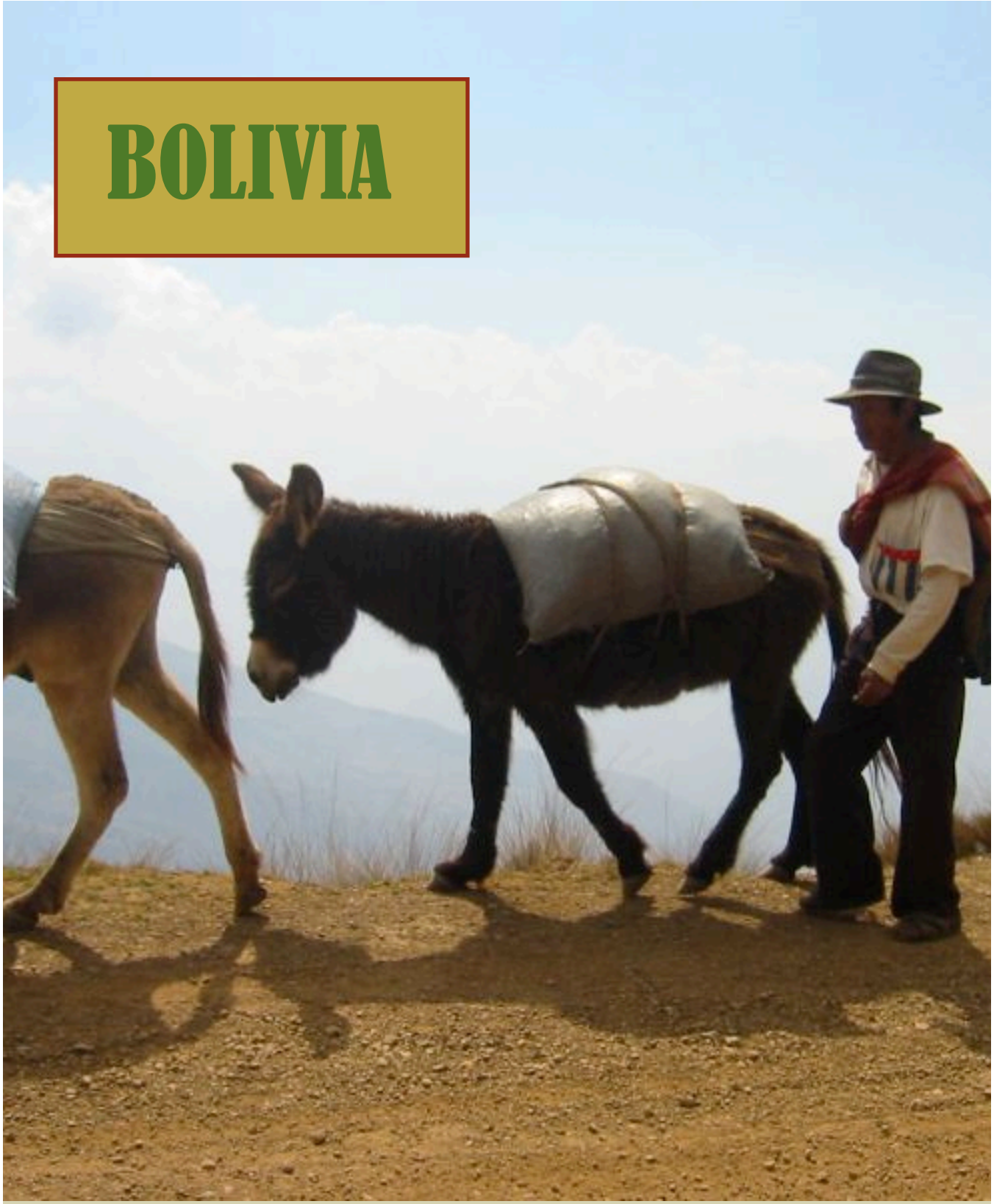
BOLIVIA



Food, Land and Water: A Journey to Learn

FOOD, LAND AND WATER
A Journey to Learn
March 15-23, 2014

Mano a Mano International Partners invites you to join a 9 day group trip to Cochabamba, Bolivia, focusing on sustainable agriculture and water conservation.

Visit rural farming communities; tour agricultural water projects and Mano a Mano's Center for Ecological Agriculture; and talk with subsistence farmers about the challenges of diminishing water supplies. Learn first-hand how international development projects can be delivered —cheaply and effectively—in communities with very few resources.

Mano a Mano International Partners is a grass-roots non-profit organization based in St. Paul, Minnesota whose mission is to create partnerships with poor Bolivian communities that improve health and increase economic well-being. It works with four counterpart organizations in Bolivia to fulfill this mission: Mano a Mano – Bolivia focuses on health and education by creating and expanding a network of community health clinics, schools and related infrastructure projects; Mano a Mano – Nuevo Mundo focuses on economic development and food security through construction of agricultural water reservoirs and roads; Mano a Mano – Apoyo Aereo provides air transport and air rescue services for Mano a Mano and other organizations throughout Bolivia; and Mano a Mano Internacional hosts volunteer groups and pilots new initiatives. Our website – manoamano.org - will give you the most up-to-date information on all of our projects and results.

Mano a Mano and Unity Church Unitarian have co-sponsored trips to Bolivia since 2002. More than 70 Unity members have participated in these trips. To find out more about the trip described here, contact either Patricia Ohmans at patricia.ohmans@gmail.com, or, Joan Velasquez at Joan@manoamano.org.

What is the purpose of this trip?

A trip to Bolivia with Mano a Mano can be a life-changing event. On this trip, we will learn first-hand about how Bolivians grow the food they eat and sell. We will talk with subsistence farmers and market vendors, as well as with agronomists, global development activists and other professionals. For travelers concerned about global food and water scarcity and equitable distribution of resources, the trip will provide a hands-on education. Working side-by-side with farmers trained at the Center, we will help build and install several simple greenhouses. We will also learn about other Mano a Mano projects such as clinics and schools, and meet the Bolivian staff and volunteers who build and manage them.

We will see and experience the need in Bolivia and the efficiency of Mano a Mano's programs in meeting those needs. Mano a Mano's Bolivian staff will give group members an unforgettable lesson on how international development projects can be delivered—cheaply and effectively—in communities with very few resources.

The trip is also intended to benefit Mano a Mano. We hope that by traveling together to Cochabamba, we will add to the people who are knowledgeable about Mano a Mano's activities, both here and in Bolivia. We hope that a trip to Bolivia will encourage travelers to deepen their commitment to supporting Mano a Mano. We want to demonstrate our support and solidarity with Mano a Mano's

Bolivian staff and volunteers, and especially with the communities in which Mano a Mano works. When you return, we hope that you will help us raise funds by telling the Mano a Mano story and/or volunteering in whatever capacity fits your interest and schedule.

Where will we go? What will we do?

Our destination is Cochabamba, Bolivia's third largest city, located in the Andes at about 8,000 feet above sea level. Day trips, possibly including one overnight stay in a rural community, will leave from Cochabamba.

The trip will include the following activities:

- Hands-on experience at Mano a Mano's Center for Ecological Agriculture (working in the demonstration garden; building and installing small greenhouses; planting and harvesting)
- Observing training sessions at the CEA
- A festive and unforgettable welcome dinner
- Meeting and talking with Mano a Mano professional staff and volunteers
- Visiting a community in which Mano a Mano has completed agricultural water projects
- Meeting and learning from farmers about their farming methods and challenges
- Visiting other Mano a Mano projects, including a school and/or clinic
- Hearing from Bolivians about effects of climate change

Here is our itinerary. Specific activities and plans are subject to chage due to weather or other factors::

Date	Activity
Saturday March 15	Fly to Miami, depart for Bolivia
Sunday March 16	Tour of Cochabamba, welcome dinner
Monday March 17	Drive to rural community of Sancayani. Visit with local subsistence farmers and family members. Observe harvest, cooking, animal husbandry. Return to Cochabamba
Tuesday March 18	Tour the Center for Ecological Agriculture. Observe training sessions for farmers. Set up construction process for small greenhouses.
Wednesday March 19	Work with farmers to build small greenhouses
Thursday March 20	Drive to rural community of Jinocata. Set up high tunnels with farmers. Stay overnight in Mano a Mano clinic.
Friday March 21	Return to city. Farewell to Mano a Mano Staff and volunteers.
Saturday March 22	Free day for sightseeing and shopping
Sunday March 23	Depart from port of exit, fly back to Miami and home or travel elsewhere.

There will be some time for sightseeing in Cochabamba. You may also choose a day trip via the Mano a Mano aircraft to the Salar de Uyuni, a breathtaking great salt lake from which Bolivia's salt is harvested (additional charge.)You may want to plan for independent trips to other parts of Bolivia once the Mano a Mano trip is complete, or perhaps to the Inca city of Macchu Picchu in Peru, after you leave Bolivia.

Who can go on this trip?
Adults and children over age 12 are welcome. You don't need to speak Spanish to come—interpreting is provided, and a few Mano a Mano staffers speak English.

Where will we stay?
Mano a Mano will reserve a block of rooms in a simple but comfortable, clean hotel near the main plaza. Single or double rooms are available. The hotel is equipped with wireless and a computer, and phone calls can be made from the rooms. There are many internet cafes in the area from which you can e-mail or phone home. For purposes of an address for Homeland Security you may use the Cochabamba address of 291 Junin – esq. Ecuador, Cochabamba, Bolivia (the address of Mano a Mano Internacional).

How will we travel?
Our trip departs from Miami, Florida on Saturday, March 15. We will meet at the Miami airport, and the entire group will travel together from Miami to Bolivia. You are responsible for your MSP-Miami reservation, but it's easiest for Mano a Mano to make the Miami-Bolivia reservation for you. If you prefer to make your own reservation, we can connect you with an appropriate travel agent. Once your flight to Bolivia has been reserved, Mano a Mano will schedule your in-country flights to and from Cochabamba. Auto travel to and from Mano a Mano worksites in Bolivia will be provided by experienced, safe drivers in Mano a Mano vehicles.

Is Bolivia safe?
Cochabamba is a safe, stable city. Bolivians, in general, are chivalrous and polite. The likelihood of any bodily harm coming to you is very, very low. However, Bolivia is also one of the poorest countries in the world. Poverty leads to desperation and sometimes to theft. You will want to be careful about your property and cash.

How about my health?
In general, there are two major areas of health concern for visitors to Cochabamba: altitude, and infectious disease.

Altitude: Cochabamba is at an altitude of about 8,000 feet; far higher than Denver, Colorado. You can expect to feel a little winded or headachy on your first day in town. Unless you have respiratory problems, however, the altitude should not make you ill. Later on in the trip we may be traveling to villages at altitudes as high as 15,000 feet; you should be acclimated by then, but consult your health care provider about travel at this altitude.

Disease: Before you travel to Bolivia, you must consult with your health care provider and/or travel medicine clinic for recommendations about vaccinations and other personal medications. A current yellow fever vaccination is required for entry into Bolivia. As with travel to any developing country, you will need to watch what you eat and drink. In country, you will drink bottled or boiled water. Food provided by Mano a Mano will be safe to eat.

If I decide to come, what am I agreeing to?

This trip to Bolivia is not a guided tour. We are a group of people who have independently and voluntarily agreed to travel together. Neither Mano a Mano nor Unity Church assumes any responsibility or liability for your personal safety, changes in travel plans, health problems, or property losses. We recommend that you purchase travel insurance prior to the trip.

How many people can go?

We hope to include everyone who wants to come on this trip. We must have at least six travelers to make the trip; if fewer than six have signed up by January 14, 2014, the trip will be cancelled.

What do I need to enter Bolivia?

United States citizens need a passport and a visa to enter Bolivia. Generally, the Bolivian Consul in Minnesota is able to issue visas. You can also obtain your visa at the airport in Bolivia when you enter the country, although this may involve a long wait in line and additional cost. We do not recommend that you mail your passport to either the Bolivian Embassy in Washington, D.C. or to any other Bolivian Consulate in the U.S. Staff at Mano a Mano in St Paul can help with visa paperwork. While the requirements are in flux, the following list of currently required documents was given to us by the Bolivian Consul in Minnesota.

- $135.00 in U.S. cash
- A certificate documenting that you have had a yellow fever shot
- Copy of your ticket
- Two passport-size photos
- Credit card
- An invitation for your stay from someone in Bolivia and proof that you are traveling with a non-profit group (the Mano a Mano office will send this to you)
- Completed visa application form (available as download on the Bolivian Embassy website at www.bolivia-usa.org on the page related to Consular Services.)

In order for Mano a Mano to purchase your plane tickets within Bolivia, we will need you to fill out a form with your name exactly as it appears on your passport, birthdate, emergency contact information, your passport number (to assist if it gets lost), information regarding any food allergies or potential medical issues.

Is my trip tax deductible?
Check with your tax advisor. Mano a Mano will send you a letter stating that you participated in a volunteer trip to Bolivia. Mano a Mano is a 501 (c)(3) organization.

How much will the trip cost?
Mano a Mano charges a trip fee of $1,900 per person, excluding air fare from the U.S. to Bolivia. The trip fee includes the following:

- Roundtrip airfare from your port of entry in Bolivia to Cochabamba.
- Lodging in a hotel in the center of Cochabamba; one night in a rural village
- All meals, except on days of travel to and from Bolivia
- In-country ground transportation to Mano a Mano sites
- Interpreter

This fee *does not* include:

- Flights to and from Miami to Bolivian port of entry/exit.
- Visas
- Pre-travel preparation (doctors' visit, travelers' insurance, passport fees, etc.)
- Souvenirs
- Optional trip to the Salar de Uyuni in the Mano a Mano aircraft.
- Additional travel prior to or following the trip

By when do I need to let you know that I will join this trip?
Please let us know your decision **by January 15, 2014.** We ask that you pay the trip fee at that time so we can make your hotel and transportation arrangements. If Mano a Mano makes your flight reservation from the U.S. to Bolivia, we ask that you reimburse the cost of ticket at that time as well.

I Want to Go! What's Next?

Here's our suggested timetable for preparations. **Items in bold face are essential.**

Learn more about Mano a Mano	Pick up some literature from the Mano a Mano office or visit the Mano a Mano website, www.manoamano.org Better yet, volunteer to help! To volunteer call Dana at 651-457-3141 or contact her at dana@manoamano.org.
Learn more about Bolivia	Check online, or at your library or bookstore for a recent travel guide. We recommend the Lonely Planet guide, called simply, *Bolivia.*
Get a passport	If you don't have a passport, or **if your passport expires within 6 months of the trip** date, check the US Customs website on what to do, or go to Fedex for a passport picture and ask for a passport application form. **The expiration date on your passport must be at least six months after your date of travel.**
Get a visa	We will advise you on how to obtain a visa to enter Bolivia
Consult with medical provider; get shots and medications	A travel clinic can give you the best information on which immunizations are recommended for you
Pay the trip fee and reimburse Mano a Mano for airline tickets	The trip fee is $1,900. Payment of the fee reserves your space on the trip and must be paid at least 60 days prior to departure. Your airline ticket should be reserved as soon as you decide to make the trip.
Pack	We will provide a detailed set of suggestions for what to bring along, but in general, plan to pack light. We may ask you if you are willing to take medical or school supplies in a second suitcase and to bring handcrafts back with you. This is legal but may be physically burdensome. Please feel that you can decline this request.