



Costa Rica

Cloud-forests, jungles and volcanoes



Saturday 4 – Friday 17 February 2012
Saturday 9 – Friday 22 February 2013

(14 days)
(14 days)

Costa Rica is amongst our favourite destinations anywhere in the world, containing spectacular mountains and active volcanoes, pristine beaches, lowland rainforest, high cloudforest festooned with orchids and bromeliads, and some wonderful tropical wetlands. And all this in a country less than the size of England! The amazing diversity of its birdlife and the fabulous complexity of its plantlife make it one of the most fascinating of tropical countries to visit – so why not make this the year you join us there!

Costa Rica is a very different sort of nation. There has been no army since 1948, for example. “Teachers, not soldiers” has been the watchword – the country has one of the highest rates of literacy in the world as a result. The people are also very proud of their commitment to conservation. They have a national park system that covers around 12 percent of the land surface in addition to numerous privately-run reserve areas, which in total protect over a quarter of the country. Costa Rica is also an intensely beautiful tropical land, with a chain of volcanic peaks rising to over 3,500m. These mountains divide the country into quite separate ecological zones, each with its characteristic fauna and flora. Costa Rica is one of the most biologically diverse countries in the world as a result, with more bird species to the square mile than any other country on earth.

It is impossible to cover all of even this small country in a fortnight, but we aim to visit a representative sample of Costa Rica’s biologically rich areas, and to give you the best possible experience of this wonderful country. Our local agents here are amongst the best we’ve found anywhere in the world, and their meticulous organisation and excellent local guides ensure a really first class tour. This will be our seventeenth tour to Costa Rica.

Tour Extensions and Independent Travel

While the main escorted tour lasts for two weeks, clients frequently ask us to extend their tour by a few days or a week. You could, for instance, join us for the tour and then fly down for a few days on the coast at Corcovado, staying at Marengo, or other lodges there. Please contact us for more information.

Outline Itinerary

Day 1 : We depart from London on a scheduled flight to arrive at San José in the evening.
Overnight San José

Days 2 - 3 : We spend the day driving up via Tapanti, a jewel of a middle elevation forest reserve, to the Cerro de la Muerte highlands where we stay at a superbly situated lodge in a wonderful sheltered mountain valley.
Two nights Cerro de la Muerte

Days 4 - 5 : We head west to the Pacific coast with time to watch birds en route. We stay at an excellent hotel with its own jungle nature trail along a stream running through the lush grounds.
Two nights Carara

Days 6 - 7 : We drive north along the Pacific coast, to the much drier and more open Guanacaste lowland, before reaching the Tempisque River.
 We stay at the beautifully-situated lodge of La Ensenada, with open lawns and extensive views out

over the Gulf of Nicoya towards the hills of the Nicoya Peninsula beyond.
Two nights La Ensenada

Days 8 - 9 : We drive across the continental divide, and continue to the Caribbean-slope forests around Lake Arenal. Towering above the lake is Volcan Arenal, the most consistently active volcano in the world.
Two nights La Fortuna

Days 10 - 11 : We drive east, along the lower slopes of the volcanic range, stopping at Virgen del Socorro, one of the best middle-elevation forests in the country. We continue on to Sarapiquí for a two-night stay. The lowland rainforest at nearby La Selva Biological Station is one of the best birdwatching habitats in Central America.
Two nights Sarapiquí

Day 12 : We drive up over the continental divide of the northern volcanic range. Here we stop at the stunning Braulio Carrillo National Park, which protects one of the best, and wettest, rainforests in Costa Rica. We return to the Central Valley and San José and end the day with a farewell dinner.
Overnight San José

Day 13 : We catch a morning return flight to London to arrive on **Day 14**.

Wild Ambitions:
Tailor-made Costa Rica holidays
 Our sister company, Wild Ambitions, can provide tailor-made Costa Rica holidays at almost any time of the year. Please contact Wild Ambitions on info@wildambitions.co.uk

TRIP DETAILS

ACCOMMODATION will be in hotels or lodges with all rooms en suite. Some of the lodges are remote, and have simpler-style rooms, often in cabins.

TRANSPORT is by small coach or minibus.

WALKING : Some forest trails can be steep in parts, but we take these slowly. We travel up to over 3,000m., but will not be walking much at this altitude.

LEADERS : **2012:** Tim Earl and local guide
2013: tbc

NUMBERS : Max. 12 clients

PRICES : **2012:** £ 3,995
2013: £ tbc

Single supp. : **2012:** £ 595
2013: £ tbc

Deposit : £ 500 per person

The price is per person and includes scheduled return flights London/San José*, airport taxes, ground and boat transportation as outlined above, accommodation on a full-board basis, admissions, local taxes, tips to hotels and restaurants, and the services of the leaders.

The price excludes holiday insurance, drinks, optional tips to the driver and local guide, and other personal expenses.

**For an ex-international flight cost (San José/San José) please deduct £ 675 from the tour cost.*



Cloud-forests: looking from the Cerro de la Muerte across the Central Valley of Costa Rica

SOUTH and CENTRAL AMERICA and the CARIBBEAN