



**Brattleboro Museum & Art Center
Art, Craft and Nature in Costa Rica**

January 12–22, 2025

Pre-trip extension January 11-12

Itinerary

Trip Leader:

Ken Klothen

Guides:

Lauran Bonilla-Mechav (San Jose only)

Marco Fallas

Contact Sarah Weiler at the museum with questions:

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Saturday, January 11 — Pre-trip Extension

Bienvenidos!

- **Arrival** in San Jose *for those participating in the pre-trip extension*. Transfer to hotel.
- **Informal dinner** at a local restaurant with Ken and Eve Klothen for those arriving in time.

Overnight at **Hilton Garden Inn La Sabana**.

Sunday, January 12 — Pre-trip Extension

Introduction to Costa Rican History, Society, Nature, and Craft

- **After breakfast** at the hotel, we will gather at the National Museum, housed in a former army base and barracks. In 1948, it was from here that the abolition of the Costa Rican army was announced. The museum has been renovated recently to provide a glimpse into the development of contemporary Costa Rican society. It also houses beautiful examples of the mysterious pre-Columbian spheres that were a hallmark of indigenous civilization in the area. The museum's entrance is a lovely butterfly garden — a great way to convince yourself that you have left the cares of life in the United States behind, at least for a while.
- **After touring the museum**, we will visit the smaller museum and shop, *Chieton Moren*. *Chieton Moren* is run by a nonprofit organization devoted to the display and sale of crafts from the several indigenous groups living in Costa Rica.
- **From *Chieton Moren*** we will take a short walking tour past some of San Jose's most appreciated street art. We will also walk through one of the city's older neighborhoods and the lovely *Parque España*.
- **From the downtown**, we will board our bus for the short drive to the outlying town of *Escazú*. Here we will enjoy lunch in the courtyard of one of the few remaining adobe houses in the area, which is now a shop dealing exclusively in contemporary Costa Rican crafts.

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Sunday, January 12

Mas Bienvenidos!

- **Arrival** in San Jose, Costa Rica for those **not** participating in the pre-trip extension. Transfer to hotel.
- **Welcome Dinner** at the restaurant that started San Jose's taste for international cuisine.

Overnight at **Hilton Garden Inn La Sabana.**

Monday, January 13

Introduction to Costa Rica's Art and Culture + Studio Visit

- **Breakfast lecture** at the hotel by Luran Bonilla-Mechav, professor of art history at the National University of Costa Rica.
- **Tour the museums of the National Bank of Costa Rica.** We will tour the famous *Museo de Oro (Gold Museum)*, built to display the Bank's collection of pre-Columbian gold and pottery. This museum was also renovated recently to provide an intricate picture of life in pre-Columbian Costa Rica. The Bank's museums include a numismatic collection and art exhibit with an excellent show of recent work by an artist whose home we will visit later in the trip. The museums are situated in former vaults of the National Bank, an interesting architectural structure descending beneath the central Cultural Plaza.
- **Lunch at *La Criollita*,** a restaurant beloved for its delicious *cocina típica*.
- **After lunch we will tour the National Theater,** one of Costa Rica's most beautiful and unique buildings. The National Theater was built by coffee barons in the late 19th century.
- **In the late afternoon, we will meet with Mauricio Herrero,** a leading young printmaker who has also become a mentor to a stable of emerging artists. We will meet several who will have work on display, and Mauricio will talk about his own work as well.
- **Dinner at *Avila Grill*,** a friendly Venezuelan restaurant serving delicious typical dishes family style.

Overnight at **Hilton Garden Inn La Sabana.**

Tuesday, January 14

*A Major Museum Collection, Studio Visit,
Art Conservation and Restoration, and a Culinary Experience*

- **Breakfast** at the hotel.
- **Tour the Museum of Costa Rican Art**, housed in the former terminal of what was the country's only airport, now the city's central *La Sabana Park*.
- **Early lunch at Soda Tapia**, an iconic *soda*, or diner/luncheonette, known for its 1950s US-style soda shop décor.
- **Studio visit to Rossella Matamoros**. Rossella is one of the 'deans' of the Costa Rican art scene. She is an accomplished artist in many media, including: drawing, sculpture, installation, painting, video, performance art, and set design. Rossella is intensely interested in combining art forms, and in linking old and new. She is also a social activist, using art to empower young women from marginalized communities. Rossella was recently named by *Forbes* one of the 100 most influential women in Central America.
- **In the later afternoon**, we will visit the workshop and gallery space of ConArte, the leading art conservation and restoration consultancy in Costa Rica. The staff at ConArte always offer us a fascinating glimpse into the intricacies of their work — which has ranged from restoring a client's beloved childhood toy to restoring all the artwork in the Grand Salon of the National Theater.
- **Fine dining in small groups**. By now you are sophisticated *josefinos y josefinas*, ready to sample the upscale restaurants of the region on your own. We will divide our group into sub-groups to visit some of the region's finest restaurants. Each group will be joined by someone from Costa Rica's art world for lively conversation and a fun evening.

Overnight at Hilton Garden Inn La Sabana.

Wednesday, January 15

Studio Visits

- **Breakfast** at the hotel.
- **Studio visit to Adrian Arguedas.** We will leave the city for the outlying town of *Barva de Heredia*, where we will visit the studio of one of Costa Rica's most celebrated painters and printmakers. Both the town of Barva and Adrian are steeped in rich folklore traditions that influence Adrian's work — as do the politics of Central America.
- **After our visit,** we will have lunch at the restaurant of the *Hotel Bougainvillea*, a beautiful country hotel with spectacular gardens that we can explore.
- **Studio visit to Philip Anaskin.** We will then journey farther into the countryside to visit Phillip Anaskin. Phillip is a young figurative painter who was named Costa Rica's top visual artist in 2023. His family emigrated to Costa Rica from Russia when he was two years old. His powerful work focuses on a variety of social issues. Phillip's studio is on his family's compound, where his sister Olga and her husband, both highly regarded artists, also live and work.
- **Upon our return to San Jose,** we will enjoy a late-afternoon visit to the studio of Carolina Guillermet. Carolina produces beautiful abstract works in a variety of media, exploring the interplay of color and emotion.
- **Dinner at Cafe Otoya,** a long-time artists' hangout that always has something interesting hanging on the walls and coming out of the kitchen.

Overnight at Hilton Garden Inn La Sabana.

Thursday, January 16

Studio Visit and Transfer South

- **Early morning breakfast** at the hotel, then departure. (Some luggage may be stored at the hotel, as we will be returning for the night before we leave Costa Rica.)
- **Gallery visit to ArtEspacio 741,** a gallery owned by painters Florencia Urbina and Deirdre Hyde, who have hung a show of their work solely for us.
- **From ArtEspacio,** we will head for lunch (on your own) to the food court at *Plaza Tempo* — definitely not your average mall food court, it is modeled after Madrid's famous *Mercado de San Miguel*.

- **After lunch we will board the bus** for the drive south to Dominical on the Pacific coast — an approximately 3.5 hour drive. We'll stop halfway in Tarcoles for ice cream at the Pop's (Costa Rica's national ice cream chain, featuring tropical fruit flavors!) and a glimpse at the residents of the banks of the Tarcoles River.

*Dinner and overnight at **Hotel Cuna del Angel**.*

Friday, January 17

River Cruise and Archeological Site

- **Optional guided bird walk** on hotel grounds for early risers.
- **Breakfast** at the hotel.
- **Zipline tour or guided nature walk** at *Hacienda Baru*, a private nature reserve encompassing multiple habitats — ocean beach, riverine zone, mangrove, secondary forest, and primary rainforest. *Hacienda Baru* hosts healthy, sustaining populations of many species of birds, amphibians, reptiles and mammals. The reserve prides itself on hiring guides from the immediate local area and training them to professional licensure level, as well as employing local people in all of its other operations.
- **Lunch at *Soda Roger***, a local place with a beautiful view of the famous “Whale’s Tail” formation off the Uvita beach.
- **Balance of afternoon at leisure:** hotel pool, air conditioning, bar, or additional guided nature walk in the area.
- **Dinner at *Restaurante Los Laureles in Uvita***. This is Ken and Eve’s (and many other locals’) favorite place to dine. Also the home of absolutely the best fish tacos and *patacones* in the universe (seriously) — *patacones* are fried non-ripe plantains, topped here with a variety of meat and vegetables to make *nacho patacones*.

*Overnight at **Hotel Cuna del Angel**.*

Saturday, January 18

Rainforest Adventures

- **Optional guided bird walk** on hotel grounds for early risers.
- **Breakfast** at the hotel.
- **Boat trip** to view wildlife on the *Siepre River*.
- **Visit archaeological site** at *Finca 6*.
- **Lunch on your own** en route.
- **Picnic dinner** of Argentine empanadas and pizza at Ken and Eve's home in Uvita.

Overnight at **Hotel Cuna del Angel**.

Sunday, January 19

Transfer to the Highland Coffee Country

Carry a light sweater and long pants for mornings and evenings.

- **Breakfast** at the hotel.
- **Morning at leisure**; guided nature walk in the area for those who wish.
- **Late morning departure for Copey** in the Dota region of the Los Santos highlands.
- **Lunch en route at a local *soda*** with beautiful views of the valley below.
- **Tour of an organic farm** growing many high-elevation fruits, for which this region is esteemed.
- **Afternoon check-in** at Toucanet Lodge.
- **Dinner at the lodge**, which serves impeccably fresh trout from nearby trout farms just up the road.

Overnight at **Toucanet Lodge**.

Monday, January 20

The Magical Quetzal and Costa Rica's Grano de Oro

- **Early light breakfast** at the lodge.
- **Early morning tour to view quetzals**, the beautiful long-tailed green bird sacred to the Maya.
- **Lunch at *Paraíso del Quetzal Lodge***, an eco-lodge that coordinates the cooperative effort to track quetzals' locations for groups like ours.
- **Tour of the Coopedota coffee cooperative plant** to learn about the process of producing coffee from plant to roaster. We'll also receive an introduction to cupping, a technique for assessing characteristics of various beans and roasts.
- **Dinner at the lodge.**

Overnight at Toucanet Lodge.

Tuesday, January 21

Return to San Jose

- **Breakfast** at the lodge.
- **Morning departure** for San Jose.
- **Lunch en route.**
- **Studio visit to Rolando Faba**, whose work we first encountered at the museums of the National Bank of Costa Rica.
- **Return to the hotel;** balance of afternoon at leisure.
- **Farewell Dinner at *Restaurante Sofia***, in *Barrio Escalante*, San Jose's booming restaurant district. *Sofia* is one of the district's older restaurants, a Mediterranean food stalwart that has been popular with *josefinos* for a decade or more.

Overnight at Hilton Garden Inn La Sabana.

Wednesday, January 22

Don't Say Adios, Say Hasta La Próxima, Costa Rica

- **Breakfast** at the hotel.
- **Transportation to the airport will be provided** for your flight, arranged to arrive at the recommended time of two hours prior to takeoff.

PLEASE NOTE:

- All activities are subject to change based on weather, road, or other conditions or factors not subject to the control of the trip leaders and guides. A sense of flexibility and openness to the unexpected will greatly enhance your enjoyment of this trip.
- The workday in Costa Rica begins in the wee hours of the morning for many, and delivery vehicles frequently work at night to avoid heavy traffic. Also, all manner of birds tend to announce the dawn in the manner of, well, birds. If you are a light sleeper please consider bringing earplugs or a white noise generator of your choice.

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