

GMO TRAVEL TIPS

Passports

You will need a passport to travel to and from Guatemala. It takes about 3 months to acquire a passport. It is possible to get one in 2-3 weeks but rush charges will apply. Be sure to make several copies of your passport. Leave one at home with family or friends; pack one in each of your bags. This will ease the process of applying for a replacement in the case of loss or theft.

Luggage

Be sure to pack reasonably sized luggage, wheels are always a plus. You will be required to carry your own luggage through the airport and again at the GMO Project. Check with your airlines on charges for your luggage, it is different with each airline.

In case your checked luggage is lost, be sure to pack some "essentials" in your carry-on so you will have enough to get by until your luggage is returned. If your luggage is lost, the airlines will either deliver it to the GMO Project or it can be picked up from the airport. We recommend keeping a copy of the (Guatemalan Mission Outreach) contact information with you. It recommended putting a special color ribbon all the team luggage. Make sure to count all pieces of luggage (checked or and carry-on) it's the best way to keep track.

Arrival at Guatemala's Airport

- 1. After arriving into Guatemala's City Airport (Aurora International, Airport Code GUA)**
- 2. They will stamp your passport at immigration; you will possibly need several carts for your luggage. Carts are free and can be brought straight to G.M.O.'s awaiting team.**
- 3. When you leave baggage claim, you will go through customs before you start to walk outside. There will be people on both sides of you. Look to the front for our sign GMO. Our team will direct you from there. It's a 90 minute drive to the G.M.O.'s Project.**
- 4. Do not change money at the banks inside the airport. There will be other opportunities at a later time.**

Departure Tax

Guatemala has a required \$3 (or Q20) departure tax to exit the country (paper cash only, no coins; no credit cards accepted). It's good to keep this money separate from spending money, possibly with your passport.

Health Rules

1. **G.M.O.'s Project has its own water supply and is safe to drink.**
2. **While outside the G.M.O. Project, drink only bottled water, or carbonated (bubbly) drinks in cans or bottles. Avoid tap water, fountain drinks, and ice cubes.**
3. **To prevent fungal and parasitic infections, keep feet clean and dry, and do not go barefoot.**
4. **Do Not eat food purchased from street vendors.**
5. **Do Not drink beverages with ice.**
6. **Do Not handle animals (especially monkeys, dogs, and cats), to avoid bites and serious diseases (including rabies and plague).**

Recommended Shots

See your doctor at least 4-6 weeks before your trip to allow time for immunizations to take effect. We highly recommend them if you plan on interacting with the babies and smaller children. Hepatitis A or immune globulin (IG) Hepatitis B

Terrain

G.M.O. is located in the mountains, an hour and a half northwest of Guatemala City. At 7300 feet above sea level, the terrain around us is steep with lush fields for farming. We're located in village Panimaquin, Chimaltenango. San Andres Itzapa our closest town has a population of about 25 thousand. The city of Antigua is only a forty minute drive.

Temperature

Located in the mountains, the altitude curtails the power of the tropical sun, resulting in a moderate climate with perfect temperatures all year round. Statistically, December and January are the "coldest" months with an average of 68 degrees F, April is the "hottest" month with an average temperature of 77 degrees F. Though the days are typically warm, the temperature drops at night. We recommend dressing in long pants and a light sweater in the evening and sleeping in a sweat suit or warm pajamas.

Seasons

The four seasons, as they are known in most parts of the world; don't have much meaning because of the almost constant temperatures. Instead, we distinguish only between the dry season, which we call summer, and the rainy season, which we call winter. Don't let the term rainy season scare you, however. It is not nearly as bad as it sounds. The rain rarely lasts for more than an hour or two at a time, leaving the air cool and fresh and providing sufficient moisture for trees and flowers to bloom and blossom. We recommend bringing a poncho during the rainy season in case you are outside and get caught in a shower.

Sleeping Arrangements

We have several places for groups to stay as they visit us. There are rooms for men's and women's use. Some sleeping quarters have shower facilities, while others require the use of external "private" showers. For group leaders our sleeping quarters have beds, the other group members have foam mats.

Items you might want to remember: A pillow; Sleeping bag; Earplugs (In case there is loud snoring); Sandals or flip-flops for the showers.

One of the wonderful things about visiting us in Guatemala is the chance to broaden your view of the world. There are different cultures, languages, and people; Christ's love covers them all. Below are a few things to keep in mind as you visit our Project and country.

Clothing

Clothes that expose arm pits and thighs are not acceptable. People often dress-up when going into a city. Khaki pants, long skirts and jeans are appropriate.

Other Important Reminders at the Project

Alcohol & Smoking

Group members must refrain from abusive language, drinking alcoholic beverages and smoking.

Sexual Abuse

Guatemalans in general are very "touchy" people. Just remember to "avoid all appearance of evil."

Work Ethic

Everyone's job description is, "whatever's necessary," which is both physical and humbling at times. Always keep in mind that the team is here to serve, not to be served.

Denominational Beliefs

People from many denominational backgrounds come to Panimaquin. There may be a difference of opinion with some doctrinal issues. However, any problems you may have with G.M.O.'s teachings must be discussed with the staff in private - NEVER with the project members.

Gender Roles

Men are given the role of dominant, decision maker while women are given the role of submissive supporter. Female work team members should not confront male nationals.

Safety at the Project in Panimaquin

1. **All cash tickets and passports should be collected upon your arrival by your group leader. G.M.O. is a safe place, but it's good to remove all temptation from our people. We will give each member of you team Q20 of our money so you can buy snacks at our local stores should you desire. Never leave the Project without permission from staff. When taking walks take one of the national staff members with you.**
2. **Ask one of the national leaders when you can take photos when your outside the Project. While on the Project grounds you can take any photos you desire.**

Trips to bigger cities

1. **Dress down.**
2. **Do consider wearing minimal amounts of jewelry - even a chain that's fake gold can be ripped off your neck. Consider leaving your wedding ring at home too.**
3. **Loop a money belt around your belt loops so that if someone cuts it, it won't fall from your waist.**
4. **Carry just one credit card and photocopies of important documents like your passport. Divide money for small and large purchases so you don't have to expose a wad of bills. (When sharing with friends, keep a kitty for common expenses to make digging for cash in public places unnecessary.) Become familiar with foreign currency before you need to use it.**

Government and Politics

We recommend you avoid talking about American and/or Guatemalan politics. If you are asked your opinion about politics, try to emphasize a Biblical perspective concerning the relevant issues and use any such discussion as a stepping stone to share the Gospel.

Most importantly bring a servants heart and a flexible attitude.

Legal Statements

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