

Costa Rica

Information for applicants

Costa Rica

Costa Rica is located in Central America, bordered to the north by Nicaragua, to the south by Panama, to the east by the Caribbean and to the west by the Pacific Ocean. It is considered one of the region's most progressive countries and has even been dubbed the Switzerland of Latin America.

Costa Rica is the smallest Central American nation after El Salvador; with an area of 51,100 km², it is only slightly larger than Germany's federal state of Lower Saxony. The country has a population of just under five million people, some 340,000 of whom live in the capital city, San José.

Climate and sights

Depending on altitude, the Costa Rican climate can be tropical or sub-tropical. Mountain ranges divide the nation into a permanently humid Caribbean region and a wet-dry Pacific region. The climate is characterised by a rainy season and a dry season, the former lasting from May to November and the latter from December to April. The climate in San José (1,150m) is rather spring-like, with an average temperature of 20°C, though this can drop significantly at night.

The city is home to several cultural institutions, including the Pre-Columbian Gold Museum. Costa Rica is famed for its beaches, volcanoes and biodiversity. Around one quarter of its territory consists of protected rainforest, which serves as a habitat for a wide range of fauna, including spider monkeys and parrots. Costa Rica accounts for just 0.01% of the earth's land mass, yet is home to between 4% and 5% of the world's flora

and fauna. It is considered a model country internationally in the area of nature conservation and climate protection.

Medical care

Medical care is of a good overall standard in Costa Rica.

The densely populated Central Valley, and San José in particular, has the highest doctor-to-patient ratio in the country, as well as a number of well-equipped state hospitals. Additionally, there are several private hospitals with modern facilities capable of carrying out complex surgery. The country also has a good network of pharmacies.

Accommodation and quality of life

San José offers a broad selection of furnished and unfurnished houses and apartments. For those with children, we recommend renting a house or an apartment in the condominios in Santa Ana or Escazú, which are popular with many families and offer the opportunity for children to meet and play with other children at the on-site swimming pool and sports facilities. Rents in these sought-after residential areas are correspondingly high, ranging from USD 2,000 to USD 3,000 per month.

Shops and services

Costa Rica offers an excellent range of shops and services on the whole. There are small stores on every street corner stocking many daily essentials, weekly markets in every neighbourhood and a good number of supermarkets selling a wide variety of products. Apart from regionally grown fruit and vegetables, Costa Rica produces very little of its own food. Import duties make imported foods relatively expensive. While rents, gym

subscriptions, cinema tickets, etc. are only slightly cheaper than in Germany if at all, transport costs a lot less.

Accompanying partners and children

Accompanying partners can obtain a work visa if they waive their seconded status and their potential employer can demonstrate that the vacancy cannot be filled by a Costa Rican national. However, this process is by its nature very lengthy and complex.

Schools and childcare: The Colegio Humboldt is the most renowned German school in San José, offering high-quality primary and secondary education. After finishing year 12, students can take the university entrance qualification, which allows them to study at German and other European universities, as well as in the United States.

Colegio Humboldt has its own kindergarten, which admits children from four years of age.

Good to know

Costa Rica has implemented a strict no-smoking law prohibiting smoking in all public buildings, offices, hotels, restaurants, bars and clubs.

Find out more

<https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/aussenpolitik/laenderinformationen/costarica-node>

<https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/393.html>

Published by:
Deutsche Gesellschaft für
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

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Bonn and Eschborn, Germany

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Eschborn 2017

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