

BRAZIL'S WILDSIDE: HYACINTH VALLEY LODGE AT PARNAIBA HEADWATERS NATIONAL PARK



Every half-century or so, an amazing new wildlife destination bursts onto the South American scene. Such is the case for Hyacinth Valley, of the sunny, dry forests of central Brazil. No other destination in Brazil offers so much charismatic wildlife in so little time—and with so much comfort.

Our new lodges are located at Brazil's new, 1.9-million-acre (730,000-hectare) Parnaíba Headwaters National Park. At one third the size of New Jersey, the PHNP is Brazil's largest park outside the Amazon and protects far more dry tropical forest than any other reserve on Earth. Only 10% of the world's original dry tropical forest remains today, while half of all wet tropical forest still stands. Therefore, the Parnaíba Headwaters National Park is exceptional conservation importance. To put this in perspective within the South American conservation scene, this is the sixth largest of Brazil's 52 national parks.

From the comfort of Hyacinth Valley, you can see some of the most exciting wildlife in Brazil. The park harbors more than 1,500 Hyacinth Macaws, or 50-100 times more than any other national park in the world. It also is the most important reserve for the endangered Maned Wolf, which is the world's largest and most beautiful canid. Finally, PHNP is the only place on Earth where Brown Capuchin Monkeys demonstrate the world's most complex tool use by nonhuman primates. Moreover, Hyacinth Valley is easy and fun to visit at any time of year, as it never floods and is virtually free of mosquitoes.

Enjoy a wildlife experience you thought was available only to National Geographic photographers, and at a surprisingly affordable price. We recommend 5 nights at a combination of the two sites to properly view all four of the unique wildlife spectacles: Maned Wolves, tool-using Brown Capuchin Monkeys, and separate, large flocks of Hyacinth and Greenwinged (Red-and-Green) Macaws at close range. All the additional wildlife and world-class scenery represents "icing on the cake". These attractions peak during the months of February through August, but there is excellent wildlife viewing in every month of the year.

Reservations: Phone/Fax: 55 65 3682 3175 - e-mail: santatereza@vsp.com.br

An explosion of color streaks across the blue sky – gliding gracefully and majestically. With one arrogant squawk the flying bouquet reveals itself – a large flock of Hyacinth macaws, as ubiquitous here as other extremely rare animals and all observable in their stunning habitat.



And what a habitat it is! Three-hundred-meter-tall, red sandstone cliffs tower over sweeping grasslands sprinkled with Mauritia palm groves and dry forest trees. Within this expansive, yet remote wilderness of central Brazil, the country's best wildlife observation awaits you. And so does a comfortable night's sleep.

Welcome to the Hyacinth Valley Lodge, located in the heart of the wooded savannah ecosystem that covers much of central Brazil. There are no biting insects and our lodges offer you a chance for up close observation of Hyacinths, other macaws, tool-using "Einstein monkeys" and the spectacular Maned Wolf.

Responsible tourism is contributing directly to the maintenance and expansion of the 8,000-hectare reserve. The reserve is vital for the conservation of this ecosystem, considering lands to the south are being increasingly cleared for agriculture.

Guests are accommodated in double occupancy brick bungalows, each with its own private, tiled bathroom with sun-heated warm showers from noon until mid-evening.

Meals are served in an open-air, thatched dining room where you sample delightful home cooking under luminescent night skies. Bird feeding platforms within a few feet of the headquarters draw a wide variety of

Reservations: Phone/Fax: 55 65 3682 3175 - e-mail: santatereza@vsp.com.br

tanagers and other small birds, making close range photography fun and easy.

Day 1 – Brasília to Hyacinth Valley Lodge

In the morning you will transfer to the Brasília or Salvador airport to board the Abaeté Airlines flight to Barreiras in the state of Bahia. In Barreiras you will be met by our bilingual, naturalist guide and driven in an air-conditioned vehicle for 150 miles north to the scenic cliff and valley region of Hyacinth Valley. In the early evening there is an excellent chance that a Maned Wolf, one of the most beautiful wolves or wild dogs in the world, will wander close to the camp during its hunt for mice. L, D

Day 2 – Hyacinth Valley Lodge

Early morning visit to a blind overlooking a feeding site for a large flock of Hyacinth Macaws. Viewing scores of the world's largest and most spectacular parrots at such close range in their natural environment is pure magic. Rays of golden morning sun illuminate the birds as they feed, rendering pictures of azure splendor. We watch them feed on their staple palm nut and playfully jockey for position on favorite perches in the trees that surround the blind. We then return to camp for a full, relaxing breakfast. The balance of the day is enjoyed hiking from the camp to look for birds or swimming in a nearby crystalline river. In the afternoon, we return to the Hyacinth blind (hide), where the birds feed once again. B, L, D

Day 3 – Hyacinth Cliffs Reserve day trip

We rise early again to view the Hyacinths. After breakfast, we grab our daypacks for the journey out to the Hyacinth Cliffs Reserve located in the Parnaíba Headwaters National Park. On the leisurely two hour journey to the Reserve, travelers may encounter Burrowing Owls, Red-legged Seriemas, Greater Rheas, Toco Toucans, Blue-and-Gold Macaws, Red-bellied Macaws, Blue-fronted Amazon Parrots, Jenday Conures (Sun Parakeets), Savannah Hawks, or any of the other over 200 bird species that call the reserve home. We return to Hyacinth Valley Lodge in the early evening. B, L, D

Day 4 – Hyacinth Valley Lodge to Greenwing Valley Lodge

After breakfast we drive for about two hours to the breathtaking Greenwing Valley site. From here we head to a blind to watch the antics of the amazing, tool-using Brown Capuchin Monkeys, who demonstrate why they have been nicknamed "the Einstein monkeys". In an amazing demonstration of tool use, they dead-lift large stones weighing half their body mass and smash them down on golf-ball-sized palm nuts that they place on large stone anvils. This unique behavior is found only at Greenwing Valley, and has been the subject of a 2004 BBC-TV documentary, coverage in National Geographic Magazine, and a December 2004 report in the prestigious journal "Science".

Reservations: Phone/Fax: 55 65 3682 3175 - e-mail: santatereza@vsp.com.br

This last report led to a host of newspaper coverage worldwide. This amazing tool use takes place 9-25 m from the visitors. We will overnight in new, double occupancy bungalows with private bathrooms close to the capuchins and other creatures such as the Great Potoo and Horned Screamer. This location is also famous, of course, for its many Greenwinged Macaws (also called Red-and-Green Macaws), which give the valley its name. B, L, D

Day 5 – Greenwing Valley Lodge to Hyacinth Valley Lodge

We're again enchanted by Capuchin activity OR we spend time in a strategically-located blind ("hide") to watch flocks of Greenwinged Macaws foraging on the ground and in low trees on some of their favorite wild nuts—a different nut species than the one favored by the Hyacinths. This Greenwinged Macaw spectacle, which takes place 10-20 m from the viewer, offers Brazil's finest viewing and photo-opportunities for either of the two macaw red species—rivaling the amazing assemblages of red macaws at the macaw clay licks of Peru. After lunch we head back to the Hyacinth Valley Lodge. If time permits, on the way we stop at a lovely, century-old grove of mango trees, where groups of Black-and-Gold Howler Monkeys perch on trees, curiously scrutinizing our bewildered stares. B, L, D

Day 6 – Hyacinth Valley Lodge to Barreiras to Brasília or Salvador

We have a final chance to visit the Hyacinth Macaws foraging near our photo blind before setting off on the return journey to Barreiras, and the morning (Brasilia) or afternoon (Salvador) turboprop flight on Abaeté Airlines. B

Departs every Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday (minimum 2 passengers). Price per person in double accommodation – \$1,447.00 Single Supplement – \$339.00

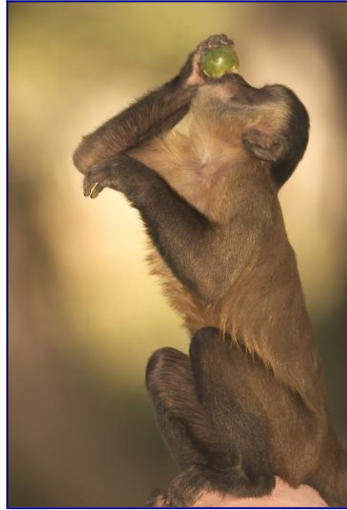
The trip cost includes:

All ground transportation as detailed in the itinerary Barreiras – Projects - Barreiras (4x4 car and/or microbus with A/C); Meals as indicated; Accommodation in DBL at the Hyacinth Camps and DBL walk in tents in Green Wing Valley. English speaking guide.

The price does not include:

International airfares; Domestic airfares; Excess baggage charges; Meals unless indicated; Alcoholic beverages at mealtimes; Gratuities; Items of a personal nature (such as telephone and fax charges, internet charges, laundry, services and hotel minibar). Travel insurance

Flights to Barreiras from Brasilia (BSB) or Salvador (SSA) : Abaeté Linhas Aéreas – From Monday to Friday.



Reservations: Phone/Fax: 55 65 3682 3175 - e-mail: santatereza@vsp.com.br