



Surf Adventure Camp Survival Guide

Hola ChicaBrava! Welcome the one and only all girls' surf camp in lush San Juan del Sur, Nicaragua. We are confident that this week of your life will leave you a different person and wishing that you could extend your stay. Get excited! Because of your commitment to ChicaBrava we want to offer some additional information that will set you up for success and so that you know what to expect.

Expect the unexpected! Just kidding; here is a list of helpful hints to consider while packing and planning for your Central-American excursion:

Rashguards and board shorts are good to have handy, as well as swimsuits that are tighter fitting and not loose. Stronger waves have a tendency to tear off loose tops and bottoms. Rashguards help with this and also help protect skin against sunburn. You don't want to have to worry about losing your swimsuit on a wave or while you are trying to paddle out!

Wetsuit tops and/or spring suits are a must if you are attending the camp anytime from November to April. The water can get cold due to upwelling caused by stronger offshore winds in these months. It's always best to be prepared. The summer months are warm so you'll not need them at all in the peak season.

Sweatshirts and pants are smart to pack as well. The camp is located near the top of a mountain and though the climate is generally tropical and hot in Nicaragua, it can get drafty up on the mountain. In the evening the drafts can make it a little chilly, so with a sweatshirt and light pants you will be cozy and comfortable. Jeans are good to bring if you plan to ride horses on our farm while here.

Beach towels are also good to bring. Bath towels are provided at the camp, but they are only intended to be used in camp. Please bring at least one if you would like to bring a towel to the beach or on the boat.



Extra money is another essential. It's best to bring smaller bills such as \$1's, \$5's, and \$10's. You should expect to pay a \$5 entrance fee at immigration when you enter Nicaragua, before you go to the baggage claim. There is also a \$30 exit fee, but most airlines include this in their ticket price. If it is not included you will pay it when you check in at the airport on the day you leave. There is plenty of shopping to be done in San Juan del Sur. ChicaBrava even has its own clothing designer who creates beautiful sundresses and relaxed beachwear for \$15 a piece. The zip-lining canopy tour is another fun activity in San Juan that costs \$30 a person. Touring the farm on horseback is also amazing and costs \$20 a person for the farm hands. It is also good to bring enough money to be able to go out at night as alcohol is not included in trip package. Costs for transportation, meals, lodging, instruction, surfboards, boat trips, yoga, and massages are all included in the price.

Tipping is another thing you will also need to plan on bringing a little extra money for. Please keep in mind that it is optional but customary to tip surf instructors and the cooking and cleaning staff at the end of the week. Just to give you an idea of how much to tip, a minimum of \$20 for the week is typical for the service staff at the house. They provide all of our meals, cook, clean, and do our laundry for us. Your tip will be combined with the tips from all of the other girls. Of course if you feel that their service was exceptional you can tip more; if you feel that it wasn't that great than you can tip less or not at all. Tipping is always up to you. If you do the math, than you will figure that this is \$3 a day, which doesn't seem like much, but is greatly appreciated. A minimum of \$20 per instructor from each guest is also an average tip for your surf instructors. There will be at least two instructors assisting you each day in the water and everywhere in between.

Study a little Spanish. It's smart to learn some phrases so you can ease your way into the culture. It's also respectful to try to speak a country's native language and can be an enlightening experience to communicate in another language even if you can only say a few broken words.



Surfboards and other equipment that do not belong to you are provided for your use. We expect that you treat these items with care as if they were your own. Surfboards are fragile and can easily be dented and the fins broken. If you damage something please understand that you will be held responsible for their repair and or replacement as though it were your own.

Safety in and out of the water is our number one priority. When you come to the camp we will have an ocean safety and board safety lesson to protect all of our chicas before we enter the sea. To keep you safe out of the water, we implement the buddy system. Some of our chicas will want to go out and experience the lively night-life in San Juan. We encourage this as it is also our goal you have fun, but it is important to not stray from the group. Always make sure the instructors are aware of your whereabouts. On the nights we hit up the town there will usually be an option to go home early or stay out later. For safety, security, and privacy at the camp, we do not allow chicas to return to the camp on their own. Everyone must return to the camp with either the early or the late group. Always keep track of your buddy, the instructors, and be sure to stay with the group!

Challenge is the word that best defines learning how to surf. It is one of the hardest sports to learn, but also one of the most rewarding. It is important to keep in mind that with this sport what you put in is what you get out. Only time in the water will bring results. Please be prepared to surf the majority of each day as our goal and main focus is to have fun and progress your surfing at whatever level you are on. If you are determined to get the most out of your week at ChicaBrava surf camp there are some ways that you can get yourself ready for surfing action. Please see our conditioning and pop-ups guide and start doing your homework!

And ask yourself... are you Chicabrava?



ChicaBrava: Pop Ups & Conditioning Guide

There are some things that you can do to prepare your body for surfing without even stepping foot on the sand.

Swimming and getting the arm muscles used to paddling is definitely beneficial. If you have access to a pool you can even paddle on a surf board or a raft securing one end to the side of the pool and paddling for an extended amount of time. Get used to water going up your nose and holding your breath underwater. Swimming laps is a great way to condition.

Pushups and yoga are another great way to get your arms set for surfing. Start with 5 to 10 pushups a day, regular style or modified (on your knees). Just doing 5 to 10 a day for a month will make a HUGE difference. It will build up your upper body strength and give you a stronger paddle. It will also help make your pop-ups easier and more natural feeling. If you can attend a yoga class once a week, that will help immensely as well.

Practice your pop-up! A pop-up is how you go from lying down on the surfboard to standing up. Below we outline the steps for a successful pop-up. You can practice this anywhere or anytime and you don't even need a surfboard. It is basically a matter of trying to train yourself to stand up in a fast and efficient manner. Since you were a child you probably stood up by going from your knees first, but in the pop-up we skip the knees which brings a challenge for some beginners. However, all you need to master the pop-up is practice. For this reason we found it imperative to pass this information along to those committed to attending camp. If you practice pop-ups it will make a more rapid process of learning and you won't have to spend extra time working on that when you have the Pacific to take advantage of!



How To Do A Pop-UP

The pop-up is divided into four steps to help you organize the movements in your mind.

Pushup: Lay down and place hands underneath your chest in a pushup position. Do a pushup.

Frog Hop: Spring (or hop) from your toes to your feet bringing your front foot even with your hands. This movement is also likened to a frog hop.

Turn: Now, after the pushup and then frog hop you should be facing forward on your imaginary (or real) surfboard. You should still be low to the ground with your body and feet facing forward. The next step is to turn sideways- you want both feet facing the same edge of the surfboard. You will notice in surf videos or magazines that no one surfs standing or facing forward. The direction you naturally turn will tell you whether you are a goofy or regular foot.

Stand! : The final step is to stand- or just rise up from the board. You never want to stand all the way up locking your knees. The stance is to keep the knees bent and shoulder length apart. Always standing fairly low with knees bent for optimal balance. RIDE OUT SISTER!!!

Practice: Do it again and again and again. Do it again tomorrow and the next day and the next.

If these steps are practiced over and over you will be able to execute a fast and efficient pop-up without having to think about it!

If you have additional questions please feel free to contact ChicaBrava!