

COSTA RICA

Coast to Coast Rainforest Trek

Duration: 12 days / 11 nights

Trip Grade: Tough

Dates:

13 – 24 Feb 2010 12 – 23 Feb 2011
 20 Nov – 1 Dec 2010 19 – 30 Nov 2011

Payment Options:	2010	2011
Self Payment		
Registration Fee	£399	£449
Trip Cost	£1300	£1300
Fundraising		
Registration Fee	£449	£449
Min. Fundraising		
Target	£3250	£3250

Costa Rica has a huge variety of landscapes, climates and environments. It is home to five per cent of the planet's biodiversity. Everything from palm tree-lined tropical beaches to smoking volcanoes, cloud forest, rainforest and mangrove swamp await us in Costa Rica!

Our coast to coast challenge will involve travelling from the Pacific Coast to the Caribbean Coast on foot and raft!! Our route takes us through coffee plantations and oak forests deep into cloud forest and dense tropical rainforest. Serenaded by howler monkeys and exotic bird calls before finishing on a beautiful tropical beach.

This is a challenging trip through remote and rarely visited regions. The terrain is tough with some hard climbs but the rewards are immense!

ITINERARY

Day 1: We fly from London Heathrow to San Jose. Arrive late afternoon and transfer to our hotel.

Day 2: San Jose - Pacific Coast - Londres

Early morning breakfast, briefing and bus transfer to the central pacific coast south of Quepos. After the three hour journey we arrive at our coastal start point and the beginning of our adventure across Costa Rica. We begin by walking across rough ground and agricultural land which is predominantly flat before coming into the foothills of the

more remote and forested highlands. Londres, our evening's camp site is a small farming community on the edge of the rainforest. **Approx 7 hours of trekking**

Day 3: Londres - San Isidro

Today we trek from Londres to San Isidro along good tracks and paths that gradually climb into the edge of the rainforest. We can see down to the Pacific coast and pass through thriving rural communities. We arrive at our campsite on the edge of the small village of San Isidro. **Approx 7 hours of trekking**

Day 4: San Isidro to Cascades

After a good night's sleep we head off into the rainforest. The trail undulates through dense vegetation. Watch out for wildlife such as beautiful tree frogs, some no larger than your fingernail, which are perfectly camouflaged amongst the leaves and vegetation of the forest. Beware we are also in the snake zone! It is often quite dark in the dense vegetation of the rainforest as the sunlight cannot penetrate the canopy above our heads. The trail is slippery and we have to clamber over

and under roots and fallen trees as Spider monkeys mock our progress from above. We continue until we reach a clearing and our night's rainforest camp site at Cascades. **Approx 7-8 hours of trekking**

Day 5: Cascades to Naranjo

In the morning we continue along narrow and slippery trails through dense rainforest. Keep your eyes open for the many wonderful birds and the occasional small group of howler monkeys – small but extremely loud! The track



climbs to a high point of 1900m and then descends sharply to the Rio Brujo.



We cross a stream and have a steep climb along a narrow trail on the other side. The afternoon's trek to Naranjo takes us on slightly better trails that gradually become wider as we make our way into cloud forest. We occasionally need machetes to clear our path. **Approx 6-7 hours of trekking**

Day 6: Naranjo to Bajo del Roble (Santa María de Dota)

Leaving the Los Santos Forest Reserve, which is an amazing forest with its huge variety of flora and fauna is sad but today we trek through small communities and agricultural land to Santa Maria de Dota our finishing point for the day. **Approx 6 hours trekking.**

Day 7: From Bajo del Roble (Santa María de Dota) to La Esperanza

Breakfast of refried beans and eggs gives us the energy to walk along the mule track through several small villages towards La Esperanza. We have a gradual incline to the small village of Copey before a steep walk up to the Pan American Highway. A short walk then takes us in forest towards our campsite near Esperanza. **Approx 6 hours trekking**

Day 8: From La Esperanza to Turrialba

We follow a steady and undulating track into the cloud forest before descending along a steep and wet path into the remoter area of jungle. The track is unclear at times but it is truly beautiful! We eventually emerge from the forest and arrive at a coffee plantation. From here we load up in vehicles and head drive the two and a half hours to Turrialba one of the highest volcanoes in Costa Rica.

Approx 6 hours trekking

Day 9: Turrialba - Caribbean Coast - trekking and rafting

After an early breakfast and a last look at Turrialba at 3328m we meet our vehicles and head towards our put in point on the Pacuare River. We raft grade III - IV rapids and we will travel around 30 km (19 miles) which will take about 4 or 5 hours, depending upon the water level. This is considered one of the best rivers in the Americas, not just because of its waters, but also because of the lush vegetation that surrounds it.

There is a chance to swim in the river, and there is always the possibility of encountering some wildlife. From our finishing point at Siquerres we load into vehicles and head for Matina and the last part of our journey to the coast. From Matina we have a short motor boat ride to the Pacare reserve where we walk the final part to the



Caribbean Coast. Our last part of the adventure is an hours boat ride to meet our buses to take us to the comfort of our hotel in Cahuita and the celebration dinner!! **Approx 1-2 hours of trekking & 4 hours of white water rafting.**

Day 10: Free day leisure

Today you can relax on the beach and take it easy!

Day 11: Drive back to San Jose and depart San Jose

Day 12: Arrive UK

WHAT'S INCLUDED

The tour cost includes scheduled return flights, accommodation and food other than two lunches and two evening meals. Camping 6 nights, hotel **/** 3 nights. All camping equipment is provided other than a sleeping bag and sleeping mat.

There is full support with local guides and cooks as well as Discover Adventure leaders

A max of £150 is needed for personal expenses and Guide tips.

FLIGHT INFORMATION

Group flights leave from London Heathrow or London Gatwick and are booked through Discover Adventure Ltd under ATOL licence 5636. By travelling with Discover Adventure you are protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA).

Our itineraries are always based on current flight schedules and are therefore subject to change by the airline.

Connecting Flights

If you book flights to Heathrow or Gatwick, it is your responsibility to allow plenty of time to connect to the group flight and to cope with any flight schedule changes. Please be aware that the best deals allow little flexibility if you need to change them. We regret that we are unable to book connecting flights for you.

Transit Stops

When booking group flights we endeavour to find the best flights that match our itinerary. There are often no direct flights to our destination, so do be prepared for transit stops: bring a good book or chat to your fellow trekkers! Airlines that do offer direct flights rarely offer competitive rates for groups. Please remember that the main purpose of our trips is to raise money for charity!

Flying Separately

If you prefer to book your own flights please ask us for a land-only cost. You will be responsible for making your own arrangements for meeting the rest of the group, though we can advise you. We need to know if you do not require our group flight as early as possible; please complete the form in the information pack you'll be sent with your booking confirmation

ACCOMMODATION

We camp for 6 nights during the trek in two-man tents. The remainder will be in a hotel which is comfortable, clean and with private facilities. Please do not expect the same standards as you would in the UK!

FOOD

All food is included except 4 meals. The food is great and there is plenty of it.

Dietary Requirements

Being vegetarian or having other dietary requirements is not usually a problem provided you let us know well in advance. If you know there are plenty of foods you cannot eat you may wish to bring extra snacks from home so you can top up your energy supply. Please feel free to ask us for advice.

Other Meals

Any meals not included are generally when we are in towns or cities and you are free to explore and try other culinary experiences! There is always something to suit every budget.

ENJOY THE EXPERIENCE!

For most people, the main attraction of travelling to a different country is to see new sights and enjoy new experiences. Sometimes those new experiences can make life harder or more inconvenient than you may like, such as toilet hygiene or different food, or simply a different attitude to solving problems. This is all part of the challenge you are signing up for!

We can guarantee that coming face-to-face with experiences outside your normal 'comfort zone' will help you bond with your fellow trekkers and provide you with plenty of things to laugh about! A sense of humour and sense of adventure are two of the most important things to bring with you!

PASSPORT & VISA

A valid ten-year passport is essential and must be valid for at least 6 months after return from the country. There are no visa requirements for Costa Rica for UK citizens. Other nationalities should check entry requirements.

VACCINATIONS

We recommend the following vaccinations:

- Tetanus (essential)
- Hepatitis A
- Typhoid
- Polio

You should **always** check with a GP or travel clinic for up-to-date travel health advice as it does change.

TREKKING INFORMATION

All luggage, food, water and camping equipment is carried by vehicles to start with and horses for the last part of the trek. Each participant is expected to carry a day sack for items needed during the day: sunscreen, camera, waterproofs etc.

Walking is on terrain ranging from good open track to narrow and overgrown jungle paths and is very steep both up and downhill at times. We are travelling through remote mountains where we could be exposed to a variety of weather conditions at any time.

It is essential that your luggage is carried in either a soft sailing bag or soft rucksack. Bags must be waterproof, or their contents waterproofed in plastic bags (your sleeping bag and mat must fit into this bag). These are then easily loaded onto the horses.

FITNESS WARNING: DESIGNED TO BE CHALLENGING!

This trek is designed to be challenging for those of good health and fitness, and is achievable for most people provided they train well in advance. We will supply you with a thorough training guide when you have registered. Training for the challenge is all part of the preparation and requires commitment! Without it, you will find the trek less enjoyable – and we want you to have the time of your life!

Clothing & Equipment

We are travelling through varied terrain and could be exposed to bad weather at any time. The information below gives you an idea of the climate, but be prepared for all weathers and temperatures. Weather conditions can change quickly in the UK! We provide you with a detailed packing kit-list on registration, as well as details on useful discounts you are entitled to as a Discover Adventure customer. We are always available if you need advice.

Weather

Average min/max temps & number of rainy days per month in San Jose:

Feb/March 24/14°C	2
September 26/15°C	14

When in a rainforest it rains! The weather will vary based on the ecosystem and altitude.

Trekking Distances

Because of the varied terrain and lack of accurate maps, it's impossible to give accurate daily distances. It's also much more useful when training to think about the hours you need to walk for, and the type of terrain you will be trekking over!

TRAINING WEEKENDS: £99 SPECIAL OFFER!

Only when you book at the same time as registering for your main challenge

Discover Adventure Training Weekends in Snowdonia National Park are designed help you prepare for your challenge. Whether you use the weekend to gauge your fitness, get your training back on track, boost your confidence, get advice or meet other trekkers, you're bound to find it incredibly useful!

For dates and further information see our brochure or website.

RAFTING INFORMATION

All safety equipment will be provided along with a full safety briefing and support staff.

TRIP SUPPORT

Discover Adventure Crew

Your trip will be led by experienced Discover Adventure leaders. Our leaders are selected for their experience in harsh wilderness environments, knowledge of travel in remote areas, friendliness and approachability, sense of humour and ability to safely and effectively deal with any situation that arises. You are in very safe hands with a Discover Adventure leader.

All our leaders are from the UK or other English-speaking countries. Most work for us on an ad-hoc basis and have 'real'

jobs in-between trips! We never send our leaders to the same destination for months on end – we want them to be as enthusiastic about your trip as you are.



The number of crew and support vehicles looking after you will depend on the final size of your group, but the team will be looking after every aspect of your trip whether that's leading the trek, looking after camp or making your lunch! At Discover Adventure we pride ourselves on our high leader: trekker ratio and believe it leads to greater trip enjoyment as well as excellent trip safety.

Luggage

Space in camp is limited and hard-sided luggage is not recommended, so we suggest your kit is packed in a soft rucksack or expedition kitbag. Ask us about our specially-designed low-cost kitbags if you don't have one already.

You should bring a small daypack to carry for items needed during the day as you will not have access to your main luggage until the evening.

Trip Safety

Your safety, and that of the rest of the group, is our highest priority. Our trips are designed and planned with safety in mind. Your crew will be equipped with radios and emergency mobile phones, medical kit and other safety apparatus where necessary. They always have access to our 24-hour emergency UK back-up. Our leaders are responsible for safety on the trip, and will make any changes to the itinerary they deem necessary should local conditions dictate.



Pre-trip administration – such as compulsory medical questionnaires and travel insurance – is all done with your safety in mind.

WORLDWIDE RESPONSIBLE TOURISM

Long before 'Responsible Tourism' became a recognised phrase, we designed and ran our trips to ensure they made minimum impact on the environment and a positive impact on the local communities we pass through. AITO, our Trade Association has recognised the work we do in this area and has awarded us 4 stars as a Responsible Tour Operator.

CARBON OFFSETTING

We actively encourage all our customers to offset any emissions connected with their trip. You can offset at any time in the lead-up to departure by visiting Climate Care via our website and making a donation to a worthwhile project supported by them. Alternatively, if you wish to take more practical action you can volunteer for a day with BTCV and work on an environmental project near to where you live. Work may include construction footpaths, dry stone walling, creating wildlife habitats or planting trees in your community. Make your volunteer pledge by going to www.btcv.org/dapledge



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