



Northwestern Costa Rica

Includes ➔

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Café Caburé (p209)
- ➔ Trio (p209)
- ➔ Bar-B-Q Tres Hermanas (p220)
- ➔ Café Liberia (p229)
- ➔ Plaza Copal (p244)

Best Places to Sleep

- ➔ Casa Tranquilo (p204)
- ➔ Los Pinos Cabañas y Jardines (p206)
- ➔ Celeste Mountain Lodge (p221)
- ➔ Rio Perdido (p223)

Why Go

What did you come to Costa Rica for? To lounge on pristine beaches and ride glorious waves? To hike up volcanoes and soak in geothermal springs? To spy on birds and monkeys and get lost among ancient trees? The northwestern corner of Costa Rica packs in all this and more. Unlike any other part of Costa Rica, Guanacaste – in the far northwest – is a wide, flat expanse of grasslands and dry tropical forest, where savanna vistas are broken only by windblown trees. Further east, the Cordillera de Guanacaste rises majestically out of the plains in a line of sputtering, steaming volcanic peaks that beg exploration. Further south, higher altitudes create a misty, mystical cloud forest, teeming with life. What did you come to Costa Rica for? Here it is...

When to Go

- ➔ Guanacaste is Costa Rica's driest province, getting very little rain from November to April, when the winds bless (and blast) Bahía Salinas.
- ➔ By contrast, the 'green' season is very, very green in the cloud forest.
- ➔ Humpback whales migrate up the coast in September and October.
- ➔ Other seasonal events to watch out for are the blooming of the yellow cortezes in March and the *fiestas Guanacastecas* that occur throughout the year.



Northwestern Costa Rica Highlights

- 1 Spotting the resplendent quetzal through the mist at one of the reserves near **Monteverde** (p195).
- 2 Satisfying your need for speed with a kitesurfing course on windy **Bahía Salinas** (p242).
- 3 Trekking the circuit of waterfalls, thermal pools

and volcanic vents at **Volcán Rincón de la Vieja** (p234).

- 4 Hiking along the raging Río Celeste at the **Parque Nacional Volcán Tenorio** (p221) and marvelling at her cerulean blue waters.
- 5 Watching wildlife at Costa Rica's largest wetland

sanctuary, **Parque Nacional Palo Verde** (p224).

- 6 Exploring the Santa Rosa Sector of the **Área de Conservación Guanacaste** (p237) to discover the flora and fauna of the dry tropical forest.