

President & Director Eduardo Villafranca



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Eduardo Villafranca has built his career on the unwavering principles of Corporate Social Responsibility. More than two decades ago, Don Eduardo launched *Hotel Punta Islita*: a project that would eventually become Costa Rica's first ecologically and socially responsible hospitality project. Little did he know at that time that this trailblazing endeavour would become the region's very first hotel included in Travel & Leisure and Condé Nast's World's Top 100 Hotels listing.

He expressed his vast experience in the Penta-pillar Approach — a holistic management system that takes into account the wellbeing of key stakeholders: Staff members, Hotel Guests, Surrounding Community, Strategic Alliances, and the Ecosystem. In addition, through the creation of the Villafranca Zürcher Foundation in 2004, with his partner Harry Zürcher, they gave life to authentic community development fostered by tourism and art in Islita. Subsequently, this Model has been successfully applied in other recognized projects in the country, such as Caminos de Osa.

In 2008, he launched the consulting firm RBA, bringing together a group of interdisciplinary professionals who have led ambitious programs in areas such as: sustainable tourism services, community empowerment, infrastructure development and sustainable corporate strategies. In 2017, Don Eduardo partnered with the German certifier TourCert, managing to include key Costa Rican destinations in the main lists of sustainable tourism.

His passion for evolving and transforming the industry he knows and enjoys has been recognized by many organizations. An example of this, in 2008, the national newspaper *El Financiero* recognized him as Businessman of the Year, and the National Chamber of Tourism of Costa Rica awarded him the National Merit Award in 2004.

Mr. Villafranca holds a Business Administration Degree from University of Costa Rica and an Executive Education Certificate from INCAE Business School. He has published two books where he distills his vision and experience in sustainable business creation: *The Art of Hospitality* and *Social Responsibility, Product of Our Spiritual Intelligence*.

FUNDACIÓN VZ



Achievements

Speaker:

Rey Juan Carlos University (Spain),
Sustainable Tourism World Congress (Brasil),
Sustainable Tourism Seminar (Patagonia),
OAS Small Hotels Congress (Panamá) and
INCAE Business School.

Media presence:

La Nación, La República and El Financiero
newspapers, BBC World and CNN Radio.

- Founding member of Villafranca Zürcher Foundation in 2004
- Identity Award given by Las Palmas de Gran Canaria University in 2003
- Corporate Social Responsibility Award for SME's by the SME's Development Projects in 2004
- National Merit Award from the National Chamber of Tourism and Business Excellence Award by Acoprot in 2004
- National Chamber of Tourism (CANATUR) President from 2005 to 2006
- Businessman of the Year 2008 by El Financiero

CAMINOS DE OSA PROJECT

- Best Adventure Product Award FITUR 2016 (Spain)

HOTEL PUNTA ISLITA

- Tourism for Tomorrow Investing in People Award 2006, World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC)
- Caring Luxury Award 2005, Small Luxury Hotels Association (SLH)
- Life Quality Award 2005, Costa Rican Ombudsman