

Costa Rica and Amazon

By Justin Stoll, client
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We stayed at the Palma Real on our first and last night. Spent two days rafting on the Pacuare River. The guide was great, the river pristine and Pacuare Lodge was breathtaking (top notch chef also). I would highly recommend this place. At the end of the rafting trip we were met by our two guides and transferred to Volcano Lodge (another excellent resort). From there we visited Tabacon Hot Springs, horseback riding, hiking and the zipline canopy tour. Everything exceeded our expectations and we had the time of our lives. The two guides we had are probably the best two guides on the planet.

Leaving Costa Rica we flew down to Lima, Peru for one night. We flew to Iquitos the next day. Iquitos is a really neat city and again..we had the time of our lives. Next day we boarded the M/V Arca for our trip upriver. It was a really neat cruise with an exceptional crew. The four-night cruise with all of the side trips was an adventure we will never forget. It's not a first-class cruise, but none of us wanted that to begin with. It had just the right flavor for traveling on the Amazon and all of the meals were very good. Everything that was listed in our itinerary was carried out..and then some. Disembarking in



Rafting, photo courtesy of Justin Stoll

Yurimaguas, we had to wait a couple of hours for our transportation to Tarapoto. This trip took us over seven hours and was really a tough grind in the van they provided. We stayed at the Puerto Palmeras Resort which was one of the best resorts (if not the best) I had ever stayed in. We hung out at the resort all the next day.

The following day we started our journey in two land Rovers. Arrived in Chachapoyas and the Hotel Monsante. Nothing fancy, but it was the perfect place to stay for a visit in an Andean town. They don't get a lot of tourists and we got a lot of stares as we walked around...however..the people were really nice once we started talking to them (in our best Spanish). Leaving Chachapoyas, we had another long drive to the Fortress of Kuelap. This drive is not for the faint of heart. Tough ride up and down, but well worth the trip. The scenery going up to the Fortress was probably the most spectacular I have ever seen. From there, we finished off our trip over the Andes where we ended in Chiclayo. The Gran Chiclayo Hotel was another really nice place in the heart of town with great food. Flew to Lima the next day, then home the following day. Overall rating for the entire trip was A+