

WILDLIFE WALKING ADVENTURE

Costa Rica

Arenal & Manuel Antonio Park

CLASSIC JOURNEYS
THE WORLD'S FINEST WALKING TOURS



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*Classic Journeys
provides unbeatable
access to experiences
around the globe.”*

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TRAVEL + LEISURE

The Perfect Blend of Adventure & Nature

You expect paradise to be beautiful. But who knew it was so much fun? Costa Rica blends adventure and nature like nowhere else. A quarter of the country is protected paradise for everything from anteaters to orchids. The best part is how easy and exciting it is. You don't just look at the cloud forest canopy. You stroll through it on suspended bridges or glide through on a zipline. You can high-five a monkey from a kayak or slalom down a colorful tropical jungle river by raft. And you'll explore with expert naturalists who make sure you spot the best fauna and flora. You'll meet the native ticos, too, and learn about local life. The trip features stays at the foot of Arenal Volcano and in Manuel Antonio Park, and all activities are included at no extra cost. Because Costa Rica is temperate and close to the U.S., you can join us in almost any season—and it's a great spur-of-the-moment getaway.

The Classic Journeys Difference

- ACTIVE HIKING & WALKING
- LOCAL WELL-CONNECTED GUIDES
- PREMIERE HOTELS
- FOODIE FOCUSED
- HANDCRAFTED TRIP DESIGN
- MORE IS INCLUDED

What's Included

- Breakfasts, 3 lunches & 3 dinners
- Full-time experienced guide(s) who are with you throughout the trip and handle behind-the-scenes logistics
- Admissions to scheduled events as noted in the detailed daily itinerary
- Gratuities for hotels, meals, and baggage
- All land transportation during the trip

Above & Beyond Benefits

→ PRIVILEGED ACCESS EVENTS

One-of-a-kind access to remarkable people, places and activities arranged just for you.

→ INVISIBLE CHECK-IN

When your group arrives, we whisk you and your bags to your room immediately. No waiting – no tipping.

Terrain

Easy to moderate forest, beach and jungle trails. 2 to 3 hours of walking per day.

DAY 1 »

San José / Arenal

You meet in San José and find out immediately that amazing feats of nature are the rule in Costa Rica.

Just a short drive out of the city, you dive into the forest at La Paz. Five waterfalls leapfrog down a scenic tropical canyon, and your guide leads us up the path with viewing platforms so close to the action that you can reach out and touch the cascading water.

You also get an incredible feel for Costa Rica's teeming ecosystem in a butterfly observatory, a breeding ground for more than 25 species. A cloud of up to 4,000 butterflies surrounds you – an amazing sight, matched only by the constant zip and buzz of the hummingbird garden where you can hold out a hand to feed the 26 species of the jewel-like birds. A fantastic photo op!

Then you're off to your country hotel at the foot of Arenal Volcano. It's a near perfect cone – and it's been dormant for many years now. So you can enjoy the scenic setting and one of the happiest side effects of volcanic activity: the hot springs that bubble to the surface all over this region. You'll make time for a steamy soak in the late afternoon. There's no better way to relax and recharge before your welcome dinner.

MEALS: L, D

OVERNIGHT: ARENAL

DAY 2 »

Arenal Volcano

Your hotel sits across Lake Arenal from the volcano, so you can just imagine the views you'll have over breakfast. Low hills covered with forest and pastures form the boundaries of the lake, which is Costa Rica's largest.

As big as the volcano looks from your table, it still doesn't begin to prepare you for the awesome scale when you step onto its lower slopes. That's where you're headed – for a close-up look at the lava flows that gushed out of the caldera during the last eruption in 1968. It's a fantastic walk that allows you to stand on the lava flows where they froze at the end of the eruption. You can see the difference between the forest that was untouched and the area that was devastated by the volcano and is being recolonized by nature.

You've probably read that most life in an old-growth tropical forest happens in the canopy far above trails on the ground. So up you are headed this afternoon, high into the lush and lively environment at the top. You'll have two options for how to experience it all. Strap on a helmet and zing through the treetops on a thrilling (and safe) zip line that slices through the canopy. Or join a naturalist guide for a walk on the hanging bridges that zag among the giant trees. With 2,500 plant species, 300 types of orchids, 200 kinds of ferns, monkeys and more, there's plenty to see. There is no extra cost for either option. You decide which style suits you best and we do all the rest. Either way, you'll get an unforgettable firsthand look at a world so dense and full of life that it's hard to imagine. THIS is why you came to Costa Rica!

MEALS: B, D

OVERNIGHT: ARENAL

DAY 3 »

School Visit / River Safari

Ticos, the native Costa Ricans, are great people and throughout the trip, you never miss a chance to meet and interact with them. But this morning you have a special treat—you stop at a small village school. Because our groups are small, the school welcomes our visit. You meet the kids and teachers, and get a very hospitable look at local life.

Then you make the huge leap from smiling children to the gaping jaws of crocodiles. You'll board a boat on the Tárcoles River and drift through its estuary in search of the crocodiles that have barely changed in 200,000,000 years. Your guides will point them out to us—not to mention the scarlet macaws, kingfishers, vireos, hawks and many other birds that make this one of the world's best bird-watching locales.

And just when it seems like nature couldn't be any more spectacular, you arrive at Manuel Antonio Park, your home for the next three nights. Overlooking the Pacific, this park is the country's crown jewel, from its cloud forests to its coral reefs. Your luxurious hotel sits on a promontory a few hundred feet above a crescent beach. You can decide if the more spectacular view is of the coastline...or of the private villas and rain forest that surround the property. Either way, your day ends with a remarkable sunset.

MEALS: B, L

OVERNIGHT: MANUEL ANTONIO PARK

DAY 4 »

Savegre River

Today is the first of two days of terrific wildlife in Manuel Antonio Park – and you begin before breakfast without even leaving your room! The hotel sits on the slope of a mountain so that you feel like you're in a tree fort. At home right outside your windows, the capuchin and howler monkeys are effective alarm clocks. (Sorry, no snooze button.) From the open-air dining room, you see iguanas, monkeys, and squirrels while you eat breakfast.

After you fuel up, the day is yours to experience Costa Rica from the water in either of two fun ways. (There is no extra cost, whichever one you choose). For an adrenaline rush, join us for whitewater rafting on a river that gushes through the jungle. We provide expert guides, as well as all the rafting and safety equipment. The rapids range from Class II through IV. It's a wild, wet ride with beautiful vistas and incredible wildlife viewing, and you pull in to shore for a delicious snack along the way.

Prefer quieter water? Team up with your naturalist guide to paddle through the mangrove trees in a scenic tidal estuary. You can slip into a 1- or 2-person kayak or let us propel you aboard a flat-bottom fishing boat. Either way, the monkeys that live in the trees come up to your craft and there is a chance of spotting anteaters, egrets and basiliscus lizards—the velociraptors of Jurassic Park. Later, you can visit the village of Quepos and do some shopping. Or soak up more of the mild Costa Rica climate down on the beach or at the pool. It's your call.

Tonight, you'll head into town with everyone for dinner at a local restaurant.

MEALS: B, L

OVERNIGHT: MANUEL ANTONIO PARK

DAY 5 »

Manuel Antonio Park

Today you'll be engrossed in the flora and fauna that makes Costa Rica's National Parks so unique. A country that has always valued eco-tourism, you will see first hand the conservation efforts that allow Manuel Antonio Park to thrive since it opened in the early 1970s.

The lush park is a very manageable size (only 1,685 acres), which makes it easy for us to explore. Your naturalist guides are so much fun to be with. They know the footpaths and how to spot animals and the stories behind the plants we see. Thanks to them, we're likely to come across shy squirrel monkeys, sloths, toucans, coatis and white-faced monkeys – lots of things you'd never see on your own. The scenery is amazing, too. Our walks include Cathedral Point, where you can see out to Mogote Island, the site of pre-Columbian native burials. On our walk, we even see how terrain changes from lush forest to the mangrove swamps, marshland and lagoons at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.

Speaking of the ocean, Manuel Antonio is famous for its three horseshoe shaped beaches. The sand is a perfect base of operations for an afternoon of swimming or just relaxing on the beach. If you're a pool person, you're welcome to head back to the hotel. Their pool is surrounded by forest, and you hear the wild sounds all around you.

This evening, the whole group is back together for our farewell dinner. Relax and reminisce on a wonderful week on the Pacific coast.

MEALS: B, D

OVERNIGHT: MANUEL ANTONIO PARK

DAY 6 »

San José Valley

Costa Rica grows some of the world's best coffee in the volcanic soil of the central valley. Today, you get an unforgettable look at the surprisingly complex process of growing, harvesting and preparing the beans. You'll visit with friends on their coffee plantation, where they show you every step from the raw coffee "cherries" right through drying, roasting and, of course, tasting their brew. It's a great chance to see and learn about this distinctive agricultural tradition.

Afterward, you return to San José in time for mid-afternoon flights back to the U.S. If you are continuing with us on the Tortuguero extension, you'll spend the night in San José and head for the Caribbean side of Costa Rica in the morning.

MEALS: B

Tour Hotels



[Tabacon Grand Spa Thermal Resort](#)

This multi-award winning 5-star luxury resort is located at the base of Arenal Volcano. The property boasts its own thermal springs, heated by the volcano. Rooms are beautifully appointed with handicrafts and furnishings made by Costa Rican artisans.

NIGHTS: 2 nights



[Parador Resort & Spa](#)

Located on the most desirable promontory in Manuel Antonio Park, the resort has private beach access, plus incredible views of the Pacific and the rainforest. Relax on the beach, go for a dip in the swimming pools, or enjoy the hotel's fine spa.

NIGHTS: 3 nights

Arrival & Departure

→ ARRIVAL DETAILS

START LOCATION: **Lobby of Costa Rica Marriott Hacienda**
START CITY: **San José**
START TIME: **9:00 AM**

→ DEPARTURE DETAILS

END LOCATION: **San José Airport**
END CITY: **San José**
END TIME: **1:00 PM**