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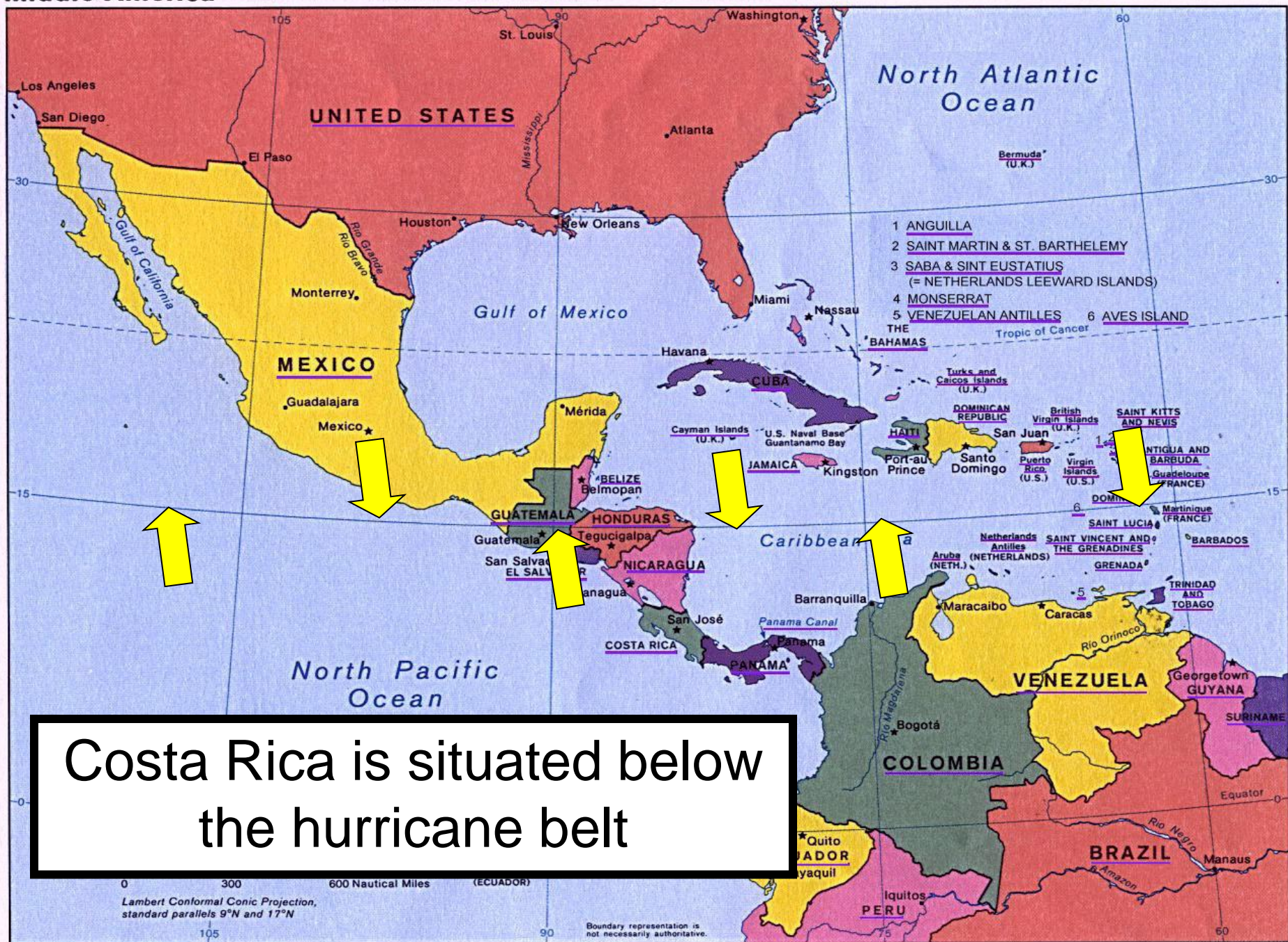
Costa Rica





Costa Rica is in Central America between Nicaragua and Panama

Middle America





It's about the size of West Virginia



Costa Rica is less than a 2 ½ hour direct flight from Miami.



Home to 4 million residents



It's also home to 100,000 foreigners



Including more than 50,000 North Americans

The government consists of three branches:

Executive – Laura Chinchilla takes office May 8

Legislature

Judicial



Dr. Oscar Arias, current
President



Laura Chinchilla new
President



It's a country with little government corruption.

And a very healthy economy.





Attractive for foreign investors.



The US is Costa Rica's largest trading partner.
Intel is the largest employer.



The country has a high Global Competitiveness ranking.



Costa Rica uses the colon as their currency, not the dollar.



Infrastructure
is improving
rapidly.





The Coastal Highway in 2009



The Coastal Highway now



The Coastal
Highway in 2009



The Coastal
Highway now





Costa Rican protest



Costa Rica is a peaceful country.



spending instead on
education

Costa Rica is proud
of a 96% literacy
rate among its
citizens; among the
highest in Latin
America

and...



High Quality, Low Cost Healthcare
(Free to residents)



The medical facilities are excellent.



Cost of an outpatient visit in Costa Rica is approximately \$17; in the US it's \$366*

*2005 World Health Organization Data



Cost of a hospital stay in Costa Rica is approximately \$52; in the US it's \$907*

*2005 World Health Organization Data



The pace of life is
slower.

Perhaps that's
why Costa Ricans
have a longer life
span than those
in the US.



Señor José Delgado Corrales - 109

Costa Rica has consistently been ranked as the Happiest Place on Earth.

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OP-ED COLUMNIST The Happiest People

By NICHOLAS D. KRISTOF
Published: January 6, 2010

SAN JOSÉ, Costa Rica



From left, Kristof/The New York Times
Nicholas D. Kristof

On the Ground

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Readers shared their thoughts on this article.
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Here again, Costa Rica wins the day, for achieving contentment and longevity in an environmentally sustainable way. The Dominican Republic ranks second, the United States 114th (because of its huge ecological footprint) and Zimbabwe is last.

Maybe Costa Rican contentment has something to do with the chance to explore dazzling beaches on both sides of the country, when one isn't admiring the sloths in the jungle (sloths truly are slothful, I discovered; they are the tortoises of the trees). Costa Rica has done an unusually good job preserving nature, and it's surely easier to be happy while basking in sunshine and greenery than while shivering up north and suffering "nature

Hmmm. You think it's a coincidence? Costa Rica is one of the very few countries to have abolished its army, and it's also arguably the happiest nation on earth.

There are several ways of measuring happiness in countries, all inexact, but this pearl of Central America does stunningly well by whatever system is used. For example, the [World Database of Happiness](#), compiled by a Dutch sociologist on the basis of answers to surveys by Gallup and others, lists Costa Rica in the top spot out of 148 nations.

That's because Costa Ricans, asked to rate their own happiness on a 10-point scale, average 8.5. Denmark is next at 8.3, the United States ranks 20th at 7.4 and Togo and Tanzania bring up the caboose at 2.6.

Scholars also calculate happiness by determining "happy life years." This figure results from merging average self-reported happiness, as above, with life expectancy. Using this system, Costa Rica again easily tops the list. The United States is 19th, and Zimbabwe comes in last.

A third approach is the "happy planet index," devised by the New Economics Foundation, a liberal think tank. This combines happiness and longevity but adjusts for environmental impact — such as the carbon that countries spew.



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Rated as the highest country in Latin America
for quality of life.



Our local policeman



Fresh, pesticide free
produce and meats are
abundant and inexpensive.



Foreigners have the same right to property ownership as Costa Ricans do.



Property ownership is Fee Simple and Title Insurance is readily available.



Taxes are very low; approx. \$1.45 per \$1000 in value up to approx 200k.

(A small additional tax applies to homes valued at over 200k.)



Home insurance is approximately \$487 yearly for a home worth \$200,000.



There is no capital gains tax in Costa Rica.



There's no tax on income from
outside of the country.



You can use your IRA to purchase property.

Tickets to a movie - \$3.00

An excellent steak dinner - Under \$12.00

Basic Commercial Phone service - \$6.00 per month

Basic Cellular Phone service - \$9.00 per month

Basic Cable TV service - \$28.00

Complete Health Coverage for resident - less than \$500 per year

Full time Maid \$200 a month.

Gardener \$2 per hour.

Vehicles are about the same as the US.

One Kilo = 2.2 Pounds

- Watermelon – 75¢ per Kilo
- Tomato - 80¢ per Kilo
- Lemons - 5¢ each
- Carrots - 50¢ per Kilo
- Pineapple - 80¢ per Kilo
- Papaya - 45¢ per Kilo
- Cucumbers - 70¢ per Kilo
- Zucchini - 20¢ each
- Onions - 50¢ per Kilo
- Mangos - 50¢ per Kilo
- Bananas - 60¢ for a bunch
- Strawberries - \$1.50 ½ Kilo





Costa Rican Coffee



\$1200 to \$1500 monthly



\$2000 to \$3000

*

Costa Rica Residency Types as of March 1, 2010 (new law) LEY GENERAL DE MIGRACIÓN Y EXTRANJERÍA				
<u>Pensionado</u>	<u>Rentista</u>	<u>Inversionista</u>	<u>Representante</u>	<u>Permanent</u>
Proof of \$1,000 USD per month income from permanent pension or retirement fund.	Proof of \$2,500 USD per month income guaranteed by a bank.	\$200,000 investment in any Costa Rica business OR a specified amount of investment in certain Costa Rica government approved sectors.	Director, executives, representatives, managers and technical employees of companies meeting certain requirements.	First degree relative with Costa Rica Citizen (thru marriage or having a child) OR may apply after 3 years in another residency .
<i>Previously \$600/mo.</i>	<i>Previously \$1,000/mo.</i>			
Can claim spouse and dependents under 25 years of age or older with disabilities.	Can claim spouse and dependents under 25 years of age or older with disabilities.	Can claim spouse and dependents under 25 years of age or older with disabilities.		Can claim spouse and dependents under 25 years of age or older with disabilities.
Cannot work as an employee.	Cannot work as an employee.	Income allowed from the project.	Income must exceed Costa Rica minimum wage for specified position by at least 25%.	Can work as an employee.
Can own a company and receive income.	Can own a company and receive income.	Can own a company and receive income.	Can own a company and receive income.	Can own a company and receive income.
Cannot be absent from Costa Rica more than 2 consecutive yrs.	Cannot be absent from Costa Rica more than 2 consecutive years.	Cannot be absent from Costa Rica more than 2 consecutive years.	Cannot be absent from Costa Rica more than 2 consecutive years.	Cannot be absent from Costa Rica more than 4 consecutive years.
All residency types must participate in the Caja Costarricense de Seguro Social (CCSS) national social security and healthcare insurance system -or- "Caja". Proof of participation and payments for the entire term of residency are required for renewals.				
Source: www.CostaRicaBlogger.com per information obtained from La Gaceta 09-01-09. Consult with a Costa Rica residency attorney for accuracy & updates.				

*A slide for those of you with eagle vision

It's easy to bring your pets with you.





Tap water is safe to drink in Costa Rica



27% of the country is protected land.



Currently 99% of their energy is from clean sources.



“Green Season” is from May until November



It's the local's favorite
time of the year.

The mornings are
sunny and late
afternoon showers are
typical.



We call that siesta time.

or... cocktail hour.





There are 6 distinct areas of Costa Rica



The Central Valley



The Northern Pacific



The Northern Plains



The Central Pacific



The Caribbean



The Southern Pacific



Cloud Forests



Mangroves



Rainforests



Coral Reefs

Costa Rica is loaded with Natural Wonders



Arenal Volcano



La Paz Waterfall



Diving off Cocos Island



South Pacific Coast Beach

And man-made ones



Cartago Cathedral



San Jose National Theater



Ruins





A myriad of activities are available;
for adventurers...



And for those of us who prefer to relax.



The country contains more than 100 types of ferns,
1,000 orchids and 2000 kinds of trees.

Costa Rica is home to a dizzying array of fauna.



Tree Frogs



Blue Morpho Butterflies



Toucans



More than 50 kinds of
Hummingbirds



Humpback Whales



Sloths



Squirrel Monkeys



Olive Ridley Turtles



860 bird species reside in Costa Rica.



More than in the US and Canada combined.







Costa Rica - 10 Reasons why it's a Top Destination for Expats

1. Healthcare is affordable and excellent.
2. Cost of living is significantly lower than in the US.
3. Longevity is longer than in the US.
4. Accessibility is easy and inexpensive.
5. Costa Ricans are friendly & happy.
6. Amazing variety of climates offer something for all.
7. Tourist attractions are lots of fun and everywhere.
8. The government is stable.
9. There are many Expat communities.
10. Business and Investment climate - tax structure
11. Conservation, ecotourism and sustainability.

Costa Rica – 10 Reasons why it's Not for Everyone.

1. Bureaucracy can be frustrating. Some things take a long time to get done.
2. It can be a culture shock.
3. Ants love it there.
4. Not everyone speaks English and they all speak Spanish.
5. We have earthquakes occasionally.
6. It can be hot and at certain times of the year it rains... a lot.
7. Parrots are noisy and get up very early.
8. Petty crime occurs more often than in the US.
9. You must leave the country every 3 months for 72 hours until you're a resident.



“When looking back at life it’s not usually what we did that we regret, it’s what we didn’t do.”