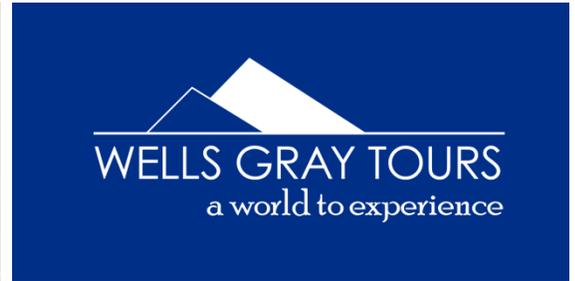




Toucans



Diria Resort

COSTA RICA

January 14, 2022 – 15 Days

Costa Rica covers only 0.03% of the planet's surface but is home to 5% of all living organisms on earth. Active volcanoes, lush cloud forests, lowland jungles, rolling savannas, and coral beaches create a spectacular setting to experience the country's natural beauty and exotic flora and fauna. During this unique tour, we travel through some of the richest habitats of Costa Rica, from Caribbean lowland rain forests to central volcanic highlands, from a cloud forest interior to coastal resorts. One highlight of the tour is our three-night stay at the Diria Resort at beautiful Tamarindo Beach. Come and admire the natural eco-wonders of Costa Rica and get away from a Canadian winter for two relaxing weeks.

Activity Level: 2



TOUR
25

33 Meals Included:

13 breakfasts, 9 lunches, 11 dinners

Fares per person:

\$7,750 double/twin; \$9,720 single

Please add 0.2% GST.

Early Bookers:

\$200 discount on first 8 seats; \$100 on next 4

Experience Points:

Earn 158 points on this tour.

Redeem 158 points if you book by October 6, 2021.



ITINERARY

Day 1: Friday, January 14

Transfers are provided from the Okanagan, Kamloops, and Salmon Arm to Kelowna Airport. We fly on WestJet to Toronto, then ride the elevator from Terminal 3 up to our convenient hotel.

Accommodation: Sheraton Gateway Hotel

Day 2: Saturday, January 15

We go downstairs and check in at WestJet for the 5½ hour flight to San Jose, arriving early afternoon. **Welcome to Costa Rica.** San Jose is two hours ahead of Pacific Time. The afternoon is time to rest after the long flight. A get-acquainted dinner is an opportunity to meet your fellow travellers.

Meals included: Dinner

Accommodation: Crowne Plaza Hotel

Day 3: Sunday, January 16

Today's tour visits some of the highlights surrounding **San Jose**. First, we visit Doka Coffee Plantation for a **coffee tour** where we learn the techniques used by the experts to produce one of the best coffees in Costa Rica. The careful process involved in the cultivation, harvesting, and roasting of the Golden Bean is demonstrated, then we savour the delectable end-product. We continue to the **Poás Volcano** where we not only admire the impressive main crater with its sulphur fumaroles, but also learn about the different ecosystems in this unique national park. (Note: Poás has been erupting periodically since spring 2017 but the park reopened in September 2018 and could be closed if bigger eruptions occur in 2022.) At **La Paz Waterfall Garden**, we visit the spectacular waterfall in the middle of the rainforest, the hummingbird gallery, the bird house, the butterfly garden, and the frog exhibit.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Crowne Plaza Hotel

Day 4: Monday, January 17

We stop for breakfast on the way to Guápiles. There we board a river boat which takes us down

the winding Tortuguero River through the ecological diversity of **Tortuguero National Park** with lots of birdlife and wildlife viewing. After a two-hour journey, we arrive at remote **Pachira Lodge**, located in the jungle on one of the Tortuguero waterways, and lunch is waiting. During the afternoon, we boat across the canal to visit the colourful village of Tortuguero. We learn about renowned naturalist Archie Carr, author of the 1956 book *The Windward Road*, who studied sea turtles at Tortuguero and was instrumental in establishing the Caribbean Conservation Corporation.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Pachira Lodge



Day 5: Tuesday, January 18

We take a boat tour along the **Tortuguero Canals** early this morning when the birdlife and wildlife are most active. It is a unique paradise of magnificent flora and fauna. We return to the lodge for breakfast, then enjoy the hotel grounds and jungle trails at leisure, or simply relax. Later, a nature walk gives a better understanding of rainforests.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Pachira Lodge



Day 6: Wednesday, January 19

We return to Guápiles by boat and vehicle, then continue to La Fortuna de San Carlos, a small town located at the base of **Arenal Volcano**. Standing prominently at 1,636 metres, it was one of the 10 most active volcanoes in the world until 2010 with constant lava flows and eruptions. Today, the volcano is dormant, but its perfect cone shape and superb hot springs make this place a must-visit! Our accommodation for three nights is at Arenal Kioro, a splendid hotel with panoramic views of the volcano and surrounded by gardens and two streams.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Accommodation: Arenal Kioro



Day 7: Thursday, January 20

We board the **Arenal Sky Tram** for a slow-paced journey through the rainforest with awesome views of the volcano during the ascent. Each gondola is accompanied by a bilingual guide and it can be stopped anytime for a special picture or if

a bird or animal is spotted. At the top, there is an observation deck with a wonderful vista of the Arenal Volcano's southern face, Lake Arenal far below, and the rolling hillsides around it. There is a shopping opportunity in La Fortuna. The afternoon is leisure time at the hotel.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Accommodation: Arenal Kioro

Day 8: Friday, January 21

We drive to the western side of Arenal Volcano where most of the activity since 1968 has occurred. There are two interesting walks and our guide chooses a suitable one. The Las Coladas trail traverses the rainforest and crosses over a large lava flow from 1992 where the impact of recent eruptions is visible. The Los Tucanes trail passes through the regrowing forest where we can see more wildlife. The afternoon is free time. Later we visit **Tabacón Hot Springs**, one of the best in the country, where you can relax in the thermal waters.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Accommodation: Arenal Kioro



Day 9: Saturday, January 22

This morning's drive goes from Arenal to **Rincon de la Vieja National Park**. This 35,000 acre park is home to an intriguing combination of volcanic geological wonders and pristine tropical forests that span six life zones. The main attraction is Rincon de la Vieja, a smooth cinder cone volcano which rises to 1,884 metres and comprises nine contiguous craters. Tropical forests, including

sections of montane and dwarf cloud forest, span the park's base, providing safe haven for a host of flora and fauna. Mammals include pumas, jaguar, monkeys (howler, spider, and white-faced), kinkajous, sloths, and tapirs. We have a midday arrival at **Borinquen Mountain Resort** and the afternoon is free time. It is located in a lush rainforest with grand waterfalls, natural mineral hot springs, and sparkling streams. Soak in the hot pools and fresh water pool, or wander the botanical gardens.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Borinquen Mountain Resort

Day 10: Sunday, January 23

The centerpiece of the resort is the **thermal springs** with hot pools, volcanic mineral mud, and natural steam rooms. Enjoy the relaxing experience of a volcanic mud treatment, then soak in the natural spring-water hot pools. The facilities are complimentary and professional spa services are charged extra. For an extra fee, you can ride the zipline with 18 platforms and 12 cables.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Borinquen Mountain Resort



Day 11: Monday, January 24

We descend from the mountains, driving past huge ranches and lots of cattle to reach the Pacific Coast and the **Guanacaste** region. Local delicacies are corn tortillas or horchata beverages. On arrival at Tamarindo Beach, we settle into the

oceanfront **Tamarindo Diria Resort** for three nights. You will be awed by the natural beauty of this private tropical resort, located on a stunning white sand beach. There is plenty of time to relax and soak up the sun. Breakfasts are included and there is a choice of four restaurants and a buffet for other meals. Other facilities are three pools, a whirlpool, free wi-fi, and a small casino. The resort is in the town of **Tamarindo** which has plenty of shops and entertainment.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: Tamarindo Diria Resort



Day 12: Tuesday, January 25

Today is free for you to decide what you want to do or simply relax by the pools or the ocean, soaking up the warmth of Costa Rica.

Meals included: Breakfast

Accommodation: Tamarindo Diria Resort

Day 13: Wednesday, January 26

This is another day at leisure.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodation: Tamarindo Diria Resort

Day 14: Thursday, January 27

In mid-day, we drive to **Liberia** and stay overnight. Our farewell dinner is a chance to reminisce with fellow travellers about our winter getaway to Costa Rica.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodation: Hilton Garden Inn

Day 15: Friday, January 28

We fly on WestJet to Calgary, then continue to Kelowna. Transfers are provided to home cities.

Meals included: Breakfast

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Transportation to/from Kelowna Airport
- Flight from Kelowna to San Jose, Costa Rica
- Current air taxes, fees and fuel surcharges
- Airline luggage fee for 1 suitcase
- 14 nights accommodation and hotel taxes
- Coach transportation throughout Costa Rica
- Expert local guides and naturalists
- Doka Coffee Plantation
- Poás Volcano National Park
- La Paz Waterfall Garden
- River boat cruise through Tortuguero National Park to Pachira Lodge and return
- Wildlife and birdlife watching boat tour along the Tortuguero Canals
- Arenal Volcano National Park
- Arenal Volcano Sky Tram
- Nature walk on an Arenal trail
- Tabacon Hot Springs
- Rincon de la Vieja National Park
- Flight from Liberia, Costa Rica, to Kelowna
- Costa Rica departure tax
- Knowledgeable Wells Gray tour director
- Gratuities to local guides, drivers and naturalists
- Luggage handling at hotels
- **33 meals:** 13 breakfasts, 9 lunches, 11 dinners

TOUR NOTES

Currency & Expenses: The currency in Costa Rica is the colon; \$1 Canadian = 480 colons as of March 2021. US dollars are widely accepted and exchanged. Gratuities have been included for all group meals and for local guides, naturalists, and driver-guides. As this tour has been planned and priced 10 months before departure, it is possible that exchange fluctuations could affect the fare, in which case you will be notified of the increase or decrease. All meals are included in Costa Rica except 3 lunches and 2 dinners at the Diria Resort. See also the note about beverages.

Departure Tax: Costa Rica charges a departure tax of US\$46 per person at the Liberia airport. This is now included in the tour fare.

Flight: Current flight schedule is with WestJet from Kelowna to San Jose, Costa Rica, with a hotel overnight in Toronto. Return is from Liberia via Calgary to Kelowna, all on the same day. Costa Rica is two hours ahead of British Columbia in winter.

Documentation: A passport is required, valid for one month after return date. A visa is not required.

Triples are not available on this tour.

Accommodation: Even though Costa Rica has a busy tourism industry, it is still considered a Third World country and accommodation outside the cities may not be up to the standards of Canadian and American hotels. We generally select the best available lodging in each location, but please do not expect to stay in luxury hotels.

Beverages: In many countries outside Canada and USA, it is not standard practice to include beverages with tour meals. On this tour, a soft drink or bottled water is included with each meal and other beverages can be purchased.

Vaccinations: Costa Rica is a tropical country, so you may need vaccinations. Please visit your local Travel Health Clinic at least a month before departure for advice on required vaccinations. Bring this itinerary.

TOUR 25 This is a Tour 25 departure, meaning the tour is limited to 25 participants, a more intimate travel experience.



Activity Level 2: Due to the historic nature of some attractions and the nature walks looking for birds and animals, it will be necessary to climb stairs, walk on uneven surfaces, and walk at least a kilometre, plus stand for an extended time on walking tours. There is a short walk at some hotels from coach to rooms. This tour is not appropriate for people who require the use of a walker. There can be long walks in the airports and you should request a cart or wheelchair in advance or at check-in if this could be a concern. The coaches and vessels cannot carry a scooter. There are many stops during this tour and you must be able to get on and off the coach by yourself without delaying your fellow travellers. If you are not able to participate in Activity Level 2, Wells Gray Tours recommends that you bring a companion to assist you. The tour director, drivers, and local guides have many responsibilities, so please do not expect them, or your fellow travellers, to provide ongoing assistance. If you are not capable of keeping up with the group or require frequent assistance, the tour director may stop you from participating in some activities or some days of the tour. In extreme situations, you may be asked to leave the tour and travel home at your own expense; travel insurance will probably not cover you.

TOUR POLICIES

Payments: A deposit of \$800 per person is requested at the time of booking and the balance is due October 6, 2021. By paying the deposit, you agree to the Terms & Conditions, Activity Level and Cancellation Policy outlined.

Discounts: Early bookers receive \$200 discount on first 8 seats and \$100 on next 4 seats for booking early with deposit. The discount is not offered after October 6, 2021.

Cancellation Policy Up to September 6, 2021, your tour payments will be refunded less an administrative charge of \$100 per person. From September 7 to October 6, the cancellation charge is \$400 per person. From October 7 to November 4, the cancellation charge is 50% of the tour fare. From November 5 to November 25, the cancellation charge is 80% of the tour fare. After November 25, there is no refund.

Fare Changes: Changes to currency exchange rates or taxes and surcharges from airlines and other tour suppliers can occur at any time and are beyond the control of Wells Gray Tours, therefore, Wells Gray Tours reserves the right to increase fares due to such changes up until the time of departure.

Travel Insurance: A Comprehensive Insurance policy is available through Wells Gray Tours and coverage is provided by Travel Guard. Policies purchased at deposit include a waiver of the pre-existing condition clause for medical and cancellation claims, otherwise policies can be purchased no later than at final payment. Please contact us for details.

Photo Credits: AdobeStock (Toucans), Diria Resort (page 1 & 4), Roland Neave (Tortuguero riverboat, Arenal Volcano), Pachira Lodge (Tortuguero flora and fauna), Tabacon Hot Springs, Marion Wienhold (muddy group)

Experience Points: This tour earns 158 e-points. Each time you travel on a Wells Gray tour, you earn Experience Points, or e-points. One e-point equals \$1. Redeem your points on select tours or accumulate enough points to earn a free tour! Redemptions offered until October 6, 2021.

Consumer Protection BC Licences: Kamloops 178, Vernon 655, Kelowna 588, Penticton 924, Victoria 65842

KAMLOOPS
(Head Office)
250 Lansdowne St.
Kamloops, BC V2C 1X7
250-374-0831

KELOWNA
2575 Richter St.
Kelowna, BC V1Y 2R1
250-762-3435

VERNON
3206 35th St.
Vernon, BC V1T 6B7
250-545-9197

PENTICTON
159 Wade Ave E
Penticton, BC V2A 8B6
250-493-1255

VICTORIA
102-736 Broughton St.
Victoria, BC V8W 1E1
250-590-7889

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1-800-667-9552