



## THE MOUNTBATTEN SCHOOL

MRT/JHS

21 March 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

### **Expedition to Costa Rica, Easter holidays 2025 (dates to be confirmed)**

We are delighted to be able to offer your child an exciting opportunity with the Geography and Spanish departments to visit Costa Rica during the Easter holidays 2025. Once the official dates for the holidays have been confirmed by Hampshire County Council, we will be able to confirm the expedition dates with our tour provider.

Costa Rica is a Spanish-speaking country which benefits from a tropical climate and its tropical rainforest is host to over 4% of the total number of species known worldwide making it incredibly biodiverse. There are numerous opportunities to study physical geography, including the structure of tropical rainforests, species adaptation, ecosystem benefits, geothermal activity and sustainable management. Furthermore, students will have the invaluable opportunity to immerse themselves in the target language of Spanish and explore the diverse culture of Costa Rica, thus improving their communication and resilience skills. We will be exploring a number of themes and concepts that are linked across the Geography and Spanish curricula as well as giving our students the opportunity to develop their cooperation, leadership and curiosity.

The expedition may be a 'once in a lifetime' experience for your child, providing an insight into a completely different and fascinating culture.

The provisional itinerary is: (please note that dates will be added with confirmation from Hampshire County Council).

- Day 1** Flight from London to San Jose, Costa Rica. Transfer to hotel. Time to relax and meet our local guide.
- Day 2** Overland and boat trip to Tortuguero National Park. (Tortuguero means 'turtle' in Spanish). Boat excursion along the rainforest canals to see the wildlife, including sloths, monkeys, great blue heron, iguanas and lizards. Guided tour of the local village and the Caribbean Conservation Corporation Visitor's Centre based on the turtle conservation projects taking place in the area.

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- Day 3** Guided rainforest hike through the national park. At the end of the hiking trail, we will visit the beach where thousands of sea turtles come each year to lay their eggs. There will be plenty of opportunities to see a variety of wildlife so have those binoculars ready!
- Day 4** Travel day. Overland trip to visit a chocolate producer at Tirimbina Rainforest Centre and a good place to stock up on souvenirs to bring back home! Students will have the opportunity to see the full process of the production of chocolate and learn about how the ancient Aztecs and Mayans invented this delicious food! Students will have the opportunity to go into the rainforest to search for chocolate beans and open the cacao fruits themselves. After this, we continue on to the Arenal Volcano.
- Day 5** Time to explore the Arenal Hanging bridges which are a series of suspension bridges and walkways which go through the canopy of the rainforest, giving students a very rare view at one of the most biodiverse layers of the tropical rainforest! Visit to the Baldi Hot Springs where students will have an opportunity to bathe in the hot springs and enjoy a number of waterslides.
- Day 6** Our guide will take us to the famous Arenal Sky Trek zip line canopy tour which is operated by experienced guides with all safety equipment provided. This involves a series of high wires which will see students zoom through the forest canopy clipped into a harness. Once back on the ground, there will be a visit to the Sloth Sanctuary to see the work that they are doing to provide care and rehabilitation for animals which have been injured or otherwise cannot be returned to the wild.
- Day 7** Visit to the Malekus Community where students will learn about local and traditional customs including the use of medicinal plants, how local infrastructure is built and how these communities live sustainably with the physical environment. Students will also be able to learn some of the native Maleku language and take part in a traditional Maleku meal for lunch. The afternoon sees a visit to a waterfall in La Paz where students will see a wide variety of animals, plants and insects as well as the largest butterfly farm in the world!
- Day 8** Transfer back to San Jose. If time, students will have an opportunity to explore parts of the city.
- Day 9** Flight from San Jose, Costa Rica to London.

We will be travelling with a reputable travel company, 'Kipling Tours', who are experienced in successfully arranging school trips (including our Azores expedition). We will be staying in 3-star accommodation at various locations in Costa Rica. **The cost of the trip will be approximately £2,950** and will include all travel expenses, accommodation, breakfast, packed lunch and dinner during the visit. It will also include all entry fees and excursion costs. As you will be aware, the final price cannot be confirmed until the airlines release the flights (usually 12 months before departure date). Students will require their own passport.

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Teachers accompanying residential visits carry an enormous responsibility for the students in their care. We therefore reserve the right to refuse a place to any student whose behaviour in school has been *or becomes a problem*.

You can apply for a place by completing the registration form below and paying a **£200.00 deposit** via Scopay (if your child is unsuccessful in gaining a place, the deposit will be refunded). The registration form and deposit must be completed by **Friday 21 April 2023**.

If your child is successful in gaining a place on this residential visit, we will inform you by email after the deadline for deposits. We will set up the schedule of payments on Scopay and when you sign into your Scopay account you will be able to activate alerts for when payments are due. The payment plan will require £150.00 per month from May 2023 up to the final payment of £200.00 in February 2025. **Please note** that this payment plan does not require payments to be made in the months of December 2023, January 2024, December 2024 and January 2025. You will find a link to the registration form below.

Click here: [Expedition to Costa Rica 2025 Sign-Up](#)

Having secured a place, should you wish to cancel your child's place, the school will try to fill the place from any waiting list. If this is not possible, the deposit will be lost and further cancellation charges made by the travel company will be incurred. These will vary according to the notice given.

You may, of course, make a claim on the insurance purchased as part of the trip, if your cancellation comes within the terms of the policy. Please bear in mind that the itinerary may have to change due to conditions or circumstances beyond the school's control.

We will be running a **briefing for parents on Wednesday 19 April** at 6.00pm in the Lantern Theatre, where we will outline the itinerary and answer any questions you may have. Please indicate your attendance on [The Costa Rica Expedition 2025 Parent Briefing Form](#).

If you have any further enquiries do not hesitate to contact Miss Roodt or Miss Gonin via [info@mountbatten.hants.sch.uk](mailto:info@mountbatten.hants.sch.uk) with 'Costa Rica 2025' as the subject title. May we take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support of the Geography and Spanish departments.

Yours sincerely

Miss Megan Roodt  
Coordinator of Humanities/Head of Geography

Miss Virginie Gonin  
Head of Modern Foreign Languages

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