

Recomendaciones para la Escuela

The following recommendations have been posted publicly and drawn from our own valuation forms in Cuenca during 2015. Names and email addresses have been removed to protect the privacy of our former students.

Gringo Post

Septiembre 1, 2015

Yanapuma Spanish School is a well-organized and efficiently run language school. My experience superseded my expectations. I initially registered for 2 weeks of advanced Spanish classes during July of 2015, and extended my stay a third week, as I was so pleased with the level of instruction I was receiving. I was given a variety of options, and chose 1:1 instruction, four hours a day. The time flew. My highly capable instructor, Carina, incorporated music, poetry, stories, personal anecdotes, humor and art into our daily lessons, thus infusing my learning with the history and culture of Ecuador. The weekly gathering of students around the table to have a taste test, or “degustación”, of typical/traditional Ecuadorian foods was another pleasurable entrance point into the culture. I arrived at Yanapuma a fluent Spanish speaker, yet my instructor discovered holes in my learning and helped me to plug many of those holes. My vocabulary has increased, my understanding of the subtleties of the language has deepened, and I am finally wrapping my mind around the complexities of the subjunctive tense! Yanapuma arranged a home-stay for me with the delightful Sra. Yolanda; having my Spanish experience extend beyond the school day to include the activities of home-life added to the fun and learning. I got to interact with more people, in Spanish, and enjoyed delicious home-cooked Ecuadorian and Venezuelan cuisine daily. I took advantage of Yanapuma’s afternoon “Culture Class” where a teacher-guide led us to discover markets, churches, museums, archeological sites and restaurants. I also got to venture beyond Cuenca through the weekend excursions organized by the school. I highly recommend Yanapuma Spanish School to students, young and old, who want a holistic experience, challenging themselves to think and speak in Spanish, and to folks who’ve chosen to live in Ecuador and want to improve their Spanish to enhance their local experience.

August 22, 2015

Yanapuma is an excellent Spanish School. My wife and I attended the Cuenca school for over 4 months and the experience was fantastic - these people care about their students. They are well organized, their teachers and staff are very competent, friendly and helpful. They have sufficient English to ensure you are accommodated if you are raw beginners like we were, or address your already higher Spanish skill levels. If you are looking for a caring Spanish school, we highly recommend Yanapuma to you.

August 14, 2015

I'm a high school student and I volunteered through Yanapuma working with kids at Hogar Miguel Leon. My time there was one of the best experiences of my life. The fact I was there for five weeks made it so that by the end I felt like I had a place. Even though I had no special talent to offer, just being there helping felt useful. The time there expanded my world view, and helped me think about how I want to live my life.

August 14, 2015

My family has had the good fortune of being involved with Yanapuma for the past five weeks. My 15 year old daughter took private classes and participated in a volunteer experience. My 12 year old daughter requested classes after she saw how much the older one was enjoying her classes. They are both intermediate Spanish students but very different kinds of kids. For each of them, their teachers were able to figure out exactly what they needed to work on and to engage them through their particular interests in a way that really kept them enthusiastic about improving their Spanish. I also felt that having a private teacher for each of them helped my kids make a dramatic improvement in their Spanish because the classes were individually tailored to their specific needs and personalities.

My older daughter had a very meaningful, positive, and enjoyable experience in her volunteer placement. There is no doubt that it helped her Spanish, but more importantly it widened her world view in a way that few experiences have done.

We also had a delightful time "hanging out" at Yanapuma, participating in the various extra activities, and getting to know other students, staff, and teachers. We found communication to be quick and responsive from the time we started planning our trip months ago, and the staff was particularly helpful in finding an appropriate volunteer placement for a 15 year old. I also have to say, having participated in many language programs throughout the Spanish speaking world, that I found Yanapuma's prices to be very reasonable and there is no question but that we got much more than our money's worth. This was one of those priceless life experiences.

August 10, 2015

I came to Cuenca for four weeks to learn Spanish and ended up staying for six. Yanapuma runs individual and small group classes for every level. Starting off, I had some Spanish vocabulary but pretty much had to start from scratch. I had four hours of classes every day at Yanapuma and I loved every minute of it. The teachers were incredibly patient and helpful and good fun. By the end of the six weeks I was much more confident in my Spanish and could hold a pretty decent conversation with either my teachers or people I met on the street. I also learned a lot about Ecuador just from talking to them. I would recommend Yanapuma to anyone considering taking Spanish classes in Cuenca. My only regret was that I couldn't stay longer.

July 23, 2015

For Spanish classes, I recommend Yanapuma Spanish school www.yanapumaspanish.org in Cuenca. It's located near Parque Calderon in the colonial part of Cuenca. They have small class sizes and use the conversational approach. I sent my 19-year old son there this summer and he learned Spanish without ever having to do any homework. In addition, they were very helpful and flexible when our plans changed. He felt like the teachers and staff at the school really cared and this made a big difference for both of us. In addition, they have a cultural program and weekend field trips that allowed him to learn more about Cuenca and gave him experiences that he would not have had otherwise. I'm very satisfied with their program.

July 29, 2015

I had come to Ecuador on somewhat of a whim, a twenty year-old woman throwing herself alone into a country whose culture and language she knew next to nothing about, and Yanapuma played an essential role in giving me the background that allowed me to continue with my travels with confidence. I spent three weeks at Yanapuma, coming in with a good grasp on French but essentially no Spanish skills, as the intro to a two-month backpacking trip. I had been very nervous about how much Spanish I would actually come out with, and found that by the end of my first week of small group classes I was able to hold conversations with strangers. I took two weeks of group classes, which ranged from 1-3 other students working with one teacher, and one week of one-on-one classes. Classes lasted four hours every weekday. The school provided me with the tools I was looking for and I felt comfortable in my working Spanish as I left, and felt like I had the skills necessary to

continue my studies using the foundation Yanapuma gave me. I also found a great, relaxed community in the school and spent time outside of class with other students and teachers. I felt very at home at the school and found it to be filled with welcoming and helpful people who definitely added meaning to my trip. In addition to the language-focused classes, other activities such as weekly food tasting and occasional "field trips" out in Cuenca added to my cultural comprehension. The school is in an ideal location in the city center as well. I would highly recommend Yanapuma to anyone looking for a Spanish school.

May 9, 2015

I loved my short time studying at Yanapuma. The staff, teachers and students were all friendly and welcoming and I was grateful for the flexibility offered. I studied both privately and in a small class and can happily recommend both. I'm looking forward to returning next year and picking up where I left off.

May 9, 2015

Yanapuma coordinated a homestay, a volunteer project, and Spanish classes for me when I was in Cuenca for a month, and they coordinated my volunteer project in the Galápagos. They will also be setting up a homestay for me in Quito in a few weeks. Overall, I have had a positive experience with Yanapuma. The school in Cuenca is beautiful and conveniently located. There were several events every week, like food tastings, cooking classes, and game days. There were also weekend day trips for an additional price. All the activities and trips were well-run and enjoyable.

The staff and teachers were lovely. Very accommodating and friendly. The main coordinator in Cuenca is especially on the ball and goes above and beyond to help. Additionally, I have been very impressed with fast email responses and great communication with volunteer sites (of course, there's no guarantee that all the volunteer sites run by other organizations are as organized as Yanapuma).

I would recommend Yanapuma for a nice Ecuador experience.

December 19, 2014

I attended Yanapuma Spanish school for a month and volunteered for the foundation. It was a wonderful experience. I was traveling alone and felt like I had a home to come to every day. The teachers are kind and patient, they work with you at your level but guide you to go further. And if you feel like you need more, you only have to ask. They really want to help you learn. Volunteering with the children at schools to teach English and teaching them how to brush their teeth (I am a hygienist) was fun and rewarding. I want to do it all over again. I am now in Columbia traveling, my Spanish lessons definitely improved this part of my trip. Thank you Yanapuma.

December 16, 2014

I agree with many of the comments made here. I studied Spanish at the Yanapuma School for one week and had an excellent experience. I hope to return and stay much, much longer. With Yanapuma's assistance I had set up a wonderful daily schedule: three hours of Spanish study in the morning at the Yanapuma School and three hours of volunteering (teaching English to children) at La Biblioteca San Joaquin in the afternoons. The combination of morning study and afternoon volunteering was powerful. My Spanish improved daily. The instruction in Spanish I received was indeed personalized and flexible. I liked the way my instructor listened to my Spanish to see what I personally needed to work on as opposed to proceeding with some rigid plan of instruction. I also appreciated her very positive approach. I look forward to returning and picking up where I left

off.

April 9, 2014

I would like to recommend Yanapuma Spanish School in Cuenca. Coming from the perspective of a foreign language teacher in America, I was able to recognize immediately, that I had made the right choice with Yanapuma.

Teachers speak only the target language using a wide range of instructional strategies. These strategies are adapted to meet the individual learning styles of adults, as well as children. The ultimate goal of this type of program is for students to become proficient in the target language, and to develop increased cultural awareness. Due to the flexibility of schedule, I was able to spend the last hour of my lesson exploring the cultural aspects of the city with my teacher. I would also like to recommend my teacher at Yanapuma, Franklin Landivar. Franklin was well prepared each day and used strategies that were very effective. I will be using some of his strategies in a language course that I will be teaching in the fall at the university.

March 21, 2014

Want to have fun, learn Spanish and contribute to Ecuador's indigenous community? Yanapuma is the place for you. All you have to do is show up. The price is right too. The teachers are young and energetic and the pace is your own. The volunteer coordinator, Joy, is bilingual and bends over backwards to help you get started. Home stays can also be arranged. Mine has become my home away from home. I have my own little Ecuadorian family here in Cuenca. Thanks Yanapuma. Phone: 07 282 4207. Simon Bolivar 6-23 y Hermana Miguel.

January 12, 2014

I took one week of Spanish classes at Yanapuma with Carina, and it was a great experience all around. Teacher, method, and even the premises were perfect. Highly recommended. Yanapuma is on Bolívar 6-23 y Hermano Miguel, Cuenca. Tel: +593 7 282 4207, www.yanapumaspanish.org

January 5, 2014

If you're looking for a good Spanish school in Cuenca, I would recommend Yanapuma Spanish School. I recently had four weeks of instruction with wonderful teachers. Their methods were perfect for my learning style, and incredibly helpful. Located in the heart of Old Town. Their email: www.yanapumaspanish.org

Gringo Tree / Tribelr

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