



SEVEN-NIGHT ITINERARY LOW WATER SEASON (June-November)

Day 1: Saturday IQUITOS/AMAZON RIVER

3:30 p.m. Flight from Lima LP 382

In just an hour and 45 minutes you will be in the heart of the Peruvian Amazon region.

5:15 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 for your journey to the river.

5:40 p.m. Transfer to Iquitos' main wharf

There the luxurious M/V Aqua, your home for the next three nights, awaits you.

6:00 p.m. Embarkation and check-in

From the moment you step on board, you will enjoy the M/V Aqua's atmosphere of low-key luxury. As you settle into your handsomely appointed over-sized suite, you will feel the vessel begin to move; the beginning of one of the great adventures of your life. Stand on the Upper Deck to take in the view, as the M/V Aqua leaves Iquitos behind.

Over the next three days, you will also sail along the two largest tributaries of the Amazon, the Ucayali and the Marañon, 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.

7:30 p.m. Safety Drill and Briefing on the Top Deck

Before dinner we will perform a routine safety drill. Then it's into the air-conditioned lounge, where you will learn about life onboard, and will have the first of the nightly briefings about your adventure to follow. You will meet the naturalist guides and the cruise director, who will use video, photos, and maps to explain the details of your adventure to follow.

8:00 p.m. Welcome Dinner

Sit down, relax, sample some fine South American wine, and enjoy the truly world-class cuisine created by Executive Chef Pedro Miguel Schiaffino, whose restaurant, Malabar, is one of the best in all of Lima. Schiaffino's recipes, with their imaginative use of local products – fruit, fish, spices – make every meal a delightful adventure. (The menu always offers choices, including a vegetarian option.) Toast the beginning of a beautiful journey.

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. See the Sun Rise Over the River

Be up early to catch your first glimpse of the majestic Amazon River, as you watch the sun rise over this green world filled with wonderful wildlife. This initial contact with Amazonia is only a brief sampling of what the rest of your journey will hold.

8:00 a.m. Breakfast

Our sumptuous daily breakfast buffet features a wide choice of traditional breakfast egg dishes, Peruvian specialties, and fresh-squeezed juices, made from tropical fruits you've never tasted before.



9:15 a.m. Tahuayo River Exploration and Fishing Trip at Charo Lake

This morning it's back aboard our comfortable excursion skiffs for your first adventure, traveling from the Amazon through the Huaysi short-cut canal to explore the Tahuayo blackwater 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 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 guides will also tell you the story of the lake and its inhabitants.

11:30 a.m. Return to the M/V Aqua

Icy cold towels and chilled fruit juice 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.

12:30 p.m. Lunch

Enjoy a selection of lighter mid-day fare in our air-conditioned dining room. Then catch up on your reading in the upstairs Lounge, do a little sunbathing on the observation deck, or watch the scenes of the river pass by, framed by your oversized window.

4:00 p.m. Yacapana Islands Exploration, Dolphin Sighting, and Night Excursion

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. We will pass by in the skiff, giving you a chance to snap good photos. As the sun sets, you will have the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to see and photograph both gray and pink freshwater dolphins. The people of the river 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, Marañon, and the Amazon Rivers merge.

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

8:00 p.m. Dinner

Day 3: Monday

MARAÑON RIVER/PACAYA-SAMIRIA NATIONAL RESERVE (YANAYACU-PUCATE)

6:30 a.m. Breakfast

7:30 a.m. Guided Jungle Walk in the Primary Forest

This morning your Naturalist Guide will tell you all about sustainable resource management projects in Amazonia, and will take you to one of these projects, where villagers are planting palms to obtain oil. Your Guide may also show you the artificial nests created on the sand to protect turtle eggs. Then we will take you deep into the jungle, where you will encounter wildlife and learn first-hand about the important medicinal value of many jungle plants. We will also show you famous Kapok Trees (ceiba pentandra), the tallest trees in the Amazon Basin.

12:00 p.m. Return to the M/V Aqua

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



3:30 p.m. Monkey, Dolphin and Caiman Expedition

In this late afternoon skiff excursion, you are likely to see howler and capuchin monkeys, the squirrel-sized monkeys called tamarins, and a vast variety of birds. You are also apt 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—some of the 13 species of monkeys resident in the National Reserve. Perhaps you will catch a glimpse of tamarins and dusky titi monkeys, as well as 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. As the sun sets and our searchlight comes on, keep your eyes out for caimans, tree boas, tarantulas, and frogs.

7:30 p.m. Arrive at the M/V Aqua. Enjoy a hot shower and a cool drink, before heading to the dining room. The M/V Aqua will start to sail downstream on the Marañón River, back toward the headwaters of the Amazon.

8:30 p.m. Dinner

Day 4: Tuesday

YUCURUCHE LAKE / BIRTHPLACE OF THE AMAZON / PUERTO PRADO VILLAGE VISIT AND NAUTA TOWN

6:30 a.m. Ucayali River and Yucuruche Lake

Rise early and be on your skiff at 6:30 AM. This morning your skiffs we take you along the Ucayali River to Yucuruche Lake, where we will walk a little way into the jungle to see the world's largest aquatic plant—the giant water lilies or "Victoria Regias."

Bring your cameras. You will be one of a very small number of people who have ever seen these luxuriant plants bloom.

8:30 a.m. Breakfast

9:15 a.m. Birthplace of the Amazon/Puerto Prado Village

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. We board the skiffs to view one of the great spectacles of the Southern Hemisphere: the birthplace of the Amazon River. Here two major tributaries—the Ucayali and the Marañón—unite to form the world's greatest waterway. It is nature at its most dramatic. Your morning 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.

We will then travel by skiff to Puerto Prado native village, where you will get to know the hospitable Cocama Indians. They will share their culture, traditions, and folklore with you, and you will have the opportunity to purchase some of their delightful folk art and crafts.

11:30 a.m. Return to the M/V Aqua.

12:30 p.m. Lunch

Share a last lunch with your fellow passengers who have taken the three-night journey. .

4:00 p.m. Nauta Town Visit

This afternoon we leave have an opportunity to explore the Town of Nauta, the oldest town in the state of Loreto. This village, founded in the 1930s, is the M/V Aqua's only access point to Iquitos during our expedition. We will have a chance to stroll through this village – which also marks the end of the only road leaving Iquitos. It is a good glimpse of life in a larger village on the river than the ones we have visited.

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



8:30 p.m. Welcome Dinner
Meet new friends—those taking the four-night journey—over dinner.

Day 5: Wednesday
UCAYALI RIVER/MAGDALENA VILLAGE/PUINAHUA CANAL

6:30 a.m. Ucayali River Exploration
We will board our skiffs just as the giant sun rises above the jungle. As we move down the Ucayali River, the Amazon's largest tributary, your naturalist guides will point out an amazing variety of wildlife, particularly active in the early hours of the day. Keep your eyes out for three-toed sloth hanging from tree limbs, for prehistoric-looking iguanas, and for a multitude of birds . . . orioles, horned screams, the list is long and varied. Then it's back to the vessel, for a sumptuous breakfast.

8:00 a.m. Breakfast

9:30 a.m. Jungle Walk to Magdalena
After breakfast we stroll through the village of Magdalena, a small community of just ten families. After you meet the people, including lots of lively and curious children, your naturalist guides will lead you through the jungle to a beautiful lake that is home to the world famous Victoria Regia giant water lily. Have your cameras ready to capture this once-in-a-lifetime sight.

12:00 p.m. Return to the M/V Aqua
Cool towels and chilled fruit juice await you, as you step out of the skiffs.

12:30 p.m. Lunch
After lunch, why not enjoy a siesta in the air-conditioned comfort of your suite? .

4:00 p.m. Ucayali Exploration and Puinahua and Discovery Tour
You will continue along the majestic Ucayali River by skiff, enjoying the opportunity to see and meet native balseros, or fishermen. They will demonstrate their skill and let you see their catch—including a type of "armored" catfish with a shell-like skin. You will have at least one chance to sample this delicious local fish at dinner aboard the M/V Aqua. We are also likely to spot, and have an opportunity to photograph, the "banana balsero" rafts, loaded with hundreds of clusters of bananas en route to market. Keep your binoculars ready to get an up-close look at woodpeckers, parrots, macaws, and toucans.

6:30 p.m. Return to the M/V Aqua

8:00 p.m. Dinner
Enjoy another gourmet meal. Afterwards, why not sit out on the Upper Deck to study the vast canopy of stars, shining so brightly, because there is virtually no electric light to compete with them.

Day 6: Thursday
PUINAHUA RIVER/HATUM POSA LAKE AND PACAYA RIVER

7:30 a.m. Breakfast

8:30 a.m. Jungle Walk Near Hatum Posa Village
On this walk, your guides will introduce you to native people doing subsistence farming, and will tell you how they learned to cultivate wild plants and trees to earn farm income. As your adventure takes you deep into the primary forest, your guides will also show you the wealth of fruit trees and medicinal plants hidden in the jungle—and will reveal some of their secrets.

11:30 a.m. Return to the M/V Aqua



12:30 p.m. Lunch

After lunch, it's nice to just watch the world go by through the over-sized windows in your suite.

3:30 p.m. Pacaya River Exploration, Plus Night Trip from Ranger Station No. 1 to Yanayacu Lake
In the late afternoon, we will take our skiffs along the Pacaya River, journeying toward the scenic Yanayacu Lake. There you can view the abundant life that is hidden in the deep rainforest.

We have chosen this time of day to give you the chance to see the late afternoon activity of the rainforest animals, including fluffy saki monkeys, capuchin monkeys, and the easy-to-spot howler monkeys. As the sun sets, listen for the loud, ferocious-sounding warning signals made by the howler monkeys, as they mark their territories.

When night falls, you will hear the second movement of the Amazon rainforest symphony, as other nocturnal animals send their shrill calls across the tree tops. We will use our special spotlight torches to locate night creatures, including, perhaps, huge caimans.

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

Tonight the vessel will be docked by the No. 1 Ranger Station in Pacaya Samiria National Park.

8:30 p.m. Dinner

After dinner, perhaps enjoy Peru's famous Pisco sours on the Upper Deck.

Day 7: Friday PACAYA RIVER / PUINAHUA VILLAGE VISIT

6:30 a.m. Pacaya Exploration; Breakfast on the Skiffs

Back on the river as the sun rises, you will see a treasure trove of wildlife, including parrots, macaws, toucans, and many kinds of monkeys—as well as some “surprise” species that you have never seen before. Enjoy a “bag breakfast” of light sandwiches and fresh juice. Since we will stop near a popular dolphin feeding spot, you will see quite a show as you enjoy your meal.

After breakfast, armed with poles and bait, we will take you to a special place on this fish-rich river, where you will catch some of the more than 3,000 species of tropical fish that live in the Amazon Basin. The key target will be piranhas, the small carnivorous fish with a fearsome reputation—considered a good food source by the locals.

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

As our journey nears its end, your luxurious home away from home starts to sail back down the river toward Iquitos. It isn't over yet, however. A new adventure awaits you this afternoon.

12:30 p.m. Lunch

4:00 p.m. Native Village Visit

This pleasant optional afternoon excursion, will take you to a riverside village – home to a friendly group of fishermen and farmers, and their families. Your guide will translate for you, as you interact with the local people.

5:30 p.m. Return to the M/V Aqua

We will sail downstream all night, as we make our way to Iquitos, and your onward flight.

8:00 p.m. Farewell Dinner

Just minutes after being in the wilderness, surrounded by monkeys and birds and the other wildlife of the rainforest, you will find yourself sitting down to a final gourmet feast in the ship's dining room



9:00 p.m. Crew Presentation

Tonight, the Cruise Director will introduce some of the crew members you haven't yet met on the trip, but who have worked behind the scenes to give you an unforgettable experience. There may even be a bit of musical entertainment!

Day 8: Saturday

ARRIVE IN IQUITOS CITY/CHECK-OUT AND DISEMBARK AT THE MAIN WHARF/CITY TOUR AND TRANSFER TO THE AIRPORT

7:30 a.m. Breakfast

9:30 a.m. Morning Excursion – The excursions today will depend on the level of the river. If weather and time permits, this will be the last opportunity to see how people live along the Amazon, as we travel by skiff through Iquitos' lively riverside community of Belen. Here, where the houses and shops actually float on the river during some months, you will see the bustling food market for all the Peruvian Amazon. All local inhabitants throughout the region sell and purchase goods here.

Some groups may instead take a short skiff ride to visit the Boras indigenous community, on the Momon River. The Bora tribe only emerged from deep inside the rainforest more than 30 years ago. They have a powerful commitment to maintaining their traditional culture. We will see them perform some of their most colorful dances for you.

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

You have time to pack and prepare for the next stage of your journey.

12:00 p.m. Light Lunch

Please leave your packed luggage in your cabins, to be transferred to the bus, before coming to lunch.

1:15 p.m. Disembarkation/City Tour/Manatee Rescue Center/Transfer to the Airport

Your afternoon in the remote city of Iquitos, accessible only by river or air, will not disappoint. This bustling town, complete with a house built by Gustave Eiffel, was once a rich center of the rubber industry. En route, we will visit the Manatee Rescue Center, where biologists and volunteers care for endangered Amazon manatees that conservation authorities have seized from local people and fishermen. Biologists will give a presentation about the project and its efforts to help these helpless mammals. You will also see how the manatees are cared for and are prepared for re-introduction into their natural habitat. Finally, we will stop at the San Juan Amazonian Indian Market, for a last chance to shop for local crafts.

4:30 p.m. Check in at Iquitos International Airport

Your guides will help you with check-in, and will stay with you until you have boarded your flight back to Lima.

5:50 p.m. Your Flight Departs for Lima LP 383

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