



First & Still the Best!

Since 1982

2015 ~ Celebrating 33 Years!

DATES

April 16 - 25, 2015

COST

\$4,695 (\$800 deposit)

RATING

Moderate

ACTIVITIES

Wildlife Viewing, Natural History, Birding, Cultural Exploration, Whitewater Rafting, Snorkeling, Sea Kayaking, Horseback Riding (optional), Spa, Zip Line Aerial Canopy Tour, Hot Springs, Walking, Photography.

MAIN ATTRACTIONS

- Explore Costa Rica's splendid national parks: Corcovado, Arenal, and Monteverde.
- Stay in luxury hotels, rainforest lodges, and hot springs resorts (with spa treatments).
- Experience an exciting array of activities, including whitewater rafting, sea kayaking, snorkeling, hiking, a zip line "Aerial Canopy Tour," and optional horseback riding.
- Hike the lava flows of the famous Arenal Volcano.
- View some of Costa Rica's 12,000 plant varieties, 237 species of mammals, 850 species of birds, and more butterflies than Africa!

AdventureWomen is the oldest adventure travel company for active women over 30.

THE BEST OF COSTA RICA

A Multi-Activity Wildlife and Nature Safari

You don't have to go all the way to East Africa or a South American rainforest to experience a unique wildlife and nature safari! Only 3½ hours south of Houston is Costa Rica, a tranquil little country that has all the elements for exotic adventuring: mighty rivers, lush rainforests and jungles, volcanoes, and steamy hot springs. Its landscape has the topographical variations of an entire continent - in miniature - with pristine Pacific beaches, Caribbean coastal banana plantations, acres and acres of coffee trees, incredible National Parks, hot tropical jungles, frosty cloud forests, volcanoes (at least three of them active), canals and rivers, and three separate mountain ranges.

Our exciting multi-activity adventure begins as we fly into the remote Osa Peninsula on the pristine Pacific coast, where Corcovado National Park protects about a third of the Osa Peninsula. Considered the crown jewel in the extensive system of national parks and biological reserves across the country, Corcovado's ecological variety is quite stunning. Called "the most biologically intense place on Earth in terms of biodiversity" by National Geographic, it has an amazing abundance of plant, bird, and wildlife species: including a bewildering assortment of orchids; hundreds of mammals, running the gamut from monkeys, ocelots, jaguars, agoutis, tapirs, and coatis to sloths; more than 850 species of birds; a population of butterflies that outnumbers Africa's; and 361 amphibians, including 2 types of endangered turtles. From our beautiful wilderness resort on Drakes Bay, it's the perfect location from which to hike and boat into the jungle to view jungle birds and wildlife, swim under waterfalls, and snorkel on Cano Island, a snorkler's paradise with sea turtles, manta rays, parrot and angel fish, and more.

From the Pacific Coast we fly to our luxurious spa at the base of the Arenal Volcano, where we kayak on Lake Arenal, hike its lava trails, and relax with spa treatments at our beautiful hot springs resort. Taking advantage of the plethora of activities in all of these marvelous locations, we continue our multi-activity adventure with a whitewater raft trip on La Balsa River (go team!), then transfer to the Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve to hike through its beauty, bounty, and biodiversity. Wind-sculpted elfin woodlands give way to rainforests where tall trees – festooned with orchids, bromeliads, ferns, vines and mosses – rise high into the sky. For the perfect combination of adrenaline, adventure and nature, we'll also get to experience the beautiful cloud forest landscape on a zip line "Aerial Canopy Tour."

Join AdventureWomen for one of the greatest adventures in Central America in the midst of flora and fauna unequalled in so small an area. With outstanding accommodations, amazing national parks, and the assortment of exciting activities we have planned, you will see why this adventure travel vacation is REALLY HARD TO BEAT!!

ADVENTUREWOMEN, INC. | 300 RUNNING HORSE TRAIL | BOZEMAN, MT 59715
EMAIL: trips@adventurewomen.com | WEBSITE: www.adventurewomen.com
406-587-3883 | 800-804-8686 | 406-587-9449 FAX

WHAT'S INCLUDED IN YOUR BEST OF COSTA RICA ADVENTURE

- 10 days/9 nights, fully guided Best of Costa Rica tour.
- Transfer and individual pick-up from San Jose International Airport to our first night's hotel, plus return transfers to the airport from our last night's hotel.
- Accommodations in wonderful hotels, rainforest lodges, and spa resorts as described in the itinerary.
- All meals from dinner on arrival day through breakfast on departure day.
- Two internal flights, and all land and water transportation throughout the trip.
- All scheduled activities and excursions with an English-speaking naturalist bilingual guide, local guides, and drivers throughout the entire itinerary.
- Entrance fees to all parks and reserves.
- One AdventureWomen escort throughout the trip.

NOT INCLUDED

- Round-trip airfare from your hometown to San Jose, Costa Rica.
- Passport fees and any airport entry or departure taxes: Costa Rica (\$28 departure tax. Can be paid with Colones, Dollars, or Visa credit card).
- Alcoholic beverages with meals, personal expenses such as laundry, phone calls, etc.
- Gratuities: Main guide (\$5/person/day); Driver (\$3/person/day); Local guides (\$2/person/day). These are minimum amounts, and you can tip more if you think your guides do a great job. Baggage handling (\$1 per bag)

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS AND HEALTH INSURANCE

Physical activity on this adventure is rated as MODERATE. This means you must be in very good physical condition and be able to walk between 5 and 8 miles and not have any physical problems or conditions that would be adversely affected by any of the activities on this trip, and the rigors of international travel. **You MUST have your own health insurance.**

HOW TO REGISTER

First, call (800-804-8686) or email (trips@adventurewomen.com) the AdventureWomen office to determine space availability. As a courtesy, we will hold your space for 5 days while you are completing the registration process, and making personal and travel arrangements.

Next, complete and sign the Trip Registration and International Passenger Information forms on our Web site by clicking "Sign Up for this Trip" on the trip page. We can also fax or email them to you. Include, with your forms, the required deposit that can be made by credit card (Visa, MasterCard, or Discover), personal check, money order, or cashier's check. You can also give us your credit card number over the phone. Once we receive your **deposit and BOTH forms**, we will mail you a trip confirmation/information packet verifying your registration.

Then, call our travel consultant Ciretta Green (1-800-247-3538), to make your airline reservations.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

International airfare to San Jose, Costa Rica is quite reasonable, and there are many flights from the U.S. Departure cities are Los Angeles, Dallas, Atlanta, Miami, and Houston. Buy your tickets early and we suggest that you work with **Ciretta Green at Travel Café (800-247-3538)** to coordinate your flights from your hometown to and from San Jose.

You must be at our first night's hotel, the 5-star Barceló San José Palacio Hotel in San Jose, Costa Rica, by 5 pm on April 16, 2015.

Barceló San José Palacio
Residencial El Robledal - La Uruca, San Jose 458-1150, Costa Rica
Tel: 1-800-227 23 56

Upon arrival at the airport, each participant will be met by an English-speaking driver (who will be holding a sign with your name on it), and transferred to the hotel, located only 8 miles from Juan Santamaría International Airport and 3 miles from San José city center. Even if you fly in a day or two early, you will be picked up at the airport and transferred to your hotel.

For your departure on April 25, 2015, we return to San Jose from Monteverde at approximately 11 a.m. You would be safe to make your flight departures for any time after 2 p.m. You will be individually transferred to the airport.

**LIABILITY FORM
AND FINAL PAYMENT**

Part of what AdventureWomen, Inc. hopes to foster is the taking of more self-responsibility for our own lives, health, and safety. **Please read the Liability Form carefully, sign it, and return it with the remainder of your balance due by:**

JANUARY 20, 2015.

**CANCELLATIONS AND
REFUNDS**

Notification of cancellations must be received in writing. Full payment is due 90 days prior to departure date, and 50% of the registration deposit is non-refundable.

For cancellations received 60-89 days prior to the trip departure date: 50% of the total trip cost is non-refundable. For cancellations received 1-59 days prior to the trip departure date: 100% of the total trip cost is non-refundable.

You are highly encouraged to purchase trip cancellation insurance to cover emergency situations. Information will be sent to you in your registration packet.

SWITCHING TRIPS

Before your final balance due date, you may change your deposit to another trip within the same calendar year by paying a \$75 fee to switch. You may not switch your deposit to a trip in another calendar year.

**ADVENTUREWOMEN'S NO
SMOKING POLICY**

Beginning in 1995, our trips became smoke free. Please note that there will be no smoking by any participants on AdventureWomen vacations.

MAKING TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS AND AIR FLIGHTS TO SAN JOSE, COSTA RICA

We suggest that you book your air reservations with our travel consultant soon after registering for this trip!

On this AdventureWomen **COSTA RICA ADVENTURE**, we ask that you work directly with our travel consultants at **Travel Café, Montana's Travel Agency**, to make your travel arrangements. After booking your trip, please call **Ciretta Green** to discuss your air schedule based on the arrival and departure times we have set for the group pick-up and departure.

1-800-247-3538 OR FAX 1-406-586-1959

email: Ciretta@travelcafeonline.com

CANADIAN RESIDENTS, please call 406-587-1188

When calling, please identify yourself as an AdventureWomen Traveler. If you leave a message on Ciretta's voice mail, she will return your call promptly. She will be happy to discuss your travel plans and help you decide when to purchase your ticket for the best rate. If you purchase your ticket through her, she can also help you with hotels and rental cars, should you want to come early, stay longer, or share a rental car or hotel room with another participant. If you do not purchase your air ticket through Travel Café, you are responsible for making your own arrangements for hotels, rental cars, trip extensions, transfers, etc.

NOTE: The recent trend in travel is for travelers to finalize their plans much closer to departure time than was customary in the past. While we try to be as flexible as possible booking last minute registrants, we must often relinquish hotel space and air reservations up to 6 – 12 weeks prior to departure! Please keep this in mind when making your travel plans.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

Citizens of the United States must possess a valid passport, which must be valid 6 months beyond your intended stay. No visas or special inoculations are required for travel to Costa Rica. You should have two extra passport photographs to take with you to use in an emergency, and always carry 2 sets of photocopies of your airline tickets and the first two pages of your passport.

**OUR EXCITING ITINERARY FOR THE BEST OF COSTA RICA: A
MULTI-ACTIVITY WILDLIFE AND NATURE SAFARI**

Day 1, Thursday, April 16, 2015 - Depart the United States for San Jose, Costa Rica

After arriving at the San Jose International Airport on April 16, 2015, by 5 p.m., each participant is met by an English-speaking driver (who will be holding a sign with your name on it), and is transferred to the 5-star Barceló San José Palacio Hotel in San Jose, just 8 miles from the airport.

After checking in, relaxing, and freshening up in our rooms, we meet at 7 p.m. in the hotel lobby for our special Welcome Dinner. Trip introductions and orientation will take place after dinner.

(Dinner)

The Barceló San José Palacio hotel, selected as the best airport hotel in San José, Costa Rica, boasts an excellent location. Just 8 miles from Juan Santamaría International Airport and 3 miles from San José city center. This 5-star hotel boasts large comfortable rooms equipped with high-speed Internet and all the amenities you

ABOUT ADVENTURE TRAVEL TODAY

Please Read Carefully!

At AdventureWomen, we would like to ensure that all participants understand that our excursions are adventure travel vacations, and not "tours." We define "adventure travel" as travel in which one actively participates, as opposed to a "tour," in which one is more or less a passive observer. AdventureWomen designs and organizes vacations all over the world for women who want to experience an active, out of the ordinary vacation, and meet new friends. Most of all, we want our trips to be fun!

In this spirit, the successful adventure traveler should be a good-natured realist and have a sense of humor! Adventure vacations, by nature, require that participants be self-sufficient, flexible, and able to accept situations as they exist, and not just as they would have preferred or expected them to exist. The constraints of scheduled group traveling also necessitate that each of us be understanding of and sensitive to others. Being on time is important, and contributes to the congeniality, success and well being of both individuals and the group!

Thank you for choosing to travel with AdventureWomen! If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to call, write or email us.

need during your overnight stay. Barceló San José Palacio hotel has been recognized for its environmental commitment with the Sustainability Certificate, awarded by the Costa Rica Tourism Institute.

Overnight at the **Hotel San Jose Palacio** in San Jose

Day 2, Friday, April 17 - Fly to the Osa Peninsula. Snorkeling and Swimming on Rio Claro

Early this morning we transfer to the domestic airport in San Jose and fly to Drake Bay on the Osa Peninsula. Our scenic flight passes over Manuel Antonio National Park and provides a great aerial view of the South Pacific Coast en route to the Peninsula. We land at Drake Bay and transfer to Drake Bay Wilderness Resort for check-in and breakfast.

The South Pacific side of Costa Rica is home to the Osa Peninsula, an area of unparalleled rugged beauty. Jutting out approximately 30 miles into the Pacific, the peninsula protects Golfo Dulce from ocean swells and produces a marvelous natural harbor. Its extensive area of virgin lowland rainforest and the fact there are few cities or towns here, make the Osa Peninsula one of the most ideal ecotourism locations on the planet: with its picturesque beaches and rocky headlands, majestic forests, endangered plants and animals, and it's wildness.

Drake Bay is located on the north side of the Osa Peninsula, and little changed since the day Sir Francis Drake docked here. It is still remote from most of the surrounding area, and has become a 'go to' spot for eco-tourists seeking a genuinely secluded wilderness experience. Frequent rains nourish a very wet tropical forest rich in biodiversity. Stretching south of Drake Bay are highly scenic rocky areas and coves, crystal blue waters, pristine beaches, and lush primary jungle rainforests. Explorers will find tide pools, spring-fed rivers, numerous waterfalls, forest trails, and some of the best bird watching in the entire country.

After check-in, breakfast, and time to relax, we head out to Rio Claro, just a fifteen minute boat trip that takes us to a breathtakingly beautiful beach and lagoon. We hike 30 minutes to a nearby jungle river, and spend time swimming, canoeing, floating, relaxing in a secluded waterfall pool, and observing jungle birds and wildlife. On the beach we'll have a delicious buffet lunch brought by our guide. Bring hiking shoes, swimsuit, sunscreen, hat and water bottle. (Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner)

For the next 3 nights we stay at **Drake Bay Wilderness Resort**, in Drake Bay on the Osa Peninsula.

www.drakebay.com
011 (506) 2775-1715 or 011 (506) 2775-1716

To give you an idea about this resort, here are a few reviews taken from Trip Advisor:

"For the adventurous who want to experience pristine Costa Rica with the comforts of a luxe 'old world' adventure lodge this is your place. Magical and simple... a rare and refreshing hold out - authentic, expansive and comfortable and with all the touches of authenticity that make it second to none. Pulling up to the hotel was like a scene from a

from a movie. At first it seemed a little rustic but it was all part of the natural charm of the place.”

“It’s impossible to find a more dramatic natural setting for a resort. The property is on a point jutting into the sea with a panoramic vista of the ocean, mountains, Drake Bay, etc. The view up the coast is phenomenal. Sunrise and sunset are spectacular.”

“THE BEST location on Drakes Bay - on a point of water with an ocean view out your front door and the jungle complete with macaws and monkeys out your back. Clean clean clean property (no bugs to worry about except on the exceptional Night hike!). The rooms are all well located. The cabins are very close to the sea, maybe 50 to 100 feet with the small waves of Drake Bay gently splashing on the beach. The rooms had murals painted by loving hands and the beds had hand carved ant eaters, perfect for my hat to rest on. The bathrooms were spacious and very nice!”

“The food was plentiful, great selection of fresh fruit and vegetables, fresh fish and grilled meats. There was a wonderful surprise appetizer platter each afternoon at the bar matched by fresh lime and mint Mojitos. The owner’s true connection to this place makes you feel like you’re in real Costa Rica, untouched, gorgeous and very relaxed.”

Overnight Drake Bay Wilderness Resort

Day 3, Saturday, April 18 - Rainforest Hiking in Corcovado National Park

The Osa Peninsula is part of Corcovado National Park, the largest single area of lowland tropical rainforest in all of Central America, and the largest of Costa Rica’s National Parks. Having the good fortune to be fairly inaccessible, Corcovado is the perfect base for visitors who are seeking to fully capture the ecological magic of this region. It is the ideal destination to experience firsthand the ecologic and biotic diversity of Costa Rica.

The crown jewel of Costa Rica’s national park system, Corcovado National Park (Parque Nacional Corcovado), is comprised of an enormous 103,290 acres of tropical rainforest. It encompasses about a third of the Osa Peninsula and embraces an unbelievable amount of its biodiversity. The Park represents a very diverse population of flora and

fauna, including 10% of the mammals found in the Americas. Declared a protected area in 1975 to prevent the harvest of precious resources, it is believed to have the largest concentration of macaws and virgin lowland rainforest in Central America. Also, it is one of the very few locations in Costa Rica that harbor the endangered squirrel monkey (the other most prominent being Manuel Antonio National Park).

After an early breakfast, we boat to Corcovado National Park and enjoy a full day of guided rainforest hikes. Our main hike is in the morning, and after lunch we hike to a waterfall to enjoy an afternoon swim.

Bring hiking shoes, swimsuit, sunscreen, hat, water bottle and insect repellent. An extra pair of shoes/sandals is recommended.

Late afternoon we return to Drake Bay for a fabulous dinner.

(Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner)

Overnight Drake Bay Wilderness Resort

Day 4, Sunday, April 19 - Snorkeling and Optional Scuba Diving on Caño Island

This morning we boat 10 miles to uninhabited Caño Island for a great day of snorkeling. This is one of the very best and most special areas in Costa Rica for snorkeling and diving! On Caño Island there are ancient pre-Colombian remains, offshore sightings of whales and dolphins, and sea turtles often lay their eggs on the island’s sandy beaches.

If there are certified scuba divers in the group, BRING YOUR C- CARDS and we can arrange for diving while the rest of the group is snorkeling. Diving will be an optional activity and an extra cost.

(Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner)

Overnight Drake Bay Wilderness Resort

Day 5, Monday, April 20 - Fly to Arenal Volcano and Tabacon Grand Spa Thermal Resort

This morning we say good-bye to the beautiful Osa Peninsula and its fabulous beaches, and fly back to San Jose. We transfer by vehicle to the spectacular Volcán Arenal area and the Tabacon Resort & Spa, with its hot springs and uninterrupted views of the volcano.

Tabacon is the name of what might very well be Costa Rica's top destination. This 5-Star luxury resort is recognized as a member of The Leading Hotels and The Leading Spas of the World. Tabacon Grand Spa Thermal Resort sits near the base of the active Arenal Volcano and offers the unique combination of the heat of the volcano, the flowing waters of the natural, mineral hot springs, the pure air of the rainforest, and the fertile earth of the Fortuna de San Carlos Region of Costa Rica. These thermal springs are warmed from the volcano.

The Resort's lush setting, with manicured gardens and the relaxing Grand Spa, sets it apart from other spas in Costa Rica. Its location, north of Arenal Volcano's most active crater, faces the direction in which the lava flows. Sitting in a hot spring and watching the red glow of the volcano light up the deep blue of the rainforest at dusk is a once-in-a-lifetime experience you will never forget!

This afternoon you are free to relax and enjoy the hot springs or a spa treatment (on your own). Here is how Tabacon describes their spa experience:

"There are thousands of spas around the world, and some aim to be the most luxurious and sophisticated. Our approach to spa life at Tabacon is simple: bring nature into your spa experience. Rather than immersing you in an environment surrounded by four walls, we give you a spa experience with the outdoors in full view in open-air bungalows set among our lush gardens, with the tropical rain forest, hot springs and volcano as background. While you can request to have music played within the bungalows, we invite you to experience the relaxation of enjoying an expert therapy to the sounds of the river, the Arenal Volcano, wildlife and, yes, even the rain."

(Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner)

For the next 3 nights we stay overnight at **Tabacon Grand Spa Thermal Resort**

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

Toll free 1-877-277-8291 from U.S. & Canada

Day 6, Tuesday, April 21 - Kayaking Lake Arenal and Hiking on the Volcano's Lava Flows

Lake Arenal is the largest lake in Costa Rica. Considerably enlarged in 1979 as part of a hydroelectric dam project, it covers 33 square miles and can be found straddling the border of two Costa Rican provinces, Guanacaste and Alajuela. The water and the surrounding hills are ideal for fishing for rainbow bass, kayaking, hiking, horseback riding, birdwatching, and mountain biking.

After breakfast at the hotel, we'll do a morning kayak trip on Lake Arenal: visit an island in the lake; see local birds such as osprey, kingfishers, neotropical cormorants and aningas; and view mammals such as howler monkeys, spider monkeys, white nosed coats and sloths. It's hard to miss the impressive view of the Arenal Volcano as we paddle!

Lunch will be en route on our way back to the resort.

This afternoon our knowledgeable guide takes us on a fascinating hike through the old lava flow trails of the Arenal Volcano. This is always one of the highlights of any of our trips in Costa Rica, so it is an exciting activity to incorporate.

After a day of paddling and hiking, the hot springs will be a refreshing treat before we have dinner tonight at a local restaurant.

(Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner)

Overnight **Tabacon Grand Spa Thermal Resort**

Day 7, Wednesday, April 22 - Whitewater Rafting at La Balsa River Class II & III

What activity is always the favorite on any AdventureWomen trip?

Whitewater rafting!!

Rio Balsa Rafting is ideal for first-time whitewater rafters. It is gentle enough for inexperienced rafters but enough of a challenge to make it exciting. Our professional, experienced bilingual guides will give us a safety talk and paddling instruction, life jackets, helmets, and then we're off on our guided rafting trip! Enjoy paddling through 25 fun and safe rolling rapids with names like "Morning Coffee" & "Rock around the Croc" and then play around in tranquil river pools in an isolated rainforest river canyon. Hopefully, we'll get to see lots of wildlife like monkeys, sloths and

tropical birds such as ospreys and toucans. This unique river trip is the best way to combine adventure and nature. Go AdventureWomen Team!!

Bring secure shoes/sandals, clothes to get wet and dry clothes to change into, bathing suit, camera, binoculars, sun screen.

(Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner)

Overnight **Tabacon Grand Spa Thermal Resort**

DAY 8, Thursday, April 23 - Monteverde Cloud Forest and Aerial Canopy Zip-Line Tour

This morning our adventures continue! After breakfast at Tabacon, we transfer overland to Monteverde Cloud Forest and the Hotel Fonda Vela. We check into our hotel, and then we are off to experience the top of the rainforest!

What's another one of AdventureWomen's most favorite adrenaline- pumping activities?

Zip-lining and canopy tour adventures!!

Undoubtedly, the zip line aerial canopy tour in Monteverde is one of the most exciting activities you'll enjoy. It's the perfect combination of adventure, nature, and excitement, together with experiencing the beautiful cloud forest landscape above and in the treeline.

The tour begins with a short safety briefing by our guides about the equipment we use, building confidence, and offering a few laughs. Then our adventure begins with the "Tarzan Swing", one of the most exciting parts of the tour. This "feat" can be done by anyone, and once you do this, the rest of the tour will be no problem! Next we pass through the treetops via a rope canopy cable, which feels like we're flying through the forest. Along the way, the guides will review the safety guidelines.

At the halfway point we reach the Rappel section, where we safely experience a quick rope descent of about 150 feet, always helped by the guides. This is a moment of pure adrenaline. You'll wonder why you have never done this before!

On this tour you'll get to experience being in the forest canopy, a magical world that exists only in the treetops. Connecting to nature in a new way, you'll gain a deepened sense of "place" from the

bird's eye views of the environment and geography that you witness. It's an amazing experience, and you will be empowered by it. Your fellow AdventureWomen friends are there to support and encourage you!

This is a FULL day of activities, and at 5:30 p.m., we'll experience a night tour of the cloud forest. A new world awakes in the cloud forest just before nightfall, when forest life is just beginning to wake up. Our guide helps us recognize the various animals, insects and amphibians within the cloud forest and will explain the reason that these creatures' habits (most of which involve feeding or breeding) are best suited for the dark. Typically though, this time of transition offers a good opportunity to view nocturnal mammals as well as diurnal animals as they prepare for night.

At 7:30 p.m. we return to the hotel for dinner and overnight.

(Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner)

For the next 2 nights we overnight at the **Hotel Fonda Vela**.

The Hotel Fonda Vela is often called "The Jewel of the Monteverde Hotels in Costa Rica" It is located in the beautiful Monteverde Cloud Forest, famous for its rare and gorgeous cloud forest and friendly community. The climate is refreshing, often referred to as "eternal spring". The views of the Gulf of Nicoya from the hotel's 4,200 foot elevation are spectacular.

Surrounded by beautiful tropical gardens, the hotel is an attractive part of the lush, tropical mountainside. The rooms are cozy, yet elegant, spacious and comfortable. Each room is designed with the environment in mind: large windows help to bring the outdoors inside. The hotel has been honored by receiving international distinction from travel critics. This praise confirms the hotel's intentions: to provide accommodations in harmony with the surrounding beauty.

Hotel Fonda Vela
www.fondavela.com
Tel: +506 2645 5125

DAY 9, Friday, April 24 - Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve

This morning we have a naturalist guided hike through the cloud forest of Monteverde Reserve. The whole

area is a fabulous place for walking, especially through the magical shrouds of mist that drape the forests in the early morning.

Monteverde Cloud Forest Biological Reserve is the most well known cloud forest in the world for its wide variety of biodiversity, important conservation contributions, and scientific researches. It sits astride the continental divide at an altitude slightly above 5,249 feet. The foliage is lush, and it protects and provides habitat for an estimated 2,500 species of plants, more than 100 species of mammals, 490 species of butterflies, and over 400 species of birds.

The Reserve is the last sizeable pocket of primary cloud forest in Central America, and supports six different eco-systems.

On our hike this morning we'll enjoy the cloud forest climate as we walk the trails among the varieties of plants and magnificent epiphytic-laden trees. The resplendent quetzals, with their long tails, feed at various locations, and one can, at times, hear the "bong" of the bellbirds.

Interesting fact: You can step on the Continental Divide, where one foot will be on the Caribbean side and the other on the Pacific side (fun to take a picture with a friend, each in one side).

This afternoon you'll have an opportunity for optional horseback riding before our Farewell dinner in the tree tops at Tree House Restaurant. This aptly named restaurant has a large and impressive fig tree growing right through its center. Indeed, it's worth a visit not only to enjoy its wonderful food but also to see its one-of-a-kind environment.

(Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner)

Overnight **Hotel Fonda Vela**

DAY 10, Saturday, April 25 - Back to the U.S.A.

Transfer to San Jose International Airport for afternoon departure. (Breakfast)

WHAT TO PACK FOR YOUR COSTA RICA ADVENTURE

The climate during our trip in Costa Rica ranges from pleasantly warm and sunny to hot and humid. Choose casual, comfortable, and breathable clothing. Lightweight cottons and washable linens are especially comfortable

and the new travel fabrics such as Supplex and Coolmax are breathable, lightweight, and dry very quickly. Lightweight pants and shorts are fine for daytime wear, but you may prefer to wear long pants and long sleeves for protection from sun and insects.

Three words of packing advice: **LIGHT, LIGHT, LIGHT!** It is best to condense your **checked luggage** into one manageable medium-sized suitcase or duffel bag with wheels and one daypack or backpack (carry-on size). Also, a spare, very light, duffel bag or day pack rolled or folded into your wheeled suitcase is useful for transporting souvenir items home. This list tries to incorporate everything you should bring to be comfortable for any of the activities in which you participate.

We suggest you use your **daypack as your carry-on bag** during your flights to and from San Jose. In it you should have all valuables and essentials: medications, passports and all important documents, cameras and memory cards, a day's change of clothing, lightweight sleepwear, and toiletries.

Clothing

- ☐ Proper footwear, such as **lightweight hiking boots** or good walking or athletic shoes is essential on rain forest trails, which can often be slippery. A pair of **sport sandals** is also important to wear for your snorkeling and swimming trips. Another comfortable pair of shoes for dinners and resorts is recommended.
- ☐ Most **rainwear** is too hot to be comfortable in the tropics. A lightweight, inexpensive poncho works best during brief, heavy afternoon showers, or in the rainforest.
- ☐ Fast drying short-sleeved shirts and a few T-shirts.
- ☐ Lightweight long-sleeved shirts for sun and insect protection.
- ☐ 2 pair fast-drying river shorts and 2 pair regular shorts (not short-shorts).
- ☐ Lightweight and fast-drying pants (zip off ones are great – no jeans).
- ☐ Sweatshirt, sweater, or lightweight fleece jacket.
- ☐ Sun hat with a brim.
- ☐ Sleepwear and underwear.
- ☐ Socks to wear with hiking boots/shoes.
- ☐ Bathing suit(s).
- ☐ Casual outfit to wear to dinners.

Binoculars are a MUST for wildlife and bird viewing!

Experienced naturalists recommend that first-time binocular buyers select a brand such as Nikon or

Minolta at a power of 7 X 30, 7 X 35, or 7 X 40. Small, compact binoculars are available at good camera stores, as well as many discount stores.

Camera Equipment

For many women, photography will be a VERY LARGE part of this trip. The opportunities are endless, and the scenery spectacular! We suggest that you bring many more memory cards and batteries than you think you could ever use!

- ❑ Digital camera, memory cards, battery chargers. You will be able to charge all of your batteries in hotels.
- ❑ Costa Rica has magnificent scenery and diversity of fauna and flora. It is a photographer's paradise. The most useful lenses are a wide angle and a tele-photo lens that zooms to a minimum of 200 mm.
- ❑ Any camera gear you carry during the trip should be in a backpack or in a bag that will leave your hands free. It is also recommended that a tight sealing camera bag be used to protect your camera equipment from moisture, dust, sand and dirt. Large Ziploc bags are especially handy.

Miscellaneous

- ❑ Day pack that is water resistant for carrying rain poncho, camera, water bottle, etc., on day trips (you can use this for your carry-on bag). If not waterproof, bring a garbage bag to line the inside of the pack.
- ❑ Money belt or fanny pack.
- ❑ Lightweight flashlight (small but has a good beam for spotlighting) with extra batteries and bulb and/or small headlamp for reading in bed.
- ❑ Pre-moistened towelettes or baby wipes.
- ❑ Hand sanitizer (alcohol based).
- ❑ Sunglasses with securing strap.
- ❑ A spare pair of glasses (if you wear glasses).
- ❑ Sunscreen, sunburn relief products, and lip balm with SPF - all fragrance free.
- ❑ Water bottle and securing strap - We recommend the 24 oz. Nalgene Everyday OTG Tritan Bottle. Made of Eastman Tritan™ copolyester, the bottle is completely BPA-free. Tritan™ copolyester provides excellent impact resistance and is suitable for both warm and cold beverages.
- ❑ Ziplock bags in various sizes. For wet, dirty clothes and shoes, or to pack anything that might leak.
- ❑ Strong insect repellent (we recommend OFF's Skin tastic, or something with DEET) and insect-bite relief products that are fragrance free.

- ❑ Toiletries (Note: feminine hygiene items are not always easily accessible).
- ❑ Washcloth.
- ❑ Small vial of Woolite to wash clothes if needed.
- ❑ Sewing kit, rubber bands, safety pins.
- ❑ Small travel alarm clock.
- ❑ Travel guide, bird books, or other field guides.
- ❑ Notebook, journal, pens, and a lightweight book you've been dying to read.
- ❑ Earplugs. We recommend Mack's Pillow Soft White Moldable Silicone Snore Proof Earplugs, which you can buy at most drugstores, or www.earplugstore.com. Good to 22 Decibels!
- ❑ Small tote or small duffel for packing purchases on the return trip.
- ❑ Lock for the suitcase you leave in your room.
- ❑ Bandanas. Bring 2 or 3 (100% cotton) for instant sweat bands and other uses too numerous to mention, some of which you have never even dreamed! Besides, it's a tradition at AdventureWomen!

Personal First Aid Kit (bring in small amounts and in small containers)

- ❑ Foot powder for moisture absorption; cloth, not plastic Band-aids; about 10 individually wrapped alcohol pads; and a small tube of Neosporin or other antibiotic cream.
- ❑ Aspirin/ibuprofen, etc.
- ❑ Cold-symptom relief tablets, antihistamine, cough drops.
- ❑ Adequate quantity of sweat-resistant sun screen with at least an SPF 15 rating or higher, and lip balm with sunscreen.
- ❑ Tweezers.
- ❑ Ace bandage.
- ❑ Antibiotics (Cipro, or another systemic antibiotic).
- ❑ Prescription medicines in their original bottles.
- ❑ Acidophilus enzyme (available in capsules in health-food stores). This often helps your digestive system get in shape for "new" flora.
- ❑ Immodium, Lomotil, or similar anti-diarrhea medicine.
- ❑ Pepto-Bismol tablets and/or liquid (in leak-proof bottle).
- ❑ Emergen-C. Good for higher altitudes, and some people swear they get fewer colds on airplanes if they take this during flights.

Last Minute Reminders

- ❑ Make photocopies of your airline tickets and the first two pages of your passport, and put them in different locations (suitcase, carry-on bag, etc.).
- ❑ Bring 2-3 extra passport size photos to use in emergencies.

- ❑ Your valuables should be insured for the duration of the trip, but better yet, leave them at home.
- ❑ Remove extra credit cards, driver's license, and personal items from wallet or purse.
- ❑ Make sure passport and airline tickets are valid and in the correct name.

Some Extra Items to Add to your "What to Bring" List

We are updating and adding the following items for all international trips. With more than 33 years of experience flying around the world, we think these items help make your long airline flights much more comfortable and even more bearable:

- ❑ Neck pillow - Inflatable neck pillow for blissful support and deep sleep. For packing, it folds into itself. Self-sealing valve means nothing to close. Soft microfleece cover removes for washing.
Eagle Creek Large Inflatable Travel Neck Pillow at TravelSmith.
- ❑ Sleep mask /Comfort eye shade - Ultra lightweight and comfortable, the Comfort Eye Shade screens out light and distractions for a cozier flight. Ultra-soft micro fleece for comfort. Adjustable elastic strap for a perfect fit. Made of Molded Polyester Micro Fleece.
Eagle Creek® Comfort Eye Shade at TravelSmith.
- ❑ Travel compression socks - Reduce ankle and leg swelling and reduce the risk of deep vein thrombosis. These doctor-designed socks stimulate circulation through gradual compression that stops swelling and guards against (DVT). Made of coolmax®-lycra®-nylon. The TravelSox® cushion Walk Socks have extra-padded soles and are made of moisture wicking SoftPrim®.
TravelSox® Cushion Walk Sock™ at TravelSmith.
- ❑ Noise canceling headphones - Block out unwanted sounds of children crying and airplane engine drone, and/or enjoy great audio sound. Reduce distortion and increase perceived loudness so you can enjoy sound at a lower volume. Get the around the ear design, which is very comfortable.
 - ❑ Bose Quiet Comfort 2 - List Price: \$199.99. Oval shaped around-the-ear design, an iPod fits nicely in the center of the case between the headphones. You can get the next generation of Bose Quiet Comfort 3, but the cost is \$349.00.
 - ❑ Audio Technica ATH-ANC7- List Price: \$219.95 Excellent sound quality and above average noise cancellation. Comfortable leather cushioning around the ear and can be worn for long periods of time with nodiscomfort. Excellent headphones with a reasonable price tag.

*Thank you for choosing to travel with AdventureWomen!
If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to call, write, or email us.*

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