



Cultural Tourist Guide **NORTHERN PLAINS**

LA FORTUNA, CAÑO NEGRO y BIJAGUA -
GUATUSO - LOS CHILES - UPALA - SAN CARLOS



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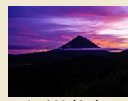
PHOTO CREDITS
GUIDE Northern Plains

- 1- Los Chiles Chamber of Tourism
Catuchi.fn@gmail.com
Fernando Sandí Castro
- 2- Tenorio- Miravalles Chamber
Flory Ramirez/ Orían Rodríguez
CATTEMI
Tenorio-miravalles@hotmail.com;
- 3- I.C.T. Regional Office Oscar Solís
Oscar.solis@ict.go.cr;
- 4- Fortuna- Arenal Chamber of Tourism
Tadeo Morales
Pablo Rodríguez
info@arenalcostarica.cr
- 5- Upala Chamber of Tourism
CATUPA
Geovanni Getvislav / Digna Villalobos
catupala@gmail.com;
- 6- San Carlos Chamber of Tourism
Gustavo Flores
info@camaradecomerciozn.com;
- 7- Bijagua Chamber of Rural Tourism
CATURI
Kenneth Hidalgo Chinchilla
info@caturi@gmail.com;
- 8- Miravalles-Tenorio National Park
German Aguilar, SINAC
German.aguilar@sinac.go.cr;
- 9- Casitas Tenorio-
Pipa Kely
info@casitastenorio.com;
- 10- Aventuras Travel
Helen Salazar Chaverri
desarrollo@aventurasarenal.com;
- 11- Desafío Adventure
Mario Abarca
Mario.abarca@desafio.com;
- 12- La Finca Lodge / Hot Air Balloon
Esteban Elizondo Arrieta
*esteban@lafincacr.com;

Tourist Information

-  www.visitcostarica.com/sites
-  www.visitcostarica.com/es/costa-rica

Credits of cover photos:



José Meléndez



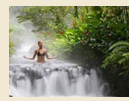
Mario Badilla



ICT



Roberto Ramos



ICT



Roberto Ramos



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10 things every tourist should see and do in the Northern Plains

1

Visit the Arenal Volcano and Tenorio Volcano (Río Celeste) National Parks



2

Visit the wetlands of Caño Negro and watch birds in the whole region



3

Boat ride through the Arenal Reservoir and enjoy a sunset in the place



4

Enjoy rural tourism from the area



5

Relax with wellness tourism, spa and hot springs



6

Experience the adventure activities



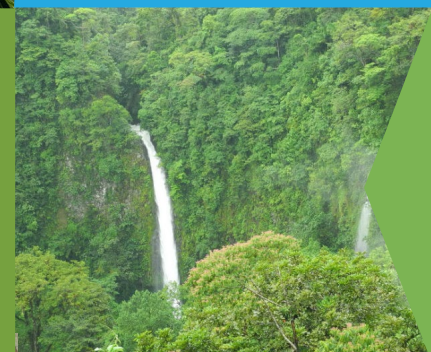
7

Enjoy local peoples and their traditions



8

Refresh with a visit to La Fortuna waterfalls and Río Celeste



9

Acquire local handicrafts



10

Meet and share traditional practices of the indigenous Maleku people





In this tourist-cultural guide we incorporate information from the tourist development centers of **Fortuna, Bijagua and Caño Negro**, as well as the tourist flow distribution centers of Ciudad Quesada and Los Chiles, located in the 4 cantons of the province of Alajuela, with regard to major natural, cultural and historical attractions, as well as recommendations of things to do to make your visit to the region a unique and unforgettable experience. **The Northern Plains offer a wide range of alternatives for ecotourism, adventure travel, rural tourism, wellness and health, or simply leisure and relaxation.**

During your visit, you will observe that the Northern Plains region is a territory made up mostly of low lands, with a humid tropical climate thanks to the strong influence of trade winds coming from the Caribbean Sea. Due to this, the **Northern Plains experience high rainfall throughout the year**, allowing the development of humid forests, evergreen and fertile plain, and natural environments that have become sanctuaries for **waterfowl, reptiles, mammals and the prehistoric gar fish.**

You will find several areas protected under the National System of Conservation Areas (SINAC) in the Northern Plains, including the **Arenal Volcano National Park, Juan Castro Blanco National Park and Caño Negro National Wildlife Refuge**, as well as many other natural attractions, lakes, lagoons, volcanoes, hot springs, rivers and waterfalls. The number of visitors attracted by the beauty and exuberant nature of the region has led to ample tourist development in terms of services and adventure sites that will make your visit to the area a unique experience.

There are lakes, such as Arenal, where you can navigate and participate in adventure activities, and rivers such as Frío, Peñas Blancas, San Carlos, Toro and Puerto Viejo, that also offer adventure activities and nature observation. Some rivers are of great importance for navigation, others are preferred for their thermal waters or attract visitors with their impressive light blue color. The **waterfalls are no exception and you will always be surrounded by flora and fauna that will make you feel like you are in paradise.** Beautiful examples are the Rio Celeste waterfall, with its turquoise blue waters, and the imposing La Fortuna fall, with a height of 70 meters.



If you are interested in exploring caves, the Northern Plains stand out, once again, on the national map with the **Venado Caverns**, made up of a system of underground caverns with unique geological features that are at least 2,000 meters in length. **Walking inside these caverns is a must for adventurers and nature lovers.**

The people of the Northern Plains await you with their warm and friendly attention. Don't miss a visit that will allow you to get to **learn about rural tourism, the local culture and its diverse traditions** always accompanied by a kind smile from the locals. On the way, you may run into one of the famous fairs that take place in any of the towns throughout the region, where there will be no shortage of bull riding events, livestock auctions, local gastronomy, music, and dancing.

The region invites you to explore its rural towns for the perfect combination of nature, adventure and agritourism.

This is an area with a cross-border identity. It is located in an environmentally important part of the San Juan River basin and has been the link for economic, social, and cultural relations between the two countries since ancient times. The essence of the territory was generated precisely from the lifestyle of these cross-border families and communities that produce basic grains and tubers, with an important organizational tradition in which women have played a key role. Economically, the interdependence of trade relations is clear, as well as the seasonal migration flows linked to agro-industrial activities.

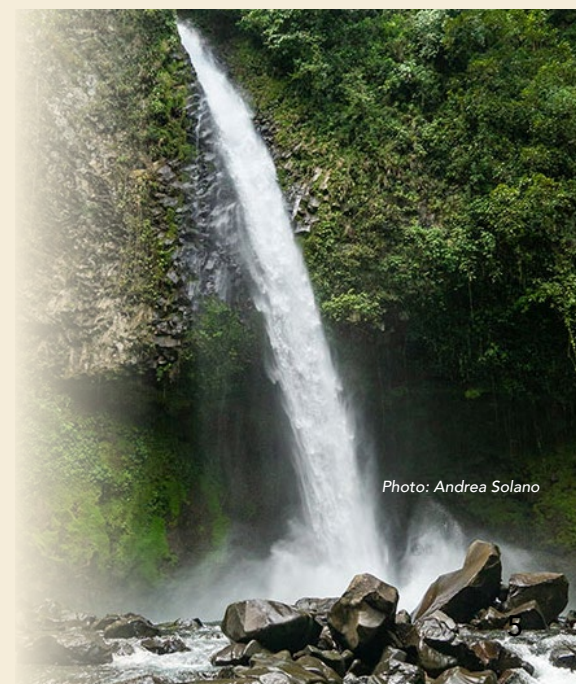


Photo: Andrea Solano

[Return to map](#)

Cultural Heritage

Gastronomy: the area has at least three types of traditional cuisine: cross-border cuisine, mestizo cuisine and Maleku cuisine. The products that serve as the base for these cooking styles include beans, corn, rice, citrus fruits, pineapple, heart of palm, plantain, cassava, and others. [Read more](#)

Handicrafts: There are multiple trade and craft techniques in the area, such as saddlery, cabinetmaking, basketry, wood and gourd crafts, and more. In the case of the Maleku community, they work with wood, clay, fibers, and basketry. [Read more](#)

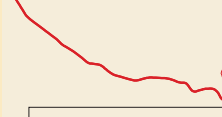
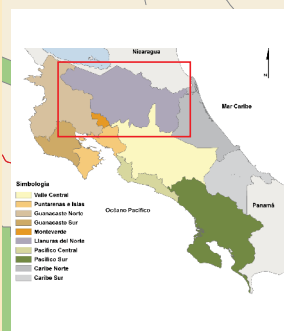
Festive activities and celebrations: The area has programmed a series of festivities linked to popular, patron saint and traditional festivals, which will allow you to enjoy the culture, gastronomy, customs and local traditions of the different towns. [Leer más.](#)

Music: The music in the area is based, in part, on waltzes, mazurkas, boleros, and the Nicaraguan-style son with a guitar. You will find a diverse set of musical groups in the region that will delight you with traditional music, songs of the area and popular music, in different events, festivities and dances or you may hire them. [Read more](#)

Folkloric dances: There are several dance groups that will transmit the joy, folk stories and living culture of the area. These dances are presented in community activities, events, and local festivals. [Read more.](#)

Indigenous community (Malekus): One of the attractions of the area is the possibility for tourists to visit and experience the native inhabitants of the Maleku community. [Read more.](#)

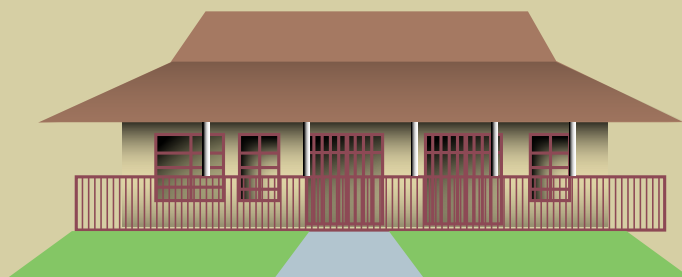
Museo Casa del Boyero: he Museum of the House of the Boyero displays all things related to the tradition of the "boyero," or ox herder, and the carreta, or cart, in Venecia of San Carlos. [Read more](#)



Architectural Heritage

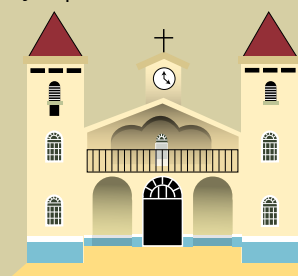
1 House of Emilio Muñoz Marengo

Located in Upala, presents a vernacular wooden architecture, typical of the constructions of the nineteen forties. Built in 1954, it was declared Historical Architectural Heritage of Costa Rica in 2001. [Read more](#)



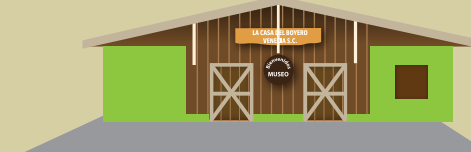
2 Templo Católico Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria

This catholic temple was declared Architectural Heritage on March 11, 2005. The first construction work began in 1947. It is one of the most beautiful temples in the Northern Zone due to its abundance and variety of precious woods.



3 Casa del Boyero

The House of the Boyero is a project run by the Asociación Pro Museo de la Casa del Boyero that preserves and displays everything related to the tradition of boyeco (oxcart transportation) and the oxcart in Venecia of San Carlos. Emilia Prieto 2020 National Culture Award for Intangible Cultural Heritage. [Read more](#)

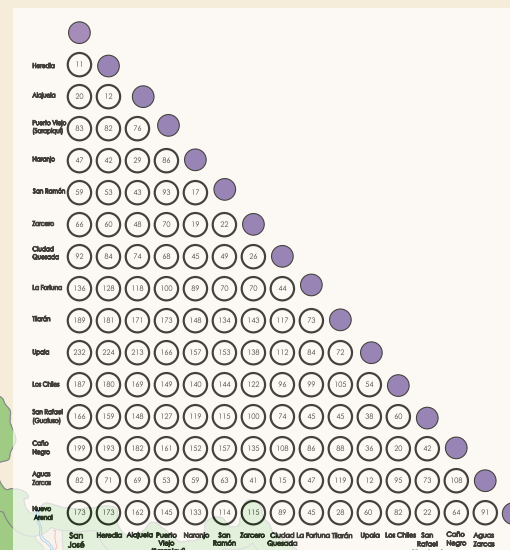


Enter the following links and you will be able to find information about companies in the area registered by

EMERGENCIAS 9-1-1

- [Hotels](#)
- [Car Rental](#)
- [Restaurants](#)
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Tourist Activities:

Horseback riding
Horseback riding is a widespread activity in the area and can be enjoyed in: Tilarán, La Fortuna, Bajo del Toro, Caño Negro, Puerto Viejo of Sarapiquí, among others. Several tours to various sites of interest use this form of transportation.

Hiking
There is no limit to the variety of hikes that can be done to observe the different natural attractions, rivers, volcanoes, hot springs, waterfalls, and more.

Recreational biking
The area offers a variety of adventure and recreational trails for traditional and/or mountain bikes. Some routes of interest are to the La Fortuna waterfall, agricultural plantations, the Arenal volcano and reservoir and a road that connects La Fortuna with Monteverde.

Boat tours
Enjoy beautiful scenery and the observation of flora and fauna on several rivers, including Río Frio, San Carlos, Sarapiquí, Puerto Viejo, and others.

Visit and observation of caves
Near the community of Venado is the most important and accessible cave system in the northern zone, which allows you to enjoy an adventure and learn about the stalactite and stalagmite formations, as well as diverse geological aspects.

Observation of flora-fauna, birds and butterflies.
The diversity of public protected areas such as Arenal and Juan Castro Blanco National Parks, and the Caño Negro and Bosque Alegre Wildlife Refuges, complemented by other private protected sites such as the Danaus Botanical Garden, La Selva Biological Station, Selva Verde and the Tirimbina Reserve, just to name a few, allow you to enjoy the natural wealth of the area.

Adventures among nature trails, hanging bridges and treetops
Tourism and recreation companies in various communities, including La Fortuna, La Virgen and Puerto Viejo of Sarapiquí, have developed facilities for the enjoyment of adventure activities that take place on hanging bridges, nature trails and in the treetops.

Photography
Photography is one of the most outstanding activities due to the diverse options of the natural and cultural landscape, as well as the richness of the flora and fauna, waterfalls, rivers, volcanoes and various agricultural and livestock farms: sugar cane, coffee, pineapple plantations, dairies and others.

Wellness tourism
Wellness and spas while enjoying the hot springs.
Visit the thermal centers, more than 200 thermal water pools distributed in spas and hotels.

Rural tourism and community-based rural tourism
Activities are offered to tourists in a rural environment that connect you with practical experiences that put you in contact with historical and cultural manifestations, demonstrative agricultural and livestock farms, agro-industrial farms, natural areas dedicated to protection, zoos, aquariums, amusement and water parks, and much more.

JANUARY

Last week Float and cart parade in honor of San Bosco. Fortuna de San Carlos

FEBRUARY

2 **Festivities for the Virgen de la Candelaria, patron saint of Venecia of San Carlos**
The day in honor of the Virgen de la Candelaria is February 2, but the festivities in the community of Venecia begin on January 31 and extend to February 10. In addition to religious activities, there are cultural activities including marimba performances, boyero parades, a convite or banquet and traditional sesteo or gathering to relax in the shade, among others. The parish hall is also set up to sell traditional foods such as tamales, picadillos, meats, gallos, breads and other dishes. **More information:** si.cultura.cr/expresiones-y-manifestaciones

3 **Our Lady of Lourdes at Cutris of San Carlos**
It has been celebrated for about 40 years. While the day of the Virgin of Lourdes is February 3, the festivities in Cutris begin on February 1 and end on the 11th of that month. **More information:** si.cultura.cr/expresiones-y-manifestaciones

First Sunday **Boyeros of Venecia of San Carlos Parades**
Held on the first Sunday of February, it is an activity that has its prelude with the "convite" on Friday and the "sesteo" on Saturday prior to this event. Starts Sunday at 11 am. **More information:** si.cultura.cr/expresiones-y-manifestaciones/desfile-de-boyeros-de-san-carlos.html

1st and 2nd week **Civic Festivities of La Fortuna.**

Last week **Civic Festivities, Tilarán.**

MARCH

March 18 and 19 **Festivities for the Patron Sant of Caño Negro.**

19 **Festivities for San José in Aguas Zarcas of San Carlos.**
The festivities last for two days. In addition to the Eucharist, there is live music, sports activities, and a fair, among others. **More information:** si.cultura.cr/expresiones-y-manifestaciones/fiestas-patronales-san-jose

APRIL

San Carlos Livestock Exposition
This fair is held in the community of Platanar of Florencia in April, where the best regional cattle are exhibited to the public. Prizes are awarded to the best, and as a complement, various activities are carried out, among which are horse parades, concerts, vehicle exhibitions, among others.

23 **Festivities for the Patron Saint of San Jorge**

MAY

Last weekend **Sarapiquí Tourist Fair.**

End of May **Equestrian Race. Venado of San Carlos**
This is a long-distance endurance competition, involving horses, ranging from 40 kilometers to 160 kilometers. The key is to showcase the skills of both horse and rider. **More information:** si.cultura.cr/expresiones-y-manifestaciones/carrera-ecuestre-san-carlos.html

15 **Festivities for the Patron Saint of San Isidro**

JUNE

13 **Festivities in honor of San Antonio, patron saint of Tilaran.**

13 **Pital of San Carlos Boyero Parade**
More than 29 years ago local boyeros, took to the streets to parade in honor of the patron saint, since then the Boyeros Parade in Pital is held on the Sunday closest to the feast of St. Anthony of Padua, celebrated on June 13 each year. **More information:** si.cultura.cr/expresiones-y-manifestaciones/desfile-de-boyeros-de-pital.html

JULY

16 **Patron Saint Festivities of the Virgen del Carmen en las Nubes**

AUGUST

2 **Patron Saint Festivities in Bijagua in honor of the Virgin of the Angels**

24 **National Parks Day**

26 **Gar fish Fair in Caño Negro**

30 **Santa Rosa de Lima in Pocosol of San Carlos.**
The community of Pocosol celebrates its festivities in honor of her from August 14 to September 1. Some activities that take place during these festivities include the Eucharist, live music, theatrical plays, traditional and popular dance presentations and sports activities. **More information:** si.cultura.cr/expresiones-y-manifestaciones/fiestas-patronales-santa-rosa-de-lima-en-pocosol

SEPTEMBER

First week **Festival de la Danta. The Tapir Festival takes place in Bijagua.**

14 **Lanterns parade. It is celebrated in all schools**

15 **Costa Rican Independence Day. Parades in the communities.**

OCTOBER

4 **Festivities in honor of San Francisco de Asís. Los Chiles.**
The patron saint of the San Francisco de Dos Ríos and Tabarcia (San José) communities, is also the patron of Los Chiles, in the province of Alajuela. In Los Chiles, the festivities last for up to two weeks, and include meals, open-air concerts, dancing in the evenings, sport activities and horseback riding.

Casa Grande Fair in Upala: It is a fair where you can enjoy traditional food, agricultural and agro-industrial products, dance, and music.

26 **Entrance of the saints in San Carlos**
This activity includes more than 30 images of saints from different communities and parishes, parading through the central street of Ciudad Quesada until they reach the Cathedral of San Carlos Borromeo. The images parade is loaded with faithful devotees, guided by a cart with a siren that clears the way for them. The community stands at the sides of the road to watch the parade of the saints and their arrival at the cathedral si.cultura.cr/expresiones-y-manifestaciones/la-entrada-de-los-santos-en-san-carlos.html

NOVEMBER

4 **Festivities in honor of San Carlos Borromeo. San Carlos.**
To celebrate the patron saint of the canton of San Carlos, the festivities are held from October 25 to November 4. All are organized by the Diocese of Ciudad Quesada. **More information:** si.cultura.cr/expresiones-y-manifestaciones/fiestas-patronales-san-carlos-borromeo.html

Forest and cattle festivals. Organized by the Municipality of San Carlos. The community named these festivities in recognition to wood and cattle, the products marketed in the region.

22 **Saint Cecilia's Patron Saint Festivities**

DECEMBER

Every three months at Full Moon. Observation of religious rituals. Tonjibe Palenque. San Rafael of Guatuso.

8 **Patron Saint Festivities of the Virgen of Guadalupe in Buenos Aires of Caño Negro**

8 **Patron Festivities of the Conception of Mary, in Veracruz de Caño Negro**

12 **Patron Saint Festivities of the Virgen of Guadalupe, in Gallo Pinto.**

The Northern Plains feature at least three traditional types of cuisine: cross-border cuisine, mestizo cuisine, and Maleku cuisine. The products that serve as the base for these cooking styles include beans, corn, rice, citrus fruits, pineapple, heart of palm, plantain, cassava, and others.

The area has a very tasty gastronomy that you must not miss. Among the main dishes, we have:

Cocoa candy



Candy prepared with cocoa and caramelized sugar. Simply delicious.

Bijagua style tubers and cheese



A dish based on cassava, tubers such as chamol, malanga and/or tiquizque, hard-boiled eggs, sweet and spicy peppers, garlic, and a cheese sauce (sour cream and cheese).

Green plantain and ñampí tamal



It is a bread prepared with a local tuber called ñampí, green plantains and pork.

Guacho de frijol



A dish based on red or black beans, rice, pork, garlic, onion, fresh peppers, celery and black pepper.

Morococho



A dish based on tender beans, pork ribs, rice, coriander, peppers and onion.

Pebre



A dish based on corn, chicken, tomato, onion, and sweet peppers.

Arepa campesina



A pancake made with flour, tapa de dulce (molded brown sugar), eggs, sour cream, oil, butter and milk.

Chocolate punch



A cold, thick drink based on milk, cinnamon, chocolate, cornstarch and coffee liqueur.

Fresh parboiled rice



Based on rice, water and sugar to taste.
si.cultura.cr/manifestaciones-culturales/fresco-de-arroz-sancochado.html

Cassava Picadillo



A hash type dish based on shredded chicken, chicken broth, cassava, cilantro, sweet peppers, tomato and onions.

Milk soup



Malanga with milk. Recipe prepared with malanga, milk and salt. It is a kind of cream of the tuber.
si.cultura.cr/manifestaciones-culturales/sopa-de-malanga-en-leche.html

Corn soup with cheese



A dish based on corn flour, cheese, onion, water, milk, peppers, coriander, spearmint, salt and pepper.

Corn chicha



Chicha is a type of liqueur based on cracked corn, hibiscus flower, sugar and vanilla.

Horchata



A soft drink made from rice, ground cocoa, cinnamon, hibiscus flower, cloves, water, milk and sugar.

Pinolillo



Drink based on corn, cinnamon, hibiscus flower, cloves, water, and milk.



Northern Plains Gastronomy

[Return to map](#)

Picadillo de arracache



A dish based on arracacha (tuber), potatoes, meat, tomato sauce, saffron, cilantro and pepper.

Tortillas palmeadas



Tortillas prepared with corn, water and salt.

Cassava cake



It is a dish made with cassava, chicken, cheese, onion, chili, garlic, coriander, oregano, pepper and bacon.

Buñuelos



Wheat flour dough fried in oil and covered with sugar or honey.

Coconut candy



Made with milk and grated coconut, similar to coconut milk.

Rice with cocoa



Dessert based on rice, milk, sugar, cinnamon, cocoa. It can be consumed hot or cold.

Chestnut cajeta



A fudge based on liquid and powdered milk, chestnuts and sugar.

Pineapple delights



A dessert made with pineapple, sugar, eggs, milk, margarine, vanilla and flour.

Meatball soup



A dish based on cassava, tiquizque, corn, yam, potato, carrot, squash, chicken, pipian, onion, peppers, garlic, eggs and corn flour.

Tamal Pizque



Bread made from dried corn

Yotamal



A tamal made from corn and sugar, wrapped in a tender corn husk.

Bean cajeta



A sweet fudge made with tender beans and sugar.



Handicrafts

There is an organization of local artisans in the area called **Colectivo Artesanal Norte Norte**, that produces crafts inspired by the culture, flora, fauna, traditions, and identity of the northern part of the country. This artisan collective gathers artisans from the cantons of Guatuso, Upala and Los Chiles, which are located in the northwestern part of the province of Alajuela, also known as the North North territory; hence, the name assigned to this collective. The area attracts national and international tourists because it is rich in natural resources and encloses protected areas for the conservation of flora and fauna. Another characteristic that enriches these areas is the added cultural value of indigenous populations such as the Malecu or Guatuso.

The formation of the North-North Collective arises as a result of an accompaniment process sponsored by the Costa Rican Tourism Institute, under the **Handicrafts with Identity Program** executed by the **Tourism Development Department of the Tourism Planning and Development Directorate** in 2011, as part of a strategy to ensure that the tourist intensely enjoys the travel experience and can take with them a unique product, forged by the hands of artisans in the area.

Take home a taste of the color and beauty of Plains!

Through the following catalog, contact artisans directly to obtain a product that reflects the identity of the north and contribute to improving the living conditions of our artisans.



With your purchase, you will be supporting our SMEs, and rescuing the local identity and culture.

[SEE CATALOG HERE](#)



When you visit the areas, you will be able to enjoy certain particularities that we indicate below:



San Carlos: Enjoy the urban landscape, where tourist attractions such as the park, the church, the market with traditional food and some handicraft products such as traditional leather goods, can be found. The House of Culture of Ciudad Quesada is a space of public interest for the expression and learning of arts and different cultural and artistic manifestations. There are regularly scheduled, theater, music and other presentations. Classes in dance, painting, singing, among others, are also offered.

The main activity of the area is livestock, as it provides 65% of the milk and more than half of the meat consumed in the country, so you can enjoy landscapes that portray this activity, as well as sugar cane, pineapple, citric fruits and tubers plantations or farms.

Upala: Visit farms and landscapes where the primary activity is the cultivation of beans (one of the largest producers nationwide), corn, rice, citric fruits, pineapple, heart of palm, plantain bananas, cassava, and others.

Los Chiles: Experience a predominately agricultural economy, based on the cultivation of basic grains, vegetables and fattening cattle along with tourism mainly related to boating through the rivers of the Frío river basin linked to the Caño Negro National Wildlife Refuge, one of the largest and most important wetlands in the country.

Guatuso: Enjoy the agricultural landscape, where you will find plantations of basic grains, sugar cane, coffee, pineapple, orange, plantain bananas and ornamental plants, as well as livestock and natural tourist attractions such as Rio Celeste, the labyrinth in Catira, the Malekus Indigenous Community, Cote Lake, and more.

If you visit the area you will be able to enjoy a series of natural attractions.

- **San Juan River:** This river is of great scenic beauty that can be navigated to enjoy the flora and fauna of the area and even to reach the border with Nicaragua and San Carlos of Nicaragua.

As well as a great variety of cultural attractions linked to:

- **The Maleku Community:** The Maleku indigenous village and territory, will allow you to enjoy their culture, agricultural production, tourism, and their handicraft production. The Guatuso indigenous territory has 600 inhabitants, distributed in three communities: Tonjibe, Margarita and El Sol, located on the banks of the El Sol river. These communities are accessible by gravel roads and are located a few kilometers from the center of Guatuso.

You will also get to visit and enjoy a cocoa plantation, a product that has been a part of the Maleku indigenous culture since time immemorial, as it is considered a sacred element with purifying and medicinal properties.

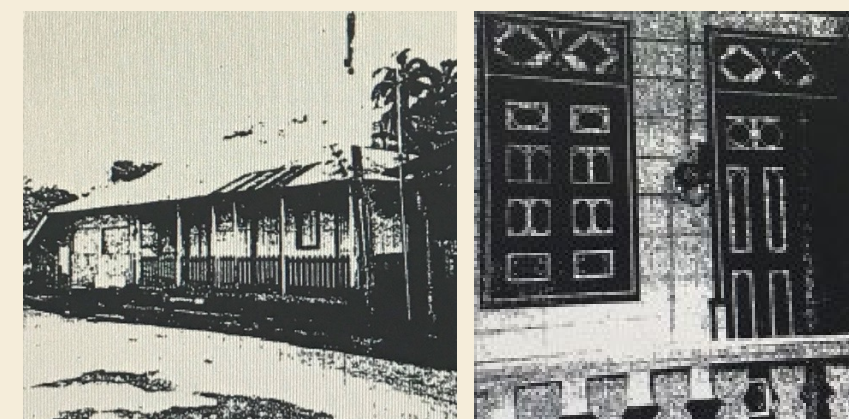
Architectural Material Heritage

When touring the area, you will observe a series of heritage buildings representing the particular architecture of the area, including:

House of Emilio Muñoz Marengo's: Located in Upala, it has a vernacular wooden architecture typical of the constructions that were built in the 1940s. This house was built in 1954 and declared a Historical Architectural Heritage of Costa Rica in 2001.



The house was built in black laurel heart wood and the roof is made with galvanized iron. There are drawings or details that decorate the doors and windows, copied from handkerchiefs or other items of personal use, which constituted a very particular way of copying the models.



Source: micostaricadeantano.com/2019/08/11/casa-munoz-marengo-upala-alajuela-1901-1950/#more-9323



MUSEO DE LA CASA DEL BOYERO

Emilia Prieto 2020 National Culture Award for Intangible Cultural Heritage.

In 2020, the 15th anniversary of the declaration of the Boyeo and the cart as a Masterpiece of the Intangible Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO is also celebrated.

The Museum of the House of the Boyero, in Venecia of San Carlos, is a project run by the Asociación Pro Museo de la Casa del Boyero that preserves and displays all things related to the tradition of boyeo and the oxcart and is advertised to the rest of the country. The association is heir to an organizational tradition established in 1959 and carried out without interruption since then. La House of the Boyero was created by this association in 2016 through Executive Decree No. 40041-C.

The participants of this association are bearers of the tradition that promote its transmission, safeguarding and revitalization, helping each new generation of men and women, to better understand and own this manifestation.

It has the support of local and regional organizations and businesses, professionals and organized groups such as: the Regional and Community Museum Program of the National Museum of Costa Rica (MNCR, MCJ), the University of Costa Rica, the Costa Rican Boyero Association,

the Rural Development Institute (INDER), the Territorial Council for Rural Development and the Juan Santamaría Historical and Cultural Museum.

It offers the public: Cart rides through Venecia of San Carlos to live the experience of using this means of transportation of yesteryear. An exhibit corner in the Museum's facilities, where you can learn about this Costa Rican tradition and observe the collection of objects related to boyeo.

Boyeo school, where participants learn how to choose the ideal oxen to form a team, how to yoke and work with them, with expert teachers in the field who are the most experienced herdsmen in the area.



Information:
 📞 Tel. (506) 2472 1012 Cel: 8552-8665
 ✉️ gigalacasadelboyero@gmail.com
 🌐 www.casadelboyero.com 📺 www.youtube.com/watch

ARTISTIC GROUPS

Los Chiles

El Gaspar Folkloric Dance Group: A group that emerged in 2004, whose dance and costumes express the local identity and are presented at fairs, festivals and cultural activities. Its director is **Oldemar Miranda, Tel 2471-1613, 8872-8143.**



Tres Amigos Musical Group:

Formed in 2009 performs ranchera music, boleros, cumbias and other genres.
Contact: Enrique Madrigal, telephone 8581-8838 and Didier Acuña 8525-9326

San Rafael Arcángel Trio:

Contact Ricardo Pilares 2471-8232, 8758-8023, Cesar Pilarte 8804-3132



Guatuso



Marimba La Tica:

An entertainment group offering shows at their farm, where a lake, tilapia and other amenities can be found.
Contact: Edwin Herrera 8322-7770 and Irma Barquero 8507-92671.



Cimarrona La 4x4:

More than 15 years old, this cimarrona, or band, plays in different events such as weddings, celebrations, parties, and more.

Contact: Jesús Daniel Carrillo Baltodano, 8681-8761.

E-mail: cimarrona4x4@gmail.com / cimarrona4x4@gmail.com

si.cultura.cr/agrupaciones-y-organizaciones/cimarrona-la-4x4.html



Marimba los D' La Villa

Instrumental or vocal musical group for all occasions, with a varied repertoire for different events, including: weddings, birthdays, dinners, dances, cultural presentations, wakes, showers, bachelor parties, and more.

Contact: Jesús Daniel Carrillo Baltodano, 8681-8761

E-mail: chus-87@hotmail.com

si.cultura.cr/agrupaciones-y-organizaciones/marimba-los-d-la-villa.html

Marimba Los del Pueblo

A musical group that uses the Costa Rican marimba as its main instrument, we interpret all kinds of musical genres, from Latin American to folkloric. We also perform popular and danceable genres such as bachata, salsa, merengue, bolero, two step, cha cha cha, cumbia, etc.

Contact: Tel. (506) 8301-2374,

Correo: marimbalosdelpueblo@gmail.com

si.cultura.cr/agrupaciones-y-organizaciones/marimba-los-del-pueblo.html

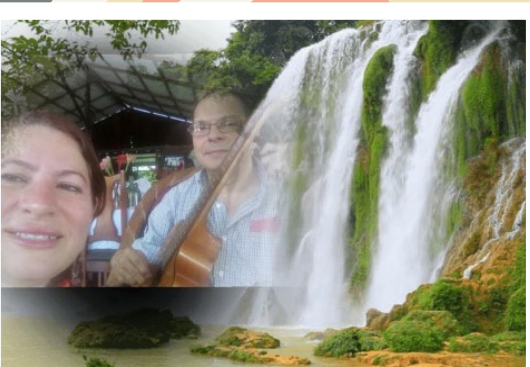
Madame Whiskey

Rock band performing music for more than 10 years. They compose, record and play original music and perform at both public and private events.

Contacts 8722-2555.

Correo: madamewhiskey506@gmail.com

si.cultura.cr/agrupaciones-y-organizaciones/madame-whiskey.html



A-fortuna-2

It was formed more than 5 years ago, is dedicated to the production of national folk music, as well as live performances in different activities such as serenades, cultural events and private activities of different kinds.

Contact: 8820-8513, **E-mail:** jaskal77@gmail.com

si.cultura.cr/agrupaciones-y-organizaciones/fortuna-2.html



Marimba Orquesta Marisol:

The orchestra plays popular music, two step, boleros, merengue and cumbia.

Contact Gerardo Quirós 8791-2882 or

Luis Sequeira 8666-3493.



Marimba La Tica:

An entertainment group offering shows at their farm, where a lake, tilapia and other amenities can be found. **Contact:** Edwin Herrera 8322-7770 e Irma Barquero 8507-92671.



Pasión Norteña:

Typical dances group of the CTP of Upala school. **Contact:** Sonia Vargas 8829-3616



Tres Amigos Musical Group:

Formed in 2009, this group performs ranchera music, boleros, cumbias and other genres.

Contact: Enrique Madrigal, tel 8581-8838

y Didier Acuña 8525-9326



Grupo Alta Voz:

A group of young people that play popular music, ballad-rock version **Contact** Jorge Vega 60512546 & Douglas Reyes 8987-9778.



San Rafael Arcángel Trio:

Contacts Ricardo Pilares 2471-8232, 8758-8023 / César Pilarte 8804-3132



Trío Miravalles:

A group that revives bolero music and original compositions that highlight the customs and characters of Upala. **Contact:** Hugo López 5000-8728.

Theater and dance groups



El Gaspar Folkloric Dance Group: This group emerged in 2004, their dance and costumes express the local identity and are presented at fairs, festivals and cultural activities. Its director is **Oldemar Miranda, Tel 2471-1613, 8872-8143**



San Carlos Impro Theater
An improvised theater group. They do theater without a previous script to follow, the plays are original and unrepeatable in each presentation. **Contact: 8542-7891, correo: improsancarloscr@hotmail.com**
si.cultura.cr/agrupaciones-y-organizaciones/teatro



AlegrArte Folkloric Company
It is an independent group born in June 2013 in Pital of San Carlos. It began with only six members and today it is made up of 23 dancers (from 4 to 35 years of age). **Contact 8343-4524, correo: alegrartecf@gmail.com**
si.cultura.cr/agrupaciones-y-organizaciones/compania-folclorica-alegrarte.html



Folkloric Screening El Huellón de La Carreta
A folkloric projection group dedicated to the revival of Costa Rica's cultural richness. **Contact: 8463-7841, correo: elhuellondelacarreta2017@gmail.com**
si.cultura.cr/agrupaciones-y-organizaciones/proyeccion-folclorica-el-huellon-de-la-carreta



Bajyrá Folkloric Company
A group founded in 1999, with a great commitment to the projection of Costa Rican traditional art. **Contact: 8725-8437, E-mail: nuriasancho@hotmail.com**
si.cultura.cr/agrupaciones-y-organizaciones/grupo-proyeccion-folclorica-bajyra.html



Pasión Cultural, artistic group
The objective of this group is to project Costa Rican culture through popular and folkloric dances **Contact: 8803-7315, E-mail: pasionalbailar@hotmail.com**
si.cultura.cr/pasion-cultural-agrupacion



R3M Collective
Independent dance group. **Contact: 8469-9261, e-mail: colectivor3m.cr@gmail.com**
si.cultura.cr/agrupaciones-y-organizaciones/colectivo-r3m



Ijin Folkloric and Cultural Association
The group's objective is to promote and preserve Costa Rican popular and traditional culture through various artistic expressions such as folkloric dance, corporal expression, theater and popular and traditional music of our country. **Contact: 8603-3418, e-mail: agrupacionfolkloricaijin@gmail.com**
si.cultura.cr/agrupaciones-y-organizaciones/agrupacion-folklorica-y-cultural-ijin.html

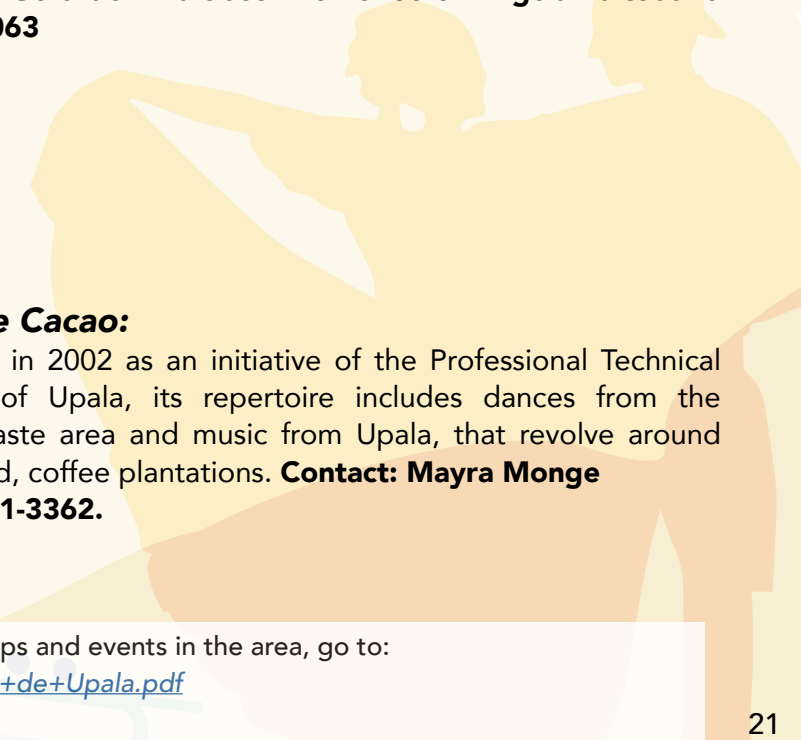


Los Sueños de Doña Julia Dance group:
A traditional dance group of senior adults, formed in 2010. **Contact Gerardo Villalobos 2464-0486 or Ángela Baltodano 2464-0063**



Flor de Cacao:
Created in 2002 as an initiative of the Professional Technical School of Upala, its repertoire includes dances from the Guanacaste area and music from Upala, that revolve around carts and, coffee plantations. **Contact: Mayra Monge Tel. 8361-3362.**

For more information about people, cultural groups and events in the area, go to:
dropbox.com/Directorio+de+Actores+Culturales+de+Upala.pdf
[Inventario cultural del cantón de San Carlos](#)



Wellness Tourism



How would you like your stress and tiredness to disappear? You are in the ideal area to do it! In the Northern Plains you can improve your mental and emotional state and your well-being by participating in a variety of activities that the area offers, including:



Hot springs:

You will find a variety of options of resorts with hot springs of different temperatures, where you can enter, rest and relax to come out renewed, while contemplating the Arenal Volcano and the natural landscapes of the area.

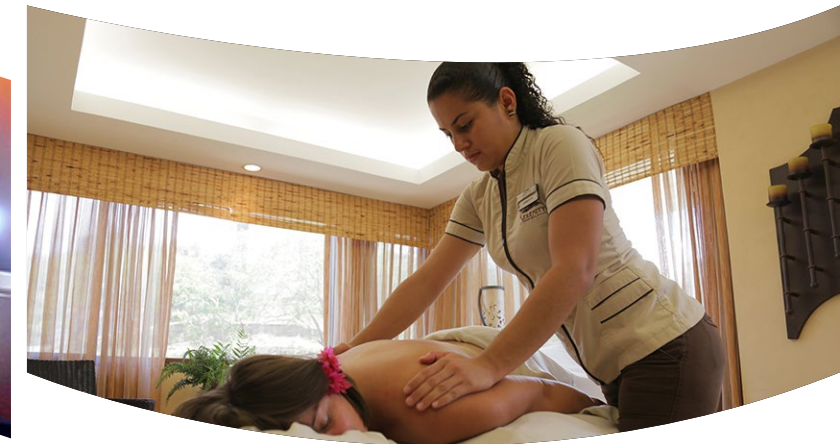
Mud baths:

Enjoy a wide variety of volcanic mud baths and masks that will leave your skin smooth, relaxed and renewed.

The mud used in the baths, which comes from the volcanoes in the area, and are rich in minerals, sulfur, zinc and magnesium that have important health benefits as they can relieve inflammation of the skin, joints, treat skin irritation and smoothen the skin.

Spa:

There are a number of spas in the area where you can receive relaxing massages and beauty treatments from professionals that will make you feel renewed. You can also experience a delicious and relaxing massage with black volcanic stones, which are very good at retaining heat. The heat from the stones,



when placed on your skin, expands the blood vessels and promotes circulation.

Yoga:

You can practice yoga in the area, which will allow you to relax and focus on the present moment, while you dedicate your mental and physical energy to each position and reconnecting with your inner self.

Forest therapies:

“Forest therapies or forest baths” allow you to open your senses, to connect more deeply with nature and to slow down the hectic pace that characterizes today’s lifestyle.



Protected Areas

 [Return to map](#)

Over time, the Northern Plains have become known for being an area of great tourist attractions and wonderful nature. There are those who come to Costa Rica exclusively for what the region offers in terms of ecotourism, rural tourism, adventure and wellness, all of which interact with the extraordinary biodiversity of flora and fauna species unique in the country and in the world. Don't miss out on the magical landscapes and experiences amidst a wide variety of options of national parks and protected areas, both public and private. In what we locally identify in commercial and tourist terms as the Northern Plains, two of the eleven Conservation Areas dependent on the National System of Conservation Areas, SINAC, coexist:

- **Arenal Tempisque Conservation Area (ACAT) and**
- **Arenal Huetar North Conservation Area (ACAHN)**



Arenal Tempisque Conservation Area (ACAT)

The Arenal Tempisque Conservation Area (ACAT) was established in October 1991 and covers approximately 395,046.14 hectares, which is equivalent to 7.73% of the national territory.

The Miravalles and Tenorio volcanoes are the highlights of this region, along with the Arenal reservoir, the main source of energy and irrigation for the country and for tourism development in the area, which includes a freshwater lake of 8317 hectares, declared a **Ramsar Site on March 16, 2000**.

Another Ramsar site located in the Arenal Tempisque Conservation Area, outside of the Northern Plains, is **Palo Verde National Park**. Set in the lower basin of the Tempisque River, it is considered an area of vital importance as a breeding and feeding site for a large number of aquatic, migratory, and resident bird species, as well as endangered species, making it one of the largest nesting areas in the country. More information at: sinac.go.cr.

Geographically, it covers parts of 10 cantons and 32 districts of the provinces of Guanacaste, Alajuela and Puntarenas. This guide will cover the part of Alajuela, located in those Northern Plains.

Almost 25% of the territory are protected wildlife areas and another 29% are biological corridors. The remaining percentage corresponds to the area of influence.

More than 70% of the country's hydroelectric energy, and more than 90% of the wind and geothermal energy production is generated in this conservation area.

A wide variety of environments, ecosystems and species are present in this conservation area, distributed in eight different life zones ranging from tropical dry forest to low montane rain forest, with the same number of zones in ecological transition. Due to the varied topography, there is a wide-ranging climatic regime and the presence of geological formations of different eras.

Its flora and fauna is diverse, hosting numerous species of **birds, mammals, amphibians, reptiles and a large number of taxonomic groups of insects and fungi**. In addition, this conservation area is home to endangered animals such as the jaguar (*Panthera onca*) and tapir (*Tapirus bairdii*), among others, as well as the 6 species of wild cats found in the country.

Furthermore, **about 190 plants** have been identified that are endemic to Costa Rica, some of them endemic to the area. Just in Monteverde, 70 of the 103 families of trees reported for the country and 21.23% of the orchid species can be found.

Among ACAT's protected areas, there are a large number of areas that are not exactly parks and that are in the hands of private ownership such as the Laguna Madrigal Wetland, the Riberino Zapandi Wetland, the Taboga Forest Reserve, the Tenorio Protected Zones, the Arenal Monteverde and the Abangares River Basin, as well as the Lomas Barbudal Biological Reserve and the Cipanci Wildlife Refuge.

Even though there are three national parks of great importance in this area, such as the Palo Verde National Park, the Miravalles National Park and the Tenorio National Park, it is the latter that is related to the geography of the Northern Plains.

Volcán Tenorio National Park

This national park is located in the Volcanic Mountain Range of Guanacaste and has several life zones such as: low montane rainforest, very humid tropical forest, very humid premontane forest. Its maximum altitude is 1916 meters above sea level.

Among the most outstanding plant species found in the area, we have palms, ferns, bromeliads and orchids. Trees include laurels, sapote, bolly trees, Brazil beauties, oaks and the jícaro danto, endemic to this mountain range, characterized by its flowers and fruits attached to the trunk.

Among the animals that can be observed, we have white-faced and howler monkeys, anteaters, pumas, jaguarundi, margays, ocelots, tapirs, tayras, paca, peccarries, agouti, as well as birds like the sunbird, guans, trogons, and bellbirds. Snakes include the bushmaster, fer de lance, jumping pit viper, side striped palm pit viper, eyelash viper, boa constrictor and coral snakes.

The park offers a habitat of rich and majestic flora and fauna, home to several endangered species and offers guided walks, hanging bridges, nature hikes and steep slopes with remarkable hiking trails.

The color of Rio Celeste, surrounded by a lush forest, offers a stunning landscape worthy to be experienced and admired. It is a river of crystalline waters that turns turquoise as if it were an act of magic. It is a natural spectacle that you can witness only at the site known as El Teñidero.

Located in the Volcanic Mountain Range of Guanacaste, this park is home to a rainforest that protects species of flora and fauna of regional importance.

Within the area, the Tenorio volcano, with its four cones, offers natural panoramic views of the Pacific and Caribbean plains.



Main attractions

Rio Celeste Waterfall

This waterfall, approximately 30 meters in height, has become a main attraction due its particular coloration.



La Laguna Azul

A small pool of intense turquoise color. Bathing is not allowed due to the high concentration of natural chemicals that produce the coloring effect.



Hervideros or borbollones

Fissures and cracks through which gases from the volcanic activity in the area bubble through the water at high temperatures.



El Teñidero:

The point where the phenomenon that gives the river its light blue color begins. You can see the turquoise color of the water in many other sectors, but this is the only place where you can observe the actual change in hue.

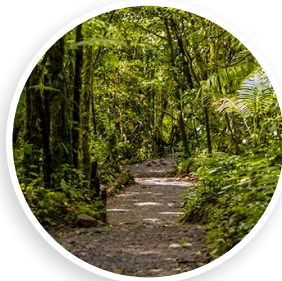
How to get there

1. By car. Take the General Cañas highway towards Puntarenas. Continue on the Interamerican Highway north to Cañas. About 10 km after Cañas turn right towards Bijagua. When in the community of Bijagua, turn off 9 km to the east in front of the sawmill.
2. From Liberia it is about a 1.5-hour drive. From the Oduber Quiros Airport in Liberia follow the road to Liberia, when you reach the intersection of Liberia continue towards Bagaces/Cañas. About 10 km (6 miles) before Cañas, turn left towards Bijagua. When in the community of Bijagua, turn off 9 km to the east in front of the sawmill.
3. You can also take route 27 from San Jose to Caldera, and it can be about a 3.5-hour drive. Another alternative route is to take the Interamerican Highway from San José to Ciudad Quesada (San Carlos) and drive to Upala. In Upala turn left towards Bijagua and continue for about 48 km (30 miles) to the park entrance, which is located in front of the Sawmill in Bijagua de Upala, from where you should travel 9 km east.
4. Another route is from San Rafael de Guatuso through the community of Katira de Guatuso, then to the community of Rio Celeste and then to the community of Pilon where the park administration and park entrance is located.



Hot springs

These are the result of volcanic activity and are located along the Celeste River.



Mysteries of Tenorio Trail

A 3.2 km nature trail that goes through the main attractions of the park including the waterfall, Laguna Azul, the "Borbollones" and "El Teñidero".



SERVICES



Lookout



Parking



Restrooms



Drinking Water



Paths

The national park offers parking space, drinking water, bathrooms, lodging for researchers, information desk, trails and viewpoints that allow visitors to enjoy the park's resources. These attractions, as well as the hot springs, are located a short distance from the administrative area and are connected by Mysteries of Tenorio trail.



Hours of operation:

Admission to the park, daily from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., departure at 4:00 p.m.



Rates:

Nationals and residents: ₡800.
Non-residents: \$12.

Conservation Area

Arenal Huetar North (ACAHN)

This conservation area is located in the northern part of the country and extends from the Las Haciendas River in Upala to the Sarapiquí River, in the Virgen de Sarapiquí (an inalienable zone of the National Wildlife Refuge Border Corridor). It is bordered to the north by Nicaragua, to the west by the Guanacaste Mountain Range and to the east by the Sarapiquí and Toro Amarillo Rivers. To the south it borders the canton of Naranjo, which makes it the protagonist of the Northern Plains.

The ACAHN protects and conserves outstanding resources such as rainforest and montane rainforest, ecosystems for biological research, wetlands that serve as shelter, feeding and breeding grounds for wild and traveling species, and water resources of great importance for the region and for the country due to the production of hydroelectric energy.

It covers an area is 6734 Km² (13.56% of the national territory). Five cantons are included: Guatuso, Los Chiles, San Carlos, Upala and Alfaro Ruiz in the province of Alajuela, plus Peñas Blancas in San Ramón and the district of La Virgen and Cureña in the canton of Sarapiquí. The Heredia province, as indicated above, is addressed in a different guide, in compliance with tourist distributions although this region in this province belongs to the Northern Plains.

In general, it has a humid climate, very hot, with a reduced water deficit. The average temperature ranges from 22° C (December to



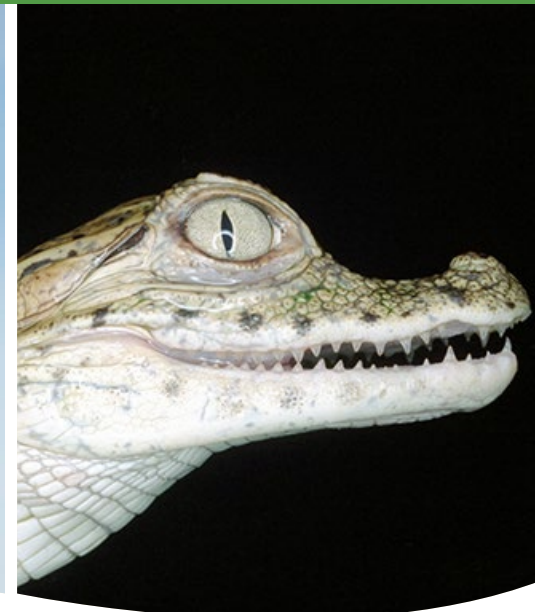
Foto: Andrea Solano
Agalychnis callidryas

Information

-  2206-5369
-  www.sinac.go.cr/ES/ac/acat/pnvt/

Tenorio Miravalles Tourism Chamber (Cattemi)

-  Tel.: 2466-7010
-  www.facebook.com/Cattemi
-  cattemi@visitcostaricanorth.com



February) to 26° C (April to November). There are variations from 2050 mm. a. in the western part at 4500 mm. a. in the East. The monthly distribution reveals that from September to October a decrease in precipitation begins, until finding the dry months in February, March and April. The area is characterized by high cloudiness, regardless of precipitation, and high relative humidity, with monthly averages from 80% in February to 91% in August.

Regarding wind patterns, the direction is constant (measured at 1000 m above sea level), prevailing for most of the year, those that blow from the east and northeast. Speeds may exceed 50 km/hour during extraordinary events such as hurricanes and storms.

The fauna of the ACAHN also reflects the transitional effect of the tropical and neartic zones, although the transition pattern is complex. The fauna is typical neotropical fauna in the case of most vertebrates, except for reptiles. Among mammals we have species from 24 families from the south (including marsupials, armadillos, sloths) and 19 families from the north (including deer, coyote, and wild rabbits)

There are freshwater fish, that are more tropical than temperate, and a very particular species,

the tropical gar (*Atractosteus tropicus*); it has a body covered with huge strong scales and an elongated mouth in the shape of a snout armed with a large number of fine teeth. It is of great evolutionary interest, since most of its relatives ceased to exist several million years ago, and for this reason it is often called a living fossil.

There are typical representatives of the southern fauna, among the amphibian families, such as cecyllids, leptodactylids, brevipitids and hylacids. Reptiles have a balance from both faunal regions, where the crocodile, caiman, and the ulima turtle, are noted.

Birds include examples of typically transitional, migrant, and temperate zone species. The diversity of bird species is particularly interesting in wetland ecosystems. Among the most representative birds are several families of waterfowl such as the anhinga, the Neotropic Cormorant, herons such as the roseate spoonbill, jacanas, doves, the quetzal of the cloud forests of the Juan Castro Blanco National Park, as well as woodpeckers and numerous families of small birds, such as songbirds and flycatchers. Birds of prey are also well represented through the eagle and hawk families, with the osprey, as well as vultures.

Many species are migratory or visit the area for nesting or wintering, especially waterfowl families.

Mammals present elements of both regions, the vast majority of mammals are small in size and have nocturnal or cryptic habits, difficult to observe. All bats, insectivores and marsupials and a large part of rodents. Some of the best known and easiest to observe diurnal mammals are squirrels, monkeys, peccary, deer, and tapir. Nocturnal animals include jaguar, ocelot, margay and jaguarundi.

There is a great diversity of bats, several species of marsupials such as the opossum, several families of carnivores, including felines, like the jaguar, puma, ocelot, margay and jaguarundi. There are also relatively abundant populations of tapir, deer, peccary, many rodents such as agouti, paca and others, like sloths and rabbits. Primates are also an interesting group, with three species: howler monkey, spider monkey and white-faced monkey.

As invertebrates go, insects play an extraordinary role in terms of species richness and diversity of forms and groups. The diversity of habitats is reflected in the richness of invertebrate species, such as bumblebees, butterflies, wasps and

ants. Other groups, particularly some orders of aquatic insects, are poorly known, while species inventory studies have found and described hundreds of new species in other groups of insects. Insects of particular importance include plant defoliators, pollinators, carnivores, scavengers, agricultural pests and vectors of both human and animal diseases.

There are a large number of areas, within ACAHN's, that are not exactly parks but fall under another category in the protected areas system, such as the Arenal Volcano Emergency Zone and the Laguna Las Camelias, Maquenque and Corredor Fronterizo Wildlife Refuges.

There are three national parks of great importance in this area of which the Arenal Volcano National Park and Caño Negro National Park can be visited by the public. While the Juan Castro Blanco National Park is also in of the area, it cannot be visited by the public because it lacks adequate facilities. However, there are private farms in the protected area that offer options for guided tours.








Volcán Arenal National Park


Volcán Arenal National Park

The Arenal Volcano National Park encompasses an area of more than 12 thousand hectares. It is located in the northwestern region of Costa Rica, between the foothills of the Tilarán mountain range and the San Carlos lowlands, 15 km from Fortuna. It is one of the most visited destinations of the Northern lowlands.

Before 1968, this volcano was known as Cerro Arenal and was considered extinct and was even thought to be just a peak. However, on July 29, 1968, it began its active period, opening three craters towards the west flank. Crater A, at 1,000 meters, caused the explosion, emanating a pyroclastic flow (burning cloud), which devastated 12 km², wiping out the towns of Pueblo Nuevo and Tabacón and causing the death of approximately 87 people.

SERVICES

-  Information
-  Paths
-  Restrooms
-  Drinking Water
-  Park rangers

 **Hours:**
Everyday from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm.

Information:

La Fortuna Tourism Chamber (Catuzon)

-  info@catuzon.com
-  www.catuzon.com
-  Tel.: (506) 2479-7512

Asociación de Desarrollo Integral de La Fortuna (Adifort)

-  info@arenaladifort.com
-  www.arenaladifort.com
-  Tel.: (506) 2479-8338

Attractions



Heliconias Trail: Covered with vegetation. It is a 610 meters long, flat and narrow trail from which you can see the crater.



Coladas Trail: A flat trail, 1.7 km in length, from where you can see the volcanic cone, Lake Arenal and the Tilarán mountain range.



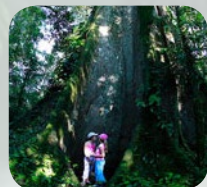
El Ceibo Trail: A relatively flat trail, 2.3 km in length, where you can see the large Ceiba pentandra, or kapok, tree.



Viewpoint to the volcanic cone: Located 1.5 km from the reception area and from which you can see the Arenal Volcano.

Access to the crater is absolutely forbidden due to risk and public health reasons

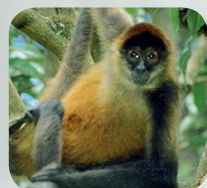
Flora & fauna



It has a diverse flora and fauna, in four life zones: **Very Humid Tropical Forest** (transition), **Montane Rainforest**, **Low Montane Rainforest** (transition), **Very Humid Premontane Forest** (transition).



Some of the most recognizable species are: **surá, cebo, ceiba, mauria, laurel, strangler figs, bully trees, cecropias, balsa, different species of palms, heliconias, orchids, ferns and bromeliads** that include the endemic species: *Pitcarnia funkiae*. In the park, different evolutionary stages of soil and vegetation formation are present thus, colonizing plants are easily observed, such as the orchid in the genus *Epidendrum*.



Primary species of fauna include the **paca, tapir, white tail deer, jaguar, peccary, coati, howler, spider and white-faced monkeys, and a variety of snakes. Birds such as parrots, tanagers, oropendolas, the brown jay, parakeets, hummingbirds, bell birds and the quetzal may also be observed.**

Restricciones



Climbing the volcanic cone is not allowed



No campfires



Loud music is not allowed



Labels are not allowed



Weapons are not allowed



Do not pollute



It is not allowed to enter under the influence of drugs



Do not extract plants and/or animals

Rates:

\$	National and resident adult:	¢1.000
	National child, and resident:	¢500
	Non-resident adult:	\$15
	Non-resident child:	\$5

How to get there:

From San José, take the Interamerican Highway west to San Ramón. Then, follow the road north through Los Angeles, La Tigra and Chachagua to La Fortuna. From there, take route 142, 17 km to Tilarán, once you reach the Tourist Police post, turn off 2 km south.

Juan Castro Blanco National Park

Juan Castro Blanco National Park covers an area of more than 14,000 hectares and is located east of Ciudad Quesada, head district of the canton of San Carlos, surrounded by the districts of Aguas Zarcas, Venecia, Zapote, Laguna, Tapezco, Altamira, North Sarchí, Toro Amarillo and Río Cuarto, among others.

This national park has thermal pools, active volcanic hotspots (such as the Platanar Volcano) and inactive volcanic hotspots (such as Cerros Viejo and Pelón), and other hills that complete the abrupt topography of the area.

The fauna observed is quite varied, including bird species like the quetzal, wild turkey, chachalaca, black guan and crested guan. Mammals include monkeys, armadillos, pacas, tapirs and others. There are about 50 rivers in the park, the Pozo Verde Lagoon and some of the largest waterfalls in Costa Rica, such as Toro, Aguas Gatas, Gorrion and Claro River. Visitor services in the San José de la Montaña sector in the Ciudad Quesada district include an information office, trails, restrooms, and potable water.

SERVICES



Information



Paths



Restrooms



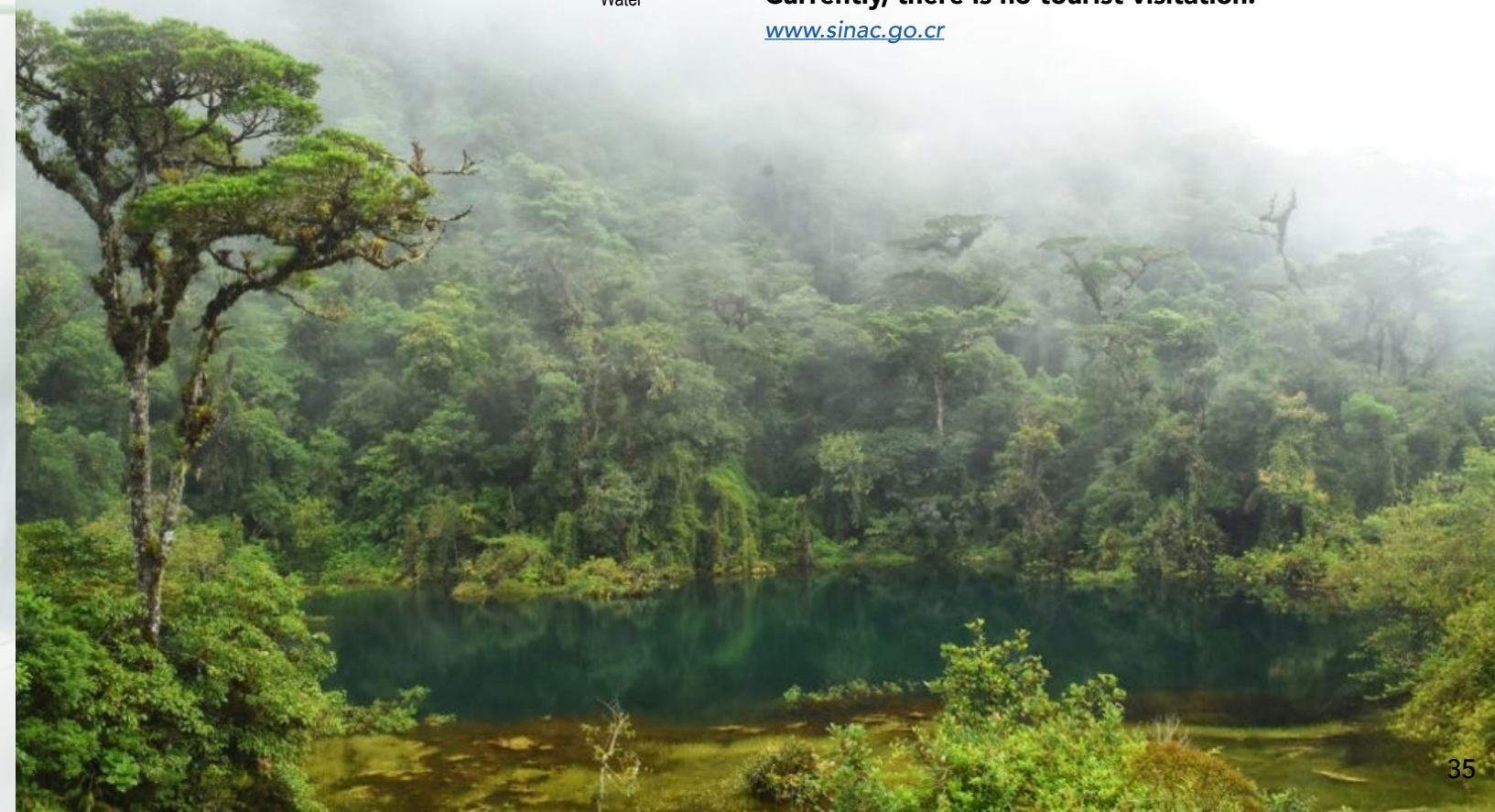
Drinking Water

How to get there

From San José, take the Interamerican Highway to Naranjo and follow the road through the towns of Zarcero to Ciudad Quesada. The entrance to the park is located east of Ciudad Quesada.

Currently, there is no tourist visitation:

www.sinac.go.cr



Caño Negro National Wildlife Refuge

Located in the lower part of the Frio River basin, in the Northern lowlands, it is about 21 km southwest of the community of Los Chiles and 36 km southeast of the community of Upala, in the cantons of the same name in the province of Alajuela. To enter the protected area, depending on the time of year, consider renting a canoe or boat tour to navigate the rivers and streams.

The Caño Negro Mixed National Wildlife Refuge is of a mixed type, which means that part of the territory it covers belongs to the State and another percentage is in private hands.

Before its creation as a refuge, it was a system of wetlands used ancestrally by the Guatuso (Maleku) Indians as a fishing area and for tribal rites and worship.

It is a wetland with an area of approximately 10,000 hectares that is home to migratory birds, many mammals, reptiles like the caiman, some endemic freshwater fish, like

the tropical gar and many endangered species. Marshes, lagoons, and swamps are found throughout the reserve. In fact, its main attraction is the lagoon and wetland covering more than 880 ha.

The Caño Negro Refuge was created in March 1984 through by executive decree No. 15120-MAG, with an area of 9969 hectares. In December 1991 it was declared a Wetland of International Importance, especially as a habitat for waterfowl, becoming part of the RAMSAR Convention. The Caño Negro Refuge is also within the Malecu-Medio Queso Biological Corridor and is a core zone of the Agua y Paz Biosphere Reserve, declared a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve in 2007.

The avifauna is one of the most diverse and important zoological groups in the area. According to 7 bird counts carried out in as many years in Caño Negro, 377 species of birds can be found, of which more than 100 are migratory.

The areas destined for public use are the sectors of the Caño Negro lagoon, adjacent to the towns of Caño Negro, Las Cubas, San Antonio, Playuelas and San Ramón of Sabogal, identified as:

- Caño Negro Lagoon
- Monico Lagoons (including Betel and Caño Blanco)
- Caño Los Patos
- Caño Negro - Sabogal Trail (North Río Frío)
- South Río Frío Trail
- Las Cubas
- Capilla Lagoon
- Muelle Lagoon
- Caño Negro (main channel sector of the Río Frío that crosses the lagoon of the same name).
- Sabogal and Playuelas Trail (North Río Frío)

Among the services offered there is general information and drinking water. In addition, the visit of researchers, as well as national and foreign students, is promoted. There is a universal path with a length of 800 m that can be covered in about one hour. It is of low difficulty. A boat ride is required to enter the elevated trail. The docks are accessible.



Flora and fauna

The refuge is a food source for migratory birds traveling from the north. There are species of plants and animals, not found in other parts of the country, there is a great abundance of birds and fish for human consumption, and it is one of the few places where the tropical gar fish can be found.

With the arrival of the dry season, between February and April, it is reduced to small lakes, streams, furrows and small beaches, frequented by a variety of birds.



Photo: Renato Paniagua



Río Medio Queso Wetland

Discover the biodiversity of the Río Medio Queso wetland in Costa Rica's Northern Region.

The Río Medio Queso wetland is a treasure of Costa Rica's Northern Region. It is known for its rich biodiversity and its role in the region's ecology. In addition, the wetland is an ideal tourist destination for those looking for a connection with nature and an opportunity to learn more about environmental conservation.

This wetland is located in the intermediate to low watershed of the Río Medio Queso, in the canton of Los Chiles, Alajuela, in the Norte-Norte Region.

How to get there

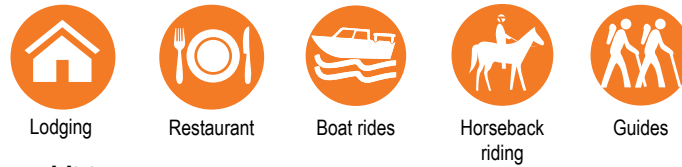
From San José, take the Interamerican Highway towards Ciudad Quesada, then San Carlos and towards Los Chiles. At Jobo, about 7 kilometers before reaching the center of Los Chiles, take the detour to the left that is well marked by a signpost, then continue 19 km west on a gravel road until you reach the community of Caño Negro.

It is also possible to enter through Upala, you must take the road that communicates Upala with Guatuso, traveling 10 km after passing over the bridge of the Zapote river, and before reaching the community of Colonia Puntarenas (next to Agrólogos) you must turn east at an intersection which has enough information not to deviate, from there you continue 25 km on a gravel road until you reach Caño Negro.

Another route that is less frequented is the one that deviates from the bridge that crosses the Celeste River near Katira, at this intersection there are no signs because it is a non-conventional route, once you take the detour leaving the paved road, you must travel approximately 32 km on a gravel road, passing through the community of Tiales, Monico and Veracruz.

(506) 8582-0362 www.sinac.go.cr

Services



In addition:

- Visitor's center with cashier's area, tables in green areas, parking for the public, others.
- Bird watching tower over 20 meters high.
- Elevated trail about 800 meters long that allows you to observe part of the lagoon system and the Río Frío.

What to bring



Restrictions:



Hours: Everyday from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm

Fees. Nationals: adults ₡800, children ₡500. Foreigners: \$5 adults and children



It is a peat bog that stretches over 5,000 hectares, with annual precipitation of 3,000 mm. Its characteristics make it a key component of the Caño Negro node, a sanctuary for both migratory and endemic birds. In addition to its scientific value, it is a special nesting ground for various species. Its fauna also includes deer, wild cats, pacas, caimans, and fish such as the guapote, tropical gar and mojarras. It is an ideal site for photographing birds, mammals, amphibians, reptiles and fish.

The Medio Queso Wetland is a fragile ecosystem that plays an important role in regulating the climate and the protection of the region's water resources. It acts as a natural filter that purifies the water and helps

prevent soil erosion. In addition, it is a vital habitat for many endangered species such as the jaguar and manatee.

Sustainable tourism is vital for conservation efforts in the Medio Queso Wetland. Visitors can enjoy activities like boat tours, hiking and birdwatching, while they learn about the importance of protecting the environment. It is important for tourists to adopt sustainable practices such as proper waste disposal in order to minimize their impact on the wetland.

More information

 facebook.com/catuchiFN



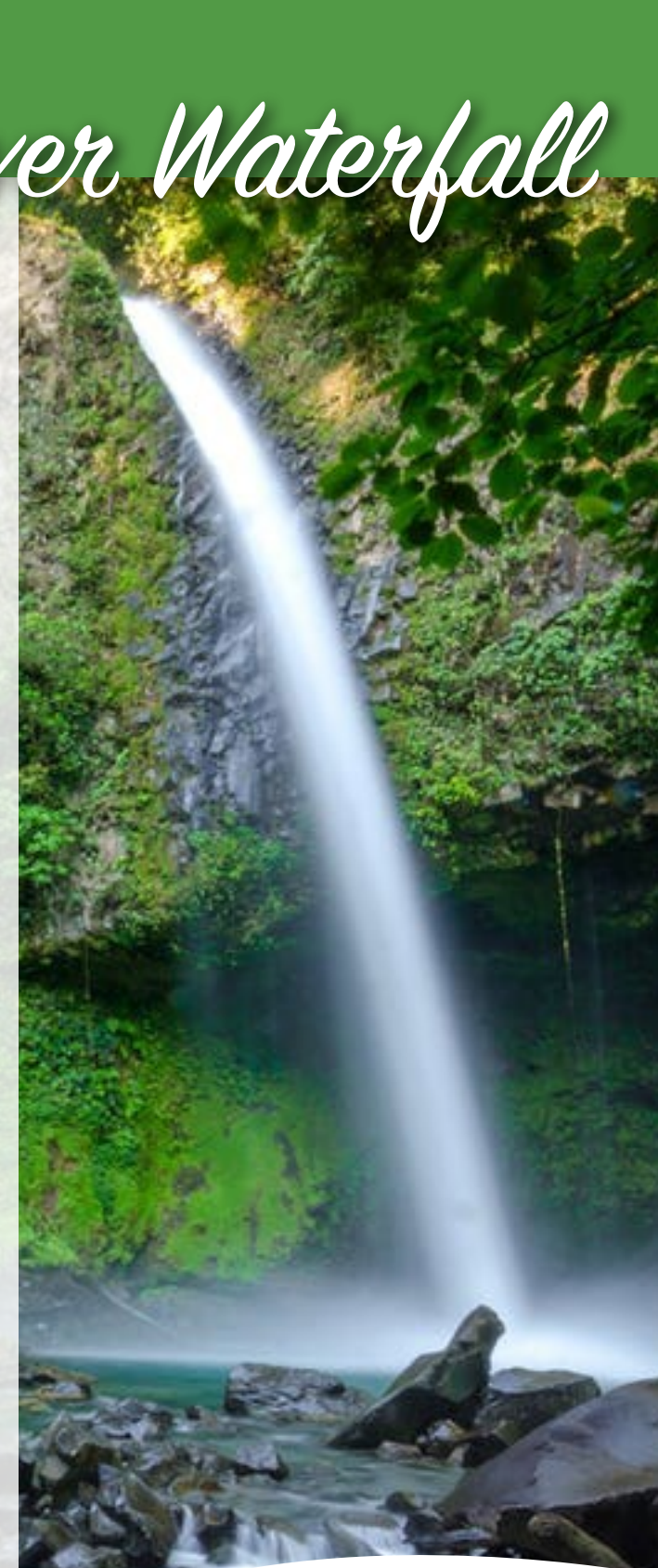
Fortuna River Waterfall

A natural area managed in a sustainable manner by the Asociación de Desarrollo Integral de La Fortuna (ADIFORT), a non-profit organization, whose main objective is to ensure the development of the community through education, road infrastructure, environment, promotion of sports and culture, beautification and public safety projects, all possible thanks to funds raised through visitation.

The Fortuna River Waterfall is located in a 210 hectares biological reserve of pre-montane tropical rainforest transition, a part of the Arenal Volcano National Park and located 520 meters above sea level, where the mountain sources of the waters of the Fortuna River emerge.

To observe this splendorous 70 meters high waterfall, the visitor must hike a trail that includes a staircase of approximately 530 steps, with hand rails and comfortable areas to rest and hydrate. Once at the base of the waterfall, you will find a large and platform viewpoint from which you can create memories by taking unique photographs, and finally you can swim in the crystal clear waters of the Fortuna River.

Información: Asociación de Desarrollo Integral de la Fortuna de San Carlos: Tel: (506) 2479-9515
info@cataratalafortuna.com
ADIFORT: info@arenaladifort.com (506) 2479-8338
www.cataratalafortuna.com/es



Volcanoes, lowlands and rural tourism

Photo: José Meléndez

Natural diversity, agricultural activities and cultural heritage are the best presentation for visitors who wish to admire the scenic beauty, adventure and the particular imagination and friendliness that characterizes the inhabitants of the northern part of the province of Alajuela in Costa Rica.

The region invites you to venture into its rural villages, as doing so becomes an adventure full of great surprises.

This is an area that, due to its very particular and even unique characteristics, allows a perfect combination of nature, adventure and agritourism. In its territory there are several national parks, protected areas, rivers, waterfalls and even volcanoes, evidence of its elevated tourism potential. It is also a region with a high potential to attract different tourism segments (rural, scientific, nature, health and adventure).

While sun and beach are generally associated with tourism, one of the primary elements of the Northern lowlands is rain, the source of life and the main reason why nature itself is one of

the greatest strengths of the region. Numerous attractions are found in this area, including Arenal Volcano and Lake, Tabacón River, Cerro Chato, Río Frío, Caño Negro Wildlife Refuge, Tenorio Volcano and Río Celeste, complemented by rivers suitable for rafting, waterfalls, and fruit plantations. That is why it is said to be a unique area in Costa Rica.

Vast lowlands, majestic volcanoes, spectacular waterfalls and rushing rivers, as well as picturesque villages, can be found in the Northern Lowlands. In all cases, the fertile nature that prevails in the region can always be appreciated.

Due to the characteristics described above, Alajuela's landscape is diverse and generous in color and shape, but friendliness and warmth of the inhabitants of its 4 cantons: San Carlos, Los Chiles, Guatuso and Upala must also be added.

The Arenal Volcano National Park covers an extensive territory that includes areas of both the province of Alajuela in San Carlos, and Guanacaste, in Tilarán.

Access to the slopes of this colossus is easy, as there is a gravel road for this purpose. There are places to stay and eat in the surrounding area. An imposing lake extends on its slopes, artificially built to make the largest hydroelectric plant in Costa Rica possible, and where there is abundant fishing.

Lake Arenal is famous for its windy conditions that make it one of the most important windsurfing spots in the world. The waters of Lake Arenal, which feed the power plant of the same name, are also used in an extensive and complex irrigation system that has transformed agriculture in the province of Guanacaste, where they flow thanks to national hydrological engineering.

Besides the Arenal Volcano National Park, this extensive province hosts other tourist attractions including the mighty rivers that cross the region, hot springs, extensive vegetation, the lowlands of Santa Clara and many waterfalls of astonishing beauty.

A particularly whimsical expression of nature can be seen in the Venado Caves, a moving example

of natural subterranean architecture, in which stalagmite and stalactite formations abound. The Venado Caves are close to Santa Clara and are part of a private property open to tourism.

The Caño Negro Wildlife Refuge is in the towns of Guatuso and Los Chiles, a water reservoir that is home to an impressive variety of migratory and resident birds that call this place their natural habitat.

Tenorio National Park and Rio Celeste

Tenorio Volcano National Park is in the Guanacaste Volcanic Mountain Range and includes several life zones like low montane rainforest, very humid tropical forest, and very humid premontane forest. Its main attraction is the Celeste River that, as suggested by its name, has an amazing sky-blue color! Named after its peculiar color, which is the result of an optical effect produced by the dispersion of sunlight due to the high concentration of aluminum silicates in its waters, it is one of the main tourist attractions of the park and of the country.



The river is formed at the confluence of the Buena Vista and Quebrada Agria rivers at the foothills of the Tenorio Volcano, in a place known as Los Teñideros. Nearby is another place called Los Hervideros, a site with hot springs where the water temperature can reach 31 to 94°C (90 to 94°F). During its descent from the volcano, the river water forms a lagoon called Laguna Azul, where the light blue color of the water can be appreciated more intensely. After the lagoon, the riverbed continues its descent to form the Rio Celeste waterfall.

Rural tourism

Rural tourism and community-based rural tourism offer visitors a very different approach to tourism. The Northern Lowlands is presented, a priori, as a place of peace and rest, as its charming rural villages are rendered as an oasis of peace compared to the big cities.

The area offers a series of very attractive alternatives to enjoy rural culture related to agro-productive, agricultural, livestock and agro-industrial farms, that will help you learn about the production processes and culture of local communities.

Live the experience of waking up to coffee, aguadulce, gallo pinto, tortillas or typical Costa Rican chorreadas. Furthermore, you can choose an agritourism activity on a farm where you can milk, the animals, feed them, visit the forest, and

enjoy a delicious Costa Rican lunch. Stay in an inn within walking distance of the lush nature of the northern area.

You will also find other attractive activities like naturalistic aquatic tours, freshwater sport fishing, day and night trail tours, guided horseback riding, the pineapple tour, the tour of the trapiche to grind cane, make molded brown sugar and the delicious fudge-like sobado, a visit to coffee mills, cheese factories, fruit drying plants, medicinal plants, breeding, catching and processing of fish, extraction of honey and mushroom production, and the organic chocolate tour, among others.

From a cultural perspective, the area is attractive due to the presence of the Maleku indigenous culture, the immigrants from Central American and from other countries, plus the possibility of combining the attractions and multiple options of sun and beach, canoeing, fishing, etc., with flora and fauna observation activities and natural history interpretation in the lush forests of protected areas.

Most of the rural tourism ventures are small projects that the neighbors themselves have developed through community associations, so that tourists can enjoy, as they do, the natural paradise they have in front of them.

Rural tourism offers all the services needed for tourism, including hotels, cabins, restaurants and tour companies, and more. So, the opportunity to

live a unique experience is there if you decide to immerse yourself in the local culture.

Tourists can also choose from a wide variety of activities. For example, horseback riding, hiking on trails or roads, quad biking, boat rides, flora and fauna observation, visits to rivers, waterfalls and lagoons, as well as national parks, protected areas and volcanoes.

This is experiential tourism, an experience to be told, to invite others to come and experience the projects in the communities. Americans, Europeans, and Canadians are the most adventurous about the communities, although there are many other nationalities.

Maleku Village

The Maleku indigenous population is primarily located in the canton of Guatuso, within the so-called "Maleku Indigenous Territory", that covers an area of approximately 2994 hectares. Currently, its population is approximately 1,400 people, located in three palenques or settlements: Margarita, El Sol and Tonjibe, where they live under very limited economic conditions. Palenque El Sol is located 4 km from San Rafael de Guatuso; Margarita is located 6 km east and 2 km southeast of San Rafael and Tonjibe is located 2 km from Palenque Margarita.

These small settlements have basic water, electricity and public telephone services, but their roads are in poor conditions.

The palenques are located within the "Maleku Indigenous Territory" located in the upper and middle parts of the Rio Frio basin.

They speak two languages: Maleku or Guatuso and Spanish, which is spoken by approximately 70% of the population. It belongs to the Vootic family of the Chibchense lineage.

In the toponymy of northern Costa Rica, the Guatusos have left some traces of their language, such as in Cóter, Upala and Tonjibe.

They are considered small farmers and grow traditional products. They cultivate the land by planting corn, cocoa, rice, plantain bananas, peach palm fruit, tubers such as cassava, tiquizque and malanga, vegetables and fruits, for family consumption and for sale in small quantities.

Maleku Tourism

Currently, they complement their subsistence economy with the craft trade. For this reason, it is common to find in each community huts with craft sales that are offered to tourists. These crafts represent the artistic heritage of their ancestors that endures over time and explains part of their



origin. Thus, there are specialists in wood carving to make masks and drums, decorated with drawings of expressive figures, almost always animals or mythological figures.

They have a unique system for burying their dead, they do so in their own homes, while singing and dancing. They also have very typical ways of preparing food, raising their children, carrying loads, using drums (a means of communication with other communities), bow and arrows, hammocks and bags made of woven vegetable fibers, and craft masks with representations of animals that signify the relationship of the world with living beings and nature.

Their way of life, dates back to ancient times and is based on this harmonious relationship with the environment and living organisms, respecting, and loving what they have. Hence, the desire of indigenous communities to maintain their history; a cultural and spiritual heritage that preserves their customs and traditions and recovers those already forgotten, but equally important to understand their origins and to promote the efforts of the wise elders, a fundamental aspect of their daily work.

Croku Tour (the house of the croku). On approximately 5 acres of protected forest, this tour includes a visit to a botanical garden with 40 species of medicinal plants and a reforestation area where 6000 trees, of 40 different endangered species have been planted. In addition, it has a hut where they have a permanent exhibition of crafts and a new hall in the middle of the forest where traditional meals of the Maleku culture are shared with visitors. (Sicultura, 2014).

Information:

- si.cultura.cr/agrupaciones-y-organizaciones
- Tel. alt.: 24-64-06-46
- Tel. trab.: 87-65-25-99
- las8etniascr@hotmail.com

Casitas Tenorio

For us, rural tourism means the interaction of our B&B with our farm and our community to give our guests an opportunity to see and participate in rural Costa Rican life and to help our guests enjoy the life that rural Costa Rica provides. This is about making tourism part of the community, rather than creating new enclaves that cater only to tourists.

Casitas Tenorio B&B is a rural tourism project. We are also involved in promoting rural tourism and actively involved in connecting rural tourism operators to this sector. We have participated in many trade fairs to promote this type of tourism.

Located near the Celeste River, Casitas Tenorio B&B is the ideal place to experience Costa Rica's rural life, as well as to take advantage of the opportunity to see truly spectacular birds, flora, and fauna.

There are six private casitas with many details that make them cozy and perfect for a relaxing vacation.

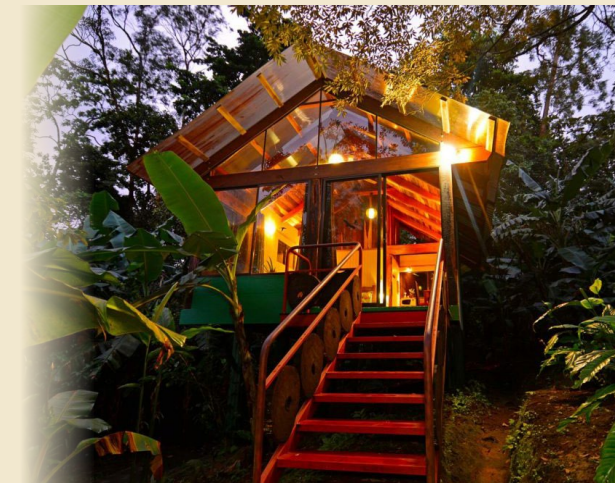
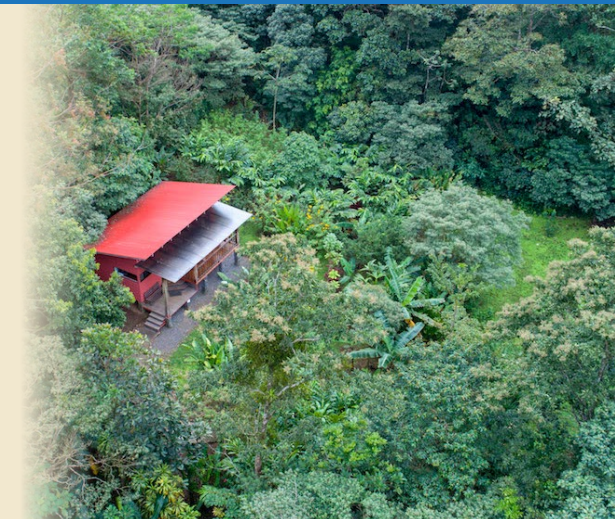
Activities

Come see the farm for yourself

Join us for a "farm tour" in the morning, where you will have the opportunity to see our farm, feed the animals and milk a cow.

Casitas Tenorio is located on a small farm of about seventeen acres. We milk eight dairy cows by hand twice a day and sell the milk to the local cheese factory that makes cheese and distributes it throughout Costa Rica.

We also have chickens, guinea pigs, rabbits, a horse and two dogs named Whisky and Dingo. Donald and Pip come from farming backgrounds and enjoy growing our own food and raising our own animals.





Vegetable garden

We plant many crops throughout the year, including corn, beans, cilantro, peppers, cassava, and cucumbers. We have a number of fruit trees including papaya, guanabana, cas, oranges and tangerines, as well as banana and pineapple plants. Our extensive gardens include medicinal plants and a wide variety of heliconias. We grow food for our own consumption, also share it with our guests and trade with our neighbors.

Dairy

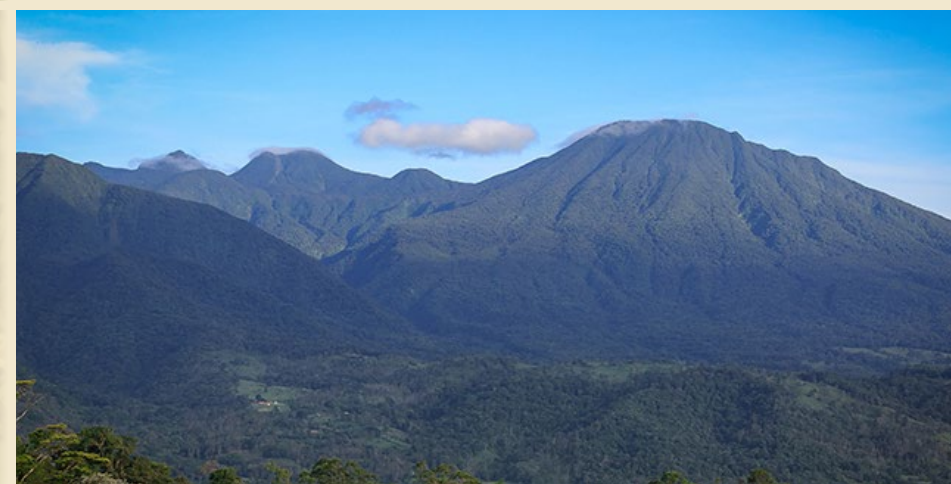
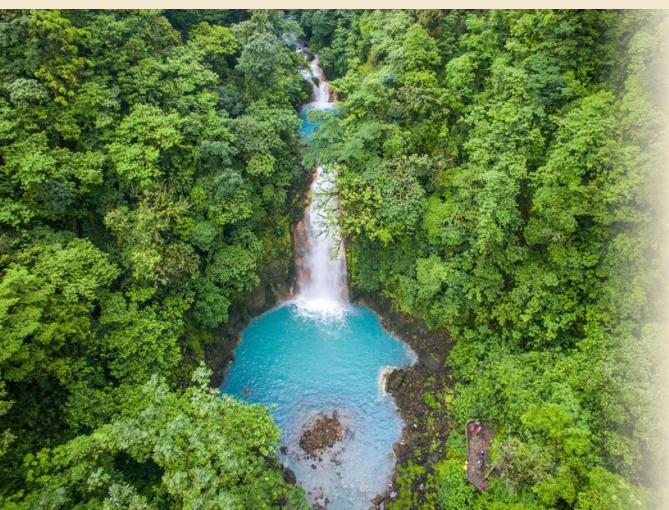
We are committed to sustainable and ecological agriculture. We also raise dairy cows and frequently raise pigs. We milk twice a day and sell our milk to a local cheese factory that supports 46 local families. We focus on living in harmony with nature and really enjoy working on the farm as a family.

Nature

We also have a trail on the property where you can see a two or three-toed sloth, a troop of monkeys or a toucan. Birding on the trail in the morning can be spectacular, as many species visit the feeders. Look here for more information on birding in the area. We have another property called Tapir Valley that you can also visit.

Contact us:

-  casitastenorio.com/the-gift-sloth-2
-  Teephone: (506) 8439-9084, 8312-1248
-  Email: info@casitastenorio.com
-  casitastenorio.com



Located in Bijagua de Upala, 3 km from the National Bank.

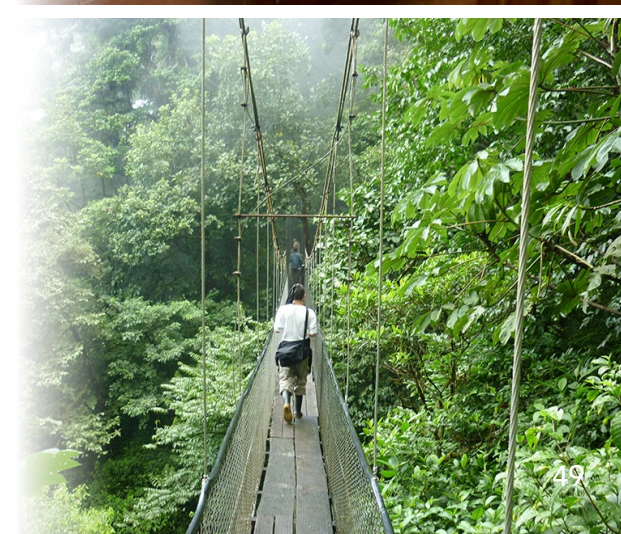
In 1985, the land where Heliconias Rainforest Lodge is now located was allocated for deforestation and land distribution by the Agrarian Development Institute (Instituto de Desarrollo Agrario, IDA) in order to give land to needy families.

A group of twenty-three families came together to protect the land from deforestation and formed a community association called Bijagüeña Association of Agricultural Producers (Asociación Bijagüeña de Productores Agrícolas, ABIPA). Armed with determination and commitment, ABIPA succeeded in halting the imminent deforestation of 73 hectares (about 175 acres) of primary rainforest in 1991. IDA assigned the land to ABIPA as a new conservation model in Costa Rica, whereby the rainforest is protected in private reserves and managed by local communities.

ABIPA received support from several national and international organizations to create a private reserve and develop an ecotourism project.

ABIPA has strong values committed to sustainable community development. We want our project to encourage other people in the area to develop income by means other than agriculture.

The objectives of the association are to conserve the incredible biodiversity in the reserve, improve the quality of life of ABIPA members and the local community, increase environmental education and conservation awareness in the local community, and promote the countryside.



 **Activities:**



Butterfly farm



Hiking



Visit to sugar mill



Visit to waterfall



Bird watching



Hanging bridges

More information

-  www.heliconiascr.com
-  info@heliconiascr.com



Finca 360

Off the grid and out of this world. Finca 360 Lodge enjoys magnificent views of volcanoes, mountains, Juan Castro National Park, the San Carlos Valley and even Nicaragua.

The Lodge has five deluxe rooms, each with a balcony overlooking the volcanoes or the forest. We have a spa and also a restaurant service, served by an excellent bilingual local chef. One of our main objectives is to preserve the rainforest on our property. The former cattle pastures that once existed are now reverting back to the rainforest they used to be.

We have over three kilometers of well-maintained trails, a suspension bridge and access to beautiful waterfalls nearby. All this is part of our charming Lodge.

Activities:

Our tour operator, Viajes Colibrí, offers additional tours, such as:



Horseback riding



Ziplining & Rappel



Butterfly farm



Coffee Tour



Stand Up Paddle

Our lodge is perfect for yoga retreats, family reunions and for anyone who loves nature and wants to be in an out-of-the-ordinary paradise.

Contact us

Venecia, 4.5 km south from Colegio Técnico Profesional - Venecia or Escuela San Martín, San Carlos, Alajuela

Tel. + 8530-5373 | +1 (979) 219-2868

finca360cr@gmail.com

Arenal 1968

Arenal volcano is located in the district of La Fortuna, canton of San Carlos, in the province of Alajuela. It has an altitude of 1670 meters above sea level. The volcano is located within the Arenal Volcano National Park. It began its last and current period of activity in 1968, on July 29 at 7:30 am. Since then, it has been constantly emitting gases and water vapors, with some explosions with pyroclastic material emissions and sometimes strong rumblings. Because of this and its frequent activity, this volcano is one of the most active in Costa Rica.

Arenal 1968

This theme park offers tours over the lava flow and volcanic rocks from the 1968 eruption, immersed in the forest and nature. Enjoy an incomparable moment full of scenic beauty in spectacular viewpoints with 360° view of the Arenal Volcano and Arenal Lake accompanied by the amazing Arenal Lake.

Choose between two different trails of medium difficulty surrounded by the beautiful nature characteristic of Costa Rica.

Hours: Open daily from 8:00 am. to 5:00 p.m. (Last admission 4:00 p.m.)

Ask about our promotional package for national tourism

Cafeteria

In our **Cafeteria Lava '68** we provide the final touch for a perfect day. Enjoy a delicious tropical drink and our special menu after venturing on tours full of discovery while admiring the magical view that stretches for miles at your feet.

For more information or for reservations please call or write us:

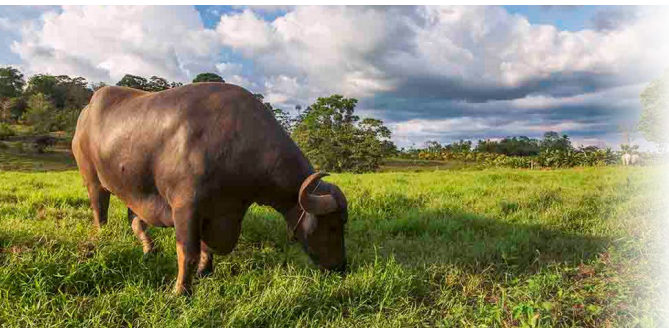
(506) 4001-1968

info@arenal1968.com

(506) 4001-1968

arenal1968.com/





La Finca Lodge

For Costa Ricans, the term La Finca has a very special meaning. More than a place to live and work, it is an identity.


La Finca is the place where our families grew up; This is where our values, work ethic and respect for others and their work come from.

Costa Rica has changed, the cities have grown, but many of us have fond memories of our days at La Finca.


That's the kind of place we have at La Finca Lodge: quiet, surrounded by nature, the perfect place to disconnect!

Lush gardens and magical views of the mountains and Cerro Platanar surround all of our rooms and villas.

For more information or for reservations please call or write us:

 506 8455 7316

 info@lafincacr.com

 506 4001 9281

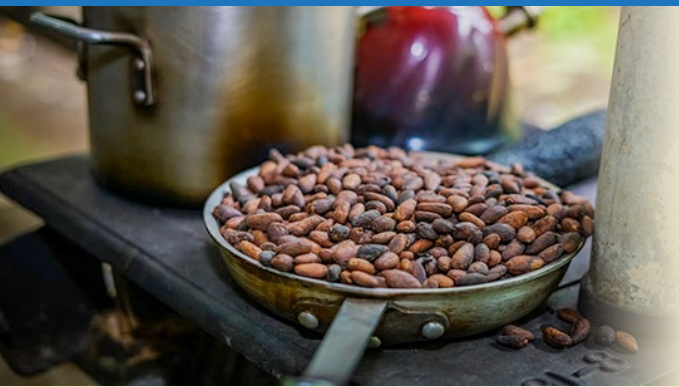
 lafincacr.com



Agro-productive farms

As a result of the boom in tourism, many projects arise in which the agricultural factor is mixed with this activity. Many of these projects have also integrated the term ecological, establishing what many call agro-ecotourism.

The concept of agro-ecotourism involves much more than just mixing tourism with agriculture or livestock farming. The term entails social responsibility, environmental protection, community bonding, and sustainability. These tourism experiences showcase dual purpose livestock, the cultivation of roots and tubers , pineapple, cocoa, heart of palm, black pepper, ipecacuanha, passion fruit, citrus fruits, plantain bananas, sweet potato, squash, watermelon, basic grains, harvesting vegetables, milking dairy cows, living in a rural inn, horseback riding, Costa Rican gastronomy and much more.



Rainforest Chocolate Tour

With the view of the majestic Arenal Volcano, in La Fortuna de San Carlos, enjoy the sweetest experience in the tropical forest, discovering the millenary secrets of chocolate from its discovery and use in the tropical regions of America, to its transformation into the product we know and love today.

Considered "a gift from the Gods", the cacao tree was of great importance to the culture, not only for the ceremonial use of its drink, but also for its economic value, to the point of its seeds being used as currency in many regions of Mesoamerica, including Costa Rica.




We promote sustainability through: environmental education, protection of our natural resources, support for programs and companies that promote sustainability, promoting a traditional product such as cocoa, rescuing our traditions and supporting small entrepreneurs.

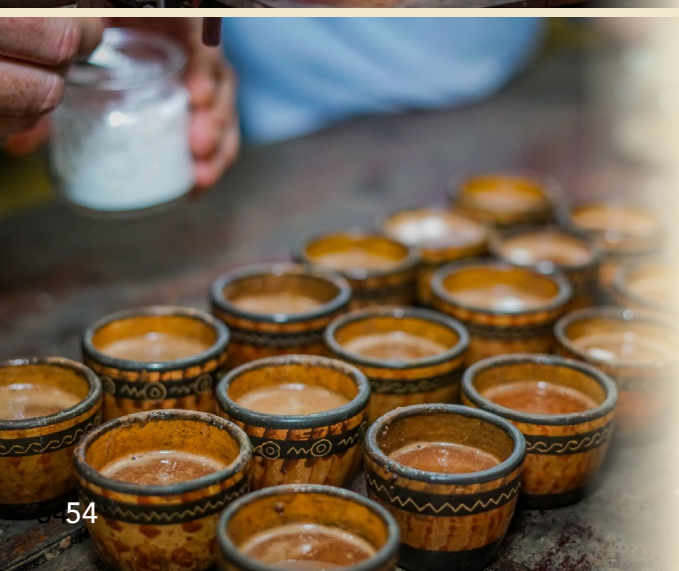
Chocolate Tour

By visiting our plantation, in an activity that lasts 1.5 hour, you will have the opportunity to learn about interesting aspects of cocoa and chocolate, going through its origin and history, emphasizing its value to Costa Rica, from a historical, cultural, and economic perspective. Our visitors actively participate in the entire production process, from working at the plantation, harvesting the fruit, drying, and grinding the seed, making the traditional drink of our ancestors, and of course tasting an organic chocolate of the highest quality, which, combined with various ingredients, generates a festival of flavors.

Designed for all ages.

Information

-  Tel. +506 2479-0090
-  rainforestchocolatetour.com/es/
-  info@rainforestchocolatetour.com



Finca La Amistad



Finca la Amistad is a 95-hectare cocoa plantation in northern Costa Rica. The name "La Amistad" reflects how we feel about the land, people and nature of Costa Rica. Today we operate a sustainable and innovative cocoa farm. About 60 hectares are used for cocoa cultivation and about 10 hectares are used to grow native hardwood trees.

Tour of the cocoa plantation

Experience a unique insight into the world of cocoa on one of Costa Rica's most sustainable farms. Follow the cocoa production process from the seedbed to the drying of the cocoa bean. **Duration:** 90 min.

"Chocolate on the plantation" workshop

For several years now, we have been making chocolate by hand using the simplest means. It's fascinating to see how much work is involved. You will have the opportunity to create your own fresh chocolate here on our farm. **Duration:** 2.5 hours





From seedbed to chocolate bar

Combine the tour of the plantation with the "chocolate on the plantation" workshop and learn all about chocolate production, from seedling to chocolate bar. You will also have the opportunity to make your own chocolate. **Duration:** about 3.5 hours

Accommodations



Finca la Amistad Cacao Lodge offers overnight accommodations for up to 20 guests and authentic local cuisine. In late 2020, we added our own boutique chocolate manufacturing facility. Our values are simple but essential: superior quality, fair working conditions, commitment to environmental and biodiversity issues, and strong partnerships with our customers and partners.

Contact:

-  reservation@finca-amistad.com
-  Tel: 70852852
-  finca-amistad.com
-  Instagram: @fincalamistad

Simon Brugger

Manager - Cicalares S.A.

-  simon.brugger@finca-amistad.com
-  +506 72907403 / +506 60483391



Edén Chocolate Tour

We are a family-owned artisan chocolate producer!



We decided to open our organic cocoa plantation for you to be part of this sweet experience.

On the Eden Chocolate Tour you will experience a one hour and 45 minutes tour. The first part takes place in our organic cocoa plantation where the visitor can see the cocoa flower, the cocoa trees, the fermentation and the sun-drying process of the cocoa beans.

The second part is inside the hut where the visitor can roast and grind the cocoa beans and learn more about the process of conching and refining the chocolate.

At the end, visitors will make their own chocolate bonbons.

For more information or for reservations please call or write us:

-  Telephone: 2200 5497
-  edenchocolatetour@gmail.com
-  [facebook.com/eden506/](https://www.facebook.com/eden506/)



Estukurú Chocolate Shop and Coffee Shop

Chocolatería Estukurú is a chocolate factory, store and cafeteria, located in La Fortuna San Carlos. We are local manufacturers of gourmet chocolates. Our chocolates are elaborated from the moment we plant our own cocoa trees in the northern part of Costa Rica in Upala, we process the seeds in a meticulous process of fermentation and drying, processing the best cocoa beans to finally obtain delicious chocolates in all its presentations.

The Estukurú Chocolate Factory tour is developed in our facilities in La Fortuna de San Carlos, where we have a beautiful model farm right at the foot of the Arenal Volcano.





The objective of the tour is to take visitors on a tour to make a chocolate bar. This activity lasts about an hour and a half, and we begin with the basic aspects of the plantation: varieties, flowering, fruits, etc. Then, we show the production, fermentation and drying processes, and we go to the factory to learn about the industrial process of dry cocoa fermented to chocolate.

Viewed through glass, we explain the process machine by machine until the chocolate is obtained. The tour ends in the store with a demonstration of tempering, a necessary process to make any chocolate product and the elaboration of your own chocolate bar, where you have several fillings to choose from, if you want to customize it.



Hours: everyday from 11 am, 2 pm and 4 pm, previous reservation (50% advance to confirm reservation).

For more information or for reservations please call or write us:

-  info@estukuru.cr
-  Tel: (506) 2479-7083 tienda La Fortuna
-  (506) 8813-5393 cell available calls and Whatsapp
-  estukuruchocolate.minidux.com





Arenal Vida Campesina is a project that defends the Costa Rican identity and seeks to maintain the best relationship between man and the environment, promoting practical philosophies that support and sustain this relationship.

Arenal Vida Campesina was created to show national and international tourists the culture and lifestyle of the Costa Rican farmer. At the same time, we preserve the customs and traditions that we inherited from our ancestors and that today are in danger of disappearing. Arenal Vida Campesina's mission is to conserve culture while promoting sustainable development hand in hand with the community, in harmony with nature.

We offer educational day tours, where visitors interact while learning about responsible production in harmony with the environment, to foster a change of mentality in terms of comprehensive organic production through responsible and friendly practices with the environment. We cultivate the primary crops that have made the Costa Rican economy strong, including sugar cane, coffee, corn, cassava, cocoa, bananas and plantain bananas, along with non-traditional crops such as Chinese potatoes, yams, and more.

We have created a collection of experiences that represent a lifestyle that has existed here in Costa Rica since its inception. A lifestyle that focuses on quality, family and sustainability.

Our tours are about discovering new cultures and experiences. We have designed our tours with the objective of preserving our Costa Rican heritage in an ever-modernizing world. We are committed to the environment by assuming the challenge of minimizing the impact of greenhouse gases to the maximum; we plant native trees in danger of extinction to capture CO2 and thus mitigate global warming.



Coffee tour with sugar cane grinding

Would you like to learn about Costa Rica's coffee culture and taste a delicious traditional pour over coffee?

We have the tour you are looking for; learn with a farmer about the details, secrets and characteristics that surround coffee plantations. Discover the coffee roasting process, taste a glass of cane juice and its derivatives, relax and learn about the different coffee preparation techniques while sipping a cup of drip coffee in combination with traditional Costa Rican snacks.



Arenal Vida Campesina Organic Farm Tour

Would you like to live an authentic Costa Rican experience on an organic farm?

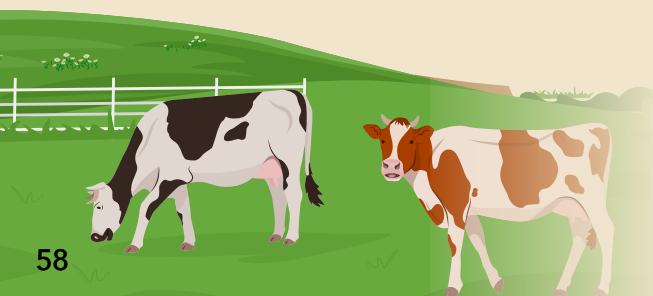
Our farm tour in Arenal Vida Campesina offers you an authentic Costa Rican experience to enjoy and learn about sustainable production techniques and an efficient model in harmony with nature that allows us to enjoy a great variety of fruits, vegetables, roots and tubers through a tour of our organic farm.

At the end of our tour we will have a traditional organic lunch, prepared buffet style. It is accompanied by our traditional pour over coffee.



Campesino chocolate tour

If you are a lover of chocolate in its different forms, aromas, flavors; and also want to live an entertaining experience, eat lots of chocolate and learn about the pre-Columbian history, we have a tour for you and your family in Arenal Vida Campesina.





Night walk

Love the rainforest, its sounds and nocturnal creatures!

Join our specialized and enjoy the richness of the tropical rainforest at night. We will search for the most beautiful colorful tree frogs, lizards, insects, birds and other species of nocturnal animals. In the middle of our tour we will be able to taste and enjoy a delicious glass of sugar cane juice with its derivatives that will recharge us with a lot of energy to continue exploring. At the end of our tour we will have a traditional Costa Rican buffet dinner prepared over firewood.



Campesino dinner tour

Are you a connoisseur over of unique experiences, traditional cuisine and the most authentic Costa Rican recipes? Would you like to learn about traditional Costa Rican cuisine?

We have the perfect tour for you. Upon arrival at the Arenal Vida Campesina farm, a specialized farmer will be waiting for you to take you to see the farm and collect the organic herbs, fruits and tubers for the preparation of dinner. Before finishing the tour of the farm, we will go to the troja to taste the sugar cane and the famous "guaro de caña" (sugar cane liquor). We will work with a specialized cook to prepare part of our traditional dinner. At the end of the evening we will have a delicious traditional, family-style buffet dinner.



Coffee-chocolate-sugar cane cultural combo, 3 in 1

Would you like to taste the three most delicious products of Costa Rica?

This interesting cultural combo is for you. Guided by an expert farmer, who with his knowledge will transport you in history and teach you the most interesting details, this tour will fill your palate with the delicious organic chocolate from the farm, the sweet and fresh taste of sugar cane and the aroma, body and flavor of Costa Rican Arabica coffee.



www.arenalvida.com



info@arenalvida.com



506-2479-9943 / 506-8639-9412



Vivencias Campesinas

We are a family business, dedicated to demonstrating Vivencias Campesinas, or farm experiences, typical of Costa Rican culture, with agro-ecological principles so that all visitors enjoy a unique experience in the area of La Fortuna, San Carlos.

Vivencias Campesinas Agroecological Farm is a welcoming place for all those who wish to learn about life in the countryside of our country.

We invite you to the agro-ecological tours, to walk through a mandala and trails where you can feel pure air, also enjoy a delicious sugar cane juice and a typical lunch with live music.

If you want to change your way of seeing life, this is the best option because we grow what we eat in an organic way and we want to share this healthy way of living, with your families.

Do you want to learn how to make handmade tortillas? Come on over! We have the best school around!

Agroecological Farm Vivencias Campesinas where we grow organically, caring for nature is our passion, an excellent place for rural tourism, highly recommended for families now that we must stay in our social bubble, this place meets all the standards recommended by the Ministry of Health.

For reservations:



Address: Alajuela, San Carlos, La Fortuna, Sonafluca, 350 meters northwest and 400 meters east of the cemetery.



+506 8853-8405 | +506 6196-0817



vivenciascampesinascr@gmail.com



facebook.com/arenalvivencias/



Finca Don Juan

We are a didactic farm with sustainable organic agricultural production for self-consumption. We are committed to the planet and human health and our motto is: **FORMATION OF MEN AND WOMEN COMMITTED TO LIVE IN HARMONY WITH THE ENVIRONMENT.**

At Finca Educativa Don Juan we have the following varieties of cocoa:

R1, R4, R6, CC187 TI, PMCT58, CRIOLLO Y CACAO DE MONO.

Upon entering our facilities, our customers are asked to wash their hands, then their temperature will be taken and logged.

Then we will walk through the trails where our cocoa plantations are located, where you will have access to important information about the history of this agricultural product in our country.

You will learn about the cocoa flower and the fruit that comes from it, and during the tour you will be shown each of the varieties of cocoa existing on the farm, all the benefits and uses.

You will live the experience of cutting the fruit, and the guide will explain the correct way to extract the fruit from the plant without damaging the fruit or the plant itself, in addition to tasting the seed.

Afterwards, we head to the ranch to experience the process of making artisan chocolate. Included is the drying, roasting, breaking the seed, grinding it in the handmade mat and also by machine.

We will have a tasting of the long awaited **DRINK OF THE GODS**, you will learn how to make handmade chocolates, important information will be provided about the properties of cocoa and there will be a variety of tastings.

For reservations:

 Tel. (506) 2479 1130

 fincaeducativadonjuan@yahoo.com

**Other
agro-productive
farms**



Other agro-productive farms

[Return to map](#)

Other farms



If you want to learn about the sugar cane production process, there is a farm in Guatuso that has two sugar mills, one manual and one electric. During the tour, visitors can observe the process of extracting the juice from the sugarcane, enjoy the juice and walk a path through the forest along the Samen River. You also learn about elements of the peasant culture such as the oven where homemade bread is made, observing the old kerosene lamps, gourds, baskets, mills, oropendola nests and the mats that functioned as beds in the past.

More information: www.facebook.com/catuchiFN



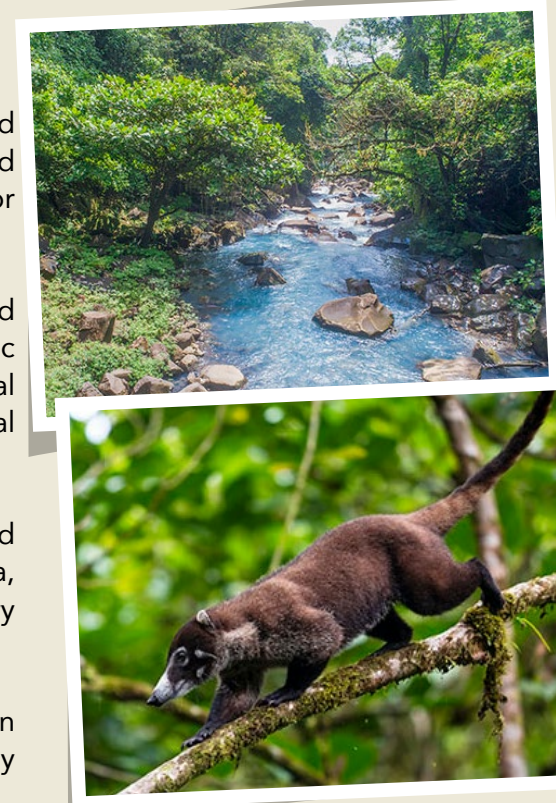
There are agricultural farms that are excellent places for hiking, bird watching and environmental education, with homemade food and atmosphere. Blue flag farms, managed under principles of respect for the environment and use of organic agriculture.

There are also integrated farms, with multiple elements of integrated water management (protection, use, harvesting, and irrigation), organic agriculture, fish farming, and livestock. Excellent place for educational and family tourism interested in agricultural, livestock and environmental education.

There are tourist ventures that offer lodging with first class food and pleasant family treatment. Descendants of the first settlers of the area, they offer extensive knowledge about the socio-environmental history of the area and horseback and other tours.

In addition, there are lodges with food service, facilities to relax in mineral waters and excellent spaces for bird watching, recognized by important national ornithologists.

More information www.facebook.com/CATURICR/ www.facebook.com/CATTEM/



Los Chiles is a rural and agro-ecological tourism destination, focused mainly on bird watching, that reinforces the preservation and responsible visitation of their 2 wetlands, internationally known for their important environmental characteristics. The citizens of Los Chiles cultivate corn, cocoa and beans. Enjoy the experience of everyday life in rural Costa Rica while taking in the scenery and wildlife. Because Los Chiles sits right on the Rio Frio, this is a great destination if you're an avid birder.

Also, if seeing wildlife up close is one of your top priorities, you won't want to miss the Caño Negro Wildlife Refuge. This area is among the most important wetlands in the world and is also home to diverse ecosystems. In the area there are rural tourism lodges, sodas and restaurants with traditional local food and entertaining activities in the rural environment.

For more information: www.facebook.com/catuchiFN

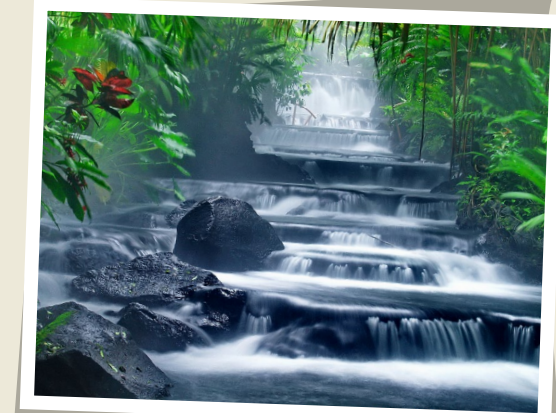


Offers lodging and activities in La Fortuna, San Carlos. You can visit a series of tourist attractions in the area, a tour to the Fortuna waterfall, hot springs of the Tabacón River, visit to the Arenal National Park, Venado caves, horseback riding to Monteverde.

Agua Zarcas, also offers the experience of enjoying communal life and natural resources. Activities: guided tour through trails in the rainforest, bird watching, visit to medicinal plantations, and tour of the dairy.

In addition, the following activities are offered in the community of Tigra of San Carlos: hiking trails through primary and secondary forest, a visit to the 3.8 hectare lagoon, waterfalls and hot springs, as well as observation of fumaroles.

For more information
 Arenal Chamber of Tourism and Commerce
<https://arenalcostarica.cr/> (506) 6334 7630
info@arenalcostarica.cr



The Northern Plains region, also known as the Huetar North Region of the province of Alajuela, is made up of the four border cantons, San Carlos, Guatuso, Upala and Los Chiles. Some of them host tourist development centers and others serve as tourist corridors for visitors, offering not only services for their convenience, but also attractive picturesque towns that are worth visiting during their journey.

San Carlos:

San Carlos has been a canton of Alajuela since 1911. With an area of 3347.98 km², it is the largest canton in the country, surpassing in size the provinces of Cartago and Heredia. It covers 6.5% of the country's territory, divided into 13 districts, and, as of 2011, boasts a population of almost 165 thousand inhabitants. The sister cantons of Guatuso, Upala and Los Chiles did not become cantons of Alajuela until 1970.

Ciudad Quesada

Ciudad Quesada is the head of the San Carlos canton and the main gateway to the northern part of the country. It offers visitors a variety of commercial and tourist services, from here you can visit sites of tourist interest such as Aguas Zarcas, Venecia, Rio Cuarto and Puerto Viejo of Sarapiquí, Fortuna, Arenal

volcano and reservoir. The Municipal Market is the ideal place for those who wish to enjoy delicious typical food..

Fortuna

A community formed by people of great entrepreneurial spirit, who converted an agricultural zone into a thriving commercial and tourist area, with beautiful landscapes such as the stunning perfect cones of the Arenal Volcano and its inseparable Cerro Chato. It offers a wide range of tourist services and products and is also an important departure point for Caño Negro, Venado Caves, Monteverde and Tilarán, among others.

Bijagua

As you drive towards Bijagua from the lowlands of Guanacaste, gradually traveling upwards, you can see the change in your surroundings.

From those lowlands to the magnificent volcanoes with their forests.

Bijagua is located in a unique wildlife area between the Miravalles and Tenorio volcanoes. Warm winds from the Caribbean rise to form condensation and then rain falls between the two volcanoes, resulting in a unique microclimate that is home to a wide variety of flora and fauna, including numerous endemic species.

The area has also been declared part of the UNESCO Agua y Paz Biosphere Reserve. Bijagua is the heart of the Tenorio Miravalles Biological Corridor. The reserve is made up of eight core zones that are legally constituted wildlife protected areas and are administered through the National System of Conservation Areas (SINAC). There's so much for nature lovers to love!

Los Chiles

Los Chiles, head of the canton of the same name since 1970, is located at an altitude of 43 meters above sea level in the San Carlos lowlands in northern Costa Rica. It is 198 km from San José, 97 km northwest of Ciudad Quesada and only 4 km from the border with Nicaragua, which is why there is a large settlement of Nicaraguan migrants in the community. Rio Frio, on the western edge of the city, is a very important means of communication to access small neighboring towns in both nations.

The community is also a center for agriculture and sport fishing.

Like many towns in northern Costa Rica, Los Chiles was first founded by Nicaraguan settlers in the early 19th century, although the region had been inhabited by Guatuso Indians since pre-Columbian times.

In 1857, during the second campaign against the filibusters, a road was opened that descended from the top of the Guanacaste Volcanic Mountain Range to the San Juan River, in order to cut off the use of the river by the enemy. From that moment on, a rich area covered, at that time, by virgin forest became evident. Years later, cocoa and coffee plantations began to form, as well as the exploitation of rubber and livestock, both in Los Bajos -today Villa Florencia- as well as in El Muelle and Boca Arenal.

The first Nicaraguans to arrive in the region, beginning in the second half of the 19th century, arrived by boat across the Frio River in search of latex from the rubber trees that abounded in the area in the wild. Some of them liked these lands and returned with their families to settle in the region.

There are two popular versions regarding the origin of the canton's name, both related to the rubber workers who inhabited the region at the



end of the 19th century, one because a plantation of chili peppers was developed from the scattered seeds of the chili peppers that they used to season their meals and another because it was a meeting place to talk about adventures, anecdotes and chiles (awkward or funny situation or experience) .

Upala

Upala is a small city with 15,000 inhabitants, head of the Alajuela canton of the same name. It is located 238 km from San José through Cañas, Guanacaste and 9 km south of the Nicaraguan border and is more related to the Chorotega region more by means of communication than by geographical location.

During pre-Hispanic times it was occupied by the Voto Indians who obeyed Cacique Garavito. It was at the same time a refuge for indigenous people escaping from the Spaniards due to its distance from the ports and the difficult access even through Nicaraguan territory, which is why the Spaniards lost interest in its conquest. It was not until the end of the 19th century that settlers from Rivas and San Carlos de Nicaragua began to migrate in search of the rubber tree to extract the product and market it in their country. Over time they settled and began subsistence farming activities. Costa Rican settlers from Guanacaste migrated starting from the second decade of the twentieth century in search of fertile land and eventually unified with Nicaraguan settlers.

Located in a region of extensive lowlands, Upala's economy is primarily agricultural. It is the main area of the country in the production of dairy and beef cattle, as well as rice and beans. Many businessmen visit this area for the exchange of ideas and marketing

of products. Today, people drive through this area to reach Caño Negro and Los Chiles.

Upala has experienced enormous growth in the Dos Ríos district sector, especially in Gavilán of Dos Ríos, in the foothills of the Rincón de la Vieja Volcano National Park. There you will find resorts such as SENSORIA, BLUE RIVER, KIWANDA, waterfalls and more.

Rincón de la Vieja Chamber of Tourism, and tour operators such as Gavilán Tours and La Carreta are found here. In the center of Upala there are quality restaurants, hotels and lodges, and the VOCARE integral farm and lodging project, to mention a few. Upala is one of the richest and most beautiful cantons of the Northern Lowlands.

Guatuso

The head city of the Guatuso canton is San Rafael, located at an altitude of 50 m, making it a true example of the climate of the Northern Lowlands. It is a community located on the banks of the Frio River and offers tourists some commercial and tourist services to stay and from there, visit sites of tourist interest such as Caño Negro and the indigenous territories of Margarita, Tonjibe and El Sol, as well as recreational trips along the river, which according to history, was the means of communication and transportation for people from Nicaragua who came to these lands in search of rubber.

Information: visitcostarica.com



*Directory of
Tourist Services*

General Services

COSTA RICA COUNTRY CODE: 506 (If you are calling from another country)

Service	Contact
Regional Office of the Costa Rican Tourism Board	ictsancarlos@ict.go.cr Tel. : (506) 2461-9102 https://www.visitcostarica.com/es
National Systems of Conservation Areas	http://www.sinac.go.cr
Arenal National Park, Tenorio Volcano, Juan Castro Blanco, Caño Negro, Caño Negro Mixed National Wildlife Refuge	
Arenal Chamber of Tourism and Commerce	Tel.: +506-6334-7630 E-mail: info@arenalcostarica.cr www.visitelafortuna.com
Chamber of Tourism Los Chiles (Catuchi)	www.facebook.com/catuchicn catuchi.canonegro@gmail.com Tel.: (506) 8582-0362
Guatuseña Tourism Chamber (CATUGUA)	Tel.: +506-86987035 Email: catugua@hotmail.com
Río Celeste Tourism Chamber	info.caturi@gmail.com https://www.facebook.com/CATURICR/
Tenorio Miravalles Tourism Chamber	tenorio-miravalles@hotmail.com turismotenoriomiravalles.com
Federation of Chambers of Tourism of the Northern Territory (Upala Guatuso Los Chiles y Bijagua)	Tel.: +506-6363-1498 Email: kalaharigeo@gmail.com
LA FORTUNA	
EMERGENCIAS	911
Costa Rican Firefighters, La Fortuna, Alajuela	(506) 2479-1553
Tourist Police La Fortuna	(506) 2479-7257
GAR Police La Fortuna	(506) 2479-9689
CCSS La Fortuna Clinic	(506) 2459-1700
SANAR Clinic La Fortuna	(506) 2479-9420
Unimed Trauma Center Ambulance	(506) 2479-1903
Bancos Popular	2479-9422
Banco Nacional	2479-9022
Banco de Costa Rica	2479-9113
Bac San José	2479-8576
Coocique La Fortuna	2401-1500
GUATUSO	
Guatuso Police Station in Katira	2402-1081
Police Station in Guatuso	2600-3081
Katira Gas Station	2402-2020
Red Cross	2464-0021
Upala Hospital	2480-0000

Service	Contact
LOS CHILES	
National Systems of Conservation Areas	http://www.sinac.go.cr http://www.sinac.go.cr/ES/ac/ACAHN/rnvsncn/Paginas/default.aspx http://www.sinac.go.cr/ES/ac/Brochures/ Tel. (506)2471-1309
Costa Rica Firefighters	Tel.2471-1290
Frnteras Police	Tel. 2471-1183
Los Chiles Pharmacy	Tel. 2471-1196
Los Chiles Hospital	Tel. 2471-2000
Red Cross	Tel. 2471-1037
Banco Nacional	tel.22122000
ATM Gas Station	Los Chiles, Caño Negro, 650 m South from the intersection to Caño Negro. 2471-3131
UPALA/ BIJAGUA	
Firefighters	Tel. 2470-0419
Upala Hospital	Tel. 2480-0000
Red Cross	Tel. 2470-1100
INS	Tel. 2287-6000
Poder Judicial	Tel. 2470-0985
Border Police	Tel. 24711183
Banco de Costa Rica	Tel. 2211-1111
Banco Popular	Tel. 2470-0132
Coopealianza. R. I. Upala	Tel. 2470-4010
Banco Nacional de Costa Rica	Tel. 2470-0127

Airports

Place	Contact
Tobías Bolaños Airport, Pavas. Son José	Tel.: 2232-28201/ 2232-7330
Juan Santamaría International Airport: Flight information	Tel.: 2437-2626
Daniel Oduber Quirós International Airport, Liberia Guanacaste Administration and Information	Tel.: 2668-1010



Costa Rica is a place where nature abounds and adventure awaits you, just remember:

- Book tours offered by authorized travel agencies.
- Make sure that the place you wish to visit is within the permitted sites of SINAC's Protected Wildlife Areas.
- Make sure that the activity you wish to perform is allowed.
- Make sure that the tour guide provides you with safety instructions and the rules of the activity before starting a tour.
- Make sure the company has an operating permit issued by the Ministry of Health, insurance policies and certified tour guides.

MIGRATION

Citizen Service Center, Migration Call Center: 1311
Office Hours: Monday to Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Sundays does not attend
www.migracion.go.cr

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LIST OF LODGING COMPANIES WITH TOURIST DECLARATION 2021

NAME	TELEPHONE	E-MAIL	WEB SITE
C.T. TILAJARI	24621212	info@tilajari.com	www.tilajari.com
HOTEL EL TUCANO RESORT & TERMAL SPA	2-4606000	reservaciones@hoteltucano.com	www.hoteleltucano.com
ARENAL LODGE (Hotel La Posada del Arenal- Hotel y Spa Arenal Lodge)	24791881	reservations@arenalodge.com	www.arenalodge.com
HOTEL ARENAL SPRINGS RESORT AND SPA	24013300	reservations@thespringscostarica.com	www.thespringscostarica.com
HOTEL ARENAL SPRINGS RESORT AND SPA	24791212	info@arenalsprings.com	www.hotelarenalsprings.com
HOTEL GARZA DEL PLATANAR	2-4755222	info@hotellagarza.com	www.hotellagarzaarenal.com
ARENAL OBSERVATORY LODGE	2-4791070	info@arenalobservatoryloge.com	www.arenalobservatorylodge.com
HOTEL LA CENTRAL	2-4600301	hcentral@racsa.co.cr	www.hotellacentral.com
Albergue LA LAGUNA DEL LAGARTO	22004629	lagarto@racsa.co.cr	www.lagartolo-lodge-costa-rica.com
HOTEL EL CONQUISTADOR	2-4600546	hconquistador@ice.co.cr	www.hconquistador.com
TABACON GRAND SPA THERMAL RESORT	24792000	sales@tabacon.com	www.tabacon.com
HOTEL ARENAL COUNTRY INN	2-4799669	info@arenalcountryinn.com	www.arenalcountryinn.com
LUIGI'S HOTEL	2-4799898	info@luigishotel.com	www.luigishotel.com
Hotel LOMAS DEL VOLCAN	2-4799000	info@lomasdelvolcan.com	www.lomasdelvolcan.com
HOTEL ARENAL PARAISO RESORT & SPA	24791100	reservas@arenalparaiso.com	www.arenalparaiso.com
LOS LAGOS HOTEL SPA & RESORT	2-4791000	reserve@hotelloslagos.com	www.hotelloslagos.com
ALBERGUE DE MONTAÑA MAQUENQUE ECOLOGE	24798200	info@maquenqueecolodge.com	www.maquenqueecolodge.com
HOTEL LA PRADERA DEL ARENAL	24799644	info@lapraderadelarenal.com	www.lapraderadelarenal.com
FINCA VILLA TINA	2-4609609	fincavillatina@gmail.com	www.fincavillatina.com
HOTEL ARENAL VOLCANO INN	2-4791122	reservaciones@arenalvolcanoinn.com	www.arenalvolcanoinn.com
HOTEL LAS TABLITAS	2-4780411	hotelyrestaurantelastablitas@gmail.com	www.hotelparaisoanatural.com

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LIST OF LODGING COMPANIES WITH TOURIST DECLARATION 2021			
NAME	TELEPHONE	E-MAIL	WEB SITE
HOTEL ARENAL RABFER	2-4799187	info@arenalrabfer.com	www.arenalrabfer.com
HOTEL ARENAL MANOA	2-4791111	info@arenalmanoa.com	www.arenalmanoa.com
HOTEL ARENAL KIORO	2-4791700	reservas@hotelarenalkioro.com	www.hotelarenalkioro.com
CASA LUNA HOTEL & SPA	2-4797368	info@casalunahotel.com	www.casalunahotel.com
HOTEL MOUNTAIN PARADISE	2-4791414	guesservice@hotelmountainparadise.com	www.hotelmountainparadise.com
HOTEL LA FORTUNA	2-4799197	reservas@lafortunahotel.com	www.hotellafortunahotel.com
CABINAS FARO ARENAL	2-4797092	info@cabinasfaroarenal.com	www.hotelfaroarenal.com
HOTEL ROYAL CORIN WELLNESS AND SPA RESORT	2-4792200	info@royalcorin.com	www.royalcorin.com
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HOTEL MONTAÑA DE FUEGO	24791220	reservaciones@montanadefuego.com	www.montanadefuego.com
ARENAL OASIS ECOLOGUE	24799526	info@arenaloasis.com	www.arenaloasis.com
HOTEL SECRETO LA FORTUNA	24797047	gerenciahotelsecreto@gmail.com	www.secretolafortuna.com
MUSSAENDA POSADA & GARDENS	24791900	info@mussaenda.com	www.mussaenda.com
HOTEL MONTE REAL	24799357	gerencia@monterealhotel.com	www.montereal.com
ALBERGUE RyA del VOLCAN	83505305	ryadelvolcan@gmail.com	
Posada de Turismo Rural Finca 360	85305373	finca360cr@gmail.com	
HOTEL SAN BOSCO INN	24799050	gerencia@hotelsanbosco.com	www.hotelsanbosco.com
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Volcano Lodge Hotel & Thermal Experience	24792800	info@volcanolodge.com	www.volcanolodge.com
HOTEL LAVAS TACOTAL	24791210	reservaciones@tacotal.com	www.tacotal.com
LA FORTUNA SUITES LODGE	24798419	reservations@lafortunasuites.com	www.lafortunasuites.com
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DESTINOS ECOLOGICOS	2-4601507		
EAGLE TOURS	2-4799091	solarenal@racsa.co.cr	www.eagletours.net
AG.V RECEPTIVA JACAMAR NATURALIST TOURS	2-4799767	info@arenaltours.com	www.arenaltours.com
AG. PURA VIDA	2-4799045	info@puravidatrips.com	www.puravidatrips.com
Canoa Aventura	2-4798200	info@canoaaventura.com	www.canoaaventura.com
Agencia de Viajes Emisora Aeronort	2-4603711	aeronortagency@gmail.com	www.aeronortcr.com
Anywhere Costa Rica	2-4798811	info@anywherecostarica.com	www.anywherecostarica.com
Desafío La Fortuna	24790020	info@desafiocostarica.com	www.desafiocostarica.com
Wave Tours	24797262	info@waveexpeditions.com	www.waveexpeditions.com
Agencia de Viajes Ecoterra Costa Rica	24798333	info@ecoterracostarica.com	www.ecoterracostarica.com
Agencia de Viajes Rainforest Travel CR	89267424	info@rainforesttravelcr.com	www.rainforesttravelcr.com
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Agencia de V. Emisora San Carlos	24612030	ventas@viajessancharlos.com	www.viajes-sc.com
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Agencia de Viajes Travel Arenal	24799656	info@travelarenal.com	
Agencia de Viajes Seven Tours Costa Rica	24790770	jrodriguez@seventours.com	
Agencia de Viajes Lobos Tours	24799208	lobostours@gmail.com	
Agencia de Viajes The House of Tours	24797530	info@thehouseoftours.com	
Agencia de Viajes Rainforest Explorers	24798111	info@rainforestexplorers.com	
Agencia de Viajes Traluxu Travel	47023434	info@traluxu.com	www.traluxutavel.com
Agencia de Viajes Flow Trips	24790075	info@flowtrips.com	www.flowtrips.com
Agencia de Viajes Dinghy Expeditions Mountains, Rivers and Coasts	84234653	info@dinghtexpeditions.com	www.dinghyexpeditions.com
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Agencia de Viajes Quercus Travel	47027265	reservas@quercustavel.com	www.quercustravel.com
Agencia de Viajes Fortuna Expeditions	24797500	carlos@slowtourismcr.com	www.slowtourismcr.com
Agencia de Viajes Kapi tours			
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BAR REST KLEAVERS	24606444		info@kleaver.com
REST PIZZA HUT	2-4608212		restaurantesancarlos@piezzahutcr.com
REST LA HACIENDA	24757340		
Restaurante LAVA ROCKS CAFÉ	2-4798039	lavarocks@ice.co.cr	
Inspira Café y Restaurante	24797139	inspiracafecr@gmail.com	
El Descorche de los Geranios BAR			

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Green Earth Gardens S.A	Parque Temático de Captura y Depósito de Carbono	2-2969949	info@greeneearthgardens.org	
Valle Monteverde S.A	Costa Rica Sky Adventures	24794100	info@skytrek.com	www.crskyadventurestravel.com
Puro Equipo USA S A	Pure Trek Canyoning	24791313	canyoning@puretrek.com	www.puretrekcostarica.com
KM Tropicales S.A	Paradise Hot Springs	24791380	info@paradisehotsprings.com	www.paradisehotsprings.com
Rainforest Experience S.A.	Rainforest Chocolate Tours	24790090	info@rainforestchocolatetour.com	www.rainforestchocolatetour.com
Asoc.de Desarrollo Integral La Fortuna de San Carlos	Reserva Ecológica Catarata Río La Fortuna	24799515	administración@cataratalafortuna.com	www.cataratalafortuna.com
Sociedad Bioecologica del Norte S.A.	Reserva Biológica Ecocentro Danaus	24797019	danaus.gerencia@hotmail.com	www.ecocentrodanaus.com

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Acufa Parque Ecológico S.A	Parque Ecológico Arenal Mundo Aventura	24799762	reservaciones@arenalmundoaventura.com	www.arenalmundoaventura.com
Nalavi Verde S.A.	Mistico Park	24798282	info@misticopark.com	www.misticopark.com
Eden Chocolate Tour S.A.	Eden Chocolate Tour	22005497	edenchocolatetourcr@gmail.com	
La Vaca Muca S.A.	Chocolatería y Cafetería Estukurú	24797083	frivas@estukuru.com	
Inversiones El Macizo RMM S.A.	Actividad Temática Ecoglide Arenal Park	24797120	contabilidad@arenalecoglide.com	
Arenal Natural Ecuestre S.A.	Actividad Temática Arenal 1968	40011968	info@arenal1968.com	www.arenal1968.com
Pedro Cordero Nuñez	Actividad Temática Finca Agroecológica Vivencias Campesinas	88538405	vivenciascampesinascr@gmail.com	

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HOTEL ARENAL SPRINGS RESORT AND SPA	24013300	reservations@thespringscostarica.com	www.thespringscostarica.com
TABACON GRAND SPA THERMAL RESORT	24792000	sales@tabacon.com	www.tabacon.com
HOTEL ARENAL KIORO	2-4791700	reservas@hotelarenalkioro.com	www.hotelarenalkioro.com
HOTEL ROYAL CORIN WELLNESS AND SPA RESORT	2-4792200	info@royalcorin.com	www.royalcorin.com

SPA			
NAME	TELEPHONE	E-MAIL	WEB SITE
Albergue Observatorio Volcán Arenal S.A	22907011	tours@arenalobservatorylodge.com	www.arenalobservatorylodge.com

NATIONAL BIRD WATCHING ROUTE COSTA RICA



Chloroceryle inda
Green-and-rufous Kingfisher
Photo: Barnaby Romero

CAÑO NEGRO



CAÑO NEGRO



Main birding spots in Caño Negro

- National Mixed Wildlife Refuge Caño Negro
- Los Chiles
- Pocosol
- San Carlos Pier
- San Rafael de Guatuso
- Bijagua de Upala
- Medio Queso
- Biological Corridor Río Frío
- Llanos de San Emilio
- Río Frío southern sector (Caño Blanco & Betel)
- Bosque de Terrón
- Volcán Tenorio National Park
- National Mixed Wildlife Refuge Maquenque



377 Bird Species

2 Endemic Species

1 National Park

2 Wildlife Refuge

The **Caño Negro Node** is an impressive green treasure to observe an enormous amount of birds of all sizes and colors. Here you can find the 6 species of kingfishers present in America, roseate spoonbills, and the largest colony of cormorants in the country. Also, purple heron, tricolor egret, jabiru, and some specialties of the area such as the white cotinga, the yellow-chested chick, the marsh hawk, and the gray-headed pigeon, among others. You can also see turtles, caimans and fish.

It is located in the north of the country near the border with Nicaragua between the cantons of Guatuso, Upala and Los Chiles. It mainly protects wetlands of great importance for wildlife, both terrestrial and aquatic, and as a reservoir in perpetuity for species unique to the area.

It has 12 identified ecosystems that provide shelter and food for more than **500 species of birds**, including migratory and resident birds, 2 of which are endemic species.

377 Bird Species

2 Endemic Species

1 National Park

2 Wildlife Refuge

It includes major birdwatching sites such as: Medio Queso, Ruta los Malecu Medio Queso Biological Corridor, Llanos de San Emilio, Caño Negro Mixed National Wildlife Refuge, and Volcán Tenorio National Park, where you can find at least half of all the bird species found in Costa Rica, including the **bell bird** (*Procnias tricarumculatus*), **umbrella bird** (*Cephalopterus glabricolis*) and the **sunbittern** (*Eurypyga helias*). **This is complemented by the cultural manifestations of the Maleku indigenous community, who live in 3 palenques or settlements: Margarita, Tonjibe and El Sol.**

The **Caño Negro Node** is a very important biological corridor between the ACTO, ACAHN and ACAT, the Tortuguero conservation area, and the Maquenque Mixed National Wildlife Refuge.

Three protected areas are highlighted: **Caño Negro National Mixed Wildlife Refuge, Tenorio National Park, and Maquenque National Mixed Wildlife Refuge.** The Caño Negro Mixed National Wildlife Refuge is a wetlands and wildlife protection area, located in the northern part of Costa Rica, about 14 km as the crow flies from the ASP to the border and approximately 33 km from the border with Nicaragua. With a protected area of approximately 10,000 hectares, **it was declared a RAMSAR Site** on December 27, 1991 and a core area of the Agua y Paz Biosphere, designated by UNESCO in 2007.

It is a site of great importance for the conservation of more than 500 species of birds including the anhinga, snail kite, tiger heron (*Tigrisoma lineatum*), sun grebe, yellow-headed vulture, red-capped manakin, birds of prey, antbirds and rare species such as the curassow (*Crax rubra*) and the spot breasted wren (*Pheugopedius maculipectus*). It is also possible to observe 6 species of kingfishers. The Refuge is of vital importance because it is home to the largest colony of cormorants (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*) in the country. It is also the only region with permanent populations of the Nicaraguan grackle (*Quiscalus nicaraguensis*), a bird endemic to the Lake Nicaragua basin. It is an important area for the sighting of the Nicaraguan seed finch (*S. nuttingi*) throughout the year.

Rio Celeste, and more particularly the Tenorio Volcano National Park, is located in the Guanacaste mountain range, between the provinces of Guanacaste and Alajuela. Among the biggest attractions of the place is the waterfall of the famous Celeste River, whose attraction is precisely its light blue coloration. Along with panoramic views, collapsed fumaroles, hot springs, streams within the forest, natural forest, nature trails and wildlife sightings.

EMBLEMATIC BIRDS CAÑO NEGRO



Jabiru mycteria
Common name: Jabiru

Photo: Bernardo López



From November to February



Leptotila plumbeiceps
Common name: Gray-headed dove

Photo: Renato Paniagua



May



Phalacrocorax brasilianus
Common name: Neotropic Cormorant

Photo: Bernardo López



From March to September

Quiscalus nicaraguensis
Common name: Nicaraguan grackle

Photo: Bernardo López



Ixobrychus exilis
Common name: Least Bittern

Photo: ICT



From June to September



Busarellus nigricolis
There is no records for CR

Common name: Black-collared Hawk

Photo: Renato Paniagua



Beginnings of rainy season

Heliornis fulica
Common name: Sungrebe

Photo: Barnaby Romero



Nesting season



Para más información visite:

cañonegroebird.org [Lista de aves V. Tenorio-río Celeste](#)

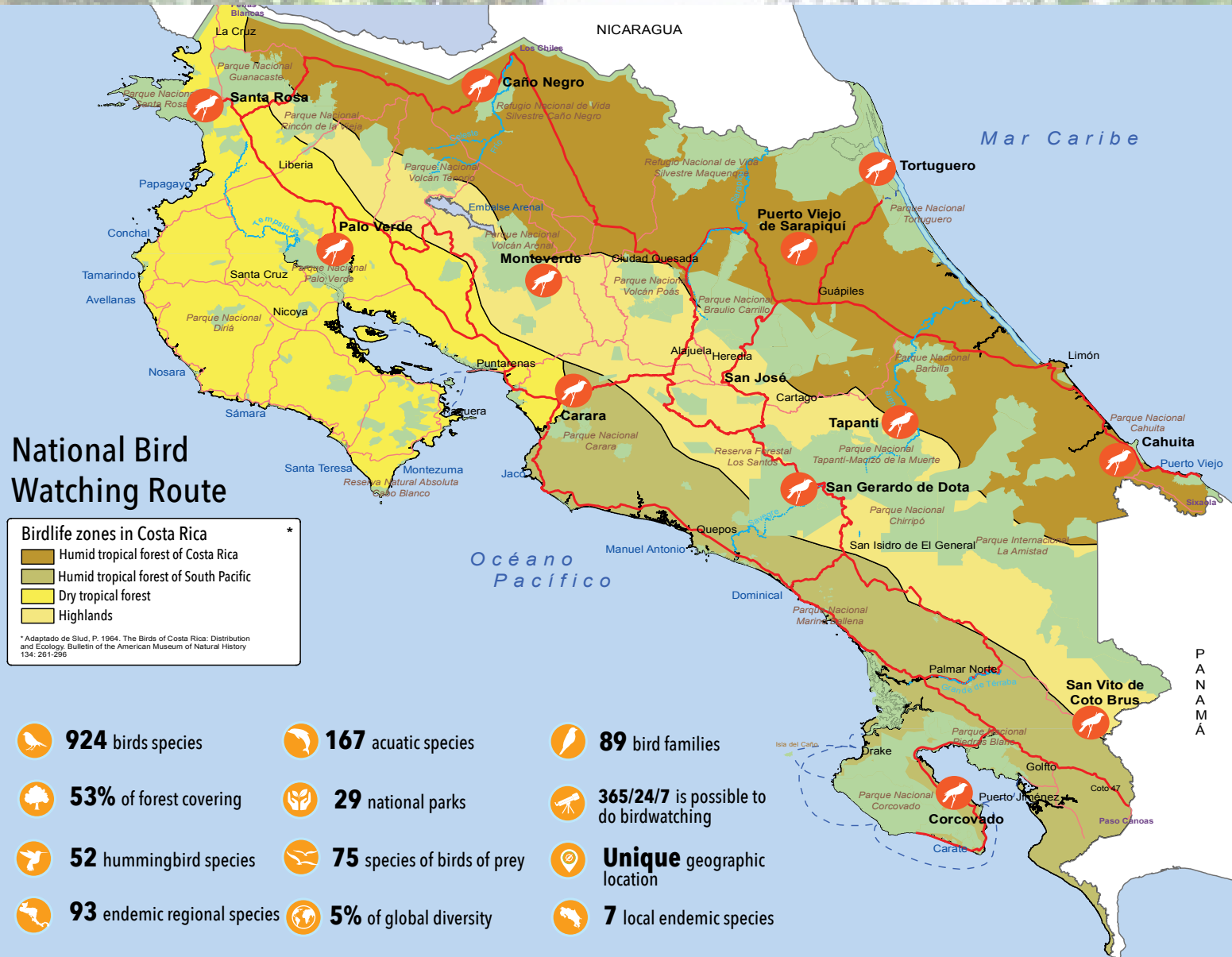
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[Video](#)



[Unión de Ornitólogos CR](#)

[Video de aves Volcán Tenorio - río Celeste](#)



BIRD WATCHING IN Costa Rica

For national and international birdwatchers, Costa Rica is one of the most important tourist destinations in the world. A country with a small territory of 51,100 km² of land area (0.03% of the world's surface) and 589,000 km² of territorial sea, it has an avifauna with more than 900 species that surpasses all of Europe. Costa Rica is possibly the country with the most bird species and habitat types in the world in relation to the size of its territory.

The diversity of birds is divided into four ornithological provinces: Highlands, Caribbean Slope, North Pacific and South Pacific. Including Cocos Island and its territorial waters.

The country has developed the National Bird Route which is composed of 12 nodes or main birding sites, involving 7 National Parks, 1 National Wildlife Refuge, private reserves and surrounding communities, distributed practically throughout the country and differentiated into 4 Bird Zones: Tropical Dry Forest, Highlands, Caribbean Tropical Rainforest and South Pacific Tropical Rainforest. All of them with a high diversity of bird species that is complemented by the culture, rurality and local communities that are integrated into this route.

Costa Rica has:

- 3 million** migratory birds of prey fly through the sky from August to November.
- 220 species are migratory** and correspond to Nearctic migratory species from North America.
- 19 are globally threatened.**
- One of the top 5 favorite birding countries in the world.**
- 7 endemic species**, 4 on the mainland, 3 on Cocos Island.
- In total, Costa Rica's bird species constitute **9% of the world's known species.** (Stiles and Skutch, 2007, p. 13-31)



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Credits

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Coordination and production: Mario B. Badilla Jara.
Workgroup: Mario Badilla, Luis Humberto Elizondo, Pablo González (maps), Rafael Soto, Rodolfo Lizano, Ruth Alfaro.
Advisory: Rosa Iris Arguedas, Renato Paniagua, Barnaby Romero, Bernardo López, Pablo Camacho, Luis Humberto Elizondo.
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Direction, proposals and review: Ruth Alfaro Rojas.

Coordination and production: Mario B. Badilla Jara.

Design and layout: Floría Leiva Pacheco.

Workgroup: Loida Pretiz, Paola Salazar Arce, Efrén Hernández Bonilla and Natalia Cedeño Vargas. (Ministry of Culture and Youth).

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Collaborators:

Marjorie Rojas, Casitas Tenorio-Pipa Kely, Aventuras Travel, Helen Salazar Chaverri, Desafío Adventure, Mario Abarca, La finca Lodge / Globo Aerostático Esteban Elizondo Arrieta.

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5-Information of QUE BUEN LUGAR <https://quebuenlugar.com/>

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