



NORTHERN GUANACASTE

Cultural Tourist Guide

Altura Guanacasteca



MUNICIPALIDAD DE
BAGACES

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Northern Guanacaste Cultural Tourist Guide

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Photo: Roberto Ramos

10 things every tourist should see and do in Northern Guanacaste

1

Contact with nature in protected wilderness areas.



2

Spotting birds, humpback whales, dolphins, turtles, manta rays.



3

Enjoy yourself at the Tope de Toros, street marimbas and masquerade clowns.



4

Experience rural and community tourism.



5

Savor Guanacaste's food and drink.



6

Try out adventure activities.



7

Go diving and snorkeling.



8

Visit the Casona de Santa Rosa Historical Museum.



9

Enjoy the many beaches and their exciting sunsets.



10

Visit Guanacaste's volcanoes.

Guanacaste is a province located in the northwest of Costa Rica. One of its main characteristics is that, despite being the second-largest region of Costa Rica, it is the least populated. Only 326,953 people live in its extensive area of 10,140 km². The warmth of its people, magical forests, natural parks, picturesque beaches and a cultural richness worth experiencing await you there.

Geographically, Guanacaste can be divided into two parts. The northern and southern cantons, also known as the highlands and the lowlands, La Altura y La Bajura.

The Highlands (La Altura)

This area is traditionally associated with the cantons located along the Cordillera de Guanacaste and the Sierra Minera de Tilarán: **La Cruz, Liberia, Bagaces, Cañas, Tilarán, Abangares.**

The Lowlands (La Bajura)

This region is comprised of the cantons located in the Nicoya Peninsula: **Carrillo, Santa Cruz, Nicoya, Hojancha, Nandayure.**

This Cultural and Tourism Guide to Northern Guanacaste (La Altura) covers the Pacific coast of Costa Rica, from the border with Nicaragua to Punta Cerritos, located 22 km west of the city of Santa Cruz. It includes the cantons of Cañas, Carrillo, La Cruz, Liberia and Bagaces. The cantons of Abangares and Tilarán are included in the Monteverde Cultural and Tourism Guide. Meanwhile, the Southern Guanacaste Cultural and Tourism Guide includes the cantons of Carrillo, Santa Cruz, Nicoya, Hojancha and Nandayure.

Along the Pacific coastline of Guanacaste, there are numerous beaches of exuberant beauty. The coastal landscape is exceptionally varied, with extensive beaches of white, gray, brown and even black sand next to a calm sea tinged with intense blues, beaches that are bathed by the warm water of the Pacific Ocean.

This area is home to an important portion of Costa Rica's natural and cultural heritage.

It's no accident that there are a significant number of protected areas that include aquatic, terrestrial, mountainous and coastal ecosystems, in whose territories life develops with exuberance. Likewise, the region holds a rich history, culture and heritage, with cultural expressions that are well worth experiencing, from its wonderful gastronomy to its traditions, music, dance and crafts.

The history of Guanacaste's culture reflects that of Latin America more broadly. Its food, rituals, festivities and handicrafts share a common indigenous past and a history marked by colonial rule, a dynamic that led to important processes of hybridization, cultural exchange and transformation of the local customs, knowledge and, especially, their cultural universe.

This pre-Columbian and colonial influence is reflected in the traditional recipes of Guanacaste, tasty rural dishes based on corn and animal products, which include bizcochos (corn doughnuts with cheese), chorreadas (flour and corn pancakes), corn rice, pozol (corn stew with meat) and moronga (homemade sausage made from pork blood, rice and spices).

World Heritage

In this region we find the Guanacaste Conservation Area (ACG), which was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1999. It includes **Santa Rosa National Park, Guanacaste National Park, Rincón de la Vieja National Park and Junquillal Bay Wildlife Refuge**, which contain four of the five main ecosystems of the tropics: marine/coastal, dry forest, cloud forest and rainforest, representing the only area in the New World to harbor such a diversity of ecosystems.

Tourist activities

The incomparable beauty of its landscapes, ranging from tropical dry forest to low montane forest and its warm climate, as well as its abundant nature, have made Guanacaste one of the most popular places for local and international tourism and is one of the most developed regions. This region also offers ideal hilly terrain for **ziplining, ATVs, mountain biking, hiking, horseback riding and other adventure activities, such as water sports, extreme sports, observing biodiversity, and more.**

A boat trip along its irregular coastline allows visitors to enjoy a **beautiful landscape** dotted by a series of surprises such as caverns, islets or the **unexpected sight of dolphins and other marine species such as humpback whales, cat sharks, manta rays, colorful fish and giant turtles.**

Waterfalls

The province of Guanacaste is known for its high temperatures and there is nothing more welcome than a refreshing swim in cold waters. In addition to its beaches, the region also has a lot of rivers, waterfalls and much more. One prime example is found in Bagaces: **the Llanos del Cortés waterfalls**, where visitors can swim to the waterfall (with a height of about 19 meters) and sit on the rocks as they relax with natural back massages from the force of the waterfall.





Diving and Snorkeling

Guanacaste is a wonderful place to dive beneath the waves, whether snorkeling or scuba diving, where you can discover a colorful underwater world with species ranging from the spectacular **whale shark to white tip sharks, manta rays, schools of different species, eels, lobsters and the beauty of coral formations.**

Surf

Guanacaste is internationally recognized as an excellent surfing destination. Its tropical temperatures, warm waters and favorable breezes provide the perfect conditions for year-round surfing on its beaches. **The best months, with the largest waves, come during the country's rainy season.** There are plenty of options for beginners and experienced surfers.



Kitesurfing

One of the most frequently visited places in La Cruz are its magnificent beaches, surrounded by the incredible Salinas Bay. These beaches are still unspoiled to this day. They are only used by kitesurfing or kiteboarding enthusiasts who come to enjoy its constant year-round wind. Experts prefer the season between November to May due to the elevated wind speeds.



Papagayo Tourism Pole

The Papagayo Tourism Pole is an initiative that is active in the cantons of Liberia and Carrillo. It is one of the international model tourism development centers, and includes international hotel chains and a marina. The area encompasses **Culebra Bay, Playa Hermosa and one of the most renowned beaches for domestic tourism, Playas del Coco.**

Getting into the Culture

Guanacaste enjoys a wealth of land for livestock and agriculture, which is linked to the production of products such as **corn, rice, beans, citrus, melon, sugar cane, watermelon** and other products. This provides an excellent opportunity for tourists who want to enjoy everything that rural Costa Rica has to offer.



Guanacaste is known for its music, the most common popular art form in the province, in which **sabaneros**, the cowboys of Guanacaste, play an important role. Musicians play an important role in the local culture; they are respected and esteemed. **Music is a natural ability among the people of Guanacaste.**

Complementing its music, traditional Guanacaste dances have been preserved through time and are the most faithful representation of the social and cultural life of the province of Guanacaste. These dances are heavily influenced by the Andalusian zapateado. Noteworthy examples include **El Punto Guanacasteco, Los Amores de Laco, La Cajeta, La Flor de Caña, El Torito, El Zapateado, El Pavo and La Botijuela**, among others.



The region is also credited with birth of the cheerful "bombas" or "retahilas", improvised poems that enliven the festivities in most Costa Rican towns. They are told to liven up parties and make people laugh. Bombas are rhyming couplets that are frequently a little over the top; they always begin with the word "Bomba" and end with the expression "Uyuyuy Bajura".

In almost every town in Guanacaste, there are buildings called a redondel or plaza de toros (bull ring) where rodeo shows have competitors vie to stay as long as possible on the bull's back. It is practiced by men, youths and sometimes even children.



Costa Rica and, especially, the province of Guanacaste, **welcomes visitors with open arms and make it easy for visitors to interact with its people, customs and traditions.** Visitors are invited to participate in its many festivities and share the joy with the tico people.

History

One standout attraction is the **Casona de Santa Rosa**, a historic museum that commemorates our country's defining deed of heroism, on March 20, 1856.



Architecture

The region has a diversity of heritage buildings, chief among them the **Casona de Santa Rosa and the White City of Liberia.** The city's historic center earned the name because of the white gravel used in construction.

Cuisine

The traditional towns of the region can be discovered in their **sodas, small family restaurants or cafés where you can taste the cuisine of Guanacaste.** The communities of Bagaces, Cañas, Carrillo, La Cruz and Liberia are all known for their traditional food and beverages.

Corn is one of the most important products in Guanacaste, with many traditional foods and beverages made from the grain. Guanacaste tortillas,





tanelas, tayuyas, tamales, pisques, sweet tamales, corn rice, nacatamales, donuts, biscuits, pozol, atol, chicheme, chicha and pinol, among others.

In the houses there is usually a clay oven, where all kinds of breads are prepared and many foods are baked. **Visitors can find out how to prepare these foods**, such as corn rice, made with white corn, soaked and then ground by hand in the metates (stones in the form of a table where grains are ground with a stone roller). Local beverages include **pinol, which is made from finely ground white corn that is toasted on a comal.**

Rural Tourism

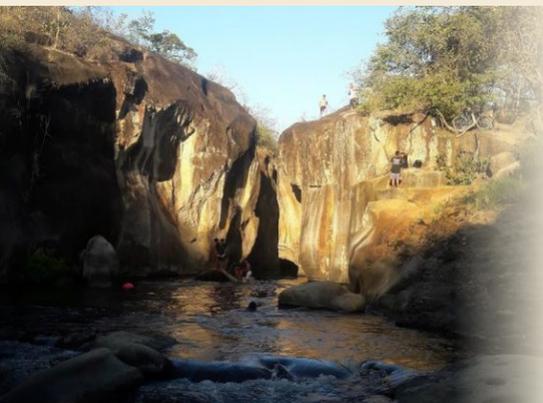
Rural tourism in Costa Rica offers a close view of nature, cultural heritage and rural customs and traditions. In addition to strengthening the economy, it also helps local communities to preserve their identity, traditions and cultural heritage, preventing emigration and the loss of ancestral customs. It also fosters environmental conservation, minimizing other more aggressive and less sustainable uses of natural resources.

In the family settings that are commonly seen in rural tourism offerings, visitors enjoy personalized attention and deepen their knowledge of rural culture, agricultural traditions and small cottage industries. Delve into rural life in Guanacaste through traditional cuisine, authentic communities, the richness of the natural environment and a traditional lifestyle, and the sustainable practices of tourism operators.

In a perfect combination of nature and culture, you will discover the Costa Rican concept of Pura Vida, enjoying and sharing a variety of environments full of peace and comfort and experiencing customs and traditions in a breathtakingly diverse natural environment.

Wellness

Guanacaste has the ideal conditions to detoxify from stress and the daily hustle and bustle. Here, you can experience wellness tourism as part of the pura vida way of life, which combines physical activity and healthy eating. Enjoy a wide range of activities that renew mind, soul and body. In Guanacaste, you can also experience novel relaxation techniques such as wraps, where your skin is moisturized using volcanic mud, coffee, tropical fruits and chocolate. With hydrotherapy and hot springs, the unique volcanic water of the region can contribute to wellness, while a variety of nature-based activities are also on



offer. These include trekking (low-difficulty hikes), forest bathing (breathing pure forest air), earthing (barefoot walking in the earth/sand), high quality healthy gastronomy, food and spa mix (splunch) and consuming local products in contact with nature. The province's main hot springs are found around the Rincón de la Vieja Volcano, Volcán Miravalles and Volcán Tenorio. Tourism operators

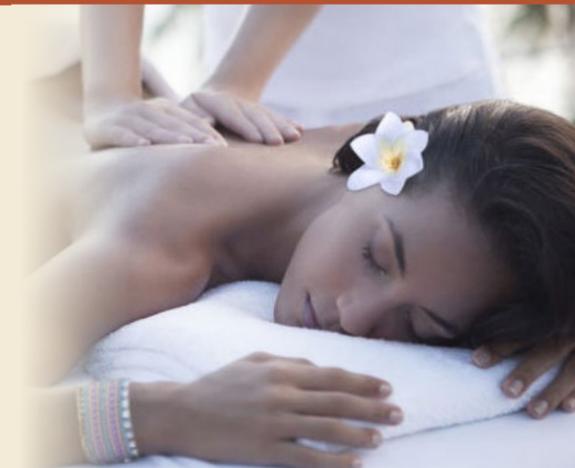
Tourism operators

There is a wide variety of tourism offerings in Guanacaste, including hostels, restaurants, tour operators, agencies and transportation companies. These companies provide quality services for a variety of market segments. You can find international hotel chains that meet quality, infrastructure and service standards, including **Barceló, Hilton, Marriott, Dreams, Riu, Sol Meliá and Occidental.** The tourism sector also includes medium, small and microenterprises, funded by national capital, which offer quality, authentic and personalized services at competitive prices.

Access

The Guanacaste region is very well connected as it is located along the Panamerican Highway, making it easy to reach by vehicle or public transportation. **Getting there from San Jose can take anywhere from a few hours to six or seven,** depending on your destination and the traffic.

Without question, the best option is to fly to Daniel Oduber Quirós International Airport, also known as Liberia International Airport. It's the country's second-largest airport, and the sixth busiest in Central America.





BAGACES

The canton of Bagaces has been called the “cradle of Guanacaste ecology”, due to its great natural wealth and the diverse flora and fauna. Located just north of Palo Verde National Park, the town of Bagaces is the capital of the canton of the same name. Thanks to its closeness to the Volcán Miravalles, residents and visitors can enjoy water parks and thermal spas throughout the year, which have been able to complement their offer with activities such as ziplining, hikes to the volcano, hanging bridges, volcanic clay baths, observation of flora, birds and mammals, mountain biking, and many other activities.

On the slopes of the volcano, the Costa Rican Electricity Institute (ICE) has built the Miravalles Geothermal Project.



How do you get there?

The shortest road route from San José to Cañas is by the Carretera Interamericana Norte until you reach Cañas.

Distance: 185 km.
Duration: approx. 2h 55 min.

Buses itinerary: visitcostarica.com

Information: www.bagaces.go.cr/

facebook.com/Miravalles



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in BAGACES



CAÑAS

Economic life in the canton of Cañas can be divided into two main areas: the cultivation of sugar cane and the production of tilapia; Cañas also has smaller economies such as livestock, rice and cotton, with tourism activity also present. However, tourism remains small-scale and operates more within the scope of rural tourism. Some tourists are attracted by the design of the central church, designed by the famous Otto Apuy.



How do you get there?

The shortest road route from San José to Cañas is by the Carretera Interamericana Norte until you reach Cañas.

Distance: 161 km.
Duration: approx. 2h 36 min.

Buses itinerary: visitcostarica.com

Information: municanas.go.cr

facebook.com



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en CAÑAS



LA CRUZ

La Cruz is the tenth canton of the province of Guanacaste, established in 1969. It borders Nicaragua to the north and contains the main border crossing between the countries (Peñas Blancas). La Cruz is located on the shores of what is now known as the Mirador de La Cruz, from where you can see wonderful and impressive sunsets in which the sun hides in the Pacific Ocean, on the wide horizon.

This viewpoint and the Santa Rosa National Park are its main tourist attractions. The Casona de Santa Rosa is a special destination, a monument to the history of the country that has been preserved since the mid-nineteenth century. The beaches of La Cruz are wonderful, with the best-known options including: Junquillal, Cuajiniquil, Jobo, Rajada, Salinas and Manzanillo Bay. Santa Rosa has some of the most beautiful beaches in Costa Rica.



How do you get there?

Once you arrive in the city of Liberia, continue north on the Carretera Interamericana (Route 1).

Distance from Liberia: 65 km.
Distance from San José: 267 km.
Duration: approx. 3h 55 min.

Buses itinerary: visitcostarica.com

Information: munilacruz.go.cr

ascatur.com

lacruzguanacaste.com



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LIBERIA

Liberia is located in the northwest of Costa Rica and has all the ingredients it takes to make a very popular tourist spot: the Rincón de la Vieja National Park, a modern international airport (Daniel Oduber Quirós), beautiful churches, an authentic colonial atmosphere, a rich history, picture-perfect beaches and traditional Guanacaste cuisine.



How do you get there?

From San José, take the Interamericana Norte until you reach Liberia.

Distance from San José: 211 km.
Duration: approx. 3h 9 min.

Buses itinerary: visitcostarica.com

Information: muniliberia.go.cr



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en LIBERIA



CARRILLO

The canton of Carrillo is located 248 kilometers from San José and was created on June 16, 1877, by decree No. 22. The town of Sietecuecos was designated as the seat of the canton, and was renamed to Filadelfia. Its main tourist attractions are the Gulf of Papagayo, Playa Hermosa and Panama (Chorotega), Playas del Coco, Ocotol, Guacamaya, and others; the main activities are fishing and diving. In El Coco there are several restaurants and hotels.



How do you get there?

From San José, take the Carretera Interamericana Norte to Liberia and from there take the turn-off for Filadelfia.

Distance from San José: 247 km.
Duration: approx. 3h 43 min.

Buses itinerary: visitcostarica.com

Information: municarrillo.go.cr



CLICK HERE
for Activities and Tours
en CARRILLO





Cantons

Bagaces	La Cruz
Carrillo	Liberia
Cañas	Santa Cruz

Cultural and tourism map of Northern Guanacaste

Cultural Heritage

Museums: The Guanacaste region is home to five museums: The Casona de Santa Rosa Historical Museum in La Cruz, the Museum of Guanacaste in Liberia, the Señor de la Agonía Museum of Religious Art in Liberia, the Museum of the Sabanero in the Liberia Casa de la Cultura, and the Eco Museum of the Mines in Abangares.

Guanacaste cuisine: In Guanacaste, you can savor exquisite dishes with pre-Columbian and colonial influences, made from corn, rice, beef, pork and poultry, as well as fish and seafood. The Altura Guanacasteca also has various types of dairy products and a sweet-making tradition. There are specific areas where a large number of restaurants and sodas can be found: between the Lagarto River and Limonal, there are many restaurants and sodas with cuisine from Guanacaste and elsewhere. The city of Liberia also offers a wide variety of contemporary cuisine, while beach towns – especially those in the Cuajiniquil area – boast a wide variety of seafood dishes. [More information here.](#)

Heritage architecture: Mid-19th century houses made from adobe and bahareque can still be observed in Liberia. A distinctive element of Liberian and Guanacaste architecture are the sun doors located in corner houses, which consist of a double door separated by a corner column. The Guanacaste hacienda marks another type of construction, with notable examples including Hacienda Santa Rosa, La Casona Hacienda Las Animas de La Cruz and others. There are also houses, schools and other buildings made of wood. [More information](#)

Archaeology: In Guanacaste there are many archaeological findings from various periods that can be seen in petroglyphs throughout the province, including the Farallón de Cañas.

Festive activities and celebrations: Throughout the year there are religious, popular, civic, and other festivities from the culture of the Guanacaste hacienda, as well as festivals and other non-heritage artistic activities. These include rodeos, Parade of Horsemen, the Coyolera and the Parranda. [More information](#)

Guanacaste music: The first musical instruments were the ocarinas or whistles, rattles and drums or atabales, of indigenous origin. Later came the quijongo, the juco, the carraca and the marimba. This latter instrument is the highlight of a number of artistic and cultural activities. Traditional Guanacaste folk music is closely linked to the marimba, the guitar and bands that feature wind instruments. Among the most popular musical genres are the parranderas, the punto or son suelto, and the tambito; but there are also marches, boleros, waltzes and more. Currently, there are a great number of musicians influenced by traditional and contemporary expressions. [More information](#)

Handicrafts: This region of Guanacaste is known for traditional pottery from La Cruz and woodwork in several cantons, especially in fine carpentry, marimbas and tools such as bateas. Hacienda culture fosters the crafts of saddlery and horsehair handicrafts, among others. Another handicraft from La Cruz is the weaving of majagua. There are also traditional crafts such as sewing that are now expressed in contemporary forms that reflect the region's identity. [More information](#)

Popular dances These mainly take place in community dance halls, which feature popular music such as salsa, merengue, cumbia and Creole swing. [More information](#)

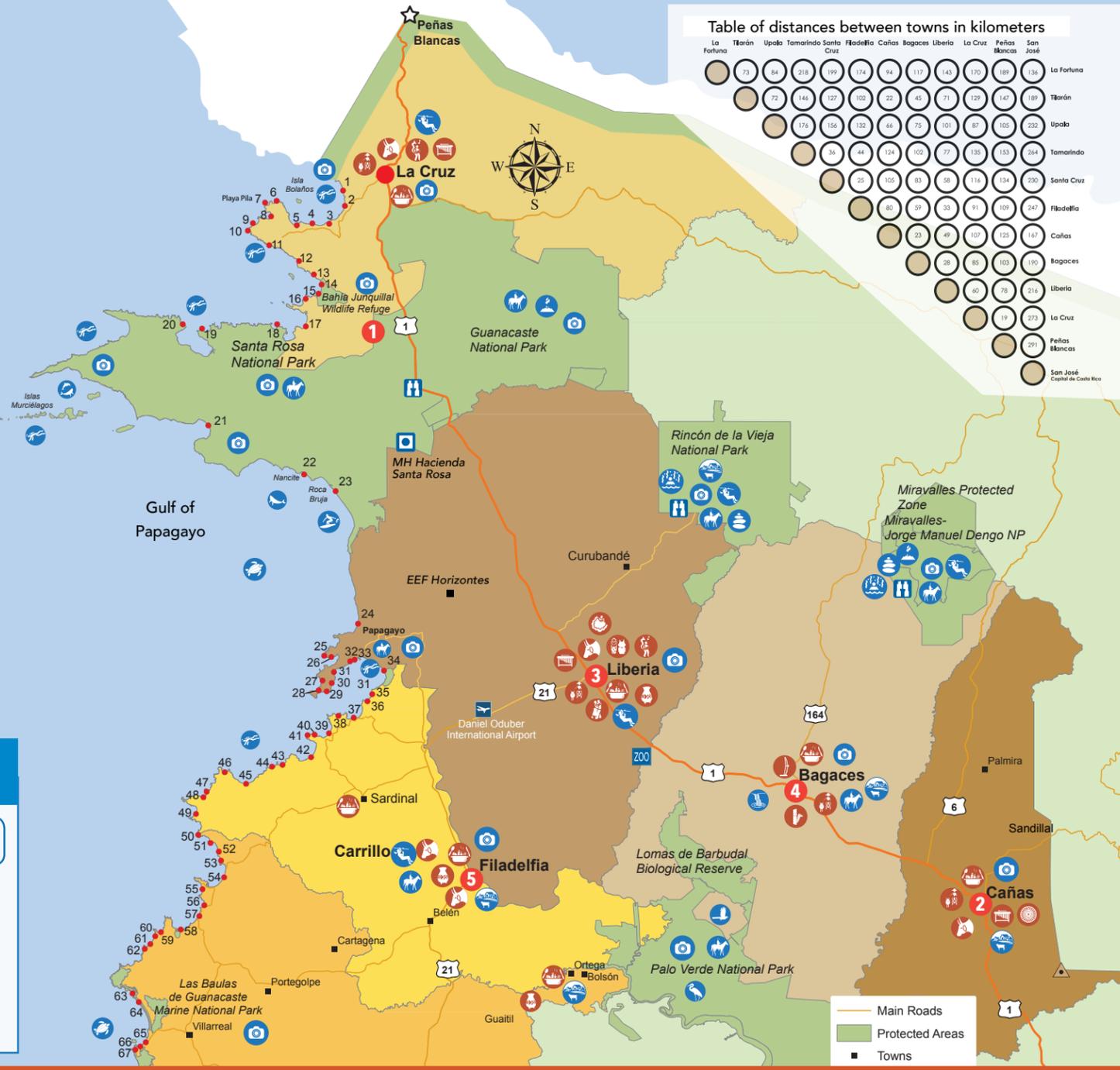
Folk dances: One of the canton's most popular artistic expressions can be found in its folk dance groups, which stage choreographies that are accompanied with musical and dance productions that are imbued with Costa Rican cultural heritage. [More information here](#)

Beaches in Northern Guanacaste

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 Playa Coventillos | 35 Playa Monte del Barco |
| 2 Playa Puerto Soley | 36 Playa Arenilla |
| 3 Playa Papaturo | 37 Playa Chorotega (Panamá) |
| 4 Playa Copal | 38 Playa Buena |
| 5 Playa Coyotera | 39 Playa Hermosa |
| 6 Playa Coco | 40 Playa Calzón de Pobre |
| 7 Playa Pila | 41 Playa Penca |
| 8 Playa Jobo | 42 Playas del Coco |
| 9 Playa Rajada | 43 Playa Ocotol |
| 10 Playa Rajadita | 44 Playa Azul |
| 11 Playa Manzanillo | 45 Playa Matapalo |
| 12 Playa Monstrecal | 46 Playa Matapalito |
| 13 Playa Toyosa | 47 Playa Guacamayita |
| 14 Playa Escondida (La Cruz) | 48 Playa Guacamaya |
| 15 Playa Bahía Junquillal | 49 Playa Zapotal |
| 16 Playa Guaria | 50 Playa Danta |
| 17 Playa Cuajiniquil | 51 Playa Pan de Azúcar |
| 18 Playa Corona | 52 Playa Prieta |
| 19 Playa Matapalito (La Cruz) | 53 Playa Penca |
| 20 Playa Sortija (La Cruz) | 54 Playa Potrero |
| 21 Playa Potrero Grande | 55 Playa Blanca |
| 22 Playa Nancite | 56 Playa Flamingo |
| 23 Playa Naranjo | 57 Playa Brasilito |
| 24 Playa Cabuyal | 58 Playa Conchal |
| 25 Playa Nacascolito | 59 Playa Zapotillal (Minas) |
| 26 Playa Huevos | 60 Playa Nombre de Jesús |
| 27 Playa Prieta | 61 Playa Real |
| 28 Playa Virador | 62 Playa Roble |
| 29 Playa Blanca | 63 Playa Honda |
| 30 Playa Jícara | 64 Playa Ventanas |
| 31 Playa Nacascolo | 65 Playa Grande |
| 32 Playa Sombrero | 66 Playa Tamarindo |
| 33 Playa Manzanillo | 67 Playa Punta del Madero |
| 34 Playa Iguanita | |

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

Hotels	Car rental	Restaurants	Travel Agencies	Directory of certified guides	Certified carriers
Tips for traveler	Bus itinerary				



Tourism Activities:

- Observation of flora, fauna and birds.** The publicly protected areas in the Guanacaste Conservation Area as well as private nature reserves offer pleasant experiences amidst the diverse natural surroundings.
- Spot birds, dolphins, whales, devil rays and turtles (seasonal).**
- Volcanoes.** Make the most of your day by visiting some of the most striking volcanoes Costa Rica has to offer, including Rincón de la Vieja, Tenorio and Miravalles.
- Sun, beaches and sunsets.** Along the Pacific coast of Guanacaste, we find several of Costa Rica's most beautiful beaches, which offer dreamy sunsets.
- Day and Night Hikes.** Hikes are a very important way of observing natural and cultural attractions.
- Photography.** Photographers can take full advantage of the varied cultural, archaeological and scenic options, as well as the richness of the flora and fauna.
- Thematic activities.** Make the most of thematic activities, which include adventure and ecological parks, access to water activities and hot springs, ziplines, suspension bridges, trails, slides, ocean activities, botanical gardens, and sanctuaries of native and exotic animals.
- Nightlife.** A wide array of restaurants, bars and hotels offer nightly entertainment to visitors.
- Adventure activities**
 - Diving and snorkeling.** A wonderful destination for diving and snorkeling enthusiasts. Home to turtles, manta rays, sharks and many schools of different fish.
 - Experience the adrenaline** of kitesurfing, ziplining, canyoning, rappel, horseback riding, hiking, ATVs, mountain biking, kayaking, canoeing, rafting, surfing, stand up paddleboarding, jetskiing, waterskiing, tubing, an much more!
 - Sport and river fishing.** The crystal-blue Pacific and its rivers beckon, where you can find some of the best sport fishing options in the world.
 - Waterfalls.** Immerse yourself in the refreshing pools of waterfalls such as Llanos del Cortés, La Cangreja and La Oropéndola, Rincón de la Vieja, Aguilar and Buenos Aires, Cabromuco, Escondida, and many more.

ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE

<p>1 Casona de Santa Rosa</p> <p>Information here</p>	<p>2 El Farallón</p> <p>Information here</p>	<p>3 La Ciudad de Liberia</p> <p>Information here</p>	<p>4 Casa de la Cultura Bagaces</p> <p>Information here</p>	<p>5 Casa de la Cultura de Filadelfia de Carrillo</p> <p>Information here</p>
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- Wellness Tourism**
 - Clay and hot springs.** Enjoy the soothing properties of the volcanic mud that you can spread on your face and body, and then rinse off in the volcanic hot springs that are naturally heated by the Rincón de la Vieja and Miravalles volcanoes. Experience a soothing and relaxing therapeutic experience.
 - Spas.** Spend a day in the different spas receiving a variety of treatments. Enjoy a relaxing massage and volcanic mud treatment, exfoliations, masks and full body baths with volcanic mud, then relax in the jacuzzi or sauna.
 - Pilates-Yoga.** Learn about the yoga initiative known as "meditation done right".
- Rural tourism**
 - See Costa Rica's countryside and traditions on a tour through the heart of Guanacaste. You will tour the province and visit several villages, where you will learn about the history and customs of the region as you approach the sites of interest.

[More information here](#)

FEBRUARY

Last week of February and first week of March
Liberia:
 Liberia's civic festivities are held in the city and fairgrounds.

February 21-24
La Cruz - Fiestas de Puerto Soley (generally in the second-last or last week).

MARCH

First week
Liberia:
 Tope de Toros, leaving the Río Liberia at the height of the royal bridge and crossing the city up to the traffic circle during the civic festivities

19
Cañas:
 Saint Joseph's Day, Patron Saint of Cañas, Civic Festivities and Cultural Week

Second Sunday of March
Cañas:
 Boyero Day

20
Liberia & La Cruz:
 Celebration of the Battle of Santa Rosa in Santa Rosa National Park. Ceremony to commemorate the battle against the Filibusteros, organized by MEP and SINAC and artistic presentations.

APRIL

First Thursday of the month
Holy Week:
 Different activities are carried out in the towns as representations of the life and death of Jesus Christ; these are performed around the Catholic churches.

Del 11 al 14
La Cruz
 Civic Festivities of La Cruz

MAY

3
La Cruz:
 San Isidro Labrador Day. Fiestas Patronales

Liberia:
 Rosary of the Dawn - performed every Saturday in May at 5:00 am in the temple and in procession through the streets, in places such as Liberia.

30
Liberia:
 Celebration of the renaming of Ciudad de Guanacaste to Liberia

Second Sunday of May
Cañas:
 Horseback riding on the Arreo trail in support of animal rescue

JUNE

5
Bagaces:
 Celebration of San Caralampio, patron saint of Bagaces (bull riding, ribbon races)

Second Sunday of June
Cañas:
 Tribute to authors from Cañas.

Fourth Sunday of June
Cañas:
 Music Day, tribute to the musicians of Cañas.

JULY

16
La Cruz:
 Fiesta de la Virgen del Mar (Cuajiniquil boat parade).

12
Cañas:
 Anniversary of the Cantonato de Cañas 1878.

Week before July 25
Liberia:
 Livestock Fair: Exhibition of cattle, horses, riding, sale of traditional food and handicrafts, concerts, dances. For two weeks, activities such as horse parades, exhibitions of livestock and agricultural machinery, traditional food sales and bull riding take place. Held at the Chamber of Livestock Farmers of Liberia.

25
La Cruz:
 Annexation of Nicoya (Guanacaste) to Costa Rica (Parade from the UNED to the town center).

25
Liberia:
 Commemoration of the Incorporation of the Partido de Nicoya to Costa Rica, a civic act with parades of Guanacaste traditions (folk dances, traditional dances, music of cimarronas, costumes, floats, popular theater, etc.) are carried out through the city's main streets and avenues.

AUGUST

2
Liberia:
 Day of the Virgen de Los Ángeles in the church of Los Angeles and Cañas Dulces neighborhoods.

2
Bagaces:
 Celebration of the Virgen de los Ángeles. Hike between Aguacaliente and Salitral, leaving from the park.

SEPTEMBER

First week of September
Liberia:
 Liberia's cultural week, in different areas of the city with various activities (marimba nights, dances, retretas, concerts, book sales)

4
Liberia:
 Origin of the old town of Guanacaste (now Liberia)

13
La Cruz:
 Handoff of the Independence Torch at the Peñas Blancas border crossing, beginning its journey to the rest of the country.

14
La Cruz y Liberia:
 Lantern Parade and Torchlight Parade - both lantern activities take place on September 14, with the local population and students parading with a representation of the lanterns used at the time the Act of Independence was signed. It is carried out in the schools and colleges of the each town.

15
La Cruz y Liberia:
 Costa Rican Independence Day (Celebration and parade of bands in the main streets).

OCTOBER

12
La Cruz y Liberia:
 Meeting of Cultures Day (activities in the Central Park or educational centers).

31
La Cruz y Liberia:
 Celebration of the Costa Rican Masquerade in educational institutions.

NOVEMBER

Second week of November
Liberia:
 Sabanero Day, Central Park. There are ribbon races, food and handicraft sales, and more.

Fiestas Patronales of Santa Cecilia

DECEMBER

7
Bagaces:
 Anniversary of the Cantonato de Bagaces

8
Liberia:
 Festivities of the Immaculate Conception. Celebrated in the esplanade of the Central Park of Liberia, novena (prayer) in honor of the Immaculate Conception, and sale of food.

8
Bagaces:
 Day of the Immaculate Conception.

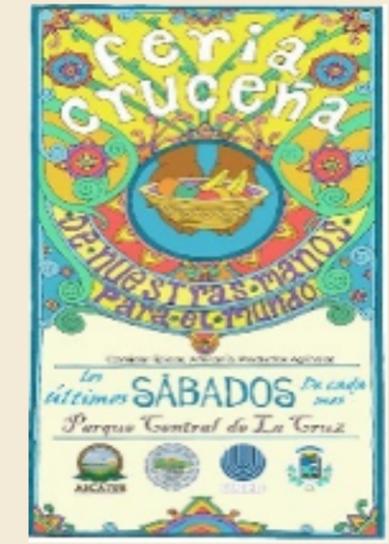
8
Cañas:
 Day of the Immaculate Conception. Parish service with cultural activities.

First Saturday in December
Liberia:
 White Christmas Festival

Second Sunday in December
Cañas:
 Christmas Parade.

22-25
Cuajiniquil:
 Fiestas patronales

Cruceña Fair: This fair takes place on the last Saturday of the month in the Central Park of La Cruz, where visitors can purchase local products and handicrafts.





An organization local artisans called Colectivo Artesanal La Huaca is a collective composed of talented researchers who search for hidden treasures in their observation of the identity and history of Guanacaste. Each member reinterprets this richness and creates handcrafted utilitarian and decorative products with a local flair.

Bagaces Handicraft and Cultural Market

We are an association of artisans, artists, cultural promoters and community leaders seeking to maintain local talent by selling our authentic handmade products. These products contain our local identity and generate economic benefits for our families while also raising the profile of our talent, culture, traditions and customs.

Yasara Francisca Rodríguez Torres

Native of Bagaces, Guanacaste. She works in handicrafts, mainly in the creation of traditional Costa Rican rag dolls, which represent part of our history.



She also works on other handicrafts using recycled materials such as newspaper, bottles, dass, acrylic paint, brushes, fabrics, lace, thread, needles, accessories, etc.

(506) 7170-6300 yasuararodri@gmail.com

Jícara Handicrafts

Handicrafts made with the shell of the calabash fruit, or jícara, are a hallmark of the canton of Bagaces. The community of Falconiana de Bagaces, in Hacienda el Jicaro, is particularly famous for these crafts, with a family of visual artists who have taken this art form in new directions.

The Badilla family is seeking to continue this tradition and indigenous skill, carving the calabash for different uses in kitchen implements, work and other uses. Their art is also used in musical instruments such as maracas, güiros and quijongos, among others.

Contacto:
Tania Badilla, tel: 6107 9414



La Huaca is the result of a training program that seeks to support handicrafts with a local identity. This training involved artisans from the Guanacaste region from October 2013 to July 2014, as part of the activities of the Tourism Development Department of the Costa Rica Tourism Board. Its objective is for tourists to enjoy the travel experience and take a unique product back with them, one that has been forged by the hands of local artisans.



Take a sample of the color and beauty of northern Guanacaste back home with you!

The catalog below contains a wealth of quality handicrafts from local artisans at excellent prices.



[See catalog here](#)



Handicrafts store, **Artecruceña de nuestras manos para el mundo**. Located in the Central Park of La Cruz.

Julián Bustos - CRIN HANDICRAFTS

Bustos is a sabanero whose expertise in the traditional techniques of making accessories with horsehair is well respected in the community. This technique, formerly used by sabaneros in the ranches of the Guanacaste region, consists of using the hair from the horse's neck, called crin, as raw material for riding accessories.



si.cultura.cr/personas/julian-bustos

Photos: Ma Soledad Hernández



Cultural Heritage

The cultural heritage of Guanacaste is very rich and diverse. For tourists visiting the area, its wonderful beaches and national parks are just the start: it also boasts a rich local culture full of customs, traditions, historical architecture, diverse cuisine, music, dance, retahílas and riddles, sayings and beliefs, stories, legends and sabanero culture that makes the tourist experience simply unforgettable.

Liberia, known as the White City due to the powdery white gravel used in construction, is the most developed city of Guanacaste. It is where basic services, hotels and restaurants are located, along with the airport. Liberia is also **home to significant cultural, culinary and artistic expressions** (dance, music, handicrafts).

La Cruz, Carrillo and the La Cruz Coastal Tourism Corridor are intriguing destinations for those who want to experience rural fishing communities such as Cuajiniquil, Puerto Soley and El Jobo. Visitors will also be able to enjoy the **Mirador de La Cruz** and other sites of great historical importance such as **La Casona in Santa Rosa National Park**. The Papagayo tourist pole offers abundant lodging options in the Playa Panama, Playa Buena and Punta Ballena sectors, complemented by the tourist corridor from Playa Hermosa to Playa Matapalo.

The cultural activities and expressions of the area are particular to Guanacaste, including the lowlands or **bajura**. These include bull riding, traditional national festivities, and Carrillo's status as the "archaeological city of Costa Rica".

Bagaces, Cañas & Islita

In the area you will be able to enjoy a variety of tourist activities related to rest, health, culture, adventure and nature, since the area around Rincón de la Vieja National Park offers a wide variety of activities concentrated around the Curubande and Cañas Dulces sectors. These include incredible options of high quality spas that are immersed in the natural surroundings. The Papagayo tourist pole also offers a remarkable selection of beaches.

Guanacaste's cultural expressions include activities that can be seen throughout the region: bullfights in rustic wooden rings, wooden houses with corrals and stables, domestic animals (chickens and cattle), wood stoves and adobe-style ovens. Take a look at the traditional ox carts of Guanacaste, the carretas – in fact, why not take a ride in one? The design of the ox carts highlight the original color and texture of the wood, giving them a more rustic touch and highlighting the beauty of the craftsmanship. Sometimes they lack the usual walls, since some ox carts are not used to transport grain, but rather tree trunks or even roots and branches.

Guanacaste is a province that has one of the most authentic collections of its folklore and local traditions, which is highly valued by Costa Ricans. It is a hotbed of traditional and folk songs, some of whose authors are known and others of which are not, which are known across the country as: **El Punto Guanacasteco, El Torito, Pasión, Amor de Temporada, Pampa, and El Cambute**. It's a region where you can enjoy the joyful melodies of the marimba, delicious food, local handicrafts, sabanero culture and villages with cultural expressions of dance and music that are on display during the village festivals or in cultural events throughout the year.



The region is known for the production of instruments such as drums, juques, quijongos, ocarinas, chirimías, pitas (made from animal bones), guitars and the marimba, which can be purchased or enjoyed with the local people.

To enjoy the music of the area, click on this link www.sinabi.go.cr

The region is also credited with birth of the cheerful "bombas" or "retahílas", improvised poems that enliven the festivities in most Costa Rican towns.

They are told to liven up parties and make people laugh. Bombas are rhyming couplets that are frequently a little over the top; they always begin with the word "Bomba" and end with the expression "Uyuyuy Bajura". For example:

¡Boomba!

*"En una linda mañana
oí cantar un jilguero
y en su cántico decía
lo mucho que yo te
quiero.*

¡Uyuyuy Mamita!"

¡Boomba!

*Ayer pasé por tu
casa y me tiraste una
chancleta; me la comí,
creyendo que era
chuleta*

¡Uyuyuy Bajura!"

(One lovely morning, I heard the goldfinch sing and in its song it said how much I love you)

(Yesterday I passed by your house and you threw a sandal at me//I ate it up, thinking it was a pork chop)

Other cultural activities



Photo: MCJ

Bull riding is an activity is part of an important festive ritual in the traditions of Guanacaste.



Photo: Soledad Hernández

La Burra: This group of riders on horseback occurs on the last day of the civic festivities. They ride in ridiculous costumes accompanied by a donkey and visit the bars of the city to the sound of a trumpet.



Photo: UCR

La Parranda: You can enjoy them in the salons of the towns, and consists of a traditional regional dance that is enlivened by the sound of the marimba.



Photo: MCJ

La Diana: A popular option during town festivals, consisting of a walk very early in the morning (5 a.m.) through the different streets of the towns, with parrandera music, sung by cimarrona musical groups and accompanied by firecrackers.



Photo: Soledad Hernández

Horseback riders parade: Watch the riders during the civic festivities in the main cities; firecrackers bursting announce that the parade is about to begin.



Photo: UCR

La coyolera: These are parties organized in some towns in a large and shaded patio of a house where the cut trunks of the coyol palm (*Acrocomia aculeata*) are placed to extract the fermented sap, called coyol wine (vino del coyol), which is then consumed by the attendees.



Photos: Soledad Hernández



Tope de Toros

The tradition of the tope de toros is the only one of its kind anywhere in Costa Rica. It consists of a "tope" or town meeting, with the partygoers and dignitaries entering on horseback or on foot, along with clowns, and musicians called cimarronas. The bulls ("toros" in Spanish, hence "tope de toros") are brought down from the farms in the Puente Real highlands along the Río Liberia, arriving every day at noon during the civic festivities. The bulls are handed over to the Master of the Plaza or the President of the Festive Committee, who then begins the herding of the bulls through the city's historic center.

(Liberia Cultural Association, 2015)

People on foot... who spontaneously engage in the tradition of meeting and exhibiting the herding of cattle through the streets of the city

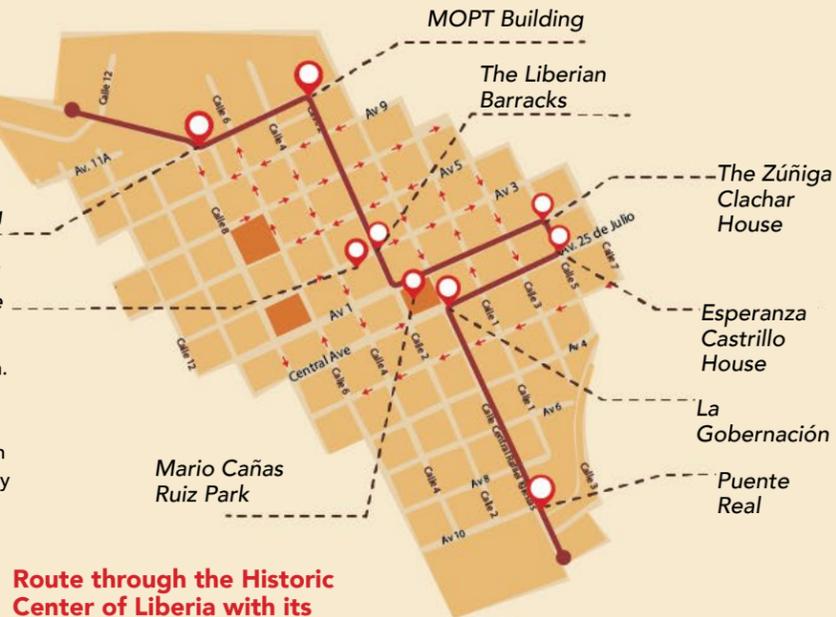
The clowns... The giant, the dwarf, the devil, the witch, the skull, la muerte quirina, the tiger, the naked devil, la segua, la llorona, el cadejo.

The band of cimarronas

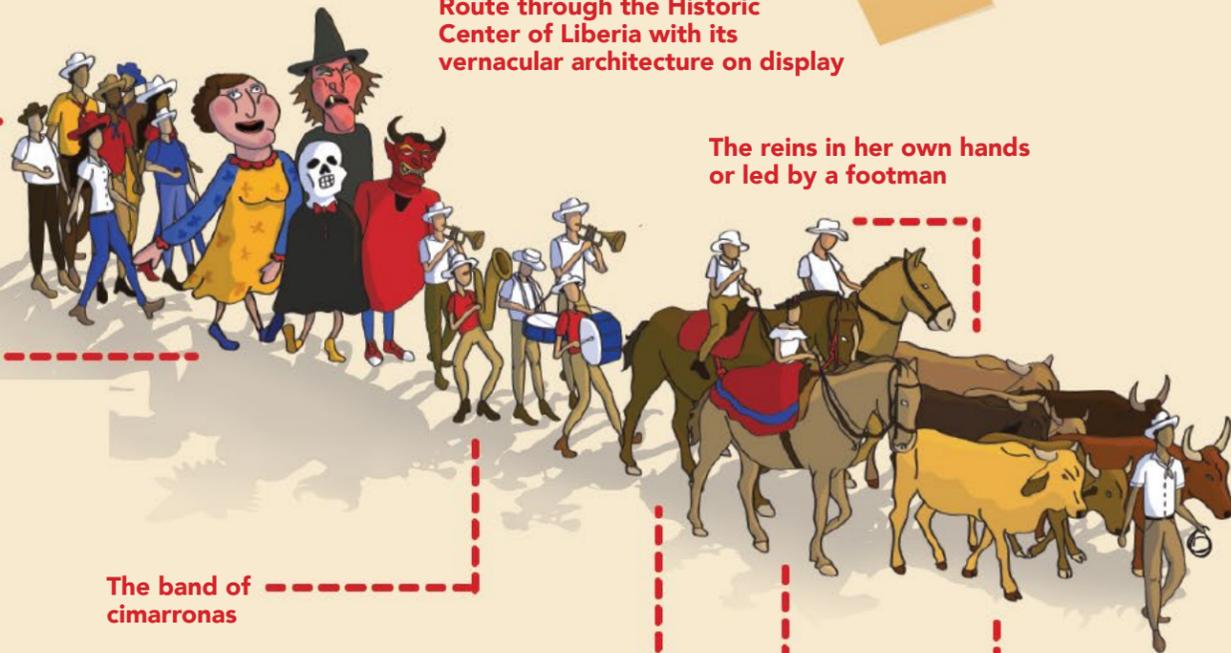
The cowboys and horseback riders

The queen of the festivities on horseback

The bulls may be steers or oxen



Route through the Historic Center of Liberia with its vernacular architecture on display



The **emblematic** tour includes:

4 of Liberia's historic neighborhoods

- 1 Condega
- 2 La Victoria
- 3 Los Ángeles
- 4 Los Cerros

It crosses through part of Liberia's **invaluable architectural heritage**

- Puente Real
- The Zúñiga Clachar House
- La Gobernación
- The Kiosk of Parque Mario Cañas
- The Ascensión Esquivel Ibarra School
- The Esperanza Castrillo House
- The Liberian Barracks
- La Barrera Bullpen at the Camilo Reyes Plaza de Toros

"...as we learn to think together, act together, to take care of what interests us, what has value to us, what holds esteem..."

(M. Hernández, personal communication, November 22, 2017).

The Guanacaste cattle ranch and its cultural universe



Hacienda El Viejo. Photo: Ma. Soledad Hernández

In the case of Guanacaste, the crossbreeding and appropriation of the bullfighting culture and the elements that surround it are part of centuries under a colonial logic in which cattle ranching emerged as the main economic activity of Costa Rica's northern Pacific region, especially in Guanacaste. The settlement of the haciendas, or ranches, in the town of El Guanacaste (now called Liberia), enabled a very rich culture to emerge. This culture is intimately connected to the land, its biogeographic spaces, its varied natural resources, and, of course, the social groups that remade it over time.

The community learned skills in these daily work spaces: herding, riding, horseshoeing, making horsehair and tools, as well as the songs, music and dances in the guttural afternoons of the pampas. All of these are important aspects of the wisdom and worldview of Guanacaste.



Illustration: "Güicho" Pizarro

Design: Rosslyn Sánchez
 Researcher: Ma. Soledad Hernández
 Source: Liberia Cultural Association, 2015



In Guanacaste, you can savor exquisite dishes with pre-Columbian and colonial influences, made from corn, rice, beef, pork and poultry. The emblematic dishes and drinks on the menu include pozol, meatballs, tamales, yoltamal, tortilla comalera, tortilla revuelta, sopa borracha, gallina inchida, vigorón, arroz de maíz, carne en bao and ayaco. You will also be able to taste the cajeta de papaya lustrada, cashew sweets, empanadilla de conserva, limón lustrado, polvorón, marquesote lustrado, tamal asado, tamal de olla, atol de maíz, piñonate, horchata, resbaladera, pinolillo. So delicious you won't be able to resist!

Guanacaste has an expansive coastline on the Pacific Ocean, meaning that its cuisine heavily features fish and seafood. The most commonly used fish in Costa Rican cuisine include tuna, sea bass, cod, sardines, mackerel, red snapper, grouper and shark. River fish such as tilapia, trout and salmon are also frequently caught and eaten. The catch also includes a large

number of crustaceans and mollusks, with the most popular including shrimp, chuchecas, pianguas, octopus, squid, clams, oysters, crabs, lobsters and several other types of shellfish.

Fish and shellfish are used in a variety of dishes. The most popular is ceviche, which is usually made of corvina or shrimp, cooked in lemon juice, onion and cilantro. Other popular dishes are rice with shrimp, squid or shellfish; seafood cooked with garlic or butter, paella, seafood soup, grilled lobster, breaded seafood milanesa, salad with tuna, salpicón and fish fillets or fried whole fish. Among the traditional dishes of Guanacaste, it is customary to eat fish whole, filleted, fried, in sauce, breaded, "a la milanesa", or stuffed with seafood. Corvina and red snapper are the most frequently used.



Pozol

A dish made from pork and corn.



Yoles

A tamale made with tender corn, sour cream, fresh cheese, sugar and salt.



CORN ROSQUILLAS

Made of white or yellow corn, with dry cheese, lard and salt, ideal to go with a cup of coffee.



Atol Pujagua

A dessert prepared with corn, ground cinnamon and sugar. It is eaten hot or cold.



SOPA BORRACHA

A dessert made from roasted corn, eggs, lemon peel, sugar cane liquor, cloves and panela.



CORN TORTILLA

A tortilla made with corn and water. A traditional fixture of the area, regularly served with various traditional dishes or eaten with cheese, cuajada or picadillos.



GALLINA ENCHIDA

A dish made from free-range chicken stuffed with pork, potatoes, olives, mayonnaise, tomato sauce, garlic, onion, coriander, sweet chili, pepper and cumin and finally fried in pork lard.



VIGORÓN

A dish prepared with finely chopped cabbage with tomato, onion and lemon, combined with cassava and pork rinds.



ARROZ DE MAÍZ

A dish prepared with corn and free-range chicken seasoned with coriander, onion, chili and garlic.



CARNE EN BAO

A dish made from flank steak (cecina) cooked in layers with ripe plantains, which are placed in a pot covered with the peels of ripe and unripe plantains.



Ayaco

A dish prepared with tender ayotito, corn, milk, oregano, pepper, sugar and thyme.



Ceviche

A dish made from fish cooked in lime juice with onion, coriander, salt, pepper, chili and sugar.

Drinks from Guanacaste



Horchata

Horchata is a tasty drink made from rice, milk, cocoa and cinnamon sticks.



Chicheme

Drink made from pujagua corn flour, cooked for about an hour and sweetened with sugar or panela. It can be left at room temperature, where it ferments to make enchiche. Sometimes ginger is added to taste.



Pozol

A refreshing drink made from pujagua corn, water and sugar to taste.



Leche dormida

Leche dormida is prepared from curd, lemon, sugar and occasionally cinnamon.



Resbaladera

Resbaladera is a delicious drink made from rice, barley, milk, cinnamon, nutmeg and sugar.



Vino de coyol

It is a beverage made from the sap extracted from the coyol palm (*Acrocomia vinifera*) through a natural fermentation process.



LOBSTER

A regional favorite, eaten on its own or stuffed and seasoned with garlic, butter, onion, basil, salt and lemon juice.

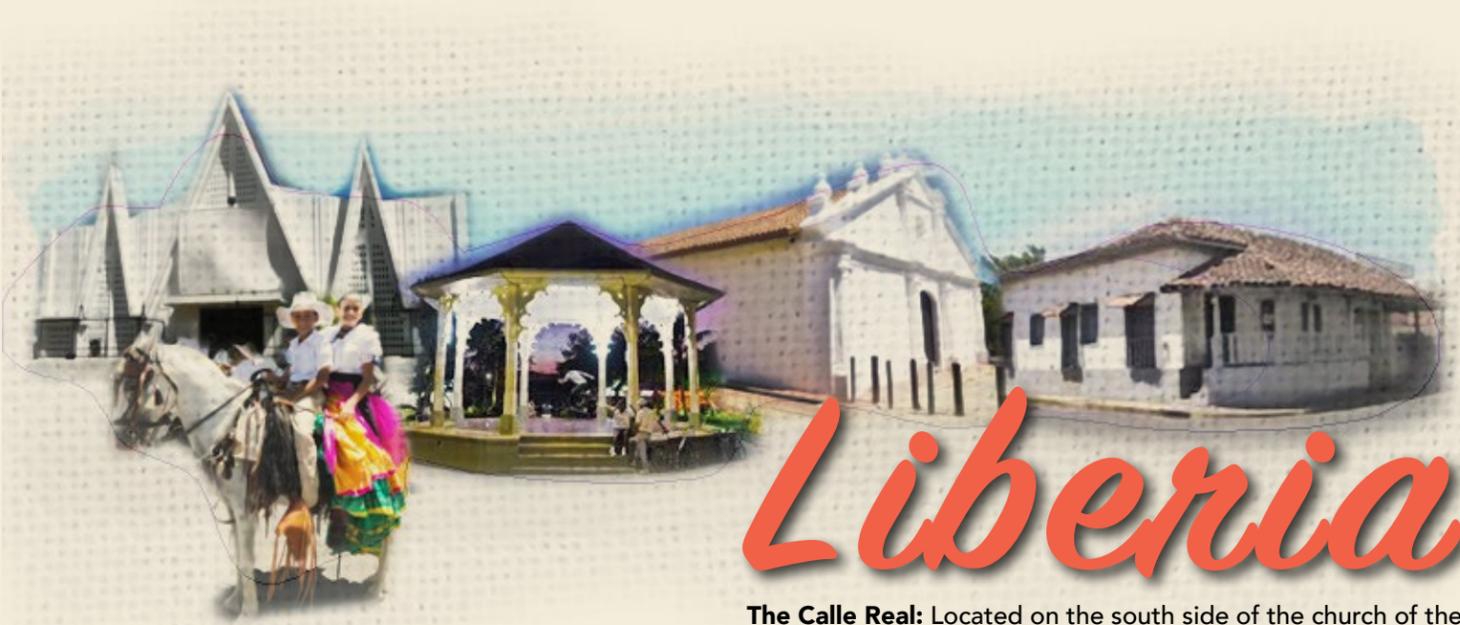
lanzateyviaja.com

For more information visit:

[Recipe book Guanacaste](#)



Enjoy Liberia's colonial architectural heritage, featuring bahareque, adobe, sun doors, tiles, patios and internal courtyards, much of which is built in white.



The Calle Real: Located on the south side of the church of the Immaculate Conception Parish. Its colonial-type urban structure is characteristic of the old town, using materials such as adobe, tile, bahareque, sun doors and tile roofs.

The buildings of the Calle Real include the following:

La Antigua Gobernación

Declared a Relic of Historical and Architectural Interest in 1983. It is located on the south side of the church of the Immaculate Conception Parish. With an adobe construction dating back to 1850, it has been a witness of important historical, political and social decisions in the province of Guanacaste and currently hosts various activities that seek to preserve the cultural values of the region, including photographic exhibitions, sales of traditional food and artistic performances.



Garnier Family Complex

The complex is located 150 m east of the Antigua Gobernación. It was built in bahareque with a sheet metal roof. It has a weak neoclassical influence, which can be seen in the work of the plinths with geometric figures.



The Zúñiga Clachar House

Declared to belong to the Architectural Heritage of Costa Rica in 1999. The structure shows a neoclassical influence in the geometric reliefs of the plinth (edged stone), built with adobe and a tile roof. Fretwork wood moldings are indicative of the late 19th century boom in wood technology. The interior of the house also has frescoes on the ceiling of the living room.



Universidad de San José

A slight Victorian influence is visible in the triangular tapestries that crown the side volumes, and in the layout of the corridor with a main door and two side doors, which become the main door of these volumes.

Location: 250 meters south of the Antigua Gobernación de Guanacaste.



Baldioceda Family House, Liberia

Located 150 m east of the Antigua Gobernación in Liberia. It was built in bahareque with a tile roof. It exhibits a neoclassical influence that can be seen in the pilasters attached to the walls, the window work and in the graphics of the semicircular arch. It also has a Caribbean influence brought by the United Fruit Company, which can be seen in its monitor.

The bridge of the Calle Real

A construction of great historical value, as it was an important access road to Liberia. The metal structure was erected in 1907. At present, the construction is being preserved as it is of great cultural and architectural value.



The Ascensión Esquivel Ibarra School

It was declared to be of architectural interest in 1990. Located on the southeast side of the church of the Immaculate Conception Parish in Liberia, it was the town's first school when it was built in 1904. It is built in bahareque and has a sheet metal roof, sash windows, a plinth or pilasters attached, with a sash that runs along the building and divides the first and second floors.



Señor de la Agonía Museum of Religious Art

This museum was created to recover and revitalize the heritage and religious and cultural traditions of Liberia. The collection is composed of objects of value in the historical and cultural context of the turn of the century. It was a time in which the architecture reflected a different lifestyle and religious fervor, with spiritual and humanistic values that are disappearing.

Old Margarita Guesthouse

Located 200 m east of the Antigua Gobernación, in front of Bar México in Liberia. It was built in bahareque with a tile roof. It exhibits Caribbean influences in the fretwork wood balconies and columns, as well as a fretwork wood finish that runs along the roof and windows with eaves. Its architecture shows significant adaptations to the climate, with cross and dynamic ventilation. White reflects light and tends to enlarge spaces.





The Hermitage of Señor de la Agonía Liberia

Declared to belong to the Historical and Architectural Heritage of Costa Rica in 1999. It is located at the end of Avenida 25 de Julio. The construction was started by Don Baltasar Baldioceda in 1854 and was finished at the end of 1865. It has an adobe construction, red brick floor and tile roof. The ciboria and the rose window stand out in the pediment. In the tympanum of the facade or entrance frame, there are pilasters and attached columns.



Casa de las Muñecas

The complex is located 300 m east and 150 m north of the Antigua Gobernación. Its name, which means "house of dolls" is because it has reliefs with dolls on the windows. It was built of bricks with a sheet metal roof, the trimmings and a kind of cornice over the windows show a neoclassical influence. The moldings on the windows and the panels are typical of the urban architecture of San José with Art Nouveau influence.

Casa de la Cultura and Museum of the Sabanero

It was declared to be of architectural interest in 1989. It is located 300 m south and 100 m west of the Antigua Gobernación and dates to 1833. It has a colonial type architecture, with bahareque construction, wood, a tile roof and a sun door. In 1986, it was designated a Casa de la Cultura.



At present, it also houses the Sabanero Museum, which seeks to preserve everything related to the life of the sabanero, the term used for the region's cattle ranchers. The work of the laborer, the sabanero, the rancher and the cook is represented through the tools of their trade as a tribute to the functions they perform in the life of the hacienda, or ranch.



Parish Church of the Immaculate Conception of Liberia

It is located in front of the esplanade of the Central Park. The building is noteworthy for its recent construction and not following the traditional architectural patterns.

The place of worship has its own characteristics, including three peaks at the front symbolizing the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Its five peaks, if seen from east to west, represent the community united in prayer. The symbolism, from beginning to the end, shows the Christian community united with the Holy Trinity thanks to prayer, which must be free. That is why the interior of the church has no columns of any kind.

The one column located to the side is that of the bell tower, which incorporates the Immaculate Conception, with its bells and cross managing to strengthen the bond of communication between the divine and the terrestrial (Carrillo, personal communication, January 2006).



La Comandancia

Declared and incorporated into the Historical and Architectural Heritage of Costa Rica in 1998.

It is located 150 m northwest of the church of the Immaculate Conception Parish. The construction of the barracks began in 1932 and was completed in 1940; it was built with concrete and designed to house troops.

It is characterized by a military style typical of barracks and prisons, with a nod to medieval or fortified architecture, with towers and battlements, not to mention neoclassical elements such as cornices and pilasters with semicircular frames at the entrances.

It has a deep well to supply water, with a division where ammunition and weapons were kept, and four strongpoints in the upper part.

In 1990 it passed out of the hands of the police due to an initiative by the Friends of the Museum Association to develop a Regional Museum that would function as an amphitheater of Guanacaste culture.



The Mario Cañas Ruiz Park Kiosk



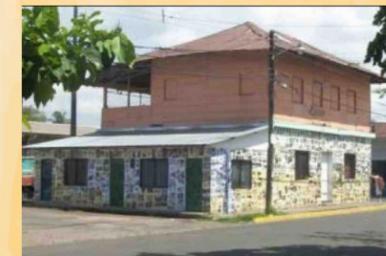
Declared to belong to the Architectural Heritage of Costa Rica in 2004. Located in the Central Park, it is an element of great cultural value not only for its construction, but also as an amphitheater for the exhibitions by bands and everything related to folklore.

The Sabanero Monument



Located on Avenida 25 de Julio, this monument represents the *sabanero*, a key character of the plains of Guanacaste, highlighting the cultural heritage of the city of Liberia.

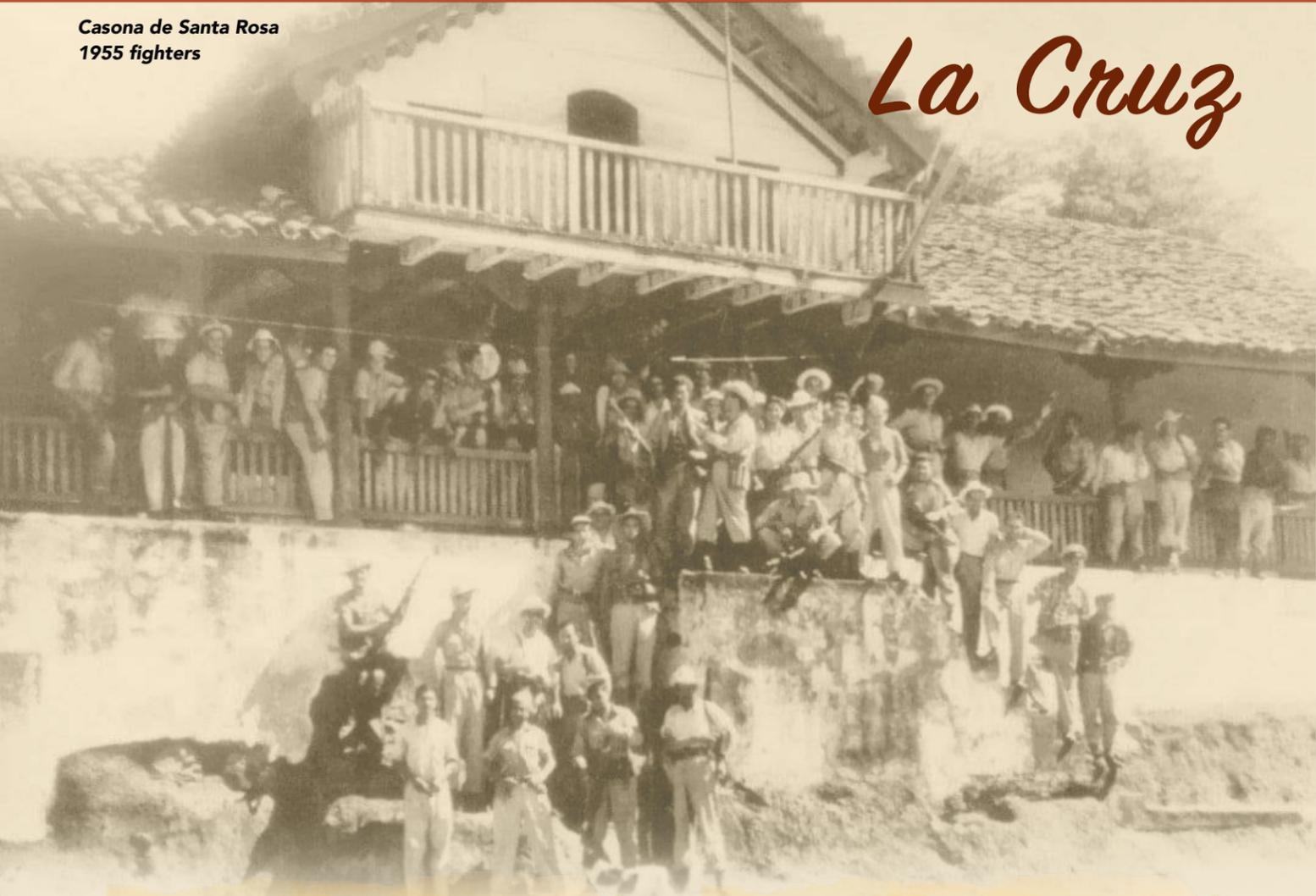
Carrillo



Casa de la Cultura

The Casa de la Cultura of Filadelfia de Carrillo, built in the mid-nineteenth century, is a sample of the vernacular architecture of bahareque and wood and is one of the few of its kind still standing in the community. The building, due to its age, construction system and the importance of the different uses it has had throughout the history of the town, has heritage value for the community. Declared and incorporated to the Historical and Architectural Heritage of Costa Rica, according to Executive Decree No. 28698-C, published in La Gaceta No. 117 of June 19, 2000, of State character. Property of the Municipality of Carrillo.

Casona de Santa Rosa
1955 fighters



La Cruz

La Casona de Santa Rosa



Located in one of the largest haciendas in the country, founded in 1750. The casona, or manor house, houses the Historical Museum,

where visitors can enjoy the architecture and exhibits of antique objects that were used in the daily work of the Guanacaste haciendas and the Battle of Santa Rosa, where Costa Ricans faced the invasion of William Walker and his filibusteros on March 20, 1856.

La Casona is located 35 km from the city of Liberia, the capital of the province, and 270 km from the nation's capital.

Stone Corrals, Hacienda Santa Rosa



These structures, several compartments built of solid stones, were used for different activities related to

the cattle ranching at Hacienda Santa Rosa. They have reportedly been used since 1700.

These corrals were used in the activities of identifying, deworming and concentrating the cimarrón cattle brought in from the countryside by the sabaneros. The construction is a testament to the skill of our ancestors, since the stones were placed in such a way that no adhesive material was needed to support them.

Cañas

El Farallón

El Farallón is a rock wall located in the Las Lomas farm in the community of Cedros de Sandillal in Cañas, which has a large number and variety of petroglyphs made by pre-Hispanic cultures, who settled in the area between first and ninth centuries. It is approximately 50 m long and 30 m high, but only has engravings in an area of 20 m in length by 7 m high. The realistic and abstract figures include depictions of human beings and animals such as monkeys, birds, fishes and iguanas. The drawings also feature figures such as spirals, simple and concentric circles, lines and triangles.



This site is the most important in the country due to the quantity and preservation of the petroglyphs and is considered unique in Central America. **It was declared and incorporated into the Historical and Architectural Heritage of Costa Rica, according to Executive Decree No. 27486-C of December 17, 1998.**

Old Casona, Hacienda San Luis

The manor house is located in what was formerly the San Luis farm, a property that had been consolidated since the end of the 19th century by Bishop Luis Leipold, who also founded the first school in Cañas in 1846.

It is a huge mansion built in cream-colored cedro wood, with brown door and window frames, in 1951.

With two levels of construction, it has large overhanging corridors with railings; six offices are located upstairs and two offices downstairs. The walls are made of shingles and the ceilings are made of boards; the floors are also wood. It does not have a system of eaves and the roof is made of sheet metal with six slopes. It is in good condition.

Over time, the building has undergone changes and modifications that have altered its original state.

It was declared to be of Historic and Architectural Interest in 1994.

Luis Léipold Herberth School



The Luis Léipold Herberth School has historical, cultural and emotional value for the inhabitants of the community of Cañas. The building has become a landmark and an image of belonging and identity for the inhabitants of Cañas. It uses a similar layout as schools throughout the main towns of the canton, established by the illustrious architect José María Barrantes.

The current school was built during the administration of Otilio Ulate around 1955.

In Costa Rica, the construction technique of wood with skirting was used because of the ease of labor, the country's forest wealth and the great versatility of the material.

Declared and incorporated into the Historic and Architectural Heritage of Costa Rica in 2007.

micostaricadeantano.com



Cañas Central Church



The catholic church of the canton of Cañas, Guanacaste, amazes visitors from Costa Rica and abroad with its multicolored mosaic facade. Located on the east side of the Central Park.

The church was decorated with tiles in a mural designed by Otto Apuy.

Otto Apuy is one of Costa Rica's most recognized artists. He participates in what seems to be almost all artistic media (sculpture, painting, drawing and, as you will see below, mosaics).

The façade and the multicolored tower of the church of Cañas were made with the trecandis technique. It consists of breaking the ceramic blocks and then using the pieces to create a work of art based on a design – in this case, an abstract one.

Apuy and a group of collaborators restored an area of 40 square meters corresponding to a section of the façade and the church tower.

To give shape to his creation, the artist used 80,000 ceramic fragments in colors such as white, blue, green and brown.

"The mosaic is a material that refracts light. As the direction of the sunlight changes throughout the day, the people who observe the work will perceive different visual effects depending on the time of day," explained the artist. Abstract and geometric shapes in the design of the work enhance the visual games that delight the viewer.

[More information here](#)

Bagaces

Casa de la Cultura



The building of the Casa de la Cultura of Bagaces was declared of Historical and Architectural Interest, according to Executive Decree No. 17988-C, published in Issue No. 7 of La Gaceta No. 33 of February 17, 1988, of state character.

The old Rafael Yglesias School in the city of Bagaces, Guanacaste, is an architectural work that is representative of the rural school infrastructure, typical of the architecture of the 1930s.

The Cultural Management Office is located in this building and is supervised by Nicolás Guevara, cultural manager of the Municipality of Bagaces. This program, which promotes the artistic and cultural development of the canton of Bagaces, has hosted activities such as photo galleries, rap battles, history talks, literary meetings, artistic and cultural workshops, among others.

The Guanacaste quijongo



Bagaces is the land of quijongueros. The quijongo guanacasteco is an arched instrument of African heritage

composed of a wooden stick, a wire that works as a string, a jícara that resonates and a small wire that is plucked to emit the sound.

Bagaces has been home to this traditional and characteristic instrument of the Guanacaste culture. Among its most renowned teachers we find Don Felipe Quirós Quirós (+) and Eulalio Guadamuz, who were significant pillars for the creation of the "Teaching Guide for the construction and use of the quijongo guanacasteco".

Eulalio Guadamuz Guadamuz

A resident of Bagaces, he learned to play the quijongo guanacasteco at the age of 14, when he worked on a large cattle ranch. He is currently the greatest exponent of the instrument in the canton of Bagaces, and a winner of the National Prize of Traditional Popular Culture 2014.



Bagaces is the land of quijongueros. Recently, the master quijonguero Eulalio "Lalo" Guadamuz was awarded with the National Prize of Popular and Traditional Culture 2014 and is the main exponent of this instrument in the canton of Bagaces, and is a resident of the community of Llanos del Cortés.

Murals



Este proyecto tiene como objetivo el rescate de espa- The objective of this project is to preserve public spaces and beautify them through art and citizen participation, as well as to foster a sense of cultural roots among the citizens, by reflecting characteristic elements of the canton of Bagaces in the artistic works.

A total of six murals have been made, with the support of local businesses and citizens of the canton of Bagaces, with the aim of beautifying our canton with elements that strengthen our cultural identity. These murals show our commitment to art and culture as a key driver of tourism and economic development, which can position Bagaces as a canton that is a cradle of art that is recognized by its multicolored murals.

The murals also contribute to citizen safety and healthy coexistence through art and culture, creating spaces for recreation and reflection on identity issues.



Felipe Quirós Quirós

Coming from a family of quijongueros, Don Felipe Quirós kept this tradition alive, having inherited it from his father, Cristóbal Alvarado, which in turn was passed on by his grandfather Pedro Cano.



He learned to make the instrument at the age of 13. His contributions are preserved in the "Teaching Guide for the construction and use of the quijongo guanacasteco".

[Video](#)

mcj.go.cr

[Construction process of the Guanacaste quijongo](#)

Personajes de Bagaces



Medardo Guido Acevedo was a folklorist, writer, songwriter and teacher who dedicated his life to preserving the culture of Guanacaste. He received the National Prize of Costa Rican Popular Culture from the Ministry of Culture in 1995 for his work, of which perhaps the most iconic is the melody of "Espíritu Guanacasteco".

He was born in Liberia but lived his childhood in Bagaces. Since then, he has dedicated his heart and soul to preserving the canton's folklore.

As a tribute to his legacy, the Office of Cultural Management of the Municipality of Bagaces and the sculptors and artists of Mano y Arte Decoración got down to work and built an almost identical sculpture in honor of Don Medardo.

The work is located in the Medardo Guido Central Park in Bagaces.

[Read more here](#) [Publications](#)



Tomás Guardia Gutiérrez was a Costa Rican soldier and politician, born in Bagaces on December 16, 1831. He governed Costa Rica in two non-consecutive periods: the first between 1870 and 1876; the second as de facto president from 1877 until his death in 1882.

People and Cultural Groups

In the area, there are a number of artistic and musical groups and key players who can greatly enrich your travel experience and often feature in the festivities and activities of the cultural agendas in the different towns. These include:

People

Rafael Ángel Zúñiga (Liberia) known as "Pellejo e Lora"

A pure Guanacaste figure, authentic as the jícaro llanero and spicy as the sun on the jaragua of the plains. Pellejo e Lora is a character that takes us to the eternal Guanacaste, full of color and joy, full of emotions with bombas and retahílas.

When asked to recite a retahíla, he doesn't think about it, he just concentrates and begins a sustained and rapid narration, speaking from memory for over a minute.

Pellejo e Lora

The nickname is due to the fact that in the 1960s, watching a television series, he noticed that the men flew and he got the idea of getting some green wings and taking off himself. The result was a broken, swollen hand. In the distance, the owner of the Liberia mill, Lauro Obando, shouted at him: "Pellejo e' lora, gran tal por cual", and the name stuck.

Marielos Jiménez (Bagaces)

Constant efforts to uphold the popular traditions of Guanacaste are a common thread over the course of her career as a narrator and storyteller, a maker of carvings and stories that pass mouth to ear in Guanacaste just like the fresh wind in this hot land. She is a cook, a mother, a poet of retahílas and a talker, and whether she's in her kitchen or on her patio, her charisma is unmatched.



Marielos Jiménez

Photo: Fabio Vega

Singers and songwriters

Important musicians have created unparalleled music for the public to enjoy, with the most prominent including:

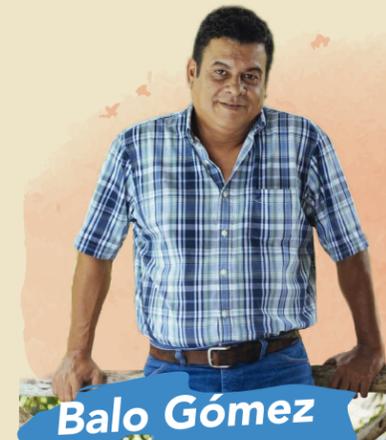


Guadalupe Urbina

Abdenago Torres Meléndez
Unesco recognizes the intangible legacy of this folklorist



Nago de Nicoya



Balo Gómez

y los de La Bajura, Santa Cruz



Max Goldemberg



Jaime Gamboa



Christian Porras

Folk dancing groups

Cañas

Caña de Azúcar Folk Projection Company

The Caña de Azúcar Folk Projection Company, from Cañas, Guanacaste, was created in 1992, with the aim of strengthening the cultural identity of the Guanacaste people under the direction of Georgina Acevedo, folklorist and cultural promoter. The group is made up of 36 members, ranging in age from 10 to 20 years old.



 2669-0659  ginacevedo39@gmail.com / canaazucarcr@hotmail.com

Corobicí Musical Ensemble

The folk dancing and musical ensemble of the Universidad Técnica Nacional, Sede Guanacaste, was started in 2015 with the aim of bringing a variety of music to each of their exhibitions.



The project began as a result of the students' interest in creating a group that reflects the folklore and music of the Guanacaste region.

 2668 3500 ext. 5071  erobles@utn.ac.cr / eri14cr@gmail.com

Bagaces

Alma Llanera Marimba Ensemble

The marimba ensemble is the legacy of a previous group directed by Professor Medardo Guido Acevedo and formed by marimba players such as Matias Palomino (father), Matias Palomino (son) and Eulalio Guadamuz. In their honor, the group has kept the same name, continuing their legacy for more than 30 years.

Its young members today include Solimar Guevara, Alonso Herra, Javier Matarrita, Edgar Leal and Nicolás Guevara, whose purpose is to perpetuate the legacy and music of Guanacaste composers.



Alma India

Alma India, the premier folk dancing group from Bagaces, Guanacaste, was founded in 1976 and directed by Mayela Ordóñez Delgado, Sandra Zamora Alvarado and Pedro Ordóñez Delgado.

 2671-2116 / 2671-2116 / 8981-8816  indirajimenez11@gmail.com



The Bagaces Philharmonic

The Filarmonía de Bagaces is a project promoted by a group of music lovers who have laid the foundations and have created a group with the aim of becoming a Concert Band of our own canton, in order to delight our people with regional, national and international repertoire through concerts and activities of high artistic quality.



La Cruz



Raíces cruceñas



Cuajiniquil Folk Production



Bejarano Cubillo Mascarades



Folkloric group «Añoranzas de mi Tierra»



Folkloric group of the Salvador Villar School



Ensamble Cruceño

 [Return to map](#)



BEACHES

Northern Guanacaste

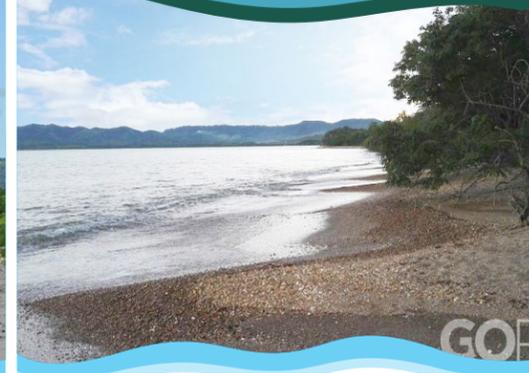


Several of Costa Rica's most beautiful beaches can be found along the Pacific coast of Guanacaste. According to the National Geography Institute, there are more than **200 km of total coastal sands** in the province, comprising 139 beaches with a wide range of scenic beauty.

Unspoiled beaches, islets and beautiful bays surrounded by tropical dry forest and an abundance of wildlife are minutes away from modern hotels, gourmet restaurants and marinas.

More than an opportunity to soak in the sun and swim in the warm waters of the Pacific Ocean, they also provide **excellent sport fishing, world-class diving, surfing for all levels**, and a long list of other marine activities.

Let's go to the beach!



Playa Conventillos

We found the border beach between Nicaragua and Costa Rica located in La Cruz de Guanacaste.

It is about Conventillos, if the visit be very careful, lest it begin in our country and end in the territory of the northern brothers without ID or passport.

 www.lacruzguanacaste.com

Playa Puerto Soley

Located at the northern end of Guanacaste, in the beautiful and wide Salinas Bay. It is a very popular beach among residents of the nearby town of La Cruz. It has moderate waves and soft sands. It is famous for its sunsets, which invite you to take a walk and contemplate the majesty of the bay, where Isla Bolaños is located.

 goplaya.cr/es/playa/soley

Playa Papaturre

Located in Bahía Salinas, Papaturre is known for its strong wind. This has made it a favorite among kitesurfers, along with its neighbor, Playa Copal. Papaturre is a brown sand beach with few stones.

 goplaya.cr/es/playa/papaturre

Playa Corona

Playa Corona is part of the Cuajiniquil area of the province of Guanacaste. It is a beautiful white sand beach with a crystalline and turquoise sea. Corona is a pristine spot, with some trees offering shade along the coast. You should choose the right time of the year to visit, as the area is windy during the summer. There is less wind in the winter, so it is recommended to visit the beach during the morning in June and July.

 goplaya.cr/es

Playa Copal

This windy brown sand beach is located in Salinas Bay in La Cruz de Guanacaste. Playa Copal has gentle waves and few rocks, but its main feature is the strong breeze, which has made it better than most other spots in Costa Rica for a few uncommon sports. In recent years, kitesurfing has become one of the attractions of this beach.

 goplaya.cr/es/playa/copal

Playa Rajada

Rajada is a place of incredible, pristine beauty. It is a white sand beach with lush vegetation, few rocks, crystal clear water, picture-perfect views and gentle waves, perfect for a dip in the sea or snorkeling. It is undoubtedly one of the best beaches in Salinas Bay, Guanacaste.

 goplaya.cr/es/playa/rajada-guanacaste



Playa Rajadita

It is located next to Playa Rajada in Salinas Bay. The difference is that Rajadita is a smaller beach, difficult to access and even more untouched.

To get there, you'll have to travel along Playa Rajada at low tide and walk over the huge rock formations. It is covered by intermediate vegetation and its waves are gentle.

In front of the beach, there is a huge stone that decorates the landscape and contrasts with the turquoise color of the water.

 goplaya.cr/es/playa/rajadita

Playa Jobo

El Jobo is a beautiful white sand beach located in La Cruz de Guanacaste. It has a gentle and pleasant swell for swimming, which combines with the turquoise color of the sea and the trees that surround the edge of the beach. Its crystal-clear water lends itself to snorkeling.

 goplaya.cr/es/playa/el-jobo-bahia-salinas

Playa Coyotera

It is a wide beach, located opposite Isla Bolaños. The island can be visited in boats or kayaks.

During the windy months, it is an excellent spot for windsurfing. It is ideal for resting, hiking and horseback riding, as well as for exploring other nearby places on mountain bikes.

 playascostarica.info/playas/playa-coyotera/

Photography: goplaya.cr

Playa Bahía Junquillal

If you want to be surrounded by nature in an environment of total tranquility, Bahía Junquillal is your beach. The white sand blends with the turquoise tone of the sea and the tranquility of the waves. This beach belongs to the Bahía Junquillal Wildlife Refuge, so don't be surprised if you are greeted by a pizote or hear the imposing sound of howler monkeys in the distance.

 goplaya.cr/es/playa/bahia-junquillal-guanacaste

Playa Pilas

Located in the community of El Jobo, it is a beautiful pebble beach with moderate waves.

Playa Cuajiniquil

Playa Cuajiniquil is located on the Gulf of Santa Elena in Guanacaste, and stands out for the robust vegetation that surrounds the entire beach. The gray-sand beach has few stones and a gentle swell that combines with the beautiful turquoise color of the water. It is surrounded by the Río Cuajiniquil and a mangrove swamp that attracts different species of birds. This mangrove allows plankton to accumulate around the beach and the phenomenon of bioluminescence to occur at certain times of the year.

 <https://goplaya.cr/es/playa/cuajiniquil>

Bahía Santa Elena



The Santa Elena Bay Marine Management Area is located on the northern coast of the Santa Elena Peninsula, in the district of Santa Elena, canton La Cruz, province of Guanacaste. It was identified as a Site of Conservation Importance through an analysis of biological representativeness and threats which sought to identify "conservation gaps" in marine environments.

The area defined as the Santa Elena Site of Conservation Importance covers an area of 727.91 ha and includes Santa Elena, Lucas and Matapalito Bays.

The objective of the Marine Management Area is to guarantee the conservation of marine biodiversity and create a sustainable flow of natural products and environmental services in collaboration with the communities.

Most of the coastline of the Santa Elena and Matapalito Bays is made up of fine sand beaches, except in Estero Grande, where silt and sand predominate. There are small sections such as Pochote and Sortija points, where rock formations crop up. The bottom of Matapalito Bay consists of sand and coral rocks in its shallowest part, and seabed and submerged rock in its deepest part.



Playa Escondida-Isleta

This small beach is located between the National Wildlife Refuge and Playa Corona. It is known for its gentle waves, making it ideal for families.

playascostarica.info



Playa Sortija

This beach is located in the Santa Elena Bay Marine Management Area. It is known for its fine sand and crystal clear waters.



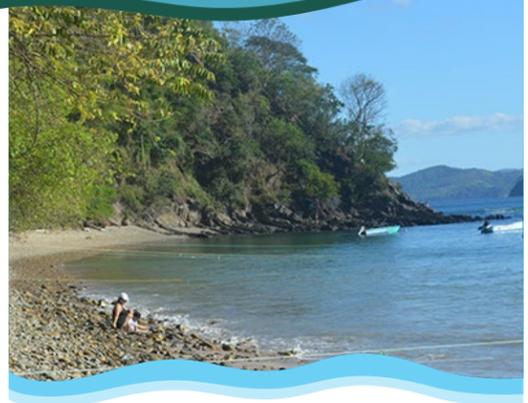
Playa Matapalito

Es una playa de arena fina y rocas coralinas. This beach, with its fine sand and coral rocks offers crystalline waters with green and blue tones. It is located in the Santa Elena Bay Marine Management Area.



Playa Nancite

For several months of each year, Nancite hosts one of the most wonderful natural phenomena of our country. An average of 175,000 turtles arrive annually at this beach in Santa Rosa National Park between August and December. At Playa Nancite, there is a house for the National Park rangers, who permanently monitor the park to prevent egg plundering and provide information about the park's restrictions.

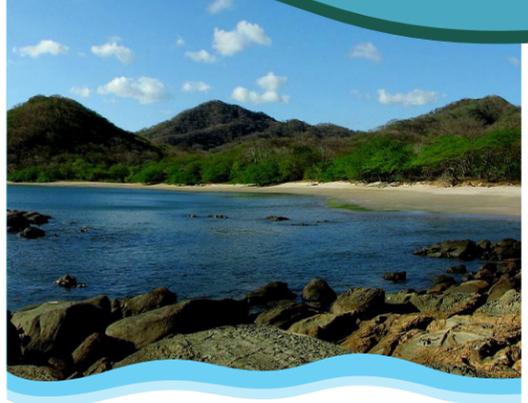


Playa Manzanillo-Bahía Salinas-La Cruz

The gray sand of this beach is intermingled with stone. Manzanillo de La Cruz has gentle waves and little vegetation.

Be careful, as there are more than three beaches with this name and this may not be the one you are looking for.

 goplaya.cr/es/playa/manzanillo-guanacaste



Playa Toyosa (Monstrencal)

It is a beautiful beach located next to the Junquillal Bay Wildlife Refuge, a conservation area that belongs to La Cruz de Guanacaste. A few stones separate this site from its neighboring beach, but the difference is marked.

Toyosa is a spot with a crystal clear and calm sea, surrounded by trees that offer shade.

 goplaya.cr



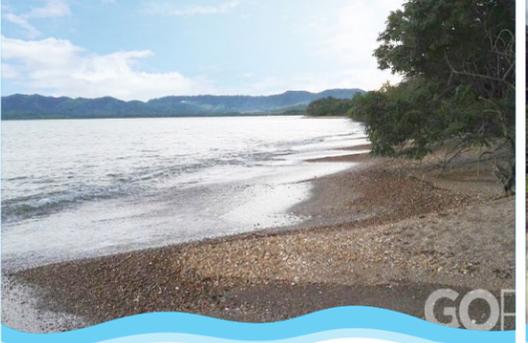
Playa Blanca

A picture-perfect white sand beach located in Junquillal in Santa Cruz de Guanacaste. This hidden spot combines beauty with crystal clear water and shady trees. A short jungle trail must be crossed to enjoy Playa Blanca, but it is well worth it.

 goplaya.cr/es/playa/blanca-junquillal

La Cruz Beaches

[Return to map](#)



Liberia Beaches

Playa Naranjo (canton of La Cruz - Liberia)

Playa Naranjo, better known as Roca Bruja, is almost a legend in Costa Rica. It's a surfer's paradise. The beach is part of Santa Rosa National Park.

In summer, you can reach Roca Bruja with a 4x4 vehicle by an extensive and complicated stone road. Then, you will have to walk along a path full of dry trees, where you are likely to find more than one deer or iguana.

Playa Cabuyal

A literal paradise. This is a place where you'll find white sand, turquoise water and a landscape full of huge mountains. Although there is an intermediate swell, this doesn't prevent you from swimming or even snorkeling in some sectors of the beach. On the shore, the trees provide shade and provide a beautiful touch to the already extraordinary landscape. Cabuyal is located a few kilometers from Liberia.

Playa Zapotillal (MINAS)

Zapotillal or Minas is a beach that is still quite unspoiled, despite its enormous beauty. It has white sand, gentle waves and few rocks.

Playa Virador

A picture-perfect white sand beach with few stones and gentle waves. However, getting there will take some work, as you will have to descend a path with 780 steps. The effort is sure to pay off. Playa Virador is located in the Gulf of Papagayo, a place that combines nature with endless beauty. Don't give up! Come and visit this incredible beach.

Playa Blanca

A white sand beach with soft waves and robust vegetation located in the Gulf of Papagayo. These characteristics, along with a few rock formations, make it an ideal natural pool to relax, in contact with nature. However, you'll need a bit of an adventurous spirit before visiting, as you will have to overcome a long path with 702 steps - quite an adventure!

Playa del Jicaro

This beach is very popular for boat tours and has an impressive scenic beauty.

goplaya.cr/es/playa/naranjo

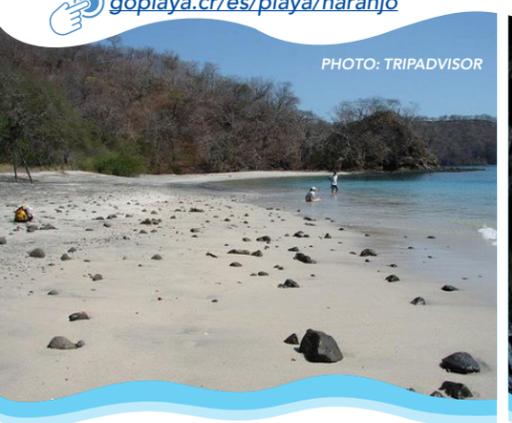
goplaya.cr/es/playa/cabuyal

goplaya.cr/es/playa/minas-bahia-de-los-piratas-guanacaste

goplaya.cr/es/playa/virador-papagayo-guanacaste

goplaya.cr/es/playa/blanca

quebuenlugar.com/lugares/playa-panama-golfo-de-papagayo/



Playa Nascacolito

Nascacolito is as beautiful as it is calm. If you ever want to take a break in solitude, somewhere where the waves are barely perceptible, this beach will fulfill all your desires.

It is easy to compare this place to a painting with beautiful shades; the beach offers every shade of blue, which blend with the white sand. These are intense colors that nature shows to the visitor.

Playa Huevos

There are two hypotheses about why it was given this name, which means "Egg Beach". The first is that it comes from a couple of rocks near the beach that are shaped like two eggs (they really do). The second theory is that turtles used to lay their eggs here many years ago and left their eggs under the white sand. There are some incredible caves that can be visited by just walking a few meters from the coast. These stones, thousands of years old, make it possible to cross from one side to the other very easily.

Playa Prieta

This small beach is located to the south of Pan de Azúcar, with a rocky stretch separating the two. It has calm waves and abundant coastal vegetation. To the south is Punta Prieta and Chocoyas Island, which is a special natural attraction amidst the surrounding landscape. These natural features separate the beach from nearby Playa Penca.

Playa Nascacolo

The beach has clear water and gentle waves, perfect for swimming, hiking and diving. The beach is a favorite among tourists who travel in boats from different nearby hotels or other water transportation companies. Its unquestionable beauty makes Nascacolo a perfect corner of the North Pacific to walk along the seashore and enjoy the small estuary that is located at its southern end.

Playa Manzanillo

It is about one kilometer long and has very little swell so it is suitable for swimming. The light gray sand contrasts with the blue waters.

The beach is surrounded by tropical forest, as well as a nearby mangrove swamp.

Playa Iguanita

Just getting to this remote spot by car is an adventure. After making your way along a long dirt road surrounded by huge cattle farms, you will arrive at the Iguanita Wildlife Refuge. There, you can enjoy a beach of gray sand, few stones and gentle waves, fringed by ample vegetation. The site is still not frequently visited by tourists.

goplaya.cr/blog/playa-huevos-y-nascacolo

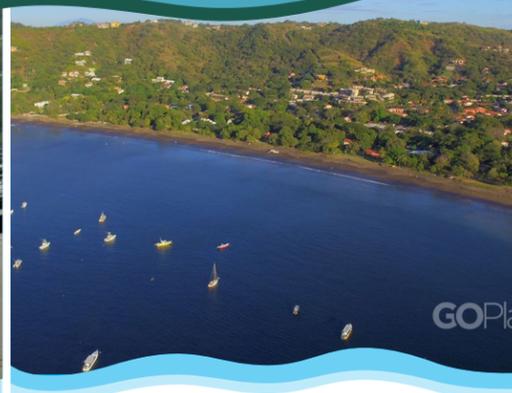
goplaya.cr/blog/playa-huevos

goplaya.cr/es/playa/prieta-flamingo-guanacaste

<https://goplaya.cr/es/playa/nascacolo>

<https://goplaya.cr/es/playa/iguanita>

Photography: goplaya.cr



Playa Arenilla

Playa Arenilla, located in Papagayo, Guanacaste, is a place of golden sand with very soft waves, where the surrounding mountains give it a private and paradisiacal touch. The beach is quite clean and has just a few rocks. Arenilla is an ideal place to relax or enjoy a swim in its calm waters.

Playa Panamá

This wide bay with fine sand is surrounded by brazilwood, manchineel and mostrenco trees. It has a low swell, with a small mangrove swamp in the Rocha Estuary. The beach is very popular for swimming, resting, hiking and camping. It is frequented by families who like to take in the beauty of the maritime landscape that extends to the white beaches located on the other side of Culebra Bay.

Playa Ocotal

This beach is located on an inlet bounded by hills, with grayish sands and low waves. It is ideal for swimming, sunbathing, and water sports such as diving and sport fishing that are offered at different points in the region. The high parts of the adjacent hills boast magnificent views of the entire Gulf of Papagayo. This beach has been awarded with the Ecological Blue Flag.

goplaya.cr/es/playa/ocotal

Playas del Coco

Of all Costa Rica's many beaches, Playas del Coco is one with tradition behind it. It is located in a bay with little swell and is very suitable for bathing and safe anchoring of boats. It has grayish sands that extend for almost three kilometers. Playas del Coco has a wide range of services that allow you to enjoy all kinds of recreational and sports activities, including sport fishing, scuba diving, boat rides, etc. It is ideal for hiking and horseback riding.

goplaya.cr/es/playa/el-coco

Playa Matapalo

Playa Matapalo is located in Sardinal de Guanacaste, one of Costa Rica's few five-star Blue Flag beaches. This spot offers gray sand and crystal-clear water. The sea is calm, perfect for taking a dip with the family. There is not much vegetation or shade around it.

Playa/matapalo-guanacaste

Playa Danta

Its scenic beauty can be appreciated from the entrance, when you cross a path with a small wooden bridge, just before entering this beach of light gray sand, soft waves and few stones. The place combines nature with crystal-clear water and lots of vegetation. From Playa Danta, you can see the Pitahayas and Santa Catalina islands. The latter site, about nine kilometers away, is a favorite site among divers in this part of the coast.



Playa Hermosa

Located a few minutes away from El Coco, it is a much less frequently visited than its neighbor, remaining an attraction for those who are looking for some peace and quiet. With its light gray sand and only a few stones, it's a beach for swimming in gentle waves, enjoying a walk or just lying under the palm trees that provide shade at the edge of the beach.

goplaya.cr/es/playa/hermosa-el-coco-guanacaste

Playa Buena

There are plenty of reasons to visit Playa Buena in Papagayo. Right next to the Occidental Papagayo hotel, head down a 400 m cobblestone path, which will take you to a good-sized white sandy beach and turquoise sea, with trees on the shore that provide shade and barely perceptible waves. Just watch out for currents.

goplaya.cr/es/playa/playa-buena

Photography: goplaya.cr

Playa Calzón de Pobre

Playa Calzón de Pobre is just as peculiar as its name, which means "poor man's underwear". It is a small spot located in Carrillo, Guanacaste, but it has everything you need to relax: white sand, crystal clear water, gentle waves and few rocks. Before entering the site, a security guard will ask you for your information, part of the protocol for a tourism complex that is being built nearby.

goplaya.cr/es/playa

Fotografías de playas: goplaya.cr

Playa Azul - Jurel

Olive-black and blackish-gray sand beach, with navy-blue waters. This bay type beach extends over a length of 177 m, representing little danger for bathers at low tide. We can observe promontories covered in plant life, platforms and reefs that offer the possibility of free diving. Rich vegetation grows along its coastline with excellent countryside scenery. It has a dock and is an anchorage for boats.

Beach aimed at fishing tourism.

goplaya.cr/es/playa/azul-pez-vela

Playa Guacamaya

This beach is located in Culebra Bay and is empty for most of the year since the route to the beach is in quite a bad state (only accessible by 4x4), though visitors can also reach the beach by boat and enjoy the beautiful scenery full of little islands. In Guacamaya, the sand is light gray and the waves are very gentle. On one side of the beach, there are some trees that provide shade. The sea feels untouched and picture-perfect, perfect for snorkeling. Guacamaya also lends itself to a peaceful swim or a quiet rest.

goplaya.cr/es/playa/guacamaya-bahia-culebra-guanacaste

Playa Guacamayita

Small and crystalline, as beautiful as it is hidden. The small beach with light gray sand offers a calm sea, perfect for snorkeling and swimming.

Vacations can take many forms, but there's nothing like being in an isolated, untouched spot with shade on one side.

goplaya.cr/blog/ruta-de-playas-virgenes-en-papagayo



Playa Zapotal

This beautiful light gray sand beach and calm waters is situated away from the noise of the city, ideal for a relaxing vacation.

 municarrillo.go.cr



Papagayo Tourism Pole (PTGP)

The Gulf of Papagayo Tourist Pole (PTGP), located in the north of the Costa Rican Pacific region, manages an area of scenic wealth, with beaches of light sand, a calm and crystalline, a dry tropical forest on land and diverse ecosystems on the coast and at sea. This, together with its cultural heritage, provides it with the greatest potential of any tourism region in the Central American isthmus. As a special zone, it is governed by a special regime due to the significance and strategic importance of the project for the country.



The Gulf of Papagayo and its coastline is the focus of a tourism project administered by the Costa Rican Tourism Board. Several high-end hotel chains and real estate developers operate here and plan to turn the region into a model tourist center where the natural environment and commercial development can coexist. Among the most popular destinations in the Gulf of Papagayo are Playa Ocotol, Playas del Coco, Playa Hermosa and Playa Panama. The Papagayo Peninsula is the most developed area in the gulf region.

The Papagayo Tourist Pole offers tourists some 17 unique beaches with calm seas in a space of just 2,000 hectares (26.33 km of coastline with an approximate area of 15,120.951.96 m², a little more than 1,500 ha). It's an ideal place for a family trip, a place with clear water that's perfect for diving, water sports, and observing the beauty of the marine environment of Culebra Bay. It's a place for resting under the shade of the trees and walking through primary forests, catching glimpses of the fauna and endemic species.

The largest tourism project in Central America emerged as a dream that involved several struggles, but today it has finally become a reality and an expression of hopes for a better future in Guanacaste and Costa Rica.

All-inclusive hotels and lodging in Papagayo

Looking for an all-inclusive hotel in Papagayo?

Twelve resorts and commercial operators are part of the Tourism Pole, including hotels such as **Four Seasons, Andaz Costa Rica Papagayo, Papagayo Golden Palms Resort, Secrets Papagayo, Papagayo Hotel and Villas, Occidental Grand Papagayo, Planet Hollywood Resort, Hilton Papagayo Costa Rica Resort & Spa, Casa Conde del Mar, El Mangroove, and Vista Bahía**. The pole also includes Marina Papagayo S.A., which opened in December 2008, and the Hacienda Blu Beach Lounge Restaurant & Grill.





HOTELS

1. Hotel Occidental Gran Papagayo
2. Hotel Vista Bahía
3. Hotel Golden Palms Papagayo
4. Oficina ICT Papagayo
5. Restaurante Hacienda Blue
6. Zona de acampar Eco Camping Papagayo
7. Hotel Mangroove
8. ASECCSS
9. Hotel Casa Conde Beach Front
10. Hotel Secrets Papagayo Costa Rica
11. Parqueo Público de Ecodesarrollo para visitar las playas de Península
12. Hotel Planet Hollywood Beach Resort Costa Rica
13. Marina Papagayo
14. Hotel Andaz Península Papagayo
15. Hotel Four Seasons Resort Costa Rica

More information:

EXECUTIVE OFFICE
Gulf of Papagayo Tourism Pole
www.ict.go.cr

 (506) 2299-5926

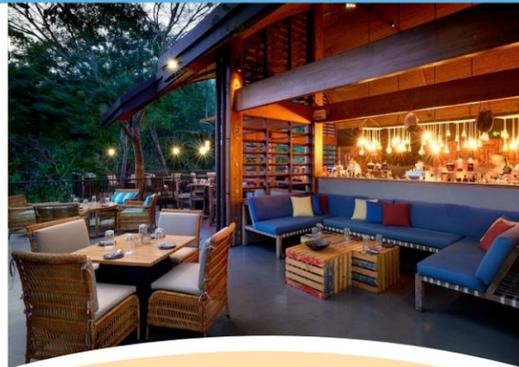
 leslie.vargas@ict.go.cr



-  Lodging
-  Main roads
-  Other roads
-  Limit PTGP
-  Protected Area

Canton

-  Carrillo
-  Liberia



Four Seasons Resort ★★★★★

Our unique Costa Rican resort offers privacy and is your starting point for limitless adventures.



All inclusive

It has 182 spacious non-smoking rooms.

Themed restaurants.

Spa and on-site activities.

Ranked among the "100 Best Golf Courses Outside the United States" by Golf Digest magazine, our 18-hole, par-72 Arnold Palmer-designed course.

Pets welcome

Lounge area with wheelchair access

Traveling with children? Kids club (with charge)

fourseasons.com

Hyatt Andaz ★★★★★

Discover happiness by the beach and take in your fill of natural inspiration in the land of pura vida.

All inclusive

This establishment has 153 non-smoking rooms

Themed restaurants.

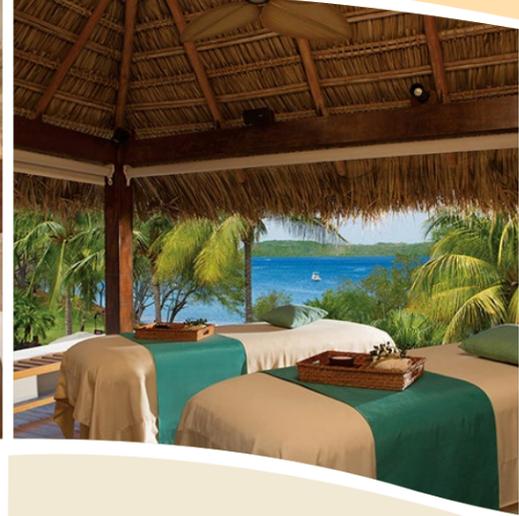
Spa and on-site activities.

Hotel Hyatt Andaz

Pets welcome (dogs only)

Accessible facilities

Adults and children



Hotel Planet Hollywood ★★★★★

At the Planet Hollywood Beach Resort Costa Rica. Guests of all ages will be able to admire objects that belonged to Hollywood celebrities up close.

All inclusive

292 rooms

Themed restaurants

Spa and on-site activities.

Pets not allowed

Accessible bathrooms and rooms

Traveling with children? Free kids club

planethollywoodhotels.com

Hotel Secrets Papagayo ★★★★★

This adults-only resort is quiet, intimate and unforgettable.

All inclusive.

202 luxurious non-smoking suites.

Themed restaurants.

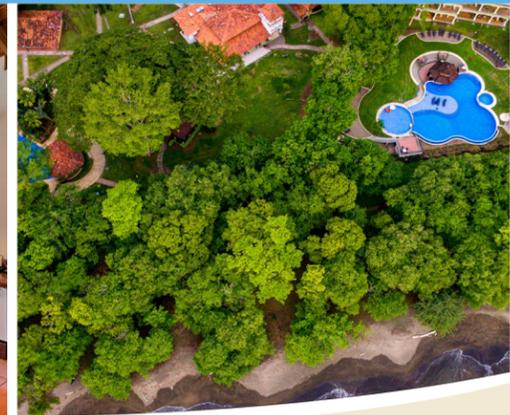
Spa and on-site activities.

Pets welcome (dogs only).

Accessible facilities

Adults only.

Hotel Secrets Papagayo



Casa Conde Beach Front

★★★★

Beachfront boutique hotel



All inclusive

50 non-smoking rooms.

Themed restaurants.

Spa and activities at the establishment.

The establishment offers free accommodation for up to 2 children, provided they occupy the same room as their parents or guardians and use the existing beds.

Pets welcome

Lounge area with wheelchair access

casacondebeach.com

El Mangroove

El Mangroove is a boutique hotel with a unique personality. Surrounded by forest, mangrove and beach.



All inclusive

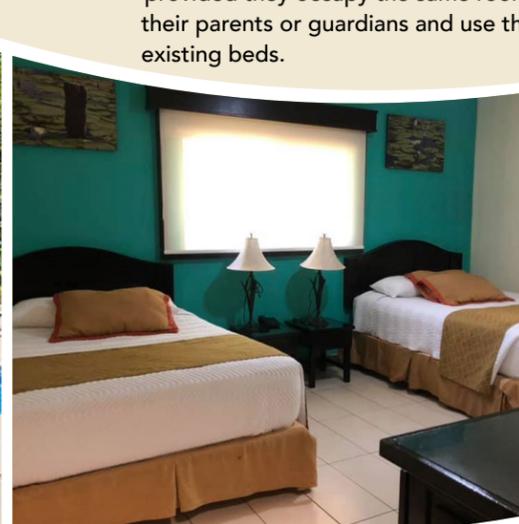
85 suites

Themed restaurants.

Pets not allowed.

Spa and activities

elmangroove.net



Papagayo Hotel & Villas

★★★★

A small complex of elegant villas with a contemporary feel



All inclusive

8 fully equipped villas with capacity for 4 to 8 people.

Sport Bar

Pets not allowed

Children welcome

Accessible facilities

www.vp.cr/

Golden Palms Beachfront

★★★★★

A boutique hotel, a hidden gem in the North Pacific of Costa Rica.

All inclusive.

40 non-smoking rooms.

Themed restaurants.

Tours and on-site activities.

Pets welcome (dogs and cats only).

Accessible facilities

Adults and children
Cribs not available

papagayogoldenpalms.com



Vista Bahía Beach Resort

★★★★★

Vista Bahia Beach Resort is located on the shores of a quiet, protected bay that is part of the Gulf of Papagayo.

- We have 32 non-smoking rooms and two private villas, with a full restaurant, bar and swimming pool.
- Activities at the establishment.
- Adults and children

- Pets welcome (dogs and cats)
- Lounge area with wheelchair access
- vistabahiaresort.com



Occidental Resort Grand Papagayo

★★★★★

A magnificent adults-only experience in the Gulf of Papagayo.



- All inclusive
- The hotel has 162 rooms
- Themed restaurants
- Spa and on-site activities

- Pets not allowed
- Adults only
- Accessible facilities
- barcelo.com



Restaurante Hacienda Blu Beach Lounge & Grill

An excellent place for lunch or dinner at the south end of Playa Panamá. A beautiful place overlooking the beach.

- International and local food

[facebook.com haciendablubeachclub/](https://facebook.com/haciendablubeachclub/)



Information for Travelers - Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Have a safe trip

Your safety and well-being are our top priority. As we face these unprecedented times, we want to keep you informed on how we are responding to the current situation on COVID-19. Please visit the link below for our latest resort reopenings, policy enhancements and our section on general inquiries.

Restrictions related to your trip

COVID-19 Alert: Travel requirements are changing rapidly, including those related to pre-travel COVID-19 testing and quarantine upon arrival at destination.

Please contact the property at least 24 hours prior to arrival to arrange check-in.

Use the information included in the reservation confirmation. Guests should contact the lodgings in advance for check-in instructions. The reception staff will greet you upon your arrival.

In response to the coronavirus (COVID-19), the hotel is implementing additional health and safety measures at this time. Due to the pandemic, businesses within the Papagayo Tourism Pole have

adopted strict physical distancing measures. It is mandatory to wear a mask in all indoor common areas to observe the hand washing and sneezing protocol.

We are closely following statements by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Health Organization on cases of the new coronavirus (COVID-19), and are complying with the guidelines of these agencies and local health authorities.

The well-being of our guests and employees is of utmost importance.

<https://www.ict.go.cr>



Marina Papagayo (PTGP)

 [Return to map](#)

Marina Papagayo is located in the Papagayo Tourist Pole of Costa Rica and is surrounded by world-class amenities. Discover one of the most exotic and accessible destinations in the world. A deep water port and year-round safe harbor on the Pacific in the center of the Americas. A seafarer's paradise surrounded by endless adventures and beach pleasures.

Located below the hurricane line and protected from the north winds of Papagayo, Marina Papagayo is situated in a naturally protected harbor that offers a precious refuge for all seasons in a nautical paradise, just 30 minutes from Daniel Oduber Quirós International Airport (LIR).

An idyllic stopover point and staging area for epic diving and underwater adventures in this tropical Pacific seascape. Nearby are Isla Malpelo, Isla del Coco, Coiba and the Galapagos Islands.



Five-star services and amenities

Designed for super yachts of up to 250 feet LOA, Marina Papagayo offers a full range of five-star services and amenities for professional captains and crew.



Accommodations

Studio, one- and two-bedroom suites with daily housekeeping.



Retail trade

Gourmet market, restaurant, convenience store.



Crew services

Outdoor swimming pool, gym, lounge, meeting room, laundry facilities.



Services

Mooring assistance, dock concierge, monitoring, provisioning and bunkering 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.



Utilities

Single-phase and three-phase electrical power, wireless, sewage and gray water disposal, and broadband internet.

Nearby options include the Andaz Costa Rica Resort by Hyatt and Four Seasons Resort Costa Rica: **Forbes' first five-star resort in Central and South America.**



Captains and crew enjoy access to the Arnold Palmer Signature Golf Course complex and seven spectacular, seldom-visited beaches, as well as miles of scenic hiking and biking trails.

Explorers Club. Your expert, naturalist and bilingual guides are available for out-of-the-ordinary expeditions.

There is a reason why Costa Rica is home to some of the happiest people on the planet and hosts many happy crews.

Costa Rica's two best-known surf spots, Ollie's Point and Witch's Rock, explode with action; the

marina is just 30 minutes from Santa Rosa National Park, part of the Guanacaste Conservation Area (ACG) (see protected areas).

For a taste of the local flavor, a mix of small beach towns beckons up and down the Nicoya Peninsula. From Malpais and Santa Teresa in the south to Tamarindo and Playas del Coco across the bay, Marina Papagayo is ideally located to keep crews happy and motivated, alleviating potential leisure problems. Explore the eco-lodges and adventure tours at Lake Arenal for fun in hot springs, waterfalls, ziplines, horseback riding, kayaking and ATV tours. (see tours).

For more information, call the US toll free.

 Tel. (888) 863.0301

 www.marinapapagayo.com



RURAL TOURISM

The cantons of La Cruz, Liberia, Carrillo, Bagaces and Cañas offer an authentic, personalized experience that provides a window into rural Guanacaste and the Costa Rican essence and identity. The companies involved in the sector operate with a proven commitment to excellence.

Guanacaste, with its 10,140.71 km², is Costa Rica's second-largest province. Its wide and varied relief includes broad plains, imposing volcanoes, plateaus, canyons, river valleys, fast-moving rivers and a coastline full of twists and turns, dotted with gulfs, bays, inlets, peninsulas, points, capes, cliffs, estuaries and islands where tourists from Costa Rican and abroad can fully enjoy its splendid beaches, many of which have earned the Blue Flag.

This area of northern Guanacaste manages to link the beauty of nature with the culture and customs of its rural settings (agriculture, fishing, nature, traditional cuisine and cultural heritage). Rural life in Guanacaste is yours to discover, with its sabaneros, its music and dances to the sound of the marimba, its exquisite traditional food and drinks, bull riding, its Chorotega pottery, its poetry in bombas and retahilas. You can also experience the lifestyle of Costa Rican artisanal fishermen.

See diverse environments full of peace, comfort, coexistence with our customs and traditions, immersed in a wonderful, diverse natural landscape that give the inhabitants of Guanacaste an identity that is unlike any other in Costa Rica or the world.



La Cruz

In the communities of the canton of La Cruz, rural tourism is chiefly offered in the coastal towns, where visitors have a variety of options for different tastes and preferences. There are also villages near La Cruz such as La Garita, Santa Cecilia, Guapinol, Sonzapote, Los Andes, La Virgen, Argendora and Cuajiniquil, among others. The highlands are not to be missed, with their volcanoes such as Orosi and Cacao. The tourist offer here involves experiences unlike those of the coastal regions.

Hacienda el Cenízaro and Tierra Madre Lodge are two excellent examples of rural tourism, combining adventure activities with a peek into local life, showing tourists the daily activities of farmers and ranchers.

Three communities of La Cruz are worth mentioning in greater detail due to the breathtaking landscapes and the local activities that make them unique tourist destinations:

1. La Virgen

This community is located in the mountains, near Lake Nicaragua. La Virgen offers views of the island of Ometepe and its two beautiful volcanoes, Madero and Concepción. This enchanting landscape is located just 5 kilometers from the border with Nicaragua, with a sense of closeness to the neighboring country. In the community, locals cultivate staple crops while a women's group is engaged in processing these local products. Livestock rearing is also an important facet of the community, with tours incorporating these activities.



2. Argendora

This community located in the foothills of the Volcán Orosi offers visitors crystalline rivers and communal and private nature reserves with great biodiversity. The agricultural activities are showcased on model farms that provide a window into our farmers' daily lives.

3. Cuajiniquil



This coastal community has beautiful beaches, a great diversity of coastal birds, not to mention whales, dolphins, turtles, and more frolicking just offshore depending on the time of year. The beautiful sunsets, typical of the Pacific coast, are one of the community's greatest assets. Some 90% of the village's 2,000 inhabitants work in fishing. Of these, several have extensive tourism experience guiding sport fishing tours and more rustic fishing experiences.

Cañas



The communities of Agua Caliente and Nueva Guatemala, located in the foothills of the Volcán Tenorio, offer agrotourism experiences for tourists from Costa Rican and abroad.

Visitors to this canton of Guanacaste can enjoy unique rural tourism adventures, such as trails through the volcano, horseback riding, trapiche tours, trout fishing, milking cows, savoring traditional cuisine, and other activities that provide a new perspective on the Guanacaste identity.

Bagaces

Each of the four districts of the canton of Bagaces (Bagaces, Fortuna, Mogote and Río Naranjo), offer activities related to rural life, nature and wellness tourism.

1. Bagaces

Nature tourism is the essence of the Bagaces district since its territory includes the Palo Verde National Park, the Lomas de Barbudal Biological Reserve and the Llanos de Cortés waterfalls. The Casa de la Chola offers exhibitions related to the folklore, customs and traditions of the area.

Link: vidafm.cr



2. Fortuna

The large number of bathing facilities with volcanic hot springs make this a premier destination for wellness tourism, with tourists seeking the area out for relaxation and the medicinal properties of the waters.

Educational, scientific and academic tourism all bring visitors to the region. The options here include tours for schools, colleges and universities with the aim of showcasing the area's clean and renewable power plants, which use solar, wind and geothermal energy.

3. Río Naranjo

Based on rural tourism. The town is home to a great diversity of handcrafted products that come from activities related to agriculture and ranching.

Liberia

Rural life in Liberia is characterized by a wide range of options. Enjoy the colors of the region's plains and the mountains, not to mention its spectacular, multicolored beaches.

Its rural communities are an expression of country living and a lifestyle that has been internationally recognized as promoting long lives. People here live from agriculture and ranching, keeping their culture alive and preserving their traditional seeds and cuisine, many of which date back to before the arrival of Europeans.

One good example is the community of Curubandé, located in the district of the same name.

The inhabitants of Curubandé are scattered over a large area, with most families owning small plots of land (under 5 hectares), on which they practice subsistence agriculture. Currently,



children are taught from first to sixth grade in the nearby rural school. Basic services include electricity, potable water, telephone service, health services, and public transportation.

Visitors to the community of Curubandé can also witness cultural expressions that show its roots as a farming and ranching town that is typical of the Guanacaste region.

Carrillo

Rural tourism in Carrillo provides visitors with authentic experiences on agroecological farms, rural communities and organizations that lead conservation, reforestation and agriculture projects. Learn about sustainable and efficient agricultural practices and hydroponic farming and enjoy a lunch prepared with locally grown



produce. Experience the adventure of artisanal fishing, spend time with local families, and taste the diverse cuisine of the area. This kind of tourism stands in contrast to sun and beach tourism, where people focus on hotels and other amenities. However, rural tourism focuses on a visitor who wants to experience the authentic local Guanacaste culture.

Tour companies showcase Guanacaste customs, from traditional clothing and a shout that expresses joy (among other things) to the plow and folksongs. In Carrillo, as in the rest of Guanacaste, diners and tourists searching for new flavors will have the chance to savor delectable dishes prepared over a wood fire or in a clay oven: rice and yellow corn, chicken with



annatto, corn biscuits, freshly made tortillas and atol pujagua, a drink made with purple corn. The cooks even showed us how they prepare the clay oven they use to prepare the food.

Don't wait, come and visit Guanacaste!



Diving in Guanacaste



Costa Rica represents an ideal destination for scuba diving since its tropical climate, along with the extensive Pacific and Caribbean coastlines, allow nature lovers to find extraordinary beauty in its depths. If you have what it takes to discover our fascinating marine world, you'll understand why **Costa Rica is one of the main ecotourism destinations to enjoy the exciting adventure of scuba diving**. The different coasts of the country await, with spectacular marine landscapes and the incredible biodiversity of the coral formations.

One of the distinctive features of Guanacaste is the Pacific Ocean. There's no need to be a landlubber here, with a diverse selection of water sports for all tastes.

The diving options on offer from operators in **Playa Hermosa, Cuajiniquil, Playas del Coco and Playa Ocotal** are just an hour's drive from Daniel Oduber Quirós International Airport in Liberia. Other locations, such as **Isla Bolaños and Isla Negritos**, also offer excellent diving options and astounding marine diversity. These sites are located about one hour and forty-five minutes from the airport. Ideal sites for beginners include: **Santa Elena Bay, Fila Playa Blanca and Bajo Meros**. From March to November, we recommend visiting the waters of **Punta Gorda, Bajo Tiburones, Isla Negritos, Isla Cabros and Islas Murciélago**, where you can find bull sharks (*Carcharhinus leucas*) in their natural habitat.

This list from Diving Center Cuajiniquil highlights a few extraordinary sites that offer incredible biodiversity and great diving in the canton of La Cruz.

Dive Sites

1. **Black coral and longnose hawkfish** (*Antipathes, Oxycirrhites typus*)
2. **Gran Susto, Isla Murciélago:** bull shark (*Carcharhinus leucas*)
3. **Bajo Rojo:** Giant manta ray (*Manta Birostris*)
4. **Gran Susto, Isla Murciélago:** bull shark (*Carcharhinus leucas*)
5. **Isla Loros:** Whale Shark (*Rhincondon typus*)
6. **Machetazo:** Shovelnose guitarfish (*Rhinobatos productus*)
7. **Bajo viejón:** Pacific seahorse
8. **Isla Loros:** Nurse shark (*Ginglymostoma cirratum*)
9. **Santa Elena Bay**

Together with the above, Isla Despensa and the Islas Catalinas are excellent sites for admiring underwater life that is difficult to find elsewhere.



Diving in Guanacaste



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The Islas Catalinas, with their ghostly manta rays that congregate from January to April, and the Islas Murciélagos, populated by bull sharks, remain the two most famous long-range dive sites in Guanacaste. However, many sites are located much closer: Punta Gorda, Bajo Tiburones, Virador and Los Meros are all about 10 kilometers offshore, and a 20-25 minute boat ride, a fairly short trip in dive circles.

What is the Dome? Where is it located?

The Costa Rica Thermal Dome (CRTD) is a unique oceanographic phenomenon, formed by the interaction of wind and ocean currents, and results in the upwelling of nutrient-rich deep waters, resulting in higher levels of biomass than in the surrounding tropical waters and making it one of the most productive areas in the northeastern tropical Pacific.

It is located to the west of Central America and can measure between 300 and 1000 kilometers wide. The average position of the Dome core is near 9° N and 90° W, in areas outside national jurisdictions. Its diameter and position varies from year to year and over a characteristic annual cycle (Fiedler, 2002).



Fundación MarViva, 2013

This oceanographic phenomenon results from the action of winds and ocean currents that vertically displace deep, cold, nutrient-rich waters towards the surface, creating an upwelling zone.

This upwelling mobilizes an enormous mass of water (about 3.5 million m³/s) to the surface.

The cold water mass is located close to 15 meters from the surface, but is much deeper around the CRTD. As they approach the surface, the nutrients in the cold water mass combine with sunlight to produce a large algae growth.

The greater presence of algae, the first step in the food chain, leads to greater food availability for zooplankton, causing a population explosion. This, in turn, is manifested in each link of the food chain, generating an oasis of resources in the sea.

Due to its high productivity, the CRTD is considered an important habitat for several species. The high presence of phytoplankton also leads to an abundance of zooplankton (1), euphausiids (krill) (2), and small squid, which form the basis of several food chains that are essential for migratory species that benefit from the Dome at various stages of their life cycles. These include manta rays, turtles, dolphins and whales, as well as marine predators including large pelagic fish such as billfishes and sharks. Finally, the area also attracts commercially valuable species such as tuna, mahi mahi and squid. Endangered blue whales migrate south during the winter from Baja

California to the Dome area to feed, mate, calve and care for their young, with some staying in the area year-round.

The Dome is also part of the migratory corridor of a population of leatherback turtles that nest in Costa Rica (Shillinger et al., 2008, 2011). These critically endangered turtles leave their nesting beaches in Central America and Mexico and migrate through the area

of the Dome, while hatchlings are transported to the Dome by coastal eddies. Unsurprisingly, the Costa Rican Dome is considered by scientists to be a critical habitat for the survival of at least these two endangered species.

www.arcgis.com
crdome.marviva.net

Most equipment suppliers offer certification by internationally recognized organizations such as the Professional Association of Diving Instructors (PADI). Plan to invest about \$300 per week or so for a beginner certification course.

Many also operate one-day mini-courses to get acquainted with diving. This course does not lead to a certification, but does offer a taste of diving, allowing you to know if you want to go even deeper into the activity.

To view the companies that have received a Tourism Declaration or those that are affiliated with the ICT, go to

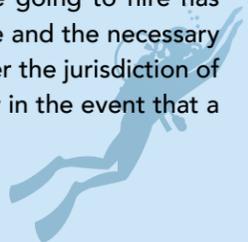
www.visitecostarica.com

Make sure that the company you are going to hire has valid operating permits, risk insurance and the necessary security measures, which are not under the jurisdiction of the ICT. ICT assumes no responsibility in the event that a company is hired.

Diving Centers in Guanacaste

The following Guanacaste dive centers can provide information.

Company	Place	Phone	Web page / E-mail
Centro de Buceo Agua Rica	Tamarindo	653-0094	www.aguarica.net
Buceo Aguacenter	Playa Flamingo	654-4148	www.costarica-diving.com
Deep Blue Diving Adventures	Playas del Coco	670-1004	www.scuba-diving-incosta-rica.com
Diving Safaris de Costa Rica	Playa Hermosa	672-0012	www.costaricadiving.net
Ocotal Diving Resort	Playa Ocotal	670-0321, ext. 15	www.ocotaldiving.com
Reef del Norte	Cuajiniquil	679-1093	minorlara@racsa.co.cr
Resort Divers de Costa Rica	Playa Panamá	672-0106	www.resortdiverscr.com
Rich Coast Diving	Playas del Coco	670-0176	www.richcoastdiving.com
Centro de buceo Summer-Salt	Playas del Coco	670-0308	www.summer-salt.com
The Edge Adventure Company	Playa Flamingo	654-4946	www.theedgeadventure.com
Diving Center Cuajiniquil	Cuajiniquil	8984-8836 2679-1217	minorlara@hotmail.com www.facebook.com





Recommendations before diving



- The dive center should be affiliated with one of the international recreational diving organizations such as PADI.
- Personnel must be qualified and trained in rescue diving, oxygen first aid and medical first aid.
- The center must have the maintenance records posted for the equipment and compressors.
- The air in your compressor must be clean.
- The boat must have first aid equipment, oxygen in sufficient quantity and quality, a first aid kit, a staff member trained in first aid and the use of oxygen equipment, drinking water, basic tools and spares, communication equipment, dive flag, an emergency plan written in a manner understandable to all, and a divemaster lifejacket for divers and staff.
- Check the date of the last hydrostatic test of the diving equipment. It must be visible on the tank and must be less than one year old.
- Check the mouthpieces before diving.

Snorkeling in Guanacaste

A calm sea with crystal-clear waters is the ideal environment for snorkeling. Guanacaste has no shortage. You will be able to choose between sites close to the beach that allow divers to choose their own route or ones that require taking a boat and going out to sea. Here are some of the best places to dive.

1. **San Juanillo:** one of the region's best places to see the rich marine life. You can swim out to sea to see tiny blue and yellow fish, starfish and sea urchins. San Juanillo is located on the west coast and the nearest towns are Marbella to the north and Ostional, Nosara and Garza to the south. It is located 17 kilometers from Playa Guiones.
2. **Isla Chora:** almost 1.3 kilometers from Sámara. To get there you will have to travel by kayak or hire a boat. Tours to the island cost around \$40 per person. Note that it is best to visit the island during low tide. According to experts, the best time for snorkeling is during the dry season, because in the rainy season the waters become turbid after heavy rainfall. The island has a quiet white sand beach where the water is calm and another more rocky part with bigger waves.
3. **Ocotal:** located 40 km south of the city of Liberia, a few minutes from Playas del Coco. Its gentle waves make it ideal for swimming, snorkeling, diving or just relaxing. The beach is surrounded by dry forest and protected by hills and rock formations.
4. **Conchal:** it is one of the best known beaches in the province. It has crystal clear turquoise waters, making it the perfect place for swimming and snorkeling. Near the coast you can find a variety of marine life and go swimming with multicolored fish.

5. **Nacascoto:** located in the canton of Liberia in the Gulf of Papagayo. It has white sand, blue and crystalline waters. It has shade along its entire coast because from the plants surrounding the beach.
6. **Playa Rajada:** a beautiful, secluded and small beach that is no more than 1 km long with light sand, a gentle slope and crystal-clear blue waters with gentle waves. The beach is surrounded by lush trees of the tropical dry forest, located in Salinas Bay in the province of Guanacaste.
7. **Playa Bahía Junquillal:** the gentle waves, clear water and the long, sandy shore make Junquillal Bay Beach an ideal destination for diving and snorkeling.
8. **Playa Cuajiniquil:** Los Leoncillos, known by locals as Boca Marion, is a hidden-away spot that is ideal for snorkeling.
9. **Playas del Coco and Playa Hermosa:** for beginner divers. It is one of the most visited places by divers, but also by tourists in search of beautiful beaches and sunny vacations.
10. **Islas Catalina: to see manta rays.** These islands are located half an hour from Playa del Coco in the province of Guanacaste and are famous for their beautiful seascape. You will be able to see sea turtles, sea horses, rays and sharks.
11. **Islas Murciélagos: to see bull sharks.** These islands are located on the north of the Pacific coast and are famous for bull shark sightings.
12. **Culebra Bay in the Gulf of Papagayo:** a quiet place to snorkel and enjoy the experience safely.
13. **Santa Elena Bay Marine Management Area:** Punta el Pochote is an ideal place for snorkeling because of the rich marine life present in the area.

Sources:

-  guiadeviajearcostarica.com
-  vozdeguanacaste.com



Fuentes

-  ticotimes.net
- viajar.elperiodico.com
- facebook.com/centrodebuceo.cuajiniquil

Protected Areas



Guanacaste Conservation Area (ACG)

National Parks

- Santa Rosa National Park
- Rincón de la Vieja National Park
- Guanacaste National Park

Other Protected Areas

- Horizontes Experimental Forest Station

Wetland

- Bahía Junquillal Wildlife Refuge

Arenal Tempisque Conservation Area
Miravalles National Park
Lomas Barbudal Biological Reserve

Tempisque Conservation Area
Iguanita National Wildlife Refuge

Guanacaste Norte (Guanacaste de Altura) includes three Conservation Areas: the **Guanacaste Conservation Area (ACG)**, which was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1999. This conservation area includes **Santa Rosa National Park, Rincón de la Vieja National Park, Guanacaste National Park** (no visitors allowed), **Horizontes Experimental Forest Station** and **Bahía Junquillal Wildlife Refuge**.

Two protected areas that belong to the **Arenal Tempisque Conservation Area** are also found in Guanacaste de Altura: **Miravalles National Park** and **Lomas Barbudal Biological Reserve**.

Tempisque Conservation Area, where the **Iguanita National Wildlife Refuge** is located, also covers part of northern Guanacaste.

The **Guanacaste Conservation Area** contains four of the five main ecosystems of the tropics: marine/coastal, dry forest, cloud forest and rainforest, representing the only area in the New World to harbor such a diversity of ecosystems.

Its location on the continental divide and the parks of the **Guanacaste Conservation Area** make northern Guanacaste a very popular site for birdwatching (with a strong Pacific influence, but also Caribbean species).

The heart of the **Guanacaste Conservation Area (ACG)** is a single uninterrupted biogeographical block of protected wilderness areas with an area of some 163,000 hectares, which extends from the marine area around the **Islas Murciélago** archipelago in the Pacific Ocean, through the **Santa Rosa plateau to the summit of the Orosi, Cacao and Rincón de la Vieja volcanoes** of the Guanacaste Volcanic Range and continuing to the lowlands on the Caribbean side of Costa Rica.

This biogeographic block, which represents approximately 2% of the country and 13% of the province of Guanacaste, is home to approximately **335,000 species of terrestrial organisms, equivalent to 2.6% of the world's biodiversity. In other words, there are more land species in the ACG than in northern Mexico, the United States and Canada combined.**



Fusion of history and nature

Santa Rosa National Park, located in Guanacaste, is a World Heritage Site that connects history and nature.

Santa Rosa preserves the only patch of dry tropical forest in Mesoamerica. This ecosystem is characterized by a long dry season (from December to May), with many of its plants losing their leaves during the dry season; water sources are very scarce and mostly seasonal. It is mostly secondary forest with forest patches that are characteristic of the original vegetation of the region. In addition to the conserving its natural heritage, the Santa Rosa Sector includes a wealth of historical, cultural, architectural, archeological and geological components. It is known for the Casona de Santa Rosa Historical Museum, dedicated to remembering the culture of the Guanacaste ranches, or haciendas, and the historical events of the Battle of Santa Rosa on March 20, 1856.

However, the main attraction of Santa Rosa National Park is that it is the only park on the planet where you can find 10 different habitats, including desert forests, oak forests, mangrove swamps, coastal forests, evergreen forests, swamps and savannas, which cover the entire area of the park. It is home to at least 115 species

of mammals such as white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*), howler monkeys (*Alouatta palliata*), white-faced capuchins (*Cebus capucinus*), spider monkeys, white-nosed coatis (*Nasua narica*), agoutis, tapirs, coyotes, peccaries, anteaters, armadillos, jaguars, ocelots, pumas, jaguarundis (*Puma yagouaroundi*) and bats, as well as more than 10,000 species of insects, 250 species of birds, predominantly the white-throated magpie-jay (*Calocitta formosa*), the orange-fronted parakeet (*Aratinga canicularis*), the turquoise-browed motmot (*Eumomota superciliosa*), the scaly-breasted hummingbird (*Phaeochroa cuvierii*) and the gray-cowled wood rail (*Aramides cajanea*), as well as around 100 species of amphibians and other reptiles such as the famous olive ridley turtles (*Lepidochelys olivacea*), leatherback turtles (*Dermochelys coriacea*), rattlesnakes (*Crotalus durissus*) and the black spiny-tailed iguana (*Ctenosaurus similis*).

Currently, the Santa Rosa area is the only place in the world with an existing natural population of the tree *Ateleia herbert-smithii*, one of the few leguminous plants in the world that is wind-pollinated, making it a very particular plant from a biological point of view (Janzen, 1988a).

The park also contains some of the oldest land in Costa Rica, which emerged from the sea more than 85 million years ago.



The park allows access to Playa Naranjo, a beautiful beach that is famous among surfers. In addition to the conserving the region's natural heritage, the Santa Rosa Sector contains the Casona de Santa Rosa Historical Museum, dedicated to remembering the culture of the Guanacaste ranches, or haciendas, and the historical events of the Battle of Santa Rosa on March 20, 1856.

Main attractions

 **Historic site:** The park contains the Historical Museum La Casona, the stone corrals and the Monument to the Heroes, each of which provides valuable information.

 **Playa Naranjo:** Ideal for visitors who enjoy surfing, camping or hiking the trails near the mangrove swamp. Peña Bruja is one of its most renowned features, a world-famous surf spot with spectacular waves for experts only.

 **Sector Murciélago:** A perfect area to see the dry forest and enjoy its beaches and trails, as well as the freshwater rivers and mangrove swamps.

 **Sector Marino:** With 43 Marine Protected Areas, it has a rich biological wealth of reefs and a variety of fish. Ideal for enjoying recreational activities such as boat rides, diving and surfing.



Hours:
Everyday from 8 am to 3:30 pm.
High season: 8 am - 5 pm.
Historic Museum La Casona de Santa Rosa, everyday from 8 am to 3:30 pm



FEES

Nationals and residents	€1.100
Foreign adult	\$15
CR children (2 - 12 years)	€500
Foreign children (2 - 12 years)	\$5
Students	€500
Rates for campers per person per day	
Nationals and residents	€3.300
Children (2 - 12 years)	€2.700
Students	€2.700
Non resident foreigners	\$19
Niños	\$9

Rates + VAT

Information Guanacaste Conservation Area (ACG)
Sub-regional Office, Liberia. Forest Procedures, Wildlife, Natural Heritage in the Maritime Terrestrial Zone

 (506) 2666-0630

Tourist information and general inquiries about Protected Areas

 (506) 2666-5051  acg.info@sinac.go.cr

Cámara Liberiana de Turismo (Calitur)

 (506) 2668-1045  calitur@calitur.com  www.calitur.com

Cámara de Turismo Guanacasteca (Catargua)

 (506) 2668-1150  mmercadeo@catargua.com  www.catargua.com

More Information:

 www.sinac.go.cr

 costaricainfolink.com

Download the maps for your tour of the Historic Site

 www.acguanacaste.ac.cr

 www.acguanacaste.ac.cr



SERVICES



Drinking water



Camping Area



Picnic Area



Restrooms



Lodging



Lookout



Parking



How do you get there?

By car

From San José drive north towards Puntarenas and then follow the Carretera Interamericana to Liberia and continue about 35 km (22 miles) north until you reach the entrance to the Santa Rosa sector, which is on your left.

From Daniel Oduber Quirós International Airport (LIR), follow the road to Liberia and continue about 35 km (22 miles) north until you reach the entrance to the Santa Rosa sector, which is on your left.

By bus:

You can take the San José - La Cruz - Peñas Blancas bus, the final destination of which is the border crossing with Nicaragua. The bus takes about 5 hours from San José and stops at the entrance of Santa Rosa National Park (Transportes Deldú, +506 2256-9072).

By plane:

You can also take a flight between Juan Santamaría airport and Liberia, with daily departures on Sansa or Aerobell Airlines. From there you can take a cab or drive to Santa Rosa National Park, which can take approximately 45 minutes.

Naranjo Station

An 8 km gravel road from Santa Rosa station leads to Playa Naranjo. The road is only passable during the dry season with a 4x4 vehicle.

Sector Murciélago

Sector Murciélago is the northern part of the Santa Helena Peninsula and provides access to multiple beaches, bays and inlets. Other important beaches

located in Sector Murciélago are: Playa Blanca (17 km from the camping area) and the bays of Santa Elena and El Hachal.

How do you get there?

Travel north on the Carretera Interamericana for about 12 miles after the entrance to the Santa Rosa Sector and turn left towards the town of Cuajiniquil and continue for about 15 km (9 miles) more on a gravel road until you reach the entrance to the Murciélago Sector of Santa Rosa National Park. Since this road is often inaccessible, it is best to stop at the Santa Rosa station in advance to request information on road conditions throughout the park. This route requires a total of 6 to 7 hours from San José.

Sector Marino

This protected area consists of 43 hectares with surf spots (Peña Bruja and Ollis Point) and diving around the Islas Murciélago archipelago. This entire sector has strong winds from November to April and approaching by sea is difficult. Boat trips can be arranged from Cuajiniquil and Playas del Coco, Flamingo and other beaches in this area.



The Casona de Santa Rosa Historical Museum is an emblematic piece of Costa Rica's history. During your visit, you will have the opportunity to delve into the most memorable chapters of our people's idiosyncratic history. Take the opportunity to appreciate the scenery that served as the foundation of the historical, cultural and natural legacy of the former Hacienda Santa Rosa.

This museum has an exhibition room with antiques, information and samples from all around Guanacaste Conservation Area (ACG). The trails around the site connect the historic site to the surrounding tropical dry forest, linking history and culture with nature. The museum is open from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.



More information:

 www.acguanacaste.ac.cr/turismo

 www.youtube.com

Download here La Casona de Santa Rosa Guide:

 www.acguanacaste.ac.cr

SERVICES



Drinking water



Picnic Area



Restrooms



Access to Universal Trail



Photo: G. Pucci



Lomas Barbudal Biological Reserve



The Lomas de Barbudal Biological Reserve was created on March 5, 1986, to protect noteworthy areas of tropical dry forest, along with sections of shrub and riparian forests. It is known as the Park of Insects due to its immense variety of insects, particularly bees, wasps and diurnal and nocturnal butterflies. There are an estimated 250 species of bees, comprising nearly 25% of the world's bee species, along with about 60 species of moths and more than 60 species of nocturnal butterflies.

Another characteristic that makes Lomas Barbudal a very important wilderness area is the presence, even during the summer, of abundant water sources, such as the Río Cabuyo, numerous streams and natural springs.

The reserve is part of the Tempisque Conservation Area and is located in San Ramón de Bagaces, 18 km southwest of the city of Bagaces, north of Liberia, Guanacaste. According to signposts, it is 6 km from the Pijije junction.

Birdwatching tourism

If you are a bird lover, the Lomas de Barbudal Biological Reserve and its tropical dry forest offers an excellent potential for bird watching, as it is home to more than 200 species of birds.

During your tour, pay close attention and you will see the scarlet macaw (*Ara macao*), the long-tailed hopper (*Chiroxiphia linearis*), the turquoise-browed motmot (*Eumomota superciliosa*), the stub-tailed spadebill (*Platyrinchus cancrominus*), the olive sparrow (*Arremonops rufivirgatus*), the red widow or elegant trogon (*Trogon elegans*), the yellow widow or black-headed trogon (*Trogon melanocephalus*), as well as the great curassow (*Crax rubra*), among others.



Trogon elegans
Photo: Laurens

Flora & fauna

Barbudal has several plant communities including the wooded savanna, evergreen forest, riparian forest found along waterways and the area's largest biome, the dry tropical forest. The dry forest is largely populated with deciduous trees, which lose their leaves during the dry season. The most common species here are pochote, indio desnudo, jobo, corteza amarilla, ronrón, laurel, canilla de mula and malacahuite.

The reserve protects several endangered tree species, such as mahogany (*Swietenia macrophylla*), secoya (*Platymiscium pleiostachyum*), pochote (*Bombacopsis quinata*), ronrón (*Astronium graveolens*), cocobolo (*Dalbergia retusa*), and cristobál or ñambar (*Platymiscium parviflorum*), as well as the nance (*Byrsonima crassifolia*) whose flowers offer an oily resin that bees of the genus *Centris* use as mortar when building tunnels. The reserve also provides habitat for the splendid golden trumpet tree or corteza amarilla (*Tabebuia ochracea*), known for the small yellow flowers that cover its bare branches after the first rains.

Mammals are not abundant. However, you can see howler and white-faced capuchins (*Alouatta palliata* and *Cebus capucinus*), squirrels (*Sciurus variegatoides*), numbat (*Myrmecobius fasciatus*), white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*), raccoons (*Procyon lotor*), tayras (*Eira barbara*), agoutis (*Dasyprocta punctata*), armadillos (*Dasybus novemcinctus*), coatis (*Nasua narica*), the fisherman bat (*Noctilio leporinus*) and a large number of reptiles and fish.



How do you get there?

From San José:



By car: Take the Carretera Interamericana north to

Bagaces. Then turn southeast near km 221 (10 km northwest of Bagaces, 14 km southeast of Liberia) and continue for approximately 12 km to the park entrance. The turnoff for the entrance to the Lomas Barbudal Biological Reserve is signposted (4WD or 4x4 recommended). The Casa de Patrimonio visitor center is 7 km to the south. Consider parking at the top and walking to the visitor center if the road conditions are unfavorable.

You can also take the new Caldera Highway (route 27) to Puntarenas and then follow the same directions along the Carretera Interamericana to the reserve.

There is also a very rough road that leaves from the northwest side of the entrance to Palo Verde National Park. Consult park rangers for current conditions and regulations before embarking on this route.

From Daniel Oduber Quirós International Airport (LIR), drive south along the Interamericana Norte for 14 km from Liberia to Bagaces. Then turn southeast and continue for about 12 km to the park entrance. The turnoff for the entrance to the Lomas Barbudal Biological Reserve is signposted (4WD or 4x4 recommended). The Casa de Patrimonio visitor center is 7 km to the south.

By bus:



You can take a bus that travels on the San José-Liberia route (which takes about 4 hours), which stops in Bagaces, Pulmitán and Liberia (2222-1650). From there you can either drive or take a cab to the Lomas de Barbuda Biological Reserve, which can take approximately 15 minutes.

By plane:



You can also take a flight between Juan Santamaría International Airport to Daniel Oduber Quirós International Airport, with daily departures on Sansa or Aerobell Airlines. From there you can either drive or take a bus or cab to the Lomas de Barbuda Biological Reserve, which can take approximately 40 minutes.





Trails, Museums and More

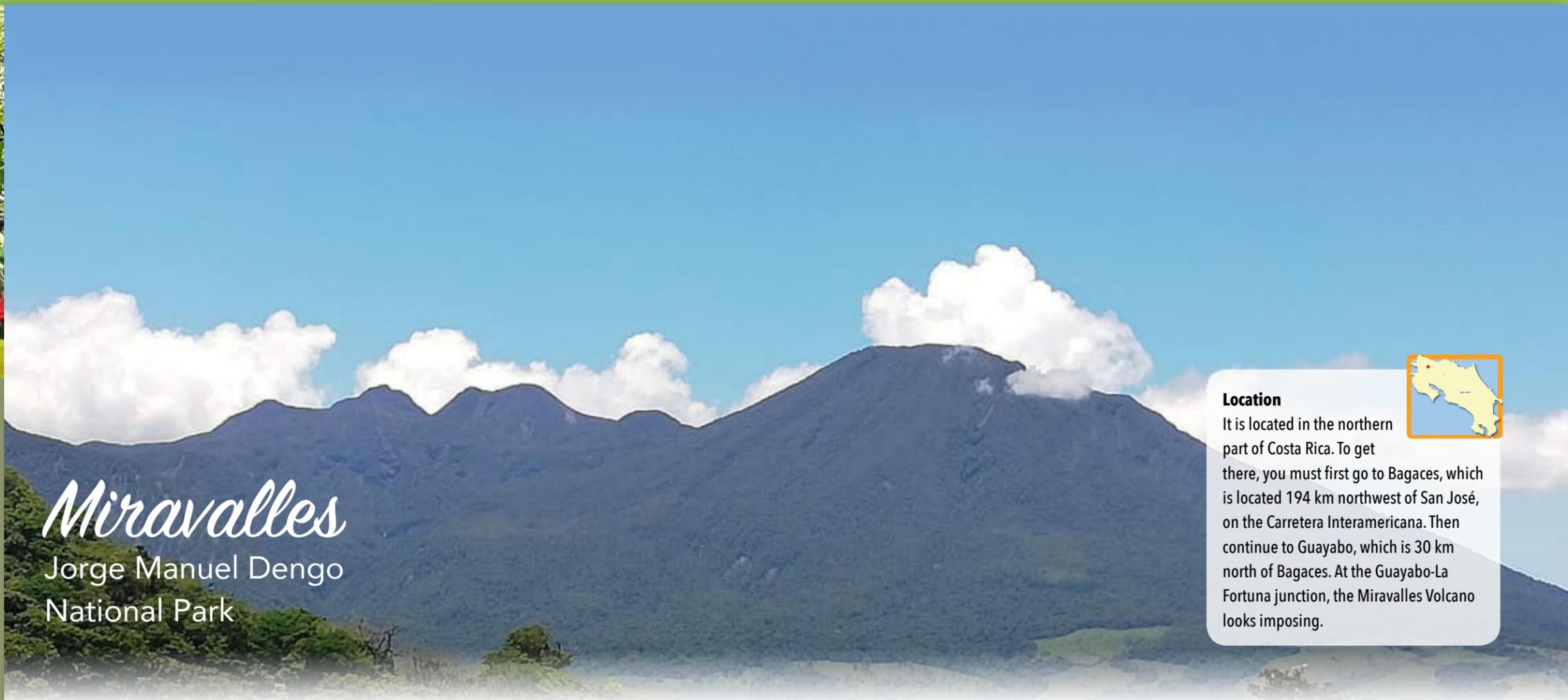
Taking one of the park's many hiking trails offers the perfect opportunity to enjoy its impressive wildlife. While you're there, why not visit the research station, which houses a wealth of data on the species you'll see? This museum and information center, located in the Heritage House at the park entrance, is a great place to start your journey through the reserve. To appreciate the best of what this place has to offer, plan on visiting between December and April. Your trip should be blessed with clear skies and warm temperatures, avoiding the extremely humid conditions of the green or rainy season.

Links

-  areasyparques.com
-  www.govisitcostarica.co.cr
-  costaricainfolink.com
-  costa-rica-guide.com/nature
-  www.facebook.com

Contact:

 Tempisque Conservation Area telephone (ACT): +506 2686-4967 / +506 2686-4968



Miravalles
Jorge Manuel Dengo
National Park

Location
It is located in the northern part of Costa Rica. To get there, you must first go to Bagaces, which is located 194 km northwest of San José, on the Carretera Interamericana. Then continue to Guayabo, which is 30 km north of Bagaces. At the Guayabo-La Fortuna junction, the Miravalles Volcano looks imposing.



The Jorge Manuel Dengo Miravalles National Park is located in the province of Guanacaste and is the 29th in the country. The area protects species that are endangered in the country, especially felines, jaguars and tapirs. In addition, it protects a significant source of water for the Atlantic and Pacific sides of the country. It was declared as a national park based on its biophysical characteristics, natural resources, and its potential for environmental research and education.

Likewise, this decision will provide a significant boost to sustainable development in the province of Guanacaste, as well as for commercial activities that are linked to caring for the environment.

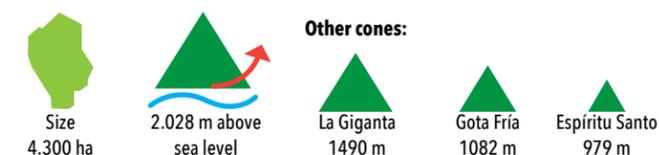
Importance

At 2,028 meters above sea level, the Volcán Miravalles is the **highest volcano in the volcanic mountain range of Guanacaste**. Ascending the massif takes you from the scorching plains of Bagaces to the cool mountain peaks.

Miravalles has a semi-destroyed and inactive crater. However, in the hornillas and Guayabo sectors, lava flows can be seen that are about one million years old. Additional volcanic cones can be found in the surrounding area, including **La Giganta, Espiritu Santo and Gota Fría**.

Biological wealth

The slopes of the national park are covered by tropical rainforest. In fact, the entire region contains a wealth of natural water resources. The

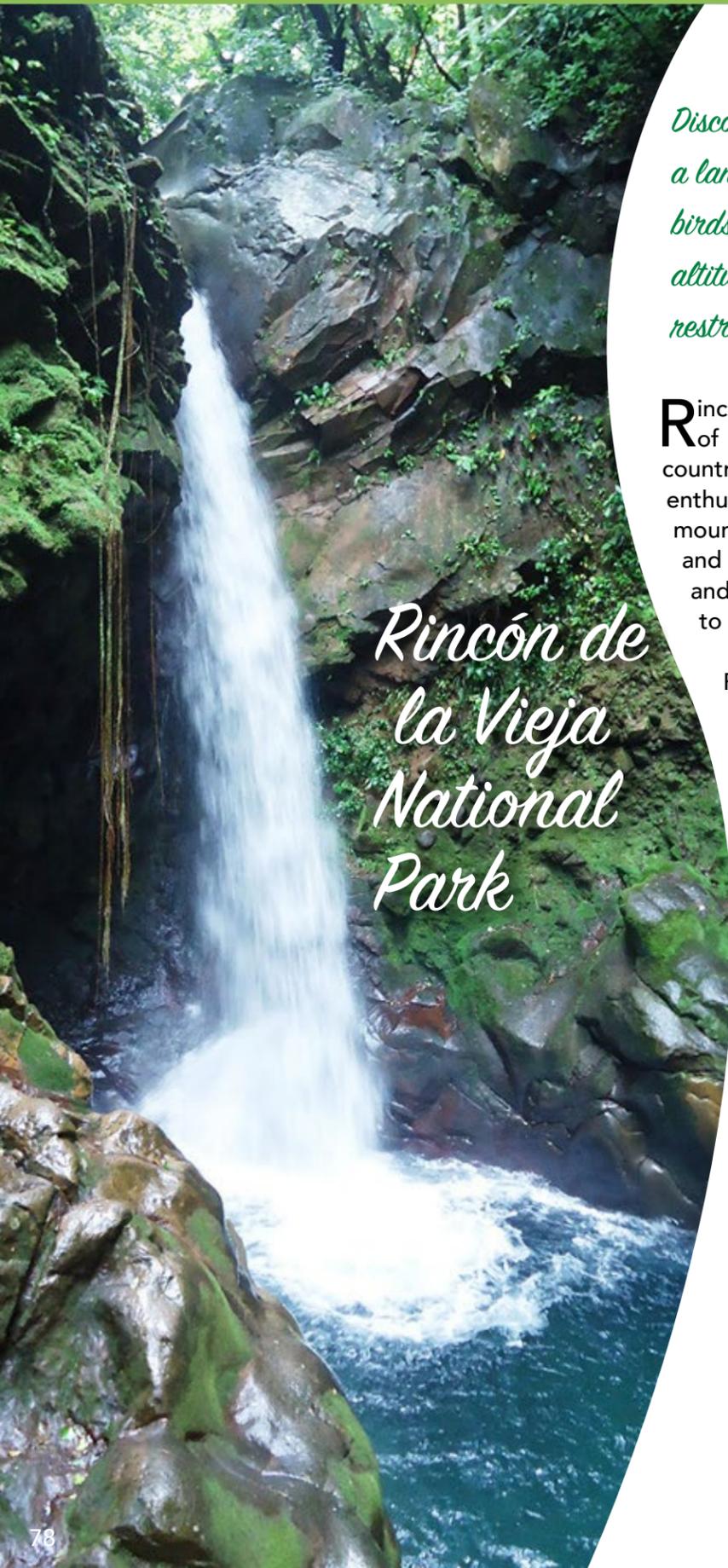


rivers that begin their courses here drain into the Pacific, Lake Nicaragua and the wetlands of Palo Verde National Park.

The area is also important as a habitat for felines, birds, deer, coyotes, tepezcuintles, peccaries and white-faced monkeys, among many others. It also has a good population of a tree called jícaro danto, which is endemic to the Cordillera de Guanacaste, meaning that it is only found here.

Clima

The temperature at the summit varies between 6°C and 9°C.



Rincón de la Vieja National Park

Discover the rich diversity of bird fauna in a landscape where Pacific and Caribbean birds converge in a single place, as well as altitudinal migration processes of species with restricted distributions.

Rincón de la Vieja National Park offers a combination of attractions that are unlike anywhere else in the country, making it one of the best destinations for hiking enthusiasts. Its volcanic complex that extends over a mountain range, with rivers that flows into the Pacific and the Caribbean, creates numerous environments and microclimates that different species of birds use to find the conditions they need to survive.

Rincón de la Vieja National Park is an undiscovered gem in the interior of Costa Rica, home to an incredible combination of volcanic geological wonders and pristine tropical rainforests that spans six life zones. **The rich and abundant volcanic activity brings about phenomena such as fumaroles, mud ponds and acid lagoons.**



Rincón de la Vieja Volcano
1,895m / 6,217 ft



It encompasses nine contiguous craters that dot the national park.



Santa María Volcano, the highest peak, at 1,916 m / 6,385 ft



Cerro Von Seebach

This is the most active area. It has a crater with an acidic lake, continuously venting steam and occasional volcanic hiccups.



Sendero con acceso universal



This set of volcanic peaks are the most active in the Cordillera de Guanacaste, where the greatest volcanic activity occurred during the second half of the 1960s. The last major eruption of the Rincón de la Vieja Volcano occurred about 3,500 years ago. All subsequent eruptions, have been smaller, including numerous historical events dating back to the 16th century. Over the last 10 years it has been a very active volcano with phreatic and phreatomagmatic eruptions. The last eruption of this type was in June 2021.

Although you can visit all year round, one of the best time to visit Rincón de la Vieja National Park is during the rainy season (May to November), as this is when fumaroles and boiling mud pots are most active, as well as when hot springs form small streams with very hot water, furthermore, solfataras (containing sulfur dioxide) fill small holes with the constant spread of muddy water.

The crater is closed and has remained so since 2011. You should therefore contact ACG at 2666-5051, for information about its next opening.

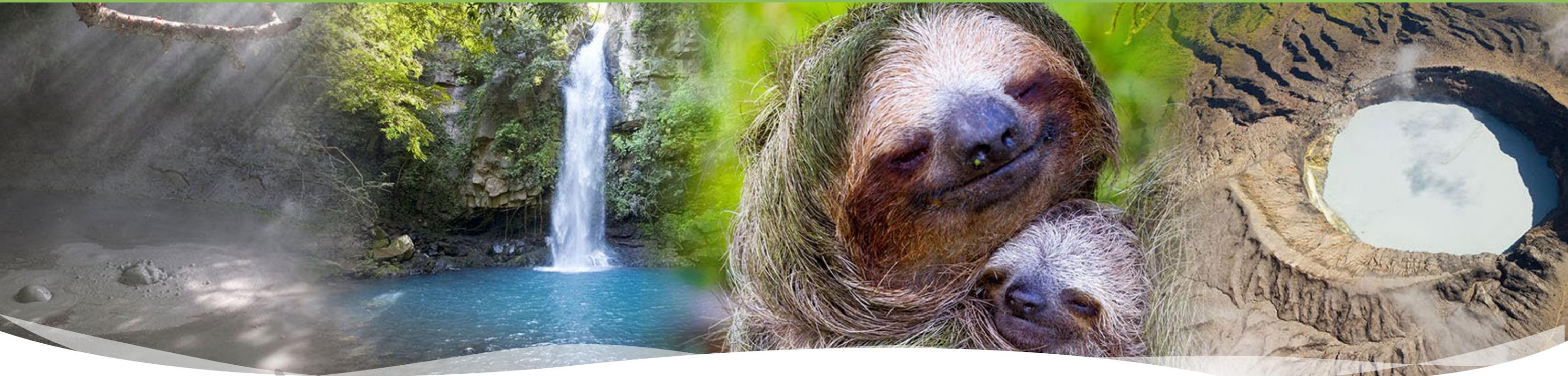
The park has a variety of wildlife, such as more than 300 species of birds, including the three-wattled bellbird (*Procnias tricarunculata*), the crested guan (*Penelope purpurascens*), the emerald toucanet (*Aulacorhynchus prasinus*), the blue-throated goldentail (*Hylocharis eliciae*), the white-fronted parrot (*Amazona albifrons*), the Amazonian motmot (*Momotus momota*), the spectacled owl (*Pulsatrix perspicillata*), the laughing falcon (*Herpetotheres cachinnans*), the black-faced solitaire (*Myadestes melanops*), the Montezuma oropendola (*Psarocolius*

montezuma) and chachalacas. It is the home of the tody motmot (*Hylomanes momotula*), a species whose distribution is limited to the high parts of the volcanic mountain range of Guanacaste. The mammals seen in the park include monkeys (white-faced capuchins, spider and howler monkeys), peccaries, tapirs, deer, raccoons, coatis, kinkajous, skunks, armadillos, anteaters, sloths, pumas, jaguars and many more. Volcanic chimneys and fumaroles provide a habitat for certain extremophile microorganisms.

Nearly 50 years of conservation efforts have allowed the park to maintain a healthy and abundant population of unique wildlife. In addition, visitors will

RESTRICTIONS

- Respect the visiting hours of the Park
- Watch your belongings
- Stay within the trails
- Don't feed or harass the animals
- No mascotas
- No se permite extraer plantas o animales
- No se permite ingresar bajo el efecto de drogas
- Do not pollute
- No campfires
- Not allowed loud music volume
- The Pailas Sector doesn't have an area for camping
- Use the grills lunch area (sector Sta María)



WHERE DOES IT GET ITS NAME FROM?



The name Rincón de la Vieja refers to the legend of a young woman whose lover was thrown into the volcano by her father, after which she became a recluse with healing powers.

The legend probably originated with the local Chorotega indigenous tribe, who believed that an old witch inhabited the top of the mountain, who was thought to send plumes of smoke into the air when she was angry.



also find mud pools, waterfalls and freshwater lakes with ideal swimming areas for tourist use. In fact, the heat the volcanoes generates is harnessed by one of the largest geothermal electricity generation plants in the world, located right here.



Main attractions

El Rincón de la Vieja has two sectors: Las Pailas and Santa María, whose beauties include certain types of volcanic activity.

In Las Pailas you can visit the trail of the same name, which leads to the Escondidas and La Cangreja waterfalls (all of high difficulty).

In Santa María you can hike along the Sendero Colibrí, visit the cold water pools, the waterfalls of the Bosque Encantado (Enchanted Forest), the hot springs (all of moderate difficulty) and the viewpoint (high difficulty).

Sector Las Pailas

The Las Pailas sector is located in a forest area, and is named after the volcanic features located there, which include fumaroles, mud pools and fumarolic lagoons.



How do you get there?

From San José: drive north towards Puntarenas and then follow the Carretera Interamericana towards Liberia, then keep going for about 5 km north; here you will take a 20 km road northwest until you reach the sector. It is advisable to use a vehicle with four-wheel drive. Driving time from San Jose is about 5 hours.

From Daniel Oduber Quiros International Airport (LIR), follow the road to Liberia and continue for about 5 km to the north; from there, you'll head northwest on a 20 km road until you reach the sector. It is advisable to use a vehicle with four-wheel drive. Driving time from Liberia to Rincón de la Vieja is about 45 minutes.

Sector Santa María

The Santa María sector was, from the end of the 19th century until 1973, **one of the largest haciendas in the area**. On the ranch, cattle were raised for meat and milk, and there were plantations of coffee and sugarcane. Within this sector is the Casona Santa María, a small exhibition for the public. The Casona can accommodate a maximum capacity of 20 people, with access subject to the availability of administrative personnel.

There is also a **lookout point**, located on a small hill behind the Casona de Santa María, an old building belonging to the hacienda. From the lookout, visitors can see the Volcán Miravalles, the surroundings of the town of San Jorge and the lowlands of Guanacaste near the Río Tempisque.

This sector also has **restrooms, bathrooms, drinking water, tables, barbecue grills and wash basins**, as well as a large area around the Casona where visitors are allowed to leave their vehicles.

Hours: Open from Tuesday to Sunday 8 am - 3 pm. Mondays closed.



How do you get to the Santa María sector?

From San José: take the Interamericana towards Liberia, then take the route that begins in La Victoria neighborhood, then take the road that leads to the town of Colonia Blanca, where you'll take a left and continue for 25 km. In total, the road to the administration building is 25 km long. Due to the conditions of the road, **it is advisable to use a vehicle with four-wheel drive.**

From Daniel Oduber Quiros International Airport (LIR): follow the road to Liberia and continue on the same road for about 5 km to the north; from there, you'll head northwest on a 20 km unpaved road until you reach the sector. Due to the conditions of the road, it is advisable to use a vehicle with four-wheel drive. Driving time from Liberia to Rincón de la Vieja is **about 45 minutes.**

By bus: You can take a bus from San José to Liberia, which takes about 4 hours (Pulmitan Liberia, +506 2222-1650) and then take the Liberia-Curubandé or Liberia-Colonia Blanca buses, both of which stop at the entrance of the Santa María Sector.

By plane: You can also catch a flight between Juan Santamaría airport and Liberia international airport, with daily departures on Sansa or Aerobell Airlines. From there, you can rent a car and drive to the park.

ENTRY FEES	
Costa Rican citizens and residents	₡1.000
Foreign adult	\$15
Children (Costa Rican citizens and residents aged 2-12)	₡500
Children (non-residents aged 2-12)	\$5
Students	₡500

Elementary and high school groups: organized and coordinated with the Ecotourism Program ecoturismo@acguanacaste.ac.cr
rates do not include VAT

SERVICES (LAS PAILAS & SANTA MARÍA)



The Pailas ranger station offers visitors the opportunity to spend the night in adjacent camps, located 200 meters from the information booth within a forest area, with a capacity for 40 people.

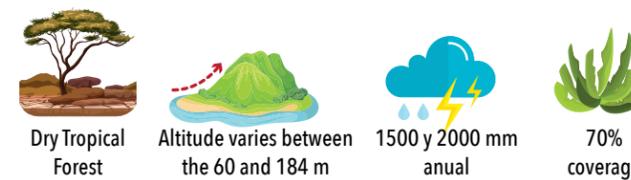
Information:
 ✉ ecoturismo@acguanacaste.ac.cr
Liberia Tourism Chamber (Calitur)
 ☎ (506) 2668-1045 🌐 www.calitur.com
Guanacaste Tourism Chamber (Caturgua)
 ☎ (506) 2668-1150 🌐 www.caturgua.com

Sector Las Pailas
 ☎ (506) 2666-5051
Guanacaste Conservation Area
 ☎ (506) 2666-5051
Tourist Information INFOTUR:
 1192
 🌐 costaricainfolink.com

The station is the main base of operations of the Restoration and Silviculture Program of the Guanacaste Conservation Area. One of the program's main activities is gathering information on the restoration of degraded environments and the implementation of activities that accelerate the natural restoration of those environments within the ACG, in sites that have been heavily disturbed by human activity.

A partial inventory of biodiversity in the Refuge reports **118 species of trees and shrubs, more than 150 species of fungi and 135 species of birds** (27% of which are migratory).

The Horizontes Experimental Forestry Station is located in the district of Nacascolo, canton of Liberia in the Province of Guanacaste, Costa Rica.



Previously, the Station's land was a ranch on which cattle ranching and agriculture took place, with extensive crops such as rice, sorghum and cotton.

The station is intended to be the most important forestry center in the dry region of Guanacaste and has basic lodging facilities, a dining room and an auditorium for holding events, with special emphasis on training and research.

SERVICES

To visit this site you must make a reservation at the following address reservaciones.acguanacaste.ac.cr. More information: 8997-3341.



Sites you can visit



Other activities you can do at the station:



How do you get to Horizontes Forest Experimental Stations?

 **By bus:** Take a bus on the Liberia-El Triunfo route, which takes about 50 minutes. You must get off at the first intersection, before reaching the town. From there, you will leave the paved road, and walk approximately 3km. Check the schedules at (506) 2666-0517.

 **By vehicle:** We are located 38 km from the city of Liberia. From Liberia, head west on the Nicoya highway (Route 21) for 18 km, to the community of Guardia. After the bridge over the Tempisque River, turn north, just where the Dolt Center mall is located (Route 253). Then continue for 11 km to the turnoff for Playa Cabuyal. Take the road that goes to Playa Cabuyal and El Triunfo for 3.5 km until you reach the crossroads at the entrance to the Station where you'll need to continue for 3 km along a gravel road to the lodge and the administrative area of the Station.

Tel: (506) 2666-5051.



ENTRY FEES

Costa Rican citizens and residents	₡1000
Foreign adult	\$10
Children (Costa Rican citizens and residents aged 2-12)	₡500
Children (non-residents aged 2-12)	\$10
Students	₡1000
Children under 6 years of age, older adults and people with disabilities	Free

Primary and secondary in groups organized and coordinated by the Restoration and Forestry Program: reservaciones.horizontes@acguanacaste.ac.cr

Rates do not include VAT

Links

- www.acguanacaste.ac.cr/biodesarrollo
- www.acguanacaste.ac.cr/programa-de-restauracion
- areasyparques.com/areasprotegidas



Bahia Junquillal National Wildlife Refuge

The site is surrounded by a great biological richness with seven different coastal ecosystems.

The rocky zone is located at the ends of sandy beaches. This ecosystem is characterized by tidal changes and an exposed rocky substrate where algae grow. It offers habitat and food to the diverse community of organisms that inhabit the surface of the rocks, tide pools and crevices. The rocky zone is ideal for observing invertebrates such as those belonging to the orders Porifera (sea sponges) and Actiniaria (anemones); echinoderms such as sea cucumbers, sea urchins and brittle starfish; mollusks like sea slugs, sea cockroaches, snails and oysters; and crustaceans such as crabs, hermit crabs, barnacles and rock lice, all of which exhibit a very interesting variety of adaptations to survive.

Attractives



Playa Junquillal: A white sand beach that is 2 km in length; its bay-like shape makes it ideal for swimming. In particular, the estuary area is ideal for swimming. Fishing is prohibited, though a variety of activities are available that will allow you to observe the area's diverse marine life with its many species of fish.



Isla Muñecos: This rocky formation is located in Bahía de Junquillal, a bay that is home to a major coral population that can only be observed up close on a rented boat booked in advance. You can find boats for rent in Cuajiniquíl.

Trails:



Sendero El Carao: This circuit trail is suitable for all visitors. Its main attraction is the dry forest, though mangroves and a beach landscape are also present. At 600 m in length, it takes around 15 minutes to complete. The trail is just 30 meters above sea level and is a great place to spot birds and mammals, though its main focus is touring the forest regeneration area. Among the most common birds that can be observed are parakeets, magpies and crab hawks. Trees such as cenízaro, guanacaste, carao, papaturro and cornizuelo are common.





Sendero el Estero Seco: It is a straight-line trail suitable for all visitors, with attractions including the estuary and beach landscape. The trail is a great place to spot birds and mammals. The trail, which is completely at sea level, has a length of 800 m and takes 20 minutes to hike. The access point is near the day area. It is easy to spot organisms of the coastal area along the trail, including crabs, raccoons, hawks and fish.



Sendero La Laguna: It is a gently curving trail suitable for all visitors, with attractions including the lake and beach landscape. You may also encounter birds and mammals along the trail. It's 800 m in length and located at sea level, taking around 20 minutes to complete. The trailhead is right at the end of the camping area. During the rainy season, many organisms of the coastal zone can be seen in the area, and migratory birds can easily be observed in the lake.



Bahia Junquillal Natural Wildlife . Located within the city of La Cruz in Guanacaste, Costa Rica, the refuge is about 33 kilometers from Liberia and borders the Santa Rosa National Park. It was created with the aim of preserving and conserving a regeneration zone, as well as a dry forest that extends to the edge of the beach and coastal mangrove. It also offers opportunities for tourists to take in the coastal environment.



The most common birds include the orange-fronted parakeet (*Aratinga canicularis*), yellow-naped parrot (*Amazona auropalliata*), white-throated magpie-jay (*Calocitta formosa*), and several species of hawks. During the rainy season it is possible to observe the roseate spoonbill (*Ajaia ajaja*). On the coast, noteworthy species include pelicans (*Pelecanus occidentalis*) and the magnificent frigatebird (*Fregata magnificens*).

SERVICES



ENTRY FEES

Rates do not include VAT

Costa Rican citizens and residents	₡2000
Foreign adult	\$15
Children (Costa Rican citizens and residents aged 2-12)	₡500
Children (non-residents aged 2-12)	\$5
Rates for campers per person per day (national)	₡4000
Rates for campers per person per day (foreign)	\$19

More information:

- Bahía Junquillal Wildlife Refuge 2200-9484
- Regional ACG: 2666-7718 / 2695-0441
- www.acguanacaste.ac.cr/turismo/sector-junquillal

Hours: every day from 7:00 am to 5:30 pm, varying during the high season, when the park is staffed from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm.

Location:
The park is located 46 km north of the city of Liberia. Take the Carretera Interamericana to the control post at the entrance to Cuajiniquil. From there, keep going for 8 km until you reach the community of Cuajiniquil, then head north for 4 km on a dirt road and you will reach the main entrance of the refuge.



Isla Bolaños

Isla Bolaños was created on February 13, 1981 in order to conserve seabirds and protect one of the few known sites in Costa Rica for the nesting colonies of magnificent frigatebirds (*Fregata magnificens*), as well as the nesting sites of brown pelicans (*Pelecanus occidentalis*), and the American oystercatcher (*Haematopus palliatus*). The refuge is part of Santa Rosa National Park and is located in Salinas Bay, near the border of Nicaragua and Costa Rica.

The island is a rocky mountain 80 meters high, with an area of about 25 ha. It is situated 15 minutes from Puerto Soley, in the northwestern part of the Costa Rica, forming part of the protected block of the Guanacaste Conservation Area.

The oval-shaped island's rugged terrain is composed of numerous layers of sedimentary rocks that are approximately 40 million years old. The geological features left behind in the rocks by the passage of time are extremely attractive and have great scientific importance as evidence of storms and meteorological phenomena that have affected the site. Plant and animal fossils tell how the storms came suddenly and many could not escape.

The island has bright white sand beaches on the eastern end, with shell and clam mounds. In the rocky areas, several species of crabs can be found,

most notably giant land crabs. In addition, the waters surrounding the island are a beautiful clear blue, which make it easy to spot the abundant marine life.

Things to remember

- At Isla Bolaños, there are no facilities on the island.
- Only guided tours with authorized guides.
- Seabirds can be observed from a boat (fishing boats can be rented in Puerto Soley).
- Coordination for visits should be made with the ACG at ecoturismo@acguanacaste.ac.cr and 2666-5051.
- The island has no marked trails, though hiking is possible during the low tide. A single trail is currently being planned, which will facilitate visits to the birdwatching point.



How do you get to the Isla Bolaños Wildlife Refuge?

Since it is an island, situated about 3 km from Puerto Soley, the refuge can only be accessed by sea.

From San Jose, Puerto Soley can be accessed by vehicle or private/public transportation. Visitors arriving from Liberia International Airport can also easily reach the national refuge. Once in Puerto Soley, the best way to reach the refuge is with a guided boat ride, which will help avoid disturbing the wildlife. Transportation can be arranged in Puerto Soley, by means of a 3 km (1.9 miles) trip to the island. The trip from San José to Liberia takes about 6 hours by private vehicle.

By car

 **From San José:** Drive west towards Puntarenas and then take the Interamericana highway until you reach the canton of La Cruz.

From Daniel Oduber International Airport, Liberia (LIR): Keep going on the road towards Liberia and then take the Interamericana highway until you reach the canton of La Cruz. The refuge is located in Bahía Salinas, near the Nicaraguan border, 6 km southwest of the town of La Cruz.

By bus:

 You can take the San José - La Cruz - Peñas Blancas bus, the final destination of which is the border crossing with Nicaragua. The bus takes **about 5 hours from San José** (Transportes Deldú, +506 2256-9072).

You can also take a bus from San José to Liberia, which takes about 4 hours (Pulmitan Liberia, +506 2222-1650) and then take a bus from Liberia to La Cruz (Arrieta Terminal). From there, Puerto Soley is 6 km away, and can be reached by vehicle or walking. In Puerto Soley, it is possible to arrange boat transportation to Isla Bolaños at any time of the year.

By plane:

 You can also catch a flight between Juan Santamaría airport and Liberia international airport, with daily departures on Sansa or Aerobell Airlines. From there, you can rent a car and drive to Port Soley, which can take **approximately 1.5 hours**.

More information

Guanacaste Conservation Area

 acg@acguanacaste.ac.cr Santa Rosa:  (506) 2666-5051

Liberia:  (506) 2666-0630 INFOTUR: 1192

 www.acguanacaste.ac.cr



The Iguanita National Wildlife Refuge is located in the Nacascolo Peninsula, and is part of the Papagayo Tourism Pole. Playa Iguanita offers placid, calm waters that are ideal for a little swimming, since Culebra Bay is protected from the open waters of the Pacific Ocean. Its territory includes 35.8 ha of a restricted area (31% of the total area) in a strip of forested land surrounding the mangrove swamp.

The Iguanita National Wildlife Refuge is part of the Guanacaste Conservation Area in northwestern Costa Rica, with warm average temperatures that range from 22°C (70°F) to 34°C (90°F), and the area includes primary forest, tropical dry forest, mangrove forest and a marine portion in the bay.

The region contains a large number of tourist, educational and scientific attractions, which are accessible to the public thanks to the proximity of the refuge to the community of Liberia. These attractions play an important role in the sustainable management of natural and cultural resources, ensuring that the refuge can be protected while maintaining the community's traditional use of the beach.

Some 67 marine species have been recorded in the Iguanita National Wildlife Refuge, including some of commercial interest such as snapper, lobster and cambute, 110 species of birds such as the common black hawk (*Buteogallus anthracinus*), the orange-fronted parakeet (*Aratinga canicularis*) and the clay-colored thrush (*Turdus grayi*), 27% of which are migratory, as well as 10 species of terrestrial mammals such as howler monkeys (*Alouatta palliata*) and white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*), and the black spiny-tailed iguana (*Ctenosaura similis*), as well as other iguana species and a wide variety of snakes, including threatened and endangered species. The presence of these species underscores the recommendations for increased protection efforts in the area in the long term. In terms of the flora, some 118 species of trees and shrubs have been recorded, including the jobo (*Spondias mombin*), indio desnudo (*Bursera simaruba*), ronrón (*Astronium fraxinifolium*) and the tea mangrove (*Pelliciera rhizophorae*).



In addition, the Iguanita National Wildlife Refuge is interested in protecting, preserving and using its pre-Hispanic cultural resources in its natural environment. These cultural resources were fundamental components in the social, economic and religious network that linked over 65 pre-Hispanic villages and towns around Culebra Bay with those of the Tempisque Valley and the Cordillera de Guanacaste, and which must be protected and conserved in accordance with the National Archeological Heritage Law.

The refuge is located within the Gulf of Papagayo Tourist Pole, an area of great beauty and with diverse natural and cultural resources. The result is a greater social interest and concern for conserving the environment while also ensuring permanent access and the right of all Costa Ricans to enjoy Playa Iguanita, especially the inhabitants of Guanacaste, since most people from the region are unable to afford a stay in the major tourist developments.

The Iguanita National Wildlife Refuge does not have any amenities for the public. Other nearby parks include the Costa Esmeralda National Wildlife Refuge, Las Baulas National Marine Park and Santa Rosa National Park.

How do you get to the Iguanita Wildlife Refuge?

 **By car.** Please note that the road conditions for the final 7 km are quite challenging, so a 4x4 vehicle is essential to reach the refuge.

From San José: Drive north towards Puntarenas and then follow the Interamericana Highway until you reach Liberia. Turn left, continue for about 8 km (5 miles), turn right at the Do It Center towards the Four Seasons Hotel and continue along the road for about 6 km (3.7 miles), then turn left on an unpaved road towards the Iguanita Wildlife Refuge and continue for another 7.5 km (4.5 miles) until you reach the entrance to the Iguanita Wildlife Refuge. This route requires a total of 5 to 6 hours from San José.

From Daniel Oduber International Airport, Liberia (LIR):

Drive south towards Santa Cruz, continue for about 8 km (5 miles), turn right at the Do It Center towards the Four Seasons Hotel and continue along the road for about 6 km (3.7 miles), then turn left on an unpaved road towards the Iguanita Wildlife Refuge and continue for another 7.5 km (4.5 miles) until you reach the entrance to the Iguanita Wildlife Refuge.

 **By bus:** There are no buses to the Iguanita Wildlife Refuge. However, you can take a bus on the San Jose - Liberia route (Pulmitan, +506 2222-1650) which takes about 5 hours, and from there you can take a cab or rent a car and drive to the Iguanita Wildlife Refuge, which takes about 40 minutes. It is recommended to purchase your ticket one day in advance to secure your space.

There are also several private transportation services (shuttle buses) that can take you from San José or Liberia to Papagayo.

 **By plane:** Take a flight between Juan Santamaría airport and Daniel Oduber Quirós Airport in Liberia, with daily departures on Sansa or Aerobell Airlines. From there you can take a cab or drive to Iguanita Wildlife Refuge, which takes approximately 40 minutes.

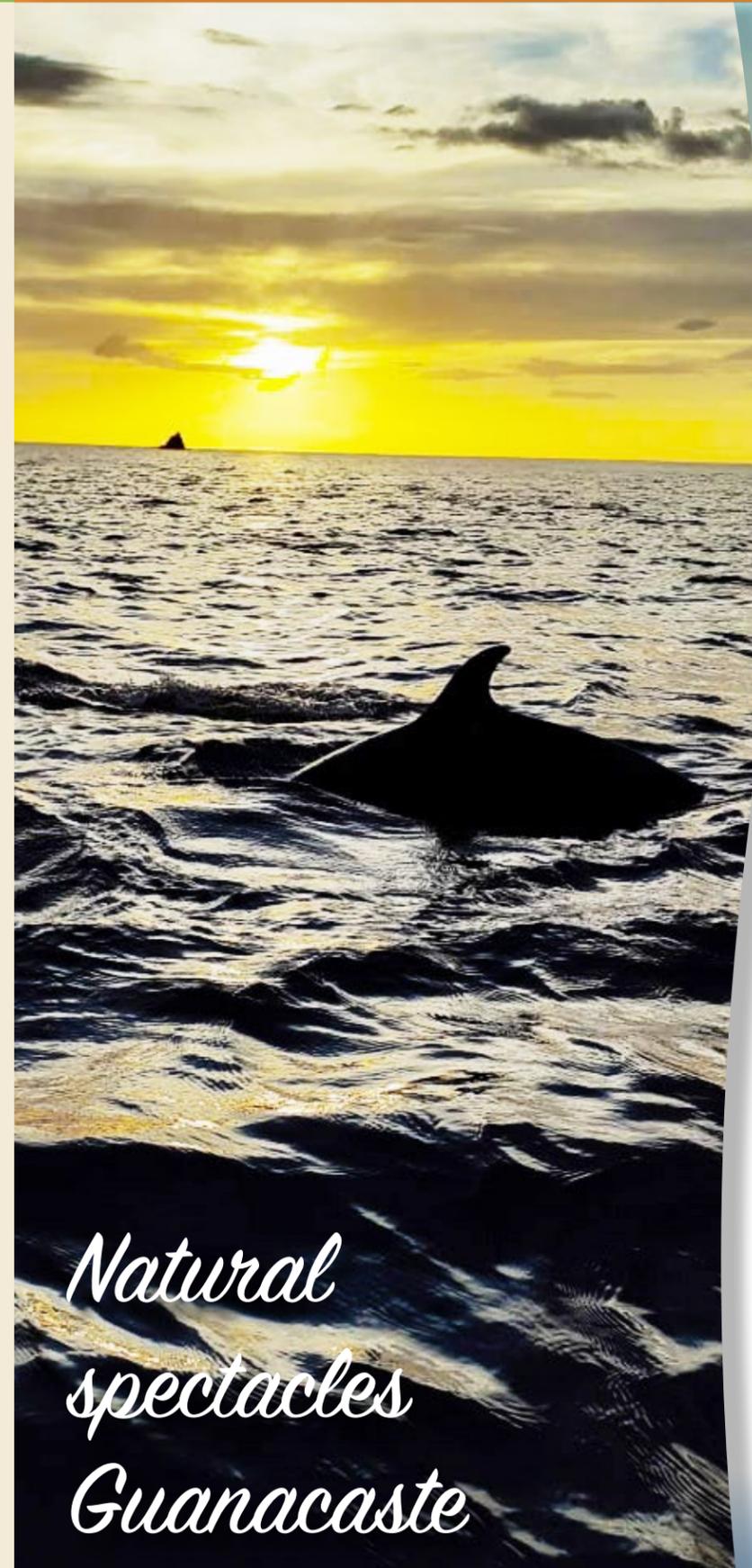
More information
Tempisque Conservation Area

 acg@acguanacaste.ac.cr
 (506) 2666-0630 / (506) 2666-7718
 costaricainfolink.com

 Bahía Culebra, Nacascolo, Liberia, Guanacaste, Costa Rica

Other nearby parks:

- Costa Esmeralda National Wildlife Refuge
- Las Baulas Marine National Park
- Santa Rosa National Park



Natural
spectacles
Guanacaste



Whale watching

Whale watching activities along the northern Pacific coast focus on humpback whales (*Megaptera novaeangliae*). The coastal communities in the country's southern Pacific region have a longer history of whale watching activities (Dominical, Uvita, Drake Bay, Caño Island, Golfo Dulce). However, in recent years, commercial whale watching has also come to coastal communities in the northern Pacific (Cuajiniquil, Gulf of Papagayo, Tamarindo, El Coco, Sámara, etc.). During the winter in the northern hemisphere (December to March), the humpback whales that feed off the northwestern coast of the United States (Washington, Oregon and northern California) migrate to the tropical waters of Costa Rica to mate, give birth and nurse their calves.

These giant, majestic mammals and their young can be seen between December and April in northern Costa Rica and further south from the first weeks of July until the end of October.

Whale watching has provided important benefits for environmental education and research, as well as providing the perfect excuse to see some of the most beautiful and impressive natural sites in Costa Rica.

 [Video](#)

[Ver infograma de ballenas](#)



Olive ridley turtle (*Lepidochelys olivacea*)

Playa Nancite is located in the marine zone of the ACG, in the northeastern part of the Gulf of Papagayo. At the moment it is only open for research, tourist visits are not allowed. This remote beach is home to an olive ridley turtle population that has been studied intermittently since its discovery as an arribada beach in 1970. An arribada is the massive and synchronized nesting of thousands of turtles of this species, which occurs in the span of a few nights.

Today there are four known major nesting beaches, Escobilla in Mexico, Gahirmatha and Rushikulya in India and Ostional in Costa Rica. There are also smaller arribada beaches, La Flor and Chacocente in Nicaragua, La Marinera and Isla Cañas in Panama, and Nancite in Costa Rica. At Nancite beach, arribadas occur approximately once a month and mainly during the months of August to November, although arribadas have been observed to occur in every month of the year.

The population has collapsed, but has since stabilized and now shows signs of recovery.

 www.acguanacaste.ac.cr

 [Video](#)



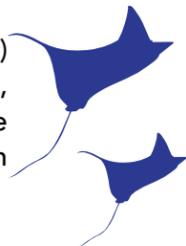
Devil rays *Mobula sp.*

"Flying" under the waters

Devil rays are cartilaginous fish (like sharks) that belong to the Mobulidae family, which also includes giant manta rays (*Manta birostris*). The most noteworthy characteristic of this family is the presence of modified cephalic fins in the form of "horns". Devil rays can reach an astounding width of 5 meters, second only to manta rays in size. They live in highly fragmented populations that are widely distributed in the tropical and temperate waters of the world.



Manta and devil rays (genus *Mobula*) are pelagic rays. This means that, unlike most other ray species, they are always swimming in the water column rather than resting on the seafloor.



Their presence is seasonal in the bays of northern Guanacaste, especially in Santa Elena Bay and the Gulf of Papagayo. It is possible that this is related to their feeding and the presence of productive waters (where plankton is abundant) due to the winds and the influence of the Costa Rican Dome. This natural phenomenon occurs in the northern Pacific off of Costa Rica, during the dry season (December to April).

Manta rays are acrobats too

These winged fish are capable of throwing themselves more than two meters out of the water and can sometimes hover in the air for several seconds before splashing back down. They are a major draw for diving and ecotourism worldwide since, in addition to being harmless, the large ones are usually docile and curious.

Some biologists believe that they do this to get rid of the remoras that tend to stick to their backs.

Another hypothesis is that the sound derived from hitting the water as they fall serves as a means of

communication. They are also believed to do so for play and even as part of courtship.

Endangered

Unfortunately, manta rays and devil rays are increasingly threatened worldwide due to a recent surge in the demand for their gills. This organ, which is used for breathing, is falsely sold as part of Chinese "traditional medicine" to cure all kinds of ailments.

Devil rays are believed to be among the least fertile of all marine fish species. Their high vulnerability to overexploitation is due to their biological characteristics, which include late maturity (they take up to 10 years to reach sexual maturity), a long gestation period (up to about one year), an exceptionally low number of offspring (only one calf every two to three years) and significant longevity (with an estimated life expectancy of 40 years for reef manta rays).

Because they are difficult to study, very little is known about their biology and ecology, which makes it difficult to develop management and conservation programs for their populations.

Costa Rican thermal dome

The high concentrations of nutrients, phytoplankton and other organisms essential to the food chain in the Dome make it an important carbon sink and



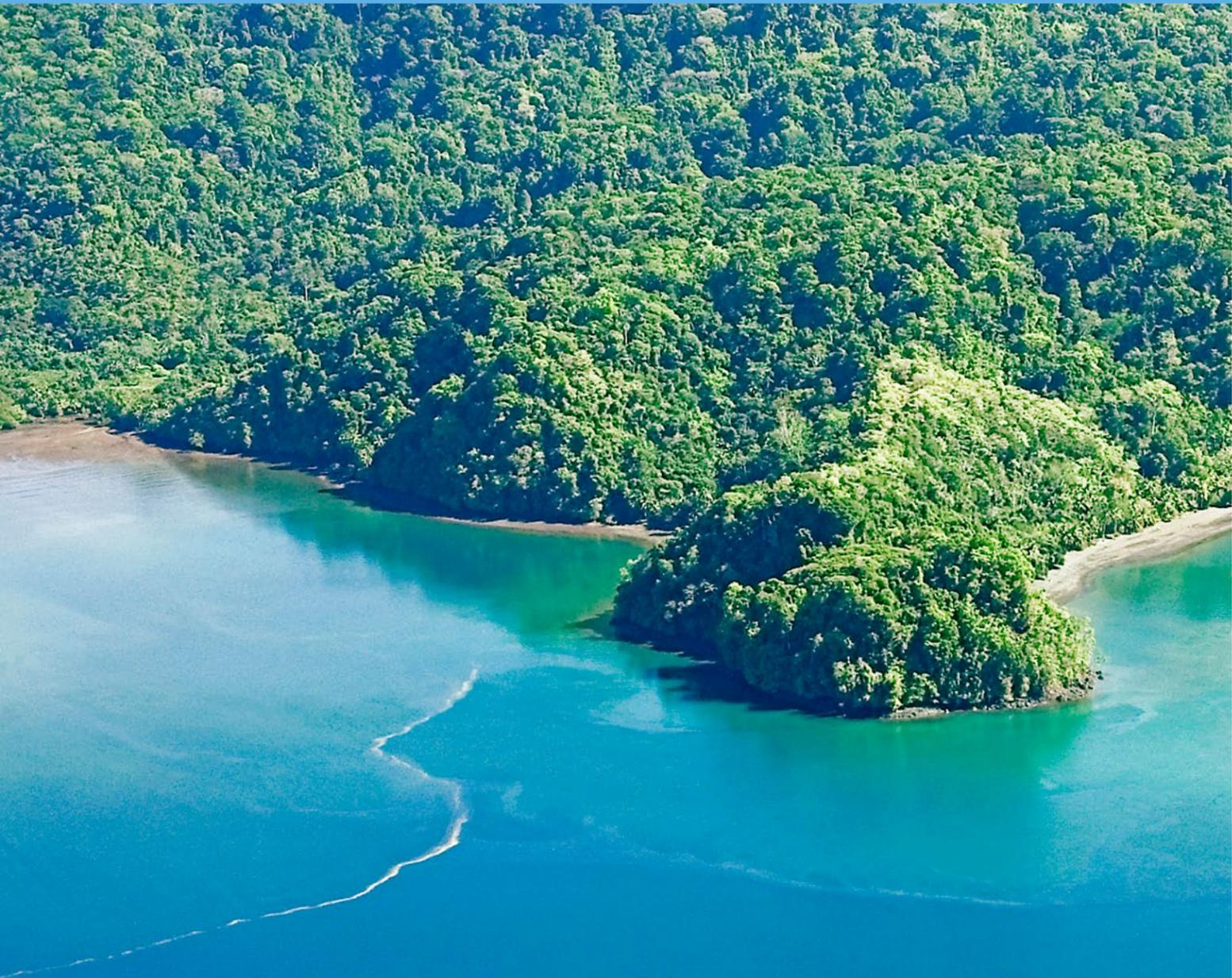
an area of exceptional importance for multiple species.

Likewise, connectivity between the habitats of the high seas and the coastal areas of Central America is of significant importance for migratory species such as sharks, whales, rays, billfishes, sea turtles, and others, including species of importance for commercial fishing such as tuna, mahi mahi and squid.

 [Video](#)

 facebook.com/MisionTiburon/

 [Video](#)



Directory of Services

Services Liberia

Service	Contact
Guanacaste Tourism Chamber CATURGUA	Tel.: 2668-1160 Nearby Daniel Oduber Quirós International Airport
Municipality of Liberia	Tel.: 2666-0169 info@muniliberia.go.cr
ICT regional offices in Liberia Airport	Tel.: 2666-2976 walter.torres@ict.go.cr
Immigration Policy	Tel.: 2299-8100
CIMA LIBERIA Hospital	Tel.: 2690-8500
Clínica San Rafael Arcángel	Tel.: 2690-5500
Dr. Enrique Baltodano Briceño Hospital	Tel.: 2679116
Firefighters	Tel.:2666-0279 Y 911
Red Cross	Tel.: 2666-7666
Banking services	There are 5 banks en Liberia y ATM's
Gas Stations	3 central canton in Liberia and 3 in sector Comunidad
Pharmacies	8 pharmacies
Shopping Centers and Supermarkets	6 supermarkets 2 shopping centers

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

Services La Cruz

Service	Contact
Chamber of Development of Commerce and Tourism of La Cruz (ASCATUR)	Tel.: 8882-0531 / 8838-9639 8381-4030
CETUR	8382-3020
Municipality of La Cruz	Tel.: 2690-5700 info@munilacruz.go.cr
ICT regional offices in Liberia Airport	Tel.: 2666-2976 walter.torres@ict.go.cr
Guanacaste National Police School Murciélago Guanacaste	Tel.: 2679-1151
Immigration Policy	Tel.: 2299-8100
Hospital Metropolitano	Tel.: 4000-3822
Clínica Salud CCSS - La Cruz	Tel.: 2679-1116
Dr. Enrique Baltodano Briceño Hospital - Liberia	Tel.: 2679-1116
Red Cross	Tel.: 2679-9146
Firefighters	Tel.: 2547-3700 y 911
Banking services	There are 3 banks in La Cruz and ATMs
Gas Stations	24 hours on the road to the Peñas Blancas border
Pharmacies	3 pharmacies
Shopping Centers and Supermarkets	2 supermarkets

Services Carrillo

Service	Contact
Guanacaste Chamber of Tourism CATURGUA	Tel.: 2668-1160 Nearby Daniel Oduber Quirós International Airport
Municipality of Carrillo	Tel.: 2688-8039 info@unicarrillo.go.cr d_pina@unicarrillo.go.cr
ICT regional offices in Liberia Airport	Tel.: 2666-2976 walter.torres@ict.go.cr
Immigration Policy	Tel.: 2299-8100
CIMA LIBERIA Hospital	Tel.: 2690-8500
Clínica San Rafael Arcángel	Tel.: 2690-5500
Dr. Enrique Baltodano Briceño Hospital	Tel.: 2679116
Firefighters	Tel.: 2666-0279 Y 911
Red Cross	Tel.: 2688-8733 Y 911
Banking services	There are 3 banks in Carrillo and ATM's
Gas Stations	3 gas stations 1 in Belén de Carrillo and 1 in Filadelfia
Pharmacies	6 pharmacies
Shopping Centers and Supermarkets	4 supermarkets 2 shopping centers

Services Cañas

Servicio	Contacto
Guanacaste Chamber of Tourism CATURGUA	Tel.: 2668-1160 Nearby Daniel Oduber Quirós International Airport
Municipality of Cañas	Tel.: 2690-4000
ICT regional offices in Liberia Airport	Tel.: 2666-2976 walter.torres@ict.go.cr
Immigration Policy	Tel.: 2299-8100 Location: Liberia
CIMA LIBERIA Hospital	Tel.: 2690-8500
Cañas Chamber of Tourism and Industry	Facebook Cámara Comercio Industria y Turismo Cañas
Dr. Enrique Baltodano Briceño Hospital	Tel.: 2679116
Firefighters	Tel.: 2547-3700 y 911
Red Cross	Tel.: 2669-3396
Banking services	There are 3 banks in Cañas
Gas Stations	2 gas stations: Mogote y Bagaces
Pharmacies	4 pharmacies
Shopping Centers and Supermarkets	3 supermarkets 1 shopping centers

Servicios Bagaces

Service	Contact
Guanacaste Chamber of Tourism CATURGUA	Tel.: 2668-1160 Nearby Daniel Oduber Quirós International Airport
Municipality of Bagaces	Tel.: 2690-1300 iinfo@bagaces.go.cr
ICT regional offices in Liberia Airport	Tel.: 2666-2976 walter.torres@ict.go.cr
Immigration Policy	Tel.: 2299-8100
CIMA LIBERIA Hospital	Tel.: 2690-8500
Dr. Enrique Baltodano Briceño Hospital	Tel.: 2679116
Firefighters	Tel.: 2547-3700 y 911
Red Cross	Tel.: 2673-0753
Banking services	There are 2 banks in Bagaces and ATM's
Gas Stations	2 gasolineras: Mogote y Bagaces
Pharmacies	4 farmacias
Shopping Centers and Supermarkets	3 supermercados 1 centros comerciales

Road information and airports

Place	Contact
Tobías Bolaños Airport, Pavas. Son José	Tel.: 2232-28201/ 2232-7330
Juan Santamaría International Airport: Flight Information	Tel.: 2437-2626
Daniel Oduber Quirós International Airport, Liberia Guanacaste Information	Tel.: 2668-1010
Private Tourist Transportation	
Air Transport	
Air flight Sansa San José- Golfito 50 minutes from Juan Santamaría Airport to Golfito Airport. From Golfito Airport to Golfito city center is 5 minutes or 2 km. There are currently two airlines that provide air service to and from San José.	
SANSA	Tel.: 2290-4100/2290-4400 sansareservations@taca.com www.flysansa.com
Aerobell Hangar #2	Tel. 4000-2030 Pavas Airport www.aerobell.com
Departures from Juan Santamaría International Airport.	
Air taxi Centroamericano AVIONES TAXI AEREO S.A	Tel: (506) 2431-0160/ (506) 2431-0293 reservations@airchartercentralamerica.com Pavas Airport www.tacsa@racsa.co.cr
Paradise Air Pavas Airport	Tel.: 2231-0938, 2296-3600. www.flywithparadise.com
Helicopters	
Aensa	Tel.22321248 www.aerotoursr.com



INMIGRATION

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

PEÑAS BLANCAS REGIONAL OFFICE

La Cruz Guanacaste
Tels: 2299-8006 / 2677-0053 / 2677-0064 / 2677-0230



Costa Rica is a place where nature abounds and adventure awaits you. Just remember:

- Book tours offered by authorized travel agencies.
- Always check local weather conditions and forecasts before heading out on a tour.
- Make sure that the tour guide provides you with safety instructions and the rules of the activity before starting a tour.
- Make sure that the company has an operating permit issued by the Ministry of Health, insurance policies and certified tour guides.

Name	Web Site	E-mail	Telephone
Tourist Activities			
PROYECTO ECO-TURÍSTICO CATARATAS LLANOS DEL CORTES	https://www.bagaces.go.cr/	wguido@bagaces.go.cr	26901342
THE CONGO TRAIL CANOPY TOURS	https://www.congocanopy.com/en	canopytour@racsa.co.cr; congotrail@racsa.co.cr	26664422
EL VIEJO WETLANDS	https://www.elviejowetlands.com/	avargas@elviejowetlands.com	22004622, 22960966
HACIENDA EL ROBLE AND ADVENTURE CENTER	http://ziplineelroble.com/about/	crisarrieta0266@gmail.com; haciendaelrobleadventure@gmail.com	26750196, 85058666, 88274706
VANDARA HOT SPRINGS AND ADVENTURE	https://vandara.travel/es/	komrales@skyrek.com	24794174
CIUDAD BLANCA GASTRO PARK	https://www.facebook.com/Ciudad-Blanca-Gastro-Park	ciudadblancagastropark@gmail.com	
RIO PERDIDO & THERMAL RIVER	https://www.rioperdido.com/es	admin@costaplan.com; notificaciones@ghp.cr	40002333
HACIENDA EL CENÍZARO TOURS & ADVENTURES	http://www.haciendaelcenizaro.com/	reservaciones@haciendaelcenizaro.com; adrian@haciendaelcenizaro.com	86305050
DIAMANTE ECO ADVENTURE PARK	https://diamanteecoventurepark.com/	info@diamanteadventure.com	21055200
PONDEROSA ADVENTURE PARK LIMITADA	https://ponderosaadventurepark.com/	saludocupacional@ciudadponderosa.com; rsoto@ciudadponderosa.com	21057171
CUAJINIQUIL TOURS	https://www.facebook.com/CuajiniquilTours	olgerlara24@gmail.com	26791019
Aquatic recreational activities			
ACTIVIDAD RECREATIVA ACUÁTICA SAFARI COSTA RICA Y AQUALORD	https://www.facebook.com/AquaLordTours/	aqualordcr@gmail.com	83765206
GOSOUTH ADVENTURE	https://www.gosouthcr.com/	info@gosouthcr.com; rebecca.rojas@gosouthcr.com	88456404
SCUBA CARIBE	https://www.scubaribe.com/	alberto.leonard@tcm-int.com	26971549
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ADVENTURE AIR HELICOPTERS	https://flyadventureair.com/	sales@flyadventureair.com	26674040
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AGENCIA DE VIAJES RECEPTIVA SENDEROS LOS TRES MONOS	https://3monkiescr.com/	reservations@3monkiescr.com; sostenibilidad@3monkiescr.com	26680076, 26680074
TICO TOURS	https://www.ticotoursguanacaste.com/	mberny10@yahoo.com; reservations@ticotoursguanacaste.com; porrasvasquez@gmail.com; manager@ticotoursguanacaste.com	26721248, 88331410
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BAR LIB	https://www.facebook.com/LIBCRC/	musilib@gmail.com	26650741
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REST FATHER ROOSTER	http://www.fatherrooster.com/index.php		26701246
RINCON COROBICÍ	http://www.raftingguanacaste.com/restaurant.html		26690303
RESTAURANTE GUANA'S	https://www.facebook.com/guanascr/	guanas@grupocorcovado.com	26653022
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POSADA REAL CAFÉ	https://cafeteandocr.com/posada-real-cafe/	info@posadarealcafe.com	26650219
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HOTEL VILLA ACACIA	https://www.villacacia.com/	villaacacia@gmail.com; villacaciahotel@gmail.com	26721000, 26721046
HOTEL OCCIDENTAL GRAND PAPAGAYO	https://www.barcelo.com/es-cr/occidental-papagayo/	papagayo.dir-asist@occidentalhotels.com	26909900, 26909905, 26908000, 26908011
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MONARCH RESORT CONDO HOTEL	https://www.vistabahiareort.com/es/	egarcia@monarchresortonline.com; reservations@monarchresortonline.com; manager@monarchresortonline.com	22560711, 26721363, 26721362
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ALBERGUE LA PUERTA DEL SOL	https://lapuertadelsolhotel.com/	lapuertadelsolcostarica@hotmail.com; hotelsol@racsa.co.cr	26700195, 26700607
HOTEL LA SIESTA	https://hotel-la-siesta-liberia.vivehotels.com/es/	lasiestaliberia@hotmail.com; ropeflo@hotmail.com; gerencia@hotellasiestacr.com	26660606, 26662950
HOTEL CAÑA BRAVA	http://www.hotelcanabrava.com/	hotelcañas@racsa.co.cr; recepcioncanabravainn@hotmail.com; info@hotelcanabrava.com	26691294
HOTEL RESORT DE MONTAÑA BORINQUEN	https://www.hoteles.com/ho225904/borinquen-mountain-resort-spa-canas-dulces-costa-rica/?modal=dp	sostenibilidad@hotelborinquen.com; info@borinquenresort.com; dalvarez@hotelborinquen.com	26901900, 26901908
PLANET HOLLYWOOD RESORT COSTA RICA	https://www.planethollywoodhotels.com/property/costa-rica	rrhhLIR@royaltonresorts.com; reservationsPCR-LIR@planethollywoodhotel.com	26909900, 26909925, 47031000
CASA CONDE BEACH FRONT HOTEL	https://www.casacondebeach.com	sporras@porrasyvasquez.com; rlara@csura.com; jporras@grupocasaconde.com	26721001, 85819166
HOTEL LA GUARIA	https://www.facebook.com/HotelLaGuaria/	hlaguaria@hotmail.com	26660000, 26664444
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HERMOSA HEIGHTS	https://hermosaheightscostarica.com/es/inicio/	hermosaheights@yahoo.com	26720112
HOTEL MARCEVA	https://www.facebook.com/Hotel-Marceva-Liberia-110072480595647/	hotelmarceva@yahoo.es	25656007, 26656037, 26656007, 26662487
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HOTEL PAPAGAYO GOLDEN PALMS RESORT	https://papagayogoldenpalms.com/	reservations@gruppapagayo.com; reservaciones@gruppapagayo.com; gerencia@solpapagayoresort.com	26720121, 26720122
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HOTEL CASA DEL VIENTO	https://casadelvientocr.com/website		2679-8060

DANIEL ODUBER QUIRÓS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT



The Daniel Oduber Quirós International Airport (IATA: LIR, ICAO: MRLB) is located in the northwestern part of the province of Guanacaste, 13 km west of the city of Liberia and 15 km from the most popular tourist beaches of Costa Rica.

It is the second-largest airport in the country and the sixth-busiest in Central America.

It serves especially as a tourist center for those visiting the Pacific coast and western Costa Rica. The airport is named after Daniel Oduber Quirós, who served as president of Costa Rica from 1974 to 1978.

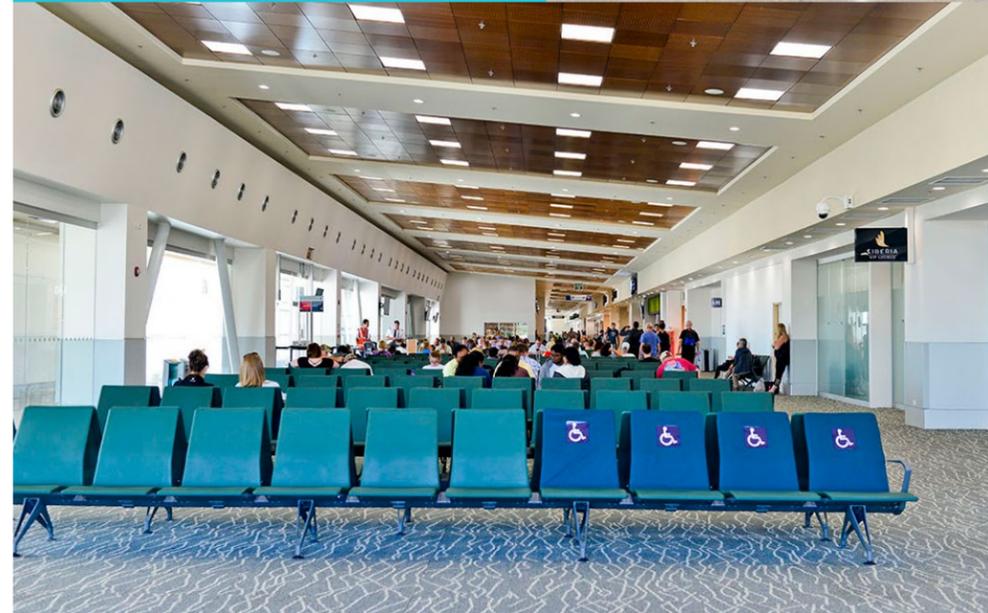
The primary reason for its importance lies in its strategic location serving the tourism development hub of the Gulf of Papagayo and the cozy beaches of the Nicoya Peninsula. This airfield is the fastest way to reach tourist sites such as Tamarindo, Playa

Negra, Gulf of Papagayo, Mal Pais, Playa Flamingo, Playa Sámara, Monteverde, Arenal Volcano and Las Baulas National Marine Park.

Secondly, its importance is due to the fact that the weather conditions in the Liberia area are more favorable than those of Alajuela in terms of rainfall intensity and visibility, which is why it is usually an alternate airport for Juan Santamaría.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

-  Daniel Oduber Quirós International Airport, Liberia. Guanacaste, Costa Rica
-  Telephone: (+506) 2666 9600
-  Web page: www.dgac.go.cr



(Megaptera novaeangliae)

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. The Guanacaste coast is great as well!

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 jorobada* 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 8,400 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.

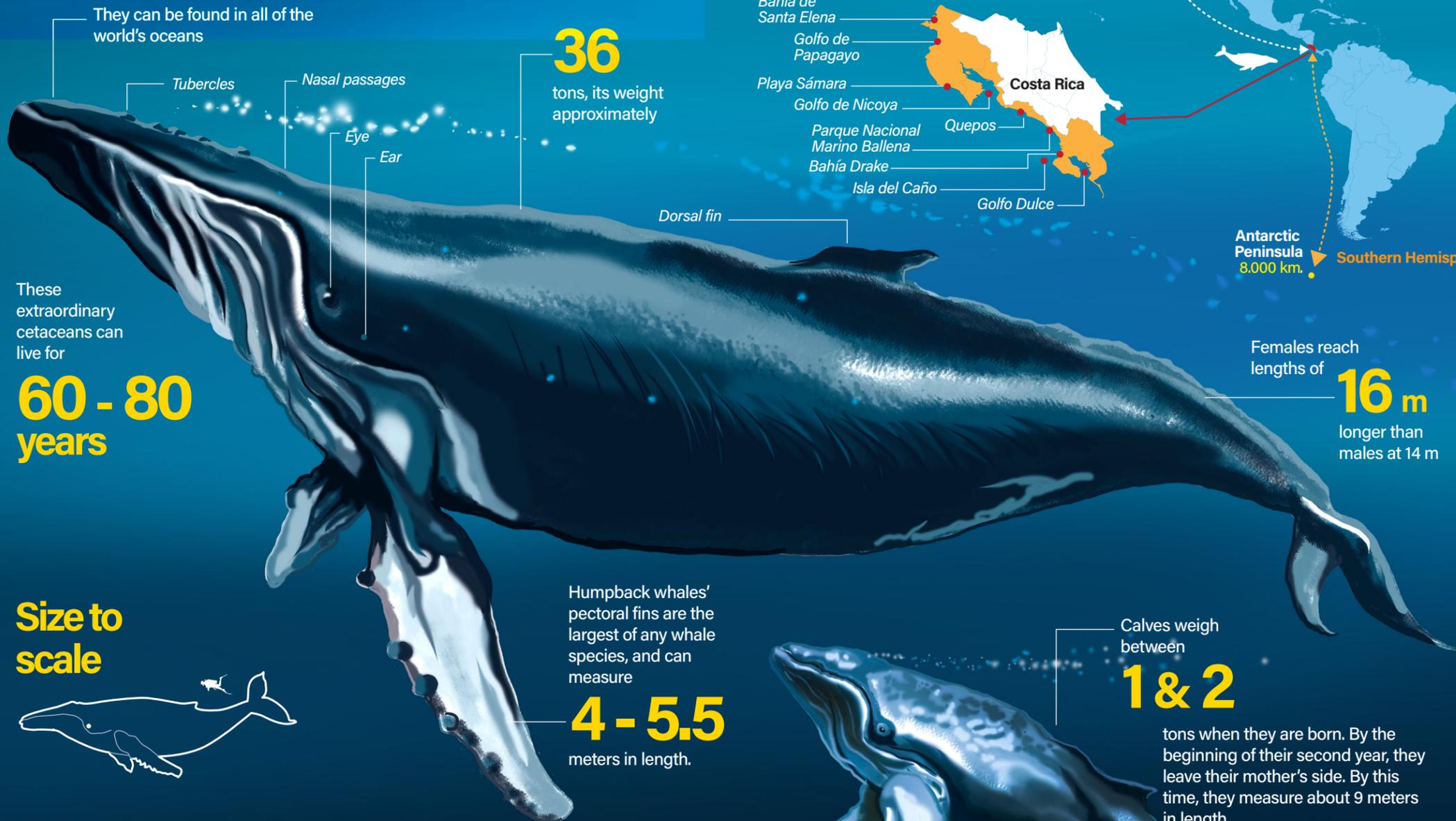
Northern Hemisphere

Washington Oregon California 5.000 km.

Antarctic Peninsula 8.000 km.

Southern Hemisphere

- Sightings in Costa Rica
- Bahía de Santa Elena
 - Golfo de Papagayo
 - Playa Sámara
 - Golfo de Nicoya
 - Parque Nacional Marino Ballena
 - Bahía Drake
 - Isla del Caño
 - Quepos
 - Golfo Dulce



They can be found in all of the world's oceans

36 tons, its weight approximately

These extraordinary cetaceans can live for

60 - 80 years

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

Size to scale



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

4 - 5.5 meters in length.

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.

Main areas of sightings in Costa Rica

Whale watching services are available on the following beaches in Costa Rica:



- Cuajiniquil
- Playas del Coco
- Sámara
- Cóbano
- 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
- Curú
- Paquera
- Puntarenas
- Isla Tortuga
- Sierpe

What do they do?



Mate



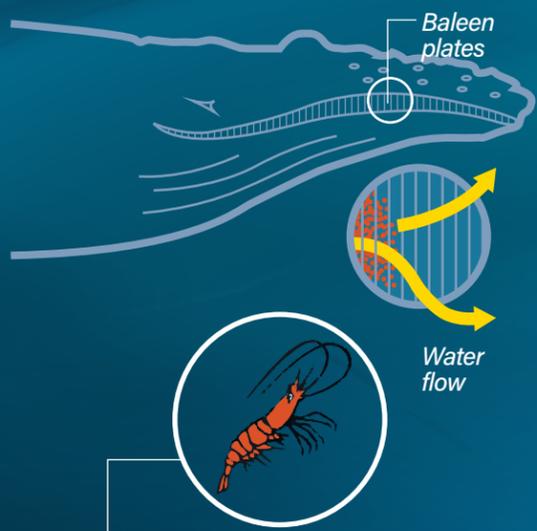
Give birth



Raise their calves

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.



Krill is whales' main source of food. It is a crustacean similar to shrimp, measuring 1-6 cm. Whales can eat **1,400 kg** in a single day.

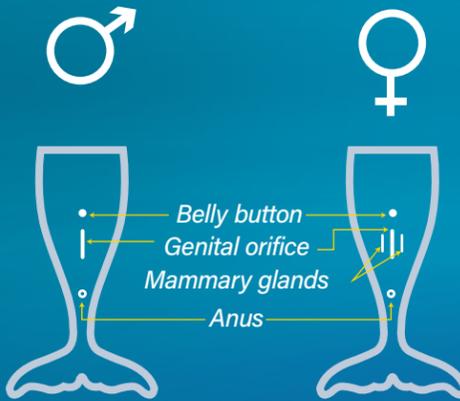
C Whales open their mouths, capturing the krill. Their baleen filters the water when they close their mouth

B They begin their ascent quickly

A The whales circle the school of krill, sometimes creating a circular "curtain" of bubbles.

Sex of whales

Both sexes have a genital slit, which contains the penis in males and the vagina in females.



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?

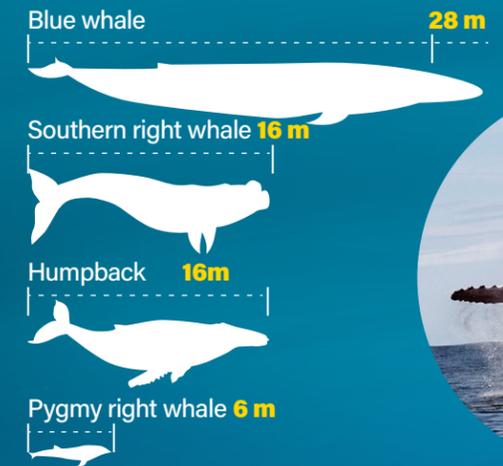
1 The mother whale begins her contractions and the calf starts to leave the mother's body. Calves are born tail-first, not head-first.

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.

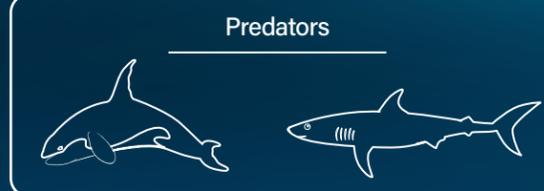
4 The calf consumes between 60 and 70 liters of milk each day.

SIZE TO SCALE:



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



BREATHING:

Whales breathe through their blowhole (nasal orifices) 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.

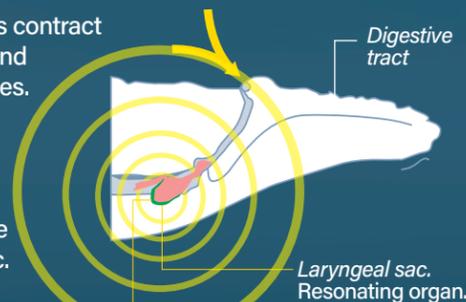
SONGS:

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.

1. The whales contract their throat and thorax muscles.

2. Air flows through the lungs and the laryngeal sac.

3. 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.



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, manta 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 (UCR-FUNDEVI 1995/SINAC) and is the eighth-best site for whale watching in the world, according to National Geographic.

Links:

- www.sinac.go.cr
- www.youtube.com
- www.youtube.com/watch
- mongabay.com
- www.nacion.com

The Costa Rican Tourism Board thanks the biologists Javier Rodríguez, Frank Garita and Alberto Villarreal for their contributions to the content and reviewing process for this infographic on humpback whales. Thanks also go to Marjorie Solís, Jorge Duarte and Ruth Alfaro for their contributions to the content of this infographic.

Coordination and production: Mario B. Badilla Jara.
Design and layout: Floria Leiva Pacheco.
Illustrations: Alexander Salazar.



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NATIONAL BIRD WATCHING ROUTE COSTA RICA

SANTA ROSA



Herpethoteres cachinnans / Guaco
Photo: Donovan Alvarez



SANTA ROSA COSTA RICA



Main bird watching sites

- Santa Rosa National Park
- Rincón de la Vieja National Park
- Bahía Junquillal Wildlife National Refuge
- Isla Bolaños Wildlife National Refuge
- Iguanita Wildlife National Refuge
- Horizontes Forest Experimental Station
- Sector San Cristóbal

Nearby local communities

- Cuajiniquíl • Bahía Salinas
- Sonzapote • Los Andes
- Brasilia • Junquillal Refuge • Playa Soley
- Tierra Madre Reserve • Argendora • Playa Rajada
- Punta Blanca • Isla Bolaños • Playa Naranjo • La Cruz
- El Jobo • Tempatal • Puerto Soley • Santa Cecilia



The Santa Rosa Node is located in the heart of the Guanacaste Conservation Area (ACG), which **was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1999**. It is located in northwestern Costa Rica, and includes Santa Rosa National Park, Rincón de la Vieja National Park, Iguanita Wildlife Refuge, Isla Bolaños Wildlife Refuge, Bahía Junquillal Wildlife Refuge and the Horizontes Forest Experimental Station.

The ACG contains four of the five main ecosystems of the tropics: **marine/coastal, dry forest, cloud forest and rainforest**, representing the only area in the New World to harbor such a diversity of ecosystems.

[Return to map](#)

BIRDS

EMBLEMATIC BIRDS OF SANTA ROSA

Horizontes Experimental Forestry Station

It is the main base of operations for the Restoration and Silviculture Program of the Guanacaste Conservation Area

135 bird species (27% migratory)

118 of trees and shrubs

+150 fungi species

500 Bird Species

3 National Parks

6 Wild Protected Areas

1 Wetland

Its location on the continental divide and the parks of the Guanacaste Conservation Area make this node a **very popular site for birdwatching** (with a strong Pacific influence, but also Caribbean species).

The avifauna is well represented in the area with more than 500 species. Some of the most iconic birds are the **white-throated magpie-jay** (*Calocitta formosa*), the **orange-fronted parakeet** (*Aratinga canicularis*), the **turquoise-browed motmot** (*Eumomota superciliosa*), the **scaly breasted hummingbird** (*Phaeochroa cuvierii*), and the **gray-cowled wood rail** (*Aramides cajanea*). The extraordinary **white-throated magpie-jay** (*Calocitta formosa*) and the **turquoise-browed motmot** (*Eumomota superciliosa*) are two conspicuous and beautiful birds that exclusively live in the dry forest.



Penelope purpurancens
Common name: Crested Guan
From March to June

Photo: Laurens Alvarado Hidalgo



Eumomota superciliosa
Common name: Turquoise-browed Motmot
From May to June

Photo: Donovan Alvarez



Calocitta formosa
Common name: White-throated Magpie-Jay
From February to July

Photo: Laurens Alvarado Hidalgo



Trogon elegans
Common name: Elegant Trogon
From April to July

Photo: Laurens Alvarado Hidalgo



Amazona auropalliata
Common name: Yellow-naped Parrot
From March to May

Photo: Laurens Alvarado Hidalgo



Euphonia hirundinacea
Common name: Yellow-throated Euphonia
From March to June

Photo: Laurens Alvarado Hidalgo

Rincón de la Vieja National Park

+400 Bird species

Volcanic peaks extend over a mountain range with rivers that flow into the Pacific and the Caribbean, with the result that a wide variety of bird species find the conditions they need to survive. The sectors of Las Pailas and Santa María are the most suitable for birdwatching and one of the best destinations for hiking enthusiasts.

+70 Bird species on a good day

Santa Rosa National Park

Tropical Dry Forest.
Dry season: From December to May

This forest provides a habitat for a wide variety of wildlife, including birds such as great curassows, magpies, toucans, ospreys, and more. Mammals include jaguars, pumas, tapirs, deer and peccaries. The area's reptiles include the hawksbill, leatherback, green and olive ridley sea turtles.

Casona de Santa Rosa Historical Museum, where the Battle of Santa Rosa took place in 1856.

Bahía Junquillal National Wildlife Refuge

Located within the city of La Cruz in Guanacaste, Costa Rica, the refuge is about 33 km from Liberia and borders

- Most common birds:
- Parakeet *Aratinga canicularis*
 - Yellow-naped parrot *Amazona auropalliata*
 - Magpie *Calocitta formosa*
 - Roseate spoonbill *Ajaia ajaia*
 - Pelicans *Pelecanus occidentalis*

Iguanita National Wildlife Refuge

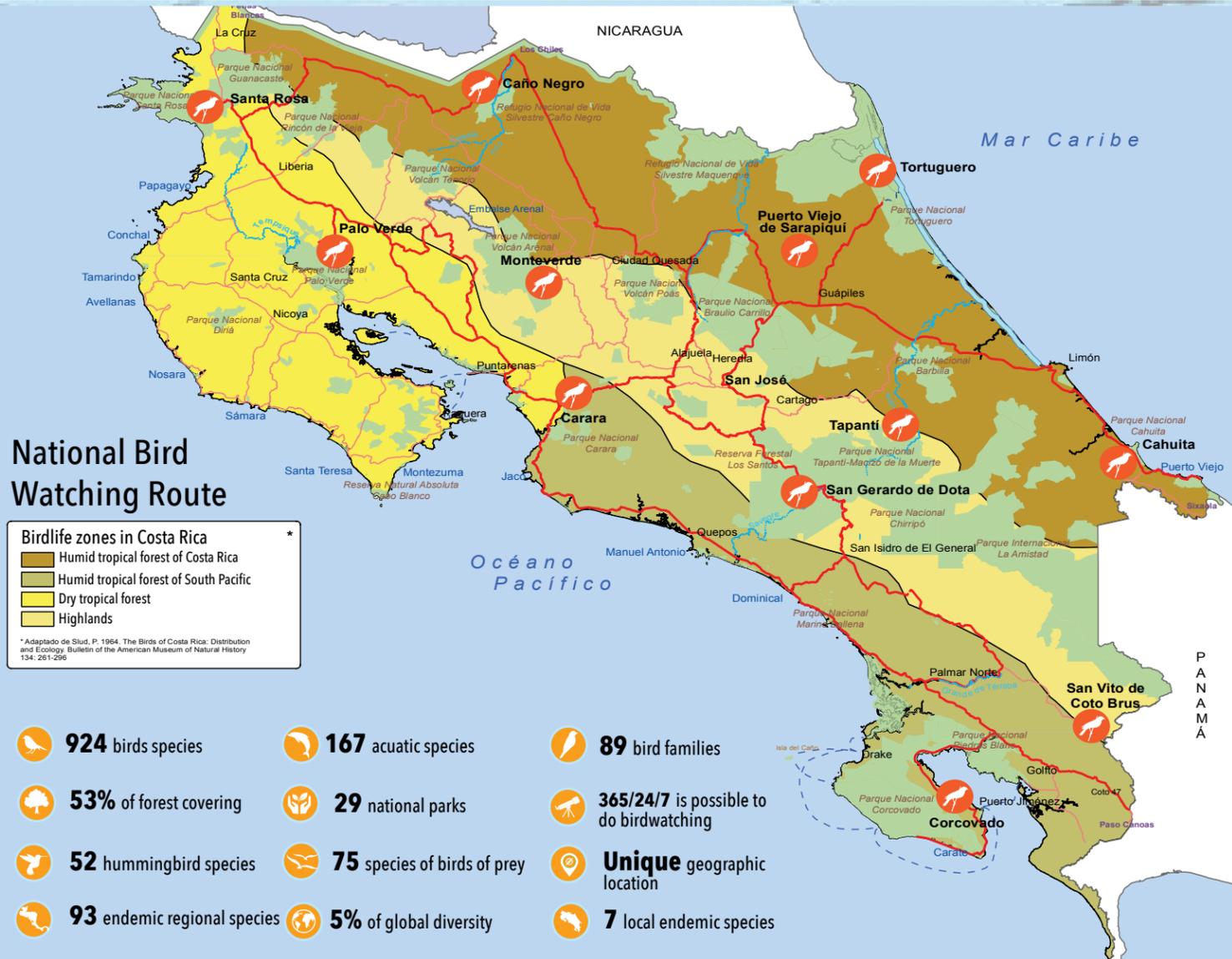
Protects biodiversity, marine and cultural resources, in addition to providing opportunities for research, protection, education and low-impact social tourism. The predominant forest type is dry tropical forest with patches of transition to humid forest.

Isla Bolaños

The island is a key nesting site for frigatebirds, brown pelicans, oystercatchers and others. This natural area plays an important role in the conservation of seabird colonies.

For more information visit:

- ebird.org
- [Las Pailas](#)
- [Santa Rosa](#)
- [Museo de Costa Rica](#)
- [Asoc. Ornitológica de CR](#)
- [Video](#)
- [Unión de Ornólogos CR](#)
- [Lista Oficial de Aves de Costa Rica](#)



BIRD WATCHING IN Costa Rica

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

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

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

Costa Rica has:

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



Credits

The Costa Rican Tourism Board thanks the National System of Conservation Areas, tour guides, businesses and individuals for their collaboration in the creation of the Palo Verde Infographic.

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Photos: Laurens A. Hidalgo, Naturalist & Birding Wildlife Photographer Tour Guide. Donovan Alvarez.
Design and layout: Floria Leiva Pacheco.

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In memoriam de **Francisco Esquivel Espinoza**, without whose collaboration and dedication this Northern Guanacaste Cultural Tourist Guide would never have been written.

Credits

The Costa Rican Tourism Board thanks the Municipalities of Bagaces, Cañas, Carrillo, Liberia and La Cruz, the Ministry of Culture and Youth, Guanacaste Conservation Area, Rebeca Álvarez of CATURGUA, the Federation of Municipalities of Guanacaste, the Ministry of Environment and Energy, Pablo Guevara of the Chamber of Commerce and Tourism of Cañas, Celia Arredondo of the Liberian Chamber of Tourism CALITUR, Mario Avendaño, the Chamber of Tourism CALITUR, Randy Rockbrand of the Chamber of Ecological Tourism of Bagaces, Manuel Alan Fonseca of the La Cruz Chamber of Tourism Entrepreneurs, Marina Peña from Asodetour La Cruz, Gretel Vega from the La Cruz Coastal Tourism Corridor, Esmeralda Espinoza from Agencia Swiss Travel, Yessenia Lara from North Pacific Adventures, Minor Lara from Diving Center Cuajiniquil, Yeudy Morera Pizarro, Wild World Wonders Tour and Transfers, Enrique López-Argendora, Costakite, Blue Dream, Kitesurfing, Finca Primavera, Diving Center Cuajiniquil, Snorkeling Cuajiniquil, Wild World Wonders Tour and Transfers, Evelyn González of COSTARICADMC, Slavica, Adrien Baeyens-Tierra Madre Ec lodge, Best Tours Costa Rica. Also, many thanks to Fabio Vega, Marianna Badilla, Ricardo Mora, Henry Wong, Leslie Vargas, Donovan Alvarez, Pablo Miranda, Javier Rodríguez and Frank Garita, Albeto Villareal, Katia Montero, Alejandro Masís Cuevillas, Luis Alexander García Ugalde, Christian Zúñiga Gutiérrez, Juan Carlos Carrillo Espinoza and to the companies and individuals for their collaboration in the development of the Northern Guanacaste Cultural and Tourism Guide.

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Coordination and production: Mario B. Badilla Jara.

Design and layout: Floria Leiva Pacheco.

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Ruth Alfaro, Emilia González, Marlene Herrera, Pablo González and Antonio Farah (maps), Francisco Esquivel and Mario Badilla Jara (Costa Rica Tourism Board).

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Regarding the photographs of the North Guanacaste Cultural Tourist Guide, we appreciate the contribution of the images to the following people and companies: protected areas

1-Roberto Ramos, protected areas photography

2-Photographs of the tours and activities managed by the following agencies and hotels:

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- The Congo Trail Canopy Tours
- El Viejo Wetlands
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- Blue Dream Adventure
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- Actividad Recreativa Acuática North Pacific Adventures
- Adventure Air Helicopters

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