

Dispatches from a Girl Scout Abroad

By Nicole Popp
Dispatch #4



Hi,

This is Nicole Popp again with my 4th dispatch telling you about some of the travel opportunities you can have as a Girl Scout and also filling you in on my Gap Year. I would like to describe my conservation work here in Costa Rica and also talk about Girl Scout Destinations.



I'm in Costa Rica with an organization called GoEco. For my Gap Year this is the only paid program I'm doing. All the other things I've done have either given me room and board or a small stipend. I'm not endorsing GoEco – it is one of many similar programs but it met two of my Gap Year goals – getting better at Spanish and also getting involved in the science of conservation work.

Here is Costa Rica, I started out with language school and a homestay. I loved the homestay – the mom was so friendly and it was easy to work on my Spanish with her. I had a hilarious time trying to explain with my limited Spanish that the snack I had with me was seaweed – something they don't seem to eat in Costa Rica.

While I am in Costa Rica I will work at two conservation centers where they rehabilitate animals like sloths, tapirs, scarlet macaws, monkeys, iguanas and various cats. At this first one, I'm in a dorm but at the second center, I'll have another homestay. I've attached a bunch of pictures of the animals I'm getting to work with.

Some of my interest in conservation comes from a Destination I did several years ago when I was 14. A Destination is a Girl Scout sponsored trip. I was able to go to Yellowstone and the Tetons in Wyoming. We camped, canoed, learned about geothermal features, hiked and saw huge wildlife. I received a \$500 scholarship from the Girl Scouts and tacked the trip onto a family vacation on the mainland so it was very affordable.

Check out Destinations with <http://forgirls.girlscouts.org/travel/take-a-trip/destinations/> and find an adventure. There are international trips, canoe trips, space exploration camps and many other trips you can take with your fellow Girl Scouts.

