



Transformational. Impactful. The beginning of the rest of your life. This is how Raleigh Venturers describe Raleigh Expeditions.

This guide will give you a more in-depth description of what to expect on a 10-week Raleigh Expedition in Costa Rica, including the structure of your programme, the projects you will participate in and camp life. We hope it gives you a sense of life on Expedition. 7 and 5 week Expeditions will differ, but many of the elements involved will be the same.



"It was the most amazing experience of my life."

AMY, VENTURER

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About Costa Rica

Indigenous people have inhabited Costa Rica since 5000 BC. The most prominent indigenous communities in Costa Rica today are the Cabecares, Bribris, Borucas, Huetatrs, Malekus and the Chorotegas. Today these communities live in rural and remote villages, often with poor access to education.

One of the most recognised events in Costa Rica's history is Independence Day; on the 15th September 1821 the whole of Central America became independent from Spain.

In the past few decades, Costa Rica has focused on committing to peace, and sustainability, reversing deforestation of its rainforests and promoting ecotourism. Today, 95% of Costa Rica's energy is renewable and is recognised as the 5th Greenest Country by the Environmental Performance Index.

TOP TIP!



We recommend learning as much Spanish as you can, this will make communicating with members of the community and partner organisations easier. We also recommend practicing hiking in preparation for your Adventure Challenge!

NATIONAL LANGUAGE

Official language is Spanish.

- 'Pura vida' can mean hello/thank vou/l am well/things are good/see you later.
- It literally translates to "pure life" but also represents the way of life for people in Costa Rica.

DID YOU KNOW?



- Costa Rica hasn't had a standing military force since 1948!
- 25% of Costa Rica's land is protected to be used as National parks or to home refugees.
- Costa Rican's are called either Ticos (male) or Ticas (female).



What will I be doing and when?

The order of the phases vary on a 10week Expedition. On a 7-week Expedition you join one project and the trek. On a 5-week Expedition you join one project phase and a shorter trek.

WHAT IS 'CHANGEOVER'?

At the end of each phase, everyone returns to Raleigh Fieldbase in Turrialba for a couple of days. During this time you will catch up with the rest of the Expedition team, debrief from your previous phase and have time to rest and relax. You will be allocated into new teams so you can start preparing for your next phase.

You will have the chance to access your phone so you can get in touch with friends and family. Once recharged and energised, you'll be ready for the next phase of your Expedition adventure!

SAMPLE TIMELINE



Arrive in San José4-7 days induction and training



18-19 DAYS

Community Project Changeover at base – 2-3 days



18-19 DAYS

Adventure Challenge Changeover at base – 2-3 days



18-19 DAYS

Environmental Phase Changeover at base – 2-3 days



Departure from San José

Your Raleigh journey doesn't end here. Become part of the Raleigh legacy and a global community of Raleigh Alumni



Arrival and introduction

All Venturers are met at the airport by our Costa Rica team and taken to our Fieldbase. You will be provided with recommended flights.

Before you start volunteering on projects, you will participate in a 4-7 day induction. Expect a busy few day as you get to know your fellow Venturers and get prepared for Expedition life.

You'll receive essential training and safety briefings, find out more about the project you'll be working on and how your energy and hard work will contribute to creating lasting change.

During induction you will stay at the Raleigh Fieldbase, where accommodation will involve sleeping on floors with access to basic washing facilities. There is also limited Wifi.

By the end of Induction, you will be ready for your first phase! You will give in your phones to be safely stored before setting off on Expedition.

Your induction will cover:

different people.

Introductions to the team

the chance to work with many

- ✓ Raleigh Code of Conduct
- Health & safety
- Navigation
- How to pack for each project
- Evacuation protocol
- Cultural awareness
- Getting to know your fellow volunteers
- Project roles and schedules

The Costa Rica team will also help prepare you for your projects, and you may receive specialised training from our project partners, who will demonstrate how your energy and hard work will contribute to lasting change.

You will then be ready to depart on your first project!



Raleigh Costa Rica partners with indigenous communities so Venturers can help work on projects to improve the facilities including primary and secondary schools.

Through the infrastructure projects we support, we aim to increase access to education, raise awareness through campaigns and workshops, and improve access to water and sanitation.

About one of our community projects

The Alto Chirripó Indigenous Territory is on the Caribbean slope of the Talamanca Mountain range and is one of the most remote areas in Costa Rica.

About 8,000 Cabecar indigenous people maintain their own culture and identity. However, Alto Chirripó has low school attendance and literacy levels and high poverty levels. One of the key barriers to culturally appropriate development is a lack of education due to poor facilities and difficult access.

Venturers work with local community groups and Parents Associations to tackle these problems by helping to build or repair school infrastructures, and plan action days with community leaders and school staff.

What will I be learning?

Teamwork is essential to achieve the objectives of this project. Other skills learned or put into practice are effective communication, decision-making, conflict resolution, leadership and negotiation.

Venturers will learn about the local context of the community and school, and will take part sessions on active global citizens.

Where will I be staying during this phase?

You'll stay in a school or community building set up as a bedroom, and will access the facilities (bathrooms, showers, kitchen).

PROJECT PARTNERS

All our community projects support the Global Goals for Sustainable Development.

Parents' Association

School staff

Ministry of Education



Led by specialist Raleigh staff and Venturer Managers, you'll trek approximately 260 km through varying landscapes - rainforest, mountainous and rural community areas.

During this phase, every day is different, including the weather and the accommodation. You'll go from camping in mountainous areas and sleeping under the stars to bunking in a community centre.

Everyone starts and finishes trek together

The trek is designed to be challenging, but no matter your trekking experience, you'll learn to put one foot in front of the other and keep going.

It requires courage to do something beyond your comfort zone, and there will be highs and lows. Supporting one another through these moments, not giving up and sharing your achievements will be some of the most memorable and defining moments of your Expedition.

Leadership and experiential learning

With all our projects, you will all take it in turns to lead the group for a day. This is a chance to develop your leadership skills but most importantly, to learn about the power of team effort and the strength of working together to achieve your goals.

Throughout trek, Venturers will also take part in orienteering and navigations as well as develop planning and logistics skills. This is all part of your experiential learning experience and an opportunity to build your skills, confidence, and resilience outside of a classroom setting. Whether it's scrambling up hills, lighting a fire or falling asleep in your tent after a long day of trekking under a beautiful starlit sky, these are some of the memories that will stay with you forever.



"It forces you to step out of your comfort zone and develop as an individual, and your abilities to communicate and compromise."

FAITH, VENTURER



Costa Rica boasts an impressive 5% of global biodiversity and has committed to sustainable biodiversity management.

Protected areas preserving ecosystems are the foundation of its conservation efforts. However, there can be issues with infrastructure and inaccessibility impacting eco-tourism, which is a significant income generator. The environment is also vulnerable due to illegal deforestation and pollution.

Raleigh Venturers support The National System of Conservation Areas mission to protect Costa Rican biodiversity. Venturers will support the maintenance and conservation of existing ecosystems and assist local communities to preserve such a biodiverse nature.

Tasks include:

- Sign making
- Waste management plans
- Biodiversity inventory
- Camera Traps maintenance
- Reforestation
- Awareness raising activities on the importance in preserving these eco systems

PROJECT PARTNERS



National System of Conservation areas (Sistema Nacional de Áreas de Conservación - SINAC)

National parks and Park Rangers



Ministry of Labour



Accomodation

Tents for 3 or 6 people, which we set up in the most incredible landscapes in the country.



Meals

Raleigh provides you with dry and fresh food and a recipe. Venturers rotate to cook for the group.

The staple food in Costa Rica is rice and beans, which can be accompanied by different vegetables and proteins. Tropical fruits are delicious, and very sweet, and eaten them frequently.



Time off

- Work will be done in the early mornings and late afternoons to avoid the heat of the day.
- On rest days you are free to relax, read a book and socialise with your fellow Venturers.

FINISHING EXPEDITION

Expedition complete! Lots of new friends and amazing experiences. All Expeditions end with everyone coming together for a final few days back at the Fieldbase.

This is a chance to catch up with friends and celebrate all you have achieved together.

Your journey doesn't end with Expedition



You will be to be part of a global movement of over 55,000 alumni.



Join a Raleigh International alumni society full of Venturers dedicated to taking action towards a fair, inclusive, and green world.



CATHERINE | COUNTRY DIRECTOR

Catherine started her Raleigh journey as a Volunteer Venturer in Borneo in 2005. This had such an impact, she came back as Deputy Operations Coordinator in Costa Rica in January 2024. Now as the Expedition Manager she is responsible for the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Raleigh Expedition, and the health and safety of all programmes.



GENECIS

COUNTRY OPERATIONS MANAGER, ITG

Ge is a Venezuelan geographer with a passion for travel and cultural exploration. With over 10 years of experience working with young people and managing operations across Latin America. She oversees strategic operations, fosters partnerships, and ensures financial health, all while contributing to meaningful travel experiences.



HANZ

OPERATIONS COORDINATOR

Hanz started this Raleigh journey as a Venturer in Nicaragua. He trained in the Political Science and International Relations fields. He is responsible for overseeing projects related to community and infrastructure, cultural exchange, and delivering an excellent learning experience.





AUGUSTINA | OPERATIONS COORDINATOR

Agustina is an Agile Project Manager and communication specialist with over 8 years of experience in planning, communication, and analytical development in regional positions. She seeks further development in institutions where she can generate added value and create a positive impact. With training in Project Management and climate change, she is passionate about environmental conservation and actively volunteers in various organizations dedicated to this cause.



PEDRO | GUIDE

Pedro was a volunteer at Raleigh Nicaragua for the ICS program back in 2016. He leads the logistics of the advanced team to ensure the correct implementation of projects and programs.

