

Itinerary Highlights:

The naturalist guides are highly experienced biologists and bilingual naturalists, who accompany us, have developed an area of specialization as birds, botany, herpetology or have a life time of experience in the field, studying natural history. All are trained in guiding techniques.



Saturday March 23, 2019

Arrive in San Jose and transfer to a unique hotel with a swimming pool located on 10 acres of carefully tended tropical grounds with over 50 species of bromeliads, native orchids, ferns, herbs and cacti gardens which provide a natural habitat for the colorful humming birds. Meals not included this day only.

Sunday March 24, 2019

We will leave early to be at La Paz Waterfall Gardens by 9 am to see the wild humming birds arrive at the hand feeders.



http://www.waterfallgardens.com/la_paz_waterfall_gardens.php

This private reserve is set in the heart of Costa Rica's subtropical zone. Here, the climate is cool and damp. The cloud and rain forests are constantly misted by the clouds rising upslope. The reserve is designed around 5 waterfalls, and hiking trails with over 40 species of birds, a toucan feeding station, insect exhibit, butterfly observatory and gardens, a butterfly laboratory, sloths, capuchin monkeys, a frog exhibit, a snake exhibit and orchid, heliconia and bromeliad exhibits. Twenty-six documented species of humming birds fly within inches of you as they search for the hand feeding stations in the morning. This visit will allow close observation of animals and birds that you will be searching for in the wild.

This is a rescue sanctuary for animals and birds which are not able live in the wild. Elevation: 4,300 - 5,000 Ft



White-throated capuchin
(with their black monks caps)



Sloth



Black-handed Spider monkey

You will also see 5 of the 6 great cats of Costa Rica;

http://www.waterfallgardens.com/jungle_cats_margay.php

The MINAE (the Costa Rican Ministry of the Environment) lost funding to care for the 35 felines so they were placed under the care of the private La Paz Waterfall Gardens. The cats were either very old, injured, or had been exposed to humans for too long to be released back into the wild. Their mission is to preserve the genetics of the wildcat species in Costa Rica.



Margay



Jaguar



Ocelot



Puma

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yvyeZrNy74s>

[LA SELVA \(Private\)](#)

After lunch here, we will continue to the Sarapiqui Region to the Estación Biológica La Selva (OTS) the Organization for Tropical Studies an internationally renown research center of 3,900 acres. Sarapiqui area represents a convenient combination among different activities that can be done by the visitors. Sarapiqui encompasses excellent bird watching opportunities, plants, flowers and trees. The abundant fores are home for many species of reptiles like Iguanas, Basilisks and an impressive variety of Snakes.

At La Selva our first, private guided night walk will be to see elusive day time birds perched on lower branches as well as night species like Owls, Nightjars or Poor wills, Bats, Reptiles and nocturnal mammals like Pacas. Among reptiles and amphibious life observed, are Tree Frogs, Toads (*Rhinella marinus*) and some species of snakes, Moths, insects, Arachnidan, and Leaf cutter Ants working at night.

[Monday March 25, 2019](#)

A private, guided, long walk is planned after breakfast on the extensive trails in the large forest reserve bordering Braulio Carrillo National Park. You'll be walking the trails long enough

to really discover the treasures of La Selva, and most of the times you'll be able to observe many species of native wildlife. There are more than 300 species of birds. We will be searching for Mantled Howler Monkey, Agoutis, Coatis, Ant-eaters, Sloths, Collared Peccaries, Variegated Squirrel, Strawberry Poison-Dart Frog, Black Wood-Turtle, an army of leaf-cutter ants, colorful butterflies as well as Lizards, Iguanas and birds, including some of the following birds.



Honey Creepers of Costa Rica



Euphonia



Trogon



Toucan



Black Crested Guans

[Tuesday March 26, 2019](#)

The “Hiking Challenge” of Rainforest Adventures (shared) will begin with a one-hour drive to where we are transferred to Tram mini-buses to take us to the Aerial tram up the mountain to impressive observation points and the paths in the jungle. This walk is inside one of the denser territories in Costa Rica where we begin our hike down to the Corinto River. There’re good chances to observe different species of birds such as Trogons, Guans, Toucans, Woodcreepers, Woodpeckers and many more birds and mammals, including Agoutis, Coatis, Tayras, monkeys, and reptiles like Iguanas and snakes. After a rest on the river bank and a well- deserved picnic-style lunch, you’ll hike back to Tower 12. This time you’ll walk along the trail that separates the Rainforest Aerial Tram from the Braulio Carrillo National Park.



[Wednesday March 27, 2019 Today we drive to Bajos del Toro Valley](#)

This area is located in the Caribbean Watershed of the Central Volcanic Mountain Range beside the Conservation Area ranging from 5,000-9,000', forming several habitats of wet-cold conditions which are perfect for a great number of orchids, bromeliads, lichens and moss that proliferate in the area. In the Cloud forest we will look for the Resplendent Quetzal and Black Guans. We will stay in the small 12-room lodge within the Reserve. This area offers Cloud Forest trails and hikes. The almost always cold and humid conditions observed here throughout the year, which is not commonly seen and enjoyed in any other part of the country.



Resplendent Quetzal



Monkey-face orchid



Bromeliads



Black Guan

We will explore the trails in the **Bajos del Toro Valley**, guided by our naturalists to look for birds, animals, reptiles and unique plants.

Thursday March 28, 2019

In the morning, we will see one of the most spectacular waterfalls of Costa Rica, the Bajos del Toro Waterfall. We will descend approximately 400 feet and 365 steps on a winding trail. The waters of Toro Amarillo River flow through an extinct volcanic crater which is surrounded by natural vegetation and multicolor geologic formations. The red and yellow clays combine with green moss and the cooling mist. Hummingbird feeders along the trail attract several colorful species.



Trail to water falls



Bajos del Toro Waterfall



Steps on the trail

<http://www.rainforestadventure.com/costa-rica-atlantic/hiking-adventure/>

In the late afternoon, we will go on a Sunset Bird Walk at Bosque de Paz. The Sunset Bird walk will cover some thicker areas as well as open fields. You may see Trogons, Hummingbirds, Tanagers (these are most beautiful birds of Costa Rica), Warblers and Vireos and even a Resplendent Quetzal from time to time.



Tanagers

Friday, Mar 29 2019: Bajos del Toro

We will explore more of the trails in the **Bajos del Toro Valley**, guided by our naturalists to look for birds, animals and unique plants.

Saturday, Mar 30 2019:

We will Visit Nectandra Cloud Forest Garden (A scientific field research station)

<https://www.nectandra.org> Our mission is to promote the conservation and restoration of the montane cloud forest ecosystems of Costa Rica through public education, education, scientific research and watershed stewardship

.Most of the plants featured in the horticultural observation area are from the preserve and its immediate surroundings. Some in the exhibit are for aesthetic elements, others for their importance in medicinal, indigenous and cultural uses.

Two naturalists-guided experiences are possible.

The “Leisure Walk” is through dense forest and undulating terrain. In addition to information offered by the naturalist you will hear the sounds of the forest and observe the fauna and flora in the serenity of the Cloud Forest.

The “Wilderness Walk” winds through primary forest and up steeper trails to observe the fauna and flora in the serenity of the Cloud Forest. Additional time will be spent in the gardens. You will be served lunch during your visit to the Nectandra Cloud Forest Garden.



We will move from the Central Caribbean coast to the Central Pacific Coast.

The Central Pacific Region encompasses a variety of habitats distributed in different zones of life from the ocean up to 3000'. This is an overlapping area hemisphere where the northern hemisphere flora and fauna meets the southern hemisphere species. Consequently, there is a large diversity of plants and animals found in this environment. Among all the many species of birds, the Scarlet Macaw is probably the most colorful and loud.

This region encompasses an important conservation area of Carara National Park. The park is in the transition zone between the dry northwest and the very wet southwest. This large park is virtually the only tall tropical moist forest remaining in the Pacific lowlands. Established originally as a Biological Reserve in 1978, Carara was upgraded to National Park status in 1990. These environs are also home for many species of birds like macaws, parrots, toucans, woodpeckers, tanagers, hummingbirds, orioles, wrens, thrushes, jacanas, gallinules and many more. Besides, it is not hard to find green iguanas and frogs in the area, as well as mammals like coatis, agoutis and monkeys. Near the Tarcoles River mouth, you can easily observe large crocodiles sun basking in the sandbanks.



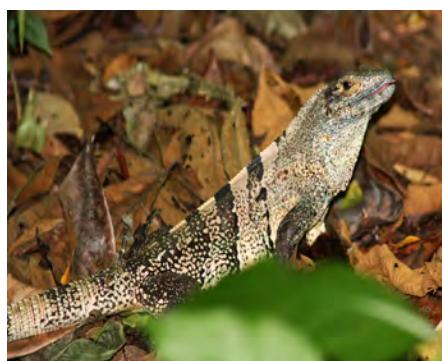
Carludovica



Scarlet Macaw



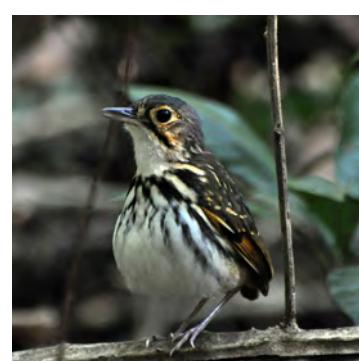
Brown-throated 3-toed sloth



Spiny-tailed black iguana



American Crocodile



Streak-breasted Antpitta

Sunday, Mar 31 2019 Carara National Park

<https://costa-rica-guide.com/nature/national-parks/carara/>

Known as one of Costa Rica's many beautiful national parks, the Carara National Park is in the Central Pacific Conservation Area located near the southern Pacific coast of Costa Rica in an isolated area of high rainfall. It is a 5,242-hectare park with an amazing diversity of flora and fauna. With a fantastic array of wildlife, with a number of species only found here, as they reach their northern limit. This park is also home to several ecosystems such as lagoons, marshlands and gallery forests. In this park you can see different species of wild animals including margay cats, jaguars, [sloths](#), [opossums](#), American crocodiles, white tail deer and ozelots can also be found here.



Ozelot



Margay

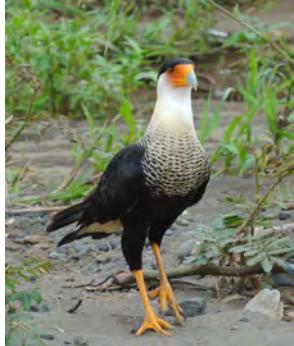


White-tail Deer

The park is located between the dry forests of the north and the humid forests of the south. As a result of this confluence of species and habitats, many endangered and threatened species live and breed here, like the American crocodile (*Crocodylus acutus*). Carara is also considered a sanctuary of the Scarlet Macaw, as well as many more species of birds like Tiger Herons, Egrets, Sand-pipers, Stilts, Tanagers, Honeycreepers, Trogons, Toucans and many more. The Three-toed Sloth lives, feeds and mates on the trees, and they can be spotted occasionally along the pathways. The area in which the reserve is located was occupied by an indigenous culture that lived from 300 B.C. to 1500 A.D. Extensive tomb sites have been excavated here, and the burial places of people of high status are remarkably complex.



Great Egret



Crested Caraca



Green Honey Creeper



Green Jesus Christ Lizard

Tárcoles Crocodile Boat Tour (Private)

The adventure takes place on the Tárcoles River, one of four rivers flowing out into the Nicoya Peninsula, and home to one of the world's largest crocodile populations in the wild with individuals up to fifteen feet long. In addition to the crocodiles, over fifty different kinds of birds can be seen on site, including the very rare scarlet macaw and a great variety of resident and migrant waterfowl. Iguanas and basilisk lizards are very common as well. On the way downstream, the boat heads along the Estero Guacalillo, a most impressive mangrove ecosystem that features four different species of mangrove trees. You will receive a brochure that shows all 56-bird species commonly sighted along the river.

Monday, Apr 01 2019

Today you return to San Jose so you can make the connection with your international flight or continue on the extension of the trip to the remote Tortuguero National Park.