



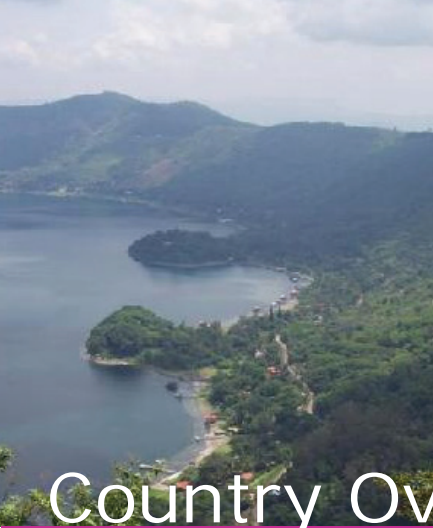
NPH USA

Raising Children. Supporting Families.
Transforming Lives.



VISITOR'S GUIDE: NPH EL SALVADOR

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Country Overview

El Salvador is the smallest Central American country, and the only one without a Caribbean coast.

Area: 8,124 square miles – slightly smaller than Massachusetts

Population: 6,602,370 (2023 estimate)

Languages: Spanish, Nahua (among some Amerindians)

About half of all children and youth are poor.

Climate/Environment

- Mostly mountainous in the north with a narrow coastal belt along the Pacific Ocean and a central plateau
- Tropical climate with distinctly wet and dry seasons
- Known as “the Land of Volcanoes” - extremely susceptible to earthquakes, volcanic activity and hurricanes
- Environmental issues include soil erosion, deforestation, water pollution and soil contamination

A Brief History

As early as 10,000 years ago, El Salvador was inhabited by Paleo-Indian peoples. At the time of the Spanish arrival in the 16th century, the country was dominated by a group called the Pipils. In 1524, Spanish conquistador Pedro de Alvarado arrived, and by the 1700s the Spaniards had overtaken the land and prevailed with their agricultural endeavors. In 1811, the first revolt against Spain erupted but failed. However, only 10 years later, on September 15, 1821, El Salvador, along with the rest of the Central American colonies, won independence from Spain.

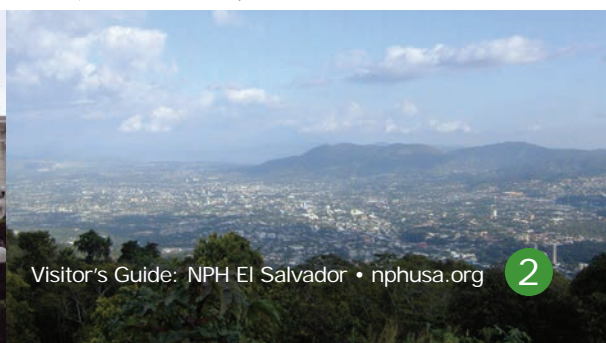
Despite El Salvador's victory in establishing independence, social and economic injustice plagued the country well into the 20th century. The most important crop is coffee, and by the 20th century, 95% of the country's income came from this crop, however only 2% of the population controlled this wealth. In 1932, a rebellion of the peasants and indigenous peoples took place, but was brutally quelled with the systematic killing of anyone suspected by the military, resulting in what is

known as *la Mantanza* (the Massacre) with the death of 30,000 people. After this, the nation became a military-run state that formed a corrupt partnership with the land-owning elite.

Poverty, unemployment and overpopulation were extensive throughout the country. The political climate was a fierce power struggle between the left and right, which spurred many coups, corrupt moves and increased guerilla activity by the domineering right wing, such as the creation of “death squads” where thousands of people were kidnapped, murdered and tortured. This widespread civil unrest turned into civil war in the 1980s. Finally on January 16, 1992, a compromise was signed by the opposing sides. During the course of this 12-year war, approximately 75,000 people were killed.

Although the country continues to face economic disparity, there has been modest growth in recent years. Still, social unrest is an issue with the most recent trend in crime being a prevalent gang problem.

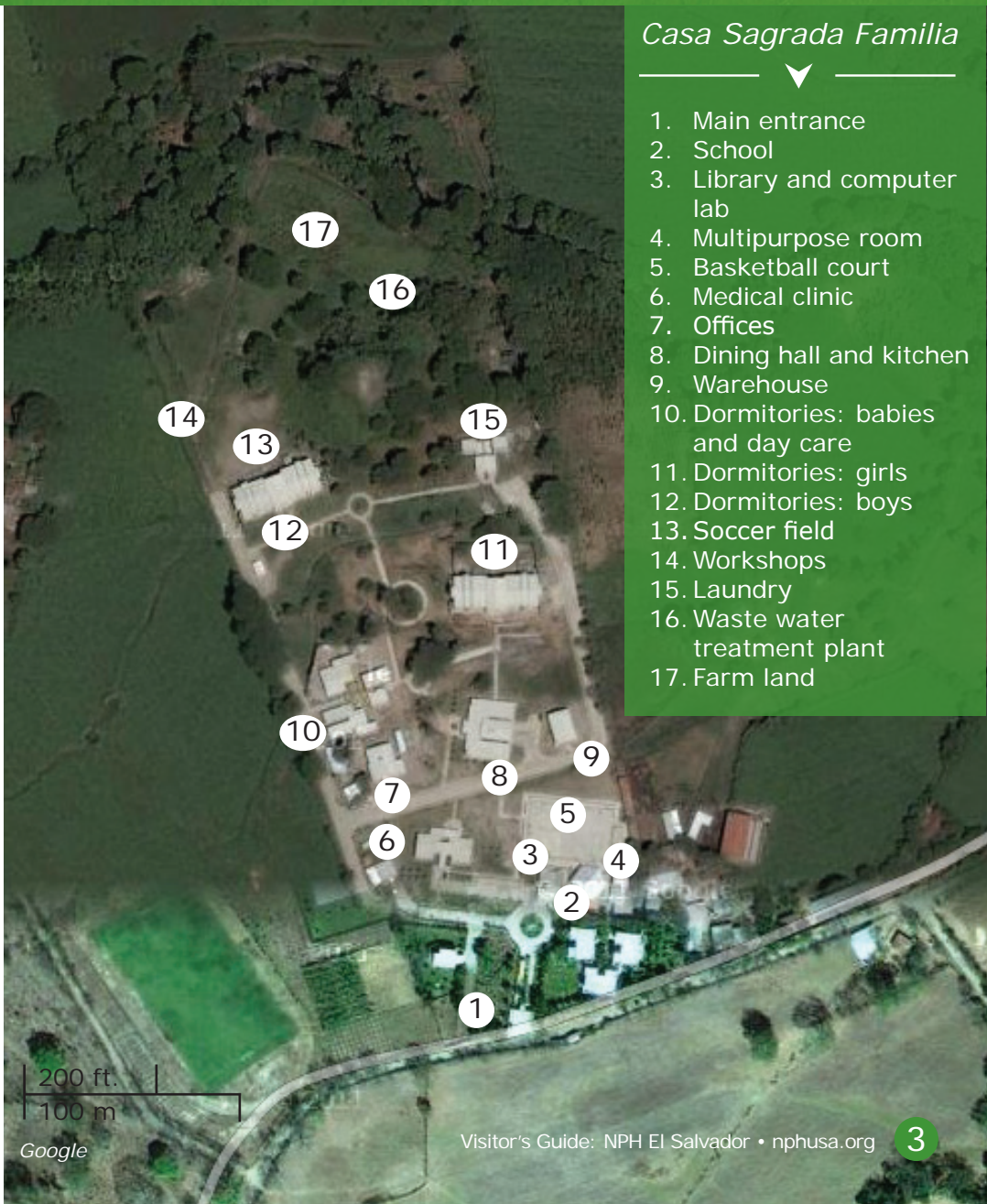
Below: Government headquarters, Stelita/WikiCommons; San Salvador, Xtremesv/WikiCommons





The NPH Home

As a result of the 12-year civil war and continuing violence and unrest, Father William B. Wasson saw the need to help El Salvador's many neglected and orphaned children. He founded a Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos (NPH, Spanish for "Our Little Brothers and Sisters") home in 1999. Located in Texistepeque, it is about 30 miles from San Salvador, the nation's capital. Construction on *Casa Sagrada Familia* was completed in December 2004.



Casa Sagrada Familia

1. Main entrance
2. School
3. Library and computer lab
4. Multipurpose room
5. Basketball court
6. Medical clinic
7. Offices
8. Dining hall and kitchen
9. Warehouse
10. Dormitories: babies and day care
11. Dormitories: girls
12. Dormitories: boys
13. Soccer field
14. Workshops
15. Laundry
16. Waste water treatment plant
17. Farm land

200 ft.
100 m

Google



Daily Life

Highlights

- The *Grupo Musical y Danza* performs traditional music and dances locally and in the U.S.
- The farm produces corn to make tortillas, sorghum for the livestock, and radishes, cucumbers and squash. The dairy cows produce 135 bottles of milk daily.
- The school features modern, well-equipped classes, and offers kindergarten through grade 9. The curriculum includes math, social science, science, language, spelling, English, computer science and physical education.
- All students begin vocational studies during the 7th grade and may choose from carpentry, tailoring, welding, and baking.
- A cooking workshop for children and youth with neurological problems and learning difficulties teaches them valuable skills for their future.
- The clinic is open to people in the community three days a week as well as for emergencies.
- A daycare center, *Centro de Atención Infantil*, was opened in 2017. It currently serves over 43 children every day: some are from the local community and some are children of people who grew up at NPH.

Responsibility

Responsibility is one of the most important values that NPH tries to instill in their children. This is why each child is expected to not only be responsible for him or herself, but to contribute to the family. This includes traditional chores such as washing clothes, cleaning, and serving food.

Each child also has additional responsibilities after school and during the weekends. Some work in the gardens, while others care for the grounds and clean common areas. Everyone knows how much effort goes into caring for their home and all the people who live there.

Before attending high school and university, *pequeños* are asked to give a year of service to the home.

Typical Day at Casa Sagrada Familia

5:00 a.m. Wake up, shower, dress, make bed
 5:30 a.m. Breakfast
 6:15 a.m. Chores
 7:15 a.m. School day begins
 12 Noon Lunch
 1:30 a.m. School
 3:30 p.m. Change clothes and wash school uniforms
 5:00 p.m. Play time and homework
 6:00 p.m. Shower
 6:30 p.m. Dinner
 7:30 p.m. Reflection and/or reading led by the caregivers
 8:00 p.m. Good night!

Godchildren

If you sponsor a child at NPH El Salvador, arrangements will be made for him/her to spend time with you during your visit. Please contact your regional office if you are interested in becoming a Godparent.



National Director Olegario Campos is an *hermano mayor* ("older brother"), who was raised at NPH Mexico.



Travel Tips



Time Zone

Central Standard Time
UTC/GMT -6 hours



When traveling abroad, we recommend enrolling in the U.S. Department of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP). This free service helps the U.S. government know where citizens are, so they can notify and assist them in case of emergency. To enroll, visit <http://step.state.gov/step>



The goal of the trip is to have fun, experience the culture of El Salvador and meet the inspiring children of NPH. Each traveler has so much to share with this great family and so much to learn. We hope that each visitor grows from their interactions with the children we support, just as your visit helps them to do the same.

Entry Requirements

A U.S. passport valid until your departure date and either a Salvadoran visa or a one-entry tourist card are required. The tourist card costs \$10 payable in cash and may be obtained from immigration officials upon arrival in country.

Vaccinations

Before traveling to El Salvador, please consult your physician and visit www.cdc.gov/travel

Transportation

- For group trips organized by NPH USA, transportation will be provided by NPH.
- Do NOT hitchhike under any circumstances.

Accommodations

Lodging varies depending on trip package. See specific trip information or consult the coordinator for details.

Food

While at NPH facilities, we will eat just like the children and staff at specific mealtimes:

- Breakfast: 5:30 a.m.
- Lunch: 12:00 p.m.
- Dinner: 6:30 p.m.

Food at NPH is NEVER wasted. If you are unsure you will like what is being served, ask for only "un poquito" (a little), and if you cannot finish, please offer it to one of the kids.



Please read NPH International's Visitor Policy and Guidelines, sign the form and return it to your trip coordinator.

While on day trips, we will eat in restaurants where we are sure that food will be prepared safely.

All visitors are welcome to bring additional snacks to share. Be sure to bring things that can withstand hot and humid conditions and preferably are individually wrapped.

Water

DRINK BOTTLED WATER ONLY. This cannot be stressed enough.

Bathroom Etiquette

It is not possible to flush toilet paper in most Latin American countries due to the poor plumbing systems. Toilet paper and all sanitary products must be thrown in small waste baskets next to the toilet. **DO NOT flush toilet paper or sanitary products while visiting the NPH home.**

Bring travel toilet paper, or a small packet of facial tissues on day trips. Tissue is not always available in public bathrooms.

Electricity

Electrical outlets are 115 to 125 volt 60 hertz, so no adapters are needed. You should expect power outages, which are common in Latin America.

Travel Tips *(continued)*

E-mail & Phones

There is a laptop computer with Internet in the office that you can use from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 1 to 5 p.m. Please arrange a time to use it with the receptionist.

Please help us be good stewards of our resources and do not ask to use our phone for long distance calls except in a true emergency. Our phone bills are VERY high due to our remote location.

Clothing

Comfortable, broken-in walking shoes are a must! The days are warm, so light clothing – shorts, slacks, cotton T-shirts, sandals and/or running shoes – is appropriate. But please dress conservatively and in a tidy manner. Also, for Mass do not wear shorts or short skirts. Please shower directly before Mass (as the children do). A clean pair of pants with a tucked in shirt is appropriate for men, as are pants, jeans, capris or a skirt and a nice shirt for women.

Because of gang issues in El Salvador:

- Earrings and piercings are not allowed for men. For women, one earring per ear is acceptable.
- All tattoos should be covered.

Our children copy the models they see and will suffer if they do not follow these rules.

Currency and Credit Cards

The official currency in El Salvador is the U.S. dollar. ATMs can be found in most cities in towns. Generally, when using credit cards there is no additional fee, however there may be one in smaller boutiques. Please remember that credit card fraud is increasing all over the world, so be cautious.

A value-added tax of 13% is applied to all goods and services.

Tipping

Most restaurants will add a 10-15% tip to the bill. Bellhops and room maids should be tipped about \$.50 per day per person. Tip tour guides \$1-5 per day per person.

Safety

Outside the gates of NPH, we recommend that you never go alone anywhere. Be vigilant in regards to your surroundings. While at the home, we will be in a very safe and controlled environment. However, it is important to remember to watch your personal property. Our children have come from very different backgrounds and while NPH tries to help them realize that they are safe now, many of them are still in survival mode. They are not malicious, but for many, taking is the only way they have ever survived.



See page 9 for emergency contact information.

PLEASE DO NOT give children your address, e-mail or phone number even if you are their sponsor.

Terms to Know

Good morning/afternoon/evening! - *¡Buenos días/tardes/noches!*
See you later! - *¡Hasta luego!*
How are you? - *¿Cómo está?*
Fine, thank you. - *Bien, gracias.*
Please - *Por favor*
Excuse me - *Permiso*
Do you speak English? - *¿Habla inglés?*
Yes - *Sí*
No - *No*
Thank you - *Gracias*
You're welcome - *De nada*
How old are you? - *¿Cuántos años tiene?*
How much is this? - *¿Cuánto es?*
More - *más*
A little bit - *un poquito*
House - *casa*
Home - *hogar*
School - *escuela*
Backpack - *mochila*
Office - *oficina*
Kitchen - *cocina*
Water - *agua*
Food - *comida*
Rice - *arroz*
Beans - *frijoles*
Spoon - *cuchara*
Fork - *tenedor*
Cup - *vaso*
Plate - *plato*

NPH-Related

Pequeño/a - literally "little," but it is the term used for all NPH children

Tío/a - literally aunt or uncle, but at NPH it is a caretaker

Fr. Wasson - *Padre Wasson* (Founder of NPH)

Padrino - Godfather (Sponsor)

Madrina - Godmother (Sponsor)

Ahijdo/a - Godchild

Hermano/a Mayor - Older brother/sister - the term for a former pequeño/a or graduate of NPH



Suggested Packing List

Clothes

- Lightweight travel clothes - there is no laundry facility, but you can hand wash!
- Jeans/shorts/travel pants - your preference
- Comfortable shoes for walking - tennis shoes or something with closed toes
- Poncho/lightweight rain jacket
- "Bug off" clothing - REI or Ex Officio (if sensitive to mosquitoes)
- One "nicer," but still casual outfit

Remember to dress conservatively. No visible undergarments; nothing torn, ripped or too short.

Toiletries

- Hand sanitizer
- Shampoo/Conditioner
- Soap (we recommend a pack of disposable face cloths that have soap in the fibers. They work as soap and a washcloth.)
- Toothbrush/paste
- Deodorant
- Razor
- Earplugs
- Soap for washing clothes (if you want)
- Suntan lotion
- Insect repellent
- Small packet of facial tissues
- Travel toilet paper

Medicines

- Personal prescriptions (can be hard to get or expensive outside the U.S.)
- Pepto Bismol/Immodium
- Advil/Tylenol/Excedrin
- Cipro/antibiotic for travelers' diarrhea
- Benadryl/Hydrocortisone
- Bandages/Neosporin
- Emergen-C/cough drops

Personal Items

- Pillow
- Umbrella
- Water bottle
- Camera/Charger
- Fly paper
- Sunglasses
- Flashlight (plus extra batteries)
- Travel alarm clock (if desired)

Snacks/Food

While we encourage everyone to eat the food provided (it is tasty), if you are worried about not liking the food, or getting enough, consider packing some pasta or another substitution for a meal, just in case. In addition, you may also want to bring:

- Granola bars/fruit bars/popcorn/snacks to share
- Gatorade packets (it is easy to get dehydrated)
- Good ground coffee and sugar to share

Other

- Passport
- Two copies of passport and credit card information: leave one copy at home
- Pictures of your family to show kids (great conversation starters!) and/or postcards

Do NOT Bring

- Expensive or irreplaceable jewelry or other valuable items
- Flashy gifts



We often leave pillows, towels, sheets and dinnerware for the home to keep after we leave.

Gifts



Visitors often ask what items they can bring for the children. Following are some suggestions.

Clothing and Shoes

- Underwear
- Socks
- Sandals

Education/Arts & Crafts

- Books in Spanish
- Coloring books
- Colored pencils and crayons
- Glue and tape
- Scissors
- Construction paper
- Play-Doh
- Yarn and pipe cleaners
- Beads
- Stickers

Toys & Games (for every age group)

- Card games
- Board games
- Jigsaw puzzles (100 pieces max.)
- Marbles

Sports Equipment

The kids spend most of their time outside, so think of items that require little or no maintenance and can be shared by everyone!

- Balls
- Jump ropes
- Air pumps with extra needles

Hygiene

- Feminine products
- Shampoo
- Soap
- Toothpaste
- Toothbrushes (for kids AND adults)

Health Care

- Vitamins
- Bandages
- Neosporin
- Tylenol

These items are always needed in the clinic. Please contact us if you are interested in donating other medical supplies.

Other

- Barrettes and hair accessories
- Inexpensive plastic jewelry
- Batteries of various sizes are always needed and easy to transport

When in doubt . . .

Bring things that NPH needs or wants, and that get depleted. If you are still unsure, ask!



PLEASE DO NOT

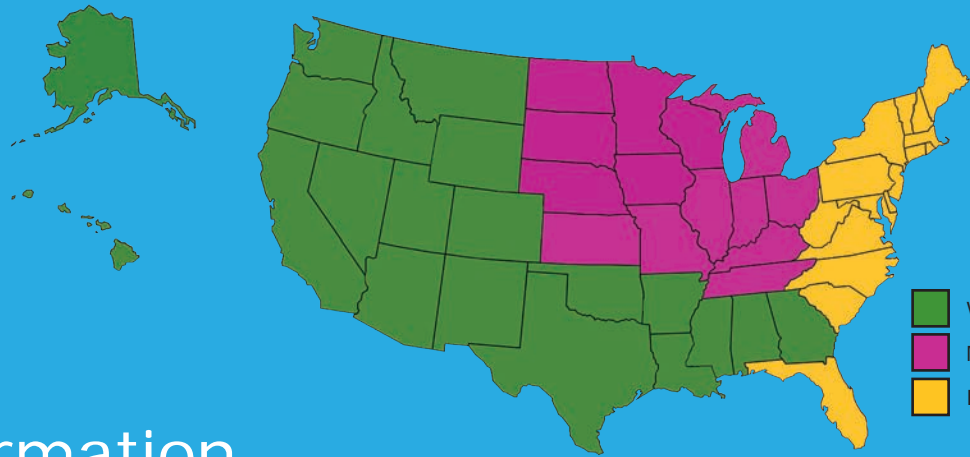
- Bring candy or small items to randomly pass out. This can result in hurt feelings among children who do not receive anything.
- Bring expensive gifts, such as music players, video games or jewelry. This may unintentionally create feelings of jealousy and cause problems for that child.
- Give gifts directly to the children. Give them to the home's Visitor Coordinator or a staff person.
- Give money to anyone at the home. This can cause confusion about how it will be used and will not qualify for a tax deduction under U.S. law. Please make all donations through NPH USA.

REMEMBER, YOUR VISIT IS A GIFT!

Neither NPH nor NPH USA want the children to associate your visit with material items. The best thing that you can bring is you! All your kind words, thoughts and affection are going to be the most lasting gift. Building relationships is the most valuable thing you can offer!



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West and South
Midwest
East

Contact Information

We suggest you leave this information as well as your flight and hotel details (if applicable) with your emergency contact.

National NPH USA Office

20 North Wacker Drive
Suite 4000
Chicago, IL 60606-3193

Phone: 888.201.8880
info@nphusa.org

NPH USA, Federal Tax ID #65-1229309, is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation that supports the homes, healthcare and educational programs of Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos.

FUNDRAISING AREAS

West and South Area

Seattle Office

2719 East Madison Street
Suite 304
Seattle, WA 98112-4752

Phone 425.646.3935
infonw@nphusa.org

Phoenix Office

5110 North 40th Street
Suite 248
Phoenix, AZ 85018-2143

Phone 480.967.9449
infosw@nphusa.org

Midwest Area

Minneapolis Office

1400 Van Buren Street NE
Suite #200-210
Minneapolis, MN 55413-4605

Phone 651.482.1703
infoupm@nphusa.org

Chicago Office

20 North Wacker Drive
Suite 4000
Chicago, IL 60606-3193

Phone 312.386.7499
infomw@nphusa.org

East Area

Quincy Office

265 Willard Street
3rd Floor
Quincy, MA 02169-1514

Phone 617.206.4940
infoma-ne@nphusa.org

NPH El Salvador Emergency Contact Information

km. 77 carretera a Metapan
Caserto San José el Sompopo
Cantón Cujucuyo
Municipio de Texistepeque
Depto. Santa Ana
El Salvador

Phone: 011.503.2487.1500
Fax: 011.503.2487.1532
e-mail: info.sv@nph.org

