Costa Rica

Family Adventure

PIONEER EXPEDITIONS

ITINERARY

Costa Rica • Family Adventure

14 DAYS • 13 NIGHTS

San José – Tortuguero National Park – Siquirres – Sarapiqui – La Fortuna – Arenal Reserve – Central Pacific – Manuel Antonio National Park

HIGHLIGHTS

- Visit one of most biologically intense places on earth
- Raft down the picturesque Sarapiqui river
- Trek the varied coastal habitat on the Caribbean Coast
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TOUR ESSENTIALS

Tour Style	Family Expedition
Tour Start	San José
Tour End	San José
Accommodation	Hotel, Lodge, Bungalow
Included Meals	11 Breakfasts, 6 lunches, 3 Dinners
Difficulty Level	Medium

THE PERFECT FAMILY GET AWAY

For this fantastic activity packed Costa Rican adventure we explore the central and north-eastern part of Costa Rica, taking in the canals and rainforest in the Tortugero National Park on the Caribbean coast and Sarapiqui – an adventurers dream, before heading off to the central pacific and the beautiful beach of Manuel Antonio.

Pioneer Expeditions
Stable Cottage • Chydyok Road • Chaldon Herring • Dorchester • DT2 8DN
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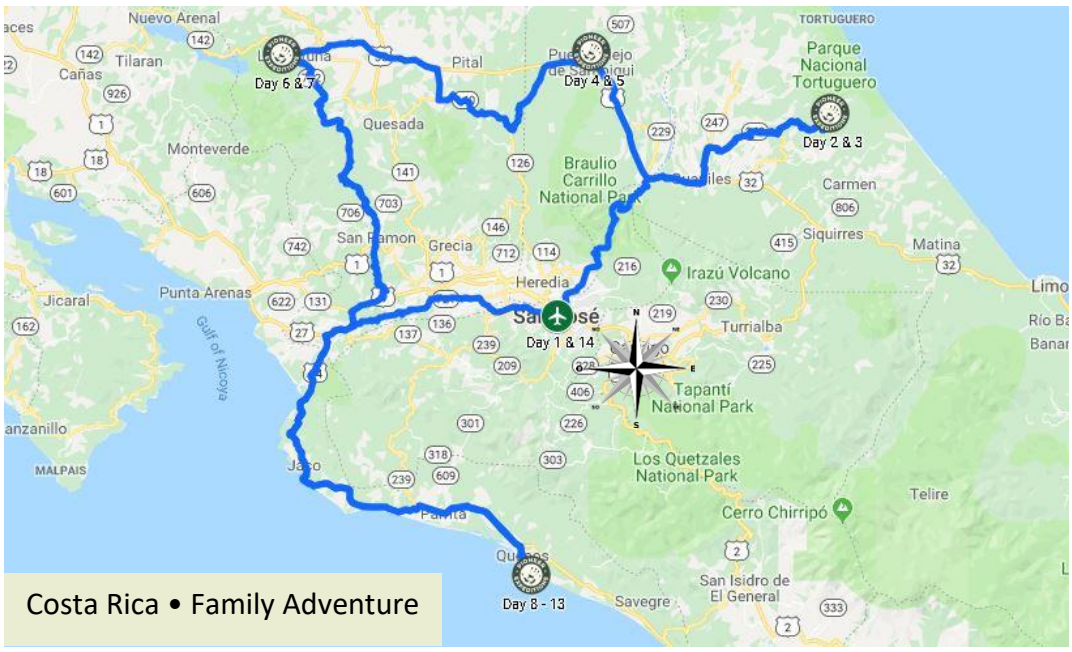
COSTA RICA *an overview*

Eco-diversity like no other - Costa Rica encases 500,000 different species which account for roughly 4% of the world's plant, insect and wildlife species. Witness Sloths, Monkeys, Frogs, Snakes, Turtles, Iguanas, Humming Birds and so much more. Wander through tranquil bird-packed cloud forests and rich rainforests brimming with a plethora of spectacular wildlife. As well as its head-turning abundance of wildlife, this Central American paradise is famed for its never-ending activities, making it an adventure-seeker's dream; the vast array of activities widely on offer include Zip-lining, White-Water Rafting and Trekking. The incredibly beautiful east and west shores that run down the sides of Costa Rica display gorgeous paradise beaches lined with jungle, such as the secluded sandy stretches of the laid-back Caribbean coastline and the 'sun and surf' pacific stretches containing some great marine life. Become acquainted with the warm friendly locals, offering huge smiles, an easy-going manner and 'Pura Vida's. Despite receiving a heavy influx of tourists in recent years, there are still some extraordinary hidden gems and quiet spots to be found which will allow the more adventurous of tourists to experience nature, activities and culture that the typical tourists let pass them by.

WHY PIONEER EXPEDITIONS?

Pioneer Expeditions are one of the few specialists that really *do* off the beaten track and unique adventures. The team have a real passion for wildlife and adventure travel which we love to share with our clients. We delight in searching the world for new destinations, new experiences and creating the most incredible adventures.
We like to introduce our clients to unique, the different, and the incredible. Whether it is through wildlife tracking, sea kayaking, snorkelling, trekking, rafting, cycling or observing wildlife in its natural environment, we want to give you the real Pioneer experience.
From the moment you choose to travel with Pioneer Expeditions until you return back home, you are supported by our dedicated team. We listen to what you want and can create an itinerary around your specific needs, working with your budget and with a commitment to responsible travel.

ITINERARY



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DAY 1: Arrive into SAN JOSÉ

Arrive in San Jose at Juan Santamaría International airport where you will be met for your private transfer to your hotel.

Overnight at Ramada Plaza Herradura (superior room)

Overnight: ***Hotel*** *Meals:* ***Nil*** *Distance:* ***30min airport transfer*** *Activity:* ***Travel***

DAY 2: Transfer to TORTUGUERO NATIONAL PARK and explore the area

Early this morning you will take a land & boat transfer to Tortuguero. We will stop for a Costa Rican style breakfast at Río Danta Restaurant in Guápiles, where we also might get the chance to see some sloths in the surround trees, and will arrive in Tortuguero around lunch time. This afternoon: depart by boat from the Lodge to a nearby private trail, adjacent to the Tortuguero National park, where you will enjoy a guided walk into the tropical rainforest on a safe & comfortable walking trail. On the way back to the lodge, we will stop at the village and invite you to join a walking tour of the Tortuguero town with your guide, tour around and continue walking by the beach back to the Lodge.

Overnight at Mawamba Lodge or similar (Standard room)

Overnight: ***Lodge*** *Meals:* ***B, L, D*** *Distance:* ***Approx. 3-4hrs driving*** *Activity:* ***Travel and wildlife***

DAY 3: Spend the day in TORTUGUERO NATIONAL PARK

This morning you can enjoy of a boat trip on the canals before breakfast. This tour introduces you to the rich rainforest and its great array of wildlife. The early morning hours offer a great opportunity to witness the awakening in the forest. Enjoy a visit to the Mawamba Park which offers some many free attractions like a butterfly garden, frogs and iguana's gardens. In the afternoon, embark on a canal boat tour for more opportunities to spot abundant wildlife.

Overnight at Mawamba Lodge or similar (Standard room)

Overnight: ***Lodge*** *Meals:* ***B, L, D*** *Distance:* ***N/A*** *Activity:* ***Wildlife***

DAY 4: Transfer to SARAPIQUI

Take the two hours boat & shuttle transfer to Siquirres. Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant where we will meet our driver for a transfer to Sarapiqui. Before arriving to the lodge enjoy a self-guided visit to La Tirimbina private reserve. Our accommodation tonight are the charming family run Pozo Azul tent suites which offer a magical experience combining nature and comfort.

Overnight at Pozo Azul Lodge (Standard room)

Overnight: ***Lodge*** *Meals:* ***B, L*** *Distance:* ***Approx. 3-4hrs driving*** *Activity:* ***Transfer***

DAY 5: Spend the day WHITE WATER RAFTING on SARAPIQUI RIVER

Take a dose of adventure this morning on the half-day Sarapiqui river white water rafting (class II-III). Enjoy lunch after the tour. The Sarapiquí River is known as the scenic river of Costa Rica's tropical rain forest, with 35 Kilometers through forest reserves, stunning views and full of enjoyment for all. This tour leaves at the Hacienda Facilities and runs 13 Km. Very safe with several accesses throughout the tour and constant communication with the base; it can be run year round. Minimum age: 9 years old.

Overnight at Pozo Azul Lodge (Standard room)

Overnight: ***Lodge*** *Meals:* ***B, L*** *Distance:* ***Varies*** *Activity:* ***White water rafting***

DAY 6: Transfer to ARENAL VOLCANO and enjoy a CANYONING & WATERFALL RAPELLING ADVENTURE

This morning you will take a private transfer to La Fortuna. In the afternoon, prepare to get wet and experience adrenaline at maximum with the Canyoning & Waterfall Rapelling Adventure.
Canyoning & Waterfall Rapelling: Your trip begins with a 30-minute 4x4 drive into the tropical rainforest outside the town of La Fortuna, in the shadow of the Arenal Volcano. Then, we will trek through the forest on mystic trails that lead to some of the most spectacular waterfalls in Costa Rica, a place very few people get to experience. Along the way we will have the chance to discover the secrets that lie hidden deep within the canyon. From the first waterfall we will rappel down from the top into the beautiful and pristine canyon below. We have 5 rappels, 4 of which are alongside or right in waterfalls, and one dry rock face. Then a short trek out of the canyon on a magical trail, jump back in the 4x4 vehicles and head back to the base camp.

Overnight at Lomas del Volcán Lodge (Bungalow)

Overnight: ***Lodge*** *Meals:* ***B, L*** *Distance:* ***Approx. 1-2hr transfer*** *Activity:* ***Assault course***

DAY 7: ARENAL VOLCANO

Take a flight over the canopy of the rainforest on the Sky Tram & Sky Trek adventure. Sky Tram & Sky Trek: This tour will take you to the nearby Arenal Rainforest Reserve, where you will be able to appreciate a natural environment. The tour includes the ascent by cable car to the top of the Arenal Reserve, where you can see beautiful landscapes of the forest, lake and the volcano. On the way back you can choose to return on the tram or take the Sky Trek which is a secure system of trails and zip lines that offers visitors the opportunity to observe and appreciate the nature from different vantage points.
In the afternoon, take a moderate hike in the Arenal Volcano national park before relax at the stunning hot springs afterwards.

Overnight at Lomas del Volcán Lodge (Bungalow)

Overnight: ***Lodge*** *Meals:* ***B, D*** *Distance:* ***Varies*** *Activity:* ***Sky Tram & Sky Trek adventure***

DAY 8: Decide between a HORSEBACK RIDING TOUR and a JUNGLE CROCODILE SAFARI in CENTRAL PACIFIC

Prepare to enjoy the sun of the Central pacific, this morning you head to beautiful beach of Manuel Antonio. Enjoy a private horse riding tour en route at Eco Ranch. (Or if horse riding is not your thing, we can change it for a Crocodile Jungle Boat Safari).

Overnight at Playa Espadilla (Standard room)

Overnight: ***Hotel*** *Meals:* ***B*** *Distance:* ***Approx. 5hr drive*** *Activity:* ***Wildlife***

DAY 9: Enjoy a day of OCEAN KAYAKING

Be ready to get wet at the ocean Kayaking adventure.
You will kayak for approximately 2 ½ hours (roundtrip), during your journey you will paddle past islands and inlets where you can observe and admire numerous marine aviary species and their nesting grounds. Partway through your route you will stop at a beautiful hidden bay to rest and enjoy a refreshing snack and to do some snorkelling. Water visibility varies depending on the season. Kayaks are available in 1 passenger and 2-passenger format. Kids must be at least 8 years old to paddle alone. Sea kayaking is much easier than river kayaking; this Manuel Antonio tour does not require previous experience. Enjoy lunch or dinner as part of the tour.

Overnight at Playa Espadilla (Standard room)

Overnight: ***Hotel*** | *Meals:* ***B, L*** | *Distance:* ***N/A*** | *Activity:* ***Kayaking***

DAY 10: Hike to MANUEL ANTONIO NATIONAL PARK

This morning take a moderate hike on the Manuel Antonio National Park; we take natural trails that head to secret beaches and panoramic views of the park. The Manuel Antonio National Park is one of the most famous in Costa Rica due to its wide variety of flora and fauna specimens. The park itself boasts 3 different trails that vary in grade from flat to very steep. A nature guide who is knowledgeable about everything you will see will accompany you. The trail you will take is flat and picturesque and loops through the park making your course approximately 2 miles long. Throughout the hike your guide will stop and explain the different nature specimens that can be observed, you can take photographs or just admire the view. One of the highlights of this Manuel Antonio tour is that the park is home to 3 of the 4 existing monkey species in Costa Rica. Throughout the hike you will be able to observe sloths, birds and reptiles as well as admire orchids, butterflies and tropical.

Overnight at Playa Espadilla (Standard room)

Overnight: ***Hotel*** | *Meals:* ***B*** | *Distance:* ***Varies*** | *Activity:* ***Hike***

DAY 11-13: Time to relax at MANUEL ANTONIO

Time at leisure

Overnight at Playa Espadilla (Standard room)

Overnight: ***Hotel*** | *Meals:* ***B*** | *Distance:* ***N/A*** | *Activity:* ***Day at Leisure***

DAY 14: Time to say goodbye to COSTA RICA and catch your FLIGHT HOME

Enjoy of the morning at your leisure. Take a private transfer to San José in the afternoon in time for your journey home.

Overnight: ***N/A*** | *Meals:* ***Nil*** | *Distance:* ***Approx. 3-4hr drive*** | *Activity:* ***Travel***

WHAT OUR CLIENTS HAVE SAID

'We were after a family holiday of a lifetime and we weren't disappointed. There was something to suit all of us. the trip ran like clockwork: pozo azul, Buenaventura, zip lining - all highlights'

-J.Fox Edwards and Family

'Very impressed with the organisation of the holiday - The Guides were all excellent - and went out of their way to accommodate any requests! All very knowledgeable and proud of their Country. All in all a very successful holiday and I am sure that we will be using your services again in the future. Thank You'

-Leeder and Family

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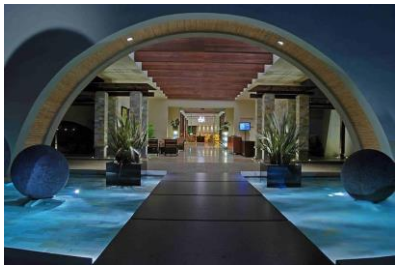
ACCOMMODATION, *at a glance*

Subject to availability

Ramada Plaza Herradura

San José

https://www.wyndhamhotels.com/wyndham/san-jose-costa-rica/wyndham-san-jose-herradura-hotel-convention-center/overview?CID=LC:HR::GGL:RIO:National:15917



Mawamba Lodge

Tortugero

https://www.mawamba.com/

Pozo Azul Lodge

Sarapiqui River

https://pozoazul.com/

Lomas del Volcán Lodge

Arenal Volcano

https://www.lomasdelvolcan.com/

Playa Espadilla

Manuel Antonio

https://www.espadilla.com/

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

INCLUDED

- Arrival Airport Transfer (from Juan Santamaría International Airport (SJO) to hotel in San José.
- Accommodation as outlined above.
- Local bilingual English-Spanish speaking guides/interpreters on shared basis during the excursions and tours.
- A combination of private land transportation and shared transfers. Transportation to Tortuguero is on shared basis.
- Meals (B= Breakfast, L= Lunch, S = Snacks/light lunch; D= Dinner).
- All tours and activities as outlined. Some tours are on a shared basis.

NOT INCLUDED

- International flights
- Meals not mentioned in the itinerary
- International Airport departure tax of $26 p/p. payable in San Jose upon exit.
  Extras at hotels (telephone calls, room service, porterage, laundry, alcoholic drinks, etc.)
- Any additional/extra tours or park fees.
- Tips & Gratuities for Guide, Driver, local guides and service providers.
- Personal and/or medical expenses.
- Entrance fee to Tortuguero National Park

WHEN TO GO

- Costa Rica's weather is affected by it proximity to the equator and the varying altitudes, meaning temperatures can vary depending on where about you are in Costa Rica.
- The wet season is roughly between May to the middle of November, with the heaviest rains in September and October. Costa Rica can still be quite pleasant in the wet season with rainy afternoons but sunny mornings.
- The dry season, therefore, is between the middle of November to April, bringing you sunshine and warm temperatures
- Temperatures can be anything from 16°c to 32°c. However, higher altitudes can exceed 0°c during the night.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ACTIVITY DURATION	2 – 5 hours per day
SEASON	This expedition is open between January and December
BEST TIME TO GO	The driest time of year to travel to Costa Rica is December – April, so this does make a great Christmas and Easter holiday destination.
GROUP SIZE	This itinerary is based on a family of 4 (aged 9 & above) sharing a quadruple room in high season. If you have older children and would prefer not sharing this is possible at a small supplement.
EXPEDITION SCHEDULE	This is run as a private departure (with some shared excursions) on dates to suit you
DIFFICULTY LEVEL	Our grades have been designated based on our perception of the degree of physical activity you are likely to require to enjoy the adventure. These are only a guideline. This itinerary has a 'Medium' level (2 – 5 hours of activities per day). This means that you will need an average level of fitness.

THE PIONEER BOOKING PROCESS

Where do you go from here? Well, you can feel free to email us at info@pioneerexpeditions.com if you're interested in this trip, or any of our other expeditions from around the world. Visit our website www.pioneerexpeditions.com to unearth all of our other equally amazing trips and destinations.

1. **Contact us -**
   We will be happy to answer any questions or enquiries you may have. From here we will begin to plan and put together your dream adventure holiday! Alternatively, on our website you will find our booking and enquiry forms; once filled in, we will be notified of your enquiry and will get back to you ASAP.

2. **Leave everything to us -**
   Everything will be arranged and booked by us, but we will make sure to keep you updated every step of the way. In addition, we can arrange your international flights if needed, as we have access to competitive airfares. We can also arrange any additional tours or additional night's accommodation.

3. **Wait for your adventure to begin -**
   Sit back and count down the days until your trip of a lifetime with Pioneer Expeditions. We'll handle all of the last minute preparations and provide you with everything you need. All practical information will be sent out to you, prior to your trip.

If you feel like altering this itinerary to suit your personal preferences, we can arrange all of that and more – just get in contact with us and let us know you requirements and wishes. From here, we can simply tailor-make your dream holiday.

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