



# COSTA RICA ECO EXPLORER

JUST GO

EBROCHURE 2019





# START YOUR ADVENTURE

## WHY CHOOSE AESU?

### ABOUT US

When deciding on a team you can trust to send you on the most magical, informative and fun travel experience, you need not look any further than AESU. We are an Educational Travel Service company founded in 1977. Our headquarters is located in Baltimore, MD with satellite and partner offices around the globe.

With over 40 years of experience we can safely say we know how to combine the wonders of history, the excitement of culture and of course, the adventure of experiencing the world. The balance of learning and fun provides a well-rounded experience, unforgettable memories, and new friendships to last a lifetime. It's time to stop dreaming about travel and start delving into it head first. When travelling with AESU, you get the most out of your journey, from trying local delicacies, to venturing into ancient territories, to living every moment of your time in each city to its absolute fullest. We want you to not only make an investment in the quality of your trip, but in the quality of every memory made along the way.

What are you waiting for? Just go!

### OUR EXPERTISE

TRIPS FOR 18 - 35 YEAR OLDS

COLLEGE STUDENT AND YOUNG PROFESSIONAL TRIPS

GRADUATION TOURS

YOUNG ALUMNI JOURNEYS

TRADITIONAL ALUMNI JOURNEYS

STUDY ABROAD AND STUDENT TRAVEL

FACULTY-LED PROGRAMS TO DESTINATIONS WORLDWIDE

CUSTOMIZED GROUP TRAVEL SPECIALIST FOR ALL AGES

5-day base land package \$1,425 \*

Rates are based on two people sharing one room. Please see rooming policy regarding arranging shared accommodations. To guarantee a single room, a supplement of \$425 for the 5-day tour will apply.

\*Special land price per person. Airfare priced separately for greater flexibility. Please call AESU World Travel for great low airfares from most US cities. Airport/departure taxes are additional and subject to change.

# WHAT DO I GET



## COVERAGE

When you book with AESU, the necessities of travel are taken care of.

These include:

- SUPERIOR TOURIST CLASS HOTELS
  - ALL LAND TRANSPORTATION
  - DAILY BREAKFAST
  - SPECIAL CULTURAL DINNERS
  - KNOWLEDGABLE TOUR DIRECTOR
  - BEHIND-THE-SCENES TOURS
- (See more in the inclusions on page 4)

## EDUCATIONAL & ADVENTUROUS

Whether you can't wait to immerse yourself in the tranquil natural beauty of Costa Rica, enjoy a leisurely deep sea fishing trip or unleash your inner adventurer and go ziplining and snorkeling through the gorgeous tropics, AESU provides a beautiful balance of historical education and complete sensory and cultural immersion into the vivacious life of this country.

## THE VERDICT?

Don't miss out on the opportunity of a lifetime to explore the places you have been dreaming of. Make new best friends from around the world and create memories that will keep this journey alive forever.

It's not rocket science. Group travel is a safer way to explore the world. This trip provides you with an exciting approach to learning and taking in all the history and culture around you. Open your mind, see the world and have the most fun you've ever had.

## GO-EXPAND YOUR HORIZONS

# COSTA RICA ECO EXPLORER

## 5 DAYS

### ABOUT THE TRIP:

Travel to this small but very diverse country on an adventure tour of wildly contrasting landscapes. From volcanoes to waterfalls and tropical forests, from exotic birds and playful monkeys to jungle-canopy walks – experience all that Costa Rica has to offer.

Note: This trip promotes community development. A portion of your trip cost will go to benefit the following projects: local animal sanctuary 'Refugio Herpetológico' in Santa Ana, the primary school 'Ticufres', and organic garden planning in the isolated mountain community of 'Providencia de Dota.'

### HIGHLIGHTS:

Welcome orientation \* Hermosa Beach \* Adventure Pass at Hacienda Guachipelin \* Rincon de la Vieja National Park \* Canyon Tour \* Zip lining \* Tarzan swings \* Horseback riding \* Waterfalls \* Volcanos \* Rainforest \* Hot Springs ... AND MUCH MORE!

### OPTIONAL EXCURSIONS:

(Not included in package price)

- o Whitewater Rafting on the Colorado River
- o Water sports at Hermosa Beach

Please check with your tour director for detailed schedules. Some options may require a minimum number of participants to operate. Rates for options are per person, approximate and subject to change.

### WHAT'S INCLUDED:

The land package includes:

\* 4 nights in superior tourist class hotels with private bath/shower, twin-share rooms \* Daily continental breakfasts \* Two dinners and one lunch \* All day excursion including Adventure Pass to Rincon de la Vieja National Park \* Activities offered: Hiking · Zip lining · Horseback riding · Tubing · Hot springs

PLUS:

\* Private tour director for the entire duration of the land tour \* Services of a local English speaking host \* Airport transfers with purchase of AESU airfare (Departure tax not included) \* All ground transportation as per itinerary \* All service charges and local taxes \* Included tour highlights



# COSTA RICA ECO EXPLORER

## ITINERARY

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### DAY 1 - TRAVEL TO LIBERIA \* PLAYA HERMOSA

Today, we embark on our flight to Liberia, Costa Rica. Upon arrival transfer to our beach hotel. Airport transfers are included with purchase of airfare through AESU. Meet fellow explorers at our welcome dinner and orientation with our tour host tonight.

**Meals:** In-flight, Welcome cocktail and dinner

### DAY 2 - PLAYA HERMOSA, GUANACASTE \* RINCON DE LA VIEJA NATIONAL PARK

After breakfast a full day of adventure begins. A private bus takes us to Rincon de la Vieja National Park, one of the country's most diverse ecological regions. Surrounding two volcanoes, Rincon and Santa Maria, the park is also home to an extraordinary display of flora and fauna, and is part of the Area de Conservacion Guanacaste World Heritage Site. This tropical forest refuge attracts scientists, students, birdwatchers, and nature lovers from around the world. Exciting activities at the park include: 'The Canyon Tour', a thrilling adventure through the Kazm Cañon, a majestic canyon created by the erosion of the Blanco River. Here there are opportunities for canopy zip lining, rappelling, hanging bridges and more. Also enjoy an optional horseback ride to the waterfalls, visit Azufrales Hot Springs at Rincon, or go tubing on Rio Negro. We return to our beach hotel on Playa Hermosa this evening.

**Meals:** Breakfast, lunch

### DAY 3 - PLAYA HERMOSA

Enjoy a day at the beach or consider an optional rafting tour on the Colorado River through beautiful canyons with wildlife, lush vegetation, and pristine waters. Relax this evening and watch another magnificent sunset while dipping your toes in the surf, or explore the colorful local town's dive shops and restaurants.

**Meals:** Breakfast

**Optional activity:** Whitewater Rafting

### DAY 4 - PLAYA HERMOSA

Plan your day as you like. Consider optional surf lessons, snorkeling and other water sports activities, or enjoy a lazy day just playing in the sand. Your host will also be able to arrange other activities such as a deep-sea fishing trip. Tonight, join fellow travelers at our farewell dinner.

**Meals:** Breakfast, farewell dinner

**Optional activity:** Water sports

### DAY 5 - TRAVEL HOME

After breakfast our land program ends and we bid farewell to sunny Costa Rica, our new-found friends and fellow adventurers. (Please note that a departure tax is due in cash at the airport before departure.)

**Meals:** Breakfast

# PROGRAM ACCOMMODATIONS

## HOTELS

Our hotels are superior tourist class or better, with private bathrooms. They are centrally located or have easy access to public transportation. Many have great extra amenities such as pools, gyms and roof-top bars. All land package rates are based on two people sharing a room. If traveling solo and not wanting to pay the single supplement, AESU will attempt to arrange a share with a same-gender traveler. If no travelers are available to share when final rooming assignments are made, the single supplement will apply.

Sample hotel:



Playa Hermosa  
Bosque del Mar Hotel

## TOUR DIRECTORS

We are very proud of our tour directors. They are young professionals: multi-lingual and carefully selected graduates from major universities. They are eager to show the world through the eyes of an adventurer. Our tour directors know this is a trip of a lifetime and will share their knowledge as well as interesting little-known facts. Our qualified tour directors and staff of local experts mean a trouble-free journey with the added security of group travel.

## ACTIVITY LEVEL

### LEVEL 3: MODERATE/ACTIVE

This trip features some all-day excursions, and a full and active itinerary. It offers activities with higher intensity. Excursions require standing and walking for extended periods of time over more difficult terrain (e.g. cobblestones, city hills, stairs without handrails, limited or no access to elevators, muddy/slippery walking/hiking trails.) This itinerary features hiking, and use of local transportation. This tour offers more active optional excursions (such as zip lining, whitewater rafting and horseback riding).

### *Please Note:*

Travel to and from the tour is not factored into our activity level ratings. You should take into account your stamina when traveling long distances and/or with multiple flight changes. Also, you must be able to handle your luggage independently throughout the itinerary.

## WHAT OUR TRAVELERS ARE SAYING

"First time taking a tour like this - great experience and fellow travelers made things even better"  
-MATTHEW B.

"Our tour guide was awesome and was always willing to take people to popular locations in her free time"  
-KATHERINE H.

"Best vacation. I had a wonderful time and made lifelong friends which made it even better"  
-ANTHONY R.

"I loved the optional excursions as well as the free time allowed in each city - it allowed us to experience each city and get to know the other members of the group"  
-ALINA NICOLE G.

"I'll never forget this trip"  
-LAURA B.

"It was the trip of a lifetime! I loved the tour director and all of my fellow travelers! I don't think I could have asked for a better trip"  
-HALEY M.

"I thoroughly enjoyed my experience! Thought it was very well organized and exceeded my expectations"  
-PAIGE A.

"I had so much fun! Would recommend to all.. amazing deal for everything we saw and did"  
-TODD S.

"100% would do it again"  
-ADDIE O.

"When booking my trip, I was searching for a balance of structured tours and adequate free time, and I found that with AESU!"  
-MCKINNON M.

"Such an incredible experience! So organized and I love how we so quickly went from place to place and saw so much!"  
-ABIGAIL C.

"Had the best time of my life!"  
-MEHVISH A.

"Definitely the best days of my life, without a doubt: new friends, amazing experiences and a ton of fun - I am so thankful for this trip!"  
-TREVOR P.

"I enjoyed everything! I was considering traveling Europe on my own, but I would never have done half the things I got to do with AESU!"  
-JENNA F.

"I would highly recommend this to others and I look forward to doing another trip!"  
-RILEY F.

"I liked that we were able to see so much - I feel like I got the most of our trip and made so many friends and memories"  
-EMILY L.

"Being in a group was very fun - getting to meet lots of cool, new people. I loved not having to worry about transportation to/from all of the things we were able to do and it was great to get free time recommendations from our tour director!"  
-EVELYN T.

"I was very satisfied with all aspects of the tour - it was a life changing experience and I definitely recommend it!"  
-JAMES M.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## BEFORE YOU GO

### HOW DO I BOOK?

Booking your trip is easy! To make your reservation, head to [www.aesu.com](http://www.aesu.com). Find your school and your tour, then click the "CHECK AVAILABILITY" button on the trip page to book your trip online, or you can call us at 1-800-638-7640 if you have any questions.

### DO I NEED A PASSPORT? A VISA?

Travel to EUROPE: If you are an American or Canadian citizen, you only need a Passport. The easiest way to get a passport is through your local post office, County Court House, or Passport Agency. Check the United States State Department's website for specific regulations regarding acquiring a passport. (<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports.html>). You may need a Visa for our tours if you are not an American or Canadian citizen. If you are a citizen of another country, you must contact the appropriate consulates for each nation on the itinerary, and you must obtain these visas on your own.

Travel BEYOND Europe: Check on Visa requirements (incl. American or Canadian citizens) with the respective consulate or embassy. Some countries may charge for a tourist visa on entry or a departure tax on leaving the country.

### HOW MUCH MONEY WILL I NEED?

We recommend \$50-\$80 per day, depending on your spending habits. That money covers items of a personal nature, laundry, beverages and meals not included on tour, and expenses for free-time activities (metro tickets, taxis, entrance fees). This amount does not include money for souvenir/gift shopping. We strongly recommend bringing a credit card (Visa, American Express, and Mastercard are the most widely accepted) as well as an ATM card. Check with your bank prior to departure to ensure your ATM card is usable overseas.

### HOW MUCH LUGGAGE SHOULD I TAKE?

Due to limited space on the tour motor coach, you may only bring ONE suitcase and ONE carry-on. Limit your suitcase size to no larger than 29 x 20 x 10 and your carry-on to no larger than 8 x 16 x 21. Check your airline's website for any additional luggage restrictions. Keep in mind that throughout the duration of the tour, you are responsible for your own luggage, so do not pack more than you can carry. Laundry facilities are available in major cities.

### WHAT SHOULD I PACK?

The easiest way to make your tour stressful is to over pack! See details in the Planning & Packing section on your trip's Toolbox pages. Download our suggested packing list.

### WHAT ABOUT PACKING DOCUMENTS?

Never pack your passport! Always keep it with you. The same goes for cash and credit cards. Pack 2 extra passport photos if possible (in the event that you misplace your passport), photo copies of your passport's personal data pages, your flight itinerary and e-ticket information, a listing of your credit card, and copies of any personal IDs. This info will be extremely valuable should you lose any actual documents. Always keep actual documents on your person, and never in your checked suitcase.

### SHOULD I PURCHASE TRAVEL INSURANCE?

We highly recommend travel insurance. (Some schools or alumni associations may offer travel insurance to you at a reduced rate.) If not, AESU also offers group travel insurance. Ask our reservations agent for details or click on this link:

<https://www.tripassure.com/main/?welcome=AESU3922MD>

## PLANNING YOUR TRIP

### WHAT ARE HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS LIKE?

We stay in superior tourist class hotels, 3-star or 4-star, all with private bath/shower. Our hotels have been especially selected for their atmosphere, friendly hospitality, cleanliness and location.

**TOUR ROOMING POLICY:** If you are traveling alone and do not want a single room, we will attempt to arrange for a 2-share room. If this is not possible, we will make arrangements for a single room and charge the applicable single supplement.

You'll be furnished a complete hotel address list with your final documents. Properties are subject to change and any substitutions would be the equivalent of those listed. For independent hotel reservations such as pre/post nights, etc., and select special tours a single supplement is always applied. Please check your itinerary.

### I DON'T HAVE A ROOMMATE, WHAT DO I DO?

Going solo is not a problem with AESU. Many of our participants don't have a travel companion when booking a trip. If you're traveling alone, we will attempt to arrange for you to share a room (same gender) at no extra cost. (See above rooming policy for details)

### I KNOW SOME MEALS ARE INCLUDED, BUT WHAT ABOUT SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS?

Tours include breakfast daily, lunches & dinner as per itinerary. If you are a vegetarian, or have special dietary needs, please add this to your account when booking. All included meals are pre-paid, so a substitute meal is always up to the goodwill of the establishment. We cannot guarantee that all special requests will be granted, but, in the past, most restaurants have been cooperative. Please keep in mind that substitute meals may not be as varied as they are at home.

### DO I NEED ANY VACCINATIONS?

Check with your doctor or the CDC ([www.nccdc.gov/travel](http://www.nccdc.gov/travel)) to find out if vaccinations are required. If you suffer from any form of illness, be sure to have an adequate supply of medicines before departing on your trip. You must advise us of any important medical condition you may have, before departure.

### DOES AESU SUPPORT ECO TRAVEL?

Every traveler shares a common responsibility to preserve our planet's environment and respect its people. AESU enthusiastically endorses ASTA's 10 Commandments, which effectively reaffirm that responsibility. Let's live by these Commandments, to ensure our world's beauty is preserved for our generation and for generations to come. Thank you for the opportunity to travel together and to discover our remarkable world in a responsible manner. Over a decade ago AESU founded "TRAVEL FOR GOOD" – many years before large travel companies became active in environmental travel.

Link to US State Department Travel Website

<http://travel.state.gov/content/travel/english.html>

FOR MORE FAQ'S VISIT OUR WEBSITE

# BOOKING TERMS AND CONDITIONS

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EXCLUSIONS: These prices do not include passport and, if applicable, visa fees (Depending on your nationality, you may require visas in addition to a passport to enter certain countries. You must contact appropriate consulates for details on how to obtain on your own.), airport and government taxes, tipping of tour guide and driver (suggested \$4-5 per day for tour director, \$2-3 per day for driver), beverages with meals unless indicated otherwise, laundry, personal insurance, room service, telephone charges, all items of a personal nature, airport transfers when a participant deviates from scheduled flights or travel dates, private transportation, and all items not specifically stated in the itinerary. CANCELLATION POLICY: All cancellations must be received by AESU in writing. All cancellations for any reason whatsoever will be subject to a \$300 per person cancellation fee. Date of receipt will determine penalties assessed. In addition to \$300, cancellation between 60-31 days of departure will result in forfeiture of 25% of tour cost; between 30-16 days 40%. Cancellation within 16 days of departure or a "no-show" at the time of departure will result in forfeiture of the entire cost of the trip. AIRFARES are highly restrictive, NON-REFUNDABLE, NON-ENDORSABLE and NON-TRANSFERABLE once ticketed. Once reservation is booked and paid for AESU reserves the right to issue tickets. Once ticketed, airfare portion is non-refundable. Cancellation of airfare reservations is subject to restrictions, regulations and additional penalties of the airlines used. Reservation changes are also subject to penalties. Medical health and accident insurance is compulsory. PLEASE SEE WEBSITE FOR POSSIBLE ADDITIONS TO CANCELLATION POLICIES LISTED ABOVE DEPENDING ON TRIP DESTINATION. AIRPORT TRANSFERS & BAGGAGE: All participants using AESU flights on regular group departure days and flights receive airport transfers (between airport & tour hotel) overseas. Land-Only participants (providing own flight overseas) do NOT receive airport transfers and must meet group at the first hotel after 3:00 p.m. on program start date. FLIGHT DELAYS - ALL AIRPORTS: In the event that airline schedule changes or delays force you to miss your airport transfer, just make your way to the first hotel listed on your hotel list. Many shuttle services are available as well as taxi or train options. As airline delays are beyond the control of AESU, additional expenses, if incurred, will be borne by the tour participant. (Save receipts for possible reimbursement by airline.) AESU is not responsible if an airline cancels, reschedules, or delays a flight for any reason. If you miss your departure flight, it is your responsibility to work with the airline on which you are ticketed to reach your destination. AESU is not responsible for any additional expenses you may incur prior to joining your trip. AESU is not responsible for and will not provide any refund for portions of trips missed due to canceled, rescheduled, or delayed flights. Participants should limit themselves to one checked bag per person and one carry-on per person. Check your airline's website for any additional luggage restrictions. Liability is clearly stated on the passenger contract. RESPONSIBILITY: The responsibility of AESU as a tour operator, their agents, and any sponsoring association is limited. They act only in the capacity of agents for the passenger in all matters pertaining to accommodations, sightseeing and transportation whether by railroad, motorboat, motorcar, steamship or plane, and as such they shall not be liable for any personal injury, death, damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity which may be occasioned, whether by reason of any defect in any vehicle, or through the acts or default of any company or person engaged in conveying the passenger, or in carrying out the arrangement of the tour. They can accept no responsibility for strike, war, quarantine, weather and any other natural or unnatural causes. Additional expenses, if incurred under any of these circumstances, will be borne by the tour participant. By forwarding the deposit, the passenger certifies that he/she has no physical, mental or other condition or disability that would create a hazard for himself/ herself or other passengers & accepts the terms of this contract. The right is reserved to decline, to accept or retain any person as a member of the tour or to cancel or alter the tour as required. If improvements in the itinerary can be made, or unforeseen conditions beyond AESU's control make changes necessary, they reserve the right to alter itineraries without penalty. Trip cancellation insurance should be purchased by the individual traveler in the event cancellation of the tour is compelled by circumstances beyond our control. In the event of cancellation due to insufficient number of participants, AESU's liability shall be limited to a FULL REFUND of all payments received from applicants, except non-refundable airfare and insurance. Baggage and personal injury are at owner's risk entirely. The issuance or acceptance of vouchers or tickets shall be considered consent of the above conditions. AESU reserves the right to increase the program price in the event of cost increases due to changes in airfares, currency fluctuations or fuel surcharges. The airlines concerned and their affiliates and agents are not to be held responsible for any act, omission or event during the time passengers are not on board the aircrafts. The passenger ticket in use by said airlines, when issued, shall constitute the sole contract between the airlines and the purchaser of these tickets and/or the passenger. All services are subject to the laws of the country in which these services are rendered. No refund or allowance will be made for absence during the tour, or for activities missed, even if for causes beyond the control of the participant. For complete terms & conditions, please refer to our web site at [www.aesu.com](http://www.aesu.com).