



Bolivia Country Packet

Updated May 2017



Maranatha in Bolivia

A few years ago, Seventh-day Adventist church leaders from Bolivia asked Maranatha Volunteers International to begin the process of starting a new effort in the country. After meeting with church officials, Maranatha committed to begin work in Bolivia by building two churches in late 2017. Starting in 2018, volunteers will be an important part of the construction efforts as Maranatha has committed to building several church frames and school classrooms throughout the country.

Bolivia first received the Seventh-day Adventist message in 1897, when a literature evangelist entered the country with copies of *Patriarchs and Prophets* and *Steps to Christ*. But it wasn't until 1907 that Adventist missionaries, Edward W. Thomann and his wife Flora, were assigned to Bolivia. Today, Bolivia is home to nearly 120,000 Seventh-day Adventists.

Many congregations in Bolivia are meeting in rented spaces or in churches that are too small or run down. This often creates problems when trying to evangelize and invite community members to church services. Maranatha meets this need by constructing much-needed buildings for these congregations. The full project scope is still being determined.

Volunteer Opportunities

In Bolivia, Maranatha will focus on church construction consisting of concrete floors, One-Day Church frames, and roofs. Maranatha has also committed to building school classrooms throughout the country. Some projects will include block walls if sponsored by the local conference, church members, or volunteer groups. Volunteer projects typically combine construction with community outreach in the form of medical clinics and children's programs. However, the details of each project vary, depending on the volunteers, availability of opportunities, and needs of the local church.

Project Funding

The local church is responsible for providing the land and labor to excavate the site. Maranatha has agreed to raise funds to help subsidize the building costs in Bolivia. These funds are provided by donations from individuals, churches and school groups, and businesses, as well as the donors of the \$10 Church program. If you or your team is interested in helping to sponsor a church or school in Bolivia, please speak with Maranatha for more information.

Bolivia Overview

Bolivia is located in South America, and it is the largest landlocked country of the Americas. The country is formed by the Andes mountain range to the west and the Amazon to the north. Bolivia was once rich with minerals, including gold and silver. It was a part of the large Incan Empire that covered much of western South America. However, in the 16th century it was colonized by the Spanish, who hoped to export the mineral wealth back to Spain. Many of the native Bolivians were forced into slavery for years until most of the wealth was stripped, near the end of the 17th century. Shortly thereafter, Simon Bolivar, helped the Bolivians gain their independence in 1825, and the new country was named in his honor.

After independence, Bolivia still struggled with internal strife and wars with neighboring countries. Bolivia had a hard time keeping its borders protected, and it lost great portions of territory to neighboring countries. At one time, Bolivia owned several thousand miles of Pacific Ocean coastline. But in the 1880s, the country lost its access to the sea to Chile. After losing wars, it also lost northeastern provinces that were rich in rubber trees to Brazil and southeastern provinces to Paraguay. Guerilla movements continued until the transition to democracy in the late 20th century.

Bolivia is now considered a stable country of South America. The local economy relies heavily on the exportation of tin, lithium, and petroleum. Recent economic growth has been higher than at any point in the last 30 years. Within the last 50 years, the population has tripled its size. Now 62% of the population live in urban areas. Due to its early colonization, Spanish remains the official and predominant language throughout the country, but 26 local indigenous languages also have official status including Quechua, Aymara, and Guarani.

Culture

Bolivia's culture is heavily influenced by the various Andean people groups, such as the Quechua and Aymara. However, years of being a Spanish colony is evident in Bolivia's healthy population of Spanish-influenced artisans, builders, dancers, and other cultural leaders.

In much of Bolivia, you may find women dressed in clothing common to other Andean cultures in Peru and Ecuador. This includes brightly colored pleated skirts, called polleras, shirts with intricate embroidery, and bowling hats. However, traditional clothing is not nearly as common nowadays as it once was. As more young people move to the urban centers and adopt western clothing, much of the old way of life is also left behind. Bolivian food, however, permeates every aspect of urban and rural life. Most meals are composed of traditional staples such as corn, potatoes, and beans, as well as Spanish staples like wheat, rice, and meat. The salteña is a popular item in Bolivia. They are similar to a baked empanada, usually filled with savory meat, and often eaten for breakfast or a mid-morning snack.

Geography and Climate

Bolivia has a very diverse terrain including three distinct regions: the Andean highlands (or Atiplano), dry valleys, and tropical rainforests. The Atiplano, in the southwest part of the country, is a plateau formed between two chains of the Andes mountains and is home to La Paz, the world's highest seat of government. It is, by far, the most occupied region with approximately half the population residing in the Atiplano. These high altitudes are also home to many animals including llama, alpaca, vicuna (a type of small camel), cougars, wolves, and deer. The northern part of the country is primarily composed of the "North Basin," the rivers that feed into the Amazon river. It is home to other animals including sloths, tapirs, anteaters, and jaguars. Due to the great variety in terrain, Bolivia also has a very diverse climate. The Atiplano has a desert polar climate characterized by dry, strong, cold winds. The valleys are often temperate, and the rainforests are wetter and more humid.

Facts & Figures

Capital:	Sucre
Nationality:	Bolivian
Population:	10.97 million
Poverty:	45%
Unemployment:	6.2%
Languages:	Spanish 61%, Quechua 21%, Aymara 15%, other local languages
Literacy:	95.7%
Life Expectancy:	69.2 years
HIV/AIDS:	0.29%
Climate:	varies with altitude; humid and tropical to cold and semiarid
Religion:	Catholic 77%, Protestant 16%
Industries:	mining, petroleum, tobacco, handicrafts, natural gas, mineral ores, tin, gold, soy products
Exports:	Bolivian Boliviano (6.9 Bolivianos to \$1 USD – April 2017)
Currency:	UTC – 04:00 (same as Eastern Daylight Savings Time)
Time Zone:	

Cultural Sensitivity

Maranatha's volunteer experience includes meeting new people and learning how to serve them. Every culture has a unique view of the world. It is important to enter another culture with humility, respect, and understanding of their traditions. Sometimes you may observe something in Bolivia that will be very different from what you're accustomed to. It does not make it wrong—just different. Be respectful and consider their perspective.

Being sensitive to a culture also means being respectful to micro-cultures, such as Adventism, within a larger culture. Adventists in Bolivia tend to be more conservative than Adventists in the United States or Canada. We try to be sensitive to this by asking volunteers to dress as modestly as possible. Pants and cap sleeves are preferred to shorts and tank tops. For church activities, women need to have skirts or dresses reaching past the knees, and men need to wear ties and closed-toe shoes, especially if they are involved in platform activities.

Planning a Project

Partnering with Maranatha

There are many reasons to plan a project with Maranatha. After nearly 50 years of focus on construction-oriented mission projects, the organization has this process mastered.

- **Maranatha has a great track record.** From local church members to church officials to volunteer team leaders—everyone recognizes that Maranatha is reliable and gets things done. We know that the details are important. Maranatha will always have your worksite prepared and support you in creating a successful project for your team.
- **Maranatha provides local support.** It is a huge help to have someone at your location, before your arrival, to scout out details and make arrangements for your group. Once your group arrives our volunteer support person will be around to help as a translator and navigate the inevitable bumps in the road.
- **Maranatha provides quality construction support.** You don't have to be a construction expert to build a project with Maranatha. Our qualified crew will prep the project site before you arrive, and they will stay to teach and assist the volunteers throughout the project. You won't just build a church or school—you will do it right!
- **Maranatha office support is available as you plan.** Hilary Macias is the group project specialist at Maranatha. She is available for questions and resources as you plan your project and work with group members.
- **Maranatha is an independent organization, but we work hand-in-hand with church leadership around the world.** Every Maranatha project in Bolivia has been selected and approved by Adventist leadership in Bolivia as a priority for growth. This means your project will have the full, long-term support of the larger church.

Accommodations

Most leaders of Maranatha projects choose to have the group stay in a basic hotel. While there are many places with varying comfort and price levels, you should expect a rather simple hotel.

Check with the project packet or your group leader for specific information regarding bed linens, towels and washcloths, hot water, air-conditioning, Wi-Fi availability, and eating facilities.

Excursion Options

Bolivia is full of great options for site-seeing. To find the best excursion for your trip, try searching online. Look for peer ratings on various activities through sites like Trip Advisor. Guidebooks published by Lonely Planet or Frommer's are also good places to start. Maranatha has a few recommended excursions or activities that other groups have done in the past. Be sure to ask what is the best option for your group.

Attractions

Amboro National Park (Santa Cruz/Cochabamba) | Located between Santa Cruz and Cochabamba, this national park is a nature reserve with over 177 species of mammals, including spectacled bear, giant sloth, jaguar, and the giant anteater, as well as 912 different species of birds. Guided tours are available including visits to beautiful waterfalls, hikes, and safari drives. For the more adventurous there are also kayaking, rappelling, horseback riding, and rafting tours available.

El Cristo de la Concordia (Cochabamba) | El Cristo de la Concordia (or Christ of Peace) is a statue of Jesus located just east of Cochabamba, Bolivia. It was originally modeled after the Christ the Redeemer statue in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. It is currently the largest statue of Jesus in the world. Visitors can take photos from the base of the statue, and on Sundays, visitors can climb stairs inside the statue to access a viewing area inside the outstretched arms.

Lake Titicaca (La Paz) | High in the Andes mountains, this lake forms a portion of the Bolivia-Peru border. Famous for its high elevation, crystal clear water, beautiful scenery, and reed-constructed boats and floating houses, Lake Titicaca is definitely on the must-see list. Visitors can take all-day boat tours that include a stop at the largest island in the lake, Isla del Sol (Island of the Sun). With the high altitude, hiking is more difficult, but even with leisurely walks, you'll still be able to see a lot of the island.

Salar de Uyuni (Uyuni/Sucre) | Salar de Uyuni, located in southwestern Bolivia, is the largest salt flat in the world. It encompasses more than 4,000 square miles! The crust of flat serves as a source of salt production, and it covers brine pools that are extremely rich in lithium. These pools contain 50-70% of the world's lithium reserves. During the dry season, you can see a thick, white crust of salt for miles, but during the rainy season, a thin sheet of water covers the salt and creates a perfect reflection of the sky.

Valle de la Luna (La Paz) | Valle de la Luna (Valley of the Moon) is located about 40 minutes outside of La Paz. It isn't really a valley but rather an expanse of naturally created canyons and spires, composed of clay and sandstone that have been eroded by the area's winds and rains. The color of the formations varies from beige to red, and even purple. Entrance into the park is very affordable and permits access to several walking trails.

Foreign Cash and Money Exchange

Bolivia uses the Bolivian Boliviano, and it has an exchange rate of approximately 6.9 Bolivianos to \$1 USD (May 2017) depending on where you make the exchange. Any cash you bring should be in new, unmarked U.S. dollar bills.

You can exchange money in or outside the airport at a bank or an exchange booth. Often your project coordinator will exchange money at a simple, rounded rate.

ATMs will allow you to withdraw Bolivianos directly and will probably give you the best exchange rate. There are ATMs in the airport; outside the larger cities, they can be hard to find and unreliable.

Credit/Debit Cards

While some establishments accept credit and debit cards, it might be easier to use cash while traveling through the country. If you do use a credit or debit card, expect a 5% - 12% surcharge for international use. Be careful when using your credit card in public; never let it out of your sight. It is wise to let your credit card company know in advance the dates you will be in Bolivia so they don't block your card when you use it in a foreign country.

Traveler's Checks

Traveler checks are not widely accepted, and commissions can be high.

Electricity

The standard current in Bolivia is 220-240 volt AC. Some areas in La Paz use 110V.

Many appliances now are dual-voltage (you can check for this on the tag on the charger). For any small, non-dual-voltage appliances (hair dryers, electric shavers, camera chargers), you will need a plug adapter and voltage converter. Voltage converters can be found at most stores like Walmart or Target for about \$20.

Most appliances will also need a plug adapter. The standard outlets have two vertical prongs without a ground prong (Type A) or two round prongs without a ground prong (Type C). International plug adapters can be found in sets or individually at many stores. You can also buy adapters for grounded to ungrounded plugs at most stores and hardware stores. Electrical surges and outages can be common. You should use a surge protector for expensive appliances and computers.



Laundry

Most cities and large towns have full service laundromats. Many hotels also provide laundry service but often charge per item of clothing, which adds up fast. You can also choose to do your laundry by hand at no additional cost.

Communication

Technology has increased so much that we can stay connected around the world.

Cell phone service is available in most moderate-sized cities throughout the country, but rural areas still experience limited service. You can use your own phone and service plan, but check international rates and service areas since international roaming and data charges can be very expensive. You can avoid unexpected charges by putting your phone on airplane mode and limiting all data usage to WiFi areas. You can also consider the T-Mobile Simple Choice Plan, which offers free international data and texting and discounted calling in more than 115 countries around the world.

Local cell phones can be also be purchased for relatively cheap price, and you can reload minutes to call locally and internationally for reasonable rates. You can also buy a SIM card for your unlocked device.

To call Bolivia from the U.S., enter the international access code (011) + the Bolivian country code (591) + the local number.

To call the U.S. from Bolivia, enter the U.S. country code (1) and then the local area code and phone number. For example, to call the Maranatha office you would dial +1 (916) 774-7700.

You can also communicate with loved ones at home through free smart phone and computer apps such as WhatsApp, Viber, FaceTime, and Skype. WiFi is available at hotels and restaurants throughout the country, and Internet cafes are also popular.

Time Zone

Bolivia's time zone is UTC-4:00. When the United States is on Daylight Savings Time, Bolivia is three hours ahead of Pacific Daylight Savings Time and the same time as Eastern Daylight Savings Time. When the United States is on Standard Time, Bolivia is four hours ahead of Pacific Standard Time and 1 hour ahead of Eastern Standard Time.

Restrooms

Public restrooms are few and far between in Bolivia, so you should take breaks at your hotel or restaurants. Western-style flush toilets are the norm in most places. But toilet paper usually goes in the wastebasket not down the toilet.

Weights & Measures

Bolivia officially uses the metric system. In some areas, you will find pounds and gallons used as well.

Travel

Airports

The three main airports are the El Alto International Airport, located in La Paz (airport code LPB); the Jorge Wilstermann International Airport, located in Cochabamba (airport code CBB); and the Viru Viru International Airport located in Santa Cruz (airport code VVI).

Most Maranatha projects will require you to book a flight into one of these three airports or into a smaller local airport closer to the project location, if one exists. A variety of direct flights connect to the airports through hubs in the U.S. and Central/South America. Popular airline carriers include American, United, Delta, Copa, LATAM, TAM, and Avianca.

When booking your flights, we recommend that you try to book on one itinerary all the way to the final destination to take advantage of the international baggage allowances. Individual domestic flights tend to have stricter limits for baggage weight and size.

Entry and Exit Requirements

The information provided below is for U.S. and Canadian citizens. Citizens of other countries should consult the Bolivian embassy or consulate in your home country for entrance requirements.

Passport | All U.S. and Canadian citizens must present a passport valid for at least six months from your scheduled return date. If you do not have a passport, U.S. citizens can apply at any U.S. post office or online at <http://travel.state.gov>. Canadian citizens can apply online at www.passport.gc.ca. It can take up to two months to complete the entire process; plan accordingly to give yourself enough time to receive your passport. You can expedite the process for an additional fee. Passport photos can be taken at the post office, FedEx, Costco, or Walgreens.

Entry and Exit

- **Valid Passport**
- **Tourist Visa (U.S. Only)**

Visa | In addition to a passport, US citizens must receive a tourist or specific purpose visa for the country of Bolivia. You can receive a tourist visa ahead of time or upon arrival in Bolivia. The specific purpose visa must be processed ahead of time through the Bolivian embassy. Bolivia processes visas on a regional basis, so requirements may vary by jurisdiction.

Volunteers can choose between a tourist visa (\$160, valid for multiple entries for 10 years) or a specific purpose visa (\$85, valid for one trip of 30 days).

In order to receive the visa, you will need your passport, passport photos, flight itinerary, flight itinerary and/or invitation letter, and a copy of a recent bank or credit card statement. Those doing the specific purpose visa must also submit a clear police record. Applicants under the age of 18 must also provide a notarized letter of consent.

A visa procedure packet is available from Maranatha and can help guide you through the process.

The gate agent may ask to see your visa before boarding your flight to Bolivia. If you will be getting your visa upon arrival, just tell them so and be prepared to show your return flight itinerary. They should then let you proceed.

More information regarding the US entrance procedures in Bolivia visit <http://travel.state.gov/>

A tourist visa is not currently required for Canadian citizens.

Yellow Fever Vaccination | According to Bolivia Immigration, the yellow fever vaccination is no longer required to receive an entry visa into Bolivia. However, the Miami embassy still lists the requirement on their website. Regardless of which embassy you process with, if you already have a valid certificate, we would recommend that you include a copy of it with the visa application.

Immigration and Customs Process

On the airplane to Bolivia, you will receive two forms that need to be filled out for processing at the airport. The immigration card will ask for information such as your name (use the name on your passport), passport number, flight number, and address where you will be staying in Bolivia. Be sure to consult your project packet or your group leader for this address, prior to departure. You will also receive a customs form requiring much of the same information.

After you exit the plane, you will follow the signs to Immigration (Migración). You will need to present your entrance forms, passport, and visa. They may ask you a couple questions regarding your trip to Bolivia. Make sure you say that you are a tourist. If you say you are coming to “work” on a Maranatha trip, it can cause confusion; they may require a work or business visa for your travel in the country. At immigration, they may stamp your passport or give you a slip of paper. Make sure you keep whatever they give you with your passport for the duration of your time in Bolivia.

After passing through immigration, head to the baggage claim, gather your bags, and go through customs (Aduanas), where they will take your customs form. They may put your bags through an x-ray, do a randomly selected bag check, or manually search your bag. Don’t worry about this process as they are primarily looking for fruits, vegetables, animals, and drugs. After passing through customs, proceed to the arrivals area of the airport where you can meet up with the rest of the group or continue to your domestic flight.

In-Country Transportation in Bolivia

Many international rental companies have a presence in Bolivia. You can reserve and pick up rental cars, trucks, and vans at most airports through agencies such as Avis, Expedia, Budget, Hertz, and Alamo.

The roads around major cities are usually good but take care with merging traffic and watch for potholes. Before driving, familiarize yourself with local laws and traffic norms. Roads between smaller towns are not usually paved. It is not recommended to drive at night.

Taxis in Bolivia are relatively cheap, but some can be unreliable and unsafe. We recommend that when traveling by taxi in large cities, you look for “tourist taxis” outside hotels and the airport. They can be a little more expensive, but they will respect international driving standards better. Taxis do not have meters; instead they usually have a preset fare to your destination. Make sure you agree on the fare before entering the taxi and request that the driver not pick up additional passengers during the trip.

Maranatha coordinates transportation for Open Team projects in privately rented vehicles with drivers. If you are leading a group project with Maranatha, we can help your group reserve a private school bus, coaster bus, or tourist coach for your transportation needs.

Nº DE REGISTRO / Record number **Nº 0114409**

C.A.N **MINISTERIO DE GOBIERNO**
DIRECCIÓN GENERAL DE MIGRACIÓN
Bienvendido al Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia

REGISTRO DE LLEGADA Y SALIDA DE NACIONALES Y EXTRANJEROS A TERRITORIO BOLIVIANO
Arrival and departure record for Bolivian and foreign citizens.

INSTRUCCIONES / INSTRUCTIONS

- ESTA TARJETA DEBE SER LLENADA POR CIUDADANOS BOLIVIANOS Y EXTRANJEROS.
This card must be filled by Bolivian and foreign citizens.
- ESCRIBA EN LETRA DE IMPRENTA, MAYÚSCULA, LEGIBLE Y CON BOLÍGRAFO, NO ESCRIBA AL REVERSO DE ESTA TARJETA.
Fill out this card in clear, block capitals. Do not write on the back.
- ESTA TARJETA DEBE SER LLENADA DEL CAMPO 1 AL 26.
This card must be filled from 1 to 26.
- ESTA TARJETA DIVIDIDA EN DOS DEBE SER ENTREGADA A MIGRACIÓN BOLIVIA EN EL PUESTO DE INGRESO O SALIDA, DE ACUERDO AL CASO.
This card divided in two parts must be hand it into the Bolivian Immigration at the port of entry or departure, depending on the case.

REGISTRO/Record

01. APELLIDO(S) / Surnames

02. NOMBRE(S) / First (Given) Name

03. FECHA DE NACIMIENTO (D/M/A) / Date of Birth (D/M/Y)

04. SEXO / Sex ☐ ☐

05. NACIONALIDAD / Nationality

06. PAÍS DE RESIDENCIA / Country of Residence

07. OCUPACIÓN / Occupation
☐ Profesional / Professional ☐ Comerciante o Empresario / Merchant or Businessman ☐ Estudiante / Student
☐ Técnico / Technician ☐ Militar o Policía / Military or Police ☐ Jubilado / Retired
☐ Empleado no profesional / Non professional employee ☐ Otros / Other

08. DOCUMENTO DE VIAJE / Travel Document
☐ Pasaporte / Passport ☐ Cédula de Identidad / ID ☐ Pasaporte Oficial / Official Passport
☐ Pasaporte Diplomático / Diplomatic Passport ☐ Otros / Other

09. NÚMERO DE DOCUMENTO / Document Number

10. PAÍS DE DESTINO / Country of Destination (on departure)

11. MEDIO DE TRANSPORTE / Transport ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

12. EMPRESA DE TRANSPORTE / NÚMERO DE VUELO (si corresponde) / Transport company / Flight number (if applicable)

13. TIPO DE HOSPEDAJE (HOTEL, HOSTAL, VIVIENDA DE FAMILIARES O AMIGOS Y OTROS) DIRECCIÓN / Type of lodging (hotel, hostel, with relatives/friends and others) Address

14. OBJETO DE VIAJE / Purpose of Trip
☐ Turismo / Tourism ☐ Trabajo / Work ☐ Familia / Family
☐ Retorno / Return ☐ Salud / Health ☐ Otros / Other

15. TIPO DE VISA (SI CORRESPONDE) / Type of Visa (if applicable)

16. DÍAS DE PERMANENCIA EN TERRITORIO BOLIVIANO / Days of permanence in Bolivian territory

FECHA / Date FIRMA / Signature

Nº DE REGISTRO **DIGEMIG** **USO PERSONAL** **Nº 0114409**
Record number **Personal Use**

17. APELLIDO(S) / Surnames

18. NOMBRE(S) / First (Given) Name

19. FECHA DE NACIMIENTO / Date of birth (D/M/Y)

20. NACIONALIDAD / Nationality

21. DOCUMENTO DE VIAJE / Travel Document
☐ Pasaporte / Passport ☐ Pasaporte Oficial / Official Passport ☐ Otros / Other
☐ Cédula de Identidad / ID ☐ Pasaporte Diplomático / Diplomatic Passport

22. NÚMERO DE DOCUMENTO / Document Number

23. PAÍS DE RESIDENCIA / Country of Residence

24. MOTIVOS DE VIAJE / Purpose of Trip
☐ Turismo / Tourism ☐ Salud / Health
☐ Trabajo / Work ☐ Familia / Family
☐ Retorno / Return ☐ Otros / Other

25. MEDIO DE TRANSPORTE / Transport ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

26. EMPRESA DE TRANSPORTE / NÚMERO DE VUELO (si corresponde) / Transport company / Flight number (if applicable)

SELLO DE INGRESO / Entry Stamp

SELLO DE SALIDA / Departure Stamp

Traveling with Minors

Minors under the age of 18 are welcome to join projects to Bolivia. Maranatha requires that at least one adult travel with every four minors, ages 14-17, and that an adult travel with every minor, age 13 and under. Minors traveling without both parents or legal guardians must carry a notarized consent form. You can find this form and complete instructions on the Maranatha website, under Resources. In order to acquire the tourist visa, Bolivia also requires a notarized consent letter stating permission to issue a visa and who will be responsible for the child during travel.

Health, Safety, and Security

For more detailed health guidelines for international travel, see our first-time traveler's guide.

Vaccines and Medications

The only vaccine required by Maranatha is a current tetanus vaccine. In addition, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends many other vaccines such as hepatitis A, typhoid, yellow fever, and an oral antimalarial drug other than chloroquine. More information is available at <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/>. Maranatha recommends that you schedule a consultation with a travel clinic doctor, prior to travel, to talk about medical precautions for your trip to Bolivia.

Malaria, Yellow Fever, and Mosquitos

Malaria and yellow fever are both life-threatening diseases transmitted primarily by mosquitos. Because of the extreme altitude variations in Bolivia, certain parts of the country are at risk for malaria and yellow fever transmission and others are not. If your project takes place in these areas, Maranatha suggests you speak with a medical professional regarding malaria and yellow fever prevention options.

Malaria is prevented through several different oral medications. Each has different side effects and dosages, so speak with a travel clinic doctor before deciding on whether to take a certain medication. When considering preventative medications for malaria, keep in mind that chloroquine is NOT effective in Bolivia. The malaria strain present in the country is considered to be chloroquine-resistant.

Yellow fever is typically prevented by a vaccination. A vaccination certificate is required in order to acquire the tourist visa.



Yellow Fever Transmission Area



Malaria Transmission Area

Mosquitos and other flying insects can also carry a variety of other diseases such as dengue. Personal precautions are strongly recommended to lower the risk of being bitten. Bring a bug repellent with a 30%-50% concentration of DEET. Wear long sleeves, long pants, and closed-toe footwear when possible. Avoid areas of standing water, and do not spend a lot of time outside during dusk and dawn. Sleep with a mosquito net when possible.

Zika

Recently the Zika virus has been spreading around Central America and the Caribbean, with some cases reported from Guyana. This mosquito-borne disease acts very similar to a hard-hitting flu with symptoms lasting about two weeks. There is currently no vaccine or treatment for the disease, and the CDC has issued a **Level 2 warning**. This warning does not suggest that you postpone all travel, but it does urge travelers to take **heightened precautions** to avoid being bitten (see recommendations above). This virus is still being studied, and information is continuing to be released. There are currently no known long-term effects; however, there does seem to be a link between the virus and possible birth defects in babies born from women who were infected during their pregnancy. The virus can remain in a woman's body for approximately eight weeks and in a man's body for approximately six months, and it can be spread through physical contact. If you or your partner is pregnant, think you might be pregnant, or are trying to get pregnant in the next six months, Maranatha recommends speaking with your doctor to determine if you should travel.

Altitude Sickness

Many parts of southwestern Bolivia are located in the Andes mountain range, at very high elevations. La Paz is located at over 12,000 feet. This high elevation puts those visiting these parts of the country at risk for altitude sickness. Altitude Sickness is a medical condition with symptoms ranging from a mild headache, dizziness, shortness of breath, and nausea to very serious cerebral or pulmonary edema. Rapid onset of symptoms, worsening symptoms, or symptoms persisting more than 48 hours could require evacuation to a lower elevation.

Altitude sickness can occur when ascending too fast and not allowing time to acclimatize to the elevation. Also, those with preexisting conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, asthma, or cardiac or lung disease should receive special clearance from their doctor or avoid traveling to high elevations during the project.

Some Maranatha projects will take place in high-altitude regions. Due to the potential risks, each participant on Maranatha projects in Bolivia is required to return a signed consent form prior to your departure.

Preventative Health

In general, preventative measures are the best ways to avoid becoming ill during your time in Bolivia. Food should be properly washed and cooked. Use only purified water for drinking and brushing your teeth, and avoid ice cubes at restaurants. Wash your hands regularly. Wear sunscreen and mosquito repellent while outdoors.

Medical Care in Country

Most large cities in Bolivia have modern clinics and hospitals. In general, private clinics are safer and cleaner than public hospitals. Maranatha will have identified several medical care locations, near the project sites, that we believe are safe for our volunteers. If you are leading a group to Bolivia, be sure to ask our project support coordinator to show you the clinic location closest to your housing and work sites.

Travel Safety

Maranatha will not knowingly send volunteers to an area that is of elevated risk. We consistently monitor security alerts from the areas where we are working, and we consciously avoid high-risk regions. However, it is important for you to take responsibility for your own personal safety while traveling. Here are some ways you can start. For a more detailed list of tips and Maranatha insurance information, be sure to read our International Traveler's Guide. While we do take precautions, there is nothing we can do to guarantee safety. We can only place our trust in God's hands.

- Avoid traveling at night or alone.
- Dress conservatively and keep a low profile.
- Avoid marginal areas of cities, alleyways, and crowds of people.
- Use caution if you are approached on the street by strangers, including vendors.
- Leave valuables, both expensive and sentimental, at home.
- Don't leave your personal belongings unattended, especially in open sight. Consider using a money belt or concealed pouch for passports, credit cards, and cash. Keep your purse or bag in front of you, held with a tight grip.
- **US Department of State:** Register your travel with the U.S. Department of State by enrolling with the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program. The U.S. government will then contact you in case of an emergency, natural disaster, or civil unrest. They can also be a point of contact for family emergencies. You can also check for security updates prior to your departure
- **Travel Guard:** The AIG accident insurance provided to Maranatha volunteers provides access to security updates and other resources. You can access this resource by using the policy number provided to you in your information packet or by a Maranatha representative once your volunteer group is confirmed

Maranatha Insurance

Maranatha mission projects are construction projects where people can get hurt. It is not possible for Maranatha to analyze everyone's insurance policy to see whether it is current and the coverage is in effect at the location of the mission project. For that reason, all volunteers will be covered by accident and sickness insurance, coordinated by Maranatha, from the time they arrive at the project until their departure. For more information about project insurance, contact Maranatha.

Communication

Promoting Your Maranatha Trip

You may contact Maranatha's marketing department for materials to help you promote your trip to Bolivia. There are DVDs and printed materials available for your convenience. Contact Maranatha for more details.

Also, when discussing this mission trip with your team and while promoting it to your church or school, please be sure to mention that you are partnering with Maranatha! We hope that you will help to spread the word about our mission to spread the Gospel through construction.

Contact Information

United States Embassy

Avenida Arce #2780

La Paz

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Canadian Consulate

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Barcelona Building, Second Floor,

Plaza España

La Paz

Phone: +591 2-241-5141

Maranatha Volunteers

International:

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