

# All Around Costa Rica

## 13 Night Private Tour with Small Group Excursions

Unleash your inner explorer and experience all that Costa Rica has to offer our unforgettable 13 night tour. From hiking through cloud forests to navigating rainforest canals, you'll discover why this stunning country really is a paradise of natural wonders.

Naturally beautiful, Costa Rica offers two unspoiled coastlines with spectacular beaches, rainforest, volcanoes and mountains, and some of the most varied biodiversity in the world. The country's natural wonders as well as the friendly, peace-loving people make Costa Rica the most visited spot in Central America.

With more than a quarter of its territory protected in national parks and private reserves, this Costa Rica eco-tour will show you the most beautiful places, wildlife and beaches this country has to offer.

### Highlights:

- Tortuguero Canals Tour
- Organic Garden Tour with Costa Rica Cooking Lesson
- Hanging Bridges Experience
- Manuel Antonio National Park
- Arenal Volcano Hike
- Cloud Forest Night Reserve Tour

### What's included:

- Getting there: Return flights and airport transfers
- Transport: Private or shared transfers throughout the tour
- Accommodation: 13 nights total duration (including 1 night on inbound flight) - 12 nights in luxury hotel accommodation throughout Costa Rica
- Meals included: 12 breakfasts, 3 lunches and 3 dinners
- Local English speaking guide
- Experiences: Shared canal boat tour and volunteering at Tortuguero, shared afternoon Organic Garden Tour with Costa Rica Cooking Lesson and dinner, shared Arenal Volcano Park expedition tour, shared night walk at Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve, shared Hanging Bridges Experience, shared Manuel Antonio National Nature Walk Tour

### Not included:

- Items of a personal nature such as laundry, table drinks, telephone bills and tips to hotel staff, drivers and guides
- Any meals (other than the one mentioned), drinks, tips, expenses of personal nature
- Anything not mentioned in the "What's Included" column



# Full Itinerary

## Day 1: San Jose

Welcome to Costa Rica!

Once you arrive at Juan Santamaria International Airport, you will enjoy a private transfer and then check-in to your hotel, located in Costa Rica's capital, San Jose.

San Jose, affectionately known to its residents as 'Chepe', lies in the heart of Costa Rica and is home to almost two-thirds of the country's population. With few buildings over 100 years old, the mountainous capital is relatively modern compared to its Latin American counterparts, but still has a significant amount of culture, art and history for visitors to discover.

With a number of theatres full of Costa Rican culture, museums that include the largest collection of American jade in the world, and streets full of bright murals and painted buses, San Jose is an eclectic city waiting to be experienced.

ACCOMMODATION: 4\* Presidente Hotel, San Jose or similar

TRANSPORT: Private transfer





## Day 2: Tortuguero

Today, you will journey to Tortuguero via a shared boat transfer. Along the way, you will stop at a local restaurant for breakfast before continuing to Pavona Dock. There, you will board a boat to navigate the scenic canals leading to your destination.

During the boat ride, you can enjoy beautiful scenery while your guide points out wildlife, including birds, monkeys, crocodiles, and other species. You will arrive around noon, just in time for lunch.

Afterward, your naturalist guide will provide information about the activities included during your stay, such as a visit to the village, nature walks, and a canal boat tour.

### Tortuguero

In Costa Rica's remote northeast, Tortuguero is accessible only by small plane or boat through its famous canals. Designated a national park in 1975, it boasts rich biodiversity, especially as a crucial nesting site for green turtles in the western Caribbean. The prime nesting season is July to October, with July and August being ideal for turtle tours. Other sea turtle species, like leatherbacks and hawksbills, also nest on the park's wide beaches, explored mostly by small boats.

ACCOMMODATION: 3\* Pachira Lodge or similar.

MEALS INCLUDED: Breakfast, lunch, dinner.

TRANSPORT: Shared transfer and speedboat





## Day 3: Volunteering at Tortuguero

### Volunteer Opportunities:

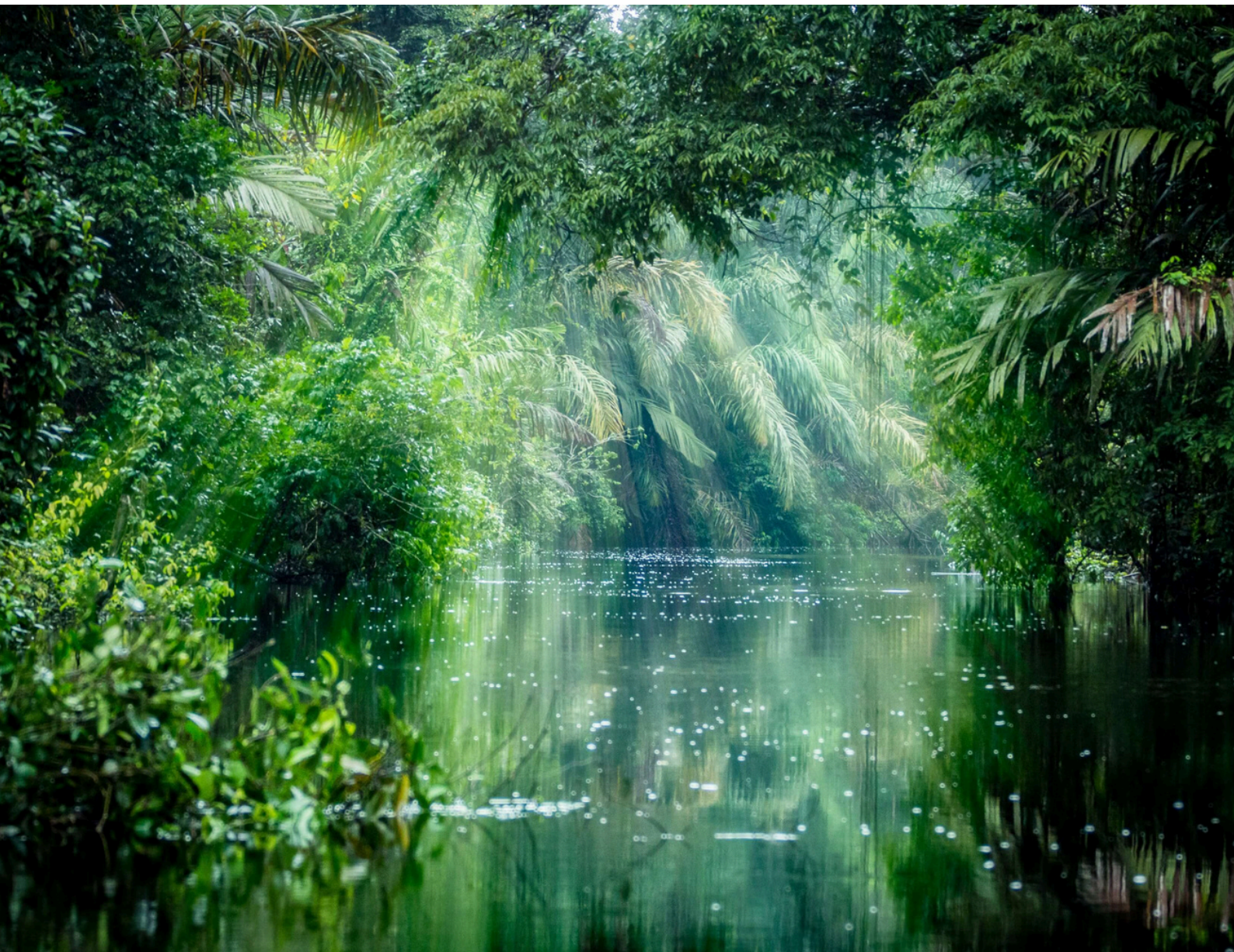
- Monitor marine turtle habits and assist with baby turtles during hatching season (September/October)
- Participate in beach cleaning to collect and bag plastic waste for recycling
- Join night beach patrols with biologists and Marine Turtle Protection Association volunteers. The 1.6-kilometer beach patrol lasts two hours, departing from the hotel by boat at 9:30 PM. The excursion includes an explanation of the nursery concept at 10 PM, followed by a one-hour hike covering 1.6 kilometers. The return trip gets you back to the hotel by 11:30 PM. (Peak Nesting Season: July-August)

If you would like to not volunteer you can also donate money for the different projects of the Sea Turtle Conservancy Organisation.

Take a shared canal boat tour. Explore the extraordinary biological diversity of Tortuguero National Park, a wilderness area featuring eleven distinct habitats. The park is home to diverse mammals, birds, and fish. Guided boat tours are the primary mode of exploration, with knowledgeable guides showcasing their keen eye for wildlife. Visitors are treated to sightings of elusive creatures in hidden corners, playful monkeys, and intriguing nature facts.

ACCOMMODATION: 3\* Pachira Lodge or similar.

MEALS INCLUDED: Breakfast, lunch, dinner.





## Day 4: Fortuna

After breakfast, take a group transfer by boat to La Pavona Dock, followed by a bus ride to Guápiles. After lunch, meet your driver to continue your journey to La Fortuna.

La Fortuna, situated at an elevation of 350 feet above sea level, is renowned as the gateway for exploring the majestic Arenal Volcano and National Park. Positioned north of the Tilaran Mountains, the cone-shaped Arenal Volcano emerges dramatically from the flat San Carlos Plains. Natural thermal springs, originating from the volcano's depths, provide opportunities to immerse in mineral waters amid scenic surroundings. The area offers a delightful mix of mountains, lakes, natural reserves, rivers, canopy tours, cultural excursions, hot springs, and rainforests, making it a preferred holiday destination. Arenal also provides easy access to Monteverde and other Guanacaste areas, with rural roads leading through picturesque landscapes of vast pasturelands.

ACCOMMODATION: 3\* Arenal Paraiso Hotel Resort & Spa or similar.

MEALS INCLUDED: Breakfast, lunch.

TRANSPORT: Shared transfer by boat to Pavona Dock and bus to Guapiles, Private transfer from Guapiles to Arenal.



## Day 5: Costa Rican Cooking Lessons

Morning at leisure to explore the area or to relax on the hotel's premises.

In the afternoon enjoy an Organic Garden Tour with Costa Rica Cooking Lesson. Harvest organically grown tubers, fruits, and vegetables and experience the traditional process of milling and savour a refreshing sugarcane juice from the handmade trapiche. Join culinary classes at the La Guaría Morada restaurant, where you'll learn to prepare authentic Costa Rican dishes. Immerse yourself in the local culture by participating in traditional dances and concluding the day with a family dinner.

ACCOMMODATION: 3\* Arenal Paraiso Hotel Resort & Spa or similar.

MEALS INCLUDED: Breakfast, dinner

TRANSPORT: Shared round trip transfer Arenal Vida Campesina

## Day 6: La Fortuna

Today you will visit the Volcan Arenal (El Silencio) as part of a shared tour.

To access El Silencio Private Reserve and get as close to the Arenal Volcano as permitted by car, then embark on a 1km walk along a volcanic rock trail, rated as moderate in difficulty. This trail leads to the observation point, offering the closest legal proximity to the volcano's base. Your guide will share fascinating information about the volcano, and enjoy excellent views of the Green Lagoon and Lake Arenal.

Continuing the expedition, you'll transition to the regenerating forest and a small area of primary rainforest at the volcano's base. This 1.5km trail provides an opportunity to spot various flora and fauna, including toucans, wild turkeys, orioles, wild boars, snakes, and monkeys. After the trail, your driver will be ready with a tasty snack of fresh tropical fruits.

Finally, return to the hotel for a restful night's sleep.

ACCOMMODATION: 3\* Arenal Paraiso Hotel Resort & Spa or similar

MEALS INCLUDED: Breakfast





## Day 7: Arenal to Monteverde

Embark on an adventurous journey through narrow streets, surrounded by lush vegetation and blue-green mountains. Arriving at the Lake Dam dock after a 15 to 30-minute ride, board a boat for a scenic trip to Monteverde across Arenal Lake. Enjoy spectacular views of the imposing Arenal Volcano and its surroundings during the 30-minute boat ride. Arenal Lake, the country's largest, is manmade and was expanded to generate hydroelectric energy for a significant part of the nation. After the boat ride, land transportation will take you to the town, where the serene and cool cloud forest awaits. You'll have free time to explore the village for lunch or the hotel's premises.

Monteverde, perched at 3000 feet in the Tilaran Mountains of northwestern Costa Rica, is a renowned destination and a prime example of community-led conservation. Initially a small Quaker reserve protecting the watershed for their dairy industry, Monteverde's protected areas now span almost 30,000 hectares, including the Monteverde Cloud Forest, Santa Elena Reserves, and the Children's Eternal Rainforest. The region offers picturesque nature sites with trails, hanging bridges, and exhibits featuring bats and frogs. Santa Elena serves as the central hub for commercial and tourism services, providing lodging, dining, and captivating tours with stunning views of the Nicoya Gulf. Immerse yourself in the biodiversity, history, and culture of this Costa Rican gem.



### SHARED TOUR MONTEVERDE CLOUD FOREST RESERVE

At nightfall, a new world comes to life in the cloud forest. Many species of wildlife are most active after dark, revealing a fascinating and different side of nature. From frogs to the mysterious nocturnal bats, these creatures are an integral part of the Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve's nighttime landscape. For those eager to explore the rich nocturnal biodiversity of the tropical forest, guided night walks led by experienced local experts offer an unforgettable experience.

ACCOMMODATION: 3\* Trapp Family Lodge or similar.

MEALS INCLUDED: Breakfast

TRANSPORT: Regular lake crossing Arenal to Monteverde

## Day 8: Monteverde Park

### SHARED HANGING BRIDGES EXPERIENCE (MORNING OR AFTERNOON)

In Monteverde, it's not just the birds that get to reach the treetops. You have the opportunity to soar through them on the hanging bridges, offering a unique viewpoint to observe the cloud forest and its inhabitants in their natural environment. This thrilling adventure spans 3 kilometers, featuring breathtaking landscapes both high up in the forest and down below on the interconnected paths that link the bridges.

ACCOMMODATION: 3\* Trapp Family Lodge or similar.

MEALS INCLUDED: Breakfast



## Day 9: Manuel Antonio Nature Reserve

Today, you'll journey from the highlands to the stunning Central Pacific coast. Enjoy a 3.5-hour drive, taking in beautiful landscapes and charming villages.

Heading south through the breathtaking Central Pacific, the quaint agricultural town of Quepos welcomes visitors. A tree-lined, cliff-top road then leads to Manuel Antonio, providing glimpses of spectacular forest and beach scenery. This renowned tourist town sits in the hills, offering stunning views of the vibrant Pacific Ocean framed by lush greenery. The highlight is the magnificent Manuel Antonio National Park, a unique blend of rainforest extending to three white sand beaches. The park safeguards diverse habitats, including primary and secondary forests, mangroves, beach vegetation, and marine resources. While there is no development within the park, the main road across Manuel Antonio hosts numerous hotels surrounded by tropical gardens, along with various dining and recreation options. The wharf and modern marina serve as departure points for sport-fishing and memorable boat trips.

ACCOMMODATION: 3\* Hotel Playa Espadilla or similar.

MEALS INCLUDED: Breakfast

TRANSPORT: Private transfer



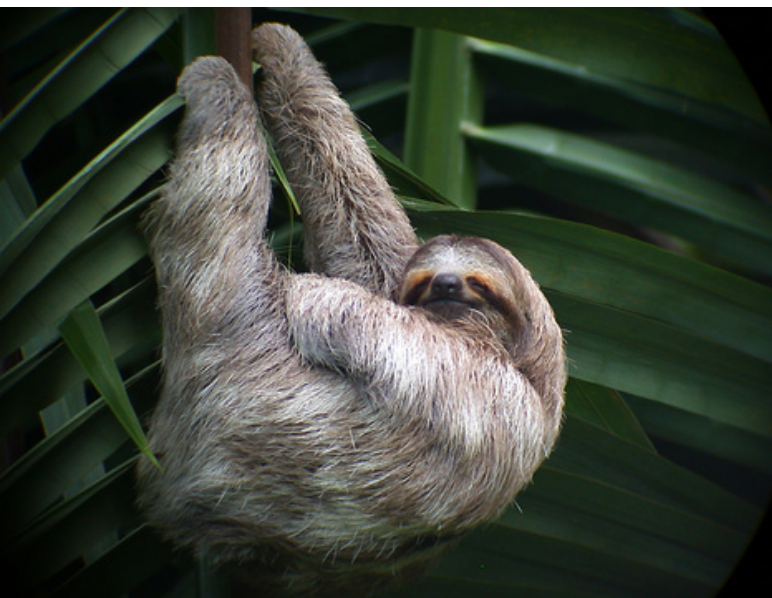
## Day 10: Manuel Antonio National Park Tour (Shared)

Embark on a guided stroll with a seasoned naturalist, versed in biodiversity education, through the preserved Manuel Antonio National Park. Explore pristine beaches and abundant flora and fauna in this enchanting location. The pace of this adventure is tailored to visitors' interests and the wildlife they wish to observe. Witness sloths, diverse monkey species, anteaters, iguanas, and a variety of birds in their natural habitat. With luck, spot the endangered Titi or squirrel monkey, one of only 1,000 left in the world, residing in our biological corridor, Manuel National Park.

Please note, the Park is closed on Tuesdays.

ACCOMMODATION: 3\* Hotel Playa Espadilla or similar.

MEALS INCLUDED: Breakfast



## Day 11: Manuel Antonio

Spend your free day further exploring the stunning Manuel Antonio National Park. Wander along scenic trails surrounded by lush rainforest, where you can spot vibrant wildlife like monkeys, sloths, and colorful birds. Relax on pristine beaches, swim in crystal-clear waters, or enjoy a peaceful picnic amidst nature. It's the perfect blend of adventure and relaxation in one of Costa Rica's most beautiful natural reserves.

ACCOMMODATION: 3\* Hotel Playa Espadilla or similar.

MEALS INCLUDED: Breakfast



## Day 12: Manuel Antonio

Enjoy another day at leisure to explore the area, or to relax at the hotel.

ACCOMMODATION: 3\* Hotel Playa Espadilla or similar.

MEALS INCLUDED: Breakfast



## Day 13: Fly Back to the UK

Following an early breakfast, journey back to San Jose for your return flight, laden with unforgettable memories. The estimated driving time is 3 hours, and remember to check in at the airport three hours in advance.

MEALS INCLUDED: Breakfast

TRANSPORT: Private transfer

## Day 14: Arrive Home

Your overnight flight arrives back in the UK for you to make your journey home.



# FAQs

## **DO I NEED A VISA?**

British nationals do not need a visa to enter Costa Rica. You may stay as a visitor for up to 90 days under a tourist visa waiver, although the exact period is at the discretion of the immigration officer on arrival.

## **WHAT CURRENCY DO I TAKE WITH ME?**

The official Costa Rican currency is the colon. US dollars are also widely accepted, however when using dollars any change you will receive back will be in colon. We would advise taking colon with you, as this may give you more value for money.

## **DO I NEED TRAVEL/HEALTH INSURANCE?**

Having appropriate travel insurance is mandatory to enter Costa Rica to ensure you're covered for relevant healthcare and local treatment.

Travel insurance should include activities you wish to partake in such as rafting and ziplining.

## **WHAT DO I NEED TO PACK?**

We would advise you bring insect repellent, biodegradable suntan lotion, rain jacket (for boat ride and rafting) comfortable walking or hiking shoes and a hat. You may wish to consider this country has areas with high altitude so take care to avoid ill effects.

## **WHO IS THIS TOUR SUITABLE FOR?**

This tour has some activities like hiking and rafting but nothing overly strenuous. You need to be reasonably fit and able but are not obliged to take part in the rafting or any activity you do not wish to do. Please advise your Tour Guide prior. There are no rafting or water sports skill required to take part.

## **DO I NEED ANY VACCINATIONS?**

Please note that there are no mandatory vaccinations required to enter Costa Rica. However, we recommend consulting your GP or a travel health clinic before you travel to ensure your routine vaccinations are up to date and to receive any personalised health advice.