



Working together. Hand in hand.

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## Frequently Asked Questions: Haiti

### What types of mission trips are there to choose from?

The Foundation for Peace has three types of trips:

1. **Christian mission trips** led by churches
2. **Nursing/medical trips** that include medical professionals, professors and/or students from a number of universities, colleges, non-governmental organizations (NGO's), and organizations such as Sigma Theta Tau International
3. **Social service mission trips** that may include public/private high schools and universities, social organizations (e.g. community youth groups), non-governmental organizations (NGO's) such as Konekte, Water@Work and Hearing Aid for Latin America

### What are the primary goals of a Christian mission trip?

These mission trips are multifaceted Christ-centered ministries shaped by the words of the Apostle Paul, "Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality." (Romans 12:10-13)

In order to achieve this goal, our mission trips are focused on building relationships with the Haitians by working hand in hand (Men nan Men) with the local community on church and community development projects. These activities are provided regardless of race, religion, gender or socioeconomic status. We believe that this results in sustainable and successful initiatives that will relieve the effects of poverty, encourage personal growth, and help to alleviate social injustice.

There are four main activities: a construction project, Bible school activities for children, worship with a local church and in some cases, a medical clinic open to all in the community. We will also have daily devotions, an afternoon at a beach, visits to historical sites and opportunities to purchase souvenirs.

### What are the primary goals of a Social Service mission trip?

These are multifaceted mission trips that are focused on building relationships with the Haitians by working hand in hand (Men nan Men) with the local community on community development projects. These activities are provided regardless of race, religion, gender or socioeconomic status. We believe that this results in sustainable and successful initiatives that will relieve the effects of poverty, encourage personal growth, and help to alleviate social injustice.

There are four main activities: a construction project, educational activities (e.g. first aid instruction), worship with the local church (a cultural experience to understand the spiritual aspects that sustain the local people) and at times, a medical clinic open to all in the community. We will also have daily group meetings to reflect on the experience, an afternoon at a beach, visits to historical sites and opportunities to purchase souvenirs.

### What are the primary goals of a Nursing/Medical mission trip?

The trips are designed to enact relationship-centered, transformational, knowledge-based nursing service through collaboration with the Foundation for Peace to develop leadership programs, to support health promotion, to facilitate the diagnosis and treatment of acute disease, and to develop chronic disease management programs.

### Do I need construction skills to participate?

The work is non-technical and done hand in hand with our Haitian friends (e.g. passing concrete blocks, passing buckets of sand, gravel, water and concrete, mixing concrete, digging footings, and painting). If something requires training (e.g. laying blocks or tiles), training will be provided at the work site by FFP staff Henery or another local construction manager. Most work is somewhat physically strenuous, especially in the hot environment of the summer months. You do not need to do any

labor if you are unable, as long as you spend time building friendships or interacting with local community members in some capacity near where the team working.

### **What are the accommodations like?**

Our groups are being housed in multiple locations depending upon the size of the group, including the FFP Haiti house in Croix-des-bouquets and several nearby hotels. Accommodations are divided into separate facilities for males and females with a common meeting/dining area. Accommodations are very basic with bunk beds, cold showers and fans. Some hotels have air conditioning.

### **Do I need special immunizations/vaccinations for the communities where we will be working?**

All participants are required to have up-to-date immunizations for their age, especially your tetanus immunization. In addition, following CDC guidelines for most travelers, we recommend that you have a Hepatitis A and an oral typhoid fever vaccine before the trip.

### **Is malaria prophylaxis required for the communities where we will be working?**

Malaria prophylaxis (chloroquine) is recommended. It must be started one week before you arrive in Haiti. Please consult your doctor if you have health issues or take other medication. In addition, each person should routinely use DEET containing mosquito repellent (provided by the participant).

### **Is the water safe to drink?**

No, not from the faucet! The FFP will provide purified water and ice made from purified water that is safe to drink. Avoid brushing your teeth with tap water or drinking any water/ice when you do not know the source.

### **What do I do if I get diarrhea?**

Diarrhea is usually a self-limited disorder that resolves with only oral rehydration. Clear liquids are routinely recommended for adults. Travelers who develop three or more loose stools in an 8-hour period---especially if associated with nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramps, fever, or blood in stools---may benefit from antimicrobial therapy. Notify your group leader and an FFP staff member if this occurs.

Antibiotics usually are given for 3-5 days. Currently, ciprofloxacin 500 mg of twice a day for 3-5 days is the recommended treatment. If diarrhea persists despite therapy, members should be evaluated by a doctor and treated for possible parasitic infection.

### **What security precautions are needed for mission team members?**

When you travel abroad, you can expect to have a safe and incident-free trip. However, there are rare occasions when mission trip members can be victimized by crime and violence, or experience unexpected difficulties. Over the years, more than 5,000 volunteers have traveled to the Dominican Republic and Haiti, with the most common problem with crime being petty theft (2-3 incidents per year). However, in 2008 in the Dominican Republic, a group member was shot in a struggle during a robbery of a gold necklace. He was rapidly cared for and God blessed him with a full recovery. The assailant was caught and jailed. The mission team was able to complete all of the planned activities in that community. As a result of this serious incident, we have enacted additional safety precautions to minimize the risks inherent to working in developing countries.

The Foundation for Peace and local church leaders will plan activities to avoid known dangerous places and situations. At the same time we need to recognize that every day, whether we're at home or away, there is some degree of risk despite these precautions.

**Go to [www.foundationforpeace.org/get-involved/mission-trips/trip-resources/](http://www.foundationforpeace.org/get-involved/mission-trips/trip-resources/) to find further information on safety and security guidelines and other helpful trip information.**

### What are the typical temperatures during the year?

The temperatures hover around 90 F during the day. While all of the areas we work will have shade (at least to rest in), it is important that all participants wear sunscreen products and a hat or visor. Typical temperatures are listed below:

**Haiti Annual Daily Temperatures**

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Avg. Max Temp	88	88	90	91	91	95	95	95	93	91	90	88
Avg. Temp	81	80	81	82	82	85	86	85	84	83	82	80
Avg. Min Temp	73	72	72	73	73	75	77	75	75	74	73	72

### What is that large lake in Ganthier?

Étang Saumâtre (also known as Lake Azuei) is Haiti's largest lake. It is in southeastern Haiti, 18 miles east of Port-au-Prince on the fertile Plaine du Cul-de-Sac bordering the Dominican Republic (see overhead view of lake to right).

The salt-water lake has an area of 65 square miles, 18 miles long and 6 miles wide. The lake supported over 100 species of waterfowl, flamingos and American crocodiles, one of the few lakes of its type in the world to harbor such fauna. Because the region was a former marine strait, several areas are below sea level.

### Do the Haitians understand the English language?

Many Haitians do speak English. Yet few of the people in communities where our teams work speak English. They all speak Creole and the educated often speak French. You may have several people in the group who speak Creole and one or more of the full-time FFP staff with you are bilingual (English and Creole)

### What type of electricity do they have?

They have the same 120 volt electricity and plug style as in the United States. Electricity is a precious commodity in Haiti, so you should be careful to use it sparingly. Be sure to charge your camera and phone when there is electricity.

### How will airline travel arrangements be made?

In some cases the group leader will secure a group reservation for the expected number of participants. Signing-up early for a trip and providing the funds to cover your ticket guarantees you a place in the group reservation. In some cases, each person will be asked to reserve and pay for their own ticket on a specific itinerary on-line or through a travel agent. Please check with your group leader regarding your particular trip. It is important that the group arrives together.

### What is the immigration/customs process at the Port-au-Prince airport?

You'll need to complete immigration (green) and customs (white) documents.

- When completing the forms mark "Reason for visit" as pleasure.
- Do not indicate that you are a medical professional.
- Write the address of the FFP house, regardless of where you are staying.  
*Santo 23 B, Imp C, #4  
Croix-des-bouquets, Haiti  
509-386-05233*
- You will need to pay \$10 US as an entrance fee to the country.
- Be sure to keep the bottom of the green form, you will need it to leave the country.

### **Are there any special documents or fees that are needed to enter or leave the country?**

There is a \$10 entrance fee. Any exit fees are included in the cost of your airline ticket.

### **Can I arrive early or stay later than the mission trip dates (i.e. stay extra-time)?**

If you would like to stay on FFP property for extra days, you must first obtain approval from the President of the FFP, Ken Culver, prior to any discussion with Valentin. This may or may not be possible depending on the ministry activities at the time. An additional fee for in-country costs may be incurred for food, lodging and transportation.

### **Can I arrive late and/or leave early if I cannot stay the entire time (i.e. shorten your mission trip)?**

These options should be avoided because it will significantly impact the overall quality of your experience. Arriving late and leaving early is disruptive to the groups and creates extra work for the FFP staff. If you are considering such a schedule, special arrangements must be approved by the President of the FFP, Ken Culver. Do not expect a cost reduction since most of your fee goes to the project and there will be extra transportation costs.

### **Will there be a lockable area for valuable items?**

No. We recommend that a lockable suitcase be used to store valuables for the group in a locked room if you are concerned.

### **What are the typical meal menus?**

The food is typical for the country, such as beans, rice, cooked vegetables, fruit, chicken, that are specially prepared by cooks experienced in cooking for North Americans using purified water. Some of it is spicy. People should not eat food that has not been specifically prepared for your mission team without checking with your group leader or an FFP staff member. Anyone with dietary restrictions should notify their group leader well before the trip and we will let the people from the church who cook for us know ahead of time. There is no guarantee that we will be able to accommodate all dietary restrictions.

### **What currency is used in Haiti?**

The Haitian gourde that is about 40 gourdes per US dollar. The Haitian dollar equals 5 gourdes.

### **Can we use ATM, debit and credit cards Haiti?**

Do not expect to use these cards while in Haiti.

### **Will I have access to the internet?**

Internet access is usually available in the FFP House, but it may not be reliable. Check with your group leader about internet access where your group will be staying. We highly encourage people to use their time in Haiti to build relationships, so if you have internet access, please do not spend all your free time on your electronic device.

### **What do I need to know when we go shopping?**

There will be limited opportunity outside of the airport. The FFP will try to arrange for items to be available for your purchase from local vendors. Bargaining in the market is a common practice, so enjoy, but look for the win-win. Be a little generous with those who don't have as much. If possible check with FFP staff to see what a fair price is.

### **How can I call home?**

On our mission trips there are several ways to call home:

- Use your cell phone (check with your carrier to make sure you have international coverage and ask the price, because it may be very high)
- Use the cell phone of another member of the group and reimburse them for the call
- Many teams use the wireless internet when available for email, texting, Facebook or Skype to communicate with family at home.

### **What about hurricanes?**

The Atlantic hurricane season is officially from June 1st to November 30th, encompassing over 97% of tropical activity. June 1st has been the traditional start of the Atlantic hurricane season for decades. Maximum activity is in early to mid-September. For more information go to **[www.nhc.noaa.gov](http://www.nhc.noaa.gov)**.

Each house where our teams stay is a very secure block building and is safe. If we learn that a storm is coming we will stock up on supplies and take refuge in the shelter of the house until the storm passes. We are blessed in that storms typically form close to where Haiti is located, meaning that they are usually relatively weak when they cross the island. They are generally just a lot of rain (tropical storms) rather than hurricanes.