

# Circle Tour FAQ's

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## ❖ What specific things will we be doing on the trip?

- Tentatively, we plan to:
  - Visit 4-5 safehouses.
  - Have group worship with rescued and redeemed women.
  - Hear from program directors from around the world. Previous years have included directors from Nepal, Cambodia, India, Malaysia, Burma, and others.
  - Develop circles of support and protection around these program leaders as well as the women working in Bangkok's red light districts.
  - Spend time with program leaders in order to be exposed to safehouse development and outreach opportunities.
  - Shop the incredible market places of Siam and visit cultural sites.
  - Spend time in prayer and worship.
  - Participate in outreach in one of Bangkok's famous red light districts.
    - There will be much prayer and training before we go. However, you can choose to decline to participate in this activity.
    - There is no physical danger associated with outreach, only potential spiritual struggles. We work to pray on the armor of God, prepare the team for what they are about to experience, and have many safety nets in place.

## ❖ Where will we be going on the trip?

- Bangkok, Thailand

## ❖ When is the trip?

- February 9-20, 2024 (tentative)

## ❖ How much does the trip cost?

- TBD

## ❖ Which traveling expenses does the trip cover?

- Lodging
- Transportation, both international and in-country
- Meals
- Banquet
- Travel Insurance
- Passport or Visa fees
- \$350 non-refundable deposit (*This deposit will go towards the overall cost of the trip*)
- Airfare
  - Tickets must be purchased through a WAR, Int'l travel agent, Carol Lenger, at 877.531.6677. This includes airfare for your trip to Bangkok.

- There are many reasons we choose to go through our travel agent. If you would like to know more, email [info@warinternational.org](mailto:info@warinternational.org).
- ***NOTE: Your overseas plane ticket is the LAST thing we purchase...all other costs must be covered first. i.e. If you have raised \$3,000 in funding – that is great, praise the Lord, but we will not purchase your overseas plane ticket from your WAR Travel Account until you have raised the full amount in order to cover all costs. We know this might put you behind schedule for deadlines in purchasing your ticket. Here are some ways people have overcome this in the past:***
  - Paid the cost of their own ticket out of pocket (by credit, cash, donating to their own account, etc.), and then if the rest of the funds came in they were reimbursed for the cost of the plane ticket as shown on the receipt from Carol Lenger. This does not mean they bought their own ticket on Travelocity. You must purchase your ticket through Carol.

#### ❖ Which traveling expenses are *not* covered by the trip?

- Personal expenses
  - Phone calls home
  - Personal shopping
  - Extra luggage fees
    - Currently most airlines allow 2 pieces of luggage for overseas travel. Note that you will have one piece of luggage reserved for your personal belongings, and one piece of luggage for WAR, Int'l to use to send things over with you for the banquet and other purposes.
  - Possible internet usage- each year our hotel says they are upgrading to have wifi, however in the past the wifi has not worked. Please budget, just in case you desire to use the business center for access to your emails and such. We are working on alternatives but cannot promise a solution until closer to the trip.
  - Immunizations- none are required, but you may wish to update your tetanus, Hepatitis A, and Hepatitis B.

#### ❖ How do I cover the cost of this trip?

- We recommend raising support to cover trip expenses. WAR, Int'l will create a support account for you and keep track of your incoming support funds. For more information, see below.
- Raising Support
  - Based on when the trip expenses are due, we recommend you mail support letters *at least* six months prior to departure. Below you will find a time line explaining when trip costs are due. It has been constructed to help you raise funds in a timely manner.
  - When sending support letters, WAR, Int'l will provide brochures and return envelopes for mailings. Each team member is responsible for postage. Remember, this postage may be reimbursed if you have raised above and beyond the amount needed for the trip. Based on this possibility, keep all your receipts.
  - It is also IRS compliant to donate to your own account and receive a tax-deductible receipt for the amount you give.

❖ **What if I raise more than the trip cost?**

- This overage can be used in multiple ways:
  - You can let us use it to cover unforeseen costs associated with the trip, which always happens.
  - You may turn in receipts for reimbursements of legitimate trip costs in agreement with IRS standards – please communicate with the WAR office on these items before you plan on this.
  - You can let us know that you would like to keep it in your account for a future Circle Tour trip. We will hold funds in your travel account for two years. It might be a great start to your next Circle Tour fund.
  - No overage will be reimbursed for trip expenses until *after* the trip.

❖ **When are the deposits due?**

- Dates are TBD
- A \$350 deposit is required with the application.
  - This amount locks you into the tour. If you need to cancel for any reason, you can still back out, but you will not be able to receive your \$350 back. This deposit is used well in advance to cover logistic areas of the trip, and is therefore non-refundable.
- 50% of funds should be raised 90 days prior to departure. This is approximately the cost of airfare.
- 100% of funds should be raised 60 days prior to departure.

❖ **What should I include in my support letter?**

- We suggest...
  - One paragraph of personal information
  - One paragraph explaining information and details about the trip
  - One paragraph to request prayer and/or financial support

❖ **How many people will be going on the trip?**

- We will keep you posted on the final count when the time comes. The trip is designed for a group of 30-50 men and women. However, we have yet to set a limit on the number of people who can attend.

❖ **Where will we be staying?**

- We will be staying at the Indra Regent Hotel in Bangkok, which is modern, safe, and comfortable; a perfect place for us to relax and debrief on all that we experience. You can find out more about the hotel at [www.indrahotel.com](http://www.indrahotel.com).

❖ **Will we be flying to Thailand together?**

- We will have a travel agent find the least expensive flight. Because of this, everyone will be together on the last flight into Thailand. Since people will be coming from different places, we will meet up with one another in connecting cities (Detroit, Tokyo, etc.), but everyone will travel with at least one or two other Circle Tour members into Tokyo, Seoul, or Dubai (subject to change) from the states, and then we all fly into Bangkok together.

❖ **How old do I need to be?**

- Because of some of the places we will be going, you need to be at least 21 years of age by the date of the trip. We strongly recommend no one over 75 due to the occasional strenuous walking conditions, however, we will not turn you down due to age if you are over 21.

❖ **Is the trip safe?**

- Physically, we are in no danger, but spiritually we are a target. It is *absolutely vital* that you begin praying on the armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-24).

❖ **What are WAR, Int'l's requirements/expectations of me?**

- Sign a statement indicating that you accept the Code of Consent/Conduct in its entirety.
- Be a member or attendee in good standing with your local church.
- Be a growing Christian, active in your local church.
- Complete the application process.
- Attend all pre-trip meetings and post trip debriefs (this may be by conference call, or by DVD with returned signed form stating you have watched the orientation).
- Be in regular, daily prayer for WAR, Int'l, team members, and yourself.
- Be flexible, taking direction and supervision from experienced personnel, while still working independently.
- Maintain confidentiality of sensitive situations.
- Follow security instructions before, during, and after trip to protect field missionaries, **rescued women**, nationals, projects, your team, and yourself.
- Recognize that many of your expectations will not be reality for short termers due to language, cultural, and time limits.

❖ **What immunizations will I need in order to go?**

- **There are no required immunizations**, but it is highly recommended that you have the following:
  - Updated Tetanus shot
  - Hepatitis A
  - Hepatitis B
- Required medicine for Thailand:
  - **Doxycycline** (or another similar, gentler medication recommended by your doctor) for diarrhea and upset stomach (also a key medication of choice for Malaria). This medication requires a prescription. Always remember to ask your doctor if new medications will cause negative side effects when combined with any current medications you may be taking.
    - **NOTICE:** Do not settle for "**Larium**" or anything else in its medical family. It has serious side effects. If you are on it or anything related to it, we cannot take you on Circle Tour. If this is a problem, contact the office immediately.
- If bringing prescription medication, be sure to bring the doctor's prescription as well. Most meds come with the prescription on the side of the bottle. If the bottle does not have this information, it would be best to ask your doctor for it in writing. You will need to notify the team doctor/nurse of your medications. All information will be kept confidential. Please send us a copy of your current medications (even over the counter) for our records.

❖ **Will there be meetings about the trip before we leave?**

- We will have one full-day orientation in Grand Rapids. Those who do not live in Grand Rapids will receive a DVD or be conferenced in via Skype or another program for a webcast viewing of the training. If you are able to come from out of town to Grand Rapids, housing will be arranged for you.

❖ **What documents will I need if I go?**

- Passport
  - A passport that is valid at least 6 months after the trip timeline. If you do not have one, apply for one at least three months in advance. Directions are online: [http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport\\_1738.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html). Keep in mind that processing fees double if you need to have it expedited.
  - The name on your passport **MUST** match the name on your ticket. If you are recently married, you will need to pay attention to this.
  - **Passport copies need to be turned in to the WAR, Int'l office with your application.**
- Visa
  - A visa is **NOT** required to enter Thailand.
- Travel Insurance
  - Overseas travel insurance is required for this trip and is included in the travel cost. WAR, Int'l will purchase this for you. It is vital that you send in your application with proper personal information (this includes middle name) in order for the office to obtain travelers insurance for you. WAR, Int'l recommends you check with your current insurance provider regarding what overseas provision is included in your plan, if any.

❖ **What is the time difference?**

- There is exactly a 12-hour time difference between Bangkok and United States Eastern Time, which makes it easy. Just switch AM to PM and vice versa.

❖ **May I call home while in Thailand?**

- No one will be able to make phone calls from the hotel phones because of the high cost per minute in addition to tacked on hotel fees. In previous years, we have had people with bills ranging from \$200-300 dollars even with using a prepaid phone card.
- Once in Thailand you may only call home if you purchase a **temporary cell phone** or your cell phone is internationally equipped. Please contact your phone provider for information on this.

❖ **How can/should I pay for things while overseas?**

- Visa/Master Card
  - Visa credit cards are most commonly accepted around the world. We do not recommend American Express or Discover cards as they are rarely accepted outside of the United States. Businesses will typically charge you a **3% surcharge** for the use of credit cards vs. cash. **Please contact your bank to notify them of your travel plans.** In some countries (i.e. Thailand), your debit card can be used to withdraw cash from international ATM's.

- Cash
  - We do NOT recommend the purchase of traveler's checks due to their difficulty in exchanging for local currency and there is usually a fee for processing. It is recommended that you bring cash. **Your cash should be clean with no writing on it and crisp bills in \$100 denominations.** Bills with a slight tear or marking on them will not be accepted. You will only need cash for personal expenses.
- Currency Exchange
  - In Thailand, there are many official money changers. The best place to exchange money will be at either of two locations outside the hotel we will be staying at. Unused local currency can be exchanged back to U.S. Dollars upon departure, there are charges for reverse exchange.
  - **NEVER change money on the streets with an individual.** You risk getting shortchanged, receiving counterfeit bills, or becoming a victim of a scam.

❖ **What can/should I wear while over there?**

- T-Shirts—must have at least a cap sleeve (NO Tanks).
- NO Capris – We will visit religious places where showing any part of the leg is inappropriate.
- Pants—comfortable for walking, light for the heat, but covering your legs. NO Shorts.
- Sandals – yes, but recognize we will be walking a lot.
- Walking shoes – yes.
- Skirts – must cover the knee **and** reach the ankle.

[Any further questions may be sent to info@warinternational.org.](mailto:info@warinternational.org)