COSTA RICA

DETAILED ITINERARY **RAINFOREST ADVENTURE** Aug 19/26

© Marcia Glick

Costa Rica is an oasis of natural wonders - volcanoes, rainforests, white sand beaches, coral reefs and wildlife - all within a world-renowned system of national parks that protects more species of mammals and birds than the continental U.S.A. and Canada combined.

Our trip features Costa Rica's natural wonders, experienced through an active program of hikes, river safaris, zip lining and rafting on the Sarapiqui River. Enjoy a cloud forest adventure in the less-visited gem of Santa Maria de Dota.

Experience the lush rainforest at Corcovado National Park, one of the most biodiverse places on Earth, with its incredible wildlife and vibrant ecosystems. Caño Island's crystal-clear waters are home to colourful coral reefs and an abundance of marine life.

At Arenal Volcano, walk on the famous Arenal Hanging Bridges and enjoy the nearby hot springs for a satisfying soak in the thermal pools. The highlight for many is the boat journey through the extensive, wildlife-rich canal system of Tortuguero National Park. For active nature lovers seeking pristine rainforest, exotic wildlife, active volcanoes and superb birding, Costa Rica is the perfect adventure destination.

FACTS & HIGHLIGHTS

• 15 land days • Maximum 16 travelers • Start and finish in San Jose • All meals included • Explore Tortuguero National Park and its jungle canals • Wildlife viewing, tropical forest walks & rafting at Sarapiqui • Enjoy Monteverde, Manuel Antonio and natural hot water springs • Visit pineapple, coffee and cocoa plantations

DEPARTURE DATES & PRICE

Dec 01 - Dec 15, 2026	-	**$5395 USD**
Jan 07 - Jan 21, 2027	-	**$5495 USD**
Feb 01 - Feb 15, 2027	-	**$5495 USD**
Dec 01 - Dec 15, 2027	-	**$5495 USD**

*Price includes new 13% sales tax.

Activity Level: 2/3

Comfort Level: Some rough, unpaved roads and long drives. The unpredictable weather is humid and tropical, especially in Tortuguero. Spurts of rain make it refreshing.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Comfortable hotels/lodges with private bathrooms.

ELDERTREKS

SMALL GROUP
EXOTIC ADVENTURES
FOR TRAVELERS 50 PLUS

DAY 1 · ARRIVE IN SAN JOSÉ

You will be met on your arrival at San Jose Airport and transferred to our hotel. Later in the evening, we meet our guide for dinner and orientation meeting.

Overnight in San Jose.

DAY 2 · LA PAZ WATERFALL GARDENS, COFFEE TOUR

Today we visit La Paz Waterfall Gardens Nature Park, featuring 5 famous waterfalls and the largest animal sanctuary in Costa Rica. Wander through the park's well-maintained trails, taking in panoramic views of the falls and surrounding tropical landscape.

Along the way, we visit Doka Estate, the oldest humid coffee processing plant that works with hydraulic power. Doka Estate has been declared an Architectural Heritage for Humanity. We learn about the vital role coffee has played in forging democracy in Costa Rica, as well as cultivating a national identity. The introduction of coffee provided a product suitable for export along with bananas and pineapples. Today, they remain the most important crops in Costa Rica. The coffee tour is packed with great tips to help make your next cup of coffee your best. You will also learn how to properly store coffee to keep it fresh and tasty.

Dinner and overnight in San Jose.

DAY 3 · SANTA MARIA DE DOTA

Today we journey to the scenic Santa María de Dota region, nestled in Costa Rica's lush Central Valley and known for its highland beauty and coffee culture. Along the way, we stop in the historic city of Cartago to visit the impressive Basilica de Nuestra Señora de los Ángeles, a major pilgrimage site, and explore the atmospheric ruins of the old parish church. After soaking in the local history, we enjoy a traditional Costa Rican lunch before continuing to Santa María de Dota. Upon arrival, we check into our hotel and settle in for a relaxing evening in the cool mountain air.

Dinner and overnight in Santa Maria de Dota region.

Sloth

DAY 4 · SANTA MARIA DE DOTA

We begin our day with an unforgettable Quetzal observation tour, where we'll have the chance to spot the stunning Resplendent Quetzal, the sacred bird of the ancient Maya. This visit will take us through lush cloud forests, offering a rare glimpse of this magnificent creature in its natural habitat.

After lunch, we'll visit Finca la Lucha sin Fin, a historica site in the pivotal 1948 revolution. It was planned and led by Pepe Figueres, the commander of the National Liberation Army. This revolution, which ultimately led to the abolition of Costa Rica's military, reshaped the nation's future.

Dinner and overnight in Santa Maria de Dota region.

DAY 5 · TO CORCOVADO NATIONAL PARK

Today we embark on a scenic drive to the picturesque Sierpe River embarkation point on our way to Corcovado National Park. We will navigate the river, which is full of mangrove trees, until we arrive at the river's mouth by the Pacific Ocean before continuing on to Corcovado Wilderness Resort. We may have the chance to spot dolphins or on occasion, depending on the season, humpedback whales.

Dinner and overnight in Corcovado National Park region.

DAY 6 · CORCOVADO - SAN PEDRILLO RANGER STATION

Set sail by boat to the stunning San Pedrillo Ranger Station in Corcovado National Park, one of the most biodiverse places on Earth. Upon arrival, embark on a guided nature hike through the park's lush rainforest, where you'll spend about two hours exploring its incredible wildlife and vibrant ecosystems. As you wander along scenic trails, keep your eyes peeled for tropical birds, monkeys, and sloths. After the hike, enjoy a relaxing picnic amidst the beauty of nature, surrounded by the sounds of the forest and the Pacific breeze.

Dinner and overnight in Corcovado National Park region.

DAY 7 · CORCOVADO - CAÑO ISLAND AND SNORKELING

Today we embark on a full-day excursion to Caño Island, just 45 minutes off the coast. This paradise destination is renowned for its crystal-clear waters and vibrant marine life. We spend the day snorkeling in the warm, turquoise waters, where you'll have the chance to swim among colorful coral reefs and tropical fish. We may see turtles, rays, or perhaps a dolphin or two. We time to unwind on the pristine beach, soaking in the sun and tranquil surroundings. A delicious picnic will be provided.

Dinner and overnight in Corcovado National Park region.

Canals of
Tortuguero

Arenal Volcano

DAY 8 · CORCOVADO TO ARENAL VOLCANO

After a short flight from Corcovado back to San José, we'll begin our drive to the majestic Arenal Volcano. As we make our way through the heart of Costa Rica, you'll be treated to a beautiful landscape, passing by vast cattle farms and lush plantations of yuca, plantains, and papayas. This journey offers a fascinating glimpse into the agricultural richness of the region, all set against the stunning backdrop of the Arenal Volcano, one of the country's most iconic natural landmarks.

Dinner and overnight in Arenal.

DAY 9 · ARENAL HANGING BRIDGES AND HOT SPRINGS

Today we visit the Arenal Hanging Bridges with our guide. This project sits within a 250-hectare (618 acre) reserve of fully recovered secondary rainforest. A visit to Arenal Hanging Bridges consists of traversing 16 bridges (8 hanging) from 5 to 100 meters long that cross the rainforest and a 3 km circuit of interpretive trails.

This afternoon we'll head to the hot springs where you can unwind and soak in the warm, soothing waters. These natural hot springs are heated by the region's geothermal activity. We will enjoy a delicious lunch afterwards.

Dinner and overnight in Arenal.

DAY 10 · TO SARAPUIQUI, ZIP LINE AND CHOCOLATE TOUR

Today we travel to the Sarapiqui region where we can enjoy a thrilling zip line tour. This optional activity offers a thrilling bird's-eye view of Costa Rica's incredible biodiversity as you glide from platform to platform through the treetops. You will experience some of the most beautiful tropical forests in Costa Rica. Staying above the canopy forest, once arriving at each platform, the professional guides will explain about the beautiful landscapes and properties you are seeing and about the significance of these forests for everyone.

Next, indulge your senses at a charming chocolate plantation, where you'll uncover the secrets of one of the world's most beloved foods. Learn about the entire process—from bean to bar—and enjoy a delicious tasting of fresh, artisanal chocolate.

Dinner and overnight in the Sarapiqui region.

DAY 11 · SARAPIQUI RAFTING ADVENTURE AND PINEAPPLE TOUR

This morning, get ready for an adrenaline-pumping river rafting experience on the thrilling Class III rapids! As you navigate the river's exciting twists and turns, you'll be surrounded by the stunning beauty of the Arenal rainforest. The rush of the rapids is only part of the adventure—keep an eye out for the vibrant wildlife and tropical birds that call this lush region home. (Rafting is an optional activity, but it's a great way to combine adventure with natural beauty in one unforgettable experience.)

Afterwards we visit a sustainable pineapple plantation near Sarapiquí. Learn how one of the country's most iconic fruits is grown, harvested, and exported, all while exploring the rich agricultural traditions of the region. Enjoy a guided walk through the fields and a fresh taste of pineapple straight from the source!

Dinner and overnight in the Sarapiqui region.

DAY 12 · TO TORTUGUERO NATIONAL PARK

This morning we depart La Fortuna and head towards Tortuguero National Park.

Three species of monkeys (spider, howler and white-faced), three-toed sloths and river otters are frequently seen along the natural inland waterways and canals. Caiman, iguanas, river turtles, basilisk lizards and poison dart Dendrobates frogs inhabit the area. 320 species of birds including all 6 species of king fishers, 3 species of toucans, 8 species of parrots and other neo-tropical species such as the slaty-tailed trogon, white-collared manakin, purple-throated ruitcrow and white-fronted nunbird all inhabit the area. We will have the opportunity to observe them during our ride through the creeks of Tortuguero National Park over the next few days.

Dinner and overnight in Tortuguero.

DAY 13 · WILDLIFE OF TORTUGUERO NATIONAL PARK

Today we travel by boat to explore the canals of Tortuguero and Cano Harold (Harold's Canal) in Tortuguero National Park. During our visit to Cano Harold, we have the opportunity to see bare-throated tiger herons, snowy egrets, boat billed herons and other species which are known to nest here.

We also visit the Atlantic Green Sea Turtle Museum founded by the Caribbean Conservation Corporation. The late Dr. Archie Carr began to study and tag the thousands of Atlantic green sea turtles that every year from June through October come to Tortuguero Beach to lay their eggs. Originally intended to protect a major nesting beach of the Atlantic green sea turtle, Tortuguero National Park now protects 51,870 acres, one of the last large areas of tropical rainforest in Central America.

Dinner and overnight in Tortuguero.

DAY 14 · TORTUGUERO TO SAN JOSE

Today, we bid farewell to the enchanting canals of Tortuguero as we begin our scenic journey back to San José. Enjoy a picturesque boat ride through the waterways, where you may still catch glimpses of wildlife along the way, including monkeys, birds, and more. From the boat dock, we'll continue by road, passing through the lush landscapes of Costa Rica's Caribbean lowlands and winding through charming towns and tropical forests. This drive offers a beautiful contrast to the wildlife haven you've just experienced, as we make our way toward the vibrant capital city of San José. Upon arrival, you'll have the evening to relax and reflect on your incredible adventure through this diverse and captivating country.

Farewell dinner and overnight in San Jose.

DAY 15 · DEPART SAN JOSÉ

Transfer to San José International airport for your homeward flight.

Coffee Plantation

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1. HOW BIG ARE THE GROUPS?

Each group is limited to 16 participants. Small groups are an important ingredient in adventure travel. They allow for more interaction and more personalized service throughout the itinerary.

2. WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE TOUR PRICE?

All accommodations throughout; all meals, starting with dinner on day 1 and finishing with breakfast on departure day (i.e. the last day of the ElderTreks tour); bottled drinking water throughout the trip; all internal transportation; airport transfers on day 1 and departure day (i.e. the last day of the ElderTreks tour); all day trips and entrance fees as outlined in the itinerary; tips for hotels (porterage), national guide, bus driver, restaurants and spot guides; services of a trip leader.

3. WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE TOUR PRICE?

International flights, tips to ElderTreks tour leader, alcoholic drinks, visas and travel insurance.

4. ARE THESE "EDUCATIONAL" TOURS?

Yes, in the broadest sense of the word, "educational". We visit museums, National Parks and Reserves and have lectures on Costa Rican flora and fauna. But this is only a portion of the educational experience. We believe that it is equally educational to meet local people on a non-commercial basis and even try to learn a few words in the native language. Sometimes the most "educational" moments are spent sipping a cold drink in a street market.

5 HOW DO WE TRAVEL DURING THE TOUR?

All local transportation is included in the land price of the trip. We travel by private minivan or microbus for road travel, by boat and by foot.

6. WHAT ARE OUR ACCOMMODATIONS LIKE?

We always stay in good accommodations — both hotels and lodges where rooms have a private bath or shower.

7. WHAT ABOUT THE WEATHER?

The Costa Rican climate can vary over short distances because of the rugged mountain chain that affects the wind, rain, and temperature resulting in a series of microclimates where altitude is a key to change. To generalize, there is a rainy season or "winter", with short heavy downpours usually around mid-day, that lasts from May–November. During the dry season, temperatures will range from the low 50's°F (10°C) to a high of 90°F (32°C) at sea level. San Jose is a comfortable 72°F (22°C) year-round.

8. WHEN IS PAYMENT DUE?

A non-refundable deposit of $500 USD (plus insurance if you require it) is due at time of booking and will reserve your place on the tour. Payment of the full land cost is due 120 days before departure. Cancellation charges are applicable and are outlined in the "Terms and Conditions" section of our brochure.

9. IS MEDICAL INSURANCE REQUIRED?

Insurance coverage is not included in the cost of your trip. Please note that medical insurance is not required for this adventure but is recommended. ElderTreks offers comprehensive travel insurance and we are happy to provide you with a quote if you call our office. If you are purchasing insurance elsewhere, please ensure you provide the details to ElderTreks as soon as possible.

Please note those travelers with pre-existing medical conditions must take out travel insurance at the time of deposit

10. WHAT SHOULD I TAKE ON THE TOUR?

There is a detailed "What to Bring" list in our Trip Kit, which we will send to you after receiving your booking deposit for the trip.

11. WHAT MEALS ARE INCLUDED?

All meals during the itinerary are included, starting with dinner on day 1 and finishing with breakfast on departure day. We eat a variety of local foods prepared in a wide range of settings. In many cases, we simply order a number of dishes and share, allowing you to sample new foods and decide what you enjoy best.

12. CAN YOU ARRANGE MY FLIGHTS?

We would be happy to take care of your air arrangements. ElderTreks offers personalized flight itineraries — not group flights. Stop over enroute, come in a few days early, or extend your stay. Call us for a customized itinerary.

13. WHAT IF I WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION?

If you have any further questions about the trip, please do not hesitate to contact our office for additional information. A Trip Kit containing further details on the destination will be sent to you once you have booked on the tour.