

## URUGUAY, PANTANAL & THE FALLS, (ZFB)

Rio De Janeiro to Buenos Aires 23 days, departing 26 Feb 2020



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### TRIP OVERVIEW

<b>Trip Style:</b>	Overlanding
<b>Route:</b>	Rio De Janeiro to Buenos Aires
<b>Duration:</b>	23 days
<b>Transport:</b>	Overland expedition vehicle
	40%  60%
<b>Accom:</b>	Hotels, Hostels, Campsites

#### Physical Challenge:

EASY HARD

Your itinerary may include easy-paced day walks, bike rides, and other activities that are not too strenuous.

#### Lifestyle Challenge:

EASY HARD

You may be camping some of the time but the pace of the trip is fairly relaxed and the facilities and road conditions are generally of a high standard.

[Itineraries](#)  
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## ROUTE MAP



## COUNTRIES VISITED

### Argentina



Argentina is a vast country which has a staggering diversity of climates and landscapes. With vibrant cities, the pampas, the jungles and the wind-swept wilds of [Patagonia](#), it is a country with a very special character all of its own and a rich cultural heritage.

[Buenos Aires](#) is the vibrant capital of Argentina. Full of life and brimming with culture, music and art, with great local restaurants, local street markets and dances, Buenos Aires is the heart and soul of Argentina and swings to the rhythm of

### 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 and Ipanema.

the tango. Also home to some exquisite wine bars and an amazing nightlife, Buenos Aires is a must-see city while in South America!

### STAY WITH REAL ARGENTINIAN COWBOYS

On the vast green pampas, the gauchos (Argentina's famous cowboys) spend their days riding their horses and protecting their cattle. Argentina is world-famous for the incredible quality of its beef and steaks, largely due to the huge pastures that the cattle have to roam on.

The north west of the country has some beautiful deserts full of multi-coloured rock formations and some magnificent wines are produced here around Salta and Cafayate. Also famous for its incredible wines is the region of [Mendoza](#), a serene town surrounded by the Andes, including Aconcagua, which at 6,962 metres is the tallest mountain in South America.

### EXPLORE ARGENTINA'S PEACEFUL LAKE DISTRICT

Further south is Argentina's peaceful and beautiful lake district, and further still are the haunting moorlands of Patagonia. This beautiful area is known for its breathtaking and desolate landscapes, towering rugged mountains, magnificent lakes and beautiful glacial scenery. It is a great place for outdoor activities, such as trekking, horse riding, kayaking and mountain biking! At the far south is the remote island of [Tierra del Fuego](#) and the most southerly town in the world, Ushuaia.

Argentina is the home to some beautiful wildlife. The Península Valdés near Puerto Madryn is a protected area for whales, penguins and seals, and Patagonia is full of fascinating birdlife and wild guanacos.

### CREATE MEMORIES AT MIGHTY IGUAZU FALLS

One of the great highlights of Argentina is the mighty [Iguazu Falls](#), on the border with Brazil. This incredible set of waterfalls is one of the world's largest, and one of the most spectacular sights in the world!

Argentina is a magnificent country full of buzzing culture, amazing landscapes and a wide variety of activities, and should be high on every traveller's wish list!

### 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 \(PDF\)](#)

## Uruguay



Uruguay is nestled in deep South America just above Argentina, and is one of the lesser-visited destinations in South America, often overlooked in favour of its larger neighbours Brazil and Argentina. However those who do visit are rewarded with friendly welcomes and uncrowded sights.

Take a trip to serene colonial town of Colonia del Sacramento and travel back in time. The rural streets are paved with stone and, with the addition of restaurants, bars and nightlife, this little town is becoming a popular place to visit.

The capital of Montevideo is a city full of life. The dance of Uruguayan Tango originated here and the unique style has now become popular across the world. The music scene, lively markets and excellent nightlife make Montevideo a great city to visit.

Other highlights in Uruguay include the rugged coastlines and colonial fort of Santa Teresa National Park, and experiencing a slice of life as a local gaucho at a wonderful ranch stay in Tacuarembó.

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## DAILY ITINERARY

### Day 1: Rio De Janeiro ( Wed 26 Feb )

**Border information:** if you are joining in Rio de Janeiro, you will most likely enter Brazil at Rio de Janeiro Galeão International Airport (IATA code: RIO/GIG).

Welcome to the iconic Brazilian city of Rio de Janeiro! There will be an important group meeting at 6:00pm at the joining hotel - please look out at the hotel reception for a note from your leader with more details about this important meeting.



Please note that many of the options listed below will only be possible for those with extra time in Rio de Janeiro before the start of your trip with us - please contact the Sales team if you would like to book pre-tour accommodation with us to have extra time exploring Rio de Janeiro.

In Rio de Janeiro we will stay in a great hotel in the Flamengo district, close to the beach and the metro station.

Hotel for the night: Hotel Argentina  
Hotel Argentina  
Rua Cruz Lima No. 30  
Flamengo  
Rio de Janeiro  
Brazil  
Tel - +55 21 2558 7233

### Activity

### Approximate Cost

Visit the world famous statue Christ the Redeemer  
BRL 74

Take a cable car up Pão de Açúcar  
(Sugarloaf Mountain)  
BRL 80

### 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 2 to 3: Ilha Grande ( Thu 27 Feb to Fri 28 Feb )

Today we will leave Rio behind and travel by truck to the stunning island retreat of Ilha Grande. We will leave our truck behind for a couple of days and take a ferry, so you may wish to pack a small overnight bag. There are no private cars or banks on the island, so you will need to bring cash along with you and be prepared for a short walk with your bags to the hostel.

We will stay in a comfortable hostel.

Estimated drive time - 5 hours.

### Day 4 to 5: Paraty ( Sat 29 Feb to Sun 01 Mar )

Today our journey begins with a short drive to the colonial town of Paraty on the Emerald Coast of the Atlantic!

We will have free time to explore the town, take a historical tour, walk along the stunning scenery of the coastline, head out snorkelling or diving, or simply relax on the idyllic beaches.

Estimated Drive Time - 4-5 hours

In Paraty we will stay in a hostel.

#### Activity

#### Approximate Cost

Go for a scuba diving trip in the incredible oceans around Paraty

BRL 250

Boat trip out to islands and beaches

Free

Try your hand at stand-up paddle boarding by hiring a board from one of the many vendors at the Jabaquara beach in Paraty

BRL 35

Learn all about the fascinating history of Brazil and the Gold Trail, on an excellent walking tour of the old colonial town of Paraty

USD 35

#### About Paraty:

Stretching west from the vibrant city of Rio de Janeiro is the spectacular Brazilian Emerald Coast, a dazzlingly-beautiful strip of land sandwiched between the verdant green hills and the sparkling waters of the Atlantic. Tropical islands, deserted beaches and picturesque coves with excellent swimming and diving make it the perfect place to



relax and enjoy some optional boat trips and other activities.

The old Portuguese colonial town of Paraty, founded in 1597 CE and once a very important port during the Portuguese gold rush of the 17th and 18th Centuries, is perhaps the most attractive spot on the coast. Low white-washed buildings with colourful doors and shutters crowd around the cobbled streets and plaza, full of interesting shops, bars and restaurants.

Paraty really comes alive at night, when locals and tourists alike sit outside the many street cafes and congregate in the main square. The town also has a couple of beaches and there are plenty of others in the surrounding area - and this is also a good place for boat and snorkelling trips, which can be arranged locally.

### Day 6 to 7: Brotas ( Mon 02 Mar to Tue 03 Mar )

Today we will drive to the remote town of Brotas in southeastern Brazil.

In Brotas we will stay at a campsite with good facilities.

Estimated Drive Time - 9-10 hours.

The following morning if time allows we may have an opportunity to go rafting. Afterwards we will continue our journey towards the Pantanal, bush camping en route with no facilities.

Estimated Drive Time - 5 hours.

#### Activity

#### Approximate Cost

Head out white-water rafting on the fast moving waters of the Jacare River (approximately Grade 3-4)

BRL 150

### Day 8 to 9: Southern Pantanal ( Wed 04 Mar to Thu 05 Mar )

Today we have an early start to meet our guide in Campo Grande, and then drive on to Brazil's amazing Southern Pantanal region, where we have a visit a local eco-tourism ranch (or 'fazenda').

Estimated Drive Time - 5 hours.

We will spend 2 nights here and have a comprehensive package of included activities such as exploring the beautiful surrounding countryside on horseback, trips down the wildlife-abundant rivers in boats and canoes, and safaris on the ranch's trucks and on foot where we hope to spot capybaras, caimans, and (if we are very lucky) jaguars and ocelots. Our stay here is an incredible highlight!

In the Southern Pantanal we will stay in dorm accommodation in a well equipped lodge with all the meals and activities included.

#### Activity

#### Approximate Cost



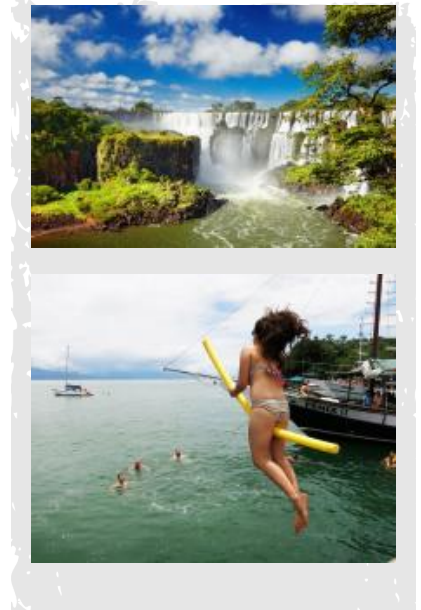
2 night wildlife safari into the Pantanal

Included in Kitty

### About Southern Pantanal:

The Pantanal is a vast wetland that covers much of inland central and southern Brazil - it is formed of a huge gently-sloping depression surrounded by rolling highlands, so the water from thousands of small rivers runs off from the highlands to collect in the basin before draining out into the Paraguay River. The Pantanal was a predominantly agricultural area, dotted with cattle ranches known locally as "Fazenda" - having realised the importance of their home as a unique habitat for wildlife, many of the Fazendas have opened up for eco-tourism in recent years and offer safaris and tours of the area.

The wildlife here is staggering, and there is probably nowhere else in South America where you'll be able to see as many indigenous species. There are over 250 different species of birds that have been recorded here, including parakeets, macaws, owls, kingfishers, ibis, storks, kites and hawks, hummingbirds and more, and there are prolific numbers of caiman, anacondas, iguanas, two species of anteaters, ocelots, jaguars, tapirs, giant river otters and thousands of marsh deer. One of the easier animals to spot is the capybara, a giant guinea-pig-type rodent that grows up to 60 kgs and lives in large herds in the swamps.



### Day 10 to 11: Bonito ( Fri 06 Mar to Sat 07 Mar )

After our morning activities and one final lunch in our beautiful ranch, it is time to leave the Pantanal and drive to the Brazilian eco-tourism capital of Bonito.

Estimated Drive Time - 3-4 hours.

We have a full day in Bonito to take part in some incredible optional activities. You could go out on a world-class snorkelling trip, explore the nearby caves, or go abseiling down some of the largest waterfalls in the area, amongst many other possibilities!

In Bonito we will camp in the grounds of an excellent hostel with a pool and good facilities.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Caving, rafting and snorkeling in the waters of Bonito	BRL 30
Take an incredible snorkelling trip through the crystal clear waters of the Rio da Prata, getting a phenomenal view of the fish and aquatic plants underwater	BRL 278
Visit the ethereal and other-worldly Blue Lake Cave near Bonito, an underground lake with an incredibly vivid shade of blue	BRL 95



Take a trek through the stunning areas surrounding Bonito, visiting some of the beautiful nearby waterfalls BRL 50

Go on a stunning sunset horse ride around the beautiful countryside around Bonito BRL 80

Hire a mountain bike in Bonito to freely explore the incredible countryside of Mato Grosso do Sul USD 20

### About Bonito:

The small town of Bonito in the southern Brazilian state of Mato Grosso do Sul is perfectly located in a beautiful and unique area. The area's main attractions are the crystal clear rivers, springs and the stunning caves, not to mention the abundant wildlife, which includes monkeys, alligators, anacondas, over 30 varieties of fish and tremendous birdlife.

Unsurprisingly, the town is often described as the "eco-tourism capital of Brazil". There are endless activities on offer, from spectacular walks through the surrounding hills and forests, to caving, horse-riding, abseiling, and snorkeling. Many of the best attractions are on private land and the area is being very carefully managed in order to protect the wildlife and habitats found here.

## Day 12 to 13: Foz do Iguaçu, Iguazu Falls ( Sun 08 Mar to Mon 09 Mar )

Today we have a full drive day south to the city of Foz do Iguaçu.

Estimated Drive Time - 10-12 hours.

The following day we will visit the Brazilian side of the phenomenal Iguazu Falls, to get some incredible panoramic vistas of the mighty waterfalls. There is also time for optional activities such as taking a helicopter ride over the falls, visiting the incredible Itaipu Dam, or to quickly stop into Paraguay to pick up some bargains in the nearby Ciudad del Este.

In Foz do Iguaçu we will camp in the grounds of an excellent hostel out of town, with good facilities.

### Activity

### Approximate Cost

2 full days to discover the unbelievable Iguazu Falls

Included in Kitty

Take an exhilarating speed boat ride around the base of the falls from the Brazilian side

BRL 66

Head on an adrenaline-fuelled speedboat trip to the base of the falls on the Argentine side - be prepared to get very wet! ARS 450

Take an unforgettable 10-minute helicopter flight over the Iguazu Falls, enjoying a bird's eye view of one of the world's most incredible set of waterfalls USD 125

Visit the colossal Itaipu Dam, the second largest hydroelectric dam in the world BRL 68

Take a short trip into Paraguay to experience the chaos of Ciudad del Este and pick up a bargain or two (price listed is for a return trip in a taxi) BRL 140

### **About Foz do Iguazu:**

Foz do Iguazu (meaning "Mouth of the Iguazu River") is the Brazilian town nestled against the double-border with Argentina and Paraguay. The town is of course most famous as the base for exploring the incredible Iguazu Falls, and the Brazilian side of the waterfalls offers visitors a very different perspective - there are a number of cleverly constructed walkways that allow you to get right out over the water up close to some of the falls themselves, and you will often be able to see fantastic rainbows forming as the sun catches the spray.

For the ultimate waterfall viewing experience, you can also organise helicopter flights from the Brazilian side, where you'll be taken out right over the falls to give you a breathtaking view of this natural wonder from a totally different perspective. There is also a fantastic bird park in Foz, where you can see many of Brazil's native species including toucans and macaws.

You can also visit the incredible Itaipu Dam, the world's second-largest dam (after the Three Gorges Dam in China) that stretches across the River Parana between Brazil and Paraguay, and a marvel of modern engineering.

### **About Iguazu Falls:**

The Iguazu Falls, located on the Iguazu River between Argentina and Brazil, is the world's largest waterfall system and one of the most spectacular natural sights in the world!

The name "Iguazu" originates from the native Guarani words "y" (meaning "big") and "uasu" (meaning "water") - the Guarani legend says that the falls were created when a deity wanted to a beautiful mortal woman, but when she tried to escape away from him in a canoe with another man the deity sliced the river in two, condemning the water and the lovers to fall for eternity.

Visitors can see the Iguazu Falls from both sides of the border - on the

Argentinian side there are miles of trails and walkways through the forests and the many waterfalls along the southern banks, culminating in a kilometre-long walkway to the phenomenal "Garganta del Diablo (meaning "Devil's Throat"), the largest and most powerful section of the waterfall system. Millions of gallons of water thunder down violently to the bottom of the huge ravine, forming the most incredible display of power, rainbows, and spray! In the surrounding dense tropical jungle there are many varieties of brightly coloured butterflies and birds, and you can take an exhilarating motorboat ride up close to some of the waterfalls (if you don't mind getting soaked!).

### **Day 14: Iguazu Falls, Foz do Iguazu ( Tue 10 Mar )**

Today we will take a day trip into Argentina to see the incredible Iguazu Falls from the other side. This is well worth doing as the views are even more spectacular, and you'll be able to look right down into the mighty Garganta del Diablo (the largest waterfall here) from a gantry walkway viewing point. We will have a full day at the Argentine side of the falls, allowing us lots of time to freely explore the site, hike some nature trails, or perhaps take an exhilarating (and very wet) boat ride!

We will either return to our base in Foz do Iguazu or stay in Puerto Iguazu in Argentina.

### **Day 15: Yapeyú ( Wed 11 Mar )**

**Border information:** exit Brazil at Tancredo Neves, enter Argentina at Tancredo Neves.

Today we will leave Iguazu and head to the Argentine town of Yapeyú. This small town was the birthplace of General José de San Martín, one of the principal leaders of several South American countries' struggle for independence from the Spanish Empire.

In Yapeyú we will stay in a basic campsite on the shores of Rio Uruguay, or alternatively bushcamp further along the route.

Estimated Drive Time - 8-9 hours

### **Day 16 to 18: Tacuarembó ( Thu 12 Mar to Sat 14 Mar )**

**Border information:** exit Argentina at Salto Grande, enter Uruguay at Salto Grande.

Today we cross into Uruguay and head to the Tacuarembó area - the traditional gaucho land of Uruguay. We will spend 3 nights in an authentic estancia to learn about the gaucho way of living. We will have a chance to learn how to prepare typical food from the area (and of course taste it!) and also enjoy some traditional music.

In Tacuarembó we will camp in the grounds of an estancia.

Estimated Drive Time - 10-11 hours.

### Activity

### Approximate Cost

Enjoy an incredible 3-night stay at a traditional Uruguayan farm to gain a fascinating insight into the lives of the gauchos, take part in a cooking demonstration, and go to an evening of traditional local music

Included in Kitty

**About Tacuarembó:** Deep in the heart of the beautiful northern Uruguayan region of Tacuarembó is a traditional working farm which is open to visitors to stay for 2 nights. During our time in the estancia we will experience a slice of life as a 'gaucho' (cattle rancher), including a food workshop where we will learn how to prepare the typical Creole food from the area, and a music evening to enjoy traditional music on the accordion and guitar.

## Day 19: Montevideo ( Sun 15 Mar )

Today we will head south to the Uruguayan capital Montevideo. The following day will be free to explore Montevideo. The city has a mix of historical buildings and modern architecture and a main feature of the city is the Rambla (waterfront promenade) where locals frequently go for a stroll to drink their mate. Mate is the traditional South American caffeine-rich infused drink sipped through a straw, particularly popular in Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Bolivia, Brazil and Chile.

In Montevideo we will stay in a comfortable hotel.

Estimated Drive Time - 4-5 hours.

### Activity

### Approximate Cost

Freely explore the pleasant Uruguayan capital of Montevideo, its markets, colonial buildings, old city, and vast promenade along the coast

Free

Learn all about Uruguayan history and culture at some of Montevideo's many museums, such as the National Historical Museum, the Gaucho Museum, and the Museum of the Andes

Free

Get a deeper understanding of Montevideo on a free walking tour of the city from an enthusiastic local guide

Free

### About Montevideo:

Montevideo is the pleasant capital city of Uruguay, situated on the east bank of the Rio de la Plata, and is just about the southernmost capital

city in South America (just below Buenos Aires)! Montevideo was founded in 1724 by the Spanish in order to strengthen their claim over the surrounding area and achieve supremacy of the Rio de la Plata over the Portuguese. The city has suffered invasion from Britain and Portugal and a civil war between two of the main independence revolutionaries during its short history, only settling to a relative peace in 1851.

Montevideo is a lovely place to visit and explore, with most people's explorations being centered on the Ciudad Vieja area (the oldest part of the city) -this area includes many old buildings, several museums, art galleries, and nightclubs near Plaza Independencia, Sarandí Street and the Mercado del Puerto.

## Day 20: Colonia ( Mon 16 Mar )

This morning we head to Colonia del Sacramento, one of the oldest and most picturesque towns in Uruguay and a Unesco World Heritage site. The afternoon is free to explore the charming narrow cobbled streets of the Barrio Histórico and the pretty riverfront.

In Colonia we will stay in a lovely hotel.

Estimated Drive Time - 3-4 hours.

### Activity

### Approximate Cost

Discover the delightful UNESCO-listed colonial town of Colonia del Sacramento by freely exploring its cobbled streets, old buildings, and small museums	Free
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### About Colonia:

Colonia del Sacramento (usually shortened to simply 'Colonia') is one of the oldest towns in Uruguay, founded by Portuguese settlers in 1680. Rivalled by the Spanish settlement of Buenos Aires on the opposite bank, and undergoing constant occupations by the Spanish, Portuguese, and later Brazilian forces, the town finally became part of independent Uruguay in 1828.

Not a single echo of this turbulent past can be seen today, as the old town is one of the most serene, laid-back and atmospheric places in South America. The town's historic quarter has an irregular street plan filled with old colonial buildings and tree-lined cobbled streets, and is inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The whole town is a wonderful place to freely explore and wander around for an afternoon soaking up the chilled atmosphere.

## Day 21 to 22: Buenos Aires ( Tue 17 Mar to Wed 18 Mar )

Today we will hop on the ferry across to the vibrant city of Buenos Aires. The truck will drive around by road and rejoin us later in the day.

Day 22 is a free day to explore the city and discover its amazing

culture, art, and music.

In Buenos Aires we will stay in a centrally located hotel, breakfast is included.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Approximate Cost</b>
Explore cosmopolitan Buenos Aires, the coolest city in South America	ARS 250
Practice your dance steps in the birthplace of Tango	Free
Enjoy a free city tour of Buenos Aires	Free
Head out to a tango show in Buenos Aires' oldest cafe, the Gran Cafe Tortoni - seeing a slice of iconic Argentine culture in an ideal and intimate setting	ARS 450
Visit the strangely beautiful cemetery of Recoleta, the final resting place of many ex-presidents and Argentine icons, most famously including the tomb of Eva Peron	Free
Learn all about the cuisine of Argentina on a food tour of Buenos Aires, visiting several incredible local top-class eateries that you won't find in the guidebooks!	USD 85
Try some of Argentina's most delicious wines on a top-level wine tasting afternoon in Buenos Aires	USD 52

### **About Buenos Aires:**

At the mouth of the River Plate estuary (where the Uruguay and Paraná rivers flow out into the Atlantic Ocean) lies the fabulous city of Buenos Aires, the cosmopolitan capital of Argentina. It's a buzzing, energetic city that often feels more European than Latin American, so much so that it's often referred to as "the Paris of the South".

There is a huge amount to do see and do here, and it's a fantastic city to explore on foot and using the extensive metro system. Some areas to check out include San Telmo, a bohemian district full of charm, antique shops, street markets, and some excellent bars; Palermo, with its fantastic restaurants and nightlife; and Recoleta, the "Mayfair" of Buenos Aires and home to the La Recoleta cemetery, Eva "Evita" Perón's final resting place. The waterfront area known as La Boca is also worth exploring, a very photogenic district with its ramshackle buildings being painted in a rainbow of different bright colours.

Everywhere you go you'll be surrounded by some fantastic architecture. The Plaza de Mayo is perhaps the most historically interesting, as this is the site of the Cabildo (original town hall), Casa Rosada (the Presidential Palace) and the cathedral where the body of General San Martín lies.

In the evenings, you are spoilt for choice - Buenos Aires has a vibrant nightlife, with a huge number of bars and night clubs to choose from. Restaurants here vary from cheap and cheerful to world class, and it's a great place to get stuck into some of Argentina's finest steak and red wine. Of course this is also the home of Tango, and there are many evening Tango shows you can buy tickets for or even take a dancing class yourself!

## Day 23: Buenos Aires ( Thu 19 Mar )

Today is the final day of the trip and there is no accommodation provided tonight. Please contact our Sales Team if you wish to book additional nights in Buenos Aires, or continue the journey to Santiago and beyond.

**Border Information:** If you are flying out of Argentina today, the International Airport is Ezeiza International Airport (EZE)

### 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.

### PHYSICAL PREPARATION

#### SOUTH AMERICA PHYSICAL PREPARATION

South America is a 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

### 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.

## BRAZIL

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

Citizens of Australia, Canada, Japan, Mexico, Russia, South Korea and the USA **will** need a visa to visit Brazil. You will need to obtain the visa **in advance**. You can arrange this in advance of your travel by applying directly yourself with your nearest Brazilian Consulate, or by hiring a specialist visa agency to make the application on your behalf. Please note that most Brazilian consulates do not accept postal applications, so require either you or a visa agent to make an appointment in person - there are also strict rules regarding where you can apply for your visa, and the application will be rejected if it is not made at the consulate nearest to where you are 'resident', so please check the consulate's jurisdiction before your application.



Another option to obtain the visa is by applying at the Brazilian Embassy in Buenos Aires, Argentina. This is possible for most foreign tourists, but you will need to allow at least 3 working days for the visa to be processed, and you must make an appointment and fill out a visa request form online prior to your arrival at the embassy, and there are strict requirements for what supporting documents you will need – please visit the embassy’s website here for more information and to set up your appointment:

[http://www.conbrasil.org.ar/CONSBRASIL/visas\\_otros01engl.asp](http://www.conbrasil.org.ar/CONSBRASIL/visas_otros01engl.asp)

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**.

## ARGENTINA

Citizens of the UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada and all EU countries **will not** need a visa to visit Argentina 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**.

## URUGUAY

Citizens of the UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada, South Africa, Japan, and all EU countries **will not** need a visa to visit Uruguay 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**.

A valid yellow fever vaccination certificate is required from travellers coming from [areas with risk of yellow fever transmission](#) (including transiting through an airport in an area of risk).

## PERSONAL SPENDING

### PERSONAL SPENDING – SOUTH AMERICA

Based on the range that previous travellers have spent in South America, we recommend you allow between USD15 and USD30 per day. This amount is usually lower in Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru but slightly higher elsewhere.

This will covers expenses such as your optional activities, drinks, meals whilst out and also when staying in hotels, souvenirs, tips and personal permits.

### 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 overland 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 overland 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/overland/your-trip/money](http://www.dragoman.com/overland/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. We also advise you to declare any pre-existing medical conditions to your travel insurers upon purchase.

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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 report 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 27/05/2019