



# NEOTROPICAL

NATURE & BIRDING TRIPS



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## BRAZIL'S ATLANTIC FOREST

# ITINERARY SUMMARY

## August 1st-7th



**Brazil's Atlantic Forest is truly a jewel of the Continent. Designated as a World Biosphere Reserve, it is a complex region of tropical and subtropical rainforest, tropical dry forest, tropical savanna, semi deciduous and mangrove forests. It extends along Brazil's Atlantic coast from sea level- up into montane forest. The Atlantic Forest currently spans over 4000 km<sup>2</sup> and is characterized by an enormous biodiversity.**

7 Days / 6 Nights Nature, wildlife, birding and photo journey. The arrival and departure Airport is Guarulhos International (GRU).

## Itinerary summary

### Day 1: August 1st Arrival to São Paulo, Brazil

Arrive in São Paulo, Brazil, at Guarulhos International Airport (GRU). No activities are planned for this day so you can rest from your travels. The transfer to your hotel is included; your hotel is about twenty minutes away and we can organize an early check-in as an option for those who need it. Usually rooms become available by noon; getting into a room earlier than that requires additional charges. Keep in mind that it takes at least 1.5 hours to get your luggage, and clear immigration and customs; there are restaurants and public areas at the airport where you can relax if you don't want to pay an early room fee.

This evening you'll enjoy a welcome dinner and the chance to meet your guide and travel companions, and to learn more about our coming adventure. We invite you to sample Brazil's national cocktail, the caipirinha, made with cachaça (sugarcane liquor), sugar, and lime. We predict this may be the first of many.

### Accommodations at Hotel Hampton Guarulhos (-/-/D)



# ITATIAIA NATIONAL PARK





### Days 2 and 3: August 2nd - 3rd Itatiaia National Park

After breakfast we'll drive to Itatiaia National Park (around three and a half hours drive time). Itatiaia is the oldest national park of Brazil, established on 14 June 1937. It's an amazing forested mountain ridge with rocky peaks with altitudes ranging from 540 to 2,791 metres (1,772 to 9,157 ft). The highest point within the park is the Black Needles Peak (Pico das Agulhas Negras). We will set base in Itatiaia for 3 nights at a charming hotel located within the park boundaries, surrounded by forest making it a great place for easy afternoon birding and photography. We'll seek for the outstanding Frilled Coquette feeding on garden flowers. Feeders at the hotel should attract a few different hummers such as Scale-throated Hermit and White-throated Hummingbird, Brazilian Ruby and Black-eared Fairy. Fruit feeders often bring in colorful species like the unmatched Green-headed Tanager, Chestnut-bellied Euphonia, Ruby-crowned Tanagers, Magpie Tanagers, Black-goggled Tanager along with many other species. You'll certainly love the activity around the lodge: Red-rumped Caciques, Dusky-legged Guan Maroon-bellied Parakeets make their presence very obvious.

We'll explore different locations in the lower zone of the National Park. This is a true hotspot of biodiversity where hundreds of species thrive; we'll seek for extraordinary species such as the Pin-tailed Manakin, Swallow-tailed Manakin, Slaty-breasted Wood-Rails, Blue-winged Macaws, Cobalt-rumped Parrotlet, Red-breasted Toucan, Surucua Trogon and many others. We'll try to get good views of some remarkable antbirds like Ferruginous Antbirds, Ochre-rumped and White-bibbed Antbirds, Tufted Antshrike, Plain Antvireo, Variable Antshrike. Bamboo patches hold Black-billed Scythebill, Black-capped Foliage-gleaner, Rufous-capped Spinetail, Fork-tailed Pygmy-Tyrant, the perky Slaty Bristlefront with its unforgettable song and many others. We have chances to see some tough birds like Such's and Rufous-tailed Antthrushes. The elegant Swallow-tailed Cotinga is unpredictable this time of year, but with luck we may encounter one.

At night we'll look for the extraordinary Tawny-browed Owl, who often remains hidden in the forest near the hotel; it's not unusual to be woken up by its otherworldly calls.

**Accommodations at Hotel do Ypé (B/ L/D)**



**BIRDING & PHOTOGRAPHY  
AT ITS BEST**





### Day 4: August 4th Agulhas Negras

After an early breakfast, we'll drive about 1 hour to a back road that accesses the higher zones of the National Park. The stunted forest and scrub here host a very different set of birds. The unmistakable calls of Black-and-gold Cotingas ring out through the mist. Hearing them is easy! Seeing them often takes a lot of persistence and patience. We'll target several species along the lower parts of the road like Rufous-tailed Antbird, Large-tailed Antshrike, Serra do Mar Tyrannulet, and Black-capped Piprites. Forest patches can be quiet until a mixed species flock comes whirling through, and then we can be inundated with birds like Diademed and Brassy-breasted Tanagers, Buff-throated and Bay-chested Warbling-Finches, Pallid Spinetail, Rufous-backed Antvireo, Sharp-billed Treehunter, and White-browed Woodpecker.

We'll check a regular lekking site for the endemic Green-crowned Plovercrest, where several males of this superb-looking hummingbird usually perch and chirp incessantly. Further up, the forest becomes shorter, and we'll try various spots for the endemic Itatiaia Spinetail, and within patches of Araucaria forest we'll look for the super endemic Araucaria Tit-Spinetail. After a picnic lunch, we'll bird a side road lower down the valley that passes through pastures and light woodland. The birding here is easy and offers very different birds like Toco Toucans, screeching Curl-crested Jays, handsome White-eared Puffbirds, Burrowing Owls, dancing Streamer-tailed Tyrants, among others.

**Accommodations at Hotel do Ype (B/L/D)**





The bird fauna of the Brazilian Atlantic Forest is exceptionally diverse and threatened. It has one of the highest levels of endemism recorded on the planet with over 220 species identified just for this biome.

**ENDEMIC HOTSPOT**





### Day 5: August 5th Serra do Mar State Park and Itamambuca

Today, you're in for a journey from Itatiaia to Imambuca, nestled alongside a pristine beach on the magnificent Atlantic Coast: The second largest rainforest on earth! Our route will lead us along a meandering road that winds its way to the coastline, weaving through the embrace of forest-clad mountains and the vastness of the sea. This stretch of the Atlantic coast boasts unparalleled beauty and tons of endemic species.

Throughout this region, you'll find a tapestry of reserves and tranquil byways nestled at the foothills of the mountains, granting effortless access to the finest avian havens showcasing the Atlantic Forest's most splendid species.

Countless opportunities await to encounter an array of antbirds, many of which reveal themselves surprisingly readily when compared to their counterparts in other parts of the Neotropics.

Some of our targets are the Scaled and Ferruginous Antbirds, Rufous capped Antthrush, Black-cheeked Gnateater, Spot-breasted Antvireo, Tufted and Spot-backed Antshrike, and Star-throated Antwren, the strikingly patterned Spotted Bamboowren and the endemic Slaty Bristlefront with its unforgettable song.

**Accommodations at Itamambuca Resort (B/L/D)**



# SERRA DO MAR



SERRA DO MAR STATE PARK covers 315,000 hectares (780,000 acres) of a forested mountain range, and is one of the largest remaining areas of continuous Atlantic Forest. It is a refuge to hundreds of species of birds and other animals. The park protects water sources that supply part of the São Paulo metropolitan region.

**Day 6: August 6th Serra do Mar State Park**

Today we'll drive towards Praia do Mococa to visit one of the best trails within the Parque Estadual Serra do Mar. Many of the species we'll search for are strikingly beautiful, like the Channel-billed Toucans sometime accompanied by the outstanding Red-ruffed Fruitcrow. Spot-billed Toucanets are also reliable at this location. Bare-throated Bellbird with its unique distinctive call will be one of our target species as well. The handsome and endemic to the Atlantic Forest of eastern Brazil Black-cheeked Gnateater, is pretty common at this location. Males are best detected by their trilling song, they generally forage very low in the undergrowth and darts rapidly between perches giving us opportunities for great sightings and pictures. After a productive morning we'll have lunch and then stop at Folha Seca Reserve, considered by many one of the best feeders in the world. Swarms of hummers are always present with the startling Festive Coquette often being the favorite. Others that visit include Saw-billed Hermit, Violet-capped Woodnymph, Brazilian Ruby, Sombre Hummingbird, Versicolored Emerald, and White-chinned Sapphire. The fruit feeders attract amazing visitors such as Violaceous and Chestnut-bellied Euphonias, Green-headed, Ruby-crowned, Brazilian and Red-necked Tanagers!!

**Accommodations at Itamambuca Resort (B/L/D)**

# SERRA DO MAR



Black-cheeked Gnatcatcher  
© Santiago Salazar



This is our last morning in this fascinating bioma. If you prefer to relax you'll have time to enjoy the beautiful beach and facilities of Itamambuca or take a short walk in one of the trails within the mangrove area at the hotel. After lunch we'll drive back to Guarulhos (3.5 hour drive). We'll arrive to GRU International Airport by 6:00pm, in time for evening departures of several airlines. If you require an overnight stay to start fresh the following day we can arrange an additional night at the hotel we regularly use close to the airport.

**(B/L/-)**

### Day 7: August 7th Fazenda Angelim

After breakfast we'll have a short drive to Fazenda Angelim. There's a fair amount of remaining lowland forest there with an impressive amount of Atlantic Forest endemics, like Rufous headed, Brazilian and Gilt-edge Tanagers. Spotted Bamboowren sometimes call softly from the overgrown clearing along the entrance road. If weather allows this is one of the most reliable locations for Buff-Bellied Puffbird and Buff-throated Purpletuft. Along the trails we'll try for Tawny-crowned Pygmy-tyrant, Yellow-lored Tody-flycatcher, White-eyed Foliage-gleaner, Yellow-throated Woodpecker, White-spotted Woodpecker, White-bearded Manakin, Chestnut-crowned Becard, Rufous-winged Antwren, Squamate antbird, Spot-breasted Antwreio, Plain Antwreio among others. Mantled Hawk sometimes can be seen perched in the trees right along the clearings waiting to ambush their prey.



# TRIP CONSIDERATIONS

**CLIMATE:** The weather tends to be very pleasant to warm at lower elevations by the coast. Itatiaia can get pretty cold in the upper zones such as Agulhas Negras. Temperatures decline at night specially in Itatiaia. Well build fireplaces are available in each room at Hotel do Ypé. Occasionally we can get cold fronts that bring cooler temperatures into the region and little rain can be expected as well.

**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:** 8 + Tour leader

**Length:** 7 days

**Starting city:** São Paulo (GRU)

**Ending city:** São Paulo (GRU)

**Pace:** Moderate

**Physical difficulty:** Moderate

Most of the the activities are held driving and walking on backroads and trails. The trails are well maintained but may become slightly slippery when wet. Most of the tour is run between sea level and 3250 ft (900 m), with one morning at Agulhas Negras about 6200 ft (1900 m).

**Focus:** Natural history, birding and photography

**PRICE PER PERSON USD \$3890**

Single room supplement USD \$590

## **INCLUDED:**

- Private service of a specialized birding & naturalist bilingual guide and local guides.
- Private transportation.
- Accommodation in double or triple occupation rooms.
- All meals listed in the itinerary with soft drink or purified water.
- Transfers In-Out.
- All excursions and activities listed in itinerary.
- Entrance fees to all the reserves and activities.

## **NOT INCLUDED:**

- Tips
- International airfare
- Alcoholic beverages
- Personal expenses
- Any other item not specified

## **CUSTOMIZED TOUR**

We can easily set up a custom tour to virtually anywhere you can imagine. With a custom tour, you can travel with friends and family on dates that are convenient for your schedule, and the tour will be run at the pace and difficulty you desire.

We can also arrange a custom extension to the Pantanal or a modification of this trip according to your interests and time availability.

PLEASE ASK FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES AND DESTINATIONS TO EXTEND YOUR TRIP.



**NEOTROPICAL**

NATURE & BIRDING TRIPS


**Day 1 & 2: August 8th-9th Trilha dos Tucanos**

Setting out from São Paulo and journeying southward, we embark on a 3.5-hour drive that brings us to Trilha dos Tucanos, nestled within the picturesque Paranapiacaba Sierra in Tapiraí city. A renowned haven for bird enthusiasts and wildlife photographers alike, this Lodge and reserve offer an intricate network of trails that provide opportunities to witness a myriad of captivating species.

In the days that follow, you'll have the chance to traverse the diverse trails that meander through the property. If your main interest lies in capturing the most exquisite images of the exceptional species that grace the reserve, we're dedicated to creating perches strategically positioned near the bustling feeders, drawing a vibrant array of bird species, including the Green-billed Toucan and the Saffron Toucanet.

The reserve boasts a trail network that opens up exciting possibilities for encountering various captivating bird species. Among the notable finds are the Robust Woodpecker, the impressive Giant Antshrike, and different trogon species: Green-back (yellow-bellied), Black-Throated, and Surucua Trogons. The unique Crescent-Chested Puffbird and the resplendent Atlantic Royal Flycatcher further grace this natural haven. With a touch of luck, a stroll along the lake's edge might unveil the elusive Brazilian Tapirs. Our exploration also encompasses spotting the Swallow-Tailed Manakin, Pin-Tailed Manakin, and Green-Headed Tanager, contributing to the array of colors and forms that nature offers.

**Accommodations at Trilha dos Tucanos (B/L/D)**

A close-up photograph of a toucan bird perched on a thin, brown branch. The bird has a large, yellow beak with a dark stripe along the edge. Its body is primarily black, with a bright yellow patch on its chest and a red and blue ring around its eye. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting a forest setting.

**EXTENSION TRIP  
AUGUST 8th-12th**

**TRILHA DOS TOUCANOS &  
INTERVALES**



**Day 3 & 4 : August 10th-11th Intervalaes**

After a productive stay at Trilha dos Tucanos, we head towards Intervalaes State Park, one of the last remaining patches of Mata Atlantica Forest. Located in the Serra de Paranapiacaba, some 270km west of Sao Paulo, it is known for its high diversity due to the altitudinal differences within the forest. Home to many endemics, the National Park is crossed by several dirtroads and trails that enable us to cover different areas- some accesible by car, and some walking trails of varying dificity. The State Park hosts different lodges within its boundaries, by spending the night in to make the most of our time in the area. The following days will be spent exploring the forest; some of the highlight here may be Solitary Tinamou, Black-fronted Piping Guan, Mantled Hawk, Spot-winged Wood-Quail, Red-and-white Crake, Rusty-breasted Nunlet, Spot-billed and Saffron Toucanet, Helmeted Woodpecker, Pale browed Treehunter, White bearded Antshrike, Squamate Antbird, White-breasted Tapaculo, Swallow-tailed Cotinga, Sharpbill, Sao Paulo Tyrannulet, Buffy-fronted and Temminck's Seedeater, Hooded Berryeater, Chestnut-back Tanager, and the Black-legged Dacnis. Night excursions can be interesting, with chances for Long-Tailed Nightjar and Black-capped Screech Owl.

Accommodation in the Intervalaes State Park for 2 nights (within the park there are 3 lodges with similar characteristics, they open their availability with 5-6 months of anticipation. Accommodation is simple, run by the National Park service. 2 nights accommodation within the Intervalles State Park.

**Accomodations at Parque Stadual Intervalaes (B/L/D)**

# PARQUE ESTADUAL INTERVALAS



**Day 5: August 12th Intervalles & Transfer out**

After an early activity and breakfast we'll drive back to Guarulhos (4.5 hour drive). We'll arrive to GRU International Airport by 4:00 pm, in time for evening departures of several airlines. If you require an overnight stay to start fresh the following day we can arrange an additional night at the hotel we regularly use close to the airport.

**(B/L/-)**



PARQUE ESTADUAL  
INTERVALES



**ATLANTIC FOREST  
BRAZIL**



# TRIP CONSIDERATIONS

**CLIMATE:** The weather typically remains pleasantly warm throughout the day; however, mornings and evenings at Intervales and Trilha dos Tucanos may experience a noticeable drop in temperatures, occasionally even turning quite chilly. Periodically, the region can be influenced by cold fronts, ushering in cooler temperatures and a chance of light rainfall.

**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:** 8 + Tour leader

**Length:** 4 days

**Starting city:** São Paulo (GRU)

**Ending city:** São Paulo (GRU)

**Pace:** Moderate

**Physical difficulty:** Moderate

The majority of our activities involve traversing backroads and trails by both driving and walking. While these trails are generally well-maintained, it's important to note that they might become mildly slippery when wet. During your time at Trilha dos Tucanos, you'll have the opportunity to observe various species as you spend time near feeders and light traps, where strategically placed perches provide excellent opportunities for photography.

**Focus:** Natural history, birding and photography

**PRICE PER PERSON USD \$2250**

Single room supplement USD \$290

## **INCLUDED:**

- Private service of a specialized birding & naturalist bilingual guide and local guides.
- Private transportation.
- Accommodation in double or triple occupation rooms.
- All meals listed in the itinerary with soft drink or purified water.
- Transfers In-Out.
- All excursions and activities listed in itinerary.
- Entrance fees to all the reserves and activities.

## **NOT INCLUDED:**

- Tips
- International airfare
- Alcoholic beverages
- Personal expenses
- Any other item not specified

## **CUSTOMIZED TOUR**

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.



**NEOTROPICAL**

NATURE & BIRDING TRIPS