

TAMARINDO, COSTA RICA SERVICE LEARNING TRIP

———— INFO + ITINERARY ————





TAMARINDO, COSTA RICA



Tamarindo is a picturesque coastal town in Costa Rica, renowned for its golden beaches, excellent surfing conditions, and vibrant atmosphere. Situated on the northwest Pacific coast, Tamarindo is approximately 250 kilometers (155 miles) away from the capital city, San Jose. It offers a perfect blend of relaxation and adventure, attracting visitors with its stunning sunsets, diverse marine life, and a range of water sports and activities.

This destination is recommended for:

Tamarindo, Costa Rica stands as a highly recommended destination for MEDLIFE volunteers embarking on a service learning trip. The unique blend of this beach town's relaxed ambiance and its presence as a home to low-income communities creates a distinct environment for meaningful service. Amidst the laid-back beach context, volunteers have the chance to make a genuine difference in these communities, addressing healthcare, education, and infrastructure needs. This setting offers an exceptional opportunity to engage with locals while contributing positively to their lives, all set against the backdrop of Tamarindo's picturesque coastal charm.

Details of Destination	
Promo video	Tamarindo promo video click here
Student Handbook	Tamarindo student handbook (Mobile Clinic station details, phrases in local language and local emergency contacts)
Country	Costa Rica
Country Population	Approximately 5 million
Languages	Spanish
Currency	Costa Rican Colón (CRC) \$1 USD = ₡ 534 CRC *Susceptible to fluctuation

Weather	Weather: All year round: 70°F to 90°F (21°C to 32°C) Precipitation: (Dry Season) - December to April (Rainy Season) - May to November
Town/City Location	Guanacaste Province
Town/City Population	354,000 (Guanacaste Province)
Time from the hotel to the communities	30 minutes up to 1:30 hour
Community Development Projects	School Renovations Classroom building Eco-bathroom Safe Homes projects
Extra Activities (Not Included)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coffee and chocolate tour - Sloth Bears tour - Butterfly garden - Waterfall visit - Surf lessons - Catamaran sailing and snorkeling

ISSUES COMMUNITIES FACE

Tourists rarely consider poverty when thinking about Costa Rica. Many find it difficult to comprehend that great poverty exists within what seems like paradise when surrounded by the country's abundant beauty. Despite being full of beautiful natural attractions unfortunately, Costa Rica has a poverty rate of one in every four people with 1.1 million individuals currently living in poverty in the country. Around 20 percent of the population lives below the national poverty line, earning less than \$155 per month. Poverty and income inequality are persistent issues in Tamarindo, particularly among local residents who may not benefit from the tourism industry. Some factors that contribute to poverty in Tamarindo include limited access to education and job opportunities, a high cost of living, and income disparities between urban and rural areas. The tropical weather and lush scenery attract many tourists. However, that same equatorial climate also brings still water and multiple mosquito-borne illnesses, which significantly impact the health of the local residents.

TRIP LOGISTICS

PASSPORT AND VISA REQUIREMENTS

For most SLT volunteers the only requirement to enter countries where we have Mobile Clinics is a current passport that will be valid at least six months after your trip. Requirements could change frequently and are communicated to volunteers during the registration process.

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.

FLIGHT INFORMATION

Volunteers are responsible for buying their own airfare. However, our team can help you in this process by providing a flight quote for your group. You can request a flight quote by emailing info@medlifemovement.org. Once your flight is booked, please make sure to add your arrival and departure information to your booking.

AIRPORT: Juan Santamaria Airport (SJO) or Liberia International Airport (LIR)

Recommended time frames for arrivals and departures is as follows:

Tamarindo, Costa Rica

Arrival: Saturday 9am to 2pm

Departure: Sunday noon to 6pm

If students arrive outside of the set time frames, they will be responsible for covering the cost of transportation to their site. If your flight arrives outside the timeframes listed please email info@medlifemovement.org. Remember that any additional nights and transfers that are added before/after your trip because of early or late arrival are not included in the Service Learning Trip donation goal, and will be at the cost of the volunteer.

We highly recommend purchasing trip cancellation insurance, which will allow you to cancel for any reason. You can contact info@medlifemovement.org for more information about our insurance options.

ACCOMMODATION

HOTEL PUEBLO DORADO

Address: Camino Principal 1100, Provincia de Guanacaste, Tamarindo, 50309, Costa Rica

Phone: +506 2653 0008

HOTEL TAMA HOSTEL & GLAMPING

Address: Tamahostel, contiguo villa verde , 50309 Tamarindo Costa Rica

Phone: +50626532122

PUPA HOUSE

Address: C. Cerritos, Provincia de Guanacaste, Tamarindo

Phone: +506 6348-4070

HEALTH

TRAVEL HEALTH INSURANCE

Emergency medical insurance is included in the cost of your trip but trip cancellation insurance is not included.

VACCINATION

MEDLIFE follows the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's recommendations and requirements. Immunization recommendations for all of our trip locations may be found on this page: www.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list. We recommend consulting the CDC page and/or visiting a local travel clinic for more information.

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

HEALTH PROTOCOLS

- **Face Masks:** Volunteers must wear surgical face masks during the Mobile Clinic and comply with all local face mask requirements.
- **Wash and Sanitize Your Hands:** Hand-washing stations and hand sanitizer will be available on clinic days. Don't forget to always wash your hands before eating and at the end of every clinic day to prevent stomach issues.
- **Illness During Trip:** If you are demonstrating symptoms of any illness or feeling unwell, please advise your Trip Leader immediately to get medical care.

OTHER

MONEY

We recommend that you have access to at least \$200 to \$300 during your Service Learning Trip week to cover two days of meals, tourism activities, and any additional food, drinks, or souvenirs you wish to purchase.

Volunteers can easily exchange money in the locations they will visit. They can access their bank accounts via ATM or debit card and can also easily exchange cash with money-exchange officials on the streets or in nearby exchange houses.

WHAT TO PACK

You should plan to look professional but dress comfortably. Jeans, shorts, polos, athletic wear, and t-shirts are all acceptable. In all locations, a MEDLIFE t-shirt will be provided, but you are not required to use it.

Check suggested items and checklist for your destination here: [SLT Packing Lists](#)

DONATIONS

Many volunteers organize themselves to bring essential supplies such as medical equipment, educational materials, and hygiene items to the communities they serve. These donated products enhance the effectiveness of healthcare and education initiatives, fostering a direct and immediate positive impact on the lives of those in need. This is not mandatory but if you wish to bring medical or any other kind of donations you can find a recommended list here: [Costa Rica Recommended donation list](#)

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

In the unlikely event you have a travel or health emergency and there are no MEDLIFE staff to assist you, you can contact us via the following numbers.

When in-destination or in transit to destination	COSTA RICA EMERGENCY PHONE	+506 71630109 (WhatsApp, call, or SMS)
When calling from within North America	MEDLIFE HQ PHONE	1-844-633-5433

Emergency or Medical Assistance Procedure

Before Your Trip: Contact your local emergency authorities

For non-urgent matters, contact your Chapter, MEDLIFE HQ Phone, or email info@medlifemovement.org

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

If you still have doubts and/or question about trip details we suggest you consult our FAQ section of the MEDLIFE movement website to search for the answer. the link is here: <https://www.medlifemovement.org/service-learning-trips/faqs/>

Itinerary Day By Day

DAY

1

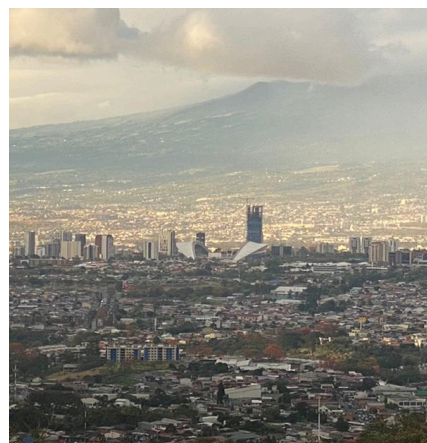
Saturday

Arrival to Liberia

Arrive at Daniel Oduber Quiros airport (LIR) between 9:00 am to 2:00 pm. 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
Tamarindo MEDLIFE Hostel



DAY

2

Sunday

Orientation Day

Your Trip Leader will take you on a walking tour of Tamarindo, giving you a chance to learn about the local way of life. The evening will be dedicated to an orientation meeting where we will distribute Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), cover what to expect for the week, safety precautions, and a brief training course on our Mobile Clinics. Meals are not included today, but there are lots of great places to eat nearby.



Overnight
Tamarindo 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 so important when you're serving communities in another country.



Overnight
Tamarindo MEDLIFE Hostel



DAY
4-6

Tuesday to Thursday

Mobile Clinics

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

Upon arriving at 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, Dental, 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 what the patient has presented with, 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 1-3pm, depending on the number of patients that day. As many as 100+ patients may pass through the medical clinic throughout the day!

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



Overnight
Tamarindo MEDLIFE Hostel



DAY

7

Friday

Development Project

Today 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 7:30am 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 2:30pm-4:00pm for a short reflection and debrief with the MEDLIFE team to wrap up the week.



Overnight
Tamarindo Hostel

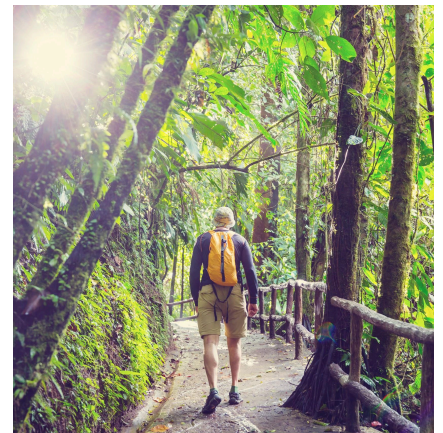
DAY

8

Saturday

Optional Day Trip

Join us on an optional day trip where you will get to explore more of what Costa Rica has to offer. The day will begin with a coffee and chocolate tour where you will get to taste as well as look into the process of production for authentic Costa Rican coffee and chocolate. After that, we will go on a sloth bear tour where you will be able to see up-close some of Costa Rica's native sloths! We will then head over to the butterfly garden where we will sit down and enjoy lunch while basking in the beauty of the butterflies. After lunch, we will head over to Llanos del Cortes waterfalls where you are free to enjoy the majestic falls by taking a swim. We will end the day with some free time to go souvenir shopping, and then arrive back at Selina Tamarindo around 6:00 p.m.



DAY

9

Sunday

Departure

Depart Tamarindo anytime between 12:00 pm and 6:00 pm.

INCLUDED

- ✓ 7 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