

EXPLORING COSTA RICA ITINERARY Including Manuel Antonio

1 night San Jose ~ 3 nights Tortuguero ~ 2 nights Arenal ~ 2 nights Monteverde
~ 5 nights Manuel Antonio ~ 1 night San Jose

Day 1 SAN JOSE

On arrival into **San Jose** International Airport you will be met by our ground agents and transferred to the **San Gildar Hotel** for your first night in Costa Rica BB.

- **San Gildar Hotel.** Just 22 kms away from the airport and a 10-minute ride from downtown San Jose, this hotel is located in the historical, picturesque town of San Rafael de Escazu. The colonial style of this hotel is framed by beautiful gardens. It has 30 rooms, a restaurant overlooking the pool. It is an ideal hotel to relax in after your long journey to Costa Rica.

Other hotels we recommend are the Alta Hotel, Grano de Oro, the Xandari Plantation & Peace Lodge

Day 2 TORTUGUERO

Early morning pick-up to join a small group travelling by road through the coffee & banana plantations and then transferring to river boat to arrive in **Tortuguero** to stay at the **Mawamba Lodge** for 3 nights. You are escorted by a guide and a driver, stopping en route at some amazing viewpoints and places of interest. This is a great introduction to Costa Rica and you will learn a lot from your guide.

- **Mawamba Lodge** is a great lodge with a lovely swimming pool and bar. Full board and regular tours are included. Tours include is an early morning bird watching tour, trek to the Butterfly farm and Tortuguero Hill, the night-time nesting turtle tour along the beach (extra \$10 charge).

Note: As the return flight has a 20Lb luggage limit you will leave the majority of your luggage @ your hotel in San Jose. Our ground agents will then collect your luggage and have it with them when they meet you off your flight from Tortuguero.

Other lodges we recommend are Laguna, Pachira & Evergreen Lodges

Day 5 ARENAL VOLCANO

After breakfast you will be transferred by riverboat to the local airstrip to take the flight back to San Jose. On arrival in San Jose our ground agents will meet you and you will either be taken to collect a 4X4 to continue on a self-drive option, or have private guided transfers. The 4X4 option has the CDW included in the price but the excess in Costa Rica is \$1000.00. To cover this you can take out an optional insurance cover @ \$20 per day, paid locally. It is perfectly safe to drive in Costa Rica, although it can be tiring due to the bad road conditions, having the 4X4 gives you the opportunity to explore the country. With the private transfers you will be driven between hotels by a guide who is fluent in English and will give you all sorts of information on Costa Rica and its people, stopping en route at places of interest. He will then leave you to your own devices whilst at the hotels..

Self-drive or have a private transfer to the Arenal Volcano area for 2 nights @ either **the Arenal Springs Hotel, the Lost Iguana Resort Hotel or the Arenal Kioro Hotel BB.**

Arenal Volcano is the most spectacular sight in all of Costa Rica. It erupts at least once every hour, it is mesmerising at any time of day, but it is especially magical at night, when a river of red-hot magma flows down its northern slopes. The Tabacon Hot Springs Resort is a very special place, there are 10 pools of thermomineral waters heated naturally by the volcano, with temperatures ranging from 23°C to 40°C. The pools are reputed to cure any number of maladies. Most people spend at least half a day and evening here, relaxing in the pools whilst drinking a cocktail watching the lava flowing from the volcano, having massage treatments or dining in the excellent restaurant. In & around this area there are lots of activities; horse riding, mountain biking, Arenal Lake- which offers lots of activities, including fishing and water sports- canopy tours, suspension bridges & close by is the Cano Negro Wildlife Refuge.

- **Arenal Springs Resort** is located between the Tabacon Hot Springs and the village of La Fortuna where you can see the north face of the active volcano from your private porch. All 26 new colonial style Deluxe Cabins offer an impressive & unobstructed view of Arenal Volcano. There is also a pool & restaurant.
- The **Lost Iguana Resort** @ Arenal offers 24 luxury rooms & a villa within a 100 acre rain forest property with direct volcano views. All rooms are spacious, beautifully designed with large private balconies. The property has its own trails, a double swimming pool with swim-up bar & excellent restaurant. The Luxury Suite is the ideal romantic room with its own Jacuzzi on the deck with fantastic views of the jungle & volcano
- **Arenal Kioro Hotel** is located in the most perfect location to view & actually be able to hear the volcano. This is one of the newest hotels, with all rooms being suites, which offer excellent facilities with each room having direct views of the volcano & each room has its own private Jacuzzi bath, also with volcano views. The hotel has a wonderful restaurant, spa, its own nature trails & pool. They do also offer transfers to their own hot springs.

Other hotels we recommend are the Arenal Country Inn, the Paraiso, & the Arenal Observatory Lodge

Day 7 MONTEVERDE CLOUD FOREST

Depart to drive or have a private transfer to the **Monteverde Cloud Forest** and 2 nights at **the Fonda Vela Hotel BB**. Monteverde is a lush plateau that is 4,592 feet above the Guanacaste plains. The Cloud Forest Reserve is extraordinary – a lush mountain habitat formed by a combination of high humidity and low cloud cover from trade winds. The area receives between 3 and 5 metres of rain each year, water which provokes incredibly lush plant growth: ferns and moss, orchids and magnolia and huge zapote trees. Animal life is also abundant; more than 1200 species of reptiles and amphibians, 400 types of bird and 100 different mammals are found here. Most people walk the park unescorted, but can join a guided tour if you wish. Downtown Monteverde is a bustling little village.

- All the rooms at the **Fonda Vela hotel** were designed having nature in mind, so large windows give guests the feeling of the forest being right in their room. It occupies 35 acre farm on the edges of the cloud forest, it is the nearest accommodation to the reserve. It is managed by 2 brothers, themselves sons of Quakers born in Monteverde.

Other hotels we recommend are the El Establo, Trapp Family Lodge, the Belmar & the Sapo Dorado.

Day 9 MANUEL ANTONIO

Depart with your 4X4 or by private transfer to the **Manuel Antonio** area and 5 nights at the **El Parador Hotel** BB. Reputed to have some of the best beaches in Costa Rica, Manuel Antonio has an ideal combination of beach and wildlife. The National park is one of the countries smallest, but is also one of its liveliest. The animals and wildlife are easily viewed here. There are lots of activities that you can enjoy in this area .. deep sea fishing, diving, snorkelling, white water rafting, take a canopy tour, visit the national park and just relax on a beach or by your hotels pool

- The **El Parador Hotel** is hidden in a small private world, surrounded by beautiful gardens and plenty of space. All rooms have a fabulous view of the Pacific Ocean and the jungle, which is very close. El Parador Hotel brings luxury to the jungle. It is built in a Spanish style with antique Spanish furniture. Facilities include a gym, infinity swimming pool, tennis courts, mini golf course and shuttle service to the National Park and beach. They have various room types within the hotel grounds.

◇ **Deluxe Superior** rooms. Are the newest rooms @ the hotel and are lovely & spacious, generally they only have a garden view although some have a glimpse of the ocean.

◇ **Premium** rooms. Are located in a separate building, along with the Premium Plus rooms, and have a “cliff lift” up to them. Rooms are spacious and have a balcony with either a jungle or ocean view.

◇ **Premium Plus** rooms. There are only 2 of these rooms as they are the corner rooms which have a double wrap around balcony. You will have a full ocean view as well as the jungle view.

Other hotels we recommend are **Tulemar Bungalows, La Mansion, the Costa Verde, Makanda by the Sea, La Mariposa & at Jaco the superb Villa Caletas.**

Day 14 SAN JOSE

Depart with the 4X4 or by private transfer back to **San Jose** for your last night in Costa Rica at the **San Gildar Hotel** BB. With the 4X4 option you will leave the vehicle at the hotel ready for collection.

Day 15

Private transfer to the airport to check-in for your return flight to the UK

Prices from £1400.00 PER PERSON

Including all domestic flights

Excluding international flights