

Raleigh
Raleigh
International

Raleigh Expedition

PRE-DEPARTURE PACK:

Costa Rica





This is the beginning of your Expedition to Costa Rica! It will be a journey of self-discovery and adventure that will take you to extraordinary places, introduce you to unforgettable people, and change you in ways you can't even begin to imagine.

This Pre-Departure Pack serves as your go-to guide when preparing for your trip and during your time on the project.

It includes everything from pre-travel requirements such as insurance, vaccinations, and background checks to information on airport transfers, what to pack and how to stay safe and healthy on project.

Connect with your fellow venturers!

Before you book your flights, you may find it helpful to join the Facebook group and speak to other Volunteers about their travel and carbon offsetting plans. We will send you the link to your specific group 1 month before your departure.

CONTENTS

Pre-departure form	03
Arrival and flight guidance	04
COVID-19 requirements	05
Visa information	06
Travel insurance	07
Vaccine requirements	07
Packing tips	08
Police clearance and background checks	09
Other helpful information	10

Pre-Departure Form



To take part in Expedition and ensure the project teams are ready for your arrival we require you to submit a series of personal/travel information.

Please complete this pre-departure form.

Information required:

- ✔ Passport information
- ✔ Insurance details
- ✔ Flight details
- ✔ Dietary requirements

If you do not have all the information right now, you can leave sections blank and return to complete it at a later date.



Raleigh International

Please complete the details below to ensure the project teams are ready for your arrival.
If you do not have all of the information right now, you can leave sections blank for now and return to complete it at a later date.

First name *
Last name *

Email *

Number Registered to Book
What are your preferred personal
Insurance details
Insurance Provider
Travel Insurance Policy Number
Travel Insurance Phone Number
Next of Kin details
Your closest relationships you would want us to contact in an emergency
Full name (last of kin)
Relationship (last of kin)
What kind of kin?
Contact number (last of kin)
Sex (last of kin)

Arrival and Flights Guidance



Airport:	San Jose (Juan Santamaría International Airport)
Airport Code:	SJO
Land by:	20:00 on the start date of your Expedition
Take off after:	12:00 on the end date of your Expedition

Flight Details

Please submit your full flights details via the **Pre-Departure form**. It is essential that we receive your flights details, so if your flight gets delayed, the team know what time you will be arriving. If there are any changes to your flights, you must inform us as soon as possible.

Top tips

- ✔ Book flexible flights – we recommend having flexible flights in case you need to amend your booking.
- ✔ You are more likely to get a cheaper flight the sooner you book.
- ✔ Watch flight prices over a week period – they may change significantly.
- ✔ Clear your cookies and cache on your web browser – some websites have algorithms that increase the price of flights that they know you're interested in. You can also use a private browsing window which doesn't log your data (such as incognito mode on Google Chrome).
- ✔ Check your travel route – ensure you are allowed to transit through the stop over country, and ensure you are able to meet the entry / visa requirements.

The 'land by' time refers to the actual arrival time of the flights – we take into account the time it will take to get through customs/baggage reclaim. At the end of the Expedition, you will be dropped back off at San Jose airport at least 3 hours before your 'take off after' time.

Recommended Airlines/Routes

Please make sure to check up to date travel restrictions for all countries you are transiting through. Here are some suggested routes from the UK:

Direct:

- British Airways London Heathrow to San Jose

One stopover:

- AirFrance via Paris Charles-de-Gaulle (France)
- Iberia via Madrid (Spain)
- British Airways and Volaris via Cancun (Mexico)
- United via Houston or Newark

Two stopovers:

- Aeromexico via Paris Charles-de-Gaulle (France) & Mexico City (Mexico)
- Lufthansa via Frankfurt (Germany) & Zurich (Switzerland)
- Swiss via Zurich (Switzerland) and Geneva (Switzerland)

Please note, you may need a negative COVID-19 test and/or to transit through another country. Please check before booking / travelling.

Hotels in San Jose

We recommend you fly directly from your home country to Costa Rica. However, if you need accommodation in San Jose before or after the Expedition, we recommend:

- Hostel Finca Escalante
- Casa Yoses Hotel
- Hotel Santo Tomas
- Holiday Inn Express San Jose Airport – more expensive option but located closely to the airport

Meeting the Team

You will be met in Arrivals at San Jose Airport by members of the Raleigh Costa Rica team. It's a small airport, and they will be wearing Raleigh T-shirts, so you won't be able to miss them.

There will be 2 meeting times:

- 18:00 for anyone arriving on earlier flights.
- And 20:00 anyone arriving on later flights.

If you are arriving before the Expedition start date, you will have to arrange your own accommodation and travel back to the airport for the start of the Expedition.

Once you meet the Raleigh Costa Rica team at the airport you will head to the British School to spend the night. The following morning, you will all be taken to the Raleigh Costa Rica Fieldbase in Turrialba, which is about two and a half hours away.

Flight booking websites

Always do some independent research to find the right flights for you that fit into the above timings. We recommend that you start off by researching flights using websites like **Skyscanner** and **StudentUniverse**.



COVID-19 Requirements

As part of the Raleigh Costa Rica Covid-19 policy you will be required to bring 6 lateral flow tests with you on Expedition.

You will be required to test on arrival with the team in Costa Rica before joining the programme. So, make sure your tests are readily available in your hand luggage. You will also be asked to test if you present with symptoms of Covid-19 at any point.

Costa Rica no longer has any Covid-19 related entry requirements, however we recommend Covid-19 vaccinations as well as a travel insurance policy with appropriate Covid-19 cover.

You can find more information about Costa Rica entry requirements on the **government website**.



Visa Information

The following information is applicable to volunteers with a UK, EU or US passport.

Please ensure that you contact your nearest embassy for information about entry requirements for Costa Rica and any countries which your flights may transit through. We strongly recommend that you do this before booking any flights.

Costa Rica Tourist Visa

UK, EU & US Passport Holders: When you arrive in Costa Rica, you will be issued with a free 90-day tourist visa upon entry. To be granted this tourist visa, you must:

- Have a passport valid for at least 6 months from the date of arrival
- Show proof that you will leave the country within 90 days*. This can either be a flight booking or a bus ticket. They will not accept the ticket on your phone, so you will need to print it out.

We recommend that you travel directly from your home country to the start of your Expedition. However, if you do plan to travel before your Expedition, you need to ensure that you have sufficient days left on your visa to cover the period of your whole Expedition. This may mean that you have to leave the country and re-enter to get another 90-day stamp.

If you're unsure about your visa requirements – click here for a full list and for further information.

ESTA Visa for transiting through the US

If you are transiting through the US, then you will need to **apply for an ESTA visa at least 72 hours before you travel.** This costs \$14, and it is all done online and only takes a few minutes. To apply for your ESTA - **[click here](#)**



Travel Insurance & Vaccine Requirements

Travel Insurance

You will need to arrange travel insurance before arriving in Costa Rica. We recommend purchasing this within 15 days of booking your trip.

It will need to cover any health requirements which may arise during your trip, including air evacuation and repatriation in the unlikely event that it is necessary. Be sure to check your policy carefully to ensure it covers activities you are likely to participate in.

For full details of what needs to be covered with your insurance policy **[please read the full guidance here.](#)**



Vaccine requirements

Raleigh’s safety guidelines are governed global health standards, and for volunteers to participate on an Expedition we require them to have a minimum level of vaccinations. Due to the nature, duration, and predominantly rural location of our projects on Expedition, Raleigh volunteers are considered to be at higher risk of certain infections and diseases than regular tourists. We strongly advise that you consult a travel clinic.

Quick reference guide:

VACCINE	REQUIRED	ADVISED
Diphtheria, Tetanus and Polio	✓	
Measles, Mumps and Rubella	✓	
Typhoid	✓	
Hepatitis A	✓	
Hepatitis B	✓	
Rabies	✓	
Dental check-up		✓
COVID-19		✓



Packing Tips

We have created a list designed to help you select and prepare your personal belongings and clothing for your Expedition. All specialist equipment (e.g. tools, safety equipment, etc) and project equipment will be supplied by Raleigh International.

For the full Kit list, [click here](#).

- Firstly, do not panic! We know that the list looks extensive, but we have divided it into essential, recommended, and optional items to help you.
- Read the guidance sections carefully. These sections will tell you about the items, as well as other key information.
- We don't want you to spend lots of money on brand new items that you may not need, so please do look at what you already have or could borrow. For example, you do not need to buy expensive technical clothing when a regular t-shirt will do. Some items (e.g. boots and rucksack) however, are worth spending a little extra on if possible as you'll be using them every day. Other items (e.g. roll matt, sleeping bag liner) do not need to be top brands.
- Try to save paper where you can, but if you find it easier, print off key pages of the checklist.
- Try and pack one or two days before you fly. This way you will know that your kit fits and that your bag is under your airline weight limit.
- Do you have to carry it all? Unless you are on trek, there will be very limited space to leave anything behind at Field Base. For this reason, please ensure that you can fit all your kit into your large rucksack and day bag.
- Mobile phones, if you wish to use your phone during Expedition make sure it is unlocked before you arrive. Phone are permitted, but not during any sessions or meetings, on project site, or at any time where it is distracting and disruptive to an activity. If phone usage is disruptive, we may ask you to hand your phone in.

Important: No camouflage, we do not allow camouflage to be worn on Expedition because of its military association.

Police/Background Checks and First Aid



Volunteers and Volunteer Managers

Irrespective of your program choice, anyone taking part in Expedition will need a Police Clearance Certificate / Advanced Background Check Certificate, as you will likely come into contact with vulnerable communities/ children/minors during your trip. This ensures the safety of the people and communities we work with and is in line with our safeguarding and child protection policy.

*You will not be allowed to join Expedition without this.

Your police clearance / background check certificate cannot be more than 6 months old when you start your placement. If you are booking in advance you will need to obtain this closer to the time.

Depending on your nationality and the regulations in your home country, there may be a small charge which is payable to your local authority.

For further details on exactly what is required for your DBS check – **please follow this link** and read carefully.

First Aid Guidance for all Volunteer Managers

It is compulsory for All volunteer manager to be first aid certified. There are no exceptions. Read further details here. **Read it here.**

Safeguarding

All participants are also required to read and adhere to our Safeguarding Policy at all times.

Read it here.

Code of Conduct

We require all participants to accept and live up to this Code of Conduct from the start, and we will provide training and support to you to ensure this is achieved.

The aim of this Code of Conduct is to let you know what is expected of you, so you can work together to achieve your and the programmes aims in a positive and safe environment. You would have agreed to the Code of Conduct upon paying your deposit. We will also go through it in your induction.

Read it here.

Representing Raleigh International

We always aim to provide you with all your daily needs, to keep you out of harm's way and to support you in your placement. In exchange, we ask you to be punctual and to behave consistently in ways that reflect well upon Raleigh International.

We ask that you dress according to local norms while in the public eye and to treat people on the work site with kindness and with respect.



Other Helpful Information

FOOD

Costa Rican Cuisine

Costa Rican cuisine is known for being fairly mild, with high reliance on fruits and vegetables. Rice and black beans are a staple of most traditional Costa Rican meals, often served three times a day. Costa Rican fare is nutritionally well rounded, and nearly always cooked from scratch from fresh ingredients.

Pinto and beans are a staple of Costa Rica and common denominator among different culinary tastes in different regions of the country. As a whole, the three most famous dishes of the country are Casado, Gallo Pinto and Arroz con Pollo.

Raleigh Food

Oats, crackers, rice and tinned foods are staple foods that are included in your Raleigh rations. You will be responsible for organising your food the whole duration of your phase.

Whilst on Expedition, your team will be allocated a fresh food budget so your team can buy fresh food from local shops and markets. This will help you become more creative with the meals you cook, and it will contribute to economic growth within the community.

WEATHER

Unlike other countries with four established seasons, the climate in Costa Rica can easily be divided into two seasons: rainy and dry – or summer and winter. High and low.

December to April – Summer (Verano)

Visitors from around the world, travel to the tropics to enjoy the warm temperatures, clear skies and lack of rainfall during the dry or high season.

May to April – Winter (Invierno)

Many Costa Ricans prefer the green season. Expect sunny mornings and afternoon rain showers (perfect for a rejuvenating afternoon repose).

CURRENCY

The official currency of Costa Rica is the Colón (CRC), but USD are widely accepted. You might want some spending money for snacks, drinks and any souvenirs you wish to buy.

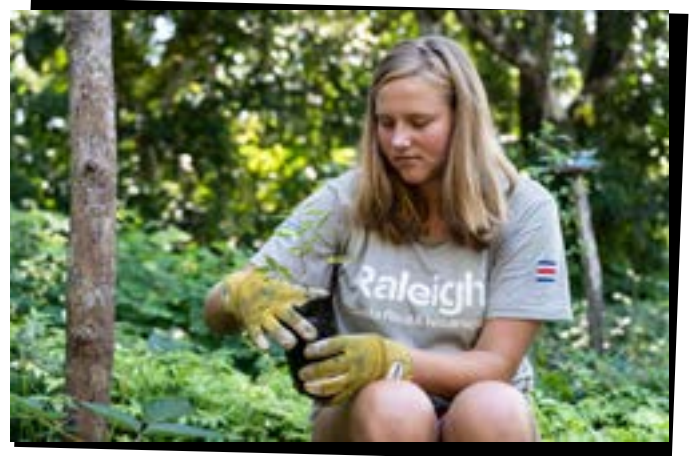
We recommend bringing between \$200-\$300 USD with you for spending money.

When you arrive, you may exchange your money for local currency at any local bank. We do not recommend exchanging money inside the airport upon arrival.

You can also exchange money at your own bank in your home country for a good rate. They are likely to have to order the currency and so plan on exchanging your money a few weeks ahead of time.

Top tips:

- Most places accept credit and debit cards.
- Notify your bank of your travels prior to leaving the country
- Big Shop like supermarkets in the capital accept USD bills (1,5,10,20) for your payments. Remember small shops or located in rural areas only accept Colones (CRC).



STAYING SAFE

Safety is of the utmost importance on Raleigh Expedition. To ensure the safety of each individual for the duration of Expedition, Raleigh have put a series of measures in places – such as no travelling at night, always staying together in pairs or 3s. These will all be briefed during your training and induction at the start of Expedition.

Costa Rica does not have a high crime rate, however tourist can often become targets for petty theft. It's important to be aware when travelling abroad, and take the following safety measures to avoid being targeted:

- ✓ Don't carry valuables such as large amounts of cash, valuable jewellery and passports.
- ✓ Bring photocopies of your passport.
- ✓ Avoid traveling and walking alone (especially at night).

THINGS TO DO IN THE AREA AFTER EXPEDITION

If you are planning on staying in Costa Rica after your Expedition, there is lots to see. Some of the top attractions in Costa Rica are Arenal Volcano, Manuel Antonio National Park, La Paz Waterfalls, Papagayo Peninsula, Tamarindo beach, Rio Celeste, Monteverde Cloud Forest and Corcovado National Park.

[You can read more about it here in the Lonely Planet Guide.](#)





Your Expectations and Our Requirements

You will need to remain flexible, understandable and good – humoured. “Africa time” can be difficult and frustrating for those who are used to a very structured life, so it is something to keep in mind! Once you arrive in Africa, your care is the responsibility of Raleigh International and our trained team.

We always aim to provide you with all of your daily needs to keep you out of harm’s way and to support you in your placement. In exchange, we ask you to be punctual and to behave consistently in ways that reflect well upon Raleigh International.

We ask that you dress according to local norms while you’re in the public eye and to treat people on the work site with kindness and respect.

- No short shorts
- Always sleeves on a t-shirt - no strappy tops or vests
- Everyone gets a T-shirt at the start of the Expedition.

In addition, Raleigh International insists that volunteers avoid any contact with drugs and any culturally inappropriate activities relating to alcohol.

The Raleigh International projects rely on networks of people, and those networks are held together are held together by good relationships. If a case should arise in which our staff feels that volunteers

or interns have repeatedly behaved in ways that contradict the basic spirit of this agreement, we reserve the right to remove you from the programme.

Upholding the good name of Raleigh International and its partner organisations

We ask that you do not bring yourself or Raleigh International into disrepute nor involve any other employee, volunteer or intern in any behaviour is found to be detrimental to the programme that you are involved with, you may be asked to leave immediately without compensation.

Drugs

If you use drugs, illegal or otherwise, other than for medical reasons, your Expedition will be terminated immediately. If you are taking drugs for medical reasons and have not informed us of your medical condition the same rules and conditions apply. If you come into contact with someone doing drugs, drug pushers etc, INFORM YOUR VOLUNTEER MANAGER OR A STAFF MANAGER IMMEDIATELY.

Child protection

Our policy and guidelines are there to help volunteers and staff be clear on our role in safeguarding children (anyone under the age of 18). It is important to be aware of what good practise is and who to talk to if you have any concerns. You will get more information when you arrive on Expedition. Any evidence of poor practise towards children will be acted on immediately and the relevant steps taken based on our policy and code of conduct.

Discrimination on any grounds

If you see, hear or encounter any discrimination of any kind, do not challenge that person or intervene. If you feel that you need to express your views, please tell your Volunteer Manager and they will take the necessary actions. Raleigh International is strongly against any form of discrimination and any information given to us is taken very seriously.

Relationships

Whilst on your Expedition we do NOT encourage any sexual relations. In addition, the programme neither allows nor encourages volunteers to develop intimate personal relationships with general staff and partners. This would not promote a good working environment and could result in the dismissal of the staff member, and your termination from the programme.

Expedition Phone policy

We encourage all our volunteers to embrace the unplug culture whilst on Expedition. Due to the rural nature of our project site, access to phone signal and Wi-Fi will be limited for the duration of each phase. In addition, the communities we work in, and with, are remote and generally economically disadvantaged. Although not always evident at the outset, your separation from the outside world vastly enhances your experience you can achieve and the experience of such communities and environments. You can be fully focused on the goals of the project site, building relationships with community members and fellow volunteers and develop new skills – getting the most out of Expedition.

We will ask all volunteers to place their phones in the safe at Fieldbase for the duration of each phase. All volunteers will have the opportunity to get their phones back at changeover and get in touch with loved ones at home.

The Raleigh team will share photos of the Expedition on social media, so family and friends should follow Raleigh's social media channels to catch any possible updates. However, due to the remote nature of our project sites we don't always have access to photos, so a stream of updates should not be expected. Family and friends can also keep up to date by sending messages via our contact a volunteer form.



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If you still have questions, there are lots of ways you can find out more.

✉ info@raleighinternational.org
📍 Join an information event at raleighinternational.org/information-events

