

COSTA RICA

CONSERVACION, CULTURA Y COMUNIDAD



The first words you hear when you arrive in Costa Rica may be “pura vida,” a greeting that expresses the peaceful spirit of a nation with a long tradition of democracy and a commitment to education. Costa Rica’s warm and hospitable people, known affectionately as Ticos, inhabit an extraordinary region of the world, one replete with active volcanoes, dense rainforest, spectacular waterfalls and pristine beaches. This country’s progressive approach to conservation has protected a substantial range of its natural habitat. Live and work with members of your host community as you gain a new appreciation for rural life and learn about the critical link between development and environmental protection. Join a Global Routes tradition going back over 20 years of service to a host of communities and dozens and dozens of schools.

“One of the most memorable moments of this experience was my homestay parents telling me I was like a daughter to them.”-Katie S. Costa Rica

HIGHLIGHTS

Master Spanish as you work alongside community members in the construction of a *salon comunal* or enjoy a warm meal of gallo *pinto* with your host family.

Enjoy the beautiful and remote cloud forests of the valley of Chirripó, Costa Rica’s highest peak (12,533’!).

Whitewater raft on the Savegre river through deep canyons and lush tropical rainforest (4 week program).

Relax, swim and take surfing lessons in the warm waters of the Pacific Ocean.



COSTA RICA DETAILED ITINERARY

IN-COUNTRY ORIENTATION

Spend your first few days in Costa Rica exploring the cloud forests of Chirripó National Park, outside the city of San Isidro del General. Soak in natural springs and hike past waterfalls en route to the Cloudbridge Nature Preserve. Delve even deeper into the forest and Costa Rican culture by hiking into a rainforest lodge, a magical place well off the beaten path. Climb giant trees, forage for medicinal plants, zip line, or learn how to make chocolate from cacao you gather with your own hands. Cool off by taking a dip in the nearby river, rappelling down a cascading waterfall, or exploring local caves.

COMMUNITY SERVICE AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE

For the next stage you will reside in the home of a rural Tico family near the city of San Isidro de El General. Here, in the hilly farmland of southern Costa Rica, you rise in the mornings to the sight of clouds enveloping the valley below. During the day, join your group and community members as you pass cinderblocks from hand to hand towards the completion of a future *salon comunal* (community center). Your combined efforts result in the creation of a valued space to hold town meetings, celebrate weddings and package locally grown coffee. Practice your Spanish while playing soccer with local children, while helping your host mother prepare *gallo pinto* (Costa Rican rice and beans) or while harvesting sugar cane on your family farm. These daily moments in rural Costa Rica welcome you into the *pura vida* way of life.

TRAVEL ADVENTURES

You depart your village after a big farewell celebration, or *despedida*, and continue on to the quiet beach town of Uvita. Here, relax on tranquil tropical beaches, explore a local waterfall, and spend an afternoon learning to surf. At high tide the mighty Pacific Ocean draws near, extending an irresistible invitation for you to dive into its warmth. When it recedes at low tide you can follow its trail along a wide sandbar that extends far into the horizon. As a final adventure, your group sets out on a whitewater rafting trip. This exciting stretch of rapids flows through a beautiful forested canyon, where waterfalls tumble from all directions into the Savegre River.

THE BASICS

Dates: TBD

Starting/Ending Point: San Jose, Costa Rica

Program Fee: TBD, depending on group size.