

Spanish in Costa Rica



LANGUAGE,
CULTURE
AND
NATURE

BIENVENIDOS A CRLA



At CRLA we believe that students need to feel at home, at ease and constantly encouraged in order to gain the confidence required to master a foreign language. We are proud of the professional, yet warm and friendly atmosphere in our school.

Since 1989, we have been sharing our skills and techniques with over 15,000 students of different ages and nationalities.

Our Spanish programs are designed to meet the individual needs of each student. We offer a wide variety of options and the flexibility for students to make the most of their time and enjoy all that Costa Rica has to offer.

*Spanish is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world,
Costa Rica is a country of friendly people, unique culture, natural wonders;
and we would like to share it all with you!*

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At CRLA you`ll have the opportunity to:

Learn our language, explore our country,
move to our rhythm, join a volunteer project,
experience our way of life, make new friends,
and much more...

COSTA RICA:

A Unique Destination



Geographically positioned as a land bridge linking the Americas, and having a variety of climates and habitats, Costa Rica is one of the most biologically diverse countries in the world.

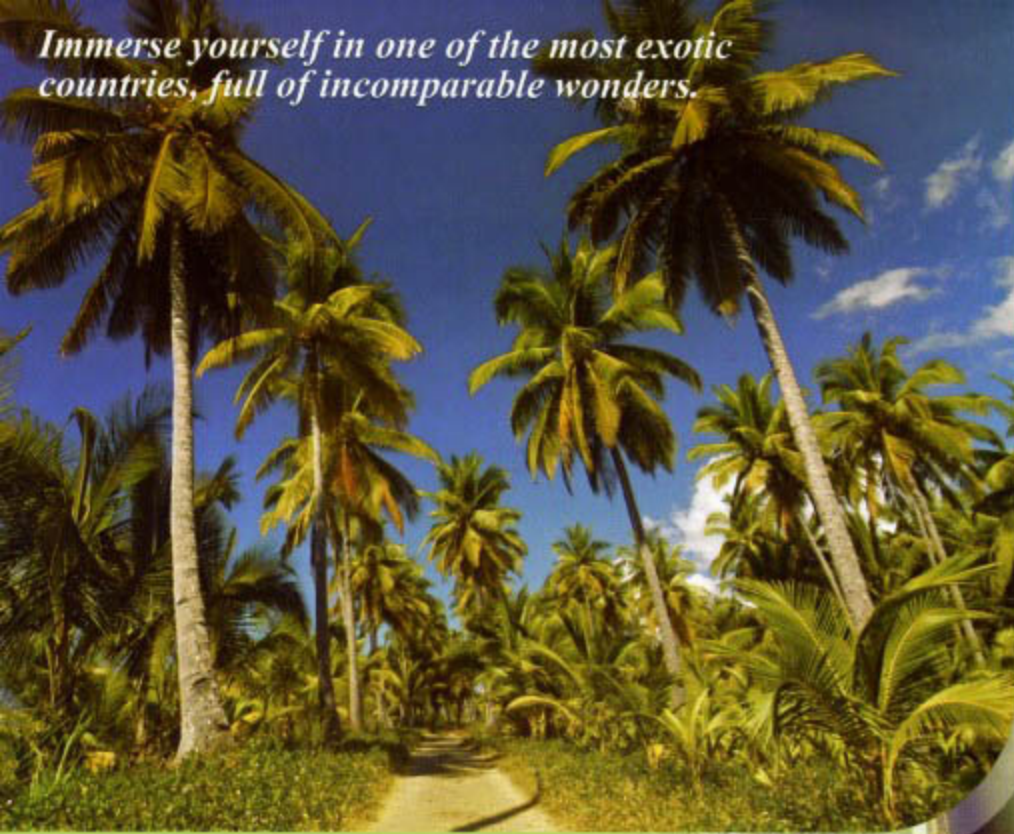


With less than 0,02% of the Earth's territory, this extraordinary country contains 6% of the world's flora and fauna species.

In addition to its natural richness, Costa Rica is an example of political stability and democratic tradition. As a country without an army, this peaceful nation has chosen to invest instead in health, education, and environmental conservation programs.



Immerse yourself in one of the most exotic countries, full of incomparable wonders.



Let yourself be carried away to a world of adventure and excitement...

Wake up to the sound of howler monkeys and colorful birds.

Explore dense jungles which give way to rumbling volcanoes and soothing hot springs.



Relax as Pacific surf crashes against sandy shores, and enjoy the laid-back tranquility of palm-fringed Caribbean beaches.



About Costa Rica



Pura Vida

Costa Rica's unofficial motto "Pura Vida" conveys the positive easy-going attitude of most Costa Ricans.

This phrase, commonly expressed by the locals, may be translated as "life is good" or "everything is fine". With any of its various uses (as a form of greeting, to show agreement or appreciation), the expression reflects how Costa Ricans, in general, are happy people, content with their standard of living, and enjoying their life.

Ticos

Costa Ricans, who call themselves Ticos (an expression that comes from their tendency to add a diminutive suffix, either "tico" or "ito" at the end of words to connote familiarity or affection) are a friendly and outgoing people.

FACTS:

- **AREA:** 51,100 sq km (19,730 sq mi)
- **LOCATION:** Central America, coastlines on the Caribbean Sea and the Pacific Ocean.
- **CLIMATE:** Spring-like temperatures year-round 21°-26° C (70°-79° F) for San José and the rest of the Central Valley and 27°-32° C (80-89° C) in coastal areas. Dry season (December-May), green/wet season (May-November).
- **POPULATION:** 4,400,000 est.
- **CAPITAL & LARGEST CITY:** San José
- **OFFICIAL LANGUAGE:** Spanish
- **RELIGION:** Roman Catholic 76%, Evangelical 14%, other 7%, none 3%
- **LITERACY RATE:** 96%, **LIFE EXPECTANCY:** 79
Costa Rica has the highest literacy and life expectancy rate in Central America.
- **GOVERNMENT:** Democratic Republic
- **ECONOMY:** Tourism, agriculture (coffee, bananas, sugar, pineapples, rice, beans; beef; timber), and electronic (microprocessors) exports.
- **MONETARY UNIT:** Costa Rican Colón (CRC)
- **COMMUNICATIONS**
Time Zone: (UTC -6). Telephone calling code: +506. Internet TLD: .cr
- **INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT:**
Juan Santamaría Int. (SJO) closest to San José



An "army" of school children march on Independence Day.

Costa Rica is the only country in America with no standing army. In a world plagued by military conflicts, Costa Ricans are proud of their peaceful history, political stability and relatively high level of development.

CRLA: Our Mission

The Costa Rican Language Academy (CRLA) is a private institution specialized in teaching Spanish as a second language. CRLA goes beyond traditional instruction by including cultural activities and educational trips to create a more well-rounded understanding of the Costa Rican culture and the Spanish language.

OUR SIX-FOLD MISSION

EDUCATION

To offer high quality and effective Spanish language instruction through dynamic teaching methods, implemented by our professional team.

CULTURE

To provide Spanish students with a total immersion program so that they are exposed to an authentic Costa Rican cultural experience.

PERSONAL ATTENTION

To center our Spanish courses around students and their individual language goals and needs providing an intimate class size and a variety of programs and schedules.

INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE

To have knowledgeable staff dedicated exclusively to the well-being of each student while living and traveling in Costa Rica.

WARM ENVIRONMENT

To create an environment where students will feel constantly encouraged to practice their Spanish language skills. In our home-like atmosphere students will also have the opportunity to make long-lasting friendships with Costa Ricans as well as with students from many countries.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

To lend a hand to the local community by providing a livelihood to Costa Rican families as well as by coordinating volunteer work in social and ecological projects. CRLA also makes regular donations to various local community organizations.



"It is our sincere goal to give our students at every moment the highest level of service, personal attention and professionalism.

We are committed to make students' stay at CRLA a memorable learning experience.

A professional Costa Rican administrative staff, knowledgeable instructors, well-designed Spanish programs, carefully selected host families, the excellent location of our modern facilities, stimulating extra curricular activities – all create the best environment to learn the language and enjoy the country."

Laura Cordero
Cristina Soto

Co-owners / Directors

Spanish Programs



Our programs offer students the opportunity to learn Spanish and to discover our culture first-hand.

These programs include:

Intensive Spanish classes, homestays with Costa Rican families, afternoon cultural classes (Latin dance, cooking, conversation), and 24 hour airport transfers.

OPEN ENROLLMENT:

Spanish courses are offered year round. New classes start on Mondays, every week of the year.

SHORT & LONG TERM COURSES:

Students may choose the length of the program (from one week up to six months).

HOURS OF INSTRUCTION:

We offer diverse programs and schedules. Students may select from 3 to 6 hours of Spanish instruction per day and also combine group classes with private tutoring.

SMALL GROUPS:

Spanish classes are offered in small groups with an average of 3-4 students (max. 6). Individual classes and special packages for groups are also available.

Methodology

At CRLA we believe that only when Spanish lessons are interesting, functional, and fun to do is it possible to learn quickly and easily. Consequently, the essence of our courses is a varied and dynamic teaching approach. Our aim is to teach classes that are intensive, yet challenging and enjoyable.

Our methodology calls for active participation from our students. CRLA's practical courses enable the students to communicate, comprehend and use accurate pronunciation in Spanish as quickly as possible. All our classes emphasize speaking abilities, but we consider the Spanish language as a whole; therefore, our programs take into account: grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, cultural understanding and pragmatic use.

Our Spanish classes usually consist of 3 to 4 students - never more than six. This small class size, along with our student - oriented teaching philosophy, provide the ideal setting for instructors to adapt the methodology and approach to meet student's individual needs and learning styles.

Students will be placed in classes according to their Spanish proficiency level, which is determined by a written test sent by email and an oral evaluation exam before starting the course. The level will be confirmed by each instructor based on the student's performance during the class.

Throughout the course, progress will be assessed daily by the teacher and our Academic Director. Every day, instructors hand in a progress report for each student in the class. This information helps our Academic Director determine and decide, along with the student, the best way for reaching his/her language goals.



Spanish Courses

We provide ten levels of Spanish instruction:

Beginners I, II & III

Advanced I, II & III

Intermediate I, II & III

Specialized courses



Beginner Levels

Beginner's courses I, II and III have been designed to provide an introduction to elementary Spanish. The primary objective of these courses is to offer students the opportunity to acquire communication skills in what we call "Survival Spanish". Topics include: asking/giving directions, using appropriate greetings, introductions and courtesy expressions as well as being able to communicate in different situations such as visiting a bank, restaurant, or other public places. Furthermore, students should be able to give their personal information, and talk about personal preferences and activities in increasing detail.

Beginner students will study basic sentence structures, learn everyday vocabulary and develop the ability to clearly communicate basic ideas in Spanish.

Intermediate Levels

The intermediate course is divided into Intermediate I, II & III and covers most grammatical structures, which will give students the tools needed to achieve more confidence and fluency when using the language. Students will learn the main grammatical structures, while improving vocabulary, pronunciation, comprehension, as well as written and oral skills. At this level the students learn to use different compensation strategies to communicate their ideas when they do not know the exact structure or word that should be used. Students will also be able to hold conversations on various topics with native Spanish speakers, using the appropriate grammatical forms for each situation.

This course emphasizes on cultural aspects of the language and its real usage. The emphasis is on culturally authentic reading and writing, along with continued development of listening/speaking competencies.

Advanced Levels

This course includes the study of advanced Spanish grammar. Students should begin to master complex syntactical and morphological structures and special differences used in the language. In addition, the students will have the opportunity to discuss current topics and have conversations with a higher level of complexity and abstract content in order to improve considerably in fluency and precision. This level includes cultural, social and historical aspects on different Hispanic speaking countries as a way to explain the relationship between language, history and culture.

The objective of this course is to achieve a high level of proficiency and fluency in the Spanish language. Furthermore, emphasis is placed on the comprehension and use of the language in unrehearsed situations in culturally appropriate ways.

Specialized Spanish Courses

We also offer medical Spanish for nurses or doctors, Spanish for lawyers, business Spanish, and special courses for Spanish teachers, as well as Latin American Literature courses.

Spanish Course for Spanish Language Teachers.

For Spanish language teachers or those studying for this profession, we offer private courses providing additional training. We discuss Latin American history and literature, focusing on textual and advanced grammatical analysis, composition and literary style. A participant may select the area in which he/she would like to specialize. Our Spanish Language Coordinator will work closely with him/her to develop a personalized program.

Spanish Language Course for Medical Professionals

This course is designed for health-care professionals who need to communicate with Spanish-speaking patients and their families as part of their daily work. It caters to various types of medical personnel including doctors, medical students, nurses, paramedics and can be adapted to each student's specific needs. This specialized course is offered as a supplement to our general Spanish language curriculum and is individually adapted to each student's level. Together, these courses facilitate effective communication between provider and patient within the health care setting.

Materials used were developed with the help of medical professionals with ample experience, in order to allow students to become familiar with the Spanish medical vocabulary and have the necessary tools to work with patients, explain or discuss various medical topics, and also act as an interpreter, if required. Visits to local clinics & hospitals are scheduled to complement the course.

Materials

In accordance with our teaching experience and specific needs of our students, we have produced our own original student workbooks which integrate the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, using Costa Rican cultural and social content. Additional teaching materials include games, charts, flashcards, audio tapes and others.

Our program emphasizes the development of oral competence and fluency in Spanish.

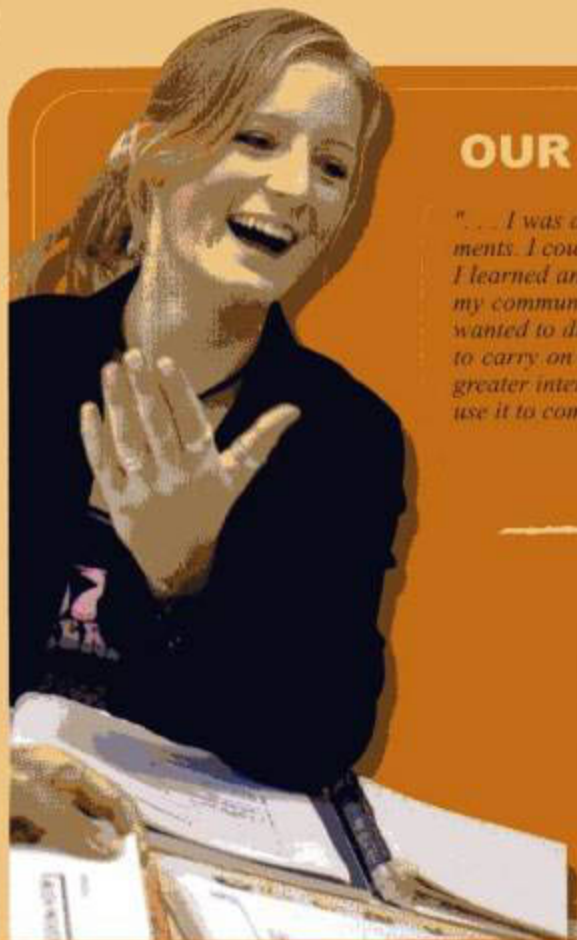


Spanish Instructors

CRLA has a permanent teaching staff of 25 native Spanish-speaking instructors. During the high season our staff increases to 35-40 teachers in order to ensure small groups and personalized attention.

Our teaching staff is accredited with the Costa Rican Department of Education. All our instructors hold a university degree in Spanish, Education, Linguistics or Philology, from either the University of Costa Rica or the Universidad Nacional (the two most prestigious universities in the country).

CRLA instructors receive continuous training. Workshops held on a regular basis cover topics such as teaching techniques for developing reading, writing, and listening skills, as well as guidelines for handling students with diverse cultural backgrounds. Highly-experienced Spanish instructors, along with other professionals who specialize in diverse topics, are invited to share their knowledge with our teachers.



OUR STUDENTS SAY IT BEST:

"... I was also impressed by the teachers, who were very nice about making adjustments. I could not have been happier with my class. There were just three of us... I learned an incredible amount from my teacher in such a short time. Before the trip my communication skills were low to none. I was barely able to tell a waiter what I wanted to drink... I was amazed by my progress. Within the first two weeks I was able to carry on a conversation and join-in with my family at dinner. It really sparked a greater interest in Spanish, and when I got back home I actually missed not having to use it to communicate. Now I find myself studying daily on my own."

Sara Weber, USA

"The Spanish teachers are fantastic and very knowledgeable. Professional and well-qualified with their degrees from area universities, they make classes fun, productive and effective. They will squeeze every bit of Spanish out of you before you leave! As with all subjects, styles vary among students when learning Spanish. Teachers do a great job to accommodate individual needs to maximize the student's time at the school."

Michael Schiffer, Germany

Administrative and Support Staff



Cristina Soto and Laura Cordero, co-owners and Directors of CRLA, along with their professional team, are fully committed to meet and exceed the needs and expectations of our students.

Each member of our staff is devoted to the success of your trip, making sure you:

- Learn Spanish
- Enjoy our culture and country
- Return home safely

From the moment you first contact CRLA up until the very last minute when you say goodbye to our driver upon departure, we will take care of you in every way we can.

The personal attention we provide, in addition to the professional service we offer, and the quality of the language instruction we deliver, sets us apart from other language schools.



Laura Campos & José Pablo Sancho
Front Desk / Student Services



Patricia Guillén
Academic Director/ Spanish Coordinator



Anabel Soto
Enrollment / Communications



Hazel Arriola & Pilar Alvarez
Host Family Coordinator & Assistant



Moisés Badilla & Leda Gutierrez
Volunteer Work Coordinators



Marilía Soto
Group Coordinator



**Leonel Valerín,
Glen Rojas, Marden Esquivel,
Isabel Vargas, Alvaro Monge**
Airport Transportation Coordinator & Assistants



Alejandra Calvo
Accounting



Rosemary Mayorga
Cooking Instructor



Cindy Castro / Ronny Arauz
Latin Dance Instructors

Meet Some of Our Instructors:

Floría Rosales

- Graduate Degree in Spanish, Universidad Nacional
- Masters Degree in "Teaching Spanish as a Second Language", Universidad Nacional (thesis pending)
- 16 years of teaching experience
- Other languages: English & German

Carlos Porras

- Graduate Degree in Philosophy & Arts
- Writer & Journalist for the international newspaper "Tiempos del Mundo"
- Finalist for first prize at writing contest: Grandes Viajeros 1998 in Barcelona, Spain
- Author of the novel "Período Especial"
- Coordinator of Literature Programs
- 13 years of teaching experience
- Winner of the Culture & Journalism Award; "Premio Nacional Joaquín García Monge a la difusión cultural y periodismo"

Olga Zúñiga

- Graduate Degree in Political Science, University of Costa Rica
- Masters Degree in Literature, University of Costa Rica
- Production Coordinator of "Centro de Estudios y Publicaciones ALFORJA"
- Editor of the magazine "Mujeres" at the "Centro de Estudios para la Acción Social" (CEPAS)
- 12 years of teaching experience

Abraham Calvo

- Graduate Degree in Spanish Philology, University of Costa Rica
- Masters Degree in Spanish Philology, University of Costa Rica
- 6 years of teaching experience

Rose Mary Mayorga

- Graduate Degree in Classical Philology, University of Costa Rica
- Completing Masters Degree in Education, UNED
- 10 years of teaching experience

Marilena Zumbado

- Graduate Degree in Spanish Philology, University of Costa Rica
- Masters Degree in Classical Studies, University of Costa Rica
- Studies in Arts and Drama
- 8 years of teaching experience

Nidia Jaén

- Graduate Degree in Modern Languages, University of Costa Rica
- Studies in English Translation, University of Costa Rica
- Other languages: English and German
- 10 years of teaching experience

Maricela Cerdas

- Graduate Degree in Classical Philology, University of Costa Rica
- Masters Degree in Classical Philology, University of Costa Rica
- Completing Masters Degree in Linguistics, University of Costa Rica
- 7 years of teaching experience
- Other languages: English and German

Stephanni Cruz

- Graduate Degree in English, University of Costa Rica
- Completing graduate studies in Education
- 10 years of teaching experience

Yosiel Piedra

- Graduate Degree in Spanish Philology, University of Costa Rica
- Completing Masters Degree in Teaching, UNED
- 5 years of teaching experience



Homestay

Spanish classes at CRLA can be taken along with our Homestay Programs.

Homestays are an excellent way for students to immerse themselves in the Costa Rican culture. As part of a family, they will practice speaking Spanish every day and at the same time learn first-hand about the Costa Rican way of life.



LIVING IN A

COSTA RICAN



HOME



CRLA is located in a quiet, residential / commercial neighborhood area close to downtown San José and our homestays are located in nearby residential neighborhoods. Most of the host families live within a short 15 to 20-minute bus ride from the school.

Our host families have clean, secure, comfortable homes. While students may not find all the luxury of a hotel room, homestays will give them a warm and caring environment that they will not find elsewhere. It will also provide students with the opportunity to practice their Spanish as much as they want!

Host Family Selection

Our homestay families are carefully selected for their hospitality, friendliness and warmth. They all offer clean lodging in safe neighborhoods. CRLA's homestay coordinators visit each family and get to know them personally. We also ask students to evaluate their homestay experience before they leave to ensure that families constantly provide quality service.

There are many different types of families: with or without children, married couples, single parents, young or older, etc. The most important quality we consider when choosing a host family is that they are genuinely interested and excited about hosting a foreign student and sharing their home and culture.

Program

Room

Students live in a Costa Rican home where they'll have their own private bedroom. In case they are traveling together, we can also accommodate couples, friends and family in the same homestay, either in shared or separate rooms.



Meals

Our Costa Rican homestay families will provide students with two daily meals: breakfast and dinner.

Special Diets

If students are vegetarians, or have any food allergies or other special dietary requirements, the host family will gladly accommodate them.



Laundry Services

Host families provide laundry service and a weekly change of bedclothes.



"With my host family I felt very welcome and more like a member. During meals we spent hours discussing, laughing and getting to know more about our cultures. I know that with my "tico" host family and CRLA I will always have a second home".

Jan Weerman, Netherlands



Cultural & Social

Activities

Available to all students at no additional fee.

Latin Dance Classes

Students learn to dance like Latins with our daily dance lessons. We teach Salsa, Merengue, Cumbia, Bolero and the latest rhythms.

"After many hours of learning Spanish, students can unwind and relax in the afternoon through the dancing and cooking classes, or catch up on email in the computer room, or just lounge with other students and teachers in the tropical garden. The salsa classes provide another fun part to the learning process while showing-off your new dance moves. For those students who want to become chefs, cooking classes will open you to a new culinary delight".

My Lam, USA

This is a great way to exercise, make friends and learn more about Costa Rican culture.



We offer 2 hours of dance classes every afternoon and students may participate in as many classes as they wish, at no additional charge. Our patient and experienced instructors will help students discover the joy and fun of Latin dance.



Cooking Classes

Students learn to prepare authentic Costa Rican cuisine. Cooking classes are offered every week for approximately two hours. These classes are taught completely in Spanish and they help students enrich their vocabulary, experiment with exotic recipes and enjoy the many tropical fruits and vegetables Costa Rica has to offer.





EXTRA CONVERSATION SESSIONS

Students can improve their oral skills with our extra "Conversation Hour" held twice a week. They get the opportunity to learn about our culture, share experiences and practice speaking Spanish. Students may grab a fresh cup of coffee and sit in a relaxed atmosphere with one of our Spanish instructors to learn new vocabulary and discuss various topics such as current events and cultural issues.

CULTURAL & SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

Throughout the year CRLA organizes cultural activities where students and staff enjoy typical music, folkloric dance, visits to museums, etc. The most popular activities include the 15 de Setiembre (Independence Day) celebration, Student - Tico Exchange, Handicraft Fair and soccer games.



LATIN AMERICAN SONGS

Learn more about the Latin American culture through music. Each week students will learn songs by different Hispanic singers - from the protest lyrics of Mercedes Sosa to the latest music by artists such as Shakira and Juanes.

"Through its Spanish lessons, cooking and dancing activities, conversational classes, and staff, CRLA has an environment that will provide students a better understanding of Ticos and their friendly culture".
Diana Stark, Canada



Volunteer Work Programs

SOCIAL PROJECTS



Volunteers have a choice to work in San José with children, elderly people, or disabled children.



Our volunteer programs allow students to expand their language abilities and learn more about Costa Rican culture in a secure and interesting environment, while helping local communities and increasing their knowledge in various fields.



"We believe that a small group of motivated people can change the world. We invite you to do some volunteer work after completing your Spanish course at CRLA. Visit our Volunteer Work Center; we have ample information, will make the necessary arrangements, and send you off on a wonderful, rewarding experience which allows you to expand your language abilities and learn more about Costa Rica, while making a difference."

*Leda Gutiérrez & Moisés Badilla
Volunteer Work Coordinators*



With the creation of its National Park System in 1970, Costa Rica has won worldwide recognition for its environmental policies which have made it possible to protect 25% of the country's territory - a larger proportion of land than any other nation in the world.



ECOLOGICAL PROJECTS



Since 1990, CRLA's Volunteer Department has arranged successful and rewarding work for over 3,000 students in ecological and conservation projects in the country's 25 national parks and other wildlife reserves.

Other Special Programs

CRLA provides the option to combine Spanish learning with work, dance, travel or other interests.



Internship Program

CRLA offers an opportunity for students, professionals, researchers, and other individuals with specific areas of interest or enterprise to gain career-related work experience.

This is a unique way to experience the country and practice Spanish while working side-by-side with Costa Ricans.

A few options are available for interns with basic Spanish skills; however, most applicants should have at least an intermediate Spanish level. Therefore, students are required to study for a minimum of two weeks in CRLA's Spanish program before starting their internship.

Internship opportunities include: tourism, ecology, social work, education, business, marketing, law, and health services, among others.

Spanish and Sports Programs

Students can study Spanish and then learn and practice water sports while in Costa Rica.

These programs combine 2 weeks of Spanish classes at CRLA followed by 2 weeks of surfing, kite-surfing or diving in the Pacific coast.



Spanish and Dance Program

Our Spanish & Dance Program includes 5 hours/day of Spanish language classes, 2 hrs/day of Latin dance classes at CRLA plus additional lessons at a renowned local dance academy.



Student Services



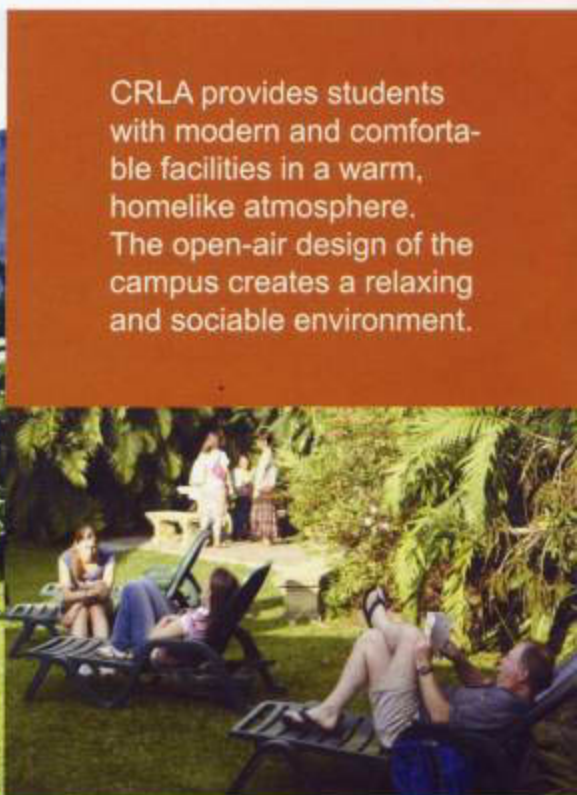
CRLA offers students a variety of services and amenities, to make their stay as pleasant and carefree as possible.

- FREE 24-hour airport transportation
- FREE wireless Internet access
- FREE use of telephones for local calls and international collect or calling-card calls
- International telephone card sale
- FREE books and class materials
- Extra "level adjustment" Spanish classes at NO COST when required
- FREE luggage storage while you travel
- Safety deposit box
- Postage stamp sale and mail drop-off at the post office
- Fax service
- Homestay or hotel accommodation service
- Volunteer work information and arrangements
- FREE export-quality Costa Rican coffee (as much as you want!)
- FREE natural refreshments made of tropical fruits
- School cafeteria serving snacks and a low-priced typical lunch
- Social & recreation areas for students
- Certificate of Attendance & farewell ceremony
- FREE Latin Dance classes (everyday)
- FREE Cooking classes (every Wednesday)
- FREE Conversation sessions (every Tuesday & Thursday)
- FREE Gym membership with our 4-week intensive Spanish & Homestay programs
- Travel advice and information service with great discounts on tours
- Hotel, tour, and airline reservation and confirmation service
- Bus schedule information and ticket purchase



"DANKE, GRACIAS, THANK YOU, CRLA! At your Academy I not only learned more Spanish than I thought possible in such a short time, I made many new friends and now I have a true "familia" in Costa Rica. Thank you also for helping me with all my weekend travels, with the bank, with e-mails, with EVERYTHING!"

Jürgen Ziegler, Germany



CRLA provides students with modern and comfortable facilities in a warm, homelike atmosphere. The open-air design of the campus creates a relaxing and sociable environment.

Facilities



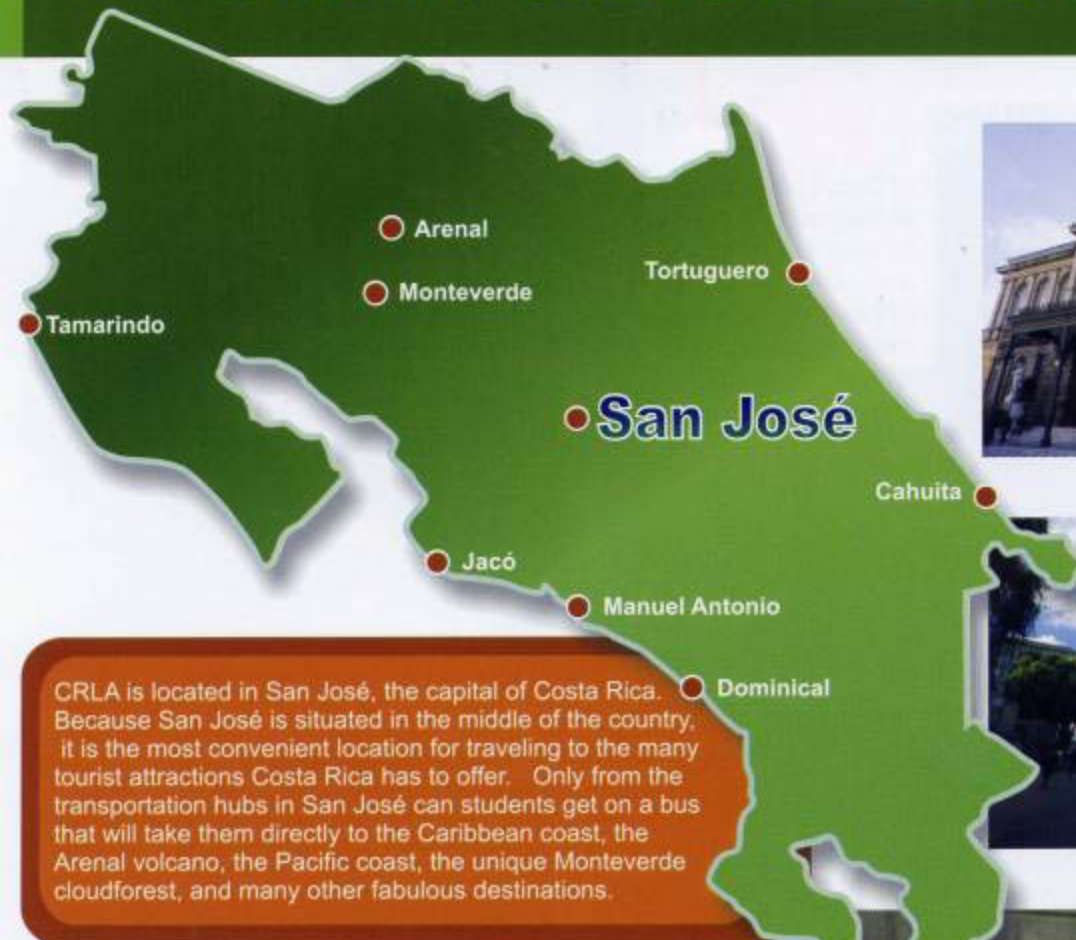
At CRLA, we have 38 classrooms, an ample reception area, administrative offices, two computer rooms with Internet access, as well as wireless Internet service...



...two classrooms for Latin dance classes, a kitchen area for our cooking classes, living rooms, sunny terraces with large beautiful, tropical gardens and other areas for social & recreational activities.



Convenient Location



CRLA is located in San José, the capital of Costa Rica. Because San José is situated in the middle of the country, it is the most convenient location for traveling to the many tourist attractions Costa Rica has to offer. Only from the transportation hubs in San José can students get on a bus that will take them directly to the Caribbean coast, the Arenal volcano, the Pacific coast, the unique Monteverde cloudforest, and many other fabulous destinations.

Located in a quiet, secure neighborhood, CRLA is close to places of interest for the students-across from the University of Costa Rica campus, close to the well-known San Pedro Mall and to a variety of restaurants, cinemas, banks, Internet cafes, and many stores. It is also a 20-minute walk from downtown San José and a short bus ride from our homestay families.

In addition, in San José students enjoy social and cultural activities year-round, including concerts at the National Theater, music festivals, art exhibit, university fairs, dance clubs, and a large variety of restaurants.

"The location is one of the greatest advantages of the school. It is easier and cheaper to use San José as your home base and depart from there to different parts of the country. Outside the city we found it hard to arrange transportation from one destination to another."

Bob & Caroline Anderson, USA



"After CRLA I stayed at a beach school for 2 weeks and after 4 days I felt the activities were limited and the experience turned a bit boring. I would definitely recommend the San José location. You have a lot more options in the city and can always enjoy different beaches on the weekends."

Christy Carlson, USA



CRLA: The Best Choice



Why CRLA is the Best Choice

Authentic Costa Rican experience

If you want to learn Spanish in Costa Rica, make sure you attend a school that offers an authentic cultural experience. CRLA is one of the few schools completely owned and operated by Costa Ricans and all of our teachers and staff are native Spanish speakers. We will share our culture with you while you learn our language.

Excellent results

We will make sure that you are making the most of your stay and learning Spanish quickly and easily, no matter what your age, background or Spanish skills are. Our practical teaching methods, innovative books & intimate class size ensures excellent results. We will even offer you extra classes at no cost, if necessary, to ensure that you will achieve your language goals.

Highly qualified instructors

In order to teach at CRLA, we require our professors to hold a university degree and have ample training and teaching experience.

Flexibility & Variety

You can start our programs any time year-round, study for as long as you want and with as many hours of instruction per day as you wish. We offer long term courses as well as intensive programs for students with a limited amount of time. Our students say they greatly appreciate our flexibility and the diversity of our programs because they are able to travel and enjoy other activities while learning Spanish.

Personalized Service

At CRLA we guarantee personal attention to each student. From the moment you arrive in Costa Rica we consider you part of our family. We will go out of our way to meet your needs and exceed your expectations.

Personal Safety and Caring

Your personal safety is one of our biggest priorities:

- You will have the director's home and mobile numbers, which you can call 24/7.
- Airport pick up and drop off are provided by reliable staff.
- Orientation and safety tips are given on your first day of classes
- Storage facilities and safety deposit box are available at the school.
- We are affiliated to Medical Emergency service and have a list of recommended doctors in case of illness.
- Even if travelling on your own, you are never alone at CRLA: we are always available to provide timely advice and will even stay at your side in case of any emergency or hospital stay.

International & Diverse Atmosphere

Our school welcomes students of all ages, nationalities, and backgrounds. Unlike most schools who cater to only one type of student, CRLA works with many universities and organizations throughout the world, so you will find a diversified student body creating an interesting international atmosphere.

Great facilities and Convenient location

We offer modern and comfortable facilities in a warm, homelike atmosphere. CRLA is located in San José, in a quiet and secure neighborhood. We are on the east side of the city, 20 minutes walking distance from downtown and within easy access to museums, theaters, restaurants, stores and bus stations.

Warm and friendly atmosphere

At the CRLA our goal is to make you feel at home when you are away from home.



"To those students who have chosen the Costa Rican Language Academy (CRLA) to learn Spanish, I say, 'Congratulations, you made the right choice!' As a former student who has studied 4 months there, I can say this school will meet your every expectation. Students will have everything at the school that is needed to learn Spanish and enjoy their time in Costa Rica. This will be one of the best decisions you have made! Pura Vida!"

M. L. Everett, USA

CRLA: The Best Value



CRLA students get the MOST for their money

Only CRLA offers students all the following services for FREE:

- Daily Latin Dance classes (2 hours per day, 2 levels: Beginner & Advanced)
- Weekly conversation classes (1 hour, twice a week)
- Weekly Costa Rican Cooking classes
- 24-hour airport pick-up and drop-off
- Books and class materials
- Extra "level adjustment" Spanish classes at no cost when required
- Internet service
- Wireless internet access
- Telephone for local calls
- Mail service
- Fresh coffee and fruit refreshments
- Luggage storage while you travel
- Wholesaler tour rates for our students
- Travel arrangements, bus ticket purchase and hotel reservations

What others say about CRLA...

Read about us in these books and magazines:

- Lonely Planet
- Petit Futé
- Rough Guide to Costa Rica
- Costa Rica Handbook
- Globe Trotter
- Transitions Abroad Magazine
- Exploring Costa Rica
- Let's Go To Costa Rica
- Frommers



Group Packages

CRLA provides customized Spanish & Travel packages.

For more than 15 years we have been receiving groups from schools, colleges, universities, professional or other interest associations. We make all the necessary arrangements, meet you at the airport, schedule Spanish lessons, arrange homestay or hotel accommodations, book tours, arrange excursions, cultural activities, and any other outings to suit the needs of the group.

CRLA staff will provide ongoing support both before and during the trip to make sure every single detail is taken care of. We will do all the work, from the planning stage all the way to the final day of the program, to ensure a hassle-free and rewarding experience for all participants and group leaders.



"Extras - This is where the school really shines. They have so much to offer. Cooking classes, dancing classes, conversation hour, soccer, etc.

Amenities - Going to this school is saving us tons of money on our excursions. They have a full time travel helper on staff.

The prices there are about 30% less than the prices at the hostel for excursions and they have discounts for activities etc. and you get a student card that you can use to get discounts at the museums, etc. They also have about 20 computers with free Internet, wireless internet, and a little cafe that sells really cheap lunch. They are a couple of blocks from a nice mall where you can go watch a movie or get something to eat after school. Oh, and they will even buy your bus tickets for you!

Recommended? -Most definitely, they take good care of their students."

Student review at 123 TeachMe.com

Exploring Costa Rica

Costa Rica is a beautiful country, full of natural wonders, and we would like to share it all with you.



Discovering a Tropical Paradise

At CRLA we provide advice and assistance (information, tour reservations and discounts, bus tickets, hotel reservations, etc), for arranging trips to all parts of the country, to help our students enjoy the opportunity to explore Costa Rica while they study Spanish.



Our students say it best:



"Before I chose the Costa Rican Language Academy, I was the most skeptical person you could imagine. I asked dozens of questions about the program and even e-mailed the available references. Now that my stay is over, I'm only sorry that it went by so fast. The reason why my experience was so worthwhile is because of the people here. I felt like the entire staff really cared about helping me and making me feel comfortable. Also, it was so easy to make new friends. There are many different activities available so not only do you learn Spanish, but you LIVE IT and ENJOY IT. I'm returning to my country as a better Spanish speaker, a better dancer, and now I can even cook!"

Nina Hilario, USA

"I have now returned to Canada and I just want to say how much I appreciated my month of study at CRLA in January. Everything about my experience with the school was first-rate: Your helpful e-mail communication before I arrived in Costa Rica, the airport transport, my wonderful homestay, the excellent (and very patient!) instructors, and the friendly staff at the front desk. I couldn't believe the staff already knew my name by the second day I was there, and they helped me in so many ways, including travel plans for my second month in Costa Rica".

Joyce Tombouljian, Canada

"I have attended two other four-week courses in intermediate Spanish at other well-known schools here in Costa Rica, and I can tell you that my experience at CRLA far exceeded my experiences elsewhere.... Outside of class, I found the atmosphere at CRLA invigorating. I felt the whole school was organized to offer its students the most value for their money. This came through in so many ways -the included afternoon conversation classes, the dance classes, and the cooking classes, not to mention the always available complimentary coffee and fresh fruit drinks, and the good food (at reasonable prices) offered by the cafeteria. The staff in reception was always helpful and friendly. In short, I would recommend CRLA to anyone considering the study of Spanish in Costa Rica. I will be back for another course, as soon as I am able to integrate my recent learning into my daily life here in Costa Rica. Meanwhile, I wish you and CRLA continued success. Sincerely,"

Dr. Grady D. Bruce, USA

For more comments and a list of students you may contact for references please visit our website www.spanishandmore.com/testimonios.htm



CRLA

Costa Rican Language Academy



Learn our language,
explore our country,
and much more...

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