

COSTA RICA

AN ECO PARADISE



Arenal Volcano

Costa Rica, in Central America, extends majestically from the Pacific Ocean to the Caribbean Sea. This spectacular country offers almost limitless possibilities including extensive rainforests, volcanoes, rivers travelling through mountains, beaches and natural resources all safeguarded by national parks and reserves. Working with our local guide we have selected locations and experiences for you to enjoy and an opportunity to marvel at the beautiful scenery, lush jungles and unique wildlife. Find out for yourself why Costa Rica is considered the happiest country in the world.

Highlights

- Small group – maximum 12 guests
- Visit to Cartago and Lankaster Gardens
- Visit to Poas Volcano National Park and La Paz Waterfall Gardens
- Coffee Tour of La Finca Rosa Blanca coffee plantation
- Walking tour of San Jose and the Central Market
- Tour of Arenal Hanging Bridges and Ecotermals thermal hot springs
- Safari float tour of Penas Blanca River
- Visit to Tarcoles
- Santa Juana tour
- Nature walk at Manuel Antonio Park



Days 1-4 Central Highlands near San Jose

You will be met individually at San Jose airport and escorted through immigration in the VIP lines and transferred to the hotel. Meet your fellow travellers over pre-dinner drinks and dinner at the hotel.

Day 2: Today we'll visit Cartago, home to the country's largest cathedral. When Spanish Governor, Juan Vasquez de Coronado founded the city in 1563, he claimed that he'd never seen a more beautiful valley. Lush green fields encircle the city while 'Arabica' coffee trees seem to grow everywhere on the steep mountain slopes. Cartago is the gateway to Lankaster Botanical Garden and the Orosi Valley which we'll have an opportunity to explore.

Dinner tonight will be at our hotel restaurant which is well recognised for its fresh local ingredients and mix of exotic indigenous dishes prepared with flair.

Day 3: This morning we'll visit Poas Volcano National Park and La Paz Waterfall Gardens where we'll stop for lunch. Poas is one of the largest caldron volcanoes in the world. La Paz Waterfall Gardens is a private rescued wildlife

preserve home to over 100 species of animals, a hummingbird garden and the most famous waterfalls in Costa Rica.

After lunch you'll have an opportunity for a little down time back at our hotel before heading to Tiquicia for a fun evening of typical Costa Rican food and folkloric dances. Kick back, have a drink or three and practice your dance moves!

 *Finca Rosa Blanca*

Days 4-6 Arenal

Day 4: After breakfast and check-out we'll take a tour of the coffee plantation before a relaxed walking tour exploring the capital city of San Jose, Costa Rica's thriving municipal centre. We'll visit the splendid and historic Teatro Nacional (the country's top-notch arts focus) and the city's gustatory crossroads, its Central Market. You're free to explore on your own.

After lunch we'll head to the beautiful mountainous area of Arenal, where a perfect volcanic cone looms over lush cloud forest and gushing natural hot springs. Keep an eye out for toucans overhead and sloths in the trees. Dinner this evening is at our hotel.



Magnificent hummingbird



Take a dip in a cool waterfall

Day 5: This morning we're off to a traditional Tico (Costa Rican) house where our host and hostess will take us farm to table with a unique cooking class experience followed by lunch.

Then we'll follow the 3km trail and 16 famous state-of-the-art hanging bridges that introduce the forest's rich biodiversity and loop through the mountainous area.

After our hike in the rainforest it's time to relax as we head to the Ecotermals thermal hot springs, famous for their therapeutic benefits since ancient times. Spend a couple of hours bathing in the mineral enriched hot springs before enjoying an authentic, traditional Costa Rican meal at the Ecotermals restaurant.

Day 6: Today we'll taste the best chocolate in Costa Rica! In this 2-hour "hands-on" program, we'll have an opportunity to participate in all the production processes of the traditional drink of Central American ancestors.

After lunch it's off for a relaxing inflatable raft trip along the river where we'll spot an array of tropical birds such as Oropenolas, Tucans, Kingfishers as well as animals such as monkeys, sloths caimans and iguanas. Dinner tonight at your leisure.

 *Lost Iguana Resort, Arenal*



Days 7-9 Manuel Antonio

Checking out of the hotel after breakfast we'll head to the lovely beach town of Manuel Antonio on the Central Pacific Coast. On the way we'll stop on the Rio Tarcoles bridge for an up close look at the world's second largest crocodiles. Later, relax and enjoy the facilities of our hotel before dinner which is included here.

Day 8: After an early breakfast today it's off to enjoy one of the best adventures in Costa Rica, the Santa Juana tour. Our journey will take us through the lush jungle to Fila Chonta Mountains. At the top of the mountain, you'll have the option of taking a guided horseback or 4WD tour down to the authentic sugar mill still run by massive white oxen. From there its a scenic ride to the sublime El Salto waterfalls. Keep your eyes open for local wildlife including over 200 species of birds.

There is a small changing area next to the waterfalls for those seeking a relaxing dip. This is one of the most beautiful places in Costa Rica for swimming in fresh clean water tumbling from pristine mountains.

Enjoy a Campesino style lunch overlooking the panoramic vista of Manuel Antonio Park before returning to the hotel where we enjoy dinner tonight.

Day 9: It's your first full day of leisure. Enjoy a pool-side breakfast at Si Como No and use this day to go shopping or relax on the stunningly beautiful beach laid out at your feet near the hotel or why not claim a chaise-longue by the private pool for a spot of well earned R & R? Lunch is on your own today, while dinner is included at Si Como No.

 *Si Como No, Manuel Antonio*

Day 10 San Jose

After a Nature Walk to spot the wildlife in Manuel Antonio National Park, one of the most successfully managed parks in Costa Rica, we'll begin our return journey to San Jose. Our farewell dinner this evening is at the hotel restaurant, one of the best in Costa Rica.

 *Gran de Oro Hotel, San Jose*

Day 11 Depart San Jose

After breakfast a group transfer will be provided to International Airport for your onward flights. As they say in Costa Rica, "Pura Vida!"

Inclusions

- Meet and greet at San Jose Airport for individual transfers
- English speaking guide for the entire tour
- 3 nights at Finca Rosa Blanca - ranked as one of the 10 best hotels in the world
- 3 nights at Lost Iguana Resort, Arenal
- 3 nights at Si Como No, Manuel Antonio
- 1 night Gran de Oro Hotel, San Jose
- 10 breakfasts, 6 lunches, 9 dinners
- Comfortable air conditioned transport for transfers and excursions
- Group transfer to San Jose International Airport
- Entry fees for scheduled visits
- Tips for drivers and guides

Dates & Prices

11 days/10 nights

Mon 12th Sep to Thu 22nd Sept 2016

Sun 22nd Oct to Wed 1st Nov 2017

Tour Price: US\$6,650 per person

Reductions available for twinshare

Not included: Air fares to/ from Costa Rica

This tour can be customised and operate on any date for a group of minimum 6.