

# BODHI SURF PRE-TRIP INFORMATION

The following information is to help you prepare for your Bodhi Surf experience in Costa Rica. If you have additional questions please feel free to email us at [info@bodhisurfschool.com](mailto:info@bodhisurfschool.com).

The Bodhi team is looking forward to your visit!

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## WELCOME TO BAHIA BALLENA - UVITA

Bahia Ballena is a small town on the southern Pacific coast of Costa Rica, within the canton of Osa, in the region known as Costa Ballena. Commonly referred to as part of Uvita, Bahia Ballena is located just 15 minutes south of the more popular Dominical. The southern Pacific coast is a breath of fresh air for travelers looking to enjoy the natural beauty of Costa Rica.

It is worth noting that Bahia Ballena is commonly grouped with the town of Uvita (people will refer to it as Bahia - Uvita) because the two towns are small and literally across the river from one another. You can enjoy the beach and slow pace of life in Bahia Ballena and the bustle of Uvita, if you can even call it that.

Whether you are looking to enjoy the solitude of a pristine beach, take a surf lesson, snorkel the clear waters of Caño Island Biological Reserve, hike through the jungle of Corcovado National Park, or kayak the Mangroves of Terraba-Sierpe, Bahia Ballena is the perfect place to use as a base camp.

Bahia Ballena, which literally means “Whale Bay”, has its name for two reasons:

1. At low tide, the sandbar on the north end of the Ballena Marine National Park beach creates the shape of a whale tail.
2. Bahia Ballena’s location on the Pacific Ocean gives it a fairly stable water temperature year-round, providing the perfect place for whales from both the northern and southern hemispheres to give birth and raise their calves during their respective winter months. For this reason, there is not one but two whale watching seasons in this lucky town, the major tourist attractions of the area.

Though certain parts of the south Pacific region can be difficult to access during the rainy season, Bahia Ballena is accessible year-round. The weather is typically beautiful, keeping in mind that Costa Rica is a tropical country with lots of rainfall and high levels of humidity. The rainy season starts in late June and can last through parts of November. During the dry season Bahia Ballena, like the rest of the south Pacific, is ideal for those family vacations and outdoor adventures.

### **Tourist Attractions & Activities in Bahia Ballena-Uvita**

The Marino Ballena National Park, which borders Bahia Ballena, is the greatest tourist attraction in the area and an iconic landmark for the communities that surround it. Caño Island and Corcovado National Park are other attractions that are popular among visitors, along with the many beaches, haciendas, and biological reserves located nearby.

You can go on a boat and whale watching tour, go horseback riding, take a canopy or kayak tour, go diving or snorkeling, and practice yoga. There are also nature hikes, such as to a waterfall in the mountains east of Bahia Ballena. Additionally, you can relax on the beach, do some shopping

in the nearby markets, and surf the beaches along the Costa Ballena region.

In terms of activities and tours available in Bahia Ballena, it is possible to find:

- Snorkeling Tours
- Whale and Dolphin Watching Tours
- Nature Hikes
- Kayaking
- Canopy Tours
- Diving Tours
- Horseback Riding
- Canyoning (waterfall rappelling)

Those looking for more relaxing activities can walk to the famous “Whale’s Tail” at Uvita Point, drive to a local waterfall and enjoy a swim in the freshwater pools, or sunbathe at any of the local palm-lined beaches.

### **Tourist Services in Bahia Ballena-Uvita**

Bahia Ballena is a town largely dependent on tourism and in addition to finding lodging, restaurants, and activities it is possible to find all the other necessary services travelers may require; including internet cafes, banks and ATMs, medical services, a police station, and a tourist information center. National Rent-A-Car can also be found in Bahia Ballena, located next to the Firestone Tire Center just south of the Uvita river.

## PRIOR TO YOUR ARRIVAL IN COSTA RICA

### Passport & Entry Visa Requirements

A passport that is valid for at least six months after your departure date is required for all travelers to Costa Rica. Please check that your passport expiration date is within the allowable time frame. U.S., U.K., and Canadian nationals do not need a visa. If you are coming from another country, check with the nearest Costa Rican Embassy or Consulate to find out if you are required to have an entry visa. Make photocopies of the first page of your passport and leave one at home and put the other in your luggage.

### Luggage Allowance

Each airline has its own baggage allowance policy. Excess baggage is charged at a specific rate depending on the individual route. You are advised to check your airline prior to travel since prices and regulations are subject to change. All airlines now stipulate that liquids, gels and/or aerosols in CARRY-ON LUGGAGE must be in completely closed containers of 3 oz/100ml or less, (even if the container is partially filled). For flights from your departure airport to/from San Jose, Costa Rica, please contact your airline prior to travel for luggage allowance regulations.

### Health & Immunizations

No vaccinations are required to visit Costa Rica, though we do recommend that you check with your personal health practitioner before travel. Most of the recommended immunizations are standard (such as Hepatitis A and B, Typhoid, Yellow Fever, Measles/Mumps/Rubella, and Tetanus-Diphtheria). Malaria is not common in Costa Rica and few travelers take antimalarial medication. However, we do recommend that you consult with your doctor or visit the U.S. Government Center for Disease Control's website for the most up-to-date information and immunization recommendations. Costa Rica has reliable medical service: hospitals, clinics, and pharmacies (that carry a comprehensive array of over-the-counter drugs) are located throughout the country.

### Medications & Prescriptions

It is recommended to bring a copy of all prescriptions and keep medications in their original bottles.

### Travel Insurance

This is recommended for coverage of unexpected change in travel plans even before you depart, lost luggage, and theft of personal property. If you purchase your airline ticket with a credit card, certain coverage may be provided — check with your credit card travel insurance department. Most companies provide coverage for both travel and medical insurance so you do not have to purchase separate insurance.

## Packing List

Remember to pack light, there are local laundromats where you can take your laundry to be washed while you are at Bodhi Surf School. Here are some suggestions for what to pack based on recommendations from past guests.

- Shirts – bring a variety of t-shirts and tank tops
- Light sweater or jacket if you're coming between the months of June-November, as it can cool off at night
- Shorts – bring several pairs, this will be your go-to attire
- Pants – while you most likely will not need pants (unless you're visiting between June-November), you may want a pair of light, casual pants for the evening, and most prefer to wear pants on their arrival and departure days
- Long-sleeve shirt – as with pants, you most likely will not need it, but it may come in handy on travel days
- Swimsuits: guys – comfortable board shorts, at least two pairs; girls – comfortable bathing suits that will not fall off while surfing (for more details read our post on [How To Choose an Ideal Bathing Suit for Surfing](#))
- Rash guard for surfing (we also provide them in case you forget)
- Casual evening wear
- Flip-flops or sandals
- Comfortable walking shoes if you plan on doing any hikes
- Sun block
- Hat
- Sunglasses
- Insect repellent & cream for relieving insect bites
- Reusable water bottle – help us reduce plastic consumption by bringing a reusable water bottle, the tap water in Uvita, Costa Rica is perfectly safe to drink
- Personal toiletries
- First aid kit (e.g. natural products, aspirin, band-aids, etc.)
- Small flashlight – essential when walking around town at night
- Camera & rechargeable batteries, or extra batteries
- Alarm clock – while we prefer you do not have to use one, past guests have recommended this for late sleepers!
- Journal/notebook
- List of emergency contact numbers
- Debit/Credit Cards with cancellation numbers for emergency
- Contact information of close friends/family (with international dialing codes)
- Personal medication – a doctor's note can help ensure easy passage of medication across international borders
- Money belt – ensure that it is discreet and comfortable to wear
- Small daytime backpack
- Bills in small or medium denominations (\$5, \$10, \$20)
- Copies of your passport, insurance and credit cards to keep with your luggage

**\*Note:** This is not an exhaustive list, though it is fairly complete. If you forget any items, you may be able to get them locally, though keep in mind that selection is limited!

## WELCOME TO COSTA RICA - GENERAL INFORMATION

### Costa Rica Overview

There are few places where the forces of nature play interactively. Rainforests, cloud forests, coastline, volcanoes, mangroves, raging rivers, exotic flora and fauna, incredible wildlife — it's a veritable haven for anyone who loves the earth, plain and simple. In Costa Rica alone, there are more than 9,000 types of flowering plants, including 1,200 species of orchids, and 850 species of birds have been identified, which is more than the United States and Canada combined. Costa Rica is proud to contain 6% of the world's biodiversity. Also notable, 25% of the country is composed of conservation and natural protected territory! While Costa Rica has a varying topography with many different climate zones, it rests wholly in the tropics and thus enjoys warm weather year-round. The country is a pleasure to explore, even in the wet season where the sound of afternoon rains on jungle leaves adds just one more layer of authenticity to the experience. Whether you are a mature couple, a family with children, a couple looking for a romantic getaway, or an adventure seeker, Costa Rica has something for you.

Costa Rica attracts more than 1 million visitors a year seeking to experience a bit of the magic that is to be found here. However, tourism has had significant negative effects on the natural and social environment. Large-scale development around some of the country's most visited areas has threatened precious ecosystems and habitats. Prostitution, drugs, and depletion of heritage and culture are all elements that can go hand-in-hand with tourism that is not managed carefully. Costa Rica battles with all of these issues yet as a result has emerged as a genuine leader in recent years with tremendous efforts in the areas of promotion of Sustainable Tourism, Responsible Travel — it's a true model for Eco Travel worldwide. In 2007, the government of Costa Rica said it wants to be the first developing country to become carbon neutral by 2021.

### Climate & Weather

The Costa Rican climate is characterized as tropical and is famous for its micro climates — hot, humid, chilly, dry, rainy and sunny weather can all be experienced during one day. Ideal almost year-round, the climate throughout Costa Rica is a moderate 72 °F in the highlands, while at the lowlands and coastal areas temperatures range from the low 70's to the high 90's. The rainy season is from the end of June through November, with the heaviest rainfalls usually occurring in October. The Atlantic or Caribbean side is driest from February through April, with a short "summer" in June and July, and the wettest months from November through January. The Pacific side and central parts of the country are driest from January through March. There is a common misconception of imagining the "rainy season" to be "monsoon-like" where it never stops raining. Nothing could be further from the truth! We can normally be assured of sunny mornings followed by some rain in the afternoons or evenings, and even plenty of days without rain. Average highs are between 80-85 degrees Fahrenheit and average lows between 72-75 degrees.

## Communications

Costa Rica's country code is 506. Wi-Fi is available throughout the country, in the lobbies and/or in the rooms at almost all hotels and in restaurants, though the service can be slow at times. There are Internet cafes spread throughout San Jose and in smaller towns as well. Be careful to not save your password or sensitive information on public computer terminals. International phone service is available at most hotels, but beware of the cost. We recommend bringing a calling card or purchasing an international calling card in Costa Rica, these are widely sold. Cell phone service can be spotty in parts of the country.

Guests who wish to purchase a prepaid SIM card for an unlocked phone may do so at a Kolbi store (there is one located at the SJO airport) or locally at the CoopeAlianza in Uvita. For reference, \$5 - \$10 (or 2,500 - 5,000 colones) is typically enough for one to two weeks of average local calling and data usage.

## Safety

Costa Rica is one of the safest countries to travel in the region and experiences a relatively low crime rate. Nevertheless, petty theft is common in many of the tourist areas and we ask that you use common sense as a precaution. The Bahia Ballena - Uvita region in particular is very calm. However, do not leave any personal items unattended on the beach or in areas where they can be easily taken. Try not to carry large amounts of cash, showcase your more expensive items (computers, large cameras, etc.) in public, and we recommend leaving your favorite and/or valuable pieces of jewelry at home. Safety deposit boxes are normally available at hotels.

## Exchanging Money, ATMs, Traveler's Checks

The monetary unit is the *colon*. You can exchange money at most banks and large hotels or at the airport. Local banks normally give the best exchange rate but are not always convenient to get to en route of your trip. The exchange rate normally hovers around 500 colones = \$1 USD. While US currency is commonly accepted in Costa Rica, if you pay in U.S. dollars, you will receive change in colones. Please note that Traveler's Checks are NOT widely used in Costa Rica. Before your trip, inform your bank that you are traveling to Costa Rica as most banks will block usage outside of your home country for security reasons. All major credit cards, particularly Visa, are widely accepted in hotels, bars, restaurants, and shops.

There are multiple banks and ATMs in the Bahia Ballena - Uvita area. The grocery stores in the area all accept credit cards, as do most restaurants and tour operators in the Costa Ballena region.

We do not recommend exchanging money at the airport unless necessary (e.g. if you are driving from San Jose we do recommend you exchange \$10 - \$20 USD into Costa Rican colones in order to pay the highway tolls), the exchange rate at the banks and ATMs are much better than what is offered at the currency exchange booths at the airport.



## Time Zone

Costa Rica is six hours behind GMT (same as Central Standard Time - CST). There is no daylight-savings time, so during the months of April-October, Costa Rica is on Mountain Daylight Time - MDT.

## Drinking Water

The tap water is potable in many areas of the country, including at the Bodhi Surf Lodge and in the Costa Ballena region. We strongly encourage you bring your own reusable water bottle and fill it up at reliable sources in order to reduce the consumption of plastic bottles. If in doubt, always ask if the water is safe to drink, as bottled water is available for purchase.

## Gratuities/Tipping

A service fee of 10% is included in restaurant bills so tipping is not necessary on top of your bill total although if you feel you would like to give a bit extra it is appreciated. However, it is customary to tip tour guides, bellmen, and drivers in Costa Rica and helpful to have ₡1,000 colones notes or US dollar bills on hand to tip. A helpful guide will receive anywhere from \$2-5 tip per day per person.

## Voltage/Electricity

Costa Rica uses 110 volt, 60 cycle electricity, which is the same as the U.S. and Canada. If you are coming from Europe, Asia, or the Middle East, then you most likely need an adapter. To see if your electrical appliances will work in Costa Rica, you can check this website:

<http://www.kropla.com/electric2.htm>

## Airport Departure Tax

Costa Rica charges a USD\$29.00 per person departure tax. In the past it was paid at the airport before your check-in with your airline; however, starting in 2015, airlines have started including it in the cost of airline tickets. In the event that the tax was not included in the cost of your ticket, you will be required to pay this tax prior to your flight check-in, the airline representative at the check-in counter will let you know. The departure tax can be paid at the airport with Colones, U.S. dollars, or credit card. Please note that some credit cards complete the payment as a “cash advance”, in which case you may be charged additional fees, and your total will be more than the USD\$29.00.

## Costa Rica's Roads

If you are driving there are some things that you should keep in mind. First, exercise caution when driving in Costa Rica during the rainy season (between June and November) as the country's mountainous terrain can present road hazards. Information on driving conditions is usually available in advance: talk to the car rental agency, listen to the radio (Costa Rica has many English stations), plan your route ahead of time and be sure to inquire.

The coastal highway (“La Costanera” or Pacifica Fernandez) down the Pacific Coast has been completed for a number of years, making the drive from San Jose to the Costa Ballena region

(including Dominical, Uvita and Bahía Ballena) and further south a breeze.

## Costa Rica History

While there is debate about the number of indigenous people in Costa Rica prior to the arrival of Christopher Columbus in 1502, few survived contact with Europeans. Today, the country's indigenous population makes up less than 2% of the total.

For nearly three centuries, Spain administered what is now Costa Rica as part of the Captaincy General of Guatemala, under a military government. The Spanish optimistically called the country "Rich Coast." Finding little gold or other valuable minerals in Costa Rica, the Spanish turned to agriculture. The small landowners' relative poverty, the lack of a large indigenous labor force, the population's ethnic and linguistic homogeneity, and Costa Rica's isolation from the Spanish colonial centers in Mexico and the Andes contributed to the development of a relatively autonomous, individualistic, and egalitarian agrarian society. This tradition survived the widened class distinctions brought on by the introduction of banana and coffee cultivation in the 19th century and the subsequent accumulation of local wealth.

Costa Rica joined other Central American provinces in 1821 in a joint declaration of independence from Spain. In 1838, long after the Central American Federation ceased to function in practice, Costa Rica formally withdrew and proclaimed itself a sovereign nation. An era of peaceful democracy in Costa Rica began in 1899, and has continued through today with only two lapses: 1917-1919, when Federico Tinoco ruled as a dictator; and 1948, when Jose Figueres led an armed uprising in the wake of a disputed presidential election. The victorious junta from this 44-day civil war drafted a constitution guaranteeing free elections with universal suffrage and the abolition of the military. Figueres became a national hero, winning the first election under the new constitution in 1953. The lack of a military continues to be a source of great national pride, and Costa Rica is presently conducting an international public relations campaign to encourage other nations to follow suit, for the purpose of global peace.

The Costa Rican government has been very involved in managing the economy since the 1948 revolution. The government operates many state monopolies, including banking, insurance, and telecommunications; controls the prices of a number of goods and services; and maintains protectionist trade laws. Government policy in the 1960s and 1970s focused on making Costa Rica more self-sufficient, and the nation has enjoyed a gradual upward economic trend. However, with the increase in oil prices in the 1970s and the sharp decreases in international coffee, banana, and sugar prices, Costa Rica's economy collapsed in 1980. Warfare in neighboring countries in the 1980s also affected the Costa Rican economy and society, shattering regional trade and bringing a large number of refugees and undocumented immigrants, particularly from Nicaragua. To quell the regional violence, President Oscar Arias Sánchez (1986-1990) promoted a successful regional peace plan that resulted in him being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1987. Since 1948, Costa Rica has held 13 successive democratic presidential elections, more than any other Latin American country.

## Government

Costa Rica is a democratic republic with strong constitutional checks and balances. Executive responsibilities are vested in a president, who is the country's center of power. There also are two vice presidents and a 15-member cabinet, which includes one of the vice presidents. The president and the 57 Legislative Assembly senators (diputados) are elected for four-year terms. Presidents are limited to one consecutive four-year term. They may run for election again but may not serve consecutive terms. An independent Supreme Electoral Tribunal supervises the electoral process. The Supreme Court of Justice exercises judicial power and a chamber of the Supreme Court reviews the constitutionality of legislation and executive decrees and all habeas corpus warrants.

The offices of the Inspector General, Attorney General, and Ombudsman exercise autonomous oversight of the government. State agencies enjoy considerable operational independence; they include the telecommunications and electrical power monopoly (ICE), the nationalized commercial banks (BNCR), the state insurance monopoly (INS), and the social security health care agency (CCSS). Costa Rica has no military; it maintains police and security forces only for internal security.

The government of Costa Rica has emphasized the development of democracy and respect for human rights throughout its history. Until recently, the country's political system contrasted sharply with those of many of its Central American and Caribbean neighbors. Costa Rica experienced several unusual days of low-level civil disturbance in early 2000 over legislation that would have permitted private-sector participation in the state-owned telecommunications and electrical power sectors.

The elections of February 5, 2006 were historic for several reasons. First, the enduring bipartisanship of the last 50 years between the National Liberation Party (PLN) and Social Christian Unity Party (PUSC) ended as 15 presidential candidates entered the primaries, all of them from different political parties. Second, a 36-year-old law stating a president could not re-run for office was overruled and former president and 1987 Nobel Peace Prize winner Oscar Arias entered the race. Third, the election results were unusually close, with an extremely low voter turnout (an estimated 40 % of the voting population did not vote due to a lack of trust for the candidates).

Arias was re-elected president with 41.1 percent of the popular vote; Otton Solis of Civil Action Party (PAC) had 40 % of the vote. (In Costa Rica a winning candidate must receive at least 40 percent of the vote in order to win the election. If none of them had reached 40 percent of the votes, a second-round would have been necessary.) During the campaign, Solis was a firm opponent to the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA), while Arias defended its approval and stated it was a priority for his administration.

The 2006 legislative elections saw significant gains in seats by diverse political parties. This

phenomenon has continued in subsequent elections, making it imperative for the ruling or majority party, PLN, to form legislative coalitions in order to advance its political agenda. This distribution forced PLN to negotiate with the minority representatives to pass CAFTA. Costa Rica was the last signatory of all Central American nations for the CAFTA agreement. Although a popular vote (the first national referendum) was carried out on October 5, 2007, and the people of Costa Rica voted to implement CAFTA in their country by a slim majority of 51.62 % in favor and 48.38 % against, government officials continue to struggle with the implementation of the agreement. The division of political parties continues to reflect greatly in the negotiations of the CAFTA at the government level. Although CAFTA was voted in by the people, the constitution needs to be changed in order for CAFTA to be fully implemented. This process is still ongoing.

In February 2010, after a hard fought election campaign, Costa Rica elected its first female president, Laura Chinchilla, the candidate of the PLN Party. She took office in a momentous inauguration ceremony in La Sabana park in San José on May 8, 2010. President Chinchilla was a vice president under President Oscar Arias in his second term, and also a former minister of security. She ran on a platform focused on safeguarding citizen security, promoting transparency in government, and bringing equitable development to underserved areas of the country. The legislature continues divided between several political parties, requiring political alliances to advance executive and legislative agendas.

Currently, Costa Rica's president is Luis Guillermo Solís of the Citizens' Action Party.

## **Economy**

According to the 2009 publication of the State of the Nation and 2008 report of The Central Bank of Costa Rica, inflation at the end 2008 closed at 13.9 % per annum — the highest inflation rate in 15 years. Real growth rate in June of 2009 was at 4.5 % and unemployment was at 5.6 %. The currency exchange rate was approximately 570 colóns to the dollar. In 2010 the exchange rate moved to favor the colón due to the dollar's protracted weakness. As of October 2015, the exchange rate was 533 colóns to the dollar.

Costa Rica's major economic resources are its fertile land and frequent rainfall, well-educated population, and attractive biodiversity. Its location in the Central American isthmus provides easy access to North and South American markets and direct ocean access to Europe and Asia. The economy of Costa Rica has been dependent on the production and export of bananas and coffee. While these products, along with sugar cane and beef, are still important, tourism, manufacturing, and services have surpassed agriculture's contribution to gross domestic product and diversified the economy. Costa Rica has also successfully attracted important foreign investments in free-trade zones by large international companies. Tourism is booming and now earns more foreign exchange than bananas and coffee combined. The government still holds controlling interests in many sectors of the economy, particularly in telecommunications, electricity, and banking. Costa Rica continues to strive to widen economic and trade ties both within and outside the region.

Nearly one-quarter of Costa Ricans live below the poverty level and the gap between the rich and poor continues to widen. Therefore, while you will see visible affluence, including modern shopping malls, just-released American movies, well-developed tourist resorts, and the latest-model cars on the streets of San Jose, you will also observe people who do not have access to such privileges.

## People and Culture

Costa Rican culture is generally very happy, warm, and family-oriented. Costa Ricans love to show off their beautiful country which has many celebrations and cultural festivities. Commonly known as ticos, Costa Ricans are predominantly of Spanish descent. There are smaller groups of people of Afro-Caribbean (3 %), indigenous AmerIndian (1.7 %), and Asian heritage (1 %). Costa Rica also hosts many refugees, mainly from Colombia and Nicaragua. Migrants from Nicaragua make up almost 10 percent of the population. Spanish is the national language, although many people on the Caribbean coast speak English and Patois (a form of Creole English). The population of Costa Rica is approximately 4.2 million; 59 % are urban and 41 % are rural, with more and more people moving to urban areas. Most people belong to the Roman Catholic Church (70 %), which is the constitutionally declared national religion, although congregations of Evangelical churches are growing (14 %).

Costa Rica boasts a relatively high literacy rate (by some counts, as high as 96 %). According to UNICEF, attendance at elementary schools (up to sixth grade) is approximately 80 %. However, attendance drops significantly (to 65 %) at the secondary-school level, and only 35 % of those who begin high school actually graduate. Infant mortality in Costa Rica is low (9.9 %) relative to that of its neighbors, and its life expectancy is comparable to that in the United States. Teenage mothers account for 20 percent of all births.

## Environment

The Republic of Costa Rica is located in Central America, with Panama to the south, Nicaragua to the north, the Caribbean Sea to the east, and the Pacific Ocean to the west. It covers a land area of 19,652 square miles — about the size of West Virginia. A chain of volcanic mountains runs through the center of the country into Nicaragua, splitting Costa Rica in two. In the center of the mountain range is a high-altitude plain, with coastal lowlands on either side. Much of the country was once covered with dense forests and jungles, most of which have been cut down to provide farmland. There has been a concerted effort to preserve what is left by the creation of a national park system, which covers almost 12 % of the country, and forest reserves and indigenous reservations boost the protected land area to 27 %. Costa Rica is famous for its great diversity of tropical flora and fauna.

## Language

Spanish is the official language of Costa Rica, yet English is widely spoken. We recommend learning basic questions and greetings prior to arriving in San Jose. Feel free to use these links to start learning today:

<http://speakeasyspanish.com/SpeakEasySpanish/Welcome.html>

<http://www.ruralcostarica.com/costa-rican-spanish.asp>

[http://www.universal-edu.com/learn\\_spanish\\_online/survivalphrases.htm](http://www.universal-edu.com/learn_spanish_online/survivalphrases.htm)

<http://www.infocostarica.com/education/lesson1.html>

## **Costa Rican Food**

There is a wide variation of cuisine available in Costa Rica. The typical cuisine relies heavily on the use of rice, beans, chicken, plantains, tortillas, and a host of tropical fresh fruits and vegetables. The typical dish, called “casado,” consists of a type of protein (usually fried), rice, beans, salad, and a fried plantain. While hot sauce is readily offered, the food is not typically spicy.

Costa Ricans themselves also eat numerous dishes that will be familiar to Westerners including pastas, pizzas, hamburgers, sandwiches, etc. There is also the fine dining option available, as Costa Rica caters to so many tourists. There are many gourmet chefs throughout the country and especially in touristy areas. Also, if you get sick of eating one genre of food, Costa Rica has many international options available, especially in the capital city.

**We are excited for your arrival and hope to instill an appreciation for this small town that Bodhi Surf calls home.**