

2023 Mission Trip Expectations

March 25-April 2

Description:

Tecate: A border town of around 120,000 people 40 miles east of San Diego; up in the mountains, separated from any other metro areas; relatively free from drug cartel crime because of separation

Travel:

We leave around 5 am Saturday morning, and drive to Flagstaff, AZ, with three stops. We leave about 8 am on Sunday morning and arrive in Tecate around 5 pm with 2 stops. We provide money for Saturday (lunch and dinner) and lunch on Sunday.

Shots: No. Being up-to-date on your vaccinations doesn't hurt, especially your tetanus shot, since we work in areas that may not have sanitary facilities.

Spending Money

If you want to buy snacks to eat while we travel or buy gifts for donors. The first day's travel is around 11-12 hours, depending on the length of stops we take and the second day's travel is about 8. We will also have a free day on Friday to shop for souvenirs, so you will need money for that. Be sure to bring small bills, so you can negotiate with the sellers. You shouldn't need more than \$50-\$75 for the whole trip.

Fund raising:

We hold fundraisers throughout the year (garage sales, bake sales); some people donate monthly toward their cost of the trip; everyone should write and send out support letters to family and friends; other fundraisers that we determine are necessary.

Ministry:

Building houses (churches, school, church additions, roof) cost \$3500 for 16x24 home with one dividing wall, usually takes 10 people per house, so the number of work sites depends on the number going on the trip

How do we choose who gets the houses we build?

Our friends in Tecate find people who need homes and own their land. We won't build for a family if they don't own the property, because the landowner can take the house and evict the people and rent it for more money. Sometimes we build for friends, sometimes we don't know who we will build for until we get there. But the Lord always gives us work to do.

VBS: 3 day program at a local church (hopefully) near at least one work site

Worship services: Wednesday and Thursday evening, done the way we do it in the US

Service: Everyone participates in everything (VBS, cleaning and kitchen help) The only exceptions are the site leaders who must keep the work moving to finish on time.

Accommodations:

We stay at a church campus in Tecate with dormitory rooms, a dining hall and bathrooms with showers.

Facilities:

- Non-potable running water – we provide drinking water
- Flushing toilets

- Hot showers (evening only and very short!)
- Bunk beds with mattresses

This is not the Hilton! We have a security gate closed and locked every night, and everyone is on the buddy system, especially the girls.

Clothing:

You need to pack light, but for just about any situation. We had snow there a week before we arrived one year, and we can have 90 degrees the whole week. Several years ago you could see your breath in the dining hall (remember, most places in Tecate don't have heaters!)

Plan on dressing in layers. Bring clothes you don't care a lot about, because they may be ruined by the time you head for home. Same for shoes. You will bring a sleeping bag or bed roll to sleep in, along with a pillow, and the nights can get very cool (40's or lower).

State Department travel advisory for Baja Peninsula (10/5/22): (look for Baja California State)

Baja California state – Reconsider Travel

Reconsider travel due to crime and kidnapping.

Transnational criminal organizations compete in the border area to establish narco-trafficking and human smuggling routes. Violent crime and gang activity are common. Travelers should remain on main highways and avoid remote locations. (***We do not go to this area.***) Of particular concern is the high number of homicides in the non-tourist areas of Tijuana. Most homicides appeared to be targeted; however, criminal organization assassinations and territorial disputes can result in bystanders being injured or killed. U.S. citizens and LPRs have been victims of kidnapping.

U.S. government employees must adhere to the noted restrictions:

(We do not travel to or through these areas)

Mexicali Valley: U.S. government employees should avoid the Mexicali Valley due to the heightened possibility of violence between rival cartel factions. The boundaries of the restricted area are: to the east, the Baja California/Arizona and Baja California/Sonora borders; to the south, from La Ventana (on Highway 5) due east to the Colorado River; to the west, Highway 5; and to the north, Boulevard Lazaro Cardenas/Highway 92/Highway 1 to Carretera Aeropuerto, from the intersection of Highway 1 and Carretera Aeropuerto due north to the Baja California/California border, and from that point eastward along the Baja California/California border.

Travelers may use Highways 2 and 2D to transit between Mexicali, Los Algodones, and San Luis Rio Colorado during daylight hours. Travelers may also use Highways 1 and 8 to transit to and from the Mexicali Airport during daylight hours. Travel on Highway 5 is permissible during daylight hours.

There are no other travel restrictions for U.S. government employees in Baja California state. These include high-traffic tourism areas of border and coastal communities, such as Tijuana,

Ensenada, and Rosarito.