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2 Week Homestay Itinerary

DAY 1

Land in San Jose, Costa Rica! Welcome. Meet your guide, climb onto the bus, and we make our way to the Pacific Coast. Our first stop is Manuel Antonio. We will catch a sunset before dinner and get some rest.

DAY 2

Today we enter Costa Rica's most popular National Park, Manuel Antonio. Manuel Antonio has recorded over 350 species of birds within the park and has 3 species of monkeys, 2 and 3 toed sloths, and some of the most breathtaking beaches on the Pacific. You will have a private guided tour and learn about the littoral forest, animals and history of the park. We will have a picnic lunch on the white sand beach and swim in the calm waters.

DAY 3

Today we make our way back up the Pacific coast and eventually end up in the cloud forests of Monteverde. Along the way we will pass 3 different forest types and learn about each one. The views are stunning once we start to ascend. We will also pass coffee farms (one of Costa Rica's main exports). Once in Monteverde we will pass by the town of Santa Elena, then check into our Eco-Lodge and have dinner.

DAY 4

Today we fly! We visit Sky-Trek and zip line through the canopies of the cloud forest. Expert guides will assist us through all 11 cables, one that is over 700 meters long! We will learn about orchids and other plants that are specific to the cloud forest and possibly have a chance to see the great Resplendent Quetzal. In the afternoon we visit the Monteverde Butterfly Garden to learn about some of the forests most intricate creatures. In the evening we dine at an exotic restaurant in town.

DAY 5

In the morning we drive around Lake Arenal on the way to the breathtaking Arenal Volcano, Costa Rica's most active volcano. We stop for lunch at an organic sandwich shop with teeming bird life and great views. After lunch, we drive around the volcano and check into our Eco-lodge. In the evening, we bathe in Natural Hot Springs, with a view of the lava spewing volcano.

DAY 6

After breakfast we take a short hike to a brilliant waterfall. We can swim in the refreshing crystalline waters below and enjoy the scenery. From there we drive to the Caribbean Lowlands to meet our Home Stay Families! We will settle into our new homes and live like a local for the next couple of days.

Home Stays

Home stays are stepping stones to learning about the country which you are visiting. Students and individuals stay with rural Tico (Costa Rican) families in their proper homes for several days or more. The idea is for the traveler to become part of the family and do what the family does. This unique experience not only exposes you to a different lifestyle and culture, it allows you to practice and enhance your language skills and make new friends. Daytime activities may include local service projects, a visit to a snake museum, visits to schools, and activities with the young folks and families exploring the village and surrounding areas. All meals will be eaten with the families.

DAY 7

Home stay. Community Service day.

DAY 8

Home stay. Community Service day.

DAY 9

We say goodbye to our new friends and home stay families then make our way to the great Caribbean Coast. In the afternoon we swim at one of the most beautiful beaches in Costa Rica. Punta Uva is a magical spot where the forest meets the sea and monkeys are often spotted eating sea grapes on the point. In the evening we will have a delicious dinner at one of towns local restaurants.

DAY 10

Our day begins with a visit to the Kekoldi Indigenous Reserve where we learn about the culture and customs of the Bri-Bri peoples. We start out in the Iguana Farm, a local project working to save the endangered Green Iguana. Our Bri-Bri native guide will take us on a walk through secondary and primary forests to teach us about the medicinal plants and trees that have supported their people's existence for 1000's of years. Upon our return we will be served a lunch prepared with organic foods from their local gardens. In the afternoon we relax on one of the coast's amazing beaches. Dinner in town.

DAY 11

Today is a full beach day. A day to journal, relax, sunbathe, play soccer and/or frisbee. We will have a picnic on the beach and then have dinner later in town.

DAY 12-13

Today we begin TWO unforgettable days of white water rafting on the Pacuare River. This is one of the top 5 rafting rivers on the planet with class 3 and 4 rapids. Expert experienced guides will safely guide us on our adventure. The river cuts through virgin forest on the Caribbean slope and passes numerous waterfalls that practically pour into our raft. We raft half of our distance on the first day, then stay on the banks of the river in luxury camping tents with bedding. The guides cook gourmet meals to keep us energized. On the second day we raft to the exploration center, have lunch and head back to San Jose for our farewell dinner.

DAY 14

We board the plane with memories to last a lifetime and fly home to share stories with friends and family.