

🕒 EXPERIENCE · SÃO LUÍS → JERICOACOARA · 7 DAYS

Rota das Emoções

The Route of Emotions, São Luís to Jericoacoara

Seven days across three states of dune, delta and wind. Swim in rainwater lagoons in a white-sand desert, watch ten thousand scarlet ibises fly home at dusk, cross rivers by ferry and beaches by 4×4, and finish in a hammock slung in turquoise water.

Feel the route

DIA 1 · SÃO LUÍS

Encanto

DIA 2 · ATINS

Liberdade

DIA 3 · THE DUNES

Assombro

DIA 4 · TO PARNAÍBA

Aventura

DIA 5 · THE DELTA

Serenidade

Some routes are named after roads. This one is named after what it does to you.

Along the top of Brazil runs a coast the highway never conquered: five hundred kilometers of dune, mangrove and wind linking the Lençóis Maranhenses, the Parnaíba Delta and Jericoacoara. To cross it you trade asphalt for speedboats, river ferries, 4×4s and, on the last day, a buggy. Brazilians simply call it the Rota das Emoções, and after day three you will stop finding the name dramatic.

We run it privately, in seven unhurried days: one guide the whole way, the crossings timed for the light, the lagoons chosen by fullness, and every night in a small pousada we would book for our own families. No convoy, no schedule but yours.

3

STATES CROSSED ON ONE THREAD OF SAND

2

UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE LISTINGS ALONG THE WAY

500 km

OF COAST WITH BARELY A PAVED ROAD

8

WAYS YOU MOVE: BOAT, 4X4, FERRY, BUGGY, BOARD, HORSE, FOOT, HAMMOCK

Three wonders, one thread of sand

Most travelers pick one of these and fly home. The Rota das Emoções strings all three into a single overland story, and the traveling between them turns out to be half the point.

I

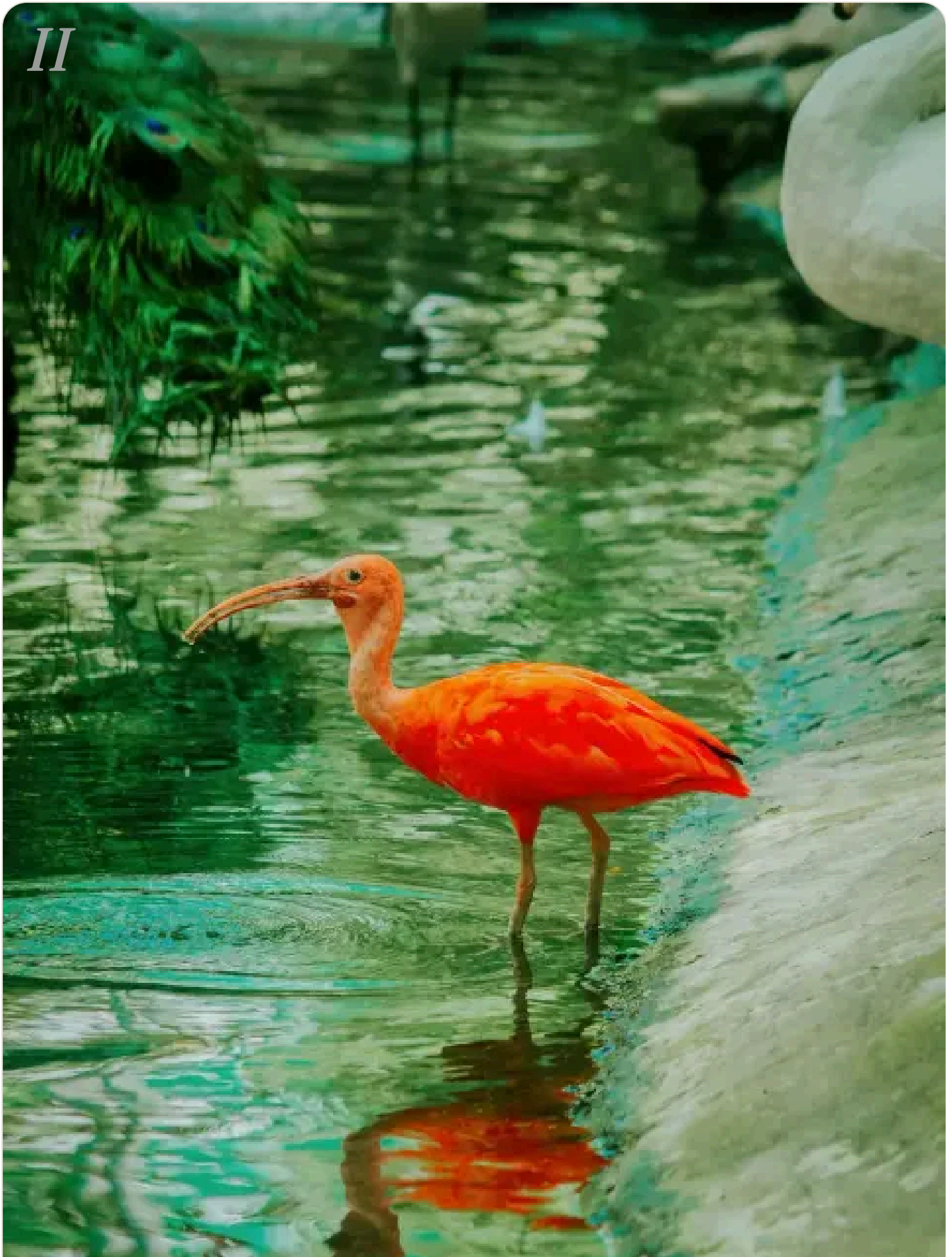


DAYS 2 TO 4

Lençóis Maranhenses

A 155,000-hectare desert of blinding white dunes that floods with rain every year, turning into thousands of warm, crystal-clear lagoons. A UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2024, and like nowhere else on Earth.

II

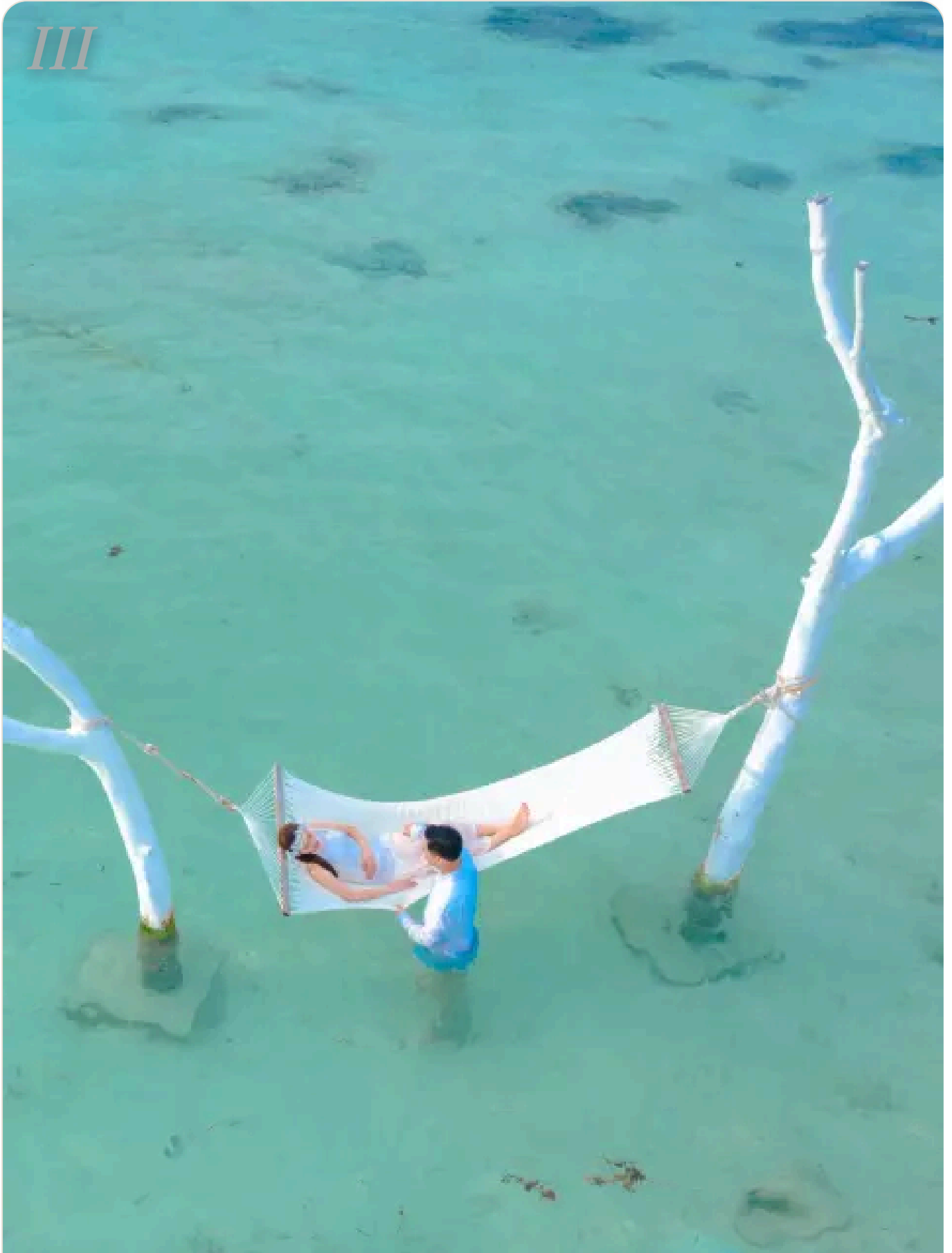


DAY 5

Delta do Parnaíba

The only river delta in the Americas that opens straight into the sea: five arms, some seventy islands, mangrove mazes and crab catchers. At dusk, clouds of scarlet ibises fly home and paint the sky red.

III



DAYS 6 AND 7

Jericoacoara

A fishing village with streets of sand, reached only over dunes and river ferries. Hammocks slung in a turquoise lagoon, a rock arch that frames the setting sun, and a nightly round of applause as it goes down.

Seven days, seven emotions

A sample rhythm, not a timetable. Every departure is private, and we reshape the days around you.



1 DIA 1 • SÃO LUÍS

Encanto ENCHANTMENT

A city dressed in tiles

You land on an island city the Portuguese wrapped in porcelain: four thousand colonial buildings, whole façades sheathed in blue-and-white azulejo tiles, a historic center UNESCO listed since 1997. Your guide walks you down Rua Portugal's cobbles, through the cool arcades of the old trading houses, and into the central market for your first taste of Maranhão, tapioca hot off the griddle and juice from fruit you cannot pronounce yet.

And then the city surprises you. São Luís is Brazil's reggae capital, and as evening comes the historic center hums with basslines from open doorways and radiola sound systems. Between the tiles and the drums of bumba meu boi, the city casts its spell easily. Sleep well tonight. Tomorrow the road runs out.

UNESCO historic center

Azulejo-tiled mansions

Central market tastings

Reggae by night

 OVERNIGHT · A restored townhouse in the historic center

 ON THE TABLE · Tapioca from the market, and juices you will google later



2 DIA 2 · ATINS

Liberdade FREEDOM

Down the river to the end of the road

A private car carries you east until the tarmac gives up at Barreirinhas. From here the Rio Preguiças is the road: you board a speedboat and run the last stretch of the river as it loops through mangrove and dune. Small monkeys pester the riverside stop at Vassouras, and at Mandacaru you can climb the lighthouse's 160 steps for your first look at what tomorrow holds: the Lençóis, white and endless, meeting the sea.

Then the river opens and delivers you to Atins, a fishing village strewn across the sand where the Preguiças finally finds the Atlantic. No paved streets, no traffic, no fuss: just wind, dune grass and a handful of pousadas. Shoes come off here, more or less for good. Walk the huge beach as the light drops, and feel a week's worth of shoulders unclench.

Speedboat down the Preguiças

Mandacaru lighthouse

Barefoot arrival in Atins

🏠 OVERNIGHT · A wind-and-sand pousada in Atins

🌊 THE SWIM · The Preguiças, warm and tea-calm, from the boat stops



3 DIA 3 · THE DUNES

The desert that floods with sweet water

This is the day the route is famous for. A private 4×4 growls out of Atins and into the national park, an hour of soft-sand driving that ends at the edge of something your brain will refuse to file: white dunes to every horizon, and between them, lagoon after lagoon of warm, drinkably clear rainwater. Your guide knows which are fullest and which are empty of people, and the swimming is yours: Gavião, Sete Mulheres, Tropical, names you will recite for years.

Lunch is the stuff of legend: in the scatter of beach shacks at Canto do Atins, where the river mouth meets the park, grilled prawns the size of your hand arrive on plates that have made this tiny place famous across Brazil. In the late afternoon, climb a high dune and watch the sun drop over the sand sea. If you have energy to burn, Atins is also one of the best flat-water kitesurf spots on Earth, and horses can carry you along the surf line at dusk.

Private 4×4 into the park

Rainwater lagoon swimming

Legendary grilled prawns

Optional kitesurf and horseback

 **OVERNIGHT** · The same pousada in Atins, sand in every pocket

 **THE SWIM** · Rainwater lagoons, filtered through miles of white sand

 **ON THE TABLE** · Canto do Atins prawns, grilled famous by two beach kitchens



4 DIA 4 · TO PARNAÍBA

Aventura ADVENTURE

The sandbar between two waters

Today the route earns its name the old way: by moving. A speedboat takes you out of Atins to Caburé, a strip of sand barely wider than a soccer field with the river on one side and the open Atlantic on the other. Swim both if you like, ten minutes apart. From there you carry on to the fishing town of Tutóia, threading past the small dunes and half-buried palms of the Pequenos Lençóis.

Then wheels again, across the state line into Piauí, arriving in Parnaíba by late afternoon. The old port district, Porto das Barcas, is all thick-walled warehouses from the carnaúba-wax boom, now home to cafés and river breezes. Dinner overlooking the water, and an early night: tomorrow belongs to the delta at your doorstep.

Speedboat along the coast

Caburé sand spit

Pequenos Lençóis

Porto das Barcas evening

 OVERNIGHT · A pousada near the old port of Parnaíba



5 DIA 5 · THE DELTA

Serenidade SERENITY

Five arms of water, one red sky

The Delta das Américas is the only delta on the continent that empties straight into open sea, and today you disappear into it: a private boat, five river arms, some seventy islands, and hour after hour of green mangrove silence. You will pull up beside crab catchers working the mud the way their grandfathers did, drift up igarapés so still the trees stand on their own reflections, and stop to swim off white sandbars in the middle of it all.

Lunch is fresh fish on Ilha das Canárias, an island community of a few hundred souls. And then, as the light goes low, the delta performs its trick. From every direction, scarlet ibises, guarás, come home to roost: first in pairs, then in ribbons, then in their thousands, an impossibly red storm settling into one green island. It lasts twenty minutes. Nobody talks on the boat ride back.

- 🏠 OVERNIGHT · The same pousada in Parnaíba
- 🌊 THE SWIM · A glass-still igarapé, deep inside the mangroves
- 🍴 ON THE TABLE · Fried fish and rice on Ilha das Canárias



6 DIA 6 · TO JERI

Adrenalina ADRENALINE

Beach-running to the barefoot village

The final crossing is pure road-movie. A 4×4 carries you into Ceará and then simply leaves the road behind, running hard-packed beach and dune track along one of the emptiest coastlines in Brazil. At Camocim a flat-deck ferry floats you and the truck over the Rio Coreaú. Beyond it the stops come fast: the dune-locked lagoon of Tatajuba for a swim and a sandboard run, and the tiny mangrove creek at Guriú where seahorses hang in the current like question marks.

And then, over one last dune, Jericoacoara: a fishing village with streets of sand, lit gold at the end of the afternoon. Drop your bags and follow everyone else up the big dune at the western edge of town. Watching the sun go down into the sea from its crest is Jeri's nightly ritual, and yes, the whole dune applauds.

4×4 beach running

Ferry over the Coreau

Sandboarding at Tatajuba

Seahorses at Guriú

The sunset dune

🏠 OVERNIGHT · A pousada in Jericoacoara's sand streets

🌊 THE SWIM · Lagoa Grande at Tatajuba, straight off a sandboard



7 DIA 7 · JERICOACOARA

Euforia EUPHORIA

Pedra Furada and the lagoon of hammocks

Your last full day is Jeri distilled. In the morning a buggy takes you east along the beach to Pedra Furada, the sea-carved rock arch that is the village's postcard; around July the setting sun lines up exactly through its window, one of those small planetary coincidences that make grown adults cheer. The buggy rolls on past Praia do Preá, where the wind turns the sea into a kitesurfers' carnival.

Then the lagoons of Jijoca: Lagoa Azul, quiet and blue, and Lagoa do Paraíso, where hammocks are slung directly in the turquoise shallows and your only task is to occupy one. Swim, order something cold, repeat. Back in the village, capoeira circles form on the sand as the light goes gold, and the week gets the send-off it deserves: one more sunset from the dune, one more round of applause.

Buggy along the coast

Pedra Furada

Lagoa do Paraíso hammocks

Capoeira on the sand

 **OVERNIGHT** · The same pousada in Jeri, one more night

 **THE SWIM** · Lagoa do Paraíso, from a half-submerged hammock

 **ON THE TABLE** · Something cold, delivered to your hammock

You will swim in seven different waters

River, rain, lagoon and open Atlantic. Pack twice as many swimsuits as you think you need, and let one always be drying on a pousada rail.

01

A rainwater lagoon

Filtered through miles of white sand in the Lençóis. Warm, clear enough to drink, and yours for a morning.

02

The Rio Preguiças

Tea-calm river water at the boat stops, small monkeys supervising from the trees.

03

Two waters at Caburé

River on one side of the sandbar, Atlantic surf on the other. Swim both, ten minutes apart.

04

A delta igarapé

Still, mangrove-shaded water deep inside the Delta das Américas, trees standing on their reflections.

05

Lagoa Grande, Tatajuba

A dune-locked lagoon in the middle of nowhere, best entered at speed, from a sandboard.

06

Lagoa Azul

The quiet blue one. Locals argue it beats its famous neighbor. Decide for yourself.

07

Lagoa do Paraíso

Turquoise shallows with hammocks slung directly in the water. The finish line of the whole route.

What travels with you



Your own guide, in English

One guide across the whole route, São Luís to Jeri. They know which lagoon is fullest this week, which shack grills the prawns, and where the ibises will land tonight.



Every leg of the crossing

Private cars, speedboats, the delta boat, 4x4s, the river ferry and the Jeri buggy. Around 500 km of coast with barely a paved road, and every meter of it arranged.



Six nights, all with breakfast

A restored townhouse among the tiles of São Luís, barefoot pousadas in Atins and Jeri, a river-port base in Parnaíba. Small, characterful, hand-picked.



The meals that matter

The legendary prawns at Canto do Atins, fish on a delta island, dinner by the old port. The rest of the time you choose, and we point you right.



Every activity and entrance

The national park 4x4 day, the full delta expedition, the buggy circuit, sandboards, lighthouse climbs and every park fee. If it is in the story above, it is included.



Insurance and a safety net

Personal travel insurance for the route, and a team that lives in Brazil and answers the phone, before, during and after.

Not included: flights, meals not listed, and personal extras. No hidden lines, ever.

Honest answers first

When are the lagoons at their best?

+

How do we get there and away?

+

Is the traveling rough?

+

Is it good for families?

+

Can we slow it down or extend it?

+

THE EIGHTH EMOTION

Saudade

The Portuguese language keeps one word the rest of the world never managed to translate: saudade, the ache of loving something that is no longer in front of you. On the morning you leave Jericoacoara, over the dunes toward Fortaleza or onward into the rest of Brazil, you will finally understand it in your own skin.

Seven days, three states, two UNESCO treasures, and one long thread of sand. Tell us your dates and who is coming. We will shape the crossing around you, book every boat, truck, ferry and hammock, and be on the phone the whole way.

Rota das Emoções on the map

The Rota das Emoções runs along Brazil's wild north-east shore, through the states of Maranhão, Piauí and Ceará, from the colonial city of São Luís to the dune village of Jericoacoara.

REGION

Maranhão, Piauí & Ceará

BEST SEASON

Late May–Sept, for full lagoons

KNOWN FOR

Dune lagoons · UNESCO delta · Barefoot village

IDEAL FOR

Adventurous couples, families who swim



[View the northeast on the interactive map](#) →

Best: September

7 days. Outside the best window it can still run, but the reasons to go are weaker; ask us before booking flights.

See what else is in season →

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC

Best — The one or two peak months

Good — A real recommendation

Trade-offs — Workable, with a catch

Click a month to see everything in season across Brazil then.

CONTINUE YOUR JOURNEY

Where to go next

The places we most love to combine with the Rota das Emoções, woven into one private, tailor-made journey.

Lençóis Maranhenses

📍 Maranhão, Brazil

A field of white dunes that fills with rainwater, and then empties.

Salvador

 Bahia, Brazil

Brazil's first capital, and its African heart.

Rio de Janeiro

 Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

The Marvelous City, Privately

FREE · 29 PAGES

FREE GUIDE

Beginner's Guide to Brazil

A free 29-page guide to everything a first-time visitor should know before landing: visas, safety, money, getting around, where to go, and what to eat.

The guide lands in your inbox right away. After that it's about one email a month: seasonal timing notes, places worth knowing about, and nothing else. Unsubscribe in one click.

START PLANNING

Thinking about the Rota das Emoções?

Send a rough idea and you'll hear back within one business day. From one person, who lives in Brazil, and who will tell you honestly whether we're the right fit.