ROAD TRIP · COSTA RICA

Surfing the Nicoya Peninsula

Three surf towns along the Nicoya coast: Tamarindo for the first lesson, Nosara and Santa Teresa for the better waves. By 4x4 down the coast road.

Length	10 days, 9 nights
Distance	400 km, 4 driving days
Behind the wheel	9 h
Travellers	2, 1 room, 1 car
Hotels	Comfort: a good hotel (3 stars)
Flights	Amsterdam – Liberia (LIR), Liberia (LIR) – Amsterdam

CONTENTS

Tamarindo	Days 1–3	**6**
Nosara	Days 4–6	**8**
Santa Teresa	Days 7–9	**10**

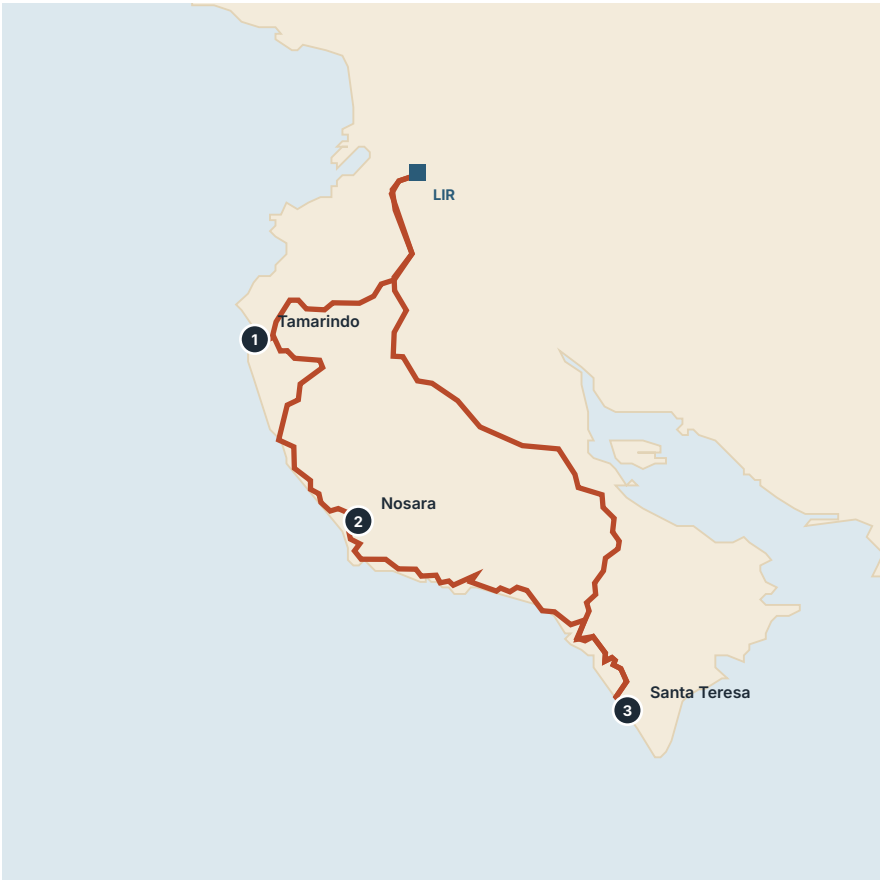
Day by day

DAY	DATE	NIGHT	KM	DRIVE	°C
1		Tamarindo	60	1 h 20 min	
2		Tamarindo			
3		Tamarindo			
4		Nosara	70	1 h 40 min	
5		Nosara			
6		Nosara			
7		Santa Teresa	100	2 h 30 min	
8		Santa Teresa			
9		Santa Teresa			
10		Flight home from LIR	160	3 h 20 min	

400 km · 9 h behind the wheel · on average 100 km a driving day

Kilometres and drive times by road (OSRM, OpenStreetMap), without stops: plan generously.

The route



Map: Natural Earth (public domain) · roads © OpenStreetMap contributors

ON THE ROAD

Day 1	Land at Liberia (LIR), drive to Tamarindo · About 60 km, 1 h 20 min
Day 4	Tamarindo, drive to Nosara · About 70 km, 1 h 40 min
Day 7	Nosara, drive to Santa Teresa · About 100 km, 2 h 30 min
Day 10	Santa Teresa to Liberia airport (LIR), fly home to Amsterdam · About 160 km, 3 h 20 min

Well prepared

Passport and entry

Dutch and Belgian travellers need no visa for a holiday of up to 180 days. Your passport must be valid for the whole trip on arrival, and you show a return ticket at immigration. There is no ESTA or form beforehand; the departure tax is included in your air fare.
nederlandwereldwijd.nl/reisadvies/costa-rica

Driving licence and 4x4

Your Dutch or Belgian driving licence is valid for 90 days. For Monteverde, Santa Teresa, Drake Bay and the Nicoya coast road you want a 4x4: dirt roads, potholes and in the green season rivers to drive through. The compulsory liability insurance (SLI/TPL) is always bought from the rental company, even if your credit card gives cover.

On the road

Count on 40 to 50 km an hour on average: mountain roads, lorries and villages. Don't drive after dark; it is dark by six, all year round. Waze knows every road and warns of closures. Never leave anything visible in the car, not even for a moment.

Money

The currency is the colón, but almost everywhere takes dollars and credit cards. Bring a few small dollar notes for tips and parking. Restaurants add 10% service to the bill; an extra tip for a good nature guide (about $10 a person) is customary.

When to go

The dry season runs from December to April: sunny on the Pacific side and in Guanacaste. May to November is the green season, with sunny mornings and afternoon showers, quieter and cheaper; September and October are the wettest months, except on the Caribbean coast, where they are the driest.

Parks and entry fees

The national parks cost foreigners about $12 to $18 a person a day. For Manuel Antonio, Poás, Irazú and Corcovado you buy your ticket online beforehand from SINAC; Manuel Antonio is closed on Mondays.
serviciosenlinea.sinac.go.cr

Health

No vaccinations are required when you come from Europe. Protect yourself against mosquitoes (dengue), especially on the Caribbean coast. Tap water is drinkable in most places; ask in remote areas.

Packing list

- [ ] Passport (valid for the whole trip)
- [ ] Driving licence and credit card in the driver's name
- [ ] Travel and cancellation insurance
- [ ] Confirmations: flights, car, hotels, park tickets
- [ ] Rain jacket or poncho, even in the dry season
- [ ] Walking shoes that may get wet
- [ ] Insect repellent with DEET
- [ ] Reef-safe sunscreen
- [ ] Binoculars for birds and sloths
- [ ] A jumper for Monteverde and the volcanoes
- [ ] Plug adapter for type A/B (120 volts)

DON'T FORGET



DAYS 1–3

Tamarindo Guanacaste

Surfing and sunset at Playa Tamarindo

Land at Liberia (LIR), drive to Tamarindo: about 60 km, 1 h 20 min

3 nights

DON'T MISS

- Playa Tamarindo
- Playa Grande and the leatherbacks
- Playa Conchal

With an extra night

With an extra night: a sunset sail, or snorkelling at Playa Conchal.

EXCURSIONS

- [ ] Tamarindo surf lesson — roughly €60 a person
- [ ] Sunset catamaran sail — roughly €90 a person
- [ ] Estuary kayak tour — roughly €50 a person

HOTEL

- [ ] Tamarindo Bay Hotel & Apartments- Self Check In, Adults Only · 3★ — roughly €570
  100 metros sur del Banco Nacional
- [ ] Baliyana Lodge · 3★
  San Antonio del Cruz
- [ ] Epic Tamarindo Boutique Hotel · 3★
  Calle Tamarindo, 1
- [ ] Casa Leona · 3★
  100 Meters Sur 75 Este del
- [ ] Casa Mapache Pool and Breakfast Available near Tamarindo Beach · 3★
  La Garita Nueva

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DAYS 4–6

Nosara Guanacaste

Yoga at sunrise, surfing at sunset

Tamarindo, drive to Nosara: about 70 km, 1 h 40 min

3 nights

DON'T MISS

- Playa Guiones
- The turtles of Ostional
- The Nosara biological reserve

NOSARA · DAYS 4–6

With an extra night

With an extra night: a day of yoga, or the Ostional arribada at night when the moon is right.

EXCURSIONS

- [ ] Playa Guiones surf lesson — roughly €60 a person
- [ ] Yoga class — roughly €20 a person
- [ ] Ostional turtles with a guide — roughly €40 a person

HOTEL

- [ ] Casas Sol y Mar · 3★
  506 tennis center, la esperanza
- [ ] Costa Rica Yoga Spa · 3★
  300 metros sur del Rio Montaña
- [ ] Bodhi Tree Yoga Resort · 3★
  Bodhi Street
- [ ] Congo · 3★
  Del Cruce Hacia Playa Pelada 800 mt Este
- [ ] La Laguna · 3★
  Nicoya

NOTES

Waves, yoga and sunsets

DAYS 7–9

Santa Teresa Puntarenas

Waves, yoga and sunsets

Nosara, drive to Santa Teresa: about 100 km, 2 h 30 min

3 nights

DON'T MISS

- Santa Teresa beach
- Montezuma waterfall
- Cabo Blanco reserve

SANTA TERESA · DAYS 7–9

With an extra night

With an extra night: by boat to Tortuga Island, or a hike in Cabo Blanco.

EXCURSIONS

- ☐ Santa Teresa surf lesson — roughly €60 a person
- ☐ Tortuga Island boat trip — roughly €100 a person
- ☐ Yoga class — roughly €20 a person

HOTEL

- ☐ Seataya Oceanview Luxury Villas · 3★

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What it costs

DAY	PLACE	HOTEL	TOURS	CAR	TOTAL
1	Tamarindo	€140	–	€70	**€210**
2	Tamarindo	€140	–	€70	**€210**
3	Tamarindo	€140	–	€70	**€210**
4	Nosara	€170	–	€70	**€240**
5	Nosara	€170	–	€70	**€240**
6	Nosara	€170	–	€70	**€240**
7	Santa Teresa	€180	–	€70	**€250**
8	Santa Teresa	€180	–	€70	**€250**
9	Santa Teresa	€180	–	€70	**€250**
10	Flight home from LIR	–	–	€70	**€70**

Flights	€1,800
Hotels	€1,470
Excursions	€0
Car hire	€650
Total	**€3,920**
	€1,960 a person

An estimate to plan with (prices of 2026-10): hotels, the ticked excursions, car hire and flights. No fuel or meals.

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About this booklet

Made on rondreis.expert. Your trip is still there, to change and print again: costa-rica.roundtrip.expert/tours/surf-nicoya/

PHOTOS

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Tamarindo	Costa Rica Langosta Beach near Tamarindo 0208.jpg · ImagePerson, CC0
Nosara	Tropical bird on a branch (Unsplash).jpg · Alyssa Crouse alyssacrouse, CC0

MAP AND TYPE

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