



Natural Selections

BIRDING, WILDLIFE, AND PHOTO TOURS



Andean Cock of the Rock

Join award-winning and renowned wildlife photographer Roy Toft on this kaleidoscope of color photography workshop, which takes us to one of the most bird-tastic countries on Earth; Ecuador. Here we explore from near sea level to 11,483-foot Yanacocha, and make stops at Mindo, Mashpi, Santa Rosa, and finally Sumaco/Guango, the entire way enjoying opportunities for capturing magnificent images of barbets, tanagers, mountain toucans, Andean Cock of the Rock, and myriad hummingbirds with names like Gorgeted Sunangel, and Sapphire-vented Puffleg! And along the way, we'll even make one nocturnal quest for the almost unbelievable-looking Pinocchio Lizard.

Ecuador with Roy Toft: a Nature Photographer's Paradise!

11 Nights/12 Days

Tour Overview

Day 1: Arrive Quito (UIO), night San Jose del Puembo Hotel
Day 2: Santa Rosa Bird Lodge
Day 3: Santa Rosa Bird Lodge
Day 4: Septimo Paraiso Lodge
Day 5: Septimo Paraiso Lodge
Day 6: Septimo Paraiso Lodge
Day 7: Guango Lodge
Day 8: Cabañas San Isidro
Day 9: Sumaco Lodge
Day 10: Sumaco Lodge
Day 11: San Jose del Puembo Hotel
Day 12: Antisana National Park, late evening departure from UIO.

11 Night/12 Day Itinerary

Day 1, Arrival to Quito:

Arrival and pickup from Mariscal Sucre International Airport (UIO) and transfer to Hotel San Jose del Puembo for overnight. Greeting dinner and orientation.

Meals: Dinner

Lodging at San Jose del Puembo

Day 2, Zuro Loma Reserve:

This morning we will have an early start, and drive for 2 hours to the beautiful Zuro Loma Reserve at an altitude of 10,000 feet. Here we will enjoy how the local people feed the Chestnut-naped Equatorial Antpittas, and photograph these, as well as the enigmatic Ocellated Tapaculo. This reserve is the best place to photograph the unmistakable Sword-billed Hummingbird as well as Buff-winged Starfrontlet, Mountain Velvetbreast, Sapphire-vented Puffleg, Tyrian Metaltail and several more. We'll enjoy a picnic lunch while taking in the site's grandiose montane view, and then begin the 2-hour drive to Mindo via the Old Nono-Mindo Road. We'll plan to arrive Santa Rosa in time to enjoy some of this site's fruit and hummingbird feeders.

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Lodging at Santa Rosa Bird Lodge*

Day 3, Santa Rosa Reserve:

After breakfast, we'll begin a full day of photography at Santa Rosa



Violet-Tailed Sylph

Reserve.

This reserve was designed for photographers with various settings that include fruit feeders, moth blinds, and hummingbird feeders.

Throughout the day we'll enjoy getting great images of Plate-billed Mountain Toucan, Toucan Barbet, Velvet-Purple Coronet, Gorgeted Sunangel, Violet-tailed Sylph, Empress and Fawn breasted Brilliant, Speckled Hummingbird, Buff-tailed Coronet and others. Passerine birds here include the sweet Blue-Winged Mountain Tanager, Golden Tanager, Golden-naped Tanager, Chestnut-capped Brush Finch and many more.

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Lodging at Santa Rosa Bird Lodge*

Day 4, Milpe Reserve:

This morning's drive will be about 1 hour and 20 minutes, and will bring

us to the mountain foothills at around 1,000 feet. Here, we'll visit the private Milpe Reserve for chances at photographing the emblematic Choco Toucan and Pale-mandibled Aracari. We'll also have a chance at a new set of hummingbirds including Green Thorntail, Green-crowned Brilliant, Rufous-tailed Hummingbird, White-Whiskered Hermit, Crowned Woodnymph and many more. In the afternoon, we'll depart for Septimo Paraiso Lodge at 5,700 feet and arrive in time for dinner. The drive should take no more than 30 minutes.

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Lodging at Septimo Paraiso Lodge*

Day 5, Mashpi Reserve:

After breakfast, we'll travel 2 hours to the Mashpi Reserve where we will photograph more Chocó endemics like Moss-backed, Glistening-green, Flame-faced, Golden, Lemon-rumped and

Rufous-throated Tanagers, plus Orange-breasted Fruiteater, Crimson-rumped Toucanet, Velvet-purple Coronet hummer, and many more.

In the late afternoon we will return to our lodge, arriving in time for dinner, and tonight we will also make a special search for the remarkable-looking Pinocchio Lizard.

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Lodging at Septimo Paraiso Lodge*

Day 6, Paz de Las Antpittas Reserve:

Early this morning we will head to Paz de las Antpittas Reserve to observe the Andean Cock of the Rocks at their lek, where males assemble during the mating season and engage in competitive displays that attract females.

Afterwards we will join Angel (the owner of the reserve) as he invites his "charges" Maria the Giant Antpitta, Willi the Yellow-breasted



Pale Mandibled Aracari

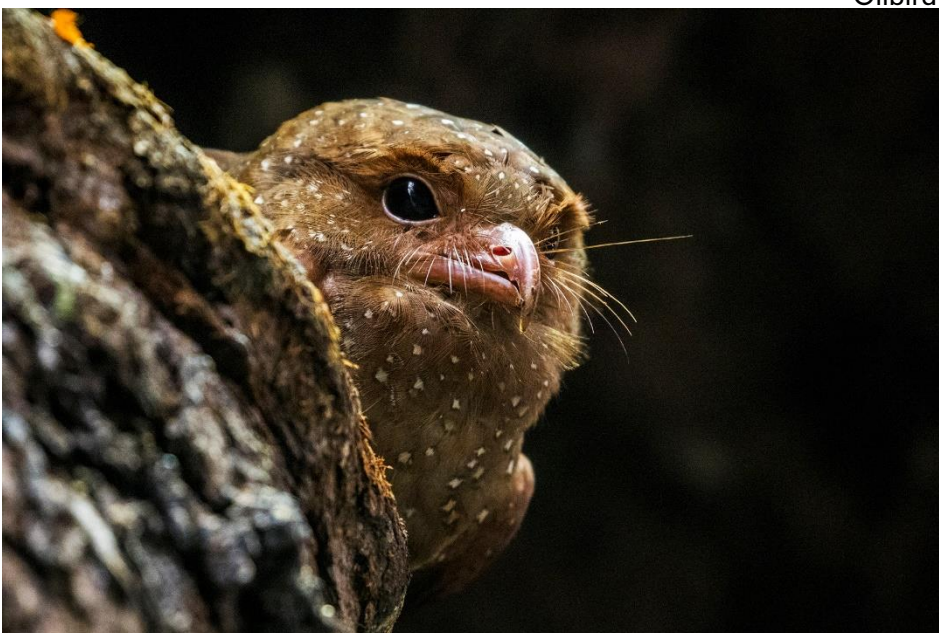
Antpitta, Shakira the Ochre-breasted Antpitta, and Susan the Mustached Antpitta in for breakfast! We'll enjoy photographing these birds and once we've finished breakfast, we'll start into Angel's super-active hummingbird feeders with species such as Toucan and Red-headed Barbet, Tawny-bellied Hermit, Purple-bibbed Whitetip, Purple-Throated Woodstar, and the spectacular Booted Racket-Tail.

After a morning at Paz de Las Antpittas, we'll drive for about an hour to visit a bigger, more active lek of the Andean Cock of the Rock and more photos of this iconic Ecuadorian species.

Our drive back to lodge in the afternoon for dinner should take us only 30 minutes.

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Lodging at Septimo Paraiso Lodge*

Oilbird



Day 7, Oilbirds and Cocks of the Rock:

This morning, our destination will be a secluded Oilbird bird cave in order to photograph this strange and enigmatic species in its lair. Along the way however, we will make another stop at yesterday's Andean Cock of the Rock lek, for another chance and more images of that flamboyant orange cloud forest denizen.

In the afternoon, after sufficient time at the Oilbird cave, we'll have a

4 1/2-hour drive to our next accommodations at Guango Lodge.

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Lodging at Guango Lodge*

Days 8, Las Brisas:

After breakfast, we will visit the moth blind where we will photograph Turquoise and Inca Jays, Pale-naped and Chestnut capped Brush finches, and then we will spend the remaining morning photographing around the lodge's gardens. In the afternoon we will visit Las Brisas, a private residence nestled in the cloud forest, and which is a great site for photographing the Peruvian Racket-Tail, Bronzy Inca, Violet-fronted Brilliant, Long-tailed Sylph, Chestnut breasted Coronet, Gorgeted Woodstar and Green-backed Hillstar.

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Lodging at Cabañas San Isidro*

Day 9, San Isidro to Sumaco:

This morning we will be photographing around the moth light, as overnight insect activity will have attracted Barred Becard, Pale-edged and Golden-crowned Flycatcher, Black-capped Tanager, Masked Trogon, and others. Afterwards, we'll have short walk to an active feeding area for White-bellied Antpitta.

After lunch, we'll travel 3 hours to Sumaco lodge and arrive in time for relaxing and an early dinner.

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Lodging at Sumaco Lodge*

Day 10, Sumaco Lodge:

In the morning, we will visit Sumaco's moth blind to photograph Western Fire-eyed and Black-faced Antbird, as well as the White-chested Puffbird. Hummingbird feeders here are also extremely active, attracting Wire-crested Thorntail, Black-throated and Violet-fronted Brilliant, Gould's Jewelfront, Fork-tailed Woodnymph and Violet-headed Hummingbirds.

In the afternoon, we'll head to the Antpitta feeding area where we'll photograph the Lodge's Plain-backed and Ochre-breasted Antpittas.

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Lodging at Sumaco Lodge*

Day 11, Sumaco to Quito:

We'll enjoy the morning with more photography at Sumaco's feeders,

and after lunch depart for Quito, a drive which will take us around 4 1/2 hours.

*Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Lodging at San Jose del Puembo*

Day 12, Antizana National Park:

90 minutes outside of Quito is the Antizana National Park and along the way make a stop for photographing species such as Giant Hummingbird, Shining Sunbeam, Tyrian Metaltail, and Black-Tailed Trainbearer. Once we reach the park, at close to 13,000 feet, we'll focus on paramo specialties like Andean Condor, Black-faced Ibis, Paramo Pipit, Black-winged Ground-Dove, Many-Striped Canastero, Chestnut-winged and Stout-billed Cinclodes, Tawny Antpitta, Ecuadorian Hillstar and others. In the late afternoon, we'll return to the airport for international flights home.

Meals: Breakfast and Lunch

Sword-Billed Hummingbird





Note: Tour ends upon arrival at the airport. Please book a late night/overnight flight, or plan to stay into the next day and fly home then. For those who want to stay overnight, we are happy to help arrange a hotel and transfer to same.

Travel insurance:

We highly recommend purchasing travel insurance. In the event that you need to cancel your trip due to medical or other reasons, this insurance will protect you.

Included in this itinerary:

In-country accommodations, ground transportation, tours, meals from dinner on arrival day to lunch on departure day, soft drinks, tour leader, local guide and entrance fees are included.

Not Included:

Personal items such as alcoholic beverages, soft drinks, gift shop, laundry, tips, etc. are not included.



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