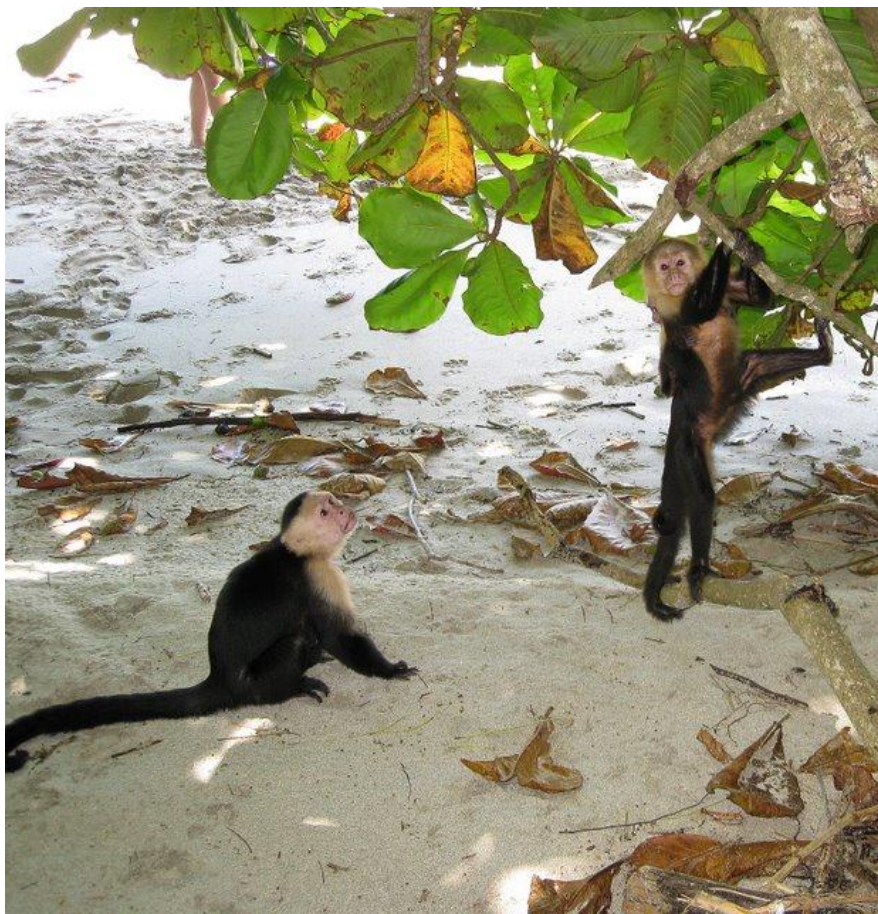




COSTA RICA

Pre-Departure Information





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WELCOME TO COSTA RICA

Hello, thank you for choosing Costa Rica Green Adventures to plan your trip to Costa Rica. Please read our general pre-departures information booklet regarding Costa Rica Green Adventures travel recommendations and trip policies. That booklet will help answer many of your questions regarding foreign travel. This Costa Rica Pre-Departure Information offers specific advice and background details on the diverse nation of Costa Rica. Costa Rica is a country located in Central America that has unlimited tourist potential and is ranked as one of the most visited international destinations. One of Costa Rica's main sources of income is tourism. Costa Rica is a democratic and peaceful country, and it has not had an army since the year 1949.

Although the country is small and it covers only 0.03 % of the surface of the globe, it proudly shelters a 6% of the existing biodiversity in the entire world. 25.58 % of the country is composed of conservation and natural protected territory. Costa Rica is also an attractive country for investment and it offers great potential for the establishment of important multinational companies, thanks to the outstanding academic level of its population, as well as the high standard of modern services and social and political stability.

COSTA RICA COUNTRY FACTS

Population:	4.1 million	Government: Constitutional, democratic republic; 4 years elections
Area:	19.730 square miles (the size of West Virginia)	Time: Central Standard (Oct-Apr), Mountain Standard
Capital:	San José	Telephone country code: 506
Official Language:	Spanish	Currency: Colon
Dominant Religion:	Roman Catholic	

COSTA RICA COUNTRY INFORMATION

CLIMATE

The tropical climate of Costa Rica is spring-like weather with some variation due to elevation and geography. In the mountains expect temperatures between the upper 50's at night and the 80's during the day. It can be especially hot and humid on the coast. Guanacaste beaches (i.e. Tamarindo) reach above

100, while the beaches of the Osa Peninsula on the South Pacific coast hover around 85-90 F from December through April. From May through November, you might find the weather to be gloriously sunny in the morning with intermittent afternoon or evening showers. Water temperatures year round are approximately 75 degrees F. Lightweight tropical clothing is appropriate for most of the trip, with a sweater for the evening in San José, and the Central Valley. It can actually get quite cold mountain elevations like Monteverde or Chirripò Cloud Forest where you may want a light jacket of fleece to layer for warmth during those nights. Rain gear, a hat sun screen are essential items. If you plan on washing clothes, you may want to bring a travel size clothes line, sink stopper and clothes pins.



TEMPERATURE & RAINFALL CHART

Región	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JULY	AUG	SET	OCT	NOV	DEC	Max. Min Temp. Average Max Temp.
Arenal	81	83	85	85	82	81	81	81	80	80	80	81	Average Max Temp.
	62	62	63	63	64	64	64	63	63	63	63	63	Average Min Temp.
	229	198	97	105	324	462	525	506	498	506	500	530	Average Rain Fall
Corcovado	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JULY	AUG	SET	OCT	NOV	DEC	Max. Min Temp. Average Max Temp.
	91	92	91	91	90	89	89	89	90	89	89	90	Average Max Temp.
	72	71	73	73	73	72	71	71	71	71	71	71	Average Min Temp.
	159	146	208	280	480	444	480	531	558	703	566	294	Average Rain Fall
Guanacaste	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JULY	AUG	SET	OCT	NOV	DEC	Max. Min Temp. Average Max Temp.
	91	95	95	96	93	89	89	89	87	87	87	88	Average Max Temp.
	69	69	71	73	79	73	73	73	71	71	89	89	Average Min Temp.
	1	1	9	22	235	312	134	206	325	285	104	13	Average Rain Fall
Quepos	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JULY	AUG	SET	OCT	NOV	DEC	Max. Min Temp. Average Max Temp.
	87	87	89	89	89	87	87	87	86	86	86	86	Average Max Temp.
	69	69	71	71	71	71	69	69	71	71	71	69	Average Min Temp.
	72	63	60	167	392	433	461	478	528	644	388	169	Average Rain Fall
Monteverde	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JULY	AUG	SET	OCT	NOV	DEC	Max. Min Temp. Average Max Temp.
	68	89	71	71	71	71	69	69	71	69	68	68	Average Max Temp.
	53	53	53	55	57	57	57	57	55	57	57	57	Average Min Temp.
	106	97	42	122	348	420	359	458	493	426	429	330	Average Rain Fall

San José	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JULY	AUG	SET	OCT	NOV	DEC	Max. Min Temp. Average Max Temp.
	73	75	77	78	78	78	77	77	76	77	75	73	
	59	59	60	60	62	62	62	62	60	60	60	59	Average Min Temp.
	10	6	12	44	225	287	215	249	332	332	142	41	Average Rain Fall
Tortuguero	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JULY	AUG	SET	OCT	NOV	DEC	Max. Min Temp. Average Max Temp.
	88	88	87	87	87	87	88	86	87	87	85	88	
	68	68	59	71	71	71	71	71	71	71	69	69	Average Min Temp.
	317	211	204	276	282	296	427	312	145	208	391	446	Average Rain Fall



PASSPORT, DOCUMENTS AND FLIGHTS

A passport is required for entry into Costa Rica, and should be valid for 30 days months after your return date. A Visa is not required. Non US citizens should check with a consulate or online at www.costarica-embassy.org.

It normally takes 6 weeks to get a passport. Passports can be obtained in about a few days by paying an additional fee for expedited service, using overnight delivery and enclosing a self-addressed, prepaid, two-way, overnight delivery envelope. Same day or overnight service is available by appointment at Passport Agencies in major US cities, and at US Consulates all over the world. A list of Passport Agencies as well as passport application information on how to obtain passports can be found at http://travel.state.gov/passport_services.html

To ensure travelers safety, new heightened security measures are taking place in airports around the world. Security searches have created longer check-in times. Higher levels of security include 1.more careful scanning of both hand and checked luggage, 2. All travelers have to check in the luggage and then again identify it as theirs before it goes back through the scan, 3. Each person goes through a metal detector at the same time as the hand luggage is being scanned, 4. Then each and every person is checked personally by hand and a hand held metal detector again before going through immigration.

In the past, guides have been permitted to escort International travelers to the check in counters in the International departure section of the airports. This area is now restricted to ticketed passengers only. No longer will guides be permits to enter this building with their passengers. Security officers have been placed at the building entrance are instructs to check each person`s ticket and passport. Only those appropriately ticketed will be permitted to enter the building.

In an effort to prevent international child abduction, many governments have initiated procedures entry/exit points. These often include requiring documentary evidence of relationship and permission for the chil`s travel from the parents or legal guardian not present. Having such documentation on hand, even if not required, may facilitate entry/departures.

MONEY CURRENCY EXCHANGE

The monetary unit is the colon. Take the time to look at the coins. One colon can be dividing into 100 centimos. Each is clearly marked, but it pays to recognize that the coin marked 25 is 25 colones, not 25 cents. Bills come in denominations of 1.000, 2.000, 5.000, 10.000, 20.000, and 50.000. Coins are 25, 50, 100, and 500 colones.

You do not need to exchange currency before your arrive. Typically, US currency is accepted anywhere and change is given in colones. Most US bank credit cards and even many cash machines cards work in Costa Rica.



PERSONAL SECURITY

Always take basic precautions whenever you travel overseas or in US cities and airports. Travelers anywhere sometimes targets for pickpockets and petty thievery. Unfortunately, pickpockets have become more common on crowded streets of downtown of San José. Keep a watch full eye your belongings and use the hotel safe when one is provided. There is no reason to leave valuables sitting out in your hotel room which might be a temptation for and otherwise honest, low wage earning staff member. For security and your own peace-of-mind lock valuables in your luggage when you are in the field. Valuables are then out of plain view and there is no question if something is missing.

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

Listed below are the Costa Rican official holidays. On these days, all government offices, including banks and post offices, are closed as are most private businesses, museums and many shops.

January 1:	New Year`s Day	Holy Thursday through Easter Sunday
April 11:	Juan Santa Maria Day (commemorating the national hero of the Battle of Rivas)	July 25: Annexation of Guanacaste Province
August 15:	Mother`s Day	September 15: Independence Day
October 12:	Columbus Day	December 25: Christmas Day

GENERAL TRIP EQUIPMENT

The enclosed equipment list describes the specific items you will want to consider bringing. Keep in mind it is a tropical environment and will generally be warm. Therefore, one sweater or light jacket is sufficient for cooler climates. Shorts are not appropriate in the city, but very useful in the field.

- ❖ **FOOTWEAR:** the best hiking is lightweight trekking shoes with traction and mid high ankle support. Bring an extra pair of lightweight dry shoes or sandals to change into after the day's hike. Sports sandals (that securely strap on such as the Teva brand), are comfortable footwear anywhere on the coast, and around your lodge.
- ❖ **HEADWEAR:** A light hat with a wide brim, including protection for the back of the neck is best. A tie under the chin is advisable to prevent possible loss due to wind on boats.
- ❖ **COLD TEMPERATURE AND RAIN GEAR:** A lightweight rain coat or poncho is very useful. A light to medium-weight jacket, sweater or synthetic fleece garment is necessary for cool nights at high elevations such as Monteverde or Chirripò highlands.
- ❖ **FLASHLIGHTS:** Flashlights are important for getting around the more remote lodges at night as they do not have electrical power 24 hours a day.
- ❖ **DAYPACK:** A good quality day pack is necessary to carry things like your water bottle, camera, binoculars, snack food

- **OFFICIAL LANGUAGE**

The official language is Spanish. The second language for a large portion of the population is English.

- **OFFICIAL RELIGION**

The official religion is Catholic. Freedom of religious choice is respected.

- **OFFICIAL CURRENCY**

Colon