



COLOMBIA IS MAGICAL REALISM



ARAUCANA LODGE AND CENTRAL ANDEAN SPECIALTIES TOUR



Sonso Lagoon - Owl's Watch - Rio Blanco Reserve
- Hacienda EL Bosque - Los Nevados NP - Tinamu -
Otun Quimbaya NP - Grape Park - Araucana Lodge
- KM 18 - San Antonio Forest - Andean Cock-of-the-
rock Lek - San Cipriano - Upper Anchicaya - Atunce-
la Dry Forest - Rio Bravo



DAYS

JUNE 25 - JULY 9 2026
JUNE 25 - JULY 9 2027

\$5,295 USD Per Person
Double Occupancy
Single Supplement: \$995 USD

THIS TOUR STARTS AND
ENDS IN
THE CITY OF CALI

WWW.COLOMBIABIRDWATCH.COM



Anchicaya

Christopher Calonje

Colombia is the birdiest country on earth, with 1,970 species—almost 20% of the world's total in 1% of its landmass, with new species still being discovered and new records being announced regularly. It is easy to see why. Colombia is tropical yet it also has ample elevation changes due to the Andes; furthermore it has both the Pacific and Caribbean coasts. Lots of different habitats ensure an abundance of bird species.

This tour celebrates the grand opening of Colombia's newest birding lodge, allowing one to bird in very comfortable accommodations in some of the best birding sites in Colombia, without having to spend much time in a vehicle. The Araucana Lodge is a brand new lodge (opening date is January 2019) designed specifically for birders and nature lovers, with spacious rooms and all the comforts to ensure a good night's rest.

For those who enjoy bird photography, Araucana Lodge and many of the reserves along the route have excellent feeder set ups that provide some of the best photographic opportunities in Colombia.

This tour starts at a prolific wetland area in the Cauca Valley in search of an assortment

of dry forest species as well as shorebirds and aquatic birds. The Sonso Lagoon is one of Colombia's largest wetland reserves and home to Little and Dwarf Cuckoos, Jet Antbird, Blackish Rail and even the elusive Horned Screamer. With luck one may encounter endemics such as Bar-crested Antshrike, and the endemics Apical Flycatcher and Grayish Piculet.

At the world-renown Rio Blanco Reserve near Manizales, there are excellent chances for some of the antpittas, plus many other cloud forest and montane birds. After more ascending, one can soak in hot springs overlooking the scenic Central Andes, and look for species adapted to high elevations in Los Nevados National Park with the beautiful Nevado del Ruiz as a backdrop. The route then descends to the Otun-Quimbaya Sanctuary in search of the endemic Cauca Guan and for the best views in the world of Red-ruffed Fruitcrow.

We then return to Cali to enjoy the KM 18 and San Antonio Cloud Forest, which provide an excellent introduction to birding in the Colombian Andes. More than 100 years ago, Frank Chapman, of the American Museum of Natural History, spent some time researching the bird diversity of this forest, which concluded in the first detailed bird survey for Colombia. The bird-

ing in the area is amazing, with mixed-species flocks of Multicolored, Purplish-mantled, Scrub and Golden-naped Tanagers foraging alongside Scaled Fruiteater, Chestnut-breasted Chlorophonias and Golden-headed and Crested Quetzal.

Apart from a visit to an active Andean Cock-of-the-rock lek, this tour dips into the humid forests of the Pacific lowlands in the San Cipriano Reserve, where the habitat and the species differ dramatically from those in the Andean Cloud forests.

Another destination is the Upper Anchicaya Valley, in one of the most biodiverse national parks in the planet: Farallones NP. Found along The Old Buenaventura Road, which descends from the western Andes to the Pacific Ocean, the area is one of Colombia's newest destinations to open up to birding, and is AMAZING.

The road provides a mind-boggling diversity of birds and is such that it inspired Steve Hilty to start work on his Field Guide to the Birds of Colombia. This was the first ornithological field guide for South America and inspired a myriad of ornithologists in the continent.



Araucana Lodge

Bar-crested Antshrike
Juan Jose Arango



DAY 1

ARRIVE IN THE CITY OF CALI

Guests will be picked up at the airport and driven to the city of Buga.

Lodging: Hotel Guadalajara

DAY 2

SONSO LAGOON

We will start early to take a 15-minute drive to this wetland gem. It is one of the only remaining wetlands in the Cauca Valley and is teeming with birds, making it one of Colombia's best wetland birding locations. Here we will search the marshes and lagoons that line the Cauca River for Fulvous and Black-bellied Whistling-ducks, Roseate Spoonbill, Glossy Ibis, Anhinga, Little Blue, Coci, and Striated herons, Snowy Egret, Black-necked Stilt and Snail Kite. We are likely to find Wattled Jacana, which have a polyandry mating system,

where females mate with many males within a breeding season. Polyandry is a fascinating adaptation that occurs in less than 1% of birds, and is most common in shorebirds.

Other interesting species we might spot include the endemics Apical Flycatcher and Grayish Piculet, Jet Antbird, Blackish Rail, Ruby-topaz Hummingbird, and Horned Screamer. Along riparian areas we may find Greater Ani, Ringed Kingfisher, Crested and Yellow-headed Caracara, Red-crowned and Spot-breasted Woodpeckers, and Cocoa Woodcreeper. Greater Anis are fascinating because two to four unrelated pairs form a nesting group that build a single nest in which all the females lay their eggs and raise the young communally. After lunch we traverse the Cauca Valley and begin our ascent up the central Andes towards the city of Manizales, in the famed Coffee Triangle.

Lodging: Hotel Quo

Sonso Lagoon
Hillary Garret





Golden-fronted Whitestart

Juan Jose Arango

DAY 3

RIO BLANCO NATURE RESERVE

The Rio Blanco Reserve is owned by Aguas de Manizales, the local water company, and is situated along an altitudinal gradient, therefore including a wide variety of ecosystems. 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



White -capped Tanager

Juan Jose Arango



Brown-banded Antpitta

Juan Jose Arango

DAY 4

OWL'S WATCH NATURE RESERVE

The Owl's Watch Nature Reserve is located adjacent to Rio Blanco, providing a great opportunity to search out any species that we may have missed at Rio Blanco. The staff there have also mastered the art of attracting birds to feeders, so it is possible to see Tourmaline Sunangel, Buff-tailed Coronet, Speckled Hummingbird, Bronzy and Collared Incas, Mountain Velvetbreast, the tiny, slow-flying White-bellied Woodstar, and the showy Long-tailed Sylph.

Lodging: Hotel Quo

Chestnut-crowned Antpitta

Christopher Calonje



DAY 5

HACIENDA EL BOSQUE 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



Crescent-faced Antpitta
Juan Jose Arango

Gray-breasted Mountain-toucan
Juan Jose Arango





Black-backed Bush-tanager
Juan Jose Arango

DAY 6

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.

Buffy Helmetcrest
Juan Jose Arango

Lodging: Hotel Termales del Ruiz



DAY 7

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

Buff-winged Starfrontlet
Juan Jose Arango





DAY 8

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

Red-ruffed Fruitcrow
Christopher Calonje

Torrent Duck
Christopher Calonje



DAY 9

PEREIRA TO ARAUCANA LODGE VIA THE NATIONAL GRAPE PARK

This day is devoted to traveling to the spectacular Araucana Lodge, with a stop at the grape park in the Cauca Valley where the main goal is to photograph Ruby Topaz Hummingbird. The bird is attracted to the yellow flowers of the Aloe Vera plant, which is planted at the park specifically to attract this species.

Lodging: Araucana Lodge

Ruby Topaz
Juan Jose Arango



Red-headed Barbet
Juan Jose Arango





DAY 10

CLOUD FORESTS OF KM 18 AND SAN ANTONIO

Today you spend the morning capturing images at 2,000 meters (6,000 feet) in elevation at the famed Km 18 area, along the road that connects Cali with the port city of Buenaventura. Birding can be very productive here, and we will look for four endemics – Chestnut Wood-Quail, Colombian Chachalaca, Grayish Piculet and the spectacular Multicolored Tanager. This area is a tanager paradise, where we have a good chance to see Purplish-mantled, Summer, Beryl-spangled, Flame-rumped, Golden, Metallic-green, Saffron-crowned, and Golden-naped tanagers as well as Ashy-throated Bush-Tanager and Blue-winged Mountain-Tanager.

We hope to be dazzled by an impressive show of hummingbirds at a private house along the same road, including the beautifully ornate Long-tailed Sylph, Booted Rackettail, Blue-headed Sapphire, Green Violetear, Fawn-breasted Brilliant, Speckled Hummingbird, White-necked Jacobin, Brown Violetear and Tawny-bellied Hermit. Birding the forest can also produce many near-endemics such as Scrub Tanager, Purple-throated Woodstar, and Nariño Tapaculo.

Lodging: Araucana Lodge

Crested Quetzal
Christopher Calonje



Multicolored Tanager
Juan Jose Arango





Rufous-throated Tanager
Juan Jose Arango

Chestnut-breasted Wren
Juan Jose Arango





Toucan Barbet

Juan Jose Arango

Rufous-gaped Hillstar

Christopher Calonje





DAY 11

Upper Anchicaya and Andean Cock-of-the-rock Lek

Perhaps Colombia's most famous birding location, the Anchicaya watershed is located in the Farallones National Park, one of the most diverse parks on the planet. The birding begins via a paved road that can offer many of the Choco endemics that this mega diverse locality has to offer. The day will be spent birding along the upper portion of the road. We will devote some time to the El Descanso area, where Rufous-throated, Glistening-green and Silver-throated Tanagers are known to occur. A day of birding at Doña Dora's place and along the upper portion of the road will surely yield many highly prized species including the endemic Crested Ant-tanager, Golden-collared Honeycreeper, White-whiskered Puffbird, Uniform Treehunter, Sooty-headed Wren, Green Thorntail and Empress Brilliant.

One of the main targets is Toucan Barbet, sporting 5 different colors elegantly while still having a tough demeanor. We will search the skies for Barred Hawk, Ornate Hawk-eagle and Swallow-tailed Kites, whilst keeping an eye out for the attractive Ornate Flycatcher feeding on low branches. Another mega target is the recently described Tatama Tapaculo. After lunch the group takes a 2-hour drive to an Andean Cock-of-the-rock Lek.

A full day of birding ends when we return for another comfortable night at Araucana Lodge.

Lodging: Araucana Lodge

Green-and-Black Fruiteater

Christopher Calonje



Blue-naped Chlorophonia

Christopher Calonje



Crimson-rumped Toucanet

Christopher Calonje

DAY 12

ARAUCANA LODGE

The day will be spent at the Araucana Lodge in search of some of the targets at the lodge that include species such as Parker's Antbird, Grayish Piculet, Apical Flycatcher, Smoky-brown Woodpecker, Bar-crested Antshrike, Spectacled Parrotlet, Scaled Antpit-ta, Crimson-rumped Tou-

canet, Colombian Chachalaca and Scale-crested Pygmy-tyrant.

We will also have a chance to explore the trails that wind through the pre-montane forest that is protected by the owners of the lodge and a stroll around the organic vegetable gardens is also a treat!

Lodging: Araucana Lodge



Apical Flycatcher Juan Jose Arango



Araucana Lodge



Araucana Lodge



Purple-throated Woodstar Juan Jose Arango



Brujitas in San Cipriano
Christopher Calonje

DAY 13

San Cipriano



The day starts with a 1.5 hour drive to Zaragoza, our entry point into the humid forests of the San Cipriano Reserve. There are no roads into the reserve, so access is via a pleasant ride on “brujitas”, which have been ingeniously engineered by the locals. In the heart of the Choco Bioregion, the area is known for being one of the most biodiverse on the planet, but also the wettest. Some of the birds that are possible include Choco Toucan, Stripe-billed Aracari, Black-tipped Cotinga (NE), Rose-faced (NE) and Blue-headed Parrots, Spot-crowned and Five-colored Barbet (NE), Broad-billed Motmot and Purple-throated Fruitcrow and Tawny-crested Tanager.

The area is teeming with Antbirds, with chances to see Ocellated, Jet, Stub-tailed and Bicolored Antbirds. With the high humidity and heat, it is best to have bagged species such as Pacific and Checker-throated Antwrens, Pacific Flatbill, Cinnamon Becard, Thicket Antpitta, Black-chested Puffbird, White-ringed Flycatcher, Blue-black Grosebeak, and Blue-crowned and Golden-collared Manakin before lunch.

Lodging: Araucana Lodge



Bay Wren
Juan Jose Arango



Tawny-crested Tanager
Juan Jose Arango



Scarlet-and-white Tanager
Juan Jose Arango



DAY 14

ATUNCELA DRY FOREST AND RIO BRAVO NATURE RESERVE

On this morning we'll visit the village of Atuncela, about 40 minutes from the lodge, where a very interesting habitat exists due to a very localized rain shadow. A dry forest with several endemic species of cactus harbors entertaining species such as Bar-crested Antshrike and Striped Cuckoo. Other targets of this area include Pale-breasted Spinetail, Golden-rumped Euphonia and the endemic Apical flycatcher and Cocoa Woodcreeper.

Once it starts to warm up we head back to the main road for lunch and a 1 hour drive to the Rio Bravo Reserve, where we will seek out targets such as: Rufous-throated Tanager, Purplish-mantled Tanager, Brown-billed Scythebill, Sooty-headed Wren, White-winged Tanager, Buff-fronted Foliage-gleaner, Uniform Antshrike, Rufous-rumped Antwren, Cerulean Warbler, and Uniform Treehunter.

Lodging: Araucana Lodge

Ruby Topaz

Juan Jose Arango



Grayish Piculet

Juan Jose Arango





Scaled Fruiteater
Juan Jose Arango

Purplish-mantled Tanager
Juan Jose Arango

DAY 15

DEPART FROM THE CITY OF CALI

THIS TRIP INCLUDES

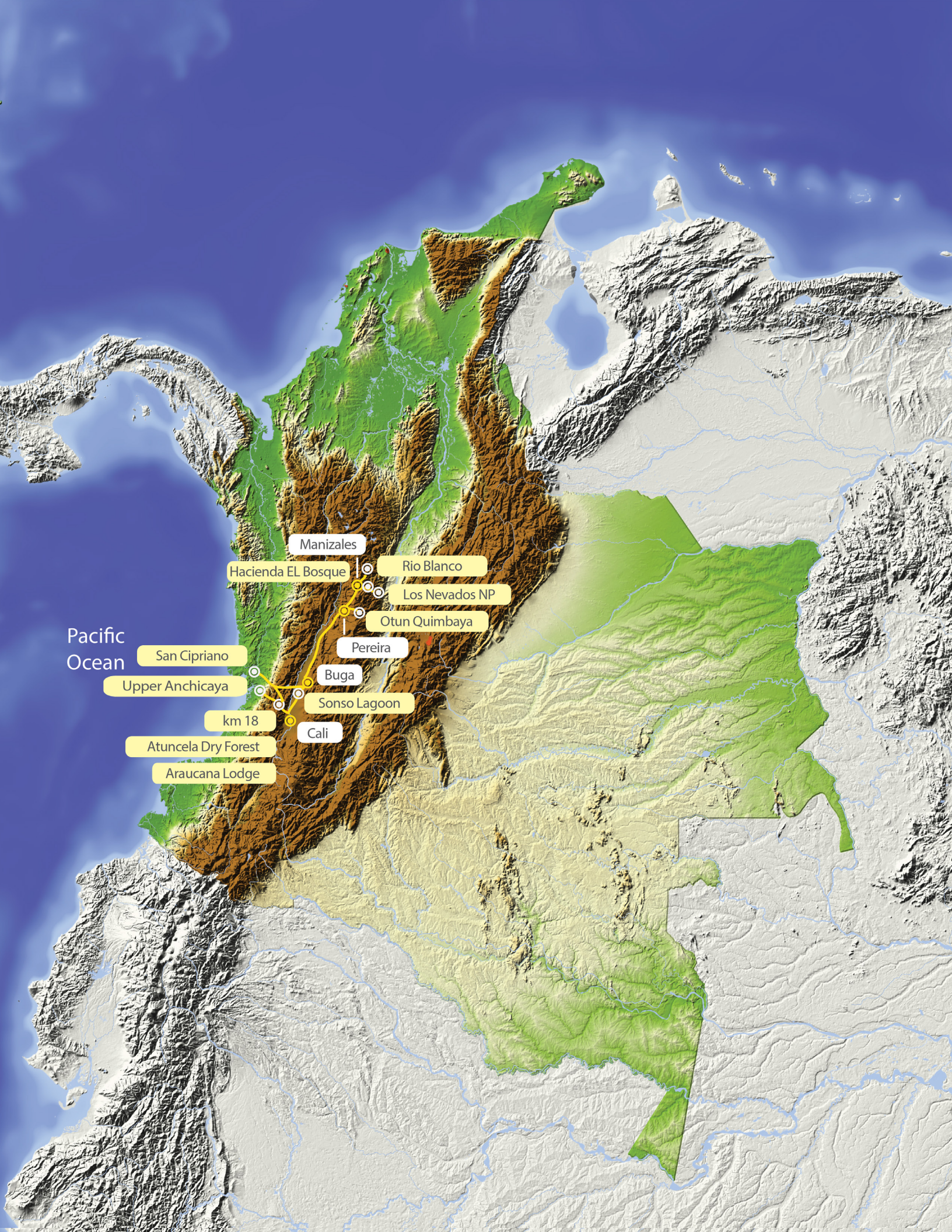
- All Lodging (Double Occupancy)
- Professional Bilingual Bird Guide (Expenses for guide Included)
- Bottled Water Throughout the Trip
- All Meals From Dinner on Day 1 to Breakfast on Day 15
- Snacks Throughout the Trip
- Entrances to Parks and Reserves
- Local Guides at Many Sites
- All Transportation and Airport Transfers
- Limited Accident and Medical Insurance

THIS TRIP DOES NOT INCLUDE

- Gratuities
- Alcoholic Beverages
- Trip Insurance
- Airfare to Colombia
- Laundry
- Items of Personal Nature







Pacific Ocean

- Manizales
- Hacienda EL Bosque
- Rio Blanco
- Los Nevados NP
- Otun Quimbaya
- Pereira
- Buga
- Sonso Lagoon
- km 18
- Cali
- San Cipriano
- Upper Anchicaya
- Atuncela Dry Forest
- Araucana Lodge



Black-throated Mango

Juan Jose Arango