



DISCOVER COSTA RICA



*Educational
Tours*

→ **Discover the Global Classroom**

9 or 12 DAYS

Discover Costa Rica

Costa Rica



Number of overnight stays in parentheses. This tour may also be reversed.



Costa Rica's Poás Volcano, which has erupted dozens of times since the first written account in 1828, features one of the world's largest geysers.

Program Fee includes:

- Round-trip airfare
- 8 overnight stays in hotels with private bathrooms (11 with extension)
- 3 meals daily (Days 2-8, and Days 10-11 on extension), dinner on arrival day and breakfast on departure day
- Full-time tour director
- 7 visits to special attractions:
INBioparque • Poás Volcano • Hot springs
Boat excursion • La Fortuna waterfall
La Selva Biological Station • Cahuita National Park
- Whitewater rafting

OPTIONAL:

Canopy tour

WITH EXTENSION: All of the above PLUS:

- 1 visit to a special attraction:
Manuel Antonio National Park

Day 1 San José

Flight to Costa Rica • Your adventure begins as you fly south to Costa Rica.

Arrival in San José • Arrive in San José, the country's bustling capital and cultural center. Founded in 1737 as "Villa Nueva de la Boca del Monte del Valle de Abra," the city's name was later abbreviated in honor of its patron saint: Saint Joseph. With its national parks and reserves, Costa Rica is one of the world's most progressive countries in its efforts to save the Earth's endangered rainforests. Costa Rica is home to one-tenth of the world's bird species and one-tenth of the world's butterflies!

Hotel transfer • After clearing customs and immigration, meet your bilingual guide, who will remain with you throughout your stay. A private motorcoach then takes you to your hotel.

Day 2 San José • Arenal Region

Visit to INBioparque • Learn about the biological diversity in Costa Rica and around the world as we visit this recreational center created by the National Institute of Biodiversity. Get up-close and personal with tarantulas, frogs, bees and butterflies in the permanent exhibits or walk through the three different ecosystem trails. Explore the plant and insect life in the lagoon before admiring the butterfly garden. Stop by the Ecological Tourism Office on your way out for more information about Costa Rica's protected land areas.

Poás Volcano • Continue along a scenic 22-mile drive overlooking the Central Valley as you make your way to the Poás Volcano.

This still-active volcano is part of Costa Rica's most developed national park. Here, you can see one of the largest craters in the world (about a mile wide and 300 meters deep), whose hot sulfurous lake changes color with volcanic activity. From a lookout point, see geysers and active fumaroles; in addition, a 20-minute hike uphill rewards you with a view of the jewel-like Botos Lake, which occupies an extinct crater.

Transfer to Arenal • Journey west across the Central Valley to Arenal. This area is one of the world's major coffee producers.

Visit to the hot springs • Experience the relaxation properties of natural hot springs, formed by water heated from nearby volcanoes and channeled into pools. It's an ideal way to rejuvenate from the day's busy activities!

Day 3 Arenal Region

Boat excursion • Enjoy a breathtaking view of the Arenal Volcano during a boat excursion across the lake. The volcano, whose perfect conical shape emerges from the green hills of Alajuela, overlooks the San Carlos plain and the Pacific lowlands. This mile-high volcano, which has been active for the past 4,000 years, last erupted in 1968.

Visit to La Fortuna Waterfall • One of Costa Rica's most spectacular waterfalls, La Fortuna is located within the thick jungle of the Arenal Rainforest. You'll pass some impressive scenery (keep your camera ready for wildlife photos) as you walk to the top of the waterfall. Later, enjoy a dip in the natural pool located under the falls.

Day 4 Sarapiquí

Transfer to Sarapiquí • Transfer to Sarapiquí in the heart of Costa Rica's banana-producing region, which is known to be one of the best places in the country for bird-watching.

Optional canopy tour • Join an optional canopy tour and make like the birds and the monkeys who call the cloud forest home. Zip lines unveil one of the planet's most fascinating ecological systems from a unique perspective—the tops of the trees. With local expert guides at your side, you can decide which view you prefer—from below or from above!

Day 5 Sarapiquí

La Selva Biological Station • Averaging over 13 feet of rain per year, La Selva Biological Station is the world's most popular site for tropical rainforest research. Originally established in 1954 as a farm to improve natural resource management, La Selva became a biological reserve and research station in 1968, when it was purchased by the Organization for Tropical Studies. La Selva's 1,600 hectares are home to more than 400 bird species, as well as 114 species of animals and 44 types of frogs and toads. Be on the lookout for poison-dart frogs, green iguanas and giant tropical ants, among other interesting organisms.

Whitewater rafting • Costa Rica offers some of the best whitewater rafting in the world. Travel to one of the many great rivers today for a thrilling paddling adventure. Be prepared to get wet!

Day 6 Limon Province

Transfer to the Limon Province • Transfer to the wild and beautiful region of Limon. Situated along Costa Rica's Caribbean Coast, Limon is known for its stunning white sand and coconut tree-lined beaches and prehistoric rainforests.

Day 7 Limon Province

Visit to Cahuita National Park • See for yourself why this national park was created in 1970, guaranteeing the preservation of its beaches, marshes, mangroves and 240 hectares of coral reef. Explore the gorgeous scenery, which plays home to tamanduas, pacas, coatis, raccoons, tree-dwelling sloths, armadillos, iguanas, howler and capuchin monkeys, and keel-billed toucans. Catch a glimpse of red land crabs and bright-blue fiddler crabs along the shores. Snorkelers are drawn to the some 500 fish species that swim in the waters here. You can also find something else lurking in the sea—the remains of two old shipwrecks with visible cannons.

Free time • This afternoon, enjoy some free time on the beaches of the Caribbean Coast.

Day 8 San José

Transfer to San José • It's time to say goodbye to the Caribbean coast and head west to San José, unless you're continuing on our Central Pacific Coast extension.

Day 9 Home

Return home • Your tour director assists with the transfer to the airport, where you'll check in for your return flight home.



Tropical birds are just some of the wildlife you'll observe in the Costa Rican rainforest.

EXTENSION

Day 9 Central Pacific Coast

Transfer to the Central Pacific Coast • Alternatively, your group can extend its stay for two days. Transfer to the breathtaking Central Pacific Coast, where sandy beaches, a rocky coastline and lush rainforests act as a magnet for travelers.

Day 10 Central Pacific Coast

Manuel Antonio National Park • Embark on a full-day trip to the 716-acre Manuel Antonio National Park, known for its white, sandy beaches and abundant wildlife. Sea turtles, two-toed sloths and iguanas comprise some of the 109 mammal species. Another 184 bird species call it home, and occasionally you can also see the migrating whales off the coast of the 12 little isles that are also part of the park.

Day 11 San José

Transfer to San José via Sarchí • Your full-day transfer begins via picturesque Sarchí, a town known for the brightly painted designs and colorful wheels that adorn local oxcarts. The complex patterns continue to be passed down from one generation to the next. Continue to San José to spend your final night.

Day 12 Home

Return home • Your tour director assists with the transfer to the airport, where you'll check in for your return flight home.

With its misty waterfalls and lush trees, Costa Rica's scenery can be, quite literally, breathtaking.



For complete financial and registration details, please refer to the **Booking Conditions**.



ITN1008DCR/S
Itinerary subject to change.

Discover the Global Classroom



Educational Tours

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2010/Fall