



Peru, Cusco Province

Welcome



Travel has been my life for 20 years. St Augustine's famous quote remains as true to me today as it was when I first set up 2by2 Holidays – "the world is a book and those who do not travel, read only one page".

My first love was Africa, the place of my birth. Its remarkable wildlife and cultures continue to captivate me today. A recent visit to the gorillas of Uganda has starkly reminded me just how fragile the survival of so many endangered species remains. And reinforced my belief that travel must always have conservation at its heart.

In recent years I have discovered the joys of travel in the Indian subcontinent and Latin America. The iconic sites and cultures here are no less enthralling. And everywhere wildlife adapts and survives, from harsh barren deserts to cool mountain cloud forests and tropical wetlands.

My enthusiasm burns as brightly as ever and I continue to be as involved in every aspect of the business as I always have been, backed up by our superb travel team. I'm particularly thrilled that so many of our customers return time after time.

I do hope you find our latest brochure inspiring and we all look forward to hearing from you.

Hambe Kahle – Travel Safely

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Three-toed sloth

Costa Rica

While only covering 0.03% of the Earth's surface, tiny Costa Rica holds more than 5% of all life forms. Over a quarter of the country is protected and its conservation credentials are impeccable, drawing nature lovers from all around the world.

Positioned within the tropics of Central America and lapped by both the Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea, Costa Rica is a wildlife haven like no other. With its mountains providing the watershed between the oceans, this tiny country has a huge diversity of geography and climate, resulting in some of the best wildlife viewing and birding in the whole world. The rainforests really do teem with wildlife. Here you will find monkeys, sloths, caiman (small alligators) and an incredible array of birds, butterflies and reptiles.

The capital of San Jose is set in the heart of the central highlands amid a line of mountain peaks and volcanoes that stretch the entire length of the country. Much of the capital's colonial heritage has gone, but the Teatro Nacional remains with its neoclassical façade. The National Museum gives an overview of Costa Rican history and is well worth a visit. People-watch in the Parque Nacional and grab some lunch in the Mercado Central – try the ceviche, a popular seafood dish.

San Jose is the perfect hub for touring and one of the joys of Costa Rica is that it is easy to get around. As the roads are good, self-driving is popular. Alternatively a network of shuttle buses join up key destinations. English is widely spoken and the guiding is excellent. Outdoor activities abound, from tranquil river floats and coastal turtle watching, to white-knuckle river rafting and thrilling zip lining. Whether you like gentle pursuits or want an adrenaline fix, there will be something for you in Costa Rica.

Reached by coach and boat, or by small plane from San Jose, Tortuguero is one of Costa Rica's most-loved national parks. A network of tranquil canals, lagoons and rivers run through this lowland rainforest, which is best explored by boat. This is home to the acrobatic spider monkey, noisy howlers and capuchins as well as the sloth. Also look for iguanas, Jesus Christ lizards (they can walk on water), tiny multi-coloured frogs, caiman and many bird species including the rare Green macaw.

This 14-mile stretch of wild pristine Caribbean coast is one of the most important nesting sites in the world for the endangered Green turtle. Carefully monitored turtle watching between June and November is a thrilling experience.

To the west of Tortuguero, the Arenal Volcano with its almost perfect cone is a must-see. A stop en route at the protected lowland tropical rainforest at Sarapiquí provides another chance to spot endemic birds, plants and trees. La Fortuna is the main town in the Arenal region and from here hiking, hanging bridge walks, zip-lining, rafting, fishing and horse riding are all available, as well as a soothing soak in the hot thermal springs. A boat trip into the Caño Negro Wildlife Refuge on the Nicaragua border is an opportunity to visit a wetland of international importance for migratory birds.

Straddling the continental divide, the Monteverde Cloud Forest is famous for its sightings of the Resplendent quetzal and over 400 other bird species, as many endemics thrive in this unique moisture driven eco-system. A ride on the Sky Tram is unforgettable, followed by thrilling zip-lining through the forest canopy.

In the northwest, the Guanacaste province protects some of the last dry tropical forest in Central America and Cordillera de Guanacaste is home to Rincón de la Vieja, one of six active volcanoes in Costa Rica. Beyond its national parks, Guanacaste's sandy Pacific beaches and dry tropical climate make this the place to come for sunshine and surf. With an international airport at Liberia, the regional capital, this is an easy destination to reach. From the Gulf of Papagayo south towards the Nicoya Peninsula, the coastal villages have rapidly developed with air-conditioned hotels and top-end resorts.

However, some of the best sandy beaches and marine activities are found further south still, near Manuel Antonio National Park. This is the smallest national park in Costa Rica, but it is blessed with the greatest wildlife diversity. Snorkel, dive, whale-watch and then look for sloths, iguana, howler and white-faced monkeys in the national park. For quetzal sightings, head inland to the cloud forests of Los Quetzales National Park in the Talamanca Mountains.

If your budget allows, visit the unspoilt Osa Peninsula surrounded by the magnificent tropical rainforests of Corcovado National Park on the southwest Pacific Coast. In this remote area there is good chance of spotting tapir, white-faced monkey and ocelot. Activities at your lodge will centre around boat rides (with thrilling wet landings) and guided walks in the jungle. In the warm ocean you can hope to see dolphins, as well as Humpback whales in season (August to March).



White-faced capuchin



Red eyed tree frog



Best of Costa Rica

- DAYS 1/2** Arrive in San Jose, with Poas Volcano & coffee tour
- DAYS 3/4** Transfer to the waterways of Tortuguero National Park, to see turtles & other wildlife
- DAYS 5/7** Travel to Arenal Volcano with its hanging bridges, hot springs & adventure activities
- DAYS 8/9** Drive to Monteverde Cloud Forest with its abundant birdlife, reptiles & insects
- DAYS 10/12** Relax on the beautiful beaches of Manuel Antonio
- DAY 13** Depart from San Jose

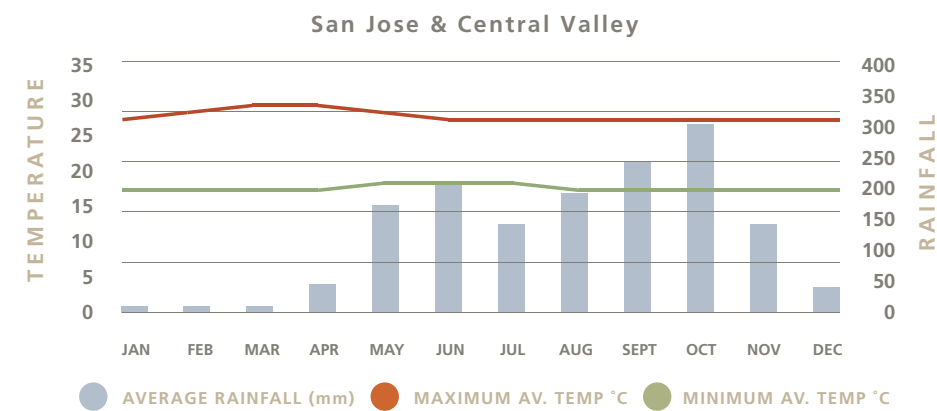
From £2,595 per person sharing including flights, mid season



This is an example itinerary – see page 5 for key. For more ideas, information and prices please call us on **01582 766 122** or visit www.2by2holidays.co.uk

When to go

The best time to visit Costa Rica is during the drier season from December to March. However this small country has many microclimates, so the weather can vary dramatically from region to region, all within one day. The rainy season runs from May to November, with the heaviest rains in September and October, which should be avoided.





Book with confidence

We have ATOL certification and membership of the Association of Tour Operators (AITO).

Booking your holiday

When you are ready to book, we will guide you through the process. In all our dealings we aim to be transparent and encourage you to read our terms and conditions thoroughly. These are on our website at www.2by2holidays.co.uk. Please do contact us if anything is unclear.

Financial Protection

Through our membership of ATOL (9025) and our Tour Operator Insurance, your holiday is fully financially protected wherever in the world you live, regardless of whether you book land-only arrangements or a complete holiday package with flights.

AITO Quality Charter

AITO is the Association for independent and specialist holiday companies. Our member companies, usually owner-managed, strive to create overseas holidays with high levels of professionalism and a shared concern for quality and personal service. The Association encourages the highest standards in all aspects of tour operating.

Exclusive Membership

AITO sets criteria regarding ownership, finance and quality which must be satisfied before new companies are admitted to membership. All members are required to adhere to a Code of Business Practice which encourages high operational standards and conduct.

Financial Security

An AITO member is required to arrange financial protection for all holidays and other arrangements (including accommodation only) booked by customers with the member under the AITO logo. This financial protection applies to customers who are resident in the UK at the time of booking and to most overseas customers who have booked directly with the member. In doing so, the member must comply with UK Government regulations. Members are required to submit details of their financial protection arrangements to AITO on a regular basis.

Accurate brochures and websites

All members do their utmost to ensure that all their brochures and other publications, print or electronic, clearly and accurately describe the holidays and services offered.

Professional service and continual improvements

All members are committed to high standards of service and believe in regular and thorough training of employees. Members continually seek to review and improve their holidays. They listen to their customers and always welcome suggestions for improving standards.

Monitoring standards

AITO endeavours to monitor quality standards regularly. All customers should receive a post-holiday questionnaire from their tour operator, the results of which are scrutinised by the Association.

Sustainable tourism

Our members acknowledge the importance of AITOs Sustainable Tourism ethos, which recognises the social, economic and environmental responsibilities of tour operating.

Customer relations

All members endeavour to deal swiftly and fairly with any issues their customers may raise. In the unlikely event that a dispute between an AITO member and a customer cannot be settled amicably, either party can call on an arbitration service to bring the matter to a speedy and acceptable conclusion.

To contact AITO call 020 8744 9280 or visit their website www.aito.com

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