

# Service Journey Packet

## led2serve

*in Costa Rica*



We're so excited that you have chosen to join a Service Journey with led2serve! You are an important part of our efforts in Costa Rica and around the world. Your involvement makes it possible for us to continue these efforts and positively impact the lives of others.

We have designed this Welcome Packet to prepare you for your upcoming trip. This packet should provide answers to many questions you may have and help make you aware of some of our important procedures.

**Please read through each section carefully. If you have any other questions or inquiries, please contact us at your earliest convenience.**

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## About led2serve

### MISSION

To equip, inspire and mobilize individuals and teams to serve others around the globe and in local communities.

### VISION

To improve the quality of life by caring for the practical needs of others while providing a life-changing service experience for individuals, teams and families to serve together.

### APPROACH

We partner with organizations and communities to bring serving teams that will support their missions in serving the distressed, orphaned, lonely, underprivileged and others in need. Our Service Journeys include restoration efforts, construction and building, outreach programs, educational partnerships, sports and play programs, relief aid/ response teams and individualized service opportunities.

### We have 3 types of Journeys

You have joined either a Service Adventure, Service Mission or Service Learning Journey. Please review the website on the specific details of each Journey to be sure you are registered for the Journey that suits you best!

## About the Costa Rica Journey

Currently in Costa Rica we are partnered with the communities of La Fortuna, Santa Theresa, San Ramon and Nuevo Arenal. Your Journey will incorporate community efforts in these areas and/or partnering agencies.

- \* 80% of our Journey efforts are focused on projects in the local community.
- \* Each journey to Costa Rica is custom-designed to match the current needs of the communities served with the capabilities/skills of the Journey members.
- \* Serving may include teaching, training, soccer or sports, painting, construction, cooking, and helping widowed, elderly or disabled people.

- \* \*\* We encourage you to read more on the specific details and facts about Costa Rica at: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2019.htm>

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[www.led2serve.org](http://www.led2serve.org)



## AREA MAPS



# MAP OF COSTA RICA

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## About Nuevo Arenal

Nuevo Arenal is located on the shores of Costa Rica's largest lake, Lake Arenal. Both the town and the lake are named after the impressive Arenal Volcano. Nuevo Arenal (translates to New Arenal) gained its name appropriately in the early 1970's as people from the older town of Arenal relocated after their town was flooded to enlarge Arenal Lake to its current size. Many call this area the Swiss Alps of Central America, as it is surrounded by lush emerald green hillsides and mountains. Not to be overlooked is the enormous (but dormant) Tenorio Volcano and Tenorio National Park, which are also close to Nuevo Arenal.

Nuevo Arenal is located on the Northern Plains of Costa Rica. Please keep in mind that all drive times are approximate and depend on road conditions and the familiarity of the driver with the terrain. The climate of the Nuevo Arenal area is comfortable. During the months of December through April, one can expect temperatures in the 80's with a low in the 60's; typically with limited rainfall. From May through November, one can expect temperatures between the 80's to the low 60's; with more prevalent rainfall. The rainfall in the Nuevo Arenal area during this time of the year is generally limited to late afternoons and early evenings (though it could rain at any time).

Nuevo Arenal tours are plentiful, though most are only available from La Fortuna. La Fortuna is a long-time favorite of eco-tourists and considered by many to be the adventure capital of Central America. (see La Fortuna on next page)

## About Santa Theresa

Santa Theresa is a very small community on the way North to Boca Arenal. We travel to this region to partner with a school and community for english, sports, education and other service partnerships. This is the location that will host and launch our inaugural **led2play Journey** beginning in January, 2014. Along with led2play, Service Mission teams will begin discipleship classes for students and adults in the church adjacent to the school.

This is one of the hottest regions where we serve! However, you will enjoy a wonderful retreat setting where teams stay either at the Resort or at Monte Escondido Lodge.

## About La Fortuna

La Fortuna's history is intimately connected with the Arenal Volcano.

La Fortuna is situated 16 miles (26 km) from Ciudad Quesada and 75 miles (120 km) from San José. The drive from San José takes 2.5 to 3 hours. There are, however, several side trips along the way that are worth exploring, including the Poás Volcano and La Paz Waterfall Gardens. Within La Fortuna, there are many hotels to choose from, most of which are conveniently located near restaurants, internet cafes and the town center. The hotels outside of the town's boundaries are more expensive, but they offer great volcano views and more amenities than those near the center of town. La Fortuna has a number of good restaurants as well as banks, grocery stores, pharmacies, gift shops and more.

Arenal / La Fortuna is the adventure center of Costa Rica. This area has a wide variety of activities to offer, including horseback riding, whitewater rafting, waterfall rappelling, hiking, canopy tours, volcano hikes, cycling tours and cave explorations. You can relax at the La Fortuna Waterfall or at the area's various hot springs.

During your Journey we will plan some exciting activity options while we are in La Fortuna!



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## Journey Checklist

Below is a checklist to help you prepare for your journey. Please read carefully through this packet and return all of your completed documentation as soon as possible (scan and email to: [connect@led2serve.org](mailto:connect@led2serve.org)). You may also mail to: led2serve, PO Box 916763, Longwood, FL 32791.

**Please complete this checklist and send it in with your required documentation.**

Some of these documents may not be required from you if you are traveling with a college or school, or if you are a parent who has a group policy, etc. Please be aware of your own needs.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Registration** - This should have been completed if you are receiving this packet. If not, visit [www.led2serve.org](http://www.led2serve.org). You must become a member, register for your journey, and pay your deposit. None of your travel details can be arranged without this first step!

\_\_\_\_\_ Review the **Release of Liability Form** and **Code of Conduct** (page 13 and 14 of this packet). If you have completed your registration on-line, you have already accepted these terms during your registration.

\_\_\_\_\_ Review **Other Team Expenses**. An overview of your trip is on page 9-10.

\_\_\_\_\_ Send a Copy of your **Passport**; this is required. Please submit a copy of the page showing your photo and passport number.

\_\_\_\_\_ Send a Copy of your **flight information** so we may plan your transportation.

\_\_\_\_\_ Send a copy of your **Proof of Medical Insurance**.

\_\_\_\_\_ Send the page with your **Emergency Contact Information** and **Serving Preferences (page 12 of this packet)**.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone

X \_\_\_\_\_  
Your Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**\*\*\* I understand that I must complete and send the above documents.**

**\*\*\* Parents must complete online waivers if your child is traveling as a minor.**



## Airports, Hotels, and Travel Information

**Airport:** We recommend that you fly into Santamaria International Airport in San Jose, Costa Rica. (airport code: SJO) The distance from San Jose to La Fortuna is 2 hours. It is 4 hours from San Jose to Nuevo Arenal.

\* Please note you must arrange your flights within a specific time frame. We typically all arrive on flights between 11:00am-1:00pm. We all depart on flights between 12:00pm-2:00pm.

If you must arrive or depart outside of this time frame, there is an additional cost for transportation. Transportation will be an additional \$80.00-\$100.00. You will receive a preferred flight from your destination. If you have not, you should email us to find out which flights are recommended for your Journey dates.

**Hotels and Lodging while in Costa Rica:** Upon arriving in Nuevo Arenal, our teams will stay at a local Cabina (hotel rooms) or with host families, based on the Journey. We will make all of the arrangements prior to your arrival. Breakfast, lunch and dinner are included in your stay in Nuevo Arenal. The accommodations are simple and clean. We do not have AC in Nuevo. However, there are wonderful breezes! Rooms comfortably sleep two or three people.

**In La Fortuna:** We stay at a hotel in town that is walking distance to shops and sights. Some rooms have double beds and others sleep 3. We can make special accommodations. All rooms have AC. If you are traveling with a spouse and/or would like a double bed, please be sure to request this on your application.

**In Santa Theresa:** We stay in a lovely retreat on the lake. This gives us walking access to partner our school and church. You may enjoy swimming in the lake, horseback riding and simply relaxing during your free time!

Please note that if you choose to have your own room or if you have other needs, just ask. We will try and accommodate each situation. There may be an additional charge for a single room. However, we are happy to discuss your requests and attempt to make those arrangements.

## Ground Transportation

On the day you arrive and the day you depart, there is typically a 3-4 hour ride. On arrival day, some teams will stop for lunch on the way to our destination. However, plan to have snacks with you on your travel day. On departure day, we typically leave early in the morning (6:00am) to get to the airport.

When you first arrive at the airport in San Jose, there will be a led2serve representative or one of our partners to escort you to your arranged transportation. You will travel by taxi or bus, depending on the number of people on your team. The cost for your transportation is included in your journey fee. However, you must arrive and depart within the team time frame listed above. Please coordinate with led2serve before purchasing your flights. If the team transportation times do not work for you, we will help you arrange other transportation to your team location.

## Personal Documents and Money

When traveling to Costa Rica you must have a passport; you are not required to obtain a VISA. It is advisable to have your immunization record in your possession when traveling. BEFORE you leave the United States please make two copies of your passport and immunization records. Leave one copy at home and carry one copy with you in your luggage. You will also have sent one to led2serve. We will travel with a copy. You may use US dollars in Costa Rica and your credit cards. You should call your credit card company BEFORE you leave the USA. Let them know you may use the card, and also ask what additional fees may be.

## Health Insurance and Medical Concerns

**Health Insurance:** Every person traveling with a led2serve Service Journey must provide proof of current medical insurance. Should you require medication, hospitalization, or medical attention, you are responsible for your own medical expenses. We will send you options for additional medical coverage, if requested.

**Immunizations:** We recommend that all Journey members have current immunizations. You should have a recent tetanus shot. We recommend that you visit the US Center for Disease Control ([www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)) for the most current recommendations.

**Medicine:** Please be sure that you have enough of your personal medication(s) or prescription(s) for the duration of your Service Journey. We suggest you pack at least one night of medication in your carry-on luggage.

**Medical Attention:** If you should require medical attention, there are hospitals in San Jose and surrounding areas. These hospitals provide good medical care. You will be responsible for all financial expenses involved in your medical care and treatment, should it be required.

## Other Expenses

**Country Exit Fee:** Currently \$29.00. You will need to pay this in cash at the airport!

**Meals on your own:** During your travel days you are responsible for your meals. Additionally, you are responsible for 1 lunch and 1 dinner on your own during your free time when there are no team meals. You can plan on \$8.00-10.00 per meal.

**Beverages:** All meals are served with water or a juice. Please be sure to plan on any drinks you may want beside what is offered with meals. You should plan on tipping at meals on your own.

**Gratuities:** You are responsible for tipping at all meals, for your drivers, and for the Cabina housekeeping. Estimated tipping for the week is \$1.00 per meal, \$15.00 in total for your bus driver and \$6.00-7.00 for your housekeeping.

**Adventure Options:** Adventure tours are additional. Normally, you will have 1-2 days on your own for adventure options. \*\*\*\* Price list will be supplied!



**Spending Money (optional):** If you want to bring US Currency (USD); small bills are suggested; they are easier to exchange. There are many ATM machines. There is no need to exchange money before you arrive or in Costa Rica.

**Fundraising for expenses (visit the website for more information):** You may fundraise by writing letters or other activities like garage sales, selling items, or bake sales. Tax-deductible receipts are sent to donors who write checks to led2serve. In the event you are not able to raise all the funds for your Journey, your deposit will not be refunded. However, it will be transferable to a future led2serve Journey. If only a portion of your Journey Fee is raised, that amount will remain in a special account for you for up to twelve (12) months; during that time, you can apply the amount towards another led2serve Service Journey. After that period of time, the money will be released to the led2serve Scholarship Fund and used toward future Service Journey expenses.

- \* *We recommend that any and all payments (after your initial deposit) be made by check and sent before your due date to avoid the 2.5% PayPal transaction fees.*
- \* *A late fee may be incurred if your Journey is not paid in full 45 days prior to your Journey deadline (or other date if advised). led2serve cannot guarantee your Journey price if this payment date is not met.*

## Suggested Packing List

### **For your service projects please have close toed shoes!**

Check the weather before you travel! Typically, wear shorts, capris or jeans during the day. You will receive a led2serve t-shirt before your trip and you may purchase more if you choose.

### **Packing List:**

- \* Activewear appropriate for hot weather and outdoor activities with children
- \* Underclothing and sleep wear
- \* Sunglasses, shades and a hat to protect against sun
- \* Tennis shoes and flip flops for casual days or in the shower
- \* Church clothes and shoes, as applicable
- \* Shoes appropriate for walking and your adventures
- \* Sunscreen and aloe (be careful: we will be very close to the equator!)
- \* Personal toiletries, towel and washcloth
- \* Bug spray with DEET, a small first aid kit and hand sanitizer
- \* Flashlight and batteries
- \* Fanny pack or small bag to carry your money and personal documents
- \* Water bottle (you can drink from the tap there; it is very good water!)
- \* Camera or smart phone
- \* Alarm clock
- \* Personal medication and vitamins/supplements
- \* Travel pillow, ear plugs and/or sleep mask
- \* If you want to pack snacks take only items that won't melt or spoil. Protein bars or granola are great snacks!

### **We recommend:**

Pack a complete change of clothes and travel-sized toiletries in your carry-on bag in case your checked bag is lost or misplaced. If you are taking any medications or wear glasses/contact lenses, be sure to pack these inside your carry on, as well.

## Hydration and Food

It is very important for each person to drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration. Please bring a refillable water bottle to keep with you during your visit. Water is potable in most of the areas where we serve. In cases where it is not, you will be responsible for purchasing water to sustain your needs. We have an excellent relationship with Moyas Restaurant, adjacent to our Cabinas in Nuevo Arenal. A typical meal might include eggs, pancakes, fruit, cereal, bread, jams, and coffee for breakfast. Lunch is our biggest meal of the day and generally consists of your rice, beans, chicken, fish, salad, fruit, sandwiches, or pizza. We have wonderful options for dinner. You will be pleased with all of the food choices available in our partner communities. Costa Rica has fresh and healthy food choices.

## Airlines and Donation Luggage Expectations

Each journey member is asked to bring 1 of bag filled with donations or supplies. Check our website to find the list of current needs so you can seek donations or buy the items on sale in advance. Please call or go online with your airline provider to view the most current travel and TSA requirements. For example, JetBlue allows 1 free checked bag and 2 carry-on pieces. Typically you can carry on one luggage for the overhead and a personal backpack. In this situation, your free checked bag could be where bag you pack your donations/supplies.

\* We can always use school supplies and sports equipment for the village students.

## Additional Information You May Want To Know

**Custom Forms:** While on the airplane, and before you arrive at customs, you will be asked to fill out a customs form. There is a section that asks you to put your address while in Costa Rica. In the name section, please write “Bromelias”. In the address section, please write “La Fortuna, Costa Rica.”

**Gifts/Money/Used Clothing:** Please **DO NOT** give any money and/or gifts to any of the local people, children or staff. If you feel compelled to give money or gifts, please do so through your Journey Leader. We have intentional methods to distribute gifts. If you would like to leave items, please give them to your Journey leader.

**Internet and Computers:** There is internet access at a local cafe during your stay in Nuevo Arenal. At this location, it is customary to purchase a drink or appetizer to use their internet. While in La Fortuna, you will have free wifi access in your rooms.

**Phones:** If you’d like to use your cell phone while in Costa Rica, please check with your cell phone provider to be sure you have international phone service. Your led2serve leaders will have phones at all times for emergencies.



## Emergency Contact Information

Should your family or loved ones need to contact you **IN AN EMERGENCY** while you are on your Journey, they can email [connect@led2serve.org](mailto:connect@led2serve.org). Journey Leaders receive email while they are on our teams. Also, you will be supplied with the Journey Leader's phone number prior to your departure. Please share this with family and loved ones.

Please list a stateside emergency contact persons:

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list any allergies you have (medication, food, animals):

\_\_\_\_\_

## Serving Preferences

1. Is there a specific age group or area you prefer to work in? If yes (or NO) please explain.
2. Do you have any skills or abilities that would uniquely qualify you for a specific area of work? (example: computer skills might be valuable on our tech crew, medical skills might help us in our medical center).
3. Do you have a heart or passion for a specific area of serving? If yes, please describe:

4. **Please circle your preferred areas of involvement:**

Audio/visual	Medical (detail please) _____
Automobile Repair	Music (instrumental) _____
Building/Construction	Music (vocal)
Community Outreach	Office/Clerical
Computers/Graphic Art	Organization
Cooking	Outdoor/Playground Crew
Dance	Prayer/Intercession
Dental	Puppet Ministry
Discipleship	Sports
Drama	Teaching
Foreign Languages	Training
Hospitality	Technology
Leadership	Transportation/Driver
Painting	Veterinarian/Animals
Landscaping	Reforestation



## Release of Liability and Responsibility of Traveler Form

led2serve Inc., its Journey Leaders, Journey Coordinators and/or Board of Directors hereinafter “led2serve” act as an agent for the team member in connection with all aspects of their Service Journey. It is understood and agreed that led2serve assumes no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident (including death), medical expenses, delay or irregularity which may be occasioned for any reason whatsoever, due to its own acts or omissions or through the acts or omissions of any company or person engaged by led2serve for the purpose of transporting or housing team member. led2serve accepts no liability or responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in transportation or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, or other causes. led2serve reserves the right to substitute accommodations of similar quality to those specified in the itinerary and to cancel any Service Journey prior to departure, in which latter case a full refund will constitute full settlement to team member (excluding flight fees). I grant led2serve the right to photograph, video, and/or interview me and I give them full and perpetual permission to use resulting pictures, depictions, images and quotes in its accounts and promotions, for no financial consideration whatsoever. led2serve reserves the right to send any team member home at their own expense if there is an infraction of the guidelines agreed upon or if deemed necessary by the Journey Leader in order to protect the safety of any person(s) and partnership within the country. I will be responsible for any costs incurred and I will not receive refund of my Service Journey Fees. I have read the foregoing and understand that the above is a full and complete release of liability of led2serve. If I do not fully comprehend this statement, I will seek legal advice before signing. I understand that by submitting this release/disclaimer that I am bound by the contents herein.

**Print Travelers' Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Travelers' Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\* This form must be signed by the parent or legal guardian if the TRAVELER is under 18 years of age.

\*\*\* THE UNDERSIGNED below are the legal parents or guardians of the TRAVELER, referred to above, and agree(s) to the foregoing RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY OF TRAVELER.

**Print Parent/Guardian Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_



## Code of Conduct

After many years of experience in coordinating teams, we have formulated the following agreement for all teams/individuals serving with us. The purpose of these guidelines are to maintain the safety and effectiveness of the Service team, our partners and our organization.

I/we understand that by joining a led2serve Service Journey, we are working together to achieve the goals of building partnership, community development, sharing love and caring for others. By joining this Journey, I commit to uphold, support and strengthen the mission and vision of led2serve. I will respect the leadership guidelines as set forth by my Journey Leader(s).

I/we understand led2serve's commitment to: facilitate logistics of the trip - including meals, lodging, transportation, ministry site set-up, interpreters, adventures, etc; provide service opportunities as discussed prior to the trip; ensure that service projects take place; and ensure that each trip is a positive, challenging experience for all.

In turn, I/we commit to maintain the utmost respect for the vision of led2serve, its staff, and the people and culture of Costa Rica; to focus on quality of serving others; to demonstrate love, acceptance and forgiveness in everything we do, especially as we express it to the children; to adhere to the rules and regulations set forth by led2serve in this Journey Packet.

I/we understand that any additional costs incurred (trips to the airport, etc.), as a result of dismissal, unplanned departures, or leaving this Service Journey early for any reason, will be the responsibility of me, the individual.

I/we will only perform activities that I am comfortable doing and will work at my own pace. I understand that my participation may involve physical activity, contact with unfamiliar persons and travel to and from various locations.

I/we understand that the foundation of led2serve is "serving without boundaries". This means that I will respect those serving with me regardless of age, skill level, gender or belief structures. I agree to act with dignity and cultural sensitivity by being a positive role model to my fellow team members and Journey Leaders.

I/we understand that unless I have registered for a Service Mission Journey with a specific faith focus, some of my team members may or may not have a belief system similar to mine and will be from all walks of life. With this in mind, I will act respectfully towards those on my team.

I/we agree to not use foul or rude language, including jokes or any conversations that could be considered harassment of any kind. I will use my free time in the community in a respectful way. I/we understand that if I am of age and choose to drink on a Journey, I will be respectful of the choices others make and will not overindulge.

**Print Travelers' Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Travelers' Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\* This form must be signed by the parent or legal guardian if the TRAVELER is under 18 years of age.

\*\*\* THE UNDERSIGNED below are the legal parents or guardians of the TRAVELER, referred to above, and agree(s) to the foregoing RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY OF TRAVELER FORM.

**Print Parent/Guardian Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_



*THANK YOU FOR YOUR COMMITMENT  
TO OUR PARTNER COMMUNITIES AND  
TO SERVING OTHERS*

led2serve is a 501(c)(3) charitable non-profit organization  
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