



PACKING TIPS.

You can make your Costa Rica adventure even more fun by being prepared with the right gear, and international travel essentials. Here is list of some of the things you need on your trip.

You must have

- A current US Passport (allow 10 weeks for processing, for more information visit travel.state.gov)
- Proof of international medical coverage (ETSI can help if you do not have your own plan)
- Up to date vaccinations (contact your primary care provider to see which vaccinations you need)
- Notarized letter of parental consent to travel (ETSI will provide a template)

Recommended packing list

- All medications you need (bring a copy of the Rx for any critical medications)
- Sunscreen
- Hat
- Sunglasses
- Bug spray
- Water bottle
- Comfortable hiking shoes or tennis shoes (be prepared for your shoes to get muddy and possibly stained by clay in the soil)
- Water shoes/sandals (secure straps)
- Swim wear and plastic bag for wet items
- Clothing—pack for warm weather and layers for cooler days & evenings (check with your tour leader for dress code)
- Rain jacket or poncho
- Socks and underwear for every day (in case laundry is unavailable)
- Small laundry detergent
- Toiletries (shampoo, soap, toothpaste, toothbrush and other personal items)
- Book and/or journal
- Travel alarm clock
- Camera and extra batteries/charger (waterproof or waterproof bag)
- Daypack or backpack (please note for international travel you are allowed one free checked bag and your carry-on bag)
- TSA approved lock for each bag
- Pen for filling out paperwork

Packing etiquette

The Costa Rican legal system takes possession of illegal items VERY seriously. Do not bring any illegal or potentially hazardous substances (even cosmetics with high alcohol content) with you or it may be confiscated. No items that could be used or perceived as a weapon are allowed.

Be sure to pack a change of clothing and all necessary items such as medication and basic toiletries (3 oz. or less) in your carry-on bag.



What to expect when you arrive

Similar to some TSA inspection, there may be a red/stop green/go system that will tell you if you need to pass through additional security. Green means you proceed directly to immigration, red means you will be directed to another line for baggage inspection and questioning.

1. All travelers will proceed to immigration. There you will present your documentation (passport, and parental consent letter if requested).
2. Then proceed to baggage claim to pick up your checked bags.
3. Next take your baggage to customs for possible additional inspection.
4. An ETSI representative will be there to greet you when you exit customs.
5. Departure procedures are similar to arrival. Travelers go through customs at their first US stop.

As with US air travel, please be respectful and patient as you pass through security.

Departure tax

Costa Rica requires a departure tax upon exit of the country. After this fee is paid, proceed to check-in for your return flight. This will be paid by ETSI at the time of departure or a cash allotment will be given to travelers prior to departure.

Banks, ATMs and money

Colones come in 500, 1000, 5000, and 10,000 bills. Coins come in denominations of 5, 10, 20, 25, 50 and 100. ATMs (known as cajeros automáticos) are widely available in Costa Rica. Some banks charge a fee for using an ATM abroad, so check with your bank before traveling to Costa Rica. Credit cards are widely accepted. Most credit cards include a transaction fee for international purchases.

Cell phones and calling home

Please be aware that calls made from Costa Rica are international and your carrier's rates apply. Most of the hotels offer free wifi and you will want to make sure your phone is in airplane mode and connected to the free wifi so that you don't incur international data charges. Many of the hotels also offer free international calling, so you can call home from the hotel. Check with your teacher before making any calls. ETSI staff will carry cell phones with international plans to be used for emergencies while you are on tour.

Electrical outlets

The electrical outlets in Costa Rica are 110V, same as in The United States.

Drinking water in Costa Rica

Though the drinking water in Costa Rica is typically safe in tourist areas, we recommend you stick to bottled or filtered water rather than tap water.

Passport

ETSI recommends that you keep your passport locked in your suitcase or in hotel storage. You should bring 2 photocopies of your passport, one to be kept by your Tour Director and one that you keep securely with you at all times

You can reach an ETSI staff member 24/7 in case of an emergency at: 877-266-5951



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