

SERVICE LEARNING TRIP
SAN JOSE
ITINERARY



Dear MEDLIFers,

Thank you for joining the MEDLIFE Movement via a Service Learning Trip with us! Here at MEDLIFE, our mission is to build a worldwide Movement empowering low-income individuals in their fight for equal access to healthcare, education, and a safe home. As an SLT participant in San Jose, Costa Rica, you are joining that worldwide Movement!

The following is a sample travel plan for you to review. Please go over it before your trip and don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions. Thank you for joining the Movement, and we can't wait to see you in San Jose, Costa Rica!

Overview:

Known for its breathtaking landscapes and rich biodiversity, Costa Rica is often seen as a tropical paradise. Yet beyond the postcard views, many families — especially in rural and peri-urban areas — continue to face systemic challenges such as limited access to quality education, healthcare, and stable employment. As of 2024, around 21.8% of Costa Rican households were living in poverty, a reminder that inequality persists even in countries celebrated for progress and sustainability.

Through a MEDLIFE Service Learning Trip in Costa Rica, you'll gain a deeper understanding of these realities while working alongside local leaders on sustainable, community-driven initiatives. Projects may include improving educational spaces, restoring local environments, or strengthening community infrastructure.

You will also help the tourism industry bounce back by exploring the country's dazzling natural wonders! As one of the world's most biodiverse countries and a leading destination in ecotourism, Costa Rica is a nature lover's paradise. It is also a hotspot for adventure travel, with adrenaline-pumping activities such as zip lining and kayaking!

Join us on a Service Learning Trip to San Jose, Costa Rica to help families recover from the pandemic and learn about poverty and sustainability. You will work hand-in-hand with the community to improve their living conditions. Register today!

Highlights of the Week:

- Learn about the challenges faced by low-income communities.
- Gain experience volunteering on a service project.
- Build bridges across cultures by connecting with community members.
- Deepen your understanding of sustainability and the environment.

Key Pillars

- **Service:** By volunteering on a Community Empowerment Trip, you'll directly bring support to the marginalized communities you visit.
- **Environment:** This trip will take you to a leading destination in ecotourism, and you may have the opportunity to volunteer on a reforestation project.
- **Education:** Learn about the systemic factors that have shaped the realities faced by families. Participate in educational discussions about sustainability and conservation.
- **Life-changing experiences:** Through eye-opening experiences and building human connections, a Community Empowerment Trip will renew your passion for building a world free from the constraints of poverty.

Itinerary in Brief:

DAY

1

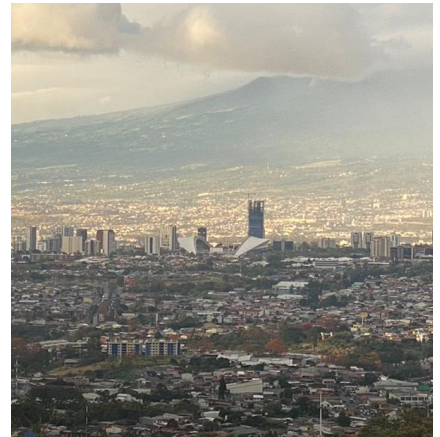
Saturday

Arrival to San Jose

Arrive at San Jose airport (SJO) between 9:00am and 2:00pm. A MEDLIFE representative will meet you at the airport and escort you to your accommodation. You will have time to relax, settle in, and then head out to explore. Meals aren't included today, but you can enjoy a tasty dinner at one of the nearby restaurants.



Overnight
San Jose MEDLIFE Hostel



DAY

2

Sunday

Welcome Meeting & Leisure Day

At 9:00 a.m. we will host a welcome meeting where everyone can gather together and we will cover what to expect for the week and review safety precautions. After that, you have the rest of the day at your leisure! Meals aren't included today, but you can enjoy a tasty dinner at one of the nearby restaurants.



Overnight
San Jose MEDLIFE Hostel



DAY

3

Monday

Reality Tour

On a MEDLIFE Reality Tour, volunteers join MEDLIFE staff in the field to learn about our partner communities and the challenges they face daily. It is often our volunteers' first exposure to extreme poverty, making it one of the most impactful experiences of their trip. The Reality Tour's main goal is to introduce volunteers to the area's culture and history. This lays the groundwork for cultural awareness and sensitivity, which are incredibly important when you're serving communities in another country.



Overnight
San Jose MEDLIFE Hostel



DAY

4-6

Tuesday to Thursday

Mobile Clinics

Tuesday through Thursday, you will support Mobile Clinics in the various communities around San Jose. Each day, the Mobile Clinic will be held in a different community. You will wake up at 6 am for breakfast and leave the hotel by 7 am to travel to the community by bus. Bus rides may be anywhere from 30 minutes to two hours.

Upon arriving in the community, you will unpack all medical supplies from the bus and meet the health professionals you will be assisting that day. After unloading supplies, volunteers will report to the Mobile Clinic station that you have been assigned to that morning. A brief training session will be provided by the health professionals at each station, and the clinic will begin accepting patients between 8-9 am. Patients will first visit the Triage Station, where you will assist in taking each patient's vital signs. From there, patients will listen to educational talks provided by MEDLIFE nurses in the Education Station, while volunteers hand out educational pamphlets. Patients will then move to either the General Medicine, Nutrition, or OBGYN stations to receive medical consultation. Within all medical consultation stations, volunteers will have the opportunity to shadow the physician and learn how the physician works with the patient to evaluate the patient's symptoms, provide a diagnosis, and devise a treatment plan. Finally, patients will be directed to the Pharmacy Station where you will assist nurses to fill the prescriptions that patients have been given during their medical consultations.

Participants stay at their assigned station until they are relieved for lunch by their Trip Leader at around 11:30 am. Take a break and eat lunch on the bus before you report to your second station assignment



for the afternoon. The Mobile Clinic will close anywhere from 1-3 pm, depending on the number of patients that day. As many as 100+ patients may pass through the medical clinic throughout the day!

In the evening, volunteers will meet in the hotel conference room at 5 pm for interactive post-clinic activities before eating dinner at 6 pm. On the days when no post-clinic activity is scheduled, volunteers will be free to explore the city before and after dinner.



Overnight
San Jose MEDLIFE Hostel

DAY

7

Friday

Development Project

On this day you'll work hand-in-hand with locals on a community development project such as a home renovation, well construction, or bathroom complex. Development projects can vary, depending on community needs. We'll leave the hostel at 7:30 am to head to the project site. Remember to wear clothes you don't mind getting dirty as you might be involved in messy activities, like mixing cement, painting walls, and other manual labor activities. After the project has been completed, take part in an inauguration with the community to celebrate all that you've achieved!

We'll return to the hostel around 2:30 pm-4:00 pm for a short reflection and debrief with the MEDLIFE team to wrap up the week.



Overnight
San Jose Hostel

DAY

8

Saturday

Optional Day Trip

Journey through Costa Rica's stunning highlands on a day filled with flavor and discovery. Visit Doka Coffee Estate for a traditional breakfast and a behind-the-scenes look at the art of coffee making. Continue to Poás Volcano National Park to see its impressive crater and the peaceful Botos Lagoon, then head to La Paz Waterfall Gardens to enjoy lunch, rainforest trails, and breathtaking waterfalls. It's the perfect mix of nature, culture, and adventure.



DAY

9

Sunday

Departure

Depart San Jose anytime between 12:00 pm and 6:00 pm.

INCLUDED

- ✓ 8 nights dorm room accommodation
- ✓ Breakfast, lunch, and dinner from Monday to Friday
- ✓ Transportation to and from the airport (within the established schedule), and to SLT activities
- ✓ English-speaking Trip Leader
- ✓ Safety equipment (including face masks)

NOT INCLUDED

- ✓ Flights
- ✓ Tips



- ✓ Pre or post-trip accommodation
- ✓ Optional excursions
- ✓ Weekend meals

Travel Advisory

All volunteers require a valid passport. Passports must be valid for at least 6 months beyond the return date, and we highly recommend a minimum validity of 7 months. You can register for the MEDLIFE SLT without a passport, but you will need to submit the info at least 2 weeks before the trip. You must ensure your passport validity before departure.

Visit your doctor: MEDLIFE does not require any vaccinations however, you should follow all CDC requirements and any advice from your medical professional.

If you're not a U.S. or Canadian citizen, you may need a visa to enter certain countries. It is your responsibility to determine if you need a visa and make appropriate arrangements.