**Guatemala – Casa Vieja**

**Pre-Trip Planner**

**ENTRY INTO GUATEMALA**

**YOU WILL NEED A VALID PASSPORT FOR TRAVEL TO GUATEMALA.** It is recommended to have at least six months validity on your passport from the time of your return date on your scheduled trip. Minors will also need a notarized letter of authorization if traveling with a single parent. Non U.S. citizens should check with their consulate to verify their required travel documentation.

In flight, you will be given a Guatemalan tourist Immigration/Customs Form. Fill it out, indicating you are staying at the Casa Vieja Lodge, Puerto San Jose, Escuintla. Upon arrival, hand the completed form and your passport to the Immigration Official, who will stamp both and return to you.  Proceed to baggage claim and hand your form to the official, collect your bags and put them through the x-ray machine. Proceed through the door and exit to the left and look for a Casa Vieja sign held by our drivers (Michael and Walter).  The group will transfer 90-120 minutes in a 15 passenger, air conditioned van to the Pacific coastal city of Puerto San Jose. The van will be stocked with water, soft drinks and beer.

VERY IMPORTANT: Please review your airlines website if you have any questions on baggage. Trek assumes no responsibility for excess luggage. For any questions regarding what you can bring as carry-on luggage please visit http://www.tsa.gov/traveler-information/prohibited-items

**BAGGAGE INFORMATION**

VERY IMPORTANT – Please review your airlines website if you have any questions on baggage. Airline’s policies differ on the amount of checked baggage allowed. Current size restrictions on checked bags are that suitcases should be no more than 62 inches and weigh no more than 50 pounds per bag. For any questions regarding what you can bring as carry-on luggage please visit <http://www.tsa.gov/travelers/index.shtm>

**THE TRIP**

When you arrive on the coast, you will be taken to the Casa Vieja Lodge, where our agents will get you situated and discuss the itinerary for your trip. During the next three days, you will be awoken about 5:45am by the aroma of fresh coffee being delivered to your room. Breakfast is 6:00-6:45am at the lodge and then you’ll transfer five minutes by van to the marina to board your boat. Upon your return to the marina at 5:00 in the afternoon, you will be taken by van back to the lodge where you will have your evening meal at 7:00pm. After fishing on the fourth day of the trip, you will either spend that last night at the lodge and be taken back to Guatemala City the following morning to board your international flight, or our agents will take you back to Guatemala City and your accommodations for the evening after fishing your last day. The hotels are conveniently located within a short walking distance of many shops and fine restaurants and our agents will be happy to offer suggestions for an enjoyable evening. If you stay in Guatemala City your final night, you will be responsible for taking the hotel shuttle back to the airport the following morning. Please be sure to allow for a solid 2 to 2 1/2 hour check-in prior to your scheduled international departure time.

**THE FISHING**

Each morning, after breakfast, you’ll be transferred to the marina to board your boat for an action packed day of offshore fishing. You will be fishing from a 37-foot boat that has been fully outfitted with all the necessary communication and fish finding equipment, while your captain, who has years of fishing experience in these waters, will do his best to put you in the fish. Boats are fully stocked with all tackle, baits, lunch and cold drinks. You will be trolling with ballyhoo behind teasers and will have the option of either hooking up your own fish, or having the mates assist. Fishing is primarily for sails with some shots at Marlin, Tuna and Dolphin. If you wish to take one of your days to fish closer to shore for Roosterfish or an occasion Snook, simply relay your preference to your captain and he will be happy to accommodate your request.

**CASA VIEJA LODGE**

Your base of operations on the coast will be the Casa Vieja Lodge. This sportsman styled property was formerly the mansion of a wealthy Guatemala sporting family. The 18 bedrooms, pool and lush landscaped grounds will assure you the utmost in comfort during your stay. There is a business center with computers available for your use and the lodge also has Wi-Fi connectivity. Laundry service is available at the lodge and the rate is $15.00 per bag of laundry. Voltage in Guatemala is 110 so you will not need any adapters for your electrical appliances. Bottled water is supplied in all rooms.

**GUATEMALA CITY**

If you spend your final evening in Guatemala City, we will be staying at the stylish Westin Camino Real. The convenience of this property to numerous shops and restaurants as well as its proximity to the airport, make it the perfect spot for clients who want to enjoy the local culture, while having all the amenities that a Westin can offer. Our ground agents will suggest some restaurants that you might wish to try, but the following are a few that we have found to be very good: Hacienda Real, or the La Hacienda de los Sanchez for steaks or typical Guatemalan fare, and Tre Fratelli for Italian food.

**WEATHER**

The climate in Guatemala will be warm to hot during the day, but cool and comfortable in the evenings. January through May are considered the dry season, so rain would generally not be a concern. Those traveling from June through August might consider packing some rain gear since you may encounter afternoon showers. Due to its higher elevation, Guatemala City is 10 to 15 degrees cooler than the coast.

**WHAT TO BRING**

The weather, for the most part, is warm and sunny so plan on bringing lightweight cotton clothing, a hat, polarized sunglasses, sunscreen, and any required personal items. Mosquitoes are generally not a problem, but it wouldn’t hurt to bring some repellant to have on hand in case the need arises. Please be sure to pack any needed medications in your carry-on.

**CURRENCY**

The currency in Guatemala is the Quetzal, however it is not necessary to change money as dollars are widely accepted. Bring small bills, as most shops will give you change in Quetzals instead of dollars. To inquire about the exchange rate at the time of travel, please check with your financial institution.

***NOTE:*** Purchases made at the lodge with credit cards will add a 12% country tax to your bill. Hotels, restaurants and services paid with credit card will also incur an additional 9% tax for service with a total 21% tax being added on your bill. All outside souvenir vendors accept cash only. Travelers Checks are **NOT** accepted.

**GRATIUTIES**

Generally it is customary to tip a boat crew after a full day of fishing and the normal gratuity is $300.00 a day to cover the captain and mates with this figure being split between the anglers on board. Tips to the house staff, figure about $20.00- $25.00 per angler, per day and $10.00 per person, per day for the drivers (for the round trip Guatemala City-lodge transfers, not the daily trips to the marina). As in all cases, tipping is a voluntary practice and completely up to the client. Please bring US dollars to tip the lodge staff, drivers and captains.

**MEDICAL INFORMATION**

We suggest you check with your personal physician or The Center for Disease Control (800-311-3435 or WWW.CDC.GOV) regarding inoculation information for this area.

**TRAVEL PROTECTION**

Trek Safaris recommends that you purchase a travel protection plan. For your convenience, we offer a travel protection plan from Arch Roamright. You should have received the brochure at the time of final billing. Please contact Trek to purchase the travel protection plan. To view the policy, go to Arch Roamright's website: http://treksafaris.archinsurancesolutions.com. Travel Insurance is underwritten by Arch Insurance Company, NAIC #11150.

 **IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS**

Casa Vieja Lodge – 011-502-7881-1705

Lodge Manager, Elisa – 011-502-4008-0436

Michael Fajardo (Transportation) – 011-502-3025-4880

Westin Camino Real in Guatemala City – 011-502-2333-3000

Trek Safaris (24 HR Line) – 904-273-7800

Trek Safaris (Reservation Line) – 800-654-9915

***Trek Safaris maintains a 24 hour answering service on its (904)-273-7800 number. Please call that number should you have any problems getting in touch with your party.***

**SUGGESTED PACKING LIST**

\_\_\_ Bags and suitcases

\_\_\_ Daypack

\_\_\_ Luggage IDs

\_\_\_ Passport / Personal ID / Driver’s License (including photocopies)

\_\_\_ Airline Tickets

\_\_\_ Emergency contact information

\_\_\_ Wallet and cash

\_\_\_ Credit/ATM Cards (set up for international use)

\_\_\_ Correspondence related to the trip (any letters or trip itinerary you received from Trek)

\_\_\_ Toothbrush, Tooth paste and floss

\_\_\_ Razors and Shaving cream

\_\_\_ Shampoo / Deodorant

\_\_\_ Lip balm and sunscreen (high SPF sunscreen)

\_\_\_ Any Medications you are taking

\_\_\_ Prescription Eyeglasses (and a spare)

\_\_\_ Reading glasses

\_\_\_ Sunglasses (polarized) (good idea to bring extra pair)

\_\_\_ Flashlight & batteries

\_\_\_ Camera & memory cards

\_\_\_ Camera batteries and charger

\_\_\_ Insect Repellant

\_\_\_ Rain Jacket (lightweight)

\_\_\_ Lightweight fishing shirts (2 or 3 -- long sleeve suggested)

\_\_\_ Tropical weight pants (2 pair)

\_\_\_ Fishing shorts (2 pair)

\_\_\_ Casual pants (2 pair)

\_\_\_ Casual shorts (2 pair)

\_\_\_ Casual Shirts (2 or 3)

\_\_\_ Shoes for fishing (flip-flops, tennis shoes, crocs or boat shoes)

\_\_\_ Underwear and socks (3 to 4 pair of each)

\_\_\_ Swimsuit

\_\_\_ Fishing cap (wide brim suggested)

\_\_\_ Fishing Gloves (sun gloves)

\_\_\_ Fishing Rods

\_\_\_ Fishing Reels

\_\_\_ Fishing lures / flies