

DAY 1: ARAUCANA LODGE TO MANIZALES WITH STOPS

The group departs Araucana Lodge after breakfast for a 6 hour drive to Manizales. We will make stops at the Rio Bravo Reserve and at the Cameguadua Reserve before we begin our ascent to Manizales.

Lodging: Hotel Quo

DAY 2 AND 3: RIO BLANCO NATURE RESERVE

The Rio Blanco Reserve is owned by Aguas de Manizales (only 30 minutes from the city of Manizales), the local water company, and is situated along an altitudinal gradient, therefore including a wide variety of ecosystems. We will have two days to explore the reserve. We could possibly observe five antpitta species at feeders located within a short hike from the lodge, including the endemic and endangered Brown-banded, and the elusive Bicolored, Chestnut-crowned, Chestnut-naped, and Slate crowned antpittas. Other feeder visitors seldom seen include Slaty-backed Nightingale Thrush and Stripe-headed Brush-Finch. Additional species observed in Rio Blanco include the uncommon and endangered Rufous-fronted and Golden-plumed Parakeet and the very rare and sought-after Masked Saltator.

Species we may encounter at this vast reserve include Tyrannine Woodcreeper, Golden-fronted Whitestart, Dusky Piha, Lachrymose and Buff-breasted mountain-tanagers, showy Grass-green and White-capped tanagers, Powerful Woodpecker, and the hard to see Ocellated, Blackish, and Spillman's tapaculos. Other less common species that are possible are Long-tailed Black-billed Peppershrike, the handsome Plushcap, Red-hooded Tanager, Mountain Cacique, and the endangered Golden-plumed Parakeet.

Lodging: Hotel Quo

DAY 4: HACIENDA EL BOSUQUE TO TERMALES DEL RUIZ

Hacienda El Bosque is roughly an hour drive from Manizales, so we will plan to get there early in time for breakfast before the amazing birding begins. The day will be spent on this working cattle farm that produces milk, whose owners have been protecting large swaths of forests and paramo ecosystems for decades. Some of our targets on this wonderful property are Crescent-faced Antpitta, Gray-breasted Mountain-toucan (comes to feeders to eat grapes), Collared Inca, Tourmaline Sunangel, Buff-winged Starfrontlet, Mountain Velvetbreast, Purple-backed Thornbill, Sword-billed Hummingbird, and Hooded Mountain-tanager. Lunch will be at the hacienda, and we will have time for some afternoon birding before driving up the mountain to spend two nights at Hotel Termales del Ruiz, at 11,000 feet, where we can relax in its mineral-rich, medicinal hot springs and enjoy scenic views of the central Andes.

Lodging: Hotel Termales del Ruiz

DAY 5: LOS NEVADOS NATIONAL PARK

We will explore Los Nevados National Park, located on the highest part of the Colombian central Andes. We will wind through patches of forest that open up to Paramo, an ecosystem of tropical grasslands above the treeline, toward the picturesque 5,300-meter (17,400-foot) volcano Nevado del Ruiz. The scenery in Paramo is magical and surreal, with velvety Frailejon plants adding to this effect. Frailejon plants belong to the Espeletia genus and are endemic to Colombia, Venezuela, and Ecuador.

The tour reaches elevations up to 3,950 meters (13,000 feet), so it will be cold. Here the goal is to find species adapted to high elevations like the endemic Buffy Helmetcrest and the near endemic Rainbow-bearded Thornbill, both of which sometimes forage on the ground. Also possible are Viridian Metaltail, Stout-billed Cinclodes, Brown-backed Chat-Tyrant, the beautiful Golden-crowned Tanager, near endemic Black-backed Bush-Tanager, and Glossy Flowerpiercer. We may also find a variety of seedeaters in the Paramo, including Plumbeous Sierra-Finch plus Paramo and Plain-colored seedeaters.

Lodging: Hotel Termales del Ruiz

DAY 6: LOS NEVADOS NATIONAL PARK TO PEREIRA VIA THE TINAMU NATURE RESERVE

The morning is spent searching for any targets that may have been missed and enjoying the hummingbird feeders at the hotel. There is also a chance to look for the very rare and endangered endemic Rufous-fronted Parakeet along a two-kilometer stretch of road that passes through elfin forest, an ecosystem of dwarfed plants. We also hope to spot the very tame Tawny Antpitta, a common companion in this area. We will stop for lunch at Tinamu Lodge where some of the species include Moustached Puffbird, Jet Antbird, Stripe-throated Hermit, and Bay-headed, Blue-necked and Guira Tanagers. Fifteen species of hummingbirds have been observed at the lodge, including Long-Billed Starthroat, White-vented Plumeteer and Western Emerald.

Lodging: Hotel Movich

DAY 7: OTUN-QUIMBAYA NATIONAL PARK

The Otun-Quimbaya Reserve is a flora and fauna sanctuary located on the west slope of the Central Cordillera, and is home to the Wax Palm, the tallest palm in the world and the national tree of Colombia. These palms, unlike most other species of palm, thrive at high altitudes and cool climates found here. We will also be received by the sounds of Howler Monkeys and the endangered, endemic Cauca Guan, once believed to be extinct until rediscovery of a population in 1990. Another rare target is the endemic Hooded Antpitta.

Otun-Quimbaya is also one of the best places in the world to observe Red-ruffed Fruitcrow. We will search for endemics – Chestnut Wood-Quail, recently described Stiles's Tapaculo – and near endemics, like Moustached Antpitta, the handsome Rufous-breasted Flycatcher, and bright-

colored Golden-fronted Whitestart. Other impressive birds we hope to find include Three-striped, Russet-crowned, and Canada Warblers, Masked Trogon, Green Jay, Andean Motmot, Blue-naped Chlorophonia, and Orange-bellied Euphonia. We will also look for Black-billed Mountain-Toucan, Chestnut-breasted Wren, Plumbeous-crowned Tyrannulet, Marble-faced and Variegated bristle-tyrants, and Glossy and Masked Flowerpiercers.

Lodging: Hotel Movich

DAY 8: DEPART PEREIRA

The price of this tour includes

- All meals, from Lunch on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 8
- All lodging (Double Occupancy)
- Bilingual professional guide
- Bottled water and snacks
- All transportation and airport transfers
- Entrance fees to parks and private nature reserves
- Limited Medical and Accident Insurance

The price of the trip does not include

- Gratuities
- Laundry
- Items of Personal Nature
- International Airfare

COST 8 PAX: \$ 2895 USD

COST 6 PAX: \$ 3150 USD

COST 4 PAX: \$ 3450 USD

SINGLE SUPPLEMENT: \$590