Jungles & Volcanoes of Costa Rica



Trip style:	Destination:	Walking Grade	Carbon Footprint:
Guided Walking Holidays	Costa Rica	3	2825kg CO2

HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Our Costa Rica holidays tick-off all the highlights of this ecologically rich wonderland. You'll experience the steamy jungles of the 20,000-acre Caño Negro Wildlife Refuge and sail down the Frío River searching for sloths and monkeys swinging from the trees. Head into the fog-shrouded landscapes of a Costa Rican cloud forest to spot rare tropical birds, and be wowed by walks along the lava fields and trails of Arenal Volcano National Park. Equally impressive is Rincón de la Vieja National Park where smoking craters and fumaroles hint at the massive geothermal forces at work below the earth. You'll even squeeze in time to relax on the paradise beaches of Guanacaste.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Admiring Costa Rica's tropical birds including the rare quetzal
- Discovering the active Arenal and Rincón de la Vieja volcanoes
- Relaxing on a boat ride through Caño Negro Wildlife Refuge
- Tucking into a homecooked dinner with our local family hosts
- Visiting Santa Rosa National Park

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Return flights from London Gatwick including baggage and transfers
- Guided walks with local leaders
- 14 nights' touring accommodation across Costa Rica
- 14 breakfasts, 9 lunches & 14 dinners
- All sightseeing and entrance fees (as per itinerary)
- Visit to Caño Negro Wildlife Refuge
- All in-destination transport

ITINERARY - ITINERARY

Day 1 San José

We arrive in San José and transfer from the airport to our hotel, which is set in its own private botanical gardens. We are joined here by our without-flight guests and enjoy a welcome dinner.

Minimum altitude 1,200m

Maximum altitude 1,200m

Day 2 San Gerado De Dota and the Quetzal Valley

If you wake early, why not visit the botanical garden to start your day, before we drive into the mountains to the area known as the Quetzal Valley where Costa Rica's rich birdlife thrives. With luck, we'll spot the valley's namesake bird, the resplendent quetzal. We'll stop for lunch at Mirador de Quetzales, then walk along the cloud forest trails in search of rare wildlife and flora. The evening's yours to enjoy before dinner back at the lodge.

Distance: 2.5 miles (4km)

Ascent: 400 feet (120m)

Maximum altitude: 2,800m

Day 3 Quetzal Valley and Reserva Savegre

You'll experience the cloud forest of Reserva Savegre today, taking the Los Robles trail to reach the viewpoint, then returning along La Quebrada trail with a boxed lunch included for our journey. You can spend the afternoon relaxing back at the hotel or if you want to explore further in your own time, why not complete one of the shorter trails such as Canto de la Aves or Los Pioneros.

Distance: 2.5 miles (4km)

Ascent: 490 feet (150m)

Maximum altitude 2,600m

Day 4 Sarapiqui

We'll drive across mountainous areas including the Braulio Carrilo National Park to Costa Rica's Atlantic region and Sarapiqui. We'll visit an Organic Pineapple Farm, run by a local family to learn about pineapple cultivation and its importance for the local economy. The tour includes a tractor ride around the farm and an opportunity to taste their produce, including a pineapple cocktail. Once we arrive at the hotel, you'll have free time before dinner.

Distance: 0.6 miles (1km)

Ascent: Negligible

Maximum altitude 100m

Day 5 Sarapiqui to Arenal

We'll head into the jungle to explore the tropical rainforest on Selva Verde's 500-acre private reserve with our expert naturalist guides. Then we'll travel to the Arenal Volcano area and La Fortuna to check in to our hotel and relax for the afternoon.

Distance: 1.2 miles (2 km)

Ascent: Negligible

Maximum altitude 100m

Day 6 Arenal Volcano

Explore the western side of the volcano on the Arenal 1968 trail named after the year it dramatically erupted. Hike the old lava flow trails and enjoy a picnic lunch, before a relaxing afternoon at our hotel. In the evening we'll drive to the neighbouring town of La Tigra where a local family will host us on a nocturnal rainforest nature walk followed by traditional homecooked meal.

Distance: 4 miles (6.5km)

Ascent: 490 feet (150m)

Maximum altitude 900m

Day 7 Caño Negro Wildlife Refuge And Frío River

This morning, we'll head to Los Chiles to visit the Caño Negro Wildlife Refuge. A slow river boat ride will take us along the Frío River, a biologically diverse wetland conservation area where you're in with a chance of spotting monkeys, caimans, turtles, sloths, and butterflies. Our lunch is included today and later you'll have time to relax before dining out at a restaurant in La Fortuna.

Day 8 Rincón De La Vieja Volcano

We'll travel to Rincón de la Vieja Volcano in Guanacaste. Then we'll head to our hotel which will be our base for the next three nights.

Day 9 Rincón De La Vieja Volcano

Taking our packed lunch, today we'll hike through the Rincón de la Vieja National Park today, home to over 300 species of birds. We'll see part of the Colorado River and several active fumaroles of this geyser volcano.

Distance: 2 miles (3.2km)

Ascent: 350 feet (110m)

Please note longer walks can be available on this day – please speak to your local guide

Maximum altitude 1,800m

Day 10 Rincón De La Vieja Volcano

Today is a free day for you to relax and enjoy this diverse setting, with lunch included at the hotel if you plan to stay and relax here. There are waterfall hikes and volcanic mud baths to experience, or you can relax in the Rio Negro Hot Springs. If you're feeling adventurous, there are a range of optional activities on offer including ziplining and canyoning.

Day 11 Santa Rosa National Park And Guanacaste Beaches

The beautiful Guanacaste beaches are in reach today. On the way, we'll stop at Santa Rosa National Park. Explore the trails and learn more about its history before journeying through several picturesque towns to reach the coast and our final beach-side accommodation.

Distance: 1 mile (1.5km)

Ascent: Negligible

Day 12 Guanacaste Beaches

You have a full day of free time and leisure. Relax by the pool, enjoy a refreshing dip at the beach, or discover one of the many optional activities.

Day 13 Guanacaste Beaches to San Ramón Cloud Forest

After a last morning at the beach, we'll head to our final destination, the San Ramón Cloud Forest – an important area of biodiversity which is nestled between the picturesque mountains of Alajuela province in the Central Valley.

Day 14 San Ramón Cloud Forest

We explore one of the most remote and peaceful areas in Costa Rica today - the waterfalls of Bajos del Toro. Surrounded by jungle and misty rain clouds, these beautiful falls offer freshwater pools to bathe in mid-hike. We'll take a packed lunch to enjoy as we take a break to soak up the scenery. In the evening, there's a farewell dinner at our hotel.

Distance: 2.5 miles (4km)

Ascent: 590 feet (180m)

Maximum altitude 1,125m

Day 15 Poas Volcano and Departure Day

Leaving the mountains today, we'll head back to San José for our evening departure flight. On the way, we'll visit the Poas Volcano for a short walk around the crater. Weather permitting, we'll take in views of one of the largest volcano craters in the world. We'll also visit Botos Lagoon, an extinct volcanic crater housing a huge variety of wildlife, plants, and flowers.

After enjoying a traditional lunch, with-flight guests will transfer to the airport for our overnight flight back to the UK.

Distance: 1 mile (1.5km)

Ascent: Negligible

Maximum altitude 2,708m

Day 16 Arrive UK

With-flight guests arrive back in the UK

DAILY WALK OPTIONS



Gentle walking grade 3

Slightly longer walks, mostly on well-trodden paths, with some gentle gradients plus stiles and steps possible. Typically, 5-6 miles (8-10km) with around 650ft (200m) of ascent.

ACCOMMODATION

Hotel Bougainvillea, San José - Costa Rica

Located just 10 minutes from downtown San José, the Hotel Bougainvillea is surrounded by large, beautiful tropical gardens – the ideal start to your holiday.

Selva Verde (Lodge), Sarapiqui - Costa Rica

Selva Verde is an eco-lodge featuring 45 comfortable rooms built on platforms so you can truly appreciate the surroundings of the Sarapiquí River. There are two restaurants, a swimming pool, plus a suspension bridge over the river and several forest trails.

Savegre Hotel Natural Reserve & Spa Lodge, San Gerado de Dota - Costa Rica

Savegre Mountain Lodge is an ideal place to rest and relax in the peaceful surroundings of a Costa Rican cloud forest. Rooms come with all mod-cons, plus a private terrace overlooking the tropical scenery.

Volcano Lodge & Thermal Resort, Arenal Volcano - Costa Rica

Living up to its name, this tropical retreat puts you at the foot of the mighty Arenal Volcano. There are two swimming pools and two bubbling hot tubs, all backed by views of Costa Rica's most famous volcanic giant. Superior rooms all have private terraces with outdoor seating, while Costa Rican dishes and a long list of drinks are served in the hotel's restaurant and bar area.

Papagayo Golden Palms Beachfront Hotel, Guanacaste Beaches - Costa Rica

This boutique beachfront property sits in 10-acres of tropical greenery and puts you on the doorstep of the Gulf of Papagayo. There's a small pool surrounded by shade-giving palm trees, plus leafy garden paths that lead to the stretch of secluded white sand beach known as Playa Panama. On the dining scene, the thatched-roof restaurant offers a wide range of dining options while the bar serves up fresh cocktails.

Villa Blanca Cloud Forest Hotel, San Ramon Cloud Forest - Costa Rica

Built by former Costa Rican President Rodrigo Carazo, Villa Blanca Cloud Forest Hotel & Nature Reserve, is a charming mountain hotel located adjacent to a working dairy farm. The 34 well-appointed casitas are comfortable replicas of traditional adobe farmhouses, complete with whitewashed walls, tile floors, cane ceilings, and wood-burning fireplaces.

Santarena Hotel, Guanacaste Beaches (November 2026)

Santarena Hotel is a beachfront boutique Hotel in the car-free town of Las Catalinas, Guanacaste. Facilities include a rooftop infinity pool, restaurant, a gym, and tennis courts. Rooms feature free Wi-Fi, air conditioning, smart TVs, minibars, and private balconies.

Hacienda Guachipelín (Lodge), Rincón de la Vieja - Costa Rica

Located at the foot of the Rincón de la Vieja volcano, Hacienda Guachipelín offers the ideal setting to explore this fascinating region. Our Superior Rooms offer comfortable, down-to-earth accommodation set amongst the property's ancient tempisque and cedro amargo trees.

Carsona del Cafetal Boutique Hotel – Quetzal Valley (January 2027)

Located close to a coffee plantation in the wonderful Orosi Valley, this beautiful boutique hotel is surrounded by nature, offering gorgeous mountain views. The hotel includes a restaurant, bar, terrace, garden, and outdoor dining area. Air-conditioned rooms feature garden or mountain views, a minibar, TV, and WiFi.

Dantica Lodge – Quetzel Valley (March 2027)

This eco-boutique hotel is located in the Los Santos Forest Reserve, with breathtaking views and walking trails beside the hotel. In addition to a restaurant, the bungalow accommodation overlooks a nature reserve, with wooden décor, seating area, safe, minibar, tea & coffee and a hot tub.

El Lugar Resort, Sarapiqui (March 2027)

The hotel has a strong focus on sustainability, located within 500 hectares of virgin rainforest, where you can observe exotic birds and wildlife. Facilities include an outdoor pool with lake views, a restaurant, and a bar. The comfortable rooms feature air-conditioning, balconies with views of rainforest, tea and coffee making facilities and a hairdryer.

Magic Mountain Lodge Hotel, Sarapiqui (Jan 2027)

The hotel is located within the small town of La Fortuna, close to the Arenal Volcano. The hotel includes a pool, jacuzzi, spa (at own cost), restaurant and bar with views of the volcano. Spacious rooms include a fridge and air conditioning and views of the beautiful Arenal Volcano.

Baldi Hot Spring Hotel, Sarapiqui (March 2027)

Baldi Hot Springs Hotel and Spa is located close to the Arenal Volcano in the town of La Fortuna. Offering 25 thermos mineral hot water pools with varying temperatures for your relaxation as well as landscaped gardens, a restaurant and bar. Room overlook the gardens and feature a terrace, air conditioner, coffee maker, minibar, safe and hair dryer.

Lomas Del Volcan Hotel, Sarapiqui (Nov 2027)

Featuring rooms containing two balconies with excellent views of the Arenal Volcano or rainforest and include a coffee maker, safe box air conditioning and Wi-Fi. The hotel features a restaurant serving local produce, a bar & lounge and a pool and jacuzzi for relaxation amid a wonderful setting.

Blue River Resort & Hot Springs, Rincon de la Vieja (March 2027)

Nestled in the rainforests of Rincon de la Vieja close to its smoking volcano, you will feel relaxed with the hotels stunning views of tropical gardens and hot springs, a pool, onsite restaurant and botanical gardens. Room amenities include air conditioning, mini fridge, safe, and a balcony. The hotel also offers spa treatments at an extra cost.

VACCINATIONS & HEALTH

Vaccinations & health information for Costa Rica

Before booking, you should check with your doctor to see if any health precautions are needed. The following websites provide a wealth of information on travelling and health: www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk or www.traveldoctor.co.uk

Medical services are not free to visitors and health insurance is therefore a necessity.

Vaccines: Hepatitis A, Typhoid & Tetanus vaccinations are recommended. Diphtheria, malaria and rabies prevention may be recommended too.

Mosquitoes, chiggers and a little biting black fly can present a problem if you are allergic to bites. Ticks are present but no diseases are known to be spread by them. Most people are not bothered at all. A spray repellent with DEET is recommended. Malaria is present in Costa Rica, although more towards the south and Atlantic coast, away from the areas we will visit. We would urge you to consult your GP before you depart for up to date information.

COVID-19

Many countries have lifted their COVID-19 restrictions but there are several with rules still in place. Please be aware that these restrictions can change frequently so you should consider packing a box of lateral flow tests and some FFP2 facemasks in case required. If you test positive on one of our holidays you may be asked to isolate and be unable to continue your holiday with the group. With this in mind, we recommend you have full COVID-19 insurance cover. If you test positive, please inform your HF Holidays Leader and the hotel management who will confirm any local restrictions and what to do next. We ask you to please check the FCDO website for the most up-to-date COVID-19 advice well in advance of travel.

PASSPORTS & VISAS

Passport & Visa information for Costa Rica

Passports

A full passport is required and must be valid for one day beyond the date of departure from Costa Rica.

Visas

British citizens with full right of residence in the UK do not require a visa for Costa Rica. Those who do not have British passports should check requirements with the embassies or consulates of Costa Rica.

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ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Packing list

It's best to be prepared for all weather conditions. To make it easier, here is a list of items you should consider packing.

Essentials

- Walking boots
- Waterproof jacket
- Waterproof trousers
- Insulated jacket/top
- Walking clothing
- Walking socks (plus spares)
- Sunhat
- Gloves/mitts and warm hat
- Water bottle (minimum 2 litre capacity)
- Headtorch
- High-factor sunscreen (minimum SPF 30)
- Swimcap (compulsory in Itialian resorts)
- Sunglasses with a dark lens
- Rucksack (15-30 litres)
- Mobile phone
- Personal first aid kit (containing your medication, blister plasters, etc.)
- Passport
- Visa (if applicable)
- Copy of your travel insurance policy
- UK Global Health Insurance Card (**formerly known as EHIC**)

Recommended

- Collapsible walking poles
- Swimwear and travel towel
- Snacks
- Dry bags

- Rubbish bags
- Insect repellent

Optional extras

- Camera
- Sit mat
- Flask for hot drinks
- Durable lunch box
- Gaiters
- GPS device (excluding Bhutan, Georgia and India)

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS (WITH FLIGHTS)

With flights

Book your holiday 'with flights' and you can choose to depart from selected UK airports* to your destination. For latest flight times and prices please call us on 0203-974-8865 or email reservations@hfholidays.co.uk

If you choose to book your flights with us, we automatically include return transfers between the destination airport and hotel.

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS (WITHOUT FLIGHTS)

Travel independently

If you prefer to book the holiday without flights and make your own travel arrangements you will still be able to make use of the return group transfers between the airport and hotel, which are included in the cost of your holiday. You must contact us on +44 (0)20 3974 8865 or email reservations@hfholidays.co.uk at least 8 weeks before your holiday start date to provide your flight details if you wish to join the transfers. If you do not contact us, we will assume you are making independent travel arrangements.

If you are arriving ahead of the group, and are meeting them at the first hotel, please leave a message at the hotel reception for the HF Holidays' leader or local leader, detailing your room number, and a mobile telephone number if possible. The leader will contact you once the group arrives. If you are arriving after the group, a message will be left for you at the hotel reception, welcoming you and giving details of the time and place to meet the group.

USEFUL INFORMATION

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is a condition of booking. Therefore, if you have not already arranged insurance, it is imperative that you do so before you travel.

For more information about healthcare and its costs, please visit: https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/

LOCAL CURRENCY

Local currency for Costa Rica

The official currency is the Colon. Colones cannot be obtained in the UK, but can be exchanged from US Dollars in Costa Rica. US Dollars are also widely accepted. Travellers cheques are no longer accepted at most banks. Major credit cards are accepted in larger hotels, although you may have problems using them in some of the more rural locations we will visit.

LOCAL TIME

Local time for Costa Rica

GMT/UTC -6 hours, no Daylight Saving

ELECTRICITY

Electricity information for Costa Rica

110V, North American 3 pin plugs (2 flat & 1 round pin). Power surges and fluctuation occur frequently.

ATM AVAILABILITY

ATM availability for Costa Rica

There are ATM's available.

TRIPNOTE VALIDITY

TRIP NOTE VALIDITY These Trip Notes are valid based on the date printed at the bottom of the page. They will occasionally be updated post booking and pre-departure. We will send you the latest trip notes prior to departure through a link in your pre departure documents or we can send you a copy in the post if preferred. In booking this trip you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call HF Holidays and ask to speak to one of the team about this itinerary. The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; so please be prepared to be flexible where necessary. At times, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned due to weather conditions, political, physical or other factors. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

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