



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.

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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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. *(Dinner not included)*

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.)

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

- Three meals as specified 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

CHALLENGE INFORMATION

DETAILED INFORMATION

Flight Information

Group flights leave from London Heathrow or Gatwick, (we regret that we are unable to book connecting flights), 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). We do not always use the same airline for each destination; if you wish to know the

probable carrier 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.

Roomshare Arrangements

Some accommodation (in hotels or camp) 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, 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.

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.

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 in camp or at the hotel, depending on accommodation. 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 and 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.

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 incidents. They help the leaders 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, but at Discover Adventure we pride ourselves on our high leader: participant ratio and believe it leads to greater trip enjoyment as well as excellent trip safety.

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 we travel to is far below what you would spend on a normal night out.

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 destination and 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.

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.

PREPARING FOR THE CHALLENGE

Clothing

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, as well as details on useful discounts you are entitled to as a Discover Adventure customer. We are always available if you need advice.

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 and fitness, all ages and backgrounds. We design our challenges so that everyone can go at their own pace: this is not a race. 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. To find out if you need a visa you can [check requirements on our website](#); please ensure you allow plenty of time.

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.

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!

CHALLENGE EXTENSIONS



ARENAL ADVENTURE

The perfect cone of the Arenal Volcano is one of the must-see sights of Costa Rica. Thought extinct until 1968, it was until recently the most active volcano in Costa Rica. It has been less active since 2010, but it is still fairly common to see glowing lava trails on its slopes at night. We base ourselves in the small town of La Fortuna, dominated by the volcano, and take advantage of the many activities in the area.

After a hike on the crater's slopes, you can choose how to fill your time – and there are plenty of options! From horse-riding and kayaking to wildlife-spotting boat trips and relaxing hot springs, there is plenty for everyone to do here.

We then move on to Monteverde, the country's most famous cloudforest reserve and one of the best places to get up close to the treetop canopy – here again you are free to choose your own activities.

Min 4 pax to run - £75 supplement for 2-3 pax

PRICES

2017	£500
2018	£499
2019	£524

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.



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 24 Nov 2017, and the challenge is subject to change.