

Cynthia Rodriguez is living the dream life, or, what she calls, “La Pura Vida.” What began as a search for a healthier lifestyle led to a complete life change, and now, at the age of 33, most of Cynthia’s time is spent on the beach in Manuel Antonio, Costa Rica.

Originally from San Jose, California, Cynthia has always had a connection to Costa Rica. Her family hails from there, and she spent many years of her youth visiting and exploring the area. It was this childhood connection which brought her back during her search for a “purer life.”

From 2008 to 2012, Cynthia worked as a journalist, and while she loved the trade, she wanted something different for her life. She had been on the search for a calmer, healthier lifestyle and yoga piqued her interest. She began practicing yoga in 2010, and quickly thereafter, her hobby turned into a passion and Cynthia decided she wanted to pursue teaching yoga as a second career.

“My first yoga teacher training course cost around \$1500. This was in San Jose around 2012. I remember that being the average price, but it can range up to \$3500 for additional training. I started with basic teacher training, and over the years I have taken additional courses which has really rounded out my business. Now, I can offer several types of yoga, such as Hatha, Vinyasa, Anusara, Therapeutic Yoga, and Hasa which can be specially designed for adults, pregnant women, seniors, or children.”

Once Cynthia received that initial certification, she knew this was the life she wanted to live. A healthy, balanced lifestyle was to take center stage, and yoga was to be her main career. In order to achieve this, Cynthia decided to move to Costa Rica – a place where she had fond childhood memories, familial history, and knowledge that living costs were lower to those in the United States.

Cynthia says this was one of the best decisions of her life: “My yoga studio is the beach here in the Quepos area, and my clients range from private one-on-one sessions to big hotel groups.” The biggest challenges of running her own yoga business is finding new and regular clients, though she has done well thus far. She advertises through her website and social media; plus, word of mouth is quite strong Costa Rica, which has supplied her with work as the staff instructor for two hotels in Manuel Antonio -- Hotel Parador and Hotel Arenas del Mar. Cynthia has the added benefit of being bilingual—because she can speak both Spanish and English, her clientele base widens dramatically. Not only can she teach other expats and tourists who come to Costa Rica, her clientele base widens dramatically with the local population.

Cynthia’s rates vary depending on what kind of class she is instructing and whether or not it is a private lesson or large class. She says her rates of “\$20-50 per person [per hour] is typical to the market around Costa Rica.” This has worked out well, and has allowed her to live a very comfortable life in Manuel Antonio, where her monthly bills total approximately \$600 a month. Overhead costs for this kind of work are low (almost non-existent), and include yearly accident insurance of \$50 annually, self-employment taxes and insurance (10% of one’s monthly incomes), as well as any additional certifications she may want or need along the way.

For Cynthia, she feels incredibly blessed in Costa Rica and enjoys the lifestyle, which she describes as “the easy and simple life. Here, we have all that we need.” Now, Costa Rica is home. When she’s not teaching yoga on the gorgeous beach, she is spending her free time meditating, studying yoga, running, swimming, hanging out with friends, and enjoying the natural beauty of her new life.