



Discovering Our Planet Together



Sea Turtles & Wildlife of Northern Costa Rica

Look for Endangered Turtles, Tapirs, Macaws & More from Remote & Luxurious Ecolodges

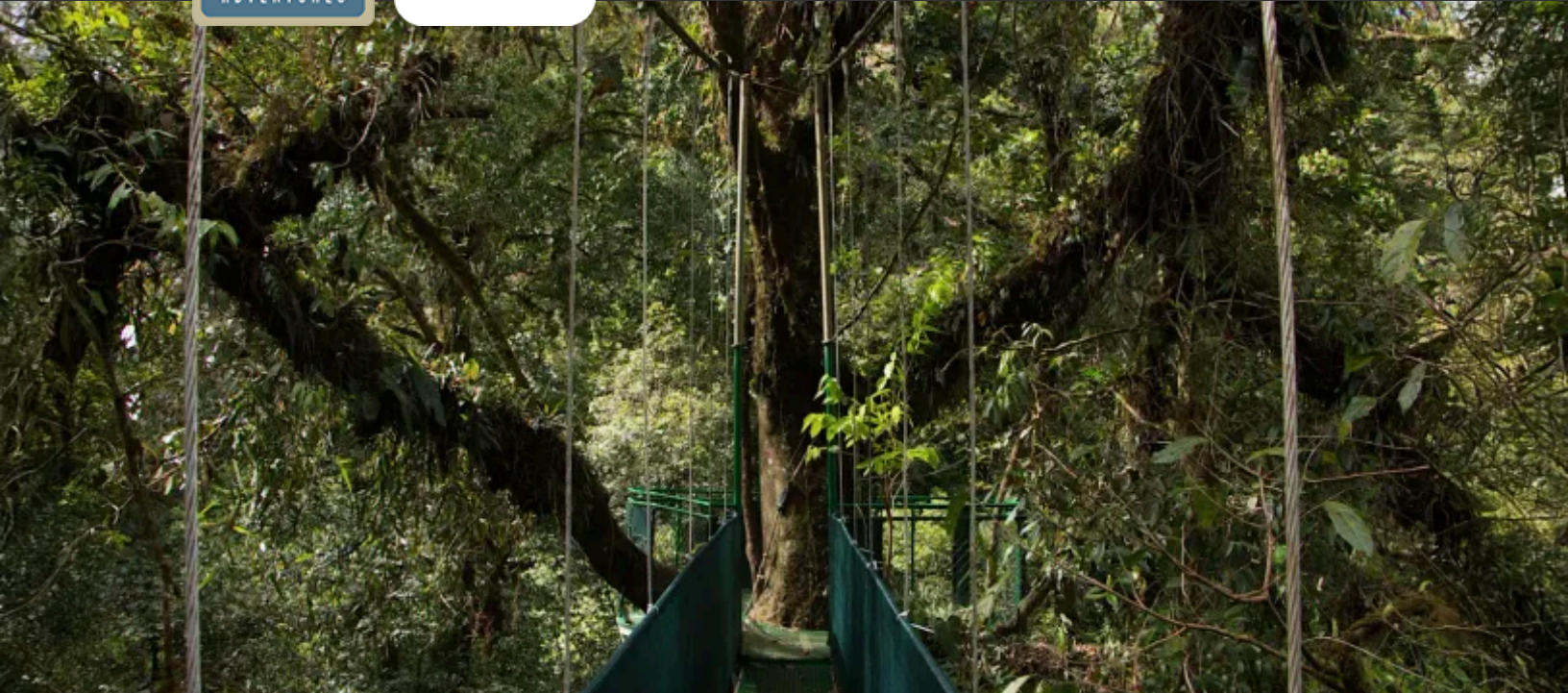


Table of Contents:

Trip Overview	3
Trip Itinerary	4
Trip Accommodations	10
What Makes Nat Hab Different?	11
Make It Private	14
Dates & Pricing Information	15
Trip Extensions	18



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Trip Details:

Days

7 Days / Aug–Oct

Physical Requirements

Moderate

Sea Turtles & Wildlife of Northern Costa Rica

Look for Endangered Turtles, Tapirs, Macaws & More from Remote & Luxurious Ecolodges

Bounded by jungle-draped volcanoes and the turquoise Pacific Ocean, Costa Rica's Guanacaste province holds treasure for nature seekers. At Punta Islita, on the outer edge of the Nicoya Peninsula, head to the beach at night in search of one of nature's most wondrous phenomena, the *arribada* (Spanish for "arrival"), a mass nesting event when thousands of leatherback and olive ridley sea turtles come ashore to lay their eggs. With luck, we may see hatchlings scurry to the sea at dawn. Inland lies a private reserve deep in the northern rainforest that's home to more endangered tapirs than anywhere else in Costa Rica. This charming mammal—related to horses and rhinos, even though it looks more like an elephant or a pig—is largely nocturnal and highly elusive, but our odds to spy them are better here than anywhere else. Add in sloths, howler monkeys and rare parrots, and you've got a tropical safari sure to delight.

Trip Highlights

Visit a wild beach with strong odds to witness an *arribada*—a wondrous event where endangered sea turtles come ashore en masse to lay their eggs

With top naturalist guides, look for the elusive Baird's tapir where they are most plentiful in Central America, on a private reserve dedicated to their conservation

Visit the Macaw Recovery Network, walk over hanging bridges through the rainforest canopy, and tour a cacao farm to see how chocolate is made



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Itinerary At A Glance

Day 1

Liberia, Costa Rica / Rio Celeste Hideaway

Day 2

Bijagua Rainforest Garden / Private Chocolate Tour / Tapir Valley at Twilight

Day 3

Tapir Valley Nature Reserve / Hanging Bridges Walk

Day 4

Chartered Flight to Punta Islita / Craft Workshop / Nighttime Turtle Quest

Day 5

Turtle Hatchling Search / Werner Sauter Biological Reserve / Macaw Recovery Network / Nighttime Turtle Encounter

Day 6

Turtle Hatchling Search / Birding on Punta Islita / Cultural Workshops

Sea Turtles & Wildlife of Northern Costa Rica Itinerary

Look for Endangered Turtles, Tapirs, Macaws & More from Remote & Luxurious Ecolodges

Day 1: Liberia, Costa Rica / Rio Celeste Hideaway

Arrive at the Liberia airport in northwest Costa Rica and meet your Expedition Leader. This afternoon, transfer to Rio Celeste Hideaway, less than two hours away, where we have an orientation and welcome dinner. Our base for the next three nights, this remote luxury ecolodge lies far from heavily toured sectors, with proximity to all the wonders of the lush rainforest that surrounds it. The region offers a vivid introduction to Costa Rica's remarkable biodiversity. The tiny country hosts an astounding number of species given its size - more than half a million different animals and plants, some 6% of the entire planet's biological diversity! A widely accepted theory to explain this unusual density is that species from both North and South America have mixed freely on this narrow chunk of land that lies between two oceans and two continents.





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Day 7

Transfer to Liberia Airport /
Depart



Day 2: Bijagua Rainforest Garden / Private Chocolate Tour / Tapir Valley at Twilight

Our nature adventure begins with a guided tour of Bijagua Rainforest Garden, a mix of secondary forest and cultivated gardens that attracts a wide array of creatures. Search for mammals, like monkeys and sloths; amphibians, including the red-eyed tree frog and blue jeans frog, plus a wide variety of birds—toucans and tanagers, honeycreepers, hummingbirds and more. Then tour a cacao farm to discover how chocolate is made. On this 20-acre family farm, learn how cacao beans are harvested from the pod, fermented, dried, roasted and turned into chocolate. Called the “elixir of the gods” by the Maya who first created this delectable beverage around the year 600, it was considered a sacred drink and used in ceremonies and offerings.

This evening, we make our first visit to Tapir Valley, home to Costa Rica’s largest population of Baird’s tapir, the biggest native land mammal in both Central and South America. After sunset, watch and hear the forest around us transform as nocturnal animals awaken for their nightly activities, including hunting, eating and looking for mates. Walk with our Expedition Leader and local guide through forest, open grasslands, and a wetland where the frog symphony is amazing! Search for amphibians, insects and mammals that are more difficult to spot during the day, including a variety of frogs, sleeping birds, kinkajous and elusive tapirs. Although tapir sightings are rather rare, the species is nocturnal, and it’s exciting to find evidence of its presence when we know it is active in the forest.

Day 3: Tapir Valley Nature Reserve / Hanging Bridges Walk

Rise early to greet the dawn as we return to Tapir Valley Nature Reserve, spanning more than 220 acres of primary and secondary rainforest on the border of Volcano Tenorio National Park. Well off the standard tourist track, this private sanctuary was established to protect valuable habitat in rural northern Costa Rica for many wild species. Among them is the Baird’s tapir, classified as endangered, but sightings in this area are increasing, and local farmers are joining efforts to protect its habitat. Although they may look more like pigs or elephants, tapirs are most closely related to horses and rhinos. Weighing up to 550 pounds with a thick, tough hide, they are generally solitary creatures. Look for their footprints on the network of private hiking trails that lace the reserve, and gain an elevated perspective from several viewing platforms. While tapirs may be top draw, the reserve abounds with other wildlife, including some of the best birdwatching in Costa Rica.

Return to our hotel for a late breakfast followed by free time to explore more of the trails, on your own or with a local guide from the lodge. This afternoon, visit Heliconias Hanging Bridges in the foothills of Tenorio Volcano for an intimate encounter with the rich biodiversity of the tropical rainforest. On a private tour over a system of suspension bridges, get a bird’s eye view of the dense forest canopy, learn which creatures inhabit various levels of vegetation, and look for howler monkeys and white-nosed coatis in the branches. We’re almost certain to see sloths, as both two-toed and three-toed species are common here. On the forest floor, we might spy a tapir if we’re lucky. And from our vantage point high above the ground, the distant views include Lake Nicaragua.



Day 4: Chartered Flight to Punta Islita / Craft Workshop / Nighttime Turtle Quest

This morning, we transfer to a nearby airstrip for our private chartered flight to Punta Islita, where we spend the next three nights. Our hotel stands alone above a pristine beach on the outer edge of the Nicoya Peninsula, far from other tourist development. Renowned for its commitment to sustainability, environmental stewardship and human betterment, Hotel Punta Islita is an understated luxury outpost promoting wildlife conservation and cultural authenticity. It also lies within a globally renowned Blue Zone, acclaimed for exceptional health and longevity supported by a lifestyle in harmony with nature. After lunch on arrival, enjoy a craft workshop with local women at Casa Museo, Islita's vibrant small art museum. We'll explore the artistic potential of found objects from nature, including seashells, pebbles and interesting seeds.

Relax this afternoon with a soak in the infinity pool overlooking the Pacific Ocean, restoring your energy for our after-dark adventure: a search for endangered sea turtles that come ashore to build their nests in the soft sand of Playa Corazalito or Ostional. Although we're never guaranteed to see them, our location and timing are good to observe the arribada (Spanish for "arrival") of thousands of turtles crawling onto the beach to lay their eggs. From July to December, olive ridley and leatherback turtles return to where they were born to continue the cycle of life. After several years at sea, their instincts guide them to emerge from the water under the cover of night to dig nests in which to deposit their eggs, before returning to the ocean. We hope to witness this remarkable spectacle. Supporting local conservation efforts, Hotel Punta Islita actively collaborates with local environmental organizations to protect these turtle nesting sites.



Day 5: Turtle Hatchling Search / Werner Sauter Biological Reserve / Macaw Recovery Network / Nighttime Turtle Encounter

Rising before dawn, we head back to the beach in hopes of seeing tiny sea turtles hatching. If we are very fortunate, we may get to watch hundreds of hatchlings scurrying to the water to begin the life cycle anew. Return to our hotel for breakfast, then spend the morning hiking in Werner Sauter Biological Reserve as we explore the Guanacaste tropical dry forest, one of the rarest and most vulnerable ecosystems in Central America. These environs are home to a rich variety of wildlife including howler monkeys, tropical porcupines, deer, iguanas, parrots, Pacific screech owls and sac-winged bats. Originally a family farm that grew mangoes and sugarcane, along with raising horses and cattle, the 346-acre private reserve today exemplifies the dedication to conservation and restoring ecological balance that is central to Costa Rica's identity. During the country's environmental movement in the latter 20th century, large areas of rainforest and cloud forest were protected, though little was done for the tropical dry forest. Concerned about the future of this important ecosystem, the family began to turn their working farm back into the natural forest that existed centuries earlier. Four decades later, the land has largely been regenerated, including its native balsa and rosewood trees, and attracts a plethora of wildlife—as well as visitors invited to discover its abundant flora and fauna.

After lunch in Samara, continue to the Macaw Recovery Network for a private guided tour. Charismatic, intelligent and vibrant, macaws are the largest of Earth's 370 parrot species. They are also on the brink of extinction along with many other parrots that are victims of habitat loss. The network seeks to protect and restore parrot populations, with a primary focus on the great green macaw, scarlet macaw and yellow-naped Amazon parrot. In addition to conserving wild populations, the network also breeds and strategically releases birds to help these species recover. Our tour includes a chance to watch a released wild flock of scarlet macaws fly in from the surrounding area. After dinner at a local restaurant, head back to the beach for another opportunity to look for sea turtles coming ashore. We'll hope to watch them dig their nests, deposit eggs, and perhaps see hatchlings heading to sea.



Day 6: Turtle Hatchling Search / Birding on Punta Islita / Cultural Workshops

Take one more chance this morning to look for turtle hatchlings, returning to the beach before the sun comes up. It's also an amazing experience to hear the beauty of tropical birds at daybreak, greeting sunrise in the forest with their exuberant chorus. With our Expedition Leader and a gifted local guide, learn to spot the unique species that inhabit this rare ecosystem, different and drier from most of the rest of Costa Rica where rainforest and cloud forest predominate. Among many others, we may see the tiger heron, rufous-naped wren, turquoise-browed motmot, various hummingbirds, scarlet macaws and critically endangered green macaws—fewer than a thousand remain of the latter.

Return to our hotel for breakfast, then enjoy a morning cultural workshop, which may feature Tico cooking, creating sand candles, or cocktail crafting infused with the region's traditional spices and blends. Lunch is served at the beach club, then the afternoon is at leisure for the pursuit of your choice: Swim in the ocean, or enjoy time by the pool with a fabulous view over the forested hills. Tour the permaculture farm. Choose a wellness treatment in the spa (additional cost)—perhaps a jade stone massage, chocolate body polish or medicinal sea mud wrap. Or opt for an active adventure (additional cost) such as kayaking through mangroves or horseback riding on the beach. After a last glorious sunset, gather for a farewell dinner together as we enjoy one final night in our secluded piece of paradise.

Day 7: Transfer to Liberia Airport / Depart

After an early breakfast, depart at 8:00 am for Liberia International Airport, about a three-hour drive. Departing flights should be booked no earlier than 1:30 pm.



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Accommodation Details:

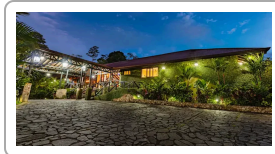
Rio Celeste Hideaway

Hotel Punta Islita

For detailed descriptions, visit nathab.com/central-america/costa-rica-turtles-tour/accommodations

Sea Turtles & Wildlife of Northern Costa Rica Accommodations

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Rio Celeste Hideaway

Tucked within a private 80-acre rainforest reserve, this luxurious ecolodge features beautifully appointed casitas, lush gardens and exclusive access to the turquoise Rio Celeste.



Hotel Punta Islita

Set on a forested mountaintop overlooking the Pacific Ocean on the outer edge of the Nicoya Peninsula, this ecolodge offers spectacular views, eco-friendly design, open-air dining and an infinity pool.



Discover a Secret Side of Costa Rica

Costa Rica is deservedly popular among travelers drawn to its enticing beaches, tropical rainforests, active volcanoes and conservation ethos. But certain destinations can feel a little crowded. That's why we have designed this unusual trip that gets you far from the standard track, where you'll spend more time with wild creatures than other tourists. See what makes this itinerary so special:

1 Explore a Far Less Traveled Part of Wild Costa Rica

In our quest to get our travelers away from overtouristed zones and into more secluded encounters with nature, we have devised an itinerary that highlights corners of Costa Rica that are relatively undiscovered—yet filled with amazing wildlife and diverse natural habitats inviting exploration.

2 Top Location & Season for Seeing Sea Turtles

From Punta Islita, we have good odds to witness one of nature's most wondrous phenomena: a sea turtle "arribada," when pelagic marine turtles come ashore by the thousands to dig nests in the sand and lay their eggs. Then, under the cover of night, just before dawn, the tiny, vulnerable hatchlings break forth, scurry over the sand and into the ocean. We've timed our departures to align with this seasonal event, and while it's never guaranteed, our chances are prime.

3 Your Best Chance to Spot Tapirs in Central America

A special focus of our trip is Tapir Valley, a largely unknown private nature reserve that holds Costa Rica's largest population of endangered Baird's tapir. While we aren't guaranteed to see these rare and elusive animals, the odds that we may are better here than anywhere else! And we often do.

4 Exclusive Private Activities & Experiences

From a behind-the-scenes look at the Macaw Recovery Network and a private botanical garden visit to a demonstration of chocolate making and a guided tour of a cacao farm, our itinerary is filled with special private presentations and opportunities for our group alone—designed to get you close to local nature and culture in the most meaningful way.

5 Premier Luxury Ecolodges Ensure Comfort in Wild Settings

We're based at two high-end ecolodges that immerse you in nature, capitalizing on their remote and secluded locations, yet without compromising on quality, amenities and ambience. Enjoy private casitas with elegant nature-sourced furnishings; fresh, local gourmet meals; on-site spas and wellness facilities; and more aspects that make you feel thoroughly cared for.



6

A Private Chartered Flight Maximizes Your Time in Nature

Rather than spend five hours on rough, winding roads to transfer from the interior mountain rainforest to the Pacific Coast, we have chartered a private plane to whisk you there efficiently—meaning you get an extra day to enjoy nature as a result!

7

Private Transportation with a Window Seat for All

Our small group shares a comfortable, air-conditioned mini bus throughout the trip, with room to spread out. We never fill our vehicles to capacity, so you'll have plenty of space for your personal items, and a guaranteed window seat.

8

A Small Group Capped at Just 10 Travelers

A small group is essential for the kind of intimate nature experiences this trip offers. With no more than 10 travelers, we can enjoy quiet solitude in the forest, count on a non-intrusive impact in wild destinations, and receive plenty of personal attention from our Expedition Leader.

9

The World's Finest Naturalist Guides

Natural Habitat Adventures has a well-deserved global reputation for employing the highest-quality guides in the industry. Our Expedition Leaders are highly trained professional naturalists with years of experience and access to resources from WWF's top scientists. You won't find more knowledgeable—or more personable—guides than those who work with us. Our philosophy is simple: a nature adventure is only as good as the guide who leads it, so we provide the very best! **Read our Expedition Leader bios** and traveler comments regarding the quality of our leaders.

10

Our Quality-Value Guarantee Ensures Your Outstanding Tropical Safari

Natural Habitat Adventures is proud to offer our exclusive guarantee that clearly states that we will meet the high expectations we set forth in our promotional materials. To our knowledge, this is the most ambitious guarantee made by any adventure travel company. Read our important promise for yourself!

11

Feel Good About Your Carbon-Neutral Journey

We care deeply about our planet, as we know you do. When you travel with us, the carbon emissions from your trip are 100% offset—including your round-trip flights from home. Natural Habitat Adventures has been the world's first carbon-neutral travel company since 2007.



12

Natural Habitat Adventures Is WWF's Travel Partner

Because of our commitment to environmentally friendly travel, as well as the exceptional quality of our small-group nature adventures, World Wildlife Fund, the world's leading environmental conservation organization, has named Natural Habitat Adventures its worldwide travel partner—a designation that makes us exceedingly proud!



Make It Private

Travel privately, exclusively with your immediate family, multi-generational family or group of friends. And when you choose a private departure, you're assured the most exclusive and authentic Turtles & Tapirs of Costa Rica tour on offer. Request your private departure by completing the form below.

Please note that on Costa Rica Make It Private departures we require a minimum group size of 5 travelers.

Also, please be aware that your per-person cost on a Make It Private trip will vary depending on the number of travelers in your group and may be as much as 10%-30% higher (ship-based trips may be even higher) than our normal trip cost unless you fill the trip.

This **Make It Private** option is available on nearly every Nat Hab trip for family and friend groups. Call an Adventure Specialist at 800-543-8917 or look for the "Make It Private" icon in the **pricing section** of a trip online at nathab.com to see prices based on your specific group size.



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Dates & Pricing Summary:

Prices: From \$

Group Size: Limited to 10 Travelers

Physical Requirements: Moderate

Sea Turtles & Wildlife of Northern Costa Rica Dates, Pricing & Info

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2026 Departures

Departure	Return	Notes
Jul 5, 2026	Jul 11, 2026	
Jul 31, 2026	Aug 6, 2026	
Aug 3, 2026	Aug 9, 2026	
Aug 30, 2026	Sep 5, 2026	
Sep 2, 2026	Sep 8, 2026	
Sep 28, 2026	Oct 4, 2026	
Oct 1, 2026	Oct 7, 2026	
Oct 27, 2026	Nov 2, 2026	
Oct 30, 2026	Nov 5, 2026	



Pricing

2025 Prices

› Trip Price

\$6995 to \$7495 (+internal air)

Internal Air Cost: \$692 (this will be listed separately on our invoicing)

Single Occupancy: \$1595. [Click here](#) to learn how you can avoid the single supplement.

Deposit: \$500 per person (nonrefundable)

Make It Private: [View pricing](#) to take this trip privately with just you and your select travel companions.

Trip prices are per person based on double occupancy and are given in U.S. dollars. Guests who reserve their space prior to final pricing confirmation will receive the lowest rate within the range offered for that date. **Please read our [Payment and Refund Policy](#) here.**



2026 Prices

We're still in the process of confirming 2026 pricing. Please contact an Adventure Specialist for more details: 800-543-8917.

Included

- › **Trip price includes:** All accommodations, services of Nat Hab's professional Expedition Leader(s), local guides and lodge staff, all meals from dinner on Day 1 through breakfast on final day, private transfers throughout the itinerary, some gratuities, airport transfers on Day 1 and final day, all activities and entrance fees, all taxes, permits and service fees.
- › **Internal air cost includes:** One private charter flight from Upala to Punta Islita (this will be listed separately on our invoicing).

Not Included

Travel to and from the start and end point of your trip, alcoholic beverages, some gratuities, passport and visa fees (if any), optional activities, items of a personal nature (phone calls, laundry and internet, etc.), airline baggage fees, airport and departure taxes (if any), required medical evacuation insurance, optional travel protection insurance.



Physical Requirements

Easy to Moderate

This trip does not require a high degree of physical fitness, however to fully participate in all activities, travelers should be able to walk a minimum of 2-3 miles unassisted over uneven terrain with potentially muddy, slippery surfaces, up inclines involving some altitude gain, and under hot and humid conditions. During our excursion to the hanging bridges, travelers must navigate about 100 steps to complete the hike. While we take our time on the trails to enjoy the beauty that surrounds us, some hikes can be more strenuous than others, depending on physical ability. The heat and humidity are also factors that can take a physical toll. Roads throughout the itinerary are sometimes bumpy and often winding. Travelers prone to motion sickness may wish to take precautions, both on drives and on the private charter flight to Punta Islita.

Mandatory Insurance

Since the areas we travel to are remote and wild (that's why we go there!), we require that all guests have, at minimum, medical evacuation insurance for this program. This is for the safety of all guests. We require that your chosen independent insurance plan includes at least \$250,000 in medical evacuation coverage.

To protect your investment and to provide peace of mind while you travel, we also strongly recommend purchasing comprehensive travel insurance. Plans may cover everything from medical treatment to trip cancellations and delays and lost luggage. Please contact our office if you would like more information about the medical evacuation and comprehensive travel insurance policies we offer by calling 800-543-8917.

Getting There & Getting Home

Arrive in Liberia by 3:00pm to make it to the hotel in time for a 6:00 pm welcome dinner on Day 1. You may depart Liberia anytime after 1:30 pm on the final day.

We can best serve you if our Natural Habitat Adventures Travel Desk makes your reservations, as our staff is intimately familiar with the special requirements of this program and can arrange the most efficient travel. Please call us at 800-543-8917. Note that while we offer you the best possible rates available to us on airfare and additional nights' accommodations, you may find special web rates or better fares online.



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Extension Details:

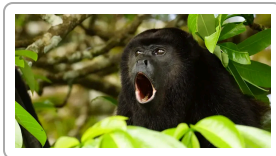
Costa Rica Wilderness Explorer
\$7995

Natural Jewels of Costa Rica
\$9695

Kingdom of the Monarchs
\$5295

Sea Turtles & Wildlife of Northern Costa Rica Extensions

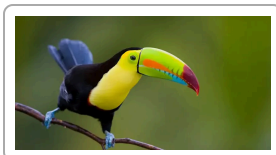
Look for Endangered Turtles, Tapirs, Macaws & More from Remote & Luxurious Ecolodges



Costa Rica Wilderness Explorer

See another side of Costa Rica on this adventure into rainforests, mist-shrouded mountains and coastlines well off the typical tourist track, and enjoy remote and authentic ecolodges en route.

\$7995 (+air)



Natural Jewels of Costa Rica

An all-encompassing nature expedition through the jungle canals of Tortuguero to the misty cloud forests of Monteverde and Corcovado's wild beaches—discover Costa Rica's exceptional biodiversity.

\$9695 (+air)



Kingdom of the Monarchs

Each winter, millions of monarch butterflies migrate to the fir forests of Mexico's Central Highlands—walk among them, take amazing photos, and listen to the air hum with the vibration of their wings!

\$5295



Natural Habitat & WWF: Discovering Our Planet Together

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WWF's membership travel program is operated by Natural Habitat Adventures (Nat Hab). To date, Nat Hab has provided more than \$6 million in support of WWF's mission and will continue to give 1% of gross sales plus \$175,000 annually through 2028. WWF® and ©1986 Panda Symbol are owned by WWF. All rights reserved.