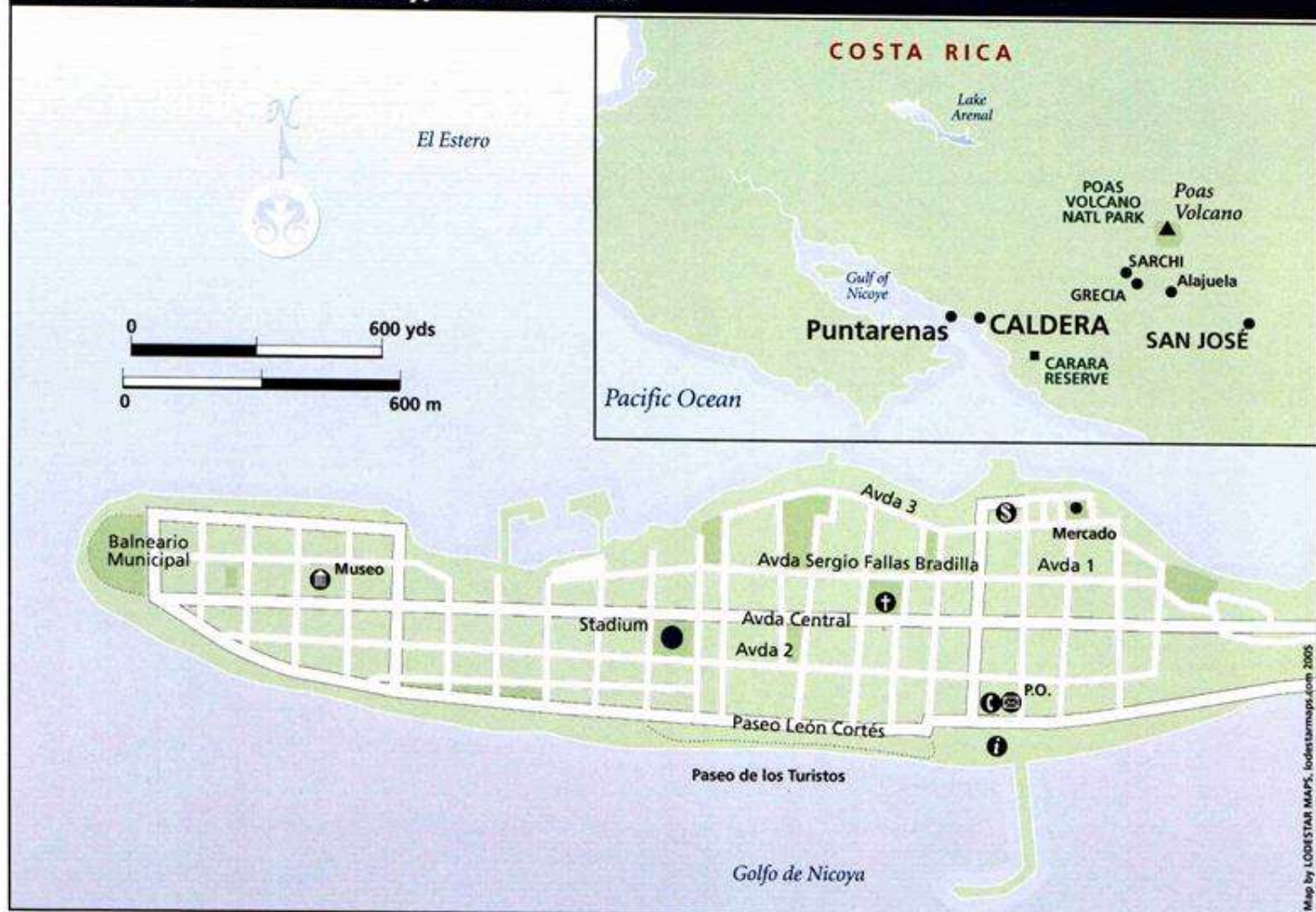




Port Description

Caldera (Puntarenas), Costa Rica



Docking location:	Crystal Symphony is scheduled to dock at Caldera Cargo Terminal.
Distance to town:	The distance to the neighbor town of Puntarenas is approximately 30 minutes drive by bus.
Local Crystal Cruises' Port Representative:	R. Smyth & Co. S.A. Del Super Santiago 400m. Norte Rio Segundo, Alajuela Phone: (011) 506-442-8862, 506-380-3718.
Exchange Rate:	The local currency is the Colon. Please check your daily Reflections for the most updated exchange rate.
Shopping:	A vendor's market place can be found inside the little terminal building. Sarchi town offers local art & craft and is located one and a half-hours drive from the pier.
Shuttle Bus:	A shuttle bus service will be operating between the pier in Caldera and the nearby town of Puntarenas. Please check your daily "Reflections" for operating hours. Please note that the drop off point in Puntarenas will be in front of the Capitania building by Paseo de los Turistas.
Taxis:	Taxis are available pier side and are not metered. Taxi rates can be negotiated and should be agreed upon before departure.

Superlatives abound when describing Costa Rica, one of Latin America's most peaceful countries. Often called the "Switzerland of Central America," it does not possess an army and boasts a stable democratic government, as well as a high literacy rate. Strategically located between two great continents, it has been the benefactor of great cultural contributions from each. In addition to discovering its fascinating traditions, visitors to Costa Rica will be welcomed by friendly people and will enjoy superb scenery and an ideal climate.

Caldera and Puntarenas

Besides the little market inside the terminal building from Caldera the port area does not have much to offer. In the terminal building you will find telephones and of course, the world famous Costa Rican coffee to purchase. Taxis are plenty available once you get off Crystal Symphony. Please keep in mind that even if the taxis are metered try to negotiate a price for your trip before starting any journey. The closest "town" of Puntarenas is approximately a 20 minute taxi drive from the port of Caldera. Puntarenas has little to offer. The native Art's and Craft market along the waterfront in the down town area of Puntarenas is nice to visit. There are a few resort areas in fairly close proximity to the port of Caldera. Nearest is the all exclusive Fiesta Resort. The resort offers two restaurants, two pools and tennis courts.

San José City and the Central Valley

The capital city of Costa Rica is located in the center of the country amidst the Provinces of Heredia and Alajuela. It takes approximately two hours to get there on the Pan-American Highway, which extends all the way from Alaska to Argentina and is lined with coffee, sugar cane and mango plantations. Downtown San José is very compact. Nearly every place you might want to go is within a 15-by-4-block area. Because of traffic congestion, you'll often find it faster to walk than to take a bus or taxi. Be careful when walking the streets any time of day or night. Flashy jewelry, loosely held handbags or backpacks, and expensive camera equipment tend to attract thieves. Avenida Central is a pedestrian-only street for the blocks from Calle Central toward the Cultural Plaza and a little bit beyond.

The National Museum

Costa Rica's most important historical museum, showcasing a great collection of Pre-Columbian gold, jade and pottery, is located in downtown San Jose.

Open from Tuesday through Saturday, from 8:30am to 4:30pm and Sundays from 9:00 am to 4:30 pm. It is closed on Monday.

Cloud Forest and the Poas Volcano National Park

There are just a few remaining tropical cloud forests in the world and Costa Rica holds two of them. This is a must if you enjoy the green tropical forests. The crater edge is located at 8,900 feet above sea level and it is one of the most visited National Parks of this nation. There is always a 50 % chance to see the crater as it is a "Cloud Forest." The visitors' center is open from 8:00am to 4:00 pm.

Carara Rainforest Biological Reserve

The 4,700 ha. Carara Biological Reserve occupies a unique position at the transition zone between tropical moist forest and tropical wet forest in the Pacific lowlands. However, Carara's main attraction for most visitors is its wildlife, and star billing goes to the Scarlet Macaw and other colorful tropical species. The reserve does maintain as well populations of Margay, Ocelot, Jaguarundi, reptiles and amphibians, though most species are either cryptic or nocturnal and therefore not readily seen. Getting there: By car, it is less than two hours from San José to the reserve headquarters. Public buses going to Jacó or Quepos/Manuel Antonio will let you off at the reserve.

Rainforest Aerial Tram

Visitors from around the world ride the Tram on a fascinating Costa Rica tour through the rain forest canopy and its hanging gardens of plants and animals. Home to two-thirds of all rain forest species, the rain forest canopy is a little-known world of tremendous beauty and extraordinary biological diversity. The park, (adjacent to Braulio Carillo National Park and only an hour from San Jose), possesses one of the richest canopy communities in the world. *Hours: 6:30 am, every day, 365 days a year. The Rain Forest Tram operates from 7:00 a.m. daily (Mondays from 9:00 a.m.). The Main Gate is open every day until 4:00 p.m.*

Shopping

The most typical items you'll find are hand-painted wooden oxcarts in the town of Sarchi, not far from Caldera. These come in a variety of sizes, and the big ones can be shipped to your home for a very reasonable price. If you want to stick to downtown San José, try the outdoor market on the Plaza de la Democracia, although prices here tend to be high and bargaining can be difficult. If you prefer to do your crafts shopping in a flea-market atmosphere, head over to La Casona on Calle Central.

Port Descriptions are provided to our guests compliments of the Crystal Adventures shore excursions staff. Information is intended as a guideline only and cannot be guaranteed by Crystal Cruises in any way.