



Costa Rica

Perfectly positioned between the warmth of the Caribbean and the vastness of the Pacific, Costa Rica is the compact heart of an extraordinary range of experiences. Where else in the world could you seek out scarlet macaws and capuchin monkeys in a rain forest, overlook a smoking volcano, raft down a tumultuous river and laze on a rugged beach, all within the space of a few days?

At a glance

- Dry season December to April, although most areas can be visited all year round
- Ideal for self-drive itineraries
- Perfect for both honeymooners and families
- Amazing selection of wildlife including turtles, macaws, caiman, basilisks, monkeys, armadillos and sloths
- Stunning flora – including 8,000 species of orchid
- 25% of country is National Park or Protected Area
- Jungle, rainforest, cloud forest, volcano and beach
- Excellent boutique hotels and remote jungle lodges



Getting there

Direct flight from London Gatwick to San Jose with British Airways. Flights from London Heathrow to San Jose via Madrid with Iberia. Also flights from London Heathrow to San Jose via the United States (Miami, Houston or Newark) with American Airlines or United. KLM and Air France also offer a service to San Jose via Amsterdam and Paris. Any flights via the US require an ESTA application. Several regional departures including London City, Manchester, Cardiff, Birmingham, Humberside, Leeds-Bradford, Edinburgh and Bristol are available on request.

Prices from **£2,306 per person** (2 sharing) for a 10 night trip

Combinations

Combine the wildlife of Costa Rica with the fascinating indigenous communities of Panama or the rich and colourful cultures and archaeological sites of Guatemala and Mexico.



San Jose & Central Valley

The great gift with which Costa Rica rewards the traveller is accessibility to so many diverse environments, and nowhere is this more true than in the Central Valley. A short distance from the country's capital of San Jose are 4 vastly different habitats, offering volcanic peaks, jungle waterfalls, plunging gorges, cloud forests and the largest butterfly observatory in the world! So whether your interests lie in the thrills of white water rafting along the Pacuare River, a more leisurely visit to the sulphurous steaming waters at Poas volcano, or perhaps mere astonishment at the dazzling display of butterfly life at La Paz Waterfall Gardens, you will have the opportunity to pursue them all.

OUR TOP TIPS

Visit the volcanic peaks of Irazu, Turrialba and Poas • Raft down the mighty Pacuare River • Explore La Paz Waterfall Gardens, which include the world's most spectacular butterfly display and a serpentarium with 30 different species of snake • Horse-ride along tropical trails



Xandari

Near Alajuela (Central Valley) **BB**

Xandari is built on a coffee plantation overlooking the Central Valley. All (except one) of the unique bungalows have a large terrace with panoramic view and a walled-in patio for privacy. All 24 bungalows have very colourful modern furnishings and private facilities (shower). The hotel has a beautiful spa offering massages, Jacuzzi and yoga. The small, informal restaurant has dramatic sweeping views over San Jose. There are three swimming pools and a private trail and waterfall. Superb property and one of our firm favourites.



Bougainvillea hotel

San Jose **BB**

The Bougainvillea hotel is situated in a quiet residential area just 40 minutes from the international airport. This is a great mid-range property with ten acres of beautiful and mature botanical gardens at the rear of the hotel. There are 82 spacious rooms with views of either the mountains or the San Jose skyline. There is also a restaurant, bar, tennis court and swimming pool.

Tortuguero National Park

Once an archipelago of volcanic islands, Tortuguero ("turtle place") blurs the distinction between the sea and dry land. The National Park consists of lagoons, wetlands, beaches and canals, which demand to be explored by boat. Travelling by launch or – for the more energetic – in canoes or kayaks, you could encounter any of the 50 species of freshwater fish, Spectacled Caiman and Southern River Otters, or watch the Spider and Howler monkeys in the jungle that fringes the beaches. Magically, you can be guided in July and August on moonlit nights to watch the turtles labouring their way onto the beaches to lay their eggs – an extraordinary sight you will never forget.

OUR TOP TIPS

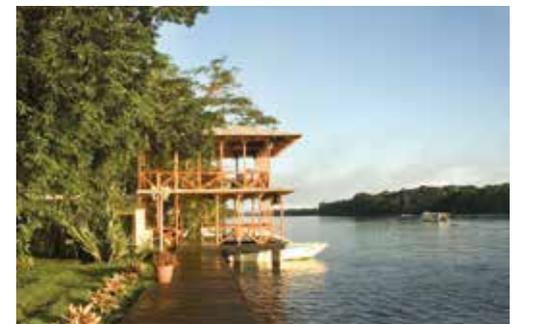
Hire a canoe to get close and personal with the otters • Follow the turtles as they lay their eggs under the night sky • Spot the "Jesus Christ Lizard" walking on water



Mawamba Lodge

Tortuguero **FB** (includes activities)

Situated on a thin strip of land between the canals and the Caribbean sea. This rustic lodge has 58 simple wooden cabins (no TV or air-conditioning), all with private facilities (shower) including four honeymoon suites. The suites have a private terrace, king size bed and corner bath. Facilities include a restaurant, bar, swimming pool and a jacuzzi. There is also a frog garden and butterfly sanctuary on-site. From the lodge it is only a short walk to the village and to Tortuguero Beach, the nesting place of Green Turtles.



Manatus lodge

Tortuguero **FB** (includes activities)

One of the most comfortable lodges in Tortuguero. The 12 spacious rooms are all furnished to a high standard. All rooms feature air-conditioning, mini bar, TV, en suite bathroom, terrace and mosquito nets over the beds. The restaurant named 'Ara Macaw' focuses on Afro-Caribbean flavours combined with fresh ingredients and locally caught seafood. There is a gym, sundeck and a lovely pool overlooking the canal.



For additional lodges, pictures and general information on Costa Rica please visit www.sunvil.co.uk



Arenal

Dominated by the spectacular Arenal volcano as it rises out of the tropical rainforest. Howler monkeys, macaws and brilliant butterflies flourish among the heliconias and cascading waterfalls. Taking full advantage of the unique habitat, there is a vast range of activities on offer. Whether your interests lie in a guided exploration of this natural wonderland of flora and fauna, or you wish to connect more energetically with the environment through zip-lining, swimming in hot springs and crossing hanging bridges, your expectations are likely to be surpassed.

Manuel Antonio National Park

From the central mountain range, the land falls away westwards down to the drier, warmer Pacific side of the country. The attractive yet compact national park of Manuel Antonio is blessed with picturesque beaches fringed with tropical dry forest. The ramshackle resort of Quepos, with its shops, bars, hotels and restaurants, has flourished along the length of this rocky outcrop. It is a three hour drive from San Jose. This is an excellent centre for a variety of activities such as deep sea sport fishing.

San Gerardo de Dota

The road to San Gerardo may not be for the faint-hearted, but the rewards are immense – especially for those fascinated by birdlife. Here in the surrounding cloud forest is the primary habitat of the dazzling Resplendent Quetzal, alongside woodpeckers, flycatchers and hummingbirds. In the narrow valley, along the Savegre River, there are trails in the lush forest - ideal for walking and horse-riding. San Gerardo offers a complete oasis to the bustle of San Jose.

Monteverde

The reward for the arduous car-ride to 1400 metres high Monteverde is to find yourself immersed in the life-giving moisture of a tropical cloud forest. Founded by American Quakers in the 1950's. The constant soft mist nourishes a bountiful environment in which all manner of species flourish – the numbers are truly astonishing: 100 species of mammals, 400 species of birds, 420 species of orchids. You might even catch a glimpse of divinity in the form of the Resplendent Quetzal!



Arenal Manoa

Arenal **BB**

The property enjoys a wonderful location with incredible views of the Arenal volcano. It is surrounded by lovely gardens. The rooms have all been designed so that each one offers a panoramic vista of the volcano. Rooms are bright and modern in bungalow-style buildings. Facilities include a swimming pool, restaurant and jacuzzi. Excellent value.



Parador

Manuel Antonio **BB**

Situated on a cliff it commands excellent views of the sea below. A regular minibus service to the nearby beach is provided, and there is also a path from the hotel to another beach. Amenities include three swimming pools, games room, tennis court, spa, restaurant and bar. All rooms have private facilities and are air-conditioned. Good value for money.



Savegre

San Gerardo de Dota **FB**

There are 51 rooms consisting of standard and junior suites dotted around the grounds. The restaurant serves homely food and there is a cosy lounge bar. The spa provides treatments, sauna and a jacuzzi. There are several walking trails including one to a waterfall. A very friendly family-run lodge in a secluded spot.



Monteverde lodge

Monteverde **BB**

Located just 15 minutes from Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve. The hotel provides comfortable accommodation surrounded by attractive mature gardens and trails. The hotel amenities include a solar heated swimming pool, jacuzzi, El Jardin Bar and restaurant. There is also a butterfly and hummingbird garden. There are 28 en-suite bedrooms with either a forest or garden view.

OUR TOP TIPS

Swim and relax in the hot springs at Ecotermales • Walk the Hanging Bridges over the Arenal rainforest canopy • Zip-line in local reserves • Fish for Rainbow Bass on Arenal Lake



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OUR TOP TIPS

Follow trails around Los Quetzales National Park • Enjoy the crisp freshness of the mountain air • Seek out the Resplendent Quetzal (most evident during the breeding season of April-May)

OUR TOP TIPS

Enjoy some of the best zip-lines in the country • Canopy Tours and Suspended Bridge Walks • Guided horseback tours • Get to know about real coffee on a plantation tour



Tempisque River

A unique and special area encompassing the wetlands, dry tropical forest and mangroves of the Tempisque river in Guanacaste. The private ecological reserve of Rancho Humo is naturally flooded in the wet season, only partially drying out in the dry season. It is set over 2640 acres including parts of Palo Verde National Park. Jaribou, storks, spoonbills, herons and cormorants are just some of the examples of the varied birdlife. There are also howler monkeys, iguanas, coatis, ocelots and American crocodiles in the area.



Pacuare River

National Geographic rates the Pacuare as among the top river trips in the world. The river plunges down the Caribbean slope through a series of spectacular canyons surrounded by tropical rainforest. On your final day at Pacuare Jungle lodge you will raft through the last section of the river, riding through Class III-IV rapids. Please note that we do recommend a certain level of fitness and an ability to swim. Please ensure your insurance covers you for rafting (up to class IV). Children under 12 are not permitted.



Piedras Blancas National Park

This delightful national park was created in 1993 and has 35,000 acres of tropical rainforest and mangroves. The area was being exploited for wood products, but has been steadily purchased with help from the Austrian government and private interests, notably the classical Austrian violinist Michael Schnitzler. The land has been subsequently donated to the Costa Rican government. It is tucked away in the south-west corner of the country across the bay from the Osa Peninsula and Corcovado National Park. Together they form and safeguard an important and ecologically diverse corridor in the Golfo Dulce. It protects some of the last remaining stretches of undisturbed lowland primary rainforest.



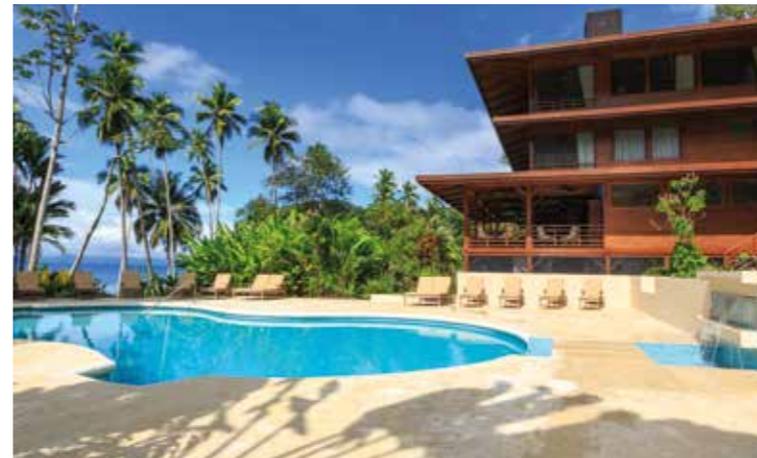
Rancho Humo estancia Tempisque River (Puerto Humo) **FB**

This smart estancia has ten rooms which feature shower, air conditioning, complimentary wifi, flat screen TV, coffee maker and safe deposit box. Junior suites have balconies. Facilities include a bar, dining room, pool and living room. Guests can explore the area on a boat or jeep safari to view the impressive wildlife. A special wildlife safari in a tranquil environment.



Pacuare Jungle Lodge Pacuare River **FB**

Reaching this lodge by raft is all part of the experience! Each of the bungalows have a private terrace, en-suite facilities and views to the lush garden or the river. There is a bar and restaurant. Excursions (payable locally) include a canopy tour through the rainforest, horse riding, hike to a Cabecar Indian community. A unique and special place.



Playa Cativo Piedras Blancas National Park **FB**

Playa Cativo is an elegant lodge accessible only by boat. It is located in an idyllic setting on the shores of the National Park. Each room has a view of either the ocean or rainforest and window mosquito screens. There is a restaurant, freshwater outdoor swimming pool, library and organic farm. The beautiful and lush gardens are abundant with butterflies, birds, small mammals and exotic plants. There is an excellent choice of activities including walking, kayaking, hiking, fishing, stand up paddleboarding and yoga. Highly recommended.



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Osa Peninsula (Corcovado National Park)

A peninsula on the Pacific coast, it has been described by National Geographic as “the most biologically intense place on earth”, and it is one of the few remaining sizeable areas of primary lowland rainforest in the whole world. Here exist 13 separate ecosystems, almost 1000 species of trees, nearly 400 species of birds, alongside tapirs, jaguars, red-eyed tree frogs, monkeys, iguana and sea-turtles. There is an opportunity to snorkel among the coral reefs – and perhaps catch sight of dolphins and the occasional passing whale. There are various trails in the National Park. There are a number of airstrips dotted around the peninsula (depending on your final choice of lodge).



Bosque del Cabo

Osa Peninsula **FB**

Bosque del Cabo is a relaxed and secluded hideaway surrounded by a 300 acre forest reserve. Located at the southernmost cape of the peninsula, it is reached by flying into Puerto Jimenez and taking a 60 minute 4x4 transfer to the lodge. Hikes can be taken on marked trails through the forest to the ocean and a waterfall. There are two standard and eight deluxe bungalows. All have a terrace area with hammocks and easy chairs along with modern bathrooms and unique outdoor showers! The attractive swimming pool is naturally filled by a spring and has a poolside bar. This small and intimate lodge is suitable for both couples and families.



Luna lodge Nr Carate **FB**

This secluded lodge is located in the Carate river valley adjacent to Corcovado National Park. The lodge is the vision of the owner Lana Wedmore. Once she came across the Osa peninsula she knew she wanted to establish her own eco-lodge and a dream was born. The lodge is spread over 60 acres of primary and secondary rainforest. There are breathtaking views from the restaurant and yoga deck. There are eight bungalows with a high thatched-palm roof. Each have en-suite facilities and a private deck from which you can enjoy the jungle dawn chorus. There is a lovely pool and a small treatment room offering massages. Excursions include guided hikes, kayaking, horse-riding, bird watching and guided tours to Corcovado National Park (payable locally). Fly to Carate (charter) or Puerto Jimenez followed by a 4X4 transfer. A real hidden jewel.



Casa Corcovado Jungle Lodge Corcovado National Park **FB**

(Normally closed 1 September-31 October)

This unusual Lodge is a 170 acre private reserve bordering Corcovado National Park. There are no roads leading to the lodge so access is only by motor launch. The journey to the lodge is great fun but sometimes the sea crossing can be rough. It is a wet landing at a nearby beach so you'll be up to your thighs in water! This is followed by a tractor transfer to the top. The accommodation consists of simple, tiled floor bungalows with shower and ceiling fans. Please note that none of the bungalows have ocean views. There is a restaurant/bar and two pools. Your stay includes a guided full day tour to the National Park and a trip to Cano Island.



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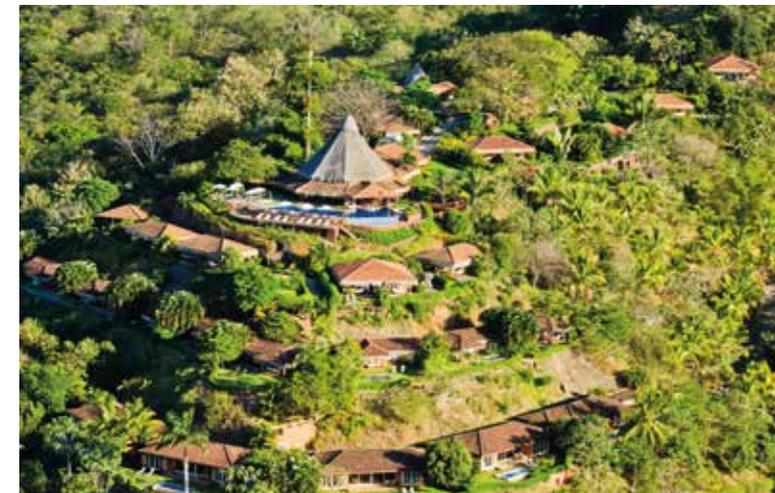
OUR TOP TIPS

Be prepared for unusual modes of transfer! (motor launch, tractor) • Snorkel at Cano island • Experience a sense of inner peace in the jungle • Walk the trails in Corcovado and try and spot a puma or jaguar!



Nicoya peninsula

The ferry trip across the Gulf of Nicoya from Puntarenas is an opportunity to enjoy the views (or alternatively take the bridge located further north). The privately owned Curu reserve fringed with white sand beaches protects a wide variety of flora and fauna. The Cabo Blanco Reserve occupies the entire southwest tip of the peninsula. Here you can find monkeys, squirrels, sloths, agoutis and a variety of snakes! With a four-wheel drive in the dry season (can be impassable in the rainy season) it is possible to head north to Playa Bejuco and Nosara. The Ostional coastline (25 minutes from Nosara) is the world's largest nesting ground for the Olive Ridley turtle between July and December. There are flights from San Jose to Nosara and Tambor.



Punta Islita

Nicoya Peninsula **BB**

This upmarket resort hotel is situated on a hilltop on the west coast. There are several room types including deluxe, suites, casitas and villas. The casitas and villas have their own garden and plunge pool. There is a stunning infinity pool, restaurant, beach club (with pool), gym and spa. For the thrill-seekers, there is zip-lining, surfing or kayaking and for those looking for some sport, you can play tennis, do a spot of sport fishing or go for a round of golf at the 9 hole course. There is a regular shuttle bus to nearby villages.



Lagarta lodge Nosara **BB**

This elegant boutique hotel is beautifully situated on a hilltop overlooking two rivers (Nosara and Montana), verdant subtropical vegetation and the Ostional coastline. There are 26 rooms across 3 room types - 7 Flor Blanca (ocean view), 8 Panorama (partial ocean view) and 11 Jungle (jungle/forest view). On the balcony (or terrace) there is a table and chairs and hammock or luxury sofa. There are mosquito screens on the balcony doors and in the bathroom. There are two infinity swimming pools, jacuzzi and spa. The attractive Chirriboca restaurant and Gecko bar enjoy stunning views of the surrounding scenery and sunsets. The hotel owns and maintains its own private 90 acre biological reserve which is situated below the property (with direct access - steep steps down). This special property should not be missed and comes highly recommended!



Tango Mar Playa Quizaes **BB**

Tango Mar is located 3km south of Tambor village, a 40 minute drive from the ferry terminal. This is an attractive, romantic and welcoming beachfront resort. The extensive facilities include an attractive swimming pool, nine-hole par 3 golf course, two floodlit tennis courts and stables. There is a spacious restaurant and bar area. It has a variety of beachfront rooms, different suites and large villas (good for families) with air-conditioning, ceiling fans, satellite TV, mini-bar and safe deposit box. The tropical suites share a pool and sundeck. The property is surrounded by tropical gardens and palm trees. Please note the tide can be strong here so please check before swimming in the sea. There is a good choice of activities and villages nearby with restaurants. Charming hotel and excellent value.



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Suggested itineraries

Please find some suggested itineraries which can be tailored to suit individual requirements. They are simply examples of what is feasible within different timeframes. There are additional itineraries on our website or please speak to us for further guidance. They are aimed at individual travellers (NOT group escorted tours). Tours include an English speaking guide. Prices are a guideline only please contact us for an exact quote. Please note that we are able to quote for land only arrangements (no flights) but we require a minimum of 7 nights.

Guide prices include

- International economy return flights from the UK (see the itinerary for specific airline details)
- Accommodation - standard room unless stated otherwise
- Private transfers and tours (unless indicated otherwise)
- Internal flights (as featured in the itinerary)
- Meals (as outlined in the itinerary)

Board basis key

- BB** Bed and Breakfast
- HB** Half-Board
- FB** Full Board
- AI** All inclusive

Classic Costa Rica - 12 nights

Based on British Airways direct flight
Guide price per person (2 sharing) £2,683

- San Jose 1 night **BB**
- Tortuguero 2 nights **FB**
- Arenal 2 nights **BB**
- Monteverde 3 nights **BB**
- Nicoya peninsula 4 nights **BB**

Day 1 Upon arrival transfer to hotel in San Jose. Bougainvillea Hotel for 1 night. **BB**

Day 2 Early morning group transfer to Guapiles, continue by boat to the lodge in Tortuguero. Mawamba Lodge for 2 nights. **FB**

Day 3 Group guided wildlife canal boat trips and guided walk.

Day 4 Boat and land transfer to Arenal. Arenal Manoa Resort (junior suite with volcano view) for 2 nights. **BB**

Day 5 Half day guided tour of Arenal Hanging Bridges.

Day 6 Transfer to Monteverde including a lake crossing. Trapp Family lodge (mountain suite) for 3 nights. **BB**

Day 7 Half day guided visit to Monteverde Cloud Forest.

Day 8 Day at leisure.

Day 9 Transfer to Nicoya peninsula. Tango Mar (beachfront room) for 4 nights. **BB**

Days 10-12 Days at leisure.

Day 13 Transfer to San Jose airport. Return flight to the UK.

Birdwatching itinerary - 10 nights

Based on British Airways direct flight
Guide price per person (2 sharing) £3,200

- San Jose 1 night **BB**
- Tortuguero 2 nights **FB**
- Sarapiquí 2 nights **BB**
- Osa 3 nights **FB**
- San Gerardo de Dota 2 nights **FB**

Day 1 Upon arrival transfer to hotel in San Jose. Bougainvillea Hotel for 1 night. **BB**

Day 2 Early morning group transfer to Guapiles, continue by boat to the lodge in Tortuguero. Mawamba Lodge for 2 nights. **FB**

Day 3 Group guided wildlife canal boat trips and guided walk.

Day 4 Boat and land transfer to Sarapiquí. Selva Verde for 2 nights. **BB**

Day 5 Half day guided birdwatching tour.

Day 6 Transfer to San Jose airport. Fly to Puerto Jimenez. Transfer to Luna lodge for 3 nights. **FB**

Day 7-8 Days at leisure.

Day 9 Transfer to Puerto Jimenez. Fly to San Jose and transfer to San Gerardo de Dota. Savegre lodge (junior suite) for 2 nights. **FB**

Days 10 Group guided half day birdwatching tour.

Day 11 Transfer to San Jose airport. Return flight to the UK.

Honeymoon itinerary - 12 nights

Based on British Airways direct flight
Guide price per person (2 sharing) £4,988

- Central Valley 2 nights **BB**
- Pacuare River 2 nights **FB**
- Arenal 2 nights **BB**
- Piedras Blancas National Park 3 nights **FB**
- Nosara 3 nights **BB**

Day 1 Upon arrival transfer to hotel in Central Valley. Xandari (prima plus villa) hotel for 2 nights. **BB**

Day 2 Guided full day Poas volcano and La Paz waterfalls tour.

Day 3 Early morning group transfer to Pacuare River. Raft to the lodge. Pacuare Jungle lodge for 2 nights. **FB**

Day 4 Day at leisure.

Day 5 Raft out from the lodge followed by a land transfer to Arenal. Nayara Resort for 2 nights. **BB**

Day 6 Half day guided tour of Arenal Hanging Bridges.

Day 7 Transfer to San Jose airport. Fly to Puerto Jimenez (or Golfito). Transfer by boat to Playa Cativo for 3 nights. **FB**

Day 8-9 Days at leisure.

Day 10 Transfer to Puerto Jimenez airstrip. Fly to San Jose - connect with onward flight to Nosara. Transfer to Lagarta lodge for 3 nights. **BB**

Day 11-12 Days at leisure.

Day 13 Transfer to San Jose airport. Return flight to the UK.

Family fun itinerary - 10 nights

Based on British Airways direct flight
Based on a 2 bedroom unit or 2 rooms at each property
Guide price per person (4 sharing) £2,306

- Central Valley 3 nights **BB**
- Tortuguero 3 nights **FB**
- Manuel Antonio 4 nights **BB**

Day 1 Upon arrival transfer to hotel in Central Valley. Xandari hotel for 3 nights. **BB**

Day 2 Guided full day Poas volcano and La Paz waterfalls tour.

Day 3 Day at leisure.

Day 4 Early morning group transfer to Guapiles, continue by boat to the lodge in Tortuguero. Mawamba Lodge for 3 nights. **FB**

Day 5-6 Group guided wildlife canal boat trips and guided walk.

Day 7 Boat and land transfer to Manuel Antonio. Parador hotel for 4 nights. **BB**

Day 8-10 Days at leisure.

Day 11 Transfer to San Jose airport. Return flight to the UK.

