

Costa Rica Mission Partners

Dental Missions 2017

God has mighty things prepared for you...
Get ready to be amazed and blessed!

General Costa Rica information



Get out your atlas and find Costa Rica. It is in Central America. Your team is flying into **San Jose**, the capital of the country (pop. 300,000). It is almost in the middle of the country. Notice the elevation on your atlas! You will be in the mountains. Costa Rica is bordered by Nicaragua (north) and Panama (south). The Pacific Ocean is approximately 60 miles to the west. The Caribbean Sea is located to the east. There are seven active volcanoes and dozens of dormant ones. Elevation varies from 8000 to 12,000 feet. Costa Rica does not have winter and summer like we do in North America. The seasons are defined by rain fall amounts - rainy (May – Nov) or dry season (Dec – Apr). Its rains 100 inches a year nationwide! The government is a Democratic Republic (sound familiar). The country has 4 million citizens. Approximately 90% of the country is Roman Catholic.

Where will you work?

You will serve at one of our partners in the poor areas surrounding the city of San Jose. Our vision is to see these local communities transformed by offering programs and services where people can encounter the love of God. We accomplish this through providing health and dental clinics, serving as needed in minor construction projects and provide healing support through hugs, handshakes and unconditional love as we build lasting relationships. Thank you for partnering with us. We couldn't do this without you!

Hotel <http://sanjosepinares.place.hyatt.com/en/hotel/home.html> or <http://doubletree.nezko.com/doubletree-by-hilton-hotel-cariari-san-jose-costa-rica> or <https://www.radisson.com/san-jose-hotel-cr-494-1007/crsanjos>

While in San Jose your team will stay at one the following the beautiful hotels:

- Hyatt Place Hotel Pinares
- Doubletree by Hilton.
- Radisson San Jose
- **No converters needed**
- The water is FINE at the hotel. **Fill up your water bottle each morning before we leave.**
- Your hotel room has been paid. You might be asked for a credit card. This is for incidentals like restaurant charges or shopping.

Mobile Dental Clinics

Your team will take dentistry to the communities! We rent a mobile dental clinic that you staff at one of our area partners. The clinic has 1 or 2 dental chairs and all the basic equipment and instruments to do extractions and fillings. We want to provide a compassionate and comprehensive treatment experience for each patient. If a patient needs more than one procedure it is best to treat as many complaints and issues as possible. We do not have x-rays available in the mobile clinics. Consider bringing one, if possible.

Please take your refillable water bottles to the clinic. Fill them with hotel water. You may need to stop at store to buy extra water, small cups for patients to use and snacks for the team. Your driver will take you anywhere you need to go.

Trip Cost

Trip cost is dependent on the number of team members, number of mobile clinic days, number of hotel rooms needed and number of nights in the hotel. The trip cost includes hotel (breakfast included), lunch at clinic site, all transportation to hotel, airport and clinic site, mobile dental clinic with a local dentist (per regs.) and team t-shirt. It does not include airfare, airport meals, lunches on non-clinic days, all dinners and any extra shopping or sightseeing. The average trip cost is \$950 per person. This is double occupancy (single occupancy is more) with 6 nights at hotel. Once your trip is confirmed and details finalized you will receive an invoice. You have 3 methods of payment: Check, credit card or Venmo.

Money to bring

- Spending \$\$\$\$. Maybe \$50.00 - \$100.00 depending on your shopping habits!! You will go to Walmart which is a great place to buy souvenirs like coffees and food items (jelly, Lizano sauce) and snacks.
- Money for your dinners and some lunches (airport and non-clinic days)
- Tips for your translator(s) and driver have not been included. Please tip them if you feel they served you well.
- **DO NOT BRING \$100 bills...VERY HARD to spend. Try to bring \$20 bills and smaller. Make sure the paper bill is in good shape...i.e. not tears or marks. The Costa Rican banks and businesses do not accept them.**
- **Exchange (Dollars to Colones) American cash is accepted everywhere. NO NEED TO EXCHANGE!** Bring small bills. At Wal-Mart, a form of ID is required for credit card purchases.
- **Exchange rate changes daily.** Expect it to be approximately 500 colones = \$1 (2500 colones = \$5; 6000 colones = \$12)

Passport

You must have a passport to travel to Costa Rica. No Visa is required. CHECK YOUR PASSPORT for the expiration date!!! It cannot expire within 3 months of your arrival back in the USA.

Medical

Consult your family doctor for suggested shots. We will be in the San Jose region. You should be current on your Tetanus and Hepatitis shots. FYI ~ Our family has not obtained any other shots.

Meals (Plan to gain 5 lbs 😊)

- Breakfast – Hot buffet at hotel (included in trip cost) Breakfast opens at 6:00am.
- Lunch - At mobile clinic site (included in trip cost)
- Dinner – Area restaurant (not included)

What to Pack (Also, see APPENDIX A at the end of this document)

- BRING A REFILLABLE WATER BOTTLE! Refill it each morning before you leave hotel.
- You will receive a t-shirt from World Mission Partners. Pick a day to WEAR YOUR TEAM T-SHIRTS!
- Mobile clinics are more fun and relaxing if you provide music. Bring a Bluetooth speaker and your favorite playlists! Your patients LOVE American music!
- Hand sanitizer
- Personal first aid kit including Pepto-Bismol
- Snacks for your room or buy some at Walmart. Your driver can take you.
- If your team is participating in some non-clinical activities like construction, bring:
 - ✓ Paint brushes (any size)
 - ✓ GOOD work gloves
 - ✓ Protective eye ware
 - ✓ Closed toed shoes for working construction
 - ✓ Work clothes for building, painting, gardening & cleaning
- NO short shorts for women! No soccer shorts (unless worn with leggings or calf length yoga pants)! Capri pants or Bermuda shorts are ok. Shorts for women should be just above the knee. This is a cultural taboo in Latin America plus short shorts invite unwanted stares!
- Casual clothes for dinner
- Light jacket or sweater or hoodie (nights and mornings are COOL!)
- Bring at least 2 pairs of tennis shoes. **They will get wet!** Crocs or other waterproof shoes like flip flops are best!
- Did I mention NO SOCCER SHORTS FOR GIRLS??!!!
- Take something to pack all of your personal belongings in for your clinic days. A backpack is recommended.

San Jose Airport (SJO)

Here are some tips for your arrival into SJO airport:

- On the immigration form you will received from the Flight Attendant, your foreseen address is the your hotel's name.
- Do not claim anything on your custom's form unless you want to claim your items are valued over \$10,000 and want to pay a tariff.
- You will go through Immigration first. The Immigration officer will ask you a few questions like "why are you here?" Simply reply that you are on a mission trip. No need to say "dental or medical". This may warrant more questions. Tell them you will be serving in the La Carpio community. Once you complete the immigration process proceed to baggage claim and look for your luggage.
- Ask a porter to assist you in baggage claim. Hand him your customs forms and he will give them to the customs agent. Again...DO NOT CLAIM ANYTHING on your form. This is for items valued over \$10,000.
- After you complete the customs process, walk outside. You will be in a sea of taxi drivers. Look for our transportation company. Your driver will hold up a sign with your name. Off to your hotel!

Daily Schedule

Each morning you will leave the hotel (after breakfast) around 8:00-8:15 and travel to the dental clinic site at one of our church partners in the community of San Jose. The team will break for lunch and eat on site at the clinic. At the end of the day you will leave when the team is finish (between 5:00-5:30). Patients are scheduled 20-25 minutes apart. You will travel back to the hotel to freshen up for dinner. The hotels are located near WONDERFUL restaurant complexes with MANY different dining options. The team can travel to a different "country" for dinner each night...all within walking distance or a short taxi ride!

Communicating with Home

Verify your international plan with your carrier. AT&T Cell phones will work in CR but it is expensive unless you have a global plan. I recommend emails/texts at night over Wi-Fi. Verizon phones do not work unless you have a world phone. Sprint phones do not work at all unless you use a texting app. Suggestion: download a TEXTING APP **before** you leave your home (Viper or What's App work well.) Once you are out of the country you will not be permitted to download a new app. These texting apps can be used for free when connected to Wi-Fi. You may IM if you have an iPhone. Wi-Fi works at hotel and is free.

Weather

It never gets cold in San Jose, only cool in the mornings and night. Due to the elevation, the high temperatures will be in the high 70's and low 80's. **It may rain every afternoon for brief periods.** Light jacket is a must! Rainy season is May-November. Dry season is December-April. The heaviest rainfall is September and October.

Water

The water at the hotel is fine. It is fine at all of the restaurants located near the hotels. Enjoy the salad and fruit! We recommend you **bring a sturdy, refillable water bottles for the clinics.** Large jugs of water have been purchased for the team. However, you may want more. Please ask your driver to take you to store to get more. You can refill your water bottles each day at the hotel before you leave and at the clinic site with the purchased water.

Emergency Contact Number in Costa Rica (Country Code is (011))

Phone numbers in Costa Rica – dial 011 then the area code and number

- Luis Alvarado (transportation mgr) 011-506-8815-9932 Speaks English, 011-506-6061-2899
 - Luis Ramirez (driver) 011-506-8621-6752
- Jhonny Granados (mobile dental clinic) 011-506-8877-3916
- Pastor James at La Carpio 011-506-8793-3534 No ENGLISH! 011-506-6113-3893
- Karoline and Katherine Vargas (translators) 011-506-8462-7046 (c) 011-506-6019-1251 (c) Speak English fluently.
- Elizabeth Soto (Bishop's Asst.) 011-506-8788-1928 Speaks English fluently
- Phone Numbers in America
 - Ed Pease 001-404-213-0909 (c)
 - Patti Pease 001-404-401-8078 (c)

MEDICAL EMERGENCY - San Jose area Hospitals

Clinica Biblica (San Jose) - 011-506-2522-1000

Hospital la Catolica (Guadalupe) - 011-506-2246-3000

Cima (San Jose / Escazu) - 011-506-2519-2305

All are private hospitals.

Per Travel.State.Gov Assistance for U.S. Citizens

Below is the website we recommend you register your team's trip with the U.S. State Department. In the event of an emergency while you are in the country, the State Department will be aware of your presence and will send help if needed. <https://step.state.gov/step/>

U.S. Embassy in San José

Calle 120 Avenida O, Pavas

- Telephone (506) 2519-2000; the extension for the Consular Section is 2188
- Emergency Telephone (506) 2220-3127 and ask for the duty officer
- Fax 011-506-2519-2305 Email consularsanjose@state.gov

Suggested Supply List

The following is a list of items we ask you to bring with your team.

Some of these items are available on site but they are in short supply. The dental clinic appreciates your donation of the following items.

Please bring

- Gloves, masks and patient bibs
- Fluoride Varnish (as much as you can bring)
- Ibuprophen and antibiotics and a method for distributing (zip loc bags, sharpie)
- Composite
- Bond agent
- Micro brushes
- Composite placement instruments
- Periosteal elevators
- Surgical instruments of choice (if doing surgery)
- Upper molar forceps of your choice or any forceps they can't get along without
- 3-0 gut sutures and needle holders. (there were many surgical scissors)
- Disposable prophyl angles and prophyl paste.
- Ultrasonic scaler and inserts
- Scalers your hygienist loves
- Topical anesthetic
- Lidocaine 2% 1:100,000 was available (what you would like otherwise)
- A few dental syringes and your needles of choice.
- Caviwipes
- Plus any "give aways" for patients like stickers, small toys, tooth brushes, paste, floss, etc...