



Costa Rica Research Guide

ANCESTOR'S BIRTH LOCATION UNKNOWN

FamilySearch Indexed Records: Try searching in the indexed records. Try a variety of searches with your ancestor's name, or with parent's names, or just by parent's surnames AND using the option to limit the locality by the country "Costa Rica" and the name of the province where they lived. If there are no results, you will have to find more information from home sources or by asking family members.

Civil Registration Online: There is a great index for Civil Registration records available at http://registronacional.com/CostaRica/rse.go.cr/consulta_persona/menu.htm. Try this site if you only know name and the time period is the 1900s.

Contact Family Members: If you do not have even a minimal amount of information AND have no idea of where and when to look, you need to contact family members who might have that information. This could be older aunts, uncles, grandparents, etc.

ANCESTOR'S BIRTH LOCATION AND NAMES OF PARENTS, SPOUSE, OR CHILDREN ARE KNOWN

Catholic Church records were kept from 1595, but civil records in Costa Rica did not begin until 1888.

FamilySearch Indexed Records: Try searching first in indexed records as explained above.

FamilySearch Browsable Images: If there are no results from your previous search for your ancestor or any siblings, you will have to browse images for the locality. On the **Search** page, click the **Central American** portion of the map then select **Costa Rica** from the list of countries. Select a record collection from **Image-Only Historical Records** and browse the collection page-by-page for your ancestor. Look for both civil registration and Catholic church records.

FamilySearch Catalog: Not all records for Costa Rica are online, so be sure to check the catalog before giving up on finding records. Under **Search** on the home page select **Catalog**. Type **Costa Rica** and click **Search**. A list of available records will appear. Your search can be localized by selecting **Places within Costa Rica** at the top and then choosing the exact locality where your ancestor lived.

RESEARCH STRATEGIES

Who to Search For? If you don't know the names of the parents, but you know the name of the spouse and/or the names of some of his children, begin with a marriage search (if they married in Costa Rica and you know the place). Or begin with a search for the birth/baptism record for one of their children (if you have an approximate birthdate and place).

FamilySearch Wiki: Translation, handwriting help, and descriptions of specific record collections can be found on the FamilySearch Wiki. Under **Search** on the home page select Research Wiki. Type **Costa Rica** into the search bar and press **Enter**. The information on this page will lead you to helpful topics such as **Languages** (under Costa Rica Background) as well as beginning research suggestions.

FamilySearch Community: You can get immediate research and handwriting help from a community of researchers through the FamilySearch Communities. Go to <http://community.familysearch.org/> and click **Groups**. Search for **Latin American Genealogy Research** or **Investigación Genealógica** to find the group for Hispanic genealogical research. While the second group is in Spanish, the members will respond to posts written in English. On the group pages, you can post research questions and upload documents to get translation help.

FINDING A LOCALITY

For help locating a place in Costa Rica, try the following sources:

- Google
- Wikipedia (The Spanish version works the best)
- Try a keyword search in the FamilySearch Catalog for Costa Rica Gazetteers

ONLINE RESOURCES

Costa Rica Consultas Civiles: www.consulta.tse.go.cr/consulta_persona/menu.htm

Costa Rica Genealogy Research: www.geneanet.org/pays/research-genealogy-ancestry-Costa%20rica-CRI

Genealogy in Latin America: www.lanic.utexas.edu/la/region/genealogy/

Costa Rica GenForum: www.genealogy.com/forum/regional/countries/topics/costarica