

M/V Aqua

Amazon River Discovery Cruise - 3 Nights
June - November (Low 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, awaiting your arrival.

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/TAHUAYO/RIVERS AND CHARO LAKE

6:30 a.m. Breakfast

Be up early to catch the sun on the river. Our sumptuous daily breakfast buffet features a broad choice of traditional breakfast egg dishes, plus Peruvian specialties and fresh-squeezed fruit juices.

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7:30 a.m. Tahuayo River Exploration and Fishing Trip at Charo Lake This morning you will board our comfortable excursion skiffs for your first adventure, traveling from the Amazon through the Huaysi

short-cut canal to explore the Tahuayo black water river. Life jackets, ponchos, rubber boots and plenty of cold potable water will always be available for you on board the skiffs. As we float down the Tahuayo, occasional fishermen paddling in their dug-out canoes will give us a cheerful greeting. Keep your binoculars ready to spot a vast variety of wildlife: terns, orioles, blackbirds, black collared hawks, monkeys, and sloth share this wonderful environment with us. Upon arrival at Charo Lake, you can bait your hooks to try to catch one of Amazonia's fearsome piranhas (and other fish as well). As you fish, trained naturalist guides will also tell you the story of the lake and its inhabitants.

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

Icy cold towels await you, as you transfer from your skiffs into the M/V Aqua. As the vessel continues up the Amazon River, you have some time to relax, or perhaps even take a nap, before lunch.

1:00 p.m. Lunch

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

4:00 p.m. Yacapana Islands Exploration and Dolphin Sighting Locals call the Yacapana Islands the "Iguana Islands," because of the huge population of these reptiles—like tiny dinosaurs—crawling over the ground and resting in the tree tops. Amazon folklore says that if you touch an iguana, you will develop some of their traits; nobody wants to be ugly, so the iguanas are well protected. We will pass by in the skiff, giving you a chance to snap good photos. As the sun sets, you will have the chance to see and photograph both gray and pink freshwater dolphins. The people of the Amazon believe that these dolphins turn into humans to steal handsome men or pretty women from their villages during celebrations.

6:30 p.m. To the Headwaters

We will return to the M/V Aqua vessel and continue our journey upstream, toward the headwaters of the Amazon River, where the Ucayali, Marañón, and the Amazon Rivers merge.

Perhaps sip a pre-dinner pisco sour on the Upper Deck, while you watch the sun set.

8:00 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. The ranger may also show you the artificial nests created on the sand to protect turtle eggs.

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 AND MARAYALI RIVER

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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 final onboard lunch with the friends you have made on your Amazon journey.

1:30 p.m. Disembarkation

Step off the M/V Aqua in the small city of Nauta, where your air-conditioned bus awaits you. Enjoy a 1 1/2-hour drive through the Peruvian countryside, before arriving at Iquitos International Airport. Your guides will assist you with your baggage and check-in, and will wait with you until you are ready to board your flight to Lima.

5:30 p.m. Departure. Your flight leaves 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.