



*College Study
Tours*

**ENVIRONMENT &
CULTURE IN COSTA RICA**

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The word is out on Costa Rica, and still there's nothing quite like the rainforests of the "Rich Coast" to get the adrenaline pumping.

At its heart, the Central American country boasts a landscape as raw and epic as Jurassic Park—as well as nearly 5 percent of the biodiversity on the planet. Discover how fragile these endangered ecosystems are as you travel through several different rainforest preserves and unearth dazzling displays of color and sound, with a

focus on conservation. Step out of the lush jungle and into the aromatic fields of a coffee plantation, where you'll meet the farmers who have perfected a process worthy of most of the world's morning cup.

Digest it all—plus delicious tamales and chorreadas—as you uncover the hidden route to La Fortuna Waterfall and otherworldly Poás Volcano.



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 get to know your group.

Day 2: San José | Arenal

INBioparque: Discover a world of biological diversity on your visit to this natural park and research station, created by the National Institute of Biodiversity. Get an up-close look into the lives of tarantulas, frogs and bees in the permanent exhibits. Then, stretch your legs and wander the park's three different ecosystem trails. Venture to the pond to check out the freshwater flora and fauna. Thousands of colorful paper-thin wings flutter around you in the butterfly garden—see if you can spot Costa Rica's native species. Stop by the Ecological Tourism Office before you leave INBioparque for further information on conservation practices and protected wildlife regions.

Poás Volcano: Visit the Poás Volcano, one of the largest active volcanoes in Costa Rica.

Travel to Arenal: As you continue to the Arenal region, watch for the tremendous cone that emerges from the green hills of Alajuela—this is the mile-high Arenal Volcano.

Hot springs: Enjoy the nearby thermal hot springs. Relax as you dip your toes in these naturally heated pools.

Day 3: Los Chiles | Arenal

Travel to Los Chiles: Make your way to Los Chiles, a bustling community only a few miles from the Nicaraguan border and overflowing in Costa Rica's trademark biological splendor.

Boat tour of Caño Negro Wildlife Refuge: Hop on board a fully equipped boat and explore the wetlands of Caño Negro Wildlife Refuge with an expert guide. As you navigate Lake Caño Negro, you may have a chance to meet a long list of rare and endangered animals that have made the refuge their home—including waterfowl, cougars, jaguars, ocelots and several species of monkey.

Return to Arenal: After a full day, head south back to Arenal for the night.

Day 4: Arenal | Monteverde

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

Travel to Monteverde: Make your way to Monteverde. Situated near the Continental Divide, the Monteverde (Green Mountain) region contains a spectacular range of flora and fauna in six distinct ecological zones.

Day 5: Monteverde

Santa Elena Cloud Forest: Explore the greenery of the community-run Santa Elena Cloud Forest on your canopy tour. You'll view rare orchids and the elusive quetzal birds that thrive in the perpetual soft mist. At this altitude, you'll literally walk through clouds! Leave a positive mark on the Earth when you plant a tree with your group in the EF reserve. Then, attend a lecture at the Santa Elena Institute and learn about their mission to promote environmentally-conscious development practices and help protect area wildlife.

Day 6: Central Pacific Coast

Travel to the Central Pacific Coast: Head to Costa Rica's Central Pacific Coast, where the beautiful scenery and exotic wildlife attract visitors from around the world. The area is especially popular with outdoor enthusiasts.

Day 7: Central Pacific Coast

Manuel Antonio National Park: Get ready for an adventure as you journey to Manuel Antonio National Park, one of the most popular national parks in Costa Rica. Founded in 1972, the park offers visitors plenty to see and do. Kick off your shoes and stand on white sand beaches, where you can sometimes spot dolphins and migrating whales just off the coast. Dwelling within the coral reefs is an abundant and diverse array of marine life. Take some time to check out the lush jungle greenery, which includes lagoons and mangrove swamps.

Day 8: Sarchí | San José

Sarchí: Browse colorful local markets today in Sarchí. The city is a major crafts center, and famous for its brightly painted ox carts, or *carretas*, typically covered in elaborate designs.

Coffee plantation: Visit the estate of a Costa Rican coffee plantation. Sip on samples and learn how these beverages are produced before continuing to San José for the night.

Day 9: Depart for home

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

2-DAY TOUR EXTENSION

Day 9: San José

Whitewater rafting: Use teamwork to navigate your course through the free-flowing waters of the Sarapiquí River rapids, all while admiring the lush Costa Rican scenery passing by.

Day 10: Depart for home

Transfer to the airport, where you'll check in for your return flight home.

INCLUDED ON TOUR:

-  Round-trip flights on major carriers
-  Full-time Tour Director
-  Land and water transportation
-  Hotels with private bathrooms
-  3 meals daily Days 2-8; local dinner on Day 1 and light breakfast on Day 9; *With extension: 3 meals on Day 9 and light breakfast on Day 10*
-  **Sightseeing tours**
Comprehensive sightseeing of natural attractions
-  **Entrances**
INBioparque; Poás Volcano; Hot springs; Santa Elena Cloud Forest; Canopy tour; Manuel Antonio National Park; Coffee plantation; *With extension: Whitewater rafting in the Sarapiquí River*
-  **Experiential learning**
Tree planting in Monteverde; Santa Elena Institute lecture

— the easiest ways to —

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