

# COSTA RICA



at Pavones require a south swell, characteristic of the winter months in the Southern Hemisphere (July-November).

Costa Rica's diversity and tremendous variety of surf spots make it possible to surf excellent waves all year long.

The short travel distances and different regions provide traveling surfers with the possibility not only to experience magic and adventure while visiting interesting and unique parts of the country, but to score a variety of world class point breaks, reefs and beach breaks. Best of all, you can surf in warm water all year round.

Costa Rica experiences semi-diurnal tidal differences. Extreme tidal variations on the Pacific coastline often affect certain breaks. But, the long, irregular coastline always guarantees quality waves for hard core surfers willing to explore.

Stop in at any local surf shop or befriend a local to learn about the best conditions for the different breaks.

With so many different beaches and locations to choose from, Costa Rica is the ideal

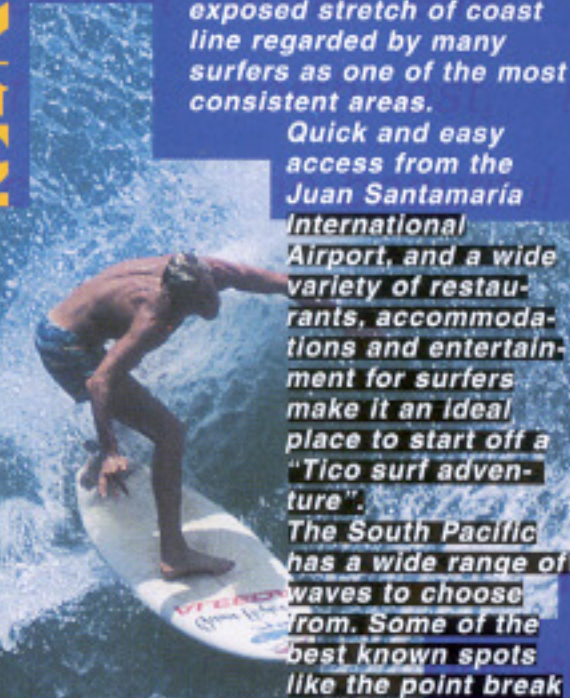
place for an unforgettable surf trip. Grab your stick, wax up and read up on our top 37 favorite spots.

Finding the best time and ideal place for an ultimate surf adventure in Costa Rica is easy to do. All you need is a brief outline of the different surf spots, a good idea of how to get there and when conditions are peak. Costa Rica's climatic and geographical variations can be divided into four different surf regions: the Atlantic or Caribbean, the North Pacific, the Central Pacific, and the South Pacific. The Caribbean coastline has a defined surf season from January to March and July to October. Strong storms in the Caribbean often send short but extremely powerful swells crashing onto world class breaks. The North Pacific generally has good quality surf year round. The consistent northeasterly "Papagayo" winds during December through March and the Northern Hemisphere storms create ideal waves.

The Central Pacific is an exposed stretch of coast line regarded by many surfers as one of the most consistent areas.

Quick and easy access from the Juan Santamaria International Airport, and a wide variety of restaurants, accommodations and entertainment for surfers make it an ideal place to start off a "Tico surf adventure".

The South Pacific has a wide range of waves to choose from. Some of the best known spots like the point break



## THE CARIBBEAN

### 1 Manzanillo

Located in the Gandoca-Manzanillo Reserve, 20 km south of Puerto Viejo, the northern end of this beach sports a fast break. On contrary, the southern end has virtually no surf because it is heavily protected by a large coral reef. Although surf is not a heavily practiced sport at this beach, diving, sea kayaking, trekking the reserve and observing the nesting of turtles in the nearby Gandoca-Manzanillo Lagoon are among other options. Although the road in is unpaved, a 4WD is not required. Lodging is rustic and the several restaurants around can dish up some excellent, typical Caribbean cuisine for starving visitors.

### 2 Puerto Viejo



An area with plenty of surf, but most well known for the biggest and most powerful wave in Costa Rica, "SALSA BRAVA" or "MEAN SALSA". This thick, voluminous, Hawaiian-style wave builds in deep water and breaks on a shallow reef. The right will usually be steep and tubular and its left will also provide a short, but sweet ride. Puerto Viejo is approximately a 3-1/2 hour drive from San José. Plenty of restaurants and hotel accommodations are available in the area.

### 3 Black Beach, Cahuita.

An excellent beach break, not

well known and therefore not heavily visited. Nevertheless, there are waves all year round. To reach Black Beach, take the road to Puerto Viejo. Take a left about 2 km before the Cahuita National Park entrance. After approximately a 10 minute drive from there, you will find the point - a well kept secret with a few U.S. surfers living in the area. The area hosts a variety of food and lodging accommodations.

### 4 Westfalia

A stretch of beach breaks extending south from Limón to Cahuita, offering lefts and rights that tend to close out when the swell gets too big. Food and lodging accommodations are recommended in Limón or Cahuita.

### 5 Uvita Island

An island off the coast of Limón where a perfect but dangerous left breaks on a reef. Isla Uvita is about a 20 minute boat ride from Limón with passage available only at certain times of the year.

### 6 Bonita Beach

A point/reef break known for its very thick, powerful and dangerous left. Access is a short and easy drive up the coast from Limón.

### 7 The North Caribbean Coast

This endless stretch of beach breaks is located along the coast of the Tortuguero National Park where some of Costa Rica's largest rivers meet the Caribbean Sea. Extreme conditions and the presence of sharks at these river mouths can deter any hardcore surfer. Most tourists visit the area to

sportfish at these river mouths or boat through the Tortuguero canals and assess its rich biodiversity. July to November visitors come to witness the nesting of the Green Turtles. Overnight lodging is available. The most practical ways to get there are to fly or rent a boat from about 2 km north of Playa Bonita or from a small port 7 km north of Limón.

## NORTH PACIFIC COAST

### 8 Potrero Grande

A very remote right point break with very fast and hollow waves. Located about 270 kms north of San José with no road access. You can rent a boat out of Playas del Coco or Playa Ocotál. There are no facilities there, but camping is a possibility.

### 9 Naranjo Beach (Witch's Rock)

One of the best beach breaks in the country, with very strong offshore winds from December to March. This remote spot is located in the Santa Rosa National Park, about 38 km north of Liberia. A good 4WD is a must. For long stays, camp grounds are set up but



an excellent river mouth break and Henry's point, another rocky point break.

no facilities are available. It is also possible to boat over from El Coco or Ocotál. Don't forget your mosquito net!

### 10 Grande Beach

Beach break located about 20 minutes north of Tamarindo. It is a recent addition to the National Park System as an effort to protect the area as a nesting ground for Leatherback Turtles. It is accessible by road, or an easy 45 minute walk across the Tamarindo Estuary and down the beach. A couple of accommodations and restaurants are available.

### 11 Tamarindo Beach

A good, central location for North Pacific surfing. Plenty of hotel and restaurant accommodations are available and easily accessible, along with local surf shops and ding repair facilities. Surf spots consist of: Pico pequeño, a rocky point; El Estero,

### 12 Langosta

A right and left point break that curls off the mouth of a small river, located 1 km south of Tamarindo. Easily accessible.