

# Information and Guidelines for



# Costa Rica

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## **Costa Rica – Central America**

Costa Rica is bordered by Nicaragua to the north, Panama to the south, the Caribbean Ocean to the east and the Pacific Ocean to the west. It is known for its beautiful mountains with rich soil, volcanoes and tropical rain forests. The country is divided by a backbone of volcanoes and mountains, an extension of the Andes-Sierra Madre chain which runs along the western side of the Americas. Costa Rica has four distinct cordilleras or mountain ranges -- Guanacaste and Tilaran in the north, Central and Talamanca in the south. Costa Rica is part of the Pacific "Rim of Fire" and has seven of the isthmus's 42 active volcanoes plus dozens of dormant or extinct cones.

Costa Rica is a tropical country which contains several distinct climate zones. There is no winter or summer as such and most regions have a rainy season from May to November and a dry season from December to April. Annual rainfall averages 100 inches nationwide with some mountainous regions getting as much as 25 feet on exposed eastern slopes. Temperature is more a matter of elevation than location with a mean of around 72 degrees in the Central Valley, 82 degrees on the Atlantic coast and 89 degrees on the Pacific coast.

### **Perez Zeledon**

Impulse ministers in San Isidro within the Perez Zeledon province. It is located approximately three hours south of the capital city of San Jose. The main economic activities involve coffee, beans, corn, fruit trees and livestock. Impulse ministers to several churches and facilities in San Isidro and the surrounding area. It is one of the largest cities in Costa Rica and the people there are known for their friendliness.

Impulse also ministers to the indigenous Indians on a reserve near the town of Buenos Aires. These people have very little because of the poverty in the area. Medical, dental and many other services are near impossible. Employment is scarce and those who are employed are only paid the equivalent of about \$8 (US) per day. We provide food, clothing and many other supplies to the Indians. We work with Pastor Minor Morales who ministers in a very remote area on the reserve.

### **Cartagena**

Impulse ministers in Cartagena within the Guanacaste province. It is located approximately one hour southwest of the city of Liberia where there is an international airport. The main economic activity is tourism. Impulse ministers to the Iglesia Bíblica Bautista in Cartagena. We work with Roger Zamora who is the pastor of the church. This is one of the poorest areas in Costa Rica.

## **Impulse Facilities**

We currently utilize area hotels in San Isidro and Cartagena that are very nice. They include a pool and other amenities. Each comes with a small café/restaurant. They are located close to our ministry locations as well as restaurants, stores, hospital and many Costa Rican markets. In case of an emergency, team leaders/coordinators are provided with a phone number and a way to contact them in Costa Rica.

There are tight security measures at these locations that work with the staff at Impulse to provide safety for you and your group. There are various room facilities available including single, double, triple and quads that can accommodate four per room.

## **Let's Eat!**

Daily meals are designed to give you a real taste of the Costa Rican culture. You may eat a meal provided by a local church, at a local restaurant or go to the mall and eat a pizza from Pizza Hut®. All meals (except breakfast) are provided by Impulse and included in the overall price. If you would like to eat out for any meals, you are more than welcome to but the cost is on your own and not reimbursable by Impulse. Breakfast is not supplied by Impulse. We ask you to bring your favorite box of cereal. When you arrive, all the boxes of each team will be combined in a common area and will be shared. Impulse will provide milk, sugar, bowls and spoons. All meals on your vacation/leisure day are on your own. In the event you group wants to eat out when it is not scheduled, proper notice must be given.

The primary food of Costa Rica is rice and beans.



## Hello.....Hello?

Cell phones, iPads, etc... are allowed. There is internet WiFi service at the hotels. Special arrangements must be made with your cell phone carrier for any international calls or cellular internet use outside the hotel and WiFi areas. Cost for phone and cellular use is extremely high if prior arrangements are not made with your carrier. Also, cell phones and other electronic devices are not permitted to be used during ministry by students and strongly discouraged during ministry activities.

There will be a computer available for e-mail if necessary. The group leader/coordinator is responsible for monitoring the time used on the computer so as not to monopolize its use. As well, group leaders are more than welcome to bring a laptop or other communication device to communicate back home.

If there is an emergency, use this order to contact the team in Costa Rica: 1.) Impulse main number: 614.561.9697 2.) E-mail [BillHayes@ImpulseMissions.com](mailto:BillHayes@ImpulseMissions.com) 3.) Call hotel 4.) Call Impulse secondary number 614.203.5026. Keep in mind that electric and internet lines are down sporadically. If there is a concern, call the Impulse main or secondary number.

Team leaders/coordinators are permitted to bring a laptop for scheduling, web-site updates, etc... Team leaders/coordinators are to e-mail [BillHayes@ImpulseMissions.com](mailto:BillHayes@ImpulseMissions.com) each day with a team update which will be posted on the Impulse FaceBook page [facebook.com/Impulse-International-Mission-Trips-103143993518/](https://www.facebook.com/Impulse-International-Mission-Trips-103143993518/).

## **Insurance**

Impulse provides insurance for all travelers and is included in the cost of the trip. Each team leader/coordinator is provided with the insurance information prior to departure and can be distributed to the participants and their family members. Each traveler is covered by the same policy which provides at least \$25,000 coverage for accidental injury and sickness and \$25,000 for accidental death, among other features.

### **Do I Need A PASSPORT?**

YES! All travel outside the U.S.A. to international destinations requires a PASSPORT. An application for a PASSPORT can be obtained from your local post office or county courthouse. The cost is around \$120 and will require a PASSPORT photo which can be taken and purchased at Walgreens® or CVS Pharmacy®, among other places. It can take up to 6 plus weeks so get yours early.

### **How About Money?**

Colones are the name of Costa Rican money. Dollars can be converted into Colones while there. The best rates are in Costa Rica at the local banks. Most places accept dollars and give your change in Colones. For most travelers it will not be necessary to convert money.

One of the questions we are often asked is “**How much money should I bring?**” In most cases \$150 should be plenty for incidentals, souvenirs, a night out and extra spending money for the vacation/leisure day.

## Time To Pack

Make room for the following necessary items:

Bible	Notebook	Something to write with
Small Flash Light	Swim suit	Beach Towel
Camera and Film	Bag for dirty clothes	Medication and Hygiene products
Bug Spray & Sunscreen	Journal	A good attitude & servants heart

There is no laundry service available for team members.

Electronic games or devices are discouraged from being used on the mission field and are not permitted during ministry times or on the buses.

Soap and towels are supplied by the hotel but **NOT** washcloths. Feel free to bring a couple to use on your trip. Hotel towels are **NOT** to be used for the pool or the beach. Soccer is the popular sport of the Costa Ricans so each group is encouraged to bring 4 or 5 soccer balls to use while there and plan on leaving them upon departure. It's best to deflate them for packing.

Each traveler is encouraged to bring two large suitcases as well as carry-on items as is permitted by their airline. Some airlines charge for baggage on international flights and some do not. These fees are not included in your airline ticket price nor provided by Impulse. Please check with your airline to determine if any baggage fees will be needed when leaving the U.S.A. or when leaving Costa Rica. Also, keep in mind there are size and weight restrictions and you should contact the airline for that information as well. All travelers are to keep their luggage with them at all times while traveling (except when luggage is checked and you are in flight). It is wise to have one set of casual clothes in your carry-on just in case luggage is misdirected or lost.

**One piece of large luggage** is to be used for all your personal items: clothing, toiletries, shoes, etc...

There is no need to bring an undue amount of clothing items or ensembles. You are traveling to a very poor part of the world and, we promise, there is no need to impress. Plan on hot weather. As well, do not bring unnecessary/excessive jewelry. Here are a few ideas when packing:

<b>Men...</b>	<b>Ladies...</b>
Pants or nice jeans for worship services	Capris or knee length skirt/dress for worship services
Polo or collared shirt for worship service and T-shirts	Polo and T-shirts (may be sleeveless but no spaghetti/thin straps)
Tennis shoes, beach shoes/sandals, flip-flops	Tennis shoes, beach shoes/sandals, flip-flops
Long/modest cargo or sports type shorts for ministry, leisure, and hotel	Long/modest cargo or sports type shorts for ministry, leisure, and hotel

Please limit piercings and visible tattoos. This is for cultural reasons and does not reflect any judgment or opinion by Impulse or the team organizers. We must respect their culture and our witness. You will be leaving but the pastors, missionaries and Impulse employees do not. Thank you for your attitude in this matter.

Dress shoes are welcome but not necessary. We ask that when ministering in the villages, pants or long athletic/cargo shorts with tennis shoes must be worn. Flip-flops/sandals are not allowed for ministry.

When attending church, men must wear dress pants or nice jeans, dress or tennis shoes and a collared shirt and the ladies wear a dress or skirt. Flip-flops are permitted but only for the ladies.

All swimwear must be modest. **Ladies** – bathing suits may be 1 piece or 2 piece but must cover the midriff and be modest. Bikinis are not allowed. **Men** – swimming trunks must be modest. A T-shirt is to be worn to and from the pool area and beaches by all travelers.

**The second piece of large luggage** is your ministry suitcase and is to be used to bring ministry material, supplies and items necessary as explained by the team leader/coordinator. Some ministry items to bring are (but not limited to):

<p><b>Personal Hygiene</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Shampoo</li> <li>▪ Conditioner</li> <li>▪ Toothbrushes/paste</li> <li>▪ Children's Cold Medicine</li> <li>▪ Deodorant/Soap</li> <li>▪ Lotion</li> <li>▪ Mouthwash</li> </ul>	<p><b>Baby Needs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Disposable Diapers</li> <li>▪ Wet wipes</li> <li>▪ T-shirts</li> <li>▪ Powdered Formula</li> <li>▪ Powdered Cereal</li> <li>▪ Baby Shampoo</li> <li>▪ Diaper Rash Ointment</li> </ul>	<p><b>Medical Supplies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Band-aids, Gauze, tape</li> <li>▪ Antibiotic ointment</li> <li>▪ Teething rings</li> <li>▪ Aspirin</li> <li>▪ Adult Cold Medicine</li> <li>▪ Thermometers</li> <li>▪ Over the counter drugs</li> </ul>
<p><b>School Supplies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Notebook paper</li> <li>▪ Pencils/Pens/Erasers</li> <li>▪ Crayons</li> <li>▪ Rulers/scissors</li> <li>▪ Notepads</li> <li>▪ Spiral Notebooks</li> <li>▪ File Folders</li> <li>▪ Folders with pockets</li> </ul>	<p><b>Spanish Religious Study Items</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Spanish Bibles</li> <li>▪ Study guides</li> <li>▪ Commentaries</li> <li>▪ Concordance</li> <li>▪ Bible Dictionary</li> <li>▪ Bible Book Studies</li> <li>▪ Journals</li> <li>▪ Children's Bible stories/games</li> <li>▪ Skits/dramas</li> </ul>	<p><b>Miscellaneous Items</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Books written in Spanish</li> <li>▪ Children &amp; Adult clothing (<i>light weight/good condition</i>)</li> <li>▪ Colorful stickers</li> <li>▪ Jump ropes, Frisbees</li> <li>▪ Soccer Balls</li> <li>▪ Face painting supplies</li> <li>▪ Money for Projects within the village (food, construction, etc...)</li> </ul>

Ministry suitcases will be brought to the hotel and sorted and categorized so as to share evenly. It is suggested that new or good luggage not be used for the ministry suitcases. If other items are needed we will advise your team leader/coordinator. You may leave unwanted suitcases with the pastors who distribute the supplies.

## **What Can We Do To Help The People Of Costa Rica?**

There are several ministry opportunities available. Here's a list of suggestions but is not all inclusive:

- Vacation Bible Schools
- Painting projects
- Construction work
- Puppet shows
- Sports games and clinics
- Musical presentations
- Soccer Clinics/games
- Evangelistic campaigns
- Dental clinics
- Dental teams
- Food Distribution
- Skits and dramas
- Mime presentations
- Youth Services & Rallies
- Street evangelism & tract distribution
- Orphanage work
- Drug/Alcohol Rehabilitation Ministry

## **Vacation/Leisure day**

There are several things to do for your day-off while in Costa Rica. Impulse will work with your team leader/coordinator to select the date and the activity. Only one option may be chosen by the team.

Available activities are:

### **Nauyaca Waterfalls - \$90**

(Includes transportation, breakfast, lunch, horseback riding, waterfalls, hiking and guide.)

### **Island Del Caño - \$115**

(Includes transportation, boat transportation and lunch. See dolphins and maybe whales, go snorkeling, swim in the ocean or just layout on the beach – added cost for snorkeling and fishing)

### **Shopping & Excursion Day! - \$40**

Shop down “Souvenir Row”, go to the mall and sightseeing in San Jose

### **Water Park – varies/around \$20**

### **Canopy/Zip Line – varies/around \$90**

### **Beach Day - \$30**

(Includes transportation and admission)

### **Hiking in the National Forest**

### **Volcano Sightseeing - \$60**

(Includes transportation and admission only)

### **Tropical Rain Forest River Tour - \$75**

(Includes travel and boat ride)

**These prices are subject to change without notice.**

*Other activities are available and may be requested.*

**Please keep in mind that the cost of your vacation day is not included in your mission trip**

**package.** If your group decides not to include a vacation day, you will need to add \$10 per person as travel and facilitator expenses for the vacation day are not included in your package.

### **Extras**

All pricing and scheduling is based upon specific hours. Bus drivers and Impulse facilitators are here to make your trip the best ever but they need their rest. Any activities planned by your group outside the normal schedule or daytime hours may incur an additional charge. In some cases, if enough advance notice is given, scheduling can be changed to accommodate your activities without additional charges.