


EXPLORING IN THE PANTANAL

BRAZIL

Jaguar Quest in Brazil's Pantanal

13 DAYS | Choose your dates | Best season to travel: **JUL - SEP**

Located in central-western Brazil, the Pantanal is the world's largest freshwater wetland and one of the most biodiverse habitats on the entire continent. This area harbors a world-record 82 species of large birds including the Hyacinth Macaw, in addition to marsh deer, coatimundi, tapirs, and giant river otters—but perhaps no other subject is as beautiful and dramatic as the jaguar. Embark on an exceptional adventure for the opportunity to observe this majestic big cat at close range. From the distinct vantage points of 4x4 vehicle, horseback, small boat excursions, and on foot, explore the region's varied terrains, wrapping up your experience with several nights aboard a comfortable safari boat navigating the northern Pantanal's rivers and tributaries.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Search for jaguars and other wildlife while exploring the northern and southern Pantanal.
- Set out on a nocturnal safari in 4x4 vehicle or by boat to observe wildlife like anteaters, foxes, capybaras, and caimans.
- Attend informative lectures on the biology and conservation of the jaguar and giant river otter.
- Peer into Buraco das Araras, one of the world's largest sinkholes and a sanctuary for Red-and-green Macaws and 150 other bird species.
- Snorkel through an underwater world of fish and aquatic plants in the gentle currents of the crystal-clear Olho D'Água River.

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

- Bilingual local guide
- Driver
- Accommodations
- Activities
- Private transportation
- Meals
- Beverages with meals
- Carbon offsetting


FEMALE JAGUAR



ITINERARY

BLD = BREAKFAST, LUNCH, DINNER

DAY 1 - DEPARTURE

Depart the US on your overnight flight to Brazil.

DAY 2 - BONITO

Upon arrival to São Paulo, proceed to check-in for your internal flight to Campo Grande. Once in Campo Grande, meet your guide and drive approximately four and a half hours to Bonito, with lunch at a local restaurant en route. Check in at your hotel and have time to relax before your program orientation and a presentation. *Overnight at Pousada Arte da Natureza. (LD)*

DAY 3 - BONITO

Have breakfast early this morning, then visit Buraco das Araras, or Macaws' Sinkhole. Measuring approximately 328 feet deep and 1,640 feet in circumference, Buraco das Araras is one of the largest sinkholes in the world. This geological wonder with striking vermilion sandstone walls is also an important nesting site for Red-and-green Macaws. The viewing platforms overlooking the sinkhole provide spectacular views of the macaws as they soar and wheel from the cliffs where they nest. Other birds are found here too—nearly 150 species have been recorded in the preserve, and common species include Gilded Hummingbird, Toco Toucan, Peach-fronted Parakeet, and Plush-crested Jay. Later this morning, travel to the Rio da Prata for snorkeling. Start with a pleasant walk on the interpretive trail through the riparian forests along the Olho d'Água and Prata rivers. The forests here are full of century-old trees festooned with orchids and bromeliads. Keep an eye out for wildlife such as coati, capuchin

monkey, agouti, anteater, and numerous bird species. At the headwaters of the Olho D'Água River, there is a large natural pool where the water is crystal clear. Here, with equipment and instruction provided by your guide, snorkel the river, letting the gentle current pull you along past aquatic plants and schools of piraputangas, dorados, and other Pantanal fish. After the mile-long float, regroup in a farmhouse for a traditional lunch. Return to Bonito for free time before dinner. *Overnight at Pousada Arte da Natureza. (BLD)*

DAY 4 - SOUTH PANTANAL

After breakfast, depart for the southern Pantanal, arriving at Pousada Aguape in time for lunch. An afternoon safari by open 4x4 takes you through different landscapes like cerrado (scrubland), savanna, vazantes (ephemeral ponds), and brejos (swamps). This is the perfect opportunity to see and observe the abundant wildlife of the Pantanal. Before dinner, enjoy a presentation about the region. *Overnight at Pousada Aguape. (BLD)*



DAY 5 - SOUTH PANTANAL

After breakfast, start with a hike through the scrub, open fields, and gallery forests near the farm. Exploring on foot affords opportunities to see some flora and fauna more closely, as you learn about their function and importance in the Pantanal ecosystem. In the afternoon, cruise down the Aquidauana River for the chance to see giant river otters, as well as the other mammals, birds, and reptiles that lie out on the river banks. This evening, embark on a night safari (by boat or 4x4) to look for nocturnal wildlife, such as crab-eating fox, marsh deer, southern tamandua, capybara, caiman, Great Potoo, Common Pauraque, and Scissor-tailed Nightjar. You may also hear the sounds of frogs and insects while you take in the beautiful night sky. *Overnight at Pousada Aguape. (BLD)*

DAY 6 - CUIABÁ

After breakfast, transfer to the airport for your flight to Cuiabá, the gateway to the northern Pantanal. Cuiabá is the capital city of the Brazilian state of Mato Grosso and serves as the geographical center of South America. Ecologically, Cuiabá sits at the transition zone between three very important ecosystems in Brazil: the Amazon, Cerrado, and Pantanal. Dinner is at the hotel this evening. *Overnight at Hotel Deville. (BD)*

DAY 7 - NORTH PANTANAL

After breakfast, depart for Pousada Piuval, a sprawling 17,300-acre cattle ranch with some of the most beautiful landscapes in the Pantanal. Upon arrival, spend the rest of the morning on a 4x4 safari in search of giant anteater, Brazilian tapir, anaconda, armadillos, Greater Rheas, and if you're lucky, come face-to-face with a jaguar. After lunch, keep your feet dry as you explore the Pantanal's marshlands on horseback. *Overnight at Pousada Piuval. (BLD)*

DAY 8 - NORTH PANTANAL

After breakfast, take the Transpantaneira about three hours to Porto Jofre, which sits at the border between the Brazilian states of Mato Grosso and Mato Grosso do Sul. This highway, mostly dirt with more than 120 wooden bridges, is one of the only access roads into the interior of the Pantanal. The 91-mile drive passes through many habitats and is lined on either side by wet ditches. It is often described as the best road in the world to spot and photograph wildlife. Animals

regularly seen include giant anteater, armadillo, caiman, marsh deer, silvery marmoset, black howler monkey, and many species of waterbird. Once in Porto Jofre, board the your riverboat accommodations and head upstream. In the afternoon, travel the river and side canals via smaller watercraft in search of jaguar, giant river otter, and much more. Before dinner, enjoy a lecture on the "Jaguars of the Pantanal." *Overnight aboard the Panoramico. (BLD)*

DAY 9 - NORTH PANTANAL

Spend the next two days exploring the heart of the Pantanal by powerboat, with jaguars as the main target. This vast network of waterways is loaded with prey (capybara, deer, caiman, fish, etc.) for these big cats, and hence supports one of the largest jaguar populations in the world (roughly 1,000 individuals currently). In the Pantanal, the exposed river banks and open spaces make it easier to spot and observe these normally shy and mysterious animals, especially when the water levels are low. In the Pantanal, jaguars are a major draw for ecotourists—providing economic incentives for local communities to further protect these apex predators and the habitats on which they rely. *Overnight aboard the Panoramico. (BLD)*



GIANT RIVER OTTER

DAY 10 - NORTH PANTANAL

Continue searching for jaguars and other wildlife by boat. As you scan the shoreline for spotted cats, other wildlife will not be in short supply, offering fantastic photographic opportunities. In the evening, enjoy the brilliant sunset as large flocks of waterbirds return to roost. *Overnight aboard the Panoramico. (BLD)*

DAY 11 - CUIABÁ

After breakfast, return to Porto Jofre and enjoy another wildlife drive on the Transpantaneira Highway. Tonight, gather for a farewell dinner in Cuiabá. *Overnight at Hotel Deville. (BLD)*

DAY 12 - DEPARTURE

Transfer to the airport for the return flight to São Paulo, where you will connect with your international flight. *(BL)*

DAY 13 - ARRIVE US

Arrive home following your overnight flight.

LAND PRICING

\$7,875 (15 participants + 1 leader)

Price includes accommodations, meals, entrance fees, and activities as indicated in the itinerary, private transportation unless otherwise noted in itinerary, non-alcoholic beverages with meals, local guides in each region for duration of program, and carbon offset.

International airfare, gratuities, and items of a personal nature are not included.

Valid for travel in 2021.

TRAVEL PROTECTION

Holbrook Travel purchases Travel Protection on behalf of all participants. These plans help provide coverage once the trip has departed and offer benefits for Baggage/Personal Effects, Accident & Sickness Medical Expenses, Emergency Evacuation and more. Refer to the Plan Document for more details.

Optional additional coverage is available in the form of the Group Deluxe Plan, which offers benefits for Trip Cancellation/ Interruption, in addition to many other insurance benefits and non-insurance assistance services. If interested in this optional plan, we can provide you with rates and plan details.

THE FINE PRINT

A \$200 per person deposit and enrollment form is due to secure your reservation. This deposit is refundable until 95 days prior to departure excluding a \$100 cancellation fee. Non-refundable final payments are due no later than 95 days prior to departure.



This program includes optional carbon offsetting with ClimateSafe. Learn more at holbrooktravel.com/climatesafe



JABIRU STORKS



ACTIVITY LEVEL

4

MODERATE-STRENUOUS

WHAT TO EXPECT

Exploring the world's largest tropical wetland, this journey reveals the Pantanal, a UNESCO World Heritage Site boasting South America's highest concentration of wildlife. A key focus will be searching for jaguar, who reside here in greater numbers than anywhere else on earth. The trip's rating is partly due to the remote location, distances covered, and primitive infrastructure. Your itinerary features three two-night stays and a three-night yacht cruise. Expect daily walking and hiking over paths that may be wet, overgrown, or uneven. There is one horseback riding excursion; and a snorkeling adventure where you'll gently float downstream for 1.25 miles. Our departure season coincides with the best time for birding (June–September) and spotting jaguar (September–October.) Daytime temperatures are generally in the 80s and 90s, but cooler at night by as much as 25 degrees. There are three internal flights. Land travel is via 4x4 vehicles; the longest transfer lasts 4.5 hours.



CUIABÁ BY MATEUS HIDALGO



ANTEATER