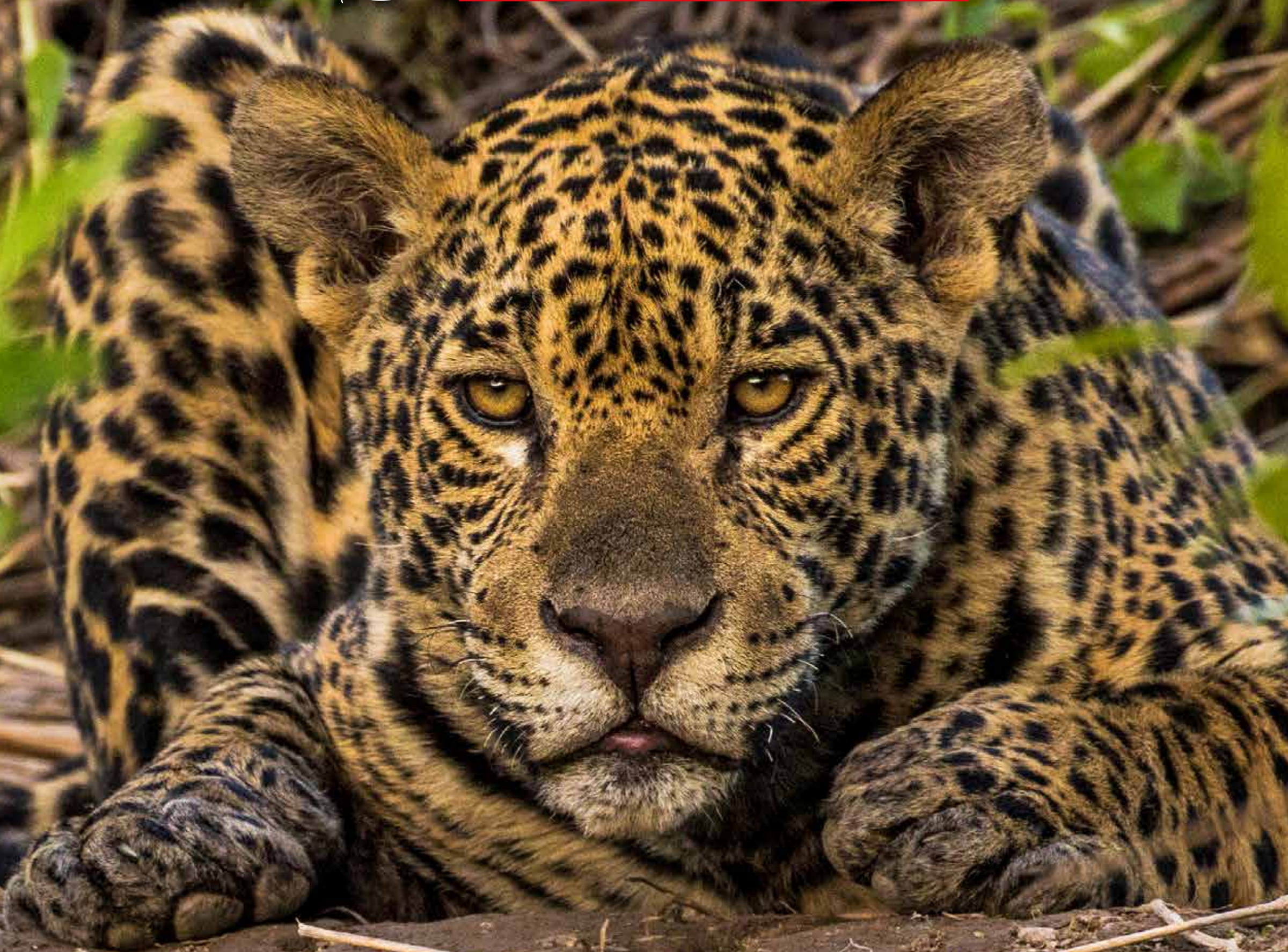




# NEOTROPICAL

NATURE & BIRDING TRIPS



## BRAZIL'S PANTANAL



# ITINERARY 2025

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August 22nd-September 1st



Spanning this colossal floodplain landscape are a myriad of habitats, a testament to the Pantanal's ecological diversity. Ponds and lakes mirror the endless sky, reflecting the rich tapestry of aquatic vegetation that carpets their surfaces. In the embrace of swampy forests and across vast grasslands and savannas, life flourishes in its myriad forms. The gallery forests and riparian woodlands, tracing the course of waterways, add to the visual splendor of this natural masterpiece.



## Day 2-3 (August 23rd-24th): Early flight to Cuiaba | Northern Transpantaneira - Aymara Lodge

Today early in the morning you'll embark on a domestic flight to Cuiabá, setting the stage for your adventure into the untamed Pantanal. Today's destination is Aymara Lodge, a pousada that marks the threshold to the northern reaches of the Pantanal in Mato Grosso. Nestled just few km away from the charming town of Poconé, standing as one of the first lodges at the renowned Transpantaneira road. With its cozy and inviting atmosphere, Aymara seamlessly blends into a 238 hectares family-run reserve that envelops it. Nestled amid a lush tapestry of native forest, Aymara Lodge emerges as a sanctuary on the banks of a serene "corixo," a tranquil waterway gently embraced by the land. This refuge stands as a gateway to the wonders of wildlife, offering an immersive experience unlike any other. Upon arrival and check-in, your journey of exploration commences. A Safari Jeep awaits to whisk you away into the heart of this vibrant ecosystem. In these surroundings, you'll witness a captivating array of creatures that thrive in this unique environment. The emblematic capybaras, the world's largest rodents, make their presence known in abundance, Jacaré caimans lurk in the waterways, Black tailed Marmosets grace the foliage and the echoes of black and gold howler monkeys' calls reverberate through the air.

Sacrlet-headed Blackbird, Southern Screamer, Maguari Stork, Red-legged Sereimas, Jabiru Stork, the elegant Sunbittern, Brazilian Teals, Campo Flickers, the giant Greater Rhea and many other species will reveal their presence in this fascinating place.

**Accommodations at Aymara Lodge (B/L/D)**





## Day 4 (August 25th): Birding & Wildlife Spotting on the Transpantaneira | Drive to Porto Jofre | Houseboat at Encontro das Aguas

Following a rewarding morning activity, you'll embark on a journey down the renowned yet rustic Transpantaneira. This road serves as a vital connection between the city of Poconé and the charming town of Porto Jofre, stretching over a remarkable 147 kilometers and traversing an impressive 122 bridges. Along this route, you'll find abundant chances for captivating wildlife encounters, a phenomenon that becomes particularly pronounced during the dry season. Many animals gather in the remaining and temporary bodies of water and take advantage of the presence of plentiful food sources. With watchful eyes, you'll search for White-headed Marsh-Tyrants, Black-backed Water-Tyrants and an incredible mix of wading birds. You'll make several stops along the way at the bridges which are usually very productive, providing new sights at each opportunity. Your route will weave through scattered palm woodlands, cerrado scrub, and seasonally-flooded grasslands. Ponds and canals lining the roadside will come alive with waders like the Roseate Spoonbill, Capped Heron, Plumbeous Ibis, Limpkin, Cormorants, Herons, different species of kingfishers, alongside the iconic Yacaré Caiman numbering in the hundreds.

Upon your arrival to Porto Jofre, the "end of the road," you'll board a small motor boat to reach the houseboat. Boat outings here will feature the world's most diverse assemblage of tame kingfishers (all five South American species are possible), Yacaré Caimans, Capybaras, Brown Capuchin Monkeys, Giant Otters, Agami Herons, Jabiru Storks and offcourse your main target, the mighty jaguar!

As the day comes to a close, you'll settle into your boat cabins, relishing the comfortable quarters. A celebratory dinner marks the conclusion of another day of remarkable wildlife encounters and adventures.

**Accommodations in private cabins on a floating houseboat hotel Panoramico (B/L/D)**





## Day 5 : (August 26th) Encontro das Águas State Park

Greet the sunrise on the river with a host of sounds and the sight of macaws, parrots and toucans overhead. Today you'll use smaller speedboats to spend the day searching for the iconic Jaguar. During the dry season, docile jaguars known for their affinity to water are photographed along the riverbank searching for the opportunity to ambush their next prey. They are good swimmers, and often lay down along the shore. Chances are good for encountering them!

Indulge in a leisurely onboard lunch, followed by a restorative siesta in your comfortably air-conditioned cabins or on the boat deck, where breathtaking views and soothing sounds abound. As the afternoon sun mellows, our pursuit of Jaguars resumes. Abundant wildlife graces this secluded corner of the Pantanal, and once your primary goal – spotting a majestic Jaguar – is achieved, you'll have the luxury of time to appreciate an array of other captivating species. Look out for the playful Giant Otters, the elegants Black Skimmer and Pied Plover, the resounding call of the Southern Screamer, the enchanting presence of Black and Gold Howler Monkeys, and many more. Your explorations may even lead you to the hidden realms of narrow streams, where elusive creatures like the Pygmy Kingfisher and Sungrebe dwell.

As the late afternoon approaches, you'll make your way back to the hospitable houseboat. Here, amidst a convivial ambiance, you can relish a delectable dinner while you recount and celebrate the day's most memorable highlights!

**Accommodations in private cabins on a floating houseboat hotel Panoramico (B/L/D)**





# JAGUAR LAND

Relative to its weight, jaguars have the strongest bite force of all big cats. Jaguars' spots are known as rosettes because they have smaller spots inside. Like fingerprints, each jaguar has its own unique set of rosettes that scientists use for identification.

It's estimated that over 5000 individuals live in the Pantanal alone, thought to be the largest single population throughout its entire distribution range.



# ENCONTRO DAS AGUAS



Rooms are air-conditioned, with private bathroom. This “floating hotel” allows you to stay close to the action spots where the wildlife, specially Jaguars, have been spotted. The boat will be docked at the gateway of Encontro das Aguas State Park.



## Day 6 (August 27th) : Pixaim Rive - Lower Transpantaneira

Having spent two days immersed in the wildest part of the Pantanal and following a productive morning within the Jaguar land, you'll depart this magical place and make your way back north through the Transpantaneira retracing your route. In the way we can cover some of the areas we previously traveled in more detail. You'll definitely look for more!

Chestnut-eared Aracari, Pearled Kite, Rusty-backed Antwren, Common Tody Flycatcher, White-browed Meadowlark, Black-backed Water-Tyrant, Great Black Hawks and others species might reveal their presence as you drive to the next lodge. Once you arrive at Hotel Mato Grosso located at the shore escenic Pixaim River, you'll settle in and check the activity in the surroundings.

**Accommodations at Hotel Mato Grosso (B/L/D)**









## Day 7 (August 28th) : Pixaim River Area Wildlife & Birding

It's another morning to greet the sunrise while sipping good Brazilian coffee. You can have a safari drive or a small boat ride on the Pixaim River this morning, depending on what we still hope to see, to spot secretive species like Agami and Zig-Zag Heron. Two bird observation towers (one near the Jabiru nest, 150 meters from the lodge, and the other in the gallery forest, 900 meters from the lodge) will allow you to enjoy the landscapes and more birds. A wonderful walk through a route in a beautiful gallery forest would also be a fantastic alternative for looking for unusual birds such as Helmeted Manakin, Mato Grosso Antbird, Band-tailed Antbird, Hooded Tanager, Little Woodpecker, Rusty-backed Antwren, Blue-crowned Trogon, Rufous-tailed Jacamar, and others.

**Accommodation Hotel Mato Grosso (B/L/D)**



## Day 8 (August 29th): Wildlife Viewing | Return Drive to Cuiabá - Flight to Campo Grande - Mato Grosso do Sul

After enjoying breakfast, with hearts filled with memories and stories, the journey back to Cuiabá commences. This paved road presents a welcome contrast to the dust-laden trails of the Pantanal, marking a gentle farewell to this captivating landscape.

Your journey is timed for a smooth transition to catch our flight to Campo Grande (1h50 min), where you'll explore the southern Pantanal in Mato Grosso do Sul.

**Accommodations Hotel Mohave in Campo Grande (B/L/D)**





## DAY 9 (August 30th) : Aguapé

After breakfast you'll drive to Aguapé Lodge (around three and a half hours drive time to cover 195 km approximately). By the beginning of the dirt road you'll make stops looking for mammals and birds.

Stunning birds that might show up in the way are Hyacinth Macaw, Nanday Parakeet, Toco Toucan, White Woodpeckers, Narrow-Billed Woodcreeper, Purplish and Plush-crested Jays, Red-crested Cardinal, Campo Flicker, Red-legged Sereima and many others.

As the day's adventures unfold, you'll reconvene with fellow explorers and friends to enjoy a delightful dinner. A time of camaraderie and celebration, this evening provides the perfect opportunity to commemorate the incredible wildlife encounters that have already marked the last chapter of your journey into the Pantanal.


Your remarkable expedition in the Southern side of this magnificent bioma has just begun, promising days filled with the wonders of nature and the thrill of discovery.

**Accommodations at Aguapé Lodge (B/L/D)**





Brazil's Pantanal stands as the world's most expansive tropical freshwater wetland, encompassing a remarkable expanse of the Earth's surface. Constituting approximately 3% of the globe's total wetland area, this natural wonder captivates with its unique floodplain ecosystems, typified by their rhythmic dance of seasonal floods and subsequent droughts. Our tailored tours of this captivating destination are timed to coincide with the dry season, when the water levels recede to unveil a captivating spectacle: ponds and mudholes teeming with an abundance of trapped fish, an irresistible banquet that beckons a congregation of ravenous predators.

A Giant Anteater (Myrmecophaga tridactyla) is shown in profile, facing right. It has a long, dark, pointed snout and a body covered in long, coarse, greyish-brown fur. The animal is standing in a field of green grass and low-lying plants. The background is filled with dense, out-of-focus green foliage, suggesting a natural habitat like the Pantanal wetlands.

This part of Mato Grosso do Sul is considered the best place in the continent to admire the Giant Anteater (*Myrmecophaga tridactyla*), is the largest species of anteater and the only species in the genus *Myrmecophaga*.



## DAY 10 (August 31st): Aguapé

Aguapé offers an excellent environment for birdwatching and wildlife photography; a place where over 380 bird species have been recorded. Among the illustrious residents that might grace your lens are the regal Bare-faced Curassow, the vibrant Blaze-winged Parakeet, and Gilded Hummingbird. The iconic Toco Toucan, along with the Pale-crested and White-fronted Woodpecker, create a visual feast for photographers and bird enthusiasts alike. Keep your camera ready for the distinctive Red-billed Scythebill, Campo Flickers, and the striking Scarlet-headed Blackbird.

Start your days with the promise of adventure as you partake in an exhilarating safari drive, over these days. With the golden light of dawn painting the landscape, your chances of encountering some of the Pantanal's most iconic residents are at their peak. Witness the elegant strides of the Giant Anteater and Southern Tamanduas as they traverse the terrain. The elusive Crab-eating Fox and the Six-banded Armadillo might reveal themselves just around the lodge.

As you explore the landscape, your eyes and lenses will capture a diverse cast of characters. Capped Herons grace the water's edge, while the magnificent Jabiru takes to the sky in all its glory. Other common species of this area are the Savanna Hawk, Rufescent Tiger Heron, Buff-necked and Plumbeous Ibis, the elegant Roseate Spoonbill offers a burst of color. The skies come alive with the brilliance of the Hyacinth and Yellow-collared Macaw, while the striking Orange-backed Troupial adds its unique voice to nature's chorus.

### Accommodations at Aguapé Lodge (B/L/D)





## Day 11 (September 1st): Wildlife Viewing | Return Drive to Campo Grande - Flight to Guarulhos (GRU)

After an early morning activity and enjoying breakfast, with hearts filled with memories and stories, the journey back to Campo Grande commences, marking a gentle farewell to this captivating region.

Your journey is timed for a smooth transition to catch your flight to Guarulhos. Plan your international flight for a late-night departure to align with the schedules of several airlines. If you prefer to start fresh the next day, we can arrange an additional night at our preferred hotel conveniently located near the airport. Should you wish to extend your adventure with a trip to the Atlantic Forest, simply let us know, and we'll be happy to assist with the arrangements.

**(B/L/-)**

**NOTE: If you choose to extend your trip to the Atlantic Forest, accommodations and dinner for this night in Guarulhos will be included.**



# **Pantanal Awaits You in 2025 Adventure of a Lifetime!**





# TRIP CONSIDERATIONS

**CLIMATE:** This tour takes place during the dry season. Temperatures fluctuate between 60° to 90°F (16° to 32°C), and it is usually very sunny. However, cold fronts are not unusual in the Pantanal this time of year, and the temperature can sometimes drop to around 45°F (7°C) in the early morning. Since part of the time in the Pantanal is spent on fast boats, it is very important to bring cold and windy weather gear for the early morning boat rides. There might be a bit of rain, but it is usually very little, and sometimes none at all.

**TIME ZONE:** UTC/GMT -3 hours

**VISA:** Passport holders of the US, Canada, and Australia will continue to be able to enter Brazil visa-free as the latter has decided to postpone the reintroduction of tourist visa requirements until April 2024. After this date you'll have to be aware of the latest official notices to confirm if the Brazilian Government has cancelled the visa waiver program and will resume the issuance of visitor visas for citizens from Australia, Canada, and the United States of America. Visitors from the UK, EU, South Africa, New Zealand, and various other countries continue to be exempt from tourist visa requirements. Consult your closest consulate to verify the requirements that apply to your particular country.

## OVERVIEW:

Max group size: 6 + Tour leader

Length: 11 days

Starting city: São Paulo - Guarulhos (GRU)

Ending city: São Paulo - Guarulhos (GRU)

Pace: Moderate

Physical difficulty: Moderate

Focus: Natural history, birding and photography

**PRICE PER PERSON USD \$6890**

Single room supplement USD \$695

Contact us for a quote if you are interested in a private tour.

## INCLUDED:

- Transfers In-Out
- Private service of a specialized birding & naturalist bilingual guide
- Private transportation
- Private motor canoe for Jaguar spotting
- Accommodation in double or triple occupation. (Single room adds a supplemental fee)
- All meals listed in the itinerary with 1 soft drink or purified water
- All excursions and activities listed in itinerary
- Entrance fees to all the reserves and activities
- All accommodations listed in the itinerary
- All the internal flights:  
São Paulo (GRU) / Cuiabá (CGB) / Campo Grande (CGR) / São Paulo (GRU)
- Fluvial transportation

## NOT INCLUDED:

- International airfare
- Alcoholic Beverages
- Additional drinks
- Tips
- Any other item not specified

## CUSTOMIZED & EXTENSION TOURS

Are you looking for a travel experience that is completely customized to your preferences? Allow us to assist you in designing a custom trip that will take you to practically any location you desire. With a personalized tour, you'll have the freedom to travel with a group of your choice, all while setting your own schedule and pace. We may add extensions to other sites such as the Atlantic Forest, Chapada dos Guimaraes, and an exclusive trip to Emas National Park - a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to see the revered Maned Wolf in its natural habitat. Your specific preferences will be prioritized.



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