



## Mission Trip Guide

### ***MISSION STATEMENT –***

Open Door exists to transform communities in Haiti spiritually, educationally, economically, physically and socially to further the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

***Ministry Description*** – Open Door Haiti currently consists of 7 churches, 3 schools, a medical clinic, an orphanage, School Of Youth Ministry (SOYM) as well as other related ministries. Open Door Headquarters in Haiti is located in a rural farming village of about 22,000 people called Bois De Lance. While you are here you will see and experience miracles and will not leave unchanged. Mission teams serving in Haiti have the option of varied projects, including: Construction, Hut to Hut Evangelism, Feeding Program, VBS, Youth Camp, Soccer Camp, Music Camp, Medical/Dental Clinic, Teacher Training, and Church Leader Seminars.

Besides Bois de Lance, the other cities that Open Door Haiti currently has churches are Cap Haitien, Ouanaminthe, Hinche, Maguayave, Vaudreuil, Fontaine. Teams assisting with ministry in Cap Haitien, Vaudreuil or Ouanaminthe stay at our main Campus in Bois De Lance and travel back and forth to these cities for ministry activity. Teams ministering in Hinche, Fontaine or Maguayave stay at our Mission House in Hinche, which is a 3 hour drive from Cap Haitien.

***Team Description*** – An ideal team size is 12-18 people. Because of the rugged nature of ministering in a third world country, it is recommended that team members younger than 15 be accompanied by a parent/guardian. Co-ed student teams must have both a male and female leader (21 years or older) present, with a student to leader ration no less than 4-1 (i.e. 12 students, 3 leaders). Team members must be mature enough to handle themselves in a third world environment.

***Team Leaders*** – Open Door Haiti provides an experienced, capable team leader for each trip to Haiti. Our Trip Leaders are ODH staff, Board Members or Ministry Advocates who each know the ministry well and travel to Haiti frequently.

## Logistics

### *Basic Trip Itinerary*

**Day 1:** Arrive in Florida. Check in to hotel. (Dinner on your own)

**Day 2:** Depart for Cap Haitian, Haiti. Once you arrive you will travel to the Ministry Guest House. After unpacking you will be briefed on the Ministry and work projects to be completed and given a tour of the compound. We will end each day with a team meeting and bible study.

**Day 3-6:** Breakfast, Work Projects or Ministry Projects, Lunch, Projects, Team Dinner, Devotions/Down Time

**Final Day 7:** Leave Haiti for the U.S.

**Sunday Schedule** (can vary based on trip): 10am - Morning Church Service, (see dress code below) 1pm - Afternoon Meal, Down Time

### *Trip Cost*

#### OPEN DOOR HAITI BOOKING FLIGHT...

##### *Option #1-*

##### *Fort Lauderdale – Hollywood International Airport*

*IBC Airline* (1 hr 45 min flight – jet plane) – **\$1,450.00** (Cost is all inclusive, including hotel on the front end of trip.) (\*\*meals while in transit are at your own expense.)

This cost does not include any work project costs, round trip flight to Florida from city of origin and extra spending money for food while traveling and souvenirs. Mission Trips must be booked with deposit paid at least 5 to 6 months in advance. (deposit = \$650 per person) You MUST already have a passport before booking a trip.

DAY 1 – arrive in Ft. Lauderdale. DAY 2 – Leave Ft. Lauderdale for Cap Haitian (arrive in CAP around 9am) DAYS 3 to 6 – work projects. DAY 7 – Return to Ft. Lauderdale (arrive about noon)

NOTE: Schedule evening flights home – getting through US Customs can sometimes take a while.



**Option #2-**

***Ft. Pierce Regional/International Airport per Orlando International***

***Missionary Flights International*** (4 hr flight – DC3 prop plane) - **\$1,150.00** (Cost is all inclusive, including hotel on the front end of trip.) (\*\*Meals during transit are at your own expense.)

This price does NOT include shuttle service from Orlando to Ft. Pierce, flight to Florida from city of origin, costs for work projects, possible hotel on back end of trip and extra spending money for souvenirs. Mission Trips must be booked with deposit paid at least 5 to 6 months in advance. (MFI requires a \$1,000 deposit per group) You MUST already have a passport before booking a trip.

DAY 1 – arrive in Orlando (travel to hotel in Ft. Pierce. DAY 2 – Leave Ft. Pierce for Cap Haitian (arrive in CAP around 11am) DAYS 3 to 6 – work projects. DAY 7 – Return to Ft. Lauderdale (arrival varies from early to late afternoon)

*NOTE:* Because of the variance in arrival back to Ft. Pierce and then traveling back to Orlando, a DAY 8 to travel back to city of origin may be required.

**BOOKING YOUR OWN FLIGHT TO HAITI...**

**\*\*NOTE:** Before purchasing your Airline ticket to Cap Haitian, Haiti, your trip dates **MUST** be cleared with our ODH Trip Administrator.

***Option #1- Miami International Airport***

***American Airlines*** – (1 hr 45 min flight – jet plane) - **\$700.00** (Cost includes hotel on the front end of trip and all cost relating to food, travel and lodging while in Haiti.) (\*\*Meals during transit are at your own expense.)

This cost does NOT include round trip flight to Cap Haitien, Haiti, any work project costs, flight to Florida from city of origin and extra spending money for souvenirs. Mission Trips MUST be booked with deposit paid at least 5 to 6 months in advance. (Deposit = \$350 per person) You MUST keep Open Door Haiti advised to your flight plans once booked. You MUST already have a passport before booking a trip.

DAY 1 – arrive in Miami (shuttle to hotel). DAY 2 – Leave Miami for Cap Haitian (arrive in CAP around Noon) DAYS 3 to 6 – work projects. DAY 7 – Return to Miami (arrive about 4pm)

*NOTE:* Schedule your flights on home 6:30pm or later – getting through customs can sometimes take a while.

### **Basic Trip Cost Includes**

- \*Round Trip Airfare from FL to Cap Haitien, Haiti (if ODH books)
- \*Hotel in FL (first night of trip) and housing at Open Door in Haiti
- \*All meals while at Open Door in Haiti
- \*Transportation while in Haiti
- \*Travel Insurance
- \*Team T-Shirt
- \*Experienced ODH Team Leader

### **Optional Team Expenses** (costs can vary and each team provides the funds)

- \*Feeding program (feeds about 500 children) \$300
- \*VBS/Youth Camp/Sports Camp Materials \$500 per week
- \*Small Construction Project \$1000-\$2500 per week
- \*Day Trip to San-Souci Palace & Citadel, \$50 per person
- \*Extra Nights in Orlando for Debrief/Disney-Beach-Universal Options TBD

### **Travel Requirements**

Valid Passport (MUST have prior to booking Mission Trip)  
Recommended Shots: Tetanus, Hepatitis A/B, Typhoid  
Recommended Malaria Medication: Chloroquine



## **FAQ's**

### **Is it safe to travel to Haiti?**

Yes and No. As with all countries, it depends on what part of the country you travel to. The US State Department has issued travel warnings on Haiti continuously for a number of years. There is generally political instability, as is found in most third world countries. The capital city, Port Au Prince, is the hotbed for most of the unrest, though there are occasional manifestations in other parts of the country. UN Peace Keeping Forces are on the ground. Cap Haitian, our destination for travel, is generally much safer than the Port Au Prince. Our mission partners on the ground in Haiti will notify us immediately if a situation arises that makes it unsafe for travel.

### **Is it safe to eat in Haiti?**

The food in Haiti is delicious, Caribbean fare. Rice, beans, chicken, plantains, pineapple and papaya are on the menu. The food is prepared safely. Don't eat from a street vender, of course, but eat heartily when our hosts serve us.

### **Is the water safe to drink?**

Yes. Bottled water can be purchased in Haiti, and we will provide ample clean, safe drinking water for the team. Be sure to bring a water bottle. Haiti also has Coke/Pepsi products available.

### **What are our lodging conditions like?**

We will stay on the compound of Open Door in Bois De Lance. Our facilities are secure, well staffed, and comfortable, with running water and generator-powered electricity. They have showers, American toilets, ceiling fans, screened windows. Haiti is always hot... and humid.

### **Do they speak English in Haiti?**

The official language in Haiti is Creole. A small percentage of the educated also speak French. We will minister with translators, and the Haitian people are very eager to learn English, as it is a gateway to economic improvement.

### **Will I need to exchange money?**

Haiti's currency is the Gourde. The exchange rate is roughly 35 Gourdes to the US Dollar. But don't worry about exchanging money. They will be happy to accept your American dollars.

### **How can I be reached in Haiti in case of emergency?**

Your ODH Team Leader will provide their cell number as an emergency contact. Check with your provider about international roaming rates.

### **What do I wear... for work projects ?**

Shorts/jeans are acceptable, although shorts must be the longer variety (NO running shorts), work boots/sneakers.

### **What do I wear... for church?**

Bring casual dress clothes. MEN- Dockers or dress slacks & golf shirt or button up shirt  
LADIES- Skirt/dress. (See \*\*\* below for clothes to avoid)

### **What do I wear... for ministry projects like VBS or youth camp?**

Casual dress similar to what you will wear for church is appropriate.

### **What do I wear... for evenings at the ministry center?**

Comfortable clothing, ie. shorts, t-shirts, sandals/flip flops.

### **\*\*\*What should I AVOID wearing?\*\*\***

*(Haitian Christian culture frowns upon these things)*

**Ladies...** avoid dresses or tops with spaghetti straps or bare shoulders /wife-beaters.

**Men...** piercings of any kind, please remove for the trip.

**ALL...** if possible, cover any tattoos with clothing.

### **What should I bring?**

Passport( and xerox copy), Bible, Emergency Contact Information, Malaria Medication (Chloroquine), Toiletries(110 volt electricity), Laundry Bag, Work Gloves, Water Bottle, Flashlight, Sunglasses, Pen, Mosquito Repellent, Hand Sanitizer, Photo of Family, Camera, Cash (several \$1 bills for small items).

### **Comfort Items** (nice but not necessary)

Reading Material for Down Time, Ear Plugs, Battery Operated Fan WITH batteries, Hat, Tissues, Ibuprofen, Imodium AD, Bandana, Sunblock, Chapstick, Zip Lock Bags, Wipes, Snack foods – granola bars, breakfast bars, beef jerky, etc. (stay away from snacks that will melt.)

### **Giveaway Items** (nice but not necessary)

Candy, Clothes, Sunglasses, Watch, Shoes, Bracelets, Soccer Ball, Hand Tools, Pocket Knife, Batteries, Soap, Toothbrush, small AM/FM Radio, School Supplies, etc.



## **Packing Instructions**

### **Cargo Allowance**

MFI has a 50 lb per person cargo allowance, which includes your backpack and suitcase. Everything over 50 lbs is a \$1.50 charge per pound. Please have your cargo weighed and money for extra cargo.

IBC has a 50 lb per person allowance for your checked bag as well as a 10 lb allowance for a small carry-on item. Everything over this is charged \$2.00 per pound.

AMERICAN AIRLINES – check with airline

NOTE: If you plan on bringing cargo in excess of your 50 lb cargo allowance, please notify your team leader a minimum of 7 days before your trip so we can include that in our team cargo and be sure that it is on the plane with the team.

## **Haitian Cultural and Social Customs**

### ***Ways of Doing Things that are Different***

#### **Physical Affection**

Hand Holding – You may notice boys holding hands as they walk or talk. This is purely friendship and carries no other significance.

Arm-Holding – If someone has just washed their hands or has especially dirty hands, they will extend their forearm instead of their hand for a “handshake”.

#### **Bathrooms**

Water – Water comes from rainwater captured on rooftops and guttered into cisterns. Water can also be purchased from a tanker truck. Water is precious; do NOT let it run. Take short, low volume showers.

Hot Water – There isn't any. Only the most luxurious buildings have hot water. Our facility does not. Only one spigot works and the label does not have meaning. It will be cool water.

Flushing – Due to the value and expense of water, toilets are often not flushed after “light duty” use. This is not negligence or lack of sanitation; it is conservation. They even have a saying, “When it's yellow, leave it mellow. When it's brown, flush it down.”

Toilet Paper – Public toilets (if you ever find one) are not equipped with toilet paper. Always carry your own in your bag. Some toilets will not flush any paper, so you may see dirty toilet paper in a waste can. The toilets on our compound are sturdy enough to flush toilet paper.

## **Open Door Haiti Ministry Philosophy**

### *Working Through The Local Church*

#### **Begging**

You will be approached by many people, whether at the airport or in the village, who ask you for money, shoes, or some item you are wearing. We make it our practice to meet the needs of the people in Haiti through the local church and its leadership. We support the church and their ministries, and in turn they are able to meet the needs of the people.

As outsiders, we don't understand culture, customs and real needs like the Haitian leadership of Open Door does. We trust their judgement and allow them to make determinations on what needs to address. Working through the local church helps us to avoid encouraging a culture of begging and strengthens the church's impact.

#### **Gift Giving**

While in Haiti, you will undoubtedly develop relationships with the Haitian people. Some will become very dear to you. You will want to help them. These are our recommendations.

Candy/Trinkets – During our trip, you might want to pass out candy or bracelets to the children at the school or orphanage. Check with your team leader to make sure this is appropriate. When we do pass out these items, we always do so with the help of our Haitian leaders. You might get mobbed by kids grabbing for what you're holding otherwise.

Gifts – If you would like to give clothes, shoes, sunglasses, tools or other items to a Haitian friend, please speak with your team leader about this. We will clear this with our Haitian leaders to make sure it is appropriate. We typically leave these things with our Haitian friends on our last day before we leave for the airport.



Support – You might be asked by someone to help support them for a new business, for secondary school, college, marriage or some other need. Let this person know you will pray for them, and that you will speak to Pastor Wiljean about their need. Then, if you wish to help, you can give those funds through Open Door Haiti and we will send them to Open Door Church to provide assistance that individual's needs.

### **Quick Facts about Haiti**

Area: 10,714 square miles (27,751 km)

Population: 9,000,000

People: 95% black / 5% white

Religion: 80% Catholic, 20% Protestant, 60% Voodoo

Language: French, Haitian-Creole

Literacy: 52%

Capital: Port-au-Prince

Government: Presidential Republic

Currency: Gourdes

Employment: More than 2/3 population is unemployed

Life Expectancy: 60 years of age

Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere ranking as the most "food-insecure" country.

Haiti occupies the western third of the island of Hispaniola. The Dominican Republic makes up the rest of the island.

Haiti is located just 700 miles southeast of Florida.

The name Haiti means "mountainous." It is the Arawak Indian name for the island.

The majority of the population does not have ready access to safe drinking water, adequate medical care or sufficient food.

The mortality rate of Haitian children under the age of five is 10 times greater than that for children in the United States.

Few social assistance programs exist and the lack of employment opportunities remains one of the most critical problems

## **A Brief History**

### **Haiti: "Eldest Daughter of France and Africa"**

Lying approximately 560 miles to the southeast of Florida, Haiti is a nation of over eight million people in a mountainous country that is approximately the size of Maryland. Upon first landing on the north coast of Haiti in December 1492, Columbus noted, "The land is very high...with very good air." On Christmas Eve, 1492, the Santa Maria ran aground on a coral reef and was abandoned in Limonade Pass near Cap-Haitien, where its remains presumably still lie. Although Columbus gave Spanish names to many towns and harbors, the name Haiti (based on the Arawak Indian word meaning "mountainous land") is still used today. While it was once rich in sugar, tobacco, coffee, indigo, and cocoa, Haiti is now the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere.

The indigenous population was completely wiped out shortly after the arrival of Europeans. African slaves were forced to work the French plantations. While French is the official language of the island, Creole (a blend of seventeenth-century provincial French and West African languages) is Haiti's national language and the sole language of 85 percent of the country. It is a matter of great Haitian pride that Haiti was founded over 200 years ago by slaves that threw the "yoke of their masters"; the first independent black republic. The history of Haiti during the last 500 years has been tumultuous and the subject of many books and dissertations.

Authors Robert Debs Heinl and Nancy Gordon Heinl, in their lengthy and well-written book, *Written in Blood, The Story of the Haitian People, 1492-1995*, describe Haiti this way: Haiti is the eldest daughter of France and Africa. It is a place of beauty, romance, mystery, kindness, humor, selfishness, betrayal, cruelty, bloodshed, hunger, and poverty. It is a closed and withdrawn society whose apart-ness, unlike any other in the New World, rejects its European roots. Haiti is roosters crowing at dawn, drums in the night, coffee plucked wild from mountainsides, rum from ancient iron kettles. Haiti is green or, too often, brown, denuded mountains, headlong valleys, burning cane fields, dark sea, bright flowers, vast ruins and gingerbread houses.

### **Cap Haitien: Paris of the Antilles**

During the mid-1700s, Cap-Haitien was reported to have been France's wealthiest colonial city. It was famous for its beautiful architecture and was, accordingly, dubbed the Paris of the Antilles. Cap-Haitien, originally called Cap Francaise and then Cap Christophe, is the second largest city in Haiti, with an estimated population of 130,000 people. It is the major city for the 775,000 people in the Northern Department. It is situated on the northern coast bordering Haiti's fertile *Pleine du Nord*, which once produced sizable crops of sugarcane, tobacco, cocoa, indigo, coffee, and cotton for export.



According to the Lonely Planet Dominican Republic & Haiti, the Plaine du Nord area now grows all the oranges (desirable because they are unsprayed and peeled by inexpensive labor) destined for use in the French liqueurs Grand Marnier and Cointreau.

It was in the hills bordering the Plaine du Nord near Cap-Haitien, in 1791, that the thirteen year battle began that would eventually lead to independence from France and freedom for the black slaves who worked the plantations. The leaders of this historic struggle included Boukman (a maroon and voodoo priest), Georges Biassou, and Toussaint Louverture. Although time, climate, and lack of resources have taken their toll on the streets and buildings in Cap-Haitien, one can still see the beauty of the architecture: the large arched wooden shuttered doors and windows, decorative second-floor balconies, fading paint in blues and pinks and yellows. Looking into the once beautiful buildings, some now without roofs, one might find a small machine shop or a craftsman carving ornate wooden chairs or beds.

Activity starts early in the morning in Cap-Haitien (also known as Le Cap and O'Cap). As the sun comes up, people sweep the sidewalks and curbs in front of their shops and houses, and they sprinkle water to keep the dust down. Women carry baskets on their heads to market. Children in crisp school uniforms make their way to school in groups or with their mothers or fathers, girls with hair ribbons perfectly matching their school jumpers. After school a visitor might be surrounded by a sea of little girls in blue uniforms, giggling delightfully at the sight of blans (foreigners). The feeling in Cap-Haitien is relaxed and the reported crime rate is low. As recently as fifteen years ago, we are told,

Cap-Haitien was beautiful, with many tourists coming to enjoy the city, the Citadel LaFerriere and San-Souci Palace historical attractions, and the nearby beaches. Now, kept away by political instability and fear of disease, tourists are few and far between.