

COSTA RICA NATURE and PHOTOGRAPHY TOUR

GREAT NATURE EXPEDITIONS WITH DRAGOMAN DIVING & OUTDOORS



“GREAT DIVERSITY OF HABITATS, GEOGRAPHIC POSITIONING, TOPOGRAPHY, AND CLIMATE BESTOWS COSTA RICA WITH ONE THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF BIO-DIVERSITY IN THE WORLD. ABOUT 5% OF THE WORLD’S SPECIES HAVE BEEN RECORDED IN COSTA RICA’S TERRITORY”.

Following is a detailed description of the custom designed Costa Rica nature photo trip. The areas to be visited offer great opportunities for wildlife observation, enjoy the landscape and learn about the people and culture.

Day 1:

Heredia

Welcome to Costa Rica! After clearing customs and meeting your guide right at the International Airport, we'll take a short drive to our hotel in the outskirts of Heredia. The hotel's awarded gardens host a wide variety of native and exotic flowering plants. Lesson's Motmot, Hoffmann's Woodpecker, Grayish Saltator and Variegated Squirrels are common wildlife sightings around the grounds. Dinner at the hotel.

Overnight Hotel Bougainvillea



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Day 2:

Tortuguero (B,L,D)

Early morning departure for Tortuguero area, one of the country's premier eco-tourist destinations. Between the months of July and October, large concentrations of Green Sea Turtles use the beach for nesting purposes. Besides the turtles, the National Park protects marine, coastal, riparian and rainforest ecosystems.

Along the way we'll see diverse landscapes and agricultural fields. Accessible only by boat or airplane, Tortuguero is a good example of a typical Caribbean community. After our arrival for lunch, we'll have the chance in the afternoon to explore the lodge's grounds looking for parrots, toucans, monkeys and more.

All our meals will be served at the lodge.

Overnight Laguna Lodge



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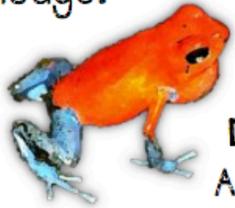
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Day 3:

Tortuguero (B,L,D)

This day we will explore the Tortuguero National Park by boat. We'll have two outings to different sections of the park. The open air boats (no roof) provide the best conditions for wildlife photography. Exploring the Rain Forest in Tortuguero yields the possibility of encountering abundant wildlife such as 3 species of monkeys (Spider, Howler and White-faced), Sloths, Caimans and much more.

Between the river tours, there will be other photo opportunities for more local wildlife and flora, and of course enjoy the lodge facilities. All meals will be served at the lodge.



Day 4:

Sarapiquí (B,L)

After breakfast we will take our boat transportation up river to meet our van and driver and continue our trip to the Sarapiquí region in the Northern Caribbean Lowlands. Lunch will be along the way and after lunch we'll make a stop at Casa de Cope for a photo session. Here we'll have the opportunity to photograph various types of wildlife at close range. White-necked Jacobin, Long-billed Hermit and Golden-hooded Tanager among many more, are common visitors at Cope's garden. We'll arrive to the station at the end of the afternoon.

Overnight La Selva Biological Station

Overnight Laguna Lodge



SNOWY EGRET, KARBEVAZI BALIKCI, Espira Imagens 2012 COSTA RICA, CEU O. KIRAC

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Day 5: Sarapiquí (B)

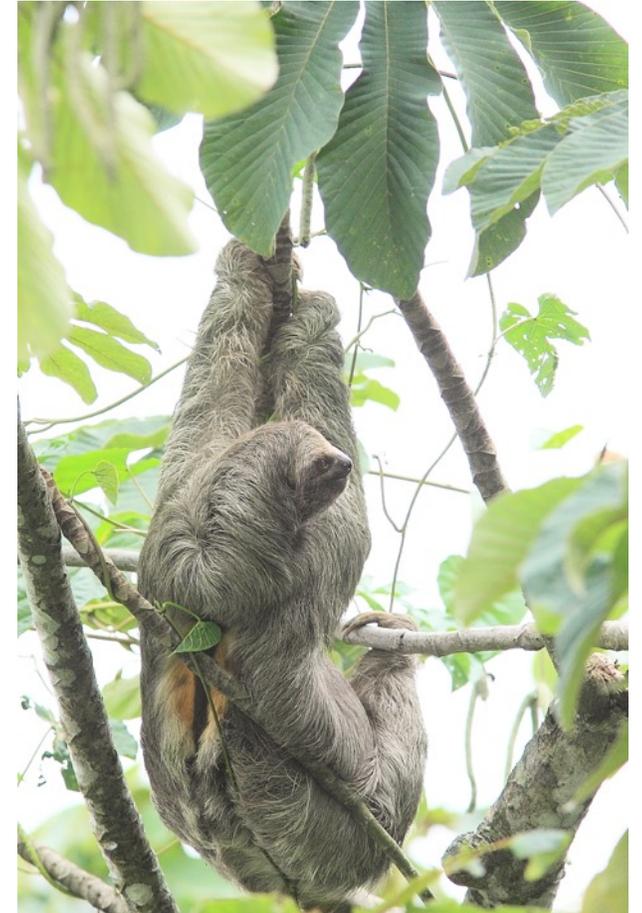
We'll spend the day exploring La Selva Biological Station, an iconic tropical rainforest research facility with a well-maintained trail network. We'll be searching for trogons, toucans, puffbirds, monkeys, peccaries and more! Over 50 kilometers of trails are available during our stay at La Selva.

Overnight La Selva Biological Station

Day 6: Sarapiquí (B)

Morning departure for Arenal Area. Along the way we will visit another great place for hummingbird and landscape photography: Catarata Bajos del Toro <http://www.catarata-del-toro.com/>. Besides the spectacular waterfall, we can see several species of hummingbirds coming to the feeders, some specialties include Black-bellied Hummingbird, White-bellied Mountain-Gem and Costa Rican endemic Coppery-headed Emerald. We'll continue our journey to the lodge after lunch, arriving in the afternoon with enough light to explore the grounds to find more photo opportunities and weather permitting views of Arenal Volcano.

Overnight Arenal Observatory Lodge



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Day 7:

Arenal (B)

Early this morning we'll gather at the observation deck where we see Montezuma Oropendolas, Passerini's Tanager and Red-legged Honeycreeper among others. After enjoying a hearty typical breakfast, we'll set out to explore the lodge's grounds and trails. Here we look for specialties such as Yellow-eared Toucanet, Broad-billed Motmot and Rufous-tailed Jacamar, Spotted Antbird, Ocellated Antbird, Orange-bellied Trogon, Crested Guan and others. The different trails and gardens offer plenty of opportunities for wildlife observation and also splendid views of Arenal Volcano when the weather cooperates. Arenal Volcano, was up until 2010 the most active volcano in Central America. After a long eruptive process and lava emissions, the volcano entered a slower phase limited now to practically only vapor emissions.



Overnight Arenal Observatory Lodge

Day 8:

Tarcoles (B)

We'll check out of the lodge after breakfast and then drive to La Fortuna where we'll visit Eco-Centro Danaus, a small nature preserve dedicated to conservation and environmental programs. <http://www.ecocentrodanaus.com/en/>
The center has a butterfly garden with several resident species, a pond where Boat-billed Herons and Spectacled Caimans reproduce, this place is a real oasis for wildlife in general. We'll continue our drive in the afternoon towards the Pacific Coast, climbing the southern portion of the Tilaran Mountain Range then dropping to sea level around Puntarenas. Arrival to the lodge at the end of the afternoon. The lodge is often visited by different species, including some Dry Forest birds such as Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl.



Overnight Cerro Lodge



KARA YANAKLI AGAÇKAKAN BLACK-CHEEKED WOODPECKER

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Day 9:

Carara (D)

After an early breakfast, we'll take a nature walk at Carara National Park. Only a few minutes away, the park sits right in the convergence zone between the dry North Pacific and the very wet South Pacific regions; rendering the park a unique feature: hosts species from both areas of influence. Baird's Trogon, Streak-chested Antpitta, Rufous Piha, Turquoise-browed Motmot. Scarlet Macaws use Carara and surrounding areas, including our hotel, as their breeding and feeding grounds. Wildlife includes White-faced Capuchin, Central American Agouties, Poison Dart Frogs and more. We will have the chance to visit the park both morning and afternoon.

Overnight Cerro Lodge



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Day 10:

Carara (B-D)

Morning boat tour of the Tarcoles River. This river is one of the most important resting areas for many migratory species, particularly shore birds, and also of great importance for resident ones like Southern Lapwing, Mangrove Vireo and Roseate Spoonbill. Along the river we can also encounter American Crocodiles basking in the sun. <http://www.junglecrocodilesafari.com/> .After this unforgettable experience continue the journey to our hotel in the highlands of Talamanca Mountain Range to settle in and enjoy dinner. The hotel is located at 7500 ft. above sea level. Arrival to the hotel late in the afternoon.

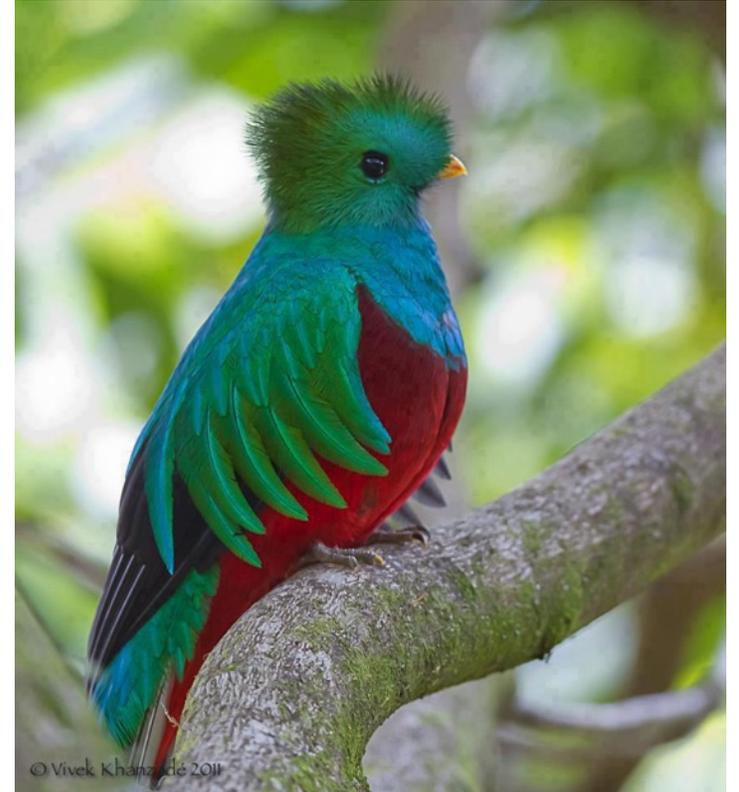
Overnight Savegre Mountain Hotel

Day 11:

(B,L,D)

We'll start the day with an early morning expedition to find the Resplendent Quetzal, regularly seen in the valley feeding on the wild avocados and nesting in dead trees along the Savegre river. Throughout this day we will have the chance to find many highland birds on the various trails and gardens. The private reserve consists of 400 hectares (988 acres) of cloud forest. Some of the highland specialties: Slaty Flowerplucker, Scintillant Hummingbird, Ochraceous Wren, Dark Pewee and Yellow-bellied Siskin. All our meals will be at the hotel's amazing restaurant with tasty and varied options.

Overnight Savegre Mountain Hotel



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Day 12:

Alajuela (B,L)

Time to explore one of the highest sections of the Talamanca mountain Range, visiting Los Quetzales National Park. Above tree line, over 3000 meters above sea level, the tall trees disappear making way for a unique ecosystem called Paramo. Only a few species can adapt to the harsh conditions, freezing temperatures before sunrise and strong solar radiation in the mid hours of the day. Endemics like Volcano Junco and Volcano Hummingbird make this habitat their home.

After our stop at the highland section we'll visit Paraiso Quetzal for a photo session at their set-up. Here we mostly find hummingbirds such as Scintillant Hummingbird and other specialties like Black-and-yellow Silky Flycatcher. After lunch we'll start our drive back to the Central Valley.

Overnight Buena Vista Hotel

Day 13:

Alajuela (B)

Morning shuttle to International Airport for returning flights.



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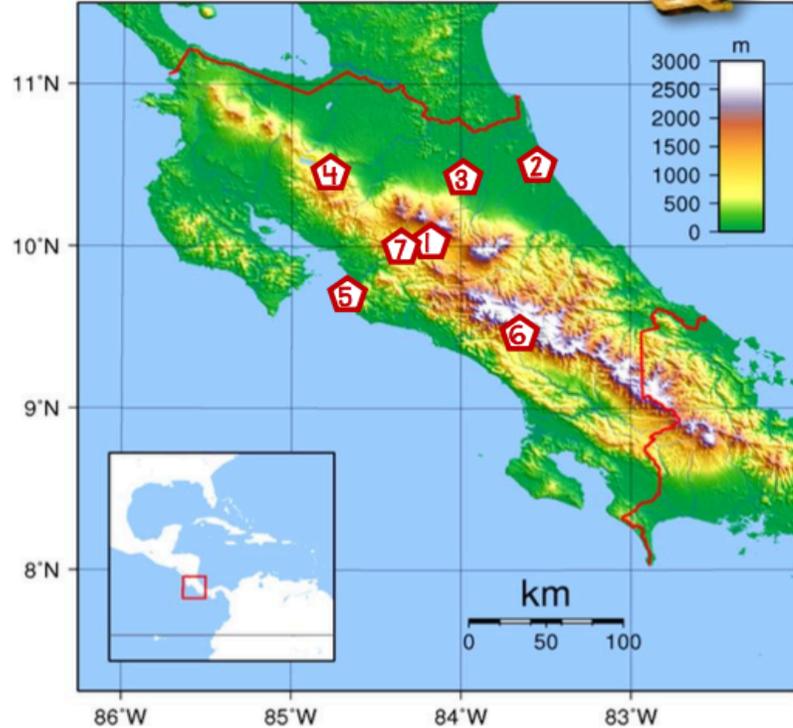
Included:

- Professional English speaking Naturalist & Birding Guide services throughout the program.
- Private transportation throughout the program (Airport pick-up and drop-off included).
- Meals indicated with: **B** - Breakfast, **L** - Lunch, **D** - Dinner.
- All lodging from day 1, ending with day 12.
- All entrance fees and excursions to attractions indicated in the program. (All tours are private and exclusive for the group)

Not Included:

- Airline ticket
- Travel insurance
- Gratuities
- Alcoholic beverages

Price: 3.570 USD



LOCATIONS

- 1- Hotel Bougainvillea
Central Valley, Heredia
- 2- Laguna Lodge North-East
coast, Tortuguero
- 3- La Selva Biological Station
Caribbean Lowlands, Sarapiquí
- 4- Arenal Observatory Lodge
Northern Zone, San Carlos
- 5- Cerro Lodge Central Pacific
area, Puntarenas
- 6- Savegre Mountain Hotel
Talamancas Mountain Range, Dota
- 7- Hotel Buena Vista Central
Valley, Alajuela.



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