



# MARGARITA TOURS, INC.,

We are Professional Amazon Jungle Outfitters

---

2009

Dear Folks,

Thank you for your interest in our Peruvian Amazon expeditions. Margarita Tours has specialized in expeditions to the Peruvian Amazon since 1983. In consequence, we know this isolated yet increasingly accessible area of the vast Amazon rainforest and its flora, fauna, native villages and peoples very well. We provide professional travel services to individuals, groups, educational courses, zoos and museums, as well as scientists visiting and working in the Amazon. We'd like to introduce you to this fascinating and beautiful part of the world as well!

We rarely advertise - this keeps our costs down as we are committed to keeping expeditions affordable to students, young people, and ordinary working people so that they too can visit the Amazon. We do the same sorts of things as the high-end companies (only better!) for much less. We are fortunate in having great people on our trips. Part of this is because we are an owner-operated company, so we get to know our clients on a personal basis. The other part of having consistently great clients is that our 'real' marketing is mostly through personal recommendation. Interesting and intelligent people who want to "do" things, recommend us to other interesting and intelligent people! If you found out about us on the web or through some other means, don't feel left out. I'm sure we'll find you interesting and intelligent as well!

We have a high percentage of repeat clients since we do our best to treat our clients right, and to give them an in-depth Amazon experience. We do, however, always appreciate feedback on how to improve our service and how better to meet your needs and wants. Those of you who have been on our trips have all been great sports about putting up with the inevitable "surprises" ranging from weather and river levels to changes in airline schedules – such "surprises" cannot be avoided while traveling in the Amazon. We know, however, that there are always little things that can be done to enhance your travel experience. We sometimes overlook such details, so feel free to bring them to our attention.

We also offer custom-made educational expeditions for teachers and students at all levels. We are a truly eco-friendly organization dedicated to meeting the needs and expectations of our clientele, while protecting the Amazonian environment in a culturally sensitive manner. We pride ourselves on good organization, adherence to a code of ethics, and exceptional expedition leadership, and we provide you with an opportunity to learn from the best-qualified resident biologists in their respective fields.

Naturally, we've been pleased to be included in *Audubon* magazines' listing of **25 Great Eco-Trips** (October 1998), and to have been awarded *Conde Nast Traveler's* magazine **2003 Ecotour Company of the Year** award, even though we have never advertised in those magazines. We take our commitment to the Amazon region and its rainforests, rivers, and people seriously. It was in recognition of our efforts in, and support of conservation, community development, and humanitarian activities in the region that we were awarded the *2003 Ecotour Company of the Year* award. We are strong supporters of Project Amazonas, a USA-Peruvian non-profit organization that works on conservation, health, and educational projects in the Peruvian Amazon.

With political instability and economic crises in many parts of the world, many people are hesitant about traveling outside of their home country. We understand your concerns, and your safety is always our first consideration. For an in-depth discussion of safety issues in the Peruvian Amazon, visit our website and the **Safety & Politics** web page. Please note that the areas we visit are far from the remote mountain areas where cocaine production takes place, and where insurgent groups in Peru maintain a declining foothold. The Amazon lowlands have very little coca production (mostly just for traditional consumption of coca leaves), and were never an area in which insurgent groups operated. In over 20 years of operation in the Amazon, we are proud to say that none of our clients have ever

suffered an injury that couldn't be cured with a band-aid, basic medication, or a quick visit to a local clinic. We have also never experienced hostility of any sort from the residents of the regions we visit, and we work hard to maintain good relations with our neighbors.

While most of our clients decide to visit the Amazon to see its natural wonders, many of them later comment that interacting with our employees and with the local people of the Peruvian Amazon turned out to be one of the most enjoyable aspects of their trip. Peruvians are warm, hospitable and engaging, and are anxious to show off their wonderful country to visitors. If big bustling cities aren't on your "to-do" list at the current time, then the open rivers and majestic forests of the Amazon may be just the change that you are looking for. The small towns and villages of the Amazon complement the natural beauty with their homey and family-oriented atmospheres. You will be as close to stress-free living as you can possibly find anywhere! (And we promise no cell-phone access!).

Please check our schedule of upcoming trips - new trips are added periodically to the website, so if you don't find a time slot that meets your schedule, check back again later, or contact us directly - if possible, we will try to schedule a trip during your preferred time slot. Dates and availability of some trips may change, so always check with us for the most up-to-date information before booking airfares. If you have the opportunity, we hope you'll take a few minutes to visit our website. We always welcome feedback!

If you haven't traveled with us before, we offer a variety of different types of trips that are briefly outlined below.

1. **Biological Field Station-Based Trips** - While our riverboat-based trips are always popular, trips based at Project Amazonas biological field stations have become increasingly popular. By staying at biological field stations, there are greater opportunities for in-depth study of the rainforest, photography, individual exploration, herpetology, bird watching, and so on. Additionally, user-fees paid by Margarita Tours help fund the continued operation of these stations, which are used by students, researchers, courses and eco-tourists. Information on the three Project Amazonas field sites can be found at: (<http://www.projectamazonas.com>).
2. **Bird-Watching Trips** - In December 1997, the very first "**Christmas Bird Count**" (CBC) was conducted at the Madre Selva Biological Field Station by the participants of our first birding trip. Our 'Rio Orosa CBC' has continued most years since! In addition to spending a fun and unique part of the holiday season in the Amazon (no hype, no ads, no jingles!), the information collected is useful for monitoring trends in bird populations over the years, and an observation tower completed in 2004 adds yet more fun to birding. Over 480 species of birds have been recorded at the field sites that we visit, and a detailed checklist is available on the Project Amazonas website as well as in the document center of the Margarita Tours website. The newly published and definitive *Birds of Peru* (2007) is going to make birding in Peru even more popular and rewarding!
3. **Tropical Fish Collecting Trips** - One of our most popular options, the fish collecting trips keep getting better and better. We now have quite detailed species lists available of the fish species encountered in different collecting locations, and with each trip, our veteran trip leaders keep finding new species to add to the lists! We have collected at least a dozen undescribed species and genera of fish from the Rio Orosa and other areas that we visit. Some of these new species are currently being described by taxonomists (some of whom also go on our trips!), others remain completely unstudied. Hobbyists and enthusiasts can still discover new species in the Amazon!
4. **Amphibians and Reptiles** - Over 200 species of amphibians and reptiles have now been recorded at the field sites that we visit, and we have encountered up to 120 species in back-to-back herp trips (a two week period) This is an incredible diversity of herps! An annotated checklist of the herp species is available from the document center of our website. Our photo, herp, and birding trips are very complementary, and herpers, birders and photographers are often together on all of these trips.
5. **Nature Photography and Natural History Trips** - Our nature photography and natural history trips have been an instant success. These trips are based at, or spend considerable time at Project Amazonas field sites, affording the greatest opportunity for maximizing photo opportunities. The photography trips are always led by professional nature photographers who are also well versed in the natural history of the Amazon rainforest.
6. **School and Educator Trips** - The Amazon is a great place for learning, whether you are a student or an educator. We have put together many education-oriented trips that provide students and/or educators with the opportunity for many hands-on activities, from biological research activities, to community service, team-building, to language and cultural immersion opportunities. Contact us, and we'll be happy to customize a program to meet your objectives.

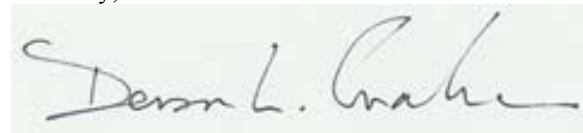
7. **Kayaking Trips** – Our top-of-the-line *Old Town Loon Kayaks* are easy to handle, even for those who have never kayaked before. What an intimate way of seeing the rainforest! At high water, there are incredible opportunities for exploring seasonally flooded forest that cannot be accessed in any way other than canoe or kayak. Silent and easily maneuverable kayaks are a great way of seeing wildlife, from birds to pink dolphins, to insects and monkeys. Kayaking through flooded forest is also a plant-lovers and photographers dream come true! March through June is the best time for kayaking, and we are always happy to customize trips. Please note that there is NO white water kayaking in the Amazon - there are no rapids or rocks to avoid, so you can fully enjoy the scenery and the moment.
8. **Plant Lover Trips** – Whether you are into orchids, palms, ferns, heliconias, fungi, or some other group of plants, the Amazon is for you. The diversity of plants is astounding, and plant lovers will feel right at home on any of our land-based expeditions. Many of our trip leaders are well versed in the flora of the area, and we do organize specialty trips, such as one for the Puerto Rico Heliconia Society and most recently for the Heliconia Society International convention held in Iquitos in June 2008. On any land-based expedition, plant people have plenty of time to search out interesting, rare, unusual, or useful plants.
9. **Family Trips** – Planning a family reunion? Want to just spend some quality time with the kids? What better place than in the Amazon? Outstanding natural beauty, welcoming and down-to-earth people, and a wealth of things to do will make it a family trip whose memories you will treasure for years. Contact us with your desired dates, and we will put together a no-obligation itinerary and quote for you!
10. **Peruvian Highlands and Andes Mountains Extensions** – Peru is such a diverse country that the coast and mountain areas are often described as being a ‘different country’ from the Amazon lowlands. We can put you in contact with professional operators for trip extensions to the justly popular city of Cusco and Inca ruins at Machu Picchu, which can be visited either before or after your Amazon expedition. Though those two sites are the best known, there are dozens of other fascinating places to visit in the highlands and coastal areas of Peru.

**Specialty Trips** – As always, we are happy to continue putting together customized education, research, family, and other types of trips that are not necessarily included in our scheduled departures. Don't hesitate to ask us if you have specific travel or ecotourism needs!

Did we mention that we were very excited and proud that Margarita Tours was selected for inclusion in **Audubon** magazine's "**25 Great Eco-trips**" issue, and more recently was voted as the **best ecotour company** for 2003 by **Conde Nast Traveler** magazine? Of course we did! This has only been possible through the past patronage and feedback of our clients, and because of your interest in the unique types of ecotours that we offer. Take a bow; we have to pass the credit on to you!

We hope you will take the opportunity to travel with us in the Amazon or another of destination in the near future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light green background. The signature reads "Devon L. Graham" in a cursive, flowing script.

Devon L. Graham, Ph.D.  
President, Margarita Tours, Inc.