



CHEESEMANS' ECOLOGY SAFARIS

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Brazil

Pantanal's Big Five

August 3 to 20, 2019



Jaguar

SAFARI OVERVIEW

Tour the Pantanal to seek South America's "Big Five" - jaguar, giant anteater, giant otter, ocelot, and South American tapir. Travel via boat, bus, and safari vehicles through regions where marshes, lakes, and streams provide diverse ecosystems that foster superb wildlife encounters with these awe-inspiring mammals. Journey down the famous Transpantaneira Highway in the northern Pantanal to Porto Jofre where day tours on the Cuiabá River afford numerous opportunities to see jaguars, giant otters, and other wildlife not easily seen by land. While in the southern Pantanal, stay at Caiman Lodge, a top wildlife destination in Brazil, and also a sure bet for giant anteaters and ocelots. Also learn about conservation and wildlife research from biologists as you join them in the field. Find a plethora of beautiful birds, such as the hyacinth macaw, to photograph and enjoy. The Pantanal Conservation Complex is a UNESCO world heritage site and biosphere reserve of spectacular beauty.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Boat down river to spot jaguar cooling off on the banks, keeping an eye on the water for giant river otters.
- Head out at night with our leader to search for nocturnal animals such as the ocelot, giant anteater, South American tapir, and Yacaré caiman.
- View the prehistoric-looking jabiru stork and the world's largest parrot, the hyacinth macaw, along the Transpantaneira Highway.
- Join conservation researchers in the field and learn about conservation issues faced in this region.

COST: \$11,625 per person, double occupancy, not including airfare (except charter flight between Porto Jofre and Fazenda San Francisco), singles extra. See the *Costs* section on page 6.

GROUP SIZE: 10.

NUMBER OF DAYS: 18, including estimated travel time.

LEADER: Diogo Lucatelli.

TRANSPORTATION: Air-conditioned mini-bus, boat, and plane.

ACCOMMODATIONS: All hotels and lodges have private baths and air conditioning.

CONDITIONS: This is a **non-smoking tour** for people who are very interested in spending the maximum time in nature. See the *Conditions* section on page 8.

Date	Description	Accommodation	Meals
Aug 3	Travel to Brazil.		
Aug 4	Meet Diogo in São Paulo, then fly to Cuiabá. Drive the Transpantaneira Highway to Araras.	Araras Eco Lodge, Northern Pantanal	D
Aug 5	Explore Araras.		B, L, D
Aug 6	Morning game drive at Araras, then drive and sightsee south to Porto Jofre.	Hotel Pantanal Norte, Porto Jofre	B, L, D
Aug 7–10	Boat trips on the Cuiabá River to find jaguar, giant otters, monkeys, and birds.		B, L, D
Aug 11	Morning boat ride, then fly from Porto Jofre to Fazenda San Francisco.	Fazenda San Francisco, Southern Pantanal	B, L, D
Aug 12	Search for giant anteater, ocelot, and other wildlife at Fazenda San Francisco.		B, L, D
Aug 13	Morning search for wildlife at Fazenda San Francisco; drive to Fazenda 23 in the afternoon.	Fazenda 23 de Marco, Southern Pantanal	B, L, D
Aug 14	Learn about local issues and wildlife at Fazenda 23 with conservation researchers.		B, L, D
Aug 15	More peccary research, then travel to Caiman Lodge.	Caiman Lodge, Southern Pantanal	B, L, D
Aug 16–17	Look for giant anteaters and other wildlife around Caiman Lodge.		B, L, D
Aug 18	Morning game drive at Caiman Lodge, then travel to Campo Grande.	Hotel Deville Prime, Campo Grande	B, L, D
Aug 19	Flights from Campo Grande and homeward.		B
Aug 20	Arrive home.		

LEADER

Diogo Lucatelli

Diogo studied Biology at Bahia Federal University, one of the most renowned academies in Brazil, and began working as a naturalist guide in the Pantanal region in 2011. His skills in zoology, animal behavior, botany, animal tracking, ecology, birding, and photography have propelled his career in guiding for renowned lodges, safari groups, and research programs. On safari, Diogo aspires to build a bond between travelers and nature and instill a commitment to conservation by sharing his experiences, knowledge, and love for the region.



DETAILED ITINERARY

Aug 3 ~ Travel to Brazil

We recommend arriving in São Paulo today. We will book you an overnight at a hotel near the airport at an extra cost, which includes the transfer from the airport on August 3 and back to the airport on August 4 for the flight to Cuiabá.

Aug 4 ~ Fly to Cuiabá then drive south to Araras

Arrive in São Paulo by early morning today at the latest. Diogo will meet you at the São Paulo Airport to catch the mid-morning flight to Cuiabá located in the northern part of the state of Mato Grosso. Drive across 90km of the Cerrado region (Brazilian savanna) to the town of Poconé, then drive about 15km south to the entrance of the Transpantaneira "Highway" - a truly extraordinary gravel road traversing some 150km of the Pantanal. You will continue south down the Transpantaneira to Araras.



Giant anteater

Aug 5 ~ Explore Araras

Explore the grounds of the Araras Eco Lodge, which include 3,000 hectares of wetlands, forest, and savannah. Birds, such as the cinereous-breasted spinetails and Mato Grosso antbirds, can all be found in the woodlands around the lodge and along an elevated boardwalk. The Araras property extends east of the Transpantaneira into the dry grasslands where you have a great chance to view both lesser and giant anteaters. After dinner, you will go on a night drive, the best time to encounter tamandua (also known as the lesser anteater) and perhaps a South American tapir.

Aug 6 ~ Morning safari then drive to Porto Jofre

After an early morning safari at Araras, you'll journey south down the Transpantaneira Highway to the Cuiabá River in Porto Jofre, making stops along the way. Water lingers alongside the Transpantaneira, concentrating a wide variety of wildlife. Diogo is very familiar with this area and knows some excellent places to stop to stretch your legs and take photographic opportunities.

The principal avian emblems of the Pantanal are the jabiru stork standing five feet tall and the hyacinth

macaw, the world's largest parrot. The hyacinth macaw is usually near lodges where they easily steal the show while feeding on palm seeds. Two species of brocket deer, plus pampas and marsh deer, can sometimes be seen in the tall grassland.

Aug 7–10 ~ *Search the Rio Cuiabá surroundings by boat*

The best chances to spot jaguar are on the Rio Cuiabá. The jaguars in this region are protected for their conservation and have become accustomed to boats full of photographers pointing lenses at them. You'll ride in boats that can quickly reach the various tributaries of the Rio Cuiabá where the cats may be lounging or hunting. The boat will travel slowly as you scan the banks and vegetation for signs of jaguar.

You'll enjoy morning and late afternoon private boat trips when the sun isn't directly overhead. Besides the beautifully colored birds, mammals to keep an eye out for include black-striped tufted capuchins, the crab-eating fox, South American tapir, and the enigmatic ocelot. Hundreds of Yacaré caimans and some green iguanas are the most noteworthy reptiles throughout the Pantanal. If lucky, you may come across a rare yellow anaconda.



Hyacinth macaw

Aug 11 ~ *Fly from Porto Jofre to Fazenda San Francisco*

Start today with another morning boat trip. After lunch, you will take a charter flight to Campo Grande directly to Fazenda San Francisco, a working ranch and hub for ecotourism and conservation research. There will be time for game drives and exploring today.

Aug 12 ~ *Explore the Pantanal around Fazenda San Francisco*

You'll have your best chances of finding giant anteater and ocelot on game drives and during nightspotting in this area. Even jaguar, maned wolf, and South American tapir are sometimes encountered. Fazenda San Francisco has extensive native forest, wetlands, and grasslands, but it's also a working ranch with cattle pastures and vast rice fields. The owner and staff work very hard to preserve wildlife, particularly to protect the rare mammals. Blue-and-yellow macaws, parrots, parakeets, toucans, and toucanets are plentiful right around the lodge and are extremely habituated. You'll go on a game drive in the evening and at dawn for the best action and enjoy breaks on the lodge grounds during the warm part of the day.



Black-striped tufted capuchin monkey

Aug 13 ~ *Morning search for wildlife, then drive to Fazenda 23*

Continue your search for more magnificent birds and charismatic mammals of the southern Pantanal region. In the afternoon, you will travel to nearby Fazenda 23, another remote working ranch with abundant opportunities for wildlife encounters.

Aug 14 ~ *Search for wildlife at Fazenda 23*

With a base at Fazenda 23, the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) has formed a partnership with the surrounding rural community to protect the biodiversity of the Pantanal. The ranch's sustainable practices have

contributed to the high diversity of wildlife you will see as you tour the area. Local researchers from WCS will

show you the conservation work they are doing in the region, especially their work on the critically endangered white-lipped peccary.

Aug 15 ~ *Fazenda 23 game drive, then travel to Caiman Lodge*

Take another early morning game drive before heading to the famous Caiman Lodge.

Aug 16–17 ~ *Explore wildlife around Caiman Lodge*

Caiman Lodge, which is “best of the best” of nature lodges in South America, has charming accommodations, a very experienced friendly staff, delicious food, very high-quality service and best of all, amazing wildlife! You’ll begin your explorations in the beautiful surroundings for birds and other wildlife. This is our favorite location in all of the Pantanal. You’ll also enjoy night drives to spot nocturnal wildlife in action. You have good chances for locating jaguars, but the overall wildlife experience while immersed in beautiful native habitat is the highlight here at Caiman, named for the plethora of Yacaré caimans, who peer out with their beady eyes gleaming at night. With luck, you will encounter mother giant anteaters with young on her back, gray brocket deer, pampas deer, two species of armadillos, tapeti (Brazilian rabbit), plus crab-eating raccoon. Elusive wildlife is very challenging to photograph, so ample time will be spent in the field to be sure to get some great photographic results.

Aug 18 ~ *Morning at Caiman Lodge, then depart to Campo Grande*

Spend the last morning photographing the resident macaws and other photogenic species. If the light is not ideal, or the group prefers, you can take a drive to the river for some action there!

Aug 19 ~ *Travel homeward*

You’ll transfer as a group to the Campo Grande Airport for your flight to São Paulo and then homeward. See *Flight Information* on page 7.

Aug 20 ~ *Arrive home*

Depending on your flight schedule, arrive home today.



Yacare caiman

COSTS (ALL COSTS ARE IN US DOLLARS)

Cost

Type	Cost per Person
Trip Cost, double occupancy	\$11,625
Single Supplement	\$2,850

Costs are per person, double occupancy, not including airfare (except charter flight between Porto Jofre and Fazenda San Francisco), singles extra. See *Included* and *Not Included* sections for more details.

We reserve the right to charge for cost increases that occur between when we set tour prices and the date of travel, for example, changes due to the cost of lodging and transportation. If you are a single traveler and you desire, we will find a roommate for you. If we cannot find you a roommate, we may charge you a single supplement fee. Single rooms are subject to availability.

Payment Schedule

Payment	Due Date	Amount per Person
Deposit	Due now to reserve your space	\$500
Second	July 1, 2018	\$1,000
Final	February 1, 2019	Remaining Balance

Payments will be due based on the schedule above. All reservations require a deposit to confirm reservation of your space. For reservations made after a due date, all past payments will be due with registration. By sending your initial deposit, you agree to accept our payment schedule and cancellation policy as a contract. If payments are still outstanding two weeks after the due date, your space may be forfeited.

Cancellations

Until the Final Payment due date, deposits are refundable except for a cancellation fee of \$150 per person, which can be applied toward another tour if reserved within six months of the cancelled trip's departure date. Cancellations are non-transferrable. No refunds are given after the Final Payment due date.

Included

- All leaders, transport, park entry fees, vehicles, and boat trips for all activities described in the detailed itinerary.
- Charter flight between Porto Jofre and Fazenda San Francisco.
- Accommodations for the nights of August 4 through August 18.
- Meals from dinner on August 4 through breakfast on August 19.
- Bottled water is provided.
- Trip Materials - information about flights, packing, entry and departure requirements, airport transfers, gratuities, etc.

Not Included

- All airfare, except flight listed as included, including international and two internal group flights booked by Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris, airport and departure taxes, and excess baggage fees. Airfare is approximately \$1,000 to \$1,500 round-trip from the continental US, plus about \$350 for two internal flights.

- Passport and visa fees.
- Gratuities: tipping is, of course, discretionary, however we suggest budgeting about \$25 to \$28 per participant per day for August 4 to August 18 with our guides (about \$375 to \$420 total *per participant*).
- Emergency medical and evacuation insurance, and trip cancellation insurance. For more information see www.cheesemans.com/travel-insurance.
- Items of a personal nature such as laundry, telephone calls, medical costs or hospitalization, room service, soft drinks, and alcoholic bottled beverages, and items not on the regular menu, etc. If you have special dietary needs, please indicate them on your Reservation/Release Form.

SIGN UP

Please contact us first to check availability, reserve your space, and obtain a Reservation/Release Form. To confirm your reservation, we require a deposit and signed form from each participant.

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OTHER DETAILS

Climate

The Pantanal can be very hot, from 90 to 100+ °F (32 to 38+ °C), especially during midday and afternoons. Stormy, windy weather from the south can make boating on the rivers very chilly, in the 60s °F (~15-20 °C), so plan to layer clothes to be prepared for these drastically changing conditions!

Fitness Level

Most wildlife viewing is done from small boats and vehicles. Walks to search for wildlife are generally less than an hour over relatively flat trails or along the gravel roads.

Transportation

Travel will be by mini-bus, boat, and commercial air. The mini-bus is air-conditioned. Some remote roads in the Pantanal can be unpaved, dusty, and bumpy. Some of the drives between regions are long, between one and five hours, but most of these are on paved, modern roads. The boats are comfortable and easy to board and unload.

Accommodations

All lodges have private baths and air conditioning.

Flights

All airfare, except flight listed as included, is not included in trip costs. Detailed flight information and the contact information for our recommended flight ticketing agent is included in the Trip Materials we will send

after we receive your reservation; she can help you arrange your flights. Please let us know if you are arriving earlier or staying later.

Flights you (or a travel agent) book: Arrive at São Paulo - Guarulhos International Airport (GRU) early enough to connect with a morning flight to Cuiabá, Brazil (CGB) on August 4. We recommend arriving a day early for an overnight to guard against flight delays or cancellations. Depart from São Paulo - Guarulhos International Airport (GRU) in the late afternoon or at night on August 19.

Flights we book for you: Three internal flights (São Paulo to Cuiabá, Porto Jofre to Campo Grande/Fazenda San Francisco, and Campo Grande to São Paulo). The cost of the Porto Jofre-Campo Grande charter flight is included in the cost of the trip; the other two internal flights will be added to your final trip balance.

Conditions

- **Non-smoking policy:** We have a strict non-smoking policy. Smoking is not permitted at any time or any place during our tours.
- **Maximum time in nature:** We try to spend as much time in nature as possible, sometimes resulting in long days but giving you a more in-depth experience.
- **Itinerary route:** The itinerary route, stops, and plans are subject to change by unforeseen circumstances beyond our control, such as weather or road conditions.
- **Additional forms:** For some of our tours, you may be asked to fill out additional forms (e.g., medical questionnaire).
- **Medical conditions and travel risks:** Travel to remote places is exciting, but it is important to understand and accept the risks, both medical and logistical. Minor medical problems can usually be treated, but because we are often far from medical facilities, there can be no expectation for immediate medical treatment or evacuation, even in cases of trauma. Anyone with health problems needing close medical supervision should not consider going on this tour. Bring enough medication for the duration of the trip for any chronic medical needs, since pharmacies are usually not available. When you send your deposit and signed Reservation/Release Form, you certify to us that you do not knowingly have any physical or other conditions that would create a risk for yourself or for other trip participants.
- **Use of drones/UAVs on tours:** Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), AKA drones, are not suitable for use on most Cheesemans' Ecology expeditions due to logistical constraints and in many cases, local and national laws or regulations. In some cases, such as on our polar voyages, we operate under environmental regulations that ban the use of recreational drones. Do not bring a drone on safari without contacting us first.

Conservation

Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris is passionate about conserving the precious regions that we travel to and supports many conservation efforts. By visiting these areas, we contribute to sustainable conservation of these valuable wildlife habitats. We urge you to support conservation organizations that protect and restore natural habitats and write letters to tourism and government agencies to promote work in preserving wildlife.

We aim to make all our trips carbon neutral by splitting the cost of carbon offsetting with our participants. For your convenience, the optional donation amount for your half of the carbon offset will be indicated on your invoice. We source high quality offsets through CarbonTree Conservation Fund, a non-profit we helped found, supporting pioneering forest conservation in the Valdivian Coastal Reserve, a Nature Conservancy project (<https://tinyurl.com/ybgkwton>).

FAQS

Should I visit the Pantanal or the Amazon to see wildlife?

While the Amazon is much more famous, the Pantanal is the best place to see Brazil's wildlife. The Pantanal is the world's largest wetland and attracts many large mammals (the Big Five), smaller mammals such as monkeys and capybaras, beautiful birds, and has much greater biodiversity and a higher density of that biodiversity. We prefer the Pantanal for our wildlife safaris.

When is the best time to go to the Pantanal?

We tour the Pantanal in August and September during the dry season. Wildlife tend to concentrate around the ponds left after the wet season's floods. Fields are now dry, enabling us to hike and drive safari-style through them to look for wildlife. It is also warmer (but not too hot for us yet) during these months and the coolness of the river entices jaguars to the riverbanks to cool off. August and September are also good months to see plentiful birds.

Am I guaranteed to see the Pantanal's Big Five - jaguar, giant anteater, giant otter, ocelot, and South American tapir?

Our goal is to see the Big Five, but we cannot guarantee that we will see them all. Wildlife is wild and unpredictable. But to best meet our goal, we spend the maximum time possible in the field to greatly increase our chance of seeing the Big Five and lots more.

Why do you spend so much time on rivers in the Pantanal?

During days near the Cuiabá and other rivers, we spend a lot of time in boats since that is the best way to see jaguar and other wildlife along the riverbanks. Wildlife are accustomed to tourist boats and feel safe around them, generally allowing us to approach close. The boats have limited space, but you will have room near your feet and on your lap for your daypack and camera gear. The boat seats are comfortable with back rests. We usually go out early in the morning, return for lunch, and go out in the afternoon again, perhaps returning late.

Should I worry about seasickness on the Pantanal's rivers?

The rivers in this region are calm and we have never had problems with anyone getting seasick.