

The Lodge at Pico Bonito

Eco-Lodge for Honduras Birding



Cabin Interior. Melissa Mayntz

About.com Rating



The Bottom Line:

Birders who aren't used to international travel may be apprehensive about visiting Central America, but the fabulous hospitality and welcoming, luxurious

atmosphere at The Lodge at Pico Bonito make birding in Honduras a breeze, even for novice travelers or beginning birders. From this one idyllic location, birders can be treated to an amazing variety of birds, authentic Mesoamerican cuisine and unparalleled service, making this award-winning eco-lodge a must-visit destination on any birder's travel list.

Pros:

Ideal location for multiple birding excursions, including on-site opportunities to see many of the more than 400 birds recorded on the lodge's property.

Well-appointed cabins offer privacy as well as convenience for both birding and relaxation.

On-site restaurant offers an innovative menu with local ingredients and can accommodate special diets as well as arrange for private meals.

Knowledgeable staff presents the best in hospitality and strives to give each guest an amazing experience.

Cons:

Stairs to individual cabins as well as the restaurant and reception areas and along some trails limit overall accessibility for guests with limited mobility.

Wireless internet access may be slow or unreliable depending on one's location on the property and local weather conditions.

Description:

Name: The Lodge at Pico Bonito

Location: La Ceiba, Atlántida,
Honduras

Rates: \$215-370 (USD) nightly depending on room and season; rates include daily breakfast for two guests

Number of Rooms: 22

Bird-Friendly Features: On-staff guides and naturalists, trails, native plant landscaping, bird feeders, nest boxes

Amenities: Pool, game room, internet access, massage services, nightly turndown, airport transfer services, bilingual guides, concierge

Website: www.PicoBonito.com

Review:

Birders visiting Central America have many options for amazing tropical destinations, and one of the finest is The Lodge at Pico Bonito in La Ceiba, Honduras. Located on 200 acres in northern Honduras, this eco-resort is ideally

positioned for a wide variety of birding adventures, and after a day of exploring different [habitats](#) and adding dozens of birds to a [life list](#), birders can easily retire to the lodge's luxury.

The hospitality of the lodge begins even before arrival, when airport transfers can be arranged in air-conditioned vans from either La Ceiba (complimentary transfer) or San Pedro Sula (2.5 hour drive; fees apply). Upon arrival, guests are greeted with chilled towels and a complimentary drink (choice of alcoholic or non-alcoholic tropical beverage), and may choose a brief orientation tour or be escorted directly to their cabin. The

private cabins, while rustic in appearance, offer ideal tropical relaxation with a porch hammock, fresh fruit and flowers, complimentary bottled water, in-room safes and comfortable furnishings. Not all cabins are air-conditioned, but all feature ceiling fans and private baths equipped with generous showers (no bathtubs) and bath supplies, including a loufa and mending kit. Individual cabins are nestled in the tropical jungle for seclusion, but are still convenient to well-groomed, lighted pathways leading to the resort's common areas. Some cabins feature adjoining doors and are ideal for larger families or groups.

The resort offers several public areas for guest use. The reception center includes a gift shop featuring local artisan crafts and tasteful souvenirs as well as the concierge desk and restrooms. A daily weather forecast is posted, and a sightings board for local birding tours is regularly updated. The wide porch has comfortable seating and is equipped with multiple [hummingbird feeders](#) that attract a wide range of species for close, amazing views.

The restaurant, Itzama, includes a full service bar and features breakfast, lunch and dinner menus that revolve around delicious Mesoamerican cuisine. Fresh, local ingredients are a focal point of the menu, and every effort is made to accommodate special requests or dietary restrictions. During busy periods or with large groups, however, service can be slower. Both interior and porch seating is available, and arrangements can be made for private seating or views overlooking the jungle or river.

Adjacent to the restaurant is a functional game room featuring pool, ping-pong and foosball tables, as well as cozy seating for socializing. Both the restaurant and game room are adorned with stunning local artwork, often of amazing tropical birds.

The resort also features other attractions, including a refreshing pool with lounge seating. Just a short walk from the main resort area, guests can visit the Serpentarium, Iguana Farm and Butterfly Farm to learn more about local wildlife.

Birders will appreciate the multiple trails around the resort property, including both short and long trails as well as canopy towers that provide elevated views of the surrounding mountains and valleys. Morning and afternoon bird hikes are scheduled daily and last 2-3 hours each, with the knowledgeable guides very willing to change routes and tour details to match guests' preferences. Binoculars are available for loan if needed. Night hikes are also available and give guests the opportunity to locate owls, tree frogs, moths and other species with guides' expert assistance.

For guests who want to venture further afield, The Lodge at Pico Bonito offers a range of excursions, including lengthy hikes of varying difficulties as well as trips to other local [birding hotspots](#), such as Cuero y Saldo Wildlife Refuge or Lancetilla Botanical Gardens. For non-birding guests, snorkeling, visits to Mayan ruins, whitewater rafting or waterfall hikes are also available. Fees apply for different tours, and guests should be prepared with adequate water, insect spray and other hiking needs. The lodge employs a number of expert guides to lead various hikes and excursions, and they are extremely knowledgeable about local birds, insects, reptiles, plants and other flora and fauna. Guests are encouraged to ask questions and express their desires so experiences can be appropriately tailored.

While the Lodge may seem an ideal birding getaway, visitors should be aware of the property's limitations. While well-constructed for drainage, the resort's pathways can become flooded in heavy rains and appropriate footwear should be worn at all times. Steep paths and occasional stairs limit access for guests with limited mobility or other physical challenges, and the jungle itself is home to some hazards to be wary of, including venomous snakes, knife grass, fire ants and scorpions, though no hazard is so extreme as to discourage cautious, prepared guests.

More than 400 bird species have been recorded at The Lodge at Pico Bonito, and even if guests are not inclined to take any additional tours or hikes, they can easily see a wide range of amazing birds on the property, including:

Black-cowled oriole

Black-headed trogon

Blue-crowned motmot

Brown jay

Collared aricari

Great potoo

Groove-billed ani

Keel-billed toucan

Lovely cotinga

Montezuma oropendola

Mottled owl

Rufous-tailed hummingbird

Social flycatcher

Violet sabrewing

White-crowned parrot

[White-necked jacobin](#)

While exact sightings vary depending on the time of year and recent weather, with so many birds to see, a relaxing, luxurious cabin to enjoy and fine dining only steps away, The Lodge at Pico Bonito is easily a top destination for any birder interested in visiting Honduras.