OSA
Cultural Tourist Guide
The extraordinary attractions of Osa

If you want an unforgettable experience of exuberant nature, in parks boasting the greatest biodiversity of the planet and within a framework of national parks, you cannot miss the Osa area.

In each of its six districts, Osa offers the possibility of experiencing different adventures, as well as the opportunity to experience the mystique and essence of its people.

The Osa region comprises, on the one hand, the entire coastal sector that extends from Dominical in the north to the canton of Golfito and the Golfo Dulce, and to the west with the Pacific Ocean at the southern tip of the country. This part of the country is well known for its biological diversity, natural beauty, rich landscapes several protected areas of great importance, including the Corcovado National Park, which National Geographic Magazine defines as “the most biologically intense place on Earth” and the travel specialist company, Discovercorps, describes as the best national park on the planet. Other protected areas in this region include: Marino Ballena, Piedras Blancas, the Terrabá-Sierpe Wetland, the Golfo Dulce Forest Reserve and the Caño Island Biological Reserve.

The canton is composed of the following districts: Ciudad Cortés, Palmar, Sierpe, Piedras Blancas, Bahía Ballena and Drake Osa Bay, of the province of Puntarenas.

Tourism Activities

It is because of all this that you will find a variety of activities for your enjoyment in the South Pacific such as hiking in the highest mountains of Costa Rica and on the trails in national parks and private protected areas, horseback riding, river rafting, sport fishing, diving, bird watching and flora and fauna observation. Especially on mangrove tours, where you might observe whales, dolphins, turtles, scarlet macaws and troops of titi or squirrel monkeys, a species endemic to the central and southern Pacific coast. Furthermore, you will find beautiful landscapes and adventure activities such as surfing, canopy, kayaking, paddle boarding, canyoning, rappelling, snorkeling, tubing, professional diving, and much more. Or, enjoy botanical gardens, impressive waterfalls in protected areas and river tours along the Terraba, Sierpe, Coto, and the Tombolo of Punta Uvita.

Top this all off with the rich local culture, by experiencing the gastronomy, traditions, music, dance, local crafts, indigenous communities and pre-Columbian spheres.

More information here
In June 2014, UNESCO declared four Archaeological Sites with stone spheres of the Diquis Delta as World Heritage Sites, the series of Sites corresponds to: Finca 6 Archaeological Site, Batambal Archaeological Site, Grijalba 2 Archaeological Site and El Silencio Archaeological Site. The stone spheres, which are still the subject of research on the method and tools of their production, represent an exceptional testimony of the artistic traditions and craft skills of these societies.

In 2015, the Sagrado Corazón de Jesús Catholic Church of Palmar Sur, was declared an Architectural Cultural Heritage by the Center for the Conservation of Cultural Heritage of Costa Rica, through Decree No. 38815-C and published in the Official Gazette No. 69 of April 10, 2015, due to its symbolic, historical, contextual and antique value.

**Finca 6 Archaeological Site**

- **Location:** Montezuma and Altos de San Antonio in Corredores, Osa in the canton of Buenos Aires, China Kichá in Pérez Zeledón, Abrojo or Brunca, Cabécar, Ngöbe or Guaymíe and Térraba, which have 12 mounds, burial sites, deposits of materials and stone spheres, reason for the declaration of World Heritage by UNESCO. [More information]

- **Pre-Columbian settlements:** In June 2014, UNESCO declared four Archaeological Sites with stone spheres from the Diquis. They are a series of pre-Columbian cliff-side settlements, which offer artificial mounds, burial sites, deposits of material and stone spheres, reasons for the declaration of World Heritage by UNESCO. [More information]

- **Banana enclave:** The area offers important vestiges of its historical past as a banana enclave through iconic housing infrastructure, as well as religious and monumental buildings, all of which is a legacy of the Costa Rican Banana Company in the South Pacific. [More information]

- **Handicrafts:** Both traditional and contemporary handicrafts can be found in the South Pacific, including the arts, work of indigenous communities, such as masks, baskets, coconut jewelry, engraved ground, natural woven bags, talco wood sculptures, painted marine, characters, wood carvings, among others.

- **Gastronomy:** The South Pacific has a gastronomy that is noteworthy due to the use of fish, fruits and vegetables typical of the area, the history of banana and palm cultivation, fishing, and the identity of the local culture.

- **Owner:** The Center for the Conservation of Cultural Heritage published in the Official Gazette No. 69 of April 10, 2015, of Palmar Sur, was declared an Architectural Cultural Heritage by the Center for the Conservation of Cultural Heritage of Costa Rica, through Decree No. 38815-C and published in the Official Gazette No. 69 of April 10, 2015, due to its symbolic, historical, contextual and antique value. [Read more]

**Architectural Heritage**

**1. Palmar Sur Catholic Church**

- **Location:** Palmar Sur Catholic Church

**World Heritage**

**2. Finca 6 Archaeological Site**

- **Location:** Palmar Sur Catholic Church

**Tourist Activities:**

- **Flora-fauna and bird watching:** Public protected areas - Nicha Ballena, Batambal, Grijalba 2, Colón Island, Piedras Blancas, Corcovado as well as private natural reserves offer visitors a pleasant experience with a diversity of nature. [Read more]

- **Dolphin and whale watching (seasonal):** Visitors have a unique experience because they can enjoy the natural wealth and find different initiatives that will show them the history, culture and wonders of the region. [More information here]

- **Hikes in protected areas:** Hikes are part of a very important activity that is carried out for the observation of natural and cultural attractions in the natural parks of Corcovado, Moino-Ballena and Piedra de Morro. This activity is the main source of income for the communities through public and private forested areas. [Read more]

- **Tour of the Tilarán Sierpe Wetland (Banano):** The Tilarán Sierpe mangrove forest is one of the largest mangrove forests in Costa Rica and plays an important role in the conservation of the Osa Peninsula. This is a dream tour for nature lovers and birdwatchers. [Read more]

- **Photography:** Photography is a wonderful activity due to the varied cultural, archeological and scenic options as well as the richness of the flora and fauna, rivers, waterfalls, and vegetation. [Read more]

- **Adventure Tourism:** Surf in Dominical Beach and Dominicalito Beach. [Read more]

**Archaeological Heritage**

**1. Palmar Sur Catholic Church**

Click on the following links and you will find information about companies of the area registered by:

- **Hotels**
- **Car rental**
- **Restaurants**
- **Travel Agencies**
- **Directory of certified guides**
- **Certified carriers**

- **EMERGENCIES**

- **9-1-1**

- **Tourist Activities:**

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## Osa activities program

### JANUARY
- **From December 30 as of January 2**
  - Dance of the little devils
    - Indigenous Community - Boruca

### FEBRUARY
- **First weekend**
  - Dance of the little devils at Curre
- **International Dance Festival**
  - typical in Puerto Jiménez
- **Commemoration of the arrival of Francis Drake**
  - Drake Beach-Osa Peninsula

### MARCH
- **First weekend**
  - Migratory Bird Festival
    - Puerto Jiménez and Golfito
- **First Friday**
  - Bird Marathon
    - Peninsula de Osa
- **First week**
  - National Sport Fishing Tournament
    - Boca Coronado, Osa
- **21 (equinox)**
  - Festival of the Spheres
    - Palmar Sur Park
- **Last week**
  - Amistad National Park Run
    - Cabécar Hill

### APRIL
- **11**
  - Civic activity Juan Santamaría
- **Easter**
  - Horseback riding Puerto Jiménez-Playa Preciosa

### MAY
- **1**
  - Labor Day
    - San Isidro Labrador Day. Patron Saint Festivities

### JUNE
- **23**
  - Anniversary of the Declaration of World Heritage Site, The Pre-Columbian Cacique Settlements with Stone Spheres of the Diquís Valley

### AUGUST
- **2**
  - Stations of the Cross in honor of the Virgin of the Angels
    - Cortés Cathedral
- **24**
  - National Parks Day

### SEPTEMBER
- **First two weekends**
  - Whale and Dolphin Festival
    - (Bahía Ballena district)
- **14**
  - Lantern parade
- **15**
  - Costa Rican Independence Day.
    - Tico-Panamanian Confraternity Festival
      - Canos Pass-Panama Border
- **Third week September**
  - Sea Festival
- **Second week September**
  - Tourist Fair Golfito

### OCTOBER
- **All month**
  - Whale watching
    - Ballena Marino National Park
- **Last week**
  - Amistad National Park Run
    - Cabécar Hill
- **Third week**
  - National Triathlon Championship
    - Golfito. Due to the health crisis, this year’s championship was suspended and moved to the last week of February 2021.

### NOVEMBER
- **All month**
  - Black November
    - Golfito Duty Free Depot

### DECEMBER
- **8**
  - Los Diablitos Festival
    - Boruca Indigenous Community
- **First Saturday**
  - Festival of Lights
- **Third week**
  - Christmas bird count
    - Osa Peninsula
- **21**
  - Winter Solstice
- **31**
  - Los Diablitos Festival
    - Boruca Indigenous Community

*An annual Arbor Day celebration event is held on the Sunday closest to June 15. In 2021 the celebration will be held on Sunday, June 13.*
We recommend a visit to the magnificent Muñeco Mountains, by bike or hiking, to observe the surrounding landscape, including the mouth of the daunting Río Grande de Terraba. Enjoy sport fishing and paddling in its estuaries or mangroves, for which you must enter the Embarcadero. Currently the landing site for artisanal and sport fishermen, this neighborhood served as a port of entry to the Southern Zone from Puntarenas during the era of the United Fruit Company. Here, you will run into historical constructions that allude to the past as a banana enclave through iconic housing buildings, all of which are a legacy of the Costa Rican Banana Company. Keep in mind that since 1934, the Banana Company moved to the southwest Pacific, due to the plagues that affected its production in the Caribbean coast. Two years later, fruit cultivation was already a reality in the southern zone. Between 1983 and 1984, the Banana Company shut down its operations in the South Pacific of Costa Rica. This decision resulted in the dismissal of more than 3,000 employees, the invasion of more than 1,000 hectares by squatters and the strengthening of African palm production.

The people of Osa are very proud of their pre-Columbian chieftain settlements, which offer the marvel of their stone spheres and sculptural legacy, reason for the declaration of World Heritage Site by UNESCO. This extraordinary archaeological legacy represents the chieftaindom societies of the Diquís delta, as it is a testimony of the complex political, social and productive structures that characterized organized societies in pre-Columbian times.

The pre-Columbian complex consists of four sites: Finca 6, Batambal, El Silencio and Grijalba 2 (located in the district of Ciudad Cortés).

Palmar also offers important remnants of its historical past as a banana enclave through iconic housing infrastructure, as well as religious and recreational buildings, all of which are a legacy of the Costa Rican Banana Company. Keep in mind that since 1934, the Banana Company moved to the southwest Pacific, due to the plagues that affected its production in the Caribbean coast. Two years later, fruit cultivation was already a reality in the southern zone. Between 1983 and 1984, the Banana Company shut down its operations in the South Pacific of Costa Rica. This decision resulted in the dismissal of more than 3,000 employees, the invasion of more than 1,000 hectares by squatters and the strengthening of African palm production.

A significant contribution of the district is the concept of the Garden City: an urban design oriented to good living (healthy life and optimal working conditions), in which the plant belt that surrounds the city and the beautiful park full of exotic trees stand out. It is a unique urban environment that has managed to incorporate modern concepts with great social and environmental responsibility. Harmony with the environment and controlled growth make Palmar Sur a true living museum.

Through Palmar Sur you can access Ojochal, where you can find an elevated gastronomic options with a lot of Canadian and European influence. It also connects to well-known beaches such as Uvita and Playa Dominical.

Siérre is located on the banks of the river of the same name. The mouth of the river, almost one kilometer wide, is quite impressive. At the source of this same river, north of the district, is the Siérre Lagoon, characterized by its large size, natural fresh water and abundant fauna and flora: a little known impressive natural destination.

The Siérre River boat tour allows you to enter one of the largest and most exuberant wetlands in Latin America: the Térraba-Siérre Wetland. This wetland was declared a Protected Site by the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands in 1996, which underscores its international significance.

The tour allows the observation of a large number of birds, reptiles and mammals, which use the wetland as a passageway and food source. Three types of vegetation can be distinguished in the protected site: mangrove, palustrine (permanent swamps and marshes on inorganic soils) and herbaceous.

In Siérre we also have the Golfo Dulce Forest Reserve, shared with Golfito, which was created in 1979 as a protected area (The Golfo Dulce Forest Reserve is shared with the canton of Golfito. The Reserve protects the lowland forest areas surrounding the Golfo Dulce and the Osa Peninsula. It is characterized by its basil tropical rainforest and cloud forests, as well as by two permanent freshwater bodies of water: the Chocuaco and Siérre lagoons, mentioned above. The great tourism potential of these natural wonders is important. The reserve is connected to Corcovado National Park and Piedras Blancas National Park. The district of Siérre is also the gateway to Isla Violines and Isla del Caño.

The district of Ballena Bay has become the center of tourism development in the canton, due to its extraordinary location on the coastal strip and also due to the positive impact of the Costanera Sur highway. One of its most important attractions is the Marino Ballena National Park, a prolific breeding ground for whales and a meeting point for dolphins and other marine and aerial animal species.

The reproductive appointment of humpback whales during the months of July to November, offers an extraordinary...
One of the most important attractions of the district is Caño Island. It has an area of approximately 300 hectares and is located about 20 km from Drake Bay. It is a protected area declared a biological reserve, which has a permanent ranger station.

The popular tourist destination attracts visitors for its beaches, coral reefs and marine life. The latter includes manta rays, dolphins, sea turtles, whales and a great variety of fish. The island presents substantial evidence of pre-Columbian human activity, which can be seen in some impressive artifacts such as the carved stone spheres made by the first civilizations that inhabited this territory.

Piedras Blancas National Park is located in this district and is considered a true lung, as it protects hundreds of hectares of primary forest. The park has almost daily rainfall, which explains the extraordinary biodiversity conditions.

This small bay, due to its abundant nature, concentrates services oriented to ecotourism. It is a truly magical place. An important part of its virgin forests are located in the Corcovado National Park (part of this park is located in the canton of Golfito). During the rainy season, Drake Bay is difficult to access by land. However, it can be reached by sea or air from San José, as there is a small airstrip.
The Osa region is home to both traditional and contemporary handicrafts. The exhibition of the artistic work of the indigenous communities, such as masks, baskets, costume jewelry, engraved gourds, natural woven bags, balsa wood sculptures, painted mastate, chácaras, wood carvings, among others, should be noted.

In the area there is an organization of local artisans called Colectivo Artesanal La Zona, who produce handicrafts inspired by the rich culture of the southern zone, the productive history of banana and palm cultivation, fishing, and the identity of the local culture.

**Indigenous communities**

Rey Curré handicraft store: located in the community of Rey Curré, 10 km from Buenos Aires on the Interamerican Highway South. The products sold are made by women artisans: engraved gourds, bags made of natural fabrics, masks, balsa wood ornaments.

Boruca La Flor handicrafts store: Boruca community, 9 km west of the Interamerican Highway South. The products are tablecloths, table centerpieces, hats, engraved gourds, bags made of natural fabrics, masks, balsa wood sculptures.

In addition, there are art galleries, demonstrations of drawing, painting and sculpture.

We also find the Casa de la Cultura, which recently opened its doors to support and accompany artists and those interested in art and culture.

**La Zona Handicraft Collective**

The formation of the La Zona Collective arose as a result of a process of accompaniment sponsored by the Costa Rican Tourism Institute, under the Crafts with Identity Program implemented by the Department of Tourism Development of the Directorate of Tourism Planning and Development in 2014, as part of a strategy to make tourists enjoy their travel experience intensely and take with them a unique product, forged by the hands of local artisans of Osa.

**Finger-licking good!**

How would you like to enjoy the aromas, colors, flavors and forms of Osa’s heritage cuisine? Taste fish and seafood, a plantain picadillo cooked with its peel, ripe plantain cakes, pork preparations, boiled pejibaye, pole bean stew, corn rice and much more...

Or if you prefer, savor the dishes of indigenous cuisine such as: potato hash with Coglo quelites (Ngäbe recipe) or Muncrup Chá (ripe plantain chicha and dough), a Boruca dish. Or refresh yourself with drinks such as squash juice, cocoa juice, sweet water with lemon, fresh cassava and others.

The South Pacific has a gastronomy that is renowned due to its fusion of ingredients and culinary traditions of pre-Hispanic (Mesoamerican and Chibchoid), African and Iberic cuisine.

There are many fishing villages that are an important part of the local economy. This can be seen in the dishes of the southern region, such as fish and seafood soups, as well as fried fish, which are very popular foods.

You can also taste preparations with corn, beans, rice, hearts of palm, meats, mushrooms, cassava and other tubers.

In short, the Osa region is an area with a great diversity of cultural attractions that are waiting for tourists to get to know and enjoy them to the fullest.
Finca 6 Museum

The stone spheres are a symbol of Costa Rican identity. More than 300 stone spheres of various sizes have been found, ranging from a few centimeters to 2.5 meters in diameter. Finally, in 2014 the Finca 6 Museum Site was created, where you can observe spheres on site and learn about their historical context.

Las Esferas Park

Palmar Sur - archaeological heritage

The eight spheres located in Palmar Sur de Osa Park or Las Esferas Park, were found in different sites of the canton during the period of the banana enclave (1935-1985), because of the preparations carried out for banana cultivation and the construction of housing.

Osa stone spheres – Professional Technical School

Palmar Norte - archaeological heritage

The twin spheres are located at the Professional Technical School of Osa since 1980. These lithic sculptures are known as the twin spheres because they are of almost the same measurement (2.10 and 2.12 meters). They are the second largest spheres after the sphere of El Silencio, which measures 2.66 meters.

Batambal archaeological site

The Batambal site was occupied in two different periods to take advantage of its strategic position. From there it is possible to observe the Terraba River, the surrounding mountains, the mangrove swamp and even the sea.

Indigenous territories

The South Pacific is home to several indigenous peoples including the Ngäbe, Terraba, Salitre, Boruca, Curre, Cabagra, Cabécares and the Borucas. The indigenous territories offer visitors a lot of interaction with their traditions, handicrafts, dances, songs, games, indigenous languages and their cosmovision within the context of a great natural beauty and a way of life in harmony with nature.

Banana enclave

The area offers important vestiges of its historical past as a banana enclave through iconic housing infrastructure, as well as religious and recreational buildings, all of which are a legacy of the Costa Rican Banana Company.

Festival de los Diablitos

The Festival of the Little Devils is a Boruca tradition that represents the fight to the death against the Spanish culture that invades the indigenous territories.

House of Culture

Ciudad Cortes - cultural sites

The Osa House of Culture was inaugurated on October 3, 2015 through the efforts of the Association of Integral Development of Ciudad Cortés, the Mixed Institute of Social Aid (IMAS) and DINADECO and the Municipality of Osa. It is used to showcase the artistic talents of the area and to implement all the cultural programs of the Ministry of Culture and Youth.
The pre-Columbian stone spheres are exceptional archaeological artifacts, some of the best examples of the original Costa Rican culture. They are found in the southeastern part of the country, mostly in the plains of the Diquís delta. The large number of these sculptures registered to date, their fine surface finish, their almost perfect sphericity, the variety of sizes, as well as the manufacturing process, symbolism and use in public spaces, make them to be considered as exceptional.

In 2014, the archaeological sites of El Silencio, Batambal, Grijalba-2 and Finca 6 were declared World Heritage Sites by UNESCO due to their outstanding universal value and their characteristics of integrity and authenticity, as they represent physical evidence of complex ancient political, social and productive structures of the societies that inhabited the tropical forests of southern Central America.

The four registered sites contribute specific elements that allow an understanding of the settlements and their landscape. Finca 6 is the only site that preserves stone spheres in linear arrangements, Batambal is known for its strategic position and visibility of the landscape, El Silencio contains the largest stone sphere ever found, and Grijalba-2 is unique for the use of limestone and its distinctive characteristics as a secondary center, compared to the Finca 6 site, which was probably a main center.

More details about the spheres and sites on the Diquís web portal:

**Finca 6 Archaeological Site**

In June 2014, UNESCO declared four Archaeological Sites with Stone Spheres of the Diquís Delta as World Heritage Sites; this includes the “Finca 6 Archaeological Site”.

**Pre-Columbian chiefdom settlements with stone spheres from the Diquís Valley**

The Batambal, Grijalba 2, Finca 6 and El Silencio sites were declared World Heritage Sites by UNESCO in 2014. They belong to the National Museum of Costa Rica.

**What are stone spheres?**

These are artifacts produced by the pre-Columbian societies of southeastern Costa Rica that reflect technical skill and great symbolism.

**What were they made for?**

They functioned as symbols of power, hierarchy and ethnic distinctiveness.

**When were they developed?**

The initial date is not known with precision. Its major production occurs between 800 and 1500 AD.

**How many spheres are there and what sizes are they?**

The total number is unknown. The National Museum has recorded 300 spheres in archaeological sites and public and private places. They measure from a few centimeters to 2.66 meters in diameter.

**How were they made?**

They were roughed out of large stones. The use of the arc has been proposed to achieve sphericity, but the specific method is unknown.

**Finca 6 Archaeological site**

Spheres at their original site, mounds and architectural structures can be observed. The tour includes four sectors.

- **Point 5**: Funereal and habitation zone altered by poaching and agricultural activity where it is possible to observe many ceramic fragments scattered on the surface.
- **Mounds**: On two elevations, two important houses were built with river stone walls and access ramps. At the beginning of a ramp, two identical stone spheres were found on either side.
- **Alignments**: Two alignments of spheres half-buried by sediment deposits resulting from flooding. One alignment is composed of three spheres and the other of two.
- **Collection of spheres**: Twelve spheres without original context recovered by the National Museum of Costa Rica, whose purpose is to show the variety of sizes, finishes and stones used.
Finca 6 Archaeological site Infrastructure with heritage value

**SERVICES**

- **Visitor Center:** informs the visitor about research and findings, conservation studies, natural and social environment of the Pre-Columbian Chiefdom Settlements with Stone Spheres of the Diquís Delta in southern CR.

- **Educational activities:** Workshops, tours and guided visits for groups. There are two permanent exhibition rooms and one temporary exhibition room.

- **Meeting room:** Available for meetings, workshops, lectures and conferences. Capacity for 30 people.

- **Sale of publications:** Books and magazines on Natural History and Archaeology. Accessibility: The building has accessibility ramps and wheelchair access.

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**HOLD TO GET THERE**

The Finca 6 Archeological Site is located in Palmar Sur de Osa, 8 km south of Palmar Sur Park, on the road to Sierpe, Puntarenas province. Click on the following link for location details.

- [Google Maps](#)

Documents illustrate the process to reach the declaration of World Heritage Site of the museum site “Finca 6”:

- [Video Grijalba 2](#)
- [Video Finca 6](#)
- [Video Batambal](#)
- [Video El Silencio. Sitio Patrimonial](#)

**FINCA 6**

(506) 2100-6000.
finca6@museocostarica.go.cr
educacionfinca6@museocostarica.go.cr

Tuesday through Sunday from 8 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

[www.diquis.go.cr](http://www.diquis.go.cr)

**RATES - El Sitio Museo - Finca 6**

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**RATES - Finca 6 - Jimenez**

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On the top of a hill in the foothills of the Fila Retinto, with an excellent view of the delta and surrounding area, the Batambal site was discovered and was occupied in two different periods to take advantage of its strategic position.

From there it is possible to observe the Térraba River, the surrounding mountains, the mangrove swamp and even the sea.

It was first a village that reached an extension of at least 4 hectares, in the so-called Aguas Buenas period (300 - 800 A.D.). The distribution of ceramic fragments and remains of stone tools, especially sharpened axes, indicate its borders.

Then, in the late period or Chiriquí (800-1500 A.D.), it was a place of special activities that extended over a little more than one hectare and would have been related to large villages located near the fertile banks of the Térraba River.

A group of four stone spheres and a group of at least nine structures, most of them rectangular, with bases built with boulders, are associated with this last occupation.

A petroglyph with a spiral motif was also found at the site and sculpted monoliths and some complete sculptures have been found that are associated with the latter occupation.

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Then, in the late period or Chiriquí (800-1500 A.D.), it was a place of special activities that extended over a little more than one hectare and would have been related to large villages located near the fertile banks of the Térraba River.

A group of four stone spheres and a group of at least nine structures, most of them rectangular, with bases built with boulders, are associated with this last occupation.

The excavation of one of the structures led to the discovery of three small stone spheres and a set of more than 160 fragments of anthro and zoomorphic sculptures that were broken on site or their remains were brought from other places, indicating the realization of special activities.

A petroglyph with a spiral motif was also found at the site and sculpted monoliths and some complete sculptures have been found that are associated with the latter occupation.
In the lands associated with the tributary rivers of the Térraba River, settlements were developed that took advantage of elevated terrain. One such case was the Grijalba-2 site, which is located on land associated with a sharp bend in the Balsar River. On a high terrace and with an approximate extension of 10 hectares, the village presents an architectural complex with circular or oval structures with bases built of limestone slabs from the Balsar River that are distinguished from those made with boulders, predominant in other sites. In the front part they have large areas paved with river stones delimited by limestone.

In addition, there are two circular mounds with diameters of 20 m and heights of 1.5 m with walls covered with limestone. These are the bases of main residences and repeat the pattern of dual mounds observed at other sites such as Finca 6.

The site has a stone sphere located about 100 m from the group of structures. It measures 1.15 m in diameter and is located near a creek. This is an area where there is abundant ceramic material, in what would be the eastern periphery of the settlement and a place for special activities away from the center of the village.

Most of the structures have an east-west orientation and, in addition, they are located very close together, which is interpreted as an arrangement for defensive purposes. The scarcity of pottery and stone tools contrasts with their abundance in the surrounding areas.

The world’s largest pre-Columbian stone sphere, discovered in 1990 at a World Heritage Site, measuring 2.66 meters in diameter and weighing more than 24 tons, has recovered its splendor after a careful restoration process by experts from Mexico and Costa Rica.

In an area between a terrace of the Terraba River and the foothills of the Cordillera Costeña mountain range is the El Silencio site, which occupied at least 20 hectares. The terrace zone has ceramic and stone deposits, possible hearths and structures from the Aguas Buenas and Chiriquí periods, buried by sedimentation from the flooding of the Térraba River. This is a small plain separated from the delta and the deposits are not as deep.

Towards the piedmont is located the largest stone sphere recorded so far (2.66 m in diameter), the sphere has been badly affected by fire, which caused serious exfoliations. It was worked in granodiorite, which would have been obtained from outcrops at a distance of approximately 1 km, associated with the Quebrada Cansot.

Associated to the sphere there is a cobblestone path with an extension of approximately 12 m and a width between 1 and 2 m, built with boulders and limestones. Stone tools that would have been used in its final finishing were found near the sphere and the structure.
Corcovado National Park is located on the Osa Peninsula, in the southwest corner of the country. Located in an area of unquestionable beauty, this natural park is considered the most important in the country. The virgin jungle captivates visitors as it envelops them with the smells and colors of the rainforest. This park has miles of deserted beaches, natural waterfalls, arousing the curiosity of visitors from all over the world.

This protected area preserves the last portion of the Mesoamerican Pacific Rainforest. Its location, climatic characteristics, the capricious condition of its soils and its topography, make this site home to an astonishing diversity of biological species.

Habitats in the park, among the main ones are: the rainforest, high altitude forest, cloud forest, alluvial lowlands, and swamp.

8 different types of vegetation can be observed up close, including mangroves, palm swamps and a wide variety of grasses that make this place a botanical dream.

The park protects several endangered species such as felines and large reptiles, as well as endemic and restricted bird species, including:

- 140 species of mammals
- 465 of birds
- 20 of them regional endemics
- 160 of amphibians and reptiles
- 40 species of freshwater fish
- 800 species of trees.

Among the most noteworthy fauna are the tapir, jaguar, puma, ocelot; monkeys such as the howler, white-faced, spider and squirrel monkeys; scarlet macaws, the white-faced, puma, ocelot; monkeys such as the howler, white-faced, spider and squirrel monkeys; scarlet macaws, the white-faced, and black. Additionally, the king vulture, tinamou, cacique, chestnut mandibled toucan, warblers, parakeets, kingfishers, the scarlet rumped tanager and several species of hummingbirds can be observed.

The park is one of the most important sites in the conservation area for the protection of lizards and crocodiles.

The San Pedrillo sector has a network of trails called La Catarata, Rio Pargo arriba, Rio Pargo abajo and Llorona. It is the place to visit if you want to get away from all the noise of the city and live with both the sun and mountains within reach.

The Sirena sector is the central park station and can be reached by land through the Los Patos sector, a 23 km walk of approximately 8-9 hours, and through the La Leona sector, which is 16.5 km, or a 6-7 hour walk. By sea you can leave from Drake Sector, Puerto Jimenez, Uvita and Sierpe. San Pedrillo can also be reached by boat, and you can walk from San Josecito to San Pedrillo. The Sirena Station has a network of 8 local trails (20 km in total) where you can enjoy the Claro River pool, and at the mouth of the Sirena River, during high tide you can see bull sharks and crocodiles.

Archaeology

Corcovado National Park has vestiges of relatively recent pre-Hispanic settlements. Archaeological studies carried out have resulted in the location of three archaeological sites in two periods of occupation. The Aguas Buenas phase (200-800 years A.D.) and the Chiriquí phase (1000-1500 years A.D.) with subsistence activities. The archeological sites are called El Cedral, located on a terrace of the Sirena River, near its confluence with the Cedral River; the other is called Sirena, located northwest of the station in the same southern part of the park. Archaeological artifacts of great importance have been found at both sites.

More information: sinac.go.cr

HOW TO GET TO THE SITE

By car: Take the Interamerican Highway South to Puerto Jimenez. There are two entrances: La Leona and Los Patos.

To get to La Leona: In Puerto Jimenez take the bus to Carate, walk about 1 hour along the beach or secondary path (approximately 3 kilometers) to the station.

To get to Los Patos: From Puerto Jimenez continue to Guadalupe de La Palma and from there it is 10 kilometers to the entrance post. When the river is low you can go by 4x4 vehicle, but during the rainy season you can only walk.

By boat: Get to Sierpe, Drake or Uvita and from there you take a boat to the entrance of San Pedrillo.
Corcovado National Park

Main Attractions:

Network of eight trails totaling approximately 20 km:

- **3 km** of hiking on the Ollas Trail, about a 5 hour walk over slightly broken terrain in a primary forest. It is a good trail for bird lovers. Its name is due to the fact that at the end of the trail there is a small swamp, or small lagoon covered with vegetation. This area has the shape of a pot.

- **1.54 km** on the Pargo Trail Abajo, its topography is mostly flat.

- **1.2 km** of the La Catarata Trail, its topography is a bit irregular.

- **2 km** of trail on the Marco Reyes Trail, dedicated to one of the exemplary park rangers of Corcovado National, La Llorona. The topography is irregular, especially to the famous arched stone and the waterfall, which when the tide rises, makes it connect with the rumbling of the waves. Currently only with permission of the PNC Administration.

- **3.5 km** of the Rio Claro Trail, flat topography, this trail reaches the Claro River up to the beach and then connects with the Los Naranjos trail. On this trail you can observe primary and secondary forests.

- **1 km** of the Sirena Trail, flat topography, starts next to the airstrip and ends at the beach near the mouth of the Sirena River. The route of this trail is through secondary forest with little more than twenty years of regeneration, where it is still possible to observe some large trees that remain from what was once a primary forest that covered the entire area.

- **2 km** of Guanacaste Trail, flat topography. This trail serves as a junction point between the Sirena River and Pavo River trails. Its name is because there were some imposing trees of Guanacaste that have succumbed over time to the storms. On this trail you can observe secondary and primary forest, as well as the beauty of the banks of the Sirena River for a while.

- **2 km** of the Los Espaveles trail, very flat. To follow this trail, you can enter through the Ollas trail or through the Rio Pavo trail. Recent research revealed that in this sector alone there are more than 140 species of trees in 100 square meters, which gives us an idea of the enormous diversity of species that exist in this area. Its name is due to the impressive Espave trees that can be observed along its route.

- **5 km** on the Pavo River Trail, flat topography, starts in front of the Sirena Station and this trail is part of the same trail that takes us to Los Patos Station. During the tour, the forest is secondary with a rapidly advancing regeneration process where different groups of plants can be observed, including heliconias, guava fields and areas that were once cattle pastures.
Main Attractions

Madrigal Trail: you will pass by a cemetery that was used by the inhabitants of the area of La Leona, before it became a National Park, a rock formation that forms caverns that can be observed at low tide. During the turtle nesting season, hatchlings can be observed.

3 km (2 miles) on the Cedral Trail, its topography is irregular, with steep slopes. Good physical condition is recommended. A waterfall immersed in the forest is its main attraction.

For the visitor’s convenience, we recommend comfortable and easy-drying clothing, closed shoes or rubber boots for hiking, sandals to rest at the station, a hat and sunscreen.

Weather conditions in the area are constantly changing, it is the rainforest, so please take applicable precautions. You can keep your clothes in your backpack in a plastic bag to prevent them from getting wet and use zip lock bags for cell phones, passports and other valuables to protect them from the rain.

Since this is an extreme adventure zone, a local guide should be hired for the hikes inside the park.

If you stay overnight in Sirena or San Pedrillo remember to bring your personal toiletries and sleeping gear (camping tent, sheets, towel).

Contact local guide associations, local tour operators and local organizations that support you in hiring tour guides in the area.

RESERVATIONS

Leona: 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
San Pedrillo: 7:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Patos and Sirena 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Reservations Office: 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon and 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. every day, by e-mail only: reservaciones.pnc@sinac.go.cr

RATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National visitors and residents</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non resident foreign visitor</td>
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<td>National and resident children (2 - 12 years)</td>
<td>$5.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non resident children (2 - 12 years)</td>
<td>$5.65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Children under 2 years of age do not pay admission, as well as national visitors and residents over 65 years of age.
Rates include VAT (13%).

RECOMMENDATIONS

• Respect the park’s public use regulations.
• Respect the park’s visiting hours.
• Beware of ocean currents and do not swim in areas of identified risk.
• Plants and animals are living beings, please do not mistreat or feed them.
• Take care of your belongings.
• Trash is not part of the natural environment, please remove it from the park.
Playa Ballena, or Ballena Beach, and the Tres Hermanas rocks are part of the Marino Ballena National Park, which extends from Punta Uvita to Punta Piñuela. Playa Ballena is named after the whale tail shape of its beach. It is a protected area of great beauty for its coastal landscape, where you can see humpback whales (Megaptera novaeangliae). The power of this animal is massive. They live in all oceans and travel thousands of kilometers from cold seas, where they feed, to warmer seas, where they mate and reproduce. If you are interested in traveling to see them, the Marino Ballena Park is one of the most important sites in the world. National Geographic magazine ranked this place as the seventh most important place for whale watching.

This protected area is a biodiversity paradise, where, in addition to whales, you can find species such as the spotted dolphin, the bottlenose dolphin, the manta ray, sea turtles (Hawksbill turtle, Eretmochelys imbricata and olive ridley turtle, Lepidochelys olivacea), hammerhead sharks, parrotfish and mackerel in its waters.

One of the most important marine environments in the area are the organic reefs, commonly called coral reefs. These are made up of hermatypic corals, organisms that contribute most of the structure; and coralline algae and some sponges, which help to bind the elements of the structure together.

Two species of reptiles have also been reported in the area: the green iguana and the basilisk. Costal bird species include frigate birds, white ibis, pelicans and brown boobies.

But the stars of the show are undoubtedly the more than 700 humpback whales - a robust cetacean averaging 15 meters in length for males and 19 meters in length for females, weighing an average of 30 to 40 tons for either gender, with a maximum of 48 tons. Costa Rica receives two populations of humpback whales; in the North Pacific the season is from December to the end of March, while in the South Pacific it is from July to October, to reproduce and raise their calves.

The Costa Rican tropics allow them to avoid loss of energy by maintaining body temperature, since the water is between 25 and 28 degrees Celsius, which makes it suitable for reproduction.

A humpback whale calf measures between 3 and 4.5 meters in length at birth and weighs almost one ton.

Tourists can also enjoy its land and sea attractions with adventure activities such as paddle boarding, kayaking, horseback riding, hiking trails, bird watching, snorkeling and surfing, among others.

For more information, visit www.fordivers.com.
Marino Ballena National Park was established in 1989 but that first decree was repealed in 1990 and in 1992 it was legitimized with a territorial extension of approximately 5331ha.

It was the first marine park in Costa Rica and Central America, the first protected area created exclusively for its marine resources. It has approximately 15 km of beach and its terrestrial extension is only a strip of 50 public meters.

Weather:
- **Hot, rainy, and very wet**
- **Dry season**: mid-December to mid-April, with sporadic rains.
- **Rainy season**: from mid-April to mid-December.

**HOW TO GET THERE**

**From San José.** Take route 27 and in Orotina you have to exit to take the Costanera Sur for about 2 hours until you get to Uvita.

**From Jacó.** Continue along the Costanera, pass through Quepos and continue to Dominical beach, Uvita and the entrance to the park are about 16 km apart, always on the Costanera. You can also go through Cerrro de la Muerte to San Isidro de El General where you must turn southwest towards Dominical and drive about 26 km.

**WHAT TO BRING?**

- Hydration
- Garbage bags and dry bags for your stuff
- Cap and sunglasses
- Sunscreen
- Fresh clothes/bathing suit
- Camera

**ADMISSION FEES**

<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nationals and residents</td>
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<td>Non-resident aliens</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children under 11 years of age and senior citizens</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**SERVICES**

- Draining water
- Showers
- Restrooms
- Parking (Ballena sector)
- Camping areas

**MAIN ATTRACTIONS**

**La Cola de la Ballena:** The Whales tail is a natural rocky and sandy formation originated by the sedimentation dragged by the tides. It can only be visited during low tide. The shape of the tail can only be seen from above. It is also known as the Tombolo and the passage of Moses.

**Isla Ballena:** Ballena Island is located about two kilometers from the coast, it is a rocky formation that is home to some species of birds and iguanas and is surrounded by coral reefs.

**Tres Hermanas Islets:** These are three rock formations where birds also nest.

**Beaches:** In addition to Uvita, where the tombolo is located, there are other beaches within the Protected Wildlife Area: Bahía, Colonia, Ballena, Arco and Piñuelas.

**Snorkeling:** This activity can be done during low tide near the tombolo or the whale’s tail, only mask and snorkel are allowed, fins are not allowed.

**Whale watching:** Humpback whale watching during the season (July-November) and resident dolphins throughout the year in the area.

**Schedule:** Every day from 7 am to 4 pm

**Restricciones:**

- No weapons
- No fire
- No litter
- No pets
- Keep off the walking trails
- Not feed local wildlife
- Not disturb marine life under the influence of drugs
- Not disturb exotic plants or animals

The following is not allowed:
- Marketing activities within the park boundaries
- The transit of any vehicle on the beach, according to article 127 and 130 of the transit law No. 7331, or boats that threaten the lives of bathers.

More information:
- www.sinac.go.cr
- www.zonasur.cr
- www.efe.com
Piedras Blancas, together with Corcovado National Park and the Golfo Dulce Forest Reserve, form an important biological corridor that, in addition to being rich in itself, protects a great diversity of flora and fauna species that live in the Golfo Dulce area. This area was created to protect the last tropical rainforest in the Golfito sector and the Esquinas river basin. It offers several attractions such as rivers, waterfalls and adventure trails that lead to San Josecito beach. You can find wetlands such as small lagoons, a cavern sector, but access is currently restricted to visitors. The type of forest is very humid and one of the most important events that takes place in the area is the spawning of needlefish. There is also a spawning area in the Golfo Dulce. It is bordered to the west by the Golfito National Wildlife Refuge and to the east by the Golfito Forest Reserve and the Terraba-Sierpe Wetland. The Esquinas River tour is another ecotourism alternative. It offers several attractions such as rivers, waterfalls and adventure trails that lead to San Josecito beach. You can find wetlands such as small lagoons, a cavern sector, but access is currently restricted to visitors. The type of forest is very humid and one of the most important events that takes place in the area is the spawning of needlefish. There is also a spawning area in the Golfo Dulce. It is bordered to the west by the Golfito National Wildlife Refuge and to the east by the Golfito Forest Reserve and the Terraba-Sierpe Wetland.

Caño Island protects very important marine environments, where coral reefs are noteworthy for their extension and richness of species. Associated with the reefs, there is a diversity of fish species, invertebrates, algae and mammals such as dolphins and whales. The island is very important from an archaeological point of view, because in pre-Columbian times it was used as an indigenous cemetery and some vestiges still remain. The Caño Island Biological Reserve (RBIC) is located on the Pacific continental shelf of Costa Rica, 16 km northwest of the Osa Peninsula, in the province of Puntarenas. Caño Island consists of 320 ha of land and 5800 ha of sea. Its waters have one of the most extensive, and in better condition, coral reef formations of the Pacific coast of Costa Rica. There are five coral platforms (or reef flats) ranging in size from 0.8 to 4.2 hectares. It is an important breeding area for individual humpback whales, both from the northern and southern hemispheres, as well as for resident dolphin species. Wildlife is scarce but you may encounter bees and butterflies. In addition to amphibians and reptiles, migratory and resident birds. As for services, there are trails, viewpoints, archaeological site and diving area.

In terms of visitor services, there are only trails and natural viewpoints. There are three short circuits of trails close to the operational center, which show ample biodiversity, streams and a tropical rainforest of majestic characteristics. The Esquinas River tour is another ecotourism alternative. This river is navigable for about five kilometers and starts at the Bonito post. In the rainy season you must be careful with the rivers as they rise and the passage may be impossible, in that case you must walk to the station.

Other options
You can also fly or drive to Golfito or Puerto Jimenez and then take a boat to the park. If you are staying in any of the various options in the area, your transfers will be arranged from either city.

In the terrestrial area, there are remains of the stone spheres created by pre-Columbian civilizations. Isla del Caño was occupied by several human groups. It is believed that between 700 and 1500 B.C. It was used as a cemetery by Chiriqui societies, or as a permanent residence by the quepos or brucas.
As for services, there are trails, viewpoints, archaeological site and diving area.

**Wealth in its depths**

The great adventure, however, is what is found in its depths. On any given day you can see sea turtles, rays, dolphins, moray eels, barracudas, sharks, humpback whales, tuna, and other species.

Another point to take into consideration is that, since this is a biological reserve, the number of divers is regulated, and tourists are not allowed to take any of the marine life, dead or alive.

You can organize trips from Dominical, Drake Bay, Uvita and Sierpe. There are several companies located near the Marino Ballena National Park that offer the tour.

### Fees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>National adults</td>
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<tr>
<td>Foreign adults</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anchorage (non-resident boats for 10 people or less)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anchorage (non-resident boats for more than 10 people)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anchorage (resident boats for 10 people or less)</td>
<td>$2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anchorage (resident boats for more than 10 people)</td>
<td>$4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Important:** The picnic is not allowed, only the entry of hydrating drinks.

**Restrictions:**

- No drinking water in the island
- Hours: 7 a.m – 3 p.m

**What to bring**

- Hydration
- Garbage bags and dry bags
- Fresh clothes/bathing suit
- Camera

**Conditions:**

- Reservations can be made 1 month in advance for the Caño Island Biological Reserve.
- Remember that to enter the Caño Island Biological Reserve you must be accompanied by a local guide who is registered with ACOSA’s Sustainable Tourism Program office before making your reservation (see attached list of local guides), otherwise you will be denied entry to the Protected Area.
- Reservations are personal and not transferable to other people.
- To enter you must present your identification (passport or identity card).
- Any request for reimbursement must be made with justification and within 15 calendar days of entering the protected area.
- Reservation changes will only be made due to flight cancellations, illness and closure of the protected area with a duly justified note (See guideline N°015-2018).

**Actions to protect corals**

- If you go swimming, snorkeling or scuba diving, please help us to protect our reefs and of course don’t forget that you can only do these activities with a trained guide.
- Corals are colonies of very small animals, which can take hundreds of years to form the structures you see today, simply touching a part of a coral out of curiosity can kill an entire colony.
- Do not walk or stand on top of corals, this can kill the living coral polyps that build the reef structure.
- Do not harass animals:
  - a) do not follow the same fish, ray or turtle for a very long time,
  - b) do not try to touch the observed animals and
  - c) do not disturb animals that are partially hidden in their burrows (moray eels, lobsters, etc.) so that they come out completely.
Snorkeling or scuba diving in Caño Island

This small island 20 km from Drake is a biological reserve and protected area. It is an ideal place for snorkeling. Its great coral reef together with its marine fauna make it one of the most impressive places in Costa Rica for this type of activities. You can book the following snorkeling tours, scuba diving or even the Open Water course in Caño Island.

Main Attractions:

- Snorkeling or scuba diving in Caño Island
- This small island 20 km from Drake is a biological reserve and protected area. It is an ideal place for snorkeling. Its great coral reef together with its marine fauna make it one of the most impressive places in Costa Rica for this type of activities. You can book the following snorkeling tours, scuba diving or even the Open Water course in Caño Island.
- Drinking water
- Outdoor shower

SERVICES

- Diving
- Snorkeling
- Trail to viewpoint
- Dolphin and whale watching

HOW TO GET THERE

Take the Interamerican Highway from San José to Piedras Blancas, to the gas station La Chacarita and then turn right (gravel road) to Puerto Jimenez or you can also take the exit to Sierpe and from there take a boat to Drake Bay. It is approximately 240 miles (395 km) by road. The total trip from San José takes about 7 hours.

You can also take a flight between Juan Santamaria airport to Golfito, Puerto Jimenez or Drake Bay with either Sansa or Aerobell Airlines every day. From there you can take a boat to Caño Island Biological Reserve, which can take approximately 50 minutes.

Location:

Located in the province of Puntarenas (Golfito and Osa cantons), on the Osa Peninsula, in the southwestern tip of Costa Rica. This reserve is dominated by basal tropical rainforest and has cloud forests in the upper parts of the Mueller, Rincón and Brujo hills. This huge bay embraces beautiful virgin beaches, rivers and forests, which are protected and are part of the Golfo Dulce Forest Reserve. It belongs to the Osa Conservation Area (ACOSA) which offers a great attraction for tourists looking for a placid dive, or enjoy nature, wildlife and bird watching. It is one of the few places in the world where you can enjoy the shade of the rainforest from a kayak or boat and at the same time observe its unique wildlife or swim in its crystal clear waters.

Monkeys are the most common residents here followed by tapirs, coatis, toucans, anteaters, sloths, many felines and numerous species of birds such as macaws, toucans, trogons, pelicans and gulls. In addition, the region where the forest meets the sea at the mouths of the rivers, forms impressive mangroves that are breeding grounds for many marine species such as dolphins, manta rays, eels, schools of fish jumping out of the water, as well as the possibility of observing the spectacular humpback whales with their calves during the months of December to May.

Three life zones: tropical humid forest, very humid tropical forest transition to premontane and tropical humid forest. Evergreen forests.

Flora: purple heart, brosimums, maca wood, terminalia, virola wild nutmeg, xylopia, apidosperma, sterculia, anacardium, hieronyma, kapok, bursera, hymena, cedrela.

Fauna: felines, deer, goat, squirrel monkey, howler monkey, white-faced monkey, otter, tapir. Birds: scarlet macaw, great curassow, eagles, hawks, owls.

As one of the wettest places on the planet with over 200 inches of rain per year, the Golfo Dulce Forest Reserve boasts some of the tallest and oldest trees that stand between 100 and 140 feet tall. Known for its biodiversity, this region is ideal for both nature lovers and the more adventurous.

The reserve provides a biological corridor of dense evergreen forests, connecting Corcovado National Park with Piedras Blancas National Park.

Those who want to explore the area outside the protected area will enjoy swimming and hiking that are abundant here. As well world-class surfing, sport fishing, kayaking, snorkeling, horseback riding and much more.

Although the Golfo Dulce Forest Reserve has no public facilities, tourists are welcome to visit and enjoy the enormous wealth of wildlife found here. Other nearby parks include Corcovado National Park, Piedras Blancas National Park, Golfito Wildlife Refuge and Carate Wildlife Refuge.

More information: costaricainfolink.com

How to get there from San José

By Car:
Take the Interamerican Highway South. In the city of Rio Claro, take the detour to Golfito. It can also be accessed from Puerto Jiménez or Chacarita, since the road from Chacarita to Puerto Jiménez crosses a large part of the reserve. The total trip from San José takes about 7 hours.

By bus:
Take a bus on the San José - Golfito route, which takes about 8 hours (Tracopa-Alfaro, 2221-4214). From there you can drive or take another bus to the Golfo Dulce Forest Reserve. You can also take a bus on the San José - Puerto Jiménez route, which takes about 8 hours (Transportes Blanco, 2771-4744). From there you can take a cab or drive to the Golfo Dulce Forest Reserve. For both cases it is recommended to purchase the ticket at least one day in advance to ensure space.

By plane:
You can take a flight between Juan Santamaria airport and the airports of Golfito and Puerto Jimenez, either with Sansa or Aerobell Airlines every day. From there you can take a cab or drive to the Golfo Dulce Forest Reserve, which can take approximately 30 minutes.
An Arboretum is a site where a living collection of trees is established for scientific, educational, touristic and recreational purposes.

The Chal Bay Arboretum is located in the Golfo Dulce Forest Reserve and is a collaborative effort between the Somos Arboretum Association (composed of people from the communities of Chal Bay, Alto San Juan and San Juan de Sierpe), SINAC officials and some strategic allies. Its intention is to provide a public space for neighboring communities, visitors, students and researchers to have access to knowledge about the most emblematic species of trees on the Osa Peninsula, a place that hosts 2.5% of the world’s biodiversity.

You can take guided tours through the trails of the Arboretum, where you can learn about the human uses of native, endemic and endangered plants of the Osa Peninsula. It is also an excellent site for bird watching, with open areas, forest and a lookout point. Visit this rural community-based tourism project and support the local economies of neighboring communities.

Important events at the Arboretum:

An annual Arbor Day celebration event is held on the Sunday closest to June 15.

To arrange a visit to the Arboretum contact:
(506) 5002-2723 and (506) 8374-7401.
Tortuga Beach

After crossing a path surrounded by trees, you will arrive at Tortuga, a gray sand beach with few rocks and strong waves. To the right, there is a river where the locals practice artisanal fishing. It is named after the sea turtles that lay their eggs on this beach at certain times of the year.

Playa Tortuga

For more information visit: www.goplaya.com

Dominical Beach

It is a beach with strong waves, ideal for surfing. It is also very frequented by campers, since it has a camping site. From Dominical you can take excursions (and tours) to nearby places of great scenic beauty such as the Nauyaca waterfalls, as well as to the nearby hills, from where you can see a spectacular landscape of the entire coastal area.

It offers a variety of tourist and commercial services.

Playa Dominical

For more information visit: www.goplaya.com

Dominicalito Beach

It is a beach with moderate waves, ideal for swimming and other water activities. Towards its southern end is Punta Dominical, which has a lush tropical rainforest. These characteristics, as well as the surrounding exuberant marine landscape, are a valuable component for those who like to enjoy nature.

Playa Dominicalito

For more information visit: www.goplaya.com

Hermosa Beach

This beach and its neighbor Uvita join at their southern and northern ends, respectively, forming a sandy strip (tombolo) in the shape of an anchor, which can be traveled during low tide, and thus, it is possible to observe different species of crabs, fish, mollusks, and algae. From this site you can see both beaches and the beautiful mountains of the Fila Costeña.

Playa Hermosa

For more information visit: www.goplaya.com

For more information visit: www.goplaya.com

Photos by: goplaya.cr
Uvita Beach

This is one of the most beautiful beaches of the South Pacific coast. Its waves are moderate and safe for swimming. It has estuaries and mangroves, especially on its northern end. To the south of the Quebrada Villegas estuary there is a beautiful row of coconut trees. Near its southern end is the Quebrada Colonia. It is an ideal beach for hiking and horseback riding, as well as to observe the marine life that exists in the surroundings of the Uvita point (tombolo).

Punta Uvita

This strip (tombolo) is very rich in marine fauna and has a reef that defends it from dangerous currents and strong waves. It is ideal for swimming and refreshing in its waters, which are very popular with divers.

Ballena Beach

It is a beach with small waves and fine sand. It is of great scenic beauty due to the coastal landscape where it is located and also includes Ballena Island, which is located in front of the coast, less than 3 kilometers away. Ballena Beach, as well as the island of the same name and the Tres Hermanas rocks are part of the Ballena National Marine Park, which extends from Punta Uvita to Punta Piñuela.

The waters of this park are frequented by humpback whales from August to October and from December to April each year.

Garza Beach

It is located south of Boca Brava. Although it is not suitable for swimming, its waves are very good for professional surfing.

Piñuela Beach

It is a small and beautiful cove, with moderate waves, very suitable for swimming, especially at its southern end. It has a steep mountainous slope toward the back and coastal vegetation. Towards the northern end the beach, a small ledge is formed, near where the Piñuela Creek flows. From here you can see Ballena Island.
**Osa Beaches**

**Tamales Beach**
It is located south of Puerto Jiménez, on the road to Matapalo. It is an extensive crescent-shaped beach, with a rocky coastline to the south. The Tamales River flows into the Tamales beach. It presents mild to moderate waves, depending on the point where it is located. It has coastal vegetation where it is possible to observe birds.

**Playa Tamales**

**Osa Beaches**

**Ventanas Beach**
It is a small beach, but very nice due to the surrounding landscape. It is called Ventanas, there is a rocky promontory with openings through which the water enters, and which can be crossed during low tide.

**Playa Ventanas**

**Osa Beaches**

**Drake Beach**
It is a beach made up of rocky sectors and coves of great scenic beauty. Due to the frequent rainfall it has a very humid tropical forest of great interest for its rich biodiversity. Numerous sport fishing and diving tours depart from Drake to Caño Island, as well as to Corcovado National Park. You can go hiking and horseback riding to nearby places of great attraction. Every year, in the month of February, the arrival of the pirate Drake to this site is commemorated with official and local celebrations.

**Playa Drake**

**Osa Beaches**

**Matapalo Beaches**
At the southern tip of the Osa Peninsula is located Matapalo Cape and near it, there are several coves and beaches of great natural beauty thanks to its very humid wooded areas, home to various species of birds, monkeys and other animals. There are waterfalls and other ideal resources for the observation of this rich biodiversity. Beaches such as Matapalo, “Backwash” and Pan Dulce are preferred by surfers, as they have excellent conditions for this sport.

**Playa Matapalo**

**Osa Beaches**

**San Josecito Beach**
Paradisiacal beach of golden sand and crystalline water that complements its beauty with the surrounding nature. San Josecito is close to Drake Bay and a few kilometers from Corcovado National Park, in the Southern Zone of Costa Rica.

**Playa San Josecito**

**Osa Beaches**

**Matapalo Beaches**
Arco is one of the five beaches that belong to the Marino Ballena National Park in Uvita, in the Southern Zone of Costa Rica. This little-known spot is characterized by the intense vegetation that surrounds it. This beach can be accessed through a path that is only enabled when the tide is low, because when it rises the access is closed. It has an extension of 500 meters and a small cave that gives its name to the beach.

**Playa Arco**
Colonia Beach (Shaman)

Located within the Marino Ballena National Park in Uvita. Colonia is a striking beach, with light gray sand and beautiful sunsets. It is a site with few rocks and enough space to enjoy a walk amidst the surrounding vegetation. There is also a spot suitable for surfing.

Playa Colonia

Punta Dominical

From its viewpoints, located on a rocky hill covered with vegetation, you can see Dominicalito, the islet known as Roca Arbol, and the beautiful mountainous and maritime landscape that extends to the south.

Playa Backwash

Backwash

Backwash is a right-hand reef break situated in the middle of the incredibly beautiful Backwash Bay and identified by a giant rock in the lineup. It requires head high or bigger waves to really make it work, it is a big, slow break that is ideal for longboarding, but due to the steep beach, the waves will pick up to create steep sections.

It is best at medium or low tides with a southwest swell. Because it is very remote and about an hour and a half drive from Puerto Jimenez, it is generally not very crowded. It can also be accessed by boat from Pavones or Puerto Jimenez.
Corcovado Tours

It is located about 17 kilometers southwest of the town of Agujitas, in Drake Bay and can only be reached by boat, mostly primary forest.

drakediverscr.com
www.costaricadiveandsurf.com
www.costaturistear.com

Floating Tour

This tour starts from Drake Bay to the forest where we will start a 2 hour hike (hard hike), we will stop along the way to have some snacks or fruits and continue walking until we reach a relaxing waterfall where we will spend about 30 minutes.

After that we will start floating downstream for approximately one hour and 30 minutes. Sometimes you are able to see several tiny squirrel monkeys snapping around in the treetops and crossing from one side of the river to the other directly over our heads!

www.pachecotours.com

Caño Island Snorkeling Tour

Caño Island is an incredible marine biological reserve located 20 km off the coast with pristine blue waters, making it the perfect tropical paradise for divers and snorkelers.

It is home to a spectacular array of stunning marine flora and fauna and is famous for having the largest concentration of Costa Rica’s coral building organisms along the Pacific Ocean.

www.surcostours.com
www.canodiverscostarica.com
www.uvita.info
tangaratours.com
costaricatourism.com
drakediverscr.com

Dolphin and whale watching tour

(seasonal)

The tour departs from Drake Bay to cross the waters between Caño Island and Corcovado National Park for 4 to 5 hours, looking for different species of dolphins and whales that visit our waters.

drakediverscr.com

Diving in Caño Island

The trip begins with a 1 hour boat ride to Caño Island. Once there, you will have the opportunity to complete 2 dives in different marine areas around Caño Island, (there are 6 marked dive sites) each dive is about 45 minutes.

Between the first and second dives, we make a stop at Caño Island. Later, the boat heads to San Josecito beach for a picnic. After lunch we travel back.

drakediverscr.com

Diving course and PADI open water course

This course does not give license or certification, it is an introduction to enjoy the experience in the underwater world. Or course to obtain the PADI license.

Drake Bay and Caño Island.

www.canodiverscostarica.com
www.drakediverscr.com

Horseback Riding Drake Bay

Take a relaxing horseback ride to explore the jungle and beach of this incredible area. Stroll along the trails and old tracks used by the pioneers. Birds, howler monkeys, white-faced monkeys and many other animals will be seen along the way.

www.poormansparadiseresort.com

www.tangaratours.com
www.uvita.info
www.canodiverscostarica.com

Drake Bay Tours

Photo: Drake Divers

Return to map
Corcovado Canopy Tour

Canopy is one of the most extraordinary activities you should do in Costa Rica. These tours show you a different perspective of nature, where huge trees serve as platforms to move from unimaginable heights that generate adrenaline-filled experiences along with unforgettable and wonderful views.

Trillo De la Danta Tour

El Trillo de la Danta, which means “the Tapir road” in Spanish, is located in the community of Los Planes in the buffer zone of Corcovado National Park. Being right next to Corcovado you can find the same animals you see inside the park.

Night Tour

This tour really makes the night come alive, and it’s easy to see how it’s one of the most popular activities in Drake Bay. Not only do they describe the biology and behaviors of these fascinating creatures, but you will also learn historical information about many of the species of mammals, insects, arachnids, and others.

Terraba Sierpe Wetlands

With more than 32,000 hectares, it has been recognized as one of the largest wetlands and mangrove forests in Central America. It is located in the canton of Osa, one of the most biodiverse areas of the country and the world, its northern boundary is the Grande de Terraba River in Boca Coronado and the Sierpe River to the south.

Mangrove tour kayaking

Adventure tour through the aquatic trails of the Sierpe River, to observe the different species of the mangrove ecosystem.

Corcovado National Park Tour

(Sirena and San Pedrillo stations)

National Geographic has called it the most biologically intense place in the world, and it is estimated that no other place in the world has a greater biological diversity.

Sierpe River mangrove Tour

The tour begins in Drake Bay by boat to the mouth of the Sierpe River, where the mangrove forest begins. Then you will take a four-hour trip upstream through the mangrove channels, seeing aquatic birds, crocodiles and mammals common to this forest. Lunch will follow in the town of Sierpe, either a picnic in the community park or in one of the restaurants in the area (as guests wish). After lunch you take a 1 hour boat ride back to Drake Bay. Return: 14:00

Birding in Drake Bay

It can be done on several trails in the area. These walking tours will be customized depending on the location of your hotel. Tours can be arranged in the early morning (5:30 a.m.) or in the afternoon (3 p.m.) and last 3 hours.

Birdwatching Sierpe route

The birdlife present in Sierpe, is one of the greatest riches that can be offered to all our visitors, with different scenarios where you can find a wide range of species, which will captivate the eyes of those who are lovers of birdwatching.

Megalithic Spheres Museum Tour

Finca 6 houses the only pre-Columbian museum site in Costa Rica, declared a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site.

Diving and snorkeling tour in Caño Island

The island is 110 meters above sea level. Volcanic rock formations provide the basis for coral colonies, composed of five reef platforms that make it ideal for diving and snorkeling. You will be able to observe small mollusks, crustaceans and an endless number of incredible fish.
This tour starts with a trip from Palmar Norte, to the Boruca indigenous reserve, along the Rio Grande de Terraba, the longest river in Costa Rica (192 km) here you can observe some species of birds such as the King Vulture, hawks and reptiles such as crocodiles. Once we have traveled 40 km along the river, we begin the ascent in 4x4 through the hills that protect the indigenous reserve, during this 11 km ascent we will have magnificent views of the valleys through which the Terraba River flows.

Once in the reserve we visit the house of Don Ismael Gonzalez, bastion of the indigenous community and holder of countless awards from different institutions such as the Ministry of Culture, UN and others, for his contribution to the culture especially in the construction of the indigenous masks, we continue our tour to the community school to observe how the Boruca culture is included in modern education. After that we continue to the community museum and also visit two artisans who make Boruca masks.
Snorkeling in Caño Island
With turquoise blue waters and colorful coral reefs, Cano Island, located near the Osa Peninsula, is one of the best destinations for snorkeling and diving in Costa Rica. Join this magical boat ride to Cano Island and explore the mysteries of the underwater world and the archaeological wonders of Caño Island.

www.bahiaaventuras.com

Enjoy the beauty of nature, hidden in the jungle is this rappel as one of the six best waterfalls in Costa Rica! Then plunge into the refreshing blue water as the waterfalls form a rainbow of light above your head, stunning your ears.

ballenainfocenter.com
uvita.info/en

Kayaking in the sea or on the river is easy and relaxing, besides being an excellent way to discover nature and explore the coast, you will be able to closely observe the Whale Rock, or you can snorkel in Punta Uvita. Also observe the riverside forests where tropical wildlife abounds.

pineapplekayaktours.com
www.ballenainfocenter.com
www.uvita.info/en

Surf Lessons
We offer you an awesome adventure, where safety and preparation in a surf lesson are the most important elements for a good surf instruction. That’s why every surf lesson starts with basic instructions: How to be safe in the water, how to paddle, what position to have in the wave, wave dynamics, stretching, how to lift the board.

Maybe you just want to ride some perfect waves at the best surf spot in Costa Rica: Playa Dominical. Or have you never tried surfing before and would like to take some lessons?

Our instructors have decades of surfing experience and are very familiar with Dominical Beach and different dive sites.

Diving Adventures
If you want to enjoy the best diving in Costa Rica, you have come to the right place. We specialize in diving tours to Caño Island and Marino Ballena National Park. Our experienced guides also know other spectacular sites that are less well known but offer an unforgettable diving experience.

costaricadiveandsurf.com
drakediverscr.com

Known worldwide for the consistency of its waves, Playa Dominical is a perfect place for experienced surfers, although it also offers some areas that are ideal for learning this sport.

Our country is one of the best places in the world to practice rafting due to the fluvial formations of our tropical forests. You can enjoy spectacular scenery while taking a natural ride on the river of your choice or you can also get your adrenaline pumping and speed boating.

www.ballenainfocenter.com
www.uvita.info/en

Rafting

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Canopy Tour
We have 2 options to do Canopy here in the South:
Osa Canopy. It is located in a private reserve of 800 hectares of primary and secondary forest, which consists of 9 cables of approximately 450 meters long, 2 rappel stations in the trees and a Tarzan rope. Also, on the property, you will be able to observe different birds, mammals, etc.

Hacienda Barú. On this tour, 8 zip lines on 8 separate cables will take you from one point to another, over valleys and streams. There are 14 land-based platforms and one tree platform overlooking the coast. The canopy tour we call the Flight of the Toucan is as much an ecological experience as it is a canopy adventure. This tour is suitable for the whole family.

www.ballenainfocenter.com
www.uvita.info/en

Piedra Ballena Island Tour
The tour starts from Ballena beach, paddling for about 30 minutes enjoying the natural coastal richness in a sustainable way without the harmful effects of an internal combustion engine. During the tour we can observe beautiful birds from pelicans to beautiful brown boobies and practice snorkeling, discovering the incredible species that are underwater.

www.ballenainfocenter.com
www.uvita.info/en

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www.bahiaballenakayakstours.com

Diving Adventures

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www.ballenainfocenter.com
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www.ballenainfocenter.com
www.uvita.info/en
We start at low tide, the waves go to one side of the Passage of Moses or better known as the tail of the whale, which makes it an excellent spot for snorkeling. Our tour lasts approximately 45 minutes - 1 hour and 30 minutes, in which you can observe many species of fish and corals. As well as giant conches, starfish, parrotfish, damselfish, eels, Moorish idol, surgeons, and others. The tour includes surf kayaking, where you can have fun without being an expert or having experience, after the great adventure in the sea, we take a break and start exploring the mangrove forest, observing seabirds and some mammals. Finally, we take a kayak tour through the mangrove swamp called Estero Negro.

bahiaballenakayakstours.com

Whale Tail Tour

Sport Fishing

Put your sport fishing skills into practice and feel the adrenaline rush of battling a fierce mahi-mahi, yellowfin tuna, marlin or sailfish during your sport fishing trip. The waters of the Osa Peninsula in the South Pacific Ocean of Costa Rica are rich in nutrients and there is a great variety of fish for your sport fishing tour.

Whale Tail Tour

Day and Night Kayak tours through the Mangrove

This tour consists of exploring a secondary forest near the tail of the whale (Punta Uvita) where you can observe monkeys, snakes, spiders, bats, anteaters, sloths, kinkajou, raccoons, scorpions, crabs and many more species of animals and insects.

At the end of the forest you take a break on the beach near the Morete River along with a snack.

The tour continues along the beach in search of turtles (in season). You will also have the opportunity to take a kayak tour through the mangrove called Estero Negro.

bahiaballenakayakstours.com

Rappelling Waterfalls in Costa Rica

The adventure begins at the top of the mountain in a 4x4 vehicle. When you reach the waterfalls, you will enjoy breathtaking views of the canyon and natural pools, where you can dive and enjoy the refreshing waterfall on your shoulders.

To take the tour you must be over the age of 12. No previous experience is necessary. Wear comfortable clothes, shoes, bring water and a camera. Do not bring insect repellents, sunscreen or a hat.

Our guide gives a welcome introduction and an overview of the day’s plan, then you will be taken on a unique adventure, guaranteeing a pleasant, safe and exciting experience, with all the necessary equipment you will be part of an educational excursion of 7 waterfalls ranging from 10 to 30 meters high.

bahiaballenakayakstours.com

Fishing in the river

Ready to fish in the river?

You can count on a great variety of fish such as snapper, black snapper, catfish, sea bass, snook, mackerel, grouper, jacks and more.

www.bahiaballenakayakstours.com

Fishing in the river

Hiking in Corcovado National Park

Put your sport fishing skills into practice and feel the adrenaline rush of battling a fierce mahi-mahi, yellowfin tuna, marlin or sailfish during your sport fishing trip. The waters of the Osa Peninsula in the South Pacific Ocean of Costa Rica are rich in nutrients and there is a great variety of fish for your sport fishing tour.

Hiking in Corcovado National Park

Corcovado National Park (San Pedrillo Biological Station)

Corcovado National Park is one of the richest places in biodiversity that exist in the country and within it there are several biological stations, you will travel to San Pedrillo, which is about an hour and a half by boat from Playa Uvita and half an hour from Sierpe. approximately an hour and a half by boat from Playa Uvita and half an hour from Sierpe, once the boat trip is over you will arrive at San Pedrillo beach and walk for a few hours along the trails of this station.

At noon you can enjoy a delicious lunch and also relax on the beach while waiting for the second hike on the trails to the waterfall. Among the most common animals to observe are white-faced monkeys, coatis, macaws, among others.

Corcovado National Park (San Pedrillo Biological Station)

www.bahiaballenakayakstours.com

www.uvita.info/en

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drakediverscr.com
Travel to Sirena, which is approximately 1 hour and a half by boat from Sierpe, once the boat trip is over you will arrive at the beach of the Biological Station and walk a few hours along the trails of this station. The extraordinary diversity and concentration of wildlife in the Corcovado watershed, which contains this Sirena Station, means that wildlife viewing opportunities are likely to present themselves at virtually any time on almost any part of any trail.

Discover the wildlife of Marino Ballena National Park as you walk along a trail between the beach and the mangrove forest and observe some mammals as well as a variety of birds, including the scarlet macaw and shorebirds. Your guide will also show you part of our city and some historical vestiges as you walk towards the main trail.

The waterfalls are one of the great attractions of the area due to their natural beauty. In addition, you can observe the fauna and flora of the place.

Snorkel on the ocean floor and see parrot fish, sea turtles, coral reefs and more during your snorkeling tour in Costa Rica to Marino Ballena National Park, Punta Uvita, Ballena Island and Tres Hermanas!

For bird watching, observation trails in different types of nearby forests are available. With a specialized local guide, you will be able to observe among the 250 different species, such as the Quetzal. Our specialized guides offer you between four incredible routes.

Enjoy incredible ocean and valley views, creek crossings, coffee and banana plantations. We will continue through a small village and pass through several farms on our way to the San Luis waterfall. This waterfall is one of the highest in Costa Rica. We will then stop for some fresh local fruit and a refreshing swim in another waterfall before returning to the base.

Navigate in a boat or catamaran through the canals of these mangroves, where you will be able to observe a great number of bird species, you will also have the possibility to see the 4 types of monkey species that exist in the country in one place! And of course, crocodiles and caimans characteristic of this mangrove area.

This tour includes entrance to the waterfall, lunch, snacks and two hours at the waterfall. There is no better way to experience Costa Rica than by ATV! Drive your own all-terrain vehicle through an adventurous tour that will take you to the beautiful Eco-Chontales waterfall. This seven-hour tour is sure to be a day you won’t forget!
Community walking tour of Bahía Ballena
A biocultural walk through Bahía Ballena. Learn about the people, history and natural wonders that make up this community bordering Marino Ballena National Park.

Cowboy Tour
Rancho La Merced is a working cattle ranch dedicated to the production of beef cattle in harmony with the ecological balance of the surrounding rainforest and mangrove forest. Come and have an unforgettable experience riding with the cowboys, driving cattle, checking calves and cows in the pasture, learning to rope calves and many other ranch activities.

Coffee Tour
To all coffee lovers! Here’s your tour! Learn firsthand the coffee process from its plantation to a delicious cup of coffee! Don Emilio’s family, located just above San Josecito (approximately 30 minutes from Centro Uvita), are authentic coffee growers and are happy to show you around their farm and teach you the whole process while you practice.

Coconut Tour
What is so special about coconut and why is it so popular? David will teach you all about coconut and its benefits in the most rustic way, from cracking the nut, to squeezing the milk, to preparing a cooked coconut oil. It also shows you how to make a lip patch with natural home remedies. If you are interested in coconut, don’t miss this rustic adventure, because you will really learn a lot about it.

Stand up paddling
Actually, this sport is not new, but dates back to ancient times, where boards and paddles were handmade from many different materials. Both these boards and the paddles or “paddles” have existed in various forms for thousands of years and are part of the evolution of man.

Chocolate Tour
This trip is ideal for those who wish to learn about the traditional way of making chocolate with a local Costa Rican guide. You have the opportunity to learn by doing, from peeling cocoa to grinding and cooking it. In addition, your host will show you some cocoa plants in his garden. At the end you can enjoy a delicious chocolate drink. For people of all ages.

Boruca Indigenous community
Tour famous for the masks and fabrics.

Community walking tour
A biocultural walk through Bahía Ballena. Learn about the people, history and natural wonders that make up this community bordering Marino Ballena National Park. Duration: 2 hours Start time: 8 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.

Tubing and floating
Tubing and floating is a perfect experience for those who enjoy fun, nature and adventure. Everyone will be given the option of a tube or a larger inflatable, for those who feel more comfortable doing the descent with the guide. The scenery downstream is beautiful, with fast and fun rapids. Along the river there is a picnic stop. This is an enjoyable activity for everyone in the group.

Night walks
Nightlife in the jungle. Here you can see the other side of the rainforest, looking for creatures that are not seen during the day.

Other adventure and nature tours
Canopy tours, kayaking, bird watching, horseback riding, guided visits to waterfalls, community cultural tours and more... Contact us to learn more about the tours we offer.
Piedras Blancas NP

Piedras Blancas together with Corcovado National Park and the Golfo Dulce Forest Reserve form an important biological corridor that, in addition to being rich in itself, protects a great diversity of flora and fauna species that live in the Golfo Dulce. As for visitor services, there are only trails and natural viewpoints.

Rio Grande de Térabla

A visit to the impressive Muñeco Mountains is recommended, which calls for a hike or a bicycle (or mountain bike) tour and will allow the visitor to observe beautiful landscape, such as the mouth of the imposing Grande de Térabla River. In this river you can practice sport fishing and paddling in its estuaries or mangroves.

Banana enclave

El Embarcadero, this neighborhood, during the time of the United Fruit Company, served as a port of entry to the Southern Zone from Puntarenas and is currently the landing site for artisanal and sport fishermen. You will also observe historical constructions that allude to the fishing and mollusk activity.

Horseback Riding

Horseback riding along the banks of the river becomes a unique adventure, especially during the months of May and June, since this journey leads to Rancho Quemado, where a unique phenomenon of this area can be observed: thousands of crabs come out of the holes to reproduce.

Finca 6 Museum Site

A source of great pride for the people of Palmares are the pre-Columbian cacique settlements, which offer the wonder of their stone spheres and sculptural legacy, reason for the declaration of World Heritage by UNESCO. This extraordinary archaeological legacy represents the societies and productive structures that characterized the organized societies of pre-Columbian times.
The BioCultural route is defined as a set of experiences that show the parallel evolution of biological diversity and cultural diversity, which through generations has forged ecological knowledge and sustainable local practices with their environment. Its objective is to link the tourism services offered in the community of Rancho Quemado and make them visible as an important destination on the Osa Peninsula.

The route contains sites for observation and interpretation of the abundant wildlife of the area, as well as presenting the local traditions of the community, which are developed in harmony with the environment. The BioCultural Route is one of the results of the project: ‘Strategies for forest conservation and strengthening of green enterprises in the community of Rancho Quemado, in the buffer zone of Corcovado National Park’, executed by Aves de Osa and financed by the I Debt-for-Nature Swap USA. - C.R.

For reservations:

www.visitranchoquemado.com

www.youtube.com

We offer the opportunity to cook typical food with Alice, our in-house chef. You can cook picadillos, gallo pinto, pancakes, desserts, and much more.

Learn from the pros! A tour born out of the need to serve volunteer groups in the community, three women came together to create cooking classes. They offer the opportunity to learn how to prepare a traditional Costa Rican dish for half a day or a full meal, according to the student’s wishes. The food is native to the Osa Peninsula region, made with fresh ingredients from local farms.

Traditional Cooking Classes

Rancho Verde Posada Rural

A small family business that offers three rustic wooden cabins with shared bathrooms around a large green area with a capacity of approximately 15 people. Meal options are available for an additional cost.

Heart of the Osa BioCultural Route

Cooking Classes

Conservando Huellas Dairy Farm

Join us to get the hands-on experience of milking a cow as we have passed down techniques that have been preserved over time. After taking the opportunity to practice the ancient tradition, it’s time to take that freshly squeezed milk back to the kitchen and put it to use! Learn how to make a traditional Costa Rican dessert of rice pudding, which is enjoyed at the end of the tour.

Description of the Osa Trail

The Osa Trail allows you to get to know the primary forest, an intact forest that has not been exploited or touched by man. Primary forests have become very rare in the world and continue to disappear even though they are places of high biodiversity. It is a rainforest, which receives a lot of rain throughout the year, mostly in September and October.

Jaguarundi Paradise Cabins

It offers lodging in 3 bungalows of rustic materials with their own kitchen and bathroom. It has a large green area and a ranch to rest. We also offer tours to the lagoon, the Osa Trail, Corcovado National Park, Caño Island and horseback riding.

Conservando Huellas Dairy Farm

Our cabins are equipped with ramps for people in wheelchairs.

We also offer a trail in a primary forest with a viewpoint overlooking the blue waters of Drake Bay!

Cabins Laguna del Valle and Sendero

It consists of 6 mixed cabins with capacity for 25 people and a large green area to enjoy. Varied food service.

There are 2 bedrooms with private bathrooms and a third one in process.

Description of the Osa Trail

Visitors can rent horses with or without a local guide for a tour of the community and the surrounding area. In charge: Enrique Badilla.

Travel by horseback to the other tourism projects here at Rancho. An excellent rural experience!

Horseback riding

Traditional Cooking Classes

Rancho Verde Posada Rural

Rural Tourism

Tours de Turismo Rural
The artisanal gold tour
It offers the experience to learn about the work of the artisan goldsmiths and also the history of Rancho Quemado and the Osa Peninsula. The former facilities now serve as the reception area.

Tour of the “Sendero Surá” (Surá Trail)
The family also offers a tour of the “Sendero Surá” in process that can be part of the tour. The trail tour lasts approximately 3 hours. The “Sendero Surá” is an adventure trail and is not recommended for senior adults.

Artisanal Sugar Mill “Don Carmen”
It consists of a traditional sugar cane mill where the normal process of sugar cane candy production is carried out using oxen or horses. The tourist will participate in the process from start to finish, including: cutting sugar cane, working in the sugar mill, drinking sugar cane juice, and helping to make delicious desserts. Typical food is also offered.

Osa Silvestre” Bakery
Traditional Bakery with handmade bread we offer traditional baguette, whole wheat bread, homemade breads with fruits and seeds of the forest, roasted tamale, cornbread, cinnamon rolls, savory bread all based on local and forest ingredients.

Butterfly Farm
The butterfly house in the forest is the place for local butterfly watching. We have an appropriate space to enjoy gardens, medicinal plants, and others related to the feeding and care of butterflies in Osa.

It consists of the production and maintenance of various species of butterflies which are kept on display in an appropriately conditioned room.

Anecdotes from grandparents
Share a unique experience, listening to stories told by some of the first settlers of the community. The shared stories are based on real experiences and aim to create a dialogue in which visitors ask questions and give their opinions.

It is a familiar exchange where the visitor better understands the fundamentals of our community’s identity.

Night Hike: Tribal Bear
You can do the night walks when night falls and a new world begins to awaken, very hidden for many of us, but fantastic and beautiful. We will observe the activities of small and large varieties of amphibians: toads and frogs, spiders and crickets. Hopefully, we will see fanciful reptiles, such as snakes hunting in small ponds or turtles in fresh water, owls, hammerhead bats, rats and opossums, and others.

UZU tracking expeditions
This is an alternative to development for rural families and a new marketing option for local tourism that decentralizes visits to Corcovado National Park to appreciate nature from the heart of Osa.

Take a tour of the organic farm and learn about many medicinal and edible plants, as well as any other uses they may have. Here there are always fruits and plants in season, while during the tour you can taste them.

Yoly Confections
Yolanda has years of experience and can create all types of rugs, quilts, comforters, sheets, baby clothes, and much more for the community and hotels.

Weaving Dreams: Handmade with Cabuya
Cabuya fiber is from a cactus-like plant that has been used for hundreds of years in Costa Rican handicrafts. Traditionally, from the Cartago region of northern Costa Rica, a women's cooperative has brought manual labor to Rancho Quemado.

Organic farming tour
This is an alternative to development for rural families and a new marketing option for local tourism that decentralizes visits to Corcovado National Park to appreciate nature from the heart of Osa.
Committee on Biological Monitoring

This is a group formed by locals who have been trained by MINAET and biology experts to maintain control by monitoring the flora and fauna of Rancho Quemado. They offer the opportunity to participate in their tours, monitoring migratory birds, endangered trees, endemic plants, footprints and mammals. The tours are suitable for all types of clients and are geared towards research and learning.

Soda Edward

A family business and restaurant that resulted from the experience obtained cooking in hotels. Now serving typical Costa Rican food at affordable prices from their home.

Corazón de Osa Typical Dance Workshop

The community organizes a mixed group of adults and children called “Corazón de Osa” that offers its services to visitors not only to be hired for presentations, but also to give typical dance classes and have fun with the members of the group.

How to get to Rancho Quemado

**From San José**

**By car:**
Take the Interamerican highway until you reach the large gas station in Chacarita (easy to locate). From there, follow the signs, you are being directed to Puerto Jiménez. When you get to Rincon, you will see the signs to Drake Bay. Turn right immediately before the Rincon Bridge and follow the signs to Drake Bay. Approximate time: 6 hours.

**By bus:**
Take the 8:00 a.m. bus. (noon to 12:00 p.m. also) at the San Carlos station (Lobo Blanco company) in San José. Ask the driver to drop you off at Rincon. From Rincon, take the 4:45 p.m. bus. to Rancho Quemado. Time: 9.5 hours.

**From Puerto Jiménez:**

**By car:**
Go northwest towards La Palma. Shortly after La Palma, it approaches Rincon. Immediately after the Rincon Bridge turn left. Follow the signs to Drake Bay. After 15 km you will arrive at Rancho Quemado. Approximate time: 60 minutes

**By bus or car:**
Take public transportation (leaves at 4:00 am. (from the ice cream shop in the center of town) or by car follow the main road out for 15 km until you reach Rancho Quemado. Time: 45 minutes

**By bus:**
Take a bus that goes to La Palma. The bus leaves La Palma via RANCHO DRAYE Bay every day (except Sunday) at 11:30 am. and 4:30 p.m. Also, in La Palma you can find a cab to take you to Rancho. Approximate time: 90 minutes

**From Drake Bay (Agujitas):**

**By car:**
Take the Interamerican highway until you reach the large gas station in Chacarita (easy to locate). From there, follow the signs, you are being directed to Puerto Jiménez. When you get to Rincon, you will see the signs to Drake Bay. Turn right immediately before the Rincon Bridge and follow the signs to Drake Bay. Approximate time: 6 hours.

*Note: The crossing is before the Rincon Bridge*

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Take the 8:00 a.m. bus. (noon to 12:00 p.m. also) at the San Carlos station (Lobo Blanco company) in San José. Ask the driver to drop you off at Rincon. From Rincon, take the 4:45 p.m. bus. to Rancho Quemado. Time: 9.5 hours.

Caminos de Osa offers four different trails along the Golfo Dulce Forest Reserve.

Through them, we aim to reduce pressure on Corcovado National Park while increasing visits to rural tourism ventures in the communities along the trails. In addition to trekking between each community, we partner with local micro tourism companies that offer a variety of services, from rich cultural experiences, a taste of local cuisine, boat excursions, horseback riding, kayaking, scuba diving, and much more.

1. **Water Way**
This is a trip to visit, learn and enjoy different bodies of water (rivers, waterfalls, streams, mangroves and the Pacific Ocean), surrounded by nature, life and culture.

2. **Jungle Road**
This is a great combination of pristine forest, culture and the iconic Golfo Dulce.
Join us on this trip and discover the natural treasures hidden in the depths of some of the lesser known areas of the Osa Peninsula.

3. **Gold Road**
No other part of Costa Rica contains as much gold as the Osa Peninsula. We invite you to participate in this challenging 5-day adventure that will take you along the entire Osa Peninsula, from North to South, to discover the gold mining culture and experience Osa to the fullest.

4. **Elemental Osa**
A conservation region becomes as large as the communities that make up that area. Enjoy an authentic experience with Osa Elemental, an opportunity for you to experience six different communities in Osa and see what each has to offer.

For more information visit: [http://caminosdeosa.com](http://caminosdeosa.com)
Cultural Tourism Tours - Bahía Ballena

Whale Tail Hike
Join us on a tour of the magical tombolo, better known as “the whale’s tail”, a natural formation unique in the world. Discover the secrets and history of the struggle of a people united in the 1960s for the protection of natural resources. We take a tour through trails within the Marino Ballena National Park that lead us to the foundations of the ancient town of Uvita Bay.

Integral Gallo Farm Tour
Start the adventure with wonderful views during a 1.5 hour drive from Uvita to San Isidro to Antonio’s farm (known as Gallo). Get ready to be in the middle of nature and plantations of various fruits such as citrus, bananas, coffee and explore the natural habitat of an integral farm that has everything to be self-sustainable.

Mototrapiche
Sweeten your palate! From the organic sugar cane plantation to the sugar cane candy blocks you can learn with don Ademar and his family all the traditional and artisanal process to make sugar cane products. Also learn about the great history of this family that 20 years ago decided to work with organic products.

Coconut Tour
In this activity, learn about the properties and uses of coconut in an artisanal way, in the hands of David, a local producer who has been interested in rescuing the traditions of coastal areas and how to apply coconut derivatives in daily life. Now concerned about coconut reforestation in the Marino Ballena National Park that lead us to the foundations of the ancient town of Uvita Bay.

Village Tour
This tour takes place in the streets of our peaceful Bahia community. Get to know our people, places of archaeological and historical importance taking into account important events from the 60’s to the present. During the tour, a collection of old photos of the area is shown to give a better perception of our past to each visitor.

Finca don Guelo
The authenticity of being a farmer! Get to know don Guelo, his family, their history, a way of life on a family farm, and enjoy a walk through the only integral farm in the area! The family's efforts to reforest the farm have made it a sanctuary for wildlife. During the tour you will have the opportunity to learn about the agricultural processes used by Don Guelo and taste delicious and authentic dishes made by his wife Doña Yeti.

Madre Selva Tour
Madre Selva is a rural community-based tourism project located in Progreso de Drake on the Osa Peninsula. Poison dart frog trail tours, hiking, horseback riding, night tours and bird tours are offered for locals and foreigners. Camping is offered if you bring your own tents.

La Tarde Community Lagoon Tour
Albergue la Laguna offers the service of food, lodging and enjoyment of walking the trails within the farm. Because we are located in the countryside and are far from the urban area, we do not have laundry facilities, refrigeration, hot water or electricity.

Coconut Tour
Get ready to be in the middle of nature and enjoy an authentic experience with food, lodging and enjoyment of walking the trails within the farm. Because we are located in the countryside and are far from the urban area, we do not have laundry facilities, refrigeration, hot water or electricity.

Integral Gallo Farm Tour
A company immersed in nature that allows national and foreign visitors to enjoy an authentic experience with nature. Through lodging, food and tours with personalized service and excellent quality; sharing knowledge of the natural and cultural wealth of the area.

Mototrapiche
A company immersed in nature that allows national and foreign visitors to enjoy an authentic experience with nature. Through lodging, food and tours with personalized service and excellent quality; sharing knowledge of the natural and cultural wealth of the area.

La Tarde agroforestry farm
La Tarde Agroforestry Farm has a butterfly farm, trees of great attraction for their imposing beauty and for being part of a group of precious woods, trails, organic cocoa plantation, reforestation and agricultural development areas, and a guest house. It also has the advantage of being located near one of the entrances to Corcovado National Park.

Coconut Tour
An integral experience will take place within the natural habitat of an integral farm that has everything to be self-sustainable. Visit the natural formations of the area and reforest the farm with the support of locals and foreigners.

Village Tour
A company immersed in nature that allows national and foreign visitors to enjoy an authentic experience with nature. Through lodging, food and tours with personalized service and excellent quality; sharing knowledge of the natural and cultural wealth of the area.

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

Land Transport

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Medical Centers

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Information of roads and airports

Place                     | Contact               |
----------------------------|-----------------------|
Tobias Bolaños Airport, P.  | Tel.: 2790-2902, 2790-2903 |
Juan Santamaría International Airport | Tel.: 2431-1025 |
Daniel Oduber Quirós International Airport, Liberia Guanacaste  | Tel.: 2431-1240 |

Land Transport

Air Taxi Centroamericano

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<tr>
<td>AVIONES TAXI AEREO S.A</td>
<td>(506) 2431-0190/ (506) 2431-0293</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:reservations@airchartercentralamerica.com">reservations@airchartercentralamerica.com</a></td>
<td><a href="http://www.tacsa@racsa.co.cr">www.tacsa@racsa.co.cr</a></td>
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Paradise Air

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<td><a href="http://www.flywithparadise.com">www.flywithparadise.com</a></td>
<td><a href="http://www.tacsa@racsa.co.cr">www.tacsa@racsa.co.cr</a></td>
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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.
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<tr>
<td>PINEAPPLE TOURS</td>
<td>COSTADO SUR DE LA POLICÍA TURÍSTICA DOMINICAL, OSA</td>
<td><a href="mailto:pineappletours@gmail.com">pineappletours@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>2743-8889</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UVAITA INFORMATION CENTER</td>
<td>FREnte AL BANCO DE COSTA RICA, UVITA</td>
<td>uвитa mail@uвитa.info</td>
<td>2743-8889</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGENCIA DE VIAJES RECEPTIVA CORAZON DE OSA</td>
<td>50 OESTE DE LA PLAZA DE DEPORTES DE RANCHEO QUEMADO, OSA</td>
<td><a href="mailto:adri.ranchoquemado@gmail.com">adri.ranchoquemado@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>8667-2355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGENCIA DE VIAJES CAÑO DIVERS</td>
<td>DENTRO DEL HOTEL PIRATA COVE, JUNTO A LA DESMEMBRACION DEL RIO DRAKE</td>
<td><a href="mailto:info@canodiversosta.com">info@canodiversosta.com</a></td>
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<td>DOLPHIN TOUR TOUR OPERADORA MARINO COSTERA</td>
<td>CONTIGUIO A PIZZA EXPRESS, BAHÍA BALLENA, OSA, PUNTARENAS</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dolphin-tours@gmail.com">dolphin-tours@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>200 METROS AL NORTE DE LA ENTRADA PRINCIPAL DEL PARQUE MARINO BALLENA</td>
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<td>2743-8679</td>
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<td>AGENCIA DE VIAJES TANGARA TOURS</td>
<td>200 NORTE DEL RESTAURANTE PAVION VERGEL PUNTA MALA</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tangastours@yahoo.com">tangastours@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>4001-4468</td>
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<td>LOOK OUT DRAKE BAY</td>
<td>PUNTARENAS, OSA, SIERPE, BAHÍA DRAKE, CALLE A LOS PLANES, CONTIGUO A RESTAURANTE JACO MAR, OFICINA CELESTE</td>
<td><a href="mailto:drakedivers@gmail.com">drakedivers@gmail.com</a>; info@ drakedivers.com; reservations@ drakedivers.com</td>
<td>8505-1717, 8310-3600</td>
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<td>AGENCIA DE VIAJES COSTA RICA ENAMORA</td>
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<td>2743-8283, 8911-7160</td>
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<td>AGENCIA DE VIAJES BAHÍA BALLENA KARMA</td>
<td>FREnte A LA ESTACION DE GUARDIA PARQUES, SECTOR PUNTA UVITA</td>
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<td>SELVA MAR</td>
<td>50 sur del Hotel Chirripo, San Isidro. Calle 2 Av B</td>
<td><a href="mailto:info@selvamar.com">info@selvamar.com</a></td>
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<td><a href="http://www.jevacaciones.com">www.jevacaciones.com</a></td>
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<td>Bahia Ballena Tours</td>
<td>Uvita, Bahía Balleina de Osa Puntarenas</td>
<td><a href="mailto:bahiaballena@bahiaballena.travel">bahiaballena@bahiaballena.travel</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Agencia de Viajes Innoceana</td>
<td>Comunidad de Ojchal, de ferretería Grupo Materiales 100 metros oeste</td>
<td><a href="mailto:info@innoceana.org">info@innoceana.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Agencia de Viajes Sukia Travel</td>
<td>Contiguo al Supermercado Santa Bárbara, Bahia Drake.</td>
<td><a href="mailto:info@sukia.travel">info@sukia.travel</a></td>
<td>7117-9166</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.autenticadventures.com">www.autenticadventures.com</a></td>
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<td>FANTASIA ECOLOGIA C.R.</td>
<td>Hotel Coscodirrey Bay, Puerto Jiménez, Costado Este del Aeropuerto de Puerto Jiménez</td>
<td><a href="mailto:reception@coscodirreybay.com">reception@coscodirreybay.com</a></td>
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<td><a href="mailto:xiralad@gmail.com">xiralad@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ANGEL GERARDO ROBLES CORTES</td>
<td><a href="mailto:boisroble04@gmail.com">boisroble04@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>87801256</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>MAikel EDUARDO SOJano SALAS</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mikesosa26@gmail.com">mikesosa26@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>87181305</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAHARRA RAMíRZ CAMBRONERO</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jaharra0822@hotmail.es">jaharra0822@hotmail.es</a></td>
<td>83516760</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>MARIA ANGela CHINChILLA LAZaRO</td>
<td><a href="mailto:angelinchillal89@gmail.com">angelinchillal89@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>86677251</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAVID ISIDRO GARRR ACuña</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sokia26@live.com">sokia26@live.com</a></td>
<td>85345380</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>JOSÉ LUIS VEGA ALFíAR</td>
<td><a href="mailto:luigivega3@gmail.com">luigivega3@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>8650418</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>RAM DAVID VILLANUEVA HENRíquez</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ramaiv@hotmail.com">ramaiv@hotmail.com</a></td>
<td>71719166</td>
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<td>FRESER ACOStA BARRAYNTE</td>
<td><a href="mailto:freinazosta77@gmail.com">freinazosta77@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>89691433</td>
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<tr>
<td>MÓNICA MIRANDA VASíQUEZ</td>
<td><a href="mailto:momiv@gmail.com">momiv@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>ZARIFET MÁRIA GARCíA GóMEZ</td>
<td><a href="mailto:zanefemi99@gmail.com">zanefemi99@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>ISAAC PÉREZ ACUña</td>
<td><a href="mailto:isaacp.a23@gmail.com">isaacp.a23@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>ANGEL CHAvES BEITA</td>
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<tr>
<td>SHARIS VALERia SóLEs CAMACHO</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sharist0099@gmail.com">sharist0099@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>JEFFRy GóNEZ ESPíNzA</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jeffreyeg@gmail.com">jeffreyeg@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>ERICKA ALEXANDRA CORDERO MARíN</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cordemar25@gmail.com">cordemar25@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>JOHAN DAVID FLOREz CUBíLO</td>
<td><a href="mailto:florescubillo2@gmail.com">florescubillo2@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td><a href="mailto:reynier.jimene.ch@gmail.com">reynier.jimene.ch@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>HEYNER AZOFEIFA LóPEZ</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:support@kuracostarica.com">support@kuracostarica.com</a>; <a href="mailto:reservations@kuracostarica.com">reservations@kuracostarica.com</a>; <a href="mailto:cedogumo@gmail.com">cedogumo@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td><a href="mailto:marinoballena@hotel.com">marinoballena@hotel.com</a></td>
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<td>HOTEL BOUTIQUE THREE SIXTY</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:cocosnotificaciones@gmail.com">cocosnotificaciones@gmail.com</a>; <a href="mailto:info@dolceuvita.com">info@dolceuvita.com</a></td>
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<td><a href="mailto:nubia@gmail.com">nubia@gmail.com</a>; <a href="mailto:yesica@corcovadotentcamp.com">yesica@corcovadotentcamp.com</a>; <a href="http://www.corcovado.com">www.corcovado.com</a></td>
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**ACUATIC TRANSPORTATION**

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<td>200 SURESTE DE LA PLAZA DE DEPORTES DE UVITA OSA</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ballenaaventurachumil@gmail.com">ballenaaventurachumil@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>NURIA VILLALOBOS VIVEROS</td>
<td>CONTIGUO A LA ESQUELA DE FINCA 12, PALMAR SUR</td>
<td><a href="mailto:enoc.nurim@gmail.com">enoc.nurim@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td><a href="mailto:marioosalmerengor@gmail.com">marioosalmerengor@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>150 MTS SUR DEL SUPERMERCADO BM</td>
<td><a href="mailto:gilbertosalmerengor@gmail.com">gilbertosalmerengor@gmail.com</a></td>
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Humpback whales in Costa Rica

Costa Rica’s Bahía Ballena, Isla del Caño Biological Reserve and Bahía Drake are some of the best places on the planet to catch a glimpse of the humpback whale. These sites are located in the northern and southern Pacific coast of our country. According to National Geographic, Ballena Marine National Park is one of the 10 best places to spot humpback whales.

Regardless of whether you’re relying on patience or luck, watching humpback whales and their calves jumping and performing acrobatic feats in the ocean is something we should all see at some point in our lives.

Humpback whales travel long distances from their feeding areas in cooler waters, including the polar oceans, to their breeding areas in the warm waters of Costa Rica.

These giants remain in Costa Rica for a total of 10 months per year, with groups coming from different hemispheres in each half of the year. This gives the country the longest humpback whale watching season in the world, thanks to the presence of whales from the northern and southern hemispheres.

Characteristics of the species
Humpback whales (Megaptera novaeangliae) are marine mammals belonging to the rorqual family (Balaenopteridae) of the suborder Mysticeti (baleen whales) and the Cetacea order, which includes whales, orcas and dolphins.

The name “humpback” is due to its distinctive short, stout dorsal fin. Its Spanish name, ballena joroba, comes from joroba, the Spanish word for “hump”.

The scientific name, Megaptera, is a compound word consisting of the greek words mega, large and ptera, fin, a reference to the animal's massive pectoral fins, which can reach up to one third of its body length, around 5 meters.

Northern Hemisphere Population
From their feeding areas on the southern Pacific coast of Canada and the entire western coast of the United States, humpback whales migrate to their breeding areas in southern Mexico and throughout Central America. In Costa Rica, they congregate in specific areas (see list on the right of the poster) of the northern and southern Pacific.

December-April (dry season)
The whales that migrate from the northern hemisphere arrive during this period, traveling an average of 5,200 km on their way here and the same amount back to their feeding areas.

Southern Hemisphere Population
From their feeding areas around the Antarctic Peninsula and southern Chile, humpback whales migrate to their calving sites in northern South America, Panama and Costa Rica. In our country, the whales congregate in certain sites in the southern and (to a lesser extent) northern Pacific coast.

July-November (rainy season)
The whales that migrate from the southern hemisphere arrive during this period, traveling an average of 6,900 km on their way here and the same amount back to their feeding areas. This is the longest permanent migratory route of any mammal!

WHERE THEY COME FROM
Migratory movements are part of most whales’ annual lifecycle; they spend the summer in their feeding grounds (high latitudes) and migrate to tropical waters (low latitudes) in the winter to reproduce and raise their calves.

Main areas of sightings in Costa Rica
Whale watching services are available on the following beaches in Costa Rica:

- Cuajiniquil
- Playas del Coco
- Sámara
- Cobano
- Jacó
- Quepos
- Herradura
- Dominicalito
- Bahía Rincón
- Bahía Ballena/Uvita
- Drake Bay
- Puerto Jiménez
- Playa Zancudo
- Cabuya
- Isla del Caño por Sierpe
- Isla del Caño por Bahía Drake
- Golfo de Nicoya
- Mal País
- Montezuma
- Tambor
- Corcovado
- Puntarenas
- Isla Tortuga
- Sierpe

36 tons, its weight approximately

These extraordinary cetaceans can live for

60 - 80 years

Humpback whales' pectoral fins are the largest of any whale species, and can measure

4 - 5.5 meters in length.

Size to scale

Calves weigh between 1 & 2 tons when they are born. By the beginning of their second year, they leave their mother’s side. By this time, they measure about 9 meters in length.

Females reach lengths of 16 m longer than males at 14 m

Sightings in Costa Rica

16/25/12

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The scientific name, Megaptera, is a compound word consisting of the greek words mega, large and ptera, fin, a reference to the animal's massive pectoral fins, which can reach up to one third of its body length, around 5 meters.

Northern Hemisphere Population
From their feeding areas on the southern Pacific coast of Canada and the entire western coast of the United States, humpback whales migrate to their breeding areas in southern Mexico and throughout Central America. In Costa Rica, they congregate in specific areas (see list on the right of the poster) of the northern and southern Pacific.

December-April (dry season)
The whales that migrate from the northern hemisphere arrive during this period, traveling an average of 5,200 km on their way here and the same amount back to their feeding areas.

Southern Hemisphere Population
From their feeding areas around the Antarctic Peninsula and southern Chile, humpback whales migrate to their calving sites in northern South America, Panama and Costa Rica. In our country, the whales congregate in certain sites in the southern and (to a lesser extent) northern Pacific coast.

July-November (rainy season)
The whales that migrate from the southern hemisphere arrive during this period, traveling an average of 6,900 km on their way here and the same amount back to their feeding areas. This is the longest permanent migratory route of any mammal!
**FEEDING:** Humpback whales possess between 270 and 440 grayish-black baleen plates on each side of the jaw, measuring 70 to 100 cm in length, which allow them to filter out water in order to obtain their food of krill and small fish.

**SEXUALITY:** Sexual maturity is reached between 6 and 11 years, at a size of between 12 and 14 m. The reproduction period lasts for a period of 4-5 months.

**HOW ARE THEY BORN?**
1. The mother whale begins her contractions and the calf starts to leave the mother’s body. Calves are born tail-first, not head-first.
2. The umbilical cord breaks off once the calf leaves the mother’s body.
3. In order to take its first breath, the calf is helped to the surface by its mother.
4. The calf consumes between 60 and 70 liters of milk each day.

**IDENTIFICATION:**
Humpback whales can be identified by means of the white marks and the unique pattern of the jagged trailing edge of their tails. This does not change from birth, and allows the identification of individuals. They serve as the whales’ “fingerprints” and help to classify whales within a group.

**MOVEMENTS ON THE SURFACE**
- Surfacing
- Pectoral slapping
- Exposure of fins
- Slapping
- Tail slapping
- Lobtailing
- Breaching
- Lunging

**BREATHERING:** Whales breathe through their blowhole (nasal orifice) situated in the upper part of their heads. They open and close their nasal passages in order to hold their breath underwater for up to 45 minutes. Under normal conditions, whales breathe every 3-9 minutes.

**SONGS:** Male humpback whales emit long-lasting sounds called songs during the reproduction period. These can last from 10 to 15 minutes and can be interpreted after a few minutes or repeated continuously for up to 22 hours.

- The whales contract their throat and thorax muscles.
- Air flows through the lungs and the laryngeal sac.
- The alternating expansion and contraction of these organs take air through the U of the larynx (in green), making it vibrate and produce the sound.

**SIZE TO SCALE:**
- Blue whale: 28 m
- Southern right whale: 16 m
- Humpback: 16 m
- Pygmy right whale: 6 m

**Ballena Marine National Park**
To protect this valuable site, the government of Costa Rica created Ballena Marine National Park (PNMB) as a sanctuary for these and other marine species including pantropical spotted dolphins, bottlenose dolphins, manna rays, clownfish and mackerel. Isla Ballena is also an important nesting site of the American white ibis. The bird species found in the park also include frigatebirds and the brown booby.

The PNMB is the first Costa Rican protected area created exclusively for its marine resources. It is also the first marine park in Central America (UICN-FUNDEVI 1995/SINAC) and is the eighth-best site for whale watching in the world, according to National Geographic.

**Links:**
- [www.sinac.go.cr](http://www.sinac.go.cr)
- [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)
- [www.youtube.com/watch](http://www.youtube.com/watch)
- [mongabay.com](http://mongabay.com)
- [www.nacion.com](http://www.nacion.com)

Illustrations: Alexander Salazar.

The Costa Rican Tourism Board thanks the biologist Javier Rodríguez, Frank Gorita and Alberto Villeda for their contributions to the content and reviewing process for this infographic on humpback whales. Thanks also go to Marjorie Solis, Jorge Darías and all those who have contributed to the content of this infographic.


A production of the Tourism Development Department, Planning and Development Office, Costa Rican Tourism Board.
Costa Rica is a privileged country, as it is visited by no fewer than five species of sea turtles, migratory species with a high ecological value and great indicators of the health of the oceans. The sea turtles nesting beaches play a very important role in ecosystem dynamics, as well as being a hotspot of ecotourism development in Costa Rica. The beaches have made it possible for local communities to carry out tourism activities related to the observation of the nesting process, which has brought significant economic and social benefits at the local and regional levels.

Costa Rica has also been one of the few countries in the world that has been carrying out sea turtle conservation for over 60 years, beginning in 1955 in the community of Tortuguero with Archie Carr. Sea turtles are one of the most important animal group mentioned in the declarations of several protected wildlife areas, including Tortuguero National Park, established in 1975, as well as some established later, including the Ostional National Wildlife Refuge, Las Baulas Marine National Park and the Camaronal National Wildlife Refuge. Over the years the government has made significant efforts to protect the sea turtles nesting beaches by including them in the management plans of protected wildlife areas, such as Playa Nancite in Santa Rosa, Playa Hermosa and Punta Mala in Cahuita, and Gandoca-Manzanillo.

In spite of these efforts, approximately 50% of the beaches used for sea turtle nesting are not covered by the country’s natural heritage program (MINAE 2018).

Credits:
The Costa Rican Tourism Board thanks Rotney Piedra Chacón, Director of Protected Wildlife Areas for the Tempisque Conservation Area (ACT) - National System of Conservation Areas (SINAC) for his contributions to the content and revision of this sea turtle infographic. Thanks are also due to Sergio Arias, Elizabeth Vélez from Asociación Kuemar, Didhier Chacón from Latin American Sea Turtle (Last), Luis Fonseca from Asociación Costa Rica por Siempre, Verónica Cáceres, Randall Ureña, Ruth Alfaro and Saúl Ruiz for their contributions to the content of this infographic.


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Species and their characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Common name</th>
<th>Head</th>
<th>Shell</th>
<th>Plastron</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eretmochelys imbricata</td>
<td>Hawksbill Tortuga carey</td>
<td>2 pairs of prefrontal scales</td>
<td>Scutes imbricated (overlapping)</td>
<td>4 inframarginal scutes without pores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chelonia mydas</td>
<td>Green turtle Tortuga verde</td>
<td>1 pair of prefrontal scales</td>
<td>4 lateral scutes</td>
<td>4 inframarginal scutes without pores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lepidochelys olivacea</td>
<td>Olive ridley Tortuga lora</td>
<td>More than 1 pair of prefrontal scales</td>
<td>6 or more lateral scutes 6 or more vertebral scutes</td>
<td>4 inframarginal scutes with pores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caretta caretta</td>
<td>Loggerhead Cabezona</td>
<td>More than 1 pair of prefrontal scales</td>
<td>5 lateral scutes</td>
<td>3 inframarginal scutes without pores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dermochelys coriacea</td>
<td>Leatherback Tortuga baula</td>
<td>No scales</td>
<td>Ridges</td>
<td>No scutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Beach nesting sites

Parts of the beach selected by different sea turtle species for nesting (green sea turtle, hawksbill, olive ridley, loggerhead, leatherback)

Newborn sea turtles develop a temporary sharp egg-tooth called a caruncle, which they use to break the egg. The tooth remains for a short time, breaking off after a few days.

Temperature determines the sex of newborns.
If the temperature in the nesting cavity is above 28.7-30.0°C, a proportionally larger number of females will be born (depending on the species).

Life cycle of a sea turtle

Feeding areas
Shallow coastal waters – Benthic foraging zone

Growing migration to the species adult mating age after 30-50 years, depending on the species

Nesting migration in 2-8 year intervals

Eggs
Hatching
Shallow water Pre-nesting habitat

Adult males and females migrate to breeding area in 2-8 year intervals.

Mating area
Adult males return to feeding areas

Suprapygal
Marginal
Vertical
Costal
Inframarginals
Cervical
Abdominal
Pectoral
Intergular
Flap
Gular
Humeral
Pectoral
Femoral
Anal
Vertebral
Carotid artery
Esophagus
Trachea
Stomach
Spleen
Liver
Adrenal
Kidney
Ovary
Pelvis
Heart
Colon
Bladder
Small Intestine
Humerus
Newborn sea turtles develop a temporary sharp egg-tooth called a caruncle, which they use to break the egg. The tooth remains for a short time, breaking off after a few days.
**Dermochelys coriacea**

**Tortuga baula**

**Shell**
- Elongated, with seven longitudinal ridges protruding from the back. The shell is soft, thick and does not contain scutes, the usual components of turtle shells. It is the only species in which the shell is composed of small bony plates called osteoderms.

**Head**
- Triangular, up to 25 cm wide; covered with skin; no scales or scutes in adults. The head has a pinkish spot that differs between individuals and can be used for identification.

**Extremities**
- Frontal flippers are extremely long; skin does not contain scutes in adults; claws not present on any of the flippers.

**Coloration**
- Dorsal side is predominantly black, with a variable abundance of white or lighter spots; pots can be bluish or pink on the neck and base of the fins, clear pigmentation predominates on the plastron.

**Plastron**
- Relatively small, flexible (contains very little material)

**Average length in Costa Rica**
- 148.7 cm (Pacific)
- 152 cm (Caribbean)

**Diet**
- Juveniles and adults both feed on jellyfish and soft-bodied invertebrates.

**Geographic distribution**
- Worldwide distribution, with nesting sites on tropical sandy beaches and foraging ranges that extend into temperate and subpolar latitudes.

**Conservation status**
- Critically endangered

**Threats**
- Egg poaching, plastic bags, bycatch, coastal development, sale, solid and liquid waste

**Nest size**
- Between 68 and 80 normal eggs, 112 eggs per nest (Caribbean)

**Nests per season**
- 7-13 clutches of eggs laid per season

**Incubation period**
- 50-70 days

**Aging**
- 30 - 50 years
- Under ideal conditions, it is believed that they can live longer.

**Sexual maturity**
- Reached between 9 and 14 years of age

**Where they swim**
- They prefer to swim in the open ocean, from the surface to depths of 1,300 m.

**Nesting on the Pacific coast**
- September to March:
  - Grande, Ventanas, Langosta, Ostional, Nancite, Osa, Junquillal, Matapalo, Naranjo, Real, Honda, Zapotillal y Nombre de Jesús.

**Nesting on the Caribbean coast**
- February-August:
  - Barra del Colorado, Tortuguero, Moin, Patosinima, Pascuaire, Matina, 12 millas, Negro, Guaihta, Gandoca.

Leatherback sea turtles carry out extensive migrations between different feeding regions in various seasons and nesting zones. To find out on which beaches in Costa Rica you can see leatherback turtles, see the map on page #1.

The leatherback is the world’s largest sea turtle species. It used to be a common sight in the northern Pacific coast, but currently arrives less frequently. It can also be observed in abundance along the Caribbean coast between March and July. These animals are not easy to spot, as they prefer to swim in the open ocean.

Leatherback turtles are circumboreally distributed, with nesting sites on tropical sandy beaches and foraging ranges that extend into temperate and subpolar latitudes. Leatherbacks are a single species worldwide comprising seven biologically described regional management units or subpopulations. (Wallace et al. 2010).
Green sea turtles are named for the color of their fat, which is green because of their diet of seagrass (Thalassia sp.). This gives their fat tissue an olive-green color, which is called calothee on the coast of Limón.

The green sea turtle, also known as the black turtle, has a worldwide distribution, occurring in all tropical seas as well as subtropical waters with less frequency (eastern, northeastern, northwestern, southeastern and western Indian Ocean, eastern and western Atlantic Ocean, Mediterranean Sea, eastern, northwestern, southwestern and western Pacific Ocean).

There is a significant concentration of green sea turtles in Tortuguero, on the Atlantic coast, with over 100,000 nesting females per year.

A subspecies of the green sea turtle, called the black turtle, lives on the Pacific coast of Costa Rica. It is smaller, with dark coloration and a narrower rear portion of the shell. In addition to seagrass and algae, they consume mangrove propagules and marine invertebrates. Nombre de Jesús, Zapotillal, Los Pargos, Cabuyal, Isla San José, Nancite, Naranjo, Real and Honda.

Except for their migrations, during which they cross the open sea, they generally live in shallow waters with coral reefs, seagrass beds and algae.
Like most sea turtles, olive ridley sea turtles have a complex life cycle that requires a series of geographically separate areas and multiple habitats. Females nest on sandy coastal beaches, from where their newborns emerge and enter the sea to continue their development. They remain in a pelagic phase, passively traveling on ocean currents that take them away from the areas of their birth, with juveniles sharing habitats with adults until reaching sexual maturity. Reproductively active males and females migrate to the coastal zones and congregate near the nesting beaches. This is the only species able to come together and organize their nesting in groups, which are called arribadas. In Costa Rica, these arribadas occur in Ostional and Nancite.

The species has three modes of reproduction: mass nesting, solitary nesting and a mixed strategy. The first method is a massive, simultaneous mass nesting behavior that can include hundreds of thousands of females over a period of several days. This occurs in less than a dozen places around the world, including the Ostional National Wildlife Refuge, Nancite in Santa Rosa National Park and Corozalito in Nandayure, Guanacaste. The most common form of nesting is dispersed or “solitary” nesting, with no apparent links between the individual events. In some areas, a mix between these two nesting behaviors can be observed. Every month, but especially during the rainy season (June to November) in Nancite and Ostional.

**HABITAT**

Like most sea turtles, olive ridley sea turtles have a complex life cycle that requires a series of geographically separate areas and multiple habitats. Females nest on sandy coastal beaches, from where their newborns emerge and enter the sea to continue their development. They remain in a pelagic phase, passively traveling on ocean currents that take them away from the areas of their birth, with juveniles sharing habitats with adults until reaching sexual maturity. Reproductively active males and females migrate to the coastal zones and congregate near the nesting beaches. This is the only species able to come together and organize their nesting in groups, which are called arribadas. In Costa Rica, these arribadas occur in Ostional and Nancite.

**DIET**

Olive ridley sea turtles are omnivorous. Their diet consists of marine plants, lobsters, crabs, fish, jellyfish, snails, and algae.

**AGE**

Estimated life expectancy of 50 years

**SEXUAL MATURITY**

Reached at 13 years of age.

**AVERAGE NEST SIZE**

110 eggs per nest

**NESTING INTERVAL**

Two per season.

**INCUBATION PERIOD**

46-65 days

**GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION**

Olive ridley sea turtles have a circumtropical distribution, nesting in all tropical seas with the exception of the Gulf of Mexico, and with migratory routes in tropical and some subtropical regions.

**CONSERVATION STATUS**

Vulnerable

**THREATS**

Egg poaching, plastic bags, bycatch, coastal development, silt, sediments and liquid waste

**PREDATORS:**

Eggs and newborns: Dogs, Possums, Birds, Snakes, Crocodiles, Jaguars.

Adults: Sharks, Crabs.
Its marine environment is surrounded by coral reefs with a large quantity of sponges, algae and seagrass. It is also located close to rocky areas, sandbanks and mangroves; turtles can rest in caves and underneath rocks.

May to November:
- Barra del Colorado
- Tortuguero
- Parismina
- Pacuare
- Matina
- 12 millas
- Negra
- Cahuita
- Moín
- Gandoca
- Uvita

May to January:
- El Jobo
- Manuel Antonio
- Nancite
- Baru
- Platanares
- San Josecito (Osa)
- Santa Teresa (Nicoya Peninsula)

HAWKBILL SEA TURTLE

Eretmochelys imbricata

Tortuga Carey

**Shell**
- Oval, with a markedly serrated posterior margin and with thick, imbricated (overlapping) scutes, except in newborns and some adults; 4 pairs of costal scutes.

**Coloration**
- Dorsal side is brown with amber-colored streaks in adults; ventral side has hues of pale yellow to white, sometimes with black spots (particularly in specimens on the Pacific).

**Head:**
- Relatively narrow; width of up to 12 cm; straight beak similar to a bird's; two pairs of prefrontal scales.

**Plastrón**
- Four pairs of inframarginal scutes without pores.

**Extremities**
- Front flippers of medium length compared to other species; two claws on each flipper.

**Weighs up to 80 kg with an average weight of 60 kg.**

**Estimated life expectancy of 30 to 50 years.**

**Critically endangered.**

**Nesting period on the Caribbean coast:**
- May to November

**Nesting period on the Pacific coast:**
- May to January

**Caribbean:**
- May to November

**Pacific:**
- May to January

**GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION**
- The tropical and subtropical coastal waters of the Pacific, Atlantic and Indian Oceans.

**HABITAT AVERAGE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEST SIZE PER SEASON</th>
<th>155 eggs per nest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| THREATS | Egg poaching, plastic bags, bycatch, coastal development, solid and liquid waste. Trade in products made from hawksbill turtle shells is a major problem in many countries, and continues to be a widespread threat in the Americas, Asia and parts of Africa.

**NESTING DATES**
- Caribbean: May to November
- Pacific: May to January

**DIET**
- Omnivorous
- Sea sponges in large quantities, algae, marine worms, mollusks, seagrass and mangroves.

**AGE**
- Reached at 20 years of age or later.

**SEXUAL MATURITY**
- Estimated life expectancy of 30 to 50 years.

**CONSERVATION STATUS**
- Critically endangered

**MAKING EVENTS**
- Mating events occur every two or three years in shallow waters.

**EXTREMITIES**
- Extremities:
  - Head:
  - Weighs up to 80 kg with an average weight of 60 kg.
  - Estimated life expectancy of 30 to 50 years.
  - Critically endangered

**NESTING PERIOD**
- Average length in Costa Rica: 85.97 cm to 90 cm

**PREDATORS**
- Eggs and newborns:
  - Dogs
  - Raccoons
  - Seagulls
  - Crabs
  - Octopuses
  - Crocodiles
  - Sharks and large fish

**Adults:**
- Dogs
- Raccoons
- Octopuses
- Crocodiles
- Crabs

**The hawksbill sea turtle is one of the most highly exploited species by humans, the hawksbill turtle is captured for its meat and its attractive shell, which is used to make rings, combs, sunglasses, bracelets, necklaces, etc. Its eggs are also collected.**

**Omnivorous**
- Sea sponges in large quantities, algae, marine worms, mollusks, seagrass and mangroves.

**The tropical and subtropical coastal waters of the Pacific, Atlantic and Indian Oceans.**

**96**
Loggerhead Sea Turtle

*Caretta caretta*

**Tortuga cabezona, Tortuga caguama**

**Shell**
- Moderately wide; five pairs of costal scutes

**Coloration**
- Dorsal side is reddish brown in adults; ventral surface yellow to orange in adults. Measures approximately 1 meter and can weigh up to 150 kg

**Plastron**
- Three pairs of inframarginal scutes without pores. Yellow-brown in color.

**Average length in Costa Rica:**
- 87 cm

**Head:**
- Large and triangular; Width up to 28 cm, two pairs of prefrontal scales

**Weighs up to 180 kg in the western Atlantic, and up to 150 kg in Australia; under 100 kg in the Mediterranean.**

**Extremities**
- Frontal flippers are relatively short in comparison to those of other species; two claws on each flipper.

**Omnivorous** from when they are newborns to juveniles, but become carnivorous as adults (crabs, snails, sponges, jellyfish, urchins, fish eggs, shrimp).

**Estimated life expectancy of 47-67 years.** Reached between age 10 and 39 years of age.

**Endangered** Egg poaching, plastic bags, bycatch, coastal development, sale, solid and liquid waste.

**GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION**

Loggerhead turtle are distributed globally, in the subtropical and temperate areas of the Pacific, Indian and Atlantic Oceans and the Mediterranean Sea.

**DIET**

Omnivorous when they are newborns to juveniles, but become carnivorous as adults (crabs, snails, sponges, jellyfish, urchins, fish eggs, shrimp)

**AGE:**
- Commonly found in coastal waters, near coral reefs, seagrass beds and algae.

**SEXUAL MATURITY:**
- Reaches maturity at age 10 and 39 years

**HABITAT:**
- 4 clutches per season
- Nesting interval: 15 days

**NESTING DATE**

- Caribbean: May to August
- Pacific: No information

**PREDATORS**

- Eggs and newborns: Ants, Worms, Seagulls, Crabs
- Adults: Beetles, Flies, Sharks, Orcas

**NESTING DATE**

- Caribbean: May to August
- Pacific: No information

**CONSERVATION STATUS**

- Endangered

**THREATS**

- Egg poaching, plastic bags, bycatch, coastal development, sale, solid and liquid waste.

**NESTING DATE**

- Caribbean: May to August
- Pacific: No information

**PREDATORS**

- Eggs and newborns: Ants, Worms, Seagulls, Crabs
- Adults: Beetles, Flies, Sharks, Orcas

**NESTING DATE**

- Caribbean: May to August
- Pacific: No information

**CONSERVATION STATUS**

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**THREATS**

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- Caribbean: May to August
- Pacific: No information

**CONSERVATION STATUS**

- Endangered

**THREATS**

- Egg poaching, plastic bags, bycatch, coastal development, sale, solid and liquid waste.

This species has been found as far as 240 km into the open sea. Though it is not commonly found nesting in Costa Rica, nests have been reported in Tortuguero. Globally, its distribution includes the Pacific Atlantic and Indian Ocean, and can be found in Washington state, Japan, India, Kenya, the British Isles, southern Chile, Australia, South Africa, and even Argentina. It is also found in the Caribbean and Mediterranean Seas. It migrates long distances from its feeding sites to its nesting beaches.

**Nesting period on the Caribbean coast**

- May to August: Barra del Colorado, Tortuguero, Parísmina, Parque Nacional, Moín, 12 Millas, Negra, Cahuita, Gandoca.

**Mating is somewhat violent: males tend to bite the female’s neck or flipper to be accepted. If the female rejects the male, she covers her cloaca and swims away towards the seafloor.”**
observación de aves

Zonas Avifaunísticas en Costa Rica*

* Adaptado de Slud, P. 1964. The Birds of Costa Rica: Distribution

Bosque Tropical Húmedo del Pacífico Sur

52

53%

Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History

especies de aves
de cobertura boscosa

Santa Rosa

Papagayo

Parque Nacional

Sámara

Nicoya

Liberia

Palo Verde

167

5%

Palo Verde

parques nacionales

especies de aves rapaces
de la diversidad mundial

Paquera

Celeste

Embalse Arenal

Océano

Parque Nacional

Volcán Arenal

Pacífico

Caño Negro

Los Chiles

Carara

Parque Nacional

NICARAGUA

Manuel Antonio

geográfica

Única

Parque Nacional

Asentamiento

año 1996

9% de las

3

7

• 7

• 7

• 7

• 7

del mundo para la

Uno de los 5 principales países favoritos

220 especies

de aves rapaces migratorias, surcan el cielo de agosto a

3 millones

100 101

Photo: Michael P. Anderson

NATIONAL BIRD

Wildlife Refuge • Piedras Blancas National Park (El Bonito Sector) • Esquinas Rain Forest Lodge • Calatea (Uvita-Corona-Lodge • El Bambú • Danta Lodge • La Bijagua de Drake • Rancho Quemado • Los Planes Drake • Cristal Ballena Hotel • Barú Province) • Diquis Delta Wildlife Refuge • Piedras Blancas National Park (El Bonito Sector) • Equinique Rain Forest Lodge • Calatúa (Uvita-Corona-De) • Térraba-Sierpe National Wetlands (Laguna de Sierpe, La Hacienda, Finca 18, Boca Coronado, Copey, Boca Nueva) • Palmar Norte (Cerro Retiro) • National Museum Visitor Center Finca 6 • Las Parguas, Hospitales behind Ciudad Nelly, Puerto Negro en Cato 47

The Corcovado Node is considered “the most biologically intense place on earth” by National Geographic magazine.

The Osa Peninsula is home to 2.5% of the world’s biodiversity and more than 50% of Costa Rica’s biological diversity, making it one of the most biodiverse regions in Costa Rica and the world. It is home to a large number of endemic birds, so much so that the Osa Peninsula is included in the “South Central American Pacific slope-021” one of the sites identified by the American Bird Conservancy as an area of endemic birds.

This region includes the Osa Conservation Area, located in the southern part of Costa Rica. The region is very humid, with an annual rainfall of 6,000 mm, which in combination with the isolation from other systems, has contributed to the high diversity of plant and animal species, including many that are endemic.
It is the only extensive region with very humid tropical forests on the Pacific slope of Central America, and the largest percentage of the country’s remaining forests are found in this area. The vegetation of the area consists mainly of very humid tropical forest with the following habitats: mountain forest, cloud forest, lowland forest, swamp forest, herbaceous swamp, mangrove, cliff vegetation and coastal vegetation.
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 surpass 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 Neotropical 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)

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 surpass 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.

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Direction, proposals and review: Ruth Alfaro Rojas.
Coordination and production: Mario B. Badilla Jara.

Guide managers: Mario Badilla and Emilia González.

Design and layout: Floria Leiva Pacheco.

Workgroup: Loida Pretiz, Efrén Hernández and Natalia Cedeno (Ministry of Culture and Youth).
Ruth Alfaro, Emilia González, Giovanni Solera, Katy Solís, Sandra Monge, Pablo González y Antonio Farah (maps), Francisco Esquivel and Mario Badilla Jara (Costa Rican Tourism Board).

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