



Vacation Highlights

TORTUGUERO NATIONAL PARK Guided cruise through the canals to view wildlife; guided walk through the rainforest

SARAPIQUI Tour a working pineapple plantation

TILAJARI RESORT Tilajari Rainforest Reserve; visit the Butterfly Garden, Ecotermals Hot Springs, and Arenal Volcano

MONTEVERDE Visit the Sky Walk hanging bridges; frog pond; Santa Elena Cloud Forest; Trapiche Farm tour & home-hosted lunch; farewell dinner

SARCHI Shop for souvenirs



February 28 - March 8, 2015

Day 4 Tortuguero–Sarapiquí–Tilajari Resort

A morning boat transfer begins your journey to the San Carlos area. First, tour the CORSICANA PINEAPPLE FARM in Sarapiquí to learn about the history, cultivation, and industry of pineapples. Continue through TILAJARI RAINFOREST RESERVE. After settling in, experience the magic of the resort's BUTTERFLY GARDEN and consider a walk in the nearby tropical rainforest in search of 300- to 400-year-old trees, poisonous frogs, monkeys, birds, and possibly small animals native to the reserve. (B,L,D)

Day 5 Tilajari Resort. Excursion to Arenal Volcano

During your morning at leisure you may wish to go on an optional horseback ride or float trip. Or, you can take advantage of Tilajari's amenities by walking along the shaded trails of the private, 750-acre tropical forest. Later this afternoon, enjoy a walking tour of the town of La Fortuna de San Carlos, offering spectacular views of the active Arenal Volcano. Next, drive to nearby ECOTERMALES Hot Springs for a dip in the curative and relaxing pools. This evening, view ARENAL VOLCANO, hoping to see lava glowing on its sides. (B,D)

Day 6 Tilajari Resort–Monteverde

After breakfast, continue to MONTEVERDE, where you will enjoy two days in the cloud forest. This afternoon, take a guided tour on the SKYWALK hanging bridges, which combines trails and suspension bridges through the canopy of Monteverde Cloud Forest, to search for flora and fauna. Later, visit the FROG POND, where you can admire more than 25 species of frogs and other amphibians and learn about the various species indigenous to the area. (B)

Day 7 Monteverde

This morning, visit SANTA ELENA CLOUD FOREST RESERVE for a walking tour. Located on the Continental Divide of Costa Rica, the Santa Elena Cloud Forest Reserve comprises an area of 765 acres, and is home to forest fauna such as the resplendent quetzal, jaguars, ocelots, monkeys, and numerous species of birds. With almost 100% humidity throughout the year, the cloud forest experiences almost 12 feet of rain per year. Later, visit the family-owned TRAPICHE FARM, where you will enjoy a homemade lunch. While here, learn about the production of sugar cane, coffee, and the traditional ways of cultivating bananas, arracacha (a local legume), avocado, macadamia nuts, as well as other products. The remainder of your day is at leisure. Tonight, your Tour Director hosts a farewell dinner, toasting an unforgettable discovery of Costa Rica. (B,L,D)

Day 8 Monteverde–Sarchi–San José

En route to San José, visit SARCHI Village, known as the center of Costa Rican handcrafts and where you will see the artists in their workshops making the famous oxcarts. Next stop is Grecia Village to see the metal church that was imported from Belgium to Puerto Limón in 1897. The church was transported by oxcarts to its present-day location, but sat in the plaza for 10 years before being reconstructed. (B,L)

Day 9 San José

Your tour ends with breakfast this morning. (B)

Natural Wonders of Costa Rica

Vacation Overview

Grab your camera and get ready for a wonderful vacation to Costa Rica! Witness bountiful wildlife in their natural habitat, enjoy relaxing dips in ecothermal hot springs, and learn about the Costa Rican culture on this thrilling adventure. Among the many highlights of this tour is Tortuguero National Park, where you'll take a boat ride along remote, unspoiled sections of the park to view wildlife. Your guide will look out for the wildlife—including freshwater turtles, egrets, toucans, and monkeys—so you can sit back, relax, and take plenty of pictures. Another tour highlight is the Arenal Volcano, considered one of the most active volcanoes in the world. You may witness the red lava streaming down the sides as you hear the volcano's grumbling. Relax as you soak in the ecothermal hot springs and perhaps watch the lava flow down the volcano—a spectacular sight! In Monteverde, visit the Santa Elena Cloud Forest Reserve, home to forest fauna such as jaguars, resplendent quetzal, monkeys, ocelots, and many species of birds—not to mention the large diversity of plant species. On this Costa Rica tour, you'll also have a chance to visit local farms to learn about the local culture and industries. So be sure to grab your swimsuit and prepare yourself for a trip of a lifetime—a trip filled with wildlife, scenic waterways, tropical rainforests, and knowledgeable guides to help you learn about Costa Rica.

Itinerary

Day 1 Arrive in San José, Costa Rica

Upon arrival, you will be met by your Tour Director, who will help you check into your hotel.

Day 2 San José—Tortuguero National Park

Journey east to the Caribbean shore and TORTUGUERO NATIONAL PARK. On the way, stop at a BANANA PLANTATION. Later, board a motor launch for your CRUISE along the Tortuguero Canals, waterways crisscrossing a national park dedicated to the protection of endangered turtles. The trained eyes of your guide and boatman help you spot freshwater turtles, caimans, herons, toucans, egrets, and monkeys. An afternoon at leisure lets you explore Pachira Lodge until you meet for an informative slideshow presentation on the area. (B,L,D)

Day 3 Tortuguero National Park Tour & Canal Cruise

A local Naturalist accompanies you on a leisurely BOAT RIDE along remote, unspoiled sections of the park's waterways, explaining the bountiful flora and fauna. Enjoy a fascinating stroll through an accessible portion of the nearby RAINFOREST. (B,L,D)

Hotels First-Class (F) Superior First-Class (SF)

San Jose Doubletree by Hilton Cariari (SF)

Tortuguero Pachira Lodge (F)

Tilajari Tilajari Resort Hotel (F)

Monteverde El Establo Mountain Lodge (F)

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