

## **Greetings!! And welcome to paradise!!!**

We here at Blue Osa recognize that, for many of our guests, this is a first visit to this beautiful country.

Accordingly, we have put together an informative 'welcome' letter for all of our prospective and upcoming guests, to prepare and help you for your arrival both to Blue Osa, and Costa Rica in general. We hope that you find it useful and, if you have any further questions... please don't hesitate to contact us, anytime!



## **How to get here?**

Upon your arrival into San Jose at Juan Santamaria International Airport, you then need to make a connection that will bring you down to the Osa Peninsula. You have a multiple of options in regards to travel from San Jose to Puerto Jimenez, but most people prefer to use one of Costa Rica's two dependable, safe and reliable Air Carriers.

Blue Osa's preferred air carrier in Costa Rica is Nature Air. Nature Air is a small but very safe, very customer service oriented airline that services all of Costa Rica. Nature Air take pride in serving not only their customers, but also the environment as well, as they are the only airline in the entire world that has reduced their carbon footprint to zero (something which, as an Eco-Hotel, we greatly admire and appreciate).

If you would like to book a flight with Nature Air, you can do so quite easily by clicking here [http://www.natureair.com/blue-osa-peninsula.aspx?referrer\\_id=440002](http://www.natureair.com/blue-osa-peninsula.aspx?referrer_id=440002) (and please remember when booking your flight that you are flying from San Jose to Puerto Jimenez).

When booking your flight, please be sure to book your shuttle (cost \$5) from Juan Santamaria Internarional Airport to the Tobias Bolanos Airport in the San Jose suburb of Pavas where they are located. If you would rather not take a shuttle, you can also hail a taxi to take you from the one airport to the other- simply tell the driver that you want to go Nature Air, and they will take you there, no problem. The taxi ride costs about \$20.

The other air travel alternative is Sansa Airlines. Sansa's advantage in comparison to Nature Air is that they fly out of a terminal that is adjacent to the main Juan Santamaria International Airport where you will be arriving. You can click here to find out more information on Sansa. <http://www.blueosa.com/plan-sansa.php>.

Alternately, if you would like to have extra service and be taken care of, please contact Isabelle at Osa Tropical. There email is [osatropical@ice.co.cr](mailto:osatropical@ice.co.cr) and there phone number is (506) 2735 6062.

You should also know that there is a baggage limit (including carry-on's) enforced on both Air Carriers. With Sansa the baggage limit (including carry on's) is 26 pounds (with baggage over 26 pounds incurring a surcharge of \$1.00 per pound). Nature Air's baggage limit is a slightly more generous 40 pounds. Nonetheless and either way- pack light!! (Remember- we're 8 degrees North of the equator, so how much in the way of clothes does one really NEED here in the Tropics?!?)

If, for some reason, you are not able to make your connection to Puerto Jimenez as scheduled, do not panic. Proceed to your terminal (be it Sansa or Nature Air) and simply rebook your flight. Your air-travel provider should allow the use of their telephone to call Blue Osa about the change in travel arrangements. For anybody travelling with Sansa and facing a bit of a wait in connection times, Wi-Fi is available in the food court at the San Jose airport should you wish to email Blue Osa about your delay. Phone cards are also available in that area of the airport, and the main phone number here is 00-506-8704-7006.

If you have the time, and a bit of a sense of adventure, driving down to the Osa is also an option. Driving around Costa Rica is fabulous and is really a great way to see the country. The hardest part is the getting out of San Jose (which, like all big cities, can be congested and a little baffling to navigate due to the absolute lack of street signs), but having left San Jose, navigation in the rest of the country is simple, and most of the roads are paved all the way from San Jose to Blue Osa. Mind you, do not expect North American quality roads and highways... but it is still a pleasant drive that should take you about 6-7 hours.

To rent a car, please see some of the major dealers such as Hertz, Budget, etc. Or you can have Isabelle arrange it for you.

### San Jose

If, an overnight stay in San Jose is necessary or preferred either going to or coming from Blue Osa, here are a few suggestions.

For travel around San Jose, taxi aeropuerto drivers just outside the San Jose airport are very helpful and can direct you to the shuttle. Fluent English is spoken at both airports so communication presents no problem. There's not much to do near the airport, however... so anybody that may want a more engaging, involving or interesting (read: 'fun') experience in San Jose should probably look elsewhere (and feel free to contact us for suggestions!)

We do have a suggested driver while you are in San Jose. His name is Luis, and he speaks very good english. The only way to reach him is by phone. (506) 8834 8181. He usually will pick up immediately and is very easy to reach. If you give him your flight information, he will be waiting to pick you up from the airport.

If you want to spend a little bit of time exploring San Jose and everything that it has to offer, your options are more numerous...

Our number one and preferred suggestion for a place to stay would be the Don Carlos Hotel ( <http://www.doncarloshotel.com> ), located in downtown San Jose. The Don Carlos is a quaint, family-owned 'boutique' hotel that is both affordable, friendly, and pleasantly situated.

Another option is Casa Bellarita. ( <http://www.casabellarita.com> ) While a little more expensive, Casa Bellarita is a beautiful B&B situated on the edge of a canyon, and thus has an extraordinary view. Quiet, tranquil, and a little out-of-the-way, it is a great place to unwind before the next leg of your journey.

Wherever you do end up staying, we ask that you please let them know that Blue Osa referred you if you could email us a copy of your reservation, it'd be greatly appreciated!

#### Blue Osa Contact Info

There are two phone numbers here at Blue Osa. The first (and preferred) is 00-506-8704-7006, and a backup number is 00-506 839 889 05. The two owners names are Adam and Aaron, and should you want to contact them they can best be reached at '[info@blueosa.com](mailto:info@blueosa.com)'. You may also reach Stephen, our general manager who will be the host of your stay. He can be reached anytime at either of these numbers, or through his email, '[Stephen@blueosa.com](mailto:Stephen@blueosa.com)'.

Please provide this emergency contact information to your family.

#### Money and Currency

It is not necessary to convert money to the local currency (colones) as all businesses happily accept U.S. dollars. Expect your change in colones, however. The conversion generally hovers around 500-550 colones for every 1 US dollar. Though this may seem daunting and confusing to figure out, I find that the best way is to simply drop it to a rate of 500 colones to every 1 dollar and then, when trying to figure out the conversion from colones to dollars, dropping all zeros in the colones cost and then doubling it. So 1000 colones (dropping all zeros) would be 2 dollars. 2000 colones would be 4 dollars. 5000 colones would be 10 dollars. 10000 colones would be 20 dollars, etc.

In regards to Credit Cards Visa, Mastercard and Discover are accepted at Blue Osa and can be used for all tours, spa treatments, purchases, etc, so in regards to your stay here you really do not need to bring much cash with you.

## Tax

The tax in Costa Rica is 13%. This will be added to your bills anywhere you go. The only exception to this tax is food.

## What to bring to Blue Osa

First and foremost, kindly remember that you are allowed up to 25 LBS on the local flights, and also that they do charge extra for over sized baggage. Having said that, in regards to what you should bring, we advise packing light. The tropical climate here makes it very comfortable, if not necessary, to wear simply lightweight clothing and footwear. Quick-dry clothing and tennis shoes, sandals, and water shoes (Tevas, Crocs) work best. The Osa Peninsula is characterized by warm, breezy days, with highs between 82 and 92 degrees, and lows in the range of 70-80. Keep in mind that Blue Osa is surrounded by jungle, so humidity is a factor- it's hot down here!!!

Here is a good, basic, ideal packing guide, based on a week stay here:

- *If coming to Blue Osa to participate in a Yoga Retreat, bring your Yoga Mat. However, Blue Osa does offer to rent yoga mats for \$5 a day, or \$30 for the week should you wish to leave yours at home. Mats are also available for sale here, in our Blue Osa store. Yoga blocks and other yoga related props are available at no charge.*
- *Also for Yoga Retreats- a notebook and pens for taking notes, and a small journal. For retreats, this is usually considered essential.*
- *A flashlight or headlamp. Perfect for those fond of midnight walks on the beach, these are also sold at our Blue Osa Store.*
- *3 - 4 tank tops or lightweight t-shirts*
- *bathing suit*
- *3 - 4 pair of shorts*
- *sarongs if you wear them (also available in the Blue Osa Gift Shop)*
- *toiletries*
- *sandals and / or walking shoes.*

Selected eco-tours may also dictate clothing and footwear. As an example, if one is desirous to go horseback riding long pants and closed shoes might be preferred. If you have a question about appropriate gear for a desired eco-tour, please let me know and we can go from there.

Many items are sold in the Blue Osa Store, so if you forget somethings you can usually find them here. We are also open to helping you buy things in the little town of Puerto Jimenez as well, so please feel free to let us know once you are here if there is something that you have forgotten and/or are missing, and require... and we'll do our very best to help you.

### Laundry Service

Laundry service is available at Blue Osa for a small fee and/or you can always hand wash articles of clothing on your own, and hang them on our clothesline.

### Soaps and Toiletries

Blue Osa provides for it's guests our own environmentally friendly Osa Soap that produced locally in the pueblo of Puerto Jimenez. If you do bring any of your own soaps or shampoos, please try to ensure that they are environmentally friendly, as we at Blue Osa are working hard to protect this already delicate eco-system. You will also want to bring plenty of sunscreen, and possibly bug repellent (but, as mentioned above, all of these are readily available in town... so feel free to gauge it as you go.) .

### Power

Power voltage in Costa Rica is the same as the United States and no adapter is necessary. Hair dryers are not available. Blue Osa is operated by solar power and, as such, there is minimal power usage.

We do ask that you come to Blue Osa with an environmental awareness of conservation eco friendliness.

### Cell Phone Service, and Internet Access

International Cell Phone service here on the Osa can be sketchy, at best. Sometimes some phones will work, sometimes they won't. I would inquire of your service provider, and make sure to ask them specifically about service in Costa Rica. And, for what it's worth, please know that anybody that might find themselves hindered by a lack of service is always welcome to use our phone for a nominal fee. Wi-Fi service is available at Blue Osa, and there is also internet service available through the computer set up in the office.

### Other Services, and Payment

The cost of eco tours, spa treatments, and other incidentals will be charged to your room and everything payable at departure- we don't want you having to constantly worry about paying for 'this' or 'that' throughout your stay. Blue Osa accepts Visa, MasterCard and Discover.

And, if you would like to read through our list of tours or see what spa services are available, do please visit our website at [www.blueosa.com](http://www.blueosa.com) and download both our Spa and Tour packets. We would also be happy to email them to you.

### Tips

Tips for services rendered are always welcome and are very much appreciated by Blue Osa's hardworking staff. At the end of the week, you may either leave a cash tip in an envelope provided, or have it charged to your credit card. All tips will be pooled and divided evenly among the kitchen, garden, and housekeeping staff.

If you would like to tip individually, you may do so personally, or you can indicate how much you would like to tip for each person upon checking out. Like wise, tips for individually booked eco-tours are left to your discretion.

### Medical Care and Attention

Emergency medical treatment is available, if necessary, in the little Clinica Hospital in Puerto Jimenez and, in the event of an extreme emergency, helicopter airlift to hospitals in Golfito, San Isidro or San Jose is also available. For minor needs, the Puerto Jimenez pharmacy is staffed by wonderful and knowledgeable people that are happy to attend to whatever your needs may be. Should anybody require anything from the pharmacy, we are happy to escort you to the pharmacy, introduce you to Humberto and Flori (the pharmacists) and generally help you acquire whatever you may require.

### Leaving Costa Rica... Departure Tax

There is a departure tax when leaving Costa Rica that is paid at the San Jose International Airport. This fee is \$26 USD and is payable in either colones, US Dollars, or by credit card.

Have a safe flight!

We think that pretty much covers it! We hope that you found this both useful and informative and that it will assist you as you prepare your journey. Should you have any further questions about anything at all, please don't hesitate to contact us anytime. We're here to help, and look forward to welcoming you to our beloved Blue Osa!!!

Namaste,  
Aaron