

PUNTARENAS

Cultural Tourist Guide



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Zip line hotel vista al golfo



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10 things that every tourist must see and do in Puntarenas

1

Take a tour of the mangroves



2

Savor seafood-based gastronomy



3

Enjoy magical beaches with your family or as a couple



4

Enjoy rural tourism in Montes de Oro and Esparza



5

Watch spectacular sunsets



6

Take tours to the Gulf of Nicoya and its islands



7

Practice responsible fishing



8

Rejuvenate in Santa Teresa, Montezuma and Tambor



9

Go paragliding in Caldera



10

Surf in Santa Teresa - Mal País





Puntarenas and islands: land of recreation, history and culture

The name Puntarenas originated in 1720 as Punta de Arena and was modified over the years until the name we know now - Puntarenas. On September 17, 1858, Puntarenas was granted the title of city and main port of the Pacific coast of our country. Like any port, it is influenced by a variety of cultures including Chinese, Afro-Caribbean, Panamanian, Nicaraguan, to name a few, and the porteños, or people of Puntarenas, are known to be friendly, sociable and hardworking.

Throughout its territory in the Peninsula and the Gulf of Nicoya you can visit numerous beaches, rivers, islands and various types of world famous protected areas. This is one of the main tourist regions of the country par excellence, where it is possible to find places of impressive natural beauty.

Gulf of Nicoya

To the east of the Peninsula lies the Gulf of Nicoya, with a surface area of 2,500 km², an impressive combination of marine habitat and coastal wetlands highlighted by the many islands, making it a spot of aquatic wonder. Abundant in number and complexity are the extensive regions of mangroves (plant life that grows in saline conditions) found on the nutrient-rich soil. These contours constitute unique habitats to provide an incredible biological diversity found in few places outside of Costa Rica. Formed by a volcanic fault line that once caused the existing land to sink into the sea, the gulf of water—ideal for supporting mangroves—is surprisingly deep. Mangroves play an essential role of the ecosystem in the Nicoya Peninsula and, consequently, have been established as a protected territory by the Costa Rican government.

The Gulf of Nicoya is the deepest inlet of the sea in Costa Rican lands and bathes the coasts of the provinces of Guanacaste and Puntarenas. Its broad entrance is limited

by Cabo Blanco and Punta Judas, while it narrows inland. The Tempisque River flows into the bottom of the gulf, while the Grande de Tárcoles River flows into the most open part to the ocean.

Península of Nicoya

Aside from the many famous beaches and mangroves, the Nicoya Peninsula is full of natural beauty and just as rich in biodiversity. Dominated by mountainous terrain, Nicoya possesses a volcanic landscape surrounded by dry and humid tropical forest with a rich fauna.

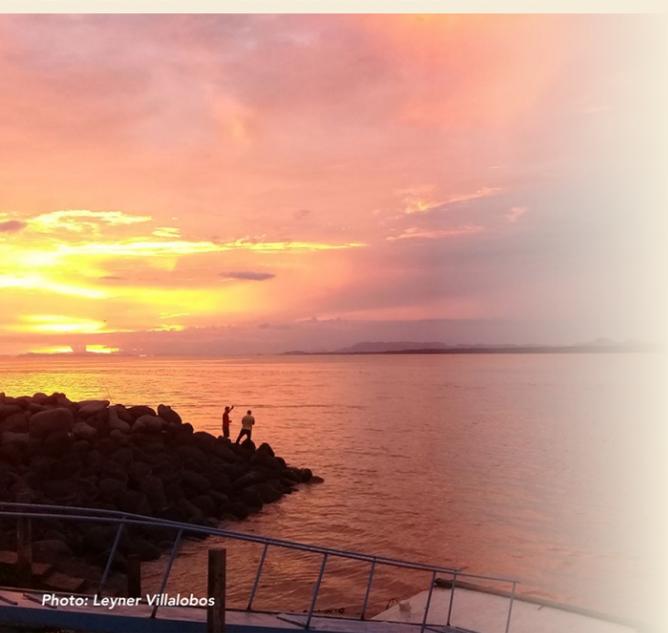
The Nicoya Peninsula, in the province of Puntarenas, with its magical natural beauty, is where the beaches and sun are a highly appreciated attraction. Here, you will find beach resorts in Naranjo, Paquera, Tambor, Montezuma, Cabuya and Mal País.

A very particular marine spectacle can be observed on Montezuma beach, where countless pools are formed at low tide where snails, crabs, sea urchins and multicolored fish can be found. Playa Cabuya, with geographical characteristics that allow the existence of varied fauna and marine life, presents similar attractions. There are different rocky platforms in which extensive and warm deposits of white sand are produced. An attractive mangrove swamp is found at both ends of Playa Tambor, which serves as a refuge for innumerable species of birds. Access to these beaches is by ferry, a service that connects Puntarenas with the towns of Playa Naranjo or Paquera. There is also a cabotage service offered by small community cooperatives.

City of Puntarenas

In the center of the city of Puntarenas, head of the central canton, and on the peninsula, there are hotels for all tastes, discos, bars, game rooms and restaurants that guarantee a pleasant stay for national and foreign tourists.

The city of Puntarenas has many attractions, among which the Paseo de los Turistas stands out, a boulevard where various types of shops are located, mainly for tourism. The beaches located in its surroundings are famous for their natural beauty. For example, the beaches of Doña Ana, Caldera, Punta Leona, Herradura, Jacó and Hermosa are located there.





Montes de Oro and Esparza

But don't think that this is where it all ends, we also have the higher area of Miramar de Montes de Oro, with spectacular viewpoints, adventure sports and birdwatching spots. To complete the tour, visit Espíritu Santo de Esparza. In 1574, the first settlement in the city of Espíritu Santo (5 km from present-day Esparza) was founded in the old Coyoche valley, between the Barranca and Jesús María rivers, near the current town of Artieda.

There the neighbors built a first chapel, and soon after the convent of San Lorenzo. In 1576 the chapel was erected as a parish, dedicated to Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria. Esparza has a lot to offer.

Lepanto

Lepanto is the fourth district of the canton of Puntarenas, province of Puntarenas, Costa Rica. The town is located at an altitude of only 6 meters above sea level on the Nicoya Peninsula. Its zip code is 60104.

A pier and some mangrove outings to the waters of the Gulf of Nicoya allow the locals to base their economy on fishing and have access to various points of the gulf such as Isla Venado, Isla Caballo, Isla de Chira, Punta Morales, Colorado de Abangares, Puntarenas city, among others.

Protected areas

This is also a notable tourist area thanks to its beaches, resorts and protected areas of flora and fauna, such as the San Lucas Island National Park, Peñas Blancas National Wildlife Refuge, Isla Pájaros Biological Reserve, Montes de Oro Protected Zone, Tivives Protected Zone, Negritos Islands Biological Reserve, Guayabo Island Biological Reserve, Cabo Blanco Absolute Natural Reserve, Nicolás Wessberg Absolute Nature Reserve, Nicoya Peninsula Protected Zone, La Ensenada Mixed National Wildlife Refuge, Romelia Mixed National Wildlife Refuge, Curú Mixed National Wildlife Refuge, La Ceiba Private National Wildlife Refuge, Karen Mogensen Fischer Private National Wildlife Refuge, Isla Tortuga Private Nature Reserve, and Punta Coral Private Nature Reserve.

Islands

It is a gulf with numerous islands, including Chira, Venado, Caballo, San Lucas, Tortuga, Cedros, Bejuco, Pan de Azúcar and Negritos, to mention a few, with beaches for all tastes, artisanal and sustainable fishing, different water sports, mangroves and different types of birds.

San Lucas Island

Isla San Lucas National Park is an island located off the Pacific coast of Costa Rica, in the Gulf of Nicoya. It belongs to the first district of the central canton of Puntarenas.

The island is located approximately 8 kilometers from Puntarenas, the nearest city. It has an area of 500 hectares (5 km²). The protected area of the national park also includes the marine zones around the island.

San Lucas is known for its old prison, which operated between 1873 and 1991. After its closure, a wildlife refuge was established, which was later declared a national park. The old prison facilities today are a historic center.

San Lucas Island has served as the setting for several literary works. This island is the setting for the novel *La isla de los hombres solos* by José León Sánchez, who spent several years in prison there. In the story "La ventana" by Carlos Salazar Herrera, the co-protagonist returns home from this island.

Ports

Two of the main ports of Costa Rica are located on its coasts, those of Puntarenas and Caldera, landing points for fish catches and shipment of their agricultural products and merchandise.

Culture

In general, Puntarenas and the Gulf Islands have a rich cultural diversity: troupes, music, rhythms, theater, poetry, singing, architectural and historical heritage, gastronomy, adventure, sun, beach and sports, so prepare your luggage



Photo: Pablo Novoa





because Puntarenas and the islands are waiting for you for several days.

This spectacular area is very close to the Central Valley, just 120 kms from the capital.

Services

The area offers quality tourist services, with hotels ranging from one to five stars, some of which specialize in water sports such as diving and fishing. There are also rural tourism ventures (lodging, thematic activities, artisanal fishing, Costa Rican gastronomy), most of which are run by families or community organizations. The area also has an excellent offer of sodas, or typical small eateries, and restaurants for all tastes, travel agencies, car rentals, tour guides, land and water carriers, which will provide you with a very special and personalized tourist experience.

Access

Access to the region is easy thanks to the modern country and public transportation services. Almost all destinations are accessible by bus, and boats are available to transport visitors from the mainland.

Ferries

If you are planning to travel to Montezuma, Santa Teresa, Malpais and other nearby places, here is all you need to know about taking the ferry. If you want to go sightseeing to Playa Naranjo or travel to Samara and Nicoya, this is the route you have to take.



Cruise Ships



What is now the Puntarenas Cruise Dock was built in 1910 for the export of coffee and railroad services. In 1996, improvements were made to handle the massive arrival of cruise ships and tourism in general, and a new pier was established with a length of 533.44 meters, with an average of 78 to 85 cruise ships arriving at the terminal each season.

Puntarenas pier has a total length of 643.65 meters, which is divided into an access bridge (201 mts), a transition bridge (171 mts) and a berthing bridge (181.5 mts).

They can dock up to two cruise ships of up to 300 meters in length each. Each post has 10 docking defenses and 14 bitts for mooring the boats.

Currently, the pier of Puntarenas is an architectural heritage of the city of Puntarenas and is a docking site for cruise ships visiting Costa Rica. It has the capacity to receive cruise ships of up to 300 meters in length and has an average draft of 10.5 meters.

Today, it is attractive to have the opportunity to see the big cruise ships, which more than ships, look like floating cities, framed within the Gulf of Nicoya. Savor a delicious coconut water while observing the majesty of the cruise ships from a kiosk at Paseo Cortés.

The Puntarenas cruise pier is one of the main cruise ship docks on the Pacific coast of Costa Rica.



Cultural Heritage

- Handicrafts.** In Puntarenas, handicrafts are of great cultural, environmental and tourist value, since many handicraft products are made from wood, seeds tossed by the sea, coconut shells and even fish scales.
- Mora & Cañas Park** Historic site built in memory of our heroes, former President Juan Mora Porras and General José María Cañas, who led the 1856 - 1857 Campaign against the filibusters under the command of William Walker. [Read more](#)
- Music-singing-poetry-theater** The cultural activities offered by Puntarenas are very diverse, from local singers, popular dances, presentations of local poets and theater, an activity deeply rooted in the community for several years now. [Read more](#)
- Groups of Dances and Comparsas, or troupes.** Because dance is one of the characteristics that distinguishes the porteño, different groups of dances can be found, such as typical, popular and the most representative, the comparsas porteñas, known for their flavor and rhythm.
- Cultural festivities.** During the year, different cultural activities are organized in Puntarenas and islands, such as the La Perla Brilla International Festival, the International Comedy Festival, the Boyeros del Pacífico Festival, September Month of Puntareñidad and the La Chucheca de Oro National Theater Festival, among others. [Read more](#)
- Gastronomy.** Seafood products are the basis of Puntarenas gastronomy, however, since Puntarenas is a port, you can enjoy dishes from other cultures. In one day you can enjoy a delicious fried fish, oriental food and at sunset, an exquisite "vigorón porteño". [Read more](#)
- Festivities of the Virgin of the Sea.** Since 1914, in the first fortnight of July of each year, thanks to Presbyter José Daniel Carmona, priest of Puntarenas at that time, the procession of the Virgin of the Sea (Virgen del Carmen, patron saint of sailors) is celebrated. The procession consists of a boat ride through the estuary of Puntarenas and part of the Gulf of Nicoya, thanking the Virgin for her protection while sailing. It is a tradition that has been celebrated for 108 years.
- Hiking.** Discover the cultural and historical richness of the city of Puntarenas, through walks with Costa Rican flavor, visit heritage buildings, emblematic places and local gastronomy. [Read more](#)



Adventure Activities:

- Flora and fauna observation.** The public protected areas of the Tempisque and Central Pacific conservation areas, as well as the private nature reserves, offer an attractive experience with the diversity of nature.
 - Bird, dolphin, humpback whale and turtle watching** (seasonal). [Read more.](#)
 - Sun, beach and sunsets.** Along the Nicoya Peninsula and Gulf of Nicoya, we find several of the most beautiful beaches in Costa Rica, offering dreamlike sunsets. [Read more.](#)
 - Day and night hikes.** The hikes are part of a very important activity carried out for the observation of natural and cultural attractions.
 - Historical walks.** Discover the cultural and historical richness of the city of Puntarenas, through walks with Costa Rican flavor, visit heritage buildings, emblematic places and local gastronomy. [Read more](#)
 - Tour of the estuary and mangroves of Puntarenas.** The tranquility of the waters of the Puntarenas estuary will make your kayak or boat tour unforgettable. [Read more](#)
 - Bioluminescence tour.** An interesting and dazzling natural phenomenon that can be observed on some beaches of the Gulf of Nicoya. [Read more](#)
 - Photography.** Photography is one of the activities that stand out for the varied cultural, archaeological and scenic options, as well as the richness of the flora and fauna and others.
 - Thematic activities.** Make the most of the themed activities that include adventure parks, ecological parks, with access to water activities, zip lines, hanging bridges, trails, slides, ocean activities, native and exotic animal sanctuaries. [Read more](#)
 - Night life.** There is an important variety of restaurants, bars and hotels that provide nightlife entertainment for visitors.
 - Rural tourism.** Enjoy the customs and activities of the rural areas of our country, visiting the different rural sectors located in our destination. [Read more.](#)
- ### Adventure Activities
- Diving and snorkeling.** Enjoy the underwater world that the Gulf of Nicoya offers. [Read more.](#)
 - Adventure:** Experience the adrenaline of kitesurfing, zip lining, canyoning, rappelling, horseback riding, hiking, quad biking, mountain biking, kayaking, canoeing, rafting, surfing, stand up paddle boarding, jet skiing, and more. [Read more.](#)
 - Sport fishing.** In the Gulf of Nicoya, sport and artisanal fishing are attractive options for those who enjoy it.

Check the following links and you will find information about companies in the area registered by

EMERGENCIES 9-1-1

- Hotels
- Car Rental
- Restaurants
- Travel Agencies
- Directory of certificate guides
- Transportation
- Traveler Tips

Tourist Information

visitcostarica.com

visitcostarica.com/es/costa-rica

Architectural Heritage

- 1 Old prison - San Lucas Island**
[More information here](#)
- 2 Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Temple**
[More information here](#)
- 3 Mora y Cañas Park**
[More information here](#)
- 4 Port Authority**
[More information here](#)

Wellness Tourism

- Spas.** A day at one of the different spas that offer a variety of treatments. Enjoy a relaxing massage, exfoliations, masks and full body mud baths, a jacuzzi and thermal sauna. [Read more.](#)
- Pilates-Yoga.** Learn about the yoga initiative known as "meditation done right."

Tourist and cultural activities

FEBRUARY	
	<p>Summer Concert (organized by CATUP)</p> <p>Last week</p> <p>2</p> <p>Carnivals of Puntarenas. You can enjoy a wide range of gastronomy, music, dancing, fireworks, parades, fishing tournaments and beach volleyball.</p> <p>Virgin of Candelaria</p>
MARCH	
	<p>International Comedy Festival Abelardo Lobo Park, Tourist Walkway</p> <p>After Easter</p> <p>National Fruit Fair. Orotina. Orotina</p>
APRIL	
	<p>Island Trail Gulf Islands. Carried out by the Tourism Promotion Board of the city of Puntarenas and the Municipality of Puntarenas.</p> <p>Entre el 10 y el 15</p> <p>Chira Island is dressed in yellow. Every year after the first rains that announce the transition from the dry season to the rainy season, the flowering of the yellow poui or cortesa begins. Event that occurs every year 7 days after the first rains and lasts 3 days.</p>
MAY	
	<p>Sol y Arena Beach Run Puntarenas Beach</p>
JULY	
	<p>13-16</p> <p>Virgin of the Sea Festival. Puntarenas Downtown The Catholic Church of Puntarenas, organizes a parade along the estuary on the same day (July 16) and the following Sunday parade of boats from the Tourist Pier to the Muelle Grande (Port Authority).</p> <p>First Sunday</p> <p>National Fisherman's Day Tribute to the country's fishing sector.</p>
AUGUST	
	<p>24</p> <p>National Parks Day</p>

SEPTEMBER	
	<p>Month of Puntareñidad</p> <p>01</p> <p>Commemoration of the Heroes Mora & Caña. Mora and Cañas Park, Puntarenas The House of Culture of Puntarenas hoists the flags of Central America and Puntarenas. The activities of the month of September are organized by the Civic Commission of the Municipality of Puntarenas and the Ministry of Public Education.</p> <p>13-14-15</p> <p>Remembrance of the Angostura tragedy at the Parque de la vuelta de Chacarita. September 14 lantern parade, leaving from Victoria Park. Arrival of the Torch at Victoria Park. September 15 parade in celebration of Independence Day (leaves from San Rafael Clinic to Abelardo Lobo Park)</p>
OCTOBER	
	<p>Nautical Festival. Gulf of Nicoya</p> <p>Folklore, Cultural Heritage, Sea and Land Festival of the House of Culture of Puntarenas.</p>
NOVEMBER	
	<p>15-18</p> <p>La Chucheca de Oro National Theater Festival (House of Culture) Usually held at the House of Culture in Puntarenas.</p>
DECEMBER	
	<p>La Perla Brilla International Festival. Paseo de Los Turistas.</p> <p>Month of Esparzaneidad. For one more year of the canton.</p>



“Eat delicious, eat healthy, eat fish”, the phrase that tells us that the ideal place to taste dishes based on different marine species is Puntarenas. Being located in front of the Pacific Ocean, gives that added value to the experience of visiting the province.

Sea Bass ceviche

One of the most loved dishes by tourists and locals, its main ingredient is fish, although the best is sea bass, which has a firm meat. Currently, you can get a good ceviche in different restaurants in the area, the only thing that varies is the accompaniment, although the traditional one is the parboiled green plantain, which compliments the ceviche. In addition, fishermen do their work under the concept of responsible fishing.



BEBIDA DE RESBALADERA

Sumamente refrescante para contrarrestar el clásico calor de la zona, la resbaladera, es una bebida de tradición en la zona. Se prepara con arroz licuado acompañado de canela, nuez moscada, azúcar al gusto, hielo y leche, nutritiva y a la vez liviana, lo que ha generado que sea popular y sea vendida en diferentes sodas de Puntarenas.



Resbaladera (Beverage)

An extremely refreshing beverage to counteract the classic heat of the area, the resbaladera is a traditional drink in the area. It is prepared with liquefied rice, spiced with cinnamon, nutmeg, sugar to taste, ice and milk. This drink is nutritious, yet light, which has made it popular and be found in different sodas in Puntarenas.



Fish in sweet and sour sauce

The first Chinese arrived in Puntarenas and Lepanto at the end of the 19th century, and once established, their contribution to the area has been of great benefit. Their entrepreneurial spirit led them to open restaurants offering Chinese food, something new and different for the Puntarenas area. Nowadays, you can enjoy a good dish in one of the Chinese restaurants, such as chop suey and wantan with shrimp or meat. A unique dish is the fish in sweet and sour sauce, which will have you licking your fingers. Come to Puntarenas and enjoy Chinese food, you will not regret it.



VIGORÓN

One of the emblematic dishes of the Puntarenas area, you can find it all along the Paseo de los Turistas. It is prepared with chopped cabbage, yucca, rind and/or meat chicharrones, seasoned with a delicious chimichurri (chopped tomato, with coriander, onion, lemon and salt). Its main characteristic is that it is served on one or two beach almond tree leaves.



CHURCHILL

Since the 1940s, the dessert known as Churchill became popular in the Paseo de los Turistas in the city of Puntarenas. According to history, the name is due to the merchant Joaquín Aguilar Esquivel, who during those years used to go to the Paseo de los Turistas to buy a slushy, but not just any slushy, he asked for it with ice cream and other ingredients.

The merchants, seeing the peculiar slushy and Joaquin's resemblance to the British politician William Churchill, decided to call him Churchill.

Today, the Churchill is an icon of Puntarenas gastronomy, making it a tradition to visit Puntarenas to eat a Churchill in the kiosks of the Paseo de los Turistas.



Rice with SHRIMP

This is the best known and most consumed rice by visitors to the area. The shrimp are peeled, washed and then cooked, and the sauce is prepared with tomatoes and spices. Once cooked, the shrimp are mixed with the sauce and everything is mixed with the cooked rice. Apart from rice with shrimp, there are other dishes such as squid with rice, pianguas with rice, fish with rice, tuna with rice, mussels with rice, seafood with rice and others that you can enjoy. Come and enjoy a tasty rice dish with the seafood of your choice.



Patacones

A patacon is a patty of fried plantain, made to accompany various types of food or to be eaten alone. Since green plantains are easily acquired, the patacon can be enjoyed throughout the area.



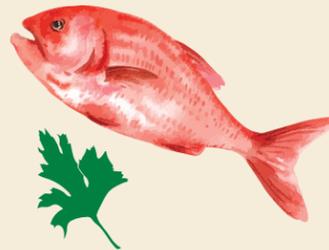
Mariscada

A mariscada is a mixture of various seafood products with rice and its preparation consists of cooking well chopped squid, octopus head, shrimp, clams. After cooking, cilantro, onion, garlic, celery, green beans, carrot, chili, oregano, achiote, and salt to taste are added. The white rice is prepared and then stirred with the previously prepared seafood.



Fried fish

One of the best known and most consumed dishes in the area of Puntarenas, the islands and the peninsula, is fried fish. Select a medium sized fish, to be fried in such a way that it can be eaten from tail to head. Enjoy each piece of fried fish meat, until only the skeleton is left, clean. Important, so that you can tell your friends that you ate a tasty traditional fried fish, make sure that the fish accompaniment is parboiled green plantains. The perfect combination.



SOUPS

A wide variety of soups are consumed in the area, although many people feel that the heat does not invite people to eating soup. But, soup is part of everyday meals, you can taste shrimp soup, seafood soup, tuna soup, fish soup and even the famous "olla de carne", which although not made with seafood is a popular dish in the area.



GREEN PAPAYA PICADILLO

The general idea is that the papaya fruit should be eaten ripe, however in the area of Puntarenas and surroundings, it is common to find green papaya picadillo at the local sodas or restaurants. It is simple and tasty. With a pointed knife, grooves are made in the peel to bleed the milky white liquid. Let it rest and then cut it into small squares. Prepare the pot with oil and add the spices of your choice, then you can add chorizo or ground beef and finally the green papaya, mix until all the ingredients are ready. It is served with tortillas or as part of a casado.



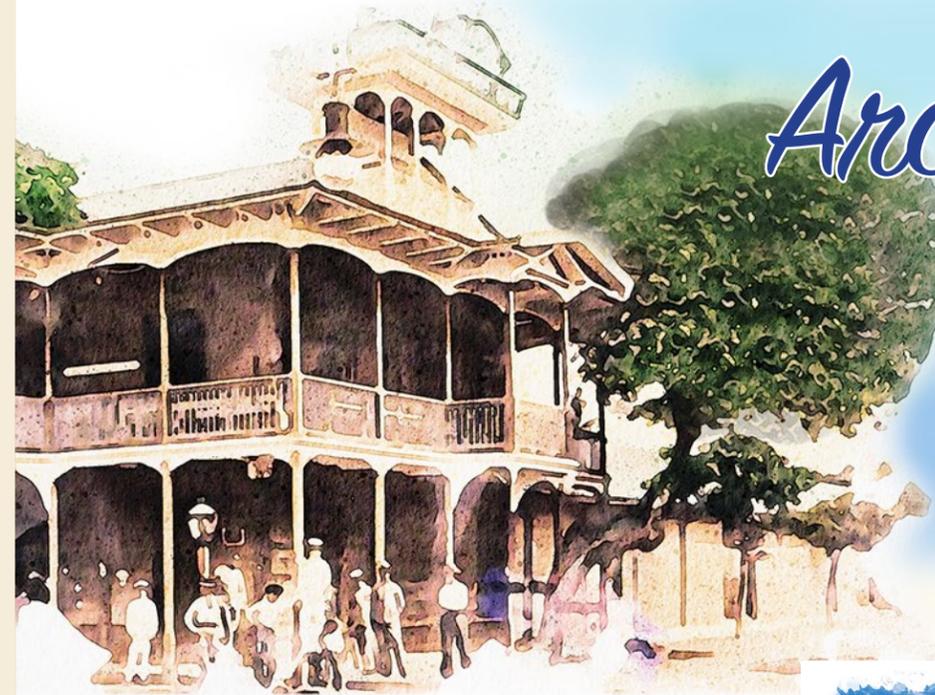
MOLLUSKS

The Gulf of Nicoya Islands have a rich diet based on marine products including clams, mussels and oysters, among others. The extraction of these products is not an easy task, as the islanders must go deep into the mangroves to search, knee-deep in mud, for the pianguas and other shellfish. This activity requires skill and experience, as well as adequate tools for harvesting. Once the shellfish have been harvested, they are washed with seawater and broken to extract their meat.



[See recipe book here](#)

Architectural heritage of Puntarenas and its Islands



Former Port Authority

Location: Next to the Cruise dock, Paseo de los Turistas.

Since 1930, the Port Authority has been the tireless watchman of each vessel that arrives in Puntarenas. Today, it remains upright and elegant receiving the cruise passengers that come to port.

It also serves as a resting place for those who have walked through the city under the hot sun and are on their way back to their cruise ship. Its octagonal shape gives it a different air in relation to other buildings in the area. While in Puntarenas, visit the famous Port Authority and take a picture next to the building, it will be a nice souvenir.

For many years the cruise dock was vital for the country's economy, being the first port of importance for imports and exports on the Pacific coast. The building maintains its original characteristics with the



exception of the southwest side, which underwent a remodeling.

The building dates back to the early 1930s and its original function was to serve as an inspection and control point for the entry and exit of merchandise.

Means of access:
Public transportation, personal vehicle.

Old prison - San Lucas Island

History and nature complement each other in San Lucas Island National Park, a historic site that housed a prison that operated for more than 100 years, a scenario that inspired the acclaimed Costa Rican writer José León Sánchez to write the famous novel *La Isla de los Hombres Solos*. In addition, you will be able to observe the entire prison structure, a silent witness of inhumane punishments in its time, and to finish the tour, take a swim in the sea at one of the island's beaches.

It was established in 1873, by then President Tomás Guardia. This prison is a group of buildings constructed in reinforced concrete, possibly in the 1930s. The island has an area of approximately 500 hectares and is about 15 km from the port of Puntarenas.



This prison, closed in 1991, functioned for over 100 years, between 1873 and 1991, now is a National Park.



Means of access: Public transportation, personal vehicle, via route 27. In Puntarenas, contact one of the tour operators that operate the San Lucas Island National Park.

Fait House

Location: north side of Parque Victoria..

It was built by Mr. Alberto Fait Rocchi between 1924 and 1925, during the second administration of President Ricardo Jiménez.

The building was personally designed and built by Mr. Alberto Fait. The architecture is of Victorian influence, built in reinforced concrete, metal and wood, making it not entirely Victorian. He copied the design of the houses he saw in the Central American Atlantic zone, when he worked in Bluefields, Nicaragua. Don Alberto's craftsmanship led him to personally forge and install each and every one of the decorative iron pieces on the second floor of the house.



Means of access: route 27, either by public bus or in a personal vehicle.

Barrio El Carmen School

Location: 1st Avenue, between 11th and 13th Streets, Barrio El Carmen.

The old part of the school in Barrio El Carmen, is a large wooden house that was built between 1941 and 1943. It is a U-shaped wooden building with a central patio. The main facade has a portico at the entrance, where there are two small windows with semicircular arches and above them ventilation grilles in the same style. Internally, all the structures of the eighteen classrooms are made of wood (Hernández, 1990).



Means of access: route 27, either by public bus or in a personal vehicle..

Old Municipal Slaughterhouse building

Location: Central Avenue, 10th Street

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the old municipal slaughterhouse building was the main slaughterhouse in the Puntarenas area, serving Guanacaste, Esparza and Montes de Oro, with a penning capacity of about 30 cattle. This brick building, with its attractive facade, does not go unnoticed by visitors to Puntarenas, take your time and admire the building of the old slaughterhouse, you will love it.

Administered by the municipality, this brick building from the beginning of the 20th century, worked with cattle brought mainly from Guanacaste, Esparza and Miramar, for local consumption.



Means of access: Route 27, either by public bus or in a personal vehicle.

Municipal Market

Ubicación: Avenida Central, calle 10^a

Building of more than 100 years (1907), located in the center of the city of Puntarenas, it is by tradition the place to buy fruits and vegetables but mainly seafood. In addition, it has several food outlets that include ceviches and others. Take a tour to the Municipal Market, silent witness to the development of the city of Puntarenas.

It was built in 1907, designed by Mr. Enrique McAdam and was located on Calle del Comercio, next to the pier that overlooks the estuary, a referential landmark of great importance for the inhabitants of the city. In its construction, the French bahareque was used as a construction technique. It began to be used in our country, in the second half



of the 19th century and has as a particularity: the use of wooden and cane structures covered with raw mud.

 **Means of access:** route 27, either by public bus or in a personal vehicle.

Mora y Cañas Park

Ubicación: 1° & 3° Avenue, 9° & 11° St.

If it is about history, the Mora y Cañas Park is one of the places of interest to visit and learn about the war against the filibusters, in the years 1856 - 1857, which moved the entire country to defend itself from the tyranny of the filibusters, led by former president Juan Rafael Mora and General José María Cañas. The park is outdoors and you can enjoy walking around it.

The Mora y Cañas park is a point of great importance for the country and especially for the province of Puntarenas, since it has a great historical review because it was in this place where the characters Juan Rafael Mora Porras and José María Cañas were shot. Central figures during the war against the filibusters. Both of them had established very close ties with Puntarenas, because Don Juanito,



one of the most important coffee growers of his time, owned a business firm in this port.

 **Means of access:** route 27, either by public bus or in a personal vehicle.

Sagrado Corazón de Jesús Catholic Temple

Location: Central Ave, 5° y 7° St.

By standing in front of the temple's façade, many visitors feel disoriented and rightly so, since it faces east and not west, as established by the Catholic religion. Due to the above, and taking into account that it is a Gothic-style building with a stone base, with gardens that invite you to take a break to protect yourself from the sun, the Catholic Temple of the Sacred Heart of Jesus is one of the attractions to visit in the city of Puntarenas.

Construction began on the gothic-style building in 1902, finishing its basic stone structure in 1905. Some stonemasons from Cartago were hired to teach the trade to the locals. A pit in Esparza called



“Los Guapinoles” was used as a quarry, later using another discovered in Barranca. In the 1950-1960 decades it was completed and reconstruction work was carried out on some parts of the temple.

 **Medios de acceso:** A través de la ruta 27, ya sea en servicio público de bus o en vehículo propio.

Cedral Temple

Built between 1927 and 1937, it is the classic building of religious architecture in the rural area of the country, wood and external sheet metal linings, which due to its scale, shape and materials have great relevance within the environment, prevailing the conjunction of neoclassical elements. and Victorians, which highlights the religious architecture of the country that represents the values of a rural temple of the early twentieth century.

An interesting place to visit, with the added value that it is located in a rural environment, in Montes de Oro.

Reference:
Maritza Cartín Estrada. Blog: Mi Costa Rica de Antaño. June, 2022.

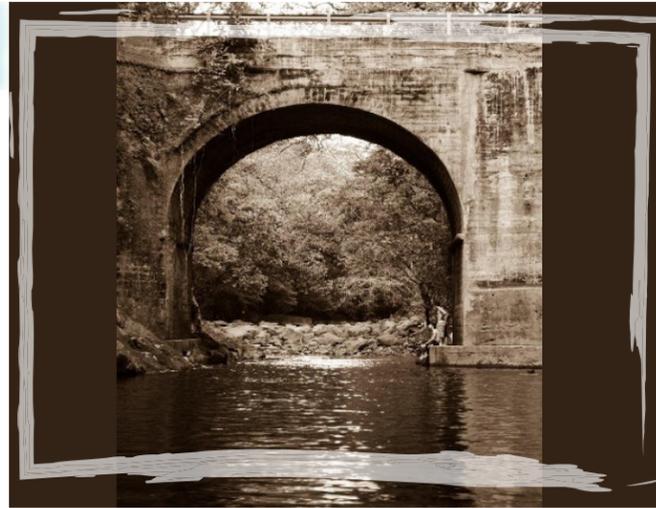


 **Means of access:** route 27, either by public bus or in a personal vehicle.

Damas Bridge

Location: 1st avenue and 1st street. On the Jesús María River, it serves as a cantonal and provincial boundary.

Built in carved stone in the middle of the 19th century, it was declared a heritage monument of historical architectural interest in 1975, through Executive Decree No. 4990-C, June 23, 1975. It was the first Historical Architectural Monument to be decreed as such in the canton of Esparza. Its river is of great beauty and hosts pools where you can enjoy its warm waters.

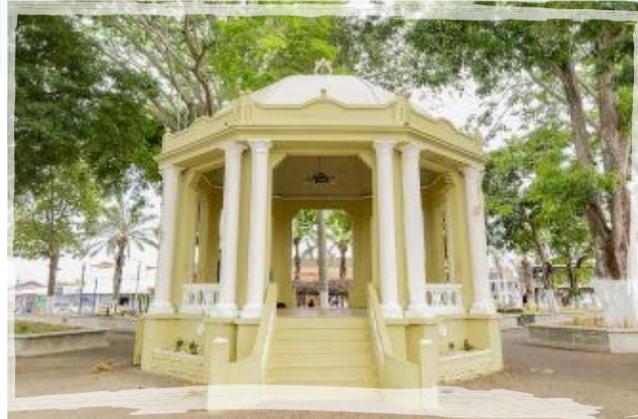


Pérez Park

Location: Center of the first district, Espíritu Santo

Declared of Historical Architectural interest, through Executive Decree No. 21626-C, published in La Gaceta No. 213 of November 5, 1992, Perez Park honors the memory of Don Ignacio Perez Zamora, one of the members of the first Municipality of Esparza.

It is a public space that dates back to colonial times, when it was a market place until the end of the 19th century. This site has been the center of the most relevant political, economic and social activities of this ancient community.



San José Catholic Temple

Location: Cedral, La Union, Montes De Oro

Built between 1927 and 1937, it is a classic construction of religious architecture in the rural area of the country, with wood and external sheet metal. Its shape and materials are of great relevance in the area, where the combination of neoclassical and Victorian elements prevail. It highlights religious architecture of the country, representing the values of a rural temple from the beginning of the 20th century.



Cambalache and Miraflores Tunnels- Esparza

Declared a Heritage of Historic Architectural Interest, through Decree No. 24083-C and No. 24087-C, of February 1995.

The Cambalache tunnel was built with stone brought from the areas near the site where they are located. The Miraflores tunnel is a stone construction, at least in its first 20 meters (at both ends), then it continues through the live rock. The stone blocks are superimposed on each other.



San José Chapel

Location: Pilas de Canjel, Lepanto

Heritage building, built in the 1940s, in wood, as a structural and lining material, the typology of windows, the use of the plinth and the pending fountain on the roof. The spire towers and the symbol of the rising sun stand out as particular elements in its architecture.

In addition to offering religious services, it is a symbol of the town's unity and part of the living history of the place, making it its most representative landmark.



House of Culture

Location: Avenue 0, 5th Street

It has two stages of construction, the older one of the Comandancia de Plaza, from the end of the 19th century, and the other of the prison built in 1913.

It presents a design of neocolonial influence with slightly ogival arched windows. In 1990, under the direction of architect Leonardo Silva was transformed into a historical marine museum with offices, a temporary exhibition hall and an auditorium.

It was declared a historical architectural heritage site on May 16, 1989.



El Puerto becomes an accessible tourist destination

Puntarenas beach, one of the most popular beaches in the country, offers an accessible space for all people to enjoy on equal terms. It offers 60 meters of retractable walkways built with 100% recycled plastic wood and an amphibious chair.

The operation offers easy access to the sea. The walkways form an accessible path for all people and the amphibious chair is a useful accessory for people with disabilities to enter and exit the sea safely.

the Puntarenas Cantonal Committee of Sports and Recreation, these accessible implements were created with the social-environmental responsibility project DONATAPA.

The walkways are modular and can cover any surface, are highly resistant and have a long service life. Each piece weighs 74 kilos and is 1.5 x 3 meters, and a total of 20 make up the 60 meters.

The Puntarenas Sports and Recreation Committee is responsible for the maintenance and safeguarding of the equipment, which is offered every weekend, on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm for the enjoyment of tourists.

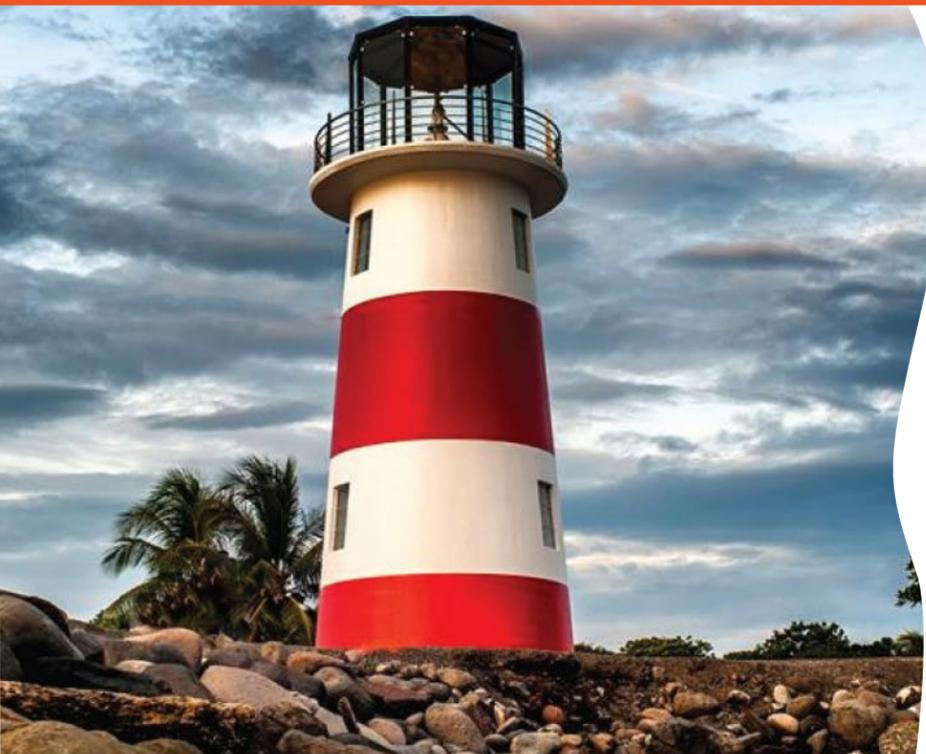
The amphibious chair supports a capacity of up to 90 kg and has a service life of more than 100 years. In addition, it comes with stainless steel screws, special tarps for brackish water, does not absorb humidity, weighs 26 kilos and is also made of recycled plastic. It is a national design created by the Costa Rican Network of Accessible Tourism.

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HIKES AROUND

Puntarenas

The colonial period

The areas near the port of Puntarenas have historical relevance since, during the process of conquest (1502-1563), they served as a key element in the arrival of the conquistadors and the founding of the first settlements. Gil González Dávila in 1522 visited the indigenous seat of Chomes; Francisco Fernández de Córdoba in 1524 founded the Villa de Bruselas in the area of Orotina and Juan de Caballón in 1561 established the Port of Landecho in the cove of Tivives.

Puntarenas is not mentioned as a port until the second half of the 18th century, when the Angostura filling was completed, which joined the islet to the mainland, absorbing trade from the Gulf of Nicoya and displacing the old ports of Landecho, Caldera, Barranca and El Palmar.

Without official recognition it was a minor port and until 1772 it was used for trade and shipping in the Pacific. By 1797 it already had a customs office.

The 19th century and the consolidation of the port

The Independence of 1821, and the boom in coffee from 1830 on, helped consolidate Puntarenas as the most important port of the emerging Republic, since the "golden grain" was exported to Chile and Great Britain from here.

The Pacific route allowed the small town of Puntarenas to strengthen the settlement process. Such was its relevance that, in 1840, it was decided to transfer the functions of the port of Caldera to Puntarenas.

In 1840, Braulio Carrillo stimulated settlement near the port and in 1845 the construction of a wooden chapel, dedicated to San Antonio de Padua, was authorized.

In 1852, the government of Juan Rafael Mora Porras ordered the construction of the hospital named San Rafael. The title of city was granted on September 17, 1858, due to the increase of its population and commercial activity.

The trade was concentrated on the main street, extended along the estuary (today Avenida del Comercio), with great movement of carts from

the center of the country to the port, trade by cabotage. They brought coffee and other local products from the center and imported Chinese salt and rice from Puntarenas. The great activity warranted the construction of a lighthouse "to avoid problems for the ships."

In 1872, the population of Puntarenas had grown and an iron dock was built by businessman Adolfo Knöhr (considered as the beginning of the urban development of the city of Puntarenas).

In 1904, the electricity was installed and in 1907 the construction of the market and slaughterhouse buildings was put out to bid. In 1913, piped water service was inaugurated in the city.

Tourism is an important source of employment and economic activity for the province. Visitors flock to the long, wide beach of Puntarenas during the Costa Rican "summer" (November - April). Many international tourists arrive on cruise ships and others pass through Puntarenas on their way to resorts and other destinations on the Peninsula of Nicoya.

HIKES AROUND

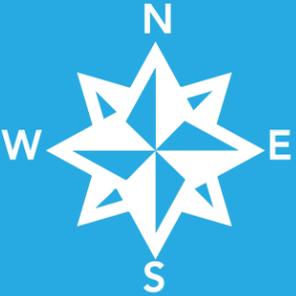
Puntarenas

Tourist Information	Beach	Bank
Cruise Pier	Dolphin Watching	Post Office
Ferry	Supermarket	Immigration
Buses stop	Pharmacy	Police



Walk 1

Paseo de los Turistas
2.3 km / 1.5 miles



- WALK 1**
1. Pacific Marine Park
 2. Dock Monument
 3. Dock
 4. Port Authority
 5. National Technical University
 6. The Murals
 7. San Rafael Clinic
 8. Manuel Burgos Monument
 9. Paseo de los Turistas
 10. The Malecones (tide breakers)

- WALK 2**
- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Ferry Terminal | 8. Municipal Palace |
| 2. Tourist Dock | 9. José Martí High School |
| 3. Rosalia Palacios Monument | 10. Jose Marti Monument |
| 4. "Lito Perez" Stadium | 11. Cathedral |
| 5. Mora & Cañas Park | 12. House of Culture |
| 6. Juan Rafael Mora Porras Monument | 13. Victory Park |
| 7. José Maria Cañas Monument | 14. Fait House |
| | 15. Municipal Market |



OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST:

- A. Matadero Municipal
- B. Casa Echandi
- C. Liceo Martí
- D. San Rafael Clinic
- E. Barrio el Carmen School



1

Marino del Pacífico Park



4th avenue, 10th street.

The park was inaugurated in 2002 as a socioenvironmental Project that seeks to work together with the human and environmental improvement of the coastal area. Thus, its mission is to promote, support and communicate research, education and the sustainable use of the marine biodiversity. It also serves as a recreational center. It occupies the lands where the piers and the Pacific Railroad station previously stood. The park has open air exhibits such as: reptiles, caimans, land turtles and crocodiles. It has 22 fish tanks with some 30 native species from the Gulf of Nicoya.

2

Muellero (Dock Workers)



4th avenue, 0 street

The Monument to the Muellero is dedicated to those anonymous persons that day after day have put their best efforts to promote the port development and allow goods arriving or departing the country in the most efficient way possible.

This reminds of those who since the XVIII Century have carried on their shoulders the national production.

The monument is made of bronze and is 1,72 meters (5.64 feet) tall, work of a sculptor whose last name was Brenes.

3

Puntarenas Pier

[For information go to page 43](#)

4

National Technical University



4th avenue, 1st street.

On December 31, 1860 the government arranged to install the main customs office of the south, with the objective of regulating the entry and exit of merchandise, which made use of the Puntarenas seaway.

The José Figueres Ferrer administration 1970-1974 enabled the port of Caldera and port activities in Puntarenas ended, leaving the warehouse abandoned.

During the Rodrigo Carazo Odio (1978-1982) Administration, the Colegio Universitario de Puntarenas (CUP) was established, using the former warehouse as its headquarters; with majors geared towards industrial and tourist development and the agricultural and ocean resources. In 1998, with the purpose of unifying the traditional technical education and the university education, six institutions of higher learning were merged with the Colegio Universitario de Puntarenas, and it became as Universidad Técnica Nacional.

5

Port captaincy

[For information go to page 17](#)

6

The Murals



The Project was an initiative of the Costa Rica Tourism Board and the Costa Rican Pacific Ports Institute (Instituto Costarricense de Puertos del Pacífico) and developed by the Costa Rican Muralist Association, led by the artist Jean Sagot.

The Project consists of three large murals with different designs, but maintain a thematic unity: "The rescue of the historic and architectural legacy, the biodiversity and the tourist potential of the Puntarenas province." *(Continue on next page)*



The first of the murals can now be seen in all their glory on the north wall of the Pacific Plaza, in front of the cruise liner pier: "Aquel verano" (That Summer), uses organic textures vegetables and minerals - to weave the images of a surfer that defies a wave, a colorful toucan and the legendary Puntarenas Pier.

The second mural: "Puntarenas: un mundo," the piece represents a large world map whereby a strip of land stands out that symbolizes Puntarenas. The different shades of brown, cream, and yellow make reference to an old map. Located on the side of the Universidad Técnica Nacional Building.

The south Wall of the San Rafael Health Center building houses the third mural: snails, seagulls and marine turtles; the image of the Puntarenas cathedral; beach umbrellas and an appetizing Churchill are combined in this piece.

7 San Rafael Health Center



4th avenue, 9th street

At the request of the citizens of Puntarenas the country's president, Juan Rafael Mora, accepted to have a sanatorium built. Under the authorization of the Governor of the Region, José María Cañas, it was baptized as San Rafael; it would be the first in the province and the second in Costa Rica.

The structure consists of three pavilions constructed from brick, wood, concrete and limestone. In the early Twentieth century, two more pavilions were added. It has vast green areas and perimeter corridors. In 1940, the Junta de Protección Social conceded the management of the hospital to a religious organization and today it belongs to the Caja Costarricense de Seguro Social.

8 Monument Manuel Burgos



4th avenue, 9th street

Known as a benefactor of Puntarenas during the first half of the XX century, Burgos donated a property for the construction of the San Rafael Hospital and carried out intense charitable and progressive works. In 1911, he became the President of the Charity Board. There is a bronze bust in the gardens that is 60 centimeters (2 feet) tall and was melted in the Public Works Workshops by Antonio Castiglioni.

9 Tourists Boulevard

 [For information go to page 43](#)

10 The Esplanades (Breakwaters)



In 1948, they began its construction to stop the beach washing caused by the strong waves. However, with the passing of time and the strong tides in the area, its reparation was a priority. The project was born in 2009, with the purpose of beautifying Puntarenas and giving it breakwaters that avoided marine erosion in the area called "La Punta" (the Point).

On November 26, 2010, authorities from the Costa Rica Tourism Board (ICT for its acronym in Spanish), and the Costa Rica Institute of Pacific Ports (INCOP for its acronym in Spanish), inaugurated the project that more than just supply the necessity, they sought to beautify the public areas and make a service available to tourists.

Also, the Project was comprised of an entrance to the esplanades, a basketball court and beach volleyball court; children's play area and multi-use plazas; meeting and seating area for visitors.



1 Ferry Terminal

3rd avenue, 35th street.

The Ferry terminal is a Project that emerged a few years ago in Puntarenas with the main purpose of having a maritime route that crosses the Gulf of Nicoya, with routes Puntarenas – Paquera and Puntarenas Playa Naranjo; connecting in approximately an hour and fifteen minutes, the points of sea landings, avoiding transfers and extensive land travel.

The Ferry Terminal presently, is being remodeled as part of “La Punta’s” beautification, and to cover the basic needs of the terminal that allow an orderly and safe use by the customers.



2 Tourism Pier

3rd avenue, 27th street.

Built under the Óscar Arias (1986-1990) Administration, by the Costa Rica Tourism Board (ICT), it was handed over to the Municipality of the province. It is presently being managed under concession of a private company. However, since 2007, the Municipality and the ICT have joined forces to recover it and convert it into a terminal where a tour can be taken to the different Gulf islands, mainly Tortuga Island and San Lucas Island. Also, it has been given the option so that Development Associations, Chambers of Tourism and State Institutions, can use its installations to carry out recreation activities for the city of Puntarenas. The pier consists of three boarding areas, public bathrooms, parking area and green areas.



3 Monumento Rosalía Palacios

Rosalía Palacios was born in the second half of the XIX century in the Cauca Region in Colombia. She immigrated to Costa Rica with her family to live in Puntarenas next to the San Rafael Hospital, this flourished in her a sense of love thy neighbor and a spirit of giving as a form of human solidarity with the sick. Soon the figure of the “Negra Chalia” became known in the port and many people sought her out for advice, assist women in labor, help underprivileged children and give first aid to those who needed it. As a tribute to her memory a sculpture was erected at the local of the Barrio El Carmen Association of Specific Development. The monument in her honor was elaborated in granite, sculpted by Olger Villegas, and with a height of 2.57 meters (8.4 feet).



4 Stadium “Lito” Pérez

Central avenue, 15th street

The stadium belongs to the municipality of Puntarenas and it is used by the soccer team Fist Division, the Puntarenas Soccer Club. Its capacity is for 4,105 fans.

The stadium has the name of the ex-soccer player from Puntarenas, Miguel Angel “Lito” Pérez Treacy. He was born in Puntarenas, and his sport career took off between 1930 and 1945. In 1974, years after his death, his friend and City Mayor, Lorgio Álvarez, proposed his name for the stadium.

It is commonly known as “La Olla Mágica”, a metaphor for the extremely hot conditions while playing on this field.

5 Mora y Cañas Park

[For information go to page 20](#)

6 Monument Juan Rafael Mora Porras

3rd avenue, 9th and 11th streets



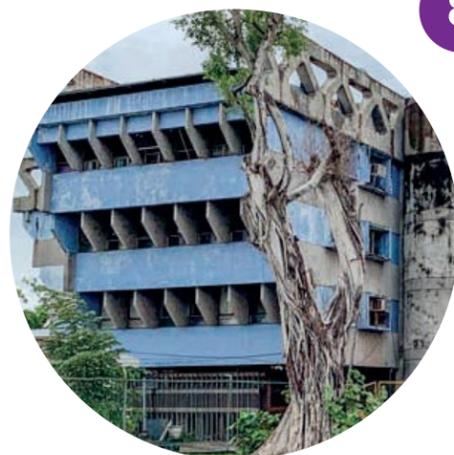
Juan Rafael Mora was born on February 8th, 1814. He was a smart businessman involved in the coffee production area. He was President of the Republic from 1849 to 1859. During his legislation, Costa Rica’s independence from Spain was recognized, the Costa Rican Diocese was opened, urban growth expanded in the Metropolitan Area and the Border Treaty between Costa Rica and Nicaragua was signed. His government participated in the National Campaign of 1856 - 1857, where the people of Costa Rica wrote the most glorious page of history for defending the national sovereignty. He was overthrown from power in 1859 and executed on September 30th, 1860 in Puntarenas, after the Battle of the Angostura. A bust in his memory was sculpted in bronze by Juan Rafael Chacón and it is 69 centimeter (2 feet) in height.



7 Monument José María Cañas

3rd avenue, 9th and 11th streets

José María Cañas was born in Suchitoto, El Salvador. At a young age, Cañas showed interest in a military career and joined the army under General Francisco Morazán. He exiled to Costa Rica after the defeat of this leader. He was the Governor of the Region of Puntarenas, during the Juan Rafael Mora Administration. As Governor, he supported many important projects such as the construction of the hospital and a lighthouse. He was known as one of the top military strategists during the National Campaign (1856-1857). In 1858, he was Costa Rica's negotiator for the border treaty with the Republic of Nicaragua. In 1859, he was overthrown and executed with Juan Rafael Mora the following year. The bust in is honor was modeled of bronze by the sculptor Juan Rafael Chacón and is 69 cm (2 feet).



8 Municipal Palace

3rd avenue, 9th street

The previous Municipal Palace, which was of wood construction burned down. The city hall occupied different locals until the government of José Figueres Ferrer (1970-1974) the new Municipal Palace building was constructed next to the Mora and Cañas Park. Designed by the architect Jorge Bertheau, using prefabricated structures, it is a fourfloor inverted cross pyramid-shape building in which on all four corners are protruding cylinder. The building was damaged during an earthquake, and had to be closed.



9 José Martí High School

0 avenue, 7th street

In the absence of a secondary school, the city demanded the government a high school. On March 23, 1942, a group of neighbors were able to establish the Delia Guevara Urbina evening high school, where it remained for 15 years to become a day school and in present the José Martí High School. It occupies three quarters of a block, with a reinforced concrete core module and extensions dating from 1960.



10 Monument José Martí

0 avenue, 7th street

Martí was born on January 28, 1853 in La Habana, Cuba. At 16, he published his first political writings, which led to the confrontation and persecution of the Spanish colonial power. In 1871, he was deported to Cadiz, Spain. In Spain, he published his book, "Presidio político en Cuba" (Political Prisoners in Cuba) and he graduated as a lawyer. He lived some years in Spain and in France, where later he decided to relocate to Veracruz, Mexico to work as a journalist. In 1878, he returned to Cuba, but was again deported to Spain. On April 11, 1895, he disembarked on Playitas, in a pro-independence revolutionary uprising; being fatally injured in the Battle of Dos Ríos. Considered as the Apostle of the Independence of Cuba, his bust is made of bronze and the author is unknown. It is found in the José Martí High School, melted in the Cuba's Civil Military Workshop in 1956.

11 Catedral

[For information go to page 21](#)

12 Culture Center

[For information go to page 23](#)



13 La Victoria park

1st avenue, 3rd street.

Its name corresponds to the tribute that the city of Puntarenas offered to the Costa Rican Army that fought during the National Campaign of 1856-1857. The city of Puntarenas and its port were vital for the passage of our military troops to Nicaragua and it was also the military base of our Navy fleet. The troops celebrated the victory in the emerging space. The park provides big open areas populated with shady trees and has a rectangular figure of about 100 meters (328 feet) long and 20 meters (66 feet) wide, according to the design of the architect Hernán Gutiérrez Brown.

14 Fait House

[For information go to page 18](#)

15 Local Market

[For information go to page 20](#)



History and Culture of

Puntarenas

The history of the city of Puntarenas, on the Pacific coast of Costa Rica, is a fundamental part of the country's patrimonial legacy, as it played a transcendental role in the economic and social development of Costa Rica due to its role as a port that linked the country with the exterior, which continues today through the tourist pier and the Port of Caldera. Puntarenas is currently the main national supplier of seafood products, as well as an important destination for national tourism.

Pre-Columbian period

During pre-Columbian times, the territory of Puntarenas belonged to the Great Nicoya, an archaeological area that occupies part of the Pacific coast of Nicaragua. Until the arrival of the Spaniards in the 16th century, there were several Chorotega chiefdoms that inhabited not only the Pacific coast but also several of the islands of the Gulf of Nicoya (Chira Island), including Corobicí, Abangares, Chomes and Orotina.

Spanish conquest

In 1522, the Spanish explorer and conqueror Gil González Dávila arrived in Nicoya. In 1524, the first Spanish settlement was built: Villa Bruselas. The first permanent settlement was Villa de Bruselas, founded by Francisco Hernández de Córdoba in 1524, near the mouth of the Grande de Tárcoles River, about five kilometers northeast of present-



day
Villa Manzanillo.

In 1556, the second church of the territory was built in Chomes. The name "Puntarenas" refers to the geomorphological process of the sand arrow formed little by little by the action of the rivers, trade winds and currents of the Barranca River that brought sand and mud.

The oldest date on which the name of Puntarenas appears is in a document from the National Archives, from February 13, 1720, mentioning the arrival of the pirate "Chipperton" to the area today known as the Gulf of Nicoya. Chipperton called it Punta Arenas in one of his documents in 1720. In the 16th century, "Puntarenas" is mentioned as a site for berths for sailing ships. Miguel Antonio de Unanué – a Panamanian merchant - was the first to use Puntarenas as a shipping point. Construction of the first customs house began in June 1797. It was in this port that a shipment of coffee, which today is one of the main export products, left for Europe for the first time.

Before the country's independence in 1821, the area was governed by Don Tomás de Acosta. Thanks to the intervention of the priest Florencio del Castillo and Tomás Acosta with the approval of the Catholic Monarchs of Spain, it was declared "Puerto Mayor" on September 21, 1814. In 1834 the port was transferred to "Caldera", but during the administration of Braulio Carrillo, six years later (1840), the port returned to Puntarenas, as a State port. Subsequently, by decree No. 2 of March 5, 1847, it was declared a free port. It was proclaimed a city on September 17, 1858, under the mandate of President Juan Rafael Mora Porras.

The Republic

The construction of the Pacific Railroad began under the administration of Rafael Iglesias and was completed in 1910. On June 7, 1909, the Constitutional Congress of the Republic enacted Law No. 56 on the municipal territorial division, giving Puntarenas the category of Province.

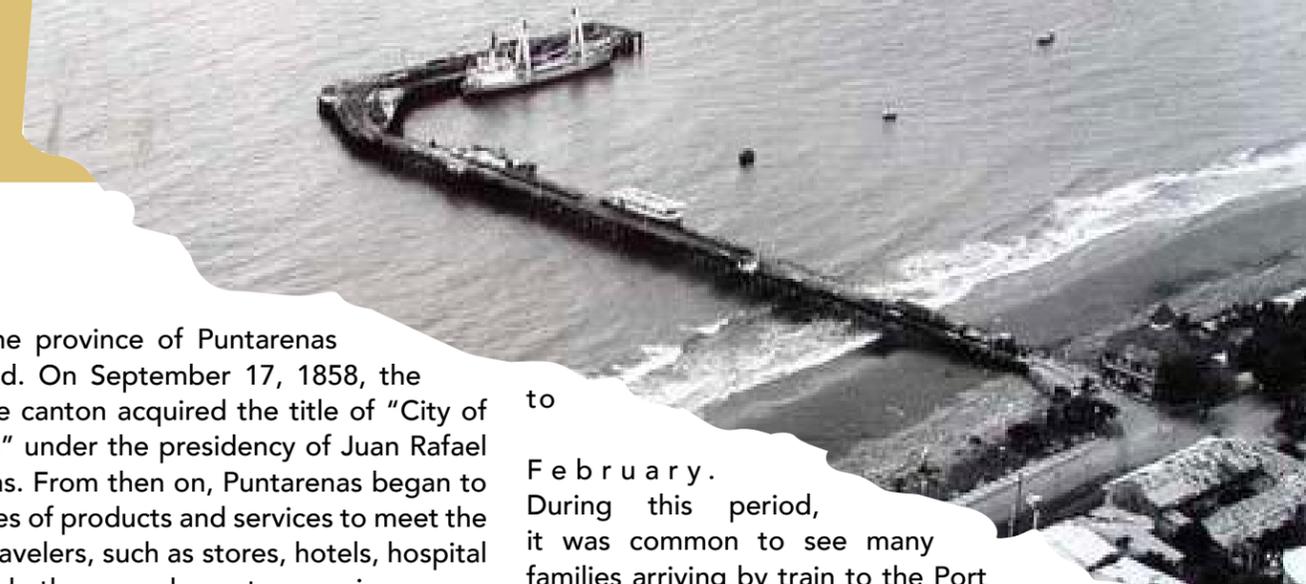
Juan Rafael Mora Porras was declared Liberator and National Hero of Costa Rica.

The Headland

The headland did not exist during the Costa Rican pre-Columbian period or during the discovery and colonization of the region. It is not in the geographical sketches of the 16th century that the historian Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo drew. Little by little it was formed by the action of the rivers, trade winds, currents of the Barranca River that brought sand and mud.

In 1838, a map by Captain Belcher, of the English Navy, included in the works of Felipe Molina, shows a non-extensive headland as we know it today.

Construction of the port of Puntarenas began in 1841 and, once it was completed, ships and steamship companies from Chile, the United States, France, Europe, Peru, Ecuador, Nueva Granada, Germany and the rest of Central America began to arrive, increasing its commercial and tourist importance.



In 1848, the province of Puntarenas was created. On September 17, 1858, the head of the canton acquired the title of "City of Puntarenas" under the presidency of Juan Rafael Mora Porras. From then on, Puntarenas began to offer a series of products and services to meet the needs of travelers, such as stores, hotels, hospital services and other complementary services.

The construction of the Railroad to the Pacific, and the installation of its terminal on the beach, made the route between this point and Los Baños one of the most traveled by tourists, which is still the case today. The port and railroad activities led to intense economic and migratory activity, commercial and transportation exchanges, as well as the transit of population. From this port all kinds of products are imported and exported to the north and south of the continent as well as to Europe.

In 1928, the construction of the current "Muelle Grande" began, to facilitate the loading and unloading of products. This, with the incorporation of the railroad, increased trade at national level and in the province itself, which brought great variants in the community since foreign workers, such as Chinese, Italians and Afro-Caribbeans (especially from Jamaica) were employed. Port, railroad and tourism activities were very important. Puntarenas is the sixth province of the country and has 11 cantons. Puntarenas, known as "The Pearl of the Pacific", has an extension of 11,276.97 km².

In Puntarenas there was a transit of tourists entering and leaving the port to other places. Merchants arriving and spending a night, waiting for the departure of a train or ship that would take their merchandise abroad, or simply tourists arriving to enjoy the beach in Puntarenas and the Balneario Nacional. The majority of the country's inhabitants, particularly those from the Central Valley, came to Puntarenas to enjoy the sun and the beach, especially during the months of December

to

February.

During this period, it was common to see many families arriving by train to the Port to enjoy the beach over the weekend. The train from San José passed through Orotina and Mata Limón until arriving at the Railroad station, which is now the Marine Park of Puntarenas.

Port activity increased between 1950 and 1970, and by that year, it was determined that the capacity of the dock had been exhausted, thus it was decided to move the port activity to Caldera, where it remains to this day.

The Jicaral, Lepanto, Paquera, Tambor, Cóbano and Manzanillo sectors were developed gradually, initially by the aboriginal population whose activity was based on corn and bean crops, and the later incorporation of populations from Nicaragua and Panama; with the purpose of developing fishing activities in association with agricultural crops in Paquera and Tambor. On the other hand, the geographical position of the peninsular towns (Lepanto, Paquera and Tambor) and the difficulties of communication with Nicoya, facilitated the commercial relationship by sea with the city of Puntarenas, which at that time was the most important center of power on the Costa Rican Pacific coast.

The world economic depression of 1927 has, at the national level, very strong socioeconomic consequences as a result of the fall in coffee prices. This situation caused large migrations of impoverished farmers from the Central Plateau (San Ramón, Palmares, Alajuela, Puriscal, Naranjo and Orotina) to the Peninsula in search of vacant land.



The immigration of "los Cartagos" (the name given to the inhabitants of the Central Plateau by those from Guanacaste), between 1930 and 1960, resulted in substantive changes in the Peninsula, generating a mixture of culture, customs and traditions. The introduction of productive activities such as coffee and sugar cane, the development of infrastructure, storage centers and other services and facilities make this area full of opportunities for national and international tourists to enjoy unique tourist experiences.

In recent years, tourism has become an important source of income, with a revitalization of the city, mainly in the Paseo de los Turistas sector. On February 27, 1987, the boulevard between the Cathedral and the old Puntarenas Police Station was inaugurated.

On December 15, 1989, the House of Culture was inaugurated in the building that used to be the former Civil Guard Headquarters of Puntarenas, which in 1977 had been declared architectural heritage of the country. The Casa de la Cultura museum was inaugurated on August 22, 1992. In September 1998, following the remodeling of the Port Authority and the reconstruction of the

pier, the first cruise ships with foreign tourists from various parts of the world began to arrive. In 2015, the Concha Acústica amphitheater was built in front of the beach, the Puntarenas Lighthouse was refurbished and the Malecón boulevard was built. In 2018, Incop awarded the project "Complementary Works for El Muellero Park", also known as the Pergolas Project, with the objective of boosting tourism activity, employment, and urban-landscape beautification of the city of Puntarenas along 800 meters of the seafront.

Links

-  storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/
-  [www.ecured.cu/Provincia_de_Puntarenas_\(Costa_Rica\)](http://www.ecured.cu/Provincia_de_Puntarenas_(Costa_Rica))

SOURCE: Diálogos electronic journal, School of History. Universidad de Costa Rica
Special volume in homage to Bernard Vicent. October 2012.

Artistic Groups of Puntarenas

La Chucheca de Oro Festival

Established in 1988, thanks to the interest of the actors who were part of the Teatro Aguamarina.

In its third edition and due to the interest of directors of popular theater groups from all over the country, the festival was changed from a regional to a national one.

It was agreed to train the theater groups with workshops given by instructors from the National Theater Company and the National Theater Workshop. Some professionals, such as Eugenia Chaverri, Melvin Méndez, Roxana Campos, Pato

Catania, Leonardo Peruchi, Mauricio Astorga, Leda Cavallini and other performing arts professionals participate in these workshops.

The Festival is always held during the second week of November and has been running for 25 years. Director: Eduardo Martínez Murillo, telephone 8497-2802, Mail, emartinez@mcj.go.cr



Puntarenas Concert Band

E-Mail: puntarenas@bandas.go.cr
Work Phone: (506) 2661 2654
Alternate phone number: (506) 2234-1611

Vías de Puntarenas Theater

Winner of three national cultural Theater awards Ricardo Fernández Guardia 2021, for scenography and best supporting actor. Currently, Vías boasts 32 years of theatrical work in the province of Puntarenas.

Teatro Vías was established in August 1990, as a project to promote the arts among the young people of Puntarenas, as well as to strengthen the cultural identity of the province, emerging as a new theatrical alternative for the local and national community, promoting a theater for all. Its director, Pedro García Blanco, is an outstanding graduate of the School of Dramatic Arts of the University of Costa Rica and has extensive professional experience. Contact Yanina Ruiz, phone 6102-2611/ 2661-1394 mail administracion-ccp@mcj.go.cr



Independent Theater Delirium of Puntarenas



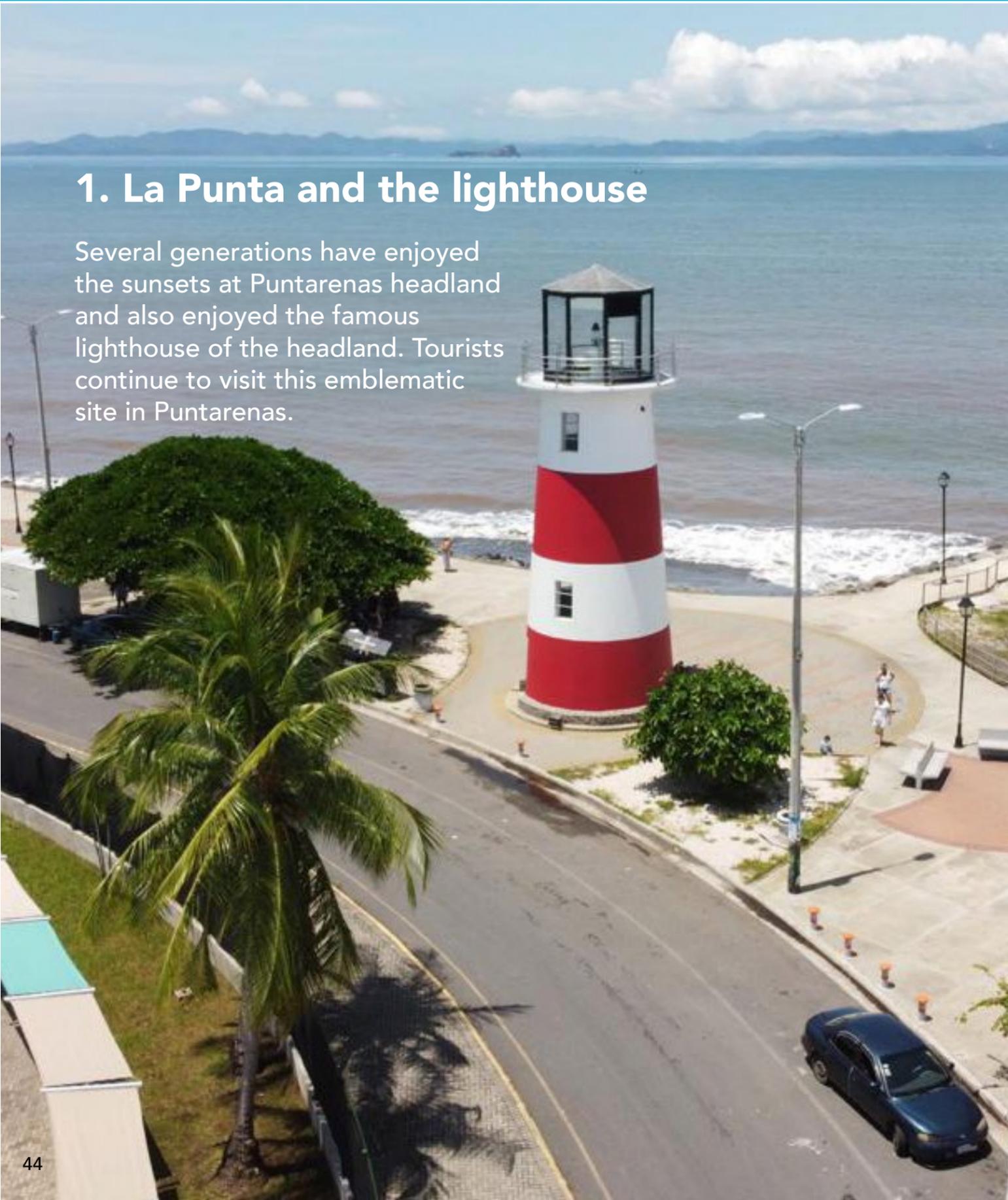
Created in 2004 at the Colegio Técnico Profesional de Puntarenas, it presents one show a year, with the surrealist or avant-garde tone that has always distinguished the group, It has developed works such as Agonía, Saber que no sabemos, A day without me, El hombre que vendió su alma al diablo, El show no tiene nombre, Historias de Amor, and others.

Contact Yanina Ruiz, phone 61022611- 26611394 mail administracion-ccp@mcj.go.cr



1. La Punta and the lighthouse

Several generations have enjoyed the sunsets at Puntarenas headland and also enjoyed the famous lighthouse of the headland. Tourists continue to visit this emblematic site in Puntarenas.



2. Pirate Headland



Built between 1970 and 1974, the Municipal Beach Resort, today Punta Pirata, has been the place of tradition for visitors who want to enjoy swimming pools overlooking the Gulf of Nicoya and appreciate the sunset.

4. Caldera



Puerto Caldera belongs to Esparza and the town is the sixth district of the canton.

Caldera, famous for its estuary, surf and port facilities, was also the stop where train passengers got their first glimpse of the Pacific Ocean. Unforgettable.

3. Cruise dock



In 1928 another dock was built, known as the Muelle Grande, which provided loading and unloading services to different ships that provided services between the Nicoya Peninsula and the Port. Today, it is an exclusive dock for the docking of cruise ships visiting the country.

5. Paseo de los Turistas



Known as Paseo León Cortés until 1960, it was later renamed Paseo de los Turistas. It is the emblematic tour that everyone who visits Puntarenas must do.

6. Paseo de los Turistas Kiosks



With a tradition of more than 60 years, the kiosks are a landmark to enjoy traditional Puntarenas cuisine, including the famous Churchill.

8. Marine Historical Museum



This museum is located in the old Puntarenas barracks, which was restored to host the House of Culture, an amphitheater and the Public Library. Temporary (monthly) painting and sculpture exhibitions are held in the first of these and monthly theater, dance and music performances are programmed in the amphitheater.

The archaeological information presented allows us to learn about the first settlements of indigenous groups in the region, the way they obtained their food, taking advantage of the diverse resources of the area, the types of burial they practiced and the exchange and trade relationships they established.

7. Chira Island



Is located in the Pacific Ocean, in the province of Puntarenas, upper end of the Gulf of Nicoya, has an area of 4,300 hectares (43.0 km²), making it the second largest island in Costa Rica, the existing communities on the island are: Puerto Bocana, Jícaro, Nancite, Pochote, Montero and Puerto Palito.

The name Chira comes from an indigenous Chorotega legend where a princess named Chira is mentioned.

Chira Island offers a series of tourist activities to the visitor, such as recreational cycling, beach, sport fishing, trails, city tour, Paloma Island, sunsets, mollusk and mangrove tour, crocodile tour, hikes and cultural events.

In addition to enjoying the rich seafood diet, you can also experience the local culture on Chira Island by visiting oyster and mussel farming projects. In addition, you can participate in mangrove reforestation activities, which will allow you to contribute to the care of the environment while learning about the importance of mangroves in the marine ecosystem.

On Chira Island, there is the opportunity to visit a pre-Columbian shell or archeological dump. There were 21 points with evidence of indigenous presence on the island, as well as knowledge of the Catholic church where Easter Week was celebrated for the first time in Costa Rica.



*Puntarenas
Beaches*



Cocal del Peñón

Near Santa Teresa, a stony beach that becomes an exception spot for snorkeling due to its transparent water.

goplaya.cr/es/playa/cocal-del-peon



Los Cedros

Beach where a palm-covered river flows into the sea. Its gentle waves allow snorkeling around the rocks. It is located very close to the community of Montezuma.

goplaya.cr/es/playa/los-cedros



Mal País

With peaceful sectors and others for surfing, Mal Pais Beach is famous for its nature, its intermediate waves and white sand, complemented by the crystal clear water of the Pacific Ocean, which generates the visitation by both domestic and foreign tourism. There are a number of services near the beach.

goplaya.cr/es/playa/malpais



Playa Caldera

With the opening of Route 27, Caldera became the closest beach to the Metropolitan Area, only 45 minutes away. Visited mainly by Costa Rican tourism, its sand is gray, with intermediate waves and few rocks, it has a good spot for surfing. You can appreciate the sunset from different points of the beach and walk along the pedestrian promenade.

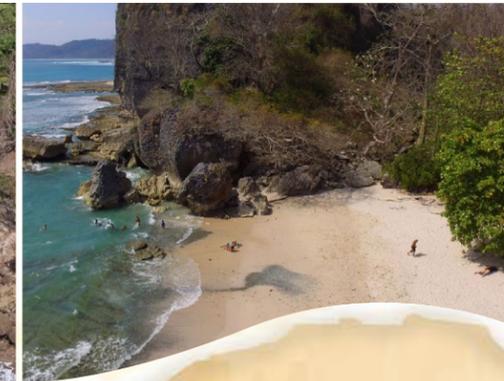
goplaya.cr/es/playa/caldera



Playa Cocalito

A beach located in Montezuma, with gray sand and soft waves and the surprise of a waterfall that goes straight to the ocean, a particular attraction.

goplaya.cr/es/playa/cocalito



Playa Cuevas o Suecos

Beach with 2 names, Cuevas or Suecos, located in Santa Teresa, with soft waves and white sand, with caves ideal for snorkeling and lush areas to just take a break in the shade provided by the vegetation of the beach.

goplaya.cr/es/playa/cuevas



Playa Blanca

Very white sand, soft waves and vegetation bordering the beach, is the main characteristic of Playa Blanca, located in the district of Paquera, Nicoya Peninsula. It is a rarely visited beach, but those who have been there often return to enjoy the whiteness of the sand.

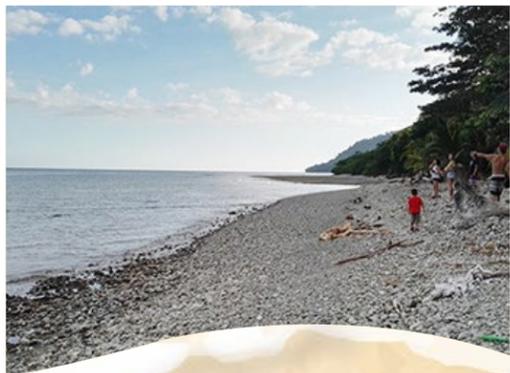
goplaya.cr/es/playa/blanca-nicoya



Playa Blanca (Punta Morales)

Playa Blanca is located in Punta Morales, Puntarenas, another beach of white sand and gentle waves, which makes it suitable for the whole family. Its clear water allows the practice of snorkeling and if you love camping, you can camp in the area.

goplaya.cr/es/playa/los-cedros



Playa Cabuya

During low tide you can walk from this beach to the island where the Cabuya cemetery is located. You can return, even at high tide, as it is not a difficult walk. Snorkeling is possible, as the water is clear and the waves are gentle.

Near Cabuya, you will find the entrance to the Cabo Blanco National Reserve, in case you are looking for more activities.

goplaya.cr/es/playa/cabuya



Playa Curú

Immersed in the Curú Wildlife Refuge, it is a wide beach at low tide, perfect for swimming due to the low waves. In addition to the beach, you can enjoy the nature of the refuge.

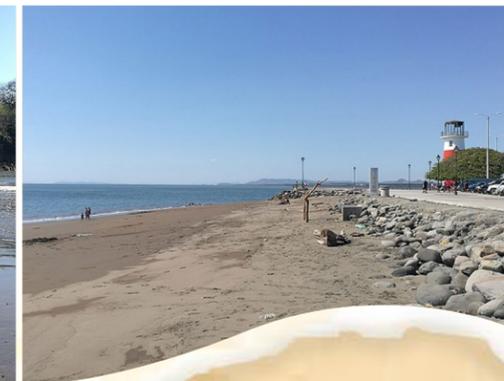
goplaya.cr/es/playa/curu-nicoya



Playas de Doña Ana

Located at the mouth of the Barranca River or Boca de Barranca, Doña Ana beach is one of the beaches that has been receiving visitors for many years, it is wide at low tide, suitable for walking along it while soaking up the sun. Its swell is moderate and depending on the season, surfing is possible. The sand is brown.

goplaya.cr/es/playa/doa-ana



Playa Puntarenas

Extensive beach, with gray sand and moderate waves, where you can go jogging or walking. Due to its location (Paseo de los Turistas) and easy access, it receives a high flow of visitors. Excellent spot to watch the sunset.

goplaya.cr/es/playa/puntarenas



Playa El Hoyo

Located in the sector of Caldera, special for surfing, and one of the best spots for surfers in the province of Puntarenas. Access is on foot, approximately 30 minutes from the dock in Caldera. Its sand is gray.

goplaya.cr/es/playa/el-hoyo



Playa Hermosa

Hermosa is an extensive beach, located in the Santa Teresa sector. It offers athletes a unique space, whether for walking, jogging or surfing. And for those who love leisure, its clear sand invites you to sunbathe and get a wild tan.

goplaya.cr/es/playa/hermosa-santa-teresa



Playa Manzanillo

Another gem of a beach, which is part of the Nicoya Peninsula. It is rarely visited, making it the perfect place to enjoy its gray sand, gentle waves, birds, almond trees and lush vegetation, which you will always remember.

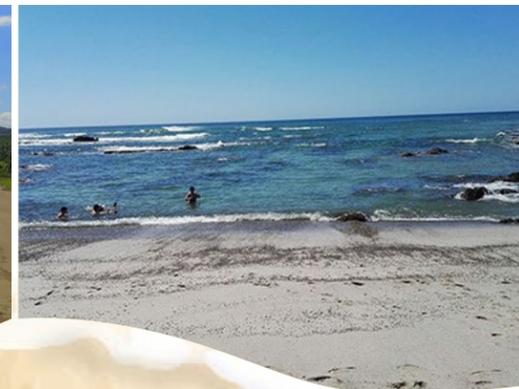
goplaya.cr/es/playa/manzanillo-santa-teresa



Playa Órganos

The vegetation surrounding the beach is impressive and well complemented by the light gray sand of the beach. Being an extensive and wide beach, it lends itself to be used by walkers and joggers. The swell is moderate, so it invites you to dive into the Pacific water. Do not hesitate, the experience will be unforgettable.

goplaya.cr/es/playa/organos-nicoya



Playa Peñón

Another good beach in the Santa Teresa area, Peñón Beach has white sand and turquoise water. In addition, at low tide, pools form between the rocks that invite you to stay in them and soak up the sun. A great place for snorkeling. A nice beach to enjoy in solitude, as it is rarely visited.

goplaya.cr/es/playa/santa-teresa



Playa Pochote

Located near Tambor, Pochote Beach, of gray sand and gentle waves, communicates with the mouth of the river of the same name. It is frequently visited by locals and artisanal fishermen.

goplaya.cr/es/playa/pochote



Playa Mar Azul (Mal País)

Mar Azul is the beach with the perfect combination of crystal-clear water, light gray sand and gentle waves, is perfect for enjoying a swim or snorkeling. Mar Azul is a hidden beach in the area of Malpaís.

goplaya.cr/es/playa/mar-azul-mal-pais



Playa de Montezuma

Montezuma is one of the iconic communities on the Nicoya Peninsula, as is its white sand beach, turquoise water and vegetation hugging the beach. It makes a visit to the beach a unique experience.

goplaya.cr/es/playa/montezuma-puntarenas



Playa Muertos

To get to Muertos beach, it is easier to do it by boat or kayak. Once you get to the beach, you will realize that it was worth it to observe the palm trees and different types of trees on white sand.

Playa Muertos is one of the few virgin beaches in the area, so it is worth a visit.

goplaya.cr/es/playa/muertos-nicoya



Playa Quesera

The combination of the turquoise waters of the Pacific Ocean with the white sand of the beach, makes it an attraction that no person can refuse to visit. Here you can snorkel, take a dip in the sea or lie on the sand and relax, the choice is yours.

Quesera Beach is part of the Curú Wildlife Refuge.

goplaya.cr/es/playa/quesera-curu-nicoya



Playa Tambor

A beach well cared for by the community, with gray sand, few rocks and gentle waves. It is easy to access, so it is very popular. The beach is wide at low tide, making it attractive for walks in the sun. It has received the Blue Flag award.

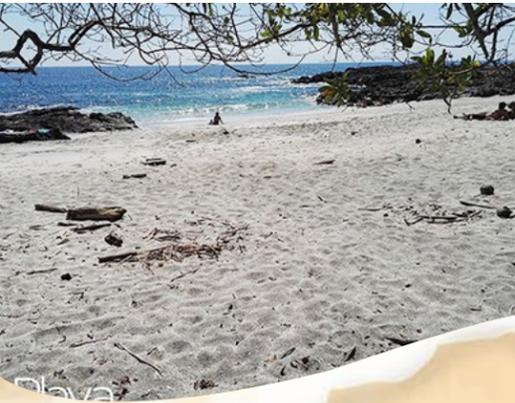
goplaya.cr/es/playa/doa-ana



Playa Isla Tortuga

Tortuga Island Beach, famous for years, is a favorite among tourists. Its combination of turquoise sea water with white sandy beach, makes it a place of extraordinary beauty that is part of the Nicoya Peninsula.

goplaya.cr/es/playa/isla-tortuga-costa-rica



Playa Manchas

It is an easily accessible beach, a few kilometers from Montezuma, Cabo Blanco and Cabuya. Playa Manchas, with its white sand and turquoise water, is the perfect combination of natural beauty. Due to the gentle waves in this area, snorkeling is possible.

goplaya.cr/es/playa/manchas



Playa Santa Teresa

World renowned beach for surfing, in addition to the white sand and its beauty make it attractive for swimmers. You can enjoy sunbathing, walking or jogging on the beach and if you love surfing you will enjoy the waves of Santa Teresa.

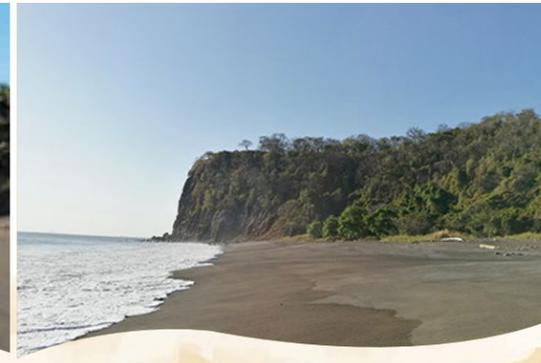
goplaya.cr/es/playa/santa-teresa



Playa Ario

Ario Beach is known for nesting olive ridley turtles and for being located within the boundaries of the Caletas-Arío Wildlife Refuge. It is a gray sand beach, medium swell, very quiet, where you can enjoy the seabirds and vegetation of the wildlife refuge.

goplaya.cr/es/playa/ario



Playa La Roca

Neighboring Caldera beach, La Roca beach is little known so it is pleasant to visit, especially if you go to the end of the beach, next to La Roca. The waves are strong and the sand is gray, it is an easily accessible beach.

goplaya.cr/es/playa/la-roca-espiritu-santo



Playa Margarita

Of gray sand, with a barely perceptible swell, Playa Margarita is a little known beach located in the district of Paquera on the Nicoya Peninsula. The tranquility results in the full enjoyment of bathing in the ocean.

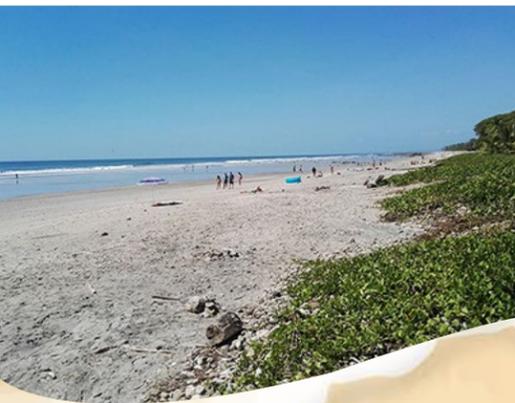
goplaya.cr/es/playa/margarita-nicoya



Playa Poza Colorada

Located in the Curú Wildlife Refuge, Playa Colorada is a hidden paradise of crystal clear water and white sand. Because it is a hidden beach, you will have to rent a kayak for a 10-minute trip to reach it from Curú.

goplaya.cr/es/playa/posa-colorada-quesera-costa-rica



Playa Carmen

Carmen Beach has three ingredients for your enchantment, blue sea, white sand and waves for surfing. In addition, an extensive beach for hiking or just sitting in the sun and plunging into the blue Pacific. Carmen Beach is located a short distance from neighboring Santa Teresa.

goplaya.cr/es/playa/carmen-santa-teresa-costa-rica



Playa Cocal

At low tide, the beach area increases to such an extent that every year an internationally recognized athletic competition is held, in which a large number of runners participate. Access to the beach is easy.

<https://goplaya.cr/es/playa/cocal>



Playa El Roble

Located in El Roble de Puntarenas, this beach is of gray sand and medium swell, wide and extensive as the neighboring beaches of Cocal and Puntarenas; being a wide beach visitors settle as they prefer and can enjoy themselves without being interrupted.

goplaya.cr/es/playa/el-roble



Playa Cabo Blanco

To get to Cabo Blanco beach, a paradise, with gentle waves, white sand and crystal clear water, you must hike for approximately 2 hours within the Cabo Blanco National Park, a sanctuary that protects the flora and fauna of the area.

goplaya.cr/es/playa/cabo-blanco



Playa Tropical

Part of Tortuga Island, this white sanded beach is rarely visited, which gives an added value as you will not have to share the beach with other people. Access to the beach is only by sea.

goplaya.cr/es/playa/tropical



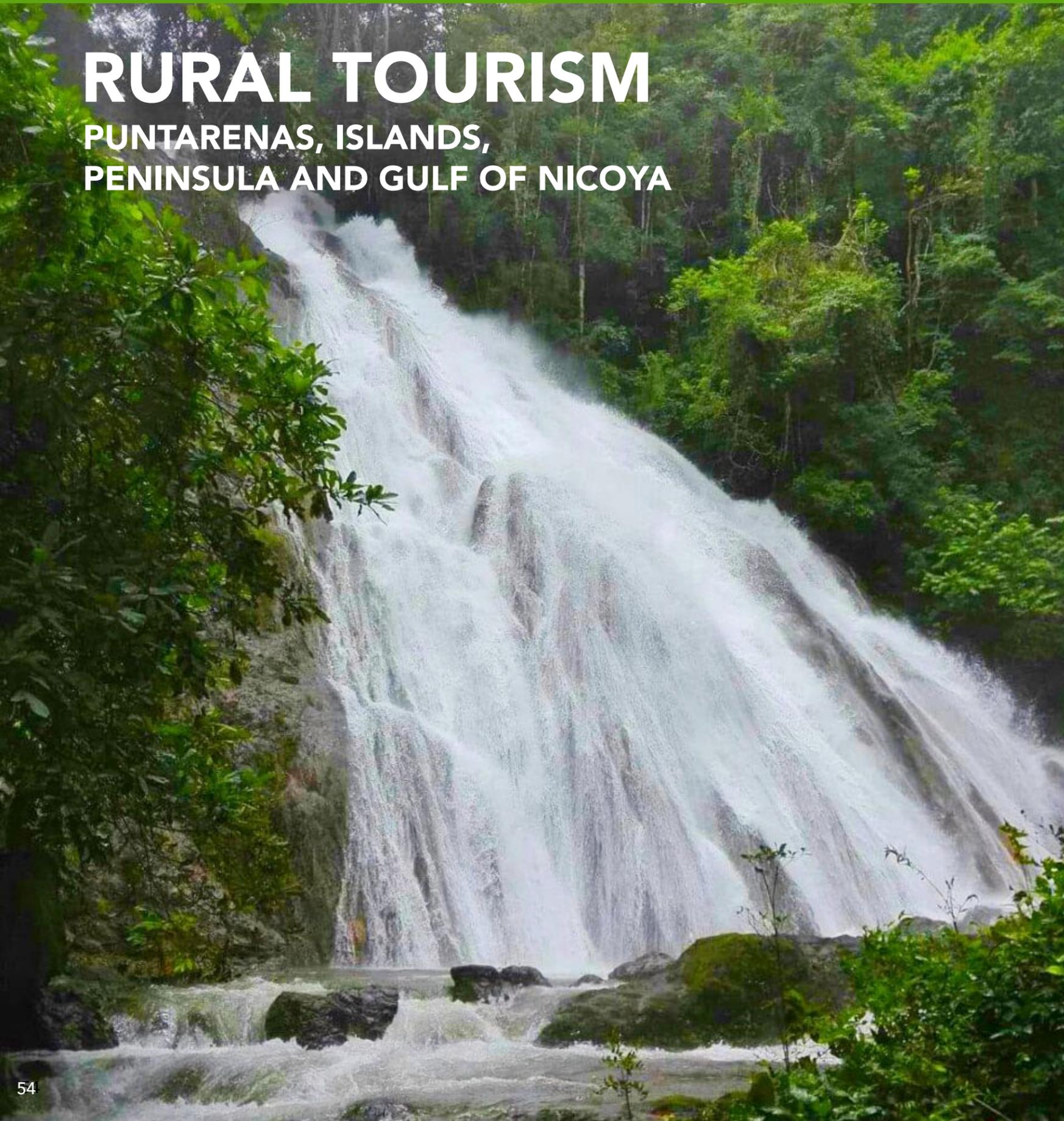
Playa Pájaros

Pájaros Beach on the Nicoya Peninsula, located in front of Pájaros Island, is a gray sand beach with a gentle swell and loose stones in the sand. For those who love sea birds, here you will be able to observe different species.

goplaya.cr/es/playa/pajaros-nicoya

RURAL TOURISM

PUNTARENAS, ISLANDS, PENINSULA AND GULF OF NICOYA



Puntarenas, Islands, Peninsula and Gulf of Nicoya invite you to live an authentic experience impossible to imitate. If you are looking to get involved with the culture of the porteños, have close contact with nature and local communities, we offer rural tourism and rural community tourism activities.

Puntarenas as a province, and specifically its central canton, has been par excellence a city that arises from the commercial and fishing activity, particularly typical of a port city, in fact, together with Limón, is one of the points where most of Costa Rica's imports and exports enter and leave through the ocean.

Parallel to this economic dynamic that has developed in the Puntarenas region, we have traditional agricultural production, which has mainly been carried out in the interior and peninsular districts.

The integration of the elements of local idiosyncrasy, cultural exchange, quality, comfort and amenities are fundamental to promote this product in the area. The operation includes lodging and food services as well as the operation of tours linked to the daily activities of the local communities.

Esparza

Among the tourist attractions is the Catholic church located in the center of the community, which dates back to colonial times. Another attraction is the Cambalache Tunnel, where the railroad to the Pacific used to pass. Esparza has been a predominantly agricultural town with beautiful countryside scenery. Tivives beach, Caldera beach and Doña Ana beach are attractions of the coastal area in Esparza. "El Hoyo," located in Tivives is a site of frequent visits due to the good surfing.

Montes de Oro

The name of the canton is related to the mountains of the region whose gold wealth was discovered by Don José de los Santos González, giving rise to the establishment of the gold mines of Providencia, Montezuma and Bellavista.

This area is of great importance from a scenic point of view, because it has the Gulf of Nicoya in the background, favoring a very striking view. The area offers nature tourism, adventure and rural tourism, which is complemented by the coffee activity. You will be able to observe the production process and taste the coffee of a traditional family mill.

In the town of Cerrillos, visitors can tour the different dairies and observe the process of some dairy products. You will also learn about some small honey producers. In the town of Sabana Bonita, tourists enjoy excellent views of the Gulf of Nicoya and the mountains of Montes de Oro and San Ramon. You will also be able to appreciate lagoons, among other natural attractions. In Peñas Blancas, tourists can enjoy bird watching, visits to the limestone mountains and the Jabonal River canyon.

A wide variety of attractions and activities can be enjoyed in the rural tourism inns. Among other activities, you can hike along nature trails and during the months of March and April you can observe quetzals.

Tambor, Montezuma, Malpais and Santa Teresa

The area of the Nicoya Peninsula brings together appreciable natural beauty within which the beaches and the sun constitute a highly appreciated attraction.



Tambor, Montezuma, Malpais and Santa Teresa are places with special characteristics, thanks to the variety of tourist attractions, undeveloped but spectacular beaches, waterfalls, protected areas, commercial establishments, inhabitants from different countries, and intense nightlife every night of the “high” season. This is a new offer for coastal destinations that seeks to diversify the activity of the artisanal fishing sector through innovative and sustainable experiences.

Gulf Islands, Nicoya Peninsula and Gulf of Nicoya

On the islands of Chira, Venado, Bejuco, Caballo, Jesucita and Cedros, located in the interior of the Gulf of Nicoya, there are tourist companies that offer original, different and authentic experiences to learn about the most genuine traditional fishing. Now you have the opportunity to live and learn about the craft of artisanal fishing in Puntarenas, the Peninsula and the Gulf of Nicoya through an innovative proposal of rural tourism.

Activities for all tastes: If you are adventurous, you can put yourself in the shoes of a fisherman by joining us on a fishing trip. In addition, this experience helps to value the local product, the

territory, learn about mariculture projects, enjoy the culture of these sectors through contact with their landscapes, people and lifestyles, and the entire chain of gastronomy, from the landscape, the trades to the tasting of the delicacies of the sea.

In addition, you can participate in tours such as humpback whale and dolphin watching, bioluminescence, flora and fauna observation, camping and enjoy the beautiful beaches and water activities. Rural tourism offers experiences for life and this is the case of these excursions to the Gulf Islands, which will allow you to live a totally different adventure.

In most of these islands, mainly Chira, there are important mangrove patches that are quite viable tourist attractions for the development of various activities such as boat tours, among others. On the islands there are important patches of secondary forests where trails have been created for guided tours, such as in the case of Venado, Cedros and Caballo.

In addition, rural tourism activities are offered, mainly by organized women’s groups in Chira and Venado.

San Lucas Island is a National Park, an outstanding attraction in the area, primarily due to its great historical and cultural value. In February 1873, and for almost 120 years, this island was home to one of the darkest penitentiaries in Costa Rica. Its ruins are considered of historical interest.

Chomes and Jicaral

In this sector, there are some small mariculture projects, mainly in Lepanto, Chomes and Jicaral. Salt mines are developed in the latter.

Mangoes, watermelons and melons are planted around Jicaral.

On the eastern side of the Gulf, Playa Chomes is an important site for tourists who enjoy watching waterfowl, both resident and migratory. In Costa de

Pájaros there is an organized group of women who develop rural tourism activities such as nurseries for medicinal and ornamental plants and a butterfly farm.

There are also some protected wildlife areas such as the La Ensenada National Mixed Wildlife Refuge in Manzanillo and the Nicoya Peninsula Protected Area.

On the way to Jicaral there are cattle farms along the roadside and in the town you can still see one of the Costa Rican traditions of yesteryear such as the use of ox carts.

 goplayatours.cr/turismo-rural

 <https://islachira.com/>

ACTIVITIES



Bioluminescence



Diving



Hiking



Flora



Artisanal fishing



Camping



Bird Watching



Visit to sugar mills



Waterfalls



Wildlife observation



Gastronomy



Visit a farm



Night life



Handicrafts with Identity



Observation of whales and dolphins



Horseback riding



Cycling



Sun and beach



Turismo Curú

Turismo Curú is a family business that, as a receptive travel agency formed by local entrepreneurs, offers adventure tourism taking advantage of the richness and natural beauty that exists in the area of the Gulf of Nicoya.

Our commitment to sustainability leads us to invest part of our profits in environmental projects in the area such as: responsible fishing, tree planting, environmental education, community development, whale studies, environmental protection and construction of artificial reefs.

With your support and our leadership, we generate projects that help local people and the environment where we operate.

The company has 23 years of experience in rural adventure and educational tourism. Each of our activities aims to show a little of the sustainable management that can be done in the area and the efficient and correct way to operate in the natural environment.

Activities:

-  Tours to Tortuga Island
-  Hiking
-  Bioluminescence Tours
-  Artisanal fishing
-  Whale and dolphin watching
-  Paddle board
-  Sea Kayaking
-  Diving

Information

-  Tel. (506) 2641-0014 / 2641-0014 / 8834-7343.
-  turismocuru@yahoo.com
-  Inside the Curú Wildlife Refuge; from the ferry terminal in Paquera, 11km south on the paved road to Tambor and Montezuma.
-  Google maps: goo.gl/maps/SjBqCHEfZ9kzriKG7

Cerro escondido

900 hectares of protected forest!

Cerro Escondido is a cozy lodge nestled in the middle of the forest in the Karen Morgensen Reserve, Nicoya Peninsula. Discover the primary forest, natural springs and the impressive Velo de Novia waterfall.



Lodging:

2 cabins with 4 bedrooms; each cabin has a large balcony and private bathroom.

Capacity: 18 people. Solar energy.



Activities:



Hiking



Horseback Riding



Orchid Garden



Tours to Venado Island



Eco-museum



Services:



Meeting Room



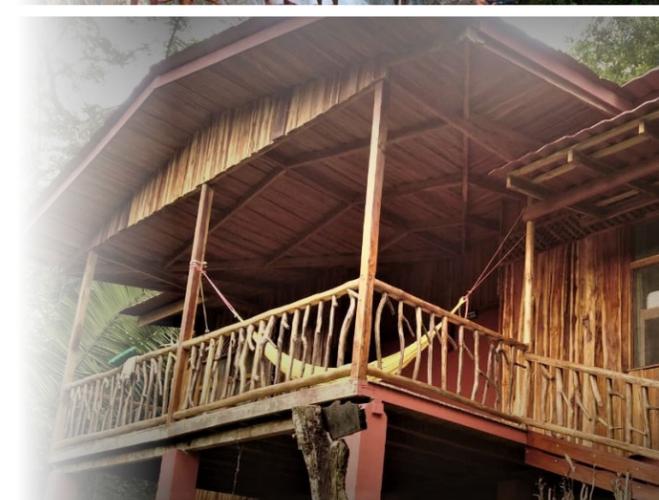
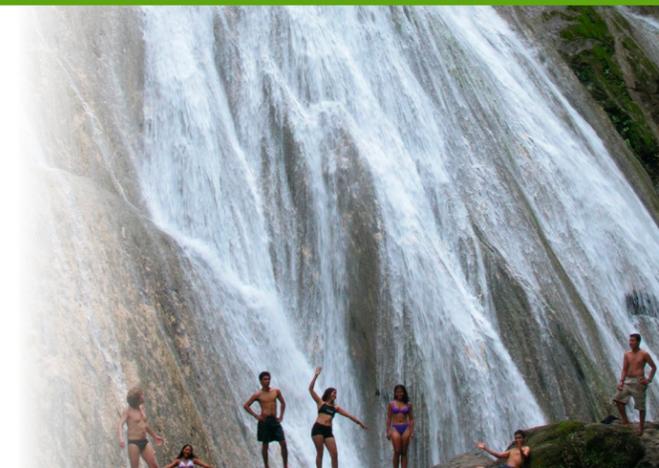
Vegetarian and traditional meals



Hiking trails

Information

-  Tel. (506) 2650-0607
-  asepalec@racsa.co.cr
-  asepaleco.com
-  Península de Nicoya. Lepanto, Puntarenas





We are a family business specializing in typical Costa Rican cuisine. We offer our customers a wide variety of food and beverages with the best ingredients from the area.

We are located in Palmital, Montes de Oro, in a pleasant climate, with easy access, parking and free internet service for our clients.

We are the point of contact for other rural community-based tourism companies.

 Oro Verde Restaurant

 (506) 8803-5921

 (506) 2647-8005

Protected Areas

Puntarenas, Islands and Nicoya Peninsula have an important ecological richness that has allowed it to articulate an innovative tourism offer based on the Tempisque Conservation Area (ACT), Central Pacific Conservation Area (ACOPAC), and private conservation efforts, which has earned it a position as an ecotourism destination.

It also implies the responsibility of local communities, entrepreneurs and state entities in relation to their active participation in tourism, the practice of sustainable development and the guarantee of protection and safety of visitors.

The following is a description of the protected areas included in this tourist-cultural guide.





TEMPISQUE

Conservation Area

The Tempisque Conservation Area is located in the northwestern part of the country and includes within its limits the entire Peninsula of Nicoya, between Playa Grande in the northwest and the mouth of the Tempisque River in the southeast and from the coast of the Peninsula of Nicoya in the west to the Tilarán mountain range in the northeast; from the north and northeast to the volcanic mountain range of Guanacaste.

It is an area of great topographic diversity ranging from sea level to 1,018 meters (Cerro Azul), with outstanding resources such as: dry, humid and secondary forests, tacotales, grasslands, lagoons, mangrove swamps, and more.

This area is responsible for the conservation and protection of the middle and lower basin of the Tempisque River and some hills of the Nicoya Peninsula. It also protects and conserves the biodiversity of marine resources, wildlife, the hydrological regime, dry tropical forest, water sources and natural springs, waterfowl habitat, wetlands, turtle nesting, maritime-terrestrial zone, among others.

These are the areas linked to Puntarenas:

State:

Estas son las áreas vinculadas a Puntarenas:

- Cabo Blanco Absolute Natural Reserve
- Guayabo Island Biological Reserve
- Negritos Islands Biological Reserve
- Caletas-Ario Wildlife Refuge (mixed)
- Curú Wildlife Refuge
- Romelia Wildlife Refuge
- Nicolás Wessberg Absolute Nature Reserve
- Nicoya Peninsula Protected Area.



Private:

- Karen Mogensen Reserve



Cabo Blanco is a refuge of great importance for the protection of marine birds, and it is also one of the most scenically beautiful areas of the Pacific coast.

A deep blue sea, a vegetation with a predominance of evergreen species that reaches the edge of the coast, interesting geological formations, a varied fauna, and countless low-tide lagoons where various species of marine organisms are trapped, make Cabo Blanco one of the most interesting and beautiful reserves in the system. The marine fauna of this reserve is diverse but not abundant.

Since 1963, after being declared a protected area, natural forest regeneration has taken place in this area. The Cabo Blanco Absolute Natural Reserve is more than a monument to humanity's hope for a better future, it is an example of nature's search for balance.

The founding of the Cabo Blanco Reserve marks the beginning of Costa Rica's policy of conservation of the natural environment, as it is the first protected area established for this specific purpose. Its creation was also a milestone that led to the establishment of the current National System of Conservation Areas.



The reserve has two types of forest:

- Original forest of this area or primary forest
- Regenerated forest or secondary forest.



About 140 species of trees.



The fauna of the area is very varied and there are numerous seabirds.



The place is covered by forest, is in front of the ocean and has 3 trails,



Location

In the province of Puntarenas, on the south west end of the Peninsula of Nicoya. The administration is 2.5 km south west of Cabuya, 16 km from Cóbano and 47 km from Nicoya.



How to get there

The most convenient route is San José-Puntarenas-Paquera (using the ferry)-Cóbano-Cabuya-administration.

 The Paquera-Cóbano road is paved in good condition up to Cóbano and the Cóbano-administration section is gravel and also in good condition, so it is possible to travel in any type of vehicle.

 There is bus service Nicoya-Paquera, Paquera-Cóbano, and Cóbano-Cabuya, and also cab service Cóbano-Cabuya. Food can be purchased in Cabuya. The nearest town with a hotel, restaurants and supermarket is Cabuya, 2.5 km from the administration.

Go in the direction of Montezuma, follow the coast until you reach Cabuya, from there follow the signs to Cabo Blanco Reserve, Cabuya sector.

Services

- 
Parking
- 
Restrooms
- 
Drinking water
- 
Picnic area
- 
Showers

What to bring

- 
Comfortable clothing
- 
Bathing suite
- 
Repellent
- 
Sunscreen
- 
Walking shoes
- 
Strong meal
- 
Snacks
- 
Water
- 
No pets
- 
No camping

Extensión



1,269 terrestrial hectares and 1,790 marine hectares

Natural and Cultural Resources

In the sea you can find fish such as: **bonito, jack mackerel, flying cuminate, snook, mackerel, mullet, rocker, yellow, red, and spotted snappers; grouper, yellow bobo, stone hand, timburil or blow fish**, that puffs up when caught, striped bass, palmito fish and salema. Some of them are very small like the small fish that get trapped in the tidal pools and can measure a few centimeters and others are huge like the grouper that can weigh up to 300 kg.

There are also an abundance of rays, hammerhead, and catsharks. Among the mollusks, the most important species are octopuses and conch or cambutes, clams and oysters, the latter two of which are very rare.

Crustaceans include lobsters and hermit, sailor, and fiddler crabs. On the rocks, during low tide, you can observe donkey shells, barnacles, burgids, limpets, sea cucumbers and small starfish-like brittle stars. Because it is an area of higher precipitation than the rest of the dry Pacific, about 2,300 mm. per year **there is a greater predominance of evergreen species in the Cabo Blanco forests.**

The most abundant trees by local name are: lemonwood, West Indian elm, hog plum, chaperno, gumbo limbo, or indio desnudo, pochote and cecropias. In areas of primary forest with little disturbance, the dominant species, with heights of more than 30 meters, are the ojoche, or breadnut tree, nispero, pochote and espavel or wild cashew. There are a total of 119 tree species in Cabo Blanco.

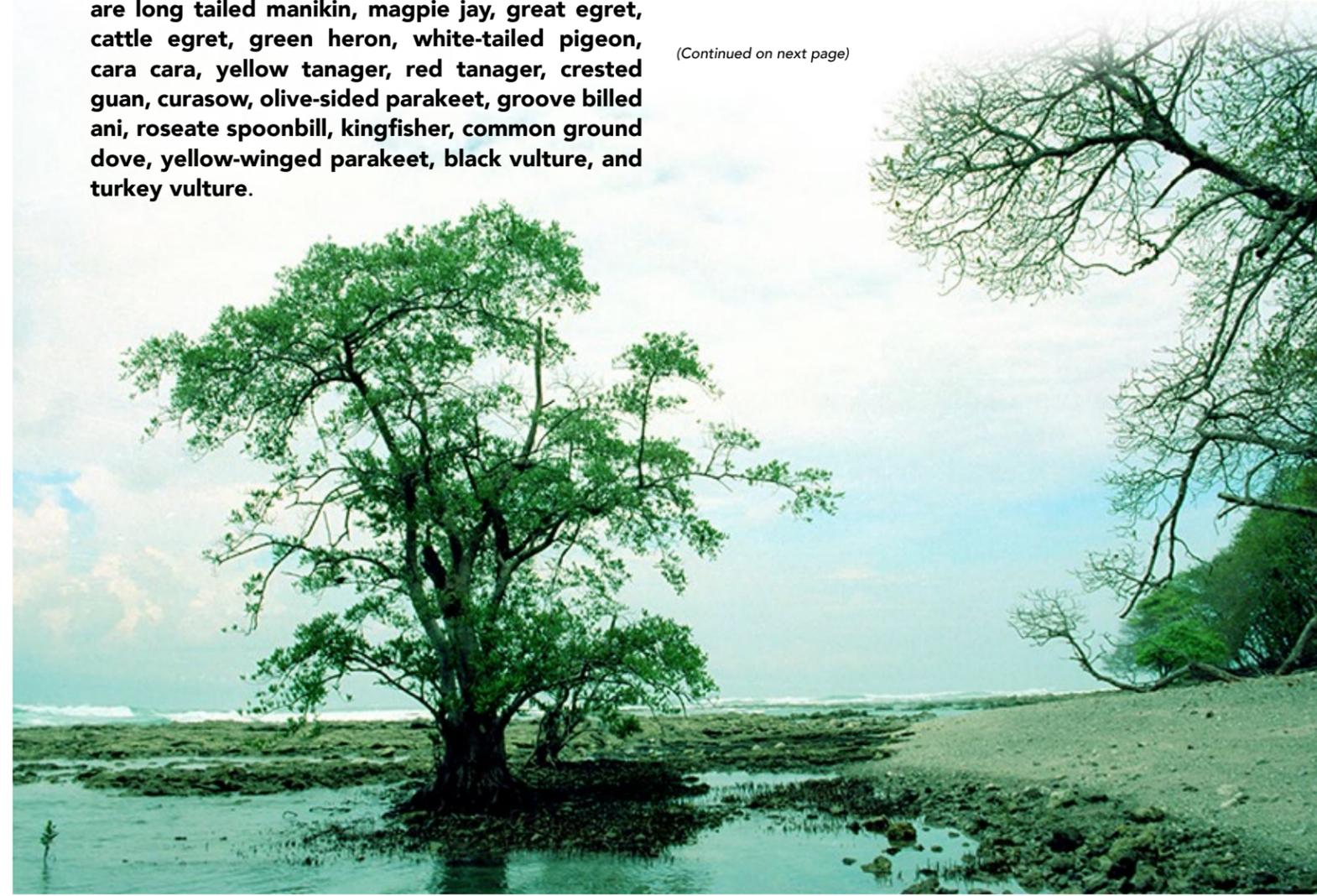


Zopilote cabecirrojo

The fauna is quite varied despite the relatively small size of the reserve. In addition to the squirrels, which are very abundant, there are other species such as: **deer, howler monkey, spider monkey, porcupine, agouti, pacas, coati, racoon, kinkajou, skunk, coyote, opossum, armadillo, anteater, margay, ocelot, jaguarundi and puma.** Among land birds, the most common are long tailed manikin, magpie jay, great egret, cattle egret, green heron, white-tailed pigeon, cara cara, yellow tanager, red tanager, crested guan, curasow, olive-sided parakeet, groove billed ani, roseate spoonbill, kingfisher, common ground dove, yellow-winged parakeet, black vulture, and turkey vulture.

Along the coast, there are about three roosts of brown pelicans, to each of which no less than 150 birds arrive at sunset. This island, a rocky rock with almost vertical walls, measures about 600 meters long by 150 meters wide and is completely devoid of vegetation. A narrow and dangerous path, on its east side, which allows climbing to the top, was built long ago to maintain the two lighthouses that existed at different times.

(Continued on next page)



The bird community of this crag is abundant. Species such as brown pelicans, frigate birds, anhinga, black-headed gulls, terns, and brown boobies can be observed perched or flying overhead. Of the latter species alone, the population is estimated at 800 specimens.

Two cultural resources related to the sea exist in the reserve. One is a sunken ship that lies off Cabo Blanco beach and appears to be about 150; a metal tip still stands out as a witness to this wreck. The other is the so-called Grand Ranger, which ran aground in 1971 off Balsitas Beach. This large ship is nowadays very deteriorated and has a large hole in the central part, at water level.



Trails

The Sueco trail is 4,200 meters to Playa Cabo Blanco, and the Danés trail of 2,300 meters round.



Hours of operation

The reserve is open to visitors only at the Cabuya station from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. from Wednesday to Sunday.

Those interested in visiting Cabo Blanco Beach, must take into account the following recommendations: **the latest time to enter the trail is from 08:00 to 11:00.**

Fees:

Locals: ₡1600 Foreigners: \$12
Students: ₡400

More information:

 **Ofic. Cabo Blanco:** (506) 2642-0093 / 2642-0096

 **Regional AC Tempisque:** 2686-4968 / 2686-4970

 areasparques.com/areasprotegidas

 quebuenlugar.com



Guayabo, Negritos y Pájaros Biological Reserves

The names of these reserves correspond to islets located on both sides of the Gulf of Nicoya, in the North Pacific of the province of Puntarenas. On a boat or ferry ride, it is possible to observe hundreds of seabirds and the surrounding area abounds with fish and jumping dolphins.





The Isla de Pájaros Biological Reserve is located in the Central Pacific Conservation Area (ACOPAC) and sharing the archipelago of the Gulf of Nicoya are two other protected areas, the Guayabo Biological Reserve and the Negritos Biological Reserve, which administratively belong to the Tempisque Conservation Area (ACT).

Guayabo Island and Negritos Islands Biological Reserves

Guayabo Island and Negritos Island make up the biological reserves of the same name, located 8 km south and 16.5 km south of the Port of Puntarenas, respectively.

Isla de Pájaros Biological Reserve

With an area of 4 hectares and located 13 kms NE of the city of Puntarenas and at an approximate distance of 500 meters from the town of Costa de Pájaros, the Isla de Pájaros Biological Reserve is the site that serves as habitat and breeding ground for many seabirds, such as: **brown pelican, yellow-naped parrots, gulls, magnificent frigate bird, and brown booby**. Also the peregrine falcon, the white-tailed pigeon, and the iguana, as well as fiddler crabs, sailor crabs, conch or cambutes, oysters and a great variety of fish are present on the island. In addition to species of flora typical of the area, which are low forest and grass patch, the guisaro bush mixed with the guanacaste, the Brosimun fig tree and the bully tree dominate the island.

Isla Pájaros has two small beaches visible only at low tide. In clear weather conditions it is possible to see the entire island of Costa de Pájaros, located about 13 km from the city of Puntarenas.

The Guayabo and Negritos Islands have an area of 143.5 hectares and serve as habitat and breeding sites for seabird populations (nesting between 200 and 300 individuals), highlighting species such as: **magnificent frigate bird, black-headed gull, peregrine falcon, white-tailed dove, brown booby and brown pelican**, the latter has one of the largest populations of this species of birds in Costa Rica. The island is also home to numerous species of crustaceans such as fiddler crabs, sailor crabs, conch or cambutes, oysters and a great variety of fish and insects. As well as species of flora characteristic of the area.

Guayabo Island is covered in some sectors by shrubs and small thorny plants. Tree species such as the guaco, or Peruvian apple cactus, strangler figs, coyol palms and the viscoyol palm stand out. In the Negritos Islands, the vegetation is semi-deciduous, such as white-flowered species, pochote, and gumbo limbo or indio desnudo. On the bluffs there are pure patches of piñuela casera and viscoyol palm.

Caletas Arío National Wildlife Refuge

The Caletas Arío National Wildlife Refuge is located to the south on the Pacific coast of the Peninsula of Nicoya, around the mouth of the Bongo and Arío rivers, and includes land located in both the Bejuco district of the canton of Nandayure and the district of Cóbano in the Central canton of Puntarenas.

Its establishment responds to the need to protect the nesting sites of four species of sea turtles: leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*), olive ridley (*Lepidochelys olivacea*), Kemp's ridley (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) and green or black (*Chelonia mydas agassizii*), as well as the conservation of important areas of mangroves, estuaries, a marine area of great richness and diversity, among many other biological elements associated with Caletas, Pencil, and Arío beaches.

Extension

It includes Caletas, Pencil and Arío beaches, the mangrove areas, the estuaries and the Bongo and Arío rivers as far as the tides reach and extends from Punta Coyote northwest of Playa Caletas to the public road that reaches the terrestrial area of Playa Arío.

It has a total area of 20,179 hectares, of which 313 are state-owned, 19,846 are marine area and 19.5 are private area submitted by Arío S.A. to the Refuge protection regime.

Attractions

- Birdwatching in different wetland ecosystems.
- Observation of mammals and reptiles such as turtles and crocodiles.
- Enjoyment of beaches, rivers, mangroves and estuaries of great scenic beauty.
- Fishing and paddle boating for more than one kilometer
- Good waves for surfing
- Observation diving during the summer season

Services

- Facilities for civil servants
- Camping area
- Restrooms
- Information
- Tours
- Showers
- Solar panels
- Parking

areasyparques.com/areasprotegidas/caletas-ario/



Curú Wildlife Refuge

The Refuge is the result of the conservation and management efforts of the Schutt family who arrived in Curú in 1933 and thanks to the vision of the first members, managed to conserve much of the forest and wild animals in the area, serving today as a seedbed to repopulate other areas of the peninsula.

This refuge is located at the southern tip of the Nicoya Peninsula, in front of Tortuga Island. The entrance is about 30 minutes from Paquera.



It consists of 1,496 hectares of tropical forest, mangroves and fields along the coast.



It has 17 trails for hikers.



To date, researchers have identified 78 separate species of mammals.



232 different types of birds, some of the most abundant are: little tinamou, cattle egret, black vulture, laughing falcon, spotted sandpiper, red-billed pigeon, blue throated dove, white-tailed dove, orange fronted parakeet, white fronted parrot, striped cuckoo, black-headed trogon, blue-crowned motmot, among others.



87 species of reptiles have been identified.



More than 500 species of plants.



Despite its small size, there are four ecosystems within the refuge: deciduous forest, semi-deciduous forest, mangrove forest and beach vegetation.

In the deciduous forest, found mainly in the Quesera and Curú points, the pochote is predominant, although 15 other species of trees have been identified, among them: lemonwood, gumbo limbo, Brazil, white flower, ron-ron, Spanish cedar, mahogany, quebracho, guachipelin, pink poui, apeiba or monkey comb, bull horn acacia and poro-poro or coral tree. In the forests of the cliffs, xerophytic species such as the pita or cabuya and the Brazil tree can be observed.

The semi-deciduous forest found in the rest of the area, except for the beach, is characterized by a mixture of evergreen and deciduous species. The main tree species here are the lemonwood or madroño, the breadnut, the Ecuador laurel, the gumbo limbo, the mahogany, the hog plumb, the rosewood, the manjack cordia or buriogre, the

guachipelin, the bitterwood or aceituno, the apeiba or monkey comb, the pink shower or carao, the anona or soncoya, the glory bush, the Brazilian cherry or guapinol, the macawood or cristóbal, the elephant ear tree or guanacaste, the yellow poui, the pink popui, the white flower plumeria, the pigeon wood guácimo, the Mexican lilac or madero negro, the quebracho, the kapok or ceibo, the panama tree, the tonka bean wood tree and balsa.

The mangrove is located behind Curú beach and is made up of the following five species of mangrove: the red mangrove, the most abundant, the tea mangrove, the white mangrove, the button wood mangrove, and the black mangrove. A bush that grows behind the mangrove is the curatella or chumico de palo. The beach vegetation consists mainly of coconut palms, introduced coco plum or icaco, monkey ear tree or guanacastes and samaneas or cenizaros.

Activities



Beautiful beaches such as **Curú, Poza Colorada and Quesera beaches.**

Senderos: The Finca de Los Monos trail is one of the best trails to see birds and small mammals, the best time to observe birds is early in the morning or at dusk. Other trails you can hike are: **Cangrejal, Ceiba and Quesera trails.**

Services



What to bring



Fees: ₡3000 for nationals
\$15 for foreigners.
Tours range from \$15 to \$35 per person, depending on the company and the tourist season during the year.

How to get there

Take route 27 in the direction of Puntarenas, when you get to Puntarenas, you have to go to the ferry port that leads to Paquera, the ferry takes about an hour and a half to reach the other side of the Gulf of Nicoya, and from Paquera, the Curú reserve is only 15 minutes away.

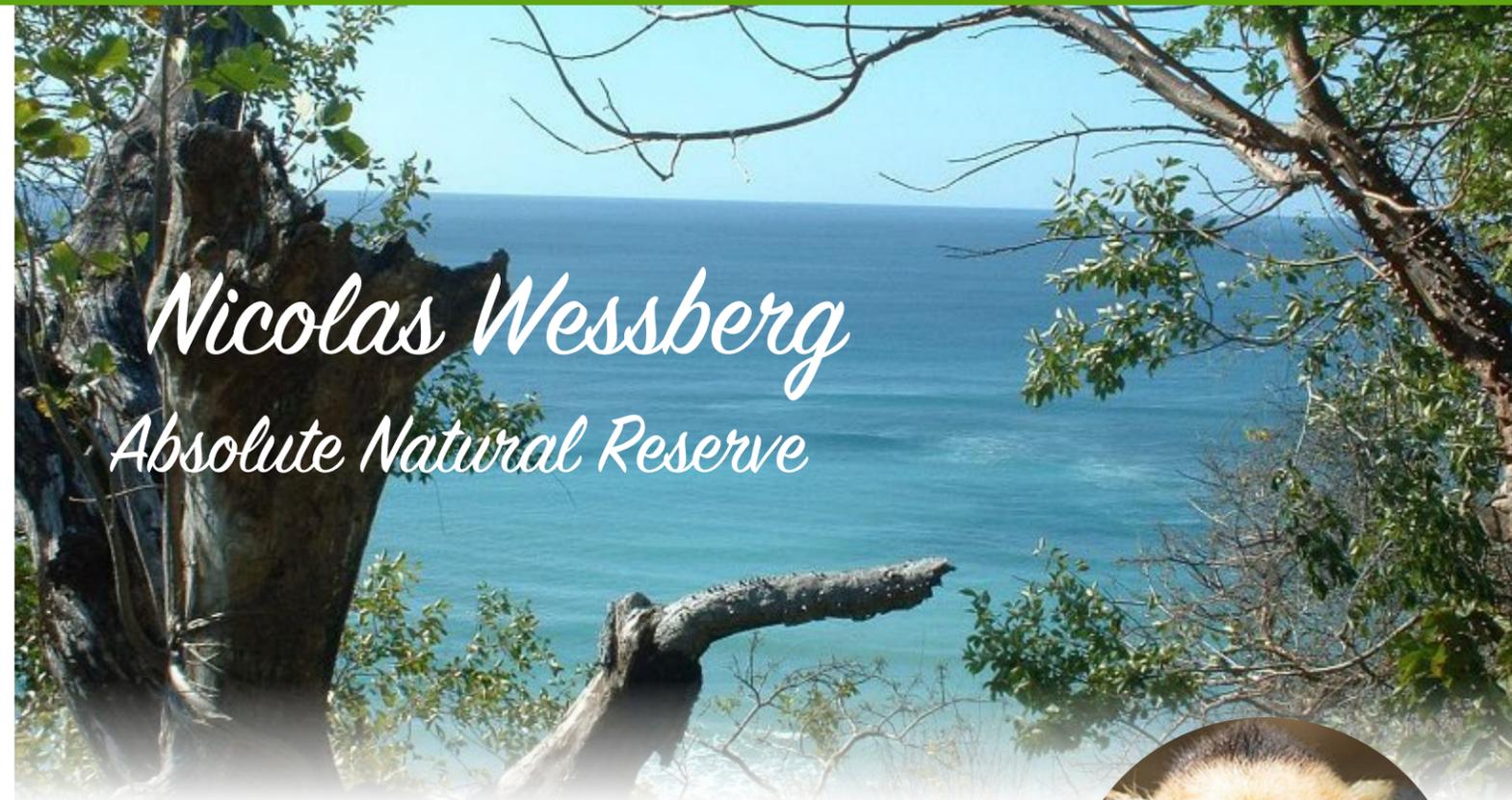
Waze: <https://waze.to/lr/hd1exe59fd>

Contact:
 (506) 6209-3846 / (506) 8834-7343.
 info@curuwildliferefuge.com
 refugiocuru@yahoo.com
www.turismocuru.com

More information
curuwildliferefuge.com/
goplaya.cr/es/playa/curu
visitcostarica.com/es/costa-rica
quebuenlugar.com/lugares/refugio

More information about accessibility in Curú:
fundameco.org/2017/04/27/curu

Hours: Everyday from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.



Nicolas Wessberg Absolute Natural Reserve

The Nicolás Wessberg Absolute Nature Reserve contains a secondary tropical rainforest, with approximately 150 trees that have been identified, where evergreen species predominate, as well as dry forest species, such as **pochote** (pochote), **hog plum** (*Spondias mombin*) and **wild cashew** (*Anacardium excelsum*).

Therefore the refuge serves as habitat for many animals such as **white-faced and howler monkeys, white-tailed deer, opossums, armadillos, anteaters, collared peccaries, coyotes, porcupines, raccoons, coatis, and ocelots.**

The Nicolás Wessberg ANR was created on October 10, 1994, to protect the tropical forests and beach areas on the southern tip of the Nicoya Peninsula, near Montezuma, Costa Rica. The edge of the reserve can be accessed by walking 2 km along Montezuma beach. This area is dedicated to the memory of the great conservationist Nicholas Wessberg.

Olof Wessberg (known as Nicolas) and Karen Mogensen came to Costa Rica in the 1960s in search of finding happiness in harmony with nature, choosing to settle on the Nicoya Peninsula. With the help of an international organization, they purchased 1250 hectares of land in 1963, made this land the first protected area in all of Costa Rica. Nicolas died in 1975 and Karen in 1994.



The Nicolas Wessberg ANR has no public services.

Other nearby points of interest include **Cabo Blanco Absolute Natural Reserve, Romelia National Wildlife Refuge, La Ceiba Wildlife Refuge and Curú National Wildlife Refuge.**

 **How to get there**

 **From San José**, drive north towards Puntarenas on Route #27 (takes 3 hours) or Route 1 (takes 5 hours) to the city of Puntarenas. Board the ferry to Paquera (it is recommended that you arrive in Puntarenas one hour before the ferry departs, phone: +506 2661-2084). Once the ferry arrives, drive along the road through the towns of Tambor, Cóbano and Cabuya. Another location is Montezuma. To get to Montezuma, you must continue south of Paquera for approximately 40 km. The Nicolás Wessberg Absolute Nature Reserve is located south of Montezuma. From Montezuma, a 4x4 car is necessary, even during the dry season.

 **By bus:** You can take a bus route San Jose - Mal Pais - Montezuma, which takes about 5 hours (Transportes Rodriguez, +506 2642-0219). It is recommended to purchase your ticket one day in advance to secure your space.

Tempisque Conservation Area Telephone (ACT):

 +506 2686-4967 / +506 2686-4968



Peninsula of Nicoya Protected Zone

The Nicoya Peninsula Protected Zone occupies 24,448 hectares and is an area that protects several springs that supply several towns with water, including Jicaral, Lepanto, Paquera and Cóbano. It is made up of seven separate forest units located in the upper part of the mountains in the center of the peninsula. There are intervened primary forests, second growth or tacotales, pastures, secondary forests and paddocks.

The zone is distributed in seven sectors located especially in areas with steeper slopes, less human presence, patches of forest, and few infrastructure services:

- A) Carmona Sector
- B) La Gloria Sector
- C) Lepanto Sector
- D) Cerro Pelón Sector
- E) Buena Vista Sector
- F) Waterfall Sector
- G) Cerital Sector

Geologically, these sectors have a base of tholeiitic basalt of the Nicoya Complex or sedimentary of the Kurú formation.

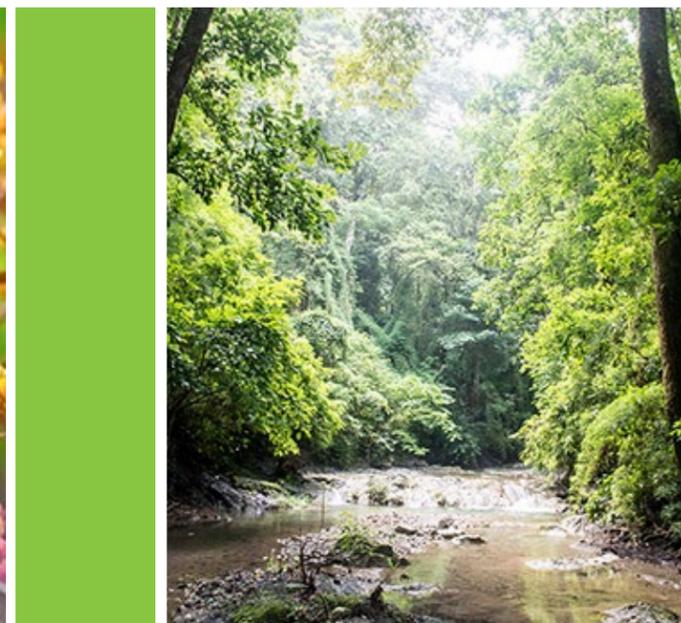
Among the important plant species found are orchids (*Guarianthe skinneri*, *Oncidium sp*, *Sobralia sp*, etc.), as well as trees with beautiful hardwoods, with reduced populations, such as sapodilla (*Manilkara sp*), cachimbo (*Platymiscium sp*), tempisque (*Sideroxylon sp*), ojoche (*Brosimum sp*) and ron ron (*Astronium sp*).

Among the animals that can be found are deer, agoutis, peccaries, coaties, pacas, the margay, ocelot, puma, white-faced monkey (*Cebus capucinus*), the river otter or water dog (*Lutra longicoudis*), the porcupine (*Coendou mexicanus*), the anteater (*Tamandua mexicanos*), the kinkajou (*Potos flavus*) and the Tayra or toluco (*Eira barbara*); and birds such as the king of vultures (*Sarcoramphus papa*), the crested guan (*Penelope purpurescens*), the curasaw (*Crax rubra*), the white hawk (*Leucopternis sp*), the laughing falcon (*Procnias sp*), which migrates to the peninsula in the dry season, the tinamou (*Rypturellus sp*), the spectacled owl (*Pulsatrix sp*), the long tailed manakin or toledo (*Chiroxiphia sp*), the Euphonia (*Euphonia sp*), the red-footed honeycreeper (*Cyanerpes sp*), among others.

These areas can be accessed from the towns described above and along specially prepared trails.

Karen Mogensen Reserve and the Cerro Escondido Inn

The Karen Mogensen Wildlife Refuge is part of the biological corridor of the Nicoya Peninsula, thanks to the forest regeneration that has occurred through land purchases made by the Ecological Association of Paquera, Lepanto and Cóbano since the beginning. Part of this land was acquired with Italian public funds and private donations thanks to GEV Modena - Foreste per Sempre ODV. All this has allowed a restoration of the natural ecosystem, which has since recovered its biodiversity.



It is located 20 km southwest of Playa Naranjo, within the Nicoya Peninsula Protected Zone and the Peninsular Biological Corridor. It is between 9.85 and 9.88 degrees north latitude, and between 85.04 and 85.08 degrees west longitude, Nicoya Peninsula, Costa Rica.



Minimum altitude: 130 meters above sea level and a maximum altitude: 510 meters above sea level, with an extension: 630 to 750 hectares.

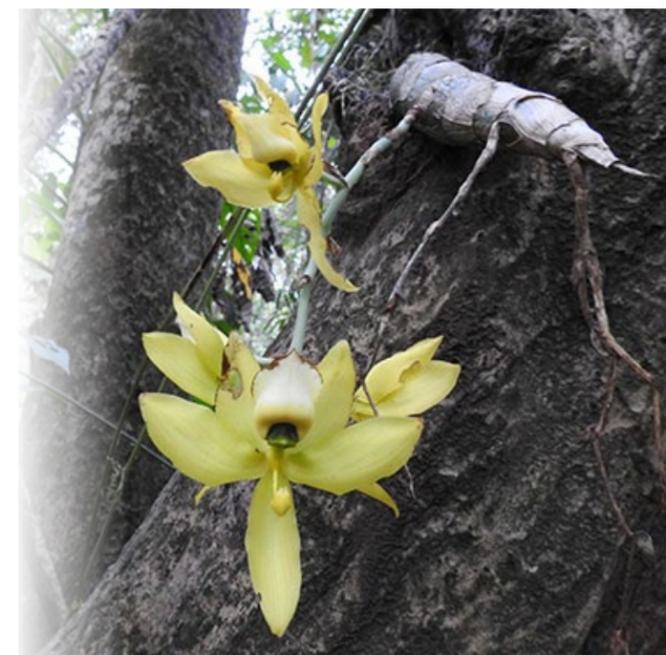


Annual average temperature: 25° C

The reserve is characterized mainly by transitional secondary forest with portions of dry forest and others of humid forest (according to Holdridge's habitat classification, 1967). In fact, along with the extensive dry forest typical of northwestern Costa Rica, the presence of different watercourses and streams has provided the growing conditions for a rainforest. In some parts of the area there are gallery forests.

In addition to preserving an **incredible amount of biodiversity, the reserve**, thanks to the forest that retains large quantities of water, also represents a very important water contribution due to the presence of springs and watercourses essential for the entire region, without losing from sight that the growth of trees is the natural and therefore the most ecological way to capture carbon dioxide emitted into the atmosphere by the various anthropogenic activities, with the important result of helping to reduce the greenhouse effect, a major contributor to climate change.

It is rich in fauna and offers the most rewarding ecotourism experience in the southern Nicoya Peninsula. This 9 km² patch of tropical-humid dry primary and secondary forest functions as a private and tourist reserve and it has become the most important link in an expanding biological corridor extending between Cabo Blanco Absolute Nature Reserve, 85 km south of the tip of the peninsula, and Barra Honda National Park, 50 km north of Guanacaste.





Species conservation

Fence removal, tree planting and natural regeneration has returned this former farmland parcel into a fully functioning jungle ecosystem.

Endangered plant species such as: **ron ron, mahogany, teak, and ebony** grow in the reserve, while white-faced and howler monkeys abound, and deer roam the forest, prey to elusive pumas. **More than 240 species of birds** have been observed, including curassows, motmots, long-tailed manakins, owls and three-wattled spectacled bellbirds.

A total of 5 km of well-maintained trails run through the reserve, leading to lookout points with amazing views of the Gulf of Nicoya, as well as to one of the country's most impressive waterfalls "**Catarata Velo de Novia**" (Bridal Veil Falls), which cascades down a rounded cliff before dropping into a deep, turquoise swimming hole.

Tourist activities

Hikers can stay at the lodge of the beautiful Karen Mogensen Wildlife Reserve Refuge to admire nature in all its splendor, take a bath in the waters of its springs that last throughout the year, in its pools shaded by lush trees and hike along its trails to different parts of the forest, admire the coastal scenery from its viewpoint at one of the highest points of its hill.

It has a common dining area, gas and wood-burning stove, rustic cabins with restrooms, in-suite shower, balconies overlooking the forest and natural music. It has a variety of offerings for walking and for natural enjoyment, such as:

 **Cerro Escondido** is a beautiful lodge located in the middle of the forest of the Karen Mogensen Reserve on Costa Rica's Nicoya Peninsula. Discover the primary forest and enjoy walks

in the morning for bird watching and to the lookout point to watch the sunset, take a dip in the natural pools of the spectacular Velo de la Novia waterfall.

 **El Mirador Trail:** This is a tour through the forest, during which you will be able to observe birds. In addition, from the viewpoint, you will be able to contemplate the beautiful Gulf of Nicoya.

 **"Velo de Novia Waterfall"**, located in the refuge.

 **Visit and swim in the waterfall:** It is a beautiful and impressive waterfall of crystalline waters, surrounded by refreshing pools where you can bathe.

 **Birdwatching:** Bird lovers can go birding around 5 or 6 am. to the trails to identify some of the 240 species of birds.

 **Transportation by horseback:** For those who enjoy horseback riding, you can ride up to the lodge on horseback from the village of Montaña Grande. Duration: 1 hour. Guide included.

 **Visit to Venado Island:** Boat ride through the mangroves of the Gulf of Nicoya, seabird watching, visit to Venado Island and typical lunch at the site. Guide included.

The Name

In memory of Karen Mogensen Fischer, a Danish-born environmentalist who, together with her husband, the Swede Nils Olof Wessberg, were pioneers of conservation in Costa Rica, creating in the 1960s, with funds raised in their countries, the first protected area, the Cabo Blanco RNA, a site of great interest and importance for conservation on the Nicoya Peninsula.

How to get there

Take route 27 until you reach the Puntarenas ferry, here you take the ferry to Playa Naranjo (tickets can be purchased online), and after getting off the ferry turn left for 400m until you reach the hotel O'Pacifico.

Waze: <https://waze.com/ul/hd1g80j4du>

What to bring

-  Comfortable clothes
-  Bathing suit
-  Repellent
-  Sunscreen
-  Snacks
-  Water
-  Walking shoes

-  High car
-  No camping
-  Pets allowed
-  Parking

Cost:

- **Standard rooms for 2 persons** (queen bed or 2 twin beds) \$130/2 persons
- **Double rooms** (2 queen beds) \$180/4 persons. (breakfast included)
- **Karen Mogensen Waterfall Tour** \$35 (includes snack)

Please note: ASEPALECO requests that all visitors make reservations for stays at the Cerro Escondido eco-lodge and for one day hikes. All visitors must be accompanied by a guide. Please call 506-2650-0607 or email asepalec@racsa.co.cr.

Hours: M-S from 09:00 am to 17:00 pm

More information:

-  costa-rica-guide.com/photos
-  www.biometeo.org
-  quebuenlugar.com
-  opacificohotel.com

 San Ramón de Río Blanco, Península de Nicoya



CENTRAL PACIFIC Conservation Area (ACOPAC)

It covers the lands between the community of Manzanillo, in the extreme north of the province of Puntarenas, to the Baru River in the canton of Aguirre and the lands in between in the southwest of the Central Valley and part of the high mountain lands in the Tamanca Mountain Range.

There are important ecosystems such as: mangroves, high Andean moors located in the northernmost part of the planet, peatlands, which have been declared a RAMSAR site and, as a historical fact, it is important to note that ACOPAC protects the first national park declared for the country (Robledales National Park, established in 1945) and Los Quetzales National Park, decreed in 2006).

ACOPAC represents 11% of the national territory (562,552 hectares). It is a region full of contrasts as a result of its varied relief, climatic diversity, biodiversity and historical colonization patterns. It includes 16 of the 34 most important watersheds for Costa Rica, 11

of the 12 life zones, 7 of the 9 transitions and presents the 6 altitudinal levels into which the country is divided. In addition, ACOPAC is home to the Turrubares hills, which along with the soils of Salinas Bay in Guanacaste, were the first points to emerge from the seabed to form the Costa Rican territory.

Protected Areas in this guide:

- San Lucas Island National Park
- Isla Pájaros Biological Reserve
- Puntarenas Wetland Estuary and Associated Mangroves
- La Ensenada Wildlife Refuge (Mixed)
- Peñas Blancas Wildlife Refuge
- Montes de Oro Protected Zone
- Tivives Protective Zone



San Lucas National Park

Protecting history sea and forest

The attraction of this park is not only its impressive biodiversity, but also its dark past: its historical importance and cultural legacy. Located in the Pacific off the coast of the city of Puntarenas, this island functioned as a prison between 1873 and 1991 and was known as the most brutal in the country. In 2001, it was declared a Wildlife Refuge and on August 10, 2020, it became Costa Rica's 30th National Park.

In its 472 hectares, whose altitude ranges between 0 and 220 meters above sea level, the tropical dry forest life zone can be found.



It has a rich variety of fauna: monkeys, squirrels, armadillos, deer, bats, raccoons, snakes, crocodiles, among other species of reptiles and birds, as well as hammerhead sharks, manta rays and turtles that inhabit this national park waters.

Located in the Gulf of Nicoya, a region that has had an important human settlement since 3000 years ago, San Lucas Island documents the earliest occupation between 1000 and 1500 years of our era. At least eight archaeological sites with housing, domestic and funerary characteristics have been located. In the excavation site known as Vigilante Alto, a funerary and domestic-habitational sector was found with ceramics, pre-Hispanic lithics and a metal artifact.

At the time of the arrival of the Spaniards, San Lucas Island was known as Chara Island by the local Indians, who belonged to the chiefdom of Paro, which also included the islands of Chira, Venado and part of the coast of the Nicoya Peninsula. By colonial times, only vestiges of the indigenous presence remained.

Known as one of the most brutal prisons in the country, it is now open to the public to revalue its cultural, historical and natural character.

Some of the outstanding architectural elements of the prison are:

1. The berth

Essential access for people and provisioning. Concrete structure in contact with seawater.



2. The Stone Walkway

Element of connection and conductor of the main flow of the area.



3. The chapel

Architectural and symbolic element par excellence.



4. The hole

For bad and incorrigible behavior, such as killing another prisoner, inmates at San Lucas prison island were lowered into the "hole," literally a hole in the middle of a large concrete disk on top of what was designed to be a cistern to hold rainwater.



This underground dungeon actually contained water, sometimes up to a man's stomach, so the unfortunate souls condemned to this dreadful punishment could not sit, let alone lie down or sleep, no matter how many days and nights they had to endure this torture.



5. The Command

6. The access cells

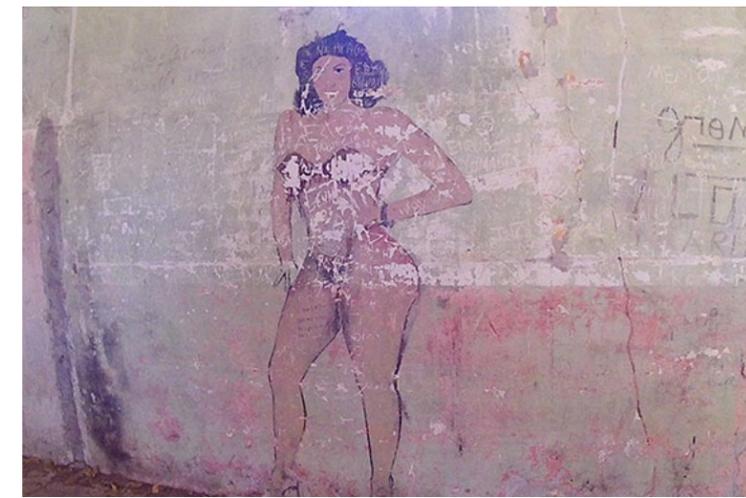
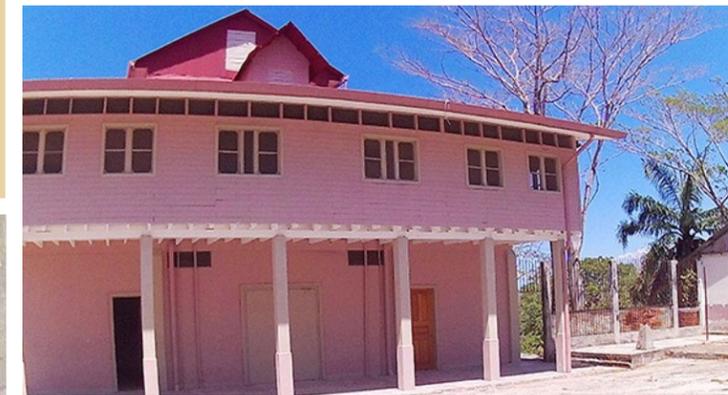
7. The pavilions: High historical and cultural value

8. The dispensary

9. Las Jachas neighborhood: Symbol of the diversity of strata and ways of life on the island. The houses of the "Las Jachas" neighborhood are considered structures of cultural value, representative of a way of life present in the history of the island.

Other structures

The island has two houses, several ruins, stone corrals, internal roads, and more.



Nature

Fauna

a. Ichthyofauna

The marine-coastal ichthyofauna of San Lucas Island National Park is represented by 29 families, with the grunts (*Haemulidae*) having the largest number of species (6), while 14 families (including *Apogonidae*, *Aulostomidae*, *Balistidae*, *Myliobatidae* and *Muraenidae*) are represented by only one species.

In addition, there are other attractive marine fauna: octopuses (*Octopus sp.*); sea slugs at Hacienda Vieja and Bellavista beaches; jellyfish (*Cnidaria*) at El Coco beach and sea turtles near El Inglés beach and at the Muelle.

b. Amphibians and Reptiles

Only the common toad (*Bufo marinus*) is reported; it belongs to the family Bufonidae.

On the other hand, 17 species of reptiles belonging to 10 families are recorded.

c. Bird life

In the avifauna group of Isla San Lucas National Park, a total of 40 species of birds are reported, of which 9 are migratory and 31 residents.

Resident species, including the magnificent frigate bird (*Fregata magnificens*), brown pelican (*Pelecanus occidentales*), Mexican dove (*Columbina inca*) and black vulture (*Coragyps atratus*), are among the most abundant in San Lucas Island National Park.



d. Terrestrial mammals

Seven species of bats, as well as the white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*), armadillo (*Dasypus novemcinctus*), variegated squirrel (*Sciurus variegatoides*), raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), the anteater (*Tamandua mexicana*), spotted skunk (*Spilogale putorius*), collared peccary (*Pecari tajacu*), and the howler monkey (*Alouatta palliata*).



Flora

The island has a total of 93 species of trees and shrubs.

Recommendations

-  Make your reservations personally or through the tour operator in the System of Collection and Reservations (SICORE) on SINAC's web page.
-  The boat providing transportation must have its civil liability policies, current navigation certificate, personal safety devices (life jackets) and collective (safety ring with its respective lanyard) and fire extinguisher.
-  Consume fluids at least 3 days before visiting the shelter in the dry season with high temperatures and in the rainy season with high temperatures and humidity. Bring at least 2 liters of drinking water for consumption during the visit.
-  Avoid the use of single-use plastics as much as possible, use other materials, conserve your trash and transfer it back to the boat.
-  Don't forget to bring any medication you take on a daily basis that are vital for your health.
-  Apply sunscreen at least every hour.
-  Food is not sold at the lodge, so it is recommended that you bring your own food or hire it from your tour operator.
-  Take a well-charged mobile phone not only to take photos on this beautiful island, but to be able to enjoy the 16 QR code points distributed throughout the island and the interesting information that they provide on each area. They will provide you with a full-fledged guided tour.
-  Wear cool, comfortable clothing and preferably protection for your head (cap, hat and others).
-  Closed shoes, preferably for hiking.
-  Carry your ticket or proof of payment at all times. ASP officials may request it at any time.
-  Follow the instructions or recommendations given by officials, guides and existing ASP signage.
-  Stay on the trail, do not interact with wildlife, do not feed them or take close-up photographs, do not touch them.
-  Always keep your personal belongings in your backpack, check at all times if you have them.
-  Do not use devices that cause noise pollution (radios, speakers, cell phones).
-  Do not enter the ASP with pets.
-  The consumption of tobacco, drugs and alcoholic beverages is not allowed according to current regulations.
-  Campfires are not allowed.
-  The extraction of flora and fauna products and by-products is not allowed.
-  Do not touch or alter the walls of the infrastructure.



What to bring

- Comfortable clothes
- Bathing suit
- Repellent
- Sunscreen
- Walking shoes
- Strong meal for picnic
- Snacks
- Water
- Cap
- Camera

How to get there

San Lucas Island National Park is located in the province of Puntarenas, just 2 hours and 15 minutes from San Jose, arriving by two routes:

1. Travel along the José María Castro Madriz highway, better known as Route 27.
2. Travel along Route 1, which includes stretches of the Bernardo Soto highway, passing through the Interamerican Highway (Alajuela to Puntarenas) and then taking detours along Route 23 or Route 17, heading towards the Central Canton of Puntarenas.

Access to San Lucas Island National Park is only by sea, for which there are options of transportation and tour operation services provided in Costa Rica, generally departing from the Tourist Pier of the ICT, located on Calle 27, El Carmen, Puntarenas Province (it is recommended that you make your reservations ahead of time).

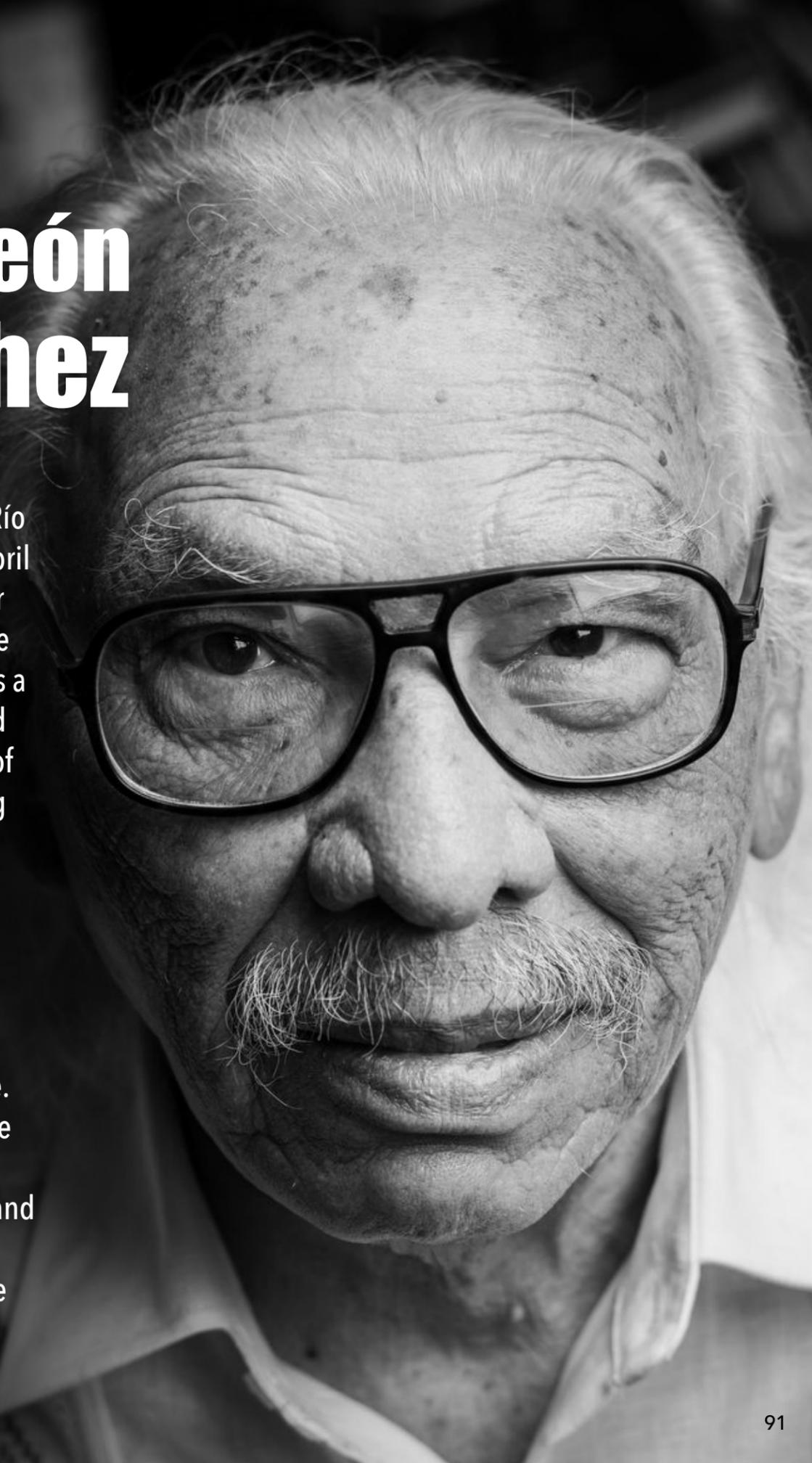
reservaciones.sanlucas@sinac.go.cr

(506) 2200-4051

sinac.go.cr/ES/ac/acopac/pnisl/Paginas

José León Sánchez

José León Sánchez (Río Cuarto, Costa Rica, April 19, 1929 - November 15, 2022, San Vicente de Paúl, Heredia) was a self-taught writer and poet. Known as one of the most outstanding prison authors of the twentieth century in Latin America and as one of the most outstanding and unusual authors in Costa Rican literature. Sánchez had a unique way of combining humor with the raw and stark realism typical of the era in which he lived.



 [Return to Map](#)

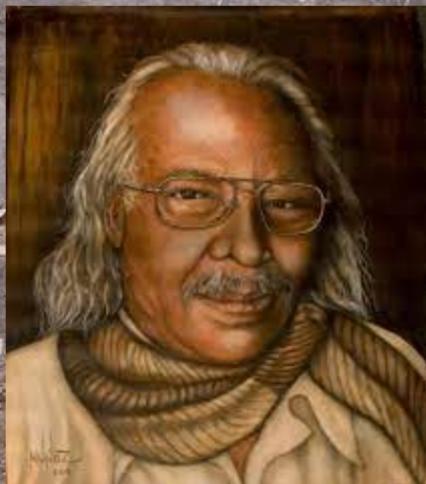
He studied law at the University of Buenos Aires. He was awarded the Magón Culture Prize 2017, was named Doctor Honoris Causa at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM, National Autonomous University of Mexico). He was awarded the Nelson Mandela Presea by the NHRC in July 2018. In August 2018, he received the Inter-American Award for Legal Merit granted by the Inter-American Bar Association. In addition to Pío Baroja, the most important award in Spain for a writer; Ernest Hemingway Award, from Casa de las Américas; National Award from the Writers Society of the University of Costa Rica; Pablo Neruda Award, from the Writers of Chile; Honorary Citizen, in Jalisco, Mexico; Clarín Award, among others. He was appointed to the United Nations World Commission for the Treatment of Offenders and traveled to 64 countries that have not yet abolished the death penalty.

When he was 20 years old, he was accused, tortured and unjustly convicted of stealing jewels from the Basilica de los Angeles and of killing a temple guard, 1950. José León Sánchez, whom La Nación would call the monster of the Basilica, was excommunicated by the Catholic Church, the number 1713 was branded on his chest and he was sentenced to life imprisonment at the San Lucas prison island. After serving a 30-year sentence, he began to write while in prison, and was released on June 8, 1970 and became the most widely read Costa Rican writer.

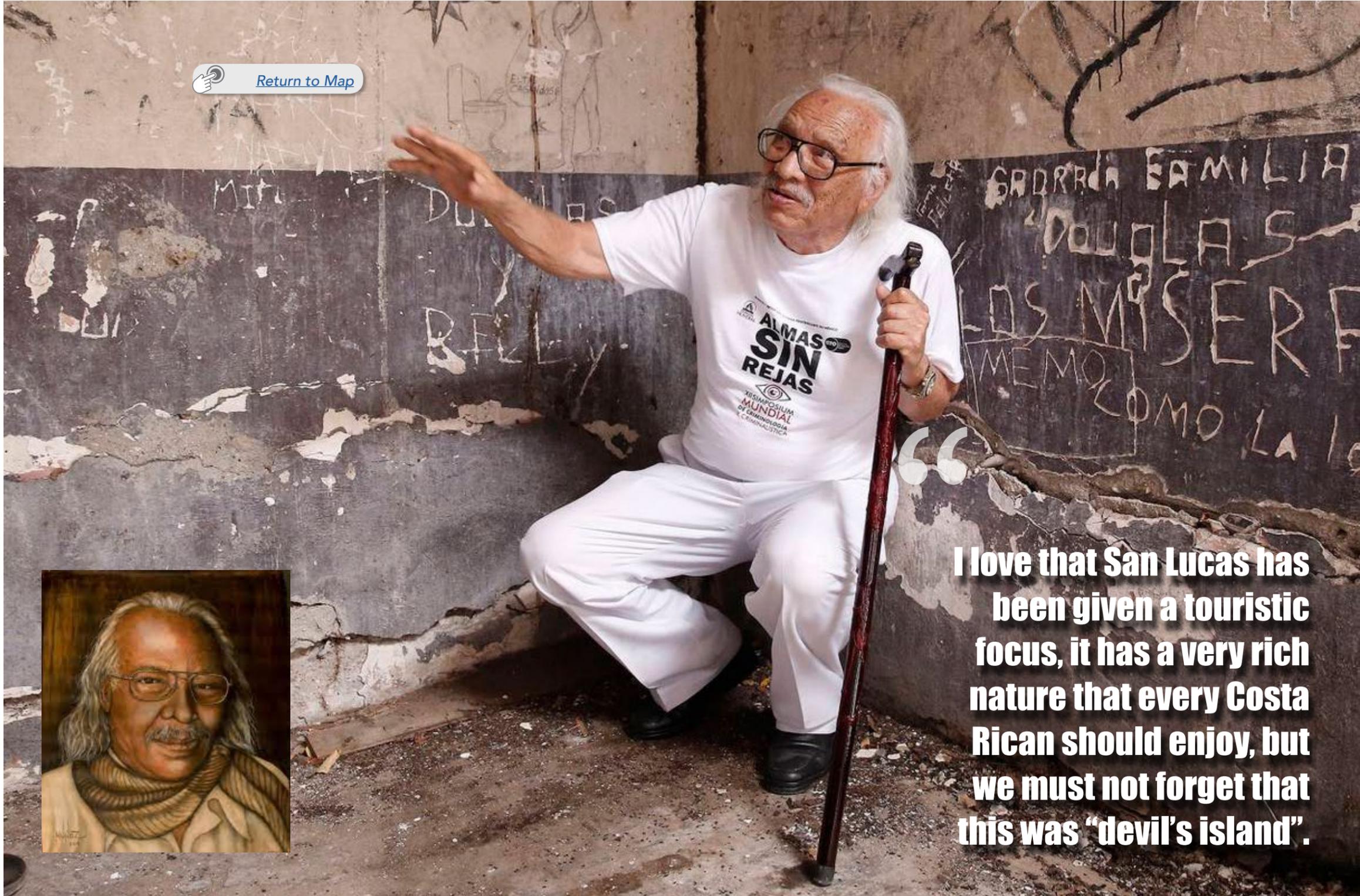
Freedom and declaration of innocence

In 1988 the Constitutional Chamber of Costa Rica made an observation on the José León Sánchez case, and that same year the Supreme Court of Justice of Costa Rica, Chamber III declared José León Sánchez innocent of the Basilica crime. The Catholic Church asked for forgiveness through Pope John Paul II.

A widely recognized and award-winning writer for his extensive literary work, don José León Sánchez



Among his most outstanding publications: *La isla de los hombres solos*, published in 1968, narrates the writer's time in the Isla San Lucas prison. This novel, by José León Sánchez, represents one of the great best sellers of Latin American literature. Millions of readers around the world have shuddered to read a narrative so consistent and, at the same time, written with anger and passion, as only the protagonist of a true story could have.



I love that San Lucas has been given a touristic focus, it has a very rich nature that every Costa Rican should enjoy, but we must not forget that this was “devil’s island”.

José León Sánchez found refuge in Mexico, during the first years of his freedom, where in 1973 they had already filmed the movie *La isla de los hombres solos*. He wrote thirty literary works, including *Tenochtitlán: la última batalla de los aztecas*, *Cuando nos alcanza el ayer*, *La cattleya negra*, *Cuando canta el caracol*, *A la izquierda del sol*, *La colina del buey*, *Campanas para llamar al viento*, *¡Mujer... todavía la noche es joven!*, *Tortura: el crimen de Colima*, *La niña que vino de la luna*, *El corazón de Juan*, *Los gavilanes vuelan hacia*

el sur, *La luna de la hierba roja*, etc. His books have been translated into English, Italian, Russian, German, Dutch, French and Mandarin. He is the most widely read and best known Costa Rican writer in the world. He has sold more than three million copies of his bestseller “*La isla de los hombres solos*” and several million copies of his masterpiece “*Tenochtitlán*”. He passed away on November 15, 2022.

 howlermag.com/es/san-lucas-island/
 dircultura.go.cr/premios-nacionales



The HEPyMA provides critical ecosystem services for resident birds and acts as a stopover site for migratory birds.



Puntarenas Estuary Wetland and Associated Mangroves (HEPyMA)

In front of the city of Puntarenas, with an area of 52.4 km² is located the Puntarenas estuary, which is one of the most important wetlands of the mangrove system of the Central Pacific of Costa Rica. It is one of the most important in Central America. Ecologically, it belongs to the salty forest region of the Pacific Isthmus. It has been shown that 95% of the fish species in the Gulf of Nicoya depend on the mangrove for feeding and reproduction. The HEPyMA is an important feeding, refuge and reproduction site for a great variety of wild species, and therefore its protection and conservation is of special importance.

It is directly influenced by the Lagarto, Guacimal, Sardinal, Aranjuez, Seco, Naranjo, and Quebrada de Palo rivers. In the inner part, it is bordered entirely by land dedicated to agriculture and livestock. The estuary and mangroves of Puntarenas can be explored by boat, kayak or paddle board, as the calm waters allow it. In addition, you can tour the network of canals to observe birds and the different types of mangroves that reproduce in the area.

The mangrove areas and beaches of the HEPyMA represent the sources of income for the families that exploit the commercially important species, including mangrove cockles (*Anadara tuberculosa* and *A. similis*) cockles (*Larkinia grandis*, has a permanent ban), hard shell clams (*Leukoma* sp.), clams (*Psammotreta asthenodon*), salt water clams (*Tagellus* sp, *Mytella guyanensis*), polychaetes (*Americonuphis reesei*) and conches (*Lobatus* sp and *Melongena* sp).

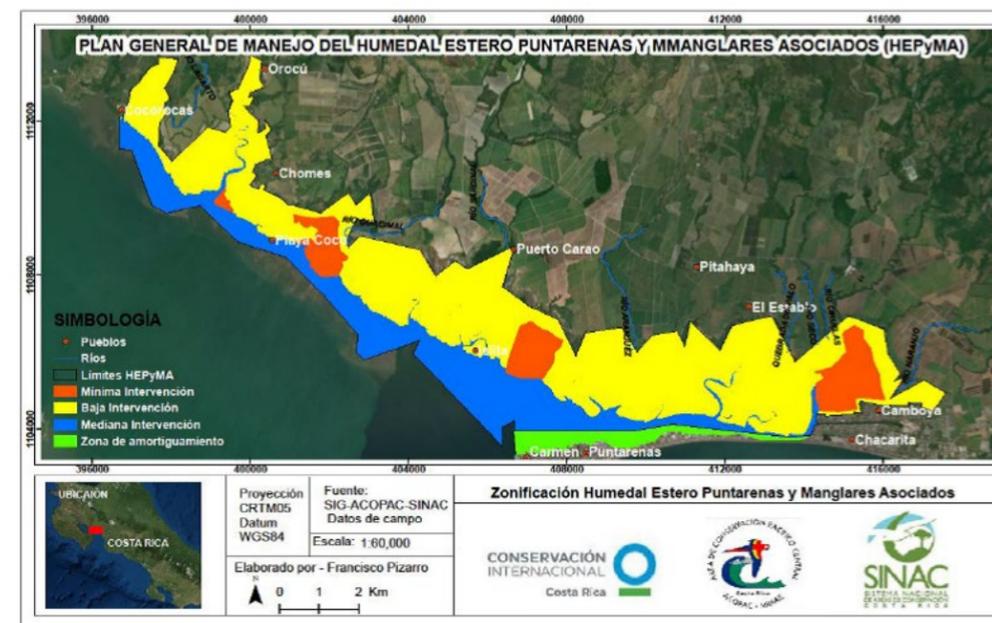
Fauna species of interest for tourism are located in the trees and sandy beaches, the most common are the white-faced monkey, howler monkey, squirrels, iguanas, coatis and raccoons, as well as crocodiles, caimans and iguanas. The HEPyMA is a feeding and resting site for more than 50 bird species, including the roseate spoonbill heron (Marín, 2006), as well as a protection, refuge and feeding area for a wide range of fish and crustacean species that inhabit this type of ecosystem (Rojas et al., 1994, SINAC, 2008).

More than 50 species of birds, one of which is the endangered roseate spoonbill heron.

Associated with the water bodies of the intertidal zone and mud, there are diverse species of fish, crustaceans, annelids and mollusks.

The HEPyMA provide critical ecosystem services for resident birds and act as stopover sites for migratory birds. In the coastal zone associated with the Chomes community, 47 species of birds of the sandpiper group were reported (Sandoval, 2013), which mainly use muddy coastal areas for feeding (Stiles & Skutch, 1989; O'Brien et al., 2006). The PSA does not report any sites used for bird nesting and reproduction. Due to their tourist attraction,

the birds and their mangrove environment have economic and ecological attributes of interest for tourism, research and management of the HEPyMA. They play an important role in the chain of services and income generation, especially due to the visits that the tour operators make during high tide, in the mangroves associated with the Zapotal, Pitahaya and Zacate estuaries.



How to get there

By bus, from San José, take the bus at the Empresarios Unidos terminal, on Av. 10 and 12, 16th Street, Barrio Los Ángeles, San José. Tel. 2221-6600.

By car, from San José take route 27 for 96 kms. Several tolls must be passed through.

In Puntarenas, a number of tour operators offer tourism services.



Mangrove tour (Abangares River)

Tour through the canals of the Abangares River with the company of a local guide. Observe the environment in areas of such importance for ecological balance, where a great amount of fish, mollusks, crustaceans, echinoderms, as well as plants of great beauty can be found.

La Ensenada Sanctuary

Beautiful views of the Gulf of Nicoya, the mangroves and salt flats, natural trails, warm cabins equipped with hot water, terrace overlooking the gulf, safety box, handcrafted skies, unique details surrounded by large green areas in the middle of the forest, will be your travel companions.

You will be part of the typical Costa Rican country life and will be able to enjoy our excellent Costa Rican Italian menu.

The 800-acre Hacienda Ensenada is managed by the Tretti family, who raise cattle, horses and produce salt and hay. In addition, we have developed a three-pronged reforestation project: the return to forest form of much land degraded by cattle production; planting of local species in other areas; and the

cultivation of exotic species. Today we are proud to have more than 30% of the farm covered by forest, which helps preserve the natural habitat.

In 1977, we began to preserve La Ensenada Sanctuary, including the mangrove swamps at the mouth of the Abangares River. The area is of great importance because it contains one of the last areas of primary and secondary forest in the northern part of the province of Puntarenas.

The area includes three types of humid environment: mangroves, a freshwater pool, and the coastline along the Gulf of Nicoya. These ecosystems are of vital importance and must be protected to prevent their disappearance.



Horseback riding tour

This tour has a duration of approximately 2 hours, where you can ride beautiful specimens accompanied by a local guide. Ride through the farm and enjoy the trails and landscape that the Ensenada Lodge has to offer. During the tour you will see a variety of birds, monkeys and other species.



Tractor tour

This tour covers an important part of La Ensenada Sanctuary and, just like the horseback tour, lasts about 2 hours. A local guide will take you to visit the salt flats, the lagoon area, a viewpoint where you can enjoy the Nicoya Gulf and its imposing beauty from the perspective of this unique mode of transportation.



Tour to Palo Verde (Bebedero River)

This tour visits the area surroundings Palo Verde National Park, which is located between the Bebedero and Tempisque rivers and has an area of approximately 18,418 hectares.

An alternative to rest and meditate in an environment of peaceful nature surrounded by beautiful flowers and birds that will make you forget that you are only 2 hours away from downtown San Jose.



Peñas Blancas

National Wildlife Refuge

The refuge is located within the Montes de Oro Protected Zone in the Canton of Miramar, Puntarenas Province.

It extends across more than 5,920 hectares and protects a wide variety of flora and fauna, including agoutis, deer, raccoons, butterflies, monkeys and more. Although the Wildlife Refuge is not located in one of the most popular areas of the country, it is incredibly unique and a wonderful place for people who love the outdoors.

In addition to protecting the headwaters of numerous rivers and preserving and increasing wildlife, it is a refuge where you can enjoy various outdoor activities, such as hiking, bathing in rivers free of pollution, bird watching and wildlife observation.

Flora & Fauna

The reserve's fauna is composed of more than 64% of the land covered by beautiful, lush forests. With different types of terrain and landscapes, the Peñas Blancas Wildlife Refuge transitions from very humid forests to lowland tropical forests through various elevations. Volcanic rock and fluvial canyons make this place a truly unique landscape. Gumbo-limbo trees, ferns, oak and cedar that dot the land are some of the thousands of species that inhabit the area. Due to the variety of trees in the park, more than 70 species of birds have been documented, making it an ideal place for birdwatchers.

The refuge is named after 'White Cliffs', which are diatomite deposits in the canyons along various riverbeds in the region. Resembling white chalk, these deposits are actually the remains of algae that were once common in this area thousands



of years ago, when Central America was submerged underwater. With a rich history of landslides, this refuge has these deposits, formed from shells. Travelers will not want to miss the Jabonal River, which crosses almost directly through the refuge, and has a large canyon where travelers will be able to observe these deposits.

The climate of the area is special for the cultivation of coffee and, therefore, it is possible to find plantations of this golden grain in the area, in addition to the typical livestock of rural areas.

Currently, rural tourism is being developed and with the help of "vaquianos", or local guides, it is possible to visit places of great beauty and freshness.

When to Visit

The best time to plan your trip is during the dry season, which runs from December to April. During the rainy season, landslides can occur, posing a great danger to travelers due to steep canyons and road flooding.

How to get to the Refuge

A four-wheel drive vehicle is the best way to go to this area, as the roads can be a bit dangerous and challenging to drive. From San José, the Pan-American Highway runs west to the town of Miramar, which is the exit travelers should take.

From the Pan-American Highway, take the road to San Jerónimo de Esparza (route 742) until you reach the town of Peñas Blancas.

Port Caldera



The name of Port Caldera has been known since 1577, it is known for the Caldera beach and its surfing, mangroves and Mata de Limón, in addition to the port facilities, as the main port of the Pacific of Costa Rica, which is of great importance for the development of the region. Port Caldera presents an interesting dynamic, the port side and the tourist side. Sitting on the beach, you can enjoy the water of the Pacific Ocean, the sun, a good meal and at the same time watch the large ships anchoring in the Gulf of Nicoya, waiting for their turn to dock and unload.



Esparza



When you enter the town of Esparza, it is important to note that you are entering the second city founded in Costa Rica, in the year 1574. In those days, it was called Ciudad del Espíritu Santo de Esparza, today it is known as Ciudad de Esparza. Also, in 1577 the port of La Caldera, today Port Caldera, the most important port on the Pacific coast of our country, was opened.

Apart from this historical facet of Esparza, one cannot overlook the nickname of the Spartans, "Garroberos", due to the fact that some time ago in Esparza it was common to consume garrobo, or iguana, meat, until the protection of the iguana was decreed. Nevertheless, the nickname has remained in the collective memory and is commonly used to identify a person from Esparza.

Virgin of Candelaria

February 2 is an important date for the people of Esparza because it commemorates the day of the patron saint of the canton, the Virgin of La Candelaria, protector of Esparza. It is a patronal feast and is celebrated for 2 weeks



around the central Catholic church with mechanical games, bingo, meals, masses, novenas, parades, clowns or masquerades accompanied by troupes.

City of Miramar



Formerly, it was known as Los Quemados (The Burned). One explanation might be the coloration of the mountains, which gives the impression that they have been burned. Another is that, previously, there was the custom, by hunters, to set fire to the hills every year. The origin of the name Miramar is due to the fact that the sea, specifically the Gulf of Nicoya, is easily observed.

There are two other localities that should be mentioned: Cedral, a community that clings to preserve its rural customs, and the Catholic temple San José de Cedral, declared of patrimonial interest. The other locality is Zapotal, with its cloud forest and part of the Pájaro Campana Biological Corridor.

City of Puntarenas



Puntarenas has stood out over the years. Since 1720, the name is mentioned in documents of Spanish conquistadors who arrived in the area. It is given the title of city and main port of the Pacific coast of our country. It is declared a port on September 17, 1858. Like any port, it is influenced by a variety of cultures including Chinese, Afro-Caribbean, Panamanian, Nicaraguan, to name a few, and the porteños, or people of Puntarenas, are known to be friendly, sociable and hardworking.

You will find a variety of restaurants in Puntarenas, with main dishes based on seafood. Chinese food and other types of cuisine can also be found in the area. In addition, you can enjoy an extensive beach, mangrove tours or tours to the islands. Celebrate the Virgen del Carmen every July 16, enjoy troupes and quietly watch a beautiful sunset.



Montezuma



The town of Montezuma, located on the Nicoya Peninsula, is an interesting mix of beaches, flora and fauna, adventure, gastronomy, bohemian atmosphere, artistic residents and much more. For these reasons, in recent years, it has become the perfect destination for those in search of an exciting and safe vacation.

The town of Montezuma is closely related to the Cabo Blanco Absolute Reserve, whose creation was a milestone that led to the establishment of the current National System of Conservation Areas. In addition, it has beaches that delight those who enjoy them and a waterfall that is an icon of the Montezuma area. It is a must-see site.

The artisan market and the perseverance of its inhabitants to maintain a town that protects the environment, are factors that make Montezuma noteworthy.

You can get to Montezuma by land, which includes a sector crossing the Gulf of Nicoya or by air, arriving at Tambor.

Santa Teresa



Located in the southern sector of the Nicoya Peninsula, is the town of Santa Teresa - Mal País, known across the globe thanks to its beaches, surfing, people, natural beauty and many other qualities, a destination visited by domestic and foreign tourists.

Santa Teresa - Mal País, is a melting pot of nationalities that can be perceived when moving through the streets of the town, not leaving out the Ticos, who with an open heart accepted the foreigners who decided to change their residence.

While in Santa Teresa - Mal País, you can participate in a variety of tourist activities, including zip lining, hiking in the forest, surfing, sport fishing, yoga, and more. Enjoy the local gastronomy, sunsets or simply take a walk along the beach.

Mal País - Santa Teresa cultural: taking into account the cosmopolitan nature of the area, you can find a number of multicultural activities.

Gastronomy: Costa Rican and international dishes, an exquisite offer for food lovers. The base

of these dishes, seafood - the most abundant product in the area - a good fried fish, ceviche, rice with seafood, casados, gallo pinto with scrambled eggs and the inevitable gallos, or soft tacos, which can be of cheese, shredded beef, chicken in sauce and many more.

You can get to Santa Teresa by land, which includes a sector crossing the Gulf of Nicoya, or by air.

Tambor is surrounded by forested



mountains that are part of the biological corridor of the Nicoya Peninsula. The north side of the bay borders the Curú Wildlife Reserve, which protects different ecological habitats with a wealth of wildlife. In front of Curú is Tortuga Island, a tropical paradise that can be visited by boat from Tambor.

South of Tambor Bay there is a small fishing community and a boat dock. This bay offers one of the few safe anchorage sites on the Pacific side of Costa Rica.

The village of Tambor is very small and has preserved a dreamy and relaxed atmosphere. It has a supermarket, souvenirs, car rental, and tour operators. Some of the hotels in Tambor are beachfront, but most accommodations are located further inland, where the Panica River creates a beautiful river environment.



Tambor also has the only airport on the southern Nicoya Peninsula offering flights to San Jose and other areas in Costa Rica.

From the pier in the south of Tambor, you can walk to the end of the bay and then about 4 km more to reach Cocalitos beach with the El Chorro waterfall that flows into the ocean. A pool in the rocks offers a luxurious natural bath.

Among the activities that this tourist area offers, we have diving tours on Tortuga Island. With its pristine white sand beaches and tall arched palm trees, Tortuga is everything you imagined of a tropical island. The islands also offer the best diving in the southern Nicoya Peninsula. In addition, fishing, horseback riding and golf tours can be found in the area.

There are two 9-hole golf courses near Tambor: one is located north of town, at the Los Delfines hotel, and the other south of Tambor at the Tango Mar Resort. Tambor is a place with special characteristics due to the variety of tourist attractions, undeveloped but spectacular beaches, waterfalls, protected areas, bird watching, turtles and humpback whales.

Lito Pérez

Soccer in Costa Rica is passion, win, lose or draw. Soccer is played all over the country, for this reason there are many stadiums throughout the country and one of them is the Lito Perez Stadium, in honor of the great Buenos Aires player Miguel Angel Perez Treacy known as Lito Perez.



Miguel was born in Puntarenas on November 13, 1904, to a Costa Rican father and an English mother.

Back in the late 1920s, the nascent national soccer was looking for idols and figures that would forever earn a place among the historical figures of the Tico championship.

Miguel was small in stature but enormous in soccer quality and physical power. At 1.62 meters, with dark hair, this porteño arrived in the province of San José in January 1930 to join the Sociedad Gimnástica Española where he demonstrated his abilities and innate quality to score goals for several years.

In the 1929 tournament, in the eight games he played, he scored an average of six goals, which made him one of the main goal scorers in the tournament. He is one of the 22 players who will go down in history, as he played in the first game of a championship final in our country when his club lost 2 to 4 against Heredia.

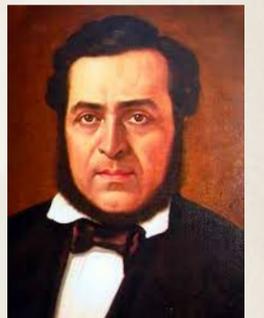
He joined the San Jose team when they traveled to the city of Puntarenas to play a friendly game. Pérez, a small defender, played with the Asturias team. In an exhibition game between the two teams, he made such a good impression that the "Diablos Rojos" invited him to join them in 1924, although he did not play a major role with the Josefino team until the aforementioned 1929 tournament.

Miguel Ángel "Lito" Pérez Treacy was a starter with the "eternal runner-up" for approximately four years. After successfully participating in Gymnastics he returned to his native Puntarenas where he played, once again, with his beloved Asturias. Lito retired at the age of 40 and died in 1959, at the age of 53.

Years after his death, in 1974, the municipal council of the municipality of Puntarenas named the Puntarenas stadium after Lito Pérez.

Juan Rafael Mora Porras

Juan Rafael Mora Porras was born in San José, Costa Rica, on February 8, 1814. He was President of Costa Rica on four consecutive occasions. Don Juanito", as he was called by the Costa Ricans to differentiate him from his relative, the first Head of State Juan Mora Fernandez, is especially credited with having led the country to victory over the filibusters led by William Walker, in the National



Campaign of 1856-1857. It is for this reason that the Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica declared him a "national hero and liberator" on September 16, 2010. Juan Rafael Mora Porras died in Puntarenas, Costa Rica, on September 30, 1860.



Gulf of Nicoya Islands

Rediscover the 23 islands and rocky islets of the Gulf of Nicoya, each with a different attraction. Let yourself be mesmerized by its biodiversity, scenic beauty, culture, beaches, rural tourism, artisanal, sustainable and experiential fishing, adventure, mariculture tours, delicious seafood-based gastronomy and history.

The Gulf of Nicoya presents mangrove swamps, channels, the Tempisque River, contains great marine wealth, in an area of 140 km. long, from Cabo Blanco to Punta Judas. It is the deepest inlet of the sea in Costa Rican lands and bathes the coasts of the provinces of Guanacaste and Puntarenas. They originated geologically in the Tertiary period, in the Miocene epoch.

Here you can take boat tours from the Tempisque River basin to the outer part of the Gulf of Nicoya as well as a varied of other tours to the islands of Berrugate, Chira, Tortuga or the famous San Lucas.

The islands and islets of the Gulf are **Toro, Yuca, Chira, Pájaros, Mario Echandi (1), Mario Echandi (2), Berrugate, Venado, Bejuco, Caballo, San Lucas, Pan de Azúcar, Guayabo, Muertos (Gitana), Jesusita, Cedros, Negritos (east), Negritos (west), Tortuga (Talolinga), Tortuga (Alcatraz), Cabuya, Cabo Blanco and Herradura.**

Most of the islands and all the islets in the Gulf are not habitable by humans, and some of them have proven to be very relevant habitat for seabirds. Among the most outstanding islands are: Chira Island, the largest island in the Gulf, inhabited and dedicated to rural tourism, and San Lucas Island, today a national park, perhaps the most famous, for having been part of the history of Costa Rica. This is the site of what was once the most famous prison in the country and where one of the best known Costa Rican books, *La Isla de los Hombres Solos* by José León Sánchez, was inspired.

Four of the islands of the Gulf have been declared absolutely protected (Cabo Blanco Island in the Cabo Blanco Absolute Natural Reserve, and the Isla Pájaros, Isla Guayabo and Islas Negritos Biological Reserves).

Tortuga Island is the most visited by tourists. The islands of Caballo, Venado, Bejuco, Cedros and Jesusita also offer tourist activities such as rural tourism, artisanal fishing tours, bioluminescence and others.

Most of the communities in the Gulf are fishing communities and have extensive knowledge of the activity. They can even teach you! In fact, if you would like to include fishing in your trip, you can. Local fishermen, who also conduct the trips, will take you to excellent fishing spots, guide you on how to fish with ropes or other techniques and bring you the day's catch for a delicious meal.

Chira Island



Chira is located in the Gulf of Nicoya and is the largest island of the Pacific coast of the country, with a length of 11.5 km and a width of 5.8 km.

Extension 4091,33 ha **Average altitude** 15 masl

Services

- Drinking water
- Restrooms
- Internet

Chira is located on the Costa Rican Pacific coast, specifically in the Gulf of Nicoya, where the Tempisque River flows into. **It is the largest island in the Costa Rican Pacific and the second largest island in Costa Rica.** Approximately 80% of its contour is surrounded by the province of Guanacaste, with Nandayure and Abangares the closest to the island.



Be captivated by the majesty of the landscapes and rolling mountains, the biodiversity of Chira Island and local culture.

Chira Island has a privileged position being in front of the mouth of the Tempisque River. An ancient Chorotega legend tells that Nacome, a powerful priest of the Jaguar God, gave this island to the beautiful princess Chira as a wedding gift and she was the first person to inhabit the island. For this reason, the island is "de Chira".

Chira Island has the greatest biodiversity of tropical dry forest flora in Costa Rica. The eastern part is dominated by mangrove swamps running through the mountains, forests and beautiful beaches of the island. With a number of fascinating ecological systems, you can explore salt marshes and mangroves in a single day, all within a short distance of each other.

Chira's economy is based mainly on artisanal fishing, agriculture and tourism. The latter is promoted

thanks to the natural resources of the island and the amazing natural landscape, such as the Tempisque River and the mangroves. Rural tours, sustainable artisanal fishing and adventure are available. You can also learn about mussel, oyster and shrimp farming or go on a sea bird watching tour.

Chira offers a number of delicious restaurants, with authentic Costa Rican cuisine, including a number of local specialties and various delicacies. You can find anything else you need at the island's convenience stores and hardware stores, ensuring you never have to travel far to stay comfortable with everything you need at your fingertips.

Chira Island is made up of the towns of Bocana, Lagartero, Montero, Pilas, Pochote, Puerto Coloradito, Puerto Mauricio and Puerto Palito, with the village of Nancite being the administrative center of the Chira district. Chira Island has a population of approximately 3,000 inhabitants involved in fishing and agriculture.

Thanks to the support of universities and state institutions, ecotourism and sustainable activities of great benefit to the community and local ecosystems have been established and organized, such as the Association of Artisanal Fishermen, Women Artisans and Women Sowers of Piangua, or mangrove cockles.

How to get there

The Island of Chira can be easily reached by boat from the port city of Puntarenas. Take a daily boat ride from the fish market or rent one from Pajaros or San Pablo. In just 15 minutes you can leave the mainland behind to find yourself surrounded by crystal clear waters and sparkling sand. **From Puntarenas it takes one hour, from Costa de Pájaros 25 minutes and from Puerto San Pablo it takes 15 minutes.**

If you wish to contact a private tour operator for transportation services visit:

jalealpuerto.cr/tours

What to bring

- Repellent
- Sunscreen
- Swimsuit
- Cap and sunglasses
- Walking shoes
- Fresh clothes
- Camera
- Hydration

Public transportation schedule

You can also opt for the public transportation service, which offers the following schedules:

- Boat Costa de Pájaros to Chira Island** 7:50 a.m. - 2:50 p.m.
- Boat from Chira Island to Costa de Pájaros:** 6:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
- Puntarenas (El Muellecito x el mercado) to Chira Island:** Monday to Saturday: 12:30 md. / Sundays: 7:00 a.m.
- Boat from Chira Island to Puntarenas:** Everyday: 6:00 a.m.

To leave from Puntarenas you must arrive at the Municipal Market taking this route, waze.com/ul/hd1g8v8gcz

From Costa de Pájaros: waze.com/ul/hd1g96n9mw.

Both routes are very accessible for any type of vehicle. It is important to keep in mind that you will have to find a place to leave your car while you are on the tour.

Public parking is available in the vicinity of both sites.

CONTACTS

Chira Island: William Quirós, tel 8623-1376.
Joaquin Quiros of the Chira Island Chamber of Tourism: 8392 0164.

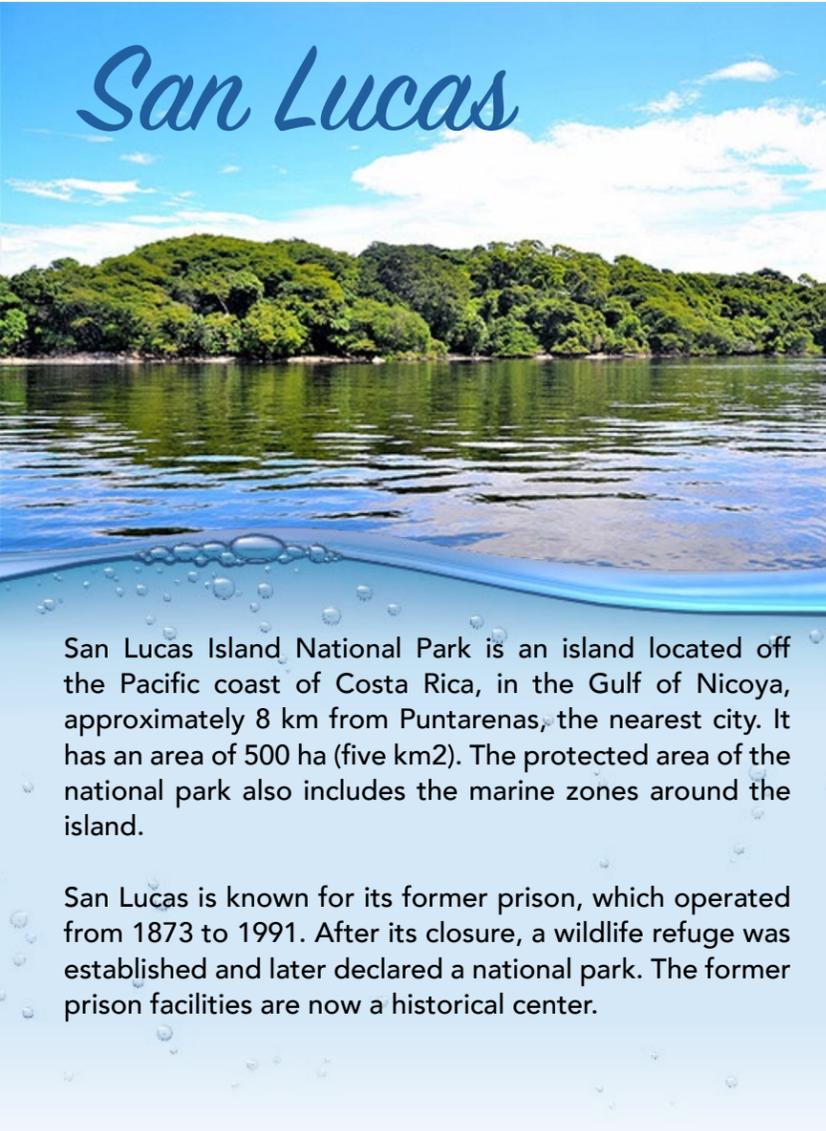
Cocos Tour offers boat service to both islands, tel 8871-6142. The boats leave Puntarenas every day at the time that suits you best.

MORE INFORMATION:
facebook.com/cocospuntarenas/ islachira.com/
jalealpuerto.cr/blog facebook.com/chirafanpage/
islachira.com/como-llegar/

Activities

- Beach Activities
- Flora & Fauna
- Gastronomy
- Horseback riding
- Rural Tourism
- Restaurants
- Handicrafts
- Artisan Fishing
- Bird watching
- Hiking
- Adventure Activities
- Sun & sea
- Recreational Cycling
- Cultural activities

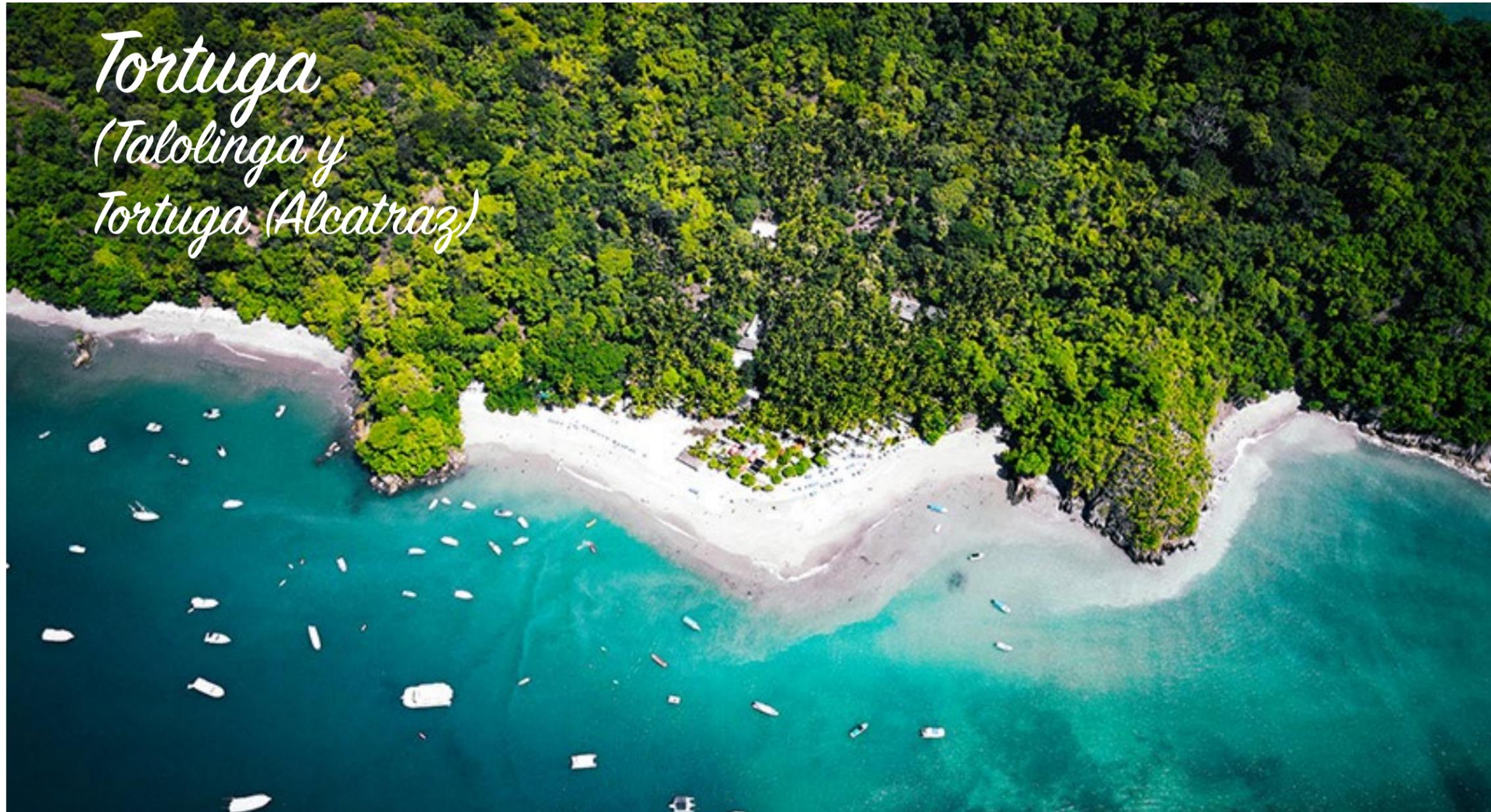
San Lucas



San Lucas Island National Park is an island located off the Pacific coast of Costa Rica, in the Gulf of Nicoya, approximately 8 km from Puntarenas, the nearest city. It has an area of 500 ha (five km²). The protected area of the national park also includes the marine zones around the island.

San Lucas is known for its former prison, which operated from 1873 to 1991. After its closure, a wildlife refuge was established and later declared a national park. The former prison facilities are now a historical center.

Tortuga (Talolinga y Tortuga (Alcatraz))



If you are looking for an option that involves sun, catamaran or boat sailing and a nice atmosphere, you have to visit this natural spot: Tortuga Island.

Isla Tortuga (also spelled Isla Tortugas), is located in front of the Curú Wildlife Refuge. They are actually 2 small islands in close proximity called Alcatraz (60 hectares or 0.6 km²), which is shaped like a turtle, and Tolinga (120 hectares or 1.2 km²). It is an important tourist attraction in

this country, due to its beaches and vegetation. Isla Tortugas is located in the Gulf of Nicoya, 12 nautical miles from Puntarenas (22.22 km).

Tolinga *Discover the magic of a dream Island*

Tolinga Island is the largest of the two islands. It has a small white sand beach, with cliffs on both ends, few waves and strong marine currents. It has a protected forest, awarded the Ecological Blue Flag for more

than five years, a distinction given to beaches in our country that have pollution-free waters. Due to its geographical characteristics, its waters are turquoise and are ideal for swimming.

Activities

Isla Tortuga offers many options for all interests. Spend the whole day resting or opt for different activities including **snorkeling, kayaking, horseback riding tours, nature walks and even different activities and sports such as jet skiing, banana**



What to bring



Repellent



Sunscreen



Swimsuit



Cap and sunglasses



Walking shoes



Fresh clothes



Camera



Hydration

See more information in the protected areas section



boats and paddle boarding. Beach volleyball or "mejengas" (informal soccer games) in the sand are other activities you will find here.

Alcatraz, the smallest island, has no beaches and is surrounded by coral reefs. They are covered with vegetation typical of dry tropical forest, transition to humid.

These wonderful islands are located off the southeast coast of the Nicoya Peninsula and can only be reached by boat. There are a variety of companies that can take you from different parts of the country, so there is no excuse not to visit this paradise of white sand, turquoise waters and beach chairs waiting for you.

Traveling to this tropical island becomes an adventure, since from the moment you get on the catamaran you will begin to enjoy the trip.

Transportation

 For several years companies have been offering all-inclusive tours (transportation, food, live music on catamaran and tours) so you don't have to worry about anything. On the island you will find a souvenir store, a trail that takes you to an impressive viewpoint and food stands, however. Some trails belong to tour operators and it is normal for them to offer the service to their own clients.

It is important to understand that these are one day tours, since there is no hotel service on the island. This allows to preserve the attractiveness of the place, the perfect combination of flora, fauna and sea.

Remember to take pictures of the vegetation and the incredible sunset over the Pacific when you get back. We know that after exploring this paradise you will not want to leave it or you will prefer to tell all your friends to organize the next trip.

By car:
Drive to the Puntarenas Pier
(1h 40min by route 27).



What to bring

-  Repelente
-  Bloqueador solar
-  Traje de baño
-  Gorra y anteojos de sol
-  Zapatos cómodos
-  Ropa cómoda
-  Cámara
-  Hidratación

You can book a tour to Isla Tortuga from Jacó, the Curú Wildlife Refuge, or in the nearby areas of Montezuma. One of the best known points is the dock in Puntarenas, from there the trip can take approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes.

 The tour rates depend on the package and the company selected by the person. On average, prices range from \$80 to \$130. It is advisable for those who wish to visit it to look for the company in advance in order to choose the most suitable one.

How to get there

Acces: By catamaran or boat.

-  White sand and turquoise water
-  Possibility to observe dolphins and whales
-  No lodging on the island
-  Hours from 7:30 am to 4:00 pm. The latest time to be back at the pier is 6:00 pm.





Venado Island

Venado maintains 95% of its tropical dry forest. Surrounded by mangroves and a privileged fauna and flora, the community of Venado welcomes its visitors with simplicity and authentic human warmth.

The main economic activity of the island is artisanal fishing, and it is famous for its "seafood soup". Venado Island is the perfect place for ecotourism and adventure. Attractions include ancestral trekking or a visit to a floating restaurant.

Venado Island is ideal for backpackers and travelers who enjoy learning about the diversity of **wildlife, birds, monkeys, nature, fishing and culture**. Over the years, this island has become a developed community with micro-enterprises (gastronomy, tours), a health center, schools and even a culture and arts center.

Tourist activities

On this trip you can **see the Gulf of Nicoya, as well as Chira Island, Bejuco Island, Caballo Island, Berrugate Island and Costa de Pajaros**. Observe many sea birds, crocodiles, manta rays and enjoy the sea breeze.

With sustainable marine farms, Isla Venado aims to attract tourists through environmentally responsible fishing.

The island offers lodging services in cabins called **Lunas de Abril**, which are part of the family business. Lunas de Abril is an installation with about twenty ranchitos or huts built on a slope that allows a full view of the island, with trees embracing a white coast, as in those postcards of tourist cruises that emphasize the presence of pristine islands. Nature is the primary attraction to Isla Venado, but it is also easy to get carried away by the smells and flavors of its cuisine.

Gastronomic adventure

A boat awaits us on the coast to take us about 20 minutes away from here, to the well-known floating restaurant, a well talked about legend as you leave from Puntarenas to here.



Located in the Pacific Ocean, specifically in Puntarenas, this small Costa Rican island is in the Gulf of Nicoya, very close to Bejuco and Caballo Islands. It has an area of 6.5 km². Its geographical coordinates are 9.9865 N (latitude) and -85.0607 W (longitude). It is inhabited.

Servicios



Agua potable



Servicios sanitarios



Internet

Actividades



Sol y playa



Observación de flora y fauna



Gastronomía



Artesanías



Caminatas



Observación de aves



Actividades de aventura

Floating restaurant offers unique experience in Venado Island

Imagine being on a floating surface in the sea and enjoying fresh seafood such as **shrimp, clams, oysters, pianguas, lobster, sea bass, snapper**, and more. That is the unforgettable experience offered by the restaurant **"Proyecto de Camarón"**, in Isla Venado, on the Pacific coast.

The tourist experience not only includes food while surrounded by the Gulf of Nicoya, but also a round trip boat ride that adds a whole other dimension to the tour.

The project was established during the covid-19 pandemic and has benefited more than 1,500 people not only on the island, but also on the Nicoya Peninsula.

This type of project fulfills one of the main objectives of tourism, by generating employment and social progress in the communities.

Hours: From 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Wednesday through Sunday.



If you wish to visit and taste the dishes, you can do so through **Coco's Tours**, in Puntarenas: [facebook.com/cocospuntarenas/](https://www.facebook.com/cocospuntarenas/) or contact **Allan Barrios** tel: (506) 5008-9444.

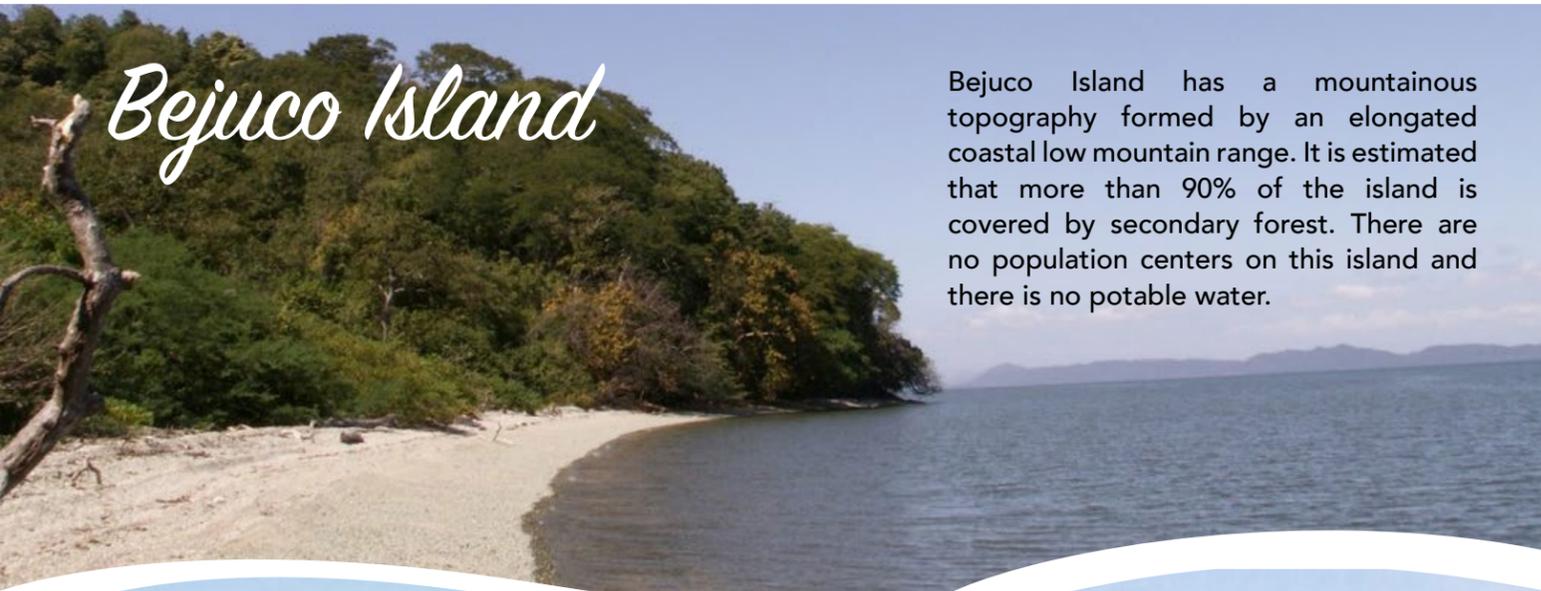
More information:

www.ict.go.cr/es

[youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com)

nacion.com/ciencia

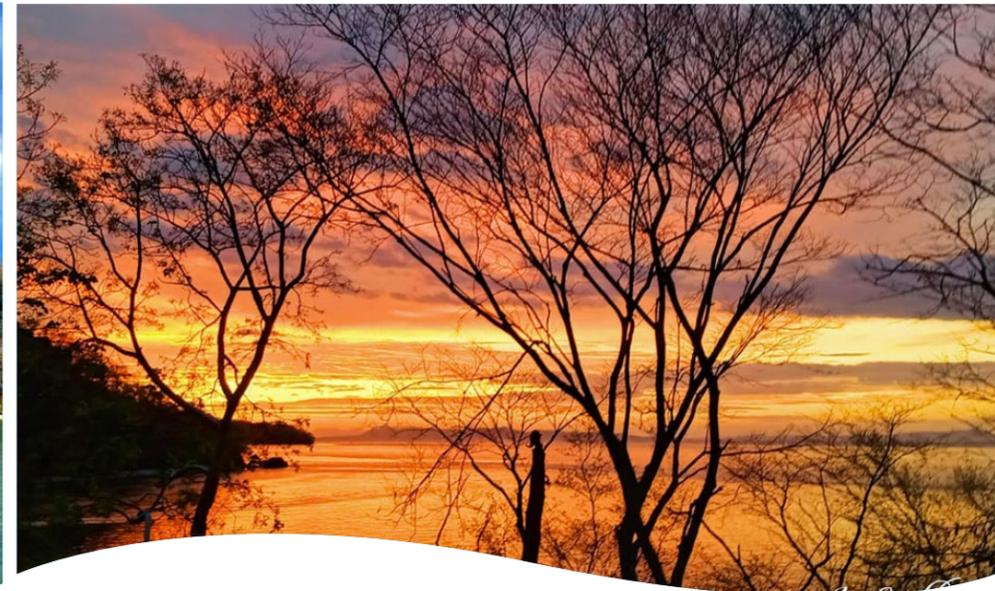
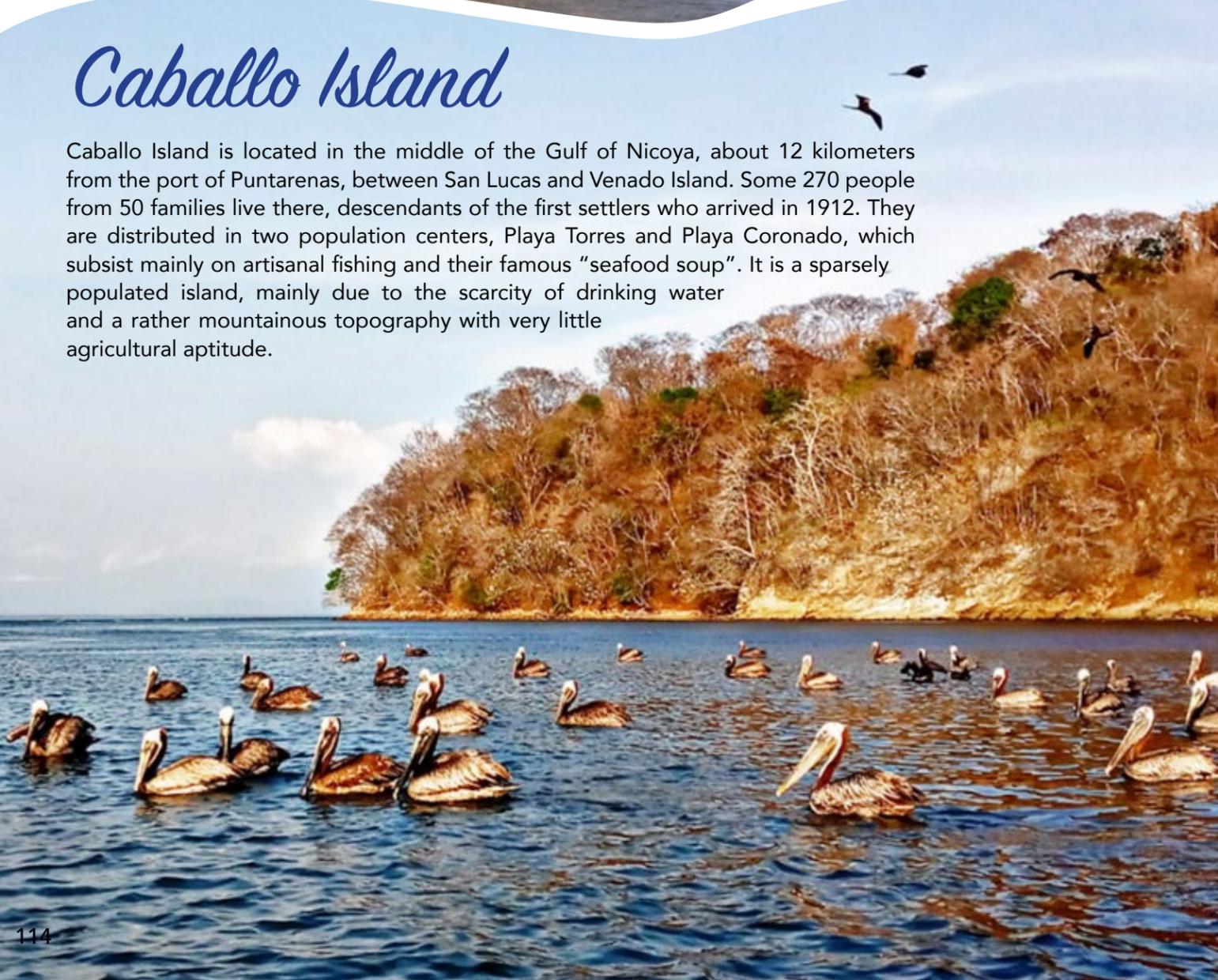
Bejuco Island



Bejuco Island has a mountainous topography formed by an elongated coastal low mountain range. It is estimated that more than 90% of the island is covered by secondary forest. There are no population centers on this island and there is no potable water.

Caballo Island

Caballo Island is located in the middle of the Gulf of Nicoya, about 12 kilometers from the port of Puntarenas, between San Lucas and Venado Island. Some 270 people from 50 families live there, descendants of the first settlers who arrived in 1912. They are distributed in two population centers, Playa Torres and Playa Coronado, which subsist mainly on artisanal fishing and their famous "seafood soup". It is a sparsely populated island, mainly due to the scarcity of drinking water and a rather mountainous topography with very little agricultural aptitude.



Most of it is covered with secondary forest that provides refuge for a small population of yellow-naped parrots (*Amazona auropalliata*). There are some mammals, reptiles and an important avifauna composed of owls, gulls and pelicans.

There are no formal roads, only trails. The sparse population is located in Coronado beach and Torres beach. The beaches are sandy, of short length and with narrow berms, such as Coronado beach.

Due to its topography and economy, there are no motorcycles or cars because there are no roads for automobiles.

The island has two schools, a high school, a health center and a church, and obtains its water from wells. Electricity is provided by an electric generator and some houses have solar panels.

The Island offers rural tourism services including lodging and food (a soda). It is a peaceful place with a beautiful beach, good homemade food, and friendly and warm people. Other activities available include kayaking and different tours (to other islands or within the same island).

- Restrooms
- No drinking water
- No internet



Activities

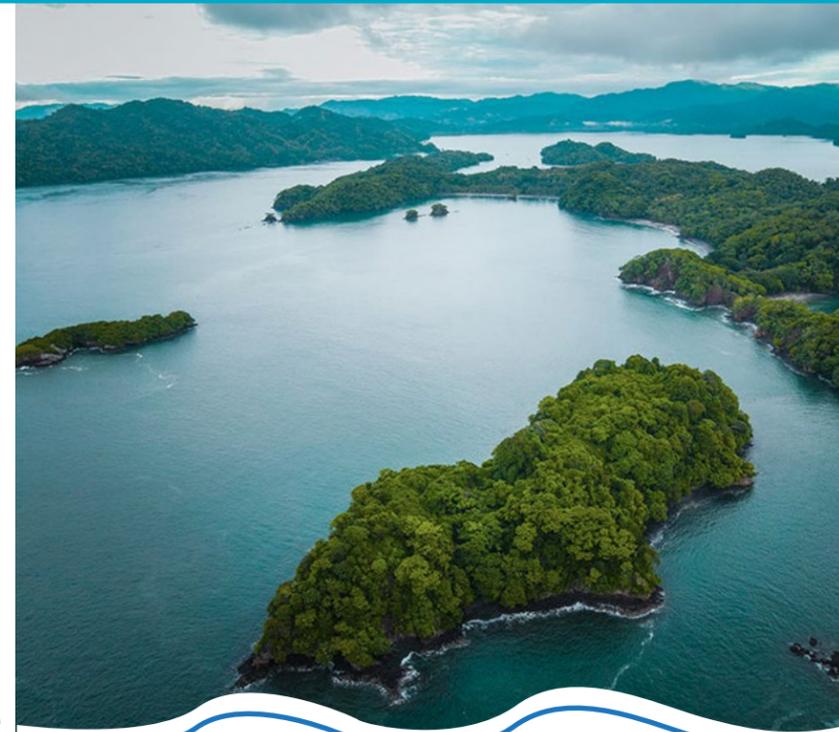
- Bird Watching
- Hiking
- Sun and Beach
- Flora & Fauna
- Gastronomy
- Adventure Activities

- Links**
- facebook.com/jalealpuerto
 - repreTel.com/noticia/un-sitio-para-visitar
 - repreTel.com/
 - facebook.com/
 - facebook.com/photo/

What to bring

- Repellent
- Sunscreen
- Swimsuit
- Cap and sunglasses
- Walking shoes
- Fresh clothes
- Camera
- Hydration

Cedros Island



Located in the Gulf of Nicoya, Cedros Island is one of the largest islands in this region. It has a small town of a few families, a church and a school. It has three main beaches: Langosta, Gringo and Tintorera beach, where there is a viewpoint from which you can see islets and Negritos Island. It has forests of fine woods, coconut trees and bushes.

In Cedros Island it is possible to obtain basic tourist services, such as lodging, gastronomy and organized tours.

Bioluminescence

Come and discover the natural phenomenon of bioluminescence, plus camping and artisanal fishing, combined with a beautiful virgin beach and rural tourism that offers experiences to last a lifetime.

If you want to live an immersive experience of rural tourism, with all the comforts, of camping, snacks, lunches, dinners and transportation from the Greater Metropolitan Area, this is your tour!

Get settled in a camping area that offers all the basic services on the quiet beach of Isla Cedros. You will be

warmly welcomed with delicious ice cream and fruit. You will have your time to practice the art of fishing in the Nicoya Peninsula or if you prefer, you can take a 'banana ride' and enjoy the day near the coast.

Experience bioluminescence up close, a natural phenomenon that will allow you to look at the illuminated sea as if there were thousands of fireflies in the water. At sunrise, admire the majesty of our sunrises at Cedros Island.

How to get there

You should take the ferry from Paquera (preferably the 5 a.m. ferry). There will be a guide waiting for you at the terminal.

Contact: ASAP TOUR Tel: 2641-0133
costatourscr.com/events



It has an approximate area of 161 ha/ 48.5 hectares (0.485 km²). It is populated.

Activities

- Sun and Beach
- Flora & Fauna
- Gastronomy
- Handicrafts
- Hiking
- Bird Watching
- Adventure Activities

Services

- Drinking Water
- Restrooms
- Internet



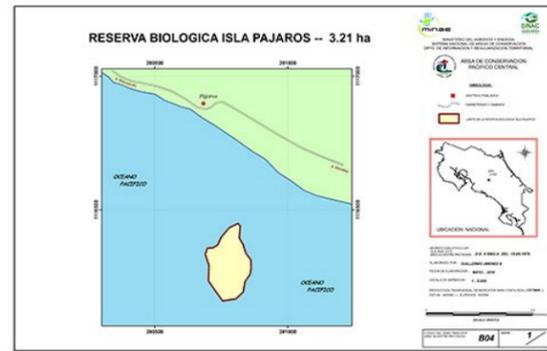
Pan de Azúcar

Pan de Azucar Islet with a beautiful seascape, home to a large population of seabirds, especially brown pelicans, among others.

Isla Pájaros Biological Reserve

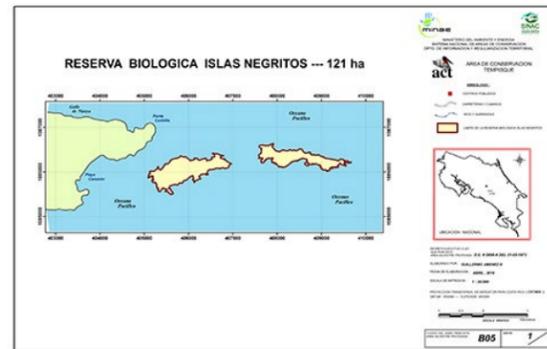


These are protected areas intended primarily for the **conservation of seabirds**. In these reserves, any tourism or recreational activity is totally restricted. (see more information in the protected areas section).



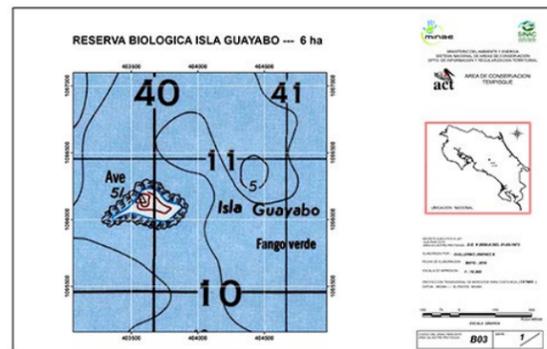
[Islas Negritos, Reserva Biológica Isla Guayabo](#)

Isla Negritos Biological Reserve



[Isla Pájaros](#)

Isla Guayabo Biological Reserve



Muertos Island



This island is also known as **Gitana**, as it is named after a pre-Columbian cemetery that once existed there. It has a wooded vegetation that covers the island. It is located territorially very close to Bahía Gigante, on the Nicoya Peninsula and is uninhabited.

To the north of Muertos or Gitana Island is San Lucas Island, to the east is Guayabo Island and to the south is Cedros Island. Its rather rocky beaches full of reefs have deterred the commercial and tourist industries.

How to get there

Isla Gitana está ubicada en el Golfo de Nicoya, dentro de Bahía Gigante, a tan solo 25 minutos por mar desde Puntarenas y por la terminal de ferry en Paquera a tan solo 20 minutos.



Camping Area

Basic tourist services are available. These include camping on the island.

iguanagocr.com/ teletica.com/masqn



Approximate area of 29.22 ha. It is inhabited.

Activities

- Sun and Beach
- Flora & Fauna
- Gastronomy
- Hiking
- Bird Watching
- Adventure Activities
- Restrooms
- No drinking water
- No internet

Jesusita Island



A paradise island with beaches of transparent and calm waters. Experience peace and relaxation at a whole new level, with exuberant nature thanks to dry forest that is transitioning to a rainforest. It is simply spectacular. Enjoy beautiful views of the gulf and the city of Puntarenas.

It has good infrastructure and a private plant, offers transportation service, sport fishing equipment, motor boats and guides to the fishing sites. The duration of the trip is approximately one hour.

This island is perfect for camping since it is equipped so that visitors can spend as many nights as they wish and enjoy the activities that can be done such as snorkeling, fishing and even take a tour of nearby islands. It also includes two inhabited islands -Jesusita and Cedros.



Isla Chiquita Glamping is located on Isla Jesusita Island and features a restaurant, deep outdoor pool, bar and garden. It offers family rooms and a solarium. The property has a tour desk and currency exchange service.

Rejuvenate mind, body and spirit while forging a special connection with nature at Isla Chiquita Glamping Hotel.

Celebrate the island's artisanal fishing heritage with an exquisite seafood dish at **Donde Tia Nora restaurant** or enjoy a refreshing drink at **Harry's Bar** while observing the surrounding beauty. Experience a great adventure, on land or at sea! **Bioluminescence expeditions, bird watching, forest hikes, snorkeling excursions and tours of other islands** are among our menu of activities. Upon returning to the hotel, **relax in our tropical gardens or enjoy a soothing massage at our Nimbú Spa.**

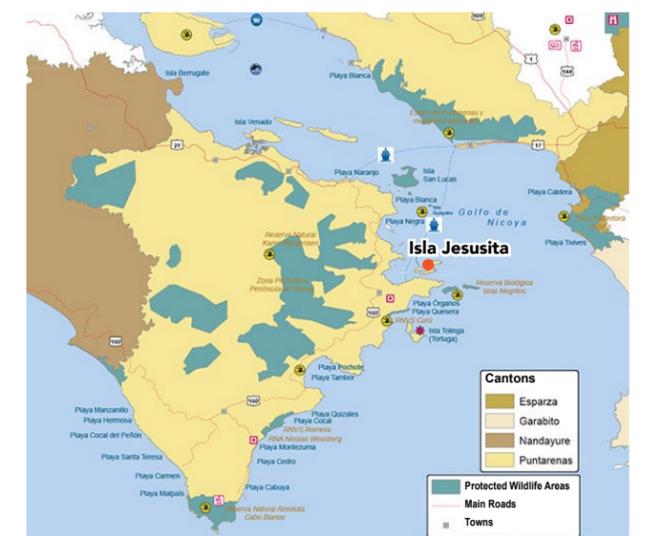
What is Glamping?

"Glamping" (a combination of the words "glamour" and "camping") combines the adventure and ecological appeal of a camping vacation with the comforts and services of a traditional hotel. Isla Chiquita elevates the glamping experience with premium tented accommodations with private bathrooms, luxury beds, organic bath products and an individual terrace to enjoy magnificent ocean or rainforest views.

islachiquitacostarica.com/ [QUE BUEN LUGAR](#)

Activities

- Sun and Beach
- Flora & Fauna
- Gastronomy
- Hiking
- Camping/ glamping
- Adventure Activities
- Bird Watching
- Handicrafts



It has an approximate area of 28.28 ha.

Berrugate

Berrugate Island belongs to Guanacaste in Costa Rica. It has an approximate area of 28.28 ha.



Cabuya



Imagine for a moment arriving at a beach that, when the tide goes out, you can almost float on the water and cross over to an island.

Interesting, isn't it? Cabuya is a fishing village located on the Nicoya Peninsula, between the Cabo Blanco Reserve and a 20 minute drive from Montezuma.

From Cabuya beach you can see the island where there is also a cemetery, yes that's right, a cemetery. Incidentally, it is the only cemetery in the town of Cabuya and the only island in Central America used for this activity.

This island became a cemetery after a person had a water accident nearby and died. Since, then the locals bury their dead at this site.

Therefore, if you visit the island, please do so respectfully and do not leave any type of trash behind.

With the water up to your knees, you will be able to walk about 400 meters until you touch the sand of the island. Of course, this is at low tide, otherwise you will have to take a boat to get there.

If you are curious about the name "Cabuya", it comes from the many plants with the same name that are found all around the edges of the island.

A small public bus connects 4 times a day to Montezuma and on the other side to the entrance of Cabo Blanco, 2 km from Cabuya. During the dry season there is also a mountain road for 4x4 vehicles to reach Mal País, 7 km from Cabuya.

goplaya.cr/blog/cabuya

Activities

- Sun and Beach
- Flora & Fauna
- Gastronomy
- Hiking
- Camping/ glamping
- Adventure Activities
- Bird Watching
- Handicrafts

Services

- Drinking Water
- Restrooms
- Internet

Cabo Blanco



Cabo Blanco Island belongs to the Cabo Blanco Natural Reserve and is located 1.6 km off the coast of Cabo Blanco. It is a rocky location with almost vertical walls, about 600 m long by 150 m wide and totally void of vegetation. Pretty much abandoned since the 1980s. The islet remains almost entirely covered by guano throughout the year, giving it a whitish appearance from a distance, hence the name Cabo Blanco.

Located exactly 1.6 km off the coast of the cape, its profile outlines the southwestern tip of the Nicoya Peninsula of the province of Puntarenas.

Herradura

Herradura island, which has exuberant vegetation, is located in Herradura Bay near the Jacó beach resort, in the canton of Garabito.



Puntarenas Tours

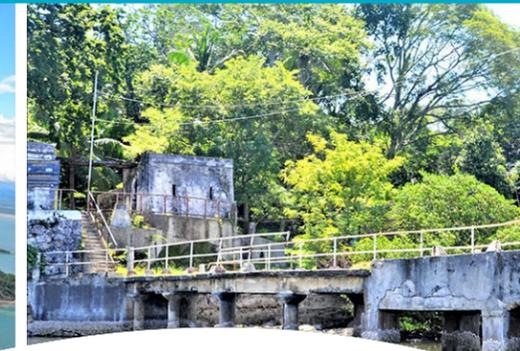
Isla Tortuga Tours

Tortuga Island (named by the Tolinga Indians) is located in the majestic Gulf of Nicoya. It has an area of 120 hectares and a protected forest that has been awarded the Ecological Blue Flag. Once on the island you can participate in water activities, sunbathe and enjoy a seafood lunch. Due to its geographical characteristics, its waters are turquoise and are ideal for swimming. Duration: 7 hrs.

Layers:

bayislandcruises.com
cocos.com/tours/
cospuntarenas.com
arenastravelcr.com
carlostours/
doñaelsatours/
costaazuladventures.com
donkeystour.com
arrecifetours.com
costatour.com
marioalbertocaldera.com
paseosporelolfo.com

marinasotavento.com
ljalotour.com
viajesticosiris.com
Anastasia-Sailing-Tours.com
turismocuru.com/es/
tropicaltourshutles.com/
alovatours.com/tours/
varsotravelcr.com
MelendezToursTravel.com
zumatours.net/
crdreamsexperiences.com



San Lucas Island National Park Tour

Get ready to visit the last vestiges of one of the most feared and inhumane prisons that existed in our country, open from 1873 to 1991. Today it is a National Park and protects the flora and fauna of the area as well as the history and architecture, a silent witness to years of suffering for prisoners on the island. The writer, José León Sánchez, with his book "La Isla de los hombres solos" publicized the atrocities that took place in the prison.

Duration of tour: 4 hours.

-  www.bayislandcruises.com
-  www.cocos.com/tours/
-  cospuntarenas.com
-  carlostours.com
-  doñaelsatours.com
-  Anastasia-Sailing-Tours-Costa-Rica.com
-  paseosporelolfo.com
-  arrecifetours.com
-  arenastravelcr.com

-  costaazuladventures.com
-  marinasotavento.com
-  donkeystour.com
-  ljalotour.com
-  turismocuru.com/es/
-  alovatours.com/tours/
-  varsotravelcr.com
-  MelendezToursTravel.com
-  turismocuru.com/es/



Dolphin watching tour

Enjoy observing these wonderful, sociable and intelligent marine mammals, which can measure between 2 and 9 meters long, depending on the species. In the Gulf of Nicoya it is very common to observe bottlenose (*Tursiops truncatus*) and spotted dolphins (*Stenella attenuata*) throughout the year. The trip takes place in the Gulf of Nicoya, the largest in the country, the ideal place to observe dolphins.

Duration of tour: 4 hours.

-  marioalbertocaldera.com
-  cocos.com/tours/
-  cospuntarenas.com
-  viajesticosiris.com
-  carlostours.com
-  ljalotour.com
-  turismocuru.com/es/

Mangrove tour

On this tour you will learn about the importance of mangroves for the reproduction of marine life, you will be able to observe several species of mangroves, such as the red and red mangrove, and in smaller quantities the white mangrove. Different species of seabirds, such as the Mangrove Hummingbird. Duration: 2 hours.

-  cocostours.com
-  viajesticosiris.com
-  ljalotour.com
-  carlostours.com
-  varsotravelcr.com



Marine Bioluminescence Tour

Bioluminescence is a phenomenon that consists of the natural production of light by microscopic marine organisms, a transformation from chemical to luminous energy. It is a night tour, because the bright light of the sea can be seen only in the dark. Come and live the magic of the sea. The Gulf of Nicoya is one of the points where this phenomenon can be observed, as there are several other known sites.

It is a tour that should be done at night, since it is the precise moment when the green and blue colors stand out, it is a different experience.

Duration: 1.5 - 2 hours.

- www.cocos.com/tours/
- cocospuntarenas.com
- carlostours/
- arrecifetours/

- costatour/marinasotavento/
- viajesturisticososiris/
- turismocuru.com/es/varsotravelcr
- facebook.com/bioluminiscenciaCostaRica/

Chira Island Tour

Visit one of the first sites explored by the Spanish in the Gulf, that in, 1523, already had a Chorotega indigenous population. Here you will enjoy good local food based on seafood and fish. Enjoy the sun and its beaches and, best of all, enjoy the charm of its people. Chira Island is the largest island in the Gulf of Nicoya.

- viajesturisticososiris/

Hiking in the Curú Reserve

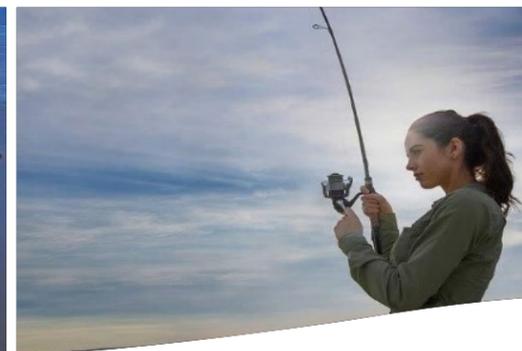
The Curú Wildlife Refuge has easy access trails and different attractions, from observing howler, white-faced and spider monkeys, white-tailed deer, birds such as motmots as well as iguanas and lizards. The tour is safe, with no risk of getting lost, and you can do it alone or hire a guide. Approximate time: 1:30 hour.

- turismocuru.com/es/

Cedros Island Camping & Adventures

Enjoy the experience of camping on an island with all the comforts, from a tent equipped with an inflatable mattress and pillow and three meals a day. Also, enjoy the tours we offer such as the wonderful bioluminescence tour, the artisanal fishing tour and the tour to Isla Tortuga.

- www.facebook.com
Instagram: @islacedrosr



Gulf Islands Tour

An interesting tour in which you can appreciate islands populated by vegetation and amazing beaches and islets populated by a large number of seabirds. On a day with the wind in your favor, you can visit islands such as Venado and its mangroves, Pan de Azúcar and its seabird population, Chira Island, one of the territories inhabited within the Gulf by indigenous groups, San Lucas Island and other equally interesting islands including Caballo and Bejuco, where you can enjoy their beaches.

- www.cocos.com/tours/
- cocospuntarenas.com
- arenastravelcr.com
- facebook.com/arrecifetours/
- facebook.com/costatour/
- facebook.com/marioalbertocaldera/
- viajesturisticososiris/
- turismocuru.com/es/
- turismocuru.com/es/
- alovatours.com/tours/
- varsotravelcr
- MelendezToursTravel

Sport fishing tour

Hotel Finca Palo Alto is a mountain hotel, familiar and cozy, surrounded by the most lively and exuberant nature sheltered by the majestic and imposing La Amistad International Park. It offers walks along trails and the river.

- facebook.com/costatour/costaazuladventures/
- donkeystour/
- marioalbertocaldera/
- turismocuru.com/es/
- tropicaltourshutles.com/tours/
- MelendezToursTravel

Horseback riding in the Curú Reserve

Enjoy a horseback ride on the trails of Curú, you can see a diversity of animals, visit the viewpoint and the pastures where the cattle are taken care of. If you wish, you can combine horseback riding with a boat trip to Tortuga Island and snorkeling. 1:30 hour duration.

- turismocuru.com/es/

Scuba Diving

Diving tour inside the marine area of responsible fishing Paquera - Tambor. You will be able to choose between 1 or 2 dives. Depending on your experience and the site, you will be able to see sharks, manta rays, eels and many other species. The tour is conducted with small groups and experienced local guides, who know the area and marine currents very well. Duration of the tour, 1 to 3 hours, depending on the number of dives.

- turismocuru.com/es/

Snorkeling tour

Start out with a 10-minute trip from Curú to Tortuga Island, where you can enjoy the beautiful turquoise waters and practice snorkeling, which will allow you to see the large schools of fish, such as the royal angel, angel bark, blue and red stars, among others. After snorkeling you can enjoy sunbathing, a dip in the ocean and resting.

Duration: 2 hours.

- turismocuru.com/es/



Whale watching

Between the months of August and November of each year, giant humpback whales can be observed off the southern coast of the Nicoya Peninsula as the head to the southern hemisphere to protect themselves from the cold winter of the north. They take a break in front of Curú and are easy to spot.

Duration of tour: 4 hours.

- turismocuru.com/es/
- islachiquitacostarica.com/



Horseback riding tour of Mal Pais

This is a tour through the forest and the beach, where you can have a lot of fun with your family or friends. Imagine watching the sunset but riding a horse along Santa Teresa beach, watching the waves as the pink sky turns dark blue. A unique experience you won't want to miss. Duration of tour: 4 hours.

tropicaltourshutles.com



Canopy tour in Montezuma waterfall

This is one of the main places of interest in the area. Enjoy a different perspective while observing nature from a different angle, with the wind in your face, while adrenaline flows through your veins. It is a unique experience.

Duration of tour: 2 hours.

tropicaltourshutles.com



Puntarenas cultural tour

Get to know the idiosyncrasies of the "Porteño", visiting the places where their daily life takes place, the central market, the commercial street, the tourist promenade and many other places. Puntarenas, being a port, has the influence of different cultures, which makes it an interesting destination.

crdreamsexperiences.com



Montes de Oro Adventure Mega Adventure Park

- Tour that takes you to the edge, full adventure with 8 cables, 17 high rope courses, also fly like Superman, be Tarzan in the Tarzan Swing and to close the rappel.
- Duration of the tour: 4 hours

facebook.com/adventureparkcostarica/



Curú Wildlife Refuge

Curú Refuge Tour is for nature lovers, for those who are looking for a different, quiet and peaceful experience. Walking through the rainforest and listening to birds is more than enough to make you feel happy to be there. The Curú Wildlife Refuge is approximately 1,496 hectares in size; with deciduous and semi-deciduous forests, mangroves and estuaries, beaches, marine habitats, grasslands and plantations.

Duration of tour: 2 hours.

tropicaltourshutles.com/tours/

turismocuru.com/es/



Cabo Blanco Absolute Natural Reserve

This Reserve has 2 trails to choose from (Danés trail and Suecos trail), with the first being shorter than the other. Enjoy a short stroll or a 2 hour hike to the other side of the park. On your way, many native species may appear, so it is recommended to walk quietly to be able to see them.

Some time to rest, fruits and drinks are provided.

Duration of tour: 2 hours.

tropicaltourshutles.com/tours/



Transportation to and from the mainland

Transfers by land, air and sea to destinations located on the Nicoya Peninsula.

santateresavacations.com



Colinas Verdes Hostel Zapotal Lodge

Horseback riding in and out of Colinas Verdes Zapotal. You can visit nearby communities and panoramic views overlooking the Gulf of Nicoya. There is also the opportunity to visit a sugar cane field and sugar mills, observe the manufacture of traditional candy, blackberry plantations and cow milking,

organic vegetable farming or visit an organic coffee plantation.

Duration of tour: 3 hours.

facebook.com/colinasverdescr/



Cerro Escondido Rural Tourism Inn

La Posada Cerro Escondido, part of Asepaleco, is located within the Karen Mogensen Reserve, it offers visitors tours through different trails with different levels of difficulty (mild to moderate) ranging from 0.3 km to 18 km, its flora and fauna is exuberant, and 240 species of birds have been identified within the reserve, such is the case of the Toledo (Long tailed manakin) with its melodious song.

cerro-escondido-ecolodge



Wellness and Yoga

Wellness experiences that inspire connection, happiness and inner peace. This sense of intrinsic calm is perfect for enjoying a massage, a deep meditation or an invigorating Yoga session.

islachiquitacostarica.com/



Horseback riding tour to Montezuma

A tour from Tambor to Montezuma, observing the nature and the scenic beauty of the Gulf of Nicoya, as well as the difference of the community of Montezuma.

Duration of tour: 1:30 to 6:00 hours

www.tangomar.com



Don Chico organic farm

The community of Paquera is known for the cultivation of guava and banana, and the organic farm of Don Chico, is located here, whose main crops are shown, allowing you to explore it in the company of one of its farmers.

Duration of tour: 2 and 30 hours

islachiquitacostarica.com/

Marine Areas of Responsible Fishing in the Gulf of Nicoya (AMPR)

The Gulf of Nicoya is one of the Marine Areas for Responsible Fishing (AMPR), whose main objective is the responsible use of fishing resources. They are created with the objective of conserving ecosystems and habitat for the protection of species and the contribution to human populations, promoting education, research and ecotourism. Marine management areas are created if there is an evident interest in the use of marine, coastal and ocean resources and if they have a sufficient extension.

The Marine Areas of Responsible Fishing are areas with important biological, fishing or socio-cultural characteristics, which will be delimited by geographic coordinates and other mechanisms that allow the identification of their limits and in which fishing



activity is regulated in a particular way to ensure the long-term exploitation of fishing resources and their conservation, use and management. This is a project led by INCOPECA with the support of universities, other organizations and fishing communities.

Currently operating in the Gulf of Nicoya are the Marine Areas of Responsible Fishing of Paquera-Tambor, Costa de Pájaros, Puerto Nispero, Venado Island, Caballo Island, and Palito-Montero (Chira Island).

For more information: Maps and data on Marine Areas for Responsible Fishing (AMPR) can be found at incopecsa.go.cr/pesca/ampr.aspx

Safety advice for Swimmers

Dear tourist

- Although the majority of beaches are suitable for swimming, there are some that because of their ocean conditions, shifting sands, and geomorphology are susceptible to under currents, also known as rip tides.
- The following is to provide some useful advice to identify them, as well as freeing yourself in the event you get caught in one, and also some general advice to enjoy the beach safely.

How can you identify a rip tide?

- A channel of turbulent water moving out to sea.
- An Area that has a visibly unusual color, usually due to swirling sediment from the beach.
- A formation of foam, algae, or litter moving uniformly out to sea.
- A disturbance in the waveline coming to shore.
- Remember that in many cases, these types of currents are unperceivable to the naked eye and although the ocean may seem calm, they still may be present, especially in beaches where the sediment is thick or the sand is white.

How to avoid being trapped by a rip tide?

- Be very cautious. Ocean conditions can change at any moment.

- Remember that rivers and lakes also have currents that may be dangerous.
- Never swim alone.
- Swim near lifeguards. If there are none, look for signage warning of dangerous currents, or ask some of the locals if the beach is dangerous or not..

What can I do if a rip tide gets a hold of me?

- Try to stay calm to conserve energy.
- Don't fight the current.
- Swim perpendicular to the current or parallel to the beach.
- Once you feel that you are free of the current, swim to shore.
- If unable to do the aforementioned, wade in the water. The force of the current lessens as it goes out to sea. When the current diminishes, swim toward the shore.
- If, at any moment you feel that you cannot reach the shore, get someone's attention: face the beach, wave your arms and shout for help.

<https://www.seguridadpublica.go.cr>



General recommendations for all beaches

- If you can't swim, be careful in the water.
- If you have eaten or drunk any alcoholic beverages, wait at least two hours before going into the water.
- Ask hotel staff, lifeguards, or locals, about the ocean water conditions.
- Look for signage or flags that warn of dangerous ocean water conditions. When you do find flags, red means danger.
- Always be in the presence of another adult who can adequately help you in the event you are in danger or need help.
- If you haven't been trained in first aid, are not skilled at swimming, or overall not in good physical condition, never try to rescue someone on your own who is drowning.
- If you want to try some water sport such as surfing, jet skiing, or others, you should know how to swim.
- If you are traveling with friends, do not play or joke around in a way that can put your life or that of others at risk.
- Learn about the ocean conditions or other natural phenomenon that can change the ocean conditions.
- If you travel to the beach with children, people with physical limitations, or elderly people, stay close to them and never let them out of your sight for any reason.

How can you help someone being dragged by a rip tide?

- Get help from a lifeguard.
- If there is no lifeguard, call 911.
- Throw the victim something that floats, like a cooler, a life jacket, or a ball.
- Yell the instructions on how to escape, as outlined in this manual.

If you're traveling in a rental car

- In the event of any damage, flat tire, or impact to the vehicle, do not accept help from strangers, since it could be a scheme to rob you. Call the agency that rented you the vehicle and do not stop until you reach a safe place.
- Never leave valuable objects in a visible place inside the car and close the doors and windows securely.
- Whenever you can, use public parking with a security guard. Do not trust people offering to watch your vehicle on the side of the road.
- It is recommended that you exercise particular caution with personal items such as your passport, credit cards, money and jewelry.

If you're traveling by bus:

- Don't lose sight of your luggage at any time. During your trip, exercise particular caution if you place your luggage in the overhead racks on the bus.

- While boarding and once you arrive at your destination, do not let your belongings out of your sight and do not trust people who offer you help or seem overly friendly.
- Take care of your personal items such as your passport, credit cards, money and jewelry. Ideally, do not keep these items in your luggage.
- If you need help, dial 9-1-1, go to the closest police station, or call the OIJ at 800-8000-645 to report a crime.

If you're going to the beach:

- If you don't know how to swim, be careful.
- Do not consume alcoholic beverages before going into the ocean and wait at least two hours after eating.
- Never swim alone. Swim close to a lifeguard post.
- Inquire about beach conditions before entering the water.
- Look for signs or warning flags.
- If you feel trapped in a rip current, do not panic and make signs that you need help.
- If you are traveling with children, senior citizens, or persons with disabilities, do not let them out of your sight.
- If a storm or other inclement weather is approaching, leave the beach area and find a safe place.
- Do not lose sight of your belongings.

General recommendations:

- Do not carry valuable items that can stand out.
- Keep your personal documents in a safe place.
- Do not trust people who seem overly friendly or who offer you services that appear to be extremely cheap and appealing.
- Do not hike alone, especially at night.
- When possible, engage the services of companies with a Tourism Declaration or ICT-certified guides. See www.visitcostarica.com for more details.
- In your accommodations, ensure that the doors and windows are closed well and use the room's safe, if available, to keep your valuable items.
- If you consume alcoholic beverages, do so responsibly and avoid consuming drugs.

For more safety tips, please visit

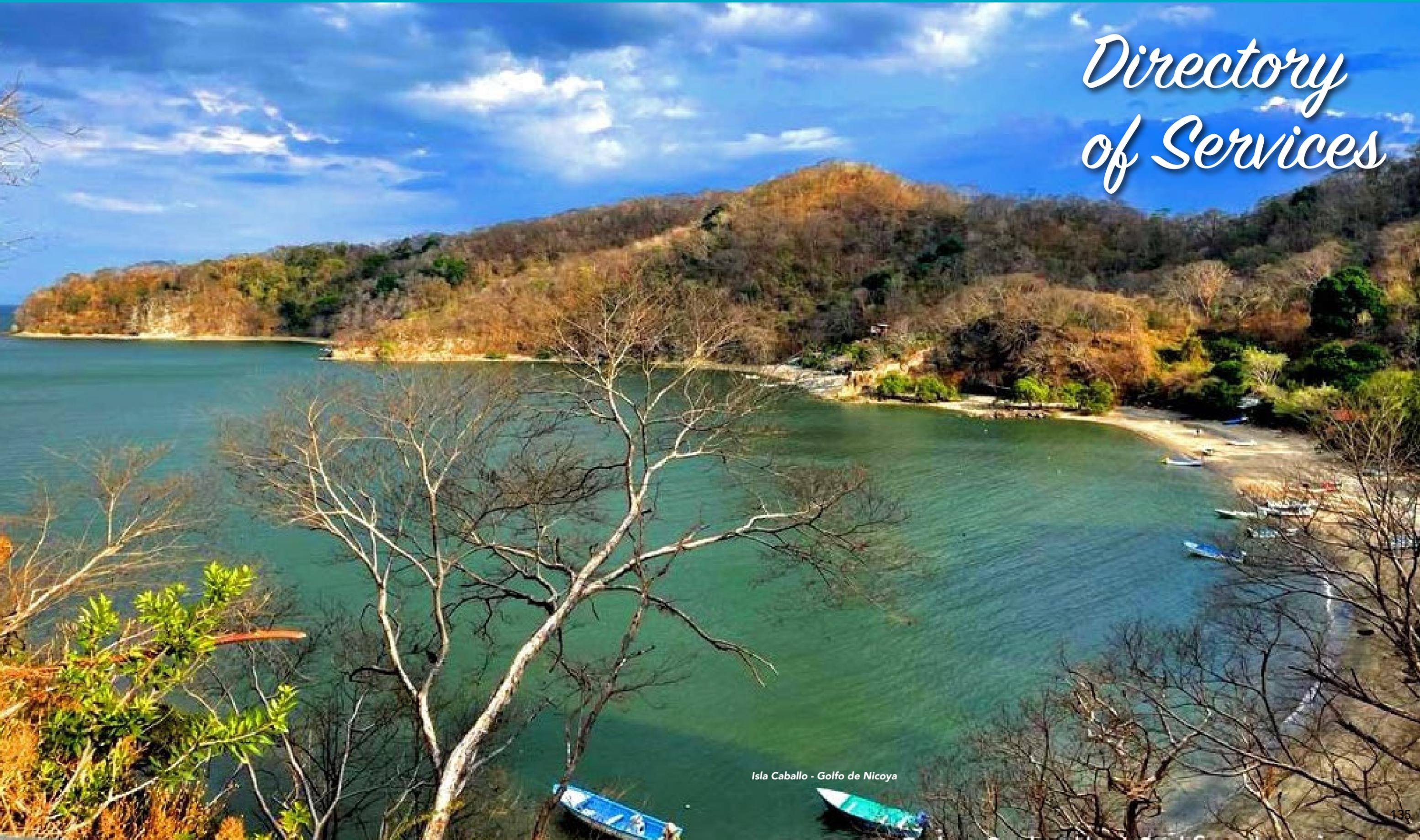
 visitcostarica.com

You can find more safety brochures on the Visit Costa Rica site under "Publications" at the following link

 visitcostarica.com/en/costa-rica



Directory of Services



Isla Caballo - Golfo de Nicoya

COUNTRY CODE: 506 (If calling from another country)

PUNTARENAS	
Financial Entities	Contact
Banco Popular	bancopopular.fi.cr/
Banco Nacional	www.bnrcr.fi.cr/
Banco de Costa Rica	bancobcr.com/wps/portal/bcr
Public Prosecutor's Office	ministeriopublico.poder-judicial.go.cr
Law Enforcement	seguridadpublica.go.cr/contactenos
Monseñor Sanabria Hospital-Puntarenas	facebook.com/hospitalmonsenorsanabria
Public Institutions	Telephone
Fire Department	26610429
Red Cross	26611945
Puntarenas Chamber of Tourism (CATUP)	2661-2980 facebook.com/CATUPuntarenas/
Municipality of Puntarenas	2661-02-50
Transportation Services	Telephone
EUPSA (San José-Puntarenas)	www.eupsacr.com/nosotros.php 2261-6600
Public cabs	26602020
Central de Taxis del Pacífico	2663 5050
PAQUERA-LEPANTO-COBANO	
Public Institutions	Telephone
Fire Department	26410670
Red Cross-Paquera	26410403
Red Cross-Jicaral	26501035
Paquera Chamber of Tourism	88509188
Chamber of Tourism Montezuma	2642-0808 montezumainfo.net/es/
Mal Pais and Santa Teresa Chamber of Tourism	8831-9711
Blue Zone Chamber of Tourism	2640-0123 facebook.com/10953207719
Local government Cóbano	2642-0510

PAQUERA-LEPANTO-COBANO	
Transportation Services	Telephone
Bus Cabuya-Montezuma:	Tel. 2642 1112
Bus Cóbano-Mal País:	
Bus Cóbano- Montezuma:	
Bus Cóbano-Paquera:	
Bus Cóbano-Santa Teresa	
Bus Jicaral-Bejuco	
Bus Jicaral-Coyote	
Bus Jicaral-Nicoya	
Bus Jicaral-Playa Naranjo:	2650 0179
Bus Jicaral-San José:	2650 0179
Bus Paquera-Río Grande:	2640 0761
Bus San José-Cóbano-Montezuma	2642 1112
Taxis-Paquera	2642 0456 / 2642 0000 / 2641 0227 / 2640 0261
Ferry Coonatramar Playa Naranjo	2661 1069
Ferry Tambor Paquera	2661 2084
C.C.S.S. Clinics	Telephone
Cóbano	2642 0208
Paquera	2641 0107
Lepanto	2650 0170
Prosecutor's Office Cóbano	2642 0512

 redesdelapeninsula.com/directorio-de-servicios

ICT REGIONAL OFFICE - PUNTARENAS
Tel.: 2661-0407
Telfax: 2661-0337
E-mail: ictpuntarenas@ict.go.cr

MONTES DE ORO	
Service	Telephone
Costa Rican Red Cross / Miramar	2639-9060
Firefighters / Miramar	2639-7700
Municipality of Montes de Oro	muniesparza.go.cr/ 2639-9020
Chamber of Rural Tourism of the upper area of Montes de Oro	2647-8024
Oromontana Chamber of Tourism	facebook.com/camara.montes-deoro/
Buses	montesdeoro.go.cr/buses-miramar-puntarenas-2/
Taxis	montesdeoro.go.cr/taxis-rojos/

ESPARZA	
Public Institutions	Telephone
Fire Department	26355121
Red Cross	26637133
Esparza Chamber of Tourism	facebook.com/people
Municipality of Esparza	muniesparza.go.cr 2636-0100

Transportation Services	Telephone
Buses	muniesparza.go.cr/articulo/219/
Empresarios Unidos	2635-2536
Joalpa	2635-5698
Public cabs	facebook.com/Espartaxi4040/ 2636-5656 / 2635-5810 / 2636-4040

FERRIS NAVIERA TAMBOR

-  navieratambor.com/coonatrmar
-  coonatrmar.com/producto/ferry-puntarenas-hacia-playa
-  nicoyapeninsula.com/es/travel-info/ferry/
-  ferry-de-paquera-y-tambor-o-de-playa-naranjo-horarios-tarifas-y-como-reservar-en-linea/
-  muniesparza.go.cr/articulo/219/horario-terminal
-  montesdeoro.go.cr/taxis-rojos/
-  contenidotico.com/
-  montesdeoro.go.cr/montes-de-oro/

Puntarenas and Paquera Ferry Schedule

	5:30 am	3:00 pm
	9:00 am	6:00 om
	12:00 md	8:30 pm

Tel: (506) 2661-2084 / info@navieratambor.com / www.navieratambor.com
Schedule effective November 28, 2022 until further notice.

 Costa Rica is a place where nature abounds and adventure awaits you, just remember:

- Book tours offered by authorized travel agencies.
- Make sure that the place you wish to visit is within the permitted sites of SINAC's Protected Wildlife Areas.
- Make sure that the activity you wish to perform is allowed.
- Make sure that the tour guide provides you with safety instructions and the rules of the activity before starting a tour.
- Make sure the company has an operating permit issued by the Ministry of Health, insurance policies and certified tour guides.

COUNTRY CODE: 506 (If calling from another country)

NAME	E-MAIL	TELEPHONE	WEB
AQUATIC RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES			
IGUANA DIVERS	info@iguanadivers.com ; juan@iguanadivers.com	2640-0427	https://www.iguanadivers.com/
BAHIA RICA ADVENTURES		2641-081	https://www.bahiarica.com/
ADVENTURE FLIGHTS	info@adventureflightscostarica.com ; santiagoguinea@hotmail.com	8811-6636	https://adventureflightscostarica.com/
MANGLE TOURS S.A	mangletours1@gmail.com	88156111, 60494906	https://mangle-tours.negocio.site/?utm_source=gmb&utm_medium=referral#details
ONIXX	onyxcr@gmail.com		
AIR RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES			
ADVENTURE FLIGHTS	info@adventureflightscostarica.com ; santiagoguinea@hotmail.com	8821-1200 72019531	https://adventureflightscostarica.com/
NEMACLYS	jcmuller61@gmail.com	2364-3027,8819-3006	https://www.facebook.com/ParapenteCaldera/?locale=es_LA
TRAVEL AGENCY			
AGENCIA DE VIAJES RECEPTIVA PACIFICTRIP	pacifictrip@yahoo.com	2636-4062	https://www.facebook.com/pacific.trip/
AGENCIA DE VIAJES PACIFIC SUN TRAVEL	pacificsuntravel@yahoo.com	2636-4604	https://www.facebook.com/uraca73/
AGENCIA DE VIAJES SANTA TERESA VACATIONS	reservations@santateresavacations.com	2683-0038	https://www.santateresavacations.com/
AGENCIA DE VIAJES RECEPTIVA MELENDEZ TOURS&TRAVEL	melendeztravel@hotmail.com	2663-6074	
AGENCIA DE VIAJES AGUAS PROFUNDAS	info@aguasprofundascr.com	2635-5037	https://www.facebook.com/aguaspro/about?locale=es_LA
AGENCIA DE VIAJES RECEPTIVA DESTINOS ENCANTADOS BOHAR	destinosencantados@gmail.com	8384-4042	
AGENCIA DE VIAJES EL TUCAN DEL PACIFICO	pacifictucantravelagency@yahoo.com	8380-8008	
AGENCIA DE VIAJES ALOVA	info@alovatours.com	2664-2727	
AGENCIA DE VIAJES PACIFIC TOURS	pacifitours73@yahoo.com	2636-4062	
TURISMO CURU	turismocuru@yahoo.com	2641-0004 Whatsapp: 8834-7343	https://www.turismocuru.com/es/
AGENCIA DE VIAJES ZUMA TOURS	info@zumatours.com ; jvan@zumatours.net	2642-0024- /26420050/84768407	
AGENCIA DE VIAJES RECEPTIVA RETOS Y AVENTURAS VISTA GOLFO	info@hotelvistadelgolfo.com	2639-9900	http://www.adventureparkcostarica.net/
AGENCIA DE VIAJES RECEPTIVA VARSO TRAVEL	info@varsotravel.com	2661-6362	https://www.facebook.com/varsotravelcr
AGENCIA DE VIAJES RECEPTIVA TROPICAL TOURS MAL PAIS	info@tropicaltourshuttles.com	2640-1901	http://www.costaricantropicaltours.com/
COCOS TOURS	bekol@naver.com	2215-5390	www.cocostour.com
COMERCIALIZADORA BAY ISLAND CRUISES	reservas@bayislandcr.com	2235-3536	https://bayislandcruises.com/

SUN TRAILS	suntrailscr@gmail.com ; reservas2@suntrails.com	2247070 84678989	https://suntrails.com/es/
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NATIONAL BIRD WATCHING ROUTE COSTA RICA

NICOYA PENINSULA



Snowy Egret
Garceta nivosa
Photo: Nick Hawkins



NICOYA PENINSULA - COSTA RICA



Main observation sites

- Cabo Blanco Absolute Natural Reserve
- Curú National Wildlife Refuge.
- Barra Honda National Park.
- Bahía and Tambor Beach trails.
- Tambor Aquiferous Recharge Zone
- Absolute Reserve Nicolas Wessberg.
- Karen Mogensen Nature Reserve.
- Camaronal Wildlife Refuge.
- Mangroves of the Gulf of Nicoya.
- Negritos and Negritos Islands Biological Reserves
- Guayabo.
- Cabuya and Playa Cedros Mixed Wildlife Refuge Caletas -Ario.
- Caletas-Arío Mixed Wildlife Refuge.

Other observation sites: Tambor Beach and Panica River trail, also known as "the 100 species trail" • Biscoyol Waterfall trail • Lagunas de los Delfines • Curú Nature Reserve • Finca Los Monos • Curú Mixed Wildlife Refuge • Trail to Playa Quesera • Raptor Ridge lowlands • Raptor Ridge mid-elevation trail • Raptor Ridge high mountain trail • Vanilla Trails • Coastal Jesus Tree Trail • La Nicoyana Private Protected Reserve **National Parks:** Barra Honda • Diria and Marino Las Baulas **Other protected areas:** 2 absolute nature reserves (one state-owned, Cabo Blanco, and one private, Nicolás Wessberg) • 3 state-owned national wildlife refuges (Ostional, Tamarindo and Mata Redonda) • 2 semi-private (Camaronal and Werner Sauter) • 2 private (Curú and La Ceiba), and three protected areas (Nicoya Peninsula, Cerro La Cruz and Nosara) • In addition to two biological reserves located in the Gulf of Nicoya (Guayabo Island and Isla de los Negritos) **Wetlands:** Riberino Zapandí • Palustrino Corral de Piedra • Cañas River.

To the northwest of Costa Rica lies the beautiful Nicoya Peninsula, the largest peninsula in Costa Rica, bathed by the Pacific Ocean, bordered by the Gulf of Papagayo to the north and the Gulf of Nicoya to the south, separated from the mainland of Costa Rica by the estuary of the Tempisque River and the Gulf of Nicoya.

It offers a rich nature: dry forests and tropical forests along with a coastline of spectacular beaches, such as Santa Teresa, Malpaís, Montezuma, Tambor and others.

This area is a paradise for birdwatchers, as it offers a great diversity of habitats suitable for the 345 species of birds recorded at different times of the year. You can enjoy resident and migratory birds such as aquatic, coastal and marine birds; the colorful red macaws, we also find birds of the remaining forests of highlands and protected hills; among them the euphonias, parakeets, woodpeckers, toucans, the king vulture, the long tailed manakin,

BIRDS NICOYA

EMBLEMATIC BIRDS

345 Bird species

1 Endemic species

3 National Parks

3 Wetlands

3 Wildlife refuges

2 Absolute nature reserves

red-headed tanager, pheasant cuckoo, hawks. Near bodies of water and in the coast and mangroves we find birds such as herons, storks, roseate spoonbills and the mangrove hummingbird (endemic).

Its coasts alternate beaches of fine gray sand, cliffs, abrasion platforms, capes, islands, gulfs, bays, estuaries and rivers, whose waters flow down draining hills of sedimentary and volcanic rocks. The landscape is dominated by dense tropical vegetation, a consequence of a warm and sub-humid climate. Barra Honda National Park and Las Baulas National Marine Park are located here.

Its colorful folklore, customs and diversity in local gastronomy make this area an additional attraction to rural tourism with its characteristic and picturesque towns, beautiful scenic views with colorful farms and famous beaches. The Nicoya Peninsula also has some of the best beach hotels in Costa Rica.

In addition, Nicoya is blessed with turtle nesting beaches, exceptional surfing and sport fishing. As well as, swimming and diving, sailing, mountain biking, hiking, waterfalls, canopy and much more. The charm of the Nicoya Peninsula never ceases to enchant its visitors. It is recognized worldwide as one of the 5 blue zones of the world. With the characteristic that many of its inhabitants enjoy more than 100 years of age due to several factors; among them the diet, the tranquility and the waters that emanate from the calcareous hills. The Gulf region and Nicoya Peninsula are part of the Palo Verde Node.



Vireo pallens
Common Name:
Mangrove Vireo

Photo: Arnoldo García



Nesting period:
June to August



Chiroxiphia linearis
Common Name:
Long-tailed Manakin

Photo: Nick Hawkins



Nesting period:
April to July



Amazilia boucardi
Common Name:
Mangrove Hummingbird

Photo: Ariel Rojas Cruz



Nesting period:
October to February



Nyctanassa violacea
Common Name:
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron

Photo: Nick Hawkins

Nesting period:
Rainy Season



Ciccaba a nigrolineata
Common Name:
Black-and-white Owl

Photo: Arnoldo García

Nesting period:
Dry Season



Nesting period:
April to June

Trogon elegans
Common Name:
Elegant Trogon

Photo: Arnoldo García





BIRD WATCHING IN Costa Rica

For national and international birdwatchers, Costa Rica is one of the most important tourist destinations in the world. A country with a small territory of 51,100 km² of land area (0.03% of the world's surface) and 589,000 km² of territorial sea, it has an avifauna with more than 900 species that surpasses all of Europe. Costa Rica is possibly the country with the most bird species and habitat types in the world in relation to the size of its territory.

The diversity of birds is divided into four ornithological provinces: Highlands, Caribbean Slope, North Pacific and South Pacific. Including Cocos Island and its territorial waters.

The country has developed the National Bird Route which is composed of 12 nodes or main birding sites, involving 7 National Parks, 1 National Wildlife Refuge, private reserves and surrounding communities, distributed practically throughout the country and differentiated into 4 Bird Zones: Tropical Dry Forest, Highlands, Caribbean Tropical Rainforest and South Pacific Tropical Rainforest. All of them with a high diversity of bird species that is complemented by the culture, rurality and local communities that are integrated into this route.

Costa Rica has:

- **3 million** migratory birds of prey fly through the sky from August to November.
- **220 species are migratory** and correspond to Nearctic migratory species from North America.
- **19 are globally threatened.**
- **One of the top 5 favorite birding countries in the world.**
- **7 endemic species**, 4 on the mainland, 3 on Cocos Island.
- In total, Costa Rica's bird species constitute **9% of the world's known species.** (Stiles and Skutch, 2007, p. 13-31)



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For more information visit:

- ebird.org
- [Asoc. Ornitológica de CR](#)
- [Unión de Ornólogos CR](#)
- [Tambor birds](#)
- [Península de Nicoya](#)
- [Lepanto, Paquera, Cóbano](#)

[Women's collective bird watchers of Costa Rica.](#)

[Bird Tourism in Nicoya Península and Gulf Islands](#)

[Beach Birds](#)

Credits

The Costa Rican Tourism Institute thanks the National System of Conservation Areas, tour guides, businesses and individuals for their collaboration in the development of the Nicoya Peninsula Infogram.

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(Megaptera novaeangliae)

Humpback whales in Costa Rica

Costa Rica's Bahía Ballena, Isla del Caño Biological Reserve and Bahía Drake are some of the best places on the planet to catch a glimpse of the humpback whale. These sites are located in the northern and southern Pacific coast of our country. According to National Geographic, Ballena Marine National Park is one of the 10 best places to spot humpback whales. The Guanacaste coast is great as well!

Regardless of whether you're relying on patience or luck, watching humpback whales and their calves jumping and performing acrobatic feats in the ocean is something we should all see at some point in our lives.

Humpback whales travel long distances from their feeding areas in cooler waters, including the polar oceans, to their breeding areas in the warm waters of Costa Rica.

These giants remain in Costa Rica for a total of 10 months per year, with groups coming from different hemispheres in each half of the year. This gives the country the longest humpback whale watching season in the world, thanks to the presence of whales from the northern and southern hemispheres.

Characteristics of the species

Humpback whales (Megaptera novaeangliae) are marine mammals belonging to the rorqual family (Balaenopteridae) of the suborder Mysticeti (baleen whales) and the Cetacea order, which includes whales, orcas and dolphins.

The name "humpback" is due to its distinctive short, stout dorsal fin. Its Spanish name, *ballena jorobada* comes from *joroba*, the Spanish word for "hump".

The scientific name, Megaptera is a compound word consisting of the greek words mega, large and ptera, fin: a reference to the animal's massive pectoral fins, which can reach up to one third of its body length, around 5 meters.

Northern Hemisphere Population

From their feeding areas on the southern Pacific coast of Canada and the entire western coast of the United States, humpback whales migrate to their breeding areas in southern Mexico and throughout Central America. In Costa Rica, they congregate in specific areas (see list on the right of the poster) of the northern and southern Pacific.

December-April (dry season)

The whales that migrate from the northern hemisphere arrive during this period, traveling an average of 5,200 km on their way here and the same amount back to their feeding areas.

Southern Hemisphere Population

From their feeding areas around the Antarctic Peninsula and southern Chile, humpback whales migrate to their calving sites in northern South America, Panama and Costa Rica. In our country, the whales congregate in certain sites in the southern and (to a lesser extent) northern Pacific coast.

July-November (rainy season)

The whales that migrate from the southern hemisphere arrive during this period, traveling an average of 8,400 km on their way here and the same amount back to their feeding areas. This is the longest permanent migratory route of any mammal!

WHERE THEY COME FROM

Migratory movements are part of most whales' annual lifecycle: they spend the summer in their feeding grounds (high latitudes) and migrate to tropical waters (low latitudes) in the winter to reproduce and raise their calves.

Northern Hemisphere

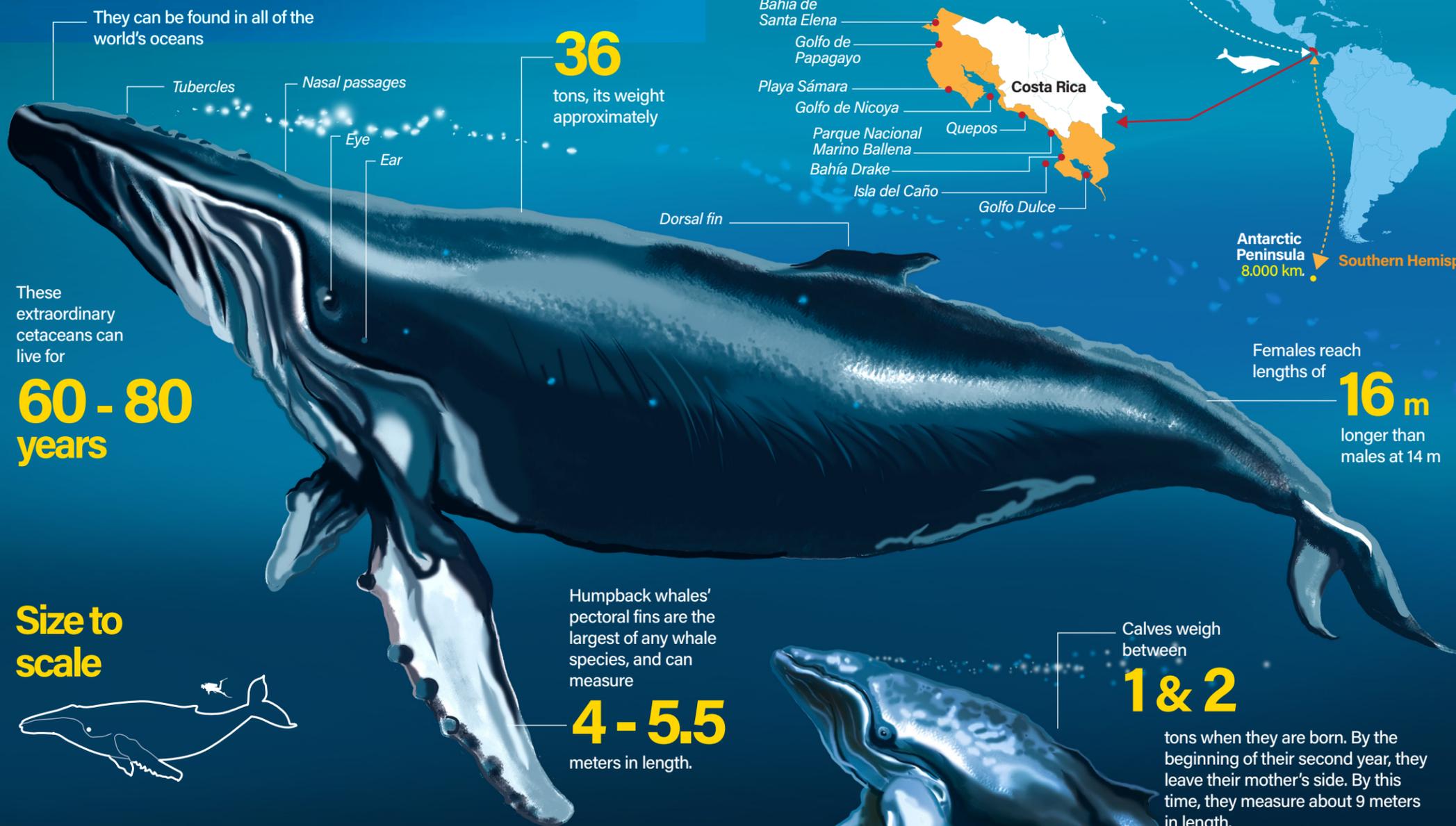
Washington Oregon California 5.000 km.

Antarctic Peninsula 8.000 km.

Southern Hemisphere

Sightings in Costa Rica

- Bahía de Santa Elena
- Golfo de Papagayo
- Playa Sámara
- Golfo de Nicoya
- Parque Nacional Marino Ballena
- Bahía Drake
- Isla del Caño
- Quepos
- Golfo Dulce



They can be found in all of the world's oceans

36

tons, its weight approximately

These extraordinary cetaceans can live for

60 - 80 years

Females reach lengths of

16 m

longer than males at 14 m

Size to scale



Humpback whales' pectoral fins are the largest of any whale species, and can measure

4 - 5.5

meters in length.

Main areas of sightings in Costa Rica

Whale watching services are available on the following beaches in Costa Rica:



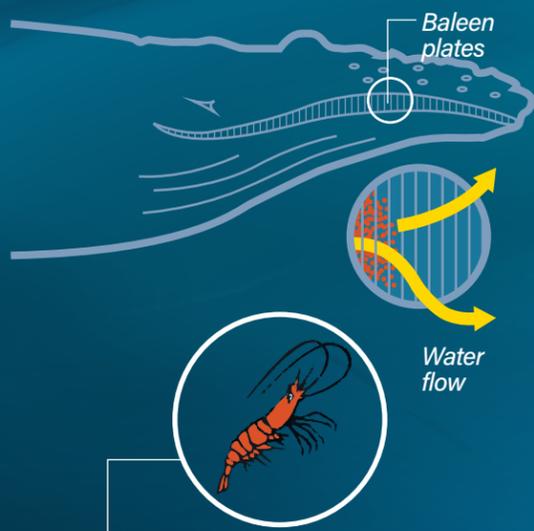
- Cuajiniquíl
- Playas del Coco
- Sámara
- Cóbano
- Jacó
- Quepos
- Herradura
- Dominicalito
- Bahía Rincón
- Bahía Ballena/Uvita
- Drake Bay
- Puerto Jiménez
- Playa Zancudo
- Cabuya
- Isla del Caño por Sierpe
- Isla del Caño por Bahía Drake
- Golfo de Nicoya
- Mal País
- Montezuma
- Tambor
- Curú
- Paquera
- Puntarenas
- Isla Tortuga
- Sierpe

What do they do?



FEEDING:

Humpback whales possess between 270 and 440 grayish-black baleen plates on each side of the jaw, measuring 70 to 100 cm in length, which allow them to filter out water in order to obtain their food of krill and small fish.



Krill is whales' main source of food. It is a crustacean similar to shrimp, measuring 1-6 cm. Whales can eat **1,400 kg** in a single day.

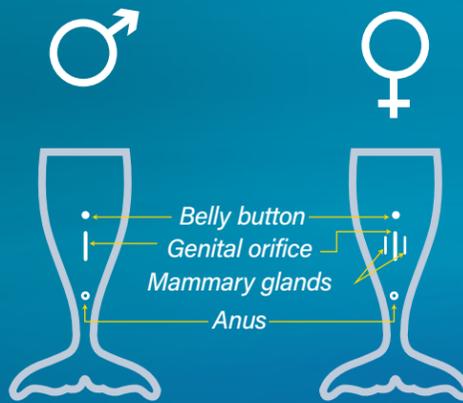
C Whales open their mouths, capturing the krill. Their baleen filters the water when they close their mouth

B They begin their ascent quickly

A The whales circle the school of krill, sometimes creating a circular "curtain" of bubbles.

Sex of whales

Both sexes have a genital slit, which contains the penis in males and the vagina in females.



SEXUALITY

Sexual maturity is reached between 6 and 11 years, at a size of between 12 and 14 m. The reproduction period lasts for a period of 4-5 months.

HOW ARE THEY BORN?

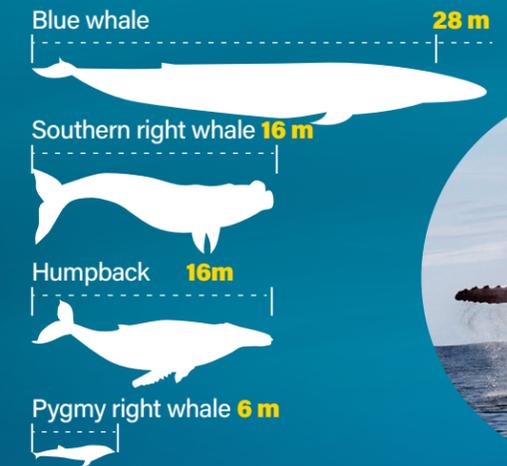
1 The mother whale begins her contractions and the calf starts to leave the mother's body. Calves are born tail-first, not head-first.

2 The umbilical cord breaks off once the calf leaves the mother's body.

3 In order to take its first breath, the calf is helped to the surface by its mother.

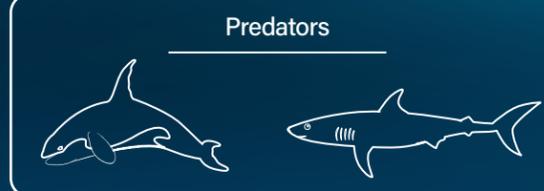
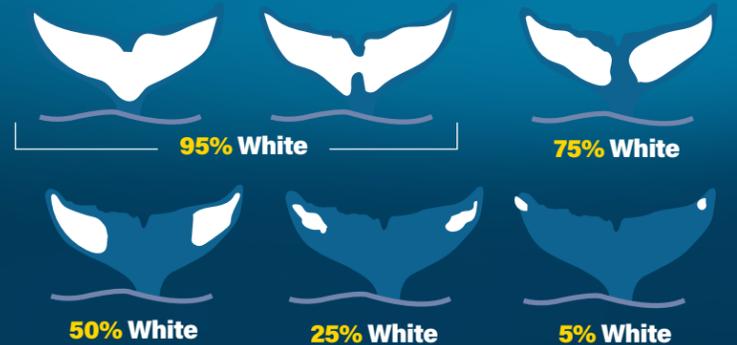
4 The calf consumes between 60 and 70 liters of milk each day.

SIZE TO SCALE:



IDENTIFICATION

Humpback whales can be identified by means of the white marks and the unique pattern of the jagged trailing edge of their tails. This does not change from birth, and allows the identification of individuals. They serve as the whales' "fingerprints" and help to classify whales within a group.



MOVEMENTS ON THE SURFACE



BREATHING:

Whales breathe through their blowhole (nasal orifices) situated in the upper part of their heads. They open and close their nasal passages in order to hold their breath underwater for **up to 45 minutes**. Under normal conditions, whales breathe every 3-9 minutes.

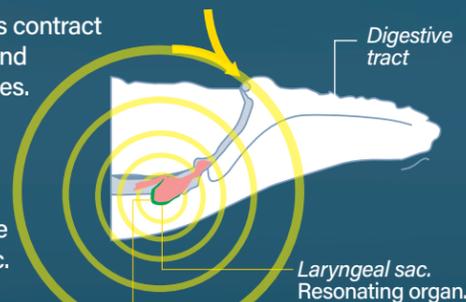
SONGS:

Male humpback whales emit long-lasting sounds called songs during the reproduction period. These can last from 10 to 15 minutes and can be interpreted after a few minutes or repeated continuously for up to 22 hours.

1. The whales contract their throat and thorax muscles.

2. Air flows through the lungs and the laryngeal sac.

3. The alternating expansion and contraction of these organs take air through the U of the larynx (in green), making it vibrate and produce the sound.



Ballena Marine National Park

To protect this valuable site, the government of Costa Rica created Ballena Marine National Park (PNMB) as a sanctuary for these and other marine species including pantropical spotted dolphins, bottlenose dolphins, manta rays, clownfish and mackerel. Isla Ballena is also an important nesting site of the American white ibis. The bird species found in the park also include frigatebirds and the brown booby.



The PNMB is the first Costa Rican protected area created exclusively for its marine resources. It is also the first marine park in Central America (UCR-FUNDEVI 1995/SINAC) and is the eighth-best site for whale watching in the world, according to National Geographic.

- Links:
- www.sinac.go.cr
 - www.youtube.com
 - www.youtube.com/watch
 - mongabay.com
 - www.nacion.com

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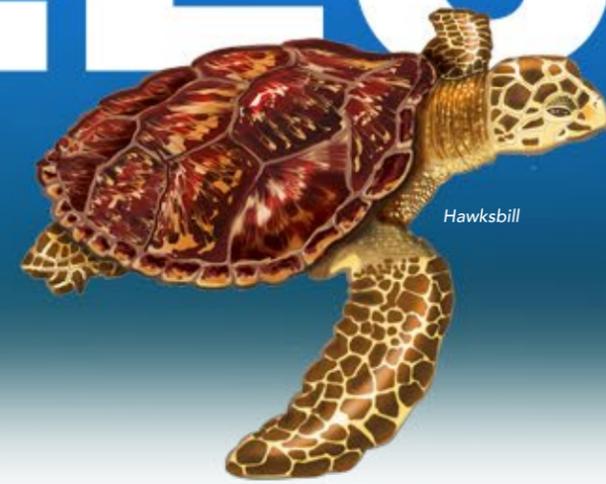
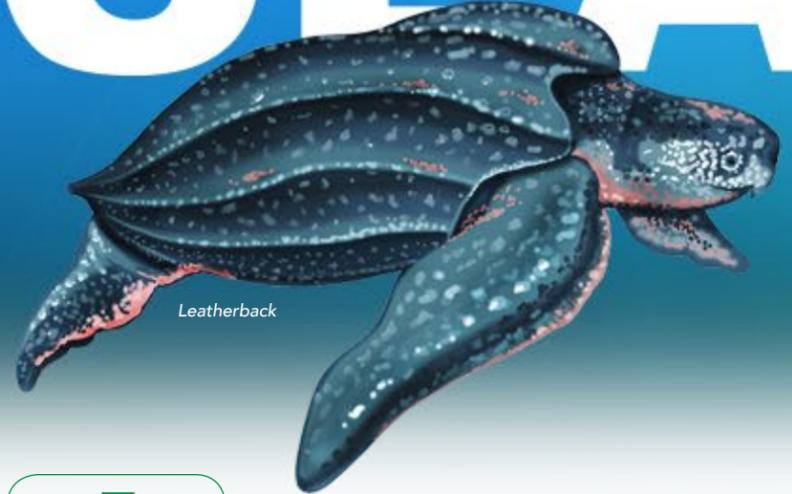
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Observing

SEA TURTLES

[Return to map](#)



in Costa Rica

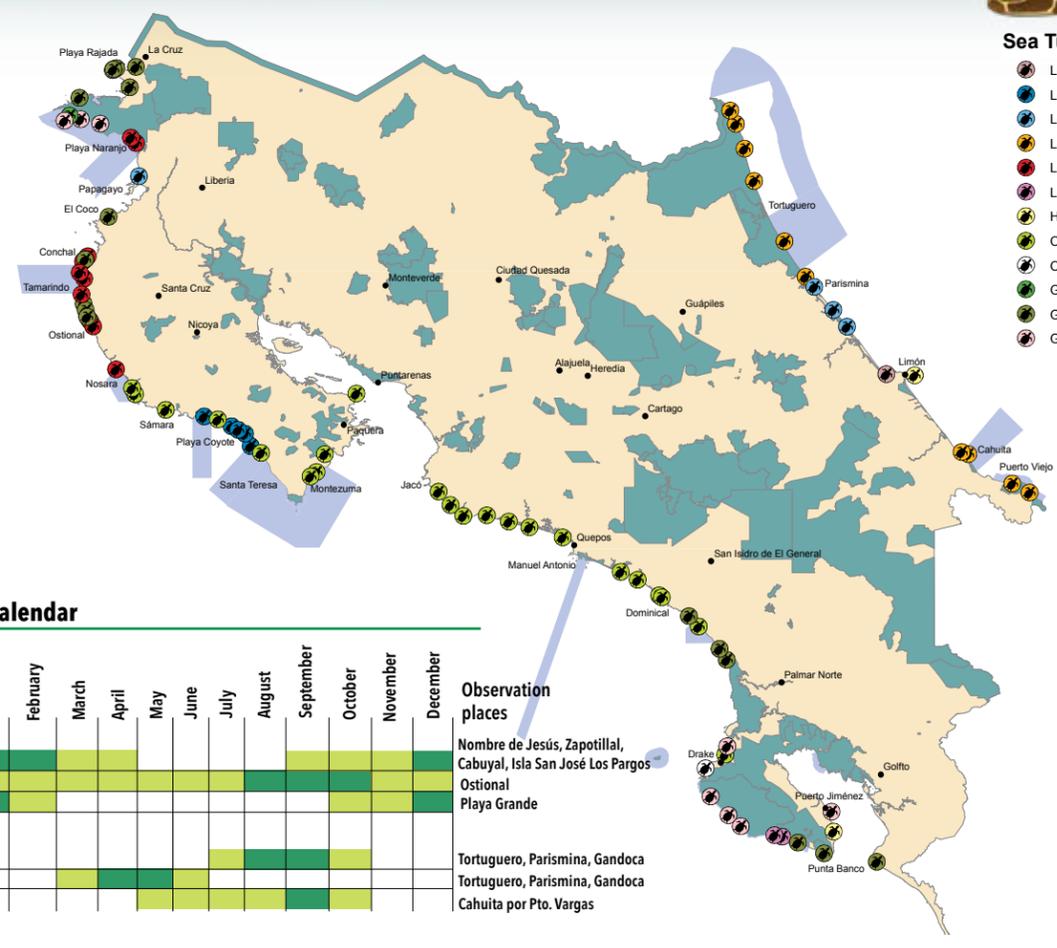
- 5**
species of sea turtles:
- Leatherback *Tortuga baula* *Derموchelys coriacea*
 - Green Turtle *Tortuga verde* *Chelonia mydas*
 - Olive ridley *Tortuga lora* *Lepidochelys olivacea*
 - Loggerhead *Tortuga cabezona* *Caretta caretta*
 - Hawksbill *Tortuga carey* *Eretmochelys imbricata*

Costa Rica is a privileged country, as it is visited by no fewer than five species of sea turtles, migratory species with a high ecological value and great indicators of the health of the oceans. The sea turtles nesting beaches play a very important role in ecosystem dynamics, as well as being a hotspot of ecotourism development in Costa Rica. The beaches have made it possible for local communities to carry out tourism activities related to the observation of the nesting process, which has brought significant economic and social benefits at the local and regional levels.

Costa Rica has also been one of the few countries in the world that has been carrying out sea turtle conservation for over 60 years, beginning in 1955 in the community of Tortuguero with Archie Carr. Sea turtles

are one of the most important animal groups mentioned in the declarations of several protected wildlife areas, including Tortuguero National Park, established in 1975, as well as some established later, including the **Ostional National Wildlife Refuge, Las Baulas Marine National Park and the Camaronal National Wildlife Refuge**. Over the years the government has made significant efforts to protect the sea turtles nesting beaches by including them in the management plans of protected wildlife areas, such as **Playa Nancite in Santa Rosa, Playa Hermosa and Punta Mala in Cahuita, and Gandoca-Manzanillo**.

In spite of these efforts, approximately 50% of the beaches used for sea turtle nesting are not covered by the country's natural heritage program (MINAE 2018).



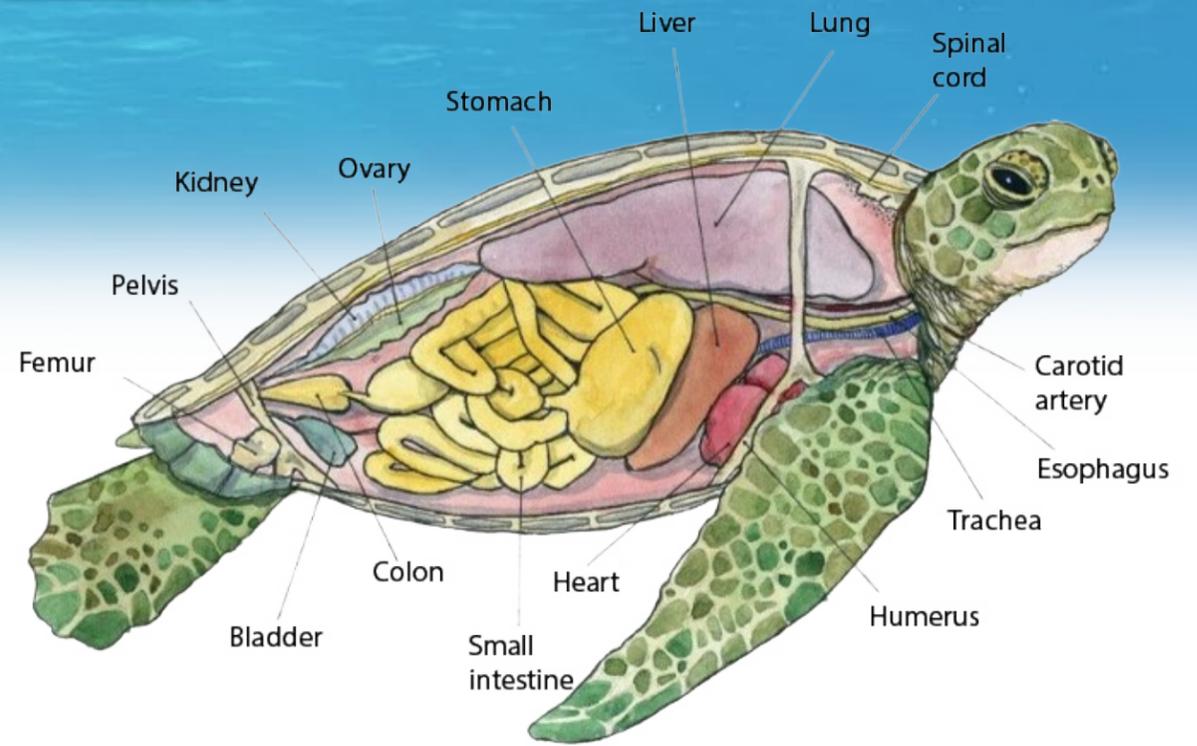
Credits:
The Costa Rican Tourism Board thanks Rotney Piedra Chacón, Director of Protected Wildlife Areas for the Tempisque Conservation Area (ACT) - National System of Conservation Areas (SINAC) for his contributions to the content and revision of this sea turtles infographic. Thanks are also due to Sergio Arias, Elizabeth Vélez from Asociación Kuemar, Didhier Chacón from Latin American Sea Turtle (Last), Luis Fonseca from Asociación Costa Rica por Siempre, Verónica Cáceres, Randall Ureña, Ruth Alfaro and Saúl Ruiz for their contributions to the content of this infographic.
Coordination and production: Mario B. Badilla Jara / Design and layout: Floria Leiva Pacheco / Turtle illustrations: Alexander Salazar / Maps: Pablo González.
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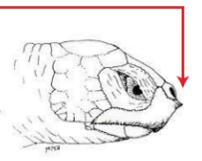
Species and their characteristics

Species	Common name	Head	Shell	Plastron
<i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i>	Hawksbill Tortuga Carey	2 pairs of prefrontal scales	Scutes imbricated (overlapping)	4 inframarginal scutes without pores
<i>Chelonia mydas</i>	Green turtle Tortuga verde	1 pair of prefrontal scales	4 lateral scutes	4 inframarginal scutes without pores
<i>Lepidochelys olivacea</i>	Olive ridley Tortuga lora	More than 1 pair of prefrontal scales	6 or more lateral scutes 6 or more vertebral scutes	4 inframarginal scutes with pores
<i>Caretta caretta</i>	Loggerhead Cabezona	More than 1 pair of prefrontal scales	5 lateral scutes	3 inframarginal scutes without pores
<i>Dermochelys coriacea</i>	Leatherback Tortuga baula	No scales	Ridges	No scutes

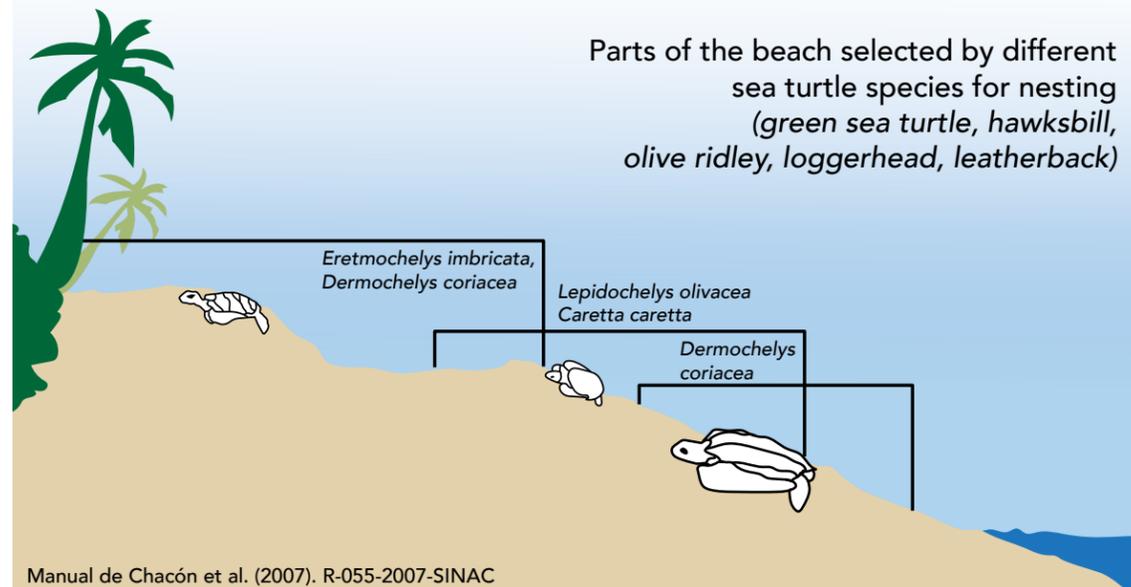
[Return to map](#)



Newborn sea turtles develop a temporary sharp egg-tooth called a caruncle, which they use to break the egg. The tooth remains for a short time, breaking off after a few days.

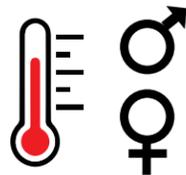


Beach nesting sites



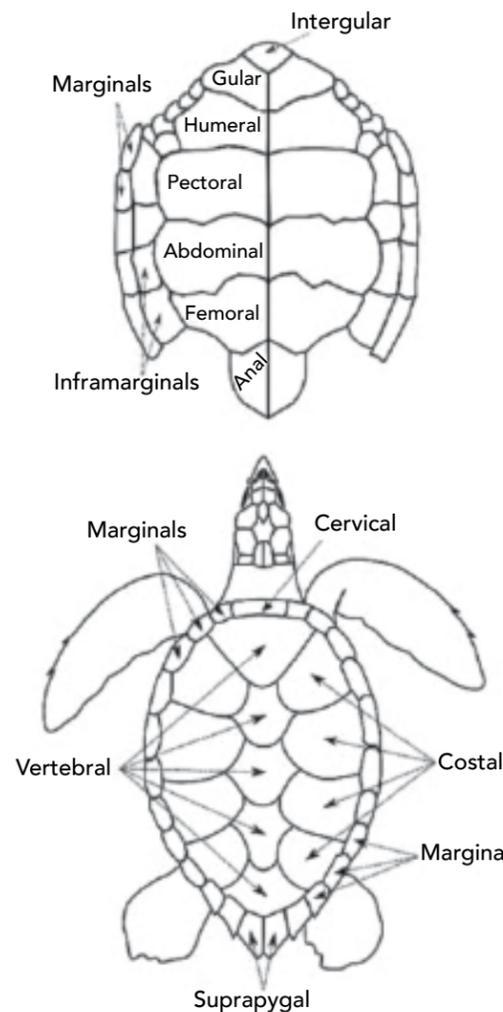
Manual de Chacón et al. (2007). R-055-2007-SINAC

Did you know?

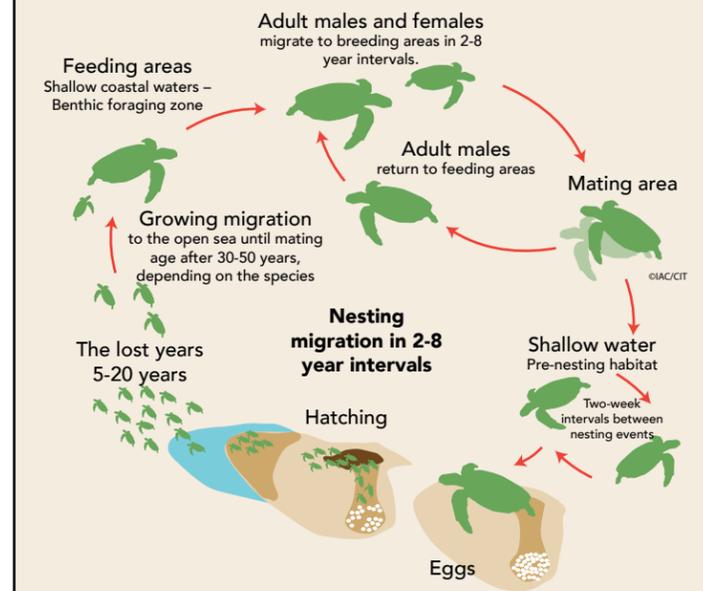


Temperature determines the sex of newborns.

If the temperature in the nesting cavity is above 28.7-30.0°C, a proportionally larger number of females will be born (depending on the species).



Life cycle of a sea turtle



The life cycle of sea turtles makes it hard to manage the species and exposes them to many impacts, natural as well as human-caused, which puts their survival at risk. Very few sea turtles survive to maturity: perhaps only 1 per 1000.

Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles. For more information, visit www.iacseaturtle.org

Leatherback sea turtle

Leatherback sea turtles carry out extensive migrations between different feeding regions in various seasons and nesting zones.

Dermochelys coriacea

Tortuga baula

Shell

Elongated, with seven longitudinal ridges protruding from the back. The shell is soft, thick and does not contain scutes, the usual components of turtle shells. It is the only species in which the shell is composed of small bony plates called osteoderms.

Coloration

Dorsal side is predominantly black, with a variable abundance of white or lighter spots; pots can be bluish or pink on the neck and base of the fins; clear pigmentation predominates on the plastron.

Head

Triangular, up to 25 cm wide; covered with skin; no scales or scutes in adults. The head has a pinkish spot that differs between individuals and can be used for identification.

Plastron

Relatively small, flexible (contains very little material)

Up to 500 kg

One individual was reported with a weight of 1,000 kg and a size of 3 m.

Extremities

Frontal flippers are extremely long; skin does not contain scutes in adults; claws not present on any of the flippers.



Nesting period on the Pacific coast

September to March:

Grande, Ventanas, Langosta, Ostional, Nancite, Osa, Junquillal, Matapalo, Naranjo, Real, Honda, Zapotillal y Nombre de Jesús.

Nesting period on the Caribbean coast

February-August:

Barra del Colorado, Tortuguero, Moín, Parismina, Pacuare, Matina, 12 millas, Negra, Cahuita, Gandoca.

Leatherback turtles are circumglobally distributed, with nesting sites on tropical sandy beaches and foraging ranges that extend into temperate and subpolar latitudes. Leatherbacks are a single species worldwide comprising seven biologically described regional management units or subpopulations. (Wallace et al. 2010).

Predators

Eggs and newborns:



Adults:



The leatherback is the world's largest sea turtle species. It used to be a common sight in the northern Pacific coast, but currently arrives less frequently. It can also be observed in abundance along the Caribbean coast between March and July. These animals are not easy to spot, as they prefer to swim in the open ocean.



Average length in Costa Rica:
148.7 cm (Pacific)
152 cm (Caribbean)

NESTING PERIOD



Caribbean coast:
February-August

Pacific coast:
September to March

DIET



Juveniles and adults both feed on jellyfish and soft-bodied invertebrates.

MATING



Occurs every **four or more years** in shallow coastal waters

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION



Worldwide distribution, with nesting sites on **tropical sandy beaches and foraging ranges** that extend into temperate and subpolar latitudes.

CONSERVATION STATUS



Tropical eastern Pacific: **critically endangered**
Northwestern Atlantic region: **endangered**

THREATS



Egg poaching, plastic bags, bycatch, coastal development, sale, solid and liquid waste

AGE



30 - 50 years. Under ideal conditions, it is believed that they can live longer.

SEXUAL MATURITY



Reached between **9 and 14 years of age**

WHERE THEY SWIM



They prefer to swim in the open ocean, **from the surface to depths of 1,300 m.**

AVERAGE NEST SIZE



Between **68 and 80 normal eggs, 112 eggs per nest** (Caribbean)

NESTS PER SEASON



7-13 clutches of eggs laid per season

INCUBATION PERIOD



50-70 days

GREEN TURTLE

Chelonia mydas

Tortuga blanca (Caribbean),
Tortuga negra (Pacific)

Oval shell (Caribbean)

Non-serrated margin, 4 pairs of costal scutes.

Heart-shaped shell (Pacific)

Posterior notch present in adults, non-serrate; commonly tectiform (shaped like a tent) and flattened on the anterior profile; 4 pairs of costal scutes.

Black coloration on the dorsal side in newborns, becoming brown with radial veins in juveniles and highly variable in adults (generally brown, creamy-yellow and other earthy shades; smooth, streaked or spotted); ventral side white in newborns, yellowish in adults.

Weight up to **230 kg** in the Caribbean and up to **120 kg** in the Pacific (70 kg on average)

One claw on each flipper (Pacific and Caribbean)

Head: Up to 15 cm (Caribbean) is the width of its head 2 prefrontal scales; 4 pairs of postorbital scales.

Head: Up to 13 cm (Pacific) 2 prefrontal scales; 4 pairs of postorbital scales is the most common number, followed by 3 pairs.

Extremities Relatively larger flippers than other populations of the *C. mydas* complex (Pacific)

Average length:
104,6 cm Caribbean
88,6 cm Pacific

Except for their migrations, during which they cross the open sea, they generally live in shallow waters with coral reefs, seagrass beds and algae.



Nesting period on the Caribbean coast

June to October: Barra del Colorado, Tortuguero, Parismina, Pacuare, Matina, 12 millas, Negra, Cahuita, Gandoca.

The green sea turtle, also known as the black turtle, has a worldwide distribution, occurring in all tropical seas as well as subtropical waters with less frequency (eastern, northeastern, northwestern, southeastern and western Atlantic Ocean, eastern and western Indian Ocean, Mediterranean Sea, eastern, northwestern, southwestern and western Pacific Ocean).

PREDATORS

Eggs and newborns:



Adults:



There is a significant concentration of green sea turtles in Tortuguero, on the Atlantic coast, with over 100,000 nesting females per year.

A subspecies of the green sea turtle, called the black turtle, lives on the Pacific coast of Costa Rica. It is smaller, with dark coloration and a narrower rear portion of the shell. In addition to seagrass and algae, they consume mangrove propagules and marine invertebrates. Nombre de Jesús, Zapotillal, Los Pargos, Cabuyal, Isla San José and Golfo Dulce are very important sites for the feeding and nesting of this subspecies (*Ch. mydas agassizi*).



NESTING DATE	DIET	MATING	GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION	CONSERVATION STATUS	THREATS	AGE	SEXUAL MATURITY	HABITAT	AVERAGE NEST SIZE	NESTS PER SEASON	INCUBATION PERIOD
<p>Caribbean: June to October</p> <p>Pacific: August to March</p>	<p>Omnivorous from when they are newborns to juveniles, but become herbivorous as adults (seagrass, algae)</p>	<p>Occurs every two to four years in shallow coastal waters.</p>	<p>Found in all tropical seas as well as less frequently in subtropical waters (eastern, northeastern, northwestern, southeastern and western Atlantic Ocean, eastern and western Indian Ocean, Mediterranean Sea, eastern, northwestern, southwestern and western Pacific Ocean).</p>	<p>Endangered</p>	<p>Egg poaching, bycatch, coastal development, sale, solid and liquid waste.</p>	<p>Up to 75 years</p>	<p>Reached between 20 and 50 years of age</p>	<p>Except for their migrations, during which they cross the open sea, they generally live in shallow waters with coral reefs, seagrass beds and algae.</p>	<p>82 eggs in the Pacific and 112 eggs in the Caribbean</p>	<p>3 or more times per season. The average nesting intervals is 14 days.</p>	<p>48-70 days</p>

To find out on which beaches in Costa Rica you can see leatherback turtles, see the map on page 1

Green sea turtles are named for the color of their fat, which is green because of their diet of seagrass (*Thalassia sp.*) This gives their fat tissue an olive-green color, which is called *Calopee* on the coast of Limón.

OLIVE RIDLEY

Known as the only sea turtle that lays its eggs in a mass nesting event called *arribada*, with thousands of females arriving at the same beach to lay their eggs. Between 100,000 and 300,000 females can participate in the event. There are several beaches along the Pacific coast of Central America where the phenomenon occurs: Ostional and Nancite (Costa Rica), Playa La Flor and Chacocente (Nicaragua), and Isla Cañas and la Marinera (Panama).

Lepidochelys olivacea

Tortuga Lora

Shell

Short and broad, lightly tectiform (tent-shaped) in adults, five to nine pairs of costal scutes (commonly six to eight), frequently with an asymmetric configuration.

Head:

Relatively large, slightly triangular; up to 13 cm wide, two pairs of prefrontal scales.

Weight:

35 kg - 50 kg

Extremities

Two claws on each flipper (some adults may lose the second claw on the front flippers).

Plastron

Four inframarginal scutes with pores.

Coloration dorsal side is brown with amber-colored streaks in adults; ventral side has hues of pale yellow to white, sometimes with black spots (particularly in specimens on the Pacific).



Average length in Costa Rica:
66 cm to 72 cm



Nesting period on the Pacific coast

Mass nesting: once per month in each month of the year.
Solitary nesting: year-round

Nesting period on the Pacific coast (mass nesting)

Every month, but especially during the rainy season (June to November) in Nancite and Ostional



This is the only species able to come together and organize their nesting in groups, which are called *arribadas*. In Costa Rica, these *arribadas* occur in Ostional and Corozalito.

PREDATORS:

Eggs and newborns:



Adults:



HABITAT

Like most sea turtles, olive ridley sea turtles have a complex life cycle that requires a series of geographically separate areas and multiple habitats. Females nest on sandy coastal beaches, from where their newborns emerge and enter the sea to continue their development. They remain in a pelagic phase, passively traveling on ocean currents that take them away from the areas of their birth, with juveniles sharing habitats with adults until reaching sexual maturity. Reproductively active males and females migrate to the coastal zones and congregate near the nesting beaches.

MATING

The species has three modes of reproduction: **mass nesting, solitary nesting and a mixed strategy**. The first method is a massive, simultaneous mass nesting behavior that can include hundreds of thousands of females over a period of several days. This occurs in less than a dozen places around the world, including the Ostional National Wildlife Refuge, Nancite in Santa Rosa National Park and Corozalito in Nandayure, Guanacaste. The most common form of nesting is dispersed or "solitary" nesting, with no apparent links between the individual events. In some areas, a mix between these two nesting behaviors can be observed.

NESTING DATE



Mass nesting: Every month, but especially during the rainy season (June to November) in Nancite and Ostional

Solitary: Year-round

DIET



Omnivorous
Marine plants, lobsters, shrimp, fish, jellyfish, snails, algae.

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION



Olive ridley sea turtles have a circumtropical distribution, nesting in all tropical seas with the exception of the Gulf of Mexico, and with migratory routes in tropical and some subtropical regions.

CONSERVATION STATUS



Vulnerable

THREATS



Egg poaching, plastic bags, bycatch, coastal development, sale, solid and liquid waste

AGE



Estimated life expectancy of **50 years**

SEXUAL MATURITY



Reached at **13 years of age**.

AVERAGE NEST SIZE



110 eggs per nest

NESTS PER SEASON



Two per season.

Nesting interval: 26-66 days.

INCUBATION PERIOD



46-65 days

HAWKSBILL SEA TURTLE

One of the most highly exploited species by humans, the hawksbill turtle is captured for its meat and its attractive shell, which is used to make rings, combs, sunglasses, bracelets, necklaces, etc. Its eggs are also collected.

Eretmochelys imbricata

Tortuga Carey

Shell

Oval, with a markedly serrated posterior margin and with thick, imbricated (overlapping) scutes, except in newborns and some adults; 4 pairs of costal scutes.

Head:

relatively narrow; width of up to 12 cm; straight beak similar to a bird's; two pairs of prefrontal scales.

Weights up to **80 kg** with an average weight of **60 kg**

Plastrón

Four pairs of inframarginal scutes without pores.

Extremities

Front flippers of medium length compared to other species; two claws on each flipper.

Coloration dorsal side is brown with amber-colored streaks in adults; ventral side has hues of pale yellow to white, sometimes with black spots (particularly in specimens on the Pacific).



Nesting period on the Caribbean coast:

May to November : Barra del Colorado, Tortuguero, Parísimina, Pacuare, Matina, 12 millas, Negra, Cahuita, Moín, Gandoca and Uvita.



Average lenght in Costa Rica:
85,97 cm to 90 cm



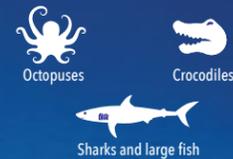
Its diet consists of sea sponges, jellyfish, invertebrates and other smaller organisms that live on the sea floor.

PREDATORS

Eggs and newborns:



Adults:



The hawksbill sea turtle is the rarest of the species found in Costa Rica. Though there is a resident colony that lives in Golfo Dulce, they are difficult to spot due to the small size of the population and endangered status.

Feeding zones: internal part of the Gulf of Nicoya, rocky reefs of Cabo Blanco, Coyote, Central Pacific and the internal area of Golfo Dulce. In Costa Rica the nesting of hawksbill turtles occurs sporadically along the Pacific coast. Nesting females have also been reported in the northern Pacific beaches, including Isla San José, Lagartillo, Avellanas, Punta Banco, Caletas and Caña Blanca.



Foto: tortugueroinfo.com

NESTING DATES



Caribbean:
May to November
Pacific:
May to January

DIET



Omnivorous
Sea sponges in large quantities, algae, marine worms, mollusks, seagrass and mangroves.

MATING



Mating events occur every two or three years in shallow waters.

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION



The tropical and subtropical coastal waters of the Pacific, Atlantic and Indian Ocean.

CONSERVATION STATUS



Critically endangered

THREATS



Egg poaching, plastic bags, bycatch, coastal development, solid and liquid waste. Trade in products made from hawksbill turtle shells is a major problem in many countries, and continues to be a widespread threat in the Americas, Asia and parts of Africa.

AGE



Estimated life expectancy of **30 to 50 years**

SEXUAL MATURITY



Reached at **20 years of age or later.**

HABITAT



Its marine environment is surrounded by coral reefs with a large quantity of sponges, algae and seagrass. It is also located close to rocky areas, sandbanks and mangroves; turtles can rest in caves and underneath rocks.

AVERAGE NEST SIZE



155 eggs per nest.

NESTS PER SEASON



5 clutches per season.

Nesting interval:
14-16 days

INCUBATION PERIOD



47-75 days.

LOGGERHEAD SEA TURTLE

Except for their migrations, during which they cross the open sea, they generally live in shallow waters with coral reefs, seagrass beds and algae.

Caretta caretta

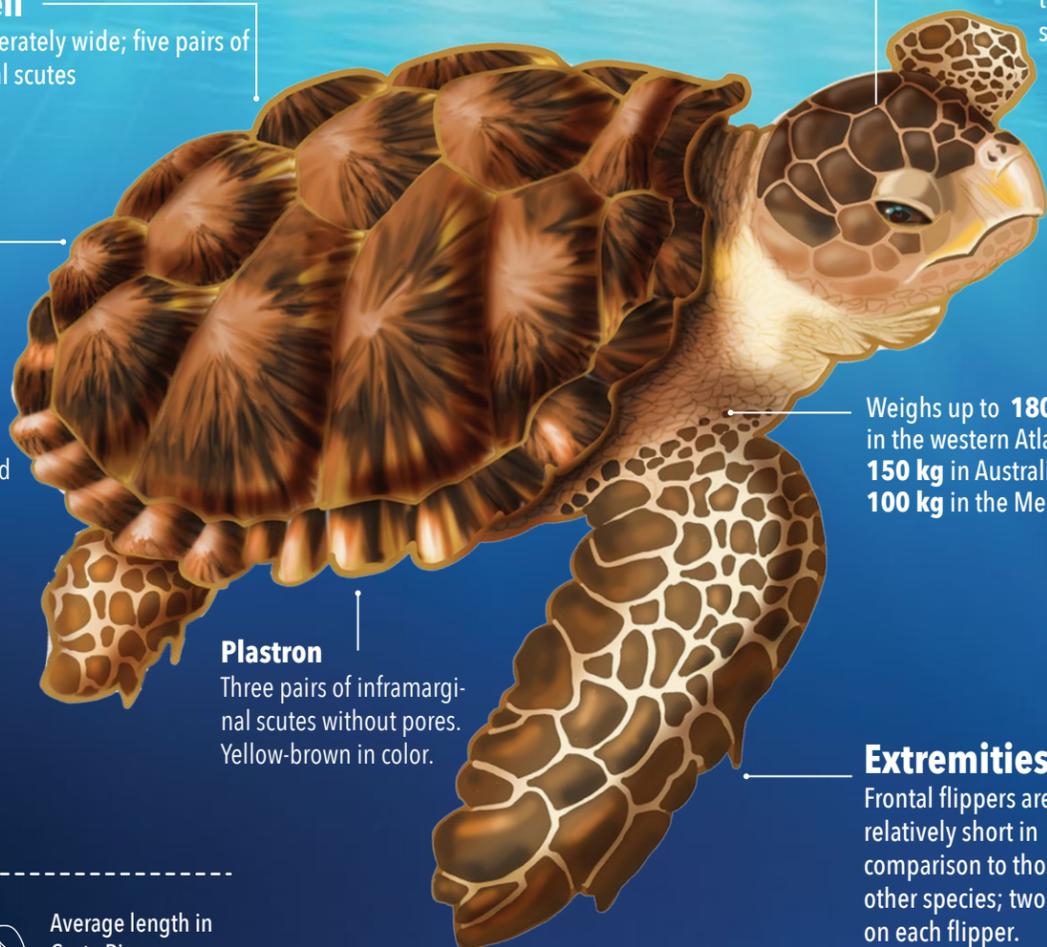
Tortuga cabeza, Tortuga caguama

Shell

Moderately wide; five pairs of costal scutes

Coloration

Dorsal side is reddish brown in adults; ventral surface yellow to orange in adults. Measures approximately 1 meter and can weigh up to 150 kg.



Head:

Large and triangular. Width up to 28 cm; two pairs of prefrontal scales.

Weights up to 180 kg in the western Atlantic, and up to 150 kg in Australia; under 100 kg in the Mediterranean.

Plastron

Three pairs of inframarginal scutes without pores. Yellow-brown in color.

Extremities

Frontal flippers are relatively short in comparison to those of other species; two claws on each flipper.



Average length in Costa Rica: **87 cm**



Nesting period on the Caribbean coast

May to August: Barra del Colorado, Tortuguero, Parímina, Pacuare, Matina, Moín, 12 Millas, Negra, Cahuita, Gandoca.

Pacific No nesting

In addition to its large head, this species is known for climbing trees near rivers and streams.

Due to the large size of its head, it cannot be hidden inside the shell.

This turtle is well-adapted to its marine surroundings.

It can be found exclusively in the reefs of Cahuita and Gandoca-Manzanillo on the country's Caribbean coast. There are no loggerhead turtles in the Costa Rican Pacific.

PREDATORS

Eggs and newborns:



Adults:



This species has been found as far as 240 km into the open sea. Though it is not commonly found nesting in Costa Rica, nests have been reported in Tortuguero. Globally, its distribution includes the Pacific Atlantic and Indian Ocean, and can be found in Washington state, Japan, India, Kenya, the British Isles, southern Chile, Australia, South Africa, and even Argentina. It is also found in the Caribbean and Mediterranean Seas. It migrates long distances from its feeding sites to its nesting beaches.



Photo: tortugueroinfo.com

NESTING DATE



Caribbean: May to August

Pacific: No information

DIET



Omnivorous from when they are newborns to juveniles, but become **carnivorous** as adults (crabs, snails, sponges, jellyfish, urchins, fish eggs, shrimp)

MATING



Mating is somewhat violent: males tend to bite the female's neck or flipper to be accepted. If the female rejects the male, she covers her cloaca and swims away towards the seafloor.

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION



Loggerhead turtle are distributed globally, in the **subtropical and temperate areas** of the Pacific, Indian and Atlantic Oceans and the Mediterranean Sea.

CONSERVATION STATUS



Endangered

THREATS



Egg poaching, plastic bags, bycatch, coastal development, sale, solid and liquid waste.

AGE



Estimated life expectancy of **47-67 years**

SEXUAL MATURITY



Reached betweenage. **10 and 39 years of age**

HABITAT



Commonly found in coastal waters, river deltas and coral reefs. **Can dive for 15-30 minutes.**

AVERAGE NEST SIZE



100-130 eggs per nest (Caribbean)

NESTS PER SEASON



4 clutches per season,

Nesting interval: 15 days

INCUBATION PERIOD



56-80 days

Experience the magic of Costa Rica's astonishing marine lights!

BIOLUMINESCENCE

Costa Rica offers a number of beaches where visitors can enjoy the phenomenon of bioluminescence, a fascinating sight in which the water is illuminated with bursts of light when it is moved.

During the night, some marine organisms – including bioluminescent plankton – create a magical spectacle in the water by emitting light due to a chemical reaction that occurs in their body without any external source of light.

¿What is bioluminescence?

Among marine organisms, it is a relatively common phenomenon, produced by microscopic organisms like bacteria and phytoplankton (dinoflagellates). Many other bioluminescent bacteria live as parasites or in symbiosis with other animals.



Cnidarians (jellyfish)



Crustaceans

Dinoflagellates

Cephalopods

Worms

Mollusks, echinoderms and fish, especially those that live in deep water like the anglerfish.

90%

of living beings that live in the bathypelagic and abyssopelagic zones – the deepest reaches of the sea – may be able to produce light in some manner.

On land

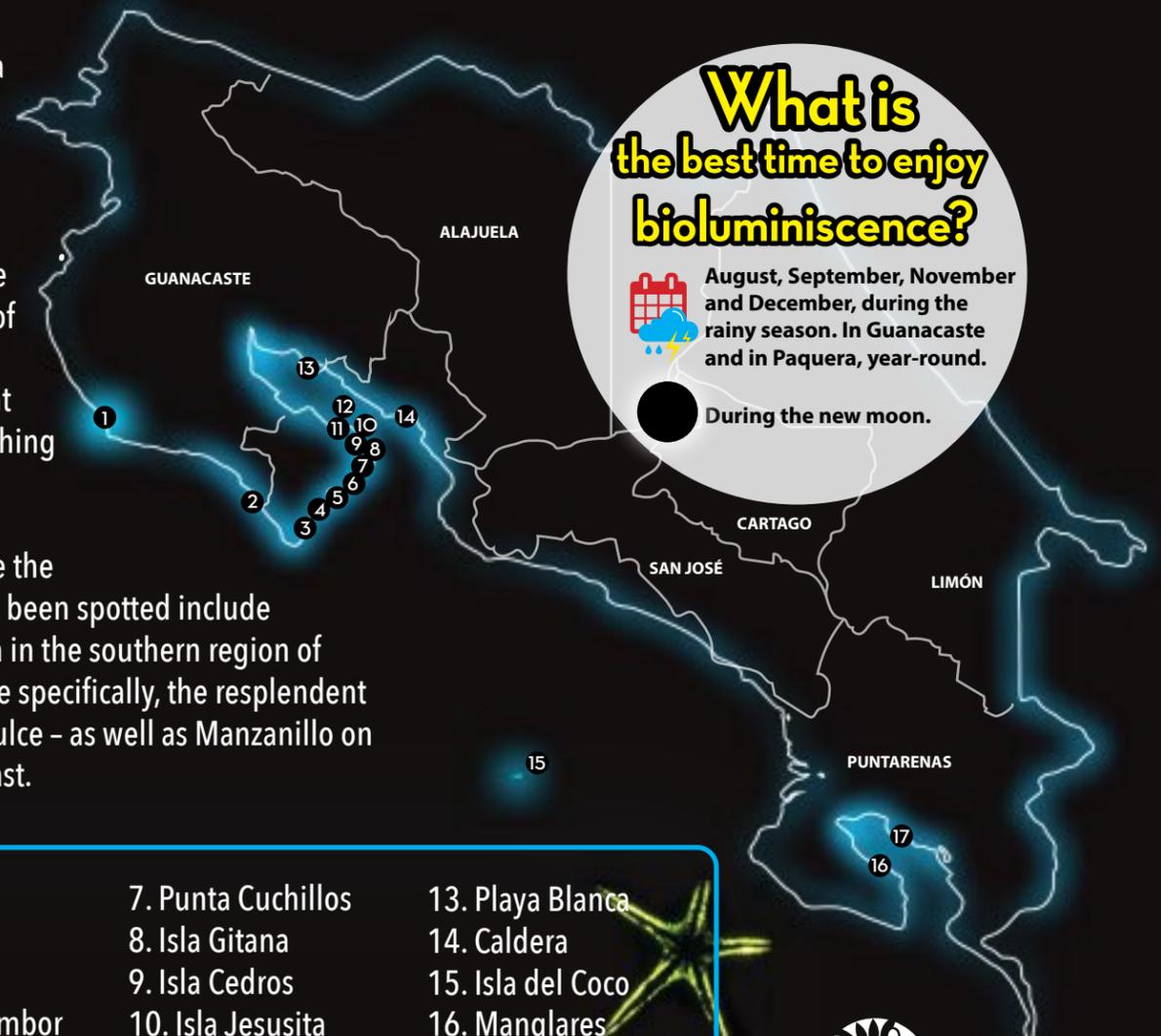
Bioluminescence is observed in fungi and invertebrates (fireflies and scarab beetles, for example).



Main observation areas

The Gulf of Nicoya (Guanacaste and Puntarenas) and the Gulf of Papagayo (Guanacaste) have the most reports of bioluminescence due to the amount of tourism and fishing in those regions.

Other areas where the phenomenon has been spotted include the Osa Peninsula in the southern region of Puntarenas – more specifically, the resplendent waters of Golfo Dulce – as well as Manzanillo on the Caribbean coast.



What is the best time to enjoy bioluminescence?

August, September, November and December, during the rainy season. In Guanacaste and in Paquera, year-round.

During the new moon.

- | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Ostional | 7. Punta Cuchillos | 13. Playa Blanca |
| 2. Cocal | 8. Isla Gitana | 14. Caldera |
| 3. Montezuma | 9. Isla Cedros | 15. Isla del Coco |
| 4. Vivos-Bahía Tambor | 10. Isla Jesusita | 16. Manglares Puerto Jiménez |
| 5. Quesera | 11. Paquera | 17. Playa Cativo |
| 6. Paquera | 12. Isla San Lucas | |



TOURS

There are various ways to enjoy bioluminescence in Costa Rica. Some options are:



NIGHT TOURS IN KAYAK

to see how the water lights up as you move.



BOAT TOURS

for a unique experience.

It is important to remember that bioluminescence **is a natural event and cannot always be guaranteed.** It depends on the season and the water conditions. It is best to investigate prior to planning the trip in order to ensure that you have the opportunity to witness this marvelous spectacle.

- www.cocos.com/tours/
- cocospuntarenas.com
- carlostours/
- arrecifetours/
- costatour/
- marinasotavento/

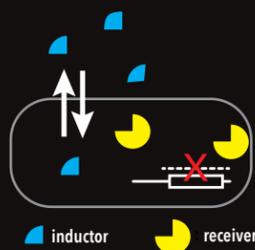
- viajesticososiris/
- turismocuru.com/es/
- varsotravelcr
- facebook.com/
- bayislandcruises

There are various types of marine organisms that create bioluminescence, and each one's light has its own form and color, from warm green to phosphorescent blue.



In the particular case of marine bioluminescence near beaches, for example, it is observed when bioluminescent phytoplankton accumulates in large quantities near the coast and is agitated by the waves, producing a beautiful blue glow that extends along the beach.

Few bacteria



Many bacteria

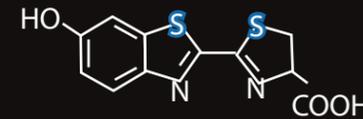


Luciferase gen

BIOLUMINESCENCE IS PRODUCED BY A CHEMICAL REACTION

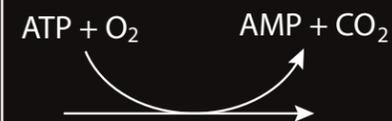
Luciferin

Organisms possess a protein known as luciferin



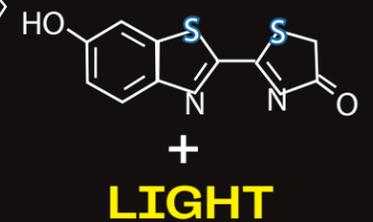
Luciferase

It is oxidized through the action of an enzyme called luciferase. Luciferase makes it possible for the protein luciferin to bond to oxygen



Oxyluciferin

The energy that results from this oxidation is emitted in the form of light (cells)



Carrying out this process has a cost for organisms, since it consumes ATP (an energy-containing molecule used in cellular function).



The light of these marine organisms has a wavelength of **550 nanometers (nm).**



The light emitted by fireflies has a wavelength of **510 nm - 660 nm**



WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF BIOLUMINESCENCE?



Intraspecific communication.

Individuals of a single species use it to communicate with each other. For example, fireflies use bioluminescence for mating.



Attracting prey. Some organisms have light-producing organs that attract their prey.



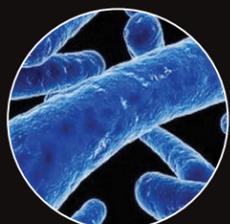
Defense. Some organisms produce light when disturbed in order to scare off predators.



Camouflage. In some cases, for example in some species of fish, bioluminescence is used to camouflage an organism amidst the shadows of the ocean.

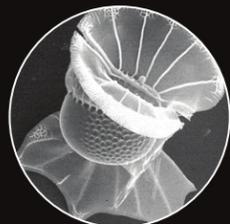


Ceratocorys

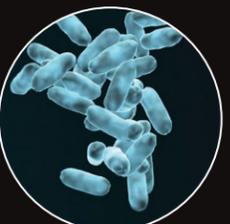


Vibrio

Sampling of the sea water in the Gulf of Nicoya has shown that the bacteria and dinoflagellates that are most commonly seen on tours have been identified as belonging to two main genera: **Vibrio** and **Photobacterium**. Meanwhile, in Isla del Coco National Park, analyses have only found the genus **Vibrio**, as well as luminescent marine dinoflagellates belonging to the genera **Ornithocercus** and **Ceratocorys**.



Ornithocercus



Photobacterium

Bacteria belonging to the genera **Vibrio** and **Photobacterium** may be free-living or in symbiosis with animals like teleost fishes, squids and cuttlefish.



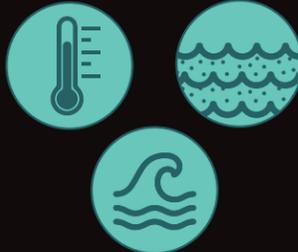
Research

Bioluminescence on the beaches of Costa Rica has been a subject of interest for scientists and experts in the field of marine biology. Studies have focused on understanding the organisms that are responsible for bioluminescence, the factors that affect their appearance, seasonal and geographic patterns, and their importance in marine ecosystems.

Some specific areas of research include:

Factors that cause bioluminescence:

These can include water temperature, salinity, the concentration of nutrients and the presence of predators and physical stimuli such as waves.



Seasonal and geographic variation:

Data collection over time and in different places in order to better understand the patterns and distribution of this natural phenomenon.



Ecological interactions:

This includes studies on how bioluminescence can affect the population dynamics of marine organisms such as predators and prey, and how it can affect the general functioning of coastal ecosystems.



This research is essential for understanding and appreciating the importance of bioluminescence in the beaches of Costa Rica. It also contributes to the conservation of these unique ecosystems and the promotion of sustainable tourism in the region.



The days of the new moon offer more darkness and less light reflecting off of the water than the full moon. However, tours can take place during any phase of the moon.



SEE LUNAR CALENDAR

vercalendario.info/es/luna/
tablasolunar.com/calendarios/calendario-lunar-de-costa-rica/

Bioluminescence sightings can be reported via this website:

biolumicostarica.weebly.com

This phenomenon is believed to exist in freshwater as well, as it is generally reported in coastal regions. Globally, only a few cases have been reported of bioluminescence in freshwater.

For more information about the project, or to report sightings of the phenomenon, you can contact the people in charge through social media:

 [Bioluminiscencia Costa Rica](#)

 [bioluminiscencia_costarica,](#)

www.ucr.ac.cr

biolumicostarica.weebly.com

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