



Costa Rica's Natural Heritage

In this small Central American democracy kissed by nature, our small group discovers a nation's wealth in four distinct regions, from cloud forest to rainforest and Central Valley to Pacific Coast. As Costa Rica presents its staggering display of biodiversity – pristine landscapes, unique microclimates, exotic flora and fauna – we enjoy a relaxed yet comprehensive exploration that celebrates the country's wide-ranging natural resources.

With an Pre-Tour Option: Tortuguero National Park

Itinerary

Created on Mar 14, 2024

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Day-by-Day Itinerary

DAY 1: Depart for San Jose, Costa Rica

We arrive in the Costa Rican capital and transfer to our hotel located in the Escazu area outside the city. This afternoon and evening are at leisure.

Accommodations: InterContinental Costa Rica

DAY 2: San Jose

After meeting our Odysseys Unlimited Tour Director and fellow travelers at this morning's breakfast briefing, we embark on an excursion to Irazú National Park, whose active volcano last erupted in 1994. At 11,260 feet, Irazú stands as Costa Rica's tallest volcano, as well as its largest; and presents a spectacle of nature, as it rises from a flat, bare landscape coated in ash. We return to our hotel late this afternoon; tonight we enjoy a welcome dinner there.

Accommodations: InterContinental Costa Rica

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 3: San Jose/Arenal Region

We leave this morning bound for the Arenal region, passing picturesque villages along the way. We stop at the Doka Coffee Estate, located on the fertile slopes of Poás Volcano, where we learn about coffee making and Costa Rica's coffee crop, one of the country's largest exports. Continuing on, we stop in Carrizal at the family-owned Botanical Orchid Garden, with tropical trails, exhibits, nurseries, and gardens all dedicated to the wondrous orchid plant. After time to explore here, we travel on to Arenal and our hotel, which offers magnificent views of Arenal Volcano and where we dine tonight.

Accommodations: Lomas del Volcán Hotel

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 4: Arenal Region

This morning we visit a local elementary school to enjoy a cultural exchange with the children and learn about Costa Rica's vaunted educational system – the country boasts a literacy rate of more than 95%. We continue on to Ecocentro Danaus, a biological reserve focused on conservation, environmental education, and sustainability. A series of trails winds through the secondary forest, where we see diverse flora, including orchids, bromelia, and heliconia, along with some of the preserve's 150 species of birds, sloths, and bats, among other fauna. Highlights include a butterfly farm with 30 different species and a natural water spring that attracts waterfowl, alligators, and iguana. Later today there's time for more volcano viewing before and after dinner from a comfortable perch at our hotel.

Accommodations: Lomas del Volcán Hotel

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 5: Arenal Region

On this morning's visit to Arenal's Mistico hanging bridges, we have the special opportunity to experience the rainforest from the canopy level as we traverse a series of five suspension bridges high above the forest floor. While we observe the rainforest from a unique perspective, our naturalist guide will point out some of the flora and fauna that thrive here. Then we return to our hotel, where the remainder of the day is at leisure to relax amidst the beautiful grounds and thermal waters. Lunch and dinner today are on our own.

Accommodations: Lomas del Volcán Hotel

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 6: Arenal Region/Monte Verde Cloud Forest

We travel today to the "green cathedral" of Monte Verde. En route, we stop to visit a nonprofit handicrafts cooperative dedicated to enhancing the economic and social well-being of local women artists. After lunch on our own in Santa Elena, we continue on to our hotel, arriving late afternoon. We dine tonight at a local restaurant in Monte Verde.

Accommodations: Fondavela Mountain Hotel

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 7: Monte Verde

This morning we embark on a guided walk through Monte Verde's biological reserve, learning about the amazing biodiversity in this relatively small area. After lunch together, we visit the Monte Verde Bat Jungle to learn about Costa Rica's diverse – and important – bat population. Late this afternoon we return to our hotel for time at leisure before visiting with a local resident who will share stories of how Quakers have influenced the region, including their founding of Monte Verde's biological reserve. We dine together this evening.

Accommodations: Fondavela Mountain Hotel

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 8: Monte Verde/Guanacaste

We depart by coach this morning for Guanacaste, Costa Rica's stunning northwest Pacific coastal region. After a stop for lunch, we reach our resort hotel overlooking the Pacific mid-afternoon.

Accommodations: JW Marriott Guanacaste Resort & Spa

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 9: Guanacaste

A float safari on the Tempisque River highlights this morning's excursion to the Palo Verde region, which is both an extraordinary wetland and also one of the world's last tropical dry forests. In this unique ecosystem, we can expect to see abundant bird- and wildlife, including monkeys, iguanas, and caimans. After lunch together, we return to our hotel mid-afternoon, with the remainder of the day at leisure along one of Costa Rica's most beautiful Pacific Coast settings.

Accommodations: JW Marriott Guanacaste Resort & Spa

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 10: Guanacaste

Today is at leisure to enjoy the beautiful beach and other amenities of our hotel, including an outdoor infinity pool. Optional activities include kayaking, hiking, or visiting the lively town of Tamarindo. This evening we gather at a farewell dinner to celebrate our Costa Rican adventure.

Accommodations: JW Marriott Guanacaste Resort & Spa

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 11: Depart for U.S.

We transfer to the airport this morning for our return flights to the U.S.

Meals: Breakfast

This tour itinerary was generated for Costa Rica's Natural Heritage on Mar 14, 2024. Please visit the Costa Rica's Natural Heritage page at <https://www.odysseys-unlimited.com/tours/central-south-america/costa-ricas-natural-heritage/> for the latest and most accurate information.