



REDFERN
ADVENTURES

AKOPÁN & ILÚ-TRAMEN EXPEDITION

Journey into Venezuela's
forgotten lost worlds

AN EXPEDITION INTO THE REMOTE TEPUIS OF VENEZUELA

THE LOST WORLD

Hidden deep within Venezuela's Gran Sabana, Akopán Tepui and the Ilú-Tramen Massif rise above vast savannahs and rainforest, forming part of one of the most extraordinary mountain landscapes on Earth.

Our expedition begins with a spectacular Cessna flight to remote Yunek. From here, we trek through savannah and rainforest to the summit of Akopán Tepui – a lost world of marshes, sandstone pinnacles, waterfalls and extraordinary carnivorous plants.

We then embark on a very different adventure, trekking towards the little-known flanks of Ilú-Tramen. Beneath immense cliffs, we explore remote forests and search for rare *Heliamphora* in a wilderness visited by remarkably few outsiders.



REMOTE

Fly by Cessna into the heart of the Gran Sabana and trek into rarely visited wilderness.



WILDLIFE

Discover extraordinary carnivorous plants, orchids, bromeliads, ferns and unique tepui wildlife.



EXPLORATION

Climb Akopán Tepui and explore the little-known flanks of the Ilú-Tramen Massif.

ABOUT THIS EXPEDITION

The Redfern team has organised expeditions throughout Venezuela's Gran Sabana and tepui region for more than twenty years.

This new itinerary takes us considerably further off the beaten track, combining two very different wilderness adventures to Akopán Tepui and the Ilú-Tramen Massif.

We have worked hard to keep the cost of this expedition as economical as possible.

However, operating in such remote locations requires complex logistics and multiple private Cessna charters (US \$1,500/hour), making this trip a little more expensive than most of our expeditions.

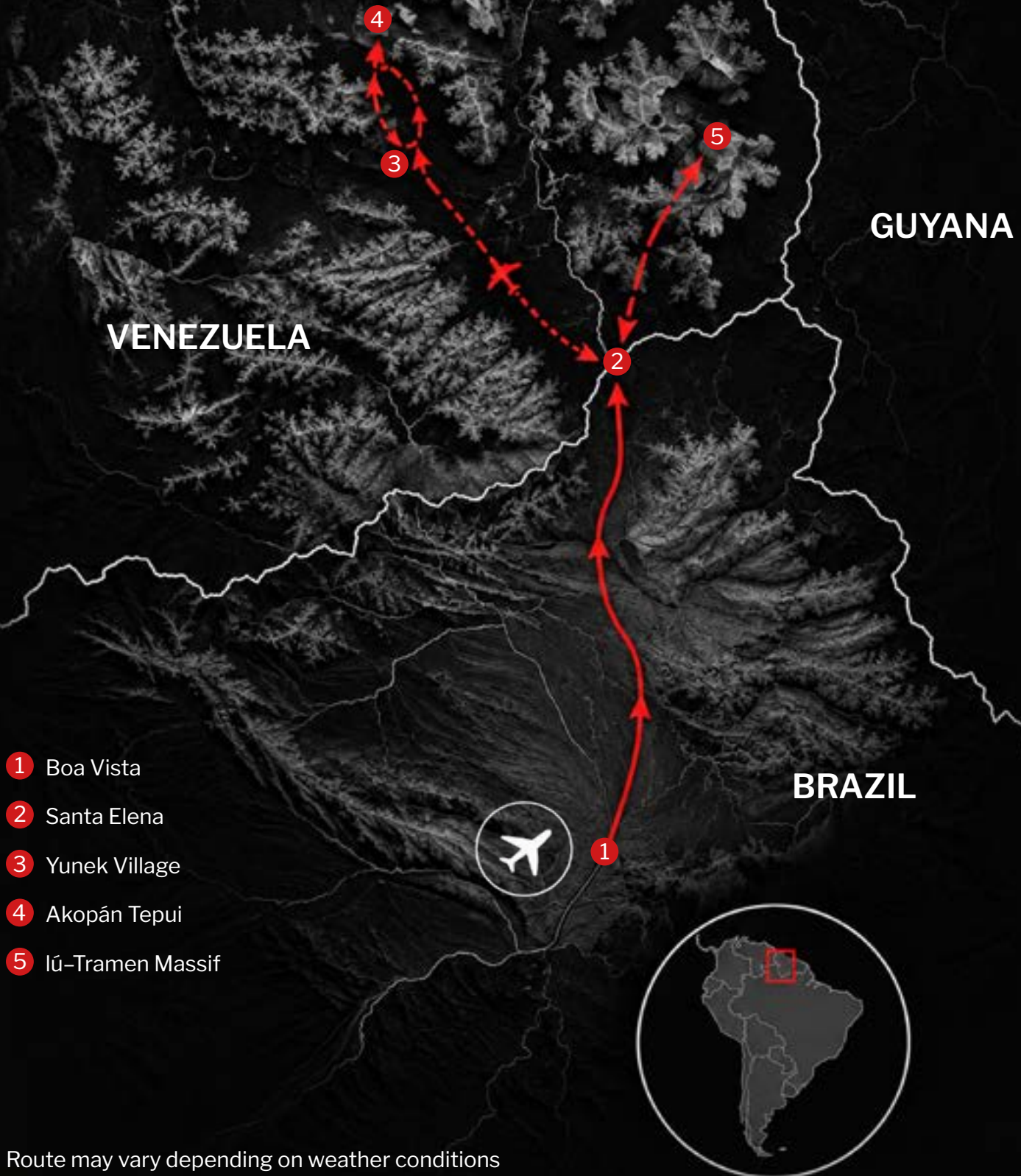
All food, equipment and supplies must be transported into the wilderness, while charter aircraft are required to fly our team into and out of Yunek.

A dedicated scouting expedition is also required in advance to establish the Ilú-Tramen route and prepare the necessary logistics. These costs are essential to make an adventure into these exceptionally remote landscapes possible.



WHERE WE GO

Simplified itinerary



Route may vary depending on weather conditions

EXPEDITION SNAPSHOT



DATES

Only 10 weekdays required. Each trip starts on a Sunday and ends on a Saturday (so you can travel during weekends before / after the trip)

2027

March 7th to March 20th, 2027

We are running this trip after our Auyán Tepui Expedition, so you are welcome to join both adventures back-to-back.



DURATION

14 Days / 13 Nights



START POINT

Boa Vista, Brazil



END POINT

Boa Vista, Brazil



PRICE

US \$4,550 per person

All-inclusive (from start to end)



DIFFICULTY LEVEL

Strenuous – For fit, experienced travellers who enjoy physically demanding adventures.



GROUP SIZE

Up to 10 participants



ACTIVITIES

Trekking, wildlife watching and cultural visits



ACCOMMODATION

Camping and hotels with shared twin or double room as standard. Single upgrade at extra cost.

Prefer different dates?

We can organise a private, bespoke trip to fit your schedule and preferences.



EXPEDITION HIGHLIGHTS

AKOPÁN TEPUI

Journey to the summit of one of the Gran Sabana's least-visited great tepuis. Trek through savannah and rainforest before emerging into a spectacular highland world of marshes, tannin-stained rivers, waterfalls and towering sandstone pinnacles.



CARNIVOROUS PLANTS

Discover an exceptional diversity of carnivorous plants, including *Heliamphora huberi*, *H. pulchella*, natural hybrids and the still-undescribed *Heliamphora* sp. “Akopán Tepui”, alongside *Drosera*, *Genlisea*, *Utricularia* and carnivorous *Brocchinia*.



ILÚ-TRAMEN

Venture towards the remote flanks of the spectacular Ilú-Tramen Massif, exploring rainforest and little-known mountain habitats beneath its immense cliffs in search of rare *Heliamphora*.

CESSNA OVER THE GRAN SABANA

Fly by private Cessna deep into Venezuela's Lost World, with spectacular aerial views across the Gran Sabana and, weather permitting, some of its immense tepuis.



RARE PLANTS

Search for remarkable orchids, bromeliads and ferns, including *Phragmipedium klotzschianum*, *Stegolepis*, unusual *Pterozonium* ferns and many other plants of the Guiana Highlands.

PEMÓN GUIDES

Journey with experienced local Pemón guides and porters whose knowledge makes exploration of these remote landscapes possible.



TRUE EXPLORATION

This is not a conventional trekking route. Our journey to the Ilú-Tramen Massif takes us deep into a rarely visited landscape, following little-known trails. Very few expeditions have explored this area, and conditions on the ground can determine exactly how far we progress. There are no guarantees – but that is part of the adventure.



GETTING THERE & AWAY



GETTING THERE

The expedition begins in Boa Vista, the capital of Roraima state in northern Brazil. Boa Vista is well connected with the rest of Brazil by air. Several Brazilian airlines, notably LATAM and Azul, operate daily flights from major hubs including Manaus, Brasília, São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. Overnight buses also operate between Manaus and Boa Vista.

On meeting in Boa Vista, we travel north by private vehicle towards the Venezuelan border before continuing to Santa Elena de Uairén, our gateway to the Gran Sabana and the beginning of our expedition.

We recommend arriving one day before the expedition begins so you can rest and recover from your international flights.



GETTING AWAY

At the end of the expedition, we cross the border back into Brazil and continue by private vehicle to Boa Vista, where our journey concludes. From Boa Vista, the same range of flights and overnight bus services provide convenient onward connections to destinations across Brazil.

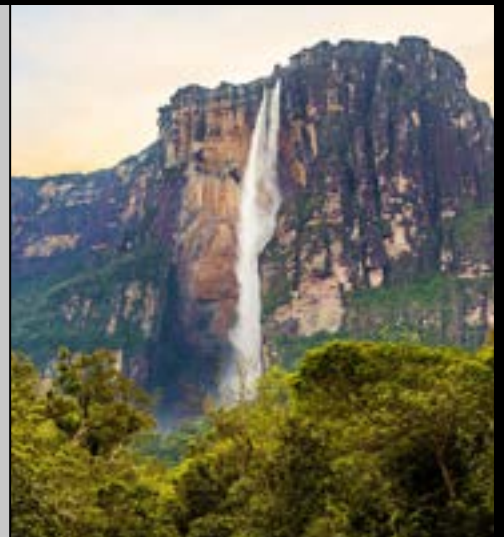
We recommend allowing sufficient time before onward flights in case of delays during the overland journey and border crossing.

EXTEND YOUR JOURNEY

Continue your adventure with an optional extension to spectacular Angel Falls, the world's highest uninterrupted waterfall.

Contact us for more information:

sales@redfernadventures.com



EXPEDITION DIFFICULTY



STRENUOUS

For fit, experienced travellers who enjoy physically demanding adventures.



DAILY ACTIVITIES

A high level of fitness and stamina is essential. No technical climbing skills needed.



WEATHER

Tropical conditions in the lowlands. Cooler conditions in the highlands.



PERSONAL PORTERS

Personal porters can be hired at additional cost to carry your main backpack, tent and camping equipment, leaving you free to trek with a lighter daypack and concentrate on photography and enjoying the expedition.

Please contact the Redfern Adventures team in advance to discuss options and reserve a porter.



This is an adventure in a remote environment. Flexibility and a sense of adventure are essential!

ITINERARY OVERVIEW

From the remote summit of Akopán Tepui to the little-known flanks of Ilú-Tramen, this expedition journeys deep into the Gran Sabana in search of spectacular landscapes, rare carnivorous plants and true wilderness.

- 
- 1 Day 1 Boa Vista to Santa Elena
 - 2 Day 2 Cessna flight to Yunek
 - 3 Day 3 Begin ascent of Akopán Tepui
 - 4 Day 4 Ascend Akopán Tepui
 - 5 Day 5 Reach the summit of Akopán Tepui
 - 6 Day 6 Explore the summit of Akopán Tepui
 - 7 Day 7 Descend Akopán Tepui
 - 8 Day 8 Return to Yunek
 - 9 Day 9 Cessna flight to Santa Elena
 - 10 Day 10 Begin Ilú-Tramen expedition
 - 11 Day 11 Explore the flanks of Ilú-Tramen
 - 12 Day 12 Explore Ilú-Tramen & begin return
 - 13 Day 13 Return to Santa Elena
 - 14 Day 14 Return to Boa Vista

DAY 1 | BOA VISTA TO SANTA ELENA

Our expedition begins early in Boa Vista, capital of Brazil's northern state of Roraima. We will pick you up from your hotel at 8 am.

Travelling in private vehicles, we journey north towards the Venezuelan frontier. The drive takes approximately four hours and provides our first introduction to the vast landscapes of this remote corner of South America. Past groups have spotted giant anteaters along the road north. There are, of course, no guarantees, but we always keep watch for wildlife along the way.



After completing border formalities, we cross into Venezuela and continue to Santa Elena de Uairén, situated on the edge of the magnificent Gran Sabana.

Santa Elena is our gateway to the extraordinary tepui landscapes of south-eastern Venezuela. Here we meet members of our local expedition team and make final preparations for the journey ahead.

We enjoy dinner together before settling into our hotel.

Overnight: Santa Elena.



DAY 2 | FLY TO YUNEK

After breakfast, we transfer to the airstrip and board a privately chartered Cessna light aircraft for a spectacular flight deep into the Gran Sabana. Our destination is Yunek, a remote Pemón community surrounded by some of the most dramatic landscapes of Venezuela's Lost World.

Leaving Santa Elena behind, we fly across an immense wilderness of savannah, rainforest, rivers and isolated mountains. Weather permitting, there should be magnificent views towards the Eastern Tepuis. Depending upon conditions and our flight path, we may also gain aerial views towards Akopán Tepui and the Chimantá Massif, providing our first perspective on the mountain we will shortly attempt to climb.

On arrival in Yunek, we meet the experienced local Pemón guides and porters who will accompany us on the expedition. The remainder of the day allows us to organise equipment, prepare our packs and explore the surrounding Gran Sabana before setting out on foot tomorrow.

Overnight: Yunek.



DAYS 3-4 | ASCEND AKOPÁN TEPUI

Leaving Yunek behind, we begin our journey towards Akopán Tepui, one of the great plateaus of the Chimantá Massif.

The ascent is very different from the dramatic cliff routes used to reach Mount Roraima or Auyán Tepui. We approach Akopán from the rear, where the mountain rises more gradually through an immense belt of forest towards the summit plateau.

Initially, we trek across open savannah beneath spectacular tepui scenery. In suitable habitats we pass remarkable stands of *Brocchinia hechtoides*, sometimes forming extensive fields across the landscape.

As we gain elevation, the open savannah gradually gives way to dense forest. Our trail climbs through beautiful vegetation filled with mosses, bromeliads, orchids and ferns.

Among the botanical highlights we hope to encounter is the beautiful slipper orchid *Phragmipedium klotzschianum*, together with the extraordinary red-bracted *Psychotria elata*, often known as the hot-lips plant.

Progress through the forest can be slow. This is genuine wilderness trekking rather than a manicured mountain path, and weather, mud, vegetation and trail conditions can all influence our pace.

Each evening we establish camp in the forest. By the end of Day 4, we should be high on Akopán and ready to complete the ascent the following morning.

Overnight: Wilderness camps, Akopán Tepui.



DAYS 5-6 | EXPLORE AKOPÁN TEPUI

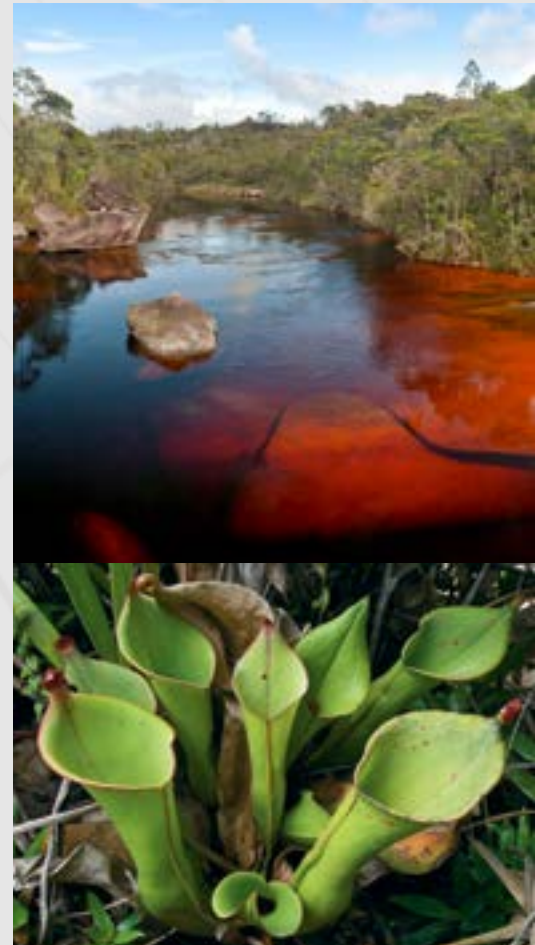
During the morning of Day 5, we continue through the upper forest towards the summit of Akopán Tepui.

As we gain altitude, the vegetation becomes lower and more open and we begin encountering some of the extraordinary carnivorous plants characteristic of the tepui highlands.

Akopán is particularly remarkable for *Heliampora*. We search for *Heliampora huberi*, *H. pulchella* and natural hybrids, together with the still-undescribed plant currently known as *Heliampora* sp. “Akopán Tepui”.

The forest gradually gives way to more open terrain crossed by beautiful golden-orange, tannin-stained streams. Waterfalls and cascades descend through the landscape as we approach the plateau.

Eventually, we step onto the summit.



The transformation is extraordinary. Akopán is strikingly different from the predominantly rocky landscapes encountered across much of Mount Roraima and Auyán Tepui. Here, large areas of the plateau are green, vegetated and marshy, interspersed with dramatic sandstone formations and groups of towering pinnacles.

We have the remainder of Day 5 and much of Day 6 to explore this remarkable Lost World. The exact route of our explorations remains flexible, allowing our guides to adapt to weather, visibility and ground conditions while giving us plenty of time for photography.

Carnivorous plants are abundant. We search for sundews including *Drosera roraimae* and *D. arenicola*, while wet ground, streamsides and marshes support numerous *Genlisea* and *Utricularia*.

Bromeliads include *Brocchinia hechtioides* and the carnivorous *B. reducta*, while other botanical highlights include *Stegolepis lingulata* (right) and an extraordinary diversity of ferns, including unusual *Pterozonium* species.

Animal life is less conspicuous, but we keep watch for frogs and lizards amongst the wet vegetation and rocks, together with hummingbirds, raptors, butterflies, dragonflies and other wildlife.

Overnight: Expedition camp, Akopán Tepui.



DAYS 7-8 | DESCEND AKOPÁN TEPUI

After our final time on the plateau, we begin the long journey back towards Yunek, retracing our route through the upper slopes and forest.

The descent provides another opportunity to experience the dramatic change in vegetation with altitude. Open highland habitats gradually disappear as we return to dense forest rich in ferns, orchids, bromeliads and moss-covered trees.

We continue searching for plants that may have been overlooked during the ascent and take time for photography whenever conditions allow.



As we descend further, the summit landscapes disappear above the forest canopy and we eventually emerge once again onto the open savannah of the Gran Sabana.

We establish a wilderness camp during our descent before completing the journey back to Yunek on Day 8.

Reaching the village marks the completion of the first of our two major wilderness adventures. We enjoy a well-earned meal and have time to rest after our journey to the summit of Akopán.

Overnight Day 7: Wilderness camp, Akopán Tepui.

Overnight Day 8: Yunek.



DAY 9 | CESSNA TO SANTA ELENA

Today we say farewell to Yunek and board our Cessna for the flight back across the Gran Sabana to Santa Elena.

Weather permitting, the flight provides another spectacular aerial perspective over the immense wilderness we have spent the previous week exploring, with tepuis rising above forests and savannahs and rivers winding through the landscape below.

On arrival in Santa Elena, we transfer to our hotel.

The remainder of the day is intentionally free – an opportunity to shower, do laundry, recharge batteries, reorganise equipment, rest and enjoy a substantial meal after our Akopán adventure.

Tomorrow we begin the second and very different part of our expedition.

Overnight: Santa Elena.



DAYS 10-12 | ILÚ-TRAMEN EXPEDITION

We now begin the second great journey of our expedition: a remote trek from the Gran Sabana Highway towards the spectacular Ilú-Tramen Massif.

Our objective is deliberately different from a conventional tepui ascent. We are not attempting to reach the summit of Ilú or Tramen. Instead, accompanied by experienced local Pemón guides, we journey towards the little-known flanks of the massif, exploring an area visited by remarkably few outsiders.

Our route takes us through open savannah, river valleys and increasingly spectacular rainforest. As we approach the mountains, their scale becomes overwhelming. Immense cliffs tower above the forest, frequently disappearing into cloud, while waterfalls descend from the plateau high above us. For the first night, we sleep in the savannah under a canopy of stars.

This is a genuine exploratory trek. Trails may be indistinct or absent, and weather, river levels, vegetation and ground conditions can determine exactly how far we progress.



There are no guarantees that we will reach every intended location or find every target plant – but that uncertainty is part of the adventure.

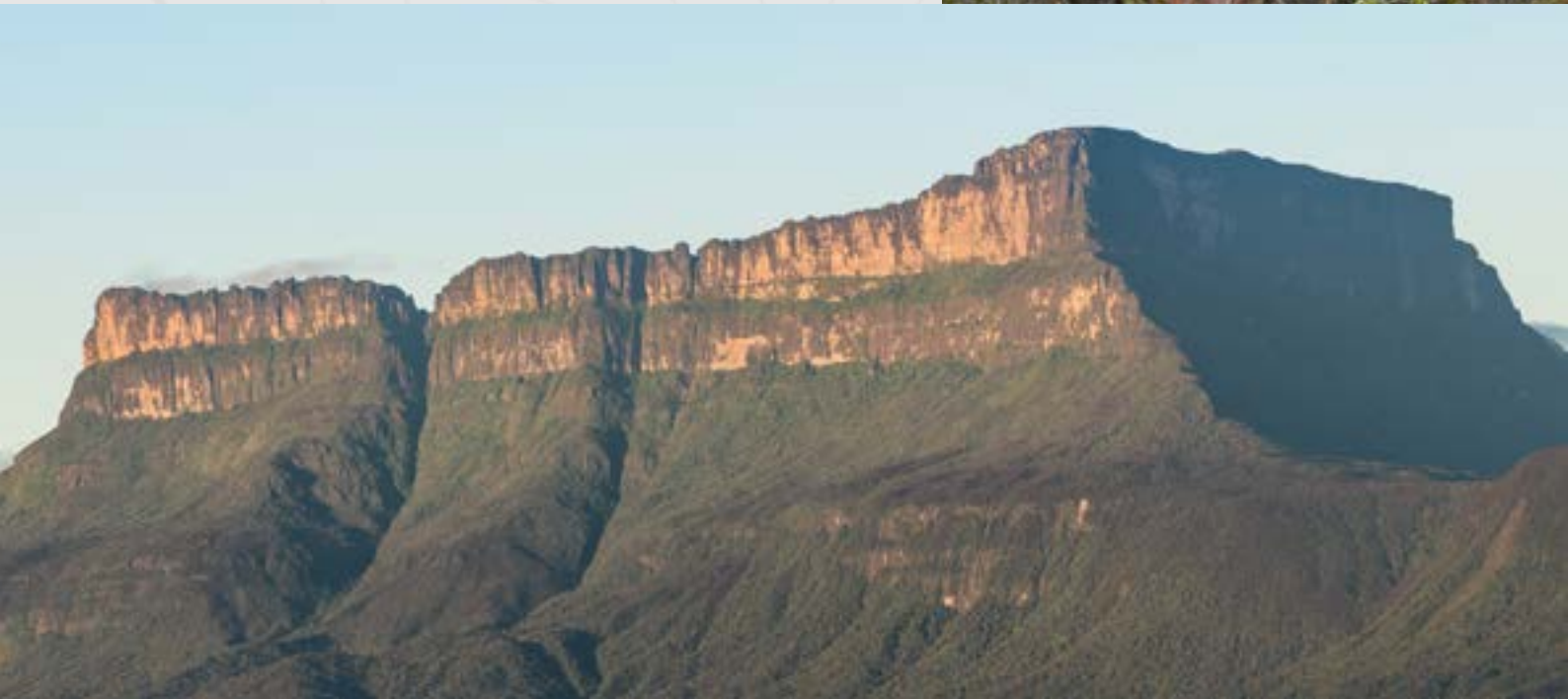
One of our principal objectives is to investigate the extraordinary carnivorous flora of the massif.

Of particular interest is the very little-known *Heliophora arenicola*, which has been encountered on very few occasions. Locating this remarkable plant cannot be guaranteed, but searching potential habitats is one of the great botanical objectives of the expedition.

We also search for the spectacular *Heliophora ionasi*, hoping to encounter colonies growing across wet slopes and cliff habitats.

Other carnivorous plants should be considerably more widespread, including *Brocchinia*, *Drosera*, *Genlisea* and *Utricularia*, alongside orchids, bromeliads, ferns and the extraordinary flora characteristic of the Guiana Highlands.

The scenery is as important as the botany. We trek through spectacular rainforest beneath some of the most imposing tepui walls in Venezuela, passing streams, waterfalls and immense expanses of wilderness.



Each evening we establish camp with our expedition team. The precise route and daily distances remain flexible, allowing our Pemón guides to adapt to local conditions and discoveries made along the way.

During Day 12, we begin our return journey away from the massif, positioning ourselves to complete the trek the following day.

Overnight: Wilderness expedition camps, Ilú-Tramen region.



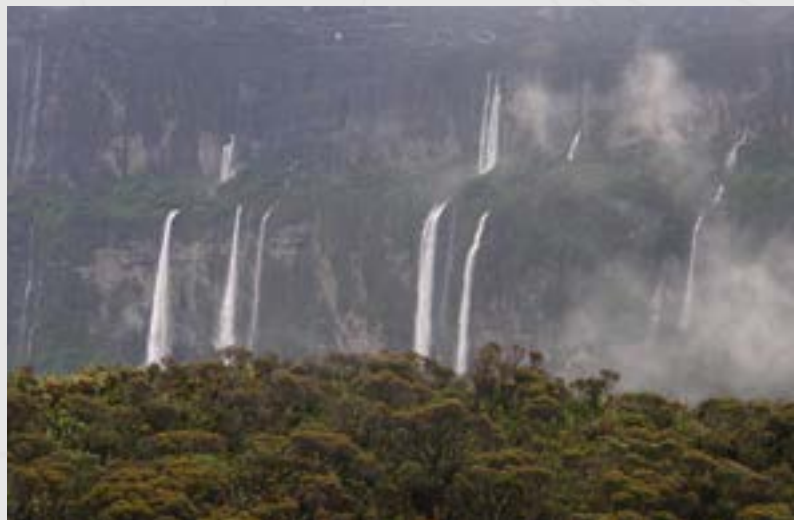
DAY 13 | RETURN TO SANTA ELENA

After our final night in the wilderness, we complete the last stage of our journey away from Ilú-Tramen. As we trek back across the Gran Sabana, we can look towards the immense massif that has dominated the previous days.

Whether or not conditions have allowed us to reach every target locality, our journey will have taken us through one of the least-known landscapes of Venezuela's Lost World.

Eventually, we reach our waiting vehicles and begin the journey back to Santa Elena de Uairén. On arrival, we check into our hotel for a very welcome shower and comfortable night. There is time to organise our equipment, enjoy a substantial final dinner in Venezuela and rest after completing the second of our two wilderness adventures.

Overnight: Santa Elena.



DAY 14 | RETURN TO BOA VISTA

After breakfast, our expedition begins its final journey south.

Leaving Santa Elena, we travel towards the frontier and complete border formalities before crossing from Venezuela back into Brazil. We then continue by private vehicle through the landscapes of northern Roraima state towards Boa Vista.

Over the previous fourteen days, we have flown by Cessna into the remote heart of the Gran Sabana, climbed through rainforest to the summit of Akopán Tepui, explored its extraordinary carnivorous plants and highland landscapes, and undertaken a very different exploratory trek towards the little-known flanks of Ilú-Tramen.

Upon arrival in Boa Vista, our Akopán & Ilú-Tramen Expedition concludes.

ADD-ON TRIP | FLY OVER THE TEPUIS

For a truly unforgettable perspective on the Lost World, we can arrange an optional scenic flight by private Cessna over the Eastern Tepuis. From the air, the extraordinary scale of this ancient landscape is revealed, with immense table mountains rising abruptly from the Gran Sabana, sheer cliffs disappearing into forest and cloud, and vast stretches of wilderness extending towards the horizon.



Weather permitting, the flight offers spectacular aerial views and exceptional photographic opportunities over one of South America's most dramatic and inaccessible landscapes. The cost of the charter depends upon the number of participants wishing to take part.

Please email sales@redfernadventures.com to discuss options.



ADD-ON TRIP | ANGEL FALLS

Extend your adventure with an unforgettable journey to Angel Falls, the world's highest uninterrupted waterfall. We can arrange a spectacular scenic flight over the falls, offering breathtaking aerial views of the immense cascade plunging from the summit of Auyán Tepui.

For the ultimate experience, join our three-day/two-night extension to Canaima, flying by Cessna into this remote wilderness before travelling upriver in traditional motorised Pemón canoes to Angel Falls. We overnight close to the falls and trek through the rainforest to their base, standing beneath a cascade that drops 979 metres from the tepui above. The journey also provides time to explore the beautiful lagoons and waterfalls around Canaima before flying back to Santa Elena – an extraordinary finale to the Akopán & Ilú-Tramen Expedition.

Please email sales@redfernadventures.com to discuss options.



WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ✓ All accommodation throughout the itinerary (shared twin or double room)
- ✓ All meals and non-alcoholic drinks
- ✓ Expert expedition team and professional guides
- ✓ All activities and excursions as per the itinerary
- ✓ All ground transport and other travel logistics during the itinerary
- ✓ All permits, permissions and entry fees
- ✓ Basic medical kit and satellite, radio or emergency phone

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- ✗ International flights to the start point and from the end point
- ✗ Travel insurance
- ✗ Passport and travel documents (e.g. visa, if required for your nationality)
- ✗ Pre- and Post-expedition accommodation
- ✗ Tips and gratuities (optional)
- ✗ Alcoholic beverages
- ✗ Souvenirs
- ✗ Personal expenses
- ✗ Optional single room upgrade



GENERAL INFORMATION



PASSPORT & VISAS

A valid passport is required. No visa is needed for many nationalities (please check for your nationality).



WHAT TO BRING

We provide a detailed list of recommended clothing and equipment.



INSURANCE

Comprehensive travel and medical insurance is mandatory.



HEALTH

Malaria prophylaxis and vaccinations may be recommended. Consult with your doctor for advice.



CLIMATE

Daytime temperatures range from 18°C to 30°C (65°F to 86°F) (cooler at higher elevations)



PHOTOGRAPHY

Endless opportunities for landscapes and wildlife. Bring macro, wide-angle and telephoto lenses.

“In every walk with nature one receives far more than he seeks.”

— John Muir

RESERVE A PLACE

www.redfernadventures.com

sales@redfernadventures.com

READY FOR THE ADVENTURE OF A LIFETIME?

Join us in Venezuela and discover ancient tepuis, extraordinary carnivorous plants and some of South America's most spectacular wilderness.



CONTACT US

sales@redfernadventures.com



VISIT OUR WEBSITE

www.redfernadventures.com



FOLLOW OUR JOURNEY

#redfernadventures



REDFERN ADVENTURES

Extraordinary Experiences. Amazing Places.