

## **From San Jose to Monteverde**

**Total Driving Time:** 3-4 hours, depending on traffic.

**Type of Vehicle:** Best done in a 4x4 vehicle or a vehicle that is high off the ground. You will want plenty of clearance to navigate the gravel roads.

**Recommended time to drive:** Early Morning, if at all possible try to avoid doing this drive on a Friday afternoon, it might take you an hour or more just to get out of San Jose.

**Fuel:** You can refuel at the Rancho Grande gas station when you turn off of Highway 1 and you can also refuel once you are in Monteverde.

**Recommended Stop en Route:** Once you hit Highway 1, you will come upon El Caballo Blanco on the right hand side of the road, it has a big statue of a white horse at the entrance. This is a great place to grab a bite to eat, use the restrooms and stretch your legs. As with all stops in Costa Rica, DO NOT leave your vehicle unattended. Take turns using the facilities and never leave your vehicle alone. Put all of your belongings in the trunk and out of sight. They are routinely broken into at road side restaurants.

**Driving Recommendations:** Once you leave Highway 1 and are on the last leg of this drive, heading to Monteverde, you will encounter narrow, winding gravel roads that have cliffs on the right hand side. It's important to anticipate that there will be fast moving vehicles and large trucks coming down the mountain. You will want to be especially vigilant on the curves and stay as far right as is safe.

### **Driving Instructions:**

1. Leave San Jose on Highway 27 heading towards Caldera, Puntarenas. You will pass through four toll booths on the road and will need to have your change ready to pay.

- First Toll, Escazu ¢300
- Second Toll, Guacima ¢340
- Third Toll, Atenas ¢610
- Fourth Toll, Pozon ¢460

After going through the last toll booth, you will be approximately 15 minutes from Caldera. You'll know you made it because the Pacific Ocean will be before you. **Driving Time:** 1 hour

2. **Turn right**, following the road signs to Liberia, this is Highway 23, follow it until it ends, take the exit to the right under passing Highway 1 and merging onto Highway 1 which is the Pan-American Highway. The Pan-American Highway/Highway 1 is the main highway that traverses Costa Rica from north to south. **Total Driving Time to this point:** 1.15 hours, **Total Distance to this point:** 90KM

3. Once you are heading north on Highway 1, follow signs to Liberia and Peñas Blancas, which is the border with Nicaragua. Stay on the highway for 17 KMS or 30 minutes. On the way you will pass the entrance to the town of Miramar and several roadside businesses such as, Palenque Garabito and El Caballo Blanco on the right. You will come to the Rancho Grande Gas Station on the right hand side of the highway. Here you **turn right**. **Driving Time:** Approximately 30 minutes **Total Distance:** 17 KM

4. Stay on this road for approximately 2 KM until to get to the town of Sardinal, there will be a soccer field on the left. Turn left after the soccer field. **Driving Time:** 5 minutes

5. From here you will follow paved road until you reach the end of the paved road, at this juncture turn right. Note: there is a small restaurant here that will be your last opportunity to use the restrooms before arriving in Monteverde. **Driving Time:** 30 minutes **Total Distance:** 19 KM

6. When you hit paved road again you will have arrived in Monteverde. Driving Time: 1 hour, after passing World of Insects on the left, take the right fork in the road, 500 meters to the entrance of Monteverde Lodge on the right hand side. **Driving Time:** 2-3 minutes. **Total Distance:** 37 KM

### **Total Distance San Jose - Monteverde: 144KM**

If at any point you are doubtful about being on the right path, you can stop and ask the people on the road, they are friendly and will point you in the right direction. As in any country in the world, it's not a good idea to pick up hitch hikers.

Keep in mind that the roads are not in good condition and distances that you might think will take you 30 minutes judging by distance on a map may in fact take you a couple of hours. Normally we judge routes by time to get there rather than distance.