

Unearth Nicaragua: Students Engage with the Local Community

GENERAL OVERVIEW:

Students spend eight days immersed in Nicaraguan history, culture, cuisine and service through meaningful experiential learning with Unearth the World's nonprofit partner. Travelers engage in cross-cultural exchange, service, day trips, Spanish lessons and guided reflection with the goal of breaking down barriers, educating, and promoting global leaders.

PROJECT OVERVIEW:

Unearth the World's partner in Nicaragua is a Sustainable Eco-hotel and Spanish school. This partner stimulates the local economy, brings responsible tourism, jobs, and sustained income into the community. The profits from the Spanish school are used to fund various local initiatives like school libraries, an organic farm, reforestation project, after school programming and a school working with children with disabilities.

This organization has created sustainable employment by hiring more than 60 local people as staff at the eco-hotel. Over the past 7 years, they have pumped approximately \$500,000 into the community which has improved quality of life and been used to fund many local community projects. These projects have provided 26 families with clean water and vegetable gardens, allowed 15 disabled children to go to school, improved infrastructure at several primary schools serving close to 1,000 students, and rescued close to a hundred animals (cats, dogs, horses, birds and monkeys).

ACCOMMODATIONS:

Students stay at the group study center, El Piscacho. El Piscacho has two large dorm rooms, with approximately 8 bunks in each, as well as three private chaperone rooms. There are latrine toilets, hot water showers, and a private kitchen and cook.

EXAMPLE ITINERARY:

Day 1: Arrival

Pick up at Managua airport by driver. Private transfer to eco-hotel. Hotel orientation and downtime/opportunity to explore the town.

Day 2

Breakfast. Morning service at one of the community projects (detailed list of available projects below). Lunch. 2 hours of Spanish lessons. Participate in an afternoon discussion on environmental issues facing Nicaragua, and deforestation in the area. Dinner at the eco-hotel and guided reflection.

Day 3

Breakfast. Morning service. Lunch. 2 hours of Spanish lessons. Afternoon trip to Cana Onda -land that is being reforested by the eco-hotel - for a hike. Dinner and guided reflection.

Day 4

Breakfast. Morning service. Lunch. 2 hours of Spanish lessons. Evening trip to hike/tour the Masaya Volcano. Dinner and guided reflection.

Day 5

Breakfast. Morning service. Lunch. 2 hours of Spanish lessons. Dinner and time for reflection and relaxation.

Day 6

Breakfast. Morning service. Lunch. 2 hours of Spanish lessons. Afternoon closing session. Dinner and downtime. Salsa dancing lessons.

Day 7

Breakfast at eco-hotel. Private transport to Granada. Private guide will lead tour/activities around Granada in the morning. Lunch in Granada. Free afternoon to explore the city. Private transfer back to eco-hotel. Dinner and downtime.

Day 8

Depart for US. Private transport to MGA airport.

SERVICE OPTIONS:

- Los Pipitos: Work alongside paid teachers to assist in games and activities for children with disabilities.
- Wildlife and Animal Rescue: Volunteers help caretakers with a range of tasks to care for rescued animals.
- Ruben Dario Primary School: Volunteers assist the librarian in the library or a teacher in a mainstream classroom to read with children or assist with homework
- Cultural Center de Karen: Work along side Karen to run her home-based daycare doing arts and crafts and playing games.
- La Reserva (Nature Reserve): Volunteers can work in the vegetable, medicinal plant and butterfly gardens. Tasks include gardening and basic construction.
- El Piscacho Community Center: Work with a local teacher to help children learn English, improve reading and comprehension, draw, paint, and play games.
- Los Martinez Reading Corner: Volunteers help younger students with tactile activities, or read and act out stories with the older students.

INCLUSIONS:

Pre-trip training (Unearth the World's 5-part Global service-learning curriculum)

Pre-trip logistical support

All accommodations (Eco-hotel double rooms)

All in-country transportation (Airport pick-up/drop off)

All meals (excluding day trip to Granada)

Volunteer projects and intentional cultural exchange

Post-trip support/coaching (led by Unearth the World)

Evening excursion to Masaya Volcano

Environmental Lecture and Trip to Canada Onda

Salsa Lessons

Day trip to Granada and guide

Nicaraguan History Lesson with local Historian