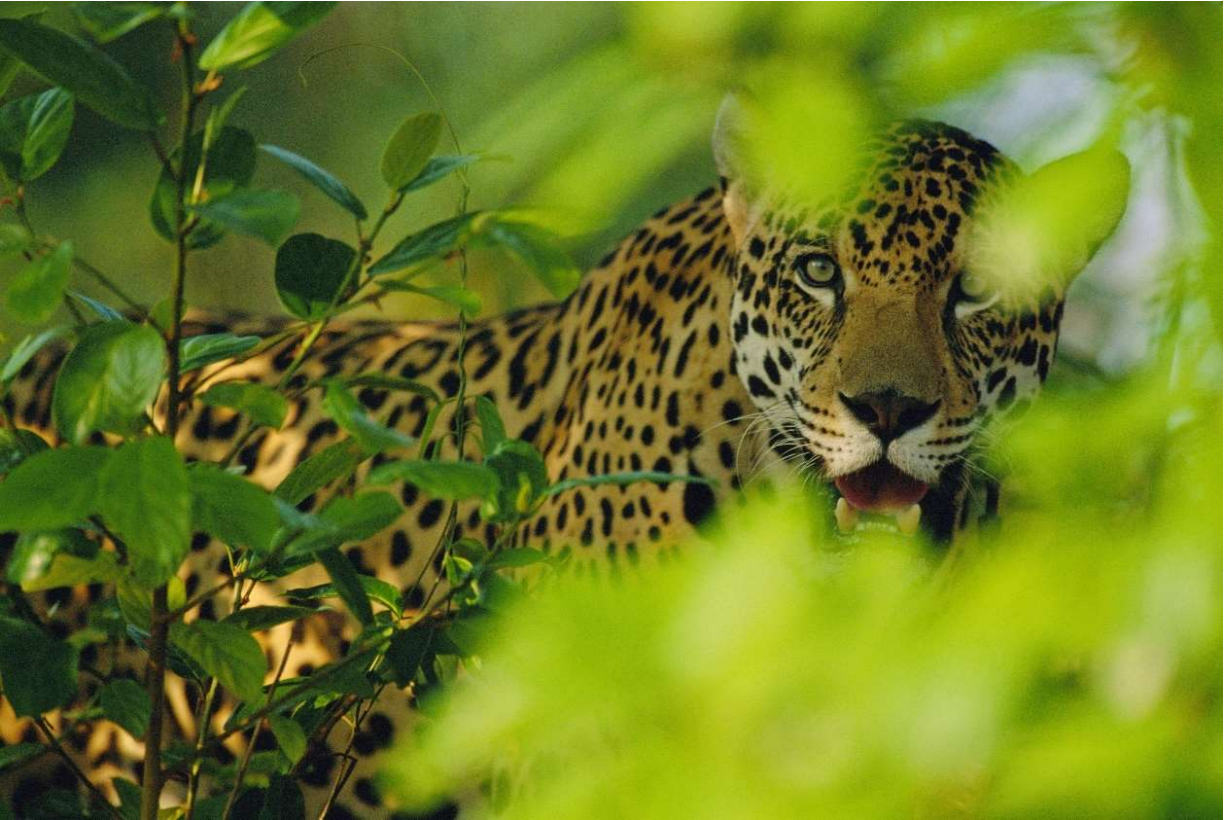


PANTANAL



Pantanal, Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil.



auroraeco

THE EXPERIENCE

Covering an area of approximately 143,000 square miles, the Pantanal is the largest floodplain in the Americas. Although it is often confused with a marsh, the area is unique in the world. It is the multitude of landscapes that makes the Pantanal so unique. Savanna lowlands, floodplains and forests are influenced by the Amazon Rainforest, as well as by the scrublands of the Caatinga, making for a vast mixture of ecosystems.

The balance of these ecosystems depends entirely on the water cycles of wet and dry seasons in the region. During the wet season, bays, lakes and streams form. When the rain stops, fish, mollusks and shellfish fill these waters, attracting animals in search of food, such as raccoons, caititus (wild pigs) and aquatic birds. During the dry seasons, the water evaporates, depositing nutrients into the soil. This not only enriches the soil, but also provides food for the animals.

It is at this time that the symbol of the Pantanal, the “piúva”, blossoms (a beautiful flowering tree which is used as building timber). Everything in the Pantanal reminds us of the presence of animals: sounds, traces, and movements. Alligators, wood ibis, cougars, snake birds, hawks, deers, herons, howling monkeys and countless insects add color to the ecosystem of the Pantanal. To come in contact with all this we recommend you stay at Caiman Ecological Refuge.

The hotel is located on a 53,000-hectare ranch adjoined to the small town of Miranda, in the Pantanal wetland, situated in the State of Mato Grosso do Sul. Caiman Lodge was established in 1985 as the first ecotourism operation in the Southern Pantanal of Mato Grosso do Sul. Since then, it has aimed at creating and offering visitors a means of getting close to the Pantanal’s nature and culture, while pursuing excellence in hospitality services and gastronomy.

It consists of two lodges – Cordilheira and Baiazinha – which have fully independent operations and are 22 km apart. Here we bring you information about Baiazinha Lodge, a bird-shaped house, located on the shores of a lake permanently flooded with crystal-clear water. It has six standard rooms, situated on the wings of the bird. Its balconies, overlooking a west-facing inlet of the lake, are an irresistible haven for watching the wetland sunset.

Decorated in traditional ranch style, apartments welcome our guests, pampering them with pure cotton sheets, down-filled pillows and hot showers. The bird’s body contains the common area of the lodge, which includes a dining room for 12 people and a large and cozy living room, equipped with TV, DVD and telephone systems. Outside, a deck includes the pool, space for chaise longues and comfortable hammocks, all framed by the lake and the vast Pantanal landscape.

Caiman Ecological Refuge has two major features in this magnificent setting:

BEST TIME TO VISIT

The dry season takes place from April to September, when the temperature drops a bit, especially during the night. This is the best time to visit. The weather presents itself at its warmest from October to March. Heavy rain is common during this period. In spite of the heat, it is a good for visits if you are crazy about watching the animals.



COMO CHEGAR

Flights coming from the main capitals head to Campo Grande airport (CGR). Upon arrival, transfer to the hotel which will take around 4h.



Nature Conservation Program

The Caiman Ecological Refuge operates an important Nature Conservation Program, which is recognized domestically and internationally. This consists of maintaining a Private Reserve of Natural Patrimony (RPPN) on a 5,600-hectare area and supporting various research and species management projects carried out on the whole ranch. In addition, nature conservation values are applied in lodge operations, such as the Caiman Recycling project, which involves the collection and separation of recyclable or dangerous waste on the whole property and educating employees on environmental responsibilities.

Caiman Ranch

Miranda Estância, a traditional cattle ranch founded in 1910 by English investors, was the precursor of the present Caiman Ranch. The ranch currently manages around 35,000 head of cattle on natural pasture, seeking harmonious integration of the livestock with the wildlife. This operation is open to visitors and can be seen firsthand by anyone interested.

REGULAR ACTIVITIES

Walking trails in the woods

taken on many trails in the surrounding areas of the lodges, the walks in the forests allow the guests the observation of small animals and of local vegetation. It is the activity that provides the greatest contact with the environment. Reinforcing the ecological focus of its activity, Caiman Ecological Refuge alternates the trails taken, minimizing the impacts on the environment.

Walking Caiman Tour

A walk through the surroundings of the main area of the ranch, the paddock, research centers, school and Environmental Interpretation Center. The final destination is Paizinho Bridge, one of the most traditional places of the Caiman Ecological Refuge, an excellent spot to observe the Spectacled Caimans. It is a magical moment in which the guests get up close to the caimans with all the safety provided by the guides, getting to know one of Pantanal's symbols.

Photographic Safari

Taken on specially adapted vehicles, this activity enables access to the most remote places of the farm. During the photographic safari, it is possible to observe the peculiarities and the contrasts of the vegetation, as well as a large variety of animals.

Canadian canoe trip

Taken in the bays of the ranch. The guests row in three-seat Canadian canoes and contemplate the nearby vegetation and water birds. It is also a good opportunity to hear the many local sounds, besides admiring Pantanal's fantastic sunset.

Nocturnal spotlighting

Provides the opportunity to observe nocturnal animals. One of the highlights is when the caimans are spotted, whose eyes present impressive red reflex.

Horseback riding

It's the most traditional way to get to know the Pantanal. During such an activity, it is common to observe the harmony between cattle and wildlife. The activity allows the exploring of regions which aren't accessible by foot or vehicles, like the marshes.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES (WITH EXTRA COST)

Biking

The Pantanal is very flat, enabling pleasant bicycle rides. On the roads or trails, the silence is the advantage of such a means of transportation. The bicycle paths and distance vary according to the group's profile.

Free horseback riding with a native guide: On this trip the idea is to ride for a longer time, accompanied by a native guide. This trip is designed for those guests who wish to learn or improve their technique, with the

opportunity of riding at a different rhythm than the regular riding tours. NOTE: For bilingual groups, the hiring of an interpreter entails an extra cost.

A day as a cowboy

Experience a day as a wetland cowboy. Riding with the possibility of herding cattle, depending on the activities of the pampas. Typical lunch. Ride with the field guide, a cowboy and a Caimaner, in an authentic cattle drive.

Birdwatching Tour

Special activity for those who are interested in watching or photographing birds, done in the necessary rhythm for finding the most rare and difficult species to be observed.

Boat trip on the Rio Aquidauana

This program is a great opportunity to get to know one of the most remote areas of the refuge and still navigate the river by punt or motorboat. There will also be a stop at Corixo do Garrafa ("Bottle Creek"), where guests may embark in canoes and row freely through the site.

THE REGION

Explore the region using Google Maps. Click on the image below.



AURORAECO DIFFERENTIALS

- + Exclusive, personalized and flexible trip;*
- + Trained and experienced hosts and local guides;*
- + Constant research into the destination in order to always offer the best options according to each traveler's profile;*
- + 24-hour access to a telephone during the trip.*

GENERAL INFORMATION

Please contact us for pricing information.

IMPORTANT

- Prices stated in Reais (R\$).
- Prices subject to change without notice.
- All apartments can accommodate up to 2 guests.
- All visitors to the Caiman Ecological Refuge are required to pay the environmental fee in order to ensure the maintenance of environmental and conservation projects of RPPN Dona Aracy (Private Reserve of Natural Heritage).
- During high season guests have to either arrive on a Thursday and leave on the following Sunday, or arrive on a Sunday and leave on the following Thursday.
- On holidays that occur during the low season, it is requested a 3-day minimum stay.
- The hotel reserves the right to cancel or replace any regular activity if environmental conditions are not favorable to its realization.
- The lodge welcomes guests of 8 years and up. Regular rates apply to all guests.

INCLUDED

- Lodging at Caiman Ecological Refuge at Baiazinha Lodge with full pension.
- Snacks during the activities.
- Non-alcoholic beverages.
- All regular activities mentioned above as well as specialized English-speaking guides.

NOT INCLUDED

- Air ticket.
- Transfers.
- Optional activities.
- Travel insurance.
- Environmental fees
- Early check-in or late check-out.
- Alcoholic beverages.
- Personal expenses.
- Tips.