

Guidelines Sheet for a Good News in Action Mission Trip to Bogota Colombia

Updated April 2024

This guidelines sheet has been specifically designed for you, a person who is either considering a GNIA trip to Bogota, or who has already signed up for a trip. Please read this document all the way to the end. It is designed to prepare you and answer all your questions. Thank you in advance and we hope to see you very soon!

1. Where is Bogota Colombia located and what is some helpful information about it?

Bogota, Colombia is in the northern part of South America. It is the capital city. The population is over 10,000,000 people. The elevation of Bogota is over 8,500 feet, if you have any medical or physical concerns that might be negatively affected by a high-altitude location, please carefully consider whether this trip is a good fit for you. Bogota is located on a High Plateau of the Andes Mountains.

The climate is classified as Subtropical Highland. The average daily temperature is about 58 degrees F. The currency in Colombia is the “Colombian Peso”. The exchange rate can fluctuate daily, but a good average exchange rate is 4,000 Colombian Pesos per one US Dollar (September 2023). (Please check online for the most accurate exchange rate close to your date of travel) There are money exchange businesses in all the malls. Your passport is required to exchange dollars to pesos. They have limits as to how much you can exchange at a time.



2. **How will you get to Bogota?** You and/or your team will arrange for your flights. You will fly from your place of origin to the El Dorado International Airport (BOG), Bogota, Colombia.

3. **Are there any forms to fill out prior to landing in BOG?** Yes. Please go to this website: [Check-mig - Migración Colombia \(migracioncolombia.gov.co\)](https://migracioncolombia.gov.co)

You can fill out this form online **prior** to your trip. Select English. This is called Checkmig. You can fill the form out anywhere from 1 hour to 72 hours prior to your trip. Upon completing the Checkmig process, you will receive an email with an attached PDF that you will also need to enter the country. This process is recommended to enter Colombia and will be referenced by the immigration official that receives you and your passport when you enter the country. These forms are Individual, so if traveling in a group or in a family unit, each person must fill out their own form. Mark the purpose of your trip as TOURISM.

Write “**Fairfield By Marriot Bogota Embajada**” as your hotel. The address of the hotel is Avenida Calle 24 No 51 40, Bogotá, Colombia, Tel.: (57) 1 489 30 00

Here is a link to the website for the hotel for your convenience:

<https://www.marriott.com/en-us/hotels/bogfi-fairfield-bogota-embajada/overview/>

4. **What does the airport arrival procedure look like?** Deboard your plane, follow the crowd to Immigration. Get in the line that says “Foreigners”. The immigration official will

scan your passport and stamp your status as a “TOURIST”. **Be sure to show this status to the hotel upon check-in so you will not be charged hotel taxes.** After clearing Immigration, proceed downstairs to pick up your suitcase at the baggage claim area that was announced on your plane, and then clear Customs. Bags are randomly checked, so please hold on to your bag tag claim that you were given when you checked your luggage as your origin. Your bags will be x-rayed as you complete the Customs process. (Do not bring any fresh food or produce into Colombia, it is not allowed. You may bring packaged, processed snacks).

Once you clear Customs, exit with your bags through the only door available for Exit.

There are TWO possibilities for your Airport to Hotel Transportation:

ONE: Pastor Alex Hernandez prefers to arrange private transportation for all mission trip participants. This is part of the whole package he contracts for the mission trip week. If on your informational email you receive the message that says you will be picked up by private transportation that Pastor Alex has arranged, then please follow these exact steps:

Go up one level (you will exit customs on the lower level) using either the escalator or elevator and walk outside to the street that goes in front of the airport. Please wait at the bus stop that is in front of Airport Exit Door #5 (every door has a number over it). You will be picked up by the arranged transportation at that exact spot.

The drive from the airport to the hotel is about 20 minutes.

TWO: The hotel you are staying at offers a very convenient shuttle once per hour, on the half hour from 5:30AM to 9:30PM (5 30AM, 6 30AM, 7:30AM etc). If your informational email indicates to you that you should take the hotel shuttle, then please follow the following instructions:

After exiting customs, go up one level (you will exit customs on the lower level) using either the escalator or elevator and walk outside to the street that goes in front of the airport. Walk across the street to the median to the place where you see a sign that says “Hotel Shuttle” in English and Spanish. Wait right there for your shuttle, it will be along at the next half hour. You must be in this spot to be identified by the shuttle driver for a ride.



The image to the left shows you what the shuttle looks like.

Also please see the next page for the hotel shuttle schedule. It is in English and Spanish. The airport pick up schedule

(airport to hotel) is listed in the right column. The hotel pick up schedule (hotel back to airport) is listed in the left column.

The hotel shuttle will pick you up and take you to the hotel. The shuttle is white and has the words “Fairfield, Marriott, and Wyndam Hotel” written on the side of the shuttle.

Upon arrival to the hotel, you will check in with your passport and give your credit card and be asked to prepay for the week. Be sure the receptionist sees the Tourist Visa, so you are exempt from Hotel Taxes. Be sure you have informed your credit card company that you will be traveling to Bogota so that the charges are not denied.

- 5. What are the Hotel details?** You will be staying at the Fairfield by Marriott Bogota Embajada. Here is a link to their website: <https://www.marriott.com/en-us/hotels/bogfi-fairfield-bogota-embajada/overview/> If you have participated in previous mission trips to Bogota: The hotel is the same hotel as always. The Tryp Hotel was bought out by Marriott in the summer of 2023)

The current hotel prices are about \$65 per night for a single or double room, about \$75 for a triple. The hotel prices may vary as the exchange rate of USD and Colombian Pesos fluctuates.

The price includes an amazing breakfast in a very pleasant restaurant located right next to the 2nd floor lobby-check in desk. There is also free Wi-Fi throughout the entire hotel. Some hotel rooms are equipped with mini refrigerators. If your room does not have one, but you would like one, you simply can request one from the front desk, and one will be delivered to your room.

There is a full-service two-story grocery store “EXITO” 5 blocks away at the “GRAN ESTACION” Mall where you can purchase water, snacks, or anything you would expect to find in a full-service grocery store. It is an easy walk and something you can accomplish any time you have free time. There are many little stores, restaurants, and pharmacies within walking distance of the hotel.

The cancelation policy for the hotel is as follows: cancelations must be made at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled reservation to avoid penalties. If between 24- and 48-hours’ notice is given, the first night’s stay will be charged as a penalty. A “no show” receives the greatest penalty, the room will be charged for the entire week. Pastor Alex Hernandez secures the reservation with his personal credit card. Any penalties will be charged to him. The team member or members who incur the penalties will be held responsible for reimbursing Pastor Alex for the penalty if that situation occurs.

**SERVICIO DE TRANSPORTE
SHUTTLE SERVICE**

SALIDA HOTEL - AEROPUERTO PICK UP HOTEL - AIRPORT	SALIDA AEROPUERTO - HOTEL PICK UP AIRPORT - HOTEL
5:00 AM	5:30 AM
6:00 AM	6:30 AM
7:00 AM	7:30 AM
8:00 AM	8:30 AM
9:00 AM	9:30 AM
10:00 AM	10:30 AM
11:00 AM	11:30 AM
12:00 M	12:30 M
1:00 PM	1:30 PM
2:00 PM	2:30 PM
3:00 PM	3:30 PM
4:00 PM	4:30 PM
5:00 PM	5:30 PM
6:00 PM	6:30 PM
7:00 PM	7:30 PM
8:00 PM	8:30 PM
9:00 PM	9:30 PM

RECOMENDAMOS ESTAR 10 MINUTOS ANTES DE LA SALIDA DEL TRANSPORTE. SUJETO A DISPONIBILIDAD
WE RECOMMEND BEING 10 MINUTES PRIOR TO THE DEPARTURES OF THE SHUTTLE

SOLICITE SU TRANSPORTE PRIVADO
CON UN COSTO ADICIONAL
EN EL ☎ (+57) 318 538 11 27

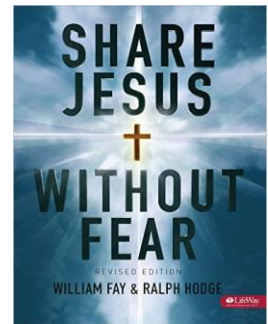
REQUEST YOUR PRIVATE TRANSPORTATION
WITH AN ADDITIONAL
COST ON ☎ (+57) 318 538 11 27

Fairfield
BY MARRIOTT
BOGOTÁ EMBAJADA

PROPORCIONADO POR EL LINEA
diplomat
SERVICIO ESPECIAL PARA MIEMBROS

Within the hotel property, on the First Floor, is a large Plaza Food Court with many excellent options. It is a great place to have lunch and dinner daily. There are also many other eating options within walking distance. A very popular restaurant called “Crepes and Waffles” is right across the street.

6. **What do you need to do to be prepared for the mission trip to Bogota?** Your spiritual preparation is most important. All team members **MUST BE** well **TRAINED** in Personal Evangelism and be highly competent in sharing the gospel utilizing a standard method such as “Share Jesus Without Fear”, Evangelism Explosion, The Four Spiritual Laws, The Roman Road, The Big Question Tract, 3 Circles, etc.



Approved Evangelism tools for the trip include:

The wordless book or Evangelism bracelets or necklaces with the presentation well memorized as well as the verses.

The Big Question Gospel Tract

The Evangelism Cube



7. **What is the best way to prepare children and/or preteens for ministry and evangelism?** Help them learn how to share the gospel using any of the above visual aids. Teach them the basics and encourage them to share with children their age.

8. **What are the Recommended Vaccines for Bogota Colombia?**

<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/colombia>

- Routine vaccines: MMR, DPT or DT, Chickenpox, Polio, and your yearly flu shot.
- Typhoid
- Hepatitis A

9. **What does Good News in Action need from you?** We will need your COMPLETE TEAM ROSTER and your FLIGHT INFORMATION **no later than 8 weeks prior to your trip**. You will send this to goodnewsinactionelsalvador@gmail.com You will be provided with an Excel sheet and will be asked to fill it out for your Roster. The following information is required:

- Full legal name as it appears on the passport of each participant

- Team members grouped into hotel rooms as they desire to stay (single, double, triple, quad (adults with minor children))
- The US passport number for each person
- The gender and age of each person
- The relationship among roommates if applicable
- The email address of each team member
- A short description of any past mission experience
- A notation of any special talents (Spanish, Preaching, Music, Paint Board, Drama, Sports, Medical, Children or Youth)
- A notation of any special medical or physical needs a person might have
- A list of Prescriptions a team member is taking.

10. What are all the costs associated with the trip? (Please use this to make your budget)

- Airfare (Variable)
- Hotel Stay (About \$230 per person in a Double Room)
- Lunch and Dinner money (\$20-25 per day)
- Water bottles for the week (\$15)
- Souvenirs (\$30) optional
- Medical treatment or medicine in the event someone gets sick (\$50)
- Phone Calls (variable)
- An Offering for the church on Sunday (variable)
- A LOGISTICAL FEE: \$425 per person USD Cash (Effective July 1, 2024). Every team member helps to cover the cost of logistics for the week. This fee will be collected during the initial orientation meeting. Please nothing higher than \$20.00 bills please. All bills must be in excellent condition. Please place the \$425.00 fee into an envelope and write the team member's name on the outside as well as the name of the church. The Logistical Fee will be used to help defray the costs of transportation, translators, all paper materials, stickers, permissions, fees, materials and supplies for the Family Festivals, hotel conference rooms, and any other logistical cost for the week. If you need or would like a Contribution Record (Tax Deductible Contribution Statement) for this money, please just ask Pam Kern at goodnewsinactionelsalvador@gmail.com and it will be provided.
- One 5 Pound Bag of Candy purchased and packed (Costco, Sams, Target, Walmart)
- One Ball of your choice (Basketball or Soccer) purchased, deflated, and packed.
- Family Festival or Pet Festival Prizes (optional but very helpful if you can bring some)

11. What should you pack for your trip?

- A Bible or Bilingual New Testament (paperback)
- pens
- hand sanitizer and/or wipes
- a pocket flashlight
- a hat & sun block

- pain reliever for headaches
- Imodium in case of diarrhea
- Conservative Warm Clothing (shorts may not be worn for any ministry activity). A warm jacket is recommended for evenings.
- Comfortable closed shoes
- An intestinal infection antibiotic such as Cipro or Bactrim
- Anti-allergy medication if you are subject to allergies
- A poncho or umbrella (can rain at any time of the year)
- Personal medications

12. What are some extra tools that could be brought that would be a blessing to Colombians?

More candy, snack packs, or festival prizes
 More soccer or basketballs
 Gospel bracelets
 Fluorescent bracelets
 Basic Hygiene kits to give away
 Basic School Supply kits to give away

13. What does the Basic (Approximate) Schedule for the week look like?

Saturday: Arrivals, hotel check in, get settled.
 Sunday: 8AM Orientation meeting (bring \$425 per person logistical fee, candy, balls, and prizes to turn in please), Church at Vida Nueva Bogota (10AM-Noon), 3-7PM Afternoon Evangelistic Outreach
 Monday-Friday: 8-9AM Devotional meeting, 9-Noon Morning Evangelistic Outreach, Lunch Break, 3-7 PM Afternoon-Evening Evangelistic Outreach
 Saturday: Departure
 You will be provided with a full printable schedule of the week a few days prior to your trip. Please be prompt to all the times listed on the schedule.
 Also, team leaders, please count your people every time you board the bus as this will help us depart on time. We will always ask if all your team members are present, it is very helpful if you are able to answer this question quickly.

14. What is the key Word for the week? “FLEXIBILITY”. Please be sure you possess a willingness to “go with the flow” while on the mission trip. Unexpected change is a common part of Latin American Culture and without a doubt, you will experience this.

15. What kind of ministry might we be doing with Vida Nueva Bogota?

Every activity will have as its goal the reaching of people with the gospel. During the morning, the most common activity will be One on One Evangelism at the “Calle Septima”, a very wide and long pedestrian walkway located in the downtown of Bogota. Afternoons and Evenings will be Family or Pet Festivals in large parks in populated Neighborhoods where again we will be sharing the gospel One on One and inviting neighbors to the

Festival. The week might also include a special activity which will be explained prior to the trip.

16. What are the instructions regarding currency exchange?

Upon arrival, exchange enough Dollars into Colombian Pesos to get you through the weekend AT THE AIRPORT, inside the baggage claim area. You will see a very formal Exchange Booth INSIDE THE BAGGAGE CLAIM AREA. The exchange rates inside the baggage claim area are excellent and usually nearly the same as in any bank or exchange house. Then on Monday, exchange more USD to Colombian Pesos to get you through the week. You will want to do this second exchange either at a bank or a money exchange store within the local mall, La Gran Estacion. Take your physical passport with you when you go change money, it is required.

In addition to exchanging dollars to pesos as described above, you can also use your credit card at one of the Hotel ATM machines located in the Restaurant Plaza area just left of the elevators. The Davivienda machine usually works the best. You will receive Pesos for your transaction.

17. At the end of my trip, how will I get back to the airport? Private Transportation or the hotel shuttle will be your hotel to airport transportation when you depart. Your informational email shortly prior to the trip will indicate to you your specific transportation. If you are taking private transportation, your email will tell you what time you need to be at the pick up spot outside the hotel. If you are taking the shuttle, be sure to coordinate your shuttle ride back to the airport with the Second-Floor front desk attendant at the hotel. Plan to be at the airport at least 2 hours prior to your scheduled departure, so please schedule your shuttle accordingly. If a large group of people all depart at the same time, private transportation will be arranged by Pastor Alex. The shuttles from the hotel to the airport run every hour on the hour starting at 6 AM and running until 10PM. If your departure is very early and the 6AM shuttle doesn't work, then private transportation will be arranged for you. Please see the image on the first page for the hotel to airport shuttle schedule.

18. Are there any aspects of the Bogota Culture that will naturally provide opportunities to build bridges for sharing the gospel? YES!

The people of Bogota love to talk and engage in conversation, they appreciate literature and art (the Bible is very appealing to them), they desire to know God, they are very friendly to foreigners and tourists, and are avid soccer fans (great conversation starter).

19. Are there any aspects of the culture that may cause a barrier for the Gospel? YES!

Since Bogota is a very large city, everyone is constantly on the rapid move and lives a stressful life, it is a challenge to get them to stop and really consider the depth and breadth of the gospel. Boldness is necessary to be successful.

The larger Evangelical churches in Colombia are churches that preach bad doctrine and have caused epidemic damage and disgrace to the church. For this reason, many people will turn down an invitation to a "church". For this reason, our invitation is always to "Study the Bible". This invitation usually yields good results.

The ambient temperature in the evenings and at night is cold, cold enough that people do not like to come out of their homes and come to the park after 6 PM. For this reason, the most valuable time to seek out people to share the gospel is before the sun goes down.

20. What are the most common struggles teammates might face in a mission trip to Bogota?

The altitude in Bogota is over 8,500 feet. This might cause some headaches, lightheadedness, dizziness, sleeping difficulties, respiratory or oxygenation difficulties to some people at the beginning of the week. It is recommended that one increases hydration significantly, eats light and that their physical exertion be done in moderation until their body gets used to the altitude.

Due to Bogota's proximity to the equator, the sun is very strong and burns very easily. One must use abundant Sun Block all week long.

The climate in Bogota is very unpredictable, it can be cold, warm, or rainy. Always come prepared, especially for rain with an impermeable jacket with a hood and/or umbrella.

21. What is the Bogota Church information?

Vida Nueva Bogota meets at the following location:

Calle 12 #68c - 24, 0000 Bogotá, Colombia

The phone number is (57) 320 999 4340. The dress code for church is casual. Church meets every Sunday morning from 10AM to Noon.

We recommend you use the following link to learn everything you can about Vida Nueva Bogota Colombia and its pastor Alex Hernandez.

[Vida Nueva Bogota Columbia — Good News In Action](#)

Please also see their Facebook page for more information and photos:

<https://www.facebook.com/vidanuevabogota/>



Here is a photo of the Vida Nueva Bogota Pastor and his family: Alex Hernandez is pictured with his wife Norma and daughter Paola. They have been in Bogota since the church's initiation in September 2014.

Contact numbers:

Pastor Alex Hernandez: +57 321 907 0140, Norma +57 313 342 5133 (Whatsapp)

alexhcordero@gmail.com

We are looking forward to seeing you soon. May God Bless you as you prepare for your trip!

If you have any additional questions, please feel free to write us at goodnewsinactionelsalvador@gmail.com

If you are already signed up for a mission trip to Bogota and need any mission trip assistance, please contact Montse Figueroa at gnumissiontrips@gmail.com As of January 2024, Good News in Action has welcomed Montse as the new mission trip coordinator.