



La Confluencia

TALLERES & EVENTOS

## Natural Construction Basics of COB and Super Adobe

El Bolsón, Patagonia, Argentina  
November 29 – December 6, 2009

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Workshops and events are the heart of La Confluencia and the Land Ethic Action Foundation. We offer these workshops to you as a microcosm of what we have begun to learn from our neighbors and this land.

### Introducing ourselves

We began our journey by learning to grow our own food, cut our own firewood, live without electricity and manage large farm animals, but came to realize that although these are fundamental aspects of living a sustainable and self-sufficient life, they are also only a part of it. We began to see that health, art, music, spirituality and community play an equal and integral part.

The community which is growing in this neighborhood and zone is one of like minded but varied individuals, families, farms and organizations bound together loosely but with a common thread. And so the people who work and teach here are people we know. We have a connection with them just as we have with this land.



## The Place

This basic cob and super adobe workshop is 7 days of intensive learning appropriate for people of all ages with or without experience. The backdrop for this workshop is La Confluencia, where you will be able to sample some of what we have experienced. We live in an almost magical corner of the planet where two rivers meet with water the color of turquoise, where mountains and forests mingle in a symphony of color and form, and where man and animals flourish.

## The Project

La Confluencia was developed by the Land Ethic Action Foundation as a teaching and demonstration center for sustainable self-sufficient living. While we make no claim of absolute sustainability, our endeavor is to use the simplest, least energy consumptive, and, to every reasonable degree, locally available building materials to construct and build the most energy efficient buildings we are capable of. As such, the lodge and spa were built of plastered straw-bale walls, dead or wind fallen cedar lumber and local stone. And following this same criteria, we will construct a super adobe/cob building during this workshop which will be used to house future workshop participants.

## An integral vision

Since our vision of a self-sufficient and sustainable life is even more than the land, the workshop will also offer shamanic drumming, circle dancing, short treks into the surrounding mountains, La Confluencia's spa, and time in the organic gardens for the enrichment of mind, body and soul.



## The Technique

Earth building techniques such as cob and adobe are among the most ancient forms of construction used by man. This type of habitation is considered to be fairly inexpensive and sustainable as it uses only clay, sand, soil, water and straw, and as such, many of the materials can be found on-site. Cob, although one of the most beautiful and versatile aesthetically, is also one of the most labor intensive. It requires more people, with more skill, over a long period of time.

In response to a growing need for low cost energy efficient housing, a new technique known as Super Adobe was developed in the 1980's by the Iranian architect, Nader Khalili. Its roots are in the sand filled bags used to create bunkers during WWI and it is now a proposed design for future use by NASA.

The super adobe technique uses long tubes of material such as burlap or polypropylene and can be filled with virtually any material. The tubes are layered and when complete are covered with an exterior treatment, usually plaster. It is an extremely cheap and easy method. Soil can be taken from the site, the tubing is low cost and the technique requires few skills so that people of all ages and skill levels can participate. Because of this, super adobe has become an important building method in many parts of the world, especially in areas where cost, ease and speed of construction are crucial issues. Although super adobe construction has already gained popularity in other parts of South America, this super adobe/cob building will be the first of its kind here in Argentina.



## The content

You will learn to locate and test soil, sand and straw, create the right cob mix for any situation, and build strong, durable, sculptural earthen walls. You will get practical experience with super adobe, foundations, windows, doors, and niches. Lectures will cover permaculture, other types of natural construction, sacred geometry in design, solar design, drainage, heating, plumbing and electric, roofing and flooring.

## The Instructors

**Paulina Avila** | Paulina is the director of natural construction at CIDEP (Centre for Research, Development and Teaching of Permaculture, [www.cidepbolsonweb.com](http://www.cidepbolsonweb.com)), with seven years of experience in South America. She has been teaching natural construction workshops for 5 years and collaborates on an international basis with the forerunners in natural construction.

**Josephine Feller** | Since 1990 Josephine and her husband have been developing a demonstration and learning center at their farm Millalén ([www.geocities.com/chacramillalen](http://www.geocities.com/chacramillalen)). The focus of their center is community living and self-sufficiency in a rural setting. She will be sharing games and circle dances designed to enhance group interaction during this workshop.

**Ellie Jordan** | Ellie is a permanent resident of La Confluencia ([www.laconfluencia.com](http://www.laconfluencia.com)) and a founding member of LEAF. She spends her time working in the gardens and with the animals. Ellie will be leading us in shamanic drumming.



## What to bring and wear

Sleeping bag and tent (for those who choose the basic workshop), work clothes, rubber boots, leather work gloves, flashlight, swim suit, towel, drum or rattle for shamanic drumming (optional), yoga mat (optional). The weather is quite changeable here at any time of the year - temperatures can vary from quite cold to hot in any given day. We recommend that you bring clothes which you can layer.

## Price and Lodging Options

\$1,500.-* per person	\$2,025.-* per person	\$2900 per person, double occupancy \$3400 per person, single occupancy
Basic Workshop and Tent space	Basic Workshop and Albergue stay	Basic Workshop and Lodge stay
Includes tent space, meals (breakfast, lunch, tea, and dinner with non-alcoholic beverages), baths and the use of the sauna and hot tubs.	The albergue has a large open loft with sufficient space for 6 people - mattresses, kitchen, bathroom and shower. This option includes meals (breakfast, lunch, tea, and dinner with non-alcoholic beverages), and the use of the sauna and hot tubs.	See website for accommodation details <a href="http://www.laconfluencia.com">www.laconfluencia.com</a> This option includes meals (breakfast, lunch, tea and dinner with noon-alcoholic beverages), and the use of the sauna and hot tubs

\* All prices are calculated in Argentine pesos.

### Payment and Cancellation Policy:

A deposit of 40% of the total cost (workshop and lodging) is required when registering.

You will receive a 100% refund if you cancel before October 29, 2009.

You will receive a 50% refund if you cancel after October 29th but before November 15, 2009.

No refunds will be given after November 15, 2009.

### For more information about the workshop:

Contact in Spanish - :Mariano Anastassiades ([mariano@laconfluencia.com](mailto:mariano@laconfluencia.com))

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