Discovering Our Planet Together



Costa Rica Wilderness Explorer

From Quetzals to Capuchins, Discover a Wilder Side of Costa Rica

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Trip Details:

Days
8 Days / Dec–Apr, Jul–Aug

Price
From $8795 (+Air)

Costa Rica Wilderness Explorer

From Quetzals to Capuchins, Discover a Wilder Side of Costa Rica

The natural marvels of Costa Rica are in a class all their own. And so is this trip, which reveals less-discovered realms of this globally acclaimed biodiversity hotspot. From a remote rainforest lodge on a private reserve on Costa Rica's southern Pacific coast near the Panama border to the misty slopes of the Talamanca Mountains, encounter an incredible profusion of flora and fauna in widely varied habitats. Keep watch for mammals, reptiles and tropical birds as we wander through jungle and cloud forest, and visit a sea turtle hatchery where we may see hatchlings scurrying to the ocean in season. Learn about the land and its people, too: tour a fruit orchard, enjoy a home-cooked lunch on a family farm, and find inspiration in local conservation efforts that are restoring landscapes to their original native beauty. Costa Rica is full of wonders—discover them on a rare ecotourism adventure off the standard tourist track.

Trip Highlights

Explore a Route Less Traveled

Led by top naturalist guides, discover Costa Rica's less-visited south Pacific coast, an unspoiled region off the typical tourist track—including a private cruise on Golfo Dulce

Enjoy Outstanding Wildlife Viewing

Look for monkeys and sloths in the rainforest, and seek Costa Rica's most coveted bird—the resplendent quetzal—in the high cloud forests of the Talamanca Mountains

Stay at Secluded & Sustainable Ecolodges

Stay at remote ecolodges in Costa Rica's most tucked-away wild settings, where nature, intimacy, hospitality and local ambience prevail

Ready to Book? Call an Adventure Specialist at 800-543-8917



Costa Rica Wilderness Explorer Itinerary

From Quetzals to Capuchins, Discover a Wilder Side of Costa Rica

Itinerary at a Glance

Day 1	San Jose
Day 2	Golfo Dulce / Tiskita Jungle Lodge
Day 3	Tiskita Jungle Lodge
Day 4	Tiskita Reserve / Punta Banco
Day 5	Talamanca Mountains / Gema del Bosque
Day 6	Los Quetzales National Park
Day 7	Gema del Bosque
Day 8	San Jose



Day 1

San Jose

Arrive in Costa Rica, where rainforest adventures await

- Stay at a luxurious hacienda-style hotel surrounded by lush gardens and birdlife
- Join your Expedition Leader and fellow travelers for a welcome dinner

Arrive in the capital of San Jose and transfer to our elegant hacienda-style resort hotel in the foothills outside the city. Our Costa Rica ecotour begins with a welcome dinner. If you reach the hotel early, enjoy a walk around the lush grounds gardens, home to abundant birdlife, a swim in the pool, or relax with a massage at the spa.

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Day 2

Golfo Dulce / Tiskita Jungle Lodge

Reach a remote corner of Costa Rica's southern Pacific coast

- Fly by private charter to remote Golfito on Costa Rica's southern Pacific coast
- Cruise Golfo Dulce, looking for bottlenose and spotted dolphins
- Arrive at Tiskita Jungle Lodge, an 800-acre private rainforest reserve near the Panama border

Transfer to the local airport this morning to board chartered planes for our direct flight to Golfito on Costa Rica's remote southern Pacific coast. On arrival, we board a boat for a private cruise around Golfo Dulce to look for bottlenose and spotted dolphins, and rarer sightings of hammerhead sharks, whale sharks and rays. From July through November, we might also see Southern Hemisphere humpback whales, which migrate to the region to breed and raise their calves in the gulf. Few visitors to Costa Rica make it to this intensely biodiverse region along the Osa Peninsula, surrounded by the country's largest tracts of untouched primary rainforest. National Geographic identified Golfo Dulce—a rare tropical fjord biome—as one of the world's most pristine seas.

After lunch, continue to Tiskita Jungle Lodge, an 800-acre private rainforest reserve and the only lodging in this undeveloped area just a few miles from the Panama border. We stay in hand-built cabins, crafted from fallen hardwood trees, which survey the distant sea from a high ridge. Wildlife abounds: Look for squirrel monkeys, howler monkeys and white-faced capuchins swinging through the trees, sloths clinging to high branches, and agouti in the underbrush. More than 275 bird species thrive in this lush habitat, and we search for some of them on a guided walk around the grounds. A coveted sighting is the scarlet macaw, successfully reintroduced by Tiskita's owners and now flourishing on the reserve.

Day 3

Tiskita Jungle Lodge

Explore Tiskita's restored rainforest

- Hike rainforest trails to waterfalls deep within the private reserve
- Tour the orchard and taste organic tropical fruit grown on the estate
- Search by night for red-eyed tree frogs and poison dart frogs

Spend a full day and evening exploring more of this impressive private biological reserve, which has been a national leader in restoring an altered landscape to its wild native state. An extended rainforest hike reveals waterfalls and more wild creatures, while a night walk offers a chance to look for red-eyed tree frogs, tiny endangered granular poison dart frogs and other intriguing amphibians that create a noisy chorus after dark. Meals at our secluded ecolodge are a highlight, prepared with fresh ingredients from the property, including some of the 125 types of organic tropical fruit grown on the estate. After lunch, we tour the orchard, examining a wide array of fruit trees, and, when certain fruits are in season, we may get to taste some unusual varieties. Our afternoon walk also offers an excellent chance to see birds and monkeys attracted to the orchards and their abundant fruit. Later this afternoon, head to the shore for sundowners by the beach before returning to our lodge for dinner.

Day 4

Tiskita Reserve / Punta Banco

Sea turtle conservation in Punta Banco

- Visit a community sea turtle hatchery with a local biologist
- Learn how scarlet macaws were reintroduced and now flourish on the reserve
- Set out on a night walk with your Expedition Leader for nocturnal wildlife

Explore more of the Tiskita reserve this morning, then walk to the beachside village of Punta Banco to visit a community sea turtle hatchery. During a talk by a local biologist running this grassroots conservation program, learn firsthand the critical value of controlled hatcheries that are helping to increase endangered sea turtle populations worldwide. For groups visiting during turtle-hatching season from November to January, we may have the opportunity for a pre-dawn visit to the beach to see baby olive ridley turtles emerging from their nests and being released to the sea. It's an extraordinary sight to see hundreds of them scurrying over the sand to the ocean where the life cycle begins anew. We also learn more about scarlet macaw conservation on the reserve and enjoy another night walk with our Expedition Leader in search of fascinating nocturnal creatures.

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Day 5

Talamanca Mountains / Gema del Bosque

Climb into Costa Rica's high cloud forest

- Cross Cerro de la Muerte on one of Costa Rica's highest mountain roads
- Walk the fields at a family coffee farm and taste the roast
- Reach a secluded cloud forest ecolodge, home to more than 600 bird species

Transfer to Golfito by road to meet our private chartered plane, which flies us north to San Isidro. From here, continue by van along one of the most spectacular drives in Costa Rica, climbing narrow, winding roads into the Talamanca Mountains. Our route crosses Cerro de la Muerte, the highest point along the Costa Rican section of the Pan-American Highway, at just under 11,000 feet above sea level. When the mists part, the views are stunning, with waterfalls spilling down steep slopes and green valleys unfolding far below.

En route to our mountain ecolodge, stop at Granados Organic Farm, a small family-run coffee operation grounded in sustainable hands-on practices. During our visit, walk the fields to see how coffee is grown and learn what makes this region ideal for its cultivation. Follow the process from harvest to drying and roasting, and witness the painstaking care that goes into each batch. The visit concludes with a tasting and the chance to pack your own bag of coffee as a souvenir. Continue into the cloud forest along the Savegre River, ascending a narrow, high mountain valley where our ecolodge awaits. Here on a steep, forested hillside with dramatic views, we're surrounded by flowering tropical plants and a dazzling diversity of birdlife—the resplendent quetzal is the most sought-after among more than 600 species found here. Other colorful residents to keep an eye out for include the long-tailed silky flycatcher, fiery-throated hummingbird, flame-colored tanager, acorn woodpecker and spotted wood-quail.

Day 6

Los Quetzales National Park

In search of the resplendent quetzal

- Track the elusive resplendent quetzal through Los Quetzales National Park
- Watch hummingbirds at a mountainside ecolodge
- Visit Batsu Gardens, designed for close-up bird photography

This lush high-altitude region will thrill bird lovers, as it is home to a multitude of vibrant species and many endemics. Set out this morning for Los Quetzales National Park, encompassing more than 12,000 acres of pristine cloud forest and 14 different ecosystems. The park also protects wild sections of the Savegre River, which originates high upon the Cerro de la Muerte. Our goal is to spot the resplendent quetzal, a revered and endangered creature of striking beauty. Listen for their deep, melodious calls as we quietly track these elusive birds. Photographers come from all over the world in hopes of capturing a shot of the quetzal's splendid plumage, with its electric green head, scarlet breast and long, iridescent turquoise tail. Our nature walk reveals a wide array of birds: we may also spy the emerald toucanet, golden-browed chlorophonia and spangle-cheeked tanager, among many others.

A highlight is lunch at Paraiso Quetzal—"Quetzal Paradise"—an ecolodge perched on a steep mountainside. From the outdoor deck we're sure to see dozens of hummingbirds buzzing, offering superb close-up photo opportunities. Later this afternoon, we'll take a walk to view waterfalls along the Savegre River and visit Batsu Gardens, where every detail has been intentionally designed to enhance outstanding bird photography opportunities in a lush natural space. This evening, after happy-hour sundowners, enjoy dinner at a special local restaurant.

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Day 7

Gema del Bosque

Cloud forest trails and a family mushroom farm

- Look for birds on the cloud forest trails with your Expedition Leader
- Tour a family mushroom farm led by its biologist owner
- Sit down to a home-cooked lunch featuring mushrooms grown on the farm

This morning, look for birds and other wildlife as we explore the network of cloud forest trails around Gema Del Bosque with our Expedition Leader—or choose a leisurely stint of birdwatching on the grounds around our ecolodge. Later today, we tour a small family-run organic mushroom farm dedicated to conservation and educating visitors about the sustainable practices used in mushroom cultivation. The owner of the farm is a biologist who shares fascinating details with us about the relationship between humans and mushrooms, and we learn some remarkable facts before sitting down for a lunch home-cooked by our hosts featuring mushroom dishes sourced from the farm. This evening, gather for a farewell dinner at Gema Del Bosque.

Day 8

San Jose

Return to San Jose

- Transfer to San Jose for homeward flights

Our Costa Rica adventure comes to a close today. After breakfast, a group transfer is provided to the San Jose airport to connect with departing flights. Please schedule flight departures no earlier than 1:30 pm today.

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Costa Rica Wilderness Explorer Accommodations

From Quetzals to Capuchins, Discover a Wilder Side of Costa Rica



Tiskita Jungle Lodge

This remote jungle ecolodge within the private 800-acre Tiskita Biological Reserve has access to pristine rainforest filled with wildlife and wild beaches well off the usual tourist track.



Gema Del Bosque

Cradled in Costa Rica's misty highlands, this forest retreat blends rustic luxury with views, birdwatching trails and cozy cabins, offering peace, immersion in nature and quiet elegance.

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Costa Rica Marriott Hotel Hacienda Belen

Named one of Central America's best hotels by *Conde Nast Traveler,* this colonial-style hotel surrounded by lavish gardens offers genteel accommodations on a 30-acre coffee plantation.

For detailed descriptions, visit nathab.com/central-america/expedition-costa-rica/accommodations.

Ready to Book? Call an Adventure Specialist at 800-543-8917

Most Travelers Never See the Wildest Side of Costa Rica. With Us, You Will.

Costa Rica Wilderness Explorer

For more than three decades we've been sharing Costa Rica's natural wonders with our guests. Over that time, we've gained an extensive knowledge of the country, enabling us to offer a whole slate of less-traveled nature experiences. Read more about what makes this Costa Rica adventure so distinctive:

1. **Visit the Less-Traveled Southern Pacific Coast**
   This unconventional itinerary focuses on destinations farther from the standard tourist track, including Tiskita, a jungle lodge that's the best-kept secret in Costa Rica. Surrounded by tropical rainforest inside an 800-acre private biological reserve near the Panama border, it's an unspoiled place rarely seen by most Costa Rica visitors.

2. **Chartered Planes Maximize Time in Nature while Minimizing Rugged Drives**
   We charter small planes to avoid very long drives on rough and winding roads. Fly directly from San Jose to remote Golfo Dulce, and from Golfo Dulce to San Isidro. Instead of time on the road, you'll spend your time in search of rainforest wildlife! Compare itineraries carefully: it's rare that anyone matches our combination of exclusivity and convenience, with a focus on less-traveled reserves.

3. **Small Groups Offer a Genuine Encounter with Nature**
   Unlike most tour operators, *we limit our groups to just 10 guests.* Whether you're in the cloud forest, the rainforest or the coastal lowlands, you'll have a more authentic nature experience without the chatter that bigger tour groups can't help but cause. We are able to focus on the sights and sounds of many animals and birds—such as the melodious call of the resplendent quetzal or the high-pitched chirps of white-faced capuchin monkeys—which are not afraid to stick around as we quietly approach.

4. **Explore Costa Rica's Most Pristine Cloud Forest Reserves**
   While many travelers focus on the duly famous Monteverde region, we take you into the more remote, less-impacted cloud forests of Savegre Nature Reserve and Los Quetzales National Park—far from big crowds, where birding and wildlife viewing in a peaceful, quiet context offers a coveted experience for the Costa Rica nature traveler.

5. **Explore Golfo Dulce on a Private Boat**
   While many tour groups share space aboard sightseeing boats with other companies' guests, we explore the Golfo Dulce ecosystem on a privately chartered boat with an expert local guide. On our uncrowded small boat, there's no jostling for views or photos—it's just us and the abundant wildlife.

Ready to Book? Call an Adventure Specialist at 800-543-8917

6 **Stay at Remote Ecolodges & See More Wildlife**

Our accommodations, though highly regarded, aren't on most Costa Rica travelers' itineraries. Secluded Tiskita Jungle Lodge is about as remote as you can get, located at the end of a dirt road on the hard-to-reach south Pacific coast. And in the cloud forests of the Talamanca Range, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, we are immersed in nature at Hotel Gema Del Bosque. Along with a chance to see the resplendent quetzal, the Talamanca Mountains have one of the highest populations of endemic birds in the Americas.

7 **Our Top-End Vehicles Offer a Window Seat for Every Traveler**

Our comfortable minibusses are ultra-spacious, with high ceilings, large windows, a wide aisle and ample space between seats. And since we never fill our vehicles to capacity, you're assured a window seat plus plenty of room to spread out. Our vehicles also offer the smoothest ride you'll find over Costa Rica's sometimes-rugged roads.

8 **Your Nat Hab Expedition Leader is with You Throughout Your Entire Trip**

In Costa Rica, where spotting wildlife in the forest requires finely honed skills, top naturalist guides are of the utmost importance. Rather than using a single driver-guide as a trip escort, which many companies do, a highly trained Nat Hab Expedition Leader personally escorts your group from start to finish. Each is a Costa Rica specialist averaging 20 years of experience, with additional training and resources from WWF scientists. We also travel with a seasoned driver/assistant guide, enabling us to divide into even smaller groups for more intimate nature encounters. **See Expedition Leader bios** and traveler comments regarding the quality of our leaders.

9 **Our Quality-Value Guarantee Ensures Your Costa Rica Adventure Is Top-Notch**

When you travel with Natural Habitat Adventures, you receive our exclusive guarantee that clearly states that we will meet the high expectations we set forth in our promotional materials. To our knowledge, this is the most ambitious guarantee made by any adventure travel company. **Read our important promise for yourself!**

10 **Feel Good About Your Carbon-Neutral Journey**

We care deeply about our planet, as we know you do. When you travel with us, the carbon emissions from your trip are 100% offset—including your round-trip flights from home. Natural Habitat Adventures has been the world's first carbon-neutral travel company since 2007.

11 **Natural Habitat Adventures is WWF's Travel Partner**

Because of our commitment to environmentally friendly travel, as well as the exceptional quality of our small-group nature adventures, World Wildlife Fund, the world's leading environmental conservation organization, has named Natural Habitat Adventures its worldwide travel partner—a designation that makes us exceedingly proud!

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Dates & Pricing Summary:

Price
From $8795 (+Air)

Group Size
Limited to 10 Travelers

Costa Rica Wilderness Explorer Dates, Pricing & Info

From Quetzals to Capuchins, Discover a Wilder Side of Costa Rica

2026 Departures

Departure – Return	Pricing	Notes
Dec 11 - Dec 18, 2026	**$9095** +internal air	
Dec 16 - Dec 23, 2026	**$8795** +internal air	Natural Habitat Explorers Pricing Available

2027 Departures

Departure – Return	Pricing	Notes
Jan 23 - Jan 30, 2027	**$9095** +internal air	Natural Habitat Explorers Pricing Available
Jan 28 - Feb 4, 2027	**$8795** +internal air	
Feb 13 - Feb 20, 2027	**$9095** +internal air	
Feb 20 - Feb 27, 2027	**$8795** +internal air	

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Departure – Return	Pricing	Notes
Mar 6 - Mar 13, 2027	**$8795** +internal air	
Mar 20 - Mar 27, 2027	**$8795** +internal air	
Apr 3 - Apr 10, 2027	**$8795** +internal air	
Apr 17 - Apr 24, 2027	**$8795** +internal air	
Apr 24 - May 1, 2027	**$9095** +internal air	
Jul 11 - Jul 18, 2027	**$8795** +internal air	
Aug 22 - Aug 29, 2027	**$8795** +internal air	
Dec 16 - Dec 23, 2027	**$9495** +internal air	
Dec 19 - Dec 26, 2027	**$9495** +internal air	

2028 Departures

Departure – Return	Pricing	Notes
Jan 7 - Jan 14, 2028	**$9495** +internal air	
Jan 14 - Jan 21, 2028	**$9495** +internal air	
Jan 21 - Jan 28, 2028	**$9495** +internal air	
Jan 28 - Feb 4, 2028	**$9495** +internal air	
Feb 4 - Feb 11, 2028	**$9495** +internal air	
Feb 11 - Feb 18, 2028	**$9495** +internal air	
Feb 18 - Feb 25, 2028	**$9495** +internal air	
Feb 25 - Mar 3, 2028	**$9495** +internal air	
Mar 3 - Mar 10, 2028	**$9495** +internal air	
Mar 10 - Mar 17, 2028	**$9495** +internal air	

Departure – Return	Pricing	Notes
Mar 17 - Mar 24, 2028	**$9495** +internal air	
Mar 24 - Mar 31, 2028	**$9495** +internal air	
Mar 31 - Apr 7, 2028	**$9495** +internal air	
Apr 12 - Apr 19, 2028	**$9495** +internal air	
Apr 15 - Apr 22, 2028	**$9495** +internal air	
Apr 21 - Apr 28, 2028	**$9495** +internal air	
Jul 1 - Jul 8, 2028	**$9495** +internal air	
Jul 20 - Jul 27, 2028	**$9495** +internal air	
Aug 10 - Aug 17, 2028	**$9495** +internal air	
Aug 20 - Aug 27, 2028	**$9495** +internal air	
Dec 13 - Dec 20, 2028	**$9495** +internal air	
Dec 16 - Dec 23, 2028	**$9495** +internal air	

See https://www.nathab.com/central-america/expedition-costa-rica/dates-fees for the latest pricing details.

Included

Trip price includes: Accommodations, services of Nat Hab's professional Expedition Leader(s), local guides and lodge staff, all meals from dinner on Day 1 through breakfast on final day, private boat tour in Golfo Dulce, private transfers throughout the itinerary, some gratuities, airport transfers on Day 1 and final day, all activities and entrance fees, all taxes, permits and service fees.

Not Included

Travel to and from the start and end point of your trip, alcoholic beverages, some gratuities, passport and visa fees (if any), optional activities, items of a personal nature (phone calls, laundry, etc.), airline baggage fees, airport and departure taxes (if any), required medical evacuation insurance, optional travel protection insurance.

Internal air: Two private charter flights. One from San Jose to Golfito and the second from Golfito to San Isidro (this will be listed separately on our invoicing).

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Important Information About This Trip

This carefully designed Costa Rica nature expedition offers a small group of travelers an intimate journey into three distinct ecosystems—lowland rainforest, mountain cloud forest and tropical beaches—for a diverse sampler of Costa Rica's natural habitats. Varied activities and visits with local people offer a deep and unique view into this legendary ecotourism destination. Please be aware that some fairly long drives along poorly maintained roads are often an unavoidable part of the itinerary, with our focus on less-visited locales.

Mandatory Insurance

Since the areas we travel to on this trip are remote and wild (that's why we go there!), we require medical evacuation insurance for our guests' safety. If you decline the medical evacuation insurance coverage offered by Natural Habitat, we request that you send us documentation of the independent coverage you have selected. We will add the cost of a medical evacuation policy to your tour invoice until you provide our office with proof of coverage including your insurance company's name, contact number and your individual policy number. Thank you for understanding that our policy exists exclusively in the interest of our guests' safety.

Also, to ensure quality medical care in the event of a medical emergency, as well as peace of mind from the time you book your trip to the time you return home, we highly recommend purchasing comprehensive travel insurance. Plans may cover everything from medical treatment and trip cancellations and delays, to lost luggage. We offer both medical evacuation and comprehensive travel policies through Arch RoamRight. Please contact our office if you would like more information about either of these plans.

Getting There & Getting Home

This trip begins and ends in San Jose, Costa Rica. **You must arrive in San Jose by 4:30 pm on Day 1** in order to make it to the hotel in time for a 6 pm welcome dinner. For guests who come in early, recommended hotels will be included in your pre-departure materials.

You may depart San Jose any time after 1:30 pm on the final day.

Our Natural Habitat Adventures Travel Desk can best assist with your travel reservations, as our staff is familiar with the specific requirements of this program and can help arrange the most efficient itinerary. Please call us at 800-543-8917. While we offer the best available rates to us on airfare and additional nights accommodations, you may occasionally find special web rates or lower fares online.

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Costa Rica Wilderness Explorer Extensions

From Quetzals to Capuchins, Discover a Wilder Side of Costa Rica



Kingdom of the Monarchs

Each winter, millions of monarch butterflies migrate to the fir forests of Mexico's Central Highlands—walk among them, take amazing photos, and listen to the air hum with the vibration of their wings!

$5495



Natural Jewels of Costa Rica

An all-encompassing nature expedition through the jungle canals of Tortuguero to the misty cloud forests of Monteverde and Corcovado's wild beaches—discover Costa Rica's exceptional biodiversity.

$11495 (+air)



Costa Rica & the Panama Canal

Explore tropical rainforests, wander pristine beaches, snorkel over colorful reefs, and cruise the legendary Panama Canal on this small-ship nature adventure.

$6228

Natural Habitat & WWF: Discovering Our Planet Together

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WWF's membership travel program is operated by Natural Habitat Adventures (Nat Hab). To date, Nat Hab has provided more than $6 million in support of WWF's mission and will continue to give 1% of gross sales plus $175,000 annually through 2028. WWF® and ©1986 Panda Symbol are owned by WWF. All rights reserved.