THE VERY BEST OF COLOMBIA

Western and Central Andes, Chocó Lowlands, and Caribbean Lowlands

18 FEBRUARY - 8 MARCH 2020
18 FEBRUARY - 8 MARCH 2021

Multicolored Tanager *is one of our targets on this tour.*

We invite you to our revised Birding Tour Colombia: The Very Best of Colombia. This itinerary provides the best in term of birds that this country has to offer. For 19 days we will explore the best birding sites of the country, including the Caribbean region in the north with the famous Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, looking for the unique species that occur exclusively in these mountainous peaks, and the dry scrub of the La Guajira peninsula at the northern tip of the country. Then we will cover the mighty central Andes from the spectacular Los Nevados National Natural Park and the Rio Blanco Reserve in search of the most wanted **White-capped Tanager**, **Ocellated Tapaculo**, **Masked Saltator**, and **Buffy Helmetcrest** to the Otún-Quimbaya Flora and Fauna Sanctuary in search of the endemic **Cauca Guan** and the secretive **Hooded Antpitta**. At the bird-rich Tatamá National Park, where the Western Andes meet the Chocó, we will search for the finest selection of Colombian birds, such as the endemic **Golden-ringed Tanager**, **Black-and-gold Tanager**, **Glistening-green Tanager**, **Club-winged Manakin**, **Chestnut-bellied Flowerpiercer**, **Dusky Starfrontlet**, **Black Solitaire**, and **Munchique Wood Wren**. We will then explore the wetlands at the shores of the Cauca River in search of the endemic **Apical Flycatcher**, **Spectacled Parrotlet**, and many classic aquatic species. Another highlight of the tour without doubt will be the Anchicaya road, where we will have the chance to look for several Chocó specialties such as **Toucan Barbet**, **Blue-whiskered Tanager**, **Golden-chested Tanager**, **Scarlet-and-white Tanager**, and **Tooth-billed Hummingbird**. The Pacific lowlands are home to the sought-after **Ocellated Antbird**, **Rose-faced Parrot**, **Choco Toucan**, and **Lita Woodpecker**. Finally we will explore the mountains above Calí in search of the striking **Multicolored Tanager**, one of the most beautiful tanagers in the world.

*The outrageously colored **Toucan Barbet***

Colombia with its diverse habitats is home to more bird species than any other country in the world. With the country's almost two thousand species be prepared to be in awe of its

spectacular avifauna as we explore Colombia on this 19-day adventure. Join Birding Ecotours on this exciting Birding Tour Colombia to this dynamic birding destination!

Itinerary (19 days/18 nights)

Day 1. Arrival in Barranquilla
Our tour will start in the northern city of Barranquilla, which is our rendezvous point at the Caribbean coast. You will be met at Barranquilla's Ernesto Cortissoz International Airport and transferred to your Hotel.
Overnight: Barranquilla Plaza Hotel, Barranquilla

Day 2. Birding the Barranquilla Marshes and Isla Salamanca, transfer to Minca
Today we will have an early start, looking for the endemic **Chestnut-winged Chachalaca** in the scrub around Barranquilla. Then we will briefly visit the Salamanca National Park, where we will be looking for the endemic **Sapphire-bellied Hummingbird**. After getting these two targets we will explore some marshes near Barranquilla, where we will look for **Black-bellied Whistling Duck**, **Rufescent Tiger Heron**, **Glossy Ibis**, **Bare-faced Ibis**, **Ringed Kingfisher**, **Snail Kite**, **Pied Water Tyrant**, **White-headed Marsh Tyrant**, **Yellow-chinned Spinetail**, **Stripe-backed Wren**, **Brown-throated Parakeet**, **Common Tody-Flycatcher**, **Prothonotary Warbler**, and **Red-crowned Woodpecker**.

Black-throated Mango *is one of the many hummingbird species we can see in Colombia.*

After the morning's birding we will transfer to the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, a place famous for its isolated, snow-capped mountains along the Caribbean coast, reaching altitudes from sea level to 5000 meters (16,400 feet). Santa Marta is the home of almost 20 endemic birds and boasts several range-restricted species – a true paradise for birders! After lunch at our accommodations our first approach to Santa Marta birds will be to those occurring at lower elevations near Minca. Our hotel holds hummingbird feeders with species like **Black-throated Mango**, **Steely-vented Hummingbird**, **White-necked Jacobin**, **Rufous-tailed Hummingbird**, and **White-vented Plumeleteer**.
In the afternoon we will explore the road below Minca, looking for **Whooping Motmot**, **Orange-chinned Parakeet**, **Keel-billed Toucan**, **Streaked Flycatcher**, **Blue-headed Parrot**, **Pale-eyed Pygmy Tyrant**, **Crested Oropendola**, **Pale-breasted Thrush**, **Baltimore Oriole**, **Yellow-backed Oriole**, **White-bearded Manakin**, and **Laughing Falcon**, and with luck we might have distant views of **Military Macaw**.
Overnight: Hotel Minca - La Casona, Minca

Day 3. Birding around Minca, transfer to El Dorado Lodge
Today we will spend the morning birding above Minca, looking for **Golden-winged Sparrow**, **Rufous-capped Warbler**, **Scaled Pigeon**, **Keel-billed Toucan**, **Rufous-tailed Jacamar**, **Rufous-breasted Wren**, **Bicolored Wren**, **Rufous-and-white Wren**, **Yellow-legged Thrush**, **Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush**, and the endemics **Santa Marta Tapaculo** and **Santa Marta Foliage-gleaner**.

*The hummingbird feeders at El Dorado Lodge attract the likes of **Brown Violetear**.*

After a nice birding morning we will continue our drive toward El Dorado Lodge in the heart of the El Dorado Bird Reserve in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta. El Dorado will be our base for two nights, allowing us to enjoy the environment and to get as many birds as possible, including most of the Santa Marta endemics. The hummingbird feeders at the lodge are excellent for several species, including the endemic **White-tailed Starfrontlet**, **Brown Violetear**, **Crowned**

Woodnymph, and if we are lucky **Lazuline Sabrewing.** From the lodge grounds we can enjoy views of **Band-tailed Guan**, **Blue-naped Chlorophonia**, **Black-capped Tanager**, **Sierra Nevada Brushfinch**, **Slaty-backed Nightingale-Thrush**, **Black-hooded Thrush**, **White-tipped Dove**, **Lined Quail-Dove**, **White-throated** (Santa Marta) **Toucanet**, and **Black-fronted Wood Quail.**
Overnight: El Dorado Lodge, El Dorado Bird Reserve

*Another hummingbird species we may encounter at El Dorado Lodge — **Crowned Woodnymph***

Day 4. Birding the San Lorenzo Ridge and El Dorado Lodge
We will have an early start, leaving the lodge before dawn to look for the endemic **Santa Marta Screech Owl**. We will reach the famous San Lorenzo Ridge at 2700 meters (8858 feet) above sea level. Here we will look for **Santa Marta Parakeet**, **Santa Marta Bush Tyrant**, **Santa Marta Warbler**, **Rufous-headed Spinetail**, **Yellow-crowned Whitestart**, **Streak-capped Spinetail**, **Santa Marta Mountain Tanager**, **Santa Marta Brushfinch**, **Yellow-bellied Chat-Tyrant**, **Flammulated Treehunter**, and with luck **Brown-rumped Tapaculo**. We will visit the San Lorenzo Field Station to look for the endemic **Santa Marta Antpitta** being fed with worms. Then we will return to the lodge and after lunch look for **Golden-breasted Fruiteater**, **White-tipped Quetzal**, **Masked Trogon**, **Montane Foliage-gleaner**, and **White-lored Warbler**.
Overnight: El Dorado Lodge, El Dorado Bird Reserve

Day 5. El Dorado Lodge and transfer to Santa Marta
We will leave early in the morning, looking for the endemic **Santa Marta Blossomcrown**, **Santa Marta Woodstar**, **Groove-billed Toucan**, **Slaty-backed Nightingale-Thrush**, **Santa Marta Antbird**, **Tennessee Warbler**, **American Redstart**, **Rose-breasted Grosbeak**, **Grey-**

throated Leaftosser, **Rusty-breasted Antpitta**, and if we are lucky **Rosy Thrush-Tanager.** We will also look for **Black-and-white Owl** at its usual day-roosting perch.
Overnight: Santa Marta

Day 6. Las Gaviotas, transfer to Riohacha, and birding at La Guajira
Today we will look for **Lance-tailed Manakin**, **Southern Bentbill**, **Striped Cuckoo**, **Trinidad Euphonia**, and **Double-striped Thick-knee**. Then we will drive to Riohacha and after arrival will look for **Green-rumped Parrotlet**, **American White Ibis**, **Reddish Egret**, **Caspian**, **Common**, **Royal**, and **Cabot Terns**, **American Oystercatcher**, **Whimbrel**, **Lesser Black-backed Gull**, and if we are lucky **Scarlet Ibis** and **American Flamingo** as well. We will also search for **Rufous-vented Chachalaca**, **Glaucous Tanager**, and **Burrowing Owl**.
Overnight: Hotel Taroa, Riohacha

***Burrowing Owl** is often encountered in small family groups.*

Day 7. Birding La Guajira and flight to Pereira
We'll have another early start to explore the dry habitat of La Guajira. We will look for **Vermilion Cardinal**, **Orinoco Saltator**, **Northern White-fringed Antwren**, **Black-backed Antshrike**, **Black-crested Antshrike**, **Slender-billed Inezia**, **Pale-tipped Inezia**, **Pearly-vented Tody-Tyrant**, **Buffy Hummingbird**, **Chestnut Piculet**, **White-whiskered Spinetail**, **Caribbean Hornero**, **Carib Grackle**, and **Northern Scrub Flycatcher** and hope to find the shy **Tocuyo Sparrow**. Later we will transfer to the airport and connect with a flight to Pereira.
Overnight: Movich Hotel de Pereira, Pereira

Day 8. Otún-Quimbaya Flora and Fauna Sanctuary, transfer to Hotel Termales Del Ruiz
A relatively short drive from Pereira will take us to the Otún-Quimbaya Flora and Fauna Sanctuary, where we will look for the endemic **Cauca Guan** and the secretive **Hooded Antpitta**.

Other birds include **Red-ruffed Fruitcrow**, **Rufous-breasted Flycatcher**, **Chestnut-breasted Wren**, the endemic **Crested Ant Tanager**, **Andean Motmot**, **White-throated Toucanet**, the endemic **Stiles's Tapaculo**, **Streak-capped Treehunter**, **Sooty-headed Tyrannulet**, **Slaty-backed Chat-Tyrant**, **Whiskered Wren**, **Torrent Tyrannulet**, **White-capped Dipper**, and **Torrent Duck.** After lunch we will drive to Manizales and bird at the base of Los Nevado National Natural Park.
Overnight: Hotel Termales Del Ruiz, Manizales

Day 9. Los Nevados National Natural Park
Today we will have an early start to explore the high-elevation páramos below the snow-capped mountains. Outside the park we will be looking for the endemic **Buffy Helmetcrest**, **Andean Tit-Spinetail**, **Many-striped Canastero**, **Grass Wren**, **Tawny Antpitta**, **Plain-colored Seedeater**, **Plumbeous Sierra-Finch**, and **Stout-billed Cinclodes**. If we are lucky we might see the mighty **Andean Condor** soaring above the mountains and the more common **Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle**. We will try to locate the uncommon **Black-backed Bush Tanager** before returning to the hotel and enjoying its hummingbird feeders. These feeders attract species like **Great Sapphirewing**, **Buff-winged Starfrontlet**, **Mountain Velvetbreast**, **Black-thighed Puffleg**, **Golden-breasted Puffleg**, **Shining Sunbeam**, **Viridian Metaltail**, and **Rainbow-bearded Thornbill**. Other species around the hotel include **Paramo Tapaculo**, **Glossy Flowerpiercer**, and **Pale-naped Brushfinch**.
Overnight: Hotel Termales Del Ruiz, Manizales

*The impressive **Long-tailed Sylph***

Day 10. Termales Del Ruiz and transfer to the Rio Blanco Reserve
Today we will spend some time looking for the endemic and rare **Rufous-fronted Parakeet** in the upper parts of the páramo. We will also explore the forest below the Hotel Termales Del Ruiz, looking for **Rufous Wren**, **White-browed Spinetail**, **Black-billed Mountain Toucan**,

Scarlet-bellied Mountain Tanager, **Streaked Tuftedcheek**, **Pearled Treerunner**, **Spillmann's Tapaculo**, **Blue-backed Conebill**, and **Hooded Mountain Tanager**. If we are lucky we might get our first view here of **Ocellated Tapaculo**.
We will continue our trip to the Rio Blanco Reserve, where we will have time to enjoy the hummingbird feeders with species such as **White-bellied Woodstar**, **Long-tailed Sylph**, **Tourmaline Sunangel**, **Buff-tailed Coronet**, **Lesser Violetear**, and **Collared Inca**. We will also explore the main road, looking for **Ocellated Tapaculo**, and before dusk we will try for **Rufous-bellied Nighthawk**, **Band-winged Nightjar**, and **White-throated Screech Owl**.
Overnight: Rio Blanco Reserve

Day 11. Full day at Rio Blanco Reserve
Today we will spend the morning visiting the three different antpitta stations of this reserve to look for **Bicolored Antpitta**, **Chestnut-crowned Antpitta**, **Brown-banded Antpitta**, and **Slate-crowned Antpitta**. The mixed flocks at Rio Blanco normally include **Blue-and-black Tanager**, **Blue-capped Tanager**, **Capped Conebill**, **Black-eared Hemispingus**, **Superciliaried Hemispingus**, **Oleaginous Hemispingus**, **Grass-green Tanager**, **Blue-winged Mountain Tanager**, **Crimson-mantled Woodpecker**, **Pearled Treerunner**, and **Green-and-black Fruiteater**. Some understory species we will look for are **Rusty-crowned Tody-Flycatcher**, **Flammulated Treehunter**, **Streak-headed Antbird**, **Blackish Tapaculo**, **Russet-crowned Warbler**, and **Grey-browed Brushfinch**. Other highlights at Rio Blanco are **Masked Saltator**, **Dusky Piha**, and **White-capped Tanager**.
Overnight: Rio Blanco Reserve

*We hope to find a number of antpitta species in the Rio Blanco Reserve such as this **Chestnut-crowned Antpitta**.*

Day 12. Rio Blanco Reserve and transfer to Montezuma Ecolodge
After a whole morning birding around Rio Blanco we will make a long drive to the Tatamá National Park, where we will stay at the basic Montezuma Ecolodge located at the edge of the park.
Overnight: Montezuma Ecolodge

Day 13. Montezuma Ridge (top)
Today we will have an early start and a full day to explore the top of the Montezuma ridge at 2600 meters (8530 feet) above sea level, where we will look for the endemic **Chestnut-bellied Flowerpiercer**, the endemic **Munchique Wood Wren**, **Smoky Bush Tyrant**, **Collared Inca**, the endemic and Critically Endangered (IUCN) **Dusky Starfrontlet**, which has been recorded recently in the area, and with luck it might remain for a long time. We will also look for the incredible mixed flock of species that makes Montezuma famous, such as the endemic **Golden-ringed Tanager**, **Purplish-mantled Tanager**, **Chestnut-breasted Chlorophonia**, **Fulvous-dotted Treerunner**, **Spillmann's Tapaculo**, **Narino Tapaculo**, **Tatama Tapaculo** (recently described in 2017), **Montane Woodcreeper**, **Glistening–green Tanager**, **Indigo Flowerpiercer**, **Ochre-breasted Antpitta**, **Bronze-olive Pygmy Tyrant**, **Handsome Flycatcher**, and with luck **White-faced Nunbird** and **Tanager Finch**. The hummingbird feeders below the ridge attract **Tourmaline Sunangel**, **Velvet-purple Coronet**, **Greenish Puffleg**, **Violet-tailed Sylph**, **Empress Brilliant**, and **Brown Inca**. At night we will look for **Tropical Screech Owl** around the cabins.
Overnight: Montezuma Ecolodge

Day 14. Montezuma Ridge (mid-elevations, Cajones)
We'll have another early start to focus this time on mid-elevation species in the Cajones sector of the park. Here we will look for **Orange-breasted Fruiteater**, **Crested** and **Golden-headed Quetzals**, **Uniform Treehunter**, **Buff-fronted Foliage-gleaner**, **Uniform Antshrike**, **Bluish Flowerpiercer**, the endemic **Black-and-gold Tanager**, **Pacific Tuftedcheek**, **Choco Brushfinch**, **Choco Vireo**, **Golden-winged Manakin**, **Black-throated Tody-Tyrant**, **Rufous-throated Tanager**, **Yellow-collared Chlorophonia**, and with luck **Black Solitaire** and **Beautiful Jay.** We will drive back to the lodge and spend the afternoon birding around the property, looking for the endemic **Greyish Piculet** and enjoy the hummingbird feeders, where we'll be looking for **Western Emerald**, **White-tailed Hillstar**, **Tawny-bellied Hermit**, and the uncommon **Purple-bibbed Whitetip**.
Overnight: Montezuma Ecolodge

Day 15. Montezuma Ecolodge and transfer to Buga
On our last morning here we will be focusing on species that occurs at lower elevations on the Montezuma ridge, such as **Choco Tapaculo**, **Club-winged Manakin**, the endemic **Parker's Antbird**, **Zeledon's Antbird**, **Ochre-breasted Tanager**, **Olive Finch**, **Crested Ant Tanager**, and with luck **Moustached Puffbird** and **Lanceolated Monklet**. Then we will leave the park to drive to the town of Buga to stay in a comfortable hotel.
Overnight: Hotel Guadalajara, Buga

Day 16. Sonso Lake and transfer to Anchicaya
We will have an easy morning visiting the Sonso Lake and looking for **Spectacled Parrotlet**, **Jet Antbird**, the endemic **Apical Flycatcher**, the secretive **Dwarf Cuckoo**, **Orange-crowned Euphonia**, **Common Potoo**, **Common Nighthawk**, **Fulvous Whistling Duck**, **Red-breasted Blackbird**, **Oriole Blackbird**, and several aquatic species that we may have missed before in the Barranquilla marshes. After lunch we will transfer to Anchicaya in the Chocó lowlands and, if time permits, spend the afternoon enjoying the hummingbird feeders of Doña Dora, where normally we find **White-whiskered Hermit**, **Green Thorntail**, and **White-tailed Hillstar**. The fruit feeders attract **Toucan Barbet**.
Overnight: Hotel El Campanario, El Queremal

Day 17. Anchicaya lowlands
Today we will focus on lowland Chocó species such as **Golden-chested Tanager**, **Scarlet-and-white Tanager**, **Emerald Tanager**, **Rufous-throated Tanager**, **Rufous-winged Tanager**, **Grey-and-gold Tanager**, **Pacific Antwren**, **Lita Woodpecker**, **Choco Toucan**, **Yellow-throated Toucan**, **Collared Aracari**, **Black-capped Pygmy Tyrant**, **Pacific Flatbill**, **Sulphur-rumped Myiobius**, **Buff-rumped Warbler**, **White-whiskered Puffbird**, **Purple-crowned Fairy**, **Bay Wren**, **Choco Warbler**, and with luck **Lemon-spectacled Tanager** and **Tooth-billed Hummingbird**. After some intense birding along the Anchicaya road we will arrive at Buenaventura on the Pacific coast for an overnight.
Overnight: Cosmos Pacifico Hotel, Buenaventura

White-booted Racket-tail *can be seen at Finca Alejandria.*

Day 18. Birding San Cipriano and transfer to Calí
We will spend the morning birding in the San Cipriano Reserve, looking for Chocó specialists such as **Stub-tailed Antbird**, **Black-breasted Puffbird**, **Scarlet-thighed Dacnis**, **Scarlet-browed Tanager**, **Blue-whiskered Tanager**, **Spot-crowned Antvireo**, **Dusky Pigeon**, **Barred**

Puffbird, **Moustached Antwren**, **Chestnut-backed Antbird**, **Bicolored Antbird**, and if we are lucky the most wanted **Ocellated Antbird**, **Rose-faced Parrot**, and **Five-colored Barbet**. Then we will drive to Calí on a new, paved road.
Overnight: Hampton by Hilton Calí, Calí

Day 19. Finca Alejandria and departure
On our last morning we will visit the famous Finca Alejandria, where we will look for hummingbirds including **Long-tailed Sylph**, **White-booted Racket-tail** (a recent split from Booted Racket-tail), **Bronzy Inca**, and **Blue-headed Sapphire**. The tanager feeders attract the handsome **Red-headed Barbet**, **Saffron-crowned Tanager**, **Golden-naped Tanager**, **Summer Tanager**, **Lemon-rumped Tanager**, **Green Honeycreeper**, and the striking **Multicolored Tanager**. Other species here include the endemic **Colombian Chachalaca**, **Crimson-rumped Toucanet**, and **Black-winged Saltator**.
After lunch we will transfer to the Calí airport to connect with your international flights.

*The brightly colored **Green Honeycreeper** can be seen at Finca Alejandria.*

Please note that the itinerary cannot be guaranteed as it is only a rough guide and can be changed (usually slightly) due to factors such as availability of accommodation, updated information on the state of accommodation, roads, or birding sites, the discretion of the guides and other factors. In addition, we sometimes have to use a different international guide from the one advertised due to tour scheduling.

Duration: 19 days

Group Limit: 3 - 8

Dates: 18 February - 8 March 2020
18 February - 8 March 2021

Start: Barranquilla

End: Calí

Prices: US$7963.00 per person sharing (5-8 participants) 2020
US$8348.00 per person sharing (3-4 participants) 2020
US$8361.00 per person sharing (5-8 participants) 2021
US$8766.00 per person sharing (3-4 participants) 2021
plus approximately US$250 for the domestic flight, which we will book for you 2020/2021

Single Supplement: US$ 990 2020
US$1040 2021
Please note that there are no single rooms available at Montezuma Ecolodge 2020/2021

Price includes:
Accommodation
All meals (except where indicated)
All ground transportation, including 4x4 transportation where needed
Admission fees to parks and reserves
Private tour leader
Local guides
Bottled water

Price excludes:
International flights
Domestic flight Riohacha-Pereira
Dinner on day 1 and on day 19
Private expenses (drinks, alcoholic drinks, laundry, any other personal items)
Any activity not described in the itinerary

Level: Moderate. This is not considered an arduous trip, but it does include early starts every day, long drives. and some steep walks. We will face high elevation in the Central Andes in the Los Nevados National Natural Park at 4100 meters/13.450 feet. The trip might not be easy for people with walking difficulties like back or knee problems and lack of stamina.