



Global Explorers

WHERE // Sustainable Tropics: Costa Rica

Program Highlights

- Stroll along Caribbean beaches, explore the rainforest and cruise through the cloud forest on zip-lines as you experience the myriad ecosystems and incredible biodiversity this tiny country has to offer.
- Immerse yourself in the animated “Pura Vida” lifestyle that makes Costa Rica known for its vibrant culture worldwide.
- Search for howler monkeys, poison dart frogs, resplendent quetzals, three-toed sloths, nesting sea turtles and more with expert local guides.

“I felt this swelling inside, like my consciousness, my confidence, my inner-self was literally just growing.”
- Melinda, Student Explorer



Program Description

Full of adventure, beauty, captivating culture and rich biodiversity, Costa Rica has everything you could ask for in an educational travel destination. It's small in size and well-traveled, making it one of the best countries on Earth for student groups. The Sustainable Tropics program brings us to several lesser-known learning spots in some of Costa Rica's most enticing destinations and immerses us in three different ecosystems. We search for all kinds of wildlife and learn about the successful sustainable development strategies that have made Costa Rica famous for conservation and ecotourism. We also interact with rural community members and have the chance to give back through service projects. Traveling by foot, kayak, boat, canopy walkway and zip-line, we truly experience this wonderful country up close and personal.

Pre-Travel Curriculum

- Tropical ecosystems, sustainable development and rainforest conservation.
- Costa Rican history and culture and Spanish language.
- Leadership skills, service learning and responsible travel knowledge.



Program Itinerary

Day 1

After traveling from the U.S. to San Jose, Costa Rica, we settle into a comfortable hotel.

Days 2 – 3

We depart by van and continue by boat for our trip to the Caribbean beaches and canals of Tortuguero. On the way to our lodge, we visit the community of Tortuguero and have some time to explore. When we arrive at our beach-side lodge we can relax and let ourselves become immersed in our spectacular new environment. Tonight, we learn about the community's incredible conservation projects. Our next morning begins with a spectacular boat ride to search for wildlife and continues with a beach cleanup project and kayaking in the area's canals. Tonight, we scour the beaches for several hours searching for nesting sea turtles.

Days 4 – 6

We depart Tortuguero this morning and head to the Sarapiquí region. Our first day includes a visit to a pineapple plantation (with plenty of samples), and a boat trip in search of monkeys on the Sarapiquí River. We conclude the day with an exciting bat observation activity and fall asleep to the sounds of the forest at the Tirimbina Lodge Field Station, our home for the next three nights. Day 5 includes a visit to La Selva, one of the most important sites in the world for scientific research on tropical forests. We conduct a research activity and enjoy a night hike in search of frogs

back at Tirimbina. Our last day in Sarapiquí is spent working on a service project with the Sarapiquí Conservation Learning Center and a local community. Then, we play a game of fútbol with the very students we just worked alongside.

Days 7 – 9

Our next stop is the Monteverde region, filled with cloud forests and wildlife. We arrive at the UGA San Luis Research Station, where we stay for the next three nights, and search for wildlife on a night hike. We begin the next day in a similar fashion, with an early morning search for resplendent quetzals – the stunning bird that is symbolic of Costa Rica. Later, we experience the forest as the birds do, zipping through the canopy and exploring a series of walkways. At a local handicraft cooperative, we can support local artists and find gifts for our families and friends. We also visit a local dairy to sample the cheese and ice cream that make Monteverde famous. On Day 9, we visit Finca la Bella, a small, local, sustainable farm where coffee, sugarcane and other crops are grown. We discuss sustainability and participate in an ongoing conservation project that will contribute to offsetting some of the carbon our trip has produced.

Day 10

We depart early this morning for San Jose to catch our flight back home.

*This represents a sample itinerary that is subject to change based on weather or other circumstances outside the control of Global Explorers.

Program Details

Expedition Length: 10 days

Location: Costa Rica – San Jose, Tortuguero, Sarapiquí, Monteverde

What's Included:

All lodging in Costa Rica; all meals and drinking water in Costa Rica; all transportation in Costa Rica; all daily activities and related fees; Global Explorers Expedition Leader; local guides and drivers; all gratuities; basic travel insurance; airport departure fees; preparatory materials and support; t-shirts and journals; carbon offsets for international air travel.

What's Not Included:

International airfare between your home city and San Jose, Costa Rica; passport fees; immunization fees; spending money (for souvenirs and extra snacks); expenses as a result of travel delays or cancellations that fall outside of Global Explorers' control.

Maturity Level:

This program is open to middle school and high school groups.

Group Size:

We require a minimum group size of 10 paying participants for this program and can accommodate up to 24 paying participants.

Accommodations:

Students stay in clean and rustic dormitory-style lodges with bunk beds, indoor bathrooms and electricity in the day time. Food is delicious and healthy local cuisine. Fresh drinking water is always available.