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Jaco Beach

By Steven Hollstein

With only 2.5 hours (approx 117 km) drive from the capitol, San José, Jacó beach or playa Jacó is one of the most visited beaches in Costa Rica.

The long sandy beach has a shape and ocean floor that promotes big waves, very much to the delight of most surfers visiting Costa Rica.

The most common route to take when going from San José down to Jacó is to drive via Alajuela, continue to Atenas and further down the dark green slopes of the west side of Costa Rica until reaching San Mateo. Continue from there to Orotina and take highway 34 straight down to Jacó.

Also make sure to peek through the car windows when passing el rio tarcoles (tarcoles river) where you can see the natural habitat of the enormous crocodiles of the Tarcoles River and the mangroves.

The Beach ----- The playa is a bit over 3km in length from one end to the other. It makes a nice walk and if your legs give up on you, the local taxis will be more than happy to help you out. You can also rent cars and bikes.

For reading, keep your eyes open and look for Jacó News, a monthly English language publication.

The surf is best in the rainy season from May to November, but depending on what you crave in size of waves; Jacó really can offer an all year surfing experience.

Sights of Jacó ----- Jacó is really the kind of place where doers go. Not to much to see locally. Things you can do are rent kayaks, go deep sea fishing or take a sunset cruise. Horse riding is also very popular and most hotels can arrange that for you.

The latest craze to emerge in Jaco is paragliding and you can even go with a boat-plane to private beaches.

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Places to go when in Jacó ----- You can go with local tours to Carara National Park, La Catarata (waterfalls) and Tarcoles crocodile tours. You should also plan for a visit to playa Hermosa south of Jacó where you can take the canopy tour.

Some places to sleep in Jacó are, Jacó Fiesta, Club del Mar, Copacabana, Best Western Jacó Beach Resort and Apartotel Gaviotas.

Eating ----- As Jacó is a quite big beach and a lot of tourism, you'll find a lot of places serving food. Visit Bananas, Chatty Cathy's, Emily's to the north. La Fragata with pasta and fish. La Hacienda with mid priced snacks and La Ostra with fish as a specialty.

Bars & Nightclubs ----- They come and go on almost a day to day basis. Two of the best are Central and Los Tucanes.

Shopping as what you expect on a tourist beach and if you run out of money, then visit Banco Nacional in the centre of town.

Finally, a warning ----- Jacó has a bit too strong surf to really be a good place for small kids. Big waves, rip tides and under currents can be dangerous for someone young or unaccustomed to the sea.

And as always, when dealing the sea, be careful. The tide in Costa Rica changes the sea level many meters and can pull anyone out into the open sea.

Steven always spends his vacations in Costa Rica. His favourite places are the beaches. Visit

<http://www.beaches-in-costa-rica.com/>

for more info.

Costa Rican Beach Jaco

By Kenth Nasstrom

Beaches in Costa Rica, like jaco, may well be one of the most important assets in the eyes of visitors. The beaches come in all sizes, shapes and types.

One of the most known beaches is called Jaco.

Jaco is one of the first beaches to become a real tourist magnet. It is also one of the closest beaches

Jaco Beach

to San Jose.

The beach itself is a three km long beach with nice sand and the water is inviting. However, as always when swimming in the sea, check out current riptides as well as keep an eye on the tide.

Jaco has rapidly become one of the selected party beaches in Costa Rica and the long beach has a multitude of hotels, cabins and rooms for rent.

When visiting the beaches,

- Ask around for information about riptides, before you find them yourself.
- Also, check the time schedule for the local tide. The change in sea level is great and you can be pulled out to sea.
- Remember that the bottom end places to stay are cheap for a reason. Never leave valuable things behind.
- Mid to high end hotels can be of good quality, but check for ceiling fans or ac as well as warm or cold water.
- Remember that the way of cooking will not be the same as in a good restaurant and you may feel the urge to test many local delicatessens when on the beach. This may come as a surprise to your stomach!
- Get bottled water on your way to Jaco. To make sure you will not stand there with the salt from the sea in your mouth, and no place, where you can find something to drink.

You can travel to and from beaches like Jaco in many ways. Rental car, bus and even by air in some cases. Smaller local airlines fly between the airports in Costa Rica daily and can take you from San Jose to Liberia or some other places. Inquire locally the get the correct schedules and prices.

Kent Nasstrom lived in Costa Rica in the 80's and Costa Rica is like a home for him. Visit

<http://www.costa-rican-information.com/costa-rica-beaches.html>

for more information about beaches in

costa rica.

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