

Pura Vida  
Travel guide

BIKINI  
adventures

# SANTA TERESA, COSTA RICA



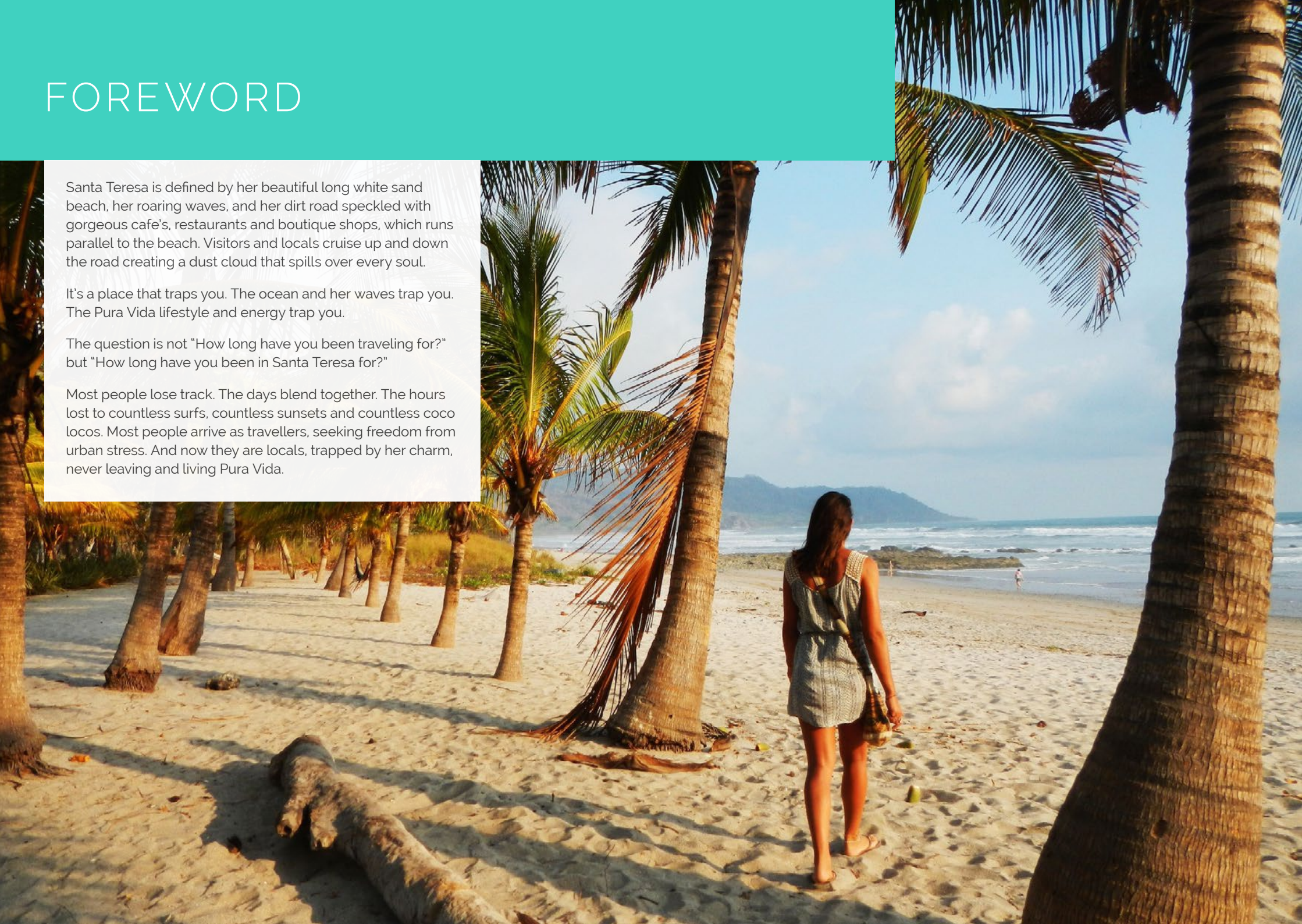
# FOREWORD

Santa Teresa is defined by her beautiful long white sand beach, her roaring waves, and her dirt road speckled with gorgeous cafe's, restaurants and boutique shops, which runs parallel to the beach. Visitors and locals cruise up and down the road creating a dust cloud that spills over every soul.

It's a place that traps you. The ocean and her waves trap you. The Pura Vida lifestyle and energy trap you.

The question is not "How long have you been traveling for?" but "How long have you been in Santa Teresa for?"

Most people lose track. The days blend together. The hours lost to countless surfs, countless sunsets and countless coco locos. Most people arrive as travellers, seeking freedom from urban stress. And now they are locals, trapped by her charm, never leaving and living Pura Vida.



# GETTING THERE

Santa Teresa is located in the Mal Pais area on the Nicoya Peninsula. There are many options to get there including direct bus, public bus and hiring a car.



## DIRECT BUS:

The Direct Bus service from San Jose is a good and convenient option. It leaves from the Atlántico Norte (also called San Carlos) Calle 12 Av. 7 - 9 in downtown San Jose twice a day (6 AM and 2 PM). The bus is comfortable, air-conditioned, and fast. The bus will board the ferry at Puntarenas. The 65 minute ferry ride across the Gulf of Nicoya is a scenic and relaxing trip with great views of the peninsula. The ferry at 5:00 p.m. will reward you with a beautiful sunset across the Gulf of Nicoya.

## PUBLIC BUS:

The public bus from San José to Puntarenas, which departs every 40 mins from the bus terminal at Avd 12, Calle 16. Once in Puntarenas

take the Ferry to Paquera. In Paquera continue by bus to Cobano, and on to Montezuma, Santa Teresa or Malpais. The last bus from Paquera is at 6:30pm for the 5pm ferry from Puntarenas.

## CAR:

You can hire a car in San José. From there, drive on the Interamericana to Puntarenas (120 km) where you take the ferry to Paquera or Naranjo.

The Nicoya Peninsula is notorious for its horrendous roads. Few parts are paved and potholes abound. During rainy season, roads sometimes transform into giant mud swamps, while in dry season you jolt in a collective dust bowl over rutted dirt roads. A solid four-wheel-drive is useful, though not necessary for most of

the tourist areas. There aren't many gas stations on the Nicoya Peninsula. On the southern peninsula there is one gas station in Paquera, two more in Cobano and another one near Santa Teresa.

On the northern Nicoya Peninsula, gas stations are a bit more common, but there are none on the road from Nosara to Tamarindo and from Samara to Santa Teresa. In Tamarindo the closest gas station is in Huacas, 12 km north of Tamarindo. If you're desperate, ask locals if someone sells gasoline from a barrel.

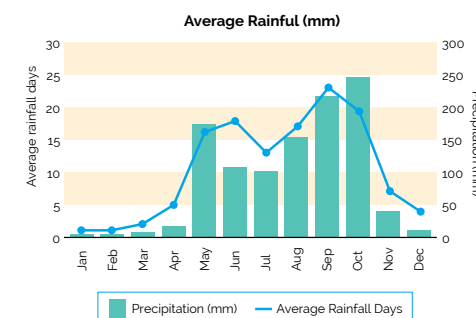
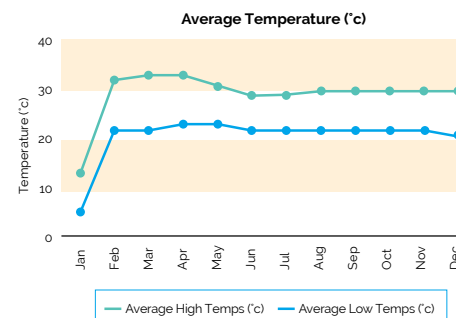
Patience while driving is a virtue. Car accidents are frequent due to bad road conditions and unexpected hazards. Avoid driving at night.

# WEATHER

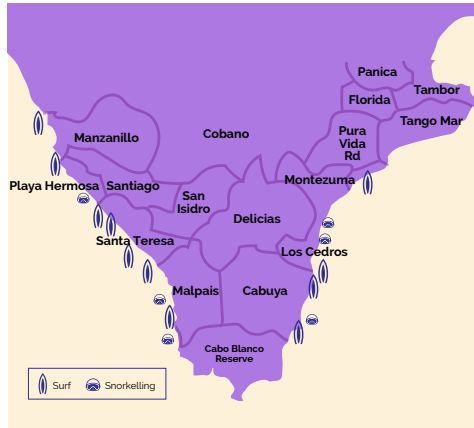
Costa Rica is beautiful at all times of the year but when you are planning your next trip, you should consider the two very different seasons in Costa Rica and what type of weather you would like to experience on your adventure.

By far the most popular time to travel to Costa Rica is from the beginning of December until the end of April. This is considered the high season as thousands of snowbirds from the Northern Hemisphere descend on the beautiful beaches of Santa Teresa. In May, the rains come back and will last until the end of November. If you like warm weather but you don't like it scorching hot, this is a good time to travel.

MONTH	SEASON	SURF
December January February	A popular time to travel; not a hint of rain nor a cloud in the sky, months are relatively warm with temperatures between 22 and 32.	<b>Beginners</b> The waves tend to be waist to head high so it is a great time to learn to surf or to improve your surfing skills.
March April	As the dry season wears into March and April, the tropical coast of Costa Rica becomes extremely hot and dry making these the two hottest months the country experiences with temperatures getting up to 33 degrees.	<b>Intermediate</b> The waves are getting bigger heading into the wet season but are not as big as the middle of the year so this is a great time for intermediate surfers.
May	May can be fairly rainy but for the most part, the rains come at night. The days are overcast with still some sunny days in between. The jungle is lush and full of life as the rain brings renewed growth to the area.	<b>Advanced</b> The waves are bigger throughout the rainy season making it ideal for more experienced surfers. There are less crowds, however if the waves in Santa Teresa get too big for beginners, there are plenty of point breaks around the peninsula with longer, smaller and waves that are more fun and less intimidating.
June July August	Tends to be less rain but the days are quite overcast, which can be pleasant as it is not so hot with max temperatures reaching 29 degrees.	
September October	Two most rainiest months so expect to need a rain jacket if you are coming at this time of year.	
November	Rainfall drastically eases off but temperatures remain between 22 and 30 degrees.	



# ADVENTURES



## WATERFALL SEARCHING

Search for hidden falls and jump off with the locals.

From Santa Teresa, you can hire an ATV and ride through the dirt roads of the Nicoya Peninsula to Montezuma. The laid back bohemian beach town of Montezuma is charming in itself, offering an abundance of cafes, boutique shops and markets. But don't stop there. Travel on to Montezuma Falls, park your ATV and walk into the jungle to search for the falls. Once you arrive, there are a number of pools to explore. If you're unsure, the locals will help you.



## SURFING

Santa Teresa offers a wide range of waves for all abilities.

Consistent warm year round swell makes this area a desirable surfing destination. There are miles of white sand beach breaks and a few pointbreaks as well. The map above highlights the number of surf destinations around the area.

There are a variety of surf shops along Santa Teresa which rent good quality boards. We love Kina Surf Shop. There are also great surf instructors for beginners in town who will provide boards.

There are also a number of surf camps in Santa Teresa.



## SPORT FISHING

A great chance to catch the biggest fish of your life.

Enjoy a half or full day fishing trips on a Panga fishing boat with experienced local fisherman. The coastline is abundant with Mahi, Yellowfin Tuna, Rooster, Snapper, Wahoo, Grouper, Snook, and more. You're almost guaranteed to come home with something. The fishing is world class and several of the fish caught in Costa Rica waters have broken world records.

## AROUND TOWN

The diverse local population means there's something for everyone.

- Snorkelling
- Kitesurfing
- SUP
- Sea Kayaking - explore calm open waters, catch fish and explore steamy underwater volcanoes
- Horseback riding through untouched pristine beaches and then onto stunning hill views. Try and spot monkeys, crocodiles, birds, reptiles and much more.
- Canopy tour on the edge of Cabo Blanco Nature Reserve
- Yoga and pilates classes
- Spanish lessons
- Visit a secret beach - Escape the crowds and hire an ATV or bicycle to search for some of the secret and remote little coves and beaches the peninsula has to offer.
- Farmers markets - An eclectic gathering of international characters; selling jewelry, cakes, coconuts, honey, clothing, beautiful organic produce and much more. Spend the afternoon chatting, listening to the live music and watching the waves. It is on every Saturday at 3pm, on the beach, next to Luz de Vida hotel, Playa Carmen.



# SLEEP

The hills and dust road of Santa Teresa are dotted with stylish boutique sleeps. From hostels, boutique hotels, apartments, villas and yoga retreats, there are plenty of options for each budget and type of traveller. Airbnb offer a wide range of rentals but these are our favourites.


## CASA ZEN GUESTHOUSE AND YOGA CENTRE \$


A home away from home, this boutique hostel is surrounded by a lush garden, ideally situated between the two main surf breaks of Playa Carmen and Santa Teresa. The ocean is only a few steps away and when it's time to take a break from the sunshine, you can drift off in one of their cozy hammocks. It's conveniently located across the road from the supermarket allowing you quick access to fresh water, seasonal fruit and other supplies.


Their treetop open air yoga deck will inspire the practiced yogi and beginner alike, with daily classes open to all. Their yoga retreats are ongoing and can be tailored to make your vacation everything you want it to be. Whether an invigorating morning practice, or a meditative afternoon session, their yoga classes and yoga retreats are taught by professional instructors, focusing on the Hatha Vinyasa style.

All of the tidy, spacious rooms have been designed with the budget traveler in mind, offering guests comfort, cleanliness and charm at a good price. A complimentary healthy breakfast is provided each day, and the signature chef's kitchen is open all day long if you'd like to prepare your own meals.

 Casa Zen Beach Access Rd, Costa Rica

 [zencostarica.com](http://zencostarica.com)


 [info@zencostarica.com](mailto:info@zencostarica.com)

 +506 2640 0523

## SURF VISTA VILLAS \$\$

Four vacation suites blessed with panoramic views of Santa Teresa's world class beaches. Located on a small private hilltop, the only neighbour is the diverse jungle and wildlife. Conveniently located just outside the hustle and bustle of town, it is still close enough to enjoy the wide variety of restaurants and shops below.

Each suite contains a fully equipped kitchen, air conditioning, large bathroom with hot water and an ocean view patio with hammocks.

 150 Meters North of Super la Hacienda in Santa Teresa

 [surfvistavillas.com](http://surfvistavillas.com)

 [surfvistavillas@gmail.com](mailto:surfvistavillas@gmail.com)

 +506 2640 0617

# EAT | DRINK | SHOP

## BRISAS DEL MAR

\$\$

Perched atop a hill, Brisas del Mar offers spectacular views, making it the perfect place to admire the beautiful sunset as you enjoy your delicious meal. The restaurant has a mix of local and international cuisines for travellers using fresh food products and ingredients.

📍 1.5 Miles North of Crossroads, Santa Teresa, Costa Rica

🌐 [buenosairesmalpais.com](http://buenosairesmalpais.com)  
✉ [bairemalpais@yahoo.com](mailto:bairemalpais@yahoo.com)  
☎ +506 2640 0941

Open: 5-10pm Tues-Sun

## ZULA

\$

Santa Teresa actually has a large Israeli presence and at Zula, serving traditional Israeli and Costa Rican food, you cannot miss the amazing hummus plates, pita sandwiches and Israeli plates. Pair with a smoothie - they have the best in town. Our personal favourite is banana and pineapple.

📍 1 km North from Crossroads, Santa Teresa, Costa Rica.

🌐 [zulainn.com](http://zulainn.com)  
✉ [zulainn@gmail.com](mailto:zulainn@gmail.com)  
☎ +506 2640 0940

Open: Sun-Fri

## ZWART CAFE

\$

More than just a delicious and healthy cafe, this shabby-chic all white haven is filled with eclectic bright surf-inspired artworks from local artist Margriet. If you're lucky enough, you can experience the great pura vida energy Margriet exudes as she works alongside the cafe in her open air studio. She's a beautiful mix of surfer and artist living the dream.

📍 50 metres north of Pizza Tomate, Santa Teresa, Costa Rica

☎ +506 2640 0011

## KINA SURF SHOP

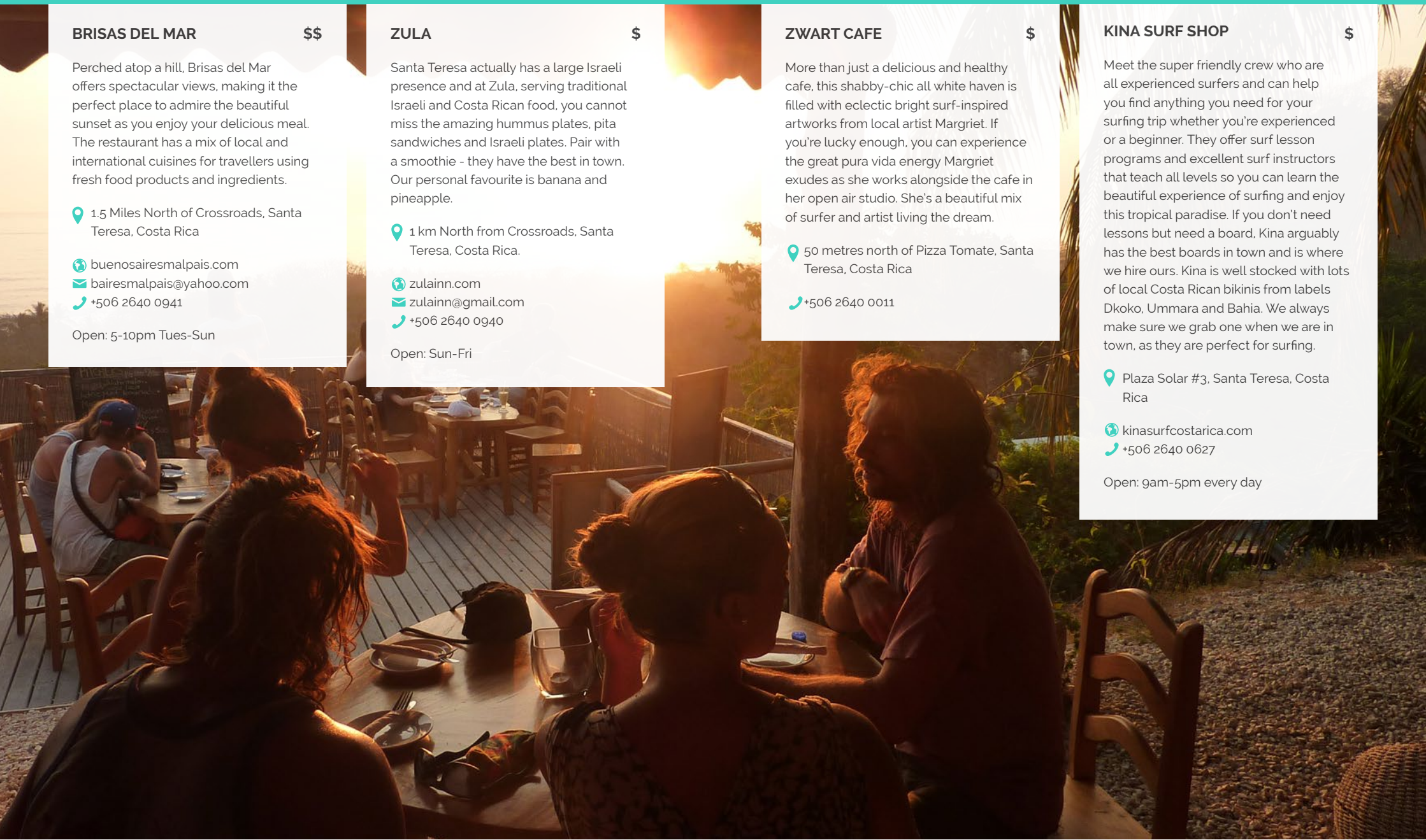
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Meet the super friendly crew who are all experienced surfers and can help you find anything you need for your surfing trip whether you're experienced or a beginner. They offer surf lesson programs and excellent surf instructors that teach all levels so you can learn the beautiful experience of surfing and enjoy this tropical paradise. If you don't need lessons but need a board, Kina arguably has the best boards in town and is where we hire ours. Kina is well stocked with lots of local Costa Rican bikinis from labels Dkoko, Ummara and Bahia. We always make sure we grab one when we are in town, as they are perfect for surfing.

📍 Plaza Solar #3, Santa Teresa, Costa Rica

🌐 [kinasurfcostarica.com](http://kinasurfcostarica.com)  
☎ +506 2640 0627

Open: 9am-5pm every day



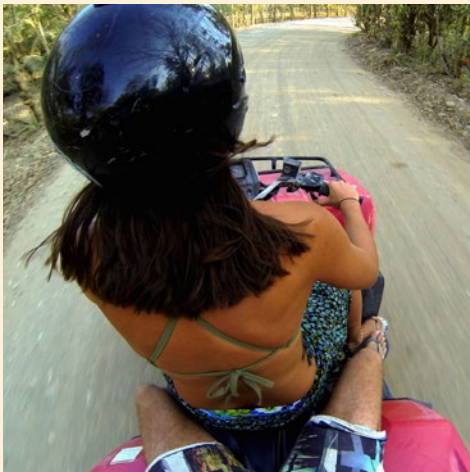
# LOCAL STYLE

Costa Rica is not only rich in biodiversity, it's rich in culture and in happiness. According to the Happy Planet Index, Costa Rica is the greenest and happiest country in the entire world, by a substantial lead.

We know that "richness" is about so much more than just wealth. It's about happiness, health, culture, and sustainability.

The common saying in Costa Rica is "Pura Vida". It means "the pure life", or "the good life". You can say it as a greeting, or as a response to "How are you?". It sums up the Costa Rican way of life - peaceful, simple, uncluttered with a deep appreciation for nature, family and friends.

So grab a surfboard, wrap a bandana around your face and mount your ATV. Cruise down the dirt road in nothing but your bikini and sarong in one direction - the waves. Your days like this will blend together. Remember, it's a place that traps you. Pura Vida.





Rara Vida Travel guide



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[bikiniadventures.com.au](http://bikiniadventures.com.au)