

DISCOVERING COSTA RICA

DAY 1 FLY TO COSTA RICA - ARRIVAL IN COSTA RICA

Fly from the UK with an early morning departure. Arrive at the International Airport Juan Santamaría. You will be met by your tour representative and taken to your hotel. After your journey, you can relax and enjoy the swimming pool facilities of your hotel.

DAY 2 INBIO PARK AND BRITT COFFEE TOUR

After breakfast at the hotel we will head for Inbio Park, where we will get the chance to take trails through groups of plants from three ecosystems: Tropical Humid, Central Valley and Tropical Dry Forests. Also visit the butterfly garden, the lagoon and aquarium and see a presentation on Costa Rica's wild protected areas lights and sound. The visit is complemented with exhibition halls including multimedia and audiovisuals, where visitors learn about Costa Rica's biodiversity, as well as a series of important activities developed in the field for its conservation, scientific research, and sustainable use. The exhibits also show Costa Rica's efforts to conserve its biodiversity through the establishment of protected areas, such as national parks and biological reserves. INBioparque also offers restaurant, gift shop, coffee shop, information and documentation center, tourist information office, wheelchair and stroller's facilities and transportation. This afternoon we will take a Coffee Plantation Tour. This fun filled multi-media presentation, where professional actors guide you through all the stages of coffee production, observes the traditions and history of coffee and the very special way they package their 'passion'.

DAY 3 SAN JOSÉ - MANZANILLO

Today after breakfast we will drive from the hotel to Manzanillo town where your tour guide will walk you through the Wildlife Refuge's Trails, while giving you an extensive lesson on medicinal plants, their preparation and the amount required for different diseases. The hike takes you on a picturesque loop, first into the forest where you will see many different types of animals, then up to the coast line to enjoy breath taking views of the ocean from high cliffs.

DAY 4 KAYAKING & SNORKELLING - PUERTO VIEJO DE SARAPIQUÍ

This morning we will get a kayak and receive basic instructions, before paddling to Manzanillo. After a 20-minute journey, you will arrive at the beach of Manzanillo and will swim and explore the coral area. Your guide will take you to the best places so you can experience the magical underwater garden. There will be time to relax on the beach before getting back into the kayaks and paddling back to Almonds and Corals.

In the afternoon we will drive through Siquirres and Guápiles to Puerto Viejo de Sarapiquí, and in the evening dinner will be at La Quinta de Sarapiquí.

DAY 5 BIOLOGICAL STATION LA SELVA - BOAT TOUR ON THE SARAPIQUÍ RIVER - PINEAPPLE PLANTATION – LA FORTUNA

In the morning we will discover and learn about the biodiversity of the tropical rainforest at OTS La Selva Biological Station. This afternoon we will get ready to enjoy a relaxing

boat ride on the Sarapiquí River, just sit back and observe the wildlife that is around you. The monkeys, iguanas, crocodiles, and the variety of birds will allow you to relax and concentrate on the scenery. During the boat ride our guide will also explain to us about life style of the friendly people that live at the river margins. Later on in the evening we will visit a pineapple plantation and learn about how the tropical pineapple is harvested, produced and exported.

DAY 6 ARENAL HANGING BRIDGES - ARENAL VOLCANO & NATIONAL PARK – TABACÓN HOT SPRINGS

Today we will visit the new attraction of the Hanging Bridges of the Arenal consists of a crossing on 15 bridges with a length between 5 and 100 metres that cross the tropical humid forest and a circuit of 3 Km of paths.

This afternoon you will be taken to Arenal Volcano, which has been active since 1968. It constantly ejects gasses, water fumaroles and explosions with pyroclastic material emissions. It is one of the most active volcanoes in the world, and its classic cone shape and constant activity, filling the sky with ash and red hot lava, will stun you from miles away. In the evening we continue to Tabacón where you will enjoy the beauty and soothing feeling of the hot springs, waterfalls, 12 mineral pools and indoor jacuzzi. Each pool varies in temperature and depth, and some vary in mineral count.

DAY 7 VENADO CAVES

In the morning we make a journey to the Venado Caves, formed during the Miocene period 15 to 20 million years ago. The Guatusos aborigines discovered the caves. Limestone rocks, stalactites, stalagmites and corals, form most of the caves and the whimsical stone formations were sculpted by an underground river. During the walk through the cave system, we will find marine fossils, and also bats, spiders and crickets. We will also walk through the river and waterfalls from the upper part of the cave during our exploration. On our return from the caves, we depart for Monteverde.

DAY 8 LA FORTUNA - MONTEVERDE CLOUD FOREST & HUMMINGBIRD GALLERY - FROG POND

Today we depart from Las Cabañitas and travel around the Arenal Lake to Monteverde.

In the afternoon the group will visit the Monteverde Cloud Forest, with thousands of species of plants, insects, frogs, snakes and great bird watching. A visit to a Cheese Factory, where every type of cheese from Baby Swiss to Gouda, Provolone and Spreads are made and to the Hummingbird Gallery is scheduled.

In the afternoon we will go to visit the frog pond with over 20 species of amphibians such as the colorful poison arrow frog, the large marine toad and the famous red-eyed tree frog.

DAY 9 BUTTERFLY GARDEN – SNAKE EXHIBITION – NIGHT WALK

Today we will visit The Butterfly Farm located in the scenic Tilaran Mountains of Costa Rica has incredible views of the cloud forest and the Gulf of Nicoya. The focus of the project here is environmental education, and thousands of butterfly enthusiasts each year visit this Nature Center and four enclosed butterfly gardens. This busy day will allow you to explore the beauty of Monteverde and see many of the things it is famous for.

This marvelous amphibian and reptile zoo is a perfect place to learn about the fauna of Costa Rica. With modern and spacious facilities, it creates a natural environment for the animals and at the same time offers high comfort and security to the visitors. Here you can appreciate more than 40 species of snakes, poisonous snakes, reptiles, lizards, spiders, iguanas, amphibians, and land-turtles. Please, if you take pictures do not use a flashlight, because some amphibians like the small poisonous frogs may become blind and die.

DAYS 10/11 MONTEVERDE - SAN JOSÉ – FLIGHT DEPARTURE

Today we will be transferred to San Jose by coach to the International airport. On arrival we shall catch an overnight flight back to the UK.