

CFCA AWARENESS TRIPS

trip information

The following information is for **2013** trips. The dates and trips to specific countries change from year to year depending on interest, the political situation within the countries and the ability of CFCA projects to host an awareness trip. A detailed schedule and additional information will be sent one to two weeks prior to departure in the pre-departure packet.

BOLIVIA

Trip Dates: May 5-12, 2013

Trip Size: 12-25 participants

Please register by March 5 to reserve your spot. If you still wish to register after this date, contact a CFCA trip coordinator regarding availability.

Trip Fee: \$600

Includes food, lodging and in-country ground transportation.
Airfare is **not** included.

For an additional fee of \$300, an optional side trip will be offered to La Paz, May 11-14. Details will be included with your confirmation packet, and you may consider joining the side trip at that time.



On your trip to Bolivia you may do some or all of the following activities:

- Be welcomed by the local CFCA staff who will be your hosts for the week, ensuring that your visit is safe and enjoyable
- Spend time with your sponsored friend and possibly the family. Sponsors with sponsored friends in the La Paz project will see them in Cochabamba. However, La Paz sponsors who join the side trip will see their sponsored friend in La Paz rather than in Cochabamba.
- Visit the homes and communities of CFCA sponsored friends and their families where you will learn about their joys and challenges
- Visit the tropical city of Santa Cruz and the Andean mountain city of Cochabamba.

Entry and Exit Requirements

A passport valid for at least six months beyond the end of your intended stay and a Bolivian tourist visa are required for U.S. citizens to enter Bolivia. The tourist visa costs \$135 and is available at Bolivian consulates in the U.S. and through reputable visa services. Instructions for obtaining a visa will be included in your confirmation packet. A **departure tax of \$25** payable in U.S. dollars is levied on U.S. citizens departing Bolivia. This fee may be included in your airline ticket. *All fees are subject to change.* While in Bolivia, participants should carry their passport or a photocopy of it at all times. Participants who will be traveling with a minor should contact a CFCA trip coordinator for additional information.

Airport and Travel Arrangements

Make your airline arrangements only after your registration is confirmed and you receive the CFCA trip coordinator's written instructions for scheduling your flight. In the meantime, we strongly encourage you to research airfares with a travel agent, the airlines or via the Internet. Vista Travel may also be contacted regarding airfare at (800) 537-5066. This agency is familiar with our programs and schedules.

All trip participants should plan to arrive in Santa Cruz at the **Viru Viru International Airport (VVI)** mid-morning on May 6. Most participants will depart from the U.S. on May 5. **The CFCA staff will meet all travelers at the airport who arrive on the scheduled arrival day, within the stated hours. Do not accept offers of transportation from anyone other than our CFCA team.** Once confirmed, trip participants must book in-country flights between Santa Cruz and Cochabamba as instructed by CFCA. Some participants will return to the U.S. from Santa Cruz on May 12, while those who join the side trip to La Paz will return to the U.S. on May 14.

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Accommodations and Food

All trip participants will stay in simple accommodations near the CFCA projects, usually in a hotel. Married couples and families will stay in private rooms. Individuals will be assigned a roommate. Running water for showers is readily available, but it may not be heated. **Tap water is unsafe for drinking.** Instead, the project will provide bottled water. Alcoholic beverages are not included in the trip fee.

Participants will eat simple meals that reflect the local cuisine. All food is prepared with purified water. All meals will be eaten with the group. Do not purchase food from street vendors. Meals are often served at a later hour than most Americans are accustomed to eating. We recommend bringing snacks such as dried fruit and nut mixes, raisins, granola bars, etc., as you may want something to eat between scheduled meals.

Bring an electrical converter and adapter if you wish to use personal electronic devices. The **electrical current** in Bolivia is 220/230V. Diagrams of the outlets are available at www.electricaloutlet.org.

Climate

For the Southern Hemisphere, the month of May is late fall, early winter. Bolivia's climate varies due to the diversity of the geographical regions. Participants should be aware that minor tremors may occur. The group travels along winding, mountainous roads, which can cause motion sickness.

Santa Cruz enjoys a tropical climate and is located at 1,300 feet above sea level. In Santa Cruz, the May low temperatures are in the mid-60s, while the highs are in the mid-80s.

Temperatures in Cochabamba range from the upper 50s to the upper 60s. Be prepared for cool weather in Cochabamba; evening temperatures can fall into the 40s. Cochabamba is located in a mountain valley at 8,600 feet above sea level. The group will likely visit surrounding communities at higher elevations, up to 11,000 feet.

For those attending the optional side trip to La Paz, the altitude of the La Paz area ranges from 10,600 feet to over 13,000 feet above sea level. May temperatures range from the low 30s to the mid-50s. The driest time of year in La Paz is May through September.

Health/Medical Preparations

Contact your medical doctor or local health department for immunization recommendations based on your health history. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at www.cdc.gov/travel has country specific recommendations regarding immunizations. You may also contact them by phone at 800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636). CFCA staff members are not qualified to offer advice on immunizations.

You should consult with your medical insurance company prior to traveling to confirm whether your policy applies in a foreign country. **If your policy does not cover emergency expenses such as medical evacuation, we urge you to consider the purchase of temporary travel insurance.** Many insurance plans, including Medicare, do not cover treatment outside of the U.S. You may obtain further information on travel insurance from a travel agent or through research on the Internet.

This trip visits high altitudes. Travelers should be aware of the risks of altitude illness and how altitude can affect certain medical conditions. CFCA will provide each traveler with a medical clearance form. This trip has a particularly rigorous schedule. It may be challenging for those with physical limitations. Please consult a CFCA trip coordinator with any concerns.

Currency Exchange and Handling

The local currency is the Bolivian **boliviano** (BOB). Your lodging, food and in-country ground transportation are included in the trip fee. You should bring additional money for the purchase of snacks and souvenirs, and to cover entry/exit fees, if applicable. You should not carry bills in denominations greater than \$20 because they may be difficult for local banks or vendors to exchange. Do not bring torn or severely worn currency. You can bring U.S. dollars into the country. You will be provided with an opportunity to exchange money upon arrival either at the airport, at the lodging, or another method. Traveler's checks are not recommended and ATMs are not readily available.