

7-Day Bottle School VolunTour Trip San Martin Jilotepeque, Chimaltenango, Guatemala

Please note this is only a sample itinerary. The actual itinerary for your trip may vary slightly.

Day 1 – Arrive in Antigua.

Arrive in Antigua, Guatemala, to start your VolunTour. Be met at the airport by a Hug It Forward representative and then escorted into Antigua. Next, have lunch with the group you'll be working with side by side, and then spend the afternoon walking around picturesque Antigua, a UNESCO World Heritage City. During the first night's dinner, participate in an important orientation, preparing you for the week ahead and building group synergy.

Day 2 – Work on bottle school project.

After breakfast at the hotel, drive to the community in which you will be working. You will be greeted by a welcome ceremony before starting work on the bottle school. After lunch, work a little more on the school before watching a presentation from a community member about the Guatemalan Civil War. Afterward, take part in a community hike, during which you'll visit the home of a few local producers who will share their culture and lifestyle. Return to San Martin in the evening for dinner.

Day 3 – Work on bottle school project.

After dining on a breakfast prepared by our private chef, drive to the bottle school community and spend the morning working on the bottle school. Depending on the bottle school's stage of construction, you may participate in different tasks on the construction site, including digging; stuffing, classifying and placing bottles; cutting and bending rebar; mixing cement; putting the first layer of cement on the walls; and painting the school. In the afternoon, enjoy a presentation by a community member about migration. Return to San Martin in the evening for dinner.

Day 4 – Discover the Mayans.

After breakfast, drive to the Mayan ruins of Chwa Nim Ab'äj, which was the last Kaqchikel fortress conquered by the Spaniards. Prepare yourself for an eye-opening tour through the amazing Mayan culture, led by Dimas, an expert guide who practices Mayan spirituality. Return to San Martin in the afternoon, and work on preparing and rehearsing the workshop on hygiene (for example, washing your hands or brushing your teeth), which you'll present to the schoolchildren the next day.

Day 5 – Work on bottle school project.

After breakfast, drive to the bottle school community and spend all morning working on the bottle school project. After a lunch served in the community, work more on the bottle school before presenting your workshop to the community's students. This will be followed by a Q&A session with the students. The community will present a closing ceremony, after which it's time to say goodbye to your new friends and head back to San Martin for dinner.

Day 6 – Return to Antigua.

Visit Tikonel, an inspirational cooperative of Mayan women's and men's groups, followed by a visit to the School for Children with Special Needs. Drive to Antigua in time for lunch, which will be served at the hotel. Spend your afternoon as you choose: visiting the artisan markets or Antigua's many museums, galleries, churches and sites of historical interest; resting; or just exploring this beautiful town. Dinner will be served at a local restaurant, and the group will share their experiences from the previous week, bringing the trip to a close.

Day 7 – Return home.

Enjoy breakfast before transferring to the airport and returning home.