



Costa Rica is a nation with a long tradition of peace and democracy, perhaps best known for its friendly people that take such pride in sharing their country's beauty and natural resources with visitors. Magnificent beaches, tropical jungles, and rich farmlands...

Costa Rica has it all. People who have traveled all over the world affirm that Costa Rica's beaches are unsurpassed anywhere. Its various climates offer choices of weather as perfect as you could hope to find any place on earth. Steep-sloped mountains topped with cloud forests, ferns and exotic wildlife, tower over fertile farmlands dotted with hundreds of neatly maintained homesteads. Flowers bloom everywhere; often entire trees bear so many colorful, scented blossoms that green leaves are hidden. As if this weren't enough, the small towns are every bit as neat and clean as the countryside, and blessed with friendly **COSTA RICAN** hospitality..



Costa Rica is a small country, but offers such a diversity of scenery, climates, and such a wide variety of flora and fauna. The number of orchids and bromeliads confuses the mind. This country has dedicated twenty percent of its territory to national parks and wildlife preserves. Probably no country in the world devotes as large a percentage of its territory to national parks and wildlife refuges. These preserves range from cloud forests to tropical beach, from volcanic craters to jungle swamps and inland waterways.



Costa Rica has a bewildering assortment of wildlife including 850 species of birds – more than three times as many as in the United States and Canada combined. Common mammals are monkeys, coatis, jaguars, and ocelots as well as sloth, tapirs and agoutis. Turtles, colorful frogs and toads of all descriptions are found, as well as crocodiles and iguana. There are said to be more varieties of butterflies there than in the entire African continent. This is truly a naturalist's paradise, drawing visitors from all over the world.



Many countries offer beautiful beaches and excellent vacation accommodations, but nowhere else in the world can a tourist find such a combination of delightful beaches, a safe and pleasant country, plus a tropical wonderland that's accessible year round – only in **Costa Rica**.



Only a dozen degrees north of the equator places **Costa Rica** in a strong position on the sun belt. In fact, the sun there is 25° more intense than the mid-day rays in Miami. Swimming in the surf is one of the highlights for many leisure travelers in search of a break from sunbathing. Other sports include surfing, sailing and sport fishing. Rafters, canoers, and kayakers are beginning to flock to **Costa Rica** because of its exciting rivers. The **Rio Pacuare** is considered world-class by sports people and ranked number 10 on the list of wild and scenic rivers worldwide.



Peak season parallels attractions. **Costa Rica's** alternative to the intensity of the high season is the "Green Season" from April through October when the pace slows and afternoons cool down. Rates are lower, roads are less traveled, beaches open up and visitors get a real glance at the new world tropics at their best, when green is predominant and daytime temperatures reach peaks at 1:00 p.m., just before the rains begin.

One of the more common descriptions of **Costa Rica** is "the Switzerland of the Americas". At first glance, **Costa Rica** differs so much from Switzerland that one might wonder how it earned this title. Both countries are of similar size, but Costa Rica is lushly tropical, continually swathed in luxurious green vegetation, a place where coffee, sugar cane and mangos thrive, and where snow never falls. **Costa Rica** would seem to be totally opposite from Switzerland, with its snowcapped peaks and rock terrain. Yet, the more one travels in **Costa Rica**, the more apparent are the parallels with Switzerland. Both are peaceful progressive countries where democracy and stability are hallmarks.

North Americans feel very much at home in **Costa Rica**. It is a country of law-abiding citizens, a place where you don't feel shivers of apprehension at the approach of a policeman or a heavily armed soldier. It's a place where North Americans feel comfortable living in just about any neighborhood, not forced to huddle together in enclaves of other expatriates for mutual support. **Costa Ricans** are so much like us, they look like us, act like us and, importantly, think like we do. They are open and friendly. No wonder North Americans feel at home in **Costa Rica**.

