

KANUKU: MOUNTAINS, RAINFOREST AND RIVER

TRAVELLING BY FOOT OVER THE MOUNTAINS AND THEN BY BOAT ALONG THE RUPUNUNI RIVER, THIS ITINERARY GIVES YOU TWO WEEKS* OF EXPLORATION AND DISCOVERY IN THE KANUKU MOUNTAINS: ONE OF THE MOST BIODIVERSE PLACES LEFT ON EARTH. IT IS ALSO THE HISTORIC HOME OF THE MACUSHI PEOPLE, WHO WILL BE YOUR HOSTS AND GUIDES.

AS WELL AS OBSERVING THE RICH WILDLIFE, YOU WILL LEARN HOW HUMANS HAVE INTERACTED WITH THE FOREST FOR CENTURIES, AND THE METHODS PEOPLE HAVE USED, AND CONTINUE TO USE, TO SURVIVE HERE. BY TAKING THIS TOUR, YOU ARE CONTRIBUTING DIRECTLY TO VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT AND LOCAL CONSERVATION.



DAY ONE

Fly into Lethem and drive to Shulinab village for lunch. Get an introduction to the history of the area and discover why this is the only Macushi village in the South Rupununi. In the afternoon, take a village tour, and try your hand at weaving a traditional cotton hammock or other local craft work. The cotton is grown in the small family farms and labouriously spun by hand before being woven into the large, intricate hammocks.

Overnight in Shulinab (guest house or hammock camp in village benab or riverside).



DAY TWO

Start your trek uphill to the old Macushi farming areas in the mountains, led by a master bush guide.

In the afternoon, take a tour of the family forest farm and learn about the lifestyle of people who live in the forest. Reap coffee from the coffee plants and prepare and roast it for tomorrow's breakfast.

Sleep at Prakada forest farm (hammock camp).



DAY THREE

Walk to the mountain peak, known as Savannah Mountain, and take in spectacular views of the Kanuku Mountain range, the Rupununi River and the south savannahs.

Ceramic artifacts and other archaeological remains buried in the forest floor are tantalising clues to the past. Before living or written memory, who lived here?

Overnight at Prakada (hammock camp)



DAY FOUR

Break camp and trek towards Rice Creek. With nothing but miles of uninhabited rainforest to explore, search for birds and other animals and learn about the biodiversity of the forest. As you travel, your guides will explain how the plants of the forest are used for food, medicines, shelter and tools.

Sleep at Rice Creek (hammock camp).



DAY FIVE TO SEVEN

Leave Rice Creek, trekking through virgin rainforest to the edge of the Rupununi River: here your canoes are waiting for you. Paddle downstream to a river camp deep in the mountains, an isolated outpost of paradise which can only be reached by river.

Spend the next two days taking your time to explore the area around the camp. During the day you will walk the bush trails and see a Harpy Eagle nest, and paddle up seldom travelled creeks looking for river otters, tapirs, jaguars and other animals.

After the extraordinary experiences of the day, take slow drifts downstream to the sound of birds and watch the monkeys forage, play and settle in to bed.

3 nights at Camp Kumaran (hammock camp).

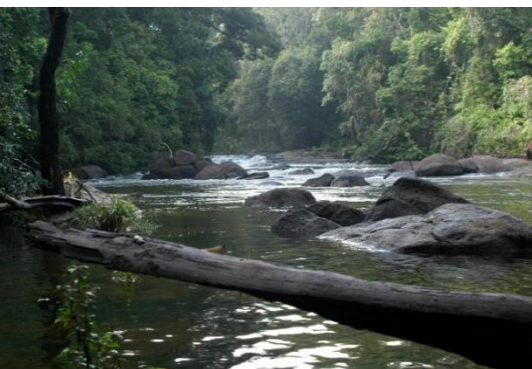


DAY EIGHT AND NINE

Travel downstream to Tawah, a wide river bank at the base of a mountain, where we will set up camp. Along the river are monkeys, forest birds and beautiful scenery.

We will explore the area around Tawah, cutting new trails through the bush, and taking our time investigating the river edge and the flora and fauna there. Your guide will teach you how to track animals in the forest; go at night to spy nocturnal creatures**.

2 nights at Tawah (Hammock Camp).



DAY TEN TO TWELVE

Now we travel up Mapari Creek to camp at the base of a jungle waterfall. Spend the next 3 nights in the new lodge or in the hammock camp. Walk to the falls top, take river drifts and do some fishing and swimming in the clear, cool water.

Here you will learn traditional styles of fishing: use a spear, a bow and arrow, make cunning fish traps and use native plants to catch your dinner.

3 nights at Mapari Lodge or Mapari Wilderness Camp



DAY THIRTEEN

Leave beautiful Mapari, and travel downstream to Yupukari village, through river framed by gallery forest.

At Yupukari, make yourself comfortable at the lodge. For your final thrilling adventure, join the team as they catch and release caiman for their ongoing research project.

Overnight at Caiman House

DAY FOURTEEN

Drive from Yupukari back to Lethem and catch your onward transport.

Difficulty Level: MODERATE

(long hikes and canoe rides require a good level of fitness but no technical skill)

Comfort Level: BASIC

(includes sleeping in hammocks under tarpaulin camps)

*PARTS OF THIS TOUR CAN BE LENGTHENED OR SHORTENED TO SUIT YOU.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND BOOKINGS: defreitasduane@yahoo.com

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT STAYING IN THE SOUTH RUPUNUNI: www.wichabai.com

***Note we do not encourage hunting on our trips.*