

## Life at Iracambi



Iracambi is what you make of it. Life here is a new experience with its own opportunities and challenges. But we can tell you one thing: you'll very likely make friends for life. First of all you'll be living with a group of people from different backgrounds, different nationalities, different skillsets and different expectations. You'll be living at the Research Center on the edge of the forest, eleven kilometers from Limeira which is a pretty small town. On the up side, it's a

fantastically beautiful place, and everyone who comes really wants to help Iracambi in its mission of saving forests and changing lives.

### Accommodation

You be living either in the Center itself or in one of the four Casinhas. The Center is the biggest of the houses, with four bedrooms, each sleeping two people, a living room, library and two bathrooms. The Casinhas each have two bedrooms, bathroom and a living room. The houses are well maintained and have electricity and wireless access 24 hours a day.

### Homestays

Another accommodation option is to stay in the home of one of the local farm families. This will give you an entirely new and privileged insight into Brazilian life and culture, as well as providing extra income for local families. We ask you to start in the Center accommodation, but you are welcome to apply to take part in the homestay program at any point after your arrival - depending on availability and a basic level of Portuguese.

### Comments from Homestay Participants

Living with a family made all the difference to my stay at Iracambi - my family welcomed me with open arms, and I became much more than just a visitor to Brazil."

"I have made great friends, really great friends. It's an invaluable experience."

"I've learnt so much living with my Brazilian family - about real life and real people here in Minas Gerais, and also about myself and my own life in England. It's been eye-opening."

All meals are cooked by our gallant cook, Carminha, and everyone loves her food. She does her best to ensure that the food is as fresh and organic as possible, and while many of the meals are vegetarian she also provides meat or chicken several times a week.

### **The working day**

Volunteers and researchers leave the house for work between 8.30 and 9 am, return for lunch at 12.30 to the Center and then it's back to work until 5. Depending on the day's program, you may be spending time on forest patrols, on the trails, collecting seeds, working in the forest nursery, planting and monitoring trees, or collecting data for our Geographical Information System.

At weekends students go off on excursions to the Colonial towns, hike in the forest, swim in the natural pool in the river, or just mellow out in a hammock with a good book. Main activities in the evenings are reading, playing cards, listening to music, watching a movie, oh and maybe a drink or two.

### **Location**

The Research Center is situated on a working farm in the Atlantic Rainforest zone, near the village of Rosário da Limeira (lat. 21°00' S, long. 42°30' W) in the southeast of the state of Minas Gerais, five hours by road from Rio de Janeiro, or four hours from the state capital, Belo Horizonte.

### **Communications**

*Telephone* – Since the phone at the Center is a cell phone, calling out is expensive. We are in the mountains, so don't expect your cell phone to work at the Center, (ours has an antenna.) Your best option is to use Skype or, for incoming calls, the Iracambi VOIP.

*Internet* - While we have 24 hour internet connection which is available by wireless anywhere on campus, there are times of year when we have to power down due to storms. Bandwidth is limited, so please be sensitive to the needs of your fellow citizens by not downloading or uploading huge files.

*Mail* - The mail is collected from time to time from the nearby village of Limeira. Letters to and from Europe take around 2 weeks and parcels 6-7 weeks. From the US, letters take about 10 days to arrive, and parcels about 5 weeks.

### **Visitors**

If you wish to have visitors or friends to stay for the odd night, please check with the volunteer coordinator, and be aware that they will be required to pay their way!

