



Las Aguas Risas - General Info and Membership Pricing

After 4 years of searching for property in Ecuador, we found a beautiful farm in the high Amazon Rainforest with plenty of fresh running water year-round and lots of forested space for trees and wild creatures. Who are we? Michael Dance (56) and Terry Chretien (62), a married vegan couple who relocated to Ecuador from the USVI in 2021.

Our primary reason for buying this property is to REFOREST the pasture land (approximately 50 hectares) with native species and fruit trees, creating more attractive habitat for wildlife and a food forest for the humans living here.

Our secondary reason for buying a large property is to have a vegan community. A safe place for vegans to live either full or part-time. We would like to co-create a community of committed, mature vegans with no dependent human children who want to live a sustainable lifestyle enjoying peaceful activities in tune with the natural environment. If you would like to become a member of a truly vegan community, we have a few options:

POTENTIAL MEMBERS

A 6-month preview period is required for anyone seeking to join Las Aguas Risas on a full or part-time basis. Potential members may choose to invest in the property for future **vested membership**; contribute work to the community as potential **working members** (full or 1/2 time); or rent one of the available living spaces as potential **non-working members**. After 6 month preview, community members will extend invitation for permanent membership to acceptable candidates who exemplify and share our vision and goals for the community, property and planet. Potential members are asked to complete a questionnaire.

VESTED MEMBERS

Vested Members are community members who have completed a 6 month preview period, been invited to the community, and invested in the property through purchase* of an existing house with personal plot, or a homestead plot to farm and/or build a simple sustainable dwelling with available natural materials. Vested members have a voice in community matters as well as land use matters, and have the same rights and responsibilities as community members. Vested members pay a \$50/mo utilities/facilities fee while on property.

* **Investment in the property** is an investment in the community and the planet; purchase for purposes of speculation is not permitted. "Purchase" of a house or plot is equivalent to a life-time lease, title of all property will remain in the name of the foundation (to be established) in perpetuity.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Community members are members who have completed a 6 month preview period and been invited into the community. Community members have a voice in community matters.

Working Members (WM):

Includes: accommodation in room (based on availability), share of community fruit/veg produced at the finca, 4 loads of laundry per month & up to 4 dryer loads/month (when necessary), shared kitchen (upstairs main house), shared bath and shower (main house). Requires: \$100 security deposit*, ≥ 20 hours per week contribution to community work (weeding, grass clearing, preparing soil and planting trees, vegetable gardening, tree maintenance, cooking, cleaning, infrastructure maintenance/improvement, etc.); \$50 per person per month utilities/facilities fee.

1/2 Time Working Members (1/2 WM):

Includes: accommodation in room (based on availability), share of community fruit/veg produced at the finca, 4 loads of laundry per month & up to 4 dryer loads/month (when necessary), shared kitchen (upstairs main house), shared bath and shower (main house). Requires: \$100 security deposit*, ≥ 10 hours per week contribution to community work (weeding, grass clearing, preparing soil and planting trees, vegetable gardening, tree maintenance, cooking, cleaning, infrastructure maintenance/improvement, etc.); \$150 per person per month (\$200/cpl/mo) utilities/facilities fee.

Non-Working Members (N-WM):

Includes: 4 loads of laundry per month & up to 4 dryer loads/month (when necessary), shared kitchen (upstairs main house), shared bath and shower (main house).

Requires: \$100 security deposit*, monthly rental of accommodations (based on availability) see rental schedule below; \$50 per person per month utilities/facilities fee.

VISITING VEGAN VACATIONERS (VVV)

Visiting Vegan Vacationers - those wishing to experience Las Aguas Risas to consider future potential membership, can stay from 3 days to 6 months, with a minimum advance payment of 1 week and \$100 security deposit, at the weekly rental rate for accommodations; see rental schedule below. All stays must be paid in advance either weekly or monthly. Weekly rates include a private room, shared bathroom, shower and kitchen, 1 washer/dryer load per week (dryer only as necessary).

Note: Non-working Members, Potential Members and Visiting Vegan Vacationers are not required, but are welcome and encouraged to join us in participating and contributing to community work projects.

* **A Security Deposit** is required for all potential members and visiting vegan vacationers. Ideally, we all hope and expect visitors, guests and potential members to be responsible, however, occasionally things get broken or go missing. A security deposit helps prevent loss to the community. Deposits are refunded, minus costs of community belongings you personally lost or broke, or other unforeseen costs incurred by the community on your behalf. Working potential members who stay less than 1 month donate 50% of their deposit to the community, as it is difficult for us to recover costs of orientation, supervision and training.

RENTAL RATES

Accommodation	Weekly (VVV) Rate	Monthly (N-WM) Rate
Single Room (Main or Pond House)	\$100 Single	\$200 Single
Double Room (Main or Pond House)	\$125 Single \$150 Couple	\$250 Single \$300 Couple
Suite (Main House)	\$150 Single \$200 Couple	\$300 Single \$400 2-4 persons
Pond House (Whole House)	\$200 (1-2 persons) \$250 (3 persons)	\$400 (1-3 persons)

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Pond House: A furnished private cottage, 2 bedroom (1 single, 1 double) with bathroom, kitchen/dining/livingroom and large covered porch, is only a 2 minute walk down the path from the main house. It is hooked up with electricity and water, internet to be added in near future. Includes 1 acre of land for owners to plant. There are already guava (guayaba), araçá, and banana trees growing on the land, and close proximity to small bubbling brook and larger quebrada. Price: \$50,000

Remote House: A 15 minute walk up into the pasture from the main house, this rustic 2 room cabin is the perfect off-grid opportunity. A couple solar panels could provide sufficient electric for LED lighting and charging devices, and some gutters and catchment tank would offer water for basic uses. Includes land plot of up to 2 hectares. Price: \$20,000 (with 1 hectare); \$25,000 (w/ 1.5 hect); \$30,000 (w/ 2 hect).

Homestead Plots: Undeveloped plots of land in current pasture areas, available for members with pioneering spirit to clear (grass only, not established trees), cultivate fruit and vegetable subsistence and/or cash crops, and/or build simple accommodation structure with naturally available materials on property - there is adequate mud/clay, bamboo and downed wood on the property to supply materials for this. As minimal natural roofing material is available on property or nearby, structures would likely need to be roofed with metal or polycarbonate panels.

Prices: 1/2 hectare \$10,000; 1 hectare \$15,000; 2 hectare \$25,000.

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Important

A few things to consider:

1.) What is your diet like?

We ask this because many vegans eat mostly processed, packaged foods. Not only are most products such as these not available here, but we also prefer to live as close to "zero waste" as possible so as not to continue filling landfills with plastic, etc. We do have many wonderful types of grains and beans, fruits and vegetables available in the markets, and we go into Limón, which is a 45 minute taxi ride, once per week on Sundays to stock up for the week.

If you are not used to eating whole, unprocessed, unpackaged foods, it would be a good idea to start doing so before coming to get your body accustomed to these major changes. There are many, many wonderful YouTube channels and vegan food blogs dedicated to providing recipes for natural foods. Even common items such as bread are usually not vegan here, as they add milk powder or lard or eggs to many of them, so on the rare occasions that we eat bread here, it is our own home-baked bread. We try to bake as little as possible because the oven uses gas, which is a fossil fuel that we do not want to continue depending on.

2.) Have you ever been in a Spanish-speaking country?

Although we have been studying Spanish for years, actually having a conversation with a native Spanish-speaker can be a bit more challenging than classroom learning. And Latin American Spanish is different than that spoken in Spain.

3.) Have you spent any time traveling away from your family?

We are quite remote out here and if one is not accustomed to being alone without familiar people around, one might become quite lonely. We are surrounded by the tranquility of nature here, punctuated by the occasional barking dog, or sounds of a distant moto, otherwise very few human made noises. We enjoy it, but some people can find the solitude oppressive.