



Costa Rica

February 20-29, 2008

February 20 **San José**

Upon this evening's arrival in San José, we will be met by our guide and driver and transferred to our hotel for the night. **Hotel Bougainvillea (dinner on the plane)**

February 21 **Costa de Pajaros**

Depart for Zarcero and our half-day workshop with professional photographer Greg Basco. The tips and techniques Greg shares with the group will be useful throughout the program. Continue on to La Ensenada Lodge, stopping for lunch enroute. The lodge is located on the Gulf of Nicoya in the northwestern province of Puntarenas. Ensenada means "cove" or "small bay." The 865-acre property is registered as a private wildlife reserve. Also a working farm, Ensenada offers a chance to participate in Costa Rican farm life. The Gulf of Nicoya, the mangroves and the salina offer those who love birds and photography over 140 different species of birds including white ibis, tri-colored heron, purple gallinule, double-striped thick-knee, parrots, parakeets, bellbirds, trogons and kingfishers. With luck, we may see a jabiru stork. Crocodiles, coyotes, howlers and white-faced monkeys, sloths, agoutis, and iguanas are also found. **La Ensenada Lodge (BLD)**

February 22 **Costa de Pajaros**

Today enjoy a guided boat tour of Palo Verde National Park. Established in 1978 to protect the Río Tempisque lowlands, Palo Verde encompasses a diverse patchwork of habitats including deciduous, riparian and evergreen forests, mangrove swamps, and fresh and saltwater marshes. The marshes are extremely important stopover points for migrating waterfowl and wading birds. In the afternoon explore the ponds and trails of the Ensenada refuge. Times today will be dependent on the tides. **La Ensenada Lodge (BLD)**



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February 23 Arenal

Early departure for Arenal. This afternoon we will hike in Arenal National Park. Once little more than a hill, Arenal devastated more than four square miles during a 1968 eruption which created the impressive mountain seen today. We will have the opportunity to observe igneous rocks created by the eruption. We will also observe many rainforest species of plants and animals during the hike, and be treated to magnificent views of the volcano. Tonight, we can continue our volcano-watching, weather permitting. On clear nights, the views of incandescent avalanches are breathtaking! **Arenal Observatory Lodge (BLD)**

February 24 Sarapiquí

After breakfast we depart for Selva Verde. On the way we will stop at La Paz Waterfall Gardens to explore the trails and have lunch. At La Paz, we may see tropical butterflies, orchids, up to 12 hummingbird species, other birds including the Emerald Toucanet and the Silver-throated Tanager, and four different waterfalls. As we continue our journey to Selva Verde, we will enjoy a short stop at San Fernando Waterfall. Here we have a chance to see birds such as the White-bellied Mountain Gem, Black-bellied Hummingbird and Red-headed Barbet. The Selva Verde Lodge is situated on a 500-acre private tract of primary and secondary tropical rainforest located on the Sarapiquí River. The forest is alive with a variety of bird life, including toucans, parrots, jacamars, hummingbirds, motmots and other exotic lowland tropical birds. Accommodations are in jungle lodges built on stilts above the forest floor, connected by a network of covered walkways. After dinner, we will enjoy a night hike to search for nocturnal frogs and insects. **Selva Verde Lodge (BLD)**

February 25 Sarapiquí

Optional early morning bird hike before breakfast or spend time at the lodge feeders on our own, where we may see Red-throated Ant Tanagers, Blue-gray Tanagers, Clay-colored Robins, Great Kiskadees, and Collared Aracaris. After breakfast we visit Heliconia Island, a local botanical garden and excellent location for flower and bird photography. The owner has fruit feeders with natural bird perches that make great spots for species such as tanagers, honeycreepers, and woodpeckers. Heliconia flowers abound, and there exists the possibility of spotting an eyelash viper on the Heliconia blooms. After a delicious lunch cooked by the owner of Heliconia Island we take a boat ride on the Sarapiquí River for wildlife and water bird observation, a fantastic opportunity to see caimans, aningas, and herons, among others. In the late afternoon, we have the opportunity to participate in a Costa Rican cooking class with the Sarapiquí Conservation Learning Center (SCLC). The SCLC is dedicated to programs that foster education, environmental conservation, artistic expression, and responsible tourism. The Center provides an ideal hands-on environment for activities which support community self-development. Optional night hike after dinner.

Selva Verde Lodge (BLD)



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February 26 Savegre

Early morning birding. After breakfast we depart for the highlands of the Talamanca Mountain Range, the country's highest, to the picturesque valley of San Gerardo de Dota, where the cozy Savegre Lodge is located. Enroute we'll stop at the Mirador de Quetzales Wildlife Refuge. On arrival at Savegre Lodge, there will be time to explore and look for birds on the surrounding property. Make sure you check out the hummingbirds from the balcony at the bar area. In this high elevation habitat of mostly oak forest and highland cloud forest, some other species to look for are the Resplendent Quetzals, Tufted Flycatcher, Flame-colored Tanager, Long-tailed Silky Flycatcher, Volcano Hummingbird (Talamanca race), Scintillant Hummingbird, Gray-tailed Mountain Gem, Silvery-throated Jay, Slaty Flower Piercer, Black-thighed Grosbeak, Collared Redstart, Sooty-capped Bush Tanager, Turrent Tyrannulet, Golden-browed Chlorophonia, Emerald (blue-throated) Toucanet, Collared Trogon, Dusky Nightjar, and Ochraceous Wren.

Savegre Lodge (BLD)

February 27 Savegre

Founded by the local Chacón family, Savegre protects a large sector of primary and secondary cloud forest. After an early breakfast, we will cover some of the lower trails in the forest and grasslands, led by our guide, looking for Quetzals and other highland species including Silky Flycatchers and Sulfur-winged Parakeets. Here we find especially good opportunities to see the charming Collared Redstart. After lunch, we travel by horseback to the Chacón family's upper cloud forest reserve to hike among towering tropical oak trees. The property's trails wind through mostly virgin forest consisting of hundred-year-old trees, multicolored plants, mushrooms, insects, amphibians and mammals. Altitudes vary from 7,220 to 11,384 feet above sea level. **Savegre Lodge (BLD)**

February 28 San José

This morning we are off for the Central Valley, with a stop in the San José suburb of Moravia for last-minute souvenir shopping, arriving at our hotel in late afternoon. Time to relax and enjoy a farewell dinner tonight. **Buena Vista Hotel (BLD)**

February 29 Departure

Transfer to the airport for our flight back home. **(B)**

Land Cost per person: \$1697

Rate is based on double occupancy with a minimum of 12 participants. Single rooms may be available (very limited) for an additional supplement of \$297. With 15 participants the cost will be \$1597 per person.



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Program Includes: all in-country transportation, accommodations, an expert guide, meals, activities as stated and \$250 donation for Friends of the Bosque plus \$50 for local Costa Rica conservation

Program does not include: international airfare, additional activities, beverages, gratuities, and the \$26.00 Costa Rica airport departure tax. Estimated airfare from Albuquerque is \$850.

Payment: In order to secure your space on the trip, a \$200 deposit and completed enrollment form is required no later than 120 days before departure (October 23, 2007). This deposit is refundable until 95 days before departure with the exclusion of a \$100 cancellation fee. Final payment is due 95 days prior, on or before November 17, 2007. Within 95 days moneys are non-refundable. Trip cancellation insurance is strongly recommended. For more information about insurance coverage, see www.travelinsured.com Holbrook's Agency number is 15849



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