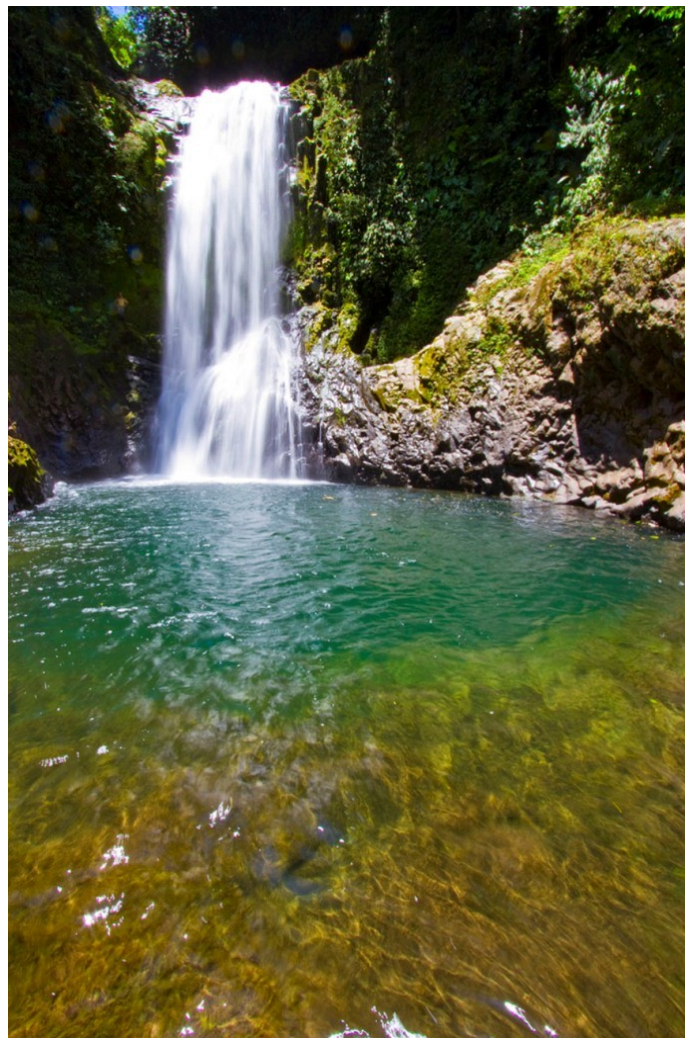


THE COSTA RICA MOUNTAIN & COAST EXPERIENCE

Adventure and Eco-travel for Jewish Young
Professionals the Pura Vida Way!

August 9-18, 2013

- ▶ Tropical beaches on the Caribbean
- ▶ White water rafting in jungle (Pacuare River - Class III-IV Rapids)
- ▶ 'Fly' over the rainforest on Zipline Jungle Tour
- ▶ Culturally and ecologically friendly rainforest guided treks.
- ▶ Shabbat with the San Jose Jewish Community (optional)
- ▶ Service project with local indigenous community
- ▶ Visit a Jewish owned ecological farm, home to untouched rainforest and amazing waterfalls
- ▶ Feel the Earthy vibe of Puerto Viejo, a happening Caribbean haven.
- ▶ Local guides and tours ensure that the indigenous communities benefit from tourism revenues and protect the environment.
- ▶ Caribbean cooking class – kosher style!
- ▶ Explore Tortuguero National Park, its natural canals and its wildlife of birds, crocodiles, monkeys and more - optional turtle nesting tour!
- ▶ Most of the meals included in price!



EVERYTHING to the left is included in our trip. These adventures are paid for already – including a swim in the pool above – just imagine that!

You may, but you do not need to spend another dollar on an adventure – it's all priced into our packaged tour.

The 9 day Summer Costa Rica Caribbean Experience for Young Jewish Professionals (for singles in their 20s - mid 40s) this Summer offers a diverse adventure that combines the Caribbean Highlands of Costa Rica – with its breathtaking tropical beaches. It begins by visiting the capital San Jose and the local Jewish community, after which we go on an amazing whitewater rafting run down to the Caribbean Lowlands, with their tropical beaches, unique flora and fauna, active nightlife, and indigenous culture - where we will also participate in a day of service benefiting one of the communities; it continues with a visit to Tortuguero National Park, with its majestic jungle canals and the late-night ritual of endangered turtle nesting on its beach; and it ends in the highlands, with their lush mountainous rainforest, waterfalls, freshwater pools and serenity - spending Shabbat while based at a cool Jewish owned eco-farm on the slopes of Volcan Turrialba.



Zipline adventure in the jungle!

This complete tour package provides a diverse and exciting adventure-experience brimming with activities (including chill time), all in a short but long week, and all in the beautiful and peaceful paradise called Costa Rica. It offers a mosaic for all your senses, focusing on the contrast between the highlands and the lowlands-coast. So come and spend an amazing week in the Costa Rican Caribbean!

We take the environment seriously, and plan our trips in accordance with the guidelines of eco-tourism: minimizing environmental damage through low impact travel, supporting local environmental projects and indigenous communities, and learning about the culture and natural environment of the places visited.

As we say in Costa Rica, Pura Vida!

Trip webpage: <http://www.costaribbean.com/august-10-18-2013-jewish-yp-caribbean-experience.html>

The Costa Rica Caribbean Experience
info@costaribbean.com
US: +1-202-599-0655
www.costaribbean.com

Trip itinerary

Please note that times of activities and locations might change due to unexpected circumstances. For example, local weather and road conditions might result in changes in the itinerary.

Friday, August 9th

The trip officially starts on Saturday, but most of you are arriving a day earlier and visiting San Jose and the Jewish Community.

After landing, you will be taken to our hotel, [Apartotel Cristina](#), where we will be staying the next two nights. You might have time to rest a bit and explore downtown San Jose (depending on when you land), before heading to services and Kabbalat Shabbat, and a communal dinner (oneg) at the [Congregación B'nei Israel](#), the liberal synagogue (affiliated with both the Reform and Conservative movements).



Congregación B'nei Israel San Jose

Candle lighting is at 5:38, so we will drive to the synagogue before this time, and light candles – we will also take the time before Shabbat to learn a bit about the Jewish community in San Jose.

San Jose Shabbat times: Light Candles at: 5:38 pm - Shabbat Ends: 6:28 pm

Services begin at 6:30, and we will be participating in a tri-lingual service – with a tri-lingual siddur unique to this community.

After services we will walk back to the hotel (approx 30-40 min).

For our time in San Jose we will be staying in the [Apartotel Cristina](#), conveniently located on the north side of [La Sabana Metropolitan Park](#), the largest urban park in Costa Rica. The hotel is 1.5 miles from downtown San Jose, and within walking distance from both synagogues we will be visiting.

We will be staying in large, comfortable large and fully equipped [two bedroom apartments](#) . There is minisplit air conditioning in every bedroom.

- [Buffet breakfast](#) is served next to the [pool](#) from 6:30AM to 10:00AM
- Complete daily cleaning and linen service
- Free high speed Internet connection (up to 6 Mb) in each apartment and wireless in public areas, plus a computer room available 24 hours a day with 4 computers connected to high speed internet
- Electronic safe in each apartment large enough to fit a laptop
- Access to adjoining fitness facilities
- Bilingual 24 hour front desk staff
- Currency exchange
- [Swimming pool](#)



Saturday, August 10th:

Morning option A:

This morning, those that wish to will be heading to Shabbat morning services at the impressive Modern Orthodox synagogue in San Jose, that is located in a complex that also hosts the [headquarters of the local Jewish community](#) (Mikva, religious school, kosher restaurant).

Services begin at 9:00l, followed by a communal lunch.

After services you will return back to your hotel (walking distance for shomrei Shabbat – about 30 minutes).

For more info, please read [this Hadassah article](#) , this [virtual tour](#), and this [article from Haa'retz](#) for more info about the Jewish Community in Costa Rica.



Shaarei Zion synagogue in San Jose

Morning option B:

Five of you have decided to go on the [Poás Volcano](#) tour this morning.

The Poas Volcano, a National Park, reaches to the height of 2,300 meters above sea level. It is an active volcano with a beautiful blue crater lake at its summit, located amidst alpine cloud forest. After getting to the park early, visiting the summit and (weather permitting) viewing the active and dormant craters, you will visit the [Doka Estate](#), a coffee plantation, where your guide will explain a bit about the coffee crop, its cycle and its importance to Costa Rica.



The Poas Volcano Crater Lake

Your guide will be the highly professional Felipe Cachon, a senior guide from [Get To Costa Rica](#) who will give you a great intro to Costa Rica.

Pick up from hotel: 7:30 am. Return - about 1:30.

Cost: \$65 per person, and includes: Transportation, a bilingual driver/guide, entrance fee to the National Park, short visit to coffee plantation.

Bring: comfortable walking shoes (tennis or hiking) and a windbreaker or light rain jacket.

Afternoon:

During the afternoon, we will be able to explore San Jose – we will be staying about a mile west of downtown, and it should be a nice Shabbat walk to some of the main attractions, such as the Plaza De La Cultura, the National Theater and the National Museum.



Downtown San Jose

We do have an option for a professional walking tour – you will get more details about that on Friday.

You can also decide to stay around the hotel, chill in the pool or walk to the Sabana Park, the largest urban park in Costa Rica, which is close to the hotel.

This evening, with the entire group present, we will all go out for dinner in downtown San Jose, and, depending on how we feel, check out the Latino vibe of the local nightlife.

Sunday, August 12th:

Whitewater Rafting Adventure

Pickup: 5:50 am from hotel

Today we will be picked up early in the morning to go on a day long [whitewater rafting adventure](#) down the Pacuare River, known as one of the top five rafting rivers in the world for its scenery and rapids (Class III-IV). You will be traveling to the Caribbean Highlands, where the trip begins – the run is 18 miles long, taking 3-1/2 to 5 hours - depending on water level.



Tour participants rafting on the Pacuare River – what an experience!

A big breakfast and hearty lunch will be served at the company's operation center before the trip and on a river beach, respectively. When you are done, you will be driven to our hotel in Puerto Viejo on the Caribbean Coast.

You will be able to leave your luggage/bags in the company's Explorations Center during the trip.

About the rafting trip:

Pacuare is world famous for its sheer beauty. A true river gorge, it is flanked by steep, green walls. Here you enjoy the feeling of total isolation from urban life and the realness of being connected with nature. You see waterfalls cascade into the river from both sides as colorful, tropical birds fly right over your head. Amazing views of this virgin tropical rainforest area appear before your eyes as you descend this true exploratory land. Wildlife is abundant, with sloth, toucans, parrots, coatis, morpho butterflies and colorful frogs being common sights.

The white water that is equally exciting. It is not an overly challenging river, but it has a lot rapids, therefore giving you an adventure filled with lots of fun. The 18 mile one day run includes a total of 52 rapids. Few rivers in the world can offer you so many.

Upon arrival to the river we will gear you up with a life jacket, helmet and paddle and then brief you with a full safety orientation talk. Finally, it is time to take off down the rapids!

The first 4 miles consist of fun class II-III rapids which is a perfect time to test your new river skills and gain confidence in your team. Here you can find pockets of secondary growth forest that is extremely beautiful. After about 40 minutes we will enter the famous Pacuare River Gorge, which is 5 miles of some of the best white water Costa Rica has to offer. The rapids here are "Terciopelo snake", "Double drop", "Upper and Lower Huacas", "Pin ball" to name a few. You will also see the Huacas waterfall, a 150 foot dramatic drop into the river.

After the gorge the river opens up to a 5 mile stretch on the Valle del Pacuare, where the river has a different character. It is wide open, which gives you the opportunity to rest a bit and take the opportunity to do some wildlife spotting. The main rapids here are "Cimarrones", "The Play Hole", "El Indio" and "Magnetic Rock". The forest remains just as lush, and the rapids just as fun.

We finish near Siquirres, at our own private Exploration Center, where you can take a shower, change and enjoy the gardens and terrace while having a beer or two and reflecting with your new friends about the great adventure you just shared!

After the trip, you will be taken to our hotel in Puerto Viejo on the Caribbean coast, arriving at about 5:00 pm, enough time to prepare for dinner and a night in the village. Depending on when you arrive, you could go for a sunset dip in the beautiful Playa Negra beach.

Puerto Viejo is one of the most happening places in Costa Rica - a place where surfers, travelers, backpackers and the counter-culture crowd blend with the local Latino, Afro-Caribbean and Bribri indigenous cultures, with its pristine coastline acting as a backdrop. Find more information about the town here: www.puertoviejoweb.com.

Upon arrival, we will be checking into the [Caribe Town Resort](#)!

The resort offers offer a saline pool with swim up bar in a magical oasis that feels newly discovered every day. Nestled in protected jungle lands of the Refugio Nacional Gandoca-Manzanillo, Caribe Town this is a small and eco-conscious resort. Enjoy onsite massage and the conveniences of home with high speed internet and breakfast prepared hot, natural and fresh, just for you!



How is Caribe Town green? The pool is saline (salt), they do not use chemicals and it is maintained at a fresh 3% (the ocean is 6% salt for reference). They do not use chemicals on-site for cleaning, just lots of vinegar, baking soda, etc :) They recycle, compost, reduce and reuse whenever possible. They collect rain water for the dry season to take care of the gorgeous gardens. They do not use fertilizer or weed killer in the gardens and all varieties of plants have been obtained by making connections with neighbors, who are happy to share the abundance and variety of plants in the area (nothing is purchased from outside the area). They support the local community recycling program, as well as the beach clean up "Bandera Azul" program. They use fruits grown on-site as often as possible for breakfast, currently including bananas, papayas, oranges, cas, zapote and araza. All of the hotel supplies are purchased through local (Costa Rican) businesses. They have ties to the local Tico and Indigenous community and the chocolate massages and facials offered on-site use the 1st press of the organic chocolate made by the Tsiru-ue indigenous family at their farm in Hone Creek.



For guests, they make homemade bread and homemade jam, in addition we offer eggs cooked to order, chorizo and fruits, as well as coffee, tea and juice. Saturdays in addition to the regular breakfast they make pancakes from scratch and French toast from their homemade bread - both served with homemade syrup and on Sundays in addition to the regular breakfast offerings we also make the Costa Rican gallo pinto. The only rule of breakfast is that everyone leaves with a happily full stomach, so it is a little bit like a breakfast buffet cooked to order :)

After checking in to our hotel, we will be heading out to eat dinner at one of the many fine restaurants Puerto Viejo has to offer. Later, we can enjoy live Reggae music with mojitos, daiquiris or fresh Pina Colada!

Monday, August 12th:

Pick up - 8:30 am from hotel!

Good morning! Today you will go on the Animal Rescue Centre, Chocolate Lady and Waterfall combo trip!

The Jaguar Rescue Center

The [Jaguar Animal Rescue Center](#) offers shelter, treatment and protection to ill or wounded wild animals in the South Caribbean area.

The Center is run by Sandro, an expert in poisonous snakes, and Encar, a biologist with a vast experience with looking after wild mammals in captivity.

Sandro and Encar started the Jaguar Center with the aim of saving the lives of as many animals that come in to the shelter, as well as trying to re-introduce them to their natural habitat, the forests of the South Caribbean.

Their house has become a sanctuary for wild animals and they try to accommodate their jungle guests as well as they can: terrariums for the snakes, large spaces for the Congo monkeys to rest in after spending the whole day playing in the garden's trees, special quarantine cages for the animals arriving seriously injured and also a large supply of medicine and an operating theatre for emergency surgery if necessary.

Your visit helps support the work of the centre!

Got Goat's Milk?

If you're visiting the center, you can help out by bringing with you to Costa Rica a can or two of [Meyenberg Powdered Goat's Milk](#) for the abandoned Howler Monkeys and Sloth babies at the center. They also need a product called [Bene-Bac](#) which is used for treating animals with intestinal problems. Unfortunately, neither of these products is available in Costa Rica.

Chocolate Lady



Tour participant with young howler monkey at the Jungle Rescue Center

Next we will visit an indigenous family where they make chocolate from the Cacao trees growing beside their house. You will learn and see demonstrated the process by which the cacao fruit is transformed into delicious and unique chocolate. You will have an opportunity to purchase some chocolate or other indigenous made handicrafts here. Note that part of the family speaks very limited English so if you don't speak Spanish your explanation of the process may take the form of a pantomime!



Traditional chocolate making at the BriBri reservation

Waterfall

Finally, you and your driver/guide will take a short hike (about 20 minutes through the jungle where you can see local plants and butterflies) to the Volio waterfall, a 12m high waterfall in the Talamanca mountains, where you can swim if you like. Should this waterfall be too dry, we will take you to an other waterfall in the area where you can enjoy swimming in the pristine nature pools.



Note: Your feet might get wet while exploring the waterfall, so make sure to wear appropriate shoes or bring an extra pair for changing after the hike

The afternoon is open, so you can chill at the hotel or check out Puerto Viejo, but I suggest we enjoy an afternoon swim along the magnificent **Punta Uva beach** south of the hotel- thought by many as the most beautiful beach in Costa Rica!

Other options: Rent bicycles and tour the beaches, take a surfing lesson, go to the local butterfly or botanical gardens!



Punta Uva Beach

Cruiser bikes are one of the best ways to get around the Caribbean (Highly recommended)!

Cruise down the road from Playa Chiquita towards Punta Uva, checking out the different beaches along the way. Bikes can be rented at or near the hotel for about \$5 a day.

At about 6 pm, it is time to learn to prepare our dinner – Caribbean style: We will take a Caribbean cooking lesson, kosher style – i.e. fish and veggies!

Using fruits and veggies typical to Coastal Talamanca, you'll learn to cook in the traditional Caribbean way, such as patacones, batidos, or fish in Caribbean sauce, etc.

Our host is Junior Palmar, not only an awesome local guide, but also the son one of Puerto Viejo's most famous and favorite cooks, miss Lidia. He invites you into his home. Mind now, Juni isn't a professional culinary instructor but this is real local flavor! Get to know a community's food and you can learn a lot about their culture. Practice your patois (or your Spanish) and learn some recipes you can take home with you, a taste of the Caribbean.

Special Hints: Bring a pen and note book to jot down recipes. Juni speaks the local dialect of English—a bit different from North American or European English



At night we are free to explore the town– all while taking in the special and laid back ambiance of Puerto Viejo. Later, we may hit one of the bars, clubs, or live music venues that dot the town...

Tuesday, August 13th:

The early wake up this morning will take us on a half day hike in the amazing [Gandoca Manzanillo Wildlife Refuge](#) – one of the best trips for wildlife viewing in all of Costa Rica.



Hiking the Gandoca-Manzanillo Wildlife Refuge

We will be picked up from our hotel at 7:45 am, after breakfast.

The hike will take us on some of the Refuge's inner trails, or to explore the bluffs and tiny hidden beaches along the coast. It will include a walk through the primary rainforest to encounter many of its colorful inhabitants and exquisite bird watching with the local naturalist, Tino. This tour is provided by [ATEC](#), a local nonprofit that helps promote culturally and ecologically sound tourism and small-scale, locally owned and responsible businesses in the area.

After the walk we can lunch at [Maxi's Restaurant](#), considered by many to be the best seafood restaurant in the Caribbean (with many veggie friendly options!). Fresh food is served here Caribbean style with a modern twist.

After lunch, we will stay to enjoy the breathtaking and tranquil beaches of Manzanillo (to soothe our bodies from all that hiking!), and stay there until the sunset.

For those interested, snorkeling is available in some of the best tropical reefs Costa Rica has to offer – with the local [Aquamor Marine Adventure Center](#).

We will return to the hotel to chill a bit, and for dinner, we will head to the Israeli owned [Pita Bonita](#) restaurant, serving some of the best Hummus outside of the Holy Land!



Wednesday, August 14th:

Zip Line Adventure!

This morning we will head out on an amazing [Jungle Canopy Tour](#), where we will literally fly through the forest by zipline - a really memorable experience! The zipline has 11 platforms, 4 suspension bridges, 7 cables, 1 shot of Tarzan, and a rock climbing.

Later we will say farewell to Puerto Viejo - We will be leaving our hotel by 11:30.

We will take a ride up the coast to the historic port of Limon, where we will eat



Tour participants on the Jungle zipline

lunch and head to the port of Moin, where we will take a boat ride up the inner coastal canal, bringing us to the tiny island village of Tortuguero.

Along the way, our boat driver/guide Willis will give us an option to observe some of the wildlife that lives along the canal.

In Tortuguero we will check into to the [Rana Roja](#) lodge, its comfortable rooms surrounded by lush vegetation- and enjoy a welcome cocktail!

This lovely lodge has comfortable spacious rooms, with comfortable beds, private bathrooms, hot water, and ceiling fans, and a turtle shaped swimming pool!

The main dining room with soaring ceilings provides first class meals in an atmosphere that reflects and compliments the jungle paradise surrounding it – this is where we will be eating most of our meals!

This late afternoon - evening you will have free time to chill in the hotel, and enjoy the jungle sounds or a swim in the pool.

Later, you can take a boat to go into the village – it has a few bars and could be nice to walk around at night.



Rana Roja Lodge, Tortuguero

The Tortuguero National Park is one of the most varied parks in Costa Rica. It boasts high rainforests, marshy lands, long stretches of beach, and wide open canals perfect for crocodile spotting. It is also one of the most important breeding grounds for the Green Sea Turtle. The wildlife here is rich and diverse with unusually large populations of monkeys, birds, and fish.

The beaches around Tortuguero are key nesting sites for many of the world's most endangered species of sea turtles. The small village, which can be reached only by boat or airplane, is sustained in large part by eco-tourism.

Thursday, August 15th:

Today starts early - 5:20am!

This is a day of jungle exploration in the Tortuguero National Park!

Early Morning Canoe Tour: In the early hours of the morning you will be woken up by a loud noise. What you will hear is not a trumpet or a big bell, but a natural alarm called the Howler Monkey! Drink some coffee and get ready for a very early boat ride. This is the best time to find wildlife along the majestic canals while admiring the beauty that is the Tortuguero National Park. Among the common species of fauna to be found are the howler, white-faced Capuchon and Spider monkeys; crocodiles; iguanas; and the blue heron, aningas, kingfishers and other type of birds. If we look closely, we may see a manatee or the Gaspar fish (considered a living fossil).



Tortuguero national park

Mid-morning walk: A breakfast buffet will be served upon our return. We will briefly rest before heading on a guided walk near the hotel.

Later in the afternoon, we will visit the local village. There is no guided activity here, only a chance to interact, shop, and experience this secluded Tico community. During this time you can also head to the beach and enjoy the Caribbean sands. It is an unguarded beach with strong waves, so swimming is not recommended.

***Tortuguero Hill** is the highest point on the Caribbean side of the country (approximately 119 meters). It is located 10 minutes from the main village just outside a small community called San Francisco. On a clear day a view of Tortuguero and the surrounding areas captures you. If any of you wish, we can organize an afternoon hike to the hill with local guide Ross.*

Relax in the lodge: For the third time today, a meal and relaxation await our return at the lodge. Tonight we can take advantage of all amenities of the resort.

Late night (option): Tonight you will have the option of taking a late night tour, to see the female green or Leatherback turtles, which come



during this season to lay their eggs on the picturesque coast. This tour is not included in the package, and will cost extra (\$20 pp).

Friday, August 16th:

This morning, after breakfast, we will take a boat ride (leaving the village at 9 am) through the landscape the National Park to the village of Pavia, where our driver will take us up into the Caribbean Highlands, passing through the scenery of banana plantations on the way.

For our final weekend we will head to the countryside paradise on the slopes of the Turrialba volcano - Finca Rio Perla (Farm of the Pearl River) - a sprawling 240 acres, including many acres of untouched rainforest. This is where we will spend Shabbat, and our last two nights in Costa Rica. Our welcome to the farm will begin with a check-in and some refreshments, followed by a short orientation walk, where we will get to meet our hosting Tico family, Efrain & Vivian.

FINCA RIO PERLA

High on the Caribbean Highlands of Costa Rica, with elevations ranging from about 1,000 to 2,250 feet (350 to 750 meters), this beautiful eco-farm is blessed with moderate temperatures, great breezes, amazing views, and a relative lack of insects (like mosquitoes).

This farm is a special place. It is home to untouched rainforest on the slopes of Volcan Turrialba, breathtaking waterfalls, refreshing natural pools and streams, and a view that goes on for miles and miles, out to the Caribbean coast. These protected rainforest land on the farm's property are accessible to visitors to enjoy during their stay. Horses, a macadamia grove, and hammocks are available to further enhance this natural experience.



Roey, a tour participant, and Vivian, the farm manager, show off some of the bounty of the organic garden on Finca Rio-Perla: eggs, lettuce and yucca!

Finca Rio Perla is also a working farm, where guests can experience the authentic Costa Rican countryside. A herd of dairy of cows, sheep, free-range hens, tilapia fishponds, organic vegetable gardens, and a grand macadamia plantation each provide ingredients that go straight to the kitchen. Guests can put food on their plates by collecting eggs, milking cows, gardening, nut picking, and fishing. Guests can also help churn cheese and ice cream from the fresh milk.

The farm offers traditional Tico (Costa Rican) food that is primarily vegetarian. Dairy, eggs and fish are harvested onsite and become additional meal ingredients. The kitchen makes all attempts to use farm-grown, locally produced, and/or organic products.

The stay at Finca Rio Perla is hosted a local Tico family, who have created a unique opportunity to explore, experience, and connect with the authentic Costa Rica. This is also a great opportunity to learn and/or practice Spanish and a great opportunity to learn Tico cooking.

Finca Rio Perla is accessible and connected, yet remote and independent. It is located about 60 miles (100 km) east of San Jose and about 40 miles (60km) west of Limon. The farm is connected to the municipal water supplier, electrical grid, and telephone and internet systems.

The farm's working philosophy is based on both traditional practices and new technologies to maintain and nurture the environment. The farm is striving toward organic and natural production and processing practices; using new technologies. It calls its balanced and eclectic approach to sustainable living: *Agro-Eco Pragmatism*.

The farm itself is owned by Dr. Paul Siegel, who has been a Rural Development Consultant with the World Bank for more than 20 years working in Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, Asia, Middle East, and Europe. He was also a professor in the USA (University of Tennessee) and Israel (Tel-Hai College in the Upper Galilee, and the Arava



Delicious veggie breakfast on Finca Rio Perla
(pic by [Matt Miller](#))



Bunk room on Finca Rio-Perla



Chilling on the deck of the main house
(Posada) of Finca Rio-Perla

Institute for Environmental Studies at Kibbutz Ketura). **Paul's vision for the farm is one of creating a thriving ecological community that will abide to sustainable guidelines, and also incorporate Jewish environmental themes.**

On Finca Rio Perla we will be staying in rustic but comfortable rooms, with shared bathrooms and toilets –you will get the room arrangement upon arrival to the farm.

Our orientation tour will be followed by a fresh home-cooked veggie lunch, after which it is time to **saddle up!** From the stables you will leave on a horseback ride towards the upper area of the farm. You will leave the horses near the macadamia processing shed, take a tour of the macadamia plantation, taste some fresh sugarcane, and hike down to the big waterfall (over 100 ft!). For nearly two hours you will take a swim in the cool water at the fall base and enjoy the rainforest around you. You can climb a small waterfall and go swimming right under the big one - an amazing experience! On the way back you will seek out some pipa's (water filled coconuts) to open for a refreshing drink.



Horseback riding on Finca Rio Perla

Due to the size of the group, we will have to split the horseback riding adventure into two: one on Friday afternoon, one on Saturday morning. Those that observe Shabbat will go on the Friday group.

In the afternoon, before Shabbat, we will have time to do as many of the following as each of us chooses:

Tilapia fishing in the farm's fishponds (which will be used for dinner); exploring the farm grounds on your own; stroll to the nearby small waterfalls; play Frisbee; pass a soccer ball, or feel the serenity while lounging on the hammocks.

After our long day, we will sit down for our festive Shabbat meal – a traditional Tico vegetarian dinner, including the tilapia we fished as well as freshly baked challa and some local wine. Dinner will be followed by a free evening to read, drink, play games and fall asleep to the sounds of the jungle around us.



Planting a tree on the farm

Saturday, August 17th

Good morning Finca Rio Perla!

Today is Shabbat, and a day of rest – and depending on what you are up to or your level of Shabbat observance, you can chill during the day, explore the area and/or partake in some farm activities.

Feel free **to wake up early and to milk the dairy cows** – we will use the milk to make cheese later!

Optional farm activities for today:

- ✚ **Plant trees** to help reforest the area and offset travel associated carbon emissions
- ✚ Sow the seeds and cultivate the land at the farm's **organic vegetable and herb garden**,
- ✚ **Collect fresh eggs** from the hen coop,
- ✚ Using machetes, clear brush and pick nuts at the **macadamia grove**.
- ✚ **Tico style cheese/ice cream making workshop**

Sometime in the afternoon we will go on a hike to the small waterfalls near the main house, and if there is interest we could walk back up and explore the larger, more remote waterfalls.

We will also be offering a tour of the farm and its facilities, as well as a talk with Paul about his experiences in with agro-eco rural development.

After dinner and a Havdalah ceremony under the stars, we can get into the mood by watching a rainforest themed film, or taking drinks and playing pool in the Stablo – the old stables converted to a chill out area.



Finca Rio Perla Activities

Sunday, August 18th

Time to say goodbye!

We will leave Finca Rio Perla by 6:45 am, in time to make our flights back home.

*****Please note that the time and location of an activity might change due to unexpected circumstances, such as inclement weather and hazardous road conditions.**



A view of Volcan Turrialba from Finca Rio Perla



August 2012 group on Finca Rio Perla

Practical Details

Dates

The Caribbean Experience trip will take place from Saturday, August 10th to August 18th, 2013 (8 nights in total; 9 nights for those wishing to arrive on Friday). We will be meeting at and leaving the San Jose (the capital) international airport (SJO).

We ask that you plan to be on a flight that will land in San Jose by 4 pm on August 10th. If you decide to arrive a day earlier, please arrive by 3 pm on Friday, August 9th so we can prepare for Shabbat. Your flight home should be no earlier than noon on Sunday, August 18th.

If you observe the Sabbath you have an option of arriving on Friday and spending the weekend in San Jose, attending services in the Jewish community – or arriving Sunday and joining the group in Puerto Viejo.

If you want to arrive a day or two earlier, or choose to leave later, please let us know how we can help you experience more of this magnificent country. We can arrange for a pick-up or drop-off in another part of San Jose at the beginning or end of the trip. Day trips from San Jose include the nearby volcanoes of Poas and Irazu. If you are interested in this option, please let us know!

Accommodations

- In San Jose, you will stay in [Christina Suites](#), a comfortable hotel which is walking distance from the Synagogue and a short ride from downtown, .
- On the Finca Rio Perla farm, guests will stay in rustic but comfortable rooms, with shared bathrooms and toilets.
- For our time in Turtuguero, we will be staying at the tranquil [Rana Roja](#), set in the rainforest right outside the National Park.
- On the southern Caribbean coast we will be staying in a comfortable yet exotic [Caribe Town](#) resort.

Guides

For your Costa Rica Experience, Greener Travel will provide you with an experienced group leader that will escort you for the length of your trip. In various activities, we use the best local specialty guides with years of expertise in introducing tourists to the natural beauty of Costa Rica. We work mostly with local guides as well as with tourism non-profit organizations such as [ATEC](#), which make sure that the local indigenous

communities benefit from tourism revenues while protecting the environment and the traditional way of life.

Transportation

We provide all transfers during the week using an air conditioned van or minibus, driven by a bilingual driver / guide.

Packing list

Before departing, you will receive a comprehensive list of suggested things to bring on the Costa Rica Experience.

Entry Requirements

A valid passport is required for all visitors to Costa Rica. Airlines traveling to Costa Rica require a **passport valid for at least 6 months after the initial flight date** in order to board the flight. US and Canadian citizens do not need a tourist visa to enter the country. Visitors from all other nationalities should check with the Costa Rican Embassy.

Weather

Weather on the trip should be warm and comfortable. On the farm it will be 75 -85 f, though it cools off a *bit* at night, and on the coast should be a bit hotter. It is Costa Rica, and it can rain, so **please bring a poncho or a light and breathable rain coat.**

Health Concerns

No immunizations, shots, inoculations or vaccinations are required to enter Costa Rica.

Electricity

Costa Rica has the same electric system as the United States. Electric outlets are 120 volts / 60 Hz.

Water

Drinking tap water is safe in Costa Rica, though the water on the coast (Caribbean) has an aftertaste and visitors tend to buy bottled water. We suggest you purchase a big water jug when you reach the coast (1 gallon) and use it to refill a smaller bottle – it saves money and is better for the environment. The hotel where we will be staying has a fridge where you will be able to chill your water and store food.

Currency

The Costa Rican currency is the colón (cólores in plural), and the exchange rate is about 500 to one USD. You can change dollars at the airport, or just use a bank/credit card and

withdraw money at the airport. ATMs can be found all over Costa Rica. Keep in mind that there is a few dollars fee for international withdrawals, though from experience it could be safer to travel with a bank card then with a large sum of cash that can get lost/stolen. The hotels you will be staying in will have safes where we can leave valuables and passports during the day.

Pricing

The price of the trip is \$1840.

Price is per person, for double occupancy accommodations. If you register alone (as most attendees do), we will set you up with a roommate for the trip!

Single occupancy is available for an additional fee - please [contact us](#) for more info.

If you are interested in arriving on Friday, August 9th, and would like to participate in Shabbat activities, you will have to add \$85 to the cost.

Great! How do I sign up?

First, please fill out our [tour registration form](#)!

To reserve your spot on the trip, follow the [link to our website](#) to make your secure deposit of \$200 via the Google Checkout system.

Our Costa Rica trips have a maximum of 18 participants, and for this trip we have a limited number of spots left.

As we have reached the minimum needed and called the trip, the \$200 deposit is non-refundable - we need to enforce this policy in order to cover loss from last-minute cancellations.

For more details on our cancellation policies, please see info below.

For general questions about the trip, please write us at: info@costaribbean.com

Please feel free to forward this info to any friends of yours that might be interested in joining us for this week - ask us about our special registration price for groups of two or more that register together!

The cost includes:

- **Transportation and transfers to and from all locations in Costa Rica by a bilingual guide/driver.**
- **Full accompaniment by a Costa Rica Caribbean Experience staff person.**
- **8 nights of double occupancy accommodations in family run hotels and lodges.**
- **Meals included in trip: 8 breakfasts, 2 lunches and 6 dinners!**
- **10 adventure and cultural activities!**
- **All activities and all meals during our 2 nights at the Finca Rio-Perla eco-farm.**
- **Canal Tour, nature hike and tour of village in Tortuguero**
- **One day of amazing whitewater rafting on the Pacuare River (including breakfast/lunch)**
- **Gandoca –Manzanillo Wildlife Hike**
- **Caribbean kosher-style cooking class**
- **Visit to the Jaguar Rescue Center in Puerto Viejo**
- **Chocolate making workshop and demonstration with the BriBri indigenous community**
- **Jungle Canopy / Zipline Adventure**
- **Welcome night dinner in San Jose**
- **Dinner at Pita Bonita in Puerto Viejo**

Please note that if you do not wish to partake in the rafting, canopy tour, and zipline, you may opt out and we will reduce the cost of your trip accordingly.

The cost does not include:

- **Airfare**
- **Costa Rica departure tax of \$28**
- **Optional arrival on Friday, August 9: Shabbat experience in San Jose (\$85)**
- **Traveler insurance (we will be able to arrange this for you if needed)**

- **Some meals on the Caribbean coast and in San Jose**
- **Optional late night turtle nesting tour in Tortuguero**
- **Alcoholic beverages**
- **Tips and gratuities**

Our tours are organized by Greener Travel Company, LLC. The company was founded by Ami Greener, an experienced and enthusiastic environmentalist that has been captivated by the unique beauty of Costa Rica. By forming personal relationships with local providers in Costa Rica (hotel owners, activity outfitters and the staff of Finca Rio-Perla, the amazing farm that we visit), we are able to offer a tailored experience to both individuals and couples traveling alone and looking to explore the area, as well as group tours which a member of our staff or local Costa Rican associates will guide.

Though the dates for this trip are set, if you want to join and cannot take the whole week off from work, we could accommodate you for part of the trip, and price it differently as well.

If you cannot make it on these dates, but would like to plan a visit alone, with a small group of friends or a romantic getaway with a significant other - we can help you plan that trip as well with some of these amazing adventures – we regularly send couples, families and small groups of friends on a tailored Caribbean Experience!

For further information and questions, please contact us at:

Greener Travel LLC
info@costaribbean.com
 US: +1-202-599-0655

Greener Travel Company, LLC Policies for Costa Rica group tours

RESERVATION AND BOOKING

Reservation and Deposit: To reserve your spot in one of our group tours, you must pay your deposit in full. Until you have paid your deposit, your spot may be given away to another traveler. Since our trips are generally limited to 18 participants or less, they do fill up.

Airfare; “Calling” of Trip: Greener Travel generally “calls” our Group Trips after at least 8 people have registered for the trip. At that time, it sends an email to all travelers who have registered, informing them that they can purchase their airfare. **DO NOT**

PURCHASE YOUR AIRFARE UNTIL YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE TRIP HAS BEEN CONFIRMED, YOU HAVE PAID IN FULL AND THE TRIP HAS BEEN “CALLED”.

Possible Delays and Trip Insurance: We strongly encourage all of our travelers to purchase trip insurance. Greener Travel is not responsible for airline delays and cancellations and in most cases will NOT be able to offer any refunds for travelers who miss all or part of their tour due to airline delays and cancellations. Some suggestions are [Travelex](#) and [Travel Guard](#).

Full Payment: Full payment must be made at least 5 weeks prior to the trip departure date or your spot is subject to forfeit to another traveler. Ask us about “early bird” discount for travelers who pay the full amount of a trip prior to the “call” date.

Method of Payment: We accept payment by check or Google Checkout (available on our website). We are offering an additional discount of \$45 for payment by check for travelers registering sufficiently in advance of the departure date. Please make checks payable to:

Greener Travel LLC.

1742 Kalorama Rd. NW

Unit B

Washington, DC 20009

USA

DISCOUNTS

Combination of Discounts: From time to time, Greener Travel may offer certain discounts or coupon codes. Those codes can NEVER be combined. All discounts are always applied to the full price trip (and not the discounted or early bird price).

Bring a Friend Policy: If you and up to three friends register together, Greener Travel will rebate you \$100 and each of your friends \$50 after the trip has been completed.

CANCELLATION AND REFUND

Cancellation by You and Refunds: Up until the trip has been “called”, you may cancel your trip at any time for any reason, and Greener Travel will refund the full amount of your payment, less a \$15 processing fee. After a trip has been “called,” your deposit will not be refunded for any reason, including if your spot is forfeited to another traveler. If you cancel your trip more than 4 weeks prior to the departure date, your cancellation fee shall be \$550, and any amount paid in excess of that amount shall be refunded. If you cancel your trip less than 4 weeks or less prior to the departure date, your cancellation fee

shall be \$800, and any amount paid in excess of that amount shall be refunded. If you cancel your trip less than 2 weeks prior to the departure date, none of your trip is refundable. For this reason, we **STRONGLY** encourage you to purchase travel insurance: some suggestions for such insurance are [Travelex](#) and [Travel Guard](#).

Cancellation by Greener Travel: We may cancel the trip for any reason prior to “calling” the trip. If we do so, we will refund the entire amount that you have paid, without applying any processing charges or other fees. We will not be responsible for any travel arrangements you have made, such as airfare, purchased before the “call” date. In the extremely unlikely event that we have to cancel a trip after it has been called, we will refund all amounts paid to you, but cannot be responsible for any other amounts, such as airfare.

MEALS AND ITINERARY CHANGES

Meals: All meals provided on our group trips are kosher-style and vegetarian friendly, however, most are prepared in kitchens that prepare non-kosher foods. We might be able to accommodate travelers who keep strictly kosher on our group trips – please contact us for information about such possibilities.

Itinerary changes: We will make our best efforts to maintain the itinerary as advertised, however, a variety of reasons, including the number of trip participants, availability of vendors and providers, and other factors, may cause us to need to change our final itinerary. In the very unlikely event we have to cancel a tour in its entirety due to factors beyond our control, we will refund the full amount paid not be liable for any other costs beyond the amount that you have paid.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK; WAIVER OF LIABILITY

Acknowledgement and Assumption of Risk; Waiver of Liability: You acknowledge that travel includes a variety of known and unanticipated risks, which could result in injury, paralysis, or death, or damage to property. You acknowledge that those risks may be created by negligence of Greener Travel, its owners, employees, contractors, and agents, other travelers of Greener Travel, and third party providers over whom Greener Travel has no control, as well as weather and natural disasters. You agree to accept and assume all risks existing in this activity, and to release, forever discharge, and agree to indemnify and hold harmless Greener Travel from any and all claims, demands, or causes of action, which are in any way connected with my participation in our trips, including any such Claims which allege negligent acts or omissions of Greener Travel. Should Greener Travel or anyone acting on their behalf be required to incur attorney’s fees and cost to enforce this agreement, you agree to indemnify and hold them harmless for all such fees and costs.

FITNESS FOR TRAVEL AND HEALTH INSURANCE

Fitness for Travel: It is your responsibility to determine that you are capable of participating in all of the activities offered on this trip and to opt out of any activities that you are not able to participate in due to your abilities (ie, ability to swim, etc.), disability, or any medical conditions.

Travel Health Insurance: We strongly encourage travelers to purchase travel health insurance to cover any medical events or emergencies that occur while you are on your trip. **PLEASE NOTE THAT TRAVEL HEALTH INSURANCE AND TRAVEL INSURANCE ARE NOT THE SAME THING**—Travel insurance covers the cost of your trip in the event of travel delays or your need to cancel the trip. Travel health insurance is a health insurance policy that covers your medical costs in the event of illness or injury overseas. Following is a suggested link that allows you to compare between different options and [purchase the insurance online](#).

USE OF IMAGES

You agree that any images, including photographs and videos, of you taken during the trip may be used by Greener Travel at no charge for commercial purposes.

CONSENT TO JURISDICTION, WAIVER OF REMEDIES

You also agree that any dispute concerning Greener Travel's services will be determined by the courts in the District of Columbia and consent to jurisdiction in those courts. You agree that if you have any dispute regarding Greener Travel's services, you will present a claim to us in that regard within 2 months of travel, and will not file an action more than 9 months after the completion of travel. Should you accept a payment or refund of any amount in the event of a dispute, you agree to waive any other rights and remedies you may have under applicable law. In no event will Greener Travel be liable for any costs above the amount paid by you to Greener Travel.

FAQ: Jewish Group Tours to Costa Rica

Who comes on your trips? What is the age range? How religious is everyone?

Our trips are very diverse. Our last trip had travelers from more than 4 countries. For our young professionals' trips, our age range is roughly 25 to 43, with most participants in the

middle of that range at roughly 25 to 35. Most participants are affiliated in some way with the Jewish community, whether they identify as Reform, Conservative, Traditional or Orthodox.

What makes your trips different from your competitors?

First, our trips focus on small, local hotels and providers. We do not use “all-inclusive” resorts, as we believe that they are not the best way to experience the culture of our destinations and to benefit the local community, one of the goals of eco-tourism. Second, we strive to make our group trips affordable while including as many items as possible. You might find a cheaper trip, but you will find that most of the activities are optional and at added cost. We believe it is better value to include those items and facilitates our primary goals of giving you a fun experience in a group setting where you can meet new people.

Why Costa Rica? Are you planning trips to other locations?

Costa Rica is one of the safest countries in Central America, has no military, and has taken significant actions to foster conservation. Accordingly, it is a country we can feel good about supporting through our travels. This year for the first time, we are also offering a group trip to Alaska and two wilderness trips in eastern Pennsylvania and upstate New York. Next year, we are also planning on adding a trip to Puerto Rico and Israel. If you have any suggestions of places you’d like to visit with Greener Travel, please let us know.

Do I have to do all the activities? Can I get a partial refund if I skip one of the activities?

We try to make our trips accessible for travelers of most abilities and encourage all travelers to fully participate in the activities unless a traveler is afraid of a particular activity or cannot participate due to a medical condition or ability level. However, if you do not want to do a particular activity, you can opt out for any reason. Because we make our best efforts to offer an alternative activity for opting out travelers for no additional cost, we cannot generally offer a partial refund for opting out travelers.

Who will I be rooming with if I chose double-occupancy?

If you are joining the trip with someone you know, we will honor your requests to room together if you wish. If you are joining the trip by yourself, we will match you up with another same-sex traveler to share a room. If during the trip, you meet someone with whom you want to share a room with, we will try to honor your request at that time.

How much is airfare to Costa Rica? Can you help me choose my ticket?

Airfare to Costa Rica from major metropolitan areas in the U.S. is generally roughly \$400 to \$500, however, that depends on your origin and travel dates. We advise travelers to check rates prior to booking a trip with us, however, you should not purchase your travel before the trip has been “called.” At that time, we would be glad to give you advice on which ticket to purchase.