

# Costa Rica

January 6 – 18, 2025

Led By: Sue and Don Kissinger  
with Victor Acosta



Continuing Education  
University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point







## **An Itinerary for Costa Rica**

### **January 6 - 18, 2025**

Come and explore the tropical paradise of Costa Rica, a small Central American Country filled with diverse ecosystems and a wide variety of flora and fauna. For our 2025 tour, we will focus on an area north of San Jose to keep our windshield time down. We will explore the tropical rainforests near the Sarapiquí through hikes, a river tour and cooking and dancing lessons! Next stop is the Arenal Volcano where we will hike on the old lava flows, kayak in a crater lake and then relax in the hot springs. Our final stop is the cloud forest near San Ramon, where we may catch a glimpse of the illusive Resplendent Quetzal during one of our hikes. Our University's long-standing relationship with Rosie at Costa Rican Specialties allows for a higher quality adventure guided by bi-lingual guide and naturalist extraordinaire, Victor Acosta. Along with tour leaders, Sue and Don Kissinger, this all-inclusive adventure gives travelers a taste of why Costa Rica is so special - Pura Vida (Pure Life)

**Trip Leaders:** Sue and Don Kissinger with Victor Acosta

**This trip has a maximum of 18 participants plus two trip leaders and a guide for an enjoyable and personal experience!**

#### **Day 1 | Monday, January 6: Arrival Day**

- Arrive in San Jose. Your private guide and naturalist, Victor, will welcome you just outside the airport and transport you to the hotel.
  - Note - We will give you parameters for arrival time - if you arrive outside of that time, a taxi to the hotel will cost about \$50.
- Welcome dinner at hotel
- Lodging at **Hotel Bougainvillea**

#### **Day 2 | Tuesday, January 7: Soak in the Local Culture**

- Guided tour of the Heredia Central Park and Market
- Visit the Jade Museum
- Free time to explore the gardens at Hotel Bougainvillea
- Dinner and lodging at **Hotel Bougainvillea**

**Day 3 | Wednesday, January 8**

**Taste of Costa Rica**

- Tour **Finca Ecoorganica Sarapiquí** and see how many of the crops are grown in Costa Rica, including pineapple, cocoa, sugar cane, coffee... samples and lunch included!
- Explore and relax at La Quinta Lodge
- Rainforest night hike
- Dinner and lodging at **La Quinta Lodge Sarapiquí**

**Day 4 | Thursday, January 9**

**Rain Forests, Hanging Bridges and Bats!**

- Explore the rain forests and hanging bridges through guided hikes at **La Tirimbina Biological Reserve**
- Evening bat tour at La Tirimbina Biological Reserve
- Dinner and lodging at **La Quinta Lodge Sarapiquí**

**Day 5 | Friday, January 10**

**Flora and Fauna Galore**

- Morning guided tour of the La Selva Biological Reserve
- Afternoon Safari Boat Tour on the Sarapiquí River
- Dinner and lodging at **La Quinta Lodge Sarapiquí**

**Day 6 | Saturday, January 11**

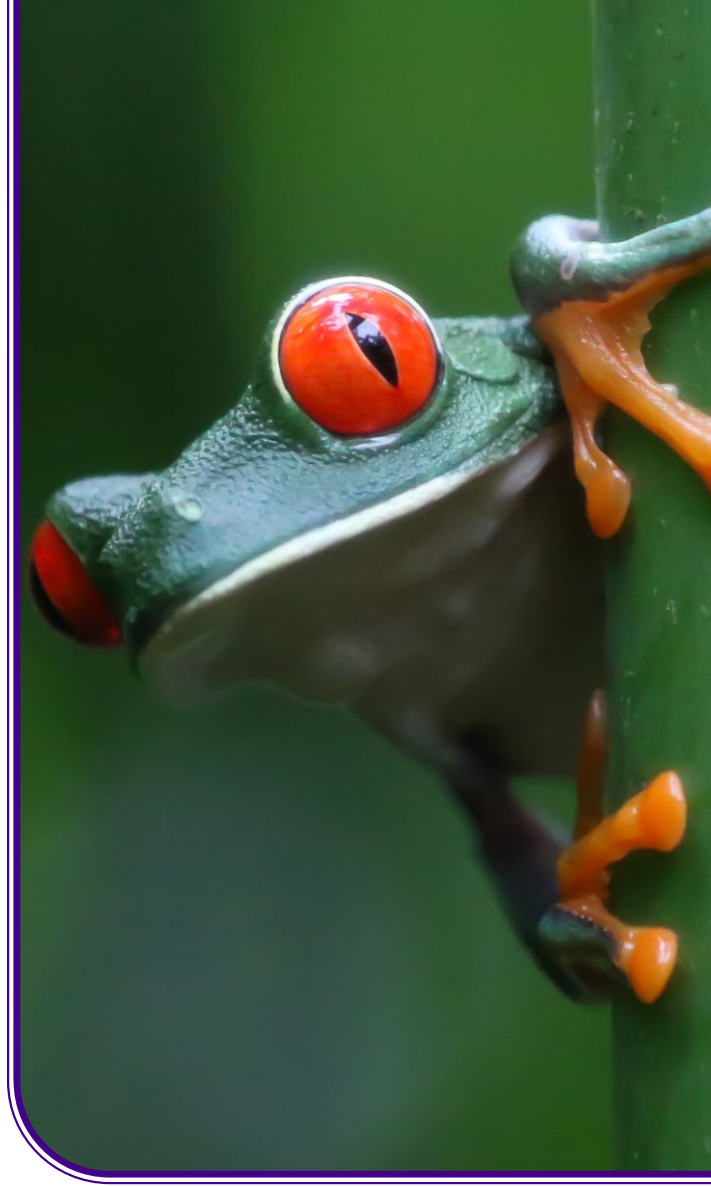
**Kayaking, Blue Waterfalls, Cooking and Dancing!**

- Guided kayak tour in Laguna Rio Cuarto - a freshwater crater lake that has beautiful green waters
- Travel to beautiful Los Bajos del Toro - an area blessed with multiple waterfalls, many which are blue in color. Opportunity to hike and swim
- Cooking class and dance lessons at Finca 360 Salsa, anyone???
- Overnight at **Finca 360**

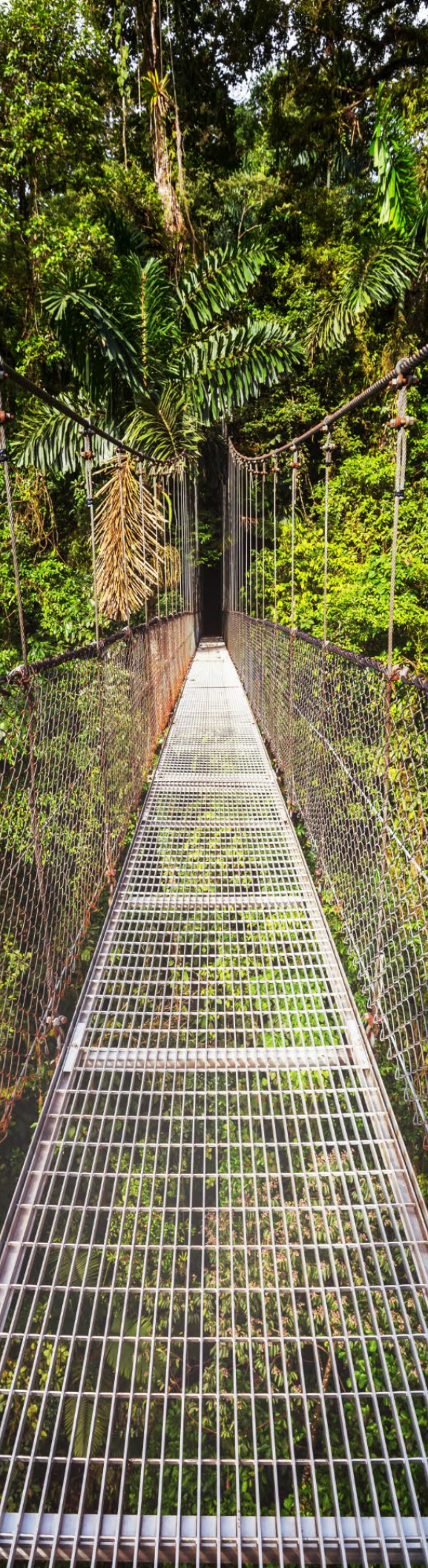
**Day 7 | Sunday, January 12**

**Butterflies and Volcanoes**

- Visit Alas del Destino butterfly farm to learn about and interact with tropical butterflies
- Explore the town of La Fortuna with time for shopping
- Relax in the hot springs and mud baths at Montana del Fuego Mountain Resort and Spa
- Overnight at **Montana del Fuego Mountain Resort and Spa**







**Day 8 | Monday, January 13**  
**Arenal Volcano and Hot Springs**

- **Mistico Park** - Arenal Hanging Bridges - guided hike in the canopy on the 6 hanging bridges at Mistico
- Afternoon guided hike on the old lava flows at the the Arenal Volcano National Park
- Evening soak in the healing waters of the **Ecotermas Hot Springs**(Dinner included)
- Lodging at **Montana del Fuego Mountain Resort and Spa**

**Day 9 | Tuesday, January 14**  
**Choose your Adventure**

- Open day to relax and enjoy the free amenities at the Montana del Fuego Mountain Resort and Spa or choose your adventure (own cost).  
Choices include:
  - Ziplining
  - Horseback riding
  - Spa treatments (at resort)
  - Whitewater rafting
  - Fishing on Lake Arenal
  - ATV Tour
  - Canyoning (rappelling waterfalls)
  - Caño Negro Wildlife Refuge Boat Tour
- *\*\*More information with be provided after the trip is filled*
- Lunch, dinner and lodging at **Montana del Fuego Mountain Resort and Spa**

**Day 10 | Wednesday, January 15**  
**Travel to the Cloud Forest**

- Morning hike at resort
- Visit Bosque Nuboso El Cocora
- Explore and relax at Ribera La Paz Wellness and Retreat
- Dinner and lodging at **Hotel Ribera La Paz**

**Day 11 | Thursday, January 16**  
**Cloud Forest and San Ramon**

- Guided morning hike in the La Paz Cloud Forest filled with lush flora and unique fauna - a birders paradise!
- Afternoon visit to the charming town of San Ramon
- Lodging at **Hotel Ribera La Paz**





### Day 12 | Friday, January 17 - Coffee and shopping for local crafts

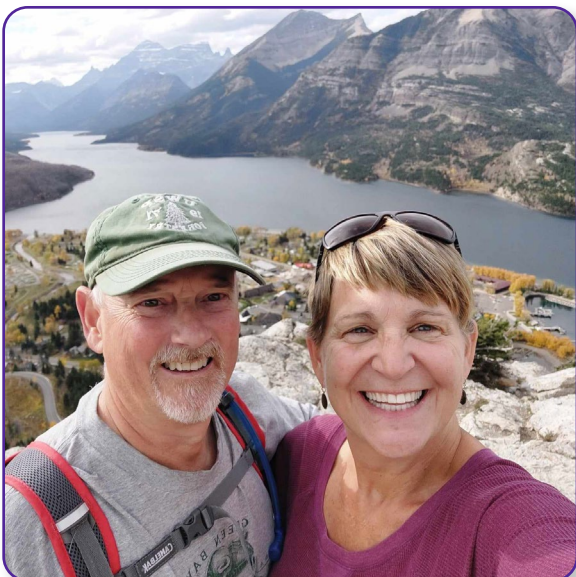
- Morning coffee tour of a high mountain coffee plantation
- Shopping in the quaint town of Sarchi - home of the painted oxcarts. This town is a hub for local artisans with a wide variety of crafts.
- Farewell dinner at Hotel Bougainvillea
- Lodging at **Hotel Bougainvillea**

### Day 13 | Saturday, January 18: Departure Day

- Transfer to airport
- We will schedule departure time parameters - if your departure is outside of that time, a taxi to the airport will cost about \$50.

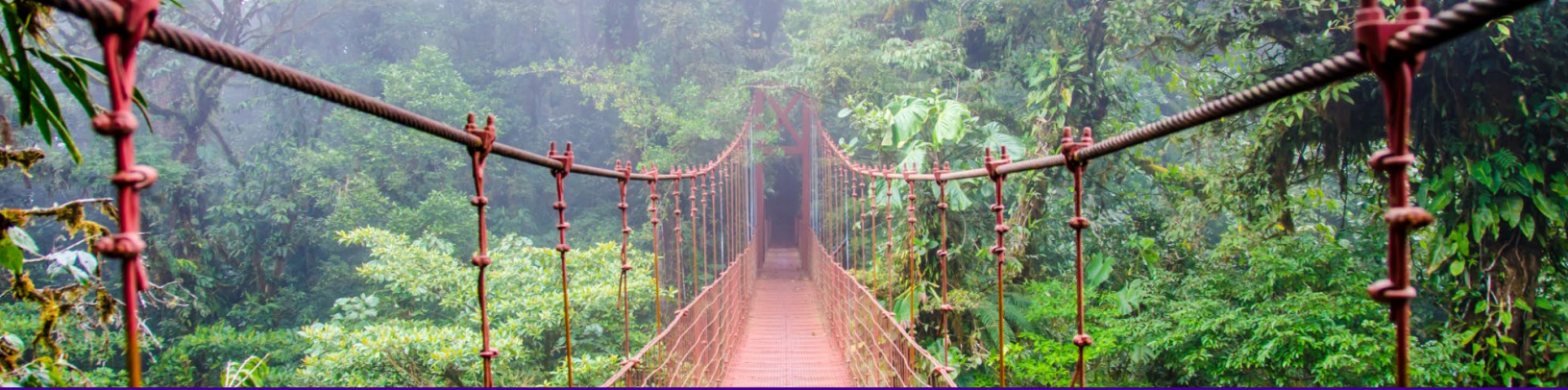
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### Meet the Trip Leaders



**Sue and Don Kissinger**, Sue and Don have traveled extensively throughout the United States, Canada, Central America, South Africa and Europe. They met as forestry students 42 years ago on a UW-Stevens Point (UWSP) international course in Europe and are celebrating their 40th wedding anniversary this year! Sue has led over 25 international tours through UWSP, including five to Costa Rica. Don has been her co-leader throughout the years and they enjoy sharing their love of travel with others! They recently retired from 30 year careers at UWSP (Sue) and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (Don) and are enjoying retirement up on a lake in northwestern Wisconsin.

**Victor Acosta**, Costa Rican biologist and naturalist, with experience in tourism, herpetology and birdwatching. This will be Victor's fifth tour with UWSP.



## Pricing

### Registration Fee

Single occupancy rates are not available

Double occupancy rates: **\$3,890 per person**

\*Registration closes September 27, 2024

### Payment Schedule:

\$450 due upon registration (*\$450 of this fee is nonrefundable*)

\$1,720 due by **Thursday, July 11, 2024**

\$1,720 due by **Thursday, October 10, 2024**

\*Since we make financial commitments in advance, no refunds will be issued for cancellations less than 90 days prior to the trip. Cancellations received more than 90 days before the trip will receive a full refund minus \$450. However, you may send a substitute in your place. Please email us at [uwspceweb@uwsp.edu](mailto:uwspceweb@uwsp.edu) to inform us of a cancellation or substitution.

### Price includes:

- Escorted tour with bi-lingual guide, Victor Acosta, throughout the trip in Costa Rica
- Two UWSP trip leaders, Sue and Don Kissinger
- All land transfers with expert driver, in a comfortable, air conditioned bus
- All lodging and taxes at resorts with private bathrooms (based on double occupancy)
- All meals (Dinner on Day 1 - breakfast on Day 13)
- All Tours and Activities:
  - Guided City tour of Heredia and Jade Museum
  - Finca Ecoorganica Sarapiquí
  - Guided hikes and Bat Tour at La Tirimbina Biological Reserve
  - Guided hikes at Le Selva Biological Reserve
  - Safari Boat Tour on the Sarapiquí River
  - Los Bajos del Toro Waterfall Tour
  - Alas del Destino Butterfly Farm
  - Cooking Class and Dancing Lesson at Finca 360
  - Laguna Rio Cuarto kayak Tour
  - Mistico Park Hanging Bridges
  - Guided Arenal Volcano National Park Hike
  - Ecotermes Hot Springs
  - Admission to Bosque Nuboso El Cocora
  - Guided Cloud Forest Hikes
  - Coffee Plantation Tour

### Price does not include:

- Roundtrip airfare to/from the Juan Santamaría International Airport (SJO), Alajuela Province, Costa Rica
- Travel insurance
- Personal expenses (including sundries, laundry, alcohol and souvenirs)
- Anything that is not mentioned in the itinerary
- Tips for guides and bus driver

**Please note:** This tour will accommodate a variety of fitness levels but to fully enjoy the activities, it is best to be in good physical shape as we will be hiking on uneven surfaces in the rainforest and other ecosystems.