

In partnership with people of diverse cultures, GCN promotes cross-cultural understanding and interconnectedness through authentic immersion experiences.

Ladino Communities

Half of the 10 million inhabitants of this mountainous, volcanic country are descendants of Mayan Indians, divided into 20 groups, each with its own language and culture. Non-indigenous (less than 20 percent of the population) control most of the land and political power. While cities are European-influenced, the small rural towns have changed very little. In the central highlands, one and a half hours northeast of Guatemala City, about 20 minutes east of the town of Sanarate, lies the village of Llanos de Morales. Farm animals wander freely about. The village has a primary school, a small health clinic, and a preschool, as well as several small stores. A river runs just south of the area, making the village a beautiful setting in one of the many valleys of Guatemala.



Llanos de Morales house about 300 families. The people of the village are **ladinos** and wear typical westernized clothes. Though Spanish is the native language, a few people may speak English. Most of the men work in nearby fields tending rice, tomatoes, peas, beans and cucumbers; several have small farms with goats, cows and chickens. The women manage the homes, doing the cooking and cleaning, as well as grinding the corn to make masa for tortillas (a dietary staple). Several women also run shops in town.

Supporting Community-Driven Projects

Global Citizens Network started working with these communities in 1992 through a partnership with the Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA). GCN now partners directly with a non-governmental organization started by a local community member who was trained by ICA. Past GCN teams have taught in the primary school, built a cement patio, improved the water drainage system for the school, and assisted in designing and painting a mural in the community. Future teams may assist with renovating and painting the preschool, improving the soccer field, or constructing a new water pump. No matter what project the GCN teams work on, participants are received warmly into the community and integrated into every aspect of their daily and community lives.



Travel Itinerary

Team members will arrive in Guatemala City where they will be met by a Guatemalan host and taken to a hotel for the night. The next morning, before heading out to the village, participants can do some banking and pick up supplies that will be needed in village. Midday the team will take a minibus two hours to Llanos de Morales. At the end of the village stay, the team will stay overnight in Antigua before flying home or continuing other travel the next day.

LLANOS DE MORALES, GUATEMALA

Accommodation and Meals

The team will stay in community members' homes with their families, one or two participants per home. Homes in Llanos de Morales may have electricity and indoor toilets, but trip participants should be prepared to do without either, as the facilities of homes differ. Team meals will generally be eaten as a group. The team's meals will be prepared by a local woman who does her cooking over a gas plate and wood fire in one of the village kitchens. Bottled water for drinking will be bought for the team in Sanarate. During the dry season, water is scarce and only sponge baths may be available.



Time to Explore

The GCN experience is time in the host community, which allows for plenty of time to get to know the local community in your own way. Often team members like to explore the surrounding area for an occasional day trip. Guatemala has many regional sites of interest, including museums, colonial architecture and churches, handicraft markets and archaeological sites. Many trip participants like to extend their time in Guatemala either before or after the GCN trip to take these into account. Possible side trips include visits to Tikal, Lake Atitlan or Antigua. Many GCN participants have studied Spanish a week or more at Casa de Espanol Xelaju, a language institute in Quetzaltenango, just one of many other language schools in the country.

Health Issues

Participants are required to be in sound health. Potential participants with significant physical limitations are encouraged to check with their physician and discuss the situation with GCN staff beforehand. The risk of disease is minimal, but sensible precautions are still worthwhile. Please check with your local clinic or public health department about suggested inoculations and other precautions. Emergency medical care in Guatemala is available in Sanarate and Guatemala City.

Dates

March 23-April 1, 2012

** Trip dates subject to change – check with GCN office to confirm details*

** Special trips can be arranged for an intact group of 6 or more*

Costs

Program costs cover on-site accommodations (lodging and meals), in-country travel, training materials, donation to the project, emergency medical and evacuation insurance, t-shirt, and a portion of the team leader's expenses.

Airfare to Guatemala, and costs relating to activities outside of the village, are additional and the responsibility of the individual participant.

All trip related costs are **tax-deductible** in the U.S.

Discounts available. One per person/group:

Four participants, one person goes half-price. Eight participants, one person goes free.

See web-site current program fees.

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