{rokbox title=|Traveling through the Colombian Amazon.|}images/stories/turistainternacional/Quehacer/informeespecial/amazonas1.jpg{/rokbox}

Traveling through the Colombian Amazon /Phot. lcrf /

The department of Amazonas is Colombia's southernmost region, located on the left margin of the river by the same name -the longest and most copious in the world.

The Amazon jungle is also the largest and most bio-diverse rainforest on earth. It is known as the lung of the world and constitutes an immeasurable ecological reserve belonging to several South American countries. It is estimated that the continental area of this vasti region covers six million square kilometers.

For its coasts on two oceans and its banks on the majestic Amazon River, Colombia is known as a country of three oceans; few countries in the world can boast about as many and as copious sources of water and the ecological reserves derived from them.

## Traveling through the Colombian Amazon

An expedition to the Colombian Amazon represents one of the most fascinating eco-tourism adventures in the midst of flora and fauna in its wildest state.

An expedition to the Colombian Amazon represents one of the most fascinating eco-tourism adventures in the midst of flora and fauna in its wildest state. It is additionally an unbeatable cultural experience due to the possibility of journeying to territories where a score of indigenous ethnic groups are settled and to the invaluable natural treasures they guard. The main groups are *Huitoto, Yagua* and *Ticuna*.

## *Leticia*, the Capital of the Departament of Amazonas

To get to the jungle and the river, and their many attractions, it is necessary to fly from *Bogotá* to

*Leticia*
, the capital of the department, near the border with Brazil and Peru.
*Leticia*
is adjacent to the Brazilian municipality of
*Tabatinga*
. In spite of its location on the southernmost tip of Colombia and the long distance from the main cities, it is a dynamic trade center for the two nations.

Leticia is the Capital of the Departament of Amazonas.

Touring the city, shopping, spending time with the community, and crossing the border to *Tabati nga*
are among the first activities visitors carry out before getting on a motorboat to start a true jungle expedition on the respectable Amazon River. During the expedition, visitors become acquainted with Indian families, huge trees, multi-colored birds, reptiles, and, by a stroke of luck, with pink dolphins, the only ones that live in fresh water.

## Navigating the Amazon

{rokbox title=|Amazon River.|}images/stories/turistainternacional/Quehacer/informeespecial/amazonas2.jpg{/rokbox}

Amazon River /Phot. aldaroso /

Although the department is bathed by countless rivers, the *Putumayo* and *Caquetá* among them, it is thanks to the navigability of the Amazon that it is possible to get to know many of the region's charming sites, requisite places among the dense and fertile jungle where a savage feast fuses the sounds of the bountiful flora and the joyful fauna.

## *Amacayacu* National Natural Park

After two hours on the river, visitors arrive at the *Amacayacu* National Natural Park , a majestic 294,000-hectare reserve where 150 mammal species, 468 bird species, and an undetermined quantity of reptiles have their habitat. On the tranquil waters of the vicinity of the park, the *V ictoria Regia*
aquatic lily, with leaves up to two meters in diameter, may be admired.

There are 150 mammal species, 468 bird species, and a large quantity of reptiles that have their habitat at the Amacayacu National Natural Park, a majestic 294,000-hectare reserve.

Thanks to the park's lodging infrastructure, it is possible to visit a large part of the park and its environs for two or more days. Among the many things to do in this protected area are outings on the *Nainekumaw* trail, canoeing on the *Matamata* stream, climbing trees and walking through the canopies, visiting aboriginal tribes, and sailing on the floating house.

## *Puerto Nariño*

A twenty-minute river journey from *Amacayacu* Park takes visitors to *Puerto Nariño*, together with *Leticia*, the only two municipalities in the department of Amazonas. The town stands out for its orderliness, cleanliness, and the absence of pollution, because among other things, in spite of having paved streets, there are no cars. A trip to *Puerto Nariño* 's lookout point is a must. It provides a 360º view over the Amazon Jungle.

## *Tarapoto* Lakes

Following a trip along the road to the town and on the *Loretoyacu* River (a tributary of the Amazon), are the *Tarapoto* Lakes. They dazzle for their cleanness and calm, and because their waters are inhabited by the spectacular pink dolphins. The natives trace the species to a legend according to which the tribal gods were so envious of the handsomeness of an Indian that they turned him into a dolphin. With patience and the calm of this paradise scenery, it is very likely to be able to admire the magical dance of this rare, beautiful species.

{gallery}turistainternacional/Quehacer/informeespecial/amazonas{/gallery}

## *Isla de los Micos* (Monkey Island)

*Isla de los Micos* - Monkey Island - is passed during the journey on the river. It is inhabited by capuchin monkeys that are quite generous in allowing themselves to be admired despite being shy of humans. Before arriving at this island, located in front of the *Santa Sofía* district, there are several natural reserves on the Peruvian margin of the river inhabited by natives of the

*Marashá*
and
*Zacambú*
groups.

## *Tanimboca* Canopy

On the way back to *Leticia*, the closeness of the *Tanimboca* Canopy offers a good opportunity to engage in adventure sports in the dense jungle. Among them are zip-lining on the highest part of the canopy, kayaking, and trail hiking. An excellent program for admiring once and again the biodiversity of the Amazon region. The canopy is reached after an 8-km road trip north of *Leticia*
, on the way to the
*Tarapacá*
district.

## The Colombian Amazon Ethnic Groups

Before bidding farewell to this exotic region, it is worth going to several communities that allow visits to become acquainted with their dances, handicrafts, and typical customs. The *Huitoto* ethnic group is one of them. Undoubtedly, the mysticism of this ancestral family will offer important teachings in regard to respect for nature and our older brothers. There, in the Amazon, the department that covers one tenth of the Colombian territory, humans, plants, and animals show us the infinite sense made by life in its wild, elementary state.

## If you think the Colombian Amazon is fascinating, you will enjoy the following:

- Panoramic photo of Isla de los Micos
- Destination Amazon Jungle
- Golden Pirarucú Festival in Leticia
- Amazonas Video
- Photo Gallery of Foreign Tourists in the Amazon Jungle

- Bird Watching in the Colombian Amazon Jungle