



COSTA RICA ESCAPE TOUR

11 - 19 JANUARY 2024



Resplendent Quetzal is one of the main targets on this trip (photo Kevin Easley).

We believe this expertly tailored Costa Rica birding tour is the perfect excuse to leave behind the daily stress of modern-day living to do some great birding in one of the most fantastic birdwatching destinations in all of the neotropics.

Costa Rica offers perhaps the best birding in Central America, not only in terms of birds (the country holds 933 species) but also in terms of accommodation and tourist infrastructure. During this short tour we are staying at some of the most comfortable hotels available, perfect for birders and nature-lovers alike. If you do not have time to join our more comprehensive Costa Rica Premium Tour but still want to see beautiful and charismatic neotropical bird species, then this Costa Rica Escape Tour could be perfect for you. The tour is suited for both first-time birders to the neotropics and those more experienced birders trying to get a high number of species in the shortest amount of time. Not only does this tour offer an impressive species list but it also offers you the opportunity to see a number of neotropical dream birds such as **Keel-billed Toucan**, **Resplendent Quetzal** and a plethora of gorgeous hummingbird species.



*The large and brightly colored **Keel-billed Toucan** is always a popular sight.*

Itinerary (9 days/8 nights)

Day 1. Arrival at San José and transfer to Hotel Bougainvillea

You will arrive at the San José Airport to be met by your tour leader, and be transferred to the hotel. If time permits, we may do some birding around the beautiful grounds of the hotel, looking for **Rufous-backed Wren**, **Hoffmann's Woodpecker**, **Finsch's Parakeet**, **Squirrel Cuckoo**, **Baltimore Oriole**, **Cinnamon-bellied Saltator**, **American Yellow Warbler**, **Lesson's**

Motmot, White-winged Dove, Rufous-tailed Hummingbird, Clay-colored Thrush, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Melodious Blackbird, Great-tailed Grackle, and with some luck, White-eared Ground Sparrow.

Overnight: Hotel Bougainvillea, San José

Day 2. La Paz Waterfalls, Cinchona Feeders, and transfer to La Quinta

We will spend some time birding the hotel grounds before breakfast to add any additional species to yesterday afternoon's birding. After breakfast, we will leave the hotel and head to La Paz Waterfalls. Here we should get species such as **Mountain Wren, Slaty Antwren, Slaty-backed Nightingale-Thrush, Large-footed Finch**, and a number of hummingbirds such **Violet Sabrewing, Green Hermit, Green-crowned Brilliant**, the endemic **Coppery-headed Emerald** and with some luck **Purple-crowned Fairy**. We will of course spend some time admiring the impressive waterfalls of the area too!



*We may find **Violet Sabrewing** at La Paz Waterfalls.*

After lunch, we will visit the Cinchona feeders, where we can spend time watching and photographing birds such as **Red-headed Barbet, Prong-billed Barbet, Blue-throated Toucanet, Silver-throated, Scarlet-rumped, Crimson-collared, Blue-grey, and Palm Tanagers**, and with luck **Black Guan** and **Buff-fronted Quail-Dove**. After some great time at the feeders, we will transfer to Sarapiquí where we will look for iconic Caribbean foothills species such as **Yellow-throated Toucan, Montezuma Oropendola, White-crowned Parrot, and Grey-headed Chachalaca**.

Overnight: La Quinta Sarapiquí Country Inn, Sarapiquí



Black Guan can be seen at the Cinchona feeders.

Day 3. La Selva Biological Station

We will have an early start to explore the famous La Selva Biological Station, where we have the chance to find **Short-billed** and **Scaled Pigeons**, **Brown-hooded Parrot**, **Great Green Macaw**, **Snowy Cotinga**, **White-ringed Flycatcher**, **Fasciated Antshrike**, **White-collared Manakin**, **Crested Guan**, **Great Antshrike**, **Red-lored Amazon**, and **Chestnut-headed** and **Montezuma Oropendola**. In addition, we'll look for **Semiplumbeous Hawk**, **Chestnut-sided** and **Buff-rumped Warblers**, **Great Tinamou**, **Vermiculated Screech Owl**, **Great Curassow**, **Northern Barred Woodcreeper**, **Rufous-winged**, **Pale-billed**, **Chestnut-colored**, and **Black-cheeked Woodpeckers**, **Keel-billed Toucan**, and perhaps even the secretive **Slaty-breasted Tinamou**.

Overnight: La Quinta Sarapiquí Country Inn, Sarapiquí

Day 4. Cope Wildlife Reserve and Puerto Viejo

We will have a full morning visiting the famous Cope Wildlife Reserve where we will have excellent opportunities to photograph birds visiting its amazing feeders. Some of the species regularly visiting the feeders might include **Bronze-tailed Plumeleteer**, **Crowned Woodnymph**, **White-necked Jacobin**, **Stripe-throated Hermit**, **White-tipped Sicklebill**, **Green Hermit**, **Montezuma** and **Chestnut-headed Oropendolas**, **Orange-chinned Parakeet**, **Black-cheeked Woodpecker**, **Red-legged**, **Shining** and **Green Honeycreepers**, and **Crimson-collared Tanager**. We will also explore some nocturnal bird territories near the reserve to look for potential roosting trees for **Crested Owl**, **Spectacled Owl**, and **Black-and-white Owl**, as

well as **Great Potoo**. The open fields are good for **Tropical Mockingbird** and **Yellow Tyrannulet**. We will also have good chances to enjoy some other iconic Costa Rican wildlife including frogs, lizards, and mammals.

Late in the afternoon, we will explore some areas around Puerto Viejo where **Great Green Macaw** is reliable and other birds such as **Slaty Spinetail**, **Long-tailed Tyrant**, **Yellow Tyrannulet**, **Olive-throated Parakeet**, **Morelet's** and **Variable Seedeaters**, and **Thick-billed Seed Finch** may be seen.

Overnight: La Quinta Sarapiquí Country Inn, Sarapiquí



Crested Owl is one of a number of owl species we hope to encounter on this tour.

Day 5. Puerto Viejo and transfer to San Gerardo de Dota

Today we will leave Sarapiquí and make our way to Sa Gerardo de Dota and will break the long drive with a pleasant birding stop along the Sarapiquí River where, with luck, we might find **Scarlet Macaw** and **King Vulture**. We also have chances for **Mangrove** and **Southern Rough-winged Swallows**, **Grey-breasted Martin**, **Prothonotary Warbler**, **Wedge-billed Woodcreeper**, and **Bare-throated Tiger Heron**. We will then continue our drive to San Gerardo de Dota and, if time permits, enjoy some birding around Cerro de la Muerte, before reaching the lovely Savegre Lodge.

Overnight: Savegre Hotel Natural Reserve and Spa, San Gerardo de Dota

Day 6. Los Quetzales National Park and Paraiso Los Quetzales Lodge

Today we will drive to the high elevations of Los Quetzales National Park. Once on the high grounds of the park we will focus on the range-restricted **Volcano Junco** and **Timberline Wren**. Other species are likely to include **Large-footed Finch**, **Volcano Hummingbird**, **Black-capped Flycatcher** and **Red-tailed Hawk**. We will then explore the lower areas in search of **Black-eared Warbler**, the shy **Peg-billed Finch**, and with luck, **Barred Parakeet**.

After birding the national park we will visit Paraiso Los Quetzales Lodge where we will enjoy the hummingbird feeders, likely getting views of **Fiery-throated**, **Talamanca**, and **Volcano Hummingbirds**, **Grey-tailed Mountaingem** and **Lesser Violetear**. The lodge is also a good place to look for the **Mountain Thrush**, **Ruddy-capped Nightingale-Thrush**, **Black-billed Nightingale-Thrush**, **Black-and-yellow Phainoptila**, and with luck, **Golden-browed Chlorophonia**.



Lesser Violetear is one of the many hummingbird species we hope to see at the feeders at Paraiso Los Quetzales Lodge.

After lunch, we will explore the surroundings of the Cerro de La Muerte and spend the afternoon enjoying some coffee and hummingbirds at Miriam's Restaurant where we should find **Acorn** and **Hairy Woodpeckers**, **Sooty-capped Bush Tanager**, **Golden-browed Chlorophonia**, **Flame-colored Tanager**, **Large-footed Finch**, **Sooty Thrush** and perhaps **Blue-throated Toucanet**. We will leave for our lodge before dusk and try for **Dusky Nightjar** en route.

Overnight: Savegre Hotel Natural Reserve and Spa, San Gerardo de Dota

Day 7. Savegre Lodge birding

Today we will have an early start to look for **Resplendent Quetzal**, perhaps the most-wanted bird in Central America. We will visit the most reliable spot in the valley to secure this special sighting. After breakfast, we will spend the morning exploring the lush mountain forest above the lodge, looking for **Spotted Wood Quail**, **Ruddy Treerunner**, **Spangle-cheeked Tanager**, **Collared Whitestart**, **Black-capped Flycatcher**, **Buffy Tuftedcheek**, **Ruddy-capped Nightingale-Thrush**, **Silvery-fronted Tapaculo**, and **Flame-throated Warbler**. Mixed flocks might hold North American migratory warblers such as **Chestnut-sided**, **Black-throated Green**, **Black-and-white**, and **Wilson's Warblers**. In addition, we could find **Sooty-capped Bush Tanager**, **Yellowish Flycatcher**, **Yellow-winged Vireo**, **Rufous-browed Peppershrike**, and **Black-faced Solitaire**. We will spend the afternoon enjoying some easy birding around the lodge where we will keep an eye out for **Finsch's Parakeet**, **Long-tailed Silky-flycatcher**, **Slaty Flowerpiercer**, **Flame-colored Tanager**, **Acorn Woodpecker**, **Red-tailed Hawk**, and **Stripe-tailed** and **Scintillant Hummingbirds**.

Overnight: Savegre Hotel Natural Reserve and Spa, San Gerardo de Dota



The fierce Ferruginous Pygmy Owl may be seen in San Jose.

Day 8. Birding Savegre and transfer back to San Jose

We will spend an extra morning around Savegre in case we need another chance to look for the **Resplendent Quetzal**, if we missed it on the previous day. We can explore the waterfalls road to look for **Yellowish Flycatcher**, **Dark** and **Ochraceous Pewees**, **Black-faced Solitaire**, and with some luck, **American Dipper**. After lunch we will be transferred to San Jose's Hotel Robledal

where it is possible to find **Ferruginous Pygmy Owl** and **Jamaican Fruit-eating Bats** in the hotel grounds.

Overnight Hotel Robledal, San Jose

Day 9. Transfer to the airport and departure

You will be transferred to San Jose Airport at a convenient time to connect with your international flight

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: 9 days
Group size: 4 - 8
Dates: 11 – 19 January 2024
Start: San José
End: San José
Prices: US\$4,706 per person sharing (2024)

Single Supplements: US\$854 (2024)

Price includes:

All accommodation
All meals
Entrance fees
Private transportation
Private tour leader
Transfers from/to the airport

Price excludes:

Flights

Personal expenses such as laundry, drinks and alcoholic drinks, personal items, phone calls, internet access, etc.

Gratuities (please see our [tipping guidelines blog](#))

Medical and trip cancellation insurance

Any activity not described in the itinerary