



# Costa Rica

THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW BEFORE  
YOU PLAN YOUR TRIP.



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**WANT TO LIVE IN COSTA RICA? SEE IF YOU QUALIFY FOR RESIDENCY!**



## About Costa Rica

Did you know Costa Rica is one of the most desirable places in the World to retire? Many retirees choose to live in the Central Valley of Costa Rica, within a few miles of the capital city of San Jose and its international airport. Shopping, medical facilities, and hospitals are abundant and just a few minutes in any direction. Costa Rica is known for its beautiful natural scenery, year-round excellent climate and friendly people. The majority of retirees in Costa Rica come from the USA, Canada, and Europe making this place a unique country of many cultures.

So, if you're thinking of the perfect place to get settled after retirement. You came to the right place as this article identifies some of the many reasons why you should consider retiring in Costa Rica.

## **Stable and Peaceful Environment**

For more than 60 years, the country has prospered in the absence of an army. In the entire Latin American region, it is considered to be one of the most stable. There is a strong democracy in Costa Rica with high voter turnout. This makes Costa Rica a worry-free environment to live in as far as property and individual rights are concerned.

## **Growing Economy**

According to economic experts, given the current prosperity in the country, its economy is expected to go nowhere, but up in the next years.

## **Climate**

Costa Rica has a wonderful variety of climates. From Cartago to Guanacaste, there is a wide diversity of weather to choose from. If you enjoy the warmth, then the beaches are a great location. If you prefer cooler weather, there are many areas in San Jose, Heredia, and Cartago to choose from.

## **Naturally Wonderful**

All over the country, you will be able to see mountains, lakes, beaches, waterfalls, and forests, making it a relaxing and picturesque place to enjoy.

## **Expat Community**

There is a large and growing expat community. As the baby boomers retire in mass, Costa Rica is a wonderful choice for many retirees.

## Proximity to the United States

If you are leaving your family in the US, there is no need to worry as flying in and out of Costa Rica will only take a few hours. This is a vacation destination. You might be even overwhelmed with friends and family that would like to come and visit you. Especially, when the snow starts to fly!

## High Quality of Life

As a retired person living in Costa Rica, you will enjoy the quality of life and the lifespan is excellent. It is a regular on the list of countries ranking high in the happiness index. More so, Costa Ricans have a life expectancy of 77.7 years on average.

## Affordable Medical Care

In Costa Rica, different health care plans are offered at affordable rates while making sure they are provided by high-quality institutions such as the Caja.

Joining the national healthcare system gives you incredible benefits. There are no restrictions on pre-existing conditions with the Caja.

For example; once you are a resident of Costa Rica, you are entitled to any and all services needed including medication for any type of illness. Monthly Payments are very affordable regardless of your income bracket.

## Easy Residency Program

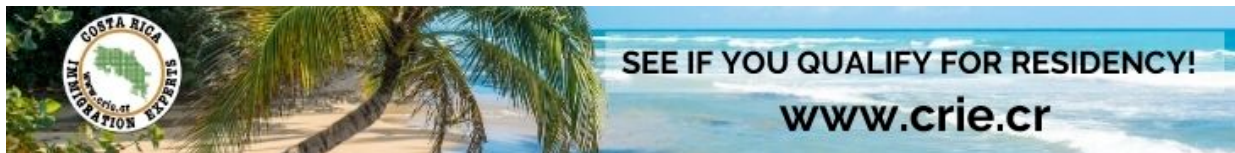
With as little as \$1,000 a month, you can easily qualify for residency as a retiree in Costa Rica.

There are a few minimal requirements, which will include living in Costa Rica at least four months annually and make payments to the public health care system. You can even own your own business and earn money while staying in the country.

At [Costa Rica Immigration Experts](#), we specialize in the preparation and filing of residency applications for prospective Costa Rican residents. Cool Fact: Once you start your residency process with us, you won't have to leave Costa Rica every 90 days anymore.

We have the experience and understanding to help you make the best-informed decision about moving to our country. Contact our friendly, courteous staff and let us help you discover more about the paradise we call Costa Rica.

We can provide you with all the information needed about Costa Rica residency and the many advantages that our beautiful country offers for you!





### Things to Know Before You Visit Costa Rica

If you are planning a trip to Costa Rica, now is the time to make sure your trip is as amazing as you've hoped for. It is a good idea to have some basic knowledge of the place you're visiting before going there.

And, that's what we're going to talk about here. Nothing too meticulously detailed or overcomplicated – just some simple and helpful background info on one of the best vacation destinations in the world!

#### **1. Costa Rica is not as cheap as its neighbors.**

Please budget accordingly, because Costa Rica can be as expensive as Toronto or Florida in some tourist areas, while non-tourist areas can be much cheaper.

If you would a detailed cost comparison between Costa Rica and other countries, visit the website called [Numbeo](#).

# Things to Know Before You Visit Costa Rica

## **2. San José is not as bad as people make it out to be.**

San José is typical of a major city in Latin America, with some wonderful upscale areas and some run-down areas as well. You just need to ask at your hotel or taxi driver what you need to know about San Jose.

## **3. Locals LOVE to talk to foreigners.**

And I mean, they'll stop you on the street to talk to you. They're very gregarious people with a curious nature and since tourism in Costa Rica is on the rise, they enjoy meeting people from all walks of life. Single ladies please take extra precautions when walking around town.

## **4. Dengue is the main disease from mosquitoes.**

The good news is, dengue has been dramatically reduced by 50% over the last few years! Be sure to use repellent and mosquito nets when possible, especially in rural and beach areas.

## **5. Ticos have a laid-back attitude but, they don't drive like they do.**

People are always surprised by the driving in Costa Rica and it's something we warn people about when they come down here.

Drive defensively and watch out for potholes, motorcycles weaving through lanes, and pedestrians on the street while in Costa Rica. In a nutshell, don't assume other drivers will be as courteous as you might be.



## Things to Know Before You Visit Costa Rica

### **6. It's a small country but it takes longer than it seems to get around.**

Costa Rica is smaller than Florida so it's easy to think you can road trip the whole country in a week. Technically you can, but trust me, that wouldn't be very fun! This is because the roads in Costa Rica are never as the crows fly. They do have highways and the main roads are paved but they usually have only one lane.

### **7. Police can stop and ask for your papers at any time.**

In Costa Rica, police have been known to stop any car and ask for papers. Always have a color copy of your FULL passport including your tourist stamp with you. Remember that to legally drive in Costa Rica as a tourist, you need to have your foreign drivers license and passport with a valid tourist stamp with you at all times.

### **8. It gets cold, but it doesn't snow.**

Located 8 to 12 degrees north of the Equator, Costa Rica enjoys a tropical climate year round with an average high of 27°C (81°F) and an average low of 18°C (64°F). Costa Rica has over 40 microclimates. Check the weather online where you will be staying or visiting before you come down.



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## **9. English is widely spoken but not all Costa Ricans speak English.**

Most Ticos speak English but not all of them. Learning a few basic phrases in Spanish would help before you arrive.

## **10. Costa Rica is safe, and theft is the most common crime.**

Costa Rica has mostly petty crime issues so lock your car and doors and watch your valuables. Like most major cities and tourist areas, there are always a few bad guys hanging around to take advantage of foreigners.

## **11. Rainy season doesn't mean it's bad to travel.**

Costa Rica is famous for its rain forests after all. Here are some other things to know about why it's actually awesome to visit Costa Rica in rainy season:

- Rainy season is also Costa Rica's low season. This means less tourists!
- Prices for hotels and tours go down quite a bit. It's the best time to travel cheap in Costa Rica.
- A typical rainy season day is sunny and hot in the morning, cloudy in the afternoon and rainy in the evening/night.
- Rainy season is the best time to see whales and turtles.

Costa Rica's rainy season extends from the beginning of May to the end of November. The rainiest months for most of Costa Rica is September and October, with December and January being rainy months in the Caribbean.

### **12. Don't Let Your Snake Guard Down.**

We certainly don't want to scare you away from Costa Rica, but you should be aware that there are 22 venomous species of snake slithering around the country. This includes the fer-de-lance, eye-lash viper and coral snake. Rest assured, they're usually shy and try to avoid people, but bites do happen. The medical system is very good here, with antivenin widely distributed, but it's not something you want to experience on your holiday. Be vigilant, stay on marked trails and obey your guide.

### **13. Don't Touch the Cute Tiny Frogs.**

Another type of critter to beware of when you're wandering the rainforest is the thumbnail sized cute and colorful frogs with the elaborate designs – aptly named poison dart frogs. They're super cute and look like rubber toys you'd find in a gumball machine, but some of them have a deadly poison that packs a punch. Resist the urge to touch these creatures. The deadliest little guys have enough venom to kill ten grown men if it gets in your bloodstream.

### **14. Mobile Internet and Wi-Fi are readily available.**

You'll find Mobile Internet (3G/4G) in most towns in Costa Rica, even in rural areas — and most hotels and restaurants provide Wi-Fi to their customers. When in doubt, ask!

### **15. Nearly every town has an ATM.**

In the old days we didn't but now we do! Check with your bank about daily limits.

### **16. Tap water is generally safe to drink.**

Costa Rica's water supply is fine to drink in most places — be sure to ask in more out-of-the-way rural areas, especially on the coast. Many buy bottled water to be safe.

### **17. US dollars are readily accepted and are the standard currency in tourism.**

For visitors from the U.S. there's no reason to change money in advance because dollars are commonly used in Costa Rica.

Hotels and tour companies quote their prices in US dollars since a good amount of the tourists are from the US. Additionally, Costa Ricans can have bank accounts in USD as mortgages and car payments in USD. US dollars have become the standard currency in tourism. Make sure you check what the exchange rate is when spending dollars.

The taxis out in front of the airport, the restaurants and hotels all accept dollars.



### **Winter In Costa Rica. What's It Like?**

When you think of winter, what is the first image that comes to your mind? Maybe cold snow, sipping hot chocolate by the fire and maybe even a blizzard!

Fortunately, Costa Rica does not have typical winters and that is a big draw for many tourists during the “winter months”.

### **December Weather in Costa Rica**

First, Costa has two seasons and those are “Wet” and “Dry”. The months of April through December are considered the wet season. And, between December through April, we have the dry season. The wet season is when we get most of the rain that keeps Costa Rica green and lush. The dry season is considered a typical summer and it starts in December.

# Winter in Costa Rica

The weather in December is an indicator of the seasonal change. The rain tapers-off and the beaches in the Pacific are mostly sunny during the month. Occasionally, the rain continues sporadically throughout the month until January. The Atlantic side of the country, the Caribbean side, can continue to see rain during the entire month but it is never definite.

## Why do tourists love Costa Rica in December?

It's like being in "Paradise". The beaches and the Central Valley experience great sunshine, between the seventies to mid-eighties and the low temperatures are between the sixties and mid-seventies. If you compare that to a typical winter in other parts of the World like (Canada and some parts of Europe), you should see why people enjoy vacationing in Costa Rica during their winter.

## Planning Ahead and Reservations

If you are considering a trip to Costa Rica during the winter months, plan ahead and make your reservations early. Costa Rica is an attractive vacation destination for thousands of foreigners between December and April. Trust us on that!

The lodging and hotel accommodations are usually 80 – 90% booked by the end of September. December is the heart of the high season for international travelers seeking fun-in-the-sun. Also, most Ticos are on holiday.

In closing, winter in Costa Rica is perfect for your next vacation!

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# General Tips for Traveling Abroad



## General Tips for Traveling Abroad

If you are considering a trip abroad, here are some general tips for your health and safety.

Before you depart from your home country, take the time to learn about your destination. Check to see if your country has an embassy or consulate in your destination and know where it is located.

### Do some research

Go to the U.S. Department of State's official website, [Travel.State.Gov](http://Travel.State.Gov). You will be able to find travel advisory information for every country of the world and contact information for the closest U.S. embassy and/or consulate.

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## General Tips for Traveling Abroad

There will also be information about visa requirements, safety and security conditions, crime, health, and medical considerations, local laws, areas to avoid, and more.

Most foreign countries require a valid passport to enter and leave. In some countries, women are required to have a male escort to leave a country.

### **Pack Accordingly**

Be aware of the different local laws and customs regarding clothing and appearance. For example, what you wear in a mall in Mexico might not be acceptable in a mall in the United Arab Emirates.

### **Be Aware of Your Surroundings**

Pay attention to local laws and customs because they can be quite different from the United States, especially if you intend to travel alone. Avoid dark, isolated areas at night.

Also, public transportation varies from country to country and so do their methods of safety. In many places, informal taxis or mini-buses pose particular threats to people unfamiliar with the local conditions, especially to women traveling alone.



## Where to Exchange Money in Costa Rica



### Where to Exchange Money in Costa Rica

A question we get often from tourists and new residents is: how and where do I exchange money in Costa Rica? Costa Rica's national currency is the colón (CRC), named after Christopher Columbus, who sighted Costa Rica in 1502 on his third voyage to the continent.

While credit cards and US dollars are readily accepted in stores and tourist businesses, you'll want to have some Costa Rican colones on hand — especially for the smaller purchases, and if you'll be visiting remote regions and beach areas.

Our suggestion is to use local bank ATMs, where you will get the rate set by your own bank. Make sure to check with your bank on foreign transaction and currency fees, though.

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# Where to Exchange Money in Costa Rica

To exchange money at any of the banks or outlets, you will need valid identification *as Costa Rica defines it*. For foreigners, valid ID is either:

- a passport with valid Costa Rica entry stamp; or
- a valid residency card, such as a DIMEX (not expired)

There are typically no exceptions to this rule due to financial industry regulations.

## Exchange US Dollars in Costa Rica

Exchanging US dollars is by far the easiest task. All banks in Costa Rica accept US dollars and almost all of them open accounts in dollars. You'll also notice that many prices in the country are quoted in dollars, such as hotel stays.

To exchange US dollars in Costa Rica, some banks are open on weekends as well, usually the ones in the malls and commercial centers. There is also Servimás inside of Walmart and Mas x Menos locations that can exchange dollars to colones without much hassle.

## Exchange Euros in Costa Rica

Here are a few banks that can exchange euros in Costa Rica:

- Banco Nacional
- Banco de Costa Rica
- Scotiabank
- BAC Credomatic

## Exchange Canadian Dollars in Costa Rica

If you brought Canadian dollars to Costa Rica and are wondering what to do with them, you're in luck. Scotiabank can exchange Canadian dollar cash to Costa Rican colones, and the exchange rate is actually pretty good.

## Exchange Other Currencies in Costa Rica

Here's where things can get complicated. Other currencies can be exchanged at the airport and possibly some other limited locations, but the exchange rate and fees will be brutal.

If you have other currencies and you happen to be in San José, you can exchange them for colones at the Banco de Costa Rica's central office in downtown San José, on Calle 4 and Avenida 2. Locals refer to that building as "Banco Negro."

At Banco Negro you can exchange euros (EUR), US dollars (USD), British pound sterling (GBP), Swiss francs (CHF), Canadian dollars (CAD), Guatemalan quetzales (GTQ), Honduran lempiras (HNL), Colombian pesos (COP), Mexican pesos (MXN) and Nicaraguan córdobas (NIO). Hours are Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. The exchange office ([Oficina Cambio de Moneda](#)) has its own street entrance on the east side of the building.



## Crime and Safety in Costa Rica

This article is not intended to scare you or make you worried during your vacation however it is important to understand crime and safety in Costa Rica, it will merely lessen the chances of anything negative happening which allows you to enjoy your hard-earned vacation here in Costa Rica. I have lived here for about 20 yrs, and other than maids picking the odd thing up, I have not had any horrific experiences. But, facts are facts. Let's begin by understanding that Costa Rica is a developing nation and is not quite up to Canada, U.S. or even European standards of policing.

Costa Rica is literally in the middle of drug producing countries like Columbia, Peru and Bolivia and the main Consumer, the U.S making Costa Rica a flow through country.

## Crime and Safety in Costa Rica

Petty theft and drug-related crimes are what you need to watch for. The legal system is rather lax as well, which means criminals don't suffer harsh sentences and are on the street when they should be locked up.

### **Here are a few tips and recommendations:**

1. There are many ATM's in Costa Rica. You do not need to carry wads of cash on you. If you need to take out a rather large amount from the local bank or are converting \$'s to Colones, ask for a sobre "envelope" and have the teller put the money in it behind the counter instead of flashing it around as you stuff it into your pockets.

2. Keep your cell phone out of site. Carrying it in your hand or in your back pocket is just too much temptation.

3. Passports are a valuable commodity and can fetch a high price, so please leave yours in your safe and carry a copy on you at all times as that is the law. You need a copy of the page with your photo and a copy of the page with the entry stamp so that they can see that you are not overstaying your visa.

4. While at the beach enjoying the sun and surf, it is not a wise idea to take valuables with you, unless you have a trusted partner or friend to watch over your things.

## Crime and Safety in Costa Rica

5. Take a taxi anytime you can at night time. Do not walk or bike after dark.
6. Leave your valuables in your hotel safe if possible and try not to take anything with you in your car or even your trunk (unless your trunk is very secure).
7. Bad guys will puncture your tire with a small object, causing you to lose air while you are driving and have to pull over. At that point, one will offer you help and the partner will empty your car while you are distracted.
8. If confronted or threatened, do not resist, give them what they want. Everything you own can be replaced. You can't be!
9. Don't become a target by being drunk or high in public.
10. Travel in pairs or better yet, a group if possible.
11. If you are a victim of theft or assault, please report it to the local authorities.

In summary; keep your wits about you at all times and enjoy the weather, culture, and people of Costa Rica.

Following these tips will assure you of a pleasant experience while vacationing here. Pura Vida!

# Essential Mobile Apps While Traveling in Costa Rica



## Essential Mobile Apps for Your Trip

If you are planning a trip to Costa Rica make sure have downloaded some essential mobile apps for your trip. What are these Essential Mobile Apps for traveling in Costa Rica, or any foreign country?

### Translation

There are going to be times when you just don't know a specific word or some phrases. You will need a translation application to help you. This application should be accurate in voice recognition and outgoing translations. If you are lost and need directions or your'e not sure how to pronounce a word, the translation application will be your intermediary translator.

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# Essential Mobile Apps While Traveling in Costa Rica

We recommend Google Translate. This application works both online and offline.

## Driving Directions

Waze is the must-have mobile application. It is free to download and use.

## Journaling

A journaling mobile application is a perfect way to document your trip. It should have an easy-to-use interface that lets you easily create journal entries, add photos with date and location information.

You can tag your entries with labels like “Costa Rica Trip” or “Arenal Volcano,” and use the search feature to easily go back and find posts from the past.

## Communication

You don't want to incur International mobile call fees while traveling in Costa Rica. You should download a free mobile application such as Skype or WhatsApp that will let you communicate for FREE over the Internet.

Hopefully, these mobile apps help make your travels in Costa Rica trip a bit more stress-free. If you have any suggestions of other apps you use in Costa Rica on a daily basis, let us know in the comments!



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# Great Places to Explore in Costa Rica



## Great Places to Explore in Costa Rica

Costa Rica is a great destination for a holiday.

There are great places to explore in Costa Rica such as gorgeous beaches, lush rainforests, active volcanos, traditional villages and many charming historic city neighborhoods.

### Exploring The Capital

If arriving in Costa Rica by plane, you will probably land in Juan Santamaría International Airport (SJO) airport in Alajuela, which is located just outside of San José. There are frequent taxis and local buses that travel from the airport to the capital. Once in the capital, you can enjoy taking a nice walk through the city center, visiting the National Theater or strolling through a museum.

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# Great Places to Explore in Costa Rica

You can finish the day by having a wonderful dinner at one of the many eateries in Barrio Escalante.

## White Water Rafting

There are unforgettable white-water rafting tours that depart from the city capital daily, with pick-up from your hotel.

Costa Rica has class II, III, and IV rapids that pass by breathtakingly beautiful waterfalls inside of canyons located in lush rainforests. Tours typically stop and provide lunch halfway down the river. You should pack dry clothes for changing into at the final stop before heading back to San José.

## Ecotourism on The Caribbean Coast

The traditional and quaint village of Tortuguero, on the Caribbean coast, offers unique ecotourism opportunities.

You will have many options for adventure or simple relaxation. You can enjoy a boat ride through jungle canals, see impressive birds, monkeys, and crocodiles can usually be spotted fairly easily.

During your time in Tortuguero, schedule a night tour to witness the magic of giant sea turtles nesting on Playa Tortuguero (February to October). Your tour fees directly support the conservation of these endangered animals. For more fun, head to the National Park (of the same name) where you can walk the flat, easy trails through dense jungle and along deserted beaches.

You'll likely run into other critters here, such as armadillos and sloths.

### **Volcanoes and Thermal Baths**

Once you are done with exploring the Caribbean, you can travel to the Pacific side of the country towards Lake Arenal.

Lake Arenal resides in the mountainous area of La Fortuna. You can enjoy the rejuvenating and relaxing healing waters of the local hot springs, heated by the active volcano Arenal. There are several luxury hot spring and spa resorts that offer day passes, which often include access to the springs, food, and perhaps even waterslides.

If you are into trekking, you can explore trails in Arenal Volcano National Park. You will be able to observe Volcano Arenal from a safe distance, walk on old lava fields and encounter the varying ecosystems of the geothermal area.

### **Explore The Cloud Forest**

Go explore Monteverde Cloud Forest.

During the journey, you'll cross Lake Arenal and ride through lush countryside to Santa Elena, a popular town and our recommendation for lodging near Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve. We recommend you allocate a full day to explore Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve. The reserve has an extensive network of hiking trails and as you enjoy the lush scenery, you may spot rare wildlife such as quetzals, monkeys, and sloths.

# The Beautiful and Deadly Animals of Costa Rica



## Caution: The Beautiful and Deadly Animals

Costa Rica is a beautiful tropical country filled with a diverse collection of beautiful animals. Some of those beautiful animals are very deadly and everyone, tourists and locals, should take great care to avoid them.

Here is a short list of some of the most deadly animals in Costa Rica:

- Fer-de-Lance Snake ([view images](#))
- Eye-lash Viper Snake ([view images](#))
- The Coral Snake ([view images](#))
- The American Crocodile ([view images](#))
- The Puma ([view images](#))
- The Jaguar ([view images](#))
- The Poison Dart Frog ([view images](#))

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## **Fer-de-Lance Snake**

This snake belongs to the Viper family. It is gray or brown and has a triangular head with diamonds. If you are bitten by the snake, you could die.

## **Eye-lash Viper Snake**

This snake also belongs to the Viper family. It can be yellow, green, red and brown in coloring or colored combinations. They have a diamond head as well but much smaller than the Fer-de-Lance.

## **The Coral Snake**

The Coral Snake can be found on both coasts of Costa Rica. It inhabits the dry forests and humid forests. There are a variety of Coral Snakes, some venomous and many that aren't. You can distinguish the poisonous ones by their specific colored rings ([click here](#)).

## **The American Crocodile**

The most popular spot to view these predators is the Tarcoles River. Although attacks are rare, you should be careful and if you are on a river tour, be cautious and listen to your tour guide.

## **The Puma**

Stay away from any "Big Cats" in Costa Rica, they are predators. These animals are very elusive, so the probability of you seeing or coming into direct contact with one is very low.

# The Beautiful and Deadly Animals of Costa Rica

## The Jaguar

Read the above (regarding The Puma). If you come across one, remain calm and try to back away slowly, very slowly.

## The Poison Dart Frog

These little frogs with the mesmerizing black and green coloring are deadly. Their poison can cause paralysis and heart attacks.

Here is some simple advice: If you see a frog that is colored vividly just let it hop along on its way, not all frogs in Costa Rica are poisonous but, it's better to be safe than sorry.

In closing, Costa Rica has many beautiful animals and some are deadly.



## CHINCHE BUG (THE KISS OF DEATH)



### Becareful of The Kissing Bug!

Be aware of the Costa Rican “Chinche” bug, also known as the “Kissing Bug”. These bugs are the cause of 6 – 7 million people, in the world, being infected with the Chagas Disease. The disease, potentially fatal, severely damages heart tissue and other organs.

People infected with the disease may not notice the symptoms for years (decades), between 20 – 30% of those people usually develop major medical problems because of that. If treatment is not received early, treatments have been reported to not work at all.

## The Chinche Bug

These insects are often found in populated areas with damp spaces, woodpiles and near pets. They can also be found near livestock. The bugs received the nickname of “The Kissing Bug” because they often, like to, bite people near the eye or mouth.

Once bitten, the bug can defecate in or near the wound and deposit a dangerous parasite called “T. Cruzi”. This parasite will burrow into the cells of the body, grow and multiply.

## Bite Symptoms

The most common initial symptoms after a bite are a purplish swelling of the eyelid or mouth). An infected person may experience Conjunctivitis, fevers, sore throat, muscle pain, poor appetite or difficulty breathing.

There is no vaccine yet against the Chagas disease, but it is curable if caught and treated soon after infection.

The correct anti-parasite medications are usually Benznidazole or Nifurtimox. (Remember: once Chagas reaches the chronic stage, medications will not work.)

If you think you have been bitten by the bug go see a doctor to have your blood tested.



# The Scarlet Macaws of Costa Rica



## Be on the lookout for The Scarlet Macaws

The magnificent Scarlet Macaw is a species of bird that is native to the tropical climate of Costa Rica.

They have breathtaking beauty, they are intelligent and very social animals with an abundance of personality.

The Macaw once inhabited many areas along the Pacific and Atlantic coasts of the countries jungles. But, due many years of deforestation and the unregulated capture of the birds as pets, their population was significantly reduced. There are an estimated 450+ birds in the country now, thanks to laws protecting the birds from illegal capture.

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## The Scarlet Macaws of Costa Rica

That number is only an estimated 1/10th of their once thriving population. Conservationists are working alongside the Costa Rican government to save and grow the Macaw species. The birds are bred in special centers in the country. The species is allowed to thrive, lay eggs, and raise their offspring at the centers and then the chicks are released into the tropical wilderness.



With the new laws in place, Costa Rica is seeing a slow and steady resurgence of Macaws in the National Parks. It is the hope of conservationists that these amazingly beautiful birds can once again grace the skies of Costa Rica.

Source: **The Ara Project Center**

We hope the same too.

**WANT TO LIVE IN COSTA RICA? SEE IF YOU QUALIFY FOR RESIDENCY!**

## Top 10 Outdoor Activities in Costa Rica



### The Top 10 Outdoor Activities

There are plenty of outdoor activities in Costa Rica to enjoy and so much to explore on your next trip. There are hidden beaches, clean rivers and lush green jungles that are perfect to enjoy.

The Pacific and Caribbean coastlines both have mountain ranges that have wonderful waterfalls, several volcanoes, amazing tropical rainforest, rushing rivers and dense jungles.

You can enjoy an activity in one of the various tropical rainforests, a local mountain range or a beautiful beaches. Below is a list of our Top 10 Outdoor Activities that you can enjoy while you are in Costa Rica.

**WANT TO LIVE IN COSTA RICA? SEE IF YOU QUALIFY FOR RESIDENCY!**

### **Zip-lining:**

Over a quarter of the land in Costa Rica is covered in rainforests. Zip-lining is one of the best outdoor activities in Costa Rica to enjoy discovering the enchanting ecosystems of this country. There are a number of zip-line courses that fly over beaches, through treetops, and across canyons.

### **White Water Rafting:**

Some of the best White Water Rafting rivers in Costa Rica are in the Sarapiquí, the Corobici, the Pacuare and the Reventazon. rivers. Each river has differing degrees of difficulty, making it easy to find one that suits the skill levels of the paddlers.

### **Sea Kayaking:**

In both, the Pacific and Caribbean coasts there are plenty of places to go and enjoy Sea Kayaking. It has become increasingly popular over the recent years. Sea Kayaking in Costa Rica is ideal only for the experienced kayakers and should never be attempted without a guide.

### **Snorkeling and Diving**

In Costa Rica, you will definitely find many terrific Snorkeling and Scuba Diving opportunities. If you venture to the Caribbean coast, where the water is warm, you will be in for a tropical treat. You will see a wide variety of marine wildlife and underwater flora, particularly at the small reef near Manzanillo.

### **Surfing:**

Costa Rica is a great surfing destination due to its world-class surfing breaks on both the Pacific and Caribbean coastlines. There are many popular surf spots such as Playa Negra, Playa Hermosa, Santa Teresa, Playa Tamarindo, and Playa Jaco.

If you don't know how to surf, no worries, there are several surf camps and learning centers where you can learn how to surf and enjoy carving-it-up in the waves.

### **Hiking:**

Costa Rica offers an abundance of places to go for a good hike or walk. You can enjoy this outdoor activity in one of the various tropical rainforests, a local mountain range or along one of the many beautiful beaches.

### **Horseback Riding:**

You can enjoy horseback riding almost everywhere in Costa Rica. You will be able to go through the forests, in the mountains, and along the sea.

Horseback riding along the beach on the Nicoya Peninsula, in the south, and Sámara on the west coast are very popular for this outdoor activity.

### **Birdwatching**

Is there such a thing as "Heaven on Earth"? If you are a birdwatcher, Costa Rica may just be that heavenly place.

## Top 10 Outdoor Activities in Costa Rica

The country boasts 840 species of birds. With the help of a good birding guide, you can find out the right place and spot some of the more elusive species. Some of the popular species are The Scarlet macaws, Oropendolas, Royal Flycatchers, Toucans, Laughing Falcons, White-fronted Nunbirds, Cinnamon Woodpeckers, Kingfishers and many more.

### **Sport fishing:**

Costa Rica is one of the best places for enjoying sport fishing. It has a vast amount of healthy waters and knowledgeable locals that know where and when to go sports fishing. Both coasts have a variety of fish such as Mahi Mahi, Sailfish, Roosterfish or even the Mysterious Marlins.

Most people report that the Central Pacific of the country is the best place to enjoy sport fishing.

### **Canyoning/Rappelling:**

If so, Canyoning or Rappelling is another of the popular outdoor activities in Costa Rica that may be perfect for you. It gives you the opportunity to get very close the awesome natural wonders found in the mountains and rainforests within Costa Rica.

# Getting Married in Costa Rica



## Getting Married in Costa Rica

Getting Married in Costa Rica just got easier. We can assist you with Civil Marriage Ceremonies!

### What is a Civil Marriage Ceremony?

A civil ceremony is simply a nonreligious, legal marriage ceremony presided over by a legal official instead of a religious one.

### How is a civil ceremony different from a religious one?

A civil ceremony is basically a one stop shop because we do everything for you. It's legally binding, which means you won't have to have two ceremonies. A religious ceremony in Costa Rica is not legally binding (unless it is performed by the local Catholic Church), so to get married in Costa Rica requires a civil ceremony either before or after your religious ceremony.

**WANT TO LIVE IN COSTA RICA? SEE IF YOU QUALIFY FOR RESIDENCY!**

# Getting Married in Costa Rica

Civil ceremonies take approximately 30 minutes to fulfill the legal requirements and signing of all documents. Ceremonies can be performed at your location or at the office of the Notary Public.

Marriages legally performed and validated in Costa Rica are also legal and valid in other countries. Your marriage certificate will be issued by the Registro Civil in about three months after it has been registered.

Your marriage will be recognized in the Canada and the U.S. after you submit the appropriate certifications to the Canadian or U.S. Embassies in Costa Rica.

To be legally recognized in the U.S. or Canada, your marriage certificate must be:

Translated into English by an Official Translator accredited by the Ministry of Foreign Relations Authenticated by the Ministry of Foreign Relations; Notarized by a Notary Public (we can do this for you); and Certified and signed by your Embassy's Consular Section.

## Choosing the Location

Not everyone wants to have a grand traditional church wedding. There are other options for your wedding ceremony. For most civil ceremonies, you can just go to the lawyers office. If you don't want to get married at the lawyers office, you can have your civil ceremony anywhere, like your backyard, public park, at the beach or a nature reserve.



## Bachelor/Bachelorette Parties in Costa Rica



## Bachelor/Bachelorette Parties in Costa Rica

Why go to Las Vegas, aka “Sin City”, for your Bachelor party, when you can have 10x more fun in Costa Rica?

Costa Rica has it all. There are beautiful girls, hot guys, golf, sport-fishing, Outdoor Activities, and some of the best nightlife you’ll find anywhere.

Bachelor parties in Costa Rica are the perfect way to go for you, your group of family/friends. You can stay in amazing houses overlooking the ocean, or in a villa in the jungle.



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## Explore and Learn

You can explore and learn about a new country while enjoying yourself. The experiences you will have and memories you create will be up to you because there is a lot of to do while you're in Costa Rica!

## The Keys to a Successful Bachelor Party in Costa Rica

What does it take to have one of the best bachelor/bachelorette Parties in Costa Rica? You need to secure (amazing accommodations, reliable transportation, review trip advisories and schedule activities).

There are many management companies that specialize in bachelor/bachelorette parties. Research some of them and contact them.

There's nothing better than going to a foreign country and knowing people who can guide you. They should know country, where to go, and where to stay. With the right company, they will show you the best tours, bars, restaurants, and everything Costa Rica has to offer.

## A Warning!

Once your bachelor/bachelorette party is over, you may return to your home country as a forever changed person. You may decide to come back to Costa Rica and make it your home!

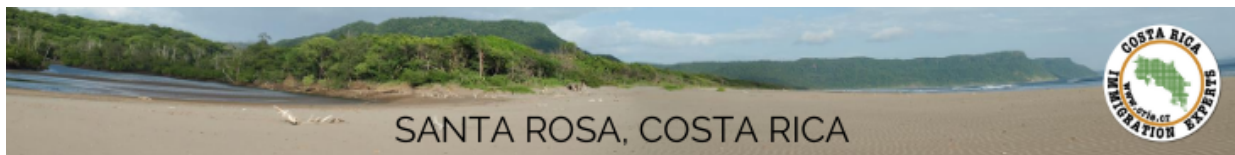


## **BONUS: Our Costa Travel Guide**

We believe, that between a normal routine and work, life can become quite boring and tiresome. That is why we strongly believe that you should definitely take a vacation to the phenomenal places Costa Rica has to offer.

However, you need to know a few things before getting ready for your trip.

These are the things which will determine your Costa Rica travel experience. And since we wish you have a trip of your lifetime, below we have highlighted a few things that you need to pay attention to before you actually visit Costa Rica.



**WANT TO LIVE IN COSTA RICA? SEE IF YOU QUALIFY FOR RESIDENCY!**

## 26 Tips for Costa Rica Travel

### 1- Instead of using taxis, take Uber

When you get to Costa Rica, you want to have fun while still maintaining your initial budget. Therefore, if you are not ready for a horror movie experience with taxi prices, you are better off to take an Uber instead of taxis. Uber services are a cheaper option and much better to use when navigating around. If you do have to take a taxi, ensure that it's red in color or orange if provided by the airport.

### 2- Public buses also make a decent alternative

While in Costa Rica, the public buses are convenient and a very cheap option. Although this is not the fanciest way to get around, if you need to move shorter distances they are always a good option.

### 3- Download the Travel app separately

If you feel that public buses will work for you when traveling across the country, ensure that you download the Travel App [Off the Grid Traveller](#) or the [Moovit App](#). This app is available in English and you don't have to pay anything to get it. The app helps you navigate with ease. In that, it tells you the bus to take on a certain route and its departure time to any location across the country.

## **4- Rental cars are expensive but truly the best**

Although you might have to spend a few more bucks when using a car rental when navigating the country, they are one of the best ways to move around. Actually, if you ask me, I feel that car rentals give you that freedom to do things according to your own schedule. You no longer have to worry about the pre-packaged tours.

## **5- The Drivers in Costa Rica can be Crazy**

Welcome to Costa Rica where the drivers can be insane. You will need to be ready for people that ignore the traffic signals, while still having speeding bikers pass by you on both sides of the car. It's actually ironic how much everyone here at Costa Rica will be relaxed about literally anything around them, but not driving. When it comes to driving they are always in a rush.

## **6- During the peak hours, please AVOID the San Jose area**

First things first, when in Costa Rica you need to avoid driving downtown especially the San Jose and surrounding areas. The place can always be too much especially during rush hour.



## **7- Waze will always be your best friend when getting around**

When in Costa Rica, the last thing you need to use, are maps. This is because the roads change constantly and you could get stuck. To take care of this problem, your best bet when getting around is the free Waze app that will never disappoint you.

## **8- The Distances may be longer than they seemed**

In Costa Rica, the roads are curvy and often unpaved with a lot of traffic. Therefore, you will most likely take longer to get to your destination than anticipated. So, when planning your travel time, ensure you check the driving period beforehand. This way, if you want to get to whichever destination in good time, you need to add at least 20-30 minutes.

## **9- They have Tolls too**

On all the major highways in Costa Rica, there are strategically stationed tolls. The good thing is that they are not insanely expensive and best of all, they accept dollars.

## **10- Costa Rica residences don't have addresses**

Most people will never believe this when they hear about it at first but it is true, there no address in Costa Rica. Actually, the use of numbered street names is a recent development that they have started using just in the last couple of years.

## 11- You'll love the local eateries: "sodas"

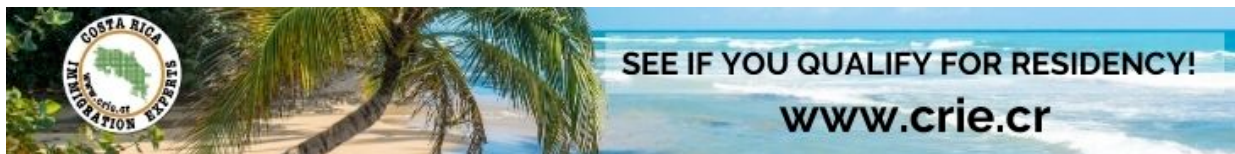
In every town in Costa Rica, they have small local eateries that locals call "sodas." This is one of the best places to grab something quick to eat. They have basic plates of food like beans, rice, salad, and meat for as low as \$5. Although cheap, you will love every bite of the food you get.

## 12- Try their local fruits

Costa Rica has a whole lot of unusual local fruits that you really need to try. Most people go to the local farmer's marketplace at least one time a week to grab some for themselves. The good thing is that every town in Costa Rica has a market day for the local farmers at least one day per week. You can inquire from the hotel about when the market day will be, and trust me, your visit will be worthwhile.

## 13- Feel free to drink water in Costa Rica

If you are concerned about water, I assure you, that the water in Costa Rica is good and safe for drinking. 95% of water is potable. But, the best thing to do is to inquire from the hotel management before you decide to fill up your water bottle from the tap.



**WANT TO LIVE IN COSTA RICA? SEE IF YOU QUALIFY FOR RESIDENCY!**

### **14- Don't feel obliged to give tips but in most tourist locations it's expected (it's already included in the bill)**

When during your Costa Rica travel, you happen to visit some of the 'sodas' or local restaurants you should not feel obliged to leave tips as it is already included in the bill. But if you've had a good experience you may want to give a little extra. However, when it comes to the more touristy locations, tips are one of the most expected things.

### **15- If you have to buy souvenirs get them at grocery stores**

To most people, this may sound quite unusual but if you want to get the best souvenir at affordable prices get them at the local grocery stores. If you think about the whole situation this is one of the best ways to cut on extra finances. If you are thinking of talking some chocolate or coffee from Costa Rica, instead of going to get them at the expensive souvenir shop, get them at almost half price at the local grocery stores.

### **16- You really don't have to take a guide**

This is common in most places and Costa Rica travel is no exception. When you get to some of the national parks you will get guides standing at the gates with offers to be your tour guide for the day at negotiated prices. I can't deny the guides are good at what they do.



They are knowledgeable on how to find most of the animals and even have certain equipment such as telescope that you will get a closer view of all animals.

### **17- If you have to travel do it during the off-peak seasons**

During the rainy season everything tends to go down the price. The rainy season mainly run within May all the way to November and December. As much as this might be considered as the annual rainy season it doesn't necessarily mean that it will rain every day.

The rain starts at 2 pm and may continue pouring hard for a few more hours. So if you want to get the best deals on Costa Rica travel, this is the time to go. You will wake up early and enjoy the day in the morning hours before the rains begin in the evening.

### **18- You can get a SIM card with prepaid services at the airport**

When you want to have fun, you need to consider excess spending. Therefore, instead of going for those fancy international plans from the cell phone provider in your home country, you can get a SIM card that is prepaid at the airport. This will cost you around \$5-10 and the money will actually be applied to your account.

The process takes less than 5 minutes. However, if there is a need to top up some more money to the account, you can get the Kolbi card at any mini market or renown supermarket in the country. All you have to do is make sure you have an unlocked phone that can use any international card.

## **19- When entering the country, you might be required to show proof the of your departure**

to the customs and border patrol, this is a common thing that you need to be ready for. Therefore, just in case you need to have a copy of the departure ticket. Also, ensure that the departure ticket is scheduled within 90 days from the time you arrive.

## **20- Are there exit taxes?**

Also, in Costa Rica when you have to cross the border to Nicaragua or any other place like Panama you may need to pay for an exit tax that goes for around \$8. However, when leaving the airport, the tax may be around \$28.

Most of the airlines include the tax in the ticket price for the flight.



### **21- It's okay to be concerned about Zika but it should not be in the list your main worries**

Out here people make Zika more of a worry that it actually is. Actually, there have been very few reported cases of people who have picked up Zika during their Costa Rica travel. What you should actually be careful of is dengue. All in all, as long as you wear a good bug spray you will most likely be okay.

### **22- The sun can be very strong**

What most people forget, is that the equator is not too far from Costa Rica. Therefore, bring sunscreen from home. While you can still buy it in Costa Rica, it will be more expensive.

### **23- Venomous Animals**

There is a whole list of venomous animals but this should not even worry you unless you are walking in the jungle. Also, avoid walking barefoot as there are scorpions.

### **24- That nice and fancy bling stuff you have, leave them at home**

Generally, Costa Rica travel is safe, but most definitely not the best place to go standing out much. Therefore, leave all your fancy and expensive nice clothes and jewelry back at home, chances are you will make yourself less of a petty theft target.

### **25- Be sure to grab your rain jacket**

Costa Rica is a unique place when it comes to climatic conditions. Every area in the country will have different climatic conditions, known as microclimates. Worst of all the torrential downpours are very unpredictable in this location. In that case, no matter you are traveling in the dry season or the rainy season, always make sure you have your rain jacket available. If you can pack a light jacket that will not be too hot while wearing.

### **26- Relax and have a great time**

Costa Rica happens to be one of the calmest places to be. Life in this place is 'Pura Vida' meaning that its pure life. The local people may more often than not, use the phrase as more of a greeting, but could also be used to mean that everything is quite okay. You consider adopting this kind of attitude.

Instead of getting frustrated when dealing with electrical problems, traffic delays or cancelled buses... You can take a short stride across the city and explore the city by foot.

If you have this attitude, your Costa Rica travel experience will be one of the best of your lifetime!



# Interested in Living in Costa Rica?

So, you're finally ready to make your move to the tropical paradise known as Costa Rica. There are many people from all over the world, that are choosing to move to the breathtakingly beautiful country located in Central America.

Did you know that Costa Rica has approximately 2.5 million tourists and visitors every year? And, about 50,000 North American expats and retirees now live in the country permanently. Each of those 50,000 Expats probably asked the same question... How do I move to Costa Rica?

Our simple answer: SEE IF YOU QUALIFY FOR RESIDENCY!

Visit our website and fill-out our FREE residency assessment questionnaire and we'll get in touch with you.

<https://www.crie.cr>

