

Full Itinerary

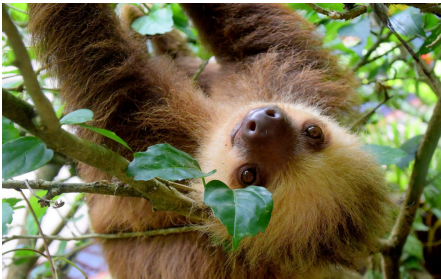
COSTA RICA ADVENTURE EXPERIENCE.



TALK TO OUR WELL TRAVELLED TEAM OF EXPERTS

0844 3350 197

Monday to Friday 09:00 - 18:00 GMT



JOURNEY SNAPSHOT

ACTIVITY LEVEL:

Level 2

DESTINATION:

Costa Rica Adventure Experience

DURATION:

12 Days / 11 Nights

FLIGHT INFORMATION:

Please arrange your flights to arrive at Juan Santamaria International Airport [SJO] on Day 1 and depart from there on Day 12

PICKUP LOCATION:

Juan Santamaria International Airport [SJO]

OVERVIEW

17 - 28 Aug, 2026

Costa Rica, the eco and adventure-tourism capital of Central America...The perfect destination for nature and lovers!

The date listed above is for our scheduled group departure. If you'd prefer to travel privately with friends or family, we'd be delighted to arrange a bespoke tour on your preferred dates. Just contact us via email and we'll take care of the rest.

Costa Rica is a small country that will have a big impact on you. Situated between North and South America, its proximity to the equator provides visitors with a tropical climate year-round along with breathtaking scenery and unique wildlife. Joining our escorted group tour will ensure you make the most of this tropical land of adventure.

ITINERARY SUMMARY

DAY 1 - Welcome to Costa Rica!

DAY 2 - Tortuguero via Braulio Carillo National Park

DAY 3 - Explore Tortuguero National Park's canals by boat

DAY 4 - Tirimbina Forest & Sarapiquí

DAY 5 - Safari Cruise to Arenal

DAY 6 - Arenal Volcano National Park & Hot Springs

DAY 7 - Lake Crossing to Monteverde

DAY 8 - Nature Adventure at the Monteverde Biological Reserve

DAY 9 - Carara National Park & Manuel Antonio

DAY 10 - A Day to Rest

DAY 11 - Manuel Antonio National Park & Journey to San José

DAY 12 - Farewell to Costa Rica & Home

FULL ITINERARY

DAY 1 - WELCOME TO COSTA RICA!

A Warm Welcome to San José

Your adventure through Central America begins with a friendly face at the airport — we'll be there to meet your flight and transfer you to your hotel in the heart of San José.

This evening, gather with your fellow travellers and your Big Journey Tour Director for a delicious welcome dinner. It's the perfect opportunity to get to know your group, share your excitement, and start your journey in great company.

Let the adventure begin!

Included meals: Welcome Dinner

Accommodation: Hotel Presidente, San Jose

DAY 2 - TORTUGUERO VIA BRAULIO CARILLO NATIONAL PARK

We begin the day with an early pick-up from our San José hotel to make the most of our adventure. As we travel by coach through the lush Braulio Carrillo National Park, keep an eye out for the region's incredible biodiversity. We'll stop en route to enjoy a traditional Costa Rican breakfast before continuing past fields of pineapples and bananas—just some of the many crops grown in this fertile region.

Upon arrival at the Caño Blanco or Pavona pier, we board a comfortable boat and begin a scenic journey through the winding canals of Tortuguero. This extraordinary waterway offers our first glimpse into the region's tropical paradise, teeming with exotic flora and fauna. A refreshing cocktail and delicious lunch will be waiting for us as we arrive at Pachira Lodge, nestled within 34 acres of vibrant rainforest just outside Tortuguero National Park.

Later in the afternoon, we enjoy a guided visit to the village of Tortuguero, a charming, colourful settlement bordered by the Caribbean Sea and the jungle canals. This evening, we return to the lodge for dinner and a relaxing night's stay in this unique and peaceful setting.

*Please note: luggage is limited to 25lbs (12kg) per person. The order of activities may vary due to weather conditions.

Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Accommodation: Pachira Lodge, Tortuguero

DAY 3 - EXPLORE TORTUGUERO NATIONAL PARK'S CANALS BY BOAT

After breakfast, we begin the day with a guided walk along the private trails around the lodge, offering a chance to spot some of the unique flora and fauna that call this region home.

Later in the morning, we'll head out on small, open boats to explore the breathtaking canals of Tortuguero National Park. This vast network of rivers and streams—only accessible by water—is home to an extraordinary array of wildlife, including monkeys, sloths, crocodiles, caimans, iguanas, and countless bird species. With luck, we may even spot some of the park's more elusive inhabitants, such as manatees or rare freshwater fish like the ancient Gaspar.

Declared a national park in 1970, Tortuguero now protects over 76,000 hectares of pristine rainforest and marine territory. It is internationally renowned as the most important nesting site in the Western Hemisphere for the endangered green sea turtle.

After a delicious lunch back at the lodge, you'll have the afternoon free to relax or explore at your own pace before dinner is served.

Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Accommodation: Pachira Lodge, Tortuguero

DAY 4 - TIRIMBINA FOREST & SARAPIQUÍ

After breakfast, we take a shared boat transfer back to the pier, followed by a ground transfer to Sarapiquí.

En route, we stop at La Tirimbina Biological Reserve for a fascinating guided chocolate tour. Cross a suspension bridge and walk through the

lush forest to a former cacao-growing plot. Here, you'll learn about the natural and cultural history of cacao, and watch the traditional artisanal process that transforms cacao fruit into chocolate—from harvest and fermentation to drying and grinding.

Of course, no chocolate experience is complete without tasting—so prepare to sample a variety of freshly made chocolate in its most authentic form.

Lunch is included at El Ceibo Restaurant during the journey.

In the afternoon, we continue to La Quinta Sarapiquí, a charming eco-lodge surrounded by tropical gardens, a reforested nature trail, and home to over 100 bird species—perfect for nature lovers and photographers alike.

Dinner will be served at the lodge this evening.

Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Accommodation: La Quinta, Sarapiquí

DAY 5 - SAFARI CRUISE TO ARENAL

After breakfast at the hotel, we begin our journey toward Arenal with a memorable safari float along the Peñas Blancas River. This peaceful two-hour paddle is perfect for soaking in the rich sights and sounds of Costa Rica's rainforest.

Keep your eyes peeled for monkeys, caimans, iguanas, Jesus Christ lizards, and a vibrant array of tropical birds. Your expert naturalist guide will share insights about the local ecosystem and its fascinating inhabitants as we gently float downstream.

Following the river adventure, we stop at Doña Mara's farm for a hands-on tortilla-making experience. Get a warm Costa Rican welcome and learn how to make tortillas the traditional way using freshly ground corn dough. Then, enjoy a delicious home-cooked lunch served with tropical drinks at the rustic rancho.

Later, we continue on to our hotel near Arenal Volcano, where the rest of the day is yours to relax. You might explore the hotel gardens or take in the stunning volcano views.

Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Accommodation: Hotel Arenal Manoa

DAY 6 - ARENAL VOLCANO NATIONAL PARK & HOT SPRINGS

After breakfast, we head out to explore Arenal Volcano National Park, one of the most iconic natural landmarks in Costa Rica. Though currently in a resting phase, Arenal remains an awe-inspiring sight. We will walk the well-maintained trails through lush rainforest, past old lava flows, and enjoy panoramic views of the volcano and the surrounding landscape.

In the afternoon, unwind at Paradise Hot Springs, where a collection of natural mineral pools awaits. Surrounded by tropical gardens and waterfalls, these soothing thermal waters offer the perfect way to relax and recharge.

Dinner will be served on-site before we return to the hotel.

Included meals: Breakfast & Dinner

Accommodation: Hotel Arenal Manoa

DAY 7 - LAKE CROSSING TO MONTEVERDE

After breakfast, we leave Arenal behind and journey toward Monteverde. Our adventure begins with a scenic boat transfer across Lake Arenal — the country's largest artificial lake and an essential source of hydroelectric power. Keep an eye out for resident and migratory birds along the way, and you may even spot a sloth in the treetops!

Upon reaching Río Chiquito, we continue by road into the lush mountain landscapes of Monteverde. En route, we'll stop at Rancho Heliconia for an authentic Costa Rican experience. Here, we'll learn how to prepare a traditional lunch from scratch — from making tortillas to cooking a delicious main course. You'll also enjoy locally produced coffee and a warm welcome from the community, often with traditional music and dance.

After checking in at our hotel, we'll venture out again this evening to experience Monteverde's magical cloud forest after dark. A guided night walk will reveal a different side of the forest, when nocturnal creatures emerge and the jungle takes on a whole new life.

Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Accommodation: El Establo Mountain Hotel, Monteverde

DAY 8 - NATURE ADVENTURE AT THE MONTEVERDE BIOLOGICAL RESERVE

After breakfast, we set out on a half-day guided nature tour through the renowned Monteverde Cloud Forest Biological Reserve — one of the most important conservation areas in Central America.

Because of its elevation (over 1,400m above sea level), this unique rainforest is often bathed in mist, creating the mystical "cloud forest" atmosphere. Warm, moist trade winds from the Atlantic rise and condense, enveloping the forest in constant cloud cover and supporting an incredibly rich ecosystem.

Along the way, we'll discover the area's spectacular biodiversity — home to jaguars, pumas, and more than 450 bird species, including the famous Resplendent Quetzal, one of the most beautiful birds in the Americas.

The afternoon is at your leisure to relax and enjoy the hotel's superb facilities. This evening, we will come together again to enjoy dinner at the hotel.

Included meals: Breakfast & Dinner

Accommodation: El Establo Mountain Hotel, Monteverde

DAY 9 - CARARA NATIONAL PARK & MANUEL ANTONIO

After breakfast, we leave Monteverde and head toward the beautiful Pacific Coast.

Our first stop is Carara National Park, a lush natural sanctuary and one of the best birdwatching destinations in Costa Rica. This transitional forest is home to nearly 50% of Costa Rica's bird species — keep your eyes peeled for the striking Red Macaws flying overhead. Our guide will lead a walk through the forest, helping us spot some of the incredible biodiversity found here.

We'll then continue our journey, stopping at Tarcoles Bridge to safely view the enormous crocodiles that live in the river below — a memorable (and safe!) wildlife moment. Our guide will ensure this stop is done with everyone's safety in mind.

We'll arrive at our hotel in Manuel Antonio later this afternoon. Nestled between tropical rainforest and the Pacific Ocean, Parador Resort & Spa offers the perfect place to unwind with superb amenities and stunning views.

Lunch and dinner are at your leisure today.

Included meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: Hotel Parador Resort & Spa, Manuel Antonio

DAY 10 - A DAY TO REST

Today, take things at your own pace and enjoy some well-deserved free time.

Relax by the pool, explore your surroundings, or simply soak in the atmosphere of this beautiful destination. Whether you choose to unwind at the hotel or take a gentle stroll nearby, the day is yours to enjoy.

Included meals: Breakfast & Dinner

Accommodation: Hotel Parador Resort & Spa, Manuel Antonio

DAY 11 - MANUEL ANTONIO NATIONAL PARK & JOURNEY TO SAN JOSÉ

After breakfast, we'll head to Manuel Antonio National Park, one of Costa Rica's most popular and biodiverse wildlife areas. Here, we'll embark on a guided walk along a scenic loop trail, keeping an eye out for the park's lively residents — including monkeys! In fact, three of Costa Rica's

four monkey species call this national park home. Your expert guide will share fascinating insights into the rich flora and fauna along the way.

You'll have some free time to relax and enjoy the beautiful beach within the park, before continuing along the trail where you may spot sloths, tropical birds, reptiles, and admire vibrant orchids and towering rainforest trees.

Following our nature walk, enjoy the remainder of the afternoon at leisure. Later, we'll transfer to San José for our final evening in Costa Rica.

In the evening, we'll gather for a special "Noche Tica" dinner — a perfect way to end the journey!

Included meals: Breakfast & Farewell Dinner

Accommodation: Hotel Presidente, San Jose

DAY 12 - FAREWELL TO COSTA RICA & HOME

Following breakfast we will transfer to the airport for our return flights to London Heathrow Airport.

Included meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: none

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Meet & Greet at the airport on arrival
- Transfers included (subject to arriving/departing at the designated airport and staying at the tour hotel on the official tour dates)
- Accommodation as detailed in the itinerary
- All meals detailed as detailed in the itinerary
- Excursions as detailed in the itinerary
- Transport in an air-conditioned deluxe vehicle
- Entrance fee into Arenal Volcano National Park & Monteverde Cloud Forest Biological Reserve
- Tour Director from The Big Journey Company as well as the local English speaking Tour Guide (subject to minimum group size being reached.)

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- ATOL Protection
- International flights to/from San Juan Santamaria Airport [SJO], Costa Rica - please contact us for a flight quotation
- Transfers on arrival or departure, to/from the airport(s), outside of the tour dates
- Drinks
- Gratuities
- Visas, travel and medical insurance
- Any personal items and anything not mentioned under included in price above
- Any meals not mentioned in itinerary
- Any optional activities offered
- Any COVID tests or related entry & exit requirements

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- **Flights:** International flights to/from your chosen destination are not included in this package. The Big Journey Company will be happy to provide a quotation for your flights—please contact us for further details.
- **Vaccinations & Health:** Vaccinations may be recommended depending on your destination. Please consult your doctor or travel clinic for the most up-to-date medical advice.
- **Visas & Entry Requirements:** Entry requirements vary by destination, and a visa may be required. Please refer to the travel tips section for full details. It is your responsibility to ensure you have the necessary travel documentation prior to departure.
- **Medical Needs:** Please inform The Big Journey Company prior to travel of any medical conditions or medications you take that we should be aware of to help ensure a safe and enjoyable experience.
- **Accommodation Check-in/Out:** Unless otherwise stated in your itinerary, check-in is after 2–3pm and check-out is before 10am. Please note that hotels may be subject to change to the same or similar standard due to availability.
- **Cancellation Policy:** Cancellations made within 90 days of departure are subject to a 100% cancellation fee. Deposits are non-refundable, and balance payments are due 14 weeks prior to departure. It is your responsibility to ensure adequate travel insurance is in place to protect against the need to cancel your holiday.
- **Minimum Numbers:** The Big Journey Company host will accompany the tour should minimum guest numbers be met. We will confirm this closer to the departure date.
- **Terms & Conditions:** Further terms and conditions apply and will be provided upon request or at the time of booking. The Big Journey Company reserves the right to withdraw any offer prior to accepting a reservation. This does not affect your statutory rights. All offers are subject to availability and space is limited.

BOOK YOUR JOURNEY

Choose from the list of dates below

17 AUG - 28 AUG 2026

FROM £4,550 PER PERSON.

Call to Book

0844 3350 197

Monday to Friday 09:00 - 18:00 GMT