

# The Latest Developments

SPOTLIGHTING PREMIER COMMUNITIES AND HIGH-RISE PROJECTS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

## Turtles, Toucans and Top-of-the-Line Finishes

These developers in Costa Rica are preserving the ecosystem as they build.

Nestled on the Pacific Ocean against the emerald hills of Costa Rica are three upscale complexes of luxury villas and homes. A fourth project, a coveted condo addition called Marisol, is on the way. But these properties are a long way from fulfilling environmentalists' fears of spoiling the country with too much development and clutter.

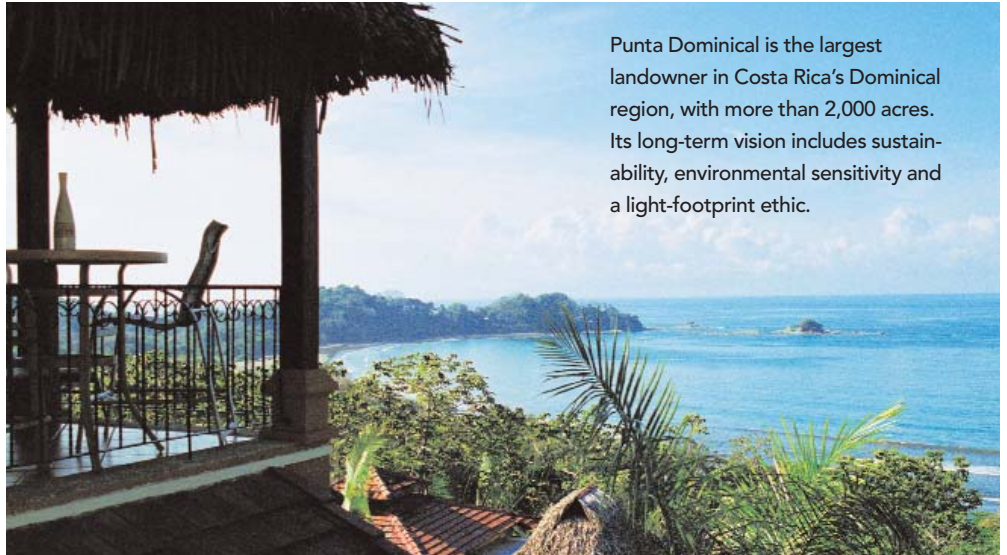
Punta Dominical, the developer of these resort properties, plans to use only 20 percent of its 1,000 acres for building creation. The other 80 percent will remain a nature preserve. The plan is part of a new philosophy that's taking hold in Costa Rica as developers become increasingly sensitive to leaving a light footprint on the environment.

In Punta Dominical's case, the company is working with environmental groups to preserve the ecosystems and lands surrounding the resort. A portion of sales revenues from each Punta Dominical property is donated to an international effort to preserve the Osa Peninsula, a corridor of ecosystems that National Geographic has called "the most biodiverse place on earth." So whether you're buying a condo in Marisol, a villa in Kiana Resorts or Canto del Mar, or an elegant custom home in Las Olas, you



can feel good about the purchase you're making.

"We also work with local scientists here to study environmental impacts in the area," said Tina Wallace, director of sales for Punta Dominical. "And



Punta Dominical is the largest landowner in Costa Rica's Dominical region, with more than 2,000 acres. Its long-term vision includes sustainability, environmental sensitivity and a light-footprint ethic.

PHOTOS COURTESY PUNTA DOMINICAL

we build all of our home sites in small clusters. That allows the ecosystem, animal corridors and breeding areas to remain intact."

Tamarindo Preserve, another development on the Pacific Coast, has also been created with an eco-sensitive approach. Most of its stucco-and-wood homes are concentrated on hilltops; a system of pathways, boardwalks and aerial paths through the tree-tops via suspended bridges connects the buildings in a way that does not disturb the wildlife. The area is home to 10 threatened species

including the Great Black Hawk, Collared Forest Falcon and Spectacled Caiman.

The colorful seaside village lies next to a national park that is the preeminent nesting site for

endangered leatherback turtles, the world's largest reptiles. The developers of Tamarindo Preserve are using only 8 percent of their 500-acre parcel of land for development; 150 acres will be donated to a nature conservancy.

The eco-sensitive approach doesn't compromise the lifestyle in either of these developments. Granite countertops, premium furnishings, open-air bistros and high-end spas are among the many amenities offered in both places. Prices start in the \$200,000s at Punta Dominical and in the \$490,000s at Tamarindo. But regardless of the many luxury details they bring along, both developers intend to take great pains to protect the island's panoply of flora and fauna, including 9,000 plant species, 850 types of birds and 1,000 species of butterflies.

"We think our clients still come down to see us because they see toucans flying by their houses and monkeys in the trees," Wallace said. "We think this is a beautiful part of the globe, and we want to preserve that."

—Jennifer Martin

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