

Guide Towards Sustainability



FLORBLANCA

— COSTA RICA —

An aerial photograph of a dense tropical forest. In the bottom left corner, a sandy beach is visible. In the bottom right corner, a building with a red roof is partially obscured by the trees. The rest of the image is filled with a thick canopy of green trees and foliage.

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Introduction

“Sustainability could be defined as an ability or capacity of something to be maintained or to sustain itself. It’s about taking what we need to live now, without jeopardizing the potential for people in the future to meet their needs. If an activity is said to be sustainable, it should be able to continue forever.”

We are grateful and blessed for the opportunity to live in one of the most beautiful beaches of Costa Rica. We love this place, its tranquility, its surf, its biodiversity and its surroundings. The more we get to know and relate to this environment, the more we understand how deeply fragile it is and our responsibility on preserving it.

We enroll ourselves in joy in every step we make forward on this endless but exciting journey, we hope you can joy the sustainability experience as we do!



**Our Mission...To be the change
we want to see in the touristic
development of our community.**



What is CST all about?

Understanding the patterns of our behavior, the way we do business, and how our actions affect our environment have become a fundamental roll of the sustainability process. We can only be a truly sustainable hotel if we have solid data and accurate information. For this reason, we have chosen to be evaluated through the most strict certification program for Sustainable Tourism in Costa Rica, known as the CST (<http://www.turismo-sostenible.co.cr>).

The CST is a program of the Costa Rican Tourism Institute, designed to categorize and differentiate tourism sector businesses based on the degree to which its operations are approaching a sustainable model in the management of social, cultural and natural resources. Here are the categories that are evaluated in order to achieve certification with the goal of demonstrating sustainability within our operation:

Physical and biological relationship: The CST evaluates the interaction between the business and the surrounding natural environment, and seeks to implement sustainable policies and programs, like the protection of the environment, among others.

Internal processes and practices of lodging

establishments: Aspects are related to the business's internal processes and systems with respect to waste management and technologies used to conserve electric energy and water.

The client: Efforts that management takes to encourage the client to participate in the implementation of the business's sustainability policies are evaluated.

Socio-economic realm: Identification and interaction of the business with developing communities are evaluated, by looking at, for example, the degree to which tourism establishments respond to growth and development in the region, by generating employment and results that positively benefit the collective whole.

We are honored to take part in the CST certification process and we are proud of our 4-out-of-5 Leaf status within the program.

Florblanca's Sustainability Policies

Environment Policy

- Make a responsible waste management to prevent water, air and soil pollution.
- Optimize the use of water and energy, through saving and the use of alternative technologies.
- Protect, respect and promote wildlife habitat and species.
- Keep gardens and structures free of agrochemicals or chemical substances harmful to human and wildlife health. Encourage the use of organic fertilizers and the enrichment of soils in a sustainable and natural way.
- Share with visitors, neighbors, suppliers and the hotel staff, our knowledge and experiences in environmental issues.

Purchasing Policies

- Inform and create actions to encourage our suppliers to participate in programs of environmental and social improvement.
- Promote local production.
- Reduce waste production and prefer reusable, recyclable or biodegradable products.
- Prefer fresh, natural and organic products.

Social Policies

- Develop employment opportunities for the community and contribute to their professional growth through training.
- Encourage guests to participate in recreational and cultural activities that our community offers.
- Support sports, culture, education, health and security programs in our community
- Respect our traditional and existing living cultures in the environment where we are and we operate. Encourage our customers and staff to promote and respect our origins.





Resiliency

“In ecology is the capacity of an ecosystem to absorb disturbance and still retain its basic structure and viability.”

Resilience-thinking evolved from the need to manage interactions between human-constructed systems and natural ecosystems in a sustainable way. Hotel Florblanca continually strives to move towards this balance and support within our own community, knowing that these efforts can have far reaching effects beyond Santa Teresa. The following are actions we are taking to make sure we continue to move in that direction:

Environment and Wildlife

Our resort is woven into the lush rainforests, ocean beaches, and tropical jungles of Playa Santa Teresa. We respect our surroundings and have taken measures to ensure the preservation of the environment and wildlife surrounding Florblanca. Here are some of the actions we have taken in order to reach that goal:

- Plants, Trees and Animals - We have a diverse collection of plants and trees in our Florblanca gardens, including a large number of native species, thus promoting the natural habitat of many animals, including monkeys, birds, insects, amphibians, and mammals.
- All fertilizers, and plague control in gardens and villas are organic and biodegradable.
- Trees and palms in gardens are tagged for a proper taxonomic classification.
- Is prohibit feeding the animals and wildlife surround Florblanca property, It could disrupt their habits and health.
- With proper assessment, we offer our help if any injured animal is found.
- Our security guards located at the beach entrance and staff have been trained on how to protect sea turtle nesting.
- Garden lights were installed taking into consideration turtle nesting and nocturnal wildlife.
- With our list of excursions, we always encourage our guests to visit the local conservation areas in the way to create a support chain.
- A system of natural rock drains allows for rain water to run off on the property in order to avoid erosion and soil depletion

We claim the following conservation statements:

Ley 7317, Wildlife Conservation..
 Ley 7554, Organic Act of the Environment.
 Ley 6703, National Law of Archaeological Heritage
 Ley 7575, Forestry Law.
 Ley 8436, Law of Fishing and Aquaculture.



Animal Welfare and wildlife...

Each year, hundreds of millions of plants and animals are caught or harvested from the wild and then sold as food, pets, ornamental plants, leather, tourist curios, and medicine. A worryingly large proportion of this trade is illegal.. Historically, such overexploitation has caused extinctions or severely threatened species and, as human populations have expanded, demand for wildlife has only increased. At the same time...Millions of animals are used annually in the tourism industry as captives for display and entertainment, as porters and carriers, as quarry to be hunted and fished, as well as for purposes of competition and sport. In Florblanca we believe that wildlife belongs in the wild, this territory enables people to see animals in their own environment with natural behaviors. We want to contribute towards the conservation of this wildlife and – crucially – their habitats so please:

-Don't take a wildlife selfie if ... the animal is being held, hugged, or restrained, if you are baiting the animal with food or if the animal could harm you.

-The best animal encounter is a wild one. View animals in their natural habitat exhibiting natural behavior and do not initiate contact with them.

-Do not purchase souvenirs made from wild animals such as fur, ivory, shells, seahorses, teeth, or turtle shells.

-Before riding on the back of a horse, mule or donkey, match your size to that of the animal and ensure that your weight is evenly balanced when riding.

-Only visit and support animal sanctuaries and shelters involving wild animals in captivity if the objectives of the organization are in the animals' best interests.

-Speak up! If you see an animal in distress, please tell your guide or Florblanca Staff. Make a note of the date, time and location as well as the type and number of animals involved. Take photos and/or videos as proof.



Waste Management

- Florblanca has a Solid Waste Management Plan as established by the Law for Integrated Waste Management in Costa Rica (<http://www.ley8839.go.cr>).

- We actively participate and promote the Municipal Recycling Program and private waste management business, which allows us to adequately dispose of the majority of our recyclables.

- All our organic wastes are used in the production of compost, which is in turn used to enrich the soil of our gardens.

- The oil used in the kitchen is collected by a local transportation company that produces its own fuel for its vehicles (<http://www.lostransportadores.net/EcoFleet>).

- All office paper is unbleached, recycled or made with sugar cane bagasse. We avoid at maximum print documents, internal communication is made through technologies such as smart phones and e-mails.

- We are using biodegradable cleaning products and reusable containers for soap, shampoo and rinse throughout the hotel.

- We have an internal system of reuse and recovery of packaging. Our suppliers of fruit and vegetables, cleaning and grooming products participate as well.

- Biodegradable Packaging - The "takeout" packaging and straws in the restaurant are made of biodegradable materials.

Water

- Florblanca has implemented a Water Management Plan in which includes a daily consumption data, analysis and reduction strategies. On its implementation we achieve a 8% reduction in the last two years.

- UV lamps were installed to purify the water at Florblanca. With this system, all taps (including sinks and showers) have clean drinking water. Microbiological tests are made to ensure quality and safe.

- A System of Treatment Wastewater was implemented. Through biological filtration we process our wastewater making possible bring it back to nature in the most responsible and decontaminated way.

- An irrigation system allows us to reuse the treated water in our gardens. We don't use drinkable water in landscaping.

- Special devices were installed in toilets to reduce water consumption; our kitchen faucets have pressure regulators too.

- We encourage our guests and visitors to cooperate with the proper use of water through our internal campaign signage in villas and common areas.

Electricity

- All the resort offer an infrastructure that invites guests to enjoy the natural light by open and ventilated areas.

- Solatube technology was installed on many office roofs to lighten the spaces with natural light.

- In addition, we have solar heaters in Laundry Room and Kitchen.

- Bulbs and energy efficient equipment is used throughout the property.

- Eco-friendly and efficient A/C and cooler equipment have been installed at the resort and they are constantly upgraded. We also have door devices in rooms and offices in order to avoid cold air escapes.

Climate Change & Global Warming

Climate change is the long-term shift in weather patterns in a specific region or globally. Unlike global warming, which refers to just one aspect of climate change - a rise in the surface temperature of the earth's surface - climate change refers to changes in a regions overall weather patterns, including precipitation, temperatures, cloud cover, and so on.

Causes

According to the scientific experts in the field of climatology, climate change is caused by human activities that have resulted in an increased concentration of greenhouse gases in our atmosphere, including carbon dioxide, water vapor, methane, ozone, and nitrous oxide. Rising levels of carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping gases in the atmosphere have warmed the Earth and are causing wide-ranging impacts, including rising sea levels; melting snow and ice; more extreme heat events, fires and drought; and more extreme storms, rainfall and floods. Scientists project that these trends will continue and in some cases accelerate, posing significant risks to human health, our forests, agriculture, freshwater supplies, coastlines, and other natural resources that are vital to Washington state's economy, environment, and our quality of life.



National Strategy

Costa Rica has developed a national climate change strategy (ENCC) in order to achieve its goal of carbon neutral economy by 2021 (MINAET, 2009b). The ENCC comprises six strategic areas (mitigation, adaptation, measuring, capacity building, awareness raising and public education funding), with the common objective of aligning policies with climate change as part of a long-term strategy for sustainable development. For more info check <http://cambioclimaticocr.com/>

Our contribution

The program of sustainability contributes to addressing Climate Change in a comprehensive manner; the Climate Change Strategy of the hotel is focused specifically on measuring and monitoring of the Greenhouse Gases (GHG) generated by the Hotel, as well as the implementation of mitigation and compensation measures.



Sharing our Knowledge and Experience

To extend our efforts in sustainability, we take measures to involve and encourage participation in our guests, visitors and staff; we try to provide the necessary information, support and resources:

- Social Media has become an ideal tool to spread the word and talk about our experience and learning. We invite you to check the Florblanca's Blog Viva Florblanca and our website to know more about all efforts in sustainability we develop.
- There are messages and friendly reminders throughout the hotel to raise awareness about the conservation of resources such as water and electricity. We want to invite you to be part of this campaign as a responsible consumer.
- We provide our guests with bicycles to give transporting options and prevent greenhouse gas emissions.
- Our \$\$ Check Out program has provided financial support to different social and environmental organizations in the community, funds are deposited each year for specific projects. You can find detailed information later in this book.



Supporting local businesses

- Florblanca studies and reviews the characteristics of the products consumed in the hotel and the sustainability value they have. We are constantly searching for companies committed to the environment and the community in which they operate.
- Our gift shop offers a wide range of handmade articles to promote local artwork and artists.
- We strive to commercialize certified organic products, fruits, vegetables, free-range chicken, local pork, and sustainable fish in our Nectar Restaurant when available.
- In support of the 8436 Law on Fishing and Aquaculture, CR, we serve sustainably sourced seafood and do not serve endangered, vulnerable or threatened species.
- We do not sell products that are forbidden by law, or contraband materials of false origin.



The workers team... an exceptional resource!

Throughout the years Florblanca is well-known for having an exceptional teamwork, this fact makes us different from other lodges in the area. A positive atmosphere, great labor conditions and the respect given to each of our employees create the perfect symbiosis.

- Florblanca has a Human Resources Department in order to maintaining the best working and lawful conditions.
- Florblanca operates under the Costa Rican work legislation.
- Provide motivational and health campaigns for all employees increasing their living standards.
- A Training and Workshop Program is performed during the year, giving the best tools and techniques to keep the employee at the vanguard of their careers or professions.
- Staff has been benefited with different health & wellness programs in which is included dietary and nutrition workshops, fitness, and recently dental care program.

We are so grateful for the dedication and responsibility on each labor the staff members do!!
"If you learn something that changes you, you've made progress. If you learn something that changes others, you've helped change the world."



Community

- Hotel Florblanca provides at least 110 direct and indirect jobs in zone, activating as well local economy. All based on the philosophy of fair trade and respecting workers law established in the country.
- We have had the opportunity to collaborate on remodeling projects and maintenance of community buildings through the Volunteer Program we developed with our workers.
- We created an internal training program for our employees that deals with various topics as environmental, occupational, health, and specific needs of their profession. Trainings and workshops are shared with students of local secondary and other workers in town.
- We had been working hand to hand on The Blue Flag Program since 2011 providing educational campaigns at schools, beach clean ups, and recycling.

What is the \$\$ check out program?

This system consists in offering the option to our guests and visitors to add \$ 10 to their final account which will be used to generate funds. Each year these funds are being awarded to local projects and non profit organizations of Santa Teresa community. We firmly believe as company and as community members that we can generate a fair business model in which benefits of the tourist economy can be reflected in a positive way in the quality of life for people in need and for the protection of natural resources for actual and future generations. Actually funds are being awarded to Nicoya Peninsula Waterkeepers:

This organization is members of the Waterkeeper Alliance (www.waterkeeper.org) a fast growing global network of more than 200 water organizations advocating for swimmable, drinkable and fishable waters around the world. They have started to work with the community and businesses regarding water quality in the area so they can best address and mitigate pollution issues.

What they do?

- Monitor, protect and restore water quality in Santa Teresa and Malpais, so future generations will be able to enjoy them!!
- Provide free advice regarding residual water management which is one of the main sources of pollution of our coastal waters.
- Educate and raise the community's awareness on the need of understanding and improving our relationship with water.
- Advocate for our waterways making sure that polluters revise and amend their practices!
- For alternative ways of support please ask at the front desk, you can donate \$1 -\$5 - \$10 -\$25... We truly appreciate any help or support our guests can provide to help ensure the continued safety and flourishing of our community!!



Florblanca alliances...

Amigos de los Parques Nacionales is a membership program created by ProParques, Fundecor and SINAC that offers people, organizations and businesses the opportunity to demonstrate their commitment towards Costa Rica's National Parks. The program has managed to maintain trails, signage and infrastructure at different stations throughout the country. In addition to the extended collaboration on projects such as “A summer without wildfire” among others.

The Code of Conduct in this country is a project of the tourist industry that is supported by The Paniamor Foundation together with the Costa Rican Tour Operators Association (ACOT), The Costa Rican Professionals in Tourism Association (ACOPROT) and World Vision Costa Rica funded by Fundecooperación. In Costa Rica, there is a great concern, so the tourist industry has taken an energetic position of zero tolerance in order to protect children and adolescents from commercial sexual exploitation. In this manner, they have united to promote the incorporation of the Code of Conduct in tourist companies to confront this problem.

Costa Rica's Blue Flag Ecological Program (Bandera Azul Ecológica) helps protect both the environmental and social landscapes of Costa Rica. The program began in 1996 as an incentive for coastal communities to keep their beaches clean. Since then, it's grown to encompass a wide variety of destinations and categories. The Blue Flag program is a driving force behind the healthy communities and vibrant ecosystems that make up Costa Rica.

Nicoya Peninsula Waterkeeper is a non-government organization, whose mission is to monitor, protect and restore water quality in the coastal watersheds and marine ecosystems between the Cabo Blanco Absolute Nature Reserve and the Caletas-Ario National Wildlife Refuge through research, field work, education and advocacy. Water is at the core of today's most pressing issues—security and scarcity, energy and climate change, the cause and spread of infectious disease. Communities are looking for ways to protect our right to clean water, as the quality and quantity of water resources decline around the world.





Costa Rica Natural History

The geological and natural history of Costa Rica is very recent, when compared with the rest of the continent. Costa Rica emerged from the deep ocean and about 200 million years ago, long after life was already on the planet, in fact, Cabo Blanco was one of the first rock formations to appear.

Prior to this, populations of flora and fauna of North and South America grew independently and was the formation of Costa Rica, who served as a biological bridge for the species found. Our country is a mixture of species that arrived from North America, as the coyote and white tailed deer and species that arrived from South America as the marsupials, sloths and armadillos.

Costa Rica accounts for 4% of global biodiversity, impressive figure considering that only represents 0.03% of the total land area of the planet, with its 51,100 km², because

this country has made efforts to have 25% of its territory under some category of protection.

Only in Cabo Blanco Reserve, there is 249 species of plants identified and 55 species of mammals, 31 of them are bats, species essential for the pollination of many plants and seed dispersers, this area is rich in diversity of birds, insects, fungi, mollusks, etc.

One of the unusual events in the area, are the Tajalín crabs, *Crassomys*, their bodies are black, with orange legs and their purple claws. The Tajalín indicates the arrival of the rainy season, when they come from the mountains in large groups, looking for the beach to reproduce, and then return to the mountain. It is a very impressive natural phenomenon, a feast for all carnivorous animals, after an intense dry season.

The rich biodiversity of Costa Rica is favored in the Nicoya Peninsula, as their forests are located in a life zone categorized as Seasonal Tropical

Wet Forest, because they are the transition between the Dry Forest and Rain Forest, allowing species from both types of ecosystems.

This is a very important area to protect, as of the total Dry Forest and its transition in Latin America there's only 1% left. Therefore, Florblanca has understood the importance of their role, as part of a biological corridor between Cabo Blanco Nature Reserve and other protected areas such as the Reserve Ario-Caletas.

The design of our gardens and the reforestation we have been doing, allows different species such as howler monkeys, iguanas, garrobos, many birds, lizards, frogs, insects, butterflies and many other species find refuge in our hotel, where every day we learn more about how to live in harmony with nature.



History of the area

The Nicoya Peninsula, was part of a large indigenous territory called La Gran Nicoya, which included the Nicoya Peninsula, Guanacaste, part of the territory of Nicaragua and spread to the Gulf Fonseca in Honduras. In pre-Columbian times, indigenous groups occupying the Nicoya Peninsula and the eastern Gulf of Nicoya, had come to this region several centuries before the arrival of the Spanish and had been replaced or had mixed with local indigenous groups.

In the XVI, the whole territory of the country was occupied by various groups of indigenous people. They were organized into what is known as chiefdoms: commanding the other chiefs or local chiefs, who were heads of several villages.

Culturally and linguistically differ among themselves, although some had many affinities. Overall, the researchers divided into three main areas the country, in order to establish the main differences between these indigenous groups.

The northwestern region is called Chorotega and was habited by indigenous groups whose culture was similar to other peoples living in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala and Mexico. They were called Mesoamerican peoples who spoke a language related to the main languages of Mesoamerica: the Nahuatl.

The conquest. The end of pre-Columbian age in the Greater Nicoya suddenly arrived with the Spanish conquest. In 1522 started the shipments of Gil Gonzalez Davila, followed by a number of another conquerors and mercenaries.

This confluence of expeditions with the same objectives (the control and jurisdiction over the new territories), led to infighting among the conquerors. Political instability impacted on the indigenous population

tragically, making this area in a marginal neighborhood. The regulations of the Crown and the power of the church takes long to arrive, leaving the territory in the hands of conquerors

If the infighting among the conquerors were disastrous for the indigenous, the conquest itself was no less. The Gran Nicoya were no centralized and absolutist state like in Mexico or Peru, but the territory was divided into small chiefdoms that the Spanish had to be reduced one by one. It was a very long and exhausting conquest , if we add the fact that were not found in the expected wealth (gold, pearls, etc.), we anticipate that the attitude of the conquerors against the indigenous was terrible ...

The conquerors tried to get the wealth that they couldn't found exploiting and enslaving the native population.

The colonial economy was based on the appropriation of land by the Spanish and the introduction of horses and cattle ranching, related to trade of mules and tallow to Panama.

1935 to 1955 From the thirties were the expansion of the agricultural frontier, a new front of colonization started in the south of the Nicoya Peninsula. People who came to this region migrated primarily in the Central Valley: Alajuela, Atenas, Palmares, San Ramon and Esparza. They characterized by hair and lighter skin than the locals. This group were called "the white" or "Cartagos"

With the advent of "The Cartagos" , production practices intensified, generating productivity as well as the land for farming. They were the group that speeded up farming. Networks were stronger trading with Puntarenas accordingly improving the land routes. Social relations were transformed, was generalized the payment of labors.. The practice of hand to hand began to disappear. Fences were installed between farms, eliminating the feeling of open mountain areas.

The cartago`s captured the lands, because were vacant, through purchase or land rush of the locals. At this time

wood extraction for marketing was the main business. Gradually population were disappearing and losing its identity, becoming lands converted in forest or plantations for timber and livestock.

According to Mr. Miguel Jiménez, a local of Hermosa Beach, about 70 years ago came the first families from Cóbano, Tambor, Río Negro and Bajos de Ario, looking for land to Santa Teresa and Playa Hermosa. A few crossed the gulf by boat from Puntarenas, and others ventured on foot through the dense forests which divided the people of Nicoya, Boards, Santa Cruz, Guanacaste and other peoples of the rest of the Peninsula of Nicoya. Small families began to establish on the area and under very difficult conditions they start to appropriate the land, cut down forests to develop agriculture and planted pastures for livestock. The government then ordered and divided the land, helping to legalize this new community. However, life was very complicated, no jobs, no electricity, no access roads. Occasionally, a boat came to sell to people what they could not produce themselves. It was not long, for the first foreigners arrived in the area and stay in love with this place realizing the tourism potential it had. Just 15 years ago and hardly the first tourism projects, arriving Florblanca about 12 years ago. The growth of the area has been great over the past 6 years, which forces us to think what kind of development we want for our area, and the great responsibility we have, especially the tourism sector to maintain an operation which is sustainable and that we can enjoy and create benefits over many years.

Tourism has proven to be a great financial support for our community, but we must be aware of developing responsibly towards the environment, community, visitors and future generations.

Costa Rica Natural Reserves and Parks

In 1970, locals and government officials took action against the diminishing natural beauty of Costa Rica and turned the country into one of the most prosperous ecotourism industries in the world. The community gathered to recognize the country's natural beauty and save flora and fauna throughout 186 areas that are protected by the National Conservation Areas System (SINAC). SINAC now protects 32 national parks, 51 wildlife refuges, 13 forest reserves and 8 biological reserves. As one of the most bio-diverse countries in the

world, Costa Rica's national parks and protected areas are some of the most interesting and beautiful places to visit. Which ones are find on the area?

Cabo Blanco Strict Natural Reserve. Cabo Blanco Strict Nature Reserve was created in 1963 by a Scandinavian couple, Olof Wessberg and Karen Morgenson. This is the first major conservation project in Costa Rica, created to protect the deforestation that was taking place along the Nicoya Peninsula in the 1950's. This nature reserve covers a total land area of 1272 hectares as well as safeguards over 1700 hectares of the surrounding ocean. Eleven kilometers south of Montezuma and nearby the popular beaches of Mal Pais, Santa Teresa and Playa Tambor, the Cabo Blanco Absolute Nature Reserve is a must visit place for any avid nature lover.

Curu National Wildlife Refuge. The land on the Nicoya Peninsula was initially purchased by a Costa Rican named Federico Schutt de la Croix in 1933. He paid just 12,000 Costa Rican colones, which is about \$24 in modern currency. After purchasing the land from the Pacific Lumber Company, de la Croix decided to completely halt the cutting down of trees and began to grow food and graze cattle in a more environmentally-friendly way. The area officially became known as the Curu Wildlife Refuge in 1983. Today, the refuge is privately owned, extremely-well cared for and even more exclusive than many of the national parks in the country. **Caletas-Ario Wild Life Refuge** Inscribed relatively recently (in 2006), the Caletas Ario wildlife Refuge (CANWR) has 313 hectares (773 acres) of protected land, plus protected marine reserves that extend 12 miles out to sea, encompassing 19,846 Hectares! Within this zone, highly destructive fishing practices are prohibited. It includes 7km of beaches as well, including the impressive Río Bongo river delta and mangroves, filled with crocodiles and various other species. It includes a 7km section of the Playa Caletas beaches, which in total is 12 km.

The Caletas Ario National Wildlife Refuge. Is part of a very large farm, and was inscribed to become a permanently protected piece of land by the Grew family, who moved here several decades ago from Canada. Much of the family still lives in the area. The wildlife refuge is supported by CIRENAS (Centro de Investigación de Recursos Naturales y Sociales).

Terms and conditions when visiting Biological Reserves

All park and reserves visitors have to respect the following regulations:

- Enter the park only by the main entrance.
- Pay for the admission fee
- Walk on the paths and trails already established only.
- Respect all the terms established on the signs.
- Follow the security regulations established, both written as well as the ones the park rangers and out-standing volunteers give orally.
- Deposit the garbage in the garbage-bins.
- Do not use soap and shampoo in the showers.

Besides the regulations established in other legal statements, it is prohibited for visitors to:

- Cause damages to the infrastructure, the fauna, flora and other resources of the area
- Carry and use firearms and other implements of hunting or fishing.
- Enter with pets or domestic animals.
- Feed the wild animals.
- Provoke scandals, lack of morality or to consume liquor or drugs.
- Throw garbage or any pollutant substance.
- Smoke out of the areas established for such a purpose.
- Visit the Park out of the established schedule.

How can you contribute on sustainability efforts?

At Florblanca, we encourage all of our guests to participate in our sustainability program. Here are a few suggestions of how you can be a big part of our sustainable efforts:

- Turn off your lights and AC when you leave your villa or when you are not using them. If using the AC, please be sure to close the room door.
- Be conscious of water usage. Water is a precious resource, and we are committed to water conservation. There is a note by your bed explaining in further detail a program with washing your sheets and towels that saves a large amount of water. In addition, please know our water is 100% drinkable.
- Each villa is equipped with recycling bins. There are also recycling bins at the entrance of the beach and common areas, please separate your waste.
- We will appreciate if you please avoid smoking inside the rooms and, for consideration to others please respect the non smoking areas in the restaurant.
- Consider the use of bicycles to visit the village. It is a way to reduce carbon emissions, and is also a way to stimulate in your physical well being.
- Santa Teresa Beach is very special to all of us here at Florblanca. We kindly ask you to not take shells, sand dollars, or any other marine/wildlife from the beach.
- Help us support sustainable programs in the community, ask the Concierge about it, and if you feel like donating to the program, let us know.
- Understand that we are surrounded by nature and wildlife, crabs, ants, birds or really amazing insects may get close to your room, there is an amazing natural history behind each of them, nonetheless we suggest that you use skin cream repellents for mosquitoes.
- Our sustainability program is constantly evolving, and we always are looking for new ideas. We want to hear your suggestions. Please feel free to tell us or write them on the comment card upon your check out.

Be a responsible traveler!

- Plan your route to minimize carbon emissions, choose environmentally friendly airlines.
- Florblanca invites you to offset carbon emissions caused by your international flights to Costa Rica. Visit: www.fonafifo.com.
- Look for sustainable hotels certified by Costa Rica's Ministry of Tourism (CST). For more information visit www.turismosostenible.co.cr.
- Support Costa Rica's impressive national park system by organizing a visit or tour.
- Buy local production, support local hotels and tour operators.
- Be mindful of the amount of water and energy that you use while on vacation. Take advantage of linen and towel reuse programs.
- When visiting natural areas, make sure not to leave trash behind. Participate in recycling programs whenever possible.
- Keep the habits and health of wildlife. Please don't feed the animals.
- Practice your Spanish! It is a great way to get in touch with local cultures and customs. Read up on local cultures and learn a few words of the local language.
- Remove all excess packaging. Waste disposal is difficult in remote places and developing countries.
- Ask your tour operator or hotel where you're staying, whether there are local conservations or social projects that you could visit on your trip and how you could help support them.
- Do not buy products made from endangered species, hard woods or ancient artifacts.
- Respect and participate in local cultures, traditions and holy places.
- When driving, stick to marked paths and roads. Be aware when driving at night that animals can scare easily from headlights and loud noises at and may be prone to leaping onto the road.
- Eat where the locals do, not only will this give you a better insight to the cuisine of the area you're visiting, but it will also help to support the local economy.
- Use reusable containers instead of plastic bottled water.

Acknowledgements

It is very exciting to see how technology and human creativity finds new solutions and ideas that guide us and bring us closer to the sustainability model in these times of serious environmental challenges. This has in some way facilitated the handling in certain risk situations, in some others we have failed... much of the balance on earth is in our hands, in the way we act, consume and in the way we relate to all living beings on this planet. We must act and adopt a responsible lifestyle regarding with the environment!

We want to invite you to live this experience of sustainability in which you can enjoy nature and this beautiful place in a conscious and responsible way. We do not have all the answers and our learning has not finished yet, but we want to share what we have learned and thus achieve positive collective changes in the way we live with our planet. Let's be the change we need to see in the world!

Thank you for choosing us as your travel destination and sharing your time with us. Sincerely,

Sustainability
Hotel Florblanca