

Costa Rica Highlights
Sightseeing & Ecotourism
9 Days / 8 Nights



❖ **Day 1: SAN JOSE, COSTA RICA**

Arrival at the Juan Santamaria International Airport in San Jose. A Swiss Travel representative will meet and greet you upon arrival at the main international arrival exit of the Airport. At that time you will be provided with all the necessary documentation that you will need during your vacation such as day by day itinerary, general important information, phone number contacts and eventually respond to any doubt that you might have. Afterwards you will be transferred to your selected Hotel in the San Jose area, for a one night stay.

❖ **Day 2: (B, L, D) SAN JOSE – TORTUGUERO NATIONAL PARK**

Early in the morning you will depart from San Jose to the North Caribbean Plains, where the most important attraction is the Tortuguero National Park, one of the most exuberant national parks in Costa Rica. On the way, you will be ascending through the Central Volcanic mountain range where you will appreciate from the bus, beautiful waterfalls and the always green forests which adorn the Braulio Carrillo National Park. As you reach the Caribbean plains you will notice a change in the climate, as it becomes a bit warmer and humid but pleasant. After breakfast on route the journey will continue passing very likely through banana fields and getting deeper in the rural roads until reaching a local dock where the boats are waiting to transfer you to Tortuguero. An approximate one and half hour boat ride, will take you through the canals sheltered in the jungle of the rain forest. From the boat, you will be able to admire the unique flora and fauna of this area, along with different types of birds. Upon arrival and check in at your selected lodge in the Tortuguero area, there could be a short briefing of the lodge, activities and afterwards lunch. Lodging for the next two nights at your selected lodge in the area. In the afternoon you will visit the village of Tortuguero where you will learn the lifestyle of local residents as per example the different coloring of their homes surrounded by the gorgeous canals and in general also to know the significant conservation efforts that some NGOs (non-governmental organizations) have developed to protect the sea turtles that come to span each year along the 20 miles of the protected coastline.

❖ **Day 3: (B, L, D) TORTUGUERO NATIONAL PARK**

During this day you will explore (by boat) some of the secondary canals in this paradisiacal place, having the opportunity to observe from close the nature that surrounds it. Many natural navigable canals and lagoons which crosses the park offers the opportunity to contemplate the biological diversity of this region. We can point out the variety of birds, turtles, reptiles, the forests and even some mammals. The park has a total of 76,316 protected hectares, with the approximately 26, 156 land with the different Canals and deltas, in which mostly is to conserve the wetlands and there is a bigger protected portion of the park which covers beaches and the sea (specially created to protect the sea turtle). The average annual rainfall is between 4,500 to 6,000mm. Rest of the day at leisure. From July to September, you might take on your own the optional (extra cost) excursion to observe the turtles at night. This being one of the most impressive natural events, as many sea turtles arrive from hundreds of kilometers away to lay their eggs close by the beaches.

❖ **Day 4: (B, L) TORTUGUERO-ARENAL VOLCANO**

At mid-morning the journey continues with a boat transfer back to the local dock and afterwards continuing by road to the Northern Plains. On route we will be making a connection and lunch stop in the area of Guapiles. This route offers amazing mountain views, passing nearby rural towns such as Sarapiquí, Rio Cuarto and Aguas Zarcas. You will also observe from the road, one of the major sources of revenue in the area: the agriculture, so you will have the opportunity according with the season to see from the distance, the crops of pineapple, oranges, sugar cane, yucca and many others.

Arrive to La Fortuna de San Carlos town late afternoon where if the weather conditions permits it, you will be able to observe the mighty Arenal Volcano which welcomes you to the area, with its impressive perfect conic shape. Check in at the selected hotel, where you will be staying the next two nights.

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❖ **Day 5: (B, D) ARENAL VOLCANO**

Morning at leisure.

In the afternoon you will be provided with a hike in the Arenal Volcano trails and the visit to Tabacon Hot Springs. Within the trails you will observe the wide variety of flora and fauna existing in the area, and a nearby viewpoint will let you appreciate ancient lava flows that have turned to stone over the centuries. The tour guide will share important information about the area, as well as useful recommendations that will allow you to discover more secrets of the wildlife that hides among the vegetation, making this a unique and unforgettable experience. The hike concludes about 2.5 hours later, after which you will be transferred to a natural hot springs Paradise, where pools at different temperatures will make you relax even more. If you wish to achieve the maximum relaxation effect alternate between the different pools, with the sound of the surrounding jungle to entertain you. At the end of the day, you will enjoy a delicious dinner at the restaurant in this property and relax for a while before starting your journey back to your hotel.

❖ **Day 6: (B) ARENAL VOLCANO - MONTEVERDE**

Morning departure from Arenal Volcano to the Cloud Forest area in Monteverde. This service is considered a transfer tour, as you will be crossing by boat the Arenal Lake, which is the largest and the most important lake in Costa Rica. The first part of the trip is adorned with the beautiful scenery of the Arenal Lake. Then will start the driving ascending through the Tilaran Mountain Range. The final portion of your journey is on gravel roads, giving you more time to enjoy beautiful mountain scenery and you will also feel a slight change of temperature as per the location above 1300 meters above sea level.

Monteverde is known for its diverse and rich tropical cloud forests. Wind-sculptured elfin woodlands on the exposed ridges are spectacularly dwarfed, whereas protected cove Monteverde cloud forests have majestically tall trees festooned with orchids, bromeliads, ferns, vines, and mosses. Alpine like weather will revive the rural experience of our country. You will be staying the next two nights at selected hotel. Rest of the day at leisure. You can explore on your own cost some of the different attractions of the area such as the Sky Walk a network of suspension bridges and trails built within the Forest, horseback riding or even the Sky Trek (a canopy tour), there is the Trapiche cultural tour, Butterfly Garden and others to explore.

❖ **Day 7: (B) MONTEVERDE**

This morning you have programmed a tour to Monteverde Cloud Forest Private Reserve. You will set out to discover the secrets of the misty cloud forest with its dense vegetation and majestic trees, enjoying its climate and hiking the trails amongst the varieties of plants and over 450 bird species seen in the area. It protects and provides habitat for hundreds of species of flora and fauna. The reserve is 26,000 acres and is an important link in the growing network of protected areas in Costa Rica. Located at an altitude between 1,200 and 1,600 m, this cloud forest gives you the chance of exploring a different type of forest, allowing you to make your very own comparison between the biodiversity found in a rainforest and a cloud forest, proving that Costa Rica is full of natural treasures. This four-hour tour will show you all the different types of ecosystems to be found in the region, as you learn more about the unique wildlife, many of which is endemic to the area. Afternoon will be at leisure. Overnight at selected hotel in the area.

❖ **Day 8: (B) MONTEVERDE – SAN JOSE**

Today you will be provided with the unescorted shuttle service back to San Jose. On your way down from Monteverde, you will observe the plains and even on a clear day in the far distance, our pacific coastal side. Then you make your way through the mountainous range and into the central valley, right in the heart of Costa Rica. You will be staying the last night of the program at your selected Hotel in San Jose.

❖ **Day 9: (B) SAN JOSE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT**

According to your international flight departure you will be transported from your hotel in San Jose to the Juan Santamaria International Airport (SJO) for your departure flight.

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Services included in this package:

- Airfare Curacao – Bogota – San Jose – Bogota – Curacao on Copa.
- Fuel charges and taxes
- Regular arrival and departure transfers.
- Two (2) nights total accommodations at Selected Hotel in the San Jose area. One night at the beginning and one night at the end of the itinerary.
- Two (2) nights/3 days regular package at selected lodge, Tortuguero. Includes: Ground and boat transportation (San Jose – Tortuguero – Guapiles), lodging, daily meals, visit to the Tortuguero Village and tour to the secondary Tortuguero canals. (Activities subject to changes as per logistics of the lodge.)
- Regular transfer from Guapiles (drop off point of the Tortuguero package) to the Arenal Volcano selected hotel.
- Two (2) night accommodations at selected hotel in Arenal Volcano.
- Regular Half Day Arenal Volcano Hike and Tabacon Hot Springs. Includes: Transportation, Guide, entrance fees & dinner.
- Regular transfer from Arenal to Monteverde area. Crossing the Arenal Lake by boat.
- Two (2) nights' accommodations at the selected Hotel in Monteverde.
- Regular half day Monteverde Cloud Forest Private Reserve. Includes: Transportation, Guide, and entrance fee.
- Regular transfer from Monteverde to San Jose.
- Regular departure transfer from San Jose selected hotel to (SJO) Juan Santamaria International Airport.
- Meals: 8 breakfasts, 3 lunches & 3 dinners.
- Sales taxes.

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Important General Remarks:

- Program are based on a minimum 2 persons

SUPERIOR OPTION:

Area / City	Hotel Name	Category	Type of Room
San Jose:	Wyndham Herradura	4 stars	Superior
Tortuguero:	Pachira Lodge	3 stars	Standard
Arenal Volcano:	Arenal Spings	4 stars	Jr. Suite
Monteverde:	Ficus Lodge	3 stars	Deluxe

Period of Validity	DOUBLE	TRIPLE	CHILD*
20AUG – 28NOV 2018	ANG4750	ANG4328	ANG2508

- Rates are per person in ANG.

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