



PRIVATE JOURNEYS WITH JOURNEY LATIN

GUYANA WILDLIFE: SOUTH AMERICA'S WILD FRONTIER

13 days from **£6,070pp**

GUYANA / GEORGETOWN AND KAIETEUR FALLS / THE INTERIOR



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

Travelling in a small group on fixed dates, this nature experience visits virgin rainforest, savannah and ancient tablelands over which spill the stunning Kaieteur Falls. The undisturbed landscapes are populated by a proliferation of wildlife: birdwatching is especially rewarding.

- DAY 1** Arrive in Georgetown and transfer to your hotel.
- DAY 2** Day trip to Kaieteur Falls.
- DAY 3** Fly to Fair View, transfer to your Lodge.
- DAY 4** Hike to the Turtle mountain.
- DAY 5** Wildlife spotting at Iwokrama.
- DAY 6** Explore the rainforest around Atta.
- DAY 7** By road to your next Lodge.
- DAY 8** Climb Surama mountain and transfer to Annai.
- DAY 9** Wildlife spotting in the area; transfer to Karanambu Ranch.
- DAY 10** Explore the Rupununi region.
- DAY 11** Discover the wildlife of the savannah; transfer to Caiman House Field Station.
- DAY 12** Fly to Georgetown; guided city tour.
- DAY 13** Transfer to the airport for your international flight home.

ITINERARY

Joining like-minded travellers, this holiday introduces you to the emerging wildlife destination that is English-speaking Guyana, formerly British Guiana. The Caribbean coast is a tangle of mangroves and sugar cane plantations. Inland is a landscape of savannah and rainforest; of ancient tablelands and waterfalls. In the back-country lodges here the few visitors are warmly welcomed. In the south, the wildlife, so rarely disturbed, seems oblivious to observers.

Wilderness waterfalls, vast tropical rainforests and horizon-bending grasslands: a nation the size of Great Britain, Guyana is unrivalled for its spectacular natural attractions and diversity of wildlife. Expect to spot all varieties of animals and birdlife from the cock-of-the-rock to the Black caiman, the tiny golden frog to the rare giant river otter- and maybe even a watchful jaguar.

After arriving in the idiosyncratic capital, Georgetown, you will head inland to the spectacular Kaieteur falls followed by the verdant nature reserve of Iwokrama Forest and onwards through Amerindian communities to the famous Karanambu Lodge. Guyana is rapidly becoming one of the most important ecotourism havens in Latin America- and it's not difficult to see why.

Please note: This itinerary can also be followed on non-scheduled dates at additional cost. Contact us for details.

DAY 1

Arrive in Georgetown and transfer to your hotel.

Transfer to your hotel in Georgetown.

DAY 2

Day trip to Kaieteur Falls.

Leap into Guyana's incredible wilderness landscape at the deep end with a guided expedition to two of the country's most impressive waterfalls. Take a light-aircraft flight over unbroken tropical rainforest to land at Kaieteur Falls, which flows over a tableland plateau into a deep gorge. The falls, which were first identified by a European in 1870, are situated in the heart of Guyana on the Potaro river, a tributary of the Essequibo. You'll be amazed by the torrent of water as it thunders from the sandstone conglomerate tableland down the drop of 228m (5 times the height of Niagara Falls). Kaieteur supports a unique and fascinating micro environment with diverse wildlife including the tiny golden frogs. Return to Georgetown.

(Flights to the falls are operated on chartered aircraft which have a minimum passenger restriction. On the rare occasions that this is not the case you will be offered the option of rescheduling the trip to another day during your stay or an alternative trip).

DAY 3

Fly to Fair View, transfer to your Lodge.

An early start, transfer to the airport and fly to Fair View. After breakfast at Rock View Lodge travel to your Lodge, about 2hrs away. On the banks of the Essequibo River, Iwokrama was established to promote the conservation and sustainable use of dense primary and secondary tropical rainforest, half of which is retained as a wilderness reserve. The afternoon is free to explore the trails around the river lodge with an Iwokrama ranger. Iwokrama is home to many bird species including the striking orange Guayanan cock-of-the-rock. Finally, after dark, you'll set out on the river in the hope of observing one or another of the 4 species of indigenous caiman, and listen out for the calls of nocturnal birds. You will also spot snakes, tree frogs and if you are lucky maybe a few mammals, such as a puma or a capybara.

DAY 4

Hike to the Turtle mountain.

Today you will climb Turtle mountain. Set off by boat along the Essequibo river to the base of the mountain. The trail is intermittently steep but there are some handrails and there are some opportunities for bird watching along the way. It takes 1-2hrs to walk up to the summit at 300m, but the effort is more than worth it for the expansive views over the emerald carpet of the forest canopy, cut through by the winding river and enlivened by macaws, spider, howler and capuchin monkeys.

Return to the river lodge for lunch. As the afternoon cools, set out on a boat trip to the Kurupukari Falls to see Amerindian petroglyphs. Then visit nearby Fair View, the only traditional Amerindian village (pop.200) situated within the reserve, before returning to the Field Station.

DAY 5

Wildlife spotting at Iwokrama.

At dawn take a wildlife walk with an Iwokrama ranger close to the Field Station. After breakfast, walk along the trail which is one of the most likely places to spot an elusive jaguar. The Iwokrama forest is rapidly gaining an international reputation for sightings of its resident jaguars, which seem not to be troubled by the appearance of the few curious human beings who venture here. The trail leads you to a special area of habitat known as Mori scrub, characterised by a low, sandy forest which supports an unusual assemblage of birds.

At the end of the trail you reach the Iwokrama Canopy Walkway: a series of suspension bridges and observation decks of up to 30m in height and 154m in length. The extensive network provides excellent access to the otherwise impenetrable upper levels of the virgin rainforest canopy. It's especially magical at dusk.

DAY 6

Explore the rainforest around Atta.

Experience the waking jungle at dawn from atop the Canopy Walkway – a truly memorable experience. After enjoying breakfast back at the lodge, the rest of the day will be spent exploring the surrounding rainforest with your guide. As well as the extensive trails network, the clearing around the lodge itself is an excellent place to spot interesting and even quite rare flora and fauna.

DAY 7

By road to your next Lodge.

You are penetrating the heart of this jungle-clad country, driving to the village of Surama situated in a stretch of savannah surrounded by the forest-clad Pakaraima mountains. An Amerindian community thrives here: inhabitants still observe many of the traditional practices of their forebears. You'll receive a welcome from a village representative on arrival. Visit the local school, medical centre and church along with some of the village's houses.

There is time in the afternoon to explore the village and observe the forest and bird life. As the temperature falls a local guide will escort you for a short walk on trails to observe the forest and bird life. Learn about the medicinal plants and their uses in Amerindian culture. Your guides will then take you paddling on the water for opportunities to observe giant river otters, tapirs, tyras, and Spider monkeys. In the evening there's an educational walk to observe wildlife and experience the forest after dark.

DAY 8

Climb Surama mountain and transfer to Annai.

Rise before dawn for a walk across the savannah (1hr) followed by a climb up Surama mountain in the cool morning air. The trail ascends gradually at first, but becomes rocky and steeper, fringed by primary and secondary forest populated by many bird species, mammals and reptiles. Breakfast will be served at a superb lookout point (228m) which affords panoramic views across the village and savannah to the Pakaraima mountains. It's a tranquil spot, the silence only interrupted by the cries of macaws and Howler monkeys.

Then depart Surama for Rock View Lodge at Annai. The road travels across grasslands and through the foothills of the mountains with excellent opportunities for savannah bird watching. Lofty jabiru storks are often seen along this stretch of road. Eventually you reach the Rupununi District and Annai, its northernmost community.

The Rupununi savannah is an extensive area of grassland dotted with termite mounds and scattered woodland. Much of it is devoted to cattle-raising, though the business on the large ranches is not very intensive. Indeed, one can travel for hours without seeing a domesticated animal of any sort. Needless to say, the birdlife here is markedly different from that of the rainforest. Your lodge for the evening is located where the savannah meets the forest-covered foothills of the Pakaraima mountains.

DAY 9

Wildlife spotting in the area; transfer to Karanambu Ranch.

Rock View Lodge is managed by the owner, an Englishman who has been closely associated with Guyana since he came here as an agricultural volunteer in 1969. The grounds are beautifully landscaped with hundreds of palms, fruit and flower trees that enhance the natural beauty of the rolling hills and savannahs, the Rupununi river and wooded mountains nearby.

Set off on a dawn guided hike along the Panorama Trail in the foothills of the mountains. The views across the savannah and villages as the sun rises are spectacular. Afterwards you'll visit nearby Amerindian villages and watch a demonstration of traditional cashew nut roasting. You might take an excursion out to watch the vaqueros (cowboys) on horseback as they take cattle out to graze on the prairie, or simply just relax at the lodge and enjoy its art collection, library and musical archive. Finish the day with drinks around the pool at the lodge.

From Ginep Landing you take a boat trip on the Rupununi river to the Ranch. Depending on the river level, this trip offers an excellent opportunity to spot giant otters as there are several family groups which live along this stretch. Late in the afternoon you will travel by boat to look for wild river otters: as dusk falls continue to ponds to see the giant Victoria Regia water lilies which bloom at dusk. On the return trip you will use a spotlight to search for black caiman and nocturnal birds, reptiles and mammals.

DAY 10

Explore the Rupununi region.

Karanambu Lodge and the surrounding savannah is a working cattle ranch but is most famous for Diane McTurk's work caring for orphaned giant river otters and rehabilitating them into the wild. Karanambu is her home and it has a long history of receiving naturalists: Diana's father, Tiny McTurk, welcomed David Attenborough and Gerald Durrell.

In the morning you can go bird watching in the environs of the lodge. When water levels are appropriate a wooded swamp near the ranch is the site of a surprisingly large colony of boat-billed herons, as well as several species of egret.

The rest of the day is at leisure.

DAY 11

Discover the wildlife of the savannah; transfer to Caiman House Field Station.

Explore the Rupununi river in search of giant river otters and Black caiman, whilst travelling by boat to the Amerindian settlement of Yupukari, a traditional village where the lifestyle has changed little over recent decades. Houses are constructed from clay brick, cooking is done over an open fire and transport is by bullock-carts.

Arrive at Caiman House Field Station which was established to carry out research on the black caimans in the Rupununi river, but is now the hub of several development projects, including the introduction of classroom libraries in village schools, a public library and internet access powered by an array of photo-voltaic panels. Visitors may also meet local craftspeople.

In the evening you launch out on the Rupununi river from Caiman House. Skilled guides will escort you on this expedition to interpret the sights and sounds of Guyana after dark when many nocturnal creatures emerge. You may spot black caiman, spectacled caiman, iguanas, frogs, and various fish species. Sleeping birds, nightjars, bats and insects can be closely approached in way not possible during daylight hours. Less likely inclusions for night viewing include opossums and sleeping monkeys. Few nights pass without some unusual sighting.

DAY 12

Fly to Georgetown; guided city tour.

Following a morning visit to a local village you will fly back to Georgetown.

There will be a guided city tour including highlights such as the State House, a typical Demerara-shuttered colonial home with large gardens). Walk along the avenues with an experienced guide who will narrate the history and anecdotes about Georgetown and its people. Other places of interest on the tour include St. George's Cathedral, one of the world's tallest free-standing wooden buildings; the public library housed in the Carnegie Building; the gothic town hall; Victoria Law Courts and the National Museum. Visit Stabroek Market where stalls sell everything from household goods and gold jewellery to fresh meat and vegetables. The excursion usually ends with a visit to the Botanical Gardens and zoo.

In the evening you will be collected and taken to the Backyard Café, where Chef Delvin will welcome you to join him as he prepares a wonderful meal from the fruits, vegetables and meats he has bought from the local market, based on guests' suggestions and dietary requirements. Chef will invite you to taste his creations as he prepares the meal, a fusion of Guyanese and first world cuisine. When he is ready, you will be invited to dine.

DAY 13

Transfer to the airport for your international flight home.

Transfer to the airport for your flight home, or, depending on your dates, it may be possible to make a stop on the Caribbean island of St Lucia, for more adventures or a few days of well-deserved rest and relaxation.

WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THE PRICE

Services of our team of experts in our London office
Services of Journey Latin America local representatives and guides
All land and air transport within Latin America
Accommodation as specified
Meals as specified
Excursions as specified, including entrance fees

INCLUDED EXCURSIONS

Day trip to Kaieteur Falls by air
Guided shared excursions from Iwokrama River Lodge
Guided shared explorations from Surama Eco Lodge,
Guided shared excursions from Karanambu Ranch
Guided shared excursions from Caiman House Field Station
Guided shared city tour of Georgetown

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED IN THE PRICE

Tips and gratuities
Meals other than specified
International flights to Latin America
Airport taxes, when not included in the ticket
Optional excursions

ESSENTIALS

TRANSPORT

2 flights; 3 road and 2 river journeys. On small domestic flights, luggage is restricted to 9kg. You can leave surplus luggage in storage in Georgetown until the end of your holiday in Guyana.

ACCOMMODATION

Rural wildlife lodges, often with an eco-tourism slant or scientific role. They offer a reasonable level of comfort with sometimes basic facilities: there's often no air-con but rooms have private bathrooms.

MEALS

Breakfast daily, lunch days 2,12; full board days 3-11

GUIDES

We carefully select our local partners. 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.

SUMMARY OF NIGHTS

13 days, 12 nights: Georgetown 2; Iwokrama 2; Atta Rainforest Lodge 2; Surama Ecolodge 1; Rock View Lodge 1; Karanambu Lodge 2; Caiman House Field Station 1; Georgetown 1.

CURRENCY

The unit of currency in Guyana is the Guyanese dollar.

HOW TO TAKE IT

Take your currency needs in the form 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.

There are one or two ATMs (Scotia Bank) in Georgetown which accept international cards. At most of the lodges you can pay your Extras bill in US or Guyanese dollars but not by credit or debit card (this situation may change of course). Some shops and restaurants in Georgetown accept credit cards.

DAILY SPEND

Most of your expenses are covered on this holiday, but you will need some Guyanese dollars for any alcoholic drinks at the lodges, souvenirs and craft work, snacks and tips. Your meals in Georgetown restaurants are also best paid for in cash.

TIPPING

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 guides, hotel and lodge staff, taxi drivers and waiters in Georgetown. It is common practice to leave 10 - 12% in restaurants.

Tipping guidelines can be found in our Briefing Dossier.

INSURANCE

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

VISAS

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.

TRIP SUITABILITY

This holiday is suitable for all able, reasonably fit visitors.

There are some jungle walks lasting 2-3 hours which can be challenging if it is raining. Some mountain climbs involve steep stretches and some scrambling.

CLIMATE

Equatorial Guyana's temperatures range from 25-30°C throughout the year. Along the coastal strip, there are two distinct rainy seasons: May to mid-July, and mid-November to mid-January. In the south (Rupununi), there's a single rainy season: May to July. Humidity can be as much as 90% at these times. August - October are the hottest months.

CLOTHING AND SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

The hot and humid climate dictates that you should bring lightweight, loose-fitting clothing including tee-shirts, and long sleeved shirts combined with quick-drying trousers to avoid being bitten by insects. You should have a rain jacket, fleece or light jacket for cooler evenings, hat, good walking boots (preferably waterproof), and trainers or sandals. Don't forget your binoculars and camera, and a light daypack to carry on excursions. Mosquito repellent and sun protection lotion are essential. Bear in mind that internal flights have strict weight restrictions, which can be as low as 9kg.

Please get in touch with the office before departure if you have any doubts. Good equipment is very important and hard to come by in South America.

VACCINATIONS

Preventative vaccinations are recommended against the following: yellow fever; typhoid; polio; tetanus; hepatitis A. You should consult your GP for specific requirements such as malaria prophylactics.

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

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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.

GIVE US A CALL

We'd love to chat

0208 747 8315

OPENING HOURS

Monday – Friday: 9am – 6pm

Saturday & Sunday: Closed

SEND US AN EMAIL

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