

BY GOPLAYA.CR

VIRGIN BEACHES IN COSTA RICA

The best beaches in Costa Rica



presented by:





Virgin Beaches in Costa Rica
by GOPlaya

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GOPLAYA GUIDE

Virgin Beaches in Costa Rica

BY GOPLAYA



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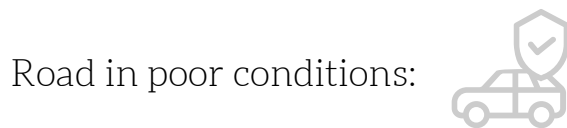
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Introduction

After traveling through the country from coast to coast and exploring 230 beaches, we have created a unique list of unknown destinations that offer different types of beauty. From spots that offer a special synergy between the surrounding vegetation and sand colors, to exotic spots that can only be reached by boat.

In Volume 1 of our “Virgin Beaches of Costa Rica” eBook, we dig into every detail. We recommend that you check and save the Google Maps addresses of all these destinations, in your mobile device.

The selected beaches were not chosen randomly. They meet several key requirements, for example, they are remote places with no hotels in front of the coast and few travelers approach them. This because most don't know of their existence, sometimes not even among the locals.

In this list, there are spots from most areas of the country. But don't worry, with each destination, GOPlaya will show you an easy to understand guide, with landmarks and reference points surrounding the beaches. This way you'll be able to locate and choose which places you want to visit, without the risk of getting lost.

We invite you to discover the essence of the beaches in Costa Rica and our wildest side. It's worth it.



10 tips to visit virgin beaches

1. In Costa Rica white sand is very different from that of the Caribbean islands. The shade of white is less intense. The main attraction of our beaches is that they're all different. They're embraced by trees that provide shade and are surrounded by mountains. Some of them have waves for surfing, while others look like natural pools. Each spot has a unique natural distinctive, which is even more eye-catching if you travel from one area to another.
2. Guanacaste, in the north Pacific, is Costa Rica's driest beach province. Even in the green season (rainy season) it's likely that it will not rain during some mornings.
3. In the Limón province, located on the Caribbean coast of Costa Rica, the weather is very unstable. The peak season (dry season) is in October and November. However, it can also rain during these months.
4. Never leave valuables in your vehicle when you visit a virgin beach. Keep windows closed when you leave the car and if you carry electronics, leave and store them in your hotel.
5. It's in the southern zone of Costa Rica, at the Osa Peninsula, where biodiversity is most intense. If you visit a beach in this area, you will probably see more birds hanging over the trees than anywhere else in the country.
6. In most beaches there are rip currents. Be very careful when swimming and be especially cautious in those areas marked as dangerous. In our eBook called Q&A about Tourist Safety in Costa Rica,



you will find a guide explaining how to identify these dangerous currents.

7. In most cases, you will have to walk a trail to get to know Costa Rica's most virgin beaches. Therefore, always carry appropriate walking shoes, water bottles and snacks.

8. If you decide to visit virgin beaches of Costa Rica, we recommend that you drive a 4x4 vehicle, as there are some roads in poor condition. If you visit the country during the green season it's a must to rent a 4x4 vehicle because, in some places, rivers grow and can flood the roads.

9. When booking a boat tour, ask for the life jacket and make sure the tour operator carries water and fruit. Also make sure that the captain is a local of the area, as this will guarantee a better knowledge of the tides and, therefore, a quieter trip.

10. Do you want to visit Guanacaste when the vegetation is green, but low on rain? Visit during the last week of November and the first week of December as rain decreases in Guanacaste and the vegetation is still green.

Map of

BEACHES IN PAPAGAYO GULF

Find here the Google Maps directions of each virgin beach, as well as other destinations that will work as a reference point for your trip.

ZONE:

Papagayo Gulf

PROVINCE:

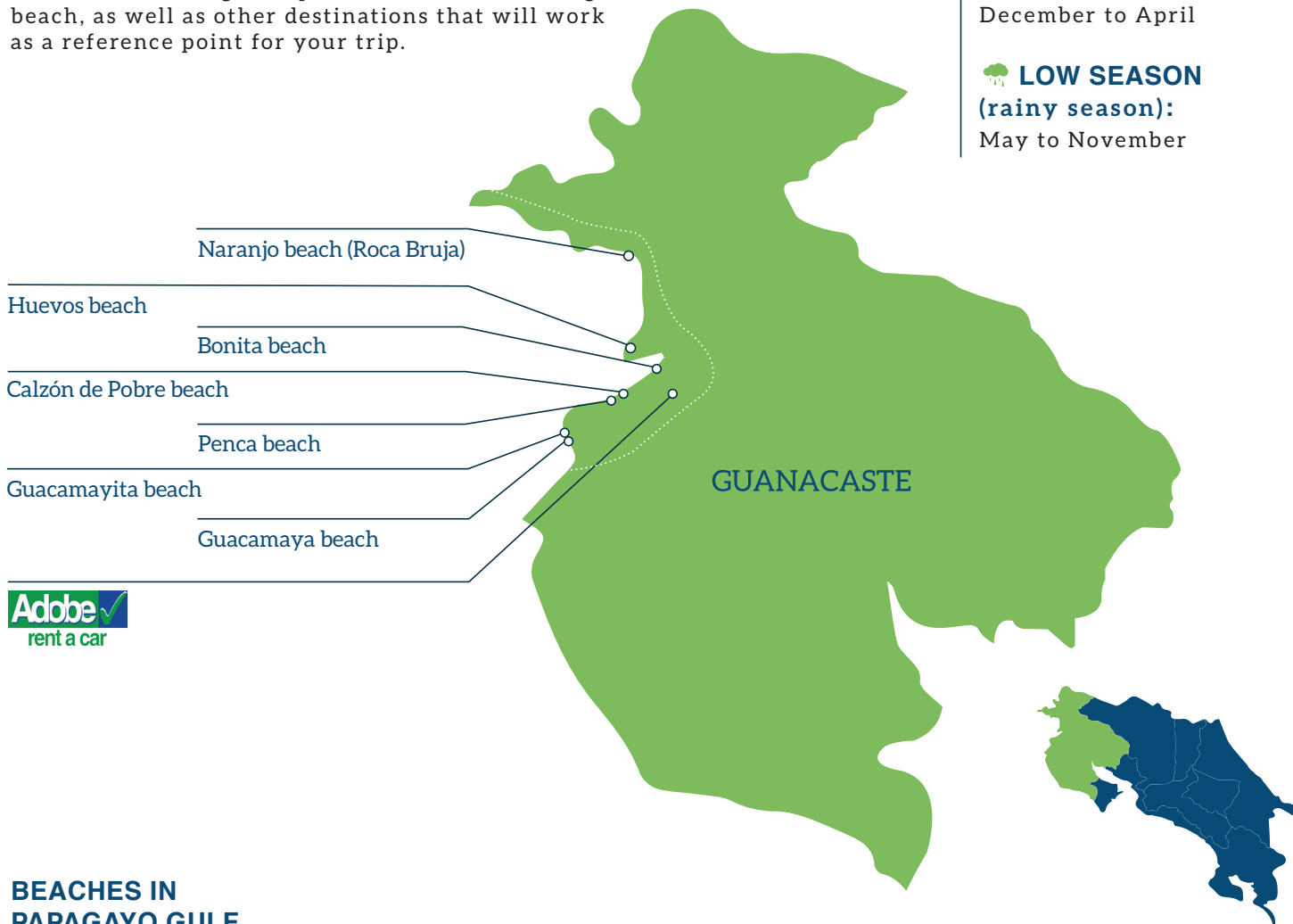
Guanacaste, North Pacific

 **HIGH SEASON (dry season):**

December to April

 **LOW SEASON (rainy season):**


May to November



BEACHES IN PAPAGAYO GULF

Huevos beach

*You can only get there by boat

 Google Maps address of the beach: <http://bit.ly/2VOtA0d>
Boats depart from El Coco: <http://bit.ly/2YbKJP8>

Calzón de Pobre beach

 Google Maps: <https://bit.ly/2VlIdZF>

Penca beach

 Google Maps: <https://bit.ly/2H6DSAT>

Guacamaya beach

*You can only get there by boat

 Google Maps: <https://bit.ly/2H644dB>
Boats depart from El Coco: <http://bit.ly/2YbKJP8>

Guacamayita beach

*You can only get there by boat

 Google Maps: <https://bit.ly/301V027>
Boats depart from El Coco: <http://bit.ly/2YbKJP8>

Bonita beach

 Google Maps: <https://bit.ly/2VNI68F>

Naranjo beach (Witch Rock)

 Google Maps: <http://bit.ly/2Vj0gzE>

NEAREST ADOBE RENT-A-CAR LOCATION:

Adobe Rent-a-Car Liberia

 Google Maps: <http://bit.ly/2H7PhjT>





Golfo de Papagayo (Papagayo Gulf)



Huevos Beach is one of the virgin spots, located in Papagayo Gulf.
Photo: GOPlaya.cr

Why do you need to know what beaches belong to Papagayo Gulf?

There are multiple statements to answer this question with certainty. The first thing you should know is that in this area, located in the North Pacific of Costa Rica, every spot is very different from the next, despite being very close to each other.

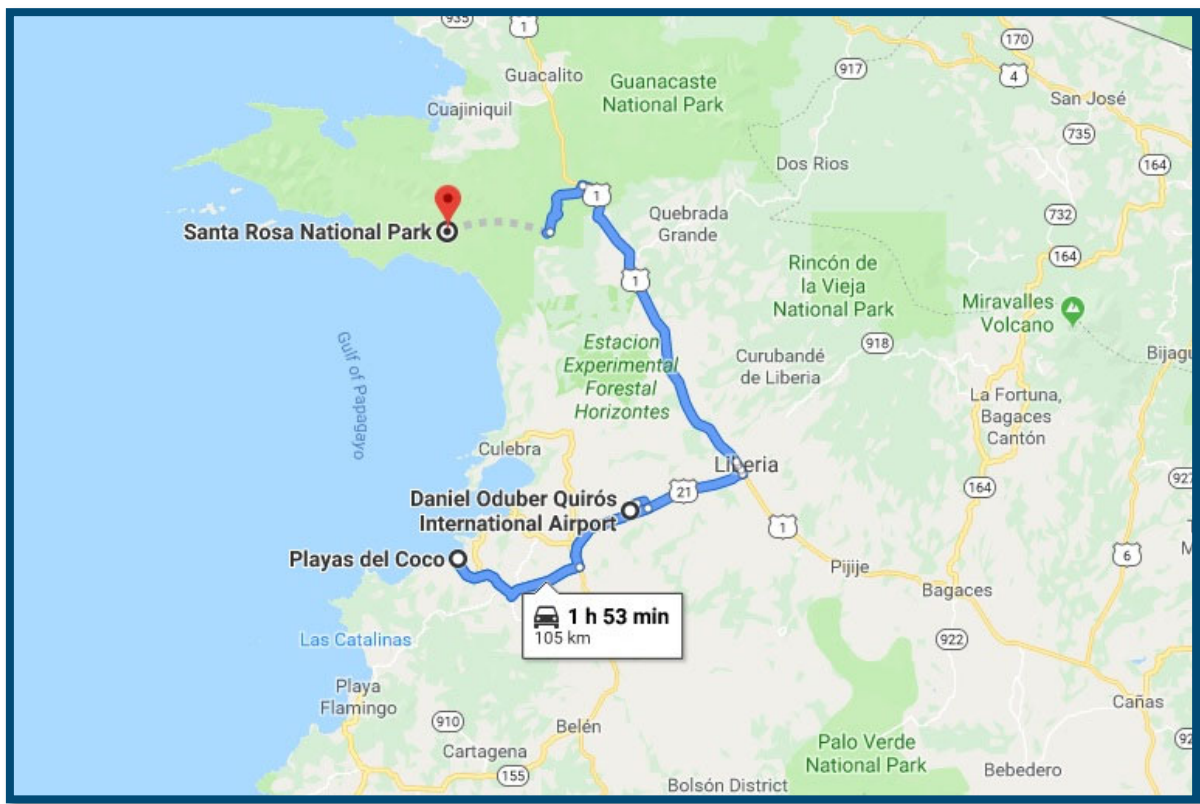
Visit www.goplaya.cr.
Find out about more than 230 beaches in Costa Rica.



Your trip will guarantee a visit to beaches for surfing, white sand beaches, virgin and hidden spots to which you can only arrive by boat, and places that are sheltered in a national park.

A great advantage is that Guanacaste is the beach province that takes pride of place. This is where you will find the largest number of beaches in Costa Rica. Because of this, you must choose your destinations very well and learn a few details before moving around the area.

First, it's important to understand that the Papagayo Gulf is large and divided into different locations: "El Coco" beach town is the starting point and all kinds of tourist services are offered here. You can find hotels, tour operators, restaurants and supermarkets in plain sight.





This place is also known as “Playas del Coco” (Coco Beaches) and it’s a popular spot for Costa Ricans to spend the year-end holidays. It’s located 4 hours away from the capital San José and 35 minutes from the Daniel Oduber Airport in Liberia.

From “El Coco” you can move to different virgin beaches that surround the area and very few people know about them, such as Calzón de Pobre and Penca (we’ll tell you about them in depth later).

In Papagayo Gulf there are also other less developed places with enormous beauty such as “Bahía Culebra” (Culebra Bay) (45 minutes from “El Coco”), “Península de Papagayo” (Papagayo Peninsula) (48 minutes from “El Coco”) and “Parque Nacional Santa Rosa” (Santa Rosa National Park, 75 minutes from “El Coco”).

In Culebra Bay and Papagayo Peninsula you will find beautiful beaches surrounded by mountains, where birds swing from the top of the trees and luxury hotels create a special synergy with nature to capture the traveler.

If you're looking for a wild experience, don't forget to visit Santa Rosa National Park. This park hosts Playa Naranjo (Naranjo Beach), also known to tourists as Roca Bruja (Witch Rock) or Peña Bruja.





Playa Huevos (Huevos Beach)



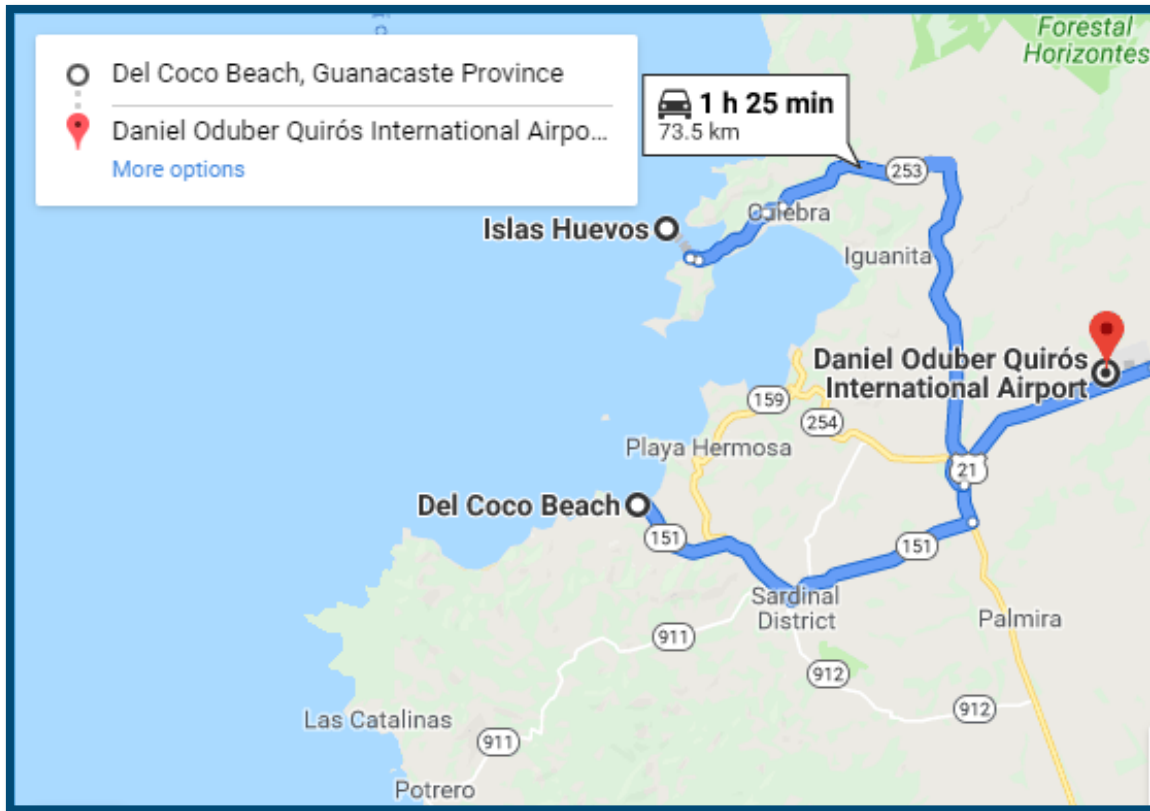
Huevos Beach at Papagayo Peninsula. Photography: GOPlaya.cr

Description: Huevos Beach exhibits the essence of the Papagayo Gulf. It's a beautiful destination filled with white sand, a calm swell perfect for snorkeling, and trees along the shore that offer shade.

This good-sized beach hides an additional attraction: on one side you can see some amazing caves that can be crossed from one end to the other during low tide. There are two caverns in total, a smaller one where you can see the opposite end, and the main one, which can be crossed to reach the other side.

According to the locals, there are two reasons that explain its name (Eggs beach in English). The first is that many years ago the Olive Ridley turtles arrived; they arrived in enormous numbers to lay their

eggs and spawn. The second reason is because on one side of the beach there is a huge rock that seems to have the shape of two eggs.



Activities and services: GOPlaya suggests that you visit this beach by boat, because you cannot drive to the coast with a regular car or 4x4. Commonly, visitors go to El Coco town and pay a tour. Boats leave from Coco Beach and the journey to Huevos lasts between 25 to 30 minutes.

What's the tour's price? Prices to rent a boat for a private tour are between \$300 and \$500, according to the needs of the client. A tour for two people that includes water and fruit costs about \$300. When paying this price, the boat will stay on the beach with the tourist for a half day, e.g. from 7:30 a.m. until 12:30 noon.



However, you can ask the tour operator to take you to another beach nearby and get the best out of the boat tour. For example, if you decide to visit Huevos we also recommend you go to Playa Nacascolo (Nacascolo Beach), another incredible spot.

Don't forget to ask for the life jacket; a necessary safety measure to prevent any risks.

Remember that, in Huevos, there are no public showers or restrooms available, but it's worth a visit. Besides being perfect for swimming, it offers a beautiful landscape, with many islets in front of the beach and a crystalline turquoise sea.

Road conditions: Before taking the boat that will take you to Huevos Beach, it's necessary to get to El Coco, where most tours are offered. The road to El Coco is in very good condition. You can travel by car without a problem.



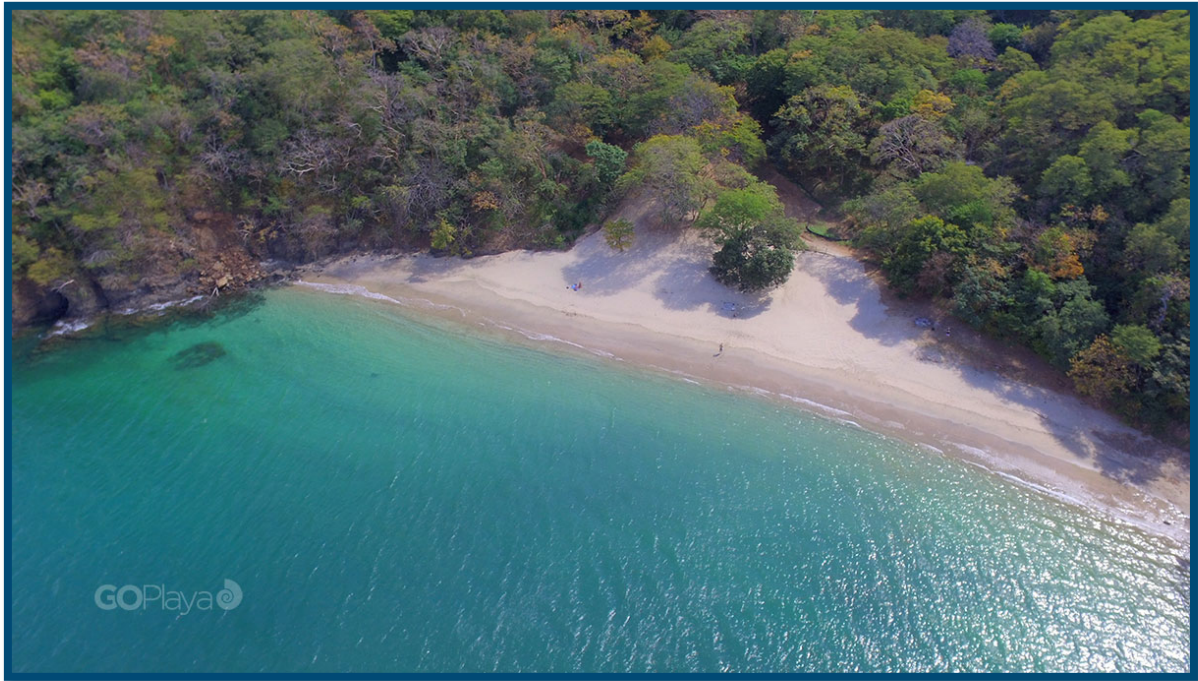


Gallery





Playa Calzón de Pobre (Calzón de Pobre Beach)



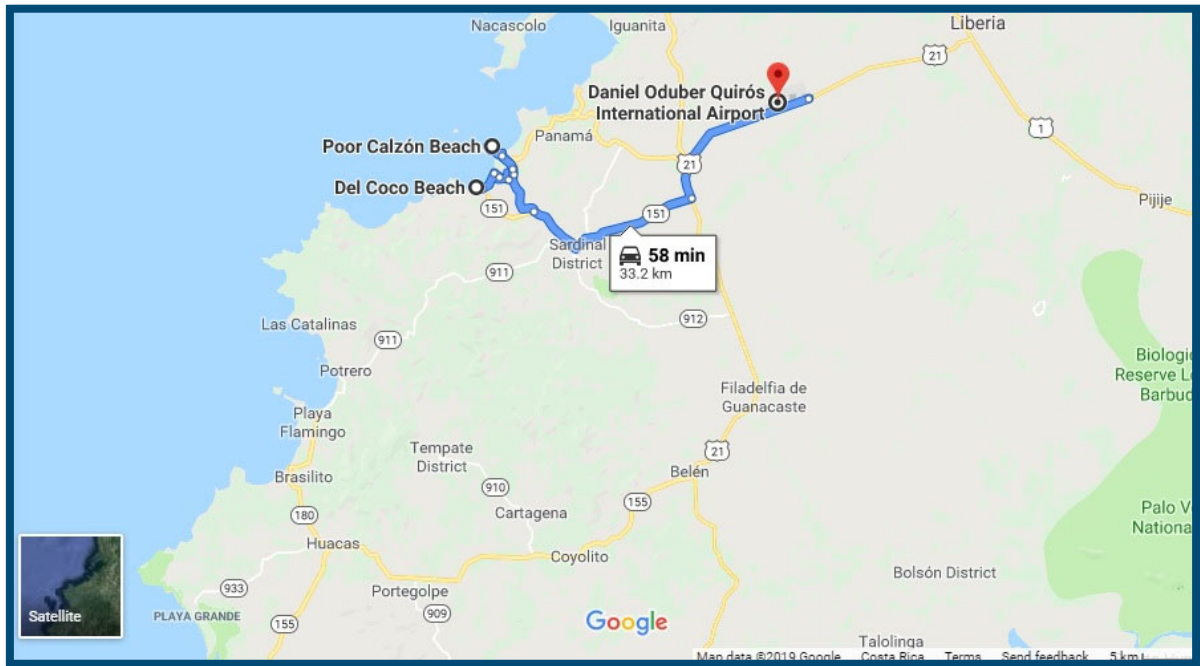
This is Calzón de Pobre Beach, located in Carrillo, part of Nicoya Peninsula.
Photography: GOPlaya.cr

Description: Calzón de Pobre Beach is a small location, but it has everything you need to relax: white sand, crystal clear water, calm waves and beautiful scenery, surrounded by mountains and only 20 minutes from El Coco. The name of this beach (poor man's underwear in English) is due to its particular shape, which from the heights looks like a bikini, or underwear.

Before arriving to the beach, a security guard will ask you for your name because, apparently, a tourist facility is about to be built and it's part of the protocol. After entering, you need to drive a few kilometers in and you'll be able to park in an area designated for parking.



Afterwards, you will need to walk on a trail for approximately 700 meters until you reach the beach. It's totally worth it; it's beautiful.



Activities and services: It's perfect for snorkeling, swimming or simply enjoying the sun. You can also see beautiful landscape before reaching the beach, as you will find the "Punta Cacique" natural viewpoint. Be on the lookout for it so you can stop your vehicle and appreciate the view.

There are no hotels or restaurants on the beach. There are no public showers nor restrooms available either. It's important that you carry a water bottle and snacks, so you can spend the day. Remember that this place is only a few kilometers away from El Coco, where there are plenty of hotel and culinary options.

Road conditions: We recommend that you visit this beach in a 4x4 vehicle, since most of the road is dirt and is in poor condition. However,



if you are careful, you can get there by regular car. Remember to avoid leaving valuable belongings in the car when you park it.





Gallery



Playa Penca (Penca Beach)



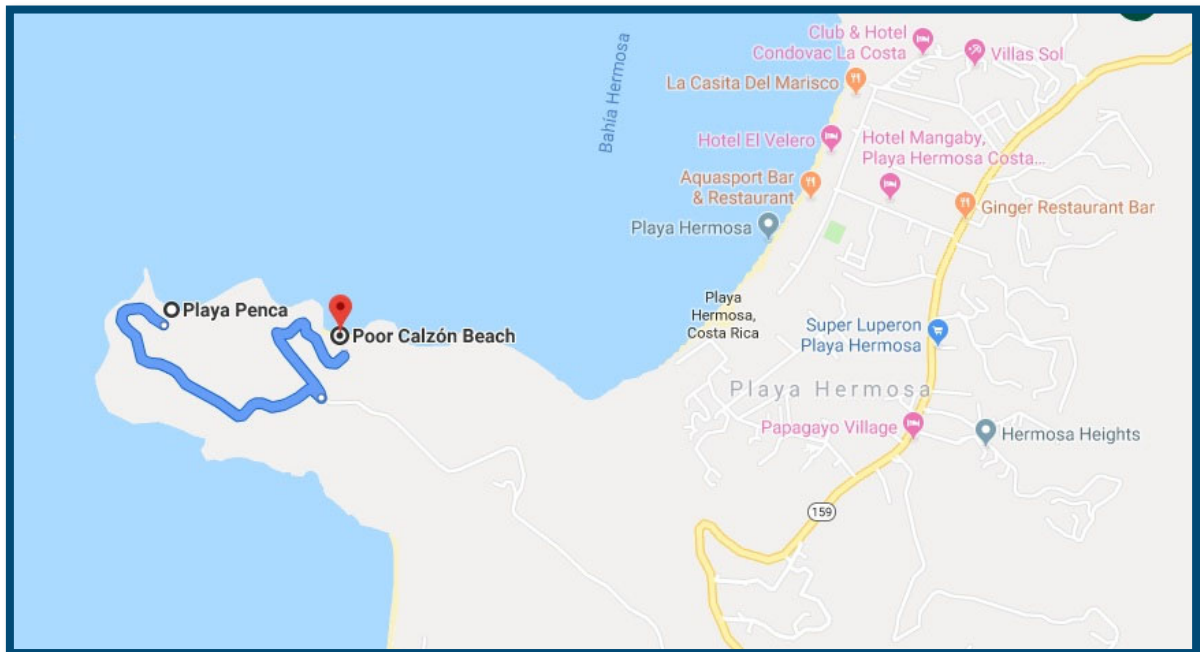
Description: Penca can be described in several ways. It's a sublime and magical place. It sounds exaggerated, but when you get there you will notice that our description falls short. Penca is a small white sand beach with a turquoise sea and soft waves, which adjoins Calzón de Pobre. Like its neighboring beach, a security guard will ask for your information before entering the road that leads to the coast.

Activities and services: In this beach you can swim or snorkel. However, you must drive along the same route that leads to Calzón de Pobre. You will pass the exit to Calzón de Pobre and continue along the dirt road. As you drive further in, the road becomes more complicated. Therefore, it's necessary that you drive there in a 4x4



vehicle to avoid inconveniences. If you are driving a regular car, it's preferable that you only go to Calzón de Pobre, because you can have a hard time getting to Penca.

When you arrive, you will find a marked trail and a space to park your vehicle. The trail is almost 600 meters long until you reach the beach.



Road conditions: A few kilometers before reaching the parking lot the road is dirt, so access is complicated and worsens during the rainy season (winter). If you decide to visit this area, it's preferable to have a 4x4 vehicle. If not, local tour operators can take you by boat; the Penca tour is beautiful as it covers the entire Papagayo Gulf, which is full of islets and spectacular views. Prices to rent a boat for a private tour range from \$300 to \$500, depending on the client's needs. A two-person tour that includes water and fruit costs about \$300.



Gallery





Playa Guacamaya (Guacamaya Beach)



Guacamaya Beach belongs to Culebra Bay in Papagayo Gulf.
Photo: GOPlaya.cr

Description: This location has two qualities of enormous value in a beach: It has a long shoreline that you can walk from end to end, and it has an absolute clean ocean. It's located in Bahía Culebra (Culebra Bay) and is deserted most of the year because you need to drive a road in poor condition to get there (only 4x4 vehicles recommended). You can also visit the beach in a boat and enjoy the beautiful landscape full of islets.

In Guacamaya the sand color is light grey and the waves are very soft. It has a few trees on one side of the beach that provide shade. This place is sublime and perfect for snorkeling.



Gallery





Playa Guacamayita (Guacamayita Beach)



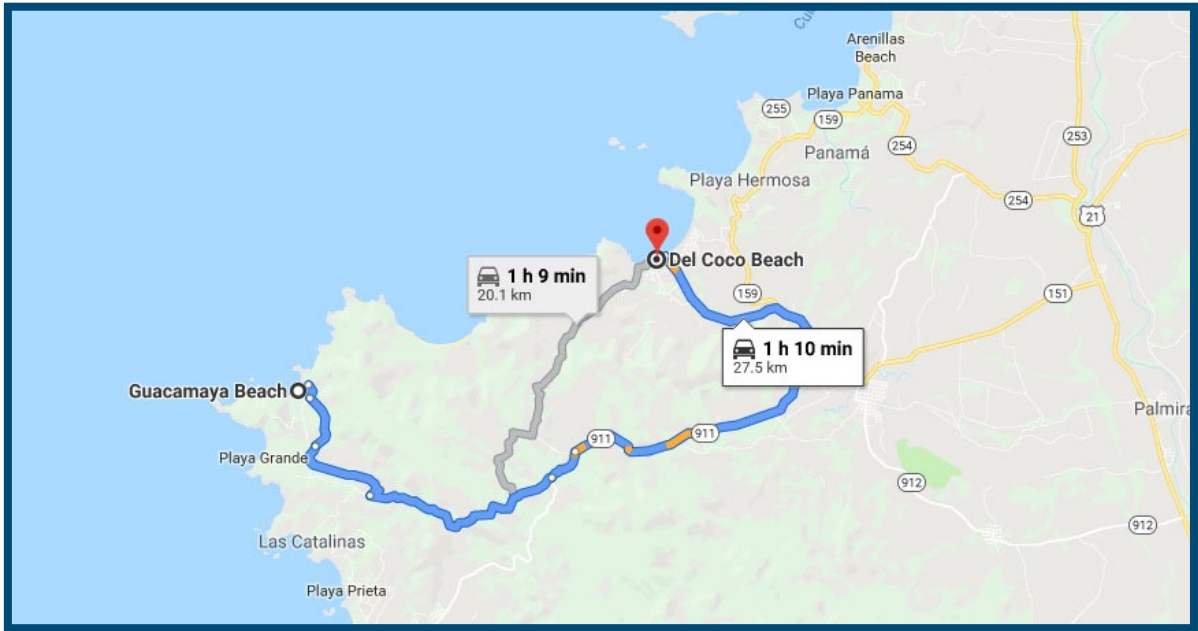
The most important difference between Guacamaya and Guacamayita is the size of the beach.
Photo: GOPlaya.cr

Description: The main difference between Guacamaya and Guacamayita is the size of the beach, as the first one offers more space for walking. In Guacamayita the sand has a light gray color and trees that provide shade. The sea is very clean, and waves are imperceptible, which makes it a perfect spot for snorkeling or swimming.

It's a small, charming destination with mild wind most of the year.



Guacamayita is so virgin that it doesn't appear on maps. GOPlaya visited this spot so you can get the directions to avoid getting lost.





Gallery





Activities and services in Guacamaya and Guacamayita: Guacamaya and its neighboring beach, Guacamayita, share the same route. It's best to book a boat tour in El Coco. Boats depart from this beach town in a journey that takes approximately 20 minutes.

What's the price of the tour? Prices to rent a boat for a private tour range from \$180 to \$350. A two-person tour that includes water and fruit costs about \$200. When you pay this price, the boat will stay on the beach with the tourist for half a day, that is, from 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 noon.

You should ask the tour operator to take you to Guacamaya and Guacamayita, as they are right next to each other.

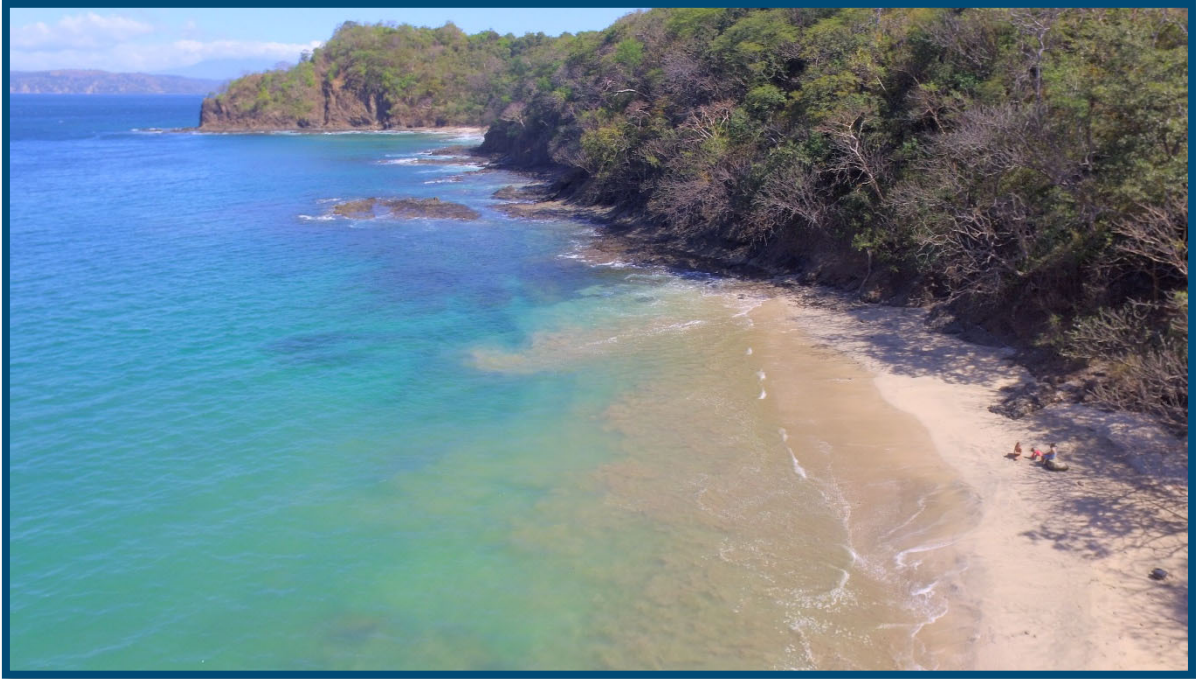
There are no services available in these places, as they are very virgin. Ground access is only available to Guacamaya. However, the road is in poor condition. If you decide to use this access, we recommend you visit during summer and drive a 4x4 vehicle.

Road conditions: Before hiring the boat that will take you to Guacamaya and Guacamayita, it's necessary to go to El Coco, where most tours are offered. The road to El Coco is in very good condition. You can travel in a regular car.





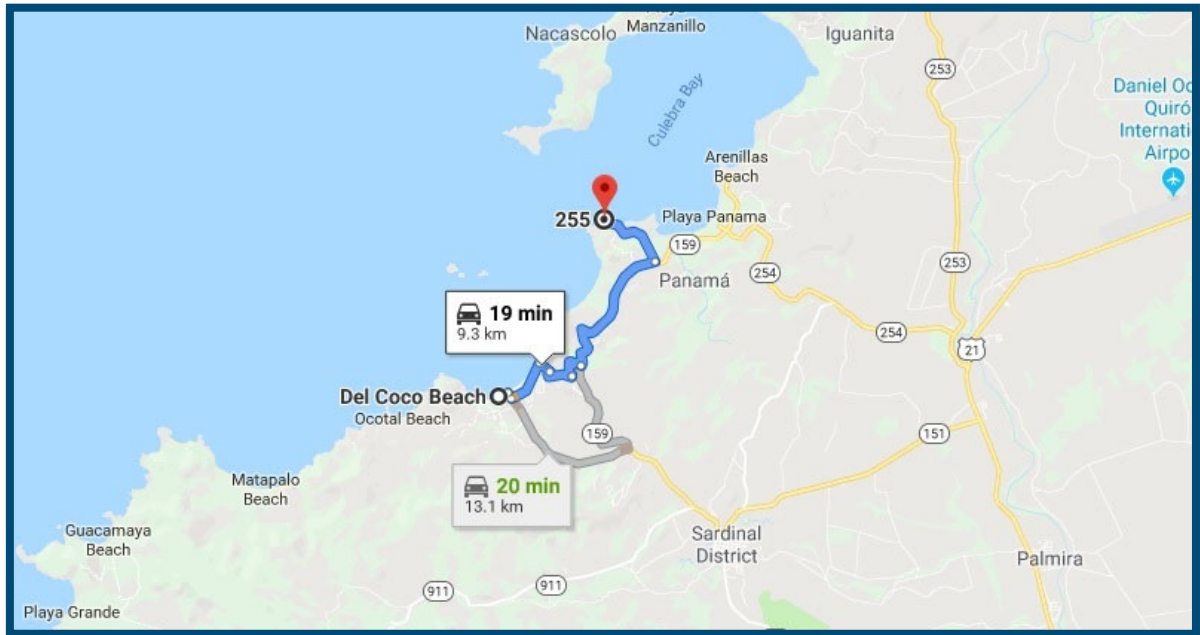
Playa Bonita (Bonita Beach)



Sea colors are very intense at Bonita Beach. Photography: GOPlaya.cr

Description: Bonita is as extraordinary as it is desolate. This spot of white sand and mid-sized waves is distinguished by the incredible color of the sea. It mixes different shades of blue due to the clarity of the water. It's so crystalline, that you can appreciate the rocks on the bottom of the sea.

This beach is small and receives only a few tourists most of the year. A stone wall in front of the beach serves as a place to leave your backpack, while enjoying a swim. Before arriving, you need to walk a 500-meter-long trail that takes you to the shore. Keep in mind that the trail is somewhat neglected. Try to walk carefully and you will reach the beach without any problem.



The red dot on the map indicates the location of Bonita Beach in Papagayo.

Activities and services: When driving, you will arrive at a housing community that is not yet finished. Right next to it is the public entrance to the beach. Walk along this trail that is steep in some parts, and do not forget to bring what you need (water and snacks), because when you see this place, you will probably not want to go back in a while. Just be careful with the rip currents.

It's important to visit this beach during low tide to make the most of your experience. In the Papagayo Peninsula there are accommodations available, mainly hotels and rental houses. In addition, it's only 20 minutes away from El Coco, where the accommodations, restaurants and supermarkets' offer is wider.

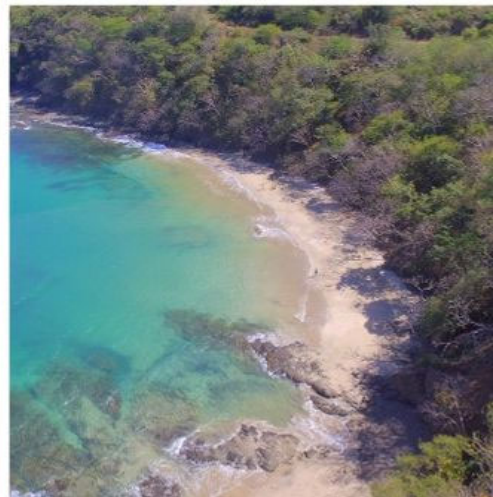


Road conditions: You can park your vehicle on the side of the road, or request authorization from the housing community security guard to park it in a vacant lot, located next to the trail entrance. The road to get here is in good condition, you can get there by regular car without problem.





Gallery





Playa Naranjo/Roca Bruja (Naranjo Beach/Witch Rock)



Sunset at Naranjo Beach, commonly known as Witch Rock, and also known as Peña Bruja by the locals. Photography: Ignacio Vásquez.

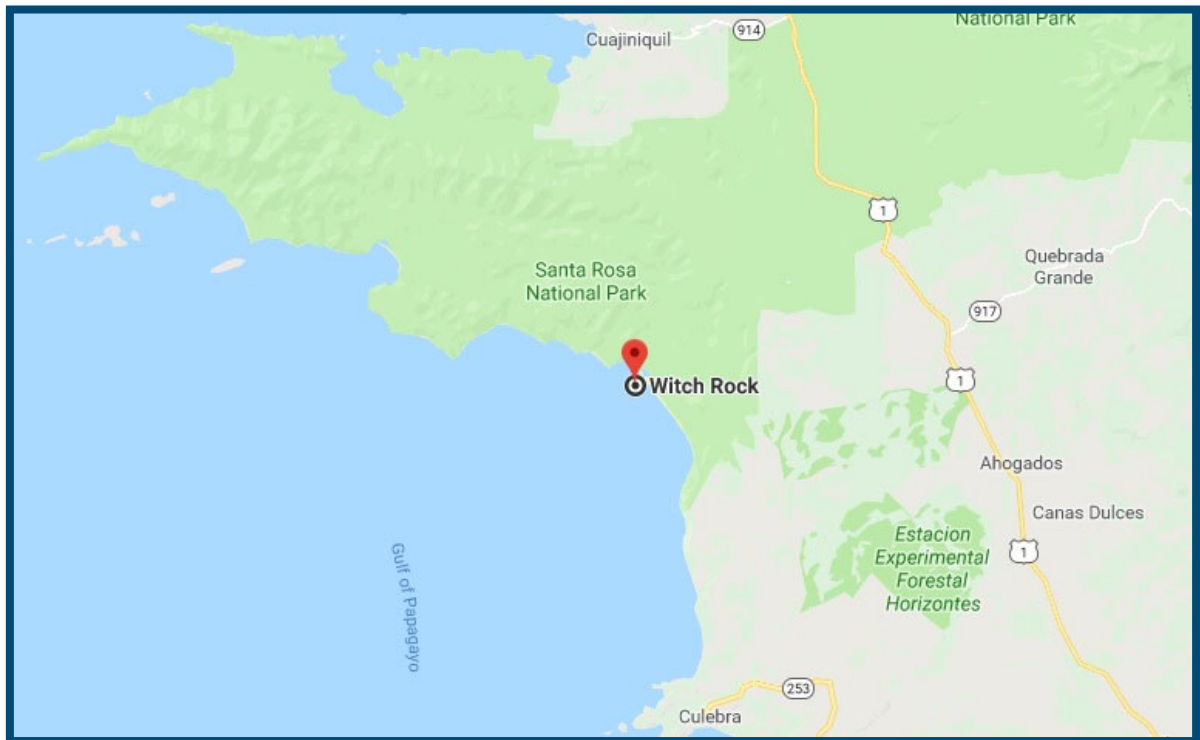
Description: Naranjo Beach, known as Witch Rock, is almost a legend in Costa Rica. Many people talk about this spot, but few know it. Besides being a paradise for surfers, it's also an extraordinary place to experience nature.

During the summer you can drive to Witch Rock in a 4x4 vehicle by crossing a long and complicated rocky road for about 10 kilometers. Then, you will need to park your vehicle in a designated space and walk



along a path full of dry trees, in which you may find a deer or a black spiny-tailed iguana.

The beach is extraordinary. Its sand is gray, the water is crystal clear, and you can see the incredible giant rock towards the back. This is the reason why it's nicknamed Witch Rock.



Witch Rock belongs to Santa Rosa National Park, in Guanacaste.

Activities and services: Walking the road to the beach is the hard part, but once you surpass it, you can enjoy a place with a designated camping area, restrooms and showers. It's almost-perfect waves receive constant visits from surfers, and you can also enjoy the incredible scenery that surrounds the shore under the shade of the trees.



During rainy season, the access to the beach is usually closed, because the road is impossible to overcome, even in a 4x4 vehicle. Before you decide to go to this spot, it's necessary to confirm if the route is enabled. To do so you can contact the Guanacaste Conservation Area: +506 2666-5051

You can also ask about allowed areas for camping and available capacity.

Tours are also offered from El Coco town; boats take surfers and travelers to the beach. The main advantage of going by boat is that you can approach the stone known as Roca Bruja (Witch Rock), an additional value for the tourist.

Road conditions: It's preferable to go to this place during the summer time, as the road condition is very complicated during the rainy season. If you still want to visit Naranjo Beach during the rainy season, it's preferable to do so on a boat tour.

The difficult part of the journey starts at the last stretch towards the beach, where the road is made of loose rock and dirt. Keep in mind that before entering the park, the route presents good conditions.

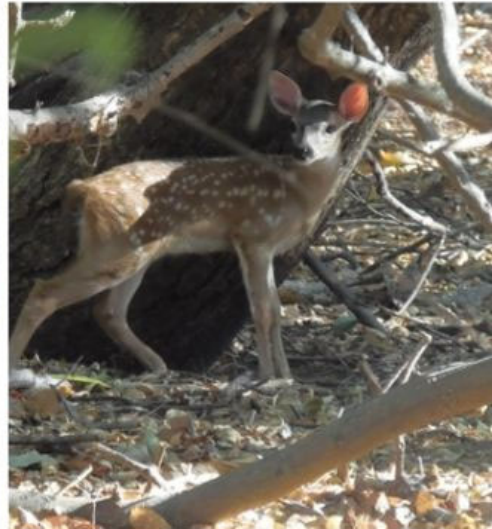
Santa Rosa National Park working hours: Monday to Sunday, 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Entrance fee for foreigners: \$15





Gallery



Map of

BEACHES IN LA CRUZ

ZONE:

La Cruz

PROVINCE:

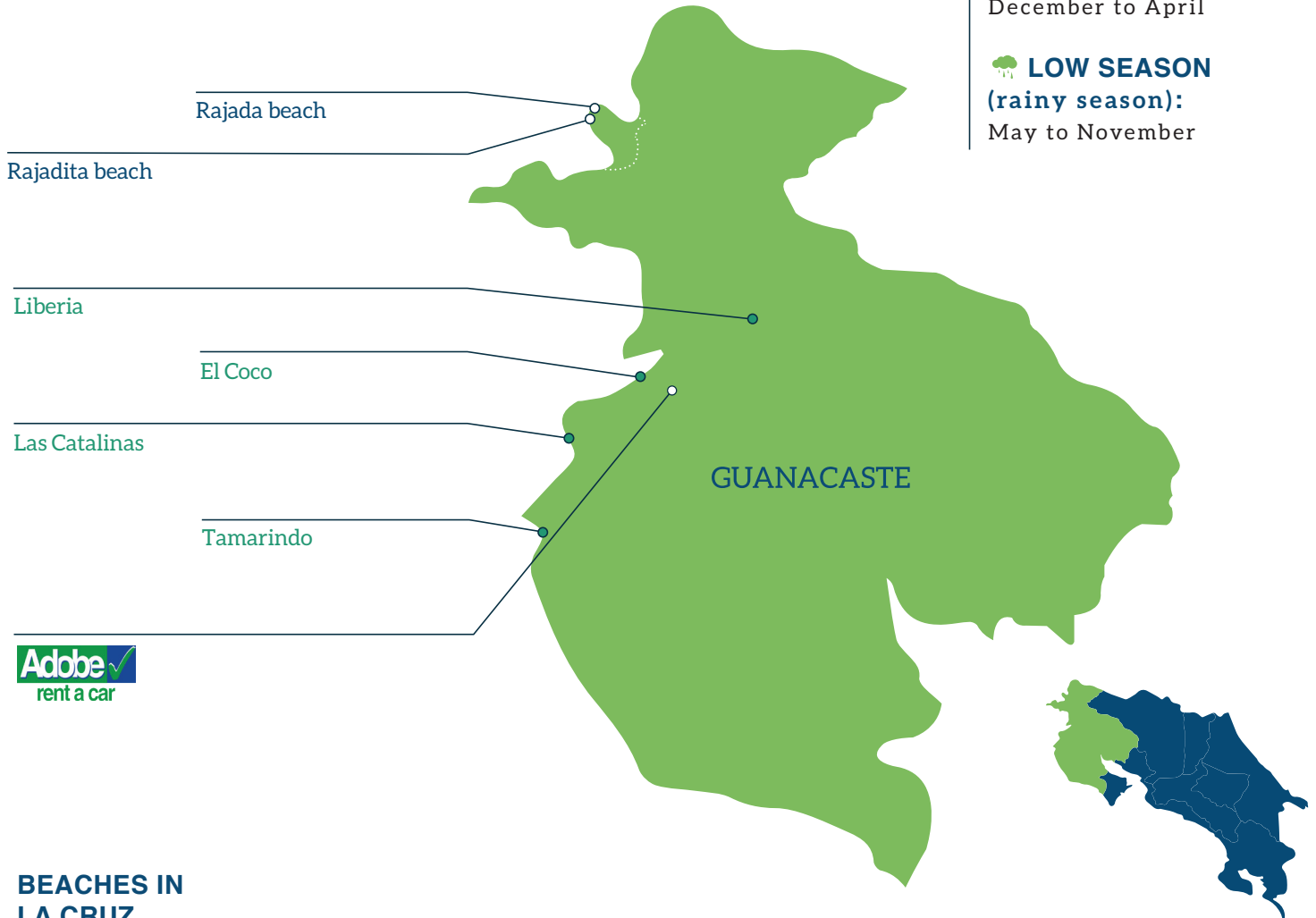
Guanacaste, North Pacific

 **HIGH SEASON (dry season):**

December to April

 **LOW SEASON (rainy season):**

May to November



BEACHES IN LA CRUZ

Rajada beach

 Google Maps address: <https://bit.ly/2J2loDG>

Rajadita beach

 Google Maps: <https://bit.ly/2V1V3a9>

NEAREST ADOBE RENT-A-CAR LOCATION:

Adobe Rent-a-Car Liberia

 Google Maps: <http://bit.ly/2H7PhjT>

REFERENCE POINTS IN GUANACASTE:

El Coco:

Google Maps: <http://bit.ly/2YbKJP8>

Tamarindo

Google Maps: <http://bit.ly/2vSKlsV>

Las Catalinas:

Google Maps: <http://bit.ly/2DUwGpg>

Liberia:

Google Maps: <http://bit.ly/2Y8CWBC>





La Cruz



La Cruz is an emergent town bordering neighboring Nicaragua. If you want to visit an area still in its infancy, where large buildings do not exist and most spots are still virgin, this place will enchant you. Just keep in mind that La Cruz has strong winds most of the year.

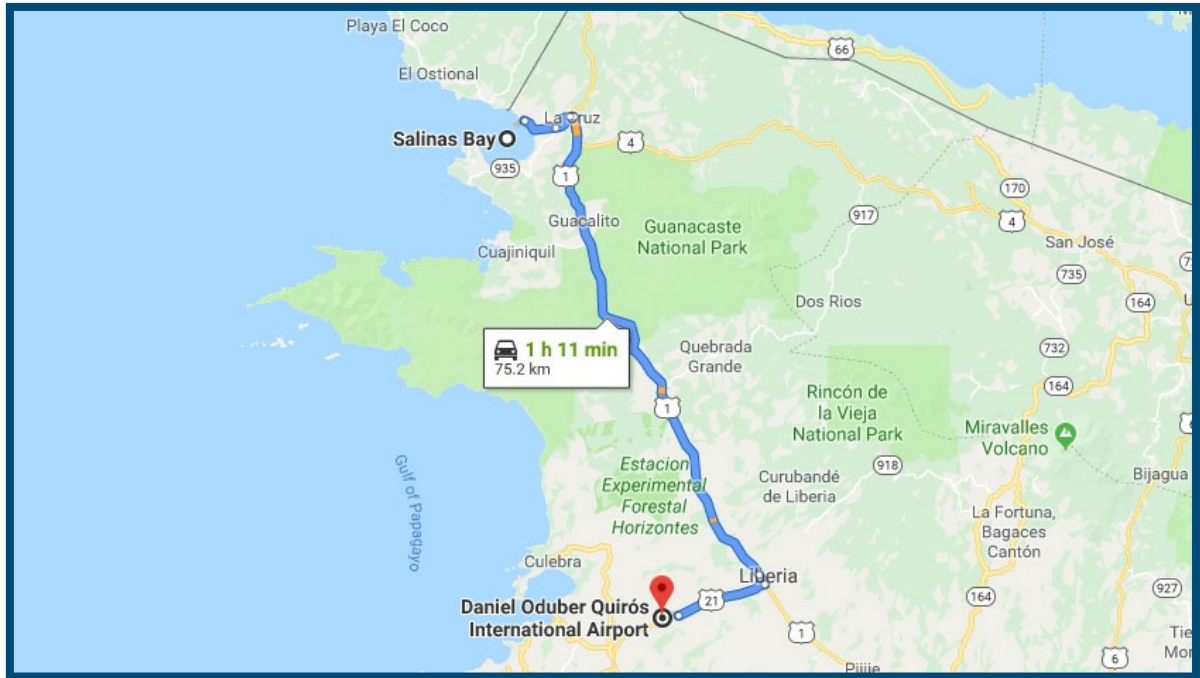
Discover the essence of Rajada and Rajadita, charming beaches that belong to this destination and that represent the old-style Guanacaste, with dusty roads, small local shops such as pulperías (something similar to a small supermarket), sodas (traditional food restaurant) and beautiful landscapes.

Visit www.goplaya.cr.

Find out about more than 230 beaches in Costa Rica.



This place is in the province of Guanacaste, in the Costa Rican North Pacific. From San Jose it will take a little more than five hours to get to La Cruz. Once you've reached La Cruz, you will have to travel an extra half hour to get to the most beautiful and unspoiled beaches in the area.



Beach Tip: As the area is windy, some beaches in Salinas Bay practice kite surfing. This is an extreme sport that consists of a board that slides over the sea with the help of a kite. The kite uses the wind to move the board, causing a sensation of adrenaline. If you prefer to avoid the wind, it's best to visit this area in the winter time (low season), when the breeze decreases.



Playa Rajada and Playa Rajadita (Rajada Beach and Rajadita Beach)



Photography: GOPlaya.cr

These beaches are totally different from one another. That's why GOPlaya will show you each spot with its respective photo gallery. However, the activities and services offered near both beaches are the same. Take it into consideration.

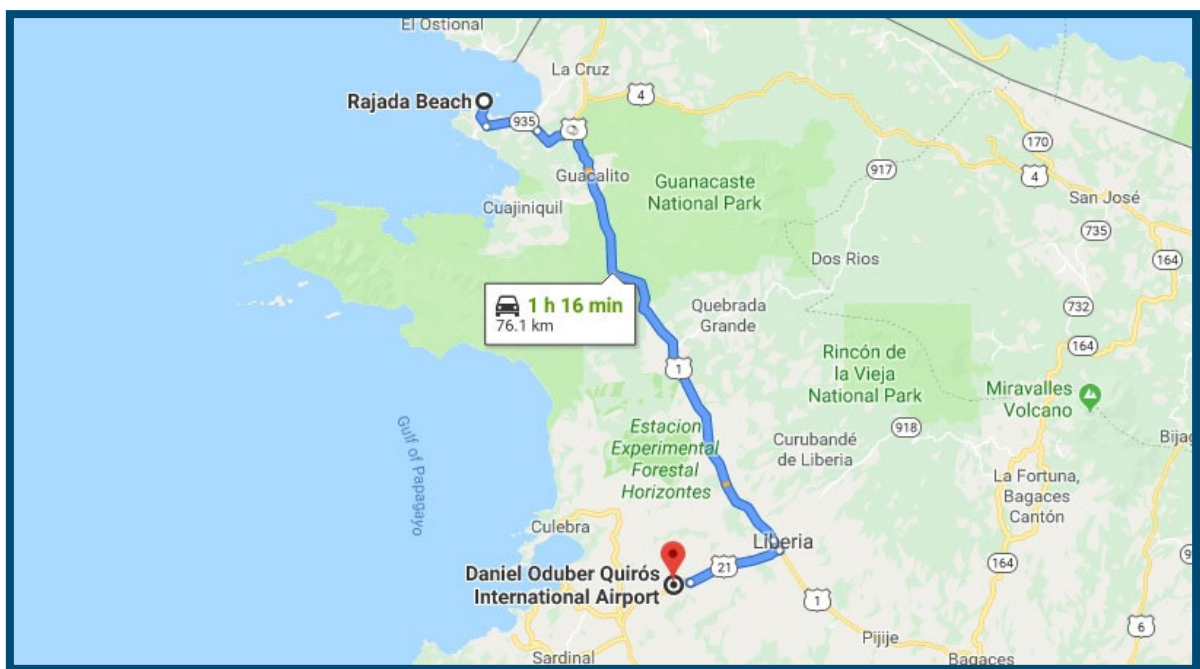
In Rajada Beach the waves are unnoticeable; the sea is clean and crystal clear.

Description: Rajada is an extensive spot with incredible beauty. It's a white-sand beach, with vegetation on the shore, few rocks, crystal



clear water, a beautiful view and a gentle swell. It's the typical place to relax under the shade of a tree or walk along the coast.

As in most of the beaches in this area, known as Bahía Salinas (Salinas Bay), in Rajada the wind blows only during some times of the year, to a lesser extent than in the rest of the spots of La Cruz, as it's surrounded by a mountain.



Activities and services: In Rajada and Rajadita there is no hotel infrastructure but there are some cabins and houses for rent in the community. There are also grocery stores (small supermarkets) available.

In addition, in Rajada there's an area to park vehicles in front of the beach and, during certain times of the year, you can see whale watching from the coast itself. You can watch the whales with their calves out at sea.



Road conditions: A great part of the way is dirt and it remains in acceptable conditions. It's not very difficult to get there by car. When you arrive in Rajada, you will be able to move to Rajadita.





Gallery





Playa Rajadita (Rajadita Beach)



You must cross some rocks, like the ones you see in the picture, to get to this charming beach. Photo: GOPlaya.cr

Description: Located next to Rajada. The difference is that Rajadita is a smaller beach, difficult to access and even more virgin than its neighbor.

How can you get there? First you must go to Rajada. On the left side of the beach, you will see some rock formations. Walk on top of the rocks for 400 meters. You can only do this during low tide.



The beach is covered by trees that offer shade and its waves are soft. In front of the beach, there is a huge rock that decorates the landscape and allows the turquoise color of the sea to stand out.





Gallery



Map of

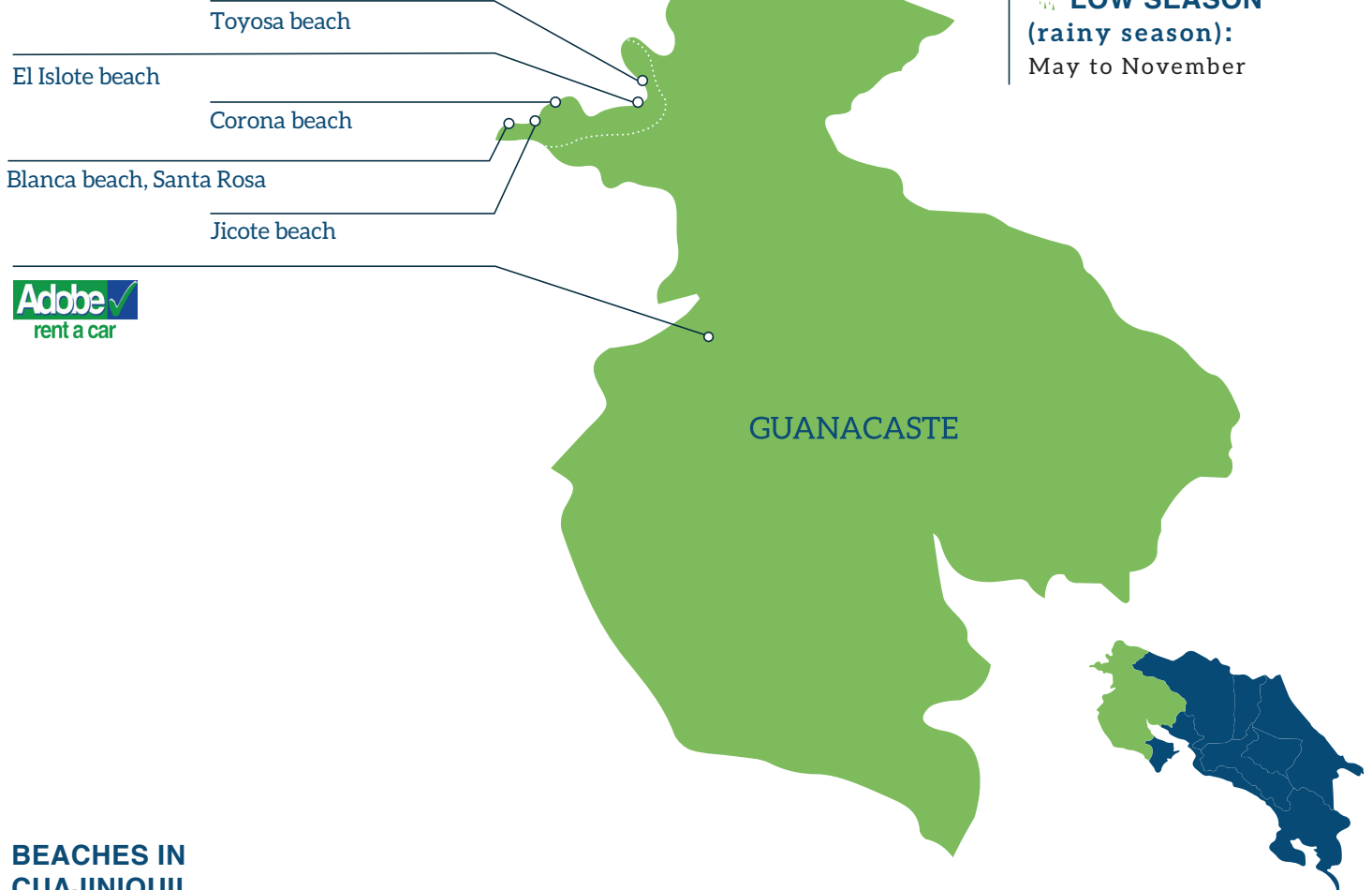
BEACHES IN CUAJINIQUIL

ZONE:
Cuajiniquil

PROVINCE:
Guanacaste, North Pacific

 **HIGH SEASON
(dry season):**
December to April

 **LOW SEASON
(rainy season):**
May to November



BEACHES IN CUAJINIQUIL

Toyosa beach

*You can only get there by boat

 Google Maps address: <https://bit.ly/304s0GU>
Boats depart from Cuajiniquil: <http://bit.ly/2J6PgyZ>

El Islote beach

*You can only get there by boat

 Google Maps: <https://bit.ly/2JbooxV>
Boats depart from Cuajiniquil: <http://bit.ly/2J6PgyZ>

Jicote beach

*You can only get there by boat

 Google Maps: <https://bit.ly/2VjIUmo>
Boats depart from Cuajiniquil: <http://bit.ly/2J6PgyZ>

Corona beach

*You can only get there by boat

 Google Maps: <https://bit.ly/2Vac9Tu>
Boats depart from Cuajiniquil: <http://bit.ly/2J6PgyZ>

Blanca beach, Santa Rosa

 Google Maps: <https://bit.ly/2VirzW5>

NEAREST ADOBE RENT-A-CAR LOCATION:

Adobe Rent-a-Car Liberia

 Google Maps: <http://bit.ly/2H7PhjT>





Cuajiniquil



Playa Toyosa (Toyosa Beach) is part of the Golfo de Santa Elena (Santa Elena Gulf), which surrounds the town of Cuajiniquil in Guanacaste.

Photo: GOPlaya.cr

Cuajiniquil is a small town that is lost in time, in which most boats are dedicated to artisanal fishing. It belongs to the province of Guanacaste, in the North Pacific, and is surrounded by the Santa Elena Gulf, where the sea is incredibly clean. It's very close to the town of La Cruz.

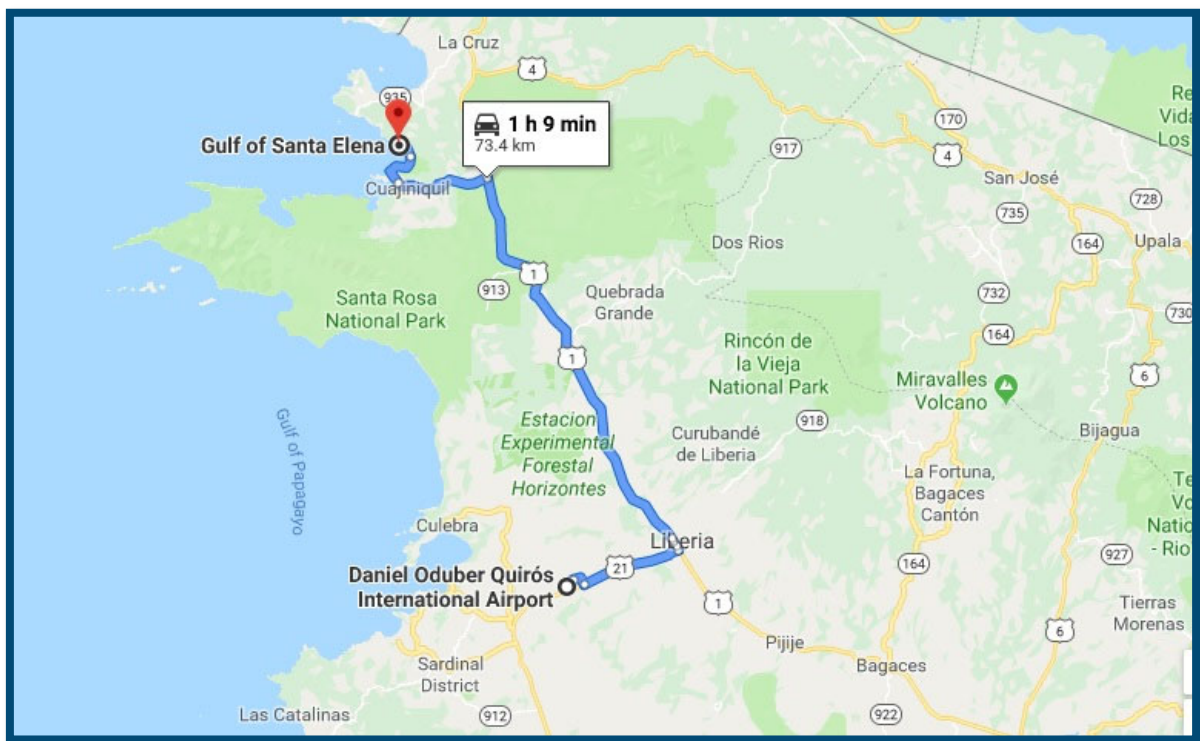
Visit www.goplaya.cr.

Find out about more than 230 beaches in Costa Rica.



Why do we show you this place if nobody knows about it? Because it hides beautiful landscapes surrounded by mountains and virgin beaches of difficult access, which can only be reached by boat. Cuajiniquíl is unknown to most travelers, and only a few tour operators in the area offer the tourist service to this location.

By knowing the area, these locals can determine the weather and the best time of day to sail to the solitary spots, as it's windy for much of the year. In Cuajiniquíl there are some lodging options, mainly cabins, boutique hotels, and sodas (traditional restaurants).



How can I get there? The best known area, which can be reached by car (preferably 4x4 vehicle) is called Cuajiniquíl, which has a lengthy shore with a gentle swell, but of lesser beauty than the other destinations. It's from this spot that the boat that will take you to the



five virgin beaches depart. These five beaches that we are going to show you are: Toyosa, El Islote, Jicote, Corona and Blanca.

In other words, you need to get to Cuajiniquil to get on the boat and start the journey to these beaches, which can last between 30 minutes to an hour, depending on the destination you decide to visit.

You are possibly wondering if there is an incredible beach in the area that can be reached by land. The answer is yes. You can find Blanca Beach. A road was opened in the area known as Murciélago Sector, which part of the Santa Rosa National Park. GOPlaya will show you how to get to this destination.

Cuajiniquil is located 1 hour and 45 minutes from El Coco in Guanacaste, 1 hour and 30 minutes from the Daniel Oduber Airport in Liberia and almost five hours from the capital San Jose.





Playa Toyosa (Toyosa Beach)

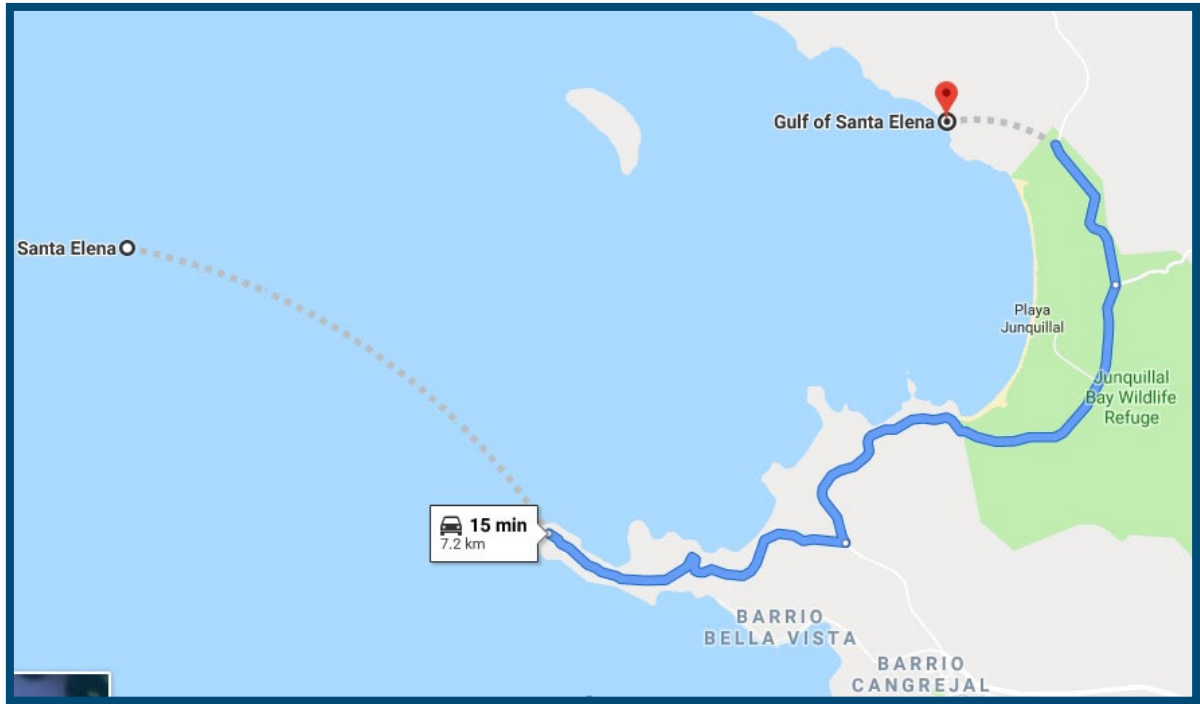


At Toyosa Beach the sand is white and on one side there is an islet that separates it from the Junquillal Bay Wildlife Refuge. Photo: GOPlaya.cr

Description: Toyosa is a beautiful beach located next to the Refugio de Vida Silvestre Bahía Junquillal (Junquillal Bay Wildlife Refuge), a conservation area that belongs to La Cruz in Guanacaste. Some rocks separate this spot from its neighboring beach, but the difference is evident. Toyosa is a spot with a crystalline and calm sea, surrounded by trees that offer shade.



In Toyosa, also known as Monstrencal (for the type of trees seen on the beach), the wind is calmer than the rest of spots of La Cruz and Cuajiniquil, so the sea water is warmer. It's a white-sand place, with shade along the beach.



There are no services available, as it spends most of the year desolate.

Boat trip: From 30 minutes to one hour, depending on the tides.



Playa El Islote (El Islote Beach)



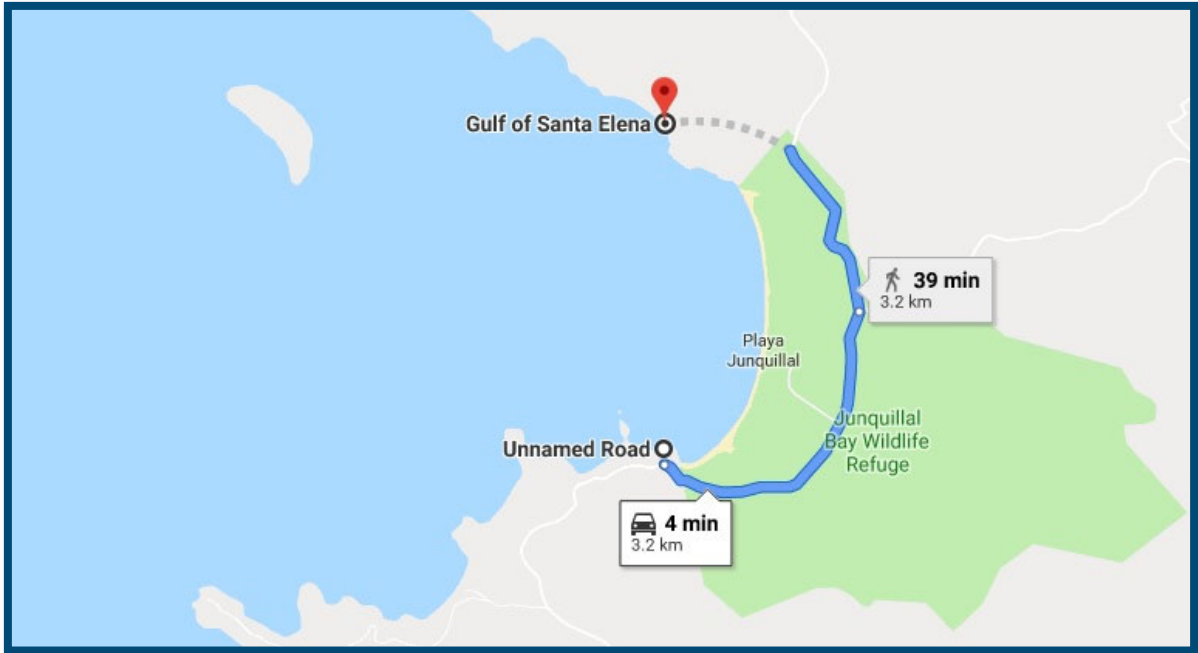
At El Islote Beach the colors of the sea are intense. It belongs to Santa Elena Gulf. Photography: GOPlaya.cr

Description: Virgin and tiny, El Islote beach is a desolate spot, which can be reached by a 4x4 vehicle or boat to enjoy the intense colors that are reflected in the sea. This white-sand beach stands out for the turquoise color and the tranquility of the waves.

There are some trees that offer shade, but it's a windy place during most of the year, so it's preferable to visit in winter time, starting in June, when the wind decreases, and you can enjoy the beach even more. This recommendation is even more important if you decide to visit by boat.



Boat trip: From 30 minutes to one hour, depending on the tides.





Gallery





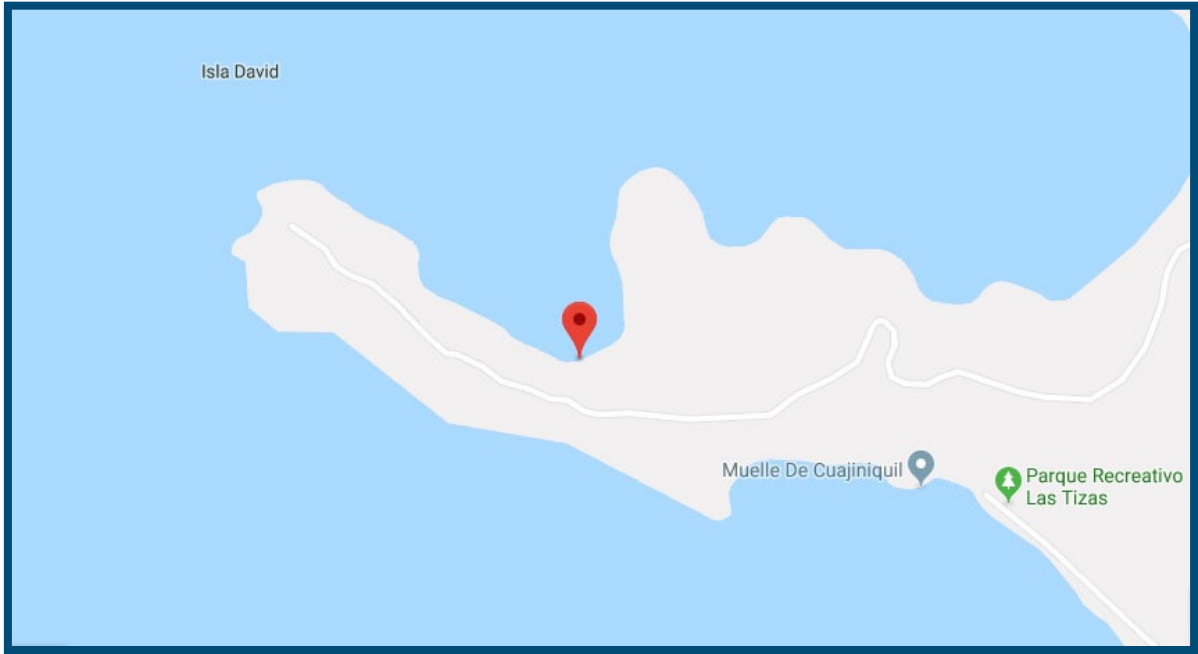
Playa Jicote (Jicote Beach)



The color of the sea is the main attraction of Jicote Beach in Santa Elena Gulf. Photography: GOPlaya.cr

Description: Jicote is a small virgin beach that offers beautiful colors. It's one of the most crystalline spots in Costa Rica. This destination combines white sand with soft waves.

There are rocks on some areas of the beach, but you can swim without a problem in other areas. In Jicote the water is clean and crystal clear, but a little cooler than in the rest of Guanacaste.



Boat trip: From 30 minutes to one hour, depending on the tides.



Gallery



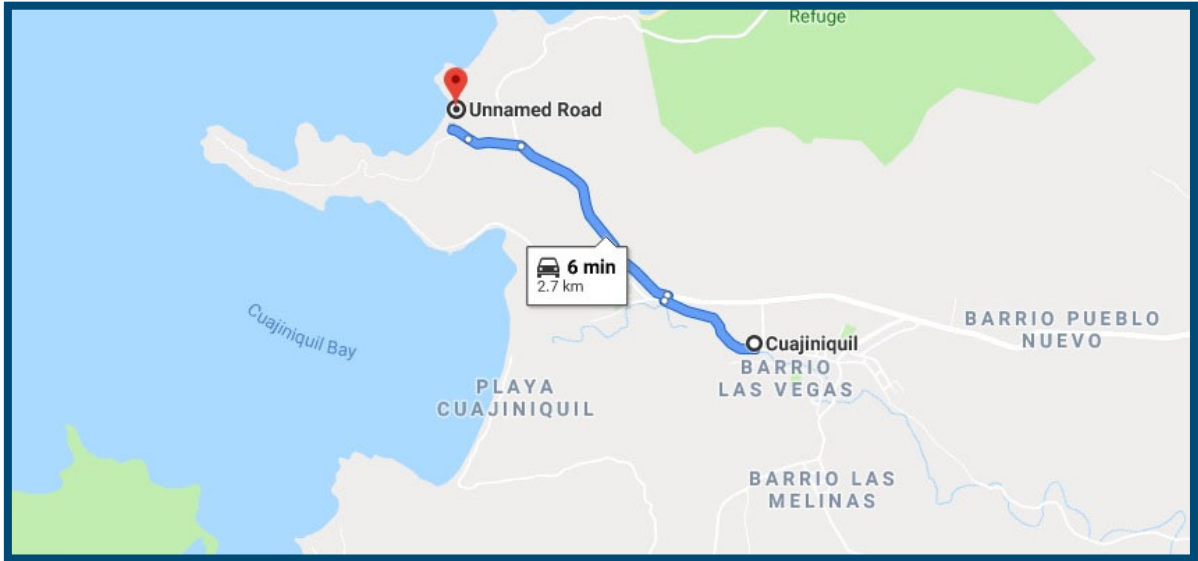


Playa Corona (Corona Beach)



Corona, a desolate beach with a beautiful turquoise sea.
Photo: GOPlaya.cr

Description: Corona is a beautiful white sandy beach, with turquoise sea and soft waves. It's an impressive destination, where you can walk from one end to the other while enjoying the colors of the ocean. In Corona the trees offer shade along the coast.



Boat trip: From 30 minutes to one hour, depending on the tides.



Gallery



Playa Blanca (Blanca Beach), Santa Rosa



In Blanca Beach the sea is clear and crystalline.
Photography: GOPlaya.cr

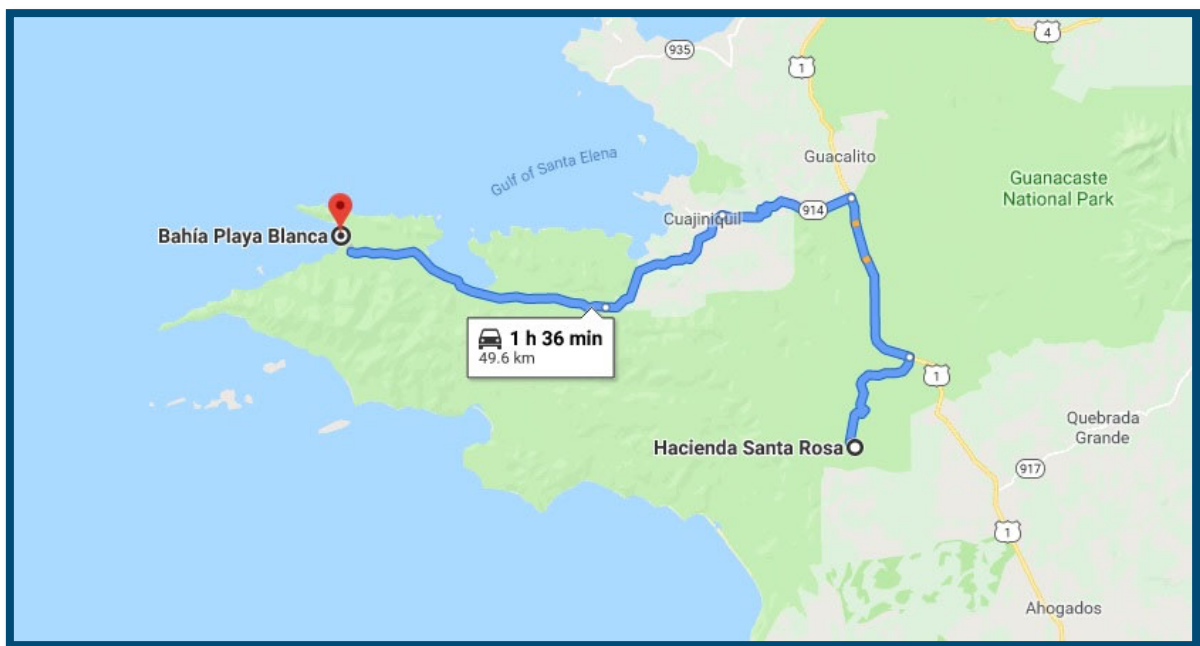
Description: After crossing a complicated road for almost 17 kilometers, in a 4x4 vehicle, you can reach this wonderful white sand, loose stone and soft wave beach. The beach is surrounded by tall mountains.

Why do you have to cross this road? Because Blanca Beach is part of an area of the Santa Rosa National Park known as Murcielago Sector, and the route is totally different.

A few pages ago, we showed you Naranjo Beach, which also belongs to Santa Rosa National Park. However, the route leading to both Naranjo



and Blanca Beach is different. GOPlaya recommends that you check the Google Maps address so that you don't get lost. In Blanca Beach you can enjoy the nature of the dry tropical forest, the living fauna and the trails that run along the area. Make sure to check the signs, as the place is big and you can get lost easily on some of the roads that open up throughout the site.



Activities and services: In the rainy season this area is usually closed because the rivers grow, and the rain causes road conditions to become more complicated. From the entrance to the site, the park ranger will explain that on this beach you can only stay for a short period of time. In case you want to confirm if the road is open during the date of your trip, you can contact the Guanacaste Conservation Area: +506 2666-5051.



In Murciélago Sector a camping area is available, and you can find lodging options, restaurants and supermarkets available a few kilometers from there. When entering the site, do not forget to carry your water bottle.

Road conditions: The road combines loose rocks with dirt and it's in poor condition. It's recommended that you enter Blanca beach in a 4x4 vehicle, both in summer and rainy season.



Map of

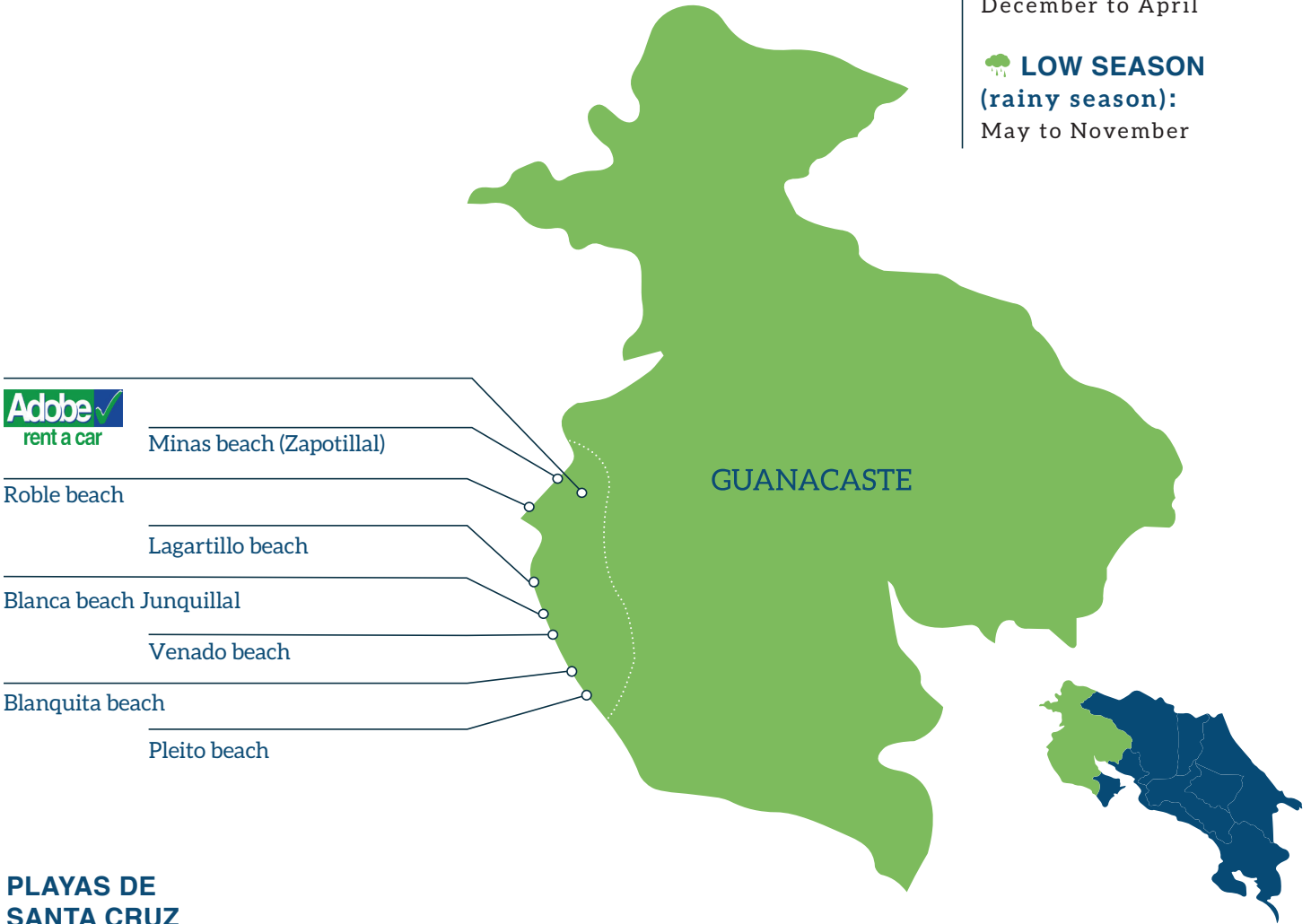
BEACHES IN SANTA CRUZ

ZONE:
Santa Cruz

PROVINCE:
Guanacaste, North Pacific

 **HIGH SEASON (dry season):**
December to April

 **LOW SEASON (rainy season):**
May to November



Minas beach (Zapotillal)

Roble beach

Lagartillo beach

Blanca beach Junquillal


Venado beach

Blanquita beach

Pleito beach

PLAYAS DE SANTA CRUZ

Blanquita beach

 Google Maps address:: <https://bit.ly/2DXTRiO>

Blanca beach, Junquillal

 Google Maps: <http://bit.ly/2LuoDpG>

Lagartillo beach

 Google Maps: <http://bit.ly/2J6zTqk>

Pleito beach

 Google Maps: <http://bit.ly/304oNr5>

Venado beach

 Google Maps: <http://bit.ly/2YdbgLQ>

Roble beach

 Google Maps: <http://bit.ly/2WznfTS>

Minas beach (Zapotillal)

 Google Maps: <http://bit.ly/2DSWBhc>

NEAREST ADOBE RENT-A-CAR LOCATION:

Adobe Rent-a-Car Tamarindo - Conchal

 Google Maps: <http://bit.ly/2DUQWHA>





Santa Cruz



Have you ever heard about Avellanas and Tamarindo Beach? They are beautiful and popular spots that belong to Santa Cruz de Guanacaste, in the North Pacific of Costa Rica. This area shelters so many incredible destinations, that most travelers are unaware of like Playa Blanquita (Blanquita Beach) or Playa Minas (Minas Beach), to name a couple.

Visit www.goplaya.cr.
Find out about more than 230 beaches in Costa Rica.



The good news is that all these places that we will show you can be reached by car. You just need to know some basic details about how to move in Santa Cruz. The main point of reference is Tamarindo town, which offers all types of accommodations and a wide range of cuisine.

You can also take surf lessons here (the area is known for its waves) or rent a quad.

Tamarindo is surrounded by small towns that belong to Santa Cruz, and those are precisely the ones that house the most virgin beaches in the area. Lodgings are also available in these places, but less in quantity.

That said, keep in mind that you can go to towns like Junquillal and Cabo Velas, but most locals and travelers are much better acquainted with the nearby beaches. To give you an example, you can see a location called Lagartillo, near popular Avellanas; or you can find Playa Roble (Roble Beach) near popular Playa Conchal (Conchal Beach).

This is the case with most of the spots that we're going to show you, since they are only a few kilometers away from popular places.

If you arrive at Juan Santamaría Airport in Alajuela, you will need to travel four hours approximately by car until you reach Tamarindo. The road is in good condition.

Later, when you want to visit a virgin beach, you will need a 4x4 vehicle, since the road is in poor condition in some places.



Playa Lagartillo (Lagartillo Beach)

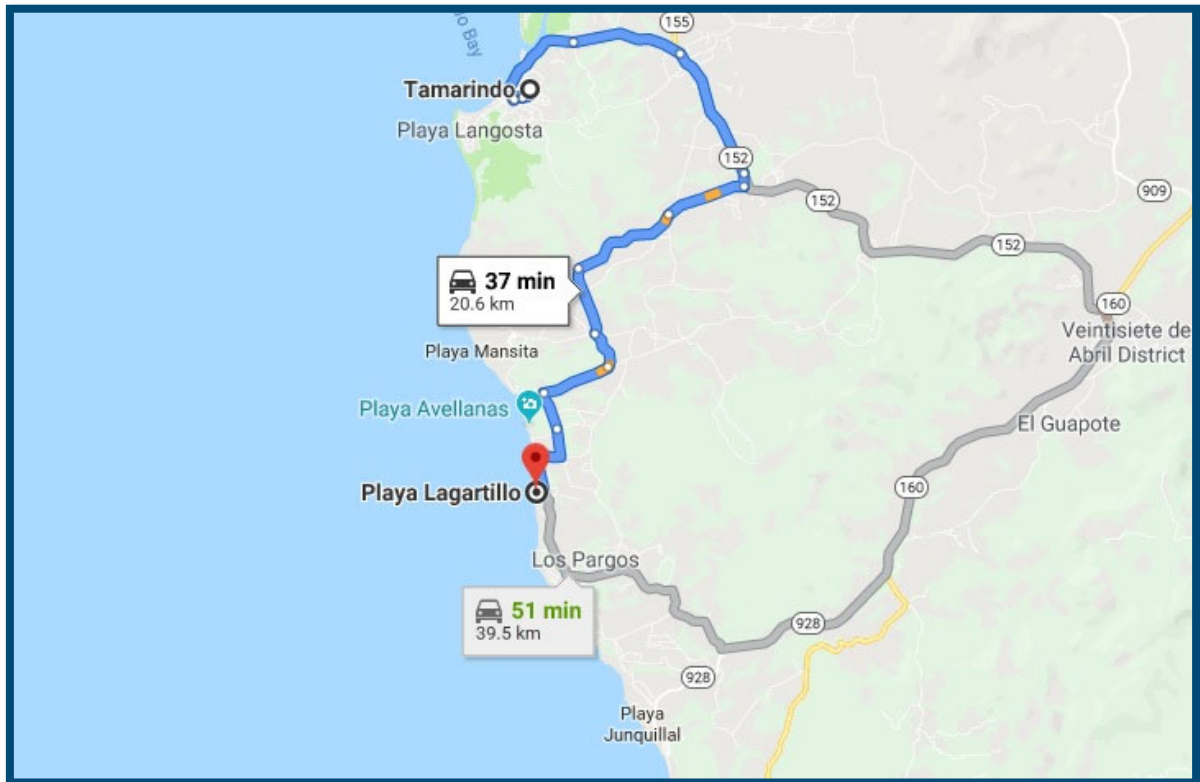


Lagartillo, a shaded beach located very close to Avellanas Beach, in Santa Cruz, Guanacaste.
Photo: GOPlaya.cr

Description: You've probably heard of Avellanas beach, a beautiful long white-sand place, highly prized among surfers. Lagartillo is very close to this Guanacaste spot. This small beach stands out for its white sand, strong waves and trees that provide shade to the seashore.

Lagartillo eBach is perfect for relaxing, reading a book, or simply tanning, as it's not very crowded compared to its neighboring

Avellanas. Since most travelers only know Avellanas, it's possible that you will find this beach alone and desolate.



Activities and services: Lagartillo is located in a strategic location because, in addition to its proximity to Avellanas, it's a few kilometers from Tamarindo.

Are there services in Avellanas? There aren't many places to stay, but you can find some hostels, cabins and a restaurant in front of the beach.

Road conditions: The road is ballast and in poor condition. It's preferable to get there in a 4x4 vehicle, especially during winter.



Gallery





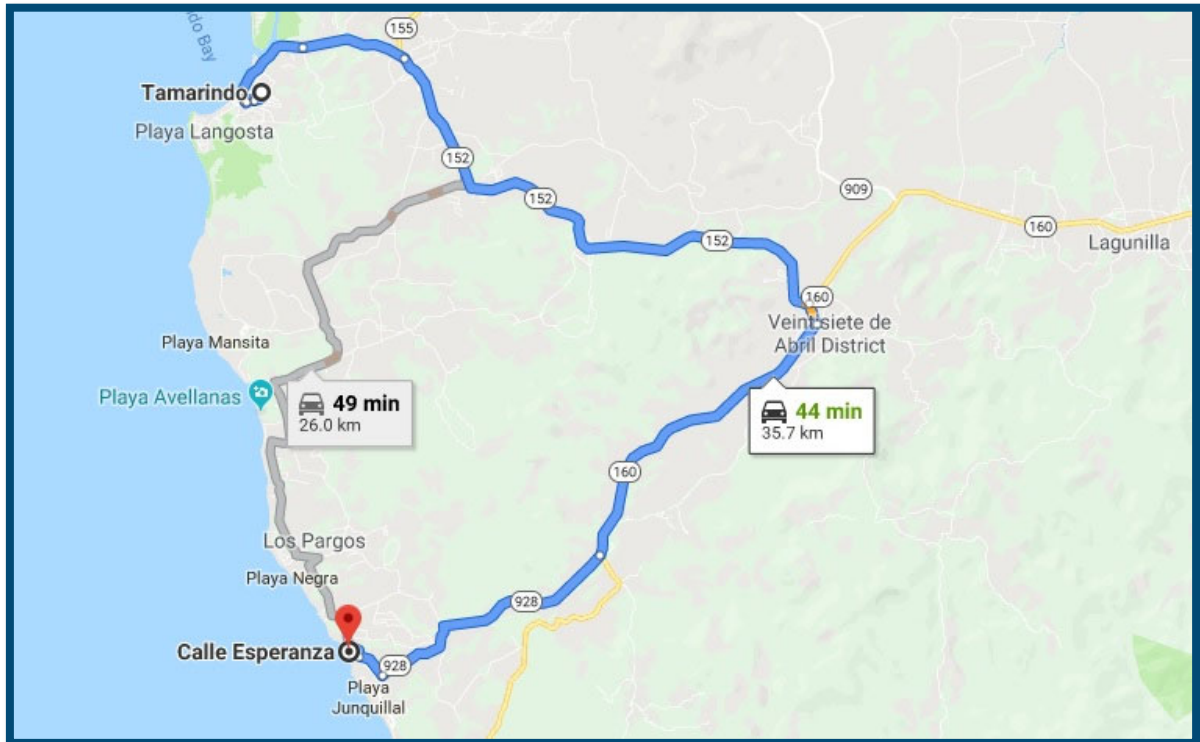
Playa Blanca (Blanca Beach), Junquillal



In Blanca Beach the sea shows different shades of blue during the summer.
Photography: GOPlaya.cr

Description: White-sand beach located in the area known as Junquillal, you will also find a beach with the same name. The main difference is that Blanca is a hidden place with a multicolored sea. During the summer time, the water reflects different shades of blue. Trees offer shade to spend the day.

Before reaching Blanca, you must walk a short trail. The journey is uncomfortable. Be careful when crossing the dirt “steps” that lead to the coast.



The red dot indicates Blanca's location. It's close to the popular Avellanas Beach and Tamarindo Beach town.

Activities and services: One area of the beach is perfect for snorkeling and sunbathing, as small “tide pools” are present during low tide. However, you need to be careful as there are currents on the rest of the beach. There are rental houses, restaurants and supermarkets available near Blanca, in Junquillal.

Road conditions: The ballast road is acceptable, so you can easily drive there with a regular car. Parking is available upon arrival.





Gallery





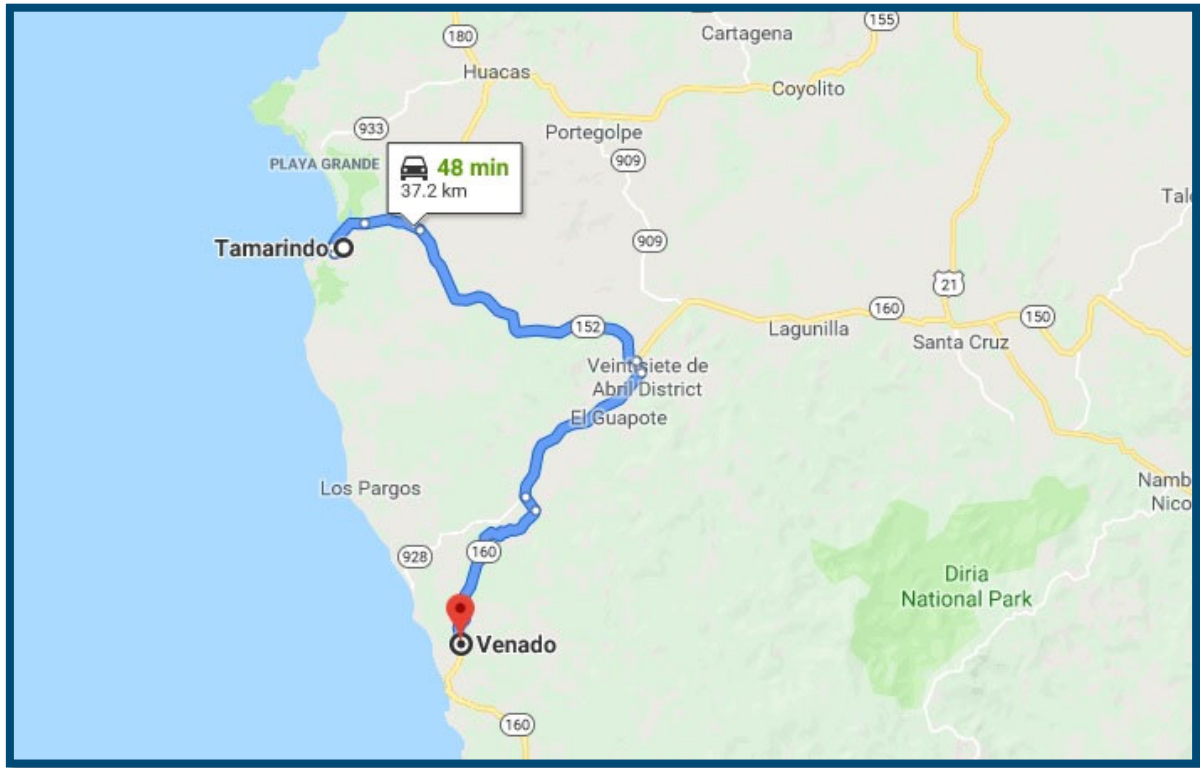
Playa Venado (Venado Beach)



Venado Beach is desolate most of the year. It's a spot with an ocean full of turquoise colors. Photography: GOPlaya.cr

Description: Venado has a peculiar shape since it resembles a small bay. The turquoise color of its waters will captivate you as well as its cleanliness, but be careful, the waves can be deceiving and the currents are strong.

This seldom-visited spot is located 10 kilometers from Junquillal, which is a district belonging to Santa Cruz in Guanacaste. Venado Beach is ideal for people who enjoy tranquility and hiking. There are only a few trees on the shore, so it's preferable to bring an awning or an umbrella that will allow you to protect yourself from the sun.



Activities and services: Near Venado, in the Junquillal area, you can find restaurants and lodging options, mainly hotels and rental houses. There are also other supermarket and lodging alternatives in the town of Marbella.

Road conditions: The road leading to Venado is a ballast road and some parts are in poor condition. Although you can slowly drive with a regular car to get there, it's preferable that you do it in a 4x4 vehicle.





Playa Blanquita (Blanquita Beach)

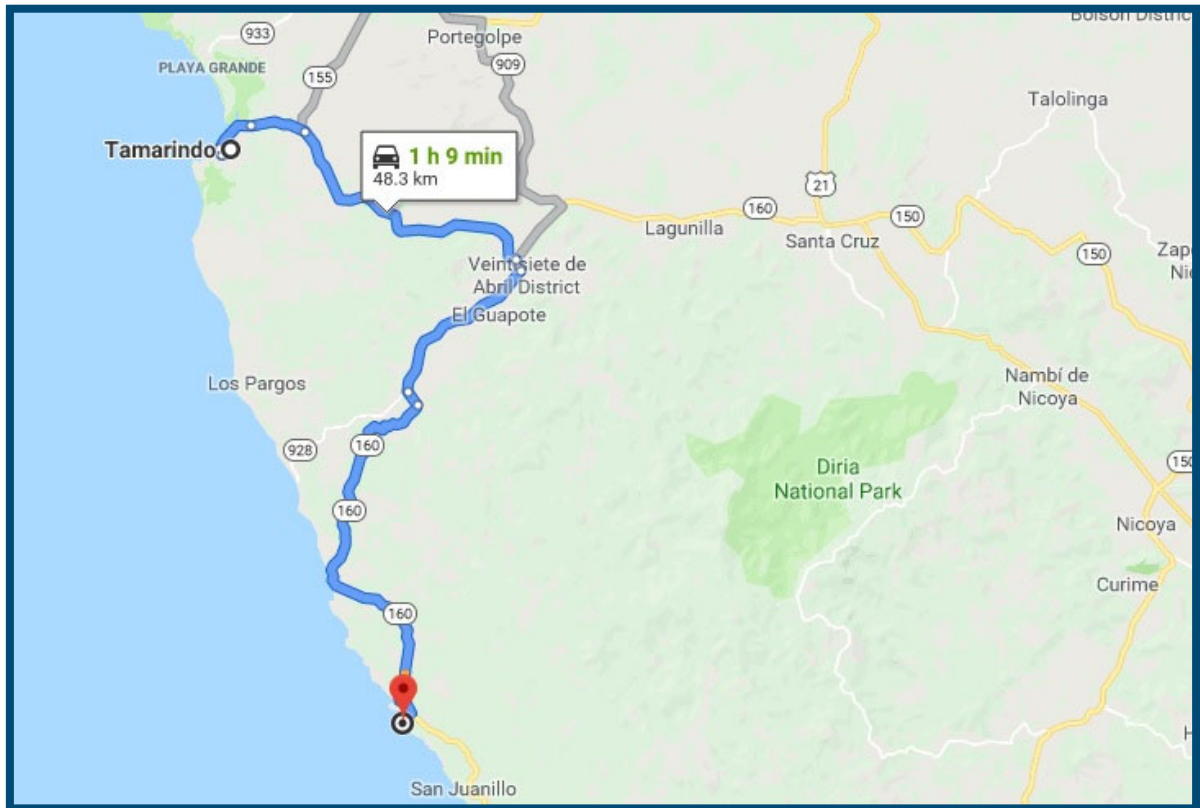


Blanquita is surrounded by intense vegetation. This image was captured during the green season. Photo: GOPlaya.cr

Description: Only locals know about this jewel that's hidden in Santa Cruz. Blanquita Beach is a white-sand spot with crystal clear water, that's surrounded by vegetation. It's located near the beach known as Frijolar Marbella. A small beach village was created near Frijolar Marbella that has some accommodations available.

From this place, you can go to Playa Blanca de Pitahaya (Blanca Beach of Pitahaya), a spot near Frijolar Marbella beach that is also desolate for most of the year. When you reach this place, you will need to walk 15 minutes along the shore until you find a dirt road. From here you have to take a left and walk along a path until you see the white

sand. Remember to check the Google Maps address of this spot to avoid getting lost.



The red dot indicates the location of Blanquita Beach, located near the town of San Juanillo and an hour and nine minutes from the town of Tamarindo.

Activities and services: This beach remains untouched, largely because of its difficult access. There is nowhere to park off the coast, so you will have to leave your car near Blanca Beach of Pitahaya and start the excursion on foot. There is also no lodging available but it's just a few kilometers from Marbella.

Road conditions: It's preferable to visit Blanquita Beach in a 4x4 vehicle, as the road is ballast and in poor condition; however, you can also arrive in a regular car, but you should drive slowly and carefully.



Other directions needed to get to Blanquita:

Blanca Beach of Pitahaya: <http://bit.ly/2YdRSP4>





Gallery





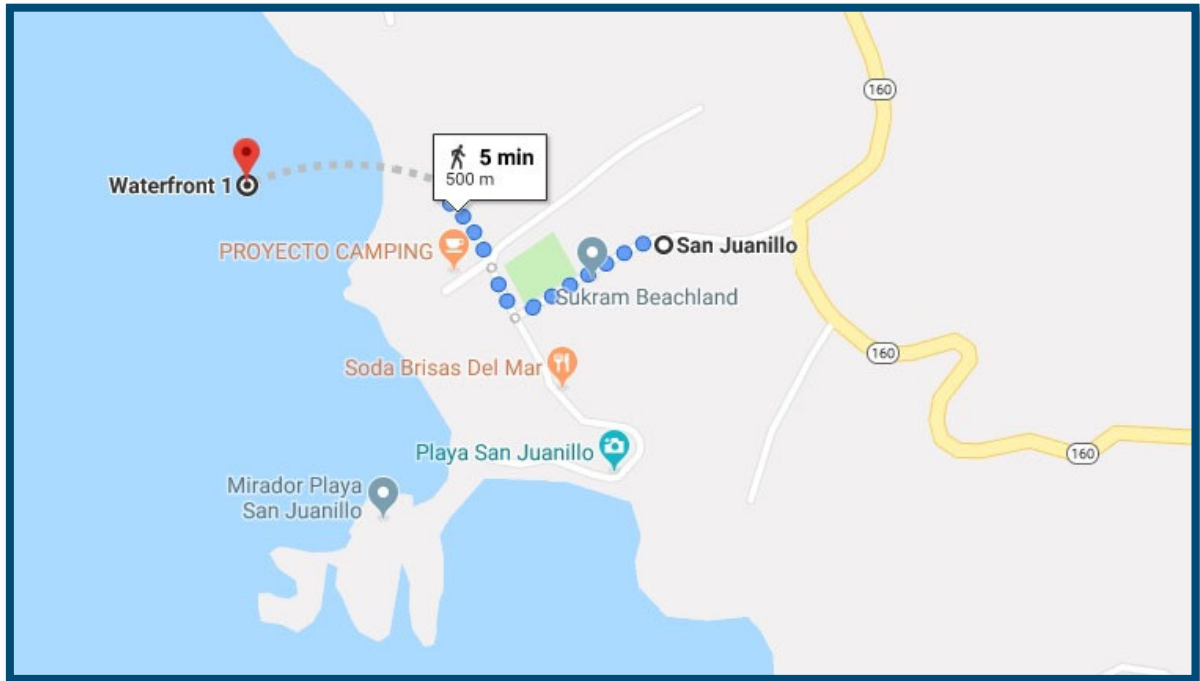
Playa Pleito (Pleito Beach)



At Pleito Beach the sand is really white, and the sea is clean and crystalline. Photography: GOPlaya.cr

Description: Just next to San Juanillo, a very popular beach due to its beauty, is hidden Pleito Beach, which is as extraordinary as its neighbor, but less visited. It's characterized by white sand and soft waves, combined with great vegetation and huge rocks surrounding the beach. It's an ideal place for snorkeling or relaxing under the shade of the trees.

Why does Pleito remain virgin when it's next to a spot that is not? Very simple: before enjoying this beach, you must get to San Juanillo, then walk over some rocks located on the right side of the beach. It takes about 10 minutes at low tide. Remember, you can only cross during low tide.



From San Juanillo you can walk to Pleito, as shown on the map.

Activities and services: You can find restaurants, cabins and boat tours in the town of San Juanillo. Although it's a developing area, it has grown in recent years. Other points of reference to look for lodging nearby are Marbella and Ostional. Ostional is one of the favorite destinations in Costa Rica to observe the Olive Ridley turtles nesting. Both places are close to Pleito and San Juanillo.

Road conditions: It can be reached by regular car but be careful because the terrain is ballast and is in poor condition. If you decide to visit the area in winter, it is best to do so in a 4x4 vehicle.

Necessary address:

San Juanillo Beach: <http://bit.ly/2VrdHOH>

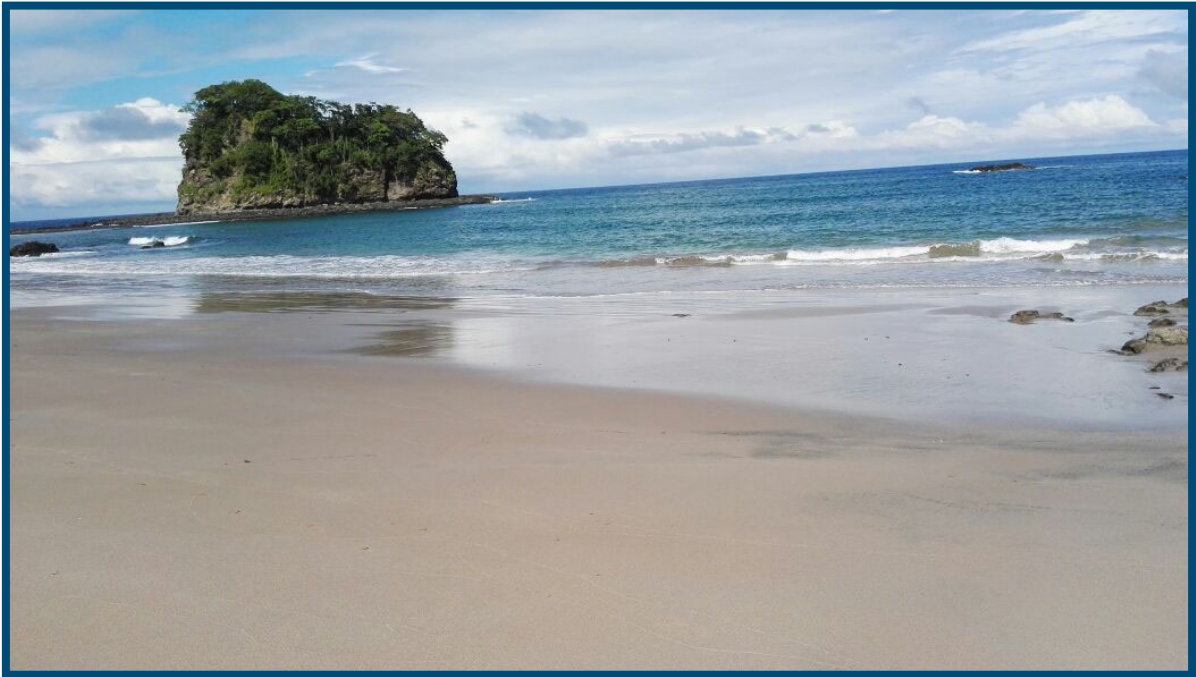


Gallery





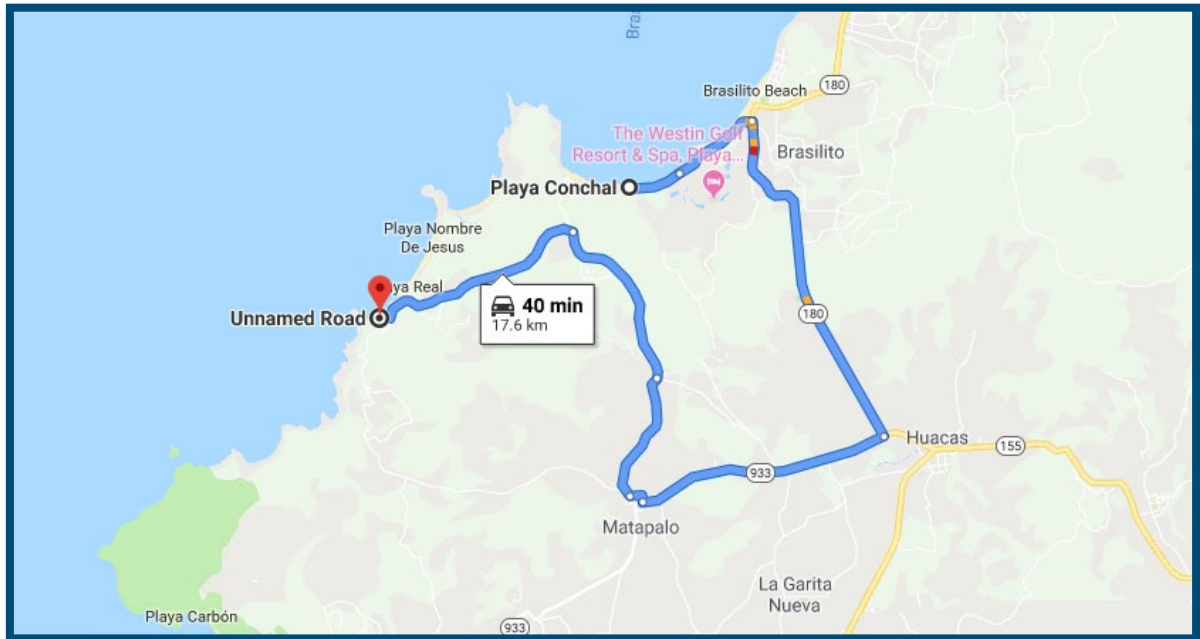
Playa Roble (Roble Beach)



Roble is rarely visited. From the beach you can see some incredible islets that decorate the landscape. Photography: GOPlaya.cr

Description: Roble Beach is located a few kilometers from Conchal Beach. Conchal is a popular and well visited spot because of its enormous beauty, and the small shells that mix with the sand, a peculiarity of this place.

Unlike Conchal, Roble is an unknown as a white-sand and soft-wave beach. The turquoise color of the water stands out because of the massive rocks that decorate the bottom of the sea, generating an extraordinary landscape. On the shore, the trees provide shade.



The red dot indicates the route to Roble Beach, which is located near Conchal and 40 minutes from Tamarindo Beach town. Photo: GOPlaya.cr

Activities and services: Due to the amount of rocks and the color of the water, it's an ideal beach for snorkeling near the shore. It has a gentle swell so you can also swim in it. It's close to Tamarindo, a beach town that offers all kinds of services.

Road conditions: Most of the road leading to the beach is dirt and in poor condition, so it's advisable to enter Roble in a 4x4 vehicle.

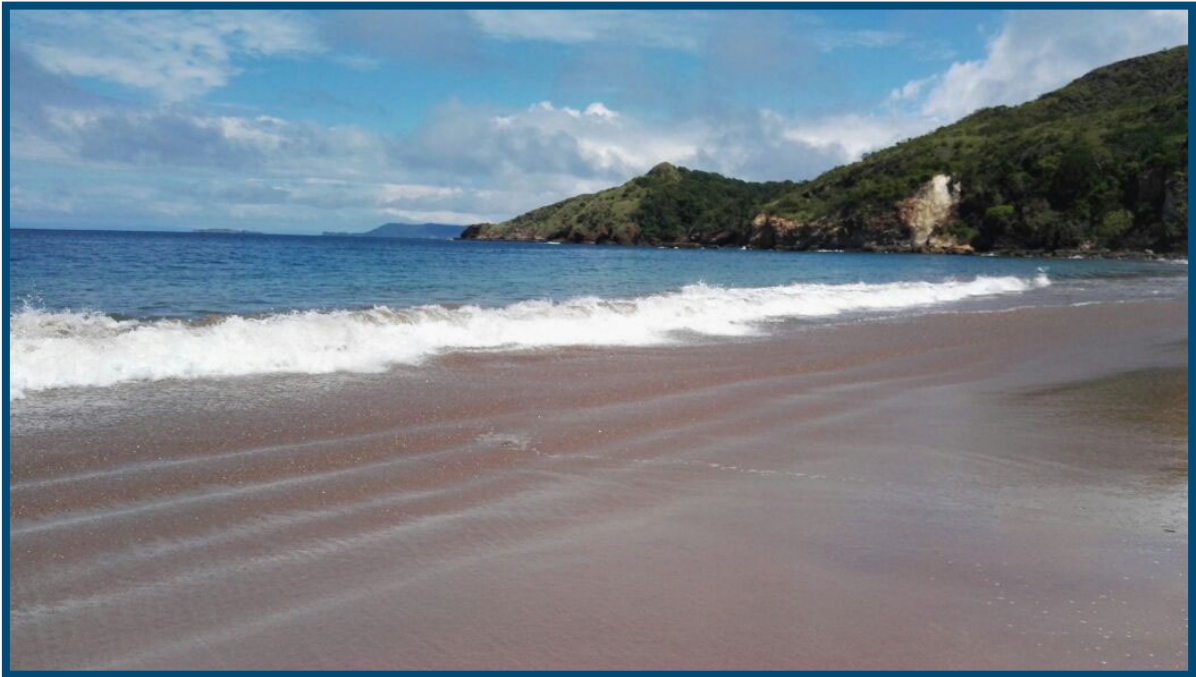


Gallery





Playa Minas (Minas Beach)

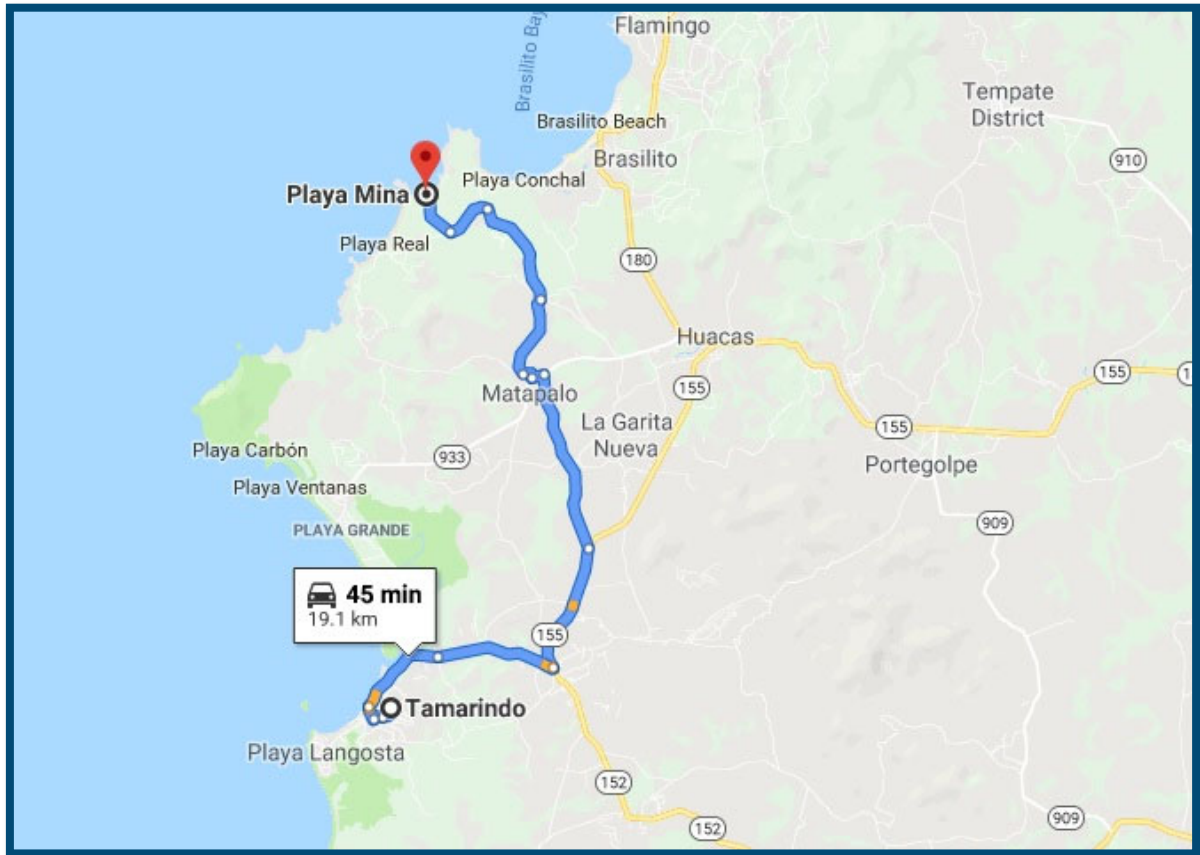


In Minas Beach the sand is a particular shade of red.
Photography: GOPlaya.cr

Description: In Minas Beach, there's a synergy between the curious and the unknown, because the color of the sand is a mixture of white with a reddish tone, very rare in Costa Rica.

In fact, this reddish color is not produced by chance. Manganese was extracted here to manufacture explosives during the Second World War. The Pacific Ocean was visited by U.S. ships, and they found the raw material needed for their weapons on this beach.

Today Minas has a soft swell and few rocks, it's surrounded by huge mountains and is a nesting site for the black turtle, a rare species in Costa Rica. There is shade on one side of the beach.



Activities and services: Minas is located near Playa Real (Real Beach), in an area known as Bahía Piratas (Pirates Bay), and is also a few kilometers from the popular Conchal Beach. In Minas you can snorkel, enjoy nature or swim in the ocean. On one part of the coast there are fewer waves than on the other side. Choose where you want to swim. Don't forget to bring your water bottle, as there are no services available.

Road conditions: The route leading to Minas Beach is in poor condition. Much of the road is dirt and it's preferable to visit in a 4x4 vehicle. If you go by regular car, do it with care.



Gallery



Map of

BEACHES IN NICOYA PENINSULA

ZONE:

Nicoya Peninsula

PROVINCE:

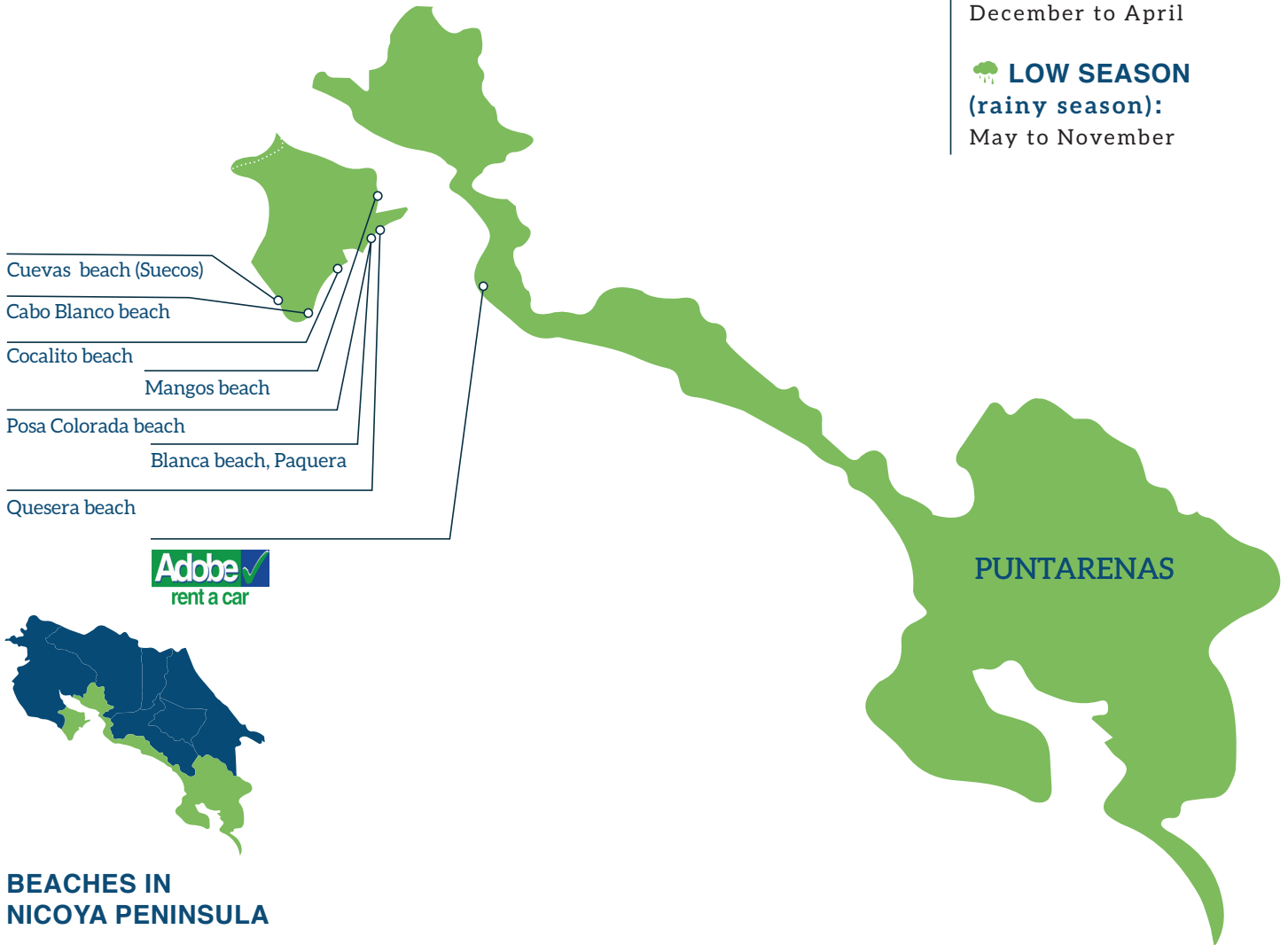
Puntarenas, Central Pacific

 **HIGH SEASON**
(dry season):

December to April

 **LOW SEASON**
(rainy season):

May to November



BEACHES IN NICOYA PENINSULA

Mangos beach

 Google Maps address: <http://bit.ly/2YdqfFO>

Quesera beach

*You can only get there by boat

 Google Maps: <http://bit.ly/2H74uQR>

Posa Colorada beach

*You can only get there by boat

 Google Maps: <http://bit.ly/2LoOyC>

Blanca beach, Paquera

 Google Maps: <http://bit.ly/2vJadHB>

Cabo Blanco beach

 Google Maps: <http://bit.ly/2V1DAyF>

Cuevas beach (Suecos)

 Google Maps: <http://bit.ly/2DSpDha>

Cocalito beach

 Google Maps: <http://bit.ly/2H3hxD3>

NEAREST ADOBE RENT-A-CAR LOCATION:

Adobe Rent-a-Car Jacó

 Google Maps: <http://bit.ly/2PR7hlf>





Península de Nicoya (Nicoya Peninsula)



An area rich in biodiversity, with sandy beaches and beautiful sunsets. This is Nicoya Peninsula.
Photo: GOPlaya.cr

You should know three things about the Nicoya Peninsula:

1. It's preferable to cross by ferry to visit the area and it's best to reserve your ticket in advance.
2. It preserves virgin destinations relatively close to other places of great popularity, such as the beach town of Santa Teresa, a mandatory visit.

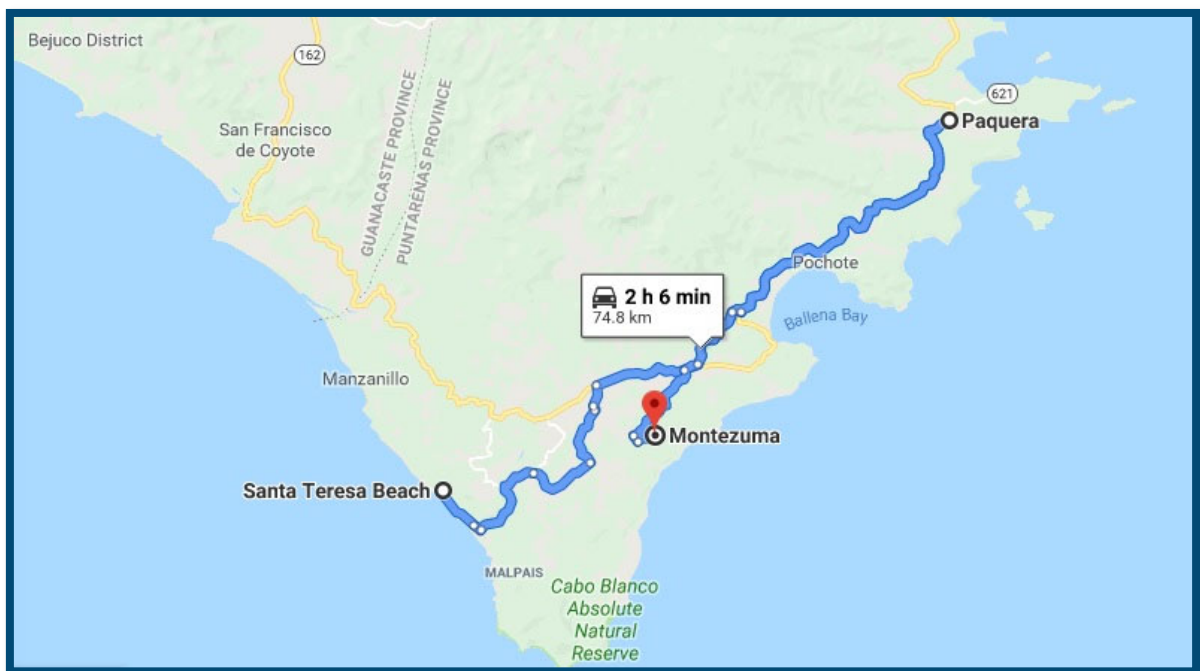
Visit www.goplaya.cr.
Find out about more than 230 beaches in Costa Rica.

3. Save at least four days to explore the Peninsula. Don't leave without visiting Quesera, Santa Teresa or Cuevas, some of the beaches that GOPlaya will show you later in this eBook.

First, it's important that you know some details about the Peninsula, so you don't get lost or confused.

Nicoya Peninsula is the elongated tip that can be seen on the Costa Rican map. It's made up of destinations that serve as a reference point for beachgoers. The first one is Paquera, because here is where the ferry disembarks and will allow you to move to all the beaches.

Reference point

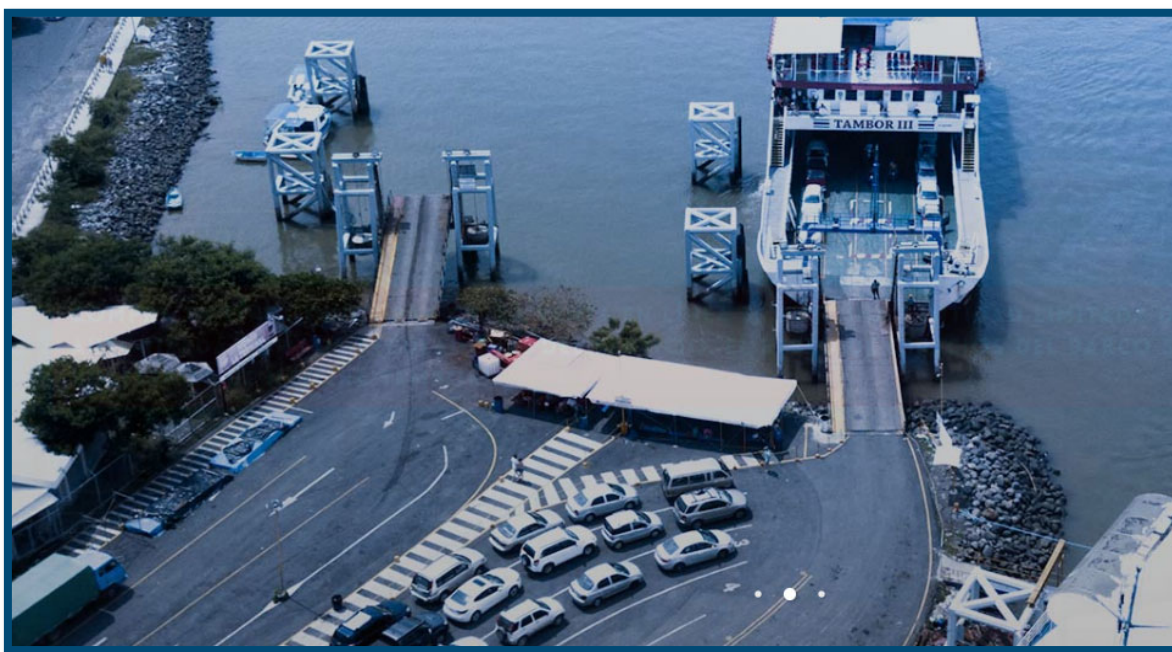


The journey. How can you take the ferry? You must arrive to El Carmen neighborhood in the province of Puntarenas, located one hour and 45 minutes from the capital San Jose by car. In this place, the Tambor shipping company offers a ferry service to Paquera. You will



have to arrive early, at least one hour and a half before the ferry boat departs, and line up so you can load your vehicle into the boat. Departure times are: 5 a.m., 9 a.m., 11 a.m., 2 p.m., 5 p.m. and 8:30 p.m.

Can I buy the ferry ticket online? Yes, go to <https://www.quickpaycr.com>, choose the time that best suits you and reserve your space. Do it with plenty of time, because the shipping company offers limited tickets online. During peak season online tickets are sold out quickly, if this is the case, you will need to line up to take next available the boat. Please note, this will set you back a few hours.



If you don't get your ticket online, you will have to buy your ticket from the shipping company. Or, if you prefer, you can drive around the Nicoya Peninsula. However, the journey is very long, as the road is in the process of being repaired. It will take about five hours to get there.



Once you have crossed to Paquera, you can move to different places. There are two well-known beach towns, Santa Teresa and Montezuma. The first offers a wide variety of cuisine and hotels, beautiful beaches and all kinds of entertainment services, from surf lessons, yoga to quad rentals.

Montezuma stands out for having a beautiful waterfall, a key point in your visit. Here, the beach is incredible as the sea is crystalline and multicolored. In the town, the Rasta culture prevails. There are souvenir shops, camping areas and hostels. In Montezuma downtown, the street is uncomfortable and narrow, with few parking spaces.

Do not underestimate Paquera, although it's usually a place of passing, it hides magical places, such as Playa Quesera (Quesera Beach), for example. Next, you'll get to know the most virgin destinations in this incredible place. For the following beaches we will constantly repeat reference points to avoid getting lost or confused.





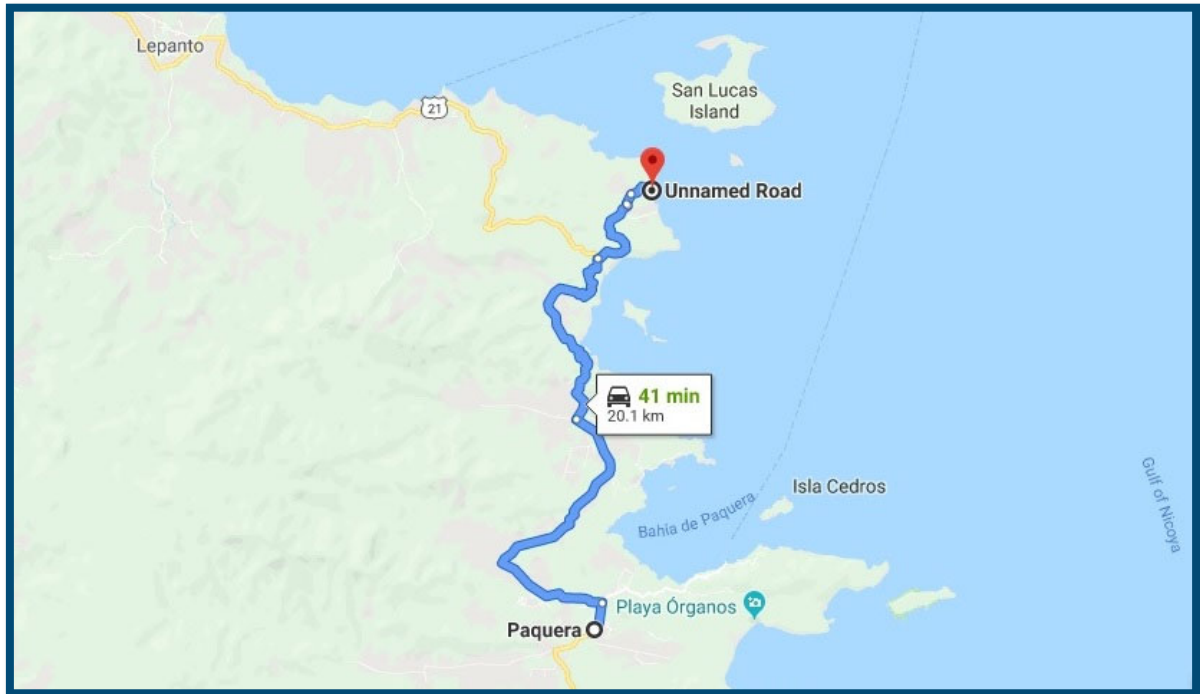
Playa Blanca (Blanca Beach)



The sea is very calm most of the year in Blanca Beach. The palm trees offer shade.
Photo: GOPlaya.cr

Description: Blanca Beach lives up to its name. The sand is really white. This beach presents a soft swell and a coast surrounded by trees and palm trees that provide shade.

Remember that this particular Blanca Beach belongs to Paquera in the Nicoya Peninsula. Costa Rica has more than five different beaches with the same name. Check Google Maps to avoid confusion.



The red dot indicates the location of Blanca Beach, a very seldom visited spot, and a few kilometers from Paquera.

Activities and services: When you arrive at the beach, you will find a restaurant a few meters from the coast. Parking is also available and some fishing boats float over the sea. It spends most of its time desolate, as few know of its existence and confuse it with other destinations.

Road conditions: You can get to Blanca Beach by taking the Paquera ferry in a journey that takes about an hour and a half to cross to the opposite end, or drive around the Nicoya Peninsula, a 4 hour trip. When the ferry reaches Paquera you will need to drive about 30 minutes to Blanca Beach. One part of the road leading to the beach is made of ballast and the other of asphalt. The road is in bad condition, but if you are careful you can get to it in a regular car.



Gallery



Playa Mangos (Mangos Beach)



A massive islet separates Mangos beach into two different spots. As you can see, it's a place without waves. Photography: GOPlaya.cr

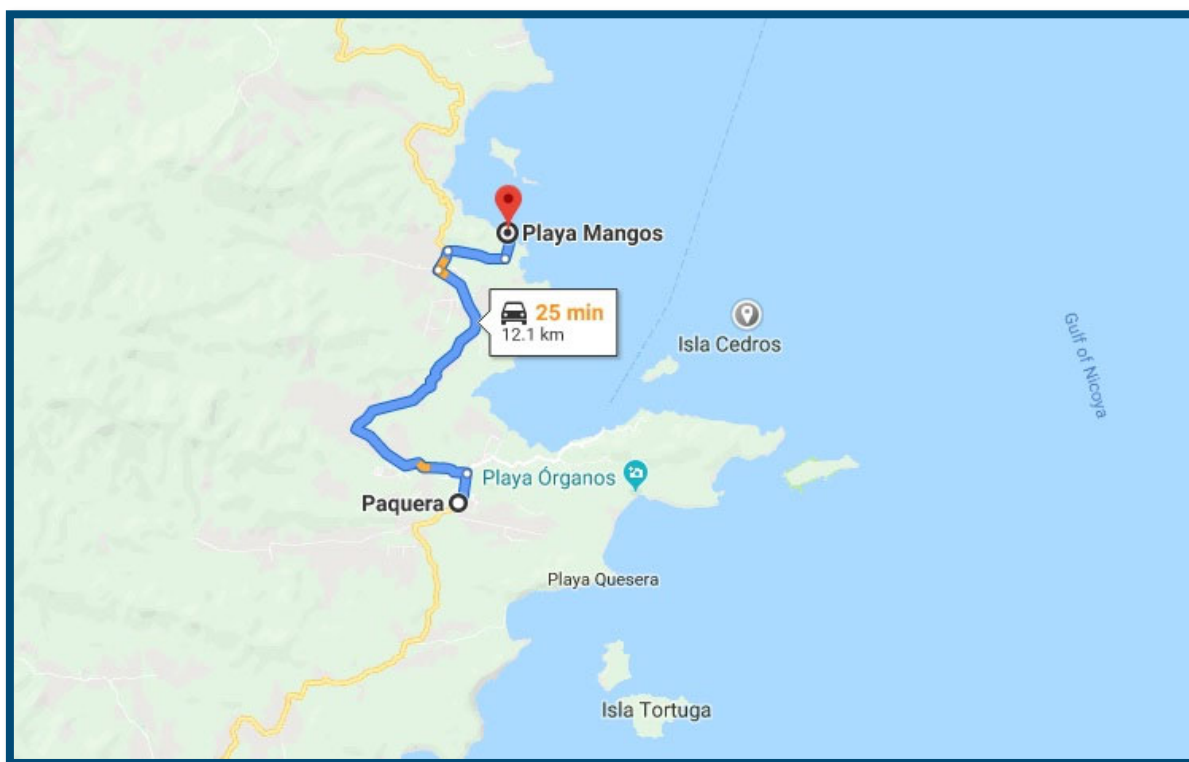
Description: Mangos is a calm, wave-free spot that hides in the heart of the Nicoya Peninsula, near the town of Paquera. The beach is divided in two by islets that decorate the landscape. The beach has grey sand and is surrounded by trees. This guarantees shade for you to have a good day.

The smallest of the two parts is the one with the best conditions, as it has less rocks and more shade.

Activities and services: There are parking spaces available in front of Mangos Beach. Here you can swim with tranquility and silence, as most of the time it's desolate.



This place is seldom visited by foreign tourists. There are no hotels or cabins in front of the beach, but a few kilometers away, in Paquera downtown, you can find some accommodation options.



Road conditions: After disembarking the ferry, you will need to drive 30 minutes to get to the beach. The access is complicated in this last stretch, because it's in poor condition. It's preferable to visit Mangos in a 4x4 vehicle, since there is a lot of loose rocks.



Gallery





Playa Quesera (Quesera Beach)



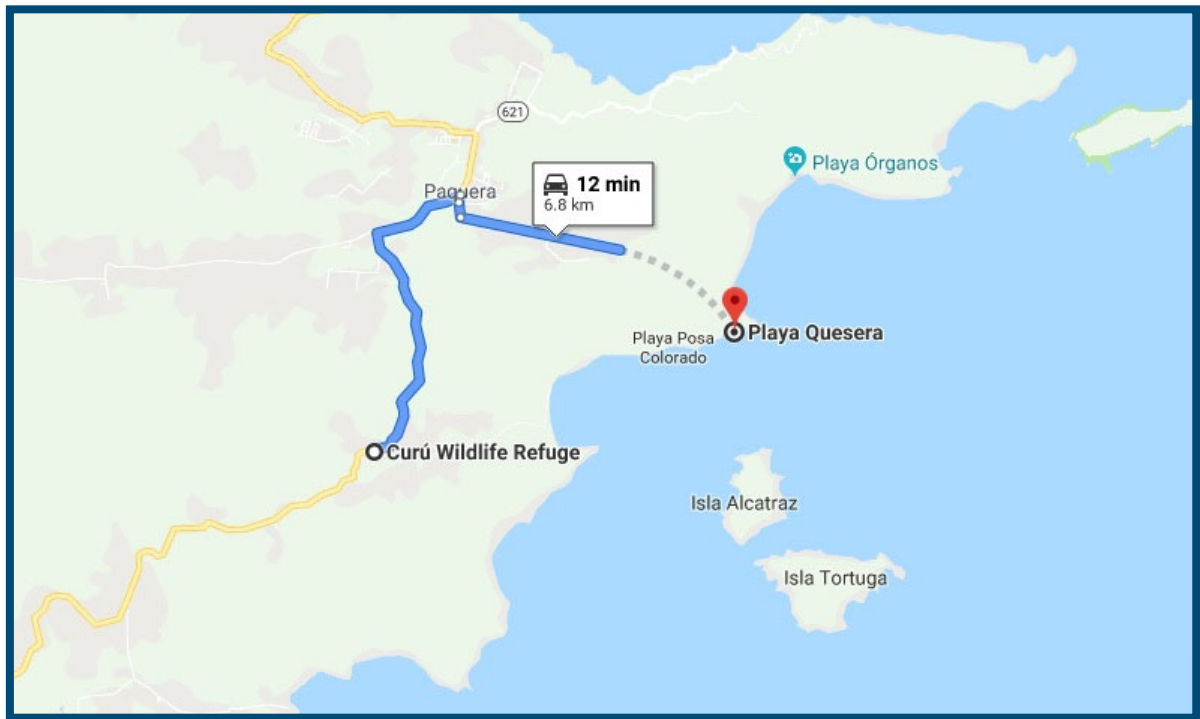
The sea at Quesera Beach is absolutely crystal clear. This spot can be reached by kayak or boat. Photo: GOPlaya.cr

Description: Quesera is a magazine spot that combines the white tone of the sand with the turquoise sea. In the crystalline water the bottom of the sea is reflected, because the waves are imperceptible. Quesera is one of those virgin places that belong to Paquera and where you can see dozens of palm trees and trees that provide shade. On the coast you can see Islas Tortuga (Tortuga Islands), which can be reached by boat. It's also a magical place to enjoy the sunsets and the intense vegetation. Quesera is part of the Refugio de Vida Silvestre Curú (Curú Wildlife Refuge), a private conservation center where you must pay an entrance fee to enter. After paying your ticket, you need to drive about 2

kilometers towards the refuge center. There you will find a souvenir shop, a restaurant and tour operator.

Once inside the refuge you can reach Quesera in one of three ways:

1. Go to the tour operator shop and book a boat; the ride takes less than 10 minutes and is beautiful. This area is surrounded by the Nicoya Gulf, and stands out for the intense colors of the sea.
2. Walk a trail surrounded by vegetation in a 2-hour journey to Quesera.
3. Rent a kayak from the tour operator and navigate for about 20 minutes.



Boat tours depart from Playa Curú (Curú Beach), which is a long gray-sand shore that borders the Refuge. Curú Beach is right next to the tour



operator shop. Before taking the boat, you can enjoy this soft swell beach.

Quesera is one of the best beaches in Costa Rica. It's perfect for swimming, snorkeling or enjoying a viewpoint just off the coast.

Activities and services: At Curú Wildlife Refuge itself you can ask for diving and snorkeling tours. The Refuge offers showers, restrooms, a restaurant and cabin rentals. Tours range from \$15 to \$35 per person. In Quesera you won't find any services; however, there is a security guard that watches over the care of this unique spot.

Road conditions: You can get to Quesera Beach and Posa Colorada Beach by taking the Paquera ferry, a journey that takes about an hour and a half to reach the opposite coast, or drive the road around the Nicoya Peninsula for about four hours.

After arriving at Paquera by ferry, a one-hour drive will take you to the Curú Wildlife Refuge. One part of the road is made of ballast and the other of asphalt. The road is in bad condition, but if you are careful you can get there by regular car. Remember to check Google Maps.

Entrance fee: \$13

Cost of the boat tour to Quesera: \$25

Other necessary addresses:

Curú Beach: <http://bit.ly/2VjnCFe>



Gallery





Playa Posa Colorada (Posa Colorada Beach - near Quesera)



The journey to Posa Colorada is short. Enjoy the kayak trip and get to know this remote spot. Photography: GOPlaya.cr

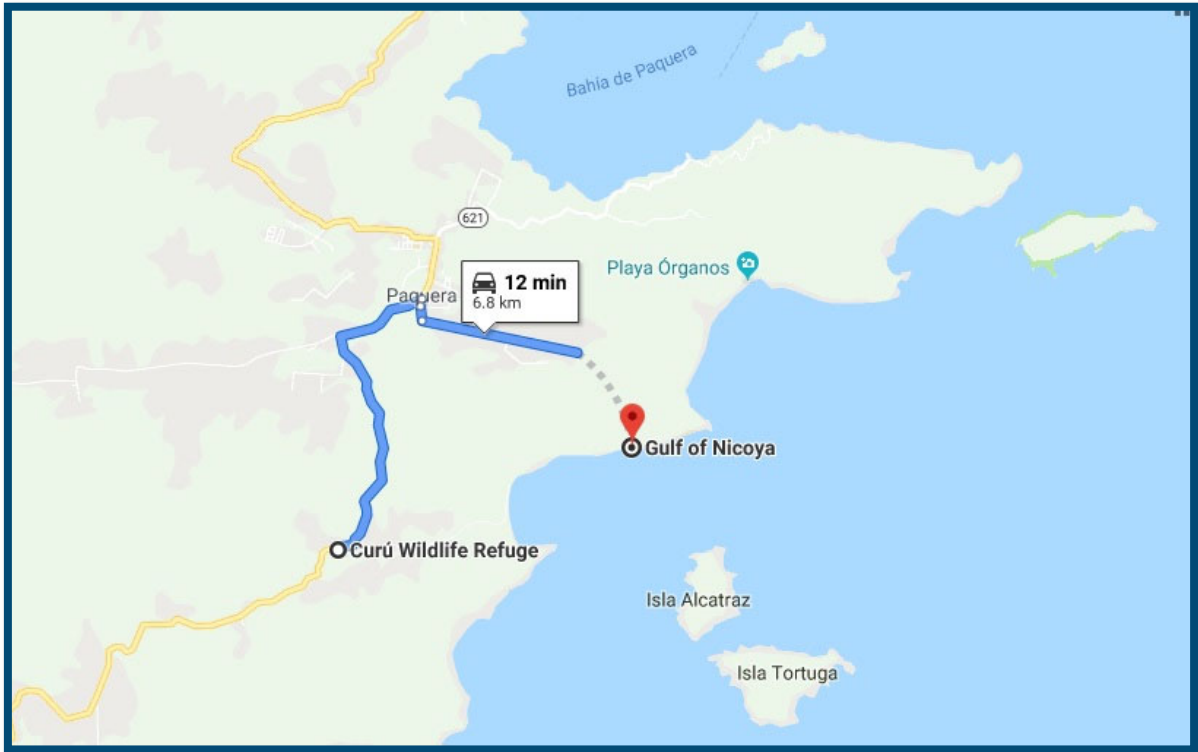
Description: By using the same route that will take you to Quesera, you can visit Posa Colorada. This is the most virgin beach of all the Curú Wildlife Refuge beaches and one of the most remote spots of Nicoya Peninsula.

It's a tiny beach, but a paradise due to the white sand, the crystal clear water and the turquoise sea that decorates this beautiful location. No services are available here.

It's not possible to get there by land, because the path that leads to the beach is in poor condition. The best way to reach it is by kayak, in a 10-



minute trip sailing from Curú beach; you can rent the kayak in the same tour shop as the Quesera tours.



The red dot indicates the location of Posa Colorada, which is right next to Quesera.

Entrance fee: \$13



Playa Cocalito (Cocalito Beach)

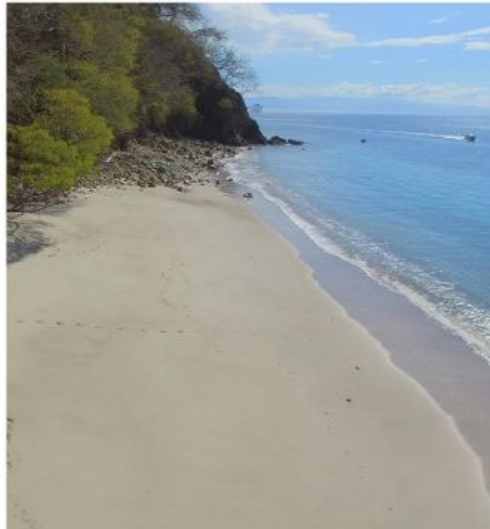


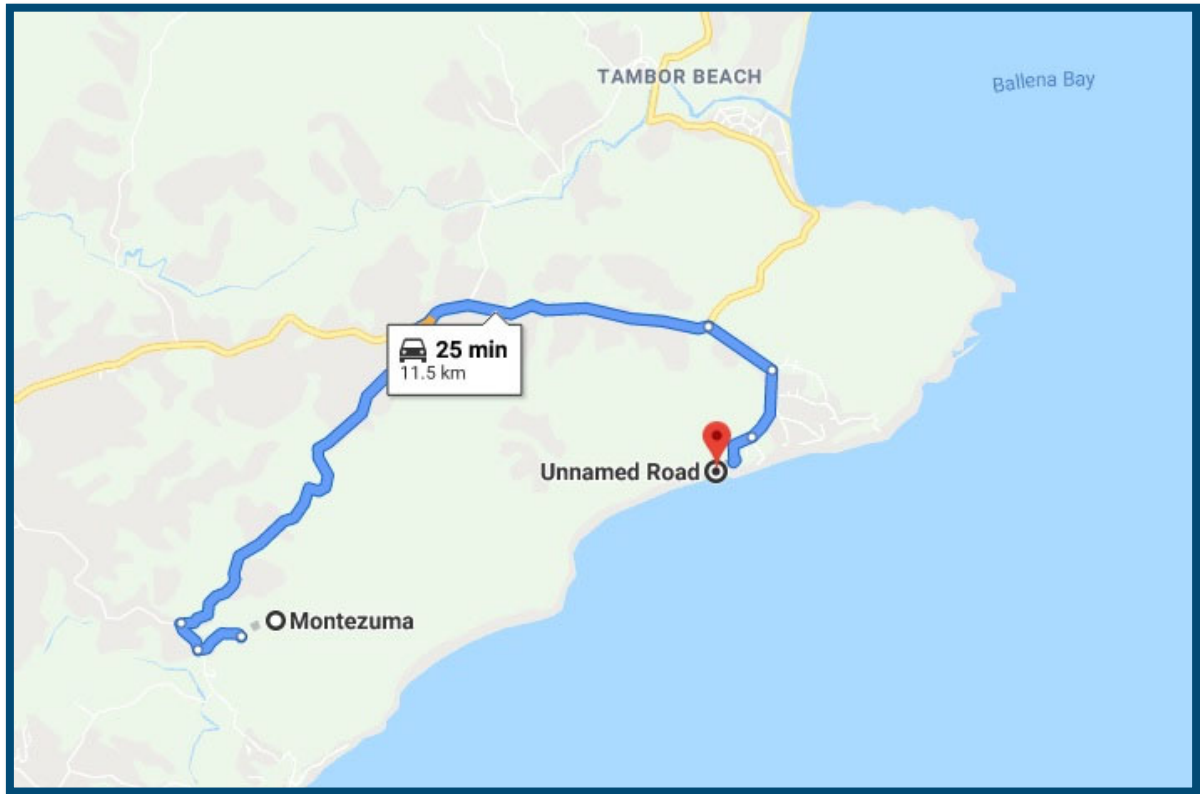
This image taken by the photographer Luciano Capelli captures the best two attractions of Cocalito. The beautiful waterfall and the virgin beach.

Description: From the beach itself you can see a waterfall that drops into the sea and this is perhaps, the most surprising beauty of this spot. This is located near the Montezuma Beach town. It has a difficult access, as you will have to pass through a trail to reach the beach.



Gallery





The red dot indicates the location of Cocalito, very close to the Tango Mar hotel and 25 minutes from downtown Montezuma.

Activities and services: You will find several lodging options near this beach, as well as near Montezuma or Tambor Beach, the two places neighboring Cocalito.

Road conditions: Why do we say it's hard to get there? First, it will take about 20 minutes from Montezuma to the entrance of the trail that's located right next to the Tango Mar Hotel.

You will need to leave your car near the trail and walk 400 meters approximately, until you come across a river. As you carefully approach a cliff, you will notice the waterfall.



If you continue walking for a few more meters, you will see the beach in the distance. To get there, you will have to cross some massive rocks when the tide is low. This spot offers a soft swell.

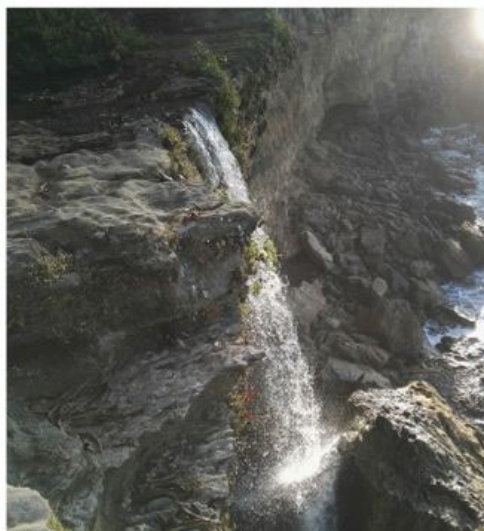
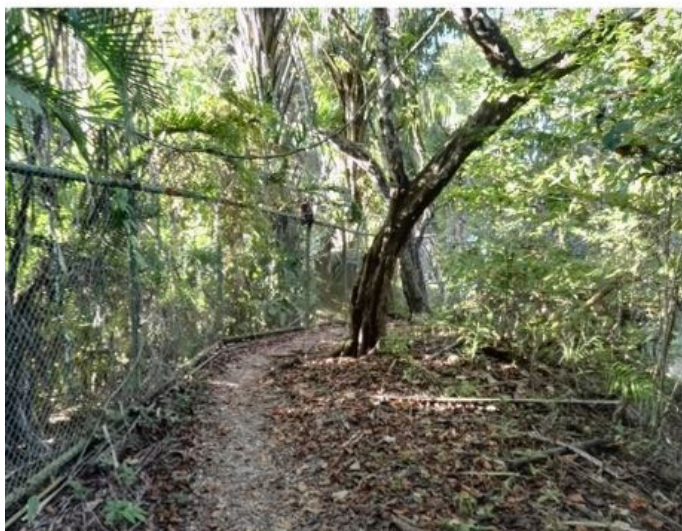
GOPlaya recommends renting a boat tour from downtown Montezuma to Cocalito Beach, as it's much safer. In case you decide to go along the trail, don't forget to bring a pair of sneakers and a companion.

How to get to Montezuma? First you must take the Paquera ferry in the El Carmen district of Puntarenas, very close to the center of the province. After an hour and a half journey, you will arrive to Paquera. From there you will need to travel by car to Montezuma in a 55 minute ride. Most of the journey is in good condition, although some parts of the road is damaged. It's preferable to visit the area in a 4x4 vehicle.





Gallery





Playa Cabo Blanco (Cabo Blanco Beach)



This beach has intense colors, white rocks and sand. It's part of the Reserva Absoluta Cabo Blanco (Cabo Blanco Absolute Reserve). Photography: GOPlaya.cr

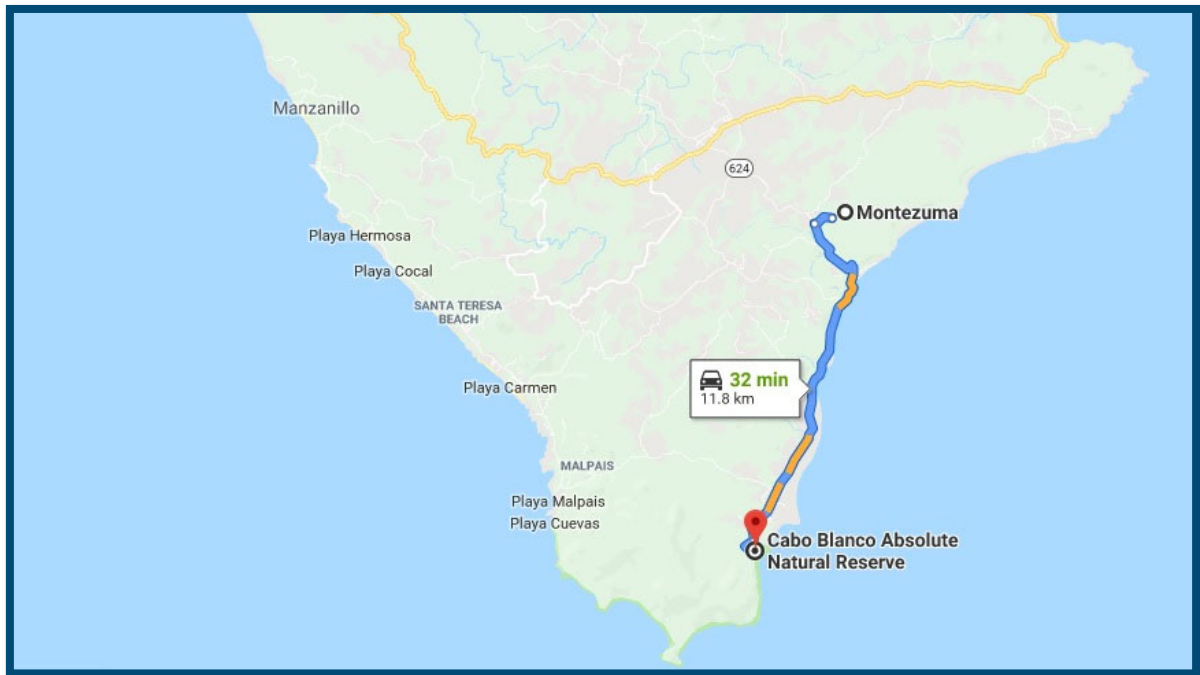
Description: Visiting Cabo Blanco Beach is an experience for adventurers. This white-sand beach combines hiking, relaxation, crystal clear sea and waves. It's located within the Cabo Blanco Absolute Reserve, a protected area of Costa Rica, and shelters the intense flora and fauna that surrounds the place.

After paying the entrance fee (\$12) to the reserve and parking your vehicle in the designated tourist parking spaces, you must walk a 5.4



kilometer long trail in the middle of the forest until you reach the beach. The route has signs posted throughout, but you need to watch out for the steps since they are somewhat damaged. Also keep in mind that, in some areas, the trail is steep and demanding. You should bring walking shoes, water and snacks.

After crossing the trail, it's time to refresh yourself. Remember that in Cabo Blanco Beach the ground is full of white rocks. To enjoy this experience to the fullest, it's advisable to bring water shoes. This will allow you to swim calmly, without hurting your feet. It's also preferable to visit this site in the morning, as it will take you more than two hours to walk to the beach. But it's worth it, don't give up.





Activities and services: When you arrive to this place you will find showers and a picnic area as well as some trees that offer shade. However, the experience starts from the tour itself, as you can see large trees, small water springs and, hopefully animals such as monkeys, birds and coatis. There are some cabins and houses for rent near the reserve. You can also find more hostel, cabin and restaurant options a few kilometers away, in Montezuma Beach town.

Road conditions: How to get to Cabo Blanco Absolute Reserve? First, you must take the Paquera ferry in the El Carmen district of Puntarenas, very close to the center of the province. After an hour and a half journey, you will arrive in Paquera. From there you must travel by car to the entrance of the reserve in a journey that lasts an hour and 16 minutes approximately. This road is ballast and in good condition for driving. When you arrive at Cabo Blanco you will find a parking area. You must buy your ticket on the spot.

Entrance fee: \$12

Cabo Blanco Absolute Reserve Office: +506 2642-0093 / +506 2642-0096





Gallery





Playa Cuevas (Cuevas Beach a.k.a. Suecos)

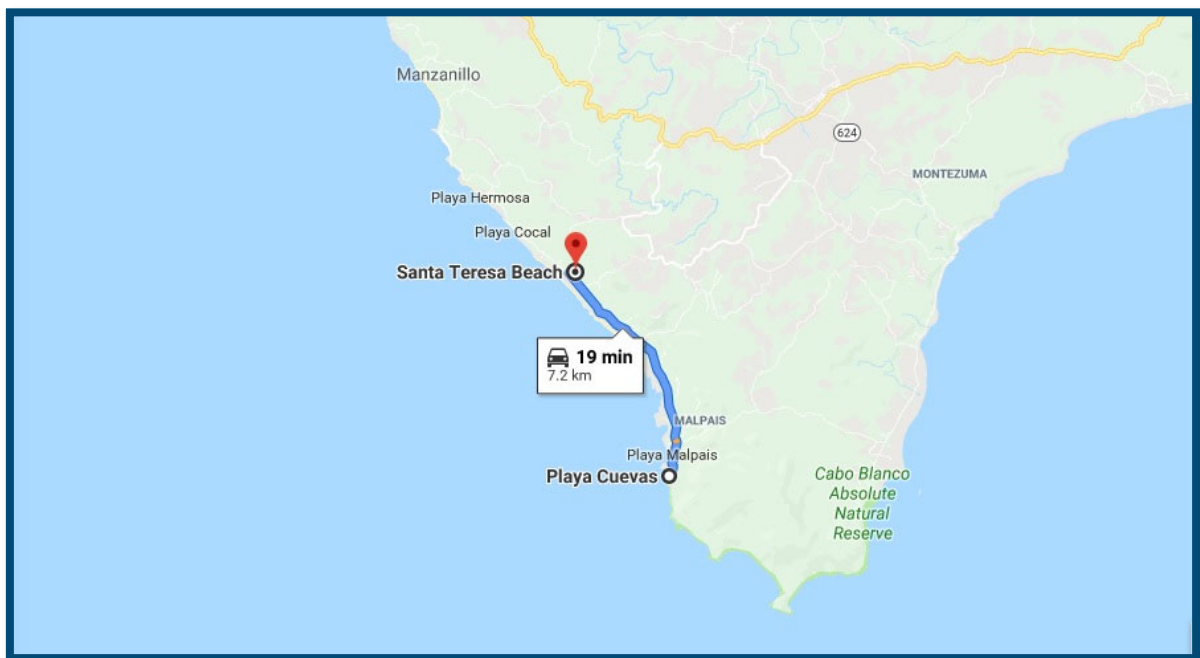


Behind the massive rock that can be seen at the back of the photograph, there are a few small caves.
Photo: GOPlaya.cr



Description: In this hidden white-sand and soft wave beach, you can enjoy snorkeling between the caves that form at its side. It's a unique place and a must when you travel to Santa Teresa. Santa Teresa is a beautiful beach town located a few kilometers from Cuevas and offers all kinds of services. Although the road is in poor condition, it's worth the effort to visit this spot.

Cuevas is the best beach in the area known as Malpaís, which borders Santa Teresa and also stands out for offering multiple accommodation options.



Activities and services: Tourists can snorkel inside the caves. Look carefully to the side so you can see the place and caves in their entirety. The caves hide under a giant rock.



In Cuevas the sea is absolutely clean and turquoise and has moderate waves. You can take a swim or simply rest under the trees located a few meters from the beach.

Road conditions: Is it difficult to get there? It may take some time but it's simple. You must travel by car to Malpaís and follow the road to the end of the street. It's a long and somewhat damaged street that borders the sea. When you reach the end of the road, you will notice that another one turns to the left; this is the final part of the route that leads to Cuevas and is in poor condition.

It is preferable to visit it in a 4x4 vehicle. After passing this bad road, you will find available parking spaces, a sign with the name of the beach and the entrance to a trail.

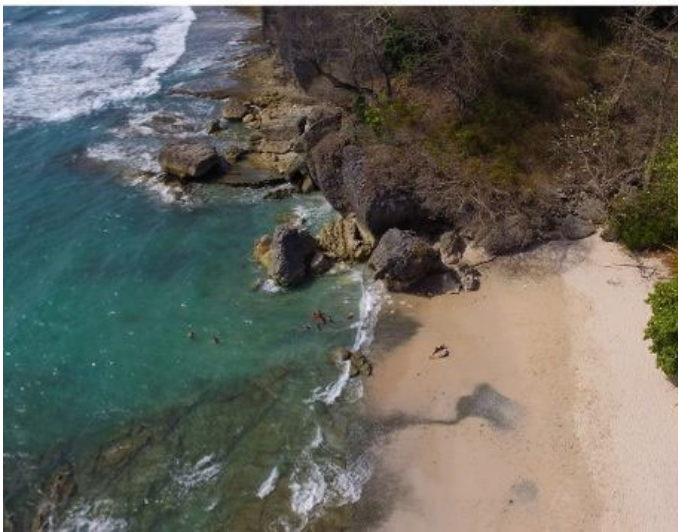
Walk along this path for almost 300 meters until you reach Cuevas. This destination is also known among locals as Suecos Beach.

You may ask yourself: Before I visit Cuevas, do I need to know how to get to Santa Teresa? Yes, and it's simple. First, you must take the Paquera ferry in the El Carmen district of Puntarenas, very close to the center of the province. After an hour and a half journey, you will arrive to Paquera. From there you will need to travel by car to Santa Teresa.

It will take 1 hour and 30 minutes approximately from Paquera to Santa Teresa by car. Some parts of the road are made of rocks and others of ballast. They are dusty and somewhat uncomfortable roads. Before hitting the road, remember to check the Google Maps and Waze addresses shown below to arrive safely at your destination.



Gallery



Map of

BEACHES IN UVITA



ZONE:

Uvita

PROVINCE:

Puntarenas, South Pacific

HIGH SEASON (dry season):

December to March

LOW SEASON (rainy season):

May to October

TRANSITION MONTHS

April & November

BEACHES IN UVITA

Arco beach

 Google Maps address: <http://bit.ly/2DW9LtR>

NEAREST ADOBE RENT-A-CAR LOCATION:

Adobe Rent-a-Car Uvita, Zona Sur

 Google Maps: <http://bit.ly/2V9gB4W>

REFERENCE POINTS IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC:

Uvita:

 Google Maps: <http://bit.ly/2V7cXsk>





Uvita



Playa Bahía Ballena (Ballena Bay Beach), also known as “Playa Uvita” (Uvita Beach), is the largest and most popular spot in the Parque Nacional Marino Ballena (Ballena Marine National Park). Photo: GOPlaya.cr

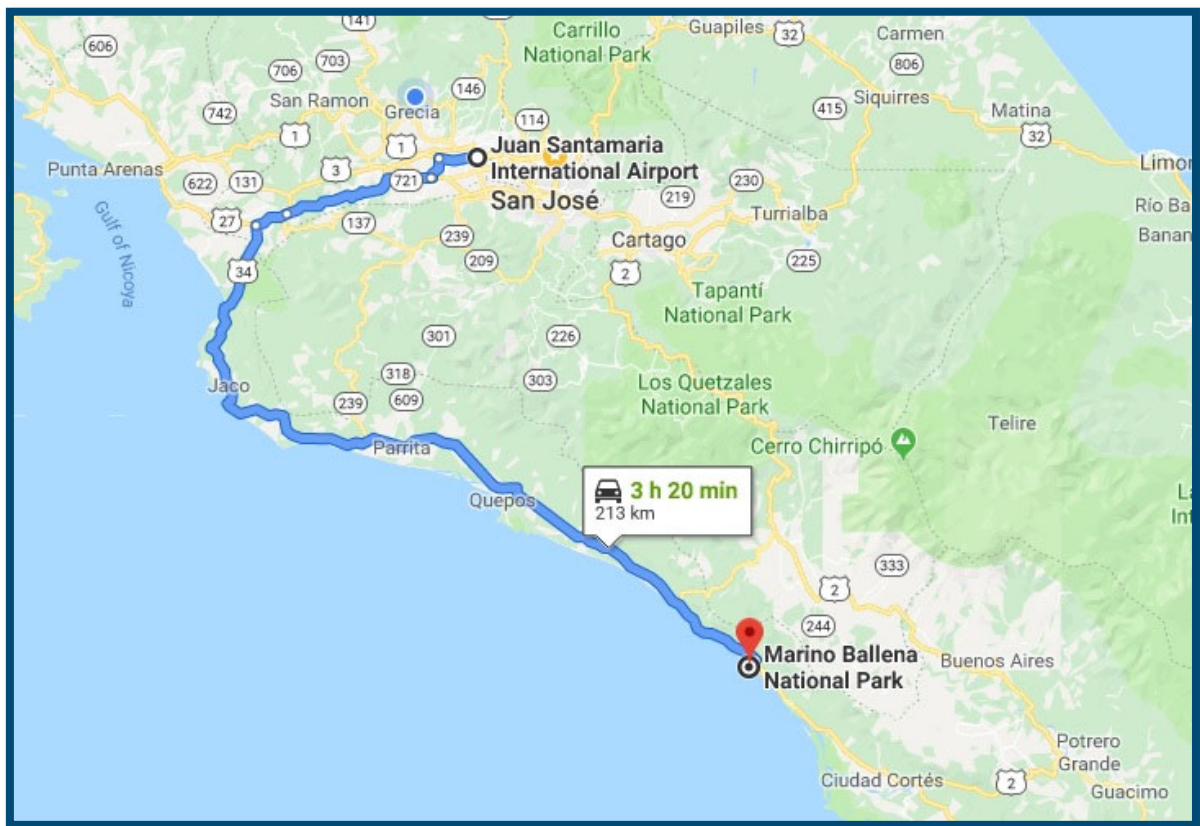
When you say the name Uvita, you basically mean “the whale town”. This beach destination is perhaps the most developed in the southern zone of Costa Rica, as thousands of tourists visit it to enjoy whale and dolphin watching.

Visit www.goplaya.cr.
Find out about more than 230 beaches in Costa Rica.



A beach town with a wide range of hotels, restaurants and mainly local tour operators was created around this natural attraction. Locals take their boats to open sea for visitors to appreciate the cetaceans in their habitat.

But where do the boats come from? The essence of Uvita is the Ballena Marine National Park, which has five beaches: Ballena Bay, also known as Uvita beach; Piñuelas, Ballena, Colonia and Arco.



Boat tours depart from Ballena Bay, the largest and most popular among the five beaches in the National Park, to which you can also go by paying the entrance fee.



Entering the conservation area is a pleasant experience. You can enjoy an extensive location, perfect for hiking, and you can also see a unique rock formation known as the “tombolo”; oddly enough, when you take aerial photographs at the moment the tide rises, this place resembles the tail of a whale. Dozens of photographers have captured this world-famous image.

Few know that there is a spot called Arco that shelters a cave. Discover it with GOPlaya.

Entrance fee to Ballena Marine National Park: \$6





Playa Arco (Arco Beach)



Arco Beach, part of the Ballena Marine National Park, in Uvita.

Description: Arco is a beach of enormous beauty. This spot can be accessed through a trail that is only available at low tide. When the tide rises, the access is closed and it's very difficult to cross.

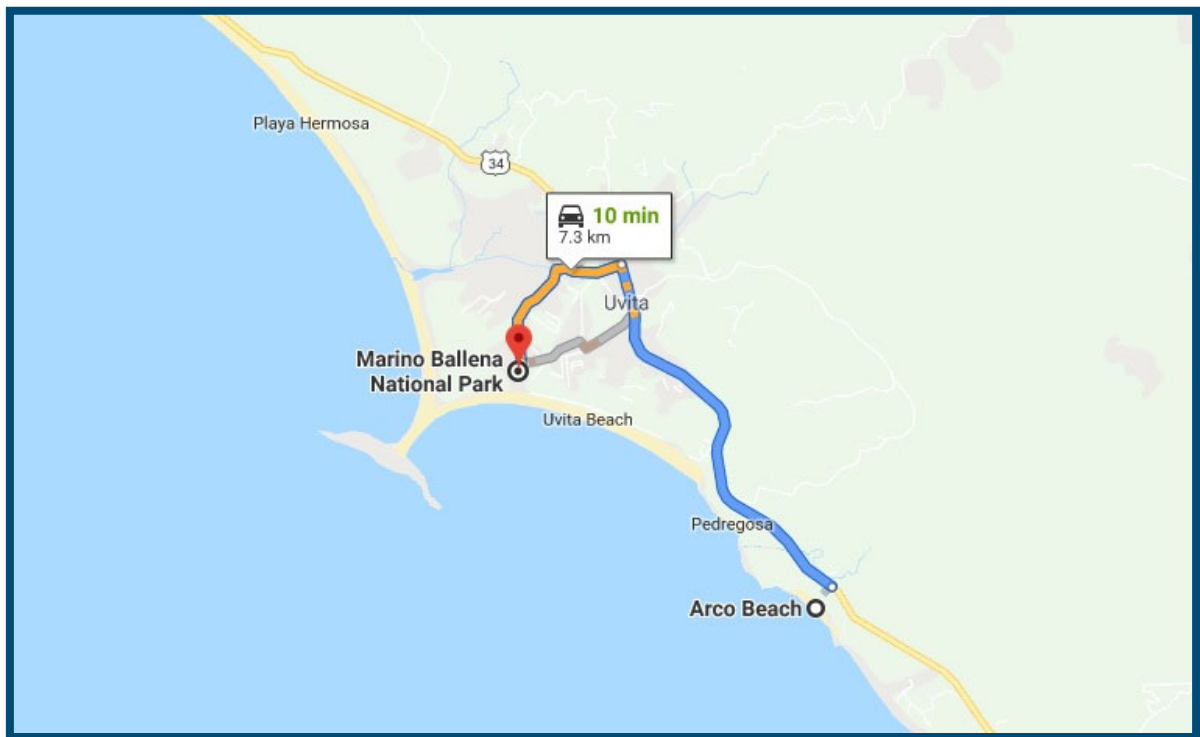
Visitors must enter through the park ranger station of the Ballena Beach area. In other words, to access the park, the visitor must first arrive at Ballena Beach, which is part of the National Park.



You must confirm with the park ranger that access to Arco Beach is enabled, and walk north for about 2 kilometers until you step on the gray sand. Follow the outlined path which crosses part of the forest. Beware of different sized rocks along the way.

On the trail, you will find streams that grow in the rainy season. It's recommended that you wear comfortable shoes, a hat and sunscreen. One of its attractions is a cave that hides on the beach. Do not enter the cave when the tide rises, as it becomes dangerous because of its depth.

This place is 500 meters long and is desolate most of the year.





Activities and services: Swimming away from the coast is not recommended. The waves are moderate, but there are undertow currents; be careful if you go out for a swim. It's a hidden and beautiful destination, perfect for spending the day. Arco is only a few kilometers from Uvita downtown, a beach town where you will find boutique hotels, rental houses, apartments and restaurants. Uvita Beach, better known as Ballena Bay among the locals, houses most of the boats that offer dolphin and whale watching tours.

Road conditions: the best-known landmark of the southern zone is Uvita. You must first arrive here and then go to Ballena Beach and the other beaches that make up the Ballena Marine National Park. The road to Uvita is in very good condition. You can get there by regular car without any problems.

Another necessary direction:

Ballena Beach: <http://bit.ly/2H3SHTu>



Map of

GOLFITO BEACHES

ZONE:

Golfito

PROVINCE:

Puntarenas, South Pacific

 **HIGH SEASON (dry season):**

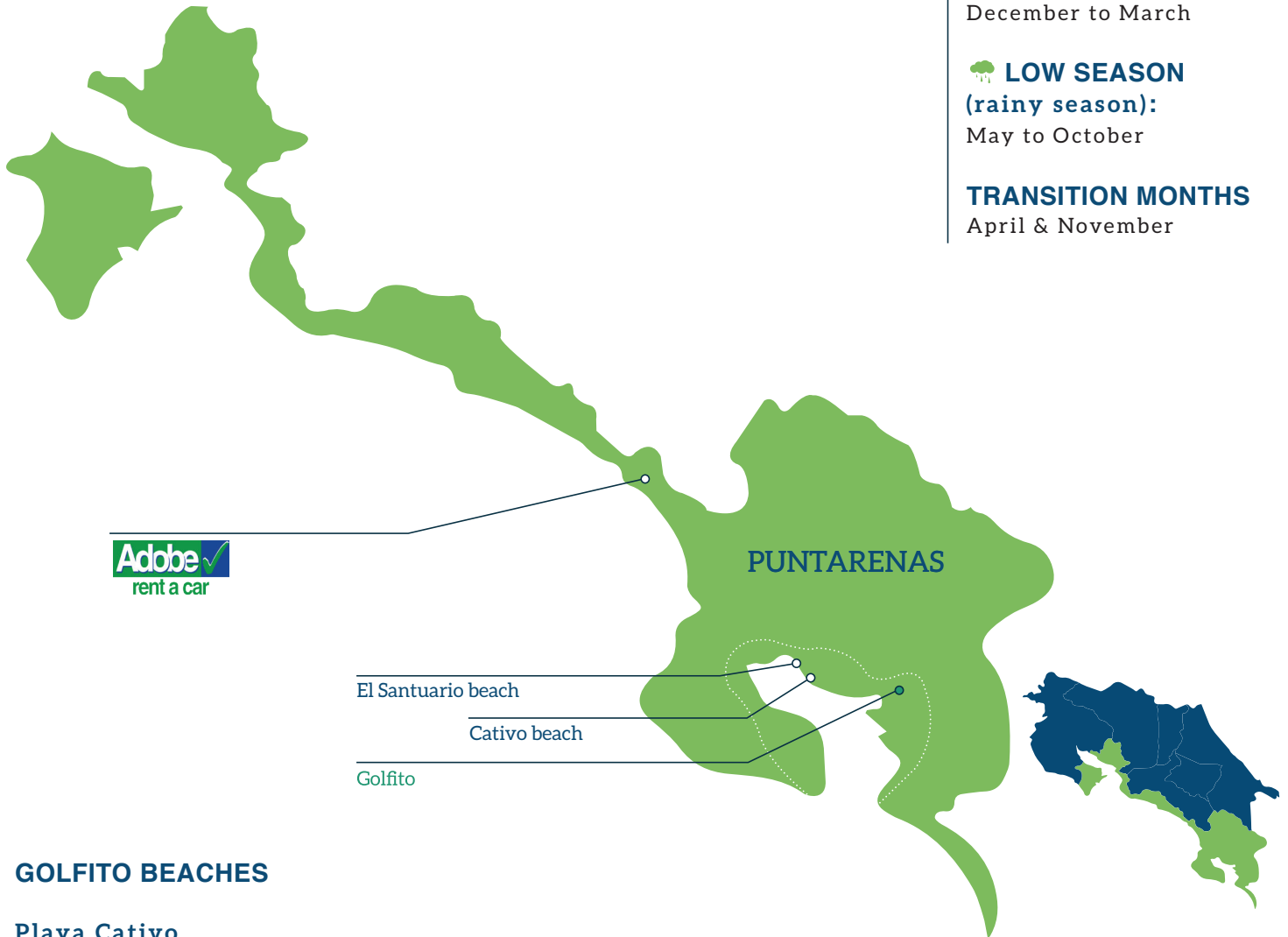
December to March

 **LOW SEASON (rainy season):**

May to October

TRANSITION MONTHS

April & November



GOLFITO BEACHES

Playa Cativo

*You can only get there by boat

 Google Maps address: <http://bit.ly/2J69tov>
Boats depart from Golfito: <http://bit.ly/2vHUbh7>

Playa El Santuario

*You can only get there by boat

 Google Maps: <http://bit.ly/2vJUKQZ>
Boats depart from Golfito: <http://bit.ly/2vHUbh7>

NEAREST ADOBE RENT-A-CAR LOCATION:

Adobe Rent-a-Car Uvita, Zona Sur

 Google Maps: <http://bit.ly/2V9gB4W>

REFERENCE POINTS IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC:

Golfito:

 Google Maps: <http://bit.ly/2vHUbh7>





Golfito



Golfo Dulce (Dulce Gulf) is the essence of the beaches surrounding Golfito.
Photography: GOPlaya.cr

It is most likely that no one has recommended you visit Golfito, a very popular town due to one thing: tax-free shops, where Costa Ricans go to buy low-priced appliances.

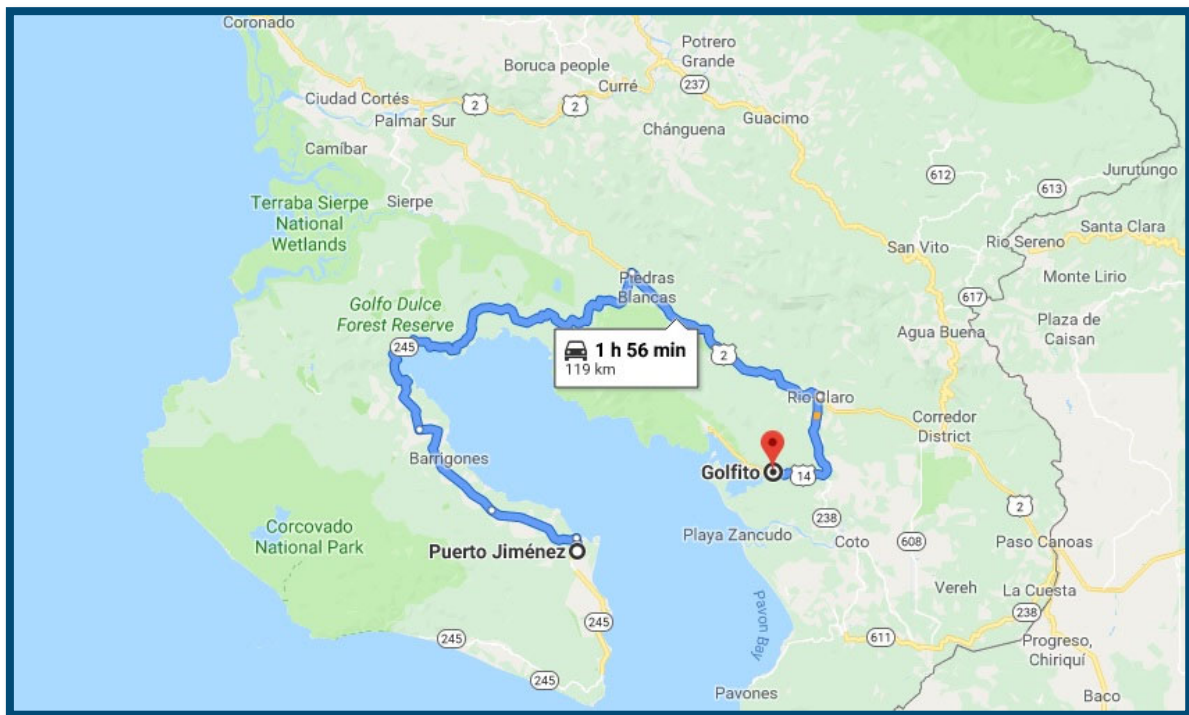
Visit www.goplaya.cr.
Find out about more than 230 beaches in Costa Rica.



However, Golfito is surrounded by two virgin areas with intense biodiversity. These are Parque Nacional Piedras Blancas (Piedras Blancas National Park) and Refugio de Vida Silvestre Golfito (Golfito Wildlife Refuge), part of the Osa Peninsula in Costa Rica's southern zone.

The first national park we mentioned is the country's least visited conservation area, according to statistics from the Costa Rican Tourism Institute. It has trails, but it's difficult to get to its beaches if you enter through the park entrance. This is because the distance that divides the main access from the coast is too long. But don't worry, there is another way to visit them.

In this ebook about virgin beaches, GOPlaya will show you how to get to three Golfito destinations: Cativo, El Santuario and Bajo Mancito.





Cativo, El Santuario and Bajo Mancito, all share the same route and we're going to show it to you. One of the main attractions of the area is that it's surrounded by the Dulce Gulf, where the sea is calm, magical and crystalline. This is why the area has become known among those who enjoy sport fishing and whale and dolphin watching.

But how can you get there?

First, you must get to Golfito downtown, located 5 hours and 30 minutes from Juan Santamaría Airport in Alajuela. The road is asphalted and in good condition for most of the route.

Since the town is small, you will find a square known as 'El Muellecito' quickly. From there boats depart for the beaches surrounding the area. The cost to rent a boat for a private tour ranges from \$300 to \$700, depending on the number of beaches you want to visit and the duration of the trip.

You can stay in Golfito downtown, which has hotels and supermarkets available. There is a unique boutique hotel available to tourists that can be reached by boat in Cativo Beach. There aren't many lodging or culinary options, since tourist services are still developing.

Another way to get to these beaches is from Puerto Jiménez, located a few kilometers from Golfito, another town in the southern zone of the country. Boats sail from Puerto Jiménez to Piedras Blancas.

Although the route is somewhat longer, Puerto Jiménez' advantage is that it's a slightly more developed area for tourism. Therefore, this place offers different types of boat tours.

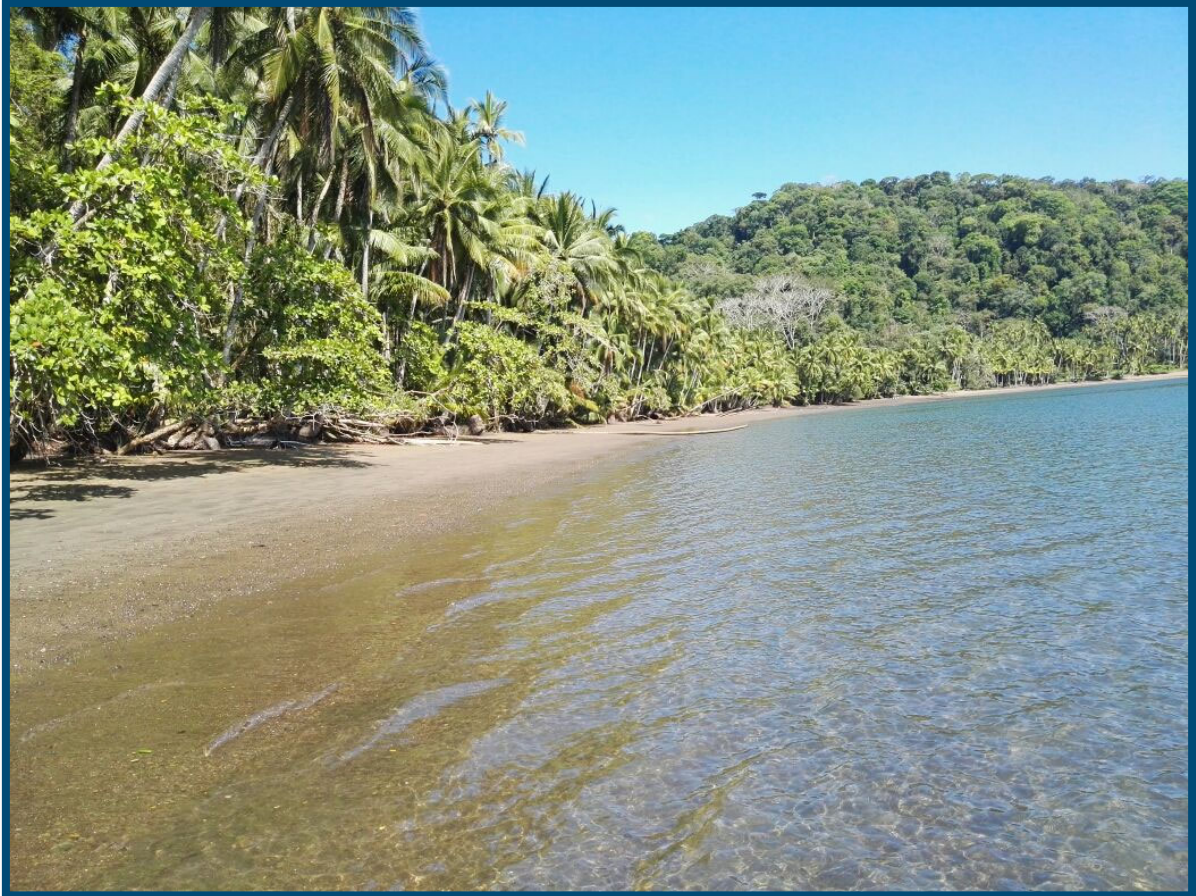


You can also arrive by air. The local airline Sansa offers daily flights to Golfito and Puerto Jimenez. The transfer to both destinations takes about 55 minutes: <https://bit.ly/2VjgQ2x>





Playa Cativo (Cativo Beach)



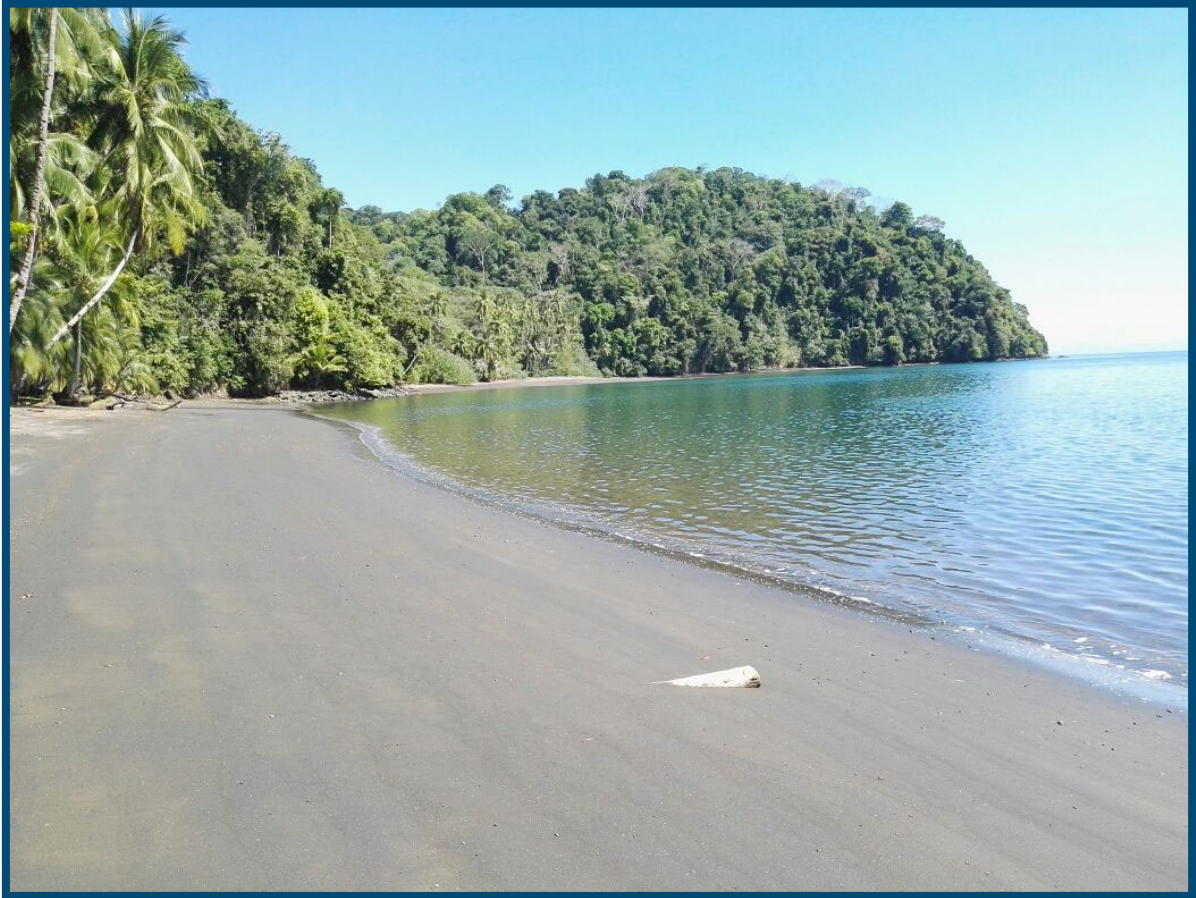
Cativo Beach captivates because of its beauty. It combines the intense green with the crystalline sea. Photography: GOPlaya.cr

Description: Cativo is a gray sand beach, surrounded by trees and mountains. Here, waves practically do not exist. Few know the beauties that surround this place, but slowly, it has become a destination recognized by fishing lovers. In Cativo Beach you'll be able to enjoy yourself in solitude and harmony with nature, and it's perfect for snorkeling. It's a narrow beach since the distance between the trees and the sea is minimal.

Boat trip: 30 to 45 minutes long



Playa El Santuario (El Santuario Beach)



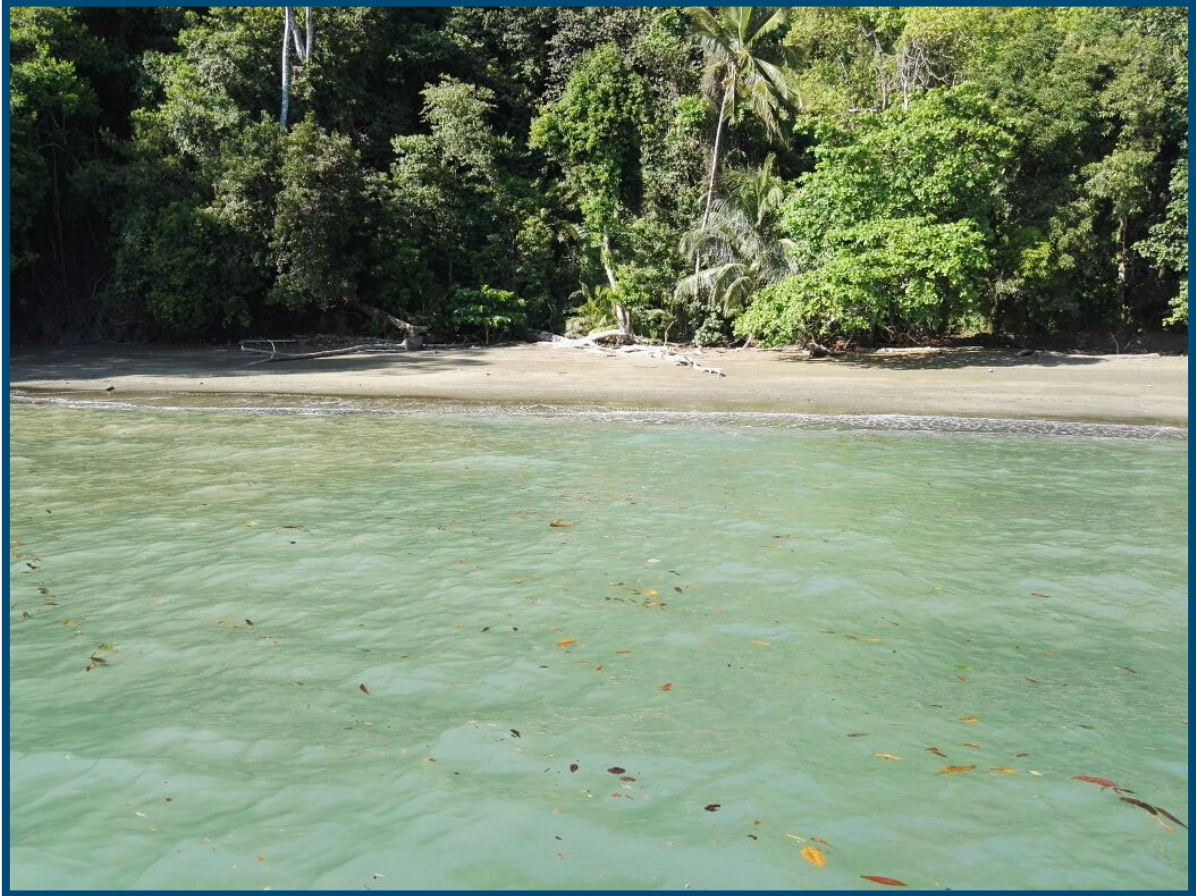
El Santuario is surrounded by mountains. The sea is clean and without waves.
Photo: GOPlaya.cr

Description: True to its name, this beach is a natural-life sanctuary. El Santuario Beach has a soft swell, few rocks and palm trees that surround the place. You can enjoy the monkeys playing among the trees to the side. This is a perfect place for swimming and snorkeling.

Boat trip: 30 to 45 minutes long



Playa Bajo Mancito (Bajo Mancito Beach)



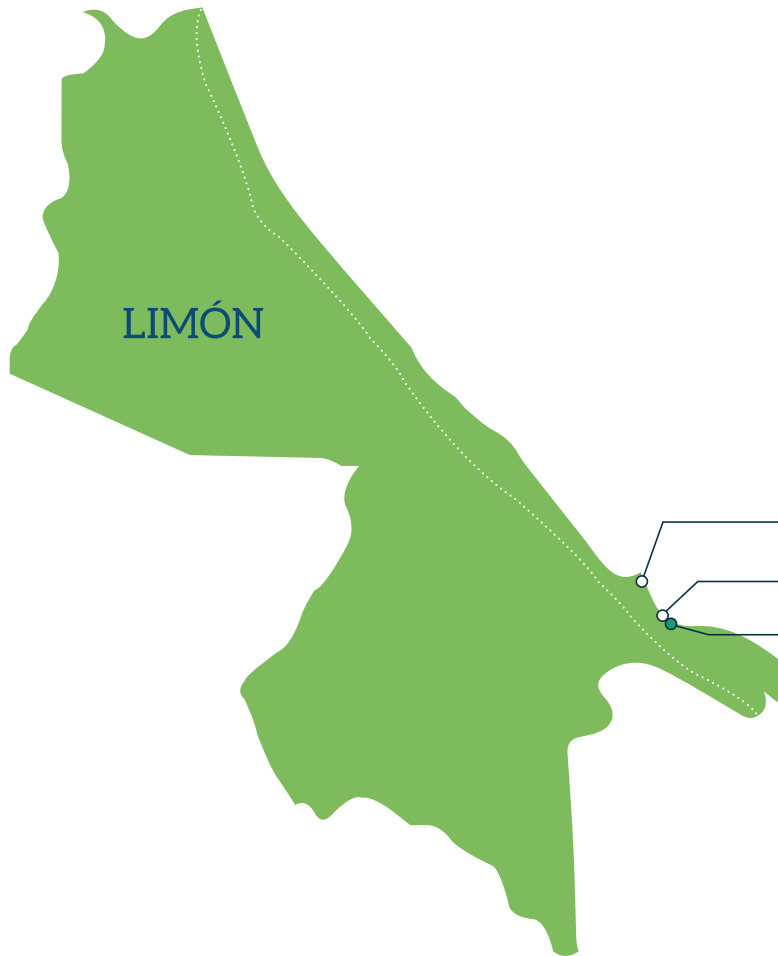
Bajo Mancito Beach is one of the most remote beaches. Its crystalline sea will amaze you. Photography: GOPlaya.cr

Description: Bajo Mancito is a small beach that belongs to Piedras Blancas National Park near Golfito area. To get to this unspoiled beach with crystal clear water. Bajo Mancito beach got light grey sand and really calm waves, which is perfect for snorkeling. You can also enjoy sunshade under a tree in this lonely place. However, if you are a sun lover, you can get a nice tan while you lay down on Bajo Mancito's thin shore.

Boat trip: 30 to 45 minutes long

Map of

BEACHES IN CAHUITA



ZONE:

Cahuita

PROVINCE:

Limón

HIGH SEASON

(dry season):

February and March, September, October and until mid-November

GREEN SEASON

(rainy season):

December, January, April. From May to August

Puerto Vargas beach

Puerto Viejo



BEACHES IN CAHUITA

Puerto Vargas beach

 Google Maps address: <http://bit.ly/2J5av43>

NEAREST ADOBE RENT-A-CAR LOCATION:

Adobe Rent-a-Car Puerto Viejo, Limón

 Google Maps: <http://bit.ly/305kn2U>

REFERENCE POINTS IN THE SOUTH CARIBBEAN:

Puerto Viejo:

 Google Maps: <http://bit.ly/2VjenFc>





Cahuita



A long trail leads to Punta Cahuita, where palm trees embrace the coast.
Photo: GOPlaya.cr

Cahuita is a town that belongs to the province of Limón in the Costa Rican Caribbean and shelters an enormous treasure: Parque Nacional Cahuita (Cahuita National Park), a destination that protects the country's largest coral reef. Before entering the protected area, you should know that it comprises different beaches, some more beautiful than others and with different accesses.

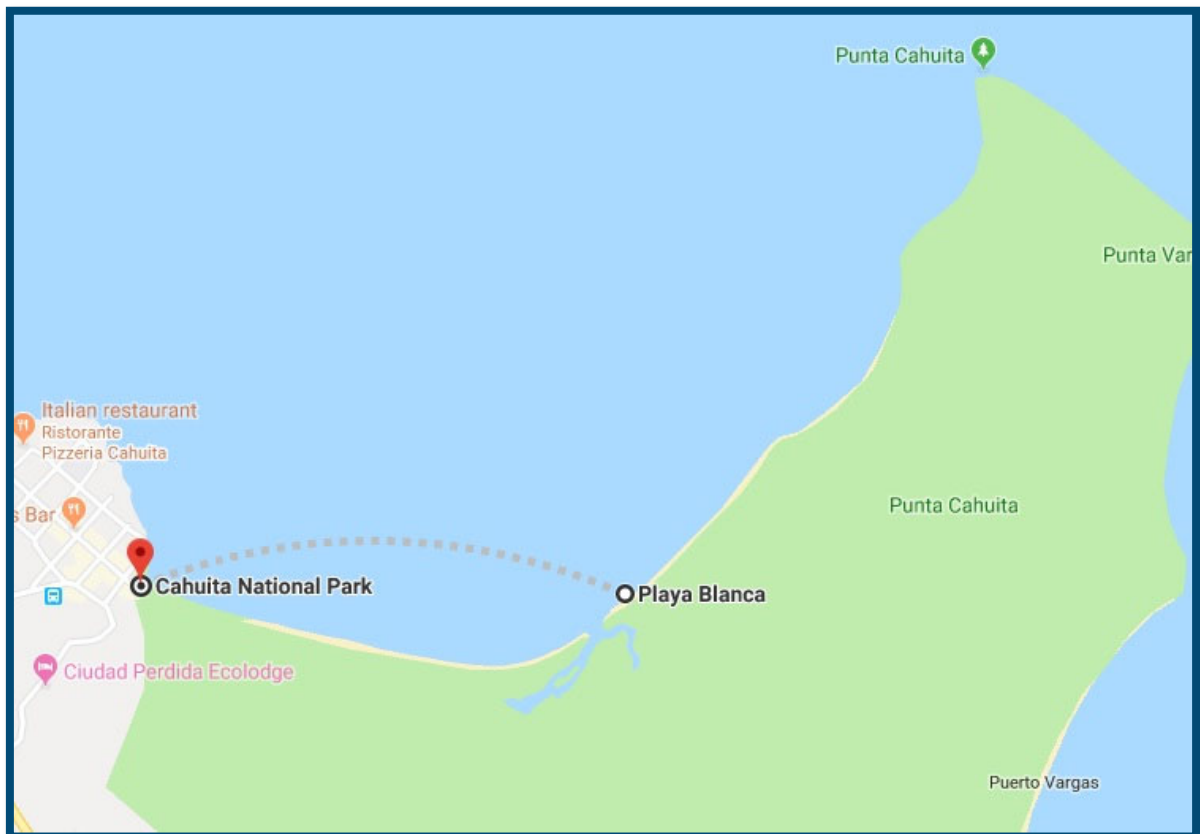
Visit www.goplaya.cr.
Find out about more than 230 beaches in Costa Rica.



Some spots are managed by the Cahuita community and you will not need to pay the park entrance fee to enjoy them. For example, you can visit Playa Blanca (Blanca Beach) without buying a ticket.

However, when you arrive with your vehicle at this spot, you will find an information booth near the coast, where they offer snorkeling tours in the marine trail, a favorite place to appreciate different types of fish.

The public entrance to Blanca Beach is different from the main access to Cahuita National Park. Another beach called Puerto Vargas is located here; this is a virgin spot that we will show you later.



The image shows how the entrance to Cahuita National Park is different from Blanca Beach, a spot managed by the community.



To get to these beaches and walk along the trails of Cahuita, you will have to pay your entrance fee. The protected area has multiple attractions, however one that captures particular attention is combining the walk along the trails, with the possibility of appreciating the living fauna and intense vegetation.

Don't leave Cahuita without walking on at least one of the trails! Observe wild animals.

Below is the description of the segmentation of trail, provided by the National System of Conservation Areas:

Punta Cahuita Trail. It's located parallel to the coast, between the northwestern limit of the Park (Nelly Creek River) and the Puerto Vargas Beach sector. The first and most frequently used part of the trail is located between the park's boundary and the Suarez River, with an extension of 1,500 meters.

This trail leads the visitor to the beach, where they can enjoy a space of tranquility.

Another part of the trail, mostly used by biodiversity lovers is located between the Suarez River and Punta Cahuita, with a length of 2,334 meters, this allows a total of 7.2 kilometers round trip.

Since there is no access to the beach, the attraction is based on nature observation.

The last part of the trail runs parallel to the coast, from Punta Cahuita to Punta Puerto Vargas. It's a 2,100-meter route and is the least used; however, it crosses the humid tropical forest, with the possibility of observing exuberant trees.



Working hours:

Monday to Friday: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Saturdays, Sundays and holidays: 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Access ticket: \$5





Playa Puerto Vargas (Puerto Vargas Beach), Cahuita



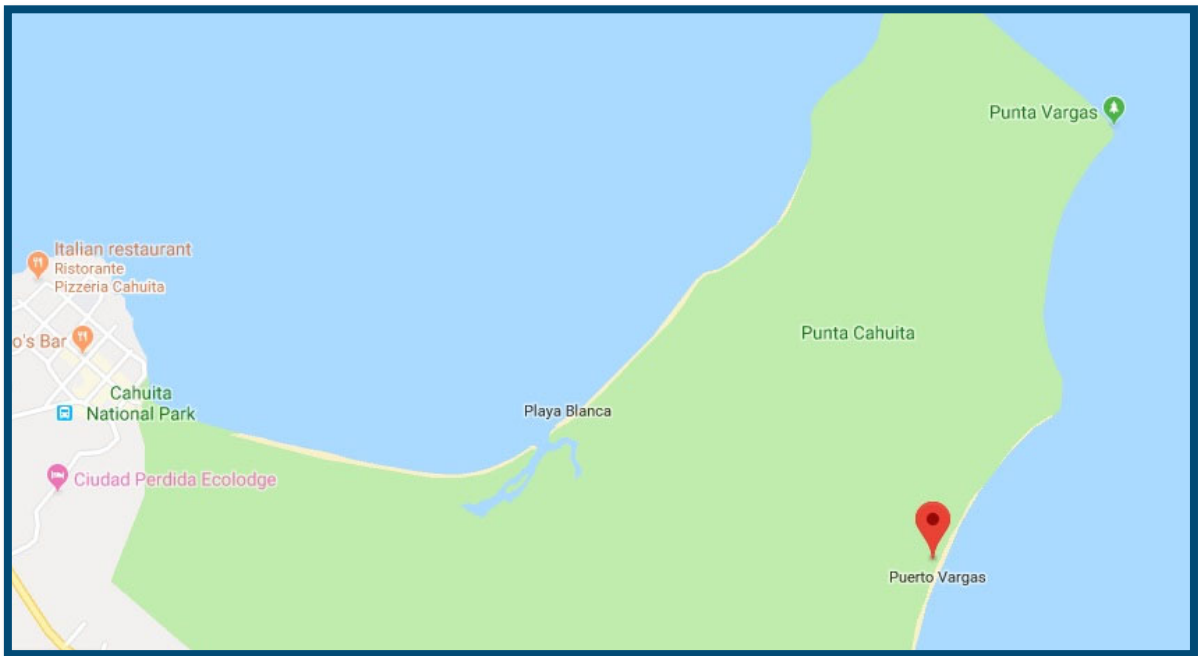
The sea is beautiful and clean at Puerto Vargas Beach.
Photography: GOPlaya.cr

Description: A natural spot with great beauty, located within the Cahuita National Park. The beautiful white sand beach combines a long trail next to the coast that allows you to enjoy the sound of the sea, with flora and fauna observation. It has a moderate swell with few rocks and wide vegetation. It's a clear sand and turquoise water place where you can explore and relax.

Activities and services: The national park offers restrooms, showers and a parking area that facilitate the tourist stay. Ask at the venue entrance for the guided snorkeling tours on the marine trail; this will allow you to get deeper into the beauties of the place. There are a few accommodations, restaurants and supermarkets available in Cahuita



town, although most the hotels for the Caribbean are concentrated in Puerto Viejo, a beautiful beach town located only 16 minutes from Cahuita.



Road condition: The road is ballast and remains in good condition. A 4x4 vehicle is not required, as the national park can be reached by car.





Gallery



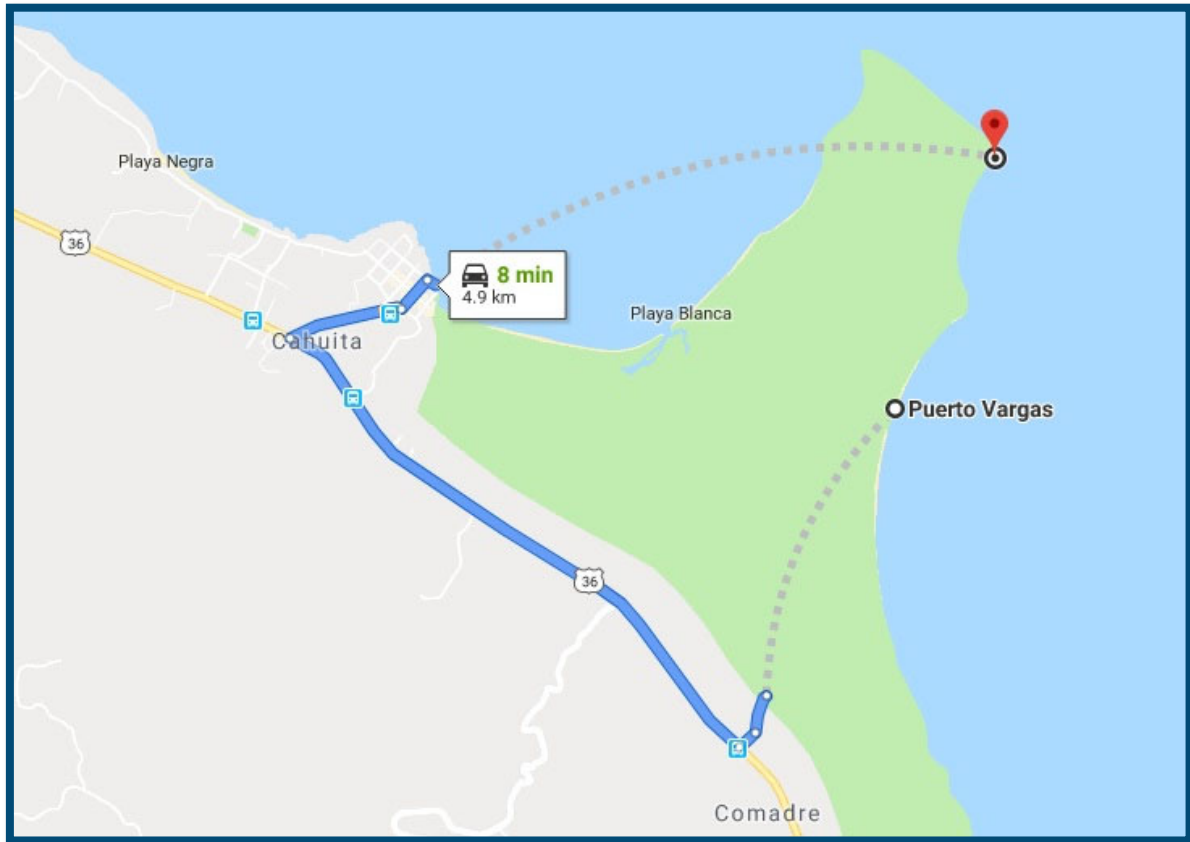


Playa Punta Vargas (Punta Vargas Beach)



A long trail leads to Punta Vargas, a paradise place you shouldn't miss.
Photo: GOPlaya.cr

Description: Spot of white sand that can be reached after 2.4 kilometers of travel along the path that starts at Puerto Vargas beach. It is a small but paradisiacal spot. In addition, it will be worth the walk, since in the trees that surround the footpath different types of animals can be observed, from monkeys, raccoons and pizotes. When you reach the beach, you will find a calm sea, with barely perceptible waves, surrounded by the coral acerrifes and the intense turquoise color of the sea.



The red dot indicates the location of Punta Vargas. 2.4 kilometers from Puerto Vargas beach, in Cahuita

Activities and Services: Upon arrival to Punta Vargas, you will find a small ranch with benches to sit and rest. There are also some signs that offer information about the area and species that can be found there. Then, among the trees, the beach hides. It is recommended that you bring your snorkeling gear so that you can observe the coral reefs that can be seen near the coast.

If you want to appreciate more diversity, it is preferable that you do a boat snorkeling tour. Tours can be taken at Playa Blanca (Blanca Beach) in Cahuita, in another sector of the national park. That is, you will have



to leave the conservation area and drive a few kilometers to get to Blanca, where access is free (or you can do a voluntary contribution).

Road condition: The road leading to Cahuita National Park is a ballast road and is in good condition. The trail leading to Punta Vargas is in acceptable condition. In some sections it is necessary to pay attention because the intense vegetation usually closes part of the path. However, it is a flat path, without steps.





Gallery





Who we are



GOPlaya.cr is the only beach search engine in Costa Rica. Its founders, José Pablo Alfaro and Carlos Alpízar, are two local travelers who toured the entire country to generate the GOPlaya database for more than 230 beaches. This allowed them to create unique content about the most incredible and hidden destinations, by adding the journalistic rigor that the tourist demands.



In 2017, GOPlaya was granted the International Open Passport Award in the “Originality” category and recently teamed up with Adobe Rent a Car to offer three e-books with exclusive content; Virgin Beaches; Beach Towns; Q&A about Tourist Safety.

Discover the unknown Costa Rica with us. Fall in love with the most extraordinary beaches and have a safe trip.

See more information about us at: www.goplaya.cr



Other Travel eBooks

