



PHOTO BY PETER ANDERSON



HOLBROOK
TRAVEL

COSTA RICA

Smith Field Explorers

March 24 - April 1, 2018

Experience Costa Rica's world-renowned national parks, lush rainforests, ancient volcanoes, and tropical flora and fauna during this fun, educational program.

From observing wildlife on guided hikes, to zipping through the treetops for a bird's eye view of the rainforest, to learning how chocolate is made, a balance of rich educational content and adventure activities makes this an unforgettable expedition!

EDUCATIONAL CONNECTIONS

- Biology
- Natural History
- Environmental Science
- Active Adventure

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Explore the rainforest on hikes with your naturalist guide to discover Costa Rica's neotropical flora and fauna.
- Experience thrilling adventures like whitewater rafting and zip lining.
- Search for nocturnal wildlife like red-eyed tree frogs, owls, and insects during evening hikes.
- Take a boat ride on the Tárcoles River and watch for its most famous inhabitants, the enormous American crocodiles.

ITINERARY

BLD = BREAKFAST, LUNCH, DINNER

MARCH 24 - PUNTA LEONA

Early departure from Tampa for arrival in San José by noon. Head to Punta Leona with a quick lunch en route. Introduction to the area this afternoon. *Overnight at Punta Leona Hotel. (LD)*

MARCH 25 - PUNTA LEONA

This morning, after breakfast, is an expedition to Carara National Park, an opportunity to explore the northernmost region of Pacific rainforest remaining in Costa Rica. In the afternoon, take a boat ride on the Tárcoles River to see crocodiles and learn about the regional importance of this mangrove ecosystem. If time permits, visit the beach later in the afternoon. *Overnight at Punta Leona Hotel. (BLD)*

MARCH 26 - MONTEVERDE

This morning embark on an adventurous drive to the cloud forests of Monteverde. Cloud forests are a consistently cool and wet environment; this one receives over three meters of rain annually and is home to an astounding variety of flora and fauna. Over 2,500 plant species have been identified here including 300 individual orchid species and over 200 species of ferns. The beginnings of the preserve can be traced back to a group of Alabama Quakers that emigrated to Monteverde in the early 1950s. Visiting biologists discovered that the cloud forest, located above the Quaker community, was rich in plant and animal life. Due to the incredible foresight of the Quakers and the Tropical Science Center, Monteverde and Santa Elena reserves were born. After checking in at the hotel, visit several sites of interest including the Women's Artist Co-op and Stella's Bakery. *Overnight at El Bosque or Monteverde Country Lodge. (BLD)*

MARCH 27 - MONTEVERDE

After breakfast, enjoy a guided hike in the Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve. Cloud forests occur near mountain peaks where rain turns into a life sustaining mist, hydrating and nourishing epiphytic plants. At the Hummingbird Gallery, birds hover then zip by, attracted to the many feeders specifically placed to entice them there. Spend an adventure filled afternoon in forest canopies as you navigate the many suspension bridges and zip lines of the Monteverde Sky Walk/Sky Trek park. The Sky Walk offers a spectacular chance to view flora and fauna from an 'up in the branches' perspective. Complete your cloud forest exploration with Sky Trek's exhilarating zip line adventure through the forest canopy. (Please note there is a 225lb weight limit for the Sky Trek program.) Following the Skywalk, the Sky Trek is a system of three platforms suspended above the ground in the midst of tree boughs. Zip lines attached from one platform to the other allow you to slide through the canopy. Each platform commands exceptional 360 degree views of Guanacaste, San Carlos, and Puntarenas. Later return to the hotel for dinner and time to relax. *Overnight at El Bosque or Monteverde Country Lodge. (BLD)*

MARCH 28 - ARENAL

Today depart early for Arenal, with a quick visit to the Santa Elena Cloud Forest Reserve, arriving at the hotel in time for lunch. This afternoon, hike along the base of the volcano through forest, over lava flows, and finally to the destroyed areas now in the process of regeneration. This is the closest place to view the volcano. After the hike, settle in for the night at the hotel and enjoy the hot springs pools. *Overnight at Arenal Paraiso. (BLD)*

MARCH 29 - SARAPIQUI

This morning, horseback ride and visit to La Fortuna waterfall, then travel to Selva Verde Lodge and Rainforest Reserve, located in the lush lowlands of northeastern Costa Rica. Founded in 1985, the lodge is designed to have a minimum impact on the environment and is a proud participant

in the Certification for Sustainable Tourism program (CST). After settling in, enjoy an orientation to Selva Verde followed by a walk in the botanical garden and forest. Before dinner travel to the nearby Sarapiquí Conservation Learning Center (SCLC) for a charla presentation on local culture. The SCLC is a not for profit organization founded to preserve the cultural integrity of the rural community of Chilamate and aid in sustainable community development projects. *Overnight at Selva Verde Lodge & Rainforest Reserve. (BLD)*

MARCH 30 - SARAPIQUI

Early this morning get an introduction to the amazing tropical birds of Selva Verde during a short hike with your guide around the grounds of the lodge. The avifauna of Selva Verde is abundant and feeding stations have been set up around the lodge to facilitate observation and identification of the many species that frequent the area. Return to the lodge for breakfast, then set out on a second nature hike through the reserve in search of new species. Your guide will discuss the complex details of the ecosystem and how life in the rainforest thrives. This afternoon take an exhilarating whitewater rafting trip on the Río Sarapiquí. A professional river guide escorts all trips and all necessary safety equipment (helmet, life jackets, etc.) will be provided. Following a thorough safety orientation and basic rafting lesson, enjoy both Class II and Class III rapids of the Río Sarapiquí. This evening a nocturnal hike provides a comparison between wildlife during the day and night. *Overnight at Selva Verde Lodge & Rainforest Reserve. (BLD)*

MARCH 31 - SAN JOSÉ

After breakfast enjoy the Best Chocolate tour, the fun starts in the 2 acre cacao plantation where you will learn all about the cacao plant, flowers, and pollination. Then visit La Paz Waterfall Gardens, located in the cloud forest near Poás Volcano. More than two dozen hummingbird species have been recorded at the garden's feeders. Also observe the largest butterfly observatory in the world, bromeliad gardens, and striking waterfalls. Have lunch at La Paz and continue to San Jose for check in at the hotel. Dinner and overnight. *Overnight at Hotel Buena Vista. (BLD)*

APRIL 1 - DEPARTURE

Transfer to Juan Santamaría International Airport for your departure flight home. (B)

TRIP COST

\$2,975 includes \$725 estimated airfare

Price includes accommodations, in-country transportation, entrance fees, guide, meals and activities as listed in the itinerary.

Airfare from Tampa is estimated at \$725 and once the group is formed, group flights will be secured and final cost may be lower. Payment for airfare may be required at that time.

Does not include gratuities or items of a personal nature.

THE FINE PRINT

Cost is based on 14-21 students in double occupancy rooms. A \$200 per person deposit and enrollment form are due to reserve your space on the trip. This deposit is refundable until December 19, 2017, excluding a \$100 cancellation fee, when nonrefundable final payments are due.

Progress payments are accepted. Travel/trip cancellation insurance is strongly recommended. For more information call Travel Insured at 800-243-3174 or visit travelinsured.com. Holbrook Travel's agency number is 15849.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Contact Mr. Chad Smith at csmith0175@yahoo.com

To enroll, parents should complete the registration form at <http://holbrook.travel/smithfieldexplorers18>