

Press release

Do something good on holiday

Hands-on volunteering opportunities in SouthWest Germany

STUTTGART – Doing something meaningful on holiday, rather than just sitting back and relaxing: this global trend is steadily growing in popularity all over the world. If you're the kind of person who would find two weeks of relaxation too dull, volunteer work creates opportunities to get an exciting fresh perspective during your leisure time. And there's no need to fly to Bali or Bangladesh to get involved in environmental, cultural or agricultural projects. Opportunities are gradually opening up closer to home to try out a bit of so-called voluntourism. Incidentally, this is also a great way to explore a country and its people from a different perspective.

Work on an organic farm: community farming in Bad Waldsee

The idea behind this community farm project in Upper Swabia is simple: about 80 members pay a fixed sum in exchange for a regular supply of fresh vegetables, herbs, fruit and other organic food products. This payment is not for the produce but for the work involved. This facilitates reliable project planning and offsets harvesting risks. Alongside the full-time employees, members also regularly pitch in to work on the community farm, acquiring lots of valuable knowledge about organic farming while they work. The organic farm also supports the principles of the WWOOF movement (WorldWide Opportunities on Organic Farms). This global community connects volunteers who want to help on organic farms. Nature-loving holiday guests who want to contribute for a short period in return for board and lodging are also welcome in Bad Waldsee.

solawi-bad-waldsee.de

Help build a medieval monastery: Campus Galli in Meßkirch

The archaeologists and building researchers in Meßkirch have ambitious plans: using medieval tools, materials and methods the aim is for a medieval monastery town to be rebuilt here in just a few decades. As a template, they are using the famous St. Gall monastery plan from the 9th century. Alongside specialists and expert professionals, lots of volunteers are also involved in implementing the project. If you are at least 16 years old and have a minimum of six days availability, you can join in work on this historic site. Prior knowledge and specialised skills are not required. To ensure everything is as authentic as possible, volunteers will also be kitted out in medieval clothing. The one contemporary concession: modern safety training is compulsory before working on site.

campus-galli.de/mitmachen

Protect biodiversity: voluntourism in the Southern Black Forest Nature Park

Linking holidays with nature conservation is the declared goal of a national pilot project in select natural landscapes across Germany. The Southern Black Forest Nature Park is one of the participants and, from 2021, will be allowing holiday guests to do short-term work on conservation and environmental projects. For example, volunteers will be repairing trails, maintaining the courses of streams, creating biotopes, and helping to restore moorland. As well as doing something useful, volunteers will gain specialist knowledge and will leave with an increased awareness of biodiversity. Experts will be available to share their knowledge and experience and assist on all tasks. At the Southern Black Forest Nature Park, voluntourism means not just enjoying a holiday in natural surroundings but helping on the ground to protect and preserve this environment. The project "Voluntourism for biodiversity in the national natural landscapes" is being funded by the German Environmental Agency as part of the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation's biodiversity scheme.

naturschutz-im-urlaub.de

Support flora and fauna: Central and Northern Black Forest Nature Park

Landscapes in the central and northern Black Forest alternate between dense forest, open valleys and gently rolling meadows. Protecting these natural and cultural landscapes, and thus preserving the habitat of the resident plants and animals, is the responsibility of the Nature Park. This work is regularly supported by volunteers who are passionate about protecting the environment. The "Herzessache Natur" initiative channels this devotion to nature, allowing volunteers to work on various projects between spring and late autumn. Depending on the season, this might involve tending meadows, repairing dry-stone walls, or clearing blueberry bush areas. This work improves conditions for the protected wood grouse, while also allowing volunteers to experience what makes the Black Forest so unique as a natural environment.

naturparkschwarzwald.de/gruene_projekte/herzessache_natur

Protect meadows and bees: Neckar-Fils Environment Centre in Plochingen

On the site of a former horticultural show, located on a bend in the river Neckar in Plochingen, conservation and environmental education have been playfully combined. The courses offered at the Environment Centre cover practical topics such as gardening in harmony with nature, and wild herbs. In addition to the range of courses, volunteers can contribute to projects in various ways: from maintaining the foreshore using scythes and rakes, to working in the show garden, or engaging in craft activities. People's contributions are incorporated in an overall programme which is tailored to meet the desires and skills of the relevant individual while teaching them about nature conservation work. The Environment Centre operates in close collaboration with the town of Plochingen and the tourist board. This town on the Neckar is conveniently situated with vineyards, a Hundertwasserhaus, and plenty of countryside, making this the ideal destination for volunteers who want to combine conservation work with cultural experiences.

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umweltzentrum-neckar-fils.de

A digital version of this press release - as well as more detailed information on SouthWest Germany - is available on our website <https://www.tourism-bw.com/press>

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