



PLACES OF INTEREST

ported by deadly accurate snipers in the bell tower of the church. The only way to get Walker and his men out would be to burn them out. When the word was spread among the soldiers, young Juan Santamaria stepped forward and volunteered. He asked only that if he should be killed that Costa Rica would look after his mother. The commanding general agreed.

As rounds zipped all around him Santamaria ran barefoot across open ground and threw the lit torch. The home was soon ablaze and Walker and his men were forced to flee the building. They soon retreated from the town under cover of darkness with heavy casualties. Santamaria, cut down by musket fire, lay dead in the dust of the street.

William Walker and his mercenaries never threatened the people of Costa Rica again. Four years later upon returning arrogantly to Central America, Walker was arrested by the Honduran government, backed against a wall and summarily shot by a military firing squad...he was 36 years old.

Today it is doubtful that any American knows the name or infamy of William Walker. However, in Costa Rica every school

child quickly learns of and comes to respect the memory and legend of a barefoot, peasant drummer-boy...young Juan Santamaria. His mother, as her son had been promised, was in fact granted a small pension for the rest of her life.

PUNTARENAS AREA PLACES OF INTEREST

1 The **National Museum of Pre-Columbian Art**, located in Costa Rica's capital of San Jose, has a fantastic collection of gold, pottery and art that dates back to the Indian civilizations that inhabited the region for thousands of years prior to the arrival of Columbus and the Spanish conquistadores.

2 The **Poás Volcano** is in many ways directly responsible for some of the best coffee to be grown anywhere in the world. As one of the world's largest volcanoes, (reaching over 8,000 feet above sea level) the eruptions that have taken place over thousands of years have provided much of the surrounding region with the rich volcanic soil in which the coffee trees thrive. Coffee plantations stretch for miles in the shadow of this great volcano. From the edge of Poás visitors can look down into the

blue waters that fill the bowl deep below the rim.

3 The **Monteverde Cloud Forest** is one of the most beautiful and interesting sites in Costa Rica. This protected cloud forest provides a living laboratory for scientists from around the world to come and study the great diversity of plants, animals and birds that thrive in this amazing environment. There are suspension bridges that allow guests the unique opportunity and perspective of walking quietly over the high jungle canopy. There are also clearly marked hiking paths that wind through the forest among the streams and waterfalls. The reserve has a beautiful hummingbird park as well as reportedly the best cheese in all of Costa Rica.

4 **Sarchi** is a small town that is famous for the quality of workmanship displayed by its local artisans. Perhaps best symbolizing the town are the intricately carved and brightly painted oxcarts that follow in the traditions established over the past century. There are numerous shops and craftsmen's studios where visitors can watch the artisans create many of the favorite pieces that include decorative masks, wooden utensils, bowls as well as hand made furniture.

5 **Manuel Antonio National Park** is another one of Costa Rica's beautiful nature preserves. Set along the Pacific coast the park includes numerous beaches and colorful fish that make for a great place to swim and snorkel. The rain forest reaches to the edge of the beach and is filled with monkeys and birds.

6 The **Orchid Farm** grows some of the most beautiful flowers in the "Orchidaceae" orchid family. The orchids are shipped all over the world. Visitors have the opportunity to see many of these mysteriously stunning plants and learn about some of the most delicate, lovely, and sought after species in the flower kingdom.

SHORE EXCURSIONS To make the most of your visit to Puntarenas and surrounding areas we suggest you take one of the organized Shore Excursions. For Information concerning tour content and pricing, contact the onboard Shore Excursion Desk. When going ashore, be advised to take with you only necessary items and secure any valuables onboard.

LOCAL CUSTOMS Bargaining: Prices are generally fixed.

Tipping: A 10% tip is added automatically at restaurants. A small addition for good service is customary and appreciated.

Local Cuisine: Costa Rican cuisine is a combination of South American, Mexican, Caribbean and European traditions. It is simple and fresh with the use of many fruits and vegetables. Some of the favorites include: Gallo Pinto, beans (red or black) and rice and if Costa Rica has a national dish...this is it. It can be served with any meal of the day. Tamales are cornmeal dough wrapped around a mixture of pork or chicken then folded into a banana leaf and baked or boiled. Empanadas are baked

pastry turnovers usually filled with chicken, beans or cheese. Olla de Carne is a vegetable soup that combines yucca, squash, corn, potatoes, and ayote which is similar to a squash. Patacones are sliced plantains that have been deep-fried. Flan is a favorite desert. It is caramel custard served chilled.

Drink Specialties: There are plenty of fresh fruit drinks available but we discovered an interesting drink called Horchata. It combines rice milk, sugar, cinnamon and water.

Costa Rican Coffee: President Abraham Lincoln famously said; "If this is coffee, please bring me some tea; but if this is tea, please bring me some coffee." We do not know what Mr. Lincoln was drinking but one thing is sure...the President had not been served a cup of Costa Rican coffee. Costa Rica is justly famous for its superb coffee. The trees thrive in the high altitudes of the cool, cloudy mountains. The volcanic soil is rich and combines with the other growing conditions to produce a quality crop. Costa Ricans drink a great deal of coffee. It has been grown in the country since the late 1700s and was being exported to Europe by the mid 1800s. Costa Rica's best coffee is still exported all over the world, much of it going to the United States. It was the general prosperity of the coffee growers and exporters in the late 1800s that helped to build a modern railroad from the interior of the country to the Atlantic coast. A fast and efficient way was needed to transport the coffee beans to the port. Today Costa Rican coffee growers continue to work hard to improve the quality of their crop and are proud of the wonderful results...results that are based upon the labors and efforts of the many generations that have preceded them. Bottled water is recommended.

SHOPPING One of the primary shopping areas for visitors to Puntarenas is close to the pier on "Paseo de los Turistas". Popular items include uniquely interesting rocking chairs made of leather and wood as well as a range of local arts and crafts, ceramics, leather and replicas of pre-Colombian gold jewelry. Local markets often have an array of fascinating items.

LOCAL CURRENCY Costa Rica's official currency is the "colon" (CRC). U.S. dollars and major credit cards are widely accepted. If you happen to use U.S. dollars please note that only small denominations in good condition will be accepted.

POST OFFICE AND TELEPHONE FACILITIES There is a Post Office one block north of the pier's main gate.

Dial the following access numbers to use a personal calling card:

AT&T: 0.800.011.4114

MCI: 0.800.012.2222

TRANSPORTATION Car rentals are available. Taxis can be found waiting at the pier. Some of the drivers might speak a little English. Prior to leaving it is best to negotiate and agree on the fare.