



25 Days

Costa Rica

Costa Rican Expedition

This fantastic 25 day school expedition brings out the best Costa Rica has to offer. In spite of its relative small size, the country is one of the most vibrant and biologically diverse places in the world. We'll travel the local way, as we uncover a side of Costa Rica that few experience.

Journey through virgin rainforest, get hands on at a biological reserve station, spend a week in a local community in the highlands, take a night hike through the cloud forest, raft through magnificent pristine river canyons and zip line through tree canopies high above the forest floor. This expedition really has it all and is an excellent introduction to travel in Central America.



Recommended expedition itinerary

Day
1

Arrive San Jose

Fly from the UK to San Jose, Costa Rica, where our local staff and vehicle will meet us at the airport. We then head straight to our hotel for drink, light snack and an early night in preparation for tomorrow.

Day
2-3

Tapanti National Park & Irazu Volcano trek

After breakfast we head out for the first part of our expedition, a two day trek in Tapanti National Park. The park covers 12,500 acres & has 45 mammal species including the white-faced capuchin monkey. It's a great introduction to the rich variety Costa Rica has to offer. The following day we drive up to the nearby Irazu Volcano (3400 m), Costa Rica's highest volcano. Its craters resemble a moonscape, a vast expanse of grey dust and rock with a green lagoon at its centre. We then trek from Irazu Volcano and head towards Prusia National Park, heading back to San Jose in the evening.

Day
4-11

Community Project in Tukurrique

Our project is based in a small town 1.5 hours from San Jose called Tukurrique. The project is centred around supporting a community reliant on the production of coffee beans, a big export earner for Costa Rica. Tukurrique's community faces many challenges, the main one being the very poor conditions in which many of the community live. Many are afraid to sleep indoors for fear of rain flooding their house at night. Our on-going project tackles the reconstruction of infrastructure with the help of a professional construction team. In addition there will be ample opportunity to get involved in wider village life as we make Tukurrique our home for the week.

Day
12

White Water Rafting on the Pacuare River

We bid our hosts a sad farewell and embark on the next phase of our expedition, a day of exhilarating white water rafting through virgin rainforest. We journey 10km over Class II and III rapids, viewing cascading waterfalls and dramatic scenery only accessible by river. Suitable for all abilities, the day starts with a comprehensive safety briefing before the fun begins. Our destination is a picturesque campsite nestled between the rainforest and the river.

Day
13-14

Rainforest Trek

We enter the next phase of our expedition and the activity level increases as we hike through pristine Costa Rican rainforest, witnessing a vast variety of plants and animals along the way. We break our journey at Barbilla, a small community where we'll get the chance to meet the locals before continuing our trek on to the banks of the Pacuare River.





Day
15-16

Rainforest Biological Reserve - trekking and conservation project

Over the next two days we'll participate in a number of conservation activities including spending time at Tirimbina, a 345 hectare reserve dedicated to scientific research. We'll hike through the rainforest, uncovering and interpreting the secrets of this wonderful Reserve as we explore some of the more remote trails in the park. Each night we'll have the opportunity to witness the reserve on a night time trek. Under the supervision and guidance of the professional staff of Tirimbina we will also have two days of hands-on conservation in action as we visit different areas of the rainforest to measure several physical and biological parameters using simple scientific techniques and instruments, comparing these with past records to see how the biodiversity of the park is changing over time.

Day
17-20

La Fortuna, Arenal Volcano

This morning, we transfer to the town of La Fortuna, lying at the foothill of Costa Rica's most famous and, until recently, most active volcano, Arenal. The eruptive cycle, which began with the infamous eruption of 1968, continued to produce enormous amounts of lava, gas and ash on an almost daily basis until 2012 when Arenal entered into an indeterminate resting phase. For the time being, there are no eruptions but that could change within a matter of months! Over the next 4 days we will have a guided hike into the volcanic national park to learn about the explosive history of Arenal, relax in hot springs with over 30 spring-fed natural pools, zip line through the canyon over the Arenal river in an adrenaline filled adventure and take a trip to the north to visit the mighty Rio Frio, part of the Caño Negro Wildlife Refuge near the Nicaraguan border. Here we have a four-hour boat ride in search of sloths, caimans, lizards, tropical birds, monkeys and much more in the surrounding lush rainforest and wetlands.

Day
21

Monteverde Cloud Forest

After breakfast, we transfer to Monteverde, set atop the spine of Costa Rica's continental divide. Monteverde is a high altitude region in the north of the country that is best known for its private reserves. The cloud forest reserves of Monteverde display a different variety of flora and fauna than lower altitude forest due to the moisture given off by the low hanging clouds that sit permanently in the tree tops. We join a walk in the forest run by a naturalist to learn about nocturnal species and their behaviour.

Day
22-23

Rincon de la Vieja National Park

The last two days sees us spending time enjoying some of the best wildlife on offer in Costa Rica as we visit Rincón de la Vieja National Park and volcano. Here we can find a great variety of vegetation and trees, and the Park is home to mammals like raccoons, white-nosed coatis, Central American agoutis, armadillos, tapirs and three species of monkeys, as well as birds such as the Blue-crowned Motmot, the Crested Guan and the Emerald Toucanet.

Day
24-25

Depart Costa Rica on overnight flight to UK

A morning departure from Costa Rica sees us fly overnight to the UK with a change of plane in Europe. We arrive back into the UK on day 25.

Further information

Look what's included!

- International flights
- All accommodation
- All food
- All transportation and activities
- Bi-lingual, first-aid qualified local expedition leader
- Parent and student expedition launch evening
- Comprehensive pre-expedition training programme
- 1-day offsite safety INSET day for staff
- ATOL financial protection
- Medical Emergency / Repatriation Travel Insurance
- Group first aid kit and prescription meds pack
- BS8848 safety management and risk assessments
- Detailed pre-departure information and kit lists
- Comprehensive teacher travel packs
- Permanent operations team in your destination
- 24-hour UK operational support whilst overseas
- Carbon offsetting of all flights
- Free t-shirt for every participant and teacher

What's excluded?

- Transport to airport in UK
- Drinks (advice will be given on purification of water)
- Visas or tourist cards if required
- Any required inoculations
- Personal spending money
- Tips for guides, drivers and porters
- Airport departure taxes paid locally
- Cancellation and personal effects insurance

Your expedition timeline



Physical expedition rating:



Moderate physical activities are included in Grade 3 trips. Good health and reasonable fitness are important to get the most out of the trip. Trips of this grading are likely to include some walking at moderate altitude (up to 2,500m) and occasional longer/harder days may be involved, with between five and seven hours of walking on certain days. The trip may contain other activities such as cycling or rafting which also require physical effort and a reasonable level of fitness. Some steady preparation and an increase if your underlying fitness levels would help you get the most from this grade trip.

Culture shock rating:



Students should expect some culture shock. You'll be exposed to signs of poverty. The food will be quite different to home and English, whilst still spoken, will be less prevalent. Respecting the local culture will make it easier to fit in and get the most out of your trip. We're likely to visit remoter locations on this tour where access to western style services may be sporadic. Often on trips of this grading there are parts of the itinerary which are more remote, interspersed with sections which are more 'comfortable'.



A journey of 1,000 miles...

Starts with a single step... Contact us now to start your expedition journey



1 Get your tailor-made proposal and further information

If this itinerary doesn't quite scratch your expedition itch then let us tailor-make one for you. Our wealth of experience and expert in-country contacts means we can design an itinerary just for you. Contact us for more information and a detailed quote.

2 Ask for risk assessments and marketing materials

We can provide initial risk assessments and destination threat assessments to help you with your expedition approval process. Ask for posters and your pre-booking information pack too.

3 Arrange an expedition launch evening at your school

This is a chance for students and parents to hear more about the expedition with a comprehensive information evening with opportunity for questions.



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