

2 Girls Who Travel

Take Costa Rica

By 2 Girls Who Travel: Valerie Jones & Kim Floyd

Armed with a love for culture, adventure, food, arts and entertainment – and equipped with a laptop, camera and multiple cellular devices – 2 Girls Who Travel has a mission to share their journey with the world. Throughout their travels, they conduct exclusive interviews, write about cool finds, give destination-specific travel tips and provide their takes on the best food and drinks and so much more. Embodying two different kinds of travelers – Val is the adventure-seeking millennial and Kim is the cultured lover of luxury – readers will learn more about them as they share their experiences traversing the globe! Subscribe to the 2 Girls Who Travel blog 2girlswhotravel.com



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How do we describe five days in paradise? It's simple ... La Pura Vida.

For those unfamiliar with the phrase, La Pura Vida – which translates to The Pure Life in English – is pure optimism and positivity for Costa Ricans. Everybody uses the phrase there. It's like their mantra – basically, they're saying take it easy and enjoy life! It's customary to end every conversation with it and after being in Costa Rica just one day, it certainly became part of our vocabulary.

There's so much to say for the beautiful Central American country of Costa Rica and fortunately we were able to explore a decent part of it – from flying in to the airport in the capital San Jose, the scenic ride to Jaco Beach (where our condo was located) and visiting Manuel Antonio National Park.

Great food, adventure and scenery abounds in Costa Rica and we were ready for it all! Jaco is a busy beach town located on the Pacific Coast of Puntarenas, Costa Rica. It attracts a young, lively crowd with its easy access to the beach (our condo was beachfront) and strip of night clubs, bars and restaurants. But Costa Rica is large, so if you're traveling with family, and looking for more family-friendly areas, you'll have no trouble finding them. We suggest searching for family-friendly resorts!

Keep reading to check out our list of things you must do if you visit Costa Rica!

Top 5 Things You Must Do in Costa Rica:

For a detailed description of all we did in Costa Rica, visit our blog 2girlswhotravel.com.



1 Go ziplining. If you crave adventure and want to experience a one-of-a-kind view of the rainforest, then ziplining is your answer. It's such a freeing feeling to glide high above the trees and live to tell about it! And if you're able, invest in a GoPro and snap it onto your helmet so you can save and share the memories and experiences with family and friends.



2 Go to the beach. Seriously, any beach. Costa Rica has plenty ... and they're beautiful! Think white sand beaches and crashing waves. Not only do they make good photo ops, but some of the more secluded beaches – like the beaches at Manuel Antonio National Park, for example, which are only accessible by visitors to the park – make for a more private, less crazed beach experience. Soak up some sun, take a swim or read a book – whatever floats your boat.



3 Befriend the locals. This is a 2 Girls Who Travel tip any time you are vacationing: meet the locals! Don't be afraid to strike up a conversation with someone at the bar or ask a shop owner the best place to go for live music on a weekend. Locals are great for advice because they have no bias. They have no obligation to tell you to go somewhere, so they'll give you the truth, based off their own experience. And who would know where to find the best casado in Jaco than a native Costa Rican? Locals can share with you the hidden gems, the best eating spots only a local would know and even offer valuable tips on how to get around. And who knows? You may make some new friends or travel buddies!



4 Visit the hot springs. We wish we could say we did this on our trip to Costa Rica, but due to time constraints and the fact that Costa Rica's most popular hot spring, located at the Tabacon Grand Spa Thermal Resort, was a four-hour drive away, we weren't able to go. However, after speaking with friends who visited the hot springs and seeing the pictures, we are completely confident in listing this as a must-see for Costa Rica travelers. The scenery is spectacular – and words just don't do it justice. While the hot springs are lovely in the daytime, they make a romantic backdrop at night. Trust us ... just go!



5 Eat an authentic Costa Rican meal. This pretty much goes without saying. Any time you visit a different region, you have to try the local food. And in Costa Rica, your best shot at that would be eating casado, which is a traditional Costa Rican dish which typically consists of rice, beans, plantains, salad and your choice of chicken, pork or fish. We had a lot of casado in Costa Rica and the meal varies slightly by cook and restaurant, so try a few different ones and pick your favorite!

