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## Happy Life in Costa Rica

Garrett Lodge  
*Linfield College*

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Garrett Lodge

San Ramon, Costa Rica

October 27, 2016

### Happy Life in Costa Rica

During my first two months of living, studying, and exploring Costa Rica, I have noticed subtle differences and major differences. However, to more fully understand the differences between the United States and Costa Rica I interviewed my host sister, Maria. Maria is twenty-seven and works for Citi Bank in Belén, Heredia. I asked her about her time in college and now work to see the differences between college-aged students in the US versus Costa Rica. Additionally, I asked her about certain tasks and belief systems and the difference in Costa Rica.

The main difference that I learned about was that most students do not live on campus. In fact, they will travel each and every day to school and return home to their families each night. Additionally, the universities offer some sports but not a lot. My host sister is not one for going out on the town as she is very relaxed but very hardworking. When she changed jobs, her current position was already higher than where she started. I also found out that it is very common for students to live with their parents until they are married or have a solid job in order to pay for their own apartment or house.

During the holiday season, my host sister and her family will rotate with her aunt to celebrate Christmas. Additionally, once a month at her house or her aunt's house the families partake in coffee time, or three hours on a Sunday to get together and catch up about the last month. Family is a huge aspect here in Costa Rica, and they tend to do more activities as a family than some families in the US.

This interview helped me realize fundamental differences between the United States and Costa Rica. For example, the family aspect as well as the 'tranquilo' or relaxed lifestyle of Costa Ricans makes for a happy life or 'Pura Vida.' Additionally, my family has a modest lifestyle, but they are all very happy and willing to share what they have with a student studying abroad. I have noticed that citizens here in Costa Rica are not in a rush and are less angry and uptight than some Americans. I have greatly enjoyed my time and my experience learning in Costa Rica.