



GETTING THERE: Unless traveling to Costa Rica from a neighboring country in Central America, you're going to fly. There are two international airports – Liberia (Daniel Oduber, LIR) and San José (Juan Santamaria, SJO). The one you'll use will depend on your itinerary. If staying in one area, a roundtrip into one or the other will be fine. If exploring multiple regions within the country, you might be flying into one of the above and out of the other.

Liberia – Western Costa Rica, Northern Pacific Coast
San Jose – Southern Costa Rica, Caribbean Coast, Central Pacific

LANGUAGE: Spanish (varying degrees of English, depending on the region).

CLIMATE: Climate is tropical year-round but has many micro-climates. These depend on elevation, rainfall, geography, etc. of each region.

Seasons are defined by rainfall, not the four seasons we're familiar with in North America. Dry season is December to April and rainy is May to November.

MONEY/CURRENCY (CREDIT CARDS, DEBIT CARDS, TIPPING, ATMS): The main currency is the Costa Rican Colones, but US Dollars are widely accepted – in cash or credit card forms. While ATMs are readily available there are hefty processing fees and currency exchange commissions. Tipping is not expected in Costa Rica, but if you would like, the standard is around 10%. In more touristy areas, you might see tip jars or people asking for them.

ELECTRICITY: Typically, you will find type A and type B plugs operating on 120V supply voltage and 60Hz.

5 FAST FACTS

1. Because Costa Rica is close to the equator, sunrise and sunset are at the same time every day. That's right 365 days a year!
2. It is the most bio-diverse country in the world with over 900,000 species of wildlife, 900 of them are birds. You're likely to catch a sighting in natural habitats, national parks, and volcanic areas.
3. Costa Rica's national anthem is played on every radio station daily at 7 am.
4. It's the hummingbird capital of the world! There are over 50 species that call Costa Rica home.
5. Costa Rica is Spanish and translates to "rich coast." Why? It's said that the country's founder, Christopher Columbus, believed the area was filled with precious metals.

5 ITEMS TO PACK

1. **Raincoat or waterproof jacket.** Even though rainy season is May through November, it's a good idea to include any time of the year.
2. **Sunscreen.** It's three to four times more expensive to purchase in destination, so pack plenty. Minimum recommendation is 30 SPF.
3. **Insect Repellant.** Mosquitos are worst during rainy season but should be used regardless of the time of year. Like sunscreen, it's best to purchase before you leave to save a few bucks.
4. **Sun hat and sunglasses.** As mentioned, Costa Rica is close to the Equator. So, these are a given. If needed, tourist areas may have spots where you can pick these up in a pinch.
5. **Sturdy shoes and water shoes.** You'll likely be exploring, walking, and hiking the lush landscapes and national parks. Leave the flip flops home. If you're a water adventurer, water shoes will protect you and help in navigating slippery surfaces.

TOURS/EXCURSION IDEAS

1. Arenal National Park
2. La Fortuna Waterfall
3. Monteverde, Cloud Forest
4. Coffee plantation tour
5. Manuel Antonio National Park
6. La Paz Waterfalls
7. Rio Celeste at Tenorio Volcano National Park
8. Tamarindo
9. Tortuguero National Park
10. Wildlife Tours/Sightings

