



“Working Worldwide for Donkeys and Mules”

Ministerio Del Interior Asociaciones Numero Nacional 170773 CIF G92455310

EL REFUGIO DEL BURRITO

VOLUNTEERS GUIDE

Firstly, let us welcome and thank you for choosing to volunteer and help us with our work

We have had many people come and stay here for a working holiday at the sanctuary. People have come from all over Spain, UK, Denmark, Finland, Norway, and other places in the world. It's a great way to learn about donkeys, spend time and get to know them and experience a different culture and climate. Also, it can be a great help to us to get the morning routine done more quickly so that we can spend more time grooming and walking our donkeys!

Everyone who has been with us ends up having their favourite donkey! As well as learning a lot about the work we do, we like to give Visiting Volunteers the opportunity to be involved in other regular things we do. Some of these activities are explained below.

Below are some frequently asked questions with answers to give you information about being a Visiting Volunteer. If you are interested in coming here after reading the information below, or you have any other questions, please contact us.

The purpose of this guide is to provide you with all the information you need to make your stay with us the best possible one.

[Is there a minimum age you need to be to work at the Sanctuary?](#)

Yes, 18, self-sufficient highly independent volunteers are preferred as the staff's availability is limited out of working hours.

[What does the work involve?](#)

You would be involved in feeding and checking the donkeys, cleaning the paddocks, grooming and general help around the sanctuary. Our vet visits once a week and, if you wish, you can accompany him and ask questions as well as watch our farrier. If our Welfare Officer is doing an Outreach Project or a Welfare Check you may be able to go with her for observation, however your ability in Spanish will determine how much you can learn by 'shadowing'. Please also note that our welfare officer is often overwhelmed with urgent cases to attend to, and therefore might not have much time to engage during your stay. Depending on when you are here during the month, you can also help with the monthly weighing of the donkeys.

Internship opportunities we can liaise with students and educational professional centres to offer internship opportunities interns should be proactive as the workload is considerable at the farm. This will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

[I have no equine experience. Does this matter?](#)

Not at all! On your first day we will give you an introduction which includes Health and Safety. Then you'll work with one of our staff who will show you what to do and help you. It is hard physical work

so be prepared! One of the reasons the work is so physically demanding is that for the several hours, in the summer, you will be needed to work outside with temperatures of 40 degrees or more, in winter you will be needed to work under the rain or temperatures near to 0 degrees. If you are from north of Europe or other cold countries and have never worked outside in the temperatures, you need to realise it's very demanding and requires a lot of determination.

What clothes should I bring?

Generally, between May and October you can be in shorts and lightweight tops. It is worth bringing a lightweight fleece or similar. As clothes that are washed will dry very quickly during the summer, you won't need to bring much! During late autumn, and spring, the weather can be a bit unpredictable so bring a jumper or two and a waterproof coat. In the winter, the late afternoon and night temperatures can be very cold. As we are near to mountains, near to the Lake of Fuente de Piedra and the plains of Antequera, it can occasionally go down to below freezing and we have had snow sometimes. The sun and the heat for any visitor from cold countries will feel extreme, from end of May until September. To bring your own working boot, steel toe caps, to make more comfortable. The volunteer have to wear reflect vest.

You should bring your own security boots, for safety reasons.

When is the best time to come to El Refugio?

We advise people not to come in July or August as the temperatures can sometimes get into the 40Cs. We would recommend spring, early Summer and Autumn. Do not forget your sunglasses. Below is a chart showing the average temperatures and rainfall.

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Av T	12	13	14	14	18	25	38	35	30	25	20	15
AV Rain	98	69	65	54	22	12	6	5	20	48	70	87

Are there any dangers I should be aware of?

There are mosquitos and a few other very small flying insects that can bite so buy some repellent.

The main dangers in the summer are sunburn and heatstroke. When you are working outside and there is a breeze blowing, it is easy to get burnt without realising it until later. Use lots of high factor sun cream and keep covered – we recommend wearing a polo or T-shirt when you are working. A wide brimmed hat is a good idea to keep the sun off your head and neck. Drink lots of water too throughout the day to avoid dehydration. You may be surprised at how much you get through in a day!

Where can I stay?

You can rent a bed, or room, in a shared house. The house is in the centre of Fuente de Piedra. This option will suit perhaps if you prefer a slightly higher level of comfort, and also means you can walk to cafes, shops, post office etc in a matter of minutes. The current cost per room in the house per night is: 20 euros; 130 euros per week; 300 per months.

You can also go to the local camping site at Fuente de Piedra, where there are on-site little wooden 'houses', and a communal swimming pool. This costs currently 25 euros per person per night.

Another option is "Casa rural Aire", you can check on Booking.com is a small Hotel on the village, you can check the availability on its website and prizes.

Which airport do I fly into?

Either Malaga or Granada airport. Both are about one hour from the sanctuary, but Malaga is the most frequent. There is a train connection towards the main train station to Malaga and, and then you can take a second train to Antequera Santa Ana, the nearest train station from the sanctuary. Please bear in mind to book the flight so the pick ups are in working hours 9-16h.

Apartado 25, 29520 Fuente De Piedra, Málaga, España • Tel.: (0034) 952 735 513

• Email: info@elrefugiodelburrito.com

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How do I get to the sanctuary / Fuente de Piedra?

If you arrive to the train station, (Antequera Santa Ana), we can arrange to collect you.

More General information.

What is the minimum age for car hire?

21 – 23 depending on the car company, in the airport you can find different companies.

Other transport Information:

If you are not intending to drive whilst in Spain, it's important to consider the considerable cost of getting around, to see places on your days off. There is no system here of giving volunteers lifts, in general except for your weekly food shop. So for example, currently to go into Malaga city will cost you, on a Saturday, around 30 euros return ticket (approx. 25-35 euros, depending on time of day, type of train, you can check on RENFE website before leaving, but I found the train system is not straight forward to figure out.) and for a taxi one way from Antequera –Santa Ana, train station to El Refugio is 18 euros. So that is around 50 euros to go just to Malaga. The taxi's here in Fuente de Piedra have fixed tariffs written down on a laminated list they can show you. This is important because for the time being the local taxi's are not using their meters. (Something to do with the town council decision). There are rentalcars that rentcars for 4€ a day. If will save you time money and headaches to rent a car: Marbesol/ Malaga.com/ rentacar.go/ there are several websites to check prices.

Saturday Trains: warning! There are fewer trains on Saturdays than weekdays, so if you go to the train station wanting to leave early for Malaga, you can't! The first trains, you could make currently leave at: 9.55am, 10.47am.

Which side to the road do you drive on?

Right

What is the speed limit?

On the motorway it is 100km (65mph). In built up areas it is 50km (30mph). Other areas vary and are signed.

What language are the signs

Spanish and in some small village around Fuente de Piedra and down the coast English.

If I do hire a car, how easy is it to find my way around?

From Malaga airport, it's easy to follow the direction to Antequera exit 132 Fuente de Piedra, and when you pass Antequera you find the sign to Fuente de Piedra, when you arrive to Fuente de Piedra you find more sign of ours sanctuary. You can use the GPS or check the direction on google maps or in our website.

Do many Spanish speak English

Yes, especially in the coast and big towns. On the sanctuary most of the worker speak a basic English.

What is the currency?

Euro

I'm vegetarian/vegan. Is it difficult to find suitable food?

No, especially if you cook for yourself. All of the supermarkets sell a wide range of foods including many UK products (these will be more expensive). It is a fact that Quorn/tofu products are not available in the main supermarkets, like Mercadona, but hummus can be found. Quality fruit and

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vegetables are in abundance. Eating in some restaurants or taverns can be a little restricted but there are always some tapas that are vegetarian. Vegans can find specialist food on the Costa del Sol.

How much money do I need to bring?

There are plenty of ATMs where you withdraw cash using VISA, VISA Debit Cards etc although the nearest to Fuente de Piedra is 2km. As a very rough guide we would suggest a minimum of €150 if you are staying for a week, which would be living very basically and without including accommodation costs.

I'd really like to come and work at the sanctuary. What do I do now?

Give us a call or contact us by email (info@elrefugiodelburrito.com) to have a chat with our Farm Supervisor. We'll then send you the forms to complete and return to us. These are so we have a little more information about you such as who to contact in an emergency, any health issues we need to be aware of etc. All information is kept strictly confidential.

SCHEDULE

Our grooms' schedule is as follows:

Summer months: 07:00 – 15:00

Winter months: 08:00 – 16:00

Volunteers will also abide by this schedule. However, as a volunteer, depending on the staff numbers you may be able to have some afternoons off. There will be a break in the morning at 12:00. Volunteers, however, can stop whenever they feel tired.

The farm is open to the public from 09:00 to 17:00.

WORK

The only thing we ask of you during your volunteering period is to maintain a positive, responsible, and collaborative attitude towards the work and the staff of El Refugio. Please be aware that donkey welfare is the main concern for the staff of El Refugio del Burrito.

Our Farm Supervisor is **Daniel Guerrero**. Any questions, suggestions or comments about our work should be directed to him, but the rest of the staff will also be happy to help with whatever they can.

SHOPPING

There are a few simple grocery shops in the village to do your shopping. You can also find a shopping centre (La Veronica) as you center Antequera. If you do not have a vehicle, please talk to our office staff, who can help you arrange transport for you to get your essentials.

INFORMATION

For any other queries, do not hesitate to contact either the Farm Manager or the office staff, who will be more than glad to help you out. Your comfort is important to us; we value the hard work volunteers contribute, making our work here less arduous for all our grooms. So, we encourage feedback, and for this purpose we will also give you a feedback sheet, you can fill in for us at the end of your stay, with any further comments or suggestions.

We hope you enjoy your volunteering at El Refugio del Burrito!

The Management.