

# ICLC Newsletter



Instituto de Cultura  
y Lengua Costarricense

Guayabo de Turrialba  
Archeological site in Costa Rica



On the southern flank of Volcán Turrialba, 19 km. north of Turrialba, is the nation's only archaeological site of significance.

Don't expect anything of the scale or scope of the Mayan and Aztec ruins of Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, or Belize. The society that lived there between 1000 b.c. and a.d. 1400, when the town was mysteriously abandoned, was far less culturally advanced than its northern neighbours.

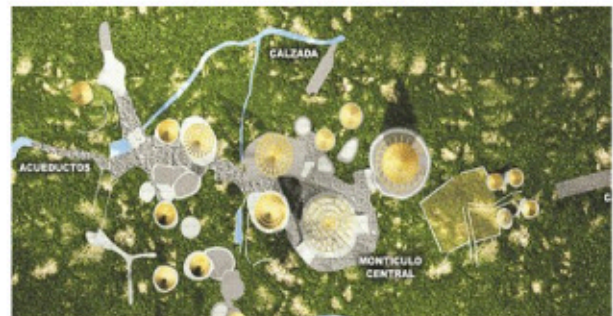
No record exists of the Spanish having known of Guayabo. In fact, the site lay uncharted until rediscovered in the late 19th century.

Many of the artefacts unearthed there are on display at the National Museum in San José.



The 218-hectare monument encompasses a significant area of tropical wet forest on valley slopes surrounding the archaeological site. Trails lead to a lookout point, where you can surmise the layout of the pre-Columbian village, built between two rivers.

To the south, a wide cobbled pavement—most of it still hidden in the jungle—leads past ancient stone entrance gates and up a slight gradient to the village center, which at its peak housed an estimated 1,000 people. The cobbled pavement (calzada), which is lined with impatiens, is in perfect alignment with the cone of Volcán Turrialba. It is being relayed in its original form.



Conical bamboo living structures were built on large circular stone mounds (montículos), with paved pathways between them leading down to aqueducts—still working after 2,000 years—and a large water tank with an overflow so that the water was constantly replenished. About four hectares have been excavated and are open to the public via the Mound Viewing Trail. Note the monolithic rock carved with petroglyphs of an alligator and a jaguar.

On April 24, 2009 the American Association of Civil Engineers, designated Guayabo as "World Patrimony of the Engineering".



For More details go: <http://www.lostcities.us/guayabo/>  
[www.moon.com/planner/costa\\_rica/mustsee/guayabo\\_nm.html](http://www.moon.com/planner/costa_rica/mustsee/guayabo_nm.html)