



Tour Cost: From USD \$4236

Group Size: Small groups up to 16 people

Difficulty Level: Moderately Rigorous Touring

Recommended for: Travelers interested in nature, culture, and adventure

Departures: We offer this trip to individuals, couples, and small groups all year long.

Read more about:

[Georgetown City Tour](#)
[Demerara Distillery](#)
[Kaleteur Falls](#)
[Abary Creek Birdwatching](#)
[Georgetown Botanical Gardens](#)

Recommended Extensions

Cap off your adventure in Guyana's wild interior with a special cultural event in Georgetown, or interrupt your flight home for a long weekend on a Caribbean beach!
[Special Upgraded Rooms at Cara Lodge](#)
[A Special Evening with Roy Geddes](#)

Additional Notes: This itinerary can be customized to suit longer or shorter schedules.

Amerindian Guyana

AS FEATURED IN

50
TOURS
OF A LIFETIME

NATIONAL
GEOGRAPHIC
TRAVELER

For thousands of years the Guianan Shield has been home to a dynamic mix of Amerindian and immigrant populations: indigenous **Akawaio**, **Arekuna**, **Carib**, **Macushi**, **Patamona**, **Waiwai**, and **Wapishana** tribes have been joined in the last century by European colonialists, west African slaves, and indentured servants from Java and India. As a result, intrepid travelers who venture to the Guianas discover a cultural experience remarkably unlike any other in South America.

Our 16-day journey introduces us to the rich culture and pristine environment of Guyana. Our itinerary focuses on small and out-of-the-way eco lodges owned and operated by Amerindian villages: **Surama**, situated at the base of the Pakaraima Mountains in the Iwokrama Rainforest; **Rewa**, at the remote confluence of the Rewa and Rupununi Rivers; **Nappi** in the Kanuku foothills not far from the Brazilian border, and **Yupukari**, on the Rupununi Savannah, where an important caiman conservation project is headquartered. Our encounters with hosts, guides, and the local population will be authentic and direct because these are English-speaking communities who host only a select handful of visitors each year.

This itinerary takes us into some of the most remote and pristine rainforest left on earth, with excellent chances for spotting endangered species such as **jaguar**, **harpy eagle**, **giant river otter**, **black and speckled caiman**, **guyan cock-of-the-rock**, **giant anteater**, **arapaima**, **neotropical butterflies**, plus insects, amphibians, primates, birds, and marine creatures of all sorts. Our guides – who grew up swimming in these rivers, walking these trails, and learning the local rhythms of nature – will help us identify the hidden gems of the rain forest and savannah, introduce us to Amerindian medicinal plant traditions, and share time-honored stories about their people's history and way of life.

Accommodation at the eco lodges is offered in clean, comfortable, and traditionally designed facilities built by villagers from locally sourced raw materials. All beds are equipped with mosquito nets and guest rooms feature private bathrooms with flush toilets. Out of economic and practical necessity, most food is locally produced, power is solar-generated, and drinking water is harvested from rivers, rain-catches or freshwater springs. Transport into Guyana's largely unpopulated interior regions is by small plane, river canoe, 4X4 pickup truck, and the occasional bullock cart. Amenities are limited, and this isn't a trip for those seeking luxurious resorts or glossy commoditized adventure packages... it is however, a perfect opportunity for those wishing to experience a vibrant and pristine natural environment in the care of those who call it home.

Day 1 - Arrive Guyana

Transfer to Georgetown. Guests are met and transferred to Cara Lodge in Georgetown (1 hour). Built in the 1840s and originally consisting of two houses, the hotel is one of the oldest wooden buildings in Georgetown. It has a long and romantic history associated with it and was the home of the first Lord Mayor of Georgetown. Over the years it has hosted many dignitaries including George V who stayed at the house in 1923 and

Day 2 - Fly to Guyana's Interior



Transfer to Ogle Airstrip for a flight across the rain forest to Annai. Lunch at Rock View Lodge and then transfer by 4x4 vehicle into the Iwokrama Forest. The Iwokrama Rainforest is a vast wilderness of one million acres. This protected area was established in 1996 as the Iwokrama International Centre for Rainforest Conservation and Development. The Iwokrama Forest is in the heart of one of four last untouched tropical forests of the world - The Guiana Shield of North-Eastern South America.

Iwokrama was established as a living laboratory for tropical forest management because the unsustainable utilisation of these forests will result in the extinction of half the world's plant and animal species and unknown changes to global climate. This is a protected area with a difference - the full involvement of people. Iwokrama is exceptional among conservation organizations because it joins with local people in every aspect of its work. From research to business, Iwokrama ensures local economic and social benefits from forest use and conservation. The Forest is in the homeland of the Makushi people, who have lived here and used the forest for thousands of years. People are a vertical part of the ecosystem. The success of Iwokrama relies on the ownership of local people and the combined skills of specialists and communities. Iwokrama does what so many International conventions have acknowledged as best practice. It has begun conservation

locally and integrated conservation into national development.

Along the road, we will watch for the myriad of bird species that frequent the forest edge, including Crimson and Purple-necked Fruit-crow, Crimson Topaz, Green Oropendula, Spotted and Guianan Puffbird, Scarlet and Red-and-Green Macaw, Blue-cheeked and Orange-winged Parrot and Gray-winged Trumpeter. This road is the only north - south access in Guyana and links the country to Brazil. Even so traffic is only very occasional and wildlife is often seen along the road, such as Agouti, Tayra, Puma, Tapir and Black Curassow. The journey concludes at the Iwokrama Canopy Walkway where we can bird watch from the vantage of 30 Metres up in the canopy. Painted Parakeet, Rufous-throated Sapphire, Guianan Puffbird, Green Aracari, Waved Woodpecker, Pygmy Antwren, Guianan Streaked-Antwren, Dusky Purpletuft, Purple-breasted Cotinga, Guianan Toucanet, Pompadour Cotinga, Buff-cheeked Greenlet, Caica Parrots, and a host of crown specialists may come within our view. From this tree top vantage you can sometimes see Red Howler Monkeys and Black Spider Monkeys. The trails also have an interpretative walk with the trees named and you can learn about their varied uses in the Macushi culture. Deer and agouti are also regular visitors to the lodge. The Iwokrama Canopy Walkway and Atta Rainforest Lodge are operated by Community and Tourism Services (CATS), a unique business model combining two private sector companies, an NGO (Iwokrama International Centre For Rainforest Conservation and Development) and the Makushi Amerindian community of Surama. CATS employs local Amerindians to manage and staff the facility.

Overnight at [Atta Rainforest Lodge](#)

Day 3 - Birdwatching and Nature Spotting in the Iwokrama Rainforest

Although the forest around Atta Lodge is excellent for birds, the major attraction here is a 154 metre long canopy walkway which is only 750m from the lodge. The walkway has four platforms, the highest of which is over 30 metres above the ground, and these will allow us to get great looks at a range of canopy species, many of which we would struggle to see well from the forest floor. Amongst the likely highlights are Painted, Brown-throated and Golden-winged Parakeets, Caica Parrot, Guianan Puffbird, Waved and Golden-collared Woodpeckers and Spot-tailed, Todd's and Ash-winged Antwrens. The walkway is also an excellent place to look for various species of cotinga including the poorly known and range-restricted Dusky Purpletuft and if there are any suitable fruiting trees nearby, we stand a good chance of seeing this bird, as well as the more widespread Purple-breasted Cotinga. Another area where we will want to spend some time is the clearing around the lodge, as this is one of the best places to see another of Guyana's "must see" birds, the Crimson Fruitcrow. This species is seen here on a reasonably regular basis, as it often comes to feed in some of the nearby trees. The clearing is also a reliable site for Black Curassow as there is a family party which has become habituated to people and regularly passes through the clearing. With reasonable luck, we should be able to add this bird to the impressive list of species we hope to see around the lodge and walkway.



During our two nights stay, another of our major targets will be the poorly known White-winged Potoo which, after dark, can be found both around the lodge and at the walkway. At dawn take a wildlife walk with an Iwokrama Ranger close to the River Lodge. Tonight we will take a drive along the trail that is one of the best places to see the elusive Jaguar. The Iwokrama forest is rapidly gaining an international reputation for its healthy jaguar populations that seem not to be troubled by the appearance of curious humans. No promises, but many have been lucky!

Overnight at [Atta Rainforest Lodge](#)

Day 4 - Drive to Surama Village



This morning we will welcome the dawn chorus from the tree-tops on the canopy walkway. After breakfast we will travel to a rainforest trail to a special locality where Guianian Cock-of-the-rock are known to display and nest. Then, if it is active, we may be able to visit a nearby Harpy Eagle nest. The nest itself is located in a huge emergent tree and if we are extremely fortunate, we may see one of the adult birds bringing a sloth or monkey to the nest to feed their chick. The trek into the nest site is about an hour each way on a reasonable trail. We will then continue on to the Amerindian community at Surama. Surama's inhabitants are mainly from the Macushi tribe and still observe many of the traditional practices of their forebears.

The village of Surama is situated in a small savannah, deep in the rainforest and surrounded by forest clad hills. It was here that Charles Waterton passed through in 1812 in search of the secrets of the useful Wourali poison known as Curare. Waterton was so stunned by this spot that he wrote in his memoirs "The finest park that England boasts falls short of this delightful scene". On arrival in Surama receive a welcome from the eco-lodge staff and settle into your accommodation. This afternoon escorted tour of the village,

visiting the local school, medical centre and church along with some of the village houses. Tonight enjoy an educational walk to observe wildlife and experience the mystique of the forest after dark.

Overnight at [Surama Eco-Lodge](#)

Day 5 - Sunrise on Surama Mountain, medicinal plant and culture demonstration

Rise before dawn for a walk across the savannah and then the exhilarating climb up Surama Mountain in the cool morning air. This is the best time to observe bird life along the trail. Breakfast will be served at a lookout point which affords incredible views across the village and savannah to the Pakaraima Mountains. After walking back to the village, many might opt to rest and relax around the cabins. This afternoon a local guide will escort you for a short walk on trails to observe the forest and bird life and talk about medicinal plants. Whilst Neomorphus ground-



cuckoos are undoubtedly amongst the toughest family of birds to locate anywhere in the Neotropics, Surama offers one of the best-known chances for seeing Rufous-winged Ground-cuckoo and to maximise the odds of us finding one, we will use expert local guides to assist us. We will, however, still count ourselves as extremely fortunate if we succeed in getting good looks at this extremely elusive species. As the afternoon cools a local guide will escort you for a short walk on trails to observe the forest and bird life. See the forest through the eyes of your indigenous guide and learn about the medicinal plants and their uses in the Amerindian culture.



Overnight at [Surama Eco-Lodge](#)

Day 6 - Burro Burro River Excursion

After breakfast take a three mile walk across the savannah and through the rainforest to the Burro Burro River to Carahaa Landing. Take dugout canoes on the river and paddle on the river to fishing and look for wildlife. Try your luck at catching the famous Haimara fish that is common to the Burro Burro waters. Tonight you will also try your hand at smoking, boiling or barbecuing your catch.

Overnight on the river

Day 7 - Follow Rupununi River to Rewa Village



At dawn your guides will paddle you on the Burro Burro River for opportunities to observe Giant River Otters, Tapir, Tira, Spider Monkeys and many more species. Return to village before departing Surama by to Kwatamang landing. Then travel along the Rupununi River with opportunities to see wild Giant River Otters and Black Caiman. You will pass locals fishing and bathing in the river until you reach the Rewa River and the Amerindian community of Rewa. Journey is approximately 50 miles by river and can be as short as 2 hours and as long as 4 hours depending on the water level. Rewa Village is located where the Rewa River runs into the Rupununi River in the North Rupununi. The surrounding area is rainforest, mountains and oxbow lakes and teeming with wildlife birds and fish. The community of approximately 220 persons is predominately Macushi with a few families of the Wapashani and Patamona tribes. Villagers practice subsistence farming, fishing and hunting with little opportunity for cash employment. In 2005 the community constructed the Rewa Eco-lodge so that they could establish a sustainable eco-tourism business. The lodge remains virtually unknown with 82 visitors in 2007 and only 57 in 2008. The lodge itself is situated on the river bank overlooking the Rewa River with views down river to the Rupununi River. Along the river bank tables and benches offer a relaxing location to enjoy the river. The grassed clearing in the rainforest houses three benabs. The largest is the

kitchen and dining area, with an outlook to the river. Accommodation is in two benabs each with two bedrooms and a large patio with hammocks for relaxing. Three bathrooms with flush toilet, shower and basin are just a few metres from the bedrooms. Once settled in take a walk through the community of Rewa to see how the locals live. Visit villager's houses where you can experience their every day life and see activities such as grating cassava, weaving baskets and tending kitchen gardens.

Overnight at [Rewa Eco-Lodge](#)

Day 8 - Climb Awaramie Mountain, sundowners on Rewa River

Enjoy breakfast at dawn overlooking the Rewa River. Then head out by boat along the Rupununi River, into an oxbow lake to begin a hike up Awarmie Mountain. The climb is steep in a few sections but in general not too difficult. Along the way you will see lots of birds and perhaps good close up views of Black Spider Monkeys. There is good birding along the trail with White Bellbirds calling both from the scrubby woodland at the beginning of the trail and again from the forests far below you when reach the summit. Other species you may see include Ornate Hawk-eagle, Black Curassow, Red-fan Parrot, Guianan Puffbird, Todd's Antwren, Spotted Tanager and Bay-headed Tanager. The area also has a high density of macaws including Scarlet, Blue-and-yellow and Red-and-Green Macaws. At the summit you will have absolutely stunning views across rainforest to the distant mountains. There is a small plateau on the top of the mountain and in one direction, there are uninterrupted views back to the Rupununi River, some patches of savannah and across to the distant Kanuku Mountains. In the other direction, there is a near vertical drop of at least 200m and the view is across great swathes of undisturbed forest to the distant Iwokrama Mountain and much closer, Makarapan Mountain. On the return you could also fish for peacock bass which are plentiful in the oxbow. Return to the lodge for lunch. This afternoon travel up the Rewa River to a location known as Seawall. This rock formation is a great place to fish or take in the beauty of the location. Visit sand banks where giant river turtles come to lay their eggs. On the return trip spotlight for wildlife. Along the river banks you may see red howler monkeys, squirrel monkeys and brown capuchin.



Overnight on the river

Day 9 - Savannah hike, watch Victoria Regis and Victoria Amazonica bloom at sunset



This morning travel by boat to a nearby trail for a hike through rainforest and into savannah. See local traditional farms and if you are lucky a family may be there practicing their indigenous farming methods. This afternoon take a boat up the Rewa River. Along the river banks you may see red howler monkeys, squirrel monkeys and brown capuchin, and this area has a large population of giant river otters. Then a 15 minute hike to Grass Pond, which is about 3 kms long and is a beautiful setting with Victoria Amazonica. It has a good population of Arapaima, (reportedly the highest density in Guyana) the largest fresh water fish in the world and you can also fish for Peacock Bass. During a late afternoon visit you may see Brown Capuchin monkey or Capybara. Birds likely to be seen include Limpkin, Wattled Jacana, Black-collared Hawk, Green Kingfisher and Guianan Puffbird. As dusk settles watch the flower of the Victoria Amazonica bloom.

Overnight at [Rewa Eco-Lodge](#)

Day 10 - Transfer by boat and 4X4 to Yupukari Village

This morning we transfer slowly on the Rupununi River to Kwatamang Landing keeping an eye out for Crestless Curassow, Jabiru Stork, Wood Stork, Bat Falcon, King Vulture, White-necked Jacobin, Golden-spangled Piculet and Drab Water Tyrant. The trip should give us another excellent opportunity to look for various river-edge, wetland and open country species and we stand a good chance of seeing Black-bellied Whistling-Duck, Jabiru, Green Ibis, Northern (Crested) Caracara, Black-collared Hawk, Zone-tailed Hawk, Brown-throated Parakeet and Swallow-wing. Depending on the river level, this trip offers an excellent opportunity to look for Giant Otters as there are several family groups which live along this stretch of the Rupununi River. Both Black and Spectacled Caimans also inhabit the river and several species of monkey including Red Howler, White-faced Saki and Squirrel Monkey can be found in



the riverside trees. We continue by 4x4 vehicle to Annai and onto Giemp Landing and then by boat on the Rupununi River, birdwatching along the way, to the Amerindian village of Yupukari and Caiman House.



Caiman House is the hub of several participatory development projects, including the introduction of classroom libraries in all three village schools and an internet-enabled public library. Visitors may have the opportunity to meet local craftspeople, including the furniture builders at Yupukari Crafters, a nonprofit venture to create village jobs and generate income to sustain educational development. Tonight enjoy a foray on the Rupununi River from Caiman House Field Station. As a guest you have the unique opportunity to support and participate in an ongoing field study of the Black Caiman (*melanosuchus niger*), the largest member of the alligator family and an endangered species. Guests will observe the capture from a separate boat, but will be offered the opportunity to assist in data collection. Caiman are weighed, measured, sexed and tagged before being released back into the river. The research has already discovered interesting information on caimans' nests that was previously unknown. During periods of high water it is difficult to capture Caiman to you will have another chance to enter the nocturnal world of the Rupununi River and associated gallery forests which offer an experience, and world of wildlife entirely different than those viewed on a day trip. Skilled guides will expertly escort visitors to meet elusive denizens of darkness by outboard powered boats, while interpreting the sights, and sounds of Guyana after dark. Just after darkness settles on the River many creatures emerge such as black caiman (to over 12 feet), spectacled caiman, tree boas, iguanas, frogs, and many fish species (i.e. arrawana, piranha). Sleeping birds (kingfishers, small perching birds) nightjars, potoos, Boat-billed Herons and other aquatic birds, bats, (harmless) spiders, insects, moths, and more can be closely approached in way not possible during the hours of light. Less likely, but not rare inclusions for night viewing include possums, tree dwelling rodents, capybara and sleeping monkeys (esp. squirrel monkeys) amongst other mammals. Few nights pass without some unusual offering.

Overnight at [Caiman House](#)

Day 11 - Transfer by 4X4 vehicle and bullock cart to Nappi Village



view wildlife and birdlife.

This morning we will have some time to visit the village, to learn about their way of life. Or go birdwatching in search of the many good savannah, gallery forest and river-edge birds found in the Caiman House area including Pinnated Bittern, Green-tailed Jacamar, Black-chinned Antbird and Capuchinbird. Pickup and transfer by 4x4 for journey across the savannah to the Amerindian village of Nappi. Upon arrival meet a member of the village council and a brief orientation of the village before continuing to the Maipaima Eco Lodge. Travel from the savannah into the rainforest to Maipaima Eco Lodge which is nestled in the rainforest covered Kanuku Mountains in the south central Rupununi district of Guyana. Once at Maipaima Eco Lodge enjoy a cold drink and relax in a hammock. Owned, operated and hand built by the Macushi Amerindians of the Nappi Village Eco Tourism group, the lodge itself was constructed through the dedicated efforts of former Guyana Parliamentarian Shirley Melville and funding by Foster Parrots. The lodge is named after the Maipaima Creek which runs past the property. Simply wooden cabins with ensuite bathrooms are linked by a raised wooden walkway to the main dining and communal area. Nappi is famous for its Balata figurines and this afternoon you can learn about how Balata is harvested, see how the figurines are made and even try and make your own. At dusk the bush comes alive and in the clearing of the lodge you have the ability to see 360 degrees to

Overnight at [Maipaima Eco-Lodge](#)

Day 12 - Hike to Bat Cave and Jordon Falls

At dawn you can bird from the clearing or venture along well maintained trails. Breakfast is served on the open veranda as Macaws fly by and the Red Howler Monkeys control the heights. From the lodge we set out on a trail observing wildlife as our guide takes us through the rainforest on our way to the Jordon Fall. After 1500 metres we divert off the main trail for a chance to look for the Guianian Cock-of-Rock. Close by is Bat Cave, where you can observe hundreds of bats as they roost, clinging to the cave ceiling. At about 2000M we encounter the steepest climb on the trek as we ascend the Kanuku Mountains. Near the top there is a break in the trees for a lovely view across the rainforest to the savannah. The trail then winds its way up and down small peaks. The forest here is pristine with plenty of wildlife. Hard to see species include Jaguar, Ocelot and Tapir. There is a chance to see Harpy Eagle as they nest in this area. More easily seen are Spider, Red Howler, Squirrel and Capuchin Monkeys. We stop at a small creek where you'll have a chance to rest and take lunch before continuing the arduous walk to the fall. The hike is likely to take 4 to 6 hours depending on conditions, fitness and what is seen along the way. Upon arrival to the falls the view is just reward for the tough trek. The Wamacarro Creek tumbles about 120 metres down the stepped, rocky mountain side. The creek opens up fantastic views across the rainforest covered mountain tops and the rocks create lovely and inviting natural pools to swim in and recover from the hike. The creek water gently massages as you bathe in the natural Jacuzzi. Dinner is served al fresco on a rocky outcrop overlooking the falls and mountains.



Overnight on hammocks at Jordon Falls



Day 13 - Swim, hike, and explore around the falls, return to Maipaima

Wake to the sound of rushing water and Bell Birds, which can sometimes be seen in the very tops of the trees on adjacent mountains. For the more adventurous you can take a difficult path down beside the falls to view them from the bottom. After a morning dip in the creek you leave by foot, trekking back through the rainforest to the lodge. The trek back is easier as much of it is downhill. Back at Maipaima Eco Lodge enjoy a cold drink and relax in a hammock.

Overnight at [Maipaima Eco-Lodge](#)

Day 14 - 4X4 to Lethem, fly to Georgetown, city tour

This morning visit a local farm to see how the Amerindians grow their crops, much of which will have been served during your stay. On departure you can walk along the track and birdwatch to Nappi Village. We then take a journey across the savannah to the Rupununi's largest town, Lethem, for a flight back to Georgetown. Enjoy an afternoon Georgetown city tour (see full description below) highlighting the unique architecture and markets.

Overnight at [Cara Lodge](#)

Day 15 - Fly to Kaieteur and Orinduik Falls

Today enjoy a trip to Kaieteur and Orinduik Falls. We take a charter flight over hundreds of miles of unbroken tropical rainforest to Kaieteur, the world's highest free-falling waterfall. Though Venezuela's Angel Falls are greater in total height, their filamentous drop occurs by stages whereas Kaieteur is a single, massive, thundering cataract 100 meters wide created as the Potaro River makes a sheer drop of 228 meters, nearly



five times the height of Niagara. The spectacle is the more impressive for its remoteness and it is altogether possible that we'll be the only persons viewing it. Here we will hope to find White-chinned and White-tipped Swifts swirling over the gorge, and perhaps we'll be lucky enough to see the astonishingly colorful Guianan Cock-of-the-Rock, White-tailed Goldenthrout, Orange-breasted Falcon or Musician Wren. The trip then continues onto the Brazilian border where the Ireng River tumbles over jasper, creating lovely pools for bathing.



Overnight at [Cara Lodge](#)

Day 16 - Depart Guyana

Transfer to the airport for your departing flight.



©2011 Wilderness Explorers
Georgetown, Guyana South America
Guyana [+592] 227-7698 | London [+44] 020 8417 1585 | Europe [+41] 56 222 9978 | US [+1] 202-630-7698
journeys@wilderness-explorers.com