

Ashford School Travels to Costa Rica
April 2019

We have been exploring how student travel can help our students and Ashford School develop cultural competency, including giving students authentic opportunities to use their Spanish language skills. Over the past several months, several parents and students have expressed interest in a trip to another country and we finally found a company, EF Tours, to help us coordinate a relatively inexpensive trip to Costa Rica, which is in Central America. EF Tours is a very reliable tour company that provides excellent service to their travelers. And Costa Rica is a safe and popular location for school groups. You can read a brief, yet comprehensive, summary of Costa Rica at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Costa_Rica

Students in grades 6, 7, and 8, during school year 2018-2019, are eligible for the trip. We will have some spots for paying parents as well. Cost is \$2,630 for a student, \$3,080 for a parent, before any discounts for signing up early. Experienced faculty chaperones will facilitate the trip at a ratio of at least one chaperone per six students.

Itinerary

Day 1: Fly to Costa Rica. Meet your Tour Director at the airport in San José.

Day 2: **San José | Monteverde**. Take a tour of Café Britt coffee plantation and roastery. Travel via Sarchi to Monteverde. Situated near the Continental Divide, the Monteverde (Green Mountain) region contains a spectacular range of flora and fauna in six distinct ecological zones.

Day 3: **Monteverde**. Experience a canopy tour. Visit the Santa Elena Cloud Forest. Here, you can look for the rare orchids and elusive quetzal birds that thrive in the perpetual soft mist. At this altitude, you'll literally walk through clouds! Plant a tree in the EF reserve in Monteverde with your group. Time to see more of Monteverde or visit a local farm.

Day 4: **Monteverde | Arenal region**. Participate in a local exchange. Travel to the Arenal region, where you can behold the perfect conical shape that emerges from the green hills of Alajuela: this is the fascinating Arenal Volcano. Overlooking the San Carlos plain and the Pacific lowlands, this mile-high volcano has been active for the past 7,000 years.

Day 5: **Arenal region | Sarapiquí**. Visit Arenal Volcano National Park. Travel to Sarapiquí.

Day 6: **Guacimo | Sarapiquí**. Participate in two educational programs at EARTH University. A school truly unlike any other, EARTH University is a tropical campus with a strong focus on continuing education, waste management, and community outreach. Established by Costa Rican law in 1986 as a private, non-profit international university, EARTH's 8,342-acre campus includes laboratories and academic farms. Ever wondered how that bunch of bananas got to your local fruit stand or grocery store? Meet the people who plant, harvest, and export those Fair Trade bananas and learn more about how important peri-urban gardens are in building communities and economies.

Day 7: **Sarapiquí | San José**. Visit Braulio Carillo National Park. Travel to San José. Enjoy a free evening or experience a folklore evening.

Day 8: Depart for home

A PowerPoint with additional information is linked to our main web page at <http://ashfordct.org/>

Please contact Troy Hopkins, Principal, with any questions at thopkins@ashfordct.org