



## Fundacion International Service Learning Colombia

Non-Profit Organization – Founded in 2014

NIT: 900867100-4

[www.MingaHouse.org](http://www.MingaHouse.org)

### What is MINGA?

*"Minga entails a collaborative work system that dates back to the Incas. It refers to the commitment, contract or work agreement between two or more people. The word minga also stands for meeting or reunion."*

### Welcome Minga House Volunteer!

Thank you for volunteering with Minga House and its partner organizations! You will love visiting beautiful Colombia's Eje Cafetero (Andean Coffee Region). You will learn while serving and have a great deal of fun doing it. Hopefully, the following travel tips will make your experience even more rewarding. Be sure you read the **Getting Ready to Go Guide** and the **Orientation Guide**.

**First, be sure to book your airline tickets for the PEREIRA AIRPORT before 7pm to avoid a \$40 USD taxi ride from Pereira to Chinchina or a hotel overnight stay. There is no public transportation from Pereira to Chinchina at night, so arrive during daylight hours.** Upon arrival to the Pereira airport go through immigration and then customs; when doing so, go through the "Nothing to declare line." Do not represent yourself to be a healthcare professional or student arriving for study (this requires a special visa for a longer period of time). If you asked our staff to pick you up at the airport, we will be waiting for you at the gate. If you did not ask us to pick you up, we can guide you to Chinchina using WhatsApp. You will first need to take a taxi to the bus terminal and then a public bus from Pereira to Chinchina. Upon arriving to Chinchina, simply go to Bolivar Park downtown and Minga House is right there! It's easy. If traveling via Bogota, do your **money exchange** there as the exchange service at the smaller Pereira airport is not always operating. \$200 USD will be sufficient to cover your meals for a 14-day stay. We strongly advise you to ensure your ATM card works by informing your bank of your travels to Colombia prior to your trip. You never know when you may need emergency cash. You will need to have Minga House's address handy during your trip as customs will ask you where you are staying (see footnotes).

You are officially a tourist if your stay is less than 45 days and do not have to pay an extended stay tax. If you do stay longer than 90 days you will be charged approximately a \$50 USD fee upon exiting the country. If you decide to stay longer than 180 days you will need to ask for an extension to your tourist VISA. We can help you with that process.

**Pack important gear in your "carry-on bag!"** (Always plan for the worst; in case your luggage is delayed or lost): Light rain gear, hat/cap, sunglasses, insect repellent, and sunscreen, two sets of scrubs, one change of clothes, swim suit, hand sanitizer, stethoscope, blood pressure cuff, a rugged water bottle, and your favorite snack bars.

Carrera 8 #10-28

Chinchina, Caldas, Colombia 176020

57-323-505-5710

[MingaHouse.org](http://MingaHouse.org)

Calle 27 #23-41

Manizales, Caldas, Colombia 170006



## MINGA HOUSE

Download your useful phone apps (WhatsApp, English-Spanish translation, Medical Prescription, Diagnosis, etc.). Note: We do have laundry service available.

If you would like to bring any **donations**, especially if you're participating in health-related either volunteer or internship roles, the following are the items that are actually needed, and in the order of preference: DO NOT bring any other items, especially medications, as we are restricted by their Health Department on what meds we can gift. Also, consider 'weight' as a factor in choosing your donations. 'Lighter' items are better than 'fewer heavier ones.'

- Multivitamins for children, pre-natal, and adults
- Dental care supplies: Toothbrushes, toothpaste, dental floss
- Thermometers (centigrade degrees) to give away to families (inexpensive giveaways)
- Pregnancy test kits (dollar store)
- Supplies: Hand sanitizer, antibacterial soap, pill separators, and plastic name tag covers.
- First-Aid kits: Antibiotic cream, bandages, ice packs, gauze, adhesive tape, band aids
- Stickers (sheets of small size; able to share & split apart among all the children)
- School supplies (crayons, pencils, coloring books)
- Small toys, frisbees, deflated soccer balls (we have air pumps here!)
- Baby & Children's clothes; Used items: Perfectly fine! (only in good condition, please)
- Hard-to-find food items: Chunky peanut butter, jalapenos, honey-mustard, & your favorites!
- Diagnostic Medical Gear: Temple Touch Thermometers, Otoscopes, Finger Pulse Oximeters, Glucometers & strips, Stethoscopes, Pressure Cuffs, and Batteries (AA, AAA, CR-2032).

Keep in mind that this is an adventure and as such, itineraries may change due to unforeseen circumstances or newly found opportunities. What is most important is that you bring your best attitude and lots of curiosity and empathy. Provide a copy of this letter to someone who you want to know how to reach us.

To ensure solid communication is established prior to your travels, please ADD me and BOTH our staff members in your **WhatsApp contacts**: The sooner, the better... **You can have our staff meet you at the airport, which I recommend. It only costs \$20 more and taxi & bus transportation is covered.**

Glen 57-323-505-5710

Stiven 57-310-452-3454

Jaidiber 313-581-4340

See you soon!

**Glen G. Galindo, M.Ed.**

Presidente

Skype: glen\_galindo

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