

Chiapas Update Bulletin

3-28-2011

WE ARE LEAVING ONE HOUR EARLIER

Upon checking the Delta website, we found that the recommended arrival time at the airport prior to departure of International Flights is 3 hours. We are traveling in a large group with oversize luggage, and we don't want to miss our flight, so:

BE AT THE DHS PARKING LOT AT 5:30 AM on April 1.

Buses will depart at 6:00 AM on April 1.

Note that you may not leave any cars parked at the school during the break.

TSHIRTS ARE READY TO PICK UP

Trip shirts are ready to be picked up MONDAY afternoon after school in the Band room. Those who ordered an extra shirt please bring payment of \$10/shirt (checks to DHSBPA): Brough (2), Broyles (1), Downs (2), Fiore (1).

DOCUMENTS UPLOADED TO THE GOOGLE GROUP RECENTLY

- FINAL HOSTING LIST. Includes emails for your host families. CONTACT THEM THIS WEEK and introduce yourself. Tell them you are looking forward to meeting them and visiting.
- Hotel room assignments for our night in San Cristobal de las casas.
- Travel groups (about 10 persons each) for times when there are limited English speaking guides (e.g. at the zoo we will split into groups of 10)
- Mayan site information. Find out more about what we will see!
- Final itinerary 3-28-2011 (includes hotel name and some other details).

OTHER NOTES

1. We found out that the Aeromexico system does not allow you to enter frequent flyer information online. Sorry about that.
2. Some people noticed that the names looked wrong on the flight confirmation (first and middle names run together) and wondered whether this would be a problem for the TSA. We asked about this and were told this isn't a problem.
3. Some additional gift ideas: DHS spiritwear includes a small nylon drawstring backpack for \$5. This may make a nice easy gift especially with a shirt or something small inside. Contact Megan Olson megeose@yahoo.com to buy a backpack or other spiritwear.
4. PLEASE make sure your paperwork is turned in ASAP. Check the spreadsheet on the Google group for your status.
5. Bring your gently used sneakers to the band room by Wednesday.
6. **We will be collecting the final payment this week before the trip.** The cost is still being computed but includes things like oversize baggage fees for the large instruments, which we will likely have to pay for all four legs of the trip.

CELL PHONE UPDATE

We confirmed that Mexico is CDMA based rather than GSM, so no special global phones are needed. In particular, Verizon phones will work fine. You will need to check with your carrier about the options available to you if you are bringing a phone. ***We are not recommending kids bring their phones.***

Nevertheless here is something we heard from someone who is on Verizon. This won't apply to AT&T, Tmobile, Sprint, or other carriers. If you are on the Verizon Family SharePlan Nationwide Talk & Text plan, you could switch to Verizon's Nationwide Plus Mexico Plan for the duration of the trip and the cost should be very small (e.g. \$15 /month difference, pro-rated only for the days your plan is switched). They said there is no charge to switch plans and switch back at the end of the trip. Note that there is still **no** Verizon International plan for text messaging, so even if you switch temporarily to the Verizon Nationwide Plus Mexico plan for voice, you will still pay 0.50/recipient per text message sent, and \$0.05 per message received. So if you do bring a Verizon phone, don't text. We re-iterate that you should call your cell phone company to see what will work best for you.