

The 2009 ISA World Surfing Games begin in Costa Rica

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The International Surfing Association welcomed more than 34 nations to the World Surfing games today in Costa Rica at a press conference hosted by a panel of participants and organizers.

Australia's Mick Campbell, an ASP professional surfer ranked 13th in the world and ISA Gold Medalist in 1998, California's Courtney Conlogue, a Silver Medalist and winner of last week's US Open, Costa Rica prodigy Carlos Muñoz who recently won the Open, Junior and Under 16 division in the National Surfing Tour and Sofia Mulanovich, 2004 ISA and ASP World Champion, were among the famous stars leading the press conference. They all spoke of the country's beauty, and the excitement they felt competing in ISA events in the past. Seated along side them was the President of the ISA, Fernando Aguerre, the President of the Costa Rican Surfing Federation and Billabong's Latin America representative Chris Evans.

"All the members of the panel very happy to be part of an event in the warm water and perfect Costa Rican waves," said Fernando Aguerre, the ISA President, "This is the first time a World Surfing Games has been held in Central America, we have been all over the globe, but never here. Being in Costa Rica is amazing."

"I am really very glad to be here in Costa Rica," commented Sofia Mulanovich, the 2004 ISA and ASP World Champion. "The truth is that generally I choose the countries I like when I compete in an ISA contest. It is always a joy to be in Latin countries. I love Costa Rica, the people are beautiful and Pura vida!"

Mulanovich also highlighted how important was to her career the fact of having won the 2004 edition of the Games by saying: "Winning the ISA gold medal in Ecuador five years ago gave me a really strong push and confidence to be able to later win the ASP World Tour, in that same year. I love being on an ISA event and I will try my best to repeat the Gold Medal."

"It is a real pleasure to be able to host these championships, since they are considered the "Olympics of the Surfing," said Jose Ureña, the President of the Costa Rican Surfing Federation. "I want to publicly thank Billabong and the ISA, since without them it had been really impossible to even dream of this event. And now we have it here, where everything we want to share it with the world we can – to show how agreeable Costa Rica is and how to enjoy to the maximum all Costa Rica has to offer."

"This is one of the only opportunities to see the best competitors from each country surfing for their flags and the pride of being members in their national surfing teams" concluded Fernando Aguerre as the conference closed. "This is a rare chance, one that we all love about surfing, to enjoy this special experience together. I invite them all to enjoy it."

The Opening Ceremonies and Parade of Nations will take place Friday at 10AM and will be web live at www.BillabongISAWorldGames.com

Perfect waves welcomed the surfers of more than 30 countries on the last few days. Fore specialists have announced the arrival of a new south swell that will keep the action up for the days to come.

SOURCE: Billabong ISA World Games



IMPORTANT CONTACTS

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WELCOME TO COSTA RICA!

We are very happy to present you the following information and to assist you with your needs.

This information will be updated periodically, please continue to check the ISA website for updates.

EVENT SITE INFORMATION

Garabito covers an extensión of 316,31 km² and has a population of 11,259 people. Garabito is part of Puntarenas (one of the 7 provinces of Costa Rica). The county of Garabito is subdivided in two city districts: **Jacó** and Tarcoles.

Jaco Beach is located 2 hours from San Jose, making it one of the nearest beaches from **International Airport Juan Santamaría (SJO)** located in Alajuela (25 minutes away from the capital city San Jose). It is of easy access, very convenient for those taking a flight and then driving directly to Jaco. Transportation in Jaco and surroundings is pretty simple. The city is small enough as to walk from one end to the other but there are also taxis that can you to your destination.

In Garabito most people speak English. The official currency of Costa Rica is the colon (₡); US dollars are also accepted, these may be exchanged at the local banks, also Euros are exchanged to colones.

One of the main attractions is surfing but there are also tours such as ATV, canopy, parachuting, kayak, horseback riding, scuba diving, sport fishing, tours on bouts and cruises. There are also tour operators that offer one day tours, such as horse back riding or luxurious sport fishing tours and kayak.

In the last years, the city of Jaco has witnessed an explosive growth in development. You may find: hotels, restaurants (many fast foods but also specialized restaurants), ice cream stores, furniture stores, pharmacies, supermarkets, stores, bakeries, rent a cars, medical clinics, hardware stores, banks, electric appliances stores, educational institutions, real estates, spas, and other kind of businesses. Furthermore, Garabito has all the public services a community requires: Social Security Clinic, Red Cross, Police (Touristic, Rural and Municipal), sports facilities, recreational parks, schools and public high schools, church, and governmental offices.

Along Jaco's main road that runs parallel to the ocean, there are numerous stores. Most of them offer products such as: jewels, fabrics, surf apparel, knick knacks, and of coarse Costa Rican souvenirs. There are also several small shopping centers along the main road that have different kind of stores and also ATM's.

South of Jaco and only a 5 minute drive away is **Playa Hermosa**, the place that will host the next Billabong ISA World Surfing Games 2009. Playa Hermosa is located on the PACIFIC COAST. Considered one of the best places to surf in the world, though visitors need to exercise caution. At noon the black sand is hot and if you don't use some kind of shoes you may burn your feet. However the beach is beautiful and it's surrounded by incredible nature. Garabito is a natural landscape where you may live an unforgettable experience.

This information was provided by the Central Pacific Chamber of Commerce of Costa Rica, for more information you may visit their website: www.cenpac.net or call (506) 2642-2853.