

THE COSTA RICA GUIDE

THE TOP 10 THINGS TO DO!

Find out all the best
things to do in Costa Rica

LEARN TO VALUE TRAVEL

Get the best bang for
your travel buck

TRAVEL TIPS, TRICKS & HACKS

Make traveling much
easier for you

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Check out these sample itineraries for your stay in Costa Rica.



SELINA HOSTEL - LA FORTUNA



CATARATA DEL TORO

COSTA RICA

The best time of year to travel?



Costa Rica is unlike any other climate in the world. However, It is more or less divided into two seasons, a dry season, often referred to as high season, and a rainy season, often referred to as green season.



Dry Season

December - April

Best time for outdoor activities

HIGH

76

LOW

57



Mid Season

May - July

Best time for budget travelers

HIGH

81

LOW

63



Wet Season

August - November

Best time for surfers

HIGH

79

LOW

61

COSTA RICA

WHAT TO EXPECT

Language: España / Spanish

Currency: Costa Rican Colón

Credit Cards & ATMs: Many Costa Rica restaurants, and hotels accept credit cards. Smaller shops and businesses in remote areas may not accept credit cards.

Safety: Although most of Costa Rica is safe, petty crime and robberies committed against tourists are endemic. Tropical illness is also a concern. See page 6 for more details.

Plugs: Costa Rica uses 110 volt, 60 cycle electricity, same as the US.

Food and Drinks: Costa Rican cuisine is known for being fairly mild, with high reliance on fruits and vegetables. Rice and black beans are a staple of most traditional Costa Rican meals, often served three times a day. Costa Rican fare is nutritionally well rounded, and nearly always cooked from scratch from fresh ingredients.

The Arts: Costa Rica is well known for its stunning wood sculptures and everyday items, such as bowls, cups, cutting boards, wine racks, and more.



CATARATA DEL TORO



ARENAL NATIONAL PARK



MONTEVERDE CLOUD FOREST

CULTURE & CUSTOMS

Famous for being the happiest country in the world, the people of Costa Rica are welcoming and friendly, yet sophisticated and proud. The priorities of the country are evident in its progressive social and environmental policies. Education and healthcare for all are fully supported. Costa Rica is a model of eco-stewardship with more than 25% of its territory preserved from development allowing it to conserve its incredible biodiversity for generations to come. This is most evident in Corcovado National Park. Also, the culture and traditions reveal their passion for democracy, freedom, and equality for all.

Ticos! The Costa Rican people affectionately refer to themselves as Ticos. This term is rooted in how they play with the Spanish language. On occasions, Costa Ricans have the tendency to add the suffix -tico to a certain word. It can be used to indicate smallness in something, but can also carry an affectionate or 'cute' meaning. It further states the point that the Costa Rican culture is one that doesn't take itself too seriously. This wonderful quality lays at the root of their peaceful and kind nature.

Costa Rican Culture – National Pride. Costa Rica is a cultural melting pot. It shows indigenous origins and Spanish colonial influence, with a peppery splash of other immigrant cultures thrown in the stew such as Jamaican and Chinese. The official language is Spanish, but there also pockets where BriBri, creole Mekatelyu as found by the Caribbean Coast in the Limon province, and English. Costa Ricans are proud of their values. They believe in education and healthcare and make it freely available to its people. They are proud of their long-standing history as a democracy.

In fact, they are the oldest and most stable democracy in the region. And they are proud of their world leadership in pioneering sustainable environmental and conservation policies. The locals go out of their way to propagate their environmental ethos by helping visitors appreciate the natural beauty of their land and wildlife.

Health Staying healthy on a trip to Costa Rica is predominantly a matter of being a little cautious about what you eat and drink, and using common sense. Know your physical limits and don't overexert yourself in the ocean, on hikes, or during athletic activities. Many beaches have dangerous riptides, and drownings do occur from time to time. As you climb above 3,000m (10,000 ft.), you may feel the effects of altitude sickness. Be sure to drink plenty of water and not overexert yourself. Limit your exposure to the sun, especially during the first few days of your trip and, thereafter, from 11am to 2pm. Use sunscreen with a high protection factor, and apply it liberally. Remember that children need more protection than adults. The water in San José and most of the country's heavily visited spots is generally safe to drink, but if you want to take no chances, stick to bottled water.

SAFETY

Tropical Illnesses, Malaria, Zika Virus, Dengue Fever all have had their periodic outbreaks in Latin America – However, your chance of contracting any serious tropical disease in Costa Rica is slim, especially if you stick to the beaches or traditional spots for visitors. However, malaria, dengue fever, leptospirosis, and Zika all exist in Costa Rica, so it's a good idea to know what they are.

Bugs, Bites & Other Wildlife Concerns Although Costa Rica has Africanized bees (the notorious “killer bees” of fact and fable) and several species of venomous snakes, your chances of being bitten are minimal, especially if you refrain from sticking your hands into hives or under rocks in the forest. If you know that you're allergic to bee stings, consult your doctor before traveling. At the beaches, you'll probably be bitten by purrujas (sand fleas), especially on the lower part of your legs. These nearly invisible insects leave an itchy welt. Try not to scratch because this can lead to open sores and infections.

Scorpions, black widow spiders, tarantulas, bullet ants, and biting insects of many types can all be found in Costa Rica. In general, they are not nearly the danger or nuisance most visitors fear. Watch where you stick your hands; in addition, you might want to shake out your clothes and shoes before putting them on to avoid any painful surprises.

Riptides – Many of Costa Rica's beaches have riptides: strong currents that can drag swimmers out to sea. A riptide occurs when water that has been dumped on the shore by strong waves forms a channel back out to open water. If you get caught in a riptide, you can't escape the current by swimming toward shore; it's like trying to swim upstream in a river. To break free of the current, swim parallel to shore and use the energy of the waves to help you get back to the beach.

Safety Although most of Costa Rica is safe, petty crime and robberies committed against tourists are endemic. San José, in particular, is known for its pickpockets. Thieves target gold chains, cameras and video cameras, prominent jewelry, and nice sunglasses. Whenever possible, you leave your passport in a hotel safe, and travel with a photocopy of the pertinent pages. Avoid parking a car on the street in Costa Rica, especially in San José; plenty of public parking lots are around the city.

Rental cars generally stand out and are easily spotted by thieves. Don't leave anything of value in a car parked on the street, not even for a moment. Be wary of solicitous strangers who stop to help you change a tire or take you to a service station. Although most are truly good Samaritans, there are bandits who prey on roadside breakdowns.

Inter-city buses are also frequent targets of stealthy thieves. Try not to check your bags into the hold of a bus if they will fit in the rack above your seat. If it can't be avoided, keep your eye on what leaves the hold. If you put your bags in an overhead rack, keep an eye on them.

Single women should use common sense and take precaution, especially after dark. Men and women should avoid walking alone at night, especially on deserted beaches or dark streets.

**THANK YOU FOR
DOWNLOADING THE
COSTA RICA GUIDE**



WATCH THE COSTA RICA VIDEO ON [YOUTUBE](#)

SETTING A BUDGET TO VALUE TRAVEL

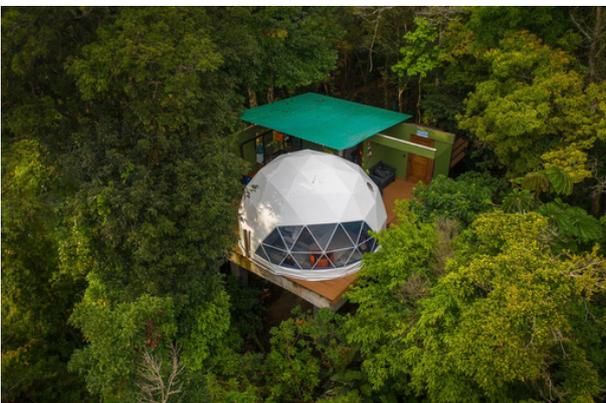
Set a budget, even if it's a loose budget. An adventure in Costa Rica doesn't have to be expensive, it just takes a little bit of pre-planning. Your most expensive part of your trip will be airfare and accommodations.

When deciding on what part of the country that you would like to stay in, keep your budget in mind as some parts are more expensive than others.

What is **value traveling**? Value traveling is getting the most bang for your travel buck.

When it comes to travel, meet somewhere in the middle, between budget and luxury. This will help stretch your budget throughout your vacation. Set aside a few nights of your trip to over-indulge and splurge on a luxury or unique experience.

Conversely, set aside the rest of the trip's accommodations for a more practical stay.



Check out this amazing [Yurt](#) in the heart of Monteverde.

It may cost you more, but you're paying for the experience. I wouldn't sacrifice on clean sheets and location, but you may want to sacrifice on amenities.



In the end, you will notice that you will get more value for your money by splitting your time between accommodations – luxury and budget.

If you do like to move around, stay in one location at least for two nights for the best experience.

Excursions

What's a great trip without a horseback ride or a visit to the Monteverde Cloud Forest?! You don't need to book an excursion every day, that will help with your budget, but you could book a few throughout the week.

Airfare

Save big on airfare by going to Costa Rica in the shoulder seasons. April through late May and September through October. The weather will be pleasant at this time too, a perfect opportunity for a getaway!

To get an idea of how much your trip will cost, research prices for airfare, hotels, and activities before you make any nonrefundable purchases or reservations.

HOW TO SAVE MONEY IN COSTA RICA

Points. The [Capital One Venture One](#) card is a fantastic travel rewards credit card to start off with. If you're a pro, use the [Chase Sapphire Preferred](#) card.

Try multiple dates. Flights are often cheaper in the shoulder- or off-season. Check prices for different dates with [SkyScanner](#) in your travel window. A sale on airfare may help you afford a destination that's otherwise out of budget.

Avoid holidays, festivals, and other large events, unless that's the reason you're going to a specific destination. Crowds can inflate hotel rates, overwhelm popular sights, and make it difficult—and costly—to get around.

Compare midweek to weekend prices. Hotels in big cities tend to be more affordable on the weekends when the business travelers have gone home, while resorts in vacation destinations may be less expensive midweek.

Once you've estimated your trip's flight and accommodation cost, start considering the cost of transportation.

Public transportation or renting a car could eat into your overall budget. Make sure you have an efficient and reliable way to get around. If you're considering hoping from town to town, it's best to rent a car in most cases. For centrally located cities and small towns, plan to walk or use public transportation.

Next, get an idea of your food budget. I'm a foodie lover, so more likely than not, I'm finding new, fun, and interesting places to check out. Some people opt to save on their food budget and hit the local market or neighborhood grocery store.

Hungry? You may find a really cheap and authentic meal at one of the local soda's. A "Soda" in Costa Rica is a local place to have cheap eats that serve authentic Costa Rican dishes.

Bring a water bottle The tap water here is hit or miss so bring a reusable water bottle to save money and reduce your plastic use. [LifeStraw](#) is my go-to brand as their bottles have built-in filters to ensure your water is always clean and safe.

What's the point of traveling if you're not experiencing new things? Don't skimp on tour and excursion expenses. You will regret not going on a wine and tapas tour or seeing the cities' attractions on a hop-on hop-off bus. Use [Get Your Guide](#) to book excursions.

BEST THINGS TO DO COSTA RICA!



HANGING BRIDGES/WATERFALL

From \$150 per person

BOOK HERE

TAKE PART IN 3 AMAZING ACTIVITIES ON 1 TOUR FROM LA FORTUNA. HIKE THE PATHS OF THE ARENAL VOLCANO, SEE THE CASCADES OF LA FORTUNA WATERFALL AND WALK THROUGH THE RAINFOREST CANOPY ON THE SUSPENSION BRIDGES OF THE ARENAL HANGING BRIDGES PARK.



WHITEWATER RAFTING

From \$65 per person

BOOK HERE

EMBARK ON A THRILLING RAFTING TRIP DOWN THE CLASS 2 AND 3 RAPIDS OF THE BEAUTIFUL Balsa RIVER. NAVIGATE 10 KM DOWNSTREAM, STOPPING ALONG THE WAY TO REST, SWIM AND EAT SOME FRESH COSTA RICAN FRUIT. ENJOY A BEER AT THE END OF THE ADVENTURE WITH YOUR GROUP.



MANUEL ANTONIO PARK

From \$59 per person

BOOK HERE

DISCOVER ONE OF MOST ENTHRALLING NATURE EXPERIENCES IN COSTA RICA DURING A TOUR OF MANUEL ANTONIO NATIONAL PARK. SPOT MONKEYS, SLOTHS, AND TOUCANS IN THE WILD.

TOP 10

THINGS TO DO IN COSTA RICA

1

EXPLORE MONTEVERDE'S CLOUD FOREST. [TICKETS HERE](#)

2

WHITewater RAFTING
[TICKETS HERE](#)

3

GO HIKING AT ARENAL VOLCANO

4

JACO BEACH ATV TOUR.
[TICKETS HERE](#)

5

MANUEL ANTONIO NATIONAL PARK

6

STAY A NIGHT AT CATARATA DEL TORO WATERFALL

7

ARENAL HANGING BRIDGES PARK
[TICKETS HERE](#)

8

SEE CROCIDILES AT THE TARCOLES RIVER CROCIDILE BRIDGE

9

TAKE A CHOCOLATE & COFFEE JUNGLE TOUR. [TICKETS HERE](#)

10

GANDOCA-MANZANILLO NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

RESEARCH AND BOOK FLIGHTS

It's important to check flight prices as soon as you know you want to go to Costa Rica. **Liberia** and **San Jose** are going to be your best bet for booking international flights. It's super easy to get started with Google Flights.

Read More: [How to use Google Flights to find the Best Prices](#)

Another great resource is the [CapitalOne Travel](#) Portal if you have a Capital One travel rewards credit card. You can track flights, compare prices and even get notified when the best time to travel is via the integrated Hopper app.

A question I get often is, "when should I book?". There's not a science to booking the right flight, at the right time. However, there are patterns to be aware of.

For example, flights in June-August will usually be higher, this is peak travel season. USA Holidays will also be higher.

Shoulder season is the best time to book (April, May & September, October). Your best bet is to book International travel around 80 days out. This will typically give you the best price.



PLAN YOUR ACCOMODATION

Once your flight is booked, it's best to start locking in accommodations.

Determine if your adventure is going to be at a centralized location, or if you will be moving around from place to place. If it's the later, make sure to look at a map to determine the best routes. Additionally, you may want to research the best roads to take to each destination. For example, Costa Rica looks very small on the map, but what you need to take into consideration is the different aspects of terrain you will encounter on such a road trip. A trip from La Fortuna to Monteverde might look like no problem at only 123km, but it will take over 3 hours because of the geography. Be careful!



Click on the tiny map above to start your hotel search and find the best deals in Costa Rica!

Browse, heart, or write down your favorite places before making the best decision. Base your final accomodation choice on location, price, features, amenities, and style... in that order.

Before making any kind of payment, make sure you know the cancelation policy. And if you think you need it, purchase trip cancellation insurance. Most major travel credit cards include trip protection, such as the Capital One Venture card or the Chase Sapphire Preferred card.



Another reason to book using your Capital One Venture or Chase Sapphire Preferred card is collecting miles and points for future traveling. **That's right, more benefits for you!** Every time I travel, I'm already checking my new mileage chart for my next destination.

So, use those travel reward credit cards to get a jump start on your future travels. You may even get a round trip to Costa Rica for free by just using your sign-up bonus miles. I did!

Note, the wildly gorgeous hotels, amazing infinity-pool-view villas, yurts on a seashore cliffside, glamping tents -will all book up far in advance.

Generally, their prices don't swing and there will be no deals to be had. Expect to pay for what you get at these luxury and off the beaten path stays.

Reading reviews online of other travelers experiences should give you a good idea on the experience you can expect.

Last but not least, compare all of your favorites before making a final decision.

SAN JOSE

Located in the heart of Costa Rica, **San José** is one of the most diverse provinces in the country due to its dense urban capital city also known as downtown San José. Boasting a pleasant and mild climate, San José is one of the most populated regions of the country and welcomes visitors regularly.

San José is home to dense culture and history, exquisite architecture, bustling nightlife and friendly locals. Considered to be both a traditional Central American city and cosmopolitan urban center, San José provides a wonderful array of activities and attractions.

There are plenty of museums, art galleries, parks and dining options for visitors to choose from. Some of the best attractions in San José include Central Park, Morazan Park, Spanish Park, National Park, Democracy Plaza and the Jade Museum.



📍 GUANACASTE /LIBERIA

With a total of 5,921 sq. miles and more than 400 miles of coast line, Guanacaste comprises the Pacific Coast area from the border of Nicaragua to the Bongo River estuary in the Nicoya Peninsula.

Along the Guanacaste coastline are a number of beaches perfect for swimming and enjoying the warm Pacific Ocean waters. The coastal landscape is exceptional with its array of white-sand beaches and calm, intense-blue waters.

Surfers Paradise & All-Inclusive Resorts

The beaches in the area are blessed with a tropical climate, and the breakers are no stranger to beginner and expert shredders. Whether you're looking for a remote getaway or a crowd favorite, this area has truly top-tier waves

Tenorio Volcano National Park

This park is located in the volcanic mountain range in Guanacaste and is home to lowland mountain rain forests, tropical wet forest, and the very wet premontane forest. Its highest point measures 6,289 ft. above sea level. Some of the more prominent plant species include palm trees, ferns, bromeliads, and orchids.

White-faced monkeys, anteaters, pumas, tapirs, and peccaries as well as exotic bird species are all found here.



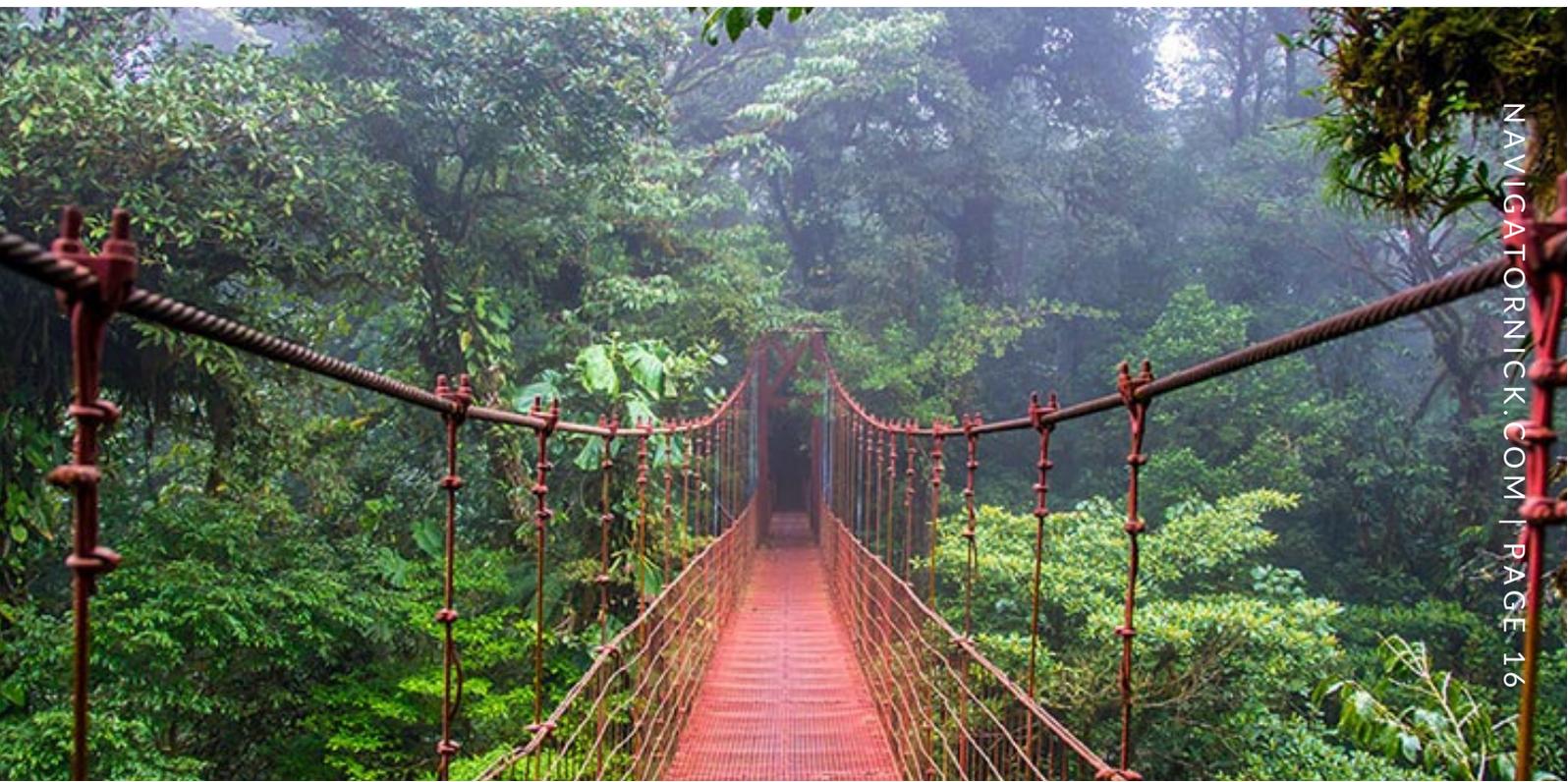
MONTEVERDE

One of Costa Rica's most visited places is **Monteverde** in Puntarenas. The **Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve** is unique from Costa Rica's other rainforests, with a constant mist that looks like clouds and gives the forest its name. The high humidity at this spot, 1,600 meters above the ocean, creates the mist and provides a cloud-like cover. Eight different biological zones are distinguishable in this moisture-rich environment, which shelters several thousand animal and plant species across its 26,000 acres.

The reserve is a bird-lover's paradise, with more than 500 species; bring your binoculars for a view of the quetzal, whose green plumage contrasts nicely with its red chest and belly, the blue-throated toucanet and the three-wattled bellbird. Be on the lookout for sloths, monkeys, pumas, monkeys and endangered jaguars, as well as the red-eyed tree frog that serves as a Costa Rican icon.

Read More - [The Best Central Costa Rica Road Trip Itinerary](#)

Along with the teeming wildlife, the cloud forest offers 420 orchid species and 200 fern species. If you find the Monteverde cloud forest a little busy, the Santa Elena Cloud Forest Reserve is its lesser-known neighbor and offers much the same experience.



📍 LA FORTUNA

La Fortuna is a town in the Northern Plains, home to the majestic Arenal Volcano and one of the most beautiful places in Costa Rica because of its natural and geological wealth and the wide range of tourist activities. However, there continue to be two very different landscapes in its structure: a cover of dense, green vegetation, and another dominated by lava and sand of the last eruptions.

The town is small, but brings a ton of energy. The town square consists of the Parroquia San Juan Bosco church, a plethora of shops, restaurants, and tourist hubs to plan your next adventure.

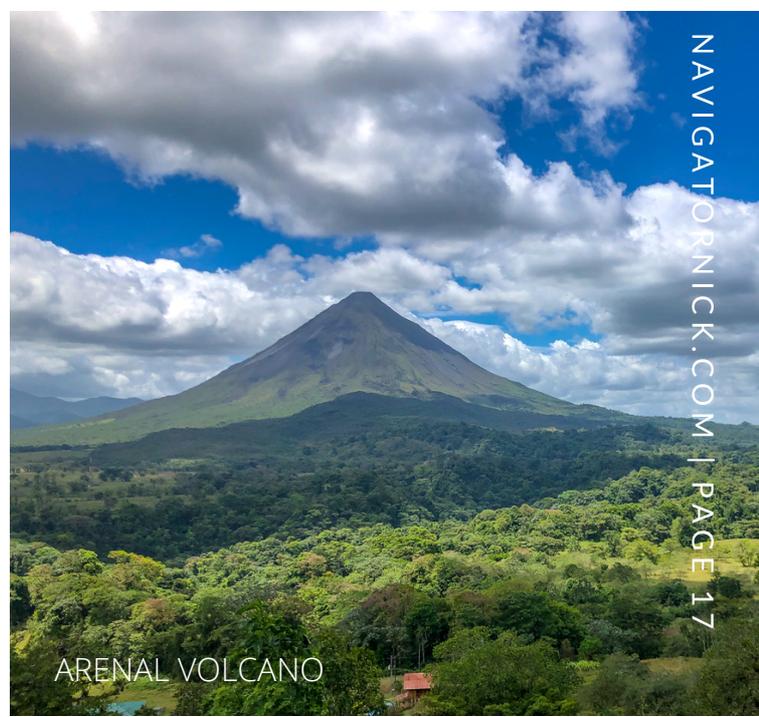
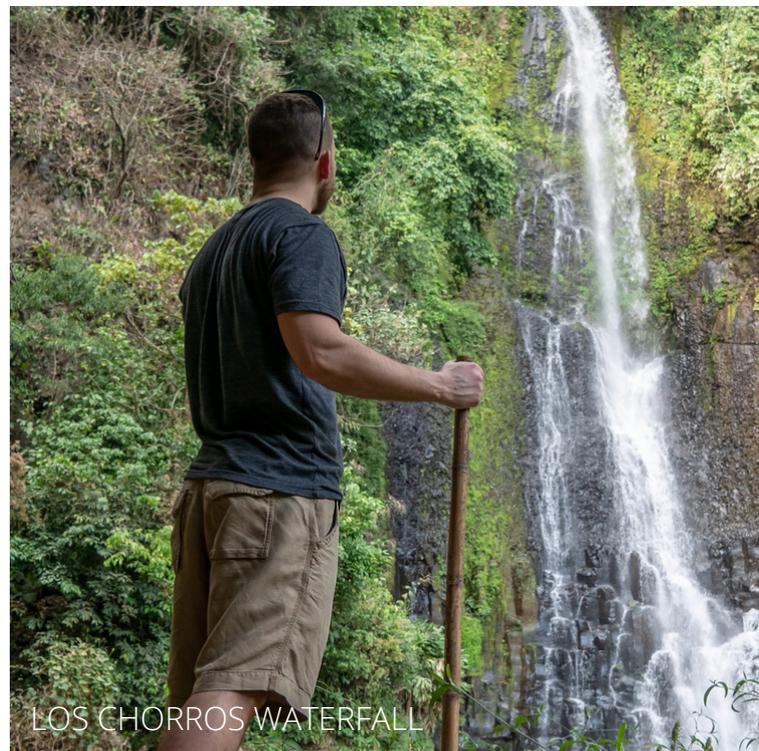
Some of these tourist activities include hanging bridges, [horseback riding](#), hiking, [hot springs](#), spa treatments, [whitewater rafting](#), and chasing waterfalls.

While there are many beautiful waterfalls throughout the country, my absolute favorite is Catarata Del Toro, about an hour south of La Fortuna.

[Mistico Arenal Park](#) in La Fortuna is a must-do adventure as you walk above the trees in the Costa Rican jungle.

In addition, there are plenty of options for accommodations around La Fortuna, ranging from Airbnbs, hostels and bed & breakfasts.

Check out the Map [here](#) to browse.



📍 MANUEL ANTONIO

Manuel Antonio National Park, in Spanish the Parque Nacional Manuel Antonio, is a small national park in the Central Pacific Conservation Area located on the Pacific coast of Costa Rica, just south of the city of Quepos, Puntarenas, and 132 km (82 mi) from the national capital of San José.

Manuel Antonio National Park (closed on Mondays) contains three beautiful beaches, casual forest trails, and a dense rainforest teeming with animal life. In 2011, it was named by Forbes as one of the world's most beautiful parks.

The two main beaches inside the park, Espadilla Sur Beach and Manuel Antonio Beach are about a 30-minute hike from the main entrance of the park. Playa Manuel Antonio is best known for its spectacular views, but if you're looking to beat the crowds, venture a bit further down the main trail to Playa Espadilla Sur.

The hotels in the Manuel Antonio area are not beachfront but set cliff-side with sweeping views. Only a few Manuel Antonio hotels have direct beach access. To reach the public beaches and the entrance to Manuel Antonio National Park, travelers can take the hotel or public shuttle.



PUERTO VIEJO

Located in Limon province on the shores of the Caribbean Sea, **Puerto Viejo de Talamanca** is a beach lover's paradise. Here amidst the exotic flora and fauna, lies a vibrant seaside town with gorgeous beaches, crystal clear blue waters, and some of the most amazing surfing opportunities. Fast becoming one of Costa Rica's premier tourist hot spots, many international surfers come here from all over the world to ride the famed Salsa Brava waves, making this Caribbean influenced town is a 'must visit' place when in Limon.

Formerly a quiet little fishing village, Puerto Viejo has a charm that is all its own. Becoming increasingly popular, especially with the young hip crowd, this town is among the top rated surfing destinations of the world. With its relaxed atmosphere and its own unique blend of Latino, Afro-Caribbean and Bribri indigenous cultures, Puerto Viejo is a lively place to have a fun relaxing vacation.

With its gold sand beaches, tropical vegetation and many interesting attractions nearby such as the Cahuita National Park, Talamanca Indian Reserve and Gandoca Manzanillo Wildlife Refuge, visiting Puerto Viejo de Talamanca is a great opportunity to experience Costa Rica at its best.



STAYING IN COSTA RICA?



BUDGET ACCOMMODATION

From \$45 per person

BOOK HERE

SELINA LA FORTUNA FEATURES ACCOMMODATIONS WITH A RESTAURANT, FREE PRIVATE PARKING, A BAR AND A SHARED LOUNGE. THIS 3-STAR HOTEL FEATURES FREE WIFI AND A GARDEN. THE ACCOMMODATIONS OFFERS ENTERTAINMENT STAFF AND A SHARED KITCHEN.



VALUE ACCOMMODATION

From \$115 per person

BOOK HERE

TIFAKARA BOUTIQUE HOTEL IS LOCATED JUST OUTSIDE ARENAL VOLCANO NATIONAL PARK IN FORTUNA WHERE YOU CAN ENJOY STUNNING VOLCANIC VIEWS. FREE WIFI ACCESS IS AVAILABLE IN THIS HOTEL.



LUXURY ACCOMMODATION

From \$150 per person

BOOK HERE

CHIRA GLAMPING MONTEVERDE IS LOCATED IN MONTEVERDE, COSTA RICA, 1.4 MI FROM SKY ADVENTURES MONTEVERDE. SELVATURA ADVENTURE PARK IS 2.2 MI FROM THE PROPERTY. FREE WIFI IS OFFERED THROUGHOUT THE PROPERTY AND FREE PRIVATE PARKING IS AVAILABLE ON SITE.

BOOK A RENTAL CAR, HIRE A DRIVER OR MAP PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

If you love the freedom of being able to come and go on your own time, renting a car is the way to go. The freedom to hit the open road to get away from the big city. The freedom to explore more than one place in a short amount of time. **Booking a rental car allows you to have flexibility.** It also saves you time and it could save you cash.

The best rental car company in Costa Rica is Adobe Rent a Car. Not only are they one of the cheaper options, but they will treat you with respect & integrity. They really care about their customers and will fill your request within reason. An alternative option is Expedia.com.

When estimating your rental car costs, remember to add up tolls, fuel costs, parking fees, and charges for dropping off the vehicle in a different location, if applicable.

In some cases, it's possible to get a rental car for free with using points from your Capital One or Chase Sapphire Preferred credit card. It never hurts to sign up for the rental car programs that Enterprise, Hertz or Budget offer. Each company sends an email from time to time about current or upcoming specials.

When choosing your rental car, consider it's size, the rental price and ground clearance, your top three priorities. The best parts of Costa Rica require four wheel drive and height clearance.



Traveler Tip: Most rental vehicles in Costa Rica are only offered in a manual transmission. Automatic transmissions are harder to find and they are more expensive.

Renting a car is not for everybody and it's not for the faint of heart. It can be dangerous and scary. If you're outside your home country and you don't know the local laws, plan to study them to feel more comfortable on the road. Otherwise, hire a private driver or use public transportation.

However, should you prefer public transportation or a hired driver, there are many guided group tours through Get Your Guide.

So, when does public transportation make sense? It makes sense when you're in a major city like San Jose, where parking is scarce.

Uber is illegal in Costa Rica but you will still find some drivers. Lyft is illegal in Costa Rica as well and does not operate.

Believe it or not, taxis are still around and in operation.

MY FAVORITE TRAVEL CREDIT CARDS FOR BEGINNERS



[CLICK HERE](#)

Disclaimer: This post contains affiliate links. If you book or buy something through these links, I earn a small commission (at no extra cost to you).

GATHER DOCUMENTATION

At least three months before your departure, make sure your passport and other necessary documents (Covid Vaccinations) are in order.

Driver's license: Driver's license are really not important in other countries besides your own. Even if you're driving in another country, you need an IDP. In May of 2025, federal agencies, including the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and Transportation Security Administration, will accept only Real ID-compliant driver's licenses, U.S. passports, or other forms of TSA-approved identification to fly domestically.

Passport: Applying for or renewing a passport typically takes six to eight weeks, sometimes longer. However, you can pay an additional \$60 expedited service fee to get it renewed in two to three weeks, if desired. If you plan to travel outside the U.S., you need a passport. Make sure your passport will not expire for at least six months after your trip is scheduled to end. Some countries also require passports to have one to two blank pages for entry.

Visas: If you're traveling to another country, you may need to apply for a tourist visa. This could require paying a visit, or sending your passport, to a foreign embassy or consulate in the U.S.

Application fees typically run from \$50 to \$200. Visit the U.S. Bureau of Consular Affairs to learn more.

TSA PreCheck and Global Entry: Travel Credit Reward Cards like the Chase Sapphire Preferred or Capital One card, give you up to a \$100 credit towards these programs. Confused about the two programs? Here's the difference: **TSA Precheck** (\$85) puts you in a faster security line at U.S. airports. **Global Entry** (\$100) includes TSA Precheck and adds expedited customs screening upon your return from international trips. These programs can help you zip through airport security lines.

Before you apply, give yourself a few weeks to fill out the online application and visit an enrollment center for fingerprinting and an ID check. You must already have a valid U.S. passport to apply for Global Entry, and you must participate in an interview at a designated enrollment center. Once approved, your status lasts five years.

LIFE'S
ESSENTIALS
FOUND HERE.

PACKING

Each adventure requires a different packing list. If you pack last minute, you can skip this section.

Traveler Tip: If you're a film nerd like me, don't forget your drone or GoPro at home! Follow this link to my Amazon store to grab the latest GoPro Hero 10 Black.



If you want to pack like a pro, I highly suggest to start thinking about it an advanced and this is for a few different reasons. The most important being that you don't want to forget anything, obviously.

The second, maybe you need to purchase something for your trip, and shipping delays happen, often. Am I right, FedEx?

Lastly, staying organized will save you time, money and headaches once you reach your destination.

**DOWNLOAD THE
ULTIMATE
PACKING LIST!**



Packing Cubes vs. Rolling: Which is best?

A packing cube set, like this set from [Travel Wise](#), can help you save almost as much space as folding. Plus, keep you significantly more organized. And this is why I love packing cubes. It makes my life so much easier on the road. Here is what I do. I pack my packing cubes and organize by clothing garment. So the basics like pants, shirts, bedtime outfits, etc. Fill in your shoes with items like socks and place them around the packing cubes, where the gaps are. Lastly, not everything needs a packing cube. You may want to lay thick sweaters or jackets flat.

Traveler Tip: If you stick a travel size fabric softener in one of your shoes, you can use it at your destination to get out any wrinkles and keep your clothes smelling fresh.

The Secret Packing Cube Hack

Once you have your [packing cubes](#), you may want to consider rolling garments and then placing them in the packing cubes. This way, **you get the best of both worlds**. The cubes keep your shirts organized and separate from your pants and the rolling technique allows you to fit more inside the cube. VIOLA!

The verdict: Rolling clothes takes up less space than using packing cubes. However, rolling may not be the most organized method. If you want to keep some delicate items wrinkle-free and stay organized without having to leave anything behind, opt for a combination of rolling and packing cubes.

7 DAY ITINERARY SAMPLE



LIVE THE "PURA VIDA" LIFESTYLE FOR ONE FULL WEEK

7 DAY CENTRAL COSTA RICA ROAD TRIP

Explore the heart of Costa Rica and all it has to offer. Live life "Pura Vida". Costa Rica is home to 12 climatic zones. The great variety in climates is mainly due to the geographical diversity. Use this to your advantage and have a plethora of activities and regions to explore.

Day 1 - Arrive in San Jose (SJO) and head to La Fortuna

Day 2 - Horseback Riding / La Fortuna Waterfall / Arenal Hot Springs

Day 3 - Arenal Rafting Adventure

Day 4 - Mistico Hanging Bridges Park / Drive to Monteverde / Coffee & Jungle Tour

Day 5 - Monteverde Cloud Forest

Day 6 - Zip Lining Adventure / Drive to San Jose (SJO)

Day 7 - Depart from San Jose (SJO)

TOUR SUMMARY

This tour brings you through the heart of Costa Rica while navigating three of the country's most popular destinations. San Jose, La Fortuna, Monteverde

CONTACT NICK@NAVIGATORNICK.COM FOR A CUSTOM ITINERARY

10 DAY ITINERARY SAMPLE



LIVE THE "PURA VIDA" LIFESTYLE FOR 10 FULL DAYS

10 DAY CENTRAL TO WEST COAST ROAD TRIP

Explore the heart of Costa Rica and all it has to offer. Live life "Pura Vida". Costa Rica is home to 12 climatic zones. The great variety in climates is mainly due to the geographical diversity. Use this to your advantage and have a plethora of activities and regions to explore.

Day 1 - Arrive in San Jose (SJO) and head to Catarrata del Torro

Day 2 - Explore Catarrata del Torro and spend the night

Day 3 - Drive to La Fortuna. Join a [Rafting Adventure](#) or go [Horseback Riding](#)

Day 4 - [Mistico Hanging Bridges Park](#) / Drive to Monteverde

Day 5 - [Monteverde Cloud Forest](#) / Coffee & Jungle Tour

Day 6 - [Monteverde Zip Lining Adventure](#)

Day 7 - Drive to Jaco Beach / Stop at the Crocodile Bridge

Day 8 - Beach Day @ Jaco beach

Day 9 - Beach Day @ Jaco Beach

Day 10 - Depart from San Jose (SJO)

TOUR SUMMARY

This tour brings you through the heart of Costa Rica while navigating three of the country's most popular destinations; San Jose, La Fortuna, Monteverde. Get a taste of the West Coast at Jaco Beach.

CONTACT NICK@NAVIGATORNICK.COM FOR A CUSTOM ITINERARY

14 DAY ITINERARY SAMPLE



LIVE THE "PURA VIDA" LIFESTYLE FOR 2 FULL WEEKS

14 DAY ULTIMATE COSTA RICA ROAD TRIP

Explore the heart of Costa Rica and all it has to offer. Live life "Pura Vida". Costa Rica is home to 12 climatic zones. The great variety in climates is mainly due to the geographical diversity. Use this to your advantage and have a plethora of activities and regions to explore.

Day 1 - Arrive in Liberia (LIR)

Day 2 - Beach Day @ Tamarindo Beach

Day 3 - ATV Tour Tamarindo

Day 4 - Drive to Monteverde / Coffee & Jungle Tour

Day 5 - Monteverde Cloud Forest

Day 6 - Monteverde Zip Lining Adventure

Day 7 - Drive to La Fortuna / Mistico Hanging Bridges Park

Day 8 - Arenal Rafting Adventure or Horseback Riding / La Fortuna Waterfall

Day 9 - Arenal Hot Springs

Day 10 - Drive to Manuel Antonio National Park

Day 11 - Wildlife Sanctuary @ Manuel Antonio National Park

Day 12 - Drive to Jaco Beach

Day 13 - Beach Day @ Jaco Beach

Day 14 - Depart from San Jose (SJO)

TOUR SUMMARY

This tour brings you through most of Costa Rica while navigating six of the countries most popular destinations; Tamarindo, La Fortuna, Monteverde, Manuel Antonio, Jaco Beach and San Jose.

CONTACT NICK@NAVIGATORNICK.COM FOR A CUSTOM ITINERARY

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Here are some useful contacts for your holiday in Costa Rica:

- Emergency: 911
- San Jose Police Station: +506 2222 2405
- Liberia Police Station: +506 2665 0609
- US Embassy: +506 2519 2000
- UE Embassy: +506 2519 2000
- UK Embassy: +506 2258 2025
- San Jose Costa Rica International Airport: +506 2437-2400
- Liberia Costa Rica International Airport: +506 2666 9600