Preparing for Your Friends of FabrettoTrip

Fabretto

GET READY!

Welcome to Fabretto! We're glad that you've decided to take the opportunity to join a Friends of Fabretto (FOF) program to Nicaragua. For many of our guests, their program to Nicaragua is a life-changing event that alters their perspective on service, poverty, and global development.

This pre-program toolkit was designed by Fabretto staff members to provide an overview on how to plan and prepare for your FOF program and make your experience as meaningful as possible. We look forward to welcoming you to Nicaragua soon!

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SAMPLE ITINERARY

Participants: TBD
Dates: February 19 - March 24

Sunday February 19th
Arrival to Nicaragua

3-5 PM	Check into Hotel in Managua (Along with Elite SEM group)
4:30 PM	Join Elite SEM - Tour of old town Managua (optional) - Short visit to the National Cathedral & National Palace.
7 PM	Dinner at Kevin´s House.
Overnight:	**Casa Imperial Hotel Boutique and Tours**, Managua, Nicaragua Address: Del Club Terraza 2 Km al Sur, Managua, Nicaragua / Phone Number: (505) 2227-7337

Monday February 20th

7 AM	Breakfast in Hotel
8 AM	Depart for Esteli
11 AM	Arrive in Esteli, eat lunch at Cuban Sandwich Restaurant
12 PM	Travel to Las Sabanas/ Quebrada Honda Fabretto Center
2-4 PM	Visit Quebrada Honda Fabretto Center (4H & SAT Program Presentation, Early Stimulation Class Visit & Choir Performance)
4 PM	Leave for Cusmapa
5:15PM	Arrive in Cusmapa
5:30PM	Walk to Lookout point for Sunset
6:30PM	Dinner at Loyola house
Overnight	Loyola House in Cusmapa

Tuesday February 21st

7:30 AM	Breakfast in Casa Loyola
8:30-9:30 AM	Walking Tour of Cusmapa
9:30-11:30 AM	Cusmapa Center
11:30-12 PM	Visit Basket Cooperative
12-1 PM	Lunch in Cusmapa
1-5 PM	Travel to Community of Angel 2 of Cusmapa Discussion with SAT Students. Demonstration of Rural Business Initiatives
5-6 PM	Make Tortillas with Doña Maria
6:30 PM	Dinner in Casa Loyola
Overnight	Loyola House in Cusmapa

Wednesday February 22nd

7 AM	Breakfast at Loyola House
8-10 AM	Travel to Somoto Center
10-11 AM	Somoto Fabretto Center (Tour and Sat Student presentation)
11-12:30 PM	Travel to Esteli
12:40-1:40 PM	Lunch with students at Fabretto Center in Esteli
1:40-2:30 PM	Fabretto Esteli Center (Tour and Activities with students)
1:40-2 PM	Tour of Center
2-2:30 PM	Library Activity/Open education activity with students
2:30-4:30 PM	Travel and visit La Cruz - Fabretto School
4:30-5:15 PM	Travel to Hotel Cuallitlan
6 PM	Dinner at Hotel Cuallitlan
Overnight:	Hotel Cuallitlan in Esteli

Thursday February 23rd

6-7 AM	Breakfast at hotel
7-10:30 AM	Travel to San Isidro de Bolas Center
10:30-12 PM	Visit Fabretto Center and Public School in San Isidro de Bolas
10:30-11:30 AM	Welcome Presentation at San Isidro Fabretto Center & Tour of School Garden
11:30-12 PM	Business Initiative Presentation
12-1:30 PM	Travel and Lunch at Salvador Allende for Lunch with Staff (Diana Corrales, Rodrigo Horvilleur, Cesar Dubois, Martha Kenya Garcia)
1:30-3:15 PM	Travel and Visit to San Francisco Center & NicaHope Cooperative
3:15-3:30 PM	Travel to Managua Office
3:30-4:30 PM	Tour of Fabretto Central Office & Warehouse
4:30-5 PM	Travel to hotel to freshen up for dinner
6:30 PM	Travel from hotel to staff member's house for dinner
7-8 PM	Dinner in Managua or at Hotel
Overnight:	Casa Imperial Hotel Boutique and Tours

Friday February 24th

Friends of Fabretto Trip Ends

*Reference our Nicaraguan excursion information on page 10 for more information on how to plan your fun adventures after the FOF Program.

GIFT DONATIONS

Please confirm gift donations with the Fabretto Volunteer Coordinator before you arrive so we can notify the Education Center and make advance plans. Fabretto will also be able to advice you of any needed instructions while flying and checking with customs.

FABRETTO CENTERS

The school year in Nicaragua starts in February and ends in November. The school year is organized like this so that students can help their parents harvest in December and January.

Cusmapa

A rural Education Center with programs serving approximately 2,300 students (at primary and secondary schools in the greater area), offering the following facilities and programs:

- Education Center with computer lab, library, and school garden
- Early stimulation program
- Early and primary education enrichment program
- Food security and nutrition program
- Technical and vocational skills program
- Community development and parent/teacher training
- Rural secondary education program (SAT)

Estelí

An urban Education Center and community school, which together serve approximately 2,200 students through the following programs:

- Education Center with computer lab, library, and school garden
- Early and primary school education enrichment program
- Food security and nutrition program
- Vocational education program
- Primary school in La Cruz, Estelí's trash dump community

Acahualinca

An urban Education Center serving roughly 1,200 students, offering the following facilities and programs:

- Education Center with computer lab and library
- School gardens at local primary schools
- Food security and nutrition program
- Primary education enrichment program
- Vocational education program
- Internship program
- Community development & parent/teacher training
- Nica HOPE jewelery cooperative

Las Sabanas • Quebrada Honda

A rural Education Center from which Fabretto supports over 1,000 students at the center and in nearby public schools with the following programs:

- Education Center with computer lab, library, and school garden
- Early stimulation program
- Early and primary education programs
- Food security and nutrition program
- Community development and parent/teacher training
- Rural Secondary Education program (SAT) and student cooperative

San Isidro de Bolas

A peri-urban Education Center outside the capital city, Managua, that supports approximately 800 students through the following programs:

- Education Center with computer lab, library, and school garden
- Primary education enrichment program
- Food security & nutrition program
- Community development and parent/teacher training
- Rural Secondary Education program (SAT)

Somoto

A peri-urban Education Center serving approximately 2,000 students, offering the following facilities and programs:

- Education Center with computer lab, library, and garden
- Early & primary education enrichment program
- Food security & nutrition program
- Vocational education program
- Community development & parent/teacher training
- Rural Secondary Education program (SAT)
- Formal preschool & primary education program at Education Center

Ocotal

A peri-urban Education Center serving over 1,600 students, offering the following facilities and programs:

- Education Center with computer lab, library, and garden
- Early & primary education programs
- Food security and nutrition program
- Vocational education program
- Community development & parent/teacher training

San Juan de Oriente

In 2015, Fabretto began supporting the only municipal library in San Juan de Oriente, Masaya. This year, a new library was built thanks to Fabretto and supporters such as La Vida Education, Elite SEM, and the friends and family of Zachary Ciperski. This new building has become the newest Fabretto Education Center, benefiting close to 200 children and youth from this town with Early and Primary Education Programs.

- Library
- Early & primary education programs
- Community development & parent/teacher training

EXPLORE NICARAGUA

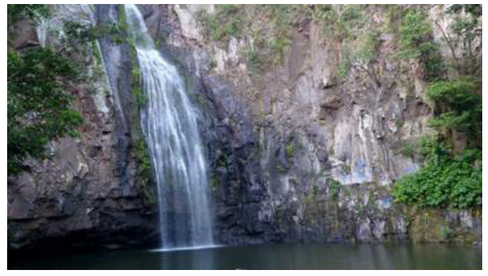
Individually or amongst the group, chose your preferred excursion(s) for your week in Nicaragua. Tourist activities can be done either before or after completing the FOF Program. This is not mandatory but highly recommended to take time to see other parts of Nicaragua.

DAY TRIPS

Laguna de Apoyo is located right outside Granada and about 45 minutes from Managua. It's a huge freshwater lagoon that was created by a volcano nearby. You can spend the day hanging out at one of the waterfront restaurants eating, playing in the water or relaxing.

Leon is Nicaragua's second colonial city located about 1.5 hours northwest of Managua. Enjoy walking around this beautiful city filled with cathedrals and museums. You can also spend the day at a nearby beach or if you're more adventurous, you can go "volcano boarding."

Somoto Canyon is located about 20 minutes from Fabretto's Center in Somoto. Strap on a lifejacket and cruise down this freshwater canyon. Includes hiking, rafting and cliff jumping. This is a good option to do on the way down from Cusmapa.



Tisey Reserve & Estanzuela Falls offer hiking at the national park located right outside of Esteli. You can swim and jump from the waterfall Estanzuela. For cultural activities, there is a cheese factory nearby, where you can take a tour and taste the cheese.

Granada is Nicaragua's oldest colonial city and one of the most popular Fabretto excursions. It is about 1 hour south of Managua. You can walk around the town, take an island boat tour on Lake Nicaragua or spend the afternoon swimming on an island. You can also hike and go ziplining at nearby Mombacho volcano.

Masaya is a town just twenty minutes from Managua on the way to Granada. You can stop to see one of Nicaragua's active volcanoes, Masaya Volcano, and visit the Masaya Market for good souvenir shopping.

Pochomil Beach is a beautiful beach on the Pacific Ocean just a 30-minute ride from Managua. There are many hotels to choose from to relax, enjoy the water, and eat great seafood.

WEEKEND TRIPS: NATURE

Ometepe Island is located about 3 hours from Managua. In order to get to the island, which is located in the middle of Lake Nicaragua, you must take a bus and a ferry. This unique island is formed from two volcanoes.

Spend the weekend hiking up one of the volcanoes, biking around the island, swimming in natural springs or hitting the waves and enjoying the beautiful sunsets.

Selva Negra is located 15 minutes from the town of Matagalpa in northern Nicaragua.

Selva Negra is a private eco-lodge where you can spend the day touring the organic coffee farms, hiking in the Black Forest, having lunch overlooking the lake, and horseback riding through the flora and fauna. You can also go into Matagalpa to enjoy local restaurants and bars or go hiking.

WEEKEND TRIPS: BEACHES

San Juan del Sur is located about 2.5 hours south of Managua. It is the biggest beach town in Nicaragua and is a surfer favorite. Spend the weekend swimming in the ocean, sailing, horseback riding on the beach, hiking and enjoying the exciting nightlife.

Playa Gigante is a beach located about 3 hours south of Managua. It has been ranked as one of the 10 most beautiful beaches in the world right on the Pacific Ocean. Enjoy the peaceful oceanfront and delicious restaurants.

Barcelo Montelimar is an all-inclusive beach resort about an hour west of Managua on the Pacific coast. This resort is complete with pools, beaches and restaurants. After a long work week it's nice to relax by the water.

TRIP GUIDELINES

Release Forms

If you have not done so, please fill out the attached release forms and e-mail them back to Martha Kenya García and Karla Santana.

Flight

If you have not already done so, please email Martha Kenya your flight itinerary as soon as possible. We strongly suggest that you book your flight to arrive no later than 4:30pm the day the program starts.

Pickup from the Airport

Your pick up from the Managua airport will be arranged based upon your flight's arrival and Fabretto transport will be waiting for you. Please stay in the indoor waiting area and look for a driver with a sign that says Friends of Fabretto trip. If you have trouble finding the driver or have a travel delay, then call Martha Kenya, at +(505) 8884-3163 .

Tourist Visa

Upon arrival at the Managua airport, you will be asked to pay a fee for your tourist visa. Please bring $10 USD to pay this fee. It can only be paid in cash and U.S. dollars are accepted.

Custom Forms

Your address in Nicaragua is:
Casa Imperial Hotel Boutique and Tours
Address: Del Club Terraza 2 Km al Sur, Managua, Nicaragua
Phone Number: (505) 2227-7337

Suggested Reading

If you would like to be more familiar with Nicaragua before traveling, then the following is a list of recommended reading:

- Blood of Brothers by Stephen Kinzer
- The Jaguar Smile by Salman Rushdie
- Nicaragua: Revolution in the Family by Shirley Christian
- The Nicaragua Dispatch – http://www.nicaraguadispatch.com/

Safety Precautions

Although Nicaragua is rated as one of the safest countries in the region, and you will be on a guided tour for the entirety of your stay, Fabretto recommends the following in the rare case of an emergency:

1. We suggest that you enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program with the State Department. This will allow the U.S. Embassy to contact and assist you in the rare event of an emergency. To do so, please click the following link http://step.state.gov
2. Visit the Center for Disease Control's website to check for any suggested vaccinations at http://www.cdc.gov/travel
3. Check to see if your current insurance plan will cover you during your stay abroad, and if you have coverage for emergency evacuations.

Dietary Restrictions

*Please note that we suggest the above solely as precautionary measures

If you have any dietary restrictions, then please email Martha Kenya, and we can arrange alternative meals. Additionally, everyone is encouraged to bring packaged snacks for traveling.

Phones

In case you need to use your cell phone, we recommend contacting your mobile phone service provider to learn about unlocking your phone for international use and any associated fees. If someone urgently needs to get a hold of you during the Friends of Fabretto trip, then please have them contact Martha Kenya, at +(505) 8884-3163, or at the following alternate emergency number +(505) 8396-2720.

Credit Cards

Inform your credit card company the dates you will be traveling to Nicaragua.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is Nicaraguan culture like?

Nicaraguan culture is very much focused on the family and community. Religion is also very important. 60% of the population identify as Catholic, although Evangelicism has been rapidly growing. Hospitality is a huge part of the culture, as well as the rich history that Nicaraguans carry on through music and folkloric dance. The typical Nicaraguan meal is rice and beans, cheese, fresh fruit juice, and a tortilla.

Is it safe in Nicaragua?

Nicaragua is a developing country steeped in tradition, rich in culture, and filled with treasures to discover. However, as with any developing country, you should be aware of situations that, while unlikely, may arise. Most common is petty crime and theft; travelers need to be aware of and take responsibility for these type of security risks by not walking at night in the bigger cities, always traveling in pairs or threes, keeping money and other valuables in a money belt (if not at home/the hotel), and knowing where they are at all times. Rural areas are generally very calm, but as with any city, particularly in the developing world, you must use common sense. It is not recommended to wear expensive jewelry, carry a lot of money or credit cards, or carry large purses, wallets, bags or cameras in public or crowded areas. When visiting Fabretto centers, rural schools or any private homes, visitors should not leave valuable items unattended. That said, we will always be traveling as a a pair when available, accompanied by local staff, and will only be using private transportation, so the risk of theft is very minimal during a Fabretto FOF Program.

What to expect

Food: When in Cusmapa you will be eating meals made by the house caretaker, Nora. Most of the food is purchased in Managua before the program and brought up with the group, and can include the following:

- Breakfast: Cereal, pancakes, bread/toast, pineapple and watermelon, coffee, and juice.
- Lunch: Sandwiches prepared by program participants (ham, cheese, peanut butter and jelly), chips, and cookies
- Dinner: Nica food night (rice and beans, fried plantain, cheese), tacos, spaghetti, Chinese rice and vegetables, barbeque (hamburgers and hotdogs) and tostones.
- We can take care of most special food requirements, but please let us know ahead of time so that we can make alternative arrangements.

Water: It is strongly suggested that visitors only drink bottled water throughout the duration of their time in Nicaragua. Though the local people drink water from the faucets and the water in Managua is highly-chlorinated (so most bacteria is eliminated), your stomach might not be used to the water and in order to avoid any travel sickness, it is best not to drink it. When dining out, be sure to drink only bottled water and take caution to only use purified ice cubes. When brushing your teeth in rural communities it is not recommended to use the tap water. Bottled/ filtered water will be available during your stay.

Bathrooms: While on the road, we will stop at gas stations as necessary for participants to use the bathroom. Your accommodations will have bathrooms, but make sure not to flush the toilet paper down the drain! There will be a waste basket next to the toilet. While participating in visits, there will mostly likely be latrines for participants to use.

Internet

At our Cusmapa guest house there is no access to internet. The majority of hotels we stay have free wifi for guests. Although it can be slow!

How the locals live

Most families in the countryside work with agriculture. A lot of the families Fabretto works with survive on less than $2 a day, so the living conditions and realities can be harsh. Their basic food supply consists of beans, rice, tortillas, and many people like to drink coffee as well.
Most students go to school Monday through Friday, however in many rural areas some students only go to classes on Saturday. Some students live in such rural areas that their only opportunity is to go to school on a Saturday. Many of these students can walk two to three hours to get to school or around 3 kilometers, just one way! The students not only have their studies to worry about but also have responsibilities to help their families maintain the household.

What should I wear while on the program?

Nicaraguans dress relatively conservatively, so it's important to keep that in mind while packing. Jeans, slacks, comfortable dresses will do. Work out clothing is generally not worn. Please reference the Packing List section for more details.

Accommodations

Fabretto has one group service home in Cusmapa. This guest house has four bedrooms with bunk beds for participants, and bathrooms and showers for use. There is a community space for eating and relaxing, and a nice patio outside. During the rest of the trip the group will stay in trusted establishments that Fabretto frequents.

Emergency/Evacuation policy

Fabretto Evacuation Policy

If you have additional questions please contact Martha Kenya (Executive Assistant to CEO and President) at mkgarcia@fabretto.org or call +(505) 2266-8772 ext.106 / +(505) 8884-3163

Transportation in Nicaragua

How will we get around? What is safe to take? While on the Fabretto FOF Program, you will travel on a private bus from a trusted transportation company. The bus will be with us through the entirety of your program so you will have transportation in case of an emergency.

Spanish speaking

It is a great idea to push yourself to use and practice Spanish.. Community members really appreciate the effort made by visitors, even if it's just saying hi. A **vast majority** of people you will meet only speak Spanish!

Money and local currency

The currency used in Nicaragua is cordobas. In January 2017 the exchange rate was estimated at 29.5 cordobas to one US dollar; however this can vary slightly depending on the day. You can exchange money when you arrive in Nicaragua but most of the places we will be traveling will accept US dollars. Please check exchange rates before you arrive so you are aware. Great to have small U.S bills on hand: $1, $5, $10.

Drinking policy

FOF participants usually purchase alcohol for dinners and relaxing at night. This expense is not built into the budget and will be worked out by the group individually.

Medical

Vaccines: While no vaccinations are required for entry into Nicaragua, Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Tetanus, and Typhoid Fever vaccinations are often recommended. According to the CDC, there is risk of malaria in Nicaragua, but not in the areas where you will be traveling. Please check the CDC website for country-specific health advisories at www.cdc.gov/travel.

Prescriptions: If you take prescription medications, please make sure to bring enough to last during your time overseas. Carry prescription drugs in their original labeled containers. If you wear glasses or contacts, we recommend that you bring both and an extra pair of contacts.

Insurance: It is very important to have health and accident insurance while you are abroad, as well as coverage for emergency evacuation. Find out if your current insurance plan will apply while you are abroad. You may want to explore the possibilities of baggage and flight insurance as well. Additionally, please enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program with the U.S. State Department, so that the U.S. Embassy can assist you in the event of an emergency. To enroll, please visit http://step.state.gov.

VIDEOS

Don't forget to check out these short videos on youtube to see a glance into the life of some Fabretto students!

Chico's Story

Early Childhood Education

Wilber's Journey

PACKING LIST

To prepare you for your journey to Nicaragua, we have compiled a packing list of suggested items. Please note that these items are not mandatory, but highly recommended to improve your visit with Fabretto. This list does not include items you may need for any program extensions to visit other parts of Nicaragua.

Local Weather

Days in Managua, Somoto, and Estelí will be warm to hot. Up in the mountains in Cusmapa and Ocotal, it is very windy and can get quite chilly in the evenings. Average temperature in Managua is 82° F, with highs over 90° F, and a minimum temperature of 74° F. Average temperature in Cusmapa is 70° F, with a maximum temperature of approximately 80° F, and a minimum temperature of 60° F.

Documents

Passport, important medical documents, photocopy of passport, Fabretto packet and evacuation policy.

Personal care items

- Toiletries to cover all basic needs
- Necessary prescription medication— Please keep in correctly labeled containers, so your medicine won't be mistaken for illegal drugs.
- Prescription Eyewear— glasses and contacts. We recommend that you bring both an extra pair of contacts and your glasses.
- Basic first aid items; allergy pills, tums, pepto bismal, ibuprofen, band aids, hand sanitizer, etc.

Clothing

- One set of footwear suitable for rougher terrain—sneakers or light hiking boots/shoes
- Second set of comfortable footwear (Sandals and/or Tennis Shoes)
- Casual and comfortable attire for both men and women
- Sufficient undergarments, socks, etc. for duration of stay with Fabretto (limited access to laundry)
- Jacket or sweater
- Warm, comfortable sleepwear
- Sunglasses and/or brimmed hat
- Farwell dinner is casual to businsss casual

Other

- Head-lamp or battery-operated flashlight
- A raincoat/windbreaker w/ hood or poncho
- Mosquito repellant (recommended with Deet): 1 per person
- Sunscreen
- Leisure reading and/or music player (bring it fully charged!)
- Ear Plugs
- Daily Snacks

CONTACT US

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