COSTA RICA

Trek Costa Rica – A Coast To Coast Adventure







Duration: 12 days

Our adventurous coast to coast challenge involves crossing from the Pacific Coast to the Caribbean on foot. En-route we see Irazu and Turrialba, the country's highest active volcanoes, as we trek from coffee plantations and oak forests into dense tropical rainforest.

Costa Rica's cloudforests and rainforests are justifiably world-famous for their diversity and this is a wonderful opportunity to experience one of the world's most incredible eco-systems. We see colourful butterflies and tiny tree-frogs, and will hear howler monkeys and exotic bird calls as we trek.

This is a tough, strenuous challenge over a range of wild terrain – it's adventurous, rewarding and a world away from the norm!

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1: Fly London to San Jose

We arrive late afternoon / early evening, transfer to our hotel and relax! Night hotel.

Day 2: San Jose – Pacific Coast – Pueblo Nueva

After an early morning breakfast and trip briefing, we transfer by bus to a beach near Quepos on the Pacific Coast. Turning inland, we start our trek at a local school and set off on our adventure across Costa Rica! Our route takes us through palm oil plantations and agricultural land which is predominantly flat, before reaching the foothills of the more remote and forested highlands. These hills are a good warm-up for what lies ahead. We pass the River Naranjo on the way to the small village of Pueblo Nueva, the site of our evening's camp. Night camp.

Drive approx 4 hours; trek approx 4-5 hours

Day 3: Pueblo Nueva – Naranjillo

Today we continue on good tracks and paths that gradually climb up the Naranjo River Valley, giving us the chance to acclimatise to the terrain and humidity before tomorrow's more challenging day. There are several demanding ascents and descents as we follow the dirt tracks – muddy at times – through thriving coffee-producing communities that provide us with a great insight to life in this part of Costa Rica. We pass some impressive waterfalls and, if conditions permit, even trek right beneath one of them! Our efforts today are rewarded by fabulous views, and by the end of the day we will be able to look back down at the Pacific Ocean. Night camp.

Trek approx 8-10 hours

Day 4: Naranjillo – Santa María de Dota

After a good breakfast, we leave the community of Naranjillo, as we continue our trek east. Our route today is on undulating terrain, as we take on the infamous 'cemetery hill', with its steep sections through coffee plantations. Although it's hard-going, we are rewarded with incredible vistas of the surrounding mountains and endless hillsides of coffee plantations. We continue onwards, with more hills ahead us, with our efforts made worthwhile as we stop at a picturesque waterfall. If there's time we might be able to enjoy a refreshing dip in a local swimming spot. Our trek today finishes once we reach the highway, where we meet the awaiting vehicles for a short transfer to the town of Santa María de Dota, a picturesque town lying in a green valley surrounded by coffee plantations, forested hills and distant mountain peaks. Night camp.

Trek approx 6 hours; drive approx. 30 minutes

Day 5: Santa María de Dota – Santubal

We begin our day with a drive to the spectacular Volcan Irazu (3432m), the highest active volcano in Costa Rica, where from the crater rim we can see down into the vivid green lake in one of the craters. When there is minimal cloud the views reach to neighbouring Volcan Turrialba, and on a really clear day it's possible to see both the Caribbean and Pacific coasts! From here, we drive to our lunch stop before beginning our trek. Although the terrain is less challenging today, and very varied, it's still a long, hilly day. Good tracks take us through sections of farmland interspersed with tropical rainforest. We cross the Rio Pacuare, and ascend the other side of the valley; a demanding trail at times with thick vegetation towering up to each side. We may hear the occasional small group of howler monkeys – small but extremely loud! – and look out for the many colourful birds and butterflies. We camp at the small settlement of Santubal. Night camp.

Trek approx 4 hours; Drive 4-5 hours

Day 6: Santubal – Mollejones

Today's route takes us alongside the Pacuare as we follow it downriver. As well as the incredible scenery, one of the day's highlights is the chance to gain an insight into the unique way of life of the people in the few indigenous settlements we pass. Coming to an impassable river canyon, we leave the valley floor and head steeply uphill into

the mountains, where we thread our way through dense vegetation and hilly ridges. Our night's camp lies at the lively village community of Mollejones, which at 3000m is our highest point on the trek. Night camp.

Trek approx 7 – 8 hours

Day 7: Mollejones – Rio Pacuare

A long day takes us on uphill on relatively good tracks though farmland and jungle before a challenging descent takes us on a narrow mud track through rainforest to the banks of the Rio Pacuare and the gateway to our next adventure! This beautiful stretch of water includes several white-water rapids (grade II – IV; no experience necessary) but also plenty of time to sit back and enjoy the scenery. This is considered one of the best rafting rivers in the Americas, not just because of its exciting waters, but also because of the lush, pristine rainforest that surrounds it. Keep your eyes open for wildlife – there's a better chance of glimpsing creatures from the river than when walking through the dense vegetation. Arriving at our comfortable riverside camp, El Nido del Tigre, you can relax in a hammock, lulled by the sounds of the river and the rainforest, looking out for toucans overhead. Time permitting, there may be a chance for a refreshing river swim on arrival. Night camp.

Trek approx. 5 – 6 hours; raft approx 2 hours

Day 8: Rafting Rio Pacuare

After our taster yesterday, we prepare ourselves for a full day of rafting! Today's stretch of river will take about 5 or 6 hours, depending upon the water level, as we glide through virgin rainforest, passing cascading waterfalls and river-carved canyons. We manoeuvre our way through exhilarating rapids, and can examine the rainforest close-up at the water's edge during quieter sections. Along the way we trek up to a spectacular waterfall, and have a break for lunch during the course of the day. This will be an exhilarating day that becomes a trip highlight for many. We take out at a farm in the heart of banana-plantations country, providing yet more diversity for our Costa Rica experience, and camp here for the night. Night camp.

Raft approx. 5 – 6 hours; trek approx. 1 hour

Day 9: Rio Pacuare – Caribbean Coast

After an early breakfast and a last look at the river, we meet our vehicles and have a lovely drive along the beautiful palm-tree-lined coastline towards Cahuita National Park. The final section of our Costa Rica trek takes us, very aptly, along the beach – a wonderful end to our challenge! Our wide, level track turns into a narrow trail which winds alongside the white sands of the Caribbean coast. We may see wildlife such as capuchin and howler monkeys and crab-eating raccoons. We reach our hotel in the small town of Cahuita, and for the first time in a week can enjoy the comforts of a hotel! We meet later in the evening for a slap-up barbeque and celebrate our huge achievement. Night hotel.

Drive approx. 2 hours; trek approx. 12km / 3 - 4 hours

Day 10: Free day Cahuita

Cahuita's black-sand beach is within walking distance of the town, and you can swim or surf in the warm Caribbean waters. Slightly further away there are white-sand beaches and coral reefs perfect for snorkelling, and the Cahuita National Park with its diverse wildlife. We have the day free to relax and enjoy our surroundings. Night hotel.

(Lunch and Dinner not included)

Day 11: Depart San Jose

We have an early morning drive back to San Jose (approx 5-6 hours) and to the airport for our afternoon flight back to the UK. (Occasionally flights depart in the morning, in which case we'll drive to San Jose the evening before.)

Day 12: Arrive UK

GRADE | ORANGE

Trips are graded Yellow, Orange or Red, in increasing level of challenge. This trip lies within the **ORANGE** range.



The grade is determined by factors such as terrain, distance, climate, altitude, etc. Each colour grade has a **spectrum** which reflects the difficulty of these factors; trip duration, accommodation and living conditions (see icon) are also taken into account.

Trip grading explained

CHALLENGE INFORMATION

DETAILED INFORMATION

Leaders & Trip Support

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. They are also trained in expedition first aid. You are in very safe hands with a Discover Adventure leader. Usually leaders are based in the UK or other English-speaking countries and lead for us regularly throughout the year in many different countries. In some instances, trips are led by in-country guides with a wealth of knowledge about the region; they have been trained by us to provide the level of support expected on a Discover Adventure trip.

Trip Doctor

An expedition doctor or medic accompanies the group (dependent on group size.) Their role is to look after the well-being of the whole group and deal with any medical incidents. They help the crew to ensure the trip runs smoothly, and encourage you when things get tough. The total number of crew looking after you will depend on the final size of your group.

Local Support Crew

Our local support crew is made up of local guides, assisted by drivers, porters, cooks and other support staff, depending on the type of trip. Local guides know the area well, and are a great source of knowledge about local customs and lifestyles. Not all support crew will speak English well, but are very friendly and approachable. The Discover Adventure crew work closely with the local crew to ensure your trip runs smoothly and safely.

Your leader will arrange a collection of tips for the local support crew at the end of your trek, and you will be provided with a guideline amount in advance. Tipping is not obligatory, but once you see how hard they work on your behalf you will be happy to donate something! All our local crew are paid wages, but bear in mind that the average wage in many countries may be less than you would spend on an average night out.

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 communication devices (eg phones, radios and/or emergency satellite phones), medical kit and other safety apparatus appropriate to the destination. Our leaders always have access to our 24-hour emergency UK back-up. They 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 medical questionnaires and travel insurance as appropriate - is all done with your safety in mind.

Foreign Travel Advice

For the latest travel advice from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office including security and local laws, plus passport and visa information, check www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice.

Flight Information

Group flights usually leave from London Heathrow or Gatwick on scheduled airlines 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).

Your journey may involve a transit en route; details of route and flight times will be confirmed several months before departure. We do not always use the same airline for each destination; if you wish to know the probable carrier and flight times, please call for details. You will usually receive confirmed flight details several months before departure. Our itineraries are always based on current flight schedules and are therefore subject to change by the airline. If you prefer to book your own flights please ask us for a land-only cost.

Accommodation

We camp at ranches and homesteads, using two-man expedition-style tents (ie sleeping-room only). Some night-stops have wooden sleeping-platforms and overhead shelters, with use of communal rooms for cooking and dining, and toilets and showers. They are atmospheric places to stay, often with incredible views. Others are simpler, but usually still have access to communal facilities. Sometimes we bed down in larger groups on the floor of homestead rooms or community halls instead of camping outside. Hotels at start and end of the trip are of a 2-3* standard or equivalent.

Roomshare Arrangements

Some accommodation will be twin-share. Please tell us if you know somebody else on the trip that you would like to share with and we will try our best to accommodate your request. If you don't know anyone else in the group don't worry, we always pair you up with someone of the same gender, and a similar age where possible. We do not charge a single supplement if you are a solo traveller in a shared room.

On some nights we are likely to sleep in more communal accommodation such as dormitories/hostels, huts, local homestays or monasteries, depending on the trip, and you may be sharing with a larger number of participants or the whole group; this type of accommodation cannot always be single-sex.

Group Size

Your booking is part of a group challenge, and the tour costs and fundraising targets listed on our website are based on a minimum number of participants which is shown on the challenge Our typical groups run with approximately 15-25 participants; however you may find your group is smaller or larger than this.

We will confirm at least 12 weeks prior to departure that your challenge is guaranteed to run. Occasionally it may be possible to still run the challenge with less than the minimum numbers, subject to a small group supplement. If we think a small group supplement may be necessary, we will discuss this with you as soon as possible, usually 5 months before your departure date.

Minimum numbers and groups sizes may vary on Bespoke Charity challenges. If you are booked onto a bespoke challenge please contact your charity for full details.

Food & Dietary Requirements

The food provided is plentiful, often local in style and freshly-cooked, and will give you plenty of energy. Sometimes we enjoy a buffet-style lunch-stop, other times we might have packed lunches. On some trips we stop at small local restaurants. Dinners are generally eaten at our accommodation each evening. In some regions there may be less variety than you are used to, and in others fresh meat or produce can be harder to come by. Any meals not included are listed in

the itinerary and are generally on travel / free days, giving you the opportunity to explore and try other culinary experiences! There is always something to suit different budgets.

Being vegetarian or having other dietary requirements is not usually a problem provided you let us know well in advance. Please do not expect as much variety as you would have access to at home – we may be in very rural or remote areas, or among people of a different culture who may not understand your requirements, however willing they are to help. If you know there are plenty of foods you cannot eat we strongly recommend you bring extra snacks from home so you can top up your energy supply. Please feel free to ask us for advice.

Luggage

Your luggage, food, water and equipment is transported for you from one night-stop to the next. If there is easy road access this is done by vehicle; if not porters, mules or even camels might carry your bags, depending on the terrain.

Space is limited and hard-sided luggage is not suitable, so it is essential that your kit is packed in a soft bag, rucksack or expedition kitbag. Ask us about our specially-designed low-cost kitbags if you don't have one already. You should also 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.

PREPARING FOR THE CHALLENGE

Fitness Levels

This is designed to be a challenge, and it is vital that you train sufficiently for it. We will supply you with a thorough training guide once you have registered. We expect all participants to train hard in advance, but we respect everyone's limits and do not expect everyone to maintain the same pace. Inadequate training is likely to have an impact not just on your chances of completing the challenge, but enjoying it too - and we want you to have the time of your life!

Our challenges attract people of all levels of experience, fitness and ability as well as all ages and backgrounds. We design our challenges so that everyone can go at their own pace: this is not a race. If you have concerns about your fitness or if you have reduced mobility please do contact us for a confidential chat about whether this challenge is appropriate for you.

For logistical and safety reasons we sometimes need to re-group, so the front-runners may find themselves waiting for the slower ones. Please relax, and remember that this is a team effort that enables people to achieve their personal goals and earn sponsorship.

Passport & Visa / Vaccinations

Entry requirements vary depending on your destination and nationality. It is your responsibility to ensure your passport is valid, and any visas are obtained in good time. Check the FCO's advice on entry requirements for your destination to be sure. Please ensure you allow plenty of time to apply for your visa; we will provide you will all necessary information 6 weeks prior to depature to assist with your application.

Your routine UK schedule of vaccinations should be up-to-date (especially tetanus). We recommend you check Fit For

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

Clothing & Kit

We plan our trips around the optimal weather conditions, but could still be exposed to bad weather at any time. It is vital you are prepared for all conditions. We provide you with a detailed packing kit-list on registration, with plenty of information, and we are always available if you need advice.

Travel Insurance

Travel Insurance is compulsory on all of our challenges outside of the UK; we strongly suggest that you arrange insurance cover as soon as your booking with us is confirmed, or as soon as you're able to purchase some, and at least 8 months prior to travel. Should you need to cancel prior to departure, you will need insurance to cover the costs involved (registration fee and any trip costs depending on cancellation date).

We all hope never to need it, and thankfully most of the time we don't, but on those rare occasions when you do, you want it to cover you as best it can. Whilst it's a fairly boring admin task relating to your trip of a lifetime, it is really important you ensure that you have adequate cover for the type of challenge you are taking part in as well as medical emergencies, evacuation and repatriation, so make sure you're happy with the level of cover. There are lots of suppliers out there, with a wide range in levels of cover; generally speaking, you get what you pay for! Get and pay for the right level of cover and then you can go on your adventure not having to worry about the what-if's. For more details click here.

Once your travel insurance is arranged, just remember to let us know the policy number and 24-hr medical emergency phone number provided by your insurers.

Cultural Differences

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 are very privileged to live in a country with a high standard of living, and travelling exposes us to different challenges – all of which help broaden our horizons. We can guarantee that coming face-to-face with experiences outside your normal 'comfort zone' will help you bond with your fellow participants 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!

Cancelling your booking

In the unfortunate circumstance that you need to cancel your booking, we would ask that you notify us in writing either by post or email. Your cancellation will be considered effective from the date the notice is received. Registration fees and amendment fees are non refundable and, depending on your payment option and how close it is to your challenge departure date, you may be liable for a cancellation charge.

Full details of all cancellation charges may be found in the Terms and Conditions of booking.

Passenger Portal

We have a Passenger Portal which will give you more details of the challenge itself. It also enables you to see any outstanding information we need, the countdown to your challenge departure, see your outstanding balance, make payments and update your contact details. You can access this via the following link - Passenger Portal Log in.

Independent Reviews 96 %

ABTA No.Y6195

logo aito

Discover Adventure reserves the right to change the route or itinerary for safety reasons should local conditions dictate.

Please note: This document was downloaded on 29 Mar 2024, and the challenge is subject to change.