

## **Volunteer Travel Guide Costa Rica - Volunteer Abroad Costa Rica [www.abroaderview.org](http://www.abroaderview.org)**

*By A Broader View Volunteers Corp*

*Dated: Nov 03, 2008*

*Known for its spectacular natural beauty and biodiversity, Costa Rica boasts over 15 different ecosystems with dramatic changes in landscapes, climate and nature. Magnificent beaches stretch for miles along an unspoiled coastline.*

Known for its spectacular natural beauty and biodiversity, Costa Rica boasts over 15 different ecosystems with dramatic changes in landscapes, climate and nature. Magnificent beaches stretch for miles along an unspoiled coastline. High on the mountains, cool and pristine cloud forests are alive with mysterious sounds and below splendid tropical rain forests are packed with life.

<http://www.abroaderview.org/costarica.php>

The country is famous for its progressive approach to conservation and is the prime eco-tourism destination in Central America due to its wealth of protected areas. Over 25 percent of the country is protected, spread between 75 different national parks, wildlife refuges and biological reserves.

In such a small geographical area it is surprising how much there is to see and do. There are activities to suit all travelers and any mood, from action to relaxation. These include surfing, snorkeling and sunbathing, horse riding, hiking and wildlife-spotting, deep sea fishing or river cruises. One can also simply enjoy a soak in the hot springs.

Travelers are also drawn to the country because of the endearing Tico hospitality. Costa Ricans are known for their incredible gregariousness and delightful ability to pamper guests - whether pointing out the right direction or cooking a typical authentic meal, they will be full of smiles and warmth. All this together with easy accessibility and an efficient infrastructure makes Costa Rica the jewel of Central America and a gem of a vacation destination.

### The Basics

#### Time:

Local time is GMT -6.

#### Electricity:

Electrical current is 120 volts, 60Hz. Flat two-pin plugs and three-pin (two flat blades with round grounding pin) plugs are in use.

#### Language:

Spanish is the official language, but English is widely spoken.

#### Health:

There are no vaccination requirements for Costa Rica. There is a risk of malaria in some areas all year round and advice should be taken on precautions. Water in cities is generally safe but it is advisable to buy bottled water, especially outside the main towns where there is a risk of contamination. Dengue fever is one of a number of diseases carried by insects that also occur in this region, especially during the rainy season; protection against insect bites is the best prevention. Medical services are reliable in cities and the standard

of hygiene and treatment is very high.

#### Customs:

'Machismo' is the main characteristic of Costa Rica culture, although women are quickly becoming more significant. Costa Ricans are conservative when it comes to family values, and roles between male and female are expected to be traditional.

#### Communications:

The international access code for Costa Rica is +506. The outgoing code is 00 followed by the relevant country code (e.g. 0044 for the United Kingdom). City codes are not required. Costa Rica has one of the most advanced telecommunications systems in Latin America. The cheapest way to phone internationally is a direct call using a phone card. Mobile phone operators use GSM 1800 networks. Internet cafes are available in the main towns.

#### Contacts

##### Visa Agencies

Travel Visa Pro, San Francisco, USA. 1-888-470-8472 or [www.TravelVisaPro.com](http://www.TravelVisaPro.com)

##### Tourism

Costa Rica Tourism Board, San Jose: +506 223 1733 or [www.visitcostarica.com](http://www.visitcostarica.com)

<http://www.abroaderview.org/costarica.php>

#### Costa Rica Embassies

Embassy of Costa Rica, Washington DC, United States: +1 202 234 2945/6.

Embassy of Costa Rica, London, United Kingdom: +44 (0)20 7706 8844.

Embassy of Costa Rica, Ottawa, Canada: +1 613 562 2855.

Consulate General of Costa Rica, Sydney, Australia: +61 (0)2 9969 4050.

Honorary Consulate of Costa Rica, Johannesburg, South Africa: +27 (0)11 486 4716.

#### Foreign Embassies in Costa Rica

United States Embassy, San Jose: +506 519 2000.

British Embassy, San Jose: +506 258 2025.

Canadian Embassy, San Jose (also responsible for Australia): +506 242 4400.

South African Consulate-General, San Jose: +506 222 1470.

Mission of Ireland to the UN, New York, United States: +1 212 421 6934.

#### Costa Rica Emergency Numbers

Emergencies: 911

#### Airports

Juan Santamaria International Airport (SJO)

Location: The airport is situated 14 miles (23km) west of San José, and two miles (3km) south of Alajuela.

Time: Local time is GMT -6.

Contacts: Tel: +506 443 0840.

Facilities: There is a currency exchange booth and ATMs in the airport terminal, as well as a souvenir store, duty-free, a food court and coffee bar.

Departure Tax: US\$26, or the Colon equivalent.

#### Climate

Being tropical, there is little difference in temperature throughout the year, but there is a lot of rainfall, particularly from May to November. Temperatures along the coast are hotter, averaging 89°F (32°C), although they are tempered down by sea breezes. The highland areas are warm during the day and can be quite cool at night.

<http://www.abroaderview.org/costarica.php>

#### Passport & Visa

##### Visa Agencies:

Avoid the stress and queues, get a visa agency to arrange your visa.  
Travel Visa Pro, San Francisco, USA. 1-888-470-8472 or [www.TravelVisaPro.com](http://www.TravelVisaPro.com)  
Global Visas, London, UK. 0207 190 3903 or [www.globalvisas.com](http://www.globalvisas.com)

Entry requirements for Americans: US nationals do not require a visa for stays of up to 90 days. A passport valid for 30 days after the date of entry is required. An extension can be organized on arrival.

Entry requirements for UK nationals: UK nationals must have a passport that is valid at least 30 days after the date of entry. A visa is not required for a stay of up to 90 days provided the passport is endorsed with British Citizen, British National (Overseas) or British Overseas Territories Citizen. Extensions can be arranged on arrival. In all other cases, a passport must be valid beyond six months and a visa is required.

Entry requirements for Canadians: Canadians must have a passport that is valid at least 30 days after date of entry. A visa is not required for stays of up to 90 days. Extensions can be organized on arrival.

Entry requirements for Australians: Australians must have a passport that is valid at least 30 days after the date of entry. A visa is not required for stays of up to 90 days. An extension can be organized on arrival.

Entry requirements for South Africans: South African nationals must have a passport that is valid at least 30 days after the date of entry. A visa is not required for stays of up to 90 days. An extension can be organized on arrival.

<http://www.abroaderview.org/costarica.php>

Entry requirements for New Zealanders: New Zealand citizens must have a passport that is valid at least 30 days after the date of entry. A visa is not required for a stay of 90 days. Extensions can be organized on arrival.

Entry requirements for Irish nationals: Irish nationals must have a passport that is valid at least 30 days after date of entry. A visa is not required for a stay of 90 days. Extensions can be organized on arrival.

Passport/Visa Note: All visitors must hold an onward or return ticket and sufficient funds. An exit visa must be obtained from the Immigration Department for all passengers staying in the country for longer than 30 days. Passports must be valid for at least 30 days after date of entry for visa exempt nationals and for six months for those requiring a visa. Admission to Costa Rica is refused to gypsies of any country and anyone with insufficient funds. Indecent clothing and long, unkempt beards and hair is prohibited.

Note: Passport and visa requirements are liable to change at short notice. Travelers are advised to check their entry requirements with their embassy or consulate.

1001 Dell Lane Suite B, Wyncote, PA 19095, USA Volunteer Abroad Project  
Tel: 1-215-780-1845 / Toll Free: 1-866-423-3258 / Fax: 1-215-887-0915  
volunteers@abroaderview.org - www.abroaderview.org - info@abroaderview.org

.

###

We offer international volunteer projects for the globally-minded individual searching for a unique travel experience. We are a 501 non-profit international volunteer organization offering short and long term volunteer programs in developing countries

Category	Non profit, Travel, Tourism
Tags	volunteer, abroad, costa rica, Travel, spring break, summer vacation, gap year, orphans, Medical, nurse, groups
Email	<a href="#">Click to email author</a>
Phone	215-780-1845
Fax	215-887-0915
Address	PO Box 14 Wyncote, PA 19095, USA
City/Town	<a href="#">Philadelphia</a>
State/Province	<a href="#">Pennsylvania</a>
Zip	19095
Country	<a href="#">United States</a>