



## Travel Information and Tips for Your Trip to Guatemala

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### Introduction

Short-term mission trips provide a unique opportunity to serve communities in need while sharing your faith. Guatemala is an excellent destination for such missions. Whether you're staying for a few days or weeks, packing carefully and being culturally aware will help ensure a smooth experience. This guide will walk you through key travel tips and requirements.

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### International Travel Preparation

- **Stay Informed:** Before traveling, research the country's culture, history, medical practices, and social norms. Even if you've been before, conditions can change rapidly.
  - **Immunizations:** Ensure all basic vaccinations are up to date, especially your tetanus booster (within the last 10 years).
  - **Travel Medical Insurance:** Verify that your health insurance covers international travel. If not, you should obtain traveler's insurance before departure. Be prepared to pay for medical services upfront and request reimbursement from your insurance provider later.
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### Required Documents

- **Passport & Visa:** U.S. citizens need a valid passport. A tourist visa is issued upon arrival.
  - **Photocopies:** Keep copies of your passport at home and with you.
  - **Guatemalan Immigration Form:** Complete the online immigration form (<https://farm2.sat.gob.gt/declaDelViajeroGt-web/pages/public/declaracionJuradaDelViajero.html>) within 24 hours of arrival. Save the confirmation email and take a screenshot of the QR code for easy access. Your destination address is **God Said Go Missions, San Lucas, Sacatepéquez.**
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## Health & Safety

- **Medications:** Bring prescription meds in their original containers.
- **Prohibited Items:** Pseudoephedrine and cannabis products are illegal in Guatemala.
- **Stay Rested:** Get plenty of rest before travel.
- **Hygiene & Water Safety:** Drink only bottled or filtered water provided by GSG Missions. Avoid eating food outside of designated sources.

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## Travel Logistics

- **Arriving in Guatemala:**
  - Upon landing, go through **immigration** and present your QR code and passport.
  - Proceed to **baggage claim and customs**. Keep your checked luggage receipt handy.
  - Exit the airport as a team to the **RIGHT**; if we are delayed in picking you up, wait at the coffee shop near the exit.
- **Transportation & Accommodations:**
  - Safe, reliable transportation is arranged.
  - Accommodations will be clean and safe. Follow local facility guidelines.



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## Cultural Awareness & Conduct

- **Respect Local Customs:** Avoid loud or rowdy behavior.
- **Dress Code:**
  - No shorts or sleeveless shirts during ministry work.
  - Closed-toe shoes recommended for all outings.
- **Safety Tips:**
  - Keep valuables secure and out of sight.
  - Avoid engaging with stray dogs. NEVER try to pet them.
  - Never be alone with children.
  - Exercise caution when interacting with the opposite sex.
- **Obey Leadership:** Follow instructions from team leads immediately for safety.

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## Money & Communication

- **Currency:** The Guatemalan Quetzal is best obtained from ATMs rather than airport exchanges. Small, unmarked U.S. bills may be accepted at some markets.
- **ATMs & Cards:** Confirm with your bank that your card will work internationally.
- **Electronics:** Keep devices secure and avoid displaying them in public.

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## Photography Guidelines

- Always ask permission before photographing people.
- Never take photos of military or police personnel or facilities.
- If unsure about taking a photo, ask a GSG team leader.



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## Packing Guide

- **Luggage:** Check with your airline for weight limits and baggage fees.
- **Clothing:** Expect mild temperatures in higher elevations (50s-70s) and hotter temperatures in lower elevations (70s-90s).
- **Other Essentials:** Flashlight, **sunscreen**, hat, **insect repellent**, bath towel, travel alarm clock, and a small journal.

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## Post-Trip Reflection

Returning home after a mission trip can be an adjustment. Some experience "reverse culture shock." Take time to reflect, integrate your experience, and appreciate the perspective gained. Your impact on the community extends beyond your visit.

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## Final Reminders

- Be **flexible**; plans may change.
- Follow the **itinerary** and be **punctual**.
- Never make promises to locals about financial support.
- If you have issues with motion sickness, please take precautionary steps each day.
- If you have ever had altitude sickness, please notify your team leader before your trip.
- If you feel unwell, inform a team leader immediately.
- Mission trips are **not** the time for romantic relationships.
- Smoking and the use of alcoholic beverages are not allowed.
- **Always represent GSG Missions** in a way that honors the ministry and those you serve.



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### **Medical Professionals**

- A list of medications in our pharmacy will be provided for your use.
- Please bring a copy of your unexpired medical license.
- Please bring the following equipment with you to use: BP cuff, stethoscope, pulse oximeter, no-touch thermometer, and otoscope, if possible.

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By following these guidelines, you'll ensure a successful, impactful, and meaningful trip to Guatemala. Safe travels!