



FEMALE BIRDERS FLOCKING TO COLOMBIA

We know what you want and we know how to do it, that's why we designed this tour for those women who want to know Colombia, the country with the second-highest biodiversity in the world, behind Brazil (Around 7 times Colombia's size). While looking for birds, this tour also takes you to discover experiences with Colombian women who will tell you how they got out of the war looking for sustainable alternatives and indigenous communities that saw in bird watching another way to get involved in the local conservation of their environment whereas have some extra income.

This tour takes you to the northern Colombia, one of the most interesting regions of Colombia for nature lovers, famed for its high level of endemic species. We will explore a huge variety of different habitats including high elevation mountains, dry forest, wetlands, mangroves, deserts and coastal habitats.

The Colombian Caribbean region is mostly lowland plains extending from the northern reaches of the Colombian Andes to the Caribbean Sea that are characterized by a variety of ecosystems including: The Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta that rise from the plains to snow-capped peaks, separated from the Andes as an isolated area of high biodiversity and endemism; One of the largest marshes in Colombia, the Ciénaga Grande de Santa Marta. The main river is the Magdalena which is fully navigable in the region and a major path for the flow of shipments to and from inland Colombia.

This tour takes you to know a good part of the culture of this side of the country. The inhabitants of the Colombian Caribbean are the result of the racial and cultural mixture of aboriginal peoples that inhabit the region since ancient times, with white individuals of Spanish nationality who arrived in the Colombian Caribbean in 1499, who at the same time introduced people of diverse African tribes as slaves. As consequence we can enjoy a unique array of music, traditions and lifestyles that maintain until today.

DAY	ACTIVITY	OVERNIGHT	ELEVATION	
			m.a.s.l	Feet
1	Arrival to Cartagena	Cartagena	Sea level	
2	Birding at Ciénaga de la Virgen, visit to Damartes Project & Traditional drums workshop – Transfer to Barranquilla	Barranquilla	20	65
3	Birding Isla Salamanca National Park & Barranquilla Area – Transfer to Minca	Minca	650	2132
4	Birding the road towards El Dorado Reserve	El Dorado Reserve	2000	6561
5	Full day at El Dorado Reserve	El Dorado Reserve	2000-2600	6561-8530
6	Morning birding at El Dorado and Transfer to Tayrona Area	La Jorará Lodge	Sea level	
7	Full day at Los Flamencos Flora and Fauna Sanctuary	Rioacha	Sea level	
8	Traditional dancing show and flight to Bogotá	International flights or extra-night in Bogotá per request		

DETAILED ITINERARY

DAY 1

Arrival in Cartagena

We will land in the international airport of Cartagena, in the Caribbean coast. Cartagena is a city founded as a major port in 1533, located on the northern coast of Colombia in the Caribbean Coast Region. It was strategically located between the Magdalena and Sinú rivers and became the main port for trade between Spain and its overseas empire, establishing its importance by the early 1540s. During the colonial era it was a key port for the export of Peruvian silver to Spain and for the import of African slaves. In order to defend it against pirate attacks in the Caribbean, great castles and walls were built throughout the city. Cartagena's colonial walled city and fortress were designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

We will spend the afternoon visiting most of those buildings and learning about its fantastic history.

DAY 2

Ciénaga de la virgen

Ciénaga de la Virgen is a swamp located in a little town called La Boquilla, a fishing village of African descent that for more than 200 years and continues to this day in a heroic struggle of cultural resistance to preserve its ancestral traditions where drums play a leading role.



In the early morning we will be birding in the mangroves where the main target will be American Pygmy Kingfisher, but also we can find a lot of shorebirds, including Black-necked Stilt and a number of species of plovers and sandpipers.

On day 2 we will visit some great conservation initiatives in La Boquilla led by women. The first one will be the DAMARTES (Damas y Madres del arte) an association composed of seven women, who produce jewelry, vases, containers, belts and accessories using coconut as raw material. They are the first women in La Boquilla to produce their own income. The creation of an object from a coconut requires, above all, enthusiasm and patience and with them, we will learn the processes to make their products.



In the afternoon, we will visit BATAMBORA, a project led by young entrepreneurs from the Afro-descendant community of La Boquilla, committed to human and economic development aimed at rescuing and preserving the cultural traditions of the African heritage. With them, we will be learning how to play “los tambores” their traditional drums, the soul of their traditional music.

In the late afternoon we will be transferred to Barranquilla.



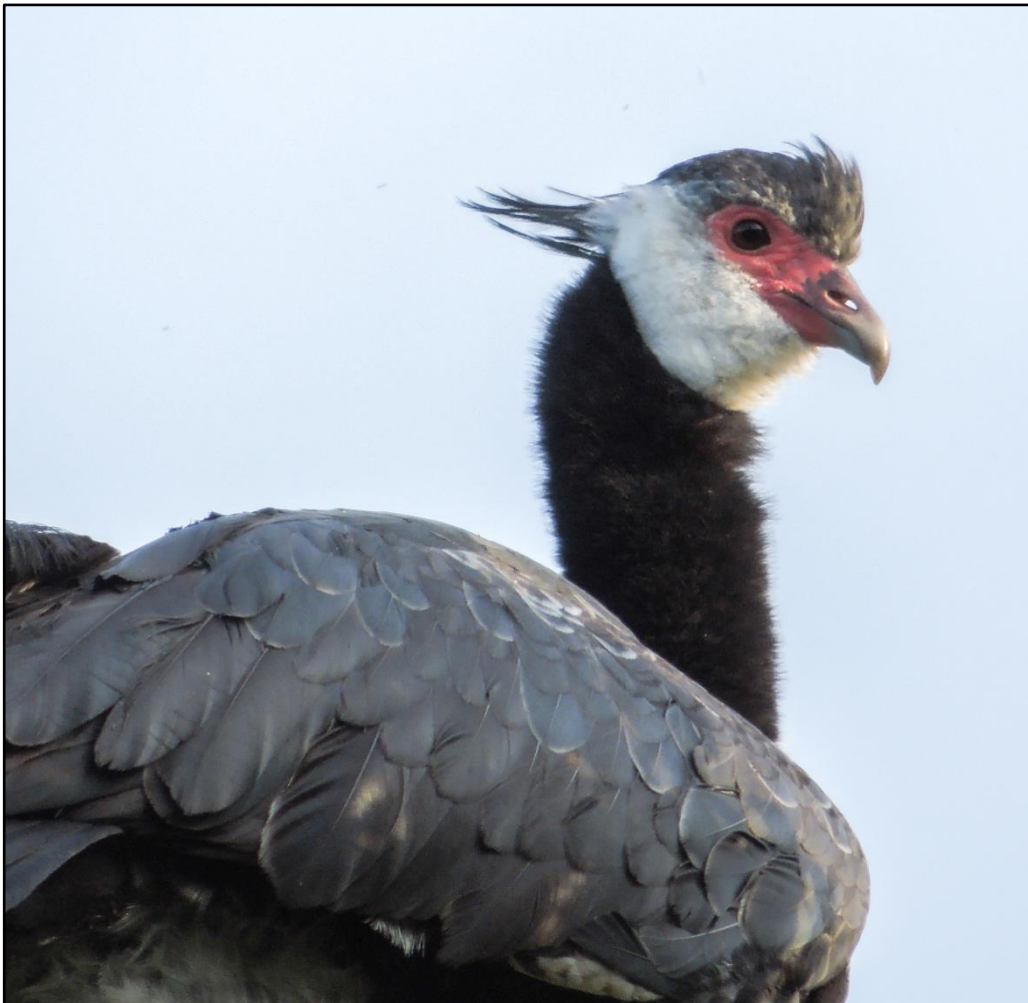


DAY 3

Birding Isla Salamanca National Park and Barranquilla Area - Transfer to Minca

In the way towards Isla Salamanca National Park we will stop on the Barranquilla city limits and visit some dry scrub forest where our main target will be the endemic Chestnut-winged Chachalaca. We are sure to see a few commoner species which could include Mouse-coloured Tyrannulet, Northern Scrub Flycatcher and Trinidad Euphonia.

Most of the morning will be spent in the extensive wetlands and Mangroves of the Salamanca National Park east of Baranquilla. The Salamanca National Park is adjacent to the Ciénaga Grande, right in the middle of the Barranquilla- Santa Marta highway. It protects the most significant area of mangroves in the Colombian Caribbean. Offers good chances for the endemic and Critically Endangered Sapphire-bellied Hummingbird, like another interesting birds as the Bicolored Conebill, Black-crested Antshrike, Golden-green and Red-rumped Woodpeckers, Dwarf Cucko, Yellow-chinned Spinetail, Bronzed Cowbird and Striped-



backed Wren. We also hope to find a host of commoner species with everything from ubiquitous Great-tailed Grackles and Thick-billed Euhphonias to Magnificent Frigatebirds and Brown Pelicans soaring overhead.

In the late morning we will start driving east through the park but expect to make frequent stops to look at the concentrations of waders and terns that can often be found on roadside pools. In the late afternoon we will climb into the foothills of the Santa Marta Mountains, to a little town called Minca.

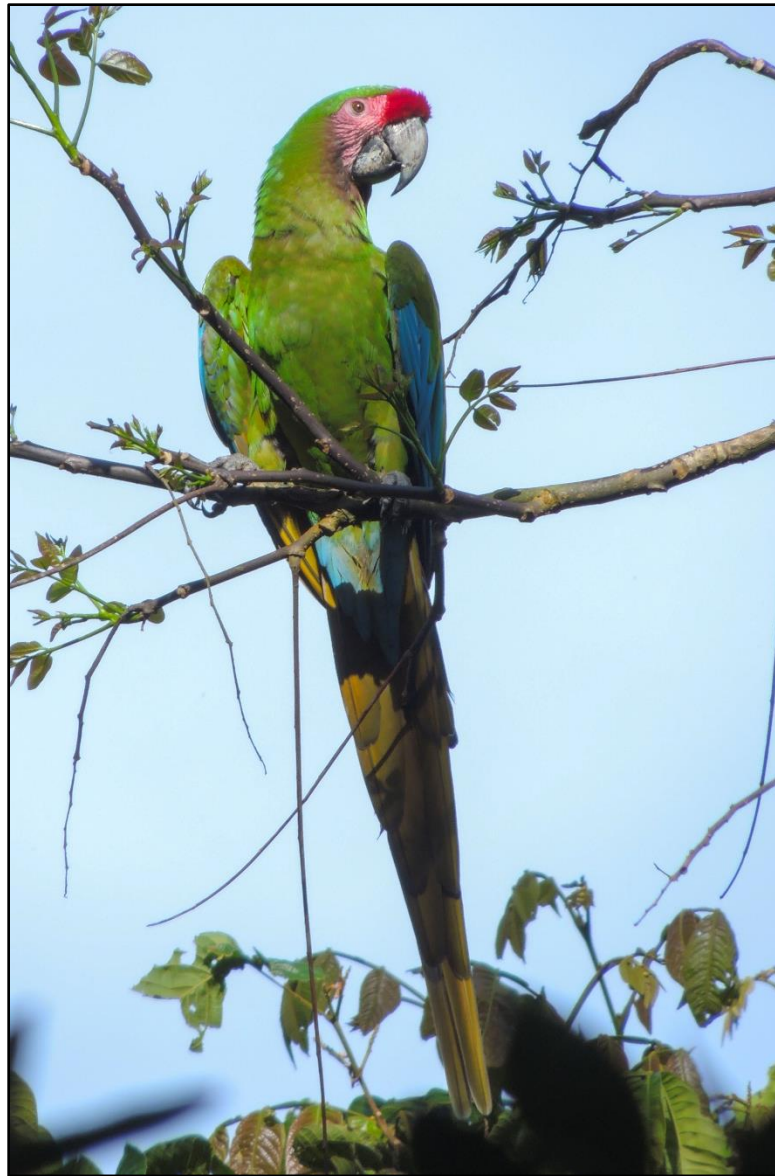
DAY 4

Birding the road towards El Dorado Reserve

Minca is a little village located in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada, the birding from the dry scrub below Minca up to the shade-coffee plantations area, encompasses lots of different habitats that yield a large number of birds, including near-endemics Golden-winged Sparrow, Scaled Piculet and Red-billed Emerald, besides Keel-billed Toucan, Military Macaw, Pale-eyed Pygmy-tyrant, Rufous-and-white Wren and Black-headed Tanager. The restaurant bird feeders attract White-vented Plumeleteer, Rufous-breasted Hermit, Steely-vented Hummingbird, White-necked Jacobin, Black-throated Mango and Whooping Motmot all of them can be photographed easily.

In the way up, we will make one stop at one of the oldest coffee farms in Colombia founded in 1892, called Hacienda La Victoria, there you will learn about how the best coffee in the world is planted, harvested, processed and sold.

In the ride up to El Dorado Bird Reserve belonging to the Colombian NGO ProAves, some of the low-elevation endemic birds can be seen: Santa Marta Tapaculo, Santa Marta Woodstar, White-lored



Warbler, Santa Marta Blossomcrown and Santa Marta Foliage-gleaner and the Santa Marta Antbird as well as White-tipped Quetzal, the recently split Santa Marta Toucanet, Groove-billed Toucanet, Golden-breasted Fruiteater, and Rusty-breasted Antpitta.

Accommodation at El Dorado Bird Reserve



DAY 5

El Dorado Bird Reserve

The Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, a UNESCO-declared Biosphere Reserve, and a well-known Pleistocene refuge, is an isolated mountain, set apart from the Andes. Reaching an altitude of 5775 meters (18942 feet) above sea level, the Sierra Nevada is the world's highest coastal peak that holds the highest degree of endemism in the world per area unity. Now days, there are about 24 Santa Marta endemic birds recognized, species you cannot see anywhere else on earth. Although, taxonomic changes can increase this number in the near future.



We will leave very early morning and spend much of the day at the highest elevations that hold most of the endemic bird species of Sierra Nevada, the critically endangered Santa Marta Parakeet, Yellow-crowned Whitestart, Santa Marta Warbler, Santa Marta Bush-Tyrant, Santa-marta (Black-cheeked) Mountain-tanager, Brown-rumped Tapaculo, Rusty-headed Spinetail, Santa Marta Antpitta and a likely to be split race of Rufous Antpitta can be found at San Lorenzo Ridge. Heading back to the lodge one can find White-tailed Starfrontlet and Streak-capped Spinetail. Around the lodge are Colombian Brushfinch, Santa Marta Brush-Finch and lots of endemic subspecies including Cinnamon Flycatcher, Black-hooded Thrush, Blue-capped Tanager, and Black-throated Tody-Tyrant.

Accommodation at El Dorado Bird Reserve





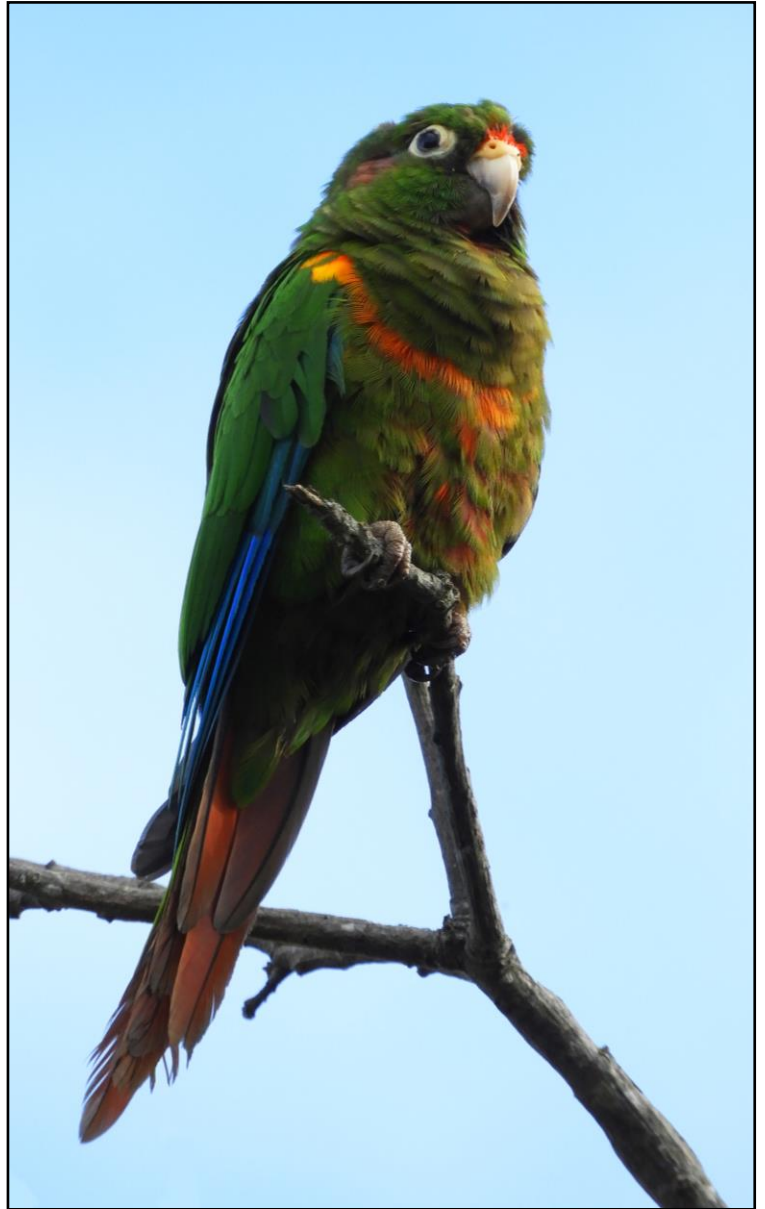
DAY 6

Morning birding at El Dorado and Transfer to Tayrona Area

We'll try as much as possible to clean up all the Sierra Nevada specialties, so in day 6 we may either go back to San Lorenzo Ridge or to lower elevation towards Minca if we missed any target the days before. We also may spend time on the feeders and the compost pile of El Dorado Lodge, where Black-fronted Wood-Quail, Lined quail-dove, Sickle-winged guan, Band-tailed guan and the gorgeous Blue-naped Chlorophonias are common visitors.

In the late afternoon we will descend to a Hotel on the coast where we may squeeze in a little birding before dusk.

Accommodation at La Jorará (Tayrona National Park area)





DAY 7

Full day at Los Flamencos Flora and Fauna Sanctuary

In between the Camarones village and the Tapias River is Los Flamencos Flora and Fauna Sanctuary, western edge of the Guajira desert. Inside the sanctuary, rain water and little streams fill a number of inland lagoons along the coast that attracts numerous spectacular shorebirds such as American flamingo, the even brighter Scarlet Ibis, White Ibis, Gulls, terns, and many migratory shorebirds are to be found at Los Flamencos waterbodies.

The whole area is occupied by the Wayuu people, a matriarchal community where the childrens inherit mother's names and not men's. Here, women are the ones who, since ancient times, have taken control of their culture. The weaving of backpacks, bags and colored blankets is the activity that is related to the essence and vision of women and their offspring. Since very young age, they are trained in this art, nonetheless for the past few years a group of 5 women have been interested in bird watching and when their time permits, they are local guides, we will be birding with them most of the morning.

The surrounding xerophytic scrub habitat is the natural habitat of very attractive regional specialties as the amazing Vermillion Cardinal, Orinocan Saltator, Buffy Hummingbird, Russet-throated Puffbird, Bare-eyed Pigeon, Chestnut Piculet, Slender-billed Inezia, White-whiskered Spinetail, Pileated Finch, Tocuyo Sparrow and the Rufous-vented Chachalaca. Also, Black-crested Antshrike, Crested Bobwhite, White-fringed Antwren, Northern Scrub-Flycatcher, Blue-crowned Parakeet, Brown-throated Parakeet and Green-rumped Parrotlet are likely to be seen.

In the The afternoon we will be enjoying the traditional dances of the indigenous community of the zone: Wayuus or guajiros, who are aborigines from the peninsula of La Guajira, on the Caribbean Sea, inhabiting territories of Colombia and Venezuela. Although the contact with the European conquerors dates from the 16th century, the wayús were not conquered until the independence of Colombia and Venezuela. This was influenced both by indigenous resistance and by the harsh environmental conditions of the desert, which served as a refuge for the Wayús. The different daily activities, festivities and rituals widely imply the use of traditional music. The work of grazing is accompanied by music produced by flutes or canutillas, whistles made of elements of the environment such as dried lemon are used in livestock activities. The indigenous yocna or yonna dance is used in celebrations related to the development of women and involves steps where she advances in defiance of the man, who recoils trying not to fall.

Accommodation at La Jorará (Tayrona National Park area)

DAY 8

Last birding morning in Camarones and flight to Bogotá

We will spend the last morning La Guajira birding in Camarones area, looking for those species we may have missed the day before. At noon we will fly back to Bogotá



