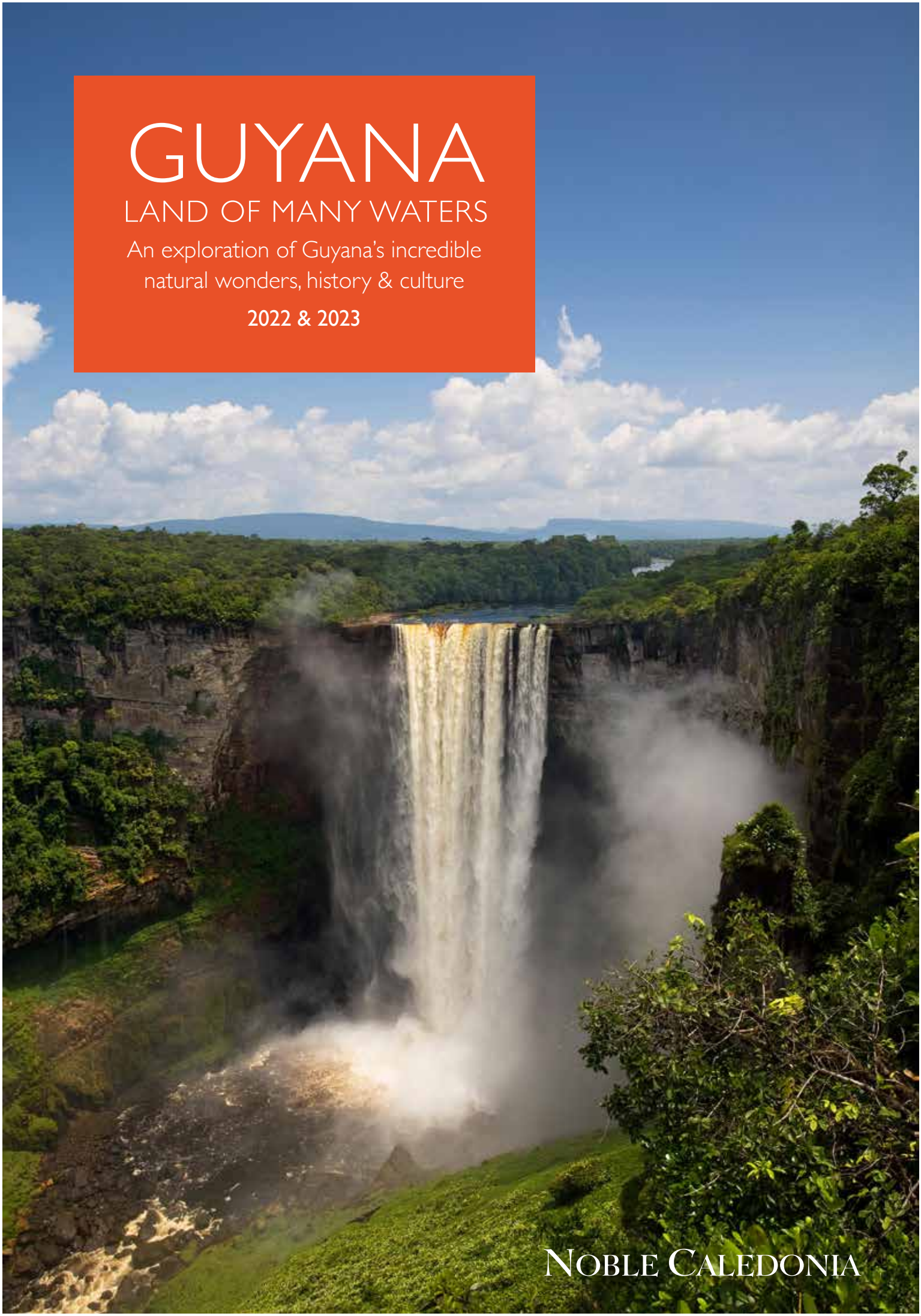
GUYANA

LAND OF MANY WATERS

An exploration of Guyana's incredible natural wonders, history & culture

2022 & 2023



NOBLE CALEDONIA

Giant otters, Karanambu

Guyana has been shaped by its long and turbulent history from the earliest times when the first Amerindian groups began to settle to the period of European exploration when it was known as the "Wild Coast" by adventurers such as Sir Walter Raleigh who visited in 1595. Following the European Wars and Dutch and British colonisation, Guyana gained independence from the UK in 1966 and is nowadays a remarkable mix of different cultures including Afro-Caribbean, European and Asian and is the only nation in South America in which English is the official language and cricket the national sport.

During this twelve night escorted tour we will discover the country's many great waterways as well as the stunning array of natural attractions and wildlife-rich experiences on offer. After time to experience the grandeur of the colonial capital, Georgetown we will visit the Iwokrama Reserve, a vast protected wilderness covered with lowland tropical forest where we will enjoy boat trips and guided walks to see wildlife and a variety of birds including, we hope, the iconic Guianan cock-of-the-rock and scarlet macaw. We then venture further into the lush interior and visit the spectacular Kaieteur Falls whose beauty lies in its sheer size and power but also its isolation in the middle of ancient jungle. At Karanambu, on the banks of the meandering Rapununi River where savannah grassland, swamp and forest meet, incredible wildlife experiences await: catch a glimpse of otters swimming amid huge Victoria amzonica lilypads; a giant anteater scuffling through the nearby savannah or simply take in the beauty of this biodiversity hotspot. Before our adventure draws to a close we will experience tropical Guyana and explore the Essequibo River.

One of South America's last wild frontiers, tourism is very much in its infancy in Guyana and the same level of accommodation and facilities should not be expected as those in better-known destinations. What you can expect, however, is unparalleled wildlife spotting opportunities, remarkable landscapes, authentic experiences and comfortable accommodation with good old-fashioned hospitality all of which combine to make the perfect tour for the intrepid traveller.

THE ITINERARY

Day 1 London to Georgetown, Guyana. Fly by scheduled flight via Barbados arriving into Georgetown this evening. On arrival transfer to Cara Lodge, a magnificent colonial home that has been converted into a hotel, our base for the next three nights.

Day 2 Georgetown. Enjoy breakfast in the hotel and a relaxing morning to acclimatise. This afternoon we will meet our local guide for a tour of Georgetown, see the Stabroek Market - once described as a "bizarre bazaar", and St. George's Cathedral which is one of the world's tallest free-standing wooden buildings. Other historic buildings along this promenade are the Public Library, City Hall, the Victoria Law Courts and St. Andrews Kirk. Visit the National Museum and the Walter Roth Museum of Anthropology which houses a wonderful collection of artefacts and explains Amerindian history and lifestyle. Meet this evening for dinner in the colonial atmosphere of the Ballet Room at Cara Lodge. The Ballet Room is steeped in history and is graced with stunning hand painted doors from India dating back to the 1890s and wrought iron arches that were commissioned from a foundry in Liverpool by the first Lord Mayor of Georgetown when he resided in the house. We will be joined by one of Guyana's premier steel pan players and a local guest speaker will provide a talk on Guayanese culture. (B, D)

Day 3 Georgetown. This morning we make an early start in order to enjoy breakfast at one of the local market stalls with our host, guide and culinary master, Chef Delven Adams who will guide us around Bourda Market, the largest of the four markets in Georgetown. We will visit the Guyana Shop which stocks all the local products produced and packaged in Guyana, before heading over to the market. Here we find an assortment of products including fish, meat, rice,

Georgetown

Rupununi River

demerara sugar, an abundance of dry goods and haberdashery. A visit to the bush medicine stalls is always educational and offers the opportunity to touch and taste a variety of local fruits and vegetables unique in this part of the world. The chef will make his purchases with what you would like to try in mind and will head home to start preparing lunch. Meanwhile we will visit the Botanical Gardens, home to an extensive collection of tropical flora, and the Zoo which has become a wildlife rescue and rehabilitation centre that houses over one hundred different species of tropical wildlife. Continue to the Backyard Cafe for lunch which, as the name suggests, is chef's backyard which he has turned into an exclusive restaurant. After lunch we join the afternoon commuters on the river taxis used to cross the Demerara River. As we slowly cruise along the bank of the river our guide will give a brief history of the famous buildings along the waterfront and the Demerara Harbour Bridge, once the longest floating bridge in the world at a total length of 1,851 metres. We will cross under the bridge and moor near a mangrove that is the nightly roost for a large variety of birds. As the sun sets over the river we should see flocks of brilliant scarlet ibis and three kinds of egrets as they fly across the sky and settle into the mangroves for the evening. Return to the hotel for an evening at leisure. **(B, L)**

Day 4 Surama & Iwokrama. Transfer this morning to the airport for our flight over the rainforest to Surama, situated in a small savannah, deep in the rainforest and surrounded by forest-clad hills. It was here that Charles Waterton passed through in 1812 in search of the secrets of the useful Wourali poison known as Curare. Waterton was so stunned by this spot that he wrote in his memoirs "The finest park that England boasts falls short of this delightful scene". Surama's inhabitants are mainly from the Macushi tribe and still observe many of the traditional practices of their forebears. A tour of the village includes the local school, medical centre and church along with some of the village houses. Also see the cassava processing where only traditional methods and tools are used, a wonderful way to learn about the indigenous culture of the Macushi tribe. After a traditional lunch of locally sourced ingredients, we board our jeeps for the drive to Iwokrama. The road is one of the best places to see the elusive jaguar and we will watch for the myriad of bird species that frequent the forest edge including crimson and purple-necked fruit-crow, crimson topaz, green oropendula, spotted and guianan puffbird, scarlet and red-and-green macaw, blue-cheeked and orange-winged parrot and gray-winged trumpeter as well as agouti, tayra, tapir and black curassow. The journey concludes at Atta Rainforest Lodge, our base for the next two nights. It is home of the Iwokrama Canopy Walkway, a collection of four suspension bridges leading to three platforms, the highest of which is over 30 metres above the ground, allowing for great views of a range of canopy species, many of which you would struggle to see well from the forest floor. The lodge is also one of the best places to see another of Guyana's "must see" birds, the crimson fruitcrow that often comes to feed in some of the nearby trees. **(B, L, D)**

Days 5 & 6 Iwokrama Reserve. Enjoy two full days at Atta Rainforest Lodge with its numerous activities on offer. Before dawn you may choose to return to the canopy for some easy birdwatching; from this tree top vantage you can sometimes see red howler and black spider monkeys. Later in the day you can enjoy wildlife and birdwatching walks on the trails around the area and, for those interested in botany, many of the trails have the key tree species marked. Many bird species, stunning insects, noisy amphibians, and playful primates make the surrounding forest their home and deer, tapir and agouti are also regular visitors to the lodge. Serious birders will want to search the undergrowth for the rarely seen rufous-winged ground-cuckoo. Later this afternoon take a drive through the forest in an area known for wildlife and jaguar sightings. This elusive cat is on the top of everyone's wildlife spotting list and, whilst not guaranteed, there is always the chance that you could have a sighting. Night walks are also possible and something interesting or new always seems to pop on to the scene along the transnational road near the lodge. **(B, L, D)**

Day 7 Pakaraima Mountains. Welcome the dawn chorus from the canopy walkway before returning to the lodge for breakfast. We then journey from Atta Rainforest Lodge through the rainforest to Corkwood in the Iwokrama Forest. Here we take a short trail on which we hope to see the amazingly brilliant Guianan cock-of-the-rock. This trail is through pristine rainforest and the guides will explain how the plants are used for medicine and other purposes. We continue to our next accommodation, Rock View Lodge, which is located where the savannah meets the forest-covered foothills of the Pakaraima Mountains. With its tropical gardens and flowering trees, the lodge resembles an oasis in the savannah and attracts many species of birds, particularly nectar feeders and frugivores. Nearby patches of light forest are home to certain ant birds and flycatchers, and of course the grasslands support an avifauna of their own. **(B, L, D)**

Day 8 Pakaraima Mountains. A dawn hike takes us to the foothills of the Pakaraima Mountains on the Panorama Trail where you might see cinereous mourner, finsch's euphonia, reddish hermit, rufous-bellied antwren, green-tailed and yellow-billed jacamar. The views across the savannah and villages as the sun rises are spectacular. We then have a relaxing day at the lodge and this afternoon we can see how local handicrafts are made as well as how the cashews are roasted. The labour-intensive method of cracking open the roasted nuts along with the self-ignition of the nuts as the acid content burns off is quite a sight. **(B, L, D)**

Day 9 Aranaputa, Rupununi River & Karanambu. After breakfast we travel to the village of Aranaputa which is situated in a stunning valley basin. Aranaputa offers warm Rupununi hospitality and we will tour the Peanut Butter Factory. In the early afternoon we take a boat trip on the Rupununi River to Karanambu Lodge, our accommodation for the next couple of nights. Depending on the river level, there may be the opportunity to look for giant otters as there are several family groups which live along this stretch of the river. Karanambu, a 110-square mile former cattle ranch located in the North Rupununi, was the home of the late Diane McTurk, conservationist and a world-renowned expert on giant otters. Known for its expansive wetlands and savannah, as well as its biological and cultural diversity, Karanambu encompasses savannah, marshy ponds, riparian forest, and a 30-mile stretch of the Rupununi River. Karanambu is located roughly in the middle of this beautiful and fascinating biological hotspot where species like the giant otter, black caiman, jaguar,

Red-and-green macaws

Fort Island

Giant anteater

Guianan cock-of-the-rock

giant anteater, and arapaima can be found. The seasonally flooded savannahs and forests also draw substantial fish migrations with as many as 700 species of fish — more than anywhere on earth. Several prominent explorers and naturalists have written about their experiences here including Robert and Richard Schomburgk, Charles Waterton, Evelyn Waugh, Gerald Durrell, and David Attenborough. With both the river and the savannahs close at hand there is a wide variety of activities to be enjoyed during our stay here. In the late afternoon we will travel by boat to look for wild giant river otters and to the ponds to see the giant Victoria amazonica waterlily which blooms at dusk. On the return trip we will spotlight for black caiman, birds and creatures of the night. **(B, L, D)**

Day 10 Karanambu. An early start takes us to an area of rolling grasslands, home to a population of giant anteaters. We hope to locate one of these six-foot long animals excavating its breakfast from one of the termite mounds that stud the savannah. Though giant anteaters live in overlapping home ranges they are mostly solitary except during mother-offspring relationships, aggressive interactions between males, and when mating. Mother anteaters carry their offspring on their backs until weaning them. Take some time to relax at the lodge or explore woodland patches or gallery forest along the river where we hope to find a variety of species including the agami heron. Meet later for an evening walk along the airstrip where we hope to see some of the local birdlife, including seven species of nightjar and among the grasslands the double-striped thick-knees. **(B, L, D)**

Day 11 Kaieteur Falls. The early risers may take the opportunity for a pre breakfast trail walk to the Honey Ponds where you may see a capuchinbird lek on one of the trails. The call of this strange bird is quite interesting and has often been compared to a cow. After breakfast we transfer to the airstrip for our chartered flight to the breathtaking Kaieteur Falls which thunder over a precipice, plummeting 224 metres, making it the longest single drop waterfall in the world. Kaieteur supports a unique microenvironment with tank bromeliads, the largest in the world, in which the tiny golden frog spends its entire life and the rarely seen Guianan cock-of-the-rock nests close by. With luck we may also see the famous flights of the Kaieteur swifts or makonaima birds which nest under the vast shelf of rock carved over millions of years by the black water of the Potaro River. Also discover several pretty carnivorous plants and beautiful wildflowers including the decorative heliconia. After our visit we re-board our aircraft for the flight to Georgetown. Check into Cara Lodge and after some free time we will drive to a local restaurant for dinner. **(B, L, D)**

Day 12 Essequibo River & Bartica. After an early breakfast at the hotel we take a boat down the Essequibo River passing the frontier town of Bartica and the Dutch ruins of an old fort on Fort Island. Today, the sparsely populated island, about three miles in length and a mile in width, is far from the busy trading post it was in its early colonial days. Return to Georgetown and the Cara Lodge Hotel for an afternoon at leisure before meeting for a farewell dinner. **(B, L, D)**

Day 13 Georgetown to London. After breakfast transfer to the airport for our scheduled flight to London via Barbados. **(B)**

Day 14 London. Arrive this morning.

Red howler monkey

DEPARTURE DATES & PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

2022 Departures: 8th to 21st September, 24th October to 6th November & 21st November to 4th December 2022

2023 Departures: 10th to 23rd January, 5th to 18th September, 24th October to 6th November & 21st November to 4th December 2023

Room	2022	2023
Twin	£7095	£7195
Single	£8595	£8695

PRICE INCLUDES: Economy class scheduled air travel • 12 nights hotel accommodation in Guyana as described • Meals as indicated (B – Breakfast, L – Lunch, D – Dinner) • Wine, beer & soft drinks with lunch and dinner • Excursions • Noble Caledonia Tour Manager • English speaking local guide • Gratuities • Transfers • Airport taxes.
Not Included: Travel insurance, meals other than those indicated.
Group Size: We are restricting the group size to just 12 participants.

Important Flight Information: The internal flights will be aboard small aircraft and so it is recommended to bring soft sided luggage. There will be a baggage weight restriction dependent on the number of passengers on the flight and this will be advised in the final documentation. It is important to note that all passengers are required to advise Noble Caledonia of their body weight prior to the tour and that, for safety reasons, all passengers and their baggage will be weighed by the airline at check-in. *Further details will be sent to booked passengers approximately 10 weeks prior to departure.*

Iwokrama Canopy Walkway

YOUR ACCOMMODATION

For our escorted tour of Guyana we have selected the following unique properties for our stay. Please note that in some of the more remote areas the accommodation on offer is simple yet clean and comfortable and the best available in the region.

CARA LODGE, GEORGETOWN – FIVE NIGHTS

Located in the heart of the city, Cara Lodge is one of the oldest and grandest structures in Georgetown. Built in 1840, this magnificent home turned hotel offers the tradition and nostalgia of a bygone era, complete with the service and comfort of a modern hotel. The rooms reflect the Victorian elegance and charm of the hotel and are furnished with locally crafted wicker and kufa furniture and equipped with en-suite bathroom, flat-screen television, direct dial telephone, air-conditioning, mini bar and complimentary tea & coffee facilities. The drinking and dining facilities include the Bottle Bar and Restaurant with its range of Western, Caribbean and Amerindian specialities and the Mango Tree Patio.

ATTA RAINFOREST LODGE, MAUISPARU – THREE NIGHTS

Atta Rainforest Lodge is 500 metres from the base of the Iwokrama Canopy Walkway, near the southern boundary of the Iwokrama Reserve in Central Guyana. The lodge offers comfortable accommodation with en-suite bathrooms, delicious home-cooked meals, and traditional Amerindian hospitality. The communal building houses the bar, dining area and kitchen and is open sided with views across the gardens to the towering forest, which surrounds the lodge. Hammocks and outdoor benches enhance the lovely gardens which include a variety of heliconias that attract hummingbirds, often close enough for the perfect photo.

ROCK VIEW LODGE, ANNAI – TWO NIGHTS

Located south of the Iwokama Rainforest reserve, Rock View Lodge is surrounded by savannah, wetland, rainforest and mountains in an area of staggering biodiversity. There are just eight private guest rooms all of which feature twin or double netted beds, en-suite bathroom, toilet, electricity and a front verandah with hammock. The grounds are beautifully landscaped with hundreds of palms, fruit and flower trees and there is a lovely swimming pool surrounded by boulders, cacti and succulents. Meal service begins with coffee and tea at dawn for those rising early to go birding, followed by home-cooked breakfast, lunch, and dinner served under the old mango tree. Electricity is offered several hours each day according to a generator schedule.

KARANAMBU LODGE, RUPUNUNI RIVER – TWO NIGHTS

Karanambu, a 100-square mile former cattle ranch, was home of the late Diane McTurk, a world-renowned expert on giant otters. Though remote, Karanambu is an increasingly popular ecotourist destination and we will be based at the award-winning Karanambu Lodge. The Karanambu Trust is active in conservation, research, training and sustainable development and in the lodge the romance of the Rupununi pioneers lives on. The lodge consists of six traditional clay brick, thatched cabins which include a verandah with hammock, private shower and toilet, and solar-powered electricity.

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Our current booking conditions apply to all reservations and are available on request.
Cover image: Kaieteur Falls