



Green Life Volunteers

Puerto Jimenez, Costa Rica

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Green Life Volunteer Internship – Program Handbook
Location: Osa Peninsula, Costa Rica

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1. Project overview

Green Life Volunteers need a communications, media, and marketing intern with sufficient/good computer skills. We need your help to “spread the word” of our projects we offer in Costa Rica. You will help Green Life Volunteers by receiving more volunteers for our projects. You will work closely with the Janina Schan, who is the owner and manager of Green Life Volunteers. She will learn you what you will have to do during your internship. We are also happy to receive your input – if you have any marketing ideas and strategies you are welcome to discuss and implement them. At the end you will receive a certificate and a letter of recommendation for your successful internship completion. Let us know if you need to meet any special requirements for your program of study or for your school. We are receiving lots of University students that conduct their major research within Green Life Volunteers – just ask us and we will help you with your school requirements!

2. Volunteer duties

As an intern on this program you will work for Green Life Volunteers in Puerto Jimenez, Costa Rica. You will help the organization to grow and to distinguish itself from competitors. During your internship you will work closely with Janina Schan, owner and manager of Green Life Volunteers. The work schedule is quite flexible. Usually you would work 5 days a week for 6-8 hours a day and have the weekends off. This depends on the schedule of the manager. An intern at Green Life Volunteers need to speak fluently English, have experience in media, communication and marketing, have experience in working on computers and can bring his or her own laptop to Costa Rica. Speaking Spanish on a basic level or higher would be good, but is not essential.

Several tasks you may have during your internship are:

- 🌱 Search for new ways to reach the target groups of Green Life Volunteers.
- 🌱 Search for new (online) advertisement and promotion strategies.
- 🌱 Create a blog entry on the Green Life Volunteers website and other blogging websites.
- 🌱 Create a new flyer, brochure, poster to distribute on schools/universities. In addition, make them in PDF as well to upload them on the website so that every potential volunteer could download them.
- 🌱 Doing research for merchandising opportunities for Green life Volunteers (T shirts, badge etcetera).
- 🌱 Be doing market research of what new projects can be developed in the region, be creative and forward your ideas to the supervisor.
- 🌱 Reply on enquiries from potential volunteers, enhance your communication skills.
- 🌱 Be doing target group research for Green Life Volunteers, so the organization can improve itself.
- 🌱 Update and promote social media pages of Green Life Volunteers.
- 🌱 Update and promote the website of Green Life Volunteers.
- 🌱 Be helping with fundraising efforts around Green Life Volunteers' projects.
- 🌱 Be helping out at individual Green Life Volunteers' projects .
- 🌱 Be helping coordinate, administer, and organize certain events or projects for Green Life Volunteers.

3. Project location

The location of our 'Internship Green Life Volunteers' program is in Puerto Jimenez on the Osa Peninsula of Costa Rica. The Osa Peninsula boasts 2.5% of the world's biodiversity, and is the most biodiversity place in Costa Rica. The communities are still quite poor, more so than in other parts of Costa Rica. The area around Puerto Jimenez is unique and beautiful.

Green Life Volunteers main office is located in Puerto Jimenez, which is the bigger town in the area. We have grown to be one of the largest towns on the Osa Peninsula. Located in the southern part of the Puntarenas province, our laidback town is one of the main gateways to the beautiful Corcovado



National Park. The last town before one can enter the park premises; a main ranger station is situated here with many tourists using this town to stock up on supplies before they trek their way through the gorgeous and diverse wildlife that the Corcovado National Park has to offer.

Situated in the Golfo Dulce, Puerto Jimenez has a wonderful beach where one can relax while taking in the superb beauty of the Osa Peninsula. This tiny 'frontier' town has a good number of hotel and resorts, both affordable and luxurious, with many rental tour companies and travel agencies in the

area from where trips around the region can be arranged. Transportation can also be organized from Puerto Jimenez, while if you get bored you can head out to the lovely remote village of Cabo Matapalo, which is famous in the region for its awesome surf breaks. Throughout the project, we make sure you will get some “down time” and you will be able to enjoy what the Osa has to offer.

4. How to get to your Project

You will first arrive in San Jose, at the Santa Juan Maria International Airport (SJO). There are two options to travel from San Jose to Puerto Jimenez. The first option is to book a flight from San Jose to Puerto Jimenez. Often you can connect your flights directly in SJO (Juan Santamaria - San Jose International Airport) to the airport in Puerto Jimenez. The major airlines flying into Puerto Jimenez are Nature Air (www.natureair.com) and Sansa Air (<http://cr.flysansa.com/en/home>).

The second option is to get by bus to Puerto Jimenez from San Jose – which is also the cheapest method. There are two public buses a day, one leaves San Jose at 8am and another leaves at 12pm. Both buses take 8 hours and go directly to Puerto Jimenez (that is the last stop). You will see lots of beautiful landscapes, mountains, and views on the way! It is a long drive, but it will show you a lot of Costa Rica’s beauty.

We will help you during your sign up process to arrange your transport and arrival in San Jose! We will help you book your hostel, arrange airport shuttle pick-ups to the hostel, and guide you on how to get to your project location. However, all of those costs are not included in our project fee, since it is things we cannot easily pre-pay and book for you in advance. Hence your transportation costs up until arrival to Puerto Jimenez, will have to be carried by you, the volunteer. Once you arrive in Puerto Jimenez, we will pick you up from the bus station and bring you to your accommodation / host family.

5. Accommodation

Interns of ‘Internship Green Life Volunteers’ program can choose to be accommodated in a host family or in your own apartment. The host family will provide two or three meals a day, this depend on our activities. You will be spending time with local Costa Ricans, who not may speak English that well, but the staff of Green Life Volunteers speak English. It will give you the opportunity to fully immerse yourself in Costa Rican culture and learn Spanish! If you choose for your own apartment, we will help you to organize it. You will have to cook your own meals. We will discuss your options during your sign up process – depending on your length of stay you may choose a host family stay or your own apartment.

If you would like to polish up your Spanish please consider doing a Spanish school before heading to your project! We offer the cheapest rates in Costa Rica for a 4 hour a day Spanish immersion school in San Isidro del General! Click [here](#) to go to our Spanish project.

6. Costs

The costs will depend on the accommodation you will choose. The host family will cost 149 USD per week, including 2 – 3 meals a day. When you choose for your own apartment, you will need to pay for

your own meals and the rent which will cost around the 250 USD. During your internship Green Life Volunteers offer you to go to a project of your choice for the weekly fee only. You would not have to pay initial organizational fee and you will only pay the weekly fee for the project's accommodation and food.

Keep in mind you do not receive the following costs:

- Salary
- Accommodation
- Food
- National and International flights
- Departure taxes
- Travel insurance
- Visa costs
- Additional travel
- Any additional food or snacks besides the host family meals
- Other personal expenses

7. Project supervisor and staff

Your project supervisor will be Janina Schan, the owner and manager of Green Life Volunteers. Sometimes you might have another intern or volunteer helping, but most likely you will be the only intern. Janina Schan will take care of you during your project and will help you with anything you need. If you have further questions or need help you can contact Green Life Volunteers any time. For emergency and urgent matters you can always call the following contact number, or contact us via email when you are still abroad!

Contact: Janina Schan - Coordinator and Green Life Volunteers Program Manager

Cell: +506 8570 0710

E-mail: info@glvolunteers.com

8. Emergency contacts- volunteer coordinator

Please bring with you the phone number below just in case something happens (you miss a connecting flight, lose luggage, etc.) and need to contact the project.

Contact: Janina Schan - Coordinator and Green Life Volunteers Program Manager

Cell: +506 8570 0710

E-mail: info@glvolunteers.com

9. Orientation and Introduction

On every Green Life Volunteers program you will receive an introduction or orientation before you begin your internship. For the 'Internship Green Life Volunteers' project, you will arrive in Puerto Jimenez the day before your internship begins. You will meet up with a Green Life Volunteers staff member in Puerto Jimenez and receive your orientation and introduction. Often this happens over lunch or dinner, or just for a coffee ☺ ! We will also show you around town, so you know where all the important amenities are, banks, supermarkets, and pharmacies etc.

During the orientation / introduction you will receive information about your internship, and Green

Life Volunteers staff will talk about general Costa Rican information, the Osa Peninsula, transportation, banks, food, and any other questions you may have before you begin at your internship. Since your work with staff members of Green Life Volunteers, there will be always someone who can help you during your stay. We take good customer service very seriously, and we want you to feel comfortable from the beginning till the end of your time in Costa Rica.

10. General Info about the Osa Peninsula and Puerto Jimenez

The local community of Puerto Jimenez is a largely rural, agricultural society with publicly funded basic education, comprising a workforce of moderately educated people. While the local service economy provides some employment opportunities, the majority of employment in this area is the tourist industry. The social fabric of the community is based on the extended family, where members often live and work together. Low wages and the seasonal nature of many jobs in this area require that families multi-generationally work to economically survive. Many local people are forced to live with their futures dimmed by the lack of high quality education and limited employment opportunities.

The state of public education on the Osa is an atmosphere of learning by memorization, leaving future generations of children ill prepared for the future, much of this due to poor government funding and lack of proper training for state teachers. Children are not given the opportunity to thrive, nor explore in a supported environment.

11. Volunteer extra-curricular activities and excursions

There is plenty to do around the Osa Peninsula, and we can help you organize activities around Puerto Jimenez during your internship. Unfortunately, any extra-curricular activities are not covered by Green Life Volunteers. Activities may be surfing, paddle boarding, Corcovado National Park hikes, Bird watching, Mangrove and Sunset kayaking, Dolphin Tours, Zip lining and much more. If there are several volunteers or interns in Puerto Jimenez at the same time, often they form groups to do some weekend activities together. Or you may decide that you would like to venture off on your own – either way, we will be there to help you to get things set up! Just ask us during or before your volunteer time!

12. General Information

Emergency Number and Cell Phone

Throughout your placement you will have the support and guidance of our experienced intern coordinators. You will be provided with a 24-hour emergency number that you can call from your accommodation and office in case you need to speak to a Green Life Volunteers staff. However, most of the time you will work closely with Janina Schan, the owner and manager of the organization. If you stay at a host families, they are very happy to lend you their phone to make quick local phone calls to Green Life Volunteer staff. Also Green Lifes Volunteers staff will call and “check in” on you throughout your stay – and we will make sure there are no miscommunications errors happening between you and your host family. We will also be in contact with you continuously, to make sure you

are doing ok at your job and to answer any questions you may have!

We advise you to BUY a local SIM card, if you have an unlocked phone. Cheap SIM cards for prepaid usage are available from 1000 Colones or 2US\$. The same amount is already on the card as credit. You can use it in any unlocked phone for international SIM cards. That way you can keep in touch and be reachable. If you do not have an unlocked phone or do not want to purchase one, you can always ask your intern supervisor to use their phone to contact us!

Accommodation

You will be living and eating with a Costa Rican host family or have your own apartment. At the host family you will be provided with a clean bed, bed-linens, and a shared bathroom. Sometimes you may be accommodated in shared dormitory type accommodation or in your own private room. It would be great if you bring your own towel, since towels are usually limited at host families. If you choose to stay in an apartment, you will have to bring your own bed-linens, towels, etc. If you are very concerned about mosquitoes, you may bring your own mosquito net to set it up. Most families and apartments do not have mosquito netting.

Meals

Food in Costa Rica is simple but delicious, and you will have access to a great variety of fruits, veggies, and dairy products in Costa Rica. Meals at your host family often include rice and beans; other common items include tortillas, salads, chicken, fish, pork, beef, pastas, soups, cereals, sandwiches, cheese, fruits, veggies and fresh- squeezed juices. You will help prepare meals with your host family, and you will experience a whole new way of cooking and preparing food. Vegetarians should have no problems with the diet in Costa Rica. Since Costa Rica is a tropical country, the variety of vegetables and fruits is fairly large.



Nonetheless, it is important to let us know about any dietary needs in advance so the family is notified and they can prepare accordingly. Those who follow a vegan diet should note that tofu is not readily available in Costa Rica, especially on the Osa Peninsula. You will be offered three meals a day usually breakfast is early around 7am, lunch between 12 and 1; and dinner between 6 and 7 p.m. You will have coffee and other snacks available at the project throughout the day as well – just talk to your host family about your needs. If you choose to have your own apartment, you will have to do the groceries by yourself. Keep in mind that the groceries can be quite expensive in Puerto Jimenez.

Laundry/cleaning

Laundry services ARE NOT part of the arrangements with your host family. You will have access to a place where you can wash your own laundry. Most families do not have washing machines or dryers. Normally laundry is done by hand and hung to dry. Some families might offer to do your laundry for an additional fee, which you will have to determine with your host family. Also, you may not have access to a washing machine or/and dryer when you have your own apartment. But you can do it by hand or bring it to a laundry service.

Telephone/internet access

In Puerto Jimenez Internet and Phone Signal is readily available. However, most host families still do not have WiFi or internet installed at the house. You may use WiFi and internet at the local internet café, or you can go to any of the restaurants and coffee shops who offer WiFi. If you have your own apartment, WiFi can be included or you can purchase it yourself with the help of Green Life Volunteers.

You may purchase your own cellphone SIM-card for an unlocked phone! That way you can use a prepaid card and also use internet/WiFi if you have a smartphone. The SIM cards are very cheaply available – it costs around 2000 Colones and you can buy it almost at any small Kiosk (Pulperia) in Puerto Jimenez or San Jose.

Weather/clothing

It usually rains at least once each day during the rainy season (May-November) even if it is just for 10-30 minutes. Puerto Jimenez is right at the ocean and the rainforest is not far – rain is pretty common during your project time. Daytime temperatures range from the mid 70's (Fahrenheit) when overcast and low-90's when the sun is out. The weather can change very quickly, storms can develop and rain may fall even though it was just sunny five minutes ago. However, it is mostly SUNNY all throughout the morning. So outdoor work will mainly be happening in the morning hours.

Humidity is very high and cotton clothes should be avoided because they never dry completely. During the summer months the humidity is a lot lower, the skies are clear and blue and it might be breeze and a bit dusty since the roads are gravel. We recommend quick-dry clothes and light breathable fabric. You will need some sandals for light day work, and stronger hiking boots or gum boots if you want to hike. Check our 'Packing List' at the end of this document for more details.

Spending money



There are two banks located in the center of Puerto Jimenez – they both have ATMs and access to USD and Colones. There is really no need for you to change money into Colones before you come to Costa Rica. Once you are in Costa Rica, and pay with your dollars, you will usually receive change back in Colones. You can take money of the ATMs with your credit card or debit card, so you do not need to carry a lot of cash with you. Please contact your bank and clear your card for international usage. Some banks have restrictions as to the amount of cash you can withdraw in a day. Find out what those limits are prior to departing. You should bring enough cash to carry you for at least the first week

until you have a chance to go to an ATM (sometimes you have to try a few ATMs before you get money). If you are bringing US Dollars you have to make sure that the bills are in good conditions, otherwise the bank would not accept them. You will need your passport (not a photocopy) in order to exchange dollars. Most places in Costa Rica would not take fifty or hundred dollar bills (with the

exception of some hotels). If you carry fifties and hundreds, you will have to go to the bank to exchange them.

Volunteer expectations

While you are working as an intern, your host family will provide you with accommodation, meals, and support. You will have to provide it yourself if you choose to have your own apartment. We will provide you with guidance and support in case you become ill, or need any other medical attention. You can contact our Green Life Volunteers Manager 24/7 on an emergency cell phone number (+506 8570 0710).

The project supervisors and staff members of Green Life Volunteers expect you to attend the program regularly, be on time, and behave consistently in ways that reflect well upon Green Life Volunteers and the other volunteers / interns. You are expected to dress according to local norms while in public and to treat people with kindness and respect appropriate to their age and social standing.

The same goes if you have a host family. In addition, Green Life Volunteers insist that interns avoid any contact with drugs and any culturally inappropriate activities relating to alcohol, especially in your host homes. Remember that some of these families have children and their culture is rather conservative. In case that an intern repeatedly behaved in ways that contradict the codes and conducts, we reserve the right to remove interns from a program.

We view the intern experience as a commitment that includes a willingness to overcome challenges of all kinds. In cases where interns are experiencing difficulties, we strongly encourage creative, collaborative solutions that allow the intern commitments to be completed. At the same time, we respect the ability and freedom of our interns to use their own judgments and understand that intern work only functions well when interns retain the will to participate fully and energetically.

Rule and guidelines

Please be aware of all the Green Life Volunteers rules in our Terms and Conditions. Green Life Volunteers expects volunteers and interns to respect the areas in which you are working as well as your project leaders, members of your host families, members of the community and other volunteers / interns. In case you are experiencing troubles or conflicts, we rather know sooner than later if there is anything that is not working for you and we want to make you as comfortable as possible. Having said that, we cannot stress enough that flexibility and being positive and open-minded will go a long way in ensuring an enjoyable intern experience.

Remember that you are in a Spanish speaking country. It is up to you to accommodate the new language and not impose your language on the locals. We always recommend to volunteers and interns that the more Spanish they speak, the better their experience will be. If you do not speak any Spanish or if you are a beginner, you have a perfect opportunity to improve your language skills during your internship and your stay at the host family. Ask us for options to take Spanish Classes before your internship – we offer very affordable and a great Spanish school program.

Important rules that you should be aware of are

- 🌿 Drinking is permitted ONLY while NOT on duty. Keep in mind that alcohol can negatively affect an intern's performance at the organization and you will be doing tasks that may be

dangerous to do when under the influence of alcohol. Drinking after hours is left to your discretion but be sensitive to the drinking habits of your host family. It is unacceptable to show up at your host family home intoxicated and sloppy!

- 🌱 Interns are permitted to smoke cigarettes but not inside the project's buildings or your host homes. You will have to agree on a place for you to smoke cigarettes where it does not molest anyone.
- 🌱 Please respect the facilities and the environment.
- 🌱 Conserve water and electricity as it is expensive and you do not want to burden your host family.
- 🌱 Respect the culture of the local community and ask for permission if you want to do things in their home that they do not normally do. Use common sense and treat people and their home with respect.
- 🌱 Be aware of mosquitoes, scorpions, spiders and other insects. Keep your bed clean and your bag zipped. Use your mosquitoes net if you brought one.
- 🌱 ALWAYS clean your feet from sand before you enter the house and specially the shower.
- 🌱 Since you are right on the beach, drains can easily clog due to sand being tracked to showers and drains.
- 🌱 Due to the heat and humidity, it is recommend that all interns shower and use deodorant every day. Personal hygiene is a must in this type of climate. Please do not put yourself in the situation that you have to be told to practice personal hygiene. The host families are usually very polite, and they would feel terrible to have to tell you that you "smell". Please be considerate!
- 🌱 Normally, toilet paper is deposited in baskets right next to the toilet. Do not flush toilet paper after using the bathroom! Again, drains in these rural areas and especially on the beach can clog easily and do not have the power to deal with toilet paper, female slips or tampons!! Always throw those items in the bin next to the toilet.
- 🌱 If you use, abuse or even come in contact with drugs, drug users, drug pushers or anyone remotely connected with drugs illegal or otherwise (other than for medical reasons), your placement will be terminated immediately, your visa will be withdrawn, and you will be deported from the country with no compensation. Never bring drugs into the project or host families (other than prescription drugs). THERE ARE NO EXEPTIONS TO THIS RULE, REGARDLESS OF THE REASONS. Please accept that while you are working on your project you do not consume illegal drugs.

Safety and precautions

Tourists are sometimes targets for pickpockets and thieves. The Osa Peninsula is a very safe place but places like San Jose or even smaller towns like Puerto Jimenez are not as safe. Please do not put yourself in a dangerous situation. Be cautious and use common sense. As a general rule, volunteers should not go off alone at nights, especially in large cities like San Jose.

The best way to store valuables is not to bring them with you if you go out but to leave them with your host family or in your apartment. Make sure whatever valuable you bring are in your bag and that you keep your bag close to you at all times. Money belts are a good investment before you travel to Costa Rica. Make sure if you get one that it is big enough that you can also fit your passport in it.

If you travel on public buses please ALWAYS stay close to your bag, or bring your valuables with you when you go to the bathroom. Do not even leave your valuables alone for a few minutes – it has happened to many volunteers before that they lost items on the bus.

Tips:

- ✿ Travel in pairs if you can (one can stay with the bags, the other goes to the bathroom)
- ✿ Use caution in unfamiliar locations
- ✿ Be very careful when traveling in San Jose. You are target for thieves. Keep your valuables in a safe place. Always keep an eye on your bag. Never leave your bag unattended when you go to the beach.
- ✿ Photocopy your passport and important documents. Do not carry your original passport on you.
- ✿ Carry your money and passport (or copy) inside a money belt on your body. It is the safest place.
- ✿ Avoid flashy dresses. Never wear expensive jewelry, etc. while traveling. Do not carry all your credit cards and all cash with you. If there is not a safety box where you are, use a money belt or make several trips to the bank
- ✿ In a lot of areas in Costa Rica swimming can be dangerous because of rip tides. Please inquire FIRST before swimming at a deserted beach. Do not go swimming alone, have someone watch you at the beach.

Medical facilities

The closest medical facility is a clinic on the Osa Peninsula in Puerto Jimenez. The doctors in Costa Rica are well educated, often speak English, and are able to take care of most of your medical needs. In case of a more serious medical situation, there is a bigger hospital in Golfito, where patients can be transferred, or if a more serious situation occurs, participants can fly to San Jose.

Recommended packing list

- ✿ Your own laptop
- ✿ Passport and passport photocopy
- ✿ Your own towel
- ✿ Debit card and credit card for any emergency
- ✿ Camera and batteries (you can find batteries here but they are more expensive)
- ✿ Small notebook and pen
- ✿ Headlamp or Torch (we have power outages, and streets are often not well lit)
- ✿ Alarm clock and batteries
- ✿ Personal medical first aid (Or medication you may need – it is remote in your location and you may not be able to buy what you need, so bring it from your home country).
- ✿ Clothing for a warm tropical climate, preferably non-cotton, that you are not worried about ruining
- ✿ Sturdy shoes for hiking or visiting a project
- ✿ Waterproof sunscreen (the sun rays are powerful)
- ✿ Sunglasses
- ✿ Forms of entertainment: books, games, music, guitar, paints, surfing equipment, etc.
- ✿ Sandals and comfortable walking shoes (that dry fast)

- 🌱 Lightweight disposable rain poncho
- 🌱 Sweater for colder rainy weather and when in San Jose
- 🌱 Swimwear
- 🌱 BUG Repellent
- 🌱 Water proof & secure bag for documents
- 🌱 Money belt
- 🌱 Binoculars for wildlife watching?
- 🌱 Positive attitude
- 🌱 Mosquito Netting

To apply to the project NOW please click on [THIS link](#) and apply now! After applying we will be in touch with you shortly!

Thank you and we are looking forward to working with you!
Your Green Life Volunteers Team

