

Dear future volunteer,

In this letter we would like to tell you about some facts concerning the Viva la Vida Cultural Center that we think you should know before coming. Most of them are common sense, but please take a look before applying to make sure that you agree and you don't have any problem about it.

- Be aware that you are coming to a village in the countryside of Cambodia, where there are a lot of insects, animals and the conditions are very different from those in the western world. If you are sensitive, you might have a bad experience.

**PLEASE IF YOU DECIDE TO COME DO NOT COMPLAIN ABOUT IT.**

- Please during your stay here, forget about yourself and think about all the children and people who live in extremely worse conditions than you. We have a comfortable house and facilities but everything is very simple and we have no luxuries here.

**HUMILITY IS A FUNDAMENTAL VIRTUE TO LIVE THIS EXPERIENCE**

- You must have a professional attitude with the children, they have to see volunteers as educators and not just as friends. Yours will be a short experience and if you are only friends with them and they think about you just as a person to have fun and not as a teacher or someone to listen and learn from, once you leave you will it will be more painful for them and you will create problems to the managers of the center. We must be a team and work together for a better education and a correct development of the activities. There are some rules that you must make sure children respect.

**YOU ARE HERE TO HELP THESE CHILDREN THROUGH AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM NOT TO MAKE THEM INSTANTANOUSLY HAPPY, WHICH IS FAKE HAPPINESS.**

- We live in a complicated village, alcohol addiction and gambling are always present and adults often do not take care of children because of that. Children are often forced to work and it is possible to face complicated situations. Who comes to live a volunteer experiences will not be able to change things so we strongly ask you to never take action in front of any situation that disgusts you. You immediately should report everything to the managers of the center (Nicola, Carmen and Saran), and they will decide how to deal with any kind of situation.

**PLEASE RESPECT THE CULTURE AND BE PRUDENT.**

- If you have any doubt or you disagree with anything related to the management of the project, please talk directly with the managers of the center and not with the other volunteers. It is very important to understand everything directly from the ones who live this reality every day. We are willing to listen to any kind of complain or suggestion and since you will come here to help us, it is fundamental to speak directly with us. It is difficult to understand everything in detail so try to communicate as much as possible with us to make it easier for everyone.

**ONLY IN THIS WAY YOUR CONTRIBUTION WILL BE PRECIOUS**

- We provide you with 3 basic khmer meals cooked by a local women and water. For extra stuff there are small shops in the village where you can buy food and cool drinks. If you have any strong allergy, you do not eat some products, you need special food or you do not like different food we are unfortunately not ready to deal with it.

- We have to adapt to the Cambodian time, so wake up and go to bed early and eat at the same time than them. We have a timetable for the activity and any volunteer is responsible for one area of the center.

**FOR ANY EXTRA INITIATIVE, WORKS AND ACTIVITIES, BEFORE DOING IT, PLEASE TALK WITH THE MANAGERS OF THE CENTER**

- You will be living and sharing time with a lot of different people, so you should be an open-minded, respectful, clean and organized person and try to keep a good work environment and house atmosphere. Also you need to take care of the house and the center, doing some cleaning and maintenance activities.

**DURING YOUR PERMANENCE HERE YOU MUST SEE THIS PLACE AS IF IT WERE YOUR HOUSE .**

- This is NOT a party place, drugs are strictly forbidden, as to drink alcohol and especially near the children. Alcohol is a big problem in the village so we have to be an example opposite to what the children see every day.. Invitations to weddings, parties or just drinking at home from the people of the village should not be accepted at all. After many negative experiences we must absolutely avoid this. If you need to have a fun evening, it might be a better idea to take a break and go to have fun in the city, there is no problem at all about it!

**THIS IS A CULTURAL CENTER FOR CHILDREN, NOT A RECREATIONAL CENTER FOR ADULTS**

- If you have problems of interpersonal relationship, psychic or psychological disorders, do not undertake this voluntary experience with the illusory expectation that this new situation can alleviate your problems or make you feel better. This is a voluntary and non-professional organization, it is not possible to properly care for people with these problems.

**YOU ARE HERE TO HELP CHILDREN, NOT TO HELP YOURSELF.**

- You have to send us a photo of your passport and pay your contribution to the association's bank account before we confirm you and book a place for you in the calendar.

**ALL VOLUNTEERS MUST COMPLAIN WITH THE SAME RULES, PLEASE DO NOT ASK TO PAY IN CASH WHEN YOU ARRIVE OR DIFFERENT CONDITIONS FOR YOU**

- There are not ATMs in the village so bring pocket money with you (dollars are accepted in the village but try to have small amounts). If you don't bring with you, you can go during the weekend to the city to do it.
- The money we ask for is to cover your daily expenses (food, water, bills of the center, salary of the woman cooking for us) .In case there is some money left it all goes to the ongoing projects. Due to many problems in the past we ask volunteers to pay for their stay in advance. If you suddenly decide to change your plans we cannot give you the money back, when we say yes to you we are saying no to many other people and we count on you. **PLEASE SEND THE REQUEST TO US WHEN YOU ARE SURE THAT YOU WANT TO COME**
- We are far away from the city, so bring all your necessary stuff with you such as mosquito repellent, toiletries (shampoo, soap...), etc...
- If you have more questions or doubts don't hesitate to contact us 😊

### **How do I reach the center?**

When we accept your request we will send you some more information about how to reach us.

### **What should I bring with me?**

No specific material is required to volunteer with Viva la Vida, apart from the enthusiasm, positive energy and the desire to help. We suggest you to bring a mosquito repellent with you. Regarding the dress code we ask you to respect the local culture.

### **What about vaccines?**

We are unfortunately not prepared to advice you about that, it depends also on your nationality, so please talk with your doctor about it.

### **Do I need a visa?**

Depending on your nationality you might need a visa (please check the information on Internet). For most European countries you can get your **tourist visa on arrival** for 30 \$, NOT the business visa. It is extendable for another month and you can stay as long as you want leaving and entering the country and paying for a new visa every month. For long stays we can help you to find a solution, just let us know.

For more information about Cambodia: <https://www.tourismcambodia.com>

## What am I going to do? Do I need to prepare something before coming?

The main activity that we need the volunteers to do is **teaching English** to the kindergarten children and to the group 4, the teenagers group with the highest level of English, our **environmental workshops**, which means clean plastics and recycle them and the **house daily tasks**. Besides the volunteers should help the teenager teacher of the Group 1 of English.

The volunteers have the following timetable that they need to follow. Everyone is in charge of different things. Usually weekends are free, just the house cleaning needs to be done, but if you organize yourself with the other volunteers, you can do it on Friday or Monday and go to visit some other place during the weekend. When we accept your request we will send you some more detailed information about the activities that you will be in charge of.

If you decide to stay during the weekend you can organize some games with the children in the football field or the library, relax and prepare the activities for the next week.

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
8 - 9	KINDERGARTEN					Cleaning of the house	FREE TIME
	Library : board games and books with the children						
9 - 10	KINDERGARTEN						
9 - 11	Sart Cambodia: Recycling Workshops						
11 - 12	FREE TIME						
12 - 14	LUNCH BREAK						
14 - 15	KINDERGARTEN					FREE TIME	FREE TIME + Preparation of the activities for the week
	Library : board games and books with the children						
15 - 16	KINDERGARTEN						
	Sart Cambodia: Recycling Workshops						
16 - 17	FREE TIME						
17 - 18	Football big	Football girls	Football small	Football big	Football small		
		English 1		English 1			
18 - 19	English 4		English 4		English 4		
20	DINNER						Free dinner**