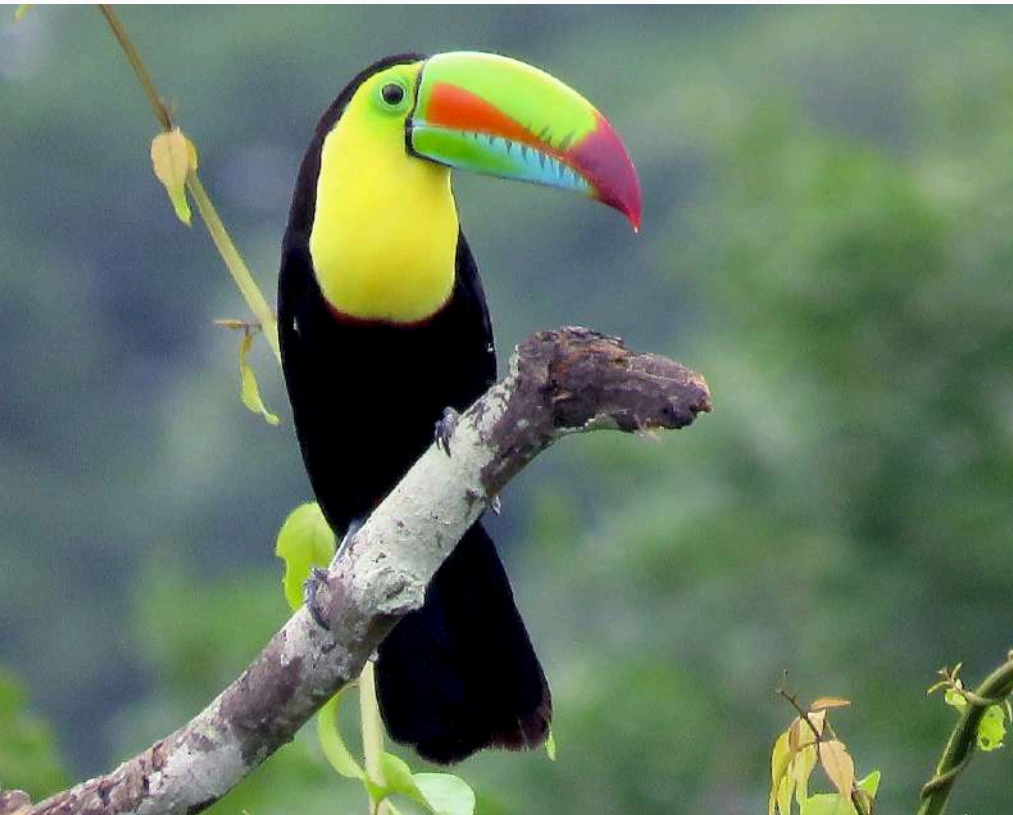


January 14-23, 2026

Costa Rica Birding Trip



Join ornithologist Dr. Chris Marsh and biologist Carlos Chacon on this exclusive small-group tour. Our nine days of exploring Costa Rica's diverse ecosystems starts with the mid-elevation rainforest near the Arenal Volcano. We stay at the Arenal Observatory Lodge, a favorite destination for naturalists and bird watchers. Our journey continues to the Sarapiquí Valley to explore the lowland rainforest for two days. We finish our adventure in the majestic Talamanca Mountains, nesting grounds of the famous Resplendent Quetzal. You'll see monkeys, toucans, sloths, poison dart frogs and more. This tailored itinerary promises an unforgettable journey for nature and wildlife enthusiasts.



Itinerary

Day 1: Arrival to San Jose

Transfer to Bougainvillea Hotel. Explore 10 acres of lush botanical gardens.

Day 2: Arenal Volcano

Departure to Arenal Observatory Lodge. Afternoon rainforest hike.

Day 3: Arenal Observatory Lodge

Exploration of the Arenal Observatory gardens and private rainforest preserve. Bird and primate watching.

Day 4: Arenal

Morning hike in the rainforest canopy at the Skywalk hanging bridges, afternoon chocolate tour at local cocoa plantation.

Day 5: Sarapiquí Rain Forest

Safari River float at the Piedras Blancas River.

Day 6: Selva Verde Lodge

Visit Pierella Butterfly Gardens., an example of grassroots conservation in the tropics.

Day 7: Talamanca Mountains

Hike in Braulio Carrillo National Park. Overnight in Savegre Lodge.

Day 8: Savegre Lodge

Hike through cloud forest in search of Resplendent Quetzal.

Day 9: Transfer to SJO Airport

Hasta luego, Costa Rica!



Day 1: Wed, Jan 14

Arrival in San Jose



Upon arrival at San Jose International Airport (SJO), you will be transferred to the Bougainvillea Hotel, nestled within 10 acres of award-winning botanical gardens.

This comfortable retreat is the perfect starting point for our Costa Rica adventure.

Welcome dinner at the hotel restaurant to review the itinerary and prepare for the next day's activities. www.hb.co.cr

After breakfast, our private bus takes us on a scenic 3-hour drive to the Arenal Observatory Lodge, surrounded by tropical gardens at the base of one of Costa Rica's most iconic active volcanoes.

The day will be filled with spectacular photo opportunities.

In the evening, we'll embark on a night hike to the local frog pond in search of red-eyed tree frogs and other fascinating creatures.

www.arenalobservatorylodge.com

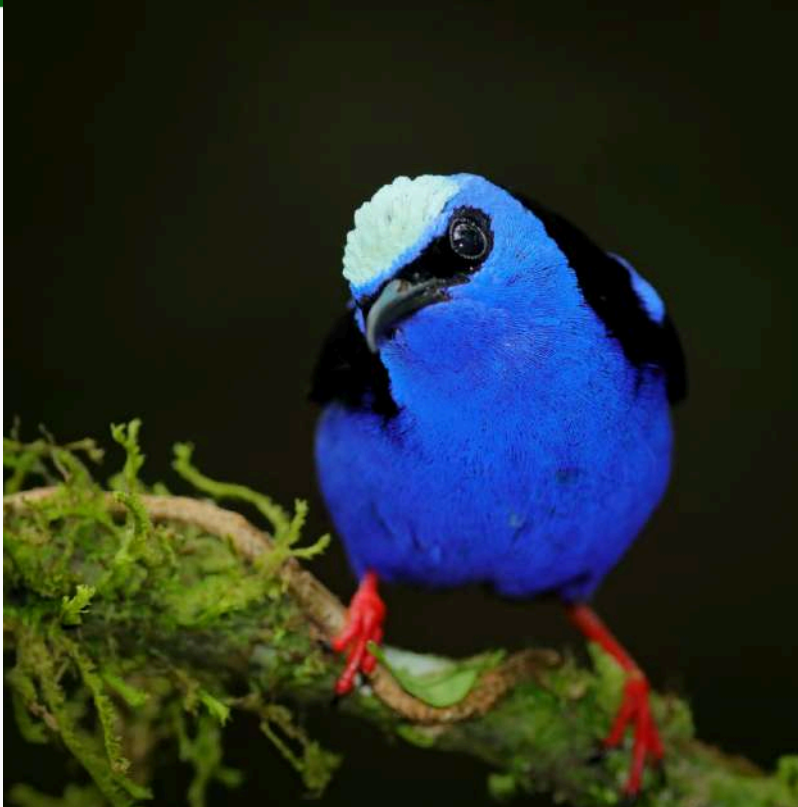
Day 2: Thur, Jan 15

Arenal Volcano



Day 3: Frid, Jan 16

Arenal Observatory Lodge



Morning bird watching at our lodge's feeders, where we are likely to see the Red-legged Honeycreeper, Golden-hooded Tanager and other tropical species. After breakfast, we will hike the trails in the lodge's private reserve.

The Arenal Observatory Lodge is known worldwide as a premier destination for nature lovers and bird watchers.

Dinner and overnight at Arenal Observatory Lodge.

Day 4: Sat, Jan 17

Arenal Volcano

Early morning canopy walk at Sky Walk hanging bridges, a great opportunity for a bird's eye view of the tree tops. Sixty percent of life in the rain forest is on the canopy.

Lunch at a local restaurant.

After lunch, we will visit a local cocoa plantation to learn about the chocolate-making process. Both chocolate and vanilla originate from the rainforest in tropical America. Can you imagine a world without chocolate or vanilla!



Day 5: Sun, Jan 18

Sarapiquí Rainforest Valley



After breakfast, we'll depart for Selva Verde Lodge. On the way, we'll stop at the Piedras Blancas River for a safari river float. As we drift down the river in small dinghies, we'll observe abundant wildlife, including howler monkeys, white-faced capuchin monkeys, two- and three-toed sloths, and toucans.

Afternoon arrival to La Quinta Sarapiquí Lodge. Afternoon walk through La Quinta's butterfly and frog gardens.

<https://laquintacostarica.com/>

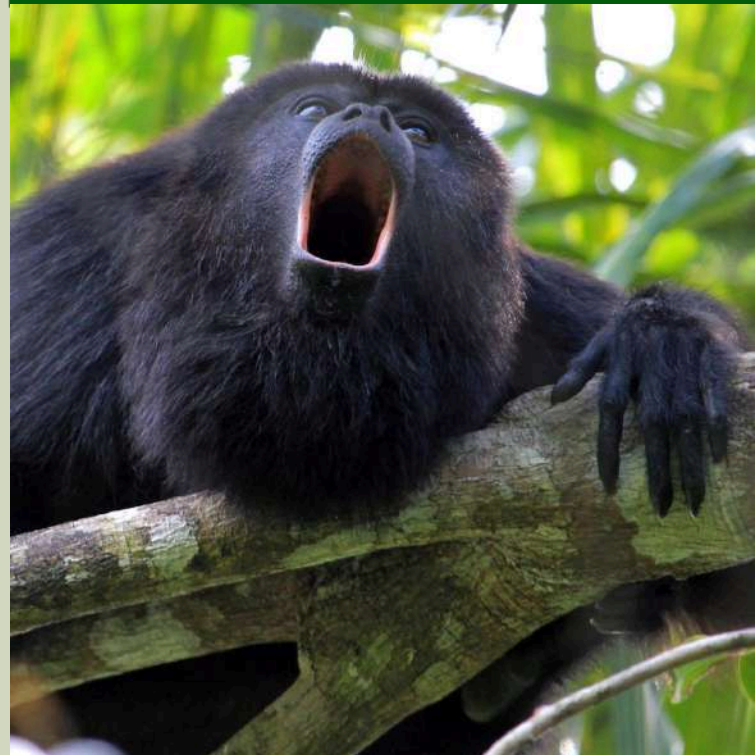
We'll begin the day with early morning birdwatching in the lodge's gardens, followed by a visit to Pierella Ecological Garden, a butterfly export garden. Here, tropical butterflies are bred for exhibits around the world. The gardens and regenerating rainforest are exemplary conservation efforts.

The afternoon is free for you to enjoy the lodge's amenities or take a stroll through the gardens.

Dinner and overnight at Selva Verde Lodge.

Day 6: Mon, Jan 19

Selva Verde Lodge



Day 7: Tues, Jan 20

Talamanca Mountains



After breakfast, we depart for the Talamanca Mountains, Costa Rica's tallest mountain range. Our journey will take us through Braulio Carrillo National Park, one of the country's largest protected areas.

Our destination is Savegre Lodge, a family-owned retreat with a protected cloud forest preserve along the Savegre River. This stunning location surrounded by cloud forest and orchards offers the chance to see the Resplendent Quetzal. We'll be there at the beginning of the nesting season for this iconic bird which was revered by the ancient Mayans.

Dinner and overnight at Savegre Lodge.
www.savegre.com

After breakfast, we board the hotel's Land Rovers and head to an ancient oak forest at the mountain range's summit.

From there, we'll enjoy a leisurely hike back down to the lodge, encountering high-altitude bird species, giant ferns, and other unique flora and fauna.

The afternoon is yours to relax, explore the nearby town, or enjoy the lodge's amenities.

Day 8: Wed, Jan 21

Savegre Lodge



Day 9: Thurs, Jan 22

Bougainvillea Hotel



Breakfast at the Savegre Lodge before departure to San Jose and the Bougainvillea Hotel.

Free afternoon to rest and explore the award-winning botanical gardens, pool, or spa, that make Bougainvillea the perfect setting to end our journey.

Farewell dinner at the hotel's restaurant, Vitarales.



All adventures must come to an end. After nine days of exploring the magic of this tropical gem, we return home with lifelong memories.

Hasta Luego, Costa Rica!

Day 10: Fri, Jan 23

Transfer to SJO Airport



Meet Our Tour Leaders

Carlos Chacon



Carlos' passion for nature grew out of his childhood experiences in the rainforests of Costa Rica. While earning his B.S. in Tropical Biology at the University of Costa Rica, he gained first-hand knowledge about local wildlife by working as a zookeeper at the Costa Rica National Zoo. After graduation, Carlos worked as a naturalist for Lindblad Expeditions, National Geographic, Nature Conservancy, Mountain Sobek Travel, and several other companies in Costa Rica, the Galapagos Islands, Panama, and Alaska. In 2005 Carlos started his own eco-tour company working with longtime friend Ricardo Gomez (driver and birder extraordinaire) and Dr. Chris Marsh. Carlos specializes in small group trips where participants experience both the rich biodiversity and the local culture of Costa Rica. Over two decades ago, Carlos met his wife Carol Weir while she was working in Costa Rica. They live in Bluffton, South Carolina and have two adult sons.

Chris Marsh



Chris's interest in birds goes back to his very early days. He grew up in Raleigh, NC, and joined the Raleigh Bird Club when he was 14. Chris completed his Ph.D. in zoology from Oregon State University in 1982 and became an assistant professor of biology at Brevard College that same year.

From 1984 to 1998 he served as a professor at Coastal Carolina University, where he taught biology, animal behavior, ornithology, and marine ecology. He conducted shorebird surveys with the South Carolina Dept. of Natural Resources and worked as an environmental consultant from 1986-1994. In 1998 he left academia to become the first full-time Director of the Spring Island Trust and also became the Director of the Lowcountry Institute when it was founded that same year. Now retired, Chris continues to contribute to conservation in the Lowcountry as director emeritus.

Chris now resides in Winston-Salem, NC but continues to stay involved with conservation initiatives in the Lowcountry. He has been co-leading Costa Rica trips with Carlos since 2005.

Additional Information

The trip is limited to a maximum of 12 participants
Price per person based on double occupancy: \$5,150
\$750 single supplement for a private room

For questions or more information email Carlos:
ecoladventures@gmail.com

Prices are per person and include:

- Transportation on private bus with air conditioning.
- Private naturalist guide services
- Lodging and meals as described
- Activities and entrance fees as described

Not Included:

- Round-trip airfare to Costa Rica
- Personal expenses (medical expenses)
- Travel Insurance
- Medical Insurance

Payment and Cancellation Policy

- Trip must be paid in full 4 months prior to departure
- Cancellations:
 - 60-45 days, 50% refund
 - 44-30 days, 25% refund
 - 29 days or less, no refund

Reserve your space on this trip by emailing Carlos Chacon at ecoladventures@gmail.com and sending an initial non-refundable commitment check of \$500.

Mail your commitment check to:

Carlos Chacon | 21 Park Circle. | Bluffton SC 29910