



## January

### *New Year*

1. January. Mostly in the surrounding of Zapote in San José there is a big fairground with the traditional bullfighting and food stands. There is also plenty of fireworks and music.

### *Copa del Café*

Mid January. International tennis tournament at the Costa Rica Country Club.

### *Folkfestival in Palmares*

Mid January. The second most visited folk festival after Zapote. Fairground with bullfighting, carnival, music and dancing.

### *Folkfestival in Alajuelita*

Mid January. Ox cart procession and visit to the iron cross.

### *Folkfestival in Santa Cruz*

Mid January. Dancing, Marimba and Bullfighting.

## February

### *Folkfestival in San Isidro del General*

First week in February. There is a cattle- agricultural and industry exhibition, as well as a flower fair and bullfighting.

### *Fiesta de los Diablitos*

This unique feast takes place in the last week in February in the indigenous town of Boruca de Rey Curre South from San Isidro del General. It is a representation of the fight between the Spaniard (bull) and the Indians (dressed up like little devils). The performance is very colorful with dancing, fireworks, masks and wooden garments. You can buy typical handcraft.

### *Carnival in Puntarenas*

This event takes place In the last week in February with lots of parades and festivities.

### *CENAC Festival*

Mid February. This event takes place In the National Culture Center in San José and features theater, movies, and storytellers.

### *Folkfestival in Liberia*

Late February. In Liberia the capital of Guanacaste you can enjoy this celebration with lots of music, concerts and mainly folcloric activities and traditions.

### *Monteverde Music Festival*

Well known Music festival in the Cloud Forest.



## March

### *Ox Cart Day*

This traditional parade takes place the second Sunday in March in Escazú and there are over 150 Ox carts participating.

### *National Orchid Exhibition*

This colorful exhibition takes place in Mid March and there can be found over 500 local and foreign species.

### *San José Day*

19 March. Religious Celebration in all the towns with this name.

### *Ujarras*

Mid March. There is a religious procession from Cartago to Ujarras, to the ruins of the first church in Costa Rica.

## April

### *Easter Week* (varies, for exact date [click here](#))

The Costa Ricans take the Easter Week very seriously but not necessarily in the religious sense. Many families spend their Easter Holidays outside San José. The more conservative population celebrates with religious processions.

### *Juan Santamaria Day*

11 April. Juan Santamaria is the National Hero of Costa Rica, he sacrificed his life while defending the country against the filibusters in 1856.

### *University Week*

In the last week in April there are a lot of exhibitions, Live music and parades in the University of Costa Rica.

## May

### *Labour Day*

1. May. There are some parades in the streets and the President holds his traditional speech where he informs about the situation of the country.

### *Folkfestival in Limón*

1. May. The *fiestas* in Limón offer cricket games, dancing, games and family picnics.

### *Handcraft exhibition*

First week in May. A large Handcraft exhibition in San José where you can get local handcrafts for fair prices.

### *San Isidro Labrador Day*

May. Folkfestival in all towns named after the holy patron of farmers. Blessings of animals and harvest as well as processions and celebrations take place.

### *San Juan Day*

17. May. This day is celebrated with a half marathon from Cartago to San José.

### *Corpus Cristi*

29. May . Religious Celebrations.

## **June**

### *San Pedro y San Pablo*

29. June. Religious Celebration to honour Saint Peter and Saint Paul.

## **July**

### *Virgen del Mar Day*

Mid July. The closest Saturday to the 16th of July in Puntarenas. The celebration consists mainly on a boat parade off the shore of Puntarenas. The boats are decorated with lots of colors. One of the boats transports the image of the holy patron saint of Puntarenas, the virgin of Monte Carmelo. There are also messes, concerts, dances and firework.

### *Annexation of Guanacaste*

25. July. The Costa Ricans celebrate the day that Guanacaste province chose their nation over neighboring Nicaragua in 1824. The biggest celebrations are concentrated in Liberia, the capital of the province with bullfighting, parades and typical food.

### *Mango Festival*

Mid July. Alajuela is called the Mango city and every July the town celebrates with parades, music and lots of mango refreshments.

## **August**

### *Virgen de los Angeles Day*

2. August. Costa Rica's largest religious celebration. Pilgrims from all over the country and even from Nicaragua walk to Cartago's Los Angeles Basilica to honour la Negrita, Costa Rica's black virgin.

### *Mother's Day*

15. August. In Costa Rica Mothersday is celebrated on August 15.

### *San Ramón Day*

30. August. Parades, music and dancing welcome the 30 saints of nearby towns, that come to honour San Ramon's own patron saint.



## September

### *Independence Day*

15. September. The Independence torch arrives one day prior from Nicaragua and is brought by relay runners to Cartago where it arrives on September 15 at 6.00 p.m. At this time the whole country stands still to sing the National Anthem. On September 14 in the evening there are children lantern parades all around the country.

## October

### *San Isidro Day*

9. October. This celebration is to commemorate this important agricultural town.

### *Puerto Viejo Carnival*

Early to Mid October. Seven days of Caribbean parties with live music, dancing, parades and a Mardi Gras style ambiance.

### *Culture Day (Christopher Columbus Day)*

12. October. There is a big carnival in Limón with lots of dancing, parades and concerts.

### *Virgin of Pilar*

12. October. Festivity to honor the virgin of Pilar, the patron saint of Tres Rios.

### *Corn Festival*

12. October in Upala. A parade with costumes made of corn as well as the crowning of the Corn Queen are part of this traditional celebration.

## November

### *All Soul's Day*

2. November. The families visit their loved ones with flowers on the cemetery.

### *Coffee picking contest*

Mid November. Central Valley. This event is celebrated with music and dancing.

### *Ox Cart Parade*

Late November. San José. This parade takes place in San José and honours Costa Rica's long Ox Cart and Agricultural tradition.

## December

### *Christmas Festivities*

Early December. Although Costa Ricans decorate their homes very early, the real Christmas Celebration starts in December. The tamales (a typical dish made of corn flour, meat and different vegetables, and then wrapped in banana leaves) are prepared after old family recipes. Each family gathers to prepare this



dish and everyone helps, from the grandmother to the youngest child. Normally it is a big event. The tamales are exchange among the families. The nativity set should not lack in any house. Besides the figures of Maria, Joseph, the herdsmen, and so on you will also find planes, cars, elephants and anything found in the house. The imagination has no limits while making the nativity set. The Jesus Baby is put on his crib on December 24th.

#### *Los Negritos*

8 December. Boruca. A combination from traditional Indigenous festivity and Catholic Rituals. This day honours the virgin of the Immaculate Conception.

#### *Immaculate Conception*

8 December. This day is celebrated with lots of fireworks.

#### *Fiesta de la Yeguita*

12 December. Liberia. A parade to honour the virgin of Guadalupe is the main activity on this day. The traditional music, dancing and firework is not missing.

#### *Christmas Eve / Christmas*

24/25 December.

Traditionally the dinner on the 24th is held on midnight, to welcome Jesus. There is also a Midnight Mess.

#### *Tope*

26 December. San José. This well-known horse parade leads through the center of San José and the well trained horses exhibit their amazing foot work.

#### *Carnival*

27 December. San José. A huge carnival with large floats, live music and a very happy atmosphere leads through the center of the city.

#### *Zapote Fiestas*

Late December. The Zapote fairgrounds transform from tranquil farmer's market to a amusement park offering food, megabars, bullfighting and lots of distraction.