



Costa Rica: Culture of Conservation

February 24th – March 5th, 2026



Every birder comes to Costa Rica for the opportunity to see a Resplendent Quetzal. We will be visiting Monteverde, one of the best places to find breeding quetzals in the country

Trip Summary

Many people forget that in the 1980s Costa Rica had one of the highest levels of deforestation in Central America. Multinational banana companies and cattle ranching enterprises leveled this country's forests at an alarming rate, resulting in a loss of around 40 percent of its forest cover by 1987. In 1996, the Costa Rican government made it illegal to fell trees without the approval of authorities and the following year it introduced a Payment for Environmental Services (PES) program. Today, nearly 60% of the land is once again forest and Costa Rica is one of the global leaders in ecotourism.

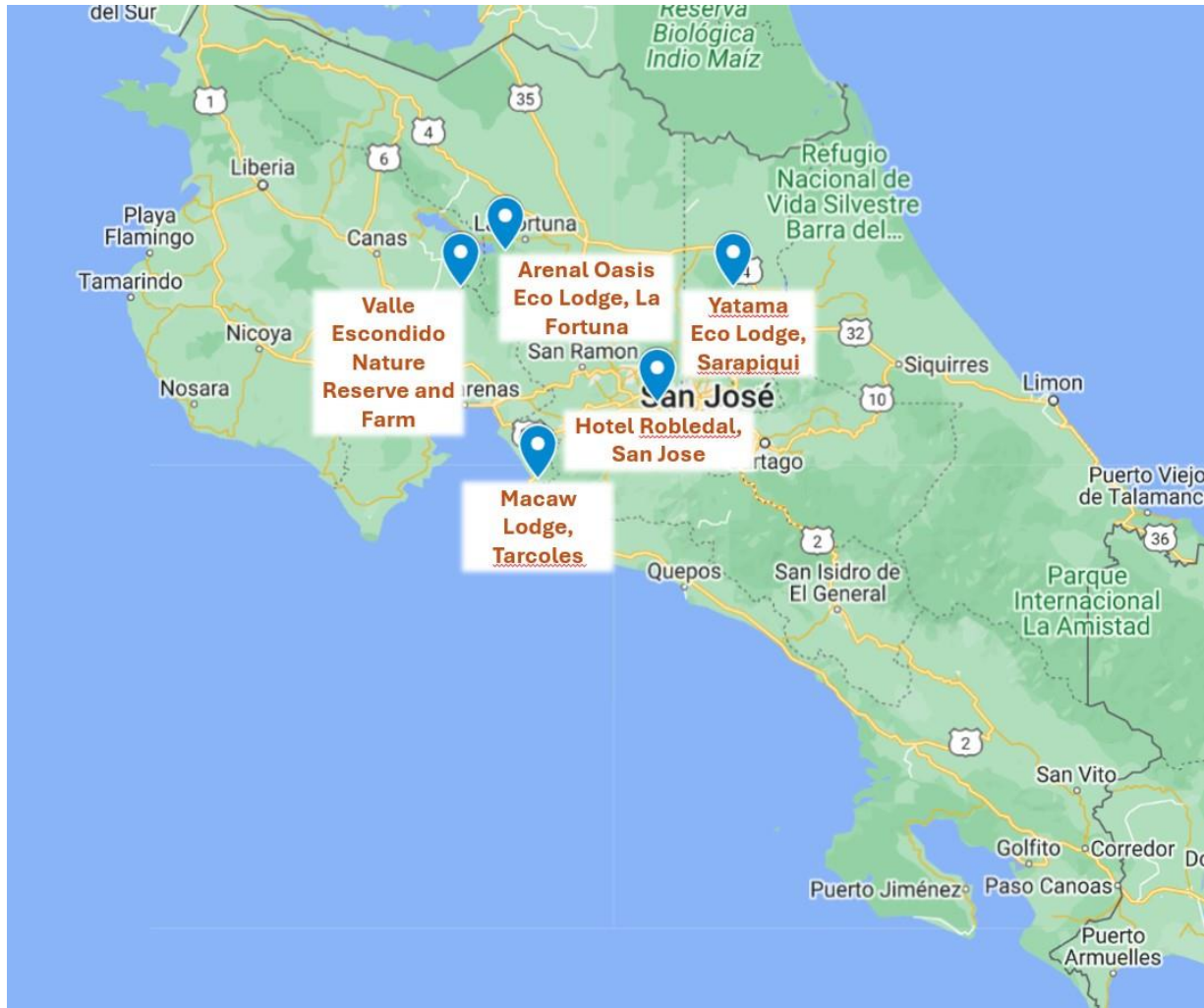
This adventure will take you to some of the most iconic destinations in Costa Rica while introducing you to its vibrant culture of conservation. Explore the beaches on the Pacific Ocean and its transitional coastal forests, search for quetzal in the high mountain cloud forests of Monteverde, and enjoy a nocturnal tree frog hike on the Caribbean slope. Meet landowners and business owners who are working hard to provide sustainable ecotourism activities while learning about their challenges and struggles. Search for and photograph some of Costa Rica's most stunning wildlife, including Resplendent Quetzal, Keel-billed Toucan, Three-wattled Bellbird, Baird's Trogon, Scarlet Macaw, Great Green Macaw, Red-capped Manakin, Monkeys (Howler, White-faced Capuchin, Squirrel), Sloths (Two-toed & Three-toed), Peccaries, Red-eyed Tree Frogs, Blue Jeans Poison Dart Frog, American Crocodile, Snakes, Basalisk Lizards, Iguanas, and nocturnal insects. Enjoy stays at memorable eco lodges with epic views and colorful wildlife while spending time with local "*ticos*" you are sure to adore.

The perfect blend of wildlife tourism, education, and relaxation, Costa Rica: Culture of Conservation is sure to be a trip you will never forget.



Itinerary in Brief

Day	Activities	Food	Lodging
1	Arrival to San Jose Transfer to Hotel Robledal	D	San Jose
2	Morning birding at hotel Carara National Park Playa Blanca Macaw Lodge	BLD	Tarcoles
3	Tarcoles River Cruise Transfer to San Ramon Valle Escondido Nature Reserve	BLD	Monteverde
4	Finca Ecológica Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve Valle Escondido Nature Reserve	BLD	Monteverde
5	Curi-Cancha Reserve Transfer to La Fortuna Bogarin Trails	BLD	La Fortuna
6	Arenal National Park Ecotermas Hot Springs	BLD	La Fortuna
7	Sky Walk Arenal Transfer to Yatama Eco Lodge	BLD	Sarapiqui
8	Guided hike in Yatama Free time at Yatama Guided night walk	BLD	Sarapiqui
9	La Selva Biological Station Soda Cinchona Finca Paraiso Mountain Retreat	BLD	Alajuela
10	Transfer to airport	BLD	Departure



Destinations for the proposed 10-day itinerary



A Sloth and her baby climb into the canopy near Yatama Eco Lodge, Sarapiquí

Itinerary

Day 1: Home | San Jose, Costa Rica

- Arrival to Juan Santamaría International Airport
- Transfer to Hotel Robledal (25 minutes)
- Relax at hotel with optional birding in the garden
 - **Target Birds:**
 - *Ferruginous Pygmy Owl*
 - *Clay-colored Thrush (Costa Rica's National Bird)*
 - *Inca Dove*
 - *Lineated Woodpecker*
 - *Blue-vented Hummingbird*
 - *Cinnamon Hummingbird*
- Welcome Dinner at hotel
- Overview of Trip/Introduction to Conservation in Costa Rica

Lodging: [Hotel Robledal](#)

Meals included: D



The lush vegetation around Hotel Robledal provides ample birdwatching opportunities only a short distance from the International Airport



Hotel Robledal is a quiet oasis near the city of San Jose, Costa Rica



Observing Scarlet Macaws in the wild is an unforgettable experience. Their streamer-like tails and flashes of color can't help but leave one with a feeling of freedom and wildness.

Day 2: San Jose | Carara National Park | Playa Blanca | Macaw Lodge

- Breakfast at hotel
- Tarcoles Bridge
- Carara National Park (1 hour 10 minutes)
 - **Target Birds:**
 - *Scarlet Macaw*
 - *Baird's Trogon*
 - *Collared Forest-Falcon*
 - *Red-capped Manakin*
 - *Rufous-tailed Jacamar*
 - *Spectacled Owl*
 - *White-whiskered Puffbird*
 - *Fiery-billed Aracari*
 - *Riverside Wren*
 - **Target Mammals:**
 - *Collared Peccary*
 - *Howler Monkey*

- *Three-toed Sloth*
- *Paca*
- *Agouti*
- Lunch and check-in at Macaw Lodge
- Optional afternoon birding at Bijagual Road or optional beach time at Playa Blanca
 - **Target Birds:**
 - *White-throated Magpie-Jay*
 - *Hoffman's Woodpecker*
 - *Rufous-and-White Wren*
 - *Crane Hawk*
 - *Slaty-tailed Trogon*
 - *Gartered Trogon*
 - *Black-hooded Antshrike*
 - *Yellow-throated Toucan*
 - *Red-capped Manakin*
 - *Long-tailed Manakin*
 - *Blue-crowned Manakin*
 - *Pacific Screech-Owl*
- Transfer to Macaw Lodge

Lodging: [Macaw Lodge](#)

Meals included: B, L, D



Macaw Lodge is a gem of a place in the middle of the Pacific rainforest



Playa Blanca is only a short drive from Villa Lapas



The Tarcoles River is home to one of the densest populations of American Crocodiles in the world

Day 3: Tarcoles | Tarcoles River Cruise | Transfer to Monteverde | Valle Escondido Nature Reserve

- 6 am: Tarcoles River Cruise
 - **Target Birds:**
 - *Scarlet Macaw*
 - *Mangrove Hummingbird (country endemic)*
 - *Double-striped Thick-knee*
 - *Amazon Kingfisher*
 - *American Pygmy-Kingfisher*
 - *Panama Flycatcher*
 - *Mangrove Swallow*
 - *Northern Jacana*
 - *Roseatte Spoonbill*
 - *Wood Stork*
 - *Boat-billed Heron*
 - *Crested Carara*
 - **Target Reptiles:**
 - *American Crocodile*
 - *Green Iguana*
 - *Basalisk Lizard*
 - **Target Mammals:**
 - *Tamandua*
 - *Howler Monkey*
- Transfer to San Ramon
 - **Target Bird:**
 - *Three-wattled Bellbird*
- Transfer to Valle Escondido Nature Reserve Hotel and Farm in Monteverde

Lodging: [Valle Escondido Nature Reserve Hotel and Farm](#)

Meals included: B, L, D



Cruise the Tarcoles River looking for wading birds while getting up close and personal to American Crocodiles

Birding Man Adventures | www.gobirdingman.com | +1 860-455-3224 | ryan@gobirdingman.com

Day 4: Monteverde

- Breakfast
- Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve
 - **Target Birds:**
 - *Resplendent Quetzal*
 - *Black-faced Nightingale Thrush*
 - *Black-breasted Wood-Quail*
 - *Red-fronted Parrotlet*
- Lunch
- Free Afternoon to explore town and relax

Lodging: [Valle Escondido Nature Reserve and Farm](#)

Meals included: B, L, D



View from the room at Valle Escondido

Day 5: Monteverde | La Fortuna

- Breakfast
- Curi-Cancha Reserve
 - **Target Birds:**
 - *Three-wattled Bellbird*
 - *Black Guan*
 - *Coppery-headed Emerald*
 - *Magenta-throated Woodstar*
 - *Emerald Toucanet*
 - *Golden-browed Chlorophonia*
- Transfer to La Fortuna (2 hrs 38 min)
- Check into Arenal Oasis Eco Lodge

Lodging: [Arenal Oasis Eco Lodge](#)

Meals included: B, L, D



The Collared Aracari is one of several species of small toucans we may see

Day 6: La Fortuna

- Breakfast
- Arenal Volcano National Park
 - **Target Birds:**
 - *Emerald Tanager*
 - *Bay-headed Tanager*
 - *Silver-throated Tanager*
 - *Black-and-Yellow Tanager*
 - *Blue-and-Gold Tanager*
 - *Montezuma Oropendola*
 - *Lovely Cotinga*
 - *Bare-necked Umbrellabird*
 - *Sunbittern*
 - *Fasciated Tiger-Heron*
- Lunch
- Ecotermas hot springs
 - Soak in the springs at Ecotermas
- Return to Arenal Observatory Lodge

Lodging: [Arenal Oasis Eco Lodge](#)

Meals included: B, L, D



Our group birding near Arenal Volcan National Park



A Basalisk Lizard near La Fortuna



Early March is a great time to search for Resplendent Quetzals near Monteverde because it is the beginning of their breeding season

Day 7: La Fortuna | Sarapiquí

- Breakfast
- Sky Adventures Hanging Bridge Hike
 - **Target Birds:**
 - *Ornate Hawk-Eagle*
 - *Sharpbill*
 - *Yellow-eared Toucanet*
 - *Bare-throated Umbrellabird*
 - *Crested Guan*
 - *Glittering Tanager*
 - *Black and Yellow Tanager*
 - *Russet Antshrike*
- Lunch
- Transfer to Sarapiquí
- Dinner

Lodging: [Yatama Eco Lodge](#)

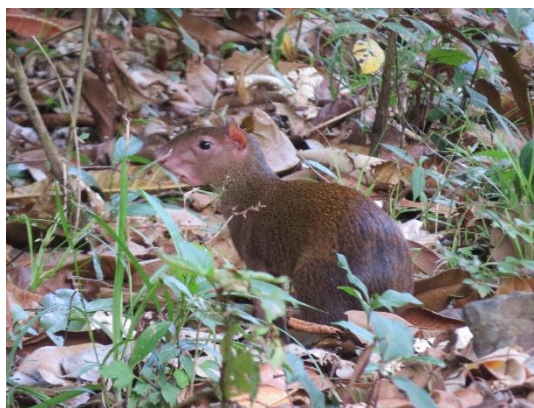
Meals included: B, L, D



The Red-capped Manakin is a common species near Yatama. This bird was made famous by its Michael Jackson-like moonwalk dance, depicted in many nature documentaries



Yatama Eco Lodge is a remote setting with endless opportunities for wildlife exploration. Prepare for endless discovery



Discover new species on the Caribbean slope

Day 8: Sarapiquí

- Breakfast
- Guided tour of Yatama
 - **Target Birds:**
 - *Great Currassow*
 - *Russet-naped Wood-Rail*
 - *Yellow-throated Toucan*
 - *Common Tody-Flycatcher*
 - *King Vulture*
 - *Red-capped Manakin*
 - *Montezuma Oropendola*
- Lunch
- Free time for journaling and relaxation at Yatama
- Dinner
- Guided night walk
 - Target Species
 - *Red-eyed Tree Frog*
 - *Blue Jeans Strawberry Dart Frog*
 - *Snakes*
 - *Insects*

Lodging: [Yatama Eco Lodge](#)

Meals included: B, L, D



Day 9: Sarapiquí | San Jose

- Breakfast
- Guided Tour of La Selva Biological Station
 - **Target Birds:**
 - *Keel-billed Toucan*
 - *Yellow-throated Toucan*
 - *Collared Aracari*
 - *Orange-chinned Parakeet*
 - *Brown-hooded Parrot*
 - *White-crowned Parrot*
 - *Great Curassow*
 - *Black-capped Pygmy-Tyrant*
 - *White-fronted Nunbird*
 - *Pied Puffbird*
 - *Ornate Hawk-Eagle*
 - *Collared Forest-Falcon*
 - *Great Green Macaw*
- Lunch at Soda Cinchona
 - **Target Birds:**
 - *Green Hermit*
 - *Brown Violetear*
 - *Green Thorntail*
 - *Green-crowned Brilliant*
 - *White-throated Mountain-Gem*
 - *Violet Sabrewing*
 - *Coppery-headed Emerald*
 - *Northern Emerald Toucanet*
- Transfer to Finca Paraiso Mountain Retreat
- Dinner

Lodging: [Finca Paraiso Mountain Retreat](#)

Meals included: B, L, D

Value

\$3,600 double occupancy

\$4,100 single occupancy

Includes:

- ✓ Driver and guide throughout the tour
- ✓ Ground transportation
- ✓ All hotels
- ✓ Meals listed on itinerary
- ✓ All fees and permits
- ✓ Water and snacks throughout the trip
- ✓ General Liability insurance and auto insurance
- ✓ 24-hour assistance in case of emergency

Does not include:

- × Flight
- × Medical insurance
- × Travel insurance
- × Evacuation costs
- × Alcoholic beverages
- × Personal expenses
- × Activities and food not included on the itinerary
- × Optional tips
- × Laundry and other items of personal nature

Please note that this itinerary cannot be 100% guaranteed, as it is only a rough guide and can be changed 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.



What You Need to Know

Group Size:

7 - 10 participants

Tour Pace:

This tour is designed for intermediate birders and photographers. We consider the difficulty level to be moderate, with most of the birding being close to roadsides and trails with slight uphill and downhill. Expect early morning starts and long drives, but we will make sure the trip is broken up with plenty of out-of-vehicle time. Rest and relaxation time will be built in throughout the tour, wherever possible.

Transportation:

You will be traveling in a 12- or 14- passenger van with windows. The maximum group size will be 8 people, including the guide. There will be sufficient room for personal baggage.

Lodging:

You will be staying at a combination of 3-star hotels and lodges throughout the tour. Each accommodation has been diligently vetted for quality and assurance. Please see websites at hyperlinks above.

Altitude:

Birding on this tour will occur between 4,000 and 10,500 feet.

Weather:

In early March, Costa Rica is transitioning from the dry season (December–April), so you can generally expect warm days, plenty of sunshine, and relatively low rainfall, especially in the central and Pacific regions. Starting in San José, daytime highs often reach the mid-70s to low 80s °F (24–28 °C) with cooler mornings and evenings. Down by the Río Tárcoles on the Pacific lowlands, it will be hotter and more humid, with highs in the upper 80s to low 90s °F (31–33 °C). Moving into the cloud forests of Monteverde, you should anticipate cooler conditions (mid-60s to low 70s °F / 18–22 °C) with mist, breezes, and the chance of light showers, so a light jacket is handy. Over in La Fortuna near Arenal, the climate is typically warm and humid, with highs around the mid-80s °F (29 °C), though afternoon clouds and occasional brief showers are common. The Sarapiquí region is also warm and humid, with conditions similar to La Fortuna but with a slightly higher chance of rain given its lowland rainforest setting. Overall, you'll experience mostly dry, sunny weather with regional variations—hot and sunny near the coast, cooler and mistier in the mountains, and humid in the lowland rainforests.



Laundry:

Laundry services are available at all hotels on this trip, however, please note that laundry fees are not included in the tour pricing.

Travel Insurance:

We do not provide travel (or medical) insurance. We strongly advise that you purchase a travel insurance package. Please read our **cancellation policy** below.

READY TO BOOK THIS TOUR?

Registration and Payment Information:

Registration and all payments, including initial deposit, should be made through our [website](#). We do accept credit cards for an additional 2.9% fee, but you may also pay by bank transfer or check. We request a \$1,000 initial deposit upon registration. **Full payment is due 90 days prior to tour departure.**

CANCELATIONS: If we cancel a tour due to low attendance, severe weather, COVID-19, or other unforeseen event, participants may either move their payments to another trip of their choice or receive a full refund. If you cancel your spot on a tour more than 90 days from departure, you will be eligible for a full refund. If cancelled within 90 days of departure, no refund will be given UNLESS we are able to fill your spot(s) with another participant(s). In that situation, \$250 will be withheld for administrative purposes, but the remainder of your payment will be refunded. We highly recommend that you purchase trip cancellation (including medical emergency) insurance to cover your investment in case of injury or illness to you or a family member prior to or during a trip.