

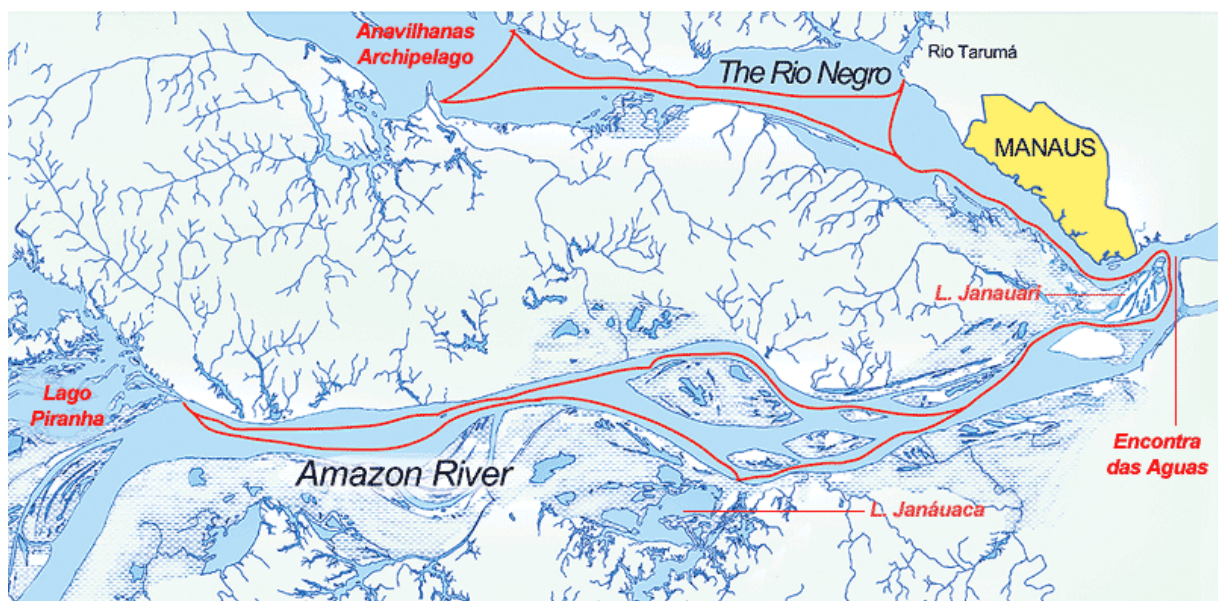
Exploring The Amazon River

Most of our cruise will take place on the Amazon River, but we begin with an afternoon in forest flooded by the ink black water of the Rio Negro. This low and dense forest is called the Igapó. We will excursion in our launches and experience a fantastic diversity of flora and fauna. During the night the M/Y TUCANO will travel downstream all the way to the confluence of the Rio Negro and the greatest river on Earth: The Amazon.

In the next days we will have up to four excursions off the vessel every day. Early mornings we glide along quiet streams in an environment called the Varzea. Here the forest is deeply shaded by giant rainforest trees that are draped with vines and orchids. The silence is broken only by the rustling of leaves by Squirrel Monkeys feeding or by the occasional piercing shriek of a Screaming Piha bird. Some nights in our launches we search for nocturnal creatures in the star filled darkness.

Our travels take us also to vast plains of waving grass which are home to some of the most spectacular wildlife of the Amazon. On lazy afternoons we may fish for the famous Amazon resident, the Piranha, some of whom we may see again on an appetizer plate. During our voyage we are treated to the ever changing vistas of travel on the mighty Amazon River itself. Most travelers are astonished by the scale and grandeur of this majestic waterway that drains a continent.

On the Amazon Odyssey we not only focus on the rainforest, but also on the culture of the people who live in this vast wilderness. We visit small fishing villages perched on the river bank where the traditional life is still guided by the rhythms of the rise and fall of the river. We also visit the homesteads of families who make and grow almost everything they need. For many travelers these visits with local settlers, whose lives are so dramatically different from ours, are some of the most memorable experiences of the cruise. Another fascinating visit is a stop at one of the bustling river trading towns. Here a vibrant river trade continues as it has for centuries. The last evening of the cruise we will coast along one of the greatest ports in the world, the Porto de Manaus. At our farewell dinner we will have the opportunity to reflect on our extraordinary experience and offer a toast to one of the most remarkable places on Earth.



Itinerary: Amazon Odyssey (5D/4N)

Day 1 This afternoon we embark on the MOTOR YACHT TUCANO in Manaus, Brasil. We depart upstream on the Rio Negro and as the vessel glides upstream we will have our first talk about Amazon environments. By late afternoon we enter one of the world's largest river island systems, the Anavilhanas Archipelago. The boat will weave along a winding channel with rainforest on both sides in a riot of brilliant vegetation. Weather permitting, we will go for an excursion in the gnarled and dense flooded forest known as the Igapó. Along the river bank we may see some Squirrel Monkeys and we may hear the other-worldly growls of Howler Monkeys echoing through the primitive rainforest. The Amazon has one of the greatest collection of birds in the world and we are sure to see some of these brightly colored jewels perched in the treetops.

We return to the M/Y TUCANO for hors d'oeuvres on the observation deck and a toast to the rainforest sunset. Following dinner we will embark in our launches in search of nocturnal creatures such as the Caiman, the Amazon's crocodilians. We may also see one of the large night birds such as a Potoo with its bulging eyes and large mouth adapted to swallow the huge Mariposa Moths, Later this evening our vessel will weigh anchor and we will voyage downstream through the night to the Xiborena Peninsula that divides the two of the world's most storied rivers: the Rio Negro and the Amazon River. (D)

Day 2 Rising early, we will excursion in the Lago Januari Ecological Park, a dense forest that is flooded with the coffee colored water of the Amazon River. We explore a labyrinth of small channels overhung with gargantuan trees and vines. Listening to the chatter of creatures in the undergrowth we also keep our eyes open for monkeys, Three Toed Sloths, and the occasional Collared Anteater. By mid morning we return to the M/Y TUCANO for a hearty breakfast and some time to relax. By late morning we foray off the vessel again to explore this environment rich in life.

Near midday, following lunch, we navigate downstream to the "Encontra das Aguas", the several mile long joining of two of the world's greatest rivers, the Rio Negro and The Amazon. The dark and light waters run side by side for several miles without mixing. Often Pink River Dolphins and also Grey River Dolphins leap and cavort along this stark line of contrasting currents. We then will begin to navigate upstream on the Amazon River until the late afternoon. On Brazilian maps this river is given the name Rio Solimões - but it is the same vast, turbulent, mighty river that we know of as the Amazon. At this point in its course, it has truly become the most magnificent river on the planet and carries fully 20% of all the fresh water on Earth.

We will travel upstream on the Amazon River into the late afternoon when we should reach a channel on the south bank of the Amazon where, conditions permitting, we can access a large lake called Lago Janauacá. Here we encounter a new and fascinating environment known as the Varzea. In our launches we glide down narrow channels where we expect to see creatures found only on the South side of the Amazon River. Tonight we will foray out in our launches to hunt for nocturnal life. In the beam of our powerful spotlights we should see the glowing eyes of Caiman, the Amazon's crocodiles. (BLD)

Day 3 We begin our day with an early launch excursion, but for our mid-morning excursion will go for a walk in a small village. We will appreciate the slow pace of life that follows the rhythms of the seasons and river cycles. About midday the M/Y TUCANO will return to the deep brown and forceful current of the Amazon River. Our destination this afternoon depends on the vessel's Captain. We will go either to the north or south side of

the Amazon River depending on the season and the weather. Our choice will be whichever offers us the best chance of observing wildlife. Late afternoon we will further explore the wilds of this tropical paradise. (BLD)

Day 4 This morning we will scout for more of the bizarre creatures of the Amazon. On our mid-morning excursion we visit a local homesteaders and walk through their gardens and learn how traditions help families survive in the remote interior. Time permitting we will also visit one of the river towns where trade still thrives in goods that have been grown, caught, or collected in this vast rainforest.

During lunch we turn the bows of the M/Y TUCANO downstream on the Amazon River and we will navigate east with the swift current. Through the afternoon we weave in and out of islands that dot the North bank of the river and we will enjoy vistas of forest and homesteads along the river banks. In the late afternoon we should be near the Rio Negro and we will venture out for one more excursion along a narrow channel called Parana Xiborena or we will return to Lago Janauari Ecological Park. At sunset we slowly ascend the Rio Negro, passing along but not stopping at the Porto de Manaus, one of the world's great ports. More than a thousand miles from the sea, Manaus is the major port for much of the entire Amazon. We will see boats of every imaginable shape and purpose that serve this continent sized forest. Tonight we will sample the national drink of Brasil, the Caipirinha and have a farewell dinner. (BLD)

Day 5 Early this morning travelers will disembark the vessel at the riverside dock of the Hotel Tropical. (B)

Meal Codes: B= Breakfast, L= Lunch, D= Dinner.

Please note that the day to day schedule must be considered approximate. Due to changing river levels and weather considerations, features and vessel course are altered and adapted to fit existing circumstances.

Degree of Difficulty: Good health is necessary. Though the trip does not include endurance hiking, participants should be able feel comfortable walking at a leisurely pace for 2 to 3 hours at a time.

Accommodations and Staff

The MOTOR YACHT TUCANO is not a luxury vessel, but is comfortable, safe, and very well suited to exploring the Amazon wilderness. The vessel was built in the elegant style of a classic river steamship, but it is actually a modern and fully certified commercial cruise vessel. While we are able to travel in comfort, we are not insulated from the forest. We remain focused on the flora and fauna of this magnificent wilderness. The voyage is quite active and we spend most of every day exploring the forest on foot or in our boat's launches.

The M/Y TUCANO is designed specifically to explore the Amazon in the most thoughtful and sustainable way. All of the cabins are outside cabins with air-conditioning and private bathrooms. Some cabins are smaller than others, but they are considered by most travelers to be comfortable. The most successful Amazon cruise vessel is not the most luxurious, but instead the one that enables travelers to experience the wild beauty of the Amazon in the most full and authentic way. This is the guiding principle of both the design and operations of the M/Y TUCANO.

The staff of the vessel are highly trained and licensed mariners who bring years of deep forest exploration to our cruises. Our guides are bilingual naturalists who not only help us spot creatures, but also help us make sense of the riot of plant and animal life of the rainforest. Our cooks prepare elaborate meals always from fresh local ingredients and our sailors safely navigate us into some of the most fascinating waterways in the world.