

Places to visit

1. Curú National Wildlife Refuge

Curú is a private property declared National Wildlife Refuge. Beaches, mangrove swamps and beautiful forested hills constitute it. The Refuge is flanked by sedimentary rock's hills, which form cliffs and inlets.

Some animals that one may observe in the refuge are: garrobos, iguanas, deer, congo and carablanca monkeys, raccoons, coyotes, pizotes, tepezcuintles and other. Likewise, more than 100 species of birds have been identified there. Mollusks and crustaceans can be found in its ponds and rocky areas.

2. Cabo Blanco Absolute Nature Reserve

Located 10 kilometers from Montezuma on the south end of the Nicoya Peninsula, this preserve protects 1,272 hectares of land and 1,700 hectares of marine territory. Its primary and secondary (in natural regeneration) forests contain around 140 tree species, both evergreen and deciduous. Wildlife includes deer, Congo and white-faced monkeys, coyotes and squirrels. In terms of seabirds, there are brown pelicans, brown boobies, frigate birds and more.

Cabo Blanco is a lovely area with untouched beaches that can be reached via the existing trails. One of the beaches is called Balsitas, less than two kilometers offshore of which lies Cabo Blanco Island, a rocky, white island that is home to a great number of frigate birds and brown boobies.

3. Playa Tambor

This beach is located inside the Bahía Ballena, which at the same time has Playa Pochote in its northeastern extreme. This bay has the particularity of having two alligator-shaped points. Tambor has leafy coastal vegetation, and a wide range of tourist services. Chosen as the location for Temptation Island 2, a hit Fox TV series, Tambor is now becoming a fast growing tourist travel destination.

A major attraction of this town is that every year whales migrate from the north to the warm waters of Ballena Bay to mate and give birth amid the abundant marine habitat found here. Bordered by two rocky platforms to the north and south, Tambor beach is protected from ocean swells, making it ideal for swimming, snorkeling and diving.



4. Montezuma

Montezuma is a popular hangout for young foreign travelers, who enjoy the village's laidback lifestyle; it is a carefree place with a mellow vibe.

Though this tiny village retains most of its tranquil atmosphere, it is now a huge beach party stop teeming with younger tourists. After the sun sets, Montezuma is the place to be on the peninsula, with plenty of bars and discos found throughout the village. The entire area comes alive with music and dancing and you can find plenty of people relaxing and having a good time.

The beaches along the Montezuma coast are nice and pretty, separated by rocky outcrops and the surfing can get good. Besides surfing snorkeling along the reefs, boogie boarding and horseback riding are a few of the popular activities here.

When in Montezuma, do visit the beautiful Montezuma waterfalls just outside of town. Over 50 feet high forms a refreshing natural pool surrounded by exuberant vegetation, this waterfall is a popular tourist attraction with many people jumping into the shallow pool below.

5. Playa Malpaís

A small coastal community some 150 km west of the capital city San Jose, around 4 km north of the Cabo Blanco National Park, this quaint beachfront village is fast becoming one of Costa Rica's hottest tourist attractions. Extending some 6 kilometers east to west, Mal Pais is a great place to kickback, relax and surf some great waves.

A surfer's paradise with consistent waves, good swells and a long beach break, Mal Pais is a rocky beach with sandy stretches and is covered with pretty seashells. With lush vegetation growing alongside the coast, this uncrowded area is perfect for those who want a peaceful and quiet vacation away from the crowds. Regarded as one of Costa Rica's best Pacific Coast beaches.



With waves that are ideal for the beginner as well as the expert surfer, this beach also offers plenty of water sports such as fishing tours, sport fishing, and scuba diving, kite surfing and snorkeling. For those who prefer some land-based activities there is horseback riding, canopy tours, mountain biking, quad biking and some great hiking trails to explore.

If you are an avid bird watcher, Mal Pais is home to a huge number of coastal and migratory birds that are a treat to see. The nightlife here is also plenty of fun, with a number of bars and parties held on a frequent basis. However, there are plenty of quiet places along the beach's secluded coves, reefs and tide pools to have a romantic evening.

Great weather all year round makes Mal Pais, among Costa Rica's trendiest vacation destinations. Usually uncrowded most of the time enjoys the area's natural beauty with plenty of luxury and affordable accommodations, bars and restaurants dotting the coast. A major pastime here is just relaxing on the beach or sunbathing.

6. Playa Santa Teresa

Playa Santa Teresa is a beautiful white/grey sandy beach with swells that are superb all year round. It has a wide coverage of coastal vegetation and beautiful rocky sectors such as Peñón de Arío, located in the north. Cabo Blanco Absolute Nature Preserve can be watched toward south of Santa Teresa beach.

Fast becoming a surfing hotspot especially among international surfers, Playa Santa Teresa is an ideal beach for surfers of any level. Here, swells range from moderate to strong. While surfing conditions are excellent throughout the year due to consistent off shore winds, the best time to visit Santa Teresa beach is from May to December, which is the "green season". During this time, swells at Playa Santa Teresa are at their peak.

Besides the plenty of surfing opportunities available at the beach, there are other activities that one can enjoy as well. Horseback riding, hiking and canopy tours are also on hand. If you prefer, you can spend a leisurely day just sunbathing on the seashore. Santa Teresa also has plenty of tropical vegetation nearby, and you can also explore Costa Rica's diverse wildlife. You can also arrange a day trip to the gorgeous Cabo Blanco Nature Reserve that is a few minutes away or you could go out to sea for a deep-sea fishing excursion.

7. Playa Carmen

This beach is located in an intermediate point between Santa Teresa and Malpaís, exactly in the sector where the access road to this coastal sector forks: north to Santa Teresa and south to Malpaís. Besides enjoying the sun and the beach, this seaboard is great for hiking and horseback riding, as well as mountain biking and admiring the varied and rich coastal vegetation. Also very visited by the surfers.



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8. Playa Cabuya

It is located seven kilometers south of Montezuma and two kilometers north of the Absolute Nature Preserve of Cabo Blanco. Also communicates with Malpaís through a convenient, very picturesque road for double-traction cars. It's an open-sea and rocky beach. Have plenty coastal vegetation and strong swelling. It possesses a beautiful coastal landscape, where Cabuya Island, which has the particularity to be a pre-Colombian native cemetery stands out. During the low tide you can get there by foot, since there's a rocky platform that unites it with the coast. It is an ideal beach to carry out walks and to observe the nature, especially in Cabo Blanco.

