



Photo by Peter Sheik

COSTA RICA

Union Academy Middle School

June 4 - 10, 2019

EDUCATIONAL CONNECTIONS



Conservation

Cultural Studies



Natural History

Active Adventure

Make the rainforest your classroom on this 7-day expedition where adventure meets education, while exploring the fascinating plants and wildlife of one of the world's biodiversity hotspots. Begin at Selva Verde Lodge and Rainforest Reserve to learn about tropical ecosystems, work on a conservation project with the Sarapiquí Conservation Learning Center, explore the mountain trails of Monteverde and navigate the Tárcoles River.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Visit a pineapple plantation to learn about harvesting and farming techniques.
- Learn about sustainability and environmental conservation on a guided tour of Tirimbina's chocolate farm.
- Go zip lining through the misty cloud forests of Monteverde.
- Spend time with the women who run the Cloud Forest Co-Op in Santa Elena Village and explore their organic farm
- Embark on a river ride down the Tárcoles River, home to the famous American crocodile and other wildlife.

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

- Expert naturalist guide
- Accommodations
- Activities
- Entrance fees
- In-country transportation
- Meals & beverages
- Travel insurance



PHOTO BY STEFFI LOPEZ

ITINERARY

BLD = BREAKFAST, LUNCH, DINNER

JUNE 4 - SARAPIQUÍ

Depart Orlando and arrive in San José midday, then travel to Sarapiquí. After settling in, visit 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. Dinner, then program orientation. *Overnight at Selva Verde Lodge. (LD)*

JUNE 5 - SARAPIQUÍ

After breakfast visit a pineapple plantation to learn about farming and harvesting techniques. Next, embark on a boat ride down the Río Sarapiquí. While winding down the river bordered with forests and cultivated fields, watch for the aquatic animals, birds, and reptiles that are abundant in this habitat. You may also see residents going about their daily lives and witness the impact local banana plantations have on this watershed. This afternoon visit the nearby Tirimbina Biological Reserve to tour a chocolate farm. During this hands-on experience, learn how ancestral indigenous traditions connect with modern commercial needs and discuss the sustainability of commercial crops, particularly chocolate, which needs shade to grow. Talk about environmental conservation and the importance of creating sustainable livelihoods. *Overnight at Selva Verde Lodge. (BLD)*

JUNE 6 - MONTEVERDE

Early morning optional bird walk. Breakfast, then drive to the cloud forests of Monteverde. Monteverde's consistently cool and wet environment 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 became the biological reserve it is today. After checking in at the hotel visit Santa Elena Village to meet with the women of the Cloud Forest Co-op, and explore their organic farm. *Overnight at Montaña Monteverde. (BLD)*

JUNE 7 - MONTEVERDE

This morning after breakfast explore the Santa Elena Cloud Forest Reserve, one of the country's first community-administered reserves and a shining example of what people can do to preserve and learn from the environment they live in. Explore this high elevation forest, which is characterized by a persistent, canopy-level cloud cover that provides a continuous supply of moisture. The result is a forest that is abundant with trees laden with epiphytes covering trunks, branches and even the roots of trees. After lunch take one of the original sky trek tours in Costa Rica. 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 another allow you to slide with the use of special equipment. A suspended bridge 300 feet in length and 66 feet high provides the best view of the inner forest. An observation platform above the canopy offers a panoramic, 360-degree view of the Guanacaste, San Carlos, and Puntarenas lowlands. *Overnight at Montaña Monteverde. (BLD)*

JUNE 8 - TÁRCOLES

After an early breakfast transfer to Villa Lapas and explore the Tárcoles River by boat. The Tárcoles River basin is one of the most important in the Pacific coastal region, virtually draining the entire western side of the Central Valley. Tárcoles hosts an amazing diversity of wildlife along its banks and in the extensive mangrove areas of

its estuary. Perhaps the most famous of all its inhabitants are the enormous crocodiles that live on its banks. Continue to the hotel to check in. After getting situated in your room, go on the Sky Walk at Villa Lapas with your guide. The Sky Walk consists of five suspended bridges at more than 180 feet above the ground. Each of these bridges is 300 feet in length, crossing through the tropical rainforest. Dinner at the hotel. *Overnight at Villa Lapas. (BLD)*

JUNE 9 - TÁRCOLES

Morning visit to a local school. Then transfer to the nearby Carara National Park for a guided walk through beautiful transitional forest. This is the northernmost region of Pacific rainforest remaining in Costa Rica, and is the beginning of the transition zone into the tropical dry forests of the northwest. Trails through Carara feature thick, ancestral forest that's remained unchanged for thousands of years, replete with towering ancient trees, vines and dense shady canopies that block out the light. Return to the hotel for dinner. *Overnight at Villa Lapas. (BLD)*

JUNE 10 - FAREWELL!

Depart for the San José airport in time for the flight home. (B)

PROGRAM PRICING

Land: \$1,395 (limited to 14 students)

Estimated Airfare: \$575

Total estimated price: \$1,970

Includes all accommodations, meals, activities and entrance fees as indicated in the itinerary, estimated airfare from Orlando, in-country transportation, beverages with meals, local guide, and carbon offset.

Does not include items of a personal nature or gratuities (approx. \$60-75)

TRAVEL PROTECTION

Holbrook Travel purchases Travel Protection on behalf of all participants traveling in 2018 or beyond. These plans help provide coverage once the trip has departed and offer benefits for Baggage/Personal Effects, Accident & Sickness Medical Expenses, Emergency Evacuation and more.

Optional additional coverage is available in the form of the Group Deluxe Plan, which offers benefits for Trip Cancellation/Interruption, in addition to many other insurance benefits and non-insurance assistance services. If interested in this optional plan, we can provide you with rates and plan details.

THE FINE PRINT

Price is based on triple/quadruple occupancy with individual beds. A \$200 per person deposit is required to hold your space. If you decide to cancel, \$100 will be refunded up until the fall of 2018, when it is time to secure the group flights. At that time the deposit will become non-refundable so that airline deposits/reservations can be made, and the final flight cost determined. Final payment is due no later than March 1, 2019. Progress payments accepted.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO ENROLL:

Visit holbrook.travell/union-cr19 or contact Nyleen Rodriguez at nyleen.rodriguez@polk-fl.net