

Center for Global Education (CGE)
Travel Seminar Program Planning Checklist
Guatemala

Mission of CGE:

The mission of the Center for Global Education (CGE) at Augsburg College is to provide cross-cultural educational opportunities in order to foster critical analysis of local and global conditions so that personal and systemic change takes place, leading to a more just and sustainable world.

Pedagogy of CGE:

The pedagogy of CGE is rooted in experiential education and Freirian theory. Our travel seminar programs are organized to give participants the opportunity to learn through experience, and then reflect upon and analyze these experiences. The basic principles of CGE educational philosophy include process (learning how to learn), community (learning in the context of community), content (engaging students holistically), critical analysis (reflecting), and action (encouraging students to be agents of change.)

CGE in Guatemala

CGE has a permanent staff member in Guatemala, Fidel Xinico Tum, and several long-time consultants. We utilize local guesthouses for housing for both our short-term programs and our Central America semester students, who spend 4 weeks in Guatemala. Some groups combine a visit to Guatemala with a visit to Southern Mexico, Honduras or El Salvador.

Programming at CGE Guatemala:

In light of our mission, all travel seminars include the following components: country orientation, including history and economy; health, safety, and cross-cultural adaptation; analysis/reflection every 2-3 days; and re-entry discussion before returning home. Programming is planned to include dialogue with leaders at both government and local levels, plus visits, activities and speakers based on your themes and goals. Possibilities:

Central America themes/topics:

- | | | |
|---|------------------|---|
| ▪ globalization | ▪ U.S. relations | ▪ ecotourism |
| ▪ trade & Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) | ▪ poverty | ▪ education |
| ▪ women/gender issues | ▪ human rights | ▪ health |
| ▪ environment | ▪ fair trade | ▪ liberation theology, base Christian communities |
| ▪ sustainable development | ▪ migration | |

Additional, specific Guatemala themes/topics:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ▪ civil war | ▪ Mayan spirituality |
| ▪ peace & reconciliation | ▪ Mayan identity and ethnic diversity |
| ▪ archaeology – Mayan ruins at Tikal | among indigenous peoples |

Program Planning

In order to help us to plan activities, visits and travel that support the goals of your travel seminar, please complete the following checklist with as much detail as possible. You will work directly with the Center's in-country staff to develop a general itinerary. The map on the reverse side will help orient you to the geography of the region, and to the location of possible visits. Most groups spend only a few days in Guatemala City.



Guatemala Checklist:

All of our trips are customized to your interests. Visits are grouped by theme or topic area. Recommended visits for general interest trips are indicated with an asterisk (*). We recommend 2 visits per full program day. This is just a sample of the visits that can be arranged! **Check one or more circles** for the MAIN focus of your trip. **Mark any of the boxes** for your visits - 1 for a priority visit and 2 for a preferred visit. Please leave blank the visits that hold limited interest.

Agriculture, Sustainable Development

- Field trip to a cooperative or private farm
- Visit a coffee plantation
- Discuss ecotourism
- Meet with indigenous people's associations to discuss land issues
- Visit a preservation area
- Visit an appropriate technology project

Education

- Visit to primary or secondary schools
- Meet with teachers and unions *
- Visit NGO working on popular education
- Visit to a college or university
- Meet with NGO's and government entities working on children's rights
- Dialogue with university students

Globalization and Trade

- Presentation on the Guatemalan economy *
- Discuss CAFTA with government officials and opposition grassroots movements
- Visit a women's sewing cooperative
- Meet with representatives from World Bank, IMF
- Discuss debt and poverty reduction
- Meet with member of the business sector

Health

- Visit a women's clinic
- Visit a hospital
- Meet with Federation of Health Workers Union
- Visit a nursing school
- Visit with a midwife
- Meet with non-governmental organizations working on HIV/AIDS *
- Visit a practitioner of medicinal plants

Human Rights

- Visit with groups involved in children's rights
- Visit with groups involved in land issues
- Visit a massacre site or an exhumation site
- Visit to the United Nations Mission to Guatemala
- Visit a marginalized urban neighborhood
- Visit the Office of the Organization of the Detained and Disappeared Persons of Guatemala

Indigenous Issues/Rights

- Visit the National Anthropology Museum
- Discuss the peace accords and indigenous identity
- Discuss Mayan culture and spirituality
- Participate in a religious Mayan ceremony
- Visit an ancient Mayan pyramid site
- Visit a marketplace and indigenous artisan projects
- Observe traditional weaving in a women's coop
- Visit an indigenous community

Politics

- Meet with leaders of the major political parties
- Visit the Congress of Guatemala
- Meet with local government authorities and judicial branches
- Discussion on the war and the post-war period

Religion

- Worship in a local church
- Meet with Christian Base Communities
- Discuss state-church relations and the role of the hierarchy of the Catholic Church
- Visit a Pentecostal Church
- Participate in a religious Mayan ceremony
- Visit with faith-based NGO's working on development

Women's Issues

- Meet with representatives from the women's movement and emerging women's organizations
- Meet with spiritual guide women
- Meet with the Defender of Women organization
- Meet with indigenous women leaders
- Visit widow organizations

Other Options

- Trip to the beach
- Visit a craft market (in Chichicastenango)
- Visit to the Ixchel Textile museum
- Visit an ancient pyramid site
- Experience folk music
- Homestays
- Language classes

Key Cities and Destinations:

- ◇ **Guatemala City:** The capital city of Guatemala. Participants stay at Casa San José, located in Zona 1, within walking distance of the cathedral and the national palace in the central plaza. Visits can include: the archeological site of K'aminaj Juyu', the National Museum of Archeology and Ethnology, and the central plaza. There is a classroom at Casa San José that can be used for group lectures and guest speakers.
- ◇ **Antigua:** Colonial city with cobbled streets, churches, tourist hotels and shopping located southwest of Guatemala City. Visits can include: touring local churches, the attractive central plaza, markets and shops. There are also many Spanish language schools in Antigua catering to foreign tourists. A good place for participants to enjoy free time. Participants stay at Posada San Vicente, a comfortable tourist hotel. 45-minute drive from Guatemala City.
- ◇ **Iximche:** Mayan archaeological site located west of Guatemala City towards Lake Atitlán. An excellent site to explore Mayan spirituality and to participate in a spiritual ceremony. Plan a half-day visit to the site.
- ◇ **Panajachel:** A tourist town in a stunning setting on the north shore of Lake Atitlán, and an excellent base for exploring the area around the lake. Visits can include: a day trip by boat to the town of Santiago Atitlán. Participants stay at Hotel K'amol B'ey, a comfortable tourist hotel.
- ◇ **Lago de Atitlan/Santiago Atitlan:** A dramatic volcanic lake surrounded by volcanic peaks in the Highlands in the department of Sololá, 80 km west of Guatemala City. The town of Santiago Atitlán, located on the lake's southern shore, is home to the T'zutujil Maya. It is an excellent place to learn about contemporary Mayan spiritual practice. Visits can include: local artists workshops, the *cofradias*, or religious brotherhoods, the colonial church where American priest was killed in 1981, and the site of a massacre of residents by the Guatemalan Army in 1990.
- ◇ **Chichicastenango:** Highland village in the Quiché province with a vibrant Sunday market. Visits can include: Sunday mass at the 400-year-old church of Santo Tomás, shopping in the market. Groups stay at the modest Posada de San Jeronimo. A day excursion can be arranged to visit the widow's weaving cooperative of Naomi and Ruth in nearby Chontala and the UPAVIM project in Chichicastenango. 2-3 hour drive 140 km Northwest of Guatemala City.
- ◇ **Quetzaltenango:** Western Highland city, located in area where some of the most intense armed conflict occurred during the civil war. Quetzaltenango is home to a number of Spanish-language schools, and is the second-largest city in Guatemala. Commonly referred to as "Xela." Near highland town of **Huehuetenango**.
- ◇ **Tikal:** Monumental ancient Maya archaeological site in the lowland Petén region that was an important spiritual and political center. Visits can include: tours of the site, including climbing pyramids and exploring the rainforest setting. Groups stay in the Jungle Lodge, a comfortable tourist hotel within walking distance of the site. Flights depart Guatemala City daily for Flores (35 minute flight-time). Van transportation is arranged from Flores to the site, a one-hour drive.
- ◇ **Livingston:** Town on the Caribbean Coast near Belize. Home to Afro-Guatemalan and Garífuna communities. Point of departure for trips down the Río Dulce