



# HOLBROOK

## *International Garden Tours*

*Presents*

*The Best of*

*Costa Rican Orchids*

### *Itinerary*

#### **Day 1**

Upon arrival in San Jose, you will be met and transferred to your hotel. This evening, enjoy uniting with your fellow travelers for a special Welcome Dinner at “L’Ile de France”. You will meet your naturalist guide who will present an overview of the tour, as well as answer any questions you might have about your upcoming journey.

Your hotel during this tour has been especially chosen to provide the charm of the country as well as the brilliant gardens and fine dining that make Hotel Le Bergerac special to all who visit.

*This very popular, charming and intimate luxury hotel, with its wonderful tropical gardens, has 26 unique and attractive rooms many with their own private garden patios. Created in the style of a small French Inn, this hotel is highly recommended by Fodors, Frommers, Lonely Planet and all leading travel publications. Located in Los Yoses, the old embassy district of San Jose, this beautiful hotel is only minutes from the attractions of downtown and is an excellent base for exploring the Central Valley and for traveling throughout Costa Rica.*

*“L’Ile de France” is a truly famous San José restaurant created 26 years ago by the well known French chef, Jean Claude Fromont. The garden view and décor create a beautiful and serene ambience for the pleasure of the hotel guests and for the many local devotees of Jean Claude’s cuisine. The very pleasant dining experience is enhanced by the wide selection of superb cuisine and fine wines offered. Among the most popular dishes are the home made rabbit pâté, French onion soup, and a delicious sea food chowder, together with main courses such as duckling Landais style, beef tenderloins with a peppercorn sauce or salmon stewed in a basil sauce. There is then a delightful choice of delicious home made desserts.*

#### **Overnight at Hotel Le Bergerac (D)**

## Day 2

Today will be filled with exciting tours of three well known Orchid Wholesalers and Gardens; Orchimex de Costa Rica, Botanical Orchid Garden, and Jardin de Las Guarias. Enjoy a delicious lunch during your day of touring at a typical *Tico* Restaurant, and this evening, you will be able to select the restaurant of your choice. There are many restaurants to choose from in the area of your hotel, or simply enjoy a fabulous meal at Hotel El Bergerac.

***ORCHIMEX** was founded in 1991 by Thai and German partners. It is part of a major corporation with more than 30 years of experience in the international flower industry producing orchids. The partners brought the technical and growing expertise as well as the market knowledge that has led Orchimex to become one of the most successful orchid producers in the world. ORCHIMEX stands for ORCHids IMport and Export. They are committed to superior quality products that meet international standards.*

***Botanical Orchid Garden**, at La Garita in the Central Highlands, offers a stunning array of orchids for sale, suitably packed for export. Taking advantage of an ideal climate like the one present in La Garita, Alajuela, they have developed with great effort and dedication a place that gathers conditions for the orchids to grow and reproduce freely. For more than 30 years, trees and palms have been planted throughout the property. This has created a habitat for hundreds of plants that you can enjoy walking along their trails. In their nurseries they preserve, cultivate, and reproduce their extensive orchid family; hybrids and species selected to offer the best for those who love and collect these beautiful plants.*

***Jardin De Las Guarias** contains an extensive private orchid collection, in fact, one of the largest private collections in the country. Owner Javier Solorzano Murillo has more than 180 orchid species on display, but it is Costa Rica's national flower, the violet *Guaria morada* orchid, that blossoms most profusely - more than 40,000 of them. Javier planted his first orchid here in 1941. At least a dozen species are always in bloom.*

## Overnight at Hotel Le Bergerac (B L)

## Day 3

This morning you will be taken to Lankester Gardens, one of the most well known Public Botanic Gardens of Costa Rica. Enjoy lunch en route in Cartago, and dinner at Pueblo Antiguo where you will enjoy the Costa Rican Nights Show!

***Lankester Gardens** has a world class collection of 800 varieties of orchids. The huge number of plants means you can see blooms year round, although Feb. through April is the most spectacular time to visit. The 26 acres of gardens are home to nearly 3,000 species in all. Officially founded in 1973, the mission of the University of Costa Rica's Lankester Botanical Garden is to promote conservation, enjoyment and sustainable use of the epiphytic flora through scientific research, horticulture, and environmental education. The garden's researchers develop research projects with a strong emphasis on alpha taxonomy and ecology of epiphyte plants and publish the results of their work in specialized journals. They also participate as teachers at the University of Costa Rica, in conservation projects and other activities such as the coordination of the Documentation Center of the JBL, the Orchid Identification Center, the taxonomic database EPIDENDRA and the edition of*

*Lankesteriana and EPIDENDRUM. Lankesteriana , the Lankester Botanical Garden's scientific journal , has been dedicated since 2001 to publishing all sorts of botanical articles, with special attention to epiphytes and orchid systems, ecology, evolution and physiology, along with book reviews and conferences on these subjects. Lankesteriana is a peer-reviewed journal that publishes original works in Spanish or English and is distributed to more than 350 institutions throughout the world.*

**Costa Rican Nights At Pueblo Antiguo** - Today you will be met at the lobby of the hotel by a representative for your transfer to Pueblo Antiguo, which is a Theme Park created to represent the architectural styles found in the 1880-1930 Costa Rica. This small city represents life in the capital of a nation during the turn of the century, from the 19th to 20th centuries, reproducing important buildings such as the metropolitan Cathedral, our Congress, the Central Market, San Juan De Dios Hospital, and several other buildings. Come and enjoy a night you will cherish in your memories in Pueblo Antiguo (Old Town), with a dance show that gathers the diverse influences that made Costa Rica a cultural bridge. Included is round trip transportation to/from the hotel and Pueblo Antiguo, a Welcome Cocktail, the tour around Pueblo Antiguo with the services of a bilingual guide, the Costa Rican Nights Show, typical dinner, barbecue style, Marimba live music and all applicable taxes. Recommendations: casual wear.

### **Overnight at Hotel Le Bergerac (B L D)**

#### **Day 4**

Today you will have the opportunity to explore the cool and abundant cloud forest of the Bosque de Paz Reserve and the lush rain forest of the Selva Verde Reserve. After spending the last few days seeing fabulous orchids in the gardens and nurseries of Costa Rica, it is seeing these orchids in the wilds of their homelands that can truly provide the most memorable experiences. Enjoy a delicious buffet lunch along the beautiful white water river of Sarapiquí at Selva Verde Lodge, while being immersed in over 300 acres of primary, tropical rain forest.

***Bosque de Paz Cloud Forest** is a 3000 acre privately-owned Biological Reserve that, as a natural biological corridor, connects the Poás Volcano National Park with the Juan Castro Blanco National Park. It is a spectacularly rich ecosystem because of its privileged location. It is located on the Continental Divide with altitudes ranging from 1450 to 2450 meters above sea level. Their three main objectives are Conservation, Research, and Education. Most of their earnings are reinvested in buying more forest to be privately protected. Each year, many forested lands around the area are being acquired to leave this untouched, fragile and complex ecosystem as a heritage to mankind.*

***Selva Verde Lodge & Rain Forest Reserve** is a 500-acre privately-owned Biological Reserve that also serves as a natural biological corridor, and has a special history of being “saved” from a clear-cutting project from the previous owner in 1985. When the current founder of Selva Verde Lodge, Giovanna Holbrook, found out about the projected destruction, she demanded that it be stopped, and when the owner was unwilling, she did what she had to do in order to save it – she bought it! And from that day until now, there has been nothing but good will put into this land, which features a fabulous, sustainable eco-lodge and private reserve. Once visited, you wish to not depart – and thus the many*

*visitors coming to Selva Verde have returned year after year, to experience the natural beauty, the dedication to the earth's gifts of flora and fauna, and to simply relax and enjoy this magical place on the planet. In addition to the many groups of scientists, students, nature enthusiasts, and awe-struck children that have visited Selva Verde, there is also another component of the property - a very special non-profit organization, the Sarapiquí Conservation Learning Center. Founded in the mid-1990s by the Holbrook family and Selva Verde Lodge, the SCLC is today a fully independent US and Costa Rica registered non-profit organization. The SCLC's mission is to link communities and conservation through education and ecotourism in the Sarapiquí region of Costa Rica's northern lowlands. The SCLC is run by an executive director and a mix of local and international staff, both salaried and volunteer. An international board of directors works to support Costa Rica-based staff. The SCLC focuses its efforts in four areas — environmental education, community development, conservation, and tourism — in order to help form future environmental leaders, raise the organizational capacity of local communities, promote sustainable land use, and connect tourists to the local community. Their programs serve hundreds of local people and thousands of eco-tourists each year. These programs include environmental education, ecotourism activities, English classes, ecology club, community outreach, women's group, high school scholarship fund, community census, and GIS mapping.*

This evening, a very special dinner awaits you at the premier restaurant in San Jose, at Le Chandelier Restaurant.

*Entering the stately Le Chandelier Restaurant is akin to being invited into the home of one of the country's best gourmet chefs. An enticing aroma of opulence wafts from the kitchen, and beyond the entryway is a table with all shapes and sizes of fresh breads and aged cheeses. The elegantly appointed rooms are dark and earthy, with portals in the walls filled with statues, wood carvings, ceramics, antique musical instruments and other unique treasures. Although deeply masculine, the decoration incorporates soft feminine touches here and there, such as the delicate white flowers and pink candles adorning each of the tables. Le Chandelier offers a wide variety of delectable dishes, prepared to perfection not just in taste but in appearance as well. Diners can choose from among an impressive menu of hot and cold starters, soups, seafood and meats, or select the complete, seven-course "Gourmet Menu," which changes every few days, depending on the availability of seasonal and fresh foods.*

### **Overnight at Hotel Le Bergerac. (B L D)**

#### **Day 5**

Following breakfast, you will be transferred to the San Jose International Airport for your flight back to the States.

*Welcome Home!*

**(B)**

#### **Tour Cost:**

**\$1148.00 Per Person in Double Occupancy**

**\$198.00 Single Supplement**

**Based on a Group of 20 Persons, Including 2 Complimentary Tour Costs**

**International Airfare Not Included**