

## RIO TO MANAUS VIA THE GUIANAS (62 DAYS) TROPICS OF SOUTH AMERICA



**COUNTRIES VISITED: BRAZIL, FRENCH GUIANA, GUYANA, SURINAME**

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Celebrate New Year's Eve or the Carnival in Rio before the trip starts, chaotic, crowded and great fun
- Exploring the Brazilian Coastline lined with beautiful beaches and great marine life
- Search for the endangered spider monkey, sloths, capybara, and the elusive jaguar in Parque Nacional Monte Pascoal
- Take in the music, cuisine and religion in the Afro-Brazilian city of Salvador
- Relax in your hammock on your journey by riverboat along the Amazon River
- Visit Europe's Spaceport and museum, a facility used to launch satellites into space in French Guiana
- Enjoy the ethnic diversity of Paramaribo, displayed through architecture, history, food and people
- Feel the buzzing, lively and colourful city of Georgetown
- Overnight stays in jungle lodges in Guyana, Suriname and Brazil
- Explore the Amazon's largest city, Manaus offering a rich variety of nature, culture, art and dining

### INCLUDES

- Accommodation - approx. 40% camping & 60% simple hostels/hotels
- Ferry across the Baia de Todos os Santos
- Bale Folclorico do Bahia - entrance to the show
- Riverboat from Belem to Macapo
- 2 nights Jungle excursion in Suriname - includes accommodation, meals & activities
- Overnight Jungle excursion in Manaus - includes accommodation, meals & activities
- Meals - approx. 45%
- All transport on Oasis Expedition Truck
- Camping and Cooking equipment
- Services of Oasis Crew

## EXCLUDES

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- Visas
- Optional Excursions as listed in the Pre-Departure Information
- Flights
- Airport Taxes & Transfers
- Travel Insurance
- Meals - approx. 55%
- Drinks
- Tips

## ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

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### ARRIVAL & ACCOMMODATION

**Trip Joining Point:** The Hotel Riazor - including Carnival or New Years in Rio

**Start Time Day 1:** 08:00

**Address:** Rua do Catete, 160 - Catete, Rio de Janeiro

**Telephone:** +55 21 2225-0121

**Website:** [www.hotelriazor.com.br](http://www.hotelriazor.com.br)

**Email:** [hotelriazor@hotelriazor.com.br](mailto:hotelriazor@hotelriazor.com.br)

All prices listed are approximate and subject to limited availability.

Room Type	Price	Description
Shared	Varied	There are different prices for New Year and Carnival Rio accommodation packages. Please contact us at <a href="mailto:southamerica@oasisoverland.co.uk">southamerica@oasisoverland.co.uk</a> to check availability.

**The trip starts from the Hotel Riazor at approximately 8am on the morning of Day 1 of your trip.**

Riazor Hotel was founded in 1891 and was at the time called "Pensão SCHRAY", situated in the old Valdetaro Square. Near the square there was a huge fountain which was transferred in 1896 to the gardens of what is now Catete Palace, Museum of the Republic. On the occasion of the reforms that transformed the mansion into the Presidential Palace, the fountain received the carving of a monogram with the initials BNF (Baron of Nova Friburgo) and the statue "The Birth of Venus" was added to it.

### **PRE-TRIP ACCOMMODATION:**

**New Years Eve and Carnival in Rio:** accommodation packages are available during this time and need to be paid for in the UK before your trip commences. These Add Ons can be booked through [My Oasis Account](#) or you can contact us at [southamerica@oasisoverland.co.uk](mailto:southamerica@oasisoverland.co.uk) to check availability and prices.

Double, twin, and triple rooms will be provided subject to availability, where requested. However when not available we may need to book other rooming arrangements, and will fit these as closely as possible to your request. Those travelling solo will be put in shared rooms to reduce the costs to them, which may be twin/triple shares with other Oasis Overland travellers. Single rooms may be available in some cities for solo travellers, and we will arrange this for you on request, subject to availability.

If you are arriving early in the morning and you would like to check in immediately, you may have to reserve your room for the previous night to ensure direct check in, otherwise you may have to wait until normal check in times (usually 1pm to 2pm).

### **AIRPORT TRANSFERS:**

We are unable to arrange transfers in Rio. On arrival into Rio airport, pre-pay for your taxi in the airport at the taxi desk (approx. US\$20-30) and take the ticket outside to an official taxi. DO NOT use the bus, as these are targeted by pickpockets and are not safe after dark.

We recommend to change some currency into Brazilian real in the airport at a bureau de change or there are ATM's - hostel rates can be low.

## PRE-DEPARTURE MEETING

There will be a pre-departure meeting in the starting hotel the night before the start of the trip, usually around 6:00pm. There will be a notice in reception advising the exact time and here your crew will explain how the day to day running of the trip works. Your Tour Leader will **collect your Local Payment** money as well as 2 photocopies of your **passport information page, insurance policy details** with policy number and confirmation that the duration will cover you for the entire trip and a **24-hour emergency assistance** telephone number. It is essential that you attend this meeting - please let the UK office or your tour leader know if you are unable to do so.

## POST TRIP ACCOMMODATION AND AIRPORT TRANSFERS

Post-trip accommodation can be arranged with your tour leader during the trip or directly with the hotel on arrival. The return airport transfer can be arranged through your hotel / hostel and is not included, it is at your own expense. We regret these services cannot be arranged via the Oasis office before departure.

The exception to this is for Rio accommodation over the New Year & Carnival periods, please contact [southamerica@oasisoverland.co.uk](mailto:southamerica@oasisoverland.co.uk) when you make your booking for further information.

## FLIGHT INFORMATION

You need to arrive at your departure city at least the day before your trip begins. Return flights must be booked for at least the day AFTER the trip is due to end. You may wish to allow some extra time to explore your arrival and departure cities.

There are many online flight search engines such as [www.skyscanner.net](http://www.skyscanner.net) or [www.ebookers.co.uk](http://www.ebookers.co.uk), flights can also be booked direct with airline websites or through travel agencies. Please inform us of your flight details through your online account, as airport transfers can be arranged for various trips.

**One way ticket:** If you intend to travel on a one way ticket to meet up with one of our trips, without possessing an onward flight ticket - we recommend that you have a copy of your payment confirmation/receipt (that you will be sent at time of your balance payment) available at immigration to assist easy entry.

**Departure Taxes:** Please check with your Travel Agent or Airline if your flight ticket already includes a departure tax payment out of the country. If it does not - please budget for approx US\$30 to \$70 USD - to be paid in US\$ only.

## PASSPORTS

Your passport must be valid for at least 6 months AFTER your trip finishes. This is a general requirement for all of the countries we travel to on our trips.

If you have dual nationality you can only use one passport for the entire trip. It is your responsibility to ensure you have all the relevant visas you require.

Please bring 2 photocopies of your passport details to give to your tour leader.

As a guideline, you will need at least 1 blank page per country in your passport, (for the 31 weeks Trans South America, you should allow at least 13 blank pages).

**Inca Trail Trek** – you will need to provide your passport details to apply for your Inca trail trekking permit, please enter these correctly on your booking form. If you are intending on renewing your passport then please let us know at the point of booking. In order to trek you will need to be in possession of both your passport and your permit – and the passport details have to match otherwise the permit issuing authorities will not let you trek.

## **VISAS**

The information below is to be used only as a guide and may change without prior notice. It is advisable to contact the relevant embassy in plenty of time before the trip departs to check the current visa requirements. It is **your responsibility** to ensure you have all the relevant visas you require.

**Visas must be paid for in USD cash ONLY.**

On arrival to countries in South America, you will be given an 'Immigration card'. It is important that you keep this with your passport during your entire stay in the particular country as it is needed for departure. Failure to produce this immigration slip can result in a fine.

**Transiting via the USA** - Travellers who are flying to South America via the US will require either a US visa or for certain nationalities an Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) to take advantage of the visa waiver programme. These can be processed and paid for [here](#).

If you have travelled to Iran, Iraq, Sudan, Syria, Libya, Somalia or Yemen since March 2011 you will not qualify for the ESTA and must apply for a visa.

It is very important you establish your ESTA eligibility and have the correct documentation before departing, as if you do not have the right authorisation upon checking in at the airport you may not be permitted to travel.

For more information on other nationalities & visas checkout [www.projectvisa.com](http://www.projectvisa.com)

## **Brazil**

Passport Holders from UK, most EU countries and New Zealand do not require a visa to enter Brazil.

Australia, US and Canada passport holders require an e-visa in advance: <https://brazil.vfsevisa.com/>.

Visas are usually only valid for entry for 3 months from date of issue so you should not apply more than 3 months before you enter Brazil. We will send you information to help you make your application closer to the time.

Passport Holders from other countries, will need to check the current visa requirements with the relevant consulate, and whether you need to obtain the visa in advance.

## **French Guiana**

Passport Holders from UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, USA and Canada will not require a visa to enter French Guiana.

Passport Holders from other countries, will need to check the current visa requirements with the relevant consulate, and whether you need to obtain the visa in advance.

## **Guyana**

Passport Holders from UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, USA and Canada will not require a visa to enter Guyana.

Passport Holders from other countries, will need to check the current visa requirements with the relevant consulate, and whether you need to obtain the visa in advance.

## **Suriname**

Most nationalities are visa free and only need to register and pay an Entry Fee online via the VFS website. Check [here](#) for a list of nationalities that must apply for an E-Visa instead.

The Entry Fee process is outsourced to an agency called VFS Global. They are the official partner of a number of diplomatic missions and a specialist Suriname visa application agency. There is no expiry date on your Entry Fee certificate but VFS advise that it is valid for entry for 90 days. This means you must not complete the process more than 90 days before we are due to arrive in Suriname. We will send you details to help you apply, closer to this time.

During the process you will need to upload a copy of your passport – please ensure this is the passport you will be travelling to Suriname on. If you will already be travelling when you do this, we suggest that you have a digital copy to take with you, as it may be easier for you to do this before you leave home than once you're on the trip.

See <https://suriname.vfsevisa.com/suriname/assets/docs/passport-bio-page.pdf> for examples of how your scanned passport should look.

The Entry Fee costs US\$50 + US\$8 processing fee, payable online.

## VACCINATIONS AND HEALTH

It is possible that you may require some vaccinations for your trip, depending on the areas that you are visiting. As we are not medically trained, we are unable to give detailed advice on vaccination requirements, so please use the information below as a guide only. We have worked closely with **Nomad Travel Clinics** for many years and they offer Oasis travellers a **10% discount** on vaccinations, anti-malarial drugs, first aid items, clothing and equipment, just enter discount code OASIS1000 at [www.nomadtravel.co.uk](http://www.nomadtravel.co.uk). Alternatively you can check out the [fit for travel website](#) for more travel health information or consult a reputable travel clinic or your GP for information and advice. We suggest that you allow at least 8 weeks to get all your vaccinations.

**Yellow Fever** - Being vaccinated against Yellow Fever and having a valid certificate and a photocopy is deemed compulsory in some countries we visit, especially at certain borders and are needed if you are entering from an infected country. You can view a list of countries requiring a certificate through the World Health Organisation [http://www.who.int/ith/ITH\\_country\\_list.pdf](http://www.who.int/ith/ITH_country_list.pdf)

**Rabies** - Vaccinations are regularly advised for many countries that we travel through - especially if time and money are not a deterrent.

**Malaria** - In some of the areas we visit there is a risk of contracting Malaria. You must be aware that whatever malaria prophylactics you are taking, they only offer partial protection. They must be coupled with your own physical efforts against being bitten - which is the best prevention. Malaria-carrying mosquitoes come out at sunset so from this time you should wear long sleeves and trousers. Exposed skin, especially ankles, should have insect repellent containing 'Deet' applied to them. Your crew will advise on where the worst affected areas are on the trip. There are a number of prophylactic malaria treatments on the market & requirements change. It is also wise to take a sample of whichever prophylactic you choose, a few weeks before you leave. This way you may determine early on if you have any adverse reactions so you can change the regimen if necessary. Please consult a reputable travel clinic or GP for advice. For more information visit [www.nomadtravel.co.uk](http://www.nomadtravel.co.uk) or [www.fitfortravel.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.fitfortravel.scot.nhs.uk)

Medical advice should be taken particularly if you are visiting the jungle in either Ecuador or Peru, the Brazilian Pantanal or Iguazu Falls in either Argentina or Brazil as part of your trip.

**Altitude sickness** - This is caused by thin air (due to lack of oxygen) and can affect anyone arriving at high altitude (above 3000mtrs). The symptoms are headaches, dizziness, shortage of breath and possibly nausea. To avoid this or alleviate the symptoms make a point to acclimatize by arriving into a high altitude destination a few days early and make sure you do not over exert yourself, rest for a few hours, avoid drinking alcohol, smoking, large meals and drink plenty of water.

As we are travelling mostly by land (as opposed to flying into a high altitude location) we should acclimatise gradually, and so avoid 'soroche', mountain sickness.

**Dengue** - Unlike the malaria mosquito, which bites at night, the dengue carrying mosquito bites during the day. Some areas we travel to do have occasional outbreaks & it is therefore advised that you take care not to be bitten during the day as well as at night. There is no vaccine available.

**Health** - To join our trips you should be in good general health. Your medical insurance company must be told if you have any pre-existing medical condition / allergy or if you are on any regular medication, otherwise you may not be covered under your policies for these. Our crew will need to know of any medication or conditions you may have. For general health advice log onto [www.nathnac.org/travel/](http://www.nathnac.org/travel/)

## TRAVEL INSURANCE

It is a compulsory requirement that you have adequate travel insurance before you join any Oasis trip and at the very least are insured for all necessary medical and repatriation costs incurred.

You will be asked to provide the following details if you have not already done so: travel insurance company name, insurance policy number & insurance emergency telephone number. You will also be required to give a copy of your policy with this information to your Tour Leader on arrival with confirmation that the policy duration is sufficient to cover you for the entire duration of your trip. It is also wise to leave a copy of your insurance policy with a friend or relative for safe keeping.

We believe that your safety and holiday enjoyment are very important. It is a mistake to think that "it will never happen to me". It is also very important that you are covered for all the activities that you may wish to undertake while on our trip. It is extremely important that you check the full extent of your cover related to 24 hour Medical Emergency Assistance. In the event of you needing medical treatment you want to know that you have the best cover available to you. Your policy should include adequate Medical Emergency and Repatriation cover as well as Cancellation, Baggage and Personal Liability cover. You need to be aware of EXACTLY what activities your policy covers you for. Please note that skiing is not usually covered in most insurance policies. Please note also that many of the areas we visit are not as developed as the UK and we have no control over the availability or standard of medical and repatriation services and facilities in the areas we visit and these do not form any part of our contract with you.

You should also note that passenger liability insurance covering vehicles, particularly in Third World countries, may be unavailable or inadequate; it is therefore important that your insurance cover makes sufficient provision for you and your dependents in the event of an accident.

We are happy to refer our UK based travellers to the travel insurance specialists [Campbell Irvine](#) who have a policy suitable for overlanding which covers most of the adventure and sporting activities on our trips.

Please be aware that most travel insurance policies will not cover you if you are visiting areas against

government travel advice. If your trip will go through areas like this (for example, some of our Trans Africa routes through West Africa) then you may need to look at an alternative policy for these sections, for example [Battleface](#) or [SafetyWing](#).

For further information, check out the [Travel Insurance](#) section of our website.

### **IMPORTANT INSURANCE INFORMATION FOR THOSE VISITING ZANZIBAR:**

The Zanzibar Government have announced the introduction of a travel insurance policy which will be obligatory for all foreign visitors to the islands, regardless of whether travellers have their own travel insurance in place.

1. The insurance policy is sold by Zanzibar Insurance Corporation.
2. The cost is US\$44 per person.
3. The insurance requirement comes into force on 1st October 2024.
4. The policy must be purchased online at [visitzanzibar.go.tz](http://visitzanzibar.go.tz) and purchases can be made from 1st September 2024.
5. Payment can be made online by debit or credit card.
6. On completion of the purchase, visitors will receive a QR code. The policy documents will be sent to your registered email address.
7. The policy document and QR code must be presented on in Zanzibar. Entry will be refused without this documentation.

To ensure you have a smooth entry, please ensure the above policy is purchased in advance of your arrival.

## **MONEY, BUDGETS AND LP**

### **Local Payment (LP)**

LP is part of your overall trip payment and is the most cost effective and practical way to get hard currency to South America to pay for a variety of your day to day local costs (i.e. all meals prepared by the group, campsite/hostel/hotel fees, gas, and certain activities listed on the trip page) which cannot be pre-paid from the UK. It is a guaranteed amount, set before your trip departs, and unlike 'group kitty' systems we will not ask you to contribute more once the trip is underway.

**Please note:** Your LP is payable to your Tour Leader on the morning of departure in US\$ Dollars CASH ONLY. Make sure that all your notes are in good condition. Old, torn or marked notes are often refused by the banks and we will therefore be unable to accept them either and you will be required to change them in the country you start for new unblemished notes which will be difficult. Please do not bring all of your Local Payment in US\$100 notes, a good mix of \$20s, \$50s and \$100s is preferable and also make sure that they are post 2013 and do not have a serial number starting with CB. In many countries smaller US\$ notes are simply not accepted and as such notes smaller

than \$20 are best avoided.

Please remember that you will need to pre-order US\$ cash for your LP before you leave home as your LP is payable all at once at the start of your trip and you cannot pay in local currency using ATMs due to the withdrawal limits in place and their unreliability. In addition, ATM transaction fees can seriously add to your travelling expenses.

### **How to bring your currency?**

Past Oasis travellers have fed back that they have felt, as a general rule it is best to bring your money in a combination of cash US dollars, pre-paid travel currency cards and debit/credit cards.

**Make sure that all your notes are in good condition. Old, torn or marked notes are often refused by the banks and shops. Please ensure your notes are dated post 2013** and do not have a serial number starting with CB. When buying US Dollars before you travel it is best to ask for clean notes with no tears or markings. It can be difficult using US\$100 bills in Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia so if possible, bring US\$50 bills for these countries. Some travellers worry about carrying so much cash with them, however all Oasis Overland trucks are equipped with an onboard safe for the security of your money and passport. Please also remember that Visas, where required, need to be paid for in US dollars cash only.

**Venezuela (If we are able to go there):** There are strict currency controls in place in Venezuela, with two official and one unofficial exchange rate currently in use. ATMs have extremely low limits for daily withdrawals and frequently run out of cash or are not in working order, as such they cannot be relied upon. We recommend you budget for your entire trip in Venezuela in cash US dollars.

### **Spending Money**

From past trips and traveller feedback US\$150 to US\$200 per week should cover costs such as some meals out, soft drinks and beers, email & communications, souvenirs and other general spending. Personal spending habits & budgets differ greatly from person to person. Budget on visa costs and optional activities separately (see visa section above & optional excursions page) & allow extra for your Local Payment contribution. There is often a departure tax payable in the airport, so allow up to US\$50 for this.

For trips starting / ending before Carnival: During the Carnival week both tourists and locals flock to Rio, meaning that many resources are stretched. This includes access to cash via banks and cash machines, as the banks frequently close for the whole ten day carnival period. Many of the machines run out of cash early on in the celebrations (often by day 2), and once the machines are empty they are not restocked until after the carnival celebrations have finished. Money exchanges can also be difficult to access during this time, or will only provide a very poor rate. From past experience we know that the exchange rate weakens in the run up to Carnival, so all in all (if possible) it would be best for you to get some Brazilian Real's in advance. When working out how many you need, bear in mind any time you will be spending in Brazil before Carnival in Rio.

If your trip goes to **French Guiana, Suriname and Guyana** please note that the general cost of living in these countries is much higher than elsewhere in South America, and you can expect the price of meals, drinks, souvenirs and excursions to accordingly cost more. For these countries we suggest you budget around US\$300 a week for extra expenses.

## **Changing money**

Change your money only at banks, hotels, airports or forex bureaus. It is illegal to change money on the street, as these people will normally be opportunistic thieves or undercover police. Your crew will advise you where & when you can change money & with what means. It is also a good idea to have a small CASH emergency fund, to allow for the unexpected.

## **Credit & Debit Cards**

If you are intending using your credit or debit card, we suggest taking more than one card with you as you may find that your card is not accepted in the first ATM you try. For credit and debit cards Visa is best. Mastercard and American Express are generally not accepted throughout South America. We recommend that you inform your bank that you will be using your card abroad to avoid it being blocked.

## **Pre-Paid Travel Currency Cards**

These cards are similar to normal Credit and Debit cards but they can be pre loaded with cash before you travel with a set amount allowing you to withdraw this cash using the card at normal ATMs. It is a more secure way to access cash on your trip, but again do not rely on these as your sole means of funds on a trip - (please refer to the ATM section). Several banks and companies now offer these cards, but be sure to look into the rates for withdrawing cash when making your decision. When using these cards abroad you will use them to withdraw the local currency from an ATM and not the currency that you loaded onto the card.

## **ATMs**

These are available in most major cities along our route and allow you to withdraw local currency only. We discourage you from relying on your ATM card as a primary source of funds in case it is lost/stolen/swallowed, or the machine isn't working. In some destinations we probably won't even see a bank or ATM for days on end. Even where do find them, they cannot always be relied upon - things change, and ATMs don't always work! Besides memorising your PIN, it is also important to be aware of your daily withdrawal limit and bank withdrawal costs.

## **Tipping**

Tipping in South America is customary and often expected, and local attitudes towards tipping are different to what we are used to in the West. It is often more than a reward for services well done but as wages are extremely low, it is an accepted means of supplementing an income. As a general rule, tipping around 10% of the total bill in restaurants is a good guide, and the same amounts usually

apply for activities and excursions.

Because it can be difficult to know what to tip, and as it has such importance in some areas both economically and culturally, there may be times and activities for which your crew will make it clear what level of tipping is 'customary/expected'. They may also be quite enthusiastic or assertive in encouraging you to take account of these suggestions. This is motivated by the knowledge of how important tipping can be, and the offence or confusion that can be caused when local people are tipped poorly. In the end, tipping remains at the discretion of the individual, but our crew will continue to advise on normal rates, and we would ask you to carefully consider the economic or personal impact of being seen to 'under tip'. We know that many who travel with us are on a tight budget, but ask you to remember that those we work with locally may also face financial hardship, and also work very hard to try to give you unrivalled service/experiences.

As a very rough guide, we would suggest that you budget for an amount equal to 10% of the local payment for your trip, plus 10% of the cost of any of the listed optional excursions that you wish to do. The amounts you end up tipping may vary from a rigid 10%, but hopefully this will help you budget in general.

On the Inca Trail, your crew will advise you what the expected tipping amounts are before the trek. It may seem unusual to be asked to tip before receiving a service, but the tips are a crucial part of the income for the guides, cooks and porters, and it is important that this gets shared out equally and fairly between them, so you can expect your Oasis Tour Leader to take an active role in ensuring it is done in the correct manner. The tips are usually spread out by the Tour Leader and then given to the travellers to hand out on the last day of the trek.

In the past we have been asked by travellers about tipping your Oasis Crew. If you choose to do this, it would be budgeted separately from the above. Our guys work very hard at making your trip a great travel experience. Working overseas can often be challenging and they are pretty much on call for you 24 hours a day, so it's appreciated as a thank you for hard work and good service, but of course not mandatory. Our suggestion is to budget around US\$1, per person, per day.

## **CLIMATE**

You will experience a varying degree of climatic changes at any time of year, from freezing temperatures (down to as cold as minus -15°C) in the Andes, to scorching heat in the desert and heavy downpours in the jungle (up to as hot and humid as 47°C and 90% humidity).

The rains in the Andes usually occur between November and April. This means downpours once or twice a day with the rest of the day usually warm and sunny, although there will also be times where it may not rain at all for a week or so. April to October is the dry season with clear views of the mountains. It is hot during the day but extremely cold at night with temperatures often well below zero. You will be spending a lot of time at altitude where nights can be very cold at any time of year.

The deserts in Peru can also be cold during the night but can be very hot during the day particularly between October and May. The Amazon Jungle is very hot with high humidity plus regular downpours of rain usually year-round. [View South American Climate Chart](#)

If you are travelling on a trip that goes through Patagonia in July – September, please be aware it will get very cold at times with temperatures well below zero, and you can expect snowfall. Please be prepared for cold conditions, with thermal clothing and the correct sleeping bag.

## WHAT TO TAKE

The less you take the less you have to pack, wash & lug home & you can always pick up extras along the way. Most people make the mistake of bringing too much gear. Clothes washing or laundry facilities will be available at least once a week. You will be travelling in the heat & camping in the cold, so bring clothes for all climates; rough stuff is best. Pack according to season: allowing for extremes in temperature (from the constant baking heat in the dry season to the cold and occasional frost overnight in some areas) Make sure that you bring your gear in a traditional soft sided 70 - 90L rucksack or holdall - suitcases are not suitable. **Remember baggage is limited to 20kg per person plus one day bag.**

Equipment	Toiletries - Most available to buy on trip
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sleeping Bag - 3 to 4 season bag, depending on season, &amp; sleep sheet</li> <li>• Foam sleeping mat or thermarest &amp; repair kit</li> <li>• Small day-pack or small bag to carry daily items</li> <li>• Soft rucksack or holdall (NOT rigid suitcase)</li> <li>• Water bottle - for personal use - we recommend Water-to-Go (see below Responsible Travel)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soap, shampoo, toothbrush/paste, antibacterial hand wash, lip balm &amp; moisturiser</li> <li>• Sun block 35 + after sun, hat &amp; sun glasses               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tampons (can buy in most places)</li> <li>• Contraception</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Clothes	Personal Effects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One pair of trainers or boots</li> <li>• Sandals/flip flops/jandals/thongs</li> <li>• Underwear/socks</li> <li>• T shirts/shirts</li> <li>• Shorts/swimwear</li> <li>• Jeans/trousers/jog pants/leggings</li> <li>• Skirt or dress</li> <li>• Sweat shirt/jumper</li> <li>• Jacket/fleece &amp; waterproof jacket</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Camera with protective case, spare batteries, film/memory card               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Torch &amp; spare batteries (head torch is best)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Travel adaptor plug/charger (for cameras &amp; mobile phone batteries)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Money belt</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Personal stereo - there is a stereo on the truck with iPod/MP3 adaptors               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Towel &amp;/or sarong</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Recommended Medical Kit List	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Antiseptic ointment/Antihistamine cream &amp; tablets</li> <li>• Nurofen or equivalent pain-killer</li> <li>• Eye-drops/bath</li> <li>• Anti-diarrhoea treatment</li> <li>• A couple of bandages (elasticated &amp; triangular)</li> <li>• Medication for personal allergies/asthma etc</li> <li>• Insect repellent containing Deet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-hydration sachets/vitamin tablets               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assorted plasters</li> <li>• 1 Course of malaria treatment</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Some suitable antibiotics as recommended by your doctor for infected cuts or to treat severe dysentery</li> <li>• Malaria Tablets - see Vaccinations &amp; Health section</li> </ul>

Please note that **in the winter months** (June - September) it can be very cold, especially at altitude, so we recommend that you bring extra layers of be prepared to purchase some when you are in Peru, Bolivia & Patagonia.

Even though our trucks are equipped with a comprehensive medical kit, we advise you to bring a small personal medical kit as our truck kit is not for general everyday use. It will also be your responsibility to carry your kit on included excursions and optional activities as some local operators may not have medical kits to hand.

## PHOTOGRAPHY AND ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

**Cameras (incl. Digital & Video Cameras)** - An easy to use 'point and shoot' will get you some good photos. For memorable shots, it may be worthwhile investing in an SLR camera, but be sure to get some practice in before the trip! Most towns and cities have internet cafes where you can download onto CD/internet sites - but don't rely on it. Internet speeds can be slow for uploading photos to social media or the Cloud.

**Photography** - Be aware of your surroundings when taking photographs and filming. Some locations will be sensitive or have local laws banning photography. For example it is usually forbidden to use cameras at borders or around government buildings, military installations, bridges and airports or to take photos of local officials. If you do take photos or film where it is not permitted you may find yourself being questioned by irate officials who may decide to confiscate your camera or instruct you to delete all the images/footage on your device. If in doubt ask for permission, or if there is no-one to ask use some common sense.

**Drones** - As the use of drones becomes more common, countries throughout the world are gradually updating their laws and restrictions on usage. The specific regulations will vary from one country to another, so do check the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice for the latest information. As with cameras, use your common sense if you do use a drone and avoid operation in sensitive areas. If you plan to bring a drone on your trip with us please contact us first to ensure there will be a suitable place to store it while on your trip.

**Electrical charging & power supply** - It may be difficult to find a power source for charging at times,

so a spare battery is a must.

Consider a 12V in-car charger (our vehicles are equipped with a couple of 12 volt cigarette lighter charger sockets - truck trips only) or bring along your 230V mains charger and travel adaptor plug for use at some of the hotels, hostels and campsites we stay at.

NOTE: 12V - 230V inverters cannot be used on our vehicles because of the power drain they cause.

Log onto [www.whatplug.net](http://www.whatplug.net) for information regarding the different electrical plugs and voltage used in each country.

## CONTACTING HOME

The internet and WiFi are readily available in almost every town and city you will visit; most hotels and hostels will have free WiFi as will many bars and cafes. Do bear in mind that the connections can be unreliable and will not always be as fast as you are used to at home. If a lot of people try to use the internet at the same time the speed will be slower still, especially if trying to make Skype calls or upload photos/videos. During periods of the trip where we are camping, internet will be less common.

Some travellers choose to take an unlocked mobile phone with them and buy local SIM cards in each country, allowing them to use mobile data. If you particularly want or need regular internet access this may be a good option. Telephone calls can be expensive usually £1 to £5 for a three minute call.

**Online Diaries** - A great variety of free "travel blogs" are now available online, they are a good way of keeping relatives and friend up to date with what you are doing and a good place to upload photos, collecting messages as well as keeping a record for yourself.

## RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

### Before you go

- Remove unnecessary packaging before you go - waste disposal facilities are often stretched or non-existent in the places we visit. To avoid unnecessary pollution of local water supplies take environmentally friendly toiletries with you.
- Why not invest in a wind-up or solar-powered torch or media player before you travel or at least rechargeable batteries.
- Learn some of the local language and read up on the local history/culture before you go. You'll get so much more out of your trip.
- Why not pack some pens/pencils exercise books in your rucksack and they can be donated to a local school or project while you're away. You can also purchase these items cheaply, locally which will help local businesses.

- Take a sturdy water bottle with you from home that you can re-use throughout your trip. We carry large quantities of purified water with us on our Expedition vehicles and it is much better for the environment if you drink this, rather than purchase bottled water along the way. (It also saves you money).
- Water-to-Go: Oasis Overland have partnered with Water-to-Go to help reduce the number of plastic water bottles consumed during a trip. Water-to-Go is a filtration system that eliminates over 99.9% of all microbiological contaminants including viruses, bacteria, chemicals and heavy metals from any non-salt water source. Click [here](#) and enter the code OASIS15 to purchase your [Water-to-Go](#) products at 15% discount. Water-to-Go will then donate a further 15% to Oasis Overland Charity projects.

## While you're travelling

From experience gained in running trips, we have developed our own practical and manageable environmental policy which all of our crew practice on the trips we operate, and they will share this information with you at the start of your trip. We welcome your input on this, plus any new ideas you may have, to improve our existing procedures. As a guide here's a few tips to bear in mind.

- Don't waste water. It is a scarce resource in many of the places our trips visit. On all our Ultimate and Overland Expeditions we carry large quantities of purified water with us. We encourage you to refill your own water bottles from this supply, rather than purchase bottled water along the way—much more environmentally friendly and saves you money.
- Never buy endangered species or endangered habitat products. Apart from the fact of it being illegal it also encourages the trade to continue.
- Look after and preserve the areas we visit. Be careful about stepping on coral reefs or trekking on undesignated tracks.
- Buy locally made crafts and products helping to support the local economy.
- Don't feel when bargaining that you have to get the cheapest price possible just for the sake of it. Pay what the item is worth to you & don't worry about what someone else has paid.
- Try the local food and drinks - this will help to support local farmers and food sellers. Sitting in a local cafe is also a great way to meet local people.
- Dispose of litter appropriately on your trip. This includes cigarette butts. Not only does litter look unsightly it can be lethal to wildlife.
- Where any toilet facilities exist, however unsavoury they might seem to you, they should be used. Where they do not, always bury your waste and make sure it is never near (at least 30m) a water source.
- When game viewing do not encourage your guides to get too close to the wildlife so that their natural behaviour is impeded.

- Respect local customs, traditions and beliefs of the people in the different regions that you travel through.
- Do not take photos of people, ritual events or special places unless you have asked first. Dress appropriately according to local codes and show respect around religious festivals.
- Recycling is almost non-existent in many of the areas and countries we visit - we do the best we can with limited resources & space on our vehicles.
- For books dedicated to travelling more responsibly & ethically see: [www.tourismconcern.org.uk](http://www.tourismconcern.org.uk)

**Community Projects** - Oasis are active in raising awareness and providing support to a number of projects and local schools where we believe we can make a positive difference. More information on the [projects we support](#).

## SECURITY

All major cities have their share of petty crime (just like our cities) and sensible precautions need to be taken. Wearing expensive looking jewellery or watches and carrying cameras will draw unnecessary attention to you. Leave valuables such as passports and excess money in your hotel safe or truck safe (we recommend carrying a copy of your passport details page at all times). You may find a simple money belt is more discreet than a bag. Always be aware of your surroundings and when approached by people you do not know, use your common sense. At night in cities it's best to use a taxi, rather than walking around the streets, single women in particular need to be careful and we would suggest that it is safer to be in a group.

**On board the truck** - Each vehicle is fitted with a hidden, lockable safe to be used for money, passports and important documents. Group member will be responsible for the safe and Oasis Overland cannot accept any liability for clients' personal or monetary contents kept in the safe or on board the truck. We advise you to not take items of value that are not essential for the journey. In certain areas a roster may be drawn up for the group to share the task of guarding and keeping

**FCO Advice** - The UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) offer country-specific advice, regarding not only security but also entry regulations, local laws and customs and health. We strongly recommend all travellers visit the FCO website, or the equivalent in their home country, to familiarise themselves with local conditions and potential issues in the countries they plan to visit before committing to a trip with us. You can view their website [here](#).

As an adventure tour operator, some of our trips will travel to areas that are rarely-visited and occasionally attract negative publicity. We are not in the business of taking our travellers or indeed staff to regions that we consider dangerous and **the safety of all who travel with us is always our main priority**, but as a discerning customer we understand you will want to be aware of any risks before travelling. We liaise with the FCO on specific regions or areas as necessary, as well as monitoring open media outlets and political risk resources, and speaking to our contacts on the ground.

In some rare cases, our trips may have to travel through areas against which the FCO either 'advise against all but essential travel' or 'advise against all travel'. When our trips travel through these areas we will carry out all due diligence and notify you in advance. This advice can change without notice. In these instances you will need to ensure you have full and comprehensive travel insurance that includes cover for these areas – some policies will exclude them. We are able to provide additional cover, if required, at additional cost. It may also be required that you read and sign a short information sheet confirming you have been advised of the risks and agree to travel contrary to the FCO advice.

If you have any questions at all about the safety or security of your trip, please do not hesitate to contact us and we will be happy to discuss your trip in more detail.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **New Years or Carnival in Rio**

**New Years Eve in Rio** - If you are on a trip that coincides with New Years Eve in Rio you can fly into Rio about 4 days before your trip starts or allow a few days after your trip finishes, to experience and join in the celebrations on Copacabana beach on the last night of the Year.

**Carnival in Rio** - If you are on a trip coinciding with 'Carnival' you should allow a few days before your trip starts or finishes, if you want to experience this spectacular event, so book your flights accordingly. Most carnival events are from the Friday through to the Tuesday before/after the trip starts/finishes.

To reserve pre/post tour accommodation for either events, please contact the Oasis office.

Should you wish to go, tickets to the Carnival Parade at the Sambadrome will be organised via the Oasis office. You will need to add them through at the time of booking or through [My Oasis Account](#).

View [more information about Carnival](#) and what you can do.

## **TRAVEL INSURANCE**

It is a compulsory requirement that you have adequate travel insurance before you join any Oasis Trip, and at the very least are insured for all necessary medical & repatriation costs incurred if you need them.

You will be asked to provide the following details on the Traveller Information Form that you send in to us after making your booking. If you have not already done so: travel insurance name, insurance policy number & insurance emergency telephone number. You will also be required to give a copy of

your policy with this information to your Tour Leader on arrival with confirmation that the policy duration is sufficient to cover you for the entire duration of your trip. It is also wise to leave a copy of your insurance policy with a friend or relative for safe keeping.

We believe that your safety and holiday enjoyment are very important. It is a mistake to think that "it will never happen to me". It is also very important that you are covered for all the activities that you may wish to undertake while on our trip. It is extremely important that you check the full extent of your cover related to 24 hour Medical Emergency Assistance. In the event of you needing medical treatment you want to know that you have the best cover available to you. Your policy should include adequate Medical Emergency and Repatriation cover as well as Cancellation, Baggage and Personal Liability cover. You need to be aware of EXACTLY what activities your policy covers you for. Please note that skiing is not usually covered in most insurance policies.

We offer tailor made Overland Adventure Travel Insurance that covers most of the adventure and sporting activities on our trips.

For further information on the insurance we offer, the activities covered and costs, check out the [Travel Insurance](#) section of our website. UK residents can purchase the insurance we recommend directly through [Campbell Irvine](#).

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## WHAT TO EXPECT

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### LIFE ON THE ROAD

The Oasis truck will be your new home giving you a comfortable, secure base with which to experience your trip. As part of the adventure you will be expected to have an active involvement in the day to day running of the trip, be part of the group and get stuck in and help with various tasks, whether it's cooking meals over open fires, pitching your tent or keeping the truck clean & tidy.

## **Itinerary**

Because Oasis Overland do not operate normal 'package holidays' the itineraries given cannot be guaranteed to run exactly as outlined. However, it is rare that we have to make major changes and in the event that we do this will be discussed with you either before or during the trip. It is important to bear in mind that should it not be possible to enter a certain country due to safety concerns, visa problems or political turmoil etc, and it becomes necessary to fly over a country in order to continue a trip, that all costs for flights will be borne by you and not Oasis. Should it not be possible for an Oasis trip to begin from a scheduled starting city due to border closures, civil unrest etc, Oasis will make all reasonable efforts to begin the trip from an alternative location. However, all additional costs that you may incur in travelling to the alternative location will be paid by you or your insurance company and not Oasis.

## **Seatbelts**

All Oasis Overland trucks are fitted with seat belts. For your own safety and security we recommend that travellers wear these at all times whilst the vehicle is moving.

## **Accommodation**

**Camping** - Oasis provides tents for those nights you will be camping. Tents are shared (between two people of the same sex from your group unless you are a couple). We spend some nights bush or desert camping, and on some occasions it is necessary to camp at overnight services, which are basic but equipped with showers and other facilities; the rest of the time in campsites. Facilities and standards at campsites vary, some are well equipped and managed and some are very basic. At bush camps you will be living off the truck, so there will be no showers or en-suite facilities! At certain campsites there is the opportunity to upgrade to a private room at your own expense if you are missing your bed.

**Simple Hotels/Hostels** - At some locations we will stay at small locally owned hostels/hotels. These are usually basic places, and often the accommodation will be mixed sex dormitory style. Upgrades may be available on arrival, but cannot be reliably pre- booked. Please be aware that the quality of accommodation can vary quite a lot from area to area and sometimes in a small hotel the standard of rooms can vary even from one room to the next - so there needs to be a level of understanding within the group that your Oasis Crew does not often have power over room allocation or services provided by various hotels and it is unavoidable that they have to rely on the local staff. Please note if you choose to participate on an overnight optional activity, then you will not receive reimbursement for any accommodation or meals that you are missing out on with the rest of the group.

## **During the day**

As a guide, driving days normally start at about 8am and finish at about 5pm, with stops for lunch and buying food, seeing local sights etc. We won't be driving every day, although there are times when we will drive for two, but we will then stop for a few days and you will have free time to explore, meet local people, do some optional activities or just relax and do your own thing. Expect to sometimes get dusty & dishevelled during the day and although you will be able to shower most nights (except at bush camps), not all camps will have hot showers.

## **Meals & cook groups**

When 'on the road' or camping, we usually cook using gas or over open fires in a rota system and you can expect to cook in a group of two or three people approximately once every ten days depending on the number of people on trip and whereabouts you are. Your cook group will have to decide on what to cook, utilise stocks from the truck stores and locally obtain ingredients from markets, shops etc. and rustle up a meal. But don't worry if you're not a Gordon Ramsay, as the rest of the group and the Tour Leader usually lend a helping hand. Here is an idea of what to expect at meal times:

**Breakfasts:** Usually simple - we help ourselves to cereal, toast, hot drinks and on occasion we will splurge with a cooked breakfast.

**Lunch:** Cold and usually quick. The cook group will put out bread, tinned supplies and maybe make a salad.

**Dinner:** Cooks come into their own in the evening, and will always attempt to cook up some delights.

When staying in hotels in towns or cities we do not include meals. This is your chance to go out and explore and try local cuisine in local restaurants.

**Vegetarians / Vegans / Coeliacs / Gluten & Lactose intolerance** - Our Tour Leaders will always do their best to cater for any dietary requirement or intolerance whenever possible. However we do not cater for fussy eaters. It must be remembered that the variety of dishes available to Vegetarians may not be the same as available to meat eaters. If there is anything in particular you require in your diet or because of an allergy or would miss from home, it would be best to bring these with you, as these cannot be purchased with normal Local Payment funds due to the high cost of these specialised and often imported foods.

Remember that when eating out in local restaurants & hotels that vegetarianism or food allergies / intolerance's, are still not widely known about or understood by many local people. i.e Vegetarians or Vegans will often be offered fish or chicken in error. Most large towns and cities, or areas used to tourists, will often have more choice but please be aware that it will probably not be as varied as you are used to when eating out at home.

## **In the evenings**

When at a bushcamp or campsite, you and your tent buddy will put up the tent, and then lend a hand with getting out the tables, stools, firewood and water containers. The fire grates need to be taken

out, the fire lit and someone can fill the kettle and make hot drinks while the cook group prepares the evening meal. Then just sit back, chill and enjoy the rest of your evening!

## Oasis Crew

We usually have two Crew whose duties are extensive and quite demanding, with challenges ranging from driving and maintaining the expedition vehicle to a high standard, to organising visas and border crossings, arranging accommodation, pre-booking some excursions and guides, helping with shopping and cooking as well as finding the best deals, socialising and making sure everything runs as smoothly as possible. Whilst our Crew are usually experienced and knowledgeable, they are not tour guides as such. Our trips pass through many countries and our Tour Leaders cannot be expected to have detailed knowledge of each country's history, flora and fauna and archaeological sites. Even so - they will be more than willing to pass on any interesting and useful information that they have acquired whilst on the road. A rewarding way to gain a better insight into the wildlife, cultural and historical diversity of the countries we travel through is by reading guide books as well as talking to the local people and using local guides.

Adventure travel can be unpredictable and occasionally our Crew may have to amend the itinerary to take into account changing local circumstances or because of a delay at a border or because of circumstances outside our control. This can all lead to additional work and commitment for our Crew who will do all they can to minimise any disruption to the trip. While our Crew are essentially on call 24 hours a day 7 days a week, it has to be remembered that no one is actually expected to work these hours, so at Oasis we are realistic that within a trip there will be times when our Crew need 'down time' and a chance to relax and 'let their hair down' as well. They are only human!

## TRIP ITINERARY

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### Rio to Ouro Preto

We leave the stunning views of Rio behind and head north to the mountain retreat of **Teresopolis**. The road winds up the hillside through jungle, with dramatic peaks towering overhead. We have some free time where we can visit the **Parque Nacional Da Serra Dos Argaos** and walk trails to waterfalls, with stunning views of obscurely shaped mountain tops.

Continuing north we make a short stop in **Congonhas** to see 12 lifelike Old Testament figures sculpted from soapstone, which stand proudly outside the Basilica do Bom Jesus de Matosinhos. Our journey takes us to quite possibly the most significant and beautiful colonial town of the area, Ouro Preto. Even vehicles are not able to navigate the narrow and winding cobbled streets. The biggest attraction is the **Minas de Passagem** (Gold Mine) - antique cable cars take you underground into the mine which was originally opened in 1719.

### Ouro Preto to Caravelas

We explore the coastline, home of some of Brazil's best and least known beaches and far less populated with tourists than the resorts of Recife and Rio. We will either stay in locally owned Pousadas (guesthouses) or camp under the stars, as we pass through Linhares to **Itaunas**. Time can be spent exploring this sleepy fishing village or wandering the dune trails and relaxing on the beach.

Cavavelas is our next destination, on the **mangrove lined Rio Caravelas**. We have the option to take a day trip to the nearby reefs in **Parque Nacional Marinho de Abrolhos**, where there is the chance to swim with **sea turtles**. Alternatively the day can be spent on the beach or wandering along the riverfront.

## **Caravelas to Salvador**

We venture further north and if time allows, we may stop off in **Parque Nacional Monte Pascoal** which is controlled by the local Pataxo (pa-ta-sho) Indians. Here we can walk the trails to try to spot the endangered spider monkey, sloths, porcupines, capybara, deer, elusive jaguar and numerous species of bird.

**Trancosco** is our next stop, declared by many from celebrities to backpackers to be one of Brazil's best beaches. Since its origins as a small fishing village, it evolved to become a hippie hangout and more recently gained a reputation as a bohemian beach town. It retains its laid back village feel with local cafes to watch the world go by from and the long sandy beach backed by palm trees is the perfect place to relax and swim.

Once again we head north, passing more remote beaches to reach Brazil's largest bay, **Baia de Todos os Santos**. Taking a ferry across the bay, we arrive in the **Afro-Brazilian city of Salvador**. Around 40% of all African slaves transported to the new world, came to Salvador and this has left a very particular vibe - tropical, soulful and intoxicating, that is unique to this corner of Brazil. The centre is separated by a steep bluff, into the Cidade Alta (Upper City) and Baixa (Lower City) and access is gained in the beautifully restored art-deco elevator - Elevado Lacerda. We have a few days to wander and take in the music, cuisine and religion of the region. You can also stop off in the Praca da Se and watch locals practicing the dance fighting known as Capoeira.

## **Salvador to Taquarucu**

Heading west, we come to the quaint town of **Lencois**. With its cobbled streets and brightly painted 19th Century buildings, it's the prettiest of the old diamond mining towns. The mighty **Fumaca waterfalls**, various caves and idyllic rivers and panoramic plateaus set the stage for some fantastic adventures. Or maybe just wander the streets, grab a coffee, take in the local life and enjoy some of the excellent cuisine.

Next we continue into the interior where roads start to become more arduous, and time allowing, we may make a stop in **Natividade**, with its cobbled streets and prettily painted, tile roofed

18th and 19th Century houses.

We move on to the cozy town of Taquarucu, some 30kms south east of Palmas, where we spend the next two nights.

The local tourism boards have worked together to try to create **Taquaruçu** an eco-tourism mecca. In the area there are some 80 waterfalls, caves and pools, which we'll have time to explore. For those that want to go wildlife spotting, several optional tours are available to the nearby parks of **Estadual do Jalapao and Ilha do Bananal**. In the latter, there is a good chance to see **dolphins, caiman, giant river turtles** and lots of bird life. Although difficult and unpredictable, you may also catch a glimpse of a Tapir or Jaguar!

### **Taquarucu to Belem**

Next we start a long drive north towards **Belem** on the Atlantic coast. Upon its completion in the 1960s this road was heralded as a feat of engineering as it overcame the unforgiving Amazon to allow people and goods to be transported from the Brazilian interior to the ports of Belem for exportation. Now the rainforest has given way to further development and we pass through vast stretches of farmland, camping overnight in remote Postos before arriving in Belem. We have a few days here to enjoy the city and wander the riverside walkways of the mighty Amazon.

### **Belem to Roura in French Guiana**

Today we board a boat, and **hang up our hammocks** ready for the journey across the mighty **Amazon delta**. Nothing can prepare you for the sheer size of this area, as it will take us 24 hours to journey from Belem on the south bank to Macapa on the north.

**Macapa** is an overnight stop in case we need to wait for our truck to arrive on a separate ferry from Belem. This gives us time to explore this commercial hub where gold, iron, timber, oil and tin ore pass through on its way to neighbouring Santana. The Equator also runs through the centre of the city, which has led residents to call it '**The capital of the middle of the world**'.

We journey north on dirt roads, quite possibly having to use our sand mats to make it through the mud and to reconstruct wooden bridges!

Oiapoque is the gateway to **French Guiana**, and here we pass through European immigration and customs before, we continue on to Roura where we base ourselves for visiting the capital city of Cayenne.

Cayenne is full of colonial architecture that just has to be explored. The two most impressive are the town hall, built by the Jesuits in 1890, and St. Saviours Roman Catholic Cathedral. The city's botanical gardens are also worth a look, or just chill out on the mail square with a beer, watch the world go by and try some of the fantastic street food.

### **Roura to St. Laurent du Maroni**

**Kourou** is a real highlight of our journey, as we can visit the **European Spaceport** where we can take a tour of the site. A large percentage of the world's satellites have been launched from here aboard the famous Ariane rockets. More recently Russian Soyuz rockets have also used this facility and if we're lucky we may even see a launch! Time allowing we will also visit **Devil's Island**, prior home to one of France's most notorious prisons.

Next we journey west to **St Laurent du Maroni**. Founded in 1880, the penal town was inhabited almost entirely with guards or liberated prisoners from the nearby Transportation Camp. Here the famous writer **Henri Charriere**, who went on to write Papillon, spent some of his days before being moved to the 'inescapable' Iles du Salut prison. An informative optional tour takes us into the camp and gives us a snapshot of quite how hard life would have been here.

### **Paramaribo & Jungle excursions**

Leaving French Guiana behind we take another ferry and cross into **Suriname**, where we feel the atmosphere and culture palpably change **from French to Dutch**. Suriname was a colonial outpost of the Netherlands from the seventeenth century until it achieved full independence in 1975; the country retains much of its Dutch character, while also having the distinctly Caribbean and African feel that permeates the whole region. Throw in some indigenous cultures and you have a unique and intoxicating mix!

We follow the road west and cross the Suriname River on the **Jules Wijdenboschbrug** (bridge) and arrive in Suriname's capital, **Paramaribo**. Positioned where the Suriname river meets the Atlantic Ocean, Paramaribo is a typically relaxed Caribbean city, with a long waterfront ideal for sitting back and relaxing in the cooling winds while watching local life go by.

The historic inner city of Paramaribo is a UNESCO World Heritage site, and walking the streets here the fusion between colonial, Caribbean and local architecture is pronounced as European styles were combined with local materials to produce a style of construction that is only found in this city.

Throughout the city there are many signs hinting at Paramaribo's multicultural history and present day, and it is possible to visit the Suriname Mosque, Neveh Shalom Synagogue, St Peter and St Paul Cathedral and Arya Dawaker Hindu Temple, as well as the grand presidential palace.

For those more interested in nature, you can arrange an excursion to a nesting site of one of the world's most famous turtle species. Nothing can compare coming up close and personal to a **giant leatherback turtle**. April is normally the start of nesting time, where turtles make the journey up the beach to deposit their eggs in the warm sand. Sightings are not guaranteed but we'll keep our fingers crossed!

In the evenings you can head for the river and join a river cruise to hopefully spot rare freshwater dolphins.

After a couple of nights in Paramaribo to relax and recharge our batteries we now include a **jungle excursion** before we continue our adventure. We'll drive inland for a couple of hours and then travel

by motorised canoe from Pokigron to our resort near the foot of the **Felullasifalls on the Suriname River**. We'll have a couple of nights here to explore the surrounding Amazon rainforest and several **Maroon villages**. Here we will learn about the **Saramaccan culture** and visit local villages. You could also go looking for caimans on a nocturnal cruise, and swim from a sandy beach or enjoy a natural jacuzzi in the rapids.

## Paramaribo to Georgetown

After returning to Paramaribo we take to the truck again and following the coastal road west we reach the banks of the **Courantyn River**, which forms the (contested) border between Suriname and Guyana. We cross by ferry and continue to travel along the coast towards **Georgetown, Guyana's capital**. On the way there is an optional overnight visit to **Bigi Pan, the largest lagoon in Suriname**. This area has received international recognition because of the hundreds of thousands of migratory birds including **flamingos** and the **striking scarlet ibis** that use the lagoon as their feeding area. As well as the birdlife the area hosts many reptiles, snakes and extensive mangrove swamps.

As a former British colony, Guyana offers something different again to the previous countries we have visited so far, but still has a distinctly Afro-Caribbean feel; strolling around Georgetown you could be forgiven at times for thinking you were in one of the many other past British territories in the region, such as Jamaica or even Barbados!

Guyana, which was granted independence in 1966, is the only English-speaking country in South America, and is to many an unknown entity, relatively untouched by mass tourism. For a small and often forgotten country, however, it punches well above its weight, offering some of the most pristine and ecologically diverse and plentiful rainforest found anywhere, the world's highest single drop waterfall, and a rich and established cultural history, with many noted poets, musicians and literary figures coming from its small population. Rhianna is half-Guyanese, too, should that be of any interest.

We will spend a few nights in **Georgetown**, from where it is possible to take an optional flight and short hike to visit **Kaieteur Falls** in Kaieteur National Park in the Amazon rainforest (book well in advance). At 221 metres, Kaieteur Falls is **the world's highest single drop waterfall**. Set in a stunning location, the falls and surrounding area are for many visitors to Guyana the highlight of their travels, as their remoteness and obscurity make you feel that you are really seeing a part of the world that very few people have ever been to.

## Georgetown to Boa Vista

After our time in Georgetown, we then head south, away from the coast, and into the dense rainforest of Guyana. The main road has been massively improved in recent years following investment provided by the Brazilian government, but we will allow several days to fully explore the area, getting onto much rougher roads and heading into the jungle to camp at a forest resort. From here you can visit a **high canopy walkway in the Iwokrama forest** to view the rainforest from an

elevated perspective and come eye-to-eye with some of the plentiful tropical bird life. You can also take boat tours looking for wildlife including toucans and red howler monkeys. This region has a reputation for being one of the best places to spot the **elusive jaguar**, so if we keep our eyes peeled we may be lucky!

Continuing south we leave the jungle and enter more open savannah regions near **Rupnuni** where there are canoeing, horse riding and wildlife viewing opportunities on the **Panorama Nature Trail**.

After an unforgettable few days travelling through the Guyanese Amazon we reach the border and re-enter Brazil and drive to **Boa Vista**, where we can take a well earned shower and enjoy some locally caught fish in one of the riverside restaurants.

## **Boa Vista to Manaus**

We drive southwards from Boa Vista through an **Indigenous Waimiri Reserve** to rejoin the Amazon River at **Manaus**.

From here we take a final included expedition into **the Amazon jungle** in search of more wildlife and to discover more of the different indigenous people who live in the area. There are chances to learn about different plant species that are used for medications, fish for piranhas, and take guided walks in the forest.

Our overland adventure finishes back in Manaus. The open air markets are well worth visiting here, with great souvenirs and local crafts available and the famous Amazonas Opera House is also good to see before you leave the city.

## **OPTIONAL EXCURSIONS**

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Optional Excursions are paid for on the day and organised during your trip, so you can decide whilst travelling which activity you may want to do. Prices listed are only a guide and may be dependant on fluctuating exchange rates and minimum numbers. Please see below for more details.

### **BRAZIL**

Title	From Price
Gold Mine Tour – Ouro Preto	US\$20
Guided Hikes – Taquarucu, from	US\$20
Kayaking – Ituanas	US\$20
Museums, Attractions & Entrances – Salvado, fromr	US\$5
Museums & Entrances – Porto Seguro	US\$5
Parque Nacional Marinho de Abrolhos – Rio Caravelas	US\$180

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Title	From Price
Serra dos Orgaos National Park & Hiking Trail Fee – Teresopolis	US\$20
Snorkelling or Diving Day Trips – Porto Seguro, from	US\$30
Waterfalls & Natural Bathing Pools – Navidade	US\$2
Fumaca Falls & Hikes – Lencois	US\$50

## SURINAME

Title	From Price
Bigi Pan tour	US\$50
Paramaribo evening river cruise	US\$35

## FRENCH GUIANA

Title	From Price
St Laurent du Maroni Transportation Camp Entrance	US\$10
Guiana Spaceport	US\$10
Devil's Island boat trip	US\$70

## GUYANA

Title	From Price
Kaieteur Falls flight, day trip	US\$260

We feel that having optional excursions gives a greater degree of flexibility and independence to our group members; independence to decide how much your spending budget can afford; flexibility to decide when and what time of day or with whom to visit a particular site, rather than for example, with the whole group at a pre-ordained time.

You pay for the optional excursions to the local operator, ensuring the money stays with that operator in the local community and this ensures as well, that you are paying the true price for any optional excursions you want to do. This also applies to accommodation costs before and after the trip. Please note that the prices of optional excursions quoted are approximate as local prices can and do change. Please see the relevant trip page for the Optional excursions you can do on that trip and a list of prices.

**Notes downloaded on: 17-04-2026**

