



*College Study
Tours*

**COSTA RICA
¡PURA VIDA!**

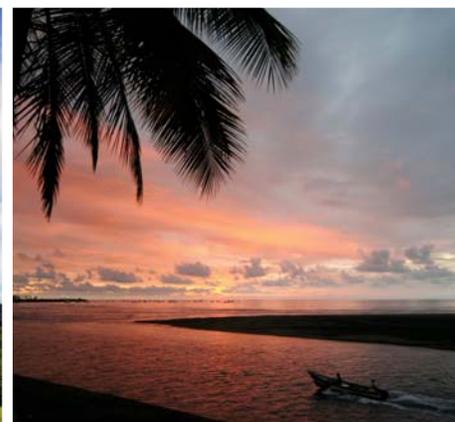
COSTA RICA | ¡PURA VIDA!

As any smiling local will tell you, Pura Vida is what life is all about in Costa Rica, a country so refreshingly at peace that it constitutionally abolished its military in 1949. You'll discover its intoxicatingly upbeat spirit courses fast and full through the breadth of "Tico" culture on a comprehensive coast-to-coast adventure.

Expect to get your hands (and feet, and clothes) dirty as you board canal boats, kayaks, rafts and ziplines to get an up-close look at ever-

changing landscapes and unparalleled animal and plant life. Bring sturdy shoes and a healthy sense of adventure, because discovering all that Costa Rica has to offer means getting out of the bus and venturing head-on into the unknown.

By the time you reach Guanacaste, don't be surprised if you're the one smiling, and ready to share Pura Vida with the uninitiated back home.



Day 1: Fly to Costa Rica

Arrive in San José: Touch down in San José, the Costa Rican capital. Depending on your arrival time, you may have free time to settle in and explore the city on your own.

Day 2: San José | Tortuguero

Braulio Carrillo National Park: Experience the fascinating and beautiful Braulio Carrillo National Park. Founded in 1978, this park was built to preserve the wildlife of the area, from jaguars and ocelots to quetzals and eagles. Here you can hop on an aerial tram that takes you through the dense overhanging flora. From this elevation you'll take in dramatic views of nearby valleys and volcano craters. Explore miles of hiking trails that weave through the park and wander up and down the sloping terrain, from the misty peaks to the beaches below.

Banana plantation: Visit a banana plantation and learn how this Costa Rican staple is harvested and distributed before continuing to Tortuguero.

Boat ride to Tortuguero: Founded in the 1930s by Colombians exporting sea turtles and coconuts, Tortuguero Village today is accessible only by boat and home to just 700 residents. Begin your visit with free time in Tortuguero Village, gateway to the Tortuguero National Park.

Day 3: Tortuguero

Tortuguero National Park: Visit Tortuguero National Park—the most important Caribbean breeding ground for the green sea turtles, who have lived here for more than 100 million years. Next, explore the twists and turns of the Tortuguero Canals on a boat excursion. High rainfall and convergence of freshwater and the Caribbean sea make the beaches, canals, lagoons and wetlands of Tortuguero areas of exceptional biodiversity. See if you can spot a howler monkey, toucan or maybe even a caiman.

Day 4: Sarapiquí

Travel to Sarapiquí: Make your way to Sarapiquí, a county in the Heredia province known for its lush rainforests, outdoor activities and incredible array of flora and fauna. Keep a lookout for the endangered Green Macaw, who makes its home here.

➦ **Sarapiquí canopy tour:** See the rainforest like never before on your canopy tour. Strap into your safety harness and glide from platform to platform through the treetop greenery. As you ride down a zip-line, you'll get a bird's eye view of the breathtaking world around you. If you're lucky, you can spot some of the area's indigenous wildlife, including monkeys, caymans, crocodiles and iguanas. Those who opt not to participate in the canopy tour will enjoy free time in Sarapiquí.

Day 5: Arenal

➦ **Whitewater rafting:** Join an optional whitewater rafting excursion. Take in Arenal's beautiful scenery when you traverse quieter river segments. Then, feel the spray of the rapids as you paddle your way through. Those who do not participate will enjoy free time in Sarapiquí.

Travel to Arenal: As you continue to Arenal, watch for the tremendous cone that emerges from the green hills of Alajuela—this is the mile-high Arenal Volcano. Overlooking the San Carlos plain and the Pacific lowlands, the Arenal Volcano has been active for the past 7,000 years.

Hot springs: Take a dip in the area's relaxing hot springs. These pools are naturally heated by thermal energy from the nearby volcano.

Day 6: Arenal

Kayak on Lake Arenal: The Arenal Volcano serves as watershed for Lake Arenal, which you'll see up-close on a kayaking excursion. Glide across the rippling blue water to hidden coves and lagoons. Be sure to keep an eye to the sky—more than 400 species of bird fly overhead here.

Hike to La Fortuna Waterfall: This morning, lace up your walking shoes and hike through thick forest vegetation to the spectacular La Fortuna Waterfall. Surrounded by tall, green cliffs, this 200-foot cascade churns the aqua pool below.

Day 7: Guanacaste

Rincón de la Vieja National Park: This morning, along the way to Guanacaste, you'll explore Rincón de la Vieja National Park and learn about the area's remarkable array of plant and animal life. Located high in the mountains, this rain and cloud forest boasts numerous geothermal hot springs. The highlight is the Blue Lagoon; its color and name come from the minerals in the stones beneath the lagoon, which is fed by a giant waterfall.

Guanacaste: As you arrive in Guanacaste, take in the craggy bluffs cloaked in forests that stretch tall above you. Along these roads you're bound to encounter local cattle ranchers driving oxen carts farther inland.

Day 8: Guanacaste

Free day at the beach: An ideal setting for divers, surfers and boaters, Guanacaste boasts miles of beaches alongside the glimmering emerald Pacific. Feel your toes in the sand as you experience firsthand the natural wonderland of the region during today's beach visit.

Day 9: Depart for home

Transfer to the airport and check in for your return flight home.

INCLUDED ON TOUR:

 Round-trip flights on major carriers

 Full-time Tour Director

 Land transportation

 Hotels with private bathrooms

 3 meals daily on Days 2-8; local dinner on Day 1 and light breakfast on Day 9

 **Sightseeing tours**
Comprehensive sightseeing of natural attractions

 **Entrances**
Tortuguero canals; Hot springs; Kayaking; La Fortuna Waterfall; Rincón de la Vieja National Park

➦ **Optional**
Sarapiquí Canopy Tour; Whitewater rafting

— the easiest ways to —

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