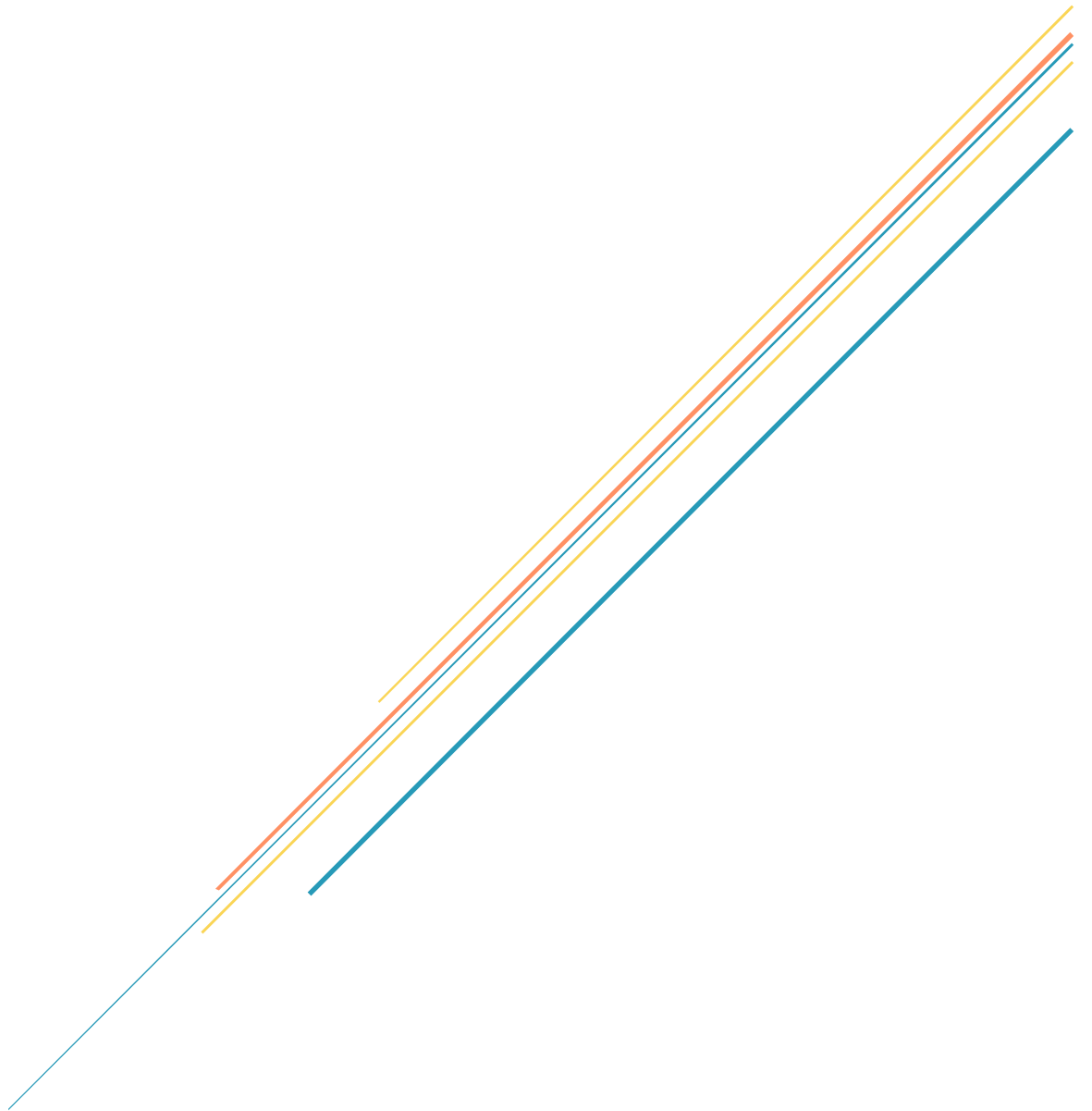


# PROJECT INFORMATION PACKET

Costa Rica: Monteverde & Costa Atlántica 2021



*Amigos*

# Table of Contents

---

<b>AMIGOS DE LAS AMERICAS</b> .....	<b>3</b>
WHAT IS AMIGOS? .....	3
VISION .....	3
MISSION .....	3
VALUES .....	3
DIVERSITY .....	3
HISTORY .....	4
<b>HISTORY OF AMIGOS IN COSTA RICA</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>GEOGRAPHY, CULTURE, FOOD, CLIMATE, &amp; TRADITIONS</b> .....	<b>6</b>
PEOPLE & CULTURE .....	6
FOOD .....	7
TRADITIONS .....	8
CLIMATE .....	9
GEOGRAPHY .....	9
SUGGESTED RESOURCES .....	11
<b>COUNTRY-SPECIFIC LANGUAGE</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>AMIGOS HIGH SCHOOL SUMMER PROGRAM 2021</b> .....	<b>14</b>
PROGRAM GOALS AND PILLARS .....	14
ROLE OF THE VOLUNTEER .....	15
<b>PROJECT-SPECIFIC INFORMATION</b> .....	<b>16</b>
PROJECT THEME .....	16
PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS .....	16
GENERAL PROJECT CALENDAR .....	17
POSSIBLE EXCURSIONS .....	18
PACKING LIST .....	19

# AMIGOS DE LAS AMERICAS

---

## WHAT IS AMIGOS?

AMIGOS is a leader in international youth development, creating a world in which young people realize their full potential as leaders and global citizens. We provide extraordinary opportunities for youth to design and lead projects in collaboration with U.S. and Latin American peers and partner organizations across the Americas. Our strong partner network, built over 50 years, enables authentic engagements in communities across the region.

Since its start, AMIGOS has operated continuously in various countries in Latin America, including Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean. Currently, AMIGOS works in seven countries in Latin America (Costa Rica, Panama, the Dominican Republic, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, and Uruguay) and the U.S. running youth leadership programs. AMIGOS always works through partnerships with local organizations and with members of host communities in Latin America and the U.S., with projects led by young people.

## VISION

A world where all people are lifelong leaders sharing responsibility for our global community.

## MISSION

Amigos de las Américas inspires leaders through authentic service and immersion experiences.

## VALUES

- **Safety First and Always:** We prioritize the health and safety of AMIGOS volunteers above all.
- **Youth Leadership:** We believe in the capacity of youth to become leaders for positive change.
- **Transformational Outcomes:** We strive to transform volunteers and communities in measurable ways.
- **Community-Led:** We create socially and environmentally conscious partnerships through collaboration with communities throughout the Americas.
- **Diversity Throughout:** We promote diversity of volunteers and stakeholders and work to break down barriers.
- **Respect:** We maintain respect, transparency, and high standards in everything we do.

## DIVERSITY

To realize the AMIGOS vision and mission, we believe in the power of every voice and the wisdom of diverse voices. AMIGOS embraces universal diversity, including:

- race

- nationality
- ethnicity
- socio-economic status
- religion
- age
- gender
- sexual orientation

AMIGOS seeks to include:

- different life experiences
- belief systems
- abilities
- opinions

throughout its work and aspires to eliminate barriers to inclusion and participation.

AMIGOS' Board of Directors and Convention of Chapter Presidents adopted this as the organization's official diversity statement in June 2012.

## HISTORY

AMIGOS was founded on the principle that young people can change the world. In 1965, a 29-year-old pastor from Houston, Texas named Guy Bevil led a team of teenagers into rural Honduras to support in the fight against a growing polio epidemic. Serving communities in remote areas of the country, this group of 181 youth and 36 adults helped protect people from the crippling disease and established friendships that crossed borders. This service had a bold impact on the lives of these young people and, as a result, they returned more mature, culturally aware, and inspired to continue serving communities at home and abroad.

The AMIGOS model of developing critically engaged young leaders remains highly beneficial to youth today. AMIGOS programs have evolved to be more responsive to the changing priorities of host communities and inclusive of young people across the Americas. Today, our projects cover a broader array of activities in health and education and focus on building skills in youth of both the United States and Latin America. More than 30,000 alumni have carried on the passion and commitment that started over 50 years ago. Our successful history supports the belief that young people have the power to rise to any challenge and make a difference.

# HISTORY OF AMIGOS IN COSTA RICA

---

The year 2021 marks AMIGOS' 39th year working in Costa Rica. Over this period, our projects have changed dramatically in response to Costa Rica's relative successes in its economic, political, environmental, and health conditions. While we used to partner with governmental organizations and focus on public health issues, we have shifted our approach to work more on building leadership skills in local youth, facilitating cultural exchange, and promoting an ethos of environmental conservation and civic engagement.

AMIGOS has been working in Pérez Zeledón since 2003 implementing conservation themed projects. From 2003-2011, we worked in communities in the region and held leadership workshops for youth. Starting in 2012 we changed our model for the Perez Zeledón summer project and started to combine home stays and work in communities with volunteer work in the country's famous national parks. Youth from Costa Rican communities along with AMIGOS volunteers completed trail maintenance projects in the parks while learning about important conservation topics and participating in fun recreational activities to facilitate cultural exchange. Then in 2018, we launched the Palmares summer project which combined the community component of AMIGOS programs with weekend long leadership camps. We hope to continue these programs once the COVID-19 situation stabilizes around the globe.

For this year, 2021, we are excited to hold our summer program in Costa Rica. The model combines our years of knowledge in the region and approach to community involvement with our rigorous safety measures for COVID-19. We have worked to build strong ties with the new organizations and look forward to working with them for years to come.



# GEOGRAPHY, CULTURE, FOOD, CLIMATE, & TRADITIONS

---

## PEOPLE & CULTURE

Famous for being the happiest country in the world, the people of Costa Rica are welcoming and friendly, yet sophisticated and proud. The priorities of the country are evident in its progressive social and environmental policies. Education and healthcare for all are fully supported. They believe in education and healthcare and make it freely available to its people. They are proud of their long-standing history as a democracy. In fact, they are the oldest and most stable democracy in the region. Additionally, Costa Rica is a model of eco-stewardship with more than 25% of its territory preserved from development allowing it to conserve its incredible biodiversity for generations to come. This is most evident in Corcovado National Park. Furthermore, the culture and traditions reveal their passion for democracy, freedom, and equality for all.



Ticos! The Costa Rican people affectionately refer to themselves as Ticos. This term is rooted in how they play with the Spanish language. On occasions, Costa Ricans have the tendency to add the suffix -tico to a certain word. It can be used to indicate smallness in something but can also carry an affectionate or 'cute' meaning. It further states the point that the Costa Rican culture is one that is very friendly. This wonderful quality lays at the root of their peaceful and kind nature.

Pura Vida is not only the motto of Costa Rica, but it is also a label for the Costa Rican culture, way of life, and its primary ethos. Directly translated, it means "pure life," but in Costa Rica, it carries a greater importance. "Pura Vida" has evolved to be a national symbol to be proud of. Locals and ex-pats share pride in the Good Life, the Pura Vida, that Costa Rican values espouse. It is used as both greeting and farewell, as a cheer, and as a description and an emphatic statement.

Costa Rica is a cultural melting pot. It shows indigenous origins and Spanish colonial influence, with a peppery splash of other immigrant cultures, such as Jamaican and Chinese. The official language is Spanish, but there also pockets of BriBri, creole, Mekatelyu on the Caribbean coast, and English. Costa Ricans are proud of their values. And they are proud of their world leadership in pioneering sustainable environmental and conservation policies. The locals go out of their way to propagate their environmental ethos by helping visitors appreciate the natural beauty of their land and wildlife.

Sources:

"Culture Of Costa Rica." Centralamerica, [www.centralamerica.com/costa-rica/culture/](http://www.centralamerica.com/costa-rica/culture/).

"What does Pura Vida mean? Costa Rican way of life". [www.bestcostaricantours.com](http://www.bestcostaricantours.com). Archived from the original on 2019-12-07. Retrieved 2015-10-08.

[www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov) Background Note: Costa Rica – People

## FOOD

Costa Rican cuisine is hearty, savory and always satisfying. While it doesn't have the spice of Mexican or the grilled skewered meats of Argentinian food, it has a style all its own: like an easy chair or a meal from your grandmother's kitchen, Costa Rican cuisine is always there for you at the end of a long day.

Generous portions, fresh-brewed coffee and fruit of every shape, size, and color fill the tables of all Costa Rican homes. Maybe it is the tropics, but there is a dedication to freshness unequalled in the U.S. Everyday Costa Ricans visit the bakery for fresh-baked bread and every week they visit the local farmer's market for fresh in-season fruit and vegetables, meat, and cheese.



If there were two words that would sum up Costa Rican food, it would be “rice” and “beans”. Pretty much every traditional meal comes with them. Alongside your rice and beans, you may see sweet plantains, fried eggs, avocados, meat, fish, cilantro, tomatoes, fresh fruit, and anything else that grows local and fresh! Costa Rican fare is nutritionally well-rounded and nearly always cooked from scratch with fresh ingredients.

Below you will find an overview of some of the most famous and common Costa Rican dishes. Please always remember to be appreciative of the food that is offered to you. Many people across the globe may not have access to as many food options as you may be used to. AMIGOS expects volunteers to immerse themselves in the local culture and to adapt to the local diet and lifestyle to the greatest extent possible.

- Gallo pinto: black beans and rice with cilantro, onions, garlic, salt, and Salsa Lizano; common for breakfast and dinner
- Platano frito: Fried plantains (sweet ones are called maduros and savory, smashed ones are patacones)
- Casados: one-plate meal that includes black beans, rice, a meat, fried plantains, and one or more side dishes
- Picadillo: diced cooked vegetables such as potatoes, green beans, carrots, zucchini, with or without meat
- Fruta (such as pineapple, papaya, watermelon, bananas).
- Sopa: soup
- Arroz con pollo/camarones: chicken and rice/shrimp and rice
- Ceviche: popular seafood dish tossed with lime and lemon juice that cooks the fish/shrimp
- Trucha: trout, often served with yucca and vegetables
- Arroz con leche: rice pudding

Sources:

“Culture Of Costa Rica.” Centralamerica, [www.centralamerica.com/costa-rica/culture/](http://www.centralamerica.com/costa-rica/culture/).

Firestone, Matthew; Miranda, Carolina A; Soriano, César G (2010). Costa Rica. Footscray, Vic.: Lonely Planet. pp. 49–52.

Mead, Rowland (2005). Costa Rica. New Holland: London. pp. 28–31.

Van Velzer, Ryan. “Costa Rican Cuisine.” Costa Rica, [www.costarica.com/culture/costa-rican-cuisine](http://www.costarica.com/culture/costa-rican-cuisine).

## TRADITIONS

Costa Rica is a very diverse country with a rich mix of traditions and customs. The following are some examples:

- Soccer, *Mejenga* or *bola*, in Costa Rica, is the most beloved national pastime. Today, six leagues currently form the Costa Rican Soccer Federation. First division soccer is the country’s most popular and hosts 12 teams. Many Ticos from Pérez root for either La Liga (Alajuela) or Saprissa (from San José).



- When you enter someone’s home, it may be a good idea to take your shoes off to be polite. When visiting people’s house, you should remove your shoes and wear flip-flops inside the house instead of going barefoot. It is considered rude to place your feet on the furniture.
- Costa Ricans generally take pride in their appearance and dress well.
- When greeting one another, a side cheek kiss is common (right cheek touching right cheek). Women kiss women, and women kiss men, but men do not kiss men. Instead, they either shake hands or give each other a one-armed hug. In formal or business settings, a firm handshake is the typical greeting. However, this practice has changed since the beginning of COVID-19 and people now greet each other from far or with an “elbow shake”.
- Tico time or “*la hora tica*” is generally observed by many Ticos. Ticos can sometimes arrive late (often by 30 minutes or more) to meals, appointments, and get-togethers. Many Ticos don’t view late arrivals as rude, and their tardiness is not meant to offend.
- Many Ticos in communities where you will live grow coffee, caña (sugar cane), or other crops. They refer to their farmland as “*la finca*.” Definitely ask community members about what they grow, how they process it, and where they sell or export to learn as much as you can about their work.
- Costa Ricans celebrate civic holidays with parades that involve school bands and local folklore group parades.

*As a volunteer, you will be a guest in someone else's community, which represents a unique opportunity to experience and learn about Costa Rican culture. As a guest, please try to reflect a sincere appreciation for everything that your host community has to offer and let them know that you are thankful for their support.*



## CLIMATE

Costa Rica has a mainly tropical climate, with year-round warm to hot temperatures. Costa Rica has a tropical and subtropical climate, with two primary seasons. In most of the country, the dry season lasts from December to summer in April. Summers are hot, dry, and cloudy. The wet or rainy season is from May to November and overlaps the dry season towards the end. The conditions are humid and overcast with frequent rainfall in many regions. Temperature variations are low, and the average annual range in Costa Rica is between 17.2°C (63°F) to 27.2°C (81°F). January sees the lowest temperatures of the year, while April records the highest. Temperatures above 37.8°C (100°F) frequently occur during the dry season. The average annual temperatures range from 27.2°C (81°F) on the coastal lowlands to 20°C (68°F) in the Cordillera Central, and below 10°C (50°F) on the highest mountain peaks.

Costa Rica receives an abundant average annual rainfall of 1981.2mm (78"). September and October are the wettest months, and the rainy season contributes up to 90% of the annual precipitation. The Caribbean slopes along the Cordillera Central receive the highest rainfall of 5003.8mm (197"), and many places receive at least 2540mm (100") annually. The eastern plains and coasts, and the southernmost part of the Pacific Coast are equatorial with rainfall throughout the year.

Costa Rica has several microclimates based on altitude, topography, local geography, and rainfall. The tropical location and proximity to large water bodies influence the climate. Thus, Monteverde, located in the cloud forest at an altitude of 1,440 m (4,662 feet) above sea level, has a predominantly rainy season between April and November and an average temperature of about 18°C (64° F), which makes it a fresh, but still humid region. On the other hand, Parismina, as a coastal community, has very humid and high temperatures. The Atlantic coast has an average temperature of 26° C (79°F) and the rainy season with higher precipitation goes from May through August and October to December.

Sources:

<https://www.weather-atlas.com/en/costa-rica-climate>

<https://www.monteverdeinfo.com/monteverde-area-maps-facts-and-links>

<https://en.climate-data.org/north-america/costa-rica/limon/tortuguero-324843/>

## GEOGRAPHY

As a stable and prosperous nation, Costa Rica is both a biodiversity hotspot and ranked among the world leaders when it comes to tackling environmental issues. Costa Rica accounts for only 0.03 percent of the earth's surface (has only 51,100km<sup>2</sup>). However, it contains nearly 6 percent of the world's biodiversity. Its natural wealth, both in species and ecosystems, is partly explained by its geographical position. Situated between the North and South America continents, Costa Rica has served as a bridge of countless species of animals and plants for thousands of years. Another factor to consider is the broad expanse of both coasts: Caribbean coast (255kms) and Pacific coast (1103 kms). The mountain range also provides numerous microclimates and a territorial sea of 589,000km<sup>2</sup>.

The system of National Parks and Reserves covers an area of 1342 hectares or 25.6% of its land area. These areas include islands, beaches, rain forests, active volcanoes, hot springs, caves, river canyons, and waterfalls. This biological heritage, the product of millions of years of evolution, presents us a spectacle of a nature unprocessed and undomesticated. The services these ecosystems provide to humanity are abundant. On one side is the environmental services: wood, timber, plants, barks, roots, leaves, seeds, fruits, flowers, to name a few, which have fueled the culture, industry, and scientific research. On the other side is environmental benefits: control of erosion caused by rain and wind, water protection, soil, fixation and carbon storage, which mitigate the greenhouse effect and biodiversity.

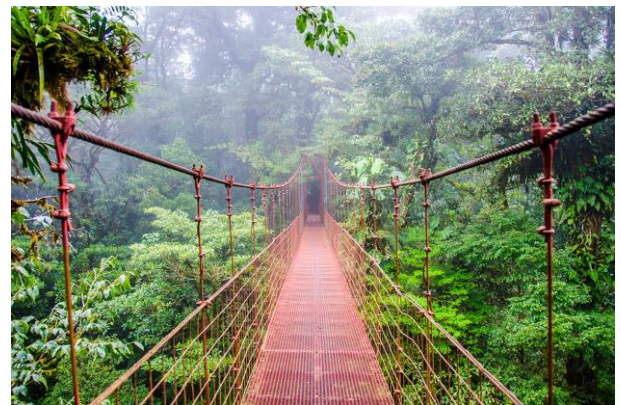


Costa Rica is considered among the most progressive nations on Earth with respect to climate change. In 2010, departing president Óscar Arias announced that Costa Rica would become the world's first carbon-neutral country by 2021. On February 24, 2019, the government of Costa Rica announced their National Decarbonization Plan, which aims to create a completely green economy in terms of transportation, energy, construction, agriculture, and land usage by 2050.

Costa Rica's environmental credentials are impressive: more than 98 percent of its energy is renewable, forest cover now stands at more than 53 percent after painstaking work to reverse decades of deforestation, and around a quarter of the country's land has been turned into protected parks and reserves.

### **Monteverde:**

Monteverde is Costa Rica's leading region in conservation efforts. Monteverde is the birthplace of ecotourism and conservation in Costa Rica with more than 40 thousand protected hectares. Monteverde is home to 5% of the world's bird species and 3% of the world's butterflies.



Monteverde has 8 municipal districts. The main city in Monteverde is Santa Elena, which has 6500 inhabitants. It has two of the main private reserves in Costa Rica: the Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve and the Eternal Children's Forest. Monteverde has a humid climate but has a fresh breeze at night.

### **Parismina:**

Barra del Parismina is located on the Caribbean coast in the province of Limón at the mouth of the Reventazón river. Parismina is a community with about halfway between Tortuguero and Limón on the Tortuguero canals. There are at least three marine turtle species that nest at the Parismina beaches, among them the leatherback and the green sea turtles. The community relies mostly on eco-tourism and fishing as its main economic activities.

Sources:

The Costa Rican Embassy to the United States. “Environment: Embajada De Costa Rica En DC.” Environment | Embajada De Costa Rica En DC, [www.costarica-embassy.org/index.php?q=node%2F12](http://www.costarica-embassy.org/index.php?q=node%2F12). “Costa Rica: the 'Living Eden' Designing a Template for a Cleaner, Carbon-Free World.” UN Environment, [www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/story/costa-rica-living-eden-designing-template-cleaner-carbon-free-world#:~:text=Costa%20Rica's%20environmental%20credentials%20are,into%20protected%20parks%20and%20reserves](http://www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/story/costa-rica-living-eden-designing-template-cleaner-carbon-free-world#:~:text=Costa%20Rica's%20environmental%20credentials%20are,into%20protected%20parks%20and%20reserves).

## SUGGESTED RESOURCES

We encourage you to learn more about Costa Rica by looking into these resources. Remember that there are many sides to any story, and every culture and country is complicated with many perspectives. We recommend researching on your own or asking your Project Staff if you have any question or doubt about the topic.

Books
<i>The Ticos: Culture and Social Change in Costa Rica</i> by Richard Biesanz
<i>Costa Rica: A Traveler’s Literary Companion</i> edited by Barba Ras
<i>Tropical Nature: Life and Death in the Rain Forests of Central and South America</i> by Adrian Forsyth
<i>Green Phoenix: Restoring the Tropical Forests of Guanacaste, Costa Rica</i> by William Allen, Samantha Burton
<i>The Quetzal and the Macaw: The Story of Costa Rica’s National Parks</i> by David Rains Wallace
<i>Mamita Yunai</i> by Carlos Luis Fallas
<i>Unico Mirando al Mar</i> by Fernando Contreras
<i>Costa Rica, Cocina y Tradición</i> by Isabel Campabadal
<i>Nosotros los Hombres</i> by Jorge Debravo
<i>Cocorí</i> by Joaquin Gutierrez
Movies

El Regreso / Hernán Jiménez (2011)
Caribe (2004)
Maikol Yordan Traveling Lost (Comedy, 2014)
First Lady of the Revolution: The Henrietta Boggs Story (2016)
OSA: The Jewel of Costa Rica (2015)
A Bold Peace (2016)
<b>Articles and Websites</b>
“Reaching for a Zero Emission Goal” By Paul Rubio: <a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/21/climate/costa-rica-zero-carbon-neutral.html?rref=collection%2Ftimestopic%2FCosta%20Rica">https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/21/climate/costa-rica-zero-carbon-neutral.html?rref=collection%2Ftimestopic%2FCosta%20Rica</a>
<a href="http://www.ticotimes.net">www.ticotimes.net</a>
<a href="http://www.pbs.org/edens/costarica/">http://www.pbs.org/edens/costarica/</a>
<a href="https://www.lonelyplanet.com/costa-rica/history">https://www.lonelyplanet.com/costa-rica/history</a>
<a href="http://www.nacion.com">www.nacion.com</a>
<b>Music</b>
Cocofunka
Malpais
Check out what’s currently on Spotify’s Costa Rica Top 50 chart!!

## COUNTRY-SPECIFIC LANGUAGE

Every country has its own set of idioms, mannerisms, and phrases. There are even language differences from one community to the next. No need to worry though; your Spanish classes at the beginning of your program will serve you very well. Below is a list of regional vocabulary that you should learn. For those of you who want to go above and beyond, check out the link below the vocabulary list for some websites with interactive learning tools.

Spanish word	Definition
Tico	Slang for Costa Rican (costarricense)
Mae	Slang for dude
Buenas	Hello/good morning/good afternoon (usually used when entering a place or home)
¿Qué me dice?	How's it going?
Vos*	"You," singular (informal), <b>not vosotros</b> , <i>explanation here: <a href="http://study-spanish-language.com/grammar/conjugating-vos/">http://study-spanish-language.com/grammar/conjugating-vos/</a></i>
Tuanis	Cool, nice, awesome
A cachete	Very good/ it's all good
Pura vida	Great, hello, you're welcome, life is good, cool, take care... ETC!
Por dicha/ Qué dicha	Fortunately/ how fortunate
Upe	Knock, knock (people say this when standing outside someone's home, rather than knocking on the door)
Mejenga	Friendly/casual soccer match
Jugar bola	To play soccer
Una soda	Small restaurant to get typical, generally cheap, food
Pulpería	Small corner store
Con gusto	You're welcome
Chunche	Thing

\**Usted* and *Vos* – For “you,” many Costa Ricans use either *usted* or *vos*. *Usted* is generally more widely used outside the Central Valley, *vos* is mostly only used in the capital. Costa Ricans also mix using *usted*, *vos* and *tú* within a relationship, which is itself a sign of closeness. For example, an *abuela* might sometimes refer to a baby as *usted*, or *usted* can be used between novios. Look at the following for conjugations of *vos*: <http://study-spanish-language.com/grammar/conjugating-vos/>

More vocabulary practice:

<http://www.languageguide.org/spanish/vocabulary/>

<https://www.duolingo.com/course/es/en/Learn-Spanish-Online>

# AMIGOS HIGH SCHOOL SUMMER PROGRAM 2021

---

## PROGRAM GOALS AND PILLARS

All AMIGOS programs and project areas are different! They are uniquely designed to fit the needs of our volunteers, partner agencies, host communities, and the regions we work in. However, all programs are designed to meet 3 goals and uphold 5 pillars:

### *Program Goals*

1. Develop young people's personal leadership capacities.
2. Strengthen young people's commitment to community engagement and service.
3. Increase young people's cross-cultural capacity and competence.

### *Program Pillars*

1. **Training and Curriculum**  
Volunteers build their leadership and community development skills through hands-on training. All programs include leadership, community service, and cross-cultural humility training. Volunteers have a hands-on training throughout the experience.
2. **Language and Cultural Immersion**  
Volunteers are immersed in the culture and language of their host country by interacting with locals in the pod, collaborating with partner agency members, and participating in cultural activities and excursions.
3. **Community Service**  
Volunteers learn about design-thinking and begin to think through the design of a service project that they will carry out upon arriving back home.
4. **Mentorship**  
Every volunteer is mentored by a staff team member and receives personalized feedback on their development as a leader throughout their experience.
5. **Reflection and Continued Engagement**  
Volunteers are guided through various reflection activities during their experience. Upon successful completion of a program, all alumni are encouraged to climb our leadership ladder to continue building their leadership skills as members of our project staff teams, our training teams or through other opportunities.

## ROLE OF THE VOLUNTEER

As you prepare for the adventure that lies ahead, think about your role as an AMIGOS as a member of a team and group of fellow peers. How do you hope to integrate into the group while also learning about the local culture?

Keep in mind that sometimes it may be hard to find tangible benefits to your experience throughout the trip because it won't be easy. However, your primary role as a volunteer on our programs is to **LEARN** about the local culture, to **PRACTICE** your Spanish with fellow group members and locals, to **SUPPORT** the work of your partner agency through your volunteer service work, to **FACILITATE** group activities, to **SHARE** your passions and to serve as a **CATALYST** for change and multi-cultural understanding.

You are a:

- Community action promoter
- Representative of your home community and your country
- Representative of AMIGOS
- Representative of your partner agency
- Guest in a foreign country and community
- Organizer, motivator, facilitator, role model, student, and friend
- Spanish-speaker
- Humble human being – you're going to discover that there is much more to learn than we have to teach. Be open to learning all that you can, and let your local contacts share their experiences and wisdom with you!

# PROJECT-SPECIFIC INFORMATION

---

## PROJECT THEME

The Program is oriented for volunteers to learn about Community Adaptation to Climate Change through ecotourism and entrepreneurship. It's set up in two climate types and with one ecotourism-based developed economy (Monteverde) and another one that is on the beginning stages of ecotourism development (Parismina).

Monteverde: The first part is focused on learning about how private conservation efforts started in Costa Rica and how that has led to ecotourism becoming their main source of economic activities from a community point of view. We will learn the basic concepts of climate change, community conservation, climate adaptation, and resilience.

Parismina: The second part is focused on learning about community-based initiatives focused on adapting to climate change as well as the impact of climate change in coastal communities. We will also learn by doing wildlife protection practices through setting up sea turtle nurseries, identifying nests, helping with maintenance, among other activities. From there, we will compare community-based initiatives learned in Costa Rica. We will also identify the positive and negative impacts of ecotourism as a community initiative to adapt to climate change.

## PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

ASTOP: The Association for Saving the Turtles of Parismina (ASTOP) is a community-based organization in Parismina dedicated to the protection of sea turtles as a means for a sustainable development for their community.



Association Save the Turtles of Parismina was established in 2001. A small group of local people were concerned about the future of sea turtles that were nesting on their beach as they noticed an increase in environmental issues and sea turtle poaching activities. They decided to take action and ASTOP was born in partnership with the Costa Rican coast guard.

Hunting turtles to resell or eat their eggs was a common practice in Costa Rica until the country, committed to biodiversity conservation, announced a law in 1999 that strictly banned sea turtle poaching and the sale of turtle products. A decade later, thanks to ASTOP, poaching dropped from 98% to

38%.

ASTOP integrates local community members as much as possible to promote sustainable development for the whole community, both human & non-human.



In collaboration with biologists & research centers, they collect data about sea turtles to take part in the monitoring and scientific research in this field. Concurrently, ASTOP is involved in conservation to safeguard a healthy environment for the egg-laying by collecting trash on the beach and joining in with recycling actions in partnership with another district association.

Volunteers will have the chance to:

- Tour the hatchery,
- Learn how to identify turtle nests,
- Walk the beaches for nesting turtles,
- Clean up the local beach areas,
- Take part in organic gardening,
- Facilitate educational activities with local youth and kids, and more!

To learn more about Reserva Playa Tortuga, visit their website: <https://www.parisminaturtles.org/>

## GENERAL PROJECT CALENDAR

The following is the tentative Project Calendar:

Calendar of Activities	
Day 1	Arrive to the airport in Alajuela. Spend 1 night at a hostel near San José.
Day 2	Eat breakfast at hostel in San José and travel to Monteverde. Get settled at hostel, dinamicas, briefing activities.
Day 2-8	Briefing + Quarantine in Monteverde: Spanish classes, briefing activities, outdoor fun, COVID test, icebreakers, team building and group tone setting. Introduction to Climate Change, Ecotourism and Community Conservation.
Day 9-12	Project activities in Monteverde: Spanish classes, conservation and climate workshops, ecotourism, and outdoor field trips. Visit a private conservation reserve, butterfly farm, hanging bridges, and an organic coffee farm to learn about climate adaptation.
Day 13	Travel to Parismina, get settled in hostel, take a walk around the area.
Day 14-17	Volunteer in community service conservation activities and participate in community adaptation to climate change workshops and intercultural activities.
Day 18-20	Go to Tortuguero, get settled in hostel. Visit the Tortuguero National Park. Debriefing, Reflection, and group activities. Opportunity to buy souvenirs.
Day 20	Travel back to San José in the afternoon and spend 1 night at a hostel before flying out the next day.
Day 21	Fly out of the San José airport! Hasta Luego!

## POSSIBLE EXCURSIONS



### Santa Elena Reserve:

The Santa Elena Cloud Forest Reserve is one of the first community established reserves in the country. At the Santa Elena Reserve, we will be introduced to how private conservation reserves were founded and do a guided hike through the trails and hanging bridges.

Learn more here: <https://www.reservasantaelena.org/>

### Finca Life Monteverde

Life Monteverde is an organization working to promote and provide educational experiences on sustainability, fair trade, and nature conservation. You will get an opportunity to learn about sustainable coffee production and the impact of climate change on farms in the Monte Verde Region.

Learn more here: <https://www.cafedemonteverde.com/>



### Tortuguero National Park

The Tortuguero National Park is located on the Atlantic coast of Costa Rica and was established in 1970. It protects multiple endangered species among of which are 4 species of sea turtles and the manatee. You will explore the national park through guided walks and freshwater canals tours.

Learn more here:

<http://www.sinac.go.cr/es/ac/acto/pnt/paginas/default.aspx>

## PACKING LIST

You should bring clothes you already have from home and are comfortable wearing! You do not need to purchase a whole new wardrobe. Bags can get lost on their way to Costa Rica. Please remember to pack any essentials; including a change of clothes, toiletries, and prescription medications, in your carry-on luggage to tide you over should that happen.

Please be sure to read to entire packing list and all the extra tips. Remember that you will be living in in a tropical and humid climate during the rainy season. For the first part of the trip, you will be in cooler mountainous areas and the second half of the trip at the beach with a much warmer climate. **Note: Costa Rica is close to the equator and the sun is very strong. Always wear sunscreen even if it is cloudy outside. Pay special attention to the suggested quantities.** If you have questions while you are packing, please do not hesitate to email us: [amigosprogramas@amigosinternational.org](mailto:amigosprogramas@amigosinternational.org)

### Clothing

- 1 pairs of jeans
- 2 pairs of work pants that you don't mind getting dirty (good for hikes and for excursions)
- 2 pairs of shorts
- 1 pair of sweats, or yoga pants for exercise or for hanging around the house
- 5 comfortable t-shirts for working outside and/or exercising
- 1 nice shirt (polo, blouse, button-up, or t-shirts)
- 1 skirt or dress (if desired)
- AMIGOS polo
- 1 warm fleece jacket
- 7 pairs of underwear & socks
- 2 bras (if desired)
- 1 set of warm & conservative sleepwear
- 1 set of lightweight sleep wear for a warmer climate
- 1 pair of comfortable closed-toed shoes/tennis shoes
- 1 pair of hiking boots
- 1 pair of flip flops
- 1 pair of rubber sandals (e.g. Tevas, Chacos, Crocs, etc.)
- 1 conservative swimsuit

### All Volunteers Should Bring

- 1 waterproof rain jacket (should fit over warm fleece jacket)
- 1 bottle of sunscreen (SPF 50 or greater)
- 1 hat with a brim (a baseball hat is fine)
- 2 reusable water bottles (1 liter each).

- 1 mosquito net and hanging supplies (refer to Required Immunization and Medication List)
- 1 pair of garden/work gloves
- 1 bottles of mosquito repellent
- 1 alarm clock (with batteries if needed)
- 1 headlamp
- 1 hand watch
- A day bag/small backpack for carrying stuff on short trips
- Thermometer and basic first aid kit
- 2 washable face masks
- Prescription medications (if applicable)
- Toiletries: soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, shampoo, conditioner, razor, deodorant, hairbrush.
- 1 Washcloth and 1 towel (quick drying is recommended)
- Luggage Locks (these are useful for independent travel)
- Spanish-English dictionary
- Health, Safety, and Travel Guidelines*
- Project Information Packet (this packet)*
- Money & ATM card
- Passport & two copies of the first page of your passport
- COVID negative test results
- CR Travel Insurance (sent to you by AMIGOS)
- Pase de Salud to enter CR—Filled out & printed by you
- Plane tickets, if applicable, and confirmation codes for e-tickets

### **Recommended Items**

- Exercise wear (shorts, leggings, joggers, etc.)
- Small, inexpensive camera and extra batteries or charger
- Journal & pens
- Small photo album with extra pictures of yourself or your family to give away
- Umbrella
- Sunglasses
- Portable solar lamp
- Music device and headphones

### **Optional Items**

- Reading books (limit 2 - you can trade books with others)
- Board games & cards
- Multi-vitamins