Curious about life at Hacienda Day Camp?

Here are the answers to our most frequently asked questions:

What does an average day at camp look like?

As a camp counselor each day will look a little different than the last! You may work with different age groupings, or "units," over the summer, allowing you to experience different perspectives and locations of camp. Regardless of your unit, though, the pacing of camp and its essential activities will remain the same throughout.

Each morning, campers are dropped off at camp between 8 and 8:30 a.m., joining together for some singalongs, games, and getting excited for the day's activities. At 9 a.m. we conduct our flag ceremony, and the camp directors share the morning announcements. Then, each unit heads off to their respective spaces for their morning activities, including archery, slingshots, crafting, group games and songs, and much more! Counselors will have access to many supplies and pre-built activities, allowing their campers' creativity to shine. Halfway through the morning, snacks are distributed to each camper. At noon, the whole camp gathers for lunch and some Girl Scout-led fun.

After lunch, the entire camp enters HOT time! HOT stands for Hour of Tranquility; Campers can read, color, take a nap, or quietly keep each other company within their units. This offers a bit of a brain break both for our campers and our counselors. Following HOT time, refreshed and rejuvenated, it's swim time! Counselors will lead their units to the pool to get changed, apply sunscreen, and enjoy the junior Olympic-sized pool, all under the watch of certified lifeguards. It is during lunch, HOT time, and swim time that our counselors take their one-hour breaks. When swim time concludes and campers get changed, they receive their afternoon snack before returning to their units for the last activities of the day.

At 4 p.m. campers complete their chores or "Kapers" for the day by tidying up communal spaces and getting ready for the next day's adventures. Before heading off to be picked up, campers participate in a group reflection, sharing their highlights of the day. Campers are to be picked up no later than 5 p.m., at which point counselors begin their own "Kapers" and finally meet for a team debrief with the camp directors. After this, staff is dismissed to rest up for another day of camp!

Do we get breaks?

Yes! All camp staff get a one-hour break each day during camp between the hours of lunch and swim time. Breaks are taken in shifts to ensure that campers remain supervised during these times, and staff break shifts are chosen at the beginning of each week. Staff are welcome to relax in our kitchen or break room, take a nap, or leave camp to grab some food.

What is the bathing situation like?

Since this is a Day Camp, neither counselors nor campers will be bathing on the premises. Showers are only used by campers during the one week of camp that features an overnight component.

How often do I get to go home?

At Day Camp, you get to go home every night, and your weekends are free! The only time counselors are expected to stay overnight is during our one overnight week, which will consist of three full days of camp, starting on a Wednesday morning and ending the following Friday evening. Break times and camp schedules are different for this week to accommodate the additional hours.

There seems to be so much jargon, I'm having a hard time keeping it all straight. What is a unit? What are Kapers?

The Hacienda Day Camp is divided into three units, each with at least two designated counselors. The units are arranged by age, the Ringtails being the youngest, the Jackrabbits being in the middle, and the Bobcats being the oldest. On some weeks, we will have a unit of Camp Aides, who are older campers who chose to participate in our leadership program to build valuable skills while experiencing all the joys of camp.

Kapers are what we call chores at Girl Scout camp. Each unit and counselor will have a different Kaper each day to ensure that our camp is well-maintained and safe throughout each week.

How do you get your camp name?

Your camp name is your decision! Some staff prefer to get a camp name from their fellow staff, while others elect to name themselves! Let your creativity run wild but be sure to pick something you will not get tired of hearing.

The Hacienda Day Camp director is named Pixie because, back when she was a counselor, her campers voted and selected it! Sparky, our assistant director, used to be called "Sparkles" at a different summer camp, and wanted to keep the name, just with a twist!

How old are the campers? How many will I be responsible for?

During our normal camp sessions, campers at Day Camp range in age from five to 17 years old! Counselors work as a team to care for one unit of campers, the size of which can range from roughly 10 to 25 Girl Scouts. For our overnight session, campers must be at least seven years old.

What is the terrain like at camp? How about the weather?

At the Hacienda Day Camp, we have paved and unpaved paths connecting our various buildings and outside spaces. Campers and counselors will often walk through rocky terrain, deep sand, loose gravel, and uneven dirt paths, so closed-toe shoes are a must! Let's be real: this is a summer camp in Tucson, Arizona. It's going to be hot! We prepare for temperatures to reach over 100 degrees Fahrenheit during the sunniest and warmest parts of the summer. As we enter July, we also keep an eye out for monsoon thunderstorms and flash floods, which do come through camp. Our top priority is keeping our campers safe, so we do spend most of the day indoors in air-conditioned spaces. When we are outside, we always bring plenty of water, sunscreen, proper attire, and make sure to stay in shaded areas. Everyone, campers and counselors, need to stay hydrated, fed, and properly prepared for these kinds of weather to experience the outdoors safely and enjoyably!

So, we do archery, slingshots, crafts, dancing, singing, swimming, and first-aiding? What if I don't have any experience with these activities?

We provide all necessary training for camp staff before camp begins! During camp training, all staff will be trained in facilitating archery and slingshots. We will also provide materials and instructions to practice some of our staple camp activities, including lanyard-making, tie dye, button making and friendship bracelets. A portion of camp training will be dedicated to learning Girl Scout songs and dances, as well as no-supplies-needed activities for staff to keep in their back pockets. Prior to camp training, we will be providing a CPR/First Aid course, half of which must be completed online.

How are we trained for camp?

Counselors participate in a weeklong training program to prepare for camp! This training includes several days of instruction at the Tucson Girl Scouts office and several days of on-site training at the Hacienda Program Center located off of Sabino Canyon Rd, just north of Tanque Verde. During this time, counselors will gain all the tools they need to have a successful and fun summer at camp, regardless of previous camp experience level.



How about food, what will I eat?

Counselors are responsible for their lunch at Day Camp. However, during the overnight session, most meals are provided. We also have a stockpile of snacks just for staff in our kitchen, so we ask that you provide your dietary restrictions and preferences. And if, in our twice-daily snack distribution for campers, we have leftovers, counselors may have some as well!

Am I expected to be ready to work throughout the night?

No, for five of the six weeks of camp, Day Camp counselors are not asked to work throughout the night. During the one overnight session, counselors are responsible for the safety of all campers throughout the three days and two nights. Given the nature of our work at camp, there are times when counselors are woken up during the night to provide support for their campers. You will always have the support of your directors too! We encourage counselors to equally divide this responsibility between themselves to ensure that no one person in any given unit is responsible for all nighttime disturbances. This responsibility obviously varies based on the age group you are working with, and the campers' comfort level.

