Antioquia
Colombia
Awareness Trips
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Welcome
Awareness trip travelers describe the experience as rewarding, eye-opening, energizing, impactful and humbling. They say they’ve grown in awareness and that their perception of poverty has changed.

Whether it’s to meet sponsored friends or simply experience the beauty of another culture, awareness trips offer an adventure like no other. During a trip we want to reach across borders, learn from one another and have fun. Travelers will see how contributions are used to support and empower families, but for most the highlight will be getting to meet their sponsored friends.

Trips are open to sponsors and non-sponsors. Some people travel solo, while others bring friends and family members to share the experience. Our travelers range in age from 6 to 90-plus. Families with children (6 and older), whether sponsors or not, are welcome.

Trip Dates

October 1-6, 2023

This trip is hosted by Antioquia project. Sponsors will have the opportunity to visit with their Antioquia sponsored friends. Visits with Cali, Cartagena or Bogota sponsored friends are not possible during this trip. To confirm which project in Colombia you sponsor in:

1. Log-in to your Unbound account and refer to the name of the project serving your sponsored friend in Colombia

2. Or look at a mailing label for your sponsored friend

3. Or call or email a trip coordinator
Sample Itinerary

On your trip, you’ll be welcomed by the local staff who will be your hosts for the week. You’ll visit the homes and communities of sponsored friends and learn about their joys and challenges while experiencing the beauty of the people.

A detailed schedule will be sent one to two weeks prior to departure.

Day 1: Arrive in Medellin, where local Unbound staff will welcome you at the airport.

Day 2: Spend time with your sponsored friends of Unbound’s Antioquia program visiting a local park or botanical garden. Enjoy a cultural tour of Colombian food, dance, music and games.

Day 3-5: Explore the city on foot and by bus. Ride the MetroCable gondolas to see the sites. Learn about the unique aspects of the Unbound program. Visit other sponsored friends in their homes and learn of their hopes, dreams and challenges.

Day 6: Return home today.
Costs You’ll Need To Cover

Fees other than those set by Unbound are subject to change.

- Unbound trip fee: **$1,400**
- Roundtrip airfare between your home airport and Medellin (MDE): **prices fluctuate**
- Make your airline arrangements only after your registration is confirmed and you receive the trip coordinator’s written instructions for scheduling your flight. You can research airfares online or through a travel agent.
- Passport book (must be valid for at least six months beyond the end of your intended stay, with a minimum of one blank (unstamped) passport page)
- Immunizations as recommended by physician: **costs vary**
- Travel health insurance: **costs vary**
- Personal expenses related to ending my trip following a COVID-19 diagnosis during the trip. For example, medical, lodging, food and flight change expenses.
What We Provide

• The opportunity to meet your sponsored friend

• Lodging and transportation costs for your sponsored friend, chaperone and local staff

• Planned group activities

• In-country ground transportation

• Lodging. While in Colombia, you will stay in simple accommodations, typically in a hotel. Maximum room occupancy is two individuals. Solo travelers will be assigned a private room unless otherwise requested. While running water for showers is available.

• Meals and bottled water. Since tap water is unsafe for drinking, we will provide ample bottled water throughout the trip. Alcoholic beverages are not included in the trip fee, but there may be occasions when you will have the opportunity to purchase them. Meals are eaten with the group and will be simple fare from the local cuisine.

• Interpreters: Unbound will provide interpreters throughout the trip.

• Memories that last a lifetime
Health & Mobility

**Mobility:** The ability to walk on wet and uneven terrain, walk up and down steep hills, climb, and descend flights of stairs is necessary. In general, groups sometimes walk up to half of a mile at any one time. Groups regularly encounter stairs, and some stairways will not have handrails. An elevator may not be available at each place of lodging. You will encounter steep and hilly terrain.

**Altitude:** Medellin is approximately 5,000 feet above sea level. You should be aware of the risks of altitude illness and how altitude can affect certain medical conditions. Consult with your doctor to see if this will affect you.

**Motion sickness:** This trip may take routes along winding, mountainous roads, which can cause motion sickness. Please contact a trip coordinator with any concerns.

Immunizations

Unbound currently requires registering travelers provide proof of a primary series of a COVID-19 vaccination.

Consult your doctor or local health department for immunization recommendations based on your health history. Staff members of Unbound are not qualified to offer advice on immunizations. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at [www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel) has country-specific recommendations. You can also contact them by phone at (800) CDC-INFO (800-232-4636). We recommend speaking with a medical professional as soon as possible, as some immunizations are time sensitive.

CDC recommendations may reference a specific area of a country or vary depending on the style of travel. An Unbound trip coordinator can answer questions about the areas of the country that might be visited, lodging and other factors that you and a medical professional may need to know.
Weather and Climate

Average temperatures in Medellin include lows in the mid-50s with highs in the low 80s. Minor tremors are common in Colombia and may occur during the trip.

Safety While Traveling

Unbound cares about your safety, and the safety of your sponsored friends and our staff. Local Unbound staff members are your hosts during the awareness trip and accompany the group. Our local staff is from the destination country and lives there. Our social workers visit the neighborhoods, towns and countryside regularly and are aware of safety concerns. Because of their unique qualifications and background, our local staff is responsible for putting together the schedule of activities for your trip and choosing the locations you will visit. The members of the communities are excited to welcome sponsors.

Nobody can guarantee safety. International travel carries inherent risks, and we understand the realities in the countries where we work. We monitor current events, weather conditions, political situations, guidance offered by the U.S. State Department and other available resources. We’re in regular communication with our local staff members and stay current on security matters. We’ve cancelled trips when we’ve deemed it prudent based on local conditions.

All Unbound travelers are expected to adhere to the Code of Conduct and other rules outlined in the Travel Agreement found in the registration materials.

Unbound is proud of our history of safe and enjoyable trips and we look forward to having you join us!
Colombia Traveler Comments

**Would you recommend an awareness trip with Unbound to others?**

“Yes. People that go (will) see another side of the world that they would miss as a regular tourist.”

- Mark, sponsor for 20 years

“Yes. An awareness trip really cements the relationship with the sponsored person. It also gives the sponsor an idea of the daily life the sponsored person encounters.”

- Donna, sponsor for 19 years

“Yes. It is a great way to travel and really see a country and meet the people. Meeting our sponsored friend was a great experience.”

- Dan, sponsor for 23 years
How Do I Sign Up For A Trip?

All travelers are required to submit a registration packet. There are two registration packets, one for travelers 18+ years old and one for those who are 17 and younger at the time of the trip. You can download a registration packet from our website at [www.unbound.org/trips](http://www.unbound.org/trips), call our (800) 875-6564 number or send an e-mail to trips@unbound.org to request that one be e-mailed or mailed to your home address.

Complete, step-by-step instructions on how to register are included in the registration packet.

**Space is limited!** Apply as soon as possible. Check our website or call us regarding availability.
Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Why should I go? What do you do on an awareness trip?

A. Awareness trip travelers describe the experience as rewarding, eye-opening, energizing, impactful and humbling. They say they’ve grown in awareness and that their perception of poverty has changed.

Whether it’s to meet sponsored friends or simply experience the beauty of another culture, awareness trips offer an adventure like no other. During a trip we want to reach across borders, learn from one another and have fun. Travelers will see how contributions are used to support and empower families, but for most the highlight will be getting to meet their sponsored friends.

Our local staff will meet travelers at the airport and will be the hosts for the week. Sponsored families will welcome travelers into their communities and into their homes. During the week, activities and celebrations will demonstrate how Unbound works with families living in poverty. Read the trip-specific sample agenda for more details!

Q. Will I meet my sponsored friend, and how much time will we spend together?

A. This is one of the main reasons we offer the trips, and we will do everything possible to make this happen! If you are a sponsor, you will spend a day or two during the trip with your sponsored friend, a member of their family and a staff member. One day is often spent at a park or recreation area. Your sponsored friend will travel from their area to meet you. Only a handful out of 700 annual visits do not happen due to health, mobility or other unexpected circumstances. For this reason, we cannot make guarantees, but sponsors do get to meet their sponsored friends 99.9 percent of the time!
Q. Who can go on an Unbound awareness trip?
A. Trips are open to sponsors and non-sponsors. Some people travel solo, while others bring friends and family members to share the experience. Our travelers range in age from 6 to 90-plus. Families with children (6 and older) are welcome.

Q. Is airfare included?
A. Airfare is not included.

Q. Should I bring my friend a gift?
A. You may bring simple gifts for your friend and for the family. Sponsored friends and their families greatly anticipate these visits, and your presence is, in itself, a special gift. Check out the Trip Preparation Guide included with your confirmation packet for gift ideas.

Q. I don’t speak the language, is that an issue?
A. Don’t worry, Unbound provides interpreters throughout the trip.

Q. How strenuous are the trips?
A. The days begin early and are filled with activities. The trip can be rigorous, as rest time is limited. You may travel long distances in a bus or van and may be gone all day visiting communities, sometimes in very warm weather. Participants should be able to climb stairs and walk on uneven terrain such as dirt paths or cobblestone. The amount of walking varies by trip. Refer to the Health & Mobility description for the specific trip you are considering. A trip coordinator would be happy to talk to you about any concerns you have about your ability to participate.
Q. What happens if a traveler tests positive for COVID-19 during the trip?

A. Travelers that test positive for COVID-19 during the awareness trip will not be allowed to continue to join trip activities and must end their participation in the trip. The traveler will be responsible for all additional expenses, which may include meals, additional transportation, medical expenses and lodging. Unbound strongly urges travelers to purchase trip cancelation insurance. Travelers should also budget for or purchase trip interruption insurance to help cover the costs resulting from early departure from a trip.

Note: Travelers cannot lodge at Unbound dormitories after testing positive for COVID-19. This is relevant to trips to Guatemala, El Salvador, and Costa Rica. Unbound will transport the individual to a hotel near the airport, which accepts COVID-19 diagnosed guests.

Q. Will my health insurance cover me in another country?

A. 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 can obtain further information on travel insurance from a travel agent or through research on the Internet.

Q. Where can I get more information?

A. You may email your questions to trips@unbound.org or call a trip coordinator during business hours at 800-875-6564.