

# Butterfield & Robinson

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## DESTINATIONS AT RISK: THE AMAZON *Second trip in environmental series targets fragile Amazonia*

Toronto, Canada — The travel experts at Butterfield & Robinson have targeted the Amazon for the second trip in their new series, Destinations at Risk (DAR). The February 2009 expedition will explore the natural wonders of the river—the world's largest by volume—as well as the mounting environmental risks it faces.

“The series is about making a personal connection with some of the world's most magical places which, unfortunately, are often also some of the most vulnerable,” says DAR trip planner Tom Abraham.

Crossing six South American countries and surrounded by rainforest, the Amazon basin is one such place. Home to more than 3,000 species of fish, the fragile ecosystem faces threats from deforestation through industry and encroaching populations, oil exploration, mining runoff, and untreated sewage. B&R's six-day Peruvian Amazon trip will engage environmental experts, naturalists and local stakeholders to facilitate a deeper understand of the issues faced by local communities and the invaluable resource itself.

“The Amazon has always been shrouded in mystery—which befits its status as a true life-giver. Considering the river boasts 20% of the world's fresh water supply and is host to literally thousands of species, the fact that it is at risk from human activity is devastating. This trip is aimed at understanding that risk, fostering a dialogue around it, and learning what we can do to avert further degradation,” says B&R co-founder George Butterfield. “In the process, of course, we'll be discovering one of the most spectacular places on Earth.”

### Into the Amazon: The Journey

Beginning and ending in Lima, the six-day journey will see travellers venture up the legendary Amazon aboard the luxury 130-foot M/V Aqua. Accommodations are in 12 oversized guests suites whose amenities include private bathrooms, air conditioning, and panoramic windows. The ship also features indoor and outdoor lounges, a bar, dining room, and observation deck. Contemporary Peruvian designs are by local architect Jordi Puig.

Onboard hosts include George and Martha Butterfield, co-founders of Butterfield & Robinson and lifelong environmental activists, and Celine Cousteau, who first travelled up the Amazon at age nine with her legendary grandfather, Jacques Cousteau. The young Cousteau is herself

a committed explorer and environmentalist who has hosted Discovery and PBS documentaries focused on ecosystems at risk. She is currently working on a medical expedition among the Achuar peoples of the Northern Amazon.

Daily excursions see travellers exploring nature reserves such as Pacaya-Samiria National Reservation with wildlife trackers and ornithologists, and include visits to local villages and markets. Meetings with community activists and local leaders shed light on projects aimed at the sustainable use of resources, and the impacts of oil exploration on the Achuar people and their lands. Evening lectures onboard ship complement daytime explorations.

#### The Series

Established in spring 2008, the DAR series aims to provide educational travel experiences that highlight species, cultures or habitats at risk. The trips are designed to be balanced learning adventures, offering insider views of the changing world in order to build awareness. On-trip experts are key influencers and authorities in the field, and may include scientists, environmentalists, community leaders, politicians, naturalists, educators and businessmen. The inaugural trip, to Canada's Athabasca Oil Sands, shed light on the controversial mining sight through mine tours, overflights, and discussions with stakeholders on both sides of the issue. Among the hosts was renowned landscape photographer Edward Burtynsky. Additional DAR trips are in the works.

All carbon emissions from DAR: Amazon will be offset.

#### The Details

6 days/5 nights

Start/Finish: Lima, Peru

Dates: February 17-22, 2009

Price: from US\$9,695 per person (double occupancy)

Butterfield & Robinson offers more than 90 innovative itineraries in 60 destinations worldwide. Their motto since 1966 remains "Slow down to see the world." Imaginative trip design, exquisite service and a tireless pursuit of the world's most fascinating places continue to make B&R a leader in active travel for all ages.