



# COAST TO COAST RAINFOREST TREK

COSTA RICA • TREK • TOUGH

## ABOUT THE CHALLENGE

Our adventurous coast to coast rainforest trek involves crossing from Costa Rica's Pacific Coast to the Caribbean. En-route we take in the country's highest active volcano, 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!

**COAST TO COAST RAINFOREST TREK** • 12 DAYS

## Day 1: Fly London - San Jose

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

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## Day 2: San Jose – Pacific Coast – Londres

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 Finca Maritima 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. Londres, the site of our evening's camp, is a small farming community on the edge of the rainforest. Night camp.

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## Day 3: Londres – San Isidro

Today we trek from Londres to the small village of San Isidro along good tracks and paths that gradually climb up to the edge of the rainforest. There are several demanding ascents and descents and several stream crossings and it can be quite muddy, but we are rewarded by fabulous views down to the Pacific Coast. We pass through thriving rural communities that provide us with a great insight to life in this part of Costa Rica before arriving at our homestead, where we camp for the night. Night camp.

**Trek approx. 18 km / 8 hours**

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## Day 4: San Isidro – Betania

After a good night's sleep we rise early and head off into the rainforest. Our trail is initially steep with several stream crossings as it takes us into dense vegetation, very different to our surroundings yesterday. 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. It is often quite dark and damp in the dense vegetation of the rainforest as sunlight cannot penetrate the canopy above our heads. The trail is slippery and we have to clamber over and under enormous roots and fallen trees as agile spider monkeys mock our progress from above. We continue until we reach a clearing and our accommodation at Betania in the Cascades area. Night camp.

**Trek approx. 8km / 5 – 6 hours**

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## Day 5: Betania – Naranjo – Quetzal y Tucan

Today is our most strenuous day: a long route on challenging terrain with demanding, muddy ascents and descents. We start early; a steep, narrow and often muddy ascent takes us up to a high ridge in dense rainforest (1765m). Keep your eyes open for the many wonderful birds and the occasional small group of howler monkeys – small but extremely loud! Our track then undulates continuously, climbing to another ridge where we have lunch. Our tracks are narrow with thick vegetation towering up to each side, and we cross several rivers and cascades. Reaching our high point of 1965m, we descend sharply to the Rio Brujo. We cross a stream and embark on a steep climb along a narrow trail on the other side. Following slightly better trails that undulate through the jungle with further stream crossings, the track becomes wider as we make our way further into cloudforest to our farmstead at Quetzal y Tucan. Night camp.

**Trek approx. 17km / 10 – 12 hours**

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## Day 6: Quetzal y Tucan – Santa María de Dota

Today's trek takes us through small communities and agricultural land to our camp near the small town of Santa Maria de Dota. We leave this amazing area of rainforest with its huge variety of flora and fauna behind us with mixed feelings; sad to leave such an incredible habitat behind us, but perhaps glad to rejoin less challenging paths! We trek on wider, easier tracks, but there are still several steep climbs before us, which take us to a high-point of 2045m. We then descend towards Santa Maria de Dota. Very picturesque, the town lies in a green valley surrounded by coffee plantations, forested hills and distant mountain peaks and feels very busy after our time in the rainforest. Night camp.

**Trek approx. 19 km / 7 hours**

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## Day 7: Santa María de Dota – Volcan Irazu – Rio Pacuare

An early start sees us driving to the spectacular Volcan Irazu (3432m), the highest active volcano in Costa Rica. We have time to explore the crater rim, with its views over the vivid green lake in one of the craters, and if there is minimal cloud we will be able to see neighbouring Volcan Turrialba. On a really clear day it's possible to see both the Caribbean and Pacific coasts! We then have a further drive to the start of our trek, which takes us 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. Time permitting, there may be a chance for a refreshing river swim on arrival. Night camp.

**Total drive approx. 4 – 5 hrs; trek approx. 6km / 2 hrs**

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## Day 8: Rafting Rio Pacuare

After breakfast we prepare ourselves for a day of rafting! We will be rafting for around 30km (19 miles), which will take about 4 or 5 hours, depending upon the water level. The beautiful stretch of water includes several white-water rapids (grade III – 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 vegetation that surrounds it. There is a chance to swim in the river, and keep your eyes open for wildlife – there's often a better chance of glimpsing creatures from the river than when walking through the dense vegetation. We will trek up to a waterfall and have a break for lunch during the course of the day, but this will be an exhilarating day that becomes a trip highlight for many. We camp again on the banks of the Pacuare River. Night camp.

**Raft approx. 4 – 5 hours; trek approx. 1 hour**

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## 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**

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## 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.)

## WHAT'S INCLUDED

- All transport from London to San Jose return
- All meals except where specified, and accommodation
- Discover Adventure leaders; doctor with a group of 15 or more participants; local guides, cooks and drivers
- Local support and back-up equipment including all safety equipment and instruction whilst rafting
- Entrance to reserves and any sites visited as part of the itinerary

## WHAT'S EXCLUDED

- Any meals specified 'not included' in the itinerary
- Sleeping bag and sleeping mat
- Travel insurance
- Personal spending money, souvenirs and drinks
- Tips for the local guides and support crew
- Inbound airport departure tax
- Fees for any optional sites, attractions or activities
- Airline taxes: we cap these so £250.00 is the maximum you will pay
- Any applicable surcharges as per Terms and Conditions

## TREK TRAINING WEEKEND

**£170 Special Offer - Only when you book at the same time as registering for your main challenge**

Discover Adventure Trek Training Weekends take place in Snowdonia National Park, Wales. This training weekend is designed to put you through your paces to enable you to gauge fitness levels and gain advice from our experienced leaders.

**GRADE | TOUGH (3)**



Trip grades range from Challenging (1) to Extreme (5).

TOUGH trips can involve tough terrain, with some very rigorous days; weather, altitude and/or basic living conditions will add to the challenge. They demand good stamina, fitness and a determined attitude.

See [Trip Grading Explained](#).



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 23 Feb 2018, and the challenge is subject to change.