



Mesoamerican Permaculture Institute (IMAP)

WHAT'S INCLUDED

A HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE THAT WILL CHANGE YOU FOREVER

After working alongside local people and learning about their struggles and joys, you won't return home the same person - you can count on it. Get inspired to begin your own journey for greater impact on the shores of the stunning Lake Atitlán, in the heart of Mayan culture.

IMAP provides an alternative to hotel chains and tour buses, for travelers looking for a more authentic experience - in a nutshell, you will *engage* with your environment, and with the people who live there. Group Trips are perfect for meaningful holidays, cross-cultural school learning, career breaks, eco-travel, alternative missionary work, or just people seeking to do something beneficial.

Your group will :

- create real connections with local people
- implement lasting permaculture practices
- participate in hands-on work with a farmer or family, and
- immerse yourself in the rich and textured Mayan culture

You can choose between the following trips:



1) Plant Fruit Trees

By planting trees, you will empower a family to produce fruit, generate income by selling the fruit in the local market and conserve the local ecosystem



2) Build A Home Garden

Design and build a home garden in a relocated community, in a way that can be carried on and replicated by the community members themselves in the years to come.



3) Build a School Garden

Alongside school children, you will build a garden in a local school in order to improve food sovereignty and combat malnutrition.

Our Group Trips **7 days / 6 nights**, but the length of stay is negotiable, and we will adjust the price accordingly.

The price per person is \$80 per day and it includes:

Transportation

A private shuttle to and from the airport in Guatemala City, as well as all transportation during your stay. If you'd like to replace a trip to or from Guatemala City with a trip across Lake Atitlan via private boat, we can arrange this for you at no extra cost, as long as weather permits.

Accommodations

Accommodations for 7 nights, either in a comfortable shared house next to IMAP or on-site at IMAP in shared dorms (2 bunk beds per bungalow). Bedding and towels are provided, and you'll have access to hot showers, a full kitchen, clean drinking water, lakeshore walking paths and, of course, IMAP's permaculture gardens. We can lodge a maximum of 16 guests between the house and IMAP. We also have a large area designed for group activities such as reflections, discussions, or watching movies.

If you are bringing a larger group, you can either stay in a basic, safe hotel in San Lucas (Hotel Los Volcanes) or, for \$25 per night extra per person, you can stay in a more comfortable hotel in San Lucas, located right on Lake Atitlan (Hotel Toliman). San Lucas is located just 10 minutes away from IMAP by road.

Home-stays

Your group also has the option to stay in the home of a local family in San Lucas. Homes can host 2 guests and provide an excellent opportunity to practice Spanish and get a taste of daily life in Guatemala.

Translation

An English-speaking IMAP volunteer will accompany you on all activities and will be present on-site at IMAP overnight.

Meals

All meals, with the exception of lunch on the free day (if you choose to have a free day), are covered in the cost of the trip. All meals are prepared using purified water.

Breakfast. For guests staying on-site at IMAP or at the house next door, breakfast is prepared every morning by a local women's group. Groups staying at a hotel in San Lucas will eat breakfast at a nearby local women's cooperative (Ijatz) who serve coffee from their own trees and jam from their own kitchens. For those staying with families, breakfast is provided by the family.

Lunch. Lunch will be served either on-site at IMAP or, on work days, on the work site. Typical lunches include hamburgers, rice, tortillas, fruit and freshly squeezed lemonade. Vegetarian options are always available. Lunches in Guatemala are typically the main meal of the day, and tend to be larger than dinner.

Dinner. For guests staying at IMAP or at the house next door, dinner will be prepared on-site by a local women's group. Groups staying Hotel Los Volcanes in San Lucas will eat dinner at the hotel and the cost is included in the price of the trip. Dinner at the Hotel Toliman restaurant is not included, and guests who stay here are

asked to cover this cost themselves (dinner ranges between \$8 - \$15 per person).

Snack. You will get a few snacks during your time here, to break up activities and give you an opportunity to try a healthy snack, Guatemalan style. Snacks include fresh lemonade or coffee and tea.

Project Donation

We require an additional per person donation of \$20. This will go directly to the project you are implementing and includes building materials, tools, fruit trees or plant cuttings, as well as IMAP's time beforehand to prepare the project, and afterwards to ensure continuity.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Health

IMAP is located 20 minutes away from a small but well-run hospital, the Hospital de Santiago, whose staff includes US-based doctors and nurses that come on a rotating basis as volunteers. There are many pharmacies in San Lucas and most medicines are readily available. Should anyone require a medical visit, we will provide all support possible including transportation and translation. There are additional costs for a clinic visit and for any prescriptions.

Purified water is available at IMAP, at the women's cooperative and at the hotels.

Safety

While in Guatemala, pay close attention to your surroundings and your personal safety at all times. When you go out, do not carry around extra money or valuables and leave your passport behind. At night, it is best to stay in groups and to not walk around alone. San Lucas is not a big city and is generally considered a safe place to be – local people are friendly toward outsiders.

Communications

We will provide the group leader with a cell phone and useful numbers for use. Wireless internet is available at the hotels but not at IMAP, but there are many internet cafés available in San Lucas.

Donations for IMAP and local families

IMAP is a small NGO founded and run by local Indigenous people. We have limited resources and welcome donations to keep the organization running. Monetary donations can be [made online](#), but we also welcome any of the following to distribute among local families:

- School supplies
- Children's books
- Cloth diapers for babies
- Laptops
- Digital cameras