



By Zeke Del Mar

Pura Vida in Costa Rica

Photography By Tina Gutomar

Here I am, sitting on a longboard, out past the breakers, wondering what the hell am I doing here. Yesterday I was surfing the Internet, doing research, and today I'm about to surf my first wave. It was always a childhood dream to be a surfer and now I'm about to make that dream a reality.

Welcome to Playa Guiones, Nosara, Costa Rica, a secluded sleepy surf community five hours west of San Jose, on the Pacific coastline. It offers a variety of waves for every experience level. This beach offers some of the most consistent year-round surfing and a no-fighting-in-the-lineup opportunity to catch a wave. Lush jungles of Guanacaste trees, chirping birds and howling monkeys surround the beach. Playa Guiones encompasses a *pura vida* lifestyle of complete relaxation and an obsession with waves and surfing. This is why Safari Surf School landed here.

Playa Guiones, a vibrant tranquil village filled with expatriates, ticos (locals) and surfers is a true surfer's playground. Once you arrive, via taxi shuttle or a short 45-minute flight from San Jose on Nature Air, you are greeted by your new family, the Safari Surf School team. Tyler, Sonja, Ileana and Kimbo's warm personalities ensure your stay will be a memorable one.

The Safari Surf School was created and continues to be run by Tim and Tyler Marsh, experienced surfers from Hawaii. They impart their surfing techniques to the students with the basics of "popping up," finding your "sweet spot," "paddling hard" and gaining the experience of knowing when to ride the wave. The School brings a unity of self, strength and brotherhood to the experience. You are there to explore your strengths and weaknesses, enjoy the culture and cuisine and connect with a group of similarly driven people.

The School has created an "all-inclusive" type surf package that includes transportation, varying luxury accommodations, two surf lessons per day (morning and afternoon), yoga lessons, breakfast and dinner, and a much-needed one-hour massage at the Tica massage studio. The accommodation choices are Arco Iris, The Harmony Hotel and L'Acqua Viva.

Arco Iris is great for the VIP surfers who want to grab a bungalow rental or a private suite. The owners of Arco Iris will customize your trip to your liking with a helicopter transportation and a Ford Excursion limo. Arriving in style, they continue with a welcoming beach party. The property has a state-of-the-art fitness facility that offers private jiu shi tzu lessons. They even include access to a private chef during your stay.

The Harmony Hotel is for the eco-conscious traveler. The hotel has received the Certificate for Sustainable Tourism from the CST Committee. The Harmony prides itself on being a sustainable property, using solar panels to heat the hot water. The restaurant serves organic, vegetarian food, and a juice bar serving drinks with sustainable bamboo straws. The healing center is another highlight of the hotel, with daily yoga sessions, relaxing holistic