

Building a Plate in Costa Rica

PROTEIN OPTIONS

- *Ceviches*: fresh fish flavored with lime and cilantro, commonly served with patacones
- *Olla de Carne*: beef stew mixed with a variety of vegetables including carrots, corn and cassava
- *Black Beans*: served with almost every Costa Rican dish as a side or main dish
- *Casado*: meat served with a variety of beans, vegetables, rice or plantains; a complete meal all in one dish
- *Rondón*: common on the Caribbean coast and contains fish, yams, peppers, onions, coconut milk and other fresh herbs to create a hearty soup



CARB SOURCES

- *Arroz*: Rice is included in most dishes served throughout the day. It is seasoned with fresh herbs and served with vegetables and a meat source.
- *Ensalada Rusa*: Consisting of mainly potatoes, this carb heavy dish also contains vegetables and protein. It is served commonly at picnics or big gatherings.
- *Chorreadas*: Similar to a pancake, this is a breakfast or afternoon snack sweet corn cake that can be enjoyed with a protein source for a more complete meal.
- *Empanadas*: Made from pastry or corn meal then baked/fried, these well-known patties can be stuffed with sweet or savory ingredients and are popular at any time of day.
- *Corn Tortillas*: A classic cultural food that is served with any meal with meat and vegetables.



FRUIT & VEGGIES

- *Plantains*: can be baked and served sweet or savory as a starchy vegetable
- *Chayote*: common side item served with casado or as pickled relish
- *Mangoes*: a sweet fruit that can be eaten alone or in a mango salsa on top of a dish
- *Pineapples*: fresh juicy fruit that is a great source of hydration and is commonly mixed in with salads, salsas and other dishes
- *Zapallo*: a squash that is typically made into a soup or other side dish



DESSERTS & SNACKS

- *Arroz con Leche*: creamy rice and milk dish spiced with cinnamon
- *Patacones*: deep fried plantains that serve as a great snack or side dish
- *Flan*: egg custard flavored with sugar and caramel that has a fun texture
- *Tres Leches*: light sponge cake soaked in milks and flavored with chocolate, dulce de leche or coffee

SIGNATURE DISHES



Patacones

Served as deep fried side, patacones are green mashed plantains that are deep fried to a golden crisp. They are shaped as a scoop and are perfect for eating guacamole, beans or pico de gallo. This side pairs well with grilled fish or chicken.

Sopa Negra

A staple dish made from black beans, this soup is seasoned with fresh herbs like cilantro and oregano and flavored with peppers and onions. Topping it with a hard boiled egg is common and will add an additional protein to this dish.



Gallo Pinto

This is the national dish of Costa Rica if you ask any native. A seemingly simple rice and beans dish yet it is served up with different flavors depending on the region you are in. Each contains a unique blend of herbs and vegetables. Gallo Pinto is found mainly at breakfast but could be eaten at any time of day.



Pozole

A filling traditional style stew, this dish is common with corn tortillas and is most popularly served during religious celebrations or main gatherings. It is made from pork, hominy, cilantro and bell peppers that are cooked slowly to ensure maximum flavor and tenderness are reached.

