

Aspen Country Day School Costa Rica program

10 days, June 7-16, 2010

Day 1 – Monday, June 7th

San José

We will depart as a group and fly to San José, Costa Rica, where we will be welcomed by our Sustainable Horizon Group Leader. Upon arrival, we will drive to the Arenal Volcano area. The twelfth most active volcano in the world, Arenal has retained its almost perfect conical shape despite a number of highly explosive eruptions. Nearly continuous activity at its summit makes for impressive displays of pyroclastic “natural fireworks” by night and columns of ash accompanied by thunderous rumbling by day. Tonight we will have an orientation to discuss the days ahead.

Day 2 – Tuesday, June 8th

Arenal Volcano

We start off our day in Arenal with a hike through the national park. This interpretive hike takes us through three distinct environments. One minute you will find yourself clambering across a moonscape of volcanic floes and the next you’ll have to search for occasional gaps in the dense jungle canopy, where columns of light illuminate broadleaf underbrush. Along the way, our group leader will help explain the geology of the volcano and the ecology of this unusual environment. After lunch, we will depart for our community service project. On the way, we will discuss the wonders of Costa Rica and how resource management affects the people of this beautiful nation. In the evening, we will be welcomed into our new community and spend our first night with our host families.

Days 3-7 – Wednesday, June 9th – Sunday, June 13th

Host community and service project

For the next few days, we’ll be working to help the community on a much-needed project. The homestay experience and community project are the heart of our trip—an excellent way to bond with our new friends and families through service. We will also enjoy afternoon excursions into the surrounding area such as a trek to a jungle river for a refreshing dip, and a trip to a nearby pineapple farm to learn how to grow this sweet tropical fruit. We will spend our evenings living and learning with our host families and gathering as a group to reflect upon our time here. On the last day in the community we will wrap up our community project, basking in the satisfaction of a job well done and ready for a well-earned break.

Day 8 – Monday, June 14th

Whitewater rafting

Today we will leave our host community early in the morning. We’ll have the opportunity to have an adrenaline filled day whitewater rafting down the Toro River. After a long day on the rapids, we’ll head back to have a wonderful typical Costa Rican dinner and prepare ourselves to experience Costa Rica from another vantage point – the rainforest canopy!

Day 9 – Tuesday, June 15th

Arenal Volcano

Today we will experience the tropical forest like never before, from the perspective of the monkeys and birds which live in the canopy. This experience combines adrenaline-filled flights through the forest canopy on zip lines and time on platforms admiring the beauty of a tropical forest from above, near the Arenal Volcano. Finally, we will drive back to the Central Valley and then celebrate our last night in Costa Rica.

Day 10 – Wednesday, June 16th

Depart

Today our trip to Costa Rica comes to a close as we depart early for our flight out of San José.

WHAT IS INCLUDED

All meals
All lodging (homestays, hotels, hostels, etc.)
All transportation within Costa Rica
All activities
Experienced, bilingual Group Leader

WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED

International airfare
Cost of obtaining a passport
Vaccinations and malaria pills
Personal spending money
Travel & medical insurance
\$26 departure tax