



RESPLENDENT QUETZAL (PHAROMACHRUS MOCINNO)

# COSTA RICA

## Birder's Paradise: Savegre, Sarapiquí, Arenal, and Carara

11 DAYS | Choose your dates | Best season to travel: **OCT - JUL**

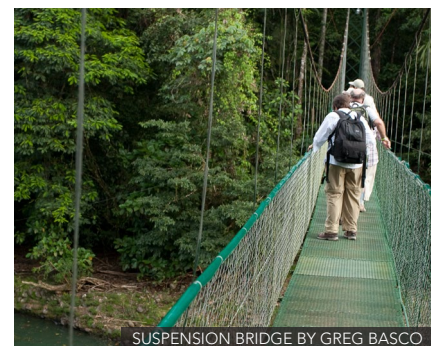
*Embark on an excursion through vibrant forests, mountainous terrain and along rivers to spot some of the hundreds of bird species that call Costa Rica home. Accompanied by one of our expert birding guides, you'll discover a variety of habitats with the aim of seeing as many species as possible. Begin 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 in the cloud forests of the Talamanca Mountain Range, a birder's paradise and one of the best spots in the country for observing the elusive Resplendent Quetzal.*

### PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Journey through the renowned La Selva Biological Station to spot some of the 400-plus bird species found here.
- Venture through a private ecological reserve in La Fortuna to view some of the 150 types of birds that live in the area.
- Visit the birding hotspot of Carara National Park in Costa Rica's Central Pacific region, which is one of the most ecologically diverse areas of the country.
- Seek out the highly coveted Resplendent Quetzal, plus other species like the Red-fronted Parrotlet and Costa Rican Pygmy-Owl that inhabit the temperate forest and páramo habitats of Cerro de la Muerte.

### WHAT'S INCLUDED?

- Bilingual local birding expert
- Driver
- Accommodations
- Activities
- Private transportation
- Meals
- Beverages with meals
- Carbon offsetting



SUSPENSION BRIDGE BY GREG BASCO



BOAT RIDE ON THE SARAPIQUÍ

## ITINERARY

BLD = BREAKFAST, LUNCH, DINNER

### DAY 1 - SAN JOSÉ

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

### DAY 2 - SARAPIQUÍ

This morning meet for breakfast and orientation in the hotel restaurant. After breakfast, receive an introductory presentation on tropical birding from a local expert. Check out of the hotel and start your journey to Selva Verde Lodge & Rainforest Reserve. En route, stop for birding at Cinchona and Virgen del Socorro, if road conditions permit. Selva Verde Lodge is situated in the Caribbean lowlands, at elevations ranging from 180 to 220 feet. Founded by the Holbrook family in 1985, the lodge is renowned for its commitment to ecological preservation and sustainability. The reserve is home to a large assortment of avian life, including several types of herons, egrets, hawks, falcons, macaws, hummingbirds, flycatchers, warblers, sparrows and tanagers. Specific species often spotted at Selva Verde include



SUNBITTERN BY SANFORD M. SORKIN

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 feeding on the giant fruiting almond trees in the rainforest. Upon arrival, have lunch at the elevated restaurant onsite. After a brief orientation to the facilities, go afternoon birding on the lodge trails. This evening after dinner, take a walk in search of nocturnal species. *Overnight at Selva Verde Lodge. (BLD)*

### DAY 3 - SARAPIQUÍ

Depart at dawn for the world-famous Organization for Tropical Studies La Selva Biological Station for early morning birding in the tropical wet forests. La Selva consists of approximately 2,500 acres of land, over 90 percent of which is virgin forest. The area averages over 13 feet of rainfall each year, making it a prime spot to observe water birds. Over half of Costa Rica's 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, Striped Cuckoo, Slaty Spinetail, Yellow-tailed Oriole, and Rufous-tailed Jacamar. Return to the lodge for lunch and time at leisure. *Overnight at Selva Verde Lodge. (BLD)*

### DAY 4 - SARAPIQUÍ

Begin the day with birding around Selva Verde grounds and reserve. Later this afternoon, take a boat ride on the Rio Sarapiquí. While winding down the river bordered with forests and cultivated fields, look for aquatic animals, birds, and reptiles in their natural habitat. You may also see residents going about their daily lives and witness the impact local banana plantations have on this watershed. *Overnight at Selva Verde Lodge. (BLD)*

### DAY 5 - ARENAL

This morning after breakfast depart for Arenal Observatory Lodge with a stop at La Fortuna's EcoCenter Danaus, a private ecological reserve that also develops programs for conservation, training, environmental education and sustainable production. There are a number of optimal birding locations to explore; the grassland areas, the bridge

over the Burío River, the secondary forest, and the natural spring are all excellent vantage points to seek out some of the 150 species recorded here. Have lunch in La Fortuna and continue to the hotel. Arenal Observatory is the only eco-lodge situated between Lake Arenal and the massive Arenal stratovolcano, and the only hotel within Arenal National Park. Set on a ridge amid towering pine trees on the south side of the volcano, the lodge boasts seven miles of well-maintained trails on over 800 acres. A birder's paradise, more than 400 species of birds have been recorded here. Some of the more spectacular local residents include the Three-wattled Bellbird, Fasciated Tiger-Heron, Sunbittern, Laughing Falcon, Red-lore Parrot, Great Curassow, Northern Jacana, 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 to 2,950 feet. *Overnight at Arenal Observatory Lodge. (BLD)*

### DAY 6 - ARENAL

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



ARENAL VOLCANO BY DEB SAVARESE

### DAY 7 - CARARA

Travel to Villa Lapas today, arriving in time for lunch at the lodge. Later this afternoon, when it cools off a bit, go for a boat ride along the Tárcoles River to watch for both water and shore birds, like Double-striped Thick-knee, Roseate Spoonbill, jacanas and ducks. The Tárcoles River basin is one of the most important in the Pacific coastal region; it drains virtually the entire western side of the Central Valley. Tárcoles hosts an amazing diversity of wildlife along its banks. The river is a perfect place to catch a glimpse of mangrove specialties such as the rare Rufous-necked Wood-Rail, Mangrove Hummingbird, Pygmy Kingfisher, Panama Flycatcher, Mangrove Vireo, Mangrove (Yellow) Warbler, and Scrub Greenlet. 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)*

### DAY 8 - CARARA

Take an early morning bird walk before breakfast. Then set out for a full day at Carara National Park, one of the birding hotspots of Costa Rica. The park is located in Costa Rica's Central Pacific region, one of the most ecologically diverse

areas of the country. The intersection of northwestern tropical dry forest with the humid rainforest of the South Pacific region, concentrated in a relatively small area, produces an interesting combination of species from both ecosystems. Keep your eyes open for Golden-naped Woodpecker, Baird's Trogon, Orange-collared Manakin, Riverside Wren, Black-hooded Antshrike, Dot-winged Antwren, Long-billed Gnatwren, and Chestnut-backed Antbird. Before dinner at the lodge, watch for macaws from a nearby bridge. *Overnight at Villa Lapas. (BLD)*

### DAY 9 - SAN GERARDO DE DOTA

After breakfast continue to Cerro de la Muerte, an area at the top of Cordillera de Talamanca, and 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, Gray-tailed Mountain-gem, Ruddy Treerunner, Buffy Tuftedcheek, Silvery-fronted Tapaculo, Ochraceous Pewee, Silvery-throated Jay, Black-and-yellow Silky-flycatcher, Volcano Junco, Timberline Wren, Zeledonia, and Resplendent Quetzal. Look for these species and others at Cerro de la Muerte and La Georgina en route to Savegre. Afternoon birding at the lodge before dinner. Take some time to visit the hummingbird feeders in front of reception and off the balcony at the lounge. The feeders are often active with resident Magnificent Hummingbird, Green Violetear, Gray-tailed Mountain-gem, Volcano Hummingbird, and tiny Scintillant Hummingbird.

*Overnight at Savegre Hotel Natural Reserve & Spa. (BLD)*

### DAY 10 - SAN GERARDO DE DOTA

Savegre is located in a small community in the Talamanca Mountains and houses its own private biological reserve. This high-elevation habitat of mostly oak and highland cloud forest 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, amphibians, and 170-plus bird species. Spend the morning birding looking for Spotted Wood-Quail, Costa Rican Pygmy-Owl, Collared Trogon, Buffy Tuftedcheek, Ruddy Treerunner, Ochraceous Pewee, Barred Becard, Zeledonia, and Golden-browed Chlorophonia. Head to Los Lagos in the afternoon in search of the Resplendent Quetzal. Dinner is followed by a guided night walk. *Overnight at Savegre Hotel Natural Reserve & Spa. (BLD)*

### DAY 11 - DEPARTURE

Early morning departure for San José and the airport. Flights should be scheduled to depart after 1 pm. (B)

## ADDITIONAL NOTES

Binoculars are required for this program. We recommend wide angle binoculars, something within the range of 7x35, 8x40 or even 10x50 with good light gathering characteristics. Although light and comfortable, pocket binoculars don't work as well in low light conditions.

Participants should be in good physical condition and able to walk unassisted for several hours per day.

## LAND PRICING

**\$2,640** (12 participants + 1 leader)

**\$2,810** (10 participants + 1 leader)

Price includes accommodations, meals, entrance fees, and activities as indicated in the itinerary, private transportation unless otherwise noted in itinerary, non-alcoholic beverages with meals, expert birding naturalist guide for duration of program, and carbon offset.

International airfare, gratuities, or items of a personal nature are not included.

Valid for travel in 2020.

## THE FINE PRINT

*A \$200 per person deposit and enrollment form is due to secure your reservation. This deposit is refundable until 95 days prior to departure excluding a \$100 cancellation fee. Final payments are due no later than 95 days prior to departure. Non-refundable final payment is due at 95 days prior to departure.*

## TRAVEL PROTECTION

Holbrook Travel purchases Travel Protection on behalf of all participants traveling in 2018 or beyond. These plans help provide coverage once the trip has departed and offer benefits for Baggage/Personal Effects, Accident & Sickness Medical Expenses, Emergency Evacuation and more. Refer to the Plan Document for more details.

Optional additional coverage is available in the form of the Group Deluxe Plan, which offers benefits for Trip Cancellation/Interruption, in addition to many other insurance benefits and non-insurance assistance services. If interested in this optional plan, we can provide you with rates and plan details.



*This program includes optional carbon offsetting with ClimateSafe. Learn more at [holbrooktravel.com/climatesafe](http://holbrooktravel.com/climatesafe)*

## MORE FROM HOLBROOK

Holbrook was founded on the principle that travel fosters a greater understanding of our world's cultural and natural treasures and that these experiences allow individuals to become agents for global change. We hope that your experiences in Costa Rica will remain with you forever and will challenge you to make a difference in the world we share!

Please join our Facebook page and share photos of your program. Visit us at [www.facebook.com/holbrooktravel](http://www.facebook.com/holbrooktravel). We hope to hear from you.

