

Costa Rica

The Natural Highlights

PIONEER EXPEDITIONS



Itinerary	Costa Rica • Nature Adventure
11 Days • 10 Nights	**San José – Tortuguero National Park– Tortuguero –i –Rio Celeste- Arenal – Monteverde** **Optional: Beach Extension at Manuel Antonio**

HIGHLIGHTS

- Immerse yourself in one of the most beautiful, biologically intense places on earth
- 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	As stated

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.

COS03

Pioneer Expeditions
Stable Cottage ● Chydyok Road ● Chaldon Herring ● Dorchester ● DT2 8DN
t 01202 798922 ● **e** info@pioneerexpeditions.com

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

Pioneer Expeditions
Stable Cottage ● Chydyok Road ● Chaldon Herring ● Dorchester ● DT2 8DN
t 01202 798922 ● **e** info@pioneerexpeditions.com

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 Hotel Presidente 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

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 Tortuguero, Hotel Pachira Lodge



Overnight:
Lodge



Meals:
B, L, D



Distance:
Approx. 3hr drive



Activity:
Exploring

DAY 3: Discover TORTUGUERO

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.

Optional Tours at additional cost

Tortuguero is one of the most important sea turtle nesting sites in the western hemisphere. Four of the seven world sea turtle species come to Tortuguero to lay their eggs including giant Leatherbacks. Nesting and hatching seasons vary depending on the species.

Experiencing the jungles sights and sounds at night gives you a spectacularly different perspective on your surroundings as we take a hike to expose nature's night time secrets with an expert guide, quiet voices! and a degree of patience.

Overnight at Tortuguero, Hotel Pachira Lodge (Standard room)



Overnight:
Lodge



Meals:
B, L, D



Distance:
Varies



Activity:
Exploring

Pioneer Expeditions
Stable Cottage ● Chydyok Road ● Chaldon Herring ● Dorchester ● DT2 8DN
t 01202 798922 ● **e** info@pioneerexpeditions.com

DAY 4: Transfer from TORTUGUERO to Monteverde Could Forest Via Guapiles

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 Sarapiqui.

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 Poca a Poca or similar

Overnight: ***Lodge*** *Meals:* ***B*** *Distance:* ***Varies*** *Activity:* ***Transfer***

DAY 5: 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 Poca a Poca or similar (Standard room)

Overnight: ***Lodge*** *Meals:* ***B, L*** *Distance:* ***Approx. 3hr drive*** *Activity:* ***Transfer***

Pioneer Expeditions
Stable Cottage ● Chydyok Road ● Chaldon Herring ● Dorchester ● DT2 8DN
t 01202 798922 ● **e** info@pioneerexpeditions.com

DAY 6 : Transfer to Arenal from Monteverde Hot Spring and Dinner Explore

After a morning heading down from the cloudforest , unwind in Arenal's soothing natural hot springs, surrounded by lush rainforest and volcanic views. Rejuvenated, enjoy a hearty Costa Rican lunch bursting with fresh, local flavors. This tranquil interlude offers the perfect balance to an exhilarating day—relaxation and discovery in the heart of nature.



."
Overnight at Arenal Observatory Lodge (or similar)

Overnight: ***Hotel*** *Meals:* ***BD*** *Distance:* ***N/A*** *Activity:* ***Exploring***

DAY 7 : Arenal Guided walk to La Fortuna Waterfalls

Embark on a guided walk through lush rainforest trails to the stunning La Fortuna Waterfall, where crystal-clear waters plunge 70 meters into a vibrant jungle pool. Along the way, your guide reveals the region's rich biodiversity and ecological wonders. On clear days, enjoy breathtaking views of the majestic Arenal Volcano towering in the distance—a rare and unforgettable sight. The experience combines scenic beauty, gentle adventure, and insight into Costa Rica's extraordinary natural landscape

."
Overnight at Arenal Observatory Lodge (or similar)

Overnight: ***Hotel*** *Meals:* ***B*** *Distance:* ***N/A*** *Activity:* ***Exploring***

DAY 8- 9 : Discover the Natural Beauty of Rio Celeste

Today we transfer to the Tenoria National park area.

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

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.

Two nights at Casitas Tenoria Lodge (or similar)


Overnight: ***Hotel***


Meals: ***B***


Distance: ***N/A***


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 Presidente hotel or similar


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***

Pioneer Expeditions
Stable Cottage ● Chydyok Road ● Chaldon Herring ● Dorchester ● DT2 8DN
t 01202 798922 ● **e** info@pioneerexpeditions.com

Optional Beach extension: PACIFIC COAST

DAY 10 – Transfer to Puntarenas (Pacific Coast)
• Private transfer to Puntarenas (approx. 2 hrs)

Accommodation: Hotel Punta Leona or similar (Selvamar Room)
Nestled between tropical rainforest and the Pacific Ocean, Hotel Punta Leona offers a unique blend of nature and comfort. The Selvamar Rooms are surrounded by lush greenery, providing a tranquil base to relax and spot local wildlife.
• **Meals: Breakfast**

DAY 11 – Jungle Crocodile Safari & Beach Time

Guided crocodile safari boat tour on the Tárcoles River
Board a safari boat and cruise down the Tárcoles River, one of the best places in Costa Rica to observe large American crocodiles in their natural habitat. Your expert guide will also point out a variety of bird species, including herons, egrets, and the striking scarlet macaw.
• **Afternoon free to enjoy Punta Leona's private beach or trails**
Unwind on Punta Leona's secluded white-sand beach or explore well-maintained forest trails teeming with wildlife—ideal for birdwatching or simply soaking up the natural beauty.
• **Accommodation: Hotel Punta Leona**
• **Meals: Breakfast**

DAY 12 – Free Day in Puntarenas

Beach day
Enjoy a full day at leisure. Swim in warm Pacific waters, relax under palm trees, or take advantage of optional activities such as snorkelling, kayaking, or a visit to nearby coastal towns.
• **Accommodation: Hotel Punta Leona**
• **Meals: Breakfast**

DAY 13 – Return to San José & Departure
• Private transfer to SJO Airport (approx. 4.5 hrs)
Bid farewell to Costa Rica's Pacific coast as you journey back to San José for your onward travel.
• **Meals: Breakfast**

Pioneer Expeditions
Stable Cottage ● Chydyok Road ● Chaldon Herring ● Dorchester ● DT2 8DN
t 01202 798922 ● **e** info@pioneerexpeditions.com

Important Information

INCLUDED	NOT 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.	➢ 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

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

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 -**

Pioneer Expeditions
Stable Cottage ● Chydyok Road ● Chaldon Herring ● Dorchester ● DT2 8DN
t 01202 798922 ● e info@pioneerexpeditions.com

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.

Pioneer Expeditions
Stable Cottage ● Chydyok Road ● Chaldon Herring ● Dorchester ● DT2 8DN
t 01202 798922 ● **e** info@pioneerexpeditions.com