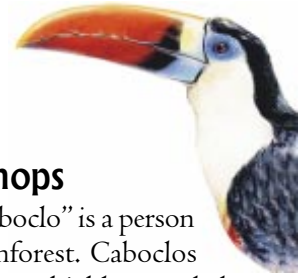


Family Departures

Voyage to the Heart of the Amazon



The Amazon is a fascinating place for young people as well as adults. All of our trips are family friendly, but in order to make it easier for families with young children to travel on our trips, we offer specific fixed departures every year that included some activities that help children enjoy the experience. Family Departures have the same theme as our regular departures, that of understanding the Amazon environment and observing the plants and animals. Activities specifically for children include our “Young Scientist Project” and “Rainforest Workshops”. We also have some activities that are just for fun. With the enthusiasm and a sense of wonder that young people bring to the experience, these are some of the most enjoyable trips we offer.

Booking Details

Family Departure are on specific dates:

2006: July 02-09, July 16-23;

2007 July 01-08 and August 05-12

Discounts for Children: young people 14 years and under who share a room with an adult are eligible for a discount of 50% off the Cruise Rate, subject to cabin availability.

2006 Child Rate: \$1,050 USD

2006 Adult Rate: \$2,100USD

Prices Include: accommodations, transfers, and meals as indicated in the itinerary. Bottled water served free of charge on the M/Y Tucano. Prices and itineraries are subject to change without notice. Prices Do Not Include: Any airfare, departure taxes, gratuities, visa fees, or items of a personal nature.

Young Scientist Project

Young scientists on board the M/Y Tucano get together briefly every morning and afternoon to conduct research and record results in our Field Notebooks. We provide each researcher with a kit of materials for the project. On our morning sessions we take measurements of river water using the same equipment and methods of the Amazon's research scientists. With the help of our group leader, each student samples the river in a number of ways. In addition to weather conditions, we record water temperature, salinity, acidity, dissolved oxygen, and turbidity. On the last day of the trip we make a graph showing how these changed over the trip and how this can affect the wildlife.

In the afternoons we gather in the main salon of the Motor Yacht Tucano to complete our field notebooks. We review the plants and animals that we saw in the last 24 hours and share the interesting things that we have observed in the rainforest. At the end of the trip each young scientist will have a detailed journal of the trip to share with others.

Rainforest Workshops

Growing up in the Amazon: A “caboclo” is a person that has grown up living in the rainforest. Caboclos are very skilled woodsmen and they are highly regarded for their deep knowledge of the rainforest. This morning session we will learn what to do to in order to survive in the rainforest: what plants to eat, where to find a drink of water, and how to track wild animals. We will even learn to paddle a dugout canoe.

Going to School in the Wilderness: One morning during the trip we will try to visit a school in one of the remote villages. Classes are not always being held, so we can't say for sure if there will be students there, but if so, our young travelers can compare their schools to those students who live deep in the rainforest.

Satellite and Constellation Hunt: On a clear dark night when we are far from any lights, we will scan the night sky for the different constellations of the Southern Hemisphere. We will also keep our eyes open for satellites that are easier to see near the equator than they are elsewhere on Earth.

Just for Fun

Camping: Weather permitting, one night during the trip there will be a night of *optional* camping in the rainforest. We will sleep in modern tents and listen to the creatures that rustle about in the rainforest at night.

Swimming: We will go swimming every day in some of the warmest and cleanest water in the world.

Insect Zoo: We have a mesh insect zoo on board for insects that we find. Student zookeepers can help feed our creatures and enjoy their strange looks and habits. We release all of the zoo animals every other day.

Fishing: We will go fishing several times during the cruise and everyone will catch a piranha, guaranteed!

Flavors, Favorites and Tropical: In addition to some foods that we all find familiar like pizza and spaghetti, we will also have some interesting ones from the tropics. This includes exotic juices, strange fruits and even some ice cream from the rainforest.

Family Departure Itinerary: *Voyage to the Heart of the Amazon*

Day 1 This morning all guests board the vessel the Motor Yacht Tucano and depart upstream on the Rio Negro. Through the morning we will cruise through the world's largest river island system, the Anavilhanas Archipelago. From the observation deck we scan the magnificent tangle of vegetation at the water's edge. By mid-afternoon the vessel has gone beyond the frontier of settlement and entered a wilderness area. Both shores are covered by dense rainforest. Though we cannot predict what we will see, we have a good chance of observing pink river dolphins and a large collection of exotic birds. Most certainly we will be treated to magnificent forest vistas and the spectacular trees themselves. In the late afternoon we embark in the launches and hunt for wildlife. We may also go for a swim in some of the world's most clean and refreshing water. (LD)

Day 2 Early this morning we explore the rainforest along the waters edge in our launches. We should hear and perhaps see howler monkeys along with a morning serenade of toucans. After breakfast we go for a walk in the forest where we will get a good start on understanding Amazon ecology. Around midday we return for lunch and the vessel will get underway, perhaps stopping at a place to swim. In the late afternoon we will again explore the forest in our launches and listen to the sunset chorus of birds and frogs. (BLD)

Day 3 This morning there will be an early exploration of the waking forest. We will keep our eyes open for monkeys... on most trips we see them often. We return for breakfast followed by either a walk in the forest or an excursion in the launches. M/Y Tucano will travel during the middle of the day and we stop in the afternoon for an excursion. Tonight the vessel may travel a bit more as we marvel at the night sky crowded with stars. (BLD)

Day 4 After our two morning excursions Tucano will navigate along the heavily forested shore, scouting for wildlife. We may stop for a visit at a settler's home carved out of the forest. In the early afternoon we will be near an extraordinary river called the Rio Jauaperi. Here we will see a kind of forest known as the varzea. We will scout along the shoreline for some of the extraordinary creatures found only in this unique environment. Weather permitting we will do a night excursion to observe nocturnal creatures. (BLD)

Day 5 Today we depart the Rio Jauaperi and head downstream on the Rio Negro exploring a new collection of rainforest habitats. In the daytime we will continue to scout in our launches and walk in the forest, and at night we will continue our hunts for nocturnal wildlife. (BLD)

Day 6 After a walk in the forest we cross to the west side of the Rio Negro, exploring as we go. We will stop at the substantial boat building village of Novo Airão. As we walk through the streets we'll marvel at how the 19th Century thrives in this remote corner of the globe. Tonight the Motor Yacht Tucano goes downstream to arrive by morning near the confluence with the Amazon River. As we glide through the starry darkness this is a good night to sip the national drink of Brazil, the "Caipirinha" and perhaps try a bit of samba on the top deck. (BLD)

Day 7 This morning we explore the Lago Janauari Ecological Park where seasonally the thick brown water of the Amazon flows swiftly through the forest. This area is usually a very good place to observe wildlife. Around midday the vessel will travel to the "Encontra das Aguas" a stark several mile long line where two of the world's largest rivers, the Amazon and the Negro, join in a turbulent maelstrom. Here the dark water of the Negro runs beside the opaque brown water of the Amazon. In the afternoon we scout one of the hidden streams in the area to try to see more of the Amazon's beautiful and bizarre creatures. Tonight there will be one last excursion looking for nocturnal life. (BLD)

Day 8 In the morning, after a hearty breakfast, all guests disembark from the M/Y Tucano. (B)

Meal Codes: B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner
Please note that the day to day schedule must be considered approximate. The exact order of the days and specific features may be altered due to navigational and other scheduling considerations.

Degree of Difficulty: Good health is necessary. While guests can have a quite enjoyable trip by simply staying on board the M/Y Tucano and participating in launch excursions, participants in our walks in the forest must be able to comfortably walk for two or more hours at a time. There are several excursions off the vessel daily and guests may choose to participate in some but not all of them. The vessel is air-conditioned in the middle of the day and during the night.

Research Kit for Each Young Scientist

"Rite in the Rain" field notebook; "Fisher Space Pen" (Writes in all weather and even upside down!); Hand Magnifying Lens; Insect Collection Net and Bottle; reading list especially for young people