



## TEAM and VISITORS GUIDE

### PURPOSE

This guide has been developed to help team members and individuals traveling to Haiti, working with Mountain Top Ministries, to prepare for their experience. Though Mountain Top Ministries is a Christian based organization, those professing another or no faith are welcome to visit too. However, we do expect for everyone to conform to the standards outlined in this guide. We wish to challenge each person who will step out of their comfort zone to come, see Haiti for yourself and "be" ministry in action!

### MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

The following is a guide to possible ministry opportunities. If you have other ideas that might benefit the people of Haiti that are within your skill sets or those of your team members, we invite you to share them with us. Remember, whatever your talents, or lack of, there is ministry you can do!

Examples

- Medical Clinic
- Work teams: mechanical, carpentry, painting, welding and masonry
- Teaching: Teacher in service, Pastor's conference/Christian leadership, health, agriculture, business
- Vocational training
- Vacation Bible School for children
- Sewing and other crafts

### RESERVING A DATE FOR YOUR VISIT

- Email Willem and Beth Charles at [mtmhaiti@gmail.com](mailto:mtmhaiti@gmail.com) to reserve your team date *before* purchasing your airline tickets. We ask that teams do not travel to or from Haiti on Friday, Saturday or Sunday nor on a flight arriving after dark unless pre-approved by the Charles'.

### TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS AND PREPARATIONS

#### Travel and Money

- After securing your team date, make and pay your own airline reservations into Port-au-Prince, Haiti. American Airlines, Delta, Jet Blue, Canada Air, Air France and others fly into Haiti daily depending on where you are flying from.
  - MTM will provide all ground transportation while you are in Haiti. ***Please, never accept transportation from or give your name or contact information to anyone unless approved by MTM in advance.***
- A \$100 non-refundable team member fee per team member (under age 16 are exempt) must be paid two (2) months prior to your departure date. This holds a place on the team for you, and, is applied to a pharmacy fund (for medical teams) or a construction fund (for all other teams).  
***NOTE: Teams are still asked to participate monetarily with pharmacy needs and to raise funds for construction projects in addition to the non-refundable team member fee. The non-refundable team member fee is not intended to pay for all of the pharmaceuticals needed, nor for the project that will be done while your team is in Haiti, but rather to help offset any unforeseen expenses.***
  - Pay at the MTM website or by check, sending it to the MTM home office. Please designate as "team member fee" including the date that your team is traveling.
    - If your team is cancelled for any reason, the non-refundable team member fee will automatically be applied to the MTM pharmacy fund.

- If your team requires dedicated translators, you will need to communicate to MTM how many will be needed two (2) weeks prior to your arrival. The cost to the team is \$30 per translator per day (if working a half day, translators are still paid for a full day's work).
- \$60 per night per person is the rate of lodging at the Thomassin Guest House. This covers 2 meals (breakfast and dinner) and basic enmities. This rate is reduced to \$30 for children 8 and under accompanied by an adult. Please be prepared to pay cash for this fee in Haiti upon your arrival.
- A \$10 entrance tax per person is now being collected as you enter the Haitian airport. Please be prepared to pay this, **with the exact amount**, as you enter the immigration area.
- Cash for souvenirs, lunch out, tips and other personal items is suggested. U.S. currency is accepted in Haiti (small bills are best when buying from vendors and in small shops; large bills are acceptable for your guest house stay & other funds). Worn or torn bills are difficult for the Haitian vendors to exchange, therefore, please ensure that the bills you bring are in good condition.

### Shots and Passports

- There are no shots required to enter Haiti, however, MTM requests that each team member have an updated tetanus shot, to include Adacel where available. We also recommend that you visit your family doctor and follow their directions for preventative vaccinations and or medications.
- A passport is required to enter Haiti. Plan on 4-6 weeks to obtain one from the time that you apply. This may be done at your local post office, call them for details.

### Spiritual and Cultural Preparations

- Be prepared to listen to God-you'll be out of your "comfort zone" and in an unfamiliar place.
- Be watchful of what God wants to do in your life and through you.
- Be open (and obedient) to what God may want you to do while in Haiti.
- Body piercings and tattoos can be offensive to some Haitians and are not accepted as a Christian practice in Haiti (this also becomes a medical issue in a population where procedures are too often not done hygienically). **Please wear only 1 pair of earrings (women) and leave all other body jewelry at home. Tattoos should be covered while at the mission site and at the guest house.**
- Smoking, alcoholic beverages and/or "uncontrolled substances" of any kind are not permitted among teams or guests neither at the mission nor at the guest house. Haitian Christians do not partake in these activities and it is often difficult for them to respect those who do.
- You are visiting Haiti for a short time. Be mindful that what you do has a long term effect on those who live here. Choose to be a good witness!
- You are a witness of Jesus Christ, *and* your home country everywhere you are. Be a good representative, people are watching you.
- If in doubt about *anything*, please ask. Do not allow yourself to leave Mountain Top Ministries nor Haiti with misconceptions!

### Personal Preparations

- Don't be afraid to touch and hold. This may be your primary form of communication.
- Look into the eyes of the Haitians.
- Be sensitive when taking photographs and filming. Ask and then respect the answer.
- When posting on social media, 1) tag MTM, 2) be sensitive about what you're posting and how you are presenting it.
- If you wouldn't want it done to you or your children, then don't do it to others (interactions with others, what you are sharing on social media, etc.).
- Be flexible to your surroundings at all times.
- Learn these basic greetings and use them with the Haitian people:
  - Bonjour-good morning
  - Bonswa-good afternoon (used after 12 noon)
  - Merci-thank you
- Leave valuable and/or expensive jewelry and electronics at home.

## WHAT TO PACK

- Contact your airline carrier and/or team leader to ask for details and limitations regarding baggage before your departure.
  - We suggest you pack personal items in your carry on and use the checked bag(s) to bring ministry supplies in.
  - Remember that your luggage may not arrive when you do, therefore it is suggested that you carry personal items in your carry on.
- Electric current is the same in Haiti as it is in North America, however, it is not always available or plentiful so be mindful when packing appliances.
- Wireless Internet is available at the guest house for use with your personal devices. A computer is not available at the guest house for your use.

### For Your Ministry

Items will vary from team to team according to the area of ministry you are participating in. Contact us prior to your trip for additional information and/or acceptance and translation of handouts.

- Medical supplies for medical teams. *ALL medical team leaders must be in direct contact with our medical director before, during and after their trip.* The MTM Medical Director will assist medical teams with inventory needs, protocols and reports.
- Tools and other needed supplies for construction work to be done.
- Teaching materials that you need or would like for your "students" to have.
- VBS supplies according to your agenda, bringing enough for all the children.
- School supplies to leave for the school (contact us for a more defined list): blue ink pens, pencils, erasers, basic art supplies (pots of paint, brushes, markers, colored pencils, glitter, construction paper, scissors), basic office supplies for teachers (paper clips and spring clips, clip boards, rubber bands, student reward stickers, post it notes).
- For other items that can be collected and brought by your team, please contact us.

### For Your Personal Comfort

- Refillable, personal water bottle to keep with you throughout the day
- Backpack
- Bible, journal or notebook, pen
- Insect repellent, sunscreen, hat
- Anti-bacterial hand wipes and/or gel
- Camera and accessories, chargers
- Personal toiletries and medications that you are likely to need
- Flashlight, personal fan, extra batteries (electric is not always available),
- Bath towel and washcloth-also available at the guest house
- 2 rolls of toilet paper and 1 roll of paper towel per person
- Kleenex (optional)

### Clothes

Haiti's weather in the mountains is hot during the day with cool nights. Bring a jacket, sweatshirt or sweater. A rain poncho is recommended if traveling during the rainy season.

April through June is the rainy season (potential daily rains) and June through November is the hurricane season which brings intermittent rain. December through March is the dry season with much cooler temperatures. Bring conservative, modest clothing that is not revealing, that is comfortable and practical.

- Shoes: Comfortable and practical for standing, walking on rough terrain, hiking and for church. Flip flops or other house shoes are great for around the guesthouse (floors are ceramic tile).
- For Church
  - Ladies-nice dresses that are near knee length with short or long sleeves only (no strap tops).
  - Men-nice pants (good jeans are acceptable) with a dress or polo-type shirt. If speaking please wear a tie.

- For Ministry
  - Ladies-knee length skirt, dress, skorts, crop or capris (*no shorts*) with cap or short-sleeved tops (***sleeveless and bare-belly tops are not acceptable***).
  - Men-jeans or long shorts and shirt (no tank tops)
  - Medical clinic participants are expected to wear scrubs while at work in the clinic. MTM keeps a large supply of scrubs available for use by team members (sizes xs-5xl).
  - Teaching ministry of any type, please bring more professional type clothing (dress or skirt, dress shirt with tie).
- For Sightseeing, Shopping and Relaxing
  - **Modest clothing** you would normally wear following the above guidelines.

## **LUNCH ITEMS**

The guest house will serve two meals each day (see the section titled, "Meals"). You will need to bring snacks and other items for your lunch and/or between meals. Teams may be offered lunch in the schools' cafeteria when school is in session.

### Suggested items

- Peanut butter, jelly, canned and dried meats, cheese\*
- Pringles, pretzels or other chips and crackers
- Snack cakes, fruit, granola and cereal bars
- Nuts and dried fruits
- Individually wrapped candies and gum
- Specialty drink mixes, tea bags, decaf coffee, creamers and sweeteners (the guest house will provide Haitian coffee, powdered creamer and sugar)
- Cereal (hot & cold) for snacking

\*freeze then wrap in newspapers or clothing to transport

Do bring a large jar of peanut butter for the dining table and sandwich bags to pack above items into. Bread will be provided for sandwiches.

## **MEALS**

Typical Haitian dishes will be served for breakfast and dinner. If you have food allergies, please make us aware of them before your visit. The guest house can usually provide foods that will meet your dietary restrictions with little effort. All food offered at the guest house is prepared in our kitchen and is safe to eat. Culligan drinking water is provided at all times for consumption and for brushing your teeth with.

- Breakfast-eggs, oatmeal, pancakes, spaghetti, corn flakes, bread, seasonal fruits and juices.
- Lunch-snacks and items that you bring.
- Dinner-varieties of grains (rice, corn, wheat) and beans with sauce, meats (chicken, beef, pork, turkey; goat upon request only), casseroles (macaroni and cheese, potatoes, eggplant, etc.), seasonal vegetables, salads, bread.
- Sodas (Haitian bottled \$1/bottle and imported diet \$2/can) are available for sale.

## **LODGING**

Team members stay at the Thomassin Guest House while in Haiti. It is located in the mountains about 45 minutes from the Port-Au-Prince airport. This guest house has four rooms with bunk beds, one room with a double bed and three full bathrooms to provide comfortable accommodations for up to 30 guests. The large dining area enables the buffet styled meals to be enjoyed together. A television and dvd player are available for movie watching and a piano is also available for those who play. The outside balcony space allows guests to enjoy the mountain top view and starry night skies. Best of all, the guest house overlooks the MTM mission in the village of Gramothe that is less than a 3-mile hike away.

## **SIGHTSEEING AND RELAXING**

One day of your visit may be used for sightseeing, shopping and/or relaxing. Businesses in Haiti are closed on Sunday. After attending church, the rest of the afternoon is often used for resting, visiting in the village or driving through the city as time permits.

There are several opportunities for you to "help" local Haitians while at the guest house which include but are not limited to the purchases of:

- Haitian grown and processed coffee (\$4/lb)
- Apparent Project paper bead and Haitian clay jewelry, hammered iron items and Haiti clay dishes
- Massage, by Mme. Canez
- Vendor shopping (barter style) set up on the premises
- Haitian made, pure vanilla and almond (\$2/8 oz. bottle)
- MTM Polo and T-shirts (\$30-\$15)

## **OTHER INFORMATION**

In case of an emergency, while in Haiti, you may be contacted at 011-509-3449-0996, 011-509-3422-9954, 812-645-0143 or reached by email at [mtmhaiti@gmail.com](mailto:mtmhaiti@gmail.com). Your address while in Haiti will be Thomassin 48 #7, Port-Au-Prince, PH: 509-3449-0996. This information will be needed when filling out immigration information cards on the airplane as you approach Port-Au-Prince.

### ***Suggested reading before coming to Haiti to partner with Mountain Top Ministries:***

- Give Your Best, How Willem Charles Transformed His Haitian Village From Poverty in Voodoo to Prosperity in Christianity by Andrew DeWitt. Andy DeWitt travels to Haiti each year with his family leading medical/surgical teams. He is also on the MTM Board. \*\*\*
- Walking in Broken Shoes, A Nurse's Story about Haiti and the Earthquake by Susan Magnuson Walsh. Sue, founder of Little by Little, is a great friend and partner of MTM leading many willing hands to serve each year at the MTM Gramothe Medical Clinic. \*\*\*
- After Disaster, An Insider's Perspective from the Heart of Chaos by Edward Minyard. Ed appeared on our door step four short days after the earthquake of 2010. He and Willem were no match for those who worked against them!
- Parc National La Visite Haiati 10 Year Anniversary of Foundation Seguin. Written in English and French, this is a must have coffee table picture book celebrating the beauty of the ministry work of Foundation Seguin with the nearby endangered La Visite National Park. Willem and Beth are personal sponsors of Foundation Seguin.

All of the books above are available at Amazon.com.

\*\*\*Available at the guesthouse \$16.

\*\*\*\*Available at the guesthouse \$40

- **Friend us on Face Book (MTMHaiti) to find out the latest news and to tag us on your posts!**

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