JOURNEY
LATIN AMERICA



PRIVATE JOURNEYS WITH JOURNEY LATIN

ACTIVE BRAZIL: REMOTE BAHIA AND FERNANDO DE NORONHA

15 days from **£4,195pp**

BRAZIL / RECIFE, OLINDA AND FERNANDO DE NORONHA / SALVADOR, LENCOIS AND THE BEACHES OF BAHIA



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

The unspoilt archipelago Fernando de Noronha, off the northeast coast or Brazil offers walks, snorkelling and diving. On the mainland the tableland country of Chapada Diamantina is criss-crossed with delightful hikes.

DAY 1	**Arrive in Salvador. Transfer to your hotel in the colonial centre.**
DAY 2	**Walking tour of historic Salvador.**
DAY 3	**Transfer to Lençóis.**
DAY 4	**Explore the Chapada Diamantina National Park.**
DAY 5	**Trek to the Sossego waterfall.**
DAY 6	**Hike in the Vale do Capão.**
DAY 7	**Travel by public coach back to Salvador.**
DAY 8	**Fly to Recife. Transfer to colonial Olinda.**
DAY 9	**Fly to the archipelago of Fernando de Noronha.**
DAYS 10-13	**At leisure on Fernando de Noronha.**
DAY 14	**Transfer to the airport and fly to Recife; continue by road to Olinda for the final night of the holiday.**
DAY 15	**Transfer to international airport in Recife.**

ITINERARY

Many people who visit Brazil stay on the coast but if you'd like to participate in active adventures, the interior beckons. Here you combine trekking in the heart of Brazil's tableland scenery with snorkelling off the coast of the remote island of Fernando de Noronha.

The interior of the north-eastern state of Bahía is scenically alluring and historically interesting. This is plantation country: cotton and sugar were cultivated here in Portuguese colonial times and thousands of African slaves worked on them, resulting in today's eclectic culture in this exotic region of Brazil. Beyond the plantations are forested hills punctuated by Lost World-like tablelands, remote and sparsely populated, separated by rushing rivers and tumbling waterfalls, and criss-crossed with delightful hikes.

Move on to Fernando de Noronha, the natural tropical beauty of which is protected by the Brazilian government. Some the world's best diving sites are to be found here, and the snorkelling off the rugged bays is equally spell-binding.

DAY 1

Arrive in Salvador. Transfer to your hotel in the colonial centre.

Transfer to your hotel in the colonial centre of Salvador da Bahía, one of Brazil's most historically significant and culturally-rich cities, with a strong African influence devolving from the slave trade.

The most vibrant and innovative district is colonial Pelourinho in the upper part of the city, Cidade Alta, which for pedestrians is linked to the lower port area of the city and commercial centre, Cidade Baixa, by art deco funicular elevators.

DAY 2

Walking tour of historic Salvador.

Salvador has its own music, dominated by a throbbing African drum beat, its own distinctive cuisine and even its own religious traditions, where Catholicism melds with African mysticism, voodoo and revivalist Protestantism. All of this is in evidence on the streets, where there is always an excuse for a party. Capoeira, the martial arts dance invented by the African slaves, has its home here.

Your guided walking tour explores the historic Upper City (Cidade Alta) which has some of the best preserved (or restored) Portuguese colonial architecture in Latin America: graceful façades are painted in contrasting light pastel shades reflecting the sunlight. You'll stroll along steeply cobbled streets flanked by the pastel-washed buildings of a bygone age. Take the Lacerda elevator down to the lower city and explore the Modelo Market then ride the Carmo elevator back up to Cidade Alta.

DAY 3

Transfer to Lençóis.

Travel by public coach inland to the Chapada Diamantina, a beautiful, sparsely populated area of scrubby vegetation and humid tropical forest studded with steep-cliffed table-top mountains. The park is run through with crystalline rivers and waterfalls tumbling through boulder strewn valleys. At its heart is the laid-back little town of Lençois, your base for visits and hikes in the area.

The town was originally founded to service diamond prospectors who flocked to the region in the 18th and 19th centuries in search of precious metal and stones. These hopefuls have now mostly departed but their rustic houses have been converted into family homes, guesthouses, cosy little restaurants and bars or craft shops

The drive is along a somewhat bumpy but paved road through the dusty sertão, a region susceptible to drought where it's very hard to scratch a living from unforgiving soils. In the past, the remote region has been a centre for political and religious upheavals but now low key tourism is bringing a modicum of prosperity. The journey takes about 5-6 hrs.

DAY 4

Explore the Chapada Diamantina National Park.

After breakfast there's a full day guided tour of the stunning Chapada Diamantina National Park. The park, established in 1985 to protect a rapidly declining natural habitat for flora and fauna, has little infrastructure, but that is part of its attraction. Gazing out from the many viewpoints you scarcely notice the signs of human interference as the forbidding-looking tablelands stretch towards a hazy blue horizon.

On today's guided exploration, drive from Lençois to the Mucugezinho river, and trek to the black lake of Poço do Diabo. From here there's an opportunity to visit Lapa Doce cave, which involves about an hour's walking underground. Also visit Pratinha Cave, a beautiful subterranean river and lake. Later, drive to Pai Inacio plateau and walk the last 500m (20 mins) for some very rewarding views.

DAY 5

Trek to the Sossego waterfall.

Today's hike is a moderately strenuous activity involving a 3hr trek (in each direction), in part scrambling over boulders, with stops to cool off in natural pools en route. The Sossego falls crash over a wedged cliff of black stone creating a myriad of small cataracts. You can swim in the tea-coloured pool at the foot of the falls among smooth submerged rocks.

Following an al fresco picnic you'll return towards Lençois, stopping at Ribeirão do Meio, an impressive natural waterslide. The brave hearted can toboggan down the slippery rock surface or swim in the lagoon below. In the event of heavy rain, the trail to the Sossego may not be possible and an alternative excursion may be offered.

DAY 6

Hike in the Vale do Capão.

Today there are two alternative hikes. One is a full day guided excursion to one of the park's major highlights – Fumaça Falls. Drive to Vale do Capão in the heart of the Chapada Diamantina from where it is a 6km trek (2 hrs partly uphill, part along the plateau) to the vantage point above the falls.

The water is sprayed by the breeze before it touches the ground, giving it the impression of a funnel of smoke. The views from the top at 340m are fabulous. Return to the village of Vale do Capão and cool off at Riachinho waterfalls and natural pools before arriving back in Lençois

The alternative trek involves a drive to Vale do Capão in the heart of the Chapada Diamantina, the main gateway for walking excursions in the park. Spend the whole day trekking, covering 25km of breathtaking scenery of lakes, rivers, waterfalls and canyons.

DAY 7

Travel by public coach back to Salvador.

DAY 8

Fly to Recife. Transfer to colonial Olinda.

Transfer to the airport and fly to Recife. This major port sprawls across three small islands connected with each other and the mainland by over two dozen bridges. Continue by road to Olinda, one of Brazil's most beautiful and best-preserved colonial towns. A maze of steeply cobbled streets, pastel coloured houses, baroque fountains and elegant squares blankets the hills. Olinda is renowned for its wild and raucous Carnival.

DAY 9

Fly to the archipelago of Fernando de Noronha.

Transfer to the airport and fly to the archipelago embracing Fernando de Noronha. The only populated island in a protected volcanic archipelago way out in the Atlantic Ocean, Fernando de Noronha is almost off the map. But those who go there (and numbers are restricted), especially divers and surfers, are well rewarded. Craggy cliffs jacketed in close garrigue-like vegetation (the original forests were destroyed) close in on gorgeous little bays of sugary sand, and the waters here, warm year-round, are sapphire-clear.

DAYS 10-13

At leisure on Fernando de Noronha.

Much of the Fernando de Noronha is designated a marine park, for good reason: sharks, dolphins, turtles and stingrays and a multitude of fish species thrive here. There are no luxury facilities here: it's a dream destination for lovers of nature, especially the undersea world. You spend four full days here, enough time to really get to know the place and explore the gorgeous scenery.

There are 26 deserted beaches, where swimming is permitted on just a few. Some are excellent surf beaches. At Baia do Sueste you can swim with turtles. Snorkelling and diving are especially rewarding and here are local companies which offer services for visitors.

DAY 14

Transfer to the airport and fly to Recife; continue by road to Olinda for the final night of the holiday.

DAY 15

Transfer to international airport in Recife.

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

Walking tour of historic Salvador

Explore the Chapada Diamantina National Park

Trek to the Sossego waterfall

Hike in the Vale do Capão

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
The holiday includes internal air and ground transportation starting at Recife airport on day 1 and ending at Salvador airport on day 15. The longest road journey is around 7 hours.

ACCOMMODATION
The accommodation on this holiday consists of small and friendly pousadas: locally run hotels and guesthouses.

MEALS
Breakfast daily; lunch days 4, 5, 6.

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

SUMMARY OF NIGHTS
15 days, 14 nights: Salvador 2; Lençóis 4, Salvador 1, Olinda 1, Fernando de Noronha 5, Olinda 1.

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

HOW TO TAKE IT
Cash machines are available in all major cities and towns, and so taking a debit or credit card with a PIN number is the most convenient way of withdrawing money while on your trip, and in most shops and restaurants you can also pay by card. However, since cards can get lost, damaged, withheld or blocked, you should not rely exclusively on a card to access funds.

We recommend that additionally you take a reasonable quantity of US dollars cash (no more than is covered by your insurance), which you can exchange into local currency, and possibly some travellers' cheques (American Express are the most widely accepted), though these are gradually falling out of use. Dollar bills should be in good condition, soiled or torn bills may be refused. You can take sterling, but the exchange rate is not always competitive or even available, restricting the number of places where you can change money. Acquire your local currency needs before heading to Fernando de Noronha.

DAILY SPEND
It is very difficult to give a guideline for essential expenses but a budget of around US$40 per day per person will cover food, drinks and the odd souvenir. Eat at the best restaurants and you will pay more.

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 hotel porters, taxi drivers and the like. It is common to leave 10 – 12% in restaurants.

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

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

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This is an active trip conceived for those who wish to explore on foot and take part in outdoor activities, but nothing requires you to have more than a good level of fitness. There are a couple of long public coach journeys, and three internal flights.

This holiday includes a couple of hikes in rocky and hilly terrain where it will be hot in summer. No special equipment or extra training is necessary. If you have a disability or other special requirements, please call us.

In the summer months of December to March the weather is extremely hot and humid.

CLIMATE

Salvador is an all-year destination, hot and humid with most rain falling from April to July. The Chapada Diamantina is also hot (27-32°C) all year round with most rain April to July.

In Fernando de Noronha, it's hot with plenty of sunshine all year round, but most rain falls between March-July, so the Brazilian summer is relatively dry.

CLOTHING AND SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

Bring practical, comfortable clothing and a light-weight jumper. If you plan to eat in smart restaurants, although clothing is not formal (no need for jacket and tie), something quite smart would be appropriate.

For the excursions light and protective clothing, a sun hat and practical sandals (they will get wet) are advised. For both the evenings and nights, bring warm and comfortable clothing; a light fleece jacket. Trousers, skirt or shorts made from light, quick-drying synthetic materials work well. For your stay in Fernando de Noronha bring swimwear for swimming and water-sport activities. You could bring your own goggles and maybe a snorkel though you can hire one locally.

Strong, comfortable shoes or trainers are advisable and you should bring insect repellent, sun block and sun glasses.

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 Latin America.

VACCINATIONS

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

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

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

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.

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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

tours@journeylatinamerica.com