

Vinalu®

'Luxembourg's first Online Wine Magazine'

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*Anaconda Walk & Canopy Walkway
in the Peruvian jungle*

NIO ET5 Test Drive

*Amazon rainforest adventure curated by
Inkaterra Reserva Amazónica*

RECORD OF A JOURNEY IN THE PERUVIAN AMAZON (PART II)

by Liliane Turmes & Good Friends



Welcome to Reserva Amazónica



inspired by Ese-Eja culture



with palm-thatched cabañas

RESERVA AMAZÓNICA & ESE-EJA CULTURE

We continue our tropical rainforest journey in the Tambopata National Reserve in Peru's Amazon, one of the most biodiverse and most remote places on earth, with a unique, unfamiliar flora and fauna, with a variety of plants greater than almost anywhere on the planet and with millions of species, many of which remain scientifically even undescribed ..., by boat over the clay-colored Madre de Dios river from Hacienda Concepción to Reserva Amazónica, our next base. The eco-lodge, established by Inkaterria in 1975, the first ever private ecological reserve, with rustic-luxury cabañas, inspired by the Ese-Eja culture, is hidden in the middle of the rainforest. The Ese-Eja indigenous people are deeply connected spiritually to the Amazon forest, with a traditional lifestyle of fishing, hunting and using the abundant medicinal plants of the jungle for their shamanic practices. Their culture is considered by the Unesco as a cultural heritage. After an unusual, delicious hot chocolate welcome drink, we retreat to our comfy cabin, with a view on the Madre de Dios river and prepare for a guided tour of the property and for a meeting with Toni Sánchez, the director of Reserva Amazónica.



in a rustic-luxury style



Handcrafted charm in the dining room



Exotic bar

TOP WINES & EXOTIC CUISINE

The chef chooses an excellent Matetic Sauvignon Blanc 2023 from Valle de Leyda / Chile, brilliant yellow in the glass, with white flowers in the bouquet and with the freshness of pomelos in the mouth, for our tasteful selection of starters, the smokey and spicy 'Pataconas, tartar de trucha ahumada, palta, aji de cocona', pressed green banana patties, topped with smoked trout tartar, avocado and a peppery cocona sauce, a classic crispy empañada, filled with beef and served with an exotic salad of mango, cabbage, green papaya, chili and toasted peanuts aside and the 'Cauliflower a la plancha' on spicy Brazil nut & coconut milk purée.

The top Odfjell Armador Cabernet Sauvignon 2022, from Valle Central/Chile, with full ripe black berries and plum aromas, and with notes of herbs, citrus and raspberries on the palate, is served with the main plates.

The traditional 'Lomo Saltado', the special sauteed beef with a delicious sauce and Reserva Amazónica's signature dish, the 'Chaufa con cecina, calabresa, pollo, huevo, ajonjolí y plátano maduro', fried rice with dried cured pork, jungle pepperoni, chicken, egg, sesame seeds and ripe bananas, the fusion dish of two cultures, the Chinese and the Peruvian.

We try a fine 'Antiguas Familias' pisco from Pepe Moquilaza (see Vinalu 68), mixed with anoni fruits from the jungle with a pear, pineapple taste, to close a rich gastronomical experience, with an interesting insight conversation.



*Top Odfjell Armador Cabernet
Sauvignon 2022*



Friendly service



Smoked trout tartar on green banana patties



Cauliflower a la plancha on Brazil nut purée



Delicious Empañada



Traditional Lomo Saltado

THE FIELD STATION & ITA

We get to know about Inkaterra's different environmental projects through Inkaterra Asociación 'ITA', an NGO which is promoting scientific research, with ecosystem studies, conservation and the reforestation in the Peruvian Amazon. ITA collaborates with renowned scientists and according to the researchers, Inkaterra Ecological Reserve has many birds and insects registered, what is important in the sense, that they play evidently a crucial role for pollination, enabling reproduction...While animals are not always easy to spot, animal life abounds in the rainforest and only on the ground of Inkaterra 2150 animal species are reported, not included arboreal species as insects, spiders, lizards, serpents and bats, whose activity is exclusively in the canopy, the least accessible place in the entire rainforest due to its delicate branches, which cannot support much weight. So only lighter animals have access to the uppermost level of the rainforest, what protects them from predators.



with spider like walking palms



Delving into the tangled jungle



Fascinating lianas

WALKING PALMS & FASCINATING LIANAS IN THE TANGLED JUNGLE

We follow our route, delving into the deep, so-called tangled jungle, with towering centennial trees like the Shihuahuacos, the guardians of the rainforest, with huge roots over the ground, looking for the light and for minerals, as the soil is poor in nutrition and with the unique walking palms, with their spider like roots, that look like legs, which help them to move to the sunshine and to grow new roots.

And everywhere between these giants, the lianas, the woody climbers, using trees to climb up to the canopy and spread from tree to tree up to the sun. At the same time they form bridges between the forest canopy, connecting the entire forest and provide animals with paths across the forest.

Always with forest sounds, like croaks rustles and calls of the exotic wildlife in the background and listening to the observations of our guide Fredy, we learn about the mega-vegetation and about the impressive Brazil nut tree, one of the highest in the Amazon forest and commercially important for its fruits. The buttery and smooth Castañas Amazónicas are used in the gastronomy and because of their dense oily texture also in the production of cremes and soaps.

VANILLA FARMING & BOTANICAL RESEARCHES

We have the privilege to talk to Antonio, the head of the laboratory and his team in their green lab at the Field Station about their botanical researches. And mainly about their Vanilla farming project, a very labor intense project, as every step in the process has to be done by hand, which makes the Vanilla orchid one of the most complicated fruits and one of the most expensive spices. In the Field Station, with excellent tropical growing conditions, they have 6 of the highly aromatic species, including the precious fragrant Pomplona varietal. Antonio explains, that the Vanilla orchid, climbing like a vine, is blooming only one day, and it needs on that specific day to be hand pollinated with feathers or needles, so that the vanilla beans can develop. Once the beans are ripe, they are hand-harvested, dried and selected manually to grade them, depending on their quality and on



The Vanilla farming at Field Station



Antonio, head of the lab & team

their purpose. The top chefs choose the whole shiny vanilla beans, with the highest vanillin content and use the thousands of tiny black seeds in desserts and simmer the beans, containing the vanilla oil, to extract the flavor, added to their gourmet recipes.

***THE ANACONDA WALK IN THE
IMPENETRABLE JUNGLE & THE
UNFORGETTABLE CANOPY WALKWAY***

We cross the mystic wetlands over the Anaconda Walk through the verdant and impenetrable jungle, to reach the tower of the Canopy Walkway, a sophisticated network with 7 hanging suspension bridges, strung between eight treetop observation platforms above the forest floor. After climbing a vertiginous tower of 42 meters above ground, we take a deep breath to step onto the first bridge ...a little bit swaying, but all safe and with a breathtaking view. What an intense and unforgettable experience to walk through the treetops, to observe the rainforest from above and gain a sense of its incredible size. We are overwhelmed, and happy to discover such a magnificent wild and pure nature.

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*Anaconda walk over mysterious
wetlands*



in the verdant impenetrable jungle



*The
vertiginous
tower to
the Canopy
Walkway*



*Hanging
bridges seen
from the
ground*



The genius structure of the bridges



A deep breath before stepping on the first bridge



Bird's Eye view on the jungle from the top

Nio ET5: A Fast Electric Midsize Car

Text by Sully Prudhomme

The young Far Eastern electric car brand Nio is now pushing into the Luxembourg market, and we had the opportunity to test the new midsize model, the Nio ET5, in its various body styles.

Nio was founded in 2014 under the name NextEV and immediately positioned itself as a provider of premium electric vehicles. After entering the European market, first in Norway, the company—specialized in battery swapping at exchange stations—expanded into other European countries and has now reached Luxembourg through importer Hedin Automotive. Elegant styling, high quality, and strong range are among the key advantages the Chinese manufacturer relies on.

The resemblance of the ET5 model, offered both as a sedan and as an estate, to established European brands may seem striking, but it reflects the engineers' and designers' determination to cater to European tastes; not surprisingly, the design department is based in Munich. Smooth curves, a stylish rear, and an expressive front with slim headlights quickly win over the observer. The midsize sedan and the Touring estate are available with two different battery sizes: 75 kWh or 100 kWh. In both cases, the previously mentioned battery-swapping capability offers significant time savings. The Touring, in particular, stands out as the first electric estate to impress, offering more practical storage space than many established brands.

The interior of the Nio ET5 is equally impressive. The extensive omission of intuitive switches and buttons may initially make operation feel complicated, but once you get used to it, everything works smoothly. A central display with high resolution and lightning-fast responses serves as the interface between passengers and vehicle. And if you find yourself completely lost in the controls, the artificial intelligence assistant Nomi, perched on the dashboard, can help with clearly spoken questions.

Even the traditional start button is no longer needed; simply moving the selector lever into the desired position is enough. The two electric motors, producing a combined 360 kW (490 hp), can accelerate the 2.2-ton vehicle from 0 to 100 km/h in just 4 seconds and allow for a top speed of 200 km/h. Depending on driving style, the car offers a WLTP range of between 500 and 590 km with the larger battery.

The test vehicles we drove—the Nio ET5 sedan and Touring—start at €60,460 including VAT for both body variants (Luxembourg prices, as of March 2026). We thank the importer and NIO Hedin Automotive Luxembourg in Hollerich for providing the test vehicles.

LIFESTYLE - THE TESTDRIVE





Impressum

Based on an idea by Romain Batya



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