



PRIVATE JOURNEYS WITH JOURNEY LATIN

WILDLIFE BRAZIL: JAGUARS OF THE PANTANAL

11 days from £6,725pp

BRAZIL / THE PANTANAL / IGUAZÚ FALLS / IGUAZU FALLS – BRAZILIAN SIDE / RIO DE JANEIRO



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

EXPERIENCE SOMETHING EXTRAORDINARY

WHY US

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

OUR JOURNEY

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

WE LOVE LATIN AMERICA

A passion for the region runs through all we do

All our Consultants have lived or travelled extensively in Latin America

Up-to-the-minute knowledge underpinned by 40 years' experience

TRAVEL WITH CONFIDENCE

Fully bonded and licensed

ATOL-protected

On your side when it matters

Book with confidence, knowing every penny is secure

THE REAL LATIN AMERICA

Our insider knowledge helps you go beyond the guidebooks

We hand-pick hotels with character and the most rewarding excursions

Let us show you the Latin America we know and love



OVERVIEW & OUTLINE ITINERARY

On this holiday to two of Brazil's most wildlife-rich destinations, the Pantanal wetlands and Iguazu Falls, the highlight is the very real possibility of spotting a jaguar in the wild.

DAY 1	Arrive at Foz do Iguaçú airport and transfer to your hotel 5km from the national park.
DAY 2	Guided tour of the Brazilian side of the Falls.
DAY 3	Guided excursion to the Argentine side of the Falls.
DAY 4	Fly to Campo Grande in Brazil's sun-baked heartland.
DAY 5	Transfer Deep into the Pantanal to your Lodge
DAY 6	Activities at the lodge.
DAY 7	Full day and evening jaguar experience.
DAY 8	Further exploration of the Pantanal from the lodge.
DAY 9	Transfer to Campo Grande airport and fly to Rio de Janeiro.
DAY 10	Guided excursion to the Christ the Redeemer statue and Tijuca Forest.
DAY 11	Transfer to Rio's airport for your international flight.

ITINERARY

Brazil is a blissful destination for wildlife lovers, with many of its natural landscapes offering the promise of multifarious sightings of birds, butterflies, reptiles and mammals. None more so than the yawning open reaches of the Pantanal, the largest freshwater wetlands in the world.

You'll be staggered by the quantity of birds, floating in clouds over the savannah or dipping into waters of the region's floodplains; and caimans, basking silently on the river beaches like hordes of summer tourists. Most alluring of all is the possibility of spotting a jaguar or other wild cat – although there are no guarantees, during the dry season of May to October your chances at your lodge here are among the best on the continent.

We've combined a stay in the Pantanal with a few days at Iguazú, famed for its gigantic waterfalls but just as mesmerising for the variety of tropical birdlife on display in the surrounding rainforest.

DAY 1

**Arrive at Foz do Iguaçú airport and transfer to your hotel
5km from the national park.**

Straddling the border between southern Brazil and northeast Argentina, The Iguazú Falls are composed of 275 separate cascades forming a curtain of foaming water which crashes through tangled sub-tropical jungle over a vast granite amphitheatre, protected by national park status. Many visitors spend just one night here but with three nights you have ample time to explore both sides of the falls.

Both countries offer scenic walkways with breath-taking scenery around every corner and easily observed wildlife including cute little coatis which visit the walkways (be careful they will steal anything edible out of your bag) and a variety of monkeys. 500 species of butterfly, 400 of bird and 2,000 plant types – including orchids – flourish in the fecund tropical forest. Among the endemic species are harpy eagles, anteaters, capuchin monkeys and ocelots – not easy to spot, but look out for some of the more brightly coloured birds including toucans, tanagers, trogons, woodpeckers, flycatchers and parrots.

You won't get to see them all in the wild all so in the afternoon you'll visit the quirky little bird park, an aviary where you can observe up close individual birds of the species endemic to the park.

DAY 2

Guided tour of the Brazilian side of the Falls.

On your guided excursion to the Brazilian side you'll get a panoramic view of the 3km cliff edge over which tumbles a curtain of hundreds of individual waterfalls, which seem to merge into one when the river is full. A paved walkway leads down the cliff to near the rim of the Floriano falls which looks over the aptly named Garganta del Diablo, "Devil's Throat" It's a truly mesmerising experience to stand and stare into the swirling, misty vortex below. Rainbows come and go, while swifts build their precarious nests in the vegetation of the spray-soaked canyon walls seemingly oblivious to the thunderous noise.

DAY 3

Guided excursion to the Argentine side of the Falls.

You'll have a full day to get up close to the fizzing spray – on the Argentine side there is a series of walkways leading you above, below and even behind the water. From the National Park Visitor Centre, a little natural-gas-powered train where the Upper Walk begins. The excursion visits two areas: the Upper Walk, linking dozens of tiny basalt islands, and the Lower Walk, closer to the falls below. A series of walkways and bridges twist and turn above, below and even behind the vast system of mesmerising waterfalls. The train later continues to Devil's Throat Station. From here, a kilometre-long walkway leads you across the river right up to the rim of the Garganta del Diablo which you saw yesterday but from a different viewpoint: today you gaze down into the chasm from on high.

DAY 4

Fly to Campo Grande in Brazil's sun-baked heartland.

Transfer to your hotel in Campo Grande for the night. The city is a substantial, modern metropolis and the capital of the state of Mato Grosso do Sul. It lies on the southern edge of the Pantanal and is a gateway for visitors to the region. The Pantanal wetlands span an area half the size of Germany. They are seasonally flooded, drained by the Paraguay river, and comprise swampy grasslands, lagoons and channels, with sparse forests, leaving some of the greatest concentrations of fauna on the continent exposed to view.

During the May – November dry season the rivers are reduced to a trickle and animals, including caiman, anteaters, giant otters, capybaras, armadillos, and, if you're lucky, jaguars, congregate at the water's edge while flocks of parakeets, rosy spoonbills, ibis, macaws and giant storks take flight. During the wet season, large areas are flooded and mosquitoes are rife, although animals are visibly grouped together on islets above the water's surface and the reflection of the Technicolor sunsets is dazzling.

DAY 5

Transfer Deep into the Pantanal to your Lodge

Your accommodation has the reputation for being the best place to stay in the region. Guest rooms and public areas have been beautifully constructed with imaginative use of wood and brick to create a rustic but high quality property. There's a blissful pool. Located on one of Brazil's largest cattle ranches covering a vast area of savannah, submersible lowlands and forest. It is involved in three types of activity: the estancia that raises beef cattle; a nature conservation program that includes the hyacinth macaw and jaguar conservation projects; and eco-tourism.

Capybara and caiman are found in abundance and tuyuyu (stork), giant anteater and howler monkey are also seen regularly. Thanks to its tireless approach to conservation, there are also healthy populations of the Pantanal's signature wildlife: hyacinth macaw and jaguar (around 35-50 jaguars are believed to be present on the entire estate).

DAY 6

Activities at the lodge.

Today's excursions are made by four-wheel drive or on foot to observe wildlife. You'll always be accompanied by an eagle-eyed, well-informed guide. Excursions include rides in jeeps or vehicles specially adapted for the terrain and by Canadian canoe or motorised boat trips. Walking, night safaris and caiman spotting are also included. Bike tours and birdwatching expeditions are also offered as well as visits to the hyacinth macaw project. (Some of these are charged extra and must be booked in advance). After dinner each day, there is a short slide-show and briefing on the next day's activities.

DAY 7

Full day and evening jaguar experience.

At Caiman Lodge there is a specialist team devoted to the conservation and monitoring of jaguars which visit the vicinity of the property. In order to record their movements, camera traps are in position, and some jaguars have collars with VHF receivers which can be tracked by satellite.

Your eight-hour jaguar-spotting activity (maximum six participants) starts during daylight hours and continues at nightfall – jaguars are nocturnal, coming out of their daytime doze to hunt after sunset – when you accompany the team of African-trained trackers, who will be looking for signs that one of these big cats has passed nearby and will attempt to locate it, so that you can have the privilege of observing the animal up close. During the day prior to your excursion, attempts will have been made to identify approximate locations of the animals – looking for tracks and remains of kills. You will also be able to inspect the cameras to see if any activity has been recorded. There is also a full presentation on the project's work and objectives at the base station.

DAY 8

Further exploration of the Pantanal from the lodge.

Today you have a further opportunity to choose from among the activities organised at the lodge.

DAY 9

Transfer to Campo Grande airport and fly to Rio de Janeiro.

Of the world's great iconic cities, Rio is the most captivating. Romantic and laid back but oozing energy and optimism, it needs a few days to explore and time to sit back and share the outdoor life of its welcoming inhabitants.

With streets, beaches and parks having been spruced up for the World Cup and Olympic Games, now is a good time to go. The busy colonial centre is transformed, with literary cafés spilling out on to pedestrianised lanes, the National Theatre is all a-glitter, and the renovated port area is home to magnificent new museums, a vast aquarium and imaginative street murals.

The lagoon behind Ipanema beach is circled by a pretty path and cycle route and the Botanical Gardens have undergone a luscious makeover. Vibrant street art, beach football, spontaneous musical events and cool bars all add to a joyous experience for visitors. Your top quality hotel is right on the beachfront at Copacabana. You may decide you want to stay in Rio longer – just ask us when you book...

DAY 10

Guided excursion to the Christ the Redeemer statue and Tijuca Forest.

Rio's unmissable highlight, there is probably no better place to appreciate Rio's magnificent cityscape, bays and beaches from atop the 710m high jungle-clad Corcovado mountain, part of the Tijuca National Park, one of very few wilderness parks in the world with an urban setting. The ascent is in itself memorable: the rack railway which goes almost to the summit climbs steeply through the lush rainforest, with its abundant tropical flowers and fruit trees, to just below the statue of Christ the Redeemer. At 30m high, the statue was erected in the early 1930s: it has since become part of Brazil's cultural identity and was declared one of the new Wonders of the World. On clear and sunny days, Corcovado offers stunning views of the city of Rio, including the instantly recognisable Sugar Loaf mountain, Niteroi bridge, and the famous beaches.

DAY 11

Transfer to Rio's airport for your international flight.

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

- Half-day guided excursion to the Brazilian side of the Iguazú Falls
- Full day guided exploration of the Argentine side of the Iguazú Falls
- Guided safari expeditions from Pantanal lodge
- Full day guided jaguar experience in the Pantanal
- Guided excursion to Corcovado and the statue of Christ the Redeemer

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 ground and air transport from Foz do Iguacu airport on day 1 to Rio de Janeiro airport on day 11.

TRIP SUITABILITY

There are a few hours of travel on unmade roads travelling to and from the Pantanal Lodge but there are many opportunities to spot wildlife and enjoy the scenery at a leisurely pace so they are really part of the adventure. Your accommodation is very comfortable.

At the lodge guides are well-informed and explorations are suitable for most ages and abilities. The Pantanal excursions will include drives down occasionally bumpy unpaved roads, and there are walks and canoe rides in the wetlands, although none of these is compulsory.

Pantanal wildlife spotting safaris require stamina and patience as, in the heat of the day, temperatures can reach 35-40°C. Families are welcome at the lodge, and this trip is most suitable for older (teenage) children.

WILDLIFE

Pantanal:

In the dry season, scores of caiman laze on the river beaches, capybara (a type of giant guinea pig) stroll across the roads, and you may come across armadillos, anteaters and howler monkeys. There are few mosquitoes and you will spot fauna throughout.

Whilst there are no guarantees, in recent years Refugio Caiman has become one of the best places in the Brazilian Pantanal to spot jaguar. Chances of seeing jaguar at Refugio Caiman are higher during the dry season, which runs from April to October, when water levels are dropping. The peak of the dry season (late July, August, September and early October) is the optimum period, but sightings do occur in the shoulder months (Apr-Jun and Nov). You are much less likely to see a jaguar during the wet season, which usually begins in Nov/Dec and lasts until March.

TRANSPORT

2 domestic flights, plus one other connecting from your international transatlantic flight; 2 road journeys within the Pantanal region.

ACCOMMODATION

We have selected comfortable modern hotels in Iguazú, Rio de Janeiro and Campo Grande, offering good quality en suite accommodation. Refugio Ecológico Caiman is the most upmarket lodge in the Pantanal and one of the most long-standing. There are excellent opportunities to spot a wide range of wildlife in significant numbers, with naturalist guides and varied excursions.

MEALS

Breakfast daily; dinner day 5; full board days 6-8.

GUIDES

We carefully select our local partners, some of whom we have worked with for over 30 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. Guides at the Pantanal Lodge are qualified wildlife-spotters.

SUMMARY OF NIGHTS

11 days, 10 nights: Iguazú Falls 3; Campo Grande 1; Pantanal lodge 4; Rio de Janeiro 2.

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. You can withdraw Brazilian reais at the airport on arrival at the airport in Iguazú and in Campo Grande and Rio de Janeiro, 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. Dollar bills should be in good condition, soiled or torn bills may be refused.

Credit cards are accepted in the lodges but you should not depend on their use as there may be problems with connectivity upon attempting the transaction.

DAILY SPEND

Some of your meals are included in the holiday itinerary, but you will need cash or card to pay for other meals. Take cash for tips, drinks and the odd souvenir. Drinks other than local juices, water, coffee and tea are charged in the wildlife lodge.

TIPPING

Tips are welcomed and local guides often rely on their tip as a significant proportion of their income. Qualified naturalist guides and drivers in the Pantanal hope to be rewarded.

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.

You can tip the guides at the lodges in dollar bills or reais.

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.

CLIMATE

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

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

July-October are the best months for jaguar spotting – this is the very driest time, when jaguars are seeking the last sources of water. September and October are among the hottest months of the year.

CLOTHING AND SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

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

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

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

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