

Costa Rica Internship:

Career Exploration in Wildlife and Rainforest Research



Global
Leadership
Adventures

OVERVIEW

Your Costa Rica internship begins with four days at the Exotic Animal Rescue Center learning about conservation work and assisting with over 25 species of animals. On this journey you will experience national parks, visit an indigenous community to learn about their craft, and join forces with a traditional “Tico” farming family to learn about the life and culture of your new community all while contributing to meaningful conservation research projects.

GLA Interns will also contribute to local non-profit conservation projects, including sea turtle conservation, research and maintenance of a neotropical butterfly garden, reforestation projects, and large mammal camera tracking projects.



INTERNSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

- Engage in hands-on wildlife and biodiversity assessments and data collection
- Contribute directly to local conservation projects
- Collaborate closely with seasoned biologists and expert field staff, learning from their expertise and gaining insights into the intricacies of wildlife conservation
- Embrace responsible and sustainable approaches to conservation, discovering the delicate balance between nature preservation and local community engagement
- Experience the breathtaking beauty of the Osa Peninsula's rainforests, forging connections with nature and like-minded peers while making lasting memories
- Earn a total of 60 internship hours throughout the course of your time on-program

INTERNSHIP SNAPSHOT

21-Day Program

JUL 07 – JUL 27, 2024

Tuition: \$6,999

PSU College Credit Add-on: \$750

Student/Staff Ratio: 6 to 1

Total Internship Hours: 60

- Contact Hours: 36
- Professional Development Hours: 12
- Self Study: 12

For Ages: 14-18

Language of Instruction: English

Lodging: Ecolodge

Airport: SJO Arrival (anytime), SJO departure (anytime)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The outcomes of this internship are related to five main learning objectives:

- Gain a deeper understanding of your goals and your professional growth areas, as well as a deeper understanding of Costa Rica and the field of conservation sciences
- Attain knowledge and understanding of recent trends, terminology and case studies within the wildlife conservation field
- Learn to recognize and articulate multiple perspectives within a larger social context.
- Learn to critically analyze quantitative and qualitative sources of information to make informed opinions.
- Learn to observe and analyze real places and situations where impacts and results can be interpreted and applied within context

THE GLA DIFFERENCE



The GLA Internship is an experiential career development internship where interns gain experience working in person with a host organization from around the world. The 2030 United Nations Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs) serves as the framework for discussions and the self-study coursework for the interns.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The 2030 United Nations Agenda for Sustainable Development outlines 17 Sustainable Development Goals addressing social, economic, and environmental challenges.

GLA interns will use this as a framework for their discussions and course studies, gaining an understanding of the interconnectedness of these issues and how to work towards a sustainable future.

Interns will explore topics related to sustainable development and wildlife conservation by exploring the following SDGs:

Global Leadership Adventures supports the Sustainable Development Goals

Internship Focus Area

Theme: Environmental Stewardship



Internship Partner Snapshot

The Osa Institute is a non-profit organization that is sponsored by donations and utilizes Osa Discovery & Lodge as a research center for data collection, laboratory for data analysis, work space, and center to develop projects specific to educational goals including comprehensive biological monitoring, focusing on fields such as Entomology, Ornithology, Mammals, Herpetology, Marine Conservation, and Agriculture. Osa Institute also utilizes the Community Center to offer classes to the community in a range of fields.

Osa Discovery serves as an international education and experiential provider for these groups of educators and students, aiming to elevate the overall experience of the group, fostering a favorable environment that encourages exploration, cooperation, and the creation of lasting memories amidst the wonders of the Osa Peninsula.



SAMPLE ITINERARY: DAILY BREAKDOWN

Actual schedule of activities will vary by internship session.

The information detailed here is typical for what you can expect to experience; however, service work and activities vary depending upon the needs of our local community partners, various celebrations and customs, as well as the weather and specific needs of the student group.

DAY 1: WELCOME TO COSTA RICA!

Fly into San José (SJO) where staff will be waiting to greet you with open arms. Meet up with your fellow travelers and get acquainted with your new internship family. We will spend the evening getting to know each other and going over an important safety orientation.

DAY 2-4: ORIENTATION & EXOTIC ANIMAL RESCUE SERVICE

Wake up to the sounds of the wildlife, and get ready for an extensive orientation to go over group objectives, learning and internship objectives, and helpful hints to help get accustomed to the culture. Break into Mentor groups and get to know each other better with icebreakers and group activities before heading out to our first day of explorations.

Our first day we will meet the leaders of the Exotic Animal Rescue Center and dive head first into wildlife conservation work. Most of these animals have been brought in because they have been affected negatively in some way by humans. But all animals have different stories of how they came to be with the sanctuary and no two stories are the same. The animals at this sanctuary are part of a rescue - rehabilitate - release program (when applicable), which is a trait that sets this specific sanctuary apart from others. The goal is not to keep the animals at the sanctuary, but instead to rehabilitate them to return to the wild. In the evening, we will do our primary leadership anchor activity and get context for conservation in Costa Rica.

DAYS 5: MANUEL ANTONIO & CROCODILE BRIDGE VISIT

We will stop at the famous Crocodile Bridge of the Tarcoles River to see these AMAZING creatures. Next, hike and explore the first National Park of Costa Rica, Manuel Antonio. Spend a day hiking and swimming in Manuel Antonio National Park where we will encounter monkeys and perhaps even see a sloth! In the evening, we will reflect with your fellow GLA students and Mentors on the impact of your time in the national park, your leadership journey and our cross-cultural experiences.

DAY 6: INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY VISIT

As we journey even deeper down the Pacific Coast and make our way to Osa Peninsula, we will take time to learn about and visit an indigenous community. Learn about their culture, dress, history, art, life-style, cuisine, dance, and more first-hand, a GLA experience unique to this specific internship!

DAY 7-13: OSA INSTITUTE ORIENTATION & INTRO TO RESEARCH PROJECTS

The Golfo Dulce is considered a tropical fjord and an extremely rare biome. The area has seventeen total protected reserves which amount to three percent of Costa Rica's land area. The area contains 50% of the flora and fauna of Costa Rica, and receives five to six meters of rain per year. The ecosystem has two parts: a marine ecosystem and a terrestrial ecosystem. You will have the chance to experience both.

Meet up with organization leaders to learn about how you'll be helping with community projects. Our work will be physical and important. We'll break up into teams for our research projects that will focus on Morpho Butterflies, protection of sea turtle populations, or large mammal tracking with jungle camera traps! You'll also use this time to practice communicating in Spanish with our local counterparts.

We'll go deeper into our learning about environmental stewardship and learn about Costa Rica's global Initiatives in this realm. Support local conservation initiatives including infrastructure building, beach clean ups and other tasks as needed by the local leaders of the community organizations.

DAY 14: GUIDED HIKE TO ENTRANCE OF CORCOVADO NATIONAL PARK, WATERFALL VISIT, & BEACH AFTERNOON

Take a break from your research projects today! We leave bright and early morning to have the best chance of seeing wildlife. Walking up the fastest and safest trail to the entrance of the park. The hike takes approximately 4 hours. Roughly 3% of the western hemisphere's biodiversity resides in Corcovado National Park.

As you venture into this natural space, often referred to as the Amazon of Costa Rica, you'll learn all about the ecology from a bilingual guide. Walk along the trails searching for diverse fauna and flora, breaking for breakfast and lunch.

If the natural conditions (time and weather) allow it, a second walk will take us down another trail to an epic waterfall. We will spend the rest of the day enjoying on the beach.





DAY 15: VISIT A TRADITIONAL TICO FARM

We'll try our hand at cooking the local cuisine, play games, learn local dance and have time to enjoy our natural surroundings. This is another amazing opportunity to learn from locals about their culture, learn about how to make coconut milk, cacao, traditional breakfast or lunch and homemade tortillas while learning about organic agriculture, wildlife and more.

DAY 16-17: FINAL RESEARCH & PRESENTATION PREP

After a few days exploring your local surroundings it's time to get back to work! Spend these days wrapping up your research projects and preparing your final presentation to share all that you've learned on this epic journey.

DAY 18: ADVENTURE DAY! ZIP LINING

What trip to Costa Rica is complete without a zip lining adventure! Soar through the jungle canopy and get a bird's eye view of the forest you have worked so hard to protect over the past two weeks.

DAY 19: PROJECT PRESENTATION & CELEBRATION

We will do our final project presentations to respected biologists and naturalists, take time for reflections and leadership activities as our 3-week journey comes to an end. We'll enjoy a celebratory dinner and reflect on both our accomplishments and learnings.

DAY 20: JOURNEY BACK TO SAN JOSÉ

More adventure! We'll rise early and make the long journey back to the center of the country, near the capitol San José, and have the opportunity to return to the start of our program and say goodbye to all of the exotic animals. Spend the evening reflecting on your journey, your new friends, and maybe even your new passion!

DAY 21: DEPARTURES

After breakfast and final goodbyes, as we head to the airport where GLA staff will check students in for their journey home. ¡Adiós!



NOTICE ON INTERNSHIP UPDATES

Every year brings new and exciting opportunities for experiences we can offer students on our programs. While this program is being planned for 2024, some activities or details may change between now and the program start date. Please note that references from past participants and previously published information may not accurately reflect every aspect of this program. Refer to the sample itinerary above or to the GLA website for the most up-to-date version of program activities, and please note that further updates may be made between now and the program start date.

TRAVELING TO COSTA RICA

GLA HOME BASE | GLA operates multiple home bases for this program. Each one is an eco-lodge or small hotel, steps from the beach with modest and typical amenities and a final one near the airport for departures.

FOOD | Costa Rica is known for its simple diet of rice, beans and a side of meat. The food at Home Base will reflect the traditional dietary staples of the people in Costa Rica. It will be simple, but fresh and healthy and include delicious, locally-grown fruits.

CLIMATE | Although summer is the middle of the rainy season, Costa Rica typically experiences a mini dry season in July. Rainfall decreases significantly for three or four weeks, especially in the northern Pacific. This makes for hot, sunny days and cooling evening rains.

WE'RE HERE TO HELP

Contact Us

Want to learn more about Global Leadership Adventures and our available programs? Our Admissions Team has expertise and insights into our slate of program offerings, and we're happy to answer any questions you might have. We have collectively visited or staffed many of our GLA programs around the world, and we have advice to share on everything from getting your travel documents together to what a typical day on a program is like. Call us at 1-858-771-0645 any time during office hours for assistance.

Enroll Now

We encourage you to enroll on your 1st choice program as early as you can! In fact, our most popular programs fill early every year, and many students end up putting off the quick and easy application process only to end up on the waiting list. The best way to ensure that you save your spot is to place your deposit and apply early. You can easily enroll online at www.experiencegla.com/enroll.



CURRICULUM & MERITS

Complete a core curriculum with your peers and through the guidance of your internship supervisor. Build your personal competitive edge, as part of a cohort of student interns working in partnership with our global nonprofit partner in Costa Rica. Create a portfolio from completed project work to enhance your college application or future career resume.

By completing this travel internship you will earn:

- A professional letter of recommendation
- A certificate of completion (60 Hours)
- Community service hours
- Relevant experience for college applications and essays

Global Leadership Adventures can also provide any supporting documentation and serve as an organization of record, should you want to earn college credits for your internship.

OPTIONAL COLLEGE CREDIT

Global Leadership Adventures is extremely proud to partner with Portland State University, based in Portland, Oregon, to offer college credit for our student interns who successfully complete all requirements for the internship.

Student interns are welcome to enroll in the internship for Portland State University credit. This internship course curriculum is fully accredited for U.S. undergraduate credit through PSU. Credits are transferable to other colleges and universities, though please note that it is the responsibility of each intern to confirm with their university of intent that these quarter credits will be accepted at the institution.

Getting college credit during high school has so many benefits. It can help with earning scholarships for college and even improve your chance of admission into your university of choice.

The additional fee to earn four quarter credits from Portland State University is \$750.00. Though recommended, you are not required to purchase the college credit add-on as it is 100% optional!

ABOUT GLOBAL LEADERSHIP ADVENTURES

Global Leadership Adventures was founded in 2003 by Fred Swaniker, a native of Ghana, TED Fellow and educational entrepreneur whose work has been praised by Barack Obama. Born as a global extension of the revolutionary African Leadership Academy, Global Leadership Adventures now operates programs centered around leadership, sustainable community service projects, and meaningful travel across Africa, Asia, Europe or the Americas. Through life-changing adventures, we strive to inspire the next generation to realize their potential to transform the world and their role in it

LEADERSHIP

Global Leadership Adventures started as an educational institute, so we continue to think and act like educators—not tour operators—as we deliver life-changing programs. We intentionally weave a leadership curriculum into the daily experience on our programs. Through group discussion, meaningful service, workshops, speakers and excursions, staff guide students to reflect on program events through the lens of leadership, and celebrate outstanding examples of leaders they encounter in the local community. Lending this context to the experience creates opportunities for students to dig deep into their vision, purpose and knowledge of themselves and the world.

GLA HAS BEEN FEATURED IN:



OUR EXPECTATIONS

Be present

Our mission at GLA is “to inspire the next generation to realize their potential to transform the world and their role in it.” To that end, we expect GLA students to maintain high standards of personal behavior and to be open-minded. The culture may be different, sometimes shockingly so. GLA will challenge students as they are expected to work hard and be present physically and mentally for all activities. We also ask students to take a step back from regular use of technology - particularly their smartphones - so as to maximize their engagement with the program and their fellow participants. Students may get hot, dirty and bug-bitten along the way, but their contribution can transform the community. The goal is for each student to return home having had a life-changing experience.

No tolerance

GLA has a no-tolerance policy towards drugs, alcohol, tobacco and disruptive behavior. Those who violate or are suspected of violating this policy will be immediately dismissed from the program at the sole discretion of GLA staff.

Community-Led experiences

GLA makes every effort to offer thoughtfully crafted programs for teens and young adults. Detailed planning and exhaustive communications with partners are indispensable parts of our program development process. However, occasionally service and activities are adjusted from session to session, due to weather, changing needs of our local community partners and/or various cultural celebrations and customs. We expect participants to be open-minded and flexible, willing to embrace the experience when plans change. GLA makes every effort to communicate adjustments to students and families with advance notice. We expect you to be open-minded and flexible.

Mentorship

GLA is not a therapy program. Our staff are highly skilled, professional, caring and fun, but they are not licensed therapists. GLA programs can be physically and emotionally demanding, and applicants should be in good physical and mental health.

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