

COSTA RICA

CARIBBEAN COAST



Highlights

- Poas Volcano & National Park
- Private Reserve Nature Hike
- Canal Boat Tours
- Tortuguero Village Tour & Natural History Museum
- Tortuguero Hill
- Butterfly Garden
- Braulio Carrillo National Park

Options

- Turtle Nesting Area Tour (July to October)
- Snorkeling
- Aerial Tram

Itinerary San Jose (1), Puerto Viejo de Sarapiqui (1), Tortuguero (2), Punta Uva (2), San Jose (1)

DAY 1 SAN JOSE Your flight arrives in the friendly city of San José, where your private bus and driver will take you on a "drive-by" tour of Costa Rica's capital city. Check into your downtown hotel and prepare for an exciting adventure in the week ahead.

DAY 2 PUERTO VIEJO DE SARAPIQUI Travel to Costa Rica's first port town in colonial times, with a stop first at Poás National Park. A short hike through a misty green cloud forest brings you to the crater of Poás Volcano and its jewel-like Botos Lake. Also stop at the beautiful El Angel waterfall. Proceed past cattle ranches and bountiful croplands on your way to Puerto Viejo and the Rio Sarapiqui at the foot of the Cordillera Central mountain range. Check in to your comfortable jungle lodge, located in the tropical rainforest, then take a short guided nature hike watching for the trogons, tucans, macaws and monkeys that live in the Caribbean lowlands.

DAY 3 TORTUGUERO Pass through miles of banana plantations as you head for the lowlands. Board a small launch for an educational and exciting Canal Boat Tour north to Tortuguero National Park. You may see howler and spider monkeys, toucans, tree iguanas, sloths, caimans, and exotic fish. Arrive at your lodge for a buffet style lunch, then a self-guided nature walk to observe wildlife and pristine rainforest. Tour a nearby village and the Natural History Museum. Tortuguero is the most important Caribbean breeding ground for sea turtles. Thousands of giant Green Turtles nest along the beaches from July to October. The hawksbill, loggerhead, and leatherback turtles are less common and nest between March and October. *Option (July to October):* Nighttime tour to see the endangered Green Turtles climb the beach and deposit their offspring of 70 to 90 eggs in the warm sand.

DAY 4 TORTUGUERO Pay a visit to Tortuguero Hill, a small extinct volcano. Also visit the hotel's Butterfly Garden, one of the largest in the country. After lunch there will be time for paddling throughout the jungle lagoons and waterways, searching for wildlife and listening to the jungle sounds. Later, enjoy the hotel's swimming pool.

DAY 5 PUNTA UVA Depart for the 2½ hour canal excursion to meet your bus on the riverbank. Then travel past Cahuita National Park, and stop for lunch at one of the typical open-air restaurants where your guide will help you order a special Caribbean lunch. Arrive at your beachfront hotel in Punta Uva, where the beaches are shadowed with coconut palm trees.

DAY 6 PUNTA UVA Today is free for sunning on the beaches or for optional activities such as snorkeling. The reef here is replete with many varieties of colored fish and 35 species of coral. A few miles from Punta Uva you can enjoy the beauty of one of Parque Nacional Cahuita, which extends over eight miles of the tropical Caribbean coastline.

DAY 7 SAN JOSE Head back up the coast, through banana plantations and up into the mountains. Pass through enormous Braulio Carrillo National Park, 80,000 acres of virgin forest created by the government to save the area from loggers. *Option:* Take a ride on the famous Aerial Tram in the park. Glide over the rain forest canopy in an area rich in tropical flora and fauna. After checking into your hotel, you can explore a bit of downtown San José and enjoy your last evening in this beautiful country.

DAY 8 DEPART Board your flight home with wonderful memories of all you have seen and experienced as an eco-tourist on your Caribbean Coast adventure.