



**Costa Rica**  
The Natural Highlights

# PIONEER EXPEDITIONS



## ITINERARY

Costa Rica • Nature Adventure

**11 DAYS • 10 NIGHTS**

San José – Tortuguero National Park– Tortuguero – Sarapiquí –Rio Celeste- Arenal – Monteverde

Optional: Beach Extension at Quizales or Manuel Antonio

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Immerse yourself in one of the most beautiful, biologically intense places on earth
- Be exhilarated rafting on the picturesque Sarapiquí River
- Visit the mystical cloud forests of Monteverde home to the resplendent quetzal
- Get above the crowds with a birds-eye view from Arenal's hanging bridges.
- Kick back and relax on Quizales beach or family friendly Manuel Antonio.

## TOUR ESSENTIALS

|                  |                                    |
|------------------|------------------------------------|
| Tour Style       | Nature Expedition                  |
| Tour Start       | San José                           |
| Tour End         | San José                           |
| Accommodation    | Lodge & Hotel                      |
| Included Meals   | 9 Breakfasts, 4 Lunches, 2 Dinners |
| Difficulty Level | Medium                             |

## ONCE IN A LIFE TIME WILDLIFE EXPERIENCE



We've combined activities galore with the spectacularly diverse natural landscape of Costa Rica. You'll take in the canals and Caribbean tropical rainforests of Tortuguero. Then choose- a hired car or sit back and be driven past epic, volcanic backdrops, through mist shrouded cloud forests where wildlife is abundant. An optional beach extension takes you to the beautiful and rugged Nicoya Peninsula or family friendly Manuel Antonio.



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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.

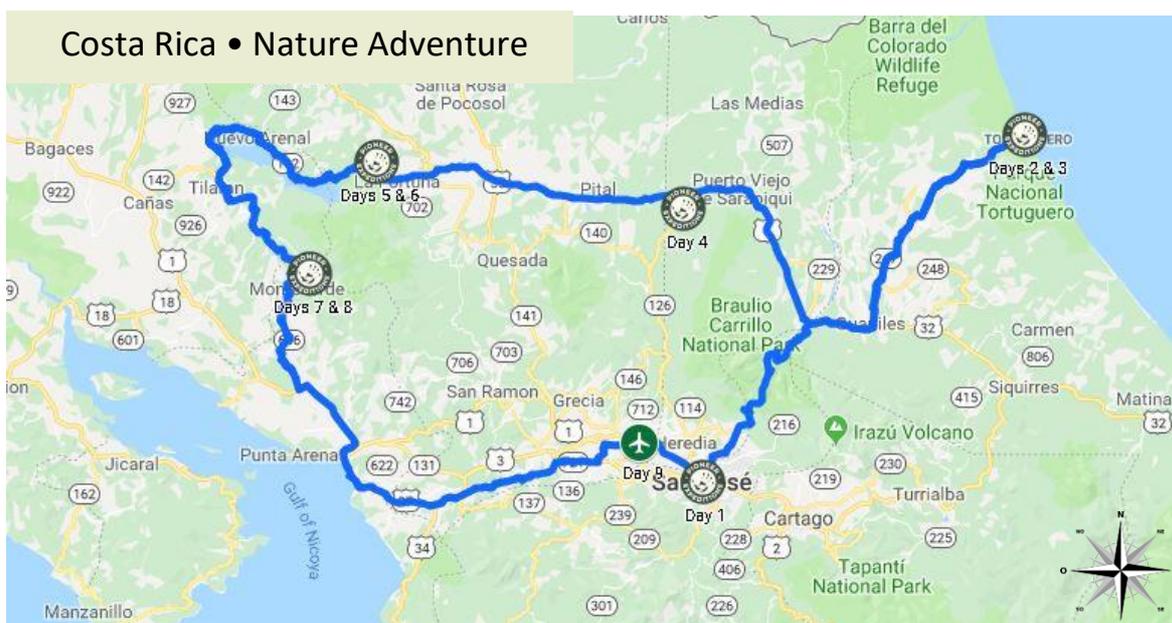
## WHY PIONEER EXPEDITIONS?

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



## DAY 1: Welcome to SAN JOSÉ

Upon arrival in San José, you will be met at the airport by a Pioneer representative and transferred to your hotel.

*Overnight at Rincón del Valle Hotel or similar (Deluxe room) (PT)*



**Overnight:**  
**Hotel**



**Meals:**  
**Nil**



**Distance:**  
**30min airport transfer**



**Activity:**  
**Travel**

## DAY 2: Today we will travel to TORTUGUERO on the Caribbean Coast

This morning we will head East to Lirio Lodge, where you will stay for a couple of nights, giving you a chance to explore the area. Meals and boat transfers are all included. Additionally, you will have a guided walk in the Pacuare Biological Reserve, where you will get to see Leatherback Turtles, Agarni Heron, Wild Felines, Sloths, and Monkeys.



*Overnight at Los Lirio at TTG Lodge (Standard room)*



**Overnight:**  
**Lodge**



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



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



**Activity:**  
**Exploring**

## DAY 3: Discover what TORTUGUERO has to offer

Lirio Lodge is located in Barra de Pacuare, the most pure section of the Tortuguero canals. Found in this extensive and unspoilt natural canal, Lirio Lodge is enclosed by tropical rainforest, and separated from the sea by a narrow peninsula of tropical jungle; the famous Pacuare Reserve.

Lirio lodge is surrounded by three Sea Turtle conservation projects, and you will get the chance to have a tour around a turtle protection project. Costa Rica is home to 5 of the 7 sea turtles in the world, and the Caribbean beaches and waters are used by the Leatherback, Green, Hawksbill and Loggerhead turtles. Additionally, during your stay here you might get the chance to visit a local school (Monday to Fridays).

*Overnight at Los Lirio at TTG*



**Overnight:**  
**Lodge**



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



**Distance:**  
**Varies**



**Activity:**  
**Exploring**



## DAY 4: Transfer from TORTUGUERO to SARAPIQUI

After breakfast at the lodge, we will take the boat ride back to dock before transfer to Guápiles. Here we will have a buffet lunch before picking up our car or meeting our private driver guide for our transfer to Sarapiquí.

Sarapiquí is known throughout Costa Rica for its amazing and rich biodiversity as well as for being an adventure seeker's dream destination. If you enjoy the outdoors, there are plenty of hiking and nature walk opportunities in this region as well as white water rafting down the River Sarapiquí. A boat trip down the Sarapiquí River is a great way to catch a glimpse of the region's wildlife including; monkeys, birds, turtles and caimans. If you are an avid bird watcher, coming here is the perfect way to see some of Costa Rica's many bird species in their natural environment such as hummingbirds, quetzals, dippers, guans.



Overnight at La Tirimbina Lodge (Standard room)



Overnight:  
Lodge



Meals:  
B, L



Distance:  
Approx. 3hr drive



Activity:  
Transfer

## DAY 5: Enjoy an adrenaline rushing WHITE WATER RAFTING experience on the SARAPIQUI RIVER



We take a dose of adventure this morning on the half-day Sarapiquí river white water rafting (class II-III) – this is a fun rafting descent suitable for beginners (available at other levels – please ask) but for those in search of an alternative activity this can be arranged. After lunch we will transfer to beautiful Rio Celeste. Celeste River is a river in Tenorio Volcano National Park of Costa Rica. It is notable for its distinctive turquoise coloration. The Celeste River also borders several hot springs and has one large waterfall.

Overnight at Arenal Manoa Hotel (Junior Suites)



Overnight:  
Hotel



Meals:  
B, L



Distance:  
Approx. 2hr drive



Activity:  
White water rafting



## DAY 6 : Discover the Natural Beauty of Rio Celeste

Today we can hike alongside the surreal turquoise waters of the Rio Celeste.

The Río Celeste gets its name from the unusual color of the water. The deep turquoise hue is a result of the Buenavista River and its silicon particles meeting the more acidic Sour Creek, the combination causes the suspended particles in the Río Celeste to scatter light, creating the turquoise colour. In the afternoon we continue to La Fortuna and Arenal volcano.

### Rio Celeste Hike:

Starting with a moderate hike, you'll be rewarded with views of the Rio Celeste waterfall and its distinct blue coloring. Follow the stairs down to the water's edge and you can witness the stunning 60-foot waterfall as it empties into a pool of sky blue water. Continuing down the well-maintained path and venturing across hanging bridges that span the river, you'll find its origins in an azure lagoon further up the trail. The Rio Celeste in Costa Rica is surrounded by the emerald green forests of the National Park, creating an experience unlike any other. You'll even get to witness the two rivers that mix to create the Rio Celeste and where they combine is where the vibrant blue color begins. The Rio Celeste's blue water comes from the minerals in the volcanic rock, but seeing them in person will feel like you are experiencing magic in nature.



*Overnight at Arenal Manoa Hotel (Junior Suites)*



*Overnight:*  
**Hotel**



*Meals:*  
**B**



*Distance:*  
**1-2 hrs drive**



*Activity:*  
**Exploring**

## DAY 7: Explore the canopy from hanging bridges

This morning we visit the Arenal Hanging Bridges for a natural history walk.

In the afternoon we are back on the ground with rainforest chocolate tour will introduce to every aspect of chocolate production from beans to bar. In addition to the natural elements we'll explore the history and origins of chocolate and, of course, get to sample some along the way.



### Rainforest Chocolate Tour:

In this "hands on" program, you will have the opportunity to learn interesting aspects of cocoa and chocolate, from its origin and history, participating in all the production process, from the harvesting of the fruit, drying and grinding of the seed, also the developing of the traditional drink of our ancestors, and of course enjoying a high quality organic chocolate. Enjoy this journey through the history, culture, traditions and the flavor.



*Overnight at Arenal Manoa Hotel*



*Overnight:*  
**Hotel**



*Meals:*  
**B**



*Distance:*  
**N/A**



*Activity:*  
**Exploring**



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## DAY 8: Transfer to MONTEVERDE and discover the incredible CLOUD FOREST

### Monteverde cloud forest:

Cloud forests are as the name suggests; hazy mist or low lying clouds that cover the upper canopy of the forest. These rare forests cover just 1% of global woodlands and can only be found in tropical and subtropical mountainous areas. The thick layer of clouds makes it more difficult for the sun to break through, providing a slower rate of evaporation, which gives the plants plenty of life-giving moisture, which in turn promotes a huge biodiversity.

Monteverde cloud forests is host to 100 species of mammals, 400 species of birds, and 1,200 species of amphibians and reptiles. Additionally, it is also one of the few remaining homes to all 6 species of the cat family; Jaguars, Ocelots, Pumas, Oncillas, Margays and Jagurundis.

Overnight at Trapp Family Lodge (1 Mountain Suite)



Overnight:  
**Lodge**



Meals:  
**B**



Distance:  
**Varies**



Activity:  
**Transfer**

## DAY 9: Spend the day exploring MONTEVERDE



This morning we can visit the stunning Monteverde Cloud Forest reserve for a morning walk tour. This offers you a fantastic opportunity to see birds. This afternoon is free to relax or go on one of the many hiking trails.

Overnight at Trapp Family Lodge (1 Mountain Suite)



Overnight:  
**Lodge**



Meals:  
**B**



Distance:



Activity:  
**Exploring**

## DAY 10: Transfer to SAN JOSE and explore the capital city

Breakfast at the hotel. Drive or take a private transfer to San José

Overnight at Park Inn hotel (Room TBC)



Overnight:  
**Hotel**



Meals:  
**B**



Distance:



Activity:  
**Day at Leisure**

## DAY 11: Transfer to the airport for your return flight or stay a few days more

After breakfast at the hotel. Return Hire Car or Private Transfer to International airport. (Aeropuerto Internacional Juan Santamaria). Or stay for a few days and relax – see our extension below from Day 9.



Overnight:  
**N/A**



Meals:  
**B**



Distance:  
**30min airport transfer**



Activity:  
**Travel**



# BEACH EXTENSION: PACIFIC COAST

## DAY 9: Transfer from MONTEVERDE to QUIZALES BEACH

Rather than heading back to San Jose, we will transfer to the beautiful and rugged Quizaes Beach on the Nicoya Peninsula. Or the family friendly beaches at Manuel Antonio where you can enjoy surfing kayaking or horse riding.

Overnight at Tango Mar Resort (Beach front room) (Enquire for Manuel Antonio)



Overnight:  
**Hotel**



Meals:  
**B**



Distance:



Activity:  
**Day at Leisure**

## DAY 10, 11 & 12: QUIZALES BEACH

Days at leisure or optional excursions.



Overnight at Tango Mar Resort (Beach front room)



Overnight:  
**Hotel**



Meals:  
**B**



Distance:



Activity:  
**Day at Leisure**

## DAY 13: QUIZALES TO SAN JOSE

Breakfast at the hotel. Drive or private transfer to San José.

Overnight at Park hotel (1 Deluxe).



Overnight:  
**Hotel**



Meals:  
**B**



Distance:



Activity:  
**Day at Leisure**

## DAY 14: SAN JOSE

Breakfast at the hotel. Private transfer or drive to International airport. (Aeropuerto Internacional Juan Santamaría).



Overnight:  
**Hotel**



Meals:  
**B**



Distance:



Activity:  
**Day at Leisure**

## DAY 15: HOME

Arrive back in UK early morning.



Activity:  
**Flight home**



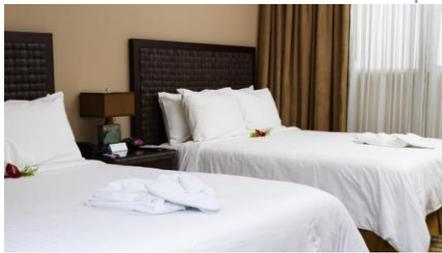
# ACCOMMODATION, *at a glance*

Subject to availability

## Rinçon del Valle Hotel

San José

<https://www.hotelrincondelvalle.com/>



## Mawamba Lodge

Tortuguero

<https://www.mawamba.com/>



## La Tirimbina Lodge

Sarapiquí

<https://www.tirimbina.org/>



## Rio Celeste Hideaway

Rio Celeste

<https://www.riocelstehideaway.com/>



**Arenal Manoe Hotel**

La Fortuna

<https://www.arenalmanoa.com/>



**Trapp Family Lodge**

Monteverde

<https://www.trappfamily.com/>



**BEACH EXTENSION: TANGO MAR RESORT**

Tango Mar

<https://tangomar.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, 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

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| 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.   |
| 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

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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.

