



# FEATHERED GEMS OF NORTHERN PERU

Marvelous Spatuletail, Antpittas & Much More!

*November 5 - 15, 2026*



*Rufous-crested Coquette, Lophornis delattrei. Photo: Doris Valencia ©*

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 Marañon River bisecting the Andes to produce an impassable barrier between the north and the south sides of the valley.



*Andean Motmot, Momotus aequatorialis. Photo: Doris Valencia ©*

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 a visual feast of hummingbirds, toucanets & toucans, woodpeckers and antpittas!

Though development and settlement have accelerated with the marked improvement in roads and other infrastructure, this part of Peru still hosts some of the most pristine montane woodlands in the neotropics. In the foothill forests of Cerro Escalera and the Akonabich Center, we hope to see the endemic Koepcke's Hermit. Likewise, the Mishana Tyrannulet, Inambari Woodcreeper, Varzea Thrush, and Fiery-throated Fruiteater are among the many possibilities at Waqanki Lodge. Here, 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 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 crevice with dozens of roosting oilbirds, the only nocturnal frugivore bird in the world and certainly one of the most bizarre species in the Americas.

The centerpiece of our tour may well be our four-night stay at Abra Patricia Reserve and Owlet Lodge, a priority site for the critically endangered Long-whiskered Owlet as well as the Rusty-tinged and

Chestnut antpittas. Among the other endemics we will concentrate on during our sojourn here is the Marvelous Spatuletail, an extraordinary hummingbird with a global range restricted to a single Andean valley.

With a cool climate, good local cuisine, attractive gardens and feeder setups, and some of the best forests in the Andes that can be reached from the road edge, this tour is an ideal opportunity to experience fantastic birding in an unparalleled landscape

Our main goal is to give you the opportunity to see the most beautiful hummingbird in the world, the Marvelous Spatuletail. However, it offers challenges to reach one of the lodges and some bird feeders. There will be one or two earlier breakfast to allow us to see some of the key species in bird feeders and possibly two picnic lunches at birding locations.



*Chestnut-breasted Coronet, Boissonneaua matthewsii. Photo: Doris Valencia ©*

## November 5, 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



*Rufous-sided Crake, Laterallus melanophaius. Photo: David Ascanio ©*

international flight and to allow for any flight delays.

**NIGHT:** Wyndam Costa del Sol  
Airport Hotel, Lima

## November 6, Day 2: Lima to Tarapoto; Afternoon drive to Wakanki Lodge

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 twenty minutes. Once in Tarapoto, we'll make the short drive in our air-conditioned van to 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. 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. In fact, several 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. Provided that we feel energized, we can try for owls at dusk.

**NIGHT:** Waqanki Lodge, Moyobamba



*Blackish Rail, Pardirallus nigricans. Photo: David Ascanio ©*

## November 7, Day 3: Waqanki Lodge and Morro de Calzada Amazon Center

After a hearty 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 Rufous-sided Crake and Blackish Rail that often attend a

carefully arranged feeder seen conveniently from a forest blind. The area is also good for other birds like Bluish-fronted Jacamar, Red-stained Woodpecker, and Channel-billed Toucan. Also, Blue-crowned and Green-backed trogons, Peruvian Warbling-Antbird, and Yellow-browed Tody-Flycatcher call this forest home. As we explore, we may hear the endangered Rio Mayo Titi Monkey or the Andean Saddle-backed Tamarin. At around mid-morning we should head back to our inn and spend the rest of the morning exploring the lodge's trail system or simply relaxing amid the lovely gardens. After lunch in Wakanki, we will take a break and offer a walk in the orchid garden of the lodge, and beyond in search for Speckled Chachalaca, Gilded Barbet and Blue-necked, Turquoise and White-lined Tanagers.

**NIGHT:** Waqanki Lodge, Moyobamba



*Emerald-bellied Puffleg, Eriocnemis alina. Photo: David Ascanio ©*

## November 8, Day 4: Early departure to Arenas Blancas. Drive to Owlet Lodge at Abra Patricia

After an early breakfast, we will take a 2 hours drive to a completely different biome dominated by a forest growing in white sand. This location is owned by a local

family and started with only 4 acres of forest. Such initiative was a great success and today it has expanded to 32 acres! This accomplishment is due to the conservation effort of Mr. Norbil Becerra, the head of the family. The area offers unique habitat with excellent birding in their gardens and feeding stations. The feeding stations are nearby the lodge area,

which is reachable along a flat trail of about 300 steps. Some of the target species are Rufous-breasted Wood-Quail, Little Tinamou, Orange-billed Sparrow, Paradise and Black-bellied tanagers, Wire-crested Thorntail, Gray-breasted Sabrewing and Rufous-crested Coquette. After a few hours at the reserve, we will continue our ride further north, making stops for birds occurring along streams such as Fasciated Tiger-Heron, Torrent Duck and White-capped Dipper. In addition, we plan to stop in the Quisqarumi Bridge, a site of the most accessible Oilbird colony in Peru. Dozens of these large nocturnal birds shelter in a cave here. These frugivores use echolocation as they soar through the darkness to take fruits from palms and fig-like from fruiting trees.

We will arrive at Owlet Lodge for a late lunch, 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.

**NIGHT:** Owlet Lodge at Abra Patricia Reserve, Abra Patricia



*Deep-blue Flowerpiercer, Diglossa glauca. Photo: David Ascanio ©*

## November 9-11, Days 5-7: Owlet Lodge at Abra Patricia

The 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.



*Sword-billed Hummingbird, Ensifera ensifera. Photo: David Ascanio ©*

We will have three full days to enjoy this fabulous forest from our base at the lovely Owlet Lodge, at an elevation of around 7,500 feet on the south side of the Río Marañón 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 near the entrance of a trail that starts right at the lodge doorstep, exploring the forest edge exotic bromeliads, orchids, lichens, and mosses. We will also offer optional short walks to bird along the road or to reach the well-constructed canopy tower that provides an 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.

To put the importance of this reserve in context, Abra Patricia 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 some of these species come to the lodge for worms. The forests in the area are home to two little-known endemics, the Cinnamon-breasted Tody-Tyrant and the Bar-winged Wood-Wren, both of which will require an extra effort to locate. The pass itself, and even the lodge garden, are good for the recently described Johnson's Tody-Flycatcher.

In the cloud forest edge, we will search out the rarely seen White-faced Nunbird along with ground dwellers like the Rusty-breasted Antpitta, Barred Antthrush, 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 to see some of them including 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.

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 as well as 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



*Marvelous Spatuletail, Loddiaesia mirabilis. Photo: David*

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. Nevertheless bear in mind that seeing any of them is only a matter of luck. 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.



*Bronzy Inca, Coeligena coeligena. Photo: David Ascanio ©*

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. Any of these species can surprise us with a brief visit to the lodge grounds.

**NIGHTS:** Owlet Lodge at Abra Patricia, Abra Patricia

## November 12, Day 8: Early morning in Owlet Lodge. Drive to Tarapoto

After breakfast, we will leave our cloud forest paradise to head back to Tarapoto. Along the road we will stop at a marsh to look for Masked Duck, Black-capped Donacobius and Rufous-fronted Thornbird. We expect to arrive to Tarapoto for a late lunch and offer an optional outing to the Juan Guerra Road. This area is home to a wealth of amazonian bird species. The forests are also noted for their remarkable plant diversity, with prominent tree species from the Bombacaceae, legume, laurel and other plant families. Birding will take place along a little-used



*Oilbird, Steatornis caripensis. Photo: David Ascanio ©*

road, where we'll take short walks depending on activity. This provides excellent opportunities to encounter some of the region's most sought-after bird species. The dry forests of the Huallaga basin are critically endangered and rank among the most threatened ecosystems in the world. Some of the target species are Northern Slaty Antshrike, Planalto Hermit, Great Antshrike, White-browed Antbird, Rusty-fronted Tody-flycatcher, Black-fronted Nunbird, Barred Antshrike, Sepia-capped Flycatcher and Sulphur-bellied Tyrant-Manakin.

**NIGHT:** Río Cumbaza Hotel

## November 13, Day 9: Cerro Escalera Reserve and the Koepcke's Hermit Center - Aconabikh Reserve



*Gould's Jewelfront, Heliodoxa aurescens. Photo: David Ascanio ©*

This morning will find us along the road Tarapoto-Yurimaguas, cutting the Regional Conservation Area Cerro La Escalera. Time allowing, we plan to stop along the road in areas where parking is allowed.

We also expect to pay a visit to the Aconabikh Reserve, a location owned by a foundation with the propose to protect the habitat of the threatened Koepcke's Hermit. Aside from the hermit, other superb hummingbirds visit the feeders including the Gould's Jewelfront, Great-billed Hermit, Sapphire-spangled

Emerald and Amethyst Woodstar. The access to the hummingbird feeders is along a pebbled trail that can be slick given the humidity in the area. You will also have to negotiate parts where roots of trees cross the trail (basically flat roots which must be avoided since they can be slick). The trail is some 180 steps from the parking lot and is relatively flat (slightly inclined with steps at the beginning and the end). For those interested in seeing the hermit there will be an optional walk of about 500 yards into the forest. The trail to look for the hermit can be muddy and crosses uneven terrain with some inclined

areas. We will have a picnic lun/pack lunch in the center to later drive back to Tarapoto, Depending on the time of our return we may make some selected stops to bird along the road. Night in Tarapoto.

**NIGHT:** Río Cumbaza Hotel

## November 14-15, Day 10 & 11: Morning birding the Ricuricocha wetland. Afternoon flight to Lima. Departure for Home

We will bird in the morning along a 20-minute drive from Tarapoto that will get us to Laguna Ricuricocha, 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.

After lunch in Tarapoto we will catch our afternoon 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. In the late afternoon we'll reconvene for a final field checklist session before enjoying a final dinner in the hotel restaurant.

Generally speaking, flights depart for the U.S. after 10:30 p.m. on Day 10, arriving early the following morning (November 15). **Any flight leaving in the afternoon or early evening in November 14 won't work since we will be arriving from tarapoto to Lima between 04:00-06:00 p.m.** 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

### ESSENTIAL TOUR INFORMATION

**TOUR SIZE:** This tour will be limited to 10 participants.

**TOUR LEADERS:** This tour will be led by **Doris Valencia** with the assistance of a local leader.



**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 **\$5,895** per person in double occupancy or **\$6,895** for a person requiring single accommodation. 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.

**REGISTRATION & DEPOSIT:** You may register for this tour through the VENT [website](#) or by calling our office (512-328-5221). The deposit for this tour is **\$1,000** per person. A second deposit of **40% of the remaining tour fee** is due 180 days prior to departure (May 9, 2026). We accept MasterCard and Visa for both deposits.

**PAYMENTS:** All tour payments may be made by credit card (MasterCard or Visa), check, money order, 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 120 days (July 8, 2026) prior to the tour departure date.

**MEDICAL EVACUATION INSURANCE/PROTECTION REQUIREMENT:** This tour visits remote locations where immediate access to primary medical care may not be available. **For this reason, travel insurance/travel protection which covers you for emergency evacuation is required for participation on this tour.** This coverage is included in the **Ripcord Rescue Travel Insurance™** program. Alternatively, comparable service can be obtained through **Medjet** and its **MedjetAssist** plan. If you choose not to purchase insurance/travel protection through Ripcord or Medjet, you are required to obtain it through another provider. Please refer to the TRAVEL INSURANCE/TRAVEL PROTECTION section for additional information.

**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:**

- **More than 120 days prior to the tour start date:** A refund of all monies paid will be issued, less 50% of the deposit (including initial and second deposit)
- **120 days or fewer prior to the tour start date:** No refund will be provided.
- **Optional add-ons:** Some tours offer optional add-ons that are designated as non-refundable. Any such add-ons are clearly identified as non-refundable at the time of booking. By selecting and purchasing an optional add-on, the participant acknowledges and accepts its non-

refundable status. Fees paid for non-refundable add-ons are not refundable under any circumstances, regardless of when the tour is cancelled.

This cancellation policy applies to all participants and all tours (Pre-Tours and Extensions are considered self-contained tours separate from the main tour). Because unexpected events can occur, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance.

#### **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/TRAVEL PROTECTION: 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 comprehensive Ripcord plan, which includes a medical evacuation benefit. With this in mind, it is important to note that medical evacuation is not offered by Redpoint as a stand-alone policy or benefit. For travelers not interested in comprehensive travel insurance, VENT recommends **Medjet** and its **MedjetAssist**<sup>®</sup> plan. Medjet is not an insurance company, and Medjet Assist is not an insurance product; rather, Medjet is a membership-based air-medical transport company specializing in moving hospitalized travelers from an admitting hospital to a medical facility of choice. Medjet does not provide medical evacuation service from the point of injury or illness; yet, the MedjetAssist plan offers robust enough travel protection to satisfy the medical evacuation insurance requirement in place for many VENT tours.

### **About Ripcord**

Ripcord is a completely integrated travel insurance program with single contact for emergency services, travel assistance, and insurance claims. Critical benefits include comprehensive travel insurance for trip cancellation/interruption, **medical evacuation from your point of injury or illness to your hospital of choice**; 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, second deposit, 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 costs in order to maintain the CFAR benefit. Please refer to the policy for a full description of coverage.

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

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.

## About MedjetAssist

MedjetAssist is a membership program that functions like AAA for motorists. The company's primary service is air medical transport. Critical benefits of MedjetAssist include a staff on call and ready to provide assistance 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; all-expenses-paid air medical transport in the United States and internationally to medical facility of choice, regardless of medical necessity; repatriation of remains; and no exclusions for pre-existing conditions.

For travelers under 75, MedjetAssist may be purchased as Short-Term Memberships of 8, 15, 21, and 30 days, or Regular Annual Memberships from 1 to 5 years. For travelers 75–84, Medjet offers a Diamond Membership that is the same program but with a few additional conditions.

For a price quote or to purchase MedjetAssist, please visit: [Medjet.com/VentBird](https://www.Medjet.com/VentBird) or call 1-800-527-7478. Pricing is based on type and term of membership.

**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 Owlet 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 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. The access to Abra Patricia and Waqanki Lodge requires walking a steep access trail. 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 Owlet Lodge, both sets of hummingbird feeders are accessed by well-maintained but slightly steep 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 Owlet 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 Owlet Lodge at Abra Patricia, the climate is decidedly cooler; damp and foggy conditions (especially at night) are frequent. To reach the Owlet Lodge one must walk an inclined dirt trail equivalent to reaching a third level floor. 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.

All lodges have hot water and 24-hour electricity as well as WIFI service – restricted to the dining room (reliability depends on weather conditions). Food is excellent and they will accommodate any special diet. Single room supplement can be offered, although in the Owlet Lodge a bathroom will need to be shared between two rooms (no matter if single or double occupancy).

**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. 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 Owlet 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 are **not** required to have a visa for entry. 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.

**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, butterflies, 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:** An important part of the value of a VENT tour is knowing that tips for local service providers at our destinations—restaurant staff, hotel staff, drivers, local guides, and various other support staff—are included in your tour fee. If you would like to offer any of your local guides an additional tip, \$5 to \$10 a day is a common amount.

Tips for your VENT tour leader(s) are **not** included, but it is customary to tip one or both if you feel that you have received exceptional service. To assist in your planning, we recommend tipping your VENT tour leader(s) \$15 to \$20 per day, or the equivalent of approximately 2–4% of the tour fee.

If you plan to give tips by cash, they should be given directly to your tour leader at the end of the tour and **not** sent to the VENT office. Some of our tour leaders use mobile payment applications such as Venmo, PayPal, and Wise. If you would like to use this method, please ask your tour leaders directly whether they can accept tips through such an application.

We emphasize that tipping is optional and that these amounts are only recommendations. The amount you decide to tip is based entirely on your experience and at your discretion.

**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 February 6, 2025, 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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