

Puerto Maldonado: Gateway to the Peruvian Amazon

August 1-9, 2023 (Cusco and Machu Picchu extension: August 10-15)

Itinerary:

Please plan to arrive in Lima on July 31. Rooms are reserved at the Holiday Inn Lima Airport, and there is a 5-minute hotel shuttle to and from the airport. We will plan on meeting for dinner & a brief orientation at 6 PM. Dinner and the hotel tonight are included in the tour cost. This Amazonian Peru tour can be combined with our extension to the incredible ruins of Machu Picchu.

Day 1 (Tuesday, August 1) Transfer to Puerto Maldonado

After breakfast we'll all shuttle back to Jorge Chavez International Airport from where we will catch our flights to Puerto Maldonado. Upon arrival to Puerto Maldonado, we transfer to the Tambopata River Port, stopping along the way to look for Purus Jacamar, Pearl Kite, and Scaled Pigeon along the route's secondary forest. Once at the river port, a private boat will take us upriver to Posada Amazonas, our lodge for the next two nights. As we eat lunch on the boat, we will stop along the hour-long drive as many times as necessary to search for Pied Lapwing, King Vulture, Bat Falcon, Olive and Russet-backed Oropendolas, and Amazon Kingfisher. **Overnight at Posada Amazonas.**

Day 2 (Wednesday, August 2) Amazonian Canopy

We start the day with a 30-minute walk to a 42-meters tall scaffolding tower that will give us eye-level views of mixed bird flocks characteristic of the Amazon's canopy. Leading the charge are tanagers, notably Paradise, Green-and-gold, Flame-crested, Turquoise, and Opal-rumped Tanager. Other species we also hope to see in the process include Cream-colored Woodpecker, Gilded Barbet, Plum-throated Cotinga, and Western Striolated Puffbird. While we wait as one bird flock after the other pass, we'll also see several species of macaws and toucans against the horizon, including the Chestnut-eared, Lettered, Emerald, Curl-crested, and Ivory-billed (Brown-billed) Aracaries. As the day heats up, we'll keep an eye out for raptors that might take advantage of the thermals, most notably Harpy Eagle. We'll end the day on the birdy Shahue Trail, which is good for Fiery-capped Manakin, Round-tailed Manakin, Pale-winged Trumpeter, and Pavonine Quetzal. **Overnight at Posada Amazonas.**

Day 3 (Thursday, August 3) Oxbow Lakes and Bamboo Forests

Reaching Tres Chimbadas Lake requires a 30-minute boat ride followed by a 45-minute hike from Posada Amazonas. Once there we will paddle around the lake in a catamaran, searching for the resident family of giant river otters and other lakeside wildlife such as Hoatzin and Horned Screamers. We'll then turn our attention to specialists of the bamboo patches nearby, such as the endemic White-cheeked Tody-Flycatcher Peruvian Recurvebill, Red-billed Scythebill, Rufous-headed Woodpecker, Rufous-breasted Piculet, Dusky-cheeked and Brown-rumped Foliage-Gleaner, Large-headed and Dusky-tailed Flatbill, Flammulated Pygmy-Tyrant, Dot-winged Antwren, Ornate Stipplethroat, White-lined Antbird, Rufous-capped Nunlet, Pheasant Cuckoo, and Striped Cuckoo. Then it's back to waterbirds during a 3-hour boat ride to and inside the Tambopata National Reserve, where we hope to encounter Capped Heron, Cooi

Heron, Large-billed and Yellow-billed Tern, Razor-billed Curassow, Blue-throated Piping-Guan, and Orinoco Goose. We end the day with a lecture by local biologists telling us about their research projects.
Overnight at Tambopata Research Station.

Day 4 (Friday, August 4) The World's Largest Macaw Clay Lick.

We start daybreak at the world's largest macaw clay lick, locally called chunchos. Up to 16 species of parrot congregate here daily, including Red-and-green, Blue-and-gold, Scarlet, Red-bellied, Chestnut-fronted and Blue-headed Macaws; Mealy and Yellow-crowned Amazons; Blue-headed, Orange-cheeked and White-bellied Parrots; Dusky-headed, White-eyed, Cobalt-winged and Tui Parakeets and Dusky-billed Parrotlets. Once this colorful spectacle is over, we'll turn our attention to the Ocelot and Toucan Trail systems, which gives us access to tropical floodplain and gallery rainforest, and hence the chance for Agami Heron, Rufescent Tiger-Heron, American Pygmy and Green-and-rufous Kingfishers, Sunbittern, Starred Wood-Quail, Pale-winged Trumpeter, Black-tailed Leaf-tosser, several Trogons and Foliage-Gleaners, and many Woodcreepers, Flycatchers, and Manakins. Of particular interest will be understory mixed species flocks that follows ant swarms; these flocks may contain 30-40 species (or more!) including Dusky-throated, Bluish-slate, and Plain-winged Antshrike, Red-crowned Ant-Tanager, Thrush-like Antpitta, White-winged Shrike-Tanager, Amazonian Barred Woodcreeper and Elegant Woodcreeper. After three long days, we'll take it easy in the afternoon; there is always a chance for Squirrel Cuckoo, Masked Crimson Tanager, Cinnamon-throated Woodcreeper, Speckled Chachalaca and Yellow-tufted Woodpecker in the vicinity of the Tambopata Research Station. **Overnight at Tambopata Research Station.**

Day 5 (Saturday, August 5) Amazonian Mixed Flocks

Today we will again explore the Ocelot and Toucan Trail systems to see species we missed the previous day. Literally, hundreds of bird species live in these forests and we often see a different set of birds on the same trails as the day before. Exciting shy species we may encounter on our early morning hike include Black-spotted Bare-eye, Black-banded Woodcreeper, Sooty Antbird, and maybe even a tinamou, Striated Antthrush, Rufous-vented Ground-Cuckoo, and Razor-billed Curassow. We will also keep looking for such targets as the stunning Pavonine Quetzal, Black-bellied Cuckoo, Amazonian Pygmy-Owl, Great Jacamar, Ringed Antpipit, Speckled Spinetail, and mixed flocks led by White-winged Shrike-Tanager. Rare surprises such as Crested or Harpy Eagle, forest falcons, and Yellow-bellied Tanager are of course always possible in these exciting rainforests. Later in the day we'll visit the transitional forests above the clay lick which host the localized White-throated Jacamar, as well as Buff-throated Saltator, Blue-gray Saltator, Scarlet-hooded Barbet, Crested and Russet-backed Oropendolas, Piratic Flycatcher, and Yellow-billed Nunbird.
Overnight at Tambopata Research Station.

Day 6: (Sunday, August 6) Riparian and Bamboo Forest

Today we explore older river-created habitats at a pond five minutes upstream from TRC—forests of Cecropia and Balsa Wood with a bamboo understory. This is the habitat of the legendary Rufous-fronted Antthrush, as well as Lemon-throated Barbet, Spot-breasted Woodpecker, Cabanis Spinetail, Amazonian Antpitta, Blackish Antbird, Fuscous Flycatcher, Guira Tanager, and Troupial. As we exit the pond's forests, we will bird on grassy areas with Tessaria and young Cecropia trees, the main habitat for Plain-crowned and Dark-breasted Spinetails, Mottle-backed Elaenia, Spotted Tody-Flycatcher, Black-billed Thrush, and Orange-headed Tanager. We then turn our attention back to bamboo specialists, and another chance for

species preferring this habitat. We will do one last venture after dinner to spotlight Tawny-bellied Screech-Owl, Great Potoo, Long-tailed Potoo, Ocellated Poorwill, and if we are lucky a Mottled or Crested Owl. **Overnight at Refugio Amazonas.**

Day 7 (Monday, August 7) Brazilian Nut Forest Canopy

We'll start the day with a 30-minute walk to a 34-meter scaffolding canopy tower. The tower has been built upon high ground, therefore increasing your horizon of the continuous primary forest extending out towards the Tambopata National Reserve. From here views of mixed species canopy flocks as well as toucans, macaws, and raptors are likely. We'll then spend the rest of the day continuing to look for species we've missed the previous days, while trip some participants may also have the option to rest after several intense days of birding. **Overnight at Refugio Amazonas.**

Day 8 (Tuesday, August 8) Secondary Forest

We'll spend the morning hiking a 2-km trail along the Tambopata River where we'll look for Bluish-fronted Jacamar, Fiery-capped Manakin, Gray-crowned Flycatcher, and Yellow-browed Tody-Flycatcher. We'll then turn our attention to the forests around Refugio Amazonas, built on land which was once part of a timber concession and cattle ranch. As such, the forest in this part of our journey is secondary, giving us access to Barred Antshrike, Short-tailed Pygmy-Tyrant, Streaked Flycatcher, Solitary Black Caciue, and Gray-fronted Dove. **Overnight at Refugio Amazonas.**

Day 9 (Wednesday, August 9) Transfer to Cusco/Lima

After breakfast, we'll head back to Puerto Maldonado—a 30-minute boat ride—before we're transferred to Puerto Maldonado Airport to catch our flights to Cusco and Lima. You can either return home or continue onto our Cusco and Machu Picchu extension.

**Order of days in itinerary may change if logistically necessary*