



# Colombia

*With Schoodic Institute*



Tour Leaders: Eric Ripma and Seth Benz

February 1-12, 2026

## **Itinerary Overview:**

February 1: Arrival in Cartagena - Transfer to Hotel  
February 2: Matute Birding Nature Reserve  
February 3: Agricola Camelias and City Tour of Cartagena - Transfer to Barranquilla  
February 4: Salamanca and Pueblo Viejo Magdalena - Transfer to Minca  
February 5: Lower Elevations of Santa Marta Mountains  
February 6: Santa Marta - Transfer to Mountain House  
February 7-8: Santa Marta Mountains  
February 9: Santa Marta Mountains - Transfer to Palomino  
February 10: Tayrona Area - Transfer to Riohacha  
February 11: Guajira Area  
February 12: Flight from Riohacha to Bogotá - Departure From Bogotá

## **Detailed Itinerary:**

### **February 1: Arrival in Cartagena - Transfer to Hotel**

Upon arrival at Cartagena's Rafael Núñez International Airport, you will transfer to your hotel. We'll have a fantastic welcome dinner this evening and plenty of time to rest before our adventures begin.

*-Overnight: Radisson Cartagena Ocean Pavilion Hotel*

### **February 2: Matute Birding Nature Reserve**

We'll spend our day birding at Matute Birding Nature Reserve, southeast of Cartagena. This private farm has excellent tropical dry forest habitat, and we'll spend the morning birding along the entrance road and on the many trails through the property. Upon our arrival, we'll have a field breakfast at the reserve.

Some of the birding highlights could include Chestnut-winged Chachalaca (endemic), Whooping Motmot, the rare Gray-cheeked Nunlet, Chestnut Piculet (endemic), the beautiful Lance-tailed Manakin, Black-chested Jay, Trinidad Euphonia, the range-restricted Golden-winged Sparrow, an endemic subspecies of Red-throated Ant-Tanager (*Driophlox fuscicauda erythrolaema*), and White-eared Conebill. Other wildlife highlights could include Red Howler Monkey and Yellow-striped Poison Dart Frog.

After spending the morning birding, we'll have worked up an appetite. Luckily, the family who runs the reserve makes some delicious home-cooked meals that we'll enjoy as we keep an eye on the nearby forest! By early afternoon, we'll start our drive back to our hotel in Cartagena. We will have dinner in Cartagena's Old City, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

*-Overnight: Radisson Cartagena Ocean Pavillion Hotel*



*Black-chested Jay*

### **February 3: Agrícola Camelias and City Tour of Cartagena - Transfer to Barranquilla**

Today, we will spend the morning birding at Agrícola Camelias. It is a biodiversity oasis that beautifully blends sustainable agriculture with nature conservation.

This unique site offers an ideal setting for birding. Its landscape combines cultivated areas, secondary forests, and wetlands. The area hosts a remarkable diversity of birds, including endemic and migratory species that find a haven in this habitat. Some standout birds you can observe here include the Chestnut-winged and Rufous-vented Chachalacas, Ruby-topaz Hummingbird, Double-striped Thick-knee, Rufescent Tiger-Heron, Capped Heron, Chestnut Piculet, Turquoise-winged Parrotlet (endemic), Glaucous Tanager, and much more. The combination of agricultural and natural ecosystems creates a dynamic and rich environment for birdlife.

After checking out of our hotel and having lunch, we'll take a walking tour of the old city. This will allow us to explore the fantastic history of this remarkable city. Once we finish our tour, we'll drive to Barranquilla, where we will stay for the night.

*-Overnight: Hotel Movich Buró 51*

### **February 4: Salamanca and Pueblo Viejo Magdalena - Transfer to Minca**

After breakfast at the hotel, we'll make a short drive to Isla Salamanca National Park. We'll spend the morning birding the extensive marshes and mangroves that this park conserves. This area has the

most extensive mangroves on the Caribbean Coast of Colombia and thus has some excellent birding!

Some of the birds we'll be targeting here include the Sapphire-throated Hummingbird (endemic), Black-crested Antshrike, Golden-green Woodpecker, Dwarf Cuckoo, White-headed Marsh Tyrant, and Stripe-backed Wrens. We should also see many species of waterbirds, such as White-cheeked Pintail, Northern Screamer, Boat-billed Heron, and American Pygmy Kingfisher.

After birding, we'll head to Pueblo Viejo Magdalena, where we'll have lunch and experience the culture of the pile dwelling (stilt houses in the marsh) community. In the afternoon, we'll continue our drive east to Minca.

*-Overnight: Colores de la Sierra*

### **February 5: Lower Elevations of Santa Marta Mountains**

Minca is a small town in the foothills of the Santa Marta Mountains with excellent scrub habitat below and mature forest surrounding the town. We will spend the whole day birding various habitats at these lower elevations. Some species we will be looking for include Golden-winged Sparrow, Scaled Piculet, and Red-billed Emerald, all of which are range-restricted species. Other species we should see include Keel-billed Toucan, Pale-eyed Pygmy-tyrant, Rufous-and-white Wren, and Black-headed Tanager! We should also see a number of hummingbirds coming to feeders, including White-vented Plumeleteer, Rufous-breasted Hermit, Steely-vented Hummingbird, White-necked Jacobin, and Black-throated Mango. This will surely be a great first day of birding in the spectacular Santa Marta Mountains!

*-Overnight: Colores de la Sierra*



*Golden-winged Sparrow*

### **February 6: Santa Marta Mountains - Transfer to Mountain House**



After breakfast at the hotel, we will start our journey to higher elevations and our next lodging, Mountain House. The birding is sure to be excellent on this day, and we will begin to see some of the species that are only found in these mountains. Some of these low-elevation endemics that we might see include Santa Marta Tapaculo, Santa Marta Woodstar, White-lored Warbler, Santa Marta Blossomcrown, Santa Marta Foliage-gleaner, and Santa Marta Antbird. Other species we may see include White-tipped Quetzal, Southern Emerald-Toucanet, Groove-billed Toucanet, Golden-breasted Fruiteater, and Rusty-breasted Antpitta.

Upon arrival at Mountain House, we will enjoy a delicious lunch before continuing birding around the lodge. The feeders at the lodge can be unbelievably busy with many colorful, stunning species, such as Blue-naped Chlorophonia, Yellow-backed Oriole, and Black-headed Tanager.

*-Overnight: Mountain House*

### **February 7-8: Santa Marta Mountains**

These two days will be spent exploring the excellent habitat in the mountains. This mountain range has the tallest peaks in Colombia. Nineteen endemic bird species are currently recognized here, and there are more than 70 subspecies, some of which will likely be raised to species level soon.



*Santa Marta Parakeet*

We'll make the most of our time here, covering all the elevations accessible by road and having picnic lunches in the field. The higher elevations hold flocks of Santa Marta Parakeets, Yellow-crowned Redstart, Santa Marta Warbler, Santa Marta Bush-Tyrant, Brown-rumped Tapaculo, Rusty-headed and

Streak-capped Spinetails, Sierra Nevada Antpitta, Black-cheeked Mountain Tanager, and Santa Marta Antpitta. We will likely see Sickle-winged and Band-tailed Guans, White-tailed Starfrontlet, Blue-naped Chlorophonia, and many tanagers at feeders. The clearing around the lodge is the best spot for Santa Marta and Sierra Nevada Brush-Finches and lots of endemic subspecies, including Cinnamon Flycatcher, Black-hooded Thrush, Blue-capped Tanager, and Southern Emerald-Toucanet. We also hope to see Santa Marta Tapaculo, Woodstar, Blossomcrown, and Foliage-gleaner. Other highlights include White-tipped Quetzal, Golden-breasted Fruiteater, and Rusty-breasted Antpitta.

*-Overnight: Mountain House*

### **February 9: Santa Marta Mountains - Transfer to Palomino**

This morning, we will track down any species we may have missed over the last few days. After lunch at Mountain House, we will make our way to Palomino, where we will be based for one night.

*-Overnight: Hotel La Jorará*

### **February 10: Tayrona Area - Transfer to Riohacha**

We will spend the morning birding around the Tayrona area before transferring to Riohacha. Tayrona National Park protects a large tract of forest that borders the Caribbean coast. Many species of birds call this area home, and some of our targets will include Ruby-topaz Hummingbird, White-bellied Antbird, Lance-tailed Manakin, and many more!



*Lance-tailed Manakin*

On our way to Riohacha, we will stop for lunch and likely arrive in Riohacha by late afternoon.

*-Overnight: Hotel Taroa*

## February 11: Guajira Area

After an early breakfast at the hotel, we will make a short drive to the Guajira Peninsula. Throughout the day, we will bird at Los Flamencos Fauna and Flora Sanctuary. This sanctuary, located along the western edge of the Guajira Desert, protects several inland lagoons along the coast that provide habitat for a long list of species. Many species of shorebirds, waders, terns, and gulls occur, including the spectacular American Flamingo, the stunningly bright Scarlet Ibis, and American Oystercatcher.

Surrounding the lagoons is an excellent scrub habitat supporting many bird species. In this area, we hope to see Vermilion Cardinal, Orinoco Saltator, Buffy Hummingbird, Russet-throated Puffbird, Bare-eyed Pigeon, Chestnut Piculet, Slender-billed Tyrannulet, White-whiskered Spinetail, Pileated Finch, Tocuyo Sparrow, and Rufous-vented Chachalaca. Other species we are likely to encounter include Black-crested Antshrike, Crested Bobwhite, White-fringed Antwren, Northern Scrub-Flycatcher, Blue-crowned and Brown-throated Parakeets, and Green-rumped Parrotlets.

We'll end the day with a great farewell dinner before our departing flights the following day.

*-Overnight: Hotel Taroa*

## February 12: Flight from Riohacha to Bogotá - Departure from Bogotá



*White-whiskered Spinetail*

## **Trip Details:**

### **Cost:**

Price per person (double occupancy) from Cartagena to Bogotá, Colombia: \$6,599

Single Supplement: \$600

Minimum Participants: 6

Maximum Participants: 10

### **Price Includes:**

Expert Guides

Ground Transportation in Colombia

All Lodging

All Meals

Park Entrance Fees

Flight within Colombia

Donation to Schoodic Institute

### **Price Does Not Include:**

Airfare to Cartagena and from Bogotá

Airport Taxes

Passport and Visa Fees

Alcoholic Beverages

Personal Items

Travel Insurance

Tips

### **Deposit:**

A deposit of \$500 per person is required to hold your spot on this tour. The remaining balance is due no later than 3 months prior to the scheduled start date of the tour (November 3, 2025).

If you have any questions about this tour or would like to sign up for it, please contact us at [info@sabrewingnaturetours.com](mailto:info@sabrewingnaturetours.com), by phone at 317-324-8505, or register through our website at [sabrewingnaturetours.com](http://sabrewingnaturetours.com).

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