

# VISITING YOUR STUDENT IN COSTA RICA

To help you gain insight into your student's transformative experience abroad with Verto, students and Verto staff team up to host a **virtual Family Week**. Family Week includes helpful sessions on subjects like academic & career success, affording college, and finding purpose. We believe that attending Family Week is the best way for families to connect with their student's experience while **encouraging them to focus on their coursework, academic success**, and building their abroad community.

If you plan on visiting, **please adhere to the following guidelines.**

## Dropping Off Your Student

For family members who choose to drop-off their student in Costa Rica, we welcome you! Please do keep in mind that this is **not required**, and students who travel independently will be received in great hands by Verto staff.

Please note that family members can only drop their student **outside** of their housing address. Only students are allowed inside of our housing, per our Housing Provider and Verto policies, and for the wellbeing of all students.

## If You Plan to Visit Your Student While Abroad

Families are welcome to visit students, though we strongly recommend visiting **at the end** of the Verto abroad experience, rather than during. Students will be quite busy with their coursework and experiential learning activities, so visitors may not be able to spend as much time with their Vertoan as they may have hoped. Additionally, participants whose families visited in the past have experienced more intense homesickness or fallen behind in coursework as a result of the visit.

**Academic and attendance policies remain in place regardless of visitors.** Participants are strongly discouraged from missing classes to host family, friends, and other visitors. Should a participant plan to miss class, they should speak with their instructors and Academic Success Coordinator in advance to understand the consequences for doing so.

**Please note: There is no time off during the week of Thanksgiving. All students are required to attend class and maintain their participation in all Verto activities.**

# Tips for Your Visit to Costa Rica

## **Verto Participant Schedule**

If you choose to visit during the abroad experience, you'll want to keep in mind your student's class and activity schedule. Classes typically take place between 8am and 4:30pm. Every week, there are activities that may be optional or required as part of your student's coursework.

During Verto Discovery Week (your student's first week on-site), all participants will receive a semester calendar with an activity schedule. **We are not able to invite families to participate in student activities.** We encourage you to check with your student about their schedule before planning your visit.

## **Lodging in Turrialba**

The Verto Study Center is located in CATIE, a research and education institute, about 2.5 hours south of San Jose. For lodging near CATIE, Villa Florencia Hotel is just 5 minutes away and Casa Turire Hotel about 15 minutes away.

## **Travel from the Airport**

Options from the airport (SJO) include:

1. **Renting a Car:** If you are renting a car at the airport, the drive from the SJO (San Jose) airport to Turrialba takes about 2.5 hours without traffic. Please download the WAZE app on your phone; this is the best source for directions around Costa Rica.
2. **Taking a Private Shuttle:** There are transfer shuttles that can take you from San Jose airport to your destination in Turrialba. A quick online search can help you find a service. Taxis and Uber may also be available.

## Our team looks forward to meeting you in-person or virtually soon!