



Purchasing real estate in Costa Rica

When looking at purchasing real estate in Costa Rica, there are many things you need to take in consideration. Most decisions concerning real estate in Costa Rica are very similar to those decisions to purchase land anywhere. You want to ensure that your property in Costa Rica is in an area where you want to live and you want to ensure that your Costa Rica real estate is going to be able to do what you dream it to do.

Nearly all of the real estate in Costa Rica that you find will have a title and will be free and clear of any liens and encumbrances. Similar to what you'd find in your home country. One key element that we highly suggest is obtaining local, legal representation. It will save you a tremendous amount of time and effort employing someone who has a full understanding of the Costa Rica real estate laws, codes and systems. A good attorney in Costa Rica can really streamline a lot of things concerning your property and should be able to completely cover any issues and answer all questions you could ever have about buying property in Costa Rica. All in all, your attorney should be one of your best friends down here.

The Costa Rican government takes a lot of measures to ensure that this beautiful, ecological paradise remains just that. It is a difficult teeter totter when you balance the ecological preservation of Costa Rica (which drives nearly all of the tourism) with the explosive development and investing that's occurring here in Costa Rica. Therefore, the government of Costa Rica, in regards to real estate in Costa Rica, has a strong department to regulate the development of their country.

One of the conditions is with the usage of the coastal lands and properties of Costa Rica. The government has claimed that the first 50 meters from high tide are to be public domain, ALWAYS! If someone tries to sell you a shack on the beach or the first 50 meters of beach, be careful because they do not own the land. The government has taken it a step further. The government also owns the next 150 meters (roughly 450 ft) of coastline beyond the first 50 meters deemed "Public". So, in this regard, the government of Costa Rica owns the first 200 meters of coastal land (approx 600 ft).

The government of Costa Rica has devised a department of records and an entity to control and monitor the usage of this specially-zoned 200 meter boundary (called the Mari-time zone). This department has devised a system for investors to obtain this special coast line zoning. The system consists of two zoning requirements. The first is the "Right of Possession" and the second is the "Concession".

The “Right of Possession” gives an investor, individual or group, the permission to occupy or “Possess” the land for a contracted period of time (usually 5 yrs, 10 yrs, or 20yrs). Obtaining the “Right of Possession” grants the possessor to obtain the land and sell or transfer the “Rights of Possession” to someone else but it does not permit the possessor any rights to develop, build, change or construct any real or substantial structures on that property. A small, simple shack can be built for the purposes of a shelter but that is pretty much all. Once an investor or individual obtains the rights to possess this land, the possessor would then have to hire an architect (and possibly and Engineer) to come to the property and create official drawings to reflect what the possessor wants to build, whether it be a personal home, a hotel, a bar/restaurant, etc. Once the official drawings are created, your attorney would then submit them to the government for obtaining your “Concession” or permission to construct what you’d like.

Most property in Costa Rica you find that is along the coast will have the “Right of Possession” but very few have the full blown Concession. Without the Concession, you can’t construct anything. There are those who build without the Concession and those properties are in danger of having their buildings razed. And it most certainly happens. The government of Costa Rica has made it very clear that the system in place is the system to be enforced.

In regards to development and building, the Costa Rica government also has in place certain environmental impact studies which control certain elements that are key to the eco-systems in different areas. Some of these restrictions would be in regards to water systems such as rivers, streams, ponds and lakes as well as protected trees, plants and groves. There is an abundance of “Green” zoning in Costa Rica and most investors look for parts of their property to be “Green” zones. Green zone restricts any and all building. Also, dependent upon the region, tampering with water ways or systems is also not allowed. Usually, you are not allowed to build, alter or construct within 15 meters (30 feet) of either side of a water system.

When purchasing land in Costa Rica make sure you have a good realtor that you trust and a good Attorney that you can communicate with well. Property in Costa Rica is a very straight forward transaction with the exception to purchasing land on the coast or the beachfront. It is important that you know, understand and comply with all government laws and regulations. In every business there are professionals and there are amateurs. Century 21 of Costa Rica, now with the new information center in Escazu, lets you see, feel and work with the professionals. [Write an email](#) or [call us](#). Let us show you why Century 21 is known as the most professional Real Estate Agency in Costa Rica.

Now with an office in San Jose, visit the Century 21 real estate information center in Escazu for any information you may need. The office is equipped with English, Spanish, German, and Dutch speaking personnel who are professionals in their trade. There is a lot of opportunity to purchase land in Costa Rica and you should feel confident and comfortable in your decisions. [Call us](#) or [email](#) with as many questions as you’d like...the answers are invaluable and they’re absolutely free to you.

Information: <http://www.c21costaricainfo.com>