

Booklet

# Longo Mai

**Borrowing:** Free

**Purchase price:** 1,000 Colones/available at Martha's



¡Bienvenid@s a Longo Mai! We are happy that you are going to spend some time with us. In this booklet we want to inform you about the village, its recreational offerings and its projects.

First you will find a summary of the history of Longo Mai. Afterwards follows practical information for your stay in Longo Mai and in the third part a description of the recreational offerings. For longer stays you'll find some information about the project tourism in Longo Mai at the end.

We hope that this booklet will be a useful companion and we are glad to receive any improvement suggestions!

**Updated: December 2015**

## History of Longo Mai

The origins of the Longo Mai movement are to be found in Austria, Germany, Switzerland and France. Young people from the generation 68 founded the first settlement in 1973 in France (*Longo mai* in Provençal means “may it last long”). They focused on living together, based on self-administration and agricultural self-sufficiency. In addition, they initiated many social projects.

In 1979, when many Nicaraguans had to flee from the terror regime of Anastasio Somoza, the cooperative decided to buy land in Costa Rica. The idea was to make it available to the refugees and thereby enable them to live independently and in dignity. After the victory of the Sandinistas, most of the Nicaraguans returned to their home countries. Families of Salvadorian refugees replaced the Nicaraguans, and landless Costa Rican peasant families (indigenous and non-indigenous) settled down as well. Today, most inhabitants have Salvadorian roots.

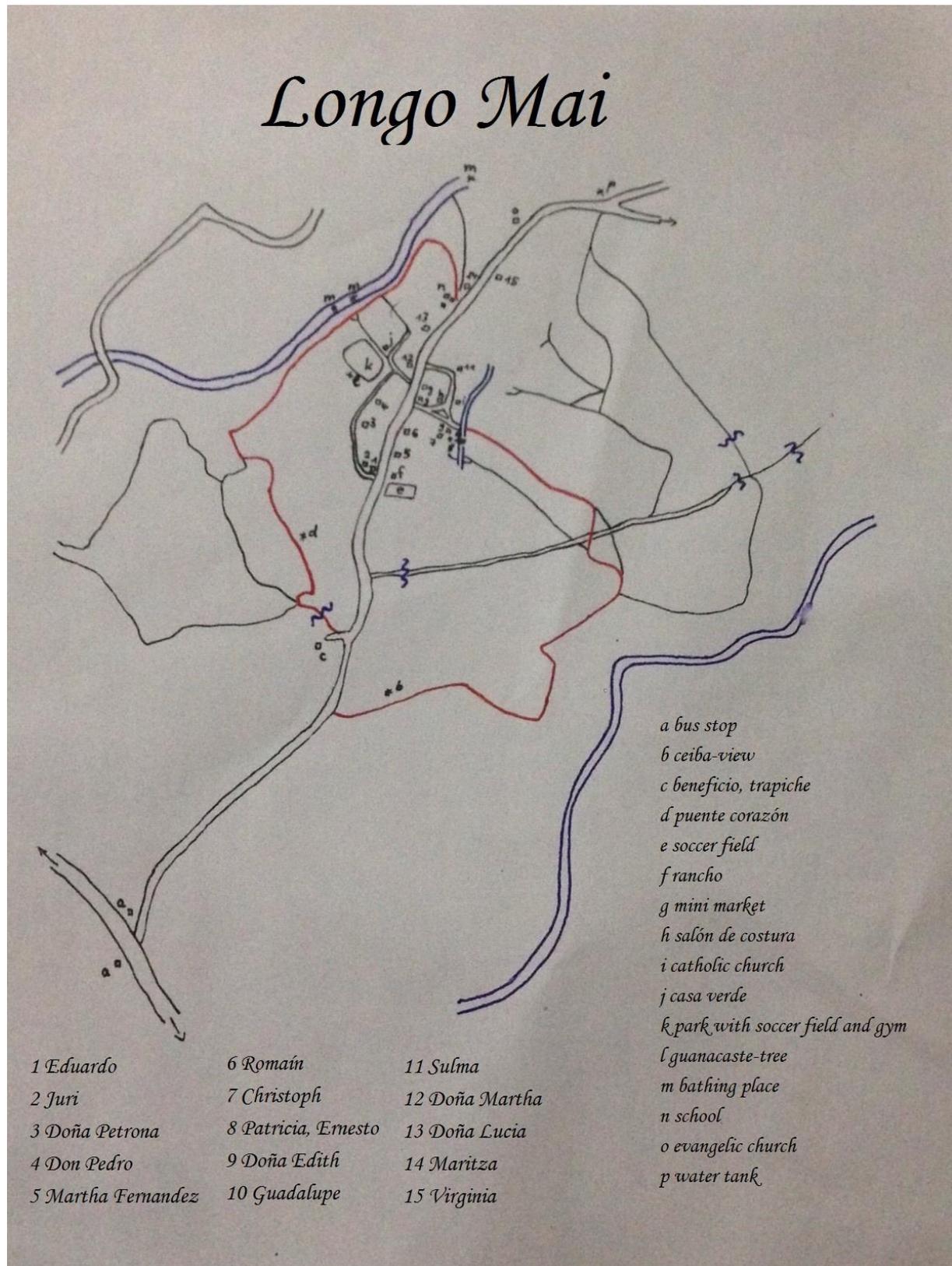
Roland Spendlingwimmer, a founding member of Longo Mai, has been guiding the project from the very first day. While in the 80s the primary concern was to provide shelter for Central American refugees, today the community is developing into an ecological center. Located at the center of vast Del Monte pineapple plantations, the village of Longo Mai (*Longo Mai* and *Finca Sonador* are used synonymously) functions as a “green lung”.

Whereas the huge pineapple plantations are a social and ecological catastrophe, the agriculture of Longo Mai is combined with environmental protection and eco-tourism. For its own use the village produces corn, beans, rice, yucca (manioc), bananas, platanos (plantains), meat, milk, eggs, fruit etc. They also grow coffee and sugarcane crops to sell them on the markets. Longo Mai today comprises about 2,200 acres, half of which is protected rainforest. There are two *pulperías* (village stores), one school, a kindergarten and two churches for the more than 700 inhabitants. Also, one regional environmental organization (UNAPROA) is based in Longo Mai. The infrastructure as well as various activities are run by numerous committees.

In 2004, the Longo Mai concept of socially responsible tourism based on cultural exchange was awarded with the “to-do” prize of the German “Studienkreis für Tourismus und Entwicklung” (study group for tourism and development).

Map of Longo Mai – updated 2015

# Longo Mai



## Practical Information

### # Host family

The dependency on the development of prices of the world market for coffee and sugarcane is strong – this is why tourism is very important for a stable income for the inhabitants of Longo Mai. Many families offer guest rooms or *cabinas* (rooms with individual access) with full pension.

The tourism committee, represented by Doña Edith, is responsible for the assignment of a host family. She is also the one to be asked about current prices. Newcomers are asked to pay her a visit upon arrival. In case of problems with the assigned host family it is very important for us to be informed. Think about a clarifying chat with your host family or with Doña Edith; also changing your host family is possible. The rooms or *cabinas* are usually simple, but cleanliness can be taken for granted.

In all host families you will have the possibility to wash your clothes, although most families offer to wash your clothes for you. Information and stories about the people and the place are free and so are the latest village rumors. ;-)

### # Active participation in everyday life – cross-cultural exchange

- Help families with garden work and experience traditional knowledge (medicinal plants: Maritza, Don Pedro, Doña Edith...)
- Help in the fieldwork (coffee harvest, sugarcane harvest, corn, beans, etc.)

Talk to your family!

### # Communication

Within Costa Rica calling is cheap. For international calls, the Internet phone at the Internet Café "El Balcón" in San Isidro (Internet will cost 600 colones per hour/via brought along device and Wifi 350 colones) or Skype is recommended, as mobile calls are quite expensive. However, the cheapest and easiest method to keep in touch with family and friends is through Internet Messenger (Whatsapp, etc.). If you don't use it yet, just buy a cheap Sim-card of a Costa Rican company (with "kölbi" you have the best signal in Longo Mai) and let the phone be set up in one of the numerous mobile shops in San Isidro. Internet without extra services will cost about 100 colones per 10 MB (Note: The Internet signal is often weak, depending on the time and location in the village. Large traffic, such as uploading videos, is therefore often tedious).

### # Address

Post can be received using the following address:

Longo Mai

Apdo. 292-8000

San Isidro de El General 11901

Costa Rica

The mailbox owner is Roland and it is irregularly checked by him. He delivers received letters to Edith. In case of packets you get a removal order and have to visit the post office in San Isidro on your own to pick it up (Mon-Fri: 8:00 to 17:00, Sat: 8:00 to 12:00).

## # Shopping

Some groceries and cigarettes can be bought in the *pulperías*. For a broader choice it is recommended to go to San Isidro. Many residents of Longo Mai also sell their own products in the village (e.g. Don Pedro sells milk, cheese and fish - all from his own breeding, Aino sells coffee picked in Longo Mai). On top of that, every two weeks on Saturday a "Feria" (farmer's market) takes place in Longo Mai.

Visitors are asked not to drink excessively in the street, as this leaves a very bad image. Also, drugs (including alcohol and cigarettes) should not be made accessible to children and teenagers. The laws against drug abuse in Costa Rica are very strict.

Longo Mai's water supply is the clean mountain stream Convento from January to April and from May to December water is being taken from a spring. Some chlorine will be added to the water as almost everywhere in Costa Rica, so it is potable at any time.

## # Things to keep in mind

When you leave the finca, store valuables and money inside your clothes. Instead of your passport, it is sufficient to take a copy of the first page and a copy of the permit/entry stamp along. Also, in Longo Mai it is always recommended to lock your door and keep an eye on your belongings when you are out (e.g. never leave your camera/wallet unattended at the river)!

- Water – rainfall in the mountains can cause the rivers to swell rapidly (it might even make your return impossible)
- Lightning – avoid isolated trees etc. (storms occur very spontaneously)
- Poisonous snakes – wear **boots** (especially recommended during the rain season), especially in the forests – so far no accidents with visitors
- Sun protection, drink a lot!
- Earthquake – they are usually light quakes – in the case of a strong earthquake, look for cover under a table or in a doorframe, do not run outside (falling objects) – earthquakes usually last only a few seconds, due to the light construction of the houses injuries are unlikely (earthquakes are rare)
- Dogs (in the evening/night hours), horses (may kick, dangerous for unexperienced riders)
- Insect bites – don't scratch (infections)

You might be the first and only visitor of your home country that the people of Longo Mai ever get to see – with your behavior you represent everybody from your country – represent them well!

## # Health

In Longo Mai there is a large variety of medical plants and numerous people have great knowledge of their usage; talk to Doña Edith, Don Pedro, Don Carlos, Mora, Maritza or Yendri.

In the case of serious health issues it is best to look for a pharmacy in San Isidro (in most of the pharmacies there is also a doctor) – the doctor will offer you a free diagnosis, but he or she will also try to sell you medication. In San Isidro there are many good doctors and the emergency room of the hospital in San Isidro is available for emergencies 24/7. For further information see Doña Edith, Don Pedro, Ernesto, Cristóbal, or Roland.

## # Recycling

In front of the Catholic Church you will encounter containers for glass, metal (cans), PET bottles, and used batteries – please make use of them! Never drop toilet paper or other things in the toilets – the pipes are rather thin and may clog. Information about waste and recycling can be obtained at Ernesto's or Maritza's place.

## # Public transportation

It is possible to get from San José to Longo Mai without changing buses – take a bus of *Tracopa*. Another possibility is to take a bus of *Musoc* to San Isidro and then change to a bus of *Gafeso* that goes to Buenos Aires, which is south of Longo Mai; so you need to get off halfway.

Once on the bus, all the buses will stop in Longo Mai if you pull the string or talk to the driver before leaving. If you wait at the bus stop, you can only get on the indirect buses, though signalize to the driver in time that you want to get on the bus. The indirect services are run by the *Gafeso* company between Buenos Aires and San Isidro (coll. “Pérez”). It is also possible to take most of the *Tracopa* busses.

Departure times of the *Gafeso* buses in Buenos Aires (updated 2015):

5:15 AM (indirecto)	9:00 AM (indirecto)	2:00 PM (directo)
6:00 AM (directo)	10:00 AM (directo)	3:00 PM (indirecto)
6:30 AM (indirecto)	11:00 AM (indirecto)	4:00 PM (indirecto)
7:30 AM (directo, Mon-Sun)	12:15 PM (directo, Mon-Sun)	5:00 PM (directo)
8:00 AM (indirecto)	1:15 PM (indirecto)	6:00 PM (indirecto, Mon-Fri)

Departure times of the *Gafeso* buses in San Isidro (updated 2015):

5:15 AM (directo, Mon-Sun)	12:15 PM (directo, Mon-Sun)	5:00 PM (directo)
6:00 AM (indirecto)	1:00 PM (indirecto)	6:30 PM (indirecto)
7:20 AM (directo)	2:00 PM (indirecto, Mon-Sun)	7:45 PM (indirecto)
8:30 AM (indirecto)	3:00 PM (directo)	10:00 PM (indirecto, Mon-Fri)
10:00 AM (directo)	4:00 PM (indirecto)	

Approximate departure times of the *Tracopa* buses in San Isidro (\* = leaves on time):

to Paso Canoas: 8 AM / 4 PM / 7:30 PM / 9 PM

to Golfito: 10 AM / 6 PM

to David: 10:30 AM (directo)

to Ciudad Cortes: 11:30 AM / 5:30 PM

to Coto 47: 1:30 PM

to Laurel: 2 PM (directo)

to San Vito: 5:30 AM\* / 9 AM / 11 AM / 2 PM\* / 2:30 PM / 7 PM

to Ciudad Neily: 4:45 AM\* / 6:30 AM\* / 12:30 PM\* / 3 PM\*

to San Jose: 7:00 AM / 8:30 AM / 9:00 AM / 10:30 AM / 1:00 PM / 4:00 PM / 5:45 PM / 8:30 PM

Departure times of the *Blanco* buses in San Isidro (\*\* = comes from/goes to San José):

To Quepos (not via Longo Mai): 7 AM / 11:30 AM / 3:30 PM

To Uvita (not via Longo Mai): 9 AM / 4 PM

to El Roble (not via Longo Mai): 12:15 PM / 5 PM

to Puerto Jiménez (via Longo Mai): 6:30 AM / 11 AM\*\* / 3 PM\*\*

Due to the limited accessibility the direct buses have shorter travel times than the indirect buses. In a “directo”, you always have to pay full fare until the final stop, no matter where you exit (To a European or North American all bus fares appear quite cheap, to costs for going from San Isidro to Longo Mai reach from 600 to 1200 colones). Depending on the occupancy rate, *Gafeso* buses from Buenos Aires take approx. 30-55 minutes to Longo Mai. The 8 o'clock indirecto to San Isidro, for example, frequently reaches Longo Mai between 8:40 and 8:45.

From San Isidro, the directos take approx. 30-50 minutes to Longo Mai, the indirectos during the day about one hour. *Tracopa* buses (the fare being comparable to the directos from *Gafeso*) take approx. 40-50 minutes. The *Tracopa* and *Gafeso* terminals in San Isidro are located just about two minutes on foot from each other; if there is no *Gafeso* bus leaving, try *Tracopa*. Tickets for *Gafeso* should be bought 1-2 hours in advance, because later even the standing room might be sold out and they might not take you.

From the Longo Mai bus stop, a shuttle is available upon request. The residents that live around the bus stop and Edith's family (tel. 8330 6118) charge approx. 3,000 colones for this service. If you call early, we can also offer you a pick-up service with horses.

An alternative to public transportation is given by Jovino, Mingo, Enrique and Nando with whom you can plan excursions to places nearby.

## # Whom to talk to

Don't be afraid just to ask your families or any person on the street if you are looking out for a person. The people know each other and will be glad to help you.

- Doña Edith (Spanish): Answers questions about the *who? how? what? where?* In Longo Mai, is responsible for the assignment of a host family – tel. 8330 6118
- Cristóbal (German, Spanish, English, French) – comprehensive library as well literature about Longo Mai – please come before 10 AM or after 4 PM –serves as contact person for all possible projects in the past, present or future - zsuzsacr@yahoo.co.in
- Roland (German, Spanish, English, French) – coordinator of Longo Mai – lives in San Isidro, usually comes on Saturday – tel. 86573552, rolspending@gmx.net
- Social servants – the Austrian Service Abroad sends civil servants to Longo Mai annually (with occasional breaks) – the civil servants will readily show you the village and give you information (ask for the “Civi”)
- Volunteers – many volunteers live in Longo Mai for months and are accordingly well-informed; also, they can offer ideas about how to productively participate in the community
- For translations: Social servants, volunteers, Yolanda, Olga, Ernesto, Aino, Cristóbal, some of the visitors
- For transportation: Jovino, Mingo, Enrique or Nando

We attempt to create the circumstances that are necessary to make your stay pleasant. Please share improvement suggestions, don't forget that all the work related to coordination, information, communication, and so on is done by volunteers – the project tourism of Longo Mai is a unique experiment, all visitors can contribute.

## Activities, recreational offerings

Visitors of Longo Mai have the unique possibility to realize long-term projects. In addition, there are a big number of activities that can be done by anyone anytime.

Not only you, but also the population of Longo Mai benefits from cross-cultural exchange. Many people here do not have the opportunity to travel (low incomes). Television creates false impressions, tourists usually convey the only real images of their respective countries. Longo Mai frequently supports teenagers from the village who want to get to know the world – villagers that have the same dream that has led you to come.



**The River Sonador near Pasiflora**

### # Activities

During the rainy season it is advisable to go on excursions in the early morning, as rains and thunderstorms start around noon (Little creeks can rapidly turn into flash floods). In any case, we recommend good shoes and sufficient sun protection.

- Forest trails
- Horseback riding, for example 2 hours to the spectacular waterfall “Perica” – bathing is possible (with care) in the lower basin of the waterfall, in the upper one **it is perilous** - for a tour on horseback or by foot - talk to Peligro, Daniel or other villagers ...
- Horse rental – talk to Doña Edith, Daniel and other families that own horses – unexperienced riders should ask for a *caballo manzo* (tame horse) – the trails have a lot of roots and stone, falls are very dangerous!
- Dancing: Typical dances are Cumbia, Salsa, Bachata or Merengue – courses with Daniel, Rolando or Juan Perez...
- Swimming in the river
- Soccer

## # Guided Tours

- Rock paintings (Petroglyphs), Ceiba (our huge tree): Hernán, Tito, Reina, Sara, Peligro and others (information: Susana, Guadalupe)
- Agriculture: Doña Edith, Daniel, Yolanda, Nando, Oscar,
- Flora & fauna in the rainforest: Luis, Maritza, Enoch, Oscar
- Tour to the waterfall: Peligro, Daniel
- Finca Pasiflora: A personal introduction can be organized over Doña Edith, on the Finca, which is located two miles above Longo Mai, you can shop for home-made bread, granola and tropical dried fruit.

The price should be agreed before the tour starts! Normally it amounts about 15,000.

## # Courses

- Spanish classes with Consuelo, Olga, Giselle, Johanna, or Yolanda (all of them speak English)
- another possibility for learning Spanish is to exchange language classes with students who want to learn English or German
- Bribri classes with Baudilia or other speakers of that language
- Dancing: Typical dances are Cumbia, Salsa and Merengue – classes with Rodolfo, Daniel, Sara

## # Crafting

- Shop for crafts at Maritza's (bracelets, earrings, belts, candles, vases, etc.)
- At Maritza's, you can craft yourself
- Romáin (shoemaker) repairs your shoes, purses, or backpacks
- Don Lito, Doña Dalay and Doña Otilia tailor clothes; fabric, buttons and zippers can be bought in San Isidro



*Pulseras (bracelets) made by Maritza*

## # Food

- Make chocolate from Longo Maian cocoa beans and *dulce* at Maritza's, Sulma's or Doña Edith's house
- Traditional Salvadorian cuisine (*pupusas, tortillas...*) at Doña Edith's, Inés', Sulma's and other Salvadorians'
- Make coffee with Sulma, Doña Edith
- Bake bread with Elena
- Occasional sale of Longo Mai coffee at Sulma's and Doña Martha's, also at Doña Edith's and Aino's place
- Sale of home-made milk products (cheese, sour cream, fresh milk etc.) at Doña Elena's
- Sale of home-made ice cream: Martha
- Fruit/vegetables: Ask in the village who sells which products at the moment – a fruit and vegetable trader comes by every Wednesday and Saturday around noon
- Cook with the families, go to church with them – become part of your family!

## # Explore the surroundings of Longo Mai

- Visit the Teribe tribe in Terraba, the Boruca tribe, or the Bribri tribe in Salitre  
*talk to Cristóbal, Roland*
- *Bailes* (dances) in Convento, Sonador and other villages
- Trips to the Pacific coast (Uvita, Dominical)
- San Gerónimo (waterfalls), La Gamba (Rainforest of the Austrians)
- Cerro Cabécar
- Cerro Chirripó

## # Further activities

- Reading
  - Cristóbal, Yuri and Ernesto lend books about Longo Mai, indigenous peoples, the rain forest, North-South relations, the history of Central America, agriculture and so on.
  - Costa Rican newspapers are for example *La Nación*, *La Prensa*, the *Tico Times* and the *Semanario Universidad* which we recommend
- Don Pedro is sometimes willing to tell about the tragic history of El Salvador – you may ask a social servant to assist with translation
- some of the villagers make music and are sometimes willing to give small concerts (Medardo, Mingo), requests over Edith
- the singer Guadalupe Urbina also gives little concerts on request and reports about the culture of Guanacaste

Ask Cristóbal or Roland for other options



**The singer Guadalupe Urbina at a culture festival in the Rancho**

## Project tourism

### #Philosophy of the Longo Mai tourism

Something unique about the Longo Mai project tourism is that your fantasy is not set any borders; your own fantasy is your limit. You decide if and how you want to make a positive impact on the community. The goal of all projects is to achieve a higher standard of living for the inhabitants of Longo Mai – you can contribute by creating a healthier environment, a better academic qualification, or a wider range of cultural activities.

In the beginning, many tourists have to get used to working in an organizational structure that is characterized by self-dependency, absence of orders, and the non-existence of controls. These attributes make the work in Longo Mai very different from what westerners are accustomed to. The success of a project depends on many factors, including the duration of your stay, your level of Spanish, the project status (if the project is already started), on your capability to coordinate with the people and on your capability to integrate the population in the project.

You participate in village life voluntarily, just like the volunteers and villagers who work with organizations and information in the tourist sector. People help you voluntarily and without being paid – if you find flaws, please understand and help eliminate them! Do not forget that this is a cross-cultural exchange. The more you integrate yourself in the life of Longo Mai, the more opportunities you have. You decide how many experiences and insights you will take back home.

By means of some examples (which are not totally fictional, but happily mixed together), we want to show you what the everyday life of a project tourist/volunteer in Longo Mai can look like after an initial phase of acclimatization:

Volunteer A has posted a note in the *pulperías* that he plans on offering an English class. He now teaches English three times a week. Once a week he also gives classes in the prison. He has noticed that many people in Longo Mai have never had the chance to learn something about computers, so he decides to offer computer and internet courses.

Tourist A helps with agriculture, organizes the annual culture festival (together with a social servant) and spends his weekends getting to know the surroundings of Longo Mai.

Volunteer B is very interested in the Costa Rican flora and has created her own little garden in agreement with her host family. She frequently works on various editions of the village newspaper and the village newsletter, which enables her to get into contact with many members of the community. Also, she is helping with construction work and supports the women's group and their projects.

Guest C likes to read and uses his time to get to know Cristóbal's library (best place to be for world changers!). He learns about the traditional cuisine, gives flute classes, and writes news articles for the Longo Mai website.

Visitor D researches the crimes that are committed on the surrounding pineapple plantations and writes for publications in her home country (buy organic, support local business!). Also, she updates this booklet.

All the organizational work in Longo Mai is done by voluntary members of various committees and organizations. For the tourism committee it is interesting to know how long-term guests judge the village, the participation in other committees is possible according to everyone's interests. Ask the respective reference persons about place and time of the next session. If the members have been newly appointed, ask Doña Edith, Cristóbal or Maritza for the actual reference person.

The appendix is a list of possible projects, committees and groups, where it is possible to participate.

## #After your stay

After leaving Longo Mai, you can still continue with help, for example by collecting donations (e.g. for the scholarship program, see <http://www.sonador.info/en/sponsorships.html>).

Another possibility to do something for Longo Mai is to sell goods made by villagers (crafts...) in your home country. You can write about your impressions and send a copy to Cristóbal (zsuzsacr@yahoo.co.in). This helps us to improve our tourism concept. If you have enjoyed your stay in the community, please recommend Longo Mai!

Equally important: You can become an ambassador for the people in the South, for their worries and problems – talk to friends and relatives about the interference of the North (free-trade agreements, etc.), the pineapple plantations on which humans and the environment are exploited etc.

Nobody can take your experiences away, they will be useful for years to come!

## Donation accounts

Student sponsorships: With 6,000 colones monthly a schoolchild is supported with materials and school uniforms.

Study sponsorships: 10,000 colones monthly

This little contribution does not directly finance the visit of school or university, but is used especially for materials. The amount goes directly to the minors or students. One can look at this donation as moral support - education is still not in first place in the lives of many families.

Roland Spendlingwimmer  
Account number 2423788  
Bank code 34110 (Österreichische Raiffeisenbank)  
BIC: AT 34110 RZOOAT2L 110 00002423788  
IBAN: AT 843411000002423788 Purpose: Education fund

or:

Roland Spendlingwimmer  
Cuenta Corriente Nr. 2629-2  
Banco Nacional de Costa Rica Sucursal San Isidro de El General.  
Purpose: Education fund

For further information see <http://www.sonador.info/en/sponsorship.html>

#### **For donations to the tourism committee:**

Maria Fernandez Zuniga  
Account number 001-647142-0  
SWIFT: BNCRCRSJ  
Banco de Costa Rica

For a membership in the **support club Sonador** (the club promotes social, ecological and cultural projects in Costa Rica – admittance fee € 20, annual membership fee € 35, students and social servants pay half):

SONADOR Unterstützungsverein Costa Rica  
Account number 16300000913  
Bank code 20320  
Sparkasse Oberösterreich  
BIC: ASPKAT2L  
IBAN: AT 56 203 2016300000913

For further information see [http://www.sonador.info/en/sonador\\_association.html](http://www.sonador.info/en/sonador_association.html)

→ For every money transfer please name the purpose or give the fund name!

## **Appendix**

### **#Committees, Groups**

#### **# Comité de Turismo (Tourism Committee)**

The tourism committee meets regularly. It assigns the arriving visitors to the interested families and imposes a tourism tax which is used for projects or social emergencies within the village. About 20 – 30 % of the village's income is generated by tourists, in times of low world market prices for coffee this is of special importance.

#### Tasks of the tourism committee:

\* Development of requirements concerning the minimum quality of accommodation

- \* Improvement of services for tourists
- \* Instruction of tour guides regarding the ecological, archaeological and agricultural sights
- \* Improvement of visitor information
- \* Expansion of tourist offers
- \* Advertising
- \* Definition of the ideal direction of development of the tourism in Longo Mai

*Reference people: Doña Edith, Cristóbal, Don Pedro*

### **# Kolping**

Many families in the village are part of the Kolping group, together they organize activities. The group is part of the worldwide organization “Kolping” and gets support and ideas from outside the village as well as from volunteers that come directly by Kolping.

*Reference people: Maritza, Eduardo, Ines, Elena*

### **# Escuela de la Tierra (School of Earth)**

The Escuela de la Tierra’s idea is to be an alternative place of education without hierarchic structure. It is seated about 2 kilometers north of Longo Mai and soon will start with the construction of their own buildings on “campo grande”. They offer open courses about different topics. Volunteers can help to initiate programs, participate in courses or offer some themselves.

*Reference people: Juan, Pablo, Cristoph, Juri*

### **# Comité de Agua (Water committee)**

The water committee is in charge of supplying water to the households.

*Reference person: Juri*

### **# Junta de Educación**

The *junta* consists of parents of school children and works in the area of the school and the kindergarten. It represents the parents’ interests and organizes the funding of the school canteen.

*Reference people: Daisy, Yolanda*

### **# Patronato Escolar**

This committee also consists of parents of school children. It organizes the maintenance of the school and its infrastructure.

*Reference person: Patricia*

### **# Consejo Pastoral (Pastoral council)**

The *consejo pastoral* is in charge of maintaining the catholic church of Longo Mai.

*Reference people: Lydia, Rafael Pérez*

### **# Comité Deportivo (Sports committee)**

In the past, the sports committee was responsible for the construction of the soccer field.

*Reference people: Leo, Ricardo, Merlin Martínez*

### # Grupo de Mujeres (Women's group)

This group sells crafts, medicinal plants and vegetables. Ask the members about their current activities.

*Reference persons: Maritza, Elena, Inés*

### # UNAPROA

In 1995, representatives of six communities in the region founded the association UNAPROA (Unión de Amigos para la Protección del Ambiente). The members are mostly campesinos (small-scale farmers). The projects of UNAPROA include 30 villages and among them an indigenous community. The executive board meets once a month.

*Reference people: Beltrán, Leo, Doña Edith, Cristóbal, Wade, Juri*

### # Comisión de la Defensa de los Ríos Convento y Sonador

The plans to construct hydroelectric power plants (ph) by private companies in the two local rivers of Longo Mai, Sanador y Convento, caused great rejection among the inhabitants of the surrounding villages. With support of the Kioskos program of the UCR an active counter-movement was organized. After 3 years of hard work the group members finally achieved their goal as the construction plans were archived. However, they are still working for the defence of rivers in the region and support other projects such as the local farmers market.

*Reference people: Juri, Cristobal*

### #Listing of some possible projects

<b>Project</b> <b>(reference people)</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b> <b>(2015)</b>
<b>Newspaper-Lora Mai</b> <i>(Cristóbal)</i>	The village newspapers “Lora Mai” and “Lorita Mai” are published whenever there is an editing team found. The newspaper might be produced together with interested students and youths, examples can be seen at Cristóbal's. A village newspaper promotes communication and activities, readers have access to literature and selected information.	Inactive
<b>Newsletter</b> <i>(Cristóbal)</i>	The newsletter is supposed to keep people which are interested in Longo Mai updated. Should there not be any money for an interesting project, it is possible to ask for donations within the newsletter.	Partially active
<b>Centro cultural juvenil – Youth center</b> <i>(Yolanda, Jaqueline)</i>	This project has been abandoned several times. The reasons were lack of interest on the teenagers' part and insufficient funding. The idea is to create room for youth activities. For the construction of a youth center there has to be an established, active youth group.	Inactive

<b>Reforestation</b> <i>(Aino, Leo, Maritza)</i>	Mixed cultures are envisaged; preferred places for reforesting include waysides, heavily eroded surfaces, and very inclined places.	Active
<b>Theater group</b> <i>(Patricia, Edith)</i>	This project at the school intends to foster the children's creativity. Plays can be rehearsed and presented.	Inactive
<b>Construction of cabinas, Improvement of guest rooms</b> <i>(Edith, Cristóbal, Roland, tourism committee)</i>	The hosting of tourists is one of very few income sources for the inhabitants of Longo Mai. Especially for single mothers the construction of guest rooms is a great help. This includes the acquisition of donations, the estimation of costs, the buying of materials, and the finding of people willing to help. With respect to the current number of tourists it seems that there are enough cabins and guest rooms in Longo Mai. The (help with) improvement of existing guest rooms is very welcome in some cases.	Active
<b>Teaching in Longo Mai</b> <i>(Edith, Cristóbal, Patricia)</i>	There is need for teachers in the village school, for (children's) groups in the saloon, as well as for private classes. English and math are especially important, but also German and other subjects. Also in the neighboring villages (like Cristo Rey) and in the surrounding village schools there is a demand for voluntary teachers. Among the adult population of Longo Mai there are still illiterates, who never had the chance to attend school in El Salvador.	Active
<b>Teaching in the prison</b> <i>(Cristóbal)</i>	Some longtime volunteers (at least three months) classified teaching in the prison of Palmares (close to San Isidro) as very enriching. English and maths classes are popular, as well as all kinds of courses and workshops (sports, theater, crafts...). In order to be admitted, a passport is mandatory.	Inactive
<b>Teaching in the indigenous community Terraba</b> <i>(Roland, Cristóbal)</i>	<p>The Teribes tribe is one of the least numerous indigenous community of Costa Rica. In 1710, they were deported from their original lands (Bocas del Toro, Panama) to Costa Rica. In Panama, the language and culture were conserved, but in Costa Rica a large part of this heritage was lost. Today there is a will to culturally regenerate. Since 1990, teachers of the Panamanian Teribes have been invited to teach the population of Terraba their former language and traditions.</p> <p>Volunteers may give language classes, computer, and music courses.</p>	Inactive
<b>Afternoon for children</b> <i>(Martha, Yolanda, Daisy, Maritza, Barbara contact: <a href="mailto:b.kussbach@gmx.at">b.kussbach@gmx.at</a>)</i>	Since 2012 there has been an afternoon for children in the Rancho every Thursday. Initiated by volunteers the project is lead by mothers nowadays. Still, volunteers are always welcome to help with ideas, participate in and support the organization.	Active

<b>Holiday week</b> <i>(look at afternoon for children)</i>	<p>The best time to organize project weeks for children is during the holidays (Dec-Feb). This can be a part of any “children’s afternoon”, where you will find possibilities to get material and support.</p>	Active
<b>Documentation</b> <i>(Cristóbal, tourism committee)</i>	<p>For amateur photographers and amateur writers there are countless possibilities to contribute meaningfully to the community. Photos, videos, and text contributions give aid to tourist information and marketing.</p>	Partially active
<b>Consultation for legal questions</b> <i>(Leo, Beltrán, Cristóbal)</i>	<p>Pursuit of lawsuits e.g. against illegal deforestation</p>	Partially active
<b>Land surveying, Cartography</b> <i>(Aino)</i>	<p>Archaeological sites, protected, and reforested areas shall be recorded.</p>	Active
<b>Maintenance, Reconstruction of Trackmarks</b> <i>(Maritza, Aino)</i>	<p>Due to climatic reasons the signs have become badly legible or destroyed and should be regularly renewed. There also exists the idea of marking some main hiking tracks through the forest around Longo Mai.</p>	Active
<b>Planning the next culture festival</b> <i>(Guadalupe, Roland, Cristóbal, Civi)</i>	<p>Once a year, in January, a culture festival takes place in Longo Mai. Therefore we invite individuals and groups (e.g. the circus group of Diego Gene of Granada, Nicaragua). The content of the festival needs to be planned (organization of workshops and lectures, music and theater nights and so on), also the fare and the accommodation need to be organized and financial and marketing concepts need to be drawn up.</p>	Active
<b>Transition to organic agriculture</b> <i>(Edith, Leo, Aino, Cristóbal)</i>	<p>Many farmers would like to switch to organic farming, but are hindered by the fear of losses. The creation of regional distribution channels may help to speed up the conversion process. Furthermore, marketing for alternative products (which provide an additional income source) like pejibaye, pepper, tropical root vegetables or dried fruit would be a great possibility. You can encourage crop rotation and study land clearance. Since 2015 a small market with focus on regional products takes places in Longo Mai every two weeks.</p>	Active
<b>Sale of crafts (artesanía) and CDs</b> <i>(artists mentioned above like Maritza...)</i>	<p>Think about selling at local markets or about building up cooperations with relevant businesses in Costa Rica or in your home country. The objective is to create a continuous source of income for the artist(s).</p>	Partially active

<b>Updating the Longo Mai website</b> <i>(Roland, Cristóbal, Anton anton_maurer@gmx.at)</i>	<p>Our website <a href="http://www.sonador.info">http://www.sonador.info</a> needs to offer current information. Visitors able to do html proggng are invited to use their knowledge in support of Longo Mai.</p>	Active
<b>Women's group, TUNA</b> <i>(Maritza)</i>	<p>During the dry season Maritza is organizing an afternoon with women at Casa Verde every Wednesday. She is always glad about support.</p>	Active
<b>Usage of fruits</b> <i>(Group of women, e.g. Maritza, Ines, Elena)</i>	<p>Fruits (oranges, lemons, mangos, grapefruit...) that exist in abundance and often simply rot can be turned into various products (juices, jams).</p>	Inactive
<b>Acquisition of donations</b> <i>(Roland, Cristóbal, Edith)</i>	<p>For scholarships, projects like the water supply, the school, soccer field and so on.</p>	Active
<b>Computer and internet courses for the village population</b> <i>(Cristóbal, Civi)</i>	<p>Text processing, spreadsheets, creation of an email account, research on the internet, typing with ten fingers...</p>	Active
<b>program for short time tourists</b> <i>(Cristobal, Edith)</i>	<p>There was the idea to create a program for tourists that only stay a short time in Longo Mai. The tourist should be attended all day, guided to different destinations nearby, to get to know the region. It is also possible to learn, depending on the interests, some Spanish or typical dances.</p>	Inactive
<b>Projects in relation with Vida Nueva</b> <i>(Roland, Alexandra under alexandra@vida-nueva.co.cr)</i>	<p>Circus project in San Isidro, free meals etc.</p>	Active
<b>Circus training</b> <i>(volunteers in San Isidro, Roland)</i>	<p>In cooperation with the „Circo Fantazztico“a circus training for children is set up in the Rancho every Monday. There is also the idea to create one for adults as well.</p>	Active
<b>Projects in relation with UNAPROA</b> <i>(Leo, Cristóbal, Beltrán, Juri)</i>	<p>UNAPROA is an environmental organization based in Longo Mai. Information about all current or planned projects (reforestation etc.) can be obtained from the members.</p>	Inactive

<p><b>Maintenance of the medicinal garden (UNAPROA)</b></p> <p><i>(Leo, Cristóbal, Beltrán, Edith, Maritza)</i></p>	<p>Volunteers are welcome to look after the garden or to expand it.</p>	<p>Active</p>
<p><b>Environmental education at schools (UNAPROA)</b></p> <p><i>(Leo, Cristóbal, Beltrán, Edith, Maritza)</i></p>	<p>In order to raise environmental awareness, you can go to surrounding villages to teach environmental classes with two members of UNAPROA.</p>	<p>Inactive</p>
<p><b>Reconstruction and maintenance of the eco trail (UNAPROA)</b></p>	<p>A few years ago, an eco trail was initiated in Longo Mai. However, it has been reclaimed by the nature and needs to be reconstructed. Cristóbal has information about the former trail stations.</p>	<p>Inactive</p>
<p><b>Jardín de la memoria (Garden of memory)</b></p> <p><i>(Guadalupe)</i></p>	<p>Initiated by Guadalupe, a 75 ha area of Longo Mai territory should be turned into a “Garden of memory” where people get access to Rock paintings and can visit a garden with a higher diversity of plants. Information about the rock paintings, plants and traditions should be built in a public center as well.</p>	<p>Active</p>
<p><b>Possibilities for studies and research projects</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Pre-Colombian archaeology (rock paintings)</li> <li>* Sustainable usage of the rainforest</li> <li>* Determination of animals and plants</li> <li>* Biology (rainforest)</li> <li>* Water quality</li> <li>* Soil conservation</li> <li>* Agricultural market gaps</li> <li>* Production, processing, marketing</li> <li>* Mixed cultivation</li> <li>* Ecotourism * (Organic) agriculture and others</li> </ul> <p>A collection of studies that have already been realized as well as suggestions for new studies can be found at Cristóbal’s.</p>	<p>Partially active</p>