

# Dentistry for All Guatemala Packing List

## Essentials:

- Passports – current and not to expire within 6 months
- Driver's license (only if able to drive a stick shift)
- U.S. dollars and American Express traveler's checks
  - Unless you are bringing down lots of money, U.S. Cash is the easiest to bring.
- Credit cards – Visa only recommended, Master Card and Amex are seldom accepted at shops and restaurants in Guatemala.
- Bank cards – ATMs are available in Antigua and Panajachel (Comi week). Be aware of security concerns.
- Official currency is Quetzales – some banks can pre-order for you – we encourage you to check as the exchange rate may be lower, but the convenience factor makes up for it!
  - Exchange rate typically Q7.5 = \$1.00 USD
- Per week \$200.00-500.00 USD suggested, depending on location, souvenir and gift shopping.

## Meds, Immunizations, and First Aid:

- Ensure all immunizations are up-to-date
  - Required - Hep A and Hep B
  - Optional – Tetanus vaccine
- Malaria pills – recommended only for those traveling to the El Remate (optional, out of season). Speak to your doctor.
  - chloroquine and hydroxychloroquine
  - Doxycycline
- Dukoral – Traveller's diarrhea (*e. coli*) oral vaccine (dead cholera and nontoxic components of cholera toxin). Requires two doses 1-6 weeks apart, no later than one week prior to departure. Average 2 year coverage.
- Personal prescriptions – basic prescription drugs available if necessary (most antibiotics, etc) but bring extra of your own to be safe.
- Ensure you have enough of any necessary OTC meds you take at home.
  - Multivitamins, band-aids, pain relief, anti-diarrheal, Pepto-Bismol, Imodium, natural tears, antibiotic ointment, Benadryl, Gravol/Dramamine, cold meds, Tylenol or Advil.

## Clothing:

- In General
  - Darker, older travelling clothes. Whites & lighter colors tend to get dirty quickly.
  - 5-6 day change suggested.

- Some locations have washing available, others on weekend only.
- Clinic attire:
  - Scrub tops and bottoms (men can wear shorts in El Remate only)
  - Recommend 3 pairs per working week needed.
  - Darker colors as light tend to get dirty quickly.
- Bathing suit
- Fleece top or sweatshirt for evenings and mornings (especially in Comitancillo & Guatemala City).
- Off duty – very casual, weekend wear. Jeans, shorts or capris.
- Rain gear – inexpensive, or light Gortex or similar.
- Footwear:
  - Good walking or light hiking boots
  - Sandals (Teva's or Keen's) or Crocs or similar for working in.
  - Flip flops for showers

#### **Toiletries & Personal items:**

- Basic – some items can be purchased (Comi and Antigua weeks only)
  - Deodorant, facial soap, toothpaste, hand cream
- Hand sanitizer – Purell (pocket size), Wet-Ones (or similar)
  - Bring one extra bottle for clinic use – it goes fast...
- Extra contact solutions, sunscreen, feminine products
- Hand mirror, sewing repair kit

#### **Electronics & Personal Appliances:**

- iPod & headphones
- Tablets, laptops – optional, but not recommended unless absolutely necessary.
  - Photo & video storage, emergency contact
  - Limited wifi except on weekends
  - 'Disconnect' is a part of the experience...
- Personal cell phones – for travel to and from, but extremely expensive to use once in Guatemala (regardless of what plan you *think* you have). Check your voice & data plans.
- DFA Team cell phone and emergency phone provided – users contribute towards cost for minutes.

#### **Additional Items:**

- Sunglasses, ear plugs, sun hat
- Insect repellent (good for fleas), lavender oil
- Swiss Army knife or Leatherman tool (must be in your checked luggage)
- Flashlight, extra batteries (this is in addition to your headlamp)

- Money belt and/or passport carrier
- Camera, extra batteries, memory cards
- Spanish/English dictionary and personal books to read
- Garbage bags (black or white) and cloth or mesh bag for laundry, etc.
- Water bottle (non 'stinkable')
- Personal snacks – power/granola bars, supplements, candy (Note: Many snack items can be purchased in Guatemala)
- One to two rolls of Duct tape (one for personal, one for team use). NOT no-name brands.

### Dental needs:

- Gloves – You need to bring your own gloves (powdered gloves recommended due to the heat in certain locations)
  - Average 50/working day packed in zip-lock bags not boxes
- Headlamps – recommended for both dentists and assistants. Mountain Equipment Co-op has a good selection, reasonable priced. LED works best, wider field of light better, or dual-function (wide and focused adjustable). Bring extra batteries (some users go through one set each day).
- Masks – Not needed for each patient, plan for 10-15 per day
- Personal preference supplies, if required – instruments, burs, composite, bond, local anesthetic, etc.

### Miscellaneous:

- Jewellery – leave all valuable jewellery at home – earrings, bracelets, chains, rings - including wedding/engagement rings, (wedding bands are okay), etc.
- Maximum weight – Each person is allowed only **one** personal bag (maximum weight 30 lbs). Please be aware that maximum airline weight is just 50 lbs per bag (economy). This has meant more difficult packing of all of the dental supplies. We recommend a small/medium sized duffel for your personal bag that can be packed inside one of our hockey bag supply bags, so that we may then pack around it. Alternatively, you may pack in your own hockey bag with space for additional supplies or sundries. Your second bag will be a FULL supply or equipment bag. Note: your ticket may qualify you for a 70 lb bag.
  - IMPORTANT: Once travelling within Guatemala, packing space in the vans is VERY limited, so no stiff-framed or large square luggage-type bags please. Multi-day backpacking packs are not necessary as they are more difficult to pack into, and we always have shuttle vans or trucks to move personal items.
- Due to most airlines now charging a fee for the second bag, we ask that you pay the baggage fee, and you must keep the receipt for reimbursement.
- Carry-on bag – recommend a back-pack or similar as you will need it for travel within Guatemala when working and off days. Suggest putting heavier items allowed on-board

in your carry-on, saving weight-space in your checked bag (eg batteries). Some travellers will be asked to carry on supply items or gifts. (matchbox cars and bouncy balls are heavy!)

- Travel insurance – required to get on your own – check with your credit card or personal insurance companies.
- Gifts – please adhere to group suggestions about gift-giving. There is NO personal gift-giving allowed, this can lead to problems if at the wrong time or place. Please clear gifts donated by friends and family with trip director in advance.
- Photography – you should always receive permission before taking photographs of people, including during dental work. DFA often has an ‘official’ photographer with the group.

### **Location Details:**

- Comitancillo:
  - Cheap sleeping bag & camper’s pillow required – will usually donate to AMMID or the women’s group that live in the mountain villages. Wal-Mart and Canadian Tire have bags in the \$25 range. Good for +5 C/40 F
  - Towel and face cloth required (can leave behind)
  - Cool at night and early mornings
  - Women – slacks and long sleeves, shoulders and knees to be covered at all times when in public, can wear shorts and more casual at hotel.
  - Clinic – everyone must wear scrubs tops (or T-shirt) and bottoms.
  - All meals & snacks provided once in Comi. Personal snacks and other items can be purchased en route.
  - Money – some local shopping (local market, weaving centre), weekend in Pana, meals during travel.
  - Weekend in Panajachel
- Antigua area:
  - ‘Modern’ accommodations, no sleeping bag necessary.
  - Lots of walking – make sure you have comfortable walking shoes.
  - Cool in evenings
  - Breakfast and lunch included, dinner on our own (delivery or restaurants)
  - Weekend off – staying in Antigua
  - Money – lots of local shopping, craft and clothing markets. Weekend expenses on your own (accommodation & shuttle costs are covered).
- Guatemala City :
  - ‘Modern’ accommodations, no sleeping bag necessary.
  - Cool in evenings
  - Breakfast, lunch, and dinner included (full team)

- Weekend off in Antigua - lots of local shopping, craft and clothing markets. Accommodation & shuttle costs are covered.
- Money – during the week – no shopping; personal snack and beverage items only.
- El Remate:
  - Malaria area, medication recommended (but not required)
  - Can get very hot – bring lighter weight scrubs, consider dry-fit? Working conditions most days will be above 30 C, hotel is on a lake (bring bathing suits),
  - Very healthy meals provided, ‘safe’ snacks available in town
  - Towel & face cloth provided, but recommend bring your own (can leave behind)
  - Hotel is very nice, rustic ‘Eco-Lodge’ (most rooms have no locking windows or doors)
  - We will be sleeping under mosquito netting and a sheet, need insect spray (for fleas) and suggest lavender oil (for spiders).
  - No weekend ‘off’ (some down-time during travel). Tikal tour optional – good walking or hiking shoes required.
  - Money – some local craft & souvenir markets, snacks and beverages.

#### The ‘smaller print’

All DFA travel bookings are to be done by our DFA travel agent. Allowances for alternate arrangements must be cleared by the trip director.

Drinking of alcohol: During the work week, a beverage (beer or wine) after work or with dinner is acceptable. Anything above and beyond that will not be tolerated.

Smoking: Smoking is not tolerated in public places. Smoking at the clinic will not be allowed at any time.

Drugs: Dentistry For All has a zero tolerance for the use of illicit drugs.

Packing: Each volunteer is expected to transport one 50-70 lbs bag of supplies provided by Dentistry For All to **AND** from Guatemala. A packing list of personal items will be provided to each volunteer and those items are to be purchased and transported by each volunteer at their own cost. Personal items should not exceed 30 lbs.

Immunizations: Each volunteer is required to receive and provide proof of the proper immunizations prior to travel at their own cost.

Travel insurance: Each volunteer is required to purchase at their own expense and provide proof of travel insurance prior to travel.

Health insurance: Each volunteer is required to have active health insurance.

Proof of Licensure: Each dentist and dental hygienist will need to provide a copy of their dental license. Please include with your initial payment.

Passport: Each volunteer must have an active passport. Passports expiring within 6 months of the mission trip should be renewed prior to travel. Please include a copy of your passport with initial payment.

While on this trip, you are an ambassador not only for your country but also for Dentistry For All. The organization has a code of conduct and a reputation that we have worked hard to develop and have built trust. If you can not adhere to the guidelines and policies we have established, your participation on the trip will be brought to an abrupt end at your own expense.

Volunteers will only be allowed to perform the tasks that they are allowed to professionally perform or tasks they have been trained to complete

Refunds can only be granted upon the discretion of the executive director of DFA. However, any refunds granted will be minus the cost of the airline ticket. It is the responsibility of the volunteer to contact the airline for a refund directly.