



## Iguazú Cataratas

By David W. Moody | July 18, 2011

Beneath a turquoise sky, liquid curtains wide enough for the windows of the universe, plummet into bottomless vapor storms. Skyloads of water, like all the rivers of the world combined, dive in sparkling arches from red rock ledges and surrender to gravity. It falls into green canyons from every direction, atomizing on impact, turning sunlight into cloud.

And it roars. It roars like ten-thousand lions.

I spend a lot of time in nature. I do a lot of hiking and feel at home in places of water, earth and sky. There are a few natural places I have been that have stopped me in my tracks and demanded involuntary states of awe. Silver Bear Paw Trail in the Sierra Nevadas, the Rockies, the Grand Canyon and Crater Lake are a few of them. Surreal places. Places so big, so beautiful, they don't feel possible to the human senses. They cause a physical reaction. A momentary gasp. A surge of adrenaline. Perhaps even a slight feeling of disorientation.

For me, whatever the initial reaction, it is always followed by a huge appreciation for my existence and an overwhelming gratefulness that I get to be present in the experience.

Iguazú Cataratas is one of those places, and probably tops my list. It is located at the northern tip of Argentina on the border of Brazil. It is a National Park and is designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and for good reason.

At the uppermost reach of this giant chasm, the Iguazú River gushes over the largest waterfall, La Garganta del Diablo (Devil's Throat). But the entire park is enormous and includes more than 275 separate falls ranging from 200 to 269 feet high. There is a small train to move people the longer distances through the jungle and countless breathtaking hiking trails with jaw-dropping vistas of the falls. And when you think you've probably seen the most beautiful view, you round a bend in the trail to find another, and another, and another. I spent two days in the park and could have stayed longer.



Of the places I've been, Iguazú Cataratas is easily one of the most incredible. The mixture of wildlife, vegetation, sky, wind and water flood into the senses with both calm and fury. Like many such places, it is difficult to do it justice with pictures, video or words.

With that said, this post includes a few of my favorite photographs taken in the park, as well as a compilation of video shot with a portable hand-held camera. Hopefully, they give you a taste.

Any traveler interested in seeing the planet's amazing places should have Iguazú Cataratas on their short list. I feel truly fortunate to have had the opportunity.

