

Costa Rica Ultimate Wildlife Itinerary 14 day

Costa Rica - The Ultimate Wildlife Ecotour

14 Day Itinerary

Our most value-packed itinerary emphasizing wildlife and bird-watching "off the beaten path." This is our signature wildlife adventure, with many of Wild Planet's special touches, including:

- More value than any other professional wildlife tour, including over 13 paid admissions to national parks, wildlife refuges, private wildlife reserves, and adventure activities such as canopy tours and hot springs.
- Expert Local Naturalist Guides - Even biologists in some places
- Breathtaking Rainforest Lodges - Including lodges featured in Conde Naste, Travel & Leisure, and on Animal Planet and the Discovery Channel
- Specifically designed to optimize the chances of seeing more wildlife by visitng a variety of different eco-systems, with no commercial "filler" activities.

Day 1-3 Cahuita National Park, Aviarios Wildlife Refuge

Highlights: Jungle Beach, Canoeing on Virgin Wetlands, Rainforest hiking, Sloth Refuge, Bird and Wildlife Watching.

Wildlife: Sloths, white-faced monkeys, anteaters, otters, caiman, morpho butterflies, poison-arrow frogs, and over 300 species of exotic tropical birds.

Start your adventure visiting the world-famous Aviaros Sloth Rescue Center, featured on Animal Planet and the Discovery Channel, where you'll interact with wildlife experts, watch feeding of newborn sloths, and learn about one of the most endearing and cuddly animals of the rainforest. Then canoe on Aviários's own private wildlife refuge through virgin wetlands where rainforest canals (similar to Torgugeuro, but without the crowds!) are habitat for exotic colorful birds such as the Purple Gallenule, Boat-billed Heron and Northern Jicana.

In the afternoon, we'll hike in Cahuita National Park, a crowd-free rainforest beach teeming with monkeys, sloths, toucans and more. We'll usually see 5-12 troops of monkeys of 2 species (with 3-30 individuals in each troop) as well as 5-20 sloths of 2 species, and a wide variety of other wildlife common to the Caribbean lowlands. This easy-paced hike ends with relaxing on the beach before heading into Cahuita for a fresh-caught seafood dinner at one of the most acclaimed restaurants on the Caribbean coast.

Day 3-5 La Selva Biological Reserve, Sarapiquí River, Puerto Viejo River

Highlights: Whitewater rafting, flatwater wildlife expedition on a rainforest river, hiking in a Biological Station with biologists studying the rainforest.

Wildlife: Extreme biodiversity including 400 species of birds, rare rainforest frogs, river otter, agouti, coati, monkeys, anteaters and more.

The Sarapiquí is one of the highlights of every paddler's "dream trip." Passing directly through La Selva Biological Reserve, the river is surrounded by old-growth rainforest and exotic birds. The next day we'll run the Puerto Viejo river, a remote river that rarely sees any humans besides us!

Wild Planet Adventures Exclusive

Choose from rafts, inflatable kayaks or canoes for both whitewater and flatwater segments. More small boats spread out along the river means more eyes spread out along the river, which means we see more wildlife! And in the flat-water sections we can stop and observe wildlife for a more intimate experience of the rainforest and wildlife than any other conventional tour.

Eve 5 La Fortuna, Volcano Arenal, Hot Springs

Relax in a rejuvenating hot springs near the foothills of of Volcano Arenal. Then enjoy a night-time view of the

volcano spouting lava.

Day 6-8 Monteverde Cloud Forest

Highlights: Cloud forest, Canopy Tour. Naturalist-guided Hiking and Birding.

Wildlife: Resplendent Quetzals, trogons, rare hummingbirds and hundreds of birds unique to the Cloud forest. Howler monkeys and other small mammals.

The Bio-diversity and exuberance of life in the cloudforest is a result of clouds drifting in and dripping constant moisture on the dense canopy tops. A naturalist guide points out a stunning array of plant and birdlife, perhaps even the endangered Resplendent Quetzal. Later, a series of suspended bridges and platforms offers an unforgettable glimpse of life high amongst the canopy and the transcendent sensation of walking amongst the clouds.

Eve 8 Carara Biological Preserve

Highlights: Evening Scarlet Macaw migration, rare wildlife, giant exotic hardwoods.

Wildlife: Crocodiles, scarlet macaws, anteater, ocelot, peccaries, white-faced and spider monkeys, poison-arrow frog.

An old growth forest of striking complexity and density, Carara's giant trees include 10 of the rarest hardwoods in Costa Rica. The unique combination of ecosystems is habitat for many rare and endangered animals, including one of the largest populations of scarlet macaws in the country, which migrate twice daily from the inland rainforest to the coastal mangrove swamps.

Day 9-10 Manuel Antonio Park

Highlights: Spectacular world-class beaches

Wildlife: White-faced and squirrel monkeys right on the beach!

The most popular national park in Costa Rica, Manuel Antonio offers dense rainforests spilling down onto brilliant white sand beaches populated with friendly white-faced and squirrel monkeys.

Day 11-14 Osa Peninsula/Corcovado:

Highlights: This is THE place you dream of when you think Costa Rica! The most remote, most biodiverse, most wildlife

(including many rare and indigenous species) and NO mosquitoes! Osa also holds the largest remaining stand of virgin rainforest in Central America. One of the last truly unspoiled and wild places in the world.

Wildlife: Osa is the absolute best place to see all 4 types of Costa Rican monkeys, (including rare squirrel monkeys) peccaries and other exotic wildlife, in greater numbers than anywhere else, and your best chance to spot jaguar and other big cats. It is one of the last stands for many extremely rare and endangered species including the Harpy Eagle and King Vulture. Over 400 species of birds including the largest population of scarlet macaws in the country.

Wild Planet Adventures Exclusive

Enjoy sunset kayaking with dolphins on the tranquil waters of Golfito Bay. Then, after the sun goes down, we'll snorkel at night to see the water come alive with blue sparkles of bioluminescence. Hike deep into Corcovado National Park with wildlife experts and search for tapir and other rare and endangered wildlife. Enjoy pristine beaches teeming with scarlet macaws. Relax at a world-class jungle lodge hailed by Travel and Leisure as one of the top 25 ecolodges in the world!

Trip Extensions:

Bocas Del Toro - World Class Snorkeling in Panama Much of Costa Rica's coral reef has been destroyed due to polluted run-off from banana plantations, which means the snorkeling is poor at best. However, the nearby archipeligo of Bocas del Toro just across the border in Panama is world renowned for some of the best snorkeling in all of central america, even better than that of Belize's renowned barrier reef. Bocas has coral of every imaginable color, teeming with marine life, as well as dolphins and turtles. On islands such as Bastimentos you can visit an authentic indian village and hike with indian guides to see the endemic strawberry poison arrow frog and rare night monkeys, neither of which exist in Costa Rica.

Tortuguero

A natural network of scenic jungle canal navigable only by boat, Tortuguero protects over 350 species of birds and mammals, including endangered great green macaws and jaguars. It is one of the most important nesting sites for green sea turtles. Enjoy boating, canoeing and wildlife watching from your waterfront lodge. Call for different price options.

Drake Bay

Explore Osa's wild northern end. Hike Corcovado National Park with local naturalist guides, boat to Cano Island for a day of snorkeling, or just relax at one of Costa Rica's best jungle lodges. Call for different price options.