

## **Dominican Republic: JCC Service Adventure**

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The Dominican Republic is home to the world's most enchanting beaches, and it is well known for its friendly and passionate people.

You'll spend the week helping impoverished rural communities and also enjoy some fun in the sun in the Caribbean relaxing on pristine white sand beaches!

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### **Spotlight on Community Service**

Sustainable development has become a necessity for all of humanity. We must learn to live in harmony with our environment. Through the service work and seminars on this program, you will learn for yourself how to envision and think about the home and life of your family. While living sustainably, we will work to empower each other to become more sustainable in our practices.

Students will volunteer in rural and urban communities working on sustainable projects such as reforestation, construction of clean-burning stoves, and building schools from recycled materials. Students will also work with local children at Haitian resettlement villages, sharing their talents doing arts and crafts, playing sports and games, and teaching basic conversational English. Most importantly, you will be a friend and role model to young children who have limited exposure to the rest of the world.



### **Sample Schedule**

***IMPORTANT NOTE: Actual schedule of activities will vary by program session.***

The information detailed here is typical for what you can expect to experience. Please note, however, that service work and activities vary depending upon the needs of our local community partners, various celebrations and customs, as well as the weather and specific needs of the student group. This information is designed to give you an example of a typical program and provide a clear idea of the experience. Some activities may be changed during the summer as the staff sees fit, and along the way circumstances and opportunities may arise that change our course.

#### **Days 1: Getting Oriented**

GLA staff will meet you at the airport in Puerto Plata and take you to the GLA Home Base. A welcome fiesta will give you a taste of Dominican culture. Orientation to the program, staff, and country will build a foundation for your work here in the Dominican Republic. Our group will discuss the goals for the week and dive into the topic of sustainability.

#### **Days 2-5: Service & Adventure**

Over the next few days you'll roll up your sleeves and be involved in a variety of community service projects that all benefit the community and revolve around the concept of sustainable development. The projects will be helping to build a school out of discarded plastic bottles and interacting with local kids at a local Haitian Batey. Each project will provide a hands-on learning experience that will impact you and the local people.

Most afternoons you'll have time to relax by the beach, enjoy the pristine sand and clear blue water. In the evenings, we'll engage in discussions about sustainability and focus on connecting what we're learning in the Dominican Republic to our own lives back home. Topics will include discussing: Human Security and Sustainable Development,



Environmental, Health, Food and Economic Issues in the DR and around the world, Leadership, Political involvement, inequalities and Social and Environmental justice.

**Day 6:** We will enjoy a boat ride in the ocean to a spot where we'll anchor and go snorkeling. We'll learn about the damage to the coral reefs from unchecked development and we'll go snorkeling to see how that has affected the fish population. In the evening, we will wrap up our final discussions about sustainability and work on setting personal goals.

**Day 7-10:** Finish up work on your various service projects. We'll spend the bulk of our days in a rural community building a school out of discarded plastic bottles. Additionally, we'll learn about aquaponics and help out on an actual project. Aquaponics is a sustainable food production system that combines a traditional aquaculture (raising aquatic animals such as snails, fish, crayfish or prawns in tanks) with hydroponics (cultivating plants in water) in a symbiotic environment.

In the afternoons, we'll still find a bit of time to relax on the beach. In the evenings, we'll engage in discussions about sustainability and focus on connecting what we're learning in the Dominican Republic to our own lives back home.

**Day 11 Brison Hike:** We will hike the famous mountain of Brison and visit a wonderful remote mountain community to get a glimpse into daily life in the countryside. We will have lunch in the community and learn about the local cuisine. Take time to reflect with your fellow GLA students and mentors. Start to consider your motivations for participating in this program; the first step in becoming a leader is to start with yourself. Why are you called to do the work that you are doing?

**OR**

Travel to Mt. Isabel de Torres and ride the cable car to see stunning views of the northern bay. The top of the mountain has gentle winding trails through botanical gardens, there's even caves with cool air for relaxing!

#### **Day 12: Departure**

After breakfast and final goodbyes, we'll travel to Puerto Plata to board our flights home. At the airport, the GLA team will help you check in and see you off on your return flight.

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## **Lodging**

This program is based at an exclusive, dedicated Home Base on the north coast of the Dominican Republic, about 45 minutes from the town of Puerto Plata.

Our Home Base is a cluster of beautiful, rustic, thatched-roof chalets around a swimming pool, just steps away from the ocean. This unique ecolodge was constructed using sustainable building techniques, and the design reflects that of the indigenous Taíno community from the region. Accommodations are comfortable and safe. Students will stay in gender-segregated rooms with roommates.

Our students are the only ones staying here, so there is a true sense of community and family. Meals are eaten in our thatched-roof dining area. Each room has a fan and private bathroom with cold-water showers. In the afternoons, you will be able to cool down after a day of hard work in our swimming pool or on the beach. Laundry will not be done on this program.

### **Internet**

Internet availability varies at the Home Base and should not be counted upon. Students will have access to the internet at least once during the program. We encourage all students to minimize their time online so as to fully take advantage of their time in the Dominican Republic!

### **Food**



We encourage all students to try local cuisine, both as part of the adventure and as a way to further connect with the community. Dominican cuisine centers on the staples of chicken, rice, beans, and plantains. Our GLA cook will provide you with a variety of dishes to sample. You will eat food that is hearty, healthy, and locally grown, consisting of meats, beans, rice, vegetables, and fruit. Vegetarian options are available at every meal.

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## Leadership and Transformation

Leadership is at the core of every GLA program. We empower students to discover what they are passionate about and teach them how to begin affecting change within themselves, their communities, and the world. Through group discussion, meaningful service, workshops, speakers and excursions, GLA students work with skillful mentors and local partners to tackle tough questions: Where do we fit in? How do we connect our knowledge and talents to those in need? How do we create and motivate change, both at home and abroad? These conversations happen throughout your time in the Dominican Republic, both formally and informally. Gather after a day of hard work, after listening to an inspiring speaker, or after learning about an important issue to reflect with your team. At the end of the program, celebrate your accomplishments with a final dinner and watch the sunset over the water.



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## About Global Leadership Adventures

**Global Leadership Adventures** ("GLA") presents a fresh, new approach to service-learning abroad for intellectually-curious and socially-oriented teenagers. Programs are offered in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Participants explore historic and natural sites in different countries while they learn the local language and history, and serve the community through meaningful volunteer efforts. GLA's goal is to provide life-changing experiences that will cultivate a global perspective and open-mindedness in students, and that will ultimately inspire them to become great leaders and global thinkers, seeking positive change in their own communities.

GLA is a division of Terra Education ("Terra"), a leader in the field of international service-learning. Terra also operates **Discover Corps**, one to two week volunteer vacations for adults and families, in collaboration with the **National Peace Corps Association**. For more information, please visit [www.discovercorps.com](http://www.discovercorps.com).

GLA has been featured in:

**The New York Times**

*seventeen*

**BALTIMORE TIMES ONLINE**



**The Boston Globe**