

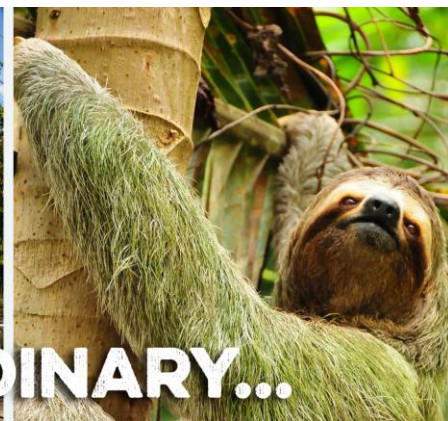


## Costa Rica

Ultimate Adventure – Coast and Cloud Forest



# PIONEER EXPEDITIONS



**DO SOMETHING EXTRAORDINARY...**

## ITINERARY

## Costa Rica • Ultimate Adventure

**22 DAYS • 21 NIGHTS**

Braulio Carrillo National Park – Tortuguero National Park –  
Cahuita – Sarapiquí – Drake – Corcovado National Park – Drake  
Bay – Sierpe – Chirripo Cloud Forest – San Gerardo de Dota – San  
Jose

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Visit one of most biologically intense places on earth
- Raft the white waters of Saraquipi river
- Marvel at the vast array of Cloud Forest birds and relax of hot springs
- Snorkeling in the turquoise water
- Explore the capital city of Costa Rica

## TOUR ESSENTIALS

Tour Style	Nature Expedition
Tour Start	San José
Tour End	San José
Accommodation	Lodge & Hotel
Included Meals	22 Breakfasts, 12 lunches, 11 Dinners
Difficulty Level	Medium

## THE ULTIMATE COSTA RICA ADVENTURE



On this epic adventure you will explore the whole of Costa Rica – from the canals and rainforests of Tortuguero and Cahuita on the Caribbean side to the central cloud forests of Chirripo and San Gerardo de Dota. You also head to the far South and the remote Osa peninsula where you get the chance to explore the jungles and snorkel in the turquoise water surrounding Corcovado National Park.



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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.

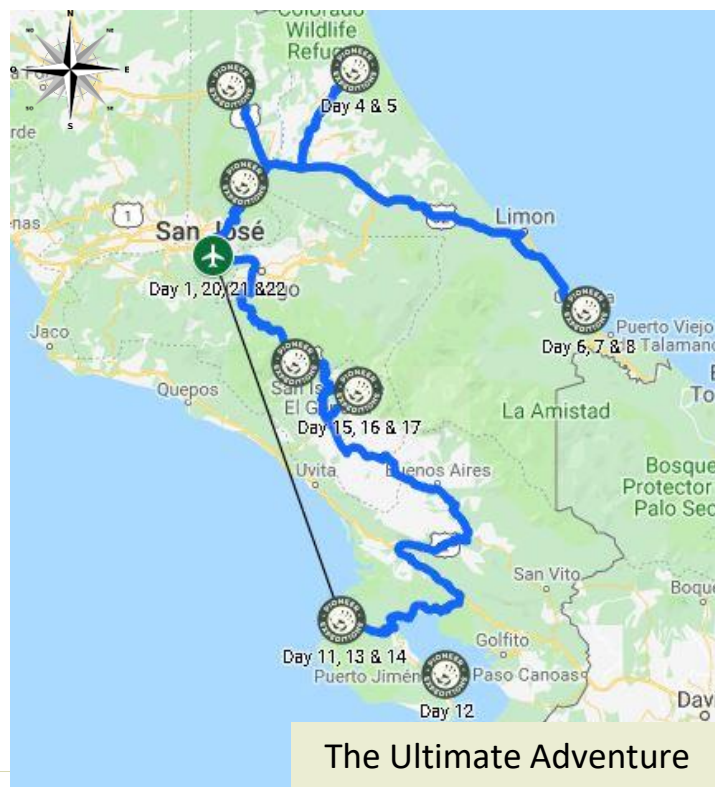
## WHY PIONEER EXPEDITIONS?

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



The Ultimate Adventure



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## DAY 1: Arrive in COSTA RICA and transfer to BRAULIO CARRILLO

Meet and greet at the San Jose International Airport by our partners and then get a private transfer to Braulio Carrillo National Park.

Check-in at the Lodge, our staff will be on hand to present you the Welcome Kit & help with check in. The Welcome kit contains important information about your trip and you will have the opportunity to review the itinerary with our local staff.

### Braulio Carrillo National Park

The Braulio Carrillo National Park is one of the most extensive national parks in Costa Rica. It was created in 1978 to safeguard the diversity of plant and wildlife found in this region, the Braulio Carrillo National Park is indeed worth a visit.

Comprised of virgin forest and at least five different life zones, the park is home to 6,000 species of plants. There are miles of hiking trails which allow you to visit these unique micro habitats. Be on the lookout for quetzals, toucans and eagles, which help to make up the 500 bird species that inhabit the park.

Around 150 mammals can be found inside the Braulio Carrillo protected zone such as white-faced monkeys, jaguars, peccaries, coati, deer, tapir and raccoons. Even the largest venomous snake found in Costa Rica, the matabuey, makes a home here, so watch your step!



*Overnight:*  
**Lodge**



*Meals:*  
**B, L, D**



*Distance:*  
**Approx. 1-2hrs driving**



*Activity:*  
**Travel**

## DAY 2-3: Explore the beautiful BRAULIO CARRILLO

**D2** - You will have a full day to explore the rainforest with a private guide. Activities to include a nocturnal rainforest walk, visit to a butterfly garden, a frog exhibition & a hummingbird sanctuary.

**D3** – Day at leisure - Trip on an aerial tram & other activities available at a discount.



*Overnight:*  
**Lodge**



*Meals:*  
**B, L, D**



*Distance:*  
**Varies**



*Activity:*  
**Wildlife**

## DAY 4: TORTUGUERO

Today you will have an early morning departure as you head off on the first part of your adventure at Tortuguero National Park. The journey to Tortuguero is by coach followed by boat and we will stop en-route for a typical Costa Rican breakfast. You will arrive at your jungle lodge in time for lunch. This afternoon is a great opportunity to visit the Village of Tortuguero along with your guide. Through this visit you will learn the ways of life of the local residents of Tortuguero. Return to lodge walking by a trail on the beach.



*Overnight:*  
**Lodge**



*Meals:*  
**B, L, D**



*Distance:*  
**Approx. 2hr drive**



*Activity:*  
**Transfer to Tortuguero**





## DAY 5: TORTUGUERO

Morning at leisure, free to enjoy the trails of the lodge & take lunch by the pool. This afternoon you will embark on a canal boat tour through the Tortuguero canals for more opportunities to spot abundant wildlife. This tour introduces you to the rich rainforest and its great array of wildlife. Dinner at pool restaurant

### Tortuguero National Park

Tortuguero National Park is one of Costa Rica's most biologically diverse wildlife areas. This is the most important site in the western Caribbean for the nesting of the sea turtles.

This very wet tropical forest is home of approximately 2,600 tree and plant species and a large range of wildlife. Birds, amphibians, freshwater fishes, American crocodiles and caimans, White-faced Capuchin, spider and Howler monkeys are living in this stunning area. Among all of these species, Tortuguero welcomes endangered animals such as manatees, tapirs and jaguars, to name a few.



*Overnight:*  
**Lodge**



*Meals:*  
**B, L, D**



*Distance:*  
**Varies**



*Activity:*  
**Wildlife**

## DAY 6: Transfer from TORTUGUERO to CAHUITA

After breakfast at the lodge, we will take the boat ride back to dock before transfer to Cahuita. You will stop for lunch at El Ceibo Restaurant in Guapiles before taking the shuttle transfer from Guapiles to Puerto Viejo



*Overnight:*  
**Hotel**



*Meals:*  
**B, L**



*Distance:*  
**Approx. 3-4hr drive**



*Activity:*  
**Transfer to Cahuita**

## DAY 7-8: Explore CAHUITA NATIONAL PARK

**D7** – Guided tour of Cahuita National Park, to include a guided walk, snorkel & lunch included. Enjoy Rasta culture with great Caribbean meals and ambience.

### Cahuita National Park

Cahuita National Park is a 2,711-acre national park located on the southern Caribbean coast protects tropical lowland wet forest (rain forest), beach, and coral. This is also one of the nicest and least developed beaches in Costa Rica. As well as the reef – on land there are many types of animal as well including northern tamanduas, pacas, white-nosed coatis, raccoons, sloths, agoutis, mantled howlers and white-headed capuchins. It has a variety of birds as well including the green ibis, green-and-rufous kingfisher and keel-billed toucan. Tropical lowland wet forest (rain forest), beach, and coral reefs



**D8** – This morning we will head out early to scout for sloths in the wild. This afternoon is at leisure where you can choose from a number of different excursions.



*Overnight:*  
**Hotel**



*Meals:*  
**B, L**



*Distance:*  
**Varies**



*Activity:*  
**Wildlife**



## DAY 9: Transfer to SARAPIQUI

After breakfast you will take a shared transfer to Sarapiquí. In the evening enjoy a nocturnal tour (as part of a group with a shared guide) or take part in the bat program.



Overnight:  
**Hotel**



Meals:  
**B**



Distance:  
**Approx. 3-4hr drive**



Activity:  
**Transfer to Sarapiquí**

## DAY 10: SARAPIQUI

Take a day to explore Sarapiquí, enjoy bird watching walks and take a safari river float tour along Sarapiquí River.

Late afternoon learn something new and take a cooking lesson (group minimum of 5 / maximum 20) and dinner.



Overnight:  
**Hotel**



Meals:  
**B, D**



Distance:  
**Varies**



Activity:  
**Wildlife boat tour**

## DAY 11: Transfer to San Jose and catch a flight to DRAKE

You will have breakfast at the hotel before taking a private transfer San Jose. Here you will take a domestic flight to Drake. On arrival you will be transferred from the airstrip to the hotel.



Overnight:  
**Hotel**



Meals:  
**B, L, D**



Distance:  
**Approx. 2hr transfer  
Short domestic flight**



Activity:  
**Transfer**

## DAY 12: CORCOVADO NATIONAL PARK

Day tour of Corcovado National Park (picnic lunch included, shared guide, group maximum of 5 people)

### Corcovado National Park

Corcovado National Park encompasses the only remaining old growth wet forests on the Pacific coast of Central America, and 13 major ecosystems including lowland rain forest, highland cloud forest, jolillo palm forest, and mangrove swamps, as well as coastal marine and beach habitats.

The diversity found on the Osa peninsula is not surpassed by any region of similar size anywhere on earth.

There is a good chance of spotting some of Costa Rica's shyest and most endangered inhabitants here; Baird's Tapirs, Jaguars, Scarlet Macaws, Harpy Eagles, Red-backed squirrel monkeys and White-lipped Peccaries. It is wet, remote and rugged, but the trails are relatively good, and the camping areas near the ranger stations are grassy and well drained.



Overnight:  
**Hotel**



Meals:  
**B, L, D**



Distance:  
**Approx. 1-2hr drive**



Activity:  
**Wildlife**

## DAY 13: DRAKE BAY

Day tour of Isla Del Caño with snorkelling (shared guide, group maximum of 6 people), picnic lunch included



A series of hand-carved, perfectly spherical stones are found on the island, suggested by archaeologists to be the grave markers of an indigenous tribe that lived here during pre-Columbian times. Throughout the 17th and 18th centuries Isla del Caño was used as a refuge for pirates along the Pacific coast, while today, it is best known for its spectacular offshore diving and unique historical past.

Turquoise water rings Isla Del Caño, as do a great number of coral reefs. In fact, the waters that surrounded the island contain the largest amount of coral-building organisms along the Pacific side of Costa Rica—there is brain coral, head coral and sea fans, to name just a few. Add to this excellent visibility and an enormous amount of marine species, and you've got the makings for magnificent snorkelling and scuba diving. Beneath the water you may be able to spot manta rays, tuna, needlefish, barracuda, snapper, white-tipped reef sharks, olive ridley sea turtles, moray eels, dolphins, and both humpback and pilot whales. Considering all of this, it's not surprising that many people regard Isla Del Caño as the best scuba diving spot in the entire country. However, because it is a biological reserve, diving numbers are strictly regulated – there are 5 dive sites and only 10 divers are allowed to be in the water at one time.

The island itself doesn't harbour as much biodiversity as does the ocean. There is an intact evergreen forest, as well as a sampling of rubber and cocoa trees. Boa constrictors, pacas, bats, tree frogs and a variety of insects can be spotted, in addition to several species of birds that use the island as a stopping point during their migration south. A number of white-sand beaches dot the island, and hiking trails extend across much of the terrain.

	<i>Overnight:</i> <b>Hotel</b>		<i>Meals:</i> <b>B, L, D</b>		<i>Distance:</i> <b>Varies</b>		<i>Activity:</i> <b>Wildlife</b>
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#### DAY 14: DRAKE BAY

Day at leisure. You may choose another tour into Corcovado National Park

	<i>Overnight:</i> <b>Hotel</b>		<i>Meals:</i> <b>B, L, D</b>		<i>Distance:</i> <b>Varies</b>		<i>Activity:</i> <b>Day at Leisure</b>
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#### DAY 15: Leave Drake Bay and transfer to SIERPE – CLOUD FOREST

Leave Drake after breakfast by shared boat transfer to Sierpe. Transfer from Sierpe to San Gerardo de Rivas (cloud forest on the base of Chirripo National Park - highest peak of Costa Rica). Transfer is a private 4x4 which will be with you until Day 13; you will have a guide /driver accompanying you. Stop at Nauyaca Waterfall for a swim and lunch and then on to accommodation after.

	<i>Overnight:</i> <b>Hotel</b>		<i>Meals:</i> <b>B</b>		<i>Distance:</i> <b>Long drive</b>		<i>Activity:</i> <b>Transfer</b>
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#### DAY 16: HIRRIPO CLOUD FOREST

Your guide will take you to explore the cloud and paramo forest. Then you have the opportunity to relax at the 2 pools of hot springs.

Nestled along the heart of the Talamanca Mountain Range in the south central portion of Costa Rica, Chirripo National Park (Parque Nacional Chirripo) consists of 123,923 acres

Much of the rugged terrain has been protected from development and exploitation by its inaccessibility. Besides the challenge of climbing Costa Rica's highest peak (Cerro Chirripó) there are miles of trails that wind through more ecological zones than you will find in most entire countries.



This is one of Costa Rica's wilder national parks

Wildlife found within Chirripo National Park includes spider monkeys, tapirs, peccary, jaguars and pumas. Over 400 species of birds have been identified in the park, including woodpeckers, wood creepers and trogons. It is also home to over 260 species of amphibians and reptiles.



Overnight:  
**Hotel**



Meals:  
**B**



Distance:  
**Varies**



Activity:  
**Wildlife**

#### DAY 17: CHIRRIPO CLOUD FOREST

Visit local artisans or do another hike perhaps in Rio Blanco reserve or Cloud bridge reserve. (Entrance not included)



Overnight:  
**Hotel**



Meals:  
**B**



Distance:  
**Varies**



Activity:  
**Visit local artisans or hike**

#### DAY 18: Transfer from SANTA ANA to SAN GERADO de DOTA

Transfer to San Gerado de Dota, visiting Cartago City (first capital city of Costa Rica and church of their patron)



Overnight:  
**Lodge**



Meals:  
**B**



Distance:  
**Approx. 2hr drive**



Activity:  
**Transfer**

#### DAY 19: Visit LOS QUETZALES NATIONAL PARK

Day at leisure to visit Los Quetzales National Park

San Gerado de Dota is a haven for birdwatchers and hikers. Located in the Savegre River Valley, this allows you quick access to Los Quetzales National Park (the home of the Quetzal). This is one of the most beautiful regions of Costa Rica with green mountainous backdrop & dense forests. Apart from the iconic Quetzal, there is a plethora of humming birds and woodpeckers to enjoy, as well as peccaries and coyotes.



Overnight:  
**Lodge**



Meals:  
**B**



Distance:  
**Varies**



Activity:  
**Wildlife**

#### DAY 20: SANTA ANA – SAN JOSE

Transfer to San Jose and then spend the rest of the day at leisure



Overnight:  
**Hotel**



Meals:  
**B**



Distance:  
**Approx. 2hr drive**



Activity:  
**Transfer**

#### DAY 21: Explore SAN JOSE



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Private tour to explore ciudad colon, Santa Ana, market and the mascaradas artisan (Costa Rican tradition), lunch included.

### San José

San Jose is the capital of Costa Rica, located in the Central Valley. The city's main tourist attractions include many beautiful theatres with European-inspired architecture (the National Theatre, The Melico Salazar Theatre) and also various museums (the National Museum, the Art Museum, and the Pre-Columbian Gold Museum). It is home to many parks and squares where you can find gazebos, open green areas, recreational areas, lakes, fountains, statues and sculptures by Costa Rican artists and many different bird, tree and plant species (La Sabana Metropolitan Park, San Jose Central Park, Morazan Park).



Overnight:  
**Hotel**



Meals:  
**B**



Distance:  
**Varies**



Activity:  
**Explore San Jose**

## DAY 22: End of the trip

You will have breakfast at the Hotel before getting a private transfer to International airport



Overnight:  
**N/A**



Meals:  
**Nil**



Distance:  
**Short transfer**



Activity:  
**Travel**

## 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, portorage, 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

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION



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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	We are able to arrange tailor-made or private departures to suit.
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](mailto: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](http://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 your requirements and wishes. From here, we can simply tailor-make your dream holiday.

