



Building Community Across Borders since 1978

Corazón Projects: What to Expect

Before you go Checklist:

- ✓ **Mexican Auto Insurance:** Check with your insurance carrier regarding coverage in Mexico. You can also purchase insurance for one day online, BEFORE the build at www.bajabound.com or call 888.552.2252. They offer competitive rates, convenience, and they support Corazón.
- ✓ **Safety:** The communities Corazón builds are far away from the danger reported on in the news. However, please do not bring valuables, and be sure to secure your passport.
- ✓ **Supplies:** Bring sunscreen, a hat, gloves, snacks, and plenty of water. Suggested supplies: canopy, trash bags, handy wipes, hand sanitizer, lip balm, and change of clothes and shoes. Dress comfortably and appropriately. Wear closed-toed shoes.
- ✓ **Equipment:** Bring a hammer, nail apron, tape measure and gloves. The only power tool we use is a skill saw and that will be provided.
- ✓ **Fill the tank:** Please fill up before leaving the U.S.
- ✓ **Carpool:** Please carpool. It is imperative to keep the cars to a minimum, so the caravan is manageable.
- ✓ **Other Donations:** Please DO NOT give out any items. We ask that you respect the philosophy: 'Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day, teach a man to fish and he will eat for a lifetime.' If you hand out items, even as small as candy, you will be taking away from the Corazón model, and you will be causing problems of inequality in the communities. If you bring donations, please give them to your Trip Coordinator, and they will be placed in our donation warehouse. Participants can exchange their service hours for the items you brought.

Legal Documentation:

U.S. citizens are required to have a U.S. passport or a passport card. Sentri and Global Entry cards are also accepted.

Exceptions:

- **Children under age 16:** U.S. & Canadian citizen children under age 16 may also present an original or copy of his or her birth certificate, school ID, a Consular Report of Birth Abroad, a Naturalization Certificate, or a Canadian Citizenship Card.
- **Groups of Children under age 19:** U.S. and Canadian citizen children under age 19 traveling with a school group, religious group, social or cultural organization, or sports team, may also present an original or copy of his or her birth certificate, school ID, a Consular Report of Birth Abroad, a Naturalization Certificate, or a Canadian Citizenship Card.

Project Day:

- **Going Down the Night Before (optional):** Some Corazón volunteers opt to stay in San Diego or Chula Vista the night before to ensure they are rested for the build.
- **Meet at 6:00 AM:** The group will meet at the Terra Nova Plaza parking lot in front of Von's off the H Street East exit (360 E. H Street, Chula Vista). Take the 805 south to the H Street East exit. The parking lot is on the right. We will gather, have a brief meeting, and leave shortly thereafter. The Corazón representatives will review the map, and groups can divide into carpools. **Be on time.** We will not hold up the caravan.
- **Crossing into Mexico:** You will receive a green or red light at the Mexican border. If you receive a green light, bare left and proceed. If you receive a red light, bare right to secondary inspection. We will ensure that all cars have cleared secondary before continuing. At the San Ysidro border ONLY, we will be following signs to a right exit for Rosarito/Ensenada. If going to Tecate, you will need approximately \$8 for the toll road. You may also be directed to the left which is a military check point. They will ask you to exit your car. Don't panic. It is common



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procedure and much like random inspection at the airport. Upon completion of inspection you will rejoin the caravan.

Lunch:

- The families will provide a traditional Mexican lunch, consisting of rice, beans, and a cactus salad. You are more than welcome to bring your own food and/or snacks. Make sure to bring plenty of water to stay hydrated. Alcohol is not allowed before, during or after the project.

At the Site:

- **Safety:** The Lead Builder will give a safety and procedures talk before beginning construction. Only experienced people should use the power tools. Check with your Lead Builder before use. You are on a construction site in Mexico. The terrain is uneven, and at times dangerous. Please use caution.
- **Special Skills:** If you have expertise in any field that might be relevant, please let us know early in the day.
- **Stick to the Plan:** Corazón houses are all built through a set process. We have refined our building process to be safe and efficient, ensuring the build is complete in one day. The process is simplistic, and structured so groups of volunteers of all skill level can contribute. Everyone must follow the instructions and procedures of the Lead Builder and Trip Coordinator to ensure safety, timeliness, and consistency.
- **The Finale:** When the house is done, we have a closing ceremony where we present the keys to the new owner. Being a part of this special moment is a memorable experience!

The Trip Home:

- **The Caravan:** Your Trip Coordinator or Saturday Supervisor will review a map at lunchtime or after the closing ceremony.
- **Crossing the Border:** The U. S. Department of Homeland Security officers at the border will want to see your documents and may ask questions about your citizenship, the purpose of your trip, and what you are bringing back with you.

After-Thoughts:

- **The Bottom Line:** You have just spent a day doing something that will make a tremendous difference in one family's quality of life. But you will realize the wonderful irony of service is that we receive much more than we give. We hope you have a thoroughly enjoyable time, which you will never forget.
- **Come Again:** You do not have to be part of a sponsoring group to volunteer. Our web site at www.corazon.org has a calendar that lists all of our activities. If you're coming with more than a couple of friends, please call the office first so we can ensure that there is enough for everyone to do.
- **Support:** Please consider supporting Corazón in the form of a family sponsorship, scholarships, donation drives and/or general support for the Corazón program.
- **Volunteer:** If you like us, volunteer! Construction projects are just one part of our program. The Corazón program is a comprehensive community development program. Information on all of our programs, and how you can become involved, whether in Mexico or the U.S., can be found on our website.
- **Survey:** Corazón values your opinion and would like to invite you to participate in a brief survey that will be emailed to you. The survey should take no more than 15 minutes of your time. Please complete our survey to improve our services, and the future experiences of our builds.

Thank you!