

The Blue Flag Ecology Program



The Blue Flag Ecology Program is a joint venture of several Costa Rican authorities, including the Costa Rican Tourism Institute, MINAE (Ministry of Environment), National Water Service, Ministry of Public Health and CANATUR (National Tourism Chamber) along with the member community striving to achieve the Blue Flag. Administered by the National Blue Flag Commission, the continued efforts of these organizations have resulted in a long list of beaches being awarded the Ecological Blue Flag.

Under the Blue Flag Ecology Program, the Costa Rican beaches are evaluated on a strict criterion. The beaches are assessed on water quality of the ocean and the drinking water, waste disposal, sanitary facilities, signage, tourist safety, environmental education and involvement of the community in beach maintenance. Only beaches with a 90% score succeed in acquiring a distinction and receiving the Blue Flag. Beaches awarded the Blue Flag are then monitored on monthly basis for sustained maintenance.



The Blue Flag Ecology Program was founded with the purpose of improving education and information regarding the environment. Since then it has been helping to promote the protection of the natural surroundings and increasing public knowledge in this regard. The proof of this is that every year more and more beach communities of Costa Rica are competing for the Blue Flag and working for the purpose of the Blue Flag Ecology Program. The success of this program has inspired authorities to expand it to the non-coastal communities.

The livelihood of most Costa Rican coastal communities depends on its beaches. It is mainly due to the Blue Flag Ecology Program that tourists and the local communities alike can now enjoy the stunning beaches of Costa Rica without fear of contamination. This has led the resident community, tourism entrepreneurs and the entire coastal municipality of Costa Rica to participate actively in taking care of the beaches and contributing effectively to the various educational programs offered under the Blue Flag Ecology Program.



The Blue Flag Ecology Program has prompted many coastal communities into putting their resources to use for improving the environmental quality of life. Today Ecological Blue Flags fly proudly over many Costa Rican beaches in the Central Valley, Northern Plains, North Pacific, South Pacific, Caribbean Coast and the Central Pacific.

Environmentally conscious tourists can now make a conscious choice and spend their vacations at the Ecological Blue Flag awarded beaches.