



# Amazon Nature Tours

Natureza Amazônica Viagens e Turismo, Ltda.



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## Sustainable Tourism in the Amazon On the Motor Yacht Tucano

Our Amazon voyages are designed to be not only interesting and engaging experiences in tropical nature, but to be ecologically sensitive and to contribute to rainforest preservation. As detailed below, our contributions to preservation are primarily through environmental education and importantly through providing a substantial income to local communities in a way that places high value on preserving wild rainforest. Our trips offer a fully sustainable and non-extractive use of primitive rainforest. Below is some information about the character of our expedition cruises and also of our efforts to promote conservation in the Amazon.

Our voyages are true expedition cruises and we explore areas where almost no other tourists venture. We go far into the wilderness, off the flight paths of planes and where all of the creatures that make the Amazon famous still reign supreme.

Our trips offer an authenticity that is due to our dedication to nature and our own sense of adventure. The mass travel market in general values short and simplified trips, but we have never compromised the length or the intensity of our trips. After 21 years we continue to conduct ambitious, intensive wilderness explorations. We routinely have a clientele of travelers who are looking for a truly unique trip and the very best kind of trip in a particular destination.

Many years ago we made a commitment to the Amazon nature and this has led to an investment, financially but also in years of effort, in exploration and conservation. For this dedication we have had the privilege of operating Amazon voyages not only for the general public, but also many private groups including birding societies, zoological parks, biology classes, conservation organizations, and nature tour operators worldwide.

Our objective has always been to voyage into the remote wilderness Amazon, to observe the complex ecology of the Amazon environments, to appreciate the creatures that live there, and to benefit conservation through generating income for local communities through a non-extractive use of rainforest. Our trips are designed to offer a physical field experience but also an as importantly, about environmental education.



### Environmental Education

Virtually throughout the trip our voyages are intensive learning experiences. We make several observational excursions off the vessel every day including walks in the forest and the launch explorations. On all these excursions the guides are charged with not only finding and observing interesting creatures and plants, but also putting our observations into an ecological framework. In the evenings our guides also address larger topics such as species diversity, hydrology in the Amazon, geography, geology, and settlement by native peoples. Our cruises also visit some remote settles and villages, and we bring the same learning and respectful perspective to our contacts with these folks living traditional lives. We have actually conducted many secondary and university academic programs in biology so there is a strong educational objective.

### Qualified Guides and Crew Members

All of our staff members are local Brazilians and are licensed by the Brazilian authorities. Our guides are long term employees with stable jobs. They were selected for their knowledge of the forest and their enthusiasm for communicating their knowledge. Our guides are skilled naturalists and dedicated conservationists. While they come from forest backgrounds they have also had the dedication to study the more academic details of Amazon ecology. They are fully equal to the task of providing detailed and correct information about Amazon nature. They and almost all of our crew members have all grown up in the forest and have a vast store of experience to share with our travelers.



### Maximizing Benefits to Local People

We not only benefit local people, we are local people. Our staff is entirely composed of men and women from small communities and our weekly payroll goes to supporting their families and communities. Our operations are the most possible direct benefit of sustainable tourism. Regarding the impact of our operations, we have designed our itineraries to enable our guests to make purchases of locally produced products and we do our best to make sure that the benefits of the purchases are passed on as directly as possible to the local economy. Our supplies and maintenance purchases are quite considerable and we do our best to purchase directly from the local farmer at the farmer's markets. There is a huge multiplier effect from our vessel operations. Because we are ourselves locally based, virtually all of our activities have social and economic benefits to local people.

### Reducing Our Carbon Footprint

In an ongoing effort to continue to reduce our carbon footprint we have installed the newest generation of diesel generators with lower hydrocarbon emissions. These newest designs create much less air pollution and are much more fuel efficient than older models. We have also replaced our outboard motors with the newest four stroke designs which are much less polluting and consume much less fuel .

### Minimizing Environmental Impact

We have designed the Motor Yacht Tucano to minimize the environmental impact of our cruises. The basic areas on which we focus are waste management, energy conservation, and pollution control. All of our waste materials are returned to our city of departure, Manaus, Brasil. This includes all recyclable material which we separate on board the vessel. Where possible we avoid the use of disposable packaging.

In the realm of energy conservation we have equipment and procedures in place to conserve energy while at the same time retaining the comfort of our cruises. One of these measures is that, unless requested by the travelers, we change the cabin linens on board the vessel every other day instead of every day. This reduces the energy consumed in washing what are usually still clean linens. Two additional procedures are in place to reduce fuel consumption and emissions. First, we do not heat hot water 24 hours a day to be used in showers. Instead, we have "on-demand" water heaters installed in each cabin and we also have an auxiliary system with water that is solar heated.

Secondly, we have a policy of "low power hours" when we actually turn off all diesel consuming machines for certain hours of the day when they are not needed. This is done in the early morning and late afternoon when the boat is generally at anchor. The vessel remains comfortable even without electrical generation because it was designed to offer water, illumination, and climate control even without electricity. The Motor Yacht Tucano actually has two completely separate water systems. This ensures that even when there are no generators functioning, the sinks, toilets and showers on the vessel continue to operate.

Because the vessel has large windows, travelers are able to use natural lighting during the day which eliminates the need to generate power for illumination. All but a very few of the light bulbs on the vessel are fluorescent which greatly reduces power consumed. When it comes to climate control, the Motor Yacht Tucano has an efficient air-conditioning system functioning in the heat of the day and at night. But even during the low power hours of the day, the cabins stay cool because



the vessel is well thermo insulated. All of the windows on the M/Y Tucano open and close and we have a practice of opening the windows in the public spaces in the cool of the afternoon. Many travelers choose to turn off the air-conditioning for the duration of the trip. Together these measures enable us to greatly reduce fuel consumption and emission of the pollutants that make up greenhouse gases, oxides of nitrogen (NOx) and hydrocarbons.

### **Sustainable Conduct in the Rain Forest**

We strictly observe a zero impact policy on our trips which includes not removing anything from the forest, leaving nothing behind, staying on defined trails, not creating new trails, keeping noise to a minimum, and leaving no waste behind. We take considerable measures not to disturb creatures that we observe including not getting too close, leaving an area if an animal becomes disturbed, not handling creatures that we encounter. We recycle our waste, we haul our trash back to landfills in the city, and we use as much natural products as possible.



### **Supporting Conservation in the Amazon**

We have always been strong advocates for Amazon conservation and this is one of the founding ideas of our company. We have made direct monetary contributions to conservation NGO's in Brasil, though our major contribution is through environmental education. All of our staff have become advocates for conservation and all of our contacts in the communities and at all levels of government are dedicated to promoting Amazon conservation.

We have also been one of the participants in preparing the management plan for the world's largest rainforest park, the Central Amazon Biological Corridor. Our company has been the most insistent advocate for the strictest possible environmental regulations for entry and use of the reserve. Though not currently well known, in future years this reserve could well become the world's most important rainforest park and we are working as hard as we can to facilitate the creation and enforcement of procedures that will ensure sustainable practices within the reserve.

### **Supporting Cultural Preservation**

On our trips we are very careful in our interaction with local peoples and try not to turn the villagers we meet into trinket vendors. We have elaborate procedures in place for not disturbing small communities with our visits. This includes varying the places we visit and ensuring that the interactions with local peoples are respectful and not economically disruptive. We provide materials that can benefit the entire community such as diesel fuel for the village generator or writing materials to the village school. Common practices which we actively discourage are the capture of wild animals for photo displays and the sale of handicrafts which are made of animal parts. We never orchestrate "manufactured" or artificial cultural experiences for our visitors.



### **Tourism and the Future**

While there is a potential for nature tourism to negatively affect natural areas, if done conscientiously and responsibly, tourism can have a very positive affect on both the environment and local communities. Tourism is an industry that values education, that can offer steady and high paying employment, and is perhaps the only type of non-extractive use that can be made of undisturbed tropical forest. As we enter our third decade of operations in the Amazon, we will continue to do our best to achieve the goals of ecotourism and have the privilege of enabling our travelers to experience the greatest wilderness on Earth.