



San Carlos, Islas Solentiname & the Río San Juan

Includes ➔

San Carlos	244
San Miguelito	246
Islas Solentiname	247
Refugio de Vida Silvestre	
Los Guatuzos.....	251
Río San Juan.....	251

Best Wildlife- Spotting

- ➔ Río Papaturre (p251)
- ➔ Aguas Frescas (p256)
- ➔ Islas Solentiname (p247)
- ➔ Río Indio (p257)
- ➔ San Miguelito (p246)

Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Sábalo Lodge (p253)
- ➔ Hotel La Comunidad (p249)
- ➔ Río Indio Lodge (p258)
- ➔ Refugio Bartola (p256)
- ➔ Hotel Sábalo (p253)

Why Go?

You could roam the globe for decades and it would be tough to top what you are about to experience here. This is a place where an enlightened priest once mingled with transcendent artists on forgotten island utopias. Where the beautiful teenage daughter of a Spanish conquistador stared down an on-rushing armada of British pirates. It's a haven for migratory birds, ranchers and fishermen where the monkeys howl, alligators cruise the black water, and enormous 500-year-old trees bangled in delicate orchids shelter fluorescent fingernail-sized tree frogs and carnivorous jaguars under one canopy.

It's also a place thousands of travelers simply pass through on their way to Costa Rica, ignoring the sweet Archipiélago de Solentiname, mythic Río San Juan and spectacular Reserva Biológica Indio-Maíz. Huge mistake. Spend some time and money. Explore. Take it all in. These are the places you imagined when you booked your ticket. This is why you travel.

When to Go

Dry season in the Río San Juan runs from February to April with more sunshine and shrinking pools of water concentrating migratory waterfowl in Los Guatuzos. From mid-September to October it's possible to hook huge tarpon in the Caribbean Sea at the mouth of the Río Indio and there is the best bird-watching around San Miguelito. And in November, dancers and artists from all over the country descend on San Carlos for the Río San Juan's biggest party – the Carnival Acuático.

