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COSTA RICA IS TEEMING WITH EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

From language, culture and the environment, there are several ways to get a new perspective while on vacation

SAN JOSE, COSTA RICA – October 27, 2015 – In Costa Rica, the phrase “*Pura Vida*” can be heard from coast to coast. The phrase literally translates to “pure life,” however its truer meaning is “full of life,” which accurately describes the destination’s wealth of natural and cultural resources. Costa Ricans know there is something to be learned every day, which is why travelers of any age, experience level or interest, travelers will find a wide array of interesting and exciting things to explore during their visit.

A sample of some of the many educational experiences in Costa Rica include:

Conservation at National Parks: Considering that Costa Rica is known for its eco-friendly policies, it’s no surprise that many universities and educational programs focus on the environment. Visitors can get a first-hand look into the sustainable management of wildlife, forest resources and other protected areas with the [Association of Volunteers for Service in Protected Areas of Costa Rica \(AVSO\)](#), which plays a key role in Costa Rica’s conservation, investigation and education efforts. The association also offers exciting and rewarding service opportunities for individuals, organizations and research can be used for college credit or data for ecologically-themed theses.

Through the [Association of Universities of Costa Rica for International Education](#) (ASUCREI) students can sign up for study abroad programs that focus on multiple topics of sustainable development. For example, the programs by CATIE and Earth universities combine a broad range of pre-determined disciplines for participating groups to encourage education, experience and understanding of the economic, ecological, and social issues in tropical climates.

Cultural Exchanges: International student and cultural exchange offerings such as [ACI Costa Rica](#) promote social and ecological programs throughout the country. Through the intercultural experience, the volunteers become global citizens: independent, multilingual, with intercultural sensitivity and with an open-mindedness towards new and different situations. ACI Costa Rica is also active member of the International Cultural Youth Exchange federation, which has been declared an International Peace Messenger by the United Nations for its contributions to intercultural learning, and is an associate to UNESCO.

[Caminos de Liderazgo](#), a program out of Stanford University, also gives students a first-hand look into Costa Rica’s vibrant culture. Visitors and residents from both rural and urban communities come together to share their vision for their businesses and participated in activities focused on leadership, tourism, sustainability, and culture.

Visitors can also give back by taking stock in Costa Rica's future through community outreach programs. These educational programs can be both private and public, and promote the self-advancement and social integration of lower income children through classes in art, sports, sustainability, agriculture and trades training. Classes are open to anyone, regardless of their ability to pay and the program accepts volunteers of all levels of expertise.

Language Immersion: Visitors interested in studying Spanish can make use of programs like [AEI Study Abroad](#) and [International Studies Abroad](#), that offer a variety of intensive courses for students like to learn in both traditional and experiential settings. The agencies also organize school programs, private lessons, family boarding, learning activities (such as surfing) and volunteer activities in Flamingo Beach, Heredia, Monteverde, Jaco and San Jose.

Costa Rica also has a variety of local [Spanish language institutes](#) that can be found throughout the country.

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About Costa Rica

Costa Rica is located in Central America between Nicaragua to the north and Panama to the south; it is bordered on the east by the Caribbean Sea and the west by the Pacific Ocean. With an abundance of unique wildlife, landscapes and climates this small country proudly shelters approximately five percent of the known biodiversity in the world. In order to protect and preserve its wealth of natural resources, Costa Rica has become a global leader in sustainable practices with protected areas comprising 26 percent of its land mass. With a peaceful spirit, emphasis on education and an economy based on tourism, technology and exportation, Costa Rica offers one of the highest standards of living in Latin America. Visitors to Costa Rica enjoy a highly organized tourism infrastructure among a tropical paradise of lush rainforests, mystical volcanoes and cloud forests and beaches that meet mountains filled with monkeys and macaws. Offering a broad terrain of activities and accommodations, visitors to Costa Rica will find a range of hotel options ranging from small beachside bed & breakfasts to authentic intimate boutique mountain lodges to major international business hotel brands and everything in between. Costa Rica's accommodations offer something appealing for everyone's desires. The phrase "Pura Vida" can be heard echoing throughout Costa Rica from coast to coast. Used as a greeting or expression of happiness, the phrase literally translates to "pure life," however its true meaning is "full of life," which accurately describes the adventure and wonder that await visitors.

About Instituto Costarricense de Turismo (ICT)

Established in 1955, the Costa Rica Tourism Board spearheads the vital task of regulating and promoting Costa Rica's extensive of tourism offerings. The ICT and its partners in the private sector work tirelessly to garner recognition, standardize practices, provide insightful research data and foster cultural development for the country's coast to coast one-of-a-kind tourism products and resources.