Together,
we’re building a school...
and hope.
Flight and Travel Information to Dominican Republic

**Airport:** Santo Domingo (SDQ) or Santiago, unless otherwise notified

**Arrivals/Departures:** Lifetouch will make these arrangements

**Travel Documents**
Passport is required; visas are not

**Immunizations**
Updated U.S. immunizations are sufficient (polio and tetanus); check with your doctor for other recommendations

**Immigration**
In flight, the airline will have immigration forms required for entry. You will need to know:
- Flight number and carrier
- Passport number
- Address during stay *(Address should NOT be used or given out for other purposes)*
  - C/Alto Cerro Calle Guarocuya No. 461
  - El Millón, Constanza
- Purpose of trip “Pleasure, Tourist, or Vacation”

Upon arrival at the airport in Santo Domingo, each person must purchase a Tourist Card (currently $10 US) before entering Immigration. *Cash is required*

Proceed to Immigration where passports and forms are stamped. Be sure to answer all questions directly.

After Immigration, proceed to Baggage Claim. Carts are available for carrying luggage. Be sure you have all luggage before proceeding to Customs.

World Servants/Lifetouch participants usually do not have problems bringing donation items or construction tools into the country. However, participants are often questioned about them. It is best to avoid packing items in boxes, rather, divide supplies among team members and pack in duffel bags or luggage.

EACH team member MUST know what is in his or her personal luggage and any other bags assigned to them (including supply and donation bags). Questions regarding the contents of luggage or bags should be answered honestly and directly. If luggage is opened for inspection, *emphasize that items are for use and donation during the stay and that nothing is for sale.* Do not bring items valued at more than $500. Items valued at less than $500 and personal items, such as cameras, computers, etc., do not need to be declared.

All group members should wear their identifying shirts on the flight to Santo Domingo. Staying together during the Immigration/Customs process is important. Jan Haeg and Andrew Mullin from Lifetouch will ensure all team members have cleared Immigration and Customs together.

After clearing Customs, everyone will exit and meet World Servants staff. Staff will answer any questions (including restroom or telephone information) before boarding the bus to the hotel.

**Note:** On average, Immigration/Customs is a one to two hour process.
Packing and Travel Considerations

All luggage and clothing should be clearly marked for easy identification. **Check with airlines for baggage weight limitations.**

**Leave all valuables at home.** Although hotel rooms are locked during the day, staff persons have access for cleaning and repairs. Do not bring radios, TVs, CD players, MP3 players, etc. The week is intended for spending time with teammates and serving the people of the Dominican Republic. **World Servants does not recommend wearing valuable watches or jewelry in the Dominican Republic. Losses are the responsibility of the individual.**

Pickpockets and theft are common in crowded areas. Be alert and always carry valuables (including cameras) and money out of sight.

**DO NOT** bring illegal substances, tobacco, or alcohol.

World Servants staff in the Dominican Republic will exchange currency at the current rate. Bring spending money in the amount to be exchanged and in smaller bills. Postcards, stamps, phone cards, vanilla, coffee and other souvenirs are available for sale.

At an elevation of more than 3,800 feet, typical temperatures are 65–75 degrees daytime and 40–50 degrees nighttime. Afternoon rain is not unusual, so be prepared to be damp and muddy.

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**What to Pack**

- 4 changes of cool and comfortable work clothing that can be used in a construction environment
  - **Long pants and shirts are required at the construction site, no exceptions**
- Two changes of clothing for after work and the day off. No tank tops, sleeveless shirts or shorts are permitted in the community; capris may be worn on the day off
- 2 or 3 pairs of work gloves
- Raincoat
- Sweater and/or jacket
- Sturdy work shoes, boots or tennis shoes
- 4 pairs of work socks
- Pajamas
- 2 to 3 bandannas for worksite
- Flip-flops for the shower
- Earplugs (for light sleepers)
- Hand and body soap
- Brush/comb
- Toothpaste/toothbrush
- Shampoo
- Insect repellent (10% DEET or more)/AfterBite (itch relief)
- Lip balm
- Flashlight
- Aspirin/other medications
- Sunscreen (SPF15 and above)
- Razor/shaving cream
- Hat/sunglasses
- Water bottle (identify as yours)
- Antibacterial gel or wipes
- 3 magazines to cut up during cross cultural training
- Notebook/pens
- Camera, batteries, battery charger, memory card
- Fanny pack or backpack
- Watch

**Optional Items to Pack**

- Toys or activities for interaction with community youth (frisbees, jump ropes, bubbles)
- Money for snacks/souvenirs
- Powdered Gatorade
- Granola bars or other **sealed** snacks
Accomodations and Emergency Procedures

Housing
We will be staying in the villas at Hotel Altocerro, Constanza. Visit altocerro.com for details.

Meals
Breakfast and dinner will be authentic Dominican cuisine served in the Altocerro’s restaurant. The chefs are trained in food preparation safety and purified drinking water is provided. Notify staff of any food restrictions or allergies not listed on applications before coming to the dining room.

Health and Safety
Meals are mandatory. It is important to consume enough calories to perform physical labor and maintain good health. Drinking large amounts of water daily is important. Participants should bring their own water bottle.

To prevent illness, good hygiene should be practiced. Shoes must be worn at all times. Common complaints include diarrhea and constipation. If either affects you, inform the mission leader immediately. Dramamine would be advisable to prevent symptoms of motion sickness.

If anyone becomes ill and must remain at the housing site or if anyone experiences injury or severe illness requiring treatment at a clinic or hospital, another member of the group must remain with him or her.

For the safety of all participants, it is essential that everyone remains with the group or assigned small groups at all times.

Bring a supply of your regular medication. You may wish to have a written prescription from your doctor in case of emergency. A refrigerator is available in each villa.

Emergency Procedures
Let those at home know, “NO news is GOOD news!”

In case of emergency, the mission leader has an emergency mobile phone. The World Servants Service Center will be contacted immediately for assistance in notifying the appropriate persons.

Should an emergency occur at home, contact the World Servants Service Center at 612.866.0010 (24/7).

Tim Gibson’s Dominican cell phone 829.477.2001

Office hours: 8:30 am to 5:00 pm CST

After office hours: Call 612.866.0010 and press 1 to be transferred to the emergency mobile phone.

Serving the Dominicans
It is a privilege and responsibility to share service and love with the Dominican people. For many, this involves crossing cultural and economic barriers. Read the following tips to help understand the Dominican culture. It is not an exhaustive list and additional insights are welcome.

- While shaking hands during introductions may be common practice, do not be offended if someone gives you a kiss on the cheek.
- Dominicans are generous hosts and want to provide the best for their guests. Accept their offerings graciously.
- Travel with humility and a desire to learn more about Dominicans and their country.
- Be aware of what might be offensive to others, especially regarding photography and cultural activities.
- Listen and observe rather than merely seeing and hearing.
- Though Dominicans may have different concepts and lifestyles, realize that this does not, in any way, make them inferior or wrong.
- When shopping, consider that bargains are possible only because of low wages paid to the makers.
- Do not make promises that you cannot keep.
- Be creative about exchanges and remember that handouts undermine empowering self-help efforts.
- Reflect on daily experiences to deepen your understanding of the Dominican culture and how you can better interact with the community.

Resources
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
http://cdc.gov

CIA – The World Factbook

Consulate of Dominican Republic
http://www.domrep.org

World Servants
http://worldservants.org

Lifetouch Memory Mission
http://www.lifetouchmemorymission.com

Learning Spanish
Learning the language is an opportunity to make friends in the Dominican Republic and show interest in the culture, but remember that the ultimate goal is not language learning, but rather getting to know, love and serve people cross-culturally.

http://studyspanish.com
Construction

There will be a variety of projects, including block and concrete work, stucco, and painting. The Lifetouch Memory Mission team will work alongside Dominicans. A Dominican foreman will be in charge of all construction. The Dominicans must have ownership in the work. It is essential that all work is completed to their standards and in their way. We like to say, “When in the Dominican, do as the Dominicans do.” Do not impose American ways or standards. Alternative work methods may be suggested, but do not be offended if the Dominicans do not use them.

A construction leader will be designated for each team to communicate with the foreman. This will ensure directions and specifications are followed and to give instructions and assistance to the team.

Safety is everyone’s responsibility. The construction foreman and leaders will ensure that the worksite is safe and methods used will not place anyone at risk.

Everyone should be involved – anyone can learn. Work is accomplished slowly, but the process is important. Learning new things and develop relationships.

Tools are always needed in the communities. If you choose to bring any tools, plan on leaving them behind for continued work in the Dominican Republic.

- Extra heavy-duty work gloves
- Levels
- Hacksaws/blades
- Hammers
- Concrete finishing trowels (flat, nonserrated, rectangular)
- Paintbrushes/rollers
- Complete toolboxes (screwdrivers/chalk lines/pliers/hammers/wrenches/etc.)

Community visits

Homes

Participants may visit homes of community members, an opportunity to learn more about them — their lives, families, traditions — and the Dominican culture.

Picture Day

One day will be set aside to take individual portraits and classroom groups at a local school.

Communications

Conference Calls

Memory Mission volunteers are asked to participate on two conference calls – one in December and one a week before the trip. On the calls, organizers will cover logistics and answer participant questions.

If you cannot participate on a call, let Jan Haeg know at 952.826.5530.

Non-Lifetouch Participant December Calls - Please Attend One

- Wednesday, Dec. 11, 4:00 – 5:00 p.m. CST
- Friday, Dec. 13, 9:30 – 10:30 a.m. CST

Lifetouch Employee December Call

- Thursday, Dec. 12, 4:00-5:00 p.m. CST

Final Pre-Trip Call for All Participants

- Tuesday, Jan. 14, 4:00 – 5:00 p.m. CST

Call in number is: 866.635.5290 Passcode: 603.076.2751

Facebook

Participants can connect with past and upcoming volunteers by liking “Lifetouch Memory Mission – DR” on Facebook. Schools, family and friends also may visit the site for updates during the Memory Mission.

Google Hangouts

Memory Mission participants will hold two-way conversations with their home schools or offices using Google Hangouts. (Examples of conversations from the 2012 Mission can be viewed at www.youtube.com/user/memorymission2012.) Please complete and return the enclosed Google Hangouts Contact Information sheet. Participants should identify an individual at their school or office who can assist with video conferencing during the trip. Participants who work at a school should check their district policy on allowing students to be shown on camera on a public Google Hangout.

Donations

Monetary gifts for building supplies must be made at lifetouchmemorymission.com. World Servants does not permit monetary or material gifts to individuals or families while on trips.

World Servants accepts donations for its work in churches, schools, and year-round clinics in the Dominican Republic. Needed supplies include:

- School Supplies – backpacks, crayons, pencils, mechanical pencils, notebooks, pencil sharpeners, staplers, rulers, and calculators.
- Laptop Computers/Mouse for Computers
- Paper – Computer, loose leaf, construction, crepe
- Tape – Scotch and Masking
- Spanish Dictionaries
- English Dictionaries
- Children’s Clothing – male pants (sizes 10-14), female pants (sizes 10 – 12), male t-shirts (sizes S-M), female t-shirts (sizes S-M), coats (sizes S-M)
- Children’s Shoes – male and female (sizes 4-9)
- Adult Clothing – male pants (sizes 32-36), female pants (sizes 6-9), male shirts (sizes S-M-L), female blouses (sizes S-M-L), male coats (sizes S-M-L), female coats (sizes S-M-L)
- Adult Shoes – male (sizes 7-10), female (sizes 6-9)
- Basketballs
- Baseball Equipment – baseballs, gloves (children and adults), bats (children and adults)