

Rocky Point FAQ

What do we do there?

We build a whole house in 3 days, and when we aren't working really hard we sleep. Just kidding, the trip isn't all work. We have some fun time, some beach time, and usually a cultural activity (like visiting a local church).

See below for more about the work and the build process.

When is the trip?

OPC goes Veteran day weekend in November, and President's day weekend in February. We usually leave on a Friday morning around 8:00am, and return on a Monday in the evening.

What do I need to bring with me?

A PASSPORT!!! And a sleeping bag, work cloths, and a mess kit. You'll get a packing list before the trip.



Is a Passport required?

YES!

Years ago, you could drive into Mexico with just a birth certificate, but that was years ago.

How much does it cost?

\$120 per person, to cover the cost of food, transportation, and lodging. It is only \$60 for rookies, drivers, and college students. *(Fee subject to change)* The actual cost of the build is about \$5500.

How old do you have to be?

Youth in 6th grade are invited as long as a parent/guardian goes with them. Youth in 7th or 8th grade are supposed to bring a parent/guardian on their first trip.

Where do we sleep?

The OPC group stays in a very comfortable beach house, and most people sleep in a bed (bring an air mattress if you have one). Other churches & groups may stay at the Amor camp site in tents or campers.

Who sponsors/organizes the trip?

OPC has been building houses in Rocky Point for since 1994 years in partnership with Amor ministries. Amor picks the family, and gets all of the materials. We provide the labor.

How big is the trip?

We usually have around 30 to 40 people, about half are students, and about half are adults. Most of our participants have been on multiple trips, so we have lots of good experience.

What else do I really need to know about Mexico?

Don't drink the tap water. Don't flush the toilet paper.

Questions about the Build process & work site

Who do we build for... *I mean... For whom do we build?*

We build for a Mexican family chosen by a local board of Pastors and Amor. Most of the families have children and are living in very poor conditions before we arrive.

How long does it take to build the house?

It takes about 3.5 days to build a whole house. The first day is short, and easy: only a couple hours of prep-work. The second day we lay the foundation for the house and build the walls: about 6 to 8 hours. The third day we stand up the house and stucco it: about 7 to 9 hours. The last day is really short, we do the 2nd coat of stucco and say good bye: about 2 or 3 hours.

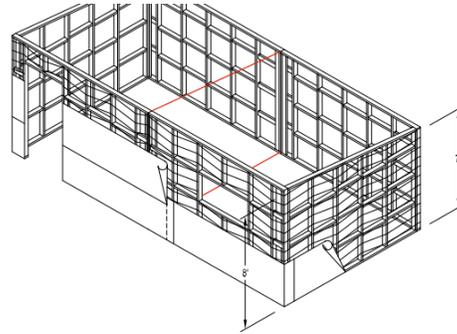
What do we start with?

We start with a bare patch of sand and a pile of building materials.

How big is the house?

11 feet by 22 feet, and 8 feet tall.

If you want exact plans go to www.amor.org



Do I need special skills or experience?

No. Just a willingness to work.

Are there power tools?

No, we work like the people we are working for. We mix cement by hand in wheelbarrows with shovels and hoes. We cut the wood with handsaws. And we use lots of hammers and nails to build the house.

Do I need to bring my own tools?

No, we have everything you'll need. However, your own work gloves will fit better and be more comfortable. And if you have your own hammer or tool belt, feel free to bring them.

What else do I need to know about the build process?

We will have an orientation meeting a couple weeks before the trip where we talk about the process, and walk you through all the steps. And then when we are there, we will teach you how to do it.

How much does it cost to build a house?

The building materials cost around \$5,500 which OPC pays for.

Questions about lodging and food and packing

What is this Beach house like?

It has 6 bedrooms, 6 toilets, & 5 showers. It's in a gated community on the beach.

Will I sleep in my own room?

No, and most likely there will be more people in your room than you think there should be, (all the rooms are like that). If you want privacy bring a tent.

Will I sleep in the same room as my child?

Probably not, so pack separate bags.



Will I get a bed to sleep on?

Maybe. If you have a cot or air-mattress please bring it. If you get a bed, you'll still sleep in a sleeping bag on top of the sheets.

Do I need to bring my own food, or what if I have food restrictions/allergies?

No, you don't need to bring your own food, EXCEPT for Lunch the first day, when we drive down. If you have dietary restrictions it is not a problem. Let us know if you have any allergies, or if you're a vegetarian/vegan so we can accommodate you. Our cooks make really good food.

What is a Mess Kit?

A plate, bowl, fork, knife, spoon, and cup—basically whatever you want to eat off of. Each person brings their own personal dishes, and is responsible for how clean they want their dishes to be. The cooks wash all the pots and pans. Disposable or easily breakable dishes are discouraged.

What kind of clothes should I bring?

You must have long pants and closed toe shoes for the worksite. Weather is similar to Phoenix, maybe a bit cooler in the beach and a bit warmer at the work site. Please don't bring clothing that is inappropriate for children/youth.

What else should I bring?

Deodorant and soap are nice. We will give you a detailed packing list, so don't worry. But do pack light, since we will have stuff for so many people.

Is there anything I shouldn't bring?

Yes. Please don't bring anything illegal (in the US or Mexico) and please don't bring anything inappropriate for youth and children. Also, we often have people with server allergies to Peanuts, so don't bring any of that.

What about Alcohol?

We have youth on this trip who aren't old enough to drink and we show them respect by not drinking regardless of age. Plus, you're much more likely to smash your thumb if you're drunk or hung-over.

Questions about Transportation and Logistics

How do we get there?

We drive in a caravan of about 5 to 8 vehicles. If you're interested in driving talk to Tully.

How long does the drive take?

The drive there takes about 4 hours, with a bathroom stop in Ajo, AZ and a short wait at the border to get our paperwork in order. The drive back also takes about 4 hours, but the wait at the border can be anywhere from 15 minutes to 4 hours depending on traffic and the mood of the Border Agents.

What time do we leave?

We gather at OPC at 7:45am to pack up all the food and stuff.

This takes about 30 to 45 minutes, then we say a prayer and hit the road around 8:30am.

What time do we come back?

On the last day we will put the 2nd coat of stucco on the house, turn over the keys at a brief worship service, and then head back to the house for a quick lunch. We try to leave the house around 12:30pm and then drive back. Depending on the wait at the border we arrive in Phoenix between 4:00pm and 9:00pm (give or take a couple of hours).

Can I leave my car at OPC while I'm gone?

Yes, but we have had the rare instance of car break-ins, and if it is easy for you to get a ride we recommend that.

Will I have cell phone service in Mexico?

Most people turn their phones off when we cross the border. Some people get limited service, at high rates. You can ask your carrier for more specifics.

Is there a phone at the house?

If there is an emergency we have the ability to call out to the USA.

Is there internet access?

No.



Questions about Safety and security

Is this trip Dangerous?

Yes, you will probably hit your thumb with a hammer. You will likely get some other scrap or bruise. You will hurt most of the muscles in your body from doing hard work. You will possibly ruin your clothes from dirt, cement, or tar. It is possible one of our vehicles will get stuck in the sand. Once, we drove through a swarm of bees, with the windows down. If you don't wear sunscreen, you will get burned. If you drink the tap water you will get diarrhea. If you don't drink plenty of water you will get dehydrated or even heat stroke.

We haven't had a trip where we didn't open the first aid kit, but we also haven't sent anyone to the hospital either.

But what is the most dangerous part of the trip?

In my humble opinion, our greatest risk for disaster is the drive there and back, especially in Phoenix traffic. All of our drivers are at least 25 years old, and we have good insurance, but whenever you get in a vehicle moving 65 miles an hour there is always a risk. That is why we wear our seatbelts.

But, is this trip safe?

No, see above.

I guess what I'm trying to ask "is Mexico dangerous?"

The world is a big scary place, and whenever you leave the safety of your house there is always a risk something bad can happen.

But I hear lots of bad things on the news about Mexico?

Yes, the media loves to tell stories about every instance of violence in Mexico and rant about how dangerous it is. The truth is there are parts of Phoenix that are worse than Rocky Point.

But I heard the US government is telling people not to go to Mexico?

NOT TRUE! The US State department has lots of warnings about lots of places all over the world. The latest warning (January 2018) regarding the parts of Mexico we go to basically said, "Be very careful, and do not travel at night." Feel free to read the travel warnings yourself at:

<http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/alertswarnings.html>

But seriously, are you sure it is safe to go?

OPC takes the safety and security of our volunteers and participants very seriously. We take numerous safety precautions for all of our events, especially foreign travel. We stay in a big group. We don't roam around after dark. We sleep in a gated community. We take people with medical or first aid training with us. We monitor the state department's website. We talk to Amor and other people in Rocky Point to assure that gang violence isn't a problem. Our current assessment is that things are safe enough to go. If the situation in Mexico changes, then we will change our plans.

Questions about faith

Do I have to go to Orangewood to go on this trip?

No.

Do I have to be a Christian to go?

No, we are welcoming to people of all faith backgrounds and religious affiliation.

Do I have to believe in God to go?

No.

However, we are a church group doing this type of work trip, and our faith inspires us to do what we do. Our primary purpose on this trip is to serve God by building a house. We are not there to convert Mexicans to Christianity. We are not there to get all of the participants to join our church. We are not there to raise money for the Church. We don't force our faith on anyone else, and we are respectful of all beliefs.

That being said, we will have times of brief prayer each day, and an evening reflection time including music. Conversations about God are encouraged, but not required. Finally we will conclude our trip with a short worship service and communion at the worksite, if the family allows. Participation in this is encouraged, but not required.

What if I've never been to church?

That's cool, you can still come on the trip.

What if I don't really like church?

That's not a problem. This is a work trip, not a weekend long revival.

What if I don't really like Christians?

Trust me, we aren't that bad.

What if I don't really like people?

Then this trip will be hard for you, because you'll be around people a lot.

What if I don't really like God, or People, or Church, or doing hard work?

Is your mom or dad making you go on this trip?