



# FEAST OF TABERNACLES

2017 U.S. HOUSING INFORMATION

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# WELCOME TO THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

## 2017 FESTIVAL HOUSING GUIDE

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**E**ach year God's Feast of Tabernacles is the highlight of the year for His people. We anticipate it and plan for it all year long. As you read this, the Feast is only a few months away once again.

We plan and save our second tithe every year in anticipation of going to the "place where the LORD your God chooses to put His name" to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles (Deuteronomy 14:24). We are excited to make arrangements for accommodations for our family, or extended family, that will help us truly rejoice before the Lord our God at His Feast. This aspect of our Feast planning is very important, especially since we will spend more time at our housing establishment than we'll spend doing any other thing while at the Feast.

Each of our Festival coordinators keeps this in mind, knowing the importance of procuring properties that will meet the needs of all of our brethren—with a focus on quality, price and value. Our Festival coordinators spend considerable time each year looking at possible establishments that will fill the bill for God's people. We try to constantly be aware of members' needs and the best facilities to fulfill those needs.

Each year we ask brethren at all of our Feast sites to evaluate the housing properties we used for that year. After the Feast, these surveys are all reviewed, and we evaluate the properties for future use.

Many factors go into the decision as to whether to use the facility again the following year, based on input from those who stayed there. As a result of this review, you will generally find some new facilities each year, as well as some that are discontinued from last year. Our goal

is to always provide the best quality and value available in the area.

A lot of work has gone into providing this guide to help you select and reserve quality housing that meets your needs at a fair price. We recommend you review all the housing offered at the site you will be attending.

To help you get a better idea of what each facility is like, we have listed the websites of most of the establishments we are using. This way you can preview the facility, see all of its amenities, as well as be aware of other factors that may be important.

It is best to get all the information you can about the housing possibilities you are considering before you make a decision.

Please be sure to note any extra charges not included in the basic room cost. These can include resort charges, charges for a pet (if allowed), and other incidental charges. Most facilities (but not necessarily all) offer free wireless Internet in the rooms. These can impact your total cost. Knowing all this in advance will help you make the right decision and hopefully avoid any disappointments or unfortunate surprises.

We would like to remind you of the benefits the Church realizes when our members use the housing establishments that are listed in the COGWA Festival Housing Guide. It enables us to secure fair prices with the housing establishments due to room night volume. It is also central to our ability to acquire quality meeting space for our services at sites where we meet in a hotel.

You will also realize benefits from using the listed housing by knowing that the facilities have been examined for quality, cleanliness and good

value. If you should encounter a problem with housing, it is much easier for the Church to help you rectify problems if you are using housing from our housing list. That said, we want you to find the housing that best fits your family's needs. Should you find it via your own Internet search, we certainly understand and have no problem with that.

As you make your housing arrangements, please remember these important reminders regarding the listed properties:

1. In general, please do not make reservations prior to the opening day and time for reservations, which is **Monday, May 22, at 10 a.m. in the time zone of the site you are attending**. The establishments have been asked to **not accept reservations prior to the agreed-upon time**.
2. Those with disabilities, health problems or other special needs that require specific types of facilities may make early housing reservations beginning May 15. (Check with your local Festival adviser for guidelines.) Some sites may require a password to make early reservations.
3. When making your reservations, identify yourself as a member of the "Church of God, a Worldwide Association, Feast of Tabernacles." Be sure to give your arrival and departure dates, be prepared to pay a deposit, and be sure to get a confirmation number.
4. Please take notice of the maximum number of occupants allowed in a room, and *do not exceed that number*. Reserving a room for four people and then putting six or seven in the room is a violation of fire code. It violates our agreement with the facility, and it also creates extra work for the housekeeping staff.
5. PLEASE make only one housing arrangement at one Feast site. Making duplicate reservations blocks housing from others looking for housing and is also unfair to the housing establishment when they get cancellations only a few weeks before the Feast. If your plans to attend that site change, be sure to cancel your housing reservation as soon as possible to free up housing.

**Mike Blackwell**  
**Festival Planning Team**

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **Q. What if I have a large family and need a larger facility, such as a house, to have enough space. Can I rent "outside" our housing list?**

A. If there is no satisfactory housing on our housing list, you are certainly free to rent something that isn't on the housing list. Most of the large, home-type facilities are "one of a kind," and it would cause more potential problems than it would solve for us to list a large number of one-of-a-kind facilities. And once such a facility was reserved, it would be a frustrating waste of time for any other members who tried to reserve the facility.

### **Q. What if I'm torn between two different housing properties (maybe even at two different sites). What is wrong with reserving them both until I decide and then releasing the one I decide not to use?**

A. This situation happens probably more often than most would think. It causes difficulties on more than one level. First, it removes a room from the "available block" that may eventually go unused if you cancel just before the Feast. Second, it may cause a facility to assume it is full and turn down possible bookings only to later have one or several cancellations by people who had "double-booked" rooms. This causes us problems when we go to book blocks of rooms for the following year.

### **Q. My extended family is all attending the same site, yet we find we are paying different tax rates on our rooms. Why is that? It seems confusing!**

A. Some Feast sites have facilities in different communities, each with different "lodging tax" setups. Some facilities have a "county tax," while others have a "county tax" and a "city lodging tax." Generally, the difference isn't that great, but it may be 4 to 5 percent different.

### **Q. What about "extra fees" that appear on my bill in addition to the basic room charge?**

A. Some facilities have extra charges for things such as "resort fee," "fee for Internet service in sleeping rooms" (in some facilities, the Internet is free only in the public areas). Most of these should be listed in

the housing brochure, but it is good to ask about any extra fees that the facility charges when making your room reservation. When in doubt, ask, so you aren't surprised when you check out.

**Q. I have found an establishment that I feel would be a great fit for our housing block. How do I go about giving this input to the right person?**

A. At times, members may find a facility that we may have overlooked or that may be under new management. There are a couple of ways you can give input in this area. First, since we may already have our room blocks set for this year, you can write in your suggestion on your copy of the Housing Survey, which is passed out at each site. The Festival coordinator for that site will see it and can follow up on it. Second, you can email the suggestion to the Festival coordinator for that site or to a member of the Festival Planning Team. But either way, please do not try to negotiate with the establishment on behalf of the Church.

**Q. I have several ideas on areas that I feel would make wonderful Feast sites. How do I go about giving input on possible locations?**

A. We are always keeping our eyes open for possible Feast sites. Our main criteria for site selection is desirable locations within a reasonable distance of the majority of our people in a region. We will occasionally

have a specialty site on a one-time or a periodic basis, but due to manpower and expense, we mostly focus on regional sites across the United States and regional sites in the international areas as well.

The Festival Planning Team is always open to suggestions for possible future sites and welcomes input from interested members. If you know of a specific facility in a particular area, feel free to mention it in an email to a member of the Festival Planning Team. But please do not contact the facility directly or discuss possible terms with the facility, as if you are representing the Church. Doing so can cause confusion. Send in your ideas, and we will look at and consider them in light of current needs, contracts and other relative conditions.

**Q. What do I do if I check into a facility selected from the housing guide and, after checking in, I find the conditions to be totally unacceptable?**

A. While this situation seldom happens, it is a possibility. Before you actually occupy the room, go back to the management and tell them the conditions are totally unacceptable and ask for either another room that is acceptable or for a refund. Most facilities will work with you. In the event that you still have a situation, feel free to contact the Festival coordinator for the site or, if you know his name, the housing officer. Either of them will be able to help you with the situation.

## Key Dates for 2017 Feast of Tabernacles

April 16-May 15, 2017  
Online registration

July 10, 2017  
Activity information posted to website

May 15, 2017  
Early housing reservations begin (check with your local Festival adviser for guidelines)

Oct. 5-11, 2017  
Feast of Tabernacles

May 22, 2017  
General housing reservations begin

Oct. 12, 2017  
Last Great Day

Registration begins April 16  
[feast.cogwa.org](http://feast.cogwa.org)



## FORT MYERS, FLORIDA



Fort Myers, Florida, is a limited-access satellite site for those who meet the criteria. After a very successful first year, it was an easy decision to return to Fort Myers. The beauty of the Gulf Coast of Florida, the many attractions for brethren to visit, and the excellent venue for accommodations and services made this a clear choice for 2017.

Services will be held at the Holiday Inn at the Gulf Coast Town Center, which is a beautiful property located on a lake. There are over 30 top-of-the-line restaurants at the Town Center for brethren to choose from. Most people may wish to stay at the Holiday Inn, where breakfast comes free with your room.

This area of southwest Florida offers many attractions. The Edison & Ford Winter Estates, which includes the Edison Botanic Research Laboratory and the Estates Museum, is nearby and open daily for tours. The causeway to Sanibel and Captiva Islands is 30 minutes away, and so is the bridge to the island of Fort Myers Beach. All have beautiful white-sand beaches. The very popular Naples, Florida, Zoo is 35 minutes away, and the western Everglades National Park's Ten Thousand Islands guided boat tour is just one hour away.

The temperatures in October should be in the low to mid-80s. We are expecting 200 or more at this site.

**Fragrance-controlled room available:** Yes.

**Tax rate for accommodations:** 11 percent.

**Closest airport:** Southwest Florida International Airport (RSW), 5 miles.

**Jim Haeffele**

Because Fort Myers is a satellite site, we are encouraging everyone to stay at the Holiday Inn, where services will be held. We have a room block there that we want to be sure and fill. If you have a need for a property with a kitchenette, please contact Jim Haeffele directly ([jim.haeffele@cogwa.org](mailto:jim.haeffele@cogwa.org)). He can then verify you have registered for Fort Myers and give you the name of a nearby property that offers kitchenettes. Those staying at the Holiday Inn will receive a full buffet breakfast included at this special rate.

### **Holiday Inn Fort Myers Airport at Town Center**

239-561-1550

[hifmyersairport.com](http://hifmyersairport.com)

9931 Interstate Commerce Drive

Fort Myers, FL 33913

\$109 1 king bed, 1-2 people

\$109 2 queen beds, 2-4 people

*Note:* You can make reservations online at [tinyurl.com/FMHolidayInn](http://tinyurl.com/FMHolidayInn) or call 866-792-4969 and reference Church of God. You will need to provide a credit card to reserve the room. All rooms will be available to members unless otherwise booked.

*Amenities:* Restaurant on premises, shopping nearby, laundry facilities, equipped for handicapped, waterfront (lake), outdoor pool, king or queen beds, air-conditioning, elevator, free Wi-Fi, fridge, microwave, fitness center, full buffet breakfast included.

*Distance from meeting hall:* on-site

# International Feast Sites

## **AFRICA**

Mugina, Burundi  
Éséka, Cameroon  
Man, Côte d'Ivoire  
Kinshasa, Democratic  
Republic of the Congo  
Kumasi, Ghana  
Nakuru, Kenya  
Salima, Malawi  
Flic-en-Flac, Mauritius  
Benin City, Nigeria  
Giti, Rwanda  
Uvongo, South Africa  
Kpalimé, Togo  
Mapoko, Zambia  
Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

## **ASIA/PACIFIC**

Coffs Harbour, Australia  
Pacific Harbour, Fiji  
Kochi, India  
Taupo, New Zealand  
Bacolod City, Philippines

## **CARIBBEAN**

St. Lawrence Gap,  
Barbados  
Grenada  
Lethem, Guyana  
Runaway Bay, Jamaica

## **EUROPE**

Calais, France

## **LATIN AMERICA**

Villa la Merced,  
Argentina  
Santa Cruz, Bolivia  
Lican Ray, Chile  
El Rodadero, Santa  
Marta, Colombia  
Antigua, Guatemala  
San Miguel de Allende,  
Mexico  
Huanchaco, Peru

## **NORTH AMERICA**

Orford, Québec

Note: Not all locations in this list are final. Please check [feast.cogwa.org](http://feast.cogwa.org) for up-to-date information on international sites.

Registration begins April 16  
[feast.cogwa.org](http://feast.cogwa.org)

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