



Costa Rica's Coastal Secrets

From the wildlife rich waterways of Tortuguero to the dense jungle coastline of the Osa Peninsula, an area labelled by National Geographic as 'the most biologically intense place on Earth', Costa Rica reveals its secrets.



YOUR
ADVENTURE
AWAITS

14 days/13 nights

ITINERARY

Day 1: San José

Arrive into San José today and transfer to your hotel. This evening is the perfect opportunity to meet your guide and get to know your fellow travellers.

Day 2: Tortuguero National Park

Your adventure begins early this morning, leaving San Jose behind as you travel to the north-east of Costa Rica to Tortuguero National Park. Accessible only by boat or light aircraft, Tortuguero's vast network of waterways, canals and swamps are remarkably tranquil, unspoilt and devoid of noise pollution. On reaching the pier you will board a small motorboat for the one hour fifteen minute journey to your lodge, which is nestled on a small strip of land between the Caribbean Sea and the main lagoon. Your afternoon is spent in Tortuguero village, where it's possible to visit the Sea Turtle Museum (a donation will be requested at the entrance). Tortuguero is probably most famous as a nesting site for the endangered Green turtle, which can be seen arriving onto the beach to lay eggs from late July to October (as part of an optional excursion). Hawksbill, Loggerhead and Giant Leatherback turtles also nest in this region, and during November to January baby turtles start to hatch and make their way towards the ocean. Today's travel time will be in the region of six hours including a break for breakfast.

Day 3: Tortuguero Waterways

Just after sunrise you will board a small boat, enabling you to discover the extraordinary flora and fauna of Tortuguero as you pass serenely along the waterways. At this time of day wildlife is usually at its most active and with the help of your expert guide you are likely to encounter monkeys, caiman, iguanas, butterflies and many of the 300+ bird species recorded here. You will return to the lodge for a hearty breakfast by the river. The lodge is a tranquil spot to relax this afternoon if you want to take some time out to enjoy the facilities, or alternatively you can join a second boat trip (included) or follow a short walking trail through the forest.

Day 4: Cahuita

You will leave Tortuguero the same way you arrived, by taking a small boat to Siquirres pier. Your bus will be at the pier waiting to drive you to the region of Cahuita on the Caribbean coast, where you will check into your hotel. Caribbean culture pervades this part of Costa Rica and is reflected in the music, food and laid-back lifestyle. Cahuita's famous white-sand beach is fringed by tall palms, behind which the dense, wet tropical forest of Cahuita National Park can be found.

Day 5: Cahuita National Park

Today you will visit Cahuita National Park, with its 2711 acres of land and an impressive 600 acres of coral reef, forming Costa Rica's largest reef system. From the southern entrance of the park you will take a 7km hike along the coastline following a trail that leads through rainforest and passes the impressive Caribbean beaches. Although a fairly small park in terms of size, there is plenty of diversity here. The rest of the afternoon is yours to explore the beach, join an



optional snorkelling excursion to discover the underwater world or enjoy the hotel.

Day 6: Sloth Sanctuary

After breakfast you will visit Aviarios del Caribe, Costa Rica's famous Sloth Sanctuary. This rescue and rehabilitation centre conducts research into sloths and works tirelessly with the goal of releasing sloths back into their natural habitat. In 2013 it was the subject of an Animal Planet TV show called 'Meet the Sloths'. You'll learn all about these fascinating animals on a two hour tour of the sanctuary, where you find out about the rehabilitation process and take a boat tour along the river to see sloths, monkeys, butterflies and birds in the wild. In the afternoon there is free time to relax in Cahuita.

Day 7: La Marta Wildlife Refuge

Your next destination is Turrialba Valley, a rich agricultural region located in the Central Highlands. On the way to Turrialba you will visit La Marta Wildlife Refuge, an area of both primary and secondary forest within La Amistad Biosphere (recognised as a UNESCO World Patrimony of Humanity). The topography of this region is mountainous, with waterfalls, rivers and caves – the varied elevation supports a wide range of plants (such as orchids, bromeliads, lichens and mosses) and animals (such as anteaters, ocelots and tapirs).

Day 8: Savegre Cloud Forest

After breakfast you will depart towards San Gerardo de Dota and Savegre Cloud Forest. This is said to be one of the best places in the whole of Costa Rica to see the beautiful, colourful and notoriously shy Resplendant Quetzal and you will have two nights here to discover the region. These endangered birds rely on the cloud forest for their habitat – the males in particular are striking with a green crest, red breast and tail feathers that can reach a metre in length. A good pair of binoculars will be helpful for quetzal spotting as these birds camouflage themselves well amongst the wet leaves of the forest! After lunch you will take a short walk into the cloud forest.

Day 9: Savegre Cloud Forest

Today is free to relax and explore Savegre Valley. Bring your binoculars to spot some of the 170 bird species, trek through the tropical cloud forest or simply relax in the grounds of the lodge. For those who are passionate about trekking, an optional tour to Los Quetzales National Park can be arranged to admire the tropical cloud forest and sub-Andean vegetation. Birds that may be seen in this area include hummingbirds, colibri, tanagers and trogons, whilst tapirs and Squirrel monkeys may also be seen.

Day 10: Sierpe

Your journey continues towards the small town of Sierpe, where you will board a small motorboat to Drake Bay on the Osa Peninsula. Passing the huge mangrove swamps that line the Sierpe River, our boat crosses the ocean before arriving into Drake Bay. This region is very remote and with extremely limited road access, which means the majority of supplies, as well as visitors and locals, must arrive by boat. Originally discovered by Francis Drake, getting here is part of the adventure! The bay is spectacular, with just a handful of lodges scattering the horizon and the rest thick verdant forest and rocky coves as far as the eye can see. Your next three nights will be spent at the Drake Bay Wilderness Resort, a family run property positioned close to the 'town' of Drake Bay and with ocean views from every corner.

Day 11: Caño Island

Board a small boat to Caño Island, located 12 nautical miles from Drake Bay. During this 45 minute boat ride there may be opportunities to spot migrating whales or playful dolphins in the surrounding waters (Orca whales might be seen between approx. December to April and Humpback whales might be seen between approx. July to November). The interior of the island is thought to have been a burial ground for the indigenous Daquis tribe during pre-Columbian times, and many perfectly spherical man-made stones have been found here. But it's the marine life that is the biggest highlight of Caño Island, with Hawksbill and Olive Ridley turtles, Manta rays and White-tipped reef sharks being just some of the likely encounters on today's snorkelling excursion. This area has been rated as having the best snorkelling in the whole of Costa Rica, with excellent water visibility and a huge marine diversity awaiting beneath the waves in the protected reef. Enjoy a picnic lunch on nearby San Josecito beach, where Capuchin monkeys, Coatimundi and lively Scarlet macaws may make an appearance.

Day 12: Corcovado National Park

When National Geographic describes an area as 'the most biologically intense place on earth' it has to be worthy of investigation! This morning you will board a small boat for a 30 minute journey to San Pedrillo Ranger Station, your entry point to Corcovado National Park. This is undoubtedly Costa Rica's most secluded and tranquil region. Protecting around one third of the Osa Peninsula (some 164 square miles), Corcovado is Costa Rica's largest national park and encompasses 13 major ecosystems across various elevations, with montane forest, cloud forest, freshwater and mangrove swamps being just some of these. Scientists have recorded half of all of the species in Costa Rica on this peninsula alone. On today's hike along the parks trails you may see all four of Costa Rica's monkey species (Squirrel, Howler, White-faced Capuchin and Spider monkeys), tamandua (anteater), two and three-toed sloths, peccary, tapirs (including the endangered Baird's tapir) and of course many reptiles, insects and amphibians. Puma and jaguar are known in this area but very difficult to see. With over 500 tree species, the bird count stands at an impressive 365 and the park protects the largest population of Scarlet macaws in the country, which can frequently be



seen and heard flying overhead.

Day 13: Back to San José

After breakfast, you will board another boat to depart from Drake Bay and return to Sierpe town. On the way your boat will take a short tour of the huge mangrove forest that lines the Sierpe River. Delving into the network of tributary rivers and streams is fascinating and a chance to learn more about the role of mangroves in the eco-system and the numerous creatures that depend on them, such as fish, crabs, birds, molluscs and shell fish. In Sierpe town you will be transferred to your private minibus and commence your journey to San José.

Day 14: San José

Your adventure comes to an end today after breakfast and it's time to bid Costa Rica and the rest of the group goodbye. Transfer to San José airport for your flight home or choose to stay on a few extra days to do more exploring.

Details

Group Size:

6-16

2018 Departures:

October: 06 (green turtle nesting season)

December: 28

2018 Pricing:

From CA\$4,745 (October) to \$5,505 (December) - twin

From CA\$5,733 (October) to \$6,683 (December) - single

2019 Departures:

January: 5, 12, 19, 26

February: 16, 23

March: 2, 9, 16, 23

July: 13, 27

August: 4, 11

September: 14, 21

October: 5, 19

November: 2

2019 Pricing:

From CA\$4,885 (July 13 - November 02, 2019) to \$4,935 (January 05 - March 23, 2019) - twin

From CA\$5,949 (July 13 - November 02, 2019) to \$6,151 (January 05 - March 23, 2019) - single

Prices are shown per person in CA\$, based on two people sharing a twin room or one person in a single. Please note, single rooms are limited and may not be available on all dates. Please inquire for availability.

Trip Code:

009390 - W20



INCLUDED

- All breakfasts, 8 lunches and 7 dinners
- 13 nights of accommodation
- All transport and listed activities
- Tour leader throughout

NOT INCLUDED

- Flights to/from San José
- Gratuities for tour leader/driver
- Optional activities
- Travel insurance
- Items of a personal nature

TOUR NOTES

Home to 6% of the world's plant and animal species, many endemic, the country's rich biodiversity is extremely colourful. Over 850 bird species have been recorded here – far more than found anywhere in North America, Europe and Australia. A cornucopia of exotic flora and fauna, Costa Rica is a nature lover's delight.

This tour is leisurely to moderate. If you are reasonably fit, enjoy the outdoors and are looking for some exercise, you'll enjoy this tour. Some previous experience is preferable for activity based trips.

Disclaimer: We do our utmost to ensure that information posted on our website is correct at the time of publication, however trip details are subject to change without notice by the suppliers and operators involved. We update the information as soon as possible when changes are advised to us, however, we cannot assume responsibility for such changes made by the suppliers and operators.

ROUTE MAP





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