

MISSION AWARENESS TRIPS

trip information

The following information is for **2012** trips. The dates and trips to specific countries change from year to year depending on interest, the political situation within the countries and the ability of CFCA projects to host a mission awareness trip. A detailed schedule and additional information will be sent one to two weeks prior to departure in the pre-departure packet.

MERIDA, MEXICO

Trip Dates: Nov. 10-17, 2012

Trips are open to anyone, however only Merida project sponsors will have the opportunity to meet their sponsored friends on this trip. Those with sponsored friends served by other projects in Mexico are welcome to contact CFCA to learn about an individual sponsor visit to meet their sponsored friend.

Trip Cost

\$475 (Includes food, lodging and in-country transportation. Airfare is **not** included.)



On your trip to Merida you may do some or all of the following activities:

- Meet your friend and possibly the family
- Travel to subprojects and learn about the potential of CFCA families
- Learn about the realities that face CFCA families, staff and communities
- Be welcomed into the homes of CFCA families
- Learn about the diverse experiences and unique perspectives of sponsored friends and their families
- Visit an archaeological zone of Mayan ruins
- Visit the states of Yucatan, Campeche and Quintana Roo

Entry and Exit Requirements

A valid passport is required to enter Mexico. U.S. citizens traveling as tourists beyond the border zone or entering Mexico by air must obtain a tourist card, also known as an FM-T, available from Mexican consulates, Mexican border crossing points, Mexican tourism offices, airports within the border zone and most airlines serving Mexico. The tourist card is generally included in the price of a plane ticket for travelers arriving by air and is provided to travelers upon arrival in Mexico. Please note that travelers not in possession of their FM-T card at the point of exit from Mexico may face a fine from Mexican Immigration. If traveling by land, please verify entry and exit requirements and fees. *All fees are subject to change.* While in Mexico, travelers should carry a passport or a photocopy at all times. Participants who will be traveling with a minor should contact the CFCA mission awareness trip coordinator for additional information.

Airport and Arrival Arrangements

Applicants should await receipt of the confirmation letter before making airline reservations. In the meantime, we strongly encourage you to research airfares with a travel agent, the airlines, or via the Internet. Vista Travel, (800) 537-5066, may also be contacted regarding airfare. The agency is familiar with our programs and schedules.

All trip participants arrive at the **Merida International Airport (MID)** on Nov. 10 and depart from the same airport on Nov. 17. **CFCA staff will meet all travelers at the airport who arrive on the scheduled arrival day. Do not accept any offers of transportation from anyone other than the CFCA team.**

Accommodations and Food

All trip participants will stay in simple accommodations near the CFCA projects, usually in some type of retreat center or hotel. Private rooms for married couples and families are available. Individuals will be assigned a roommate. Running water for showers is readily available, but it may not be heated. Tap water is unsafe for drinking. Instead, the project will provide bottled water. Alcoholic beverages are not included in the trip cost.

Participants will eat simple, nutritious meals. You will have the privilege of trying a variety of foods. Typically, a selection of food is available at each meal. All food is prepared with purified water. All meals will be eaten with the group. Do not purchase food from street vendors. Meals are often served at a later hour than most Americans are accustomed to eating. We recommend bringing snacks such as dried fruit and nut mixes, raisins, granola bars, etc., as you may want something to eat between scheduled meals.

No electrical converters or adapters are necessary. The **electrical current** in Mexico is 127V, within the same range as the voltage in the U.S., and the shape of the plugs is the same.

Climate

In Merida, the temperatures in November average between the 70 and 90 degrees with average humidity levels near 75 percent. Participants should be aware that minor tremors may occur, and travel along winding, mountainous roads can cause motion sickness.

Health/Medical Preparations

Contact your medical doctor or local health department for immunization recommendations based on your health history. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at www.cdc.gov/travel has country specific recommendations regarding immunizations. CFCA staff members are not qualified to offer advice on immunizations. You should also consult with your medical insurance company prior to traveling to confirm whether your policy applies in a foreign country. If your policy does not cover emergency expenses such as a medical evacuation, we urge you to consider the purchase of temporary travel insurance. You may find further information on travel insurance through a travel agent or through research on the Internet.

Currency Exchange and Handling

The local currency is the Mexican **peso** (MXN). Your lodging, food and in-country transportation are included in the trip cost. You should bring additional money for the purchase of snacks and souvenirs, and to cover entry/exit fees. You should not carry bills in denominations greater than \$20 because it may be difficult for local banks or vendors to make change. Do not bring severely worn or torn currency. Traveler's checks are not recommended, and ATMs are not readily available.