

# Welcome to Costa Rica

Friendly, peaceful Costa Rica is the southernmost country in Central America with an immense range of climates, flora and fauna of particular interest to naturalists from around the world.

In 1948 Costa Rica voted to abolish its army and today proudly spends 60% of its budget on social services. It boasts a high level of sanitation and education, and is one of the most literate nations on earth.

Deeply committed to ecology, Costa Rica has set aside nearly 30% of its land as national parks or as private reserves.

It has long, sandy beaches on both coasts which are ideal for an active or relaxing vacation. Costa Rica is an excellent family destination. Once you have savored the misty mountains, tropical rainforests, and warm, friendly "Ticos," you will wonder why you stayed away so long!



## Getting Around Costa Rica - Our Transportation

We have a variety of transportation modes in order to accommodate every budget. Our programs are quoted using our most basic shuttle service, with quotes for upgrades to more private services and/or air service listed under the **MODIFICATION NOTES**.

### Shuttle Service

Comfortable, air-conditioned, late-model vehicles transport visitors between most destinations. The departures are usually in the mornings, and travelers are picked up and dropped off at their hotels of choice, and are assisted by bi-lingual attendants. The shuttle service is operated by an independent company, all departures are guaranteed, and vehicles vary from mini-vans, micro-buses or 40 passenger motorcoaches, depending on group size.



### Car Rental Service

We can quote a self-drive program to Costa Rica upon request. Vehicles will be dropped off and picked up at the hotels, and our representatives will review all contracts and paperwork with the travelers. If the vehicle is rented on arrival day, or dropped off on departure day, our representative will assist passengers at the airports. All of the vehicles are four-wheel-drive with manual or automatic transmissions. However, this mode of travel is not for everyone. Driving conditions in Costa Rica are not ideal, and many roads are not paved. Even where roads are paved, the surface is not always well maintained. Some say that the signage in Costa Rica is poor, whereas we maintain that it is almost non-existent. Once outside of the major urban and tourist areas, most "Ticos" do not speak English, and trying to get driving instructions can be challenging.

### Direct Transfer Service

The Direct Transfer Service is an economical alternative to the shuttle service and is a privately operated service of our own. The bilingual drivers are experienced and courteous, but they are not guides. All departures are guaranteed, and the vehicle size may vary from late-model cars to vans or micro-buses. Pick-ups and drop-offs are limited to a maximum of three each, which will also limit the group size. Most departures are in the mornings, with a few exceptions.



There are some destinations where the roads are so bad that you just cannot drive to them, namely, Nicoya and Osa Peninsulas. Tortuguero National Park is accessible via air or boat only, as it is on the inland canal.

### Air Service

Some areas of Costa Rica are served by air, and are indicated with the airplane icon on the map. Certain destinations, such as the Nicoya and Osa Peninsulas are technically accessible by road, but the roads are in such bad conditions that we have packaged them as fly-in destinations only. Checked luggage is restricted to 25 pounds per person.

### Private Transfer Service

For those who desire personalized service and flexible schedules, we offer transportation all around Costa Rica via private four-wheel-drive vehicles (depending on the number of passengers) with expert, bilingual drivers. Our drivers are experienced and courteous, but they are not trained guides, and are not expected to perform guide services. Quotes for private guide services, in addition to the drivers, are available upon request.



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