



BETCHART  
EXPEDITIONS Inc.

AAAS Travels  
& Sigma Xi Expeditions

17050 Montebello Road, Cupertino, CA 95014-5435



FIRST CLASS

Explore Costa Rica!  
December 19-28, 2010



# COSTA RICA

## Nature's Treasurehouse

December 19-28, 2010

A Special Expedition  
for Members and Friends of  
AAAS & Sigma Xi



### AAAS Travels • Sigma Xi Expeditions

Dear Travelers and Friends:

An excellent introduction to the natural wealth of Costa Rica, this 10-day expedition includes a special look at the natural wonders, pristine parks and reserves of Costa Rica. Please join us this year, and learn firsthand about the wildlife, tropical ecology, and importance of tropical forests, and enjoy the spectacular natural world of Costa Rica.

Visits will include Volcan Poas, with an excellent introduction to the fiery history of an active volcano near San Jose; the Monteverde Cloudforest, a world-renowned mountain reserve cloaked in mists and cloud; Carara Biological Reserve, beautifully situated on the Pacific Coast; and Braulio Carrillo, a montane rainforest park with an aerial tram which allows spectacular views of the rainforest canopy. We will also visit charming San Jose, the bustling capital of Costa Rica, situated at 3,000 feet, near the mountainous backbone of the country.

Leading the expedition will be an excellent naturalist guide. This expedition will give an excellent exposure to tropical rainforests and tropical ecology, and the plants, animals, insects, and birds which inhabit the forest.

Join us as we explore and learn about the wonders of tropical Costa Rica. Please make your reservation right away as space is limited. For more information, please telephone (800) 252-4910.

Sincerely,

Robert P. Nansen  
Naturalist  
For AAAS Travels & Sigma Xi Expeditions





## ITINERARY

### Day 1 – USA to San Jose, Costa Rica.

Expedition members fly from Miami, Dallas, or other gateway cities to San Jose, the capital of Costa Rica. Transfer to the *Bougainvillea Hotel*.

### Day 2 – Volcan Poas National Park.

Welcome breakfast this morning. We will depart San Jose and begin our introduction to the national parks and natural history of Costa Rica as we explore the dynamic terrain of Volcan Poas. This active volcano continues to spew steam and sulfur gas, and much of the landscape is little changed since the 1952-54 eruptive period. Spectacular geology and high elevation plant and animal communities will be of interest. Afternoon drive through the rainforest to the Caribbean lowlands and *Selva Verde Lodge (3 nights)*. An evening stroll will introduce you to the sounds of the rainforest. B,L,D

### Day 3 – La Selva Biological Station.

This morning we will visit the La Selva Biological Station of the Organization for Tropical Studies, one of the most important sites for tropical forest research in the Americas. La Selva was set aside in 1956 as a research site for its nearly virgin forest. The Station has been the research location for thousands of students and thousands of ecological papers. An excellent trail system allows easy access to the impressive forest, noted for its immense buttressed, canopy-emergent trees and protective low-lying swamps. You will have the opportunity to meet scientists and to learn firsthand about discoveries in the tropical rainforest. Optional trip on the Sarapiquí River to look for howler monkeys and other wildlife. Evening lecture and discussion. B,L,D

### Day 4 – Braulio Carillo National Park & Aerial Tram.

Morning naturalist walk at Selva Verde's private reserve to hear and see birds at the start of the day. Later drive to Braulio Carillo National Park. This outstanding national park descends from the Continental Divide to the Caribbean lowlands and is one of the most important Costa Rican national parks. The park offers a wonderful opportunity to explore the upper canopy of the rainforest via an aerial tram. We will travel through the rainforest canopy for a bird's-eye view of the forest and its inhabitants, approximately 100 feet above the forest floor. Many species of plants and insects are only found in the upper canopy of the forest. B,L,D

### Day 5 – Arenal National Park & Monteverde Reserve.

Today we will cross the Caribbean lowlands and drive up to the volcanic summit of Costa Rica and the quintessential volcano, Arenal. Arenal Volcano was dormant until 1969 when shock waves, then ash and volcanic bombs rained down on the region. Arenal is quiet again, but some nights the glowing summit can be seen. We'll continue along the spine of the Cordillera Central with views to the Gulf of Nicoya on the way to the famous Monteverde Cloudforest. Enjoy a walk to see bromeliads, hummingbirds, and hear the sounds of birds in the late afternoon. Overnight at *Heliconia Hotel (2 nights)*. B,L,D

### Day 6 – Monteverde Cloudforest.

Here at an elevation of 5,500 feet on the cool upper slopes of the Cordillera de Tilaran, the world-famous Monteverde Cloudforest Reserve protects an extraordinary lush cloudforest. As we explore the excellent trails, we will delight in the bromeliads, orchids, tree ferns, and mixed flocks of foraging birds. With luck, we may see the resplendent quetzal, considered by many to be the most beautiful bird in the New World. There will also be an opportunity to learn about the Quaker community and visit the local museum. B,L,D

### Day 7 – Monteverde to the Pacific lowlands.

Early morning naturalist walk at Monteverde, then a memorable drive to the Pacific lowlands. Look for roadside hawks and flocks of parrots on our drive through the dry deciduous forest and farmland of the Pacific lowlands to *Villa Lapas Resort (2 nights)* situated on a river near one of the most beautiful beaches in Costa Rica. Afternoon snorkeling or dugout canoe ride. B,L,D

### Day 8 – Carara Biological Reserve.

Today we will visit Carara Biological Reserve. It is in a transitional region between the dry climate of the north and the humid climate of the south with a mixture of species from both areas. Scarlet macaws nest in good numbers along with toucans, trogons, and howler monkeys; it has the highest population of endangered crocodiles in Central America. See the new Visitor Center and begin your exploration on one of the numerous trails along streams and through tall rainforest. In the afternoon we'll discover the mangrove forests at the mouth of the Rio Tarcoles. Here winter shorebirds will be in great numbers along with herons, egrets, scarlet ibis, black skimmers, and maybe another crocodile. B,L,D

### Day 9 – Villa Lapas to San Jose.

Awaken to the sounds of birds and monkeys beginning their day. Join your naturalist to explore the Sky Way trail in Villa Lapas's private reserve near the lodge. Tanagers, trogons, grosbeaks, and parrots are very active and we will look for fruiting trees. After lunch drive through banana, oil palm, and coffee plantations to the Meseta Central and San Jose for a city tour. Farewell dinner. *Bougainvillea Hotel*. B,L,D

### Day 10 – San Jose to Home.

Morning return flights to Miami or Dallas with connecting flights home for the end of the expedition.

## COSTS & CONDITIONS

**Expedition Fee:** \$2,795 per person for 10 days, plus air fare of approximately \$650 per person + tax from Miami or Dallas to Costa Rica, round trip.

**What to Expect:** This expedition is planned for the travel enthusiast who would enjoy exploring and learning about the flora and wildlife of some of Costa Rica's finest national parks. Travel is by motorcoach with daily outings on foot of 1 to 2 miles at a leisurely pace suitable for discovery. Typically, it is hot and humid in the lowlands (90's); springlike in the highlands. Even in the dry season, some rain can be expected. At the volcanoes, we will reach 8,000 feet; please consult your physician. This expedition is a tremendous experience for travelers with an appetite for adventure who can tolerate some insects, heat, and bumpy dirt roads for the chance to explore superb natural areas. (No smoking in vehicles, during lectures, or meals.)

**Expedition Fee Includes:** Land transport; airport transfers; accommodations twin share with bath in comfortable country-style lodges and hotels; meals; entrance fees; baggage handling; leadership, administration.

**Expedition Fee Does Not Include:** International air fare (quoted separately); gratuity to expedition leaders and driver; personal items such as alcoholic beverages, laundry, phone calls, bottled water, snacks, personal insurance; or foreign airport departure taxes.

**Air Fare & Airline Ticketing:** Air fare quoted is based on independent fares with American Airlines from Miami or Dallas to Costa Rica, return. Please book early: Costa Rica air fares increase dramatically within 90 days of departure. AIR FARES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

**Single Accommodations:** Singles are available for \$495. If you do not have a roommate or we cannot assign one, you must pay the extra cost of a single.

**Reservations, Deposits, Payments:** Please mail a deposit of \$500 per person with the completed reservation form. The balance is due 60 days before departure.

**Cancellations & Refunds:** The initial deposit for the expedition is refundable up to 60 days before departure less a handling fee of \$100 per person. There will be no refund for any cancellation after the 60-day period unless your place is resold; then only the \$100 handling fee applies. There are no refunds for unused meals, accommodations, or other trip features.

**Responsibility:** Betchart Expeditions Inc., the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), and Sigma Xi, the Scientific Research Society act only as agents for the passenger with respect to transportation and hotels, and exercise every care possible. However, we can assume no liability for injury, damage, delay, loss, accident or irregularity in connection with the services of any airplane, ship, motorcoach, or any other conveyance used in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. We cannot accept any responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, terrorism, quarantine, acts of God, or other causes beyond our control. All such losses or expenses will have to be borne by the passenger, as tour rates provide for arrangements only for the time stated. We reserve the right to substitute another leader of similar expertise or reserve the right to cancel any tour prior to departure, in which case the entire payment will be refunded with no further obligation on our part. The right is also reserved to decline to accept or retain any person as a member of the tour. No refund will be made for the unused portion of any tour unless arrangements are made in sufficient time to avoid penalties. The price of the program is based on current tariffs and rates, and is subject to change. Any tariff, exchange rate, or fuel increases will be passed on to participants. Baggage is carried at the owner's risk entirely. It is understood that the air ticket when issued shall constitute the sole contract between the passenger and the airline concerned. The airlines concerned are not to be held responsible for any act, omission, or event during the time passengers are not on board their plane or conveyance.

## QUESTIONS?

Please call Betchart Expeditions Inc. (800) 252-4910 or (408) 252-4910. On the Web: [www.betchartexpeditions.com](http://www.betchartexpeditions.com)

## RESERVATIONS

#1154

**YES!** I/We want to join the **Costa Rica Expedition, December 19-28, 2010**, offered by **AAAS Travels & Sigma Xi Expeditions**. Please reserve \_\_\_ space(s). As a deposit, I/we have enclosed a check for \$\_\_\_\_\_ (\$500 per person) payable to Betchart Expeditions Inc. Trust Account.

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: Home (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Work (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Membership (please circle): AAAS Sigma Xi ACS Planetary Society

Accommodations Preference: \_\_\_ Nonsmoker \_\_\_ Smoker

\_\_\_ Twin \_\_\_ Single \_\_\_ Twin Share \_\_\_ with a friend or

\_\_\_ assign a roommate

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please Mail To: **Costa Rica, Betchart Expeditions Inc.**  
**17050 Montebello Road, Cupertino, California 95014-5435**