info@oasisoverland.co.uk
Tel: +44 (0)203 725 8924

# CARTAGENA TO MANAUS INC. GUIANAS (29 WEEKS) TRANS SOUTH AMERICA



**COUNTRIES VISITED: ARGENTINA, BOLIVIA, BRAZIL, CHILE, COLOMBIA, ECUADOR, FRENCH GUIANA, GUYANA, PARAGUAY, PERU, SURINAME, URUGUAY**

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Wander the cobbled alleys of the old city amongst churches, monasteries and plazas in Cartagena
- 3 nights exploring the Amazon Jungle - take guided walks and view the exotic wildlife by land or river
- Trek through the Sacred Valley of the Incas reaching the famous UNESCO World Heritage site Machu Picchu
- Journey through endless grasslands, stupendous mountains and glaciers in Patagonia
- Travel to the most southerly town on earth, Ushuaia
- Experience the pulsating and cosmopolitan city of Buenos Aires
- Take in the enormity of Iguazu Falls from both the Argentine and Brazilian sides
- Explore the vast wetlands in the Pantanal, home to hundreds of species of birds and fish, including Piranha!
- Celebrate New Year's Eve in Rio, chaotic, crowded and great fun
- Exploring the Brazilian Coastline lined with beautiful beaches and great marine life
- Search for the endangered spider monkey, sloths, capybara, and the elusive jaguar in Parque Nacional Monte Pascoal

- Take in the music, cuisine and religion in the Afro-Brazilian city of Salvador
- Relax in your hammock on your journey by riverboat along the Amazon River
- Visit Europe's Spaceport and museum, a facility used to launch satellites into space in French Guiana
- Overnight stay in a Jungle Lodge nestled in the rainforest of the Guyanese Amazon
- Explore the Amazon's largest city, Manaus offering a rich variety of nature, culture, art and dining

## INCLUDES

- camping & 50% simple hostels/hotels
- Playa Blanca boat trip - Cartagena
- City tour - Cartagena
- Tayrona National Park - includes entrance & hammock accommodation
- El Totumo Mud Volcano
- Coffee plantation tour - Salento
- 3 night Jungle Trip in Ecuador - includes accommodation & meals (activities are optional extra)
- Chan Chan Ruins - entrance & guided tour
- Boat tour and overnight stay with local family on Lake Titicaca
- Torres del Paine National Park - entrance fee included
- Pantanal - includes accommodation, meals & activities
- Iguazu Falls - entrance to Argentina side
- Ferry across the Baia de Todos os Santos
- Bale Folclorico do Bahia - entrance to the show
- Jungle Lodge in Guyana
- Meals - approx. 50%
- All transport on Oasis Expedition Truck
- Camping and Cooking equipment
- Services of Oasis Crew
- Overnight Jungle excursion in Manaus - includes accommodation, meals & activities
- Riverboat from Belem to Macapo
- 2 nights Jungle excursion in Suriname - includes accommodation, meals & activities

## EXCLUDES

- Visas
- Optional Excursions as listed in the Pre-Departure Information
- Inca Trail trek and W-Trek add-ons
- 5 night break in Rio
- Flights
- Airport Taxes & Transfers

- Travel insurance (compulsory, get a quote here)
- Meals - approx. 50%
- Drinks
- Tips

## ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

### ARRIVAL & ACCOMMODATION

**Trip Joining Point:** Hostal Casa Torres - Cartagena

**Start Time Day 1:** 08:00

**Address:** Cl de la moneda 7 - 110 Historic Center, Cartagena

**Telephone:** +57 313 872 7468

**Website:** www.hostalcasatorres.com

**Email:** **recepcioncasatorres@gmail.com**

All prices listed are approximate and subject to limited availability. Price includes breakfast.

| Room Type | Price | Description |
|---|---|---|
| **Mixed dorms with fan** | 90,000 Colombian pesos | Per person |
| **Double room en-suite** | 198,000 Colombian pesos | Per room |
| **Double en-suite with aircon** | 225,000 Colombian pesos | Per room |

**The trip starts from Hostal Casa Torres at approximately 8am on the morning of Day 1 of your trip.**

Hostal Casa Torres offers simple but clean and comfortable rooms in one of Cartagena's narrow, balcony-lined streets. With a great city centre location, sights such as Bocagrande Beach, Bolivar Park and the Palace of the Inquisition are not far away. Wifi and breakfast is included, there is a shared kitchen available for guests and lots of eating options nearby.

### PRE-TRIP ACCOMMODATION:

Please book this direct with Hostal Casa Torres. Accommodation costs for any additional nights are payable direct to the hostel in Colombian pesos.

## AIRPORT TRANSFERS:

We are unable to arrange transfers in Cartagena. Licensed taxis are available from the outside arrival concourse. Join the queue at the taxi rank, an official will ask you where you are going before giving you a ticket, and directing you to your allocated vehicle. Tell the driver **Hostal Casa Torres, Cl de la moneda 7 - 110 Historic Center**. The hostel is approximately 5kms from the airport and it should cost you around 15,000 pesos (it may cost more depending on your time of arrival and how much traffic there is)

We recommend to change some currency into Colombian pesos in the airport at a bureau de change or there are ATMs - hostel rates can be low.

### PRE-DEPARTURE MEETING

There will be a pre-departure meeting in the starting hotel the night before the start of the trip, usually around 6:00pm. There will be a notice in reception advising the exact time and here your crew will explain how the day to day running of the trip works. Your Tour Leader will **collect your Local Payment** money as well as 2 photocopies of your **passport information page**, **insurance policy details** with policy number and confirmation that the duration will cover you for the entire trip and a **24-hour emergency assistance** telephone number.It is essential that you attend this meeting - please let the UK office or your tour leader know if you are unable to do so.

### POST TRIP ACCOMMODATION AND AIRPORT TRANSFERS

Post-trip accommodation can be arranged with your tour leader during the trip or directly with the hotel on arrival. The return airport transfer can be arranged through your hotel / hostel and is not included, it is at your own expense. We regret these services cannot be arranged via the Oasis office before departure.

The exception to this is for Rio accommodation over the New Year & Carnival periods, please contact **southamerica@oasisoverland.co.uk** when you make your booking for further information.

### FLIGHT INFORMATION

You need to arrive at your departure city at least the day before your trip begins. Return flights must be booked for at least the day AFTER the trip is due to end. You may wish to allow some extra time to explore your arrival and departure cities.

There are many online flight search engines such as **www.skyscanner.net** or **www.ebookers.co.uk** **,** flights can also be booked direct with airline websites or through travel agencies. Please inform us of your flight details through your online account, as airport transfers can be arranged for various

trips.

**One way ticket:** If you intend to travel on a one way ticket to meet up with one of our trips, without possessing an onward flight ticket - we recommend that you have a copy of your payment confirmation/receipt (that you will be sent at time of your balance payment) available at immigration to assist easy entry.

**Departure Taxes**: Please check with your Travel Agent or Airline if your flight ticket already includes a departure tax payment out of the country. If it does not - please budget for approx US$30 to $70 USD - to be paid in US$ only.

#### PASSPORTS

Your passport must be valid for at least 6 months AFTER your trip finishes. This is a general requirement for all of the countries we travel to on our trips.

If you have dual nationality you can only use one passport for the entire trip. It is your responsibility to ensure you have all the relevant visas you require.

Please bring 2 photocopies of your passport details to give to your tour leader.

As a guideline, you will need at least 1 blank page per country in your passport, (for the 31 weeks Trans South America, you should allow at least 13 blank pages).

**Inca Trail Trek** – you will need to provide your passport details to apply for your Inca trail trekking permit, please enter these correctly on your booking form. If you are intending on renewing your passport then please let us know at the point of booking. In order to trek you will need to be in possession of both your passport and your permit – and the passport details have to match otherwise the permit issuing authorities will not let you trek.

#### VISAS

The information below is to be used only as a guide and may change without prior notice. It is advisable to contact the relevant embassy in plenty of time before the trip departs to check the current visa requirements. It is **your responsibility** to ensure you have all the relevant visas you require**.**

Visas obtained at borders and embassies during the trip must be paid for in **USD CASH ONLY**, as stipulated by the relevant immigration officials. Evisas will require payment online by credit or debit card.

On arrival to countries in South America, you will be given an 'Immigration card'. It is important that you keep this with your passport during your entire stay in the particular country as it is needed for

departure. Failure to produce this immigration slip can result in a fine.

**Transiting via the USA -** Travellers who are flying to South America via the US will require either a US visa or for certain nationalities an Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) to take advantage of the visa waiver programme. These can be processed and paid for here.

If you have travelled to Iran, Iraq, Sudan, Syria, Libya, Somalia or Yemen since March 2011 you will not qualify for the ESTA and must apply for a visa.

It is very important you establish your ESTA eligibility and have the correct documentation before departing, as if you do not have the right authorisation upon checking in at the airport you may not be permitted to travel.

| Country | British | Australian | New Zealand | USA | Canadian |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Colombia** | No | No | No | No | No |
| **Ecuador** | No | No | No | No | No |
| **Peru** | No | No | No | No | No |
| **Bolivia** | No | No | No | US$160 | No |
| **Chile** | No | No | No | No | No |
| **Argentina** | No | Free | No | No | No |
| **Uruguay** | No | No | No | No | No |
| **Paraguay** | No | No | No | No | No |
| **Brazil** | No | Yes | No | Yes | Yes |
| **French Guiana** | No | No | No | No | No |
| **Suriname** | US$58 | US$58 | US$58 | US$58 | US$58 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Guyana** | No | No | No | No | No |

For more information on other nationalities & visas checkout **www.projectvisa.com**

## Peru

Passport Holders from UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada and most EU countries will not require a visa to enter Peru.

Passport Holders from other countries, will need to check the current visa requirements with the relevant consulate, and whether you need to obtain the visa in advance.

**Inca Trek** – you will need to provide your passport details to apply for your Inca trekking permit, please enter these correctly on your booking form. If you are intending on renewing your passport then please let us know at the point of booking. In order to trek you will need to be in possession of both your passport and your permit – and the passport details have to match otherwise the permit issuing authorities will not let you trek.

## Argentina

Passport Holders from UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada and most EU countries will not require a visa to enter Argentina.

Passport Holders from other countries, will need to check the current visa requirements with the relevant consulate, and whether you need to obtain the visa in advance.

## Bolivia

Passport Holders from UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and most EU countries will not require a visa to enter Bolivia.

**American passport holders** will require a visa to enter Bolivia, you can purchase these upon arrival for approximately US$160. You will need 2 passport-sized photographs (3cm x 4cm), a colour photocopy of the passport information page, a copy of your yellow fever certificate, paper copy of your trip booking confirmation and your most recent 3 months bank statements.

You can apply for your visa in advance if you wish but please check how long it is valid for you to enter Bolivia.  Valid for entry is different for the length of stay allowed.  For example, if your visa is valid for entry for 30 days from the date of issue and you're starting your trip in Cartagena, your visa will expire before reaching Bolivia.

Travellers joining one of our **Regional Explorers in Peru and Bolivia** may wish to obtain this visa in advance.

Passport Holders from other countries, will need to check the current visa requirements with the relevant consulate, and whether you need to obtain the visa in advance.

**Brazil**

Passport Holders from UK, most EU countries and New Zealand do not require a visa to enter Brazil.

Australia, US and Canada passport holders require an e-visa in advance: https://brazil.vfsevisa.com/. Visas are usually only valid for entry for 3 months from date of issue so you should not apply more than 3 months before you enter Brazil. We will send you information to help you make your application closer to the time.

Passport Holders from other countries, will need to check the current visa requirements with the relevant consulate, and whether you need to obtain the visa in advance.

**Chile**

Passport Holders from UK, Ireland, New Zealand, USA and most EU countries will not require a visa to enter Chile.

From 17 September 2025, Australian passport holders no longer need to obtain a visa for stays of up to 90 days.

Passport Holders from other countries, will need to check the current visa requirements with the relevant consulate, and whether you need to obtain the visa in advance.

**Colombia**

Passport Holders from UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada and most EU countries will not require a visa to enter Colombia.

Passport Holders from other countries, will need to check the current visa requirements with the relevant consulate, and whether you need to obtain the visa in advance.

**Ecuador**

Passport Holders from UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada and most EU countries will not require a visa to enter Ecuador.

Passport Holders from other countries, will need to check the current visa requirements with the relevant consulate, and whether you need to obtain the visa in advance.

Travellers **must** have physical proof of health care Insurance whilst travelling through Ecuador. You may be asked to provide this at Immigration at the land border or at the airport on arrival - a printed copy of your travel Insurance should suffice. You will also need a Yellow Fever vaccination certificate if coming from Colombia or Peru - see the Vaccinations and Health section below.

## French Guiana

Passport Holders from UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, USA and Canada will not require a visa to enter French Guiana.

Passport Holders from other countries, will need to check the current visa requirements with the relevant consulate, and whether you need to obtain the visa in advance.

## Guyana

Passport Holders from UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, USA and Canada will not require a visa to enter Guyana.

Passport Holders from other countries, will need to check the current visa requirements with the relevant consulate, and whether you need to obtain the visa in advance.

## Suriname

Most nationalities are visa free and only need to register and pay an Entry Fee online via the VFS website. Check here for a list of nationalities that must apply for an E-Visa instead.

The Entry Fee process is outsourced to an agency called VFS Global. They are the official partner of a number of diplomatic missions and a specialist Suriname visa application agency. There is no expiry date on your Entry Fee certificate but VFS advise that it is valid for entry for 90 days. This means you must not complete the process more than 90 days before we are due to arrive in Suriname. We will send you details to help you apply, closer to this time.

During the process you will need to upload a copy of your passport – please ensure this is the passport you will be travelling to Suriname on. If you will already be travelling when you do this, we suggest that you have a digital copy to take with you, as it may be easier for you to do this before you leave home than once you're on the trip.
See https://suriname.vfsevisa.com/suriname/assets/docs/passport-bio-page.pdf for examples of how your scanned passport should look.

The Entry Fee costs US$50 + US$8 processing fee, payable online.

### VACCINATIONS AND HEALTH

You may require vaccinations for your trip, depending on the areas that you are visiting. As we are not medically trained, we are unable to give detailed advice on vaccination requirements, so please use the information below as a guide only. You should consult a reputable travel clinic or your GP for information and advice. We have worked closely with **Nomad Travel Clinics** for many years and they offer Oasis travellers a **10% discount** on vaccinations, anti- malarial drugs, first aid items, clothing and equipment, just enter discount code OASIS1000 at www.nomadtravel.co.uk. Alternatively you can check out the Fit For Travel website for more travel health information. We

suggest that you allow at least 8 weeks to get all your vaccinations.

**Covid-19** - requirements for the countries you will visit have been changing and things are getting easier nearly everywhere now with many countries removing the requirement for vaccination certificates and PCR tests before entry. In principle however, it is going to be much more straightforward, and cheaper for you, if you are fully vaccinated against Covid-19. That includes having had any booster doses if your vaccine timings mean you could have had one. There are still a few countries along the way which won't let people in if you are not fully vaccinated or provide a negative PCR test (Bolivia and Suriname for example). **It is safest to assume that to complete the trip you will need to be fully vaccinated against Covid-19.**

**Yellow Fever** - being vaccinated against Yellow Fever and having a valid certificate and a photocopy is deemed compulsory in some countries we visit, especially at certain borders and are needed if you are entering from an infected country.

**Rabies** - vaccinations are regularly advised for many countries that we travel through.

**Malaria** - in some of the areas we visit there is a risk of contracting Malaria. You must be aware that whatever malaria prophylactics you are taking, they only offer partial protection. They must be coupled with your own physical efforts against being bitten - which is the best prevention. Malaria-carrying mosquitoes come out at sunset so from this time you should wear long sleeves and trousers. Exposed skin, especially ankles, should have insect repellent containing 'Deet' applied to them. Your crew will advise on where the worst affected areas are on the trip. There are a number of malaria prophylactics available and requirements change. You may wish to take a sample of whichever prophylactic you choose, a few weeks before you leave. This way you may determine early on if you have any adverse reactions so you can change the regimen if necessary. Please consult a reputable travel clinic or GP for advice. You can also find more information at www.nomadtravel.co.uk or www.fitfortravel.scot.nhs.uk

Medical advice should be taken particularly if you are visiting the jungle in either Ecuador or Peru, the Brazilian Pantanal or Iguazu Falls in either Argentina or Brazil as part of your trip.

**Altitude sickness** - this is caused by thin air (due to lack of oxygen) and can affect anyone arriving at high altitude (above 3000mtrs). The symptoms are headaches, dizziness, shortage of breath and possibly nausea. Arriving at a high altitude destination a few days early will help you acclimatise and avoid this. Make sure you do not over exert yourself, rest for a few hours, avoid drinking alcohol, smoking, large meals and drink plenty of water.

As we are travelling mostly by land (as opposed to flying into a high altitude location) we should acclimatise gradually and so avoid 'soroche', mountain sickness.

**Dengue** - unlike the malaria mosquito, which bites at night, the dengue carrying mosquito bites during the day. Some areas we travel to do have occasional outbreaks and it is therefore advised that you take care not to be bitten during the day as well as at night. There is no vaccine available.

**Health** - to join our trips you should be in good general health. Your travel insurance company must be told if you have any pre-existing medical condition or allergy or if you are on any regular medication, otherwise you may not be covered under your policies for these. Our crew will need to know of any medication or conditions you may have.

**TRAVEL INSURANCE**

It is a compulsory requirement that you have adequate travel insurance before you join any Oasis trip and at the very least are insured for all necessary medical and repatriation costs incurred.

You will be asked to provide the following details if you have not already done so: travel insurance company name, insurance policy number & insurance emergency telephone number. You will also be required to give a copy of your policy with this information to your Tour Leader on arrival with confirmation that the policy duration is sufficient to cover you for the entire duration of your trip. It is also wise to leave a copy of your insurance policy with a friend or relative for safe keeping.

We believe that your safety and holiday enjoyment are very important. It is a mistake to think that "it will never happen to me". It is also very important that you are covered for all the activities that you may wish to undertake while on our trip. It is extremely important that you check the full extent of your cover related to 24 hour Medical Emergency Assistance. In the event of you needing medical treatment you want to know that you have the best cover available to you. Your policy should include adequate Medical Emergency and Repatriation cover as well as Cancellation, Baggage and Personal Liability cover. You need to be aware of EXACTLY what activities your policy covers you for. Please note that skiing is not usually covered in most insurance policies. Please note also that many of the areas we visit are not as developed as the UK and we have no control over the availability or standard of medical and repatriation services and facilities in the areas we visit and these do not form any part of our contract with you.

You should also note that passenger liability insurance covering vehicles, particularly in Third World countries, may be unavailable or inadequate; it is therefore important that your insurance cover makes sufficient provision for you and your dependents in the event of an accident.

We are happy to refer our UK based travellers to the travel insurance specialists Campbell Irvine who have a policy suitable for overlanding which covers most of the adventure and sporting activities on our trips.

Please be aware that most travel insurance policies will not cover you if you are visiting areas against government travel advice. If your trip will go through areas like this (for example, some of our Trans Africa routes through West Africa) then you may need to look at an alternative policy for these sections, for example Battleface or SafetyWing.

For further information, check out the **Travel Insurance** section of our website.

**IMPORTANT INSURANCE INFORMATION FOR THOSE VISITING ZANZIBAR:**
The Zanzibar Government have announced the introduction of a travel insurance policy which will be obligatory for all foreign visitors to the islands, regardless of whether travellers have their own travel insurance in place.

1. The insurance policy is sold by Zanzibar Insurance Corporation.
2. The cost is US$44 per person.
3. The insurance requirement comes into force on 1st October 2024.
4. The policy must be purchased online at visitzanzibar.go.tz and purchases can be made from 1st September 2024.
5. Payment can be made online by debit or credit card.
6. On completion of the purchase, visitors will receive a QR code. The policy documents will be sent to your registered email address.
7. The policy document and QR code must be presented on in Zanzibar. Entry will be refused without this documentation.

To ensure you have a smooth entry, please ensure the above policy is purchased in advance of your arrival.

**MONEY, BUDGETS AND LP**

## Local Payment (LP)

LP is part of your overall trip payment and is the most cost effective and practical way to get hard currency to South America to pay for a variety of your day to day local costs (i.e. all meals prepared by the group, campsite/hostel/hotel fees, gas, and certain activities listed on the trip page) which cannot be pre-paid from the UK. It is a guaranteed amount, set before your trip departs, and unlike 'group kitty' systems we will not ask you to contribute more once the trip is underway.

**Please note:** Your LP is payable to your Tour Leader on the morning of departure in US$ Dollars CASH ONLY. Please make sure that all your notes are in good condition. Old, torn or marked notes are often refused by the banks and we will therefore be unable to accept them either. Larger denomination notes are preferable for your Local payment. In many countries, $10 and $5 notes are simply not accepted and are best avoided.  Please make sure that $US Dollars are dated 2013 or later and do not have a serial number starting with CB.

Please remember that you will need to pre-order US$ cash for your LP before you leave home as your LP is payable all at once at the start of your trip and you cannot pay in local currency using ATMs due to the withdrawal limits in place and their unreliability. In addition, ATM transaction fees can seriously add to your travelling expenses.

## How to bring your currency?

Past Oasis travellers have fed back that they have felt, as a general rule it is best to bring your money in a combination of cash US dollars, pre-paid travel currency cards and debit/credit cards.

**Make sure that all your notes are in good condition. Old, torn or marked notes are often refused by the banks and shops. Please ensure your notes are dated 2013 onwards** and do not have a serial number starting with CB. It can be difficult using US$100 bills in Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia so if possible, bring US$50 bills for these countries. Some travellers worry about carrying so much cash with them, however all Oasis Overland trucks are equipped with an onboard safe for the security of your money and passport. Please also remember that Visas, where required, need to be paid for in US dollars cash only.

**Spending Money**

*We are currently updating our Optional Excursion costs so please be aware that some costs may have increased or there may be activities that are no longer available or have changed. In addition, please bear in mind recent global price increases and fluctuations in currency exchange rates. As such we would suggest budgeting at the higher end of our spending money suggestions below. Personal spending money can vary so much between travellers but we hope this helps you to plan. We always recommend having a contingency fund and it's always worth having a bit extra as a buffer for those 'must buy' purchases you may find en route!*

From past trips and traveller feedback US$150 to US$200 per week should cover costs such as some meals out, soft drinks and beers, email & communications, souvenirs and other general spending. Personal spending habits & budgets differ greatly from person to person. Budget on visa costs and optional activities separately (see visa section above & optional excursions page) & allow extra for your Local Payment contribution. There is often a departure tax payable in the airport, so allow up to US$50 for this.

For trips starting / ending before Carnival: During the Carnival week both tourists and locals flock to Rio, meaning that many resources are stretched. This includes access to cash via banks and cash machines, as the banks frequently close for the whole ten day carnival period. Many of the machines run out of cash early on in the celebrations (often by day 2), and once the machines are empty they are not restocked until after the carnival celebrations have finished. Money exchanges can also be difficult to access during this time, or will only provide a very poor rate. From past experience we know that the exchange rate weakens in the run up to Carnival, so all in all (if possible) it would be best for you to get some Brazilian Real's in advance. When working out how many you need, bear in mind any time you will be spending in Brazil before Carnival in Rio.

If your trip goes to **French Guiana, Suriname and Guyana** please note that the general cost of living in these countries is much higher than elsewhere in South America, and you can expect the price of meals, drinks, souvenirs and excursions to accordingly cost more. For these countries we suggest you budget around US$300 a week for extra expenses.

**Changing money**

Change your money only at banks, hotels, airports or forex bureaus. It is illegal to change money on the street, as these people will normally be opportunistic thieves or undercover police. Your crew will advise you where & when you can change money & with what means. It is also a good idea to have a small CASH emergency fund, to allow for the unexpected.

**Credit & Debit Cards**

If you are intending using your credit or debit card, we suggest taking more than one card with you as you may find that your card is not accepted in the first ATM you try. For credit and debit cards Visa is best. Mastercard and American Express are generally not accepted throughout South America. We recommend that you inform your bank that you will be using your card abroad to avoid it being blocked.

**Pre-Paid Travel Currency Cards**

These cards are similar to normal Credit and Debit cards but they can be pre loaded with cash before you travel with a set amount allowing you to withdraw this cash using the card at normal ATMs. It is a more secure way to access cash on your trip, but again do not rely on these as your sole means of funds on a trip - (please refer to the ATM section). Several banks and companies now offer these cards, but be sure to look into the rates for withdrawing cash when making your decision. When using these cards abroad you will use them to withdraw the local currency from an ATM and not the currency that you loaded onto the card.

**ATMs**

These are available in most major cities along our route and allow you to withdraw local currency only. We discourage you from relying on your ATM card as a primary source of funds in case it is lost/stolen/swallowed, or the machine isn't working. In some destinations we probably won't even see a bank or ATM for days on end.  Even where do find them, they cannot always be relied upon - things change, and ATMs don't always work! Besides memorising your PIN, it is also important to be aware of your daily withdrawal limit and bank withdrawal costs.

**Tipping**

Tipping in South America is customary and often expected, and local attitudes towards tipping are different to what we are used to in the West. It is often more than a reward for services well done but as wages are extremely low, it is an accepted means of supplementing an income. As a general rule, tipping around 10% of the total bill in restaurants is a good guide, and the same amounts usually apply for activities and excursions.

Because it can be difficult to know what to tip, and as it has such importance in some areas both economically and culturally, there may be times and activities for which your crew will make it clear what level of tipping is 'customary/expected'. They may also be quite enthusiastic or assertive in encouraging you to take account of these suggestions. This is motivated by the knowledge of how important tipping can be, and the offence or confusion that can be caused when local people are

tipped poorly. In the end, tipping remains at the discretion of the individual, but our crew will continue to advise on normal rates, and we would ask you to carefully consider the economic or personal impact of being seen to 'under tip'. We know that many who travel with us are on a tight budget, but ask you to remember that those we work with locally may also face financial hardship, and also work very hard to try to give you unrivalled service/experiences.

As a very rough guide, we would suggest that you budget for an amount equal to 10% of the local payment for your trip, plus 10% of the cost of any of the listed optional excursions that you wish to do. The amounts you end up tipping may vary from a rigid 10%, but hopefully this will help you budget in general.

On the Inca Trail, your crew will advise you what the expected tipping amounts are before the trek. It may seem unusual to be asked to tip before receiving a service, but the tips are a crucial part of the income for the guides, cooks and porters, and it is important that this gets shared out equally and fairly between them, so you can expect your Oasis Tour Leader to take an active role in ensuring it is done in the correct manner. The tips are usually spread out by the Tour Leader and then given to the travellers to hand out on the last day of the trek.

In the past we have been asked by travellers about tipping your Oasis Crew. If you choose to do this, it would be budgeted separately from the above. Our guys work very hard at making your trip a great travel experience. Working overseas can often be challenging and they are pretty much on call for you 24 hours a day, so it's appreciated as a thank you for hard work and good service, but of course not mandatory. Our suggestion is to budget around US$1, per person, per day.

**CLIMATE**

You will experience a varying degree of climatic changes at any time of year, from freezing temperatures (down to as cold as minus -15°C) in the Andes, to scorching heat in the desert and heavy downpours in the jungle (up to as hot and humid as 47°C and 90% humidity).

The rains in the Andes usually occur between November and April. This means downpours once or twice a day with the rest of the day usually warm and sunny, although there will also be times where it may not rain at all for a week or so. April to October is the dry season with clear views of the mountains. It is hot during the day but extremely cold at night with temperatures often well below zero. You will be spending a lot of time at altitude where nights can be very cold at any time of year.

The deserts in Peru can also be cold during the night but can be very hot during the day particularly between October and May. The Amazon Jungle is very hot with high humidity plus regular downpours of rain usually year-round. **View South American Climate Chart**

If you are travelling on a trip that goes through Patagonia in July – September, please be aware it will get very cold at times with temperatures well below zero, and you can expect snowfall. Please be prepared for cold conditions, with thermal clothing and the correct sleeping bag.

**WHAT TO TAKE**

The less you take the less you have to pack, wash & lug home & you can always pick up extras along the way. Most people make the mistake of bringing too much gear. Clothes washing or laundry facilities will be available at least once a week. You will be travelling in the heat & camping in the cold, so bring clothes for all climates; rough stuff is best. Pack according to season: allowing for extremes in temperature (from the constant baking heat in the dry season to the cold and occasional frost overnight in some areas) Make sure that you bring your gear in a traditional soft sided 70 - 90L rucksack or holdall - suitcases are not suitable. **Remember baggage is limited to 20kg per person plus one day bag.**

| **Equipment** | **Toiletries - Most available to buy on trip** |
|---|---|
| • **Sleeping Bag - 3 to 4 season bag, depending on season, & sleep sheet**<br>• **Foam sleeping mat or thermarest & repair kit**<br>• **Small day-pack or small bag to carry daily items**<br>• **Soft rucksack or holdall (NOT rigid suitcase)**<br>• **Water bottle - for personal use - we recommend Water-to-Go (see below Responsible Travel)** | • Soap, shampoo, toothbrush/paste, antibacterial hand wash, lip balm & moisturiser<br>• Sun block 35 + after sun, hat & sun glasses<br>• Tampons (can buy in most places)<br>• Contraception |
| **Clothes** | **Personal Effects** |
| • **One pair of trainers or boots**<br>• **Sandals/flip flops/jandals/thongs**<br>• **Underwear/socks**<br>• **T shirts/shirts**<br>• **Shorts/swimwear**<br>• **Jeans/trousers/jog pants/leggings**<br>• **Skirt or dress**<br>• **Sweat shirt/jumper**<br>• **Jacket/fleece & waterproof jacket** | • Camera with protective case, spare batteries, film/memory card<br>• Torch & spare batteries (head torch is best)<br>• Travel adaptor plug/charger (for cameras & mobile phone batteries)<br>• Money belt<br>• Personal stereo - there is a stereo on the truck with iPod/MP3 adaptors<br>• Towel &/or sarong |

| **Recommended Medical Kit List** | |
|---|---|
| • **Antiseptic ointment/Antihistamine cream & tablets**<br>• **Nurofen or equivalent pain-killer**<br>• **Eye-drops/bath**<br>• **Anti-diarrhoea treatment**<br>• **A couple of bandages (elasticated & triangular)**<br>• **Medication for personal allergies/asthma etc**<br>• **Insect repellent containing Deet** | • Re-hydration sachets/vitamin tablets<br>• Assorted plasters<br>• 1 Course of malaria treatment<br>• Some suitable antibiotics as recommended by your doctor for infected cuts or to treat severe dysentery<br>• Malaria Tablets - see Vaccinations & Health section |

Please note that **in the winter months** (June - September) it can be very cold, especially at altitude, so we recommend that you bring extra layers of be prepared to purchase some when you are in Peru, Bolivia & Patagonia.

Even though our trucks are equipped with a comprehensive medical kit, we advise you to bring a small personal medical kit as our truck kit is not for general everyday use. It will also be your responsibility to carry your kit on included excursions and optional activities as some local operators may not have medical kits to hand.

#### PHOTOGRAPHY AND ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

**Cameras (incl. Digital & Video Cameras) -** An easy to use 'point and shoot' will get you some good photos. For memorable shots, it may be worthwhile investing in an SLR camera, but be sure to get some practice in before the trip! Most towns and cities have internet cafes where you can download onto CD/internet sites - but don't rely on it. Internet speeds can be slow for uploading photos to social media or the Cloud.

**Photography -** Be aware of your surroundings when taking photographs and filming. Some locations will be sensitive or have local laws banning photography. For example it is usually forbidden to use cameras at borders or around government buildings, military installations, bridges and airports or to take photos of local officials. If you do take photos or film where it is not permitted you may find yourself being questioned by irate officials who may decide to confiscate your camera or instruct you to delete all the images/footage on your device. If in doubt ask for permission, or if there is no-one to ask use some common sense.

**Drones -** As the use of drones becomes more common, countries throughout the world are gradually updating their laws and restrictions on usage. The specific regulations will vary from one country to another, so do check the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice for the latest information. As with cameras, use your common sense if you do use a drone and avoid operation in sensitive areas. If you plan to bring a drone on your trip with us please contact us first to ensure there will be a suitable place to store it while on your trip.

**Electrical charging & power supply -** It may be difficult to find a power source for charging at times, so a spare battery is a must.

Consider a 12V in-car charger (our vehicles are equipped with a couple of 12 volt cigarette lighter charger sockets - truck trips only) or bring along your 230V mains charger and travel adaptor plug for use at some of the hotels, hostels and campsites we stay at.

NOTE: 12V - 230V inverters cannot be used on our vehicles because of the power drain they cause.

Log onto**www.whatplug.net**for information regarding the different electrical plugs and voltage used in each country.

#### CONTACTING HOME

The internet and WiFi are readily available in almost every town and city you will visit; most hotels and hostels will have free WiFi as will many bars and cafes. Do bear in mind that the connections can be unreliable and will not always be as fast as you are used to at home. If a lot of people try to use the internet at the same time the speed will be slower still, especially if trying to make Skype calls or upload photos/videos. During periods of the trip where we are camping, internet will be less common.

Some travellers choose to take an unlocked mobile phone with them and buy local SIM cards in each country, allowing them to use mobile data. If you particularly want or need regular internet access this may be a good option. Telephone calls can be expensive usually £1 to £5 for a three minute call.

**Online Diaries** - A great variety of free "travel blogs" are now available online, they are a good way of keeping relatives and friend up to date with what you are doing and a good place to upload photos, collecting messages as well as keeping a record for yourself.

#### RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

### Before you go

- There are ways you can reduce the carbon impact of your international flight:
  - Take a longer trip - if you have the time available, taking one longer trip rather than two or more shorter trips means less international flights and therefore less carbon emissions.
  - Another way to reduce international flights is to take a direct flight rather than one requiring a change
  - The more passengers on a plane, the more the carbon footprint of the flight is shared, so travelling in a smaller economy seat is better.
  - Try to travel on newer aircraft as these are more fuel efficient
  - You can check fuel emissions of a flight on both Skyscanner and Google Flights. Some airlines are introducing the option to pay for an increase in the amount of sustainable aviation fuel used.
  - Don't take too much luggage - packing light is not only easier for you but uses less fuel to transport.
- Remove unnecessary packaging before you go - waste disposal facilities are often stretched or non existent in the places we visit. To avoid unnecessary pollution of local water supplies take environmentally friendly toiletries with you.
- Why not invest in a wind-up or solar-powered torch or media player before you travel or at least rechargeable batteries.
- Learn some of the local language and read up on the local history/culture before you go. You'll get so much more out of your trip.
- Why not pack some pens/pencils exercise books in your rucksack and they can be donated to a local school or project while you're away. You can also purchase these items cheaply, locally which will help local businesses.

- Take a sturdy water bottle with you from home that you can re-use throughout your trip. We carry large quantities of purified water with us on our Expedition vehicles and it is much better for the environment if you drink this, rather than purchase bottled water along the way. (It also saves you money).
- Water-to-Go: Oasis Overland have partnered with Water-to-Go to help reduce the number of plastic water bottles consumed during a trip. Water-to-Go is a filtration system that eliminates over 99.9% of all microbiological contaminants including viruses, bacteria, chemicals and heavy metals from any non-salt water source. Click here and enter the code OASIS15 to purchase your **Water-to-Go** products at 15% discount. Water-to-Go will then donate a further 15% to Oasis Overland Charity projects.

**While you're travelling**

From experience gained in running trips, we have developed our own practical and manageable environmental policy which all of our crew practice on the trips we operate, and they will share this information with you at the start of your trip. We welcome your input on this, plus any new ideas you may have, to improve our existing procedures. As a guide here's a few tips to bear in mind.

- Don't waste water. It is a scarce resource in many of the places our trips visit. On all our Ultimate and Overland Expeditions we carry large quantities of purified water with us. We encourage you to refill your own water bottles from this supply, rather than purchase bottled water along the way- much more environmentally friendly and saves you money.
- Never buy endangered species or endangered habitat products. Apart from the fact of it being illegal it also encourages the trade to continue.
- Look after and preserve the areas we visit. Be careful about stepping on coral reefs or trekking on undesignated tracks.
- Buy locally made crafts and products helping to support the local economy.
- Don't feel when bargaining that you have to get the cheapest price possible just for the sake of it. Pay what the item is worth to you & don't worry about what someone else has paid.
- Try the local food and drinks - this will help to support local farmers and food sellers. Sitting in a local cafe is also a great way to meet local people.
- Dispose of litter appropriately on your trip. This includes cigarette butts. Not only does litter look unsightly it can be lethal to wildlife.
- Where any toilet facilities exist, however unsavoury they might seem to you, they should be used. Where they do not, always bury your waste and make sure it is never near (at least 30m) a water source.
- When game viewing do not encourage your guides to get too close to the wildlife so that their natural behaviour is impeded.
- Respect local customs, traditions and beliefs of the people in the different regions that you travel through.
- Do not take photos of people, ritual events or special places unless you have asked first. Dress appropriately according to local codes and show respect around religious festivals.
- Recycling is almost non-existent in many of the areas and countries we visit - we do the best we can with limited resources & space on our vehicles.

- For books dedicated to travelling more responsibly & ethically see: **www.tourismconcern.org.uk**

**Community Projects** - Oasis are active in raising awareness and providing support to a number of projects and local schools where we believe we can make a positive difference. More information on the **projects we support**.

**SECURITY**

All major cities have their share of petty crime (just like our cities) and sensible precautions need to be taken. Wearing expensive looking jewellery or watches and carrying cameras will draw unnecessary attention to you. Leave valuables such as passports and excess money in your hotel safe or truck safe (we recommend carrying a copy of your passport details page at all times). You may find a simple money belt is more discreet than a bag. Always be aware of your surroundings and when approached by people you do not know, use your common sense. At night in cities it's best to use a taxi, rather than walking around the streets, single women in particular need to be careful and we would suggest that it is safer to be in a group.

On board the truck - each vehicle is fitted with a hidden, lockable safe to be used for money, passports and important documents. Group members will be responsible for the safe and Oasis Overland cannot accept any liability for clients' personal or monetary contents kept in the safe or on board the truck. We advise you to not take items of value that are not essential for the journey. In certain areas a roster may be drawn up for the group to share the task of keeping watch over the truck.

FCDO Advice - the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) offer country-specific advice, regarding not only security but also entry regulations, local laws and customs and health. We strongly recommend all travellers visit the FCDO website, or the equivalent in their home country, to familiarise themselves with local conditions and potential issues in the countries they plan to visit before committing to a trip with us. You can view their website here.

As an adventure tour operator, some of our trips will travel to areas that are rarely-visited and occasionally attract negative publicity. We are not in the business of taking our travellers or indeed staff to regions that we consider dangerous and the safety of all who travel with us is always our main priority, but as a discerning customer we understand you will want to be aware of any risks before travelling. We liaise with the FCDO on specific regions or areas as necessary, as well as monitoring open media outlets and political risk resources and speaking to our contacts on the ground.

In some rare cases, our trips may have to travel through areas against which the FCDO either ‘advise against all but essential travel’ or ‘advise against all travel’. When our trips travel through these areas we will carry out all due diligence and notify you in advance. This advice can change without notice. In these instances you will need to ensure you have full and comprehensive travel insurance that includes cover for these areas – some policies will exclude them. We are able to provide additional cover, if required, at additional cost. It may also be required that you read and sign a short information sheet confirming you have been advised of the risks and agree to travel contrary to the

FCDO advice.

If you have any questions at all about the safety or security of your trip, please do not hesitate to contact us and we will be happy to discuss your trip in more detail.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

## The Inca Trail and Machu Picchu

We do not include the cost of trekking to Machu Picchu in our Overland trips that visit Peru. Instead, we offer several different options, depending on whether you want to trek or take things more easily and just see Machu Picchu.

### Machu Picchu by train

If you do not want to do a multi-day hike, then you can stay behind in Cusco for a couple of extra free days, and then take an option to visit Machu Picchu by train. We transfer you by road and train to the town of Aguas Calientes where you spend the night in a hotel. The next morning you then head up to Machu Picchu and enjoy a 2 hour guided tour followed by free time to explore the site. You then return back to Cusco by train and road again, this time joining together with people from the group who have taken the trekking option. Prices are based on a minimum of 2 people taking this option, and a single room supplement applies for any solo travellers staying in the hotel in Aguas Calientes.

### Trekking

We offer 3 routes - **Classic, Salkantay and Lares** - (subject to season and availability), all accompanied by knowledgeable guides and porters.

Our first choice trek is the Classic trail. As availability is limited we will move quickly after booking to obtain you a permit where possible. It is VERY important to note that as soon as we purchase your permit it is non-transferable, and non-refundable. Your permit will be linked to your passport details, so please make sure you enter these correctly at the time of booking. If you are intending renewing your passport then please let us know at the point of booking. In order to trek you will need to be in possession of both your passport and your permit – and the passport details have to match otherwise the permit issuing authorities will not let you trek. If you need any further clarification then please contact us.

When the Classic trail is not available, we will arrange the Lares trail at no extra charge (subject to minimum 3 people). If you wish to trek either the Lares or Salkantay by choice, you must let us know at the time of booking. An additional fee may be payable, but we will discuss this with you. All of the treks visit Machu Picchu for the day.

For more information about the treks including maps please click below for the three routes and treks:
**Classic Lares Salkantay**

**Tipping on the Inca Trail** - Before you start your trek, your Oasis Tour Leader will advise you and other travellers of the suggested tipping amount for the guides, porters and cooks on the trek (this applies to the Classic, Lares and Salkantay treks). Tipping is a vital part of the income for the staff who work on the treks, and it is expected. It is not compulsory, but if you choose not to tip it will be viewed suspiciously and negatively by the local staff and as such we respectfully ask all our travellers trekking to pay the requested amount. We are advised by the local operators what the suggested tipping amount is for each trek, and you will be asked to contribute, before the trek departs. It is usually around US$50 per person, which is then shared out amongst the guides, porters and cooks.

**Porters** - Personal porters are available who can carry a **maximum of 6kgs** of your equipment whilst on the Classic Inca trail. Please let your tour leader know if you would like to add one of these (price approx. US$90 per person). At the briefing the Guide would provide you with a duffle bag to pack your equipment into which will be available at camp each night. Your sleeping bag is not included in this weight limit.

**Huayna Picchu** - Some people like to climb the nearby summit of Huayna Picchu during their time at Machu Picchu. One of the main reasons for doing this would be for the view from the top of it over Machu Picchu. Because of its increasing popularity the local authorities have introduced a permit system to control numbers and collect funds from those wanting to do this. Permits can sell out a long time in advance, and you therefore need to request us to purchase you a permit urgently if you want to do this. You can request this by clicking the Huayna Picchu 'add-on' through your account. There are 400 permits available per day currently. Once requested your tickets cannot be refunded or exchanged, as it is arranged with your specific name and passport details.

The ascent of Huayna Picchu is very steep in places and it can take about an hour to the top. It will be your responsibility to be at the entrance point at the right time, and should you be late then you will unfortunately forfeit your opportunity to go up. The climb is done on the same day that you are visiting the ruins at Machu Picchu, so reduces your time wandering around the ruins. Please bear in mind that to get up and down can take around three hours, and is very steep in places. It is not really for those who are unfit, or scared of heights. The path is pretty deteriorated in places so some light scrambling is required.

## W-Trek, Torres del Paine

Explore South America’s finest national park. This 6 Day / 5 night option will take you on trails to the mighty granite pillars of Los Torres, through the imposing French Valley and magnificent Grey’s Glacier. Hike through emerald forests, to magnificent glaciers, along alpine rivers and lakes, with picturesque mountain vistas while in this area of unparalleled beauty.

The **W Trek** is a challenging hike with some tricky terrain and steep ascents and descents. You do not need to be a specialist or experienced hiker to complete the trek, but you do need to be in moderate to good health with a decent level of fitness. The Active **W Trek** is a popular, camping style multi-day adventure program.

Spaces to hike the **W Trek** are limited and issued on a first-come-first-served basis and subject to availability at all times, so if you want to join this trek it is recommended you add this at the time of your booking. If we are unable to confirm your space you will be refunded in full, including your deposit.

**What's Included:**

- Accommodation for 5 nights - 2 nights Puerto Natales (twin share), 3 nights in park (2 camping, 1 dorm)
- Transfer from Puerto Natales to Torres del Paine National Park (1.45 hours drive)
- Park entrance fee
- Catamaran ticket from Paine Grande to Pudeto, bus ticket from Pudeto to Puerto Natales
- Tents
- Guide on first day of trekking to the base of the towers
- Trekking poles for the first day of trekking if required
- Meals as listed

**What's Not Included:**

- Meals not listed
- Tips

***Itinerary:*** *Please note the itinerary is subject to alteration and the stated walking times are approximate. Weather in the park can be changeable and affect hiking, and everyone walks at their own pace.*

**Day 1:** This evening you will meet fellow trekkers for a welcome dinner, followed by a briefing for your 'W Trek'.

**Accommodation:** Puerto Natales (twin room - shared bathrooms)

**Meals Included:** Dinner

**Day 2:** This morning nice and early you will meet the group and travel to Torres del Paine National Park. Torres del Paine was given its name from the three striking granite towers, formed above a glacial lake. The trek today is with a guide and you will be making your way to the base of these towers. Once you reach the lookout of the 'Base of Torres del Paine' you can enjoy the view of Torre Sur (2,850m), Torre Central (2,800m), Torre Norte (2,600m) and Cerro Nido de Cóndor. The trek today is approximately 19kms and should take about 8 hours.

**Accommodation:** Refugio Torre Central or Refugio Torre Norte (Dorm bed)

**Meals Included:** Breakfast, Boxed Lunch, Dinner

**Day 3:** Today the trail follows alongside the turquoise waters of Lake Nordenskjöld. We then make our way to Los Cuernos (The Horns), an outcropping of granite peaks which stand at over 2000 metres high, before continuing through to Domos Frances. The views from Los Cuernos are considered by many to be the most memorable in the whole park, perched on a hillside with the famous towers above with views across one of the park's stunning light blue lakes. The trek today is approximately 14.6kms and should take about 6.5 hours.

**Accommodation:** Camping at Francés

**Meals Included:** Breakfast, Boxed Lunch and Dinner

**Day 4:** Making our way through 'The French Valley' we will pass through Mirador Británico, the lookout point generally thought to be one of the most overwhelming spots on the whole Circuit, where you can take in Paine Grande, Cerro Hoja, Cerro Máscara, Cerro Catedral, Cerro Aleta de Tiburón, Cuerno Norte and other magnificent peaks. We return back the same way and continue to the Pehoe sector, reaching our evening destination Paine Grande. The trek today is approximately 20.3kms and should take about 9 hours.

**Accommodation:** Camping at Paine Grande

**Meals Included:** Breakfast, Boxed Lunch and Dinner

**Day 5:** Our final day of trekking will take us on the trail through the western side of the Paine Massif, stopping off at various viewpoints to take in Grey Lake and the Mountain views, as we continue north to the impressive natural ice formations of Grey's Glacier. The return is the same way back to Paine Grande where you will take a catamaran across Lake Pehoé to Pudeto. You will then board the bus back to Puerto Natales arriving in the evening. It is time to put your heels up and celebrate your huge sense of achievement having conquered one of the world's great hiking routes with a cold beer and Pizza. The trek today is approximately 22kms and should take about 8 hours.

**Accommodation:** Puerto Natales (twin room - shared bathrooms)

**Meals Included:** Breakfast, Boxed Lunch, Dinner

**Day 6:** After your breakfast (included) you will then continue with your Oasis Overland Adventure.

**Please Note:** The above itinerary and stated accommodation is subject to change without notice and may be altered due to local operating conditions. In the event of any changes due to circumstances beyond our control, while we will do our utmost to minimise the impact on the planned itinerary, we will not be held responsible for any costs incurred.

**Deposit:** £400 per person. (Once requested your permit cannot be refunded or exchanged).

**Just add this on to your trip when booking!**

**New Years or Carnival in Rio**

**New Years Eve in Rio -** If you are on a trip that coincides with New Years Eve in Rio you can fly into Rio about 4 days before your trip starts or allow a few days after your trip finishes, to experience and join in the celebrations on Copacabana beach on the last night of the Year.

**Carnival in Rio -** If you are on a trip coinciding with 'Carnival' you should allow a few days before your trip starts or finishes, if you want to experience this spectacular event, so book your flights accordingly. Most carnival events are from the Friday through to the Tuesday before/after the trip starts/finishes. We offer Rio accommodation packages that cover Carnival as well as a separate add-on which includes a ticket to the Samba School parade at the Sambadrome, normally on the Sunday evening.

To reserve pre/post tour accommodation for either events, please contact the Oasis office.

View **more information about Carnival** and what you can do.

**Extensions from Quito to the Galapagos Islands**

If your overland expedition isn't enough of an adventure, why not consider extending your trip to the Galapagos Islands, where we offer a selection of tours, varying in length and activity level:

- **5 Day - Galapagos Essentials** - Our lead-in product, ideal for those looking to experience the natural beauty of the Galapagos without being too active. This tour visits the Islands of Santa Cruz and San Cristobel.
- **5 Day - Best of the Galapagos** - For those looking for an activity based trip to the Galapagos, our Best of the Galapagos tour has a more active itinerary, including a hike on the Sierra Negra Volcano. This tour visits the Islands of Isabela and Santa Cruz.
- **8 Day - Galapagos Uncovered** - For passengers with more time available, our Galapagos Uncovered tour is a great option, this tour includes a good mix of activities and includes visits to three islands; San Cristobel, Isabela and Santa Cruz.

#### TRAVEL INSURANCE

It is a compulsory requirement that you have adequate travel insurance before you join any Oasis Trip, and  at the very least are insured for all necessary medical & repatriation costs incurred if you need them.

You will be asked to provide the following details on the Traveller Information Form that you send in to us after making your booking. If you have not already done so: travel insurance name, insurance policy number & insurance emergency telephone number. You will also be required to give a copy of your policy with this information to your Tour Leader on arrival with confirmation that the policy duration is sufficient to cover you for the entire duration of your trip.  It is also wise to leave a copy of your insurance policy with a friend or relative for safe keeping.

We believe that your safety and holiday enjoyment are very important. It is a mistake to think that "it will never happen to me". It is also very important that you are covered for all the activities that you may wish to undertake while on our trip. It is extremely important that you check the full extent of your cover related to 24 hour Medical Emergency Assistance. In the event of you needing medical treatment you want to know that you have the best cover available to you. Your policy should include adequate Medical Emergency and Repatriation cover as well as Cancellation, Baggage and Personal Liability cover. You need to be aware of EXACTLY what activities your policy covers you for. Please note that skiing is not usually covered in most insurance policies.

We offer tailor made Overland Adventure Travel Insurance that covers most of the adventure and sporting activities on our trips.

For further information on the insurance we offer, the activities covered and costs, check out the **Travel Insurance** section of our website. UK residents can purchase the insurance we recommend directly through Campbell Irvine.

#### RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

### Before you go

- Remove unnecessary packaging before you go - waste disposal facilities are often stretched or non existent in the places we visit. To avoid unnecessary pollution of local water supplies take environmentally friendly toiletries with you.
- Why not invest in a wind-up or solar-powered torch or media player before you travel or at least rechargeable batteries.
- Learn some of the local language and read up on the local history/culture before you go. You'll get so much more out of your trip.
- Why not pack some pens/pencils exercise books in your rucksack and they can be donated to a local school or project while you're away. You can also purchase these items cheaply, locally which will help local businesses.
- Take a sturdy water bottle with you from home that you can re-use throughout your trip. We carry large quantities of purified water with us on our Expedition vehicles and it is much better for the environment if you drink this, rather than purchase bottled water along the way. (It also saves you money).
- **Water-to-Go**: Oasis Overland have partnered with Water-to-Go to help reduce the number of plastic water bottles consumed during a trip. Water-to-Go is a filtration system that eliminates over 99.9% of all microbiological contaminants including viruses, bacteria, chemicals and heavy metals from any non-salt water source. **Click here** and enter the code OASIS25 to purchase your Water-to-Go products at 25% discount.

### While you're travelling

From experience gained in running trips, we have developed our own practical and manageable environmental policy which all of our crew practice on the trips we operate, and they will share this information with you at the start of your trip. We welcome your input on this, plus any new ideas you may have, to improve our existing procedures. As a guide here's a few tips to bear in mind.

- Don't waste water. It is a scarce resource in many of the places our trips visit. On all our Ultimate and Overland Expeditions we carry large quantities of purified water with us. We encourage you to refill your own water bottles from this supply, rather than purchase bottled water along the way- much more environmentally friendly and saves you money!
- Never buy endangered species or endangered habitat products. Apart from the fact of it being illegal it also encourages the trade to continue.
- Look after and preserve the areas we visit. Be careful about stepping on coral reefs or trekking on undesignated tracks.
- Buy locally made crafts and products helping to support the local economy.
- Don't feel when bargaining that you have to get the cheapest price possible just for the sake of it. Pay what the item is worth to you & don't worry about what someone else has paid.
- Try the local food and drinks - this will help to support local farmers and food sellers. Sitting in a local cafe is also a great way to meet local people.
- Dispose of litter appropriately on your trip. This includes cigarette butts. Not only does litter look unsightly it can be lethal to wildlife.
- Where any toilet facilities exist, however unsavoury they might seem to you, they should be used. Where they do not, always bury your waste and make sure it is never near, (at least 30m) a water source.
- When game viewing do not encourage your guides to get too close to the wildlife so that their natural behaviour is impeded.
- Respect local customs, traditions and beliefs of the people in the different regions that you travel through.
- Do not take photos of people, ritual events or special places unless you have asked first. Dress appropriately according to local codes and show respect around religious festivals.
- Recycling is almost non-existent in many of the areas and countries we visit - we do the best we can with limited resources & space on our vehicles.
- For books dedicated to travelling more responsibly & ethically see: **www.tourismconcern.org.uk**

**POST TRIP ACCOMMODATION AND AIRPORT TRANSFERS**

Post-trip accommodation can be arranged with your tour leader during the trip or directly with the hotel on arrival. The return airport transfer can be arranged through your hotel / hostel and is not included, it is at your own expense. We regret these services cannot be arranged via the Oasis office before departure.

**POST TRIP ACCOMMODATION AND AIRPORT TRANSFERS**

Post-trip accommodation can be arranged with your tour leader during the trip or directly with the hotel on arrival. The return airport transfer can be arranged through your hotel / hostel and is not included, it is at your own expense. We regret these services cannot be arranged via the Oasis office before departure.

The exception to this is for Rio accommodation over the New Year & Carnival periods, please contact **southamerica@oasisoverland.co.uk** when you make your booking for further information.

#### FLIGHT INFORMATION

You need to arrive at your departure city at least the day before your trip begins. Return flights must be booked for at least the day AFTER the trip is due to end. You may wish to allow some extra time to explore your arrival and departure cities.

There are many online flight search engines such as **www.skyscanner.net** or **www.ebookers.co.uk** **,** flights can also be booked direct with airline websites or through travel agencies. Please inform us of your flight details through your online account, as airport transfers can be arranged for various trips.

**One way ticket:** If you intend to travel on a one way ticket to meet up with one of our trips, without possessing an onward flight ticket - we recommend that you have a copy of your payment confirmation/receipt (that you will be sent at time of your balance payment) available at immigration to assist easy entry.

**Departure Taxes**: Please check with your Travel Agent or Airline if your flight ticket already includes a departure tax payment out of the country. If it does not - please budget for approx US$30 to $70 USD - to be paid in US$ only.

#### PASSPORTS

Your passport must be valid for at least 6 months AFTER your trip finishes. This is a general requirement for all of the countries we travel to on our trips.

If you have dual nationality you can only use one passport for the entire trip. It is your responsibility to ensure you have all the relevant visas you require.

Please bring 2 photocopies of your passport details to give to your tour leader.

As a guideline, you will need at least 1 blank page per country in your passport, (for the 31 weeks Trans South America, you should allow at least 13 blank pages).

**Inca Trail Trek** – you will need to provide your passport details to apply for your Inca trail trekking permit, please enter these correctly on your booking form. If you are intending on renewing your

passport then please let us know at the point of booking. In order to trek you will need to be in possession of both your passport and your permit – and the passport details have to match otherwise the permit issuing authorities will not let you trek.

#### VACCINATIONS AND HEALTH

You may require vaccinations for your trip, depending on the areas that you are visiting. As we are not medically trained, we are unable to give detailed advice on vaccination requirements, so please use the information below as a guide only. You should consult a reputable travel clinic or your GP for information and advice. We have worked closely with **Nomad Travel Clinics** for many years and they offer Oasis travellers a **10% discount** on vaccinations, anti- malarial drugs, first aid items, clothing and equipment, just enter discount code OASIS1000 at www.nomadtravel.co.uk. Alternatively you can check out the Fit For Travel website for more travel health information. We suggest that you allow at least 8 weeks to get all your vaccinations.

**Covid-19** - requirements for the countries you will visit have been changing and things are getting easier nearly everywhere now with many countries removing the requirement for vaccination certificates and PCR tests before entry. In principle however, it is going to be much more straightforward, and cheaper for you, if you are fully vaccinated against Covid-19. That includes having had any booster doses if your vaccine timings mean you could have had one. There are still a few countries along the way which won't let people in if you are not fully vaccinated or provide a negative PCR test (Bolivia and Suriname for example). **It is safest to assume that to complete the trip you will need to be fully vaccinated against Covid-19.**

**Yellow Fever** - being vaccinated against Yellow Fever and having a valid certificate and a photocopy is deemed compulsory in some countries we visit, especially at certain borders and are needed if you are entering from an infected country.

**Rabies** - vaccinations are regularly advised for many countries that we travel through.

**Malaria** - in some of the areas we visit there is a risk of contracting Malaria. You must be aware that whatever malaria prophylactics you are taking, they only offer partial protection. They must be coupled with your own physical efforts against being bitten - which is the best prevention. Malaria-carrying mosquitoes come out at sunset so from this time you should wear long sleeves and trousers. Exposed skin, especially ankles, should have insect repellent containing 'Deet' applied to them. Your crew will advise on where the worst affected areas are on the trip. There are a number of malaria prophylactics available and requirements change. You may wish to take a sample of whichever prophylactic you choose, a few weeks before you leave. This way you may determine early on if you have any adverse reactions so you can change the regimen if necessary. Please consult a reputable travel clinic or GP for advice. You can also find more information at www.nomadtravel.co.uk or www.fitfortravel.scot.nhs.uk

Medical advice should be taken particularly if you are visiting the jungle in either Ecuador or Peru, the Brazilian Pantanal or Iguazu Falls in either Argentina or Brazil as part of your trip.

**Altitude sickness** - this is caused by thin air (due to lack of oxygen) and can affect anyone arriving at high altitude (above 3000mtrs). The symptoms are headaches, dizziness, shortage of breath and possibly nausea. Arriving at a high altitude destination a few days early will help you acclimatise and avoid this. Make sure you do not over exert yourself, rest for a few hours, avoid drinking alcohol, smoking, large meals and drink plenty of water.

As we are travelling mostly by land (as opposed to flying into a high altitude location) we should acclimatise gradually and so avoid 'soroche', mountain sickness.

**Dengue** - unlike the malaria mosquito, which bites at night, the dengue carrying mosquito bites during the day. Some areas we travel to do have occasional outbreaks and it is therefore advised that you take care not to be bitten during the day as well as at night. There is no vaccine available.

**Health** - to join our trips you should be in good general health. Your travel insurance company must be told if you have any pre-existing medical condition or allergy or if you are on any regular medication, otherwise you may not be covered under your policies for these. Our crew will need to know of any medication or conditions you may have.

#### MONEY, BUDGETS AND LP

### Local Payment (LP)

LP is part of your overall trip payment and is the most cost effective and practical way to get hard currency to South America to pay for a variety of your day to day local costs (i.e. all meals prepared by the group, campsite/hostel/hotel fees, gas, and certain activities listed on the trip page) which cannot be pre-paid from the UK. It is a guaranteed amount, set before your trip departs, and unlike 'group kitty' systems we will not ask you to contribute more once the trip is underway.

**Please note:** Your LP is payable to your Tour Leader on the morning of departure in US$ Dollars CASH ONLY. Please make sure that all your notes are in good condition. Old, torn or marked notes are often refused by the banks and we will therefore be unable to accept them either. Larger denomination notes are preferable for your Local payment. In many countries, $10 and $5 notes are simply not accepted and are best avoided.  Please make sure that $US Dollars are dated 2013 or later and do not have a serial number starting with CB.

Please remember that you will need to pre-order US$ cash for your LP before you leave home as your LP is payable all at once at the start of your trip and you cannot pay in local currency using ATMs due to the withdrawal limits in place and their unreliability. In addition, ATM transaction fees can seriously add to your travelling expenses.

### How to bring your currency?

Past Oasis travellers have fed back that they have felt, as a general rule it is best to bring your money in a combination of cash US dollars, pre-paid travel currency cards and debit/credit cards.

**Make sure that all your notes are in good condition. Old, torn or marked notes are often refused by the banks and shops. Please ensure your notes are dated 2013 onwards** and do not have a serial number starting with CB. It can be difficult using US$100 bills in Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia so if possible, bring US$50 bills for these countries. Some travellers worry about carrying so much cash with them, however all Oasis Overland trucks are equipped with an onboard safe for the security of your money and passport. Please also remember that Visas, where required, need to be paid for in US dollars cash only.

**Spending Money**

*We are currently updating our Optional Excursion costs so please be aware that some costs may have increased or there may be activities that are no longer available or have changed. In addition, please bear in mind recent global price increases and fluctuations in currency exchange rates. As such we would suggest budgeting at the higher end of our spending money suggestions below. Personal spending money can vary so much between travellers but we hope this helps you to plan. We always recommend having a contingency fund and it's always worth having a bit extra as a buffer for those 'must buy' purchases you may find en route!*

From past trips and traveller feedback US$150 to US$200 per week should cover costs such as some meals out, soft drinks and beers, email & communications, souvenirs and other general spending. Personal spending habits & budgets differ greatly from person to person. Budget on visa costs and optional activities separately (see visa section above & optional excursions page) & allow extra for your Local Payment contribution. There is often a departure tax payable in the airport, so allow up to US$50 for this.

For trips starting / ending before Carnival: During the Carnival week both tourists and locals flock to Rio, meaning that many resources are stretched. This includes access to cash via banks and cash machines, as the banks frequently close for the whole ten day carnival period. Many of the machines run out of cash early on in the celebrations (often by day 2), and once the machines are empty they are not restocked until after the carnival celebrations have finished. Money exchanges can also be difficult to access during this time, or will only provide a very poor rate. From past experience we know that the exchange rate weakens in the run up to Carnival, so all in all (if possible) it would be best for you to get some Brazilian Real's in advance. When working out how many you need, bear in mind any time you will be spending in Brazil before Carnival in Rio.

If your trip goes to **French Guiana, Suriname and Guyana** please note that the general cost of living in these countries is much higher than elsewhere in South America, and you can expect the price of meals, drinks, souvenirs and excursions to accordingly cost more. For these countries we suggest you budget around US$300 a week for extra expenses.

**Changing money**

Change your money only at banks, hotels, airports or forex bureaus. It is illegal to change money on the street, as these people will normally be opportunistic thieves or undercover police. Your crew will advise you where & when you can change money & with what means. It is also a good idea to have a small CASH emergency fund, to allow for the unexpected.

**Credit & Debit Cards**

If you are intending using your credit or debit card, we suggest taking more than one card with you as you may find that your card is not accepted in the first ATM you try. For credit and debit cards Visa is best. Mastercard and American Express are generally not accepted throughout South America. We recommend that you inform your bank that you will be using your card abroad to avoid it being blocked.

**Pre-Paid Travel Currency Cards**

These cards are similar to normal Credit and Debit cards but they can be pre loaded with cash before you travel with a set amount allowing you to withdraw this cash using the card at normal ATMs. It is a more secure way to access cash on your trip, but again do not rely on these as your sole means of funds on a trip - (please refer to the ATM section). Several banks and companies now offer these cards, but be sure to look into the rates for withdrawing cash when making your decision. When using these cards abroad you will use them to withdraw the local currency from an ATM and not the currency that you loaded onto the card.

**ATMs**

These are available in most major cities along our route and allow you to withdraw local currency only. We discourage you from relying on your ATM card as a primary source of funds in case it is lost/stolen/swallowed, or the machine isn't working. In some destinations we probably won't even see a bank or ATM for days on end.  Even where do find them, they cannot always be relied upon - things change, and ATMs don't always work! Besides memorising your PIN, it is also important to be aware of your daily withdrawal limit and bank withdrawal costs.

**Tipping**

Tipping in South America is customary and often expected, and local attitudes towards tipping are different to what we are used to in the West. It is often more than a reward for services well done but as wages are extremely low, it is an accepted means of supplementing an income. As a general rule, tipping around 10% of the total bill in restaurants is a good guide, and the same amounts usually apply for activities and excursions.

Because it can be difficult to know what to tip, and as it has such importance in some areas both economically and culturally, there may be times and activities for which your crew will make it clear what level of tipping is 'customary/expected'. They may also be quite enthusiastic or assertive in encouraging you to take account of these suggestions. This is motivated by the knowledge of how important tipping can be, and the offence or confusion that can be caused when local people are

tipped poorly. In the end, tipping remains at the discretion of the individual, but our crew will continue to advise on normal rates, and we would ask you to carefully consider the economic or personal impact of being seen to 'under tip'. We know that many who travel with us are on a tight budget, but ask you to remember that those we work with locally may also face financial hardship, and also work very hard to try to give you unrivalled service/experiences.

As a very rough guide, we would suggest that you budget for an amount equal to 10% of the local payment for your trip, plus 10% of the cost of any of the listed optional excursions that you wish to do. The amounts you end up tipping may vary from a rigid 10%, but hopefully this will help you budget in general.

On the Inca Trail, your crew will advise you what the expected tipping amounts are before the trek. It may seem unusual to be asked to tip before receiving a service, but the tips are a crucial part of the income for the guides, cooks and porters, and it is important that this gets shared out equally and fairly between them, so you can expect your Oasis Tour Leader to take an active role in ensuring it is done in the correct manner. The tips are usually spread out by the Tour Leader and then given to the travellers to hand out on the last day of the trek.

In the past we have been asked by travellers about tipping your Oasis Crew. If you choose to do this, it would be budgeted separately from the above. Our guys work very hard at making your trip a great travel experience. Working overseas can often be challenging and they are pretty much on call for you 24 hours a day, so it's appreciated as a thank you for hard work and good service, but of course not mandatory. Our suggestion is to budget around US$1, per person, per day.

**CLIMATE**

You will experience a varying degree of climatic changes at any time of year, from freezing temperatures (down to as cold as minus -15°C) in the Andes, to scorching heat in the desert and heavy downpours in the jungle (up to as hot and humid as 47°C and 90% humidity).

The rains in the Andes usually occur between November and April. This means downpours once or twice a day with the rest of the day usually warm and sunny, although there will also be times where it may not rain at all for a week or so. April to October is the dry season with clear views of the mountains. It is hot during the day but extremely cold at night with temperatures often well below zero. You will be spending a lot of time at altitude where nights can be very cold at any time of year.

The deserts in Peru can also be cold during the night but can be very hot during the day particularly between October and May. The Amazon Jungle is very hot with high humidity plus regular downpours of rain usually year-round. **View South American Climate Chart**

If you are travelling on a trip that goes through Patagonia in July – September, please be aware it will get very cold at times with temperatures well below zero, and you can expect snowfall. Please be prepared for cold conditions, with thermal clothing and the correct sleeping bag.

**WHAT TO TAKE**

The less you take the less you have to pack, wash & lug home & you can always pick up extras along the way. Most people make the mistake of bringing too much gear. Clothes washing or laundry facilities will be available at least once a week. You will be travelling in the heat & camping in the cold, so bring clothes for all climates; rough stuff is best. Pack according to season: allowing for extremes in temperature (from the constant baking heat in the dry season to the cold and occasional frost overnight in some areas) Make sure that you bring your gear in a traditional soft sided 70 - 90L rucksack or holdall - suitcases are not suitable. **Remember baggage is limited to 20kg per person plus one day bag.**

| **Equipment** | **Toiletries - Most available to buy on trip** |
|---|---|
| • **Sleeping Bag - 3 to 4 season bag, depending on season, & sleep sheet**<br>• **Foam sleeping mat or thermarest & repair kit**<br>• **Small day-pack or small bag to carry daily items**<br>• **Soft rucksack or holdall (NOT rigid suitcase)**<br>• **Water bottle - for personal use - we recommend Water-to-Go (see below Responsible Travel)** | • Soap, shampoo, toothbrush/paste, antibacterial hand wash, lip balm & moisturiser<br>• Sun block 35 + after sun, hat & sun glasses<br>• Tampons (can buy in most places)<br>• Contraception |
| **Clothes** | **Personal Effects** |
| • **One pair of trainers or boots**<br>• **Sandals/flip flops/jandals/thongs**<br>• **Underwear/socks**<br>• **T shirts/shirts**<br>• **Shorts/swimwear**<br>• **Jeans/trousers/jog pants/leggings**<br>• **Skirt or dress**<br>• **Sweat shirt/jumper**<br>• **Jacket/fleece & waterproof jacket** | • Camera with protective case, spare batteries, film/memory card<br>• Torch & spare batteries (head torch is best)<br>• Travel adaptor plug/charger (for cameras & mobile phone batteries)<br>• Money belt<br>• Personal stereo - there is a stereo on the truck with iPod/MP3 adaptors<br>• Towel &/or sarong |

| **Recommended Medical Kit List** | |
|---|---|
| • **Antiseptic ointment/Antihistamine cream & tablets**<br>• **Nurofen or equivalent pain-killer**<br>• **Eye-drops/bath**<br>• **Anti-diarrhoea treatment**<br>• **A couple of bandages (elasticated & triangular)**<br>• **Medication for personal allergies/asthma etc**<br>• **Insect repellent containing Deet** | • Re-hydration sachets/vitamin tablets<br>• Assorted plasters<br>• 1 Course of malaria treatment<br>• Some suitable antibiotics as recommended by your doctor for infected cuts or to treat severe dysentery<br>• Malaria Tablets - see Vaccinations & Health section |

Please note that **in the winter months** (June - September) it can be very cold, especially at altitude, so we recommend that you bring extra layers of be prepared to purchase some when you are in Peru, Bolivia & Patagonia.

Even though our trucks are equipped with a comprehensive medical kit, we advise you to bring a small personal medical kit as our truck kit is not for general everyday use. It will also be your responsibility to carry your kit on included excursions and optional activities as some local operators may not have medical kits to hand.

#### PHOTOGRAPHY AND ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

**Cameras (incl. Digital & Video Cameras) -** An easy to use 'point and shoot' will get you some good photos. For memorable shots, it may be worthwhile investing in an SLR camera, but be sure to get some practice in before the trip! Most towns and cities have internet cafes where you can download onto CD/internet sites - but don't rely on it. Internet speeds can be slow for uploading photos to social media or the Cloud.

**Photography -** Be aware of your surroundings when taking photographs and filming. Some locations will be sensitive or have local laws banning photography. For example it is usually forbidden to use cameras at borders or around government buildings, military installations, bridges and airports or to take photos of local officials. If you do take photos or film where it is not permitted you may find yourself being questioned by irate officials who may decide to confiscate your camera or instruct you to delete all the images/footage on your device. If in doubt ask for permission, or if there is no-one to ask use some common sense.

**Drones -** As the use of drones becomes more common, countries throughout the world are gradually updating their laws and restrictions on usage. The specific regulations will vary from one country to another, so do check the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice for the latest information. As with cameras, use your common sense if you do use a drone and avoid operation in sensitive areas. If you plan to bring a drone on your trip with us please contact us first to ensure there will be a suitable place to store it while on your trip.

**Electrical charging & power supply -** It may be difficult to find a power source for charging at times, so a spare battery is a must.

Consider a 12V in-car charger (our vehicles are equipped with a couple of 12 volt cigarette lighter charger sockets - truck trips only) or bring along your 230V mains charger and travel adaptor plug for use at some of the hotels, hostels and campsites we stay at.

NOTE: 12V - 230V inverters cannot be used on our vehicles because of the power drain they cause.

Log onto**www.whatplug.net**for information regarding the different electrical plugs and voltage used in each country.

## CONTACTING HOME

The internet and WiFi are readily available in almost every town and city you will visit; most hotels and hostels will have free WiFi as will many bars and cafes. Do bear in mind that the connections can be unreliable and will not always be as fast as you are used to at home. If a lot of people try to use the internet at the same time the speed will be slower still, especially if trying to make Skype calls or upload photos/videos. During periods of the trip where we are camping, internet will be less common.

Some travellers choose to take an unlocked mobile phone with them and buy local SIM cards in each country, allowing them to use mobile data. If you particularly want or need regular internet access this may be a good option. Telephone calls can be expensive usually £1 to £5 for a three minute call.

**Online Diaries** - A great variety of free "travel blogs" are now available online, they are a good way of keeping relatives and friend up to date with what you are doing and a good place to upload photos, collecting messages as well as keeping a record for yourself.

## SECURITY

All major cities have their share of petty crime (just like our cities) and sensible precautions need to be taken. Wearing expensive looking jewellery or watches and carrying cameras will draw unnecessary attention to you. Leave valuables such as passports and excess money in your hotel safe or truck safe (we recommend carrying a copy of your passport details page at all times). You may find a simple money belt is more discreet than a bag. Always be aware of your surroundings and when approached by people you do not know, use your common sense. At night in cities it's best to use a taxi, rather than walking around the streets, single women in particular need to be careful and we would suggest that it is safer to be in a group.

On board the truck - each vehicle is fitted with a hidden, lockable safe to be used for money, passports and important documents. Group members will be responsible for the safe and Oasis Overland cannot accept any liability for clients' personal or monetary contents kept in the safe or on board the truck. We advise you to not take items of value that are not essential for the journey. In certain areas a roster may be drawn up for the group to share the task of keeping watch over the truck.

FCDO Advice - the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) offer country-specific advice, regarding not only security but also entry regulations, local laws and customs and health. We strongly recommend all travellers visit the FCDO website, or the equivalent in their home country, to familiarise themselves with local conditions and potential issues in the countries they plan to visit before committing to a trip with us. You can view their website here.

As an adventure tour operator, some of our trips will travel to areas that are rarely-visited and occasionally attract negative publicity. We are not in the business of taking our travellers or indeed staff to regions that we consider dangerous and the safety of all who travel with us is always our main

priority, but as a discerning customer we understand you will want to be aware of any risks before travelling. We liaise with the FCDO on specific regions or areas as necessary, as well as monitoring open media outlets and political risk resources and speaking to our contacts on the ground.

In some rare cases, our trips may have to travel through areas against which the FCDO either 'advise against all but essential travel' or 'advise against all travel'. When our trips travel through these areas we will carry out all due diligence and notify you in advance. This advice can change without notice. In these instances you will need to ensure you have full and comprehensive travel insurance that includes cover for these areas – some policies will exclude them. We are able to provide additional cover, if required, at additional cost. It may also be required that you read and sign a short information sheet confirming you have been advised of the risks and agree to travel contrary to the FCDO advice.

If you have any questions at all about the safety or security of your trip, please do not hesitate to contact us and we will be happy to discuss your trip in more detail.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

## The Inca Trail and Machu Picchu

We do not include the cost of trekking to Machu Picchu in our Overland trips that visit Peru. Instead, we offer several different options, depending on whether you want to trek or take things more easily and just see Machu Picchu.

### Machu Picchu by train

If you do not want to do a multi-day hike, then you can stay behind in Cusco for a couple of extra free days, and then take an option to visit Machu Picchu by train. We transfer you by road and train to the town of Aguas Calientes where you spend the night in a hotel. The next morning you then head up to Machu Picchu and enjoy a 2 hour guided tour followed by free time to explore the site. You then return back to Cusco by train and road again, this time joining together with people from the group who have taken the trekking option. Prices are based on a minimum of 2 people taking this option, and a single room supplement applies for any solo travellers staying in the hotel in Aguas Calientes.

### Trekking

We offer 3 routes - **Classic, Salkantay and Lares** - (subject to season and availability), all accompanied by knowledgeable guides and porters.

Our first choice trek is the Classic trail. As availability is limited we will move quickly after booking to obtain you a permit where possible. It is VERY important to note that as soon as we purchase your permit it is non-transferable, and non-refundable. Your permit will be linked to your passport details, so please make sure you enter these correctly at the time of booking. If you are intending renewing your passport then please let us know at the point of booking. In order to trek you will need to be in possession of both your passport and your permit – and the passport details have to match otherwise the permit issuing authorities will not let you trek. If you need any further clarification then please

contact us.

When the Classic trail is not available, we will arrange the Lares trail at no extra charge (subject to minimum 3 people). If you wish to trek either the Lares or Salkantay by choice, you must let us know at the time of booking. An additional fee may be payable, but we will discuss this with you. All of the treks visit Machu Picchu for the day.

For more information about the treks including maps please click below for the three routes and treks:
**Classic Lares Salkantay**

**Tipping on the Inca Trail** - Before you start your trek, your Oasis Tour Leader will advise you and other travellers of the suggested tipping amount for the guides, porters and cooks on the trek (this applies to the Classic, Lares and Salkantay treks). Tipping is a vital part of the income for the staff who work on the treks, and it is expected. It is not compulsory, but if you choose not to tip it will be viewed suspiciously and negatively by the local staff and as such we respectfully ask all our travellers trekking to pay the requested amount. We are advised by the local operators what the suggested tipping amount is for each trek, and you will be asked to contribute, before the trek departs. It is usually around US$50 per person, which is then shared out amongst the guides, porters and cooks.

**Porters** - Personal porters are available who can carry a **maximum of 6kgs** of your equipment whilst on the Classic Inca trail. Please let your tour leader know if you would like to add one of these (price approx. US$90 per person). At the briefing the Guide would provide you with a duffle bag to pack your equipment into which will be available at camp each night. Your sleeping bag is not included in this weight limit.

**Huayna Picchu** - Some people like to climb the nearby summit of Huayna Picchu during their time at Machu Picchu. One of the main reasons for doing this would be for the view from the top of it over Machu Picchu. Because of its increasing popularity the local authorities have introduced a permit system to control numbers and collect funds from those wanting to do this. Permits can sell out a long time in advance, and you therefore need to request us to purchase you a permit urgently if you want to do this. You can request this by clicking the Huayna Picchu 'add-on' through your account. There are 400 permits available per day currently. Once requested your tickets cannot be refunded or exchanged, as it is arranged with your specific name and passport details.

The ascent of Huayna Picchu is very steep in places and it can take about an hour to the top. It will be your responsibility to be at the entrance point at the right time, and should you be late then you will unfortunately forfeit your opportunity to go up. The climb is done on the same day that you are visiting the ruins at Machu Picchu, so reduces your time wandering around the ruins. Please bear in mind that to get up and down can take around three hours, and is very steep in places. It is not really for those who are unfit, or scared of heights. The path is pretty deteriorated in places so some light scrambling is required.

**W-Trek, Torres del Paine**

Explore South America’s finest national park. This 6 Day / 5 night option will take you on trails to the mighty granite pillars of Los Torres, through the imposing French Valley and magnificent Grey’s Glacier. Hike through emerald forests, to magnificent glaciers, along alpine rivers and lakes, with picturesque mountain vistas while in this area of unparalleled beauty.

The **W Trek** is a challenging hike with some tricky terrain and steep ascents and descents. You do not need to be a specialist or experienced hiker to complete the trek, but you do need to be in moderate to good health with a decent level of fitness. The Active **W Trek** is a popular, camping style multi-day adventure program.

Spaces to hike the **W Trek** are limited and issued on a first-come-first-served basis and subject to availability at all times, so if you want to join this trek it is recommended you add this at the time of your booking. If we are unable to confirm your space you will be refunded in full, including your deposit.

**What’s Included:**

- Accommodation for 5 nights - 2 nights Puerto Natales (twin share), 3 nights in park (2 camping, 1 dorm)
- Transfer from Puerto Natales to Torres del Paine National Park (1.45 hours drive)
- Park entrance fee
- Catamaran ticket from Paine Grande to Pudeto, bus ticket from Pudeto to Puerto Natales
- Tents
- Guide on first day of trekking to the base of the towers
- Trekking poles for the first day of trekking if required
- Meals as listed

**What‘s Not Included:**

- Meals not listed
- Tips

***Itinerary:*** *Please note the itinerary is subject to alteration and the stated walking times are approximate. Weather in the park can be changeable and affect hiking, and everyone walks at their own pace.*

**Day 1:** This evening you will meet fellow trekkers for a welcome dinner, followed by a briefing for your 'W Trek'.

**Accommodation:** Puerto Natales (twin room - shared bathrooms)

**Meals Included:** Dinner

**Day 2:** This morning nice and early you will meet the group and travel to Torres del Paine National Park. Torres del Paine was given its name from the three striking granite towers, formed above a

glacial lake. The trek today is with a guide and you will be making your way to the base of these towers. Once you reach the lookout of the ‘Base of Torres del Paine’ you can enjoy the view of Torre Sur (2,850m), Torre Central (2,800m), Torre Norte (2,600m) and Cerro Nido de Cóndor. The trek today is approximately 19kms and should take about 8 hours.

**Accommodation:** Refugio Torre Central or Refugio Torre Norte (Dorm bed)

**Meals Included:** Breakfast, Boxed Lunch, Dinner

**Day 3:** Today the trail follows alongside the turquoise waters of Lake Nordenskjöld. We then make our way to Los Cuernos (The Horns), an outcropping of granite peaks which stand at over 2000 metres high, before continuing through to Domos Frances. The views from Los Cuernos are considered by many to be the most memorable in the whole park, perched on a hillside with the famous towers above with views across one of the park’s stunning light blue lakes. The trek today is approximately 14.6kms and should take about 6.5 hours.

**Accommodation:** Camping at Francés

**Meals Included:** Breakfast, Boxed Lunch and Dinner

**Day 4:** Making our way through 'The French Valley' we will pass through Mirador Británico, the lookout point generally thought to be one of the most overwhelming spots on the whole Circuit, where you can take in Paine Grande, Cerro Hoja, Cerro Máscara, Cerro Catedral, Cerro Aleta de Tiburón, Cuerno Norte and other magnificent peaks. We return back the same way and continue to the Pehoe sector, reaching our evening destination Paine Grande. The trek today is approximately 20.3kms and should take about 9 hours.

**Accommodation:** Camping at Paine Grande

**Meals Included:** Breakfast, Boxed Lunch and Dinner

**Day 5:** Our final day of trekking will take us on the trail through the western side of the Paine Massif, stopping off at various viewpoints to take in Grey Lake and the Mountain views, as we continue north to the impressive natural ice formations of Grey's Glacier. The return is the same way back to Paine Grande where you will take a catamaran across Lake Pehoé to Pudeto. You will then board the bus back to Puerto Natales arriving in the evening. It is time to put your heels up and celebrate your huge sense of achievement having conquered one of the world’s great hiking routes with a cold beer and Pizza. The trek today is approximately 22kms and should take about 8 hours.

**Accommodation:** Puerto Natales (twin room - shared bathrooms)

**Meals Included:** Breakfast, Boxed Lunch, Dinner

**Day 6:** After your breakfast (included) you will then continue with your Oasis Overland Adventure.

**Please Note:** The above itinerary and stated accommodation is subject to change without notice and may be altered due to local operating conditions. In the event of any changes due to circumstances

beyond our control, while we will do our utmost to minimise the impact on the planned itinerary, we will not be held responsible for any costs incurred.

**Deposit:** £400 per person. (Once requested your permit cannot be refunded or exchanged).

**Just add this on to your trip when booking!**

**New Years or Carnival in Rio**

**New Years Eve in Rio -** If you are on a trip that coincides with New Years Eve in Rio you can fly into Rio about 4 days before your trip starts or allow a few days after your trip finishes, to experience and join in the celebrations on Copacabana beach on the last night of the Year.

**Carnival in Rio -** If you are on a trip coinciding with 'Carnival' you should allow a few days before your trip starts or finishes, if you want to experience this spectacular event, so book your flights accordingly. Most carnival events are from the Friday through to the Tuesday before/after the trip starts/finishes. We offer Rio accommodation packages that cover Carnival as well as a separate add-on which includes a ticket to the Samba School parade at the Sambadrome, normally on the Sunday evening.

To reserve pre/post tour accommodation for either events, please contact the Oasis office.

View **more information about Carnival** and what you can do.

**Extensions from Quito to the Galapagos Islands**

If your overland expedition isn't enough of an adventure, why not consider extending your trip to the Galapagos Islands, where we offer a selection of tours, varying in length and activity level:

- **5 Day - Galapagos Essentials** - Our lead-in product, ideal for those looking to experience the natural beauty of the Galapagos without being too active. This tour visits the Islands of Santa Cruz and San Cristobel.
- **5 Day - Best of the Galapagos** - For those looking for an activity based trip to the Galapagos, our Best of the Galapagos tour has a more active itinerary, including a hike on the Sierra Negra Volcano. This tour visits the Islands of Isabela and Santa Cruz.
- **8 Day - Galapagos Uncovered** - For passengers with more time available, our Galapagos Uncovered tour is a great option, this tour includes a good mix of activities and includes visits to three islands; San Cristobel, Isabela and Santa Cruz.

**VISAS**

The information below is to be used only as a guide and may change without prior notice. It is advisable to contact the relevant embassy in plenty of time before the trip departs to check the current visa requirements. It is **your responsibility** to ensure you have all the relevant visas you require**.**

Visas obtained at borders and embassies during the trip must be paid for in **USD CASH ONLY**, as stipulated by the relevant immigration officials. Evisas will require payment online by credit or debit card.

On arrival to countries in South America, you will be given an 'Immigration card'. It is important that you keep this with your passport during your entire stay in the particular country as it is needed for departure. Failure to produce this immigration slip can result in a fine.

**Transiting via the USA -** Travellers who are flying to South America via the US will require either a US visa or for certain nationalities an Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) to take advantage of the visa waiver programme. These can be processed and paid for here.

If you have travelled to Iran, Iraq, Sudan, Syria, Libya, Somalia or Yemen since March 2011 you will not qualify for the ESTA and must apply for a visa.

It is very important you establish your ESTA eligibility and have the correct documentation before departing, as if you do not have the right authorisation upon checking in at the airport you may not be permitted to travel.

| Country | British | Australian | New Zealand | USA | Canadian |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Colombia** | No | No | No | No | No |
| **Ecuador** | No | No | No | No | No |
| **Peru** | No | No | No | No | No |
| **Bolivia** | No | No | No | US$160 | No |
| **Chile** | No | No | No | No | No |
| **Argentina** | No | Free | No | No | No |
| **Uruguay** | No | No | No | No | No |
| **Paraguay** | No | No | No | No | No |
| **Brazil** | No | Yes | No | Yes | Yes |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **French Guiana** | No | No | No | No | No |
| **Suriname** | US$58 | US$58 | US$58 | US$58 | US$58 |
| **Guyana** | No | No | No | No | No |

For more information on other nationalities & visas checkout **www.projectvisa.com**

## Peru

Passport Holders from UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada and most EU countries will not require a visa to enter Peru.

Passport Holders from other countries, will need to check the current visa requirements with the relevant consulate, and whether you need to obtain the visa in advance.

**Inca Trek** – you will need to provide your passport details to apply for your Inca trekking permit, please enter these correctly on your booking form. If you are intending on renewing your passport then please let us know at the point of booking. In order to trek you will need to be in possession of both your passport and your permit – and the passport details have to match otherwise the permit issuing authorities will not let you trek.

## Argentina

Passport Holders from UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada and most EU countries will not require a visa to enter Argentina.

Passport Holders from other countries, will need to check the current visa requirements with the relevant consulate, and whether you need to obtain the visa in advance.

## Bolivia

Passport Holders from UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and most EU countries will not require a visa to enter Bolivia.

**American passport holders** will require a visa to enter Bolivia, you can purchase these upon arrival for approximately US$160. You will need 2 passport-sized photographs (3cm x 4cm), a colour photocopy of the passport information page, a copy of your yellow fever certificate, paper copy of your trip booking confirmation and your most recent 3 months bank statements.

You can apply for your visa in advance if you wish but please check how long it is valid for you to enter Bolivia.  Valid for entry is different for the length of stay allowed.  For example, if your visa is valid for entry for 30 days from the date of issue and you're starting your trip in Cartagena, your visa

will expire before reaching Bolivia.

Travellers joining one of our **Regional Explorers in Peru and Bolivia** may wish to obtain this visa in advance.

Passport Holders from other countries, will need to check the current visa requirements with the relevant consulate, and whether you need to obtain the visa in advance.

## Brazil

Passport Holders from UK, most EU countries and New Zealand do not require a visa to enter Brazil.

Australia, US and Canada passport holders require an e-visa in advance: https://brazil.vfsevisa.com/. Visas are usually only valid for entry for 3 months from date of issue so you should not apply more than 3 months before you enter Brazil. We will send you information to help you make your application closer to the time.

Passport Holders from other countries, will need to check the current visa requirements with the relevant consulate, and whether you need to obtain the visa in advance.

## Chile

Passport Holders from UK, Ireland, New Zealand, USA and most EU countries will not require a visa to enter Chile.

From 17 September 2025, Australian passport holders no longer need to obtain a visa for stays of up to 90 days.

Passport Holders from other countries, will need to check the current visa requirements with the relevant consulate, and whether you need to obtain the visa in advance.

## Colombia

Passport Holders from UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada and most EU countries will not require a visa to enter Colombia.

Passport Holders from other countries, will need to check the current visa requirements with the relevant consulate, and whether you need to obtain the visa in advance.

## Ecuador

Passport Holders from UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada and most EU countries will not require a visa to enter Ecuador.

Passport Holders from other countries, will need to check the current visa requirements with the relevant consulate, and whether you need to obtain the visa in advance.

Travellers **must** have physical proof of health care Insurance whilst travelling through Ecuador. You may be asked to provide this at Immigration at the land border or at the airport on arrival - a printed copy of your travel Insurance should suffice. You will also need a Yellow Fever vaccination certificate if coming from Colombia or Peru - see the Vaccinations and Health section below.

**French Guiana**

Passport Holders from UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, USA and Canada will not require a visa to enter French Guiana.

Passport Holders from other countries, will need to check the current visa requirements with the relevant consulate, and whether you need to obtain the visa in advance.

**Guyana**

Passport Holders from UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, USA and Canada will not require a visa to enter Guyana.

Passport Holders from other countries, will need to check the current visa requirements with the relevant consulate, and whether you need to obtain the visa in advance.

**Suriname**

Most nationalities are visa free and only need to register and pay an Entry Fee online via the VFS website. Check here for a list of nationalities that must apply for an E-Visa instead.

The Entry Fee process is outsourced to an agency called VFS Global. They are the official partner of a number of diplomatic missions and a specialist Suriname visa application agency. There is no expiry date on your Entry Fee certificate but VFS advise that it is valid for entry for 90 days. This means you must not complete the process more than 90 days before we are due to arrive in Suriname. We will send you details to help you apply, closer to this time.

During the process you will need to upload a copy of your passport – please ensure this is the passport you will be travelling to Suriname on. If you will already be travelling when you do this, we suggest that you have a digital copy to take with you, as it may be easier for you to do this before you leave home than once you're on the trip.
See https://suriname.vfsevisa.com/suriname/assets/docs/passport-bio-page.pdf for examples of how your scanned passport should look.

The Entry Fee costs US$50 + US$8 processing fee, payable online.

## WHAT TO EXPECT

### LIFE ON THE ROAD

The Oasis truck will be your new home giving you a comfortable, secure base with which to experience your trip. As part of the adventure you will be expected to have an active involvement in the day to day running of the trip, be part of the group and get stuck in and help with various tasks, whether it's cooking meals over open fires, pitching your tent or keeping the truck clean & tidy.

**Itinerary**

Because Oasis Overland do not operate normal 'package holidays' the itineraries given cannot be guaranteed to run exactly as outlined. However, it is rare that we have to make major changes and in the event that we do this will be discussed with you either before or during the trip. It is important to bear in mind that should it not be possible to enter a certain country due to safety concerns, visa problems or political turmoil etc, and it becomes necessary to fly over a country in order to continue a trip, that all costs for flights will be borne by you and not Oasis. Should it not be possible for an Oasis trip to begin from a scheduled starting city due to border closures, civil unrest etc, Oasis will make all reasonable efforts to begin the trip from an alternative location. However, all additional costs that you may incur in travelling to the alternative location will be paid by you or your insurance company and not Oasis.

**Seatbelts**

All Oasis Overland trucks are fitted with seat belts. For your own safety and security we recommend that travellers wear these at all times whilst the vehicle is moving.

**Accommodation**

**Camping** - Oasis provides tents for those nights you will be camping. Tents are shared (between two people of the same sex from your group unless you are a couple). We spend some nights bush or desert camping, and on some occasions it is necessary to camp at overnight services, which are basic but equipped with showers and other facilities; the rest of the time in campsites. Facilities and standards at campsites vary, some are well equipped and managed and some are very basic. At bush camps you will be living off the truck, so there will be no showers or en-suite facilities! At certain campsites there is the opportunity to upgrade to a private room at your own expense if you are missing your bed.

**Simple Hotels/Hostels** - At some locations we will stay at small locally owned hostels/hotels. These are usually basic places, and often the accommodation will be mixed sex dormitory style. Upgrades may be available on arrival, but cannot be reliably pre- booked. Please be aware that the quality of accommodation can vary quite a lot from area to area and sometimes in a small hotel the standard of rooms can vary even from one room to the next - so there needs to be a level of understanding within the group that your Oasis Crew does not often have power over room allocation or services provided by various hotels and it is unavoidable that they have to rely on the local staff. Please note if you choose to participate on an overnight optional activity, then you will not receive reimbursement for any accommodation or meals that you are missing out on with the rest of the group.

**During the day**

As a guide, driving days normally start at about 8am and finish at about 5pm, with stops for lunch and buying food, seeing local sights etc. We won't be driving every day, although there are times when we will drive for two, but we will then stop for a few days and you will have free time to explore, meet local people, do some optional activities or just relax and do your own thing. Expect to sometimes get dusty & dishevelled during the day and although you will be able to shower most nights (except at bush camps), not all camps will have hot showers.

**Meals & cook groups**

When 'on the road' or camping, we usually cook using gas or over open fires in a rota system and you can expect to cook in a group of two or three people approximately once every ten days depending on the number of people on trip and whereabouts you are. Your cook group will have to decide on what to cook, utilise stocks from the truck stores and locally obtain ingredients from markets, shops etc. and rustle up a meal. But don't worry if you're not a Gordon Ramsay, as the rest of the group and the Tour Leader usually lend a helping hand. Here is an idea of what to expect at meal times:

**Breakfasts:** Usually simple - we help ourselves to cereal, toast, hot drinks and on occasion we will splurge with a cooked breakfast.

**Lunch:** Cold and usually quick. The cook group will put out bread, tinned supplies and maybe make a salad.

**Dinner:** Cooks come into their own in the evening, and will always attempt to cook up some delights.

When staying in hotels in towns or cities we do not include meals. This is your chance to go out and explore and try local cuisine in local restaurants.

**Vegetarians / Vegans / Coeliacs / Gluten & Lactose intolerance -** Our Tour Leaders will always do their best to cater for any dietary requirement or intolerance whenever possible. However we do not cater for fussy eaters. It must be remembered that the variety of dishes available to Vegetarians may not be the same as available to meat eaters. If there is anything in particular you require in your diet or because of an allergy or would miss from home, it would be best to bring these with you, as these cannot be purchased with normal Local Payment funds due to the high cost of these specialised and often imported foods.

Remember that when eating out in local restaurants & hotels that vegetarianism or food allergies / intolerance's, are still not widely known about or understood by many local people. i.e Vegetarians or Vegans will often be offered fish or chicken in error. Most large towns and cities, or areas used to tourists, will often have more choice but please be aware that it will probably not be as varied as you are used to when eating out at home.

**In the evenings**

When at a bushcamp or campsite, you and your tent buddy will put up the tent, and then lend a hand with getting out the tables, stools, firewood and water containers. The fire grates need to be taken out, the fire lit and someone can fill the kettle and make hot drinks while the cook group prepares the evening meal. Then just sit back, chill and enjoy the rest of your evening!

### Oasis Crew

We usually have two Crew whose duties are extensive and quite demanding, with challenges ranging from driving and maintaining the expedition vehicle to a high standard, to organising visas and border crossings, arranging accommodation, pre-booking some excursions and guides, helping with shopping and cooking as well as finding the best deals, socialising and making sure everything runs as smoothly as possible. Whilst our Crew are usually experienced and knowledgeable, they are not tour guides as such. Our trips pass through many countries and our Tour Leaders cannot be expected to have detailed knowledge of each countries history, flora and fauna and archaeological sites. Even so - they will be more than willing to pass on any interesting and useful information that they have acquired whilst on the road. A rewarding way to gain a better insight into the wildlife, cultural and historical diversity of the countries we travel through is by reading guide books as well as talking to the local people and using local guides.

Adventure travel can be unpredictable and occasionally our Crew may have to amend the itinerary to take into account changing local circumstances or because of a delay at a border or because of circumstances outside our control. This can all lead to additional work and commitment for our Crew who will do all they can to minimise any disruption to the trip. While our Crew are essentially on call 24 hours a day 7 days a week, it has to be remembered that no one is actually expected to work these hours, so at Oasis we are realistic that within a trip there will be times when our Crew need 'down time' and a chance to relax and 'let their hair down' as well. They are only human!

#### LIFE ON THE ROAD

The Oasis truck will be your new home giving you a comfortable, secure base with which to experience your trip. As part of the adventure you will be expected to have an active involvement in the day to day running of the trip, be part of the group and get stuck in and help with various tasks, whether it's cooking meals over open fires, pitching your tent or keeping the truck clean & tidy.

### Itinerary

Because Oasis Overland do not operate normal 'package holidays' the itineraries given cannot be guaranteed to run exactly as outlined. However, it is rare that we have to make major changes and in the event that we do this will be discussed with you either before or during the trip. It is important to bear in mind that should it not be possible to enter a certain country due to safety concerns, visa problems or political turmoil etc, and it becomes necessary to fly over a country in order to continue a trip, that all costs for flights will be borne by you and not Oasis. Should it not be possible for an Oasis trip to begin from a scheduled starting city due to border closures, civil unrest etc, Oasis will make all reasonable efforts to begin the trip from an alternative location. However, all additional costs that you

may incur in travelling to the alternative location will be paid by you or your insurance company and not Oasis.

**Seatbelts**

All Oasis Overland trucks are fitted with seat belts. For your own safety and security we recommend that travellers wear these at all times whilst the vehicle is moving.

**Accommodation**

**Camping** - Oasis provides tents for those nights you will be camping. Tents are shared (between two people of the same sex from your group unless you are a couple). We spend some nights bush or desert camping, and on some occasions it is necessary to camp at overnight services, which are basic but equipped with showers and other facilities; the rest of the time in campsites. Facilities and standards at campsites vary, some are well equipped and managed and some are very basic. At bush camps you will be living off the truck, so there will be no showers or en-suite facilities! At certain campsites there is the opportunity to upgrade to a private room at your own expense if you are missing your bed.

**Simple Hotels/Hostels** - At some locations we will stay at small locally owned hostels/hotels. These are usually basic places, and often the accommodation will be mixed sex dormitory style. Upgrades may be available on arrival, but cannot be reliably pre- booked. Please be aware that the quality of accommodation can vary quite a lot from area to area and sometimes in a small hotel the standard of rooms can vary even from one room to the next - so there needs to be a level of understanding within the group that your Oasis Crew does not often have power over room allocation or services provided by various hotels and it is unavoidable that they have to rely on the local staff. Please note if you choose to participate on an overnight optional activity, then you will not receive reimbursement for any accommodation or meals that you are missing out on with the rest of the group.

**During the day**

As a guide, driving days normally start at about 8am and finish at about 5pm, with stops for lunch and buying food, seeing local sights etc. We won't be driving every day, although there are times when we will drive for two, but we will then stop for a few days and you will have free time to explore, meet local people, do some optional activities or just relax and do your own thing. Expect to sometimes get dusty & dishevelled during the day and although you will be able to shower most nights (except at bush camps), not all camps will have hot showers.

**Meals & cook groups**

When 'on the road' or camping, we usually cook using gas or over open fires in a rota system and you can expect to cook in a group of two or three people approximately once every ten days depending on the number of people on trip and whereabouts you are. Your cook group will have to decide on what to cook, utilise stocks from the truck stores and locally obtain ingredients from markets, shops etc. and rustle up a meal. But don't worry if you're not a Gordon Ramsay, as the rest of the group and the Tour Leader usually lend a helping hand. Here is an idea of what to expect at

meal times:

**Breakfasts:** Usually simple - we help ourselves to cereal, toast, hot drinks and on occasion we will splurge with a cooked breakfast.

**Lunch:** Cold and usually quick. The cook group will put out bread, tinned supplies and maybe make a salad.

**Dinner:** Cooks come into their own in the evening, and will always attempt to cook up some delights.

When staying in hotels in towns or cities we do not include meals. This is your chance to go out and explore and try local cuisine in local restaurants.

**Vegetarians / Vegans / Coeliacs / Gluten & Lactose intolerance -** Our Tour Leaders will always do their best to cater for any dietary requirement or intolerance whenever possible. However we do not cater for fussy eaters. It must be remembered that the variety of dishes available to Vegetarians may not be the same as available to meat eaters. If there is anything in particular you require in your diet or because of an allergy or would miss from home, it would be best to bring these with you, as these cannot be purchased with normal Local Payment funds due to the high cost of these specialised and often imported foods.

Remember that when eating out in local restaurants & hotels that vegetarianism or food allergies / intolerance's, are still not widely known about or understood by many local people. i.e Vegetarians or Vegans will often be offered fish or chicken in error. Most large towns and cities, or areas used to tourists, will often have more choice but please be aware that it will probably not be as varied as you are used to when eating out at home.

**In the evenings**

When at a bushcamp or campsite, you and your tent buddy will put up the tent, and then lend a hand with getting out the tables, stools, firewood and water containers. The fire grates need to be taken out, the fire lit and someone can fill the kettle and make hot drinks while the cook group prepares the evening meal. Then just sit back, chill and enjoy the rest of your evening!

**Oasis Crew**

We usually have two Crew whose duties are extensive and quite demanding, with challenges ranging from driving and maintaining the expedition vehicle to a high standard, to organising visas and border crossings, arranging accommodation, pre-booking some excursions and guides, helping with shopping and cooking as well as finding the best deals, socialising and making sure everything runs as smoothly as possible. Whilst our Crew are usually experienced and knowledgeable, they are not tour guides as such. Our trips pass through many countries and our Tour Leaders cannot be expected to have detailed knowledge of each countries history, flora and fauna and archaeological sites. Even so - they will be more than willing to pass on any interesting and useful information that they have acquired whilst on the road. A rewarding way to gain a better insight into the wildlife, cultural and historical diversity of the countries we travel through is by reading guide books as well as

talking to the local people and using local guides.

Adventure travel can be unpredictable and occasionally our Crew may have to amend the itinerary to take into account changing local circumstances or because of a delay at a border or because of circumstances outside our control. This can all lead to additional work and commitment for our Crew who will do all they can to minimise any disruption to the trip. While our Crew are essentially on call 24 hours a day 7 days a week, it has to be remembered that no one is actually expected to work these hours, so at Oasis we are realistic that within a trip there will be times when our Crew need 'down time' and a chance to relax and 'let their hair down' as well. They are only human!

## TRIP ITINERARY

### Cartagena to Tayrona National Park

A highlight of any trip to Colombia is undoubtedly **Cartagena**. With its colonial past and Unesco World Heritage status, the old city is an ideal place to just wander the maze of cobbled alleys amongst churches, monasteries, plazas and bougainvillea draped balconies. Las Murallas, the thick walls built around the old city to protect it from pirates, are wonderfully preserved and make for an interesting walk, before stopping off in one of the hidden patio cafes. We spend our first night here to get a flavour of both the old city and also the trendy area of Bocagrande. We will also include a boat trip to **Playa Blanca**, which is one of Cartagenas most famous beaches with its turquoise waters and golden sand.

We then set off in the Truck heading eastbound with a quick dip in Volcan de Lodo el Totumo before we continue to **Taganga** where we spend a night in this chilled out Caribbean town with a strong alternative feel. Some of South America's loveliest coastline lies east of Taganga in **Tayrona National Park**.  We spend time exploring trails to beaches set in deep bays, shaded by coconut palms. We have the option to snorkel and possibly scuba dive in some of the bays. Lack of roads means that we may hike with some of our gear to our overnight spots and sleep in hammocks!

### Tayrona National Park to Salento

We head south into the heart of Colombia, with a roadside bush camp on the way before arriving in the lively city of **Medellin**. Here is a good spot to get a few Salsa or Tango lessons in before trying out your moves in the many discos and clubs. For those wanting a little culture there are several art galleries and museums worth visiting or also an option to travel via local bus to the sleepy colonial town of Santa Fe de Antioquia.

Continuing south, our Colombian overland adventure takes us into the mountains to the pleasantly cool climate of **Salento**. Here, deep in the heart of the coffee growing area, we have the option to visit one of the numerous coffee farms. Parque Los Nevados, with peaks topping 5000m, and weirdly tall Palm trees make it a great place to spend a day trekking, before checking out some of the town's funky bars in the evening.

### Salento to Parque Purace

Continuing our journey through Colombia, we venture east into stunning mountain scenery and after a gruelling drive, we eventually take an unpaved road through Parque Purace. The park is the only place to see Condors in Colombia, and is home to an active volcano, Volcan Purace (4750mtrs).

At San Agustin we can head out to the Archaeological Park, home to ancient carved volcanic stone figures and tombs, set in verdant mountain scenery. Dating from between the 1st and 8th centuries, you can wander amongst the ‘Forest of Statues’ numerous funerary monuments in a woodland setting or ceremonial water channels carved into the rock bed at Fuente De Lavapatas.

### Parque purace to Quito

Further west is the beautiful colonial city of **Popayan**. Nicknamed the white city, some would say only Cartagena surpasses Popayan's colonial structures. We shall make a small stop to admire the chalk white facades and stock up on supplies, before following the Andes south towards Pasto. Santuario De Las Lajas - a neo-Gothic church built on a stone bridge spanning a gorge - is the main point of interest in our last stop in Colombia, Ipiales. We may choose to camp the night in either Pasto or Ipiales, or possibly continue on to the border with Ecuador.

We cross the border and make our way to **Quito**, a capital city rich in history and surrounded by mountains - a playground for hikers and mountain bike fans. On the way we cross the Equator and stop at the town of **Otavalo** famous for its **colourful craft market**.

### Quito to the Amazon and Cuenca

Departing **Quito**, Ecuador’s largest city, we head east on narrow, tortuous roads to the steamy edge of the Amazon basin and our gateway into the **Amazon jungle**. Here accompanied by experienced guides, we explore on foot this exotic environment staying at a forest lodge.

Further south, perched high in the mountains of Ecuador, lies the outdoor adventure mecca of **Banos** . This spa town, where Ecuadorians go to relax in the thermal baths, is a favourite amongst those who have undertaken South America travel. With optional activities including rafting, canyoning and treks to waterfalls, you won't be short of things to do! We hit the road again and drive south along the spine of the Andes towards Peru visiting **Cuenca** on the way.

### Cuenca to Lima

A day’s drive and a bush camp on the Pan-American highway brings us to the border with **Peru**. You will notice an amazing transition in one day, from the glush farming country of highland Ecuador, through sub-tropical forest and immense banana plantations, to dry barren desert in Peru. We are rewarded with a couple of days chilling by the beach at **Punta Sal** and **Mancora**. Our next stops on our South America travel experience are the **Chan Chan ruins**, imperial citadel of the pre-Inca Chimu kings which the Incas later conquered. It claims to be the largest mud brick city in the world.

Continuing with the Andes close to our left and the sea on our right, the capital city of **Lima** will be our next stop on our South America tour. Here you'll encounter both abundant wealth and grinding poverty, modern skyscrapers next to some of the finest museums and historical monuments in Latin America.

### Lima to Colca Canyon & Cusco

Departing Lima our next stop is the **Ballestas Islands** in the Paracas National Reserve. By boat, you have the opportunity to visit the rare and exotic sea birds and mammals that inhabit these islands. An hour's drive inland in the heart of the Ica Desert is the Oasis of **Huacachina**; if it's an adrenaline rush you're after, you have the option to head out on a custom made dune buggy & roar across the desert sands to the top of enormous dunes & then sand board down them - head first on a greased up plank of wood! Then, after an unforgettable desert sunset, we sit around the campfire while our guides cook up a storm, followed by a night sleeping out under the stars. In the morning we make our way to one of the world's great archaeological mysteries **The Nazca Lines**. These huge figures and shapes, carved into the desert floor are best viewed from the air, with various optional flights available - South America travel is not complete until you have seen these unbelievable ancient mysteries.

Still heading south we visit **Chauchilla Cemetery** with its well-preserved mummies, on our way to Puerto Inca, at this ancient Inca harbour we camp at the beach and enjoy our last night at sea level before beginning our climb back into the towering Andes. The next two nights are spent in **Arequipa** at 2325m, giving us time to acclimatise, and enjoy this beautiful colonial city with its impressive El Misti Volcano in the background. Arequipa is also the gateway to one of the deepest canyons in the world. Twice as deep as the Grand Canyon, **Colca Canyon** is an awesome sight. Here, if you get up early, **Condors** can be seen circling lazily on the thermals rising from the canyon floor.

A couple of day's driving and an overnight bush camp then bring us to Cusco.

### Cusco, Inca Trail & Machu Picchu

Widely considered to be the most interesting city for South America travel, our next stop **Cusco** is surrounded by **the Sacred Valley of the Incas** and offers a wide range of activities to explore the region. We will base ourselves here for 6 days giving us enough time for the **Inca Trail** trip and to visit **Machu Picchu**, which is regarded by many to be the highlight of their South America tour. There are several treks which you can take to Machu Picchu. These are all available as Optional Add Ons which you can add to your booking. When permits are still available, we will organise the Classic Trail trek for those booking the trek option, but great alternative Inca Trail treks, like the Lares or Salkantay can be arranged when the Classic is not available or by your choice (must be pre-arranged at time of booking). These alternatives mean that you still get to visit Machu Picchu.

If you do not want to trek, then you can remain in Cusco for a couple more free days, and then we offer an option to visit **Machu Picchu by train** instead. This must also be booked and paid for in advance.  Tours to Machu Picchu are absolutely unbelievable; a trip to this City in the Clouds is an ancient and awe-inspiring part of our South America travel tour. Besides seeing Machu Picchu, you

are able to enjoy the architectural uniqueness of Cusco and explore some of the colourful surrounding markets. Please note that for all those visiting Machu Picchu there is now the option to buy a ticket to go up the summit next to Machu Picchu, **Huayna Picchu**. Tickets for this must be requested at the time of your booking with us, and payment made in advance in the UK.

### Cusco to La Paz

Bordering Peru and Bolivia at 3800m lies **Lake Titicaca**, the home of the Uros Indians who have made their dwellings on floating reed islands. By boat we visit the floating islands during the day and then we go that one step beyond the average tourist and spend the night with one of the Indian families on the lesser known islands Isla Amantani or Taquile. Spending some time during South America travel in these local communities will provide a unique opportunity to learn more about the traditional lifestyle of the Andean people and their customs. From here it is a days drive to the capital of **Bolivia - La Paz**. This is a great place to visit a 'peña' club, dedicated to Andean folk music, and perhaps buy some souvenirs in one of the authentic markets such as the witches market. It’s also well worth while exploring the city using the network of cable cars stretching up the hillsides.

### La Paz to Uyuni

Leaving La Paz we enter real Bolivia, where the Aymara and Quechua Indians scrape a living from their small plots of land in the harsh climate and paved roads are virtually non-existent. A couple of day’s driving and overnight bush camp bring us to one of Bolivia’s most beautiful cities, **Sucre**. Known as the ‘4 Names City’ because of its long and varied history, the city is at a lower altitude than La Paz and enjoys a warmer and greener climate. The **Cretaceous Park** is well worth a visit, as you can see and learn about the thousands of remarkable dinosaur footprints discovered here, including the largest ever found, from a Titanosaur weighing over 70 tonnes!.

A short drive then brings us to **Potosi**. At over 4000m it is the highest city of its size in the world and 400 years ago it was the largest city in all the Americas. Vast amounts of silver were extracted from Potosi and shipped to Spain in years gone by. The adventurous may take the opportunity to go down one of these mines where mining techniques have remained unchanged for centuries, though read up on safety concerns first. Visiting the ancient mint or having a tour around the Casa Nacional de Moneda (National Money House) also provides a good look into Potosi's and Bolivia's past.

Leaving the bleak Altiplano we arrive at the shimmering white **Salt Flats of Uyuni**. With no roads and only vague tracks to follow, taking an optional jeep trip out onto the salt flats and salt lakes makes for an unforgettable experience

### Uyuni to Salta

Our descent through the Andean passes is spectacular as we cross into Argentina towards the colonial city of Salta. On the way we pass the rugged desert landscapes and red rock formations in the **Tupiza River Valley**, and see the **Cerro de los Siete Colores** (Hill of 7 Colours).

We'll then enjoy a couple of nights' break in Salta, allowing us to relax and enjoy the cafes around the Plaza 9 de Julio which is bordered by the neoclassical Salta Cathedral and 18th century El Cabildo, town hall turned museum.

### Salta to Santiago

After Salta, we head south winding around lakes and weaving through baked cliffs until we reach Cafayate, the first wine region of Argentina. Famous for its white wines, you can explore some of the wineries on foot or by bicycle. Continuing south we join the route 40, the longest route in Argentina, to Mendoza, the biggest wine region in Argentina. Here you can indulge in more wine and good steak! From here we head for Chile as we cross the Andes past the Inca Bridge and San Martin's pass and into the modern capital, Santiago. We have some free time here to explore the city, and with famous Chilean Steak houses, the Casillero del Diablo winery, skiing available in the winter, you will find it easy to pass the days away.

### Santiago to Hanging Glacier NP

Leaving Santiago, we pass small villages and deep blue lakes with mountains towering above us as we wind through **Chile's Lake District**. Pucon, an outdoors centre in its own right, will be our base for the next few nights from where it is possible to organise whitewater rafting, water sports, horse riding and one day hikes up nearby Villarrica Volcano. Ascending the Andes via some spectacular mountain passes we arrive in **Bariloche**, Argentina. This very popular holiday destination for Argentinians is the top ski resort on the continent and also has several hiking trails and a great nightlife.

Crossing back into Chile, we stop at Futaleufu, which sits at the confluence of the Fugaleufu and Espolon river valleys, and has some of the very best river rafting in the world. Those inclined will have the chance to try this out, and enjoy the fast waters, regular rapids, and beautiful turquoise waters and surrounding mountain scenery.

We'll continue driving south through the mountains along Chile's famous Carretera Austral highway to Hanging Glacier National Park. Weather permitting, you'll be able to hike to see the spectacular sight of the glacier as it terminates at the end of a rocky mountain valley with a high sheer cliff, waterfall and lake beneath.

*Note: We don't often run these often, but if you are travelling on a trip that travels through Patagonia from July to September, please be aware it will get very cold at times with temperatures well below zero, and you can expect snowfall. Please be prepared for cold conditions, with thermal clothing and the correct sleeping bag. On any July to September trips in Patagonia, this section of the trip is subject to change en route. Please see our 'Winter in Patagonia' notes for further details.*

### Hanging Glacier to El Chalten & El Calafate

After arriving in El Chalten we have a few days to explore and enjoy the amazing scenery here. El Chalten is rightly known as the trekking capital of Argentina, and there are many optional day hikes in the surrounding mountains, including up to the base camp of Mount Fitz Roy.

From El Chalten we drive back along the shore of Lago Viedma and then drive south to Lago Argentina and the town of El Calafate which is a bigger base for more adventures into Los Glaciares National Park. This includes the largest glacier in the world and here you have the option to take a boat ride up close to Perito Moreno Glacier, almost 200 ft high. Options are also available to take guided walks with crampons on top of the glacier, hikes in the surrounding mountains, and horse rides in nearby Estancias.

### Puerto Natales & Torres del Paine NP

From Calafate we cross back into Chile and arrive at the coast at **Puerto Natales**. We base ourselves here for several days particularly for visits to **Torres del Paine National Par**k, another area of outstanding beauty where huge granite cliffs dominate the landscape. A good way to explore the area is either hiking or by horseback. Here there is also the option to complete the **famous W-Trek** (bookable as an Add on), and we allow 4 full days for people to complete this trek. Please note that spaces on the trek are subject to availability. For those who do not want to complete the W-Trek there are options of shorter day hikes in the park which do not need to be booked ahead and you are free to do as you choose once there. You could also take a boat trip to **Magdalena Island**, which hosts one of the largest colonies of **Magellanic Penguins**, exceeding 150,000. During the trip you may also spot Austral Dolphins and Toninas.

### Puerto Natales to Ushuaia

We continue south towards the wild and hauntingly beautiful Land at Worlds End, the island of **Tierra del Fuego.** We cross by ferry to the most southerly town in the world **Ushuaia**, from where you can view the green waters of the **Beagle Channel,** and the snow clad peaks beyond.

We have a few days here, and boat trips on the Beagle Channel and to **Penguin Island** are available as well as hiking trips to the Emerald Lagoon or the Vinciguerra Glacier. For those not feeling so active, a fun and scenic vintage steam train ride is available on the Fuegian Railway into the Tierra del Fuego National Park.

Ushuaia is also the starting point for many cruise ships and expeditions heading to Antarctica, and you could aim to time a trip there with the end of your expedition with us.

### Ushuaia to Buenos Aires

We now cross to the Atlantic coast of Patagonia and visit one of the marine sanctuaries. Penguins, Sea Lions, Elephant Seals, Sea Birds and sometimes Whales can be seen. Following the excellent paved roads north along the coast we pass through some quite affluent towns. One, **Puerto Madryn**,

was the landing place over a century ago for the first group of Welsh settlers that subsequently colonised and now farm the surrounding area. We traverse the vast Pampas grasslands, South America's cowboy country, where gun-toting gauchos on horseback look after vast herds of cattle.

Travel to Argentina is not complete without a visit to the country's capital, and so we follow the coast further north to **Buenos Aires**. The city is renowned for it's steaks, fine wines, tango dancing, ice cream and great nightlife! We'll spend a few days in this smart cosmopolitan city and you could be forgiven for thinking you were back in Europe, albeit with a distinct South American feel.

### Buenos Aires to Uruguay

We leave Buenos Aires and drive north until we can cross the Uruguay River into **Uruguay** and return south to the historic cobbled centre of Colonia del Sacramento. If you wish, you may want to avoid this drive and hop on the ferry across the Rio Plata by ferry and enter **Uruguay** that way**.** After time to explore Colonia, we'll continue along the coast to the capital city of **Montevideo** which is a cosmopolitan city with some excellent museums, art galleries, music venues, and nightlife. The food and flea markets are also well worth exploring, along with the many restaurants and cafes.

Further along the coast we have time to enjoy the fine beaches of **Punta del Este** before turning north and heading back towards Argentina via the town of Salto, famous for its hot springs and indoor and outdoor geothermal pools.

### Trinidad and Asuncion in Paraguay

After crossing back into **Argentina**, we drive north and cross into **Paraguay**, where we can visit the impressive ruined Jesuit Mission near the village of **Trinidad**. A stop at the capital of **Asuncion**, one of the oldest cities in South America is next. Little visited by tourists, you'll find you are met with a friendly curiosity unlike many other big cities in the region.

We cross another border now, entering **Brazil**, and also change from Spanish to Portuguese Spanish to Portuguese, and it is time to get our tongues around a new linguistic challenge!

### Iguazu Falls, Bonito and the Pantanal

The **Iguazu Falls** form the natural border between Argentina, Paraguay and Brazil. Higher than Niagara and wider than Victoria Falls they are an awe-inspiring place to spend the next few days before we continue on with our travel through Brazil. The lush tropical forest surrounding the falls has many walking trails leading to smaller hidden falls, ideal to refresh from the steaming heat and abounding with parrots, toucans, woodpeckers and colourful plants. Here you can also undertake a number of optional activities such as rafting, helicopter flights and mountain bike riding.

Next stop is **Bonito** where we can swim and snorkel in some of the clearest rivers and lakes in the world, one of the best experiences in the whole of Brazil. Spectacular walks in the mountainous forests may reveal wildlife that includes monkeys, alligators and anaconda.

Our next highlight in Brazil is the **Pantanal region** where spend a couple of days and include some activities in the vast wetlands which are home to over 600 species of birds and 350 kinds of fish, piranha being common, as well as an abundance of reptiles and animals. Try your hand at Piranha fishing too!

### Pantanal to Rio

We now head to the coastal village of **Parati**. This unspoilt and picturesque town has remained fundamentally unaltered for three centuries. Cars have been banned from its cobbled streets that run down to the seashore, instead mountain bikes are used and are a good way to get around. Another great way to explore the secluded islands of this pristine coastline is taking a sailing trip in one of the traditional schooners.

Our final drive takes us to the hedonistic playground of **Rio de Janeiro**, where people famously enjoy a party and live for the moment. Many people in the group will finish their trip on arrival into Rio. The Carnival and New Years Eve celebrations are always chaotic, crowded and fun and a must during any stint of travel to Brazil! We have Carnival and New Year accommodation packages available if you would like to extend your stay and remain with other people in the group for the celebrations. Those travellers continuing on beyond Rio will have a break in Rio and can either book the accommodation package with us, or make their own arrangements until we meet again to depart Rio and head further north.

### Rio break

You have a few days free in Rio now to relax and catch up after the previous weeks' busy travels. You can book an accommodation package with us, or make your own arrangements, as you prefer. Rio is a fantastic city, famous for its Copacabana and Ipanema Beaches, the huge Christ the Redeemer statue and Sugarloaf mountain which you can reach by cable car. In addition, the Rio Carnival is renowned the world over and is the world's largest. If your trip coincides with the Carnival (which most of our departures are timed to), then we will offer options for tickets to visit the Sambadrome Parade together as a group on one of the evenings we are here. There are also various museums and an impressive botanic gardens to visit, and plenty of opportunities for trying some local food and drink.

### Rio to Ouro Preto

We leave the stunning views of Rio behind and head north to the mountain retreat of **Teresopolis**. The road winds up the hillside through jungle, with dramatic peaks towering overhead. We have some free time where we can visit the **Parque Nacional Da Serra Dos Argaos** and walk trails to waterfalls, with stunning views of obscurely shaped mountain tops.

Continuing north we make a short stop in **Congonhas** to see 12 lifelike Old Testament figures sculpted from soapstone, which stand proudly outside the Basilica do Bom Jesus de Matosinhos. Our journey takes us to quite possibly the most significant and beautiful colonial town of the area, Ouro

Preto. Even vehicles are not able to navigate the narrow and winding cobbled streets. The biggest attraction is the **Minas de Passagem** (Gold Mine) - antique cable cars take you underground into the mine which was originally opened in 1719.

### Ouro Preto to Caravelas

We explore the coastline, home of some of Brazil's best and least known beaches and far less populated with tourists than the resorts of Recife and Rio. We will either stay in locally owned Pousadas (guesthouses) or camp under the stars, as we pass through Linhares to **Itaunas** . Time can be spent exploring this sleepy fishing village or wandering the dune trails and relaxing on the beach.

Cavavelas is our next destination, on the **mangrove lined Rio Caravelas**. We have the option to take a day trip to the nearby reefs in **Parque Nacional Marinho de Abrolhos**, where there is the chance to swim with **sea turtles**. Alternatively the day can be spent on the beach or wandering along the riverfront.

### Caravelas to Salvador

We venture further north and if time allows, we may stop off in **Parque Nacional Monte Pascoal** which is controlled by the local Pataxo (pa-ta-sho) Indians. Here we can walk the trails to try to spot the endangered spider monkey, sloths, porcupines, capybara, deer, elusive jaguar and numerous species of bird.

**Trancosco** is our next stop, declared by many from celebrities to backpackers to be one of Brazil’s best beaches. Since its origins as a small fishing village, it evolved to become a hippie hangout and more recently gained a reputation as a bohemian beach town. It retains its laid back village feel with local cafes to watch the world go by from and the long sandy beach backed by palm trees is the perfect place to relax and swim.

Once again we head north, passing more remote beaches to reach Brazil's largest bay, **Baia de Todos os Santos**. Taking a ferry across the bay, we arrive in the **Afro-Brazilian city of Salvador**. Around 40% of all African slaves transported to the new world, came to Salvador and this has left a very particular vibe - tropical, soulful and intoxicating, that is unique to this corner of Brazil. The centre is separated by a steep bluff, into the Cidade Alta (Upper City) and Baixa (Lower City) and access is gained in the beautifully restored art-deco elevator - Elevado Lacerda. We have a few days to wander and take in the music, cuisine and religion of the region. You can also stop off in the Praca da Se and watch locals practicing the dance fighting known as Capoeira.

### Salvador to Taquarucu

Heading west, we come to the quaint town of **Lencois**. With its cobbled streets and brightly painted 19th Century buildings, it's the prettiest of the old diamond mining towns. The mighty **Fumaca**

**waterfalls**, various caves and idyllic rivers and panoramic plateaus set the stage for some fantastic adventures. Or maybe just wander the streets, grab a coffee, take in the local life and enjoy some of the excellent cuisine.

Next we continue into the interior where roads start to become more arduous, and time allowing, we may make a stop in **Natividade**, with its cobbled streets and prettily painted, tile roofed 18th and 19th Century houses.

We move on to the cozy town of Taquarucu, some 30kms south east of Palmas, where we spend the next two nights.

The local tourism boards have worked together to try to create **Taquaruçu** an eco-tourism mecca. In the area there are some 80 waterfalls, caves and pools, which we'll have time to explore. For those that want to go wildlife spotting, several optional tours are available to the nearby parks of **Estadual do Jalapao and Ilha do Bananal**. In the latter, there is a good chance to see **dolphins**, **caiman**, **giant river turtles** and lots of bird life. Although difficult and unpredictable, you may also catch a glimpse of a Tapir or Jaguar!

### Taquarucu to Belem

Next we start a long drive north towards **Belem** on the Atlantic coast. Upon its completion in the 1960s this road was heralded as a feat of engineering as it overcame the unforgiving Amazon to allow people and goods to be transported from the Brazilian interior to the ports of Belem for exportation. Now the rainforest has given way to further development and we pass through vast stretches of farmland, camping overnight in remote Postos before arriving in Belem. We have a few days here to enjoy the city and wander the riverside walkways of the mighty Amazon.

### Belem to Roura in French Guiana

Today we board a boat, and **hang up our hammocks** ready for the journey across the mighty **Amazon delta**. Nothing can prepare you for the sheer size of this area, as it will take us 24 hours to journey from Belem on the south bank to Macapa on the north.

**Macapa** is an overnight stop in case we need to wait for our truck to arrive on a separate ferry from Belem. This gives us time to explore this commercial hub where gold, iron, timber, oil and tin ore pass through on its way to neighbouring Santana. The Equator also runs through the centre of the city, which has led residents to call it '**The capital of the middle of the world**'.

We journey north on dirt roads, quite possibly having to use our sand mats to make it through the mud and to reconstruct wooden bridges!

Oiapoque is the gateway to **French Guiana**, and here we pass through European immigration and customs before, we continue on to Roura where we base ourselves for visiting the capital city of Cayenne.

Cayenne is full of colonial architecture that just has to be explored. The two most impressive are the town hall, built by the Jesuits in 1890, and St. Saviours Roman Catholic Cathedral. The city's botanical gardens are also worth a look, or just chill out on the mail square with a beer, watch the world go by and try some of the fantastic street food.

### Roura to St. Laurent du Maroni

**Kourou** is a real highlight of our journey, as we can visit the **European Spaceport** where we can take a tour of the site.  A large percentage of the world's satellites have been launched from here aboard the famous Ariane rockets. More recently Russian Soyuz rockets have also used this facility and if we're lucky we may even see a launch! Time allowing we will also visit **Devil's Island**, prior home to one of France's most notorious prisons.

Next we journey west to **St Laurent du Maroni**. Founded in 1880, the penal town was inhabited almost entirely with guards or liberated prisoners from the nearby Transportation Camp. Here the famous writer **Henri Charriere**, who went on to write Papillon, spent some of his days before being moved to the 'inescapable' Iles du Salut prison. An informative optional tour takes us into the camp and gives us a snapshot of quite how hard life would have been here.

### Paramaribo & Jungle excursions

Leaving French Guiana behind we take another ferry and cross into **Suriname**, where we feel the atmosphere and culture palpably change **from French to Dutch**. Suriname was a colonial outpost of the Netherlands from the seventeenth century until it achieved full independence in 1975; the country retains much of its Dutch character, while also having the distinctly Caribbean and African feel that permeates the whole region. Throw in some indigenous cultures and you have a unique and intoxicating mix!

We follow the road west and cross the Suriname River on the **Jules Wijdenboschbrug** (bridge) and arrive in Suriname's capital, **Paramaribo**. Positioned where the Surname river meets the Atlantic Ocean, Paramaribo is a typically relaxed Caribbean city, with a long waterfront ideal for sitting back and relaxing in the cooling winds while watching local life go by.

The historic inner city of Paramaribo is a UNESCO World Heritage site, and walking the streets here the fusion between colonial, Caribbean and local architecture is pronounced as European styles were combined with local materials to produce a style of construction that is only found in this city.

Throughout the city there are many signs hinting at Paramaribo's multicultural history and present day, and it is possible to visit the Suriname Mosque, Neveh Shalom Synagogue, St Peter and St Paul Cathedral and Arya Dawaker Hindu Temple, as well as the grand presidential palace.

For those more interested in nature, you can arrange an excursion to a nesting site of one of the world's most famous turtle species. Nothing can compare coming up close and personal to a **giant leatherback turtle**. April is normally the start of nesting time, where turtles make the journey up the

beach to deposit their eggs in the warm sand. Sightings are not guaranteed but we'll keep our fingers crossed!

In the evenings you can head for the river and join a river cruise to hopefully spot rare freshwater dolphins.

After a couple of nights in Paramaribo to relax and recharge our batteries we now include a **jungle excursion** before we continue our adventure. We'll drive inland for a couple of hours and then travel by motorised canoe from Pokigron to our resort near the foot of the **Felullasifalls on the Suriname River.** We'll have a couple of nights here to explore the surrounding Amazon rainforest and several **Maroon villages**. Here we will learn about the **Saramaccan culture** and visit local villages. You could also go looking for caimans on a nocturnal cruise, and swim from a sandy beach or enjoy a natural jacuzzi in the rapids.

### Paramaribo to Georgetown

After returning to Paramiaribo we take to the truck again and following the coastal road west we reach the banks of the **Courantyn River**, which forms the (contested) border between Suriname and Guyana. We cross by ferry and continue to travel along the coast towards **Georgetown, Guyana's capital**. On the way there is an optional overnight visit to **Bigi Pan, the largest lagoon in Suriname**. This area has received international recognition because of the hundreds of thousands of migratory birds including **flamingos** and the **striking scarlet ibis** that use the lagoon as their feeding area. As well as the birdlife the area hosts many reptiles, snakes and extensive mangrove swamps.

As a former British colony, Guyana offers something different again to the previous countries we have visited so far, but still has a distinctly Afro-Caribbean feel; strolling around Georgetown you could be forgiven at times for thinking you were in one of the many other past British territories in the region, such as Jamaica or even Barbados!

Guyana, which was granted independence in 1966, is the only English-speaking country in South America, and is to many an unknown entity, relatively untouched by mass tourism. For a small and often forgotten country, however, it punches well above its weight, offering some of the most pristine and ecologically diverse and plentiful rainforest found anywhere, the world's highest single drop waterfall, and a rich and established cultural history, with many noted poets, musicians and literary figures coming from its small population. Rhianna is half-Guyanese, too, should that be of any interest.

We will spend a few nights in **Georgetown**, from where it is possible to take an optional flight and short hike to visit **Kaieteur Falls** in Kaieteur National Park in the Amazon rainforest (book well in advance). At 221 metres, Kaieteur Falls is **the world's highest single drop waterfall**. Set in a stunning location, the falls and surrounding area are for many visitors to Guyana the highlight of their travels, as their remoteness and obscurity make you feel that you are really seeing a part of the world that very few people have ever been to.

### Georgetown to Boa Vista

After our time in Georgetown, we then head south, away from the coast, and into the dense rainforest of Guyana. The main road has been massively improved in recent years following investment provided by the Brazilian government, but we will allow several days to fully explore the area, getting onto much rougher roads and heading into the jungle to camp at a forest resort. From here you can visit a **high canopy walkway in the Iwokrama forest** to view the rainforest from an elevated perspective and come eye-to-eye with some of the plentiful tropical bird life. You can also take boat tours looking for wildlife including toucans and red howler monkeys. This region has a reputation for being one of the best places to spot the **elusive jaguar,** so if we keep our eyes peeled we may be lucky!

Continuing south we leave the jungle and enter more open savannah regions near **Rupnuni** where there are canoeing, horse riding and wildlife viewing opportunities on the **Panorama Nature Trail**.

After an unforgettable few days travelling through the Guyanese Amazon we reach the border and re-enter Brazil and drive to **Boa Vista**, where we can take a well earned shower and enjoy some locally caught fish in one of the riverside restaurants.

### Boa Vista to Manaus

We drive southwards from Boa Vista through an **Indigeneous Wairmiri Reserve** to rejoin the Amazon River at **Manaus.**

From here we take a final included?expedition into **the Amazon jungle?**in search of more wildlife and?to discover?more of the different indigenous people?who live in the area. There are chances to learn about different plant species that are used for medications, fish for piranhas,?and take guided walks in the forest.??

Our overland adventure finishes back in Manaus.  The open air markets are well worth visiting here, with great souvenirs and local crafts available and the famous Amazonas Opera House is also good to see before you leave the city.

## OPTIONAL EXCURSIONS

Optional Excursions are paid for on the day and organised during your trip, so you can decide whilst travelling which activity you may want to do. Prices listed are only a guide and may be dependant on fluctuating exchange rates and minimum numbers. Please see below for more details.

### PERU

| Title | From Price |
|---|---|
| Ballestas Island Boat Trip | US$15 |
| Horse Riding, from | US$20 |
| Sun & Moon Temple– entrance | US$5 |

| Title | From Price |
|---|---|
| Mountain Biking – Mancora, from | US$10 |
| Colca Canyon – National Park entrance fee and guided overnight tour, from | US$65 |
| Dune Buggies & Sandboarding (combo) | US$65 |
| Guide & Staff Tips – Inca Trail treks | US$50 |
| Nazca Lines Flight (weather permitting), from | US$100 |
| Cusco City Tour | US$10 |
| Cusco Museum Day Pass | US$35 |
| Mountain Biking – Cusco, from | US$10 |
| Sacred Valley Tour (shared group, entrance fees & lunch not included), from | US$45 |
| Thermal Mud Pools | US$12 |

## SOUTH AFRICA

| Title | From Price |
|---|---|

## BRAZIL

| Title | From Price |
|---|---|
| Abseil & Dive Trip (need PADI) – Bonito, from | US$350 |
| Abseil & Snorkel Trip – Bonito, from | US$240 |
| Bird Sanctuary – Iguazu Falls | US$20 |
| Boat Cruise – Parati | US$30 |
| Brasilia Museums – Brasilia, from | US$2 |
| Helicopter Flight – Iguazu Falls | US$120 |
| Iguazu Falls Entrance Fee (Brazil) | US$23 |
| Rio da Prata Snorkelling (1 Day) – Bonito, from | US$75 |
| River Tubing – Bonito | US$30 |
| Favela and/or City Tours – Rio, from | US$30 |
| Handgliding – Rio, from | US$180 |
| Gold Mine Tour – Ouro Preto | US$20 |
| Guided Hikes – Taquarucu, from | US$20 |
| Kayaking – Ituanas | US$20 |

| Title | From Price |
|---|---|
| Museums, Attractions & Entrances – Salvado, fromr | US$5 |
| Museums & Entrances – Porto Seguro | US$5 |
| Parque Nacional Marinho de Abrolhos – Rio Caravelas | US$180 |
| Serra dos Orgaos National Park & Hiking Trail Fee – Teresopolis | US$20 |
| Snorkelling or Diving Day Trips – Porto Seguro, from | US$30 |
| Waterfalls & Natural Bathing Pools – Navidade | US$2 |
| Teatro Amazonas Guided Tour – Manaus | US$7 |
| Jungle Trip (incl food & accom) – Manaus (price per day), from | US$80 |
| Blue Lake Cave – Bonito | US$30 |
| Pantanal Activity Package, from | US$55 |
| Fumaca Falls & Hikes – Lencois | US$50 |
| Boat Trip – Iguazu Falls | US$30 |

## ARGENTINA

| Title | From Price |
|---|---|
| Beagle Channel Boat Trips – Ushuaia | US$50 |
| Cafayate Bike Hire & Wine Tastings | US$20 |
| Canopy Zip Line – Salta | US$50 |
| Horse Riding Salta – Incl. Transfers and Lunch | US$60 |
| Horseriding, Bariloche – 3hrs | US$95 |
| Kayaking, Bariloche, from | US$50 |
| Perito Moreno Glacier Day Trip – El Calafate, from | US$50 |
| Paragliding – Bariloche | US$90 |
| Viedma Glacier Ice Trekking or Climbing – El Chalten, from | US$150 |
| Snorkel with Sea Lions (Puerto Madryn) | US$140 |
| Walking Tours – Buenos Aires | US$10 |
| Graffiti Tour – Buenos Aires | US$30 |
| Ferry to Uruguay | US$85 |
| Tango Show – Buenos Aires | US$100 |
| Boat Trip – Iguazu Falls | US$30 |

| Title | From Price |
|---|---|
| Jesuit Mission | US$10 |
| Mendoza Wine Tour | US$25 |
| Whitewater Rafting – Salta | US$45 |
| Viedma Glacier – El Chalten | US$60 |
| Hiking in Tierra del Fuego National Park – Ushuaia, from | US$57 |
| Valdes Peninsular – 1 Day Tour – Puerto Madryn, from | US$90 |

## SURINAME

| Title | From Price |
|---|---|
| Bigi Pan tour | US$50 |
| Paramaribo evening river cruise | US$35 |

## COLOMBIA

| Title | From Price |
|---|---|
| Cerro de Monserrate Cable Car – Bogota | US$15 |
| Chiva Bus Tour – Cartagena | US$25 |
| Coffee Farm Plantation Tour – Manizales | US$20 |
| Parque Los Nevados Day Trip – from Manizales | US$65 |
| Santuario de las Lajas Museum – Ipiales | US$1 |
| Museums, Attractions & Entrances – Bogota | US$5 |
| Termales del Ruiz – Thermal Baths | US$30 |

## ECUADOR

| Title | From Price |
|---|---|
| Bridge Swing | US$25 |
| Canyoning/Rappelling/ Abseiling – from | US$60 |
| Entrance to Del Diablo waterfall– Banos | US$5 |
| Hot Springs – Banos, from | US$5 |
| Jungle Activity Package, from | US$30 |
| Massages – Banos, from | US$20 |
| Whitewater Rafting – Banos Grade 4/5 | US$75 |

## BOLIVIA

| Title | From Price |
|---|---|
| La Paz City tours, from | US$15 |
| Potosi Guided Mine Visit | US$20 |
| Uyuni Salt Lake – 1 Day Tour inc. Lunch | US$55 |
| Gravity Assisted Mountain Biking, from | US$125 |

## CHILE

| Title | From Price |
|---|---|
| Funicular de Santiago | US$6 |
| Santa Catalina Winery Tour | US$15 |
| Museo Chileno de Arte Precolombino | US$15 |
| Horse Riding – Torres del Paine, from | US$50 |
| Return Ferry to Main Trekking Route – Torres del Paine | US$30 |
| Villarica Volcano Climb – inc. guide & equipment – Pucon | US$140 |
| Whitewater Rafting – Pucon, from | US$50 |
| Camping fee for overnight treks – Torres del Paine | US$10 |

## FRENCH GUIANA

| Title | From Price |
|---|---|
| St Laurent du Maroni Transportation Camp Entrance | US$10 |
| Guiana Spaceport | US$10 |
| Devil’s Island boat trip | US$70 |

## GUYANA

| Title | From Price |
|---|---|
| Kaieteur Falls flight, day trip | US$260 |

We feel that having optional excursions gives a greater degree of flexibility and independence to our group members; independence to decide how much your spending budget can afford; flexibility to decide when and what time of day or with whom to visit a particular site, rather than for example, with the whole group at a pre-ordained time.

You pay for the optional excursions to the local operator, ensuring the money stays with that operator in the local community and this ensures as well, that you are paying the true price for any optional excursions you want to do. This also applies to accommodation costs before and after the trip.

Please note that the prices of optional excursions quoted are approximate as local prices can and do change. Please see the relevant trip page for the Optional excursions you can do on that trip and a list of prices.

***Notes downloaded on:*** *13-11-2026*