

Texas A & M . Tourism Operations in Costa Rica.  
Our third year with this program.  
Next trip will be February 5 – 12, 2015

## **COSTA RICA**

### **February 18 – 26, 2014**

Abbreviations: B (breakfast), L (lunch) , D (dinner)

Tue 18 Arrive in San Jose. You will be met at the airport by your professional naturalist Bilingual guide Lloyd Martinez.

#### **Lloyd Martinez**

Naturalist guide Lloyd Martinez has taken courses at the National University of Costa Rica in marine biology and tropical biology. He also has taken courses at Lankester Gardens on dendrology, birds of Costa Rica, and Costa Rica's trees.

He received his official permit as a tour guide after training at the National Institute of Learning, where he completed courses about the serpents of Costa Rica, natural history, geography and hotel management.

His other training includes Costa Rican literature, general tourism, touristic legislation and RPC. He completed Tam Travel Agency's training to work with cruise tourism.

A self-learner, from an early age, Lloyd paid close attention to the wildlife on at his grandfather's farm, from the birds and their songs to the large iguanas sunbathing on rocks. Today, he enjoys studying not only natural history and biology but also other subjects, including current political, cultural and socioeconomic matters that affect Costa Rica.

Lloyd feels very fortunate to share the beauty of his country with all visitors. Our tourists are very pleased to have Lloyd as their guide -- not only because his excellent knowledge, but also because of his wonderful humor.

Check in at hotel. Lunch in San Jose.  
Afternoon visit to the National History Museum.



The fortress was built in 1917 and was originally a military barracks: the exterior walls still have many bullets lodged in them from the country's 1948 civil war. It became the site of the museum in 1950.

The entrance on the east side leads to a courtyard displaying pre-Columbian artifacts and cannons from the colonial period. The museum is organized thematically in a counter clockwise direction from the entrance with artifacts related to Costa Rica's geological, colonial, archaeological, religious and modern history. The museum had a notable collection of pre-Columbian stone tables (metates), ceramics and a gold room "Sala de Oro" in the northeast tower. The colonial room has a notable collection of furniture and is designed to emulate that of an actual quarters in the 18th century. The museum also has an exhibit of the 1987 Nobel Peace Prize awarded to Óscar Arias, and a bust of José Figueres and butterfly garden in the outside "Plaza de la Democracia" [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Museo\\_Nacional\\_de\\_Costa\\_Rica](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Museo_Nacional_de_Costa_Rica)

Overnight at Don Carlos Hotel  
<http://www.doncarloshotel.com/>

- Wed 19      Departure to the Soltis Center
- (B,L,D)      Stop at Lands in Love for a talk with manager and lunch.  
Presentation:  
Guest Speaker Dr Gonzalez  
Dinner at the Soltis Center  
Night hike at the private forest of the Soltis Center
- Tour the private Rain Forest at the Soltis Center guided by expert bilingual soltis Center guide, Albert.  
Overnight at the Soltis Center.
- Thu 20      Visit to Finca Luna Nueva



Breakfast and Lunch at the Soltis Center  
Tour to Finca Luna Nueva

#### COMPOST, GARDEN, AND FARM ANIMALS

“See what keeps our crops healthy, from our happy water buffalo to the wiggling worms in our compost. Begin by walking through our cacao orchard past our private reserve that is connected to the 50,000 acre Children's Eternal Rainforest via a biological corridor.

Next, stroll through our bio-intensive garden, where you will taste numerous plants and herbs, the same ones we serve daily in our restaurant. After the garden you will see our pigs, goats, and chickens and learn how they contribute to the sustainability of the farm.

Your tour will end at our composting area, where we will show you how our composting and biodynamic systems create a more fertile land for ourselves and for future generations.”

<http://fincalunanuevalodge.com/tours/farm-tour>

Presentation:

Lloyd - Guide Business- History of Costa Rica & Tourism, Miles Phillips  
- Ecotourism Continuum - Results or Methods?

Dinner and visit to Baldi Hot Springs all afternoon

<http://baldicostarica.com/springs/>

Ovenight at the Soltis Center



Fri 21(B,D)

#### Ecoglide Canopy Tour

“This adventure will take you for 13 cables, starting in one of 25 meters of extension. The level of adrenaline will increase until you arrive to cable number 12. This is the longest cable and it is 430 meters long.

First, our specialized guides will give you the needed equipment to enjoy with security and you will receive a speech to know what to do during the tour. Then, we will take you to the first canopy platform in an off road car and after that, you won't stop flying!”

<http://arenalecoglide.com/>

Lunch on your own at La Fortuna.. Time for shopping and visiting the town.

#### Afternoon Chocolate Tour

“With the view of the majestic Arenal Volcano in La Fortuna of San Carlos, enjoy the sweetest rainforest experience, discovering the ancient secrets of chocolate: from its discovery and use, in tropical America, to the processing of the product we know and enjoy today.

Considered as “a gift of the Gods”, the cacao tree was very important to the ancient culture, it was not only used as a ceremonial drink, but its seeds were also used as currency because of its economic value , in many regions of Mesoamerica, including Costa Rica.

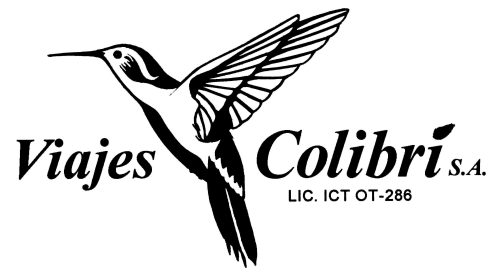
In this 2-hour “hands on” program, you will have the opportunity to learn interesting aspects of cocoa and chocolate, from its origin and history, participating in all the production process, from the harvesting of the fruit, drying and grinding of the seed, also the developing of the traditional drink of our ancestors, and of course enjoying a high quality organic chocolate.”

<http://www.rainforestchocolatetour.com/>

Presentation:

Guest Speaker - CST/Tourism (pending)

Overnight at the Soltis Center



Sat 22 (B,L,D) Visit to Proyecto Asis

“At Proyecto Asis we believe by doing our part in helping injured wild animals and educating the public on the struggle of these animals, we will be helping to restore the balance between man and nature.

Proyecto Asis is officially recognized by and work in close coordination with the Ministry of the Environment and Energy(MINAE) and the Monteverde Conservation League, a non-profit organization that administers the world-renowned Children’s Eternal Rainforest, a private reserve of 54,000 acres.

We also look forward to working with you! You can either come as a day visitor or a short-term volunteer through one of our volunteer programs. Proyecto Asis has a variety of different volunteer programs, all of which focus on environmental conservation and wildlife preservation. We've worked with professionals, universities, high schools, tour agencies, and individuals.”

<http://www.institutoasis.com/animalrescuecenter.htm>

Presentation:

Instituto Nacional De Costa Rica - Tourism - Santa Clara - Speaker on Tourism Industry, Ecotourism. (pending)

Lunch and dinner the Soltis Center  
Overnight at the Soltis Center

Sun 23 (B,L) Departure to the beach.  
Afternoon visit to Jaco Beach followed by dinner on your own.  
Overnight at Punta Leona Hotel  
<http://www.hotelyclubpuntaleona.net/>



Mon 24 (B,L) Morning breakfast at Punta Leona followed by relaxing time at the beach.

Mid - morning Jungle Cocrodile tour

<http://www.junglecrocodilesafari.com/> with Lunch included

“Jose's Crocodile River Tour takes place on the Tarcoles River in Central Pacific Costa Rica. Get up-close with American crocodiles of all sizes, and observe an abundance of beautiful exotic birds! Enjoy spectacular rainforest scenery and cruise through dense mangrove forest canals. Spot jungle wildlife such as iguanas, lizards, and monkeys, and experience our one-of-a-kind crocodile feeding show!”

<http://www.junglecrocodilesafari.com/>

Presentation:

Hotel Speaker & Guest Speaker - Parks or Conservation Business Success (pending)

Overnight at Punta Leona Hotel

Tue 25(B,L,D) Carara National Park Tour

“Carara is a favorite with bird watchers for several reasons besides its ease of access. First, its position in a transition zone means that residents of both habitats are likely to appear. Second, the Río Grande de Tárcoles has free flowing sections and its waters seep into seasonal marshlands and a shallow oxbow lake covered with hyacinths further expanding number of local habitats. Finally, because it is slightly dryer, and not all of the trees are evergreen, Carara is more open than the rainforests further south making wildlife spotting easier.”

<http://costa-rica-guide.com/parks/carara.htm>

Lunch at Punta Leona.

Afternoon visit to Jaco Beach.

Farewell - Discussion and Photos Hotel Speaker - 15 minutes

Overnight at Punta Leona Hotel

Wed 26 (B) Early morning departure to take flight back.