Guyana

Birds & Wildlife (Relaxed)



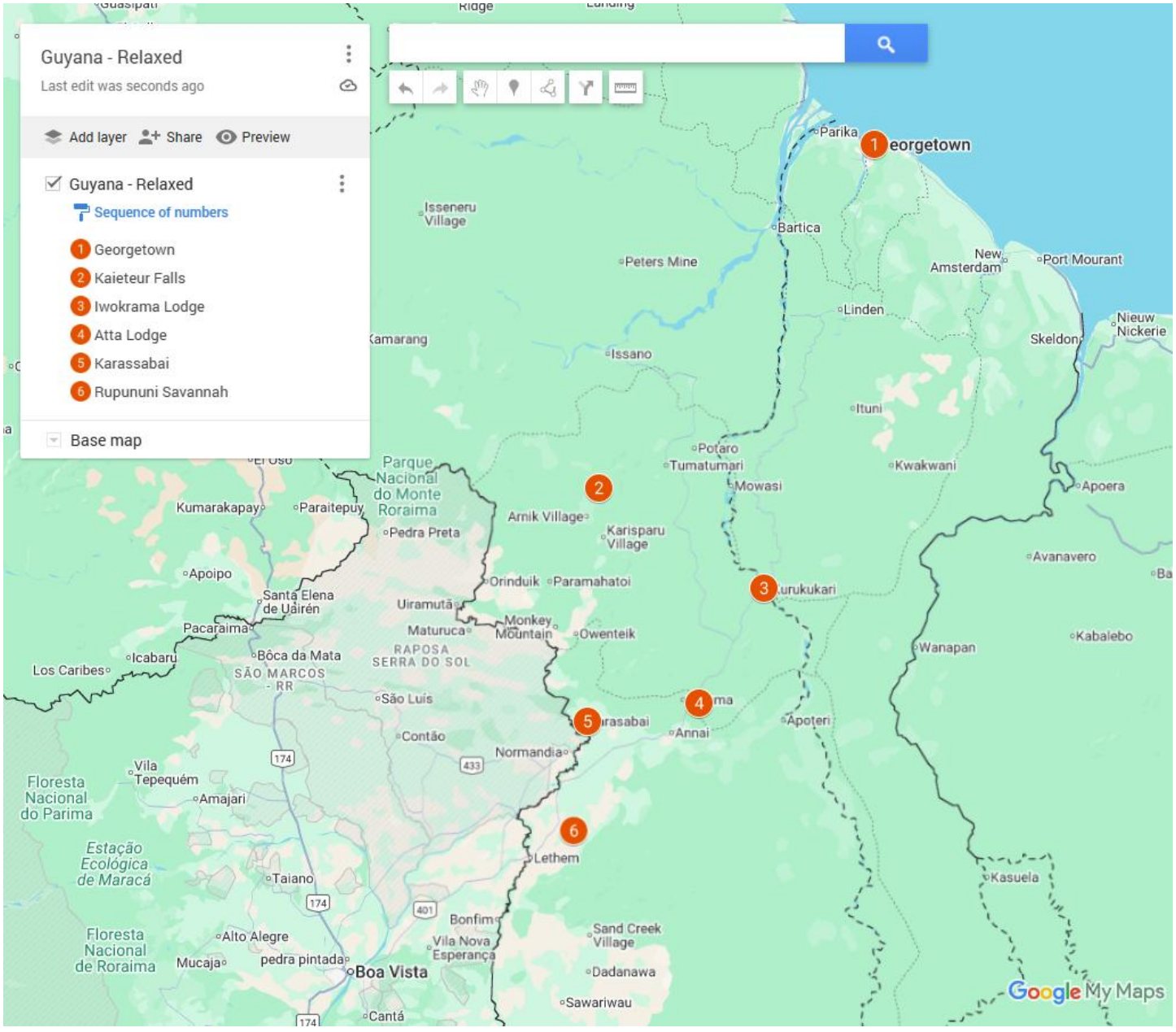
Giant Anteater by Adam Riley

Guyana, a small English-speaking South American country nestled on the Atlantic Coast east of Venezuela, has become recognised as one of South America's top birding and wildlife destinations. Due to a tiny population and an incredibly high proportion of undisturbed habitat, Guyana hosts some of the last relatively unexplored wildernesses on Earth. A variety of pristine ecosystems occur here, from lowland rainforests that stretch as far as the eye can see, to the savannahs and waterways of the famed Rupununi region, not to mention the dramatic Kaieteur Falls (one of the world's highest single-drop waterfalls), all of which ensures that this magical destination has something to offer every birder and nature enthusiast.

Numerous large macaws, Sun Parakeet, Guianan Cock-of-the-rock, Scarlet Ibis, Rio Branco Antbird, Guianan Red Cotinga, Capuchinbird, Crimson Fruitcrow, Grey-winged Trumpeter and Harpy Eagle are just some of the many birding highlights that can be anticipated on this tour! Mammals are also a major emphasis, and we can expect species ranging from the amazing Giant Anteater to various New World monkeys, plus a chance to see the elusive Jaguar!

Itinerary & Map

Day 1	**Arrival in Georgetown**
Day 2	**Georgetown & surrounds**
Day 3	**Georgetown to Iwokrama River Lodge via flight over Kaieteur Falls**
Days 4 & 5	**Iwokrama River Lodge & surrounds**
Day 6	**Iwokrama River Lodge to Atta Rainforest Lodge**
Days 7 & 8	**Atta Rainforest Lodge**
Day 9	**Atta Rainforest Lodge to Karassabai & Sun Parakeet quest**
Days 10 & 11	**Rupununi Savannah**
Day 12	**South Ireng River, flight return to Georgetown**
Day 13	**Final departure**



Birding sites in detail

Georgetown. We travel along the coast, eastward from Georgetown, to look for the first of many range-restricted species. These include the highly localised Blood-colored Woodpecker, an astonishingly colourful *Veniliornis* found only in the Guianas and almost wholly limited to the narrow coastal plain, plus the attractive Rufous Crab Hawk, a species that has been negatively affected by the destruction of its preferred mangrove habitat. We will also search for the poorly-known White-bellied Piculet that can be found here and the localised Plain-bellied Emerald. Other birding targets in these mangrove forests include Little Cuckoo, Straight-billed and Buff-throated Woodcreepers, the attractive Black-crested Antshrike, Sooty-headed, Southern Beardless and Mouse-coloured Tyrannulets, Pale-tipped Inezia, Boat-billed Tody-Tyrant, Spotted Tody-Flycatcher, White-winged Becard, Violaceous Euphonia, Hooded Tanager and Bicoloured Conebill.



Blood-coloured Woodpecker by Lev Frid

Depending on tides, we may bird some nearby mudflats to for waders (a variety of northern migrants will be around), the brilliant Scarlet Ibis, Black Skimmer, Brown Pelican and Magnificent Frigatebird. A nearby heronry also allows opportunities to see more widespread species, including Black-crowned and Yellow-crowned Night Herons, Little Blue Heron, and Western Cattle and Snowy Egrets.

Georgetown Botanical Gardens. Despite being located in central Georgetown, the expansive grounds and large tropical trees, lawns and wetlands provide for exciting birding. Some of the species we are likely to see include Snail Kite, Yellow-headed Caracara, Wattled Jacana, Pale-vented Pigeon, numerous Ruddy Ground Doves, Red-shouldered Macaw, Green-rumped Parrotlet, the localised Festive Amazon, Yellow-crowned and Orange-winged Amazons in good numbers, Greater and Smooth-billed Anis, Yellow-chinned Spinetail, the cute Common Tody-Flycatcher, Pied Water-Tyrant, noisy Rusty-margined Flycatchers and Great Kiskadees, Tropical and Grey Kingbirds, the lovely Black-capped Donacobius, Tropical Mockingbird, Pale-breasted Thrush, Yellow Warbler, Yellow



Kaieteur Falls by Lev Frid

Oriole, Carib Grackle, Red-capped Cardinal, Blue-grey, Palm and Turquoise Tanagers, and the uncommon Wing-barred Seedeater.

Kaieteur Fall's. From Georgetown we'll to Kaieteur, the world's highest free-falling waterfall. Though Venezuela's Angel Falls are greater in total height, their filamentous drop occurs by stages whereas Kaieteur is a single, massive, thundering cataract 100 meters (over 300 ft) wide, created as the Potaro River makes a sheer drop of 228 meters (almost 750 ft), nearly five times the height of Niagara! The spectacle is all the more impressive for its remoteness and it is altogether possible that we'll be the only persons viewing it at the time. Here we will also use the opportunity to look for White-chinned and White-tipped Swifts swirling over the gorge, and perhaps we'll be lucky enough to see the astonishingly colourful Guianan Cock-of-the-rock, White-tailed Goldenthroat or Musician Wren in the surrounding vegetation, or even Orange-breasted Falcon soaring over the gorge as it hunts for swifts.



Rufous Crab Hawk by Lev Frid

Iwokrama River Lodge. The forest that surrounds the Iwokrama Field Station is as diverse as it is extensive. We'll bird a number a number of different sites during our time here.

The riverine habitat near the field station offers open views from the river edge as well as from the comfortable thatch-covered dining area. Here we will keep our eyes out for a resident pair of Bat Falcons, Red-throated Caracara and congregations of Giant Cowbird and Pied Plover on the lodge lawns. Birdwatching along the riverbank in surrounding areas might produce our first sightings of the gaudy Sunbittern, Green Ibis or Capped Heron. A unique mammal also occurs in this area, the Brown-bearded Saki Monkey, among other more widespread species such as Weeping Capuchin, Red Howler and Common Squirrel Monkey.



Guianan Red Howler Monkey by Adam Riley

Birding around the lodge clearing should produce Little Chachalaca, Lined Forest Falcon, flocks of Painted and Golden-winged Parakeets, Blue-tailed Emerald, Black-throated Trogon, Black Nunbird, the spectacular Pompadour Cotinga, Black-necked Aracari, the Red-billed form of White-throated Toucan, Ringed Woodpecker, Crested Oropendola, Moriche Oriole, White-shouldered Tanager, and Lesson's, Ruddy-breasted and Chestnut-bellied Seedeaters.

The Screaming Piha Trail, is home to an incredible density of its namesake; and, between the piercing chorus of piha screams, we will listen and look out for Bronzy Jacamar, Chestnut and Waved

Woodpeckers, Amazonian and Dusky-throated Antshrikes, Grey Antbird, Collared Trogon, Strong-billed, Plain-brown and White-chinned Woodcreepers, and White-crowned and Golden-headed Manakins.



Guianan Toucanet by Lev Frid

The trails in this section of the forest are normally active with rich mixed species bird flocks. Here we may look for the near-endemic Green Aracari, White Bellbird, Spix's and Marail Guans, Squirrel and the scarcer Black-bellied Cuckoos, Eastern Long-tailed and Reddish Hermits, Grey-breasted Sabrewing, Blue-crowned Motmot, Green-backed (Amazonian White-tailed) Trogon, Great Jacamar, the impressive Red-necked Woodpecker, attractive Collared Puffbird, White-lored Tyrannulet and Helmeted Pygmy Tyrant (which is often heard in the vine tangles above our heads). Careful searching of mid-level and sub-canopy flocks here have turned up Cinnamon-rumped Foliage-gleaner, Plain Xenops, Long-tailed, Wedge-billed, Amazonian Barred, Chestnut-rumped, Buff-throated and Lineated Woodcreepers, Mouse-coloured, Fasciated and Cinereous Antshrikes, Todd's, White-flanked, Brown-bellied and the localised Rufous-bellied Antwrens, Sepia-capped Flycatcher and secretive Golden-crowned Spadebill. Antbirds are also prolific and previous tours have enjoyed superb views of the remarkable White-plumed Antbird here as well as another army ant swarm follower, Rufous-throated Antbird.

In the evenings, we may drive along the various access road in search of Jaguar and nocturnal birds such as Common, Long-tailed and even Rufous Potoo, Blackish and Ladder-tailed Nightjars, and owls including Crested and Spectacled.

Mori Scrub. This area is characterised by an unusually low, sandy forest – which in turn, supports an interesting and unique assemblage of bird species, among them Rufous-crowned Elaenia, Black Manakin and Red-shouldered Tanager. Other birds we will stop and look for include Guianan Red Cotinga, the stunning Blue-backed Tanager and, if we are very fortunate, a Rufous-winged Ground Cuckoo dashing across the road!



Black Curassow by Adam Riley

Atta Rainforest Lodge. Atta has a wonderful Canopy Walkway measuring 500 foot (150 meter) long, that consists of four platforms connected by a series of suspended walkways, granting us a great view from the vantage of 100 feet (35m) up in the canopy. Afternoons are the perfect time for viewing parrots and, besides the three massive species of

macaws (Blue-and-yellow, Scarlet and Red-and-green) that occur so abundantly in these little disturbed and protected forests, we should see Caica, Dusky, Black-headed and Blue-headed Parrots, as well as noisy Southern Mealy and threatened Blue-cheeked Amazons as they head off to their roosts. We will also keep a look out for swifts and amongst the commoner species we will search out the little-known Chapman's Swift.



Giant River Otter by Adam Riley

Around the lodge, we will try for the stunning White-winged Potoo at a reliable stake-out. If anyone is up for a night walk after dinner, chances exist for the mythical Giant Armadillo as well as several other smaller armadillo species, Kinkajou, Olingo, and, who knows, Jaguars are resident around the camp…

For anyone getting up at dawn, we'll may be able to watch Short-tailed Nighthawks settle in for the day, swifts take to the sky, White-throated and Channel-billed Toucans yodel from conspicuous perches, Barred Forest Falcons call loudly, Black Caracara flocks scream overhead, the range-restricted Guianan Toucanet hop around like clockwork toys, Plumbeous Pigeon sit atop trees to soak up the first rays of sunlight, and a whole host of crown specialists come within our view. Possibilities include Pied and Guianan White-necked Puffbirds that are sometimes astonishingly close, Black-tailed and Black-crowned Tityras, active families of Cayenne Jay, and the lovely Golden-sided Euphonia. Icterids are regularly seen and include Crested and Green Oropendolas and flocks of Yellow-rumped and Red-rumped Caciques.

With enough time in this habitat, an arboreal mixed flock is likely to move through, allowing for eye-level views of a variety of tanagers and tyrant-flycatchers. These include White-lored and Slender-footed Tyrannulet, plus the localised Spot-tailed and Todd's Antwrens, which can often be found moving together. The walkway is also an excellent place to look for various cotingas, including the poorly-known and range-restricted Dusky Purpletuft; and if there are any suitable fruiting trees nearby, we stand an excellent chance of finding the more widespread Spangled and breathtakingly stunning Purple-breasted Cotinga as well.



Guianan Cock-of-the-rock by Lev Frid

Another area we will be birding is the clearing right in the vicinity of the lodge, as this is one of the best places to find another of Guyana's specialities – the gorgeous Crimson Fruitcrow. This incredibly bright but scarce species sometimes comes to feed in the nearby trees if there is fruit available, which would also likely produce sightings of the

outrageous Pompadour Cotinga and noisy Purple-throated Fruitcrow. The clearing is a reliable site for Black Curassow as well since there is a habituated family party that regularly passes through.



Green Aracari by Lev Frid

Mixed bird flocks in the vicinity can really be spectacular, occasionally containing over 40 attending species! These may include Pygmy, Ash-winged and Long-winged Antwrens amongst other species in the group, Blue and Black-faced Dacnis, Purple and Green Honeycreepers, White-shouldered and Yellow-backed Tanagers, cute Long-billed Gnatwrens, Buff-cheeked Greenlet, Violaceous, White-lored and White-vented Euphonias, Helmeted and the diminutive Short-tailed Pygmy Tyrant (the world's smallest passerine), Yellow-margined and Rufous-tailed Flatbills, both Great and Paradise Jacamars, Yellow-green Grosbeak and the poorly-known Olive-green Tyrannulet, among many others.

The maniacal growls of Guianan Red Howler Monkey troops can be heard throughout the forest, although it takes a bit more luck to see the amazing Black Spider Monkeys brachiating through the upper canopy storey.

Birding a section of nearby secondary forest edge, where a blackwater stream crosses the road should produce the showy Red-fan Parrot overhead, and we will listen for tough birds such as Red-billed Woodcreeper, Slaty-backed Forest Falcon, Greyish Mourner, Musician Wren, Rose-breasted Chat, Red-and-black Grosbeak and the tough Black-throated Antshrike. One of the star birds is a regular visitor, the outstanding Crimson Topaz, certainly amongst the most beautiful of all hummingbirds, which can be seen hovering above the water in search of insects. Other possible species include Fork-tailed Woodnymph, Blue-tailed Emerald, White-necked Jacobin and the striking Black-eared Fairy. We will also take the time to bird along the jungle trails where flocks include White-plumed, Spot-winged, White-browed, Scale-backed and Ferruginous-backed Antbirds, Ash-winged and Long-billed Antwrens, Coraya Wren and McConnell's and Grey-crowned Flycatchers.



Black-faced Hawk by Lev Frid

We'll also spend some time birding the Cock-of-the-rock Trail, an easy 20-minute walk, to hopefully have our first view of the incomparable Guianan Cock-of-the-rock. Much like the bizarre rockfowl of West Africa, the female incubates her eggs in a nest securely fastened with viscous mud to the slope of a rock face.

Peering around such rocks, we will be in a position to behold our first views of the male Guianan Cock-of-the-rock, which displays by clinging to the sides of thick twisted vines. Its luminous orange colouration, extraordinary feather plumes that it outstretches during its display, and outrageous headdress-like crest make this astonishing creature one of the most extraordinary birds on Earth, and we hope for some fantastic views during our time here!



Sun Parakeet by Lev Frid

Karassabai Village. On arrvial in Karassabai, we will take the time to visit some of the locals residents in order to secure final permission to bird in the area. The reason for doing this is because there are very few visitors here, and we wish to ensure good future relations and ongoing conservation efforts, especially considering that these people ultimately control the fate of the Sun Parakeet.

This remote area is the only known site, and possibly the only place left on Earth, where the critically endangered Sun Parakeet still survives in the wild. This vivid species once ranged widely across Suriname into northern Brazil, but after years of feverish illegal trapping, including rumours of entire planes jammed full with thousands of ill-fated birds, the world population now hangs in the balance with less than 2,000 individuals. Nonetheless, we stand a very high likelihood of encountering these overwhelmingly colourful parakeets as they fly through the valley and feed on the fruits of surrounding trees. The intense combination of yellow and red, shared with the sheer exhilaration of watching one of the rarest and most beautiful birds on Earth, is an incredible experience indeed!

The riparian forest along this border with Brazil, offers us some very interesting opportunities – although our attention is firmly focussed on the parakeets of course. Other more widespread birds we might encounter include Toco Toucan, Yellow-throated and Streaked Flycatchers, Rufous-browed Peppershrike, Hooded and Hepatic Tanagers, Small-billed Elaenia, Brown-crested Flycatcher, Red-eyed Vireo, Orange-backed Troupial and Green-rumped Parrotlet.



Agami Heron by Lev Frid

Rupununi Savannah. Grasslands host coveys of Crested Bobwhite, Savanna Hawks perched on fence posts at regular intervals, White-tailed and Short-tailed Hawks overhead, Crested Caracara in good numbers, diminutive American Kestrels, cryptic Double-striped Thick-knees, noisy Southern Lapwings, Plain-breasted Ground Dove, Fork-tailed Flycatcher, Bicoloured Wren, Eastern Meadowlark, Grassland Yellow and Wedge-tailed Grass Finches, and the near-threatened Bearded Tachuri, a member of the tyrant flycatcher family

that has declined markedly in recent years due to its preference for undisturbed savannah grasslands.

Forest patches host Striped Cuckoo, Ferruginous Pygmy Owl, Blue Ground Dove, Plain-crowned Spinetail, Yellow-crowned Tyrannulet, both Barred and Great Antshrikes, and Tropical Gnatcatcher. In the vicinity, we might also come across Buff-necked and the far less common Sharp-tailed Ibis and if we are very fortunate, Crested Doradito.



Hoary-throated Spinetail by Dubi Shapiro

The gallery forest near our lodge may produce Red-legged Tinamou (certainly by vocalisation, but we will also attempt to entice one into view), Violaceous Trogon, Northern Slaty Antshrike, Black-chinned and White-bellied Antbirds, Blue-backed Manakin and the localised Pale-bellied Tyrant-Manakin, among many others.

The river is home to Wood Stork, White-faced and Black-bellied Whistling Ducks, the rare Stripe-backed Bittern if we are fortunate, as well as families of endearing Giant River Otters, the largest of the world's otters and one that is now endangered due to the loss of pristine habitat. Further explorations may reveal Least Grebe, South American Snipe, Yellow Tyrannulet, White-headed Marsh Tyrant, Cliff Flycatcher and Ruddy-breasted Seedeater.

In the evening, we have the option to spend some more time looking for nocturnal species such as Least and Band-tailed Nighthawk, Pauraque and both White-tailed and Spot-tailed Nightjars. Here we may also find the remarkable Giant Anteater or Crab-eating Fox prowling through the grasslands.

South Ireng River. We'll be birding this site for two exceedingly range restricted species, Hoary-throated Spinetail and Rio Branco Antbird. Both species are only found in gallery forest along the Rio Branco River and its main tributaries, all of which ultimately flow into the Amazon. Recent agricultural pressures have seriously reduced the amount of available habitat for these birds and as a result, the spinetail is now classified as endangered, with the antbird treated as near-threatened.



Scarlet Ibis by Adam Riley

Along a comparatively short stretch of the river, we will specifically target the Hoary-throated Spinetail and Rio Branco Antbird, although other interesting species may include Pale-legged Hornero and Chestnut-vented Conebill. Very few birders have ever ventured to this remote area, so a few avian surprises are certainly not out of the question!

Tour Grading & Key

Overall Ease		Moderate. Suitable for most birding / wildlife interest levels. Has some walking in hot & humid conditions. A few very early morning departures.
Birding Ease		Moderate. Partly rainforest birding with several low-density species. Easier in the savannah.
Accommodation		Medium standard, mostly quite simple. Some have no hot water; others have shared facilities. No aircon, fans dependent on electrical power.
Walking / Trails		Moderate walking. Some sections can be rough or uneven, others have short, steep sections. Canopy walkway requires walking up several flights of stairs. We aim to avoid tougher hikes.
Vehicles / Roads		Combination of regular minibus, 4x4's & an open back vehicles of various kinds. Some roads can be very bumpy or muddy after rains.
Photography		Worthwhile to good. No feeders or hides.
Annoyances		Mosquitoes and tiny bloodsucking flies can be numerous at some sites (weather dependent). Hot, with high levels of humidity.

Financial Arrangements and Important Notes

Tour dates, prices, single supplement, approximate flight costs and tour spaces are displayed on our website.

Tour inclusions:

- All meals from dinner on day 1 to breakfast on day 13;
- 2x Internal flights (both charter and scheduled);
- Bottled drinking water;
- All lodgings;
- All ground transportation during the tour;
- All reserve entrance fees;
- All guiding services
- Tips for local guides, drivers and services.

Tour exclusions:

- Visa fees;
- ANY non-included flights;
- Any beverages (including mini-bar charges at hotels) not noted above;
- Optional excursions;
- Special gratuities;
- Telephone calls, laundry and other items of a personal nature.

Single Supplement: The single supplement cost for this tour will be charged if you wish to have single accommodation. If RBL cannot provide you with a rooming partner for these nights although you choose to share, the single supplement will become applicable. We will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that a rooming partner is found if you do wish to share.

Tipping: As noted above, gratuities (drivers, hotel staff, restaurants etc.) are included on this tour. However, this does NOT include your Rockjumper leader/s. If you feel that they have given you excellent service, it is entirely appropriate to tip them at your discretion.

- **Due to constantly fluctuating exchange rates, we quote our tours in 4 currencies. The tour price is fixed only in the currency printed in bold, and the actual cost in the other currencies listed will be adjusted according to prevailing exchange rates at the time of final invoicing. The same applies to approximate flight and single supplement rates.**
- **Rates are based upon group tariffs; if the tour does not have sufficient registrations, a small group supplement will be offered to confirm the tour.**
- **Tour prices are subject to unforeseen increases in tour related costs and may have to be adjusted as a result.**
- **The designated tour leader/s may be changed at short due to unforeseen circumstances.**
- **The itinerary is indicative only. Changes may need to be made to the order in which the tour is conducted, or some of the venues we visit closer to departure. We will attempt to adhere as close to the original program as possible.**

Our Relaxed series of tours are designed to focus on having an enjoyable holiday with a bird and wildlife focus. Where possible; we have reduced or removed long drives, single night stays and poor/rustic accommodation. We have also sought to reduce or remove difficult hikes, narrow/muddy trails and otherwise oppressive environmental conditions. Early starts and night birding are mostly optional, and we will not spend much time searching for difficult and/or skulking species. These tours are not suitable for hardcore birders and listers, or dedicated photographers.

- Guyana is generally very hot and humid. On most mornings we will be up and out very early to take advantage of the cooler temperatures and wildlife activity.
- This tour does require a moderate level of fitness and participants should be in good general health as most of the forest birding will be done on foot and may require walking for several hours at a time. Should you have any physical limitations, please notify us in advance of departure.
- Some of the vehicles we use are open topped, and time will be spent standing or sitting in the back where we can get a better view of the surrounding forest. We should expect some bumpy roads depending upon local road conditions.
- Accommodation is generally simple but comfortable throughout the tour, although air conditioning is not available. Mosquito nets are provided. Electricity is available at most sites.
- Biting insects can be numerous at time, and include mosquitos, gnats ('no see ums') and biting flies. The risk of malaria is low.
- The species mentioned in this itinerary have all been recorded on previous Rockjumper tours, but climatic factors play a huge role in the species composition each year regard.

Arrival and Departure Details

The tour starts with a welcome dinner on the evening of day 1. As this is an arrival day, you are free to arrive at any time. The tour will conclude after breakfast on day 13.

The above information in respect of arrivals and departures is a guide only. Precise arrival and departure information will be sent to you in your Tour Confirmation package once the tour has been officially confirmed. If you wish to arrive early and/or depart late and would like assistance in this regard, kindly contact the Rockjumper office.

Cheddi Jagan International Airport, Georgetown (IATA: GEO) is the primary port of entry and departure for international flights into Guyana.

Visa requirements differ by country, nationality of the traveller and duration and purpose of your intended stay. It may be necessary to obtain a visa or an electronic travel authorization in advance of your travel. It is therefore vitally important that you check with your travel agent/consulate/embassy for exact visa requirements.

DO NOT book any flights until the Rockjumper Team have officially confirmed the tour.