

Costa Rica Travel Tips

Always be alert and aware of your surroundings.

Never leave valuables in plain site in your car, even for a moment.

Costa Rica is not a violent country, but at all times be on the lookout for pickpockets or crowds of young people who may wish to relieve you of your valuables.

If someone suspicious approaches your vehicle while you are stopped at a traffic light or sign, sound the car horn.

Never carry your passport with you. Instead, make a copy of the front page AND a copy of the page that contains your entry stamp from immigration. This will be more than sufficient ID should you be stopped.

Do not pull over for flashing headlights. A police vehicle and an authorized emergency vehicle are the only ones authorized the display of flashing, rotating red or blue lights.

Just because a person can speak English (or whatever is your native language), does not mean you should trust them.

If you become lost, try to find a public place, like a service station, in order to read your map or ask for directions.

If you are told that something is wrong with your vehicle, do not stop immediately. Drive to the nearest service station (bomba) or to another well lighted public area.

If you get a flat tire immediately after picking up your rented car, be on the lookout for friendly people who wish to help you. See Car Rentals.

Keep doors locked and windows shut up when driving, and always when the vehicle is parked.

Do not keep valuables on the seat next to you or in the back seat when driving if the windows are open.

Goods and valuables should be kept in the trunk, locked glove compartment, or out of sight.

Always park in well-lit areas.

Check the interior of your vehicle and surrounding areas before getting into your vehicle.

Do not pick up hitchhikers.

If using an automatic cashier (ATM), be sure the area is well lit. Return to you car, hotel or home to count your money. If in the car, roll the windows up. I seldom use ATMs at night.

Do not leave the keys in your vehicle or your car engine running when using an automatic cashier or public telephone even for a moment.

If you suspect that you are being followed, head immediately to the nearest well lit public area and call the police.

When dining outdoors, do not leave your purse, bags, cell phone or ANY valuable on the table.

If you must carry a purse or bag, hold it in front of you close to your body. Be sure it is closed.

Don't wear flashy jewelry, real or not. Dress down when walking around, especially in heavy tourist areas.

When encountering a threatening or hostile individual, do not put up any resistance. If all that person wants is your belongings so give them up. NOTHING you carry is worth your life or serious injury.

In case of emergency call 911 from any telephone. Do not expect the operator to know English.