



On this intensive 9-Day program you will experience everything for which Costa Rica is famed: volcanos, fumaroles, mud baths, thermal springs, sky-blue waterfalls, crystal-clear swim holes, bird watching, horseback riding, rainforest zip-lining, caving, a river cruise, surfing lessons, amazing beaches, great food, and the best chocolate and coffee in the world. You also spend a day volunteering at a wildlife rescue clinic where you can get up close (even touch) wildlife you would normally only see from a distance, and another day canyoning and tubing on the Rio Colorado or whitewater rafting on the Rio Tenorio (there are amazing wildlife spotting opportunities from the raft as it drifts between the rapids). As with our other destinations we take maximum advantage of our small group footprint - whenever possible we pair up with private guides, start early, and take the trails less travelled.

Day	City	Highlights
1	Rincón de la Vieja	Meet your Group Director at the airport for an early morning flight to Costa Rica! Board your private shuttle for a ride to our hotel in Rincón de la Vieja Volcano National Park. We'll stop along the way for lunch at a "soda" (a small family-run restaurant with typical Costa Rican dishes) and then again at a local grocery store to stock up on essentials like water, sunblock, and bug spray (Costa Rican grocery stores are also an opportunity to explore local snack foods like coconut flavored soda or ketchup flavored chips). On arrival at the hotel we'll enjoy the hot springs (we're on the side of a volcano) before heading out across the hills on horseback to catch the sunset.
2	Whitewater Rafting Canyoning & Tubing	Board shuttle for a ride to the Rio Tenorio or the Rio Colorado. Both are great experiences! The Rio Colorado is a small river, well suited to tubing and canyoning.. The Rio Tenorio has great sections of Class IV whitewater rapids with lots of wildlife spotting during the quiet sections.
3	Las Pailas Trail Swimming Hole Transfer to Arenal	Wake up to the smell of Costa Rican coffee and enjoy buffet breakfast before taking a morning hike along the Las Pailas Trail. This 2 hour guided hike around the base of the volcano will take us across dry forest, past geysers, and through a rainforest. We'll keep our eyes open for toucans, spider monkeys, lizards, turkeys, birds and the rarely spotted sloths. Lunch then board our shuttle van for the transfer to our hotel in La Fortuna (the town at the base of Arenal Volcano). We'll stop along the way to swim in a natural pool at the base of a huge waterfall.
4	Wildlife Rescue	Relaxed breakfast and then we're off to a wild animal rescue center, where you can spend the morning helping prepare meals suited to the diets of the various animals, getting up close to the animals (ever shake hands with a spider monkey?) and building, cleaning, or painting enclosures.
5	La Fortuna Waterfall Guided Crater Hike Transfer to Monteverde	Today we're off to the Arenal Observatory we'll find the trailhead for our hike up to the Cerra Chato Crater. On this guided hike we'll pass through three different types of primary forest - rainforest, transition forest and cloud forest (as we get close to the summit). In the cloud forest we'll keep our eyes open for the Emerald Toucanet, Black Guan and Black-faced solitaire. The views of Arenal Volcano on the way up are incredible, as are the views of the emerald pool from the lip of the crater before we descend down to the water's edge. On our return we'll have lunch and then board our shuttle van for a scenic drive around Lake Arenal to our hotel in Santa Elena (the town nearest Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve). We'll stop for a swim in Lake Arenal along the way.
6	Guided Birdwatching Zipline-Rappel-Tarzan Trapiche	Early breakfast! We're off in search of Costa Rica's most sought-after birds and morning is the best time to hear (and then find) them. Monteverde is home to more than 400 species of bird including the Quetzal, azure-hooded jay, prong-billed barbet, black-faced solitaire and orange-bellied trogon. Next up, the canopy zipline tour: We'll zipline from tree to tree hundreds of feet above the ground, sometimes crossing valleys on with cable distances over 1km! Students looking for an even bigger adrenaline rush can try the tarzan swing. The canopy tour is followed by a Trapiche Tour where we learn about coffee and sugar production before making our own chocolate and candy.
7	Barra Honda Caving Palo Verde River Cruise Choratega Pottery Tamarindo	Early breakfast! Today we leave for the surfer's paradise of Tamarindo on the Nicoya Peninsula. Along the way we'll visit Baria Honda National Park, Palo Verde National Park, and Guaitil de Santa Cruz. Baria Honda is home to a mesa that rises almost 1000 feet over the Tempisque valley where we'll descend into the cave by ladder and spend a few hours exploring with guides. Palo Verde is home to the estuary of the Rio Tempisque which we'll explore by boat. Guaitil is home to Chorotega-style pottery which we'll see being crafted. On arrival in Tamarindo we'll get oriented with a walk around town and then we'll have some free time to explore before meeting for dinner
8	Surfing Beaches Tour Souvenirs	Surf's up! After a relaxed breakfast we meet our instructors for two hours of surfing lessons in warm, crystal-clear, turquoise waters. After the lessons we'll take some time with our boards to hone our new skills then we'll board our private shuttle to go swimming at the top three beaches in Tamarindo. We'll start with the beach that has the best restaurant (it's right on the beach), then we'll go to the one with the best views, then we'll end with the one that has the nicest sand. The day ends with final souvenir shopping in Tamarindo before farewell dinner.
9	Airborne	Board your private shuttle for a ride to the airport. Flight home. ¡Adiós Costa Rica!

