

*Pacific Horticulture and Sterling Tours Present  
Costa Rica - Exotic Flora & Fauna*

*November 16-24,2019  
9 Days / 8 Nights*

**Saturday, November 16: Arrival San José, Costa Rica at Juan Santamaría International Airport**

Arrive Juan Santamaria International Airport. Transfer to our hotel where you will check in for three nights. Join the other tour members and our specialist guide for a welcome dinner at the hotel.

**Accommodations at:** Costa Rica Marriott, Deluxe Rooms *Dinner*

**Sunday, November 17: Sarchi Orchid Gardens & Nectandra Cloud Forest**

Today we visit the town of Sarchi, home to the colorful Costa Rican oxcart. Recognized by UNESCO as a world cultural heritage symbol, it features intricate designs and a signature “song” produced by the chime of the rotating wheel.

The Sarchi Else Kientzler botanical garden was created by Ludwig Kientzler, who wanted to contribute to education and environmental conservation. The project started in 1998 in an old coffee farm, and was officially opened on July 27, 2006, after nine years of preparation. Else Kientzler Botanical Garden has around 2000 species of plants in its 11 gardens.

Next we travel northwest of San Jose to the Nectandra Cloud Forest Gardens. Some plants are included as pure aesthetic elements, others for their importance in medicinal, indigenous and cultural uses. The preserve is for scientific field research by the Nectandra Institute. Current research includes identification of dominant and unusual plants, and investigation into the variables influencing natural reforestation in cloud forests. We'll hear the sounds of the forest, observe the fauna and flora, and experience the serenity of the place as we take a guided walk. We'll have lunch while enjoying panoramic views of the reserve. **Breakfast, Lunch**



### **Monday, November 18: City of San José – Town of Guacimo Limon**

After breakfast we depart for the town of Guacimo in Limon where we will visit the Thomas Wiedenmann Gardens. Thomas is located north east of San José, less than 18 miles from the Caribbean coast. He has a passion for tropical plants that flourish in the humid forests of the Caribbean. His garden consists of a collection exotic plants such as heliconias, palms, gingers, calatheas, bromeliads, cordylines, cycads, dracaenas and more. Thomas also grows exotic fruit trees such as the mangosteen; a real treat when in season! The farm receives lots of rain every year and is able to produce year round. Thomas is working on creating hybrid bromeliads in multicolor displays.



After the visit to Thomas Wiedenmann's, we will have lunch at Turrialtico, a rustic wood lodge with panoramic views over the valley and mountain range. The property is surrounded by tropical gardens.



This afternoon we will visit our guide's private home garden. **Breakfast, Lunch**

### **Tuesday, November 19: City of San José – Golfito – Las Cruces**

This morning we board our private light charter plane for a short flight to Golfito. Upon arrival we transfer to the dock where we will have a boat ride to Casa Orquideas. Casa Orquideas is beautifully landscaped private tropical garden with hundreds of species of ornamental and edible plants. After a guided tour with the owners we'll return to Golfito and drive to Las Cruces.



Las Cruces Biological Station is owned and operated by the Organization for Tropical Studies in Costa Rica. It is located near the Panamanian border on Costa Rica's southern Pacific coast.

The station is home to the Wilson Botanical Gardens featuring beautifully diverse plantings of tropical and subtropical ornamentals, representatives of unusual plant families, and rare and endangered plants from Costa Rica and elsewhere. The forest is classified as a Tropical Premontane Rainforest and the wide range in elevation allows for a high diversity with the forest home to over 2,000 plant species.

Our day includes a visit to Finca Cántaros located in San Vito. San Vito was founded in 1952 by Italian settlers. The property is over 17 acres with a cool, comfortable, tropical highlands climate. Finca Cantaros is constantly adding to its plant collection with an eye to attractive landscaping. We may see hummingbirds, warblers, and other birds.



**Two nights at: Estación Biológica Las Cruces. Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner**

### **Wednesday, November 20: Las Cruces**

We will enjoy a full day in Las Cruces. After breakfast we'll have a leisurely, guided walk through the botanical garden. While exploring the vast collection we'll learn about the flora and fauna of a mid-elevation forest. The walk with a resident naturalist guide will lead us through well-maintained, gently sloping trails and grounds filled with the wealth of tropical colors and scents. We will have opportunities to spot various species of birds and wildlife.



Lunch will be at Casa Botania, perched on a mountainside in the beautiful highland countryside. All ingredients are fresh with vegetables from their organic green house.

**Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner**



### **Thursday, November 21: Las Cruces - San Isidro del General Valley - San Gerardo de Dota Valley**

We leave Las Cruces and drive to Talari Mountain Lodge in San Isidro del General where we will have lunch near the General River. It's at the beginning of the Chirripo National Park and near Los Cusingos Bird Sanctuary. The Lodge and reserve protects a small patch of subtropical forest in an otherwise heavy agricultural area of south central Costa Rica. We continue to Savegre Mountain Lodge, climbing Cerro de la Muerte (mountain). The Elevation is close to 12,000 feet and the landscape is unique. During the construction of the Pan-American Highway during the 50s, many workers ventured into this area and some small villages were born. The region has a special importance for conservation as well as Eco-tourism. Cerro de la Muerte is considered a birdwatcher's paradise with the iconic resplendent Quetzal, Emerald Toucanettes and hummingbirds being fairly common sightings. On a clear day visitors can look out across the lush forest to see the Pacific Ocean in the background.



***Two nights at: Savegre Hotel Natural Reserve & Spa. Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner***

### **Friday, November 22 : Full Day at San Gerardo de Dota Valley**

After breakfast, we'll take a morning walk in the informal gardens around Savegre Mountain lodge, and short drive to the Oak Forests that have made this region known to botanists.

Afternoon drive to San Gerardo's award-winning coffee plantations and coffee processing plant where we will take coffee with a local family.

***Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner***

**Saturday, November 23: San Gerardo de Dota Valley - Cartago - Tres Rios - City of San Jose**

Today we will explore Finca Navarro, an ecological garden offering a unique opportunity to experience the beauty of a tropical habitat in one of the mountainous areas of Costa Rica. We'll stroll through the beautiful Butterfly Farm created by Doña Grace Navarro Picado, owner of the Finca.

We will go through the laboratory to gain an understanding of the cycle of life, history and importance of this type of butterfly. We will also see bananas, bromeliads, and many other food and ornamental plants grown in the organic soil.



After Finca Navarro we will visit Doña Ileana Terán's private garden, Hacienda La Laguna in eastern San José city. La Laguna is in the hills of Curridabat, at a height of 4620 feet surrounded by coffee plantations. The gardens of the Terán Jimenez family are in the middle of the Hacienda, one of the oldest plantations in Costa Rica. We will stroll through the exuberant tropical garden created by the horticulturist, Ileana Jiménez de Terán. Our walk winds past Jacaranda trees and Oaks below terraces and past formal gardens.



After our tour through Doña Ileana's garden we return to the Costa Rica Marriott. Tonight we join our guide and new friends for a festive farewell dinner.

***Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner***

**Overnight at:** Costa Rica Marriott. Deluxe Room

**Sunday, November 24: City of San Jose - Departure**

Transfers included to the International Airport for our return flights.

***Breakfast***

## **HOTEL & ROOM DESCRIPTIONS**

### **Costa Rica Marriott**

Costa Rica Marriott features an outdoor swimming pool, driving range and spa. This luxury hotel in San Jose is the ideal place for a relaxing vacation. There are several choices for on-site dining, high-speed Internet and Spanish colonial architecture.



The Deluxe rooms feature a King Bed or 2 Double Beds, shower/tub combination, hair dryer and robe, desk, International cable TV, safe, mini-bar, and coffee maker.



### **Estación Biológica Las Cruces**

Located near the southern border on the grounds of Wilson Botanical Gardens, home to one of the richest collections of tropical and subtropical plants found in this part of the American Continent, the Las Cruces Biological station has 12 new comfortable double cabins, featuring telephones and hook-ups, private hot showers and balconies with views. Family-style meals are included. An educational research center, a library and extensive research facilities are available.



### **Savegre Hotel Natural Reserve & Spa**

South of San José in a private natural reserve near Los Quetzales National Park, Hotel Savegre is a great place to explore Costa Rica's tropical cloud forest. The hotel has a bar and restaurant, day spa, beautiful gardens and a private reserve with trout stream, fishing pond and an extensive network of trails. The Chacón family, pioneers in the San Gerardo de Dota region has been operating the hotel since its inception.



Cabins have private baths, hair dryer, coffee maker, and electric heater or fireplace.

**TRAVEL DOCUMENTS:** A passport valid for at least 6 months beyond the end of the tour is required for travel to and from Costa Rica.

**FLIGHTS--where to meet the tour:** The tour begins with a welcome dinner at our hotel in San Jose 7:00pm November 16. Due to the wide choice of flights to Costa Rica's Juan Santamaria airport, guests arriving will be met at the airport and transferred by taxi the short distance to the hotel. Our tour ends in San Jose on November 24. Transfers will be provided to the airport. We suggest contacting Leslie Garber of Cadence Travel or your travel agent for assistance booking flights. Be sure to ask about business class as there can be attractive sale fares. Leslie charges a fee for her service, but our guests find her service to be of value. She can also assist with travel insurance. Leslie.garber@cadencetravel.com (619) 756 7388.

**TRAVEL INSURANCE:** We strongly encourage all guests to purchase travel insurance in case of injury or illness during the tour and, of equal importance, to protect against cancellation penalties. We have made special arrangements with Leslie Garber of Cadence Travel to provide quotations and assistance acquiring appropriate insurance for this tour. Guests should consider insurance purchase at the time of deposit as certain benefits as to pre-existing conditions are available. Leslie Garber can provide more detailed information. Group travel insurance will not be offered with this tour.

**LAND COST PER GUEST:** Based on a minimum of 16 paying guests, \$3866.00 per person for members of Pacific Horticulture Society, \$3966.00 for non-members. Single supplement: \$708.00. A nonrefundable deposit of \$400 per person is required to secure a reservation, with balance due 60 days before departure. There are a limited number of single spaces available.

You must have a paid membership in Pacific Horticulture Society in order to receive the membership discount. If you are unsure of your current status, contact PHS at [office@pacifichorticulture.org](mailto:office@pacifichorticulture.org). If you are not a member, sign up now at <https://www.pacifichorticulture.org/join-renew>.

### The Land Package Includes:

- 8 nights accommodation as per the itinerary.
- Breakfast daily, 7 Lunches, 6 Dinners
- Special, naturalist English speaking guide
- Transportation as noted in the itinerary with a Spanish speaking driver.
- Porterage is included.
- Taxes & entrance fees to all gardens and sightseeing mentioned in the itinerary
- Sightseeing as specified in the itinerary
- Donation of \$350 to Pacific Horticulture
- International departure tax (currently \$29 per person)

## Not Included in Tour Price:

Costs of obtaining passports or tourist cards; excess baggage fees; personal expenses such as room service, beverages and laundry; personal communications charges; international airfare; sightseeing or meals not specified in the itinerary; personal insurance coverage (strongly recommended), gratuities.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** When flying or traveling by boat within Costa Rica **A Maximum of 30 Pounds of luggage is allowed per person.** The weight limit for flights or boat trips within Costa Rica does not mean that you need to limit yourself to 30 lbs of baggage for your entire trip to Costa Rica. While it always makes sense to travel light, you can bring more than 30 lbs of luggage. Our operator can store your excess luggage while you are on portions of the trip that involve flights or boat trips, and catch it up to you as soon as feasible. (At extra cost)

To make a reservation, please complete and submit an online or printed booking form or contact:

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