JOURNEY
LATIN AMERICA



PRIVATE JOURNEYS WITH JOURNEY LATIN

BRAZIL WILDLIFE: IGUAZU, PANTANAL AND AMAZON CRUISE

15 days from **£7,675pp**

BRAZIL / IGUAZU FALLS – BRAZILIAN SIDE / THE PANTANAL / THE BRAZILIAN AMAZON / THE AMAZON



WITH OVER 40 YEARS EXPERIENCE, NO-ONE KNOWS LATIN AMERICA LIKE WE DO

EXPERIENCE SOMETHING EXTRAORDINARY

WHY US

We are the UK's No.1 specialist in travel to Latin America and have been creating award-winning holidays to every corner of the region for over four decades; we pride ourselves on being the most knowledgeable people there are when it comes to travel to Central and South America and passionate about it too.

OUR JOURNEY

As our name suggests, we are single-minded about Latin America. This is what sets us apart from other travel companies – and what allows us to offer you not just a holiday but the opportunity to experience something extraordinary on inspiring journeys throughout Mexico, Central and South America.

WE LOVE LATIN AMERICA

- A passion for the region runs through all we do
- All our Consultants have lived or travelled extensively in Latin America
- Up-to-the-minute knowledge underpinned by 40 years' experience

TRAVEL WITH CONFIDENCE

- Fully bonded and licensed
- ATOL-protected
- On your side when it matters
- Book with confidence, knowing every penny is secure

THE REAL LATIN AMERICA

- Our insider knowledge helps you go beyond the guidebooks
- We hand-pick hotels with character and the most rewarding excursions
- Let us show you the Latin America we know and love

OVERVIEW & OUTLINE ITINERARY

A nature-focused holiday in two contrasting regions of wild Brazil: the wetlands of the Pantanal and the Rio Negro on Amazonia. Two distinct wildlife experiences; a land-based eco-lodge and a whole week's expeditionary cruise on MV Tucano.

DAY 1	**Arrive in Foz do Iguaçu. Transfer to your accommodation on the Brazilian side of the Iguazú Falls.**
DAY 2	**Guided excursion to the Brazilian side of the falls.**
DAY 3	**Guided excursion to the Argentine side of Iguazú Falls.**
DAY 4	**Fly to Cuiabá in Mato Grosso, Brazil's remote interior.**
DAY 5	**Transfer to your lodge in the Pantanal wetlands.**
DAYS 6-7	**Wildlife-spotting expeditions from the lodge.**
DAY 8	**Fly to Manaus, Amazonia; transfer to riverside hotel.**
DAYS 9-14	**Cruise on the Amazon river and Rio Negro.**
DAY 15	**Optional city tour. Transfer to Manaus airport for international flight home.**

ITINERARY

Brazil hosts blankets of tropical forest and steaming wetlands brimming with wildlife just waiting to be revealed to you. For this nature-focused holiday we have selected three places where you have the best chance of appreciating the variety.

Start off at Iguazú Falls, where you will step out of your hotel room to a symphony of birdsong and the thunderous roar of water crashing over lofty granite cliffs fringed by tropical rainforest. Toucans and parakeets dodge the spray, while inquisitive coatis will try to investigate the contents of your bag. Move on to the country's heartland and the Pantanal wetlands for a few days based at a nature-lovers' lodge. The Pantanal is an open area of swampy grasslands, leaving fauna exposed to view. The wildlife co-exists harmoniously with the cattle which breed on the ranches in the area. According to season, you might observe regiments of caiman, and flocks of thousands of roseate spoonbills, ibis, macaws and giant storks.

Move on for a week's expeditionary cruise on a traditional-style wooden craft in Amazonia, including several days sailing along the black waters of Rio Negro away from the tourist routes. There, you pass few settlements so there is little river traffic: beyond the beautiful Anavilhanas archipelago you are on your own, with a real feeling of remoteness. There's a catalogue of bird, mammal and reptile life to be seen from macaws and sloths to anacondas: much of it is shy but your experienced guides are experts at spotting it.

DAY 1

Arrive in Foz do Iguaçu. Transfer to your accommodation on the Brazilian side of the Iguazú Falls.



Arriving at Foz do Iguaçu in the southeast of the country, on the border with Argentina and Paraguay, you'll be driven to your hotel, which is situated at the entrance to the national park and next to the delightful and quirky Bird Park.

The Iguazú Falls are unquestionably one of the most extraordinary natural phenomena in the world. A total of 275 falls thunder over a 60m high rust-coloured cliff surrounded by dense tropical forest. The U-shaped Devil's Throat is the most dramatic sight, here the frothing water of the Iguazú River crashes over a 1.5km-wide precipice and columns of vapour are thrown skyward. Elsewhere the river flows decorously through the rainforest breaking up into dozens of smaller cascades. You can usually spot toucans and many other exotic birds perched in the foliage above the tumultuous waters.

DAY 2

Guided excursion to the Brazilian side of the falls.

Today you have a half day excursion to the Brazilian side of the falls. Here there's a broad panoramic view of these colossal cataracts, and there are some excellent opportunities to photograph the full sweep of the water.



DAY 3

Guided excursion to the Argentine side of Iguazú Falls.

Private guided tour of the Argentine side of the falls. You will be driven across Fraternity Bridge, which links the towns of Puerto Iguazú in Argentina and Foz do Iguaçu in Brazil. The day begins with a visit to the National Park Visitor Centre, where there is a display that illustrates the biodiversity of the region's tropical rainforest, and from there a little train transfers you to Cataratas station where the Upper Walk begins.

This sequence of causeways and passarelles links dozens of tiny basalt islands at the top of the sheer rock face, and the walkways cross the myriad of streams as they cascade over the lip of the precipice.

The train then continues to Devil's Throat station and from here a walkway leads across the river to the thunderous Garganta del Diablo, the Devil's Throat. From this spectacular vantage point you can feel the incredible power of the water as it plummets into the vortex below.



DAY 4

Fly to Cuiabá in Mato Grosso, Brazil's remote interior.

Fly to Cuiabá, a major city in the heart of Brazil's interior and the gateway to the Pantanal wetlands. Overnight here.

The Pantanal wetlands cover a large basin half the size of France. This basin is seasonally flooded and is drained by the Paraguay River, which flows into the south Atlantic via the River Plate estuary.

The result is a paradise for nature lovers, especially for wildlife observation. Unlike the areas of high jungle, the Pantanal is an open area of swampy grasslands, leaving some of the highest concentration of fauna in the continent exposed to view.



DAY 5

Transfer to your lodge in the Pantanal wetlands.

By road (4hrs) to your lodge within the wetlands. The lodge offers a programme of activities where you can view wildlife. Sun-seeking caiman (alligators) stretch out on the river beaches or observe you with a beady eye just visible above the water's surface. Gangs of the ubiquitous capybara -a giant rodent – stroll lazily across the road. Giant storks and roseate spoonbills wade through the standing water while agitated parakeets and clouds of snowy ibis take to the sky.



DAYS 6-7

Wildlife-spotting expeditions from the lodge.

Depending on local conditions, daily expeditions may include boat rides, walking trails and horse-riding through the Pantanal's watery landscapes. You could visit a fazenda (farm) on the banks of a shimmering lake for sunset, when birds congregate for evening feeding with a raucous cacophony of sound. You may set off on an excursion by safari vehicle or boat to view wildlife in the crystal clear waters on a remote section of the Mutum river; seize an opportunity to fish for piranha, or take a boat trip to a small fishing community on the Cuiabá river.



DAY 8

Fly to Manaus, Amazonia; transfer to riverside hotel.

Transfer to the airport and fly to Manaus, isolated capital of the state of Amazonas, sprawling along the banks of the Amazon river. The vast city of 2 million inhabitants is on the northern bank of the Rio Negro, just upstream from its confluence with the Amazon.

Although it's 1,600km from the Atlantic, ocean-going vessels can sail this far upstream. Towering modern skyscrapers intermingle with the traditional red-tiled roofs of the older buildings, many of which reflect the wealth of Manaus's illustrious past during the rubber boom – notably the magnificent opera house.

Your hotel is just outside town on the banks of the Rio Negro: your expeditionary vessel, will depart from the pier at the property.



DAYS 9-14

Cruise on the Amazon river and Rio Negro.



In the morning, you will be greeted by your cruise guides and embark on your week-long cruise heading north up the Rio Negro beyond its confluence with the Amazon river. Travel beyond the 400 islands of the Anavilhanas Archipelago towards the Rio Branco, with an ever changing eco-system, and progressively fewer riverside farm settlements. You really feel you have the privilege to enter a remote, seldom visited and intact area of Amazonia.

The ship navigates north up the mosquito-free Rio Negro towards Rio Branco and the border with Colombia. There are a number of excursions every day, from dawn and late afternoon canoe trips to forest walks, piranha fishing and nocturnal wildlife spotting. Your guides will keep a list for you of species identified: you may well be surprised to see how long this will be by the end of your journey: several species of monkey, sloths, alligators, parrots, turtles, spiders, ants, snakes and a huge variety of birds.

You can swim in the river, visit isolated riverbank family farms and the evocative ruins of once prosperous rubber estates, all of which receive very few visitors but where the handful of people who live there will give you a warm welcome. The return journey follows the west bank. On the last day you drop anchor close to Manaus after witnessing the impressive spectacle of the Meeting of the Waters, where the dark tannin waters of the Rio Negro converge with the opaque brown water of the Amazon river proper.

The last night is spent at anchor near Ponta Negra.

DAY 15

Optional city tour. Transfer to Manaus airport for international flight home.

An optional city tour, which includes a tour of the Opera House.

INCLUDED EXCURSIONS

- Guided tour of the Argentine side of Iguazú Falls
- Safari expeditions from the Pantanal lodge
- Daily guided explorations during your Amazon cruise

ESSENTIALS

The holiday includes internal air and ground transport starting at Foz do Iguacu airport on day 1 and ending at Manaus airport on day 15. 6 nights are spent on board the Amazon cruise.

On this tour we use good quality mid to upper mid-range hotels with well-equipped rooms, private bathroom and air-conditioning. Our Pantanal lodge has attractive white, red-roofed chalets with en suite facilities and mosquito screening.

On the Tucano river cruiser, built in the style of a traditional Amazonian river boat, there are just 9 guest cabins, promoting a sociable on-board atmosphere where guests soon get to know one another. Rooms have shelving and hooks making the most of the restricted space. There's air conditioning keeping you cool at night.

Breakfast daily, full board days 5-7, 9-14.

We carefully select our local partners, some of whom we have worked with for over 25 years. Their English-speaking guides understand the expectations of our clients very well, and are consistently singled out for praise by the latter on their return.

15 days, 14 nights: Iguazú Falls 3; Cuiabá 1; Pantanal lodge 3; Manaus 1; Amazon cruise 6.

The unit of currency in Brazil is the real (plural reais).

Cash machines are available in all major cities and towns, and so taking a debit or credit card with a PIN number is the most convenient way of withdrawing money while on your trip. You can withdraw Brazilian reais at the airport on arrival, and at the airports in Cuiabá and Manaus. In most shops and restaurants you can also pay by card. However, since cards can get lost, damaged, withheld or blocked, you should not rely exclusively on a card to access funds.

We recommend that additionally you take a reasonable quantity of US dollars cash (no more than is covered by your insurance), which you can exchange into local currency. Dollar bills should be in good condition, soiled or torn bills may be refused. You can take sterling, but the exchange rate is not always competitive or even available, restricting the number of places where you can change money.

Credit cards are accepted in the Pantanal lodge but you should not depend on their use as there may be problems with connectivity upon attempting the transaction. Credit cards are not accepted on board the Amazon cruise vessel. It is usually advantageous to pay your drinks bill in dollars rather than in reais as the exchange rate on board has been reported to be poor.

It is very difficult to give a guideline for essential expenses but a budget of around US$50 per person per day should cover the cost of meals not included in the holiday itinerary, tips, drinks and the odd souvenir. Eat at the very best restaurants and you will pay considerably more. Drinks other than local juices, water, coffee and tea are charged in the Pantanal and on the Amazon cruise, though prices are reasonable and not more than in the UK.

Tips are expected and local guides often rely on their tip as a significant proportion of their income.

Most service industry workers will expect a tip of some kind and so it is useful to have spare change for hotel porters, taxi drivers and the like. It is common to leave 10 – 12% in restaurants.

Travel insurance is essential.

Details of our recommended policy can be found on our Travel Insurance page.

If you have purchased your flights through Journey Latin America, the international departure tax is usually included in the ticket.

Holders of a full British passport do not require a visa, although passports must be valid for at least 6 months after the trip

begins. Anyone with a different nationality should enquire with us or check with the relevant consulate.

If flying to the US, or via the US you will need to fill in your online ESTA application.

There are no long days of travel on this trip. There are two domestic flights by commercial jet and these may include a change of aircraft en route.
In the Pantanal, guides are well-informed and expeditions, which include kayaking on the river at sunrise, as well as nature walks and horse riding, are suitable for most ages and abilities. The Pantanal excursions will include drives down occasionally bumpy unpaved roads, and there are walks and canoe rides in the wetlands, although none of these is compulsory.

The Amazon cruise is comfortable, the cabins are cosy but there is proper bedding, shelves and hooks to store your belongings, private bathroom with shower (hot water restricted hours), and air-conditioning at night. You should be able to climb the quite steep steps leading from deck to deck on the Amazon vessel, and get in and out of the boat to board the motorised launches and canoes which pull up alongside.

The holiday is suitable for all reasonably fit wildlife lovers and older children. If you have a disability or other special requirements, please call us.

In the summer months (December to March) the weather is particularly hot, wet and humid; you might bear this in mind if travelling with small children or elderly persons.

At Iguazú and in the Pantanal December to March are the hottest, wettest and most humid months (up to 40°C), but the highest temperatures in the Amazon are reached (also up to 40°C) in August when there is little cloud cover. Otherwise a temperature of around 30-32°C with partial cloud cover and varying amounts of rainfall is the norm there.

The dry season (April-November) is the most comfortable for visits to the Pantanal and Iguazú although the sun can be strong. It can be cool at Iguazú and in the Pantanal in June and July with temperatures just before dawn dipping on occasion to just above zero, though it will be warm during the day. You may wish to bear in mind the wildlife viewing opportunities before making your decision about when to go.

For day-to-day outdoor wear you should take loose-fitting, breathable clothes including long-sleeved shirts and light, quick-drying trousers for protection on jungle walks. Comfortable shoes or walking boots, a sun hat and sunglasses are essential. You should take a light fleece for cool nights and consider a Gore-Tex layer or rain cape and rain hat, as well as swimwear, insect repellent, sun-block and a torch. You might like to take your own binoculars for observing wildlife; the better the quality, the more rewarding the wildlife observation experience. Similarly you won't regret taking a camera with a long lens, and plenty of memory (you can recharge your camera battery on board the Tucano). Rubber boots are supplied on the Amazon cruise and you may be given a complimentary straw hat.

Clothing at the lodges and on the Tucano is informal but you might take one smart change of clothes to wear in the hotels.

Preventative vaccinations are recommended against the following; typhoid; polio; tetanus; hepatitis A. For specific requirements you must consult your GP.

As of 2018, visitors to Brazil travelling on our holidays should be protected with a vaccination against yellow fever, and carry the corresponding certificate. In April 2013, the World Health Organisation Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on Immunisation concluded that a single primary dose of yellow fever vaccine is sufficient to confer sustained immunity and lifelong protection against yellow fever disease, and that a booster dose is not needed.

You can also find helpful information on the Masta Travel Health website.

We've partnered with Water To Go to offer Journey Latin America clients a 30% discount on 50cl filtered, reusable water bottles with every booking. The bottle can be refilled at any water outlet and has a filter that eliminates 99.9% of bacteria and viruses, allowing the water to be safe to drink.

Simply use the special Journey Latin America code **JLA30** when purchasing the bottle directly on the **Water-To-Go website**.

Wildlife can be spotted on this holiday all year round. If there are brief cold snaps (e.g. in June in the Pantanal), fauna may hide away.

Pantanal:
In the dry season, scores of caiman laze on the river beaches, capybara (a type of giant guinea pig) stroll across the roads, and you may come across armadillos, anteaters and howler monkeys. We recommend that you travel at this time when there are fewer mosquitoes and you will spot fauna throughout.

In the rainy season (December to April) roads are muddy and even impassable, excursions may be by boat: but the reflection of the tangerine sunsets on the flooded plains creates a rich and sumptuous tableau. In the months when the wetlands are flooded wildlife congregates on islands marooned above the water's surface, so you will be able to observe birds and animals more sporadically but in greater numbers.

Amazon:
You will spot birds, reptiles and mammals all year round, albeit frequently only from a distance. The main criteria for deciding when to visit have more to do with the height of the water level in the river than the weather or the life cycle of the wildlife. At the maximum height, the river waters are 14-17m higher than at the lowest. The river floods the surrounding forest.

High water in Amazonia is from April to August. The advantage of travelling on the Tucano at that time is that the water level facilitates movement by boat into small creeks and streams. This is more rewarding than the trips down the main riverbanks which are the only alternative when the water levels are low. You should see a large number of birds along the more intimate banks of the minor creeks.

The vegetation is especially beautiful between May and June when many exotic plants are in flower.

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GET IN TOUCH WITH US...

Our friendly, knowledgeable team of travel experts are always happy to chat about holiday ideas and share helpful advice. Give us a call today and begin planning your perfect trip to Latin America.

0208 747 8315

OPENING HOURS

Monday – Friday: 9am – 6pm
Saturday & Sunday: Closed

SEND US AN EMAIL

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