

NATURAL WONDERS OF COSTA RICA!

14 days with Nigel Marven



Join Celebrity Guide, TV Host **Nigel Marven** and **Johan Fernandez**, top Costa Rican guide and naturalist (The Birdway, www.thebirdway.com) to encounter over 40 kinds of hummingbirds, toucans, resplendent quetzals, sunbitterns, sloths, white tent-making bats, red-eyed tree frogs, "blue jeans" poison frogs, eyelash pit vipers and crocodiles.

On our adventure we'll see up to 350 species of bird. Most of the photos were taken by Joy Wang on our trip that followed the same itinerary in November 2022.

As well as wondrous wildlife, we'll experience comfortable lodges and hotels with delicious food.

Day 1: Airport pick ups in San Jose. Overnight Bougainvillea Hotel. Welcome dinner with Nigel and Johan.

After our meal we'll take a short night walk in the garden in search of the rare golden monkey frog and to watch leafcutter ants in action.

Day 2: On a pre breakfast walk In the hotels beautiful gardens we'll look for owls in their day roost, yellow-naped parrots, our first humming birds and much more.

Travel to Hotel Quelitales. On a perch in front of a waterfall in the grounds we should see the fabulous green-fronted lancebill. There'll be black bellied hummers, trogons, woodpeckers and oropendolas too. Dinner with Jose, the owner, a birder and one of Costa Rica's top chefs. His bananas Foster is to die for!

Day 3: We'll meet a splendid and usually difficult to see, scaled ant pitta that visits for earthworms every morning, piles of grain lure in charming rice rats and colourful Ground sparrows.

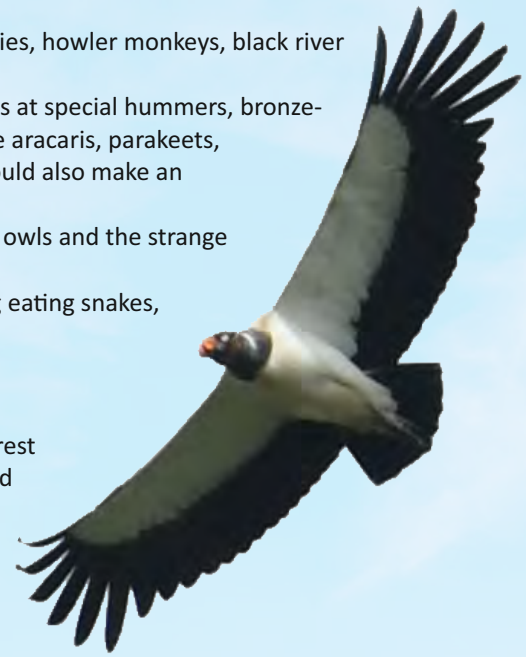
After breakfast we head for Ara Ambigua in search of delightful and special hummers, black crested coquettes and go in search of snow caps.

Overnight at Rancho Naturalista a brilliant lodge with exceptional food and views of Turrialba volcano.

Day 4: We'll start the day drinking coffee on a veranda watching the busy feeders. Birds include Chachalacas, aracarís and motmots. Mammal visitors are agoutis and if we're lucky a tayra, a huge weasel. Close to Rancho we'll look for spectacular sun bitters and witness hummingbirds splash bathing in picturesque forest pools. Overnight at Rancho Naturalista.

Day 5: After breakfast and a last look at Rancho's feeders we drive to the lowland rainforest of Serapiquí. En route we'll look for dashing bat falcons spectacular scarlet and great green macaws. Overnight at Villa Lapas hotel. After dinner we'll make a short night walk to see and photograph the iconic red eyed treefrog.





Day 6: Today we'll visit the world famous La Selva Biological Station in search of peccaries, howler monkeys, black river turtles, "blue jean" poison frogs, trogons, euphonias and migrant warblers.

In the afternoon we'll visit Cope's place, a magical sanctuary where we'll get close looks at special hummers, bronze-tailed plumeleteers, long billed and stripe-throated hermits. Other avian gems include aracarís, parakeets, kingfishers, eye popping honey creepers and dacnis. Jesus Christ lizards or basilisks should also make an appearance.

We'll take a short hike in the rainforest for white tent making bats, roosting spectacled owls and the strange great potoo.

After dinner at the hotel, we'll go on a night Safari to spotlight spectacled caiman, slug eating snakes, whip scorpions and tarantulas.

Overnight Villa Lapas Hotel

Day 7: We journey to the Nicoya peninsula for a dry forest adventure.

On the way we'll stop at Tapirus Lodge and take the Aerial tram, gliding through the forest canopy at eye level with epiphytic orchids and sloths. We'll also see handsome crowned tree frogs and we have chances of Baird's tapir and eyelash pit vipers.

We overnight at La Ensenada, a magical lodge on the coast, set amongst magnificent Guanacaste trees.

Day 8: We'll take an early morning boat trip through the mangroves to look for roseate spoonbills, mangrove hummers (a species unique to Costa Rica) roosting nighthawks and the sought after and rare rufous-necked wood rail. In the afternoon we'll visit salt evaporation pools to scope out shorebirds and crocodiles.

Overnight La Ensenada.

Day 9: We travel with wildlife stops to the Tarcoles River where we'll take a boat trip to get up close and personal with huge American crocodiles.

Overnight at The Ara Hotel.

Day 10: A hike in the famous Carara National Park. Chances of capuchin monkeys, spiny tailed iguanas, lance tailed manakins, the spectacle of an army ant swarm followed by ant birds and wood creepers. We'll also track down the elusive steak chested ant pi a.

Overnight at The Ara Hotel Hotel.

Day 11: We drive to San Gerardo de Dota high up in the Talamancas Mountains. We'll need fleeces and warm clothes here. We'll visit the paramo a unique high altitude habitat with volcano juncos, timberline wrens, silky flycatchers and volcano hummingbirds.

Overnight at the sumptuous Savegre Hotel

Day 12: We'll look for the mythical resplendent quetzal, one of the planet's most awe inspiring birds.

We'll do short walks in the cloud forest to see woodpeckers, a wonderful variety of montane hummingbirds, emerald toucanets and many more.

Overnight Savegre Hotel

Day 13: We journey back to San Jose with wildlife stops on the way. A birding stop at a cafe should deliver new birds on our final day.

Overnight at Airport Hotel.

Day 14: Transfer from hotel to airport for flights home.

WHEN:

20th February to 6th March, 2025

6th - 19th December, 2025

PRICE PER PERSON: US\$3950.00 (based on 2 sharing), Single room US \$4400.00

To find out more information and book places, contact Johan at info@thebirdway.com

CLICK HERE TO SEE NIGEL'S RECENT ADVENTURES IN COSTA RICA FOR NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC!

Hope to see you in November!

Best wishes, Nigel and Johan.