



Pray America/Manos de Jesus Leaders Guide

General Mission Trip Information

Our hope for trips to Manos de Jesús (“MDJ”) in Chichicastenango is for partners to return home transformed. We see these short term-trips as an opportunity for personal and spiritual growth in Christ, while accomplishing a very valuable work. We intentionally plan the trip to develop relationships with our Guatemalan community and the MDJ team. Throughout the week, you'll be deeply immersed in Guatemalan and Mayan culture, actively participating in MDJ programs and projects, and reflecting on your experiences.

The per-person cost for a trip is **\$950 + airfare + optional add-on package**. This includes up to six nights lodging on our campus and one night lodging at the hotel Barceló in Guatemala City (if needed), as well as meals and transportation. Your trip fee also provides support for MDJ operating costs.

If at any time you have questions or need to clarify information concerning your trip to Chichicastenango, please contact us via our website or email Annika Hoekstra at annika@prayamerica.org.

Basic Trip

\$950 per team member

- One (1) night at the Hotel Barceló in Guatemala City
- Two (2) meals at the Hotel Barceló in Guatemala City (*dinner & breakfast*)
- Lunch/snack on the way to Chichicastenango
- Week of lodging and meals at Monte Flor
- Serving and participation in programs and projects at Monte Flor
- Opportunities for cultural engagement and learning
- A visit to one of the largest outdoor markets in Central America
- All transportation upon arrival in Guatemala

Add-on Packages *Optional (and very fun!) additions to your team's trip. Prices apply for teams of 10 or more.*

Antigua Day Package

\$25 per team member

Spend a day in Antigua on the way to Guatemala City

(Lunch is up to the freedom of choice of the team members, and will use personal cash to cover)

Lake Atitlán Day Package

\$55 per team member

Visit the lake for half a day

Enjoy a boat ride

Scenic lunch

Antigua Overnight Package

\$120 per team member

Spend your last night in Antigua at a local hotel

(Lunch is up to the freedom of choice of the team members, and will use personal cash to cover)

Booking a Trip

Trip dates are available year-round, except for the last three weeks in December and the month of January. View availability using our [Trip Calendar](#) located on our website.

Legal Documents & Immunizations

- A current passport, not due to expire within six months.
- A current Tetanus shot is required for all participants.

Travel Insurance

We encourage team members to personally purchase travel insurance for their trip. Pray America/Manos de Jesus **does not** provide travel insurance. See below for suggestions:

- www.travelinsurance.com
- www.travelguard.com
- Purchase with your airline

Booking a Trip

1. Pick your trip dates
2. Contact us through our [website](#) or submit an online [Trip Information Request Form](#)
3. Reserve your week with a nonrefundable trip deposit of \$1,000 or \$100 per team member. This will confirm the trip dates for your team.
4. Build and register your team (**the minimum team size is 10 people, the maximum is 20 people**)
 - Fill out a [Team Member Registration Form](#) for each team member
 - Complete **60 days prior to arrival in Guatemala**
5. Book flights
 - We request that all team members depart and return together on the same flight itinerary.
 - **Please choose midday arrival times:** Arriving between 11 AM and 2 PM helps get the team to Chichi before dark. Mid-day departures are also ideal, but less critical.
 - Provide team's flight itinerary to PA **45 days prior to arrival**
6. Decide which trip package your team wants
7. Send trip payment to the Pray America office in **1 check**. Make checks out to Pray America, with your trip dates and group name clearly marked in the memo line.
 - Your team members' financial contributors can write their checks for your trip to the church or non-profit organization handling your team funds.
 - If you do not have a church or non-profit organization to handle your team funds, please contact MDJ for suggestions so you and/or your contributors can still receive a tax deduction for the donated funds.
 - All trip funds, including add-on packages need to be sent to PA **1 month prior to arrival**.

Please mail checks made out to Pray America to the following address:

Pray America
PO Box 14070
Lansing, MI 48901-4070

Note: **Work Projects** are planned based on the current needs of the communities served by MDJ. If a work project(s) is available during the team's scheduled week, the work project(s) will be provided to teams as an additional option prior to their trip. As in the past, the team will be responsible for sponsoring the cost of the project(s) they elect.

Important Deadlines

- Complete team member registration forms **60 days prior to arrival.**
- Provide the team's flight itinerary to PA **45 days prior to arrival.**
- All trip funds, including add-on packages need to be sent to PA **1 month prior to arrival.**

Additional Information

Transition Day & Add-on Packages

Following a week of service teams can benefit from a day of reflection, processing, preparing for and traveling home. Recommendations on how to spend your transition day:

- **Prayer and reflection morning** = Spend time alone or as a group praying for Manos de Jesus, Chichicastenango, and your team. Leave campus at 11am, travel to Guatemala City and enjoy a relaxing evening at the Barceló. (Team members will pay for lunch)
- **Day in Antigua** = **\$25 per person.** Spend a day in Antigua on the way to Guatemala City. Sightsee, shop, and eat on your own. Spend the night at the Hotel Barceló in Guatemala City. Dinner and breakfast are included!
- **Day at Lake Atitlán** = **\$55 per person.** Enjoy the beauty and culture of Lake Atitlán, shop, eat lunch (included), and spend the night at the Hotel Barceló in Guatemala City. Dinner and breakfast are included!
- **Antigua Overnight** = **\$120 per person.** Sightsee, shop, and eat lunch on your own. Spend your last night in Antigua at a local hotel. Dinner and breakfast are included!

Team Member Preparation

Each team member will have different expectations for your trip to Guatemala. It can be very helpful and healthy to discuss expectations as a group before your trip. God typically grows and stretches us in unique ways on a mission trip. A helpful place to start is to be reminded that you are in Guatemala to serve, not to be served. The following serving order is a helpful tool for your team to remember prior to and during your time in Guatemala:

1. Guatemalans
2. Your fellow team members
3. Manos de Jesus staff and missionaries
4. Yourself

Pre-Trip Meeting Topics

We strongly encourage the Team Leader to hold regular meetings leading up to the trip. This will facilitate group cohesiveness and it will provide a chance for you to help your team with any questions they may have concerning your upcoming trip. The following are suggested topics to be covered:

1. Travel plans, team expectations, fundraising, payments & deadlines, packing list (*see exhibit A*), and initial team member requirements

2. Prepare your team spiritually
3. Flexible mindset, although there will be a planned itinerary the schedule is subject to change
4. Culture and history of Guatemala (**These videos are intense and should be previewed prior to being viewed by kids*)
 - “Reparando” available on Amazon Video
 - “Living on One Dollar a Day” available on Amazon Video
 - “Finding Oscar” available on Amazon Video
 - “Voice of a Mountain – Life After the 36 Year War in Guatemala” available on YouTube
5. **Donated items**
 - Please do **not** bring any donated items without consulting with the MDJ Trip Coordinator. The Trip Coordinator can communicate with you about what, if any donated items are needed.

Customs Information

Guatemala Customs uses a digital customs form. Each team should complete this form before leaving for your trip, and you can do this [here](#). Below are some helpful tips and information to have ready as you fill out the form.

- You can complete this form within 3 days before your trip
- One form per family
- Choose “La Aurora / Aduana Central de Aviación” for Arrival or Departure Customs
- Foreseen Address: Canton Chilima Finca Monteflor, Chichicastenango, Quiche
- Purpose of trip: Tourism
- Home/departure country: Estados Unidos / United States
- Once completed, you will receive an email confirmation with a QR code. Have that document or a screenshot of it handy upon landing.

Unplugging Policy

Although we have WIFI at Monte Flor, it is a limited bandwidth so we ask everyone to “unplug” as much as possible. Furthermore, we strongly encourage all team members to unplug so that they can more easily be fully present and available to connect and build relationships, as well as see, learn, and hear what God wants to share with them while they are here.

Exchanging Money

We can exchange your US dollars for Q’s (Quetzales) here at Monte Flor. We ask that we exchange everyone’s money at the same time, and only once during the week. Banks here have become extremely particular about the cash they will accept so we ask that you bring crisp, unmarked, and untorn bills in **denominations of \$20 or larger** (banks here no longer accept \$1’s, \$5’s, or \$10’s). We will not be able to exchange Q’s back into dollars at the end of your trip.

**Note that you can also exchange your money at your bank prior to the trip if you prefer.*

MDJ Tienda

We have a shop on the Monte Flor campus that sells T-shirts, sweatshirts, sandals, coffee, woven gift bags, etc. Credit cards are accepted.

Alcohol Use

No drinking alcohol while in Chichicastenango. This includes bringing alcohol back to Monte Flor. Meals paid for by MDJ will not cover any alcohol purchases.

Offerings & Gifts

Please do **NOT** give gifts or offerings directly to individual Guatemalan staff members or the families we serve (this can easily cause interpersonal strain within the staff & community).

If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to us through our website or through email to the MDJ Trip Coordinator.

Exhibit A
Sample Itinerary and Packing List

Sample Itinerary *(Keep in mind that your week will be a result of how Manos is serving the community. It is important to understand that flexibility is a big part of serving.)*

- Saturday – travel to Chichicastenango
- Sunday – church service on campus & visit market
- Monday – tour of Chichicastenango with a local guide, serve in Education program (*off campus*)
- Tuesday – home visits/project (*if available*), & Fútbol Academy (*on campus*)
- Wednesday – home visits/project (*if available*), & Education Program (*on campus*)
- Thursday – home visits/project (*if available*), & shopping in the market
- Friday – transition day & stay at the Barceló in Guatemala City
- Saturday – travel home

Note: If a work project(s) is available during the team's scheduled week, the work project(s) will be provided to teams as an additional option prior to their trip.

Packing List **The culture in Chichicastenango is a modest culture, so we ask everyone to keep knees, shoulders, and cleavage covered (no shorts, tank tops, or low-cut shirts while in Chichi).*

- Bible, notebook, pens (for journaling)
- Medicines needed (personal, Pepto, Imodium, Ibuprofen, Dramamine, etc.)
- Hand sanitizer
- Sunscreen & hat (the sun is very strong here as Chichi is at a high altitude)
- Ear plugs (roosters crow and dogs bark at night)
- Shoes – 1 pair closed toed shoes for on campus programs, 1 pair shoes for walking/leisure
 - For work projects, closed toed shoes must be worn
- Clothes – leisure and athletic clothes (please no tight clothing, shorts, or tank tops while in Chichi)
 - For work projects, jeans/pants are required and bring work gloves
- Light fleece-type jacket or sweatshirt (it is chilly at night)
- Lightweight rain jacket or poncho
- Personal reusable water bottle
- Small Daypack or Backpack
- Soap/Shampoo (we have plenty of towels at Monte Flor)
- Flashlight
- Small snack items for yourself (including special dietary needs)
- Swimsuit (if you want to swim at the Hotel Barceló)
- Quetzals/Cash/Credit Cards for meals while traveling (in the airport or any additional places you may stop on your trip)
- Spending money for shopping in the market (Quetzals are preferred)

Pro tip: Pack clothing appropriate for any type of weather. The weather here can change quickly from dry to wet, and warm to chilly so think layers.