

Global Creek
@
Jo Jo's Jungle Retreat

Volunteer Program Introduction

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Introduction

Global Creek

Who We Are

Global Creek at Jo Jo's Jungle Retreat is a new environmental education and life-learning retreat centre on the Caribbean coast of Costa Rica, borne in the area of Puerto Viejo de Talamanca in 2008. We provide a jungle oasis where people can come to experience the peace and tranquility of Costa Rican nature in a luxurious natural setting whilst learning to live a more sustainable and harmonious life with the earth and oneself. Global Creek at Jo Jo's Jungle Retreat is a union of a number of different concepts seamlessly merged into one living - and life-giving - force: a luxurious jungle retreat and vacation center; an environmental education center; a yoga and meditation spa; a community education center; and a model for environmental sustainability and social responsibility.

Our retreat centre combines elegance, class and luxury with a 100-percent environmentally-friendly and sustainable business practice. We strive to achieve no less than a 'zero-footprint' effect on our surroundings/planet, to be a model of environmental and social sustainability for any business or residence, and to further environmental learning and cognizance in both the local and international communities through: active guest education and workshops, tangible on-the-ground projects, providing (and encouraging) a space to be used for learning and research, and simply by providing a working example of the ease and benefits of leading a sustainable life.

What We do

Accommodation and hosting

- All-inclusive, open and custom retreats, retreat hosting, stay-only and volunteer-exchange accommodations
- Accommodations in private rooms, private houses, shared rooms, cabins or camping sites
- Healthy and wherever possible organic meal availability
- Education and integration of sustainable living tips and techniques
- Laundry services, Bicycle rental, and more.

Activities

- Yoga classes
- Guided meditation
- Massage therapy
- Interpretive trails (*planned*)
- Guided hikes (*planned*)
- Day trips (planning, arranging and/or delivery of)
- Local tours and activities with partners
- Tours and projects in local community with partner organizations

Workshops and training

- Regular, on-going/on-request training opportunities offered to our guests and the local community on a variety of environmental and sustainability-based topics.

Examples include:

- Sustainable living
 - Organic food production
 - Natural gardening and planting
 - Ecological building/construction
 - Green energy
 - Stream sampling
 - Community maintenance/infrastructure projects
 - and more...
- Specialized workshops from national and international experts in topics ranging from ecological living to wholistic nutrition to mind and body development and practice
 - Ongoing research and training through our volunteer and work-exchange programs

Ecological / Sustainability Projects

- The ongoing development of new, and care and enjoyment of existing, sustainability projects of all sorts, such as: interpretive learning trails throughout the site; organic vegetable, herbal and medicinal plant gardens; sustainable, green-design building projects; constructed wetlands, and so on. See our 'Projects' section for more information.
- Community outreach and education projects to give back all that we can to the indigenous of the area and share whatever information and resources that we can with the entire community.

How You Can Be Involved

Global Creek is incorporating a volunteer work-exchange program to provide some unique growth and learning opportunities to those able to lend their time and/or energy to support areas of our programs and allow us to provide these priceless benefits and services to the local and global communities, human and otherwise. We offer volunteers accommodation and amenities in our gorgeous jungle retreat space, use of some of our facilities and services, meals and beverages, access to our workshops and classes, and some truly unique and special learning and personal growth opportunities, in exchange for their time and energy in supporting us in certain projects, a modest fee to cover basic living and support costs, and most importantly the investment of their passion in what we will be accomplishing together!

This document describes the basics of our volunteer work-exchange program at Global Creek and provides a description of various details surrounding it. If you are interested in learning more, please read on!

Volunteer Program

Volunteering at Global Creek

The volunteer program at Global Creek should be, we believe, a prime consideration for those seeking a deeply involved, richly rewarding volunteer experience with a grassroots-style sustainability and education project, combined with a tranquil jungle getaway experience. Volunteers should share a passion for our vision and goals, and should be coming with the intent of making a real difference.

We ask all our volunteers to commit to a minimum of one (1) month's time with us, and to be ready to fully invest their skills and energy during their working time here at the retreat. Our volunteer program is a not-for-profit operation, but there is a fee for our volunteers to help us cover the cost of their stay and the services provided to them during that time (please see 'Costs' below). Volunteers are reminded that Global Creek is a new operation and to consider what this means for a volunteer – it does pose challenges in it's own right, and also creates some unique opportunities to get involved at an even deeper level, to potentially make an even greater impact with their time, and to help us develop during our most formative stage.

If you are looking to really get involved and make a truly positive impact – on the local environment and community and with a direct international reach at the same time – with your time, to invest your skills, education/training, experience and/or passions in our projects, to do so in the essence of tranquillity and beauty, and to gain a truly rewarding experience, then volunteering with Global Creek may be for you.

Program Areas

There are a variety of different types of projects and areas in which volunteers may get involved at Global Creek, and each exact role is tailored to the individual volunteer. We work together to find a custom union between our active projects and needs lists and your particular interests, skills, goals and objectives. What follows is a list of current projects and roles for which we are actively recruiting volunteer assistance.

- *Plant and Wildlife Identification* – helping us to identify and catalogue the tremendous array of plant and animal life here at our retreat.
- *Gardening* – assistance in effectively establishing and maintaining our organic vegetable garden, herbal garden and medicinal plant garden. We are in need of horticulturalists to help in the planning/design elements of our gardens, as well as any 'green-thumbs' who would like to assist us in the day-to-day maintenance of gardens like these, our butterfly garden, etc.
- *Trail construction* – designing and/or creating new access and hiking trails throughout our site which combine minimum-impact design with optimal education potential.
- *Labourers* – general help of all sorts around the retreat, in daily maintenance and upkeep activities as well as in the establishment of new projects and infrastructure.
- *Educators* – environmental or otherwise to help us develop new and innovative ways of educating locals and foreigners of all different ages and backgrounds.
- *Academic Researchers* – those interested in conducting formal academic or other sorts of research connected to our local flora/fauna, environmental projects, or surrounding communities. Please speak to us about interests and potential areas of

study, which could touch on anything from the epidemic which decimated all cacao plantations in the region and looking at restoring our last remaining plantation patch, to all-natural techniques for pest or invasive controls, to even experimenting with different all-natural preservation techniques for bamboo – the opportunities are plentiful.

This list represents a sampling of the top-priority areas identified as in need of volunteer assistance. In following our overall open and dynamic approach however, not only is this list ever-changing but we are also very happy to explore other areas for volunteer involvement to best suit each particular volunteer. Use the above list as a guide and let us know how you might like to contribute to our goals here at Global Creek.

What We Provide

Global Creek will provide our volunteers with:

- o Accommodation
- o Partial food and beverage costs
- o Basic living costs such as electricity, water and essential toiletries expenses
- o No-charge attendance to some of our own workshops, classes or other such training opportunities
- o Optional attendance in our yoga and meditation classes (*see 'Costs' below*)
- o Full use of kitchen and volunteer space
- o An array of learning and growth opportunities!

Accommodations for volunteers will be furnished for the most part in our volunteer home, Casa Corazon ("Heart House"). Casa Corazon is a lovely stand-alone home that can accommodate up to 9 volunteers at a time in bunk-bed style fashion. There is one female's and one male's room, a full kitchen and full bathroom with hot shower, plus a large private front patio area at this 'house of heart'.

Volunteers will be provided with freshly-prepared breakfast daily. Breakfasts will be simple, hearty and healthy, prepared each day by a combination of our staff assisted by our volunteers themselves. Volunteers will herein be asked to evenly rotate amongst themselves 'breakfast duties', which will include assisting with breakfast setup and prep along with takedown and clean-up. We will further provide juices, teas and coffee plus clean drinking water throughout the days to our volunteers.

Volunteers will have full access to the kitchen when they are in Casa Corazon, and we will supply all the essentials in terms of soaps, towels, toilet paper, etc. All volunteers will be more than welcome to join us for any of our non-privately booked classes, workshops and other such training opportunities which we internally put on ourselves. For those interested in yoga, meditation and/or massage sessions, volunteers may opt-in to these services for an additional small fee (again, simply to help us cover our expenses – see '*Costs*' below) – Doing so will entitle you to partake in our yoga/meditation classes three days per week and to one massage every two weeks, all provided by our professionally-trained and certified instructors/practitioners.

The potential learning and growth benefits of volunteering with Global Creek speak for themselves, and we will ensure that volunteers are supported and taken care of in every way possible so that you can both gain the maximum from your volunteer experience and have an unforgettable, tranquil and relaxing time while doing it!

We remind potential volunteers that we are still in our early growth and developmental phases here at Global Creek, so some of our specific programs and services are only now being put into place or may still be just on the horizon. Please speak to us about the details of what this may mean as we would like you to be fully cognizant of this, and to be looking forward to growing together with us!

Costs

We do charge a fee for participation in our volunteer program, even though it is run as a not-for-profit operation. This fee is intended to help us cover the costs of accommodating and supporting our volunteers during their stay with us, including the services provided to them through that time. Any extra revenues generated from this program are then injected right back into supporting and furthering the activities and projects of our volunteers.

The current costs for the volunteer program are:

\$11 per day for accommodation and basic living, food (breakfast preparation) and beverage expenses.

\$15 per day with the addition of three yoga classes per week and up to one massage every two weeks.

In May or June of this year we expect the volunteer costs to rise slightly to account for a rise in services and activities at the retreat centre and the additional provisioning of lunch to our volunteers five days of the week. At that time the new volunteer participant costs would be:

\$14 per day for accommodation and basic living, food (breakfast *and lunch* preparation) and beverage expenses.

\$18 per day with the addition of the yoga + massage option.

Volunteer Prerequisites

The most important qualities that we look for in a volunteer are a belief in our mission and a commitment to invest themselves as fully as possible in their work and energy behind that work during their time here at Global Creek. The more knowledge, skills and experience that a volunteer can bring the better of course too, as this can only add to what a volunteer would be able to contribute to our common goals.

What we require specifically of our volunteers during their time here is:

- ✓ A minimum **1-month commitment** to remain with our project
- ✓ At least **25 hours** of work-time per week
- ✓ A true investment of energy, motivation and care in their work
- ✓ A level of self-sufficiency and an appreciation for all of the varied needs of the entire retreat centre operation here
- ✓ The desire to work with us and fellow volunteers in a mutually respectful, constructive, compassionate and positive way
- ✓ A willingness to contribute to general up-keep and maintenance needs of the retreat and its operations
- ✓ Sharing cleaning duties with other volunteers in the volunteer areas, as well as sharing in providing kitchen assistance
- ✓ A flexibility in their accommodation space to relocate should the need arise
- ✓ An adherence to our conduct guidelines outlined below
- ✓ An adherence to our environmental protection and sustainability guidelines

and policies at all times

Volunteer Conduct

Retreat – Volunteers are asked to always remember that the retreat centre is firstly just that – a retreat, vacation and education experience for our guests. We must always work around our guests here and respect their needs at all times.

Quiet – We are after all a jungle oasis, and it's nice to be able to experience all of the sensations that come along with that. At night time specifically we ask that as of 9:30pm all noise and lights be kept to a minimum, and we ask that all refrain from any loud noise or disturbances throughout the entire day.

Cleanliness – The cleanliness of the entire retreat centre – including personal, volunteer and all common space – should be respected and maintained at all times. Let's keep this place looking beautiful!

Health and Well-Being – Global Creek is a substance-abuse free operation. There is no smoking of any kind on the property, and nor do we condone alcohol consumption on the premises. No illegal narcotics will be tolerated in any form.

Respect – At all times. Respect for your fellow volunteers, visitors, guests, us, all the other life with which we share this space, and for the entire planet. This will be a mutual respect shared by all here.

Is it for me?

Making Your Decision

Please read each section of this Volunteer Program Overview, and consider every aspect of our program as you decide if you think Global Creek is right for you. Make notes of anything you might be curious for more information on, or about any questions that you may have for us. First and foremost, do you believe in our mission and vision here at Global Creek, and have a true desire to see our programs succeed and to help us in achieving our goals? Do you have a real investment to offer and contribution to make here? Is there or are there specific programs or areas you would like to see yourself contributing too? Are the potential rewards of volunteering at an environmental education, life-learning and jungle oasis retreat like ours something that appeal to you?

Applying

If you think that you and Global Creek would be a good fit, then it's time to let us know – Send us an e-mail message (to globalcreek@gmail.com with the word "volunteer" contained in the subject line) telling us how. Please include a covering letter along with your resume, C.V. and/or list of relevant experiences and skills. Also let us know which particular projects or project areas you may be interested in, and perhaps why. Don't forget to mention when you might like to join us and for how long.

Next Steps

We will review your letter and attachments, and try to get our own sense of how good of a fit we might make. As we get into this process, you'll likely receive a few questions from us or other communications. Please note that it may take us a little while to work through these steps, this being only one of the many reasons to plan ahead and leave ample time for us each to step along this path. If then after we are able to chat a bit over the telephone the fit seems right to all, we'll convivially be awaiting your arrival here at Jo Jo's Jungle Retreat!