

URUGUAY BIRD WATCHING TOUR & MONTEVIDEO TRIP

Adventure and Nature in Uruguay: Birding & Wildlife

8 DAYS / 7 NIGHTS

This small and peaceful country offers nature lovers an amazing variety of ecosystems mainly concentrated in the Bañados Del Este Biosphere Reserve (UNESCO). Commonly referred to as 'the Switzerland of America' this republic is proud of its almost 200 years of democracy and being one of the safest countries in the world.

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| <p>FROM GET CUSTOM PRICING per person</p> | <p>THIS TOUR INCLUDES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 days/ 7 nights • All night accommodation • All transfers • Full board (drinks not included) • Bilingual guides | <p>HIGHLIGHTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Montevideo • Punta del Este • Isla de Lobos • Jose Ignacio • Cabo Polonio • Ombues Forest • National Park of San Miguel • Cebollatí river • Quebrada de los Cuervos • La Laguna • Sierra de los Caracole |
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Day 1 **MONTEVIDEO & SURROUNDINGS**

Arrival to Montevideo, the capital city. Guests are met at the Carrasco International Airport and driven along the wonderful coastline called Rambla to the hotel. Optional city & birding tour and introductory talk. During the evening we will have dinner at the lively Old City.

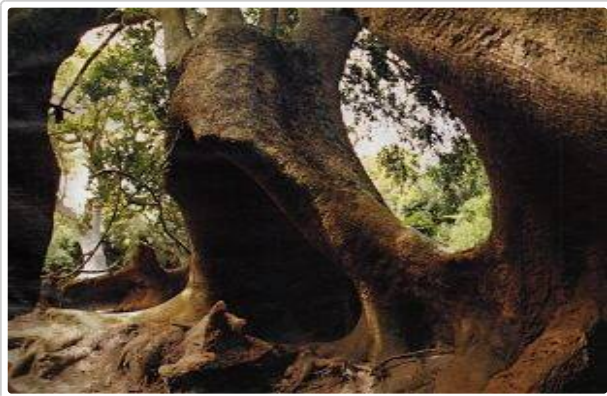
Overnight at the hotel



Day 2

PUNTA DEL ESTE, ISLA DE LOBOS, JOSE IGNACIO & LAGOONS

Early transfer to Punta del Este, boat visit to Isla de Lobos (Sea Lions Island), looking for shore and seabirds like Great Grebe, Black-browed Albatross, Yellow-nosed Albatross, Cape Petrel, Southern Giant Petrel, Olivaceous Cormorant, American Oystercatcher, South American Stilt, Greater Yellowlegs, White-rumped Sandpiper, Snowy Shearwater, Black Skimmer, Kelp Gull, Brown-hooded Gull, Snowy-crowned Tern, Yellow-billed Tern, and Royal Tern. Isla de Lobos is the shelter for one of the largest South American sea lions & fur seals colony. After an excellent lunch at Punta del Este port, birding at the coastal lagoons José Ignacio, Garzón and eventually Rocha, looking for Chilean Flamingo, Black-necked Swan, Coscoroba Swan, Southern Wigeon, Brown Pintail, South American Tern and Cayenne Tern. Short drive to Estancia Guardia del Monte or El Charabon, both authentic working Uruguayan ranches. Typical dinner and overnight at the estancia.



Day 3

CABO POLONIO, SHIFTING SAND DUNES & THE FOREST OF OMBÚES

We will start our Humedales del Este biosphere reserve trip with an early birding at the estancia Guardia de Monte on the shores of the Castillos Lagoon, searching for Greater Rheas, Spotted Tinamou, Short-billed Pipit, Limpkins, White-necked Heron, Striated Heron, Ringed Kingfisher, Snail Kite and Roadside Hawk. We also visit, the Ombúes Forest looking for Diademed Tanager, Blue and Yellow Tanager, Hepatic Tanager, Chalk-browed Mockingbird, Tropical Parula and Creamy-bellied Thrush. The Ombú curiously rarely grows in groups of more than 2 or 3, the forest of Ombúes that we visit is possibly the only one in the world. Each tree has its own wonderful shape with thick, twisting roots spreading out over the ground; some are over 500 years and have a diameter of 2 metres (6 feet). Then we will be driven by truck to Cabo Polonio, a small fishing village which can only be reached by horse or four wheeled drive. The fascinating part of the area is the huge area of shifting sand dunes where we can see good numbers of seabirds in addition to the sea lions and migrating Franca Whale that is commonly spot during the south spring. Lunch at a typical restaurant on the beach, Dinner and overnight at La Perla seaside inn.



Day 4

NATIONAL PARK OF SAN MIGUEL, THE HEART THE EASTERN WETLANDS

Sunrise breakfast and short drive to the Laguna Negra (Black Lagoon); in the afternoon we will visit the Bañado Los Indios. All of this area is mostly covered by marshlands with plenty of birds like de Black-necked Swan, Coscoroba Swan, Ringed Teal, Brazilian Duck, Speckled Teal, Bare-faced Ibis, White-faced Ibes and Plumbeous Ibis, Spot-flancked Gallinule and Straight-billed Reedhaunter. It is also a stronghold for threatened birds like Saffron-cowled Blackbird, Black-and-White Monjita, Marsh Seadeater and White-collared Seedeater. In the morning we will walk into the native vegetation on the hills from where we will be able to enjoy an incredible view of the unique extensive palm groves, the big lagoon and the huge marshlands. Despite a number of stories, no one knows how the palm trees got here - some 300 years old; they give the landscape a very exotic look. After a typical barbecue at the black lagoon shores we will be driven along a very scenic road to the Bañado de los indios (Indians marshlands) an incredible place full of birds in the heart of the Humedales del este biosphere reserve. Dinner and overnight at El Fortín de San Miguel, right in the Brazilian border.



Day 5

THE CEBOLLATI RIVER & TREINTA Y TRES STATE

After a pleasant night at this inn built in the same stone as the nearby Portuguese fortress we will reach and navigate the Cebollatí River, an important meandering river with a wide and well conserved gallery forest. Here we will see good numbers of Limpinks, Ospreys, Herons, Snail Kites and three different Kingfishers. In the afternoon we visit a large nest colony of Roseate Spoonbill and Herons in Da Fonseca Ranch, where a hide has been built. During the afternoon, we will travel to the city of Treinta y Tres, which takes its distinctive name from a crusade from Argentina to Uruguay by 33 men in the early 1800's. This movement led, four months later, to Uruguay's independence from the Portuguese. Overnight at the local hotel (guests will be able to enjoy the hot water pool of this modest hotel).



Day 6

THE FANTASTIC QUEBRADA DE LOS CUERVOS

Full day visiting the famous Quebrada de los Cuervos (Vultures Ravine); the Yermal Chico stream cuts deeply into the rocky hills of this gorge. This protected area is considered the southernmost spot of Atlantic Forest. We will enjoy some trekking in the Quebrada; as we walk down, the humidity rises and the vegetation gets really dense. In this unique area you can find 70% of Uruguay's native flora and over 100 bird species. During the afternoon we drive south leaving the province of 33, through Lavalleja province until we reach the town of Aigua. Dinner and overnight at Estancia Los Plátanos.



Day 7

LA LAGUNA, ONE OF THE BIGGEST PRIVATE PRESERVED AREAS OF THE COUNTRY

La Laguna has one of the biggest private preserved areas of the country, where no cattle is fed. We will spend a whole day birding in the hilly area of Cathedral Hill, highest point in Uruguay looking for other forest birds like Dusky-legged Guan, Scissor-tailed Nightjar, Sharp-tailed Streamcreeper, Glaucous Blue-Grossbeak and Chestnut-backed Tanager. We also see open areas birds like Turkey and Black Vultures, White-tailed Hawk, Red-legged Seriema, Burrowing Owl, Field Flicker, White Monjita, Gray Monjita, Vermillion Flycatcher, Tropical Kingbird, Fork-tailed Flycatcher, Rufous-browed Peppershrike and Brown and Yellow Marshbird. We will walk and hike the beautiful hills to the natural small waterfalls and lagoon that gives the name to the estancia. Depending on the weather people can have a nice bath in its absolutely fresh water. Typical candle dinner and overnight at the estancia.



Day 8

CARACOL HILL AND DEPARTURE FROM URUGUAY

Early morning birding at Caracoles Hill near to La Laguna in search for woodland birds like Gray-necked Wood-Rail, Spot-winged Pigeon, Picazuro Pigeon, White-tipped Dove, Guira Cuckoo, White-throated Hummingbird, Mottled Piculet, White Woodpecker, White-spotted Woodpecker, Green-barred Woodpecker, Stripe-crowned Spinetail, Rufous-capped Antshrike, Variable Antshrike, Small-billed elaenia, Blue-billed Black-Tyrant, Crested Black-Tyrant, Rufous-bellied Thrush, White-browed Warbler, Diademed Tanager, Red-rumped Warbling-Finch, Yellow-rumped Marshbird and Chopi Blackbird. At sunset, we will look for owls such as the Tropical Screech-Owl. Traditional lunch and drive to the airport or pre arranged extensions.