



ENVISION TAIPEI HANDBOOK

INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THE SITE

Our ministry is multi-faceted. Here at Envision Taiwan these are a few of the things we do: run our own Aroma Coffee Shop business as a gateway into the community; lead our own church plant, Aroma Church, to be a place of acceptance and love (the aroma of Christ) as we worship the one true God and are being transformed personally, communally, and missionally to be more like Him; support our own members who lead various ministries into the community, such as homeless outreach, skateboarding ministry, women's healing ministry, and develop new, intentional relationships with people in the neighborhood; and host teams and interns through Envision to mobilize people like you to serve and grow in a cross-cultural ministry context.

We have lots going on, but we certainly sense what Jesus says in Luke 10:2, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few." We need people like you who sense the call of God to come and be the Aroma of Christ in this place with us! Teams and interns who come to serve with us always make kingdom impact and leave Taiwan changed.

MEET THE TEAM

Chris & Jamie O'Dell, our Taipei site directors, have been serving with Envision Taiwan since 2008. They have one son, Enoch (2), and one on the way. Chris is currently in charge of all of Aroma Ministries and serves as the pastor of Aroma Church. Jamie helps out in various areas and takes care of Enoch. Chris is passionate leader who loves coffee, reading, creating music, and technology. Jamie loves hiking, exploring, and drinking coffee with friends.

In 2015, Jesse Wagner returned after serving as a year-long intern, to coordinate much of the Envision Taiwan program. [More will be added on Jesse!]

Mark Cheng is a Taiwanese guy who coordinates most of the outreach events for Aroma Church and for Envision teams and interns. He has a heart for the homeless and is great at loving difficult people!

Caleb and Miki Bennett are a couple who has served with Aroma since 2012. They host teams and interns in their house. Caleb (Canadian) serves in skateboarding ministry, and Miki (Taiwanese) serves with the coffee shop. They have one son, Zephaniah (1) and another child on the way.

Justin and Brittany Siemens are an American couple who moved to Taiwan with their daughter, Kennedy (3), to serve with Aroma in 2015. They host interns in their house.

Sarah Mabee has been serving with Aroma since she was an Envision intern in 2009. She leads the worship team and serves in a ministry to broken women called Sew Hope.

There are many other Taiwanese and foreigners serving with the Aroma Ministries who you will meet during your time with us. They are all amazing and make up our team and family here in Taiwan!

GENERAL INFORMATION

TEAM COSTS

The general cost is \$995 per individual on the ground in the country for 10 days. The in-country expenses cover meals, lodging, laundry, in-city transportation, and travel insurance. It is an additional \$50 per individual for every extra day. Airfare excluded.

INTERN COSTS

The general cost is \$1,450 per intern on the ground in the country for one month. The in-country expenses cover meals, lodging, laundry, in-city transportation, and travel insurance. Airfare excluded.

MONEY QUESTIONS

You may consider raising extra funds to put on a large ministry event. If you're interested in this, please contact us for more information.

The banks in Taiwan aren't open late or on weekends, so we can help you exchange money at the airport. The rate is quite fair, and it's much easier and quicker to do it at the airport. If you're not sure how much spending money to take out, just exchange \$50 or so and you can get more out later if needed. We have all your transportation, housing and food costs covered, so this money will be for you to spend.

Bring crisp, new USD bills to exchange. Banks will not accept coins or old bills. If you inform your bank that you will be overseas, you should be able to use your credit card or debit card to withdraw NTD from any ATM, with a service fee. Ask your bank about these fees first.

Taiwan is primarily a cash culture, so don't expect to be able to use credit cards in stores. Always have the money you need in cash. Taipei is quite safe and we have had virtually zero cases of robbery, but carry your money wisely and don't carry too much at once.

HOUSING + FOOD

You will stay in a house or hostel in the area. There will be WI-FI, A/C, bedding and basic necessities available to you. Be sure to bring your own towel and toiletries. You are welcome to bring your own blanket or pillow if you'd like.

Most of your meals will be eaten out, but you can pick up some essentials at the supermarket if you'd prefer (cereal, milk, etc.). There will be a useable kitchen in the place you're staying. However, eating out in Taiwan is very cheap, so it isn't uncommon for people to eat out for all meals. Please let us know if you have serious dietary restrictions so we can advise accordingly.

Taiwanese people are very proud of their food. Try Taiwanese foods that are offered to you and be polite even when you dislike them.

GENERAL INFORMATION

COMMUNICATION

Wifi is available in the Aroma coffee shop and at your host home or hostel (for both teams and interns).

If you would like to use your cell phone, we recommend bringing an unlocked phone and purchasing a SIM card for it while you are here - we recommend this for team leaders and for interns.

If you would like to use a laptop while you are here, it will be your responsibility to bring one with you.

AIRPORT + ARRIVAL INFORMATION

When you on the plane, you will need to fill out a landing form. Write the following:

1. Contact Person in Taiwan: Jamie O'Dell No. 179 HanZhong St. Taipei, TW Phone: 0983-055-709

2. Purpose: Travel/Visit/Tourism

3. Your Address in Taiwan: 5F, No. 21, Lane 261, Dechang Street Taipei, TW 108

Once you land, you will go through 1. Immigration, 2. Baggage claim, 3. Customs, and then you will come out into the arrival hall.

In the arrival hall, turn right. Someone from our team will be there waiting. We will probably see you first, but if you don't see us, just walk to the right and wait. If for some reason you can't find the pick-up person, ask to borrow someone's phone and call Jamie (0983055709). People here are really nice about that kind of thing!

From the airport, we will take a bus ride into Taipei City (approximately 50 minutes) and then a taxi to the place you'll be staying (approximately 10 minutes). Do not get on a bus without first finding us!

VISAS

If you are an American citizen, you do not apply for a visa before you come to Taiwan. If you are not an American citizen, search the requirements for entry into Taiwan from your country of origin, or ask us for help.

Short-term teams and interns do not need visas at all.

If you intend to teach English during your internship, you will need to get a visitor's visa after you have landed and have a work permit from your employer.

Teams and interns will need a valid passport that won't expire for 6 months, or the duration of your internship.

HEALTH + VACCINES

No special health concerns or vaccinations needed for your time in Taipei.

PACKING LIST

SUGGESTIONS

- Jacket/hoodie
- Casual, comfortable clothes that will keep you cool. It can get very hot in Taiwan, especially May-August. Sleeveless shirts and tanks are fine, but prioritize modesty.
- Pajamas (you'll be sharing a room with teammates)
- Pants and shorts. Some Taiwanese don't wear shorts in the city often, but you won't be offensive if you do!
- Our church is very casual, so you can wear jeans.
- Swimsuit
- Comfortable walking shoes
- Rain gear
- Toiletries
- Medications/prescriptions
- Ibuprofen, dayquil or nyquil, etc.
- Band-aids
- Hand sanitizer
- Feminine products
- Shower towel (shampoo/conditioner and soap will be provided)
- Two forms of ID (passport and license)
- Camera
- Cell phone
- Sunscreen
- Headphones
- Spending money
- Water bottle
- Toilet paper/tissues
- Small nonperishable snacks
- Bible, journal, pen
- Devotional books or music for quiet times
- Small gifts (possibly American-themed) to give you good friends you meet
- Other ministry items if you are hosting a special event (sewing materials, teaching materials, children's ministry, sports ministry)

They often wear pants in the heat of the summer and rarely wear flip flops in the city. Young people do wear shorts and flip flops, and you can certainly wear these most of the time if you like. Prayerfully consider how what you wear will affect others and don't wear things that may be an issue. Tank tops are okay in many settings but be aware and considerate. Our ministry has many young Taiwanese new believers and pre-believers who have no concept of modesty, so set a good example for them in modesty and purity.

MINISTRY

TEAMS

A day in the life of a team here looks something like this:

- 8-9:30AM – Personal devotions, get ready, eat breakfast
- 9:30-10AM – Travel to the Aroma
- 10-11AM – Morning team worship, prayer, devotion
- 11-12:30PM – Aroma training (culture, language, ministry, etc.)
- 12:30-2PM – Lunch out in Ximen
- 2-3PM – Prep for afternoon outreach
- 3-5PM – Outreach in Ximen
- 5-8PM – Dinner out in Ximen
- 8-10PM – Evening outreach or event
- 10PM – Travel home, team debrief, rest

INTERNS

Teaching Track

- 8AM - Get ready for the day, spend time with Jesus
- 10AM - Ministry or teaching prep OR Chinese class
- 12PM Lunch
- 1PM Head to class
- 1:30PM - 6:30PM Teach English
- 7:30PM - Arrive to Ximen and eat dinner
- 8:30PM - Aroma event (small group, outreach, Coffee Talk, etc.)
- 10PM - Head home

Full-time Aroma Track

- 8AM - Get ready for the day, spend time with Jesus
- 10AM - Worship and prayer at Aroma
- 11AM - Study Chinese, or work on Aroma projects
- 12PM Grab lunch
- 1PM Chinese class or language exchange
- 3PM-6PM - Aroma projects
- 6:30PM - Dinner
- 8:30PM - Aroma event (small group, outreach, Coffee Talk, etc.)
- 10PM - Head home

CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

TIPS ABOUT TAIWANESE CULTURE

Taiwanese people are kind to travelers and great at hosting. They may go out of their way to help you. If they are offering a lot (i.e. not just helping you find a place, but going 30 minutes out of their way to take you there), tell them a couple times that they don't need to do that. If they keep pushing, then it's okay to receive their sacrificial help.

They are very hardworking and often work 10AM to 10PM every day or from 9AM to 6PM, but will stay countless hours overtime without pay. Some are resentful, but may consider this part of life and if they don't do it, the boss will find someone else who will.

They highly respect their elders and superiors, and often feel obligated to follow their teaching or advice. Be careful about directly disagreeing with people who are your "superiors" or elders.

Taiwanese people avoid conflict and would rather go with the flow than fight an issue. Because of this sometimes they will say yes to you so you don't feel offended, but never show up or follow through on the thing they previously agreed to—they just didn't know how to tell you.

Relationships are highly valued and powerful tools in Taiwanese culture. them with genuine love and interest and not just as a ministry task, or they will see right through it. As you invest you will get amazing opportunities to speak into their lives.

Taiwanese people don't often have visitors over to their home. If you are invited, it's a big honor. Do it! Bring a gift such as fruit or some kind of treat. Take your shoes off and wear their house slippers. Taiwanese people do not wear shoes in the house. Be careful about praising their things too much, or they may feel obligated to offer them to you.

Taiwanese people are very superstitious. Be aware of these things that may be considered culturally unacceptable. Do not stand your chopsticks in your dish; it looks like incense offered at the temple. Don't talk about death directly. Don't whistle or point at the moon or cemeteries. Taiwanese people are curious to learn about foreigners and about Christianity. Do share what you're doing in Taiwan and that you're a Christian. Ask them questions about their faith and what they know about Jesus. Be respectful in religious conversations.

CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

A BIT ABOUT XIMEN

Taipei is a city of 3 million. It has an amazing transportation system, and though the city is large, it feels local and slow-paced at times, compared to other big cities.

Ximen, the area where we are located, is in Wanhua District, the oldest part of Taipei. Wanhua has countless temples and a particularly strong spiritual atmosphere. There are many gangs and prostitutes with a visible presence in some areas, and many homeless and lower income families.

Ximen is a youth shopping area. It was originally a theater district, and even today there are many movie theaters in this area. There are also lots of little shops and restaurants. On the pedestrian streets you will find a mix of youth, tourists, vendors, bored old men, and homeless people.

USEFUL PHRASES IN MANDARIN

Hello: ni hao (nee how)

Ximen (our area): ximen (she mun)

Thank you: xie xie (she-eh she-eh)

Please: qing (ching)

Sorry: dui bu qi (dway boo chee)

Excuse me (To get past someone): jie guo (jee-eh gwo)

I want: wo yao (whoa yow)

How much: duo shao (doo-oh show (like how, not row))

Jesus loves you: yesu ai ni (yay soo eye knee)

CONTACT INFO

HOW TO GET IN TOUCH (AND STAY IN TOUCH)

AROMA ENVISION

General Email: envision@thearoma.tw

Chris O'Dell, Site Coordinator: odellcs04@gmail.com

Jesse Wagner, Envision Coordinator: jessedan28@gmail.com

AROMA COFFEE SHOP/AROMA CHURCH

No. 205, HanZhong Street Taipei, Taiwan, 108

www.thearoma.tw