



Cultural differences

- Here in the mountains it is a “macho culture”. Men work and women stay home and serve the men. When we eat with the groups, my wife and her helpers will not usually eat with us. One reason is because they want to make sure everybody has something to eat before they start, and they are usually still doing stuff in the kitchen getting things ready/finished up (many people ask about this and try to pressure them into eating with us, please don’t).
- My wife and her helpers do not like or want help washing dishes either. To them, if a stranger comes in and tries to wash dishes it is because they do not think the Hondurans are able to do it or are doing a good enough job.
- When you pass somebody in the street, especially a female for a male or male for a female, you do not say “hola.” “Hola” here in the mountains is more of an invitation of wanting something more or a continued conversation. It could mean even more conversation. The correct thing to say is “Adios” because you are leaving as you pass them. If you are going into someone’s house or walking into a store, Hola is fine because you are starting the conversation, but saying “hola” to a stranger in the street is more flirting than anything else.
- You will probably hear gun shots and might even hear of a death while you are here. There is no such thing as sentencing, trials, etc. Many people call it mountain justice.

What to wear

- Many groups like to wear team shirts when they come to Honduras. We strongly discourage this for two reasons. The first is when people see team shirts they know that they could possibly be money or valuables with the group and we do not want to bring any attention from unwanted people. The second reason could be more important. Groups come to serve the Honduran people. There is something that says “Look at me! I’m on a mission trip to Honduras.” This takes the focus off of God and the work we do and places it on the mission teams.
- In the city of San Pedro Sula people can wear pretty much whatever they want. When we are in the mountains it would be best to wear pants. People can feel free to work in shorts and hang out at night at my house/hotel in shorts but walking around town, going to church, going to a village, it would be best to wear pants.
- Close toed shoes for men are needed for church and going to the villages. Anytime else, feel free to wear what you want to wear. We work with concrete filters that weigh over 200 lbs so if you want to chance going home with less toes that is up to you.
- Feel free to take off your shirt when we are working, or carrying a filter on our shoulders to use as padding, but that is all.
- Bring gloves if you think you might need them.
- Bring rubber boots if you want or they have them for sale for \$8 here in the mountains. (Depending on the rainy season)

Geography/weather

- If you go to google maps and type in El Paraiso, Copan, Honduras, our town will come up
- We are south west from San Pedro Sula, Honduras, right along the Honduran/Guatemala border.
- We live in the mountains and will be working in the mountains the entire week (between 3000-5000 ft)
- Most villages where we will be working will be anywhere from 20 minutes – 1 hour from our work shop. All of the roads are dirt/mud depending on the rain.

Honduras has two seasons

- Rainy season is August-January. During this time there could be weeks where it rains most days especially at night. Weather is normally high 85 – lows 65
- Dry Season is March-June. It usually only rains once or twice during this 3 month period. Hot, dry, dusty. Highs 95-100- lows 80-85

Money

- Honduras uses Limpera as currency and it is currently 21.5 Limpera to \$1. (in 8 years it has been 18.3 – 22)
- There is no need to exchange money before you come because you will not get as good of exchange rate.
- The hotel where the group stays will be able to exchange money for you, as much as you want.
- There is no place here in the mountains that will take a credit/debit card or checks so bring cash.
- The market (for souvenirs) in San Pedro will take credit cards, dollars, and limperas.

Phone

- If you use your American phone in Honduras it will cost a lot. (most companies charge 50cents per text and \$2 per minute)
- I have a Honduran phone that I give to the group for emergencies to call me and/or they can buy minutes to call the USA if they want. A 10 min call to the US cost about \$1.
- If you have a smart phone, you can download an app called Viber. This app make phone calls over the internet. The app is free and the calls are free over WIFI.
- I have wifi at my house and there is wifi (sometimes) at the hotel.

Water/Electricity

- There is no safe tap water in Honduras. It would be best to use bottled/filter water for everything including brushing teeth.
- The water also goes out a lot for a number of reasons but usually doesn't stay off for more than a couple of hours.
- The outlets are 110 like the USA so you will not need any type of adapters for your electronics.
- The power is kind of like the water, and sometimes goes out also. This happens a lot more during the rainy season.
- There is no hot water in the hotel rooms so get ready for a refreshing shower.

Diseases

- There are many things that make people sick while they are here. The most common is the dirty water. Please make sure you are careful to only drink filtered/bottled water
- Stay hydrated. Many people are not used to working all day in the sun. It is important that you drink enough water because sometimes people with get sick from not drinking enough water.
- Here in the mountains we have two mosquito diseases (Dengue Fever and Chikunguya) and neither has a vaccine or medicine to prevent them. During high mosquito times, May-August, it would be smart to bring and wear bug spray.
- The work we do is very dirty. Please keep remember to wash your hands before you eat. Hand sanitizer is also a good idea but please do not use is in front of the Hondurans because they might think they are the reasons you are using it.
- Many people ask about shots to get before coming to Honduras. We recommend checking out the CDC website for Honduras for updated information.