

Haiti Visitor Guide

Prepared by the St. Anthony Haiti Committee

I. Before you go

Medical Preparations

- It is important to contact your personal doctor as soon as you decide to go to Haiti.
- Tetanus shots need to be up to date.
- Malaria prevention meds are taken over a series of weeks
- Other vaccinations may be necessary
- It would be good to get a broad spectrum antibiotic prescribed by your doctor (ex. Cipro)
- Anti-diarrhea medications (prescription meds are better than OTC)

Travel Documents and Information

- Passport (take with you a photo copy of the front page)
- Drivers License (or ID card)
- Notify (email) US Embassy in Haiti of the dates you will be in Haiti email: papniv@state.gov
- Obtain travel insurance (take a copy with you) ex. CSA Travel Insurance on-line.
- A Travel Grant (up to \$500 per traveler) is available for St. Anthony parishioners. Contact a Haiti Committee member for an application.

II. What to take with you

Medications

- Any personal medications
- Tylenol PM is helpful in the heat and with the noise of dogs and roosters.
- Pain Medicine (Tylenol, etc.)
- Mosquito Repellent (with a high % of DEET)

Personal Toiletries

- Most rooms have a shower, but there is NO HOT WATER
- Bath Soap, "Wet Ones," Sun Screen, Hand Sanitizer
- Avoid fragranced items (they attract mosquitos)
- Toilet paper is provided (but you may want to bring a roll)
- Towels and sheets are provided (but you may want to bring an extra towel and/or wash cloth)
- Small mirror, Ear-plugs (it can be noisy at night)

Clothing

- Generally light weight, loose fitting
- Medical Team will be provided scrubs during clinic time
- A nice outfit for Mass. Shirt (tie is optional), Dress or Skirt
- Sneakers, sandals, shower shoes
- Hat, Sunglasses, Shorts are OK, if not too short

Helpful items

- Flashlight with extra batteries
- Camera/charger
- Cell phone/charger
- Keep hydrated. Bring a water bottle. Drink mixes like Gatorade replenish electrolytes.
- Journal/notebook and pens
- Snacks for yourself and to share. ex. peanut butter, crackers, trail-mix, nuts, Jerky
- Book or game for down-times

Expenses

- You may need to overnight in Miami and/or Port-au-Prince
- If his schedule permits, the pastor of St. Montfort will drive U.S. visitors to and from Port-de-Paix.
- Otherwise, transport from Port-au-Prince to Port-de-Paix is by bus or car rental with a driver.
- U.S. currency is not used in Port-de-Paix, however the pastor will accept U.S. currency.
- Gratuity for meals and to tip the cooks is appropriate as are donations at Mass.

III. What to Expect in Haiti

General considerations

- You may need to lower your expectations. It will be hot and humid. This is not a Caribbean vacation!
- Mosquitoes may be numerous. Mosquito nets are provided with beds.
- Mingle with the people. You are ambassadors for St. Anthony Parish while in Haiti.
- Try to speak French (bring an English/French or Creole Dictionary)
- Know a little about Haiti, its customs and history.
- Facilities are primitive. Haitians value cleanliness, however not always by our standards.
- Bottled water will be available at the guest houses and in Port-de-Paix.
- Never drink the tap water in Haiti. Do not even rinse your mouth with tap water.
- Do not eat any raw fruit or vegetable unless you can peel them (ex. banana, mango, orange).
- The food is well seasoned and tasty, however you may want to bring along some snacks.
- Electricity is generally available, maybe not 24/7.
- It is generally not a good idea to walk unaccompanied beyond the grounds of the parish.

While in Port-au-Prince

- You may need to stay at a guesthouse overnight in Port-au-Prince.
- Most guesthouses will send someone to meet you at the airport.
- Matthew 25 House is a house of hospitality established by the Parish Twinning Program of the Americas (PTPA). It is located in the Delmas 33 area of Port-au-Prince. Many U.S. parishes use this guesthouse. The fee, about \$45 per night, includes 2 meals and transport to and from the PaP airport. It is a great place to meet people and share ideas. Contact Info: www Matthew 25 House Port-au-Prince Email: Matthew25house@yahoo.com Phone: Fixed Cell: (011) (509) (4) 272 9166 PTPA Coordinator: Bertony Domond his cell is (011) (509) (3) 726 4472
- Other guesthouse options include St. Joseph Home for Boys, Wings of Hope, and more
- Accommodations are better in Port-au-Prince. Electricity is more reliable. Warm water is available.
- If you have time, tour the city. Ask at the guesthouse about a car/driver to take you to see Mother Theresa's Home for the Sick and Dying, St. Joseph Home for Boys and the ruins of the Cathedral. Also worth seeing are Wings of Hope and the Baptist Mission House which are in nearby Fremantle.

While in Port-de-Paix

- When visiting St. Montfort Parish for the April 28 Feast Day of St. Louis Marie de Montfort (The Fet), be aware that the pastor and parishioners are busy preparing for the Fet. Each night prior to the Fet, novena-type prayer services with long sermons are held. There are also music and ritual rehearsals. The Fet Mass lasts about 3 hours. It is very hot in the church. A luncheon usually follows the Mass.
- Depending on the weather, you may tour the area and visit some of the parish "chapels" in the countryside. The Chapels are in Poste Metier, Paulin, Passe-Catabois, Baie des Moustiques and Vieux Remy. Other sites of interest are: the parish dispensary, St. Montfort School, the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, an orphanage, a nearby prison, the Sisters of Charity compound, beaches, and a market in St. Louis du Nord.