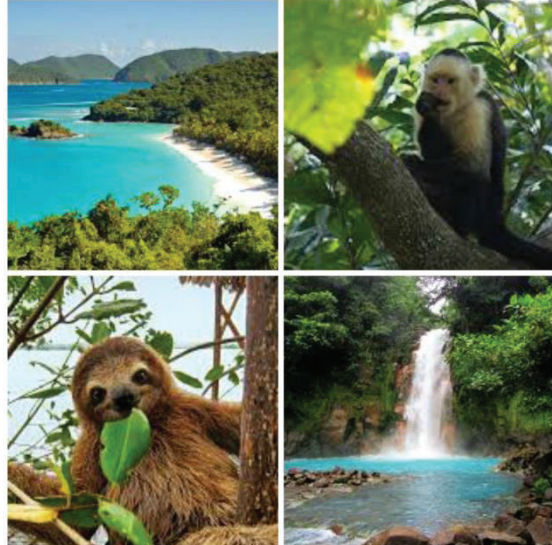


Getting Married in Costa Rica – Things to Know

Legal Requirements for Getting Married in Costa Rica

Costa Rica has two available options for couples looking to marry in the country. The first is a civil wedding presided by a Costa Rican lawyer. The second is a Catholic Church ceremony, directed by a Costa Rican priest in the local language (Spanish); both the bride and groom must be Catholic and follow the appropriate conventions and documentation through the church.



Requirements:

- 2 witnesses to attest that they know the couple and that they are each entering marriage by their own will and are each legally able to be married (if needed, the resort can provide witnesses)
- passports for the couple and each witness (valid throughout your stay in Costa Rica)
- occupations
- current address
- names and addresses of both of the couples' parents
- original birth certificates
- single status affidavits
- if divorced, a Certificate of Divorce
- if widow/widower, a Certificate of Death for the former spouse

According to local law, women do not change their last name when they marry. In the legal documentation and in the marriage certificate, names will read as they currently appear on the passports. Couples can change their last names in their country of residence if they wish to do so after the marriage certificate is received.

There is no minimum stay period for visitors to marry in Costa Rica. The day of the ceremony, the required information is put into a sworn statement which the couple signs and their lawyer submits to the National Registry. Once the marriage license is recorded, they must translate it to English and have it authenticated by the country of residence's consulate, then mailed to the couple. One antiquated but still upheld law in Costa Rica to be wary of; there is a 300-day wait period between divorce and a new marriage for women.

Why get married in Costa Rica?

Costa Rica is a small country that has much to offer, with tropical rainforests, waterfalls, volcanoes, and both black and white sand beaches between the Caribbean and Pacific coasts. Driving between shorelines takes only three hours by car, so it is possible to enjoy the black sand beaches of the Pacific and the white sand beaches of the Caribbean in one vacation. Horseback riding, hiking, fishing, and discovering the diverse and lush ecosystems are also popular day tours.