



BIRDING MAN

A D V E N T U R E S

Costa Rica: Culture of Conservation

Costa Rica, Central America

January 31st – February 9th, 2025



Observing Scarlet Macaws in the wild is an unforgettable experience. Their streamer-like tails and flashes of color can't help but leave one with a feeling of freedom and wildness.



Trip Summary

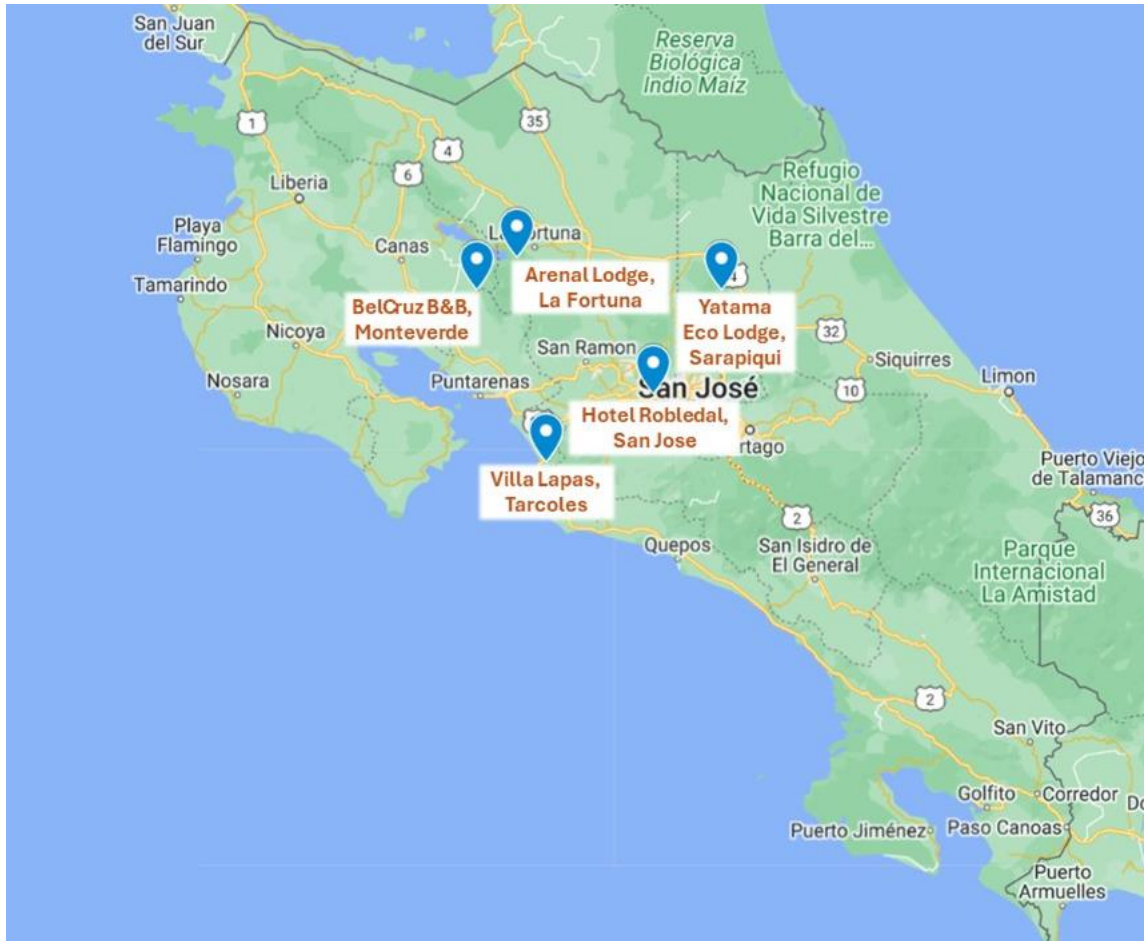
Many people forget that in the 1980s Costa Rica had one of the highest levels of deforestation in Central America. Multinational banana companies and cattle ranching enterprises leveled this country's forests at an alarming rate, resulting in a loss of around 40 percent of its forest cover by 1987. In 1996, the Costa Rican government made it illegal to fell trees without the approval of authorities and the following year it introduced a Payment for Environmental Services (PES) program. Today, nearly 60% of the land is once again forest and Costa Rica is one of the global leaders in ecotourism.

This adventure will take you to some of the most iconic destinations in Costa Rica while introducing you to its vibrant culture of conservation. Meet landowners and business owners who are working hard to provide sustainable ecotourism activities while learning about their challenges and struggles. Search for and photograph some of Costa Rica's most stunning wildlife, including Resplendent Quetzal, Keel-billed Toucan, Baird's Trogon, Scarlet Macaw, Red-capped Manakin, Monkeys (Howler, White-faced Capuchin, Squirrel), Sloths (Two-toed & Three-toed), Peccaries, Red-eyed Tree Frogs, Blue Jeans Poison Dart Frog, American Crocodile, Snakes, Basalisk Lizards, Iguanas, and nocturnal insects. Enjoy stays at memorable eco lodges with epic views and colorful wildlife while spending time with local "*ticos*" you are sure to adore.

The perfect blend of wildlife tourism, education, and relaxation, Costa Rica: Culture of Conservation is sure to be a trip you will never forget.

Itinerary in Brief

Day	Activities	Food	Lodging
1	Arrival to San Jose Transfer to Hotel Robledal	D	San Jose
2	Morning birding at hotel Carara National Park Playa Blanca Villa Lapas Jungle Lodge	BLD	Tarcoles
3	Tarcoles River Cruise Transfer to BelCruz B&B	BLD	Monteverde
4	Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve Optional Night Hike	BLD	Monteverde
5	Curi-Cancha Reserve Transfer to La Fortuna La Peninsula Road	BLD	La Fortuna
6	Birding at Lodge Tabacon Hot Springs	BLD	La Fortuna
7	Sky Walk Arenal Transfer to Yatama Eco Lodge	BLD	Sarapiqui
8	Guided hike in Yatama Free time at Yatama	BLD	Sarapiqui
9	La Selva Biological Station Soda Cinchona Transfer to San Jose	BLD	San Jose
10	Transfer to airport	BLD	Departure



Destinations for the proposed 10-day itinerary



A Sloth and her baby climb into the canopy near Yatama Eco Lodge, Sarapiquí

Itinerary

Day 1: Home | San Jose, Costa Rica

- Arrival to Juan Santamaría International Airport
- Transfer to Hotel Robledal (25 minutes)
- Relax at hotel with optional birding in the garden
 - **Target Birds:**
 - *Ferruginous Pygmy Owl*
 - *Clay-colored Thrush (Costa Rica's National Bird)*
 - *Inca Dove*
 - *Lineated Woodpecker*
 - *Blue-vented Hummingbird*
- Welcome Dinner at hotel
- Overview of Trip/Introduction to Conservation in Costa Rica

Lodging: [Hotel Robledal](#)

Meals included: D



The lush vegetation around Hotel Robledal provides ample birdwatching opportunities only a short distance from the International Airport



Hotel Robledal is a quiet oasis near the city of San Jose, Costa Rica

Day 2: San Jose | Carara National Park | Playa Blanca | Tarcoles

- Breakfast at hotel
- Tarcoles Bridge
- Carara National Park (1 hour 10 minutes)
 - **Target Birds:**
 - *Scarlet Macaw*
 - *Baird's Trogon*
 - *Slaty-tailed Trogon*
 - *Rufous-tailed Jacamar*
 - *Collared Aracari*
 - *Fiery-billed Aracari*
 - *Riverside Wren*
 - **Target Mammals:**
 - *Collared Peccary*
 - *Howler Monkey*
 - *Three-toed Sloth*
 - *Paca*
 - *Agouti*
- Lunch and check-in at Villa Lapas
- Optional afternoon birding at Bijagual Road or optional beach time at Playa Blanca
 - **Target Birds:**
 - *Slaty-tailed Trogon*
 - *Gartered Trogon*
 - *Black-hooded Antshrike*
 - *Black-mandibled Toucan*
 - *Red-capped Manakin*
 - *Long-tailed Manakin*
 - *Blue-crowned Manakin*
- Transfer to Villa Lapas Jungle Village

Lodging: [Villa Lapas Jungle Village](#)

Meals included: B, L, D



Villa Lapas Jungle Village will be our first stop on this one-of-a-kind tour. Villa Lapas is home to over 240 species of birds. (Source: <https://www.villalapas.com/rooms>)



Playa Blanca is only a short drive from Villa Lapas



The Tarcoles River is home to one of the densest populations of American Crocodiles in the world



Usually several American Crocodiles can be seen from the Crocodile Bridge across the Tarcoles River

Day 3: Tarcoles | Tarcoles River Cruise | Transfer to Monteverde | BelCruz B & B

- 6 am: Tarcoles River Cruise
 - **Target Birds:**
 - *Scarlet Macaw*
 - *Double-striped Thick-knee*
 - *Amazon Kingfisher*
 - *American Pygmy-Kingfisher*
 - *Panama Flycatcher*
 - *Mangrove Swallow*
 - *Northern Jacana*
 - *Bare-throated Tiger Heron*
 - *Boat-billed Heron*
 - *Crested Caracara*
 - **Target Reptiles:**
 - *American Crocodile*
 - *Green Iguana*
 - *Basalisk Lizard*
 - **Target Mammals:**
 - *Tamandua*
 - *Howler Monkey*
- Lunch
- Transfer to BelCruz B & B in Monteverde

Lodging: [BelCruz B & B](#)

Meals included: B, L, D



Cruise the Tarcoles River looking for birds like Fasciated Tiger Heron while getting up close and personal to American Crocodiles

Day 4: Monteverde

- Breakfast
- Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve
 - **Target Birds:**
 - *Resplendent Quetzal*
 - *Black-faced Nightingale Thrush*
 - *Fiery-billed Aracari*
 - *Black-breasted Wood-Quail*
 - *Red-fronted Parrotlet*
- Lunch
- Free Afternoon to explore town and relax

Lodging: [BelCruz B & B](#)

Meals included: B, L, D



View from the room at the BelCruz B & B in Monteverde



Every birder comes to Costa Rica for the opportunity to find a Resplendent Quetzal. We will be visiting Monteverde during the Quetzal's breeding season, so they should be easier to find than during other times of the year

Day 5: Monteverde | La Fortuna

- Breakfast
- Curi-Cancha Reserve
 - **Target Birds:**
 - *Three-wattled Bellbird*
 - *Black Guan*
 - *Coppery-headed Emerald*
 - *Magenta-throated Woodstar*
 - *Emerald Toucanet*
 - *Golden-browed Chlorophonia*
- Transfer to La Fortuna (2 hrs 38 min)
- Check into Arenal Observatory Lodge

Lodging: [Arenal Observatory Lodge](#)

Meals included: B, L, D



The Collared Aracari is one of several species of small toucans we may see



The view of the Arenal Volcano from the grounds of the Arenal Observatory Lodge (Source: <https://www.arenalobservatorylodge.com/arenal-volcano/>)

Day 6: La Fortuna

- Breakfast
- Birding on the grounds of Arenal Observatory Lodge
 - **Target Birds:**
 - *Montezuma Oropendola*
 - *Lovely Cotinga*
 - *Great Currasow*
 - *White-crowned Parrot*
 - *Black-crested Coquette*
- Lunch
- Tabacon River Hot Springs
 - Soak in the springs along the Tabacon River
- Return to Arenal Observatory Lodge

Lodging: [Arenal Observatory Lodge](#)

Meals included: B, L, D



Relaxing in the hot springs on the Tabacon River, La Fortuna



A Basalisk Lizard on the shores of the Tabacon River

Day 7: La Fortuna | Sarapiquí

- Breakfast
- Sky Adventures Hanging Bridge Hike
 - **Target Birds:**
 - *Ornate Hawk-Eagle*
 - *Sharpbill*
 - *Yellow-eared Toucanet*
 - *Bare-throated Umbrellabird*
 - *Crested Guan*
 - *Glittering Tanager*
 - *Black and Yellow Tanager*
 - *Russet Antshrike*
- Lunch
- Transfer to Sarapiquí
- Dinner

Lodging: [Yatama Eco Lodge](#)

Meals included: B, L, D



Yatama Eco Lodge is a remote setting with endless opportunities for wildlife exploration. Prepare for endless discovery



Discover new species on the western Caribbean slope

Day 8: Sarapiquí

- Breakfast
- Guided tour of Yatama
 - **Target Birds:**
 - *Great Currassow*
 - *Russet-naped Wood-Rail*
 - *Yellow-throated Toucan*
 - *Common Tody-Flycatcher*
 - *King Vulture*
 - *Red-capped Manakin*
 - *Montezuma Oropendola*
- Lunch
- Free time for journaling and relaxation at Yatama
- Dinner
- Guided night walk
 - Target Species
 - *Red-eyed Tree Frog*
 - *Blue Jeans Strawberry Dart Frog*
 - *Snakes*
 - *Insects*

Lodging: [Yatama Eco Lodge](#)

Meals included: B, L, D



Day 9: Sarapiquí | San Jose

- Breakfast
- Guided Tour of La Selva Biological Station
 - **Target Birds:**
 - *White-fronted Nunbird*
 - *Black Hawk-Eagle*
 - *Gartered Trogon*
 - *Golden-hooded Tanager*
 - *Crested Guan*
 - *Black-cheeked Woodpecker*
 - *White-collared Manakin*
 - *Rufous Motmot*
- Lunch at Soda Cinchona
 - **Target Birds:**
 - *Green Hermit*
 - *Brown Violetear*
 - *Green Thorntail*
 - *Green-crowned Brilliant*
 - *White-throated Mountain-Gem*
 - *Violet Sabrewing*
 - *Coppery-headed Emerald*
 - *Northern Emerald Toucanet*
- Transfer to San Jose
- Dinner

Lodging: [Hotel Robledal](#)

Meals included: B, L, D



Price per person: \$2,800.00, single supplement \$500

Cost is based on Double Occupancy

Includes:

- ✓ Driver and professional naturalist guide throughout the tour
- ✓ Ground transportation
- ✓ All hotels
- ✓ All food
- ✓ All fees and permits
- ✓ Water and snacks throughout the trip
- ✓ General Liability insurance and auto insurance
- ✓ 24-hour assistance in case of emergency

Does not include:

- × Medical insurance
- × Travel insurance
- × Evacuation costs
- × Alcoholic beverages
- × Personal expenses
- × Activities and food not included on the itinerary

Tour Pace:

This tour is designed for beginner to intermediate birders and photographers. We consider the difficulty level to be moderate, with most of the birding being close to roadsides and trails with slight uphill and downhill. Expect early morning starts, but we will allow plenty of time for rest and relaxation at the lodges.

Transportation:

You will be traveling in a 12- or 14- passenger van with windows. The maximum group size will be 6 people, excluding the guide. There will be sufficient room for personal baggage.

Lodging:

You will be staying at a combination of 2- and 3-star hotels, motels, and lodges throughout the tour. Each accommodation has been diligently vetted for quality and assurance.