

# VOLUNTEER IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

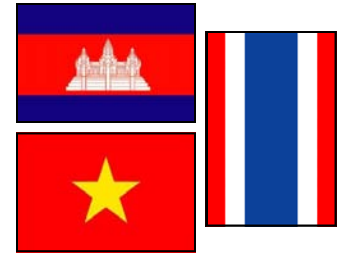
*"Here is what I know now—parts of this world challenge us, push us to quit, but I can meet them. And I will find friends who will help me. I am not meant to defeat whatever I encounter; I am, though, capable of meeting it and learning from it." -Steve C.*



- **Who:** Volunteers in good physical health between the ages of 18 to 70, or under 18 with parental consent.
- **When:** First Monday of any month, minimum stay 2 weeks and maximum 1 year.
- **Where:** Cambodia, Thailand or Vietnam
- **What:** Volunteer at an orphanage or school, participate in an environmental conservation project or help a village with its agriculture.
- **How:** First submit your Volunteer Application, interview, then submit payment for the program: \$1340 (2 weeks) and \$255 each additional week.

*"Asia sticks to you. This is a spiritual place infused with the gods of past and present: the ancient spirits of the land and the family, the deities of Buddhism and Hinduism and the rules of Islam." -Lonely Planet*

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## PERKS

Guaranteed volunteer placement.

Airport pick-up and transfer.

Basic and safe accommodations in volunteer house with traditional meals cooked 3 times a day.

Orientation & Training.

International Medical Insurance.

Full-time pre-departure and local support from our team of coordinators.



Join Our Community to ask questions:



Read blogs from current participants or email us: [info@culturalembrace.com](mailto:info@culturalembrace.com)

# PROGRAM DETAILS & FAQs

## *Volunteer in Southeast Asia Offers:*

- First-hand experience helping the local community
- An opportunity to broaden your perspective and worldview
- An opportunity to participate in and learn local cultural activities (e.g.: sports, music, cooking)
- Memorable travel experiences with the chance to see exotic sites you have always dreamed about
- The ability to make lifelong friends from around the globe
- A valuable work experience that strengthens your resume, exhibiting your diligence, independence, and intercultural experiences
- A great way to develop and support your self-confidence and interpersonal skills



## *Cultural Embrace Includes:*

### ✓ **Guaranteed Volunteer Placement Prior to Departure**

*Cultural Embrace* pre-arranges your volunteer project before you leave home to ensure an easy and hassle-free transition into your new life abroad.

### ✓ **Housing and Board**

Basic, clean & comfortable accommodations on twin sharing basis in a volunteer guest house. Single room available upon request for additional fee. All meals are cooked at the guest house and are typical dishes, often rice dishes and vegetarian.

### ✓ **Visa Assistance**

All volunteers to Southeast Asia travel on the tourist visa. Please contact your local Southeast Asia or Southeast Asia Embassy or Consulate to check details, or ask your *CE* coordinator. Please note that any visa fees are the responsibility of the applicant. And, while we can assist you during the process, ultimately it is your responsibility to ensure that you have obtained the appropriate visa for your work experience. *Cultural Embrace* has no control over the visa process and cannot guarantee that your visa application will be accepted.

### ✓ **Arrival Pick-Up and Orientation**

All volunteers are picked up at the airport by our local coordinator who will then help them settle into the guest house and introduce them to their project. The first week includes many tours and lessons to help volunteers adjust and feel more comfortable.

### ✓ **International Traveler's Insurance with Basic Major Medical Coverage**

Our policy provides basic medical coverage. Additional policies and premium plans are available at extra cost.

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# PROGRAM DETAILS & FAQs CONTINUED

## ✓ *Cultural Embrace* “Culture Kit”

Before your departure, we will send you a cultural kit that is filled with useful tips, advice, information, and your insurance card to prepare you for your amazing adventure of living and working abroad.

## ✓ **Full-time Representation**

*Cultural Embrace* provides English-speaking representation in the United States and Southeast Asia prior to, during, and after your placement.

## **Requirements:**

In order to participate in this volunteer program, *Cultural Embrace* requires that you:

- Be between the ages of 18 to 70. Or, if younger than 18, you must have parental or guardian consent
- Have good physical health
- Be open to foreign cultures and living abroad
- Have a high level of responsibility
- Be dedicated to the full term of commitment
- Be a team player
- Enjoy providing a service and working with others in a challenging environment



## **2011 Program Fees:**

Program	Length	Price
Orientation (1) + Volunteering (1)	2 wks	\$1340
Extra week – Volunteer or cultural activities	1 wk	\$255
Extra week – Beach, Trekking	1 wk	\$435

*\*Prices listed in US Dollars*

*\*\*Please note- Prices are subject to change according to exchange rates.*

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## ***Project Details:***

### Volunteer Orientation

The orientation week and training are the first step for a successful stay in Southeast Asia. Therefore the first week is dedicated to familiarizing yourself with the country and meeting the other participants. You will also engage in the following activities: learning about the culture, team-building activities, language and cooking lessons and visiting local tourist places. You will also have time to meet the local people, taste the food and learn about the countries customs. During this period, everyone will also be informed in detail about the program chosen and the different projects.

### Thailand Program

If you are interested in volunteering during your time in Thailand, *Cultural Embrace* can organize week-long projects for you to teach/tutor English, work on environmental/eco projects in the forest and hillside, provide assistance at local orphanages, or volunteer at hilltribe villages. During your Cultural Excursion time you may find that you want to experience Southeast Asia's rich in history and culture by exploring Buddhism, Muay Thai boxing, or eco-tours. Or opt to go on a trek through the hilltribe villages or jungle, which will give you a first-hand look at how many Thai minorities live and how pristine and beautiful these areas are. Just let Cultural Embrace know your strengths and goals, projects can be tailored to meet them.

### Vietnam Program

Our Volunteer Vietnam Program is a fantastic opportunity to be a responsible traveler and make a positive contribution during your stay. You will be placed in a local school, where you will have the possibility to give a positive input into the life of the Vietnamese children. Volunteers are invited to teach English in a creative way. During this week, you will have the chance to learn more about the cultural diversity in Vietnam. You will spend time interacting with the locals and have time to explore Vihn City. This will be a unique experience that you will remember for the rest of your lifetime



### Cambodia Program

If you are interested in volunteering during your time in Cambodia, *Cultural Embrace* can organize week-long projects for you to teach/tutor English local students. This program consists of helping students, aged between 7 -18 years old, at various schools. Accommodation is generally in home stays with carefully screened and selected local families or in a local hostel. Central Cambodia Tour Cambodia is a country of considerable contradictions. After going through a troublesome and violent past with extreme poverty, Cambodia still retains its undeniable charm and glory. During this week-long tour, we will visit the archeological and world famous sites of Angkor Wat. We will also visit the Cambodian capital, Phnom Penh, and a visit to the National museum. And let's not forget another highlight—tasting local Cambodian cuisine throughout the region! Accommodation in Siem Reap and Phnom Penh will be in basic local guesthouses located close to the city centre. This week-long adventure is available every third week of the month. Beach Our Beach week takes place in Sihanoukville, Cambodia's premier beach town. This is also the time for everyone to relax in the company of the other volunteers and a great way to reflect on your experience abroad.

Our Volunteer Southeast Asia Program will give you the possibility to make real friends among students, teachers and the local villagers. Volunteering Options include Teaching, Farming and Conservation as well as additional excursions to trek or enjoy the beach.

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## *How to Apply:*

1. Obtain the **Volunteer Abroad Application Forms & Procedures** documents in one of two ways:  
(a) Download the forms from our website at [www.culturalembrace.com](http://www.culturalembrace.com)  
(b) Call *Cultural Embrace* at 1-512-469-9089 or Skype: Cultural.Embrace to have the forms mailed to you within 3-4 days.

2. Read the instructions carefully and *complete all forms*.

3. Submit your completed application packet to:

Cultural Embrace  
7201 Bill Hughes Road  
Austin, TX 78745 USA



## *Completed packets should include the following:*

- Volunteer Program Application
- Signed Volunteer Agreement
- Copy of your passport (information page only)
- Cover Letter in English explaining why you want to Volunteer in Southeast Asia
- Two References: preferably professional and/or character references
- Doctor's note verifying that you are in excellent mental and physical health
- Copy of Police Clearance (obtainable from your community's local police station)
- Two 1½" x 2" official passport-size photos, with your name printed on each photo
- One smiling full-length photo of yourself (for local coordinator to identify you)
- US\$250 non-refundable deposit (credited towards your program fee)

Upon receipt of your application, a *Cultural Embrace* coordinator will contact you for a 20-30 minute phone interview. Once we accept you in to our program, you will receive an invoice for the remainder of your program fee. In order for us to contact our local partners to start your placement process, we require at least 50% of your program costs.

We recommend submitting your application and program fee at least 3-4 months prior to your desired start date in order for us to organize and arrange your volunteer placement.

\**Cultural Embrace* requires an expedited application fee for those applying 16 weeks or less before the desired date of departure. Applications received 12-16 weeks prior to desired departure date will be charged \$150. Applications received fewer than 12 weeks before the desired departure date will be charged \$250.

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# PROGRAM DETAILS & FAQs CONTINUED

## *Frequently Asked Questions:*

1) *Why should I pay to volunteer abroad, and where does my money go to with Cultural Embrace?*

Cultural Embrace and our local partners in Southeast Asia specialize in arranging a guaranteed volunteer placement, housing and insurance prior to your departure. This will alleviate the troubles and stress of getting everything organized in a new country, so you will have more time and energy to spend on your volunteer project and living abroad. Your time abroad will still be an independent and memorable one, but we are here to guide you to a safe, healthy and comfortable experience before, during, and after your adventure.

You will be assigned an experienced Program Coordinator from our Austin, Texas office. He/She will provide personalized attention to help pre-arrange your volunteer placement, housing and travel needs. Our Program Coordinator will work with our in-country representative to match your requests and background skills with the availability and needs of the local employer. Once you go abroad, you will be assisted by our in-country representative, and will typically have a direct supervisor for your project, as well.

Your program fee includes your customized volunteer placement, housing and meals, airport transfer, orientation, basic international traveler's insurance, and all of the administrative and logistical costs to set up your placement in the States and Southeast Asia. **Cultural Embrace** also prorates the expenses for marketing, advertising, and site visits/communication among all of our programs within our fees.

2) *What are the living conditions like?*

While on your volunteer placement, you will stay in a clean, simple volunteer facility. All accommodations are shared, 2-4 people per room with modern amenities like a hostel. Social activities are planned so volunteers will get to know each other and enjoy working on projects together.

3) *What type of meals are included?*

Typical meals are enjoyed by all, especially for those who have a knack for spicy and flavorful dishes. Vegetarian and dietary meals may be met, however, if you have specific allergies, you may need to provide your own food. Please list any special dietary requirement on your application.

4) *What is the application process like, and when will I have confirmation about my volunteer project?*

After C.E. receives your completed application, you will be assigned a personal Program Coordinator who will work with you through your departure and beyond. He/She will conduct ~30 phone/web interview (or in person, if applicable) to discuss your background, goals, and expectations of a volunteer placement. Then, you will receive an invoice for the remainder of the program, and once we receive at least half of this fee, we will send your details to Southeast Asia to find



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available projects that match your interests. Some companies may want to conduct a phone interview with you, which your Program Coordinator will prepare you accordingly. Placements are confirmed prior to departure with both volunteers and project managers agreeing on the terms, duties, responsibilities, and schedule.

5) *How long can I volunteer in Southeast Asia?*

The minimum duration is two weeks, and you may stay up to one year.

6) *What type of visa assistance does **Cultural Embrace** provide?*

Participants going to Southeast Asia for three months or less will travel on a tourist visa good for up to 90 days. If you are planning to stay longer than 3 months, you will have to apply for an extension of your tourist visa. Please note that any visa fees are the responsibility of the applicant. And, while we try to assist you during the process, ultimately it is your responsibility to ensure that you have obtained the appropriate visa for your volunteer experience. *Cultural Embrace* has no control over the visa process and cannot guarantee that your visa application will be accepted.

7) *What should I wear and bring to Southeast Asia?*

Depending on the time of year and location of your placement, you will need to dress accordingly. Please note that Southeast Asia is a conservative country and the locations in which you will be volunteering will probably be more traditional than the larger cities. *Cultural Embrace* will provide you with more details in your *Cultural Embrace* pre-departure kit.

8) *Can I volunteer and/or live with a friend or partner?*

Yes, you can enroll in this program with a friend or partner. Please just let us know so we can make sure your trip is coordinated simultaneously. We encourage you to travel and explore your world with others. This enhances your experience and memories, and you can be rewarded for referring others to travel on a CE program.

9) *How long will it take to make my placement?*

We ask applicants to apply at least 3-4 months in advanced of your desired start date. The placement may take less time than this, but we want to ensure that we have enough time to find a great placement for you! There are additional administrative fees if you apply less than 3 months in advanced, and we do not contact our local partners until we receive at least 50% of the program fee payment.



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10) *When should I buy my plane ticket and does Cultural Embrace provide any resources to help with plane tickets?*

Plane tickets should not be purchased until after your placement has been confirmed. *Cultural Embrace* works with consolidators and discount travel agencies that can help find cheaper tickets than those that are available to the general public. We have a partnership with STA Travel (1-877-236-1048) for great student/youth rates, and they have a very nominal service fee if you need to make any changes before or during your travels.

11) *What do I do if I have a problem or complaint within my volunteer placement?*

You should first speak with your project supervisor or manager to give them an opportunity to explain or investigate the situation. If the complaint still exists, then please contact your local representative in Southeast Asia, as well as let *Cultural Embrace* (Austin office) know so we may diplomatically mediate on your behalf. Please note that you will be assigned an in-country representative that will assist you with any questions or concerns. We also encourage you to fill out our program evaluations.



12) *Is there someone I may speak to about their experience on this program, and being abroad?*

Yes, we have a network of current and past travelers that are happy to communicate with you. Due to confidentiality, please contact our Austin office to receive a list of names and contact information of participants and alumni that have agreed to be contacted by others. Additionally, we encourage you to check out, use, and get involved with our social media community. These community sites will provide great insight of what you should expect on your adventure abroad. Plus, we provide additional discounts to our community members!

**Facebook Page** (<http://www.facebook.com/CulturalEmbraceTravel>)

**Twitter** (<http://twitter.com/culturalembrace>)

**Blogger** (<http://www.culturalembrace.blogspot.com/>)

**Youtube** (<http://www.youtube.com/user/CulturalEmbrace1>)

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## *A Few Words. . .*

At *Cultural Embrace*, we want to facilitate experiences that, first and foremost, help individuals have a safe and healthy time abroad while becoming better acquainted with both themselves and the richly textured cultures of the world around them. Our partnerships with companies, non-profits, and NGOs grant program participants the opportunity to explore Southeast Asia first-hand while adding valuable content to their resumes. Volunteering in Southeast Asia is, putting it shortly, a tremendously edifying experience that is sure to leave you with lasting memories and a renewed sense of purpose. So do yourself a favor: call *Cultural Embrace* straight away and let us start planning your once-in-a-lifetime international adventure!

*For any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at [info@culturalembrace.com](mailto:info@culturalembrace.com) or by phone at 1-512-469-9089 or by Skype: Cultural.Embrace.*



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