

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.

PHILIPPINES

Trip dates: Jan. 23-Feb. 3, 2014

Trip Size: 12-40 participants

Please register by Nov. 23 to reserve your spot. If you still wish to register after this date, contact a trip coordinator regarding availability.

Trip Fee: \$800

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

On your trip to the Philippines you may do 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
- Observe the colorful beauty and ingenuity that the country and people of the Philippines have to offer
- Visit the metropolitan capital of Manila; the city of Antipolo; Quezon, the most populous city in the country; and Legazpi, known as the “city of fun and adventure”. The group will not travel to Zamboanga. Zamboanga sponsored friends will travel to Manila and visit with their sponsors there.



Entry and Exit Requirements

A passport valid for at least six months beyond the end of your intended stay is required to enter the Philippines. Upon arrival, immigration authorities will annotate the U.S. passport with an entry visa valid for 21 days. There is a **Passenger Service Charge, currently 550 pesos (about \$15)**, to be paid in Philippine pesos when departing the country from international airports. *All fees are subject to change.* While in the Philippines, 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. Special requirements exist for the entry of minors unaccompanied by a parent or guardian.

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 be contacted regarding airfare at (800) 537-5066. This agency is familiar with our programs and schedules.

Trip participants will arrive to and depart from **Ninoy Aquino International Airport in Manila (MNL)**. Participants traveling from the U.S. should expect to arrive in Manila one to two days after departure due to overnight travel and crossing many time zones. Participants should arrive in Manila between 5 a.m. and 5 p.m. on Jan. 25. The limitation in arrival hours is for safety reasons. **The CFCA staff will meet all travelers at the airport who arrive**

Airport and Travel Arrangements (Cont'd.)

on the scheduled arrival day, within the stated hours. Do not accept offers of transportation from anyone other than the CFCA team. Activities will begin with a group dinner the evening of Jan. 25.

Trip activities will end with lunch on Feb. 2. Return travel should be scheduled so that participants depart Manila after 2 p.m. on Feb. 2. Participants returning to the U.S. will arrive in the U.S. on Feb. 3.

Accommodations and Food

All trip participants will stay in simple accommodations in Manila, usually in some type of air conditioned 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, though hot water is not. **Tap water is unsafe for drinking.** Instead, the project will provide bottled or purified 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 dried fruit and nut mixes, raisins, granola bars, etc., as you may want something to eat between scheduled meals.

Bring an electrical converter and adapter if you wish to use personal electronic devices. The **electrical current** in the Philippines is 220V. Diagrams of the outlets are available at www.electricaloutlet.org

Climate

The climate in the Philippines is very warm year-round. Participants should be prepared for high humidity and very warm temperatures. Average highs during January and February are in the upper 80s with lows in the mid 70s.

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 may also contact them by phone at 800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636).

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 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 find further information on travel insurance through a travel agent or through research on the Internet.

Travelers with asthma or other respiratory illnesses should be aware that the urban air pollution in the Philippines has been known to exacerbate symptoms.

Currency Exchange and Handling

The local currency is the Philippine **peso** (PHP). 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. 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. You can bring U.S. dollars into the country. You will be provided with an opportunity to exchange money upon arrival either at the airport, at the lodging, or another method. Traveler's checks are not recommended, and ATMs are not readily available.