



Thank you for your interest in our Spanish program in beautiful Costa Rica. I am happy to give you more information about our programs, and if you would like to call or Whats App I am in the office Monday to Friday and will be more than happy to talk to you and answer any questions. Meanwhile, here is some general information to get started!

SPANISH CLASSES:

Our most popular Spanish program is our adult immersion group classes which we offer year-round (except attached school closure dates) at both of our top locations. They are offered for all ages and all levels, from complete beginner up to almost native speaker.

The adult group class program consists of 20 hours of Spanish instruction per week (which is 4 hours per day from Monday to Friday), in small groups of 2-6 students. Classes are designed to cover one level per week and include a textbook for each class/level.

If there is only one student in a level/group, the student will receive private lessons in that week (number of hours pro-rated according to group class rate paid). This allows us to offer every level in every week.

We also offer private Spanish classes (depending on the season – please check availability on private classes in advance).

OUR LOCATIONS:

We are a Spanish Immersion School with two unique campuses; one right on the beach in beautiful Playa Sámara on the Northern Pacific Coast and the other campus right in the historic city of Heredia – Costa Rica's Central Valley – close to the capital of San José. You can decide to study at either one, or you can also book a mix of both (full week/s at each location and switch on the weekend).

Sámara Campus:

The Sámara school is located **right on the beach**. Spanish courses are given in modern, air-conditioned classrooms, with ocean view, providing an ideal spot for learning. Teachers may take students outside to hold a class or conversation hour in the gardens or on the beach under the shade of the palm trees. Our facilities include free WiFi, tropical gardens leading straight onto the sand, student social and study areas, an open air “rancho”, fridge, hammocks, lockers and outdoor showers. Air and ocean temperatures are hot year-round! It's hard to imagine a prettier place to study Spanish (or work!), and it's ideal for combining vacation with study.

Heredia Campus:

Our colonial building is a tropical oasis on the outskirts of downtown Heredia. From the moment you walk through our door, you will be welcomed in a friendly and familiar atmosphere, with beautiful tropical gardens and courtyard study areas. No matter where you are from, at Intercultura Heredia you will feel at home. You will enjoy learning Spanish in a welcoming city environment, with very few tourists, surrounded by hills and volcanoes. Heredia's weather is breezy and pleasantly warm year-round, ideal for both learning Spanish and exploring after school.

Intercultura's central location within the city gives students easy access to shops, entertainment and transportation. From school, students are no more than a few minutes by foot from a variety of services,



including: Olympic-size swimming pool, gyms, yoga studios, bars, restaurants, basketball courts, discotheques, the National University's theatre, the post office, daycares, banks, football fields, clinics and more. At the same time, the tranquility and natural beauty of the mountains is only a few minutes away by taxi or bus. And the international airport Juan Santamaria (SJO) is only about 10 kms from Heredia.

STUDENT PROFILE:

In Sámara as in Heredia, we have a range of student ages and nationalities from 18 up to 86, our oldest student so far! Students come primarily from North America and Europe, with a few from as far away as Australia, Japan and Asia. At any one time in school there might be between 15-60 students in Heredia, or between 25-80 students in Sámara.

- ✓ January to March tends to see a rise in adult professionals and retirees, along with the younger 20s age range during winter breaks and spring breaks. Any time of year, you will find other students with similar interests and quickly make friends at school! About 90% of our students are solo travelers, and easily bond with one another in classes and activities.
- ✓ We pride ourselves on the diversity of our student body, whether it be nationality, age, religion, gender expression, ethnicity, sexual orientation or other, we welcome all our students equally and without judgement. Costa Rica is known for its avant-garde human rights and anti-discrimination laws. We have a strong tradition of peace (no standing army!) and inclusivity, and we are a country where diversity is respected and celebrated.
- ✓ From June to August, in addition to our solo traveler students, we receive several high school students for our under 18 Spanish immersion programs, and quite a few families, where kids and parents study in different programs but on the same schedule.
- ✓ From September to December (our green season – some afternoon showers but otherwise sunny days!) we tend to have fewer students, and therefore smaller classes with more personalized attention. The age range at this time is about 21 – 60, along with a few of the high school immersion students.

HOMESTAYS:

- A key part of our program is the homestays we offer with selected Costa Rican families. All students are encouraged to participate in this opportunity, as it provides an invaluable source of Spanish instruction, as well as a wonderful interpersonal experience. In general, homestays are regarded as the most effective way to put into practice the Spanish you learn in the classroom. Living with a family who speaks no (or only little) English, in combination with intensive study, provides a wholly integrated exposure to both the language and the culture. In this way the learning process is greatly facilitated, as is the speed with which fluency is acquired.



- **The homestay includes a private room, laundry service and standard Costa Rican breakfast and dinner with the family.**
- We like to describe the accommodations as rustic but comfortable. Even though houses are simple, all of them have all the basic comforts required, like a place to study, a fan, window screens, and a place to lock your important stuff. Some of the families may offer services like cable TV, WiFi connection or hot water, especially in Heredia where the weather is cooler. Students should take into consideration that the houses at the Beach Campus are slightly less comfortable due to aspects like more heat, humidity and sometimes also more insects, but the setting is ideal for those who enjoy nature and beach activities.
- A small percentage of the homestays offer a private bathroom; these are assigned on a first-come first-served basis.
- The price of the homestay is for the week (7 nights) and you have the option to stay from Saturday to Saturday or from Sunday to Sunday. You can also add additional nights in case of early arrival and/or late departure. Note that the maximum is 4 additional nights. In case of 5 or 6 nights of homestay we charge 1 full week.
- All homestays are within walking distance (maximum 1.5 kms, lots even less). In Samara some students rent bikes to move a bit faster. In Heredia, homestays are conveniently located in Heredia center. In both cases, walking between the school and the homestay is totally viable and what most students do.

Of course, you don't have to stay with a local family if you don't wish to do so.

OTHER AVAILABLE LODGING OPTIONS THROUGH INTERCULTURA:

Heredia private student apartments – these are conveniently located diagonally opposite Intercultura's main building. They are fully furnished and offer free Wi-Fi, kitchen equipment, cable, sheets and towels. The apartments open out to a shared roof terrace with a view of the city and the mountains, and there is shared laundry area. Our apartments are located on the second floor. We have 4 one-bedroom and 4 two-bedroom apartments, and these are mostly occupied by Spanish students, with one of two English teachers sometimes renting as well.

Sámara Student residence – perfectly located right next to the school and steps from the beach, with 8 private rooms, all equipped with a private bathroom and A/C. The residence offers (shared for all guests): Full kitchen; large, breezy social area with deck-chairs, hammocks and communal dining tables; a large, grassy, fenced-in yard; outdoor showers; secure parking. On the same premises we have also have two private, fully equipped 2-bedroom apartments with kitchen, AC, and small balcony/terrace. Finally, there is the option to book a spot in one of two shared rooms (hostel style, mixed gender) that share a bathroom and kitchen with other students (max. 5 in total). If availability allows, it is also possible to book one of those two hostel rooms privately (you would still share the kitchen and bathroom with the other room in this case).



It is important to mention that the availability of all “on-campus” lodging options is limited, and needs to be confirmed in advance.

And if you prefer to arrange your own, private accommodation (hotel, hostel, holiday rental, Airbnb etc.), you are very welcome to do so, there are many options in town.

ACTIVITIES:

In addition to the Spanish classes, we also offer FREE daily extracurricular activities such as Latin Dance class, cooking class, yoga, culture tour, Zumba, Language Exchange etc. (exact activities depend on the campus and the season). See <https://www.interculturacostarica.com/activities-tours/> for more information.

Our students also have the option to participate in our variety of day and weekend trips to different destinations throughout Costa Rica. This is a great opportunity to see more of the country within a short travel time. And if you prefer not to spend too much time on transportation close-by activities are plentiful. In Sámará we offer local excursions, such as Dolphin watching tour, Kayak tour, ziplining, horseback riding. In Heredia outings include a Coffee plantation visit, Waterfalls, San Jose city and museums, Chocolate production process, Volcano visits, and more.

ARRIVAL:

If you choose to start your program in Heredia (we recommend this if you will do both campuses), your homestay family will pick you up at no extra charge from the airport. If you are staying in apartments or in Sámará and need an airport transfer to the campus, we can organize this for you. Or, if you need any assistance/information to organize your own transfer, we are happy to give recommendations. It is a good idea to schedule your arrival for Saturday/Sunday so as to be able to start the classes on Monday.

I hope this gives you some insight into our program, and please feel free to get back to me with any further questions.

If you already have a specific idea of dates/program, you can also sign up and book a spot in our program, following this link to our online reservation form:
<https://www.interculturacostarica.com/reservation-form/>

I hope to welcome you to Costa Rica soon!
Kind regards,

Claudia

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