



## Essential Costa Rica



**HOLIDAY TYPE:** Small Group  
**VISITING:** Costa Rica

**BROCHURE CODE:** 4038  
**DURATION:** 7 nights

### In Brief

Discover one of the most biodiverse countries on the planet and feast your senses on the vibrant nature of Costa Rica. Take in the fragrant aromas of the tropical flora, hear the symphony of animal calls in the jungle and taste the delicious flavour combinations influenced by various world cuisines. Nothing compares to Costa Rica's unique offering with its active volcanoes, cloud forests and effervescent waterfalls.

### Our Opinion

*“ Costa Rica is one of the most beautiful places I have ever visited. It really was a feast for the senses; vibrant colours, a symphony of animal sounds, aromatic food. I couldn't believe how richly bio-diverse the country was. It's not until you experience Costa Rica first hand that you can truly appreciate it's splendor. The people were incredibly warm and friendly and couldn't wait to showcase their fascinating land. ”*

# The Specifics

## Group Size

We always try to provide an approximation of the group size you can expect to be with for the duration of each of our holidays. It may be that you are joined by others for parts of your holiday (such as transfers and particular activities) but the above number reflects those you can normally expect to be with from beginning to end. If group size is something which is particularly important to you, please speak to our Travel Experts and they can suggest the best holidays for you.

Tailor-made holiday group sizes will vary for all activities as will the group size for any additional activities you book.

## Minimum numbers required for a holiday to operate

Some of our holidays require a minimum number of participants to operate (as listed in the 'Group Size' section). If your holiday departure has not yet reached the minimum number, you will be told at the time of booking. In the unlikely event that your chosen date is not guaranteed by nine weeks before your scheduled departure date, we will contact you to discuss the available options as per our booking conditions.

## Minimum and maximum age

The minimum age for this holiday can be found in the 'Key Facts' section of the holiday overview.

Younger family members may be able to participate but may not be able to take part in all activities. Please contact one of our Travel Experts if you have any questions.

## Itinerary amendments

The order of activities listed in this agenda is provided for guidance only, your final and detailed itinerary will be provided either with your final travel documents (which are uploaded into your online account around a week prior to departure) or upon arrival.

## Guides & Safety

When partaking in any activity, it is imperative that everyone in your group listens very closely to the instructions provided by the guide and that they are abided by at all times. Our guides are experts in their field and no one knows the environment better than these highly knowledgeable and experienced providers.

Prior to starting any activity, please make it clear to your guide if there is any element of the safety briefing you are unsure of or would like to clarify before you set off.

Our guides will always take local conditions into account when considering whether an activity can go ahead. This is, in part, why your itinerary is subject to change at short notice. This rarely happens, however, if it does, we will always endeavour to reschedule the activity for later in your holiday. If this is not possible then the cost of the activity will be refunded to you when you return home.

Our guides' word on activities is always final and your safety is their principal concern at all times; please respect their decisions. By following their instructions, your safety and enjoyment during each activity will be greatly enhanced.

**NB: In order to participate in our holidays, all guests must be able to understand instructions given in English. These instructions may be delivered verbally or in writing and will include vital safety information and ongoing instruction during activities**

## Pregnancy

If you are pregnant at the time of booking your holiday or you discover you are pregnant prior to your departure, firstly – congratulations! Secondly – please tell us as soon as possible. This situation does frequently arise and we are able to advise you both from our own first-hand experience and from discussing this at length with our expert local partners who have experience in this area. The more notice you can give us the better, in order to suggest any adaptations to the itinerary you have booked which will reduce the risk to both mother and baby. Please contact our customer service team at [info @ activitiesabroad.com](mailto:info@activitiesabroad.com) for more information.

## Experience and Fitness

Most of the activities we offer have been designed for beginners who have no prior experience and are of all age ranges and fitness levels. Our guides provide expert advice, tuition and instructions prior to any activity going ahead. Activities are designed to be enjoyed and not endured, but some, do require a more basic level of fitness than others. If you have any questions, then please contact one of our Travel Experts who can provide first-hand advice.

The only holidays which are not as suitable for complete beginners are the multi-night safaris which involve several days in wilderness cabins travelling by either snowmobile or husky safari. Again, this all depends on the individual taking part, but some prior experience and understanding of these types of activities can be very helpful and a

greater level of fitness is recommended.

## Financial Protection

We know that your holiday will be one of the most important investments you make in a year and we understand how important it is for you to know that you are financially protected and that your money is secure. Alongside our ATOL financial protection (ATOL 6865) you may book with confidence as we are a fully bonded member of ABTA (ABTA number Y6261). This means that you have the benefit of ABTA's code of conduct and your money is fully protected regardless of whether we are arranging your flights for you or not. We also offer our clients our 'Peace of Mind Promise' to really put your mind at ease. Please see the following link for full details: <https://www.activitiesabroad.com/about-us/financial-protection>

## Responsible Travel

Responsible Travel is at the heart of our business and our approach is based on ensuring that our holidays are environmentally, socially and economically responsible. We work in some of the most pristine environments in the world and with suppliers who we class as friends; protecting and providing for both is central to our ethos. Full details of our Responsible Travel Policy can be found on our [website](#).

## Parental Supervision

Our family holidays are designed to be just that, family holidays. During activities, our guides are there to provide advice, tuition and supervision but we must stress that you are responsible for the child or children in your care. We do not employ qualified childminders and you should not put our guides or other group members in a position where they are responsible for the care of your child or children.

## Money and tipping

At your discretion, you may wish to tip your guides at the end of your stay as a gesture of appreciation for their efforts during your holiday.

## Travelling overseas with children

The Foreign Office has advice for travelling overseas with children which can be found by [clicking here](#).

To minimize any potential issues at the border entry point for a country if both parents of

a child entering the country are not going to be present then we would strongly recommend having a written statement from the absent parent(s) stating that they are in full knowledge and support of the visit and a contact number should they wish to verify the document is genuine.

Whilst it is unlikely you would need to produce such a document if it is requested and evidence cannot be produced this may delay your entry into the country and cause further complications which can be easily avoided.

## Medical History and Advice

We want our holidays to be accessible as they can be and will do our best to accommodate any special requests and requirements where possible. We have a wide range of holidays and destinations and so our travel experts will help find the best holiday for you.

In order to give us the best possible chance to do this we ask that if you or any member of your party has any medical condition or disability which may affect your holiday or has any special requirements, that you tell us at the time of enquiry or booking. You must also promptly advise us if any medical condition or disability which may affect your holiday develops after your booking has been confirmed. You may need to provide a doctor's note and proof of insurance in some cases as the health and safety of our clients is absolutely paramount.

In providing this information you are allowing us to work with our expert local partners to ensure that your whole party can enjoy the holiday. By letting us know in advance we can discreetly work with you to adapt any part of the holiday which may potentially be challenging. Being able to prepare for this in advance makes an incredible difference to what we can offer and minimises any impact on your party and the rest of the group.

Unfortunately, if you choose not to share this information with us in advance then it may limit some or all of the itinerary you have booked, and we cannot be held accountable for any additional costs or missed activities resulting from this.

It is vitally important that you advise us prior to departure of any medical or dietary condition relating to any member of your party so that we may notify our local staff before you arrive. We recommend only drinking bottled water from bottles with unbroken seals and be vigilant about the use of ice in drinks and ice cream.

## Insurance

Insurance is not included in your holiday, but it is a pre-requisite to travelling with us. You will need to ensure that you have cover for all the activities that you will be participating in during your holiday.

It is extremely important that you take out a suitable travel insurance policy at the time of booking. Plans do sometimes change, and you will need this policy should you need to



cancel your holiday.

If you are struggling to find a suitable policy then details of our preferred provider, who will cover you for all the activities we offer, can be found on our website by [clicking here](#). Please note that this policy is available to EU residents under the age of 75 only.

## The UK Foreign Office Advice

Our clients' safety is at the centre of everything we do, and our operations team continually assesses and monitors the destinations we feature. We carry out thorough risk assessments and work closely with all of our suppliers to continually follow best practice. For up to date travel advice the UK government offers its [Travel Aware website](#) as well as the advice detailed below.

### The Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice

We receive all updates from the [Foreign and Commonwealth Office \(FCO\)](#) with regards to travel advice and we always ensure that we follow this advice in our operations. The FCO issues travel advisories for countries based on a very wide range of factors. They may provide notification about things as simple as a football match and crowds, or they may go so far as to advise against all travel to a region. We ask all our clients to refer to the relevant [Travel Advice by Country](#) for the destinations they are visiting in order to make an informed decision on the safety of the destination based on the details provided. It also provides vital information regarding entry requirements, embassy information, local laws and customs as well as specific safety and health. Guests should take responsibility for keeping themselves up to date with this advice. Please also ensure that, if you are transiting through another country, you have read the advice and meet the entry requirements for that destination too.

The FCO travel advice is applicable to British Passport Holders. Most governments will issue their own travel advice for a region and, if you are not a UK resident then you can find some helpful links below:

Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade <http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/>

New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade <http://www.safetravel.govt.nz/>

Canadian Consular Affairs Bureau <http://voyage.gc.ca/>

The U.S. Bureau of Consular Affairs <http://travel.state.gov/content/travel/english.html>

If the FCO deems that there is an unacceptable level of risk for UK citizens then, together with the government, they may issue an advisory against all travel to a region or country. If such an advisory is published, then we will act accordingly, and this may require the cancellation, curtailment or amendment of a holiday itinerary. These decisions are made on the basis of ensuring our clients' safety and will affect all clients on the holiday,

regardless of their nationality.

If one of our local experts suggests an amendment due to a situation which develops locally then we may also take the decision to amend an itinerary appropriately.

If we have to cancel your holiday prior to departure you will be offered the option of an alternative trip (where any price difference will either be refunded to or covered by you) or a full refund of the monies paid.

If we have to curtail a holiday, then you will be refunded for any costs for the elements we have been unable to deliver, where we have been able to secure a refund from our suppliers. If we must reroute a holiday, then any basis for refund is determined on a case by case basis and dependent on whether the central holiday experience was provided or not.

## Booking activities locally

Additional activities can be booked locally in almost all our destinations. However, as per our booking conditions, we cannot be held responsible for any injury or loss incurred through participation in activities which are booked at your destination outside of our holiday itinerary (see our 'Terms and Conditions' for further details).

When arranging any such activity please always ensure that safety is your primary concern.

In some of our destinations, you can borrow or hire equipment for use in your free time. You do so entirely at your own risk. You must ensure that you are correctly prepared, have the necessary equipment and knowledge (maps, etc.) and ensure that where applicable, you follow marked routes. We recommend discussing your plans with the local teams who will be able to advise on the most suitable options for you.

Always let the reception/guide know where you are planning to go and take a torch and mobile phone (with the hotel/guide's phone number stored). It is also a good idea to leave your contact number and the time you expect to return to the hotel should the hotel need to contact you.

## Costa Rica FAQs

### Do we need to tip?

Tipping is a big part of Costa Rican culture and although it is not expected, it is greatly appreciated for excellent service. Bellboys and housekeepers usually receive around \$2 USD, whereas taxi drivers don't expect to be tipped at all. Most restaurants include a 10% service charge, however, if you feel that you have received exceptional service, an additional tip of 5%, or rounding up your bill is considered appropriate.

As a gesture of appreciation for their services during your holiday, you are welcome to tip your guide and driver at your discretion. Although this is not expected, it can be a nice way of thanking them for their time and effort. As a guideline, \$5-10 USD per person per day would be greatly appreciated for your guide, although this is by no means compulsory. You may also have local guides that will join you for certain parts of the trip and if you receive excellent service from them, a tip of \$2 USD per person per day would be appropriate, which is also the amount we would recommend if you would like to tip your driver.

## Do we need visas to visit Costa Rica?

British nationals don't need a visa to enter Costa Rica. Upon entry, most visitors are granted a stay of up to 3 months. Your passport should have at least one day's validity from the date you are leaving Costa Rica.

## How expensive is Costa Rica?

Costa Rica tends to be a less expensive destination than the nearby Caribbean islands and it is relatively inexpensive to enjoy your time here, although certain items can cost slightly more than in the UK due to taxes and import costs.

A large (1.5litre) bottle of water will cost you around £1.80 and a can of soft drink roughly £1. A half-litre of beer will cost approximately £1.30 and a meal in a mid-range restaurant is likely to cost around £7. A bottle of wine will likely cost you £7-10 in a restaurant, on average. Local products tend to be cheaper and you can pick up cheap local fruit and coffee throughout the country.

## What is the local currency?

The currency in Costa Rica is the colón, named after Christopher Columbus. US Dollars are also widely accepted, especially at hotels and restaurants, whereas smaller services and more remote destinations will likely only accept colones. £10 is worth approximately ₡8300 (\$16 USD).

Cash machines are widely available in the larger towns and hotels, but you should have cash available for the more remote destinations and lodges. Credit cards are also widely accepted.

## What is the time difference?

Costa Rica is 7 hours behind the UK.



## What kind of plug do we need to take?

In Costa Rica, they use Type A and B plugs, similar to those found in the US, which are 120V/60Hz. Your plug will need to have two straight prongs to fit the sockets here.

## What will the weather be like?

Thanks to Costa Rica's proximity to the equator, its days are long and filled with sunshine and no real winter period, which makes this a great place to enjoy a family summer holiday filled with activities!

Costa Rica generally enjoys warm days, with the occasional burst of tropical rainfall. The climate varies from region to region and during your time here, you will get to travel to a variety of different locations. In the Central Valley, they enjoy a warm, spring-like climate all year round whereas the coastal areas can be very hot and dry.

The average temperatures are as follows

May – June: 24°C - 32°C

July – August: 24°C - 31°C

September – October: 23°C - 31°C

## What's the food like?

Most Costa Rican meals include black beans or rice, often served with generous portions of vegetables, such as fried plantains and tomato, as well as meat or fish. Sour cream, eggs, onions and peppers are also key ingredients and the locals love their corn tortillas! While here try a Casado, which is one of the most common dishes in Costa Rica, comprised of beans, rice, onions, plantains, cabbage, tomatoes and a choice of chicken, fish, pork or steak with grilled onions.

The plantain is probably the most popular snack in Costa Rica. It looks like a large banana, but can't be eaten raw. Usually it will be fried or baked, bringing out the sweet flavours and it is a great accompaniment to most meals.

There are many weird and wonderful fruits to try in Costa Rica, such as the guanabana, which is a textured, green, football-sized fruit that makes a lovely juice drink. The pejibaye is another great one to try – a relative of the coconut, its taste resembles chestnut or pumpkin. There are certainly lots of surprises for the family to try!

## Costa Rica FCO Advice

Below you will find the specific link for the current FCO advice for the country/countries that you are visiting which is applicable to British passport holders only. It is vital that you read this as early as possible as the content includes details on entry requirements, embassy information, local laws and customs as well as specific safety and health advice.

<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/costa-rica>

Most governments will issue their own travel advice for a region and, if you are resident outside of the UK, then you can find some helpful links below:

Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade <http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/>

New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade <http://www.safetravel.govt.nz/>

Canadian Consular Affairs Bureau <http://voyage.gc.ca/>

The U.S. Bureau of Consular Affairs <http://travel.state.gov/content/travel/english.html>

## Flight schedule changes and connecting transportation

On your documentation, we will confirm your flight schedule. Sometimes the flight number, routing and timings might change prior to your departure. If the change is classed as a significant change then we will contact you to discuss this. Please see our booking conditions for details.

Flight schedule changes can impact on your pre and post-holiday travel arrangements if these have been booked separately to your holiday. We strongly recommend that you do not book transport (such as trains or transfers), car parking or non-connecting flights to the departure point for your holiday until you have received your final confirmed travel times when your final travel documents are issued. We are not responsible for the effect of any schedule change on your pre or post travel arrangements. We strongly recommend that you do not purchase non-flexible or non-refundable tickets to avoid cancellation and penalty charges.

## Booking your own flights cancellation disclaimer

If you have chosen to book your own flights, then you will need to wait until we confirm to you that the holiday departure has met the minimum numbers required to run (if applicable to your chosen holiday). Once the holiday is guaranteed to run, you will be informed and you can then make your arrangements.

If transfers are included in your holiday, please ensure that any potential flights will be met by our standard transfers (speak to one of our Travel Experts for advice) otherwise private transfer supplements may be applicable. Once your flights are booked, please

send us a copy of your detailed flight itinerary.

Please be aware that most tickets are non-refundable in the case of cancellation. For this reason, we strongly advise you check the rules of the ticket and check the limitations of your cancellation insurance before booking. We cannot be held liable, in the unlikely eventuality that we should be forced to cancel or amend your trip, for losses incurred relating to any flight booking you have made.

## Special requests & in-flight meals

Due to the remote locations of our holidays, flight availability can be exceptionally limited. To ensure that you can travel on the seats that we have pre-allocated to a certain holiday, flight options might be restricted. Please discuss this with our Travel Experts at the time of booking.

Generally, we are unable to assign specific seating on flights although we can make requests on your behalf. We cannot guarantee this and if a request is unable to be actioned then this is not classed as a breach of contract on our part.

If your booking allows for online check-in then you should do so as early as possible to ensure you are allocated seats next to your travelling companions. Details regarding this will be provided in your final travel documents which will be provided approximately one week prior to travel.

If you require special seats or assistance at the airport due to a medical condition, reduced mobility or disability, then please let us know at the time of booking (or as soon as possible prior to travel if the issue occurs after booking). You may be required to provide written confirmation of your fitness to travel from a doctor.

Domestic flights and those within Europe, may not provide meals or snacks onboard so it is always worth remembering this if you are due to land late in the evening when opportunities to buy food may be limited.

We always forward any dietary requirements to the airlines, but we cannot guarantee the availability of the chosen diet onboard. You may want to consider bringing your own food to guarantee there will be something you will be able to eat. This is the approach our staff with dietary requirements take when flying within Europe.

## Terms and Conditions

Our full booking terms and conditions can be found on our website: <https://www.activitiesabroad.com/booking-conditions>

**Please note: our payment and cancellation terms will be unique to each booking - they will be confirmed with you at the time of quotation. The terms listed**

**above are noted as a guide only**