

SOUTH AMERICA · WILDLIFE · ADVENTURE · OFF THE BEATEN PATH

 Guyana

Guyana is South America's only English-speaking country, and most of it is still rainforest. Kaieteur Falls is among the world's most powerful single-drop waterfalls, the Rupununi savanna holds giant anteaters, otters and jaguars, and Amerindian-run lodges open up the interior. Getting there takes effort, which is exactly why it stays so wild.

 Before you go, read the UK government's travel advice for Guyana and entry requirements (visas, passport validity). Last updated by FCDO 30 December 2025.

 CAPITAL Georgetown	 CURRENCY Guyanese dollar (GYD) £1 ≈ GYD 279	 LANGUAGE English, Guyanese Creole	 BEST TIME Sep–Nov
 DAILY BUDGET £55–£320 £££ Expensive	 PLUGS Type A, B, D, G 120V · UK plugs fit	 FLIGHT FROM LONDON 12h via St Lucia (BA same-plane stop), Barbados or New York ~£700–£1,250 return	 TIME ZONE UTC-4 standard time

Guyana feels like a Caribbean nation on the South American mainland: English is the official language, cricket is the national obsession, and the culture blends Indian, African, Amerindian, Chinese and Portuguese heritage. Almost everyone lives on the narrow coastal strip, much of it below sea level and protected by sea walls and Dutch-era drainage canals, while the interior is rainforest, rivers and savanna. A first trip usually combines a day or two in Georgetown with a flight to Kaieteur Falls, then a loop south through the Iwokrama forest to the Rupununi savanna, staying at community-run lodges such as Surama and Rewa.

Guyana is not a cheap destination. Interior lodges charge all-inclusive rates, transfers often involve light aircraft or 4x4s, and the oil boom has pushed Georgetown's hotel prices up sharply. The payback is wildlife watching with almost nobody else around: harpy eagles, black caiman, giant otters and even jaguars are realistic sightings on a well-planned trip. It suits keen naturalists, birders and adventurous travellers comfortable with heat, insects and changing plans. Most visitors are surprised by how friendly and easy-going Guyanese are, and by how good the food is, from Georgetown's curries to Christmas pepperpot.

Top 5 highlights

1

NATURE

Kaieteur Falls

The Potaro River drops 226m in a single plunge, more than four times the height of Niagara, into a forested gorge. Most visitors fly in from Ogle for a few hours; look for tiny golden frogs in the giant bromeliads beside the trail.

2

WILDLIFE

Rupununi savanna

Vast grasslands and wetlands in the far south-west, where Karanambu Lodge pioneered the rehabilitation of orphaned giant otters, and giant anteaters, black caiman and arapaima are regularly seen. Cattle ranches and Makushi and Wapishana villages complete the picture.

3

NATURE

Iwokrama Forest

Nearly a million acres of protected rainforest straddling the road to the Rupununi, with a river lodge, hikes up Turtle Mountain and a canopy walkway near Atta where harpy eagles and jaguars are sometimes seen. Guides come from local Makushi communities.

4

ARCHITECTURE

St George's Cathedral, Georgetown

One of the world's tallest wooden churches, a white Gothic Revival Anglican cathedral completed in 1899 and built largely from local greenheart timber. Combine it with Stabroek Market's iron clock tower and the manatees in the botanical gardens.

5

WILDLIFE

Shell Beach

A remote 120km stretch of the north-west coast where four species of sea turtle, including giant leatherbacks, nest from roughly March to August. Getting there involves long river and sea boat journeys, so most visitors go with a specialist operator.

Biggest cities

LARGEST CITY

Georgetown

≈ 235,000 people

The capital's white-painted wooden buildings, canals, botanical gardens and Stabroek Market deserve a day or two before you fly into the interior.

2ND LARGEST CITY

Linden

≈ 27,000 people

A bauxite-mining town on the Demerara River, about two hours south of Georgetown, mostly passed through on the long road to Iwokrama and the Rupununi.

3RD LARGEST CITY

New Amsterdam

≈ 17,000 people

A quiet Berbice River town with colonial wooden churches and a busy market, worth a stop on the coastal road east towards Suriname.

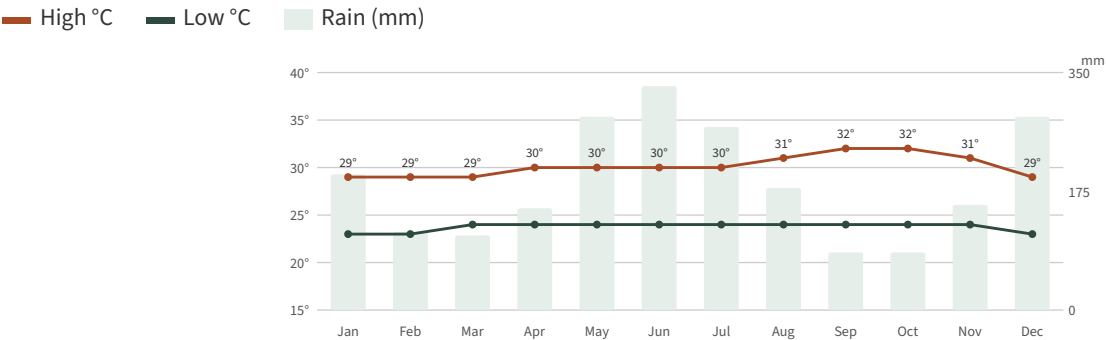
Ranked by urban-area population where available. Figures are rounded estimates, and sources define city limits differently, so rankings of similar-sized cities can vary.

When to go to Guyana

Best time: **Sep–Nov**.



Average climate in Georgetown



Festivals & events

Feb	Mashramani Guyana's carnival on Republic Day, 23 February, with costumed bands, steel pans and calypso competitions parading through the streets of Georgetown.
Mar	Phagwah The Hindu spring festival of colours, a national holiday in Guyana, when coloured powder and water are thrown with abandon across Georgetown and the Berbice villages.
Mar–Apr	Rupununi Rodeo Held in Lethem over the Easter weekend, with vaqueros from the savanna ranches competing in bronco riding, roping and races, plus music and food stalls.

How much does Guyana cost?

SHOESTRING £55 per person / day ≈ GYD 15,334 hostels, street food, buses	MID-RANGE £140 per person / day ≈ GYD 39,032 3-star hotels, restaurants, some taxis	COMFORTABLE £320 per person / day ≈ GYD 89,216 4-star+, guided trips, private transfers
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Estimates per person per day, excluding flights. Prices vary by season and city.

Food to try

Pepperpot

Guyana's national dish: beef, pork or mutton stewed for hours in cassareep, a bittersweet cassava extract from Amerindian cooking, and eaten with bread on Christmas morning.

Cook-up rice

A one-pot Saturday favourite of rice and black-eyed peas simmered in coconut milk with salted meat, chicken and fresh herbs.

Roti and curry

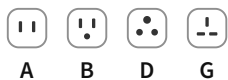
Soft, flaky dhal puri or paratha roti for scooping up chicken, duck or goat curry, a legacy of the Indian indentured labourers who arrived from 1838.

Getting around

Small planes from Ogle airport are the quickest way to Kaieteur, the Rupununi and the interior lodges. The only road south, from Linden to Lethem on the Brazilian border, is partly unpaved and slow, served by buses and 4x4s. On the coast, numbered minibuses and taxis are cheap, and speedboats from Parika run up the Essequibo to Bartica.

Practical information

PLUGS & VOLTAGE



120V — UK plugs fit

DIALLING CODE

+592

TAP WATER

Not safe — drink bottled or treated water

TIPPING

Check the bill for a service charge; if there is none, leave about 10%. At interior lodges, a pooled tip for guides, boatmen and kitchen staff is customary.

ETIQUETTE

Greet people with 'good morning' or 'good afternoon' before asking for anything. In Amerindian villages, follow the village council's rules, ask before photographing people, and don't wander off unaccompanied.

MAIN AIRPORTS

Cheddi Jagan International Airport (GEO), Georgetown; Eugene F. Correia International Airport (OGL), Georgetown

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Ambulance: **913**

Fire: **912**

Police: **911**

Source: FCDO "Getting help"

TIME ZONE

UTC-4 (standard time)

DRIVING

On the left

Visas & entry for Guyana

Shown for a British passport.

No visa needed

You do not need a visa to visit Guyana. Visitors can normally stay for 30 days, but you can apply for one-month extensions from Guyana's immigration and support services.

The Guyanese authorities can arrest visitors who overstay or abuse the conditions of their stay. You could get a one-year prison sentence, a fine of up to 50,000 Guyana dollars (about 250 US dollars) and deportation – at your own expense – upon your release.

From the UK government's FCDO entry requirements for British passport holders — read the full page for passport validity, permits and exceptions.

Health & vaccinations



See a travel health nurse, GP or travel clinic **6–8 weeks before you go**. Make sure routine UK vaccinations (such as MMR and diphtheria-tetanus-polio) are up to date.

RECOMMENDED FOR MOST TRAVELLERS

Hepatitis A

Tetanus

Yellow fever

SOMETIMES ADVISED — DEPENDS ON YOUR TRIP, ACTIVITIES AND HEALTH

Chikungunya

Dengue

Hepatitis B

Rabies

Tuberculosis

Typhoid

YELLOW FEVER CERTIFICATE

A yellow fever certificate is only required if you arrive from (or transit through) a country with yellow fever risk — not if you fly direct from the UK. There is a risk of yellow fever in parts of the country — vaccination may be advised.

MALARIA

Malaria risk in some areas

- There is a risk of malaria in all interior regions of Guyana: antimalarial tablets recommended.
- There is a very low risk of malaria in Georgetown and the coastal region: awareness of risk and bite avoidance recommended.

Source: TravelHealthPro (National Travel Health Network and Centre), checked 21 October 2026. This is a summary, not medical advice.

Public holidays in Guyana

The next 12 months. Banks, offices and some sights may close, and transport and hotels get busy around these dates.

Sun 8 Nov 2026	Diwali
Mon 9 Nov 2026	Diwali (observed)
Fri 25 Dec 2026	Christmas Day
Sat 26 Dec 2026	Day After Christmas
Mon 28 Dec 2026	Day After Christmas (observed)
Fri 1 Jan 2027	New Year's Day
Tue 23 Feb 2027	Republic Day
Mon 22 Mar 2027	Holi
Fri 26 Mar 2027	Good Friday
Mon 29 Mar 2027	Easter Monday
Sat 1 May 2027	Labour Day
Wed 5 May 2027	Arrival Day
Mon 17 May 2027	Eid al-Adha (date may shift)
Wed 26 May 2027	Independence Day
Mon 5 Jul 2027	CARICOM Day
Sun 1 Aug 2027	Emancipation Day
Mon 2 Aug 2027	Emancipation Day (observed)
Sun 15 Aug 2027	Prophet's Birthday (date may shift)
Mon 16 Aug 2027	Prophet's Birthday (observed, estimated) (date may shift)

National holidays only. Dates based on lunar calendars can move by a day or two depending on official announcements.

Know before you go

Kaieteur flights from Ogle need enough passengers and clear weather to go, so book early, keep a spare day in your plans and expect occasional delays or cancellations.

Sockets supply 110–120V in some buildings and 220–240V in others, sometimes side by side, so check before plugging in anything that isn't dual-voltage.

Pack long sleeves, strong repellent and a head torch for the interior, and check TravelHealthPro's malaria advice for the Rupununi and other inland regions before you go.

Visa, health and safety rules change. Before you book or travel, check the FCDO travel advice (gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice) and TravelHealthPro (travelhealthpro.org.uk). Costs are estimates. © 2026 Pick My Trip.