



Semilla Nueva

Field Service Trips



Be Inspired. Be Involved. Be Changed.

Join Us on Our Field Service Trip!

On a Semilla Nueva work trip you participate in meaningful agricultural activities that have a direct impact on farmers' lives. You will also have the opportunity to share with their families, eat at their tables, and be a part of a cultural exchange that few people experience throughout their lifetimes.

You will visit and work in communities during the day and stay each night at our new Experimental and Training Center in La Maquina, Suchitepequez, our new home for research staff and visitors at our experimental farm. In the mornings you'll plant with farmers in their fields, and afternoons are spent with women's groups, relaxing at a farmer's home, or a quick trip to the beach. Evenings are yours to relax and explore. Community members will eagerly share their stories, fields, and homes, happily answer your questions, and will want to learn about your culture and experiences!

Spanish language is NOT necessary, as Semilla Nueva staff will translate all throughout the trip. Expect to spend up to 2 hours riding on rough roads for daily transport to and from communities.

Semilla Nueva Field Service Trips are offered each year in August and November

Depending on the season, specific activities in our communities may include:

- Plant rice or other crops with farmers and families
- Participate in our women's food security groups including joining a cooking workshop
- Harvest corn and other crops with farmers and families
- Partake in Q&A sessions with farmers, and visiting families
- And more!

Dates & Costs:

Each year we offer two trip opportunities. The next upcoming trips are:

2016 Fall Trip: October 30 to November 4

2017 Spring Trip: May 21 to May 27

2017 Fall Trip: October 1 to October 7

Airfare: \$750	Estimated roundtrip for economy ticket.
SN costs: \$650*	Includes all in-country transportation, food, hotels for days included within itinerary, and staff time.
Total: \$1,400	\$650 is deposited to Semilla Nueva before the trip. Trip members will be responsible for booking their own flights, but SN team members will be happy to help you in the process!

*Price is subject to change in 2017

Are you coming with us? Contact trip coordinator Eve Dolkart at outreach@semillanueva.org

Fall Trip Itinerary

October 30 - November 4, 2016

October 1 - October 7, 2017



Sunday

Arrive to Guatemala

- Semilla Nueva staff pick up from Guatemala City Airport to Antigua
- Check in to EuroMaya Hotel
- Walking tour with discussion on Guatemalan history, culture, and context
- Dinner with Semilla Nueva office staff (dependent on arrival time)

Monday

Welcome to Semilla Nueva

- Meet the field staff
- Tour the Experimental Center and discover our agricultural technologies
- Taste test with fresh QPM tortillas
- Meet with partner farmers

Tuesday

Get Your Boots Dirty & Help Our Women's Food Security Groups

- Harvest QPM with a Semilla Nueva farmer
- Meet Semilla Nueva's Food Security & Nutrition staff
- Cook with the women of our Food Security & Nutrition Groups
- Prepare and taste a highly nutritious dish with local flair

Wednesday

Partake in Semilla Nueva's National Conference

- Meet with Guatemalan Rotarians to learn why they support Semilla Nueva
- Meet Semilla Nueva community coordinators and participants from across the nation
- Learn about Semilla Nueva technologies and sample nutritious dishes

Thursday

Day Two of the National Conference

- Help prepare daily activities
- Hear presentations from farmers (staff will translate into English) and view demonstrative parcels
- Group photo & Conference Wrap Up

Friday

Close of Trip

- Group breakfast
- Return to Antigua, airport, Panajachel, or other destination (staff will assist with travel arrangements for visitors wishing to extend stay)

Activities are subject to change or shift depending on availability during the season



Spring 2017 Trip Itinerary

May 21 - May 27



Sunday, May 21

Arrive to Guatemala

- Semilla Nueva staff pick up from Guatemala City Airport to Antigua
- Check in to EuroMaya Hotel
- Walking tour with discussion on Guatemalan history, culture, and context
- Dinner with Semilla Nueva office staff (dependent on arrival time)

Monday, May 22

Welcome to Semilla Nueva

- Meet the field staff
- Tour the Experimental Center and discover our agricultural technologies
- Taste test with fresh QPM tortillas
- Meet with partner farmers

Tuesday, May 23

Get Your Boots Dirty & Help Our Women's Food Security Groups

- Plant corn with a Semilla Nueva farmer
- Meet Semilla Nueva's Food Security & Nutrition staff
- Cook with the women of our Food Security & Nutrition Groups
- Prepare and taste a highly nutritious dish with local flair

Wednesday, May 24

Partake in Semilla Nueva's National Conference

- Meet with Guatemalan Rotarians to learn why they support Semilla Nueva
- Meet Semilla Nueva community coordinators and participants from across the nation
- Learn about Semilla Nueva technologies and sample nutritious dishes

Thursday, May 25

Day Two of the National Conference

- Help prepare daily activities
- Hear presentations from farmers (staff will translate into English) and view demonstrative parcels
- Group photo & Conference Wrap Up

Friday, May 26

Close of Trip

- Group breakfast
- Return to Antigua, airport, Panajachel, or other destination (staff will assist with travel arrangements for visitors wishing to extend stay)

Activities are subject to change or shift depending on availability during the season

Want to start planning for your trip? Check out the next page for must-see places in Guatemala!

Must-See Places in Guatemala

Optional Day and Continued Travel Options

Antigua



Semilla Nueva staff is thrilled to be able to serve as your tourguide through the cultural charm of Antigua, Guatemala. It is nestled in the valley of three volcanos: Agua (3766m), Fuego (3763m) and Acatenango (3976m) providing constant stunning scenery. Walk through the cobblestone streets with pastel facades under terracotta roofs, eat at the delicious restaurants scattered throughout town or sip on some of the finest Guatemalan coffee.

Panajachel "Pana" - Lake Atitlan



You will have the option to spend a day on the beautiful Lake Atitlan wandering around the town of Panajachel or "Pana" as locals call it. Stroll down the colorful streets filled with vibrant handicrafts that the Kaqchiquel and Tz'utujil Maya from surrounding villages come to sell (they make wonderful gifts to take home!). Enjoy a brief hike down to the shore and take in the beautiful volcanic panorama!

Semuc Champey



Looking to continue travelling after your visit with Semilla Nueva? Check out Semuc Champey, the famed 300-meter long limestone bridge topped with cool swimming pools filled with flowing water. The beautiful turquoise and emerald green pools are definitely worth the trip! This can be easily arranged, as there are many trips that leave from Antigua daily.

Tikal National Park



Head up to the Peten Region of Guatemala to discover the ancient Mayan Ruins of Tikal. Hike through the dense canopy-forest filled with monkeys and scarlet maccaws to see the stunning 44 meter high structures of the city that once was. By far the most dramatic ruins in Guatemala!

About Guatemala

All you need to know to be an educated traveller

The Country

Guatemala is home to more than sixteen million people, covers over 42,000 square miles, and is sandwiched between Mexico, the Caribbean Sea, the Pacific Ocean, Honduras, Belize, and El Salvador.

With lush greenery, 205 miles of coastline, exotic wildlife, majestic mountains, and striking landscapes, Guatemala is one of the most beautiful countries in Central America. The physical appeal of Guatemala, meaning “the land of forests,” masks its bloody past and uncertain future.

The Culture

Guatemala’s culture is a unique combination of Mayan practices and Spanish colonial heritage. Approximately fifty percent of the population is mestizo (a mix of Amerindian and Spanish, called Ladino by the people of Guatemala). The remainder of the population identifies with European, K’iche, Kaqchikel, Mam, Q’eqchi, or other Mayan and non-Mayan groups.

The vast diversity of ethnicities results in nearly 21 different languages spoken throughout the country. The majority of people speak Spanish; however, there are twenty indigenous languages represented. Many indigenous people of the rural highlands follow traditional religious and social customs and continue a rich tradition of textiles and other handcrafts. This same population practices spiritual acts that are rooted in the country’s history prior to the civil war, sometimes blending elements of Roman Catholicism. The majority of the population identify themselves as Roman Catholic, Protestant or part of the Maya-Catholic fusion.

The fourteen million people of Guatemala thrive on the country’s fertile land as over 52 percent of the population is engaged in agricultural work. Guatemala has traditionally produced a variety of natural exports including coffee, sugar, bananas, and vegetables. The urban areas, however, are heavily influenced by European and North American trends.



Are you coming with us? Contact trip coordinator Eve Dolkart at outreach@semillanueva.org

What to Pack?

Clothing and Essentials

Clothing

Bring a range of layers that will keep you warm in temperatures as low as 40 degrees F, and keep you cool when its as hot as 100 F. The lower elevation regions where are our projects are located are always hot and humid, with temperatures between 80-100. Having a light weight rain jacket is a good idea. We recommend one pair of sandals and a dependable pair of comfortable hiking shoes that you don't mind getting muddy. A few long pairs of pants, skirts, and shorts should do the trick.

While visiting our project sites, it is important to maintain professional appearance, meaning long pants and shoes for men, and pants, capris, or knee-length skirts for women.

Essentials

Sun Protection!

- Hat
- Sunscreen
- Sunglasses

Bug Repellent

Any of your essential medications

Water Bottle

Suggested Items

Daypack

Digital Camera

Towel/washcloth

Undergarments

Sleepwear

Hand sanitizer

Watch

Alarm clock

Ear plugs/Eye mask

Tennis shoes/hiking sandals

Flip-flops or sandals (for shower and for evenings)

Reading materials (journal, Spanish dictionary, reading book)

Active wear (appropriate for hot weather and outdoor activity that may be ruined during field visits)

Toiletries (toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, shampoo, conditioner, shaving cream, contact solution, comb, etc.)



Why We Ask That You Not Bring Gifts

Semilla Nueva's hope is that by creating sustainable agricultural practices in our communities we are, thus, fostering sustainable communities. So, instead of giving handouts, we give educational resources, training, workshops, and conferences. We are empowering and connecting communities to be self-sustaining- encouraging them to work hard, solve their own problems, value their land and value themselves. Thus, we would prefer that you DO NOT bring gifts for the children or families we will be visiting.

Giving gifts creates favoritism within the communities, and creates hurt and jealousy amongst those families or children who do not receive a gift. It also creates an expectation of further gifts down the road; thus, establishing a handout mentality!

If you have something you would like to bring to our team to help out, please contact us ahead of time! Electronics are especially useful.

Preparing for Guatemala!

Semilla Nueva's Health, History and Resources Document

Travel Information:

US Embassy Website: guatemala.usembassy.gov

Exchange \$25-100 into Guatemalan Quetzales right before you leave customs in the airport.

- Check out www.xe.com for current exchange rates.
- Contact your bank to advise them that you'll be travelling abroad and will need to use your ATM card.

ATM card abroad:

ATM's in Guatemala will let you withdraw money from your account and will automatically exchange it for Quetzales. **Without clearing your travel plans with your bank, your ATM card won't work, and you will have to rely on exchanging cash only.**

- Bring a debit card to withdraw money from local ATMs as you need it. The Semilla Nueva team will help you find ATMs during the various parts of the journey.
- American dollars and credit cards are accepted in parts of the capital and most places in Antigua. Small villages in rural Guatemala generally only accept Quetzales.

Items of Value:

It is safe to bring valuable items (electronics, gadgets, computers, camera equipment) with you; however, petty theft does happen and it is important to stay street smart. During travel, use a daypack and keep it close. It is not a good idea to flash expensive items, like smart phones or tablets. Do not leave items unattended while traveling or in public spaces.

General Principles

- Bring copies of all important documents and emergency contact information.
- Always know how to contact SN staff and the US Embassy. Print out a copy of the following page!
- Keep money in multiple locations while traveling.
- Keep emergency stashes of any critical medications.

Health Information

- CDC Travelers Health Info:
- Take a look at your vaccination history to make sure you are current.
- Visit a doctor to get the necessary vaccinations and ask their advice on any concerns you may have.
- Our project sites are in a warm coastal climate, however areas like Lake Atitlan or Antigua can be a bit chilly in the evening. Be prepared for various climates with sun protection, bug spray, and be intentional about staying very hydrated during your trip.
- Always communicate health conditions or worrisome symptoms to the Semilla Nueva team (we know how to help!) Travelers diarrhea is common in Guatemala. So please let us know your symptoms, and we can find appropriate medication.

Traveler's Cheat Sheet

Please print this sheet and keep it with you during your travels!

Contact Information

Semilla Nueva Office and Staff

7a Avenida 14-44, Zona 9
Edificio Galeria Local 17
Ciudad Guatemala, Guatemala
Office phone: +(502) 2331-0626

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Kendall Banks: Director of Monitoring, Evaluation,
& Development
+(502) 3053-2959
kendallbanks@semillanueva.org

U.S. Embassy Guatemala

Avenida Reforma 7-01, Zona 10
Guatemala City, Guatemala
Telephone: +(502) 2326-4000
Emergency After-Hours Telephone:
+(502) 2331-2354

Hotel/Lodging

EuroMaya
7a. Calle Poniente No. 43
Antigua Guatemala
+(502) 7832 4722

Semilla Nueva Experimental & Training Center
Kilometer 189.5
Carretera a Tulate
San Jose La Maquina, Suchitepequez

Transportation

Taxi Amarillo (Safe taxis in Guatemala City):
1766 - Usually requires Spanish language
If necessary for whatever reason, see if you can get
hotel staff or the airport's staff help.

¡Práctica tu español!

Hello	Hola	You are welcome	De nada
Goodbye	Adios	What is your name?	¿Como te llamas?
Good Morning	Buenos días	My name is	Me llamo...
Good Afternoon	Buenas tardes	I am from	Soy de...
Good Evening	Buenas noches	Corn	Maíz
Welcome	Bienvenidos	Rice	Arroz
How are you?	¿Como estás?	Sesame seed	Ajonjoli
I am fine	Estoy bien	Soil	Suelo
Please	Por favor	Farmer	Productor
Thank you	Gracias	Friend	Amigo
		Yes / No	Sí / No

90% of residents
communicate in
Spanish, we
encourage you to
have fun practicing
and using it while
visiting!