

COSTA RICA - COSTA RICA IN DEPTH



INTRODUCTION

Explore the very best of Costa Rica with our 14 day Costa Rica in Depth itinerary. Stunning wildlife, breath-taking scenery and picturesque beaches are all here to give you a real nature lovers' dream holiday. Starting in the capital San Jose, we make our way to Tortuguero National Park, which is famed for its diverse and vibrant wildlife including jaguars, manatees, caimans, monkeys, and of course the beaches covered in nesting sea-turtles! Next we visit to the soaring Arenal volcano, where you can see smoke and ash rise from its towering peak. From here we ascend into the famed Monteverde Cloud Forest sitting at over 1,400 metres above sea level, where we discover misty views, rolling hills and hundreds of diverse plant and animal species. Lastly, the trip ends with a relaxing beach stay in Manuel Antonio where you can take in some sun or take on some of the many activities available.

ITINERARY

DAY 1: Arrival transfer in San Jose

On arrival, please make your way through to the Arrivals Hall where our representative will be waiting for you to transfer you to your hotel. He/she will be holding a sign with your name on it. Should you not be able to locate them, please refer to the front of your itinerary for emergency contact details of our representative office.



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DAY 1: San Jose

San Jose, the capital and largest city of Costa Rica, sits in the Central Valley region overlooked by volcanoes to the north and the Talamanca Mountains to the south. It is the cultural capital of Costa Rica, offering many museums including the Pre-Columbian Gold Museum that displays hundreds of gold artefacts. In the historic neighbourhoods of San Jose, Spanish colonial mansions have been converted into galleries, boutique hotels and restaurants.



DAY 2: Arrival to Tortuguero

Early pick up from your hotel. Admire the biodiversity of this astonishing protected area of Costa Rica as the bus drives through Braulio Carrillo National Park. Stop en route to have a delicious typical breakfast. Along the road you can observe many different kinds of products grown in this area such as pineapples and bananas. Board a comfortable boat on arrival at the pier and let this extraordinary exotic paradise enchant you as you travel through the Tortuguero canals. Enjoy a refreshing cocktail and a delicious lunch as you arrive at the lodge. After lunch visit the picturesque town, the green turtle information centre and the beach area. Dinner will be served at 7pm. From July to September: Optional night tour (not included in the package) to observe the turtles nesting.



DAY 3: Tortuguero

After breakfast take a guided walking tour through the trails followed by free time before lunch. In the afternoon visit the Tortuguero National Park, exploring the canals in small, open boats to allow better visibility. Tortuguero is a network of navigable lakes, rivers and canals (both natural and man-made) that are used for transportation and are a great place for observing local wildlife such as birds, monkeys, two and three-toed sloths, American crocodiles and caimans. The canals also provide shelter to endangered animals such as the Oriental Indian Manatee, a large variety of crustaceans and about 30 species of fish, including the Gaspar, considered a living fossil. Free time before dinner.



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DAY 4: Tortuguero to Puerto Viejo

After leaving the hotel you will depart to Caño Blanco town where you will stop for lunch at a local restaurant. Meet your transfer to take you to your next destination, Puerto Viejo. Take a boat and land transfer from Tortuguero to Guapiles.



DAY 4: Puerto Viejo

Originally called Old Harbour, Puerto Viejo is a coastal town on the Caribbean in the southeast of Costa Rica. It is home to many beautiful beaches including Playa Chiquita, Playa Negra and Punta Uva and it is known to surfers for having the largest and most powerful waves in the country, Salsa Brava. The town has an interesting mix of cultural influences including Latino, Afro-Caribbean and indigenous Bribri.



DAY 5: Puerto Viejo: Free Day

Breakfast at the hotel. Day at leisure



DAY 6: Puerto Viejo - Arenal

Breakfast at the hotel. The Northern Region offers a landscape of exceptional beauty with its forests, lagoons, fields of crops, rivers with hot springs, and the most active volcano in Costa Rica. Shuttle transfer from Puerto Viejo-Arenal



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DAY 6: Arenal

Arenal Volcano is one of Costa Rica’s most notable natural features, with its picture perfect conical shape rising to 1,657m. It lies within the Arenal Volcano National Park in the northern lowlands region of the country. Since a major eruption in 1968, this volcano has been one of the most active in Costa Rica with mild, nearly continuous activity from its conical crater. Lava flows and clouds of smoke or ash can often be seen from the El Mirador viewpoint and there are hot springs in the area where you can relax in the mineral-rich pools of the natural geothermal river.



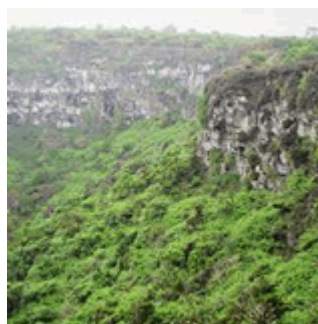
DAY 7: Arenal


Breakfast at the hotel. Morning tour to the Hanging Bridges, one of the greatest eco touristic projects of Costa Rica with the exuberant primary rainforest where you will find a great biological diversity with an incomparable scenic splendour. During the afternoon you'll hike through the secondary rainforest around the Arenal Volcano National Park, the site of the 1968 eruption that awoke this previously dormant volcano. After exploring the national park you will go to the Tabacon Hot Springs for an evening of relaxation.



DAY 8: Monteverde

After breakfast at the hotel, you will take a shuttle transfer to Monteverde via Arenal Lake. On arrival, check into your hotel and the remainder of the day is then free at leisure. Monteverde is a Quaker settlement in the mountainous northwest of Costa Rica. Nearby, the stunningly beautiful Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve houses 2.5% of the world’s biodiversity and is home to thousands of species of plants and animals including jaguars and ocelots as well as over 400 species of birds, including the colourful resplendent quetzal. There are many trails that lead through the ferns and orchids and hanging bridges that allow you to experience the forest canopy.



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DAY 9: Monteverde

Breakfast at the hotel. Shared morning guided visit to the Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve where a local naturalist guide will explain about the different macro/micro flora and fauna. Visit the Golden Toad's unique habitat, see birds like the resplendent quetzal, the three-wattled bell bird, and the black faced solitaire. See trees like strangler figs, avocados and cecropias, epiphytes such as bromeliads, orchids and mosses and a wide variety of insects, mammals and reptiles. Includes: Entrance fee, tour with a bilingual naturalist guide, transportation and a 15 minute stop at CASEM. (Local women's handcraft cooperative).



DAY 10: Shuttle Monteverde - Manuel Antonio

Shuttle transfer from Monteverde to Manuel Antonio.



DAY 10: Manuel Antonio

Manuel Antonio is one of the most popular National Parks in Costa Rica. Once an island, the park is now connected to the coast by a thin strip of land. Surrounded by beautiful blue green waters, pristine white sandy beaches meet the rainforest and the mountains. The National Park has a great system of trails that wind through the rainforest-lined tropical beaches and over rocky headlands with unforgettable views across the bay to the outer islands. The park is home to a rich array of wildlife including white-faced, mantled-howler and red-backed squirrel monkeys, two and three-toed sloths, racoons, coatis, iguanas and a number of species of birds.



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DAY 11: Manuel Antonio

Breakfast at the hotel. Morning shared tour to visit Manuel Antonio National Park, once an island but now connected to the coast by a thin strip of land. This land bridge now forms the spine separating the park's two most popular beaches, Playa Espadilla Sur and Playa Manuel Antonio. The southern facing beach, Playa Manuel Antonio, is a picturesque half-mile long, white sand crescent bisecting deep green foliage to one side and a private, secluded cove to the other. Standing with your feet dug into the sand and watching the waves crash against the rocks on either side of the lagoon, it is easy to believe that you are a thousand miles from anywhere.



DAY 12: Manuel Antonio Free Day

Day at leisure.



DAY 13: Manuel Antonio-San José

Breakfast at the hotel. Transfer to San José. Driving time is approximately 3 hours. Remainder of the day is at leisure.



DAY 14: Departure transfer

You will be collected from your hotel at the appropriate time and transferred to the airport for your onward flight.



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INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

Accommodation	Standard
Inclusions	<p>Representative to meet you at the airport Private & shuttle transfer Daily breakfast 2 nights in San José 2 nights in Tortuguero 2 nights in Puerto Viejo 2 nights in Arenal 2 nights in Monteverde 3 nights in Manuel Antonio Specified tours and activities All hotel taxes</p> <p>Exclusions Visa fees (if applicable) Meals not specified Airport tax (if applicable) Personal expenses Optional activities not mentioned in itinerary Gratuities for staff/guides</p>
Difficulty Rating	1 (easy)
Single Surcharge	Available upon request
Notes	Contact us for more details
Price Dependent upon	Season and availability

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SUSTAINABILITY

Chimu Adventures undertakes a number of sustainability measures within its operations including:

- 1) Only using local guides and office staff to both maximise local employment opportunities and minimise carbon footprints. Local guides also ensure you benefit from the intimate knowledge, passion and culture of the country you're visiting.
- 2) Where possible, using locally owned and operated boutique hotels to maximise the return to the local community.
- 3) Chimu's "Pass it on" programme has provided funding to hundreds of local community projects in Latin America. Our aim is to empower local communities, helping them to develop their own infrastructure for the future. Since 2006, we have been working with Kiva (a well-known Non-Governmental Organisation), providing hundreds of loans to local businesses all over South America.

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4) In our pre tour information we provide a range of tips and advice on how to minimise your impact on both local environments and communities.

5) Chimu Adventures' offices also take a number of sustainability measures including carbon offsets for company vehicles and most staff travel. Chimu Adventure's internal processes are also structured to create a paperless office and to reduce waste. There are also internal programmes to help staff minimise their carbon footprint such as our staff bike purchase assistance plan which encourages office staff to commute to work via bicycle. Currently almost half of our office based staff commute to work via bicycle.

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