

Group Retreat FAQs

Airport Shuttle for Participants

A round-trip airport shuttle is included in the retreat package. Pura Vida will only pick up/drop off from the International Airport in San Jose or the adjacent local airport for Costa Rican domestic flights. Complete this [link](#) that is emailed directly to Pura Vida's reservation department.

Health & Travel Requirements

Do I need travel insurance? Strongly recommended. Options include Allianz, Trawick, Travel Guard, and Manulife (Canada) but you must secure on your own.

Do I need vaccinations? Only if you are arriving from countries with Yellow Fever risk. Check with your doctor.

Do I need a visa or passport? A valid passport (6+ months from entry date) and return ticket are required. U.S. and Canadian citizens do not need a visa.

Boutique is open Sunday – Friday from 12-8 pm (closed Saturdays). Discover a lovely selection of Costa Rican arts and crafts as well as snacks, essential travel items like toiletries, sun block, sunglasses and yoga gear.

Our Pool, Jacuzzi and Aquatic Treatments Tub -Enjoy lazy laps and floating on the mountaintop in our heated pool or just soaking in the sun poolside. Our property also offers a hot tub and Aquatic Treatments pool for therapeutic wellness treatments.

Checkintime is 2pm, **Checkouttime** is 10:00am

Current Weather [Link](#)

Electricity

Standard 110V, like the US, converters are not needed unless guests are traveling from Europe.

WhatsApp Pura Vida Front Desk: +506 8701 4031

Dialing the retreat center from the US or Canada (678) 661-2140

Dialing the retreat center from Costa Rica: +506 4082 1122

Email: frontdesk@puravidaspacr.com (Note the "cr" at the end of spa)

Physical Address for Pura Vida Retreat & Spa (SJO Airport Immigration will ask for this):

Calle Puente Negro
800 Mts SW of CENCINAI
Pavas, Carrizal, Alajuela, Alajuela, 20103

Gratuities are not included and are discretionary. Our general staff of approximately 35 people (kitchen, housekeeping, gardeners, maintenance crew, drivers, yoga, and office) all take great pride in their work and are honored to serve you. If you feel like the staff took great care of you, Pura Vida suggests tipping \$10 USD per guest per night.

Staff tips are pooled together weekly and distributed equally among the hospitality team. Cash is preferred (and appreciated!), but credit cards are also welcome. Please note that the gratuities paid by credit card are subject to a 3% fee, so the team receives a little less that way.

We ask that you please tip your massage therapist separately if you were pleased with the service – the U.S. standard of 15% to 20% — preferably at the time of treatment or added to the treatment service receipt. It is also customary to tip tour guides and drivers as a token of your gratitude for their service as well.

Group Welcome - Orientation- Mandatory

The Group Coordinator will welcome you and your participants with an orientation on the afternoon after your arrival.

Hair Dryers are available at the front desk for guest use.

Internet/WiFi: Free Wi-Fi is available throughout the property, although some areas may be less strong than others. Guests can expect to have about 10 MB's. Ethernet cables for a more reliable connection are available for guest computers near the reception area.

Laundry is available to Pura Vida guests at a charge of \$8 USD per load to wash, dry and fold.

Meals - Served Buffet Style (meal plan starts with dinner on the night of arrival and ends with breakfast on the day of departure) Animal protein (chicken or fish) will be served at lunch and dinner.

Delicious dishes are lovingly prepared from fresh local produce and regional purveyors. Served buffet-style in our inviting dining hall, all meals feature both North American and Costa Rican vegetarian, fish and chicken dishes to tempt your taste buds and nourish your body and soul. Complimentary coffee, tea, alkaline water and filtered water are available throughout the day. The wine and juice bar in the dining hall stocks sulfite-free, organic wines, Costa Rican and Central American beers, and bottled water for an additional fee. It is also the place for fresh smoothies, and custom-blended chai and turmeric elixirs.

**Please indicate in advance in the comment section of the rooming list, if you have any dietary allergies.*

**Note that wine, beer, smoothies, elixirs, other specialty drinks and snacks are not included in the retreat package pricing. Guests may charge them to their incidentals bill and settle up the night before departure.*

Medical Emergencies

The staff is trained in basic first aid. For immediate concerns/consults EMT's can be called. 911 response time is 20-25 minutes. The closest hospital is San Rafael de Alajuela. This is a public hospital. There is also San Miguel Clinic. Both are approximately 20 minutes away.

Money

Costa Rica's official currency is the colón. However, U.S. dollars are widely accepted throughout the country. Local buses are the main exception and require payment in colones. Bringing small USD bills for tipping is recommended, and credit cards are commonly accepted both on and off property. Unless you plan to use public buses, exchanging dollars for colones is generally unnecessary.

Pura Vida accepts USD, all major credit cards, and Apple Pay. Currency exchange services are not offered on-site, and any change provided will be in USD. Avoid exchanging money at the airport, as exchange rates there are typically unfavorable.

Safety

Costa Rica is generally very safe. As with any destination, common-sense precautions are recommended and may vary by location.

The retreat center is gated and secured 24/7, and single travelers are regularly welcomed. Each guest room includes a safe-deposit box large enough to accommodate a 15" laptop. For personal safety, guests are asked not to walk in the surrounding neighborhood after dark. Those wishing to walk or jog through the nearby coffee fields should do so with a companion and remain mindful of their route to ensure an easy return.

Water

Glass bottled water will be placed in the rooms and available at the bar. Water bottle refill stations are scattered throughout the property. Water at Pura Vida is safe to drink from every faucet on the property. They filter their water on the premises with both a 1-micron filter and a UV filter. We recommend that guests travel to Pura Vida with their own water bottle.

Group Retreats

Bonfire - On the grounds of Pura Vida

Cacao Ceremony

Taking ceremonial cacao supports processes related to the opening and expansion of the energetic heart, provides strength and vitality to the body, allows us to connect with the purest essence of being and the path of our soul.

Ceremonial cacao helps us optimize the understanding of experiences and situations in higher planes, bringing clarity and lucidity to materialize intentions, decisions and prayers. The experience includes:

- Energy cleansing with medicinal plants
- Energy activation and ritual to honor the 4 directions
- Meditation, breathwork and aromatherapy
- Chants & devotional prayers
- Cacao sacred drink
- Healing movement
- Sound healing therapy

Excursions

Monday: Waterfall Gardens Tour - Departs at 8:45 am and returns around 1:30pm

One of Costa Rica's most popular destinations, La Paz Waterfall Gardens, near the Poas Volcano, offers five stunning waterfalls and 3.5 kilometers of walking trails that wind past the country's biggest Butterfly Observatory, through gardens swarming with vivid hummingbirds, to the cloud forest, ending in sweeping views of the waterfalls. Other attractions include wildlife refuge rehabilitation enclosures (including monkeys, cats, and birds), serpentarium, Fun fact: Tico and Tica are colloquial terms for male and female natives of Costa Rica.). Friendly, knowledgeable local naturalists are your guides for this up-close and personal look at Costa Rica's natural resources.

What is needed: walking shoes, light rain jacket/poncho, cap, sunglasses, bug repellent, full water bottle, money for souvenirs, tips (cash preferred), and coffee/beverages

Full Day Tours: (Wednesdays Only)

Hot Springs Tour. Depart at 7:30 am and return around 6:00 pm (includes lunch). ***Minerals in hot springs may discolor swimwear. **** 2.5 hour drive each way

Like most excursions in Costa Rica, part of the adventure is just getting there. Participants will cross the central mountain range—a unique opportunity- to reach their destination. Upon arrival a short hike will take you through a secondary growth forest which ends in the property's private reserve of awe-inspiring mostly primary growth forest. There you will find the hot springs in the heart of the rainforest, where you can relax and immerse yourself in seven warm, healing volcanic hot springs pools. The pools vary in temperature, depth, and mineral content, but the mineral-rich waters with therapeutic copper-salt have profound healing properties and will help restore and improve your natural energy levels. A delicious lunch follows.

What is needed: walking shoes, water shoes, bathing suit, towel (can take a pool one from PV), light rain jacket/poncho, cap, sunglasses, full water bottle, bug repellent, money for souvenirs, tips (cash preferred), and fresh juices/cocktails

Packing Essentials

What should I pack?

Bring layers (temps range 58–88°F), swimsuit, rain gear, hiking shoes, toiletries, sunscreen, bug spray, reusable water bottle, hat, sunglasses, and any medications.

What type of electrical outlets are used?

Standard US 110v outlets. Tentelows also have outlets. European guests will need a converter.

What amenities are in the rooms?

Soap, shampoo, conditioner, and a coffee maker (except in Tentelows). Floor fans are available in all rooms. Suites have ceiling fans.

Is English spoken at the retreat?

Yes, our front desk staff, yoga instructors, and spa therapists all speak English.

Is there air conditioning or heating?

No. Our mountain climate remains spring-like year-round with temperatures in the 70s–80s°F during the day and 60s°F at night.

What is the Wi-Fi like?

Free Wi-Fi is available with average speeds of 10 MB/s. Ethernet connections are available near reception.

Are linens and pillows hypoallergenic?

Yes, we use 100% cotton sheets and pillowcases with no feathers or down.

Salsa Class – Scheduled for NYE night, no experience required

Spa Treatments – Start at \$120 per treatment, up to \$190 USD, book once onsite

Holistic Garden, Flora and Fauna

Over 1,400 species of orchid grow wild in Costa Rica. Our natural flower is under siege in some areas because of deforestation, so we are taking an active role to conserve and celebrate this exotic plant. Our grounds hold dozens of species of orchids.

We take great pride in our exuberant, lush gardens that attract a variety of fauna for our guests viewing pleasure.

Other FAQs

Is Pura Vida near the beach?

No, Pura Vida is a mountain retreat center. The nearest beach is about 2 hours away on the Pacific coast.

Where do I meet my shuttle driver at the airport?

Outside SJO's International Arrivals area, near the Malinche Restaurant. Look for a "Pura Vida Retreat & Spa" sign with your name or your group's name.

What should I do if my flight changes?

If the flight number remains the same you don't need to do anything as the drivers track your flight. If the flight # changes, then please contact the retreat center at frontdesk@puravidaspa.com or WhatsApp +506 8701 4031.

What if I arrive early or depart late?

For arrivals before 7 AM, please reserve the prior night. For late departures, guests must check out by 10 AM but may stay on the property until shuttle time. Showers and changing rooms are available.

Can I rent a car or use Uber?

Yes. While you do not need a car during your stay with us, there are several rental car companies near the airport including Adobe, Economy, and Payless. We recommend that you book your rental car in advance. The front desk can call for a taxi or guests can book an Uber. Rates vary depending on destination.

Should I bring cash?

Yes. USD cash is recommended for tipping and offsite purchases. Unless you are planning to ride the local bus, there is no need to exchange money to the local currency.