

Bellavista Cloud Forest Lodge



Highlights	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Beautiful views across the Tandayapa Valley• Excellent birding• Easily accessible from Quito by car• Extensive network of well marked trails• Great hummingbird viewing
Situation	In the Tandayapa Valley, 2 hours by car from Quito.
Activities	Guided or self-guided cloud forest hikes, birding, horse riding.

Bellavista Cloud Forest Lodge is located in a private reserve in the Tandayapa Valley, two hours from Quito by car. The Tandayapa Valley is an excellent location for birding, whilst the lodge also provides a great place to stay for those with an interest in natural history and eco-adventure. The goal of the Reserve is to educate its visitors on the significance of biodiversity in tropical cloud forests and the ever-increasing importance of the forest's protection.

The accommodation at Bellavista Cloud Forest Lodge comprises varied buildings. Firstly, a four-storey geodesic dome with 5 double rooms, as well as the dining room. The dome offers a 360° view; you can even see the peaks of Pichincha and Cotacachi in the distance. Then there is a Hansel and Gretel-style half timbered house, as well as 2 suites, all in the main lodge area. Away from the main area, there are 3 separate houses which offer secluded accommodation for families or honeymooners. There are a total of 19 rooms with private balconies, private bathrooms (hot showers) and comfortable beds. There are a further 12 beds available in shared accommodations. Food at the lodge is hearty and wholesome and vegetarian dishes are always available. Trout and chicken are regularly served, as well as beef, pork and seafood. Specific dietary requirements can be catered for.

The lodge is in montane forest, or cloud forest. The forest is frequently bathed in cloud and is a humid, but not a hot, place. A very special environment is supported, dominated by gnarled moss-clad trees with branches laden with botanical treasures such as orchids, bromeliads and other epiphytes. The reserve's elevation ranges between 1600m to 2500 metres above sea level and has an average temperature of 14°C

to 22 °C. Within the reserve there are over 330 recorded species of birds, which reflects the fact that Bellavista and the surrounding region of northwestern Ecuador is a true biodiversity hotspot. Mammals present here include the endangered Spectacled Bear (rarely seen, but protected by the Reserve), and Andean Coati amongst others. Birding and natural history are the principal activities at the lodge, and specialist birding guides can be arranged. The lodge also has resident naturalist / birder guides who interpret the cloud forest ecosystem and its denizens as they accompany guests in their exploration of some of the 8 miles of trails around the lodge. There is a self-guided trail for those wanting to explore on their own, and hiking the roads through the reserve is also a good way to spot the wildlife. Horseriding is also offered, from short rides around the lodge to full day rides. Also, Bellavista is a very good base for further exploration of northwestern Ecuador.

