



Helpful hints to have a successful pilgrimage

1. Accommodations should be modest, never extravagant.
2. Comfort is not to be refused, especially when it is offered as a form of hospitality, but sleeping on the floor should not be avoided, if needed.
3. Staying in a dorm where students reside is a great idea if the partner has the facilities.
4. Take snacks such as crackers, nuts, dried fruit, jerky, string cheese, peanut butter and maybe a few canned foods with you as a back up source of food. (anything that does not have to be refrigerated)
5. Take a good Red Cross approved medical kit, sunscreen, a hat and bug repellent with DEET (50% or more).
6. Take both over the counter and prescribed meds for diarrhea and constipation.
7. Unless you are staying in a very high-end hotel, take an extra towel and washcloth, an extra roll of toilet paper or the small travel rolls and toilet seat covers. Also take antibacterial hand gel (no water needed) and baby wipes (they will come in handy).
8. Reading materials will help you get a sense of the country's history, culture, and contemporary news. Try to look for sources that give you the information from the perspective of both the country and the outsiders. Find out what the predominant language/s is/are and purchase a language book to take with you. (You may look it up on the Internet)
9. Seek opportunities to spend time with the people, sharing stories and experiences, striving and struggling to communicate.
10. Share spiritual practices with the hosts and learn from them.
11. The purpose is not to sightsee, but to connect; not to help, but to learn; not to do, but to practice spirituality while (and as the means of) experiencing the land of great cultures and people.

12. Defy unfair or misrepresented stereotypes about Americans as well as face the stereotypes that convict Americans.
13. Refrain from wearing offensive clothing, logos, and designers. Do your homework with regard to dress – what is acceptable in your hosting country.
14. Maintain the integrity of the pilgrimage by leaving all “worldly goods” behind... this includes walkman, disc men, game boys and other electronic toys, palm pilots, cell phones, etc.
15. Upon arriving, don't take out your camera and start taking pictures (like all at once). Many airports have very strict rules that prohibit picture takings. Always ask persons for permission before taking their picture. Many tourists rudely take pictures of people and children without asking permission. Assign ONE leadership photographer to group (this person can also maintain the laptop for “e-journaling”, homeland communication, and photo documentation). Pilgrims will learn much more by opening their eyes, their ears, and their hearts rather than searching for “Kodak Moments.”
16. Develop an itinerary and have an idea of what you want to do and where you want to go. Get input on modes of transportation and travel time from place to place. The itinerary is not the only means by which we have a good trip, but it is part of the framework of our experience. We want to do and see interesting and important things. But, we also need to provide space for God, others and ourselves.
17. The itinerary should allow significant time for processing and journaling as well as internalizing. Caution should be taken so that the participants don't experience an exhausting pace in the schedule. Some participants of mission trips in the past have expressed that “the pace of the schedule was significantly exhausting.”
18. It's a good idea to contact Global Ministries' Resource Development Office for information related to existing projects in the countries we are in global partnerships with. Ask for description flyers about the different projects and share this information with the group, congregation, region or conference. The Pilgrimage Leadership Team is constantly developing new flyers and you

need to ask for them in advance. This information will help travelers remember they don't need to create projects, but can connect with existing ones.

19. Use discretion in communications with the participants of the group, especially through e-mails, during the planning process of the pilgrimage. Whenever copying participants of the group on e-mails, it is important that most of the communications filter through the leaders, because some communication is coordination that the leadership contacts need to figure out before they let the group participants know. Another reason is that is good for one contact person to be the conduit of the information so that people don't become confused as to whom they should listen. It's easier to rely on one voice than it is to discern who is in charge of what.
20. Try not to stray from the beaten path. Try not to stray off alone; stay with at least one other person that you know.
21. Try to pack light. Allow for room to pack all the goodies you may purchase.
22. Take gifts you may want to give the host you may stay with or whoever may host you in one way or another. You may also want to take gifts for the children. These don't need to be expensive. Things with the church logo, tee shirts, pen sets, bubbles or balloons. Do not take any candy.

People-to-People Pilgrimage Program

P.O. Box 1986

Indianapolis, IN 46206-1986

(317) 713-2565 □ mcruzado@dom.disciples.org

www.globalministries.org

A common witness of the Division of Overseas Ministries, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and Wider Church Ministries, United Church of Christ