

## BRAZIL & LAS GUYANAS EXPLORER, (LRV)

Boa Vista to Rio De Janeiro 57 days, departing 01 May 2022



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## TRIP OVERVIEW

- Trip Style:** Overlanding

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- Route:** Boa Vista to Rio De Janeiro

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- Duration:** 57 days

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- Transport:** Overland expedition vehicle, 4x4, Private bus, Minibus, Boat, Overnight boat

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- 30% 70%

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- Accom:** Hotels, Hostels, Guesthouses, Campsites, Wild Camps, Overnight Train

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### Physical Challenge:

EASY      HARD

Depending on the trip, activities may include treks of 3-4 hours at altitude or across hilly terrain, multi-day treks at sea level, horseback riding, canoeing and other adventurous activities.

### Lifestyle Challenge:

EASY      HARD

This trip has a bit of everything.

[Itineraries](#)  
[British Foreign Office Travel Advice and Warnings](#)  
[Health](#)  
[Safety & Security](#)  
[Included Activities](#)

## ROUTE MAP



## COUNTRIES VISITED

### Brazil



Brazil has a totally different feel to it than the other Latin American countries. The only Portuguese-speaking country in South America, it positively vibrates with a unique and dynamic energy of its own.

Most overland visitors start in the dazzling city of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil's most famous city and home to the famous Christ the Redeemer statue and some of the world's most fantastic and atmospheric urban beaches such as Copacabana

### French Guiana



French Guiana, or Guyane, the smallest of the three Guianas, is an overseas department of France that was first occupied by French traders in the 17th Century. French is the spoken language, the country uses the Euro as its currency and as you may expect, you'll find great French Cuisine and ample French wine.

As the smallest country (32,500 square miles) within South America, there is plenty to bring visitors here though tourism remains in its infancy.

and Ipanema.

### SEE PANTANAL'S LEGENDARY WILDLIFE

Brazil's wildlife is legendary, and there is no greater place to spot animals and birds in South America than the [wetlands of the Pantanal](#). Here, it's possible to go spotting for ocelots, jaguars, tapirs, jabiru storks, caiman, and many types of birds! The optional activities available in the region and the nearby eco-tourism capital of Bonito are as amazing as they are numerous, with boat trips, rafting, snorkelling through crystal-clear rivers, and caving being just a few of the many possibilities here.

### RIO AND BEYOND

Further to the south is one of the greatest natural highlights in the world, the majestic [Iguazu Falls](#)! These colossal waterfalls are amongst the most impressive on the planet and a phenomenal sight on anyone's overland travels through South America!

Near to Rio de Janeiro you'll find the idyllic colonial towns of Paraty and Ouro Preto, once hugely important for gold trading back in colonial times, and each with their own serene atmosphere today. In the interior, we will explore the bizarre futuristic capital city of [Brasilia](#), a fascinating and somewhat unusual highlight of the country.

Further inland we find the incredible landscapes of the Chapada dos Guimarães National Park, dotted with stunning caves and waterfalls and providing some fantastic walking opportunities.

### RIO CARNIVAL

Rio is particularly famous for its huge annual party - the incredible Rio Carnival. The celebration of Mardi Gras (6 weeks before Easter) is a great Brazilian tradition - the whole city goes wild for a full 7 days in a whirlwind of music and colour. We have a range of packages that get you to the heart of the action!

To learn more about Rio Carnival and see all the optional activities available around carnival time, see our [Rio Carnival 2019 Optional Extras Booklet \(PDF\)](#)

Vast areas of undisdrubed rainforest is home to a myriad of animal and birdlife. The development of the country is in the main, the coastal strip, where you'll also find the European Space Agency's launch site in Kourou, and the Capital of Cayenne (so named after an Amerindian Prince) sitting on a peninsula at the mouth of the River Cayenne. Amerindian and Maroon people live in the interior of the country, and not far from Cayenne is a settlement of Hmong refugees from Laos who established a town here in the 1970's.

Due to its equatorial position, the climate here is humid, with an average temperature of 28°C, you can expect rain at any time of the year.

## Guyana



Guyana, the only country of South America to speak English, is certainly one of the continent's best kept secrets. It is possible to step off the gringo trail and engage with local people, who are friendly and fascinated to meet foreigner. The coastal fringe of Guyana is a lively mix of Dutch and British colonial architecture. An unpaved dirt road takes the really intrepid visitors into the Country's interior and all the way to Brazil in the South. Along the way there are jungle and savannah lodges, amerindian and moroon villages and wildlife research stations. It is possible to spend many nights exploring the region, in search of some of the wildlife that inhabits this wild interior. Some of the worlds most impressive and isolated waterfalls are to be found in Guyana.

The currency is the Guyanese Dollar. Guyana's temperature is between 24 and 31'C throughout the year and though warm it is bearable thanks to the river and sea breezes. The wet season runs from May to August and November to January.

## Suriname



Suriname is a real cultural melting pot, brought about by its history and location on the edge of the Caribbean. It is the smallest independent country in South America and is renowned for its hospitality. The country in reality is subdivided into two main regions, the northern coastal plains where the majority of folk live and the tropical forests of the interior that are really only accessible by the network of rivers that lace the interior.

For the traveller, the attractions are that not only is this country still off the main tourist trail but also it has a wealth of attractions, both in terms of destinations and in terms of the people. Paramaribo, the capital, is a UNESCO World Heritage site complete with unique and authentic Dutch colonial architecture and populated with a mingling of different peoples from Dutch and British colonialist, Maroon (ex slaves who interbred with local Amerindians), India, Indonesian and Chinese, who are descendents of the indentured labourers. The culture and cuisine reflect this wonderful eclectic mixture.

The interior is a fantastic wilderness of tropical forests with unique Flora and Fauna and is sparsely populated by Amerindians and is best explored by boat.

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## DAILY ITINERARY

## Day 1: Boa Vista ( Sun 01 May )

Welcome to Boa Vista! today there is an important meeting at 18:00, please meet in the Hotel Reception. The rest of the day is yours to enjoy Boa Vista.

**Border Information** - If joining the trip in Boa Vista, you will fly into Boa Vista-Atlas Brasil Cantanhede International Airport (BVB)

In Boa Vista we stay in a comfortable hotel.

Hotel for the night: Euzebios Hotel  
Rua Cecilia Brasil  
1517 Centro  
Boa Vista  
Brazil

## Day 2 to 3: Rupununi ( Mon 02 May to Tue 03 May )

Today we will start out early and head into Guyana, to the open Savannah region, where we will stay in a well equipped camp site and have an opportunity to take part in some optional activities, such as horse riding, hiking and canoeing.

Approximate drive time - 245km / 5hrs

### Activity

Head out for a guided hike

### Approximate Cost

USD 10

We will spend two days in the Rupununi Savannah area of Guyana; here we can have a village tour, take a wildlife walk, experience the forest after dark. We have the option of climbing a nearby mountain or taking a canoe trip.

Included in Kitty

## Day 4: Iwokrama Forest ( Wed 04 May )

We will have a short drive into the heart of the Iwokrama Forest, a protected area of pristine rainforest. Along the way we will visit a local village. Keep your eyes peeled for any wildlife you may see from the road side such as red howler monkeys and toucans. This evening we will have time to walk in the canopy of the forest.

Tonight we will camp with facilities.

Approximate drive time - 80km / 2hrs

### Activity

Take an evening trip on the river to spot Caiman

### Approximate Cost

USD 30



We will stay in the heart of the Iwokrama Forest at a jungle lodge where we have time to explore the rainforest and observe the wildlife and birdlife.

Included in Kitty

## Day 5: Iwokrama Forest ( Thu 05 May )

We will spend the day enjoying the peace and tranquility of the rainforest, we have time to explore and search out the amazing wildlife that lives in this area.

Later in the day we will cross the Essequibo river, and move our camp further north.

Tonight we will camp with facilities

Drive Time: 1-2 hours

### Activity

### Approximate Cost

Iwokrama Canopy Walkway offers a unique experience in the region and envelopes you in the jungle's mid-level canopy through a series of suspension bridges and decks from heights of up to 30 metres (98 ft.).

Included in Kitty

Go in search of wildlife and the illusive Jaguar on an evening drive along the Iwokrama Rainforest passage.

USD 65

Take a nature trail with a local guide into the forest

USD 17

During low water season take a boat trip along the river to find the ancient Petroglyphs, estimated to be over 600 years old

USD 15-20

## Day 6: Georgetown ( Fri 06 May )

Today is a big drive along the wonderfully undeveloped main road from the forest to Georgetown! The journey is primarily on a bumpy dirt road, which we will share with commuter minibuses and trucks, all winding their way through the rainforest. From the town of Linden, the tarmac starts and it's smooth driving for the final 120km to Georgetown! Be sure to keep a look out for wildlife, Jaguars have been known to cross the road right in front of the buses!

Driving Distance - 400km / 12hours



In Georgetown we will stay in a centrally located, locally run hostel, with shared bathrooms in a combination of twin and dorm rooms.

**About Georgetown:**

Georgetown is the capital of Guyana, known as the 'Garden City' of the Caribbean, despite actually being on the Atlantic. It's wide, tree-lined avenues and canals follow the layout of the old sugar estates. There are stunning colonial buildings everywhere, as well as botanical gardens and even a National Park, where you can visit the resident Manatees who live in the lakes here. From Georgetown you can take a light aircraft to visit the magnificent Kaieteur Falls, one of the highest single drop waterfalls in the world, and home to incredible wildlife such as the stunning, orange Cock of the Rock and the tiny Golden Frogs.

**Day 7: Georgetown ( Sat 07 May )**

Take a morning tour of the city, explore the old canals and great sea wall, visit incredible wooden cathedrals, the huge market and try to spot manatees swimming in the lake of the national park. Georgetown is a busy place and feels happily free from mass tourism. Be sure to take your camera!

**Activity**

**Approximate Cost**

Take a half day trip by light aircraft to the awesome Kaieteur Falls.

USD 195

Enjoy a city tour of historic Georgetown

Included in Kitty

**Day 8: Georgetown ( Sun 08 May )**

Today we have a free day in the city.

Perhaps one of the greatest highlights of Guyana is the spectacularly remote and impressive Kaieteur Falls, one of the tallest single drop waterfalls in the world, and reachable only by light aircraft. Take a half day flight to the falls and then enjoy a walking tour to the Falls and search for the tiny golden rocket frogs, hiding in the tank bromeliads leaves, as well as an impressive variety of butterflies, you may also be lucky enough to spot the bright orange Guyana Cock of the Rocks.

**Activity**

**Approximate Cost**

Take a full day trip to the Arrowpoint Nature Resort

USD 110

**Day 9: Bigi Pan ( Mon 09 May )**

Today we will leave the bright lights of Georgetown behind us and cross the border into Suriname. We will follow the coastal road and then cross the river on a ferry. On arrival in Suriname we will head to the



Bigi Pan, designated an 'Important Bird Area' of Suriname and famous for its spectacular shore birds and in particular the Red Ibis.

We will spend the night in comfortable accommodation in twin rooms and meals included.

Estimated Drive Time: 7hrs

### Activity

### Approximate Cost

Take a sunset boat trip in search of dolphins, tour includes snacks and drinks. EUR 27.50

### About Bigi Pan:

Bigi Pan is a large nutrient-rich lagoon forming part of a vast wetland system that joins the Nickerie River and the Atlantic Ocean. The Pan is well known for its spectacular bird life.

## Day 10 to 11: Paramaribo ( Tue 10 May to Wed 11 May )

Today we will have some free time at the Pan in the morning and after lunch we will head to the lively capital of Suriname!

Estimated Drive Time: 4-5hrs

On Day 11 we have a full day to explore Paramaribo's historic inner city and the Commewijne area. You can explore the historic centre on foot, visit Fort Zeelandia and the Suriname museum, and enjoy the fantastic architecture of Saint Peter and Paul Cathedral, one of the largest wooden buildings in the western hemisphere, or hire a bike and take a boat across the river to cycle the peaceful Commewijne Plantation Loop and visit the star shaped fort at Neiu Amsterdam.

There are plenty of bars and restaurants to choose from.

In Paramaribo we will stay in a comfortable Hostel

### Activity

### Approximate Cost

Visit the partly renovated plantation Peperpot and take a walk in the nature park EUR 39

Take a tour to explore the historical timeline of Suriname and its bitter-sweet sugar past. EUR 65

## Day 12 to 13: Upper Suriname Area ( Thu 12 May to Fri 13 May )

This morning we leave the truck behind and set off for an unforgettable adventure into the interior of Suriname. We will travel by minibus for





approximately 190km to the port at Atjoni, we then hop on a boat for a 1hr trip along the Suriname river, deep into the rainforest where we will stay for two nights on our own private island!

Be sure to pack light for this excursion, as we can only take a small bag each with us.

During our stay we can visit local villages, walk around the island in the hope of meeting some of its furry inhabitants and learn about the medicinal plants, try to spot Caiman on a night time canoe trip, take a dip in the river at the Ferullasi rapids - a natural jacuzzi, relax on the island by the pool, spot the kingfishers on the banks of the river and enjoy the tranquillity of the Amazon Rainforest.

We will stay in comfortable cabins and enjoy our own pool. All meals are provided during our visit, though you will need a small amount of money for drinks and tips for our local guide.

### Activity

### Approximate Cost

Spend 2 nights / 3 days on an all inclusive island retreat in the Suriname River, surrounded by dense rainforest, birdlife and opportunities to visit local communities.

Included in Kitty

### About Upper Suriname Area:

We will stay in a nature resort located in the Upper Suriname area on an island in the Ferulasi region. During our stay you can relax and unwind in the stunning natural setting. Or you can take part in various activities such as cultural workshops, forest walks, canoe trips or visit the local population. The pristine rainforest, turbulent rapids, beautiful flora and fauna, idyllic islands and the fascinating Maroon culture make for a truly unforgettable experience.

## Day 14 to 15: Paramaribo ( Sat 14 May to Sun 15 May )

This morning is free for you to enjoy how you wish, walk, swim or relax and after lunch we will transfer back to Paramaribo.

On Day 15, we have one more day for exploration. Today is yours to spend as you wish; take a boat trip to Jordensavanne, take part in a Moengo Cultural experience, go walking in the Peperpot Nature reserve or Brownsberg Nature Park, learn the art of Surinamese cookery, or take part in one of the many day tours available.

### Activity

### Approximate Cost

An evening tour to visit the Sea Turtles in their natural habitat.

EUR 75

Take a boat trip to the ruins of

EUR 85

Jodensavanne with its influential history

## Day 16: Saint Laurent du Maroni ( Mon 16 May )

Today we say goodbye to Suriname and drive to the border, we will take the ferry across the Maroni River to Saint Laurent du Maroni in French Guiana.

**Border Information:** Exit Suriname at Albina, Enter French Guiana at Saint Laurent du Maroni

Estimated Drive Time: 4hrs

## Day 17: Plage les Hattes, Saint Laurent du Maroni ( Tue 17 May )

Today we have a free morning to explore the border town of Saint Laurent du Maroni, located on the Maroni River, with its interesting and dark history as an arrival point for prisoners during the 19th Century.

During Turtle Season (March to August) in the afternoon we will drive to the northern beach of Plage les Hattes, in the hope of spotting the Olive Ridley and Leatherback turtles. In the off season we can opt to spend an extra day in Saint Laurent du Maroni.

### Activity

### Approximate Cost

This river tour will take you to the "Ile Portal" river island, the Amerindian village of Biguiston and its polishing stones and finally to the Wacapou creek.

EUR 40

## Day 18: Kourou ( Wed 18 May )

Today we will head out to the town of Kourou; the site of the European Space station and the starting point for boat trips around the former penal colony on Devil's Island, one of the infamous Iles du Salut, off the coast of French Guiana. The ordeal of Frenchman Henri Charriere, who spent 12 years here, would later inspire the book Papillon

Approximate driving time - 190km / 3hrs

We will camp tonight with facilities

### Activity

### Approximate Cost

Take a boat trip to the Iles du Salut, the Devils islands; explore the old church, school and hospital of Ilhe Royale, photograph the native wildlife and even take a dip in the convicts swimming pool!

EUR 50

Visit the international Spaceport in Kourou      Included in Kitty

## Day 19: Cayenne ( Thu 19 May )

Today we will visit the European Space Centre near Kourou, en route to the capital city of Cayenne.

Approximate drive time - 1hrs/100km

We will stay in a local guesthouse

Activity	Approximate Cost
Visit the international Spaceport in Kourou	Included in Kitty
Take a boat trip to the Iles du Salut, the Devils islands; explore the old church, school and hospital of Ilhe Royale, photograph the native wildlife and even take a dip in the convicts swimming pool!	EUR 50

## Day 20: Cayenne ( Fri 20 May )

Today we have a half day city tour, followed by a free afternoon to enjoy the city, perhaps take a boat trip to the former penal colony on Devil's Island, one of the infamous Iles du Salut, off the coast of French Guiana. The ordeal of Frenchman Henri Charriere, who spent 12 years here, would later inspire the book Papillon.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Take a 2-hour kayaking trip to the Iles Dupont; sea islets positioned less than a half-mile off the beach of Cayenne's Grand Hotel de Montabo. This site is perfect for the observation of sea turtles and dolphins.	EUR 29
Take an afternoon and evening trip in a pirogue (dugout canoe) up the Kaw River to view the lora and fauna of the marshes and in the evening go in search Caiman	EUR 55
Take a 3hr walking tour of Cayenne; climb up Cépénou hill to enjoy a panoramic view of the city; the visit will take you through numerous key spots of historical, cultural or natural interest.	Free

## Day 21: Cayenne ( Sat 21 May )

Today is the final day of the trip and there is no accommodation provided this evening.

**Border Information** - If leaving the trip at Cayenne, you will fly from Cayenne Félix Eboué International Airport (CAY)

## Day 22 to 24: Macapa ( Sun 22 May to Tue 24 May )

This morning we will depart Cayenne and begin our adventure across the furthest northern section of Brazil. This section of the trip requires some flexibility due to the departure timings of the Passenger boat and Truck Ferry, as well as the road conditions and weather. We will travel 780km in total over the next couple of days, staying in a basic hotel en route to the port in Macapa.

## Day 25: Sao Luis ( Wed 25 May )

Sao Luis is full of interesting museums, the historic centre houses beautiful, pastel coloured colonial mansions. You can take a boat trip to the more laid back town of Alcântara, you may spot the Scarlet ibis, or guarás on your way.

### Activity

### Approximate Cost

Set within an impressive mansion, are exhibits of Sao Luis festivals - Carnaval, Bumba, Meu Boi and Divino Espirito Santo	Free
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Learn about Maranhão's indigenous cultures at the Centro Perquisa de Historia Natural	Free
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### About Sao Luis:

São Luís is the capital of Maranhão, situated in the Bay of San Marcos on the northeastern coast of Brazil south of the Amazon Delta. The French founded the city in 1612 but the Portuguese captured it almost immediately in 1615 and then the Dutch took over for 4 years in 1641. The old city is steeped in an almost tangible history and has strong traditional folklore. There are excellent museums; the Catedral da Sé, built in 1726 by the Jesuits and a large French-built fortress now called the Palácio dos Leões. Today the city is almost more famous for its music and is the centre of reggae culture in Northeast Brazil. It has excellent nightlife, restaurants and numerous festivals throughout the year.

## Day 30: Barreirinhas ( Mon 30 May )

This morning we will drive to the town of Barreirinhas, our base for exploring the National Park.

In Barreirinhas we will stay in a local hotel

Approximate Driving Time - 250km / 4 hrs

### Activity

### Approximate Cost

Take an overnight 4WD tour of the stunning Lençóis Maranhenses National Park

Included in Kitty

## Day 31: Lencois Maranhenses National Park, Barreirinhas ( Tue 31 May )

Today we will head out in motor boats through the Preguica River, to the protected area of Pequenos Lençóis, along the way we will visit a small fishing village, take a short walk to enjoy views of the dunes and the Preguicas River.

### About Lencois Maranhenses National Park:

Lençóis Maranhenses National Park, in Maranhão State, is one of Brazil's top natural attractions. It is an ecosystem formed of white sand dunes which cover 383,000 acres and look like bedsheets (*lençóis* in Portuguese) spread out on the Northeastern coast of Brazil.

Fresh water lagoons that fill up with rainwater, mostly during the first six months of the year, make Lençóis Maranhenses unique. Mangroves, deserted beaches, *buritis*- a graceful kind of palm tree - and the Preguiças River help compose the park's diversity.

Lençóis Maranhenses has been formed over thousands of years, as the sand from riverbeds is deposited at the mouth of the rivers and brought back to the continent by winds and sea currents. The sand dunes advance as far as 50 kilometres inland and stretch along 43 kilometres of coastline. They are mostly deserted beaches on which sand mixes with mangroves, creating picture perfect vistas.

## Day 32: Lencois Maranhenses National Park, Barreirinhas ( Wed 01 Jun )

Today we will take a trip to Grandes Lençóis, stopping off at some dunes and islands of the famous Parnaíba Delta. Seen from the sky, the meeting point of the Rio Parnaíba and the Atlantic Ocean looks like a giant puzzle, made up of 85 tiny islands.

In the afternoon we will travel back to our pousada in Barreirinhas.

### Activity

### Approximate Cost

Visit the stunning Lençóis Maranhenses National Park

Included in Kitty

### Day 33: Jericoacoara ( Thu 02 Jun )

Today we drive to the laid back beach town of Jericoacoara, or 'Jeri' as it's affectionately known. Access to Jericoacoara is only by 4WD through unpaved tracks through the dunes, making it a wonderfully hard to reach place.

We will stay in a local Pousada

Approximate Drive Time - 466km / 9hrs

#### Activity

#### Approximate Cost

Treat yourself to a relaxing massage during your time away from the truck

BRL 150

Try a 90minute Capoeira class

BRL 35

#### About Jericoacoara:

Jericoacoara is a stunning beach area, located close to the equator in the northeast of Brazil. It is a good example of an area embracing the concepts of responsible tourism. Development has been severely restricted and building is only allowed in the nearby fishing village. To get there, you have to drive off-piste across sand dunes for about 15 kms in a 4x4 and this limits the numbers of outsiders who visit the place. It is a remarkably beautiful place with vast fields of sand dunes, turquoise sea and loads to do. For lovers of the natural beauty there are numerous hikes and trails, which can be accessed on foot or by horse. Alternatively, you may prefer to play around on the dunes on sand buggies or sand boards or to go out on boat trips. It is also an excellent place for windsurfing and other watersports. The area has no big hotels, but has plenty of small restaurants and posadas.

### Day 34: Jericoacoara ( Fri 03 Jun )

Jericoacoara is a magical place to spend some time; wander the sandy lanes, enjoy the sunset with a caipirinha on the dunes whilst the locals practise their Capoeira, head out on a quad bike adventure to remote lagoons where you can take a dip, laze in a hammock and enjoy a seafood lunch. Jeri is also one of the prime spots for surfing, windsurfing and kite surfing!

#### Activity

#### Approximate Cost

Visit the beautiful Lagoa Paraiso

USD 30

Take out quad bikes to visit the area around Jericoacoara

USD 65

Learn to kitesurf in Jericoacoara USD 160

Enjoy the waves and rent a surf board BRL 25-60

### Day 35: Canoa Quebrada ( Sat 04 Jun )

Drive day to the pretty seaside town of Canoa Quebrada.

In Canoa Quebrada we will stay in a local Pousada

Approximate Drive Time - 450km / 8hrs

#### About Canoa Quebrada:

Until the mid 1970's Canoa Quebrada had been but a sleepy fishing village until it began to gain popularity with a group of hippies, who gave to Canoa an air of liberty and tolerance which can be felt until today. The village is now one of the best known and most visited beaches in Ceará with dunes and falesias with heights of up to 30 metres which have served as the stage for several movies of Brazilian cinema and television.

Today, besides the eternally overwhelming landscape, the greatest attractions to enjoy are the buggy tours through the sand dunes along the beach and the red cliffs, and the refreshing dives in the calm blue-green ocean.

For the more adventurous there is the opportunity for kite surfing, cliff gliding, capoeira, or you can simply venture through the fishing villages on a long walk or discover the ecological trails that cut through Canoa Quebrada. When the sun begins to set, run to the top of the dunes and you will witness one of the most spectacular sites in the northeast.

### Day 36: Canoa Quebrada ( Sun 05 Jun )

Huge pinkish sand dunes dominate the area of Canoa Quebrada, it's a fantastic spot to kick back and relax or for the more energetic, take an evening horseback ride along the beach or head out on a beach buggy. There's a laid back small town to explore too with lots of great cafes and bars.

#### Activity

#### Approximate Cost

Take a 4hr Beach buggy trip to Ponta Grossa BRL 100-350

Take an evening horseback ride on the beach BRL 100

### Day 37: Olinda ( Mon 06 Jun )

We have a full day drive to the stunning colonial gem of Olinda,

considered one of Brazil's most important historic sites.

Approximate Driving Time - 629km / 10hrs

In Olinda we will stay in a local Pousada

#### **About Olinda:**

Olinda was one of the old capital cities of Brazil and has quite a few historic buildings dating mainly from around the mid-1600's, many of which have been restored. It is a culturally important city, and is home to many artists and musicians. A good spot to have a drink and take in Olinda is the Alto de Se, the highest square in the town, it has stunning views of the skyscrapers of Recife shimmering in the distance.

### **Day 38: Olinda ( Tue 07 Jun )**

Explore the beautiful town of Olinda, once known as 'small Lisbon' and the richest town in Brazil. Enjoy wandering the cobblestone streets, check out some of the exquisite churches and definitely make time for lunch at Alto de Se, to enjoy the views!

#### **Activity**

#### **Approximate Cost**

Take part in a Capoeira class

BRL 30

Visit the imposing 16th Century Igreja da Se, located at Alto da Se (Cathedral Heights)

Free

### **Day 39: Aracaju ( Wed 08 Jun )**

Today we head south along the coast, into the state of Bahia and to the town of Aracaju, where we can chill out in one of the town's seafront eateries, listen to some traditional forró music and enjoy the fresh crabs that the town is known for.

Approximate Driving time - 510km / 8hrs

We will spend the night in a local Pousada

#### **Activity**

#### **Approximate Cost**

Visit the Tamar Turtle Conservation Project

Included in Kitty

#### **About Aracaju:**

Set in Segipe, the smallest of Brazil's states, Aracaju is a popular weekend getaway for Brazilians, though often overlooked by Tourists. The town boasts beautiful beaches, waterfront restaurants, lively festivals and a picturesque main square, complete with towering cathedral.

### **Day 40: Salvador Da Bahia, Pirambu ( Thu 09 Jun )**



This morning we will continue our journey south to Salvador, along the way we will make a stop at the Projeto Tamar - a research station involved in the protection of Brazil's five species of turtle, spanning 1000km in 9 of Brazil's states. The best time to visit is September to March when the spawning occurs.

Approximate Driving time - 325km / 8hrs

Activity	Approximate Cost
Watch a <i>candomblé</i> ceremony in Salvador	USD 50
Visit the Tamar Turtle Conservation Project	Free

### About Salvador Da Bahia:

Situated on a peninsular jutting out into the Atlantic Ocean, Salvador da Bahia was the capital of Brazil when it was first colonised, but now it can only claim to be the capital of the state of Bahia. Bahia is strongly influenced by its links with Africa, both in its language, religion, food, dance and music, and this certainly dominates the atmosphere in Salvador. If time allows we will take in a night at the Bale Folclorico da Bahia or the Oludum drummers for a taste of local traditions.

Apart from the historic interest of the town, there are some excellent beaches to visit nearby, but you should definitely try to get to a 'Candomble' evening while you are here. Candomble is a popular religious cult in the region, and the ceremonies offer a fascinating insight into the culture of this area.

Salvador is also well known for its spectacular Carnival and other festivities, but the nightlife is good here at any time of the year.

## Day 41: Salvador Da Bahia ( Fri 10 Jun )

Today is the final day for passengers finishing their trip in Salvador. Please note there is no accommodation included on the trip tonight – please contact your Sales Agent if you are interested in booking an extra night of accommodation or if you would like to join the journey south to Rio de Janeiro.

**Border Information:** if you are finishing your trip in Salvador, you will most likely exit Brazil at Deputado Luís Eduardo Magalhães International Airport ([IATA](#) code: SSA)

## Day 42: Salvador Da Bahia ( Sat 11 Jun )

Welcome to Salvador! Today there is an important group meeting at 18:00hrs please meet at the Hotel reception. The rest of the day is yours to enjoy Salvador.

**Border information:** If you are joining your trip in Salvador, enter Brazil at Deputado Luís Eduardo Magalhães International Airport ([IATA](#): SSA)

We stay just by the old centre of Pelourinho in a lovely hotel.

Hotel for the night: Pousada de Mangueira  
09 Ladeira da Saúde  
Bairro da Saúde  
Salvador  
Bahia  
Brazil

Activity	Approximate Cost
Watch a <i>candomblé</i> ceremony in Salvador	USD 50

### Day 43: Salvador Da Bahia ( Sun 12 Jun )

Explore the energetic and vibrant city of Salvador, known around the world for its Carnival festivities. Salvador is home to over 300 churches, the historic centre is recognised by UNESCO and full of interesting architecture, brightly coloured buildings and cobblestone streets. It's an excellent place to witness the African culture in music and dance and enjoy some delicious street food.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Visit the Forte Santo Antonioa da Barra, Brazil's oldest lighthouse, for panoramic views of the city.	USD 10
Watch the Brazilian martial art of Capoeira, combining elements of dance, acrobatics and music.	BRL 35

### Day 44: Itacare ( Mon 13 Jun )

We head south the beautiful beach town of Itacare, with its stunning Atlantic rainforest, laid back eco-friendly cafes and bars, and the opportunity to surf, relax and explore. This is our last view of the ocean before we head inland for the National Parks!

Approximate Driving Time - 7hours / 250km

Tonight we will camp in a Campsite with facilities

#### About Itacare:

Itacare is a small eco-friendly town just south of Salvador, located in the cocoa region of Bahia state. White sandy beaches, great food, friendly locals, wild nature and fantastic surf make this town a popular place to spend a day or two. Itacare offers 20 miles of picture perfect beach, warm oceans, lots of cool bars and cafes.

### Day 45: Itacare ( Tue 14 Jun )

Today we have a free day to explore the area, enjoy the beach, take

part in some of the many adventure activities available here, or visit the stunning Peninsula de Marau, stopping off at Praia Taipus de Fora and Lagoa Azul.

We will camp this evening at a campsite with facilities.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Approximate Cost</b>
Take part in a range of adventure activities from horses riding, rafting, canyoning, mountain biking, kayaking and even off road adventures	USD 50-100
Head to the southern beaches for some surfing or chill out on the beach and relax	Free
Take a day trip to explore the Peninsula de Marau, with it's gorgeous beaches, Camambu bay's nature reserve and relaxed viallges.	USD 75

## **Day 46: Lencois ( Wed 15 Jun )**

Today we head to the fantastic town of Lencois, the gateway to Chapada da Diamantina National Park. We camp in Lencois giving you the opportunity to enjoy a variety of treks into the stunning scenery of the national park.

Approximate Driving Time - 9hrs / 515km

## **Day 47 to 48: Chapada Da Diamantina National Park, Lencois ( Thu 16 Jun to Fri 17 Jun )**

We have two full days to enjoy the Chapada Diamantina National Park; this is a real adventurer's paradise. It's possible to go hiking, stopping along the way for a dip in the river by waterfalls and rapids, go horse riding, kayaking or maybe mountain biking. There are even cave systems to explore. The Chapada is full of towering rock formations and vast plains, making it perfect for landscape photography.

We will spend the night in a camp site with facilities.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Approximate Cost</b>
Head into the beautiful Chapada Diamantina National Park	Included in Kitty

### **About Chapada Da Diamantina National Park:**

In the hinterland of Salvador, just outside of the town of Lençóis, lies the Chapada Diamantina, or Diamond Highlands. Valleys of lush green dotted with bright tropical flowers surround a mountain range of

twisted red-rock formations reminiscent of the American Southwest. Numerous small rivers carve their way through the highlands, splashing over waterfalls and natural slides. There are also numerous caves, some many kilometers long. Many are quite popular, some just being discovered, some restricted yet to geologists who are trying to figure out just how they and the rock formations they contain were formed.

The gateway community of Lençóis is an old colonial town of stone streets and little churches, with little signs of the modern world. The attractions here are entirely natural. We have the chance to walk the highlands, explore caves, mountain bike old miners' tracks, and swim in natural pools and waterfalls. This is the Brazil that so many travellers miss. It is the other Brazil, away from the crowds of Rio and from the beaches or famous sites. This is the sort of place that you can visit so easily on an overland trip but that is so often inaccessible to the normal tourist or traveller.

Here you will have the opportunity to trek to many of the locations within the park, depending on your fitness and sense of adventure but either way is a wonderful place to spend a few days.

## **Day 49 to 50: Alto Paraiso, Chapada Dos Veadeiros National Park** **( Sat 18 Jun to Sun 19 Jun )**

Over the next two days we will travel overland across the central Brazilian countryside, towards the town of Alto Paraiso and the stunning Chapada dos Veadeiros National Park, bush camping en route.

On Day 8 we will aim to travel approximately 500km / 9hrs and find a nice bush camp along the way.

On Day 9 we will aim to travel 400km / 8hrs, we stay in an eco-tourism campsite in the laid back town of Alto Paraiso.

### **About Chapada Dos Veadeiros National Park:**

Located in the State of Goiás, about 250 km from Brasília, the Chapada dos Veadeiros National Park is, according to NASA, the most luminous point seen from the Earth's orbit. This is due to the quantity of quartz crystals present in the soil, besides several other metals and minerals.

The main river that flows in Veadeiros National Park is Rio Preto. Along its course, there are many spectacular waterfalls, including Rio Preto Falls (120 metres high, 80 metres at the base) and the Cariocas. The canyons are just as beautiful, with walls of up to 40 metres high and valleys of up to 300 metres. Forests are also present in the region, and are well worth exploring primarily because of the rich variety of flora, more than 25 species of orchids can be found for example. The rich fauna of the region includes species threatened with extinction such as the Pantanal deer, the Jaguar, the Maned Wolf. More common are the Rhea (Brazilian ostrich), Seriema, Tapeti, Armadillo (Tatu Canastra), Anteater, Capybara (Capivara), Tapir (Anta), Green-Beak Toucan, Black Vulture, King Vulture. While the forests are home to this amazing wildlife it can be quite difficult to see, nonetheless this is a great place for us to explore for the amazing flora and landscape alone.

## **Day 51 to 52: Alto Paraiso, Chapada Dos Veadeiros National Park** ( Mon 20 Jun to Tue 21 Jun )

We have two full days to explore the National Park. The Chapada dos Veadeiros is one of Brazil's hidden gems, one of the oldest and most beautiful tropical ecosystems in South America and home to incredible waterfalls, rock formations, caves and grottoes.

This morning we will have an included visit to the Vale da Lua or the Valley of the Moon, so called due to the rock formations giving it an appearance similar to the moon.

This area is perfect for hiking, horse and bike riding and of course swimming in natural pools and soaking up the parks atmosphere. It is said that due to the high amount of quartz in the ground, that this Chapada is glows from space!

We will camp in a well equipped camp site.

## **Day 53: Brasília ( Wed 22 Jun )**

Today we arrive in the futuristic capital of Brasilia. We will enjoy a guided tour of this fascinating city, which was designed and built to be the Brazilian Government's headquarters in 1960. The city is designed to resemble a plane, and is a UNESCO heritage site, housing some incredible, futuristic style Cathedrals and Monuments.

Approximate driving time - 150km / 3hrs

In Brasilia we will camp at a campsite with facilities

### **Activity**

Full day guided tour of Brasilia

### **Approximate Cost**

Included in Kitty

### **About Brasília:**

Brasília is the capital city of Brazil, founded in 1960 by the President Juscelino Kubitschek in order to move the capital from Rio de Janeiro to a more geographically-central location in the country. The city is one of the major examples of the 20th Century's modern movement in architecture and urban planning - with Oscar Niemeyer and Lúcio Costa as was the chief architects, the construction of Brasília was incredible feat that turned unpopulated swampland into a purpose-built city in just 41 months between 1956 and 1960. The city's unique style and history have earned it UNESCO World Heritage status, and exploring the city really does envelop you in the feeling of being time-warped into a 1960s vision of the future!

To really appreciate the plan of the city with its aeroplane-like shape, try a trip up the television tower for a panoramic view of the city. The Metropolitan Cathedral, shaped like a crown of thorns with angel statues suspended from the ceiling, should not be missed, neither should the incredible blue stained glass of Dom Bosco Cathedral. Other fascinating buildings include the National Congress and Senate, the Juscelino Kubitschek Memorial and the incredible JK Bridge.

## Day 54: Tres Marias ( Thu 23 Jun )

We have a full day drive through the Brazilian countryside. We will find a nice spot and camp for the night near Tres Marias.

Approximate driving Time - 550km / 10hours

## Day 55: Ouro Preto ( Fri 24 Jun )

Today is a full day drive to the beautiful old colonial mining town of Ouro Preto where we will stay at a local Guesthouse. Ouro Preto is considered Brazil's most important historic site.

Approximate Driving Time - 400km / 8hrs

In Ouro Preto we will stay in a local hostel

### About Ouro Preto:

Ouro Preto (meaning 'Black Gold') was founded in the 17th Century by Portuguese colonialists, and became the largest and most important city of the Brazilian Gold Rush of the 18th Century when gold was found in the surrounding area. Mines were built to extract the precious metal, and the tremendous wealth that resulted attracted Europe's intelligentsia and sparked a Baroque revival in the city - a heritage still very much evident in Ouro Preto's preserved colonial buildings and churches, art and sculptures (particularly the sculptures of Aleijadinho, one of Brazil's most famous artists).

In 1789, Ouro Preto became the birthplace of the Inconfidência Mineira, a failed attempt to gain independence from Portugal. The leading figure, Tiradentes, was hanged as a threat to any future revolutionaries. Ouro Preto is a fascinating place to explore - the surviving colonial buildings are fantastically preserved and the city is refreshingly free from modern development (any new buildings must be constructed in line with the town's historical aesthetic). There are several old mines that are open for visitors, providing a glimpse of how life was for the miners all those years ago.

## Day 56: Ouro Preto ( Sat 25 Jun )

Today we will have a half day guided tour of Ouro Preto, well known for its colonial architecture and the first Brazilian town to be considered a UNESCO world heritage site. In the afternoon enjoy some free time to explore the town, visit the museum or some of the stunning baroque churches. There are some fantastic cafes and restaurants in Ouro Preto. Don't forget your camera today, Ouro Preto one of the most picturesque towns on our itinerary!

### Activity

### Approximate Cost

Head underground into the gold mines of Ouro Preto

BRL 60

Time to explore unique colonial Ouro Preto

Included in Kitty

and its architectural heritage

Learn all about the failed uprising against the Portuguese in 1789 at the Museum of the Inconfidencia, or visit the Mineralogy Museum to see some of the gems mined in the area

BRL 30

Visit the village of Congonhas near Ouro Preto and see the remarkable statues of the Twelve Prophets by Aleijadinho, an accomplished sculptor who worked despite losing his hands to leprosy

Free

## Day 57: Rio De Janeiro, Petropolis ( Sun 26 Jun )

Today we drive to the vibrant city of Rio de Janeiro, a highlight of any trip to Brazil!

Along the way we will stop at Petropolis, the cool hill-side hideaway for local Cariocas escaping the heat of Rio. We will have 2 hours to explore the Museu Imperial, the former Imperial Museum, wander the town or visit the Palacio de Cristal, the site where the last slaves of Petropolis were released.

Drive Day: 450km, Drive Time: 7hrs (approx)

In Rio we stay in a comfortable hotel

Activity	Approximate Cost
Relax and explore the world famous beaches of Rio de Janeiro, including Ipanema, Arpoador, and of course Copacabana	Free
Explore the magnificent Botanical Gardens of Rio de Janeiro, with over 54 hectares and 6500 species of plants and flowers	BRL 8
Visit the iconic Escadaria Selaron, a colourful tiled staircase lovingly created by local resident Jorge Selaron	Free
Explore the stunning natural Atlantic rainforest of Tijuca, the largest urban forest in the world	Free
Take a cable car up Pão de Açúcar	BRL 80

(Sugarloaf Mountain)

Visit the world famous statue Christ the Redeemer

BRL 74

### About Rio De Janeiro:

Rio de Janeiro has to be one of the most beautifully situated cities in the world. The stunning Pão de Açúcar (Sugarloaf) Mountain rises up out of Guanabara Bay and the sandy beaches of Ipanema and Copacabana cut beautiful curves in the shoreline, all under the watchful gaze of the iconic Art Deco statue of Christ the Redeemer on Corcovado, one of the New Seven Wonders of the World.

This is a city with something for everyone - beaches, history, shopping, culture, fantastic food and amazing nightlife. For amazing views of this spectacular city, take the cable car up to the top of Pão de Açúcar, ride the train to Corcovado or jump on the tram to the historic hillside neighbourhood of Santa Teresa. If you're interested in learning more about Rio and Brazil, there are several fascinating museums in the city and you'll see some fantastic architecture by wandering around the older parts of the city.

Kick back and relax on the famous urban beaches, enjoy a beer or caipirinha at one of the many street-side cafes and then when evening comes you can party the night away - Rio has some unbelievable bars and clubs in the buzzing areas of Lapa and Ipanema. If you need a bit of quiet time to recover, take a walk in the city's wonderful botanical gardens, or escape the city for the day on an excursion to the lush forests of nearby Tijuca National Park.

Rio is particularly famous for its huge annual party - the incredible Rio Carnival. The celebration of Mardi Gras (6 weeks before Easter) is a great Brazilian tradition - the whole city goes wild for a full 7 days in a whirlwind of music and colour. Samba schools compete with ever more awe-inspiring dance displays, floats and costumes, putting on marathon performances in the Sambadrome, and street parties are held all over the city.

## Day 58: Rio De Janeiro ( Mon 27 Jun )

Today is the end day for our passengers finishing their trip in Rio de Janeiro. Please note there is no accommodation included on the trip tonight - please contact your Sales Agent if you wish to book extra accommodation to fully enjoy Rio.

**Border information:** If you are leaving in Rio, exit Brazil at Rio Galeão International Airport International (IATA code: GIG) Airport.

### IMPORTANT NOTES

The routes, activities and places visited described in these trip notes are intentions and are meant as a rough guide only.

These trip notes have been compiled to help you prepare for your journey once you have booked. They



include the full itinerary and dates, and information about kit lists, meeting hotels, insurance, vaccinations, visas, and other information that will help you get ready for your trip.

We update these notes regularly, so please ensure you have an up-to-date version of these trip notes.

We intend to follow the planned route but exact night stops and inclusions cannot be guaranteed. It sometimes happens that we decide to make a change to our planned itinerary. This may be for a variety of reasons - climatic, road or bureaucratic conditions may demand it. By their very nature, overland itineraries need to be flexible and the regions that we are travelling through are often unpredictable. We run adventure journeys in off the beaten track areas, which often have poor infrastructure. You should expect that some of these areas do not adhere to 'Western' safety standards.

## **PERSONAL SPENDING**

Based on what previous travellers have spent in the Guianas, we recommend that you allow 15 - 30USD per day. This amount will vary according to country; generally French Guiana is the most expensive of the three, followed by Suriname and then Guyana. This will cover expenses such as drinks and meals out whilst staying in hotels and some activities.

## **GETTING AROUND**

The road across the coastal strip from Cayenne to Georgetown is sealed. Border crossings will often involve a ferry crossing, so be prepared to wait a little while for the ferry to arrive and for customs to check everyone through. In the interior of Guyana there are very few sealed roads, and the main route to Brazil is on a very bumpy dirt track, which can become impassable during the rainy seasons. Travellers should be prepared for some bumpy journeys in this region!

## **CURRENCIES AND MONEY MATTERS**

French Guiana - Euro

Suriname - Surinamese Dollar - (1 USD = 8SRD)

Guyana - Guyanese Dollar - (1 USD = 200GYD)

ATMs are available in Cayenne, Paramaribo and Georgetown and some smaller towns. Credit cards are only accepted in certain hotels, shops and restaurants. You should have local currency with you, especially in the Interior of Guyana and Suriname. Cambios offer the best exchange rates. USD and Euros are easy to exchange and widely accepted as payment in major cities.

## **CLIMATE**

The climate in the Guianas is equatorial, meaning hot all year around, with an average temperature of 27.5°C. Humidity is generally high all year and can be quite uncomfortable, but noticeably so during the rainy seasons. Please note that many of our lodges and hotels do not have air conditioning due to their locations. The coast is cooled by sea breezes, and feels more comfortable, but you should come prepared for a hot and humid trip!

The wet season is November to January and May to July, our trips are designed to run during the dryer seasons, but please be aware that there is rain year round, therefore waterproofs are a must!

## **CLOTHING**

Long sleeves and collars are great for keeping off the sun and the mosquitos. Comfortable, light clothing is recommended, as are comfortable walking shoes or boots and sandals. A sun hat and sunglasses are essential.

## LOCAL FOOD AND DRINKS

Food in Guianas has strong influences from around the world, leading to some unique creations.

Influences from Europe, East India, China, Indonesia, Africa and Amerindian cuisine have fused together in this tiny corner of South America. Chicken, Fish and Meat are commonly on the menu, along with vegetables, rice and cassava. In French Guiana you should try the Bouillon d'aura - a blend of crab, smoked fish, chicken, vegetables and aurora fruit. In Guayana some great snacks include Foo-foo - plantains made into cakes and fried and Pepperport, an Amerindian meat stew with cassava and hot pepper sauce. In Paramaribo, try the Parbo beer and of course Guayana blends excellent local rums. Bottled water is recommended.

## TIPPING

Local Guides do not expect, but greatly appreciate a tip. In the interior it is recommended that any tips are given in local currency. For meals, 10% at hotels and restaurants is generally expected.

## LANGUAGES

Guyana is South America's only English speaking country. Dutch is the main language of Suriname and French in French Guiana. There are also a number of Amerindian communities who speak their own indigenous language.

## SAFETY

In general you will find the people of the Guianas to be very friendly, helpful and welcoming, many are interested to meet travellers. Whilst in any city, we recommend that you check with the reception of your hotel if there are areas to avoid after dark, and that you only take with you the money that you need for the day and leave valuables, spare cash cards and passports in the truck or hotel safe. There are some mosquitos, we recommend that you use repellent and the mosquito net provided in hotels.

## GETTING HERE AND AWAY

The Guianas are a relatively new and un-touristed travel destination, which creates some great opportunities to get off the beaten track. However international transport is more challenging.

We recommend that our passengers make use of the direct flights between Paris to Cayenne, which takes approximately 9 hours with Air France and Air Caraibes.

There are a number of daily departures from Boa Vista (BVB) International Airport, however since Boa Vista is one of Brazil's smaller airports, you will usually need to travel via Brasilia or Sao Paulo.

There are a number of internal flights which take approximately 1hr 30mins from Lethem in the south of Guyana to Georgetown, the Capital of Guyana, if you should wish to travel home from Georgetown please let us know and we can assist in arranging the internal flight. Please note that this will mean that you finish your trip one day early and do not cross the border into Brazil on the final day.

Surinam Airways also offer direct flights from Amsterdam to Paramaribo, Suriname in approx 9hours. From Paramaribo there are various options to transfer by road to Cayenne or to Georgetown (45min flight with Suriman Airways)

Please be aware that Surinam Airways no longer operate a flight from Belem to Cayenne.

If you would like assistance in arranging you international transport please contact our team.

## **EXPLORATORY TRIP WARNING - THIS IS A NEW TRIP FOR US!**

Please note that all or part of this trip is a brand new itinerary, and could be going through completely new areas for Dragoman. This is what we call a New or Exploratory trip, and it means that all the passengers on these trips for the first season are the route's pioneers!

However, while we have thoroughly researched all aspects of this new route and put the itinerary together with the best of intentions, please note that your crew will be finding a lot of information out for us on the ground, will be playing a lot of things by ear, and may alter the itinerary slightly in places where it becomes necessary. Most trips will have slight or significant changes made to them after this first season, and frankly we would be very surprised if an Exploratory trip was to run perfectly to the published itinerary. Usually we find that this is rarely a problem but rather an exciting feature, that there are much more pleasant surprises in store than unpleasant ones, and these Exploratory trips are a fantastic opportunity to shape the trip as a group.

However, the warning is sincere and these trips must be viewed as Exploratory - if this concerns you or you would rather stick to a tried-and-tested itinerary, then we recommend that you wait a year or two until we have this itinerary perfected following operating it many times, or of course to consider one of the more established trips in our extensive portfolio.

## **PHYSICAL PREPARATION**

### **SOUTH AMERICA PHYSICAL PREPARATION**

South America is diverse continent, from high altitudes in the dry Andes, the steamy and humid Amazon, the cold moorlands of Patagonia, to the lush green pampas of northern Argentina. You should therefore be prepared for the full gambit of climates. There will be time for hiking and many other activities such as horse riding and white water rafting, and you will need to be reasonably fit to be able to participate in everything on offer.

Overland travel can be demanding - long, rough travel days, dusty conditions can be challenging to some. You will need to be fit enough to help every day with the camp chores (cooking, washing up, general camp set up) as well as putting up and taking down your own tent. There are some long driving days and some early morning starts.

The step up into the overland vehicle, while not overly high can become tiring and you need to judge yourself to be physically fit enough to haul yourself up and down the step at least 8-10 times a day. By and large the South America trips have a good range of hotel accommodation mixed up with camping so that life is not too rough.

We will be travelling to areas in remote locations where medical assistance will not be available. If you have a medical condition such as a heart condition that would put you at risk, we would suggest that this is not the trip for you. Also, please be aware that should an emergency occur, there is likely to be a considerable delay in accessing medical care, and by joining our trip you accept this risk.

## **VISA INFORMATION**

Many countries that we visit on our travels will require visas to enter. Some are best obtained before you leave home, and others can be obtained en-route. Whilst the ultimate responsibility for obtaining visas is yours, we will endeavour to assist you wherever possible.

The visa requirements for your trip vary depending on where you are from and where you are going. The information provided is given in good faith and we do try to keep the visa information as up to date as possible. Please read the information very carefully to make sure everything is clear and you aware of

what you need to do. Please also be aware that rules surrounding visas do change, often suddenly, and without prior warning. This is why it is important that you also double-check the information we provide for yourself.

For visas that are needed in advance, you may wish to submit the applications directly to the relevant embassy or consulate. If you require any supporting documentation for your visa applications, Dragoman will obtain this on your behalf as part of your trip price - we will contact you to request additional information in order to make this application for you.

However, for trips that involve multiple visas, you may find it beneficial to use a specialist visa agency to assist you with your applications. While this does sometimes increase the cost, it usually makes the process much easier for you.

As you will often need to submit your passport together with your applications, we recommend that you avoid making any travel plans in the weeks leading up to your departure.

Most countries require that your passport is valid for at least 6 months after your entry into the country.

For trips that are not yet guaranteed, you may find yourself in the position whereby you will need to start the visa application process prior to your trip being guaranteed - in this situation we still advise you **not** to purchase flights until your trip is guaranteed. However, you **can** start your visa application process, ensuring that when applying for your visas or letters of invitation that you allow several days before and after your entry into the country to allow for delays, availability of flights, etc.

## **BRAZIL**

Citizens of the UK, Ireland, New Zealand, Australia, Switzerland, South Africa, US, Canada, Japan, countries of South America and all EU countries **will not** need a visa to visit Brazil as a tourist for up to 90 days.

Citizens of other countries should check with the relevant consulates as to whether a visa is required. If a visa is required, you will need to obtain it **in advance**.

## **FLYING TO CENTRAL OR SOUTH AMERICA VIA THE USA OR CANADA**

If your flight to Central or South America goes via the USA, then you **must** obtain an Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) before travel (except for citizens of Canada, who will not require this). Citizens of the UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and most EU countries are part of the USA's Visa Waiver Scheme and are eligible to obtain an ESTA.

An ESTA must be obtained **online** and **in advance** via the following link and paying the appropriate fee - <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov/esta/> - please note that you will be denied boarding your flight if you do not have this arranged.

If you are not eligible for an ESTA, then you will have to obtain a B-1/B-2 visa for temporary visitors, and you will need to obtain it **in advance**. In this case it would be advisable to book flights that do not go via the USA.

Please note that if you have travelled to Iran, Sudan, Iraq or Syria since March 2011, or hold dual-nationality with one of these countries, then you will not be eligible for an ESTA and must instead apply for a visa. There are some exceptions to this, please see the following link for more details - <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2016/01/251577.htm>.

Similarly, if your flight to Central or South America goes via Canada, then you must obtain a Canadian Electronic Travel Authorisation (eTA) before travel (except for citizens of the USA, who will not require this). Citizens of the UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, most EU countries, South Korea and Japan are part of Canada's Visa Waiver Scheme and are eligible to obtain an eTA.

An eTA must be arranged **online** and **in advance** - please go to <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/visit/>, apply and pay the appropriate fee.

If you are not eligible for an eTA, then you will have to obtain a Temporary Resident Visa, and you will need to obtain it **in advance**. In this case it would be advisable to book flights that do not go via Canada. Please note that several Eastern European nationalities will need a visa.

## SURINAME

Citizens of the following countries are eligible for a Tourist Card to enter Suriname; UK & Northern Ireland, USA, Canada, you can check the full list of qualifying countries by following this link: [Suriname Tourism](#)

Tourist Cards cost 35USD, single entry, no photo or application form is required. They are available at the Paramaribo international airport and at the Suriname Embassy in Guyana and French Guiana for those travelling overland on our trip, time has been allowed within the trip to collect these.

A passport with at least 6 months validity and proof of onward travel arrangements are required.

Citizens of other countries should check with the relevant consulates as to whether a visa is required. If a visa is required, you will need to obtain it either in advance in your home country or in Cayenne, French Guiana, before your trip starts (if travelling westbound) or at Georgetown, Guyana (travelling eastbound during your trip). Visas take around 24hrs to process.

A visa is required for citizens of Australia and New Zealand at a cost of 50USD, you will need a passport photo, passport, proof of onward travel. Visas can be applied for at the following Suriname Embassies:

Surinamese Consulate General in Cayenne - 3, Avenue Léopold Héder, 97300 Cayenne, French Guiana, (+594) 594 282 Allow 24 hours for processing - opening times Monday to Friday - 09:00 - 16:30

Surinamese Embassy in Georgetown, Guyana - 54 New Garden & Anira Street, Georgetown, Guyana (+592) 226-7844 Same day service (documents must be dropped off before 12pm and can be collected after 2pm - Monday to Friday - 09:00 - 16:30

A Yellow Fever Certificate is mandatory.

## FRENCH GUIANA

Citizens of the UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada and most EU countries **will not** need a visa to visit French Guiana as a tourist for up to 90 days or more.

Citizens of other countries should check with the relevant consulates as to whether a visa is required. If a visa is required, you will need to obtain it **in advance**.

## GUYANA

Citizens of the following countries do not require a visa to enter Guyana: Commonwealth countries, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and United States of America. The maximum stay should not exceed 30 days.

Citizens of other countries should check with the relevant consulates as to whether a visa is required. If a visa is required, you will need to obtain it **in advance**.

Your passport must have at least 6 months validity. If you are arriving by air you are required to have an onward plane ticket.

A Yellow Fever Certificate is mandatory.

## PERSONAL SPENDING

### SOUTH AMERICA CURRENCIES AND CASH

It is not really worth trying to buy local currencies before you travel. Bear in mind that many countries have strict regulations about the amount of their own local currency you are allowed to import - if you are found with amounts in excess of the allowed amounts, it may well be confiscated!

For obvious security reasons we hesitate to recommend you bring lots of cash with you, a sensible mix of cash and ATM cards is best. Most of our past passengers have said they wished they had been told to bring more cash. Apart from the convenience of being able to change money in many more places, you will sometimes get a much better exchange rate for cash.

More and more people are choosing to travel with cash passports such as TravelEx cards (you can visit [www.cashpassport.com](http://www.cashpassport.com) for further information on these). This is a very secure way of carrying your money whilst travelling. You treat them exactly like an ATM card and draw out local currency from an ATM within each country.

Travellers cheques have become increasingly difficult to change in South America with passengers and our leaders experiencing huge frustration and numerous hours spent trying to find a bank which will change travellers cheques. For this reason we no longer accept them on our trips and do not recommend that you bring them for your personal spending money.

You should take a mixture of denomination notes. Banks and moneychangers in most countries will now only accept bills with a metallic strip running top to bottom of the bill and which are **no more than 8 years old**. You should not take worn or damaged notes, or any that have been written on. Brazil can be difficult for changing money, so it's handy to have a cash card as backup. Please bring a mixture of small and large denominations as in more remote areas it can be hard to change amounts over USD50.

Please note that due to a recent counterfeit scam central banks in several South American countries (Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia and Chile) have temporarily banned the circulation of USD100 notes bearing a series 2001 production date and a serial number starting with the letters CB or CF and ending in B2. The serial number is printed in green on the emblem.

Cash machines are readily available in most areas but are not always reliable therefore we recommend that you do not rely on them as your only source of cash. ATMs can be difficult to find sometimes in remote areas, especially in Patagonia. Credit cards such as Visa, MasterCard and American Express are the most commonly accepted, but be prepared for very high commission charges. Please do not rely on cards for daily use, as they are not always accepted outside of larger towns and cities.

## WHAT ELSE YOU NEED TO KNOW

### Overland Lifestyle and Trip Suitability

Dragoman was founded in 1981, and has had many years of experience of leading overland trips across 4 continents. Overlanding is all about sharing a great travelling experience with like-minded people. On your trip you'll travel in one of Dragoman's purpose-built iconic expedition vehicles on an off the beaten track adventure along rugged roads, experiencing the sights, sounds and smells of the world up-close. Your journey will be overland, sometimes across vast distances, so some long days spent driving are inevitable - but these will be interspersed with breaks of a day or two at a destination or activity. On an overland journey, you are more than just a passenger and everyone gets involved setting up camp - we supply the tent but it's up to you to pitch it! As part of your trip, you will be assigned a truck job which could be collecting firewood or water, luggage loading, organising food, stores, etc.

Like all great adventures, the more you put in the more you'll get out!

We are looking forward to welcoming you on one of our overland journeys, but before we do there are a few things we would like to draw to your attention.

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## Who Travels with Dragoman?

Our groups are made up of people from around the world, and are always an interesting mix of nationalities and ages. On average there is a pretty even split between males to females, and between solo travellers, couples and small groups of friends. We believe that overlanding should be open to as many people as possible, and so although we have a minimum age limit of 18 (or 7 on our Family Trips), as long as you are fit, healthy and passionate about travel, we are happy to take you, whatever your age is. One of the wonderful aspects of group travel is the camaraderie and friendships that are formed along the way, and the variety of people that you will meet.

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## Group Size

The maximum group size we take on our overland journeys ranges from 19 to 22 depending on the geographical location; however the average number of passengers is more likely to be around 16.

Please note that there is an overlap of 2 trips in Cuzco and during the Inca Treks. This means a group starting a trip in Cuzco will embark on the Inca Trail at the same time as a group finishing in or travelling through Cuzco. In practical terms this means there could be more than 22 group members in Cuzco and on the Inca Trail at the same time.

Please note that there is also an overlap of 2 trips in Zanzibar. This means a group starting a trip in Nairobi, for example, will visit Zanzibar at the same time as a group starting their trip there. In practical terms this means there could be more than 22 group members in Zanzibar at the same time.

Please also note that on some departures there may be more than one truck doing the same route. This means that you will be in the same hotel or campsite as another Dragoman group on some days. To ensure that you are not always at the same place at the same time as another group, your itinerary will most likely be slightly altered from the itinerary advertised in these trip notes.

## Our Crew and Guides

Our crew are passionate about travel and are always up for adventure. It takes someone special to become a Dragoman leader. Our crew undergo the most intensive training program of all the overland companies, spending 8 weeks learning the ropes at our base in Suffolk, UK, and then up to 6 months on the road as a trainee. Our crew are trained to manage and operate the trip safely and efficiently and their duties include: planning the trip according to the itinerary, driving and maintaining the truck, securing services of local guides, general logistics, health and safety, liaising with bureaucracy, dealing with issues where needed and offering advice and support to our customers. In addition they have a basic knowledge of the places visited and will be able to offer suggestions of things to do and see. Dragoman endeavours to provide the services of experienced crew, however, due to the seasonality of travel, situations may arise where your tour leader is new to a particular region or training other crew, new to the area.

On all Dragoman overlanding trips, we usually have 2 western crew but please be aware that there may be times when one crew member has to leave the trip due to unforeseen circumstances such as visa issues, illness of a group member, etc. On some of our trips we have 1 western crew and 1 local driver instead of 2 western crew. On trips south of Nairobi in East and Southern Africa we will also have an African camp master/cook who is in charge of running the camp and organising all of the meals. Their knowledge of the local produce makes shopping at the markets great fun and you will learn how to prepare and cook some unusual dishes.

On the majority of our trips in Ethiopia, Sudan, Central Asia, China and South East Asia, in addition to our crew we will have a local guide on board who will travel with us for the entire duration of our time within one country. In these cases, the local guide becomes a third crew member and is able to offer their local knowledge as well as an insight into their country and the lives of the local people.

In most other areas of Africa, the Americas, India and Turkey, in addition to our crew we will employ local guides in specific locations of interest (for just a few hours up to a few days).

Your crew have a duty of care to all members of the group and therefore they have the authority to ask you to leave the trip if you require serious medical assistance, you are behaving in an anti-social manner or refuse to comply with local laws and customs. In all matters relating to the trip, the leader's decision will be final and we appreciate your respect of this.

## Accommodation on Tour

Dragoman's overland trips are designed for shared accommodation, whether camping or staying in hotels or hostels, and therefore do not involve a single supplement. Whilst our crew will do their best to accommodate couples travelling together in twin rooms, all our travellers should expect to stay in multi-share accommodation when staying in hostels, gers or yurts.

The type, variety and standard of accommodation will vary greatly depending on what options are available at the time; hotels can vary from very basic rooms without electricity or running water to high standard hotels with good facilities! Generally in hotels most rooms will be single sex, twin-share, but in South America many rooms are triple/quad-share. Hostels, gers and yurts are nearly always multi-share and may be mixed sex.

The campsites will range from rather basic to those with excellent facilities, including swimming pools, restaurants and bars. In some cases it may also be possible to upgrade locally to bungalows, lodges or even tree-houses. One of the highlights of overlanding is that in more remote areas we will camp away from the tourist crowds. Occasionally on some of our trips we are able to stay in villages or local homestays allowing us to get close to the indigenous population and ensuring that our money stays within the local community.

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## The Kitty

In addition to the trip price on our overlanding trips, you will also be required to pay a kitty specified for your trip (please note that there is no kitty on our Family Trips). The kitty is payable in installments at the start of each section of the trip for combination trips, and in full at the start of the trip for individual trips. Each customer joining a trip pays their kitty into a central fund. The fund is managed by the Dragoman crew and the kitty accounts can be viewed by all throughout the trip.

The kitty covers all things that the whole group does, such as:

- Hotel accommodation and campsite fees
- Meals whilst camping (not whilst staying in hotels)
- Activities listed as included (e.g. National Park or historical site entrances, excursions, etc.)

The kitty system is unique to overlanding and allows us to have flexibility and transparency on our trips. You can see exactly how your money is being spent and ensure that you are getting the best value by buying locally. It also helps to keep the costs competitive and save on administration costs so that we can pass the saving on to you. Dragoman makes NO PROFIT on kitties, as they are the group's fund. If there is money left in the kitty at the end of your trip, then this is divided between the group and you receive a refund.

Once you book your trip it is very important that you check our website on a regular basis and just before departure for any changes to the kitty amount. We constantly update the kitty prices on our website and the kitty advertised in the brochure is an estimate at the time of printing. Prices can go up or down with no notice, and exchange rate fluctuations will affect costs.

The kitty is payable in full at the start of your trip (in instalments at the start of each individual trip on combination trips). Alternatively you can pay in advance via a bank transfer 3-4 weeks before the start of your trip - please see [http://www.dragoman.com/files/Kitty\\_doc\\_v10.pdf](http://www.dragoman.com/files/Kitty_doc_v10.pdf) for more details - this information sheet will also be sent in your booking confirmation upon booking a trip and can be found on [www.dragoman.com/overlanding/planning-your-trip/money](http://www.dragoman.com/overlanding/planning-your-trip/money). Please also note that prepayment is not available for our trips to West Africa, Iran, Tajikistan and any trip in Africa north of Nairobi.

If you are bringing the kitty out in cash, please ensure your USD notes (EUR notes if your trip goes



through West Africa) are clean and undamaged and **no more than 8 years old**. If needed, your tour leader will be able to accept some of the kitty in local currency, and they will let you know the exchange rate locally. In most destinations you can withdraw local currencies from ATM machines, using either a cash passport or a credit/debit card. However, please bear in mind that most cards have a maximum withdrawal amount per day, local ATMs may run out of cash, and your bank could block the card despite you warning them of your travel plans, so it could be impractical to try to get the entire kitty out from an ATM.

We cannot accept traveller's cheques on our trips.

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## Meals and Group Participation

On an overland journey you are more than just an individual passenger - you're part of the team. You are expected to pitch in to set up camp, shop for food, cook and generally help out. As part of your trip you will be assigned a truck job which could be collecting water and firewood, sweeping out the truck, loading the back locker, etc. While camping on overland journeys, the meals are included in the kitty. This means that you will have to work together to cook for everyone in your group. You will be divided into smaller units of 3-4 people and take it in turns to cook for the whole group according to a rota system. When it is your group's turn to cook you will have to plan the meal, shop for the ingredients in local markets or supermarkets and then prepare the meal for the whole group. The secret to cooking for 20+ people using a basic camping kitchen is to keep it simple! (On trips south of Nairobi we have a cook on board the truck; however you will still be required to help them to prepare meals).

An example of a typical camp breakfast might be toast with spreads, fruit and cereal as well as tea and coffee. When time allows it will also be possible to serve something hot such as eggs or pancakes. Lunch is almost always a sandwich heaped high with healthy salad and assorted fillings, with fruit to follow. Dinner might be a BBQ, risotto or pasta dish and there is always the chance to try some local cooking. Generally our passengers find the more they put into a trip, the more they benefit from it.

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## Dietary Requirements

If you have any dietary requirements please tell us at the time of booking and tell your crew at your welcome meeting. Our crew will try to cater for any particular dietary requirement or food intolerance whenever possible. However, it must be remembered that it may not always be possible and the variety of dishes may be severely limited in comparison to those available to others. If there is anything in particular you require in your diet, that you would miss from home, or because of an allergy would miss out on, it would be best to bring this with you. Depending on your particular requirements, you may need to allow yourself some extra spending money to allow you to purchase extra food items.

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## Itineraries

Our itineraries are developed and published with the best of intentions, however travel in more remote areas of the world is unpredictable - borders can close, there can be extreme adverse weather, strikes or maybe mechanical issues that affect the running of your trip, but equally due to the nature of our trips we can often spontaneously include a local festival or event into the itinerary. This being said, the safety of our passengers, leaders and operators is a priority for us. With this in mind we monitor world events very closely. By the very nature of the adventure travel that we take, there are risks and hazards that are inherent in our itineraries. We make operational decisions based on informed advice from a number of sources, including the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office travel advice, reports from other travel companies and local suppliers, leaders' reports from off the road and local contacts we have built up over many years of experience.

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## British Foreign Office Travel Advice and Warnings

Dragoman follows the British Foreign Office Travel advice when deciding where and where we are unable to travel. We will base our decisions on itineraries and alterations to published routes based on their

advice rather than the advice of other governments. We will advise you of any significant changes in advice before travel or whilst you are overseas.

However, we recommend you check the latest travel advisories from your own government for the country you are travelling to before you book and prior to departure. If there are any travel warnings present for the region you will travel to, as well as considering whether you are happy to travel despite the warning you must also check to ensure that it is not invalidating your travel insurance. Here are a few useful addresses:

UK - [www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice](http://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice)

Australia - <http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/>

New Zealand - <http://www.safetravel.govt.nz/>

United States - <https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country.html>

Canada - [http://www.voyage.gc.ca/countries\\_pays/menu-eng.asp](http://www.voyage.gc.ca/countries_pays/menu-eng.asp)

We also recommend that you check out the UK Travel Aware website before you travel at <https://travelaware.campaign.gov.uk/>. This website offers straightforward travel advice, top tips, and up-to-date country information to help you plan a safe trip.

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## Health

You need to be in good physical health in order to participate fully in our trips. When selecting your trip please make sure you have read through the itinerary carefully and assessed your ability to cope with our style of travel. To help you assess if this trip is suitable, please refer to the physical rating. The ratings for each trip are a good indication of how challenging they are and in some cases you should be prepared for some long driving days and possibly limited facilities. We are always happy to give extra advice if you have additional concerns. Please note that if, in the opinion of our leader, you are unable to complete the itinerary without undue risk to yourself and/or the rest of the group, Dragoman reserves the right to exclude you from all or part of the trip without a refund.

You should consult your doctor for up-to-date medical travel information prior to travel, particularly if you have a pre-existing medical condition. You must also declare any pre-existing medical conditions to your travel insurers upon purchase and provide evidence to us prior to departure that your pre-existing medical condition has been declared to your insurers. Failure to do so will mean that you are unable to join the trip.

## Extreme Environments

There may be periods of time within your trip when you meet extreme conditions, such as extreme heat, extreme wind, extreme cold, extreme humidity, extreme altitude, extreme crowds etc. Whilst our crew will let you know at the time when you are likely to meet these conditions, please ensure that you have read through the trip notes carefully and researched the local weather conditions at the time and that you feel that you are fit enough to cope with these conditions. If you have any doubts at all, please contact us to discuss your concerns prior to booking, and when on trip, if you find that the local conditions are causing you concern at any time, please be sure to let your trip leader know so that appropriate precautions can be discussed.

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## Altitude

Some pre-existing medical conditions are known to severely worsen at high altitude and be difficult to adequately treat on the ground, leading to more serious consequences. It is imperative that you discuss your pre-existing medical condition/s with your doctor. We understand certain medications are reported to aid acclimatising to high altitude; please discuss these options with your doctor. For trips that travel to areas of high altitude, the tour leader will issue you with a self-assessment altitude questionnaire which allows you to monitor how you are coping with the altitude and informs you of danger signals so that you

can reports these as soon as possible, either to the tour leader or a medical professional.

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### **Yellow Fever**

A valid international certificate of vaccination against Yellow Fever is required in many countries. You may need to present this on arrival at the airport or border crossing. Some countries will refuse entry if you are unable to present your certificate. It's also quite common for your home country to request a Yellow Fever certificate on your arrival back home.

It is your responsibility to check with your doctor well in advance of leaving home about the Yellow Fever requirements for the countries you'll be visiting.

### **Malaria & other mosquito-borne diseases**

There is a risk of contracting malaria in some areas which we travel through. If your trip goes to a areas with malaria it is always best to get expert advice before travelling about the types of malaria pills available, whether they are recommended, and take any that are prescribed as instructed. Consult your GP or travel clinic for the most up-to-date requirements.

Other mosquito-borne diseases such as yellow fever, dengue fever, chikungunya and Zika are continuing to spread and are becoming a bigger problem around the world. Mosquito bite prevention is vital to avoid contracting any of these diseases, as there are no vaccines or specific treatments available. Health professionals have issued warnings for pregnant women travelling to areas affected by the Zika virus. For more information about Zika please visit:

- WHO: [www.who.int/en/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/zika-virus](http://www.who.int/en/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/zika-virus)
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention: [www.cdc.gov/zika](http://www.cdc.gov/zika)

The Anopheles mosquitoes that transmit malaria usually bite between the hours of dusk and dawn, whereas the Aedes mosquitoes that transmit yellow fever, dengue fever, chikungunya and Zika bite both during the day and the night. To prevent being bitten, it is recommended to cover up by wearing long-legged and long-sleeved clothing, preferably light-coloured and buttoned at the wrists. Do not sleep without closing your windows, tent door, etc. and use a mosquito net in hotels or if sleeping outside where there are mosquitoes present. Use mosquito repellent applied directly to your skin or soaked into your clothing. Treating clothes and mosquito nets with a Permethrin solution also provides significant protection. It should be available at most travel stores. Mosquito coils are useful on still nights and in hotel rooms, but cannot be used inside the tents. For more advice on how to avoid bites please see: [www.travelhealthpro.org.uk/factsheet/38/insect-and-tick-bite-avoidance](http://www.travelhealthpro.org.uk/factsheet/38/insect-and-tick-bite-avoidance)

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### **Vaccinations**

Recommended vaccinations and other health protections vary according to different regions and recent bulletins issued by health authorities. It is essential to get the latest specific health advice on the regions and countries you are planning to travel in, so please check with either your doctor or travel clinic in good time before you travel. The following websites are also a helpful resource: [www.nathnac.net](http://www.nathnac.net) and [www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk](http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk)

In the UK, we have been working with Nomad Travel for many years and their website has comprehensive, up-to-date vaccination and health information. You will receive a 10% discount off all vaccinations given at Nomad Travel clinics.

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## **Safety & Security**

At Dragoman your safety is of paramount importance and we will do our best to ensure that your travel with us is safe and trouble-free, but we do ask that you take that little bit of extra care whilst you are away and to understand about the nature of this style of travel.

Of course we want you to have an enjoyable time, but you must also remember that part of the enjoyment of travel is experiencing a different way of life and cultures. This may also mean experiencing different safety and hygiene standards than those you are normally used to.

Therefore, please take note of the following safety tips and follow any local safety advice or briefings delivered by our crew or any third-party suppliers we use during your trip.

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## Transport Safety

- Our own vehicles have fully-fitted seat belts; make sure you always belt up.
- If you find a safety belt inoperable or missing on one of our vehicles, please inform the crew immediately.
- Unfortunately, we cannot guarantee that other vehicles we may use or recommend in some countries will be fitted with seat belts on every seat as it is not a legal requirement in much of the world.
- Please remain seated on board vehicles at all times when the vehicle is in motion.
- Never place luggage in the aisles or foot wells.
- Ensure you know where your nearest Emergency exit is; this may be a designated emergency exit, a window, a door, or a roof hatch.
- Check the location of the fire extinguisher and first aid kit.
- Follow any safety instructions provided by the crew/driver.
- Our vehicles are fitted with roof seats which can be used in certain conditions, such as when driving at low speeds, off main tarmac roads, etc. The roof hatches can only be opened and the roof seats used with the express permission of the crew and you must never sit in the roof seats without seat belts.

## Road Safety

- Traffic in some countries travels on the opposite side of the road to what you may be used to, so ensure you look both ways before crossing the road.
- In many countries vehicles do not automatically stop at crossings and driving styles may be very unpredictable, so please remain very vigilant when near roads and vehicles.
- Crash helmets are often not provided with mopeds and motorbikes overseas – we do not recommend you hire these vehicles.

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## Fire & Other Safety - Hostels/Hotels/Homestays

- Ensure you know where your nearest fire exit is and check to ensure that it is operative.
- Check the location of the nearest fire extinguisher.
- Study the fire instructions in your room if available.
- Identify how to raise the alarm if a fire occurs.
- If a fire occurs, leave immediately; do not stop to collect your effects.
- Proceed to an assembly point well away from the building.
- Electrics in hotels in many of the places that we visit will not be up to the same standards as at home. Please ensure that you check rooms, especially bathrooms and are aware of any issues that look unsafe. If in doubt inform the crew who will endeavour to sort the situation out if possible.
- Staircases and stairwells are often built to a very different design than under western building standards. There may be no guard rails, be excessively steep, have dangerous gaps between the stairs and the wall, etc. At all times be aware and take appropriate and prudent care.
- We often stay in homestays and farmstays. These may range from a traditional yurt through to a tree house or a town house. As these are traditional homes, they may well not adhere to our western standards of safety and so it is important that you make yourself aware of potential risks.
- If in doubt please inform the crew of any safety issues with the hotels/hostels or homestays.

## Fire Safety - Campsites

- Ensure you know where the nearest source of water or fire extinguisher is.
- Know how to raise the alarm.
- Extinguish all camping fires fully before retiring to bed.
- Observe any regulations regarding fires and bushfires in dry conditions.

- Identify how to raise the alarm if a fire occurs.
- If a fire occurs, leave immediately; do not stop to collect your effects.
- Proceed to an assembly point away from the tented accommodation/affected campsite.

### Other Campsite Safety & Security

- Familiarise yourself with the campsite and any known hazards.
- Group the tents around our vehicle wherever possible.
- No open flames, smoking or flammable liquids in or near the tents.
- Ensure the cooking area is well away from the tents.
- Ensure all water for cooking and drinking is purified first.
- Ensure any soil toilets are a minimum of 50m away from the tents and the cooking area.
- All food waste should be burned or buried a minimum of 100m away from the site.
- Ensure local advice is followed concerning any wildlife in the area.
- Keep valuables locked in the vehicle.
- Be aware of any local security issues that might be important.
- Do not set out tents close to perimeter fences which may be a security risk.
- Be aware of the security arrangements and local guards for campsite and if in doubt ask them where and where not to pitch tents.
- If in doubt please inform the crew of any safety issues with campsite.
- When wild camping, ensure that you do not wander away from the camp alone. If you do leave camp, ensure that you have notified the leader or other members of the group.

### Food Safety

- Make sure your food has been thoroughly cooked.
- Hot food should be hot, cold food should be cold.
- Avoid any uncooked food, except fruit and vegetables (notably those you can peel or shell yourself).
- In many countries you should only drink bottled water or purified water and ensure any seal is intact when purchasing bottles.
- On the Dragoman vehicles we have a tank of drinking water that is kept purified by the crew.
- Avoid ice in drinks as this can cause upset stomachs in hot climates.
- Make sure you wash your hands in antibacterial product when preparing and/or eating food.
- Many of the restaurants that you will eat in, either as a group or as individuals, will NOT have the same standards of food hygiene as we have in the western world. Unfortunately this is a reality of life in these regions. Therefore please think carefully about where you eat, what food you order and be aware of the risks.

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### Personal Safety

One of the real advantages of overland travel is that the vehicle provides a very real level of security when travelling. There is no doubt that a properly-equipped overland vehicle, with safes, fully lockable doors and windows is an obvious advantage when travelling in much of the world. Generally speaking, you will not be travelling on local public transport and will have the added security of travelling in a group with experienced crew on-hand to offer advice. We have come up with a few pointers that we recommend you follow:

- Follow the crew's specific safety advice in each destination.
- Always remain aware and vigilant, and stay away from situations where you do not feel comfortable.
- Avoid carrying too much money.
- Always avoid carrying your passport, driving licence, air tickets, and other valuable items around with you unless this is essential. Instead, keep valuables such as this locked away in the truck's safe, or the safety deposit box in the room or reception of the hotel/hostel.
- If you are carrying cash, cards or valuables, use a money belt or neck wallet which are more easily concealed and more difficult to pickpocket.

- Do not take any valuable jewellery, watches, etc. away with you in the first place.
- Avoid walking in poorly lit areas.
- If possible avoid walking around on your own; it is always safer to explore with others.
- Always try to walk with confidence and purpose, which will help you avoid looking like a lost tourist!
- Take special care when walking to avoid spraining or twisting your ankle on potholes, cobbles and uneven ground.

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### **Activity Safety & Optional Activities**

You will have the opportunity to take part in many exciting activities and excursions, some of which are included (e.g. hiking the Inca Trail, trekking to see Mountain Gorillas, visiting the Taj Mahal, etc.), whilst others are optional (e.g. white water rafting in Uganda, zip-lining in Costa Rica, etc.). Some of these activities require a certain level of fitness, so it's important that you read through the trip notes thoroughly and make your own conclusions as to whether you feel that you are fit and healthy enough to enjoy this trip and its activities to their fullest.

Some activities may have higher risks than you are used to and you must judge whether or not you wish, or have the physical ability, to take part.

Please note that riding helmets are mandatory for all optional and included horse riding activities. This is an insurance requirement.

Optional activities mentioned by Dragoman are not included in the trip price or kitty, and do not form part of your contract with Dragoman. As such you accept that any assistance given by Dragoman crew members or local representatives in arranging optional activities does not render us liable for them in any way. The Dragoman crew are assisting you in arranging these activities for your added enjoyment whilst on your trip. The operators of these services and optional extras are local suppliers who contract directly with the client 'on the road', subject to and in accordance with their own terms and conditions. Dragoman accepts no liability for any action or activity undertaken by the client which is arranged independently of Dragoman while on tour. Crew may take part in an optional activity but do so as private individuals and not as company representatives.

Please use your own good judgement when selecting an activity in your free time.

Ensure that you use the appropriate equipment on optional activities, including life jackets, helmets, etc. This is especially important on activities such as horse riding, white-water rafting, etc.

Always ensure that your travel medical insurance covers you for all included and optional activities that you wish to participate in.

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### **Included Activities**

Included activities are listed in the day-to-day itinerary, all other activities are optional and at your own expense. If you choose not to participate in the included activities on this itinerary, the cost will not necessarily be refunded; this is something you will need to check with your leader.

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### **Optional Activities**

A selection of optional activities is listed in the day-to-day itinerary. This list is designed to be a helpful guide as to what is commonly available in each location, and is neither an exhaustive list, a guarantee that the activity is available, or an endorsement or recommendation. Please note that certain activities may not be available on your particular visit if they are overbooked, underbooked, out of season, or for any other reason - the list of activities is made according to our latest information and in the best faith, but please be aware that things may change between our last visit and your arrival. Please also note that it may not be possible to do all the activities listed in the time available at each destination, and it is recommended to give yourself extra time in your joining or ending city if you would like to participate in

some optional activities there.

Prices listed are for entrance only and do not include transport costs to and from the sites or local guides unless indicated - again, these prices are displayed according to our latest information and in the best faith, but prices do fluctuate due to exchange rates, season, numbers of participants, and simple increases from the operator - any prices listed are a guide only and certainly cannot be guaranteed.

Optional activities are not necessarily endorsed or recommended by Dragoman nor included in the price of this trip. If you do any optional activities, you do so at your own risk and it must be clearly understood that your participation is your own decision and does not form part of your contract with Dragoman. You may be required to sign/complete a waiver form or optional activity form for some optional activities.

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## Insurance

It is a condition of booking that you have comprehensive travel insurance. Without evidence of valid travel insurance you will not be allowed to start the trip.

We recommend that any policy has a minimum medical (including repatriation) cover of £5,000,000. We recommend that any policy also has a minimum level of cover for Personal Liability of £2,000,000 and for Cancellation and Curtailment of £5,000 (or the full cost of your trip). Cover for loss of baggage, personal effects, money and other inclusions are down to personal choice although please bear in mind that personal effects are more likely to go missing whilst travelling and you should ensure that your policy is adequate to cover the value of your personal effects e.g. cameras, tablets, phones, ipods, etc. Please note that Dragoman is not responsible for your personal effects and is not insured for their loss. Please note that you should be insured for trip postponement or cancellation purposes immediately upon paying a deposit.

Whatever policy you choose, you must ensure that it is designed for adventure/overland travel and make sure it covers any activity that you intend to undertake (whether included or optional). As such it must cover you for adventure activities such as white water rafting, trekking, horse-riding, etc., and that the 24-hour Emergency Assistance Company must be experienced in handling situations in developing countries - for example, that they have the ability to arrange repatriation from remote areas such as the Sahara or if you were trekking in the Andes. On activities or side trips that are not recommended by us, please ensure you are happy with the safety of the activity before participating.

Please note that in the case of credit card travel insurance we will require details of the participating insurer, the insurance policy number and emergency contact number prior to travel rather than just the bank's name and credit card details. It is up to you to ensure that these policies have the cover you require, as many of these policies are not able to cope with adventure travel to remote areas and many are not valid for travelling outside your country of residence or outside the EU.

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## Our Liability Insurance

Dragoman has comprehensive passenger vehicle liability protection and tour operator insurance. These policies have total indemnities of £5,000,000 and £10,000,000 per incident respectively. This is in addition to local vehicle insurance and your personal travel insurance.

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## Out of Office Hours Contact

We have an out of office hours number you can call which should only be used once you have left your home country to start the trip and in the event of a real emergency. Should you need to call the number, we will do what we can to help but please bear in mind that real progress or action may not be possible until normal office hours. If you can not get through please leave a message with you name, reference number, contact details and a message with the help that you need and we will get back to you.

If your flight is delayed or cancelled, please let us know and then make your way to the joining hotel as instructed in these trip notes. If you cannot get through leave a message and a contact number as these will be regularly checked and the crew informed if necessary.

**Out of hours Number: +44 (0) 7985 106564**

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## Luggage & Kit List

Although you will not have to carry your main bag for long distances, you will need to help load and unload them onto the truck. For this reason we recommend that you use a backpack or soft bag rather than a heavy suitcase. During your trip your main luggage will be kept in the truck's back locker which will be inaccessible during a drive day, so you will also need a small daypack. This can be used to carry your camera, water bottle and other personal effects for daily use. Please be aware that due to the constant dust and vibrations your luggage bag will be subject to extreme wear and tear.

The size of baggage that can be brought on this tour is limited by the locker space on the truck. We recommend that your bag be no larger than a large rucksack with a capacity of about 80 litres (approximately 70cm high, 40cm wide, and 40cm deep). The weight limit for luggage on all trucks is a maximum of 20kg.

Your clothes and equipment should be appropriate for the conditions you are travelling in, which will vary depending on which part of the world you're heading to. On overland trips, Dragoman will provide all camping equipment apart from sleeping bags and ground mats, so you'll need to bring those with you if your trip includes camping nights.

Think about the climate and altitude of the areas you'll be travelling to - there's nothing worse than being cold at night so it's worth investing in a decent sleeping bag if it's likely to get cold. And remember that even when it's warm during the day, it can often get cold at night, particularly in desert regions.

For a general idea of what you need, this list provides a guide:

### General

- Sleeping bag, sleeping bag liner, sleeping mat and small pillow – if your trip includes camping nights
- Sandals or flip flops
- Comfortable walking shoes
- Sun hat and sunglasses
- Waterproof jacket
- Warm sweater or fleece
- Swimwear
- Comfortable travelling clothes and a set of casual but smart clothes for evenings out
- If visiting places of worship on the trip, men should bring a pair of full length trousers and women should bring a skirt that covers their knees and a scarf
- Towel – quick dry, lightweight travel towels are best
- Toiletries including bio degradable wet wipes, sanitary products, hand gel, sun cream and insect repellent
- Day pack – essential for keeping things handy when on the truck, on short hikes, walking around cities, etc
- Assorted dry bags – to protect your kit from dust and damp
- Pouch or money belt
- Water bottle (at least 1 litre) – we carry drinking water on all of our trucks and actively encourage our customers to use the water supplied. Whilst away from the truck we encourage the use of a filter water bottle and we are able to offer Dragoman customers a 25% discount on Water to Go bottles and filters using the code DRAGOMAN25 on the link <https://www.watertogo.eu/dragoman>
- Head torch with spare batteries and bulbs
- Camera with spare battery and extra memory cards
- Electrical accessories such as charger, power bank, adapter, etc
- Carbon monoxide detector
- A good book, a diary or notebook and pen, a fun game for travel days
- Personal medical kit – see notes below



## Cold weather

For trips going through mountainous areas, deserts, high altitude regions and Patagonia, you should be prepared for cold weather, especially at night. Ensure you bring:

- 3/4 or 4/5 season sleeping bag with liner – see note on sleeping bag ratings below
- Thermal base layers
- Winter jacket
- Hat, gloves and scarf
- Warm socks

## Hot weather

For trips going through tropical areas you should be prepared for hot and humid weather. Ensure you bring:

- Loose fitting clothes with long sleeves and legs
- Mosquito repellent
- Mosquito net – not essential as our tents have mosquito netting but can be handy for hotels and hostels or sleeping under the stars

## Trips with trekking

For trips including treks, ensure you bring:

- Lightweight walking clothes suitable for the general climate
- Waterproof trousers
- Sturdy walking boots
- Walking stick(s) – not essential but can help in steep terrain; sticks can generally be hired or purchased en route

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## Sleeping Bags

A sleeping bag's rating typically indicates the lowest temperature at which it will keep the average sleeper warm enough to sustain them but not necessarily make them warm enough to feel comfortable. For example, with a 0°C bag, you should be able to stay in 0°C temperature but you will not necessarily be able to sleep comfortably.

For European sleeping bags there are the following standards:

- The upper limit is the highest temperature at which a 'standard' adult man is able to have a comfortable night's sleep without excess sweating.
- The comfort rating is based on a 'standard' adult woman having a comfortable night's sleep.
- The lower limit is based on the lowest temperature at which a 'standard' adult man is deemed to be able to have a comfortable night's sleep.
- The extreme rating is a survival-only rating for a 'standard' adult man. This is an extreme survival rating only and it is not advisable to rely on this rating for general use.

The transition zone, in between the comfort and lower temperature, is usually considered as the best purchase guideline.

## Personal Medical Kit

All of our trucks have a standard motorist's first aid kit on board for use in emergency situations only. The first aid kit is in compliance with UK standards for first aid provision within motor vehicles, and contain supplies to treat road side injuries. We do not carry prescription medications, therefore in addition to this we recommend that you purchase your own personal medical kit.

In the UK we have teamed up with Nomad Travel Stores and Clinics to produce travel medical kits. They

have been designed in conjunction with the truck kits and contain everything you would need for any minor incidents and health issues. For more details please visit their website:

**Global Survival Kit** - <http://www.nomadtravel.co.uk/p/2712/Global-Survival-Kit>

**Ultimate Medical Kit (POM)** - [http://www.nomadtravel.co.uk/p/2909/Ultimate-Medical-Kit-\(POM\)](http://www.nomadtravel.co.uk/p/2909/Ultimate-Medical-Kit-(POM))

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## Passports

Check that your passport will still be valid for 6 months after the end of your trip - this is important as some countries WILL refuse entry to anyone whose passport is due to expire. A temporary or 'visitor's' passport is not valid on our trips. You will need to provide us with your passport details prior to departing for your trip. If you change your passport, please remember to inform us as soon as possible - however, please be aware that changing your passport can cause big problems if you need to apply for visas or permits (such as the Inca Trail or Gorilla Trekking) in advance.

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## Pre and Post Trip Accommodation and Airport Transfers

At Dragoman we believe you should make the most of the places you visit, so if you would like to see more of the joining or finishing point cities, why not book additional accommodation to extend your stay? Dragoman can take away the hassle of time zones and language barriers by making the booking for you. This accommodation is only available at the joining or finishing city of your trip, immediately before or after the trip you are travelling on.

While Dragoman is happy to assist with booking your pre and post trip accommodation, it is important that you understand that you may be able to book your own room at a cheaper rate directly through the hotel or on the internet. Our additional accommodation prices are based on the hotel's rate plus an administration fee. Please note our rates do not reflect last minute walk-in rates or internet specials.

We can also book arrival airport transfers for you as long as we have your flight arrival details. These are normally payable in cash upon arrival; however we do have pre-paid transfers in a few destinations.

Please contact our reservations team for details of the accommodation and transfers that we can offer, as not all hotels offer this service.

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## Continuing Your Trip

Having an amazing trip and met a great group of people? Having too much fun to go home yet? If you're on one of our trips and decide that you would like to continue with us, then why not speak to your trip leader who can advise you of the cost and availability of continuing your journey.

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## Contingency Emergency Fund

Sometimes, civil or political unrest, or reasons beyond Dragoman's control (e.g. a natural disaster), can mean that an itinerary is disrupted and we have to make a contingency plan. This may involve hiring alternate transport or even the whole group flying over an area. Although Dragoman will help organise travel arrangements, in circumstances outside Dragoman's control you will be required to contribute the additional costs involved and therefore we ask you to bring along a 'Contingency Fund' of USD400. In almost all cases trips run smoothly and this fund is therefore never used. We also recommend that you take along an internationally recognised credit or charge card with a decent limit in case of emergencies, such as medical treatment en route, or even the need to be repatriated; though these occurrences are rare. Remember that travel insurance policies usually only refund you for expenses after you have already paid out.

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## Responsible Tourism

Dragoman is committed to ensuring that we have a positive impact on local communities and that we implement policies to minimise any negative impact on the local environment. We are dedicated to making sure that we adopt a responsible attitude to the areas through which we travel and believe that our trips should benefit the local people and their environment. Dragoman recognises that we are guests of local communities and strive to make these communities our partners, so that they benefit directly from our visit. You can find full details of Dragoman's Responsible Tourism policy from the link below:

<https://www.dragoman.com/about-us/responsible-travel/policy-and-guidelines>

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## **Water**

The sale of bottled water contributes to an enormous environmental problem around the world. In addition to the water in the bottle, the production of a 1 litre plastic bottle takes 2 litres of water and 200ml of oil. A large proportion end up in limited landfill or discarded in waterways and natural environments.

Please avoid the purchase of bottled water by using the chemically sterilised water stored in the purpose-built storage tank on your overland vehicle. You are free to refill your bottle as many times a day as you like. You are helping the environment and your pocket!

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## **Electrical Equipment**

Your vehicle will be usually equipped with a 12-Volt socket, so to charge your iPod, MP3 player, camera, laptop and mobile phone you will need a DC 12V adapter - the type that can be used from a cigarette lighter in your car. Please be aware that only one piece of equipment can be charged at a time and it will not be allowed if there is a risk of running the vehicle's batteries low. Batteries may also be recharged from hotel room wall sockets and the majority of the campsites we stay at have electricity points, so please bring along your normal charging adapters as well. You will need to ensure that you have the correct country adapter for your specific charger.

For mobile phones, please note that most countries in the Americas operate at 850 MHz and 1900 MHz which is not the same frequencies used in Europe, Africa, Asia and Australia. Most modern tri-band and quad-band mobile phones will be able to operate on these frequencies but please check your mobile phone specifications before travelling to ensure that you'll be able to use your phone in the Americas.

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## **A Few Rules**

It is one of our core values to treat all people we encounter with respect, including the local people who make our destinations so special. We have therefore set down a number of rules to which our customers must adhere.

Engaging in commercial or exploitative sexual activities, committing acts of violence or threatening violence towards local people, other group members or any member of our staff is not allowed. Any customer engaging in such activities will be required to leave the trip immediately with no refund of the trip price.

You must at all times comply with the laws, customs, foreign exchange and drug regulations of all countries visited and conduct yourself in accordance with our responsible travel policy. Any customer found contravening such laws or regulations will be required to leave the trip immediately with no refund of the trip price.

Although we are aware that in some parts of the world taking, carrying or selling drugs, carrying weapons, or engaging in commercial or exploitative sexual activities may be legal, it is not acceptable for Dragoman customers and our tour leaders have the right to ask you to leave the trip immediately with no refund of the trip price if you are found to be engaging in such activities.

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## **Issues on the Trip**

While we always endeavour to provide the best possible holiday experience, due to the nature of travel and the areas we visit sometimes things can and do go wrong. Should any issue occur while you are on your trip, it is imperative that you discuss this with your group leader or our local partner straight away so that they can do their best to rectify the problem and save any potential negative impact on the rest of your trip.

We recognise that there may be times when your group leader may not be able to resolve a situation to your satisfaction. If this is the case please contact our customer relations department on

[customer-relations@dragoman.co.uk](mailto:customer-relations@dragoman.co.uk).

You may also choose to provide details in your feedback questionnaire which we ask you to complete at the end of your trip, but we do ask you to be aware that it is very difficult for us to provide any practical help after the trip is complete.

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## **Tipping**

Tipping is entirely voluntary. The Dragoman crew may be travelling with you for many weeks and usually they become good friends with most members of the group. It is sometimes easy to forget that they do work hard to ensure that you do have a great trip. If you feel you would like to tip them, they certainly would appreciate it.

On a number of our trips, we also use a local guide as well as our own Dragoman crew. These guides live and travel with you through their home country and it is usual to tip them when they leave. We recommend USD 1 to USD 4 per person per day, but check with your crew for an appropriate amount.

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## **Feedback**

After your travels, we want to hear from you! We rely on your feedback. We read it carefully. Feedback helps us to understand what we are doing well and what we could be doing better, and it allows us to make improvements for future travellers.

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These trip notes have been compiled to help you prepare for your journey, once you have booked. They include the full itinerary and dates, information and kit lists, meeting hotels, insurance, vaccinations, visas, and other information that will help you get ready for your trip.

Please ensure you have an up to date version of these Trip Notes

These trip notes were printed on 21/08/2019