

Educational Travel Experience Designed Especially for Your Group














Soccer, Service & Culture in Costa Rica

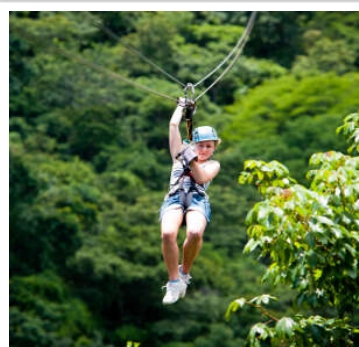
ITINERARY OVERVIEW

- DAY 1 DEPARTURE FROM NORTH AMERICA - ARRIVE SAN JOSE AREA (2 NIGHTS)
- DAY 2 SARCHI & THE DOKA CHALLENGE
- DAY 3 SAN JOSE AREA - POAS - LA PAZ - ARENAL AREA (4 NIGHTS)
- DAY 4 FIRST INTERNATIONAL FRIENDLY & SERVICE PROJECT
- DAY 5 VOLUNTEER AT A LOCAL SCHOOL & SKY TREK
- DAY 6 SECOND INTERNATIONAL FRIENDLY & WILDLIFE BOAT TOUR
- DAY 7 DEPARTURE FROM SAN JOSÉ

ITINERARY

Soccer is the most popular sport in Costa Rica. Almost all residents eat and breathe soccer. Costa Rica has a professional soccer league and Costa Rica's national soccer team is the third most successful team in CONCACAF after Mexico and the United States. This passion for soccer gives us the opportunity to use soccer as the vehicle for cultural exchange. Besides enjoying the weather, beaches, adventure, wildlife, and natural wonders, you will have the chance to play competitive soccer with the locals and to experience a different soccer style.

 Educational Tour/Visit	 Cultural Experience	 Festival/Performance/Workshop	Tour Services
 Recreational Activity	 LEAP Enrichment	 Match/Training Session	    



DAY 1

-  Relax and enjoy our scheduled flight from North America. Our bi-lingual Tour Director will meet us at the airport and will accompany the group throughout the tour.
-  Our private coach will meet us at the airport and transfer the group to our San Jose area hotel. San Jose is the capital and largest city of Costa Rica. Located in the Central Valley, San José is the seat of national government, the focal point of political and economic activity, and the major transportation hub of this Central American nation. Today it is a modern city with bustling commerce, brisk expressions of art and architecture, and spurred by the country's improved tourism industry, it is a significant destination and stopover for foreign visitors.
-  Our accommodation for the first two nights will be in the San Jose area. While here, breakfast will be served at the hotel each morning, and we will have one dinner at the hotel restaurant.
-  **TRAINING SESSION**
We will participate in a Training Session at a local field. The training session will be led by your own coaching staff and are designed to prepare the team for upcoming friendly matches. (Training sessions may be in the morning, afternoon or evening and will be determined by the final hotel location, field availability, and the schedule of activities for the day).
-  We will dine this evening in the hotel restaurant.

DAY 2

-  This morning you will enjoy breakfast at the hotel.
-  Today we will explore Sarchi and participate in a leadership activity. Take time to explore Sarchí, Costa Rica's main artisan town and view the colorfully painted miniature oxcarts made here. Oxcarts such as these were once used to haul coffee beans to market and they remain a well-known symbol of Costa Rica. In addition to miniature oxcarts, many carved wooden souvenirs are made from rare hardwoods carefully and sustainably harvested from the nation's forests.
-  **LEAP ACTIVITY - OX CART CRAFTS**
A local artisan introduces you to the origins of traditional Costa Rican craftmaking, such as Ox Cart painting. Try your own hand at painting and take home your art as a souvenir. Today lunch will be included.
-  **THE DOKA CHALLENGE**
The Ropes Challenge Park at Doka Estate is a team building activity for adventure seekers and groups alike. We will be taken through a course that spans over Doka Estate's coffee plantations and includes 14 different elements for participants. These 14 elements include a catwalk, zip-lining, rappelling, a swinging bridge and more. The challenge is designed for those interested in improving team building and personal development skills.



DAY 2



TIQUICIA DINNER

This evening we will enjoy dinner at the Tiquicia Restaurant. Located high in the mountain overlooking San Jose and the central valley, we will dine amongst one of the best views in Costa Rica. The meals will feature traditional Costa Rican cuisine home cooked on wood grills. Normally the visit includes music and traditional Costa Rican dance. This is the ideal spot for a final team photo!

DAY 3



This morning you will enjoy breakfast at the hotel.



Today we will travel from the San Jose area to the Arenal area.



POAS VOLCANO NATIONAL PARK

We will make an early departure and travel to Poas Volcano National Park. The Poás Volcano is one of the world's largest geysers with an awesome crater, over 1.5 km. wide! The tour begins with a beautiful drive through the lush coffee plantations and flower farms of the area. In addition to the volcano, the Poás National Park is a 9,884-acre reserve with rich tropical vegetation and animal life. The tour includes a hike through the surrounding forest that is teeming with typical plant life and exotic birds. The hike concludes at a restful, emerald green, tropical lagoon.



LA PAZ WATERFALL GARDENS

We will visit La Paz Waterfall Gardens, one of the most beautiful and fascinating attractions in Costa Rica. Our tour begins as we enter the Aviary to explore the birds of Costa Rica and even hold a toucan! We continue into the huge Butterfly Garden that features a variety of species and an excellent learning center. Next we will view the monkeys before we explore the hummingbird and orchid gardens, where you can get up close to hummingbirds.



Today lunch will be included at La Paz's magnificent restaurant just off the hummingbird garden. The buffet lunch features traditional cuisine in one of the most beautiful open-air settings in Costa Rica.



LA PAZ WATERFALL GARDENS

Our visit at La Paz Waterfall Gardens continues as we visit the small serpentarium featuring many of Costa Rica's snake and lizard varieties. We continue to the cats exhibit to see the beautiful and massive Costa Rican jaguars. Our time concludes as we hike down the perfectly laid out trails to viewing points along the 4 La Paz Waterfalls, each viewing point seemingly more impressive than the last.

Arenal is famous for its Volcano, an unavoidable presence while traveling within this part of the country. It is tall and imposing and has a reputation that precedes itself. Arenal's perfectly symmetrical shape makes it a sightseer's dream.



Our accommodation for the final four nights will be in the Arenal area. While here, breakfast and dinner will be included daily (and possibly lunch).



Tonight we will dine in the hotel restaurant.

DAY 4



This morning you will enjoy breakfast at the hotel.



FIRST INTERNATIONAL FRIENDLY MATCH

We will play a Friendly Match against a local club or school team. The team will meet and compete against athletes of similar ages and skill levels, and have the opportunity to make friends for life. (The teams you will play will be selected after time of booking and will be based on the specific skill level and requirements of your team. We have contacts at every level and take great pride in finding the perfect fit for each friendly match).



Today lunch will be included.



VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY

This afternoon we will participate in a Volunteer Activity in the Arenal area. Based on needs at the time of our trip, we will participate in a humanitarian, environmental or community based project. This can include volunteering at an orphanage or home for the elderly, volunteering in a local environmental project, or dedicating our time and resources to a worthy project in the region.



DAY 4



LEAP ACTIVITY - COCINA TICA

This evening we will learn to cook Costa Rican style! We will learn about the ingredients and the history of the meal, then we will create authentic local foods and sit down to savor your delicious creations

DAY 5



This morning you will enjoy breakfast at the hotel.



VOLUNTEER AT A LOCAL SCHOOL

This morning we will do Volunteer Work at a Local School. We will visit a local school where we will have the opportunity to teach and read to students, play games with students, or assist in the re-building or repair of the school.



Today we will enjoy lunch at the school along with our new friends!



SKY TRAM AND SKY TREK

Our tour begins with an Aerial Tram ride, as cable-cars with open carriages will whisk us up the northern slopes of the Cordillera de Tilaran to the lookout point at 4,250 feet. From here we will have an amazing view of Lake Arenal and the volcano. Descend by the Tram or Sky Trek, a system of zip lines ranging from mountain to mountain, which together have a distance of 2.5 miles of linear cable. The tour gives us the opportunity to fly through a cable and have a unique experience of adventure and adrenaline at speeds up to 40 miles per hour with distances ranging up to 2500 feet and heights of 524 feet. In addition the tour offers 5 observation towers that exceed the cloud forest treetops providing a panoramic view.



Tonight we will dine in the hotel restaurant.



DAY 6



This morning you will enjoy breakfast at the hotel.



SECOND INTERNATIONAL FRIENDLY MATCH

We will play a Friendly Match against a local club or school team. The team will meet and compete against athletes of similar ages and skill levels, and have the opportunity to make friends for life. (The teams you will play will be selected after time of booking and will be based on the specific skill level and requirements of your team. We have contacts at every level and take great pride in finding the perfect fit for each friendly match).



Today lunch will be included.



WILDLIFE BOAT TOUR

Enjoy a relaxing boat ride to observe the wildlife that is around you, including monkeys, iguanas, crocodiles, and a variety of birds. During the boat ride our guide will also explain about the lifestyle of the people that live by the riverside.

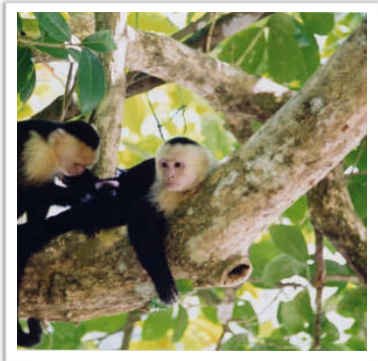
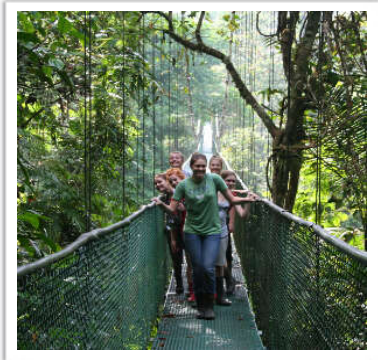


Tonight we will dine in the hotel restaurant.



VOLCANIC HOT SPRINGS

This evening we will bath in volcanic hot Springs and take the opportunity to submerge yourself in the natural medicinal waters. The springs include several pools of varying temperatures, all surrounded by nature.



DAY 7



This morning you will enjoy breakfast at the hotel.



Our rewarding and enjoyable tour comes to an end as we make an early departure for San Jose. Our Tour Director accompanies us to the airport on our final day.

What is Included:

- Round trip airfare with a major carrier on scheduled flights and guaranteed dates
- All airport taxes and fuel surcharges (which will not change after time of enrollment for any participant)
- Accommodation in three or four star hotels or resorts in twin or triple rooms with private facilities guaranteed throughout
- Breakfast, lunch and dinner daily (as per the itinerary)
- Water and ice for each training session and match
- A full-time, bi-lingual WorldStrides Excel Programs tour director to accompany your group from arrival to departure
- All soccer practice sessions and match arrangements (per the itinerary)
- All admissions, activities & excursions as per the itinerary
- Transportation by private coach for airport transfers, friendly games and sightseeing (where and when required)
- 3 free college credits for high school age students (this is optional for each participant & requires post trip course work)
- USTOA Extensive Consumer Protection up to \$1,000,000 in coverage for advance deposits through our USTOA membership
- Basic health insurance while on tour (including medical treatment on tour up to \$7,500) and \$50,000 of coverage for emergency evacuation and repatriation
- Costa Rica Departure Fee (Approximately \$30)
- Manchester United Raffle fundraiser
- Industry leading Professional Liability Insurance of \$50,000,000 in coverage, which extends to certain individuals acting on behalf of Excel Sports as Coaches and Chaperones
- One free place in a single room throughout the tour

This Does Not Include:

- Any items not mentioned above or in the detailed itinerary
- Personal beverages with meals
- Laundry services on tour
- Visas (if required)
- Tips and gratuities for the guide and driver
- Any fees that might be imposed by the airlines at the airport for checked baggage
- Any costs for the hire of, or transport of, equipment or gear
- Travel insurance - We offer and always recommend our Trip Mate travel insurance policy to all participants. This comprehensive policy includes health, property and cancellation coverage at a cost of \$149

Manchester United GRAND PRIZE RAFFLE DRAWING

Win a four-day trip for two and attend the final Manchester United home game at Old Trafford Stadium



The Winner Will Receive:

- Two round trip flights to Manchester
- Two nights at the 3-Star Willowbank Hotel in Manchester
- Two tickets to see Manchester United's final season home game at Old Trafford



"The Manchester trip was an awesome experience that I will never forget. It's been a dream of mine to see a Premier League game so this trip helped that wish come true for me. The atmosphere at the game was awesome and I got to see some great goals from Manchester United. I was also impressed with how accommodating Excel International Sports was while arranging extra days and flights for the trip. Overall, I am so grateful that I got this opportunity to go to Manchester and fulfill one of my dreams!"

Mike Smith, Grand Prize Raffle Winner

THE ULTIMATE FUNDRAISER

WorldStrides Excel Sports Programs is pleased to offer your individual participants or your team with the ultimate fundraiser. Your participants will be able to sell raffle tickets to people in their community or to other friends and family members. The money they raise will be theirs to apply towards the cost of their sports tour.

We will provide a PDF of the raffle tickets. The participants will print the tickets at home, and then they will proceed to sell the tickets for \$10 each. WorldStrides Excel Sports Programs will provide the grand prize and hold a drawing on the 1st of March each year in order to choose a winner.

"This raffle fundraiser is sending me to Spain to play soccer. When my parents told me I had to pay for the trip myself I was determined I could do it and with the help of this raffle I was able to pay for the entire trip. Thank you so much!"
Sydney Larkin, St. Mary's College Women's Soccer (MD)

