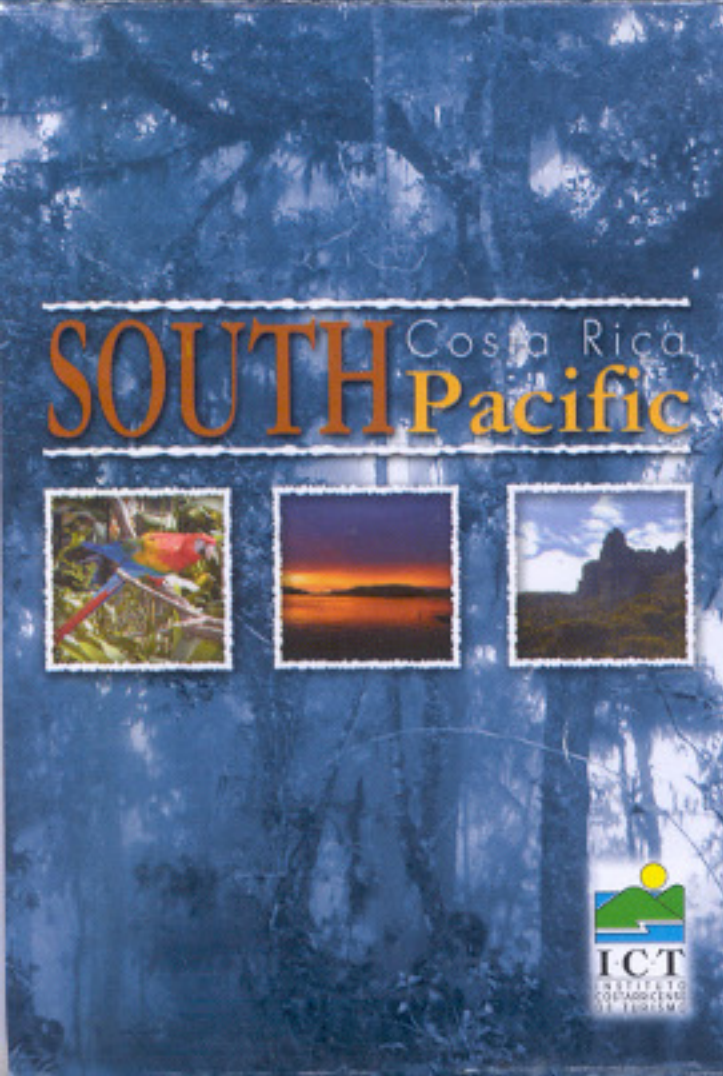


SOUTH Pacific Costa Rica
General Information



SOUTH Pacific Costa Rica



Credits:
 Direction: Union of Tourist Chambers in the Pacific
 South and Tourism Information Center
 Licda. Jeanine Santos de Vicente
 Editing: Msc. Malfreda Camboa Quesada, Rural
 Development Program
 MSc. Gilberto Fallas Hidalgo
 MSc. Alberto Sánchez Sáenz
 Bach. Silvia Rodríguez Araya
 English Translation: Heather Lane
 Review: Instituto Geográfico Nacional y Sistema
 Nacional de Areas de Conservación
 Sponsor: Costa Rica Tourist Board (I.C.T.)
 www.tourism-costarica.com
 Design: E.M. Asesores S.A.
 E-mail: ciproturn@raccsa.co.cr
 Http: www.ecotourism.co.cr
 www.costaricasasur.co.cr
 Telephone: 771-6096
 Partial or entire reproduction of this document is pro-
 hibited without permission from the Tourist Information
 Center, CIPROTUR.



TOURIST ATTRACTIONS
 The Pacific Southwest contains an extraordinary amount of biodiversity, due to the varying topography and climate, as well as nationally and internationally renowned tourist attractions. Pavones Beach contains the second largest left wave in the world for surfers. The Río General and the Coto Brus possess special characteristics great for rafting. The two rivers unite to form the Río Grande de Térraba, considered the country's most copious. Chirripó National Park, located in the majestic Talamanca mountain range, is home to the highest elevation of Costa Rica, and along with La Amistad International Park – Costa Rica's largest and named by UNESCO as a world heritage site-, they form part of the Biosphere Reserve.

TOURIST ACTIVITIES
 The Region possesses ideal conditions for sport fishing. In the Pacific South waters people have caught world record setting fish. It also offers great conditions for the development of rural tourism, which includes agro-tourism, eco-tourism, adventure tours and ethno-tourism and one may enjoy any of following activities:

Sport fishing , Canoeing, Mountain Climbing, Archeology, Scuba Diving, Hiking, Mountain Biking, Bird Watching, Snorkeling, Mountain Trekking, Visits to, Indigenous Villages, Home stays with rural families, Rafting, Camping, Ultralight Flying , Kayaking, Horseback Riding, Surfing, Spelunking



IMMIGRATION LAWS BETWEEN COSTA RICA AND PANAMA
 In order to travel to Panama, a tourist must register their departure with the Costa Rican Migration office for \$10. Additionally, they will need to purchase a tourist visa for \$5, provided that no special type of visa is required. They will also need a proof of return to Costa Rica by showing a return bus or plane ticket, if traveling on public transportation. It is not permitted to leave Costa Rica with rental cars, however, the public transportation system to David and Panama City is excellent. The Costa Rica-Panama border at Paso Canoas is an ideal place to shop due to the lower Panamanian taxes.

LANGUAGE
 The official language of Costa Rica is Spanish. In certain locations, especially in hotels and in sites geared to tourists, it is common to find English spoken. There are also indigenous villages where dialects such as Cabécar, Bribri and Guaymí are spoken.

BANKS
 Banking services are offered both in the private and public sectors. The State Banks (Banco Estatal) are the most common and these include: Banco Nacional de Costa Rica (Costa Rican National Bank), Banco de Costa Rica (Costa Rica Bank), Banco Popular, and Banco Crédito Agrícola de Cartago (Cartago Agricultural Credit Union). Banks are open to the public between the hours of 8:30 am and 3:30 pm. Private banks are open from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm.



Presentation

For those of us that live in the Pacific South of Costa Rica, it would be an honor to welcome you as a guest to our country and to share our culture and home with you. In this brochure we have included some helpful information so that you may get the most out of your trip and enjoy the attractions and beauty of Costa Rica.



The mangroves Térraba-Sierpe are the largest mangroves in Costa Rica and form a labyrinth of channels, which reproduce a wide variety of aquatic life. Caño Island is located not too far from these mangroves and is one of the best places along the Pacific American Coast for scuba diving. Corcovado National Park is located on the Osa Peninsula of the Southern Region and is considered by National Geographic Magazine as the park with the most biodiversity on the planet.

LODGING
 The South West Region is different from other zones of Costa Rica in terms of lodging as tourists activities in this part of the country has developed within the small businesses. The large majority of these businesses are serviced by the owners, who attend to their clients with warmth and kindness adding a personal touch to their customer's visit. Nevertheless, the visitor may also find large hotels that offer different prices and different services that also adjust to the meet individual needs.



THE COMMERCIAL FREE ZONE IN GOLFITO
 Golfito serves as a commercial free zone in Costa Rica, where you can purchase articles and appliances at a lower tax rate than normal.

CREDIT CARDS
 Almost all businesses accept credit cards but the type of card accepted varies with each. In tourist centers most all types are accepted, but this is not always the case in non-tourist businesses. The most widely accepted cards are: Visa, Master Card, American Express, and Diners Club.

HEALTH SERVICES
 The health sector is very good in the Southern Region. There is a network of Hospitals and Public Clinics that offer service and hospitalization to the entire population with the necessary human resources and technological equipment available to attend to all types of emergencies. There are also private clinics and medical consultants that are available to tourists



LOCAL FESTIVALS AND ACTIVITIES
 Agricultural, Industrial and Orchid Fair, San Isidro, P.Z. February
 Costa Rica-Panama Border, Paso Canoas. September
 Cattle, Agriculture and Industrial Fair of Corredores. December
 Mount Chirripó Race. February
 Multi-Ecological Challenge. July
 Horseback trip between San Isidro and Cartago. August.



The abundant water network winds its way through the different altitudes of the Park to the Pacific Ocean forming beautiful waterfalls. The Southern Region also contains the largest area of Indigenous Reserves and ancestral culture. From the Pacific South you will have access to more than 50% of the area of Costa Rican National Parks.

TAXES
 Throughout the country, the consumer should pay 13% of the price of the merchandise and services acquired. Additionally, lodging has a 3% tax and food and beverages served in Restaurants and similar businesses charge a 10% gratuity which is included in the client's bill, it is not necessary to pay an additional tip. All businesses are obligated to provide an authorized receipt from the Tax Authority



NATIONAL HOLIDAYS AND LOCAL FESTIVALS
 January 1 (New Years), April 11 (Juan Santamaría Day National Hero), May 1 (Workers Day), Holy Thursday and Good Friday (Easter Week), July 25 (Annexation Day Guanacaste) August 2 (Our Lady of the Angels Day), September 15 (Independence Day), December 25 (Christmas), December 31 (New Years Eve)

Hospital	Telephone
H. Escalante Pradilla, Pérez Zeledón	771-0022 / 771-1885
H. Dr. Tomás Casa, Ciudad Cortés	788-8197 / 788-8198
H. Ciudad Neilly	783-4111 / 774-4115
H. de Golfito	775-1001
Clínica de Buenos Aires	730-0116 / 730-0068
Clínica de Puerto Jiménez	735-5061 / 735-5029
Cruz Roja	
Telephone	
Pérez Zeledón	771-0481
Buenos Aires	730-0078
Ciudad Cortés	788-8171
Golfito	775-0397
San Vito	773-3191
Puerto Jiménez	735-5061 / 735-5029
Ciudad Neilly	783-3757
Dirección de Tránsito	
Telephone	
Pérez Zeledón	771-3313
Río Claro	789-6050
Guardia de Asistencia Rural	117

