

# RESIDENTIAL GAP SEMESTER

## 2022-2023 CATALOG



**OUTWARD BOUND  
COSTA RICA**



Outward Bound Costa Rica (OBCR) is a non-profit, experiential education organization welcoming local and international students and adults on courses that inspire a lifetime of leadership, growth, and a commitment to serve through adventure-based learning.

We see participants coming away from our courses with stronger leadership skills, a greater understanding of the world around them, and having discovered that they are capable of more than they ever thought possible.

On an OBCR course, you can expect to get out of your comfort zone through a variety of challenging adventure activities, rustic accommodations, local foods, and new found friendships from across the world. Get ready to embrace the unknown and dive into a memorable adventure!





# 35-65 DAY RESIDENTIAL GAP SEMESTER

Enjoy the comforts of sleeping on a mattress every night with the experiential impact of diving into Central American culture through interdisciplinary learning modules in the tropics of Costa Rica and Panama.

Gain independence and become confident in yourself through course module takeaways – improving your Spanish language skills, doing your part to combat climate change, trying your hand at Latin cuisine cooking and much more. Electronics, cell phones, and laptops are welcome on this program.

We will work with you to tailor your perfect residential gap semester lasting between 35 and 65 days. Each topic is complimented by excursions that will enhance your learning, including day trips to volcanoes, hot springs, tropical cloud forest or rainforest reserves, turtle nesting sites, and important political and historical locations in Costa Rica.



No Tent Camping



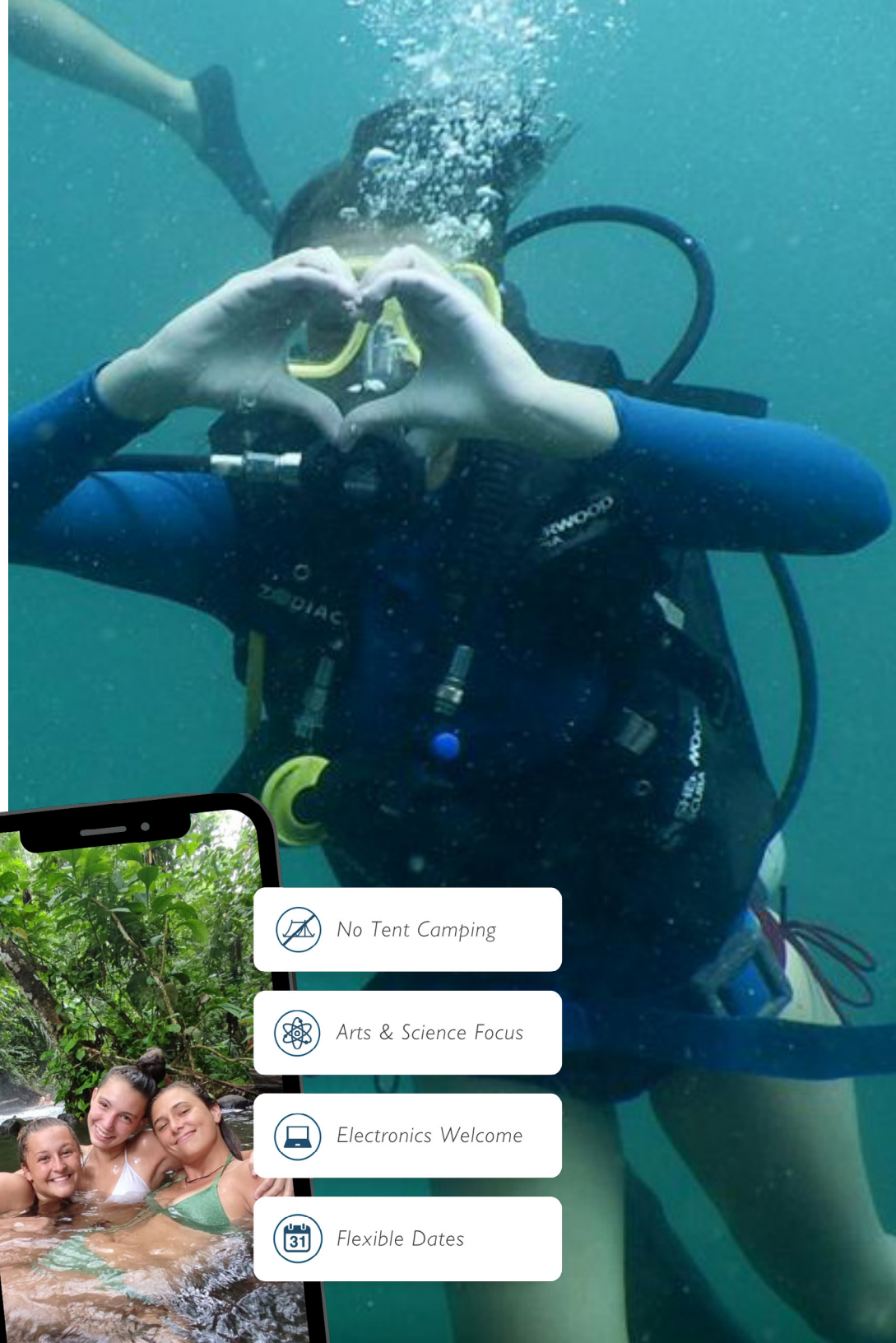
Arts & Science Focus



Electronics Welcome



Flexible Dates

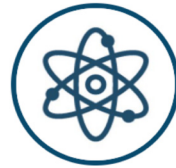


# WHAT SETS RESIDENTIAL APART?



## NO TENT CAMPING

Accommodation will always be on a comfy mattress—whether that be in one of our rustic rainforest base dorm rooms, at an eco lodge, or private hostel while out on your field experiences.



## ARTS & SCIENCE FOCUS

Students work through a variety of module topics like Scuba & Tropical Marine Biology using a combination of research studies, theory teachings, guest lectures, and excursions (such as scuba diving!) that enhance their understanding.



## ELECTRONICS WELCOME

Phones, laptops and electronics are welcome! We encourage you to bring a laptop to help support research and notetaking during formal class sessions. Our rainforest base dorm rooms have wifi, plus during your free time you can walk up to our office balcony to enjoy a view while working on your laptop or giving a call to family and friends back home.



## FLEXIBLE DATES

Join for the full 65 days or opt for a shorter 35-day stay, or even customize your arrival and departure dates. We understand you may be planning multiple “legs” of your gap year, and we want to make our program as accessible as possible to accommodate your schedule and individual passions. We’re happy to help you schedule your course around the modules that are of the most interest to you!





## SEMESTER MODULES

There are three modules that will be recurring themes, projects, and topics throughout your entire experience. These recurring modules include *Agriculture & Culinary Arts*, *Spanish Language & Latin American Culture*, and *Health & Wellbeing*. For example, you will be included and part of the cooking experience each day of the program, so you will be consistently learning how to make new Costa Rican dishes and how to formulate a menu.

The other modules are concrete to a single dedicated 1-2 weeks. For example, the Scuba & Tropical Marine Biology module will be a 1-week module on the Caribbean Coast learning about coral reefs and marine life.

### Modules include:

- Scuba & Tropical Marine Biology
- Peaceful Resolution & Social Justice
- Agriculture & Culinary Arts
- Spanish Language & Latin American Culture
- Health & Wellbeing
- Volcanology & Thermal Springs
- Indigenous Art & Culture
- Environmental & Wildlife Conservation



## Scuba & Tropical Marine Biology



Dip your toe into the physics and physiology of scuba diving, earning your NAUI scuba diver certification, while learning about incredible marine and coral reef life on the Caribbean Coast of Panama. You may opt to snorkel instead of scuba diving. Learn from resident naturalists about fascinating underwater creatures that inhabit the region and factors contributing to coral depletion, destruction, and erosion. Discover innovative methods for replenishing and preserving important coral reef structures.



## Peaceful Resolution & Social Justice



Discover why Costa Rica is one of the most peaceful nations in the world. Why does Costa Rica not have an army? Who protects the country? Is there a police force? Then, what is your own life's purpose? Pick a cause and we'll guide you on making an activism plan for when you return back home —women's rights, LGBTQIA rights, climate change, wildlife preservation, and indigenous rights. Speak with a local educator and leader about peaceful resolution, social justice & service in Costa Rica and dive deep into instructor-led discussions.







## Agriculture & Culinary Arts



Engineer grow gardens and become confident in the kitchen!

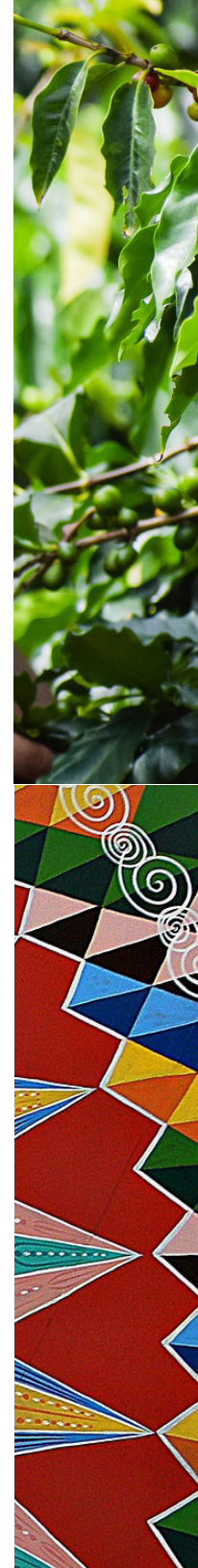
After learning garden theory, create and execute your own organic farming project at our rainforest base. Then, learn how to make all the staple Costa Rican dishes (gallo pinto, sopa negra, olla de carne, arroz con pollo, and more). Visit a coffee plantation to learn how coffee is produced from bean to cup. Learn about sustainable agriculture practices along the way and their environmental, economic and social impact.



## Spanish Language & Latin American Culture



All levels are welcome—beginner, intermediate and advanced! Take Spanish learning out of the classroom and use what you have studied in real-life scenarios. Become confident in your conversational skills by talking with native speakers. Compliment your studies by listening and learning to the music of Latin America and experience why dance is an integral part of this culture by learning cumbia, bachata, merengue, salsa, and more!





## Health & Wellbeing



Explore the art of mindfulness and discover how mental well-being can help us overcome challenges and achieve our goals. This module is designed to equip you with knowledge and strategies you need to lead a happier, healthier lifestyle as well as helping others who may be experiencing mental health issues. Develop a deeper connection to and understanding of the self by practicing yoga and meditation. Build your skills for independent college living and beyond.



## Volcanology & Thermal Springs



What do these topics have in common? LOCATION. Visit the northwest of Costa Rica to discover the land of fire, home to volcanoes and thermal springs. Visit several natural tropical ecosystems and learn about the geology of these spectacular environments. You'll also stand atop a volcanic crater lake and notice how atmospheric pressure differs at elevation. Curious? It's fascinating and truly exemplifies experiential learning, allowing you to retain new knowledge.



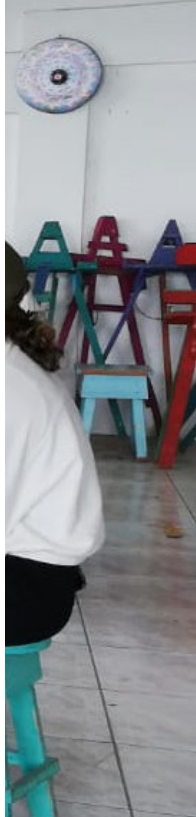




## Indigenous Art & Culture



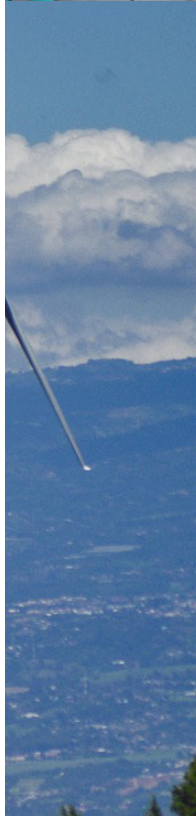
Be inspired by the vibrant culture and nature of Central America. Learn about the artistic heritage of Costa Rica and the Boruca indigenous community and experiment with indigenous techniques, including painting, traditional weaving and maybe even mask-making! Stay with the tribe and hear oral histories, participate in culturally relevant ceremonies, be a part of meals and more. Understand what it means for Boruca to be a matriarchal society and discuss the social roles of women with members of the community.



## Environmental & Wildlife Conservation



Learn the science behind global warming and the development of solutions for a sustainable future. Discover how Costa Rica is leading the way in eco-tourism while gaining an ethical barometer of responsible tourism. Contribute to ongoing eco initiatives by visiting different sites of energy sources, like the largest hydroelectric plant in the country. Spend one week at a coastal sea turtle conservation site learning from local biologists on the importance of wildlife preservation.





# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## How is this program different from your other Gap Year & Semester programs?

The Residential program is for someone who is independent, eager to learn, and would like to grow through guidance and an incredible interdisciplinary, experiential learning-focused curriculum. You will have at least one day off a week from scheduled field experiences, teachings, or programming. During this free time, you can explore the surrounding rainforest, go for a relaxing hike, swim in nearby waterfalls, hop on a FaceTime call with friends and family, and more! This program also differs as there is no camping, so accommodation will always be on a comfy mattress. Additionally, you are permitted to have electronics on course.

## Where will I be staying?

When you are not out in the field, your home will be in one of our rustic dorm rooms at the spectacular rainforest base. You will have access to hiking/running trails as well as a nearby health club for working out or swimming laps. About 1/3 of the time you will be out on explorations which will include overnight accommodation.





A photograph of two young women in a greenhouse. The woman on the left is smiling and looking down at a plant. She has dark hair tied back and is wearing a grey tank top and a necklace. The woman on the right is wearing a tan bucket hat and a white tank top, also looking down at the plant. They are surrounded by various green plants in pots.

# COURSE DETAILS

**AGE:** 17+ years old and must have graduated from high school

**DATES:** Fall 2022: October 3 – December 7  
Spring 2023: February 27 – May 3  
Fall 2023: October 2 – December 6

**COST:** Fall 2022 & Spring 2023:  
35 days – \$5,430 USD  
65 days – \$10,080 USD

Fall 2023:  
35 days – \$5,540 USD  
65 days – \$10,280 USD

**CREDIT:** Up to 10 semester credits available. Semester students are eligible for academic credit through the following options:

**Option 1:** Transfer credit via Western Colorado University

**Option 2:** Independent study with your university

*Send us an inquiry requesting our Academic Credit Packet to help you talk to your study abroad or academic advisor to approve course credit via one of the above options.*



# 35-65 DAY RESIDENTIAL ITINERARY

## WEEK 1

Day 1: Fly In | SJO

Day 2-5: Active quarantine | *Rainforest Base*

Day 6: Health & Wellbeing | *Bosque Prusia*

Day 7: Day Off

## WEEK 2

Days 7-8: Agriculture; Spanish Language & Latin American Culture | *Rainforest Base*

Day 9: Day Off

Day 10-14: Indigenous Art & Culture | *Boruca Indigenous Community*

## WEEK 3

Day 15: Day Off

Day 16-20: Peaceful Resolution & Social Justice | *Alajuela*

Day 21: Wildlife Conservation | *Rainforest Base*

## WEEK 4

Days 22-26: Volcanology | *Cartago/Alajuela*

Day 27-28: Environmental & Wildlife Conservation | *Cartago & Sarchí*

## WEEK 5

Day 29: Day Off

Day 30-35: Climate Change & Tropical Marine Biology | *Manuel Antonio*

## WEEK 5

Day 36: Day Off

Day 37: Health & Wellbeing | *Rainforest Base*

Day 38-42: Environmental & Wildlife Conservation | *Guanacaste*

## WEEK 6

Day 43: Spanish Language & Latin American Culture | *San Jose*

Day 44: Health & Wellbeing | *Moravia*

Day 45: Day Off

Days 46-49: Scuba & Tropical Marine Biology | *Panama*

## WEEK 7

Day 50-57: Scuba & Tropical Marine Biology | *Panama*

## WEEK 8

Day 58: Whitewater Rafting | *Sarapiquí*

Days 59-64: Volcanology & Thermal Springs | *Arenal*

Day 65: Fly Out | SJO

*This course itinerary is meant to be used purely as an example of how modules are laid out. Actual dates with change as they are adjusted around sea turtle nesting windows and other variables.*



## Day 2

- Breakfast (gallo pinto & eggs)
- Walk & tour in reserve, epiphytes & bromeliads lesson
- Lunch (casado)
- Spanish language lesson
- Nightly meeting & dinner (vegetables soup cooking lesson)

## Day 20

- Breakfast (cereal, fruit, granola, yogurt)
- Field experience, intro from conservationist guest speaker on Ostional sea turtle projects
- Beach clean up

## Day 40

- Breakfast (arepas & pancakes)
- Review and discuss researched solutions for problem areas in greenhouse project
- Visit to wildlife rescue center
- Dinner (arroz con pollo cooking lesson)

## Day 60

- Shallow water scuba diving and tropical marine life lessons, first coral reef & shipwreck dive, writing dive tables
- Lunch (patacones cooking lesson)
- Boat to Sloth Island to explore limestone caves
- Dinner (pasta Caribeña)



**OUTWARD BOUND  
COSTA RICA**



**TRAVEL JOURNAL**

DAY IN THE LIFE

Please note these schedules are examples to show "typical" days. They are not set in stone and are subject to change.





# NEXT STEPS

1. **ENROLL** in the 35-65 day Residential Gap Semester program on our [website](#).
2. **SUBMIT YOUR INITIAL DEPOSIT** to reserve your spot, and you will receive via email an Information Packet and Packing List for your course.
3. **EMAIL IN YOUR PAPERWORK** (including a copy of your flight itinerary and passport), pay your balance within 30 days of your course, and ask us any questions along the way.
4. **GET EXCITED** to meet one of our staff at the airport in Costa Rica to start your adventure!

## PLEASE NOTE

*It is the responsibility of the participant to book their flights to and from Costa Rica, these are not included in the course price. In-country transportation, accommodation and food are covered by Outward Bound Costa Rica.*







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commitment to serve through adventure-based learning.  
BE. OUT. THERE.*

[www.OutwardBoundCostaRica.org](http://www.OutwardBoundCostaRica.org)

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