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TRIP DETAILS

11 days ~ Venezuela, Brazil,
& Guyana

7 days strenuous hiking on
steep, uneven terrain

7 nights camping, 3 nights
hotels

2009 DATES

Mar 28–Apr 7

Jun 27–Jul 7

Nov 7–Nov 17

2010 DATES

Mar 20–Mar 30

Jul 3–Jul 13

Nov 6–Nov 16

2009 LAND COST

\$4,395 per person
(6-8 members)

\$4,695 per person
(3-5 members)

\$850 internal airfare



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MOUNT RORAIMA: TREKKING THE TEPUI

**An Anniversary Follow the Leader Trip
with Sergio Fitch-Watkins**

TRIP LEVEL
MODERATE TO STRENUOUS

HIGHLIGHTS

- Challenging 7-day trek on Mount Roraima, the highest of Venezuela’s tepuis—tabletop mountains
- Behold immense waterfalls formed by torrents cascading over the tepuis’ edge, including Angel Falls on Auyantepui, the world’s highest waterfall
- Venture to Lago Gladys and the “prow”—the northern tip of Roraima—well beyond where most trekkers explore
- Explore the high, remote plateaus of Mount Roraima, with its strange, weather-eroded rock formations, natural thermal pools, and unusual flora and fauna

Revised January 14, 2009



MOUNT RORAIMA: TREKKING THE TEPUI

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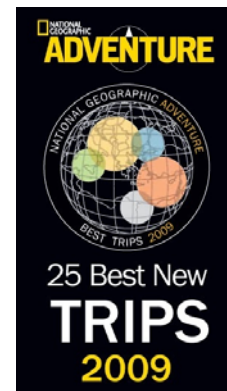
*“The tepuis are one of the most exotic types of mountains you can climb, and are still being studied. Remote, wild, and unique in the world, they even have their own flora and fauna. Sir Conan Doyle’s book *The Lost World* was inspired by them—mountains that are in the middle of the jungle, yet are several thousand feet high. The top is one of the most intriguing places—like a labyrinth—with caves, crevasses, and little pools, and very hard to cross, all in the middle of the tropics! We will climb to the summit and explore (caves, pools, etc.), and ponder how the tepuis were formed.”*

~ Sergio Fitch-Watkins

National Geographic Magazine described Mount Roraima as, “a place in the world that's so remote, few have ever been there, and though you may be able to locate it on the map, that doesn't mean you'll find it.” Fortune hunters long ago were lured by the promise of gold and diamonds in this legendary land of El Dorado, while the real treasure—spectacular scenery and unique species—lay all around them.

In the 19th century, explorers’ reports presented at the Royal Geographic Society flung Roraima into the heated debate over evolution. Scientists speculated that the summit was so isolated—jutting straight up from the jungle—it must be another Galápagos. In 1877, an editorial in a London newspaper asked, “Will no one explore Roraima and bring us back the tidings which it has been waiting these thousands of years to give us?” Inspired by such speculation, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle wrote his 1912 novel *The Lost World*, in which the main character, a professor, encounters cavemen and dinosaurs still roaming Roraima. While it’s hard to live up to legends of pterodactyls, Roraima *is* inhabited by species isolated for millennia, as well as towering waterfalls and enormous mesas that dwarf the few who venture here.

Senior MTS guide Sergio Fitch-Watkins and the local Pemón Indians—who revere Roraima—will lead you deep into this mysterious natural world. The notion of summiting a mountain and hiking across a flattop mesa may at first appear incompatible, but they are in fact complementary on this unique adventure in southeastern Venezuela. You’ll summit Mount Roraima (9,219’), the tallest of the *tepuis*—sandstone mesas that are some of the oldest



Honored as one of National Geographic Adventure Magazine's 25 Best New Trips for 2009!

MOUNT RORAIMA: TREKKING THE TEPUI

geological formations on Earth. Discover an extraordinary landscape of sheer-sided plateaus towering 6,000-feet above pristine rainforests, while the lands to the north offer even more scenic surprises—rock formations carved by wind and water, valleys scattered with precious crystals, and views of Guyana’s dense jungle below. Along the way, you’ll learn about Roraima’s unusual plants and animals that can only be found here. Count on long hikes along a trail that’s technically quite easy, but a formidable ascent considering the altitude, cold weather, and the possibility of sudden storms. We combine vigorous hiking with village tours, and even regional culinary specialties (ants and termites!)—so you may fully explore the stark, pure beauty of this wild and unspoiled region.



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ITINERARY

☞ This trip begins with a rendezvous at the airport in Caracas, Venezuela on Day 1.

DAY 1 ~ Arrive in Caracas

Your trip leader or a representative will meet you outside the customs and immigration area at the airport. He or she will answer questions, brief you on the immediate arrangements, and escort you to your hotel. Caracas, the capital of Venezuela, lies among the valleys of a coastal mountain range where the city's charming colonial buildings contrast sharply with soaring skyscrapers.

D... Hotel Eurobuilding Express

DAY 2 ~ Puerto Ordaz – Parque Nacional Canaima

Early in the morning, transfer back to the airport for the flight to Puerto Ordaz. We then take a charter flight to the Gran Sabana, where we land on an airstrip in Luepa—seemingly in the middle of nowhere—near the Sierra de Lema, a mountain range on the northern edge of Parque Nacional Canaima. The park lies in southeastern Venezuela along the border between Guyana and Brazil. In 1975, it was tripled in size to over 11,500 square miles, making it the world's largest national park at the time. It was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1994. We will enjoy a leisurely afternoon sightseeing in this remote landscape of savanna, rainforest, waterfalls, and remarkable tepuis. Visit 206-foot-high Kama-merú Falls and end the day in Paraitepui, a Pemón Indian village and the trailhead for Roraima.

B,L,D...Camp

DAY 3 ~ Hike to Base Camp

Today we hike across rolling grasslands and several rivers to the 6,000-foot base of Mount Roraima. After three hours of easy walking across rolling savanna, we cross the Río Tek, followed by the Río Kukenán at an altitude of 2,900 feet. As the Kukenán is 130-foot wide, the crossing will depend on the water level. After lunch, we will walk for three more hours; the terrain becomes more difficult as we ascend nearly 3,000 feet before we reach Base Camp at 6,000 feet, where we set up our camp. (Hiking: 6 hrs.)

B,L,D...Camp

DAY 4 ~ Summit Day

Today we will walk an inspiring four to five hours through the tropical forest at the base of the *tepuí*, followed by a steady climb up “La Rampa” to the top—a natural staircase-like path. We will rest and take a snack break at a waterfall in the middle of the ramp, saving lunch for the summit at 9,180 feet. We set up camp under a rock ledge for protection from the strong winds and low temperatures (40°F) at night. These natural caves are called “El Hotel” by the locals. This is no Sheraton, but the stunning views of the savanna below make up for the lack of luxury! (Hiking: 4-5 hrs.)

B,L,D...Camp

DAY 5 ~ Triple Point

Depending on the weather, we rise at 6am to hike two hours to “La Ventana”—the window to the Kukenán—for breathtaking views of the eastern face of Mount Roraima and Guyana's jungles. There are rock pools everywhere,

and in them you may see the black toads unique to Roraima that neither hop nor swim but roll up in a ball to escape danger. Over half the plant species are unique to tepuis or to Roraima alone, including several orchids and carnivorous pitcher plants. After we return for breakfast, we dismantle the camp and walk four hours to the obelisk monument of Triple Point or Punto Triple, the tri-partite border where Venezuela, Brazil, and Guyana meet. On the way we will pass through the amazing Valle de los Cristales, a small valley brimming with quartz. We will camp near Triple Point. (Hiking: 6 hrs.)

B,L,D...Camp

DAY 6 ~ Lago Gladys – Prow of Roraima

Today we walk through a fantasyland of strange rock formations and a lush river valley to Lago Gladys, named after a lake in Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's novel *The Lost World*. Then, weather permitting, we venture beyond where most explorations end at the northern tip of Roraima, called “La Proa” because it resembles a ship’s bow. The jungle of Guyana lies a breathtaking 1,500-feet below. Afterwards, we return to our Triple Point campsite. (Hiking: 8-10 hrs.)

B,L,D...Camp

DAY 7 ~ Return to El Hotel

On our hike back to the “hotels”, we will stop at El Foso, a small, pristine natural pool, for a refreshing swim. (Hiking: 6 hrs.)

B,L,D...Camp

DAY 8 ~ Crossing Ríos Kukenán and Tek

This morning we will make a challenging descent down the ramp, then cross the Ríos Kukenán and Tek before setting up camp for our last night in the savanna. (Hiking: 10 hrs.)

B,L,D...Camp

DAY 9 ~ Paraitepui – Santa Elena

After breakfast, we will leave our Río Tek campsite for the hike back to Paraitepui—a Pemón Indian village, for a memorable cultural encounter and our last lunch. We then ride four-wheel-drive vehicles to Santa Elena. On the way we will stop at Quebrada de Jaspe, where a waterfall and a thirty-foot-wide stream simultaneously flow over a bed of jasper—red and yellow semi-precious stone—creating a brilliant natural phenomenon. Overnight at Yakoo, a charming eco-lodge. (Hiking: 4 hrs.)

B,L,D...Yakoo Lodge

DAY 10 ~ Angel Falls - Caracas

Fly by private charter to Caracas via Puerto Ordaz, taking in stunning views of the savannas and tabletop mountains. If weather allows, we will enter Auyantepui's Devil's Canyon to fly over Angel Falls or Salto Ángel, the world's highest waterfall with a sheer drop of 3,212 feet. Our local representative will assist you with your connecting flight back to Caracas.

B... Hotel Eurobuilding Express

DAY 11 ~ Fly Home

Transfer to the airport and depart on homeward-bound flights, or join an extension to Angel Falls or Los Roques Archipelago National Park.

EXTEND YOUR ADVENTURE!

Now that you've seen **Angel Falls** from above, you'll no doubt want to view them up close! We offer a post-trip extension to the base of Angel Falls. See itinerary below. *3 days. From \$990 (per person, double occupancy, includes internal airfare).*

Or, prefer to complement your trek with some Caribbean snorkeling and relaxation? Join our extension to **Los Roques Archipelago National Park** for Caribbean snorkeling and relaxation. *3 days. From \$750 (per person, double occupancy, includes internal airfare).*

Angel Falls Extension

To get some idea of the wonder of the world's highest falls, imagine twenty Niagras stacked vertically. On this extension we travel by *curiara* (indigenous dug-out canoes) for an intimate exploration of the falls and their beautiful natural setting. Feel the spray on your face and the thundering power in your chest on this unforgettable extension!

DAY 1 ~ Canaima – Angel Falls

You will be met at the Canaima airport by our representative and transferred to Canaima Camp, located on lovely Laguna Canaima. We navigate by boat through the lagoon on our way to the waterfalls of Hacha, Golondrinas, Ucaima, and Guadaima. Once we reach Ucaima Port, we get out and walk to the entrance of Salto Sapo (Frog Falls), where we have the opportunity to pass behind the curtain of the falls for a unique view. Return via *curiara* to our campsite in Canaima.

L,D...Camp

DAY 2 ~ Angel Falls River Tour

Today we rise early and travel by *curiara* to Pozo de la Felicidad (Well of Happiness), Isla Orquídea (Orchid Island), the pristine landscape of Auyantepui, the torrential waters of the Río Churun, and finally Isla Ratoncito (Little Mouse Island), where we will take in the incredible sights and sounds of Angel Falls or Salto Ángel. Our guides prepare lunch and dinner for us in a shelter near the falls. An optional two-hour (round-trip) walk is available to the Laimé viewpoint, which provides excellent access and up-close views of the falls.

B,L,D... Camp

DAY 3 ~ Canaima – Caracas

Before transferring to the airport for your flight to Caracas, you will have time to walk around Canaima's local handicraft shops.

B

2009 LAND COST

\$4,395 per person (6-8 members)

\$4,695 per person (3-5 members)

\$850 internal airfare (Caracas/Puerto Ordaz–Luepa–Puerto Ordaz/Caracas—subject to change. Mountain Travel Sobek will book and issue these tickets for you.)

Rates quoted are per person, based on sharing double accommodations.

Single Supplement—\$450 for “requested” singles; \$225 for “forced” singles. If you prefer single accommodations, you must pay the Single Supplement Fee. If you’re traveling alone and wish to share accommodations, we’ll try our best to find you a roommate. If that’s not possible, we will only charge you half of the single supplement.

2010 LAND COST

TBA—please call for details.

Tier Pricing

Adventure travel works best with a small group of people. In order to operate these small groups, our trips are priced according to the number of full-price passengers on the trip. (Mountain Travel Sobek staff, trip doctors, and other discounted travelers are excluded from the count for this purpose.) We initially invoice you at the highest tier level price (the smallest group size we can operate). If the price drops due to an increase in group size, you will be refunded the difference.

What’s Included

- ◆ expert leadership
- ◆ accommodations in hotels, lodges, or inns
- ◆ meals as noted (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
- ◆ airport transfers
- ◆ sightseeing as noted in the itinerary
- ◆ ground transportation
- ◆ entrance fees to reserves and parks
- ◆ basic medical and evacuation insurance

What’s Not

International airfare; flights within Venezuela (see separate cost above); meals not noted in itinerary; insurance other than basic medical and evacuation insurance as noted above (we strongly recommend you purchase the supplementary trip insurance offered by Mountain Travel Sobek, which includes trip cancellation insurance); optional tipping to leader, guides and local staff; excess baggage charges; airport taxes (if any); and items of a personal nature (sodas, alcoholic beverages, laundry, etc.).

Air Travel

Airfare is not included in the land cost of our trips. For air reservations, we recommend you contact the airlines directly, either by phone or the Internet. In addition, many travelers elect to use their “frequent flyer” miles when traveling with us. **But please check with our staff before purchasing or obtaining your tickets.** We need to verify your arrival and departure schedule and ensure we have enough participants to operate the trip.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT

Expert Leadership

Expert leadership is the key to an exciting, unforgettable experience. Our trips feature gifted leaders for whom leading trips is a true vocation. Besides showing you wonders you’d never find on your own, they make sure everything runs smoothly and safely without a hitch. They are knowledgeable about all aspects of your trip, and take great pleasure in sharing their insights with you. More than just guides, they positively elevate your experience by being teachers, companions, and the best of friends. You’ll be in good hands with them every step of the way. The following people will lead this trip:



Sergio Fitch-Watkins, a native of Mexico, is one of Mountain Travel Sobek's senior guides (he's been with us since 1977). He led many of our past mountaineering expeditions to destinations all over the world (including Antarctica), and now leads our most challenging treks in Nepal, Peru, and Pakistan. Sergio is at home just about anywhere in the world and is one of the most capable and unflappable guys we know - just the kind of person you want to be with in a remote wilderness!

Activity Level

Mountain Travel Sobek trips are designed for flexible, energetic people who like to be active and have a spirit of adventure and a positive attitude. We rate this trip as moderate to strenuous in nature. You should be in good physical condition and enjoy walking. The better physical shape you are in, the more fun you will have.

This trip involves seven consecutive days of trekking in the wildernesses of Parque Nacional Canaima and the unique moonscape of the Roraima tepui, with hikes up to 10 hours a day. We operate this trip with a small staff, so the guides would appreciate your assistance at times with pitching your tent and other camping duties.

The level of fitness needed for this trip requires regular aerobic exercise for at least one hour 4-5 times a week. This may include aerobic fitness classes, power walking, jogging, cycling on hills, swimming, and cross-country skiing. Additionally, you must be able to sustain exercise for prolonged periods. We recommend that you start a moderate training program **at least three months** before departure, then slowly build up to a more strenuous level. Since training is highly sport-specific, include some hiking or running in your program. Consult your physician if you have questions concerning your underlying health. We can help answer questions for you or your physician concerning required levels of fitness and health conditions at altitude. If you have concerns about your ability to do this trip, we can suggest appropriate alternatives.

Weather

Please also note that some of the activities are weather dependent. Roraima’s summit is high enough that it creates its own weather; swirling clouds can descend with little warning, and there can be sudden electrical storms at any

season. While the misty veil shrouding the mystical tepui may lend an aura of mystery, it's best to prepare with waterproof clothing and gear.

THE NEXT STEP

Ready to go? Signing up is easy!

Just call us at 1-888-MTSOBEK (687-6235) and reserve your spot! You can also book a reservation online at our website (www.mtsobek.com). If you prefer to use a travel agent, he or she can book your trip at no extra cost and provide other helpful assistance.

Then Leave the Rest to Us

Before you go, we provide you with extensive pre-departure information, including clothing recommendations, suggested reading lists, up-to-date health advice prepared by our consulting physician (an expert in wilderness medicine), and other details.

Why Mountain Travel Sobek is Your First Choice for Adventure

Mountain Travel Sobek is the pioneer in active adventure travel. No other adventure travel company can lay claim to that title. We were the first to take Americans trekking in Nepal, raft the wild rivers of Africa, and open up many previously inaccessible corners of the world to curious travelers. We set the standard for adventure travel and have a strong reputation for excellence that we do everything we can to maintain. Since we are the leading adventure company, we have a lot to live up to, so we make sure we provide safe, quality trips and the best customer service to our passengers.

References

Don't take our word for how great our trips are. We'll be happy to provide you with references of satisfied past travelers.

Questions?

Feel free to call us at 1-888-MTSOBEK (687-6235) if you still have any questions or concerns. We're here to help you. You can also check out our website at www.mtsobek.com.

Note on Itinerary

Although we will do our best to adhere to the itinerary schedule as listed, it is subject to change. Please read the Limitation of Liability and Booking Conditions in the four-page Participant Information Form. You can find all this information on our website at www.mtsobek.com/faq and the form itself at www.mtsobek.com/pdf/participant_info.pdf.

Terms & Conditions

Once you have made a deposit for a trip, you agree to be bound by all our terms and conditions including the Limitation of Liability Clause. The full Terms and Conditions can be found at www.mtsobek.com/faq/#liability or call 1-888-MTSOBEK (687-6235) for a copy. These are partial conditions. Your participation is contingent on your signature on the full list of terms specified in the four-page Participant Information Form (www.mtsobek.com/pdf/participant_info.pdf). Any dispute concerning, relating or referring to the Terms and Conditions, to any literature concerning this trip, or the trip itself, shall be resolved exclusively by

MOUNT RORAIMA: TREKKING THE TEPUI

binding arbitration in San Francisco, California, according to the then existing commercial rules of the American Arbitration Association. Such proceedings will be governed by substantive California law (but not procedural law) without regard to the California Arbitration Act.

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