



# DUCHY COLLEGE PROJECT INFORMATION PACK



## Costa Rica Group Expedition



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AMERICA**

# INDEX

**YOUR PROJECT 3-9**

**SAMPLE ITINERARY 10-11**

**ACCOMMODATION & LIFESTYLE 12-14**

**USEFUL INFORMATION 15-17**







**SOUTH  
AMERICA**

# ABOUT THE PROJECT

Our conservation work  
in more detail



# ABOUT COSTA RICA



## Location

With the greatest concentration of biodiversity in the world, Costa Rica is a must for any conservationist. Over 25% of the country is protected in national parks, this is due to the country's progressive policies on environmental protection and sustainable ecotourism. The rainforests, tropical forests, marine areas and wetlands of Costa Rica are the subject of many university and scientific organisation studies.

This "biological crossroads" of the world offers a visitor an unforgettable glimpse of a tropical paradise with over 500,000 species of animal including endangered sea turtles, monkeys and jungle cats plus over 800 species of bird. Seen as an example of political stability in the area, Costa Rica has enjoyed democracy for almost 60 years and is an oasis of calm among its turbulent neighbours.





# YOUR PROJECT



## Pacuare Turtle Conservation Project

The first part of your project will be at the Pacuare Turtle Project which is located in a quiet, remote area accessible only by boat. Your time at the project will be spent patrolling for sea turtles laying their eggs, rebuilding defences to protect from the ocean or perhaps establishing a hatchery. This is hands on work and often includes maintenance and improvements to the accommodation, clearing paths and beach cleaning.

Patrols are lead by an experienced patrol leader walking a sector of the beach searching for nesting females. Once a turtle is encountered the leader, with the aid of the volunteers, will collect information; the length and width of the turtle, nest location and its dimensions and the number of eggs laid. The eggs will be carefully removed by the group leader and relocated to the hatchery. Turtles are sensitive to light, if any light is to be used on the beach only red light is permitted.

Turtle conservation is one of the most incredible experiences, your time and contribution to the project is very valuable. It can be hard work; patrols take place whatever the weather and you may not encounter any nesting turtles. Hatchery shifts can be long and sometime tedious but the overall experience is second to none in a place of extreme natural beauty.



## Pacuare Turtle Conservation Project

During a hatchery shift you will need to check for baby turtles that have left the nest and need to be placed on the beach so they return to the water, monitor the hatchery for any potential threats to the nest e.g. crabs. Assist with the relocation of eggs found on patrol, recording data on the number of eggs, their original location and where they are relocated to.

There are normally two nightly patrols at 11pm or 3am depending on the tides, you will spend around 4 hours patrolling depending on the number of turtles found with a short break at each end of the beach.

Be prepared to go with the flow! Whilst some of the work may be hard it is incredibly rewarding and in the most amazing setting. It may take you a while to acclimatise to the conditions, we recommend that you remember to drink plenty of water, you may find it useful to bring rehydration sachets, stay in the shade during your breaks, wear plenty of sun screen and don't over do it.





# YOUR PROJECT



## Your conservation programme

- Night beach patrols
- Collecting biometric data from nesting turtles
- Relocating of nests
- Nest Monitoring
- Day/night hatchery duties
- Beach cleaning
- Hatching liberation
- Basic construction work, building hatcheries for example
- General maintenance
- Maintenance of volunteer accommodation
- Reforestation work – collecting/sorting of seeds, planting saplings



# YOUR PROJECT



## Esparza

You will be based at the family run volunteer centre in Esparza, North Puntarenas, a small agricultural town near the Pacific Ocean, for the second part of your project. Esparza is located 80kms from the capital city of San Jose in the countryside offering rolling hills, breath taking mountain views and deep river valleys.

From your base you will experience some of the beautiful scenery and exotic wildlife that Cost Rica has to offer; it is part of the Neo-tropic eco zone which includes more tropical rainforest than any other eco zone and is one of the most important reserves of biodiversity on earth.

The country is host to many environmental treaties and is noted for its national park system which oversees over 160 protected areas which comprise over a quarter of Costa Rican territory, you will have the opportunity to visit a number of these areas whilst you are staying at Esparza.





# YOUR PROJECT



## Your Conservation Programme

- Braulio Carrillo National Park, experience the aerial tram above the jungle and a guided nature tour
- Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve offers views of both the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans
- Playa Uvita Marino Ballena National Park to see whales and visit the coral reef
- Experience crocodiles, birds and monkeys up close on the River Tarcoles. Enjoy horse riding on the beach
- Toucan Rescue Ranch offers an opportunity to understand sloths and conservation
- Introduction to the world leading approach to maritime conservation at the Maritime Park Puntarenas
- Visit to the macaw and wild bird sanctuary, also includes jaguars
- Hiking with a guide in the cloud forest and experience the amazing Ocean View Zip Line to experience fantastic views with a shot of adrenaline
- Guided tour of Manuel Antonio National Park and conservation talk

# YOUR PROJECT



## Sample itinerary

- ❖ Day 1 – Arrive into San Jose (SJO) airport. Your group guide will meet you and transfer you to the family run volunteer accommodation in Esparza. Welcome dinner
- ❖ Day 2 – After breakfast an early start with all your belongings to travel by coach to Goshen de Bataan, approximately 4 hours duration, then transfer to the boat for 45 minutes to the project, dinner at the project
- ❖ Days 3-7 – You will work as a volunteer in the conservation effort to protect 3 species of endangered sea turtles. See conservation programme for details of activities. Breakfast, lunch and dinner will be provided each day.
- ❖ Day 7 – After breakfast depart Pacuare by boat then drive through Braulio Carrillo National Park. Experience the aerial tram above the jungle and a guided nature tour of the butterfly garden, orchard garden, terrarium; a day of amazing views and adrenaline with rainforest adventures. Full shoes must be worn no sandals/flip flops. Dinner and overnight at the Esparza accommodation
- ❖ Day 8 – After breakfast visit the Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve which offers views of the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, followed by a lecture and natural history tour. O/N Esparza
- ❖ Day 9 – After breakfast to Playa Uvita Marino Ballena National Park to search for humpback whales and 2 species of resident dolphins, visit the coral and rock reefs and snorkel to observe the wonderful marine wildlife and view the caverns of Ventanas Beach. O/N Esparza





# YOUR PROJECT



## Sample itinerary

- ❖ Day 10– After breakfast visit the Manuel Antonio National Park with a talk on conservation and a guided tour.
- ❖ Day 11 – Breakfast then at the Toucan Rescue Ranch there will be an introductory talk about sloths and conservation followed by a tour of the ranch where you will meet sloths, toucans and other birds and mammals. Dinner at Esparza
- ❖ Day 12 – Breakfast then a visit to the Maritime Park Puntarenas which offers an insight into their world leading approach to maritime conservation; after a tour of the park you will visit the macaw and wild bird sanctuary, which also offers the opportunity to see jaguars, for an interactive workshop and tour. Dinner at Esparza
- ❖ Day 13 – After breakfast visit Las Hornillas, Miravalles Volcano with a waterfall tour and primary forest to spot birds and reptiles; after lunch experience the hot springs, mud baths and sauna at the live crater. Dinner at Esparza
- ❖ Day 14 – Breakfast before a crocodile boat tour on the River Tarcoles and the mangroves, the opportunity to see crocodiles, birds and monkeys up close. After lunch you will be horse riding along the beach; an opportunity for souvenir shopping. Dinner at Esparza
- ❖ Day 15 – After breakfast transfer to the airport for your flight home to the UK.

*Whilst you will cover all the activities on the itinerary certain days may swap around during your time at Esparza.*





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# **LIFESTYLE & ACCOMMODATION**

Life in Costa Rica





# ACCOMMODATION & LIFESTYLE



## Pacuare Turtle Project & Esparza

Accommodation at the turtle project is in shared beach huts, these are basic, clean and comfortable. There are small lockers available for personal valuables such as passports - you will need to bring a padlock. Electricity is generated via solar and has to be rationed, so can be sporadic.

The family run volunteer accommodation in Esparza has shared rooms, which are lockable, in two linked houses with a large garden with BBQ, table tennis and badminton. WiFi coverage and hydroelectricity are both excellent.





# ACCOMMODATION & LIFESTYLE



## Food

Whilst at Pacuare Turtle Project you will have three meals a day provided. Generally this will be local food – rice and beans! When at Esparza breakfasts and some dinners will be provided at the volunteer accommodation; meals are mainly taken in the volunteer accommodation on site during activities (the cook is excellent); for those meals that are not included at Esparza there are a variety of restaurants in the vicinity that offer different choices.

Jamie Oliver referred to Costa Rican food as 'honest, simple and delicious'.

It is important that you advise us of any dietary requirements be they preference, allergies or intolerances so we can advise the project to enable us to ensure that you are adequately catered for.







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# **USEFUL INFORMATION**

Inclusions/Exclusions &  
Recommended Kit List



# WHAT'S INCLUDED



## Proposed trip dates are:

Depart UK 16<sup>th</sup> July | Arrive CR 16<sup>th</sup> July 2022

Depart CR 30<sup>th</sup> July | Arrive UK 31<sup>st</sup> July 2022

## Trip Cost:

Est. £2,649.00 per person\*

\*This price can be taken as indicative only and is based on a group size of 18 students. No reservations are being held on behalf of the group.

## Key deadlines are:

Return of booking forms or online application

Deposit of £300 to confirm placement within 7 days of provisional booking to confirm place

50% Instalment payment due 16 weeks before departure

Balance payment due 8 weeks before departure

## What is included?

- International flights from Edinburgh
- Transfers to/from project
- Accommodation
- Three meals per day
- All activities as part of the project
- ATOL protection
- Airport meet/greet
- 24/7 In country support



## NOT Included

- Personal Travel Insurance \*
- Meals on travel days – before arriving & after departing from project
- Any activities not specified as part of the project
- Weekend activities
- Visa's/travel documents

\* We recommend you take out as soon as your booking is confirmed



## Suggested kit list

A large backpack is recommended as your main luggage, not a suitcase; you will be travelling by basic means of transport in Costa Rica so a suitcase would not be practical

- Short sleeve shirts
- Long work trousers and shorts  
(Or work trousers with zip-off longs)
- T shirts
- Dark clothing for night work (turtle project)
- Hiking Boots/comfortable walking shoes
- Rain jacket (dark colour)
- Fleece/jumper (for cool evenings)
- Warmer clothing for winter
- Daypack rucksack
- Socks
- Hat
- Sandals/flip flops
- Changes of casual clothes for evenings
- Underwear

- Beach towel
- Swimwear
- Toiletries
- Mosquito / insect repellent
- Personal medication
- Water bottle (at least 1 litre)
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen

### Other useful items:

- Good torch (red light filter)
- Water bottle
- Camera
- Spare batteries
- Sunglasses
- Binoculars
- Cards/books/music
- Mammal/bird book
- Notebook/diary and pen
- Spanish dictionary



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