

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## GENERAL QUESTIONS

### 1. Where is TEFL International located?

For receiving deliveries by DHL:      TEFL International  
\*Note: *A person must be here to*      600 metros al norte del Banco Popular  
sign for the package. The Delivery      En el camino por la finca Alfaro  
company will try twice then send      A la izquierda en las Villas Jacqueline  
*the package back to San Jose*      Carretera Manuel Antonio  
Quepos 6350  
Costa Rica

For receiving personal mail:      Your Full Name  
Lista de Correos  
Quepos 6350  
Costa Rica

Telephone:      (506) 2777-0183

Email:      [admin@teflcr.com](mailto:admin@teflcr.com)

### 2. What does the tuition for the program include?

Total fees: **\$1690**

Comprised of:

**\$500**      non-refundable deposit

**\$1190**      remaining course fee. This amount includes tuition, course materials, certification, and moderation fees. Airfares, accommodation, and food are not included.

### 3. How do I pay for the course?

By this stage, you should already have paid the \$500 **deposit** either online by credit card or via bank transfer.

1. Pay by credit card either before or upon arrival. Go to our secure server at <http://teflife.com/payment.html> and follow the instructions. You will only need to fill in your name, email address, credit card details and reason for payment in the billing section. We will usually respond within 12 hours confirming receipt of payment.

2. Pay by personal check to:

TEFL International

1200 Belle Passi Rd  
Woodburn, OR 97071

Personal checks MUST BE drawn on a US bank from a US account and it must arrive 2 weeks before the course start date.

\*Please write your name, the course location, course dates, and your Email address on the back of the check. This is very important so that we can immediately notify you when the check has been received.

3. Pay by bank transfer:

Bank of America  
Routing No. 02600959-3  
Swift Code BOFAUS6S  
Account No. 004541342524 FOR WIRE IN ONLY

CREDIT: TEFL INTERNATIONAL  
Bank of America, N.A.  
110 South Pacific Hwy  
Woodburn, OR 97071  
Tel. No. 503 982-2265

**4. What is an average program day like?**

The course runs, full-time over four weeks Monday – Friday. The first two weeks are comprised of six hours of classroom work each day, with two 15-minute breaks and one hour for lunch. The final two weeks are spent on lesson planning and teaching practice. **On the first day of your course you should arrive for orientation at 8:30 am.** At this time you will be given a detailed course timetable. In addition, there will be a **graduation dinner on the last Friday of the course**, so if possible make your departure arrangements from Manuel Antonio accordingly.

**5. How many students on average are in the program each month?**

Typically we have around 15 trainees. When enrollment for a course is over 18, the trainees are divided into two classes that are taught simultaneously. Most of the participants are American, British, Canadian or Australian, although we do accept non-native speakers of English who have a high proficiency in the language.

**6. What are the teaching practice students and classes like?**

We invite local Costa Rican students for your teaching practice. Costa Rican students are very keen and enthusiastic and because we don't charge them to attend, all students come to classes purely because they want to!

**7. What are accommodations like?**

TEFL International can arrange homestays in Quepos, which include a private bedroom in a Costa Rican family's home, breakfast and dinner, laundry service, an opportunity to practice your Spanish, and an authentic experience of the Costa Rican culture. **Homestay accommodations must be secured at least one month prior to the course start date.** All other accommodation arrangements must be made independently. Below is a list of

recommended accommodations, their description, and their contact information. All trainees should complete an Accommodation Preference form regardless of which option you choose.

Cabinas Pedro Miguel: Located in Manuel Antonio- about 10 minutes by bus from Downtown Quepos and **a 10 minute walk to the school**. Includes hotel-style private bedrooms and bathrooms, but does not include kitchen, air-conditioning, or phone. Set in beautiful “jungle” surroundings with access to a small pool. Suites with kitchen and air-conditioning are available upon request for an increased rate.

\* Discounted rates are provided for TEFL trainees. Price is dependent on season and you must identify yourself as a TEFL International trainee at the time of your booking to receive the discounted rate.

Phone: (506) 2 777-0035  
[www.cabinaspedromiguel.com](http://www.cabinaspedromiguel.com)

Vista Serena Hostel: Located in Manuel Antonio- about 10 minutes by bus from Downtown Quepos and **a 10 minute walk to the school**. Includes shared rooms and private bungalows, with fans, lockers and laundry service. Also includes shared living area with TV/DVD, fully-equipped kitchen, and porch with hammocks. Set on a mountain surrounded by spectacular views overlooking the Pacific Ocean.

Phone: (506) 2777-5162  
[www.vistaserena.com](http://www.vistaserena.com)

Widemouth Frog Backpackers' Hostel: Located in Downtown Quepos- about a 15-minute walk from the school site. Includes shared rooms, with lockers, laundry service, and free Internet access. Also includes shared living area with TV/DVD, fully-equipped kitchen, and covered rancho with hammocks.

Phone: (506) 2777-2798  
[www.widemouthfrog.org](http://www.widemouthfrog.org)

Craigslist Costa Rica:  
<http://costarica.en.craigslist.org/apa/>

Quepolandia:  
<http://www.quepolandia.com/classified-ads/>

Although Quepos and Manuel Antonio accommodations have electricity, internet and water, the area is subject to frequent power outages, and it is not rare for water to be out for a few days. We recommend you keep a flashlight and stock up on a few bottles of water, just in case.

## **8. When are the homestay or On-Site accommodations available?**

Homestay and On-Site accommodations are available from the Sunday before the first day of the course through the Saturday after the last day of the course. Once you have submitted your Accommodation Preference form, you will receive your homestay family's profile and directions to their home approximately 3 weeks before the start of your course. If your preference states that you would like to stay at the On-Site accommodations, you are to arrive at the school the day before the start of the course to receive your reserved room.

## **9. What should I know about my homestay?**

Homestay accommodations are meant to give trainees a cultural and family atmosphere which will enhance their stays in Costa Rica. With this dynamic in mind, there are certain courtesies expected of trainees. Guests are not allowed without the express permission of your family. If you will be late or will miss dinner, it is polite to notify your family ahead of time. You might also consider establishing a specific time with your family when laundry will be collected and labelling your clothes to make sorting easy.

## **10. What are the On-Site accommodations like?**

The TEFL International School in Manuel Antonio is located a short walk from downtown Quepos, offering beautiful views of the surrounding mountains and the Pacific Ocean. The school building is comfortable and the main classroom is air-conditioned.

Our location offers 2 types of rooms to stay in: a smaller bedroom with a double sized bed costing \$400 for the month with a bathroom shared by one other room; or a larger bedroom with a queen sized bed and private bathroom costing \$500 for the month. Should you choose to live in either room with another student, family member, or spouse, the price of the small room becomes \$550 and the larger room becomes \$700. The cost is then divided by the two occupants.

The campus includes: a fully operational kitchen complete with a gas stove, a microwave oven, rice maker, blender, two refrigerators (1 for all students and one for students living on-site), plates, bowls, utensils, and cutlery; a student lounge with a television and DVD player; a computer room complete with three computers, all with internet capabilities, and printing facilities; a copy machine; a student library with books to aid in lesson planning; and laundry facilities. There are also a variety of restaurants, banks and internet cafes nearby.

Internet access is available the school 24/7, including secure, high-speed wireless access.\*

\*As with most parts of Costa Rica, heavy rains may cause power outages and loss of internet services during the wet season.

## **11. Can I bring my laptop?**

We strongly recommend you bring your laptop since free Wi-Fi access is available in the training centre. If you don't have a laptop you can use one of our two computers in the student lounge, although your use should be primarily for course-related projects. We have a printer and a copy machine, but they can be unreliable at times. If the facilities on-site are malfunctioning for any reason, you can always use local cafes, which cost between 800 and 1000 colones/hour (between \$1.75-2), plus any printing costs that you incur. We recommend Internet Quepos near the bus station, Internet Hostel Vista Serena, and Tropical Internet Café on the Quepos waterfront.

## **12. What about public holidays?**

Because of the intensive nature of our TESOL course, time off is not given for local, national or international public holidays that occur during your course.

## **THE JOB MARKET & TEACHING IN COSTA RICA**

### **1. What is the TEFL job market in Costa Rica like? Will I have trouble getting a job?**

The job market for English teachers in Costa Rica is excellent at the moment, although most of the jobs are located in or around San Jose. The best time to start looking for employment is when you are close to finishing your course.

### **2. What will TEFL International do to help me secure employment?**

We give you advice and assistance with writing resumes and cover letters. As well, we provide a list of local English teaching establishments and post available jobs on our jobs board. You should feel free to ask our staff for advice at any time.

### **3. What is the average salary like?**

The average salary in Costa Rica is about 3000 to 4000 colones (\$6-8) per hour. The rate varies depending on what type of school or company you work for, and whether you work full or part-time.

### **4. How many of the TEFL graduates actually find work in Costa Rica?**

The majority of our course graduates who have wanted to work in Costa Rica have been able to secure teaching positions.

### **5. Do schools provide health insurance?**

Generally, no. However, everyone in Costa Rica (tourists included) can make free use of the national health service.

### **6. Do schools provide work permits?**

This depends on the employer. Some may, others may not.

### **7. What is a typical teaching position like?**

Of course it varies from school to school, but you may be expected to teach a variety of courses, ranging from children to business professionals at all levels, in groups or in private sessions.

### **8. Can I return to my own country and teach with my certificate?**

Yes, it is possible, though the requirements for working in ESL or TEFL in many western countries are different and sometimes include graduate and/or post-graduate level education in ESL or TEFL.

## **PAPERWORK & DOCUMENTATION**

## **1. What documents do I need to bring?**

Of course, you need your passport. When you secure work you may be asked to provide copies of your birth certificate, college degrees, and transcripts. **You might also consider obtaining an international driving permit if you want to drive in Costa Rica.**

## **2. Do I need a visa to enter Costa Rica?**

Visitors to Costa Rica from the USA, Canada, and the UK can enter the country without a visa. All visitors to Costa Rica are required to carry a passport valid for at least six months after arrival date and can remain in the country for 90 days. The initial 90-day period can be extended for an additional 90 days within the country.

Visitors to Costa Rica from Ireland, Australia, and New Zealand can also enter the country without a visa. Visitors must carry a passport that is valid for at least six months after arrival date and can remain in the country for 30 days. The initial 30-day period can be extended for an additional 60 days within the country.

*As this information is subject to change at any time, we advise you to contact your local consulate for current travel regulations prior to planning your trip. For more information on obtaining visas please check with your local Costa Rican consulate or embassy.*

## **QUESTIONS ABOUT MANUEL ANTONIO & LIVING IN COSTA RICA**

### **1. What are the average housing and living expenses in Costa Rica?**

According to HYPERLINK "<http://www.costarica.com>" [www.costarica.com](http://www.costarica.com) the average family budget is around \$600 a month including a three bedroom house, all utilities, food, and transportation; however, Manuel Antonio and Quepos are some of the most expensive towns in the most expensive country in Central America. A one bedroom apartment in this area runs from \$300, if you can get it through a local contact, up to \$500. How much you spend will depend on choices you make, for example how much you drink, how much international food you eat, and how much travel you do while you are here. Housing is generally less expensive in the Central Valley, where the majority of the jobs are. Depending on where you are and how many people you are living with, a shared apartment can run each person less than \$100 per month.

### **2. What if I get sick in Costa Rica? Are there western-standard medical facilities?**

If you find yourself requiring medical attention, you can use the Costa Rican National Health Service free of charge. There are a number of private hospitals that offer their own health insurance services (similar to US style HMOs), however we do recommend that you get health insurance before you travel.

### **3. What is the public transportation system like?**

The cheapest way to get around town is certainly the bus at 200 colones per trip (less than 25 cents). The route begins at the bus station in downtown Quepos and ends at the park entrance in Manuel Antonio. The buses leave approximately every 30 minutes and run until 9:30 pm. The buses are clearly marked with a "Quepos/Manuel Antonio" banner on the windshield. Bus stops are marked by either a bus shelter or a yellow line painted on the pavement, although some are not marked at all. When waiting on the street, be sure to flag down the bus or you may be

passed by. There is no way to get to TEFL International by bus.

A slightly more expensive but speedy alternative to public transportation is to take taxis. The cost varies by driver and whether it is day or night. Trips around Quepos, including to the TEFL site (Villas Jacqueline por fincas Alfaro), should cost around 1000 colones. Trips to Manuel Antonio beach will be about 2500 colones. Addresses in Costa Rica are often referred to by landmarks because the streets are not named.

If you decide to walk anywhere, be careful about traffic on the Manuel Antonio road, as there are no sidewalks and many blind spots. Also be careful walking anywhere after dark. It is best to take a taxi at night.

#### **4. What's the climate like? What kind of clothing will I need to bring?**

The seasons in Costa Rica are divided between summer and winter or the dry season and the wet season, respectively. On the Pacific slope the rainy season begins in May and runs its course until November. The days often begin sunny and pleasant, with rains coming later in the day. If attending a course scheduled during the rainy season, we recommend you bring a rain jacket and/or umbrella. The dry season begins at the end of November and runs through mid-May. The skies are often cloudless with rain occurring on a weekly, rather than daily, basis. Temperatures vary between 74 and 95° F (23 to 35° C) with the average being around 85° F (29° C).

Lightweight fabrics are usually best in beach areas, as it is often hot and humid. There are many places to do your laundry and accommodations often offer laundry service, so bringing clothes for everyday is not necessary. Make sure you bring a beach towel, bathing suit, and sunscreen, although a rain jacket and/or umbrella will probably be needed as well. There are also many parks and waterfalls in the area to explore, so comfortable shoes and clothing are a must. Please see the Course Dress Code for specific teaching practice requirements.

### **ARRIVING IN COSTA RICA**

#### **1. How do I get to Quepos/Manuel Antonio from the airport?**

##### ***Bus from San Jose to downtown Quepos:***

Buses run regularly between San Jose's Coca Cola bus terminal and downtown Quepos's bus station, and the trip takes about 3 ½ hours on the *directo* bus and 5 ½ on the *colectivo*. The *direct* buses are generally clean, comfortable, and on time and leave at 6 am, noon, and 6 pm. s. The *colectivo* buses leave at 7 am, 10 am, 2 pm, and 4 pm and make many stops and are often crowded with people standing in the aisles. Fares are about \$6 per person, although a taxi from the airport into San Jose can cost up to \$20.

Buses in Costa Rica are run by small companies, meaning there is not nationalized transit system. Generally you cannot reserve a seat by phone or the Internet, which means the only way to guarantee a seat on the bus is to purchase a ticket ahead of time and in person at the Quepos ticket stall across from the terminal (pictured on map below). An alternative is to purchase tickets through [CostaRicaBusTickets.com](http://CostaRicaBusTickets.com), which will arrange pick-up from the airport and have your tickets purchased and waiting for you

for around \$25.

\* BE AWARE, TOURISTS AT THE COCA COLA BUS TERMINAL CAN BE A TARGET FOR THEFT. KEEP YOUR BELONGINGS CLOSE AT ALL TIMES, EVEN ONCE YOU HAVE BOARDED THE BUS. DO NOT PUT VALUABLES ABOVE YOUR HEAD OR UNDER THE BUS. \*

***Flights:***

Nature Air and Sansa both offer daily flights from the regional airport next to the international airport to the Quepos airport that range from \$60-\$70. There is a baggage limit of 26 lbs. and you must have a two-hour window between your arrival and departure to provide time for customs and collecting your baggage. Reservations should be made in advance, as the planes are small and book quickly.

Nature Air US/Canada (800) 2235-9272 Costa Rica (506) 2220 – 3054  
HYPERLINK "http://www.natureair.com" [www.natureair.com](http://www.natureair.com)  
Sansa (605) 2221 - 9414  
HYPERLINK "http://www.flysansa.com" [www.flysansa.com](http://www.flysansa.com)

***Taxis:***

Go to the official taxi stand at the airport exit. A ride to Quepos/Manuel Antonio will cost about 120 dollars and you have to pay up-front. An official will then take you to your taxi. Do not go with people who approach you and offer you a taxi, they are not licensed and not insured to take passengers.

***Interbus/Gray Line:***

Both of these private bus companies have daily shuttles from San Jose hotels to Quepos/Manuel Antonio hotels that cost about 35 dollars. You can take a taxi from the airport to either the nearby Garden Court Hotel or Hampton Inn. The shuttles usually seat up to eight people, pick-up at approximately 8 am and 3 pm, and take you directly to your lodging. You can make reservations on-line or by phone.

Interbus: HYPERLINK "http://www.interbusonline.com" [www.interbusonline.com](http://www.interbusonline.com)  
Gray Line: HYPERLINK "http://www.grayline.com" [www.grayline.com](http://www.grayline.com)

If you have more questions please contact us at:

Email: admin@teflcr.com  
Telephone (CR): (506) 2777-0183  
HYPERLINK "mailto:applications@teflife.com" [applications@teflife.com](mailto:applications@teflife.com)  
HYPERLINK "http://www.teflife.com" [www.teflife.com](http://www.teflife.com)

**Thank you for choosing TEFL International Manuel Antonio, Costa Rica!**

## Accommodation Preferences

Please fill out this form and send it to Admin@teflcr.com

1. Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age: Male / Female

2. Course Month/ Year \_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you smoke?

4. Please select your preference from our current list below. Our options are subject to change, so we will work with your preferences to secure the best situation for you. Unless otherwise specified, accommodations could be co-ed. First come, first served.

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. I will secure my own accommodation  
(Please see attached FAQ for recommendations)

### \_\_\_\_\_ 2. **On-Site accommodation at TEFL International, Costa Rica**

\_\_\_\_\_ Double bed with bathroom shared with another room = \$400  
or \$275 if shared. 3 rooms available.

\_\_\_\_\_ Room with single bed and shared bathroom = \$350. 1 room  
available.

\_\_\_\_\_ Queen size bed with ensuite bathroom = \$500 or \$350 if shared. 1  
room available.

\_\_\_\_\_ Room with 2 double beds to share with one other student = \$350  
each. One room available.

\_\_\_\_\_ Room with 2 single beds to share with one other student = \$275  
each. 1 room available. .

- On-site at TEFL International for convenience
- Walking distance of Quepos
- Wireless High Speed Internet Access
- Beautiful views of the mountains and ocean
- Laundry facility
- Private or shared bedrooms (your preference)
- Fully stocked kitchen

\_\_\_\_\_ 3. I would like to share my accommodation with another trainee  
NAME \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*Please note that if you determine you are unhappy with your home stay accommodation upon arrival for any reason, you have until the second day of the course to let the staff know in order to change your accommodation. However, you will be responsible for payment of the nights that accommodation provided for you. You will then need to secure your own accommodation.\*\*\*

