



May 12-20, 2025

# Costa Rica Leatherback Turtle Trip

## An Adventure of a Lifetime

Join this customized, small-group nature trip through Costa Rican ecosystems. Witness the nesting of giant Leatherback Sea Turtles on the Caribbean coast of Costa Rica, one of the world's main nesting colonies of this majestic endangered species. Walk through rainforests, explore active volcanoes, and search for sloths, toucans, monkeys and other tropical wildlife.



## Itinerary

### Day 1: Arrival to San Jose

First night at Bougainvillea Hotel.  
Welcome dinner at hotel restaurant.

### Day 2: Arenal Volcano

Departure to Arenal Observatory Lodge.  
Visit a local Costa Rican home.

### Days 3: Arenal Volcano

Exploration of the Arenal Observatory gardens and private rain forest preserve.

### Day 4: Gandoca Mazanillo

Departure to Caribblue Hotel-Night outing in search of Leatherback sea turtles.

### Day 5: Cahuita National Park

Morning hike in Cahuita National Park.  
Afternoon at leisure at the beach

### Day 6: Punta Mona

Morning hike at Punta Mona preserve.  
Afternoon exploring local town.

### Days 7-Orosi Valley

Morning charter flight to San Jose.  
Departure to Quelitales Lodge.

### Day 8: Quelitales Lodge

Morning visit to Irazu Volcano.  
Afternoon hike at Rio Macho National Park

### Day 9: Transfer to San Jose Airport

Hasta luego, Costa Rica!

# Day 1: Monday, May 12

## Arrival in San Jose



Upon arrival at San Jose International Airport (SJO), we will be transferred to the Bougainvillea Hotel.

Within 30 minutes from the airport and set among 10 acres of lush tropical gardens, this comfortable hotel in the capital is a great place to start our tropical adventure in Costa Rica.

We will gather in the evening at the hotel restaurant to go over the itinerary and the next day's activities.  
Overnight at Bougainvillea Hotel  
[www.hb.co.cr](http://www.hb.co.cr)

Our morning drive will take us across the Continental Divide and through the vast rainforest of Braulio Carrillo National Park. Shortly after crossing the National Park, we will stop at Pierella Gardens for lunch and explorations of the gardens.

Pierella Gardens is a butterfly farm, where over 60 species of butterflies are raised for exportation. We will tour the gardens guided by a local naturalist. Pierella is also a great place to see tropical birds, sloths, monkeys, and other wildlife.

Afternoon arrival at Arenal Observatory.

[www.arenalobservatory.com](http://www.arenalobservatory.com)

# Day 2: Tuesday, May 13

## Arenal Volcano







Day 3: Wed., May 14

## Arenal Volcano

Early morning birding on the lodge's trails, followed by breakfast. After breakfast, we depart for a walk through the waterfall trail. Within our hotel's protected area, this is a great location to see abundant wildlife and a spectacular waterfall.

Afternoon exploring the gardens and forest at the hotel.

We will end the day with a night hike to the famous frog pond, where we are likely to see the amazing red-eye tree frog and several other species.



Day 4: Thursday, May 15

## Caribblue Hotel



Morning departure to the south Caribbean coast.

Today we break our drive with a stop at the home of Costa Rican naturalist Jairo Lacayo. An old friend of Carlos and Ricardo, he has turned his backyard into a paradise for wildlife. We will eat lunch on Jairo's porch while watching the activity at his many bird feeders. After lunch, we continue to the Caribbean coast, which is populated by descendants of Jamaicans. This region has a distinct culture, cuisine, and language.

The vegetation in this area is lush and biodiversity is among the highest in Costa Rica. Depending on circumstance, we may seek sea turtles this night.

[www.caribblue.com](http://www.caribblue.com)



Day 5: Friday, May 16

## Cahuita National Park



Early morning birding walk through the lodge's trails, followed by breakfast. After breakfast, we will depart for nearby Cahuita National Park. This park protects 1,106 hectares of pristine coastal rainforest and 22,300 hectares of the marine environment including the most vibrant coral reefs in Costa Rica.

Our hike through the park will present great bird-watching opportunities and chances to see other wildlife such as sloths, monkeys, and the colorful Golden Eyelash Viper. We will spend the afternoon at leisure with the opportunity to explore the beach and enjoy the hotel amenities.

Night visit to Gandoca Manzanillo beach to search for nesting leatherbacks.

Day 6: Sat, May 17

## Punta Mona Preserve

After breakfast, we will drive a short distance to the Punta Mona preserve, for a hike through the rainforest and coastal environment. Great chances to see two-toed sloths, three-toed sloths and the iconic golden eyelash viper.

Afternoon at leisure to enjoy the beach or explore the local town of Puerto Viejo.





## Day 7: Sunday, May 18

### Quelitales Lodge



After breakfast, our bus will take us on a 3-hour drive through the countryside. We'll enjoy lunch en route at a local restaurant.

We reach Quelitales Hotel, a birding hot spot located on the border of Rio Macho National Park with a view of the Irazu Volcano. Here it is possible to see over 70% of Costa Rica's hummingbird species.

Afternoon hikes through our hotel's rainforest trails and gardens. Or visit Doña Ana waterfall.

<https://www.hotelquelitales.com/>

## Day 8: Monday, May 19

### Irazu Volcano

Early morning visit to the Irazu Volcano, the highest and largest in Costa Rica. The crater has a 0.5-mile diameter, and you will find yourself in a flat and impressive lunar landscape. Afternoon visit to Rio Macho National Park. This massive rainforest preserve encompasses multiple types of forests which provide a home to a myriad of tropical wildlife including tapirs, white-faced capuchin monkeys, kinkajous, ocelots, jaguarundi, rare endemic orchids, and the largest moth on the American continent. Additionally, National Park hosts over 400 bird species including resplendent quetzels, emerald toucanets, and violaceous trogons.



## Departure



Early morning transfer from Arenal to the San Jose airport.

All adventures must come to an end. After eight days of exploring the magic of this tropical country, we return home with lifelong memories.

NOTE: Your departure flight must be after 12 pm (noon).

Hasta Luego, Costa Rica!

## Meet your expedition leader

Carlos Chacon



Carlos Chacon, a native Costa Rican, moved to HHI 20 years ago. Carlos has been a naturalist for more than 30 years -- first in his native country leading nature tours in the rainforest and other tropical environments and later in his adopted Lowcountry.

Carlos directed the HHI Turtle Patrol for 7 years. He regularly organizes and leads groups of Lowcountry nature enthusiasts through the diverse ecosystems of Costa Rica. When Carlos is not leading a trip in Costa Rica, he resides in Bluffton, SC. There he works as the Manager of Natural History for the Coastal Discovery Museum on Hilton Head Island.



# ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

## ECO-ADVENTURES OF COSTA RICA

The trip is limited to a maximum of 12 participants

\$ 4,250: Price per person based on double occupancy-\$750 single supplement

Prices are per person and include:

Private transportation on microbus with A/C

Transportation as described

Private naturalist guide services

Lodging and meals as described

Activities and entrance fees as described

Not Included:

Round trip airfare to Costa Rica

Personal expenses (medical expenses, souvenirs, etc.)

Travel Insurance

Medical insurance

Payment and Cancellation Policies:

Trips must be paid in full 4 months before departure.

Refunds will be issued according to the following deadlines:

- \$650 commitment deposit is non-refundable.
- For cancellations received 60 to 45 days before arrival, 50% of the total amount.
- For cancellations received 44 to 30 days before arrival, 25 % of the total amount.
- If the participant cancels 29 days to 1 day before arrival, no refunds are available.



Sign up by emailing Carlos Chacon at [Eco1adventures@gmail.com](mailto:Eco1adventures@gmail.com) and sending an initial commitment non refundable \$500 check made to EcoAdventures LLC and mailed to:

Carlos Chacon | 21 Park Circle. | Bluffton SC 29910