



Location and Course Information Manuel Antonio, Costa Rica

The following contains very important information to help you pack and prepare for your stay in Manuel Antonio, Costa Rica as well as details regarding the training location and training course itself. Please read this thoroughly and keep it for future reference.

Deposit

If you have not yet paid a deposit and received confirmation of payment, you are not yet "officially" registered for a course. Should you still need to make a deposit, please review the available payment methods in your original acceptance letter.

Final Payment

The balance of your course fees can be paid, in US dollars or colones, any major credit card, cash or bank transfer (which must be arranged with your bank before you leave home) at the course location. Please e-mail the Manuel Antonio location at: admin@teflcr.com for bank details. All accounts must be settled by the first day of the course.

Visa and Passport Information

Visitors to Costa Rica from the USA, Canada and the UK can enter the country without a visa. Visitors must carry a passport that is valid for at least six months after the date of arrival and can remain in the country for 90 days. The initial 90-day period can be extended for an additional 90 days within the country.

Visitors to Costa Rica from Ireland, Australia and New Zealand can also enter the country without a visa. Visitors must carry a passport that is valid for at least six months after the date of arrival and can stay in Costa Rica for a maximum of 30 days. The initial 30-day period can be extended for an additional 60 days within the country.

Citizens from all other countries should contact their local consulate to obtain current travel regulations.

*As this information is subject to change at any time, we advise you to contact your local consulate for current travel regulations prior to planning your trip.

Onward Tickets

Visitors to Costa Rica officially need a ticket out of the country before being allowed to enter. This is rarely asked for at the airport in San Jose because most airlines will not let you board their planes unless you have a return or onward ticket.

Job information

If you plan to seek employment after the course, it is a good idea to bring copies of your educational diplomas/transcripts and a copy of your birth certificate.

There is great demand for qualified TEFL teachers throughout the world. TEFL International provides the following services in this area:

Contact information and details of selected schools worldwide

Details of selected vacancies available worldwide

Details of the most popular web sites of TEFL vacancies and information

Internet access for job searches and on-line applications

Sessions covering CV preparation, advice about applications and interviews and all available information about teaching conditions in the trainees preferred destinations.

There are a variety of job opportunities throughout Costa Rica and Latin America, and finding a teaching position should not be a problem if you are proactive in your search.

Getting to Manuel Antonio/ Quepos

The options are public bus, Interbus, taxi, and plane. The Costa Rica site will send you an Arrival Details document with specific information.

Transportation upon Arrival

Your accommodation is available starting from the Sunday before the course begins through Saturday morning following the final week. We hope you will plan to arrive in Manuel Antonio / Quepos earlier so that you have a chance to relax and get accustomed to your surroundings before the course begins.

Directions and advice on transportation to your accommodation in Manuel Antonio/ Quepos from the bus station or the Quepos Airport will be provided two weeks prior to the start of the course.

Early Arrivals

If you wish to arrive in Manuel Antonio / Quepos before Sunday when your accommodation is available, TEFL International can provide assistance in finding reasonably-priced and well located rooms. One of our favorites is the Wide Mouth Frog www.widemouthfrog.org.

Accommodation Details

TEFL International can provide accommodation in homestays. TEFL International will arrange homestays in Quepos, which include a private bedroom in a Costa Rican family's home, breakfast and dinner, laundry service, an opportunity to practice your Spanish, and experience the Costa Rican culture.

All other accommodation arrangements must be made independently. Below is a list of recommended accommodations, their description, and their contact information. All trainees should complete an **Accommodation Preference** form regardless of which option you choose.

Cabinas Pedro Miguel: Located in Manuel Antonio within a few minutes walk of the school site. Includes hotel-style private bedrooms and bathrooms, but does not include kitchen, air-conditioning, or phone. Set in beautiful "jungle" surroundings with access to a small pool. Suites with kitchen and air-conditioning are available upon request for an increased rate.

* Discounted rates are provided for TEFL trainees. Price is dependent on season and you must identify yourself as a TEFL International trainee at the time of your booking to receive the discounted rate.

Phone: (506) 2 777-0035 Website: www.cabinaspedromiguel.com

Vista Serena Hostel: Located in Manuel Antonio a short bus ride down the hill to the school site. Includes shared rooms and private bungalows, with fans, lockers and laundry service. Also includes shared living area with TV/DVD, fully-equipped kitchen, and porch with hammocks. Set on a mountain surrounded by spectacular views overlooking the Pacific Ocean.

Phone: (506) 2777-5162 Website: www.vistaserena.com

Widemouth Frog Backpackers' Hostel: Located in downtown Quepos about a 15-minute walk or short bus ride to the school site. Includes shared rooms, with lockers, laundry service, and free Internet access. Also includes shared living area with TV/DVD, fully-equipped kitchen, and covered rancho with hammocks.

Phone: (506) 2777-2798 Website: www.widemouthfrog.org

Although Quepos and Manuel Antonio accommodations have electricity and water, the area is subject to frequent power outages, and it is not rare for water to be out for a few days. We recommend you keep a flashlight and stock up on a few bottles of water, just in case.

School Location and Facilities

The TEFL International School in Manuel Antonio is located a short walk from downtown Quepos on the road that leads to Manuel Antonio national park and the beaches. The school building is comfortable and air-conditioned. There are a variety of restaurants, banks and internet cafes nearby. Limited internet access is also available within the school to be used during non-classroom hours.

Training Course Schedule

There is a course orientation on Monday morning before the first class. This orientation takes place at 8:30 am at the school's site. Please be sure to arrive promptly. During the Orientation you will be provided with a complete course schedule. Sessions generally run Monday through Friday, with regular breaks scheduled among the six hours of class each day.

Trainees are expected to attend all input and other sessions included on the schedule unless they are sick and require medical treatment. This is particularly important for Teaching Practice (TP) as it is very difficult to arrange alternate TP times. Please note that certificates cannot be given until all course requirements have been met.

Course Dress Requirements

For all inputs and tutorial sessions at the TEFL training location there are no specific requirements, yet we ask that you be mindful of your peers and respectful of the fact that you are a visitor in another country. However during teaching practice there are dress requirements that adhere to the local culture and basic ideas of professionalism.

For Women

Knee length or longer skirts and tailored pants (including cropped pants and capris) are appropriate. Shirts should be modest with shoulders covered. Plunging necklines, bare midriffs, see-thru fabrics, spaghetti straps and T-shirts with logos are not acceptable. Sandals are acceptable, but flip-flops, hiking boots, and athletic shoes are not.

For Men

Long pants, with the exception of jeans, are the norm. Shirts with collars, either long or short sleeved, are acceptable. T-shirts with logos are not acceptable. Sandals are acceptable, but flip-flops, hiking boots, and athletic shoes are not.

If you have questions please contact us for clarification.

Resources

Please bring a pen and a notebook for taking notes during class. All relevant course books and materials will be provided.

Photocopying, fax and telephone facilities are available for use by trainees.

Internet access at the school for personal e-mailing is limited. We have a computer exclusively for our trainees but course work has priority over personal e-mailing at all times.

Business Hours

Generally speaking, normal business hours in Quepos and Manuel Antonio are between 8:30 a.m. 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Many shops close between 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. for lunch. Shops close around noon on Saturday and the vast majority of shops are not open at all on Sunday. Please bear this in mind when planning time to run errands and do your shopping.

In-Town Transportation

Quepos is a small, compact town that is easily navigable on foot. Manuel Antonio is spread out over a hill that is quite steep in places. Reaching the top of the hill in Manuel Antonio from Quepos or from the beach is best undertaken via bus or taxi. Taxis and buses are readily available, safe and inexpensive. Once you've reached the top of the hill, Manuel Antonio is relatively flat and easy to navigate on foot.

Local Weather Conditions

The seasons in Costa Rica are divided between summer and winter or the dry season and the wet season, respectively. On the Pacific slope the rainy season begins in May and runs its course until November. The days often begin sunny and pleasant, with rains coming later in the day. If attending a course that is scheduled during the rainy season, we recommend that you bring a rain jacket and/or an umbrella. The dry season begins at the end of November and runs through mid-May. The skies

are often cloudless with rain occurring on a weekly, rather than a daily basis. Temperatures vary between 74 and 95° F (23 to 35°C) with the average being around 85°F (29°C)

Get Acquainted!

Manuel Antonio is an incredible destination with something unique to offer every visitor. With an abundance of wildlife viewing opportunities, beautiful beaches and adventure-based activities, you should never be bored during your free time! Before your arrival, we highly recommend you purchase a descriptive guidebook or do some online research to familiarize yourself and get acquainted with Manuel Antonio and all it has to offer. For more information on Costa Rica and the towns of Manuel Antonio and Quepos, we recommend the following sites:

Lonely Planet: http://www.lonelyplanet.com/destinations/central_america/costa_rica/

A short overview of Quepos: <http://costarica.tourism.co.cr/central-pac.html>
www.puertoquepos.com

Local English newspapers: www.amcostarica.com and www.ticotimes.com

Should you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

See us online! We are available 24/7 thru:

Email : applications@teflife.com

Live Help : just click on the Live Call/Live Chat at www.teflife.com

**We look forward to welcoming you to the beautiful
country of Costa Rica!**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. Where is TEFL International located?

For receiving deliveries by DHL: TEFL International
*Note: *A person must be here to* 100 Metros sur de Pajaro Azul
sign for the package. The delivery Carretera Manuel Antonio
company will try twice then send Quepos 6350
the package back to San Jose. Costa Rica

For receiving personal mail: Your Full Name
 Lista de Correos
 Quepos 6350
 Costa Rica

Telephone: (506) 2777-4042
Fax: (506) 2777-4065
Email: admin@teflcr.com

2. What does the tuition for the program include?

Total fees: **\$1690**

Comprised of:

\$500 non-refundable deposit

\$1190 remaining course fee. This amount includes tuition, course materials, certification, and moderation fees. Airfares, accommodation, and food are not included.

3. How do I pay for the course?

By this stage, you should already have paid the \$500 **deposit** either online by credit card or via bank transfer.

The **balance** of your tuition fees (\$1190) can be paid before your arrival via wire transfer. Alternatively, you can pay the balance of your course fees **on-site in Manuel Antonio before the end of the first day of your course** with cash or any major credit card.

Onsite payment options are:

- i) Cash - in US dollars or local currency (colones) converted from US dollars according to the current rate of exchange at the time of payment.
- ii) By VISA, Mastercard, American Express or Discovery credit card

Late fees of \$25 per day may be assessed if payment is not made on time.

4. What is an average program day like?

The course runs, full-time over four weeks Monday – Friday. The first two weeks are comprised of six hours of classroom work each day, with two 15-minute breaks and one hour

for lunch. The final two weeks are spent on lesson planning and teaching practice. **On the first day of your course you should arrive for orientation at 8:30 am.** At this time you will be given a detailed course timetable. In addition, there will be a **graduation dinner on the last Friday of the course**, so if possible make your departure arrangements from Manuel Antonio accordingly.

5. How many students on average are in the program each month?

Typically we have around 15 trainees. When enrollment for a course is over 18, the trainees are divided into two classes that are taught simultaneously. Most of the participants are American, British, Canadian or Australian, although we do accept non-native speakers of English who have a high proficiency in the language.

6. What are the teaching practice students and classes like?

We invite local Costa Rican students for your teaching practice. Costa Rican students are very keen and enthusiastic and because we don't charge them to attend, all students come to classes purely because they want to!

7. What are accommodations like?

TEFL International can arrange homestays in Quepos, which include a private bedroom in a Costa Rican family's home, breakfast and dinner, laundry service, an opportunity to practice your Spanish, and an authentic experience of the Costa Rican culture. **Homestay accommodations must be secured at least one month prior to the course start date.** All other accommodation arrangements must be made independently. Below is a list of recommended accommodations, their description, and their contact information. All trainees should complete an Accommodation Preference form regardless of which option you choose.

Cabinas Pedro Miguel: Located in Manuel Antonio within a few minutes walk of the school site. Includes hotel-style private bedrooms and bathrooms, but does not include kitchen, air-conditioning, or phone. Set in beautiful "jungle" surroundings with access to a small pool. Suites with kitchen and air-conditioning are available upon request for an increased rate. * Discounted rates are provided for TEFL trainees. Price is dependent on season and you must identify yourself as a TEFL International trainee at the time of your booking to receive the discounted rate.

Phone: (506) 2777-0035 Website: www.cabinaspedromiquel.com

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Although Quepos and Manuel Antonio accommodations have electricity and water, the area is subject to frequent power outages, and it is not rare for water to be out for a few days. We recommend you keep a flashlight and stock up on a few bottles of water, just in case.

8. When are the homestay accommodations available?

Homestay accommodations are available from the Sunday before the first day of the course through the Saturday after the last day of the course. Once you have submitted your Accommodation Preference form, you will receive your homestay family's profile and directions to their home approximately 3 weeks before the start of your course.

9. What should I know about my homestay?

Homestay accommodations are meant to give trainees a cultural and family atmosphere which will enhance their stays in Costa Rica. With this dynamic in mind, there are certain courtesies expected of trainees. Guests are not allowed without the express permission of your family. If you will be late or will miss dinner, it is polite to notify your family ahead of time. You might also consider establishing a specific time with your family when laundry will be collected and labelling your clothes to make sorting easy.

10. Can I bring my laptop?

We strongly recommend you bring your laptop since free Wi-Fi access is available in the training centre. If you don't have a laptop you can use one of our two computers in the student lounge, although your use should be primarily for course-related projects. We have a printer, but it is unreliable. For both your Internet and printing needs, you can use local cafes that cost between 800 and 1000 colones/hour (between \$1.75-2) plus any printing costs you incur. We recommend Internet Quepos near the bus station, Internet Hostel Vista Serena, and Tropical Internet Café on the Quepos waterfront.

11. What about public holidays?

Because of the intensive nature of our TESOL course, time off is not given for local, national or international public holidays that occur during your course.

THE JOB MARKET & TEACHING IN COSTA RICA

1. What is the TEFL job market in Costa Rica like? Will I have trouble getting a job?

The job market for English teachers in Costa Rica is excellent at the moment, although most of the jobs are located in or around San Jose. The best time to start looking for employment is when you are close to finishing your course.

2. What will TEFL International do to help me secure employment?

We give you advice and assistance with writing resumes and cover letters. As well, we provide a list of local English teaching establishments and post available jobs on our jobs board. You should feel free to ask our staff for advice at any time.

3. What is the average salary like?

The average salary in Costa Rica is about 3000 to 4000 colones (\$6-8) per hour. The rate varies depending on what type of school or company you work for, and whether you work full or part-time.

4. How many of the TEFL graduates actually find work in Costa Rica?

The majority of our course graduates who have wanted to work in Costa Rica have been able to secure teaching positions.

5. Do schools provide health insurance?

Generally, no. However, everyone in Costa Rica (tourists included) can make free use of the national health service.

6. Do schools provide work permits?

This depends on the employer. Some may, others may not.

7. What is a typical teaching position like?

Of course it varies from school to school, but you may be expected to teach a variety of courses, ranging from children to business professionals at all levels, in groups or in private sessions.

8. Can I return to my own country and teach with my certificate?

Yes, it is possible, though the requirements for working in ESL or TEFL in many western countries are different and sometimes include graduate and/or post-graduate level education in ESL or TEFL.

PAPERWORK & DOCUMENTATION

1. What documents do I need to bring?

Of course, you need your passport. When you secure work you may be asked to provide copies of your birth certificate, college degrees, and transcripts. You might also consider obtaining an international driving permit if you want to drive in Costa Rica.

2. Do I need a visa to enter Costa Rica?

Visitors to Costa Rica from the USA, Canada, and the UK can enter the country without a visa. All visitors to Costa Rica are required to carry a passport valid for at least six months after arrival date and can remain in the country for 90 days. The initial 90-day period can be extended for an additional 90 days within the country.

Visitors to Costa Rica from Ireland, Australia, and New Zealand can also enter the country without a visa. Visitors must carry a passport that is valid for at least six months after arrival date and can remain in the country for 30 days. The initial 30-day period can be extended for an additional 60 days within the country.

As this information is subject to change at any time, we advise you to contact your local consulate for current travel regulations prior to planning your trip. For more information on obtaining visas please check with your local Costa Rican consulate or embassy.

QUESTIONS ABOUT MANUEL ANTONIO & LIVING IN COSTA RICA

1. What are the average housing and living expenses in Costa Rica?

According to www.costarica.com the average family budget is around \$600 a month including a three bedroom house, all utilities, food, and transportation; however, Manuel Antonio and Quepos are some of the most expensive towns in the most expensive country in Central America. A one bedroom apartment in this area runs from \$300, if you can get it through a local contact, up to \$500. How much you spend will depend on choices you make, for example how much you drink, how much international food you eat, and how much travel you do while you are here. Housing is generally less expensive in the Central Valley, where the majority of the jobs are. Depending on where you are and how many people you are living with, a shared apartment can run each person less than \$100 per month.

2. What if I get sick in Costa Rica? Are there western-standard medical facilities?

If you find yourself requiring medical attention, you can use the Costa Rican National Health Service free of charge. There are a number of private hospitals that offer their own health insurance services (similar to US style HMOs), however we do recommend that you get health insurance before you travel.

3. What is the public transportation system like?

The cheapest way to get around town is certainly the bus at 200 colones per trip (less than 25 cents). The route begins at the bus station in downtown Quepos and ends at the park entrance in Manuel Antonio. The buses leave approximately every 30 minutes and run until 9:30 pm. The buses are clearly marked with a "Quepos/Manuel Antonio" banner on the windshield. Bus stops are marked by either a bus shelter or a yellow line painted on the pavement, although some are not marked at all. When waiting on the street, be sure to flag down the bus or you may be passed by. The bus stop for TEFL International from Quepos (on the way "up the hill") is the Manuel Antonio Surf School (MASS) just past the TEFL building. The bus stop from Manuel Antonio (on the way "down the hill") is the Restaurant Plinio. TEFL International is just a short walk down the hill from both stops.

A slightly more expensive but speedy alternative to public transportation is to take taxis. The cost varies by driver and whether it is day or night. Trips around Quepos, including to the TEFL site (Tango La Guacha), should cost around 1000 colones. Trips to Manuel Antonio beach will be about 2500 colones. Addresses in Costa Rica are often referred to by landmarks because the streets are not named.

If you decide to walk anywhere, be careful about traffic on the Manuel Antonio road, as there are no sidewalks and many blind spots. Also be careful walking anywhere after dark. It is best to take a taxi at night.

4. What's the climate like? What kind of clothing will I need to bring?

The seasons in Costa Rica are divided between summer and winter or the dry season and the wet season, respectively. On the Pacific slope the rainy season begins in May and runs its course until November. The days often begin sunny and pleasant, with rains coming later in the day. If attending a course scheduled during the rainy season, we recommend you bring a rain jacket and/or umbrella. The dry season begins at the end of November and runs through mid-May. The skies are often cloudless with rain occurring on a weekly, rather than daily, basis. Temperatures vary between 74 and 95° F (23 to 35° C) with the average being around 85° F (29° C).

Lightweight fabrics are usually best in beach areas, as it is often hot and humid. There are many places to do your laundry and accommodations often offer laundry service, so bringing clothes for everyday is not necessary. Make sure you bring a beach towel, bathing suit, and

sunscreen, although a rain jacket and/or umbrella will probably be needed as well. There are also many parks and waterfalls in the area to explore, so comfortable shoes and clothing are a must. Please see the Course Dress Code for specific teaching practice requirements.

ARRIVING IN COSTA RICA

1. How do I get to Quepos/Manuel Antonio from the airport?

Bus from San Jose to downtown Quepos:

Buses run regularly between San Jose's Coca Cola bus terminal and downtown Quepos's bus station, and the trip takes about 3 ½ hours on the *directo* bus and 5 ½ on the *colectivo*. The *directo* buses are generally clean, comfortable, and on time and leave at 6 am, noon, and 6 pm. s. The *colectivo* buses leave at 7 am, 10 am, 2 pm, and 4 pm and make many stops and are often crowded with people standing in the aisles. Fares are about \$6 per person, although a taxi from the airport into San Jose can cost up to \$20.

Buses in Costa Rica are run by small companies, meaning there is not nationalized transit system. Generally you cannot reserve a seat by phone or the Internet, which means the only way to guarantee a seat on the bus is to purchase a ticket ahead of time and in person at the Quepos ticket stall across from the terminal (pictured on map below). An alternative is to purchase tickets through CostaRicaBusTickets.com, which will arrange pick-up from the airport and have your tickets purchased and waiting for you for around \$25.

* BE AWARE, TOURISTS AT THE COCA COLA BUS TERMINAL CAN BE A TARGET FOR THEFT. KEEP YOUR BELONGINGS CLOSE AT ALL TIMES, EVEN ONCE YOU HAVE BOARDED THE BUS. DO NOT PUT VALUABLES ABOVE YOUR HEAD OR UNDER THE BUS. *

Flights:

Nature Air and Sansa both offer daily flights from the regional airport next to the international airport to the Quepos airport that range from \$60-\$70. There is a baggage limit of 26 lbs. and you must have a two-hour window between your arrival and departure to provide time for customs and collecting your baggage. Reservations should be made in advance, as the planes are small and book quickly.

Nature Air US/Canada (800) 2235-9272 Costa Rica (506) 2220 – 3054

www.natureair.com

Sansa (605) 2221 - 9414

www.flysansa.com

Taxis:

Go to the official taxi stand at the airport exit. A ride to Quepos/Manuel Antonio will cost about 120 dollars and you have to pay up-front. An official will then take you to your taxi. Do not go with people who approach you and offer you a taxi, they are not licensed and not insured to take passengers.

Interbus/Gray Line:

Both of these private bus companies have daily shuttles from San Jose hotels to Quepos/Manuel Antonio hotels that cost about 35 dollars. You can take a taxi from the airport to either the nearby Garden Court Hotel or Hampton Inn. The shuttles usually seat up to eight people, pick-up at approximately 8 am and 3 pm, and take you directly to your lodging. You can make reservations on-line or by phone.

Interbus: www.interbusonline.com

Gray Line: www.grayline.com

If you have more questions please contact us at:

Email: admin@teflcr.com

Telephone (CR): (506) 2777-4042

applications@teflife.com

www.teflife.com

Thank you for choosing TEFL International Manuel Antonio, Costa Rica!

ACCOMMODATION PREFERENCES

Please fill out this form and send it back to admin@teflcr.com.

1. Name _____ Age _____ Female / Male

2. Course Month / Year _____

3. Do you smoke? yes / no

4. Please select your preference from our current options below. Our options are subject to change, so we will work with your preferences to secure the best situation for you. Unless otherwise specified, accommodations could be co-ed. First come, first served.

_____ 1. Home-Stay – \$400 / person

- In Quepos
- Private bedroom in a Costa Rican family's home
- Two meals per day (breakfast and dinner)
- Laundry service once a week
- The opportunity to practice your Spanish and get to know Costa Rican culture

_____ 2. I will secure my own accommodation.
(Please see attached FAQ for recommendations.)

5. Is there another trainee you would like to share an ac with?

yes / no Name _____

* Please note that if you determine that you are unhappy with your homestay accommodation upon arrival for any reason, you will have until the second day of the course to let us know for a refund. However, you will be responsible for payment for the nights that accommodation was provided for you. You will then need to secure your own accommodation.

applications@teflife.com

www.teflife.com