

Costa Rica: Spanish & Service Adventure

The best way to learn Spanish - in a fun and meaningful way in beautiful Costa Rica!



Highlights Include

- Volunteer at an impoverished school
- Learn Spanish while serving a community
- Camp on the beach and learn to surf
- Zip line through the rain forest
- Ride down roaring rivers on inner tubes
- Hike to the crater of a volcano



Costa Rica: Spanish & Service Adventure

The best way to learn Spanish - in a fun and meaningful way in beautiful Costa Rica! Costa Rica is home to the world's most beautiful beaches, mountains and forests; but it is also home to warm and friendly people.

Spend three weeks volunteering at rural schools while also studying Spanish and also enjoy some fun in the sun hiking to waterfalls, riding a horseback through a jungle, camping alongside crystal blue waters and learning to surf, as well as ziplining and tubing down roaring rivers.

Community Service

You will volunteer every weekday morning at an elementary school in an rural area teaching arts, crafts, sports or basic English. This will allow to help the children of the community while also practicing your Spanish language skills. 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

There's no better way to learn Spanish than living in the country and practicing with local children, while being coached in the classroom by experienced teachers. Designed for high school students, our *GLA Experiential Language Curriculum* seamlessly integrates language into many aspects of the program, including community service and cultural activities. Our unique combination of classes and community service allows beginners to quickly learn the basics and gives advanced speakers the confidence to use their skills with native speakers. Students will have 45 hours of language immersion. In addition to language, you'll also learn about Costa Rica culture through workshops on dance, cooking, music and social issues.

Adventure

We'll get out and explore the tropical countryside and experience the vast array of natural wonders in Costa Rica. You will hike to a hidden waterfall, ride horses, zip line through lush forests, ride river rapids, and spend time on pristine beaches. We'll even camp out on the beach one night, learn to surf and scout for breeding sea turtles.

Lodging

The GLA Home Base is a large villa on the outskirts of a coastal town in the Guanacaste region of Costa Rica. It is situated across a dirt road from the Pacific Ocean. Students will be staying in gender segregated rooms with bunk beds, fans and a private bathroom for each room. In the afternoons, you can cool down after a day of work in our swimming pool, play sports, and relax on the beach. The GLA Home Base is used exclusively by our staff and students. Food will be hearty and healthy, locally grown food that consists of meats, beans, rice, vegetables, and fruit.

21-Day Program

July 4 – July 24, 2012
July 26 – August 15, 2012

Duration: 21 days

Tuition: \$4399

Service hours: 40

Max. group size: 44

Location: Playa del Coco

14-Day Program

June 19 – July 2, 2012

Tuition: \$3199

Service hours: 30

Max. group size: 44

Location: Playa del Coco



Program Schedule

***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. Costa Rica 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: Students arrive at Liberia airport on the first day of the program and are taken our comfortable and unique Home Base situated across the road from the Pacific Ocean. Students who arrive in the afternoon will engage in ice-breakers and have a chance to explore the nearby beach. Students who arrive in the evening will join the full group for dinner and an official welcome and orientation.

Day 2: After a morning of orientation and a review of our Code of Conduct and some teambuilding activities, we'll take our Spanish placement tests and engage in our first class. We offer classes for beginners, intermediate and advanced Spanish speakers; each class is tailored to the specific skill levels of the students. We'll also begin exploring the town with a scavenger hunt and learn from our local Costa Rican staff about the unique culture of the country. In the evening, we will have our first leadership activity.

Day 3: Today we begin our community service work. We'll meet with the Director of the school and learn more about the socio-economic background of the community where we are working and also begin developing our work plans. In the afternoon, we'll spend time with families in the community in order to learn first hand about the conditions people live in.

Day 4: Community service starts around 8:30 am and goes until roughly 12:30pm. In the afternoon we'll have our second Spanish class and then visit the Costa Rican Red Cross to learn about health issues in the community. That night, we'll play some Spanish-learning games and hear from a long-time resident of Guanacaste to learn more about the history of this region of the country.

Day 5: After a morning of community service, we'll have an hour of Spanish class and then some free time at the beach. After dinner, students will each take an article from the local newspaper and be responsible for explaining the content of the story to their peers. This is a way to practice Spanish and also learn about the news of the country. We'll do this evening news activity approximately three times per week. At night, we'll have a session on personal leadership.

Day 6: We'll start the day with a morning of community service at the school. After school, we'll visit a local high school to challenge the students to a game of soccer or to help them practice their spoken English. In the evening, we'll have a tasty class on exotic fruits of Costa Rica.

Day 7: For the next two days we'll engage in some high adrenaline activities. Today, we'll wake up and travel to Rincon de La Vieja National Park and explore this volcanic area. On our trek to Pailas we will see amazing bubbling mud lagoons and all the other natural wonders of the volcano. Afterward, we will soak our muscles in the hot springs before we drive back up to the GLA Home Base for a good nights sleep!

Day 8: We'll start today by zip lining through the treetops of a forest, then we'll ride inner tubes down a roaring river, followed by a horseback ride around the base of a volcano and end it with fun in a gorgeous waterfall and hot springs.

Day 9: After a morning of community service, we'll dive into one of the most contentious issues discussed in Costa Rica: immigration. The immigration of Nicaraguans seeking better jobs and a path out of poverty is the topic of much debate in Costa Rica. We'll travel to the Nicaraguan border and hear from locals about why people immigrate illegally and hear arguments on both sides of the issue. That evening, we'll continue our discussion about national identity and culture.

Day 10: Another full morning of community service at the schools, followed by lunch back at the GLA Home Base. In the afternoon we'll meet with a local leader to learn about social issues and current events in the Guanacaste. Besides learning about local topics, the discussion will give you the opportunity to practice your Spanish. In the evening we participate in a lesson on Latin dance such as salsa, *merengue* and *bachata* in nearby Liberia.

Day 11: After community service, we'll drive down to a completely undeveloped beach for an afternoon of relaxation and volleyball. After dinner, we'll engage in a thought-provoking session on personal leadership.

Day 12: After community service, we'll visit a local farm and learn about daily life on a Costa Rica farm. You'll have a chance to milk a cow and see how fresh cheese, or *queso fresco*, is made. In the late afternoon, we'll have Spanish class followed by dinner and time to relax at the pool or play games on the beach.

Day 13: We'll start the day with community service at the school. After school, we'll visit a local high school to challenge the students to a game of basketball or to help them practice their spoken English. Afterwards, you'll have time to get on the internet and communicate with friends and family back home.

For students, on the 14 day program we will talk about sustainable versus unsustainable models of tourism and the importance of English in the tourist economy. We'll visit the touristy beach town of Playa del Coco to see how tourism has impacted this community. While at this town, you'll have a chance to do some last minute shopping. After dinner, we will have our farewell banquet and party!

Day 14: 14-day Program Ends today and students will depart for the Liberia airport to catch their flight home.

21 Day Flagship Program Continues

Day 14: We will travel to the Guanacaste Conservation Area where we'll hike through this lush jungle until we reach one of the most beautiful, isolated beaches. This beach is not open to the public and only accessible on foot. The afternoon will be free to enjoy this unspoiled paradise. At night, we'll head out with our naturalist guide in search of sea turtle who come out at night to lay their eggs on the beach under the moonlight. If we're lucky enough to see it, it's a sight to behold. That night, we'll sleep in tents on the beach.

Day 15: We'll get up early the next morning to catch the best waves. We'll have a professional surf instructor on site to give us a surf lesson. If you already know how to surf, you can borrow a board and start riding waves. While the waves here are not huge, they're steady and consistent, making it a great place to get started. In the afternoon we'll take a hike with our guide and try to identify some species unique to this ecosystem. We'll return to our Home Base for dinner and have free time to recover from a long, fun weekend.

Day 16: We start our final week together with our community service project. In the afternoon we will participate in a soccer tournament with the children of the local schools where we have been volunteering over the past two weeks. In the evening we'll wrap up our leadership curriculum and begin reflecting on what we will take back to our hometowns from this experience.

Day 17: After community service, you'll have your final Spanish class. In the afternoon you'll have time to work on your final group presentations summarizing what you've learned.

Day 18: A morning of community service followed by a discussion about the role of tourism in Costa Rica. We'll talk about sustainable versus unsustainable models of tourism and the importance of English in the tourist economy. We'll visit the touristy beach town of Playa del Coco to see how tourism has impacted this community. While at this town, you'll have a chance to do some last minute shopping.

Day 19: After community service, you'll have time to complete your final presentations. After dinner you'll present to the entire group, in Spanish.

Day 20: For our final day at the community service site, we'll make piñatas with the kids at the school and then celebrate by breaking them open. In the evening, we'll have our farewell banquet and party!

Day 21: After breakfast, most students will depart for the Liberia airport to catch their flight home.





**Global
Leadership
Adventures**

About Global Leadership Adventures

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

seventeen

The Boston Globe

BALTIMORE TIMES ONLINE