

## **Cultural Immersion Nicaraguan Holiday**

**November 20-27, 2011**

From Granada, the oldest continually inhabited Spanish colonial city in the Americas, to the Fishing Village of Masachapa on a tranquil Pacific Ocean beach to international award winning ecolodge Finca Esperanza Verde on top of a mountain in the Nicaraguan highlands.

Trip sponsored by Sister Communities of San Ramón, Nicaragua

Trip leaders: Lonna and Richard Harkrader, 919 489-1656 [lharkrader@mindspring.com](mailto:lharkrader@mindspring.com),

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<http://www.fincaesperanzaverde.org>.

**\$1,250 includes all lodging, activities, in-country travel and most meals**

**Day 1 – Arrive Managua airport where we are met by a driver and chartered bus. Short 1 ½ hr. drive to Granada. On the way stop at pottery village of San Juan del Oriente, lunch in Catarina overlooking Laguna de Apoyo crater lake. Arrive Granada. Check into our hotel. Explore historic Granada.**

**Day 2 – Spend morning in Granada and then head by coach bus through sugar cane plantations to the fishing village of Masachapa on the Pacific Ocean. Check into our rooms at beach side Hotel Summer. Relax by the ocean or pool and watch fishing boats return from their day at sea. Dinner followed by star gazing with live marimba band performance.**

**Day 3 - Early morning fishing trip with local fishermen for those who have chosen this activity. Lovely meals including lobster. Stroll around the town center. Enjoy the beach. Music party and fundraiser for maternal health project in San Ramon with music by DJ Chela (aka Lauren Harkrader) of Brooklyn, NY at Hotel Summer for townspeople and DJ Chela fans.**

**Day 4 – Depart for award winning Finca Esperanza Verde Ecolodge (FEV), Best ecolodge in Nicaragua-2004. Virgin Holidays-Best small hotel for Responsible Tourism-2007) with view across the Dariense Mountain Range. Plant trees as part of FEV's reforestation project. Observe life of organic coffee farm. Pick coffee. Enjoy our first spectacular sunset and dinner. Local staff introduce themselves and welcome group.**

**Day 5 –Hike to see birds, waterfall, medicinal plants, orchids and butterflies. Lecture about the life cycle of butterflies in our butterfly conservatory. Thanksgiving dinner with all the fixings. Talk by staff about impact FEV has had on their lives. Talk by Richard Harkrader on the future of renewable energy.**

**Day 6 - Early morning bird hike. Breakfast. Visit town of San Ramón to experience many fascinating activities planned by residents including a traditional cooking class, jewelry making workshop, craft sale, local history talk by town leader and hand made paper demonstration.**

**Day 7 - Observe processing of coffee beans in FEV's wet mill. Nature hike with naturalist guides. Pass by La Chispa Elementary School built with income from tourism. (10% of income from ecotours funds a similar project each year.) Visit a coffee farm and meet the farmer and his family. Coffee cupping (tasting). Return to FEV for hike or relaxing in one of the many hammocks and rocking chairs. Local folk musicians perform around the campfire. Neighboring children roast marshmallows.**

**Day 8 - Depart FEV for Managua. You may choose to extend your trip by visiting other places of interest. Ask Lonna and Richard for suggestions.**

