

Embassy of India Panama

Fact Sheet Costa Rica

Map of Costa Rica



Flag of Costa Rica



Introduction

Officially 'the Republic of Costa Rica' a country in Central America, it is bordered by Nicaragua to the north, the Caribbean Sea to the northeast, Panama to the southeast, the Pacific Ocean to the southwest, and Ecuador to the south of Cocos Island. It has a population of around 5.13 million in a land area of 51,060 square kilometers (19,714 square miles). An estimated 333,980 people live in the capital and largest city, San Jose, with around 2 million people in the surrounding metropolitan area.

The sovereign state is a unitary presidential constitutional republic. It is known for its long-standing and stable democracy, and for its highly educated workforce, most of whom speak English. The country spends roughly 6.9% of its budget on education. Its economy, once heavily dependent on agriculture, has diversified to include sectors such as finance, corporate services for foreign companies, pharmaceuticals, and ecotourism. Many foreign manufacturing and services companies operate in Costa Rica's Free Trade Zones where they benefit from investment and tax incentives.

Costa Rica was sparsely inhabited by indigenous people before coming under Spanish rule in the 16th century. It remained a peripheral colony of the empire until independence as part of the First Mexican Empire, followed by membership in the Federal Republic of Central America, from which it formally declared independence in 1847. Following the brief Costa Rican Civil War in 1948, it permanently abolished its army in 1949, becoming one of only a few sovereign nations without a standing army.

The country has consistently performed favorably in the Human Development Index (HDI). It has also been cited by the United Nations Development Programme as having attained much higher human development than other countries at the same income levels, with a better record

on human development and inequality than the median of the region. It performs also well on comparisons of the state of democracy, press freedom and subjective happiness.

Languages spoken are Central American Spanish, English, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Polish among many others. Major religions practiced in the country are, Catholicism 52%, Protestantism 22%, Irreligion 17%, Buddhism and other religions 5%.

Costa Rica has one of the highest standards of living in Central America in spite of the high poverty levels. The country has evolved from an economy that once depended solely on agriculture, to one that is more diverse, based on tourism, electronics and medical components exports, medical manufacturing and IT services. Corporate services for foreign companies employ some 3% of the workforce.

The growing debt and budget deficit are the country's primary concerns. Other challenges facing Costa Rica in its attempts to increase the economy by foreign investment include a poor infrastructure and a need to improve public sector efficiency.

Culture

The culture of Costa Rica is rich, recognizable and varied, having influences initially from indigenous and European culture, later from Afro-Caribbean and Asian culture. Traditional technologies, agricultural, cultural and religious practices, and beliefs exist in the country, connecting in the genetic and cultural fields the current population with their indigenous, European and African ancestors. Costa Rica is a mestizo country, multi-ethnic, multilingual and multicultural, in which very diverse social communication systems coexist, ranging from Creole in Limone to Iberian customs and customs, passing through cultures and ways of thought that are so dissimilar like the Chinese, the indigenous or the Mennonite.

The University of Costa Rica offers within the School of Philology, Linguistics and Literature Degree in Classical Philology that include content related to the Indian language and culture. For example: Mythology of India, Sanskrit, Rabindranath Tagore and his work, Sanskrit Literature, Indo-European Linguistics, among others. Indian cultural organizations like Siva Ashram, Prema Bhakti Ras, Art of Living and Brahma Kumaris are present in Costa Rica.

President of Costa Rica (Head of State & Head of Government):

H.E. Mr. Rodrigo Chaves Robles (महामहिम श्री)

Minister of Foreign Affairs

H.E. Dr. Arnoldo Andre Tinoco (श्री)

Correct pronunciation of the country: Costa Rica ()

Correct pronunciation of the Capital city: **San Jose** ()

The continent in which it is located: **South America** (साउथ अमेरिका)

Geographical location in the continent: **Central America** (सैट्रल अमेरिका).

Placement of the country in the map: Costa Rica is located on the Central American Isthmus, surrounding the point 10° north of the equator. It has 212 km of Caribbean Sea coastline and 1,016 on the North Pacific Ocean. It borders Panama to the south and Nicaragua to the north.

Form of Government: Costa Rica is a Democratic Republic with a Presidential form of government. The President is elected after every 4 years and is assisted by two Vice Presidents and a Cabinet comprising of Ministers who constitute the Government Council. Legislative power is vested in the Legislative Assembly, a unicameral body comprising of 57 Members of Parliament who are elected by popular vote for 4 years based on the system of proportional representation. Members of Parliament can be re-elected. Costa Rica's seven Provinces- Alajuela, Cartago, Heredia, Limon, Puntarenas, Guanacaste and San Jose, are ruled by Governors appointed by the President.

Total population of that country: 5.17 million

Official language: The official language is [Spanish](#). Other languages spoken are English, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Polish.

Name of our Head of Mission, his batch and since when he/she is posted there: Ambassador Dr. Sumit Seth, IFS since 2005, credentials to be presented yet.

A small note on some prominent quality/speciality of that country: Costa Rica is one of the most biodiverse countries in the world, with a wide variety of flora and fauna found in its rainforests, cloud forests, and coastal areas. This biodiversity has made Costa Rica a popular destination for ecotourism and nature lovers.

The country has made significant progress in promoting sustainable practices, with a goal of becoming carbon-neutral by 2050. The country has also prioritized the conservation of its natural resources, including its forests, rivers, and oceans.

Costa Rica is a stable democracy with a long history of peaceful transitions of power. The country has a strong tradition of respect for human rights and the rule of law, making it a safe and welcoming place to live and visit.

Costa Rica has a high literacy rate and a strong education system that emphasizes access to education for all. The country also has a well-educated population that is skilled in a range of industries, including technology and tourism.

Pura Vida Lifestyle: "Pura Vida" is a common phrase in Costa Rica that translates to "pure life" or "simple life". It reflects the country's laid-back and friendly lifestyle, where people prioritize spending time with family and friends, enjoying nature, and appreciating the simple things in life.

Problems faced by the country: Despite being a relatively prosperous country in Central America, Costa Rica still faces significant income inequality, with a significant portion of the population living in poverty.

Costa Rica's fiscal deficit has been growing in recent years, which has led to concerns about the country's long-term economic stability.

Its natural environment is under threat from deforestation, pollution, and climate change. The country is taking steps to address these issues, but there is still much work to be done to protect its natural resources.

Corruption is a significant problem in Costa Rica, with some government officials and public servants accused of taking bribes and engaging in other forms of misconduct.

The healthcare system is facing challenges in terms of access, affordability, and quality, particularly in rural areas.

Name of major tourist spots:

- Arenal Volcano
- Manuel Antonio National Park
- La Fortuna waterfall
- Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve

Any famous monument/location in the country:

- National Theatre of Costa Rica
- Guayabo National Monument
-

Names of major cities:

- San Jose (capital city)
- Limon
- Heredia
- Alajuela
- Cartago

Bilateral Agreements

MoU on Foreign Office Consultations

MoU for setting up of Centre for Excellence in Information Technology (CEIT)

MoU between the Foreign Service Institutes

Agreement on Exemption on Visa requirement for holders of Diplomatic, Official and Service Passports

MoU on Technical Cooperation

MoU on Economic Cooperation

MoU on Bio technology

Joint Economic and Trade Committee protocol under the framework of the MoU on Economic

Cooperation.

Population of Indian diaspora: Indian community numbers about 1000.

Achievements of Indian diaspora: The community has been active in organizing social and cultural programmes, as well as trade promotion activities, in collaboration with the Indian Embassy.

Names of big Indian companies/banks, if any: Indian companies including Infosys, L&T Infotec, Wipro and CSS Corps have set up delivery centres in Costa Rica. Value Labs, an India-based technology services provider, has in 2020, opened a new near-shore centre in San Jose, Costa Rica, to serve its clients in the USA and Canada.

Any special thing/location/monument/statute related to India in that country: Installation of the first Gandhi Statue in Costa Rica at the University of Costa Rica will take place soon.

Attitude towards India/Indians: Positive and friendly. India and Costa Rica enjoy cordial and warm relations. India appointed an Honorary Consul in San Jose in 1995, following which Costa Rica opened an Honorary Consulate in New Delhi in 1996. Costa Rica opened its Embassy in New Delhi in April 2010. The Indian Embassy in Panama is concurrently accredited to Costa Rica. India appointed its Honorary Consul General in San Jose in 2022.
