

East Chapel Hill High School Cultural Immersion and Sister School Ecotour
to San Ramón, Nicaragua

Tropical adventure in the cool, green mountains of the Nicaraguan highlands
April 1-8, 2012

Trip sponsored by Sister Communities of San Ramón, Nicaragua (SCSRN)
Trip leader: Sandy Williamson swilliamson@chccs.k12.nc.us, 919 969-2482 x 264
\$910 includes all in-country meals, lodging, activities and transportation

Day 1 – Arrive Managua airport where you are met by our guide, a driver and chartered bus. Dinner at sunset at award winning Finca Esperanza Verde Ecologe (FEV) (Best ecolodge in Nicaragua-2004) with view across the Dariense Mountains. Local staff introduce themselves and welcome group.

Day 2 - Nature hike with naturalist guides. Visit La Chispa School built with income from tourism. (10% of income from ecotours funds a similar project each year). Meet teacher and students. Observe parent-run nutrition program. Visit a coffee farm and meet the farmer and his family. Coffee cupping (tasting). Learn about organic coffee farming. Picnic and swim at a near by river with waterfall.

Day 3 –Guided hike to see birds, waterfall, medicinal plants, orchids and butterflies. Lecture about the life cycle of butterflies in our butterfly conservatory. Learn to make tortillas by hand and to roast coffee the campesino way. Local folk musicians perform around the campfire. Neighboring children roast marshmallows.

Day 4 –Activity with students from El Trentino Primary School at the farm’s Environmental Education Center. Guided hike on one of FEV’s five hiking trails through the rain forest. Talk – “Sister Communities of San Ramón’s Impact on the Local Economy”. Talk – “Solar energy: a sustainable resource”-observe photovoltaic solar system components.

Day 5 –Depart FEV for the town of San Ramón. Stop at El Trentino Primary School on the way to visit and distribute school supplies. Arrive in San Ramón and meet your guest house family. Two guests stay with each family. Visit town of San Ramón (schools, herbal medicine farm and pharmacy, library, baseball stadium.....) with Tourist Guide Club of San Ramón. Traditional dance performance by young children.

Day 6 –Bird watch with children’s bird club. History lecture by member of the community. Tropical seed jewelry making workshop. Learn to make a special dish in Doña Adalila’s cooking class. Communal dinner with families. Entertainment by local folk musicians.

Day 7 – Visit Los Pipitos Center for Handicapped Children. Hike to a rural community. Learn about San Ramon’s urban water project built with support from SCSRN. Bird watch especially the oropendulas flying in and out of their 4 foot hanging nests. Visit craft market where primitive style paintings by local youth are sold (2 pm). Play chess and other games at the library (4 pm). Good bye send off 6 pm.

Day 8 – Return to Managua by chartered bus for departure or for a side trip on your own to another part of Nicaragua.