



RÍO PERDIDO

Guanacaste - Costa Rica

Sustainability at Rio Perdido

[Río Perdido](#) is the labor of love for a small group of explorers who rediscovered a thermal river deep in eastern Guanacaste. The group immediately sought to secure and protect the land while making it available for others to enjoy under a sustainable development plan. Environmentally conscious and community minded, the team behind Rio Perdido is driven by a passion for discovering and preserving the unknown, honoring the cultural heritage of native ancient civilizations, and protecting and reviving 1,500 acres of land over a decade of reforestation efforts. Below is an overview of the sustainability efforts Rio Perdido has established since opening in 2013.



Sustainability Credentials

Today, Río Perdido is a boutique hotel with an impressive list of sustainability credentials, including:



Elite Level certification from the Costa Rican Tourism Institute's Sustainable Tourism program

Río Perdido has been awarded Elite Level certification, the highest level possible, in the Sustainable Tourism Certificate program (CST), a program of the Costa Rican Tourism Institute (ICT). The program is a result of the public and private sector's collaborative efforts to recognize tourism companies for their sustainable tourism practices.



5 stars in The Ecological Blue Flag - Watershed & Climate Change Categories

Río Perdido has been awarded The Ecologic Blue Flag - Watershed Category with five stars and Climate Change Category with six stars, the highest ratings possible. These awards are given annually to recognize the effort and voluntary work of organizations that are helping to protect both the environmental and social landscapes of Costa Rica.



Carbon Neutral Certification

Río Perdido is a certified carbon neutral company under INTE B5:2016 regulation, an initiative developed by Costa Rica's Climate Change Directorate of the Ministry of Environment and Energy. Through this certification program, Río Perdido has pledged to take action to reduce, remove and offset Greenhouse Gas emissions (GHG) and strengthen decarbonization.



Considerate Collection

SLH Considerate Collection

Rio Perdido is honored to be a part of SLH's Considerate Collection. Hotels within the collection have been handpicked for achieving the highest categories of SLH's Sustainability Criteria and Pillars, that are aligned with the UN's Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs) as well as Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) framework. They are Sustainable Innovators that are Community Minded, Cultural Custodians and Environmentally Conscious. They've been visited, vetted, and verified against these criteria and many other SLH quality measures.



Co-Signer of The Code of Conduct

Rio Perdido is a co-signer of The Code of Conduct, a program that seeks to end the sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism. Through staff training, Rio Perdido supports The Code's mission to provide awareness, tools and support to the travel and tourism industry to keep children safe.



Licensed By Essential Costa Rica

Rio Perdido is an official representative of Essential Costa Rica, a government association that represents the country at an international level. To earn this affiliation, Rio Perdido had to undergo a comprehensive evaluation to ensure that its operations are guided by the five values of Costa Rica: Excellence, Sustainability, Social Progress, Innovation, and Costa Rican Rooting.



In Alliance with Tourism–Local Development Engine

Rio Perdido is proud to be a part of Tourism - Local Development Engine, a multi-institutional effort to leverage the power of tourism as an engine for rural development through sustainable, local purchasing of agricultural products.

Cultural Custodians

When an exploration was carried out on property, small pieces of broken pottery were discovered under a thin layer of soil on the land. With the help of curators from the National Museum of Costa Rica, these pieces were categorized as **authentic Chorotega artifacts** dating back hundreds of years. The Chorotega were one of eight indigenous ethnic groups that inhabited Costa Rica. It was concluded that this setting was an important meeting place where this ancient civilization gathered. To honor this heritage and preserve as much of the land as possible, development plans included **building less than 1% of the total area** and the remaining has been kept for reforestation and preservation.

Rio Perdido also hosts craft sessions for guests led by local artists in **The Workshop**, a creative space which doubles up as the hotel's gift boutique - stocked with locally made arts and crafts. Rio Perdido's chefs are proud to offer special menus to commemorate holidays and festivals throughout the year, which honor the traditions of Costa Rica and Guanacaste. To celebrate, hotel staff add traditional elements to their uniforms and invite local dance groups and musicians to perform.

The hotel is committed to **commemorating Costa Rican identity**, celebrating events such as June 25 (Annexation of the Nicoya Party) and September 15 (Independence of Costa Rica). These celebrations include menus representing Costa Rican gastronomy, as well as traditional music and dances.

Community Support and Education

Impressively, **90% of the Rio Perdido team comes from nearby local communities**, many of whom hold management positions at the hotel. Staff are continually given opportunities to learn and develop skills through the hotel's various training programs, allowing for professional and economic growth which in turn promotes the protection of the environment. Additionally, the designers and materials used throughout the property are all local, including all artwork and ceramics.

These include an environmental education project led by Rio Perdido in collaboration with local colleges. As a result, the community of San Bernardo was encouraged to participate in **The Ecological Blue Flag - Communities Category**, making them the first community in Bagaces to achieve such certification. **Local entrepreneurs can benefit from the hotel's business training**, which works alongside the local municipality to support small business owners, including artists who exhibit their works in the canton's tourist sites.

Conservative Footprint

Hotel grounds take up less than 1% of the total **1,500 acres of land**. Architects and engineers made use of preexisting paths and cleared land to prevent further deforestation.

Electric Powered

Rio Perdido promotes the use of electric vehicles by providing free charging at dedicated stations. **The property's on-site cars are 100% electric**, whether these vehicles are used for guest transport or for maintenance.

Biodegradable Products

Rio Perdido only uses biodegradable products in housekeeping, laundry, kitchen, and fumigation areas, including renowned brands such as Florex, Ecolab, Greensolutions, among others. For spa treatments, Rio Perdido is proud to partner with Biosfera, a local woman-owned sustainably focused business providing hand crafted organic scrubs, soaps, oils, and more.

Commitment to Recycling

Rio Perdido has its own collection center for recyclable waste, and all employees are trained in recycling practices. These waste materials are properly managed by the Municipality of Bagaces. Río Perdido has a special agreement with the municipality whereby the property recycles most non-organic waste to a degree that is not even common in dense, highly visited areas, nor in the capital.



PROTECTION AND REGENERATION PRACTICES

Reforestation Efforts	<p>The Río Perdido team has been championing the reforestation process by focusing on sustainable transplanting. Because Río Perdido is located in the region's most sun-drenched area, irrigation is necessary for the property's younger transplants. To accomplish this, Río Perdido injects treated water back into the land, using most of its treated residual water as well as circulated pool water.</p> <p>Through reforestation and conservation initiatives, the hotel team has expanded protected ancestral lands from 600 acres to 1,500 acres, nearly tripling the area of endangered rainforest.</p> <p>In an effort to preserve the forest's natural landscape, the hiking and biking trails are intentionally not overly-manicured in order to keep the unspoiled natural pathways that weave throughout the property. Some of the paths which lead guests to the thermal hot springs were created by the ancient Chorotega people many years ago.</p>
Intolerant to Illegal Hunting	<p>The Río Perdido team maintains continual monitoring of the reserve to protect its natural wildlife.</p>
Flora & Fauna Protection	<p>Río Perdido prioritizes the conservation of its flora and fauna, receiving continuous training from the PUMAS Rescue Center on wildlife management. The hotel also engages in valuable research with entomologists and top botanists to identify and conserve endangered plant species found in the region.</p> <p>Conservation efforts include protecting the Celastraceae Wimmeria exfoliata, a rare species of tree endemic to Guanacaste, Costa Rica that was discovered during land evaluation for Río Perdido's carbon neutrality initiative. Since its discovery, Río Perdido has worked to conserve the tree's habit by achieving carbon neutrality for all man-made projects, ensuring the land is not exploited for human fuel or food, and working with forestry engineers to ensure the tree's habitat is protected.</p> <p>All of Río Perdido's landscaping efforts also include local native species. Annually, with the support of the Costa Rican Electricity Institute and the Municipality of Bagaces, Río Perdido plants native and protected trees which improves air pollution, conserves water, are non-invasive and prevent erosion.</p> <p>Due to these efforts, fauna has flourished under the guardianship of Río Perdido. It's not uncommon to see Capuchin monkeys, Howler monkeys, armadillos, ant eaters, kinkajous and many more throughout the property.</p>
Native Woods Protection	<p>In an effort to stop the extraction and exploitation of fine woods, all wood used to build the hotel was sourced from fallen trees or farmed under license. From napkin rings to coasters, Río Perdido is committed to not letting a single natural resource go to waste.</p> <p>In collaboration with the Wildfire Functional Training forest community, the hotel also has an onsite fire brigade to protect the land and mitigate forest fires.</p>



LOCALLY SOURCED

From Garden to Plate

When it comes to Rio Perdido's kitchen produce, anything which cannot be grown in the hotel's organic garden is purchased from local suppliers which not only reduces food miles, but supports local farmers, fishermen, and dairy artisans - **the chefs exclusively use Costa Rican ingredients**, the majority of which come from Guanacaste itself, in traditional dishes such as 'casado' and marinated beef loin with 'criollo' dressing.

Mandala Garden & Farm

Rio Perdido's garden produces organic herbs and veggies, growing delicious and highly medicinal plants that aren't commonly found in the US. Among the 50 plus medicinal herbs and vegetables in the garden, a sample includes: Melissa, butterfly pea, yerba mate, leche de sapo (mexican thistle), citronella, and culantro.

Rio Perdido currently **maintains two hives of indigenous bees**, which are not intended for commercial purposes but rather for the enjoyment of guests and conservation efforts. One hive is associated with Mayan and pre-Mayan periods, producing a modest quantity of honey with enhanced medicinal properties and a rich flavor profile, ideal for pairing with the restaurant's organic pancakes crafted from yucca and ancient grains. The second hive produces Mariola honey, a variety not commonly found in the United States.



About Rio Perdido:

Río Perdido lives and breathes its natural surroundings. Set in the lush dry forest with 1,500 acres of untamed tranquility, the 30 stilted bungalows are tucked away amongst 20 miles of walking, running and cycling trails, a thermal river and bathing pools. Nestled in lush dry forest, the expansive property offers natural hot springs, adventure trails, and canopy zip lines, providing a unique and rejuvenating experience. Stay in eco-friendly accommodations seamlessly integrated with nature. Indulge in locally inspired gastronomy and embrace our commitment to sustainability. A member of Small Luxury Hotels of the World Considerate Collection, Río Perdido invites you to immerse yourself in the magic of Costa Rica, where every moment is an exploration of nature's wonders. For more information, please visit www.rioperdido.com.

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