



THE LAURA & ALVIN SIEGAL  
LIFELONG LEARNING  
PROGRAM

**Riches of the Rainforest, Arenal Volcano, & the Pacific Coast**  
**December 27, 2020 - January 4, 2021**



**ITINERARY**

*BLD = Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

**Sunday 12/27/2020 San José Hotel Balmoral (D)**

Upon arrival, after clearing customs and immigrations at the airport, meet your driver and transfer to Hotel Balmoral, situated in the heart of the city near the Gold Museum and the National Theater, along the city's famous pedestrian boulevard. Check-in available at 2:00 pm. This evening enjoy a welcome dinner and program orientation at El Patio featuring a variety of options including a full service restaurant, pizzeria, and coffee shop. In order to arrive in time for orientation, you must book flights that arrive in San José no later than 4:30 p.m. Room type - Standard Plus

**Monday 12/28/2020 Sarapiquí Selva Verde Lodge (BLD)**

This morning, gather for breakfast then depart San José, heading north to Selva Verde Lodge & Rainforest Reserve. En route stop at La Paz Waterfall Gardens to explore the many trails and picturesque waterfalls, as well as the hummingbird garden and lush botanicals. Enjoy lunch at La Paz, and continue to Selva Verde, located in the lush lowlands of north central Costa Rica on a private tract of primary and secondary tropical rainforest. After settling in, receive an orientation on the lodge's facilities and 500-acre private reserve, then attend a lecture by a local naturalist on the biodiversity of the region and rainforest structure. Enjoy time to relax in your room, or stroll about the property before a buffet-style dinner in the upstairs dining room. After dessert, explore the world of the rainforest after sundown during a short night hike in search of nocturnal amphibians, mammals, owls, and insects. Room type – Sarapiquí

**Tuesday 12/29/2020 Sarapiquí Selva Verde Lodge (BLD)**

This morning after breakfast, embark on an exciting whitewater rafting adventure! The river has a gentle current with several minor class I, II, and III rapids. A professional river guide escorts all rafting trips and all of the necessary safety equipment (helmet, life jackets, etc.) is provided, along with a lesson on rafting safety instructions and procedures. For those not interested in rafting, a boat trip along the river can be arranged as an alternative. Return to the lodge for lunch. In the afternoon, visit the plantation and reserve at Best Chocolate to learn all about the cacao plant and how it's processed from fruit to final product. After witnessing all stages of the process, try a taste of freshly-made chocolate with a new appreciation of its origins. This evening, have dinner at the lodge and visit the nearby Tirimbina Biological Reserve for a presentation on the fascinating lives of bats. During the visit, learn about some of the 113 species of bats that can be found in Costa Rica, with an opportunity to see live specimens humanely caught by local researchers collecting data. Room type – Sarapiquí

**Wednesday 12/30/2020 Arenal Arenal Paraiso (BLD)**

Rise early for optional morning birding on the grounds. After breakfast, set out on a hike in the primary rainforest reserve to observe this unique ecosystem up-close. A variety of wildlife can be seen along the reserve's forest trails, including sloths, monkeys, iguanas, parrots, toucans, hummingbirds, and other tropical fauna. After the hike, walk through Selva Verde's botanical garden and learn about the beautiful tropical flowers and plants. Have lunch at the lodge, check out, then depart for Arenal, stopping at La Fortuna on the way. This picturesque town is a great place to take photos and shop for souvenirs. Upon arrival at Arenal Paraiso, check in and enjoy the rest of the afternoon at leisure to relax in the thermal hot spring pools heated by Arenal Volcano. Weather permitting, the hotel affords excellent views of the volcano from every room. Room type – Superior

**Thursday 12/31/2020 Arenal**

**Arenal Paraiso (BLD)**

This morning after breakfast, depart for Arenal Hanging Bridges, a reserve that abounds with wonderful trails, suspension bridges, and outstanding natural areas. Then, head to Arenal Vida Campesina, an organic farm and education center dedicated to advancing environmentally-friendly agriculture. Enjoy a traditional lunch prepared with fresh produce from the farm, then get hands-on as you learn how to make tortillas. The hospitality is as heartwarming as the shot of their farm-fermented liquor - a traditional farewell gesture, and fitting end to a memorable visit. Return to the lodge for dinner. Room type – Superior

**Friday 01/01/2021 Guanacaste**

**Sugar Beach Hotel (BLD)**

Check out after breakfast at the lodge, then begin the transfer to Sugar Beach. En route, stop for a visit at Hacienda El Viejo Wetlands, a private wildlife refuge. Here, enjoy a typical Costa Rican buffet lunch at La Casona, a historical home dating back nearly 150 years that evokes the spirit of Costa Rica's colonial era. Then, set out onto the Tempisque River on a boat tour of El Viejo Wildlife National Refuge, where you'll see an incredible number of birds, monkeys, iguanas, and crocodiles. Return to La Casona to enjoy a cup of coffee and some fruit before departing the hacienda and continuing to Sugar Beach. Check in upon arrival, and enjoy the rest of the evening at leisure to explore the hotel facilities. Dinner at the hotel. Room type - Garden View

**Saturday 01/02/2021 Guanacaste**

**Sugar Beach Hotel (BLD)**

Today a day for independent exploration at your own expense, however, all meals at the hotel are included. Room type - Garden View

**Sunday 01/03/2021 Guanacaste**

**Sugar Beach Hotel (BLD)**

After breakfast, head to Flamingo Beach for a scenic catamaran journey along the beautiful Pacific coast. From the dock, take a brief ride by motorized tender to arrive at the catamaran, then go aboard and set sail! Enjoy a picnic-style meal on board, then swim and snorkel from the catamaran in search of tropical fish, octopi, starfish, rays, and puffer fish. At the end of the cruise, board the tender back to shore and return to the hotel. The afternoon is at leisure to explore the beach or relax. This evening, enjoy a farewell dinner at the hotel. Room type - Garden View

**Monday 01/04/2021 Farewell!**

**(B)**

Transfer to the international airport in Liberia, one group departure which takes approximately 1.5 hours. Check out is at 12:00 pm. Please arrange all departing flights after 12 noon.

### **Trip Cost**

**\$3,495 per person, based on double occupancy**

**Single Supplement: \$480**

**Inclusions: Internal flights, all tips/ gratuities, bottled water, all ground transportation**

**To Make a Reservation, Contact Holbrook Travel at 800.451.7111**