



**DISCOVERY GROUP TOURS**

# TANAGER: FLORA AND FAUNA OF COSTA RICA

12 days from **£3,443pp**

**COSTA RICA / SAN JOSE, CENTRAL HIGHLANDS AND CENTRAL VALLEYS / CARIBBEAN  
COAST / MONTEVERDE AND THE CLOUD FOREST / ARENAL AND THE NORTH / PACIFIC  
COAST**

# WITH OVER 40 YEARS EXPERIENCE, NO-ONE KNOWS LATIN AMERICA LIKE WE DO

EXPERIENCE SOMETHING EXTRAORDINARY

## WHY US

We are the UK's No.1 specialist in travel to Latin America and have been creating award-winning holidays to every corner of the region for over four decades; we pride ourselves on being the most knowledgeable people there are when it comes to travel to Central and South America and passionate about it too.

## OUR JOURNEY

As our name suggests, we are single-minded about Latin America. This is what sets us apart from other travel companies – and what allows us to offer you not just a holiday but the opportunity to experience something extraordinary on inspiring journeys throughout Mexico, Central and South America.

### WE LOVE LATIN AMERICA

A passion for the region runs through all we do

All our Consultants have lived or travelled extensively in Latin America

Up-to-the-minute knowledge underpinned by 40 years' experience

### TRAVEL WITH CONFIDENCE

Fully bonded and licensed

ATOL-protected

On your side when it matters

Book with confidence, knowing every penny is secure

### THE REAL LATIN AMERICA

Our insider knowledge helps you go beyond the guidebooks

We hand-pick hotels with character and the most rewarding excursions

Let us show you the Latin America we know and love



## OVERVIEW & OUTLINE ITINERARY

This guided group tour combines Costa Rica's natural highlights with a few less visited, up and coming destinations, offering a thrilling tropical adventure bursting with wildlife.

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|---------------|---|
| <b>DAY 1</b>  | Fly into San José and transfer to hotel.  |
| <b>DAY 2</b>  | Drive and boat to Tortuguero Jungle Reserve.  |
| <b>DAY 3</b>  | Guided exploration of the reserve by boat.  |
| <b>DAY 4</b>  | By boat and road to Sarapiquí.  |
| <b>DAY 5</b>  | Visit La Tirimbina Rainforest Reserve.  |
| <b>DAY 6</b>  | Drive to Bijagua.   |
| <b>DAY 7</b>  | Visit Rio Celeste and Tenorio Volcano National Park.  |
| <b>DAY 8</b>  | Drive to Monteverde.  |
| <b>DAY 9</b>  | Explore Selvatura Park and Monteverde Cloudforest Reserve.  |
| <b>DAY 10</b> | Carara National Park.   |
| <b>DAY 11</b> | Day at leisure.   |
| <b>DAY 12</b> | Transfer to San José airport for international flight.<br>UK clients arrive home the following day. |

## ITINERARY

Costa Rica is a compact, accessible country where visitors are mesmerised by the forest-mantled volcanic landscapes and the sheer volume of exuberant bio-diversity. There's a peaceful, friendly ambiance throughout which lends itself to a truly relaxed group holiday of discovery.

To understand the complexities of the bewitching natural environment and the efforts to sustain it, on this group adventure you benefit from the services of well informed local guides, who are bursting with pride in Costa Rica's achievements. You'll be taken to the famous national park at Tortuguero where, boating through the mangroves, you'll be overwhelmed by the number of species - including of course turtles - and the magical fairyland of the Monteverde cloud forest, a haven for birdlife.

To this we have added up and coming new destinations: tropical Sarapiquí and the turquoise pools and sparkling waterfalls of Rio Celeste. Finally spend time at Carara, a coastal reserve famed for its scarlet macaws and the huge crocodiles which lurk in the mangroves.

Owing to the wilderness locations, most of your meals are included, so this holiday is really good value as well.

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### DAY 1

#### **Fly into San José and transfer to hotel.**

You will be met at the airport by your tour leader or one of our other local representatives who will take you to your hotel in the capital.

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### DAY 2

#### **Drive and boat to Tortuguero Jungle Reserve.**

Today we head off to discover the Caribbean coast with a few days of rewarding wildlife spotting. This is true wilderness: it isn't the Caribbean of resort hotels, sugary beaches and piña coladas. The road strikes out northeast through Braulio Camillo National Park, including a short bumpy ride through banana plantations to La Pavona dock.

Then it's a boat ride along the shore hugged by twisted mangrove swamps before we arrive in the small, ramshackle and remote village of Tortuguero. Getting there is part of the adventure: it could take between two and four hours depending on how often we stop to observe plants or wildlife.

Of course one of the area's biggest draws is the proliferation of turtles (nesting Jul-Oct) and you will learn about projects to conserve and protect these magnificent creatures.

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### DAY 3

#### Guided exploration of the reserve by boat.

We'll set off on a wildlife adventure with a boat trip through the mangrove forest of Tortuguero National Park, now one of the last protected areas of tropical rainforest in Central America, with 11 different natural habitats and a huge range of endemic wildlife, much of which can be spotted as you glide through the water.

There are three species of monkeys (spider, howler, and white-faced) which you may spot swinging from branch to branch while lazier three-toed sloths doze in the shade and river otters pop up in the natural inland channels. Caimans, iguanas, river turtles, lizards and poison dart frogs also populate the mangroves, along with over 320 species of birds including three of toucan and eight of parrot: we are sure to spot a good number of them.

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### DAY 4

#### By boat and road to Sarapiquí.

We're back on the water to explore more of these spidery channels on the way back to the dock followed by a drive to the Sarapiquí region, a fertile plain where jungle was cleared for cattle ranches but which is now a focus for conservation with a number of eco-tourism projects.

There are forested national parks in the area, dispersed between banana and pineapple plantations. Rio Sarapiquí is becoming popular for rafting on its rapids and bird-watching and numerous other activities in the area include mountain-biking, boat trips and canopying.

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### DAY 5

#### Visit La Tirimbina Rainforest Reserve.

The morning we'll take a natural history walk in the Tirimbina Reserve, which caters for research and recreation in a rainforest environment. The reserve was founded to preserve one of the few remaining stands of intact tropical forest on mountainous slopes in Central America, and, through education, to incorporate the participation of local communities.

To make exploration even more varied, there's a suspension bridge, canopy walkway and rainforest museum in the reserve. Once again, a variety of mammals and insects can be spotted, and we may come across a few nocturnal animals, fast asleep in the heat of the day.

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## DAY 6

### Drive to Bijagua.

The town of Bijagua sits on a saddle between two volcanoes, Tenorio and Miravalles and is the base for visits to Tenorio Volcano National Park, established in 1997 to protect tracts of primary and dry tropical forest. Trails within the park are still being created, and it's regarded as one of the new up and coming destinations for nature lovers and adventure seekers.

Bijagua itself is a peaceful spot where the inhabitants' income drives from small scale crop farming and cattle pastures. There are a number of facilities including a school and others we may find useful, including a bank, pharmacy and shops.

If there's time during our couple of days here, you may like to explore the area's trails on horseback or mountain bike.

## DAY 7

### Visit Rio Celeste and Tenorio Volcano National Park.

Those of us who up for a moderately challenging 6km hike will set off for Rio Celeste, remarkable for its striking turquoise blue colour. While walking along the trail we'll keep an eye out for monkeys, sloths, tropical birds and other wildlife, while enjoying views of hot springs and a lagoon. The winding path follows the banks of the river, taking us upstream while the vivid blue colour of the water deepens until we arrive at a photogenic waterfall.

## DAY 8

### Drive to Monteverde.

Head on by road to Monteverde. The last section of the road is where the adventure begins – we follow a dirt road bumpy with volcanic rocks, winding up through the hills to the cloud forest at 1,400m above sea level. We can expect it to be dusty in the dry season and muddy in the wet. However we should be diverted by wildlife we spot along the way – sloths, monkeys and tropical birds – keep your binoculars handy.

We'll be staying in a lodge close to the village of Santa Elena, an unassuming settlement which is nevertheless the hub for visits to the Monteverde National Park and enlivened by a few craft shops and restaurants.



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**DAY 9****Explore Selvatura Park and Monteverde Cloudforest Reserve.**

Selvatura Park is a conservation area offering a number of exhilarating activities including zip lines. We'll take a walk over its trail system which includes seven suspension bridges crossing the deep canyons at treetop level.

In the afternoon we have a guided walk in the Monteverde Cloudforest Reserve, home to more than 100 species of mammals, 400 of birds and 1,500 of plants. We follow the well-marked trails, amidst dense, mist-shrouded, dripping foliage – with luck we'll encounter the iconic bird, the brilliantly feathered resplendent quetzal (Jan – Jul). Other striking species include the emerald toucanet and we should also be able to spot white-faced and howler monkeys. The reserve embraces a protected area with six different life zones: so many habitats in such a small area allow us to enjoy a rich diversity of flora and fauna within a short distance and by easy walking.

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**DAY 10****Carara National Park.**

Today we set off on a journey down towards the Pacific coast, and enter a completely different vegetation zone of Pacific tropical dry forest.

Carara is a popular national park famous for its bright scarlet macaws and giant crocodiles, which sprawl on the beaches of the Tarcoles river – we'll view them safely from a bridge! Upon arrival at Finca Ecologica La Trinidad we'll do something a bit different, with a cookery lesson on the premises. There's also time for an optional (extra cost) ride on horseback.

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**DAY 11****Day at leisure.**

Today you can rest up at the lodge, which is situated next to the Carara National Park itself. It's a good base from which to go bird-watching – the forest is less dense here than in the other parks we have visited, making it easier to spot the wildlife – or set off on one of the marked hiking trails. Alternatively, just drink in the panoramic views from the lodge over the forests, river and ocean.

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**DAY 12****Transfer to San José airport for international flight.**

Today you'll be flying home, unless to decide to stay on for a few more days in this beguiling country, perhaps for some beach time at Manuel Antonio where there's a range of good accommodation, a monkey-filled national park and sweeping golden Pacific sands.

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UK clients arrive home the following day.

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## WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THE PRICE

Services of our team of experts in our London office

Services of Journey Latin America local representatives and guides

All land and air transport within Latin America

Accommodation as specified

Meals as specified

Excursions as specified, including entrance fees

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## INCLUDED EXCURSIONS

boat trip down the canals of Tortuguero

nature walk in Tirimbina Rainforest reserve

Tenorio Volcano National Park and Rio Celeste hike

Selvatura hanging bridges

visit to Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve

cooking class at local finca

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## WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED IN THE PRICE

Tips and gratuities

Meals other than specified

International flights to Latin America

Airport taxes, when not included in the ticket

Optional excursions

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## ESSENTIALS

### ABOUT OUR GROUP TOURS

To find out more about how our group tours including group sizes, solo travellers and why to choose us. Please click [here](#).

### TOUR LEADER

Due to the tour concentrating on some less explored areas of Costa Rica we felt it was essential that this tour be led by a local expert and local naturalist guides.

### SUMMARY OF NIGHTS

12 days, 11 nights: San José 1; Tortuguero 2; Sarapiquí 2; Rio Celeste 2; Monteverde 2; Carara 2.

### ACCOMMODATION

On our Discovery Journeys the standard of accommodation varies. We aim to keep the price competitive while ensuring the basic comforts. Hotels/guesthouses are comfortable and attractive in most places, and you will be pleasantly surprised. This tour visits some of the more remote areas of Costa Rica, so accommodation will vary from place to place, but all will have ensuite bathrooms and a range of facilities.

Examples of hotels/lodges used on this journey include:

- San Jose: D Sabana Hotel
- Tortuguero: Laguna Lodge
- Sarapiquí: Tirimbina
- Rio Celeste: Celeste Mountain Lodge
- Monteverde: Sibú Lodge
- Carara: Cerro Lodge

### TRANSPORT

All journeys by private vehicles and boats. Travelling days between 2-4hrs.

### MEALS

Breakfast daily; Dinner days 5,6,8,9 and 11; Full board days 2,3,4,7 and 10.

### TRAVELLING ALONE

There is no extra cost for single travellers who are willing to share a room. You will be accommodated with a same-sex member of the group who is usually also travelling solo. For single travellers who wish to be sure of having their own room there are a limited number of single rooms available, which carry a surcharge.

### TRIP SUITABILITY

Costa Rica is a country where activities are based outside in the nature, so a relative level of fitness will help you make the most of trip. Most excursions will involve some walking, but your tour leader can advise on each activity and make sure it is suitable. For the more active there are opportunities for longer hikes and adventurous activities.

### CLIMATE

The trip covers climates ranging from tropical lowland to more temperate zones in the highlands. November to April when we run this tour, visitors will encounter high temperatures in lowland areas, but cool evenings in the highlands and San José with temperatures falling to around 5°C. Rainfall and humidity will be lower at this time.

### CLOTHING, EQUIPMENT AND LUGGAGE

A daypack is essential for carrying rainwear, snacks, books/tablet and a water bottle as are comfortable walking shoes. Bring a hat with a visor, sunglasses and sunblock. Binoculars are useful for bird and wildlife spotting. Because the weather can be changeable, we recommend wearing layered clothing for excursions.

Please bring a reusable water bottle. Single-use plastic bottles are forbidden inside protected areas.

## MONEY

Please see the Country Info tab on this holiday for our latest currency information and advice about how to take your spending money. Tipping in Latin America is almost always done using cash. It is customary to tip tour leaders, local guides, drivers, boat crews and other service providers such as restaurant staff and porters. Full tipping guidelines are sent with your confirmation documents as is advice on local costs.

## HEALTH, ENTRY REQUIREMENTS AND INSURANCE

For health information on travelling to Costa Rica visited including recommended vaccinations, please see <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/>

All Latin American countries have specific entry regulations related to Covid 19. Please also check our Travel Hub for further information.

Holders of a full British passport do not require a visa, although passports should be valid for at least 6 months after the trip begins. Other nationalities should enquire with us or check with the consulates.

Travel insurance is essential. Details of our recommended policy can be found on the Travel insurance website.

Our full briefing dossier contains more information on vaccinations, visas and insurance and will be provided with your final travel documents or can be requested from your travel consultant at any time.

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## GET IN TOUCH WITH US...

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Our friendly, knowledgeable team of travel experts are always happy to chat about holiday ideas and share helpful advice. Give us a call today and begin planning your perfect trip to Latin America.

### GIVE US A CALL

We'd love to chat

**0208 747 8315**

#### OPENING HOURS

Monday – Friday: 9am – 6pm

Saturday & Sunday: Closed

### SEND US AN EMAIL

[tours@journeylatinamerica.com](mailto:tours@journeylatinamerica.com)