



Costa Rica

Matriarchs, Magma and Monkeys

15 Days

Journey into the depths of Costa Rican culture in this fantastic 15 day central American adventure. Meet tribes-women of the Cabecar and Bribri indigenous communities, experience the thrills of white water rafting and see the country's incredible flora and fauna from land, water and even from air in a zip line adventure through the tree tops! During this trip we will experience the traditional and modern ways of life of Costa Rican women from several walks in life and learn about the skills which they value, not to mention taking home the recipe for an unbeatable chocolate cake! This itinerary really does have it all...



[Learn more about our Carbon Labels](#)

Your Recommended Educational Journey

Day 1	Arrive San Jose On arrival in San Jose, we will meet our Trip Leader at the airport and transfer to our hotel in San Jose.	LD
Day 2	Walking City Tour and San Jose Central Market Our first morning in Costa Rica will be spent on a fascinating walking tour of the city's main historical landmarks including the National Theatre and the Metropolitan Cathedral. After lunch, we will visit the San Jose Central Market, a maze of narrow alleys with over 200 shops, stalls and cheap restaurants known as 'sodas'. Here we will have the opportunity to meet local Costa Rican women who work in the markets selling a vast array of products from snakeskin boots to fruit and veg and herbal remedies.	BLD
Day 3	Rafting to El Nido del Tigre Camp This morning we transfer to the rafting gateway of the raging Pucare River where we embark on our white water rafting adventure. The journey takes us through pristine rainforest spotted with waterfalls to the El Nido del Tigre Camp, where we spend the night nestled in the sounds of the rainforest.	BLD
Day 4	Visit to the Cabecar Indigenous Community Despite being the largest indigenous community in Costa Rica, the Cabecar community is the most isolated. Luckily, our rainforest camp means we enjoy a three hour trek through the spectacular flora and fauna to reach their reserve. Here we meet with local women to learn about the traditions of their matrilineal culture. Later, we return to our riverside camp for another night in the wild.	BLD
Day 5	Rafting and Transfer to Cahuita Beach Today we say goodbye to our home in the rainforest as we embark on another white water rafting journey, stopping en-route to hike to some of the area's stunning waterfalls and enjoy a well deserved lunch ashore. We then transfer to the breath taking Cahuita Beach where we stay overnight in cabins.	BLD
Day 6	Visit to the Bribri Indigenous Community and Sloth Sanctuary Visit This morning we meet an indigenous family from the Bribri Community to learn about women's roles in this matrilineal society. We also learn about the properties of local plants and the processes involved in making chocolate, something which only the women are allowed to do! This is incredibly important to the Bribri culture where chocolate is used in purification rituals, food and medicine. Afterwards, we visit the Sloth Sanctuary to learn about these beautiful animals and the work in rehabilitation and research which the sanctuary undertakes.	BLD



Day 7	Transfer to Gandoca Manzanillo and Cookery Lessons Today we transfer to Gandoca Manzanillo, a wildlife refuge and rustic town where we will spend the next few days. The community here live off of turtle protection, tourism, volunteer coordination, construction and banana farming and many local women also receive tourists as a source of income. We will be staying at Maria's property: Cabinas Rinconcito. This afternoon we receive a cookery lesson from Maria herself who will show us how to make the traditional Rondon Dish.	BLD
Day 8	Coconut Oil Making This morning we learn from Maria, along with a few other women of the Gandoca Community, how to make coconut oil from scratch. It only requires a few simple tools but a lot of patience! There may be free time in the afternoon to explore the area or relax.	BLD
Day 9	The Ancient Art of Cocoa Cake Having already learnt a little about the importance of cocoa in Costa Rican culture, we expand our knowledge today as we learn how to make cocoa from scratch and how the Gandoca people make the dried, natural cocoa into a cake mix—we predict a Great Costa Rican Bake Off ahead! After feasting on our efforts we return to Cahuita to spend another night in the cabins.	BLD
Days 10 - 11	Tirimbina Research Station and Hike An initial familiarisation hike around this exciting centre, followed by a full day to taking part in the activities on offer at Tirimbina. This could include reviewing their frog or bat programmes, learning about forest composition or discovering the wonders of ecology and diversity in the rainforest.	BLD
Day 12	Safari Float Tour Today we explore the river in a more relaxed manner, floating downstream to see the abundance of wildlife the rainforest has to offer. We will stop en-route at the Finca de Don Pedro, a local farm where Don Pedro and his wife will teach us about the Costa Rican way of life 70 years ago and how to make Costa Rican tortillas, a much needed snack!	BLD
Day 13	Arenal Volcano Hike and Hot Spring Visit Our hike will take us to Arenal Volcano where a naturalist guide will lead us on a gentle rainforest hike. We will have the opportunity to spot some diverse flora and fauna including monkeys, toucans and sloths. We then reach natural hot springs where we can relax in the soothing water and soak away our aching muscles. In the afternoon we transfer to San Jose ready for our flights the following day.	BLD
Days 14 - 15	Depart Costa Rica and Return to UK It is now time to wave goodbye to Costa Rica and our Trip Leader as we fly back to the UK.	B



Look what's included:

- International flights
- All accommodation, transportation and activities
- All food as described above
- Local, bi-lingual, first-aid qualified STC tour leader
- Parent and student trip launch presentation
- Pre-travel training programme
- 1-day offsite safety INSET day for school staff
- ATOL financial protection
- Emergency Medical & Repatriation Insurance
- Group first aid kit and prescription meds pack
- BS8848 safety management and risk assessments
- Detailed pre-departure information and kit lists
- Comprehensive teacher travel packs
- Permanent operations team in your destination
- 24-hour UK operational support whilst overseas
- Donations to two carbon & conservation charities
- Free Fairtrade t-shirt for every participant and teacher
- Free travel guide book to your destination

What's not included:

- Transport to airport in UK
- Drinks (advice will be given on purification of water)
- Visas or tourist cards if required
- Any required inoculations or Covid tests
- Personal spending money
- Tips for guides, drivers and porters (ask for guidance)
- Airport departure taxes paid locally
- Personal effects and cancellation insurance



A word about Responsible Tourism

On our expeditions and educational journeys, we strive to connect teachers and students with the people they meet, nurture the cultures they experience and protect the beautiful environments they are lucky enough to explore.

Many companies talk the talk, few truly walk the walk. While we are far from perfect, we are leading the way in sustainability in the school travel sector. In 2018 we were the first UK travel company to become **Travelife Certified** – a verified sustainability certificate formally recognised by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council.



This is our passion, and we'd love to tell you more about it in due course. In the meantime, for more information on some of the steps we take as a company to make our operations more sustainable, please visit:

<https://www.thestc.co.uk/travel/what-do-we-do/>

Trees for Life

Physical Rating for this trip: Grade 3



Moderate physical activities are included in Grade 3 trips. Good health and reasonable fitness are important to get the most out of the trip. Trips of this grading are likely to include some walking at moderate altitude (up to 2,500m) and occasional longer/harder days may be involved, with between five and seven hours of walking on certain days. The trip may contain other activities such as cycling or rafting which also require physical effort and a reasonable level of fitness. Some steady preparation and an increase in your underlying fitness levels would help you get the most from this grade trip.

Cultural Rating for this trip: Grade 3



Students should expect some culture shock. You'll be exposed to signs of poverty. The food will be quite different to home and English, whilst still spoken, will be less prevalent. Respecting the local culture will make it easier to fit in and get the most out of your trip. We're likely to visit remoter locations on this tour where access to western style services may be sporadic. Often on trips of this grading there are parts of the itinerary which are more remote, interspersed with sections which are more 'comfortable'.



Travel Safety & Other Pre-Travel Training

Preparing students and teachers for their upcoming adventure is an opportunity to teach important life skills and a vital part of our overall approach to safety management. Please ask for your quote for the training schedule specific to this educational journey. Topics covered will include:

Responsible Tourism workshop

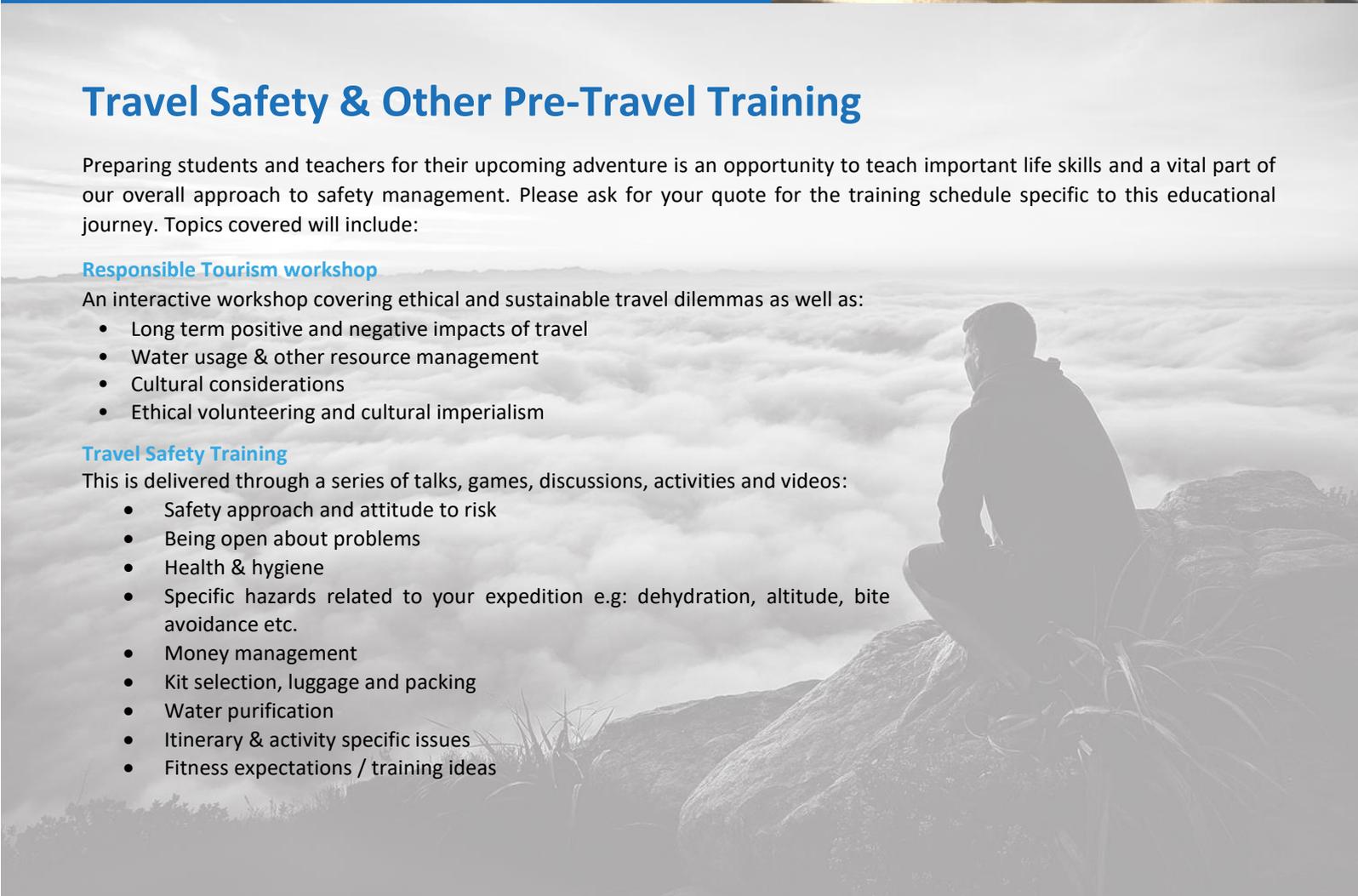
An interactive workshop covering ethical and sustainable travel dilemmas as well as:

- Long term positive and negative impacts of travel
- Water usage & other resource management
- Cultural considerations
- Ethical volunteering and cultural imperialism

Travel Safety Training

This is delivered through a series of talks, games, discussions, activities and videos:

- Safety approach and attitude to risk
- Being open about problems
- Health & hygiene
- Specific hazards related to your expedition e.g: dehydration, altitude, bite avoidance etc.
- Money management
- Kit selection, luggage and packing
- Water purification
- Itinerary & activity specific issues
- Fitness expectations / training ideas





A journey of 1,000 miles...

Starts with a single step... Contact us now to start your educational journey

1 Ask for your personalised quote & further information

If this itinerary doesn't quite scratch your adventure itch then let us tailor-make one for you. Our wealth of experience and expert in-country contacts means we can design an adventure that's just right for you and your students. Contact us for more information and a detailed quote.

2 Ask for risk assessments and marketing materials

We can provide initial risk and threat assessments to help you with your trip approval process. Ask for posters and your Pre-Booking Information Pack too.

3 Arrange a trip launch evening

This is a chance for students and parents to hear more about the planned adventure with comprehensive information covering the itinerary, safety management, the build-up to the trip and lots more. There is also plenty of opportunity for questions.



The home of the modern, innovative school expedition, where a sustainable, ethical approach guarantees unique experiences and a life enhancing adventure.



Our school trips and educational tours are all about maximising the learning opportunities of travel. It's all here, the humble school tour has just come of age.



Adventures, holidays and cultural journeys for teachers looking to 'Escape the Classroom' and discover more about our amazing world, its people and places.



"I am being completely serious when I say that I won't ever run a school trip without you guys. I trust you and your team completely - and the in-country staff that you carefully cultivate and train are a cut above the rest."

Teacher feedback, King's High Warwick

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