

River trip journal

Sunday 16th May 2010
Brazil, South America

Day 1

Today was the first day of my incredible river trip down the Iguazu River. I woke up to a golden sunrise and the sound of exotic birdlife. Full of excitement, my fellow travellers and I ate a delicious breakfast of bananas and corn cakes. I couldn't finish it because of the butterflies in my stomach!

We began our journey in a small, wooden boat. It smelt of river water but was very comfortable. I grabbed an oar and rowed gently down the river. The waters were calm here, so the rowing was easy. It gave me a chance to really take in the beautiful surroundings.

The river cut through a rainforest teeming with life! Above our heads flew rainbow-coloured birds with loud, musical calls. On the lush, green river banks, we spotted stunning pink and yellow flowers and soft tufts of graminea grass. To my surprise, I even caught a glimpse of a caiman in the river! At first, I thought it was a rock because of its green, bumpy camouflage. Our guide told us not to worry as it was small and was a long way from our boat! After an amazing first day, we set up camp in the hot, humid rainforest.

Day 2

Our rest day by the river was magical. We fished in the river for hours but we were never bored. The song of the rainforest entertained us and each tug on the fishing rod filled me with hope and excitement. Back at the camp, and feeling rather sweaty, I helped to prepare a tasty dinner of golden corn cakes and white fish called dorado. As we cooked on an open fire, the scent of smoky fish wafted through our camp, making our mouths water! It must have attracted some animal interest too, as we had a visit from a cheeky coati racoon. It had rusty brown fur, a stripy tail, a long nose and beady black eyes.



One of the visitors fed it some corn, but our guide shooed it away. She said we mustn't encourage them to eat human food.

After dinner, we sat around the fire and told each other stories. One of our group members even sang and played guitar. The music was like a lullaby and soon made me very sleepy. I crawled back to my cosy tent, but my sleep didn't last long. I was woken up by the high-pitched buzzing of a mosquito and then I felt the sharp stab of its bite.

I am still scratching my swollen bites. I hope I can get some cream to help the itching tomorrow.

Day 3

Today was unforgettable! We travelled further down the river and watched it widen towards the famous Iguazu Falls. I have always wanted to come here, so my dream has come true! As we neared the falls, I could hear the gushing roar of the waterfall getting louder and louder. The ripples on the water's surface became more like waves and the boat was moving faster. My heart beat like a drum as I helped steer the boat through the rapids.

On the river banks, I could see brightly-coloured butterflies and birds. I even spotted a toucan – the most famous bird of South America (in my opinion!). Its huge bill was orange with a curved, black tip. I think it saw me looking, as it turned its head and fixed me with its blue eye. With a loud croak, it flew away into the trees. Amazing!

The waterfalls were gigantic and breathtaking. Huge amounts of water crashed down from the wide rocks above, and a stunning rainbow was created in the water spray. I could smell the freshness of the water and felt as though I was standing in a very cold power shower!

My journey down the river was over, but I have taken away wonderful sights, sounds and smells that I will treasure forever. Well, apart from the itchy mosquito bites!

