



Tour:

COSTA RICA ECO-ADVENTURE

Middle School Edition

Itinerary:

8-days / 7-nights

COSTA RICA ECO-ADVENTURE - MIDDLE SCHOOL EDITION San Jose, Sarapiquí, Arenal & Central Pacific Coast

Day	Meals	Morning	Afternoon		Evening
1	D	Travel to Costa Rica; transfer to hotel; Welcome & Safety Meeting			Welcome Dinner
2	B, L, D	Poás Volcano National Park	Doka Estate Coffee Plantation		Free Time & Local Dinner
3	B, L, D	Transfer to Sarapiquí	Lowland Rainforest Exploration: Ziplining Expedition & Floating Wildlife Safari on the Sarapiquí River		Dinner Evening Bat Workshop
4	B, L, D	Chocolate from Tree to Treat Experience	Transfer to Fortuna / Arenal	Costa Rica Cooking Class	Arenal Volcano Hike Dinner
5	B, L, D	Eco-Centre Danaus Biology & Wildlife Walk	Don Juan's Farm & Costa Rica Culture Experience		Dinner & Hot Springs
6	B, L, D	Transfer to the Pacific Coast	Jungle Crocodile & Tropical Mangrove Safari	Hotel Check-in	Dinner Free Time
7	B, L, D	Manuel Antonio National Park Excursion & Beach Time			Dinner & Trip Reflections
8	B	Transfer to San Jose International Airport; depart Costa Rica for home			



Costa Rica is one of the most biologically diverse regions on the planet!

As with all sample itineraries, please be aware that this is an "example" of a schedule and that the activities and hotels shown may be variable dependent upon dates, weather, special requests and other factors. Itineraries will be confirmed prior to travel.



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A Message From Our Team

At STEM Study Tours, we believe students learn best when they're immersed, engaged, and inspired. Every program is built with intention - blending hands-on discovery, academic depth, and meaningful experiences that help students see the world (and themselves) in new ways. Our goal is for each itinerary to spark curiosity, build confidence, and create moments students carry long after the trip ends. We're honored to partner with schools who share that vision and to help bring learning to life beyond the classroom.

— Michele & The Hammock Expeditions Team

Why Travel With Hammock Expeditions & STEM Study Tours

Schools choose us because we design programs that are organized, intentional, and built around real learning. Our itineraries combine strong academics with smooth logistics, giving teachers confidence and giving students opportunities to explore, ask questions, and grow. We partner with trusted local experts, communicate clearly, and support groups every step of the way so educators can focus on their students - not the logistics.

What Sets Us Apart

- **Purpose-Driven Itineraries** - Students actively participate in meaningful, real-world learning.
- **Safety, Structure & Professionalism** - From 24-hour support to vetted partners and clear communication, we ensure teachers can focus on their students while we handle the logistics.
- **Hands-On, High-Impact Learning** - Our programs emphasize field science, conservation, and experiential learning - the kind that sticks with students long after the trip ends.
- **Student-Centered Design** - We balance learning with fun, reflection with adventure, and structure with flexibility. Every day is crafted to keep students engaged, energized, and supported.
- **A Team That Travels With Purpose** - We're educators, planners, naturalists, and travel professionals who care deeply about student growth. Your goals become our goals.

Our Commitment to You

When you travel with us, you gain a partner who understands your vision, anticipates your needs, and delivers an experience your students will remember for years to come. We're here to support your school, empower your students, and make every moment meaningful.

We want to be your educational partner. Let us know how we may serve you.

Michele, Christina, Izzy, Dana, Taylor, and the Team



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Costa Rica Eco-Adventure invites young explorers to discover one of the world's most biodiverse countries through hands-on learning and unforgettable experiences. Students journey from volcanic peaks to rainforest rivers, ziplining through lush canopies, spotting wildlife on safaris, and diving into local culture through chocolate and cooking workshops.

Designed for educators and families who value purposeful travel, this program blends adventure with education - connecting science, sustainability, and cultural understanding. Each day balances active exploration with reflection and fun, inspiring curiosity and teamwork while deepening appreciation for Costa Rica's natural wonders and vibrant communities.



Costa Rica is a living classroom of adventure and discovery. From steaming volcanoes and lush rainforests to pristine beaches and vibrant wildlife, this Central American gem offers endless opportunities to learn, explore, and connect with nature. Its commitment to sustainability and “pura vida” spirit make it an ideal destination for students and travelers alike—safe, welcoming, and full of wonder at every turn.

Did you know?

- ❖ Costa Rica has 5% of the world's biodiversity even though it's smaller than West Virginia.
- ❖ The country runs on more than 98% renewable energy, making it one of the world's greenest nations.
- ❖ Sloths move so slowly that algae grows on their fur, helping them blend into the rainforest.
- ❖ Costa Rica has over 200 volcanoes, and several are still active.
- ❖ The national motto “Pura Vida” means “pure life” and reflects the country's friendly, positive spirit.
- ❖ Sea turtles return to the same beach where they were born to lay their eggs.
- ❖ Costa Rica abolished its military in 1948, choosing to invest in education and healthcare instead.
- ❖ You can find more than 900 species of birds, including colorful toucans and scarlet macaws.
- ❖ The rainforest canopy is so dense that 80% of its wildlife lives above ground in the treetops.
- ❖ Costa Rica protects over 25% of its land as national parks and reserves - one of the highest percentages in the world.

Sample Hotels

San Jose: [Sleep Inn Hotel Paseo Las Damas](#)

Sarapiquí: [Selva Verde Lodge & Rainforest Reserve](#)

La Fortuna / Arenal: [Hotel Arenal Montechiari](#)

Central Pacific Coast: [Punta Leona Beach Club & Nature Resort](#)



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Day 1

Dinner (dependent upon arrival time)

Travel to Costa Rica via international air, arriving at Juan Santamaría International Airport. After boarding your transportation, your group will be transferred to your hotel in the San Jose area. After getting checked in, we will have our Welcome, Safety & Orientation meeting and then dependent upon your arrival time, your group will reconvene for dinner later in the evening. If you experience a late arrival, head for bed and we will start in the morning!

Day 2

Breakfast, lunch & dinner

Today's activities include:



Poás Volcano: Where Earth Comes Alive - A visit to Poás Volcano places students at the edge of one of Costa Rica's most dynamic natural laboratories, where they can witness firsthand how powerful geological forces shape the planet. Standing near the volcano's vast, steaming crater, students explore the national park's unique high-altitude ecosystem, observe fumaroles and mineral-rich crater lakes, and learn how volcanic activity influences everything from soil fertility to biodiversity. This experience transforms Poás into a living case study in earth science, climate impact, and environmental resilience as

students see how Costa Rica monitors volcanic activity, protects surrounding communities, and preserves fragile ecosystems in an active volcanic zone. It's the kind of moment that turns textbook concepts into something real, memorable, and deeply inspiring.



Doka Estate Coffee Plantation: From Bean to Brew - At Doka Estate, students step into the heart of Costa Rica's coffee tradition, one of the country's most important agricultural and cultural pillars, while discovering the full journey of coffee from seedling to roasting. This hands-on experience takes groups through the plantation's lush fields, where they learn how altitude, climate, soil, and sustainability practices shape flavor, before seeing the century-old water-powered mill that still operates today. Along the way, students connect science, agriculture, ecology, and global impact as they

discover how coffee cultivation affects local ecosystems, how farmers balance tradition with modern environmental practices, and how Costa Rica's commitment to sustainable agriculture supports both communities and biodiversity. It's an immersive look at the chemistry, ecology, and economics behind one of the world's most beloved crops - and a meaningful chance to understand how everyday choices ripple across the planet.

Day 3

Breakfast, lunch & dinner

Today's activities include:



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Hacienda Pozo Azul: Adventure With Purpose - At Hacienda Pozo Azul, students step into one of Costa Rica's most innovative eco-adventure centers, where conservation, community, and outdoor exploration come together along the Sarapiquí River. This sprawling rainforest reserve gives groups the chance to experience Costa Rica's natural beauty up close through activities that are both thrilling and deeply educational, while learning how sustainable tourism supports local communities, protects fragile ecosystems, and provides real-world models for conservation in action. What makes Pozo Azul especially meaningful is how it transforms adventure into applied learning, helping students see how land stewardship, biodiversity protection, and eco-friendly design shape the future of responsible travel. It's an unforgettable blend of adrenaline, teamwork, and environmental understanding - the kind of experience that stays with them long after they return home.

Although several activities are available for our guests, for our Middle School students, we encourage groups to select the ***Ziplining Adventure*** in the morning, and then a ***Floating Wildlife Safari*** in the afternoon. Other available options include Class III and IV Whitewater Rafting, Horseback Riding, Rappelling & Nature Hikes. A waiver/release is required for all activities and for all participants.



Evening Bat Workshop at Tirimbina Biological Reserve: Science After Dark - As night falls over the rainforest, students step into the world of Costa Rica's most important and often misunderstood mammals: bats. At the Reserve, a leading center for tropical research, groups join trained biologists for an immersive, hands-on workshop that brings real field science to life as they observe how researchers safely capture and study bats, learn how to identify different species, and discover critical roles bats play in pollination, seed dispersal, insect control, and overall ecosystem health. Students may

even see scientists collect data on wing structure, feeding habits, and population health using the same methods applied in global conservation efforts. This eye-opening, after-dark experience challenges misconceptions, highlights the importance of biodiversity, and transforms the rainforest from something students simply see into something they truly understand, blending curiosity, courage, and real-world STEM learning in a memorable way.

Day 4

Breakfast, lunch & dinner

Today's activities include:



Chocolate from Tree to Treat Experience - In the heart of the rainforest, students discover the remarkable journey behind one of the world's favorite foods: chocolate. During this immersive, hands-on workshop, they learn how cacao is grown, harvested, fermented, and transformed within the lush ecosystem where it naturally thrives, following the full bean-to-bar process from cracking open fresh cacao pods to grinding roasted beans and creating traditional chocolate. Along the way, guides bring the story of cacao to life, connecting its cultural history in Costa Rica, its importance to Indigenous communities, and the role sustainable farming plays in protecting rainforest biodiversity. This delicious



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experience blends science, culture, and sensory learning as students explore how climate and soil shape flavor, how fermentation and roasting change chemical properties, and how ethical agriculture supports local families and fragile ecosystems. It's hands-on learning at its sweetest - a memorable way to connect the rainforest, culture, sustainability, and the real-world science behind every bite.



Pura Vida Cooking Class: Farm-to-Table Flavors of Costa Rica – In this workshop, students step into a true farm-to-table experience where Costa Rican culture, sustainability, and culinary creativity come together. The workshop begins with a guided walk through a local organic farm, where students harvest fresh ingredients straight from the fields — tropical fruits, fragrant herbs, root vegetables, and seasonal produce grown using eco-friendly practices. Back in the open-air kitchen, students learn to prepare traditional Costa Rican dishes such as homemade tortillas, gallo pinto, picadillos, and plantain favorites. Guided by a local chef, they explore how flavor, culture, and community are woven into every recipe. The hands-on cooking process highlights the chemistry of food, the importance of regenerative agriculture, and the role cuisine plays in Costa Rican identity.



Arenal Volcano Hike: Exploring Costa Rica's Living Landscape – This hike takes students through one of Costa Rica's most dramatic and scientifically significant environments. As they walk along the base of this perfectly conical stratovolcano, students explore trails shaped by past lava flows, observe hardened volcanic rock formations, and learn how eruptions have transformed the surrounding ecosystem over time. Guides introduce students to the region's unique biodiversity - from regenerating forests to species that thrive in nutrient-rich volcanic soils. Along the way, students discover how Costa Rica monitors volcanic activity, manages natural hazards, and protects communities living in the shadow of an active volcano.

Day 5

Breakfast, lunch & dinner

Today's activities include:



Eco-Centre Danaus: Biology & Wildlife Walk - At Eco-Centre Danaus, students step into a thriving biological reserve where rainforest conservation, field science, and biodiversity come vividly to life. Guided by expert naturalists along shaded trails, students observe wildlife in its natural habitat - from sloths and poison dart frogs to iguanas, butterflies, and colorful tropical birds - while learning how reforestation, wetland restoration, and sustainable land management help protect fragile ecosystems. This experience transforms the rainforest into a living biology classroom as students practice real field observation skills, identify species using scientific methods, and discover how habitat protection, human impact, and community-driven conservation are deeply connected. Peaceful, eye-opening, and deeply educational, the walk helps students understand why Costa Rica is a global leader in conservation and why protected places like Danaus are essential refuges for wildlife and biodiversity.



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Don Juan's Farm & Costa Rica Culture Experience - At Don Juan's Farm, students step into a living classroom where Costa Rican culture and sustainable agriculture come together. This family-run farm introduces groups to traditional crops like sugarcane, coffee, tropical fruits, and medicinal plants, while showcasing organic farming practices that protect soil health, biodiversity, and surrounding ecosystems. Students get hands-on with cultural demonstrations - pressing sugarcane, grinding coffee, tasting fresh produce, and learning how generations of Costa Rican families have cared for the land.



Baldi Hot Springs & Geothermal Pools - At Baldi Hot Springs, students unwind in a series of naturally heated thermal pools fed by the geothermal energy of Arenal Volcano. Surrounded by lush rainforest and dramatic volcanic views, they move through mineral-rich pools of varying temperatures, explore waterfalls and landscaped gardens, and enjoy a relaxing evening capped with a delicious dinner on-site - a perfect way to recharge after a day of exploration. This experience also connects geology, wellness, and environmental appreciation, helping students see how geothermal activity creates natural hot springs, how Costa Rica manages and

protects its geothermal resources, and how volcanic landscapes shape both ecosystems and daily life. It's a restorative, memorable moment that blends science with relaxation in a way students never forget.

Day 6

Breakfast, lunch & dinner

Today's activities include:



Jungle Crocodile Safari & Tropical Mangrove Adventure - On the safari, students travel by boat along the Tárcoles River and into the surrounding mangrove ecosystem, one of the most biologically rich habitats in Costa Rica. Guided by naturalists, they observe American crocodiles, waterbirds, iguanas, and other wildlife up close while learning how mangroves protect coastlines, support biodiversity, and serve as vital nurseries for countless species. This experience connects wildlife conservation, ecosystem science, and real-world environmental challenges as students see firsthand how human activity

impacts river and mangrove health, how predators like crocodiles shape the food web, and why protecting coastal ecosystems is essential for climate resilience. It's an exciting, eye-opening adventure that deepens their understanding of Costa Rica's wildlife and the delicate balance that sustains it.

Day 7

Breakfast, lunch & dinner



Manuel Antonio National Park & Beach Time - At Manuel Antonio National Park, students explore one of Costa Rica's most iconic protected areas, a lush coastal rainforest where monkeys, sloths, iguanas, tropical birds, and vibrant plant life thrive alongside white-sand beaches and turquoise Pacific waters. Guided along shaded trails and scenic overlooks, they learn how land and sea ecosystems connect, observe wildlife in its natural habitat, and experience firsthand why protected areas are essential to biodiversity and conservation. After the hike, students enjoy well-deserved beach time to

relax, swim, and celebrate the journey together while soaking in the beauty of Costa Rica's Pacific coast. This joyful finale helps students understand how national parks safeguard endangered species, how coastal ecosystems support both marine and terrestrial life, and how responsible tourism helps preserve fragile habitats for future generations.

Day 8

Breakfast (dependent upon departure time)

After breakfast, and depending on flight departure times, students transfer to Juan Santamaría International Airport for their journey home. As the group says goodbye to Costa Rica, they carry with them new friendships, meaningful discoveries, and unforgettable memories from a week filled with adventure, learning, wildlife, culture, and the spirit of *pura vida*.



Hasta luego Costa Rica!



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Minimum Booking Numbers: 20 students

What's Included:

- ✓ Roundtrip international flights
- ✓ 7-nights' accommodation in Costa Rica
- ✓ Breakfasts, lunches & dinners daily (except travel days)
- ✓ Transportation for programmed activities & airport transfers
- ✓ Poás Volcano Excursion
- ✓ The Doka Estate & Coffee Plantation Tour
- ✓ Rainforest Ziplining in Sarapiquí
- ✓ Floating Wildlife Safari on the Sarapiquí River
- ✓ Evening Bat Workshop
- ✓ Chocolate from Tree to Treat Experience
- ✓ Eco-Centre Danaus Biology & Wildlife Walk
- ✓ Don Juan's Farm & Costa Rica Culture Experience
- ✓ Guided Hike at Arenal Volcano
- ✓ Baldi Hot Springs Excursion
- ✓ Pura Vida Cooking Class
- ✓ Manuel Antonio National Park Excursion
- ✓ Jungle Crocodile & Tropical Mangrove Safari on the Tárcoles River
- ✓ Dedicated Tour Director
- ✓ 24-hour emergency cover

What's Not Included:

- ⊗ Fully comprehensive insurance (**mandatory**)
- ⊗ Baggage costs, pay directly to airline if required
- ⊗ Baggage handling - everyone should be able to pull / load their own bag
- ⊗ Transfers to/from home airport
- ⊗ Meal selections other than ones provided for the entire group (we are generally able to cater for allergy conditions, vegetarians, halal and in some cases vegan)
- ⊗ Cost of visas, visa waivers, passports or other legal requirements for entry/return
- ⊗ Cost of inoculations or medication required for travel
- ⊗ Sightseeing / Entertainment / Transport not shown in Itinerary
- ⊗ Hotel incidental deposits & bills – mini-bar, movies, etc.
- ⊗ **Gratuities – drivers, hotel services, local guides, tour director** (please budget \$60 per person)
- ⊗ Credit card fees if individuals wish to pay via credit card instead of ACH
- ⊗ Additional taxes, fuel surcharges or fees levied by governments / suppliers

As always, our staff are available to answer any questions you may have regarding programming.
If we may serve you in any way, please do not hesitate to contact us.



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SAMPLE PACKING LIST – COSTA RICA!

- Raincoat / umbrella
- 1 long-sleeved shirt
- Mosquito repellent & anti-itch cream
- Sunscreen
- Flashlight / headlamp
- Hiking boots, athletic shoes; water shoes; beach sandals
- Camera & binoculars if desired
- Bathing suit / swimming costume
- Water bottle
- 4 – 6 pairs of shorts
- Short-sleeve or non-sleeved T-shirts
- 1 fleece or sweatshirt
- Optional casual outfit or dress for dinner, if desired
- Cash for meals on days 1 & 8 (dinner included on arrival day provided early evening arrival)
- Cash for any Gratuities / Tips

Please know that gratuities (tips) are totally discretionary however they are customary and assist in making up the general basic wages for service personnel. Gratuities are generally paid in local currency or USD, paid per person and suggested minimums are:

- ❖ Bus Driver = \$10-15 per person on tour, dependent upon service levels
- ❖ National Guide = \$25+ per person on tour, dependent upon service levels
- ❖ Tour Director = \$25+ per person on tour, dependent upon service levels

PASSPORT COPY - Please bring at least one photocopy of your passport's information page. In case of the loss of a passport, the passport owner can use this copy to get a new passport reissued relatively quickly. Additionally, participants may be asked to show proof of nationality to authorities, so this should be carried on your person always.



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