

Besides, you can enjoy different adventure activities, like surfing, fishing, or scuba diving, which will also take you to the beautiful coral reefs that house an incredible variety of fish.

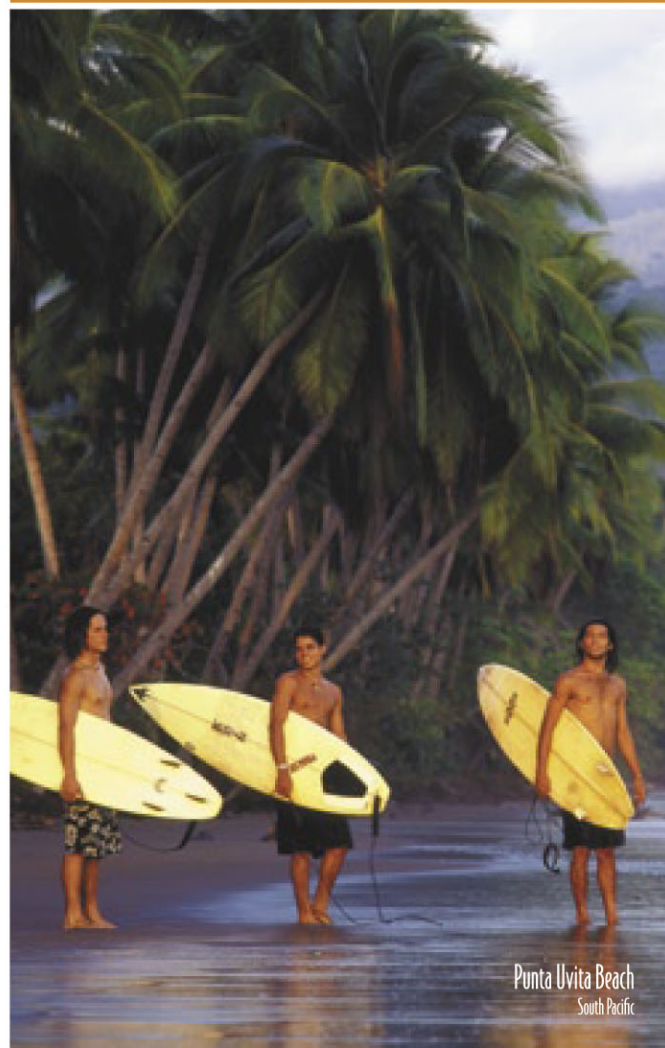
Islands

Costa Rica has several islands to enjoy the sun, the sea, and feel the sea breeze. The most amazing one is Cocos Island, declared by UNESCO to be “Human Patrimony”. It is located 330 miles from Costa Rican territory, and it can be reached by boat in 36 hours. There are specialized operators who will take you to the island where you can admire the natural beauties, go scuba diving, or walk inside the island. This place also has an abundant sea life, like the whale sharks, white-tip sharks, tuna fish, parrot fish, corals, mollusks, or the hammer-head sharks, in quantities that are difficult to find somewhere else.

Another popular island is Tortuga Island where you can enjoy the beach and several water sports. There is also Caño Island to go scuba-diving in its crystalline waters, and learn about its Pre-Columbian legacy.

You should not miss visiting the islands of the Gulf of Nicoya, that can be reached within a short time. Here you will not only admire the natural riches of this zone, but also practice exciting sports like scuba diving and fishing.

You can reach these islands in a pleasant yacht or boat. There are specialized tour operators offering everything you need for an enjoyable visit, since there are no hotels in the zone. Generally, this visit to the island is just for the day, during which you can enjoy different activities like tours around the island or beach games. There is also plenty of food available throughout the day, which you can savor while gazing out at the vast sea that surrounds the island.



Punta Uvita Beach
 South Pacific



Conchal Beach
 North Guanacaste



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Dreamed Beaches

Costa Rican beaches are surrounded by forests with a vast natural diversity. Many of them also have beautiful coral reefs to dive and explore. Other sites offer activities, such as: boat trips through the mangroves, scuba diving, surfing, sports fishing, walks along natural trails, or horseback riding.

There are no limits between Costa Rica and the sea. The Pacific and Caribbean coasts extend 911 miles along this small piece of land. The Costa Rican beaches are ideal for sunbathing and relaxing, and they are part of a complex natural system recognized by the Blue Flag Ecologic Program. This program has already awarded a special recognition to 56 beaches around the country. The Blue Flag Program is implemented thanks to Costa Rica's commitment to sustainability and environmental protection, which ensures clean and safe beaches for visitors.

There are several options to reach the beaches along the Pacific and Caribbean Coasts, where you will discover paradise under the sun. Beaches have warm waters all year long, so you can enjoy your trip any time of the year.

Speaking of diversity, the beach sands of each coast have different textures and shades of color: white, yellow, gray, and even black, caused by the constant hitting of shells against the coral reefs.

Comfortable lodging and savory food

Costa Rica has plenty of beaches to choose from, so you can plan your vacations according to your interests and budget. Whichever you choose to visit, you will soon forget all the hustle and bustle of the city life.

There are several hotels near the coast where you will be able to spend a memorable time with your family, partner or friends. You can either choose to stay in big hotels with comfortable facilities, or in cozy boutique hotels.



Beaches

- | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 1 Puerto Soley | 13 Tamarindo | 25 Jaco |
| 2 Junquillal | 14 Junquillal | 26 Esterillos |
| 3 Panama | 15 Ostional | 27 Manuel Antonio |
| 4 Hermosa | 16 Nosara | 28 Dominical |
| 5 Coco | 17 Garza | 29 Uvita |
| 6 Ocotal | 18 Samara | 30 Zancudo |
| 7 Pan de Azúcar | 19 Carrillo | 31 Pavones |
| 8 Potrero | 20 Montezuma | 32 Gandoca |
| 9 Blanca (Flamingo) | 21 Tambor | 33 Cocles |
| 10 Brasilito | 22 Puntarenas | 34 Puerto Viejo |
| 11 Conchal | 23 Doña Ana | 35 Cahuita |
| 12 Grande | 24 Punta Leona | 36 Bonita |

National Parks and Protected Areas

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| 37 Santa Rosa Nat. Park | 47 Poas Volcano Nat. Park | 57 La Amistad Int. Park |
| 38 Guanacaste Nat. Park | 48 Carara Biological Reserve | 58 Corcovado Nat. Park |
| 39 Rincon de la Vieja Nat. Park | 49 Braulio Carrillo Nat. Park | 59 Silvestre Galfito Nat. Wildlife Shelter |
| 40 Lomas Barbudal Biological Reserve | 50 Irazu Volcano Nat. Park | 60 Gandoca-Manzanillo Nat. Wildlife Shelter |
| 41 Las Baulas Marine Nat. Park | 51 Manuel Antonio Nat. Park | 61 Cahuita Nat. Park |
| 42 Ostional Nat. Wildlife Shelter | 52 Guayabo Nat. Monument | 62 Tortuguero Nat. Park |
| 43 Barra Honda Nat. Park | 53 Cerro Muerte-Tapaniti Nat. Park | 63 Barra del Colorado Nat. Wildlife Shelter |
| 44 Palo Verde Nat. Park | 54 Marino Ballena Nat. Park | 64 Cabo Blanco Absolute Nat. Reserve |
| 45 Caño Negro Nat. Wildlife Shelter | 55 Chirripo Nat. Park | 65 Cocos Island Nat. Park |
| 46 Arenal Nat. Park | 56 Hitoy-Cerere Biological Reserve | 66 Caño's Island Biological Reserve |



There are many local flights that arrive at Golfito or Puerto Jimenez so you can reach quickly to one of the places with the largest natural diversity throughout the country. The scenery is absolutely wonderful and visitors will be amazed by the beauty of the forests' flora and fauna. You can also get there by road where you will find several high-quality, rustic hotel options, to make you feel closer to nature.

You will experience true adventure with the many activities this place offers: contemplate the flora and fauna, rejoice in its unique vegetation, or observe exotic animals like the red macaw. This is also a great fishing spot. Surfing enthusiasts will get a thrill out of the wave breaking far left near Pavones, one of the longest in the world.

North Caribbean

You can travel to the North Caribbean Region, either by boat or by plane.

You should not miss the unforgettable experience of watching green turtles lay their eggs on the beaches of the Tortuguero National Park, from June through October. Barra del Colorado is highly recommended for shad and bass fishing.

South Caribbean

Beautiful beaches are waiting for you in this lush region of Costa Rica, which can be accessed by road. When you visit the South Caribbean with your family, partner, or friends, you will admire the contrasting tones of white and dark sands in the beaches of Cahuita and Puerto Viejo. An exuberant vegetation combines perfectly with the sea shore, in places where beaches and forests lie next to each other.

Visitors will also enjoy experiencing the local culture. The strong Afro-Caribbean influence will make you live a different experience. See the region's very particular architecture, feel the people's happiness, try braiding your hair, savor the exclusive local dishes, like "rice and beans", "pati" (seasoned beef pattie), -chicken with coconut, and "rondon", and learn about the exotic customs originated from the region's different ethnic groups.



Punta Uva Beach
South Caribbean

On the other hand, Costa Rican cuisine is very diverse as every region has its own dishes. Ingredients and preparation differ from one coast region to another. However, an element of Costa Rican food that always stands out is its excellent taste. This will whet your appetite and curiosity and make you sample the local delights.

Guanacaste Region

Beaches located in the Guanacaste region offer many adventure and fun options. This is one of the most popular destinations among tourists. For those who want to go back home suntanned, there is plenty of sun almost all year round.

This region has many splendid spots for you to explore and enjoy, as well as different accommodation options. You can go to a secluded place like the beaches of the Santa Elena Peninsula, with small boutique hotels, or beaches near large hotel complexes in the Gulf of Papagayo.

Among the many activities these places offer are: Swimming, scuba diving, surfing, windsurfing, fishing, beach volleyball, and golf, or simply walking along the beach while the sun shines on your face.

Food is also among Guanacaste's biggest attractions, with a strong indigenous influence. There are many corn-based dishes like "bizcochos" (cornbread), "tortillas", "pozol" (corn and pork meat stew), and "arroz de maíz" (rice and corn). If you have a sweet tooth, you should not miss out on the chance of tasting the popular "cajetas" (fudge-like sweets).

You can get there faster if you take one of the non-stop flights from the United States to the Daniel Oduber International Airport, by air with the internal flights or by land, from many different locations in the country.

Central and Mid Pacific Region

Here there is fun for everyone. You can start with a visit to the islands along the coast, with beautiful beaches ideal for swimming, snorkeling, sunbathing, taking boat rides, or simply enjoying the luscious vegetation of the rain forests surrounding them.



The central region features many attractive places, like the Port of Puntarenas which is very attractive because of the cruise ships landing in their facilities, and bird-watching at Carara National Park.

In Puntarenas you will also find a delectable variety of foods, like seafood dishes. Don't miss out on "ceviche", or a whole fried fish. Other speciality of this region is the "Churchill", made with crushed ice, flavored syrups, sweetened condensed milk, powdered milk, and a scoop of ice cream. There is also the "mate", and refreshing fruit salads.

The Mid Pacific Region offers an exuberant scenery that combines sun, beaches, and forests with protected areas like the Manuel Antonio National Park.

Also, surfers will find the beaches in Jaco and Hermosa Beach absolutely ideal for enjoying this exciting sport. At night, these places come alive with fun and enjoyment for you to spend a memorable time.

There are many beach hotels in this zone that offer comfortable accommodations. Visitors can easily access the beaches along this region by taking one of the many flights arriving at the Juan Santamaria International Airport. From there you can reach your destination after a three-hour drive.

South Pacific Region

This region of Costa Rica offers visitors the opportunity to combine the beauty of the beaches with Caño Island's virgin vegetation and reefs, where they can also practice snorkeling and scuba diving.

Lush vegetation and breathtaking views along the coast will make your vacation relaxing and enjoyable. This added value can be found, in its pure form, in the beaches of Dulce Gulf and Osa Peninsula which boast Biological Reserves and the Corcovado and Marino Ballena National Parks.