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COSTA RICA: FROM SEA TO MOUNTAINS

Trip Summary

HIGHLIGHTS

- Kayaking through the jungle canals and lagoons of Tortuguero National Park
- Rafting through the rainforest on the Sarapiquí River
- Soaking in the hot springs in Arenal
- Learning about the unique Cloud Forest Ecosystem
- Soaring through the air on a zipline
- Enjoying Costa Rican cuisine and hospitality

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TRIP AT A GLANCE

Location:	San Jose, Costa Rica
Activities:	Multisport
Arrive:	Arrive before 3:30PM on Day 1 at the San Jose airport
Depart:	You are free to leave anytime on the last day. The included shuttle will have you to the airport by 10AM.

Trip Overview

Costa Rica, a pioneer in the field of ecotourism, is known both for the diversity of its ecosystems and for the government's efforts to protect those ecosystems in National Parks. In fact, Costa Rica has managed to protect a larger proportion of its land than any other country in the world, with 25% receiving some form of protection. This is a country of many unique ecosystems: rainforests, beaches, jungles, and even snow capped mountains. Costa Rica's flora and fauna, particularly birds and flowers, are amazingly rich. In this land of jewels, we have picked out the three best places that you have to visit to appreciate just how diverse this country is. After arriving in San Jose we travel to Tortuguero National Park with its system of jungle canals on one side and the Atlantic Coast on the other. We then visit the Arenal area, best known for its volcano and hot springs. Finally we end in the lush cloud forest of Monteverde. We haven't seen it all, but in 10 days we've seen a ton! Maximum group size: 12

Rating

This trip is rated 1 and is designed for active women who want to immerse themselves in the natural history of this fascinating country. While the trip is active, none of the activities are strenuous and all are designed to give you different perspectives on the flora and fauna. **Rating:**  2 3 4 5

What's Included

- A naturalist Costa Rican guide and an AGC guide (If trip is not full, there may not be an AGC guide)
- Nine nights double occupancy lodging
- All activities specified on the itinerary
- Private transportation within Costa Rica
- All meals from dinner the first night through breakfast the last
- Airport transfer to and from San Jose (on day of arrival and departure at scheduled times)
- Gratuities for drivers and incidental guides

Not included: Airfare to San Jose, guide gratuities, Costa Rica departure taxes (\$29 - usually included in your airfare), alcoholic beverages, travel insurance

OUR ITINERARY

Below is the itinerary we have planned for the trip. As is true on any adventure travel trip, plans for any specific day may be modified due to weather considerations, unforeseen circumstances, new opportunities, and group interests.

DAY 1

Pura vida! It's time to shake off those winter blues and revel in the wonders of the tropics. Plan to arrive in San Jose, Costa Rica and be through customs by 4 PM local time. Upon arrival you will be welcomed by our team of friendly leaders; our AGC guide and local partner. From the airport, we'll drive 30 minutes to our hotel in the bustling Capital. During our group orientation at 5:30 PM we'll learn more about this incredible country that hosts more than 5% of the world's biodiversity and then we'll learn about the delicious cuisine over a shared group dinner. Overnight at the Radisson. (D)

DAY 2

Costa Rica's 801 miles of stunning coastline touch both the Pacific and the Caribbean, and we'll drive approximately 2 hours to the Caribbean side to check out Tortuguero National Park - our home away from home for the next few days. On the way, we'll drive through Braulio Carrillo National Park and then on to Caño Blanco for a scenic boat ride to our hotel. Once we get settled in, we'll learn some kayaking basics and then explore the serene waterways to spot wildlife. Here you can bask in the quiet river tributaries while on the lookout for monkeys, sloths and an abundance of birds like the red-lored parrots, hummingbirds, herons, yellow-billed caciques and more! Overnight at Pachira Lodge or similar. (B, L, D)

DAY 3

This morning, we will board a small private boat with a local naturalist and venture deep into the canals of the park to explore the extensive network of freshwater creeks and lagoons. These lush areas are replete with seven species of river turtles, Spectacled Caiman, Southern River Otters, a number of crustaceans, and over 50 species of freshwater fish. If we are lucky, we might spot an endangered West Indian Manatee! In the afternoon we'll stretch our legs with an easy walk on a nature trail to look for more wildlife. The rest of the day is free; you can relax at the swimming pool or hang out at the beach. Overnight at Pachira Lodge or similar (B, L, D)

DAY 4

Get one last stroll on the beach if you desire before we continue back inland by boat and private bus. Our landing spot today is the Sarapiquí Rainforest, which has been described as "an adventure seeker's dream destination." Sarapiquí is one of the few remaining areas in Costa Rica where the endangered Green Macaw lives. As one of the last areas of primary rainforest in Costa Rica, Sarapiquí houses over half of the country's total species of birds. The species diversity is astounding, with more than 1,850 plants, 448 birds, 70 species of bat and five of Costa Rica's six felines. This region is also a major agricultural producer because the land is very fertile due to the consistent flows of the Rio Sarapiquí and the mild year-round climate. On the drive we'll see fields of coffee, cardamom, cacao, corn and banana with a stop at the Pierrella Ecological Butterfly Garden where we'll take a tour and have a delicious lunch. Then we'll continue on to our lodging for the night at Selva Verde. Overnight at Ara Ambigua Lodge or similar. (B, L, D)

DAY 5

Buckle up your lifejacket and grab your paddle, we are going white water rafting on the Sarapiquí River! The Sarapiquí River is perfect for first time paddlers looking for a safe adventure with Class II and III rapids (depending on water levels and recent rainfall). We'll float past dense trees and abundant wildlife, alternating paddling through calm waters and paddling through fun liquid "mini roller-coasters." After lunch we will continue traveling northwest for approximately an hour to Arenal Volcano, one of the most notable land features of Costa Rica. This impressive volcano is located within the nearly 30,000 acre National Park that serves to protect it. Though the volcano is estimated to be 3,000 years old, it is considered "young" geologically. Arenal began its last and current period of activity in 1968 but has been "sleeping" since 2010 with decreased lava flow and seismic activity. Our hotel for the following 2 nights is located right in front of the volcano, with an unparalleled view of the mountain. Rejuvenate your paddling muscles with a nice long soak in the healing waters of our hotel's natural hot springs. Overnight at Los Lagos hotel. (B, L, D)

DAY 6

Another beautiful day in the rainforest! Today we dive deeper into the flora and fauna of our surroundings on a guided nature walk over the famous Mistico Hanging Bridges. Extending nearly two miles in length when added together, the 14 hanging bridges offer a unique glimpse into the wildlife that inhabit the canopy of the rainforest. We'll see birds like the White Hawk and the Great Curassow among others. Did you know that Costa Rica is considered a "hummingbird capital" because there are 52 unique species of hummingbirds here? This afternoon we can rest and relax in the hot springs. Overnight at Los Lagos hotel. (B, L, D)

DAY 7

We start the day by boating across Lake Arenal, the largest lake in Costa Rica. It was enlarged to its present size in 1979 as part of a hydroelectric project to bring electricity to rural areas. There are two primary species of fish in Lake Arenal, machaca and bass. The ecosystem that encompasses the lake includes over 120 mammals, including jaguar, tapir and quetzal. Get your cameras ready for absolutely picturesque views of the volcano as we cruise across the lake in an open air boat! We will be picked up by the bus on the other side of the lake and continue on to our afternoon hiking point. (1.5 hours drive) The Cloud Forests of Monteverde Costa Rica are often described as Mother Nature's playground, and is home to a stunning diversity of plant life. The tropical science center of Monteverde's Cloud Forest Biological Reserve was the first private area for the conservation of wildlife in Costa Rica and hosts half of all the wildlife in the country and where we will continue to learn about the natural ecosystems. After dinner we'll venture out again for a nocturnal tour to meet the other half of Costa Ricans diverse animal populations. Overnight Monteverde. (B, L, D)

DAY 8

Today we take another guided walk through the cloud forest and then get ready for adrenaline in the afternoon as we fly between trees in harnesses! Unleash your inner Tarzan as we soar through the canopy, eye level with the birds we have been admiring all week. The tour has 14 ziplines, 1 rappel and 1 Tarzan swing. Overnight: Monteverde (B, L, D)

DAY 9

The best part of waking up is learning about the coffee in your cup! This morning we will take a tour of an organic farm. We will see where coffee, sugar cane, bananas, tubers, oranges and more are grown and learn about the entire coffee production process from pod to cup. We'll even get to see how a "trapiche" or traditional sugarcane press works. After a delicious lunch in a local restaurant, we will drive back to San Jose. Tonight we will toast to our incredible adventure and the new friends we've made over a celebratory dinner. Overnight at Radisson San Jose (B, L, D)

DAY 10

Adios! Today we bid farewell to the tropics and head home. We will be transferred as a group to the international airport at 9 AM and you can plan to leave any time after 11 AM. (B)

ADDITIONAL TRIP INFORMATION

Getting There

Plan to fly into Juan Santamaria International Airport (SJO). A group shuttle will be arranged and the shuttle driver will meet you outside the airport at 4PM for the 30-minute transfer to our hotel. If you are arriving earlier, we can either arrange a shuttle for you for an additional fee or you can take a taxi (about \$30).

Our official meeting time is **5:30 PM** in the lobby of the [Radisson Hotel](#). If you would like assistance with airfare, we recommend contacting our AirDesk Partner, [Exito Travel](#). Start by submitting this [form](#). Just fill in your dates and destinations, including any additional notes about preferred carriers, class of service, possible stopovers, etc., and an agent will typically respond via email within a few hours. If you prefer to call, the number is 800-655-4053; be sure to tell them you are traveling with Adventures in Good Company.

Please note: Exito charges a one-time, non-refundable processing fee of \$35 per passenger.

Accommodations

We are staying at a variety of accommodations, from a well-situated and modern hotel in downtown San Jose to smaller family owned lodges in other places. Every place we stay is clean and comfortable, with double-occupancy rooms and ensuite bathrooms. Four single rooms are available for an additional cost.

Travel Insurance

We recommend that you purchase a travel protection plan to help protect you and your travel investment against the unexpected. For your convenience, we offer travel protection through Travelex Insurance Services. For more information on the available plans or to enroll, visit www.travelexinsurance.com or call 1-800-228-9792 and reference location number 06-0331.

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CANCELLATION POLICY

Cancellation charges reflect the many expenses Adventures in Good Company cannot recover if you cancel, even if you must do so due to illness, injury, or personal emergencies. These fees are not meant to be punitive. The charges made reflect the expenses Adventures in Good Company has incurred in administering your reservation and planning for your participation. We recognize that the majority of those who cancel their reservations do so out of necessity. Please note that we do not make any refunds for any unused portion of your trip, not arriving, arriving late, or leaving the trip early.

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