

M/V Aqua

Amazon River Discovery Cruise - 3 Nights
December - May (High Water) Itinerary

Day 1:

Saturday
IQUITOS/AMAZON RIVER

5:00 p.m. Arrival

Your guides await you, as your flight from Lima glides in for landing at Iquitos International Airport. After you've claimed your luggage, you will board an air-conditioned bus and transfer to Iquitos' main wharf. There the M/V Aqua lies at anchor.

As you settle into your over-sized suite, your vessel will start on its journey toward the Yanayacu River, deep in the heart of Amazonia. Over the next three days, you will also sail along one of the largest tributaries of the Amazon, the Marañón, as well as on the mighty Amazon itself. You are embarking on a spectacular adventure, to a place visited by only a few of even the most experienced world travelers.

8:00 p.m. Safety Drill and Briefing on the Top Deck Before dinner we will perform a routine safety drill. Following that, your Cruise Director and Guides will give a brief orientation talk about life on board, where you will go and what you will see on your Amazon journey.

8:30 p.m. Welcome Dinner Peruvian cuisine is considered one of the world's best. Here it is presented with a touch of European flair, and a vegetarian dish is always available. Raise a glass of fine South American wine to toast the beginning of a beautiful journey, then look out the window and watch the river go by as you experience your first wonderful meal aboard the M/V Aqua.

Perhaps enjoy a nightcap on the Upper Deck, under the stars, before retiring.

Day 2:

Sunday
AMAZON/YANAYACU RIVER/CORRIENTES LAKES/YARAPA RIVER

6:30 a.m. Breakfast

Enjoy the first of our generous breakfast buffets, complete with traditional breakfast egg dishes, plus Peruvian specialties and fresh-squeezed juices.

8:00 a.m. Yanayacu River Exploration

This morning you will board your comfortable excursion skiff to begin our first adventure along the Yanayacu ("black water") River. Life jackets, ponchos, rubber boots and plenty of cold potable water are

1

always available on the skiffs. As we float along this river, we will pass fishermen paddling in their dug-out canoes and will have the chance to see a great variety of wildlife, including terns, orioles, blackbirds, black collared hawks, monkeys, and sloth. Your guides will provide lots of detail about life along the river as we journey past its banks. Upon arrival at Corrientes Lake, you will have the chance to fish for the fearsome, sharp-toothed piranha, highly valued as a food among the local people. As midday approaches, we will begin our return journey.

11:00 a.m. Return to the M/V Aqua

The staff will await you with icy towels to help you cool off from your time on the river.

1:00 p.m. Lunch

Enjoy lighter mid-day fare in our air-conditioned dining room.

4:00 p.m. Yarapa River Exploration and Night Excursion After time for a siesta, we will board the skiffs again to explore the narrow Yarapa River. Here, in the heart of the rainforest, you are likely to spot squirrel monkeys, herons, egrets, and the unusual horned screamer. As the sun sets, you will become aware of the rich and varied sounds of diurnal creatures marking their territories. As soon as it is dark enough, we will turn the spotlight on to search for night wildlife—nighthawks, frogs, opossums, tarantulas, and caimans are easily spotted along this part of the river.

7:30 p.m. Return to the M/V Aqua

The M/V Aqua continues to make its way upstream, toward the birthplace of the Amazon River—the dramatic spot where the Ucayali, Marañón, and Amazon River all unite in a rush of water. Sit under the stars on the Upper Deck and sip a pre-dinner pisco sour.

8:30 p.m. Dinner

Day 3:

Monday

MARAÑÓN RIVER/PACAYA-SAMIRIA NATIONAL RESERVE (NAUTA CAÑO AND YANAYACU-PUCATE)

6:30 a.m. Breakfast

Today you can choose between two options:

Option 1: Full day excursion with a Picnic Lunch at Ranger Station No. 2

7:30 a.m. Full day excursion at Ranger Station No. 2 Travel by skiff from Yanayacu Creek all the way to remote Chingana, a small creek where giant river otter usually nest. These handsome animals were killed in great numbers for their pelts, and are now threatened with extinction. On this excursion, you will also see howler and capuchin monkeys, the squirrel-sized monkeys called tamarins, pink and gray river dolphins, and a vast variety of birds. We will also take you deep into the jungle, where you will encounter wildlife and learn first-hand about the important medical value of jungle plants. And we will show you famous Kapok Trees (ceiba pentandra), the tallest trees in the Amazon Basin. Enjoy a generous picnic lunch at the park Ranger Station No. 2, before we begin our journey back to our vessel.

4:00 p.m. Arrive at the M/V Aqua.

Option 2: Guided Jungle Walk/Siesta/Monkey and Dolphin Expedition

8:30 a.m. Guided Jungle Walk at Ranger Station No. 1 This morning your Park Ranger will tell you all about sustainable resource management projects in Amazonia. You will visit one of the projects, where villagers are planting palms to obtain oil.

11:00 a.m. Return to the M/V Aqua

12:30 p.m. Lunch, followed by a Siesta

4:00 p.m. Monkey and Dolphin Expedition

On this late afternoon expedition, you are likely to see the two different kinds of freshwater dolphins—including the unusual pink ones—found in the Amazon. Later, keep your eyes directed toward the jungle canopy, where you can spot at least several kinds of primates—among the 13 species of monkeys resident in the National Park. Perhaps you will catch a glimpse of tamarins and howlers, dusky titi monkeys and pigmy marmoset monkeys. Watch for alligators, and keep your binoculars at the ready, as you are likely to see more than 200 species of birds.

6:00 p.m. Return to the M/V Aqua

7:30 p.m. Dinner

8.30 p.m. Optional Night Excursion

This evening we will take the skiffs out in search of caimans, tree boas, tarantulas, and frogs. After this night adventure, the M/V Aqua will start sailing downstream on the Marañón River, toward the headwaters of the Amazon.

Day 4:

Tuesday

BIRTHPLACE OF THE AMAZON/PUERTO MIGUEL VILLAGE/MARAYALI RIVER

5:30 a.m. Birthplace of the Amazon

This morning, the M/V Aqua skirts the edges of the vast Pacaya-Samiria Reserve, a flooded forest covering five million acres at the headwaters of the Amazon basin. Rise early and be on your skiffs at 5:30 a.m. to view one of the great spectacles of the Southern Hemisphere: the sun rising over the birthplace of the Amazon River. Here—where the union of two major tributaries, the Ucayali and the Marañón, form the world's greatest waterway—nature is at its most dramatic. Your dawn excursion will be accompanied by abundant bird song, as you glide in small boats past river banks populated by large-billed terns, laughing falcons, gray tanagers, sandpipers, five kinds of parakeets, the exotic short-tailed parrot, and dozens of other birds.

7:30 a.m. Breakfast

8:30 a.m. Puerto Miguel Village

We will travel by skiff to Puerto Miguel native village, where you can meet and interact with local villagers from this most remote part of the world, and can learn a bit more about their culture, traditions, and folklore. You will also have the chance to trade items for local handicrafts.

11:00 a.m. Return to the M/V Aqua

12:30 p.m. Lunch

Share a last lunch with your fellow passengers.

1:30 p.m. Disembark/Depart for Nauta Board an air-conditioned bus in the historic town of Nauta, for the 1 1/2-hour ride through the Peruvian countryside to Iquitos International Airport. Your guides will help you check in and will stay with you until it is time for you to board your flight.

4:00 p.m. Check-in at Iquitos International Airport

5:30 p.m. Your Flight Departs for Lima

Note: All itineraries are subject to change, due to weather and other conditions. All times indicated are approximate, and are also subject to change.