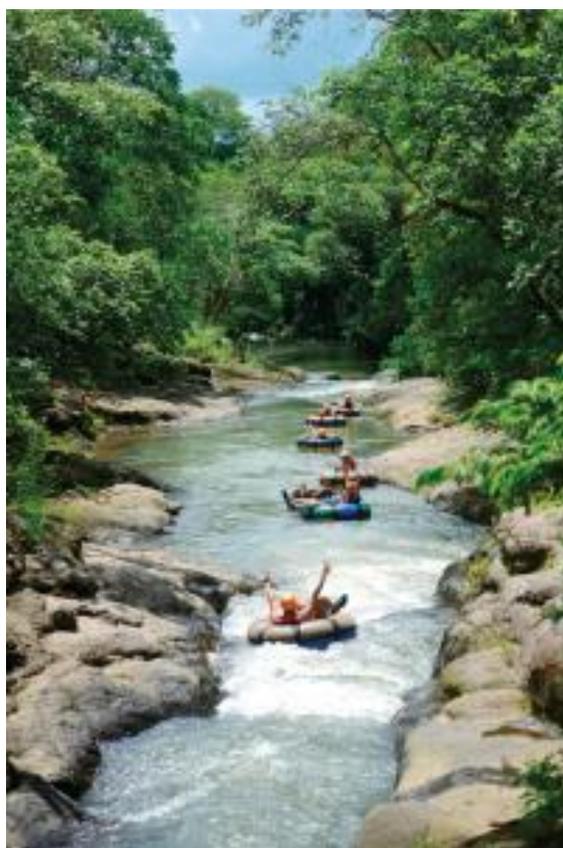


# Travel: Costa Rica, A Visit This Month Means Big Surf and Less Rain

March 2018 [Valli Herman](#) [1 Comment](#)



River tubing Rio Negro at Hacienda Guachipelín.

*In March, the peak dry season in Costa Rica offers travelers bigger surf, better chances to spot wildlife as trees drop their leaves, and sparse rain—particularly in the more arid province of Guanacaste. The large, northwestern area surrounding the city of Liberia is a rapidly developing destination for active, nature-loving travelers who can hike through rainforests, snorkel in calm bays, and soak in thermal springs.*

**Five-Star Style** | A recent \$35 million refurbishment of the Four Seasons Resort Costa Rica on Peninsula Papagayo brings contemporary style to the plush enclave, along with fine dining, a stellar wine list, and an enormous breakfast buffet. Screened balconies offer cozy water views (\$1,080 and up). The upgrades continue down the road, where the Andaz Costa Rica Resort at Peninsula Papagayo has opened new nature trails, and more refurbishments are in the works (\$440 and up).

**Being Underwater** | A few feet from their butler-attended beach chairs, Four Seasons hotel guests can use complimentary snorkel gear and dive into a spectacular aquatic wonderland in Culebra Bay. Enormous puffer fish, parrotfish, triggerfish, and varieties of colorful wrasse surround swimmers in swarms. Frequent catamaran tours departing from the hotel beach explore sunset views and deeper snorkeling.

**Handy Ranch** | Hotel Hacienda Guachipelín, an eco-tourism resort, is about 15 miles northeast of Liberia, Guanacaste's central city. The 3,400-acre working ranch offers day tours, river tubing, horseback or mountain bike riding, and hiking through dry tropical forest landscape and

waterfalls (\$15 and up). The resort's free buffet breakfast includes fresh fruit and handmade tortillas (rooms \$110 and up).

### Rincón de la Vieja Volcano National Park



**A Nature Trek**  
| Many hotels and resorts offer tours to the Rincón de la Vieja Volcano National Park (\$15), which includes an active volcano and its less-threatening boiling mudpots, steamy fumaroles, and waterfalls in the green season.

Though hikes to the volcano's peak are now off-limits, other well-marked trails loop through diverse terrain that's home to exotic birds and animals.

**Spring Into Inaction** | Soak up nature in the natural hot springs at the lush Tabacón Thermal Resort and Spa (\$300 and up). Immerse in shallow, terraced pools of warm volcano-fed springs, surrounded by exotic landscaping (free to hotel guests; visitor day-passes \$77 and up). Meditate under a waterfall or stare at a fin-crested basilisk that walks on water. Have an unforgettable spa massage in Tabacón's open-air cabanas (\$115 and up). Refresh at the resort's Los Tucanes restaurant with herb-crust sea bass (\$30) and quail's egg and beef tenderloin salad (\$20).



**Arenal Volcano** | Tourists help support high-caliber dining in the town of La Fortuna, known for the nearby Arenal Volcano that has spilled lava since its 1968 eruption. At the casually elegant Don Rufino Restaurante, the wide-ranging menu includes outstanding

Andaz Costa Rica Resort

ceviche (\$9); a goat cheese, quinoa, and sweet potato salad (\$8); and an upscale take on the classic Costa Rican *casado*, slang for the typical meal of a married man. Earthenware platters and bowls contain fluffy rice, savory black beans, green salad, sweet plantains, and egg-topped picadillo vegetable hash with grilled chicken, beef, or fish (\$12).

**Rainforest Adventure** | Take a reservation-only guided rainforest tour at Sensoria, a private reserve with an observation platform above the jungle canopy, sparkling waterfalls, and soothing mineral thermal pools for swimming (\$90 to \$120). Guides help identify flora and fauna, and lunch is served after the tour.

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR:** With Easter on April 1, expect religious processions and services throughout the country this month. In the Guanacaste region, Miércoles de Ceniza (Ash Wednesday) means livestock parades and, in Liberia, harm-free bullfights.

<http://www.orangeoast.com/oc-traveler/travel-costa-rica-visit-month-means-big-surf-less-rain/>