

## COSTA RICA NATURAL WONDERS



Tropical Gardens, Lush Jungles & Vibrant Cloud Forests with Andy Pulte & Jason Reeves

March 15-23, 2014

*"I had never seen a forest so green. Vines spiraled upward into the tops of huge trees draped with hanging plants. Even the light was green."*

- Jeremy Schmidt -

View our Ways to Save \$225 per person below!

Costa Rica, a landmass encompassing only .03% of the earth's surface, contains a whopping 5% of earth's biodiversity- a density that is unmatched anywhere else in the world. Join Andy Pulte and Jason Reeves and escape the cold gray days of winter for a very special garden adventure to sun soaked Costa Rica. On this eight night tropical garden adventure you'll discover a jungle paradise unlike any other. Despite its diminutive size, Costa Rica boasts greater biodiversity than all of Europe or North America! Over 850 species of birds have been identified here, far more than have been seen in Europe or Australia and more butterflies thrive here than on the entire continent of Africa. Join Jason and Andy and explore lush jungles and view an abundance of exotic wildlife from a bridge that gently suspends you in the mist of the Cloud Forest canopy. Sultry breezes, tropical gardens and colorful birds await you.

### JOURNEY OVERVIEW

2 Nights San Jose (first and last night)  
 2 Nights La Fortuna / Arenal Volcano  
 2 Nights Monteverde Mountain Cloud Forest  
 2 Nights Ricon de la Vieja Nat'l Park  
 2 Nights Post Tour option — Manuel Antonio Nat'l Park

### JOURNEY HIGHLIGHTS

Colorful garden visits as listed in your itinerary ♦ A coffee plantation visit ♦ Towering Arenal Volcano ♦ The Monteverde Cloud Forest ♦ Soaking in the Hot Springs ♦ Hummingbird Gallery ♦ Skywalk and zip line canopy tour (optional) ♦ Wildlife viewing via a Cano Negro river float trip ♦ Butterfly Gardens ♦ Morning and evening bird walks ♦ Monteverde Orchid Gallery ♦ Sightings of toucans, quetzals, monkeys, iguanas, sloths and more!

### IT'S INCLUDED

- An expert Earthbound Expeditions guide/naturalist
- Eight nights of accommodation in charming hotels, comfortable cabins and lodges (All rooms with private baths and hot showers)
- Special visits to botanical gardens, cloud forests and orchid and butterfly galleries
- All breakfasts, plus eleven additional multi-course meals
- Transportation from arrival to departure on board a spacious, air-conditioned motorcoach
- Entrances to all activities and national parks as listed in your itinerary
- Gratuities for your guides, naturalists and driver
- Fun introductory language lessons offered by your guide
- Hotel and country taxes of 13%
- Complimentary refreshments
- A fun group of fellow garden lovers

## TRIP FACTS

Length: 8 Nights/9 Days

\$2,275 PP Dbl. Occupancy Land only (20-26 travelers)

\$2,395 PP Dbl. Occupancy Land (15-20 travelers)

\$475 Single Supplement (waived if matched with roommate)

Trip begins in San Jose, at 7:00pm on Saturday, March 15

Trip ends after breakfast on Sunday, March 23 in the morning

Post-tour begins Saturday, March 22

Post-tour ends Tuesday, March 25 in the early morning

**NOT INCLUDED:** Round-trip airline ticket and baggage fees, alcoholic beverages with meals, room service and gratuities for hotel staff, travel insurance, meals, Costa Rica departure tax of \$26 and any activities or items not listed in your itinerary.

## WAYS TO SAVE!

**Pay by check:** Pay your final balance by check or money order and save \$75 per person.

**Alumni Discounts:** All alumni of Earthbound Expeditions will receive \$100 off the published journey price (private trips may be excluded). If Earthbound Expeditions has other discounts available, participants may choose the greatest available discount.

**UT Garden Members Save an additional \$50**

## FACT

Costa Rica is home to over 9,000 identified species of vascular plants and... 1,200 varieties of orchids

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## YOUR GARDEN ADVENTURE BEGINS...

### DAY 1

#### Arrive San Jose

Pura Vida! Today your garden adventure begins as you arrive at noon in San Jose. After clearing customs and gathering your bags, you'll be met by your guide Minor Alfaro and transported by motor coach to your nearby hotel.

Tonight meet your hosts Jason Reeves and Andy Pulte for a welcome gathering followed by dinner. Sleep in San Jose (D)

### DAY 2

#### Coffee Plantations and Lush Jungles

We'll stop at coffee plantation in order to learn about the "Grano de Oro" (the Golden Bean) and then enjoy a traditional lunch.

Then we cross the continental divide through the heart of lush jungles. Our home this evening will be at the base of Arenal Volcano, best known for its spectacular and frequent displays of volcanic fireworks. At 5,437 feet, Arenal Volcano looms large and ominous over the pastured green hillsides that surround its base. As Costa Rica's most active volcano, its history is charged with eruptions – both major and minor – that have intimately affected the region and the people who live here. The largest recorded eruption in Arenal's history was in 1968. After nearly 400 years of inactivity, the Arenal Volcano burst open and buried over 5 square miles in rocks, lava and ash. Thanks to geothermal activity beneath Arenal, the area surrounding the volcano is home to a number of stunning hot springs. Sleep at the base of Arenal Volcano (B, L, D)

### **DAY 3**

#### **River Wildlife Float Trip and an Evening at the Hot Springs**

Refuge is considered to be one of the best sites on the continent for bird watching. In addition to an abundance of birds, Caño Negro is also home to many exciting animals, such as sloth, three types of monkeys, caimans, lizards, bats, and a variety of flora native to the wetlands. Our tour to this beautiful region leaves from La Fortuna and travels approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes to Los Chiles, a rustic village just two miles from the Nicaraguan border. Then we begin our boat ride to the wetlands. On the way up, you will see many bird and animal species. We will stop midday along the river for a typical Costa Rican lunch before heading back to Los Chiles where we'll board our bus and return to our home at La Fortuna. In the late afternoon you have the opportunity to soak in the warm thermal waters of Tabacon Hot Springs, a tropically, lush resort where you can relax under warm, rushing waterfalls and in pools of varying degrees of warmth (spa entrance not included). Sleep at the base of Arenal Volcano (B, L)

### **FACT**

"Although Costa Rica lacks an army, it claims over 830 species of birds."

### **DAY 4**

#### **Monteverde Cloud Forest and Butterfly Gardens**

Following breakfast, we'll say "adios" to Arenal and make our way to the renowned Cloud Forest of Monteverde. Our picturesque drive will take us along the windswept shores of Lake Arenal before heading up over the continental divide once again. Making a number of stops where the scenery is at its best, we end our drive at Monteverde itself. Due to its high altitude – some 4,662 ft above sea level – Monteverde is privileged to receive a steady supply of clouds and the life-giving moisture that they contain. This moisture, often in the form of fog, catches on the branches of the tallest trees and drips down to the other organisms below. This helps to support a complex and far-reaching ecosystem, one that harbors over 100 species of mammals, 400 species of birds, tens of thousands of insect species, and over 2,500 varieties of plants, 420 of which are orchids. After checking into our mountain lodge, we visit Jim Wolf's amazing Butterfly Garden where you'll get closer look at these fragile creatures and a few of their less lovely friends. Time permitting, we'll join Minor this evening for a sunset bird-watching walk and spend the next two nights in the midst of the Cloud Forest. Sleep in Monteverde (B, D)

### **DAY 5**

#### **Vibrant Cloud Forests and an Energetic Hummingbird Gallery**

Hummingbird Gallery: This morning prepare for the overwhelming lushness of the Cloud Forest of Monteverde, home to numerous species of plants, birds and animals. Your guide will lead you on a walking journey through this abundant environment, pointing out the many exciting plants and animals, and keeping a keen eye out for Quetzals, considered by many to be the most beautiful bird in the world. Having heightened our interest in birds, we make a quick stop at the Hummingbird Gallery to enjoy a viewing of these tiny and beautiful members of the Cloud Forest community.

After a tasty lunch, we head to Monteverde Orchid Garden. There are more than 1,400 types of wild orchids growing throughout the rainforests of Costa Rica, and 500 of these can be found in Monteverde alone. Incredibly, the Monteverde Orchid Garden houses 426 different species, spread across a neatly labeled and aesthetically pleasing outdoor garden. A trip here will educate you on the characteristics, growing environment

and threats that orchids currently face. Sleep in Monteverde (B, D)

### **Monteverde Optional Skywalk Canopy Walk and Zipline Tour**

Skywalk is a series of suspension bridges that will allow you to walk where our planet's life is at its most complex. Eighty percent of all life in the Cloud Forest is to be found in the canopy. Hovering one hundred feet above the dark floor of the jungle, the sun-soaked canopy explodes with life. Former guests have stated that Skywalk is the trek a lifetime.

### **DAY 6**

#### **Off to Costa Rica's Yellowstone Park**

Our drive will take us out of the Cloud Forest and through the dry "African" grasslands of the province of Guanacaste. En route we visit the Hagendauer Injured Animal Reserve and enjoy lunch on a rushing river. Upon arrival (time permitting) enjoy a nature walk with your Costa Rican naturalist. Sleep in Rincon de la Vieja (B, L, D)

### **DAY 7**

#### **Thermal Springs and a Trek into the Outback**

Called the "Yellowstone of Costa Rica," Rincon de la Vieja boasts an active volcano, geysers, bubbling mud pots and mineral hot springs, virgin forest and countless species of birds, monkeys and other wildlife.

Our day will begin with an early morning bird walk. After a hearty breakfast your guide will explain all the different options available for you today which include: Horseback riding, an outing to Oropéndola Waterfall, Tubing the Rio Negro, Canyoning and Zip-Lines, an easy hike the Red Pond or simply soaking up the ambiance in a hot thermal spring. This evening enjoy a farewell dinner with your guide and hosts. Note: Hot Spring entrance included. Horseback riding, zip lines and tubing are optional. Sleep in Rincon de la Vieja (B, L, D)

### **DAY 8**

#### **Return to San Jose or Continue on to the Pacific Coast Depart for San Jose**

For those wishing to visit the Pacific Coast you'll be met and transported by private mini coach to Manuel Antonio Beach. Once there you'll enjoy an orientation and dinner.

Please see the itinerary for the post tour extension below.

If not heading to the coast you will return to directly to San Jose. Sleep in San Jose (B, D)

### **DAY 9**

#### **Journey over after breakfast**

Return home with a lifetime of memories.

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### **POST TOUR EXTENSION: Manuel Antonio Nat'l Park & Beach**

Begins on day 8-

\$395 per person in a shared double room

\$135 Single Supplement

### **About Manuel Antonio National Park**

Manuel Antonio National Park is a small National Park located in the Central Pacific Conservation Area of Costa Rica. Established in 1972 with an area covering 4,014 acres (16.24 km<sup>2</sup>), the smallest of Costa Rica's parks. It is well known for its beautiful beaches and hiking trails. In 2012, Manuel Antonio was listed by Forbes among the world's 12 most beautiful national parks. There are four beaches within the limits of the park: Manuel Antonio, Espadilla Sur, Teldoro, and Playita. With their large light sand berms, it is easy to see why they attract beach goers of all ages. The first is separated from the second by a "tombolo", or natural land bridge formed by sand accumulations. Visitors may enjoy a roughly hour-long hike from Espadilla to the top of Punta Cathedral (100 m). Both Manuel Antonio and Espadilla Sur contain tidal pools great for snorkeling.

Although Manuel Antonio National Park is Costa Rica's smallest national park, the diversity of wildlife in its 6.83 km<sup>2</sup> (3 sq. mi) is unequaled with 109 species of mammals and 184 species of birds including the Fiery Billed Acari, Brown Pelican, Laughing Falcon and the Kingfisher.

Both Brown-throated Three-toed Sloth and Hoffmann's Two-toed Sloth (perezosos) are a major feature, as

are three of Costa Rica's four monkey species: the Mantled Howler monkey, Central American Titi (Squirrel) Monkey, and White-headed Capuchin monkey. Black Spiny-tailed Iguana, Green Iguana, Common Basilisk, White-nosed Coati and many snake and bat species are also common in the park.

## **INCLUDED**

- Transport to Manual Antonio beach
- Two night stay in the Hotel Costa Verde or similar
- Morning guided walk
- Breakfast daily
- Return transport to San Jose
- Hotel stay in San Jose at the Wyndham Herradura airport Hotel

**Not Included:** Park entrances, lunch and dinner

## **DAILY PROGRAM**

### **DAY 8**

#### **South to Manual Antonio National Park & Beach**

For those wishing to continue on and explore the Pacific Beach Coastline you might consider staying on two extra nights and continuing on south to Manual Antonio National Park and Beach.

Check in to your cozy hotel. Free evening to enjoy and dine at your leisure. Sleep in Manual Antonio Park

Note: Unlike crowded beach resorts, Costa Rica environment laws dictates that hotels be located off the beach. Note: Artificial light has been known to impact and effect the nesting of sea turtles.

### **DAY 9**

#### **A Day at the Beach Today is your day to truly relax**

Meet a local guide this morning for a 2 hour guided walk through Manual Antonio National Park. Then, the only thing on the agenda is lying in a hammock contemplating the incredible beauty of Costa Rica from a suspended position. Looking for an interesting activity? Be warned: spontaneous beach parties have been known to occur here and monkey's just may steal your lunch...pura vida! Sleep near Manuel Antonio National Park (B)

### **DAY 10**

#### **Post Tour Returns to San Jose in the afternoon**

### **DAY 11**

#### **Depart Costa Rica after Breakfast**

The Costa Rican departure tax of \$29 USD is to be paid at the airport before checking in either by credit card or cash.

Buen Viaje!

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[Click here to view photos of our 2012 Journey!](#)

[Click here to view Earthbounds bird and animal list](#)



## **BIRD, MAMMAL and REPTILE LIST (seen by Earthbound Travelers)**

### **COSTA RICAN BIRDS**

- Ringed Kingfisher
- Great Kiskadee Flycatcher



- Great Egret
- Northern Jacana
- Purple Gallinule
- Black Bellied Whistling Duck
- Collared Redstart
- Wood Stork
- Grey Hawk
- Montezuma Oropendola
- Sooty Robin
- Great Tailed Grackle
- House Wren
- Chestnut Mandibled Toucan
- Yellow Faced Grassquit
- Yellow and White Warbler
- Clay-Colored Robin
- Band Tailed Barb Throated Hummingbird
- Summer Tanager
- Bananaquit
- Scarlet Rumped Tanager
- Turkey Vulture
- Black Shouldered Kite
- Black Vulture
- Keel Billed Toucan
- Buff Throated Woodcreeper
- Tropical Kingbird
- Northern Oriole
- Yellow Bellied Flycatcher
- Blue Seed Eater
- Brown Jay
- Yellow Warbler
- Rufus Tailed Hummingbird
- Blue Grey Tanager
- Golden Olive Woodpecker
- Anhinga
- Rufus Motmot
- Red Billed Pigeon
- Cattle Egret
- Black Striped Sparrow
- Resplendent Quetzal
- White Shouldered Tanager
- Blue Crowned Motmot

- Emerald Toucanet
- Orange Billed Nightingale Thrush
- Violet Saber Winged Hummingbird
- Green Violet Eared Hummingbird
- White Eared Ground Sparrow
- Orange Bellied Trogon
- Common Bush Tanager
- Slate Throated Redstart
- Bronze Cowbird
- Red Legged Honeycreeper
- Mountain Robin
- Swainson's Thrush
- Ocraceous Peewee
- Wilson's Warbler
- Grey Headed Chachalaca
- Groove Billed Ani
- Great Blue Heron
- Bare Throated Tiger Heron
- Amazon Kingfisher
- Osprey
- Laughing Falcon
- Limpkin
- Crested Caracara
- Spotted Sandpiper
- Snowy Egret
- Green Backed Heron
- White Winged Dove
- Magpie Jay
- Scarlet Macaw
- Great Green Macaw
- Yellow Naped Parrot
- Bat Falcon
- Double Striped Thickknees
- Pale Billed Woodpecker
- Crested Guan
- Budgerigar
- Collared Aricari
- Hoffman's Woodpecker
- Inca Dove
- Palm Tanager
- American Swallow Tailed Kite

- Caspian Tern
- Ruddy Turnstone
- Brown Pelican
- Red Lored Parrot
- Barn Swallow
- Roadside Hawk
- Black Headed Trogon
- Short Tailed Night Hawk
- Olive Throated Parakeet
- Squirrel Cuckoo
- White Fronted Parrot

### **COSTA RICAN MAMMALS IDENTIFIED**

- Jaguar
- Jaguarundi
- Margay
- Ocelot
- Central American Aguti
- Northern Tamandua (anteater)
- White-faced Capuchin Monkey
- White-nosed Coati
- Mantled Howler Monkey
- Olingo
- Mexican Hairy Porcupine
- Striped Hog-nosed Skunk Central American Spider Monkey Brown-throated Three Toed Sloth Hoffman's

### **REPTILES**

- Reptiles American Crocodile
- Green Sea Turtle
- Green Iguana
- Basilisk (Jesus Christ lizard)
- Whiptail lizard

### **OTHERS**

- Fiddler crabs
- Ghost crabs
- Giant grasshopper
- Orange-kneed tarantula
- Termite mound

[Make Your Reservation](#)  
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Garden Host Jason Reeves

*"Now that I am home, I realize what an intense experience it was, part vacation, but part immersion into another culture and another perspective on the vastness of the natural world."*



**V. Shea**

*"Our guide's enthusiasm was very contagious and his knowledge was unending on the countryside and its environment. You guys covered it all! Our guides were unflappable, keeping the mood up. Thoughtful attention to details at all times."*



**Jack and Ros C.**

*Most memorable moment? "So many!!! The raft trip, plus the cloud forest, plus the entire wildlife etc. etc. Oh yes, seeing the people and their way of life and their homes."*



**K. Kirks**

*"Everything was superb!" Most memorable moment? "Seeing all the monkeys! Boogie boarding at Playa Grande, raft trip, horseback riding, hikes in Monteverde and Los Inocentes."*



**L. Smetzer**

*"Because of you everyone had a journey of a lifetime. You even arranged for animals and birds to appear on cue, which is pretty amazing when you think of it! Minor is the perfect guide, knowledgeable, energetic and fun."*

**Edmund Stone, All Classical**



