



SUMMER



**pacific  
discovery**  
inspiring educational adventures

# Costa Rica Summer Program

OUTDOOR EXPEDITIONS AND  
BIODIVERSITY PROTECTION

[www.pacificdiscovery.org](http://www.pacificdiscovery.org)

# Overview

**Surf, hike, and raft on multi-day expeditions through the ecological hotspot of Costa Rica and protect its rich biodiversity with wildlife rehabilitation and sustainable practices!**

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This program is packed with epic multi-day adventures in one of the happiest countries on earth. Hike through the lush Los Santos rainforest, raft down the thrilling Pacuare River rapids, and kayak through the stunning waters of Golfito—no experience needed, just a spirit of adventure! Along the way, you'll experience Costa Rica's famous 'Pura Vida' lifestyle and discover why this country is a global leader in eco-stewardship.

Costa Rica is at the forefront of renewable energy and sustainability, and we'll see it firsthand while living on a permaculture ranch, learning about sustainable farming and conservation. We'll also contribute to wildlife rehabilitation efforts at a rescue center, helping to care for sloths, howler monkeys, and other exotic animals rescued from illegal trade. A highlight of the trip? Surfing the waves of the Pacific Coast, followed by relaxing yoga sessions to unwind.

Join this unforgettable summer program to explore, learn, and give back with a close-knit group of peers. You will receive a Certificate of Completed Service Hours (30 hours) for their valuable contributions to conservation efforts.





## Sample Itinerary

*\*\*This is a guide to what you can expect to do on program.  
The order in which the activities occur might vary\*\**

## WEEK 1 | HIKING IN THE RAINFOREST

Bienvenidos! Though Costa Rica is a small country, it boasts an incredible 6% of the world's biodiversity. Our journey begins in **San José**, where we'll stroll through cobblestone streets, visit bustling markets, and try local favorites like Gallo Pinto.

Next, we travel to **Santamaría de Dota**, a picturesque valley south of the capital known for producing some of Costa Rica's best coffee. Here, we'll spend time getting to know our group, with our instructors leading orientation sessions to prepare us for the adventures ahead.

The week's highlight is our first multi-day adventure: hiking the **Ruta Sukia**. This pristine rainforest trail is alive with exotic birds and cascading waterfalls. Along the way, we'll fully immerse in Costa Rican culture by staying in homestays with local families, offering a firsthand look at life in rural communities.



## WEEK 2 | LOCAL LIVING, REGENERATIVE FARMING & SURFING!

From the mountains, we make our way toward the Pacific Ocean, stopping in the rural farming town of **Tinamu**. This environmental education center, nestled along the **Savegre River Basin**, is a hub for sustainability and conservation efforts. We'll work alongside the local community, helping with tree planting and carbon neutrality projects while learning about regenerative farming. Evenings bring night safaris and cave explorations, giving us a deeper appreciation of the region's biodiversity.

Then, it's time for one of the most anticipated parts of the trip—surf camp! We head to the world-renowned Playa **Uvita**, where we'll spend three days learning to surf. Whether you're a beginner catching your first wave or improving your technique, the Pacific swell here has something for everyone. Our expert instructors will teach us about ocean safety, currents, and wind patterns, skills that will stay with us long after the program ends. Surf camp is all about pushing limits, celebrating small victories, and soaking up the fun, whether it's sunset beach hangs or morning surf sessions with new friends.

## WEEK 3 | STRETCH OUT BEFORE OUR KAYAKING EXPEDITION

We take a step back from the adrenaline this week with two days of yoga and meditation, designed to help us reflect on our journey so far. Through mindfulness and self-exploration, we'll gain a fresh perspective and renewed energy for the adventures ahead.

Next, we set off on an unforgettable multi-day sea kayaking expedition through **Golfo**. Paddling along the stunning coastline, we'll camp on secluded beaches, dine under the stars, and soak in the beauty of the rainforest from a whole new perspective. With professional guides leading the way, we'll kayak at a pace that suits the group, making time for snorkeling, dolphin spotting, and swimming in crystal-clear waters.



## WEEK 4 | WILDLIFE CONSERVATION & A RAFTING ADVENTURE

After our kayaking adventure, we travel to an animal rescue center dedicated to rehabilitating Costa Rica's endangered wildlife. Many of these animals, including sloths and spider monkeys, have been rescued from illegal trafficking. Our work will include preparing food, assisting with habitat enrichment, and learning about conservation efforts that help these animals heal and return to the wild whenever possible.

Our final adventure is a three-day rafting expedition down the **Pacuare River**, one of the world's top destinations for whitewater rafting. Between thrilling rapids, we'll stop to swim beneath waterfalls and explore the tropical rainforest. This is the perfect way to wrap up our month-long journey; working together, pushing our limits, and celebrating all we've accomplished.

We complete our loop back in **San José**, where it all began. After an action-packed month of adventure, service, and cultural immersion, we take time to reflect on our experiences and the friendships we've built. Though saying goodbye is never easy, the lessons and memories from Costa Rica will stay with us forever.

*\*Each week includes designated free time for rest, exploring, and catching up on personal tasks.*

***Pacific Discovery reserves the right to adjust the itinerary based on availability, safety, and program needs.***



# Program Highlights

- **Volunteer** project rehabilitating sloths, monkeys and other exotic animals at an animal rescue center
- **Learn** about **sustainable agriculture** and its importance in developing communities
- **Surf** on the pristine beaches of the Pacific coast with professional surf instructors
- Take a 3-day **white water rafting** trip through rapids and waterfalls on the Pacuare river
- **Sea kayak** through the Golfito on a multi-day adventure through rainforest-covered hills and secret islets
- Take a 3-day **hike through the rainforest** of La Zona de Los Santos
- Connect with and learn about the **local culture** through working alongside community members on Rancho Tinamu
- Live like a local with **family homestay** experiences on the Ruta Sukia hiking trip
- Experience the “pure vida” lifestyle in the world’s happiest country
- Receive a Certificate of Completed Service Hours with 30 hours to boost your resume



## COUNTRY INFORMATION

Costa Rica, nestled in Central America between Nicaragua and Panama, is a country of stunning natural beauty and rich cultural heritage. Home to just 5 million people, nearly 2 million reside in the bustling capital of San José. With lush rainforests, two breathtaking coastlines, and a deep-rooted Spanish influence, Costa Rica offers something for every traveler.

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## CLIMATE

Costa Rica has a tropical climate year-round. December-April is the “summer” season and May-November their “winter” season. June and July is the country’s green season and you catch the seasons in transition when the national parks are quieter.

**Day time average 70-88°F; night time average 70-75°F.**

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## MEALS

‘Gallo Pinto’ is the national dish of Costa Rica, and is eaten for breakfast, lunch or dinner, sometimes along with eggs. Also keep in mind that the variety of foods you’re used to eating at home might not be available in some of the areas we visit, so you might often be eating the same kinds of foods. We understand this can get tiring and our instructors will try to mix things up, but in some places this is simply a restriction of food sourcing in the area, so it’s good to come in with an expectation that you won’t get all of the foods you’re used to at home! Any snacks are at an additional cost, which we recommend budgeting for around \$10 per day.

### **Regular food to expect:**

- Breakfast: gallo pinto, which is rice, beans, plantains, and eggs
  - Lunch & dinner: casado, which is rice, beans, steamed veggies, protein, plantains, salad, and sometimes a kind of macaroni salad.
  - Local Central American cuisine notes: Rice/beans/protein/plantains combos are the traditional local food in Costa Rica. Other popular food includes beans and rice, Gallo Pinto, meat soups and stews, salads, ceviche, tamales (corn dough stuffed with meat, beans, or cheese), tropical fruits and fruit juices, tres leches cake (Milk cake).
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## TRANSPORT

The itinerary has been designed to maximize comfort and safety whilst also giving you the opportunity to experience local transport and take part in daily life. We will mainly be utilizing minivans on this program, with lots of self-propelled expeditions along the way!



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