

EXPLORE!

BIG 15 SALE

Family Rainforest Adventure
15 days
Costa Rica - Trip code FCC



Family Rainforest Adventure

Towering volcanoes, long sandy beaches and unspoilt tropical rainforest are all part of this holiday to Costa Rica. Journey from the Caribbean to the Pacific ocean through one of the most biologically diverse countries in the world. Cruise through jungle waterways, discover cloud forest trails home to the Resplendent Quetzal, arguably the most beautiful bird in the world, learn how to make chocolate, relax on golden sand beaches and zip wire through the forest canopy. Costa Rica is truly a magical, all round family destination.

Trip highlights

- ★ **Volcanoes** - Discover active volcanoes and gigantic craters
- ★ **Wildlife** - Look out for some of the world's weirdest and most wonderful creatures, such as howler monkeys, sloths and beautifully-coloured birds
- ★ **Monteverde** - 'Fly' through the canopy of this cloud forest; Spot the famous quetzal bird
- ★ **Jungle** - Cruise along the waterways of the Tortuguero 'mini Amazon'
- ★ **Golden beaches** - Share the beach with sun-bathing iguanas and capuchin monkeys in Manuel Antonio National Park
- ★ **Guayabo** - Visit an old Indian ceremonial site

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.

TRIP PACE:

Full on

Full on paced trips are for travellers who like their holidays packed with activities and experiences, moving on quickly from place to place with lots of early starts and long, busy days. Some may find them tiring, but others get a buzz from packing their precious holiday-time as chock-a-block full of new experiences as possible!

GROUP SIZE:

12 - 18

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 Jose

After arriving in San Jose, we will check-in to our conveniently located hotel which will be our base for the next two nights. San Jose lies in a fertile valley at an altitude of 1150 metres. Coffee and sugar cane are big industries here and coffee is even planted between new buildings and along the roadside on the outskirts of the city.



Accommodation: Quality Real Hotel (or similar)



Premium Hotel



Swimming pool available



Meals Provided: None

DAY 2 - Trip to Doka Coffee Estate and city tour in San Jose

Normally this day would be planned to visit the volcanic crater of Poas. However, due to recent activity at the Poas volcano, and the closure of the National Park, we'll now visit Doka Coffee Estate - the largest coffee plantation in Costa Rica. Here we'll be given a guided tour around the coffee plantation, which will include coffee tasting and a visit to the roasting room.

After our visit to the Doka Coffee Estate, we'll continue onto the town of Sarchi, well known throughout Costa Rica for its beautiful and intricate arts and crafts. It's famous for producing colourful and decorative oxcarts, which are a huge part of Costa Rican culture today, and even considered one of Costa Rica's national symbols. We'll have time to explore the artisan town, visit the largest and oldest oxcart factory, and see Sarchi's church unusually painted pink and blue.

Following our visit to Sarchi, we'll then visit the neighbour town of Grecia. A small farming town with beautiful mountain landscapes and rich scenery, Grecia is an important agricultural hub of the country, producing sugar cane, organic coffee and pineapples. The town is home to Cathedral de le Mercedes, a gothic style church made of metal pieces. This afternoon, an orientation tour of San Jose will help us to gain a feel for the city centre and main sights, including the National Museum.

Should the Poas Volcano stabilize and the Poas National Park reopens, then we'll revert back to our original plans on this day to visit Poas Volcano.



Accommodation: Quality Real Hotel (or similar)



Premium Hotel



Swimming pool available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 3 - Drive to Turrialba visiting the city of Cartago and Guayabo

This morning, if the Poas Volcano is still closed we will have short visit to the old colonial capital of Cartago, before heading to the Irazu Volcano, where we'll visit the main crater viewpoint. If the Poas Volcano is reopened, we will not visit Irazu but instead continue from the city of Cartago to Guayabo National Park which is the largest archaeological site to be found in Costa Rica. Largely unexplored, the area contains ancient trails, bridges, water tanks and homesites, as well as petroglyphs estimated to be about 3,000 years old. We also visit the excavated Aboriginal Ceremonial Centre at Guayabo which dates from 1000 to 1400 and is one of the country's most important archaeological sites. Here, uncovered paved streets and water channels help us to understand about village life in that era. We then continue our journey to the town of Turrialba which is famous for its lush natural beauty and where we will spend the next two nights. Its fertile land makes it an important agricultural region for coffee, sugar and Macadamia nuts, with its cheese being popular throughout the country.



Accommodation: Hotel Wagelia (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 4 - In Turrialba with optional full day rafting

The day is free for you to spend as you wish. You may choose to try a full day whitewater rafting on the Pejibaye River and with grade II to III rapids (operates between May and November), which is a fun ride with plenty of birds to spot in the trees along the banks. Alternatively, you may choose to visit CATIE Research Centre (Centro Agronomico Tropical de Investigacion y Ensenanza). Recognised throughout the world as an important agronomic station, its environmental development projects seek to enhance human wellbeing and protect natural resources. Its botanic garden is a special place to relax, surrounded by the calls of birds, the whisper of the giant Guanacaste Tree and the imposing Ceiba. This evening, your Tour Leader may be able to organise an optional visit to a typical 'Finca', where you can enjoy dinner prepared in a traditional family way.



Accommodation: Hotel Wagelia (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 5 - Drive and boat cruise through the jungle waterways to Tortuguero

Our drive to Cano Blanco takes us through extensive banana plantations. From Cano Blanco or La Pavona, a boat will take us to our spectacular lodge in the Tortuguero National Park, where we spend the next two nights. As we travel through a fascinating network of jungle waterways, it is easy to understand why this area is often described as a 'mini Amazon'. Its complex canal system and narrow lagoons link small isolated settlements and are rich in fish, including rainbow bass and grouper. They also support an abundance of birds, such as heron, stork and kingfisher. We will also take a short walking tour of the village of Tortuguero. Our lodge is in an idyllic setting, perched on a small slither of land between the Caribbean Sea and the waterway.



Accommodation: Evergreen Lodge (or similar)



Premium Lodge



Swimming pool available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

DAY 6 - View turtles laying their eggs in Tortuguero National Park

To kick off our day, there is the option of a bird watching trip by boat at dawn. Amazingly, the country's different species outnumber those found in the whole of Europe with stork, parrot and hummingbird being among the many birds to be spotted. Later this morning, we will head out on a jungle trek to understand more about the area's unique ecosystem. It's amazing to think that 33% of the jungle's total biomass is made up of ants and termites. This afternoon, we will take to the waterways for further exploration and on our travels, we may come across the howler monkey, aptly named by the way it noisily protects its territory and if you are lucky, you may also see the elusive ocelots cat and jaguar. Throughout the year, you may be lucky enough to see different species of turtle nesting close to our lodge. The best time to see this spectacle is between June and September, when over five-thousand green, leatherback and the 700-pound loggerhead turtles come ashore to nest on Tortuguero's beaches. At this time of year, there is the option of an evening turtle walk to take in this spectacle.



Accommodation: Evergreen Lodge (or similar)



Premium Lodge



Swimming pool available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

DAY 7 - Visit La Tirimbina for a chocolate tour

Leaving our lodge this morning, we travel by boat back to Cano Blanco, before heading on to Puerto Viejo Sarapiquí.

After lunch, we plan to visit La Tirimbina for a chocolate tour. This two and a half hour tour will open the secrets and wonders of one of mankind's favourite foods: chocolate. Originally from Central America, this plant has an extraordinary history; it was one of the most important products for the Mayan and Aztec cultures. The discovery of America led to the introduction of chocolate in Europe, transforming it into the product we all know today.

We start by taking a short hike over a suspension bridge and through a forest to a former cacao-growing plot, learning about the cacao tree along the way. Upon arrival at the plot, the artisanal process by which cacao fruit is transformed into chocolate will be demonstrated. There is ample opportunity to taste different kinds of chocolate, prepared on the spot in the traditional way.



Accommodation: Selva Verde Lodge (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Meals Provided: Breakfast and Lunch

DAY 8 - Drive to Arenal area via a nature reserve at the foot of an active volcano

This morning's drive skirts around the great central volcanic massif, passing through fertile farmlands that are rich with tropical crops. Soon we catch sight of the famous Arenal Volcano. This classic cone rising to 1,633 metres is covered by a tangled mass of vegetation on one side, while the other is starkly barren. Having remained dormant for hundreds of years, it erupted unexpectedly in 1968 destroying the small town of Tabacon on its west side. After this, it was known for its regular explosions which became a huge spectacle. However, since 2010, the volcano has gone quiet once more...but you never know when it will erupt again!.

This afternoon, we drive to the Mirador del Silencio Reserve, where we can enjoy a short nature trail observing endemic flora and fauna at the foot of the volcano. Brimming with giant trees, weird and wonderful plant species and a spectacular view of Arenal, it's no wonder that the reserve has featured in several films. These include 'The Congo', 'Spy Kids 2' and 'After Earth', starring Will Smith. Many species of fauna can also be seen here, including different types of snakes, howler monkeys and many species of birdlife. Our accommodation for the next two nights is in La Fortuna. The town was renamed after the 1968 eruption, when it was seen as being 'fortunate' that it was located on the eastern side of the volcano.



Accommodation: Arenal Palace (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Meals Provided: None

DAY 9 - In Arenal area with optional whitewater rafting or walking to a waterfall

Today has been left free to explore the area as you choose. There are local treks to waterfalls where you can take a dip, as well as along lava trails. We recommend making the most of the local geothermal activity by enjoying an optional bathe in the nearby hot springs.



Accommodation: Arenal Palace (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 10 - Drive to Monteverde cloud forest, cooking lesson and optional forest walk

Today we travel around Arenal Lake up into the cloud forest region of Monteverde - one of the most well-known places in Costa Rica to see wildlife. The last part of our journey is on bumpy roads, but we are rewarded with a two-night stay here to enjoy all that this area has to offer.

Perched on the Continental Divide between the Pacific and the Caribbean, it is thought that there has been indigenous habitation in Monteverde since 3000 BC. However, the turning point in its recent history came in 1950, when a group of pacifist Quakers from Alabama moved here to avoid subscription in the Korean War. They sought a lifestyle in a country in which they could embrace their peaceful beliefs and continue to cultivate their dairy farms. These families went on to establish the community of Monteverde and some of its famed cloud forest reserves. Lunch today is an interactive affair, allowing the kids to cook up a Costa Rican treat for the adults in the group. Once we are all fed and watered, we can look forward to an afternoon of optional activities. There is a butterfly farm to explore, as well as an orchid garden. Your Tour Leader will be able to provide more information on the choices available. This evening, there is the opportunity to go on a guided night walk in search of nocturnal species, such as pacas and tarantulas.



Accommodation: Hotel Heliconia (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Meals Provided: Breakfast and Lunch

DAY 11 - Visit Santa Elena Reserve with free time to try a canopy tour or wire walkways

The famous, but now very rare, resplendent quetzal can be seen in this area, one of the last remaining places in Central America where its habitat has been preserved. Sacred to the ancient Maya and Aztec people, it is considered to be one of the most beautiful birds in the world. This morning, we will have a guided tour of Santa Elena Reserve, where 90% of the species found in Monteverde can also be seen. Quieter and less touristy than its famous neighbour, our visit here gives us a good chance of spotting wildlife.

During our walk through this reserve, we will occasionally stop to watch the recordings of different trap cameras set up by the Santa Elena Conservation Project. These cameras are used to measure the number of times each animal visits an area and to study their behaviour once there. The rest of our day is free to spend as you wish. Monteverde is regarded as offering some of the best canopy experiences in the world and you may choose to 'fly' through the dramatic scenery on a zip-wire, or take a more sedate walk through the canopy on treetop walkways. Alternatively, you may choose to explore one of the other private forest reserves in the area.



Accommodation: Hotel Heliconia (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 12 - Drive to Manuel Antonio National Park along the Pacific coast

Leaving the cloud forest behind us this morning, we descend to the Pacific Coast where we enjoy staggering views over the Gulf and Peninsula of Nicoya. Heading south, we then pause at Carara Biological Reserve, famed for the scarlet macaws and abundant birdlife which populate this transitional forest. Finally, we continue along the Pacific Coast to Manuel Antonio National Park, where we will spend the next two nights.



Accommodation: Cabina Espadilla Hotel (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 13 - In Manuel Antonio park area famed for its beautiful beaches and rich wildlife

This morning, we explore the Manuel Antonio National Park, famed for its beautiful beaches and rich wildlife. During our time in the park, we are likely to see white-faced capuchin monkeys, coatimundi (part of the racoon family) and the tiny squirrel monkeys. This is also one of the best places in Costa Rica to see sloths. The majority of a sloth's diet comes from buds and leaves but unfortunately leaves provide little energy and thus sloths move only when necessary and even then, very slowly. The remainder of the day can be spent relaxing on the white sandy beaches and enjoying a swim in the warm azure waters. The sunsets from this coast are spectacular and have to be seen to be believed.



Accommodation: Cabina Espadilla Hotel (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 14 - Manuel Antonio National Park. Drive to San Jose

After a morning relaxing on the beach, we leave the Pacific Ocean at about midday. Our journey back to Costa Rica's capital will take about four hours.



Accommodation: Quality Real Hotel (or similar)



Premium Hotel



Swimming pool available



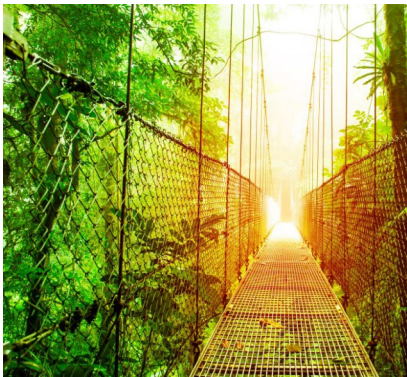
Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 15 - Tour ends San Jose with optional waterfall visit

Depending on your departure time today, you may wish to take an optional visit to La Paz Waterfall Gardens this morning which is a short distance outside San Jose. Here, among the five striking waterfalls, you can visit the largest butterfly observatory in the world and a hummingbird and bromeliad garden.

 Meals Provided: Breakfast

Family information



Hanging bridges in the rainforest canopy



Beach in Manuel Antonio National Park

Nature's paradise: With a quarter of Costa Rica designated as protected land and with over 5% of the world's biodiversity, Costa Rica is a truly wildlife-lover's paradise and a fantastic destination for a family holiday.

Over two weeks spot sloths, howler and capuchin monkeys, armadillos and sea turtles as well as more elusive animals such as tapirs. As for the birds, there are around 900 species and some of them are outrageously colourful. Even if your children aren't massively into birding, when you're looking for Toucans, Scarlet Macaws, the stunning Resplendent Quetzal, Hummingbirds and Kingfishers, even the indifferent wildlife enthusiast can't help but get swept along with the excitement.

As for thrill seekers, Costa Rica offers a host of adventurous family activities to satisfy the most hardened adrenaline seeker. Try optional white water rafting in Turrialba, zip wiring in Monteverde or sea kayaking in Manuel Antonio. Finally take time to relax on the fine beaches of both the Atlantic and Pacific oceans with free time at the end of the trip at Manuel Antonio National Park.

If you're looking for a family holiday to Costa Rica that connects your kids to the natural world and ignites their thirst for adventure then this trip is for you. You'll come back rejuvenated, refreshed and with a camera full of amazing memories.

Triple Rooms: This trip allows the option for triple rooms to be included within the booking on all nights of this trip. Triple rooms in Costa Rica will contain two double beds. If you would like this option, please ask our Sales team for further information.

Direct flights: Costa Rica is a relatively easy country to travel to with direct flights available from London Gatwick to San Jose with British Airways twice a week. Regional departures are also available with other airlines.

Average Age: As a guide we have identified the actual average age of the children who have travelled on this family Costa Rica tour over the last 5 years, to help you decide whether it's the right one for your family. The average age on this trip is 13 years old; this trip is suitable for children of all ages, including younger children.

Minimum age

11



Why book this trip

If you want a destination that is relatively untouched by mass tourism and your family want to be overwhelmed by a locations beauty and diversity, then Costa Rica is a great choice. The diversity of the country, including its landscapes and jungles are all absolutely breath taking. From rainforest to volcanoes to waterways and finally to beaches. This trip is active - you can try out white water rafting, rock jumping, zip wiring along a 1km wire high above the cloud forest, horseback riding and see and hear an active volcano and if you don't mind getting up close to frogs, spiders, bugs and monkeys then our 'Rainforest Adventure' holiday is for you.

What's included?



Included meals

Breakfast: 13
Lunch: 4
Dinner: 2



Transport

Bus
Boat



Trip staff

Explore Tour Leader / Driver
Boat Crew
Driver(s)
Local Guide(s)



Accommodation

3 nights premium hotel
9 nights standard hotel
2 nights premium lodge

Trip information

Country information

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

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

A selection of optional activities are listed below to help you budget for your Family adventure. Whilst the basic tour price you pay before you travel includes a great selection of highlights, we have also built in free time to allow you the flexibility to choose from a carefully selected range of additional excursions and activities or take time to relax, the choice is yours.

At certain destinations along the way there may be several options to choose from and it may not be possible to fit all the activities in; your Explore Leader will be able to give advice on which are the most suitable for your family.

Day 3: Finca visit local farm and dinner US\$ 20 per person.

Day 4: Turrialba - Half day White-water rafting US\$ 80 per person (grade II to III) a minimum age of 12 applies to this activity; operates between May and October only. In the dry season (December to April) we offer the Pacuara River as an alternative, US\$ 85 per person (grade II to III) a minimum age of 8.

Day 6: Tortuguero - Turtle watching (in season, June to September) US\$ 30 per person.

Day 7: Sarapiquí - Bat tour (night walk) US\$ 24 per person

Day 7: Sarapiquí - Jungle zodiac boat trip for wildlife spotting US\$58 inc. transport per person.

Day 9: Arenal - Hot springs US\$ 37 (US\$ 57 with dinner) plus transport per person

Day 9: Arenal - Full day white water rafting (grade II or III) US\$ 89 per person. A minimum age of 10 applies to this activity.

Day 9: Arenal - Farm to Table cooking class US\$67 per person.

Day 10: Monteverde - Night walk in Reserve US\$ 48 per person.

Day 11: Monteverde - Hanging bridges and canopy US\$ 50-81 per person

Day 11: Monteverde - Canopy tour US\$ 50 per person

Day 11: Monteverde - Walk in Monteverde Reserve \$20 - \$65 per person depending on numbers.

Day 13: Manuel Antonio - Savegre river rafting US\$ 98.00 per person min. A minimum age of 8 applies to this activity.

Day 13: Manuel Antonio - Damas Island Kayak US\$ 69.00 per person.

Day 13: Manuel Antonio - Ocean Kayaking & Snorkelling US\$ 69.00 per person

Day 13: Manuel Antonio - Horseback riding and waterfall US\$ 69.00 per person

Day 13: Manuel Antonio - Mangrove boat tour US\$ 69.00 per person

Day 13: Manuel Antonio - Canopy Tour US\$ 71.00 per person

Day 13: Manuel Antonio - Butterfly & Reptiles combo US\$ 69.00 per person

Clothing

Lightweight clothing is essential in midsummer however a warmer jumper is advisable for cooler evenings in the highlands (especially in Monteverde). A good waterproof is essential, and you should consider waterproof trousers. The jungle lowlands are hot and muggy, and it can rain at any time of year. Long trousers and long-sleeved shirts are recommended on jungle walks. There is a laundry next to the hotel in La Fortuna / Arenal.

Footwear

Lightweight trail/walking boots for jungle walks, comfortable shoes/trainers and sandals. Waterproof boots are recommended.

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

Please allow yourself one main piece of luggage and a daysac. Remember, you are expected to carry your own baggage, so don't

overload yourself, a soft wheely bag may be easier to manage than a suit case.

Equipment

We recommend a sunhat, sunscreen, a torch, insect repellent and a waterbottle. Binoculars are essential for bird and animal spotting.

Tipping

Explore leader

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

Local crew

In this region, tipping is a recognised part of life across the service industry. Local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided.

To assist with this your Explore Leader may organise a group tips kitty for included activities and meals, they will then account for kitty use throughout the tour.

For this we suggest US\$30 per family member.

For all non-included services and meals on your trip please tip independently at your discretion.

Country Information

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

£3

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. You may wish to take extra cash to cover the cost of optional excursions – please see the budget for your trip section on the trip notes.

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, 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.

Accommodation and service levels in Costa Rica are in general of good standard as they are used to catering for the North American Market. Almost every hotel we stay in has air conditioning or fans. We try to avoid the use of the large chain hotels and try to use a mix of jungle and mountain lodges as well as small family run hotels. They all have private facilities. Several of our Costa Rica hotels are found on the outskirts of town - these have better facilities and larger grounds and we will have transport on hand to take us into town for evenings.

Family swimming

Most of the hotels have pools and we can swim in the sea and rivers

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.

Price Guarantee

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 and Passport 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.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

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, Polar, 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. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. 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.

Non refundable permits

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. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. 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 Explore Travel Health and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.
