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COSTA RICA VFR GUIDE VISUAL CORRIDORS AND ROUTES

Introduction

Learning Costa Rican Airspace

Flying under Visual Flight Rules (VFR) in Costa Rica offers a unique and rewarding experience, with stunning coastlines, dense jungles, and mountainous terrain shaping the country's airspace. However, navigating this diverse environment requires a solid understanding of local regulations, airspace classifications, communication procedures, and operational challenges.

This guide provides essential information for pilots operating VFR in Costa Rica, covering key topics such as controlled and uncontrolled airspace, designated VFR routes, weather considerations, radio communication protocols, and special-use airspace. Whether you're a local pilot or a visitor exploring Costa Rica from the skies, this guide will help ensure safe and efficient flights while complying with Dirección General de Aviación Civil (DGAC) regulations.

By familiarizing yourself with the airspace structure and best practices for VFR operations, you'll be better prepared to navigate Costa Rica's skies with confidence.

Uncontrolled Airspace

Outside of controlled areas, Costa Rica features extensive **Class G** airspace, especially over rural, jungle, and coastal regions. VFR corridors allow pilots to navigate these areas safely without requiring ATC clearance but still following standard radio procedures.

- **Common Traffic Advisory Frequency (CTAF):** 122.8 MHz (used at uncontrolled aerodromes and en route for position reports).
- **Flight Information Service Coco Radio (FIS):** 126.8 MHz (for general traffic advisories).

MROC / MRPV VISUAL CORRIDORS AND CHARTS

Visual corridors for VFR traffic are used most of the time in Costa Rica for either getting in or out of San Jose. These will be used in VATSIM for regular VFR operations. In the link below you will be able to see the chart (In Spanish), with its altitude constraints and coordinates of each visual reference.

https://cocesna.org/aipca/AIPMR/AIP_2402/Eurocontrol/COSTA%20RICA/2024-12-26-AIRAC/html/eAIP/MAPS/AD/AD_MROC/MR_AD-2.MROC%20COCO%20TM A%20VFRR%20WEST%20SECTOR%20A.pdf

You will also find very helpful this VFR Approach Chart, in which you can find the names of different visual references used for getting in and out of our airspace. Paraiso, Santiago, Orotina and Atenas are some examples of these visual waypoints.

https://cocesna.org/aipca/AIPMR/AIP_2402/Eurocontrol/COSTA%20RICA/2024-12-26-AIRAC/html/eAIP/MAPS/AD/AD_MROC/MR_AD-2.MROC%20VAC.pdf

RECOMMENDED ROUTES

Flying VFR in Costa Rica offers breathtaking views of diverse landscapes, from rugged mountains and dense rainforests to pristine beaches and active volcanoes. Due to the country's compact size and varying elevations, flights can transition from coastal plains to towering peaks within minutes, making careful route planning essential.

Scenic VFR Highlights:

1. Central Valley & Highlands

- **Notable Features:** San José, Poás Volcano, Irazu Volcano, Cartago
- **Challenges:** High terrain, frequent cloud cover in the afternoons
- **Recommended Altitude:** 7,500–10,500 ft MSL to clear mountains safely
- **Key Airports:** MROC (San José), MRPV (Tobías Bolaños)

2. Pacific Coast & Nicoya Peninsula

- **Notable Features:** Manuel Antonio, Jaco, Gulf of Nicoya, Tamarindo
- **Challenges:** Strong coastal winds, occasional pop-up storms
- **Recommended Altitude:** 3,000–6,500 ft MSL for sightseeing
- **Key Airports:** MRLB (Liberia), MRQP (Quepos), MRTM (Tamarindo)

3. Caribbean Coast & Lowlands

- **Notable Features:** Tortuguero, Limon, Cahuita National Park
- **Challenges:** High humidity, frequent rain, low visibility
- **Recommended Altitude:** 2,500–5,500 ft MSL over the coastline
- **Key Airports:** MRLM (Limon), MRBT (Barra del Tortuguero)

4. Volcano & Jungle Routes

- **Notable Features:** Arenal Volcano, Monteverde, La Fortuna
- **Challenges:** Restricted zones near active volcanoes, turbulence near mountains
- **Recommended Altitude:** 8,500–12,500 ft MSL to avoid turbulence
- **Key Airports:** MRAN (Arenal), MRUP (Upala)

Our recommended routes:

LIBERIA (MRLB)

1. San Jose to Liberia (MROC → MRLB)

- Route (Copy and Paste on SimBrief):** 095851N0841142W
 100107N0841340W 100037N0841849W 095850N0842301W
 095521N0843123W 095235N0843709W MRCH 100401N0845756W
 101448N0851446W 102914N0852510W
- Route (Say this when asking for VFR clearance):** CVC Corridor, Chacarita, Coast Line, Tempisque and Liberia.
- Typical Altitude:** 6,500–10,500 ft MSL
- Flight Time:** ~45 minutes



2. Liberia to San Jose (MRLB → MROC)

- **Route (Copy and Paste on SimBrief):** 100224N0843626W
100201N0843100W 100116N0842200W FANAL TIO
- **Route (Say this when asking for VFR clearance):** CVB Corridor, FANAL and TIO VOR.
- **Typical Altitude:** 7,500–9,500 ft MSL
- **Flight Time:** ~45 minutes



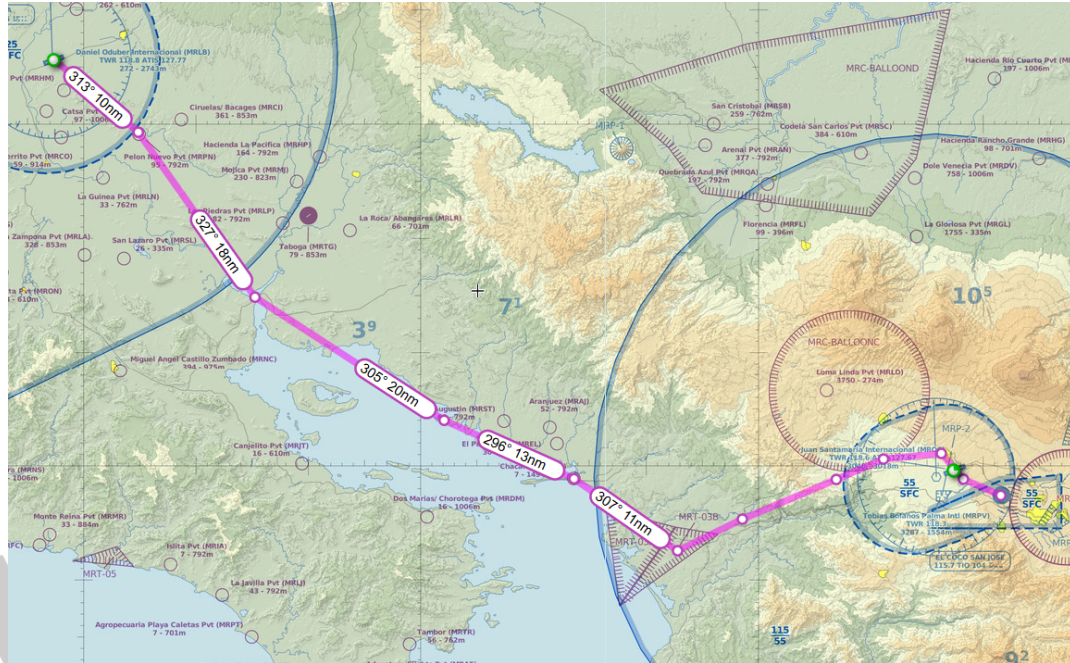
3. Liberia to Pavas (MRLB → MRPV)

- **Route (Copy and Paste on SimBrief):** 100224N0843626W
100201N0843100W 100116N0842200W FANAL TIO
- **Route (Say this when asking for VFR clearance):** CVB Corridor, FANAL and TIO VOR.
- **Typical Altitude:** 7,500–9,500 ft MSL
- **Flight Time:** ~45 minutes



4. Pavas to Liberia (MRPV → MRLB)

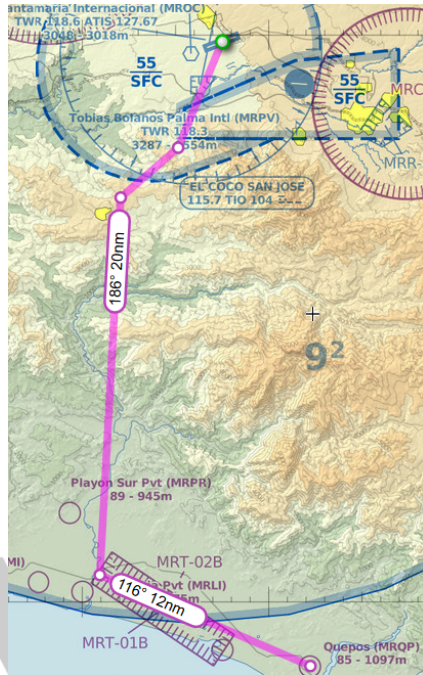
- Route (Copy and Paste on SimBrief):** 095851N0841142W
 100107N0841340W 100037N0841849W 095850N0842301W
 095521N0843123W 095235N0843709W MRCH 100401N0845756W
 101448N0851446W 102914N0852510W
- Route (Say this when asking for VFR clearance):** CVC Corridor, Chacarita, Coast Line, Tempisque and Liberia.
- Typical Altitude:** 6,500–10,500 ft MSL
- Flight Time:** ~55 minutes



QUEPOS (MRQP)

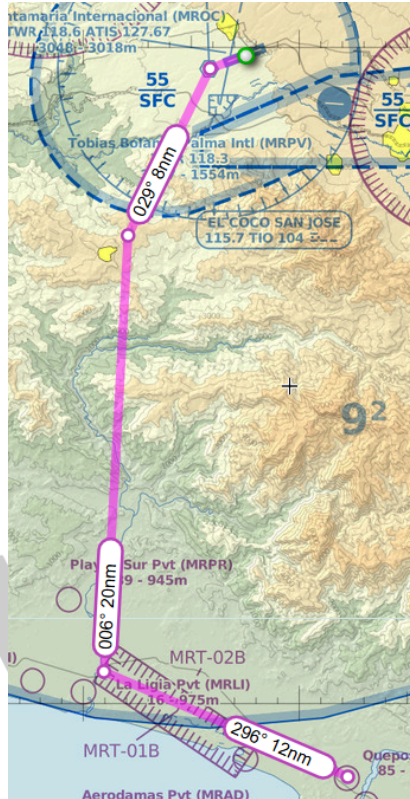
5. San Jose to Quepos (MROC → MRQP)

- **Route (Copy and Paste on SimBrief):** COLON 095123N0841758W PARRI
- **Route (Say this when asking for VFR clearance):** Colon, Paso de Parrita (From North to South uneven altitude plus 500. From South to North even altitude plus 500), PARRI and Quepos.
- **Typical Altitude:** 5,500–7,500 ft MSL
- **Flight Time:** ~35 minutes



6. Quepos to San Jose (MRQP → MROC)

- **Route (Copy and Paste on SimBrief):** PARRI 095123N0841758W TIO
- **Route (Say this when asking for VFR clearance):** PARRI, Paso de Parrita (From North to South uneven altitude plus 500. From South to North even altitude plus 500), COLON and TIO VOR.
- **Typical Altitude:** 6,500–8,500 ft MSL
- **Flight Time:** ~35 minutes



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7. Pavas to Quepos (MRPV → MRQP)

- **Route (Copy and Paste on SimBrief):** COLON 095123N0841758W PARRI
- **Route (Say this when asking for VFR clearance):** Colon, Paso de Parrita (From North to South uneven altitude plus 500. From South to North even altitude plus 500), PARRI and Quepos.
- **Typical Altitude:** 5,500–7,500 ft MSL
- **Flight Time:** ~35 minutes



8. Quepos to Pavar (MRQP → MRPV)

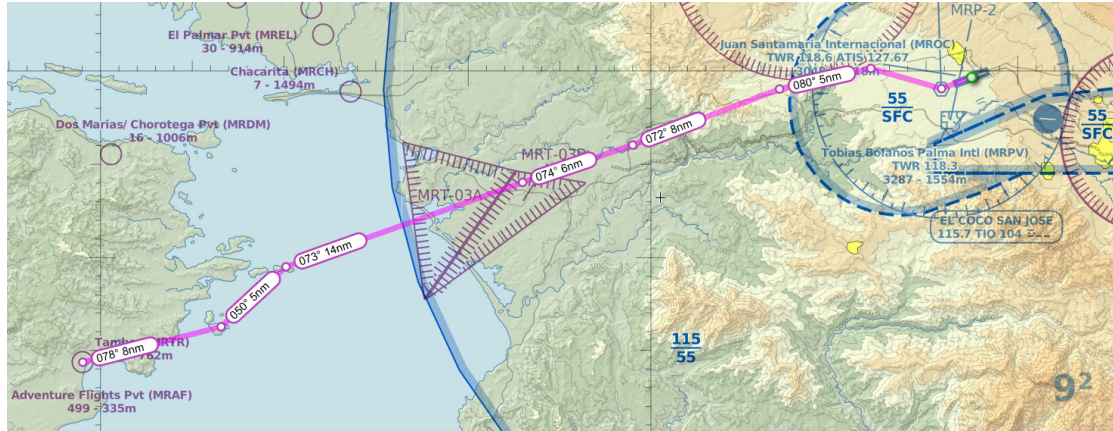
- **Route (Copy and Paste on SimBrief):** PARRI 095123N0841758W COLON
- **Route (Say this when asking for VFR clearance):** PARRI, Paso de Parrita (From North to South uneven altitude plus 500. From South to North even altitude plus 500), COLON and Pavar.
- **Typical Altitude:** 6,500–8,500 ft MSL
- **Flight Time:** ~35 minutes



TAMBOR (MRTR)

9. San José to Tambor (MROC → MRTR)

- **Route (Copy and Paste on SimBrief):** 100111N0841318W FANAL
095912N0842258W 095630N0843141W 095437N0843725W
094188N845693W 094323N845926W
- **Route (Say this when asking for VFR clearance):** CVC (5,000ft then descend after CASCA)
- **Typical Altitude:** 5,000ft MSL
- **Flight Time:** ~30 minutes



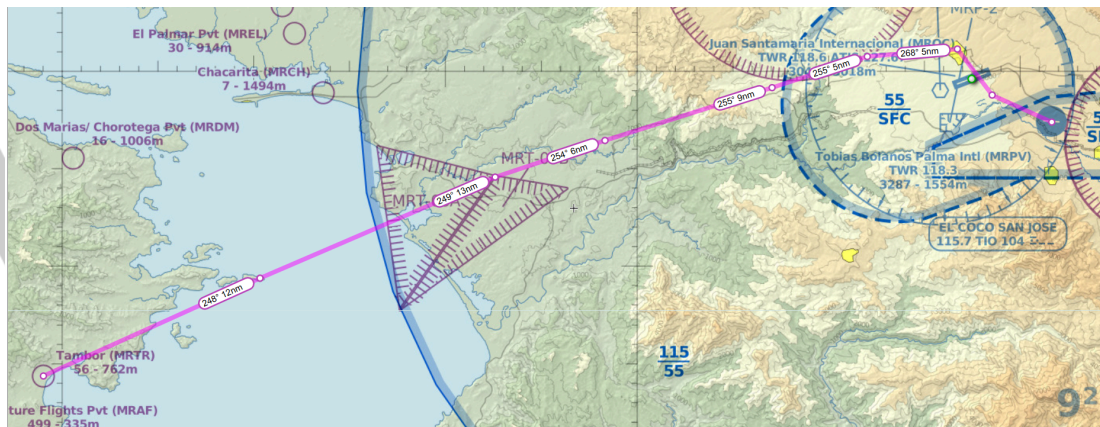
10. Tambor to San Jose (MRTR → MROC)

- **Route (Copy and Paste on SimBrief):** 094616N0845326W 094929N0844954W 0954N08437W 0956N08431W 0959N08423W FANAL TIO
- **Route (Say this when asking for VFR clearance):** CVC (6,000ft CONSTRAINT) and TIO.
- **Typical Altitude:** 6,000ft MSL
- **Flight Time:** ~35 minutes



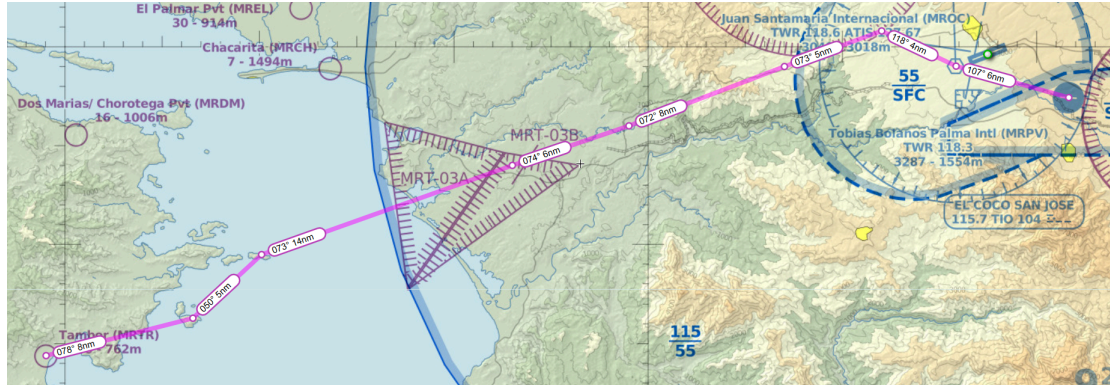
11. Pavas to Tambor (MRPV → MRTR)

- **Route (Copy and Paste on SimBrief):** 095849N0841129W 100111N0841318W 100048N0841800W 095912N0842258W 095629N0843141W 095436N0843725W 094924N0844941W
- **Route (Say this when asking for VFR clearance):** SANAT, CVC (5,000ft then descend after CASCA)
- **Typical Altitude:** 5,000ft MSL
- **Flight Time:** ~30 minutes



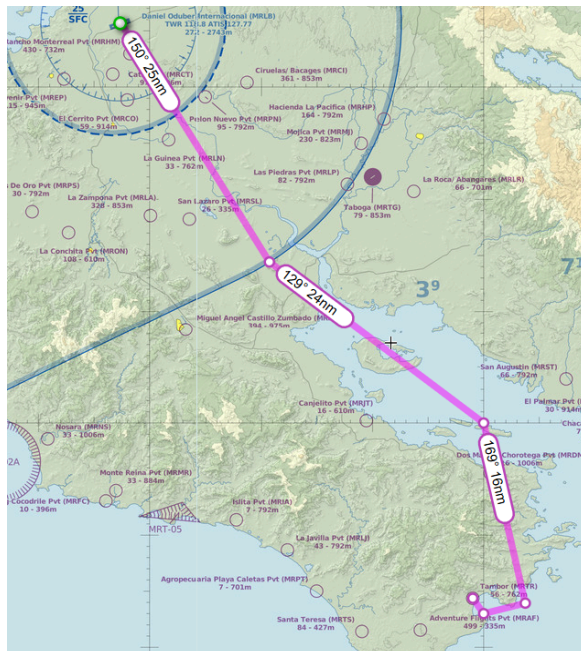
12. Tambor to Pavas (MRTR → MRPV)

- **Route (Copy and Paste on SimBrief):** 094616N0845326W 094929N0844954W 0954N08437W 0956N08431W 0959N08423W FANAL TIO
- **Route (Say this when asking for VFR clearance):** CVC (6,000ft CONSTRAINT) and TIO straight into MRPV.
- **Typical Altitude:** 6,000ft MSL
- **Flight Time:** ~35 minutes



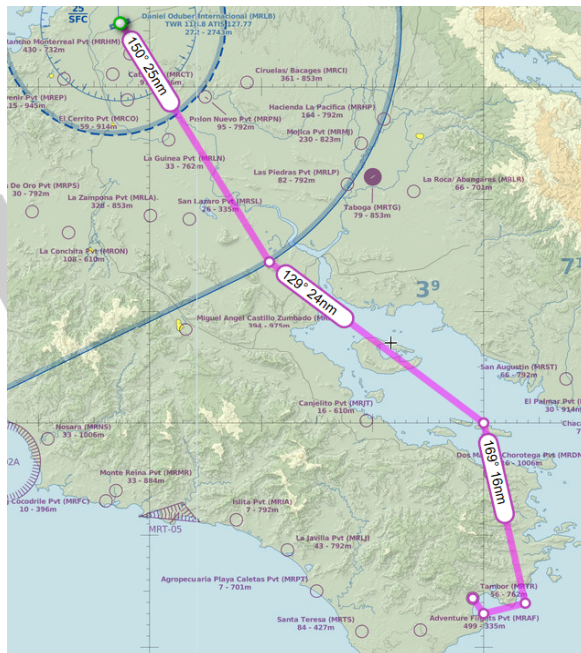
13. Liberia to Tambor (MRLB → MRTR)

- **Route (Copy and Paste on SimBrief):** ORRAL 1085N 094356N0845615W 0943N08500W
- **Route (Say this when asking for VFR clearance):** Tempisque River and Nicoya Peninsula Coast Line.
- **Typical Altitude:** 5,500ft MSL
- **Flight Time:** ~40 minutes



14. Tambor to Liberia (MRTR → MRLB)

- **Route (Copy and Paste on SimBrief):** 094305N0845735W 094914N0845140W 1085N ORRAL
- **Route (Say this when asking for VFR clearance):** Nicoya Peninsula Coast Line and Tempisque River
- **Typical Altitude:** 4,500ft MSL
- **Flight Time:** ~45 minutes



TAMARINDO (MRTM)

15. Liberia to Tamarindo (MRLB → MRTM)

- **Route (Copy and Paste on SimBrief):** MRTM
- **Route (Say this when asking for VFR clearance):** Direct Tamarindo
- **Typical Altitude:** 5,500ft MSL
- **Flight Time:** ~20 minutes



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16. Tamarindo to Liberia (MRTM → MRLB)

- **Route (Copy and Paste on SimBrief):** LIB
- **Route (Say this when asking for VFR clearance):** 103458N0853427W
- **Typical Altitude:** 4,500ft MSL
- **Flight Time:** ~20 minutes



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17. Pavas to Tamarindo (MRPV → MRTM)

- **Route (Copy and Paste on SimBrief):** 095913N0841159W
100047N0841307W 100314N0842117W RAMON RIOBA MIRAM
101445N0851450W 101603N0854747W 101803N0855222W
- **Route (Say this when asking for VFR clearance):** SANAT, CVA (Look for altitude CONSTRAINTS), Tempisque and Tamarindo.
- **Typical Altitude:** 7,000ft-11,500 MSL
- **Flight Time:** ~45 minutes

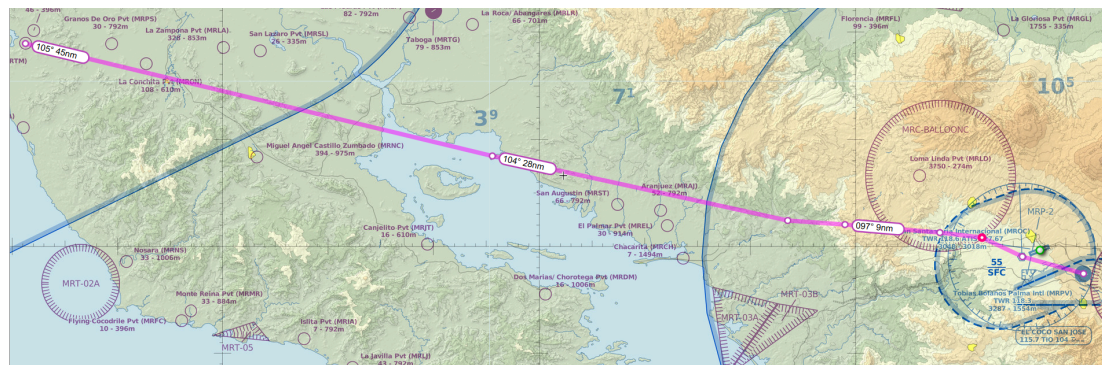


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18. Tamarindo to Pavas (MRTM → MRPV)

- **Route (Copy and Paste on SimBrief):** 100826N0850427W 100224N0843626W 100201N0843100W 100116N0842200W FANAL TIO
- **Route (Say this when asking for VFR clearance):** CVB (Look for altitude CONSTRAINTS), TIO and straight into MRPV.
- **Typical Altitude:** 7,000ft-9,500ft MSL
- **Flight Time:** ~50 minutes



19. San Jose to Tamarindo (MROC → MRTM)

- **Route (Copy and Paste on SimBrief):** 100314N0842117W RAMON RIOBA MIRAM 101445N0851450W 101603N0854747W 101803N0855222W
- **Route (Say this when asking for VFR clearance):** CVA (Look for altitude CONSTRAINTS), Tempisque and Tamarindo.
- **Typical Altitude:** 7,000ft-11,500 MSL
- **Flight Time:** ~40 minutes



20. Tamarindo to San Jose (MRTM → MROC)

- **Route (Copy and Paste on SimBrief):** 100826N0850427W 100224N0843626W 100201N0843100W 100116N0842200W FANAL TIO
- **Route (Say this when asking for VFR clearance):** CVB (Look for altitude CONSTRAINTS), TIO.
- **Typical Altitude:** 7,000ft-9,500ft MSL
- **Flight Time:** ~45 minutes



LIMON (MRLM)

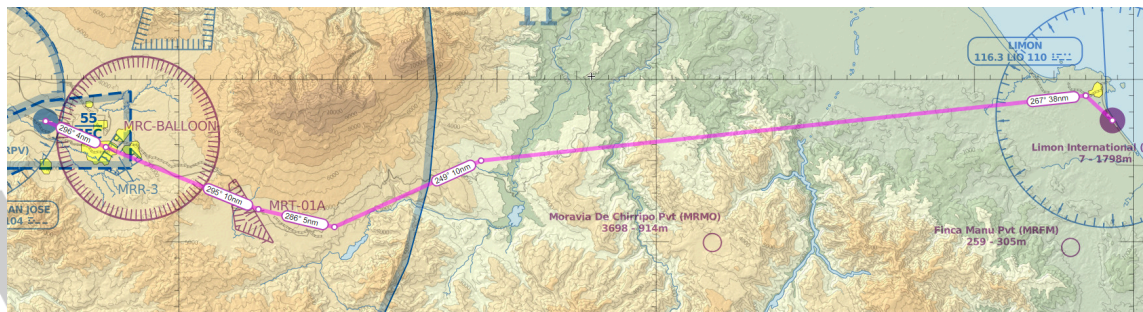
21. Pavas to Limon (MRPV → MRLM)

- **Route (Copy and Paste on SimBrief):** 095654N0840307W
095355N0835726W PARAI 095714N0833000W
- **Route (Say this when asking for VFR clearance):** Cartago Pass
- **Typical Altitude:** 5,500ft-9,500 MSL
- **Flight Time:** ~40 minutes



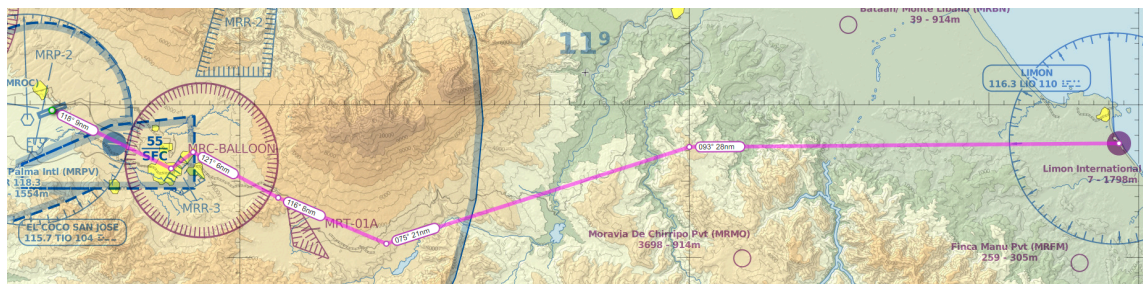
22. Limon to Pavas (MRLM → MRPV)

- **Route (Copy and Paste on SimBrief):** 0959N08303W 0955N08341W PARAI 0952N08355W ESRIO
- **Route (Say this when asking for VFR clearance):** PARAI, Cartago Pass and straight into MRPV.
- **Typical Altitude:** 6,500ft-10,500ft MSL
- **Flight Time:** ~35 minutes



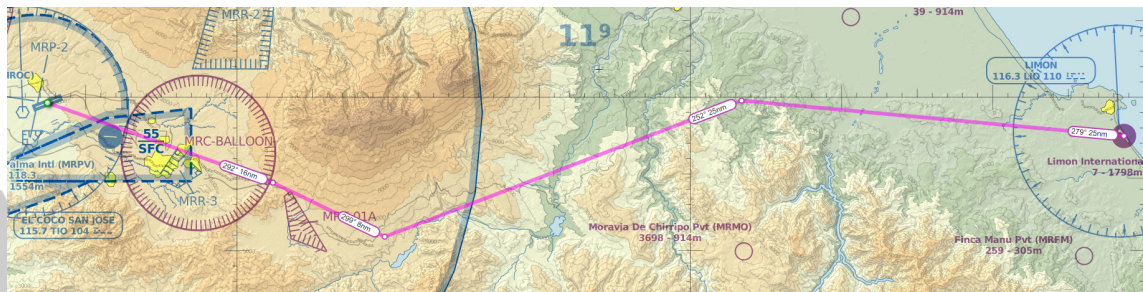
23. San Jose to Limon (MROC → MRLM)

- **Route (Copy and Paste on SimBrief):** ESRIO 095654N0840307W 095355N0835726W PARAI 095714N0833000W
- **Route (Say this when asking for VFR clearance):** Cartago Pass
- **Typical Altitude:** 5,500ft-9,500 MSL
- **Flight Time:** ~45 minutes



24. Limon to San Jose (MRLM → MROC)

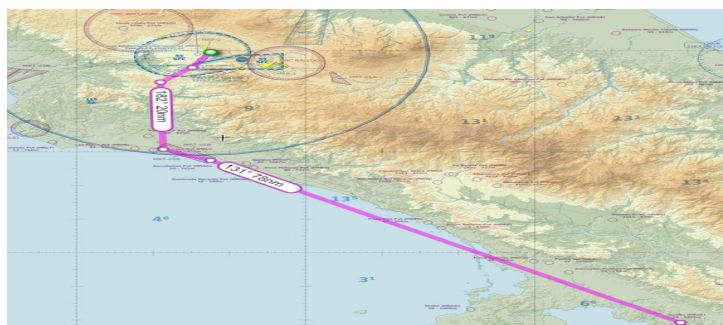
- **Route (Copy and Paste on SimBrief):** 095947N0832637W PARAI 095426N0835737W
- **Route (Say this when asking for VFR clearance):** PARAI, Cartago Pass and straight into MROC.
- **Typical Altitude:** 6,500ft-10,500ft MSL
- **Flight Time:** ~35 minutes



GOLFITO (MRGF)

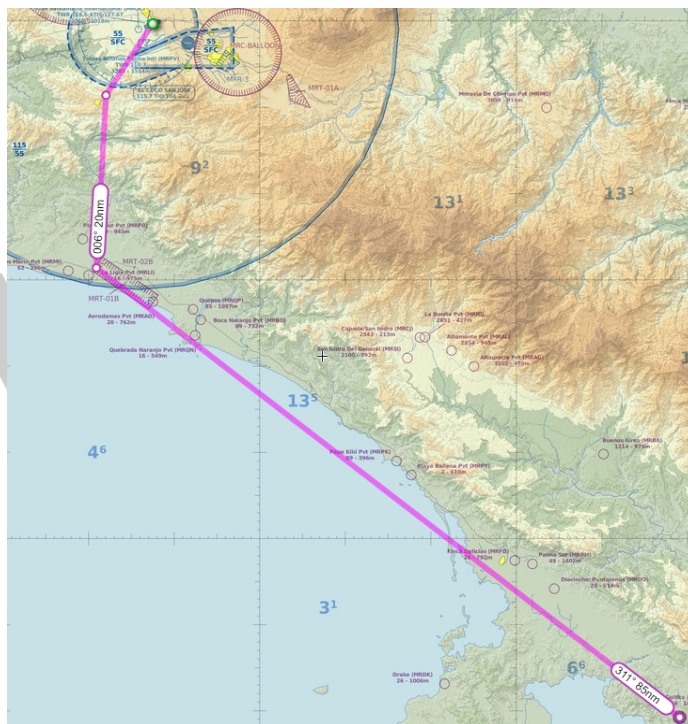
25. San Jose to Golfito (MROC → MRGF)

- **Route (Copy and Paste on SimBrief):** 095504N0841451W 095042N0841902W 093046N0841841W 092728N0841230W
- **Route (Say this when asking for VFR clearance):** Parrita Pass, Parrita, Aerodamas and Coast Line.
- **Typical Altitude:** 5,500ft-11,500 MSL
- **Flight Time:** ~55 minutes



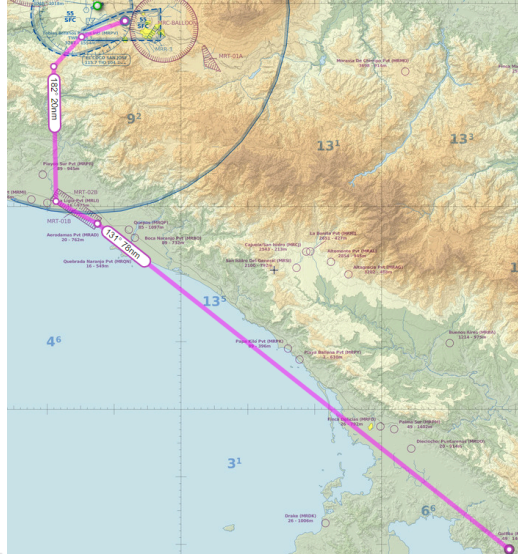
26. Golfito to San Jose (MRGF → MROC)

- **Route (Copy and Paste on SimBrief):** PARRI 095123N0841758W
- **Route (Say this when asking for VFR clearance):** Parrita, Parrita Pass.
- **Typical Altitude:** 6,500ft-10,500ft MSL
- **Flight Time:** ~65 minutes



27. Pavas to Golfito (MRPV → MRGF)

- **Route (Copy and Paste on SimBrief):** 095504N0841451W
095042N0841902W 093046N0841841W 092728N0841230W
- **Route (Say this when asking for VFR clearance):** Parrita Pass, Parrita, Aerodamas and Coast Line.
- **Typical Altitude:** 5,500ft-11,500 MSL
- **Flight Time:** ~55 minutes



28. Golfito to Pavas (MRGF → MRPV)

- **Route (Copy and Paste on SimBrief):** PARRI 095123N0841758W COLON
- **Route (Say this when asking for VFR clearance):** Parrita, Parrita Pass.
- **Typical Altitude:** 6,500ft-10,500ft MSL
- **Flight Time:** ~65 minutes

