SABREWING
NATURE TOURS



# Colombia

*Santa Marta with Owl Research Institute*

Tour Leader: Eric Ripma

December 6-15, 2027

info@SabrewingNatureTours.com | www.SabrewingNatureTours.com | 317-324-8505

## Itinerary Overview:

**Main Tour:**

December 6: Arrival in Barranquilla
December 7: Salamanca and Colores de la Sierra - Transfer to Minca
December 8: Lower Elevations of Santa Marta Mountains
December 9: Santa Marta Mountains- Transfer to Mountain House
December 10-11: Santa Marta Mountains
December 12: Santa Marta Mountains - Transfer to Palomino
December 13: Tayrona Area - Transfer to Riohacha
December 14: Birding the Guajira Area
December 15: Departure

## Detailed Itinerary:

**December 6: Arrival in Barranquilla**

Upon arrival at Ernesto Cortissoz Barranquilla International Airport (BAQ), you will be transferred to your hotel. We'll have a fantastic welcome dinner this evening and plenty of time to rest before our adventures begin.
*Overnight: Hotel Movich Buró 51*

**December 7: Salamanca and Colores de la Sierra - Transfer to Minca**

After breakfast at the hotel, we'll have 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-bellied Hummingbird (endemic), Pied Puffbird, Bicolored Conebill, American Pygmy Kingfisher, and Golden-green Woodpecker. This area also has a remarkable number of wintering Prothonotary Warblers, and we will likely see many. If time allows, we will bird in some nearby marshes and could add many species including White-headed Marsh Tyrant, Pied Water-Tyrant, Dwarf Cuckoo, Stripe-backed Wren and the endemic Turquoise-winged Parrotlet. After we have finished birding this area, we will continue our drive to Minca. On the way, when we reach Santa Marta, we will transfer into 4X4 vehicles which we will be using for our time in the Santa Marta Mountains. We will then finish our drive to Minca where we will be staying for the following two nights.
*Overnight: Colores de la Sierra*

**December 8: Lower Elevations of Santa Marta Mountains**

We will start our day with some coffee while watching the feeders at our lodge. We can expect to see a few species of hummingbirds including White-vented Plumeleteer and White-necked Jacobin, but

the fruit feeders are the real highlight. Typically, many beautifully plumaged Blue-naped Chlorophonias and Purple Honeycreepers visit with lesser numbers of Bay-headed, Gray-headed, White-lined, Crimson-backed, and Blue-gray Tanagers also stopping by. Larger birds such as Crested Oropendolas and Black-chested Jays also typically stop by. And we'll be keeping an eye out for Golden-winged Sparrows which are typically feeding in the nearby forest. Throughout the morning we'll be birding around other areas of the lodge as well. The entry road and a trail to a beautiful viewpoint are good places to spend some time. We will be looking for many species in these areas including Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl, Scaled Piculet, Crimson-crested and Lineated Woodpeckers, Sepia-capped Flycatcher, and Swallow Tanagers among many others.



*Golden-winged Sparrow*

In the afternoon, we will spend some time birding at slightly higher elevations, but this small elevation gain changes the bird life quite dramatically. We will likely spend most of our time birding along a quiet backroad where we could see some of our first Santa Marta endemics. This is a great area for Santa Marta Antbird and will give us our first chance at others such as Groove-billed Toucanet, Santa Marta Tapaculo, Streak-capped Spinetail, Spectacled Tyrannulet, and other species that will become more common at higher elevations. This will surely be a great first day of birding in the spectacular Santa Marta Mountains!

*Overnight: Colores de la Sierra*

**December 9: Santa Marta Mountains - Transfer to Mountain House**

Early this morning we will make a short drive to lower elevations. We will begin our day, scanning out over the mountain ridges looking for Military Macaws. Many other species can also be seen in this area and we'll be looking for Common Potoo, Streak-headed Woodcreeper, Pale-eyed Pygmy-Tyrant, Golden-fronted Greenlet, Rufous-and-white Wren, and Orange-crowned Oriole. 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 throughout 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.



*Santa Marta Blossomcrown*

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*

**December 10-11: Santa Marta Mountains**

These two days will be spent exploring the excellent habitat in the Santa Marta Mountains. This mountain range has the tallest peaks in all of Colombia and around nineteen endemic bird species (depending on current taxonomy) are currently recognized here, and there are more than 70 subspecies, some of which will likely be raised to species level soon.

On one of our mornings in the mountains, we will visit the San Lorenzo Ridge where we will be birding at about 8,500 feet. Early on this morning, we will be looking for the endemic Santa Marta Screech-Owl. The high elevation forests along the ridge 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, and Black-cheeked and Carriker's Mountain Tanager. Around the feeders at the ridge, we will be watching for a Santa Marta Antpitta that comes in for worms and the beautiful White-tailed Starfrontlet that visits the feeders.

Around our lodge, Mountain House, we'll be looking for many species visiting their feeders and gardens. Blue-naped Chlorophonias, Black-headed, Black-capped, and Bay-headed Tanagers, and Yellow-backed Orioles are common at the bananas while the hummingbird feeders typically attract Sparking, Lesser, and Brown Violetears, Crowned Woodnymph, and Lazuline Sabrewing. The nearby flowers usually bring in many White-sided Flowerpiercers with lesser numbers of Rusty Flowerpiercers. We will also have to keep an eye on the flowers for Santa Marta Blossomcrown! We will also keep an eye on the grain pile for Sierra Nevada and Santa Marta Brushfinches and Lined Quail-Dove.

We will also spend some time birding forested habitats just above Mountain House. As we walk along the road, we will be looking and listening for Gray-throated Leaftosser, Santa Marta Tapaculo, Rusty-breasted Antpitta, Golden Grosbeak, Golden-breasted Fruiteater, White-tipped Quetzal, Southern Emerald-Toucanet among many others.



*Santa Marta Antpitta*



*Santa Marta Parakeet*

The forests below Mountain House will give us a chance to see some new species too. A short drive to some drier forest habitat will give us a chance to see the secritive Rosy Thrush-Tanager, Keel-billed Toucan, Santa Marta Foliage-gleaner, Spectacled Tyrannulet, and Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush. A couple of nice viewpoints nearby are great places to watch for soaring raptors. We have a good chance to see King Vultures, Sharp-shinned Hawk (Plain-breasted), Black-and-white Hawk-Eagle, Zone-tailed Hawk, and if we get really lucky, Black-and-chestnut Eagle!

One of the great things about these mountains is that there is almost always something interesting to

look at!
*Overnight: Mountain House*

**December 12: 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 Hukumeizi*

**December 13: Tayrona Area - Transfer to Riohacha**

We will spend the morning birding around the Tayrona area before transferring to Riohacha. Our main destination on this morning will be Gaviotas Road. We will spend our time walking along this quiet road and looking for the many species that call this forest home. Some of our targets will include Ruby-topaz Hummingbird, White-chinned Sapphire, White-necked Puffbird, Gartered Violaceous Trogon, Rufous-tailed Jacamar, 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 the early evening. We will likely make a couple of brief birding stops along the way and we will start seeing a different suite of birds that live in the dry scrub habitat of this area. A few species we may see include Double-striped Thick-knee, Green-rumped Parrotlet, Rufous-vented Chachalaca, and Bare-eyed Pigeon.
*Overnight: Hotel Taroa*

**December 14: Birding the Guajira Area**

After an early breakfast at the hotel, we will have a short drive to the Guajira Peninsula. Throughout

the morning, 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, Orinocan 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.
*Overnight: Hotel Taroa*

**December 15: Departure from Riohacha**

After breakfast, we'll transfer to the Riohacha Airport for our flight to Bogota where you can connect with your international flights.



*Vermilion Cardinal*

# Trip Details:

## Cost:

Price per person (double occupancy) from Barranquilla to Riohacha, Colombia: $5,399
Single Supplement: $400

Minimum Participants: 6
Maximum Participants: 10

## Price Includes:

Expert Guides
Ground Transportation in Colombia
Internal Flight from Riohacha to Bogota
All Lodging
All Meals
Park Entrance Fees
A portion of proceeds donated to Owl Research Institute

## Price Does Not Include:

International Airfair
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 (September 7, 2027).

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

Responsibility/Disclaimer Statement:
Sabrewing Nature Tours acts only as an agent for the various independent suppliers that provide hotel accommodations, transportation, sightseeing, activities, or other services connected with this tour. Such services are subject to the terms and conditions of those suppliers. Sabrewing Nature Tours and their respective employees, agents, representatives, and assigns accept no liability whatsoever for any injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or any other incident which may be caused by the negligence, defect, default of any company or person in performing these services. Responsibility is not accepted for losses, injury, damages, or expenses of any kind due to sickness, weather, strikes, hostilities, wars, terrorist acts, acts of nature, local laws, or other such causes. All services and accommodations are subject to the laws and regulations of the country in which they are provided. Sabrewing Nature Tours is not responsible for any baggage or personal effects of any individual participating in the tours/trips arranged by Sabrewing Nature Tours. Individual travelers are responsible for purchasing a travel insurance policy, if desired, that will cover some of the expenses associated with the loss of luggage or personal effects.