



# COSTA RICA

## Riches of the Rainforest, Arenal Volcano, and the Pacific Coast

with Delaware Nature Society

**JANUARY 17 – 26, 2023**



Discover the best of the tropics on this classic Costa Rica 10-day excursion with Delaware Nature Society! From rainforests and rivers to volcanoes and beaches, you'll experience a variety of ecosystems and habitats, fun and engaging activities, and the friendly, "pura vida" attitude for which the country is famous. Begin in the country's lush Caribbean lowlands, where pristine forests shelter a great diversity of plant and animal life. Then continue to picture-perfect Arenal Volcano before heading to the Pacific coast for the chance to swim, snorkel, and cruise along the shoreline. A blend of nature and culture make this an informative, well-rounded exploration.

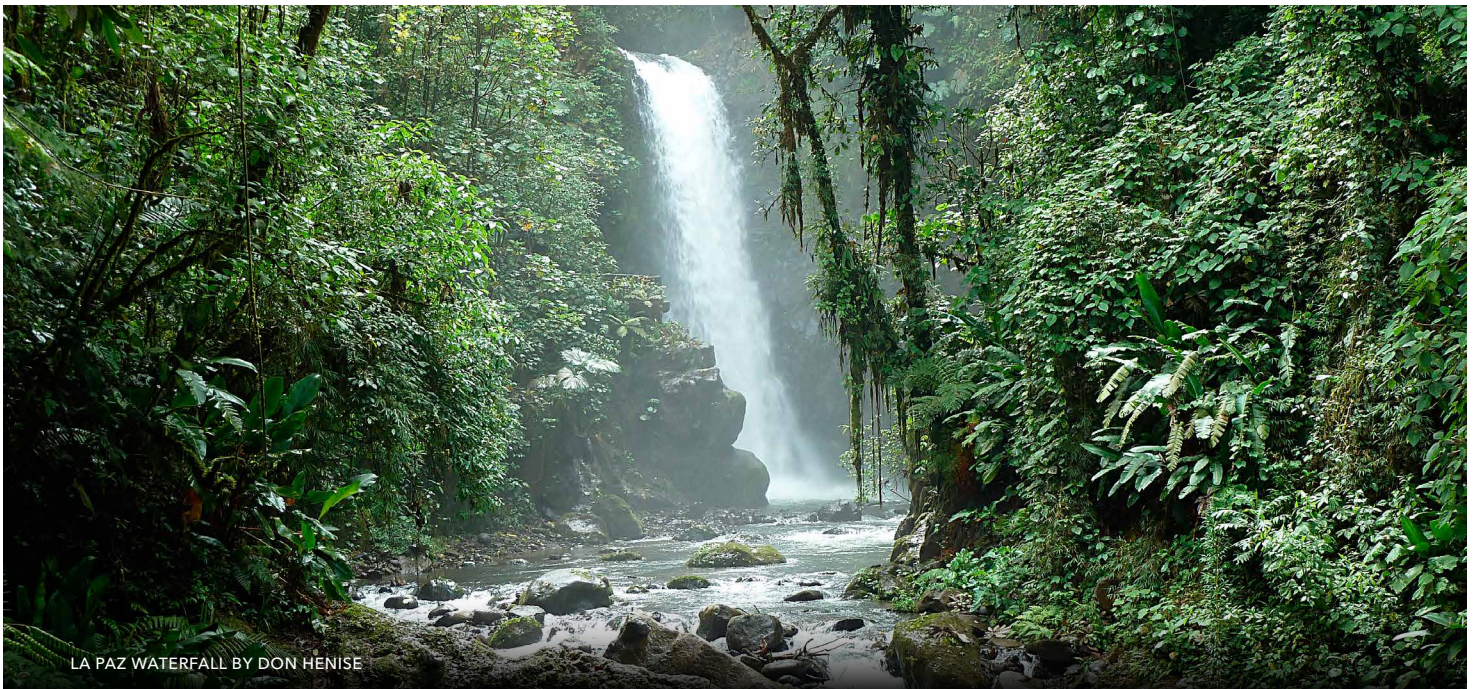
**Please note:** Flight plans should be made to arrive in San José (SJO) and depart from Liberia (LIR).

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Search for tropical birds, monkeys, bats, lizards and more during our guided hikes in the primary rainforest of the iconic La Selva Biological Research Station.
- Sample gourmet chocolate while learning about the history and cultural importance of cacao in the tropics.
- Experience a thrilling whitewater rafting adventure.
- Set sail on a scenic catamaran ride in the ocean, with the chance to swim and snorkel from the boat.
- Observe tropical birds, howler and white-faced capuchin monkeys, crocodiles, and other wildlife at El Viejo wetlands.



HOWLER MONKEY BY SARAH MURRAY; ARENAL VOLCANO BY DEB SAVARESE



LA PAZ WATERFALL BY DON HENISE

## ITINERARY

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### DAY 1 | TUE | 17 JAN | SAN JOSE

Upon arrival, after clearing customs and immigration at the airport, meet your driver and transfer to Hotel Bougainvillea. This evening, enjoy a welcome dinner and program orientation at the hotel restaurant. In order to arrive in time for orientation, participants must book flights that arrive into San José no later than 4:30 pm. Check-in starts at 3 pm.

#### DINNER

HOTEL BOUGAINVILLEA

### DAY 2 | WED | 18 JAN | SARAPIQUI

This morning, gather for breakfast, and then depart San José, heading north to the Sarapiquí region. En route, stop at La Paz Waterfall Gardens to explore the many trails, picturesque waterfalls, and lush botanicals. The gardens provide a wonderful introduction to Costa Rica's flora, fauna, and scenic landscapes. Have lunch at La Paz before continuing to Selva Verde Lodge & Rainforest Reserve, located in the lush lowlands of north-central Costa Rica on a private tract of primary and secondary tropical rainforest. After settling in, receive an orientation to the lodge's facilities and 500-acre private reserve, and then attend a lecture by a local naturalist on the biodiversity of the region and rainforest structure. This information will provide the foundation for understanding the complexities of Costa Rica's ecosystems and will enhance your experiences throughout the trip. Enjoy time to relax in your room, or stroll about the grounds before a buffet-style dinner in the upstairs dining room. After dessert, take a short night hike in search of nocturnal amphibians, mammals, owls, and insects.

#### BREAKFAST-LUNCH-DINNER

SELVA VERDE LODGE

### DAY 3 | THU | 19 JAN | SARAPIQUI

Optional morning bird walk. This morning embark on an exciting whitewater rafting adventure! The river has a gentle current with several minor Class I, II, and III rapids. A professional river guide escorts all rafting trips, and all of the necessary safety equipment (helmet, life jackets, etc.) is provided, along with a lesson on rafting safety instructions and procedures. For those not interested in rafting, a more relaxing boat trip along the river can be arranged as an alternative. Return to the lodge for lunch. In the afternoon, visit Tirimbina Biological Reserve for a chocolate tour, to learn all about the cacao plant and how it's processed from fruit to final product. After witnessing all stages of the process, try a taste of freshly made chocolate with a new appreciation for its origins. This evening, have dinner at Tirimbina followed by a presentation on the fascinating lives of bats. Learn about some of the bat species found in Costa Rica, with an opportunity to see live specimens humanely caught by local researchers, who are collecting valuable data about the abundance and diversity of bats in this region.

#### BREAKFAST-LUNCH-DINNER

SELVA VERDE LODGE

### DAY 4 | FRI | 20 JAN | SARAPIQUI

Rise early to visit the OTS La Selva Biological Station where we have a cafeteria-style breakfast alongside station researchers. After breakfast we will explore La Selva on a guided walk which consists of approximately 2,500 acres of land, over half of which is virgin forest. The area averages over 13 feet of rainfall each year and is one of the longest-studied rainforests in the world. Rich in biodiversity, more than half of Costa Rica's recorded bird species have been spotted at La Selva! Photo opportunities abound as we

look through the forest layers and along the river for frogs and toads, birds, turtles, iguanas, even peccaries. Return to the lodge for lunch and time at leisure.

**BREAKFAST-LUNCH-DINNER**

**SELVA VERDE LODGE**

## DAY 5 | SAT | 21 JAN | ARENAL

After breakfast, depart for Arenal Observatory Lodge this morning, with a stop at La Fortuna's EcoCenter Danaus. This private ecological reserve also develops programs for conservation, training, environmental education and sustainable production. There are a number of optimal locations to explore; the grassland areas, the bridge over the Burío River, the secondary forest, and the natural spring are all excellent vantage points to search for wildlife. Have lunch in the bustling town of La Fortuna and continue to the hotel. Set on a ridge amid towering pine trees, Arenal Observatory is the only eco-lodge between Lake Arenal and the massive Arenal stratovolcano, and the only hotel within the boundaries of Arenal National Park. Explore some of the seven miles of well-maintained trails on the 800-acre property. A birder's paradise, more than 400 species have been recorded here. Some of the more spectacular local residents include the Three-wattled Bellbird, Fasciated Tiger-Heron, Laughing Falcon, Red-lored Parrot, Great Curassow, Northern Jacana, Steely-vented Hummingbird, and Keel-billed Toucan. There is also plenty of other wildlife in the area, including three species of monkeys. Elevations range from 1,650 to 2,950 feet.

**BREAKFAST-LUNCH-DINNER**

**ARENAL OBSERVATORY LODGE**



KEEL-BILLED TOUCAN BY DAWN SCRANTON

## DAY 6 | SUN | 22 JAN | ARENAL

After breakfast, head to Arenal Sky Tram and Sky Walk that abounds with wonderful trails, suspension bridges, and outstanding natural areas. You may choose to walk or ride the Sky Tram gondola (extra fee) through the rainforest to an observation deck, where you'll enjoy magnificent views of Lake Arenal and the Arenal Volcano's southern face. Then hike or Zip Line (extra fee) back down! Observe the rainforest canopy

from up amid the treetops, where you may find epiphytic plants, butterflies, birds, and arboreal mammals. Ziplining can be added on site at an additional cost of \$37 (taxes included) and is subject to availability, advanced reservations are recommended. Return to the hotel for dinner and time to relax.

**BREAKFAST-LUNCH-DINNER**

**ARENAL OBSERVATORY LODGE**



RED-EYED TREE FROG BY JOHN EARL KNEISLER

## DAY 7 | MON | 23 JAN | GUANACASTE

Check out after breakfast at the lodge, and begin the drive to Guanacaste. En route, stop for a visit at Hacienda El Viejo Wetlands, a private wildlife refuge. Here, enjoy a typical Costa Rican buffet lunch at La Casona, a historical home dating back nearly 150 years that evokes the spirit of Costa Rica's colonial era. Then, set out onto the Tempisque River on a boat tour of the wetland refuge, where you'll see an incredible number of birds, monkeys, iguanas, and crocodiles. Return to La Casona to enjoy a cup of coffee and some fruit before departing the hacienda and continuing to Guanacaste. Check in upon arrival, and enjoy the rest of the evening at leisure to explore the hotel facilities. Dinner at the hotel.

**BREAKFAST-LUNCH-DINNER**

**PAPAGAYO GOLDEN PALMS BEACHFRONT HOTEL**

## DAY 8 | TUE | 24 JAN | GUANACASTE

Today is at leisure to enjoy the beach. Set on the shores of the Gulf of Papagayo, located on the northern Pacific coast of Guanacaste, this is the most desirable beach zone in Costa Rica. This area is famous for sunshine, surfing, eco adventures, incredible biodiversity, and natural beauty. Enjoy a day of swimming, lounging, reading, or take advantage of day tours (at your own cost) such as hiking on local trails, deep-sea fishing excursions, surfing, sea kayaking, paddleboarding lessons, mountain biking on coastal trails, beach activities, and relaxing in the surrounding areas. If desired, your guide will be available for trail walks in the morning or afternoon.

**BREAKFAST-LUNCH-DINNER**

**PAPAGAYO GOLDEN PALMS BEACHFRONT HOTEL**



## DAY 9 | WED | 25 JAN | GUANACASTE

After breakfast, head to nearby Flamingo Beach for a scenic catamaran journey along the beautiful Pacific coast. From the dock, take a brief ride by motorized tender to arrive at the catamaran, and then board to set sail! Enjoy a picnic-style meal on board, then swim and snorkel from the catamaran in search of tropical fish, octopuses, sea stars, and rays. At the end of the cruise, board the tender back to shore and return to the hotel. The afternoon is at leisure to explore the beach or relax. This evening, gather to share a farewell dinner at the hotel.

**BREAKFAST-LUNCH-DINNER**

**PAPAGAYO GOLDEN PALMS BEACHFRONT HOTEL**

## DAY 10 | THU | 26 JAN | FAREWELL!

After breakfast, travel approximately 30 minutes to the international airport in Liberia for flights home. Flights should be scheduled to depart after 2 pm. Latest hotel check-out time is noon.

**BREAKFAST**



This program includes optional carbon offsetting with ClimateSafe. Learn more at [holbrooktravel.com/climatesafe](https://holbrooktravel.com/climatesafe)

## PRICING DETAILS

**\$3,225 per person**

Price includes:

- Accommodations, meals, and activities as described, including entrance fees
- Non-alcoholic beverages with meals
- Full-time guide for duration of the program
- Private vehicle transportation and driver
- Departure tax
- Carbon offset

Price does not include: International airfare, travel insurance, tips/gratuities, drinks purchased on own, or items of a personal nature.

Holbrook can assist with making flight arrangements if desired. If making arrangements on your own, please note flight plans should be made to arrive in San José (SJO) and depart from Liberia (LIR).

## THE FINE PRINT

Cost is based on a minimum of 10 participants in double occupancy. A \$200 per person deposit and enrollment form are required to reserve your space on this trip.

Please note: Your participation as a traveler indicates acceptance of Holbrook Travel's Covid-19 protocols in place at time of travel. Holbrook Travel strongly recommends the purchase of travel insurance for medical emergencies while traveling and to protect your investment. Please note the purchase of Cancel for Any Reason Coverage or to exclude pre-existing conditions with Trip Cancellation coverage may require policy purchase within 10-14 days of your initial deposit, depending upon the provider.

**Single room supplement:** \$675

**Final payment due date:** October 14, 2022



**FOR MORE INFORMATION, OR TO ENROLL:**

DEBBIE JORDAN | [debbie@holbrooktravel.com](mailto:debbie@holbrooktravel.com) | 866-748-6146 | [holbrook.travel/dns-cr23](https://holbrook.travel/dns-cr23)