

## **ASALEM – FAQs**

### **KNOW BEFORE YOU GO**

#### **Location:**

Asalem is an enchanting Seaside Hideaway located in Ilha Grande, an oceanic island inside a State Reserve protected area, Southeast of Rio de Janeiro. Surrounded by the dense Atlantic Rain Forest, it overlooks the spectacular Bay of Abraão. This unspoiled peace of paradise is a perfect choice for honeymooners who look for privacy. Asalem is right by the water and swimming is possible directly from our waterside sundeck. There are beaches on both sides of Asalem within a three-minute walk or swim.

#### **Coordinates:**

Latitude: 23.1333° S

Longitude: 44.1667° E

#### **Time Zone:**

UTC -3.0

#### **Climate:**

Because it is close to the equator, Asalem enjoys a humid tropical weather year-round and the annual medium temperature is 22.5°C/72.5° F, being February, the warmest month with 26°C/79°F average and July the coldest, with 19,5°C/71°F average. The medium water temperature is between 18°C-24°C/64°F-75°F.

The nights and mornings are usually cool, and the days are warm. July and August are the coolest months. January and February are the warmest. There used to be a sharp rainy period in the past, January being the rainiest month and July the driest. However, due to global warming changes, the rain season is unpredictable. Rain is very welcome to Asalem – the island smiles when the rain comes, nurturing the lush and dense vegetation. Even in wet conditions, the place is highly enjoyable as the proximity to nature offers intimate glimpses of sea and jungle creatures. Asalem has no walls and the animals come and go as they please. The area also provides first-class bird watching.

#### **Topography:**

Ilha Grande has mountains with several peaks. The most popular is Pico do Papagaio, 982 meters high, accessible for climbing. The landscape is extensively vegetated with dense forests and steeps, surrounding rivers and caverns.

#### **The village Abraão**

The village of Abraão is the island's main village, at twenty-minute seaside walk or five-minute boat ride. It has shops, a few supermarkets, fine restaurants, a church, emergency care, pharmacy, internet cafés and nightlife.

#### **What to Pack:**

Hat

Swimwear

Sandals/flip flops

Walking shoes & socks

Prescription drugs  
Toiletries bag  
At least two good books  
Spare glasses/sunglasses/contact lenses  
Lightweight cottons shirts (short and long sleeved), shorts and trousers  
Sweater or fleece for cool evenings  
Sunscreen protection

### **Things To Do During Your Stay:**

Ilha Grande means Big Island. We recommend a minimum of four nights for exploring at least the main routes. Hiking through the jungle, kayaking, snorkeling and surfing the emerald ocean that surrounds 107 white-sand beaches are just a few things you can do during your stay. And if you can, save a day or two just to relax!

#### **LOPES MENDES**

Mentioned as one of the most beautiful beaches in the world in travel magazines such as *Conde Nast Traveler* and *Vogue Magazine* among others, Lopes Mendes is a definite must to visit in the island. It is the largest of the 107 beaches scattered throughout Ilha Grande. The waves along its three kilometers of thin white sand are a Mecca for surfers and snorkelers. Shared boats depart daily from the village of Abraão, but can pick-up Asalem's guests at our private waterside sundeck with no extra charge upon prior request.

#### **DOIS RIOS**

Besides its lovely beach with two pristine rivers, you can sense the battle won by tranquility by visiting the remains of Brazil's most notorious penitentiary, known as The Devil's Cauldron, now disappearing within the tendrils of the island's weeds. The village where the prison caretakers used to live with their families still remains, although only a very few stayed, giving the feeling of a ghost town. The only access is through a two-hour walk from the main village of Abraão to the other side of the island, facing the open sea.

#### **LAGOA AZUL & SACO DO CÉU**

Shared boats depart daily from the village of Abraão to Lagoa Azul – Blue Lagoon – and Saco do Céu – Sky Bay –, a little bay aptly named because on new moon nights the sky is so clearly reflected in the waters that the stars appear to be floating. You can also hire a private boat for a day trip or to dine out in one of the bay's sophisticated restaurants – reservation is a must.

#### **PICO DO PAPAGAIO**

Hiking through the rain forest to Parrot's Peak takes around 3 hours each way. Therefore, we recommend starting no later than 8am. The view from the top makes it worthwhile! On clear days it is possible to see Rio with the naked eye.

#### **ABRAÃOZINHO**

A fifteen-minute walk from Asalem takes you to Abraãozinho beach where you can swim to the calm waters and order drinks & appetizers from one of the two bars. Asalem's restaurant service starts at 4pm so this is a good option for a day snack.

#### **FEITICEIRA WATERFALL**

The most popular waterfall is Feiticeira, with 15 meters high. The trail has a flat terrain with slight elevation change. The duration is moderate with short but steep climbs. You will pass along the ruins of an aqueduct built in 1893, with 125 meters long.

#### **PRAIA PRETA & OLD PRISON**

The fine-grained dark monazite sand beach of Praia Preta is easily accessible by walking from the village of Abraão. There you can also visit the ruins of the old penitentiary used to imprison criminals and also to

quarantine immigrants early last century. Ask our management about the trail to “Poção”, a hidden natural pool right above where the river meets the sea.

**Water:**

Water source is local from our own land and it is not used for cooking or drinking as foreigners are not used to its minerals. However, it should be fine for brushing. Bottled water is provided in the room’s minibar.

**Conservancy:**

We are fully committed to conservation. Our goal is of minimal impact upon landscape and wildlife and we aim to preserve our local community’s cultural heritage, improve their standards of living, education and health care.

**Our fee includes:**

- Breakfast
- Transportation to and from the main village of Abraão (arrival and departure)
- Use of kayaks & canoe
- Art books and games
- Internet in the communal area only (wi-fi and modem connection are subject to weather conditions as well as the provider signal; such conditions extend to the whole island).

**Eating & Drinking:**

The breakfast and dinner area overlooks the ocean. Guests are encouraged to help us choose fresh fish for our dinner, brought by local fisherman directly to our private waterside sundeck. Guests are also invited to contemplate the sunset while enjoying our house-specialty CAIPIRINHA during Happy Hour. Our house cocktails are made from local cachaças and hand-picked fruits from our land, such as manga (mango), pitanga, tangerines, goiabas (guava), mamão (papaya), jaca (jackfruit), young coconut, lime, and more. A selection of beer and wine is also available. Our restaurant is very well known, not only for tastiness without pretentiousness but most of all for freshness – we have a few local fisherman suppliers who come to our water deck directly from the sea on a regular basis, so we don't need to stock up. Therefore, our fish & seafood is always fresh. In order to meet such standard, orders must be given hours in advance as the meals do take time to get ready. Everything is cooked from scratch. It is not uncommon to see cosmopolitan guests having their anxiousness melted right before our unforgettably delicious dishes! Also our cook, who has been with us for over six years, is very meticulous and takes all the necessary steps as she understands our guest are mostly foreigners who are not used to our strong oils, water and seasonings. Dinner is served from 4pm to 9pm and orders are taken up to 7:30pm.

**Safety:**

Asalem is equipped with safety cameras and all rooms have been fitted with safes so guests are able to lock up valuables such as passports, money, cameras or laptops. Although we had never had intruders in the past, we aim for safety.

**Medical Concerns and Immunizations:**

Emergency medical care is available at the village of Abraão, just 5 minutes away by boat from Asalem, and it is free of charge for foreigners. A medical equipped speedboat is provided by the town of Angra dos Reis 24/7 for emergencies requiring extra care.

**Internet:**

Asalem is located in a remote area, stability may vary. Wi-fi connection is provided in the communal area only and it is subject to weather conditions as well as the provider signal; such conditions extend to the whole island. We do not advise guests to rely on internet connectivity in the island, especially if intending to work during their stay.

**Children & Elderly:**

Asalem is an enchanting waterfront lodge surrounded by the rain forest, replete with stairways that can be steep at certain points. Due to topographic features, Asalem is not recommended for children under twelve years old, especially if they are very active. However, families with small children are welcome in the lower level Eco-Honeymoon Suite and Chalet only. We advise the use of discretion considering physical condition. Triple rate applies when accompanied by child three years old and older. For each extra child guest, 10% of the triple rate is applied.

**Events & Group Bookings:**

Asalem welcomes group bookings noting our small size and limited space. We also host events that enrich life at Asalem such as lectures by visiting writers, artists, and cultural thinkers. Event planning is available upon prior request for a surcharge. Our event planner can also coordinate accommodation of larger groups in nearby hotels. Contact our reservation specialist for information regarding group dinner buffet, custom tailor made day trips, transfers, corporate brainstorm, birthdays and other celebration parties and ceremony arrangements.

**Additional Services:**

Massage and guided hiking & kayaking can be arranged by our management upon availability. Most of these services are recruited from our local area. Our guides have been trained but they are already knowledgeable on the flora and fauna of the area, as they reside nearby. We like to employ local people to support the local community.

**Tipping:**

Gratuity is not mandatory in Brazil. For those considering leaving a gratuity for the Asalem team, you can handle it to the manager in charge – this will be fairly distributed among all the staff. The only people you might consider tipping directly are your guides and masseur.

**Souvenirs:**

Asalem is run by the photographer André Cypriano, who became the only person authorized by the governor of Rio de Janeiro to spend days taking photographs inside the most infamous penitentiary in the history of Brazil, "The Devil's Caldron." Located inside a State Reserve, the prison was closed and the buildings demolished in 1994. Eight months after Cypriano documented it. His book, "The Devil's Caldron," is for sale at Asalem, as well as later published books – "Rocinha – An Orphan Shantytown", "Quilombolas" and "Capoeira". Original photographs, signed, dated and numbered with the edition can be privately shown upon request.

**Laundry:**

Asalem provides laundry service for a surcharge.

**Power Supply:**

Voltage is 110. The lighting is provided by the state. We recommend bringing plug adaptor. Due to the island's intensive exposure to nature and its remote location, sometimes we experience short periods of power outage until the maintenance team reaches us. For such events, bringing flashlights is recommended. We also favor the magic of candlelight and gas lamps. And there are nights so clear that the Milky Way itself will light up the evening.

**Currency:**

Local currency is Brazilian Reais (BRL). There are no banks, cash machines, or money exchange offices on the island. We recommend that visitors exchange money prior to arriving. We accept Reais, Dollars, and major credit cards. Most restaurants and stores in the main village of Abraão also accept major credit cards.

**Passports & Visas:**

A valid passport and visa is required to enter Brazil. Check with your local Brazilian Consulate for more detailed information at least three months prior to your trip. It is advisable that you have full travel insurance while traveling in Brazil.

**Reservation:**

We have very few rooms, therefore, we recommend making your reservation as soon as your flight is confirmed. Reservation can be done through our website or by email upon pre-payment of 50 percent of the total amount due. We have a minimum of two nights for environmental reasons. Short stays are strongly discouraged considering the trip to get to the island – Ilha Grande means "Big Island" – we recommend at least four nights for exploring the main routes.

Please read our Cancellation Policy section before making your reservation. Note that all prices quoted are subject to change without prior notification due to any seasonal prices, availability, exchange rate or market price fluctuations; and can only be confirmed on clearance of outstanding funds due. Asalem functions independently from any other individual or business travel supplier.

**Cancellation & Devolution Policy:**

Cancellations must be done in writing. The policy will become applicable from the payment date.

CANCELLATION AND DEVOLUTION – except Holidays, New Year's & Carnaval Packages and Groups of two or more rooms:

- Reservations cancelled 10 days or more prior to the check-in date, 90% of total deposit will be refunded;
- Reservations cancelled from 5 to 10 days prior to the check-in date, 50% of total deposit will be refunded;
- There will be no refund for NO SHOW, early checkout or cancellation made less than 5 days prior to the check-in date, or now show.
- Reservations changed 7 days or less prior to the check-in date will be charged one daily rate.

CANCELLATION AND DEVOLUTION – during Holidays, New Year's & Carnaval Packages and Groups of two or more rooms:

- Reservations cancelled 30 days or more prior to the check-in date, 90% of total deposit will be refunded;
- Reservations cancelled 15 days or more prior to the check-in date, 50% of total deposit will be refunded;
- There will be no refund for NO SHOW, early checkout or cancellation made less than 15 days prior to the check-in date.

**Contact:**

**ASALEM**

Praia da Crena s/n

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