



COLOMBIA BIRDING TOUR

"CENTRAL & WESTERN ANDES SPECIALTIES"

DATE TBD

Join **Flyway Birding tours**

for an exclusive **Colombia Birding Tour**, carefully designed to showcase the extraordinary diversity of the Andes and Cauca Valley. Enjoy exceptional birding, memorable wildlife encounters, spectacular landscapes, and cultural experiences.



BUFFY HELMETCREST



Colombia's bird diversity is shaped by a complex landscape of Andean mountain ranges, deep intermontane valleys, tropical lowlands, and highly localized ecosystems. This itinerary follows that geography through the Central and Western Andes and across the Cauca Valley, connecting páramo, cloud forest, wetlands, dry forest, and Chocó-influenced habitats. The route also highlights how private reserves, working farms, rehabilitation centers, and community-led projects are contributing to the protection of these landscapes and the species that depend on them.

COLOMBIA BIRDING TOUR 2027

Colombia is home to nearly 2,000 bird species, representing close to 20% of the world's bird diversity. With approximately 90 endemic and 193 near-endemic species, the country offers exceptional opportunities for birders, naturalists, and wildlife photographers. Its complex geography supports 92 recognized ecosystems and has played a major role in the evolution and distribution of its birdlife.

In Colombia, the Andes divide into three major ranges—the Western, Central, and Eastern Cordilleras—separated by the deep valleys of the Cauca and Magdalena rivers. Over time, these mountain systems and valleys have acted as natural barriers, isolating populations and contributing to the development of endemic and restricted-range species.

This itinerary focuses on endemic, near-endemic, and range-restricted birds of the Central and Western Andes, while also including species shared with neighboring regions. The route crosses high-Andean forest, cloud forest, páramo, the dry forests and wetlands of the Cauca Valley, and habitats influenced by the biogeographic Chocó. The journey begins in Pereira and concludes near Cali.

The program combines birding at established feeder sites with traditional field birding along forest roads, trails, reserve edges, wetlands, and natural habitats. Several locations provide close views of antpittas, mountain-toucans, tanagers, and hummingbirds, while others emphasize birding away from feeders. Some sites are particularly suitable for photography, while others offer broader opportunities to observe birds within intact or recovering ecosystems.

Travel distances between major birding areas are generally manageable, with accommodations selected for convenient access to field sites. Conditions vary considerably along the route, from warm Cauca Valley lowlands to cool high-Andean environments, so layered clothing is essential. Sturdy hiking footwear is recommended; rubber boots are not normally required.

Elevations range from approximately 2,800 to 13,500 ft. Most outings involve established trails, lodge grounds, reserve roads, and short walks, although some locations include steep or uneven terrain. Vehicle access remains nearby at many sites, and 4×4 vehicles are used where road conditions require them.

SHINING SUNBEAM



SICKLE-WINGED GUAN



TOUCAN BARBET



COLOMBIA BIRDING TOUR 2027

Day 1 – Day , Month – Arrival in Pereira

After clearing immigration and customs at Matecaña International Airport (PEI) in Pereira, you will be met by our local representative and transferred to the hotel. All inbound flights for the tour should be scheduled to arrive at PEI, and airport transportation will be provided for participants arriving on Day 1. Pereira sits at approximately 4,600 ft in Colombia's Central Andes and offers a pleasantly mild climate compared with the warmer Cauca Valley lowlands we will visit later in the tour.



Many participants may prefer to arrive a day early, and for those doing so we recommend an additional pre-tour night at Hotel Sonesta Pereira. On Day 1, we will arrange an early-afternoon pickup from the Sonesta and transfer to Hotel Mandalay 1941, where our program officially begins. After settling in, there will be an optional opportunity for some relaxed afternoon birding around the hotel grounds and nearby habitat.

At 6:00 p.m., we will gather for our official tour orientation to review the itinerary, logistics, birding activities, and conservation themes of the journey. A welcome dinner will follow, offering a chance to meet the tour leaders and fellow participants before we begin exploring Colombia's remarkably diverse Andean landscapes the following morning.

Overnight at Hotel Mandalay 1941. D.



Pereira, located in the heart of Colombia's Coffee Cultural Landscape, is a dynamic city known for its coffee culture, stunning landscapes, and vibrant urban life. Visitors can explore lush coffee plantations and enjoy scenic views of the Andes mountains. The city is also a gateway to various nature reserves and parks, making it an ideal destination for eco-tourism and birding.

Day 2 – Day , Month – Otún Quimbaya Flora and Fauna Sanctuary

Today we explore the Otún Quimbaya Flora and Fauna Sanctuary, situated on the western slope of Colombia's Central Andes. Together with the adjacent Ucumarí Reserve, these native and reforested forests form an important buffer for Los Nevados National Park and play a vital role in regional water conservation. We will travel by 4x4 vehicles from the hotel to access the sanctuary, spending the day birding along forest roads, trails, and edges in a

setting where the focus is entirely on natural habitat rather than feeders. Key species include the endemic Cauca Guan and Crested Ant-Tanager, both Colombian endemics and important conservation targets. Elevations range from approximately 4,900 to 7,000 ft, with generally cool montane conditions and temperatures typically around 50–65 °F. Decades of forest protection and restoration have helped maintain rich bird populations, making Otún Quimbaya one of the most significant birding areas in Colombia's Central Andes. We return to Pereira in the afternoon.

Overnight at Hotel Mandalay 1941. BLD.

Day 3 – Day , Month – Guásimo DMI & CRARSI Wildlife Rehabilitation Center – Hacienda El Bosque

We spend the morning in the lowlands at Guásimo DMI (Distrito de Manejo Integrado), in the Inter-Andean Cauca Valley. This protected area preserves an important mosaic of remnant tropical dry forest, one of Colombia's most threatened forest types, with only a small percentage of its original extent remaining due to ranching, agriculture, and urban expansion. Birding will take place along quiet tertiary roads and a short trail, with 4x4 vehicles providing access to some of the back roads. Target species include the endemic Apical Flycatcher, along with Guira Tanager, Golden-collared Manakin, and other species associated with the dry forests of the Cauca Valley. After lunch, we visit the CRARSI Wildlife Rehabilitation Center for an orientation and guided walk focused on its wildlife rescue, rehabilitation, and release programs. From there, we begin a steady climb into the highlands toward Hacienda El Bosque near Manizales, gradually transitioning from the warm Cauca Valley into cool high-Andean landscapes. The hacienda sits at approximately 10,000 ft and offers expansive views over the surrounding mountains, forests, and valleys. After arrival, we check in and settle into the lodge in preparation for the following day's high-elevation birding.

Overnight at Hacienda El Bosque. BLD.



Otún Quimbaya Flora and Fauna Sanctuary, near Pereira, protects more than 1,200 acres of sub-Andean forest on the western slope of Colombia's Central Andes. Its forests support a rich diversity of birds, butterflies, and other wildlife, including endangered species such as the Mountain Tapir. The sanctuary also protects important habitat and the upper watershed of the Otún River.

Day 4 – Day , Month– Hacienda El Bosque / Nevado del Ruiz Páramo

This morning we travel to the high slopes of Nevado del Ruiz, reaching elevations of approximately 13,500 ft in search of Buffy Helmetcrest and other high-elevation specialists. The páramo ecosystem is one of the most distinctive habitats of the northern Andes and plays an essential role in both biodiversity conservation and regional water security. Our visit offers an opportunity to experience this remarkable environment while supporting responsible access and local conservation efforts. Conditions at this elevation can be cold, windy, and highly variable, so participants should be prepared for sudden changes in weather. By late morning we descend to Termas del Ruiz, at approximately 11,500 ft.

Participants may choose to relax in the thermal pools while others continue birding around the lodge gardens, feeders, and nearby elfin forest. Species may include Hooded Mountain-Tanager, Golden-breasted Puffleg, and a variety of highland hummingbirds. Afternoon temperatures around the lodge typically range from approximately 45–70 °F.

Overnight at Hacienda El Bosque. BLD.



BUFFY HELMETCREST

Day 5 – Day , Month– Hacienda El Bosque / Manizales

Hacienda El Bosque is renowned for its well-managed feeding stations, which attract antpittas, tanagers, hummingbirds, mountain-toucans, and other high-Andean species. The surrounding landscape combines extensive forest with pastures and agricultural areas, creating productive edges and open clearings. Conditions generally range from 45–65 °F at elevations of approximately 9,500–10,800 ft. Morning birding will focus on the lodge grounds, feeders, hides, and nearby forest edges, with excellent opportunities for species such as Equatorial Antpitta, Crescent-faced Antpitta, Gray-breasted Mountain-Toucan, and Sword-billed Hummingbird. Short trails and quiet viewing areas also provide good opportunities for photography.

After lunch, we depart Hacienda El Bosque and make the relatively short transfer to Manizales, where we check in at Quo Hotel. Later in the afternoon, participants will have the opportunity to visit the historic center of Manizales, with time to explore some of the city's architecture, plazas, and local atmosphere before returning to the hotel for dinner.

Overnight at Quo Hotel. BLD.

Day 6 – Day , Month– Río Blanco Reserve / Manizales

Today we visit Río Blanco Reserve, an IBA (Important Bird Area)-designated cloud-forest site on the edge of Manizales that protects headwaters critical to the city's water supply. Trails and viewing areas provide opportunities for both feeder photography—featuring antpittas, mountain-toucans, and hummingbirds—and traditional forest birding.

Key targets include the endemic Brown-banded Antpitta, as well as Green-and-black Fruiteater and Black-billed Mountain-Toucan. With temperatures generally ranging from 55–75 °F and elevations between approximately 5,200 and 8,000 ft, bird activity can remain steady through the morning and into the early afternoon. After lunch and some additional birding, we return to Quo Hotel in Manizales, where the remainder of the afternoon will be free to rest and enjoy some downtime before dinner.

Overnight at Quo Hotel. BLD.

Day 7 – Day , Month— Hacienda Venecia / Cauca Valley / Buga

After breakfast, we depart Manizales and begin our journey toward the Cauca Valley. Our first stop will be Hacienda Venecia, a traditional working coffee estate, where we will take part in a dedicated coffee tour. The visit provides an introduction to Colombia's coffee-growing culture, from cultivation and harvesting to processing and roasting, while also offering a closer look at the landscapes and agricultural traditions that have shaped this region for generations. Following the visit, we continue west and descend toward the broad Cauca River Valley, gradually leaving the cooler Andean slopes behind and entering warmer lowland conditions. The drive takes us through a changing landscape of agricultural areas, river valleys, and foothills as we make our way toward Buga. We expect to arrive at Eco Hotel Hacienda El Diamante during the afternoon, with time to settle in and enjoy some relaxed birding around the lodge grounds and surrounding habitat before dinner.

Overnight at Eco Hotel Hacienda El Diamante. BLD.

Río Blanco Reserve, just outside Manizales, protects cloud forest and important headwaters that supply water to the city. Its elevation range supports a rich mix of Andean birds, including antpittas, mountain-toucans, hummingbirds, and numerous forest species.

GREEN-AND-BLACK FRUITEATER



Day 8 – Day , Month— Laguna de Sonso / Buga

This morning we visit Laguna de Sonso, an important wetland complex associated with the Cauca River and one of the most significant lowland birding areas in the region. Our visit begins with birding along the reserve trails before boarding a boat to explore the wetlands and search for species associated with open water, marshes, riparian vegetation, and surrounding dry forest.

Among the notable birds found here are the endemic Grayish Piculet and Dwarf Cuckoo. Elevations range from approximately 2,800 to 4,000 ft, with warm conditions typically between 65–85 °F. Our visit also directly supports local conservation efforts and a community-based ecotourism initiative led by local women at Sonso. Through guiding, visitor services, environmental education, and other tourism activities, the project helps create sustainable livelihoods while strengthening local involvement in the protection of the wetland and its wildlife. After lunch, we return to Eco Hotel Hacienda El Diamante, where the remainder of the afternoon will be available for relaxed birding around the property.

Overnight at Eco Hotel Hacienda El Diamante. BLD.



SPECTACLED PARROTLET

Day 9 – Day , Month– Eco Hotel Hacienda El Diamante / Araucana Lodge

We begin the morning with a relaxed birding session around the lodge's feeders, gardens, and surrounding habitat. The property and nearby open areas provide opportunities for a different mix of Cauca Valley species, with possible highlights including Crested Bobwhite and, with some luck, the endemic Turquoise Dacnis. The morning will allow plenty of time for observation and photography before returning to the lodge.

After lunch, we begin the drive toward Dagua, gradually leaving the Cauca Valley and climbing into the forested slopes of the Western Andes. On arrival at Araucana Lodge, we check in and settle into our rooms before spending the late afternoon around the lodge grounds and feeders. These attract a varied assortment of hummingbirds, tanagers, and other forest-edge species, providing an easy and productive introduction to the birdlife of this new region before dinner.

Overnight at Araucana Lodge. BLD.

Day 10 – Day , Month – Doña Dora / Araucana Lodge

Today we travel to Doña Dora, a renowned birding and photography site located on the western side of the Western Cordillera, closer to the biogeographic Chocó region. The property is especially well known for its productive feeders and for its charismatic founder, Mrs. Dora, whose work has helped make the site an important stop for visiting birders. The surrounding forest and edge habitat support an impressive mix of species, including Glistening-green Tanager, Toucan Barbet, Rufous-throated Tanager, and many other Chocó foothill specialties.

One of the highlights of the visit is the opportunity to see an Andean Cock-of-the-Rock lek. Reaching the lek involves approximately a 20-minute walk along a steep dirt trail, with steps in some sections, so participants should be prepared for a short but moderately strenuous outing. Elevations range from approximately 3,600 to 4,600 ft, with warm and humid conditions generally between 70–80 °F. After lunch and additional birding around the feeders and forest edge, we return to Araucana Lodge in the afternoon, with time to relax or continue birding around the property before dinner.

Overnight at Araucana Lodge. BLD.

Day 11 – Day , Month– La Florida / Cali

Today we spend most of the day birding at La Florida, a productive cloud-forest site in the Western Cordillera. The property offers a combination of feeders, gardens, trails, and adjacent forest that provides excellent opportunities for both observation and photography. Highlights may include endemic Multicolored Tanager, Chestnut Wood-Quail, Little Tinamou, Saffron-crowned Tanager, and a variety of other colorful foothill and montane species. Elevations range from approximately 5,600 to 7,200 ft, with temperatures generally between 60–75 °F.

After lunch and a final birding session around La Florida, we begin our drive toward Cali and Hotel Real Elim, conveniently located near Alfonso Bonilla Aragón International Airport. We expect to arrive in the late afternoon, with time to check in before gathering for our farewell dinner. This final evening will be an opportunity to reflect on the journey, the remarkable diversity of habitats explored, and the conservation and community projects encountered along the way.

Overnight at Hotel Real Elim. BLD.

Day 12 – Day , Month– Departures / Cali

Airport shuttle service will be provided from Hotel Real Elim to Alfonso Bonilla Aragón International Airport (CLO) according to participants' departure schedules. Please plan outbound flights from Cali, allowing sufficient time for airline check-in, security, and international departure formalities.



Thank you for joining us on this journey through Colombia. Beyond the birds we see, this journey supports the people and places that protect them. Our visits to family-owned lodges and reserves, national parks, and local conservation projects help sustain habitat protection and responsible tourism.

This itinerary is classified as moderate due to the combination of elevation, varied terrain, and full days in the field. Most birding will take place along forest roads, lodge grounds, reserve trails, feeder areas, wetlands, and established paths, but some locations include uneven footing, muddy sections, steep inclines, and steps. The visit to the Andean Cock-of-the-Rock lek at Doña Dora requires an approximately 20-minute walk on a steep dirt trail, while several other sites involve slow-paced walking over irregular terrain.

The tour also includes substantial changes in elevation, from the warm lowlands of the Cauca Valley to high-Andean environments above 10,000 ft, with the highest excursion reaching approximately 13,500 ft at Nevado del Ruiz. At these elevations, thinner air, cold temperatures, wind, and rapidly changing weather can make even relatively short walks more demanding. Temperatures across the itinerary may range from the mid-40s °F in the highlands to the mid-80s °F in the lowlands.

Participants should be comfortable with early starts, extended periods outdoors, occasional use of 4x4 vehicles, and several days involving both morning and afternoon field activities. A reasonable level of physical fitness, good balance, and the ability to walk at a steady pace on uneven surfaces are recommended. Proper footwear, layered clothing, rain protection, sun protection, and preparation for both cool high-elevation conditions and warm tropical environments are essential.

Included in the program:

- Professional Naturalist & Birding Guide services throughout the program.
- Coach transportation throughout the program
- All meals from dinner day 1 to breakfast day 12
- All lodging in double occupancy (single supplement subject to availability).
- All entrance fees and excursions.
- Updated bird check-list.
- Purified Water
- Gratuities
- Donation to local conservation group

Not included in the program:

- Airline ticket
- Travel insurance
- Alcoholic beverages
- Personal expense

COLOMBIA BIRDING TOUR 2027

FOR REGISTRATION & INFO:

info@flywaybt.com

DATES:

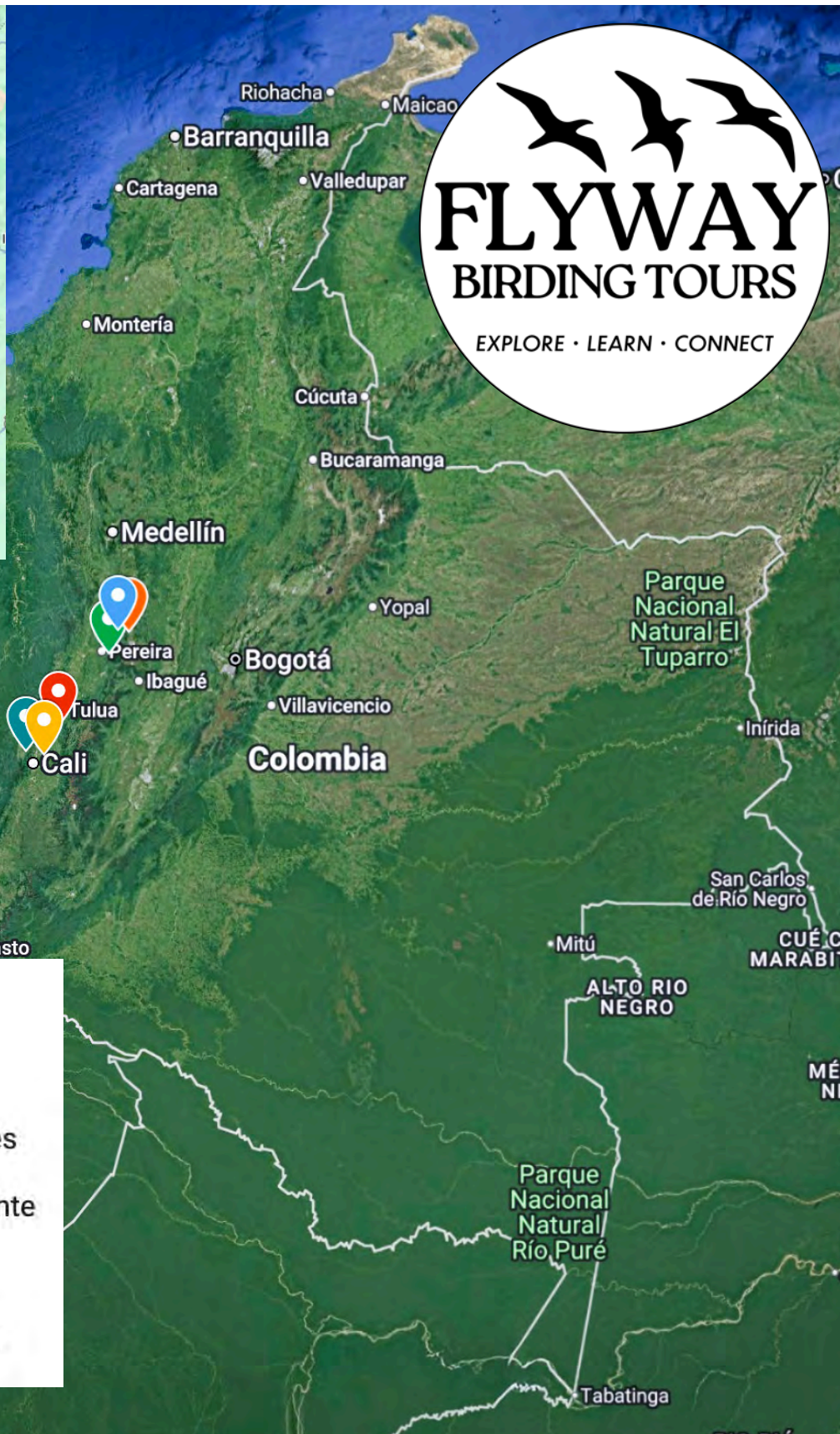
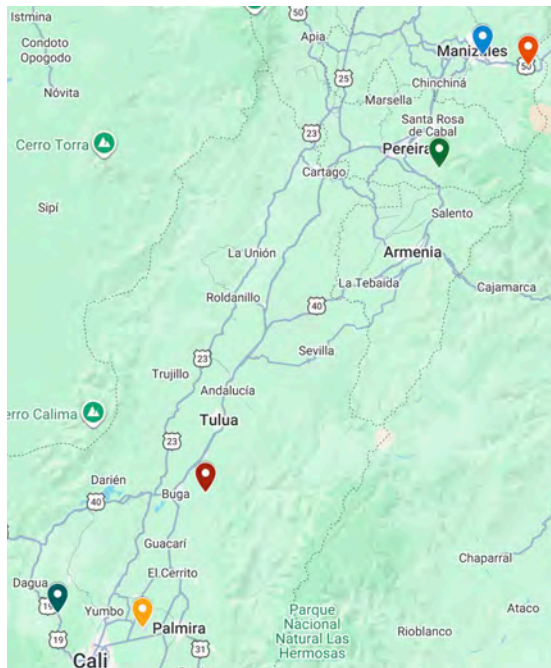
XXXX - XXXX, 2027

PRICE PER PERSON*:

\$XXXX DOUBLE

\$XXXX SINGLE

*PRICE BASED ON A GROUP OF 10 BIRDERS



-  Hotel Mandalay 1941
-  Hacienda El Bosque
-  QUO Quality Hotel - Manizales
-  Ecohotel Hacienda El Diamante
-  Araucana Lodge
-  Hotel Real Elim International