



## Sandoval Lodge

Sandoval Lodge has been one of our favourite Peru jungle lodges for several years now, and is a great bet for all you keen wildlife spotters.

Sandoval is the only lodge in the Tambopata Reserve to be situated on the banks of a protected oxbow lake, and this location right by the sparkling waters of Lake Sandoval give unrivalled access to the lake in the crucial early morning and late afternoon hours - the best times for wildlife-spotting and photography - as well as allowing for easy nighttime excursions into the forest and onto the lake itself to look for caiman.

The 25 rooms at Sandoval Lodge all have ensuite facilities with hot showers, electricity and fans, and all sleeping and communal areas are screened, although mosquitoes aren't a great problem in this area anyway. The lodge operates sustainable tourism policies and was built using only mahogany driftwood; it is owned jointly by a non-profit foundation and by five indigenous families.



### Day One - Into the jungle

This morning we will pick you up and take you to the airport to catch a flight down into the jungle, to Puerto Maldonado. From here we will take you on a 25 minute journey down the Madre de Dios River by motor canoe, at the end of which is the lovely Sandoval Lake Lodge. From here the trail takes you on a 2-mile walk or rickshaw ride through secondary forest, until we reach a small canal where we board canoes and are paddled 220 yards through a flooded forest of 100-foot tall Mauritia palms. As the canal opens onto the shimmering surface of the lake, we transfer to a catamaran and are leisurely paddled across half the lake to the lodge.

After some food and a brief rest to avoid the afternoon heat, we once again board the catamaran and set off to explore the entire west end of the lake. Here, in the flooded palm forest we drift to the sounds of hundreds of Red-Bellied Macaws as they return to the palm forest for the night. We return to the lodge around nightfall for dinner. After dinner we will return to the canoes to look for the large and extremely rare Black Caimans. If it is

a clear starlit night, we will also be able to float in the middle of the lake and enjoy the southern stars as they are meant to be seen...



### **Day Two - Sandoval Lodge**

A pre-dawn wake-up call will enable us to be on the lake for sunrise and hopefully an encounter with a family of Giant Otters which frequent the lake and are most active at this time of day. Most of the fish-eating water birds around the lake are active in the early morning as well, and this outing should provide excellent views and photographs of birds like Hoatzins.

After returning for a late breakfast we set off into the coolness of the tall virgin forest near the lake to see some of the towering wild Brazil Nut trees and a demonstration of how our hosts collect, open and commercialize this important natural product. After lunch and a short siesta we once again board the catamaran to explore the eastern part of the lake, where we might see one or more of the five species of monkeys which live in the forest near the lake, such as the Brown Capuchin Monkey. There is then a final chance after dinner to try and spot some Black Caimans on the lake, or to go on a short night walk through the primary forest.



### **Day Three - Last Day in the Jungle**

After a dawn breakfast we take a final, shorter paddle around the west end of the lake to try and glimpse the Giant Otters again before returning to Puerto Maldonado to catch the lunchtime flight back out of the jungle!

