Tour Code
BR1

ADVENTURESABROAD

BRAZIL

Rio de Janeiro, Iguacu Falls, the Amazon & Pantanal

14 days

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Day 1 Arrive in Manaus

Today we arrive in Manaus, gateway to the Amazon.

Amazonas is by far the largest of Brazil's states, covering an area that is almost a quarter of the national territory. Half of the Amazon River's 6275 km (4,000 mile) length is in Brazil with some 100-plus tributaries. Standing on the shores of the Rio Negro, 1500 km (900 miles) upriver from Belem and the point where the Amazon reaches the Atlantic, Manaus was originally a Portuguese settlement where a fort was built in 1669. The name of the city comes from the Manaos Indian tribe that inhabits the area.

Overnight in Manaus.

Included Meal(s): Dinner, if required.

Day 2 Manaus - Amazon: Amazon Exploration

Today we transfer from Manaus to our Amazon lodge. This transfer may be by road, by boat or a combination of both.

The very mention of the name Amazon conjures up images of adventure and mystery. Designated the world's largest rainforest and one of the world's largest rivers, Amazon defines the word "exotic". The term "rainforest" describes forests that grow in constant humid conditions. They can occur whenever the annual rainfall is above 2000 mm (80 inches) per year, and high temperatures favour plant development. The Amazon River is almost 6440 km (4,000 miles) long, with a volume of water equal to 11 times the volume of the Mississippi River. Amazonia, consisting mainly of forest, forms more than 50% of Brazil's area, though only 7% of its total population. Most of the Amazon's inhabitants live in and around a few cities including Manaus, a thousand miles from the ocean.

Using a comfortable lodge as a base, we will explore the Amazon's maze of forest and mysterious waters by boat and on foot. During our time here we hope to observe exotic birds such as parrots, toucans, and macaws. We also hope to spot sloths and monkeys during our exploration. You may even have the chance to see the "boto", a kind of river dolphin.

* NOTE: Our activities in the Amazon will vary depending upon seasonality, weather, and other considerations, at the discretion of your Tour Leader and local Amazon guides.

Overnight at an Amazon lodge.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Day 3 Amazon: Bird Watching, Forest Walks & Village Visits

Today we continue with our exploration of the Amazon. This morning we will enjoy an early morning canoe trip for bird watching, and to enjoy the morning sounds of the jungle. There are good chances of seeing large flocks of egrets and cormorants. During the day we will be sure to visit a Caboclo village, home to the local population whose ancestors are half Indian and half Portuguese. Many of these inhabitants make a living on manioc plantations, fishing, diverse fruit trees, rubber, Brazil-nut trees, wood and other extractive products. A night trip by boat or on foot will enable us to see nocturnal animals, sometimes including nighthawks, snakes, toro-rats, sloths and frogs.

SEASONALITY: in the rainy season, which roughly runs from mid-December to mid-May, the temperature is a bit cooler than the June-December dry season. The average daytime temperature in the rainy season is usually in the mid-20's C (80's F) with nighttime lows in the mid teens C (70's to high 60's). In the dry season the daytime temperature can go up to the mid-30's C (90's) though there is much variability and cool days are common. Nighttime temperatures during the dry season are usually in the mid-20's (70's), though there are also some very cool nights.

Is it desirable to travel to the Amazon in the rainy season? Yes! Even though it does rain more this time of year, it is also true that many plants have evolved to fruit and flower during the rainy season, which attracts birds and primates to the water's edge for us to observe. The gigantic

thunderstorms are a great pleasure to observe.

Overnight at an Amazon lodge.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Day 4 Amazon - Manaus: City Tour

This morning before returning to Manaus we will have another early morning excursion into the nearby waterways and jungle. We will walk through the forest with commentary by our local guide. Here we will learn about the unique flora of the region, and the many medicinal uses of the plant life that surrounds us. The Amazon rainforest has a huge live collection of flora species, and botanical experts say that in 2.5 acres of the forest you can find 700 different species of trees and twice that number of plants.

We then say goodbye to the Amazon and return to Manaus for a city tour that will include the Municipal Market and the famous Amazonas Theatre. The magnificent Manaus Opera House (also known as The Amazon Theatre) is a working historical landmark that currently accommodates the Amazonas Philharmonic and plays host to the annual Amazonas Opera Festival. Construction on the neo-classical style Teatro Amazonas began in the late 1880's at a time when the plantation barons of Manaus were flush with cash due to the thriving rubber export business. Sparing no expense, the barons imported artists, designers and materials from across Europe.

Overnight in Manaus.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 5 Manaus - Brasilia: City Tour

This morning we fly to Brasilia, Brazil's modern, purpose-built capital. It was as far back as the early 1800's that the idea of an inland capital for Brazil was first discussed. A Salesian priest from Italy dreamed that a new, economically powerful civilization would rise up at the geographical centre of Brazil. It would take almost a century and a half before the dream was realized in 1960 by then President Juscelino Kubitschek.

This afternoon we will have a tour of this fascinating city. Our tour includes the chapel of Our Lady of Fatima; Dom Bosco's Church, one of the most beautiful buildings of the city. We will ascend the central TV Tower, with its lovely views over the entire city from its observatory platform. We will also stop at the memorial for Juscelino Kubitschek, the builder and founder of Brasilia and former President of Brazil.

During our time here we will see the cathedral and the Three Power Square - where we will see the Congress Building and Planalto Palace (the office of the President and supreme court).

Overnight in Brasilia.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 6 Brasilia - Campo Grande - Pantanal

Our destination for today is the Pantanal, home to the highest concentration of wildlife in South America. We must first fly to Campo Grande, the gateway to the Pantanal. Upon arrival we transfer by road to the Pousada Aguape, situated 160 km (100 miles) from Campo Grande. The Aguape Ranch was founded 155 years ago and is still owned by the same family. Through the years the farm activities have diversified. The Ranch is home for a school, a regional
horse breeder, and a Hyacinth Macaw project, cattle ranching, and now a tourism area with a large variety and quantity of wildlife.

The Pousada Aguape is equipped with 14 air-conditioned rooms, each with a ceiling fan. The pousada has a swimming pool, bar, small gift shop and a restaurant. The great diversity of animal species in the region arises from vast differences in habitat. Savannah flood plains, dry forests and humid, temperate zones co-exist with grassy plains and scrubby vegetation. A total of over 80 mammal, 50 reptile, and 650 bird species have been identified here -
- however, none of them are indigenous to the area. Among the residents are 13 endangered species -- among them jaguar, otter and

anteater.

This afternoon after our arrival we will enjoy an open-vehicle safari. Here we are surrounded by nature with palm tree forests, open savanna and riverside terrain. The opportunity for wildlife viewing is great -- and we can hope to see anything from giant anteaters and armadillo to bat-eating fox and a plethora of bird species. Watch for the Jaribu Stork, Hyacinth Macaw and the Plumbeous Ibis.

Overnight in Pantanal region.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 7 Pantanal Exploration

Today will be spent exploring this remarkable region. In its two distinct seasons, the Pantanal presents a constant, unequaled spectacle. From December to April is the flood season when the rivers overflow and spread themselves for miles uniting with the bays and creeks creating a true ocean of sweet water. This is a beautiful period of Pantaneira flora -- the green explodes and provides breeding ground for flora and water-loving fauna. Excursions at this time of year usually involve exciting exploration by boat/canoe for at least part of the time.

We may start our day with a safari walk through the lush riverside forests of the Aquidauana River. This walk allows us to experience up-close the natural beauty of the Pantanal region. We have the chance to explore this stunning area and its abundant wildlife, and learn all about the flora and fauna that make this place unique.

An evening game drive will allow us the chance to discover nocturnal species, as animals are best viewed during the cooler hours of the day. The Pantanal of South America is one of the most immense, pristine and biologically rich environments on the planet. Often referred to as the world's largest freshwater wetland system, with its extraordinarily concentrated and diverse flora and fauna, and a landscape spanning a variety of ecological sub-regions The Pantanal stands as one of the world's great natural wonders.

Overnight in the Pantanal region.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Day 8 Pantanal: Full Day

Today we get to continue our exploration of the Pantanal. The Pantanal is renowned for it spectacled caimans -- a crocodile species which grow up to 3m (10 feet) in length. Once nearly endangered, today there are nearly 10 million in existence in the Pantanal. In addition, the area's waterways are filled with brightly-coloured kingfisher and teem with the infamous piranha. Birds abound in the Pantanal and are more numerous than anywhere else in South
America. Look out for eagle, stork, nandu, jabiru, macaw and ibis.

One of our activities today we be a boat safari along the Aguidauana River. This area is an unparalleled wildlife sanctuary of spectacular beauty, an ecological paradise containing hundreds of species of birds, thousands of varieties of butterflies, myriad brightly-coloured flowers, and shoals of fish. Capuchin and Howler monkeys, capybaras, toucans, anacondas, caimans and tapirs help create an aquatic theater of sights and sounds.

There will also be the chance today to enjoy a horse ride. This will take place in the early morning or late afternoon in order to avoid the intense heat of the day. For many, horseback riding is the best way to get into the heart of the Pantanal, getting to places that normally cannot be reached by regular means of transportation.

Overnight in the Pantanal region.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Day 9 Pantanal - Campo Grande - Rio de Janeiro

Today we travel to Campo Grande from where we fly to Rio de Janeiro, the Ciudade Marvailhosa (marvelous city). Our sightseeing in Rio will

be a combination of bus and on-foot exploration; you must be prepared to be on your feet for some hours at a time.

Seven million Cariocas, as the inhabitants are called, are jammed into one of the world's most beautiful city setting -- between ocean and escarpment. This makes Rio one of the most densely populated places on earth. Cariocas pursue pleasures like no other people: beaches and the body beautiful, samba and football; cerveja (beer); and cachaca (sugar-cane rum). In Rio everything ends with samba -- football games, weddings, work, political demonstrations and, of course, a day at the beach. There's a lust for life, and a love of romance, music, dance and a talk that distinguishes the Cariocas from everyone else.

Overnight in Rio de Janeiro.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 10 Rio de Janeiro: City Touring & Christ the Redeemer

Today we have a tour of Rio. The city is divided into a zona norte (north zone) and a zona sul (south zone) by the Serra da Carioca, steep mountains that are part of the Parque Nacional da Tijuca. These mountains descend to the edge of the city centre, where the zonas norte and sul meet.

Corcovado, one of these mountain peaks, offers us the best way to become familiar with the city's geography -- from it you have views of both zones. The statue Cristo Redentor (Christ the Redeemer), with his outstretched arms, gazes down on the Bahia da Guanabara and the landmark Pao de Acucar (Sugar Loaf). His left arm points toward the zona norte, and his right toward the zona sul suburbs of Copacabana, Ipanema, Leblon and beyond. We will go to the foot of the mountain from where we travel by an electric tramway car to the top. We have plenty of time at the summit to take in this world-famous view!

We continue with a drive through the city center. Here we will also enjoy a walking tour and a break for lunch. The Centro in Rio, or the city center, is the oldest neighbourhood and the site where Rio de Janeiro was founded. Today it is not only the historic core but also the commercial, administrative and financial center. We will see one of Rio's finest buildings, the Theatro Municipal, hidden amongst busy roads. The Metropolitan Cathedral of Rio was completed in 1979, and its unique architectural style was based on the Mayan architectural style of pyramid construction.

Later in our day we enjoy a sightseeing ride along Rio's beaches -- Leblon, Ipanema and Copacabana. One of the world's most famous beaches runs 4.5 km (3 miles) in front of one of the world's most densely populated residential areas. There is always something happening on the beach during the day and along the footpaths at night: drinking, singing, eating and all kinds of people checking out the scene; tourists watching Brazilians. From the scalloped beach you can see the granite slabs that surround the entrance to the bay -- a magnificent meeting of land and sea. Different parts of the beach attract different crowds.

Overnight in Rio de Janeiro.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 11 Rio de Janeiro: City Touring, Sugarloaf Mountain & Free Time

Today we continue to explore this world-class city.

We will voyage to the top of Sugarloaf Mountain. From the top of this celebrated peak, the city, Baia de Guanabara, and the winding coastline are stretched out dazzling below. To reach the summit at a lofty 400 m (1,325 feet) it is necessary to take two cable cars. A clear day will supply the most spectacular of views: the uncurling arch of the Praia de Copacabana, its miles of tiles glistening in the sun's last rays. From the top you'll see Corcovado Mountain, with the massive statue of Cristo Redemtor (Christ the Redeemer), his arms extended in mercy and blessing.

We will stroll through parts of Santa Teresa, a small neighborhood located on top of the Santa Teresa hill. Close to the center of Rio, this district is famous for its winding, narrow streets that are a favourite spot for artists and tourists. Nearby is the Carioca Aqueduct. Located in the city center, this aqueduct was built in the middle of the 18th century to bring fresh water from the Carioca River to the population of the city. This is an impressive example of colonial architecture and engineering.

There will be some free time this afternoon for you to explore on your own and perhaps stroll along the beachside avenue nearby our hotel.

Overnight in Rio de Janeiro.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 12 Rio de Janeiro - Iguacu Falls

This morning we fly to Iguacu Falls.

Made up of many cascades producing vast sprays of water, this is unquestionably one of the most spectacular waterfalls in the world!! The surrounding subtropical rainforest has over 2,000 species of vascular plants and is home to the typical wildlife of the region: tapirs, giant anteaters, howler monkeys, ocelots, jaguars and caymans. The Falls are formed by the Rio Iguacu, which has its source near Curitiba. Starting at an altitude of 1300 m (4,264 feet), the river snakes westward, picking up tributaries and increasing in size and power during its 1200 km (745 mile) journey. About 15 km (9 miles) before joining the Rio Parana, the Iguacu broadens out, and then plunges precipitously over an 80 m (263 foot) high cliff. The 275 interlinking cataracts extend nearly 3 km (2 miles) across the river.

On arrival, we'll head to the viewing area from where you will quickly appreciate the enormous size of the falls. From numerous spots all along the path there are excellent views, at first across the lower river at a point where it has narrowed to channel width. At the bottom of the path, where the river widens again, there's a catwalk leading out towards the falls themselves. Depending on the force of the river, the spray can be quite heavy so, if you have a camera, be sure to carry a plastic bag. Special walkways have been built along the path allowing visitors to get close up to this wonder of natural beauty and power.

Overnight at Iguacu Falls.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 13 Iguacu Falls

Today is yours to enjoy the Iguacu / (Iguazu in Spanish) area.*

You have the option today of viewing the falls from the Argentine side*. Voted as one of the 'Seven Natural Wonders of the World', Iguazu Falls is undoubtedly one of the most imposing natural attractions in Argentina and the world. On this side of the falls there are 2 circuits: an upper path and a lower path. On this excursion you will view the falls from both the upper and lower paths. The upper paths provide some stunning panoramic views, and the lower path leads to the base of the falls, where the spray moistens visitors. This excursion is an unforgettable experience for any traveler! Located in the Northeastern tip of Argentina and bordering the Brazilian state of Parana to the north, Iguazú National Park, jointly with its sister park Iguacu in Brazil, is among the world's visually and acoustically most stunning natural sites for its massive waterfalls. It was added to the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1984.

(NOTE: This excursion is an OPTIONAL expense; please contact us for the current cost).

* Please note that today your Tour Leader may be continuing to the Argentina side with passengers booked on a longer tour option. If this is the case, your day will be unaccompanied and your evening meals will be included at your hotel. Your airport transfer and departure will be managed by our local representative.

Overnight at Iguacu Falls.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 14 Departure

Departure from Iguacu (Airport Iguassu / IGU).

BOA VIAGEM!!

Included Meal(s): Breakfast