EXPLORE! Tour Notes

PRICE GUARANTEE 100% NO SURCHARGES

Quetzals of the Cloudforest (CC 2015)

WILDLIFE

TOURDURAT
15
DAYS

Tour Style: Classic
Tour Pace: Moderate
Tour Type: Small Groups
Tour Comfort: Standard
tour Code: CC

Tour Highlights - Quetzals of the Cloudforest

- ✓ Nature and wildlife - See sloths, monkeys, brightly coloured frogs and a plethora of spectacular birdlife in their natural environment
- ✓ Volcanoes - Admire the classic cone-shape of Arenal and the vastness of Poas
- ✓ Tortuguero - Cruise the jungle waterways and explore the rainforest in search of abundant wildlife in this 'mini Amazon'
- ✓ Monteverde - Search for the beautiful quetzal in this remarkable cloudforest reserve
- ✓ Manuel Antonio - Share the stunning white-sand beaches with sun-bathing iguanas and Capuchin monkeys

Tour Essentials

Accommodation:	12 nights Standard Hotel 2 nights Standard Lodge
Included Meals:	14 breakfasts, 3 lunches, 2 dinners
Start Point:	Join tour: San Jose
End Point:	Tour ends: San Jose
Transport:	Bus, Boat
Countries:	Costa Rica

Quetzals Of The Cloudforest

On this journey through Costa Rica, we discover rich nature and unique wildlife as we explore the towering volcanoes of Arenal and Poas; the lush rainforests of Santa Elena and Tortuguero and the beautiful beaches of Manuel Antonio. The birdlife is a particular highlight and we hope to spot the rare and beautiful quetzal, as well as colourful toucans, hummingbirds, kingfishers and parrots.

Suitability

We've given each of our tours a comfort rating and a tour pace, walking or cycling grade to give you a general idea about the level of activity on each tour and the standard of accommodation you will be staying in at the end of your day's adventure.

Often you'll stay in different styles of accommodation during your tour; so we make an average rating across the entire tour. For more information on where you'll stay each night, please refer to the day by day tour itinerary.

Tour Comfort: Standard

Our mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en-suite facilities.

Tour Style: Classic

Packed with adventure, these tours offer inspiring destinations and authentic travel experiences at a reasonable price. Using all kinds of transport and accommodation, we'll take you off the beaten track to discover the true heart of the people and places you visit.

Tour Pace: Moderate

These moderately paced tours provide some busy days with plenty of experiences to enjoy, as well as time to relax along the way.

Your tour itinerary

Tour itinerary notes

While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested.

Your Tour Leader

A Tour Leader is an integral part of any Explore tour and your tour will be led by one of our experienced tour leaders who have been handpicked and expertly trained. We believe that our Tour Leaders are the key to the success of our tours; they are passionate travellers who are bursting with first-hand local knowledge which they love to share. Your Tour Leader will also take care of all the planning and organisation throughout your journey. Their passionate approach will make this tour fun and inspiring, bringing the destination to life whether you're travelling alone or with others.

DAY 1 Join tour in San Jose

After arriving in San Jose, we will check-in to our conveniently-located hotel which will be our base for the next two nights. San Jose lies in a fertile valley at an altitude of 1150 metres. Coffee and sugar cane are big industries here and coffee is even planted between new buildings and along the roadside on the outskirts of the city. The city is more cosmopolitan than other Central American capitals and is famed for its vibrant nightlife, which you may choose to sample this evening.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available **Swimming Pool Available**

Included Meals: None

DAY 2 Visit the volcanic crater at Poas; tour of San Jose

This morning, an hour's drive will take us to Volcan Poas National Park, where the smoke from one of Costa Rica's most active volcanos rises majestically from the beautiful tropical rainforest. At almost a mile in diameter, the main crater is one of the largest in the world. The national park has many interesting trails which we can explore. One of these leads to a forest-fringed lake where fiery throated hummingbirds can be seen feeding on colourful flowers. Should weather conditions prevent a visit to the Poas Volcano, we may head up to Irazu - the tallest volcano in Costa Rica, with equally spectacular views. This afternoon, an orientation tour of San Jose will help us to gain a feel for the city centre and main sights, including the National Museum.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available **Swimming Pool Available**

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 3 Drive to Turrialba; visit Guyabo

This morning, a 45-minute drive takes us to Cartago, the old colonial capital that is situated at the foot of the Irazu Volcano. After exploring some of this interesting city, we continue our journey to the town of Turrialba, where we will spend the next two nights. This area is famous for its lush natural beauty. Its fertile land makes it an important agricultural region for coffee, sugar and Macadamia nuts, as well as diary production, with its cheese being popular throughout the country. On arrival, we will visit the excavated Indian ceremonial centre at Guayabo. Dating from 1000 to 1400, this is one of the country's most important archaeological sites. Here, uncovered paved streets and water channels help us to understand about village life in that era. After this we will return to Turrialba for lunch then we will visit the remarkable serpentarium, where you can see Costa Rica's most venomous snakes and largest boas. This evening, your Tour Leader may be able to organise an optional visit to a typical 'finca', where you can enjoy dinner prepared in a traditional family way.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 4 CATIE Agricultural Research Station optional visit

Today is left free for you to spend as you wish. You may choose to try white-water rafting on the Pacuare River. Regarded as one of the country's most exciting and scenic rivers, calm stretches between the Class IV rapids allow time to appreciate your passage through rainforest-topped canyons. Alternatively, you may choose to visit CATIE (Centro Agronomico Tropical de Investigscion y Ensenanza) Research Centre. Recognised throughout the world as an important agronomic station, its environmental development projects seek to enhance human wellbeing and protect natural resources. Its botanic garden is a special place to relax, surrounded by the calls of birds, the whisper of the giant Guanacaste Tree and the imposing Ceiba.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 5 Travel by bus and boat to Tortuguero National Park

This morning, our drive to Cano Blanco takes us through extensive banana plantations and we hope to stop at a banana packing station to understand more about this important Costa Rican industry. From Cano Blanco, a boat will take us to our spectacular lodge in the Tortuguero National Park, where we will spend the next two nights. As we travel through a fascinating network of jungle waterways, it is easy to understand why this area is often described as a 'mini Amazon'. Its complex canal system and narrow lagoons link small isolated settlements and are rich in fish, including rainbow bass and grouper. They also support an abundance of birds, such as heron, stork and kingfisher. We will also take a short walking tour of the carless village of Tortuguero. Our lodge is in an idyllic setting, perched on a small slither of land between the Caribbean Sea and the waterway.

Overnight: **Standard Lodge**
Single Room Available **Swimming Pool Available**

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 6 Full day to explore the park searching for wildlife

Today, we have the opportunity to explore more of this spectacular national park. To kick off our day, there is the option of a bird watching trip by boat at dawn. For many, Costa Rican birdlife is a huge trip highlight. Amazingly, the country's 850 different species outnumber those found in the whole of Europe. This morning, stork, parrot and hummingbird are among the many birds to be spotted. Later this morning, a local guide will take us on a nature walk to understand more about the area's unique ecosystem. This afternoon,

we will take to the waterways for further exploration. On our travels, we may come across the howler monkey, aptly named by the way it noisily protects its territory. Much shyer animals in this area include ocelots, tapir and the incredibly elusive jaguar. Throughout the year, you may be lucky enough to see different species of turtle nesting close to our lodge. Hawksbills nest from October to March, with leatherbacks taking over from April to November. The best time to see this spectacle is between June and September when over five-thousand green, leatherback and, occasionally, 700-pound loggerhead turtles come ashore to nest on Tortuguero's beaches. At this time of year, there is the option of an evening turtle walk to take in this spectacle.

Overnight: **Standard Lodge**
Single Room Available **Swimming Pool Available**

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 7 Journey by boat to Cano Blanco, drive to Arenal

Leaving our lodge this morning, we travel by boat back to Cano Blanco. This afternoon, our drive skirts around the great central volcanic massif, passing through fertile farmlands, rich with tropical crops. Soon we catch sight of the famous Arenal Volcano. This classic cone, which rises to 1633 metres, is covered by a tangled mass of vegetation on one side, while the other is starkly barren. Having remained dormant for hundreds of years, it erupted unexpectedly in 1968, destroying the small towns of Tabacon and Pueblo Nuevo on its west side. After this, it was known for its regular explosions, which became a huge spectacle at night. However, since 2010, the volcano has gone quiet once more. Our accommodation for the next two nights is in La Fortuna. The town was renamed after the 1968 eruption, when it was seen as being 'fortunate' that its location, on the volcano's eastern side, saved it from decimation. This evening, we can make the most of the local geothermal activity by enjoying an optional bathe in nearby hot springs.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 8 Walk near Arenal Volcano

This morning we will explore the Arenal Volcano National Park, home to one of the most majestic volcanoes in Costa Rica.We will take a walk on the flanks of the volcano where your leader will point out interesting flora and fauna and provide more information about the science and history of the volcano . We will walk to a viewpoint for a closer view of the volcano. This afternoon has been left free to explore the area as you choose. There are local treks to waterfalls and along lava trails. Whilst those keen to relax can enjoy spa treatments with volcanic mud. Your Tour Leader will be able to provide information on all the options.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 9 Travel to the Monteverde Cloudforest Reserve

Today we will travel around Arenal Lake up into the cloud forest region of Monteverde - one of the most well-known places in Costa Rica to see wildlife. The last part of our journey is on bumpy roads, but we are rewarded with a three-night stay here to enjoy all that this area has to offer. Perched on the Continental Divide between the Pacific and the Caribbean, it is thought that there has been indigenous habitation in Monteverde since 3000 BC. However, the turning point in its recent history came in 1950, when a group of pacifist Quakers from Alabama moved here to avoid subscription in the Korean War. They sought a lifestyle in a country in which they could embrace their peaceful beliefs and continue to cultivate their dairy farms. These families went on to establish the community of Monteverde and some of its famed cloudforest reserves. Monteverde is regarded as offering some of the best canopy experiences in the world. This afternoon, you may choose to 'fly' through the dramatic scenery on a zipwire, or take a more sedate walk through the canopy on treetop walkways. This evening, there is the opportunity to go on a guided night walk in search of nocturnal species, such as pacas and tarantulas.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 10 Nature walk in the cloudforest searching for wildlife

We have the next two days to explore all that this area has to offer. The famous, but now very rare, resplendent quetzal is fairly commonly seen in this area, one of the last remaining places in Central America where its habitat has been preserved. Sacred to the ancient Maya and Aztec peoples, it is considered one of the most beautiful birds in the world and the best time to see it is during its breeding months of March and April. This morning, we will have a guided tour the Monteverde Cloudforest, walking the paths that wind their way through gigantic ferns and giant ferns and giant trees dripping with lichen and moss. The jungle floor is often littered with blossoms that fall from the high canopy providing a carpet of colour amidst the endless green. The rest of our day is free to spend as you wish. You may choose to stay longer in the Monteverde Cloudforest or explore one of the other private forest reserves in the area.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 11 Free day; options include walks in the reserve

Today has been left free to enjoy one or several of the many optional activities available in the area. You may choose to visit the local butterfly, or orchid garden. Another option is a visit to the Frog Pond conservation project, which is working to set up a genetic pool for amphibian conservation. Alternatively, you may choose to enjoy a trek in one of the other reserves. Your Tour Leader will be able to offer advice on the options available.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 12 Drive south to Manuel Antonio National Park

Leaving the cloudforest behind us this morning, we descend to the Pacific Coast, enjoying staggering views over the Gulf and Peninsula of Nicoya. Heading south, we cross the Rio Tarcoles Bridge from which huge crocodiles are regularly seen. We then pause at Carara Biological Reserve, famed for the scarlet macaws and abundant birdlife which populate this transitional forest. Finally, we continue along the Pacific Coast to Manuel Antonio National Park, where we will spend the next two nights.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available **Swimming Pool Available**

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 13 Explore Manuel Antonio's wildlife and beaches

This morning, we explore the Manuel Antonio National Park, famed for its beautiful beaches and rich wildlife. During our time in the park, we are likely to see white-faced capuchin monkeys, coatimundi (part of the racoon family) and the tiny squirrel monkeys. This is also one of the best places in Costa Rica to see sloths. The majority of a sloth's diet comes from buds and leaves. As leaves provide little energy, sloths move only when necessary and even then very slowly so they are easy to spot. The remainder of the day can be spent relaxing on the white sandy beaches, enjoying a swim in the warm azure waters. The sunsets from this coast are spectacular and have to be seen to be believed.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available **Swimming Pool Available**

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 14 Travel back to Costa Rica's capital, San Jose

After a morning relaxing on the beach, we leave the Pacific Ocean at about midday. Our journey back to Costa Rica's capital will take about four hours.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available **Swimming Pool Available**

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 15 Tour ends San Jose

Depending on your departure time today, you may wish to visit one of the several museums in town.

Included Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation and Meals

Accommodation Rating

Accommodation and service levels in Costa Rica are in general of a good standard as they are used to catering for the North American Market. Almost every hotel we stay in has air conditioning or fans. We try to avoid the use of the large chain hotels and try to use a mix of jungle and mountain lodges as well as small family run hotels. They all have private facilities. Several of our Costa Rica hotels are found on the outskirts of town - these have better facilities and larger grounds and we will have transport on hand to take us into

town for evenings.
Our San Jose hotel has modern facilities and in a great location with all the city centre attractions easily reached on foot. We then continue through the volcanic lands where we stay in a small family run hotel at the foot of the Turrialba. From here we continue to the Caribbean coast where we stay in a lodge in cabins with en-suite facilities, the lodge is within the national park on the banks of the river delta from where we will roam the tributaries on small boats searching for birds and animals. In Arenal we stay at a small, locally-owned hotel in the town centre with idyllic views of the volcano. In Monteverde we stay in a comfortable hotel on the outskirts of town. Finally we head to Manuel Antonio, a coastal location where we stay in cabins with en-suite rooms and fans, there is a pool here however the Pacific Ocean is nearby.

Food & Drink

Included meals: 14 breakfasts, 3 lunches,2 dinners included in the price of this tour. Please be prepared to pay for non-included meals. Please note that costs for drinks and meals can vary depending on location.

Budgeting for your Tour

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the tour price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs and items of a personal nature such as laundry.

Food

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide.Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Costa Rica

Lunch £: 10.00

Dinner £: 13.00

Drink

The prices for drinks can vary greatly depending upon location and the prices detailed below are an average guide. In general you would expect that drinks purchased in a supermarket or local bar to be less expensive, whilst drinks in an upmarket bar or restaurant may be more expensive.

Costa Rica

Bottle of Beer £: 1.80

Water £: 1.30

International Departure Taxes

You will need to allow USD$28 for San Jose departure airport taxes.

Other Sightseeing & Activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations.

Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Optional Excursions

Turrialba - Full day Whitewater rafting US$ 85 (grade III); Half day US$ 80; Finca visit local farm and dinner US$ 18; Catie US$ 25 (inc. guide). Catie inc. lunch US$ 45
Tortuguero - Turtle watching (in season) US$ 30; Bird/wildlife watching tour US$ 20, Spa US$ 60
Arenal - Hot springs US$ 37 (US$ 47 with dinner) plus transport; Waterfall walk US$ 15; Half day Safari float US$ 57;
Monteverde - Canopy bridges US$ 45; Night walk in Reserve US$ 48; Canopy zip wires US$ 70; Canopy and Bridges US$ 83; Butterfly garden US$ 20 (inc. transport); Orchid gardens US$ 10; Santa Elena USD$ 67
Manuel Antonio - Boat trip around NP US$ 65; Wildlife guide US$ 15 (based on group of 4).

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these trip notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations.

Tipping - Tour Leader

Tour Leader: At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Tipping - Local Crew

Local Crew: Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. Accordingly, you should allow US$ 35 for group tipping.

In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

10% is expected in restaurants.

Foreign Exchange

Costa Rica

ATM Availability: Available in Major towns. Always have some cash as back-up as they are not always reliable

Credit Card Acceptance: Credit cards are useful and can be used in many places, but may be subject to a 10% service charge

Travellers Cheques: Travellers Cheques can be awkward or expensive to change

Local Currency: Costa Rican Colon.

Recommended Currency for Exchange: Carry all your funds in US cash NOT Sterling or Travellers Cheques which are more difficult to exchange. We recommend to take a minimum of US$400-$500 of your total spending money in cash, in mixed denominations. Notes should be in good condition otherwise they might be difficult to exchange. USD can be used in some paces in Costa Rica

Where to Exchange: Your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival.

Joining your Tour

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a ‘flight inclusive’ package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the ‘Land Only’ arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific ‘Joining Instructions’ prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found on our website at www.explore.co.uk, in the tour specific dates and prices section.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer. For more information please refer to https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the ‘Land Only’ arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer please refer to https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Important Information

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

EXPLORE!
The Adventure Travel Experts

CAMPBELL IRVINE
DIRECT TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel Insurance is essential. If you have not already arranged cover, please contact our recommended Travel Insurance providers www.campbellirvinedirect.com/Explore who offer Travel Insurance specifically designed to cover travel with Explore or call **Campbell Irvine Direct** on Tel: 020 7938 1734

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Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Visa Information

Costa Rica: Citizens from the UK, US, Canada and most EU countries do not require a visa for a stay up to 90 days. Citizen of Australia, New Zealand and the Republic of Ireland do not require a visa for stays up to 30 days.

USA (If flights transit): According to US law, passengers will have to disembark, collect luggage and clear immigration before re-boarding for the onward flight.
Citizens of the UK, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and passport holders from several EU countries can enter the United States without a visa under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP). This applies if you enter the country by sea or by air on a carrier participating in the visa waiver scheme, holding a return/ onward ticket. The passport requirements are that it must be machine readable, and must contain a digital photograph of the holder and also an integrated circuit chip that stores biographic information.

All passengers travelling to the USA under the Visa Waiver Programme must provide their details online no later than 72 hours prior to travel. British travellers who have not registered before their trip are likely to be detained and sent home.

When completing an application for transit you should enter the words 'In Transit' with your final destination location in the address line. Anyone applying for an Electronic Travel Authorisation (ESTA) to travel under the Visa Waiver system will be charged a fee of 14USD (9GBP).
For more information, and to apply online, please visit the following website at https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov. Once obtained, the application will be valid for a period of two years, or for the validity of your passport (whichever is shorter).

For more information about who is eligible for the VWP, or any other questions you may have regarding your eligibility, or machine readable passports, please contact your local consular office, or visit www.usembassy.org.uk

Other nationalities should consult the relevant consulate.

All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related issues with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

Vaccinations & Protection

Costa Rica

Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure. Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against malaria, typhoid, infectious hepatitis and polio. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on different prophylaxis available against malaria. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/ and from your local healthcare provider.

Preparing for your Tour

Climate

Costa Rica

Seasonal weather patterns can be unpredictable. Up-to-date information on the weather worldwide can be found by following the BBC weather link on this page. Costa Rica has a tropical climate with high temperature humidity and rainfall. The average temperature is 21°C in the highlands and variable in the lowlands. The rainy season is from May to November and the summer from December to

April, but it does still tend to rain, usually in short bursts. Bear in mind that Costa Rica has 12 microclimates and weather can vary significantly in one day.

Clothing

Lightweight clothing is essential in midsummer though a warmer jumper is advisable for cooler evenings in the highlands (Monteverde can be very cool at night). A good waterproof is essential, and you could consider waterproof trousers. The jungle lowlands are hot and muggy, and it can rain at any time of year. Long trousers and long-sleeved shirts are recommended on jungle walks. Please be aware there is a reasonably priced / fast laundry in La Fortuna / Arenal.

Equipment

We recommend a sunhat, sunscreen, a small umbrella, a torch, insect repellent, a travel adaptor and a water bottle. Binoculars are very useful for bird and animal spotting.

Footwear

Lightweight trail/walking boots for jungle walks, comfortable shoes/trainers and sandals. In the rainy season waterproof boots are recommended.

Luggage: On Tour

One main piece of luggage and a daysac. Remember, you are expected to carry your own baggage – don't overload yourself.

Luggage allowance on tour: 20kg

General Information

Country details

Costa Rica

Population: 4,608,426

Size of Country: 51,100 sq km

Major Language: Spanish

Religion: Christian, Roman Catholic

Time Difference to GMT: -6

Electric Supply & Plugs

Costa Rica

2 Pin Flat

Why Choose Explore

We've been creating award-winning pioneering adventure holidays for over 30 years, earning the trust of thousands of delighted customers, who feel safe in our hands. Our tour leaders have expert local knowledge and our tours are designed to take you off the beaten track to see the most exotic, inspiring and dramatic places in the world.

- With over 30 years' experience, we are passionate about what we do.
- Pioneering small group adventures, self-guided, private journeys & tailormade holidays.
- Award winning tour leaders who you can trust.
- Responsible travel is and always has been one the driving principles of Explore.

Our adventure holidays are full of exciting things to see and do, exploring in small groups travelling by bus, boat, plane, rickshaw, camel, elephant, or any number of unusual forms of transport . Often you will stay in family run hotels and village houses and enjoy authentic local cuisine. In this way, it's easy to discover the true heart of the people and the place you travel to – and make some new friends along the way. Each tour is uniquely different, so please feel free to browse through our tours to see what may whet your appetite.

Our commitment to the environment

We are passionate about sustainable travel and work hard to create tours where your holiday delivers real benefits to the local communities. We minimise our impact by travelling in small groups, respecting local cultures and traditional, reducing waste and offsetting 100% of the CO2 from our flights.

When you travel with Explore, you are directly contributing to local economies and helping empower the people you meet. We currently support a range of charities and good causes, including: Toilet Twinning (helping to flush away poverty), Lone Buffalo Foundation (a community project based in Laos providing creative skills for young people), Dekamer (a turtle rescue centre in Turkey) and Kids Saving the Rainforest (a wildlife rescue centre in Costa Rica supported through the LATA foundation). We also care passionately about the world's wildlife. We are patrons of the Born Free Organisation and Friends of Conservation.

Cool Earth

Explore are proud to support Cool Earth in their effort to reduce global carbon dioxide levels through the prevention of deforestation in the South America rainforest. Cool Earth focus on areas in immediate danger of deforestation, supporting local communities to be forest guardians. To date 350,000 acres of rainforest has been protected. Saving rainforest also protects rare animals and plants, allows local forest communities to maintain their way of life, and protects a major source of oxygen and fresh water. When you travel on an Explore holiday we make a donation to Cool Earth that exceeds the impact of our customers flights each year.

Earth Matters

- The Travel Foundation

  Explore are active members and supporters of the Travel Foundation which has established a variety of sustainable tourism projects in destinations and works with industry to improve practice. Visit their website www.thetravelfoundation.org.uk
- Tourism Concern

  Explore support the work of Tourism Concern who campaign for fairly and ethically traded tourism, and are part of its Ethical Tour Operator Group www.tourismconcern.org.uk
- For further information on responsible travel go to www.explore.co.uk/ResponsibleTourism/

Know before you go

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice follow the link at www.explore.co.uk/travel-safety

Booking Your Holiday

Peace of mind - book with confidence

You can book your Explore holiday with confidence, as all monies paid to us for your trip are fully protected. Explore is a fully bonded tour operator licensed by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and by ABTOT.

The air holiday packages (Tours including flights) that we advertise are ATOL protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's LicenceÂ granted by the Civil Aviation Authority.Â Our ATOL number is ATOL 2595. In addition, As a member of the Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT), Explore has provided a bond to meet the requirements of the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992. Please note that packages booked outside the UK are only protected when purchased directly with Explore.

Reserving your place

To reserve your place on this tour you will need to check availability on the Explore website or through our dedicated call centre based in the UK where you can. Our tours can fill up quickly so you are advised to book as early as possible. If your chosen date is ‘Available’ or ‘Guaranteed’ we will be able to provisionally hold you a space for up to 48 hours.

For Self-Guided holidays and Private Journeys simply choose your date of travel and let us know so we can confirm all ground services.

The easiest way to confirm your booking is through our website. When you are ready to book, we normally require a 10% non-refundable deposit, but for some holidays this may be more to cover such items as permit fees, internal flights or other non-refundable services. If your travel starts within 60 days of booking, full payment will be required at the time of booking

100% No Surcharge Guarantee

The price paid for our holidays is no longer subject to change. Once booked and confirmed we will guarantee the price you pay will not increase, whatever the circumstances. You will not be approached to pay fuel surcharges unlike the vast majority of other adventure tour operators. The price guarantee applies to all new bookings departing between 1st January 2014 and 31st December 2015.

Tour Itinerary Versions

Itinerary details may vary depending on departure date and alternative itineraries for this tour may exist. Please refer to the dates and prices page on our website to check which itinerary operates on each departure date.

Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour but small changes may just be added to these tour notes.

Please note: 2015 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2015. 2016/17 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 2016.

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