



CMT **guatemala**

Centro para Misión Transformadora

Short-Term Vision Trip Manual

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Introduction

Vision Trips

During the summer months we often host groups of North Americans on what we call "vision trips." In contrast to a "mission trip," centered on what an outsider is invited to come and "do" in another culture, a vision trip focuses on the invitation for an outsider to come and "see" what God is doing through local, grassroots leaders serving their own people in hard places. By becoming students of God's activity in a foreign place, the hope is that well-crafted encounters, historical analysis, and targeted theological reflection will lead participants into an ability to re-imagine and broaden their own personal understanding of life and mission.

French author Marcel Proust writes, "The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new lands, but in seeing with new eyes."



We are not unaware of the controversy that has risen in the face of such endeavors. Last year, Kenyan leader Kennedy Odede published an article in the *New York Times* entitled "Slumdog Tourism," writing that "slum tourism turns poverty into entertainment,

something that can be momentarily experienced and then escaped from. People think they've really 'seen' something - and then go back to their lives and leave me, my family, and my community right where we were before." This article ignited a flurry of blogging activity where short-term missions trips, in addition to "Slumdog Tourism," were tagged as "Ghetto Tours," "Poverty Safaris," and even "Poverty Porn." (See Poverty Tourism Taxonomy 2.0 for a great discussion on this).

In hopes of avoiding these pitfalls, we have come to see well-crafted vision trips as a means to liberate "mission" from incarceration to the limitations of a "trip" or the responsibility of a select "committee" in a church. The idea, rather, is to learn to see mission as a lifestyle. One of the passages that inspired a Vision Trip experience

this past week for us here in Guatemala City was the story of blind Bartimaeus in Luke 18. Bartimaeus cannot see anything with his "eyes" but at a particular moment during the "religious parade" happening around him, he discerns something with his heart that he must respond to. He asks those around him what is occurring and learns that "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by."

To the chagrin of the others, Bartimaeus yells and screams until Jesus stops and invites him to a meeting in the street. Looking at the absurdity of his actions, it's as if Bartimaeus embodies the words in the conclusion to the novel *Last Lovers* where author William Wharton writes that "perhaps sometimes it is best to be blind, so one can see the way things really are, and not be blinded by the way they look."

The climax of this encounter is the beautiful question that Jesus asks Bartimaeus: "What do you want me to do for you?" This question animates our work with vision teams as we explore together what it means to have the ability of Bartimaeus to see (discern) with one's heart "Jesus of Nazareth" as he passes by in unexpected people and surprising places. First, the presence of the Divine must be discerned and then one needs to exercise the courage to not let the sacred moment pass by without hearing one's personal "beautiful question" from the lips of Jesus. It is the art of knowing how to see.

Leonard Sweet, in his book entitled *Summoned to Lead*, described an ad campaign called, "Leonardo de Vinci: The Art of Seeing." It centered on da Vinci's philosophy, summed up in two words: *saper vedere*, or "knowing how to see." As a scientist, philosopher, inventor, and artist, da Vinci enlisted the concept of *saper vedere* to engage the world around him. To him, life was measured by one's ability to see correctly. He described the almost mystical process of artists not simply painting what they see as much as their ability to see what they paint.

Too often, we want to move into mission without *saper vedere* (before "knowing how to see") and in doing so we cause more problems than we solve while, at the same time, completely missing the beautiful question rolling off the lips of the Master speaking through very unexpected people in very surprising places.

Invitation

We are headquartered in the largest city of Central America, Guatemala City, a city with a metropolitan population of some 4.5 million (2.3 million in the city proper). Guatemala



is an incredibly beautiful country with about 26 volcanoes, majestic lakes, unbelievably awesome weather conditions, intriguing Spanish colonial architecture, and rich cultural diversity. We have 26 different language groups of Mayan ancestry throughout the country. In cultural diversity throughout Latin America, Guatemala is second only to Bolivia in variety of indigenous peoples and languages.

Part of our **vision** in working with groups from the States is to share the beauty of God's infinitely creative handiwork exploding all around us. Secondly, exposing groups from the States to visionary leaders and cutting edge ministries run by Guatemalans working in the hardest places with the most marginalized peoples brings us great joy. From the gut-wrenching poverty of La Limonada, where 60,000 people live in a huge ravine, to the 5,000 homeless youth living on the streets of Guatemala City, to prison chaplains serving active members of the two largest Central American street gangs, to the 11,000 squatters in the city dump, to the adobe huts of Mayan Indian villages in the highlands, we are inspired and encouraged beyond explanation by the faithful saints that God is using in these places. We are thrilled to bring the few groups from the States that come to us each year to these places of "apparent hopelessness and despair." The truth is that there are in actuality many leaders serving in these places as lighthouses of inspirational hope and vision whom we would like to introduce you to.

Our vision is that groups from the States come to Guatemala not on trips of "one-way mission" but rather trips for the purpose of capturing "vision" born in the crucible of the missional lives of national servant-leaders. Thus, groups from the States should travel with the anticipation of seeing a very great God at work through tireless sacrificial saints against all odds bearing witness to the Kingdom of God being built in very hard places. The image of the Body of Christ that Paul uses in Romans and 1 Corinthians stresses a two-fold partnership between the diverse parts of the Body of Christ. Paul tells us that the parts "belong to one another" and "have need of one another." Vision trips to Central America with CMT celebrate the "belongingness" and "needfulness" of the diverse parts in the Body of Christ, and we believe that trips of vision organized well and prayed for intensely can inspire new vision along these lines not only for global mission but also in the local church communities in the States from which these groups come. Henri Nouwen, reflecting on his extensive travel and ministry experience in Latin America, wrote this candid thought a few months before his death that summarizes nicely what we want to say to groups from the States who desire to come on short-term projects to Guatemala:

"It is my conviction that the spiritual destiny of the people of

North America is intimately connected with the spiritual destiny of the people in Latin America. I am increasingly struck by the thought that what is happening in the Christian communities of Latin America is part of God's way of calling us in the North to conversion. I even feel that knowing God in North America can no longer be separated from the way God is making himself known in Latin America."

In this spirit of partnership and mutual "conversion," we invite groups to come to Guatemala City on vision trips. Mother Teresa, when asked about what was happening in India by people she met during her travels around the world, would often simply answer with the statement, "***Come and see. Why don't you just come and see?***" If you are part of a group considering coming to Guatemala City on a short-term vision casting experience, we invite you with all of our hearts **to come and see what God is doing here**. You and the believers in Guatemala *belong* to one another and have great *need* of one another, and it is the image of the kingdom vision that we look forward to exploring with you.

Mission and Vision of Centro para la Misión Transformadora (CMT) Guatemala

*Mobilizing communities of grassroots leaders
to see and celebrate Good News in hard places.*

We mobilize people from all walks of life to see and celebrate God at work in the world and equip them to love and serve the urban poor.

To that end...

1. We are called to nurture life-giving perspectives and practices that sustain those who live and breathe good news in hard places. As witnesses of the Incarnation of Jesus we seek peace and unity in all things.
2. We function as a resource center that equips leaders, churches, mission agencies, organizations, universities and missional communities of all kinds to seek the peace of the cities in which they serve.

CMT Guatemala recognizes the most powerful and renewable resource in high-risk communities resides within the communities themselves – the web of people, relationships and institutions that sustain the life of the community. The critical

need is to recognize and network missional communities of grassroots leaders thereby activating resources in a way that is sustainable.

Unfortunately, the leaders who are closest to the needs are often overlooked and overwhelmed. Also, in Guatemala there has been an inherent aversion to collaboration and synergistic partnerships between organizations, churches, and denominations. Therefore, such leaders do not receive the encouragement or training and support that they need or deserve. As a result, high-risk communities are vulnerable to well meaning but unsustainable solutions that are artificially imposed from the outside. Solutions that are not owned and led by the communities themselves suffer along with the people. They fail to experience transformation from the inside out and the bottom up.

Therefore, we are committed to mobilize and nurture communities of grassroots leaders with affordable and accessible theological training, spiritual formation and networking. Such work seeks to inspire and equip local leaders to be agents of transformation in the context of chronic poverty and violence.

Mission

Our mission is to mobilize and nurture missional communities of grassroots leaders who serve high-risk populations in hard places.

High-Risk Populations:

- Risk of Abuse - Women, children, elderly, people with disabilities
- Risk of Street - Homeless, orphans, battered women
- Risk of Gangs - Children and youth trapped in extreme poverty



- Others wrongly labeled as least, last and lost

Hard Places:

- Places excluded, where people don't want or don't care to go
- Extreme poverty with lack of opportunity
- Vulnerable to natural catastrophes

Vision

Our vision is to see those who have been labeled the least, last and lost in urban communities experience fullness of life. We seek the peace of the communities that we serve, making tangible the vision of Jesus:

“The Spirit of the lord is upon me,
because he anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives,
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to set free those who are oppressed,
to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord.”

Luke 4:18-19

Values

Our values form the center of all we do. CMT Guatemala is part of a values-based international network of CMT organizations. Together, we order our work around the following values and we express them uniquely according to the contexts in which we serve.

Our core values are founded upon and formed by the Incarnational Mission of Jesus Christ. We understand the Incarnation as the entire Gospel event of Jesus Christ, who is God's saving action for all creation.

We believe the Incarnation calls forth and sustains an incarnational people whose mission is to bear witness to the Kingdom of God. Such a mission holds in creative tension the person and work of Jesus. It involves the redemption of people as well as places. It touches the body and the soul. It seeks righteousness and justice. It calls forth personal transformation and systemic change. It is holistic and radically inclusive. It intentionally crosses boundaries: cultural, ethnic, social, economic, and even religious. It is particularly concerned for those people and places that have been wrongly labeled the unredeemable least, last and lost. It is the whole Gospel, for the whole Person, for the whole Church, for the whole World.

Our commitment to the Incarnational Mission of Jesus Christ is clarified by the following values:

- the vulnerable
- local faith communities
- the city
- grassroots leaders
- community
- unity
- peace

We also delight in... liminal space, beautiful questions, risk-taking, failure, and humor.

Transforming Mission

“Transforming mission” is about changing the way we do mission, and it is about being changed by the mission that we do. It means real, radical, and sustainable change. It is about bearing witness to Good News that is already present in hard places. It is always mutual and always consensual. It transforms givers into receivers and receivers into givers. It transforms guests to hosts and hosts into guests. The false distinctions between “us” and “them” dissolve into a unified “we.” In seeking the peace of those we serve, we find our own.

Three Levels of Transformation

- What: From “bringing” Good News to bearing witness to Good News.
- How: From a one-way street to a two-way street.
- Who: From givers to receivers and from receivers to givers.

Three M’s of Mission

- Our Method is from below – with those who have been labeled the least, last and lost.
- Our Message is Peace – peace that frees us from the cycle of violence
- Our Messengers are Peacemakers – people who make God’s love tangible and model alternative ways of living.

Strategies of Transformation

- **Mapping**

CMT is committed to mapping the hurt, hope and heart of the communities we serve. Methods for mapping includes:

- Moments of Blessing
 - Asset mapping
 - Community prayer

- **Networking**

CMT is committed to participate in existing, and help start new networks for the purpose of effectively serving high-risk populations in hard places.

- With leaders
- With churches
- With agencies/organizations

- **Training**

CMT is committed to transformational training for grassroots leaders which includes:

- Street Psalms and Lenses of Leadership Theological Training

Series

- Spiritual Formation
- Internships
- Urban Mission Institute (One year institute focused around a residentially based, intentional community)

- **Sustaining**

CMT is committed to ongoing encouragement and formation of the leaders and partners that we serve which includes:

- CMT Community (Spanish language version of Street Psalms

Community)

- Online and print resources
- Mentoring

- **Modeling**

CMT is committed to helping our partners model transformation in high-risk communities which includes:

- Short-term demonstration projects
- Long-term initiative development
 - Creative partnerships
 - Consultations
- Research and development

Our Model

Our model is based on well-tested community development practices that work. We use a bottom-up approach to transformation that is highly contextual to the assets, needs, desires and dreams of those who are on the ground. Ownership and authority are located among those who live and serve among the high-risk populations. CMT's role is to help provide strategies and structures that will leverage the gifts of those we serve.

CMT identifies and works with partners to help mobilize and equip missional communities on the ground.

Outcomes

The following outcomes are the measuring stick of success. CMT will mobilize and nurture missional communities of grassroots leaders who will utilize our resources to love and serve the high-risk populations in hard places. At the end of the day, each of the individual leaders and missional communities that we serve will be able to do the following with and for the communities they serve.

- Act: Missional communities will love and serve the vulnerable in ways that bring about lasting and mutual transformation.
- Reflect: Missional communities will have the tools to reflect deeply on God's liberating Word with and for those who have been labeled the least.

- Discern: Missional communities will have the capacity to see and celebrate the movement of the Spirit in hard places, both individually and corporately.

Project Logistics and Group Considerations

Vision Trip Program Options

We have a myriad of amazing ministries to visit and experiences to take in during a vision trip experience. The following categories/populations are just some of the areas that we can provide visits to and reflective experiences around:

- Education: school setting, day care centers, and after-school programs
- Community development: life-skills programs, arts and media, and sustainability projects
- Children’s ministry: feeding programs, holistic outreach, Christian schools
- Street gangs: contact us for details on the current situation
- Street youth: evangelistic outreach, rehabilitation, life-skills projects, mentoring and discipleship programs
- Prostitution/sexual exploitation
- HIV/Aids
- Special needs children
- Orphanages
- Victims of domestic violence (mainly women and children): justice, awareness and rescue programs
- Church setting: focus on worship, outreach, and local ministries



Budget Considerations

This is an estimated budget that serves only to give you an idea of what a vision trip may cost.

▪ <u>Administrative Costs</u>	
Logistics Fee	\$150 Flat Rate per participant (Pre-Trip Expenses, CMT Guate donation)
Room and Board	\$50 per day, per participant. (Food, Lodging and Transportation in the City and one day at Antigua).
Closing Dinner	\$35 per participant.
▪ <u>Programatic Costs</u>	
Group Coordinator	\$50 per day.
Translators	\$25 per day.
Specific projects	To be determined by groups budget and plans.
Trips to the highlands	Approximately \$300-\$350 per group. (Cobán, Chichi, Atitlan).
Unforeseen	\$150 (flat cost, refundable if unused)
▪ <u>Other Considerations</u>	
Airfare	(Depending on time of year and airline deals.) This is arranged on your end; we only need the flight information as soon as you have it confirmed.
Immunizations	Costs vary widely. See section titled "Immunizations" for more detailed information.
Travel Insurance	\$25-\$75-optional and on your own arrangements
Sightseeing and Day Off	\$10-\$45 per excursion. Depends greatly on your preferences. Includes costs of food, transportation, special excursions, etc.
Special Projects, supplies, and love gifts	Determined by the group.
Personal spending	

Excursion Options

Depending on the length of your stay in Guatemala, a variety of very special excursion trips can be arranged. Here is a brief listing of them. For more detailed information and pictures, please go to www.visitguatemala.com or www.iexplore.com/dmap/Guatemala/Where+to+Go or www.larutamayaonline.com for three of the best places to go on-line to learn more.



Antigua – Only a 30-45 minute drive. Easily a day trip but Antigua is at its best in the evening when the central park and cathedral are lit up with lights. If done in one day, it is nice to stay for an authentic Guatemalan dinner and then a stroll in the central park before heading home. We can also arrange very reasonable overnight lodging in Antigua if desired. Antigua is a must-see experience when coming to Guatemala.

Lake Atitlan – Reputed to be the “most beautiful lake in the world.” It is a 3 hour ride in bus, just over 2 in a car or van. Can be done in one LONG day but best if an overnight in one of the hotels on the lakes shores is involved, especially since the view of the three volcanos that surround the lake is most exquisite in the early morning hours.

Volcan

Pacaya – If your group is into adventure, plan to take the hour and 15 minute ride south to Volcan Pacaya,



one of the 26 volcanoes in Guatemala and in the top three of most active in all of Central America. This is a nice day trip with an hour and 15 minute drive both ways and a two hour hike up with a 45 minute hike back down.

Works great with a picnic lunch, or we can bring hot dogs to roast over the red hot lava.

Zone 1 – A nice afternoon experience where you can visit and take a tour of our National Palace, stroll through the central park of Guatemala, visit the National Cathedral, or do some shopping in the artesanía market of beautiful Guatemalan handicrafts.

Chichicastenango – The largest and most famous market in all of Central America. About a 3 hour ride by bus.

Many, Many More – Guatemala has many, many more gems to explore that we don't have time to outline here in detail, but at the above web-sites you can read all about them. The ones listed above are the most common desires for the groups we serve but there is also the famous Mayan ruins at Tikal, Rio Dulce, Copan Ruinas across the border in Honduras, Coban, real coffee plantations in Acatenango, etc. We can arrange trips to any of these places if your group desires and has the time.

Immunizations

Immunizations are *not required* for entry by Guatemala's government but are *recommended* by the IMB and U.S. Public Health Service (CDC) to give you important protection. You can use your own discretion in these recommended immunizations however we strongly recommend (per the suggestion of medical professionals) making sure your tetanus is up to date and getting vaccinated for Hep A and Typhoid. If you plan to be around any medical situations while on your project, then Hep B is recommended as well.

Hepatitis A

This very common viral liver infection, spread by unclean food and water, can be debilitating for months. There is an excellent Hepatitis A vaccine that is given in two doses at least six months apart. This replaces the old "gamma globulin." The first dose protects for over a year, and the second for probably 20 years or more. Minimum age: 2 years.

Hepatitis B

Hepatitis B is another type of viral hepatitis. This very common infection can cause liver disease such as cirrhosis, failure, and/or cancer. The disease is spread sexually

(most commonly), by blood, and by contaminated equipment such as needles. This vaccine is **mandatory for short term travelers when there is a possibility of hands-on involvement in dental or medical work.** Do not get close to medical/dental work or used supplies if you have not had this vaccine. For other short-term travelers, Hepatitis B vaccine is optional. Many travelers will not have time before travel for the full series of three doses given over six months, so a condensed dosage schedule may be necessary: Day 0, Day 30, Day 60, and again at one year.

Tetanus

If immunized in the past, a booster shot every ten years is recommended.

Typhoid

Typhoid fever is a life-threatening illness caused by the bacterium Salmonella Typhi. In the U.S., about 400 cases occur every year, and 75% of these are acquired while traveling internationally. Typhoid fever is still common in the developing world, where it affects about 21.5 million people each year. Typhoid fever can be prevented and can usually be treated with antibiotics.

Visit <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/> for the best travel suggestions.

Medical Treatment

In case of illness, we have a host of doctors and nurses that we can contact at any time. In case of food-borne sickness such as parasite and amoebas, we can buy what we need immediately (there are many 24-hour pharmacies throughout Guatemala City) to deal with these situations. Our team is well-versed in recognizing parasite problems caused by contaminated food and water. In more serious cases, there are very well-equipped hospitals with outstanding emergency rooms throughout Guatemala City.

Passports

You do not need a visa ahead of time to travel in Guatemala, but you must have a valid U.S. passport to travel. Passports must be valid for a minimum of 3 months after the return date. It is not necessary to carry your passports on your person during your time in Guatemala, and so we encourage all visitors to keep those locked up in a safe place in their place of lodging. We do recommend you make a good, clear photocopy of the main page of your passport and keep it in a safe place apart from the originals. You will not need to carry the photocopy with you either

during your time in Guatemala. The only time you will actually need your passport in your possession is in the airport when you arrive and depart and in the bank if you want to exchange money.

Time Zones

Central Standard Time (CST). The same as Houston, Texas, and Chicago, Illinois.

Guatemala City Airport Procedure

While en route to Guatemala, you will be given two pieces of documentation to fill out. There will be a place to write down your address in Guatemala. You can usually simply write *ciudad* on that line and you'll be fine. If for some reason (it has never happened yet) someone asks you for a more specific address than that, give them the address where you'll be lodging. After arriving in Guatemala, you want to follow the crowd as you deplane, as they will lead you to immigration. Stay together in an orderly fashion but once you hit the line for immigration, feel free to separate and join different lines.

As you proceed through immigration, you will need your passport and debarkation/tourist card which you received on the flight. There are no costs or fees for entering the country!! After passing through immigration, go directly and get your bags. Even though we are the largest and most modern airport in Central America, there are only two baggage claim lines located all in the same place so you'll have no problem finding where you are to go. There are free luggage carts for your use if needed. Prayerfully you will have no problem acquiring your luggage. If for some reason something is not there, look for someone wearing an airport uniform to help you.

After you get your luggage, proceed towards the exit and hand someone the second piece of paper that you filled out while on the plane that was not collected from you in immigration. Have it at hand ready and be sure that it is signed (bottom left hand side of the form). Follow the crowd outside and you will be greeted by friendly CMT personnel—(we cannot enter the airport). From here we will proceed out the doors and onto the street. There will be many people outside. Some will approach you and offer to help with your luggage. *They will expect a fee.* Politely decline their offer if you do not want to give them anything. If you do allow them to help, simply have a dollar bill or two ready to give them as a tip.

We will likely have a large school bus or two vehicles waiting to pick you up. If we have two vehicles, one will be for people and the other for luggage. Simply follow

instructions from CMT staff and take very good care to hold on to your personnel belongings because outside of the airport is a notorious place for petty thieves and pick pockets.

Emergency and Guatemala Contact Information

The official address and phone number of where you will be staying while in Guatemala depends on which one of the many wonderful lodging options we agree upon together for your time in the country. When that is decided, we can make sure you have exact address and telephone information for the place (seminary or hotel) where you'll be housed.

Two cell phones are available for all groups. These phones are a great way for the group to keep in touch with one another if they are split up into different teams and also work well to make and receive calls from the U.S. Upon arriving, you can buy a phone card for the phone and use it to make calls to the U.S. (10 cents a minute). You can receive unlimited calls on these two phones from anywhere in the world. This means that family and friends back home have 24-hour direct emergency access to the members of the team. We typically put these phones in the possession of one or two leaders of the group and then those leaders are responsible to see to their responsible usage. The phone numbers for the phones that will be designated for your team will be emailed to you about a week before your travel date.

Money

The currency in Guatemala is the Quetzal, named after the national bird. The exchange rate is usually right around 7.7 Quetzales to \$1. We have a U.S.-based bank account where money can be deposited State side and then accessed in Guatemala. We encourage this process for all groups. At the end of the trip/project, our staff will deliver a detail budget breakdown of all money used and any extra cash will be returned. Traveler's checks can be very hard to cash and the lines at banks can be very long. Cash in dollars can be exchanged fairly easily and in some places such as the street market, dollars can actually be used to purchase items.

The best way to access money is via the use of ATM machines which are very easy to find throughout the country. You can typically take out up to Q2,000 a day (\$265), and your bank back home will record the transaction in dollars based on the exact exchange rate for that day. If you plan to do this however, it is wise to inform your bank that you will be doing so otherwise they might freeze your account the first time thinking your card was stolen when they see a foreign transaction. **Important:** Almost all U.S. banks apply a charge of 2% over every

transaction (purchases, withdrawals, etc.) you make using a debit card in a foreign country. Please keep this in mind when making your decision as to how you want to handle your money and inform your bank that you will be using your cards during your time overseas. Make sure to ask your bank about their overseas policies. Many places do not take credit cards or only take Visa, so make sure you have some cash on you at all times.

Luggage

- Most airlines, of course, allow you to bring one checked suitcase (50 lbs. max), 62 linear inches per piece (157 cm) (total length + width + height.)
- You may also bring one carry-on and one purse/camera bag/personal item. You can only exceed your weight/size limits for checked bags and carry ons by paying extra fees at check-in. We highly recommend trying to stay away from that.
- Money should be carried on your person, not in your carry-on.
- Do not bring along expensive jewelry or other personal items. (Basic rule: Don't bring anything that you cannot afford to lose!)
- Make sure all luggage is labeled with your name, address, and phone number. (Contact us for details on this.)
- Attach distinguishable ribbon to luggage for easy recognition at airport.
- Pack an extra shirt and undergarments in your carry-on in case luggage is lost.
- We recommend locking your suitcase with a TSA approved lock.

Clothing and Packing Considerations

Clothing:

- It's springtime! The weather will be in the mid 70's. Guatemala is known as the land of Eternal Spring so it can be a little chilly in the early morning and evenings especially in the highlands so come prepared with at least one sweatshirt or light jacket.
- Sunday Ministry – Casual but nice. Slacks, collared shirts, long skirts, etc.
- Monday- Friday – Comfortable clothes to work and play in but respectable. The Guatemalan cultural expectations for Christians is quite conservative and it is important that this be respected. In public, please refrain from wearing torn jeans or shirts, etc. even if you are doing a work project. Unless you are playing sports or doing tourist activities shorts are not encouraged so please plan on long pants (jeans) or for the ladies jeans, capris or long skirts.

- Men: Shorts are not encouraged unless you are playing sports or doing tourist activities, so please plan on long pants (jeans). No torn shirts or pants or cut offs.
- Ladies: For women it is best to have modest sleeves on shirts, tops, and dresses or bring a sweater to wear. No spaghetti straps or tank tops. T-shirts must be long enough to tuck in. No shorts or “mini-skirts.” Jeans and capri pants for the ladies are acceptable.
- Please bring a minimal amount of jewelry. Men should not plan to wear earrings at all during official project hours (in the ministry facility in the evenings or out for dinner of course there is no problem).
- Weather-related clothing: Rain gear is needed from May till October and a couple sweaters or light jackets for the rest of the time as it will be cool in the mornings and evenings. A portable, travel-size umbrella would be useful to bring along.
- Shoes: Wear comfortable shoes at all times. Tennis shoes and sandals are okay. Although flip flops are comfortable, they might be a bad choice for ministry, and several host leaders have observed that closed shoes are better for several reasons. Bring a pair of shoes for showering and lounging (they wear shoes inside because the floor are mainly tiled). Be sure, though, that flip flops are not the ONLY shoes you have.

Other considerations:

- Tattoos: In Latin America, the culture is not very open regarding tattoos, and often people relate tattoos with gang activity. If you have tattoos, please keep them covered as best as possible, or ask us where and when can you show them without a problem.
- Piercings: Although this is not strictly required, it is good to know that culturally, it will be better to follow this point: no lip, tongue, or facial piercing. No pierced ears for the guys. Excessive or strange piercings are discouraged. For the ladies, only one set of pierced earrings at a time. Please bring a minimal amount of jewelry.
- Tobacco and alcohol: Please avoid it completely during your time with us as it is considered unacceptable among the Guatemalan Christian community.
- Voltage adapters: The voltage in Guatemala is 110v, the same as that in the U.S. Voltage adapters will not be needed, though a two- to three-prong adapter can be useful in some places.

Special Recommended Personal Care Items

(Most of these things you can also find in Guatemala, but if you have them already and can bring them, that is up to you.)

- Hand wipes (anti-bacterial)
- Anti-bacterial hand gel
- Sunscreen and suntan lotion or baseball cap (No New York Yankees. All Detroit Tigers gear is highly encouraged!!)
- First Aid kit (band-aids, antibiotic ointment, insect bite medicine, Anti-diarrhea and Anti-gas medication, Tylenol, Antacids, etc.)
- Allergy medication
- Resistant water bottle to refill any time you want
- Personal toiletry items: shampoo, soap, tooth brush, tooth paste, razor and etc.
- Throat lozenges
- Mosquito repellent
- Small notebook
- Small Bible - Bilingual Bible if you have one
- Small travel umbrella
- Swim suit: Modest. One piece.
- A card with your name, address in U.S. and in Guatemala - tape it to the inside top of your suitcase.
- Non-perishable snacks/candy

Donations for Various Ministries

Currently, we work in close relationship with 10-20 different ministries. Although you might have a chance to visit some of them, other ministries are also in constant need of specific donations for their programs. Please take a minute to consider some of the following ideas, and let us know how you want to distribute them, either directly, or leaving them with us to handle them. If you have something additional that you think could be helpful, and you don't see it here, don't hesitate to ask. Below is a list of general ideas for different ministries. Personal gifts for the children, ministries, and families that you will meet will be a great idea. The best gifts in this regard are something special that comes from your home town or



personal cultural background. You are having the chance to be ushered into their culture and lives, why not give a little of yourself back to them?

updated November 2013

- office supplies
- street youth ministry supplies
- gang chaplaincy supplies
- toys, prizes, or awards for kids
- printed resources (in Spanish, please)
- school supplies
- arts and crafts supplies

Again, if you're unsure about what you can bring, please don't hesitate to ask!

Weather

Guatemala's seasons are only "dry" and "rainy." Dry season goes from November to April, and rainy season is from May to October, with the highest chances to get lots of rain during June and July. Despite the rain, the weather will be in the mid 70's average. Guatemala is known as the land of Eternal Spring so it can be a chilly in the early morning and evenings, especially in the highlands.

Food and Beverage Precautions

It is difficult, if not impossible, to guarantee the safety of food and beverages when traveling, especially in developing countries. Without strict public health standards, bacteria or parasites in food or water may go undetected and cause illness such as traveler's diarrhea. However, travelers can continue to enjoy local foods—this is part of the pleasure of international travel. Just be sure to follow food and water precautions and concentrate on eating the types of food that tend to be safest.

We take great care to make sure our guests eat well and safely and have rarely had severe problems outside of the normal traveler's diarrhea that is impossible to avoid in most people (sorry!). The bottom line is that if you do what we say and eat what we tell you to eat, you should be fine!

Traveler's diarrhea is caused by something the traveler ate or drank. While it may not be possible to avoid diarrhea in certain high-risk destinations even with the strictest adherence to preventive measures, the risk can be minimized by following the guidelines below:

“Boil it, cook it, peel it, or forget it.”

Other Helpful Tips and Hints:

- Eat foods that have been thoroughly cooked & are still hot & steaming.
- Avoid raw vegetables and fruits that cannot be peeled. Vegetables like lettuce are easily contaminated and are very hard to wash well.
- When you eat raw fruit or vegetables that can be peeled, peel them yourself. (Wash your hands with soap first.) Do not eat the peelings. It is recommended that you wash and dry the vegetable or fruit yourself.
- Avoid foods and beverages from street vendors. It is difficult for food to be kept clean on the street, and many travelers get sick from food bought from street vendors.
- Use sealed bottled water or chemically treated, filtered, or boiled water for drinking and preparing food.
- Drink beverages made only with boiled water whenever possible (such as hot tea and coffee). Water boiled for any length of time (even 1 minute), at any altitude, is safe to drink.
- Carry safe water with you if you are going out for the day and where availability of safe water is not assured.
- At most lodging facilities, ample bottled water is supplied or can easily be acquired and we recommend the group start with bottled water and then subsequently place their names on their bottles and repeatedly fill them up from the bottled water in the large jugs each morning before leaving your lodging facility.
- There are NO PROBLEMS showering or brushing one's teeth in tap water. Just be careful not to swallow large amounts, and you'll be fine.
- Ask for drinks without ice unless the ice is made from bottled or boiled water. Avoid popsicles and flavored ices that may have been made with contaminated water.

You should NOT...

- Drink tap water. Even if locals do, visitors have not built up an immunity to it.
- Use ice unless it is made from boiled, bottled, or purified water. Freezing does not kill the organisms that cause diarrhea.
- Assume that water is safe because it is chlorinated. Chlorination does not destroy all the organisms that can make you ill.
- Drink from wet cans or bottles-the water on them may be contaminated. Dry wet cans/bottles before opening and clean all surfaces that will have contact with the mouth.
- Drink fruit juice unless it comes directly from a sealed container; otherwise it may have been diluted with tap water.
- Eat cut fruit sold by vendors. Their practices may not be very sanitary.

Taking Pictures

Although we understand that you want to document your experience here in Guatemala, you in turn need to understand that there are times where pulling out your camera will be inappropriate and possibly even dangerous. Parents are nervous about strangers taking pictures of their children because of recent child trafficking. Please ask your leaders before taking pictures to ensure your safety and that of those around you.



Behavior

It is important to be respectful of your host country, your peers, and yourself anywhere but it is especially important to be aware of your behavior when working with a ministry in a foreign country. You are representing the name of Jesus to the people around you, even the non-natives, the ones you traveled with. Demonstrate maturity and withhold condemnation of those around you despite frustrating circumstances. This will build community between your peers and those you meet.

Safety Disclaimer

CMT serves urban leaders who in turn serve the least, the last, and the lost in hard places. Some of the programs and projects within our network are by design in the toughest places of the city. We make a concentrated effort to never place staff or participants in peril and avoid any situation that may possess potential danger to those who travel and minister with our organization. However, by the very nature of this work, there is a level of risk involved. This must be understood by those who serve as interns and volunteers. All of our trips involve thorough planning in collaboration with in-country partners.

We are in constant communication with the U.S. Embassy and the local authorities about any safety issues. For more background and general information, please read the considerations provided by the U.S. Embassy.

There also could be additional emotional and physical stress due to culture shock and a variety of ministry conditions. We encourage you to prepare yourself for service through a number of ways:

- Prepare yourself spiritually, physically and mentally.
- Read all you can about Guatemala.
- Talk with missionaries serving in the country, specially in the urban areas.
- Ultimately, we believe in the sovereign hand of God in such matters and continue to pray for His protection in areas of ministry.

Speaking Through a Translator

Time Factor—Your message or speaking time should be approximately 25 to 30 minutes. Therefore, if you are using a translator, you should cut that speaking in half (15 minutes). However, remember you aren't in a hurry; take your time and share the gospel. Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit.

Themes—Choose simple, basic themes. The simple Gospel message cannot be improved on. Positive messages emphasizing the life-changing power of Jesus Christ will get the best results.

Illustrations—Avoid long complicated illustrations. Jokes usually don't translate well. They often depend on word plays or are very culturally—biased and just don't come across. Also colloquial phrases often don't translate (e.g. raining cats and dogs, the cat's out of the bag)

Quoting Scripture—"Shot gun quoting" of scripture could be very clumsy. The translator may not know them by memory and will have to look many of them up. Give the scripture passage(s) before the message so he/she will look it up and read it for you.

Remember the Translator—If you bring your own translators be sure they are aware to break what is said into natural thought segments. The best translation is not necessarily sentence-by-sentence but rather idea-by-idea. Be sure not to speak too long before breaking; this puts a big strain on the translator. It is very helpful to go over the message with the translator before service time. This helps so there are



not any surprises and gives opportunity to think about new words or phrases. This does not mean a complete manuscript, but it does help the translator to know where you are going. Also praying together is very important. Remember, the ideal is that the preacher and translator become one unit communicating God's message.

Audience—Don't speak to the translator; speak to the audience. This holds true in preaching and teaching as well as in conversation.

Facts and Figures

Guatemala is located in Central America, bordered on the west by the North Pacific Ocean, between El Salvador and Mexico, and on the east by the Gulf of Honduras (Caribbean Sea) between Honduras and Belize.

The Mayan civilization flourished in Guatemala and surrounding regions during the first millennium A.D. After almost three centuries as a Spanish colony, Guatemala won its independence in 1821. During the second half of the 20th century, the country experienced a variety of military and civilian governments as well as a 36-year civil war, a war which led to the death of more than 100,000 people and created more than a million refugees. In 1996, the government signed a peace agreement formally ending the conflict.

Guatemala's capital city is the most modern and cosmopolitan city in Central America. Fast paced and vibrant, Guatemala City (or Guate as it's referred to locally) is a wonderful blend of old and new and possesses a distinct Latin charm. Today, Guatemala City proper has some 2.5 million inhabitants. Its location, facilities and the International Airport "La Aurora" make it the starting point for visits to the rest of Guatemala. Guatemala City was founded in 1776, after a devastating earthquake destroyed the former Spanish capital of Central America, "La Ciudad de Santiago de los Caballeros de Guatemala," known today as Antigua Guatemala (or simply Antigua). Sitting on top of three tectonic plates, Guatemala City is spread out in a valley with Volcán Agua (The Water Volcano) on its horizon.

Guatemala City has an active cultural life throughout the year. Most of the country's museums are to be found here. There are also more than 30 galleries showing Guatemalan artists in painting, photography, engraving, and sculpture. Theaters present a wide range of plays, especially national playwrights. Visitors interested in handicraft will find them in the Central Market, located a block away from the cathedral. At the Central Market you will not only find unique

Guatemalan handicrafts, but also see the colorful variety of local flowers, fruits, and vegetables. The Relief Map in Minerva Park is a good place to see the extension of Guatemala, and if you have never been to Paris, you should visit "Torre el Reformador," the world's only scale replica of the Eiffel Tower.

Antigua

Antigua is among the world's best-conserved colonial cities; it is a magical and captivating small town that makes you feel time might have stopped some 300 years ago. From its colonial architecture to its beautiful surroundings, as you stroll through town on the cobblestone streets, you will experience the splendors of ancient times! Antigua Guatemala offers something for all travelers. Colonial history that is always present combines with an array of cultural activities, which include art galleries and exhibits, performing arts, popular arts, films, forums, and cultural tourism in general. Antigua Guatemala was once the third most important Spanish colony in the Americas. More than 30 monastic orders called Antigua home and built stunning monasteries, convents and cathedrals in the town. Its setting is majestic, nestled between three dramatic volcanoes: Agua, Fuego and Acatenango. Antigua hosts the largest celebrations for Lent and Easter in the Western Hemisphere. The history of the processions dates back to the early 1500s and began with the arrival of Don Pedro de Alvarado from Spain. While many are attracted to the solemn religious fervor, others enjoy the beauty of the colorful "alfombras" (sawdust carpets) that are made along the processional routes. Antigua is also among Latin America's most popular cities in which to study Spanish, boasting more than 75 schools.

Guatemala Facts

Official Name	Republic of Guatemala
Capital	Guatemala City
Population	13.9 Million
Area	108,890 square kilometers
Area Comparative	Slightly Smaller than Tennessee
Geographical Location	15 30 N, 90 15 W
Coastline Length	400 kilometers
Languages	Spanish 60%, Amerindian languages 40% (23 officially recognized Amerindian languages, including Quiche, Cakchiquel, Kekchi, Mam, Gaifuna, and Xinca)
Major Religions	Roman Catholic, Protestant, Indigenous Mayan Beliefs
Median Age	18.4 Years (Male 18.1, Female 18.6)
Poverty	75% of Population below poverty line

Literacy	71% of the population are literate
Independence	September 15, 1821, from Spain
President	Ottos Pérez Molina
National Anthem	" <i>Guatemala Feliz!</i> " (<i>Guatemala, Be Praised!</i>), written by José Joaquín Palma (A Nicaraguan)
National Emblem	Quetzal - a bird that signifies freedom because it dies in captivity
National Animal	Quetzal
National Bird	Quetzal
National Flower	Monja blanca or white nun orchid
National Tree	Ceiba tree
National Currency	Quetzal

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