



VICTOR EMANUEL NATURE TOURS

ITINERARY

# FEATHERED GEMS OF NORTHERN PERU MARVELOUS SPATULETAIL, ANTPITTAS & MUCH MORE!

A RELAXED & EASY TOUR™  
NOVEMBER 8–18, 2024

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Crimson-mantled Woodpecker © Andrew Whittaker

**The diversity of birds in the Andes of northern Peru is greater than nearly anywhere else on earth. This fabled birding destination is full of colorful tanagers and hummingbirds, along with many exciting endemics and poorly known local specialties, a good number of which can be seen right from the doorstep of our lodges. The high rate of endemism here is due largely to geography, with the deep valley of the Marañón River bisecting the Andes to produce an impassable barrier between the north and the south sides of the valley.**

**This exciting itinerary maximizes our birding time, giving us a chance not only to seek out rarities at various elevations but also to make the acquaintance of a number of widespread montane and foothill gems. Be prepared for an almost overwhelming visual feast of tanagers, hummingbirds, quetzals, woodpeckers, cotingas, manakins and antpittas!**

**Though development and settlement have accelerated with the marked improvement in roads and other infrastructure, this part of Peru is still dominated by lush, virtually pristine montane woodlands. In the foothill forests of Cerro Escalera and the Akonabich Center, we hope to see the endemic Koepcke's Hermit. The Mishana Tyrannulet, Inambari Woodcreeper, Varzea Thrush, and Fiery-throated Fruiteater are among the many possibilities at Waqanki Lodge, where up to 20 species of hummingbirds visit feeders and buzz through one of the richest orchid gardens in the world. At mid-elevation near Moyobamba, we will encounter an entirely different suite**



**The striking Chestnut Antpitta © Andrew Whittaker**

**of hummingbirds and tanagers, and a visit to a blind in a white-sand forest lets us watch tinamous, ground-doves, and perhaps even Rufous-breasted Wood-Quails at close quarters. We will also visit an easily accessible cave with hundreds of roosting Oilbirds, one of the strangest birds in the Americas.**

**The centerpiece of our tour may well be our five-night stay at Abra Patricia Reserve and Owlet Lodge, a priority site for the critically endangered Long-whiskered Owlet and the Ochre-fronted, Rusty-tinged, and Chestnut antpittas. Among the other endemics we will concentrate on during our sojourn here is the Marvelous Spatuletail, a bizarre hummingbird with a global range restricted to a single Andean valley.**

**With a cool climate, excellent food, attractive gardens and feeder setups, and some of the best and best-maintained trails in the Andes, this tour is an ideal opportunity to experience fantastic birding in an unparalleled landscape.**

**This tour is one in our series of Relaxed & Easy tours. These tours are appropriate for participants who want a slower paced tour, with somewhat fewer hours in the field and lighter physical activity.**

**They are ideal for persons who prefer a somewhat later start in the morning (typically between 6:00 to 6:30 AM), a break after lunch and a shorter afternoon outing. They typically involve shorter walks, usually less than a mile, and avoid difficult terrain.**

**November 8, Day 1: Arrival in Lima.** Tour participants should plan to arrive in Lima, Peru, (Jorge Chávez International Airport, airport code LIM) today. After clearing immigration and customs, a short distance walk outside the terminal will take you to the **Wyndham Costa del Sol Airport Hotel**, located right at the airport across from the departure terminal, where a room has been reserved in your name. Most flights from the United States arrive in the late evening. Due to the late flight arrival times, dinner tonight is on your own.

When making your airline reservations, please keep in mind that our flight to Tarapoto the next day (Day 2) departs in the morning. We recommend arriving a day early in order to rest after the late arriving international flight and to allow for any flight delays. Some travelers may choose to arrive early and spend a day or two in Lima touring the city; our office will be pleased to help with additional arrangements, such as extra days in Lima or a city tour. The airport is located in the municipality of Callao, away from Lima's commercial areas and historical sites.

NIGHT: Wyndam Costa del Sol Airport Hotel, Lima

**November 9, Day 2: Lima to Tarapoto; Afternoon at Cerro Escalera Reserve.** We'll meet in the hotel lobby this morning, at a time to be announced, for a short tour welcome before walking to the departure terminal as a group. Our flight from Lima to Tarapoto should depart around 9:45 am. The flight will last about an hour and



Paradise Tanager © Andrew Whittaker

twenty minutes. Once in Tarapoto, we'll make the short drive in our air-conditioned van through fertile lowlands to Cerro Escalera Reserve and the Akonabich Center, in the Andean foothills. Flowers and feeders here attract the White-necked Jacobin, Gray-breasted Sabrewing, and Violet-headed Hummingbird, but the real attraction is the Koepcke's Hermit, a rare hummingbird endemic to these Andean foothills.

After a restaurant lunch featuring local cuisine, we will return to birding the reserve, an excellent site for Wattle Guan, Red-throated Caracara, White-throated Toucan, Rose-fronted Parakeet, Bluish-fronted Jacamar, Cliff Flycatcher, and Paradise and Turquoise tanagers. We will arrive at our hotel in the afternoon.

NIGHT: Río Cumbaza / DM Hotels, Tarapoto

**November 10, Day 3: Tarapoto to Waqanki Lodge.** A 20-minute drive from Tarapoto, Laguna Ricuricocha is a 90-acre lake with aquatic and emergent vegetation attractive to Comb and Black-bellied Whistling ducks, herons and egrets, Rufous-sided Crake, Wattle Jacana, and Least Grebe.

Among the stops we will make on our drive today is Quisqarumi Bridge, site of the most accessible Oilbird colony in Peru; hundreds of these large nocturnal birds shelter in a cave here. These frugivores use echolocation as they soar through the darkness to take fruits from palm trees.



**Oilbird © Rafael Galvez**

We will arrive at the family-run Waqanki Lodge, secluded in secondary forest at 1,000 meters (3,000 feet), in time for a delicious lunch. A ten-minute walk from our rooms through the rich gardens takes us to a blind with excellent views of hummingbird feeders, where we can expect as many as 18 species, including Rufous-crested Coquette, Golden-tailed Sapphire, Black-throated and Long-tailed hermits, Blue-tailed Emerald, Violet-headed Hummingbird, Gray-breasted Sabrewing, White-necked Jacobin, Black-throated Mango, Amethyst Woodstar, Long-billed Starthroat, Fork-tailed Woodnymph, Sapphire-spangled Emerald, and White-chinned Sapphire.



**A lovely male Golden-tailed Sapphire © Andrew Whittaker**

With over 350 species of every size, shape, and color, this is one of the best areas for orchids in the Neotropics. Botanists and non-botanists alike will be overwhelmed by the beauty and diversity of these flowers; several new species have been described from the lodge gardens here, which can also produce the endemic Black-bellied Tanager or the Mishana Tyrannulet and Varzea Thrush, both of the latter species only recently described. We can try for owls at dusk.

NIGHT: Waqanki Lodge, Moyobamba

**November 11, Day 4: Waqanki Lodge and Morro de Calzada Amazon Center.** After a hearty early breakfast, we will set out on the lodge's trails before making the 20-minute drive to the Morro de Calzada Center. Our quest begins with the search for the elusive Russet-crowned Crake, and we will also be looking for White Hawk, Bluish-fronted Jacamar, Red-stained Woodpecker, and Channel-billed Toucan. Blue-crowned and Green-backed trogons, Peruvian Warbling-Antbird, and Yellow-browed Tody-Flycatcher also call this forest home. As we explore, we may hear the endangered Rio Mayo Titi Monkey or the Andean Saddle-backed Tamarin. We'll spend the rest of the day exploring the lodge's trail system or simply relaxing amid the lovely gardens.

NIGHT: Waqanki Lodge, Moyobamba

**November 12, Day 5: Waqanki to Owlet Lodge at Abra Patricia.** After some pre-breakfast birding at the lodge, we will set out on what will be mostly a travel day, making stops for forest birds or for Fasciated Tiger-Heron, Torrent Duck and White-capped Dipper on roadside streams.

We will arrive at Owlet Lodge in the late afternoon, with time to enjoy the lively feeders before taking in a breathtaking sunset over hills draped in pristine cloud forest. The hummingbird feeders should be bustling with the likes of Sword-billed Hummingbird, Chestnut-breasted Coronet, Collared Inca, Emerald-bellied Puffleg, Fawn-breasted Brilliant, White-bellied Woodstar, and Long-tailed Sylph. The gardens and forest around the lodge draw mixed flocks including Crimson-mantled Woodpecker, Barred Becard, Yellow-breasted Brushfinch, and Flame-faced, Grass-green, and White-capped tanagers. Even the endemic Yellow-scarfed Tanager and Johnson's Tody-Flycatcher are possible here, where the total bird list exceeds 400 species. Late in the evening, it is often possible to see a Black Agouti or a Tayra, the large tropical weasel relative, around the lodge.



Long-tailed Sylph © Andrew Whittaker



A beautiful Yellow-scarfed Tanager © Andrew Whittaker

NIGHT: Owlet Lodge at Abra Patricia Reserve, Abra Patricia

**November 13-16, Days 6-9: Owlet Lodge at Abra Patricia.** Abra Patricia Reserve was established in 2005 by the Asociación Ecosistemas Andinos (ECOAN), with the support of the American Bird Conservancy. In the twenty years since, those organizations have worked together to expand the reserve and to create a new protected area, the Huembo Reserve, which is home to the Marvelous Spatuletail. With the nearby Alto Mayo Cloud Forest Reserve, a total of 450,000 acres of forest has been preserved along the upper Mayo River.

We will have four full days to enjoy these fabulous forests from our base at the lovely Owlet Lodge, at an elevation of around 7,500 feet on the south side of the Río Marañon watershed. The Alto Mayo Reserve extends from the pass down to about 3,300 feet, making this stretch a superb point of access to middle-elevation and foothill birding. Our birding will take us to a range of elevations, with a distinctly different avifauna at each. We will bird along well-maintained trails starting right at the lodge doorstep, exploring the forest interior's exotic bromeliads, orchids, lichens, and moss. We also have access to such specialized micro-habitats as bamboo. The well-constructed canopy tower here provides a unique view into the exuberant plant life of the treetops, along with a chance to see colorful tanagers and other birds at eye level. Though some rain is to be expected, our visit is timed for the drier season, with mild daytime temperatures and cool nights.

The Abra Patricia region is best known for the discovery of four species new to science over the past fifty years. The little Ochre-fronted Antpitta was discovered here in 1976, and the Chestnut Antpitta in 1987. The endemic Rusty-tinged Antpitta also occurs here, and in most years, we have great luck in seeing them, especially now that all three species come to the lodge for worms. Elfin forests in the area are home to two little-known endemics, the Cinnamon-breasted Tody-Tyrant and the Bar-winged Wood-Wren. The pass itself, and even the lodge garden, are good for the recently described Johnson's Tody-Flycatcher.



Ochre-fronted Antpitta, female © Andrew Whittaker

In the cloud forest, we will search out the rarely seen White-faced Nunbird along with ground dwellers like the Rusty-breasted Antpitta, Barred Anthrush, and Trilling and Rufous-vented tapaculos. Larger birds of these forests include the Scaly-naped Parrot, Golden-headed and Crested quetzals, Masked Trogon, White-collared Jay, and Wattled, Andean and Sickle-winged guans.

Many of the birds of the forest interior can be challenging to see, but we will hope for looks at the Rufous Spinetail, Uniform Antshrike, Streak-headed Antbird, Bicolored Antvireo, Rufous-headed Pygmy-Tyrant, and Gray-browed Brushfinch. The mixed flocks here are quite different from those at lower elevations, often featuring Green-and-black Fruiteater, Variable Antshrike, Streaked Tuftedcheek, Striped and Black-billed treehunters, Spotted Barbtail, Montane Foliage-gleaner, Olivaceous Siskin, Chestnut-breasted Chlorophonia, and Red-hooded, Grass-green, and Beryl-spangled tanagers. The valleys echo with the voices of such great songsters as the Andean Solitaire and Sharpe's and Chestnut-breasted wrens. The forest reserve is also the last stronghold of the endemic and endangered Yellow-tailed Woolly Monkey.



**Grass-green Tanager is a regular around the clearing at the Owlet Lodge. © Andrew Whittaker**

Somewhat lower down, ridge-top elfin forest is home to Crested Quetzal, Chestnut-crested Cotinga, Booted Racket-tail, and a host of gem-like tanagers: Lacrimose, Blue-winged, and Hooded mountain tanagers and Yellow-throated, Metallic-green, Saffron-crowned and Flame-faced tanagers.

The Marvelous Spatuletail, one of the most spectacular hummingbirds in the world, is known to visit feeders at the Huembo Interpretation Center, near the villages of Pedro Ruiz and Florida. Among the other hummingbirds we might see here are the Violet-fronted Brilliant, Sparkling and Lesser violetears, White-bellied Hummingbird, Andean Emerald, Green-tailed Trainbearer and the nearly microscopic Little Woodstar. A walk along the trails gives us a chance at the endemic Buff-bellied Tanager, Emerald ("Blue-throated") Toucanet, Speckle-chested Piculet, Rufous-capped Antshrike, Speckle-breasted Wren, Buff-browed Foliage-gleaner and Silvery Tanager.

Huembo Reserve also holds good numbers of Andean Cock-of-the-rock and Red-ruffed Fruit-crow, and even the rare Amazonian Umbrellabird is a possibility here. Fast-moving feeding flocks can include the stunning Versicolored Barbet, Lanceolated Monklet, Scaled Fruiteater, Lemon-browed and Ornate flycatchers, Golden-collared and Purple honeycreepers, Black-faced Dacnis, and Blue-naped Chlorophonia. We are likely to visit two different hummingbird feeders where the nectar-sipping guests can include Violet-fronted Brilliant, Booted Racket-tail, Tawny-bellied Hermit, Greenish Puffleg and Ecuadorian Piedtail.

And then there are the wonderful tanagers: Vermilion, Blue-capped, Paradise, Orange-eared, Green-and-gold, Golden, Blue-necked, Blue-and-black, and the amazing White-winged. No less interesting are such duller-plumaged specialties as the Pearled Treerunner, Equatorial Graytail and Ash-browed Spinetail.



Marvelous Spatuletail © Andrew Whittaker

Night birding is often good here, too. Both the Rufous-banded Owl and the White-throated Screech-Owl can be found in the lodge's garden, and the wider area is home to the Lyre-tailed Nightjar (the male's tail has to be seen to be believed!), Rufous-bellied Nighthawk, and the endemic Cinnamon Screech-Owl.

NIGHTS: Owlet Lodge at Abra Patricia, Abra Patricia

**November 17-18, Days 10-11: Abra Patricia to Tarapoto; Return to Lima; Departure for Home.** After a pre-dawn breakfast, we will leave our cloud forest paradise to head back to Tarapoto; en route we will visit a blind in a private reserve in white-sand forest. Our time here should give us outstanding views of shy forest dwellers such as Cinereous and Little tinamous, Ruddy Quail-Dove, Gray-cowled Wood Rail, Ruddy Quail-Dove and Rufous-breasted Wood-Quail. The garden's abundant flowers and feeders attract hummingbirds including the tiny Wire-crested Thorntail, Blue-fronted and Green-fronted lancebills, Green Hermit, the poorly-known Many-spotted Hummingbird, Amethyst Woodstar, Black-throated Brilliant and with luck, the rare Napo Sabrewing.

Before arriving in Tarapoto at mid-afternoon, we will stop at a marsh to look for Masked Duck, Black-capped Donacobius and Rufous-fronted Thorn-bird. We will arrive at the airport with ample time to catch our late-day flight back to Lima.

Upon arrival in Lima, a short walk through the main terminal will take us back to the Wyndham Costa del Sol Airport Hotel, where a room has been reserved in your name. This evening we'll reconvene for a final field checklist session before enjoying a final dinner in the hotel restaurant.

Generally speaking, flights depart for the USA after 10:30 p.m. on Day 10, arriving early the following morning (November 18). Those wishing to avoid the long overnight flight should consider spending a final night in Lima and taking an international flight the following morning (if available).

NIGHT: Wyndham Costa del Sol Airport Hotel, Lima

**MEDICAL EVACUATION INSURANCE REQUIREMENT:** This tour visits remote locations where immediate access to primary medical care may NOT be available. For this reason, travel insurance which covers you for emergency evacuation is required for participation on this tour. This coverage is included in the Ripcord



Rescue Travel Insurance™ program. Through Ripcord, “emergency evacuation” can be purchased as a stand-alone benefit or as part of a comprehensive travel insurance policy. If you choose not to purchase insurance through Ripcord, you are required to obtain it through another provider.

**TOUR SIZE:** This tour will be limited to 14 participants.

**TOUR LEADERS:** This tour will be led by **David Ascanio** and **Doris Valencia**.



**David Ascanio**, a Venezuelan birder and naturalist, has spent over 39 years guiding birding tours throughout his native country, Colombia, Brazil, Peru, Costa Rica, the Orinoco and Amazon River basins, Trinidad & Tobago, Suriname, the Guianas, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, the Lesser Antilles, Cuba, Chile, and Panama. He is especially interested in bird vocalizations and has a private library containing voices of more than 70% of all the birds of Venezuela. David combines superb birding skills with an astonishing command of bird vocalizations. He has published a book for children about bird songs and coauthored the descriptions of two new species, the Rio Orinoco Spinetail and the Delta Amacuro Softtail. David has also published numerous papers about the birds of the *llanos* (plains), Orinoco River Island species, and the pan-tepui endemic species on which he has become an

authority. He is the senior author of the *Field Guide to the Birds of Venezuela* (2017). David is an excellent communicator, has a great sense of humor, and is tireless in helping others find birds and wildlife. These traits have made him one of the most popular naturalists and guides in the Neotropics.



**Doris Valencia** is a keen Peruvian birder and naturalist. She was born in Cusco, the capital of the Inca. Her passion for the outdoors and birding has its roots in her childhood. She spent her early years in the Madre de Dios region (southern Amazon) where her parents managed an eco-lodge. She leads birding trips throughout Perú and Colombia and is expanding to Ecuador. Doris unites great birding skills with a wide-ranging knowledge in all aspects of natural history. She is also an avid student of Peruvian history. Her lectures on the history of Machu Picchu are superb. Doris is the director of the Pacha Conservancy Project, which works with reforestation, outdoor education, research, and community outreach in the fragile cloud forest north of Cusco. She is also an entrepreneur and has been working to promote women in the tourism industry as guides and naturalists, especially from the

communities that surrounds important bird areas.

**FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS:** The fee for **Feathered Gems of Northern Peru** is **\$4,995** per person in double occupancy from Lima, Peru. The tour fee includes all meals beginning with breakfast on Day 2 through dinner on Day 10, accommodations as stated in the itinerary, ground transportation during the tour, domestic air tickets (economy class) roundtrip between Lima and Tarapoto, guide services provided by the tour leaders, and gratuities to local service providers and staff. It does not include international airfare from your home to Lima and return, airport departure taxes, alcoholic beverages, special gratuities, phone calls, laundry, or items of a personal nature. Rates are based upon group tariffs; if the tour does not have sufficient registration, a small-party supplement may have to be charged.

The single supplement for this tour is **\$850**. You will be charged a single supplement if you desire single accommodations, or if you prefer to share but have no roommate and we cannot provide one for you.

**REGISTRATION & DEPOSIT:** To register for this tour, please contact the VENT office. The deposit for this tour is \$1,000 per person. If you prefer to pay your deposit using a credit card, the deposit must be made with MasterCard or Visa at the time of registration. If you would like to pay your deposit by check, money order, or

bank transfer, your tour space will be held for 10 days to allow time for the VENT office to receive your deposit and completed registration form. The VENT registration form (available from the VENT office or by download at <https://ventbird.com>) should be completed, signed, and returned to the VENT office.

**PAYMENTS:** All tour payments may be made by credit card (MasterCard or Visa), check or bank transfer (contact the VENT office for bank transfer information). These include initial deposits, second deposits, interim payments, final balances, special arrangements, etc. Full payment of the tour fee is due 150 days (June 11, 2024) prior to the tour departure date.

**FUEL AND FUEL SURCHARGES:** In the uncertain, often volatile oil market of late, it is difficult – if not impossible – to predict fuel costs over the long term, and more specifically, at the time of operation of this departure. Our prices are based upon the prevailing fuel rates at the time of itinerary publication. While we will do everything possible to maintain our prices, if the fuel rates increase significantly, it may be necessary to institute a fuel surcharge.

**EXCHANGE RATE SURCHARGES:** In the erratic global financial markets of today, it is difficult to predict foreign currency exchange rates over the long term or at the time of operation of a tour or cruise departure. Tour prices are based upon the rate of exchange at the time of itinerary publication. If exchange rates change drastically, it may be necessary to implement a surcharge. If a surcharge is necessary, every effort will be made to minimize the amount. In many cases, these additional foreign exchange rate surcharges are passed to VENT by its vendors and suppliers.

### **CANCELLATION & REFUNDS:**

#### **Cancellation by Participant:**

Refunds, if any, for any cancellation by a participant are made according to the following schedule: If participant cancels 180 days or more before the tour departure date, a cancellation fee of \$500 per person will be charged unless the deposit is transferred to a new registration for another VENT tour that will operate within the next 12 months, in which case the cancellation fee will be \$100 per person. If cancellation is made between 179 and 151 days before departure date, the deposit is not refundable, but any payments covering the balance of the tour fee will be refunded. If cancellation is made fewer than 150 days before departure date, no refund is available. This policy and fee schedule also applies to pre- and post-tour extensions. For participants' protection, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance that covers trip cancellation/interruption.

<u>If participant cancels:</u>	<u>Participant's refund will be:</u>
180 days or more before departure date	Participant's deposit minus \$500*
\$179 TO \$151 days before date	No refund of the deposit, but any payments on the balance of the tour will be refunded.
150 days or less before departure date	No refund available

\*Unless the deposit is transferred to a new registration for another VENT tour that will operate within the next 12 months from the date of participant tour cancellation, in which case the cancellation fee will be \$100 per person. To qualify, cancellation must occur 180 days or more before departure date; deposit transfers must be made at the time of cancellation; and one transfer per deposit.

#### **Cancellation by VENT:**

If VENT cancels a tour prior to departure without cause or good reason, VENT will provide the participant a full refund, which will constitute full settlement to the participant.

If VENT cancels or delays a tour or any portion of a tour as a result of any Force Majeure event, VENT will use its reasonable best efforts to refund any payments on the balance of the tour fee to participant; provided that, VENT will have no obligation to provide a participant with a refund and will not be liable or responsible to a

participant, nor be deemed to have defaulted under or breached any applicable agreement, for any failure or delay in fulfilling or performing any term of such agreement. A “Force Majeure” event means any act beyond VENT’s control, including, without limitation, the following: (a) acts of God; (b) flood, fire, earthquake, hurricane, epidemic, pandemic or explosion; (c) war, invasion, hostilities (whether war is declared or not), terrorist threats or acts, riot or other civil unrest; (d) government order, law or actions; (e) embargoes or blockades; (f) national or regional emergency; (g) strikes, labor stoppages, labor slowdowns or other industrial disturbances; (h) shortage of adequate power or transportation facilities; and (i) any other similar events or circumstances beyond the control of VENT.

This VENT Cancellation & Refunds policy does not apply to air tickets purchased through VENT or to any special arrangements, such as additional hotel nights, that fall outside of the services described in the tour itinerary.

**Victor Emanuel Nature Tours is not a participant in the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires certain sellers of travel to have a trust account or bond. This business has a bond issued by Travelers in the amount of \$50,000. CST #2014998-50.**

**TRAVEL INSURANCE:** To safeguard against losses due to illness, accident, or other unforeseen circumstances, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance as soon as possible after making a deposit. VENT has partnered with Redpoint Travel Protection as our preferred travel insurance provider. Through Redpoint, we recommend its **Ripcord** plan. Designed for all types of travelers, Ripcord is among the most comprehensive travel protection programs available.

Critical benefits of Ripcord include a completely integrated program with a single contact for emergency services, travel assistance, and insurance claims; **medical evacuation from your point of injury or illness to your hospital of choice**; comprehensive travel insurance for trip cancellation/interruption, medical expense coverage, death of pet, and much more. Optional expanded insurance coverage is available and includes items such as evacuation coverage in case of a natural disaster or political or security reasons, waiver for pre-existing medical conditions exclusion, and a “Cancel for Any Reason” benefit. Ripcord is available to U.S. and non-U.S. residents.\*

For a price quote, or to purchase travel insurance, please visit: <https://ripcordtravelprotection.com/ventbird>; or click the **Ripcord** logo on our website (click Help and Trip Insurance); or call +1-415-481-0600. Pricing is based on age, trip cost, trip length, and level of coverage.

\*To be eligible for the pre-existing medical condition exclusion waiver and the optional Cancel for Any Reason (CFAR) upgrade, you must purchase your policy within 15 days of making your first trip payment. The CFAR benefit provides reimbursement for 75% of covered costs, and increases the policy premium by approximately 50%. Policies may be purchased either for the full value of the tour fee at the time of deposit or in segments as individual tour payments are made (deposit, mid-payment, final balance, additional arrangements, etc.). The “pay as you go” approach reduces up-front expense and ensures that the amount paid toward your full policy premium is in proportion to the amount paid toward the full tour fee. If you choose to “pay as you go,” you must cover each deposit or payment within 15 days, and insure all non-refundable trip cost in order to maintain the CFAR benefit. Please refer to the policy for a full description of coverage.

### **Coronavirus (COVID-19):**

In line with the decision made by the federal government (including the CDC), Redpoint considers COVID-19 illness as any other seasonal respiratory illness. Providing only a positive Covid-19 test result will likely not be considered a covered event per the terms and conditions of the company's policy. Redpoint maintains a **Coronavirus FAQ** page on its website that addresses questions and concerns travelers may have regarding COVID-19 and Redpoint's policy. We strongly recommend that you visit the page for an overview of relevant topics.

Please visit the **Coronavirus FAQ** page at the following link:  
[https://redpointtravelprotection.com/covid\\_19\\_faq/](https://redpointtravelprotection.com/covid_19_faq/).

**AIR INFORMATION:** Victor Emanuel Travel is a full-service travel agency and wholly owned subsidiary of Victor Emanuel Nature Tours (VENT). Victor Emanuel Travel will be happy to make any domestic or international air travel arrangements from your home and return. Per person fees apply for each set of travel arrangements: \$50 domestic; \$75 international.\* Many of our travelers choose to make their own air travel arrangements, but we emphasize the benefits to using our services. If you book your air arrangements yourself, Victor Emanuel Travel is unable to provide support in managing any flight delays and/or cancellations that could occur before and during a tour. When you purchase air tickets through Victor Emanuel Travel, our staff has ready access to your air ticket record and can provide assistance as problems arise. Please feel free to call the VENT office to confirm your air arrangements. **Please be sure to check with the VENT office prior to purchasing your air ticket to confirm that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate. VENT cannot be held responsible for any air ticket penalties.**

\*An air ticket will be purchased by Victor Emanuel Travel on behalf of the traveler with the traveler's consent. A purchase is considered final upon receipt of payment. If a ticket is subsequently reissued at the behest of the traveler (i.e. voluntary change of plans), the same fee rates apply for the reissue process, in addition to any fees that may be charged by the airline.

**BAGGAGE:** Please limit baggage to one piece of luggage and one carry-on. The airlines now strictly enforce baggage regulations. For the domestic flight in Peru, participants are asked to limit checked luggage to one bag weighing no more than 20 kilograms (about 44 pounds). Excess baggage charges, which can be substantial, are the personal responsibility of each participant. Please consult your pre-departure materials and/or airline to find out specific weight restrictions.

As a precaution against lost luggage, we suggest that you pack a change of clothes, toiletries, medications, important travel documents, optics, and any other essential items in your carry-on bag. Due to ever-changing circumstances in the government's attempts to improve airport security, we recommend that you check the website of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) for information pertaining to permissible carry-on items: <http://www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/prohibited/permitted-prohibited-items.shtm>.

**CLOTHING:** This tour visits a variety of regions, from the warm/hot lowlands around Lima and Tarapoto to the cool/cold highlands of Abra Patricia. Participants should pack for a variety of conditions. Light field clothing and casual attire are suitable for this trip. Please avoid military camouflage patterned clothing as it conveys an inappropriate image to police and military personnel, whom we may encounter. The following items are recommended:

- **Pants:** A couple of pairs of pants are essential. Many people prefer lightweight pants made of cotton or other material, but denim, though not as comfortable, is certainly acceptable.
- **Field Clothing:** Outdoor stores such as Cabela's and REI carry field clothing that many birders find appealing. Pants and long-sleeved shirts made of lightweight, durable materials with multiple pockets and ventilated seams are popular. These provide useful protection from the sun and occasional biting insects. Please avoid white or brightly colored clothing.
- **Shirts:** A couple of long-sleeved t-shirts in addition to other comfortable styles suitable for cool weather. We do not recommend short-sleeved shirts as much, as they offer no protection from biting insects or the sun.
- **Hat:** A hat, particularly of a wide-brimmed style, for protection from the sun is essential. At the very least, please bring a baseball-style cap.
- **Outerwear:** Cold to warm/hot weather is anticipated for much of the trip, but a warm sweater or jacket will be needed for the mornings and evenings at the Owlet Lodge at Abra Patricia. Your outerwear should be water repellent as rain is always a possibility in the highlands.
- **Sleepwear:** Warm sleepwear will be needed for the cool nights at the Owlet Lodge.

**FOOTWEAR:** We recommend a good trail-walking shoe or light hiking boot when in the field. Athletic shoes are acceptable. Lighter shoes or sandals will come in handy when relaxing around the hotels and lodges.

**LAUNDRY SERVICE:** Laundry service is available at the hotels in Lima and Tarapoto on a charge-per-item basis. The Owllet Lodge at Abra Patricia charges \$10.00 (USD) per kilogram (around 2.2 pounds). Items dropped off in the morning at the lounge are usually returned in the afternoon of the same day or early the next morning. Laundry service is not available at Waqanki Lodge.

**CLIMATE & WEATHER:** Weather conditions can be extremely variable on this trip. The daytrip in the lowlands around Tarapoto is likely to be warm-to-hot and dry, with daytime highs reaching into the 90s (°F). Conversely, our time in the mountains, at Abra Patricia, will be cool to cold on clear nights and mornings, with temperatures dropping to the low 50s, although temperatures quickly warm on sunny days. Our visit is timed for the dry season although rain is always a possibility. At any time, but especially during the peak dry months of June, July, and August, cold fronts from the south (polar air masses) can bring a few days of rain and cold temperatures. During these cold fronts, daytime highs may be only in the mid-50s to mid-60s, and temperatures may drop to as low as the 40s at night.

### **CONDITIONS:**

**Physical demands:** The physical demands on this tour are easy to moderate, but our excursions involve a moderate amount of walking and standing. All walking will be at a slow pace, and we emphasize that no one will be subjected to physical demands exceeding their capabilities. At Abra Patricia and Waqanki Lodge, physical demands range from light to moderate. Forest trails are generally wide and well-maintained but involve walking both uphill and downhill because the terrain is hilly. Most birding is done along the main highway or on short trails. At the Spatuletail Reserve, an hour drive from Owllet Lodge, both sets of hummingbird feeders are accessed by fairly short and well-maintained but slightly steep trails. The other hikes from the Owllet Lodge are less strenuous, on very well-maintained but narrow trails. In places, walking will occur on uneven ground, including up and down stairs. The trail to the hummingbird garden is fairly short but steep and can be slippery after a rain. However, at the garden itself, there is an elevated lookout with bench seats. The longer trail into the upper forest is well maintained. Persons in reasonably good physical condition, however, should not experience problems. Your tour leaders will describe the trail conditions and distances on a daily basis, usually at dinner and lunch time.

### **Accommodations:**

Accommodations are fairly good at Waqanki and Owllet lodges and at the hotel in Tarapoto. The Lima Airport Hotel is very comfortable and conveniently located. At Waqanki Lodge, the rooms are comfortable and the quality of food good. At the Owllet Lodge at Abra Patricia, the climate is decidedly cooler; damp and foggy conditions (especially at night) are frequent. The lodge consists of the visitor center and three identical cabins. The visitor center has a lounge, dining hall, kitchen, restrooms, and a storage room. The cabins each have two suites. One suite is arranged as a double bedroom and the other suite with a single bed. Both suites share a common room and a common bathroom. The rooms are comfortable but unheated and can be quite chilly some nights. Please refer to the Sleepwear section under CLOTHING. From the parking lot, an uphill trail of approximately 125 yards leads to the main lodge and dining area, and an additional 75-yard walk leads to the guest cabins beyond.

**Meals:** Most of our meals during this trip will be served at the dining room at hotels and lodges as well as local restaurants. Breakfasts will be served to the table, with assigned seating at lunch and dinner for our group with occasional set menus or à la carte service. We will also have some box lunches while we are birding. Given sufficient notice, the kitchens can accommodate special dietary needs; please inform us of any special needs when you register for the tour.

**Elevations during this tour:** We will be touring mostly in the foothills and cloud forest of the Andes where the elevation ranges from 385 meters (1,265 feet) at Tarapoto, to 980 meters (3,215 feet) at Waqanki Lodge near Moyobama, up to 2,316 meters (7,600 feet) at the Owllet Lodge at Abra Patricia.

**EQUIPMENT:** One of the most important aspects of an enjoyable travel experience is being prepared with proper equipment. The following items will come in handy during your trip to Peru:

- **Daypack** – Good for carrying extra clothing, field guides, supplies, optical equipment, etc.
- **Notebooks and pens**
- **Travel alarm clock** – Battery-operated is best if you are not using the alarm on your phone.
- **Polarized sunglasses with good UV protection**
- **Sunscreen, lip balm, skin lotions**
- **Personal toiletries**
- **Cameras, lenses, memory cards, and extra batteries**
- **Collapsible walking stick** – Highly recommended for those who have trouble walking, and certainly very helpful at Waqanki and Owlet lodges
- **Umbrella** – A small collapsible umbrella can be indispensable.
- **Zip bags** – Large plastic zip bags are useful for protecting optical equipment from rain and humidity.
- **Refillable water bottle** – Important as an effort to reduce plastic waste
- **Small flashlight or headlamp** – You should be sure to bring a rugged flashlight with extra batteries or a small head lamp (LED-types work best) for owling and general use while walking at night around the lodge.

### **BINOCULARS & SPOTTING SCOPES**

**Binoculars** – We strongly recommend good binoculars of at least 8x32, 8x42, or 10x42 magnification. We recommend that you NOT bring mini-binoculars of any kind. Some people like “minis” because they are small and lightweight, but they have an extremely small field of view and very poor light-gathering power. Trying to find a bird in your binoculars using minis is like trying to read a book through a keyhole. You will be very frustrated, and even if you do manage to get the bird in your binoculars before it flies, you will have a poor view. You will find that 8x32 or 8x42 binoculars are compact and light enough.

**Spotting Scopes** – Your tour leaders will have scopes available for group use throughout the trip, but if you have one and wish to bring it, please feel free to do so.

### **TRAVEL DOCUMENTS:**

**PASSPORTS** - A valid passport is required for six months beyond your entry date into Peru. Please check the expiration date on your passport. **If it is not valid for six months beyond your entry date into Peru, you will need to get it renewed.** You will also want to make sure that you have at least two blank pages in your passport for stamps.

If you need a passport, you should get it well in advance of your trip departure date. For additional fees, a passport can be issued on an expedited basis. In the United States this can be done at the nearest passport office, most post offices, or the county clerk’s office. You may also visit <https://state.gov/travelers/> for information on how to get or renew a passport.

As a safety measure, photocopy the first two pages of your passport and keep the photocopies in a safe place, so if your passport is lost you will have proof of identification. Your passport should be signed and easily available at all times. You will need it for check-in at the airport on your first day of departure, so **do not pack it in your checked luggage.**

**VISAS** - Citizens of the United States and Canada are required to obtain a tourist visa for entry into Peru. The visa can be obtained free of charge upon arrival in Lima. Rules and regulations pertaining to non-U.S. and Canadian citizens may vary; please check with the consulates or embassies.

**CURRENCY & MONEY MATTERS:** Your trip fee includes all necessary expenses; however, you may want to bring some cash to cover personal expenses not included in the program, such as gifts, laundry, gratuities, meals on your own, and personal items. It is best to carry small denominations as hotels may be unable to provide change for large bills. Bills need to be in good condition as worn and old ones are not accepted for exchange. Major credit cards are accepted at all hotels for gift shop items, laundry, etc. Please check with your bank and credit card issuer for more information regarding banking and the use of ATM and credit cards overseas.

The official currency of Peru is the Sol (plural=Soles) (PEN). You can check the latest currency conversion rate by visiting “XE-The World’s Favorite Currency Site” at: <http://www.xe.com/>.

**ELECTRICITY:** Power in Peru is 220V, with use of outlet types “A” and “C” most prevalent. The “A” type outlet accommodates a flat two-bladed plug while the “C” type outlet, also known as the European-style outlet, accommodates a plug with two round pins. To ensure that use of American standard 110V equipment with the flat-pronged plugs will work, you should bring an all-purpose transformer to convert the current for 110V use, in addition to proper plug adapters. However, nowadays most electronic devices accommodate these two types of power.

**INTERNET ACCESS:** Wi-Fi service is available at all hotels during this trip (Lima and Tarapoto), though service at the Waqanki Lodge can be slow, especially during rain storms. This also applies to the facility at Abra Patricia where Wi-Fi, available in the common areas (dining room and lounge), doesn’t work as efficiently during storms and cloudy days.

**LANGUAGE:** Spanish is the primary language spoken in Peru. English is spoken by the principal staff in hotels and lodges.

**TIME:** Peru observes Peru Standard Time (PET) all year, without any seasonal changes. PET is on the same time zone as Eastern Standard Time (EST).

**HEALTH:** VENT follows Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations for standard travel precautions, which includes vaccination against a variety of preventable diseases. Among these so-called Routine Vaccinations are measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) vaccine, poliovirus vaccine (boosters for adult travelers), and Varicella (Chickenpox). You should also be up to date with Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B vaccinations.

If you are taking personal medication, prescription or over the counter, be sure to bring an ample supply that will allow you to get through the tour safely. Please consult your physician as necessary. Remember to pack all medication in your carry-on baggage, preferably in original containers or packaging. As airline baggage restrictions can change without warning, please check with your airline for procedures for packing medication.

**Malaria & Yellow Fever:** Malaria and Yellow Fever are serious diseases spread by mosquitos. Vaccination for Yellow Fever is not required for entry to Peru; however, the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) recommends a yellow fever vaccination for all travelers who intend to visit most forest areas of the country up to an elevation of 2,300 meters (7,550 feet). Malaria has been confirmed in Peru, including the chloroquine-resistant strain in rural areas. The CDC recommends an anti-malarial prophylaxis for all travelers to most areas of the country up to 2,500 meters (8,200 feet). There are several options for malaria prophylaxis. Please consult your health care provider and/or the CDC for more information. Although both Yellow Fever and Malaria are endemic to Peru, VENT has not had a problem with either disease on a Peru tour in many years.

**Typhoid:** VENT recommends vaccination against Typhoid, a bacterial disease that is found in Peru. Typhoid, or Typhoid Fever, is caused by *Salmonella Typhi*. It is transmitted through consumption of contaminated food and water, typically when someone who is infected uses the bathroom and does not wash their hands. Symptoms may include high fever, weakness, stomach pain, headache, diarrhea or constipation, cough, and loss of appetite.

**COVID-19:** We continually emphasize that our number one priority is the health and safety of our customers and employees. Although VENT no longer maintains any of its COVID-era prevention protocols, we strongly recommend best practices for protecting yourself and your fellow travelers against COVID-19 illness. These measures include receiving the primary series vaccinations for those eligible, staying “Up to Date” with COVID-19 booster shots, wearing high filtration N-95 or KN-95 masks when in airports and on airplanes, and avoiding risky social settings in the lead-up to your tour. These recommendations are firmly rooted in CDC guidance regarding recommendations for avoiding COVID-19. Please visit the **Coronavirus Travel Update** page of our website <https://ventbird.com/covid-19> for our official statement regarding COVID-19 and the operation of our tours. Please visit the CDC website for the most up to date information about COVID-19 and associated guidance for proper health and hygiene: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>.

**Sun Exposure** – The sun’s ultraviolet rays are dangerous under prolonged exposure (sometimes only a matter of minutes), even in winter and early spring. Anytime you are outdoors you will want to protect your skin, including your lips, eyes, nose, and ears. A severe sunburn is potentially very painful and will affect your level of enjoyment. Always protect yourself when outdoors and be sure to bring an ample supply of high SPF sunscreen and lip balm. We strongly recommend the use of ultra-violet blocking, polarized sunglasses.

**Food and Water:** All food is safe to consume, including raw fruits and vegetables and is cooked on site. Purified water is available throughout the trip. Lodges have bottled water dispensers available for water refills. Our vehicles will also have water available at all times. All salads and dairy products are perfectly safe to eat at the places we visit.

**Biting Insects:** Mosquitoes and black flies can sometimes be a nuisance in and around Waqanki Lodge and Abra Patricia. We suggest a stick-type repellent for your face and hands and any exposed skin to be applied as needed.

**Insect Repellents** – There are insect repellents for the skin and an insect repellent used to treat clothing that should not be applied to the skin.

Insect repellents for the skin are commonly available in three forms:

- DEET (N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide): A chemical compound that is marketed under various brand names (OFF!®, Cutter™, Ultrathon™, etc.) and offered in a variety of formulations including sprays, lotions, time-release preparations, and disposable wipes. The formulations will state a percentage of the active ingredient DEET on the packaging. DEET may be applied to exposed skin directly and/or sprayed on clothing. Please be careful when applying DEET as it can damage plastics and lens coatings.
- Picaridin: A synthetic formulation that is derived from piperine, a substance found in plants that produce black pepper.
- Herbal insect repellents: Various mixtures of organic ingredients such as oils from eucalyptus, citronella, cedar, and other herbs. The herbal repellents are more difficult to categorize because of the difference in ingredients from one brand to another. There is considerable variation in their effectiveness.

An insect repellent for clothing is marketed in one approved formulation:

- Permanone® (Permethrin) is an odorless spray-on repellent that may be used for **pre-treatment** of clothing, gear, and tents. It should not be used directly on the skin or sprayed on clothing while it is being worn. The pre-treatment process requires a number of hours to complete and must be done outdoors, so is best completed in advance of travel. Do-it-yourself pre-treatment has to be repeated more often than commercial treatment using Insect Shield® technology. It is available at various outdoor stores and can easily be found online.
- Insect Shield® apparel: Clothing pre-treated with Permanone is made by a variety of manufacturers. It is available for purchase from some sporting goods suppliers. The clothing is advertised as retaining its repellency for up to 70 washings.

The US EPA offers a search tool to help choose a repellent that is best for a particular situation. For example, some repellents work for mosquitoes, but not for ticks.



<https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents/which-insect-repellent-right-you>

A good source of general health information for travelers is the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, which operates a 24-hour recorded Travelers' Information Line (800) CDC-INFO (800-232-4636). You can check the CDC website at <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>. Canadian citizens should check the website of the Public Health Agency of Canada: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health.html> (click on Travel Health).

**SUGGESTED READING:** A number of traditional booksellers and online stores list excellent inventories of field guides and other natural history resources that will help prepare you for this tour. We recommend [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) which has a wide selection; [www.buteobooks.com](http://www.buteobooks.com) and [www.nhbs.com](http://www.nhbs.com) which specialize in ornithology and natural history books; and [www.abebooks.com](http://www.abebooks.com) for out-of-print and hard-to-find titles.

***Birds:***

Schulenberg, T. S., D. F. Stotz, D. F. Lane, J. P. O'Neill, & T. A. Parker III. *Birds of Peru*. 2010. Second edition. Relatively compact (but remember, there are almost 1,800 species in this book), although not as small or lightweight as field guides to North America and Europe. **This is the most important field guide for this tour.**

***Behavior and Ecology:***

Forsyth, A., and K. Miyata. *Tropical Nature: Life and Death in the Rain Forests of Central and South America*. 1984. Does not deal much with birds, but a fantastic introduction to all kinds of topics relating to tropical wildlife—bugs, frogs, plants, botflies, and much more. Extraordinarily well written, a classic that ought to be read by anyone contemplating a visit to the American tropics.

Hilty, S. *Birds of Tropical America: A Watcher's Introduction to Behavior, Breeding and Diversity*.

2005. Highly recommended for background information on how things work in bird communities at tropical latitudes. Topics include the diversity of birds, hummingbird communities, mixed-species flocks, antbirds and army ants, colorfulness, song structure, and much more.

**TIPPING:** Tipping (restaurant staff, porters, drivers, local guides) is included on VENT tours. However, if you feel one or both of your VENT leaders or any local guides have given you exceptional service, it is entirely appropriate to tip. We emphasize that tips are not expected and are entirely optional. Tips should be given directly to your tour leader; they should not be sent to the VENT office.

**RESPONSIBILITY STATEMENT:** Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, Inc., a Texas corporation, and/or its agents (together, "VENT") act only as agents for the participant in regard to travel, whether by railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, or airplane and assume no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity which may be occasioned either by reason of defect in any vehicle or for any reason whatsoever, or through the acts or default of any company or person engaged in conveying the participant or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. VENT accepts no responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in airfare or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, terrorism, or other causes. All such losses or expenses will be borne by the participant, as tour rates only provide for arrangements for the time stated.

VENT reserves the right (i) to substitute hotels of similar category, or the best reasonable substitution available under the circumstances, for those indicated and (ii) to make any changes in the itinerary that are deemed necessary by VENT or which are caused by third party transportation schedules (i.e. railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, airplane, etc.).

VENT reserves the right to substitute leaders or guides on any tour. Where VENT, in its sole discretion, determines such substitution is necessary, it will notify tour participants.

VENT reserves the right to cancel any tour prior to departure with or without cause or good reason. See the VENT Cancellation & Refunds policy set forth above.

Tour prices are based on tariffs and exchange rates in effect on December 11, 2023, and are subject to adjustment in the event of any change thereto.

VENT reserves the right to decline any participant's Registration Form and/or refuse to allow any participant to participate in a tour as VENT deems reasonably necessary, in its sole discretion. VENT also reserves the right to remove any tour participant from any portion of a tour as VENT deems necessary, in its sole discretion, reasons for such removal include but are not limited to, medical needs, injury, illness, inability to meet physical demands of a tour, personality conflict or situations in which such removal is otherwise in the best interest of the tour, the tour group and/or such participant. A participant may also voluntarily depart from a tour. If a participant is removed from a tour or voluntarily departs from a tour, such participant will be responsible for any expenses associated with such removal or departure, including but not limited to, transportation, lodging, airfare and meals, and VENT will have no obligation to refund or reimburse any such removed or departed participant for any tour payments or deposits previously paid by such participant.

Baggage is carried at the participant's risk entirely. No airline company, its employees, agents and/or affiliates (the "Airline") is to be held responsible for any act, omission, or event during the time participants are not on board the Airline's aircraft. The participant ticket in use by any Airline, when issued, will constitute the sole contract between the Airline and the purchaser of the tickets and/or the participant. The services of any I.A.T.A.N. carrier may be used for VENT tours, and transportation within the United States may be provided by any member carrier of the Airlines Reporting Corporation.

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