

WELLS OF HOPE

... For Those Who Thirst ...

Mission Trip Information

Introduction

Thank you for considering a Wells of Hope Mission Trip Experience. Hundreds of people, young and old have had the life-changing experience of traveling to Guatemala with Wells of Hope over the last ten years. Through this experience, mission participants serve and work alongside the poor through a variety of solidarity projects. It is a life-changing opportunity to discover more about the world and yourselves, putting faith, social justice, service and leadership into action. Mission trip groups receive the guidance and direction from a local Mission Group Leader who is responsible to promote the trip, recruit, register and collect money from participants, and works alongside the Wells of Hope coordinators to see that all preparations are in place. While at camp the group is led by a dedicated and experienced camp team leader who will schedule and plan activities. High-school groups also travel with a required number of chaperones. The cost of the mission experience trip is \$125/ day plus airfare, including travel days. This includes food and lodging during your stay. Airfare can range from \$700-\$900 depending on the season. Participants should not book their airline tickets without first consulting their mission group leader, who will coordinate dates and times of travel with Wells of hope. Groups are expected to fundraise a minimum of \$2500 to defray the costs of projects they will be working on during their mission trip. This fundraising can be done through a variety of special events. In the past groups have held dinners, carwashes, used social media or collected pledges. Please note, funds raised do not go toward the general travel expenses of the group.

Camp Visitor Orientation

The following information is designed for visitors to camp in Guatemala. Information contained in this booklet was accurate at the time of printing but could change due to a number of factors. Use this information as a guide for your Guatemalan experience. Guatemala is a developing country where medical services and personal safety can be much different from Canada. Please read the following information carefully and be aware of conditions in Guatemala.

Wells of Hope www.wellsofhope.com
<http://www.facebook.com/wellsofhope.water>

Wells of Hope is a non-profit, charitable, independent, inter-denominational organization founded by Ted and Miriam Van der Zalm. Wells of Hope is a volunteer driven organization. Our main purpose is to provide humanitarian aide to the poor in Guatemala. Our operating principles are rooted in solidarity with our Guatemalan friends and our Christian beliefs. Wells of Hope is managed by a board of directors in the Niagara Region and has been working in Guatemala since 2004.

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Purpose of Your Visit

Your visit to the Wells of Hope project in Guatemala will give you a first hand experience of life in a developing country and acquaint you with the realities of the Third World. You will have the opportunity to assist the project by providing physical labour to assist with various activities. We hope that participants will be able to look beyond their Canadian oriented views of the world by taking into account Third World perspectives on global relationships and by sharing your experience with friends when you return to Canada.

Our Camp Facilities

The camp is located about 4 km from the town of Jalapa in the state of Jalapa. It is approximately 1,500m above sea level. The camp has the luxury of flush toilets and showering facilities. We have a gas stove and a refrigerator. Meals are simple, nutritious with minimal selection and less variety than home. Fresh fruit and vegetables are a part of every meal. Everyone is expected to help with meal preparation and cleanup. Sleeping accommodations are mainly provided in the main guest house and bedrooms are typically shared by up to 3 people. We can comfortably accommodate groups of up to 25 people. Bedding, including sheets and blankets are provided. There is no landline telephone at camp but we do have cell phones that work well. We have extremely limited internet access at the camp via a modem and as such is reserved for Wells of Hope personnel. Consider informing people ahead of time that you will be “off-line” during your time at camp. Due to the communal living arrangements at the camp, respect and consideration for your fellow participants and Wells of Hope personnel is essential for a positive experience. Adherence to camp rules, as well as preparedness and punctuality for group activities, is vital in order for everyone to have a positive experience. The consumption of alcohol at camp by adults is strictly limited and regulated. Please follow guidelines laid out by camp directors.

Student Travelers

Students travelling with a mission group are expected to follow the guidance and direction of Camp Leaders and their chaperones. Arrangements can be made through them to make contact with family in Canada in case of special necessity. Follow any further written directions and guidelines provided by your school group. We suggest you take a break from electronic devices and do not bring them with you. Parents will be given contact information regarding how to reach the camp in emergency cases.

Passports and Documentation

You are required to have a current Canadian Passport that will not expire until 90 days after your planned return date. Secondary identification such as a health card or birth certificate should be carried. Make 2 photocopies of your identification and leave one photocopy at home and take the other with you, kept separate from the originals. A visa is not required for Canadians entering Guatemala. All visitors to camp are required to complete an application form and waiver which will provide WHO personnel emergency contact information, passport details as well as the skill sets each individual has to offer during the trip. Knowing skill sets in advance assists us in planning appropriate activities to make your experience the best it can be.

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Medical

Planning for health protection prior to visiting Guatemala should take place several months before your intended travel in order to provide time for any necessary injections. Please ensure that you are in good health prior to departing for Guatemala. Ensure that vaccinations such as Tetanus and Diphtheria are up to date (check with your family doctor) Protection from Hepatitis A & B is desirable as is typhoid protection. Other vaccinations are not required for short-term visitors to Guatemala. Malaria is not a significant problem in the area that you will be visiting. Ensure that you have health coverage for outside of Canada that includes evacuation to Canada. Diarrhea is a common problem for many travelers and you may want to bring medication for this condition with you. For minor cases Pepto-Bismol is recommended supplemented with bananas. The use of Lomotil, Paregoric and Kaopectate is discouraged, as they can be dangerous in infectious diarrheas. A consultation with the your local Public Health Travel Clinic is a must. The health clinic will advise you of all medical concerns with regards to travel to Guatemala. Wells of Hope is not a medical institution and therefore you should use the advice of medical professionals. If you are carrying medications that you normally use, ensure that you have enough for you entire stay and that they are in the original container from the pharmacy. Please advise camp personnel of all medical history that could be relevant to the success of your trip. Please take the heat and the sun very seriously. Sunburn and heat stroke are serious concern. Bring a hat, high SPF sunscreen and a refillable water bottle.

Food and Water

While in Guatemala you will be taking your meals in camp. Outside of camp do not consume drinks with ice cubes. Drink only bottled water and tinned beverages such a pop. If you have food allergies or have important dietary needs please inform Wells of Hope prior to leaving Canada. Personal hygiene (thorough washing of hands) is very important and will help reduce the chances of getting ill.

Shopping / Souvenirs

The local market in Jalapa does not offer much for the tourist in terms of souvenirs although machetes, leather goods and some pottery are available.

Currency

The base unit of currency is the quetzal, which is named for the country's rare national bird. The quetzal is divided into 100 centavos. There are coins of 1,5,10,25 100 centavos and bills of 1,5,10,20,50,100 and 200 quetzals. One Canadian dollar has a value of about 5.5 quetzals (this rate changes constantly). Exchanging currency in Guatemala is an extremely time consuming process and is not possible in a group experience. Additionally, **local Guatemalan banks will not accept Canadian currency and the camp cannot exchange Canadian dollars for local currency. You must convert some currency prior to arrival to ensure that you have some money for personal use, if the need arises. You can do this at a currency converter in your local mall, or at your bank.**

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Possible Activities

The range of activities can vary due to what is happening in the local villages and the skills of our visitors. However, in the past groups have been involved in the following activities: school and home construction (painting, gathering fill, delivering building materials) assisting with English lessons, teaching music and games to local children, assisting with sewing lessons, visiting the local market, schools, orphanage, natural beauty sites, drill sites, laying water lines, cleaning/painting medical clinic, attending local festivities (luncheons, festivals, church) making tortillas, hiking.

General Safety

There has been peace in Guatemala since 1996 but reasonable precautions are always necessary when travelling. During election years in Guatemala, civil unrest and robberies tend to increase especially in urban areas. The website for the Canadian Embassy in Guatemala <http://geo.international.gc.ca/latin-america/guatemala/> contains useful information for the traveler and is current. Purse snatching and pickpockets and other small time criminals are found in places like airports and tourist attractions. Leave valuable jewelry at home. Keep money and other valuables in a money belt or pouch concealed from view. Wells of Hope personnel are well versed in any safety concerns or dangers that exist and the group leader's instructions and advice must be adhered to while participating in this program. In the event of an emergency, the Wells of Hope leader will take charge of the situation and act accordingly to ensure the safety of the participants.

General Information

You will be staying in a foreign country and are subject to the laws of that country. You must respect the customs, traditions, culture and economic conditions even if you disagree with them. Modesty in dress is highly regarded. Women wear skirts at or below the knee and rarely wear shorts. The sun in this area is very powerful due to the altitude and latitude. Sunscreen and hats are necessary. Politeness goes a long way and knowing some Spanish will help.

Time Zones

During our standard time, Guatemala is 1 hour behind our time. During daylight savings time (after March 12, 2017), Guatemala is 2 hours behind our time.

Travel Arrangements

All travel arrangements to camp must be coordinated and scheduled by our Mission Program coordinator, Norman Hauer (Norm.Hauer@wellsofhope.com) This is required to make airport pick-up and drop-off as efficient and cost-effective as possible as well to ensure the space is available in camp.

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Possible 10 Day Itinerary

Day 1 Arrive in Guatemala City airport (*no later than 2pm*). Approximately a 2.5 hour drive to camp. Dinner and get settled.

Day 2 Approximate daily schedule:

7:10 Breakfast

7:45 Outline of Day's Agenda

8:00 Placement in Work Teams and off to work duties

12:30 Lunch

1:30 Resume work duties or change duties with other teams.

6:00 - 7:30 Supper, Gathering for Reflection and sharing of the day

Days 3-? Basically a repeat of day 2 with changes of tasks that are assigned to work teams.

Sundays - The group will attend church and may travel to a local place of interest.

Last Day - Return flights should not be booked earlier than noon to allow travel time back to airport.

WHAT TO BRING

- ✓ Any prescription medication you are using (including allergy medication)
- ✓ Personal grooming materials , towel, facecloth etc
- ✓ Personal size waterless hand sanitizer (e.g. purell)
- ✓ Passport and other identification
- ✓ Clothing for your stay. Laundry facilities will not be available (except for emergencies)
Evening temperatures range from 5-10C while daytime temperatures range from 18-25C
- ✓ Camera
- ✓ Writing materials - you are encouraged to keep a journal
- ✓ Sun screen, sun glasses, a hat and a personal refillable water bottle
- ✓ A limit of 2 pieces of luggage per person is essential due to the nature of our accommodations
- ✓ Small Flashlight (the headlight variety are great)
- ✓ Rugged foot wear such as hiking boots or work boots
- ✓ Swimsuit – a *modest* swimsuit.
- ✓ Small gifts for children (if you wish) soccer balls (deflated for travel) hats, *stickers*, small toys, crayons, etc) Please do not give out any cash.
- ✓ A small backpack is really great as you can use it as a carry on for the plane trip and to carry your lunch camera etc while in Guatemala.

WHAT NOT TO BRING

- ✓ Expensive jewelry
- ✓ Electrical items (Ipad, MP3 players, etc)
- ✓ Tobacco products
- ✓ knives etc
- ✓ Be sure to follow airline regulations for your carry on items.

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THE LAST WORDS

The great attitudes of past visitors have helped Wells of Hope to achieve and maintain its positive reputation. Your actions during and after your visit will help uphold the quality of the relationship we enjoy in Guatemala. Guatemala's needs and the needs of individual families are very large and almost no amount of gifts can eliminate these problems. In contrast, material aid, raised before or after the trip and given to appropriate institutions and organizations helps address these needs in a more beneficial way. We ask that you come with an open heart and mind. Learning about the plight of the poor in an experiential way can be a life changing experience for many people. Our goal is to change your perspective on issues surrounding poverty and social justice in the world and become an advocate for change.

While the material presented here is very serious, we do know how to have fun, and Guatemalans smile and laugh a lot. A good sense of humour, patience and a willingness to be flexible are some of the best things a visitor can bring to Guatemala. We hope the laughter and experience we will share in Guatemala will remain with you long afterwards.

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Contact Information

Wells of Hope Contacts in Canada

Norman Hauer – Norm.Hauer@wellssofhope.com; 905-933-9198

Scott Maxwell – smaxwell4@cogeco.ca; maxwell.woh@gmail.com; 905-328-7500 (cell); 905-988-6085 (home)

Anneliese Huizinga - anneliese@wellssofhope.com

Ted VanDerZalm - teamvdz@hotmail.com

Wells of Hope Contacts in Guatemala

Norman Hauer – Norm.Hauer@wellssofhope.com; 011 5721 4875

Ted VanDerZalm - teamvdz@hotmail.com

Contact Phone Numbers

Canadian Embassy in Guatemala 502 2333-6102 fax 502 2363-4208 Guatemalan Embassy in Canada 613-224-4322 (see later pages for more information on the Embassy) Before leaving Canada you must register with the Canadian Embassy in Guatemala online through the Canadian Consular website <http://www.voyage.gc.ca/main/sos/rocapage-en.asp> or by email gtmlacs@international.gc.ca You will need your passport number and other information to do so. The Wells of Hope address in Guatemala is: Esperanza, Barrio El Arenal, Jalapa, Jalapa, Guatemala. The country phone code is 502.

Canadian Embassy in Guatemala City

Street Address: Mailing Address:

13 Calle 8-44 Zone 10, Canadian Embassy

Edificio Edyma Plaza Apartado Postal 400,

Guatemala, C.A.

Telephone: Email: gtmla@dfait-maeci.gc.ca

Fax: (502) 2365 1210 (General), (502) 2365 1211 (Political)

(502) 2365 1216 (CIDA/Consular)

[Embassy staff](#)

Hours of Operation

Monday - Thursday: 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. (Administration, Consular, Commercial, Political/Public Affairs and Development Assistance Programs)

After hours emergency contact information (for Canadian citizens only)

Call collect: (613) 996-8885 / (613) 944-1310 (TTY) - The [Emergency Operations Centre of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade](#) operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

An experienced officer is always available to respond to emergency calls from anywhere in the world.

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SOME SPANISH WORDS AND PHRASES

Hola (ola) hello

Adios Goodbye

Por favour please

Gracias thank you

Si yes

De nada You're welcome

Disculpeme Excuse me

Perdon sorry

Entiendo I understand

No entiendo I don't understand

Socorro help (for emergencies)

Donde esta el bano Where is the toilet

Cuanto cuesta ? how much is it ?

Me gustaria I'd like to

Me le gusta I like it

No me le gusta I do not like it

Buenos dias good morning

Buenas tardes good afternoon (until about 8pm)

Buenas noches good evening

Como se llama usted ? what is your name

Me llamo my name is ...

Mucho gusto I am pleased to meet you

Como esta ? How are you ?

Escucha Listen

Mira look

De donde es ? Where are you from ?

Soy de I am from ...

Cuantos anos tiene? How old are you ?

Tengo ... anos I am Years old

Latin American Phrase books are helpful. There are several sites on the internet where you can learn and practice Spanish. Knowing some numbers can be useful when purchasing something or giving your age or grade.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/spanish/lj/itinerary.shtml>