



Costa Rica & Panama

**A Tour for
Master Gardeners
January 8-19, 2010**

NATURE

HORTICULTURE

ECOSYSTEMS

LAND ONLY PACKAGE PRICE: \$2,980 per person

Airfare is not included in package price; cost will vary depending on the departure airport and can be arranged independently or by the tour leader.

**For more information contact Mary Kroening at (573) 881-6316
or email info@hiddentreasuresbotanicaltours.com**

\$1,000 deposit per person holds your reservation. Final payment due by October 8, 2010.

Poised at the crossroads of the Americas, Costa Rica and Panama are two of the wealthiest countries in terms of natural diversity and wildlife, including many endemics found nowhere else on earth. This 12-day study program will expose you to some of this stunning array of exotic tropical plants and animals, the ecology of the rainforest and other ecological habitats, and tropical horticultural production.

Join Susan Mahr, Wisconsin MG Program Coordinator, and Mary Kroening, Hidden Treasures Botanical Tours, on a special trip as we leave the typical tourist route to visit some of the most exclusive areas of these stunningly beautiful countries to discover the vast array of endemic plants in the rainforest, be immersed in the cloudforest, see abundant wildlife — monkeys, butterflies, birds, frogs and more — in their natural habitat, and much more.

Your University of Wisconsin Extension host for the trip:

Susan Mahr
Wisconsin MG Program Coordinator
(608) 265-4504
semahr@wisc.edu



The Itinerary



RELAX



LEARN



Saturday, January 8

Travel to Costa Rica. Upon arrival at Juan Santamaría International Airport you will be met by your guide and transportation. For those who arrive early enough (many flights don't arrive until evening), enjoy the extensive gardens behind the hotel where you may be lucky enough to spot the blue-crowned mot mot that visit the fruit feeders or arrange your own optional excursion.

Meals included: none

Lodging: Hotel Bougainvillea (www.hb.co.cr/)

Sunday, January 9

This morning we drive to the San Gerardo de Dota region where we visit a coffee plantation to learn about this important export crop. Then we continue on into the Cerro de la Muerte — the foliage changes from the lush greens of a tropical jungle to forest characterized by massive oaks, tree ferns, poor man's umbrella (*Gunnera* spp.), and scandent bamboo (*Chusquea* sp.). Because we will be at an elevation of over 7,000 feet in the Talamanca mountains, it may be cool at night.

Meals included: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Lodging: Savegre Mountain Hotel (www.savegre.co.cr/)

Monday, January 10

We have a full day free to relax at the hotel, hike on some of the 35km of trails with our guide (and maybe see the elusive resplendent quetzals that frequent the area or some of the other 170 species of birds that are regularly seen here), and/or take an optional tour (for an additional fee), such as ziplining, horseback ride or visit to Quetzal National Park.

Meals included: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Lodging: Savegre Mountain Hotel



EXPLORE



REJUVENATE



EXPERIENCE



Tuesday, January 11

This morning we leave the Cerro de la Muerte and drive south to Wilson's Botanical Garden, part of the Las Cruces Biological Reserve, 340 acres of primary and secondary montane forest just a few miles from the Panamanian border.

Meals included: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Lodging: Wilson Botanical Garden

Wednesday, January 12

Today is a full day at Wilson's Botanical Garden, which is maintained by the OTS (Organization for Tropical Studies). The 20 acre cultivated gardens — created in 1962 by Mr. Robert Wilson — have become a facility used for research, teaching, and to help preserve numerous threatened plant species. It contains one of the most important collections of tropical and subtropical plants in Central America, with over 2,000 native species, and the second largest collection of palms in the world. There are also unusual plant families and rare and endangered plants from Costa Rica and elsewhere, especially ferns, aroids, bromeliads, gingers, heliconias, and marantas. More than 1,000 genera in 212 plant families can be seen along trails that wind around palm-covered hillsides, through agave and lily beds, under rain forest canopy, through banana and heliconia groves, or to strategic overlooks on the rolling grounds. We will tour the gardens, hike in the rainforest and enjoy the birds visiting the fruit feeders.

Meals included: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Lodging: Wilson Botanical Garden

Thursday, January 13

After an early breakfast we drive to *Parque Internacional La Amistad* (La Amistad International Park), a park equally split between Costa Rica and Panama. Covering nearly a million acres (much of it inaccessible because of the difficult terrain), it is the largest nature reserve in Central America and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Because of its strategic position in the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor and a diverse range of environments, it is a major biodiversity resource at a regional and global level. Approximately 1,000 fern species, 500 tree species and 130 different types of orchids can be found within the park borders; two thirds of all the wildlife that resides in Costa Rica can be found here, including jaguars, giant anteaters, tapirs, puma, harpy eagle, margay and ocelot.

Meals included: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Lodging: Los Quetzales Ecolodge & Spa (www.losquetzales.com/)

Friday, January 14

We have the day to explore the area surrounding the lodge, inside the primary cloud forest of Baru Volcano National Park and perched at the edge of La Amistad International Park. The long-dormant *Volcan Baru*, in the highlands of the Province of Chiriqui, is Panama's highest peak. Covering 35,000 acres, the area features volcanic cliffs, forests and tropical rainforest.

Meals included: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Lodging: Los Quetzales Ecolodge & Spa



ENCOUNTER



DISCOVER



APPRECIATE



Saturday, January 15

After breakfast we travel in 4WD vehicles to Finca Drácula, home to one of the largest collections of rare orchids in the world (and named after this genus of 118 species of Central and South American orchids with two long spurs on the flower sepals, similar to the more common genus *Masdevallia*). With over 2,200 orchid species and many other blooming plants, this orchid farm is dedicated to promoting education and conservation of orchids and other tropical ornamentals.

Meals included: Breakfast, lunch & dinner

Lodging: Los Quetzales Ecolodge & Spa

Sunday, January 16

This morning we drive back to Costa Rica's south Pacific coast to our accommodations at an ecolodge dedicated to marine and terrestrial conservation and environmental education. Set high above the beach, with sweeping ocean views, it is part of a private nature reserve of virgin rainforest that borders thousands of acres of privately protected forest. The remainder of the day is free to explore the rainforest reserve to see huge ancient trees, monkeys, and green and black frogs.

Meals included: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Lodging: La Cusinga Lodge (www.lacusingalodge.com)

Monday, January 17

We have the whole day to explore the trails around La Cusinga or visit beautiful Playa del Arco, a beach accessible by a rainforest trail about 20 minutes south of the lodge. There will be an optional mangrove boat tour in the afternoon (additional charge applies).

Meals included: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Lodging: La Cusinga Lodge

Sunday, January 18

In the morning, we start the long drive back to San José. We may make a brief shopping stop along the way, and should arrive at our hotel in mid afternoon.

Meals included: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Lodging: Bougainvillea

Sunday, January 19

After breakfast, transfer to Juan Santamaría International Airport for the flight home, or begin an optional extension.

Meals included: Breakfast

OPTIONAL EXTENSIONS — these can be arranged to be guided or independent, for as many days as you wish; prices will vary. Possible destinations include Tortuguero in the lowland flooded forest for exploring the Caribbean rainforest by boat; or the isolated Osa Peninsula for scuba diving, kayaking, and exploring remote, pristine Corcovado National Park. Please contact Mary or Susan to discuss the possibilities. Other extensions can be arranged.

Details

This tour has been organized for Master Gardener Volunteers in Wisconsin and other Midwestern states, and other interested individuals, by Hidden Treasures Botanical Tours, L.L.C. (www.hiddentreasuresbotanicaltours.com/). **Please note that changes to the itinerary may be necessary due to equipment, weather or other factors beyond our control. Participants must be able to do moderate physical exercise (2-4 hours of walking per day, high heat and humidity, 3-4 hour bus rides) and should be in good overall health!**

Tour price	\$2,980 per person (double occupancy)
Single supplement	add \$500

Cost includes:

- 11 nights accommodations
- All meals (except on day 1 and 12) and lodging, including tips for maids, porters, and waiters
- Private transportation with driver and air-conditioning
- All admission fees or entrance fees as shown on itinerary
- Private driver and botanist guide and their trip related expenses
- All taxes

**\$1,000 deposit holds
your reservation**

**Final payment due
October 8, 2010**

Please note:

- Maximum of 18 tour participants.
- A passport is mandatory to enter Costa Rica. Passport must be valid for six months beyond return date. Allow several months to obtain a passport if you need one or a renewal!
- Tour price does **NOT** include:
 - roundtrip airfare from U.S. to San Jose, Costa Rica
 - airport departure fee (USD\$26.00 per person)
 - alcoholic beverages
 - optional excursions
 - **end of tour gratuity** for local guide (\$5-10/day) and bus driver (\$5/day)
 - items of a personal nature
 - full coverage travel insurance for health, baggage and cancellation
 - 3% surcharge for final payment by credit card
- Trip insurance is highly recommended.
- For more information about the itinerary, or details of travel conditions, logistics, health and safety issues, etc., contact Mary Kroening of Hidden Treasures Botanical Tours, L.L.C. or Susan Mahr



Mail all tour forms and payments (make checks payable to "Hidden Treasures Botanical Tours, L.L.C.") to:

Mary Kroening	(573) 881-6316
Hidden Treasures Botanical Tours	e-mail: info@hiddentreasuresbotanicaltours.com
P.O. Box 39	
Rochepoint, MO 65279	

PLEASE NOTE: **Final payment by credit card will have an additional 3% surcharge**

To reserve YOUR spot on this unique trip, send the registration form (next page) and a \$1,000 deposit per person to Hidden Treasures Botanical Tours (address above). Final payment due **October 8, 2010**.

Registration Form

MASTER GARDENER TOUR OF COSTA RICA & PANAMA

January 8-19, 2011

Passenger Information

Please record information exactly as it appears on your passport. Passport information may be sent later if you have yet to obtain a passport.

Name as on passport _____ Name as on passport _____

Passport # _____ Passport # _____

Passport Exp. Date _____ Passport Exp. Date _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (home and / or cell) _____ Email _____

Emergency Contact Name and Phone _____

Please mark your preferred travel arrangements

- I will make my own airline reservation/arrangements
- I would like Hidden Treasures Botanical Tours to arrange airline reservations from this airport:
- _____
- Single Occupancy — add \$500
- Double Occupancy — (if not named above**) I would like to room with: _____
- ** (cannot be guaranteed, and if none available, you will be responsible for single supplement)

Payment Information (deposit \$1,000 per person)

If paying by check: make payable to Hidden Treasures Botanical Tours, L.L.C.

amount \$ _____ check no. _____

If paying by credit card (we can accept only VISA or Mastercard):

Credit Card Number _____ Exp. Date _____

Amount to be charged _____ Three digit security code from back of the card _____

Signature _____

Direct Inquires and mail this form to:
Hidden Treasures Botanical Tours, L.L.C.
P.O. Box 39
Rocheport, MO 65279
573-881-6316
Email: info@hiddentreasuresbotanicaltours.com
www.hiddentreasuresbotanicaltours.com