



Animal rescue center in Costa Rica



General informations

This is your ideal place if you love animals and want to help them to live free in the wild. This animal rescue center is located on the Caribbean coast of Costa Rica. It is a temporary or permanent home for ill, injured, and orphaned animals. With a focus on monkeys, sloths, other mammals, birds, and reptiles; the center provides veterinary services, round-the-clock care and comfort to animals that would otherwise be unable to survive in the rainforest or the sea of the Caribbean.

This center has the actual rescue center were lots of activities are going on and many visitors are received. This is a good place to be interactive with both the animals as well as people, working in a team and obtaining lots of experiences. The center as well has a property of 49 hectares of primary forest (an area where there are no visible indications of human activity); this untouched property is the ideal place to locally release many of the animals as it gives them the best chance of a clean and naturally safe environment with little chance of interaction with humans in the future.

With the staff and volunteers living on site, it is possible to monitor the release process, and ensure that potential releases are safe and have sufficient food until they are truly ready for independence.

Conditions

- PUERTO VIEJO
- MINIMUM 4 WEEKS
- CONSERVATION PROJECT
- NO SPANISH NEEDED
- +18 YEARS OLD

What to consider

- Projects start on Mondays and end on Sundays, you need to be at the Center the Sunday before.

- Longer stay is available upon request, bear in mind that 3 months is the valid time for the volunteer to stay in the country without needing a Visa
- Available all year round
- Max of 25 volunteers at the same time
- There is a private clinic in Puerto Viejo town and the nearest hospital is approx. 1,5 hour drive
- Travel/Health insurance is mandatory
- Tuberculosis test is mandatory
- Internet connection signal is not stable and can be poor

Meals: volunteers have the kitchen at the center at disposal to prepare their meals and they are responsible for buying their own ingredients. Near the center there are supermarkets and groceries available about 15 minutes away (walking distance).

There are bikes available for rental, this is a great way to move around in the town. Volunteers need to be responsible, disciplined, and able to work in team, flexible, patient, and pro-active

Volunteer activities

Since the Rescue centers offer tours to tourists throughout the week and the animals need constant help, volunteers work 5 days a week, but weekends are not necessary. In the center the work starts normally at 07.30am and ends around 04.00pm (this is an estimate as it ends when the work is finished, which could be earlier, but also later).

On Sunday you will arrive at the Center (shuttle from San Jose to Puerto Viejo upon request). You will meet other volunteers that are already there and some of the staff. You can use the rest of the day to visit the town and buy your ingredients for the coming days.

Volunteer training begins every Monday morning at 11:00 am (attendance is mandatory!). You will be formally introduced to the other volunteers and join a tour of 90 min of the Center with tourists. After it, you can have a quick break to lunch and then you will have a meeting with the Volunteer Manager. You will get all the information you need to fully start your volunteering the next day.

During the following weeks, the work can include a broad range of tasks, from doing the dishes and cleaning up after the animals (which is a constant!), to building and remodeling enclosures, or baby-sitting a new arrival to ease the stress of their new environment.

Your task as a volunteer :

- **Hands-On Maintenance:** Help keep our facilities in great shape, ensuring a safe and cozy environment for our animal residents.
- **Pathway Patrol:** Tidy up pathways and areas around animal enclosures to keep everything neat and organized.
- **Diet Prep and Daily Care:** Assist with preparing diets and daily care routines alongside our dedicated animal keepers, gaining hands-on experience in animal husbandry.

- **Visitor Guide:** Share your passion for wildlife by guiding visitors through the sanctuary and sharing amazing stories about our animal residents.
- **Training Sessions:** Join in training to learn more about animal behaviors and care techniques, enhancing your knowledge and skills.
- **Compassionate Care:** Provide loving care to our animals through feeding, monitoring, and engaging with them, helping create a nurturing environment where they can thrive.

2 days a week are free in the afternoon/evening (not necessarily consecutive days and/or weekends)

Your stay at the project ends on Sunday when you will say goodbye. If needed we can coordinate your transport back to San Jose, or other destinations of Costa Rica.

WHAT TO CONSIDER WHAT TO DO IN YOUR FREE TIME

On your free days, you are free to discover the magical places around Puerto Viejo, like the breathtaking beaches, the **Cahuita Natural Park** hike, **waterfalls**, practice surf, tropical massages, white water rafting tours and many others like:

- Explore the **Gandoca-Manzanillo Wildlife Reserve:** Hike, kayak, and snorkel in the tropical waters, or discover protected beaches where sea turtles lay their eggs.
- **Relax at the beach:** Visit Playa Cocles, Playa Chiquita, or Punta Uva, al just a short tuk-tuk ride away. Think coconut palms, golden sands, and pure paradise Visit Playa Cocles, Playa Chiquita, or Punta Uva, al just a short tuk-tuk ride away. Think coconut palms, golden sands, and pure paradise
- **Snorkel the reefs:** Dive into the clear waters around Puerto Viejo and explore vibrant coral reefs teeming with colorful marine life.
- **Take a trip to Cahuita:** Just an hour away, this charming beach town offers stunning coastal views, a national park with shady hiking trails, and playful monkeys.
- **Enjoy fresh seafood:** Treat yourself to a delicious meal packed with Caribbean flavors and celebrate an evening off in the sunshine.

LOCATION

The institute is 4 KM from Puerto Viejo and 220 from San Jose, Costa Rica's capital. By shuttle/bus it takes around 4 hours from San Jose to reach Puerto Viejo.

Puerto Viejo is a much-loved beach town perched on the shore of the Caribbean in the south of Costa Rica. With a laid-back, lively Creole culture and reggae music permanently drifting through the air, it's somewhere very easy to get beautifully stuck for a while. The vibe is bohemian through and through, with surfers, hippies and locals all living together peacefully in the sunshine. Expect tie-dye, dreadlocks and a big-hearted welcome. The Creole influence comes from the Jamaican immigrants that arrived in Costa Rica to work on the railways in 1900, and the flavour of Puerto Viejo is firmly rasta. The nearby Gandoca-Manzanillo Wildlife Reserve offers great opportunities for hiking, kayaking and snorkeling in the tropical waters.

There are also several protected beaches where sea turtles come ashore to lay their eggs. Though the beaches in town are not the best for swimming and sunbathing, head east and you'll find golden stretches of sand, complete with swaying palms and turquoise waters. The nicest are Playa Cocles, Playa Chiquita and Punta Uva, both just a short tuk-tuk ride away.

Slightly further afield the tiny beach town of Cahuita situated right next to a stunning national park with the same name is a great place to relax. Due to its tropical climate, Puerto Viejo gets its fair share of rain, making the weather slightly unpredictable on a year-round basis. However, the showers are always followed by bright bouts of sunshine and they keep the surrounding forests lush and green.

ACCOMMODATION

You will be lodged at the project just steps away from the rescue center.

The rescue dorms:

- 6 shared dorm rooms downstairs (rooms are always shared, but try to avoid mixed rooms).
- Each room offers 4 single beds with quality mattresses, individual reading light and plugs to charge electronic devices and a large capacity lock (bring your own lock).
- Each dorm room has its own unsuited bathroom with 1 toilet and 1 hot water shower.
- Bed linen & towels (not for the beach) included.
- Wi-Fi
- Cleaning service.
- Laundry machines with additional cost (approx. 8 USD per load).
- Common area to relax and share with other volunteers.