
GEEO ITINERARY

X-Uruguay, Argentina, and Brazil 7/3/2023

Day 1: Montevideo Arrive at any time, but preferably on time for our 6 PM group meeting.

You may arrive in Montevideo at any time today. Check the notice boards or ask at reception for the exact time and location of the group meeting, typically 6:00 p.m. or 7:00 p.m. After the meeting, you might like to take the option of heading out for a meal in a nearby local restaurant to further get to know your tour leader and traveling companions. Please make every effort to arrive on time for this welcome meeting. If you are delayed and will arrive late, please inform us. Your tour leader will then leave you a message at the front desk informing you of where and when to meet up.

Day 2: Montevideo Enjoy a free day in Uruguay's capital city.

Enjoy a free day in Uruguay's capital city. You can hop on a bike and cruise down the Rambla, soaking up the sun and gorgeous views from this coastline avenue. You can visit the amazing Mercado del Puerto where you can sample Uruguay's famous meat right off the grill. You can learn about cowboy culture at the Museo del Gaucho. Or head out of Montevideo and take a day trip to glamorous Punta del Este to admire the upscale beaches, neighborhoods, and gardens.

Day 3: Buenos Aires This morning, you will take the ferry to Buenos Aires. Enjoy the rest of the day at leisure.

This morning, we take the ferry to Buenos Aires. Enjoy the rest of the day at leisure to explore one of South America's greatest cities. Known as the "Paris of the Americas," Buenos Aires is a vibrant city full of life. The capital city of Argentina, it is the ultimate cosmopolitan city. Travelers find that it has more in common with the cities of Europe than the rest of South America. Roughly one-third of Argentina's 45 million citizens live in greater Buenos Aires, and the Porteños are justifiably proud of their home. During colonial days, Buenos Aires was the seat of the Viceroy of La Plata. The heart of the city is the Plaza de Mayo, which has been almost completely rebuilt since the turn of the century. The Plaza features many notable sites worth a visit, including: the historic Cabildo (Town Hall), where the Independence movement was first planned; the Casa Rosada (Government Palace); and the Metropolitan Cathedral of Buenos Aires, where San Martín, the father of Argentine independence, is buried.

Day 4: Buenos Aires (B) Free day to explore Buenos Aires.

Today is a free day for you to get out and explore Buenos Aires on your own. The city is comprised of a number of distinct neighborhoods, some of which have become top tourist draws. For many, the highlight of their time in the capital is a visit to San Telmo for the weekend antiques market and street artists' displays. La Boca was originally settled by the successive waves of immigrants that contribute to the capital's unique character. Its brightly colored walls and buildings draw Porteños and tourists alike. Posh Recoleta, with its cafés, museums, and cemetery, is a pleasant place to spend an afternoon. When you are done exploring, settle your weary feet and enjoy a drink in one of the many sidewalk cafés and restaurants, and you will begin to understand the contemplative Argentine way of life. Buenos Aires will be your last chance, while in Argentina, to try the succulent bifé and parrilladas (two forms of renowned Argentinian beef), so dig in and enjoy! Visit the districts of La Boca, Recoleta, and San Telmo, or catch a tango show at one of the many famous tanguerías. Wander the pedestrian walkways and see some dancing in the streets. Whatever you do, Buenos Aires is sure to leave lasting memories.

Day 5: Buenos Aires/Foz do Iguaçu (B) Fly to the city of Foz do Iguaçu and visit the amazing Iguazú Falls.

After a morning flight from Buenos Aires, our visit to Brazil begins with the magnificent Foz do Iguaçu, or

Iguazú Falls, which converge at the borders of Brazil, Paraguay, and Argentina. Originally “discovered” in 1541 by the Spaniard Juan Alvar Nuñez, he named the falls Saltos de Santa María. The name we use today means “great waters” in the Tupi-Guarani tongue. The Falls are protected by two National Parks – one in Brazil and another in Argentina. Tours utilize trails and catwalks adapted to the landscape of the area, and walking is easy for all ages. The torrential Iguazú River crosses the State of Paraná in Southern Brazil from East to West. A few kilometers before its junction with the Paraná River, one of the most splendid natural beauties of the world, Iguazú Falls, takes shape. Over 2.7 kilometers long and an average flow of 1,750 cubic meters per second, this wonder is located in a very special place. The contrast between the green of the vegetation and the dark color of the basalt rocks with whirring waters plunging from a 72-meter-high cliff is magical. At Iguassu, there are 275 falls in all, spread over a 3-km area, some over 80 m (262.4 ft) in height, making these cataracts wider than Victoria Falls and higher than Niagara! It should come as no surprise that UNESCO declared the region a World Heritage site in 1986. To see the falls properly, you need to view them from both the Brazilian and the Argentinean sides. The Brazilian side offers the grand overview and the Argentinean side provides a closer look. Today, we visit the Brazilian side of the Falls to get a panoramic view of one of the world's largest and most impressive waterfalls. Approximate travel time: 1.5 hrs by plane; 1.5-2 hrs by private vehicle.

Day 6: Foz do Iguazu (B) Explore the Argentine side of the Falls and its trails. Opt for a boat tour. Return to the Brazilian side for a night in town.

Spend the whole day on the Argentina side of Iguazú Falls, exploring the paths over the Falls or experiencing the UNESCO World Heritage site from a boat tour. Tours utilize trails and catwalks adapted to the landscape of the area, and walking is easy for all ages; guided tours of the complex are available several times a day. Some of the optional activities at the falls include: Iguazú Falls Boat Tour (700 ARS per person, 1-2 hrs) Enter the jungle from the “Sendero Yacaratía” and enjoy the panoramic view. Board motorboats that pass through the Lower Canyon of the Iguazú River, and continue to the Falls. After enjoying the view from San Martin Island, sail from “Tres Mosqueteros” to the “Devil's Throat.” Sail along the shore before, and enjoy the splendor of, the San Martin waterfall, a wonderful and unforgettable experience. Foz do Iguazu Helicopter Ride (460 BRL per person) Fly above the roaring cascades of Iguazú Falls on a memorable helicopter ride to get a unique view and take mind-blowing photos. Sit back in the comfortable seats, enjoy the ride, and let the experienced pilot guide you over the immense falls. Foz do Iguazu Bird Park Visit (60 BRL per person) Grab a camera and get up and close and personal with macaws, parrots, parakeets, and over 150 other species of birds. Located on the Brazilian side of Iguazú Falls, the Bird Park is on 12 acres of native subtropical forest. Enter a huge aviary to see the birds free from cages and nets. Check out other exhibits to view butterflies, alligators, and snakes (including boas and anacondas).

Day 7: Foz do Iguazu/Paraty (B) Fly to São Paulo and continue to Paraty. Opt to visit the cachaça distilleries or take a boat ride.

This morning we fly to São Paulo and continue by van to Paraty, a quaint colonial town on the coast renowned for its architecture. Opt to visit the cachaça distilleries or take a boat into the bay to explore the nearby islands and beaches. Paraty is a lovely colonial town. Sitting on Brazil's southeastern coast, it lies on the border of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo states, and it is popular among those who want to get away from it all – Brazilians and visitors alike. Considered one of the world's most important examples of Portuguese colonial architecture by UNESCO, the historic center is a well-preserved national historic monument. Today, the center is closed to vehicles as a means of preserving its laid-back colonial ambiance. During high tide, the Portuguese cobblestone streets are partly flooded by seawater, adding to the fairy tale atmosphere. In the 1700's, when the mines of Minas Gerais were pouring out gold, the perfect bay of Paraty was a busy port, the second most important in Brazil during the “Golden Century.” The best pinga or cachaça (sugar cane liquor) of Brazil was produced here, and the name “Paraty” became synonymous with the liquor. Later, coffee was brought from the valley of Paraíba to be shipped to Portugal, sparking another economic boom. In 1888, with the end of the slavery, Paraty became almost forgotten in time, and a large exodus left only a population of around 600, a considerable drop from the 16,000 when the town was in its prime. In 1954, a road was opened linking the town to the inland through the valley of Paraíba, but it was not until 1973-1975, with the opening of the highway BR-101, that Paraty's rebirth as a tourist town began. It was declared a national monument in 1966.

Paraty's bay, Baía Carioca, is filled with over 65 tropical islands and dozens of beaches, each offering something different, and all covered with vegetation that remains lush and colorful year-round. The water of the Baía is always the right temperature for swimming, diving, and snorkeling. The national parks that encircle the town are filled with trails, wildlife, and waterfalls. Hiking or horseback riding, for the sports-minded, or a jeep or van tour are both excellent ways to appreciate this natural wilderness. Approximate travel time: 1.5 hrs. by plane (Iguaçu to São Paulo); 5-6 hrs. by shared van (São Paulo to Paraty).

Day 8: Paraty (B) Enjoy a free day to explore Paraty. Opt to take a Caipirinha boat trip, go kayaking, or go horseback riding.

Enjoy a free day to explore Paraty. Optional activities include a Caipirinha boat trip, kayaking, and horseback riding. Some of the optional activities include: Cachaça Distillery Visit (90 BRL per person) Tour a cachaça distillery where sugarcane juice is used to create the most popular distilled spirit in Brazil. If it tastes familiar, that's because it's the main ingredient in a Caipirinha, the country's national cocktail. Often called "Brazilian rum," cachaça is so popular, it's produced by 40,000 micro-companies across the country. The blend from Paraty is sweet and salty; taste the sea as you sip this local liquid. Paraty Caipirinha Boat Tour (\$21 USD per person) Home to hundreds of pristine islands and idyllic white sand beaches, it doesn't get much better than the Costa Verde. Cruise up the coast with a Caipirinha in one hand and your camera in the other. Brazil's national cocktail, made from muddled lime, sugar, and locally distilled Cachaça, provides a perfect accompaniment to this marine adventure. Stop along the way to swim in the crystal clear waters or to catch some sun. Snorkeling equipment is provided for those wanting a peek at what is under the water's surface. Kayaking (90 BRL per person, 1-6 hrs) See Paraty's from a whole other level - sea level! Check out the spectacular views of the old town and the coastal mountain range and explore otherwise inaccessible mangroves. Horseback Riding (120-150 BRL per person, 3-6 hrs) Throw on some long pants, grab the reins, and hop up on a well-trained horse. Trail ride through the Atlantic rainforest in the mountains around Paraty. Cross rivers and follow trails lined with tropical trees. Reach a lookout and see the village and the water below. Stop at a waterfall and jump in! Let the rushing water massage your muscles, then hop back on the horses and gallop home. 4x4 Tour (100 BRL per person, 6-7.5 hrs) Hop in the back of a jeep and hang on for this tropical tour. Enter the Serra da Bocaina National Park, visit waterfalls (great for photos and swimming), and step back in time along the Gold Trail road, constructed by enslaved people from Africa to transport gold mined inland and transported to Paraty port, bound for Portugal. Diving Paraty (Price varies) Brazil is a diver's paradise. Its waters include a rich variety of fish, mammals, kelp, and coral. Spot brilliantly colored fish accented against the white sand ocean floor. Keep your eyes peeled for dolphins, sea turtles, and nurse sharks. Paraty boasts at least 10 locations recommended for SCUBA diving. Explore the waters off islands with exotic names - Cocos, Meros, Deserta - and add an unforgettable underwater adventure to your list of most memorable moments. Trindade Day Trip (5 BRL per person) Located about 25 km (15.5 mi) away from the town of Paraty is the small beach town of Trindade. Walk along the sandy beach, play in the water, and opt to go surfing.

Day 9: Paraty/Ilha Grande (B) Continue up the coast and take a ferry to Ilha Grande. Opt to hike to remote beaches. Enjoy free time to relax and explore the island.

This morning, we have a short, scenic drive along the coast to Angra dos Reis, where we board the ferry to Ilha Grande, home to some of Brazil's most beautiful beaches. Enjoy free time to soak up the sun, snorkel, hike, and cruise to various beaches, not to mention feast on fresh seafood and sip caipirinhas in the plaza in the evenings. Ilha Grande truly defines what we imagine when thinking of a tropical beach paradise. Cars on the island are limited to essential services only (fire, ambulance, etc.), it is largely undeveloped, and there are many hiking trails leading to deserted white sand beaches. Once a favored hangout for pirates, slave traders, and, up until the late 20th century, a political prison. Now, Ilha Grande is a pristine remnant of Brazil's Atlantic rainforest. The flora and fauna on Ilha Grande, a Nacional Patrimony protected area, are extremely diverse. The state park was created in 1971 and encompasses 4,500 hectares of wilderness. Mountain range, coastal, mangrove, and prairie vegetation are all found here, along with an astonishing collection of bird life, including parrots, woodpeckers, Brazilian thrushes, and saracuras. There are also different kinds of monkeys, squirrels, armadillos, pacas, hedgehogs, and

snakes, as well as endangered species such as the *Alouatta Fusca*, more commonly known as the Bugio monkey. Approximate travel time: 2 hrs by shared van (Paraty to Angra dos Reis); 1.5 hrs by ferry (Angra dos Reis to Ilha Grande).

Day 10: Ilha Grande (B) Enjoy a free day in Ilha Grande. Optional activities include hiking Pico Do Papagalo or Lopez Mendez, snorkeling, or just relaxing.

Today, we enjoy a free day on Ilha Grande. You might consider hiking Pico Do Papagalo or Lopez Mendez, going snorkeling, or relaxing on the beach. There's plenty to see and do on Ilha Grande, and we wanted to make sure that you had some time to take it all in. Feel free to relax or try some of the following optional activities: Snorkelling Ilha Grande (Price varies) Rent a mask and snorkel, pull on some fins, and get set to enter the underwater world of colorful tropical fish, shells, and all things seaworthy. November through May is Ilha Grande's best time to snorkel. Hotspots include the Blue Lagoon, Green Lagoon, and Abraão Beach. Luxuriate in the warm salt water, look down, and, in some cases, see to a depth of 15 m (50 ft). Hike to Pico do Papagaio (130 BRL per person, 6-7 hrs) Enjoy a guided hike from Abraão to Pico do Papagaio, soaking in the scenery along the way. It will take roughly 4 hours to hike up and about 2 hr to hike back down. The 360 degree views from the top are well worth the effort. Lopez Mendez Hike (Free, 2.5-4 hrs) Grab your bathing suit, slip on your walking shoes, and take the hike from Abraão to the beautiful beach of Lopez Mendez. Follow a well-marked trail up and down, through forests, and past other beaches. Eat Jack fruit picked along the way. Drink water from a natural spring. Listen to howler monkeys. After 2.5-3 hrs., arrive at the stunning Lopez Mendez beach, where the white powder sand yields softly under foot and the rolling green hills provide a stunning contrast to the turquoise water. Ilha Grande Boat Excursion (40 BRL per person, 4-5 hrs) From the main village of Vila do Abraão, take a boat tour to some of the best beaches around the island. See tropical fish and cool off in the salt spray of the turquoise waters. Stop to swim and snorkel and pinch yourself for being lucky enough to partake in this tropical piece of paradise. Enjoy the scenery while drinking a caipirinha, Brazil's national drink. Surfing Ilha Grande (40-80 BRL per person, 1-8 hrs) Slather on the sunscreen, strap on a leash, pull on a rash guard, and get ready to hit the waves. Experience the surf at the beaches off Ilha Grande. Lopes Mendes is a good bet - shallow walk out and steady waves in a drop-dead gorgeous setting. Take a lesson, learn tips and techniques, then hang ten like a local. Ilha Grande Diving (Price varies) Explore one of the world's largest concentrations of underwater shipwrecks, many lost during pirate battles in the 16th-18th centuries in the waters off Ilha Grande. Dive to see the Pinguino cargo ship as well as the remains of a helicopter near Laja do Matariz. Discover massive underwater caves, swim with schools of tropical fish and admire the colors of corals and reefs, in the warm salt water where visibility varies from 6-20 m (20-66 ft). Ilha Grande Biking (Price varies) Fill your water bottle, rent a bike in Abraão Village and get ready to sweat. Peddle to Preta Beach to see the ruins of the Lazareto, which was initially built to quarantine immigrants arriving from Europe until it was converted to a prison, which only closed for good in 1994. Follow the Cascade Path to the old Aqueduct (Aqueduto) and imagine it's 1893 and water is running along the stone structure to supply the Lazareto.

Day 11: Ilha Grande/Rio de Janeiro (B) Travel by ferry and van to Rio de Janeiro. Explore the city on an optional city tour.

Leaving the port after returning from Ilha Grande, we travel north along a dramatic road up the coast through superb scenery before rounding the cliffs at Vidigal, where we get our first glimpse of one of the most memorable cities in the world: Brazil's ocean-side jewel, Rio de Janeiro. "God made the world in 6 days, the seventh he devoted to Rio," so say the Cariocas, residents of this beautiful city. This is a densely packed metropolis of over 9 million inhabitants, whose economic foundations lie in the cultivation of sugar cane and gold mining. Referred to as the "cidade maravilhosa" (Marvellous City), few cities enjoy such a dramatic setting as Rio. Brilliant, white beaches at Copacabana and Ipanema, the deep blue waters of the Atlantic, the luminescent green of Guanabara Bay, and the bare blue slopes of Pão de Açúcar (Sugarloaf Mountain) combine to make Rio unique. Standing over it all, atop Corcovado (Hunchback), is the huge statue of Christ the Redeemer, the best place from which to appreciate the city. Superb panoramic views of the city and area can also be found from the top of Pão de Açúcar, which can be reached by cable car. Head to some of the famous beaches and prepare yourself for an experience unlike anything else on Earth. Although the Portuguese first sailed and entered the bay, it was the French who first established a settlement in the area, logging Brazilian wood along the coast. Their first

permanent settlement lasted a brief 5 years, when they were attacked and driven from the area by the encroaching Portuguese. A series of skirmishes ensued, with the Tomaio people allied with the French against the Portuguese. In 1567, the Portuguese began construction of a fortified town to repel invaders, naming it São Sebastião do Rio de Janeiro. Amassing wealth with the gold rush of Minas Gerais, in the early 18th century, Rio became Brazil's most important city and a great temptation to the French who, in 1710, waged war against the Portuguese, at one point holding the city for a sizeable ransom in gold. Again in the 19th century, under threat of Napoleon's invasion, what remained of the Portuguese monarchy fled to Brazil where they set up court in grand style. Many of today's older structures date from this period. The gold rush was followed by a coffee boom in the mid-1800's and the wealth generated led to the city's initial modernization. Replacing Salvador de Bahía as the colonial capital in 1763, the city remained the capital until 1960, when it was replaced by Brasília. Today, the city is a magnet for tourists who come to walk the beaches of Ipanema and Copacabana and generally partake in the Carioca zest for life. Many ascend Pão de Açúcar, whose image is nearly synonymous with Rio and Carnival. Modern Rio is perhaps best known for the contrasting images offered by the favelas (also spelled favelas; shanty towns), and the glitz and glamour preferred by the Samba schools and their Carnival celebrations. Rio is definitely a tale of two cities: the city is divided into a Zona Norte (North Zone) and a Zona Sul (South Zone) by the Serra da Carioca, steep mountains that are part of the Parque Nacional da Tijuca. These mountains descend to the edge of the city center, where the two zones meet. The upper and middle classes reside in the Zona Sul, the lower class in the Zona Norte. Favelas cover steep hillsides on both sides of town. Rocinha, Brazil's largest favela, is in Gávea, one of Rio's richest neighborhoods. Most industry is in the Zona Norte, as is most of the pollution. The ocean and beaches are in the Zona Sul. Approximate travel time: 1.5 hrs by ferry (Ilha Grande to Agra dos Reis); 3.5 hrs by shared van (Agra dos Reis to Rio de Janeiro).

Day 12: Rio de Janeiro (B) Depart at any time.

Depart Rio de Janeiro at any time. Want more adventure? Book two or more GEEO trips in the same year and receive a discount! GEEO will give you 10% off of the lesser value program(s) (up to 3 programs). If you don't see a program that interests you that pairs with this trip but still would like to extend your time abroad, let us know. We will work with you to find a non-teacher trip from our tour operator's much larger catalog. Even better, if you are an educator, we can offer still offer you a discounted price on the trip you choose!