

VIAJES CON SENTIDO (MEANINGFUL JOURNEYS) COSTA RICA 2021

Costa Rica is worldwide recognized as a leader in ecotourism and sustainable tourism, due to the efforts made for preserving the environment and the great amount of biodiversity and natural wealth that it has, as well as the integration of the community in the tourist activity, providing a unique experience to visitors.

ABOUT COSTA RICA

There are only 200 miles (322 kilometers) from the Pacific coast to the Caribbean coast of Costa Rica. The diversity of landscape and microclimates that can be enjoyed in the same day, make this country a unique destination.



In only 19,714 square miles (51,000 square kilometers), the traveler can find: sun and beaches, adventure, nature and culture; those components are necessary to satisfy wishes of thousands of tourists. Costa Rica is among the 20 most diverse countries in the world and has 54% of its territory under some category of protection management.

Requirements to enter Costa Rica



- **Passport:** to enter Costa Rica, visitors must present their passport, which should not expire or lose validity before six months from the date of entry into the country.
- **Visa:** some countries require a visa to enter the country so they are asked to verify with the Consulate of Costa Rica if this procedure is necessary and the requirements to obtain the visa. For your reference, you can consult the website of the General Directorate of Migration of Costa Rica www.migracion.go.cr
- **Yellow Fever:** the yellow fever vaccine is mandatory for people who come from at risk countries. They must be vaccinated before entering the country and it must be verified by means of the "International Certificate of Vaccination against Yellow Fever". This certificate is valid 10 days after vaccination. For more details, please check the information in the official publication at the address: www.historico.gaceta.go.cr

DAY 1 – JULY 17, 2021

Once you arrive in Costa Rica you will get a transfer to the Hotel Presidente, in the heart of San José, just on the pedestrian avenue of Avenida Central, where locals and visitors mingle with street vendors, artists and some of the most emblematic places of the capital city: The National Theater, the Gold Museum, the Spain Park and the National Museum.



The Hotel Presidente is interesting because it is an urban hotel that has bet on sustainability as part of its operation; this shows that good practices can not only be developed in rural hotels or located in the middle of the forest, but also in hotels located downtown. In addition to environmental actions, they have developed social programs that go beyond philanthropy and seek a change in the quality of life of people.

Welcome dinner included at Café Mundo.

DAY 2 – JULY 18, 2021



After breakfast, you will move to Rancho Margot in La Fortuna de San Carlos, located in the north of Costa Rica. It lasts approximately 3 and a half hours to get there. In part of the route, the road passes through the Braulio Carrillo National Park, one of the largest protected areas in Costa Rica with 50,000 hectares and whose landscape is made up of high mountains densely covered with

forests.

Rancho Margot is a sustainable project, which has the highest qualification of the Certificate of Sustainable Tourism (CST), a program developed by the Costa Rican Tourism Institute (ICT). This project is characterized by generating its own electricity, using alternative energy sources, producing 67% of the food necessary for its guests and collaborators, among other good practices.

More information: <https://www.rancho-margot.com/el-rancho-margot>

Lunch is included at Rancho Margot. After the visit, you will go to the Arenal Country Inn Hotel to check in and where you will stay 6 nights, while you volunteer. This hotel is also certified with the CST.

More information: http://www.arenalcountryinn.com/es_index.html

DAYS 3-4-5-6-7 – FROM JULY 19 TO JULY 23, 2021



Every day after breakfast, you will go to the TEC Campus San Carlos, to carry out the volunteer program. Lunches and dinners are not included.

Day 6 - July 22, 2021

This day after volunteering, you will go to the Ecotermiales hot springs to relax in different natural pools and enjoy dinner. This attraction is one of the most important of La Fortuna.

Ecotermiales is a company committed to sustainability; it has an integrated waste management system, which allows them to process 100% of the waste generated by their activity.

Web: <https://ecotermialesfortuna.cr/>

La Fortuna de San Carlos is an interesting case study, considering that before the tourist activity occurred as a result of the activity of the Arenal Volcano, its main attraction. However, when the volcano stopped being active, touristic entrepreneurs were forced to diversify the offer and venture into new products. That is how adventure activities such as canopy, hanging bridges, among others, emerged; and wellness tourism with hot springs and spa, allowing the boom in tourism and becoming one of the most visited destinations in Costa Rica, both by national and foreign tourists.



DAY 8 – JULY 24, 2021



Very early in the morning you will go to La Pavona to take the boat that will take us to Tortuguero, a small village in the province of Limón that is located on the Caribbean coast (breakfast is taken on the way in Guápiles).

Tortuguero, is a navigable set of lakes, rivers and canals, which are a great opportunity to enjoy the

wildlife of the area, with more than 350 species of birds, amphibians and freshwater fish, and approximately 400 species of trees, about 2,200 other species of plants and many animals, including 3 of Costa Rica's 4 species of monkeys, sloths, American crocodiles, and alligators, plus the famous four species of Sea Turtles (out of the 7 in the world) that they choose this site to spawn. The National Park also provides refuge for endangered animals such as manatees, tapirs and jaguars, to name a few.

After checking in at Laguna Lodge, which has an exclusive location on a strip of land between the Caribbean Sea and the Tortuguero lagoon, we will enjoy a buffet lunch. After a short break, in the afternoon we will visit the small village to learn about the local way of life and visit the collection center for recyclable materials managed by the development association.



You return to the Lodge and dinner will be at 7:30 p.m. (In Tortuguero all meals are included, breakfast, lunch and dinner).

DAY 9 – JULY 25, 2021

After breakfast we will visit the Tortuguero National Park to discover the great amount of biodiversity that can be observed through its channels.

Tortuguero National Park is the main nature destination in Costa Rica. It is a vast wetland full of primary forests and home of 450 bird species: half of all Costa Rica's



species. This protected area has three different types of tropical forests: Humid, Premontane and Montane.

Today, after a typical lunch and a break, we will start a short walk along the lodge's trail and beach.

DAY 10 – JULY 26, 2021



After breakfast at Laguna Lodge, we will check out and head to the South Caribbean beaches of Costa Rica. We will be taking lunch on the way. During the next days we will stay at Almonds and Corals, located in the exuberant Gandoca Manzanillo jungle. This hotel is also CST certified due to its sustainable actions. You can see more info at: <https://www.almondsandcorals.com/es/>.

We will enjoy a leisure afternoon to explore the area's natural and cultural wonders. You can either relax at the beach or visit Gandoca Manzanillo Wildlife Refuge for a self-guided walk.

DAY 11 – JULY 27, 2021

After breakfast we will visit Cahuita National Park, consisting in 23.290 hectares of marine territory and 1.102 land hectares. Here you can find a wide group of ecosystems like coral reefs which due to its structure and biodiversity, are considered as the most developed ones in the Caribbean coast.

Along Cahuita's trails you can find howler and white-faced monkeys, sloths, toucans

herons, and more. In addition, the ocean and sand are a must to enjoy here.



DAY 12 – JULY 28, 2021



After breakfast time we will head to our last destination: Turrialba, a small and charming city located in the central valley.

We will visit the Guayabo National Monument. This protected area of approximately 20 hectares is home of Costa Rica's most important archeological site, compiling a group

of pre-Hispanic architecture structures made of stone. It was built between 1000 B.C and 1400 A.C, and it was occupied during for approximately 2.400 years after its creation.

The Guayabo National Monument holds one designation of Civil Engineering Heritage, given by the American Association of Civil Engineers. This recognition rewards the architecture techniques used by the first inhabitants of this area of the country, which have lasted through hundreds of years.

Lunch will be served in a local restaurant, and dinner is not included tonight.

*In case the group prefers, it is also possible to arrange a visit to Volcán Turrialba National Park instead of Guayabo Monument. The extra price is 15 USD per person.

DAY 13 – JULY 29, 2021

After enjoying a delicious Costa Rican breakfast, we will be back to San José to finish our tour and do our trip closure.

At 18:00, we will enjoy a cultural dinner in Ecole Travel's office.



DAY 14 – JULY 30, 2021

Today, our local driver will bring you to SJO airport to take your flight back home.