

ALIHUEN

(big tree in Mapudungun)

WHY THIS GUIDE?

Most wwoofers and workawayers have many questions about the place they will volunteer at; the food, the working hours, the work to be done, accommodation...

We made this guide to answer most of these questions and to give you a guidance of what to expect when you volunteer at our farm.

Hopefully this guide doesn't look like a 'do's and don'ts' list but rather a guideline to show whether our farm will be suitable for you or not.

Our main interest is to make it a pleasant experience for the volunteers and an enjoyable time for us, hosts.

Please, take some time to read this manual and hopefully we'll see you here some time!

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FARM

- December 2005: purchase of 7,5 hectares farmland and old farmhouse
- 2007 - 2008: purchase of 13 hectares farmland
- July 2007: first plantation of 3200 native trees
- November 2007: construction of the new house
- August 2008: second plantation of 17.000 native trees

- 2009: start of organic garden (native potatoes, elephant garlic and beans)
- Winter 2010: refurbishing of the guesthouse (La Cabaña Reciclada)
- Summer 2010: arrival of the first wwoof volunteers
- August 2013: purchase of 2,72 hectares for plantations and camping-style lodging
- Summers & autumns of 2014 and 2015: plantation of 2.000 trees

- September 2014: Purchase of 43 hectares bordering the first farm for reforestation - conservation reasons
- All through 2017 - 2019: Construction of a 400 meter (437 yard) all-accessible trail (wheelchair users, blind people, ...) with 16 informative (interactive) stations
- 2018 - 2020: Plantation and maintenance of 7.400 native trees



First visit of the farm, love at first sight...



Start of the vegetable garden



Volunteer accommodation

WHO ARE WE?

- Grecia Maldonado Barria (°May 1975): born on the island of Chiloé, 4th generation artisan. Teaches weaving on the traditional and Swedish loom.
- Tamara Marquez Maldonado (°May 1998): Grecia's daughter
- Gabriel Beuckels Maldonado (°October 2013): Grecia and Jeroen's son
- Jeroen Beuckels (°September 1977): Belgian citizen since 2005 living on the Archipelago of Chiloé. Jeroen is a chef, farmer and tour guide.



Grecia & Jeroen



Traditional loom of Chiloé



Gabriel



Tamara

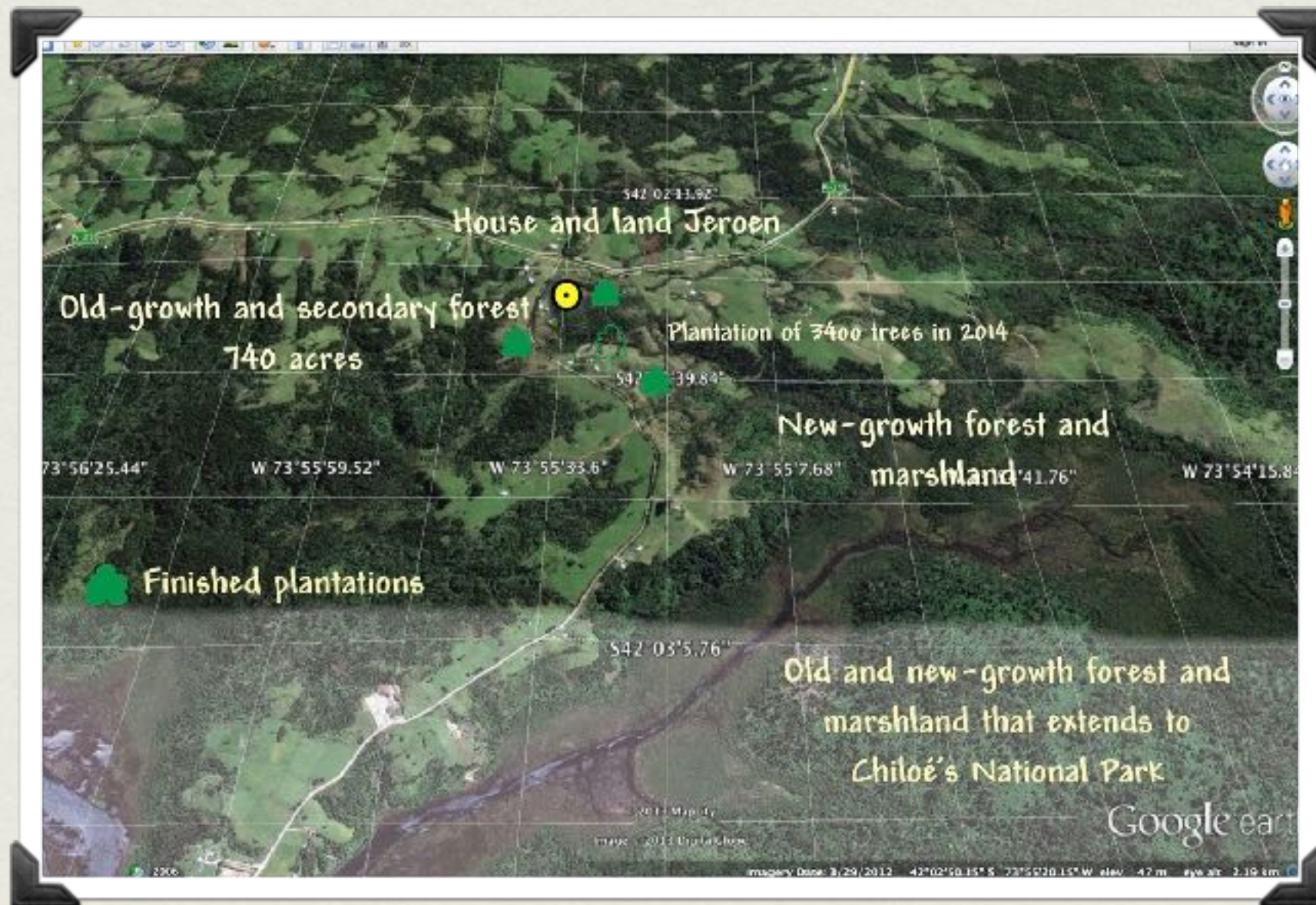
REFORESTATION PROJECT

The main objects of reforestation on Alihuen are:

1. Connect patches of isolated forest with the National Park of Chiloé
2. Restoration of lost forest
3. Education
4. Creating awareness

1. Connect patches of isolated forest with the National Park of Chiloé

In the sector where we live there are several disconnected patches of native forest of considerable size (740 - 1230 acres). Interior roads with low traffic and pasture land separate them.



What is the benefit of connecting isolated forests?

- Extend habitat of endangered carnivores like the *Lycalopex fulvipes* (Darwin's fox) and the *Leopardus guigna* (Kod kod)
- Create a reproduction, feeding and resting area for the second smallest deer in the world, the Pudu (*Pudu pudu*)
- Establish a transit zone for birds who need dense forest to travel from one area to another like the *Rhinocryptidae*

On the archipelago of Chiloé are the *Scelorchilus rubecula* (Chuca), *Eugralla paradoxa* (Ochre-flanked tapaculo), *Scytalopus magellanicus* (Magellanic tapaculo) and the *Pteroptochos tarnii* (Black-throated huet huet)

Darwin fox



Pudu deer



Austral pygmy owl

2. Restoration of lost forest

Every year 66.700 acres of native forest is lost in Chile due to forest fires and illegal logging.

In the last 400 years Chile has lost 3/4 of its forest surface...



3. Education

Since 2010 about 70 volunteers from Chile and the rest of the world have given a helping hand with the reforestation project.

Volunteers help with pruning, weeding, seed collection for the nursery and the digging of plant holes.

The whole process of a tree plantation and the maintenance of it are explained to those who volunteer here.



4. Creating awareness

Without being self-important, we want to show our neighbour- farmers and other farmers on the archipelago the benefits of native tree plantation.

Small farmers can get between 90 and 100% of their plantation investment back from the National Forestry Corporation (CONAF).

After 5-6 years their small livestock can graze on the plantation for another 7-10 years.



SUSTAINABILITY PROJECTS

- rain water collection for the volunteer/guesthouse
- solar water pump
- solar panels for volunteers electricity
- solar water heating for guesthouse showers
- 3-system wood stove in family's house (heating, cooking & hot water)
- recycling building materials
- organic vegetable garden



3-system wood stove



Veggie garden



Rain water collection



Solar water pump

VOLUNTEERING ON ALIHUEN

- 1. Why do we receive volunteers?
- 2. What do we offer in return for your work?
- 3. What do we expect from volunteers?
- 4. Things to bring
- 5. Some things to consider

Why do we receive volunteers?

In February 1999 Jeroen travelled to Australia and had his first experience with wwoof there. An Australian girl that he met on his travels through Europe sent him a leaflet with information about wwoof . When he arrived in Australia he became a member, received the book with wwoof farms and phoned his first farm. A new world opened; organic farming, re-forestation, vegetarian food, yoga, alternative energy, conservation etc. In Belgium and abroad he used to work as a chef cooking traditional French and Belgian food and had only vaguely heard of organic food. Slowly he started to have the idea and dream of having his own organic farm one day and combine it with cooking for guests. So grew 'Alihuen' farm.

Since the beginning of Alihuen, Grecia and Jeroen wanted to receive volunteers to exchange knowledge with like-minded people and show that it is possible to farm and reforest using sustainable practices. Without the help of the volunteers it wouldn't be possible to realize the things we dream of. Local people willing to work in the countryside are difficult to find as most young Chileans move to the cities to work in salmon processing or other factories.

Tree planting doesn't give us a financial income, the project has been financed so far with the help of tourists, forest conservationists and the Chilean forestry department. Tree planting will never give us an income either so that's we also rely on committed volunteers to help us.

We hope that people who come and work here become enthusiastic about reforestation, organic farming and sustainable living and one day realize their own project.

What do we offer in return for your work?

Education A complete 'hands on' course on reforestation, lessons on sustainable land management and on how to set up your own farm, information on what kind of land to look for and ideas how to make money with sustainable agriculture / tourism.

Lodging is in a comfortable, waterproof Nordic tipi. There are clean toilets close to the tents and showers are next to the swimming pond, Water is solar-heated. The tents are spacious and sleep 2 persons. They have mattresses, pillows and sleeping bags

3 meals a day: Breakfast is with home-made bread, butter, jam, free-range eggs, fresh milk and (instant, sorry) coffee, tea or herbal teas. If you would like 'real' coffee, BYO.

Lunch is the warm meal of the day. If you are vegetarian, vegan or allergic to some foods; let us know.

In the evening we have a bread meal with cheese, honey and the same things as breakfast.

Clean skies The southern hemisphere sky is great for observing the stars. The closest cities are at 30 and 80 km so there is little light pollution. If you have an iPod, iPad or similar device, the 'SkyView' app helps you distinguishing the constellations and shows the names of stars, planets, comets etc... We have a stargazer to have a closer look at the sky as well.

Information about the best spots to visit on the archipelago Chepu Valley and the nearby National Park are good places to hike, camp, horse-ride, kayak, fish,...



What do we expect from wwoofers and workawayers?

Interest for our project If you want to learn about reforestation and sustainable living this is probably a good place for you. We went through a lot of trial and error and love to share our experiences with other people keen on nature conservation.

five-hours work a day, work starts on Monday afternoon and continues until 11 days later Friday afternoon. This reforestation is a major project and to make it work we need this 11 day shift. Working hours are flexible so you can make your own work schedule. It is possible to work 5 hours in the morning and then have lunch or if you are an evening person you can work the 5 hours in the afternoon. Some work will have to be done as a group.

About 1 hour a day Help with cleaning the dishes, setting the table and getting firewood. If you play with our 6 year old son he will be delighted, you will be able to use the kayak for free and we will be eternally grateful.

Some experience with physical work You don't have to be an experienced farmer but it helps that you have used a shovel and wheelbarrow once and knows that physical work sometimes hurts the body a bit.

Minimum stay of two weeks We normally take up to 6 volunteers at the time (if there is demand). If for some legitimate reason you are not feeling happy at Alihuen you are free to leave.

Things to bring

- sturdy shoes, we provide overalls (dungarees, coverall, boiler suit,...)
- music! (on mp3 player and flash drive so we can share)
- musical instruments, we have a guitar and a piano at the farm
- books (digital also)
- warm clothes, rain protection pants (trousers) and waterproof raincoat
- sun hat, suncream (high protection level)
- flashlight

Some things to consider

Smoking is only allowed in certain areas. In summer the grass around the trees becomes very dry and ignites easily.

Limited, slow Internet is available, use it for the most necessary messages only please.

Most meals will be Lacto-ovo vegetarian but we will prepare (free range, hormone free,..) meat as well. In case all volunteers are vegetarian we will cook accordingly. With Lacto-ovo vegetarian food & cooking we mean: abstention from meat - red meat, poultry, seafood and the flesh of any other animal; it may also include abstention from by-products of animal slaughter.

If you are vegan we will adapt to that.

Safety: This reforestation project requires the use of a brush cutter to clean the brushes, a wood chipper for the brushes (and later used as mulch around the trees), a fence post drill. You will also work with a machete sometimes, an axe and hand saws. Whilst working with machines all the safety measures will be taken. When you really feel uncomfortable about a task for your safety, tell us and we'll find something else to do or show how to do it the safest way. Working gloves, safety goggles, helmet, etc. are provided.

Visitors: Sorry, if you want to meet with friends, relatives, fellow travellers,... do so after the shift and not on the farm. Encourage your friends to join the Workaway and wwoof program!

Language: Grecia speaks Spanish only, a great opportunity to upgrade your Spanish skills!

No-Alcohol policy: Over the years we have learned that this is the best for us and the volunteers.

What kind of work will you do?

During the summer and autumn of 2019 - 2020 there are several jobs to be done:

- tree planting and tree maintenance
- clearing and chipping weeds with machetes and machines
- fence building
- some firewood stacking



2007 plantation

Where is Alihuen?





HOW TO GET HERE?

- by bus (from Ancud): a bus that goes to 'Chepu' leaves Ancud three times a week. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. The bus leaves from the 2nd floor of the 'Unimarc' supermarket at 4 pm (E & G on the city map of Ancud). The bus ride costs 2500 pesos
- by car: look at the map of the area on the previous page

