Brazil: Jaguars and Wildlife of the Pantanal

EXPLORING THE WORLD'S LARGEST WETLAND



TRIP DATES

2024

July 29-August 7, 2024 August 9-18, 2024 August 23-September 1, 2024* September 13-22, 2024

*Reverse Itinerary

2025

July 19-28, 2025 August 16-25, 2025 September 1-10, 2025 September 13-22, 2025 September 27-October 6, 2025



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The Pantanal of Brazil, the world's largest tropical wetland, is a vast waterworld of flooded grasslands, tropical savannas, and gallery forests that shelter phenomenal wildlife. Hundreds of rare and wildly colorful avian species nest in the Pantanal, caiman and capybara roam the meandering river banks, and the top predator in this hotspot of biodiversity is the majestic jaguar, the largest native cat in the New World, found here in great numbers. We bring you into the heart of the Pantanal for an incredible wildlife adventure, and unlike the Amazon, where wildlife can be hard to spot, the Pantanal has wonderfully open habitats. We've timed our trip for the dry season, when the waters recede, the wildlife is concentrated, and jaguars are found near the Paraguay River, where they come to drink, swim, and hunt. We'll bring you to a remote lodge for this thrilling experience, and we explore by boat on the lookout for these magnificent creatures. Heading deeper in the Pantanal, we safari by 4WD vehicle and canoe in a riverine forest with extraordinary birdlife, including macaws and huge jabiru storks. With luck, we may see giant anteater and giant otter here as well. We combine our wildlife safari with hiking in the stunning "cerrado" ecosystem of Chapada Dos Guimarães National Park, a land of tropical savanna, sandstone cliffs, red-rock formations, and towering waterfalls. Here we'll explore the canyons, valleys, and savannas, with opportunities for refreshing dips in some of the many waterfalls. Our accommodations include a forest ecolodge in the Pantanal reserve and a small, ideally located lodge in Chapada Dos Guimarães that brings us broad vistas across the park, with hiking trails all around us. This adventure with Brazilian naturalist Sergio Freitas is safari-style, with early morning starts for optimum wildlife viewing, mid-day breaks to avoid the afternoon heat, and late afternoon excursions. We will also have after-dinner outings to see nocturnal wildlife. Join us in Brazil for a phenomenal wildlife adventure!



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DAY 1 CUIABÁ

Welcome to the city of Cuiabá, capital of the Mato Grosso state. You'll be met on arrival for a transfer to the Hotel Deville, where we gather for a trip orientation and a Welcome Dinner...D

DAY 2 THE PANTANAL / AYMARA LODGE

Our introduction comes on our day's drive to our first lodge deep in the Pantanal. Wildlife viewing along the road can be great and makes the drive a "safari"—we'll look for an array of spectacular birds, possibly including wading birds such as jabiru stork, roseate spoonbill, and rufescent tiger heron, along with marsh deer, capybara, and caiman, and giant river otter (an endangered species). We arrive in time for lunch at Aymara Lodge, our welcoming accommodation in the forest. In the afternoon, we set out to explore on foot or by canoe, keeping an eye out for native avians including cocoi, striated, and agami heron and all five species of South American kingfisher. The birds in this area often include sought-after hyacinth macaw (the largest parrot species in the world) as well as curassow and toucan. We may also see mammals like hooded capuchin, ground-dwelling paca, and South American coati. Dinner and overnight at Aymara Lodge, followed by a night safari in search of nocturnal wildlife...BLD

Driving Details: 6 hours depending on stops for wildlife viewing; 64 miles on paved road, 18 miles on dirt road

DAY 3 WILDLIFE OF THE PANTANAL

We'll have a full day to explore from the lodge. The narrow river that flows right past our lodge is bordered by gallery forest. Regular avian visitors include toco toucan, blue-fronted parrot, crimson-crested and pale-crested woodpecker, rufous-tailed jacamar-the list is breathtaking! Mammals we may see include hooded capuchin, South American coati, black-and-gold howler monkeys, and Azara's agouti and paca. On our canoe outings, we'll look for wading birds as well as caiman and giant river otter. We'll also explore by 4WD vehicle, giving us a chance to see marsh deer and the fascinating giant anteater. Optional horseback rides are available-a great way to get to the more remote spots. This evening, we'll gather at the lodge for a talk by a researcher from the Jaguar Identification Project (www.jaguaridproject.com), a non-profit that is using citizen-science to build a cohesive database on individual jaguars in the northern Pantanal region. The talk will discuss the biology of jaguars, the importance of ecotourism, and the conservation status of these big cats. For the last 20 years, researchers in the Porto Jofre region have been cataloging individual jaguars by their unique spot pattern, which is comparable to a fingerprint. One hundred percent of the revenue of the Jaguar ID Project goes back to jaguar conservation. Dinner and overnight at Aymara Lodge...BLD

DAY 4 JAGUAR TOUR TO PORTO JOFRE

Today we'll head to one of the world's jaguar-sighting hotspots, the settlement of Porto Jofre on the Cuiabá River, where jaguars are known to frequent the waterways and beaches during the dry season. A population of jaguars at Porto Jofre has become relatively habituated to people over the years, making



TRIP DETAILS AT-A-GLANCE

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Length:	10 days
Arrive:	Cuiabá, Brazil
Depart:	Cuiabá, Brazil
Lodging:	1 night hotel, 8 nights
	wildlife lodges
Meals:	All meals included
	(B=Breakfast, L=Lunch,
	D=Dinner)
Activity:	Wildlife and Natural
	History
Trip Level:	1 2 3 4 5 6
	Easy nature walks and
	light hikes in a hot and
	humid Pantanal climate,
	river excursions by
	motorboat and canoe,

hikes in Chapada dos Guimarães National Park

HIGHLIGHTS

- Search for the elusive jaguar along the Pantanal's rivers
- Witness spectacular birdlife, from hyacinth macaws to roseate spoonbills
- Meet with a researcher from the Jaguar Identification Project
- Look for giant anteater, capybara, caiman, and giant river otter
- Hike in the stunning landscape of Chapada dos Guimarães National Park
- Enjoy overnights in cozy wildlife lodges

Itinerary (cont'd)

sightings more frequent, although the Porto Jofre area itself has become very crowded with tourists. We get an early start for a 3-hour drive to Porto Jofre, where we'll explore by private, open-air boat along the river's shores. We'll have a light lunch on board. In the late afternoon, we return to the quiet woodland setting of Aymara Lodge. Dinner and overnight at Aymara Lodge...BLD

Driving Details: 3 hours; 74 miles on dirt road (one way)—total of 6 hours, 148 miles on dirt road

DAY 5 THE PANTANAL / PARAGUAY RIVER / HOTEL BAIAZINHA

We head to our second great wildlife location, an area renowned among wildlife photographers and birders. We'll be traveling along the Transpantaneira Highway part of the way, a dirt road that crosses 100 wooden bridges as it makes its way across the remote northern Pantanal. We arrive at our remote lodge, the Hotel Baiazinha, set in the Cáceres region on the left bank of the Paraguay River. In the afternoon we'll enjoy our first river safari in search of jaguar. Dinner and overnight at hotel...BLD

Driving Details: 5 hours; 112 miles on paved road, 65 miles on dirt road

DAYS 6-7 PARAGUAY RIVER / SEARCHING FOR JAGUARS

Exploring by small motor boat with our naturalist guide, we have two full days to make forays along the Paraguay River. Its meandering lakes, ponds, and streams are a great place for birds, reptiles, and mammals including the jaguar. This part of the river is the world's prime area for seeing jaguar, who are drawn to the sandy river banks during the dry season to drink, swim, and hunt. Here they often find their favorite prey, the capybara, the largest rodent in the world (weighing up to 150 pounds). They also hunt the river for caiman (related to the alligator), dispatching them with a bite from their incredibly powerful jaws. Jaguars are solitary, only coming together to mate, and like tigers, they are strong swimmers. They live up to 12-15 years in the wild, and males can weigh up to 250 pounds. We'll also encounter other fascinating wildlife, from giant river otter to howler monkey and capybara. There is always an array of tropical birds-among the frequently spotted are pied lapwing, black skimmer, and yellow-billed terns. We'll set out in our boats each day, and return to the comfort of our lodge each night. Overnights at the Hotel Baiazinha... BLD each day

DAY 8 CHAPADA DOS GUIMARÃES NATIONAL PARK

After a final morning looking for specialties such as redlegged seriema and pale-bellied tyrant manakin, we have a complete change of scene as we enter Chapada Dos Guimarães National Park, a spectacular realm of red-rock formations, impressive cliffs, crystalline rivers, and stunning waterfalls. Along the way we stop for lunch at Veu da Noiva (Bridal Veil), a 285-foot waterfall cascading into a huge sandstone canyon. Avians here include channel-billed toucan, lettered aricari, blue-winged and red-and-green macaw. At 2,600 feet above sea level, the park is one of the water sources for the Pantanal's marshlands and is a unique place to explore on daily hikes. Our remote lodge, Pousada do Parque, is set on 1,200 acres of private land on the edge of the national park. We'll set out on our first stroll later this afternoon as we head to the lodge's observation tower for sunset views. Overnight at Pousada do Parque...BLD Driving Details: 5 hours; 173 miles on paved road, 47 miles on dirt road

Hiking Details: 20-30 minutes

DAY 9 CHAPADA DOS GUIMARÃES NATIONAL PARK

We continue our exploration of the park and hike the tablelands, valleys, and cerrado (tropical savanna) of this magnificent region. Our morning hike is a circuit of the waterfalls near our lodge, the Circuito das Cachoeiras, with possible stops to take a refreshing dip or two. After lunch and a rest at the lodge, we head to the Alto do Céu viewpoint for sunset. Overnight at Pousada do Parque... BLD

Driving Details: 2 hours Hiking Details: 3-4 hours, 3.5 miles

DAY 10 CUIABÁ / DEPART

After morning activities at the lodge, we transfer to the Cuiabá airport for departure on homeward-bound flights... BL

Driving Details: 60 minutes

ITINERARY-IN-BRIEF, AUGUST DEPARTURE (REVERSE)

Call for separate Detailed Itinerary. Day 1: Hotel Deville, Cuiabá Days 2-4: Hotel Baiazinha, Pantanal Days 5-7: Aymara Lodge, Pantanal Days 8-9: Pousada do Parque, Chapada Dos Guimarães National Park Day 10: Depart from Cuiabá

Trip Cost, Payment & Insurance

TRIP COST

Prices are per person, valid through 2024 \$7195 (9-12 members) \$7395 (6-8 members) \$7595 (4-5 members) Single supplement: \$935

2025 Trip Cost: Please call for details

To offer the lowest possible cost, our trips are priced according to the number of participants on the trip. All costs are per person, based on double occupancy. If you wish to have a single room, you must pay the single supplement fee. Please note that Wilderness Travel staff, or guests of Wilderness Travel such as travel writers, photographers, or leaders-in-training, are not included in the tier pricing count.

CURRENCY EXCHANGE RATE

Because the prices published for our program are set so far in advance of the trip dates, we are occasionally faced with exceptional cost increases and/or currency fluctuations that affect the actual cost of running the trip. In most years, no price changes are necessary. However, we do reserve the right to raise or lower the trip price if there is a significant change in costs or exchange rates. If this is the case, your final invoice will reflect the difference in trip cost.

TRIP COST INCLUDES

- Expert leadership of a Wilderness Travel Trip Leader and local guides
- Accommodations in hotels and lodges
- All meals included as indicated in the Detailed Itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
- Sightseeing and excursions as noted
- Airport transfers, ground transportation

TRIP COST DOES NOT INCLUDE

International airfare, internal flights, any meals not specified after each itinerary day, airport departure taxes, optional tipping or gratuities to guides or staff, additional hotel nights that may be necessitated by airline schedule changes or other factors, expenses such as medical immunizations (if any), travel insurance, or passports and visas, and other expenses of a personal nature (alcoholic beverages, laundry, etc.).

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

At time of reservation: \$600 90 days prior to departure: Balance

CANCELLATION AND TRANSFER FEE SCHEDULE

Up to 91 days prior to departure: No charge! 61-90 days prior to departure: 25% of trip cost 46-60 days prior to departure: 50% of trip cost 45 days or less: 100% of trip cost

TRAVEL INSURANCE

We highly recommend you purchase travel insurance. You can take advantage of a comprehensive Travel Protection Plan designed for Wilderness Travel by Travelex, or purchase other insurance on your own. See our website for details: <u>www.wildernesstravel.com/insurance</u>

Accommodations



HOTEL DEVILLE Cuiabá, Brazil Day 1 (1 night)

This large modern hotel with spacious guest rooms offers every comfort and convenience—an excellent place to stay before heading off to the wilds of the Pantanal. The service and staff are friendly and efficient, and there's an outdoor pool should you wish to take a cooling swim. Be sure to try a caipirinha (Brazil's national cocktail) at the poolside bar!



AYMARA LODGE Poconé, Brazil Days 2 to 4 (3 nights)

Aymara Lodge has 14 guest rooms with air conditioning and en suite bathrooms, and is set in the middle of a forest and on the edge of a corixo (small watercourse), where animals such as capybara, lobete, paca, coati, and monkey are seen daily, and it's one of the best bird watching spots in Brazil. The lodge's restaurant features regional cuisine, including locally sourced fish and meat. The bar has regional beers and a good wine list.



HOTEL BAIAZINHA Caceres, Brazil Days 5 to 7 (3 nights)

Set on the Paraguay River, this remote 15-room lodge offers comfy, simple, and well-kept rooms with air conditioning and hot showers. The restaurant serves delicious, innovative cuisine. When not exploring the river by boat, relax by the swimming pool or play a round of billiards in the game room. It's an excellent home base for our explorations by boat in search of the Pantanal wildlife.



POUSADA DO PARQUE Chapada Dos Guimarães National Park, Brazil Days 8 to 9 (2 nights)

Pousada do Parque is a simple and welcoming lodge with eight air-conditioned guest rooms, a small swimming pool, garden, and lounge with a fireplace. The guest rooms are small but comfortable, and the restaurant offers a varied local menu in its open-air restaurant. Water for the showers is solar heated, and salvaged wood was used for the lodge's construction.

These are our signature accommodations for this trip. Although it is highly unlikely, we may make substitutions when necessary. To see more photos and descriptions, please visit our *Brazil: Jaguars and Wildlife of the Pantanal* webpage and click on "Accommodations."

Iguassu Falls from Brazil Extension

One of the most stunning natural wonders in the world, Iguassu Falls (also spelled Iguazú) stretches a full mile across the Rio Parana, with 275 separate cascades—one third on the Brazilian side, two thirds on the Argentinian side—laced with rainbows and plunging hundreds of feet in a mist-shrouded subtropical landscape, truly an otherworldly spectacle. We'll walk along the footbridges near the falls on both the Brazilian and Argentinian sides for a chance to spot colorful toucans and other birds. The Falls were declared a Natural World Heritage for Humanity by UNESCO in 1984. The Falls can be reached by paths, footbridges, and Zodiac, offering a number of different perspectives.

DAY 1 IGUASSU FALLS

Arrive at Foz do Iguaçu Airport and transfer to Belmond Hotel das Cataratas. After checking in to your room, transfer to the falls and explore the many paths that wind around the area, enjoying your first views of the cascades and the thundering sounds of the water. The birdlife around the Falls is abundant and fascinating. Overnight at Belmond Hotel das Cataratas...B

DAY 2 ARGENTINIAN SIDE OF THE FALLS

Visit the Argentinean side of the falls with a two-mile walk on the Sendero Macuco jungle trail. This path leads through dense forest to the nearly hidden Arrechea Waterfall, a 60-foot-high cascade that has carved a lovely natural pool below. During the walk, there are six interpretive stations along the trail explaining the rich biodiversity of the area. Afterward, visit Devil's Throat Lookout. Here a catwalk trail brings you to a viewing platform right by the horseshoe-shaped main cascade, where several powerful falls unite (bring a dry bag to protect your camera from the heavy mist). Overnight at hotel...BL

DAY 3 DEPART

Enjoy a morning at your leisure, or join the optional visit to the Bird Park where you can see chicks and fledglings, and learn about the conservation and rescue programs. Transfer to the airport and depart...B

EXTENSION COST

Prices are per person, valid through 2024 \$1995 (2 members) Solo Traveler: \$3295 Single supplement: \$1095

Prices are not guaranteed until services are confirmed.

EXTENSION COST INCLUDES

- Accommodations
- Meals as indicated
- Airport transfers
- Services of a local guide on Day 2
- Sightseeing as noted

EXTENSION COST DOES NOT INCLUDE

Internal airfare, airport departure taxes, optional tipping or gratuities to guides or staff, additional hotel nights that may be necessitated by airline schedule changes or other factors, additional hotel nights in Buenos Aires, and other expenses of a personal nature (alcoholic beverages, laundry, etc.).



Arrival & Departure

Upon confirming your trip reservation, we will send you a Welcome Packet that includes a list of documents (passport, visas, etc.) required for your trip. Please feel free to call if you would like this information before making your air arrangements.

If you have booked extra services before or after the trip, an Extra Services Confirmation will be sent with your Final Documents.

ARRIVAL & MEETING PLACE Cuiabá, Brazil

Suggested Airport: Marechal Rondon International Airport (CGB) Suggested Date & Time: Day 1, by 4:00 pm

Meeting Place: A complimentary transfer is provided from the Marechal Rondon International Airport to the Hotel Deville for all trip members arriving on Day 1. Your Trip Leader or a WT representative will meet you outside the customs area and will be holding a Wilderness Travel sign.

DEPARTURE Cuiabá, Brazil

Suggested Airport: Marechal Rondon International Airport (CGB) Suggested Date & Time: Day 10, after 2:00 pm

On Day 10, a complimentary transfer will be provided from Pousada do Parque to the Marechal Rondon International Airport for flights. If you are departing on a different day, a transfer can be arranged at additional cost.



INTERNATIONAL AIR TRAVEL

You are responsible for making your own arrangements for flights to and from Brazil. There are many online consolidators for booking travel, but for more personal help arranging air transport, you can contact Exito Travel at 1-800-655-4053 in the US or 1-800-670-2605 in Canada. They are very adept at putting flight itineraries together, to even the most far-flung places. More information can be found at <u>www.exitotravel.com</u>.

Depending on your routing, it is necessary to depart from the US one or possibly two days prior to Day 1 of the trip itinerary. The name on your airline ticket must match the name on your passport exactly, and your passport must be valid for at least six months after your date of return to the US.

Please do not purchase your tickets until you are confirmed on the trip. Once tickets are purchased, please forward a copy of your email flight confirmation from the airline. It is your responsibility to ensure your flight times coordinate with the arrival and departure logistics for this trip.

Trip Leader

Wilderness Travel Trip Leaders have a passion and a joy for creating an unforgettable journey. We are extremely proud of them and the incredible travel experiences they make possible. The Trip Leader for each departure is listed on the "Dates & Prices" tab on our *Brazil: Jaguars and Wildlife of the Pantanal* webpage: <u>https://www.wildernesstravel.com/trip/brazil-pantanal-jaguar-wildlife-tour/</u>



SERGIO FREITAS

Sergio first fell in love with the world's largest rainforest—the Amazon, and the world's largest tropical wetland—the Pantanal, when traveling there for field work as an undergraduate in biology. His enthusiasm for what he discovered led him to focus his studies on the wildlife in this unique ecosystem. He earned his master's degree in ecology and biodiversity conservation, and has published several papers and articles on ecology and climate change; he has also described a new species of fish in the Pantanal basin. Sergio began working as a guide while doing his field research, and has considered it a dream job ever since. He is devoted to sharing his in-depth knowledge of natural history and animal behavior with fellow travelers, and in addition to guiding in the Pantanal, he earned his PhD in Environmental Sciences in 2020.

Trip Details

TRIP LEVEL

The trip is Level 2+, easy to moderate, according to our trip grading system. For your own enjoyment, we recommend you make a special effort to be in good physical condition. This is an active expedition, with nature walks and light hikes in a hot and humid climate, covering a variety of terrain including forest trails. Our explorations are timed with wildlife activity, so dawn, dusk, and nighttime excursions are a highlight of the trip, but you will need to be prepared for long days. Our trip is timed for the "dry season" (June to September), although afternoon showers can occur year-round. During August, it will be hot during the day (high 80s°F, sometimes higher), but nights are usually cooler (60s°F), with mist or fog often coming in. Travel in Brazil is always an adventure; expect the unexpected! Schedules can change and our logistics are well-planned but subject to local conditions. Our team will do all they can to be sure that the trip runs as smoothly as possible, but this is Brazil, not Switzerland. A spirit of adventure and flexibility will help you get the most out of the trip.

WEATHER

The best time to visit the Pantanal is generally during the dry season, June to September. Because there is less rainfall during this time, animals tend to cluster around the smaller stretches of water, leading to greater opportunities for jaguar sightings. Temperatures in the dry season range from the low 60s to the mid-80s. Layers are advisable for cooler evenings. Some rainfall is still likely in the dry season, so be prepared for sunshine as well as moisture.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT TRIP

Adventure travel often involves exotic destinations, unusual levels of physical exertion, or activities you may not have participated in previously. We work hard to help you choose the right trip for you, paying attention to your individual interests, abilities, and needs. If you have questions about the level of comfort or any of the activities described in this itinerary, please call Wilderness Travel at 1-800-368-2794 and ask for the Latin America Manager or email us at <u>latinamerica@wildernesstravel.com</u>.

REFERENCES

We'd be happy to put you in touch with a past client that has traveled with us on this or a similar trip.

TOUCAN CLUB

We are very proud to have one of the highest rates of repeat travelers in the business, and have established the Wilderness Travel Toucan Club to reward you for your loyalty. For more information, please visit the Toucan Club page of our website at <u>www.wildernesstravel.com/toucan</u>.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

At <u>www.wildernesstravel.com</u>, you can book your trip online or find out about added departures, last-minute deals, and one-time Limited Edition adventures that aren't listed in our catalog. You can also access our complete library of detailed itineraries filled with enticing photos and videos, read bios of our Trip Leaders, find descriptions of trip accommodations, and check real-time availability of any trips that interest you.

Average Daily Max/Min °F												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Cuiabá	90/75	90/75	90/75	89/73	89/73	88/68	89/65	90/69	94/72	93/75	90/75	88/76
Pantanal	83/72	84/72	81/69	78/68	72/62	71/59	68/56	70/58	71/61	75/65	80/68	81/69
Rainfall - Inches												
Cuiabá	8.0	8.6	7.9	3.0	2.0	1.0	0.4	0.5	1.8	4.0	6.2	7.9
Pantanal	6.2	5.8	4.0	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.8	3.0	5.1	4.9	4.0	5.1





WILDERNESS TRAVEL HAS BEEN AWARDED:

Best Travel Specialists in the World: Conde Nast Traveler, 2024, 4-time winner World's Best Tour Operators: Travel + Leisure, 11-time winner Best Wildlife, Hiking & Walking Trips: AFAR Magazine, 3 years in a row Best Adventure Travel Companies: USA Today Trip of the Year: Outside Magazine, 9-time winner 50 Tours of a Lifetime: National Geographic Traveler, 9 years in a row Best Adventure Travel Companies: National Geographic Adventure, 3-time winner

Please be advised that California has established a Travel Consumer Restitution Fund under the California Seller of Travel Law that took effect January 1, 1996. This fund is designed to protect consumers from unscrupulous practices by discount airfare ticket sellers or air charter operators. Unfortunately, this law does not cover non-California residents and, even in the case of California residents, it does not cover any foreign travel where the foreign "providers of transportation or travel services" are not in compliance with the Sellers of Travel Law (compliance being defined as registered as a Seller of Travel in California and a participant in the Travel Consumer Restitution Fund). Thus none of Wilderness Travel's tours qualify and we are required by law to advise each client that they are not covered by the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires sellers of travel to maintain a trust account or bond. This business has a trust account. California Seller of Travel #100769640

While as accurate as possible at the time of printing, this itinerary should be considered an approximate indication of the schedule and scope of activities and trip routing, rather than an inflexible schedule of events; it is subject to change due to circumstances beyond our control. This trip is subject to the Limitation of Liability and all the terms and conditions as detailed in the General Information section of the Wilderness Travel Catalog.