

PUNTARENAS, COSTA RICA

ARRIVE:	SUNDAY	07 DECEMBER	0800
DEPART:	TUESDAY	09 DECEMBER	2000
ON-SHIP TIME:	TUESDAY	09 DECEMBER	1800

----- **SUNDAY, 07 DECEMBER** -----

COS00 DIPLOMATIC BRIEFING (On Arrival, Sunday, 07 December, On Ship) Attendance is mandatory.

A representative from the U.S. Embassy in San José will provide information about the current political, social and economic situation in Costa Rica as well as on the status of relations between the United States and Costa Rica. Safety and security considerations for traveling in Costa Rica will also be discussed.

COS01 ARENAL VOLCANO (On Arrival, Sunday, 07 December – 1600 Monday, 08 December) Minimum 20/ Maximum 70 (PRICE: \$257.00)

Located at La Fortuna in San Carlos, Arenal Volcano rises 5,436 feet above sea level. It is the most active and the most studied of all Costa Rica's volcanoes. It booms and rumbles with an unnerving consistency, and its nocturnal pyrotechnics have struck awe in the hearts of thousands of observers. With its conical shape and continuing activity, Arenal is a picture-book image of a volcano. Daily ash columns, underground rumbling, glowing red lava flows and sudden explosions make Arenal a must-see on any visitor's itinerary.

Day 1: Transfer from the ship to La Fortuna in San Carlos by motorcoach. Upon arrival, meet a Costa Rican family, who will open the doors of their home to show you how they live. From the vegetable garden, you will assist with the picking of vegetables and the preparation of a typical meal. Costa Rican food is a fusion cuisine. It combines elements of culinary traditions from Africa, Italy, France, China, and Spain, flavored by traditional grains (rice, corn, and beans), roots (cassava, taro roots, sweet potatoes), spices (coriander, garlic, annatto, saffron, parsley, oregano, thyme, nutmeg, salt, and pepper), oils (olive oil, vegetable oil, and lard), sauces (Lizano, Soy, and Worcestershire), fresh fruit, and vegetables. To end the day, enjoy the relaxing thermal waters of the area pools with different temperatures coming from individual hot springs. Enjoy dinner at Baldi Hot Springs, the thermal waters' spa which provides spectacular views of the volcano from the pool's edge. (L, D; Arenal area hotel)

Day 2: After breakfast, travel to the Hanging Bridges, a project that consists of eight fixed bridges, ranging in length from 8 to 22 meters, and six hanging bridges, built with the latest techniques and designed with an eye for both beauty and safety. The Hanging Bridges are from 48 to 98 meters in length. All the bridges are made of galvanized steel and high-strength aluminum. The entire project was designed to blend with the natural environment, leaving the forest virtually intact. After lunch at a local restaurant, return to the ship. (B, L)

COS02 MANUEL ANTONIO BEACH AND NATIONAL PARK (On Arrival, Sunday, 07 December – 1800 Monday, 08 December) Minimum 20/Maximum 40 (PRICE: \$276.00)

Manuel Antonio National Park has a charming combination of rain forest, beaches and coral reefs. Some of Costa Rica's most beautiful beaches lined with lush forest that is home to sloths, iguanas, monkeys and millions of colorful crabs are found here.

Day 1: Transfer from the ship to Manuel Antonio National Park by motorcoach (about three hours). After registration at the hotel and lunch, explore the park, one of the most beautiful protected areas of Costa Rica. The beaches are fringed by a tall evergreen forest, which grows right down to the high tide mark and provides a pleasant shade. An experienced naturalist guide takes you on an informative hike through the park and leads you to the beach to enjoy some free time. After dinner, the rest of the evening is on your own. (L, D; Espadilla Hotel)

Day 2: Following breakfast at the hotel, enjoy a morning at leisure to further explore the area. After lunch, enjoy a bit more free time before returning to the ship. (B, L)

COS03 OUTRIGGER CANOE – GROUP A (0900-1400 Sunday, 07 December) Minimum 20/Maximum 38 (PRICE: \$72.00)

Enjoy the beauty of the Pacific Ocean, the fun of a kayak and the safety of a US Coastguard-approved outrigger canoe. Join this day of exploring the beautiful coastline and most secluded coves on the Pacific Coast of Costa Rica. An hour's scenic drive will take you to a quiet beach where the Costa Rica Outrigger Team is making final preparations to set off on this half-day adventure. Once at the beach you will be assigned to a special canoe along with another seven partners and your "eccentric" guide. The beauty of the outrigger canoe is that you share the work of paddling with your group of eight, thus if you feel like sitting back for a while and just looking at the spectacular scenery, you may do so and still continue on your way. Many compare the experience with rafting on the ocean. The canoe is fitted with floatation devices on either side and is virtually unflappable. You'll glide easily past spectacular cliffs with abundant bird life and land on secluded beaches that offer the best snorkeling to be found on the Central Pacific Coast. Once landed, your guides will accompany those who wish to snorkel, making you feel at ease as they point out colorful fish and show you some of the underwater world. Then take a moment to relax on a beach, which can only be accessed from the sea, and sample some of the fresh tropical fruit offered by your guide. All too soon, it will be time to start your return to meet the remainder of the Outrigger Team who will provide ice-cold refreshments upon your arrival. Please note: Although not strenuous, participants will be asked to paddle the canoes. Footwear such as sports sandals or tennis shoes is required. Bathing suit, shorts, sunscreen, a towel and a change of clothes are recommended. Not recommended for children under 6 years old.

COS04 THE TÁRCOLES RIVER: A WILDLIFE GALLERY (0900-1430 Sunday, 07 December) Minimum 30/ Maximum 120 (PRICE: \$53.00)

Bodies of water attract a diverse and abundant range of wildlife. Other than walking through a rain forest, a glide down a lazy river is the best way to spot animals and enjoy the tropical setting. From the ship, take a 1 ¼-hour transfer to the grand Tárcoles River, one of the main rivers in the country. The Tárcoles winds its way from the central valley to the Pacific Coast, through hundreds of miles of unspoiled jungles and mangroves. Aboard a sturdy pontoon-type vessel, your guides and captain will maneuver the shifting sand banks, to reveal the animals, insects and plants that lie hidden to the untrained eye. On your 1 ½-hour sail on the river, you may see and/or hear howler monkeys, toucans, crocodiles and other permanent residents of this watery paradise. (Box lunches from the ship will be provided.)

COS05 PICTURESQUE SARCHI (0915-1430 Sunday, 07 December) Minimum 20/Maximum 96 (PRICE: \$33.00)

High in the mountains, in the heart of the Central Valley, is the small town of Sarchi, cradle to famous wood carvers and artisans that gave identity to the country's local craft and lore. It is here that most visitors to the country find the treasures that will remind them of their time in Costa Rica when they are far away. From the hot and dry coastal plains, your drive will take you through quaint villages, fields of sugar cane, cattle ranches and coffee plantations, to the Central Volcanic Mountain Range where the deep green of its hills lies in dramatic contrast to the colors of the coastal region. Throughout your drive, a professional guide acquaints you with the country's history, politics and culture. The guide's interesting account of Costa Rica will make the 40-mile journey short and pleasant. Soon the little town appears, with its bright colors and friendly people, proudly displaying the most typical symbol of the country . . . the brightly colored hand-painted ox cart. The painting of the carts started over two centuries ago and you will have a chance to witness master craftsmen painting the intricate patterns and bright colors as their ancestors did for generations. Time has been allowed to browse for keepsakes and mementos of your visit to this tiny, peaceful republic. Upon leaving Sarchi a short stop will be made in Grecia to admire the unusual metal Church of the Lady of Mercy. Your return journey takes you past sugarcane and coffee plantations that were once the main trade of Costa Rica. (Box lunches from the ship will be provided.)



COS06 CLOUD FOREST AND POÁS NATIONAL PARK (0915-1745 Sunday, 07 December) Minimum 20/Maximum 96 (PRICE: \$58.00)



From the low coastal areas, head into the clouds and discover the incredibly diverse landscape, the ever-changing vegetation and spectacular scenery that this journey provides. One of the most renowned parks in Costa Rica, the Poás National Park, is one of the few cloud forests accessible from the Pacific Coast during a one-day visit. This beautiful nature reserve allows participants to experience a rare natural scenario, as well as the possibility of witnessing the struggle within the earth's core. Surrounded by lush cloud forest is the crater of the Poás Volcano. On a clear day, it is possible to peer into the volcano's crater and see geysers of steam and smoke, rising from the bubbling depths. As the volcano is in a cloud forest region, visibility of the crater is subject to cloud influence. After a visit to the park, continue through spectacular scenery, which brings to mind the fields and pastures of the Swiss Alps. It is

this region that gave Costa Rica its nickname "The Switzerland of Central America". Shortly thereafter, reach a traditional mountain retreat and enjoy a tasty traditional "Tico" meal. After lunch, stop briefly at the nearby town of Grecia to admire the unusual metal Church of the Lady of Mercy. Upon leaving Grecia, your journey to the ship takes you past sugarcane and coffee plantations that were once the main trade of Costa Rica. Please note: This tour requires some walking over even and uneven paths at a high altitude (8,700 feet.) and therefore might not be suitable for all participants. Sturdy walking shoes, a light waterproof jacket, sweater (for the air-conditioned bus) and sun block are recommended. Sudden rain showers can be expected.

COS07 CANOPY ADVENTURE – GROUP A (0930-1300 Sunday, 07 December) Minimum 20/Maximum 70 (PRICE: \$60.00)

Originally developed by scientists to study the biodiversity found in the canopy of trees, the method involved rigging large trees with climbing gear, cables, ladders, etc. By means of this gear, biologists were able to swing from one tree to another, over chasms and water, to study larger areas of the forest. They also discovered it was a LOT of fun!!! Nowadays, several canopy tours have been developed around the world, with Costa Rica leading the world in abundance and safety of this activity. This program allows anybody to rise to the top of the trees and switch on the adrenaline, as you swish through the air from one gigantic tree to another . . . and unlike Tarzan . . . in complete safety. A thirty-minute drive along the scenic coast will bring you to the Canopy Center. Here a knowledgeable guide will assist you in donning the harnesses and safety equipment and will give you a thorough explanation of how to behave, what to expect and how to make the most of your experience. Once ready, a dirt road and a short walk will take you to the first platform. Hook your harness to the cable and go! The series of platforms are sometimes located over 100 feet high and up to 2,100 feet apart, enough to wake you up!



Please note: This tour is only recommended for those people who are able to participate in moderately strenuous activities and high-adventure programs. Participants must fit in the harness in a safe manner as determined by the head guide. A general guideline is about 220 pounds (100 kilos) but is actually a function of body shape and size. Comfortable light clothing with long shorts or pants and sturdy closed-toe walking shoes are recommended. Participants who suffer from vertigo should not participate in this tour.

COS08 TROPICAL RAIN FOREST: CARARA NATIONAL PARK (0930-1400 Sunday, 07 December)
Minimum 20/Maximum 54 (PRICE: \$45.00)

Tropical rain forests are major providers of the air we breathe, the source of most elements used to create modern-day medicine and a legacy to future generations. A visit to Carara National Park offers insight to the complex world of the tropical rain forest. It is ideal for those who wish to become acquainted with the exotic flora and fauna that thrive in the region. Over 10,000 species of plants, 3,000 species of birds and some 200 species of butterflies are present in this transitional zone, where the less dense undergrowth makes spotting easier than in the deeper forest. Scarlet Macaws, howler monkeys, white-collared monkeys, coatimundis, peccaries, crocodiles and toucans are a few of the animals which call this area their home and although not guaranteed, may be spotted. The key to your learning adventure is an experienced naturalist guide, a true master of the forest, who is able to interpret all the messages and signs the jungle puts forth and translates them for you to understand. He will expose the delicate balance between plants, insects and other animals and will show you some of the treasures the rain forest provides. You will reach the Biological Reserve by means of air-conditioned vehicles. (The group will be divided to walk on two different trails to lessen the impact on the reserve.) Please note: Paths between the bridges are over uneven, broken terrain and may be muddy, thus footwear may be dirtied. Sturdy walking shoes, binoculars, light cotton clothes – long pants, long-sleeved shirt and a sweater (for the air-conditioned bus) are recommended.

COS09 RAFTING ON THE COROBICI RIVER (0930-1630 Sunday, 07 December) Minimum 20/Maximum 96 (PRICE: \$64.00)

Although by no means a hard core adventure, this trip down the Corobici River offers the opportunity to enjoy nature at its best and negotiate some swift waters here and there. Starting as a swift and strong river at its origin in the mountains, the Corobici becomes a docile giant when it reaches the low flood plains of the pacific coast. It is here where you will put in your rafts to begin an interesting journey. Along the way, the river winds among dense jungle, secondary forests and from time to time near pastures and fields. Throughout the course, the river has been blessed with a rich wildlife, making it ideal for nature lovers and amateur natural historians. As this section has no more than class one and two rapids, it is the ideal excursion for beginners or for those who do not want the more strenuous white-water rafting experiences. (A late lunch is included.) Please note: This tour is only recommended to those people who are able to participate in moderately strenuous activities. Footwear such as sports sandals or tennis shoes is required and may become wet. Sunscreen, a towel and a change of clothes are recommended. **Not recommended for children under 6 years old.**

COS10 THE ESSENCE OF COSTA RICA (0930-1800 Sunday, 07 December) Minimum 20/Maximum 96 (PRICE: \$60.00)

Although not an easy task, this full-day experience allows visitors to flavor Costa Rica in a more in-depth manner in just one day. The experience does not concentrate on any particular sight. Instead, it concentrates on those sights that highlight the history, culture, society and nature of the country, to provide a general, yet vivid impression of all that Costa Rica entails. In an effort to allow the broadest view of the country, your path to the capital city will lead you through four of the seven provinces that make up the Republic. Allowing for a brief stop along the way, the 2 ½-hour journey to San José will take you past vast coastal floodplains, up high mountains and into the Central Volcanic Valley, which travelers have compared more to Northern Europe than to Central America. Throughout your journey, a proud native Costa Rican will lead you through the country's history, economy and politics, offering insight to the beautiful views and landscape along the way. Once in San José, your first stop will be at the National Museum of Pre-Colombian Art for an entertaining and well-documented narrative on the country's heritage. Here your guides will personally lead you through the pre-Colombian jade and gold exhibits. Your next stop will be the Opera House, a close replica of the Paris Opera House and a bastion of culture. This venue has come to represent the love of Costa Ricans for the fine arts. After stopping for lunch at one of the country's leading restaurants, your return drive to the ship will further broaden your perspective of the country stopping in the town of Grecia to admire the unusual metal Church of the Lady of Mercy.



COS11 LA PAZ WATERFALL GARDENS (0930-1800 Sunday, 07 December)
Minimum 20/Maximum 48 (PRICE: \$68.00)

La Paz Waterfall Gardens, Nature Park and Wildlife Refuge, is an area committed to educate and entertain visitors with a world-class ecological experience. This is Costa Rica at its greenest and most exuberant. Upon arrival, you will visit the Hummingbird Garden where these feathered friends will delight and fascinate you with their antics as they play and fight with each other at amazing speeds and within arms reach. Nearby is the enclosed Butterfly Garden, one of the largest in the world, including the most colorful and exotic butterflies found in Costa Rica. After visiting these two interesting exhibits, you will explore the real forest. On a well-laid-out trail, your guide will lead you along a crisp clean mountain river that cuts through the dense rain forest and provides an incomparable setting of gallery forest and a spectacular waterfall. This pristine setting is the true Costa Rica, the one that faced the first Spanish settlers back in the early 1500s and still steals the hearts of so many visitors. (Lunch at the park restaurant is included.) Please note: This tour requires some walking over even and uneven paths at a high altitude (8,700 feet.) and therefore might not be suitable for all participants. Sturdy walking shoes, a light waterproof jacket, sweater (for the air-conditioned bus) and sun block are recommended. Sudden rain showers can be expected.

COS12 COFFEE: COSTA RICA'S TREASURE (0945-1630 Sunday, 07 December) Minimum 20/Maximum 96 (PRICE: \$57.00)

It is said that the riches of Costa Rica lie in its physical beauty and its friendly people. This leisurely day's experience showcases just that – the treasures of Costa Rica. As you depart the pier, relax and soak in the verdant hills as you wind your way along the route used by the conquistadors to access the lush central valley. The old road takes you from sea level to over 3,000 feet where dramatic changes in vegetation and climate are visible; an exuberant and verdant region unfolds before your eyes. Your first stop is the working coffee plantation of Café Britt. At the coffee plantation, discover the secret of what transforms ripe coffee fruit into a delicious cup of gourmet coffee. By means of an interactive presentation, professional actors guide you through the production stages from tending the trees to the careful handpicking at harvest time. Observe and participate in the traditions and history of coffee. A typical lunch will be served at *Don Prospero* Restaurant on the Britt plantation grounds. After a delightful lunch, return to the ship.

COS13 CANOPY ADVENTURE – GROUP B (1330-1700 Sunday, 07 December) Minimum 20/Maximum 70 (PRICE: \$60.00)

For a description of this practicum see COS07 Canopy Adventure – Group A.

-----**MONDAY, 08 DECEMBER**-----

COS14 SAN JOSÉ OVERNIGHT (0830 Monday, 08 December – 1830 Tuesday, 09 December) Minimum 20/Maximum 38 (PRICE: \$230.00)

This trip showcases the history, culture, society and nature of Costa Rica while allowing time to explore the capital city on your own. This is a great opportunity to see a lot in a short time – see four of the seven provinces in less than 48 hours!

DAY 1: Depart the pier and travel to San José, the Republic's capital city. The 2 ½-hour journey is quite picturesque. Pass vast coastal floodplains, travel up high mountains and into the Central Volcanic Valley before reaching your destination. Learn about the country's history, economy and politics, while enjoying the beautiful landscape. The first stop is the National Museum of Pre-Colombian Art for an entertaining and well-documented

narrative on the country's heritage. Here your guides will personally lead you through the pre-Colombian jade and gold exhibits. The next stop is the Opera House, a close replica of the Paris Opera House and a bastion of culture. After dinner, the evening is free for independent pursuits. (L, D; Hotel Centro Colon or similar)

DAY 2: After a refreshing breakfast at the hotel, depart for the rainforest to experience the beauty and thrill of a true Costa Rican adventure – a canopy zip-line adventure! Originally developed by scientists to study the biodiversity found in the canopy of trees, the method involved rigging large trees with climbing gear, cables, ladders, etc. By means of this gear, biologists were able to swing from one tree to another, over chasms and water, to study larger areas of the forest. They also discovered it was a LOT of fun!!! At the canopy center, a knowledgeable guide will assist you in donning the harnesses and safety equipment and will provide a thorough explanation of how to behave, what to expect and how to make the most of your experience. Once ready, a dirt road and a short walk will take you to the first platform. Hook your harness to the cable and go! The series of platforms are sometimes located over 100-foot high and up to 2,100-foot apart, enough to wake you up without any caffeine! After reliving your canopy experience over lunch, travel to the Espiritu Santo Coffee Estate and learn about the harvesting and processing of coffee. Enjoy a cup of java before traveling to the artistic community of Sarchi. Arrive at this charming town and soak in the local flavor with its bright colors and friendly people. Sarchi proudly displays the brightly colored hand-painted ox cart, a national symbol and treasure. The painting of the carts started over two centuries ago; witness master craftsmen painting the intricate patterns and bright colors as their ancestors did for generations. After viewing these Costa Rican treasures, return to the ship.

COS15 OUTRIGGER CANOE – GROUP B (0830-1330 Monday, 08 December) Minimum 20/Maximum 38 (PRICE: \$72.00)

For a description of this practicum see COS03 Outrigger Canoe – Group A.

-----TUESDAY, 09 DECEMBER-----

COS16 CANOPY ADVENTURE – GROUP C (0830-1200 Tuesday, 09 December) Minimum 20/Maximum 70 (PRICE: \$60.00)

For a description of this practicum see COS07 Canopy Adventure – Group A.

COS17 HORSEBACK RIDING – GROUP A (0945-1345 Tuesday, 09 December) Minimum 10/Maximum 20 (PRICE: \$61.00)

Both beginners and leathery cowboys will enjoy this day at a traditional Costa Rican Ranch on well-trained, docile horses. Not too far from the ship awaits your *vaquiano* (Costa Rican cowboy), who has prepared the horses to take you on a fun adventure through fields, cattle farms and tropical rain forest. Keep your eyes out for the many animals that inhabit the area. The jungle provides a welcome shade and as your eyes adjust, discover the thick strands of orchids and bromeliads that weigh heavy on the large tree branches, the beautiful butterflies that fill the area and the permeating sense of peace. Dismount near a river to pause and enjoy your surroundings and enjoy a refreshing drink. Please note: Although not strenuous, this practicum requires a certain amount of physical activity necessary to mount, dismount and ride a horse. Long pants and closed-toe shoes are required. **This activity is not suitable for dependent children under 12.**

COS18 CANOPY ADVENTURE – GROUP D (1330-1700 Tuesday, 09 December) Minimum 20/Maximum 70 (PRICE: \$60.00)

For a description of this practicum see COS07 Canopy Adventure – Group A.

COS19 HORSEBACK RIDING – GROUP B (1345-1745 Tuesday, 09 December) Minimum 10/Maximum 20 (PRICE: \$61.00)

For a description of this practicum see COS17 Horseback Riding – Group A.