

*Overview of*  
***Immigration to Costa Rica***



*Alfredo Fournier & Asociados*

ABOGADOS Y NOTARIOS  
San José, Costa Rica

[www.fournierlaw.com](http://www.fournierlaw.com)

# Immigration to Costa Rica

## Introduction

The Laws that regulate immigration matters in Costa Rica establish several ways to become a resident in this country, through the attainment of special visas. Among them, the most frequently used are the retired bondholder visa, the pensioner visa and the permanent resident visa.

In the following we inform on those possibilities that imply permanent residency that allows the bearer to travel internationally and offer other advantages.

## The Immigrant Visa

Foreigners who invest US\$50.000 or more in Costa Rica are allowed to apply for a permanent residency through this visa. Investment can be done:

- ➔ In shares of a Costa Rican corporation operating in Costa Rica, accepted as of national interest for tourist, held for at least five years; or
- ➔ Deposits bearing interest of at least US\$1000 per month with a Costa Rican or foreign banks. The bank must state the interest will be sent to the depositor to Costa Rica for five years.

### ADVANTAGES OF THIS VISA

- ➔ Married applicant may include in the same application his wife and children under 18 years of age as dependents.
- ➔ Permanent residency in Costa Rica with right to a Costa Rican resident identity card.
- ➔ Right to apply for Costa Rican citizenship after years of continuous residency.

## Permanent Resident Visa

Foreigners who have invested a sum no less than US\$200.000 in business in Costa Rica will have the right to request a permanent resident visa.

Exportation processing zones are designated areas within the territory of the Republic of Costa Rica authorized by the Costa Rican government. In these areas, companies can establish their infrastructure to carry on the activities of exporting and selling their goods or services produced, manufactured, assemble or processed by themselves.

### ADVANTAGES OF THIS VISA

- ➔ Married applicant may include his wife and children under 18 years of age as dependents.
- ➔ Permanent residency in Costa Rica with right to a Costa Rican is resident identity card.
- ➔ The right to work in Costa Rica.
- ➔ The right to apply for Costa Rican citizenship after 5 years of holding this

visa.

- ➔ The right to multiple entry visa to enter Costa Rica.

### **Pensioner Visa:**

Persons who receive a pension of at least US\$1000 may receive a Pensioner visa.

#### **ADVANTAGES OF THIS VISA:**

- ➔ Married applicant may include his wife and children under 18 years of age as dependents.
- ➔ Permanent residency in Costa Rica.

### **Work Permit:**

These are permits given to persons who do not wish to live in Costa Rica. These persons only want to come to work for a short period of time. The permits are readily given to management personnel, duly certified university personnel and in those areas in which there are no Costa Rican willing to work.

#### **ADVANTAGES OF THIS VISA:**

- ➔ Married applicant may include his wife and children under 18 years of age as dependents.
- ➔ The right to work in Costa Rica.
- ➔ Obtained quickly with the request of the employer.
- ➔ Very low cost.

### **For a detailed opinion on the best Visa, please contact us at:**

Paseo Colon and 40<sup>th</sup> Street, San Jorge Building, Third Floor, San José, Costa Rica.

- ➔ Telephone: (506) 233-6086
- ➔ Facsimile: (506) 258-0059
- ➔ E-Mail: [info@fournierlaw.com](mailto:info@fournierlaw.com)
- ➔ Web site: [www.fournierlaw.com](http://www.fournierlaw.com)
- ➔ Primary mail address: Post Office Box: 348-1007 Centro Colón, San Jose, Costa Rica. (Slower mail)
- ➔ Secondary mail address: SJO 1822, P.O. Box 025216, Miami, Florida 33102-5216. (Faster delivery mail service)