**Day 1: August 22**  
Arrival in São Paulo, Brazil, at Guarulhos International Airport (GRU)  
No activities are planned for today so you can rest up from your travels. The transfer to our hotel is included; our hotel is about twenty minutes away and we can organize an early check-in as an option for those that need it. *(Normally rooms can be available by noon, getting into a room earlier than that requires additional charges. Remember, you have at least 1.5 hours to get luggage and clear immigration and customs; there is a restaurant and public areas where you can relax if you don’t want to pay an early room fee.)*

**Day 2: August 23**  
Early Flight to Campo Grande Airport | Explore the South Side of the Pantanal  
We should arrive to Campo Grande about 9:00 AM and are met by our local guides. We drive by van or mini-bus to Aguapé Lodge (around four hours drive time) with stops for mammals and birding on the way there. We are motivated to get there, since this is where we have lunch! After checking into our rooms, we spend time birding around the lodge until the end of the day, looking for birds such the Chaco Chachalaca, Hyacinth Macaw, Blue-fronted Parrot, Nanday Parakeet, Toco Toucan, Lineated and White Woodpeckers, Narrow-billed Woodcreeper, Greater Thornbird, Giant Cowbird, Crested Oropendola, Purplish and Plush-crested Jays, Red-crested Cardinal, and many others. We then gather with friends for dinner and for those that wish, the daily checklist. Accommodations at Aguapé Lodge.

**Day 3-4: August 24-25**  
Pantanal Safari from Aguapé Lodge  
Aguapé is an excellent environment for birdwatching, a place where over 300 bird species have been recorded. The Lodge is located 195 kilometers from Campo Grande city, which has an International Airport, and 60 kilometers from Aquidauana city, which is known as the gateway to the Pantanal. We have two full days to explore from the lodge, plus our pathway coming and going. Interesting bird species are Southern Screamer, Blaze-winged Parakeet, Gilded Hummingbird, Toco Toucan, Pale-crested and White-fronted Woodpecker, Red-billed Scythebill, Helmeted Manakin, and the Scarlet-headed Blackbird. Both days, after an early breakfast, we embark on a safari drive with good chances to see the Undulated Tinamou, Capped Heron, Jabiru, Savanna Hawk, Rufescent Tiger Heron, Buff-necked and Plumbeous Ibises, Roseate Spoonbill, Hyacinth and Yellow-collared Macaw, Red-billed Scythebill, Orange-backed Troupial, and many others. After lunch back at the lodge, we enjoy a siesta in the hot part of the day, and then we make another safari drive until the end of the day, returning in the dark with chances to see mammals like the Crab-eating Fox, South American Coati, Capybara, Marsh Deer, Southern Tamandua, Crab-eating Raccoon, River Otter, and night birds such as Common and Great Potoo, Spectacled and Striped Owl, Pauraque and Scissor-tailed Nightjar. We find this area to be the best place to spot Giant Anteater in the whole region and we make the effort to
find them, so keep your fingers crossed! Each day, we have dinner upon return, and for those that wish, the checklist. Optional fishing with local guides and boats can be arranged while you are at this lodge. Accommodations at Aguapé Lodge.

**Day 5: August 26**

**Birding from Aguapé to Campo Grande**

After an early breakfast we take a bird walk for excellent chances to see Great Rufous Woodcreeper, Blaze-winged Parakeet, Black-crowned Tityra, Chestnut-eared Aracari, and Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl, among the many more. This morning we also enjoy a motorboat excursion at Aquidauana River. This river is full of life with good chances to see a family of Giant River Otters and special birds like Black-collared Hawk, five species of kingfisher, Rufous-tailed Jacamar, Blue-throated Piping Guan, and many others. After an early lunch at the lodge we drive back to Campo Grande, check in to the hotel, and then enjoy a short visit to the “nestera,” a place where a nice concentration of macaws and herons nest near the city. Accommodations in Campo Grande.

**Day 6: August 27**

**Early flight Campo Grande to Cuiaba**

**Northern Transpantaneira Adventure Begins | Pousada Piuval**

After an early domestic flight to Cuiabá we begin the second (northern) half of our Pantanal adventure! Driving south, we reach the famed Pantanal via a paved road to Poconé. En route we have lunch in a typical churrasqueria, and enjoy simple Brazilian-style cuisine. From here, we travel the dirt Transpantaneira Road, perhaps only rivaled by Tanzania’s Serengeti road for spotting wildlife. Our destination tonight is Pousada Piuval. Along the way, we might see Ringed Kingfisher, Red-crested Cardinal, Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture, Toco Toucan, Jabiru, Limpkin, our Capybaras (of course!), Yacaré Caiman, and more. Pousada Piuval is located just 10km from Poconé. This is the first lodge on the Transpantaneira. It is small, about twenty rooms, and part of a large (7,000ha), family-run ranch. After check in, we can stretch our legs on a short walk. There is a lovely pool if anyone wants to cool off with a swim. Accommodations at Pousada Piuval.

**Day 7: August 28**

**Birding & Wildlife Spotting on the Transpantaneira**

**Drive to Porto Jofre | Jaguar Boat Excursion**

After some morning wildlife viewing at the ranch, we depart down the Transpantaneira, keeping an eye out for Red Brocket Deer, Marsh Deer, Crab-eating Fox, Greater Rhea, Chestnut-bellied Guan, Bare-faced Curassow, and a mix of wading birds. Bridges are hotspots from which we can view the presence of a huge food supply; Green Kingfisher, Great Egret, Cocoi Heron, both Bare-faced and Green Ibises, and White-lored Spinetail are just a few species we may see. We pass through scattered palm woodlands, cerrado scrub, and seasonally-flooded grasslands reminiscent of the Everglades. Roadside ponds and canals are filled with waders: Roseate Spoonbill, Plumbeous Ibis, Limpkin, cormorants, herons, kingfishers, and their predator, Yacaré Caiman. July water conditions concentrate the fish for foraging waders like Jabiru and Maguari Stork. At Porto Joffe, the “end of the road,” palms attract several resident pairs of Hyacinth Macaw. From this little town on the Cuiabá River, we board a small boat to reach our lodgings — two days on a lovely houseboat. Rooms are air-conditioned, with private bath. This “floating hotel” allows us to stay close to where the wildlife has been spotted; we explore from the houseboat each day on smaller boats. We check into our boat cabins, have dinner, then have a briefing on safety and wildlife we hope to see. If skies are clear, star viewing is impressive & you can see the Southern Cross! Optional fishing is available while you are on the houseboat portion of the tour. Accommodations in private cabins on a floating houseboat hotel!
**Day 8: August 29**
*Full Day Looking for Jaguar, Jabiru & More | Jaguar Boat or other boat with same services*
Awake on the river to a host of sounds and the sight of macaws and more flying overhead. We use smaller speedboats to spend the day searching for the iconic Jaguar, known for their affinity to water. They are good swimmers, and often lay down along the shore after a swim. Chances are good that we see at least one individual, male or female - or perhaps even together! We lunch on board, take a short siesta (yes, love that AC ...) and try for Jaguar again in the afternoon. Wildlife is plentiful in this remote part of the Pantanal, so once we accomplish the main task (a Jaguar, of course) we have time to admire other species like Giant Otter, Black Skimmer, Pied Plover, Southern Screamer, and Yacaré Caiman. We also visit little streams for skulkers like Pygmy Kingfisher and Sungrebe. By late afternoon we return to our welcoming houseboat. We celebrate our sightings with caipirinhas before dinner! Accommodations in private cabins on a floating houseboat hotel!

**Day 9: August 30**
*Wildlife & Birding on the Lower Transpantaneira*
After two days immersed in the wildest part of the Pantanal, we return north, retracing our route. We are not in a hurry though, and work some of the areas we previously traveled in more detail. Perhaps we find a troop of Black-and-Gold Howler Monkeys, Chestnut-eared Aracari, Snail Kite, Rusty-backed Antwren, Common Tody Flycatcher, White-browed Blackbird, and others species as we drive to our next lodge. We watch for Cream-colored Woodpecker, Ashy-headed Greenlet, Short-crested Flycatcher, Mato Grosso Antbird, Great Antshrike, and Purple-throated Euphonia. Near water we find Whistling and Capped Herons, Pygmy and Ringed Kingfishers, Sunbittern, Black-collared and Great Black Hawks, and Rusty-backed Spinetail. Once we arrive at the Mato Grosso Hotel on the Rio Pixium, we settle in and check the feeders for brilliant-colored toupials, Palm, Silver, and Sayaca Tanagers, and Red-crested Cardinal. At this point in our journey we have seen numerous mammals and birds, and we can base our efforts on finding anything missing from our list that we hope to see. Accommodations at the Mato Grosso Hotel, Rio Pixiam.

**Day 10: August 31**
*Pixaim River Area Wildlife & Birding*
It’s another morning for gazing at the sunrise while sipping good Brazilian coffee. This morning, pending what we still need to see, we can do a safari drive, or we can take a small boat ride on the Pixaim River to spot secretive species like Agami and Zig-Zag Heron. This is a good spot for Giant Otters and, with luck and some searching, a Tapir. Driving back to Cuiabá, the landscapes are iconic and make for great pictures. We look for Black-capped Donacobious, Green-and-rufous Kingfisher, Little Blue Heron, and other species like some very impressive iguanas. We can break up our drive with a walk in Gallery Forest habitat looking for special birds like Helmeted Manakin, Mato Grosso Antbird, Band-tailed Antbird, Black-hooded Tanager, Blue-crowned Trogon, and more. Dinner finds us sampling authentic Grosso cuisine, including legendary piranha and local beef. Accommodations at the Mato Grosso Hotel, Pixium River.

**Day 11: September 1**
*Wildlife Viewing | Return Drive to Cuiabá*
Today, we make our way back to Cuiabá; the paved road is perhaps a welcome sight as we bid adieu to the marvelous but often dusty Pantanal. Our plan is to arrive in Cuiabá in time for connections to São Paolo for evening flights out. Plan on flights after 4:00PM. For those not finding a good match up, you can return to GRU and overnight, or simply overnight at a hotel we regularly use in Cuiabá and start fresh the following day.