

AMAZON RIVER CRUISE



"As well as an exciting list of birds it is the mammals that excite me too and none more than the Amazon River Dolphin. I have never seen them and the thought that we may get to see them well is especially thrilling. We have good chances of Tucuxi - another river dolphin - too."
Roy Atkins

Dates Sat 17 - Sat 31 Aug 2024

Price £7,190

Deposit £1,445 Single Supp £1,970

Leaders Roy Atkins and local guides

Flights LATAM, scheduled
Outbound: Overnight, Heathrow-Manaus
Inbound: Overnight, Manaus-Heathrow
Outbound and Inbound via Sao Paulo

Weather Likely to be warm to hot, with temps in high 20s to mid 30s, but cooler at night. It is the dry season and this is the driest month, but there is always a chance of a shower, so waterproofs are essential

Walking Excursions are by vehicle, boat and on foot. During the cruise part of the tour we often use motor canoes for quite a lot of the time. We'll not always land during excursions, but where landing is an option, walks are at a gentle pace on easy terrain. A few of the places that we plan to visit don't have forest trails

Health A good level of fitness and agility is required to get in and out of the canoes and for the forest walks. Please take advice from your local travel clinic/doctor on recommended vaccinations

Meals All included from lunch on Day 2 to dinner on Day 14

Insects There may be biting insects in some areas, so repellent is essential

Accom Twin and single rooms/cabins all ensuite. Cabins onboard Iracema have twin bunks

Group 16

Just some of what we hope to see:

| | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Amazon River Dolphin | Guianan Cock-of-the-rock |
| Giant Otter | Hoatzin |
| 10+ monkey species | Blue-and-yellow Macaw |
| Tucuxi River Dolphin | Bare-necked Fruitcrow |
| Three sloth species | Capuchinbird |
| Amazonian Umbrellabird | Wire-tailed Manakin |
| Pompadour Cotinga | White-throated Toucan |

Amazon River Dolphins and chance of Giant Otter, Tucuxi, lots of monkeys, sloths, plus lekking Cock-of-the-rock and an exciting range of birds as we cruise deep into the Amazon

- Cruising on the Amazon River and exploring tributaries from motorised canoes
- Excellent chance of close encounters with Amazon River Dolphin
- Visits to a Cock-of-the-rock lek - an astonishing sight, with other great birds nearby
- Good chance of Tucuxi, Giant Otter and an amazing selection of monkeys
- Amazonian Umbrellabird, Capuchinbird, Pompadour Cotinga, Hoatzin and more
- Landings on several days to explore the forest and islands on foot
- Comfortable boat, the Iracema, with air-conditioned and ensuite cabins

1-3 We travel to Manaus, via Sao Paulo, where we stay for two nights. If time permits we'll start our bird list with species such as White-throated Toucan, Black-necked Araçari, Black Nunbird, Yellow-rumped Cacique and Little Chachalaca. There are mammals here too such as Three-toed Sloth and Red-rumped Agouti, as well as our first monkeys - perhaps Pied Tamarin or the strange-looking Golden-faced Saki.

An early start takes us to the outskirts of Manaus and the Ducke Reserve. Ideally, we want to be there at first light to view across the tree tops from a 42m high canopy tower! A great range of birds are possible including Caica Parrot, Blue-headed Parrot and Red-bellied Macaw, plus toucans and mixed flocks of tanagers, including Turquoise Tanager. After a late breakfast we drive to our next lodge with the lure of an active Guianan Cock-of-the-rock lek!



We'll pay our first visit this afternoon and after sunset, we may try for some nocturnal mammals, owls and potoos around the lodge.

4 After a second visit to the lek, we'll search for other birds such as Black-spotted Barbet, Bronzy Jacamar, White-lored Euphonia and both Guianan Red and Purple-breasted Cotingas, as well as Golden-handed Tamarin - a black monkey with orange hands and feet! After lunch we head back to Manaus, where we board our vessel for the main part of the holiday - 9 days exploring the River Amazon by boat and on foot. Still docked in Manaus this evening we can relax and watch flocks of parrots fly to roost from the deck of our boat.

5-13 Our itinerary onboard the boat is dependent on weather and water levels, so the following is what we hope to do over





"Imagine cruising down the river watching out for dolphins, the occasional parrot or toucan flying overhead, investigating narrow channels and islands by motorised canoes and making landings on forested islands to see wonderful birds and spotting monkeys in the trees - it just sounds idyllic!"
Roy Atkins

our time cruising the Amazon River. Our captain is experienced in knowing the best places to go under whatever conditions, so we are in good hands. We may change the order of the sites or swap some for places not mentioned, as we need to be flexible to make the most of our time. We'll cruise deep into the Amazon Rainforest, where the habitat is always either Varzea Forest, which is flooded annually, or Terra Firme Forest which is never flooded. Sometimes we may be far from shore as the river is very wide, but our main goal is to explore the Amazon's tributaries and islands, where we'll be surrounded by lush vegetation. For this, we'll use motor canoes, which are open-topped with wooden benches and back supports. We'll be able to watch wildlife and take photos as we explore the numerous streams and islands. Wherever possible, we'll disembark for short walks for birding and to explore this enchanted forest. These are some of the places we hope to get to...

We shall likely sail eastward to explore Janauacá and the Solimoes River. Glossy Antshrike, Hoatzin, Little Cuckoo, Yellow-browed Tody-flycatcher and Sunbittern are possible and we hope to see monkeys such as Golden-backed Squirrel-Monkey and Large-headed (Brown) Capuchin.

The Río Negro heads northwest of Manaus to the mouth of Acajutuba River and it is here we'll have our best chances to see Amazon River Dolphin. Interactions between the dolphins and humans started here some 25 years ago and a very curious pod often come very close, but be aware nothing is guaranteed.



We'll look out for Green-and-rufous Kingfisher, Black-chinned Antbird and many other species, before moving on to explore the Anavilhanas Archipelago. Here we'll look for Rusty-backed Spinetail, Black-crested Antshrike, Tropical Gnatcatcher, Varzea Schiffornis and delightful Wire-tailed Manakin to name a few and we should keep our eyes open for Giant Otter and Tucuxi Dolphins.

We hope to explore Jaú National Park, one of the largest protected areas in Brazil, with dense rainforest habitat providing chances of Ivory-billed Aracari, Black Caracara, Pompadour Cotinga, Bronzy Jacamar, Black-fronted Nunbird, Long-billed Woodcreeper, Undulated Tinamou, Agami Heron, Festive Amazon and plenty more.

Novo Airão, also along the Negro River, provides a real possibility of Amazonian Umbrellabird, as well as Pied Puffbird, Ash-breasted Antbird, Klages's Antwren, Crane Hawk and Grey-headed Kite. We'll hope to walk some Terra Firme Forest trails near the Ariáú River, where we'll look for birds such as Green Oropendola, Musician Wren, Amazonian Pygmy Owl, Yellow-billed Jacamar and the strange looking Capuchinbird, plus a host of other species such as macaws, hummingbirds, toucans, tanagers and more chances of dolphins.

14-15 We disembark in Manaus for our afternoon flight to Sao Paulo, where we then take our overnight flight back to London, arriving on Day 15.



Outline Itinerary

- Days 1-3** Overnight flight to Sao Paulo, then onward flight to Manaus where we stay for two nights. Visit Ducke Reserve and a Cock-of-the-rock lek
1 night Tropical Executive Hotel
1 night Pousada Aldeia Mari Mari
- Day 4** After a second lek visit we board our comfortable boat - 10 nights Iracema
- Days 5-13** The boat itinerary will be flexible as it is weather/water-level dependent, but we hope to visit the following areas. Eastward out of Manaus, to Janauacá and the Solimoes River. The mouth of Acajutuba River, for Amazon River Dolphin, then on to the Anavilhanas Archipelago. The protected area of Jaú NP then on to Novo Airão for forest walks near the Ariáú River. We use motor canoes for excursions to explore the tributaries and islands, with some landings where possible
- Days 14-15** Disembark in Manaus for our afternoon flight to Sao Paulo and then an overnight flight back to the UK, arriving on Day 15

Darren Rees: Cock-of-the-rock
Trogon Tours: Iracema boat, Scale-backed Antbird, Wire-tailed Manakin
Norton Defeis: Amazon River Dolphin
Thomas Divileck: Capuchinbird