



American Crocodile by Joanna Livingstone

COSTA RICA

NATURE'S PARADISE: SAVEGRE, SARAPIQUÍ & ARENAL

with John Ferner and Rudy Garns

May 9-19, 2018



On this 11-day program embark upon an excursion through vibrant forests, mountainous terrain and along rivers to discover the abundant wildlife, avifauna, and natural wonders of Costa Rica. Accompanied by expert guides, you'll travel to a variety of habitats with the aim of seeing and photographing as much wildlife as possible. Begin in the Caribbean lowlands of the Sarapiquí Valley, then travel to the picturesque Arenal Volcano, continuing on to Carara National Park near the Pacific coast and ending up at Savegre Lodge, a nature's paradise in the cloud forests of the Talamanca Mountain Range and one of the best spots in the country for observing the elusive and colorful Resplendent Quetzal.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Enjoy a stay at Selva Verde Lodge & Reserve, where you can see many species of fauna and flora that depend on the rainforest for survival.
- Journey to La Selva Biological Station to spot some of the 400-plus bird species and 1,850 plant species that inhabit the area.
- Venture through La Fortuna's Eco Center Danaus, a private ecological reserve with over 150 birds species, plus sloth and tree frogs.
- Seek out the highly coveted Resplendent Quetzal, several colorful hummingbird species, and a variety of fascinating fauna that inhabit Costa Rica's rainforest, cloud forest, and temperate regions.

ITINERARY

BLD = BREAKFAST, LUNCH, DINNER

MAY 9 - SAN JOSÉ

Arrive in San José and transfer to Hotel Buena Vista, situated just minutes from the airport in the charming town of Alajuela. Check in at the hotel and enjoy the stunning views of the Central Valley. Elevation is comfortable 3,100 feet. *Overnight at Hotel Buena Vista.*

MAY 10 - SARAPIQUÍ

This morning meet for breakfast and orientation at 7:00 am in the hotel restaurant. Check out of the hotel and then transfer to Selva Verde Lodge and Reserve, situated in the Caribbean lowlands at elevations of between 180 220 feet. En route birding at Cinchona and, if road conditions permit, Virgen del Socorro. Founded by the Holbrook family in 1985, Selva Verde Lodge is renowned for its commitment to ecological preservation and sustainability. The reserve is home to a large assortment of avian and other wildlife. Bird species often spotted at Selva Verde include the Keel-billed Toucan, Sunbittern, Crimson Tanager, Wood Thrush, Violet-crowned Woodnymph, and Grey-necked Wood Rail. Selva Verde is also home to the endangered Great Green Macaw, which can occasionally be found here feeding on the giant fruiting almond trees in the rainforest. Upon arrival have lunch at the elevated, riverside restaurant. After a brief orientation to the facilities, afternoon birding and nature watching on the lodge trails. This evening after dinner, optional night walk. *Overnight at Selva Verde Lodge & Rainforest Reserve. (BLD)*

MAY 11 - SARAPIQUÍ

Depart at dawn for the world famous La Selva Biological Station and an early morning walk in the tropical wet forest. La Selva consists of approximately 2,500 acres of land, over 90% of which is virgin forest, and is home to 1,850 species of plants, 350 species of trees, and over 400 species of birds. The area averages 13 feet of rainfall each year! Over half of Costa Rica's 895 recorded bird species have been spotted at La Selva, including the Bare-necked Umbrellabird, Red-capped Manakin, Great Antshrike, Chestnut-backed Antbird, Slaty-tailed Trogon, Yellow-tailed Oriole, and Rufous-tailed Jacamar. Return to the lodge for lunch and have free time to relax or for optional activities such as

ziplining or horseback riding. *Overnight at Selva Verde Lodge & Rainforest Reserve. (BLD)*

MAY 12 - SARAPIQUÍ

Birding around Selva Verde grounds and reserve. Late afternoon boat ride on the Rio Sarapiquí. While winding down the river bordered with forests and cultivated fields, aquatic animals, birds, and reptiles are abundant in their natural habitat. *Overnight at Selva Verde Lodge & Rainforest Reserve. (BLD)*

MAY 13 - ARENAL

This morning after breakfast depart for Arenal Observatory Lodge with a stop at La Fortuna's Eco Center Danaus, a private ecological reserve dedicated to conservation, environmental education and sustainability. Lunch in La Fortuna. Arenal Observatory is situated in Arenal National Park on a ridge amid towering pine trees and beautiful rainforest on the south side of the volcano. The lodge boasts seven miles of well-maintained trails on over 800 acres. A natural paradise, more than 400 species of birds have been recorded here. Some of the more spectacular local residents include: Three-wattled Bellbird, Fasciated Tiger Heron, Sunbittern, Laughing Falcon, Red-lore Parrot, Steely-vented Hummingbird and Keel-billed Toucan. There is also plenty of other wildlife in the area, including three species of monkeys. Elevations range from 1,650 2,950 feet. *Overnight at Arenal Observatory Lodge. (BLD)*

MAY 14 - ARENAL

Morning birding if desired. After breakfast, transfer to the Arenal Hanging Bridges. Six of the 15 bridges are suspended in the upper canopy of this mature forest trail system. The elevation is approximately 1,900 feet. The trail system straddles types of ecosystems forming a transitional vegetation strip with high biodiversity where both highland and lowland species occur. There is an excellent chance to see motmots and jacamars. Return to the lodge for lunch and this afternoon continue birding and nature study on the lodge's trails. *Overnight at Arenal Observatory Lodge. (BLD)*

MAY 15 - CARARA

Travel to Villa Lapas today, arriving in time for lunch at the lodge. When it cools off a bit, later this afternoon, take a boat ride on the Tárcoles River. The Tárcoles River basin is one of the most important in the Pacific coastal region, virtually draining the entire western side of the Central Valley. Tárcoles hosts an amazing diversity of wildlife along its banks. Perhaps the most famous of all its inhabitants are the enormous crocodiles that live on its banks. Later take a guided night walk to observe owls. *Overnight at Villa Lapas. (BLD)*

MAY 16 - CARARA

Take an early morning nature walk before breakfast. Later visit Carara National Park for the day, one of the birding hotspots of Costa Rica. The park is located in Costa Rica's Central Pacific region, which is one the most ecologically diverse areas of the country. The intersection of the northwestern tropical dry forest habitats, with the humid rainforests of the South Pacific region in a relatively small area, produces a very interesting combination of species from both ecosystems. Keep your eyes peeled for Golden-naped Woodpecker, Baird's Trogon, Orange-collared Manakin, Dot-winged Antwren, Long-billed Gnatwren and Chestnut-backed Antbird. Also watch for sloths and monkeys. Before dinner at the lodge, watch for macaws from a nearby bridge. *Overnight at Villa Lapas. (BLD)*

MAY 17 - SAN GERARDO DE DOTA

After breakfast continue to Cerro de la Muerte, an area located at the top of the Cordillera de Talamanca that is famous for its diversity of endemic wildlife. Consisting of temperate forest and páramo habitats, the natural vegetation attracts species such as the rare Red-fronted Parrotlet, Costa Rican Pygmy owl, Dusky Nightjar, Fiery-throated, Volcano, and Scintillant Hummingbirds, Ochraceous Pewee, Volcano Junco, Zeledonia, and Resplendent Quetzal. Afternoon birding at the lodge before dinner. Take some time to visit the delightful hummingbird feeders in front of reception and off the balcony of the lounge. *Overnight at Savegre Mountain Hotel. (BLD)*

MAY 18 - SAN GERARDO DE DOTA

Savegre's private biological reserve protects high elevation habitat of mostly oak forest and highland cloud forest that attracts a huge variety of avifauna. The large centennial oaks that cover the forest are laden with lichens and mosses that contrast with the colorful bromeliads. The forest is rich with insects, mammals, and amphibians, and 170+ bird species. Elevation here is 7,200-8,000 feet. Spend the morning looking for Spotted Wood Quail, Costa Rican Pygmy Owl, Collared Trogon, Buffy Tufted-cheek, Ruddy Treerunner, Ochraceous Pewee, Barred Becard, Zeledonia and Golden-browed Chlorophonia. Head to Los Lagos in the afternoon in search of the Resplendent Quetzal. Guided night walk this evening. *Overnight at Savegre Mountain Hotel. (BLD)*

MAY 19 - DEPARTURE

Early morning departure for San José and the airport. Flights should be scheduled to depart after 1:00 p.m. this afternoon. (B)

LAND PRICING

\$2,550 (10 participants)

Cost includes meals, accommodations, and activities as indicated in the itinerary, in-country transportation, full-time guide, bottled water on the bus, and carbon offset.

Does not include international airfare, estimated at \$775 from Tucson and \$725 from Cincinnati, gratuities for guide or driver, or items of a personal nature. Other departure cities available.

Pre-night at Buena Vista \$145 per room; post-night at Herradura \$120.

THE FINE PRINT

Cost is based on double occupancy; for a single room throughout the trip add \$280 per person. A \$200 per person deposit and enrollment form are required to reserve your space on the trip. This deposit is refundable excluding a \$100 cancellation fee until February 03, 2018, at which time non-refundable final payment is due. Travel/trip cancellation insurance is strongly recommended. For more information call Travel Insured at 800-243-3174 or visit www.travelinsured.com. Holbrook Travel's agency number is 15849.



This program includes optional carbon offsetting with ClimateSafe. Learn more at holbrooktravel.com/climatesafe



FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO ENROLL

Visit holbrook.travel/ferner-cr18 or contact Debbie Sturdivant Jordan at 866-748-6146 or debbie@holbrooktravel.com

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Dain Van Schoyck, Jerry Goffe (NaturePhotoWorks.com), Eric Kilby, Joaquin Garcia, Debbie Sturdivant Jordan, Francesco Veronesi