



# Coates Wildlife Tours

17 DAY COSTA RICA WILDLIFE SAFARI  
San Jose - San Jose

3rd November - 19th November 2012



Join us for an adventure in exotic Costa Rica, lauded as the most environmentally friendly country in the world. You can expect to see a vast array of wildlife in pristine natural habitats – Costa Rica is a paradise for lovers of the natural world!

Your Costa Rica Wildlife Safari is comfortably accommodated and fully escorted, and the flexible itinerary allows plenty of time to pursue your special interests. Just a few of the tour highlights are outlined below to whet your appetite – this is a magnificent tour not to be missed!

## **Savegre River**

The stunning Savegre River is known as Central America's cleanest river, and is a must-see destination for nature lovers. Lush rainforest, waterfalls and canyons surround this stretch of coastal whitewater. Many tropical birds call the rainforest home, including egrets, osprey, toucans, parrots, kingfishers and cormorants.

## **Cerro de la Muerte mountain**

This magnificent mountain is part of the Cordillera de Talamanca range, which extends from eastern Costa Rica to western Panama, and is home to many endemic plants and animals.

The higher areas are páramo habitat (meaning desolate territory in Spanish). This is a Neotropical ecosystem, featuring dwarf bamboo, stunted shrubs and tree ferns, together with smaller plants like blueberry, gooseberry and lady's slipper. In the lower areas of the mountain the natural vegetation is oak forest with a bamboo understory. This area is an excellent place to look for the brightly coloured Resplendent Quetzal.

Nearly fifty percent of the bird species recorded from Cerro de la Muerte are endemic to the Talamanca range. These include the Fiery-throated Hummingbird, Timberline Wren, Sooty Robin, Black-billed Nightingale-Thrush, Peg-billed Finch and Volcano Junco.

## **Cano Negro Wildlife Refuge**

The Cano Negro Wildlife Refuge is 25,100 acres and is part of the Arenal Huetar Norte Conservation Area. The refuge includes wetlands that host record numbers of migratory waterfowl species including storks, spoonbills, ibis, anhingas, ducks and cormorants. The forests, grasslands and marshes in the area are home to a variety of endangered species including jaguars, cougars, tapirs, ocelots, peccary and several monkey species including the White-headed Capuchin and Mantled Howler.

## **Tenorio Volcano National Park**

The Tenorio Volcano National Park is 31,794 acres of land within the Arenal Tilaran Conservation Area. The park is most well known for the volcano from which it takes its name. The Tenorio volcano consists of four volcanic peaks and two craters. Another highlight of the park is the breathtaking Celeste River, which is well known for its distinctive turquoise colour (caused by a chemical reaction between sulfur from the volcano and calcium carbonate).

The upper area of the park primarily consists of cloud forest, while the lower regions are rainforest, where tapirs and rare pumas can be found.

## Itinerary

### Day 1 Arrive in San Jose

On arrival in San Jose airport, your group will be met by a representative of Costa Rican Trails and transferred to your hotel. At the hotel, your tour guide will do a general introduction to the tropics and the tour itinerary. After check-in the rest of the day is free time for you to use at your leisure.

**Accommodation:** Bougainvillea Hotel, Standard Garden View Room

### Day 2 Heredia Province

Today you will have a whole day of free time to rest after your flight. The hotel's lush gardens are perfect for a walk to admire many of the birds that are commonly found in the Central Valley. At the hotel you can also arrange a day tour if you wish (not included).

**Accommodation:** Bougainvillea Hotel, Standard Garden View Room B

### Day 3 San Jose – Carara Biological Reserve - Villa Lapas SkyWay

After breakfast this morning you will depart towards the Central Pacific Coast and the Carara Biological Reserve. This 4700 hectare reserve is at the mouth of the Tárcoles River. The reserve is surrounded by agricultural land and provides an oasis for wildlife from the surrounding area.

This afternoon you'll check in at the Villa Lapas at nearby Carara. After check in, you'll experience the raw power of the rainforest on the SkyWay walking tour. The SkyWay offers 2.5 km of walking trails, allowing you to observe a wide array of exotic flora and wildlife firsthand. Make yourself one with the jungle by walking the five suspended bridges that are more than 180 feet above the ground. Each of these bridges crosses through the very heart of the tropical rainforest. You'll be surrounded by the magic of unspoiled nature.

**Accommodation:** Villa Lapas, Standard Room B

### Day 4 Carara Biological Reserve

Today you'll enjoy an early breakfast and depart for the Carara Biological Reserve, where you'll be able to spot the brilliantly patterned Scarlet Macaw. Other birds to watch out for include guans, trogons, toucans, mot-mots and many other forest species. Monkeys, squirrels, sloths and agoutis are among the more common mammals present.

This afternoon we'll navigate along the Tárcoles River. This river adventure will help you understand the life cycle of the mangrove and its inhabitants. This mangrove forest is one of the most important on the mid-Pacific coast for the conservation of the Scarlet Macaw. Endangered bird species such as the Mangrove Cuckoo, Mangrove Hummingbird, Mangrove Vireo and Panama Flycatcher together with egrets and herons spend most of the day in the forest, roosting in the mangroves.

**Accommodation:** Villa Lapas, Standard Room B

### Day 5 Villa Lapas - La Ensenada National Wildlife Refuge

Today you will continue to the east coast, following the Pan-American Highway on the road to Punta Morales, Coyolitos and Abangaritos.

La Ensenada National Wildlife Refuge is 1000 acres, located on the pacific coast in the province of Puntarenas, on the gulf of Nicoya. It is an ideal place for birdwatchers and nature lovers. The most important aspects of this ranch are their cattle, horses and the production of salt and fruit. It is also a paradise, where you'll find the perfect point of balance between adventure and relaxation.

**Accommodation:** La Ensenada Lodge, Standard Room BLD

### Day 6 La Ensenada National Wildlife Refuge

Today is free time to spend at your leisure or to participate in optional activities.

**Accommodation:** La Ensenada Lodge, Standard Room BLD

**Day 7 La Ensenada - La Anita Rainforest**

Today you will be transferred via Tenorio National Park to the northern mountains and volcanic area of Guanacaste province, where you will be staying at the La Anita Rainforest Lodge. The lodge is surrounded by lush vegetation in a flat area between three volcanoes, the Miravalles, Rincon de La Vieja and Santa María.

In the heart of this remarkable rainforest locals grow and harvest macadamia nuts, cacao (chocolate), heart of palm, taro, cardamom, organic tropical fruits and vegetables, medicinal herbs, together with thousands of tropical flowers. The ranch is part of La Colonia Libertad town, where 55 families work in agriculture to support themselves. The ranch is also committed to working in harmony with the environment and the local community.

**Accommodation: La Anita Rainforest Lodge, Standard Room B**

**Day 8 La Anita Rainforest**

Today is free time to spend at your leisure or to participate in optional activities.

**Accommodation: La Anita Rainforest Lodge, Standard Room B**

**Day 9 La Anita Rainforest Lodge - Caño Negro**

After an early bird watching walk on the trails of the hotel's private reserve, the group will head to the northern plains, bound for the Caño Negro area. These amazing wetlands are located in the northern zone of Costa Rica, close to the small village of Los Chiles in the Province of Alajuela. Caño Negro is mainly formed by the Caño Negro Lagoon and the Rio Frio. It is one of the most important biological areas in the country and is one of the four most important wetland areas in the world.

The Cano Negro Wildlife Refuge was declared a wildlife area of international importance in 1991. This ecological treasure is the natural habitat of more than 350 species of bird, as well as the Emerald Basilisk, iguanas, River Turtles, caimans and jaguars.

**Accommodation: Caño Negro Natural Lodge, Deluxe Room BLD**

**Day 10 Caño Negro (Natural Walk / Wetland Tours)**

Today you will take a tour of the wetlands, to help you gain an insight into the great biodiversity of the refuge. You will visit one of the butterfly gardens, where you can observe many different butterfly species. We will also visit the project for turtles.

Later today you will enjoy a boat ride through the channels and lagoons which make up this beautiful area. The scenery is very impressive, as is the flora and fauna. The channel systems are also very beautiful. This refuge is home to more than 350 bird species such as the Jabiru, Roseate Spoonbill, Neotropic Cormorant, Anhinga, Wood Stork, Tricolored Heron, Bare-throated Tiger-Heron, White Ibis, Great Blue Heron, Snowy Egret, Sungrebe and the Black-bellied Whistling Duck.

**Accommodation: Caño Negro Natural Lodge, Deluxe Room BLD**

**Day 11 Caño Negro - Sarapiquí**

Today we'll continue to the Caribbean lowlands. In Sarapiquí you will find several protected areas: Braulio Carrillo National Park, La Selva Biological Station and the Sarapiquí Protected Area. Visiting these areas will show you different types of tropical rainforests.

In the late afternoon you'll enjoy a shared night walk (La Tirimbina). Your naturalist guide will escort you on a walk by the light of the moon to discover the wonders of the night-time rainforest, when most wildlife species are active.

**Accommodation: Selva Verde Hotel, River View Room B**

**Day 12 Sarapiquí - Rancho Naturalista**

Today the group will be transferred to the central valley east lowlands, where you'll notice a big change in weather and bird species within a short distance.

**Accommodation: Rancho Naturalista, Standard Room BLD**

**Day 13 Rancho Naturalista**

Today is free time to spend at your leisure or to participate in optional activities.

**Accommodation: Rancho Naturalista, Standard Room BLD**

**Day 14****Rancho Naturalista - Cerro de La Muerte Mountain Range**

After breakfast your naturalist guide will escort you to the Cerro de La Muerte Mountain Range. The group will have the chance to stop wherever possible for wildlife spotting.

San Gerardo de Dota is a tiny community in the Talamanca Mountains, settled in the fresh mist of a mountain valley, surrounded by deep cloud forests and filled with massive tropical trees. It is also a paradise for birdwatchers as it's home to more than 170 bird species, including some of the most rare and endangered bird species in Central America. It is a special place for watching the Resplendent Quetzal bird, one of the most ornate birds in the wild.

Various migratory species arrive in different seasons, joining the native species to add to the colorful views for birdwatchers. Among the visitors are the Orioles, Warblers, Tennessees and Raptors. Their native hosts include the Long-tailed Silky-Flycatcher, Yellow-winged Vireo, the Flame-throated Warbler, Black-cheeked Warbler, Yellowish Flycatcher, Barred Becard, Tufted Flycatcher, Silvery-fronted Tapaculo, Zeledonia, Torrent Tyrannulet, Collared Trogon, Scintillant Hummingbird, Volcano Hummingbird, Fiery-throated Hummingbird and Spotted Wood-Quail.

**Accommodation:** Savegre Lodge, Junior Suite Room **BLD**

**Day 15****San Gerardo de Dota: Savegre River Waterfall**

One of the most impressive sceneries in this area is with no doubt the Savegre River Waterfall. Within an hour's walk you will have the opportunity to enjoy this wonderful waterfall, surrounded by a dense cloud forest. Your guide will take you through the forest and show you the gorgeous flora and fauna alongside the crystal waters of the Savegre River. The river then turns into an amazing white veil - the waterfall.

**Accommodation:** Savegre Lodge, Junior Suite Room **BLD**

**Day 16****San Gerardo de Dota - San Jose**

Today around midday the group will be transferred to San Jose for the last night in Costa Rica. You'll be free to spend the rest of the day at leisure in San Jose.

**Accommodation:** El Rodeo, Standard Room **B**

**Day 17****End of Arrangements**

Today marks the end of your Costa Rican experience. Your guide will transfer you to the international airport. **Please note: due to security reasons, the group must check-in at the airline counter three hours prior to your flight departure time.**

**B**

**NOTE: the above itinerary may be varied according to conditions or advice at the time.**

**Included**

- Fully escorted tour
- Meals as per itinerary (B = breakfast, L = lunch, D = dinner)
- Porterage on arrival
- Guided arrival transfer
- 17 days of naturalist guide
- 17 days of private transportation (Coaster Bus)
- Waterfall hike
- Night Walk at La Trimibina
- Wetlands boat tour
- Entrance fees to Cano Negro Wildlife Refuge
- Tenorio National Park entrance fees
- Carara National Park entrance fees
- SkyWay entrance fees
- Porterage on departure
- Taxes

## Not Included

- International airfares and accompanying airport/airline taxes
- Any meals not included in the itinerary
- Any required visas
- Personal travel insurance
- All other personal expenses, such as laundry and drinks with meals
- Any pre and post tour accommodation
- Any transit accommodation between Australia and Costa Rica
- Alcoholic or carbonated drinks

## Accommodation

### Bougainvillea Hotel

The Bougainvillea Hotel offers contrasting brick textures, adobe-like surfaces, diverse hardwoods and artfully chosen changes in dimensions and wall angles. Quality modern paintings, pre-Columbian objects subtly displayed in niches in walls and a romantic fireplace give the hotel the cosy feel of a country inn.

The gardens are an inspirational paradise where you can relax and discover the beauty of many Costa Rican plants and birds. With its 8 acres of carefully tended tropical grounds, the Hotel Bougainvillea features over 50 species of bromeliads, Costa Rican native trees, numerous orchid species, herb and cacti gardens. Radiant hummingbirds also live within the grounds.

### Savegre Mountain Lodge

The Savegre Mountain Lodge, located in the midst of a beautiful cloud forest, is dedicated to luxurious and sustainable hotel service. Also known as the Cabinas Chacón, the hotel is an environment of warmth and tranquility, a place to let the tensions of modern life fade away and enjoy the splendor of untouched nature.

### Rancho Naturalista

Rancho Naturalista is among the finest in Central America. Over 450 species of birds have been recorded in the area. This comfortable lodge is also famous for its excellent food, welcoming hospitality and stunning volcano views. Provisions are also made for non-birding guests who will find Rancho Naturalista a relaxing retreat.

While enjoying your coffee or tea on the balcony you will be amazed at the variety of tropical birds coming to the feeders. Groups of Gray-headed Chachalacas, Collared Aracaris, Passerini's Tanagers, and the impressive Montezuma Oropendolas will all provide quite a show. Other likely possibilities include Blue-crowned Motmot, Lineated and Black-cheeked Woodpeckers, Golden-hooded and White-lined Tanagers, and Scarlet-rumped Cacique.

Hummingbird feeders only a few feet away are usually buzzing with Green Thorntails, White-necked Jacobins, Green-crowned Brilliants, Green-breasted Mangos, and Rufous-tailed Hummingbirds.

### Selva Verde

Selva Verde is more than a lodge and more than a rainforest reserve. It is your gateway into a magical world of towering Almendro trees, Mantled Howler Monkeys, and Keel Billed Toucans. Immerse yourself in tropical nature as you hike through deep green forest or reflect quietly in a comfortable hammock. Discover something new as you encounter Selva Verde's amazing wildlife and vibrant people. Rekindle your sense of wonder and experience the out-of-the-ordinary.

Located just 2 hours from San Jose, Selva Verde provides easy access to the wonders of the rainforest. For over 30 years, they have been a haven for nature enthusiasts from around the world. Come and explore Selva Verde's 500 acres of vibrant tropical nature in the heart of Costa Rica's Sarapiquí Canton.

As one of Costa Rica's legendary eco lodges, they are committed to a sustainable future - not only for Selva Verde, but for the people and wildlife that call the Sarapiquí home. They proudly carry and support Costa Rica's Certification for Sustainable Tourism. They actively work with conservation partners, including the Sarapiquí Conservation Learning Center, to promote conservation and environmental education throughout the local community. Learn more about their efforts when you visit Selva Verde!

### **Cano Negro Lodge**

Cano Negro Lodge offers a wide variety of options to the visitors of Costa Rica such as: bird watching, photography, the observation of flora and fauna, wildlife adventure, wetlands discovery and cultural exposure.

The lodge has 42 rooms, restaurant, swimming pool and a bar secluded in beautiful gardens, where you can view the exotic wildlife. With a focus on growth and natural development, Natural Lodge Cano Negro has created new jobs for locals, giving them new opportunities and allowing them to learn new skills. These wonderful people now make up the entire staff in the Natural Loge Cano Negro, where they offer you customized service that makes you at home.

### **La Anita Rainforest Ranch**

La Anita Rainforest Ranch offers a spacious terrace, the 'rainforest deck', walking trails in the forest and the ranch, places designed for bird watching and other wildlife, internet access and a restaurant, offering meals prepared with fresh ingredients from local farms.

One of La Anita's highlights is their food. It is delicious and 100% natural with a high nutritional value. The ingredients are harvested in their own orchard or from local farmers. With these ingredients, the ranch offers delicious gourmet cuisine. The meals are served on the main deck, which is surrounded by forest and has the best views of the Rincon de la Vieja and Santa María Volcanoes.

### **Esenada Lodge**

Esenada Lodge offers accommodation in comfortable villas facing the Nicoya Gulf. Enjoy the spacious terrace, where you can watch an unforgettable sunset while relaxing in a hammock.

### **Villa Lapas**

The Villa Lapas's private reserve borders Carara National Park, one of the largest protected areas in Costa Rica. The national park is home to one of few remaining populations of Scarlet Macaws in the country, and the Tárcoles River is home to many crocodiles that can be easily seen from the river bridge. It is also a favorite bird watching spot.

### **El Rodeo Hotel**

El Rodeo is a Costa Rican country inn, located only 10 minutes away from the Juan Santamaria International Airport, and in the heart of the latest, bustling business and commercial district, Santa Ana / San Antonio de Belen, and only 15 minutes away from downtown San Jose.

El Rodeo seeks to replace the cold, impersonal ambiance that usually characterizes larger hotel chains, with Costa Rican charming warmth, plus exceptional service in a natural and peaceful environment. Their facilities are set in tropical gardens and include a swimming pool and Jacuzzi, with views of the spectacular Poas and Barva volcanoes. Their tennis court is complimentary for our guests, a charming cafeteria and the renown restaurant El Rodeo Steakhouse, a Costa Rican favorite and without a doubt the best in its class for over 25 years.

## **Tour Costs**

**Cost:** \$5,455.00 per person, twin share

**Departs:** San Jose 3rd November 2012

**Finishes:** San Jose 19th November 2012

**Max No. of Participants:** 12 passengers + 1 crew member

**NOTE:** Flights and transit accommodation (if required) between Australia and Costa Rica are NOT included.

## Tour Payments

Deposit (non refundable): At time of booking \$1,500.00 per person  
Final Payment: 3 months before departure

Note: The final payment is non refundable if canceled after 1st August 2012;  
Travel insurance covering all payments is available and is strongly recommended.

Prices have been based on all known costs and current rates of exchange.  
Any significant changes beyond our control will be passed onto passengers.

## Tour Escorts

8 or more passengers: Coates tours naturalist escort plus local guide;  
Less than 8 passengers: Local guides only

## Tour Information

Coates Naturalist guide: Wayne O'Sullivan

Wildlife specialist: Local guide

Accommodation:  
Twin share rooms with ensuite in hotels and motels.

### Meals:

Meals as indicated on the itinerary are included. Special dietary requirements can usually be catered for. Please advise any special requirements at the time of booking. A surcharge may apply.

### Trek Grading:

Light bushwalking most days.

### Weather:

Costa Rica is a tropical country situated between 8 and 11 degrees above the equator. It has only two seasons: dry and green! The dry season is generally between late December and April, and the green or wet season lasts for the rest of the year, but still offers an average of about 5 hours of daily sunshine. The Caribbean coast doesn't have this extended dry weather and stays green all year round. The humidity tends to be a little oppressive at times.

### Clothing:

A suggested list of items to bring on tour will be included with our pre-departure information sent to you on full payment of tour costs. However comfortable casual clothing is recommended. Light shirts and T-shirts during the day and warmer jumpers and jackets will be needed for the evenings. Sturdy and comfortable walking shoes or boots are essential.

To make a booking or further information please contact  
Tom or Sylvia Grove



## Coates Wildlife Tours

Unit 12/17 Ogilvie Road  
Mount Pleasant, WA 6153

P.O. Box 4502  
Myaree BC, Myaree, WA 6960

Phone: 08 9330 6066 Fax: 08 9330 6077  
Free Call Country & Interstate: 1800 676 016

Email: [coates@iinet.net.au](mailto:coates@iinet.net.au)