

## COSTA RICA

SOUTH AMERICA



Travel & Possession Permitted with Limited or No Restrictions



### Summary

- Tourists cannot access medical marijuana or bring it into the country, and prescriptions from other countries are not honored in Costa Rica.
- Marijuana has been legal in Costa Rica since 2022 under Law 10113 for medical use.
- CBD products under the allowable THC threshold (~0.03-0.3%) may be tolerated, but anything with THC is prohibited unless you have a valid Costa Rican prescription.
- CBD-based products such as oils, tinctures, capsules, and cosmetics are permitted if they contain minimal THC ( $\leq 0.03-1\%$ ) and are registered with the Ministry of Health. Hemp-derived dried flower with  $< 1\%$  THC is allowed under regulated sale. THC-rich products are restricted to patients with Costa Rican prescriptions and dispensed only via licensed medical providers.
- The Ministry of Health (Ministerio de Salud Pública) is the primary regulatory authority overseeing medical cannabis in Costa Rica. Further, the Ministry of Agriculture (MAG – Ministerio de Agricultura) oversees licensing for cultivation, seed approval, hemp production and food/industrial processing; while the Scientific-Ethical Committee (CEC – Comité Ético Científico) is in charge of the oversight of research protocols involving medical cannabis.

### Background

Medical marijuana is legal in Costa Rica, but access is strictly regulated and not extended to tourists or foreign prescriptions. In March 2022, Costa Rica passed Law No. 10113, legalizing the production, distribution, and consumption of medical cannabis and industrial hemp. In 2023, the government published the regulatory framework detailing licensing procedures, health product standards, and permitted uses. The law distinguishes between:

- Medical cannabis (with psychoactive THC content,  $>1\%$ ) — strictly regulated.
- Industrial hemp and non-psychoactive cannabis ( $<1\%$  THC) — more accessible and less restricted.



Medical cannabis is permitted for Costa Rican citizens and legal residents with a valid medical prescription from an authorized local doctor. However, only certain health conditions qualify, and cannabis products are dispensed through licensed pharmacies and clinics.

Psychoactive cannabis is not for over-the-counter sale and is only distributed under strict medical control.

CBD-only products (with < 0.03–0.1% THC) may be tolerated if they comply with local standards and include proper labeling.

Prescriptions from other countries are not honored in Costa Rica, and tourists are not permitted to access medical marijuana in Costa Rica.

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## Non-Medical Cannabis

- Consumption: Public use is illegal and may result in fines. Private, adult use is generally tolerated.
- Possession: Possessing up to 25 g of cannabis is decriminalized but may require you to appear before a Dissuasion Commission. Repeated offenses can lead to mandatory counseling or treatment.
- Sale & Distribution: Selling or trafficking cannabis remains a criminal offense with significant penalties. There is no legal framework for commercial sales.

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## Traveling to Costa Rica with Medical Cannabis

Bringing medical cannabis into Costa Rica is not permitted, even with a foreign prescription. Foreign medical marijuana prescriptions are not valid in Costa Rica.

Importing cannabis (including vape pens, oils, or edibles with THC) into Costa Rica is illegal, even with a prescription.

CBD-only products (with < 0.03–0.1% THC) may be tolerated if they comply with local standards and include proper labeling.

Customs enforcement can be inconsistent, but travelers caught with THC products risk confiscation, fines, or legal action.

### Steps to Take Before Departure:

1. Talk to Your Doctor:
  - Discuss alternatives or temporary substitutions for the duration of your stay.
  - Ask about CBD-based options (legal in Costa Rica if THC content is below 1%).
2. Consider Travel-Safe Alternatives:

- Ask your doctor if you can switch to CBD-only products before traveling.
  - CBD products under 1% THC are legal and sold in Costa Rican pharmacies.
3. Pack Medical Documents:
    - Bring a letter from your doctor explaining your condition and treatment.
    - Even though cannabis cannot be imported, documentation may help in case of medical emergencies or local consultations.
  4. Research Local Availability:
    - Some pharmacies in Costa Rica now sell regulated CBD products.
    - If extended stay is planned, consult a local doctor for legal medical access.
  5. Avoid Buying Cannabis Illegally:
    - Recreational cannabis is decriminalized, not legal.
    - Possession of small amounts may not lead to arrest, but sale and purchase are criminal offenses.
  6. Contact a local Doctor:
    - Contact a local Doctor several weeks, even months, in advance to consult if a local prescription could be obtained to access medical cannabis while in Costa Rica.

### MINISTRY OF HEALTH Contact Information

- Address: Calle 16, Avenidas 6 y 8, Edificio junto al hospital San Juan de Dios, San José 10123-1000, Costa Rica
- Phone: +506 4003 5000
- General Email: [información.tramites@misalud.go.cr](mailto:información.tramites@misalud.go.cr)

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### Practical Tips

- It is suggested to contact the Costa Rican embassy or consulate in your country for official confirmation.
- If you will need cannabis-based medication during your stay and are eligible, consider contacting a Costa Rican-licensed medical provider or clinic (e.g. Cura Vida or Costa Rica Cannabis Clinics) to explore obtaining a local prescription, though options for short-term tourists remain limited.
- Whether you are a resident, expat, or temporary visitor, Costa Rica Cannabis Clinics (CRCC) offers a simple and effortless way to access legal quality medical cannabis products within Costa Rica. Local assistance can be requested at: [Contact — Costa Rica Cannabis Clinics](#)

*The information provided reflects the most current data available; however, as cannabis laws are continually evolving, this content should not be interpreted as legal advice.*

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