

Great Explorations



Trip Dates

2010

Feb 6-12
Feb 13-19
Feb 20-26

Self-guided and custom trips also available and can start any day. Call or email for details.

2011

Feb 5-11
Feb 12-18
Feb 19-25

Trip Size

4-12

Total Days:

7 days/ 6 nights

Arrive/Depart:

San Jose

Activity Level:

Moderate
20-40+ miles daily
van supported

Terrain:

Mix of paved and gravel roads. Mountain bikes recommended.

Costa Rica, Multisport

Cycle, kayak, raft, hike, & zip-line!

We first visited this region a decade ago, attracted by the beaches, warm weather, stunning scenery and ecological diversity. With the development of eco-friendly boutique hotels, Costa Rica is now more appealing than ever. The cycling is on a combination of paved and gravel roads where you'll ride through lush vegetation, past volcanoes, rainforests and waterfalls. With opportunities to raft, kayak, zip-line and or hike through jungle beneath the vaulting canopy of ancient rainforests, the temptations are many.

Only Great Explorations:

- Extraordinary guides, and authentic experiences.
- Our cycling routes avoid the busier roads and provide the best opportunities to cycle in peace.
- Raft one of the top 10 whitewater rivers in the world, the Pucare.
- You'll visit the Los Angeles Cloud Forest for a more intimate encounter with nature

Itinerary



Getting there :

San Jose: direct flights are available from a number of US cities including Miami, Houston, Dallas, Atlanta, New York, LA, and Chicago.

DAY 1:

San Jose - Your hotel is included on arrival day at the wonderful Hotel Grano de Oro. We'll meet at 7 pm for a welcome reception and dinner in the hotel's acclaimed restaurant.

DAYS 2+3:

Turrialba - We'll shuttle to Cartago, founded in 1563 and the country's capital until 1863. After visiting the Byzantine Cathedral here, we'll begin cycling with a beautiful descent into the Orosi Valley. Reaching the 4-star Casa Turire, you can relax in the swimming pool and Jacuzzi. Next day options will include cycling to and rafting on the Pucare River, one of the top 10 rivers in the world. This promises to be a trip highlight! If you prefer relaxing around the hotel, and kayaking on the lake, this is of course, a less adrenalin-filled option. Activities D2: cycling- 30 or 55 km; D3- 10 km, rafting- full day, kayaking- at your leisure

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Cost

Land Cost (current year):

US \$2250
Includes 6B/2L/5D

Single Supplement: US \$400

Bike Rental: US \$140

DAYS 4+5:

La Fortuna - We'll begin the day with a shuttle to Varablanca, from where our cycling will begin. The riding is mostly downhill and we'll stop en-route to taste the local strawberries and enjoy a picnic lunch. In La Fortuna, if time allows you can visit a 75 m waterfall a 6 km trek from town. Next day, we'll take a boat ride on the Rio Chiquito and cycle a lake-side route around Lake Arenal, finishing the day with a visit to hot springs at Balneario Tabacon. Activities D4: cycling- 50 km, hiking- 1 hour; D5: cycling- 50 or 68 km, hiking 2 to 3 hours



DAYS 6+7:

Los Angeles Cloud Forest - From La Fortuna, we'll shuttle east towards the town of Tanque, from where we'll cycle towards San Ramon, the birthplace of Jose Figueres Ferrer, the former president who is celebrated as the man who abolished the army in Costa Rica. Our hotel, the Villa Banca is situated in the Los Angeles Cloud-forest Reserve, with en-suite casitas and fine restaurant. Next morning we'll lead a hike on trails to discover the secrets of the Cloud Forest

where you'll have the chance to encounter quetzels, howler monkeys and birds; there is even time to zip line through the forest for an exhilarating finish to our trip before lunch. The trip will conclude with drop-off at the San Jose airport by 2:00. For those continuing with the extension to Manuel Antonio Park, flights depart late afternoon. Activities: D6: cycling- 30 km; D7: hiking- 2 to 3 hours.

Extension:

For those wishing to extend their vacation to Manuel Antonio Park, we offer a two day extension, staying at the exquisite Si Como No Hotel with breakfast daily; after an afternoon flight from San Jose, you'll be met on arrival at Quepos & transferred to the hotel. Next morning you will be provided options for kayaking, horseback riding, and visiting the national park trails with guide if desired. We'll time your flight on day 3 to co-ordinate with your on-ward travel plans. Cost of extension is US\$595 (single supplement is US\$245).

Rough Guide describes Si Como No as follows: "Enjoy beautiful views of the Pacific and Punta Cathedral from this award-winning architectural complex set high on a hill. The hotel has solar-heated hot water, a Jacuzzi, two pools, swim-up bar, waterside, and a small cinema with nightly screenings free to guests."



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Accommodations



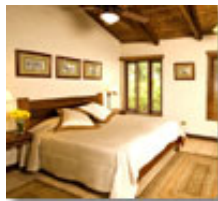
Hotel Grano de Oro, San Jose: This hotel is a converted mansion with Victorian décor, polished wooden floors and rooftop terrace. The restaurant with its hacienda-style décor, is acclaimed as one of the best in San Jose.



Casa Turire, Turrialba: Located in the agricultural region of the Turrialba, with just 16 rooms, this gracious hotel boasts a lake-side setting with pool and extensive gardens. Each room is spacious with beautiful wood floors, high ceilings, and private balconies with spectacular views.



Lost Iguana Resort: Located west of La Fortuna, this peaceful jungle lodge has rooms with balconies offering volcano vistas, large, comfortable beds and a swimming pool.



Villa Blanca Cloud Forest Hotel & Spa: This 75 acre boutique hotel is surrounded by the spectacular Los Angeles Private Biological Reserve. There are 35 individual casitas and a large common 'Hacienda House' with billiards room, comfortable salons with fireplace and the Sendero Restaurant, where authentic Costa Rican meals are served.

What's Included in the Cost of Your Trip?

- services of one or more experienced Great Explorations guides and support vehicle
- 6 nights lodging
- all breakfasts, 2 lunches, and all dinners but 1
- entrance fees for selected historical sites and museums
- detailed map and route instructions
- all baggage transportation
- all transportation from initial meeting point to final drop-off (see arrive/depart cities)

Please note: Final itinerary is subject to revision; any changes made are done so in an attempt to provide the best possible trip given route conditions and available services. Due to the nature of our business and exchange rates, prices are subject to change. All prices quoted are U.S. dollars but we gladly accept payment in Canadian dollars also. Due to cancellations and waiting lists, trip availability fluctuates daily. If you have any questions or would like to confirm space on this trip before making your reservation, please contact us at info@great-explorations.com or by telephone at **604.730.1247**