and then packing up and going upriver to a campsite in the jungle. Given all we had learned about the hazards
of the jungle, we declined to join Leandro and the two doctors in gathering firewood. We ate around a campfire
and later slept in net-covered hammocks under a thick canopy of the broad leaves of the jungle forest. In the
morning, Leandro told us that he had spotted the eyes of a jaguar staring into our fire, but we never saw him.
Mostly, we slept to a serenade of howler monkeys somewhere off in the distance.

Back by boat and car to Manaus. Right at the end of the boatride, we made it to cover just before a great
deluge poured out of the sky. The river had gotten progressively darker as we rode the river and we made it just in time by stopping short of the roadside dock in Rio Preto de Eva at the house of some people that or guide knew.

Next day, off to Belem, the port of rubber country and also home to rubber barons more than a century ago. Here, we had another wonderful guide, Rena, Indonesian, but a resident of Belem for twenty-five years. We toured in Belem with her that afternoon and early the next morning we were off to Marajoa, the great island delta of the Amazon, larger than Switzerland, but nowhere more than 10 meters above sea level. We spent the first night on Marajoa at a Fazenda—a Brazilian ranch with 4000 head of buffalo—an hour up a river channel in the jungle. Again, minimal electricity, but irrelevant. The hospitality was extraordinary, as was the food, all cooked on an outdoor cast iron wood stove. The lunches and dinners had both buffalo and fish to offer, along with great homegrown vegetables, homemade bread, and buffalo mozzarella among the after-dinner offerings. There was also a world-class buffalo ricotta cheese pie for desert. The owners, husband and wife, spoke almost no English. They both spoke Portuguese and he spoke French. There is a large French presence in this part of Brazil and they continue to speak French for generations.

The river here was really tidal. In the afternoon we went off in a small boat to tour one of the narrow
canals into the jungle, only available at high tide, never more than ten feet wide, sometimes with the branches coming right up to the boat on each the side and down from the top. At one point, the owner, who was steering the back of the boat, spotted a long pod that he said was a tarantula nest. He casually brought it into the boat and started peeling it open. Near the end, he exclaimed in French, “Oh, it is only a baby, not poisonous!” He took it in his hand and then passed it to Rena, who was sitting forward of Judy and Norm. Judy would have jumped out of the boat were it not for the unknown dangers of the jungle water. The Indian guide in the front of the boat also spotted a snake in a hollow of a tree, previously a termite nest that the snake had invaded and cleaned out for its own use!

Our time at the Fazenda gave us the opportunity to ride water buffalo. Judy did fine - no broken bones. However, our guide Rena went over the top of her buffalo and broke her wrist! First treatment was with a local indian shaman with a cast that held her until we returned to Belem where she went to a hospital.

That night, we again went out in the river in search of alligators. This time we found some! They are really mean looking creatures up close and personal! Again, the next morning, we went out on the river and spotted more alligators and many birds. This is the place to which we want to return. It is fascinating and delightful. We felt quite safe despite all of our preconceived notions about the jungle.

We spent the next night in a posada outside of Soure, the capitol of the island, not