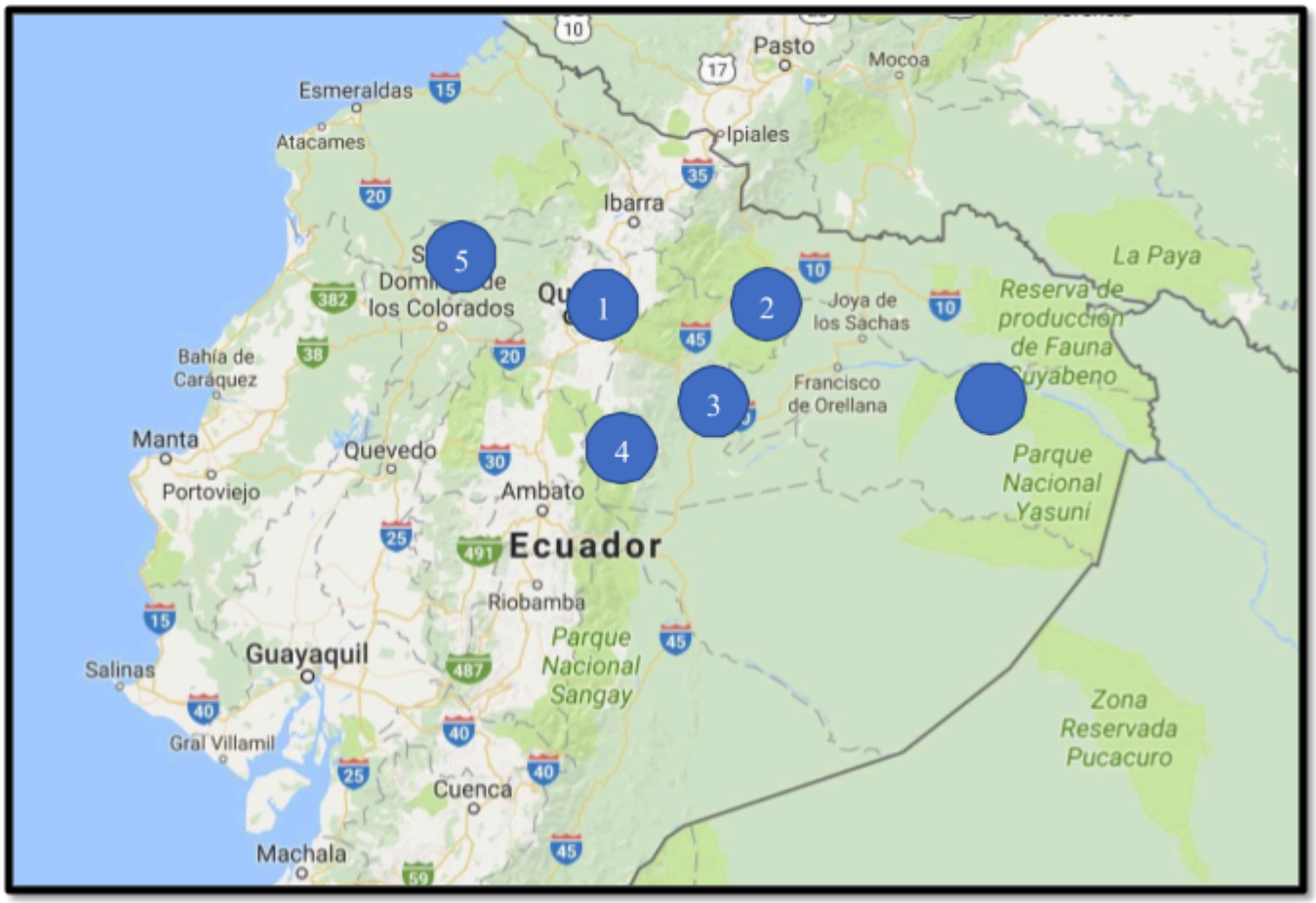
BEST BIRDING OF ECUADOR

AMAZON, ANDES AND MINDO AREA

15 days and 14 nights.



1. Quito **2.** Amazon Foothills **3.** Deep Amazon **4.** East Andes **5.** Antisana **6.**
Mindo Area.

- DAY 1: Quito Area. Puembo Birding Garden.
- DAY 2: East Andes Cloud Forest. San Isidro Reserve.
- DAY 3: The foothills of the Amazon, Wildsumaco Lodge.
- DAY 4: The foothills of the Amazon, Wildsumaco Lodge.
- DAY 5: The top of the Andes, Antisana. Guango Lodge.
- DAY 6: The top of the Andes, Antisana. Guango Lodge.
- DAY 7: Paz de Las Aves and the famous Antpitta feeders. Sachatamia Lodge.
- DAY 8: Paz de Las Aves and the famous Antpitta feeders. Sachatamia Lodge.
- DAY 9: Quito Area. Puembo Birding Garden.
- DAY 10: The deep Amazon, Yasuní, Napo Wildlife Center.
- DAY 11: The deep Amazon, Yasuní, Napo Wildlife Center.
- DAY 12: The deep Amazon, Yasuní, Napo Wildlife Center.
- DAY 13: The deep Amazon, Yasuní, Napo Wildlife Center.
- DAY 14: Quito Area. Puembo Birding Garden.
- DAY 15: Goodbye Ecuador. FLIGHT BACK HOME.

Detailed Itinerary

DAY 1: Puembo Birding Garden. Quito City.

Upon your arrival at Quito International Airport, our friendly guide will greet you and take you directly to Puembo Birding Garden. Here, you will have the opportunity to discover the birds in the lush gardens and enjoy a delicious lunch.

In the gardens of Puembo Birding Garden, you will be amazed by the species visiting our feeders, including the Sword-billed Hummingbird, Golden-rumped Tanager, and Saffron Finch.

Overnight at Puembo Birding Garden.

DAY 2: East Andes Cloud Forest. San Isidro Reserve.

We start our day with breakfast, either on the road or at the hotel. Our next destination is the San Isidro Reserve, a privately owned 1,170-hectare preserve nestled in the pristine Cloud Forest. Located at an elevation of 2,000 meters near the charming town of Cosanga in the Napo province, this site not only offers exceptional birding opportunities but also serves as a vital buffer zone for the expansive 120,000-hectare Antisana Ecological Reserve.

San Isidro Reserve is renowned for its remarkable birdlife, superb lodging facilities, and exquisite cuisine, making it an absolute must-visit for bird enthusiasts exploring Ecuador.

As we arrive, the hummingbird feeders near the dining rooms and the social area, where most of the cabins are situated, come to life with the regular visits of Speckled Hummingbird, Fawn-breasted Brilliant, Bronzy Inca, Collared Inca, Chestnut-breasted Coronet, and Long-tailed Sylph. We'll spend the afternoon immersing ourselves in birdwatching around the hotel, taking in the sights and sounds of this vibrant ecosystem.

Being refreshed and rested in the late afternoon is of utmost importance because tonight, we'll embark on an exciting quest to spot the famous San Isidro Owl, a variation of the Black-banded Owl, and other captivating nocturnal birds that call this diverse environment

home.

Enjoy a peaceful night's rest at San Isidro Reserve.

DAY 3: The foothills of the Amazon, Wildsumaco Lodge.

The renowned Wildsumaco Lodge and Bird Sanctuary is a truly remarkable destination, owned and meticulously managed by the Río Pucuno Foundation. This pristine sanctuary spans 120 hectares, with an additional 130 hectares leased from the Sumaco community, dedicated to the preservation of the forest and its utilization for ecotourism activities. Situated at an elevation ranging from 1200 to 1500 meters above sea level, this site is a haven for nature enthusiasts.



Upon our arrival, we'll enjoy a delightful lunch and then spend the remainder of the day on their bird feeder's deck. This deck boasts some of the most exceptional hummingbird feeders in all of Ecuador, attracting a stunning array of avian wonders. Expect to encounter species such as the Pale-tailed Barbthroat, Great-billed Hermit, Green-fronted Lancebill, Napo Sabrewing, Violet-headed Hummingbird, Wire-crested Thorntail, Fork-tailed Woodnymph, Golden-tailed Sapphire, Many-spotted Hummingbird, Rufous-vented Whitetip, Ecuadorian Piedtail, Black-throated Brilliant, Gould's Jewelfront, and the Booted Racket-tail (eastern morph).

Your evening will be spent in the tranquil embrace of the Wildsumaco Lodge, immersed in the natural beauty of this remarkable sanctuary.

DAY 4: The foothills of the Amazon, Wildsumaco Lodge.

We'll kick off our day early on the deck, making a dedicated effort to spot more

hummingbirds, while also keeping an eye out for tanagers, barbets, and toucans that are drawn to the native fruits on the surrounding trees. Additionally, at 8:00 a.m., we'll strategically place bananas on a nearby tree to entice the Napo Tamarin Monkeys, whose entertaining antics while vying for the best banana provide a delightful spectacle for visitors.



Following a hearty breakfast, we'll embark on a stroll along the entrance road, where we'll be on the lookout for an impressive array of bird species, including the Maroon-tailed Parakeet, Coppery-chested Jacamar, Striolated Puffbird, Gilded Barbet, Red-headed Barbet, Lafresnaye's Piculet, Ash-browed Spinetail, Black-billed Treehunter, Strong-billed Woodcreeper, Red-billed Scythebill, Russet Antshrike, Ornate Antwren, Yellow-breasted Antwren, Blackish Antbird, White-backed Fire-eye, Ecuadorian Tyrannulet, Black-and-white Tody-Flycatcher, Lemon-browed Flycatcher, Slaty-capped Shrike-Vireo, Rufous-naped Greenlet, Gray-mantled Wren, Golden-collared Honeycreeper, Orange-eared Tanager, Golden-eared Tanager, Paradise Tanager, Spotted Tanager, Slate-colored Grosbeak, Olivaceous Siskin, and Bronze-green Euphonia.

We'll return to the hotel for a satisfying lunch, followed by an afternoon session at the second hummingbird feeder and an excursion driving uphill in pursuit of some of the aforementioned bird species.

As night falls, we'll set out to search for the Foothill Screech-Owl, Rufescent Screech-Owl, and the impressive Band-bellied Owl, which often graces us with exceptional views from the parking lot.

Your evening will be spent in the comfortable accommodations of the Wildsumaco Lodge, where you can relax and relish the day's birdwatching adventures.

DAY 5: The top of the Andes. Guango Hotel.

We will be stationed at a local light post where we will take advantage of the birds visiting the light to catch the moths and other insects that were attracted during the night. Here, species

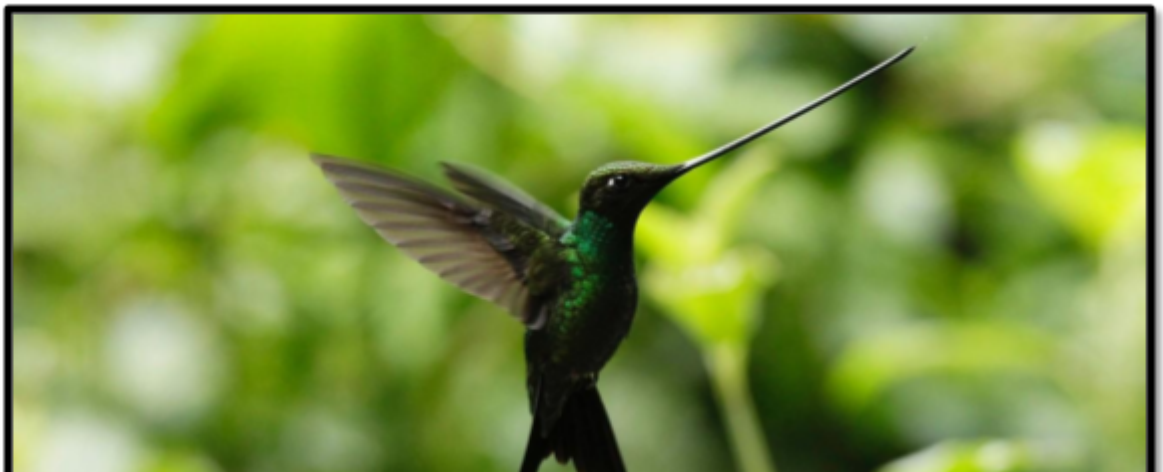
such as the Green Jay, Cinnamon Flycatcher, Masked Trogon, and others make regular appearances.

After breakfast, we will head to our next destination, possibly making one or two stops along the way before reaching our lodge. This place boasts outstanding feeders that attract one of the most prominent stars of the bird world: the Sword-billed Hummingbird, known for having the longest bill in proportion to its body size among all birds. We will spend a few hours observing these hummingbirds. Other noteworthy species that frequent the feeders include the Speckled Hummingbird, Mountain Velvetbreast, Collared Inca, Buff-tailed Coronet, Chestnut-breasted Coronet, Tourmaline Sunangel, Glowing Puffleg, Tyrian Metaltail, Mountain Avocetbill, Long-tailed Sylph, White-bellied Woodstar, and Gorgeted Woodstar.

Night at Guango Lodge.

DAY 6: The high Paramo and the Sword-billed Hummingbird, Guango Hotel.

After breakfast, our first endeavor will be to seek out a local bird that resides near the nearby river - the Torrent Duck. We'll make concerted efforts to capture high-quality photographs of these birds within their extraordinary and challenging habitat. Following this, we will capitalize on our proximity to explore the high paramo, which is an ideal habitat for encountering a variety of bird species, including the Shining Sunbeam, Mountain Velvetbreast, Buff-winged Starfrontlet, Sword-billed Hummingbird, Purple-backed Thornbill, White-browed Spinetail, Pearled Treerunner, Tawny-rumped Tyrannulet, White-throated Tyrannulet, White-banded Tyrannulet, Rufous-breasted Chat-Tyrant, Crowned Chat-Tyrant, Red-crested Cotinga, Rufous Wren, Spectacled Whitestart, Black-crested Warbler, Citrine Warbler, Blue-backed Conebill, Glossy Flowerpiercer, Blue-and-black Tanager, Golden-crowned Tanager, Scarlet-bellied Mountain-Tanager, Hooded Mountain-Tanager, Black-chested Mountain-Tanager, Buff-breasted Mountain-Tanager, Gray-hooded Bush-Tanager, Black-capped Hemispingus, Superciliaried Hemispingus, Plushcap, Paramo Seedeater, Slaty Finch, and Stripe-headed Brush-Finch.



Following our high-paramo exploration, we will make our way to the famous Papallacta during our journey to the next hotel. Papallacta is situated between the Pichincha and Napo Provinces, right on the Continental Divide. The birding site's elevation ranges from 3000 m to 4100 m. While the number of bird species in this area may be relatively small, most of them are specifically adapted to the high-elevation grassland Paramo. We will drive for approximately 45 minutes until we reach a road where we can birdwatch from the car and make stops if we spot any interesting birds along the way.

One of our primary targets in this area will be the Rufous-bellied Seedsnipe, a rare resident of the high paramo with a remarkable pattern of browns and grays. Additionally, we will be on the lookout for other notable species like the Bar-winged Cinclodes, Many-striped Canastero, Red-crested Cotinga, Black Flowerpiercer, Scarlet-bellied Mountain-Tanager, Carunculated Caracara, Andean Condor, Green-tailed Trainbearer, Black-tailed Trainbearer, and the largest hummingbird in the world, the Giant Hummingbird.

DAY 7: Paz de Las Aves and the famous Antpitta feeders. Sachatamia Lodge.



Refugio Paz de Las Aves is known in Ecuador as a privately owned property spanning 120 hectares, of which 70 hectares are protected forest managed by the Paz family. This site is situated at an elevation of approximately 1850 meters. Our morning will commence with a visit to the hide developed by the Paz family, providing us with an early morning opportunity to witness the captivating courtship display of the Andean Cock-of-the-Rock. This allows us to enhance the photos taken during the previous afternoon.

Subsequently, we will follow Angel Paz, the renowned and charismatic owner of the reserve, during his daily ritual of feeding Antpittas. This extraordinary experience will grant us the chance to encounter four Antpitta species: the Yellow-breasted, Giant, Ochre-breasted, and occasionally the Moustached Antpitta. Additionally, we may have the opportunity to observe the endemic Dark-backed Quail. Later in the morning, we will enjoy breakfast at the reserve, providing ample opportunities to photograph the Crimson-rumped Toucanet, Sickle-winged

Guan, Blue-winged Mountain-Tanager, and, hopefully, the Toucan Barbet.

In the afternoon, we will visit the fruit feeders at Mindo Loma, which will likely offer our best opportunity to capture photographs of the Black-chinned Mountain Tanager and Blue-winged Mountain-Tanager. When the trees in the forest surrounding the main house bear fruit, it's a favorable time for spotting the Orange-breasted Fruiteater and Scaled Fruiteater. The hummingbird feeders are frequented by species such as the Purple-bibbed Whitetip, Brown Violetear, Fawn-breasted Brilliant, Brown Inca, Collared Inca, Velvet-purple Coronet, Buff-tailed Coronet, Booted Racket-tail, Violet-tailed Sylph (more common here than in any other location), Andean Emerald, and Purple-throated Woodstar. Some of these species are seasonal and may make appearances near the feeders.

Night at Sachatamia Lodge.

DAY 8: The most colorful display in Ecuador, the Andean Cock-of-the-Rock. Sachatamia Lodge.



Mindo is renowned as one of the premier destinations for birdwatching and bird photography in all of South America. We will arrive at our hotel by mid-morning, allowing us time to acclimate to the surroundings and capture photographs of hummingbirds. The highlight bird to seek here is the stunning Velvet-breasted Coronet. Following lunch, we will embark on a journey to one of the most renowned locations in northern Ecuador: the Angel Paz Reserve.

Our objective here is to witness and photograph one of the most iconic birds of South America, the Andean Cock-of-the-Rock. Arriving at this site by midafternoon, we will find our spot within a rustic hide and patiently await the commencement of the birds' spectacular courtship displays. Although the lighting conditions can be challenging, your guide will assist you in capturing the best possible photos of this extraordinary and unique natural spectacle.

Night at Sachatamia Lodge.

DAY 9: Puembo Birding Garden.

After an exhilarating day attempting to observe the Andean Cock-of-the-Rock, we will journey to Puembo to relish the gardens and rejuvenate ourselves for the upcoming adventure at Napo Wildlife Center, where an incredible experience awaits you.

DAY 10-13: Deep Amazon, Yasuní, Napo Wildlife Center.

On this day, you will embark on a private transfer to the Coca-Napo Wildlife Center. The Yasuni Ecolodge is a remarkable ecotourism project owned by the Añangu Community, with a portion of their vast communal land, spanning over 40,000 hectares, dedicated to the tourism program. This communal land serves as a vital corridor connecting the 603,380-hectare Cuyabeno Reserve and the immense 982,000-hectare Yasuní National Park. The proceeds from the lodge contribute directly to the management of the communal preserve, as well as salaries, healthcare, and education for the community's staff and indigenous people.

The following day, your adventure will take you on a boat journey to explore the nearby islands, forest edges, and renowned parrot clay licks along the river. The activity at the first clay lick typically commences around 8:30 AM, so it makes sense to spend the morning birding in the nearby areas. If the weather remains stable, you may visit some of the river islands nearby until it's time for the parrot clay lick session. A blind will be used to provide excellent views of the hundreds of parrots, including Blue-headed Parrots, Dusky-headed Parakeets, Mealy Amazons, Yellow-crowned Amazons, Orange-winged Amazons, and occasionally White-eyed and Cobalt-winged Parakeets.



In the afternoon, you will explore the lodge's surroundings, birding in open areas and along the forest edge in search of specialties like

White-chinned Jacamar, Brown Nunlet, Orange-crested Manakin, Great-billed Hermit at a lek, Black-tailed Trogon, Broad-billed Motmot, Purplish Jacamar, and Cream-colored Woodpecker.

The chosen lodge provides convenient access to two main habitats in the Amazon: the gallery forest (seasonally floods and is located along water streams) and the Terra Firme (never floods). During the morning, you will explore the flooded areas where you might encounter Agami Herons, Zigzag Herons, Boat-billed Herons, Gray-necked Wood-Rails, Sunbitterns, Great Potoos, Chestnut-capped Puffbirds, Hoatzins, Rufescent Tiger-Herons, Boat-billed Herons, Green Ibises, Black-collared Hawks, Sungrebes, Limpkins, Greater Anis, Blue-crowned Trogons, Black-capped Donacobius, Silver-beaked Tanagers, and Red-capped Cardinals.

In the afternoon, you will return to the lodge and visit the Canopy Tower, a unique experience in the Amazon lowlands. Being 30 meters above the ground in the late afternoon provides exceptional views of some of the rarest and less-seen species from an elevated perspective. Species like Black-fronted Nunbirds, Scarlet-crowned Barbets, Chestnut Woodpeckers, Violaceous Jays, Masked Crimson Tanagers, Magpie Tanagers, and various parrots and macaws fly by as they search for a place to roost.

During the nighttime, you can explore around the lodge for the Ferruginous Pygmy Owl, Tropical Screech Owl, and the Tawny-bellied Screech Owl.

DAY 14: Puembo Birding Garden.

On this day, you will return to Quito city. In Coca, your driver will be waiting for you to begin the transfer to Puembo Birding Garden in the city.

DAY 15: Goodbye Ecuador. Flight back home.

About This Tour

Included in the Tour

- Transportation in a spacious car with fuel included throughout the trip.
- Specialized guide with a spotting scope.
- Accommodation in all hotels listed.
- All meals starting with lunch on day 1 and ending with breakfast on day 15.
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Not Included in the Tour

- Tips for hotel staff, the main bird guide, and the driver.
- Medical expenses, prescription drugs, and other personal items.
- Additional tours offered by hotels (Spa, massage, etc.).
- Alcoholic beverages, cigarettes, and any items not listed on restaurant menus.
- Health insurance.
- Laundry.
- Souvenirs.
- Any other expenses or extra tours not listed as included above.