



IV. National Symbols

Flag:	The present flag was adopted in September 1848 when Costa Rica became a Republic. The flag is formed by five horizontal stripes: the first and the fifth are blue, the second and the fourth are white, and in the middle there is a red stripe that doubles the width of each of the other four stripes.
Emblem:	It was adopted in 1848. Three volcanoes and a vast valley stretching between two oceans form it, and in each of the oceans there is a merchant ship. In the horizon, there is a rising sun between the blue sky and the blue ocean. Two wreaths of myrtle leaves joined by a ribbon bearing the inscription "República de Costa Rica" enclose the national seal. Seven stars forming an arch represent the seven provinces of the republic. The crown is formed by a blue ribbon with the inscription "América Central".
National Anthem:	The music of the Costa Rican National Anthem (Himno Nacional de Costa Rica) was composed in 1852 by Don Manuel María Gutiérrez (1829-1887), director of the Marching Band.
National Flower:	Guaria Morada (<i>Cattleya skinneri</i>). This is a native species in the American continent and grows nationwide without any problem.
National Tree:	Guanacaste Tree (<i>Enterolobium cyclocarpum</i>).
National Bird:	Yiguirro (<i>Turdus grayi</i>).
Typical Ox-Cart:	In 1988 the Costa Rican ox-cart ("la carreta costarricense") was established as the national symbol of work. Drawn by a team of oxen, the ox-cart was used during the colonial period for the transportation of sugar cane, tobacco, and coffee. Thus, it became a very important factor in the development of agricultural activity of Costa Rica. In the present, the ox-cart is one of the most representative handcrafted objects in Costa Rican culture.