

## Costa Rica – pure and untamed



If you have been thinking about a special place to travel to and a new experience to live, Costa Rica is the answer.

Imagine for a moment ...a land of friendly and peaceful people; a land of tropical natural wonders with dedication to preserve for all to enjoy. Costa Rica is a region filled with tropical rain forests, active volcanoes, colorful exotic flowers and exquisite beaches, Costa Rica has it all with no artificial ingredients!

Costa Rica, 51,100 sq. km is bordered to the north by Nicaragua, to the east by the Caribbean Sea, to the Southeast by Panama, and to the West and Southwest by the Pacific Ocean. It lies completely within the tropics. Costa Rica was created by volcanic activity. In the north region you will find the Arenal Volcano (1633 meters), one of the most active volcanoes in Latin America.

Like many tropical countries, Costa Rica experiences two seasons, the wet and the dry, rather than the four seasons in temperate regions. The dry season lasts generally from November to April and this is called „verano“ (or summer) by Costa Ricans. The rest of the year is called the „green season“ with rainfalls in the afternoons and sunshine until midday.

Temperatures vary very little from season to season in the Central Valley. San José has an „eternal spring“. Lows average a mild 18° Celsius year round while highs are a pleasant 28° Celsius.



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The World Resource Institute, in a chart published in 1995, shows that Costa Rica has the most varied fauna on the planet.

With the Constitution of 1949 the army was abolished. Costa Rica is the oldest Latin American democracy with public elections every 4 years. Over the last 50 years Costa Rica has managed to institutionalize an educational and a health system for the entire population and is often considered to be among the most advanced countries within Latin America. The percentage of illiteracy was evaluated at only 5 % in 2001, live expectancy is 75 years.

Costa Ricans are known worldwide for their distinguished love of peacefulness, which also found its expression in the Nobel Peace Prize for the ex-president Oscar Arias in 1987.

The introduction of coffee during the XIX century began to provide a product suitable for export. This was followed by bananas, and today these two crops continue to be the most important in the country. Other important exports include meat, sugar, flowers, tobacco, cacao and many tropical fruits such as papaya, pineapple and mango. However, the most important factors today are tourism and the development of new technology plants, the latter growing rapidly in the Central Valley. The local currency is called Colón, in October 2004 USD\$1 was equivalent to 450 Colones.

