

Costa Rica Short-term Trip Travel Tips and Packing List

Fast Facts

Currency: Costa Rican Colon (1 USD = 561.34 CRC), note: this rate changes daily.

Electrical: 110v, no need for a converter, may need an adapter for 3 prong plugs.

Languages Spoken: Official language is Spanish.

Time Zone: Central Standard Time, UTC-6 (1 hour behind of EST, 2 hours behind during daylight savings mid-March – early November)

Weather/Climate: Highs in the 80s, lows in the upper 60s – 70s.

- But be prepared for a variety of conditions. Layering is suggested in case it is warmer or cooler than expected.

Lodging: You will be staying in hotels. Bedding and towels are provided.

Meals: All meals are included in the cost of your trip and will be held at the hotel or local restaurants. Chicken, rice and beans is a typical meal.

Water: Only use bottled water for drinking and brushing your teeth. Bottled water will be provided so be sure to bring a refillable water bottle.

Spending Money: Your basic expenses will be covered; however, you may want personal cash for snacks, souvenirs, or love offerings. \$100-200 is recommended.

Currency Exchange: The best location to exchange money is at the airport upon arriving in Costa Rica, unless your team leader has made other arrangements.

Shopping: There will be an opportunity to shop for souvenirs towards the end of the trip.

What to Wear

Our desire is to make sure we dress in a way that will not offend our hosts. Please dress conservatively and modestly. A flashy wardrobe can be a stumbling block to our friends who may have far fewer material goods. We ask that there be no tank tops, nothing tight-fitting or low-cut, no clothing that contains innuendos/political messages/profanity, and nothing with rips/holes.

- **Air Travel:** Dress casually and comfortably. No leggings or clothing with rips or holes.
- **Community / Work Projects:** Dress casually and comfortably, such as light-weight pants, long shorts, capris and t-shirts. Bring an extra outfit to change into after you've cleaned up at the day's end.
- **Church Service:** Men should wear pants or long shorts and a collared shirt. Women should wear a long skirt (below the knee, covers the knees when seated) and nicer shirt/blouse.

Packing

- Keep your passport with you, do not pack in checked baggage.
- Carry-ons: One suitcase that fits in overhead compartment, and one personal item that fits under seat in front of you.
 - Be sure to follow airlines size and weight guidelines.
 - It is also recommended to have a change of clothes in your carry-on in case your luggage is delayed.
- Reminder: You can only take small bottles (max 3oz. size) of liquids in your carry-on bags. Please put these in one clear Ziploc bag not to exceed the 1-quart size.
- Checked Bags: Plan to bring 2 large suitcases.
 - Be sure to follow airlines size and weight guidelines.
 - 1 suitcase will be for team supplies, 1 will be for your personal items.
- Be sure to include identification on and inside each piece of luggage.
- Be sure to weigh and measure your bags before travel day.

Other Travel Tips

- Watch your luggage, passport, and belongings at all times. Pickpockets and petty thefts are common within airports and tourist areas.
- Leave your valuables at home. Don't bring anything that you can't afford to lose, or anything that reinforces the idea of being a rich American.
- If you are bringing a credit card, remember to notify your credit card company that you will be traveling.

Travel Items

- Passport
- Insurance card
- Backpack, passport pack
- \$100-\$200 (personal spending)
- Credit card
- Flight schedule, emergency contacts
- Travel toilet paper, Kleenex
- Plane neck pillow
- Personal snacks, gum

Linens

- Bath towel, wash cloth
- Bag for laundry

Clothing

Women:

- 2-3 pants, capris, long shorts
- Tees, shirts (1/day)
- Extras to change into at end of day
- Long skirt (below the knee, church)
- Nicer shirt/blouse (church)
- Swimsuit (modest, one piece or tankini, mid-section must be covered)

Men:

- 2-3 pants, long shorts
- Tees, shirts (1/day)
- Extras to change into at end of day
- Long pants, collared shirt (church)
- Swim shorts (modest, long)

All:

- Long pants
- Long sleeve shirt
- Light jacket, sweater, hoodie
- Sleepwear
- Underwear, socks
- Bandana/Hat (sport or wide brimmed)
- Sandals with heel straps (comfortable for walking)
- Sneakers, closed toe shoes (work, ministry, hiking, canopy days)
- Flip flops, shower shoes
- Outfit for plane home

Other Items

- Toiletries: soap, shampoo, shaving, feminine prods, etc.
- Glasses, contacts, solution, strap for glasses
- Sleep aids: meds, earplugs, mask, etc.
- Personal meds/prescriptions (pack in carry-on)
- Cipro – Rx
- Motion Sickness meds/patches
- Hand Sanitizer, Wipes
- Sunscreen, Sunglasses, Chapstick
- Bug repellent, repel wipes (containing DEET)
- Reusable water bottle
- Headlamp, flashlight, batteries
- Alarm clock (Battery)
- Rain Gear: jacket, umbrella, poncho (dollar store)
- Bible
- Notebook, notepad, journal
- Devotion for day scheduled
- Pens, pencils
- Life token
- Playing cards, games
- Headphones
- Camera, Batteries
- Phone, charger, cord, portable charger
- Plug adapter for 3 prong plugs
- Family photos
- Ministry supplies as designated by team