

COSTA RICA

DETAILED ITINERARY

RAINFOREST ADVENTURE

May 24/24



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Costa Rica is an oasis of natural wonders - volcanoes, rainforests, white sand beaches, coral reefs and wildlife - all within a world-renowned system of national parks that protects more species of mammals and birds than the continental U.S.A. and Canada combined.

Our trip features Costa Rica's natural wonders, experienced through an active program of hikes, river safaris and horseback rides. Enjoy the pristine flora and fauna of Monteverde, Manuel Antonio and Sarapiquí during a tropical forest walk, ziplining, a river journey and rafting.

At Arenal Volcano, walk on the famous Arenal Hanging Bridges, visit La Fortuna Waterfall and enjoy the nearby hot springs for a satisfying soak in the thermal pools. The highlight for many is the boat journey through the extensive, wildlife-rich canal system of Tortuguero National Park. For active nature lovers seeking pristine rainforest, exotic wildlife, active volcanoes and superb birding, Costa Rica is the perfect adventure destination.

FACTS & HIGHLIGHTS

• 15 land days • Maximum 16 travelers • Start and finish in San Jose • All meals included • Explore Tortuguero National Park and its jungle canals • Enjoy Arenal Volcano • Wildlife viewing, tropical forest walks & rafting at Sarapiquí • Enjoy Monteverde, Manuel Antonio and natural hot water springs • Visit pineapple, coffee and cocoa plantations

DEPARTURE DATES & PRICE

Dec 03 - Dec 17, 2024	-	\$4595 USD
Jan 08 - Jan 22, 2025	-	\$4795 USD
Feb 14 - Feb 28, 2025	-	\$4795 USD
Dec 02 - Dec 16, 2025	-	\$4795 USD

*Price includes new 13% sales tax.

Activity Level: 2/3

Comfort Level: Some rough, unpaved roads and long drives. The unpredictable weather is humid and tropical, especially in Tortuguero & Rincon de la Vieja. Sprurts of rain make it refreshing.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Comfortable hotels/lodges with private bathrooms.

ELDERTREKS



SMALL GROUP
EXOTIC ADVENTURES
FOR TRAVELERS 50 PLUS

DAY 1 • ARRIVE IN SAN JOSÉ

You will be met on your arrival at San Jose Airport and transferred to our hotel. Later in the evening, we meet our guide for dinner and orientation meeting.

Overnight in San Jose.

DAY 2 • TO TORTUGUERO N.P. VIA BRAULIO CARRILLO N.P.

Early morning, depart San Jose for the Caribbean coast. Enroute, we drive through Braulio Carrillo National Park, enjoying wonderful views of the rainforest. Upon arrival in Cano Blanco or La Pavona (depending on weather conditions) we transfer to our boat for a 1 1/2 hour boat journey through the beautiful canals to get to Tortuguero, always keeping an eye out for wildlife.

Three species of monkeys (spider, howler and white-faced), three-toed sloths and river otters are frequently seen along the natural inland waterways and canals. Caiman, iguanas, river turtles, basilisk lizards and poison dart Dendrobates frogs inhabit the area. 320 species of birds including all 6 species of king fishers, 3 species of toucans, 8



species of parrots and other neo-tropical species such as the slaty-tailed trogon, white-collared manakin, purple-throated ruitcrow and white-fronted nunbird all inhabit the area. We will have the opportunity to observe them during our ride through the creeks of Tortuguero National Park over the next few days.

After lunch, we will explore the village of Tortuguero to learn about the history of the village, visit the park headquarters and walk past colorful Afro-Caribbean homes.

Dinner and overnight in Tortuguero.



Sloth



DAY 3 • WILDLIFE OF TORTUGUERO NATIONAL PARK

Today we travel by boat to explore the canals of Tortuguero and Cano Harold (Harold's Canal) in Tortuguero National Park. During our visit to Cano Harold, we have the opportunity to see bare-throated tiger herons, snowy egrets, boat billed herons and other species which are known to nest here.

We also visit the Atlantic Green Sea Turtle Museum founded by the Caribbean Conservation Corporation. The late Dr. Archie Carr began to study and tag the thousands of Atlantic green sea turtles that every year from June through October come to Tortuguero Beach to lay their eggs. Originally intended to protect a major nesting beach of the Atlantic green sea turtle, Tortuguero National Park now protects 51,870 acres, one of the last large areas of tropical rainforest in Central America.

Dinner and overnight in Tortuguero.

DAY 4 • CANALS OF TORTUGUERO, TO SARAPIQUI

After breakfast, we depart via the stunning wildlife rich canals of Tortuguero to Cano Blanco or La Pavona (depending on weather conditions) where we transfer to our vehicle and continue to Sarapiquí.

Dinner and overnight in Sarapiquí.

DAY 5 • SARAPIQUI RAFTING ADVENTURE AND PINEAPPLE TOUR

This morning, enjoy an exciting river rafting adventure (Class III - Rafting is optional). Make sure you keep an eye out for birds and wildlife while enjoying your adrenaline rush.

After lunch, we will visit a certified organic pineapple farm. Considered to be one of the pioneers in organic production, we will learn about the cultivation of pineapples in harmony with nature.

Return to the hotel in the late afternoon where you have some time to relax before dinner.

Dinner and overnight in Sarapiquí.





Canals of
Tortuguero



Arenal Volcano

DAY 6 • TO ARENAL VOLCANO, HANGING BRIDGES AND HOT SPRINGS

After breakfast, we make our way to Arenal, driving by many large cattle farms, as well as yuca, plantain and papaya plantations.

Enjoy an afternoon hike in the Arenal Hanging Bridges with your guide. This project sits within a 250-hectare (618 acre) reserve of fully recovered secondary rainforest. A visit to Arenal Hanging Bridges consists of traversing 16 bridges (8 hanging) from 5 to 100 meters long that cross the rainforest and a 3 km circuit of interpretive trails.

Early evening, we enjoy the warm and soothing natural hot springs, due to the region's geothermal activity, with dinner to follow.

Dinner and overnight in Arenal.

DAY 7 • WATERFALL WALK AND CHOCOLATE TOUR

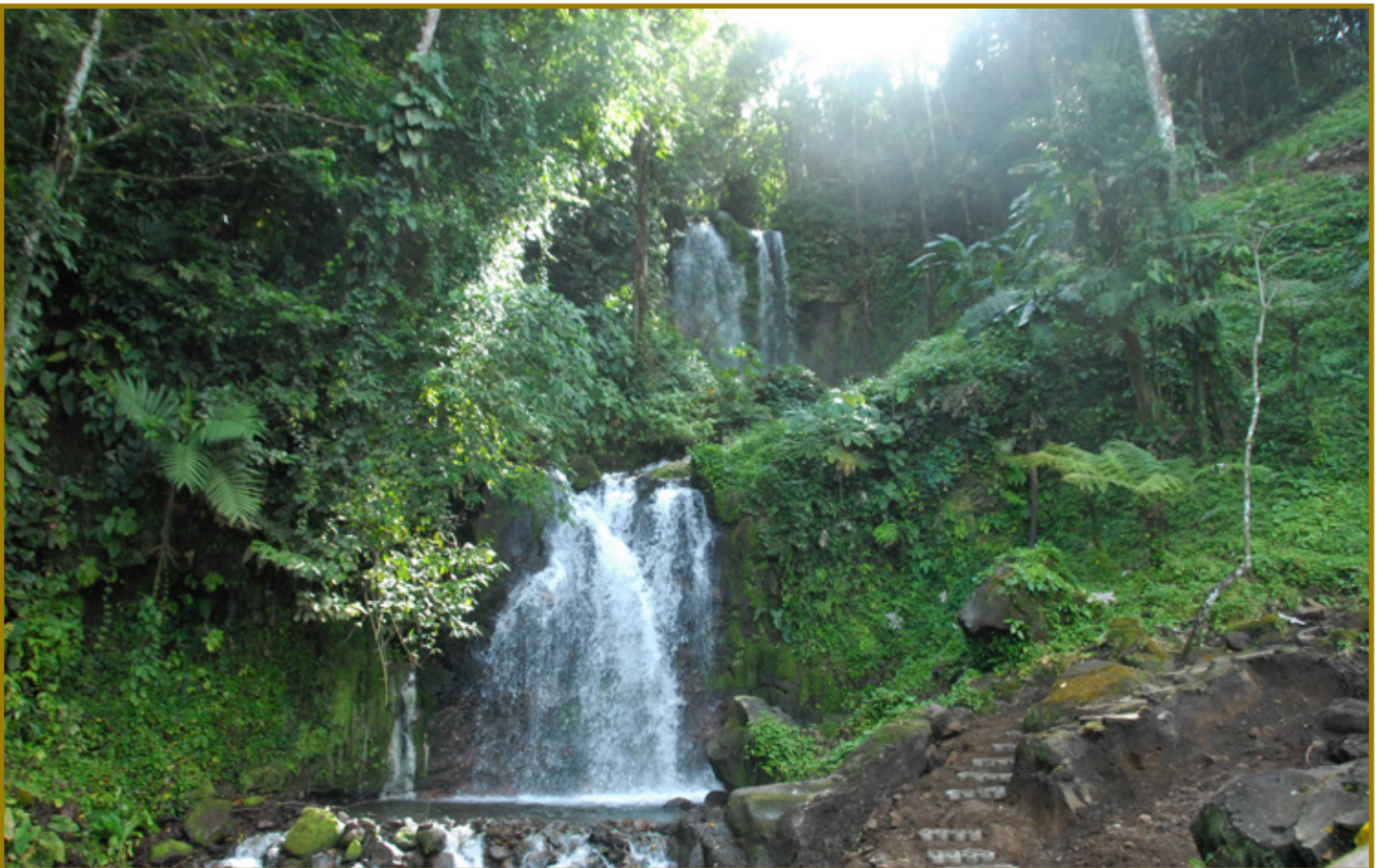
In the morning, we visit La Fortuna Waterfall and hike down stairs to where the water plummets 200 ft (65 m) into an emerald pool. If you're feeling adventurous, you can swim in the chilly water.

Afterwards, we visit a small plantation to explore the secrets and wonders of one of mankind's favorite foods: chocolate.

Dinner and overnight in Arenal.



Blue River





DAY 8 • TO MONTEVERDE

After breakfast, we set out for a leisurely bus ride towards Monteverde. Notice the dramatic change in scenery from lake Arenal, all the way up to green mountain. Monteverde is a peaceful community made up of dairy farmers, naturalists and tourism service providers who have joined together to create a model for sustainable development and protection of the environment that is well-known throughout the world.

Founded in 1954 by a group of Quakers searching for a peaceful place to live, is the home of Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve, the Children's Eternal Rainforest, and the Santa Elena Reserve.

During our time in Monteverde, we will enjoy a scenic night tour.

Dinner and overnight in Monteverde.

DAY 9 • MONTEVERDE, ZIPLINING AND SANTA ELENA CLOUD FOREST RESERVE

This morning, we enjoy a thrilling zipline circuit through 9 cables, of lengths between 1200 ft and 2310 ft and heights of 60ft to 480ft. Cables stretch from mountain to mountain, crossing canyons, going into the forests, and even sometimes in between clouds (ziplining is optional).

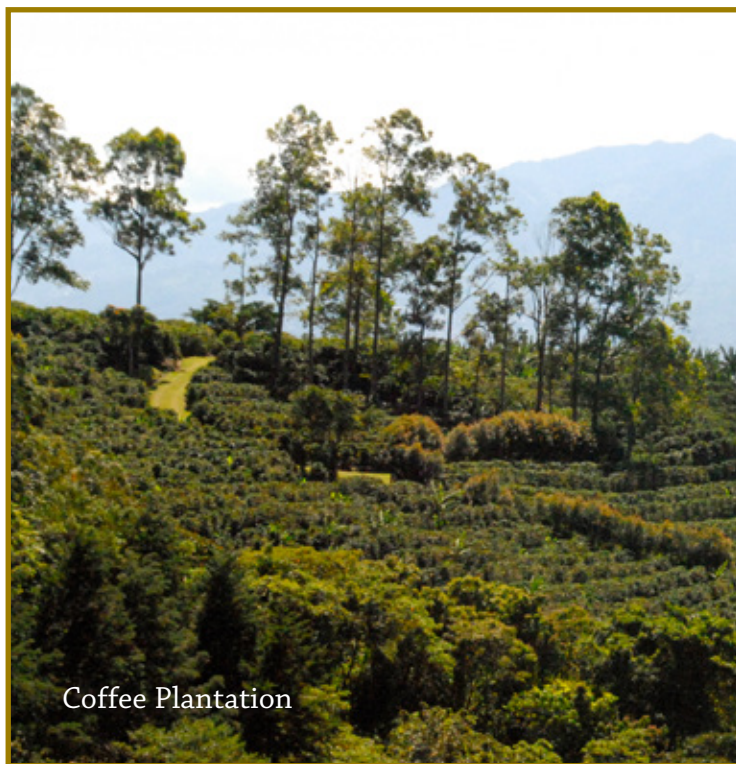
After lunch we continue to Santa Elena Cloud Forest Reserve, managed by the local community of Santa Elena. At an elevation ranging from 1,440 to 1,660 meters (4,725 to 5,450 feet) above sea level, the forest is perpetually cloaked in a delicate veil of mist. Santa Elena Cloud Forest Reserve is a stunning example of cloud forest ecosystems, featuring dense vegetation and a wide variety of flora.

Dinner and overnight in Monteverde.

DAY 10 • RINCON DE LA VIEJA, VOLCANO HIKE

Today we will have a long and exciting journey from Monteverde all the way to Guanacaste province. The continental divide has created a dry forest on one side of Rincon de la Vieja National Park and lush rainforest on the other. We will have the opportunity to hike around the base of Rincon de la Vieja volcano and see the little bubbling acidic lagoons and mud piles.

Dinner and overnight in Liberia (Guanacaste).



Coffee Plantation

DAY 11 • HORSEBACK RIDING, WATERFALLS AND RIVER SWIM

Today after breakfast we will drive for about 40 minutes to meet our horses. We will enjoy an easy horseback ride to the river where we can take a dip in the clear pristine waters of the Chorreras cascade. Be sure to bring along your swimsuit. This is a perfect setting to enjoy a restful, yet exciting day, and cool off in the refreshing waters. (Traveling by horseback is optional)

Dinner and overnight in Liberia (Guanacaste).

DAY 12 • TO CENTRAL PACIFIC, CROCODILE SAFARI

After breakfast, we travel to the Central Pacific region of Costa Rica. Along the way, we make a stop at a crocodile safari on Tarcoles River. The Tarcoles area isn't just a great place to see the formidable American Crocodile, it is also a great place to see many species of birds and fish.

Dinner and overnight in Playa Hermosa.

DAY 13 • MANUEL ANTONIO N. P.

Today we will have a guided tour of Manuel Antonio with its impressive landscapes and many coves with white sand beaches amidst great mountains and tropical forests. Despite being Costa Rica's smallest national park, its biodiversity is impressive. You can see sloths, mantled howler monkeys, squirrel monkeys, white-headed capuchin monkeys, iguanas, common basilisk, 184 bird species (including toucans, woodpeckers, potoos, motmots, tanagers, turkey vultures, parakeets and hawks). It is also possible to see dolphins as well as the occasional migrating whale.

Dinner and overnight Playa Hermosa.

DAY 14 • TO SAN JOSE, COFFEE TOUR

Today we return to the capital of San Jose where will have time to reflect on our adventure during our farewell dinner this evening.

Along the way, we visit to Doka Estate, the oldest humid coffee processing plant declared an Architectural Heritage for Humanity, that works with hydraulic power. We learn about the vital role coffee has played in forging democracy in Costa Rica, as well as cultivating a national identity. The introduction of coffee provided a product suitable for export along with bananas. Today, both remain two of the most important crops in Costa Rica. The coffee tour is packed with tips and tricks that will help make your next cup of coffee your best and learn how to properly store coffee. Of course, there is always the opportunity for great birding anywhere in Costa Rica.

Farewell dinner and overnight in San Jose.

DAY 15 • DEPART SAN JOSÉ

Transfer to San José International airport for your homeward flight.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1. HOW BIG ARE THE GROUPS?

Each group is limited to 16 participants. Small groups are an important ingredient in adventure travel. They allow for more interaction and more personalized service throughout the itinerary.

2. WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE TOUR PRICE?

All accommodations throughout; all meals, starting with dinner on day 1 and finishing with breakfast on departure day (i.e. the last day of the ElderTreks tour); bottled drinking water throughout the trip; all internal transportation; airport transfers on day 1 and departure day (i.e. the last day of the ElderTreks tour); all day trips and entrance fees as outlined in the itinerary; tips for hotels (portage), national guide, bus driver, restaurants and spot guides; services of a trip leader.

3. WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE TOUR PRICE?

International flights, tips to ElderTreks tour leader, alcoholic drinks, visas and travel insurance.

4. ARE THESE “EDUCATIONAL” TOURS?

Yes, in the broadest sense of the word, “educational”. We visit museums, National Parks and Reserves and have lectures on Costa Rican flora and fauna. But this is only a portion of the educational experience. We believe that it is equally educational to meet local people on a non-commercial basis and even try to learn a few words in the native language. Sometimes the most “educational” moments are spent sipping a cold drink in a street market.

5. HOW DO WE TRAVEL DURING THE TOUR?

All local transportation is included in the land price of the trip. We travel by private minivan or microbus for road travel, by boat and by foot.

6. WHAT ARE OUR ACCOMMODATIONS LIKE?

We always stay in good accommodations — both hotels and lodges where rooms have a private bath or shower.

7. WHAT ABOUT THE WEATHER?

The Costa Rican climate can vary over short distances because of the rugged mountain chain that affects the wind, rain, and temperature resulting in a series of microclimates where altitude is a key to change. To generalize, there is a rainy season or “winter”, with short heavy downpours

usually around mid-day, that lasts from May–November. During the dry season, temperatures will range from the low 50’s°F (10°C) at Monteverde, to a high of 90°F (32°C) at sea level. San Jose is a comfortable 72°F (22°C) year-round.

8. WHEN IS PAYMENT DUE?

A non-refundable deposit of \$500 USD (plus insurance if you require it) is due at time of booking and will reserve your place on the tour. Payment of the full land cost is due 120 days before departure. Cancellation charges are applicable and are outlined in the “Terms and Conditions” section of our brochure.

9. IS MEDICAL INSURANCE REQUIRED?

Insurance coverage is not included in the cost of your trip. Please note that medical insurance is not required for this adventure but is recommended. ElderTreks offers comprehensive travel insurance and we are happy to provide you with a quote if you call our office. If you are purchasing insurance elsewhere, please ensure you provide the details to ElderTreks as soon as possible.

**Please note those travelers with pre-existing medical conditions must take out travel insurance at the time of deposit*

10. WHAT SHOULD I TAKE ON THE TOUR?

There is a detailed “What to Bring” list in our Trip Kit, which we will send to you after receiving your booking deposit for the trip.

11. WHAT MEALS ARE INCLUDED?

All meals during the itinerary are included, starting with dinner on day 1 and finishing with breakfast on departure day. We eat a variety of local foods prepared in a wide range of settings. In many cases, we simply order a number of dishes and share, allowing you to sample new foods and decide what you enjoy best.

12. CAN YOU ARRANGE MY FLIGHTS?

We would be happy to take care of your air arrangements. ElderTreks offers personalized flight itineraries — not group flights. Stop over enroute, come in a few days early, or extend your stay. Call us for a customized itinerary.

13. WHAT IF I WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION?

If you have any further questions about the trip, please do not hesitate to contact our office for additional information. A Trip Kit containing further details on the destination will be sent to you once you have booked on the tour.

