

Information and Guidelines for



El Salvador

Rev. 10/11

El Salvador – Central America

Situated on the Pacific coast of Central America, El Salvador has Guatemala to the west and Honduras to the north and east. It is the smallest of the Central American countries, with an area equal to that of Massachusetts, and it is the only one without an Atlantic coastline. Most of the country is on a fertile volcanic plateau about 2,000 ft (607 m) high.

The Pipil Indians, descendants of the Aztecs, likely migrated to the region in the 11th century. El Salvador, with the other countries of Central America, declared its independence from Spain on Sept. 15, 1821, and was part of a federation of Central American states until that union dissolved in 1838. For decades after its independence, El Salvador experienced numerous revolutions and wars against other Central American republics. From 1931 to 1979 El Salvador was ruled by a series of military dictatorships.

In 1969, El Salvador invaded Honduras after Honduran landowners deported several thousand Salvadorans. The four-day war became known as the “football war” because it broke out during a soccer game between the two countries.

Ahuachapán

Impulse ministers primarily in the area of Ahuachapan specifically in Chalchuapa and El Refugio. It is located approximately two hours northwest of the capital city of San Salvador and just west of Santa Ana. The main economic activities involve coffee, beans, corn, tobacco and livestock. Impulse ministers to several churches and a Christian School.

Impulse provides hope and help to this very poor area by providing food, supplies and ministry needs for churches and schools. We also do construction projects in partnership with the school and churches. These people have very little because of the poverty in the area. Employment is scarce and those who are employed are only paid the equivalent of about \$6 (US) per day.

Impulse Facilities

We currently partner with hotels that is very nice. The Hotels include spacious rooms and a truly Salvadorian atmosphere. The hotels are located in Chalchuapa just minutes from the Impulse ministry sites. In case of an emergency, team leaders/coordinators are provided with a phone number and a way to contact them in El Salvador.

There are tight security measures at these locations that work with the staff at Impulse to provide safety for you and your group. There are various room facilities available including single, double, triple and quads that can accommodate four per room. Room charges by Impulse are on a per person basis.

Let's Eat!

Daily meals are designed to give you a real taste of El Salvador. Some of the best food in the world is here! You may eat a meal provided by the hotel, a local church or at a local restaurant. All meals (except breakfast) are provided by Impulse and included in the overall price. If you would like to eat out for any meals, you are more than welcome to but the cost is on your own and not reimbursable by Impulse. Breakfast is not supplied by Impulse. We ask you to bring your favorite box of cereal. When you arrive, all the boxes of each team will be combined in a common area and are to be shared. Impulse will provide milk, sugar, bowls, spoons and coffee. All meals on your vacation/leisure day are on your own. In the event you group wants to eat out when it is not scheduled, 12 hours notice must be given.

Hello.....Hello?

There is no need to bring a cell phone. Some cell phones cannot communicate unless a special package is purchased. For some cell phones, a SIM card can be purchased along with a Global Calling Plan so that your phone is useable. In most cases, the cost is over \$100 just for the short duration of your trip. Keep in mind that for all cell phone carriers, each call from within El Salvador under a global plan will cost about **\$2.50 per minute** whether calling the U.S.A. or within El Salvador. **BOTTOM LINE: THERE IS NO NEED TO BRING YOUR CELL PHONE.** Also, cell phones are not permitted for any students going on a trip without prior permission from their team leader/coordinator.

So, how do I communicate back home? Impulse provides a computer for e-mail and that utilizes SKYPE and allows audio as well as video communication. For those at home to be able to communicate with SKYPE, they will need to download the program from the internet which is free. Impulse charges \$.20 per minute to reimburse for computer expenses, usage, etc... The duration of calls are monitored. Travelers will be allowed to contact home via SKYPE but not in excess. The SKYPE user name will be given to the team leader/coordinator prior to departure to distribute.

If there is an emergency, use this order to contact the team in El Salvador: 1.) Impulse main number: 614.561.9697 2.) SKYPE 3.) E-mail info@ImpulseMissions.com 4.) Call hotel. Keep in mind that electric and internet lines are down sporadically. If there is a concern, call the Impulse main number.

Team leaders/coordinators are permitted to bring one laptop for scheduling, web-site updates, etc... No other laptops are to be brought by any team members due to the inadequacy of the internet service within the hotels (per their request). Team leaders/coordinators are to e-mail info@ImpulseMissions.com each day with a team update which will be posted on the Impulse web-site www.ImpulseMissions.com.

Insurance

Impulse provides insurance for all travelers and is included in the cost of the trip. Each team leader/coordinator is provided with the insurance information prior to departure and can be distributed to the participants and their family members. Each traveler is covered by the same policy which provides at least \$50,000 coverage for accidental injury and sickness and \$50,000 for accidental death, among other features.

Do I Need A PASSPORT?

YES! All travel outside the U.S.A. to international destinations requires a PASSPORT. An application for a PASSPORT can be obtained from your local post office or county courthouse. The cost is less than \$100 and will require a PASSPORT photo which can be taken and purchased at Walgreens® or CVS Pharmacy® among other places.

How About Money?

El Salvador uses our U.S.A. dollars as their currency so there is no need for exchanging. All places accept dollars. **DO NOT BRING TRAVELLERS CHECKS, GIFT CARDS OR PRE-PAID CREDIT CARDS.** They will not work. Some retailers take credit cards but we strongly advise against their use as identity theft and the stealing of card information does occur often.

One of the questions we are often asked is “**How much money should I bring?**” In most cases \$100-\$150 should be plenty for incidentals like souvenirs, a night out and extra spending money for the vacation/leisure day.

There is also a \$10 entrance fee charged at the airport when you arrive in El Salvador. This is not included in the amount paid to Impulse and should be collected by the team leader/coordinator before leaving on your mission trip.

Time To Pack

Make room for the following necessary items:

Bible	Notebook	Something to write with
Alarm Clock	Swim suit	Beach Towel
Camera, batteries, film	Bag for dirty clothes	Medication and hygiene products
Bug spray & Sunscreen	Journal	A good attitude & servants heart

There is no laundry service available.

Walkmans, iPods, CD players, Gameboys, etc... are discouraged from being used on the mission field and are not permitted during ministry times or on the buses.

Soap and towels are supplied by the hotel but NOT washcloths. Feel free to bring a couple to use on your trip. Hotel towels are NOT to be used for the pool or the beach. Soccer is the popular sport of El Salvador so each group is encouraged to bring 4 or 5 soccer balls to use while there and plan on leaving them upon departure. It's best to deflate them for packing.

Each traveler is encouraged to bring two large suitcases as well as carry-on items as permitted by their airline. Some airlines charge for baggage on international flights and some do not. These fees are not included in your airline ticket price nor provided by Impulse. Please check with your airline to determine if any baggage fees will be needed when leaving the U.S.A. or when leaving El Salvador. Also, keep in mind there are size and weight restrictions and you should contact the airline for that information as well. All travelers are to keep their luggage with them at all times while traveling (except when luggage is checked and you are in flight). It is wise to have one set of casual clothes in your carry-on just in case luggage is misdirected or lost.

One piece of large luggage is to be used for all your personal items: clothing, toiletries, shoes, etc... There is no need to bring an undue amount of clothing items or ensembles. You are traveling to a very poor part of the world and, we promise, there is no need to impress. Plan on hot weather. As well, do not bring unnecessary/excessive jewelry. Here are a few ideas when packing:

Men...	Ladies...
A few pairs of pants	A few pairs of capris & knee length skirts/dress
Polo, collared and T-shirts	Polo, shirts and T-shirts (may be sleeveless but no spaghetti/thin straps)
Tennis shoes, beach shoes/sandals, flip-flops	Tennis shoes, beach shoes/sandals, flip-flops
Long/modest shorts for some ministry projects, leisure and hotel	Long/modest shorts for some ministry projects, leisure and hotel

Ladies – please limit pierced jewelry to ears only. Men – no earrings allowed. Tattoos should be covered if possible. This is for cultural reasons and does not reflect any judgment or opinion by Impulse or the team organizations. We must respect their culture and our witness. You will be leaving but the pastors, missionaries and Impulse employees do not. Thank you for your attitude in this matter.

Dress shoes are welcome but not necessary. We ask that when ministering in the villages, men wear pants with tennis shoes and ladies wear knee-length dresses or capris with tennis shoes. At times, flip-flops/sandals are allowed for the ladies. Athletic shorts are permitted for some ministry & sporting activities.

When attending church, men must wear dress pants, dress or tennis shoes and a collared shirt and the ladies wear a dress or skirt. Flip-flops are permitted for the ladies.

All swimwear must be modest. Ladies must wear a one piece or a bathing suit that covers the stomach. No bikinis are to be worn. Men – swimming trunks must be modest. A T-shirt or cover-up is to be worn to and from the pool area and beaches by all travelers.

The second piece of large luggage is your ministry suitcase and is to be used to bring ministry material, supplies and items necessary as explained by the team leader/coordinator. Some ministry items to bring are (but not limited to):

<p>Personal Hygiene</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Shampoo ▪ Conditioner ▪ Toothbrushes/paste * ▪ Children's Cold Medicine ▪ Deodorant/Soap ▪ Lotion ▪ Mouthwash 	<p>Baby Needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Disposable Diapers ▪ Wet wipes ▪ T-shirts * ▪ Powdered Formula ▪ Powdered Cereal ▪ Baby Shampoo ▪ Diaper Rash Ointment * 	<p>Medical Supplies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Band-aids, Gauze, tape * ▪ Antibiotic ointment * ▪ Teething rings ▪ Aspirin ▪ Adult Cold Medicine ▪ Thermometers ▪ Over the counter drugs
<p>School Supplies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Notebook paper ▪ Pencils/Pens/Erasers ▪ Crayons * ▪ Rulers/scissors ▪ Notepads ▪ Spiral Notebooks ▪ File Folders ▪ Folders with pockets 	<p>Spanish Religious Study Items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Spanish Bibles * ▪ Study guides ▪ Commentaries ▪ Concordance ▪ Bible Dictionary ▪ Bible Book Studies ▪ Journals ▪ Children's Bible stories/games * ▪ Skits/dramas 	<p>Miscellaneous Items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Books written in Spanish ▪ Children & Adult clothing (<i>light weight/ good condition</i>) ▪ Colorful stickers * ▪ Jump ropes, Frisbees ▪ Soccer Balls * ▪ Face painting supplies ▪ Money for Projects within the village (food, construction, etc...) *

* - denotes item is needed badly

Ministry suitcases will be brought to the hotel and sorted and categorized so as to share evenly. It is suggested that new or good luggage not be used for the ministry suitcases. If other items are needed we will advise your team leader/coordinator.

What Can We Do To Help The People Of El Salvador?

There are several ministry opportunities available. Here's a list of suggestions but is not all inclusive:

Vacation Bible Schools

Painting projects

Construction work

Puppet shows

Sports games and clinics

Musical presentations

Soccer Clinics/games

Evangelistic campaigns

Dental clinics

Dental teams

Food Distribution

Skits and dramas

Mime presentations

Youth Services & Rallies

Street evangelism & tract distribution

Orphanage work

Much, Much More...

All activities are to conclude by 5 p.m. each day. Additional evening excursions, church services, ministry or other activities must be planned prior to the trip and any additional cost will be quoted.

Vacation/Leisure day

There are several things to do for your day-off while in El Salvador. Impulse will work with your team leader/coordinator to select the date and the activity. Only one option may be chosen by the team.

Available activities are:

Volcano Sightseeing - \$50

Beach Day & Tour - \$50

Mayan Ruins Tour - \$25

The prices above include transportation and additional hotel cost if required and is based upon a group of 10 or more. Small group or individual prices are quoted separately.

Other activities are available and being added when prices confirmed.

Please keep in mind that the cost of your vacation day is not included in your mission trip package. If your group decides not to include a vacation day, you will need to add \$5 per person as travel and facilitator expenses for the vacation day are not included in your package.

Extras

All pricing and scheduling is based upon specific hours. Bus drivers and Impulse facilitators are here to make your trip the best ever but they need their rest. Any activities planned by your group outside the normal schedule or daytime hours will incur an additional cost at \$30 per hour. The cost includes the use of one bus (or 2 vans) and facilitator(s). In some cases, if enough advance notice is given, scheduling can be changed to accommodate your activities without additional charges.

