



COSTA RICA  
**Investments**

# Building in Costa Rica



## YOUR GUIDE TO BUILDING IN COSTA RICA

If you have decided to build or are thinking of building in Costa Rica this guide will outline the steps, challenges and process you should understand. Building can be a wonderful experience, allowing your creative mind to go wild and to build something unique and amazing in Costa Rica.

## The Process

1. Find & purchase the Land
2. Develop the plans
3. Get permits
4. Contract a builder
5. Get building!



### FIND THE LAND

When looking at and purchasing land in Costa Rica, below are some aspects to consider and things to ask the Realtor and Seller.

1. **What is the water situation?**  
— with no water you won't get a building permit
2. **Electrical availability - is there an electrical post nearby?**  
— If not, getting a post put in is a simple process and costs around \$2,000 a pole, with pole distance being between 50-100m depending on the property.
3. **Check the Uso de Suelo aka Land Usage**  
— make sure you can build what you want on the property.
4. **Soil studies**  
— get a soil study done so you know what you are building on and make sure it doesn't flood.
5. **See the property in the dry and green season**  
— properties look different throughout the seasons here.



## BUY V BUILD

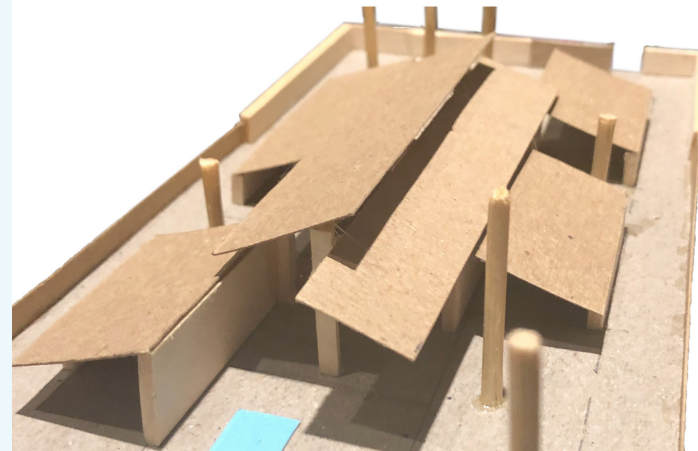
When analyzing whether to buy or build in Costa Rica it's important to understand that any building project is going to cause stress, there is just no way around it. However, when you have your perfect property in Costa Rica, you will quickly forget about the stress, especially as you sit by your pool, cocktail in hand with an amazing ocean view.

	BUY	BUILD
SPEED	Instant	1-2 years
COST	Get what you see, don't pay for mistakes	Without good management can be more expensive
CONVENIENCE	Easy	Longer
APPRECIATION	1-3 %	5-10%
GET WHAT YOU WANT	Maybe	100%



## THE BUILDING TEAM

Taking your time, asking for references and building a great team will make all the difference when it comes to constructing in Costa Rica. Below is the team you should be looking for as well as some recommendations for each category in Costa Rica.



### Architect and/or Engineer

You can use both or just an engineer, but ultimately an engineer needs to submit the structural plans. Our advice is to use both as you will have an artist to make it look good and an engineer to make sure it is built well.

Inverse Project	Richard Hammond	<a href="http://www.inverseproject.com/">www.inverseproject.com/</a>
Loop Design	Mario Zamora	<a href="http://www.loopdesign.studio/">www.loopdesign.studio/</a>
SGI	Melissa Santana	<a href="http://www.sgi-ingenieros.com/">www.sgi-ingenieros.com/</a>
Richard Muller	Richard Muller	<a href="http://tamarindopark.com/2021/08/20/meet-our-architect-richard-muller-castro/">tamarindopark.com/2021/08/20/meet-our-architect-richard-muller-castro/</a>
Studio Saxe	Studio Saxe	<a href="http://studiosaxe.com">studiosaxe.com</a>
LSD	Tinoco	<a href="http://www.elesdi.com/">www.elesdi.com/</a>
Manucci Architects	Tatiana Alfaro	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/mannucciarquitectos">www.facebook.com/mannucciarquitectos</a>

## Project Manager\*

This is not required, but if your project is complicated or you want to make sure everything runs to plan, then a Project manager can help a lot. They have knowledge of construction, permitting and delivering projects on time and budget.

Avicenia	Daniel Loria	<a href="http://avicennia.co.cr/en/home/">avicennia.co.cr/en/home/</a>
Sphera	Roberto Meza	<a href="http://www.sphasostenible.com/">www.sphasostenible.com/</a>

*\*Not required but will help in a fluid building process.*

## Construction Company

Making sure you have a great building company is vital. You should interview a few and see some of the other projects they have built. Request references and ask these references what the challenges were. The point is to uncover the issues that arose and how they were overcome. A great question is would they use them again if they had to do the project over.

Totem Costa Rica	<a href="http://www.totemconstructora.com/">www.totemconstructora.com/</a>
Proinsa	<a href="http://www.proinsa.cr">www.proinsa.cr</a>
Prodieco	<a href="http://www.prodieco.com/">www.prodieco.com/</a>
Guzman	<a href="http://www.constructoraguzman.com/">www.constructoraguzman.com/</a>
LR Ingenieros	<a href="http://www.lringenieros.net/">www.lringenieros.net/</a>
New Age Construction	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/NewAgeConstruction">www.facebook.com/NewAgeConstruction</a>

## Interior Designer\*

By now you've spent all this time and money on the skeleton and guts of the place so you may want to make sure it looks as stunning inside and outside as it does in the foundations, walls and roof.

*\*Not required but will help in a fluid building process.*

Lilliam Fatjo	<a href="mailto:lilyfatjointeriors@gmail.com">lilyfatjointeriors@gmail.com</a>	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/lily_fatjo_interiors/">www.instagram.com/lily_fatjo_interiors/</a>
Carrie Branton	8701-4176 <a href="mailto:indigohomefurniture@gmail.com">indigohomefurniture@gmail.com</a>	<a href="http://www.indigohomecostarica.com">www.indigohomecostarica.com</a>
Mariana & Jaime	506 8639 2606 <a href="mailto:info@colablancastudio.com">info@colablancastudio.com</a>	<a href="http://www.colablancastudio.com/">www.colablancastudio.com/</a>
Sarah Flores	(506) 8420 8991 <a href="mailto:info@sarahyfloresinteriordesign.com">info@sarahyfloresinteriordesign.com</a>	<a href="http://www.sarahyfloresinteriordesign.com/">www.sarahyfloresinteriordesign.com/</a>
Sens Interior Design	(+506) 2281 0550 <a href="mailto:info@senscr.com">info@senscr.com</a>	<a href="http://senscr.com/">senscr.com/</a>
Marcela Soto Design	8729 - 1340 <a href="mailto:decoracion@marcelasoto.com">decoracion@marcelasoto.com</a>	<a href="http://www.marcelasoto.com/">www.marcelasoto.com/</a> <a href="https://www.facebook.com/marcelasotointeriordesign/">www.facebook.com/marcelasotointeriordesign/</a>
Maricia Guitierrez	8729-7983 <a href="mailto:maricia@vitaldesigncr.com">maricia@vitaldesigncr.com</a>	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/vitaldesigncostarica/?hl=en">www.instagram.com/vitaldesigncostarica/?hl=en</a>
Rosario Arguello - Casa Nova	2653-9060 <a href="mailto:info@casanova.cr">info@casanova.cr</a>	<a href="http://casanova.cr/">casanova.cr/</a>





## Building Process

1. Hire an architect and or Engineer who is licensed by the College of Engineers and Architects (CFIA) to build plans that work for you and your land.
2. Submit your plans for approval from the College of Engineers and once approved (1-2 weeks), submit your plans to the local municipality for approval (1 month).
3. Find and contract your construction company.
4. Make sure you have electricity and water on your property ready for construction.
5. **Begin building in Costa Rica!**



## COSTS OF BUILDING IN COSTA RICA

The range of prices to build in Costa Rica is far and wide depending on the quality of build.. As a basic rule of thumb, the below will help you have a rough estimation of how much each build quality will cost per sqm and sqft.

	SQM	SQFT
<b>Basic Quality</b> (Ceramic floors, zinc roof, single pane aluminum windows, wood doors, granite kitchen)	\$800—\$1,200	\$75—\$110
<b>Mid Quality</b> (Ceramic floors, granite kitchen, double pane aluminium windows, some hardwoods)	\$1,300—\$1,800	\$120—\$170
<b>High Quality</b> (Porcelain floors, quartz kitchens, double pane hi-quality windows, hardwoods)	\$1,800-\$2,500	\$180-\$230

### Aspects to consider that may lengthen building time in Costa Rica

- If you don't have water from mains or a registered well and need to dig a well, this process can take up to 12 months and have a cost of over \$2,000.
- Building over 500 sqm or 5,400 sqft? Then you will need an environmental study which will increase the cost by around \$1,500.



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