CFCA AWARENESS TRIPS

trip information

*The following information is for **2014** 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 an awareness trip. A detailed schedule and additional information will be sent one to two weeks prior to departure in the pre-departure packet.*

ECUADOR

Trip Dates: Oct. 18-25, 2014

Trip Size: 12-20 participants

Please register by Aug. 18 to reserve your spot. If you still wish to register after this date, contact a CFCA trip coordinator regarding availability.

Trip Fee: $600

Includes food, lodging and in-country transportation. Airfare is **not** included.

On your trip to Ecuador, you may participate in some or all of the following activities:

- Be welcomed by the local CFCA staff who will be your hosts for the week, ensuring that your visit is enjoyable
- Spend time with your sponsored friend and possibly the family
- Visit the homes and communities of CFCA sponsored friends and their families, where you will learn about their joys and challenges
- Visit the port city of Guayaquil, known as the "Pearl of the Pacific"
- Visit the ancient Incan city of Quito, located at the center of the world

Entry and Exit Requirements

A passport valid for at least six months beyond the end of your intended stay is required to enter Ecuador. U.S. citizens do not need a visa for a stay of 90 days or less. Tourists must also provide evidence of return or onward travel, such as an airline ticket. There is an airport departure tax of approximately $26 in Guayaquil and $40 in Quito. The airport tax may or may not be included in your airline ticket. *All fees are subject to change.* While in Ecuador, participants should carry their passport or a photocopy of it at all times. Participants who will be traveling with a minor should contact a CFCA trip coordinator for additional information.

Airport and Travel Arrangements

Make your airline arrangements only after your registration is confirmed and you receive the CFCA trip coordinator's written instructions for scheduling your flight. In the meantime, we strongly encourage you to research airfares with a travel agent, the airlines or via the Internet. The Florida-based agency, Vista Travel, may also be contacted regarding airfare at (800) 537-5066. This agency is familiar with our programs and schedules.

All trip participants should fly into **Simon Bolivar International Airport (GYE)** in Guayaquil on Saturday, Oct. 18 between 7 a.m. and 9 p.m. You may arrive at your destination one day after your departure due to overnight travel. Travelers will depart on Oct. 25 from the **Mariscal Sucre International Airport (UIO)** in Quito. **The CFCA staff will meet all travelers at the airport who arrive during the designated arrival time. Do not accept offers of transportation from anyone other than our CFCA team.**

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Accommodations and Food

All trip participants will stay in simple accommodations near the CFCA projects, usually in a hotel. Married couples and families will stay in private rooms. 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 fee.

Participants will eat simple meals that reflect the local cuisine. 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 nut mixes, granola bars, etc., as you may want something to eat between scheduled meals.

No converter or adapter is necessary. The electrical current and the shape of the outlets in Ecuador are the same as in the U.S. Diagrams of the outlets are available at www.electricaloutlet.org.

Climate

This trip will visit Guayaquil and Quito. Although both areas experience rainy and dry seasons, the climate is often unpredictable in Ecuador and it is recommended to bring a rain jacket. This trip will visit both coastal lowlands and the Andes Mountains. Participants should be aware that minor tremors may occur. The group will travel along winding, mountainous roads, which can cause motion sickness.

Guayaquil is located in the low-lying coastal zone of Ecuador. Temperatures in October range from the mid 80s during the afternoon and mid 60s at night. The primary rainy season lasts from February to April. Rain is possible year round.

Quito is located between 9,300 and 9,900 feet above sea level in the Andean Highlands of Ecuador. Average high temperatures are in the mid 60s, with lows in the 40s. Be prepared for cool evenings and mornings. The sun can be intense at this altitude. Wear sunblock and a hat for protection.

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. You may also contact them by phone at 800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636). CFCA staff members are not qualified to offer advice on immunizations.

You should 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 medical evacuation, we urge you to consider the purchase of temporary travel insurance.** Many insurance plans, including Medicare, do not cover treatment outside of the U.S. You may obtain further information on travel insurance from a travel agent or through research on the Internet.

Because this trip travels to high altitudes, travelers should be aware of the risks of altitude illness and how altitude can affect certain medical conditions. This trip involves a particularly rigorous schedule. It may be challenging for those with physical limitations. Please consult a CFCA trip coordinator with any concerns.

Currency Exchange and Handling

The local currency in Ecuador is the U.S. dollar. Your lodging, food and in-country transportation are included in the trip fee. You should bring additional money for the purchase of snacks and souvenirs, and to cover entry/exit fees, if applicable. You should not carry bills in denominations greater than $20 because they may be difficult for local banks or vendors to exchange. Do not bring torn or severely worn currency. Traveler's checks are not recommended, and ATMs are not readily available.