



lonely planet



- HIGHLIGHTS
- ITINERARIES
- LOCAL EXPERTS
- EASY-TO-USE MAPS

Discover Costa Rica

Experience the best of Costa Rica

Discover

Contents 

Costa Rica

Throughout this book, we use these icons to highlight special recommendations:



The Best...

Lists for everything from bars to wildlife – to make sure you don't miss out



Don't Miss

A must-see – don't go home until you've been there

Local Knowledge

Local experts reveal their top picks and secret highlights



Detour

Special places a little off the beaten track



If you like...

Lesser-known alternatives to world-famous attractions

These icons help you quickly identify reviews in the text and on the map:



Sights



Eating



Drinking



Sleeping

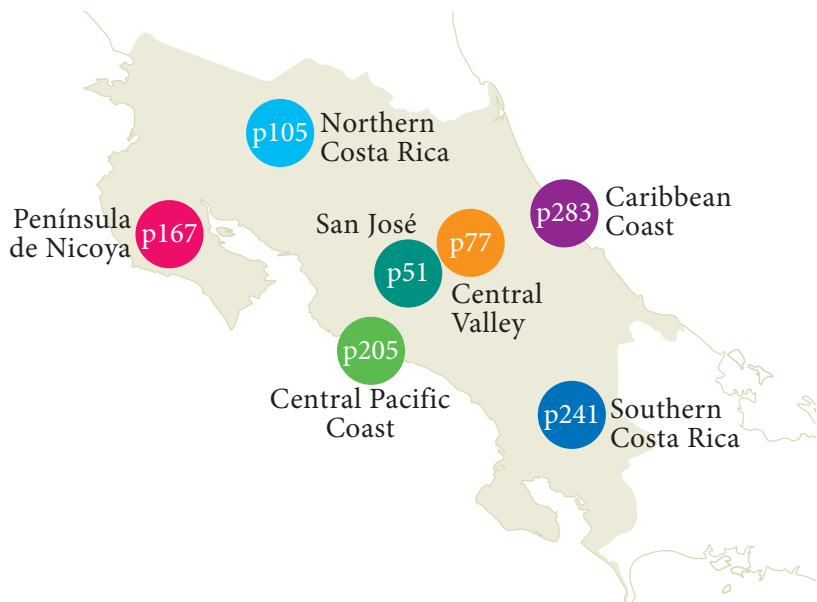


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- Museums & Theaters in San José
- Mercado Central
- Public Parks
- Plaza de la Cultura
- Escazú
- Los Yoses & San Pedro

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- Monumento Nacional Arqueológico Guayabo
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- Cartago

● Northern Costa Rica

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- La Fortuna
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- Dominical
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- Jacó
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This is Costa Rica

If you have long sought a piece of tropical paradise, take a deep breath, you've found it. The perfect balance of adrenaline-addled adventure destination and unplugged tropical getaway, Costa Rica is a land of dormant volcanoes, desolate beaches and dense jungle. The canopies rustle with riotous troupes of white-faced monkeys, hillsides echo with the squawk of scarlet macaws and the trees along the trail are overburdened with the day's lunch of ripe star fruit. It might seem like a wondrous tropical fantasy land, but this is Costa Rica.

Costa Rica has earned a rightful place in the cubicle daydreams of travelers around the world. Learn to surf in warm salt water and hike above the clouds; rush down white-water rivers and then hoist yourself up to a zip line to sail over jungle canopies. Sound good? That's only the beginning. Costa Rica is the preeminent eco- and adventure-tourism capital of Central America.

With a world-class infrastructure, visionary sustainability initiatives and no standing army, Costa Rica is a green, peaceful jewel of the region. Taking into account that more than a third of the country enjoys some form of environmental protection and there's greater biodiversity than the USA and Europe combined, it's a country that earns the superlative descriptions. And though the breakneck pace of American-style modernization threatens to pave over the country's cultural treasures, there's still plenty of the laid-back, heart-stopping beauty of the so-called 'Old Costa Rica'.

Then there are the people. Costa Ricans, or Ticos as they call themselves, are largely proud of their little slice of paradise. They welcome guests into the easygoing rhythms of *pura vida* – the pure life – that is as much a catchy motto as it is an enduring mantra.

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