

Walking Brazil

Adventure Memo

Olá from your fellow Adventurers at WAI!

We are excited to offer an opportunity to explore one of the most underrated travel destinations on the planet on one of our newest adventures—*Walking Brazil*. The word “Brazil” brings to the mind of most North Americans widely conflicting images of rainforests, massive rivers, crowded cities, raucous festivals, and popular beaches. This perception is a small fraction of the reality, and our journey through this amazing country will help unravel the fascinating conundrum that is Brazil. The five focal points of the Adventure include:

- The **Amazon River** – largest and longest in the world (now considered longer than the Nile), with a flow at its mouth 12 times that of the Mississippi River!
- The **Pantanal** – largest wetland on the planet, boasting a delightful kaleidoscope of colorful birds and animals;
- **Rio de Janeiro** – the Cidade Maravilhosa (Marvelous City) is truly gifted in its spectacular coastal setting – Ipanema Beach, Christ the Redeemer, and spectacular vistas from Pão de Açúcar, reached by cable car, are just a few of Rio's attractions!
- **Paraty** – outlet for all the gold mined in Brazil before the development of Rio, this colonial jewel on the sea offers a dazzling section of the Brazilian coastline, wonderful walking, and gastronomic delights in its restaurants and cafes;
- **Iguaçu Falls** – fueled by a series of rivers emerging from dense rain forest, and over six feet of rainfall each year, over 275 separate cataracts create an amazing spectacle that we'll experience from all sides, including from below the falls on a boat trip into the heart of the mists!

The Adventure is available in two parts, available individually or combinable into one 16-day series of wonder upon wonder. Both parts are 10 days long. Both parts are susceptible to lazy luggage syndrome with three sets of three-night stays. Part 1 begins in the Amazon, continues to the Pantanal and finishes in Rio. Part 2 begins in Rio, continues to Paraty, and finishes in Iguaçu Falls. The two parts overlap in Rio de Janeiro—all travelers will experience Rio together. Those of you who opt to participate in the entire Adventure will therefore receive a credit for the overlap in the program (see the Adventure brochure).

How do I lock in my place on this Adventure?

To save yourself a spot on this Adventure, contact us to register with a \$500 payment as soon as possible! There has been a groundswell of interest in this Adventure, but there is still a strong likelihood that there will be openings. In the event that you are not among the first 30 travelers to register, your registration secures your place on a waiting list.

How is airfare arranged?

One of the challenges of planning an Adventure in Brazil is working out the airfare. The country is large (5th largest on the planet), our aggressive program covers a broad geographical cross-section of Brazil, and the still-developing airline industry struggles to keep up with an intensifying demand caused by a booming economy. Further complicating the air scenario is the fact that only one airline flies directly from the USA into Manaus, and the alternative of this direct flight forces us all the way to Rio or Sao Paulo before returning to Manaus (similar to flying from Europe to New York City—via Los Angeles)!

Because we fly several times from point to point within Brazil, it is important that we keep the group together. We have therefore been working on a group air proposal flying out of Miami on TAM Airlines for several months now. Yes, several months! The factors listed above have put TAM in a very relaxed bargaining position, and we continue to press them for confirmation and pricing on our booking.

Our expectation is that we will have final confirmation with pricing by the end of September 2011. Should our airline choose not to confirm our group booking (it may be more profitable for them to fill their planes with individual bookings in 2012), the need to keep the group together has generated a backup plan of blitzing the airline with your individual bookings all at once. These tickets are currently running approximately \$1800 for either part 1 or part 2 and about \$2100 for the full tour. A group booking would likely save us each about \$200 to \$300.

Keep in mind that you are not required to purchase the airfare through WAI. You may attempt to book this on your own provided you can match up with our flights. The likelihood of this working out well for you, however, is not high. We are not marking up our air price and the hopscotch nature of our flights is enough to make even the most experienced travel agent's head swim! We advise you to accept

Insurance – What if I need to place a claim?

Jumping through hoops to get results from large, bureaucratic organizations can be enough to try the patience of Job! Travel insurance companies, unfortunately, are not immune to bureaucracy. Ambiguity and forms-overload often seems to outweigh reason and simplicity. Ultimately, however, travelers are paid and the *Preferred Benefits* policy we recommend works! Though it is easy to view insurance as a necessary evil, we have seen the benefits of travel insurance time and again. We believe it is worth the cost...and hoop-jumping required!

our group booking proposal...when it finally comes!

In any case, we will keep you apprised of developments. Final details about flight arrangements will be sent in the *Adventure Advice* flyer to those who register by phone or email, along with travel agent contact information for connecting flights to/from Miami. **Please do not book any airfare until you hear from us!**

Travel Insurance

Due to the remote locations we explore on this Adventure, our Brazilian tour operator requires that all travelers purchase full medical and emergency evacuation insurance. Though we normally prefer not to require travel insurance, we concur with our travel partner in Brazil in this case. Walking Adventures has negotiated with an insurance carrier to provide travel insurance in the form of a Preferred Benefits™ policy. We are pleased to make this package available and believe that it will provide travelers with an important element of security at a reasonable price. (See the back of the General Tour Conditions sheet for more detailed information.)

IMPORTANT: The insurance policy includes time-sensitive coverage provisions for some benefits, including pre-existing conditions and trip cancellation coverage for any reason (with additional fee), **provided you purchase the insurance within 15 days of your registration.** Should you choose to add the cost of your airline tickets to your insurance policy, contact our office within 15 days after you purchase your airfare. Airfare is NOT automatically covered by the insurance you purchase for the tour!!

Other Travel Details to be Aware of

Tourist VISA: Brazil requires visitors from North America to obtain a visa prior to arriving in Brazil. WAI will send out information about how to do this in plenty of time, well before our departure. Travelers are welcome to work directly with the Brazilian embassy or consulates, but in most cases, we recommend using a visa service like the one we will be recommending.

Immunizations: Travelers will want to consult with a travel clinic about advisable immunizations. None are required but past experience has shown that malaria is usually considered an issue in Brazil by doctors in North America. More information will follow in the Tips & Tidbits factsheet about 3 months before departure, but you are welcome to take the itinerary to your doctor or travel clinic to find out their recommendations at any time.

Group Travel Credit

If you are part of a Group, remember that your full deposit of \$500 is still required to hold your spot on this Adventure. Your group leader is responsible to submit your name in writing to us before you register, qualifying you for the Group Travel Credit, but a full deposit is needed to officially reserve your place.

What Happens Next?

Upon registering for this Adventure, you will receive a welcome letter, initial invoice, and Adventure Advice flyer with important information about steps to take in the months before your trip. **Please do not buy your airline tickets until you receive the Adventure Advice flyer.** The final payment for the program is due 90 days before departure, and you will receive a final billing about 2 weeks prior to that point, along with a factsheet of additional information about the Adventure to help you get prepared! Then, about 3 weeks before departure, you will receive a final packet with all the details of the program, including hotel names and contact information, a list of fellow travelers, and a more detailed daily schedule.

*Brazil is a fascinating land of geological, cultural, and natural diversity!
Join us next summer as we walk Brazil!*



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