

GROUP TRIP GUIDE

CASAS

P O R C R I S T O

Guatemala

For questions, please contact our team coordinators at questions@casasporcristo.org or 915.778.0046.

QUICK GUIDE

3-6 Months Prior

- Apply for passports.
- Read this Guatemala Group Trip Guide.

30 Days Prior

- Check with your team leader to find out your missionary, lodging, and family information.
- Pray for the recipient family.
- Submit your digital Disclosure of Risk & Medical Release forms.
- Make sure to indicate any food allergies when completing your Disclosure of Risk & Medical Release forms.
- Submit any necessary information to your team leader so he/she can purchase your travel insurance.

PACKING LIST

- Travel documents (passports, etc.)
 - Toolbelt or nail apron
 - Work gloves
 - Protective eyewear
 - Long work pants (No capri pants or shorts on work site)
 - Work shirts (t-shirts)
 - Sturdy closed-toed shoes or boots & flip flops
 - Hat or bandana
 - Insulated water container
 - Sunblock
 - Chapstick
 - Bible
 - Soap, shampoo, & other toiletries
 - Feminine hygiene products (tampons are difficult to find)
-

REQUIRED TOOLS

- **Hammer (no smaller than 16 oz.)**
 - **Carpenter's pencil**
 - **25 ft. tape measure**
 - **Utility knife**
-

These items aren't mandatory but can be helpful

**Earplugs (for sleeping)*

**Flashlight*

**Wet wipes*

**Knee pads*

DO NOT PACK

- Tank tops or sleeveless shirts
- Torn pants
- Hairdryers, curling irons, and hair straighteners
- Shorts shorter than knee length (no cheerleading/running shorts)
- Tight-fitting clothing (yoga/spandex pants)

30 DAYS PRIOR

Disclosure of Risk & Medical Release Form

You must fill out a digital Disclosure of Risk & Medical Release Form before you enter Guatemala. You will receive an email with instructions on how to fill out this form. Your form is due 30 days prior to your trip.

Food Allergies

Make sure to indicate your food allergies when completing your Disclosure of Risk and Medical Release forms online.

Missionary, Lodging, & Family Information

Check with your team leader to access a trip profile page link containing information about your assigned missionary, Guatemala lodging, and family. We will send it to your team leader no later than 30 days prior to your trip.

Travel Insurance

Your team leader will purchase travel insurance (see **EMERGENCIES** section for details) on your behalf and print the ID cards to keep with you while traveling. Submit any necessary information to the team leader from your church/organization.

TRIP DETAILS

Arrival & Departure

Your Casas missionary will contact your team leader before your trip to introduce themselves, go over expectations for the week, and talk about your airport pickup. All team members must be present at the time the team is scheduled to be picked up from the airport. We will pick you up from the airport at your scheduled arrival time and drop you off in time for your departing flight.

Additional Ministry Opportunities

Although our main goal is to serve God by building homes for families, we welcome you to participate in additional evangelistic projects. See our [Spiritual Outreach Guide](#) or contact [Joshua Crabbs](#), Foreign Field Director at 915.778.0046 ext.12 for assistance.

Animals

It is important that you do not feed or touch the animals in Guatemala. Many of them carry diseases and have the potential to bite or scratch.

Attire

Please bring clothing that is modest and appropriate. The following clothing items are prohibited: tank tops, cutoff shirts, torn pants, shorts shorter than knee-length (no cheerleading/running shorts), and tight-fitting clothing (no leggings or yoga/spandex pants). On the worksite, everyone must wear long pants and closed-toed shoes for protection. You may wear modest, knee-length shorts whenever you are not on the worksite.

Cell Phones

Talk with your carrier to see if you will have service in Guatemala and what charges you may incur. Your Casas missionary will have a cell phone with service in Guatemala in case of emergencies.

Cultural Sensitivity

Casas por Cristo exists to open the door for local pastors and churches to share the love of Jesus Christ by serving. The Guatemalan church culture is generally more conservative than yours. Please be sensitive to the desires of the pastors you are here to serve. Our pastors have asked that our teams refrain from purchasing or consuming alcohol and tobacco, dress modestly, and respect the facilities. Ask your Casas missionary for more specific information about your assigned pastor/church. Please refer to our [Guatemala Culture Guide](#) for additional information.

Dedication

Plan with your team how you would like to dedicate this home. We will provide a Spanish Bible, keys, and a plaque. This will be a great time for your team, the sponsoring pastor, and the recipient family to speak with one another, present gifts, and pray together. Check out our [dedication sample outline](#) for more details.

Devotions

Reflecting on each day is an important part of your experience. We have a [devotional guide](#) available online to print for your trip. Plan a time each day for a group devotional and reflection.

Documentation

Passports are REQUIRED for all team members! If you plan to travel with minors without parents, please see the US Customs & Border Protection's [recommended documentation](#).

Excursions

Check out our [Guatemala Excursions](#) to view a list of excursion options. Please let us know what you'd like to do.

Flights

Your team is responsible for purchasing your own airfare. Secure your flights to and from La Aurora International Airport in Guatemala City. **It is mandatory that you arrive and depart as a team** as we will only make one trip to the airport to pick you up and drop you off. You should arrive any time Sunday and depart the following Friday for three-day builds or Saturday for four-day builds. We will do our best to be flexible with alternate schedules.

Gifts for the Recipient Family

In an effort to create uniformity and adhere to the desires of our pastors, we ask that you limit your gifts to one of each of the following per family.

- One bed and/or one Eco-Filter can be added to your team's invoice.

Immigration & Entry Form

INFORMACION GENERAL / GENERAL INFORMATION

NIT en Guatemala: Salida / Departure: Fecha / Date: **27 07 18**

1. Adiana de Ingreso o Egreso del país / Arrival or Departure country: **GUATEMALA**

2. Apellido(s): Last Name: **SMITH** 3. Nombre(s): Name: **JOHN THOMAS**

4. Tipo Documento / Document Type: 5. Sexo / Sex: X

6. Pasaporte / Pasaport: No. / No.: **123456789** 7. Nacionalidad / Nationality: **USA**

8. Profesión u oficio / Occupation: **TEACHER**

9. País de nacimiento / Country of Birth: **USA** Fecha / Date: **16 05 78**

10. Dirección Perseña / Previous Address: **7 CALLE 3-34 SAN RAYMUNDO ZONA 1**

11. País de procedencia / Country of departure: **USA**

12. País de destino / Country of destination: **GUATEMALA**

13. Motivo principal del viaje / Purpose of the trip: Turismo / Tourism X Oficio / Official Negocio / Business
Residencia / Residence Turismo / Transit Otro / Other

14. Modo de transporte / Means of transportation: Aéreo / By Air X Terrestre / By Ground Marítimo / By Sea

15. Empresa y número de viaje (tráfico) / Place of origin of the visit: / Avión / Flight No. / Vehicle No. / Boat name and number: **AA 934**

16. ¿Tiene consigo un efectivo o un documento una cantidad mayor o igual a US\$10,000.00 o su equivalente en moneda nacional? / Are you carrying currency or monetary instruments over or equal to US\$10,000.00 or its equivalent in national currency? SI / Yes No X

17. En caso afirmativo favor indicar en siguiente: / If you marked yes, please provide the following information:

Español / Spanish	Inglés / English	Si / Yes	No / No
Clase de Título / Title Class	Clase de Título / Title Class		
Valor / Value	Valor / Value		
País de Emisión / Country of Issuance	País de Emisión / Country of Issuance		

¡LEER ENCARECIDAMENTE INSTRUCCIONES DEL PAÍS (GUATEMALA) ANTES DE PASAR LA BARRERA DE INGRESO Y SALIDA DEL PAÍS (GUATEMALA) PLEASE READ CAREFULLY THE INSTRUCTIONS OF THE COUNTRY (GUATEMALA) BEFORE ENTERING THE COUNTRY (GUATEMALA) AND LEAVING THE COUNTRY (GUATEMALA)

18. Contar únicamente el contenido de la siguiente(s) lista(s) de artículos que se encuentran en el bulto de su equipaje personal. / Before entering read carefully instructions on the back. / Los artículos de la siguiente(s) lista(s) de artículos que se encuentran en el bulto de su equipaje personal.

Español	Inglés	Si	No
Armas, armas de fuego, municiones, explosivos, dinamita, etc. / Weapons, firearms, explosives, dynamite, etc.	Arms, guns, firearms, or any kind of gun or explosives (guns, pistols, revolvers, etc.)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X	<input type="checkbox"/>
Armas con filo, cuchillos, etc. / Weapons with blades, knives, etc.	Weapons with blades, knives, etc.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alcohol, bebidas, drogas, medicamentos, etc. / Alcohol, drinks, drugs, medicines, etc.	Alcohol, drinks, drugs, medicines, etc.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alimentos, víveres, plantas, frutas, semillas, etc. / Food, supplies, plants, fruits, seeds, etc.	Food, supplies, plants, fruits, seeds, etc.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X	<input type="checkbox"/>
Almohada, colchón, paja, etc. / Pillow, mattress, straw, etc.	Pillow, mattress, straw, etc.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X	<input type="checkbox"/>
Almohada, colchón, paja, etc. / Pillow, mattress, straw, etc.	Pillow, mattress, straw, etc.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X	<input type="checkbox"/>
Almohada, colchón, paja, etc. / Pillow, mattress, straw, etc.	Pillow, mattress, straw, etc.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X	<input type="checkbox"/>
Almohada, colchón, paja, etc. / Pillow, mattress, straw, etc.	Pillow, mattress, straw, etc.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X	<input type="checkbox"/>
Almohada, colchón, paja, etc. / Pillow, mattress, straw, etc.	Pillow, mattress, straw, etc.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X	<input type="checkbox"/>
Almohada, colchón, paja, etc. / Pillow, mattress, straw, etc.	Pillow, mattress, straw, etc.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X	<input type="checkbox"/>

Firma / Signature X: *John T. Smith* No. **37667501**

This is a copy of the immigration and entry form that you will fill out on the plane to Guatemala. Each individual on the trip will fill one out. Please fill it out using the following address: 7 Calle 3-34, Zona 1, San Raymundo, Guatemala.

Immunizations

We do not require any immunizations; however, we do recommend current Tetanus and Hepatitis A & B immunizations. You may check the CDC website to see what they recommend for travel to Guatemala.

Internet

Most accommodations offer basic internet for free that will allow you to text and call (video streaming unavailable). Cash and credit cards are accepted at the Casas store.

Lost Baggage

If your baggage does not arrive, please see the airline and give them the following information.

- Address: 7 Calle 3-34, Zona 1, San Raymundo, Guatemala.
- Guatemala staff phones: 3166-6771 (Kyle St. Amand), and 4561-8486 (Luke Stavely). Dial 011-502 first if calling from a US phone number.

Meals, Transportation, & Lodging

Casas por Cristo will arrange your [meals](#), transportation, and lodging in Guatemala. The cost will be reflected on your team's invoice to be paid with the rest of your final trip fees 30 days prior to your arrival (15-person minimum). The cost can also be found on our website. There is an additional fee if you are staying longer than the typical 6 or 7-day trip.

Merchandise

You may purchase Casas souvenirs (t-shirts, hats, mugs, etc.) from the Casas store located at our office in San Raymundo. You can also shop online on our [website](#). US dollars, Guatemalan quetzales, and credit cards are accepted.

Money

In Guatemala, the currency is called the Quetzal. The US dollar is **not** accepted in San Raymundo. Exchange your money stateside for the best exchange rate or at the Guatemala City airport. You will need to have your passport and know where you are staying in San Raymundo in order to exchange money. The address you can give is **7 Calle 3-34, Zona 1, San Raymundo, Guatemala**. You can also withdraw money from the local ATMs in San Raymundo using your personal debit card. Please check with your bank to see what fees may apply. No banks will exchange \$20 bills in San Raymundo, so if you need to exchange money there, you will have to bring crisp \$50 or \$100 bills.

Personal Belongings

Don't bring anything to Guatemala that you would be heartbroken to leave without. We recommend keeping anything of value with you at all times (money, passports, jewelry, etc.), locked in the safe in our office, or secured in the room at your lodging facility.

Project Time Frame

You should allow **three to four full days** for the project. Every worksite has unique challenges, so it is important that you allow yourself enough time to finish the project.

Recipient Family

We do not require that the recipient families participate in the building process beyond having the site prepared. However, many families are eager to help but are shy and feel like they would be in the way. Make every effort to include your family in the building process. Some families will prepare meals for teams to show their gratitude. These families make extra efforts to ensure that the food is safely prepared.

Smart Traveler Enrollment Program

We recommend that your team leader enroll your group for free at [STEP.state.gov](https://step.state.gov) to receive travel and security updates about your destination, and to help the US government reach you in an emergency. You can create an account and upload a spreadsheet with contact details for multiple travelers.

Spanish

The primary language spoken in Guatemala is Spanish. However, some families speak a Mayan dialect called Kaqchikel. We encourage you to learn some Spanish phrases beforehand to be able to speak with your family. Check out our list of [Common Spanish Phrases](#).

Support Your Missionary

In order to keep the cost of our mission trips low, our missionaries raise their own salaries to serve in the ministry. Each missionary depends on gifts from churches and dedicated individuals to cover their salaries. Changing a family's life this week could not happen without your effort and sacrifice. It also could not happen without your financial support for our missionaries. At the end of your trip, encourage your missionary by giving a donation and consider joining their monthly support team. At some point during your trip, your missionary will give a Casas por Cristo presentation, testimony, and ask for financial support.

Team Composition

For the best building experience, we recommend 15 to 25 people. Visit our website for the [team composition guide](#) to determine the optimal number of people for your trip. The work will include pouring concrete, building walls, and installing metal roofing, electrical, siding, windows, and a door. Each of these tasks has at least one element that everyone can perform. Skilled laborers are not needed.

Time Zone

Guatemala is in the Central time zone but does not observe daylight savings. When establishing meeting times, we will refer to this time zone.

Water

Tap water in Guatemala is not purified to American standards. To avoid getting sick, please drink only the purified water that Casas will provide for you at your worksite and lodging.

Weather

The temperatures in San Raymundo range from 55 to 80 degrees year-round. Rain is a common occurrence, and a light rain jacket is recommended.

Your Casas Missionary

One of our trained missionaries will be with you during all waking hours in Guatemala. During the night, they will be available by cell phone or other messaging services (Whatsapp, Facebook Messenger, iMessage) which can be utilized by the free WiFi offered in all of our housing locations.

Your missionary will teach, supervise, and ensure safety and quality. We take care of the details so that you can focus on building and serving. Most of our missionaries have a basic understanding but are not fluent in Spanish. Our missionaries are here for you and your group and will work to accommodate your requests. Read a brief bio about your missionary on the [missionaries page](#) of our website.

EMERGENCIES

Casas por Cristo Office Number: 915.778.0046

Please leave our office number 915.778.0046 with your families and friends at home in case of an emergency where they would need to contact you while you're out of the country. Even if it is after business hours, they will reach one of our missionaries who will assist in relaying their message and provide any necessary follow-up.

Emergency Numbers in Guatemala

If an ambulance is needed, the Guatemala emergency numbers are 6630-8755 and 4548-8786.

First Aid Kit

Your Casas missionary will have a basic first aid kit. We recommend that you also bring a first aid kit to treat minor medical incidents throughout your trip.

Medical Treatment

In case of a medical emergency, your Casas missionary will evaluate the severity of the injury. For minor medical issues (dehydration, minor scrapes, cuts, food-related sickness, etc.), the team member will see the local doctor in San Raymundo, Dr. Ramiro Cojon (GPS: 14.766925, -90.593245). For more serious injuries, the Casas missionary will call the international insurance your team has purchased and take the injured person to Guatemala City to receive treatment at a larger medical facility, Centro Medico (Zona 10, GPS: 14.610198, -90.509935). The team member will be accompanied by a Guatemala field missionary while another Casas missionary attends to the needs of your team. The injured team member will be sent back to the US as early as possible.

Travel Insurance

Your team leader must purchase travel insurance for you and your teammates. We require the [Outreach Group Plan](#) through [International Medical Group](#). On our website we offer an [Explanation of Travel Insurance Coverage](#). Prior to your departure, your team leader will print your travel insurance ID cards to keep with you while you travel in case of an emergency. If you need assistance from the insurance company, please contact [Adam Bates](#) at 800.647.4589.

Safety

Your team's safety is of the utmost importance to us. We have been working diligently since our inception in 1993 to ensure that we have a number of fail-safes in place regarding personal safety and emergency situations. Read our [Risk Plan](#) for more details.

US Embassy Guatemala City

Sometimes, in spite of careful planning, things still go wrong during a trip abroad. Contact the US Embassy for help with emergencies.

US Embassy Guatemala City

Avenida Reforma 7-10, Zona 10

Guatemala City, Guatemala

Email: AmCitsGuatemala@state.gov

Phone: (502) 2326-4000 (If calling from the US, dial 011 first.)

GUATEMALA LODGING

You will stay at one of our facilities for the duration of your trip. We will email you the link to your trip profile page containing details about your lodging no later than 30 days prior to your arrival.

Bathrooms

All toilet paper should be thrown away in the trash can. Do not place it in the toilet.

Cleaning

Our Guatemala cleaning team will service your accommodations daily to remove trash in the restrooms and common areas. They will not enter the dorm rooms where your team will stay. However, we recommend not leaving any valuables in the rooms. If your restroom trash should fill up before the next day's cleaning, please dispose of the trash in the larger trash containers.

Showers

All of our accommodations have showers with hot water. We ask you to take military showers: get wet, turn the water off, soap up, and then turn the water back on to rinse off.

Sleeping

Sleeping arrangements vary by facility. A bed, pillow, sheets, blanket, and towels will be provided.

TYPICAL SCHEDULE

Day 1

Arrive at the airport, exit customs, and walk outside to meet your Casas representative and get on the bus. Arrive at your accommodations in San Raymundo and enjoy a simple sack lunch/dinner in case you haven't eaten prior. A short orientation will be given.

Days 2 - 4

- 6:30 a.m. — Breakfast
- 7:30 a.m. — Head to work sites
- 3:00-5:00 p.m. — Return from work
- 6:00 p.m. — Dinner
- 10:00 p.m. — Lights out

Day 5

Choose one excursion option for your team (or two Antigua excursions). You might be responsible for purchasing your lunch. Leave after breakfast, return late afternoon, and have dinner at your accommodations.

Day 6

Early morning: head to the airport. Time will be determined by your flight back to the U.S.

**If doing the alternate 7-day schedule, you will arrive on day 1, workdays 2-5, have your excursion on day 6, and depart on day 7. We will do our best to be flexible with alternate schedules.*

WORKSITE

Construction Process

The house you will be building will have a concrete foundation followed by 2" x 4" framed walls. The outside of the house will be covered with wood lap siding. The inside of the house will have electricity, and 1/4" plywood wall paneling. The roof is framed with 2"x6"s then covered with corrugated metal roofing.

Preparedness

Be sure to arrive at the worksite with all of the equipment that you will need. You will need to take a positive attitude, sunscreen, a water bottle, and tools.

Stay in a Group

Your team leader and your Casas missionaries should know where you are at all times. Your team should stay together as a group at all times.

Tools

Casas por Cristo provides the majority of the tools you will need, **but you do need to bring the required tools on the packing list.** You and your team are responsible for the tools we provide. If tools break due to normal wear and tear, we will replace them. However, if they are lost or neglected, your team will be responsible for the replacement costs. The Casas toolkit is equipped with the following power tools: cement mixer, drill, power saw, and generator, if necessary. You are welcome to bring any additional tools or nail guns. We have found that extra battery-powered tools are more helpful than corded tools. Your team may have to load and unload all of the tools multiple times every day.

Work Site Bathroom

There is a bathroom facility of some sort at each work site. However, some may be more primitive than others.

Work Site Safety

The two most frequent worksite injuries are debris in the eye and dehydration. If your Casas missionary asks you to do something that you are unable to perform, please ask him or her to reassign you to another task. Please take the following precautions.

- Wear eye protection at the worksite.
- Drink one gallon of water per day.
- Wear sunscreen or protective clothing to prevent sunburn.

C A S A S *Por* C R I S T O

Copyright © 2022

All text and artwork were produced for the sole use of Casas por Cristo (This is not public domain clipart). No art or text may be reproduced in any form without the expressed consent of Casas por Cristo.

Casas por Cristo
PO Box 971070
El Paso, TX 79997
915.778.0046
casasporcristo.org
questions@casasporcristo.org

Revised 8/25/2022