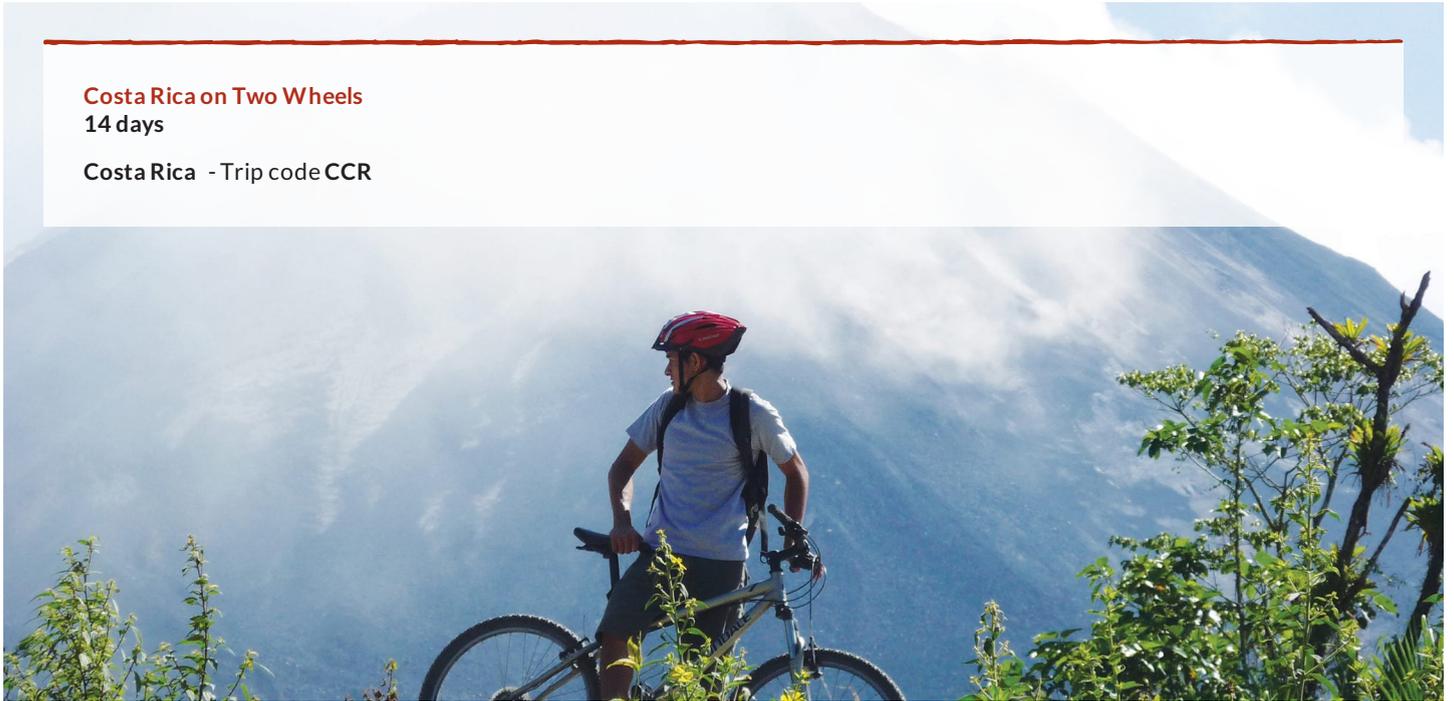


EXPLORE!

Costa Rica on Two Wheels
14 days

Costa Rica - Trip code CCR



Costa Rica on Two Wheels

On this cycling tour of Costa Rica we discover a diverse land rich with nature, towering volcanoes and abundant wildlife. We start in the lush rainforest of Tortuguero on the Caribbean coast before cycling through the ever-changing landscapes of the interior past active volcanoes, lakes and cloudforest in the Arenal and Miravalles areas. Finally we reach the Pacific Coast and beautiful beaches of Manuel Antonio National Park.

Trip highlights

- ★ **Coast to Coast** - Discover the diversity of Costa Rica by bike
- ★ **Tortuguero** - Cruise the jungle waterways and explore the rainforest in search of abundant wildlife in this 'mini Amazon'
- ★ **Nature and wildlife** - The opportunity to see sloths, monkeys and brightly coloured frogs, together with some of Costa Rica's spectacular birdlife
- ★ **Volcanoes** - Admire the classic cone-shape of Arenal and the hot springs of Miravalles
- ★ **Manuel Antonio** - Walk jungle trails and tropical beaches with resident iguanas and Capuchin monkeys

ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

Standard

Our standard, mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service, often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en suite facilities.

CYCLING GRADE:

Easy To Moderate

This grade is ideal if you want to enjoy both easy and moderate rides on the same tour. You'll be cycling through flat or gently undulating terrain, with the occasional more energetic ascent.

GROUP SIZE:

10 - 16

Maximum group size ranges from between 6 to 20 people, depending on the type of trip, the transport and accommodation used and activities included. We rarely have groups that are smaller than five or six people and the average is 12 people plus an Explore leader.

Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

DAY 1 - Join tour San José

Our journey begins in San José, Costa Rica's capital. Founded in 1738 and set in a fertile valley blanketed in a lush abundance of coffee and sugar cane plantations, the city is one of the youngest and most cosmopolitan capital's in Central America.



Accommodation: Sleep Inn (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: None

DAY 2 - Journey to Tortuguero National Park by bus and boat

Early this morning we leave the capital and head towards the Caribbean coast. Our destination is La Pavona Pier, around a three and a half hour drive away. The journey takes us through the Carrillo National Park and on arrival we'll board a boat and continue along the Tortuguero River, towards the richly diverse landscapes of the Tortuguero National Park. The first part of the cruise takes around an hour, before we stop off at the Visitor Centre for a brief orientation, after which we'll continue by boat to our lodge. After lunch, this afternoon is then free to explore your surroundings in a little more detail, with the option to rent a kayak, or just relax on the beach.



Accommodation: Turtle Beach Lodge (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 3 - Exploring Tortuguero National Park

Tortuguero's remarkably rich landscapes include rainforests, mangroves, swamps, beaches and lagoons and we'll spend this morning discovering something of its stunning natural diversity. After an early morning coffee, we'll head out on a guided boat tour along some of the park's canals and waterways, which provide home for manatees, crocodiles, Tropical Gar and an abundance of freshwater fish. Returning to the lodge for breakfast, we then set out on a jungle hike through the surrounding rainforest. These forest are home to sloths, three of Costa Rica's four species of monkeys and a huge variety of birdlife. After lunch, the afternoon is then free for optional activities.



Accommodation: Turtle Beach Lodge (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 4 - Boat and bus to Guapiles. Afternoon cycling

Leaving Tortuguero this morning we head back to La Pavona Pier by boat, a journey of around two hours. From here we then drive on to Guapiles, lying in the heart of the country's banana growing region, where we'll stop for lunch before driving on to the starting point of our cycling adventure close to Sarapiquí. After checking the bikes over and ensuring that they are properly adjusted we'll begin with a relatively easy introduction, riding along tarmac roads that take us through a rural setting of farmland and banana plantations. Our ride will be mainly on the flat today and we'll cover the last 30 minutes to the hotel by bus. Our total cycling distance today is approximately 20 kilometres (total accumulated ascent 50 metres, total accumulated descent 180 metres).



Accommodation: Tilajari Lodge (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast & Lunch

DAY 5 - Cycle to La Fortuna

Beginning from the hotel today we cycle through a landscape of undulating terrain, passing through a rural scene of farms, cultivated fields and patches of tropical forest. Arriving in Muelle we'll stop and look for some of the huge iguanas that can occasionally be found here, before continuing on to La Fortuna. Weather permitting we may be accompanied by the spectacular backdrop of the Arenal Volcano and arriving at our next hotel by bike, this afternoon is free to explore a little of La Fortuna at your leisure. You may wish to visit the local La Fortuna Waterfalls. Our total cycling distance today is approximately 28 kilometres (total accumulated ascent 330 metres, total accumulated descent 150 metres).



Accommodation: San Bosco Hotel (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 6 - Free day in La Fortuna

With no cycling scheduled, today has been left free to enjoy a number of other activities including canopy tours, zip lines and hot springs. The city's downtown area is dominated by the classic cone of Arenal Volcano, one of the world's most active volcanoes, and the itself town is blessed with a number of thermal springs where you can relax and unwind in the natural hot water pools.



Accommodation: San Bosco Hotel (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 7 - Cycling in the Arenal Volcano National Park

A short drive this morning brings us to the site of the impressive Lake Arenal, the largest man-made lake in Costa Rica. Beginning our day's riding at the base of the volcano, we'll follow the northern shore of the lake and negotiate our way through a landscape of rolling hills, rainforest and pastureland. Arenal Volcano lies at the heart of a stunning national park that covers some 9,884 acres and is home to 850 species of birds including the endangered resplendent quetzal. We'll enjoy some fine views of the lake and the volcano during our ride this morning, before finishing the rest of the journey by car after lunch. Our final destination is the small town of Tilarán, located in the hills overlooking the western shores of the lake. Total cycling distance today is approximately 27 kilometres (total accumulated ascent 830 metres, total accumulated descent 800 metres) with an extra optional 12 kilometre ride starting earlier in La Fortuna.



Accommodation: Hotel Guadalupe (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 8 - Visit Viento Fresco Waterfalls (optional). Cycle across the Guanacaste plains to Cañas

We start our day with an optional excursion to visit the nearby Viento Fresco Waterfalls by bus where you will have the opportunity to swim and explore up to five waterfalls set in the rainforest. In wet conditions access to the falls is not recommended and we

would start today's ride after breakfast instead arriving earlier into Cañas. After returning to the hotel we get on our bikes at around 11am for an easy ride down towards the drier plains of Guanacaste today, enjoying some spectacular views of the Pacific coastline and the chain of volcanoes that lie to the north. Our ride ends in the small community of Cañas, from where we will drive the short distance to our hotel situated some 5km from Cañas near the Corobici river. You have the option to continue cycling 15 km to Bebedero and the Tour Leader will be able to help arrange an optional boat excursion on the Corobici River for bird watching and to spot wildlife such as crocodiles and monkeys. Total cycling distance today is approximately 22 kilometres (total accumulated ascent 300 metres, total accumulated descent 780 metres) with an extra optional 15 kilometres (+60m/-130m).



Accommodation: Hacienda La Pacifica (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 9 - Cycle through the foothills of Miravalles Volcano

An early start to make the most of the cooler temperatures, today provides us with our most challenging ride. Beginning with a short drive to Bagaces we'll start with a gentle uphill ride, heading north towards the Miravalles Volcano. The route is mainly uphill but the gradient is gradual, so the answer is low gears and a steady pace today. We'll make a number of longer stops too, making the most of the breathtaking scenery as we make our way to Yoko Termales, on the slopes of Miravalles Volcano. Finishing the day at the higher and cooler elevations of the slopes, we'll be rewarded this afternoon with a welcome dip in the natural hot springs. Our total cycling distance today is approximately 27 kilometres (total accumulated ascent 700 metres, total accumulated descent 200 metres).



Accommodation: Hotel Yoko Termales (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 10 - Explore the landscapes around the Miravalles Volcano

The Miravalles Volcano is the highest peak in the Guanacaste Mountains (2,023 m) and sits in the heart of the largest geothermal field developed in Costa Rica. Another day here affords an opportunity to relax and enjoy more of its unique attractions, with a three to five hour ride along the slopes of volcanoes and through the forest to Liberia (returning by vehicle), providing the perfect excuse for revisiting the hot springs. The volcano's verdant slopes form part of the area's protected zone, which is a lush haven of cloud and primary forest that provides shelter for coyotes, howler monkeys, peccaries and even pumas. For anyone not wanting to cycle there are other options available including hot mud baths or a walk to Las Hornillas, to visit its active volcanic crater. Our total cycling distance today is approximately 37 kilometres (total accumulated ascent 490 metres, total accumulated descent 920 metres).



Accommodation: Hotel Yoko Termales (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 11 - Early morning loop cycle from hotel. Drive to Manuel Antonio N.P.

Early this morning we will explore the local area further on a circular bike ride. After the ride you will have time to shower and change before we check out of our hotel in the late morning. We spend the rest of the day making our way by bus (4 hours) to the Pacific Ocean and onto our final destination at Manuel Antonio National Park. We will break the journey for lunch and at Tarcoles Bridge where we will hopefully spot a few of the gigantic crocodiles that regularly bask beside the river's edge, before finally arriving at our hotel later this afternoon. Our total cycling distance today is approximately 29 kilometres (total accumulated ascent 400 metres, total accumulated descent 400 metres).



Accommodation: Hotel Karahe (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 12 - Manuel Antonio National Park

One of Costa Rica's most popular parks, Manuel Antonio provides a wonderful mix of world class views and golden beaches along the country's central Pacific coastline. Today has been left free to make the most of this idyllic spot, with plenty of options available for sea kayaking, canopy walks, fishing or just relaxing on the beach. The national park is home to a rich diversity of flora and fauna and a walk through its primary forest provides a chance to look for sloths, monkeys, iguanas and over 180 species of birds including toucans, parakeets and potoos.



Accommodation: Hotel Karahe (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 13 - Free morning. Afternoon drive back to San José

After a relaxing morning we'll drive back to San José after lunch, an approximate five hour drive that should get us back into the capital in time to enjoy a stroll through the centre of the city before dinner.



Accommodation: Sleep Inn (or similar)

 Standard Hotel

 Single room available

 Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 14 - Tour ends San José

Tour ends in San José after breakfast.

 Meals Provided: Breakfast

Cycling information

DAILY DISTANCE



 Optional Rides

General cycling information

On this tour we cycle 191 km over seven days (an average of 27 km per day) with further optional rides available. The terrain is mostly undulating with some flat sections mixed in. Most of the route is on tarmac roads with about 15% on dirt or gravel roads in reasonable condition. The tour starts gently and builds up with moderate graded rides on days 7, 9 and 10 with several uphill. A support vehicle accompanies the rides throughout. We have graded the route as easy to moderate.

Bike included

27 gear Trek 4500 mountain bikes

Bike information

Your included bike will be a 27 gear Trek 4500 mountain bike and will be the correct frame size for your height. A water bottle holder is included as well as the facility to fit your own pedals or saddle if you wish to bring them. A support vehicle accompanies the rides throughout the tour. We provide spare parts and take care of the day to day maintenance. All you need to bring is your own helmet.

Cycling grade

EasyToModerate



Why book this trip

Unlike many other operators, we include the hire of your bike in the overall cost of the holiday: you don't need to bring your own or pay extra to hire one locally. We also provide a support vehicle, spare parts and take care of day to day bike maintenance. All you need bring is your own helmet.

What's included?



Included meals

Breakfast: 13
Lunch: 3
Dinner: 2



Transport

Bus
Bicycle
Boat



Trip staff

Explore Tour Leader / Cycle guide
Driver(s)



Accommodation

13 nights standard hotel

Trip information

Country information

Holidays to Costa Rica

Climate

Seasonal weather patterns can be unpredictable. Up-to-date information on the weather worldwide can be found by following the BBC weather link on this page. Costa Rica has a tropical climate with high temperature humidity and rainfall. The average temperature is 21°C in the highlands and variable in the lowlands. The rainy season is from May to November and the summer from December to April, but it does still tend to rain, usually in short bursts. Bear in mind that Costa Rica has 12 microclimates and weather can vary significantly in one day.

Time difference to GMT

-6

Plugs

2 Pin Flat

Religion

Christian, Roman Catholic

Language

Spanish

Budgeting and packing

Optional activities

Tortugurero - Kayaks USD 10 per person, (guided tour USD 20 per person); Canopy Tour USD 45 per person (min 4) Arenal - Canopy - USD 50 per person; Hanging bridges USD 65 per person; Hot springs - USD 35 per person; Viento Fresco waterfalls visit 10 USD per person Miravalles - Waterfall Tour USD 40 per person; Tour of Hornillas USD 35 per person (Combination of both USD 55 per person) Manuel Antonio - Canopy Tour USD 70 per person including lunch; Las Damas Mangrove kayak trip USD 70 per person; Las Damas Mangrove Boat trip USD 65 per person; Manuel Antonio NP USD 50 per person; Dolphin Watch USD 75 per person Cañas - Corobici River boat excursions US\$40 per person

Clothing

When cycling: quick drying cycle tops, padded cycle shorts, lightweight wind and water proof jacket and warmer breathable layers where local conditions require. General: Pack essentially for hot weather. Bear in mind that the region is tropical (humid) and that days can be very hot. Lightweight rainwear or an umbrella is advisable all year. Casual clothes are the most practical (something with long sleeves, and long trousers for evenings), and tight fitting garments should be avoided. A swimming costume is recommended.

Footwear

If you are not bringing cycle shoes then try to bring stiff-soled shoes as these are better for cycling - transmitting your energy into the pedals more efficiently. This becomes more relevant and recommended the more demanding the grade and distances to cover. SPD cycle shoes are not well suited to tours that combine sightseeing with cycling. Comfortable shoes, trainers, sandals or flip flops are useful when not on the bike.

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

We recommend you bring a daypack and one main piece of luggage (total allowance: 44lb/20kg) which will be transported between hotels while you cycle. Check the bike details section to see if a pannier or handlebar bag is provided on the bike.

Equipment

On all Explore cycle holidays we strongly recommend you bring along and wear your cycle helmet. It is a legal requirement in Costa Rica to wear a helmet that meets current safety criteria. In case of an accident resulting in personal injury, certain insurance policies are invalidated in cases where a helmet was not being worn. Cycle glasses to protect against dust, pollen and the sun, padded cycle gloves and a water bottle or water delivery system (e.g. camelback or platypus) are also useful. You may choose to bring your own gel seat cover for added comfort. If a handle bar bag or pannier is not provided (check bike details) then you may like to bring a small rucksack to wear while cycling. Other items to consider bringing are a sunhat and sun cream, torch, earplugs and insect repellent. Please carry some or all of your cycling equipment e.g. helmet as part of your hand luggage.

Tipping

Explore leader

Tour Leader: At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Local crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognised part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour. Accordingly, you should allow USD 35 for group tipping. Ten percent tip is expected in restaurants.

Holidays to Costa Rica

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price

£13

Dinner price

£13

Beer price

£1.8

Water price

£1.3

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Costa Rican Colon.

Recommended Currency For Exchange

Carry all your funds in US cash NOT Sterling or Travellers Cheques which are more difficult to exchange. We recommend to take a minimum of US\$400-\$500 of your total spending money in cash, in mixed denominations. Notes should be in good condition otherwise they might be difficult to exchange. USD can be used in some places in Costa Rica

Where To Exchange

Your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival.

ATM Availability

Available in Major towns. Always have some cash as back-up as they are not always reliable

Credit Card Acceptance

Credit cards are useful and can be used in many places, but may be subject to a 10% service charge

Travellers Cheques

Travellers Cheques can be awkward or expensive to change

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

Bus, Bicycle, Boat

Accommodation notes

Booking a Single Room

All of our group tours are planned and operated on a twin-share basis, meaning that the standard cost is based either on individual travellers sharing accommodation with another group member of the same sex, or people who book together sharing accommodation. Please refer to the tour notes where the single room option availability is detailed on a night by night basis for this tour, and the price for the available nights is detailed on the dates & prices tab by departure date. For Self-Guided trips the Single Room supplement offers the option of a single room each and is charged per person. The Single Room supplement also applies to the third person in a party of three that will be accommodated in a single room.

Standard - Our mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en-suite facilities.

Essential information

FCO Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice [click here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, [click here](#)

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Essential Information

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

Visa Information

Costa Rica: Citizens from the UK, US, Canada and most EU countries do not require a visa for a stay up to 90 days. Citizen of Australia, New Zealand and the Republic of Ireland do not require a visa for stays up to 30 days. Other nationalities should consult the relevant consulate. You should confirm all visa related issues with the relevant Embassy prior to departure. USA: (including those in transit) Citizens of the UK, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and passport holders from several EU countries can enter the United States without a visa under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) - where you apply for an ESTA (Electronic System for Travel Authorisation), which applies if you enter the country by sea or by air. This must be done on line - <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov> no later than 72 hours prior to travel. Travellers who have not registered before their trip are likely to be refused boarding. You must have an electronic passport with a digital chip containing biometric information about the passport owner. UK passports which are biometric feature a small gold symbol (camera) at the bottom of the front cover. If you have visited Iraq, Syria, Iran or Sudan since 2011 or are dual nationals of these countries, you cannot travel with an ESTA and instead you will need to apply for a visa from the nearest US Embassy or Consulate. If you are unable to provide a valid visa before boarding flights to the US, or entering via another method, you may not be permitted to travel. Please note for your ESTA application you will be required to supply Point of Contact information. Explore's USA contact information will be listed on your final documentation which you will receive approximately 3-4 weeks before departure. If you are leaving for the USA before this, please call the Explore team to get this information. (Not necessary if in transit) For further information please check out the US embassy website. Visa applications - <http://london.usembassy.gov/niv/apply.html> Canada: An electronic travel authorisation (ETA) is required by British citizens transiting via Canada. For more information see the official Canadian government website: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/visit/eta.asp> Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our Essential Information and Booking Conditions.

Transfers

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. [Read more about them here.](#)

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Holidays to Costa Rica

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against typhoid, infectious hepatitis and polio. Please consult your travel clinic for the latest advice on Malaria, Dengue and Zika Virus. Please take preventative measures to avoid mosquito bites - these include mosquito repellent as well as long trousers and long sleeve shirts to cover up when necessary. Please note many countries in Central America, South America and the Caribbean require a yellow fever vaccination certificates if travelling from infected areas. A detailed list of these countries can be found on the NaTHNaC website - <http://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>. Also on the NaTHNaC site there is a list of Countries (and specific areas within a country) which are at risk of infection and a vaccination is therefore recommended.. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/> and from your local healthcare provider.
