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Thank you for your interest in visiting Bridge To The Nations in Tayoltita, Municipio de La Cruz de Elota, Sinaloa, Mexico. Many exciting things are happening here, and we are blessed to have you be a part of this expanding ministry. This information packet includes Bridge To The Nations' guidelines and cultural considerations. We trust it will be of help to you in preparing for your trip. May the Lord bless you as we minister together!

Bridge To The Nations is a ministry located outside a migrant camp where many Indigenous workers come every year in hopes of a better life. We offer hope to these workers by providing different programs to enrich their lives. These programs include: Literacy Program, Movie Nights, Door to Door Evangelism, Health and Sex Education, Children Evangelism, Sports Club, Leadership and Discipleship, Church Planting, Music Club, etc. Here you will be able to enjoy a flexible ministry schedule, learn about indigenous cultures in Mexico, learn about mission work, leadership, church planting, evangelism, community development, etc.

### BRIEF HISTORY

Maria heard the Lord's call to work with the Indigenous people in the year 2001. She began to make trips to different agricultural camps in this area looking for the place where the Lord would have her served. When she visited the camp Tayoltita in 2007, she felt that the Lord asked her to adopt this camp. It was not until 2010 that she became a full time missionary to this camp. The ministry is now becoming a missionary base where teams from all over the world are visiting. Different worldwide and national organizations/ministries, as well as a few churches in the surrounding areas, are partnering with Bridge To The Nations in transforming the lives of many indigenous groups by scheduling team visits on a regular basis.



### BRIDGE TO THE NATIONS' LOCATION

Bridge to the Nations is located in the small village of Tayoltita about 15 min from Celestino Beach, on the Pacific Ocean, 1 hr. and 30 min. from Mazatlán and 1 hr. and 15 min. from Culiacan in Sinaloa, Mexico. To reach Bridge To The Nations you can fly either to the Mazatlan or Culiacan International Airports, go to the central bus station "Autobuses Unidos de Sinaloa" and take a bus to Kilometer 78 of the Maxipista to La Cruz De Elota. Let us know when you are coming to arrange for pick up at the bus stop.



## NEARBY ATTRACTIONS

La Cruz de Elota is located 130 Kms. from Culiacan and Mazatlán. *La Cruz* is known for the abundance of birds and fish. The zone of the Mountain range of Conitaca is the perfect place for many hunters and fishermen. There are natural attractions like the thermal waters of Ipucha. The dam El Salto (The Jump) is one of the most famous dams of the Mexican northwest and is located 20 Kms. from La Cruz. The church dates from century XVIII and there are objects of historical value there. Located 8 Kms. west of La Cruz de Elota, are the beautiful and natural Beaches of Ceuta. Ceuta is a place to which the regional tourism visits regularly. It also houses a camp to protect the marine turtle that initiated its operation since 1976 to conserve and to preserve its species. Celestino beach is located 10 Km from La Cruz, it offers virgin beaches and it's a world class surfing spot. Here you will be able to enjoy the best oyster of stone of the Mexican northwest and the matchless flavor of the shaken vigorously fish and the typical cocktail of the coco with shrimp.



## CLIMATE

Tayoltita and the surrounding areas enjoy a pleasant, temperate climate due to close proximity to the Pacific coast. Temperatures range from 52° - 90° F:

- Spring (late Feb-May) 60°L - 84°H F (with some rain)
- Summer (June-Sept) 78°L - 90°H F
- Fall (late Sept-Nov) 78°L - 89°H F
- Winter (Nov-Feb) 63°L - 78°H F

Rain averages approximately 3" annually, but can be heavy. It typically occurs between late June and September. Summer daytime temperatures often range from 78° - 90° F.

Cold weather, with temperatures falling to around 30° F, does occur during the wintertime. It is often cold from evening to morning. Housing accommodations are not necessarily heated. Please take this into consideration when packing.



## TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS

### PASSPORT

Non-Mexicans and permanent residents must present a valid passport in order to obtain a visa. The charge for the visa is approx. \$30 and it is good for 6 months. It is important that you say you will be visiting, not working as a missionary at Bridge To The Nations. "Working" implies that you will be getting paid for what you will do here and it will complicate the process for you and/or team while at the border.

**CHILDREN UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE TRAVELING EITHER WITH ONE PARENT OR UNACCOMPANIED REQUIRE A LETTER WITH BOTH PARENTS' CONSENT, CERTIFIED BY A NOTARY PUBLIC OR AN AUTHORIZATION SIGNED BY THE PARENTS AT THE MEXICAN CONSULATE, IN PERSON, IDENTIFYING THEMSELVES WITH THEIR OWN PASSPORTS. IT IS NECESSARY THAT THE NON-TRAVELING PARENTS SIGN OR PROVIDE SUCH AUTHORIZATION.**

All of the requirements above apply only to nationals of:

Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Singapore, Spain, Sweden,

Switzerland, United Kingdom, U.S.A.

The Mexican government does not permit minors (persons under the age of 18) to enter the country unless accompanied by a parent or a legally-documented guardian who is authorized to sign for medical care (a document indicating guardianship, signed by **BOTH** parents and notarized, is required).

For information on other nationalities, please contact the nearest Mexican Consulate.

The Mexican Consulate reserves the right to request further evidence of the applicant's intention to visit Mexico as a tourist whenever such intention has not been established to the Consul's satisfaction. The same right applies with regard to evidence of the applicant's financial means to sustain him/herself while in Mexico.

***\*Immigration requirements are subject to change. You should verify whether or not you meet current requirements before leaving for your trip. The Sanctuary is not a licensed government agency and this information is provided as a courtesy.***



### **REGARDING MONEY**

Only Mexican pesos are acceptable forms of currency. Please change Canadian dollars, U.S. dollars and Euros into Mexican pesos before arriving in Mexico (20 pesos bills and smaller are recommended). You can also withdraw cash in Mexican pesos from ATM machines. Please do not bring travelers or personal checks in place of cash as they are generally not accepted. Most local businesses and restaurants also do not accept credit cards.



### **BOOKING AN INDIVIDUAL OR WORKGROUP**

Because space is limited, visitors are advised to submit their reservation requests on the 1st of each month, two months in advance. Please e-mail your requests as they will be time-stamped to determine booking priority. Time stamping is according to the local time in Sinaloa, Mexico which is either Pacific Standard Time (PST) or Pacific Daylight Time (PDT), depending on the time of year. **Requests are processed in the order they are received.**

**The following information is required PRIOR to receiving a confirmation letter from the Main Office and is requested that you use the format below:**

1. Dates: 1st, 2nd, and 3rd choices (Please keep in mind that we are closed every year from Nov. 20<sup>th</sup> through Jan 1<sup>st</sup>.)
2. Size of Group: Make up of your group with a maximum of 7 members
3. Contact Info: Address, Phone and Email

**Until you receive a final confirmation, your dates are not yet reserved.** Once your reservation has been confirmed a 50% of the total bill is required. If you wish to increase the size of your team, you must contact us as soon as possible with your request. If approval is granted and your group number increases, a new deposit amount applies.

**Minors:** Visitors to Bridge To The Nations are generally adults, though minors may also visit. Minors, like adults, are neither the liability of Bridge To The Nations nor the responsibility of the staff. Mexican law considers anyone under the age of 18 a minor. A minor coming to Bridge To The Nations must be either:

- Accompanied by a parent or grandparent if under 16 years of age - ratio 1:1, unless traveling as a family (parents accompanies children **at all times**) *or*
- At least 16 years old and accompanied by a legally responsible adult who has a leadership relationship with the minor, i.e., a teacher, pastor, or workgroup team leader. (An adult friend or parents of a minor friend do not fall under this category.) The accompanying adult leader must have a notarized letter signed by both parents, giving permission to take their child into Mexico, legal guardianship while there, and the authority to make necessary medical decisions on their behalf. Please see note (\*) for more information. We request a guardian-to-minor ratio of 1:4 for minors 16 and 17 years of age.

*\*A legal guardian is someone who has the legal authority (and the corresponding duty) to care for the personal and property interests of another person. This includes, but is not limited to having the legal authority to sign for medical care for the minor for whom the guardian is responsible.*



## MEDICAL

The closest clinic to Bridge To The Nations is about a 20 min drive. If you are on medication, please bring an ample supply. Each person is responsible for his/her own health insurance, medical care and any associated costs. Proof of Medical Insurance is required and must be submitted as soon as your trip is scheduled.



## ACCOMMODATIONS

Bridge To The Nations provides **minimum** accommodations to approved visitors. Space is limited and all those desiring to visit must contact us and make a reservation prior to arrival – **no exceptions**. Depending on the number of people visiting, please be aware that we may not be able to accommodate special housing requests i.e. married couples, families or friends wishing to be housed together. Come prepared to share accommodations with others and make new friends. **Upon booking a reservation, please submit a completed Skills & Abilities form as soon as possible** as this aids in the planning of visitor sleeping arrangements. **All visitors staying at Bridge To The Nations should bring their own towels, pillows, sheets, sleeping bags and/or inflatable mattress.**



## FACILITIES

Please be considerate of others using the restroom/shower/kitchen facilities. Please clean up after yourself after each use. Clean up shower drain to avoid clogging. There is no washer or dryer. Clothes are washed by hand and line dry. **REMEMBER NOT TO THROW TOILET PAPER IN THE TOILET.**

We ask that you clean the facilities on or before your departure day.

The kitchen is inside the staff housing and therefore we ask that your team assign one to two people only to do the cooking.



## WORK ASSIGNMENTS

Work assignments are dependent upon the needs of the ministry during your stay and may include any form of helping. The team will be assigned a daily chore, i.e. cleaning, kitchen, maintenance, etc., as time permits. Please be prepared to be flexible and willing to do what you are asked. **The Skills & Abilities form is an invaluable tool in helping determine suitable work assignments.** The work schedule is 10:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Day off will be announced. Our schedule is very flexible and could change at any time. **BE FLEXIBLE!**



## MORNING DEVOTIONS/CHURCH ATTENDANCE

A regular time is set aside for morning devotions from 8:15 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. (This is our chance to get direction from the Lord about anything HE would have us do during the day) and church service Sunday afternoon. *Your presence is requested at these gatherings – please be prompt.* You may be asked to lead praise and worship as well as to give your testimony. If you have a team leader, he/she will let you know.



## MEALS

Meal times are very flexible and subject to change depending on ministry activities. Normally: Breakfast 7:30-8:15 am; Lunch 1:00 – 1:30 pm; Dinner 6:00 pm. A kitchen is available to prepare your own meals if necessary or there are small restaurants where meals could be purchased. Three meals will cost approximately \$12 - \$15 USD per day.



## DRESS CODE

Please adhere to the dress code guidelines listed below. If you are asked to change, please be willing and open to do so.

- Shorts and skirts must be at least to the top of the knee or longer.
- Spaghetti straps and tank tops are not permitted. Shoulders must be covered.
- Clothing that exposes the midriff is not permitted.
- Tight-fitting clothing is not permitted.
- Sheer or see-through clothing is not permitted.
- One piece bathing suits and a t-shirt over should be worn and only should be worn at the beach or swimming pool.
- Body piercing jewelry is not permitted. Exception: earrings on females
- Please avoid extreme or offensive make-up, clothing and hairstyles. Please **cover tattoos**.
- Bare feet are not permitted (for health and safety reasons). OK inside the house.
- Observe the 3 “Bs” rule: No boobs, no belly, no butt

**\*See the “Outreach” section below for additional dress code guidelines.**



## STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

- If you leave the base, please let your group leader know where you are going and when you expect to return. Please go in 2's or small groups when going into town.
- No alcoholic beverages, smoking, drugs or dancing are allowed on the property or in the community and surrounding areas.
- Open fires, firearms and/or firecrackers are not allowed on the premises.
- Please do not be overly noisy and/or obnoxious at any time during your stay. We ask that all is quiet from 10:00 p.m. to 6:30 a.m. Lights should be off at 10:00 pm.
- No inappropriate public displays of affection are allowed.
- We suggest that men talk to men and women talk to women at the camps.
- **PLEASE DO NOT TAKE CHILDREN TO THE PUBLIC RESTROOM.** If you are asked by any children to go with them to the restroom “because they are afraid” to go alone, we advised that you **PLEASE DO NOT TAKE THEM.** Ask them to ask a family member to take them.
- No cameras are allowed inside the camps. Outside the camps, do not take pictures of people unless you get permission first. **The Indians believe that “you are taking their soul” when you take their picture.** Children are always willing and sometimes would ask you to take their picture. **PLEASE DO NOT PUBLISH** any pictures taken inside the camp on any social media channels due to safety of our staff.
- The camp administration has requested that **NO TEAM MEMBERS SHOULD BE INSIDE THE CAMP AFTER 9 PM.** We **MUST** all leave the camp by 8:45 PM at the latest. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**
- Pictures taken by our staff of you and/or your team may be posted on our FaceBook page or website. By letting us take your picture, you are giving us permission to use those pictures.



## OUTREACH\*

The purpose of our Outreach ministry is to evangelize, feed the hungry, clothe the naked and pray for the sick. Many people in the local Christian community adhere to a conservative dress code – it is very modest. We must be more culturally sensitive to the Indians while ministering in the camps. As such, in addition to adhering to the dress code outlined earlier in this packet, males should wear long pants or shorts below the knee and females should wear a dress, skirt or shorts that falls below the knee or jeans as long as they are not tight-fitting while at the camps. Long hair is best tied back or tucked up into a cap or scarf (to help prevent the spread of lice). Little makeup should be worn.

The distribution of any items or gifts in the camps is not allowed unless prior permission has been given by Bridge To The Nation staff. If your group feels led to bring a treat for children on either Adult or Child Evangelism, we recommend school supplies like, pencil, pens, notebooks, pencil sharpeners, etc., “kid-friendly” nutritional snacks like raisins, popcorn, fruit trail mix, water, juice, etc...*instead* of candy. These can be bought locally. Sufficient quantities should be bought for all of the children (approximately 200). We suggest bringing jump ropes, balls and other toys so that you may interact with the children during evangelism times.



## COMMUNICATION

Internet is available within a 20 min. drive. Visitors are welcomed to use their cell phones. The phone number at the base may be given out, but should be used for emergency calls only.



## USEFUL ITEMS TO BRING

- Bible, Journal and pen
  - Camera
  - Water bottle
  - Light Jacket
  - Towel
  - Shampoo and Conditioner
  - Soap
  - Toothbrush and toothpaste
  - Sunscreen and Mosquito repellent – **VERY IMPORTANT**
  - Sleeping Bag or Sheet/Blanket Combo
  - Blow out mattress
  - Spanish/English dictionary
  - One piece swimsuit (females)
  - Walking shoes: Tennis shoes or hiking boots and sandals (we will be walking quite a bit)
  - Travel alarm clock
  - Flash light, sun glasses, hat
  - Umbrella, raincoat, beanie or hat, gloves (check the weather)
  - Work clothes, gloves, boots, jeans and t-shirts are appropriate for men and women
  - Mexican currency only (it is not possible to change traveler's checks, US or Canadian currency)
- PETS** - Sorry, no pets allowed.

I pray that your visit to Bridge To The Nations in Tayoltita will be a life changing experience for you and your team.

In Christ,

Maria E. Lopez Duran, Founder/President  
Bridge To The Nations