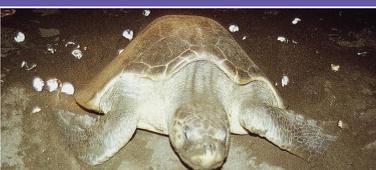
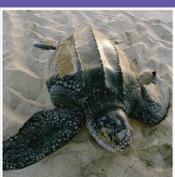




COSTA RICA VOLUNTEER PROGRAM



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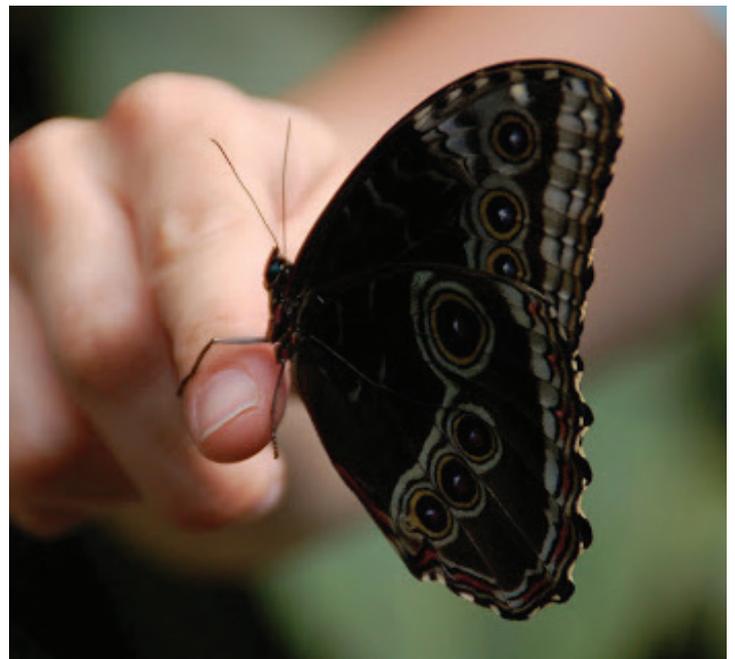
INTRODUCTION

Costa Rica is one of the most popular and beautiful tourist destinations in the world with its rugged coastlines, majestic volcanoes and heavenly beaches. Our volunteer programmes allow you to experience the culture of this charming, idyllic country while also contributing to various elements of Costa Rican life.

We have volunteer projects in various locations across Costa Rica. You could work with children in a day-care centre or residential facility and provide care and support through creative projects and stimulating play, or you could work in a children's museum and become immersed in something educational and interactive, while also having lots of fun!

Any green thumbs can put their skills to use in the beautiful Botanical Gardens, or lend their expertise to a local family farm in the peaceful village of Pacquera. Or maybe you'd like to help in the conservation of endangered turtle and monkey species? The option is yours!

Volunteers can stay with host families and experience authentic Costa Rican food while becoming immersed in the country's culture. On days off you're free to explore and discover the best of what Costa Rica has to offer.



ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation will be provided for Volunteers throughout the programme at a home stay or residence

HOME STAYS

Home stays have been chosen after a thorough application process to make sure they have everything our participants need, including Wi-Fi and laundry services. Breakfast and dinner is usually provided with the home stay option, with some programmes including lunch as well.

RESIDENCES

All residences have shared bedrooms, bathrooms with hot water, a common room, kitchen and a laundry room. Residences are fully equipped and usually provide breakfast, however lunch and dinner are not provided.



CHILDCARE & TEACHING

Volunteers are involved in the daily care and teaching of under privileged children. You will contribute to a child's cognitive, academic, emotional and social growth, with the hope that it brings about some lasting and sustainable changes in their lives.

VOLUNTEERS ACTIVITIES

- Preparing food, serving, and helping to feed the younger children
- Playing, singing, and taking the children to local parks
- Developing creative projects and instructing children with special needs
- Volunteers need to be self-starters who are comfortable with flexible schedules and changing circumstances with minimal supervision
- Volunteer should be creative and comfortable working independently

CHILDCARE PROJECTS AVAILABLE

- Daytime shelter for children
- Orphanage in Cartago
- Orphanage in San Francisco
- Orphanage in Heredia
- Daytime shelter for children in Puntarenas
- Orphanage in San Ramon
- Orphanage in Puntarenas

TEACHING PROJECTS AVAILABLE

- School project in Ciudad Quesada
- Heredia School
- Jacó School
- San Francisco School
- Puntarenas School
- School in San Gabriel



TEACHING CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Volunteers will teach children and young adults with a large range of physical and/or mental disabilities. You will provide a supportive and enriching environment for the children, tailoring the education of each child to their unique needs. The role of each volunteer is based on his or her experience and level of Spanish. Volunteers can provide ideas about how they can best serve and engage with students, area schools, and other local community members and organizations.

VOLUNTEERS ACTIVITIES INSIDE THE CLASSROOM

- Guiding students in reading and writing
- Planning and teaching specific topic lessons
- Assisting with individualized attention to students while instructors are performing activities with the group

VOLUNTEERS ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

- Cataloging and shelving books
- Facilitating mini-courses (weekly classes on crafts, skills, sports, or languages)
- Fundraising
- Helping with internet research and/or other computer related tasks
- Completing manual labor, including gardening, building repairs, or painting

PROJECTS AVAILABLE

- School for Disabled Children, San José

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

Costa Rica's health care system is one of the pillars of the country, allowing its population to boast a high health and life expectancy level. Volunteers for the Emergency Medical services will work alongside local emergency responders and professional paramedics. Volunteers will experience both emergency services to patients, as well as medical education classes to individuals and organizations.

VOLUNTEERS ACTIVITIES EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

- Basic first aid & vital support
- Evacuations in the event of emergencies
- Prevention and combat of fires
- Vertical rescue & rescue in confined spaces

VOLUNTEERS ACTIVITIES NATIONAL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

- Feeding the babies
- Helping with language therapy
- Supporting doctors with the completion of patients' forms
- Teaching Maths and Science to kids
- Taking part in any special project assigned by doctors

PROJECTS AVAILABLE

- Children's Hospital
- Medical Center



ANIMAL CARE AND CONSERVATION

Volunteers can get involved in various animal conservation projects in Costa Rica. The monkey preservation project concentrates on the protection of endangered spider monkeys in Costa Rica. Volunteers can help rehabilitate captured spider monkeys and eventually release them back into the wild. Volunteers can help protect endangered Leatherback turtles who come to nest on the shores of the beautiful Playa Grande every year. Alternatively, you can work for the Society for the Protection of Animals, where you can play your part in helping to alleviate animal suffering.

VOLUNTEERS ACTIVITIES MONKEY PRESERVATION PROJECTS

- Fitting-out and maintenance of cages
- Feeding monkeys
- Helping in the Rescue Centre

VOLUNTEERS ACTIVITIES

TURTLE PROJECTS

- Assist biologists in protection & research of marine turtles
- Night patrols
- Data gathering
- Babysit eggs at hatcheries

VOLUNTEERS ACTIVITIES

ANIMAL PROTECTION PROJECTS

- Help with campaigns
- Promote animal care education
- Feed the animals

PROJECTS AVAILABLE

- Animal Protection Association
- Monkey preservation project
- Turtle Project North Pacific coast
- Turtle Project in the Caribbean coast
- Wildlife Rescue Center
- Animal Protection in Heredia

FARM MAINTENANCE

Volunteers will help to maintain the land, forest and fauna in the vast area surrounding the peaceful village of Pacquera. You will help to manage a camping site located in the Reserve, as well as manage and work on the trails and fruit plantations in the area. Volunteers are needed all year round, as there's always work to be done! You can see the Tropical Dry Forest of Puntarenas and will have the opportunity to experience the wonderful culture and lifestyle of Costa Rica first-hand.

VOLUNTEERS ACTIVITIES

- Cleaning & maintenance of trails & campsite
- Helping in Guava plantations
- Making local cheese



- Learning about the local cuisine
- Milking cows (optional farm work)

PROJECTS AVAILABLE

- Farm in Paquera

ECOLOGICAL CONSERVATION PROJECTS

Volunteers will help to promote the conservation, enjoyment and sustainability of beautiful flora and fauna in various ecological projects. You will engage in scientific research, horticulture and environmental education to play your part in conserving and protecting the endangered plant and animal species of Costa Rica.

VOLUNTEERS ACTIVITIES

- Trail construction and maintenance
- Care of field and greenhouse collections
- Biological research
- Assisting and educating visitors
- Helping with reservations and tourists

PROJECTS AVAILABLE

- Heredia Biodiversity Park

- Cartago Botanical Garden
- National Park in the North Pacific coast
- National Park in the South Pacific coast.
- Ecological Reserve

MARINE PARK PROJECT

Volunteers will work in the Marine Park in Costa Rica where they can get involved in conservation projects, environmental education programmes, garden maintenance or tourism. Volunteers will be heavily involved in various aspects of park life, from cleaning and maintaining the park, to assisting customers and gathering research on their experience. As volunteers on this project, you will be supporting the marine park team and promoting the importance of animal and environmental conservation.

VOLUNTEERS ACTIVITIES

- Cleaning and maintaining all areas of the Marine Park
- Keeping the facilities for the animals in good condition
- Feeding & caring for animals
- Assisting visitors
- Updating images & videos on the park database
- Creating materials for education workshops

PROJECTS AVAILABLE

- Marine Park in Puntarenas





VOLUNTEER PLACEMENT INCLUDED SERVICES

- Airport Transfer on Arrival
- Accommodation at a home stay or residence
- Breakfast and dinner provided with home stay options (lunch included in certain programmes)
- Orientation on arrival
- Dedicated programme coordinator throughout the project on the ground
- Support from local partner organisation throughout placement
- On-site 24 hour volunteer emergency contact
- All material & resources required to carry out duties in each volunteer project

WEEK 1 SAMPLE SCHEDULE

This is an example of daily activities. All activities schedule below are subject to change. Schedules are flexible, so you can also apply for part-time positions from 8:00 am – 12:30 pm on days off.

If you take the Spanish Immersion course, you will get free dancing and cooking classes in the afternoon twice a week at the Spanish Institute.

DAY	VOLUNTEER PROGRAM
MONDAY	Arrival at Airport and transfer to home stay or residence using Shuttle Bus Service.
TUESDAY	Welcome meeting and orientation. Brought to project site after orientation, where you will begin working.
WEDNESDAY	Work from 8:00 am – 4:00 pm on project site
THURSDAY	Work from 8:00 am – 4:00 pm on project site
FRIDAY	Free Weekend/Optional tour to explore Costa Rica
SATURDAY	Free Weekend/Optional tour to explore Costa Rica
SUNDAY	Free Weekend/Optional tour to explore Costa Rica

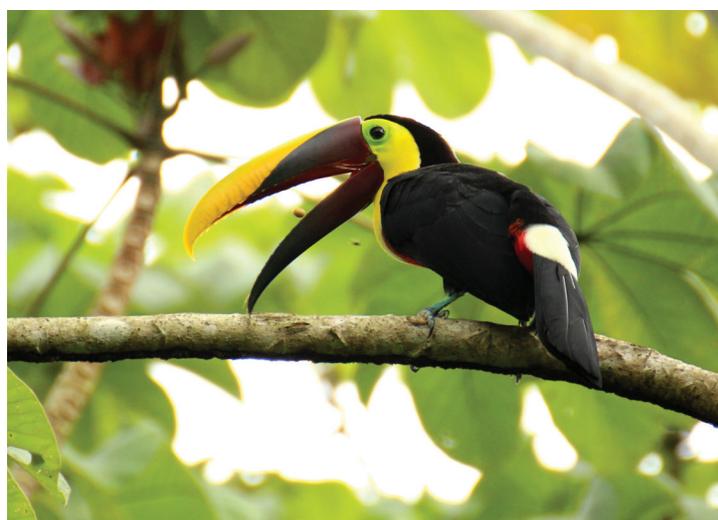
Explore idyllic Costa Rica and experience the natural beauty this Central American wonderland is famous for.

While on a Volunteer project you will gain a unique insight to the local people's lives and customs with a chance to jump on day tours of the local sites as well as cultural activities.

But you may want to explore a little further than your local town and USIT can book you on small group tours before or after your volunteer experience – this way you get to see as much of Costa Rica as possible.

You could explore Costa Rica on a Shoestring for 8 days in a thrilling and action-packed adventure. Witness the Arenal Volcano, then take a dip in the hot springs nearby. Get the adrenaline pumping in La Fortuna, then soak up the hippie spirit of Montezuma and relax on the beach. You are free to choose your own adventure activities, so you can make your trip as exciting and adrenaline-inducing as you want.

Just talk with your USIT coordinator about how you want to spend your next adventure!



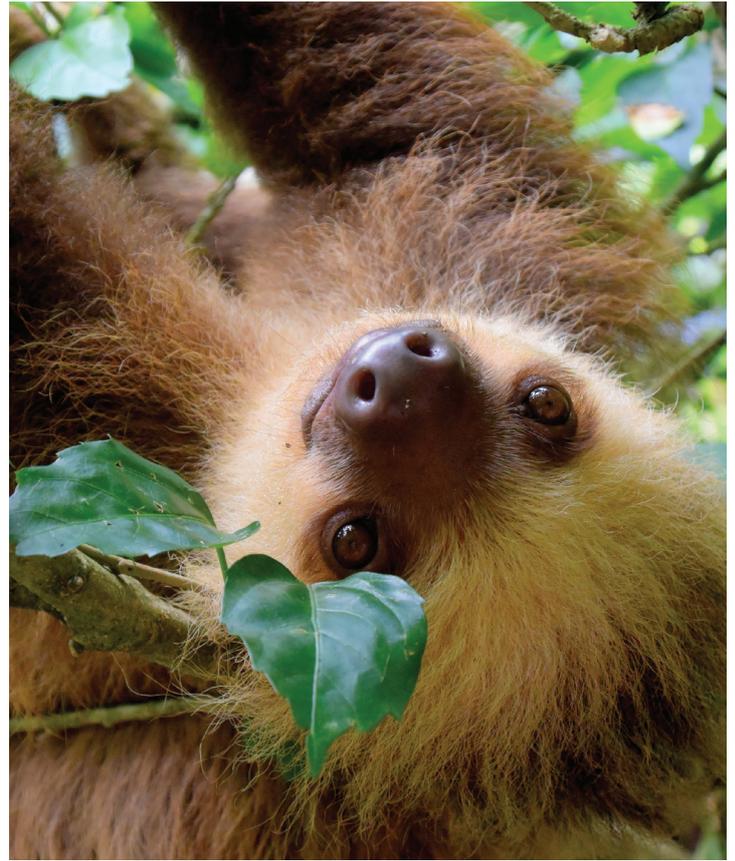
FLIGHTS AND INSURANCE

All participants on a USIT Volunteer Project must purchase their flights & insurance through USIT.

Our Insurance policy is a Work & Travel policy tailored to the volunteer experience.

All flight itineraries will be discussed and agreed between the volunteer and USIT coordinator before finalising the details.

Your USIT coordinator can tailor make certain flight plans to include stopovers or multi stop itineraries should you wish to do some travel to other countries besides Costa Rica – just let us know where you want to go next!



MAP OF COSTA RICA

