

PART ONE GENERAL INFORMATION 1

Chapter 1 Background Information 3

Geography 3, Climate 4, Natural history and conservation 4, History 10, Government and politics 18, Economy 18, People 19, Language 20, Religion 21, Education 22, Culture 23

Chapter 2 Practical Information 28

When to visit 28, Suggested itineraries 29, International tour operators 29, Red tape 31, Embassies and consulates 32, Getting there and away 33, Health 38, Safety 44, What to take 46, Money 46, Budgeting 48, Getting around 49, Accommodation 52, Eating and drinking 55, Public holidays and festivals 56, Shopping 57, Arts and entertainment 58, Visiting museums and churches 58, Media and communications 58, Cultural etiquette 61, Travelling positively 62

PART TWO THE GUIDE 65

Chapter 3 Asunción 66

History 66, Getting there and away 67, Orientation 67, Getting around 68, Tourist information, tour operators and agencies 73, Where to stay 77, Where to eat and drink 84, Entertainment and nightlife 89, Shopping 91, Other practicalities 95, What to see and do 97, Excursions 119

Chapter 4 Circuito de Oro 121

Getting out of Asunción 123, Suggested circuits 128, Fernando de la Mora 131, Travelling along Ruta 2 131, San Lorenzo 132, Capiatá 135, Itauguá 138, Ypacaraí 140, Caacupé 141, Itacurubí de la Cordillera 144, Towns north of Ruta 2 144, Luque 144, Areguá 148, San Bernardino 153, Altos 156, Emboscada 157, Atyrá 158, Tobatí 159, Vapor Cué 162, Towns south of Ruta 2 162, Pirayú 163, Piribebúy 163, Valenzuela 167, Sapucaí 168, Travelling along Ruta 1 169, Itá 170, Yaguarón 172, Paraguairí 176, Carapeguá 177, Ybycuí 178, La Colmena 179, Salto Cristal 179, San Roque González 180, Quiindy 181, Parque Nacional Lago Ypoá 181, Caapucú 183

Chapter 5 Misiones and the Jesuit Reductions 185

Villa Florida 187, San Miguel 190, San Juan Bautista 191, San Ignacio Guasú 196, Santa Maria de Fé 205, Santa Rosa 210, Santiago 212, Ayolas 214

Chapter 6 Southwest to Ñeembucú and the Old Battlegrounds 223

Pilar 225, Humaitá 232, Fishing pueblos along the Río Paraná 235, Northern Ñeembucú 240

Chapter 7 Southeast to Itapúa and the Ruins 241

San Cosme y Damián 241, Carmen del Paraná 247, Trinidad 247, Jesús 256, Colonias Unidas 259, Excursion to San Ignacio Miní 260, Excursion to San Rafael Nature Reserve 267, Encarnación 268

Chapter 8 Excursion to the Iguazú Falls 277

Puerto Iguazú 279, Foz do Iguazu 286

Chapter 9 Ciudad del Este and the East 295

Ciudad del Este 295, Itaipú 304

Chapter 10 Villarrica and Central Eastern Paraguay 309

Coronel Oviedo 311, Yataity 312, Independencia 313, Villarrica 315, Excursions from Villarrica 320, Caazapá 322

Chapter 11 Concepción and the Northeast 329

Getting there and away 329, Travelling along Ruta 3 330, San Pedro de Ycuamandyyú 334, Concepción 337, The far north 342, Pedro Juan Caballero 346, Parque Cerro Corá and the surrounding area 351, The far north of Cerro Corá 354, The east-northeast 354

Chapter 12 The Chaco 361

Within reach of Asunción 363, Travelling along the Ruta Transchaco 364, The humid Chaco, up to Pozo Colorado 366, Filadelfia 367, Boquerón 371, Loma Plata 372, Salt Lakes 373, Mariscal Estigarribia 374, The Pantanal 377

Appendix 1 Language 384

Appendix 2 Glossary 392

Appendix 3 Selective list of fauna 397

Appendix 4 Further information 399

Index 405