

# La Pedregosa *Ecolodge*

## Ecotourism and Agrotourism OFF THE BEATEN PATH

Reserva Natural La Pedregosa

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### Bienvenidos al Vichada

Colombia's Orinoco River basin is basically undiscovered. Even most Colombians are unaware of the hidden treasures that nature travel to the country's second largest departamento of Vichada can offer. It is almost as if it was designed for the traveler interested in something off the beaten track. Vast savannahs interspersed with lush rain forest and amazing rivers, caños and morichals make Vichada a unique and unforgettable experience. Nestled along the banks of the Rio Bitá, possibly the world's first protected river, is the La Pedregosa Natural Reserve and the Amazonia Reforestation tree plantation.

Visitors to La Pedregosa get to stay in a genuine ecolodge, one that relies on solar energy, wind and nature for its amenities. The La Pedregosa Ecolodge has comfortable double occupancy rooms, and is based on the all-inclusive concept of room and board, given its remote location. The ecolodge has its own restaurant, *Mi Viejo Congrio*, named after one of the many fascinating native tree species to be found in the region. Check this brochure out for more details.



**Ecotel La Pedregosa S.A.S.**  
RNT 41689





## Ecotourism

The *La Pedregoza Natural Reserve* was founded in 2010 and has 1,200 hectares (3,000 acres) under conservation. We are now registered with Colombia's national parks system as RNSC 101-11 Resolution 96 of 2014. The natural reserve has 4 distinct Orinoco River basin eco-systems, which are inundation forest, gallery forest, *morichals* or heavily treed creeks, as well as savannah, all of which in turn include *serranías* or small hills, *caños* or large creeks and *lagunas* or dry season lakes and finally wetlands.

Ecotourism at our *La Pedregoza Natural Reserve* is centered on access to the rain forests on foot in the dry season or by kayak in the wet season. We limit the number of visitors at



any one time to preserve the pristine natural conditions, making it ideal for bird watching, wildlife observation or forest bathing, known as *Shinrin-yoku* in Japanese, which is a spiritual chance to commune with nature. *La Pedregoza* has it all, with distinct seasonal changes.

The natural reserve has 7 KM of Rio Bitá river front. In 2014 the Rio Bitá was declared a protected river by organizations like the WWF, the renowned *Alexander von Humboldt Institute*, the Vichada government and our very own non-profit NGO, the *La Pedregoza Environmental Corporation*, which is engaged in a large number of regional conservation activities.

## Agrotourism

*La Pedregoza* also includes a large tropical tree afforestation project, *Amazonia Reforestation*, involving the

planting of over 40 different tree species. More and more the tree plantation side is dedicating itself to the challenges of making some of the poorest soils on the planet

productive, using sustainable and organic practices. This includes a growing emphasis on the planting of native tree species and the research required to create formal technical specifications that will allow for their inclusion in reforestation and degraded area restoration programs.

The tree plantation is a giant laboratory, in which we are trying to produce organic fertilizers using local resources, biochar as a soil amendment, sustainable practices that enhance and promote local micro fauna, all based on the idea that the soil has a living soul. Visitors can experience and learn about ecoagriculture, analog forestry and the challenges of making them work. We are a *Tree-Nation* plantation.

## Recreation

It is not all learning and study. The Rio Bitá offers some of the finest beaches in Colombia during the dry season, from January to April. A little bit of sports fishing is always possible, and includes the frustration of trying to understand why the locals catch something with a string and a hook, while the fancy rods and lures seem less productive. We have several swimming spots where visitors can experience our famous crocodile, anaconda, sting ray and piranha swim. Some lucky visitors on occasion will get to swim with pink dolphins. Our savannah hikes offer endless vistas and nothing can compete with a cold beer while watching the *atardecer llanero*, or sundown in the eastern plains.

# Exotic Nature Travel





# Afforestation

## Inundation Forest

People often instinctively think that the rainy season is not a good time to travel. However, the highlight of the year at the *La Pedregosa Natural Reserve* is when the rain forest is completely inundated, creating a magical landscape during which one can paddle a kayak in the tree tops. Native trees can survive for 8 months while being flooded, making the inundation forest an amazing eco-system well worth experiencing.



Orinoco River basin rivers have a pulse that leads them to inundate large areas every year. In the case of *La Pedregosa* that pulse can be as high as 7 meters, while the mighty Orinoco can be as much as 14 meters or more. This pulse is vital, as the flooded forests permit aquatic life of all kinds to find abundant food. Visitors often use the word magical to describe the inundation forest.

## Morichals

If you have a childhood fantasy about dense tropical jungle, then the morichal is the place to make it come to life. Morichals are heavily treed savannah drainage creeks, named after the ubiquitous moriche palm (*Mauritia flexuosa*), which makes the morichal stand out from the savannah landscape. Vichada has a network of morichals that allow the annual rains to drain into the rivers, which in turn drain into the mighty Orinoco. Wildlife uses the morichals as corridors and food sources. At *La Pedregosa* we are happy to do a morichal penetration with you.

## Savannahs

The predominant feature of Colombia's eastern plains or *llanos orientales* are endless savannahs or grasslands, sometimes with small hills known locally as *serranías*. While the savannah is amazingly biodiverse, it is also a harsh landscape, without shade, that seems to gather heat and reflect it back at the visitor. At *La Pedregosa* visitors can experience the savannah and its *serranías* without having to feel like they are lost in a desert.

## Wet and Dry

Dry season activities include visits to turtle beach and dolphin beach, dips in a cool morichal pool, or swimming in the *caño* in the pineapple forest. The natural reserve has three rain forest trails in the turtle forest, the dolphin forest and the pineapple forest, and a spectacular savannah and *serranía* hike for the late afternoon. Bird watching, kayaking in the *Rio Bitá* and our *caño*, as well as forestry excursions, are always on the menu.



Wet season activities (May to December) include kayaking in the inundation forest, visiting the tree nursery, bird watching, savannah hikes, dips in a savannah pool, apiculture excursions, forestry cultivation visits, amazing thunder and electrical storms, and more. Finish the day with a cold beer or one of our signature *lulada venenosa* cocktails, while watching the sunset or *atardecer llanero*.



# Orinoco GETAWAYS



# Package Deals and Pricing

## Pricing:

- Single Person: **\$100 USD** per night plus tax (all inclusive).
- Couple (Double occupancy room): **\$180 USD** per night plus tax (all inclusive).
- Prices include the **\$25 USD** value per person week-pass to *La Pedregoza Natural Reserve* (tax included).
- Optional: Additional beverages. 2 beverages a day per person are included.
- Transportation from the airport to La Pedregoza included in the per person or per couple price. If you have your own transport we will apply a 10% discount to the per person price.
- Please contact us regarding seasonal conditions. We can sometimes assist with rubber boots, but can't guarantee we have your size.

We suggest 3 or 5 night packages which include the following (depending on your travel schedule):

- Ground transport from Puerto Carreño (PCR) airport to La Pedregoza and back (10% discount if you have your own vehicle or transport).
- Accommodation in our ecolodge (double occupancy).
- Up to 3 meals a day while at La Pedregoza (Colombian food with drinks).
- Guided nature tours, bilingual guides.
- Use of 2 man kayaks for river, caño or deep inundation forest exploration.
- Use of sports fishing gear.
- Tour arrangements out of Puerto Carreño (depends on your travel schedule).
- Entry into La Pedregoza Natural Reserve
- 2 beverages a day included.
- Eco and Agro educational experiences.
- Bird watching, Apiculture and more.

## Physical Facilities:

- We have 10 double occupancy rooms, each with comfortable beds and mosquito nets, a table with 2 chairs, night tables, private bathroom with shower, wire frame closet, large windows with mosquito screens and storm shutters, electricity for 2 hours every evening, solar charged battery lights and a fan.
- Meals are prepared in our *Mi Viejo Congrio* restaurant and are based on Colombian style cuisine; guests also receive 2 beverages of beer or pop, or our signature *Lulada venenosa* (a.k.a. toxic lulo), Flor de Jamaica red wine or our amazing Acacia honey mead in the evenings. Our well water is potable and filtered water is available.
- Guests with specific dietary requirements should consult with us in advance.
- Guests with medical or other health conditions should consult with us in advance.



## Ecolodge La Pedregoza

*Where forest meets savannah in amazing Vichada!*



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