

The Rio Carnival

6 days | Starts/Ends: Rio de Janeiro



Join the world's biggest party for six days of street festivals, pulsating samba rhythms and vibrant parades with sightseeing to the world-famous Christ the Redeemer statue and Sugarloaf Mountain, as well as time to unwind on Copacabana Beach.

HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

Trip Highlights

- Blocos - dress up and join in the dancing at one of the famous Rio carnival street parties
- Rio Scenarium - enjoy a night out at one of the most famous samba clubs in Rio with live music and DJ's
- Corcovado - marvel at the world-famous Christ the Redeemer statue and spectacular views of the city
- Sambadrome Parade - get close to the action and see the colourful floats and costumes from Sector 11
- Sugarloaf Mountain - catch a cable car to the top of Sugarloaf Mountain and soak up the breathtaking city views
- Copacabana Beach - enjoy free time to unwind on one of Rio's most famous beaches

What's Included

- Dedicated Carnival team on hand to provide assistance
- 5 breakfasts
- 5 nights 3 star hotel in Rio's Flamengo district (twin/triple rooms)
- Transportation by private bus and metro
- Street party experience at one of Rio's famous Blocos
- Evening of live music and dancing at Rio Scenarium
- Sector 11 ticket for the Sambadrome parade
- Rio city tour of Corcovado Mountain and Sugarloaf Mountain (unguided)

What's Not Included

- International flights, airport transfers and visas
- Items of a personal nature, additional meals and drinks
- Tipping – an entirely personal gesture

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1 : Rio De Janeiro

Welcome to Rio Carnival, the biggest party on the planet! Please make your own way to our joining hotel. We have an important meeting at 5pm or 6pm where you'll have a full briefing on how to make the most of your time in Rio and receive your tickets, maps, T-Shirt and souvenir booklet. Please check the notice board in the reception area for other important

information throughout the week. After the meeting we have a table booked at a nearby buffet restaurant, so you can get to know some of your fellow travellers. Our dedicated carnival team will be on hand throughout the week for a few hours each day to provide any assistance you may need.

There's a whole host of additional optional activities that you may like to take part in such as 'Join the Parade', prior early booking is essential! If you are arriving early you may also like to join a Market Tour or Walking Tour. In Rio de Janeiro we stay in a great hotel in the Flamengo district, accommodation is in twin and triple rooms. Our hotel is close to the beach and the metro station. Hotel check-in is from 2pm and staff will be on hand to give you assistance.

Optional Activities:

- Join your group for a welcome meal - BRL 50
- Explore Brazilian flavours in a half-day cooking class - USD 75
- Join us for an up close fruit market tour (2 hrs) - USD 30

(All optional activity costs provided in these Trip Notes are an approximation and subject to change)

Overnight - Rio De Janeiro

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Day 2 : Corcovado & Sugarloaf Mountain



Today we will visit the most iconic sights of Rio; the immense statue of Christ the Redeemer perching 710m high on Corcovado mountain and the Pão de Açúcar or Sugarloaf Mountain. We will have some time to explore these sights in our own time, you may even choose to take a helicopter ride! We will also aim to see some other important landmarks such as the Maracanã stadium, Escadaria Selarón and the Lapa Arches. We will travel by minibus. (NB today's tour is unguided, you will be accompanied by our crew).

This evening we will head out to Lapa for a night out in a samba club; Rio Scenarium, one of the City's greatest nightspots - it's an antiques warehouse, music venue, bar and restaurant all housed in a fantastic colonial mansion. There will be live samba music and DJs on each floor. We will be hosting a beginners Samba Dance class in the late afternoon, why not sign up and learn some of the basic steps before hitting the town!

Optional Activities:

- Explore Brazilian flavours in a half-day cooking class - USD 70
- Explore the magnificent Botanical Gardens of Rio de Janeiro with over 54 hectares and 6,500 species of plants and flowers - BRL 8
- Take a brilliant free walking tour with an expert local guide around Lapa and Central Rio de Janeiro (or Copacabana and Ipanema on certain days) - Free
- Perfect your Samba moves in a beginners dance class - USD 29

Overnight - Rio De Janeiro (B)

Day 3 : The Sambadrome Parade



This morning why not glitter up and join us at one of the local 'blocos' or street parties, there will be live music, dancing and plenty of opportunities to get to know Rio and its people! Blocos are great fun, crowded, hot and lively! The local 'cariocas' will be all dressed up, so make sure you come dressed to impress!

In the evening it's time for the main event of the week - the parade in the Sambadrome. The top samba schools parade their fantastic floats and costumes and the party goes on well into the early hours of the morning. You'll be situated in Sector 11, close to all the action.

Overnight - Rio De Janeiro (B)

Day 4 : Copacabana & Ipanema



This morning is free for you to recover from last night in the Sambadrome! It's a great chance to hit the beach, explore the city or simply have a lie in! In the afternoon you may wish to join us for a walking tour of Copacabana and Ipanema beaches.

This evening we have the chance to re-visit the Sambadrome, this time in Sector 5 in the centre of the parade runway, to see the last 7 of the elite samba schools parading. You even have the option to don a costume and take part in the parade itself, dancing your way

down the Sambadrome runway - a once in a lifetime experience! Note: It is important to pre-book these activities.

Optional Activities:

- Join the Parade, an experience of a lifetime! - USD 700
- Second visit to the Sambadrome in the amazing Sector 5 - USD 180
- Relax and explore the world famous beaches of Rio de Janeiro, including Ipanema, Arpoador and, of course, Copacabana - Free
- Explore the magnificent Botanical Gardens of Rio de Janeiro, with over 54 hectares and 6,500 species of plants and flowers - BRL 8
- Walking Tour taking you through two of the most famous neighbourhoods; Copacabana and Ipanema and finishing up with a picnic by the Rodrigo de Freitas Lagoon) - USD 20

Overnight - Rio De Janeiro (B)

Day 5 : Free day



Today you have free time to enjoy the activities, sights and sounds of Rio! Join a bloco, hit the beach or ride the tram to Santa Teresa. Rio has so much to offer other than its carnival festivities. We will be organising some fun water based activities such as kayaking and paddle boarding (prior booking is essential). Tonight you have a free night to hit the town; head downtown and enjoy a Caipirinha under the iconic Lapa arches or join a bloco.

Optional Activities:

- Kayaking Trip (3 hours) - USD 83
- Explore Brazilian flavours in a half day cooking class - USD 75
- Escape the city for a half day Jungle hike and tour - USD 72
- Stand up Paddleboarding lesson in Copacabana (1hr 15) - USD 43

Overnight - Rio De Janeiro (B)

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Day 6 : Rio De Janeiro

Today marks the end of our time together in Rio! Hotel check-out is at 12pm. (B)

Joining Hotel

On day 1 please make your own way to our joining hotel in Rio's Flamengo district. There will be an important meeting at 17:00 or 18:00- please look out at the hotel reception for a note with more details about this meeting.

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

Accommodation

This is on a shared basis (twin or triple) with breakfast included daily but no other meals. All rooms are en-suite with air-conditioning, TV, fridge and safe. There is a single supplement available at an additional cost. Please enquire with your sales agent at the time of booking if you should wish to purchase the single supplement.

Money Changing

Banks will be closed over most of Carnival but some money changers stay open although exchange rates are not always that good. Cash will give you the best exchange rates - usually USD, GBP and EUR are easily exchanged. Travellers Cheques are not generally accepted. American Express Office is open through Carnival for exchange. Cash machines are located nearby to the hotel but can run out of money, so plan in advance and be very aware of theft and fraud.

Things to Bring

You may wish to consider bringing the following items with you to Rio Carnival:

- Binoculars to help see the detail of the parades at the Sambadrome
- A disposable raincoat (can also be bought in Rio)
- A compact camera
- A money belt

Carnival Optional Activities

The following optional activities need to be booked prior to departure and are subject to availability. Prices may be subject to change. Please contact us to check availability and book.

- Join the Sambadrome Parade, an experience of a lifetime! - approx USD 700
- Second visit to the Sambadrome in the amazing Sector 5 - approx USD 180
- Half day Jungle hike (Tues or Wed at 9am) - approx USD 75
- Half day cooking course (Fri or Sat at 11am) - USD 75
- 2hr Market Tour at 10am on Friday - USD 30
- Kayak Tour 3hrs (max 10) - USD 84
- Stand Up Paddleboarding Lesson in Copacabana 1hr 15mins (max 20) - USD 20
- 1hr Samba Dance Class - USD 29

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Our partners

This tour is operated in by our trusted partner and you will join travellers from different operators, not solely On The Go.

Itinerary Disclaimer

The routes, activities and places visited described in these notes are intentions and are meant as a rough guide only. By their very nature, overland itineraries need to be flexible and the regions that we are travelling through are often unpredictable. We intend to follow the planned route but exact night stops and inclusions cannot be guaranteed and 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. Changes to the itinerary may occur with little notice so please be prepared for modifications to your trip.

Emergency Contact Information

In the event of a real emergency once you have left your home country, please contact the out of office hours number below. If you cannot get through on the phone, please leave a message with your name, reference

number, contact details and a message with the help that you need and we will get back to you. Please bear in mind that real progress or action may not be possible until normal office hours, depending on the issue.

If your flight is delayed, please inform us as soon as you can and then make your way to the joining hotel as instructed in the Joining Point section of these notes.

Overlanding Lifestyle

Overlanding is all about taking the road less travelled, seeing the real country as well as the highlights, and getting away from the tourist trail. It's all about the journey, not just the destination!

Overlanding is all about sharing a great travelling experience with like-minded people. On your trip you'll travel in one of our 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!

Meals & Group Participation

On an overland journey in South America 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

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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!

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.

The Local Payment/Kitty

In addition to the trip price on our South America overlanding trips, you will also be required to pay a Local Payment specified for your trip. This Local Payment is referred to locally as the kitty. The kitty is payable in instalments 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 crew and the kitty accounts can be viewed by all throughout the trip.

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

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

The kitty system is unique to overlanding and allows us to have flexibility and transparency on our trips. You can see exactly how your money is being spent and ensure that you are getting the best value by buying locally. It also helps to keep the costs competitive and save on administration costs so that we can pass the saving on to you. We make 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.

Prices can change with no notice and exchange rate fluctuations will affect costs. Therefore the Local Payment/kitty amount can change and the price on our website includes a buffer to cover this. The actual amount you will be asked to pay locally may potentially be less than the amount quoted on your tour voucher/trip notes.

The kitty is payable in cash on Day 1 of your trip so remember to arrange to bring sufficient cash USD with you. Alternatively you can pay in advance via a bank transfer 3-4 weeks before the start of your trip. If you wish to pay in advance please contact us and we can provide the bank details and instructions. Please note that we cannot accept traveller's cheques on our trips. Should you wish to do this and the kitty quoted on day 1 of the trip is less than what you have paid prior to arrival, you will receive a refund on day 1 of the trip.

Please ensure your USD notes 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.

Tipping

Tipping may not be customary to you and is entirely voluntary - however it can be of great significance to the people who take care of you during your trip. The 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 are happy with

the service and feel you would like to tip them, they certainly would appreciate it.

It is also customary to tip the local guides. We recommend USD1 to USD4 per person per day, but check with your crew for an appropriate amount.

For general tipping in restaurants and on excursions, it can be useful to hold on to your smaller notes and coins to make tipping easier.

The Crew

Our crew are passionate about travel and are always up for adventure. The crew undergo the most intensive training program of all the overland companies, spending 8 weeks learning the ropes at our partner's base in the UK, and then up to 6 months on the road as a trainee. The 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. We endeavour 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 who are new to the area.

On all of our South America overlanding trips, we have two western crew but please be aware that there may be times when one crew member has to leave the trip due to unforeseen circumstances.

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

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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.

Our Overland Trucks

We use rugged and sturdy Mercedes-Benz trucks (known for their durability) that will take you off road and off the beaten track. These have been specially modified to create custom designed overland vehicles which have unique integrated cabs. The trucks are fully equipped for self-sufficient wild camping, and have comfortable coach-style seating. All of the trucks are owned and maintained by our partners, and our crew follow a strict maintenance schedule - this means we can manage the quality and safety of our fleet.

Please note that the overland trucks are not air conditioned. This helps to avoid illness from the sudden changes in temperature and humidity that you can experience with air conditioned vehicles on long overland journeys and it also helps to speed up the process of acclimatisation to the climate.

Each of our vehicles is unique and features will differ between each truck, but most of our trucks feature the following:

- An integrated cab - so you are always with your crew rather than being separated
- Coach style seating - forward-facing apart from four seats facing backwards around two tables
- A side awning for sun/rain cover
- Luggage locker
- A drinking water tank of approximately 350 litre capacity, plus 60-80 litre jerry cans
- Long range fuel tanks
- Audio equipment with MP3 player connection
- 12v charging points (some models only)
- A hidden safe to keep money and passports secure
- An integrated fridge
- Large equipment storage areas for food, cooking utensils, expedition equipment, etc.
- Bookshelf/library
- Map board

Standard equipment on each truck:

- Dome-shaped or A-frame tents with integrated mosquito nets
- Emergency medical kit

- Camping stools and tables
- Cooking equipment, gas, and eating utensils
- Camping lights
- Full range of mechanical tools and spares
- Sand mats in case of bogging

Drive Times

Please note; all drive times given are the approximate number of hours that the truck will be in motion only, and does not include any time taken for coffee or lunch stops, border crossings, photo stops, activities en route, comfort breaks, shopping stops, toilet stops, etc. The times given are approximate estimates only and whilst given with the best of intentions, the drive times are heavily dependent on traffic, road conditions, weather, police roadblocks, and many other factors - flexibility is essential on any overland trip!

Optional Activities

Please note that all optional activity costs provided in the Trip Notes are an approximation and subject to change. Prices listed are for entrance only and do not include transport costs to and from the sites or local guides unless indicated.

You will have the opportunity to take part in many exciting activities and excursions, some of which are included whilst others are optional. The included activities are listed under Inclusions. All other activities are optional and at your own expense. If you choose not to participate in the included activities, the cost will not necessarily be refunded; this is something you will need to check with your leader.

Some of the activities require a certain level of fitness, so it's important that you read through the itinerary thoroughly and make your own conclusions as to whether you feel that you are fit and healthy enough to enjoy the 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, and have the physical ability, to take part. Also always make sure that your personal travel insurance covers you for any activity you are planning to take part in.

Please note: The optional activity 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, and therefore any prices listed are a guide only and cannot be guaranteed.

Accommodation

Our South America 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.

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 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 wild 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.

Our Overland Groups

Our overland groups in South America 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

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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.

Group Size

The maximum group size we take on our South America 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. 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 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 on the website and in the Trip Itinerary. Even on the majority of our trips where there is only the one truck, you may from time to time meet up with other groups at points on the road, and may partake in activities jointly with other groups on these occasions.

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.

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.

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.

Passport

Your passport details are required to complete your booking. 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) in advance.

As a general rule most countries expect that your passport is valid for 6 months after the end of your trip and will refuse entry to anyone with shorter validity. A temporary or 'visitor's' passport is not valid on our trips. Please ensure the name on your passport matched the name on your booking and flight tickets. Bring a copy of the main passport page with you on your trip and leave another copy at home with family or friends.

General Visa Information

Many countries require visas to enter; some must be obtained before you leave home

and others can be obtained en route. Whilst the ultimate responsibility for obtaining visas is yours, we will endeavour to assist you wherever possible. If you require any supporting documentation for your visa applications, we can obtain this on your behalf.

For visas that are needed in advance, you may wish to submit the applications directly to the relevant embassy or consulate. However, for trips that involve multiple visas, you may find it beneficial to use a specialist visa agency to assist you with your applications. While this does sometimes increase the cost, it usually makes the process much easier for you.

Visas can take several weeks to process so make sure you familiarise yourself with any requirements as soon as you have booked your trip to allow for processing time. As you will often need to submit your passport together with your applications, we recommend that you avoid making any travel plans in the weeks leading up to your departure.

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

The information provided here is given in good faith and was correct at time of writing; however please visit the relevant consular website of the country or countries you are visiting for detailed and up-to-date visa information specific to your nationality. Please be aware that rules surrounding visas do change, often suddenly, and without prior warning.

If your flight 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

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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.

Flights Via the USA or Canada

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 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.

Physical Preparation

Overland travelling 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.

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. 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.

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. 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, we reserve 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.

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.

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 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/factsheets/detail/zika-virus
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention: 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

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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

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 and www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk

Medical Assistance in Remote Areas

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.

Insurance

Comprehensive travel insurance with cover for medical expenses and emergency repatriation is compulsory for all our trips. You will not be allowed to start the trip without showing the trip leader evidence of valid travel insurance including the insurance company's 24-hour emergency contact number.

In the case of credit card travel insurance we will require details of the participating insurer,

the insurance policy number and emergency contact number rather than just the bank's name and credit card details. Please contact your bank before travel to obtain these details. Also ensure that your credit card travel insurance policy has 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.

Make sure that your insurance policy:

- is designed for adventure travel and that it covers any activity that you may wish to participate in (whether included or optional), such as white water rafting, trekking, horse-riding, etc.
- has a 24-hour emergency assistance company that is experienced in handling situations in developing countries – for example, they should have the ability to arrange repatriation from remote areas such as the Sahara or if you were trekking in the Andes
- covers your age group (some policies have age limits)
- covers travel to high altitude if your trip goes to altitude (e.g. if you're climbing Kilimanjaro)

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). Please note that you should be insured for trip postponement or cancellation purposes immediately upon paying a deposit.

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.

Travel insurance can be arranged through the Dragoman website or by our team of travel consultants – please contact us for a quote.

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.

Personal Spending

You know your spending habits better than we do, so please budget a sensible amount for things like drinks, shopping, optional activities, tipping and laundry. Remember to also budget for any visas to be obtained en route.

We appreciate that it's hard to know exactly how much money you will need when you're travelling through new countries and areas. To make budgeting a little easier we have included some guidelines below. The Trip Itinerary also gives approximate costs for some optional activities and by reading the itinerary thoroughly you will know what's included and what isn't. As a general rule, it's always better to bring a little more than you think you'll need!

Based on the range that previous travellers have spent on our South America trips, we recommend budgeting USD15-30 per day (this amount is normally lower in Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru but slightly higher elsewhere).

Cash or Card

We recommend bringing a sensible mix of cash and cards on your trip. A small amount of local currency can be handy when you first arrive to your destination but 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. Traveller's cheques have become increasingly difficult to change around the world. For this reason we no longer accept them on our trips and do not recommend that you bring them for your personal spending money.

More and more people are choosing to travel with prepaid travel cards or currency cards in addition to, or as an alternative to, debit

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or credit cards. 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. Please note that while ATMs are widely available in most areas, in more remote areas they are few and far between and in some countries you cannot use foreign cards at all. ATMs are also not always reliable and we therefore do not recommend that you rely on them as your only source of funds. Cards are accepted as payment in some major cities, but be prepared for high commission charges depending on your bank/card provider.

Cash can be changed in many places where ATMs are not available and you will sometimes get a better exchange rate as well. Make sure any USD and EUR notes are no more than 8 years old, clean and in good condition. Worn or damaged notes or any that have been written on are often refused by money changers. Please also bring a mix of denominations; the majority of the money you intend to change should be in large denominations (USD/EUR100 and 50 notes) as the exchange rate is often much better than for smaller notes. However, it is a good idea to have some smaller notes as well, as in more remote areas it can be hard to change amounts over USD/EUR50.

In South America we recommend you bring USD. Brazil can be difficult for changing money, so it's handy to have a cash card as backup if you're travelling through Brazil. 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.

Contingency Emergency Fund

Sometimes, civil or political unrest, or reasons beyond our 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 we will help organise travel arrangements, in circumstances outside of our control you will be required to contribute the additional costs involved and therefore we ask you to bring the equivalent of USD400 as a contingency fund. In almost all cases trips run smoothly and this fund is therefore never used. We also recommend that you bring 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 in some instances only refund you for expenses after you have already paid out.

Luggage

Although you will not have to carry your main bag for long distances, you will need to help load and unload bags 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 luggage 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 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.

What to Pack?

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 our overland trips, all camping equipment is included 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. And remember that even when it's warm during the day it can often get cold at night, particularly in desert regions.

Kit Lists

For a general idea of what you need, the lists below provide a guide. The lists are NOT exhaustive.

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
- 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

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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

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.

Electrical Equipment

Your vehicle will usually be 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.

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 contains 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. To see their overland range go to <http://www.nomadtravel.co.uk/overland-ready>

Government Travel Advice

We follow 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
 Australia - www.smarttraveller.gov.au
 New Zealand - www.safetravel.govt.nz
 United States – www.travel.state.gov
 Canada – www.travel.gc.ca

We also recommend that you check 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.

Safety Information and Tips

Your safety is of paramount importance to us and we will do our best to ensure that your travel is safe and trouble-free, but we do ask that you take that little bit of extra care whilst you are away and take some time to understand about the nature of this style of travel. Part of the enjoyment of travel is experiencing a different way of life and cultures but 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

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delivered by your crew and any third-party suppliers we use during your trip.

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.
- Some of 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.

Hostels/Hotels/Homestays safety

- 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.
- Electricians 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. 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.

Campsite fire safety

- 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.

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 overland trucks 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.

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

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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.

Activity Safety & Optional Activities

Optional activities are not included in the trip price or kitty, and do not form part of your contract with us. As such you accept that any assistance given by the crew members or local representatives in arranging optional activities does not render us liable for them in any way. The 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. We

accept no liability for any action or activity undertaken by the client which is arranged independently of us 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, taking into account your physical ability to take part and making sure you are happy with the safety aspects of the activity. 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.

Extra Accommodation & Transfers

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? We can take away the hassle of time zones and language barriers by making the booking for you. This service is available for some hotels in joining and finishing cities, immediately before or after the trip you are travelling on.

While we are 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.

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 travellers 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 our travellers 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.

Brazil Country Guide

Brazil - Fact File

- Official Name: Federal Republic of Brazil
- Capital: Brasilia
- Population: 176 million
- Total Area: 8.5 million square kilometres
- Official Language: Portuguese
- Religions: Roman Catholic 80%, Protestant 15%
- Voltage: Brazil has a variety of electrical voltages, sometimes within the same city and outlets often accept a range of plug types. For this reason, many hotels and campsites will label their outlets to make sure guests know what type of power they use. If an outlet lacks a label, this information will often be listed in the hotel services guide. If in doubt, you

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should check with reception before plugging in an appliance.

- Dialling Code: +55
- Time Difference: GMT/UTC -2 to -4. For other time differences please visit www.timeanddate.com
- Airport Departure Tax: none

Brazil - Visas

Citizens of most Western European nations, including the UK and Ireland, need only a passport valid for six months and either a return or onward ticket, or evidence of funds to pay for one, to enter Brazil. An entry card must be filled in on arrival to obtain a tourist permit allowing you to stay for 90 days. Australian, USA and Canadian citizens MUST obtain visas in advance and a return or onward ticket is usually a requirement. Do not lose the carbon copy of the entry card the police staple into your passport on arrival, as you may be fined on departure if you don't present it. A sensible precaution is to photocopy it and keep it separate from your passport (or take a photograph of it). Visa requirements do change periodically so you should check for the latest information on your specific visa requirements with your local Brazilian embassy or consulate well in advance of your planned date of travel.

Brazil - Climate

Brazil can be split into four distinct climatic regions. The coldest part - in fact the only part of Brazil which ever gets really cold - is the South and Southeast, the region roughly from central Minas Gerais to Rio Grande do Sul. Here, there's a distinct winter between June and September, with occasional cold, wind and rain.

The coastal climate is exceptionally good and the 7,000 kilometres of coastline, from Paraná to near the equator, bask under a warm tropical climate. There is a winter, when there are cloudy days and sometimes the temperature dips below 25°C, and a rainy season, when it can really pour. In Rio and points south the summer rains last from October through to January, but they come much earlier in the northeast, lasting about three months from April in Fortaleza and Salvador, and from May in Recife. Even in

winter or the rainy season, the weather will be excellent much of the time.

The average monthly temperature in the northeast doesn't ever dip below 25°C and the interior is semi-arid. Rain is sparse and irregular, although violent. Amazônia is stereotyped as being steamy jungle with constant rainfall, but much of the region has a distinct dry season from July to October. Check the weather chart on our website or visit www.worldclimate.com to get an idea of what the weather will be like on your trip.

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Brazil - Money

Important

In Latin America you will have problems changing the US\$100 CB B2 2001 series notes and it is important you do not to bring them. In some countries banks won't even take them. The serial number is located in the top left hand corner and bottom right hand corner on the side with the President's face. This serial number starts with CB and then a few more numbers and then directly under that B2. At the bottom of the note near the signature of the Treasurer it says which series of notes it is and it is there that it says 2001 series.

Local currency

The monetary unit in Brazil is the Real, which is divided into 100 centavos. For up-to-date exchange rates with your own currency visit www.xe.com.

Changing money, credit cards & ATMs

We recommend that you bring cash/travellers cheques in US dollars only. Visa, Diners and American Express are the best credit cards to bring (Mastercard is not common in Brazil), however there can be problems at times getting money out from ATMs, so make sure you have sufficient cash for emergencies.

There is no restriction on the amount of foreign currency that you may bring into Brazil, however very large sums should be declared on arrival. There is often a general lack of small change and we recommend maintaining

a supply of small denomination notes and coins.

When arriving at the Rio de Janeiro International Airport we suggest that you get some reals at one of the little banks in the terminal building or use one of the ATMs (as you come out of customs, take the escalators (to the right) to the top floor then go left and right to the end passing through the shops you will find about three ATMs together). Change enough money to see you through the first few days of your trip – particularly if it is a weekend.

Brazil - Local Transport

Much of Rio can be visited by bus or metro (although the latter doesn't really cover many of the tourist sights). The buses are fast (remember, every Brazilian wants to be a motor racing driver, well at least the bus drivers), reliable and cheap. They are easy to use as you get on and pay the conductor who sits in a little booth then pass through a turnstile. Beware of thieves and pickpockets, especially before you pass through the turnstile.

Taxis are relatively cheap and we recommend using them at night. Most taxis have meters and you should insist that the driver switches it on.

In other Brazilian towns and cities walking is basically the best and cheapest way to see the sights (with the exception of Sao Paulo where the metro is the best way of getting around the city).

Brazil - Food & Drink

All meals are included when camping and lunch is included on travelling days in the truck. When staying in hotels lunch and dinner is at your own expense. (All hotels in Brazil include a buffet style breakfast, normally bread, cold meats, hams, cheese, fruits, juice, tea or coffee). As a guideline a simple snack (e.g. a sandwich) can cost as little as US \$0.70, a light meal will cost around US\$2-3, and a main meal with a couple of beers will cost around US\$8. You will find that meals are generally much cheaper than you are accustomed at home but obviously this does depend on what you order and if you

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updated on 01-06-2020 03:53:46

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have wine or other drinks which will certainly increase the bill. Eating out in upmarket suburbs like Ipanema or Leblon in Rio will be more expensive.

Your tour leader will be able to recommend restaurants.

Generally you will find that meals are much bigger than you are used to and, in many cases, one main meal will serve for two. Quite often the waiter will even suggest that two of you share it.

Food

In Brazil the basic diet focuses on meat and black beans. The favourite national dish, especially on Saturday lunchtimes is "feijoada". This consists of several meats (sausages, pork etc) in a delicious stew cooked with black beans and "farofa" (manioc flour). This is normally accompanied by neat chachaca which will blow your head off at first but then become very mellow.

A 'churrasco' at a typical Churrascarria (BBQ) restaurant is another typical dish but go there with an empty stomach as you will get so much food. Every type of meat you can think of is served on giant swords and waiters wander around topping up your plate every few minutes. These restaurants also have great salad bars with lots of variety where you can help yourself as many times as you wish.

If you like fish ask for 'peixe' which can be grilled, pan fried with breadcrumbs or with a sauce. There are also plenty of chicken ('frango') dishes which are a good idea if you don't like your food too salty (the beef normally comes very salty indeed).

Typical snacks available in lanchonetes and roadside truck-stops include 'empadao' (pasties with chicken or meat), 'empadas' (fried version of the latter), 'coxinha' (pear-shaped deep fried manioc flour with fish or chicken), 'pão de queijo' (hot roll made with cheese) and 'salgados' (savoury pastries).

For a cheap and hearty meal try the fixed priced 'prato feito' or 'sortido'. While at the 'comida por kilo' you pay by the kilo which is usually very good value.

Vegetarians

If you are a strict vegetarian you may experience a distinct lack of variety in the food available, especially in small towns. However vegetarian alternatives are becoming more popular you will just have to search a little harder for the restaurants that cater to your tastes. Our tour leaders will do their best to provide interesting vegetarian alternatives when arranging group meals in the campsite, but your patience and understanding is requested.

Drink

All drinks such as water, soft or alcoholic drinks are at your own expense at all times. The following is a guideline for drinks bought in a shop in the street. Prices in restaurants and hotels can sometimes be more than double the prices specified below:

- 1 litre of water - US\$0.50
- 30cl bottle of soft drink - US\$0.30
- 30cl bottle of beer - US\$0.50
- 50cl bottle of beer - US\$0.80

You should be wary of drinking the local tap water. Bottled water and carbonated soft drinks are widely available and are generally safe to drink. Surprisingly, although Brazil is one of the largest coffee producer in the world, most coffee in cafes and restaurants leaves a lot to be desired, so look out for a specialist coffee type cafe. For great fresh fruit juices ('sucos'), try the 'lanchonetes' where you can also get great snacks.

In Brazil some of the hotels we use have bars or serve alcoholic drinks. If there is not a bar in the hotel then there is sure to be one within walking distance. In more up-market hotels, imported beers and spirits are available, but at a much higher price. There is an array of locally made rums, whiskeys, gins, vermouth, campari and cachaca available cheaply. The latter is a sugar-cane liquor which is used in the Brazilian national drink 'Caipirinha' (a mix of cachaca, sugar, crushed ice and slices of squashed limes). Another variation is the 'Batida' which is cachaca mixed with a variety of fruit juices, crushed ice and sugar. There are various brands of beers including Brahma,

Antarctica and Cerpa. Draught beer is called 'chopp'.

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