Eagle-Eye Tours

# Iguazu Falls Extension Itinerary

Link: Iguazu Falls Extension

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## Tour Overview

Many of our guests arriving to enjoy our Patagonia Wildlife Safari also choose to join the Iguazu Falls birding pre-tour. It is relatively convenient to experience this natural wonder while in the general vicinity, based out of Buenos Aires (which is also worth a couple days' worth of exploring!). Iguazu does not fall into the category of "If you've seen one waterfall, you've seen them all," and it takes more than a day to explore the actual falls.

Like the other great waterfalls of the world, Iguazu provides a different experience depending on water levels. If in flood, a visit can be overwhelming, but at any moment the experience of hiking the walkways above and below the falls is simply nature at its finest. And when a small group of Plush-crested Jays or Toco Toucans arrive on the scene it is icing on the cake. The subtropical Atlantic Rainforest of Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay hosts a large diversity of endemic birds and other rainforest specialties that seem more common here than in the Amazon.

We explore the national park surrounding the falls on the Argentine side, which is extensive and offers a chance to encounter animals that require larger tracts of forest such as piping-guans. During our visit we explore the falls several times and also go farther afield to varied habitats that host a suite of different species. Guests can expect to encounter one or two dozen Atlantic Rainforest endemics during the tour along with several mammals and reptiles, and are guaranteed to fill memory cards, and, more importantly, memories, with the drama of Iguazu Falls.

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## Itinerary

#### Day 1: Arrival in Buenos Aires

Meet for an evening meal if your flights allow to discuss our Iguazu Falls birding pre-tour. Night in Buenos Aires.

**Day 2: Flight to Iguazu**



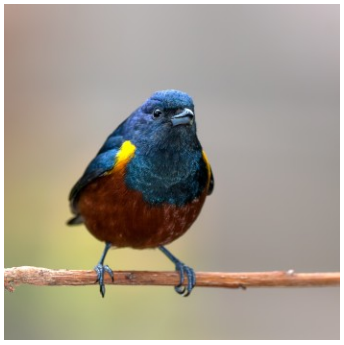
After breakfast we catch a morning flight to Iguazu. We arrive to the airport and we'll head straight to the national park where most of the action is, including lunch. We may have our first glimpse of Toco Toucan in the parking lot and any number of other Atlantic rainforest specialties. This habitat is only a remnant of a once-vast forest and therefore many of the species we'll encounter are endemic or difficult to find elsewhere. The Argentine side of Iguazu hosts a large, contiguous tract of intact Atlantic rainforest in a subtropical climate. The falls themselves are a large, spectacular network of various cascades, some of which almost don't seem real. We'll choose one of numerous trails that best suits afternoon photography and wildlife viewing. Today we just get a taster of what these falls are all about. In the evening we'll drive into town and enjoy a patio dinner at a quaint restaurant featuring some classic Argentine fare: beef and wine (but tasty, non-meaty offerings exist!). Night in Puerto Iguazu.

**Day 3: Iguazu National Park**



We'll spend a full day exploring Iguazu National Park where over 350 bird species have been sighted. We'll see other interesting wildlife such as the Argentine Tegu lizard and overly friendly coatis and monkeys too. Birds are abundant and include such Atlantic forest beauties as Surucua Trogon, Swallow-tailed Manakin, Green-headed Tanager, Blond-crested Woodpecker, and Black-fronted Piping-Guan. But none is more emblematic of the falls than the Great Dusky Swift, seen powering over and around the impressive cascades themselves. As for this magnificent spectacle, Iguazu Falls really is a must-see and we will be right in the heart of the action. Today we'll explore at least two trails that lead us over the top or below the falls and coincidentally past some spectacular birding and photographic areas. When we don't want to walk, there is a small train that can take us around the park.

**Day 4: Urugua-í Provincial Park & Mainumby Reserve**



Today we'll travel farther afield, leaving the Iguazu Falls area to explore another large parcel of forest to the south, within Urugua-í Park. The commute will allow us to see some of the countryside of Misiones province. Near the park headquarters we'll choose a trail where we can enter the forest on the lookout for more exciting birds. One of these is the mysterious Spotted Bamboowren, which has recently been deemed a relative of the tapaculos (after variously being grouped with wrens, antbirds, and gnatcatchers). Either way, it's another sought-after Atlantic forest endemic! Others that can be more easily found include Chestnut-bellied Euphonia, Robust Woodpecker, White-browed Warbler, Tufted Antshrike and Rufous Gnateater. With much luck, we could encounter something rarer like the Helmeted Woodpecker, Bay-ringed Tyrannulet or Canebrake Groundcreeper. We continue to Mainumby Reserve, arriving in time for lunch. After lunch, we will explore one of the reserve's forest trails before spending time birding around its renowned feeders, which regularly attract an impressive variety of Atlantic Forest species. Among the highlights we hope to find here are Tataupa Tinamou, King Vulture, Red-breasted Toucan, and even the striking Ultramarine Grosbeak. In the late afternoon, we depart Mainumby Reserve and return to Puerto Iguazú. Here we'll visit some excellent hummingbird gardens where Black Jacobin and Swallow-tailed Hummingbird can be found, and Violaceous Euphonia. There is also a tract of rainforest near the hotel that is excellent for birds including Buff-bellied Puffbird, Sibilant Sirystes and Black-goggled Tanager. Night in Puerto Iguazu.

**Day 5: Route 101**



A final morning on an excellent secondary road nearby the airport gives us a chance to clean up on some other interesting birds and wildlife. Harpy Eagle has been recorded here in recent years but for regular birds it is a particularly good location for Ochre-collared Piculet, Pavonine Cuckoo, Slaty-breasted Wood-Rail and up to five species of foliage-gleaner! Ocelot has been sighted in previous years. Before our afternoon flight back to Buenos Aires we may have a chance to view the falls one last time. Dinner and night in Buenos Aires.

**Day 6: Buenos Aires**

This morning we are back in Buenos Aires for a relaxing breakfast before the main Patagonia Wildlife Safari tour starts later in the afternoon. You have the morning to explore downtown Buenos Aires. Lunch on your own.

# What to Expect

**Overview**

The Iguazu Falls tour is a moderately paced birding tour. You can expect early mornings and long days in the field. We may take a midday siesta.  Please keep in mind that birding in the dense subtropical forest can be challenging.

**Food**

We generally have breakfast at the hotel before we head out for the day. We sometimes take a picnic lunch in the field, but will often stop at a restaurant. Dinner is usually at the lodge or a nearby restaurant, and is usually served quite late. Each evening after dinner we compile the day's checklist, review the day's activities, birds, mammals and other observations, and plan the next day's activities.

**Accommodation**

Accommodations range from standard hotel rooms to rustic lodges, close to our birding locations.

**Walking**

We focus heavily on the waterfalls area, which is inside a popular national park with restaurants and gift shops, but also plenty of greenspace. Exploring the falls involves easy to moderate walking along boardwalks and overlooks. We walk a slow pace and the longest walk will be 2 miles but we could spend up to 5 hours on a walk of that length. This walk may be slippery with uneven surfaces; the condition depends on how much maintenance the park custodians have completed recently. There's an option to remain with the driver and van next to a creek.

**Driving**

There will be a small amount of driving each day to get to each location.

**Climate**

Expect warm to hot weather with a chance of showers in this subtropical border area next to Brazil. It should be the dry season but the falls can be pumping due to rains in the Amazon. Comfortable hiking shoes are fine. If you are connecting to the Patagonia Wildlife Safari, you can leave your cold weather clothing at the hotel in Buenos Aires.

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# What's Included

**Tour Price Includes**

• 2 nights in Buenos Aires, 3 nights in Puerto Iguazu
• All Meals and soft drinks from Dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on day 6
• Roundtrip flights between Buenos Aires and Iguazu
• Airport transfers
• Ground transportation
• National Park entrance fee
• Gratuities to local guides
• Local birding guide on four days
• 4-8 Participants will be guided by one EET guide, 9-12 participants will be guided by 2 guides

**Tour Price Does Not Include**

• Travel to and from start/end location
• Arrival transfer from airport to hotel in Buenos Aires
• Travel Insurance
• Items of a personal nature
• Alcoholic Beverages