

Nuestra Familia Orphanage Information Sheet

TIJUANA, BAJA CALIFORNIA, MEXICO

Clothing:

The best advice on clothing is to pack light and bring multiple layers. Bring short sleeves and a light jacket. Before you pack, check Tijuana Mexico on weather.com. One outfit for construction is recommended; you should not be afraid to get your clothing dirty. Additionally, in order to maintain respect for the home, we ask that you dress conservatively (ie: mid-thigh shorts or longer, no low-cut blouses or tank tops, etc.)

Keep in mind the months of November, December, March, and April the weather can be very cold while June, July and August can be very warm. Please plan accordingly.

Quarters:

We will stay at Nuestra Familia with 40+ orphans and their caregivers. The orphanage director is Juan Villagran. The Mexican government does not provide any support to orphanages in Mexico. Part of their support comes from hosting individuals who stay at the orphanage, but most of the support comes from donations.

Nuestra Familia consists of about two acres of campus with two extensive buildings and storage areas. Some of those buildings are humble, however, the dorms for the volunteers are nice. They have hot water, showers, and toilets. To help save costs, reduce waiting times, and conserve water, we ask that you take a quick, efficient shower.

Clean, drinkable water is provided for you, along with bottled water. Do not drink the tap water because it is not filtered. If you would like to get extra water and drinks, there is a store in town where you can buy these items.

Do not flush any paper products down the toilets. Put all paper products, including toilet paper, in the waste containers next to the toilet.

There are mattresses for each of you to sleep on. We recommend bringing sheets, a pillow, and a blanket or a sleeping bag to put on the mattress.

Please remember that as guests, we will be expected to respectfully follow the rules and policies explained to us by the staff upon arrival.



Construction Activities:

We will be working on various projects such as painting, pouring cement, tiling, cleaning, and a few other projects at Nuestra Familia Orphanage. These are subject to change based on current orphanage needs. You will receive a list of tools during your orientation meeting that you can bring to assist in the construction projects.

Fun Activities:

Throughout your stay, we encourage you to find time to spend and make connections with the orphanage children. We will organize opportunities for you to play and do activities with the children.

Some ideas include:

- Soccer
- Volleyball
- Basketball
- Arts & Crafts Projects
- Simple Card Games like Old Maid, Uno
- Puzzles
- Fingernail Polish
- Bubbles
- Pictures Books or Youth Books in Spanish
- Coloring Books and Crayons

**If you can bring a pump, that is always helpful. Many of the balls at the orphanage are flat.*

The beach is less than 30 minutes away and groups have had fun hunting for sea life, wading, riding horses, and making sand castles. The horse rides at the beach are generally \$10.00 for a short ride (20 minutes). That rate can be negotiated down with larger groups of five or more riders.


Since Tijuana is a large city, we like to do service projects around town. These projects vary from trip to trip. Your trip host will coordinate these activities. We will be going out to a couple fun taco shops and restaurants in Tijuana, as well as a souvenir shopping outing. There are a variety of Mexican shops selling jewelry, blankets, leather works, shirts, and sombreros. All places will take US currency. \$100.00 in small bills (\$1.00- \$5.00) should be sufficient. You can also use credit cards for larger purchases.

Meeting Place in San Diego, CA:

Our intent is for all to arrive at Palm Ridge Park at 1:00 p.m. Pacific Time and then cross over the border to drive approximately 30 minutes to Nuestra Familia. If you need to do a bit of shopping before we depart at 1:00, please do so before we meet together as a group!



Click on the link below for directions to the meeting spot:

 Palm Ridge Park

A Child's Hope Van Rentals:

If you will be riding in the van instead of driving your own vehicle, please be sure to communicate with Maelle Bargeron (maelle@achf.org) your flight arrival/departure times so we can pick you up and take you back to the airport. If you are arriving in San Diego and will not be at the airport, be sure to coordinate where you will meet us so that we can drive you into Mexico.

Return Date:

On the last day of the trip we generally leave the orphanage early in the morning and cross the border into California by noon.

Purchase Mexico Vehicle Insurance:

If you are driving your own vehicle into Mexico, you will need Mexican auto insurance. Contact your auto insurance provider and see if they will cover you approximately 75 miles into Mexico. If you are not covered, you will need to purchase additional auto insurance. You can go to <http://www.bajabound.com/?r=ach> and get a quote.

Though we do not necessarily recommend any particular agency, Baja Bound seems to have the lowest prices we have found. They have also agreed to give a portion of their revenue to ACHF. If you are renting a vehicle to drive into Mexico, make sure to get the insurance from the rental company. When renting, be sure that they allow your type of vehicle into Mexico (some don't allow SUVs into Mexico).

Main Focus of Trip:

Please remember throughout your trip that the main focus is the kids. Playing and giving individual attention to the kids is the volunteers number one priority, even over construction projects. Our volunteers are like aunts and uncles to the kids. They come over holidays and spoil the kids! Don't feel guilty or bad if you need to leave projects to spend some quality time with the kids.

Questions:

If you have unanswered questions feel free to email our Volunteer Experience Coordinator, Maelle Bargeron, at maelle@achf.org.