

Discovering Costa Rica – 11 Days

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 Natura Park

We will transfer this morning to Puerto Viejo de Talamanca, near the Gandoca Manzanillo Wildlife Refuge. After lunch we will drive from the hotel to Manzanillo 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 coastline to enjoy breath-taking views of the ocean from high cliffs.

Day 4 Crazy Monkey Canopy Ride Or Kayaking - Drive To Puerto Viejo De Sarapiquí **Option 1 Crazy Monkey Canopy Ride**

This morning we will experience the jungle from the top of the trees, on a Crazy Monkey Canopy Ride, a system of ten platforms, with cables stretching from platform to platform throughout the forest. We will move from tree to tree and platform to platform using steel cables with pulleys and a safety harness. The tour will offer breathtaking views of every aspect of the forest and its wildlife, while gliding through the forest and experiencing the adventure of a lifetime, ending on the golden sandy beach. You will see where the jungle truly meets the ocean!

Option 2 Kayaking and swimming

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.

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 La Selva Biological Station. INBioparque is an amazing theme park that offers an interactive experience with Nature. Here you will see groupings of plants and trees from the tropical rainforest, Central Valley forest and species from the dry tropical forest and wetlands.. Around the lagoon you can enjoy the butterfly garden and the aquarium and in Wildlife Stations you can see: boas, frogs, tarantulas, ants and turtles.

This afternoon we will 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 about the lifestyle of the friendly people that live by the riverside.

Later on in the evening we will visit a pineapple plantation and learn about how the tropical pineapple is harvested, produced and exported. Drive to La Fortuna for overnight.

Day 6 Sky Walk Or Sky Tram - Arenal Volcano & Nat Park – Tabacón Hot Springs **Option 1 Sky Walk**

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

Option 2 Sky Tram (& Trek)

The tour begins with an Aerial Tram ride – cable-cars with open carriages will whisk us up the northern slopes of the Cordillera de Tilaran to the lookout point at 4,250 feet. From here you will have an amazing view of Lake Arenal and the volcano. Descend by the Tram or Sky Trek...this is a system of zip lines ranging from mountain to mountain, which together have a distance of 2.5 miles of linear cable. The tour gives you the opportunity to fly through a cable and have a unique experience of adventure and adrenaline at speeds up to 40 miles per hour with distances ranging up to 2500 feet and heights of 524 feet. In addition the tour offers 5 observation towers that exceed the cloud forest treetops providing a panoramic view.

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 area where you will enjoy the beauty and soothing feeling of the hot springs and waterfalls.

Day 7 Venado Caves, Horse Riding Or Cano Negro Boat Trip - Monteverde **Option 1 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. The tour includes: transportation, Guide, torch, a surgical mask, and a bath after the trip, the rental of Wellingtons is extra. After the tour, you then travel to Monteverde.

Option 2 Horse Riding

Travel the old-fashioned way... We take a very scenic & safe trail along Lake Arenal – get glimpses of the famous and active Arenal Volcano and ride beside lush and beautiful rainforest while trying to spot toucans, sloths, & other tropical creatures. Our **horseback ride** is recommended for horse lovers and adventurers of all levels, Monteczuma Oropendolas, monkeys, the elusive "paca" and other tropical animal can be seen during the tour. Please let us know your level of riding ability from novice to expert and your approximate weight and height, so we can properly fit you for your horse. The tour includes: transportation to the Lake Arenal dam, boat ride on Lake Arenal to the town of El Castillo and then a beautiful day riding along Lake Arenal. You then travel by bus to Monteverde.

Option 3 Cano Negro Boat Tour

The Caño Negro Wildlife Refuge is an area of lakes and swampy land formed from alluvial sedimentation. In this refuge there are five main habitats. The vegetation on the edges of the lake and along the channels is mainly herbaceous. The birdlife is rich and varied. Some of the most abundant or note-worthy aquatic birds are the anhinga, roseate spoonbill, white ibis, jacana, woodstork, black-bellied tree duck and the jabiru. This refuge holds the only permanent population of Nicaraguan grackle, an endemic bird of the basin of Nicaragua Lake. The mammals and reptiles living in this area include the puma, jaguar, ocelot, tapir and cayman, which is very common in the channels. Caño Negro is situated on the Los Guatusos plain near the border with Nicaragua. You then travel by bus to Monteverde.

Day 8 Monteverde Cloud Forest – Sky Walk Or Sky Trek

Today the group will tour the Monteverde Cloud Forest, with thousands of species of plants, insects, frogs, snakes and great bird watching. We begin the day with a Trail Walk, where we will view the diverse selection of flora and fauna as the reserve is home to six different vegetation communities, over 100 species of mammals, 400 species of birds, 120 species of amphibians and reptiles, and 2,500 species of plants (among them 500 different kinds of orchids).

Option 1 Sky Walk

Sky Walk is a spectacular combination of suspension bridges with easy and well-maintained walking trails built in the Monteverde Cloud Forest and above the tropical forest canopy, which affords visitors a view previously reserved for birds and monkeys. The Sky Walk tour includes 2.5 kilometers of trails and 5 suspended bridges across deep canyons at the level of the treetops. The longest bridge is about 243 meters (800 feet) in length. Anybody that can walk for 2 hours can live this experience. There is **no** strenuous climb or mud and the trails are very well maintained.

Option 2 Sky Trek

Sky Trek is a system of trails, suspension bridges, and zip lines that offers visitors the opportunity to observe, and appreciate tropical vegetation from different vantage points, above the rain forest canopy. Sky Trek is similar, in a way, to other rain forest canopy tours in Costa Rica, but incorporates some significant differences, such as being of larger scale, with more zip lines and platforms, longer trails, and suspension bridges. The Sky Trek zip line requires no special athletic abilities. All you need to know how to do is sit down - gravity and the guides do the rest for you. The guides will gear you up and get you started from each platform.

In the late afternoon we will 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 Monteverde Butterfly Garden – Snake Exhibition

Today we will visit The Butterfly Farm located in the scenic Tilaran Mountains, which 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 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..

Day 10 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.

Day 11 Arrive UK

Arrive back in the UK today via Madrid.