

Volunteering at **Ananda Kalyani** is an excellent opportunity to learn and meet people from all over the world. Our programme includes non-formal education, sharing knowledge and hands-on learning. It will give you the chance to deepen your self-knowledge, to learn to share and live together with others. In our community we have people with a broad range of cultural backgrounds and skills who can teach and share their experience on topics such as organic gardening, permaculture, household maintenance, construction, vegetarian and vegan cooking, food preservation, playing the guitar, piano, drums, singing, fundraising, sociocracy, social change, team building games, networking, strategic planning and more. We also have new people constantly joining us, bringing with them new skills and knowledge.

At Ananda Kalyani our primary goal is to offer an experiential learning experience to those who come and stay with us. We have a mix of short and long term volunteers including young travellers who find us on volunteer websites, long and short term volunteers sponsored by the European Voluntary Service (EVS) and local Portuguese who find out about us by word of mouth or through our website. During their stay volunteers get the opportunity to develop themselves through yoga and meditation, the experience of living in a community and learn many practical skills including vegetarian cooking, gardening, building, group facilitation, project management, volunteer management and many others. We encourage volunteers to start projects which can help generate income (such as making miso and growing salad greens) and/or provide a service to the community. At Ananda Kalyani we also host retreats and seminars on yoga and meditation, occasional yoga teacher training, **Prout** (an alternative socio-economic model), organic gardening, permaculture, sustainable community design and various other topics which help us to improve the quality of our lives both individually and collectively.

We have two main projects: one is a vegetarian restaurant, **Ananda Cafe**, located in the city of Covilha and a land project known as a **Master Unit** near Paul, a village half an hour away from Covilha. Apart from cooking and serving in the restaurant the volunteer will learn how to interact with people from all over the world, how to build a team, how to communicate in a positive way, how to plan, promote and organise different events. The overall learning objectives of the Covilha activities are to teach the participants about a healthy vegetarian lifestyle, how to run a restaurant and to acquire a variety of related skills such as vegetarian and vegan cooking as well as developing other tangentially related competences such as journalism, design and marketing and the use of social media. Volunteers will have plenty of opportunities to develop their knowledge of Portuguese through interaction with the local visitors to the cafe and the cultural nights, etc. They will participate in the workshops and other programmes of the cultural centre and develop life skills such as self-confidence, multi-tasking and working in a team, etc. In the restaurant they will learn about different types of diet, the preparation of a variety of international dishes, fusion cooking, healthy food options, and how to develop their creativity through cooking. This creativity can then carry over into other areas of life.

The volunteers at the Master Unit project will be involved any of the following activities: helping with the development of a food forest and an organic garden based on permaculture principles, a seed bank to preserve seeds and plants for future generations, assisting in the development of an ecological centre and the construction of a water conservation programme or the construction of small buildings using natural materials such as straw bale. They will learn how to prune and care for cherry trees and berry bushes, composting, mulching, caring for and transplanting seedlings, how trickle drip irrigation systems work, weeding and all other aspects of maintaining and developing an organic farm. They may help with marketing the food grown at our fortnightly market stall, learn how to run a food cooperative, visit other eco-villages and projects nearby or process food for our processed food project, which we are just starting to develop. They will also be given the opportunity to develop their own project according to their interests, such as creating a herb garden and essences from herbs and other plants or building a drying machine to dry fruits and vegetables. They may also like to help with other aspects of food preservation. In the summer the volunteers will have the opportunity to help with the organization of our summer camps, festivals, and help promote eco-tourism. They will also learn how to do publicity for these events by making materials and

advertise them on social media. They will be asked to help prepare a cultural night about their country and its culture, and possibly others on topics related to their areas of interest, such as vegetarianism in their home country as well as create a blog about their activities. They will also be able to participate in all our programmes in the yoga room in their free time and to go into town regularly to enjoy the social life and culture of Covilha town.

The daily routine of a volunteer usually starts with optional morning yoga and meditation sessions, followed by breakfast, a morning meeting, then work until lunch around 1.30 pm. Volunteers are expected to participate in our work schedule for 6 hours per day. After that they are free to create their own programmes for the rest of the day. Again they are welcome to join the evening meditation and any other evening activities. Dinner is eaten together, and is a time to share our knowledge, skills and stories. Volunteers usually sleep together in dormitories, in bunk beds or on mattresses on the floor. There are separate rooms and dorms for men and women. The volunteers are provided with three healthy vegetarian meals daily, with opportunities to detox through dry fasting or juicing once in a while. The use of drugs, alcohol and cigarettes as well as the consumption of non-vegetarian food is not permitted on the property.

We are looking for volunteers who are open to live with people from different cultures and backgrounds and who are interested to share in and learn from the whole process. We want to provide a place where everybody can express themselves and learn how to develop their full potential.

We are living together with one monk and two family teachers, who teach us meditation, a yogic lifestyle and how to live peacefully together as a community. We practice meditation, kiirtan (spiritual chanting and dancing) and yoga exercises twice a day everyday and everyone is welcome to join. The monk and meditation teachers also give personal guidance for one's spiritual growth to those who wish.

If you would like the experience of organic farming or restaurant management, a daily routine of yoga and meditation and to live in such a community, you are most welcome to volunteer with us.

Our education work is inspired by Prout and Neo-Humanism. Prout (An Acronym for Progressive Utilization Theory) is an alternative socio-economic model based on cooperatives, the ethical distribution of wealth, self-reliant regional economies and a worldview (Neo-Humanism) that human beings, animals, plants and nature itself are part of one universal family. All should have the right to live and prosper and none should have the scope to enrich themselves at the expense of others. Click on these links to find out more about [Prout](#) and [Neo-Humanism](#).

We are a worldwide spiritual and social family whose yoga and meditation practices are based on the teachings of Spiritual Master Shrii Shrii Anandamurti. While we regularly dive into the deepest realms of our being through meditation, we make it our duty to selflessly serve society through social outreach activities. We believe that the ultimate goal of life is to attain spiritual enlightenment. If you think you share the same ideals and aspirations, we can work together to become a force for change in the world. Let us get to know each other.