



Southern Screamer – © Jorge La Grotteria

Costanera Sur Reserve

Half day tour

*Take your chance and visit one of the world's best urban reserves
for birding, with the specialists...*

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Masked Gnatcatcher – © Jorge La Grotteria

INTRODUCTION

Costanera Sur reserve is probably the most visited place by birdwatchers in Argentina, and this is because of a combination of reasons: it's conveniently located just a few blocks away from Buenos Aires (the main gateway to Argentina) downtown, and it's regarded as one of the best birding urban reserves in the entire world!

With approximately 350 hectares (and a similar number of bird species historically recorded on it), this is a big reserve which protects a variety of habitats including marshes, lagoons, patches of grasslands and a mixed forest with native and invasive (exotic) plants and trees.

The reserve's bird list includes a combination of species from the pampas lagoons, marshes and grasslands, and birds from the riverside forest that grows along the Parana and Uruguay rivers and biologically connect temperate Buenos Aires with the more subtropical north of the country. For this reason, a visit to Costanera Sur reserve could be attractive for passengers who wish to add a considerable number of birds to their list, no matter if they travel to south (Patagonia) or north (Iguazu falls and Atlantic forest, Ibera marshes or north-west Argentina) destinations.

Another great advantage of birding in Costanera Sur reserve is how tame birds (and other fauna) are, usually allowing great and fairly close views, although this will depend on the species and habitat conditions.

This is a tour that fits birders and bird photographers needs in a very short amount of time, and can be combined with pretty much any other activity you may be planning to do during your next trip to Argentina.

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Black-headed Duck – © Andrés Terán

TOUR DESCRIPTION

The tour starts with pick up at the hotel in Buenos Aires around 7 AM. This may not seem to be an early start, but Costanera Sur reserve opens at 8 AM, so we plan to start birding from the outside before its opening, along a promenade with great views of one of the reserve's main lagoons, where many of the most attractive targets can be spotted: **Southern Screamer, Rufescent Tiger-Heron, Whistling Heron, Cocoi Heron, Wattled Jacana, Limpkin, Giant Woodrail, Plumbeous Rail, Ringed Teal, Silver Teal, Yellow-billed Teal, Brazilian Teal, Rosy-billed Pochard, Coscoroba Swan, White-faced Whistling-Duck, Fulvous Whistling-Duck, White-tufted and Great Grebes**, and three species of coots (**Red-fronted, Red-gartered and White-winged**) are just a few of the possibilities along this promenade. Passerines include **Red-crested Cardinal, Screaming Cowbird, Narrow-billed Woodcreeper, Black-backed Water-Tyrant, Cattle Tyrant, Grayish Baywing and Chalk-browed Mockingbird**, which usually allow very close views. Raptors are common, with **Southern and Chimango Caracaras, Harris's and Roadside Hawks** as the most frequent ones, but sometimes even **Snail Kite** is present in the lagoon. And the diversity of psittacids is remarkable, with **Monk, White-eyed, Nanday and Yellow-chevroned Parakeets** commonly seen. Less frequent but always possible to find are **Stripe-backed Bittern, Rufous-sided Crake and Maguari Stork**. And all this is likely to be seen in just one average walk along the promenade, outside of the reserve!

Once we get inside we will walk along the trails looking for forest birds such as **Checkered Woodpecker, Golden-crowned Warbler, Tropical Parula, Chivi Vireo, Golden-billed Saltator and Masked Gnatcatcher**. In the shrubs, **Black-and-rufous Warbling-Finch** is conspicuous for its welcoming song, as well as **Masked Yellowthroat**, which is a summer breeding visitor in the area. **Black-capped Warbling-Finch, Double-collared Seedeater, Small-billed Elaenia, White-winged Becard, White-crested Tyrannulet, Streaked Flycatcher, Gilded Hummingbird and Glittering-bellied Emerald** are just a few more examples of non-aquatic targets. But the inner lagoons are also great to look for **Black-necked Swan, Lake Duck** and the scarce **Mask and Black-headed Ducks**. After a few hours of great birding we will be ready to go out and call it a (very productive) day.



Golden-billed Saltator – © Jorge La Grotteria

ITINERARY*

7 AM: Pick up at the hotel and transfer to Costanera Sur reserve.

7:20 AM (approximated time): Start birding along front promenade until the reserve's opening time, which is 8 AM (although we normally get inside well after it, because of the high bird activity seen from outside).

12:30 PM: Transfer back to hotel. End of the tour.

** The itinerary may change due to force majeure*

TOUR DETAILS

Price

Please contact us to find out about our prices for the current and/or following seasons.

Our prices for this Half Day tour **include** private transportation, local guide with quality spotting scope, snacks and drinks (bottled water) during the tour. Our prices **do not include** personal insurance, lunch, tips nor anything not mentioned on previous sentence.

Group size

We run this tour on request for a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 10 passengers. Please contact us for information about larger groups.

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Rufescent Tiger-Heron (juvenile) – © Jorge La Grotteria

Physical difficulty

Easy, although it involves walking for 5 hours (the terrain is even and there are benches where it's possible to sit and rest for whiles if needed).

Weather in Buenos Aires

This is a temperate and humid region which can get high temperatures during the summer (over 30° C at times) and winter temperatures that usually vary from 5 to 20° C. On intermediate seasons (autumn and spring) this will depend on the direction of the wind (northern wind brings warm temperatures, and southern wind does the opposite). Rain fall could be expected but it's hard to predict with anticipation. Normally winter has weak (though cold and steady) rain and summer has strong (though passing) storms.

Packing for the trip

During austral summer bring light clothing (long-sleeves shirts and long pants to avoid insect bites) and a light coat. We also recommend to bring closed hiking shoes, a rain coat ("ponchos" are very useful) and a good hat. Along with that you should bring sun glasses, sun screen and insect repellent. If you are coming in winter you should add warm clothing (a good jacket that protects from the wind is recommended).

Best time of the year

This is a tour that can be made at any time of the year, although the species composition change from



Bird photography at Costanera Sur reserve – © Marcelo Gavensky

austral summer to austral winter. Costanera Sur reserve **does not open** on Mondays, rainy and strong windy days, days after strong rain and several national holidays. In those cases we still recommend to take this tour, birding from the outside along the front promenade, especially if it's your only chance for a visit.

Best combined with


This HD tour is recommended to combine with all other destinations in Argentina, especially at the beginning of any trip to this country.

Important (READ): our tours are designed for small groups, with low impact, personalized attention and hiring local guides whenever possible, in order to increase their quality. We keep the use of play back* down to a minimum possible so to avoid stressing the birds or affecting their natural behavior, thus actively contributing to the conservation of the same and promotion of responsible birding and ecotourism practices.

**We do not use play back at all in Costanera Sur reserve as its use is not allowed by the reserve's local authorities*

CONTACT INFORMATION

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