

## Dominican Republic: Building a Sustainable World™

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### Highlights

- Volunteer to implement ecologically sustainable projects in rural areas
- Visit Haitian refugee communities
- Hike to stunning waterfalls
- Ride a catamaran in the Caribbean and explore pristine beaches
- Meet dynamic leaders and NGOs implementing cutting-edge social programs
- Explore the colonial city of Santo Domingo

## Dominican Republic: Building a Sustainable World™

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In this GLA Flagship program, you'll dive deep into issues of sustainability and develop the leadership skills necessary to address some of humanity's greatest environmental challenges.

Led by Dave Addison, our expert director, who holds his PhD in Global Sustainability, the group will meet with major NGOs and local leaders who are making great progress on sustainability in the Caribbean. You will be given the tools and support to design your own project as you collaborate with your peers to determine ways to empower change in a Dominican community, as well as in your home communities. You will evaluate the role of natural resources in your life and determine the vital purpose they play in the future of the world.

### Community Service

Our group will volunteer on various sustainability projects throughout the country including the construction of biomass stoves in rural communities, installation of water filtration devices and solar energy systems, and assisting in the development of agriculture and reforestation systems. In addition, you can share your talents doing arts and crafts, playing sports and games, and teaching basic conversational English with local children that our group will meet along the way. Most importantly, you will be a friend and role model to young children who have limited exposure to the rest of the world.

### Hands-On Learning

Students will explore topics in environmental sustainability, the most critical issue of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Through the service work and seminars, you will learn for yourself how to envision and change your life to become more sustainable. These seminars are carefully designed to allow you to make connections between the work at the community service project and issues facing the rest of the world. You will also learn about the vibrant Dominican culture through music, dance and food.

### Adventure

We'll explore the tropical countryside through long hikes out to a chain of hidden waterfalls and remote villages. We'll ride a catamaran in the Caribbean, zip-line through virgin rain forest, snorkel through crystal blue waters and coral reefs, and sunbathe on pristine white sand beaches. In addition, we will explore urban life in the colonial capital, Santo Domingo. The Dominican Republic is an ideal place for those looking for fun and adventure in the sun, while making a difference.

### Lodging

The GLA Home Base is a gorgeous beachfront cluster of chalets around a swimming pool. There is a thatched roof dining area. The GLA Home Base is on an almost private beach called Playa Las Canas, approximately 30 minutes east of the town of Puerto Plata on the north coast. Students will share a bedroom with one other student. Each bedroom has a private bathroom. Food will be hearty, healthy and locally grown organic food consisting of meats, beans, rice, vegetables, and fruit.



### Tuition

Tuition includes all in-country expenses including lodging, meals, transportation, all activities and entrance fees, community service materials, all excursions, wi-fi internet access, backup medical insurance, and experienced program leaders.

Tuition does not include the following: international airfare, \$10 airport departure tax, souvenirs, snacks, laundry, phone calls, or medical expenses.

### Quick Facts

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#### Program Details

- Duration: 21 days
- Tuition: \$4,395
- Max. group size: 30 students
- Community service hours: 30
- Location: Playa Las Canas
- Airport: Puerto Plata (POP)

#### 2012 Dates

- June 29 - July 19, 2012
- July 23 - August 12, 2012



## Program Schedule

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*Disclaimer: Actual order of activities will vary by program session. The day by day itinerary detailed below is typical for what you can expect to experience, but not set in stone as work and activities vary depending upon the needs of our local community partners, various celebrations and customs, as well as the weather. This itinerary is designed to give you an example of what a day to day schedule would look like and provides a clear idea of the program experience. It may be changed during the summer as staff see fit and on the ground circumstances and opportunities change our course. The Dominican Republic will challenge you as students are expected to work hard and really be present for all that we do. You will get hot, dirty and bug bitten along the way, but your contribution to the rural community and to each other will positively impact everyone involved.*

**Day 1:** You will arrive at the airport in Puerto Plata where you will be met by a member of our staff and be taken to the GLA Home Base. After a welcome fiesta to give you a taste of Dominican culture, our director will give an orientation to the course and students will set their personal goals for the 21 days.

**Day 2:** Wake up to the sound of crashing waves and the gorgeous views of the bay. You will be greeted with a hearty breakfast and have an orientation to the program, staff, and country. We will hike into the Septentrional Mountain Range and reward ourselves with a swim at the Ciguapa Falls. We will return to our lodge for lunch and learn about the local cuisine. After dinner we will have our first seminar where we will begin to understand the term sustainability and how it directly impacts our lives.

**Day 3:** After breakfast, we will begin our trek to a remote village in the heart of the mountains to begin our community service project. We will break into smaller groups and install biomass stoves in the local homes. These stoves offer an environmentally safe and more efficient option for the local communities. Students will learn about the role of women in the Dominican Republic and understand the science behind the biomass stoves. In the evening, relax on the beach, or in our GLA Home Base pool chatting with new friends.

**Day 4:** We will continue our community service project in the remote village as our group continues working hard and making friends with the local people. We will complete the day of community service with the installation of a solar panel system for a local school or medical clinic facility.

**Day 5:** In the morning our group will organize a game of baseball with Dominican youth, a very important part of the local culture. After a morning of friendly competition, we will venture into the Haitian Refugee Camp, *Asencion*. After dinner we will discuss the role of water in our lives to prepare us for our upcoming community service project.

**Day 6:** Today our group will hike to another part of the mountains and work with a different community for our last day of community service of the week. During this guided hike our group will observe the effects of deforestation in the mountainside and the impact on the surrounding communities. Our group will construct a water provision and filtration system. We will discuss the great lengths that the locals must travel to obtain water as well as the lack of water resources in the communities, as we uncover the shocking reality that people across the globe face on a daily basis. We will spend the rest of the afternoon on the beach snorkeling, or having a local BBQ.

**Day 7:** The morning will begin with discussions of food systems and the risks to agricultural processes in the developing and developed world. To celebrate all of our hard work this week, we will head to *Yassica* for the famous zip line through the vast and beautiful jungles of the DR in the afternoon.

**Day 8:** We will begin our weekend of fun with a catamaran ride on the ocean, where we will discuss what resources the ocean offers us. Our catamaran will take us to hidden coves to snorkel and discover exotic fish and marine life and offer students a chance to relax after a week of hard work. Following our fun ride we will travel to the beach and spend the day relaxing, snorkeling, and hiking. We will have lunch at a local restaurant and sample some local fare. In the evening we will have free time.

**Day 9:** Today we will travel to Mt. Isabel de Torres and ride the cable car to see stunning views of the northern bay. Then we will visit Fort Felipe, the first landing point of Christopher Columbus more than 500 years ago. We will have lunch on a grassy knoll overlooking the bay. In the evening we refine our Latin dance moves in preparation for the evening dance party with the local villagers!

**Day 10:** We will begin our second week of community service, working on a reforestation project that is coordinated by a local non profit organization and the forestry department of the province of Puerto Plata. After spending the morning planting trees and speaking with the leader of the non profit, our

group will enjoy the afternoon relaxing as we will have time to use the internet to correspond with loved ones back home. In the evening we will have a brief Spanish lesson followed by a seminar regarding the importance of reforestation in creating a sustainable lifestyle for these rural communities. We will brainstorm other ways to create a sustainable lifestyle on a global scale from simple steps we can do upon our return home to giant moves our government must take.

**Day 11:** We will return to our reforestation project in the morning. In the afternoon, our group will spend the afternoon on the beach to relax from a hard days work. We will continue our discussion from the previous night, followed by a film to provide a different perspective. Numerous concepts of agro-forestry will be explored as the students begin to understand the complexities and relationships of forest and agricultural systems and what the impact of our current practices have on the environment and long term sustainability.

**Day 12:** Today, our community service project will take place in a small fisherman's village offering students a new scene. Our group will work with a different non profit organization in a beach clean and environmental education program. Students will see the disturbing truth behind the trash and its effect on the developing world and more specifically this community that relies on fishing for survival. In the afternoon our group will walk along the beach and enjoy the shops and have a chance to get some souvenirs. In the evening we will have a seminar on leadership.

**Day 13:** Today our group will travel to *Jarabacoa* and visit an organic coffee farm. We will have the opportunity to work on the farm and aid in the development of these agricultural food systems. We will have local experts from the agro forestry university (UAFAM) based in *Jarabacoa*. In the afternoon we will travel further into the mountains to the beautiful village of *Constanza*. Much of the food for the island is produced here and the students will have the opportunity to compare and contrast organic food with high production food systems. Upon return to GLA Home Base, our group will think about our own plans and projects that we want to pursue once we arrive home.

#### **Day 14 - 16:**

Our group will take off early for our weekend away in the capital, Santo Domingo, the first stop on Columbus' journey. Get ready for a weekend of culture and history as we trek across the cobblestone streets unraveling the cities hidden treasures. We will explore the purported first cathedral of the Americas, other historical colonial sites. During this trip we will meet with the environmental minister, the director of the United Nations Developmental Program (UNDP) in the Dominican Republic, and a representative of the German Development Group (GTZ). Each will guide us through the various priorities established for sustainability and poverty alleviation in the developing world. We will also meet with the Dominican Republic advisor for the Millennium Development Goals. We will stay at a at the edge of the charming colonial district and enjoy an evening of walking through old forts and cathedrals. Sunday night, we will travel back to our wonderful GLA Home Base on the beach.

**Day 17:** Students will wake up for their final week of community service which will show them a different side of the Dominican Republic. Our group has experienced rural poverty and witnessed the villages' ability to sustain themselves but this week the focus will be on the urban life and social sustainability. Today we will spend the morning in a Haitian refugee camp playing soccer and being a friend to the children we meet. In the afternoon we will go on a hike to experience the picturesque and breathtaking views of the DR.

**Day 18:** Students will continue volunteering with the children in another refugee camp to witness firsthand the effects of urban poverty. After playing with the local children and organizing games, our group will spend time in the sun and enjoy the ocean breeze while reflecting on the day's service. Tonight we will break into groups to discuss the future of sustainability in our lives and ways that we can empower change in the world. We will continue working on our final projects and brainstorm with our peers for ideas.

**Day 19:** Our group will help rebuild and refurbish a home in *La Cienega*. The village has a population of approximately 4,000 and is among the poorest in the Dominican Republic. The students will gain firsthand knowledge of the differences in rural and urban poverty and the small amount of financial and physical effort it takes to change these lives.

**Day 20:** We will work again in *La Cienega*, either completing yesterday's project or beginning another. The projects will include building new walls for houses and creating cement floors for bedrooms. We'll also wrap up our person projects we've been working on during these three weeks. On our final evening together with a goodbye fiesta where we will practice our salsa moves one last time as a group to say our final farewells.

**Day 21:** After breakfast and final goodbyes, we'll travel to Puerto Plata to board our flights home. GLA staff will help students check in for their flights and make sure they safely depart.

## **About Global Leadership Adventures**

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Global Leadership Adventures, established in 2004, is the premier international community service-learning program for high school students. Students come back transformed.

GLA is unique because of its focus on leadership development and first-hand learning about global issues. Students learn first hand from social pioneers around the world who are creating positive social change in their communities.

Students are taught to use their heart, as well as their head, to become agents of positive change across borders.

GLA has been featured in:

**The New York Times**

**The Boston Globe**

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**BALTIMORE TIMES ONLINE**

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