



# Costa Rica: Rainforests, Volcanoes & Wildlife

9 days | 12 days with Manuel Antonio & San José extension

From misty cloud forests and lush jungles to volcanic landscapes and sun-kissed beaches, there's so much to love about this Central American hot spot. Begin this small group Adventure Tour in Tortuguero, home to picturesque rainforest canals, then take a dip in the natural hot springs at the foot of the mighty Arenal Volcano and explore the majestic cloud forest region before ending your tour in San José.



## Your tour package includes

- 8 nights in handpicked hotels
- 8 breakfasts
- 5 lunches
- 5 dinners with beer or wine
- 2 tastings
- 9 sightseeing tours
- Expert Tour Director & local guides
- Private deluxe motor coach

## Included highlights

- Tortuguero National Park
- Arenal Volcano National Park hike
- Organic pineapple farm
- Heliconia Ranch tree planting
- Coffee & cocoa plantation
- Santa Elena Cloud Forest Reserve
- Toucan Rescue Ranch

## Tour pace

On this guided tour, you'll walk for about 2.5 hours daily across moderately uneven terrain, including paved roads, unpaved trails, and muddy paths, with some hills.

## Group size

10-22

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## San José → 1 night

### Day 1: Arrival in San José

*Included meals: light dinner*

Fly to Costa Rica and settle in to your hotel in San José. Enjoy a light dinner this evening.

*Please note: If you arrive after 9pm, dinner will be served in your hotel room.*

## Tortuguero → 2 nights

### Day 2: Transfer to Tortuguero

*Included meals: breakfast, lunch, welcome dinner*

Pass through Braulio Carrillo National Park, home to many dormant volcanoes and placid crater lakes. Then, hop aboard a boat as you travel to your eco-friendly rainforest lodge in Tortuguero. Enjoy an included lunch and get settled in to your hotel.

Later, get to know your group at a welcome dinner.

*Please note: From July through September, for an additional cost, you can book a green sea turtle beach walk for this evening through your Tour Director.*

### Day 3: Walking & boating tour of Tortuguero National Park

*Included meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner*

Get to know Tortuguero National Park, a tropical rainforest, on a guided tour.

- Learn about the park's diverse habitats, including mangrove forests, swamps, and beaches, on a walk led by your naturalist guide
- Board a boat and cruise through the park, seeking out monkeys, tapirs, caimans, and more
- View the freshwater creeks and lagoons, home to endangered turtles and over 50 species of fish
- Spot the local flora and fauna along the rainforest canals
- Enjoy an included lunch featuring local cuisine

Spend a free afternoon in Tortuguero or add an excursion.

Sit down for an included dinner of traditional Costa Rican food.

+ Tortuguero National Park: Rainforest Kayaking Tour

## Arenal Region → 2 nights

### Day 4: Arenal Region via organic pineapple farm & salsa dance class

*Included meals: breakfast, lunch, tasting*

Journey by boat through the jungled canals of Tortuguero National Park. Then continue by bus to the Arenal region, making stops along the way.

- Sit down at a local restaurant for a family-style Costa Rican lunch
- Visit an eco-friendly, organic pineapple farm in the Sarapiquí region
- Hop aboard a tractor to tour the farm and visit the pineapple fields
- Learn how pineapple is grown using compost fertilization, natural herbicides, and crop rotation
- Try fresh-cut pineapple and pineapple juice before learning how to make a piña colada and enjoying the homemade drink

This evening, meet with a local dance instructor and learn how salsa was introduced in Costa Rica. Then, get out on the dance floor for a lesson on the basic steps and spins, and enjoy an evening of fun.

### Day 5: Hiking tour of Arenal National Park & ranch visit

*Included meals: breakfast, lunch*

Hike through Arenal Volcano National Park on a guided tour.

- View the mile-high volcano, a near-perfect conical shape that emerges from the Sierra de Tilarán mountain range
- Gaze at the placid Lake Arenal, watching for northern jacana, woodpeckers, and kingfishers by its shores

*Please note: Travelers should be able to hike around two miles over uneven terrain and hardened lava.*

This afternoon, visit an eco-friendly ranch in La Fortuna.

- Enjoy a farm-to-table lunch featuring ingredients harvested on-site
- Explore the grounds with a local guide

- Learn how the ranch became the country's first carbon-negative company by using sustainable farming practices

Spend a free evening in the Arenal region or add an excursion.

+ Arenal Hot Springs & Dinner

## Monteverde → 2 nights

### Day 6: Monteverde via Heliconia Ranch, coffee, cocoa & sugarcane tastings

*Included meals: breakfast, lunch, tasting*

Get another look at the spectacular Lake Arenal as you travel to Monteverde by boat and bus.

There, learn about Costa Rica's diverse ecology and vibrant culture.

- Help with reforestation efforts by planting a native tree at Heliconia Ranch
- Have lunch at a local farm and enjoy coffee and dairy products cultivated on-site
- Watch traditional Costa Rican dances performed by the ranch's staff
- Head to a nearby coffee plantation to learn about the history and production of coffee beans
- Sample some of the locally sourced coffee
- Discover how cocoa is produced and turned into chocolate before sampling the sweet treat
- Enjoy a tasting of raw sugarcane as you hear how it's harvested

Spend a free evening in Monteverde or add an excursion.

+ Monteverde Cloud Forest Nighttime Wildlife Walk

### Day 7: Hiking tour of Santa Elena Cloud Forest Reserve

*Included meals: breakfast, dinner*

Join your Tour Director for a hike through Santa Elena Cloud Forest Reserve, a haven for birdwatchers.

- Learn about variety of flora and fauna, including orchids and ferns
- Walk through the misty forest as you explore this rare ecosystem, which gets its name from the constant cloud coverage
- Try to spot toucans, hummingbirds, resplendent quetzals, and more

*Please note: Travelers should be able to hike around two miles over wet, and potentially slippery, pathways.*

Enjoy a free afternoon in Monteverde or add an excursion.

Later, sit down for an included dinner at a local restaurant.

+ Sky Walk

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## San José → 1 night

### Day 8: San José via Toucan Rescue Ranch

*Included meals: breakfast, farewell dinner*

Travel to San José, stopping along the way to tour the Toucan Rescue Ranch.

- Learn about the company's mission to rescue, rehabilitate, and release Costa Rican wildlife
- Set off on a walk around the property with a local guide to see parrots, macaws, owls, sloths, spider monkeys, weasels, and more
- Discover the importance of conservation in Costa Rica as you hear the stories of how the animals arrived at the ranch

Head to a local restaurant to enjoy live music, dancing, and scenic vistas as you celebrate your trip during a farewell dinner.

*Please note: On some departures the visit to Toucan Rescue Ranch may take place on day 2.*

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## Flight Home

### Day 9: Departure

*Included meals: breakfast (excluding early morning departures)*

Transfer to the airport for your flight home or extend your stay in Costa Rica to explore Manuel Antonio.

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## + Manuel Antonio & San José extension

You know how they say "good things come in small packages"? Well, that's Manuel Antonio 100%. Take a tour of Costa Rica's littlest national park to uncover its incredible biodiversity—and its postcard-worthy beaches.

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## Manuel Antonio → 2 nights

### Day 9: Manuel Antonio National Park

*Included meals: breakfast, dinner*

Make your way south to the country's smallest national park, popular for its breathtaking beaches and scenic hiking trails. Uncover its incredible biodiversity and postcard-worthy beaches on a guided tour.

- Keep an eye out for some of the 109 mammal species and 270 bird species that call the park home
- Walk to the top of rocky Cathedral Point to view the park from across the Pacific
- See the blowhole at Escondido Beach
- Survey the saw cliff and sea caves at Serrucho Point
- Relax on the beach or take a dip in the Pacific Ocean

Sit down for an included dinner this evening.

### Day 10: Free day in Manuel Antonio

*Included meals: breakfast*

Enjoy a free day in Manuel Antonio or add an excursion.

+ Manuel Antonio Catamaran Cruise

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## San José → 1 night

### Day 11: Tárcoles River cruise & transfer to San José

*Included meals: breakfast, farewell dinner*

Travel to the quiet town of Tárcoles and set out on a riverboat tour of the Tárcoles River led by a local guide.

- Soak in views of lush mangrove forests and jungle scenery
- Look out for wildlife such as crocodiles, iguanas, lizards, monkeys, and birds

This afternoon, travel back to San José and sit down for an included farewell dinner at a local restaurant.

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## Flight Home

### Day 12: Departure

*Included meals: breakfast (excluding early morning departures)*

Transfer to the airport for your flight home.

# Customize your experience

Customize your tour by adding excursion options. Excursions offered on the same day will occur at different times, so there's no need to choose. Save \$10 when you book your excursion up to three days before your tour departs.\* Excursions requiring advance reservation only list this discounted price. Call or go online to customize your tour: [goaheadtours.com/CRP](http://goaheadtours.com/CRP) | 1-800-597-0350

## **Day 3: Tortuguero National Park: Rainforest Kayaking Tour**

\$55/\$65\* (2 hours, departs in the afternoon)

Tortuguero National Park is known for its serene network of canals that wind through the tropical rainforest. The best way to explore these waterways? By kayak, of course! Take a boat to the local ranger station to meet up with a naturalist guide and board your kayak, which is specially designed to navigate the waterways. You'll paddle through natural canals, lagoons, and hidden coves while learning about the lush flora and fauna found in the rainforest. Keep your eyes peeled for wildlife, like river otters and manatees, and admire the scenery as you paddle to portions of the park only accessible by kayak. After your tour, travel back to your hotel by boat.

Snorkel in the calm turquoise waters as you explore the underwater beauty up close. Please note: This excursion is weather-dependent and will run in the afternoon from January to March and in the morning from April through mid-December.

## **Day 5: Arenal Hot Springs & Dinner**

\$95/\$105\* (5 hours, departs in the afternoon with dinner)

The afternoon is yours to explore an array of heated pools, kept warm by geothermal activity surrounding the Arenal Volcano. Then, enjoy dinner, along with views of the volcano, at a restaurant in the charming town of La Fortuna before traveling back to your hotel.

## **Day 6: Monteverde Cloud Forest Nighttime Wildlife Walk**

\$39/\$49\* (3 hours, departs in the evening)

When the day ends and the sun sets on Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve, a variety of nocturnal animals are just waking up. On this evening's tour, you'll join a naturalist guide for an evening walk to learn about nocturnal life in the cloud forest. A flashlight will be provided for each traveler so you can navigate the terrain of the forest. Depending on the season, you may see sleeping birds such as quetzals, toucans, and bellbirds. Some of the most frequently observed animals include kinkajous, sloths, olingos, and monkeys. Plus, your guide will point out species of snakes, tarantulas, and frogs that can only be viewed at night.

## **Day 7: Sky Walk**

\$65/\$75\* (time length varies, departure time varies)

The canopy layer of the Costa Rican rainforest teems with life, but until recently, it was difficult for travelers to enter this world. On today's excursion, a guided tour brings you to a series of suspended bridges high above the floor of the Monteverde cloud forest.

## **Extension excursion options**

### **Day 10: Manuel Antonio Catamaran Cruise**

\$115/\$125\* (3 hours, departure time varies)

Spend the afternoon cruising along the central Pacific coast of Quepos on board the Ocean King catamaran, the largest in Central America. Sail through the various islands and rock formations as you explore Manuel Antonio National Park from the water, keeping an eye out for dolphins and sea birds that inhabit the area.

\*Optional excursions may be purchased up to three days prior to departure or while on tour. Pre-purchased optional excursions cannot be canceled within three days prior to departure or while on tour. Select optional excursions require advance booking and cannot be purchased or canceled after the advanced reservation deadline. GAT accepts payment by cash, Visa or MasterCard for optional excursions purchased on tour. Additional fees may apply for optional excursions purchased on tour. Excursions require a minimum number of participants to operate. Details and prices are subject to change. Due to seasonal hours of operation and availability, some excursions may not operate. If this occurs, you will be refunded any payments made for that excursion post-tour. Learn more at [goaheadtours.com/terms](http://goaheadtours.com/terms)