

## Flavors of Costa Rica Cultural Experience

San Jose/ Arenal/Monteverde/Guanacaste  
9 DAYS / 8 NIGHTS Guided Vacations 2024

Day by day Itinerary

### **SAN JOSÉ**

#### **Day 1: Arrival**

Arrival and transfer from the international airport to the chosen hotel.

*CAT services: A/C transportation, airport meets and greet.  
Overnight at San Jose Hotel*

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### **ARENAL**

#### **Day 2: Transfer to La Fortuna, Arenal Volcano Hike and Hot Springs.**

Pickup time: 8.00 am

We will start our trip driving north on the Pan American highway over rolling hills of sugar cane and coffee plantations. Inevitably we must make a stop in the famous town of Sarchí, with international fame; it has earned the name of the birthplace of Costa Rica's Artisans. As we continue our trip we will go through diverse plantations with agricultural products, ornamental plants and cattle ranches until we arrive to La Fortuna, for lunch at a cozy restaurant. Later, we will enjoy the most extraordinary view of the Arenal Volcano on a gentle hike of approximately 1 ½ hours along the base of this marvelous wonder of nature.

After all this excitement nothing better than relaxing at Paradise Hot Springs where you will be able to enjoy a variety of thermal pools and a delicious dinner.

*Breakfast: at Hotel. Lunch: on tour. Dinner: at Paradise Hot Springs  
CAT services: A/C transportation, tour guide, entrance to Hot Springs and national park.  
Overnight at Arenal Hotel*

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### **ARENAL**

**Day 3: Cook Like a Costarican**

**Pickup time: 4:00 PM**

There is something special about having an authentic experience while traveling. Cultures identify themselves through their cuisine and Costa Ricans are no different -- and it's not just "rice and beans..." We invite you to have a delightful, local-style meal and enjoy what may be your most-memorable meal in Costa Rica! You'll learn about Costa Rican food and local agricultural products such as yucca, tiquisque, mamón chino, sugar cane and other interesting local foods. We'll pick you up from your hotel and drive about 5 minutes to an exclusive, hidden out place next to the enchanting El Salto waterfall near downtown La Fortuna. Upon arrival to your Costa Rica Cooking Class, you'll learn about the garden and farm where the fresh cooking ingredients come from. You'll get an understanding of what it takes to get the food from the farm to the table! To get started, you'll try your hand and mixing up a delicious homemade tropical Costa Rican cocktail or jungle juice! You will then get ready to learn how to cook up some Tico-style "picadillos," tortillas and "guisados" for a delicious sit-down meal and plenty of captivating conversation!

*Breakfast: at Hotel. Dinner: on tour*  
*CAT services: A/C transportation, tour guide.*  
*Overnight at Arenal Hotel*

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**MONTEVERDE**

**Day 4: Transfer to the Monteverde Area**

**Pickup time: 8:00am**

After breakfast, we will continue our journey to the Monteverde Cloud Forest known for its biological reserve, Monteverde protects a large variety of endanger species, including amphibians, mammals and birds. On a spectacular drive of approximately 3 hours you will enjoy breathtaking views of Arenal Lake and the northern plains of Costa Rica: Our guide will be teaching you the importance of each habitat and the history of each town passing by. After checking at the hotel, you can relax or take an optional activity: Canopy Tour, sky walk, frog pond or Butterfly farm.

*Breakfast: at Hotel*  
*CAT services: A/C transportation, tour guide.*  
*Overnight at Monteverde Hotel*

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**MONTEVERDE**

**Day 5: Coffee and Chocolate Tour**

Pickup time: 8:00am

Discover the wonder of how chocolate and coffee are made. Explore a coffee plantation and plant your own coffee bean as you learn about how the beans are grown, harvested, and turned into coffee. Then, delight in a delicious demonstration of the chocolate-making process as the rich history of the cocoa plant is explained. Perfect for families, children, coffee-and-chocolate lovers, and anyone looking to spend a few hours engaging in the history and culture of these vital components of Costa Rican culture. The Don Juan Coffee and Chocolate tour is an absolute can't-miss tour while you're in Monteverde!

*Breakfast: at Hotel. Lunch: on tour*

*CAT services: A/C transportation, tour guide, Coffee Tour entrance fee.*

*Overnight at Monteverde Hotel*

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**GUANACASTE**

**Day 6: Transfer to Guanacaste**

Pickup time: 8:00am

After enjoying two of the best destinations in Costa Rica for nature lovers it is time to visit Guanacaste.

*Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner at hotel.*

*CAT services: A/C transportation, tour guide.*

*Overnight at Guanacaste Hotel (all inclusive)*

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**GUANACASTE**

**Day 7: El Viejo Wetlands Cultural Experience**

Pickup time: 7:30 am

Hacienda El Viejo is surrounded by sugarcane crops and the most important river in the Blue Zone of Costa Rica, Rio Tempisque. With a house of more than 150 years old and former home to presidents of both Costa Rica and Nicaragua.

**Cultural Tasting**

We begin the tour at the "Trapiche" (mill), where we can observe how an ox tied to a yoke makes a "needle" turn, so the cane can fit inside the mill, and this how the juice is obtained. As a part of the experience, we will taste slices of sugar cane and its juice,

“tapa de dulce” (raw sugar), and of course the sugar cane juice. After we try the sweetest thing, it’s time to go to a place that will immediately take us back to the ancient times of old ranches that belonged to families from Guanacaste; a space of culture and learning “La Casa del Sabanero”. We will taste the delicious traditional meal of Guanacaste, as we observe how the “tanelas”, “empanaditas”, and “rosquillas” are baked on a wood oven. All these are prepared with corn, just as our grandmas do! The women at “La Casa del Sabanero” will teach you how to make tortillas as all people do in Guanacaste! Finally, we will drink a delicious coffee or natural fruit juice.

### **Rum Experience by Sabandí**

Feel the contact with earth and our roots, prepare your senses as we experience the whole process of producing high quality Rum from our purest sugar cane. View the extracting and cooking of the sugar cane juice in an artisanal way, until you reach the

distiller where you will get the first liquors and highest purity. Our Rickhouse awaits your taste buds, which age and improve the flavors of our Sabandí Rum in its oak barrels. The aged Sabandí rum, distilled on premises, boasts its characteristics and differences with each sip. Enjoy the end of the tour with a delicious cocktail made with Sabandí Rum and the stunning views of our lagoon, Relax and enjoy the birds, and peacefulness of the most emblematic haciendas of the last century in the North Pacific of Costa Rica.

*Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner at hotel.*

*CAT services: A/C transportation, tour guide and entrance fee to El Viejo.*

*Overnight at Guanacaste Hotel (all inclusive)*

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## **GUANACASTE**

### **Day 8: At leisure**

Optional tours available *Overnight at Guanacaste (all inclusive)*

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## **GUANACASTE**

### **Day 09: Departure transfer to the Liberia International Airport**

Our guide will pick you up at the lobby of your hotel to transfer you to LIR International Airport. Make sure you have all your belongings with you.

## **Recommendations.**

### **What kinds of clothes should I bring?**

Pack light and bring comfortable clothing. T-shirts and shorts are acceptable in San José (during the day, if planning to go out in the evening slacks are highly recommended as some restaurants won't admit you in shorts or sandals). Loose-fitting long-sleeved shirts and pants are recommended if you want to avoid sun. Bring a large hat to block the sun from your face and neck. Pack a light sweater or jacket for the A/C of the bus might get cool. Sturdy sneakers or hiking boots are essential if you plan to do a lot of sightseeing and hiking. Waterproof hiking sandals or other footwear that lets your feet breathe are good for strolling about town, and also for beach walking, fording streams, and navigating the myriad mud holes you'll find on rain and cloud forest trails.

### **How is the weather in Costa Rica?**

The climate is idyllic. In the lowlands, which are dry in the Pacific Northwest and humid elsewhere, daytime temperatures range in the eighties to nineties F° (high twenties to mid-thirties C°). Usually in the seventies F° (low to mid-twenties C°) at middle elevations, the mercury can fall as low as the forties and fifties F° (five to mid-tens C°) at the top of the mountains. Costa Rica can be broadly categorized into four major climatic zones:

### **Language**

The official language is Spanish, although the tourist will find that English is widely spoken particularly in places such as hotels, travel agencies, banks, rental car companies, restaurants, etc.

### **Time**

In Costa Rica daylight savings time is not used, but in order to have an idea of the approximate time of this country, it can be related to the U.S. Eastern Standard Time:  
From October to April: Costa Rica is one hour behind Eastern Standard Time.  
From April to October: Costa Rica is two hours behind Eastern Standard Time

### **Electricity**

Is the same as in the U.S. 110 volts., 60 cycles.

### **Credit cards**

All major credit cards are accepted in almost all hotels, stores, restaurants and car rental agencies. Outside San Jose and in some places the tourist should be prepared to pay in local currency; especially if the store, hotel, etc. is planning to include a service charge fee for the use of the credit card.

### **Policies and payments**

All tours must be prepaid 1 month prior arrival. You can wire the funds to our bank in Miami or pay with credit card. In case of credit card payment there is a service charge of 4% and banks in Costa Rica, in order to protect the customer, requires a "signature on file form" with a copy of both sides of the credit card.

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### **INSURANCE:**

Our passengers, while transported in vehicles owned by CENTRAL AMERICAN TOURS, are covered by insurance from OCEANICA.

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### **RESPONSIBILITY:**

CENTRAL AMERICAN TOURS as a recognized tour company, acts only as an agent for the passenger in regard to travel, whether by car, motor coach, railroad, boat or plane and assumes no liability during such travel for injury damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity which may be occasioned whether by reason or defect in any vehicle or for any reason whatsoever, or through the acts of default of any company or person engaged in covering the passenger or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. CENTRAL AMERICAN TOURS cannot be held responsible for losses or additional expenses due to delay, hotel or airline irregularities, sickness, weather or any other causes. CENTRAL AMERICAN TOURS assumes no liability for the loss of personal effects or baggage. The right is reserved to cancel or change any tours, schedules and rates and to cancel or substitute stops on any tour without notice, and to use the services of affiliated companies as deemed necessary.

### **NOTE:**

When other individuals or companies are used to provide services, their insurance payment and cancellations policies will apply.