

COSTA RICA & PANAMA - NATURAL COSTA RICA



INTRODUCTION

Costa Rica is one of Central America's jewel. It's an oasis of calm among its turbulent neighbors and an ecotourism heaven. It's also mostly coastline, which means great surfing, beaches galore and a climate built for laziness.

Costa Rica's enlightened approach to conservation has ensured that lush jungles are home to playful monkeys, languid sloths, crocodiles, countless lizards, poison-dart frogs and a mind-boggling assortment of exotic birds, insects and butterflies. Meanwhile, endangered sea turtles nest on both coasts and cloud forests protect elusive birds and jungle cats.

Thrill seekers can fly through forests on zip lines, peer into boiling volcanoes, surf oversized waves and dive with dolphins and whales - all in the course of a normal day. Then again, if you have some serious chilling to do, you can always lounge in a hammock and enjoy the pure life, or "Pura vida" - a national expression that sums up the desire to live the best, most hassle-free existence.

ITINERARY

DAY 1: Arrival in San Jose

Meet and greet at Juan Santamaría International airport and private transfer to your hotel.



TRIP CODE

CRTSNCR

DEPARTURE

Daily

DURATION

11 Days

LOCATIONS

Costa Rica: San Jose, Arenal, Manuel Antonio beach



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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: Day at leisure in San Jose

Breakfast at the hotel and day at leisure to relax and to discover the capital city on your own. From the glistening gold and jade museums to the forward-thinking National Center of Art & Culture, San Jose can give you a historical overview of the country, please contact us to get to know the different activities available in San Jose.



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DAY 3: Depart from San Jose to Arenal

Turn your day of travel into a fun filled adventure including three of Costa Rica's most beautiful sites: The Poas Volcano, La Paz Waterfall Gardens and the famous Doka coffee plantation where you will learn about the history and importance of coffee in Costa Rican culture. On the way to the volcano, we will visit the Doka Coffee Plantation to learn about the ancient techniques of planting, harvesting and processing coffee. We will also talk about the importance of coffee production in Costa Rica and we will finish the tour with a delicious hot cup of Doka coffee. Driving up the mountains towards the Poas volcano, you will notice a change in altitude as the temperature gets cooler and the vegetation changes. You will observe more coffee plantations, as well as flower, fern and strawberry farms higher in the mountains. At the top of the volcano, you will be amazed at the gorgeous mountain views, the interesting rock formations and the massive crater filled with a stunning light blue sulfurous pool. The Poas Volcano has been active since 2006, mostly with gas or ash eruptions instead of red lava flow. In fact, on October 8th, 2014 ash was tossed over 1000 ft high up into the air. You will also have a chance to learn about the different ecosystems and wildlife found in the Poas Volcano National Park. This full-day visit continues in La Paz Waterfall Gardens for a delicious lunch and an interesting tour. We will at first enjoy a traditional Costa Rican lunch, and then head on a soft hike to reach the breathtaking La Paz waterfall. We will also have a chance to visit a number of attractions inside the park such as the hummingbird gallery, the serpentarium, the bird house, the butterfly garden and the frog exhibit! This tour is perfect to everyone of all ages.



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DAY 4: Day at leisure in Arenal

Breakfast included in the hotel. Day at leisure to relax, enjoy the natural springs or take an optional tour. Hot springs are considered a natural expression of Earth's energy. Geologically, Tabacon Resort's thermal natural springs are 97% rain-based and 3% magma-based. Rainwater enters the earth through fissures on the surface and is then heated by magma found in the earth's core. Once heated, the waters rise to surface, taking with them minerals found in the earth's rocky stratus. Tabacon is a completely natural resort. There are five different springs in the property, with temperatures ranging from 25 degrees Celsius (77 degrees Fahrenheit) to 50 degrees Celsius (122 degrees Fahrenheit). Water flows by gravity throughout the property, forming in-river pools, waterfalls, and cascades. Hot springs provide many benefits thanks to various chemical, physical and biological effects; the most notable is a sensation of wellbeing coming from relaxing tense and tired muscles. Shangri-La Gardens is a luxury area, exclusive for adults. It is a private area of lush gardens and six natural thermal mineral spring water pools, naturally heated.



DAY 5: Day at leisure in Arenal

Breakfast included in the hotel. Day at leisure to relax, enjoy the natural springs or take an optional tour, options include 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 can hike through the secondary rainforest around the Arenal Volcano National Park, the site of the 1968 eruption that awoke this previously dormant volcano.



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DAY 6: Transfer from Arenal to Manuel Antonio

Breakfast included in the hotel. In the morning, shuttle transfer to Manuel Antonio área. The Central Pacific possesses the beaches closest to the capital city. Among the most popular are Herradura, Jaco, Dominical and the ones at Manuel Antonio National Park. They enjoy the characteristics of a very hot and humid climate, with a season of brilliant sunshine from December through the end of April and warm waters all year long. Hills covered with green forests compose the common landscape of the area. Some of the features which have made Manuel Antonio one of the places most preferred by the tourists are the white sand beaches, cliffs, rivers, rain forests, the large variety of animal life and nice warm climate. The Manuel Antonio National Park is home of the White Faced, Mantled Howler and Red-backed Squirrel monkeys, Two and Three Toad sloths, among other mammals, as well as a number of species of birds. Punta Cathedral (cathedral point), the bay of Puerto Escondido (hidden port), and the beautiful beaches with blue green waters represent some of the main attractions of this park.



DAY 7: Beach stay at Manuel Antonio - Day 7 to 9

Free days to relax and enjoy the beach in Manuel Antonio. Options includes a visit to 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.



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DAY 10: Manuel Antonio - San Jose

Breakfast included in the hotel. Shuttle transfer back to San José.



DAY 11: Departure

Breakfast included in the hotel. According to flight schedule, private transfer to Juan Santamaría International airport. Please notice that check in at airline counter must be done three hours prior to flight departure.



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INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

Accommodation

Standard

Inclusions

All hotel taxes
Accommodation with breakfast
Bilingual guides
Transfers between locations

Exclusions

Visa fees (if applicable)
Meals not specified
Airport tax (if applicable)
Personal expenses
Optional activities not mentioned in itinerary
Gratuities for staff/guides

Difficulty Rating

1 (easy)

Single Surcharge

Available upon request

Notes

Contact us for more details

Price Dependent upon

Season and availability

SUSTAINABILITY

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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.
- 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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