



Welcome!

We are happy to have you join us for a program at the Sueño Azul Resort located on 1,500 lush acres in the heart of Costa Rica's rain forests. We hope this packet answers any questions you might have about the resort, travel arrangements, your schedule, what to bring, and accommodations. After one of our weeklong learning vacations, you will return home feeling relaxed, refreshed, and renewed.

### Travel Documents Required

Citizens of the United States, Canada, and Panama may enter Costa Rica with a passport that remains valid at least six months after your travel date. Identification such as a driver's license or birth certificate are no longer valid for travel in Costa Rica.

A valid passport allows Canadian, American, as well as most Latin American and European citizens to stay for up to 90 days.

Citizens of other countries may require a visa to enter Costa Rica. Before you go to Costa Rica please make a copy of your passport which you will need to carry with you at all times. You should leave your original passport at Sueño Azul if/when you leave the resort.

### Arrival and Departure

Check-in at Sueño Azul begins at 3:00 p.m. on Saturday. Check-out is by 11:00 a.m. the following Saturday (local time).

For early morning departures on Saturday, please settle your account Friday night at the front desk.

### Getting There

- **United States Airlines** There are several U.S.-based airlines that fly to San José, Costa Rica.

American: 800.433.7300 aa.com

U.S. Airways International: 800.622.1015 usairways.com

Delta: 800.241.4141 delta.com

- **Foreign Airlines** There are a few foreign airlines that fly to San José, Costa Rica from the U.S.

TACA 800.400.8222 taca.com

Copa Airlines 800.359.2672 copair.com

Mexicana Airlines 800.531.7921 mexicana.com

**Exit Fee:** *There is a departure tax of approximately \$26 U.S. at the airport; this is best paid in cash.*

### Airport Transportation

- **Shuttle Service**

Omega arranges for two group shuttles between the Juan Santamaria International Airport in San Jose and Sueño Azul, leaving at 1:30 p.m. or 6:00 p.m. on Saturdays only. One of the two pre-arranged shuttles is included in your package. *To allow enough time to meet the shuttle, your plane MUST arrive in San Jose at least 1 hour prior to the shuttle departure time. It is required that you call Omega at least two weeks before your departure with your travel information. If you do not give us your flight information or cannot utilize the 1:30 or 6:00 free shuttles, you are responsible for your own transportation and fees.* See taxi information below.

The shuttle service will pick up/drop off guests at the airport only. A Sueño Azul representative will be waiting with an Omega/Sueño Azul sign at the airport exit, outside, after customs. Three weeks prior to your departure to Costa Rica we will send you an Omega badge to wear at the airport to help the Sueño representative identify you. There are many tour companies and taxi companies making pick ups, so please look carefully for our sign. The trip between the airport and Sueño is approximately 1 1/2–2 hours.

When booking your Saturday return flight, please allow 4 hours for travel and airport time. The airport requires international travelers to arrive at least 2 hours before their departure time. Free shuttles will depart Sueño Azul at **approximately** 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. If you have an early morning return flight (leaving San Jose before 12:00p.m.) you will be responsible for the cost of the taxi.

#### • Taxi

The average cost of a taxi from the airport to Sueño Azul is \$80 (not including tip). The trip between the airport and Sueño Azul is approximately 1 1/2–2 hours. Please find attached driving instructions in both Spanish and English so you can give it to your driver to follow.

#### **Some helpful phrases you may hear or want to say**

A donde quiere ir? Where do you want to go?

De acuerdo O.K.

Por cuanto me lleva a Horquetas de Sarapiquí? How much to take me to Horquetas de Sarapiquí?

Gracias Thanks

#### **Program Schedule**

This schedule may vary depending on which week you are attending, the courses offered that week, and Sueño Azul activities.

#### **Typical Weekly Standard \*Schedule**

Saturday	Arrival
Sunday	Morning orientation; full day workshop
Monday	Morning excursion (half-day); afternoon workshop
Tuesday	Workshop sessions
Wednesday	Full-day excursion
Thursday	Workshop sessions; evening celebration
Friday	Morning excursion (half-day); afternoon workshop
Saturday	Departure

#### **Typical Daily Standard \*Schedule**

7:30-8:00a.m.	Yoga class (optional)
7:00-9:00a.m.	Breakfast
10:00-noon	Morning workshop or excursion
12:30-2:00p.m.	Lunch
2:00-3:00p.m.	Freetime
4:00-6:00p.m.	Afternoon workshop
7:00-9:00p.m.	Dinner

*\*Abbreviated schedule will not include morning workshops on Tuesday and Thursday and will include a full day excursion on Friday*

## Things To Do

The cost of your Costa Rica program includes one full-day and two half-day eco-adventures (on-site and off-site). There are other eco-adventures that you may purchase or substitute for those scheduled at an additional cost; information about these will be available upon arrival at Sueño Azul.

## What to Bring

All yoga props are provided on-site, including mats, blocks, blankets, and straps. Please bring:

- **Camera/film/batteries**
- **Flashlight**
- **Insect repellent**
- **Sunscreen**
- Several light shirts
- Pants or shorts
- A more dressy outfit (for the Thursday evening celebration)
- Bathing suit
- Raincoat or poncho
- Hat (for sun protection)
- Walking/Hiking shoes (for muddy trails)
- Wet/water shoes (if you participate in the white water rafting trip or swim in the cascades)
- Alarm clock (battery operated)
- Backpack
- Jeans for horseback riding

## Climate

December through April is Costa Rica's dry (and high) season. Be sure to book your flight in plenty of time to get the best deals (see our Getting There section). Temperatures in and around Sueño Azul during January through April average 75-80 degrees fahrenheit with moderate to high humidity.

## Immunizations and Health Concerns

You are unlikely to encounter any serious diseases in Costa Rica. Sanitary standards are high and the health system is excellent. No vaccinations are required to enter Costa Rica as epidemic diseases have been all but eradicated throughout the country.

The water at Sueño Azul is very clean and drinkable, however outside of the resort one should drink bottled water. It is recommended that you drink plenty of fluids due to the intense sun. You can get the latest information on health-related issues in Costa Rica from the Center for Disease Control at [cdc.gov/travel/](http://cdc.gov/travel/).

## Money

It is recommended that you bring \$300–\$500 (U.S.) for any extra trips or activities, and for shopping. It is best to bring new, untoned bills in denominations of \$5, \$10, and \$20. Please make sure you have at least \$100 in smaller bills (especially \$1 & \$5 bills). The resort is not equipped to change U.S. currency to smaller denominations. It is not necessary to pre-exchange U.S. dollars for colones (Costa Rican currency); gift shops and hotels either exchange money or accept dollars. There are gift boutiques at the airport, the Sarapiquí boat tour, and at Sueño Azul. Most places in Costa Rica do not accept credit cards.

**Exit Fee:** *There is a departure tax of approximately \$26 U.S. at the airport; this is best paid in cash.*

### **Gratuities**

The Costa Rican locals whose efforts help make your stay at Sueño Azul such a pleasure are responsible for room cleaning services, grounds, maintenance, and the kitchen. There is a suggested gratuity of \$75 US dollars per guest per week for these services, which is placed in the tip box upon checkout. If you feel your specific guide or taxi driver has done an excellent job, please feel free to tip them additionally as the staff collection will not benefit them.

### **Sueño Azul Facilities**

At Sueño Azul you can enjoy the great tasting food in the open-air dining pavilion or have drinks on the terrace overlooking the Sardinal and San Rafael rivers. You can also take advantage of the swimming pool and the Jacuzzi, which have spectacular views of the rivers. There are horses to go horseback riding along the trails that take you to the butterfly garden or to the waterfalls, all inside the Sueño Azul property. The resort also has more than 700 acres of primary and secondary forests, through which you can take guided walks on the trails.

### **Housing**

Each spacious guest room at Sueño Azul opens out onto a terrace with views of the surrounding mountains, rivers, and lakes. Decorated in a rustic style typical of Costa Rican mountain homes, every room has a private bath with a large ceramic tiled shower and a hair dryer. There are ceiling fans, plenty of linens and towels, and storage space. Most rooms have two queen-size beds. Laundry service is available for a fee.

### **Meals**

Meals at Sueño Azul are served buffet style at the open-air dining pavilion, surrounded by a view of the grounds, the scent of the ginger flowers, and the sounds of the rivers. Three delicious meals are available every day, with vegetarian and nonvegetarian options, and include coffee, tea, and juices. A cash bar is available for wine, beer, soft drinks, bottled water, and cocktails.

### **Wellness Services**

A variety of health and wellness services are available, including various types of massage, facials and body wraps. Appointments can be scheduled upon arrival. Cash or traveler's checks are preferred; Visa, MasterCard, and American Express are accepted. Services reflect the practitioners available that week; all services may not be available at all times.

### **Telephone**

The Costa Rican phone and power system is government-owned and has not yet attained the standards of service and technology you may be used to at home. Sueño Azul has public phones you can use with an International Calling Card. When purchasing an international calling card in the United States for use in Costa Rica, be sure to get the access number for use in Costa Rica (the card will not work without this access code). MCI and AT&T international calling cards are recommended. You may also purchase prepaid calling cards at the San José airport before you depart to Sueño Azul. Check with your cell phone provider regarding cell phone service in Costa Rica. In the event of an emergency, your family and friends may call Sueño Azul's reception office at 011.506.764.1000 and leave a message for you, which will be delivered to your room.

### **Internet Access**

Sueño Azul has wireless Internet access in the lobby. A computer is available, based on availability in the lobby.

### **Additional Internet Resources**

Costa Rica Link ([1costaricalink.com](http://1costaricalink.com)) is an independently owned website with helpful information about travel, tours, car rentals, nightlife, hotels, activities, and more.

Costa Rica Map ([costaricamap.com](http://costaricamap.com)) offers maps and travel information on the many different regions in Costa Rica. Sueño Azul is in the northern region (Heredia) close to Puerto Viejo de Sarapiquí and just outside the village of Horquetas.

Guias Costa Rica ([guiascostarica.com](http://guiascostarica.com)) has information on and links to nearly everything you would ever want to know about Costa Rica.

Lanic ([lanic.utexas.edu/la/ca/cr/](http://lanic.utexas.edu/la/ca/cr/)) provides links to many organizations in Costa Rica. Offered by the University of Texas, most of the information here is in Spanish.

### **About Costa Rica**

Because Costa Rica does not have a military, the money that might have gone into the military has been spent on education; in fact, Costa Rica enjoys one of the highest literacy rates in the world. Today Costa Rica has the highest standard of living in Central America, the second lowest birth rate, and the greatest degree of economic and social advance. Additionally, Costa Rica has dedicated more than 25 percent of the nation's land to help preserve the Earth's biodiversity with a system of national parks, biological reserves, wildlife refuges, and wildlife corridors. During your white-water rafting or morning excursions, you will experience some of the beauty to be found in Costa Rica.

- Area: 51,100 square kilometers
- Population: 4 million
- Capital: San José (pop. 1,000,000)
- Language: Spanish
- Location: Central America between Nicaragua & Panama (8°–11° N of equator)
- Currency: Colon (\$1.00 U.S.= approx. 515 colones, rate varies) Bills: 10,000, 5,000, 1,000, and 500
- Religion: 90 percent of Costa Ricans are Roman Catholic.
- Time Zone: Central Standard Time (They do not observe daylight savings time.)

### **Geography of Costa Rica**

Costa Rica is divided by a backbone of volcanoes and mountains. Part of the Pacific "Rim of Fire," and home to seven active volcanoes plus dozens of dormant or extinct ones, Costa Rica experiences earth tremors and small quakes from time to time.

The capital, San José, and neighboring cities of Alajuela and Heredia, lie in the middle of the Meseta Central (Central Valley) where almost two-thirds of the nation's population lives.

**Cancellation, Refund, and Payment Policies**

A full refund, less a \$100 processing fee, will be offered for cancellations made on or before the close of business 45 days before the beginning of your program. No refunds will be offered for cancellations made with less than 45 days' notice, if you do not show up, or if you leave early.

Travel insurance is recommended to cover your nonrefundable air and land transportation costs in the event that you need to cancel or change your travel plans. Ask the travel agent when you make your flight reservations.

**Contact Information**

Sueño Azul  
Horquetas de Sarapiquí, Costa Rica  
Phone: 011.506.764.1000 or 1500  
Fax: 077.506.764.1049  
E-mail: [info@sueñoazulresort.com](mailto:info@sueñoazulresort.com)  
[sueñoazulresort.com](http://sueñoazulresort.com)

Before you know it, you will be heading for Costa Rica! If you have any questions that were not answered here, please call Omega Registration at 800.944.1001, Monday through Thursday from 9:00 a.m.– 5:00 p.m., Friday from 10:00 a.m.– 5:00 p.m. EST, or e-mail us at [registration@eOmega.org](mailto:registration@eOmega.org). We look forward to meeting you and sharing a great time.

Warm wishes,

Robert (Skip) Backus  
Executive Director, Omega Institute

**Direcciones: (Spanish)**

Sueño Azul, Horquetas de Sarapiquí

- Del Aeropuerto Juan Santamaría, toma la autopista No. 1 hacia San José.
- Al llegar al Parque La Sabana, toma la vía izquierda (Este) del Paseo Colon (Ave 0) por 1400 metros que lo lleva al centro de la Ciudad;
- Al llegar al Hospital San Juan de Dios cruza a la derecha (Sur) 100 metros, cruzando de nuevo a la izquierda (Este) toman la Avenida 2 y recorriendo 700 metros hasta encontrar la Calle Central.
- Cruza a la izquierda (Norte) siguiendo por esa vía 500 metros (Ave 7), donde cruza a la derecha (Este) y recorre 200 metros hasta encontrar la Calle 3.
- En esta luz cruza de nuevo a la izquierda (Norte) y recorre 700 metros hasta encontrar la Autopista Braulio Carrillo (Ruta No. 32) que le lleva a Limón.
- Sobre esta carretera recorre 50 kilómetros pasando por el Parque Nacional Braulio Carrillo hasta llegar al cruce a Puerto Viejo de Sarapiquí. Al llegar a ese cruce encuentra el Restaurante Rancho Roberto's.
- Cruce a la izquierda y recorra 15 kilómetros (Ruta No. 4) hasta encontrar la entrada al pueblo de Horquetas de Sarapiquí a su izquierda.
- Pasa por el pueblo de Horquetas, recorriendo 2 kilómetros, donde encontrará una intersección en forma de Y para tomar la vía izquierda.
- Ahí encontrará la Verdulería La Central; recorre 200 metros hasta encontrar un puente de color amarillo y azul a su izquierda y después de cruzarlo, sigue por 300 metros más por la misma vía hasta encontrar a su derecha la entrada a Sueño Azul Resort. Recorre 800 metros más hasta llegar al hotel.

**Directions: (English)**

Sueño Azul, Horquetas de Sarapiquí

- From the Juan Santamaría Airport go to Highway N. 1 to San José.
- As you reach La Sabana Park turn left (East) taking Paseo Colon (0 Avenue) for 1400 meters which takes you Downtown; when reaching San Juan de Dios Hospital you turn right (South) for 100 meters and then turn left again (East) to find 2nd Avenue.
- Drive 700 meters to find Central Street.
- There, turn left (North) driving 500 meters until you get to (7th Ave), then turn right (East) and drive 200 meters to find 3rd Street.
- There, turn left (North) and drive 700 meters to find the entrance to the Braulio Carrillo National Highway (Route N. 32) which takes you to Limón.
- On this road, drive for 50 kilometers going through the Braulio Carrillo National Park until you find the crossing to Puerto Viejo de Sarapiquí at your left. Right on this crossing you will find Rancho Roberto's Restaurant.
- Turn left and drive 15 kilometers (Route N. 4) to find the entrance to Horquetas de Sarapiquí.
- There, turn left and go through town for 2 kilometers where you will find a Y shaped intersection.
- Take the left road, where you will find a small grocery store called La Central. Drive for 300 meters to find a bridge colored yellow and blue at your left. Cross the bridge and then drive for 300 meters more to find the entrance to Sueño Azul Resort at your right. Drive for 800 meters more to find the hotel.