Experience a different adventure every day with this unique journey Chile, Bolivia and Peru. From the world’s driest desert to the high Andes, trekking the Inca Trail, exploring the mighty Amazon, Lake Titicaca and the phenomenal salt lakes of Uyuni en route.

HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

Trip Highlights
- Santiago - Chile’s cosmopolitan capital
- San Pedro de Atacama - The world’s driest desert
- Salar de Uyuni and Laguna Colorada
- La Paz - One of the highest cities in the world
- Cuzco - The ancient Inca capital
- Puno & Lake Titicaca - Uros floating reed islands, Amantani and Taquilla islands
- Sacred Valley of the Incas - Pisac ruins, the temple of Ollantaytambo and local markets
- The Inca Trail Trek and Machu Picchu - The lost city of the Incas
- The Amazon Rainforest
- Lima - Vibrant markets and colonial museums

What’s Included
- 10 breakfasts, 7 lunches and 7 dinners
- 13 nights in simple hotels, 2 nights hostels, 2 nights jungle lodge, 3 nights camping
- Airport arrival transfer on day 1
- 3 economy class flights: Santiago - San Pedro de Atacama, Uyuni - La Paz, Cuzco - Puerto Maldonado, Puerto Maldonado - Lima
- Included excursions: two nights in the Amazon Jungle, guided tour of the Sacred Valley of the Incas, full day excursion on Lake Titicaca, Valley of the Moon, entry to Laguna Colorada National Park, drive on the Salar de Uyuni salt flats
- 4 day Inca Trail Trek, Lares Trek (or free time in Cuzco) and guided tour of Machu Picchu.
- Entrance fees for included excursions
- Escort by a tour leader and specialist local guides at certain sites
- Transportation by flights, private vehicle, train, public bus, boat and 4WD

What’s Not Included
- International flights and visas
- Items of a personal nature, additional meals and drinks
- Tipping - refer to the Tipping paragraph in the Trip Notes for further information

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1: Santiago
Upon arrival at Santiago airport you’ll be met and transferred to our joining hotel. The first day of your tour is simply an arrival day with no pre-organised activities. In order to allow time to relax and see some of the sights you may wish to add pre tour accommodation. On arrival please ask at the reception for information on when the pre departure meeting will be held.

On your first day you are free to explore Chile’s cosmopolitan capital city, Santiago, at your own pace. For the best views of the city, take a funicular railway to the top of San Cristobal where the Statue of the Virgin overlooks the capital and the distant Andes. Here you can taste some of Chile’s best wines and find some beautifully situated swimming pools. Santiago is a very clean, modern city with many fountains and parks, and is well-renowned for its markets such as the famous Mercado Central, one of the best seafood markets in the world. In the Plaza Constitución at the Palacio de la Moneda you can see the changing of the guard on most days.

Optional Excursions:
- Museo Histórico Nacional – US$1
- Teatro Municipal, with daily shows ranging from opera, ballet, orchestras and concerts – from US$3-12
- Maipo region winery tours – US$18-50
- Accommodation: Hotel Libertador or similar

Overnight - Santiago
Santiago to Lima

Days 2-3 : San Pedro de Atacama

San Pedro de Atacama - Laguna Colorada. We continue our 4WD expedition and cross the border into Bolivia, into some of the most remote areas of the Bolivian Altiplano. You will see a variety of dramatic landscapes including smoking volcanoes, barren deserts and gravity-defying rock formations carved by the wind. In this incredibly empty landscape you'll most likely feel the furthest from civilisation you've ever been. You will visit the Laguna Colorada, which offers some truly breathtaking scenery, with several varieties of flamingos gathering in the shallow waters of the beautiful crimson lagoon.

Included Excursions:
Entrance to Laguna Colorada National Park
Accommodation: 1 night in basic, multi-share hostels Overnight - Laguna Colorada (B, L, D)

Day 4 : Laguna Colorada

Laguna Colorada - Uyuni. Continuing our exhilarating 4WD tour, we explore the epic Salar de Uyuni. Claimed to be the largest salt flat in the world, the brilliant white vast Salar de Uyuni, which covers some 10,500 square kilometres and is estimated to contain 10 billion tons of salt, looks like something from a surrealist painting and its seemingly infinite horizons will amaze you. The highlight of the day is Fish Island (seasonal dependent). Located in the centre of the Salar, 100 kilometres from Uyuni, this hilly outpost is covered in giant cacti amid a flat, white sea of hexagonal salt tiles. The island is so named because it has the shape of a fish. The otherworldly views from Fish Island will take your breath away, with the brilliant blue sky (weather permitting of course) contrasting with the pure white of the salt flats. On this day we will also explore the Train Cemetery, where you can see the remains of 19th and early 20th century steam locomotives, and we visit Colchani, which is the main plant for the iodisation of salt and the best place to observe the methods of salt extraction from the Salar.

Please Note: Occasionally in the rainy season the salt flats become overly flooded and we may have to alter the itinerary if the salt flats are not safe to traverse. Your tour leader will advise as early as possible if this is likely to happen on your tour.

Included Excursions:
Visit the Salar de Uyuni salt flats
Accommodation: 1 night in basic, multi-share hostels at Cashi Wasi or similar & 1 night in hotels at Torito Hotel or similar Overnight - Uyuni (hostel) (B2, L1, D1)

Days 7-8 : La Paz

Uyuni - La Paz. We fly across the country from Uyuni to La Paz. If it is a clear day, you will be able to see the huge expanse of the Altiplano as you fly over the landlocked country, perhaps seeing the Andes slowly flattening out to become the Amazonian basin, which spreads to the far East of the country, to the border with Brazil.

Built in a steep valley that protects the city from the harsh elements of the Altiplano, just about every building in La Paz is built on some sort of hill, so sightseeing will literally take your breath away! You will have two days to explore La Paz and its bustling atmosphere. Our hotel is very centrally located and is just around the corner from the city's colourful indigenous street markets including the fascinating and suitably named "Witches Market" where local women in traditional 'Cholita' dress sell such items as dead cats and llamas foetus said to ward off evil spirits. The main square, Plaza Murillo, is also within walking distance. The square still retains its colonial buildings including the Presidential Palace. La Paz is possibly the best place to experience a traditional peña show of Andean music and dance to local bands playing time-honoured instruments such as zampoñas (pipes) and charangos (the ukulele).

Optional Excursions:
Red Caps walking tours – free (tips appreciated)
The World’s Most Dangerous Road Mountain Biking – US$107
Santiago to Lima

Accommodation: 2 night(s) Hotel Sagarnaga or similar Overnight - La Paz (B:1)

Days 9-10: Puno & Lake Titicaca

La Paz - Puno. We travel by public bus across the border into Peru and on to Puno on the shores of Lake Titicaca, which at 3,855 metres above sea level, is the highest navigable lake in the world. We’ll arrive in time so you can visit the colourful local market.

The next morning we depart Puno for our full day excursion on Lake Titicaca. We visit the floating Uros islands in the Bay of Puno, which are constructed by the islanders using reeds that grow in the shallow waters of the bay. You will get to meet the families who live on these islands, learning about their way of life and visiting their homes. You will also have the option to ride in a traditional reed boat before continuing our journey to the island of Taquile, a small island 45km offshore from Puno. It is well known for its tradition of intricate textiles and clothing knitted by the male locals. These textiles are regarded among the highest-quality handicrafts in Peru, and you will learn about this important tradition by meeting and interacting with the islanders. You will then have the option to have a lunch made of local produce before returning to Puno.

Included Excursions: Guided tour of Sacred Valley of the Incas
Accommodation: Tika Wasi or similar Overnight - Ollantaytambo (B)

Day 11: Cuzco

Puno - Cuzco. We travel from Puno to Cuzco, driving along roads abundant with herds of llamas, alpacas and vicuñas before reaching the Altiplano (high plain) where our journey takes us past hot mineral pools, snow capped mountains and through villages where the locals sell food, fur hats and alpaca sweaters. At the highest point, the La Raya pass at 4,321 metres, you can see the research station for high altitude animals. You will have the evening free to wander the beautiful porticos of Cuzco.

Accommodation: Hotel Cusco Plaza II or similar Overnight - Cuzco (B)

Day 12: Sacred Valley

Cuzco - Sacred Valley. A full day is spent visiting the Sacred Valley of the Incas before staying the night with a local Peruvian family. Firstly we visit the Pisac ruins, perched on a hilltop with incredible views of the snow-capped mountains. We then go down to the famous traditional market of the same name, which is full of colour and atmosphere. A great place for souvenirs! After lunch, we continue along the valley to the temple/fortress of Ollantaytambo with its enormous Inca terracing constructed on the side of a steep mountain.

If you are doing the Inca Trek to Machu Picchu, tonight you will stay in Ollantaytambo. If you are doing the Lares Trek or have opted to take the train to Machu Picchu, this afternoon, you will return to Cuzco where you will spend the night.

Included Excursions:

Guided tour of Sacred Valley of the Incas
Accommodation: Tika Wasi or similar Overnight - Ollantaytambo (B)

Days 13-15: The Inca Trail

On day 13 we start our Inca Trail trek. The Inca were a highly organised civilisation and created many Inca paths throughout the Andes in a network they called Qhapaq Ñan. The most famous of all the paths is known simply as Camino Inca or The Inca Trail to Machu Picchu, the royal route to the remnants of the breathtaking mountaintop city of Machu Picchu. Spread over four days, the spectacular 44-kilometre Inca Trail Trek crosses three stunning high passes and encounters many ancient archaeological sites, culminating at the citadel of Machu Picchu. There are few treks in the world that combine natural beauty, history and mystery with such an awe-inspiring final destination.

The Inca Trail Trek can be demanding but can be completed by anyone who leads a reasonably active life - you certainly don’t need to be an athlete. Everyone is able to walk at their own pace and there is no rush to finish. The trekking group is led by an expert local guide and supported by a team of porters and cooks, leaving you with only a small day pack to carry. If you are in any doubt or if you have any condition that may affect your ability to trek, we advise that you consult your doctor. Before embarking on the Inca Trail Trek we will have a briefing to prepare for the next few days and an early departure the following morning.

Day 13 - The trek begins after a short bus journey and the first day is a relatively easy 4½ hour 13 kilometre walk

Day 14 - Today will be your biggest challenge as you reach the highest pass at Warmiwañusca (4,200 metres) which translates to “Dead Woman’s Pass!”. You will cover approximately nine kilometres in about 5-7 hours and after the high pass it’s all downhill as the trail winds its way along old Inca stairs to our campsite.

Day 15 - On Day three we pass the ruins of Runkurakay, Sayacmarca and Phuyupatamarca, walking approximately 15 kilometres in seven hours.

Due to a limited number of people being allowed on the trail a day, permits are limited and can sell out far in advance. If you wish to book the Inca Trail, please provide your Reservations Agent with your passport details by email as soon as possible so that we can secure your permit. Without your passport details, we are unable to arrange your Inca Trail Trek.
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If you are unable to get permits for the Inca Trail, the scenic Lares Trek is available. For information on the Lares Trek including what meals are included, see the notes after the itinerary.

If you do not want to participate in either trek then you will visit Machu Picchu by train and have plenty of free time to enjoy the activities available in and around Cuzco. Meals are not provided during the time spent in Cuzco.

Included Excursions:
Permits and Guided three day hike on the Inca Trail
Accommodation: 3 night(s) in campsites on the Inca Trek. Overnight - Inca Trail (camping) (B:3, L:3, D:3)

Day 16: Machu Picchu

Machu Picchu - Cuzco. On the last morning of the Inca Trail Trek, after an overnight stop at Wiñay-Wayna, you will rise early for the final walk to Machu Picchu and greet daybreak over the famous “Sun Gate”. There will then be time to explore on your own or simply take in the magnificence of the place after your guided tour.

The Lost City of Machu Picchu was originally completely self-contained, surrounded by agricultural terraces sufficient to feed the population, and watered by natural springs. Located high above the fast flowing Urubamba River, the cloud shrouded ruins have palaces, baths, temples, storage rooms and some 150 houses, all in a remarkable state of preservation that will simply take your breath away.

The ruins were only discovered by the outside world in 1911, when American explorer Hiram Bingham found them while looking for another “lost city” called Vilcabamba. Due to their isolation many of the buildings are still quite intact and you can’t help but admire Huayna Picchu (“Young Mountain”), which towers above the ruins.

After spending most of the day at Machu Picchu you have the chance to meander through the markets before enjoying a scenic train ride back to the Sacred Valley where our transfer to Cuzco will be waiting.

Included Excursions:
Guided Tour of Machu Picchu

Accommodation: Hotel Cusco Plaza II or similar
Overnight - Cuzco (B)

Day 17: Cuzco

After four days of trekking through the Andes you’ll probably want some rest time and that’s exactly what today is all about. The day is free for you to relax and unwind, or explore more of Cuzco at your own pace.

The oldest continuously inhabited city in South America, Cuzco was the hub of the Incan Empire and features a population of around 300,000, most of who are indigenous. This marvellous colonial city is situated 3,310 metres above sea level and has numerous churches, some of which were built using recycled Inca masonry, as were many other buildings in Cuzco. The main square is called the Plaza de Armas, which has the beautiful cathedral on one side, which took a century to build, and the Church of La Compañía de Jesus on the other. The colonial arcades, which occupy the remainder of the plaza, are full of restaurants and shops. If you’re in the mood for a cultural experience, take a peek inside the 14th-century Inca palace which was later converted into the city’s Museo de Arte Religioso (Museum of Religious Art). Well worth exploring during your time here is the ancient archaeological site of Sacsayhuaman, which has the largest and most impressive Inca stonework of all.

If that all sounds a bit much, the city boasts some great markets, the most well-known being San Pedro where all kinds of textiles and artisan merchandise are sold, and you can enjoy a fresh fruit juice made by one of the welcoming locals. Or you can simply enjoy wandering the cobbled streets, enjoy a cup of coca tea in a local café and soak up the friendly atmosphere.

Optional Excursions:
Boleto Completo, valid for 10 days and includes entrance to most Inca ruin sites in Sacred Valley and Cusco.-- US$40 or 130 soles
Boleto Parcial, includes just sites around Cusco – 70 soles
Massages – US$25/hr
City tour – US$30 + 70 soles entry if Completo has not been purchased
Chocolate making course – US$22

Accommodation: Hotel Cusco Plaza II or similar
Overnight - Cuzco (B)

Days 18-19: The Amazon Jungle

Cuzco - The Amazon. Our rep will transfer you to the airport for your flight to the city of Puerto Maldonado located on the confluence of the Madre de Dios and Tambopata rivers. The city is the starting point for our visit to the Amazon rainforest.

In Puerto Maldonado you can pick up any last minute drinks or snacks in the busy markets and shops. The first leg of our journey is by bus followed by canoe, a 35 kilometre journey along the river (approx two hours total). The canoes are very safe.

Arriving at the lodge located on the river’s edge, you will be allocated a bungalow all of which
Santiago to Lima

are built from local indigenous materials. Each room is sealed by meshed netting to keep out mosquitoes and other insects. All rooms have basic private bathroom facilities. Due to the remoteness of the lodge there is no hot water and drinking water should be purchased. There is also limited electricity so please charge any electrical equipment prior to your arrival. In the evenings the lodge and walkways are lit by oil lamps. Other facilities include a welcoming reception area, dining room and bar facilities. All excursions are led by English speaking local guides providing plenty of opportunity to enjoy marvelous jungle landscapes and rich diversity of flora and fauna.

After lunch we will set off on a trek through the rainforest along wooden walk ways. On the way our guide will stop to show you various species of bird and explain the medicinal plants and delicate ecological systems of the Amazon Jungle. The scenery is extremely varied incorporating dense jungle as well as marsh areas. You will see incredibly big trees, several metres in diameter and around 450 years old. There is an opportunity to take a canoe ride drifting along one of the small lakes hidden away in the jungle, observing caiman and the abundant bird life. We then return to the lodge for dinner.

After an early breakfast we hike deeper in to the jungle, enjoying the surroundings and exploring the delights and hidden wonders of the Amazon Rainforest. We may also catch a glimpse of the rare giant otter. Afterwards we will enjoy the view of the lake from our viewing point/observation platform, where you can experience the canopy wildlife such as parrots, guacamayos, toucans, camungos, shanshos, herons, turtles and caiman. We will return to the lodge for a well deserved lunch.

After lunch, we take a short boat trip across the lake. You may see the white shanshos, herons, turtles and caiman. We will then set off and explore the rainforest along wooden walk ways. On the way our guide will stop to show you various species of bird and explain the medicinal plants and delicate ecological systems of the Amazon Jungle. The scenery is extremely varied incorporating dense jungle as well as marsh areas. You may see incredible big trees, several metres in diameter and around 450 years old. There is an opportunity to take a canoe ride drifting along one of the small lakes hidden away in the jungle, observing caiman and the abundant bird life. We then return to the lodge for dinner.

On arrival in Santiago, we recommend you change enough money into the local currency (the Chilean peso) for the first four or five days of your trip. This is especially important if you are arriving on a Saturday night. The exchange rate at the airport is just as good as in the city centre. As you come out of immigration you will find the bank right in front of you before you turn left into the baggage claim area or you can use one of the ATMs outside the terminal.

Arriving to Lima

On arrival in Santiago, we recommend you change enough money into the local currency (the Chilean peso) for the first four or five days of your trip. This is especially important if you are arriving on a Saturday night. The exchange rate at the airport is just as good as in the city centre. As you come out of immigration you will find the bank right in front of you before you turn left into the baggage claim area or you can use one of the ATMs outside the terminal.

Airport transfer

An airport arrival transfer is included in the cost of your tour. If you are delayed by more than an hour or you miss your connecting flight, in order for us to rearrange your transfer, please call the emergency contact number on your tour voucher with your new scheduled arrival time and flight details. We will do our best to rearrange your arrival transfer.

Making your own way to our start hotel

If, for any reason, you need to make your own way to our start hotel you can either take a taxi from the rank outside or you can arrange to pay for a taxi at one of the pre-pay taxi desks just before you get to the luggage hall. You then hand a ticket to the driver rather than paying in the taxi. Licensed and unlicensed taxis are also available outside but you will have to haggle for a good price which can be difficult if you do not speak Spanish. If you do use these taxis you should agree a price before setting off and get the driver to write down the price (be clear on whether they are talking about pesos or US dollars). The airport is approximately 30 minutes from the city centre (depending on traffic).

Start Hotel Address:

Hotel Libertador
Avenida Libertador Bernardo O’ Higgins 853
Santiago, Chile

Tel: (+56) 2 639 4211
Fax: (+56) 2 632 7128

The hotel serves a continental breakfast consisting of bread, jam and tea/coffee or juice, or an American breakfast with eggs. Please check with reception for serving times and prices (breakfast is not included).
Santiago to Lima

Single Supplement
If you paid our single supplement for this tour, a single room will be provided for your comfort every night except days 4 - 5, 12 - 15 and 18 - 19.

The Inca Trail
Hiking the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu
The Inca Trail trek is undulating and there are even (a few) flat sections. What this does mean is that on some days (particularly on day 2 up to the highest pass – ‘Dead Woman’s Pass’ at 4,200m) it can be a hard going (seemingly never ending!) uphill slog. Naturally the uphills are countered by some prolonged downhill sections and this can be even tougher on the legs.

It is important to remember that the trail is not three solid days of challenging trekking, rather it is varied and the difficulty level can change two or three times within the same day. The most imperative factor in tackling the trail is to take it slowly (try to take small, shuffling steps), walk at your own pace (this is vital) and remember that it is not a race! Drink plenty of water and take breathers often (buy a cheap walking stick in Ollantaytambo and lean on it rather than sitting down). Those who charge into every uphill section and want to be the first at every pass will find the trail the toughest.

Fitness
The Inca Trail is certainly not easy but you do not need to be an athlete or a trekking expert to complete it. Fitness is naturally important but it is the kind of trek that anyone with a positive attitude and determination can do. However the more fit you are the more you will enjoy the trail and the more chance you will have to take in the scenery and appreciate the Inca ruins dotted along the way. If you do not exercise regularly, it is advisable to do some extra walking or some kind of aerobic activity in the months leading up to your trip.

Many people worry whether they will be able to cope physically but complete failure is rare and would usually only result from severe altitude sickness or a person lacking even a basic level of fitness. Adults of all ages (from teenager to pensioner) complete the trek and age itself is no barrier if you are positive minded and live an active lifestyle. Before departing for your tour, we recommend visiting the doctor who will be able to provide you with more information. If you are planning to take your children to Peru, please be advised that the minimum age for hiking the Inca Trail is 13 years old.

Altitude
Altitude can affect anyone at moderate to high altitude (generally anything over 3,000 metres). Altitude sickness is caused by the lack of oxygen which can be up to a third less than at sea level. No one understands why some people are affected and others not and age, level of fitness and strength is no indication of how well you will fare. Be aware that altitude sickness can be serious, so if your guide advises you to rest or descend, please do as instructed. As the Inca Trail trek is a mixture of ascents and descents, altitude sickness is often short term and suffering from it does not necessarily mean you will be unable to complete the trek. Drugs are available to combat the effects of altitude sickness. We advise you to visit your doctor before you travel on all of our tours but when hiking the Inca Trail, it is imperative that you do so.

Staff & support
The trek will be led by an experienced guide with extensive local historical and archaeological knowledge. You will pass many Inca ruins along the way and your guide will conduct short tours wherever it is possible to do so. A team of porters will carry all equipment leaving you with just a small daypack to carry. The cook will prepare three meals a day (while camping) plus provide hot drinks and snacks.

Equipment & campsites
All camping gear (tents are two person) and cooking equipment is supplied (except sleeping bags). Each day the porters will overtake the group to arrive in camp well in advance. This gives them plenty of time to set up camp and start to prepare dinner. Tents are two person A-frame style and there is a communal dining tent for eating and staying dry – if it rains. Sleeping mats are provided and these will be laid out in the tents by the porters. When you get into camp you will be able to collect your duffle bag and access your clothes/toiletries. The porters usually also provide a small bowl of warm water, soap and a small flannel / towel for every person to wash their hands when reaching camp and each morning. Campfires are not permitted so there is not a lot to do after dinner and most people retire to bed early. Please note that campsites are subject to change depending on availability. You will be advised at the Inca Trail trek briefing of the exact campsites you will be staying at.

Toilets & showers
There are toilet blocks (with ceramic squat toilets) dotted along the Inca trail. These little blocks are usually well hidden from view and are surprisingly clean. Between these toilet blocks the only choice is to go ‘behind a bush’! Lunch stops are often made in the vicinity of a toilet block. Toilet blocks are usually available in camp on the second and third night. The location of camp on day one can vary and it is likely that you will have to use a toilet tent or the bush. Taking your own toilet roll is essential but it is important not to flush loo paper away. Showers are available at the campsite on day 3. On this night all trekkers camp at the same place so demand for the showers can be high, however as everyone arrives into camp at different times in the afternoon you may be lucky and not have to queue for too long.

Meals
The food provided by the porters and cook is nothing short of amazing. Trekkers can expect a breakfast of omelettes or pancakes, a ‘takeaway’ snack pack of fruit or chocolate to eat mid morning, a two course lunch of soup and meat with pasta or rice, afternoon tea on arrival at camp with biscuits and popcorn and a three course dinner. Breakfast and dinner is accompanied by hot drinks (tea, coffee, chocolate) and lunch usually by cordial (other drinks e.g. soft drinks or beer are at your own risk).
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TRIP NOTES

**Santiago to Lima - 21 days**

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**TRIP NOTES**

- *Please note: If you are travelling in winter and you do not wish to invest in a 4 season bag you may want to consider purchasing a 3 season bag plus a sleeping bag liner and bringing additional clothing.*

- Sleeping bag - You will need a good warm sleeping bag for the Inca Trail trek. Where possible we recommend you bring your own sleeping bag, however adequate ones can be hired locally (for approx US$10) but we can take no responsibility for the standard. If you are planning to hire a bag it is a good idea to bring a silk sleeping bag liner to use inside for added warmth and comfort.

- Footwear

Good quality, comfortable footwear is essential. Whatever you wear on your feet the most important thing is comfort. It is vital to ensure your boots are well worn in and lightweight. Ankle support and waterproofing is recommended but if you already have something comfortable with good grip on rocks then don’t go rushing out to buy new boots – you are better off with your well worn pair!

- Luggage Storage and Load Limits

During the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu your main luggage will be stored in Cuzco and you will receive a small duffle bag at your Inca Trail briefing (which will be held the evening before you start the trek) to pack clothes and sleeping bag for 3-4 days. Your team of porters will carry these bags together with the food and equipment for the trail. Please note that you will not have access to these items until the end of each day as the porters will always be ahead of the group. You should therefore bring a day pack in which you can carry personal belongings such as your camera, water and sun screen etc. By Peruvian law the duffle bag must not weigh more than 5 kilograms (10lbs) which is to include your sleeping bag - this limit is set to protect the health of porters and animals. All bags will be weighed before being accepted. If you require more than 5 kilograms, it will then be your responsibility to carry the extra amount together with your day pack.

- Packing List for the Inca Trail Trek

- Passport – You MUST take your passport and a photocopy is not sufficient. (Keep it in a plastic bag in case of rain).

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- Packing List for the Inca Trail Trek

- Passport – You MUST take your passport and a photocopy is not sufficient. (Keep it in a plastic bag in case of rain).
Santiago to Lima

- Small towel and basic personal toiletries - there is an opportunity for a shower at the campsite on the third night so bring travel size shampoo and shower gel if you would like to use it, plus wetwipes for the rest of the trek.
- Water bottle – bring one large (1.5 litre) or two or three small water bottles that can be refilled on the trail with boiled water, which will be supplied when possible.
- Warm clothing for night time - Fleeces, long pants, woollen hat, gloves
- Thermal underwear – If trekking in winter or you feel the cold
- Walking clothing in layers – e.g. zip off trousers, fleeces, T-shirts
- Personal medication and basic first aid kit - Band-aids, Imodium, Panadol, rehydration sachets
- Camera and spare batteries, memory cards or film - Please note: there are no electrical outlets on the Inca Trail so make sure you fully charge or/and have spare batteries!
- Snacks - Chocolates, chips, biscuits, energy bars. Snacks are provided during the trek but you may like to bring one or two extras just in case.
- Torch (flash-light) - (Very Important) and spare batteries.
- Sunscreen, sunglasses and sun hat
- Tropical strength insect repellent
- Antiseptic hand gel
- Swimwear for Aguas Calientes hot pools - Towels can be hired there for 3 soles.
- Flip flops / thongs / sandals – If you wish to have a shower on the third night.

Alternative Lares Trek
For those on the Lares Trek instead of the Inca Trail, details of the trek are as follows...

Day 13: The Lares Trek
Cuzco – Lares – Wacawasi – Sondor. We depart Cuzco early in the morning and travel to the township of Calca (2900 metres above sea level) in the Sacred Valley of the Incas. You might get a chance to visit an ancient bakery where there’s a chance to snack on delicious freshly baked bread and watch traditional cooking methods. We can also visit the principal local markets selling a multitude of Andean crops including colourful corns, seeds and spices. The markets are a fantastic place for authentic photographs or simply to spend a while soaking up the atmosphere of life – and everyday trading – totally untouched by tourism. Continuing on from Calca we drive to the highest point of the day passing Inca burial tombs, local farms and herds of wild llama en route. Stopping for a short guided walk we visit the vast pre Inca ruins of Ascasmarca (4000m) with stunning views of the surrounding valley and mountains. From here we continue uphill to the highest point of the day at 4340m to the Lares Valley to the small community of Lares, stopping for a short time to buy last minute supplies, before continuing on to Chancachacha, for lunch and the starting point of our trek. Throughout our trek, we are supported by an experienced team of porters to tend to our constant daily needs. This makes our trek more authentic and within the tradition of the area.

After two hours of hiking we will arrive at Wacawasi, located at 3800 metres and one of the largest villages of direct descendants of the Incas, will be our first stop. We will see the unspoiled traditional daily activities of the local way of life. Continuing on, we follow the ancient trail to arrive at Sondor; at 4220 metres, this is our first campsite and home for tonight. Overnight - camping (B, L, D)

Day 14: The Lares Trek
Sondor – Marcacocha – Pallata. The most captivating, this morning we cross our first high pass of Wacawasiqasi, at 4600m, which is located on the shoulder of the holy Pumahuanca mountains. Following on, we cross the second high pass of Waynruruycuqasa at 4600m. We see spectacular views of Aruraycocha Lake, situated at 4380m. We also see the surrounding valleys and the Andean farmers dressed in their traditional, brightly coloured ponchos and head-wear, tending their crops and alpaca/llama herds. This is a remote and rarely visited region and our time here makes for an unforgettable experience, and supreme photographic opportunities. We will stop for a well-deserved lunch, at Siki estanque at 4120m, and this afternoon we continue on to Pajchayaoq, Ruka and Marcacocha and you will be welcomed by many children along the way who are back home from school. Late in the afternoon we will see Inca and pre Inca remains around Hatunuyaqoq and Marcacocha arriving at Pallata at 3220m where we will spend the night. Overnight - camping (B, L, D)

Day 15: The Lares Trek
Marcacocha – Ollantaytambo – Aguas Calientes. We have an early morning start today as we set off for Ollantaytambo. We stop to visit the dramatic Inca site of Pumamarca, which dominates the entire valley. From Pumamarca an original Inca trail carries us down the lush valley among Inca terracing of Tambowayalla, Chuchuna and Media Luna. We arrive in Ollantaytambo in time for lunch and after a quick rest we board the train, and following the Urubamba river we arrive at the small but well-known township of Aguas Calientes - the starting point for tomorrow’s visit to the astounding lost Inca City of Machu Picchu and our home for tonight. Aguas Calientes is named after its nearby hot springs. There is time here to relax in the soothing pools and there are plenty of restaurants to choose from for dinner (not included). Overnight - Aguas Calientes hotel (B)

Day 16 - Machu Picchu
Machu Picchu - Cuzco. Rising early we take the bus up to Machu Picchu to beat the thronging crowds which arrive mid morning. If members of your tour group have spent the past three days hiking the Inca Trail Trek, your early arrival will allow time to catch up and share stories of your respective treks before a full guided tour of the archaeological site. You will then have free time to independently explore this mystical Inca city. Returning to Aguas Calientes by bus we then catch the late afternoon train and bus back to Cuzco. Overnight - Cuzco

Lares Trek Quick Facts
Accommodation: 2 nights camping (two person tents, shared) with all meals provided, 1 night hotel.
Meals: All meals are provided during the trek.
Equipment and Facilities: All equipment is supplied for camping (except sleeping bags) and cooking. Facilities while camping are basic (shower on the last night and some toilets).
Transport: Transfers (minibus, bus and train) are included.
Group: The group size will vary depending on demand, however the trek group is subject to a maximum of 16 passengers (per guide).
Staff: English speaking guide, porters and cook.

TRIP NOTES

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Santiago to Lima

**Extras:** Please budget for extra drinks (i.e. soft drinks and alcohol), tips and meals in Aguas Calientes.

**Important Note**
You will be required to pay a single supplement if you are the only person from a group tour hiking the Lares Trek. This is payable at the time of booking. However, if additional group members join your group after you have booked, the supplement will be refunded to you in Cuzco.

**Machu Picchu by train**
If you do not wish to trek, you can take the train to Machu Picchu and enjoy additional free time in Cuzco. This is included in the tour price at no extra charge. Please note that meals are not included, apart from two breakfasts in Cuzco. Your itinerary during the four days when other group members are trekking will be as follows...

**Days 13 & 14 - Cuzco**
Free time to explore Cuzco. Overnight - Cuzco

**Day 15 - Aguas Calientes**
Take a scenic train journey to Aguas Calientes, a town which is named after its nearby hot springs. There is time here to relax in the soothing pools and there are plenty of restaurants to choose from for dinner (not included). Overnight - Aguas Calientes

**Day 16 - Machu Picchu**
Machu Picchu - Cuzco. Rising early take the bus up to Machu Picchu. Meet up with the rest of your tour group who have been trekking and enjoy a full guided tour of the archaeological site. You will then have free time to explore this mystical Inca city. Returning to Aguas Calientes by bus we then catch the late afternoon train and bus back to Cuzco. Overnight - Cuzco

**KNOW BEFORE YOU GO**

**Our partners Tucan Travel**
Please note that our South America group tours (not Galapagos cruises) are operated by Tucan Travel. Travellers on your trip will have made their reservation with either On The Go Tours or Tucan Travel. The style of adventure your tour group who have been trekking and enjoy a full guided tour of the archaeological site. You will then have free time to explore this mystical Inca city. Returning to Aguas Calientes by bus we then catch the late afternoon train and bus back to Cuzco. Overnight - Cuzco.

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**Hotels & Arrival Transfers**

**Arriving at the airport**
When you arrive in your starting city the immigration officials may ask to see your onward flight ticket, so you should have your tour voucher and international flight ticket to hand.

Day 1 of all our tours is simply a joining day and the tour actually departs the joining city on day 2. The last day of your tour is the official departure day and is free for you to pack or sightsee before you depart. All tours are scheduled to arrive at your final destination the afternoon/evening before your departure day. Therefore very little time is spent in each of the starting and finishing cities and you will need to allow a few days at the beginning or end of your tour if you want to explore them further. This is particularly important for passengers joining tours in high altitude cities (Quito & La Paz) so that you can rest and acclimatise before the tour begins. We can book pre and post tour accommodation for you upon request.

Check in time is at 1300 hrs on day 1. If you wish to use the services of a room before or after checkout time, or you are arriving very early in the morning of day 1, you will need to book an extra night, which we can arrange for you. All rooms are on a bed only basis unless otherwise indicated.

An airport arrival transfer is included. Departure transfers are not included but can be booked for an additional fee.

Important: If you are delayed by more than an hour or you miss your connecting flight, in order for us to rearrange your transfer, please call your emergency contact number on the voucher with your new scheduled arrival time and flight details. We will do our best to rearrange your arrival transfer.

**Missing your tour departure**
If you miss the start of your tour, please ask at the reception of the hotel for a message from your tour leader which will give you instructions on how to catch up with the group. Any associated costs will be at your own expense (although, depending on the reason, you may be able to claim these from your travel insurance so ensure you keep all receipts).

If you know in advance that you are unlikely to arrive on time, please contact Tucan Travel immediately so we can inform the tour leader. Tucan Travel cannot be held responsible should your airline/boat/coach be delayed and we are unable to refund any unused portion of your tour.

**Welcome Meeting**
South America Group Tours - The address of your start hotel can be found on your Tour Voucher. On arrival you should look for a Tucan Travel information sheet and welcome note on the hotel notice board where you will find details of the pre-departure/welcome meeting.

The tour leader or a representative will normally hold the pre-departure meeting early in the evening of day one. This meeting is usually held at 6pm, assuming that all travellers have arrived by then. You will be briefed about the tour, given an outline itinerary for the next few days and any questions will be answered. After the meeting there is usually an option for everyone to go out for dinner and drinks to start to get to know one another.

Please note that you will need to bring the following items to the pre departure meeting:

- The original copy and a photocopy of your passport
- Vaccination certificates (if required)
- Travel voucher
- Details of your travel insurance policy number and their 24hr emergency contact number

**Our Itineraries**
Our detailed day by day itineraries are provided in good faith and it is our intention to adhere to the published route but please be aware that changes may be made before or during your tour for operational or safety reasons or to incorporate improvements. Impromptu changes may also occur whilst you are travelling.
Santiago to Lima

as a result of one-off circumstances such as an excursion being closed on a particular day, weather conditions or transport. Delays are rare but occur occasionally and for this reason and the reasons above this itinerary should be considered as a guide only. Published transport times are approximations and may vary depending on local conditions.

Optional Excursions

During our South America Group Tours there will be free time to enjoy a range of optional excursions which are listed in the Trip Notes. Your tour leader will be able to make recommendations and bookings in advance for most of these activities so you have more flexibility and control over your itinerary. Please note that you may not have time to do all of the optional excursions listed. Should you wish to partake in optional activities in the city where you tour starts/ends, please check their is sufficient time to do so or alternatively consider booking pre/post tour accommodation.

Optional excursions are not operated by On The Go Tours / Tucan Travel and while every effort is made prices may not be up-to-date and are intended as a general guide to help you budget for your trip. Prices for vehicle-based excursions are approximate based on the optimum number of participants and the actual price may vary depending on group size.

Sufficient safety equipment such as helmets and life jackets are sometimes not available and On The Go Tours / Tucan Travel are unable to provide this equipment. If you intend to participate in an optional excursion you may like to consider bringing your own safety gear.

Excursions are run by a local operator or third party with both On The Go Tours / Tucan Travel and the Tour Leader acting as a booking agent only. Optional activities are not part of the tour and our booking conditions do not apply to them. It is your responsibility to ensure you have the correct travel insurance for the excursions you intend to take part in and On The Go Tours / Tucan Travel are not liable for any injuries incurred.

Spending Money

Spending money – allow approximately US$25-30 per day to cover meals, snacks, drinks, limited souvenirs, laundry, tips and any extras on our group tours.

Style of Tour

Our South America Group Tours are designed to suit travellers who love being able to travel on many different forms of transport with local people. There is a certain amount of involvement needed, which will mean carrying your own bags to the bus or train station or even helping the driver throw everyone’s packs onto the roof. If you enjoy meeting and interacting with local people and don’t mind roughing it occasionally, then these tours will be just right for you.

It is important that you are open to travelling with a range of different age groups. You must also satisfy yourself that you are fit enough to complete the itinerary as there are no refunds if you choose to leave the tour. Based on the nature of this travel style, our adventurous South America tours are generally suitable for people aged between 18 and 60 years old. If you have any questions about this please contact us or speak to your travel consultant.

Our South America tours suit people who are fit and active. On all of our tours there are many walks between bus/train terminals and hotels and travellers must be able to carry their own luggage over various terrains as well as lift up luggage onto the tops of buses so do not pack more than you can comfortably carry.

The average group size is 8 to 12 passengers with a maximum of 16, however on some included excursions group sizes may occasionally be larger.

Tour Leaders

Our South America Tours are escorted by a tour leader who will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the tour, so you are free to sit back, relax and enjoy the journey. Our tour leaders are genuine travel addicts who will share their passion for their destination with you.

You may be assisted at other times by other representatives, who will escort you at times when your tour leader may not be available. In addition, local guides are used to accompany many of our excursions, such as visits to archaeological sites and the Inca Trail Trek. Their knowledge of the local area and familiarity with its customs and history will enhance your experience by getting to know a country from a local’s perspective.

Our South America tours operate on a modular system with smaller tour sections joining and leaving the master tour throughout its duration. This means that you may start your tour with a local representative and then meet up with your tour leader and the rest of your group on day two of the tour.

Tipping

Although tipping is not a natural part of many Western cultures it is expected in South America, where many workers are very poorly paid and depend on tips for their main income. The local people work very hard to provide a good service and this is due in part to the tips they have received from foreigners in the past. However all tips are at your own discretion and you should not feel obliged or pressured to tip at any time – particularly if you feel that the level of service was not up to standard.

As a general guideline a gratuity of 10% of the total bill for your waiter is recommended in restaurants. You should be aware that prices on the menu often exclude service charges but they are added to the bill (10%) and local taxes (anywhere between 2% and 20%). If it is included then you are not expected to pay an additional tip, although this is still appreciated. Some restaurants have a ‘cubiertos’ (cover charge) which is normally added onto the food section of the bill, not the total, so watch out for this when dividing the bill with other group members.

It is customary to tip your local guides on both included and optional excursions. As a guideline, we recommend US$5-5 per person for a half/full day excursion. Your tour leader will generally pass around an envelope for the local guide on included excursions. The tour leader will indicate on the envelope the amount of the tip usually given per person to the guide.
Santiago to Lima

This information is given as a guide as many travellers are unsure how much to tip. Should you wish to give the local guide your tip personally and not with the group tip then please feel free to do so.

Inca Trail and Lares Trek - the commonly accepted combined tip for guides, porters and cooks on the Inca Trail or Lares Trek is US$30 per trekker. This amount will be collected from each trekker by the tour leader and distributed amongst the Trail team usually at the last dinner.

Tips are also appreciated by your tour leader at the end of your tour. This, however, is this only if you feel that their service was up to standard and is completely at your own discretion. Tipping is an entirely personal gesture.

Group Tour Accommodation

In South America we generally stay in small, locally-owned hotels rather than large international chains. We are occasionally far from towns and cities, staying in unique places such as jungle lodges, Chinese junk boats or remote home-stays. Depending on the tour, the accommodation we use is generally the equivalent in comfort of a two to three star hotel. We stay in small hotels, hostels and guest houses which are usually situated close to the main sights and town centres. They are chosen for their local character, ambiance, cleanliness and security. You will find comfortable rooms with en-suite facilities (although on rare occasions bathrooms may be shared). You may on rare occasions be required to stay in a triple room or in mixed gender dorms where accommodation options are limited.

All accommodation is included from the arrival day until check out time on the final day of the tour. Travellers will share rooms with other group members of the same gender. Mostly this will be in twin rooms although sometimes in triples depending on the group composition and hotel rooming structure.

Please note: Accommodation sometimes has erratic services such as a lack of hot water or no central heating. Depending on the tour, there may be occasions when you are camping or your overnight accommodation is on buses, trains or boats. More details on accommodation can be found on each tour itinerary page. Hotel staff don’t always speak English and sometimes our reservations are “lost”! In general, facilities are very good but please be prepared for the occasional mishap, which is all part of the typical travel experience.

Transportation & Travel

On all of our South America Group Tours we use a variety of transportation. Vehicles can range from buses filled with local people and their many possessions to our to private minibuses, four-wheel drive vehicles and comfortable air-conditioned coaches. Sometimes you could be travelling on boats, trains, planes, ferries, private shuttle buses, boats, dugout canoes and taxis. Most bus transport is very comfortable, often with reclining seats. Please note that the four-wheel drive vehicles used when visiting the Salt Flats in Bolivia do not have heating, so you’ll need to wrap up warm in colder months.

Our aim is not simply to get you from A to B, but to help you to experience each destination as a genuine traveller, not as a first class tourist. A word of warning - please remember that travelling conditions can sometimes be cramped.

The occasional long travel day is inevitable when you are covering large distances. Our South America Tours try to find the balance between long, short and non travel days, ensuring our itineraries aren’t too tiring and give you time to explore. We cut down on travel times by including some short flights and overnight trains and buses. Each itinerary is different, so please check the tour itineraries for information on travel times.

Meals

On our South America Group Tours breakfast is often included. In remote areas such as the Amazon Jungle excursion and on the Inca Trail or Lares treks, much and dinner is also included. Most other meals are not included which gives you the flexibility to choose when and where you eat. Our tour leaders have a wealth of knowledge regarding local restaurants and can advise you of the best places to try the delicious and varied local cuisine.

What to Pack

Our South America tours often involve walks between bus or train terminals and hotels, so travellers must be able to carry their own luggage over various terrains, as well as lift luggage on to the tops of buses. We therefore recommend backpacks over suitcases, as you may be off the beaten track every now and again. It is important that you only pack what you can comfortably carry. By packing less you will have a more enjoyable tour and have more room in your luggage for souvenirs! On tours that include flights, we cover the cost of your checked baggage up to 20kg, even in cases where the airline policy is lower. All baggage over 20kg may still be checked, but charges will be the responsibility of the traveller.

In addition to your main bag, you will need a small daypack for your everyday excursions. Try to keep this bag as light as possible and make sure that all main sections of your bags can be padlocked. This daypack should have enough room to carry plenty of food and snacks for long hikes and treks and be big enough for an overnight excursions.

Essential for all tours

- Tour Voucher and Tour Trip Notes
- Passport - with at least six months after you have finished your tour with sufficient blank pages. (with 2 photocopies - one kept separately & the other to give to the tour leader with your next of kin details)
- Cash/ travellers cheques/ credit & debit cards (with photocopies kept separately)
- Travel insurance certificate (with a photocopy to be given to your tour leader)
- Spare passport photos (you may need these for obtaining visas)
- International airline tickets (with a photocopy kept separately)
- International Vaccination Certificate (Yellow Fever if applicable)
- International student card (may get you discounts into some sites)
- Your travel consultant’s phone number and email address (it is very important to have this as it is much easier to confirm/ change flights etc via your agent)

TRIP NOTES

updated on 31-08-2017
Santiago to Lima

Suggested equipment (some useful, some necessary - use your discretion)

- Cotton money belt and/or pouch to store your valuables under your clothing
- Sunglasses
- Small calculator (to help with currency conversions)
- Lockable pouch for your money and valuables to use in safety deposit boxes
- Plastic bags (very useful for wrapping camera equipment, soap, shampoo bottles, wet clothing etc)
- Inflatable pillow (if trekking in Peru)
- Sleeping bag (if trekking in Peru)
- Small umbrella (also good for sun protection)
- Pegless washing line and travel laundry detergent (bio-degradable preferably)
- Torch
- Binoculars
- Travel alarm clock
- Travel plug adaptor
- Small medical kit with diarrhoea remedy, rehydration salts, antiseptic cream, sterile dressings, plasters, bandages, pain-killers, safety pins etc
- Small sewing kit
- Lip balm, sun block with high UV factor (this can be expensive to buy locally)
- Insect repellent (DEET 35% min) and bite cream
- Tampons/Sanitary towels
- Toilet paper (best to carry a roll with you at all times) and/or tissues (purchase locally)
- Antibacterial hand cleansing gel (the type you can use without water)
- Moistened face tissues (e.g. Wet Ones)
- Ear plugs
- Travel sickness tablets (these are usually easy to buy extra sweaters/jumpers locally).

Check the climate and altitude at www.worldclimate.com to get an idea of what the weather will be like on your tour. We do not feel that it is necessary to include a full packing list as you will know what you need depending on the duration of your tour. However we do recommend that you bring the following:

- A lightweight water/windproof jacket with hood
- Easy to pack wide-brimmed hat or cap
- Sarong - very useful as a beach towel, bag, hat, shawl and wrap around
- Towel
- Swimwear
- Sandals/flip flops

It is also ESSENTIAL that you have good, comfortable shoes that are suitable for walking and trekking. These don’t need to be expensive boots, but they should have good ankle support and grip, be worn in and ideally waterproof.

Sleeping Bags

A good warm sleeping bag is necessary on all tours which include the Inca Trail or Lares Trail in Peru. Adequate ones can be hired locally but we take no responsibility for the standard and we therefore recommend that if possible you bring your own. Because these treks are at high altitude, we recommend bringing a four season bag with side zip which can be opened out when you reach warmer weather. Extra blankets can be purchased locally if necessary.

In South America, you may have a number of overnight excursions included on your tour. Thick blankets are supplied when on Amantani Island (Lake Titicaca) but they have a tendency to be dusty, so you may wish to bring a sleeping bag or sheet (they cannot be hired there). You may also wish to bring a sleeping sheet for your overnight excursion into the Amazon Jungle.

A sleeping bag liner/sleep sheet is optional on all other South America Tours. Some passengers like to use them on long bus journeys and overnight trains.

Health

Please see your doctor or travel clinic for an up to date list of all recommended vaccinations for the regions you will be travelling to. We recommend that you do this at least eight weeks before you travel, as you may need a course of medications or more than one vaccination.

In general we recommend that you are vaccinated against Tetanus-diphtheria, polio, hepatitis A and Typhoid and if travelling to a jungle area, yellow fever. Vaccinations are solely the responsibility of the traveller and not that of On The Go Tours.

The malarial risk varies in the regions of South America and in some areas appropriate preventive medicines are needed. Measures should always be taken to avoid mosquito bites, such as nets and creams. Please check with your health care professional as to the best and most up to date remedy for this mosquito borne disease.

It is not recommended that you drink the tap water in any of the countries we visit and we recommend that you carry a First Aid kit as well as any personal medical requirements. Please be aware that quite often we are in remote areas and away from medical facilities, and for legal reasons our leaders are prohibited from administering any type of drug including headache tablets, antibiotics, etc.

Electricity Supply

The power supply varies from country to country and can also vary from region to region within a country. If bringing electrical equipment, make sure that it can be switched over from 110 volts to 220 volts and vice versa.

Santiago to Lima - 21 days

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If your equipment is 220 volts it will work on a 110 volt system (albeit slower), but if you use 110 volt equipment in a 220 volt system, it will blow the equipment! Bring a voltage converter and travel plug adaptor (most countries either have 2 pin flat as in USA or 2 round pins).

Personal Safety

It is not advisable to wear chains or expensive looking watches or jewellery while in many South American cities. You should also keep your camera concealed when not in use and carry daypacks on your front for extra safety. Crime in Latin America is not as bad as its reputation but you must be sensible and alert.

Bolivia Country Guide

Bolivia - Fact File

- Official Name: Republic of Bolivia
- Capital: La Paz (administrative), Sucre (judicial)
- Population: 8.4 million
- Total Area: 1.1 million square kilometres
- Official Language: Spanish, Quechua and Aymara
- Religions: Roman Catholic 95%
- Voltage: 110 volts in La Paz and 220 volts in the rest of the country
- Dialling Code: +591
- Time Difference: GMT/UTC –4
- Airport Departure Tax: US$25

Bolivia - Money

Citizens of the EU, Canada and Australasia do not need a visa to enter Bolivia. Entry is granted on production of a passport valid for more than six months, a return air/bus ticket and proof of funds to support yourself for the duration of the stay. Many other nationals, including US and South African citizens do require visas. For the latest information on your specific visa requirements you should contact the local Bolivian Embassy or Consulate well in advance of your planned date of travel.

Bolivia entry/exit requirements: Your passport must contain a Bolivia entry stamp, without this you’ll have to pay a fine when you leave the country. If you enter Bolivia overland ensure that your passport is stamped on both sides of the border, with an exit stamp from the country you are leaving and an entry stamp on the Bolivian side.

Bolivia - Climate

Nicknamed the ‘Tibet of the Americas’, landlocked Bolivia is the highest and most isolated country in the Americas. With elevations ranging from sea level to over 6,880 metres, the Bolivian landscape offers a mind blowing array of complex ecosystems and stunning scenery. It is basically divided into three regions: Altiplano (a plateau at an average of 4,000 metres above sea level, 800 kilometres long and about 130 kilometres wide); the yungas (a series of forested and well-watered valleys); and the llanos (the Amazon-Chaco lowlands). Because of the wide range of elevations and topography, there are many different climatic patterns. The overall temperatures are probably cooler than most people expect. Even in the humid forest regions of the north, frosts are not unheard of. Bolivia’s unprotected expanses contribute to variable weather conditions and the two climatic ‘poles’ are Puerto Suarez for its stifling, humid heat, and Uyuni for its near-Arctic cold and icy winds.

There’s no time that is perfect for the entire country, but December to March is when most of the rain falls. La Paz is always cool at cold night, so be prepared with sweaters and windbreakers. La Paz can get quite warm during the day but sometimes mists swirl through the streets and the city can be literally wrapped in the clouds. Throughout the country, night temperatures drop dramatically, and on the high Altiplano, when a cloud passes over the sun, the temperature plunges noticeably. In Cochabamba, Sucre and Tarija, winter is the time of clear, beautiful skies and optimum temperatures. The lowlands experience hot sunny days and an occasional shower to cool off and settle the dust.

Visit www.worldclimate.com to get an idea of what the weather will be like on your tour.

Bolivia - Money

Important

In Latin America you will have problems changing the US$100 CB B2 2001 series notes and it is important you do not to bring them. In some countries banks won’t even take them.

The serial number is located in the top left hand corner and bottom right hand corner on the side with the President’s face. This serial number starts with CB and then a few more numbers and then directly under that B2. At the bottom of the note near the signature of the Treasurer it says which series of notes it is and it is there that it says 2001 series.

Local currency

The monetary unit in Bolivia is the boliviano (often referred to as the Peso), which is divided into 100 centavos. For up-to-date exchange rates with your own currency visit www.xe.com. Changing money, credit cards & ATMs

We recommend that you bring cash/travellers cheques in US dollars only. There is no restriction on the amount of foreign currency that you may bring into Bolivia, however very large sums should be declared on arrival.

There is often a general lack of small change and we recommend maintaining a supply of small denomination notes and coins – you may sometimes be offered sweets, cigarettes or even razor blades as change!

When arriving at the La Paz El Alto International Airport we suggest that you change some money at the bank (“Cambio”) in the main terminal building. Change enough money to see you through the first few days of your tour – particularly if it is a weekend. Please note you can only change cash (not traveller’s cheques) at the Cambio.

There are ATMs in the city where you can get money out 24hrs a day.

Bolivia - Local Transport

Most of La Paz is easy to visit on foot, although the high altitude can take its toll, especially when walking up hill. There are various types of buses and minibuses which are very cheap but you will need to know which routes to use (ask at the hotel reception for assistance). There are also fixed route taxis “trufis” which are “colectivos” (meaning other people will be on-board). You can tell these taxis apart by their red and yellow side. You can also travel by “colectivos” (shared taxis) which are very cheap but carry many passengers. There are also fixed route taxis “trufis” which are “colectivos” (meaning other people will be on-board). You can tell these taxis apart by their red and yellow side. You can also travel by “colectivos” (shared taxis) which are very cheap but carry many passengers. There are also fixed route taxis “trufis” which are “colectivos” (meaning other people will be on-board). You can tell these taxis apart by their red and yellow side. You can also travel by “colectivos” (shared taxis) which are very cheap but carry many passengers. There are also fixed route taxis “trufis” which are “colectivos” (meaning other people will be on-board). You can tell these taxis apart by their red and yellow side. You can also travel by “colectivos” (shared taxis) which are very cheap but carry many passengers. There are also fixed route taxis “trufis” which are “colectivos” (meaning other people will be on-board). You can tell these taxis apart by their red and yellow side. You can also travel by “colectivos” (shared taxis) which are very cheap but carry many passengers.

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Santiago to Lima

taxi to have meters so you will need to barter for a good price. In other Bolivian towns and cities walking is basically the best and cheapest way to see the sights.

**Bolivia - Food & Drink**

**Food**

In Bolivia the basic diet focuses around chicken, beef or seafood, mostly with french fries or rice (or both) and possibly a little salad. The Bolivian national dish is the parillada, a mixed grill with everything meaty including offal and intestines. Sajta de pollo is hot spicy chicken with onion, fresh potatoes plus dehydrated potatoes called chuno, lomo ala pimiento is a pepper steak popular with travellers, fricase is juicy pork with chuno, silpancho is bread-crumbed meat with fried eggs, rice and banana, saice is a dish of mince meat with spicy sauce and potatoes, rice, onions and tomatoes and milanesa is beef or chicken breaded and fried like a schnitzel. For a simple fish, you should ask for pescado which can be grilled, pan fried with breadcrumbs apanado or served with a sauce. Trout trucha is especially good from Lake Titicaca. Typical snacks include empanadas, pasties filled with cheese, humitas (maize pies), pucacapas (spicy cheese pies) and saltenas (meat or chicken pasties which you can get super spicy or mild). Much of Bolivia’s food is not too hot and spicy but you will find a bowl of aji (which is a chilli or hot pepper sauce) on most tables which can be added to spice things up.

In most of the larger cities and towns you will find an array of international cuisine. There are pizzerias on every corner and Chinese (chifas) food is very common. A cheap, filling 3 course lunch (normally called a comida del dia) can often be had for about US$1.50.

**Vegetarians**

If you are a strict vegetarian you may experience a distinct lack of variety in the food available, especially in small towns. You might find that you are eating a lot of omelettes and especially in small towns. You might find a bowl of aji (which is a chilli or hot pepper sauce) on most tables which can be added to spice things up.

**Drink**

All drinks such as water, soft or alcoholic drinks are at your own expense at all times. The following is a guideline for drinks bought in a shop in the street. Prices in restaurants and hotels can sometimes be more than double the prices specified below:

- 1 litre of water - US$0.60
- 30cl bottle of soft drink - US$0.50
- 30cl bottle of beer - US$1
- 50cl bottle of beer - US$1.50

You should be wary of drinking the local tap water. Bottled water and carbonated soft drinks are widely available and are generally safe to drink. Plastic sachets of flavoured chocolate and strawberry milk are also available.

In Bolivia some of the hotels we use have bars or serve alcoholic drinks. If there is not a bar in the hotel then there is sure to be a bar within walking distance. In more up-market hotels, imported beers and spirits are available but usually at a high price. If you are happy to drink the local spirits then there is an array of rums and singani (distilled grapes). Imported Chilean and Argentine wine can sometimes also be found cheaply. A bottle of rum could be as little as US$5 in a local shop and quite often the mixer to go with it (Coke) is more expensive. There are various brands of beers including Pacena, Ducal and El Inca (dark sweet stout).

**Chile - Fact File**

- **Official Name:** Republic of Chile
- **Capital:** Santiago
- **Population:** 15.5 million
- **Total Area:** 756,950 square kilometres including Easter Island (Isla de Pascua) and Isla Sala y Gomez. Chile stretches over 4,300 kilometres from north to south, a distance roughly the same as that from San Francisco to New York, or Edinburgh to Baghdad.
- **Official Language:** Spanish
- **Religions:** Roman Catholic 89%, Protestant 11%
- **Voltage:** 220 volts. Chilean outlets use three round pins in a line, with the middle one being an earth. Two-pronged European style plugs can also be used.
- **Dialling Code:** +56

**Chile Country Guide**

**Chile - Fact File**

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- **Dialling Code:** +56

- **Time Difference:** GMT/UTC -4. For other time differences please visit www.timeanddate.com

**Chile - Visas**

Most nationals, including citizens of the EU, North American and Australasia do not need to acquire a visa in advance to enter Chile. However some nationalities must pay an entry fee on arrival by air (e.g. United States $100, Canada $55 and Australia $34, these costs may change). Entry is granted on production of a passport valid for more than six months, a return air/bus ticket and proof of funds to support yourself for the duration of the stay. Most nationalities can enter for up to 90 days, although it’s up to the immigration official to decide whether you’re allocated 30, 60 or 90 days on arrival. Visa requirements do change periodically so you should check for the latest information on your specific visa requirements with your local Chilean Embassy or Consulate well in advance of your planned date of travel.

**Chile - Climate**

Chile is very long and narrow (it is no more than 180 km wide at any point) and the Andes Mountains are a dominant feature running down the entire length of the country. Because of its length, Chile encompasses a variety of climates (the country contains both arid deserts and icebergs). There’s no one time that’s perfect to visit every part of the country, but it seldom rains during October to March, humidity is low, midday temperatures reach about 32°C and the nights are cool. It is colder and rains a lot in Santiago and in the south in May to August. A sweater (and, in the south, a heavy jacket) should be taken no matter when you go, as nights can be cool-to-cold nearly everywhere.

Santiago, due to its position in the central region, has a Mediterranean climate with well-defined seasons. Spring, between September and November is mild, which contributes to the flourishing green colour of the plants and trees. Summer, between December and February, is dry and hot although at night it cools down slightly, and on the coast this temperature drop can be much more extreme. Autumn is between March and May, and temperatures decrease gradually. Daytime winter temperatures are reasonable but mornings can be very cold.

**Santiago to Lima - 21 days**

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- **aus** 1300 855 684 aus-info@onthegotours.com
- **nz** 0800 44 77 69 CAN 1 866 890 7038
- **usa** 1 866 377 6147 SA 0800 982 686

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**Chile - Money**

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**Local currency**

The monetary unit in Chile is the Chilean peso, which is divided into 100 centavos. For up-to-date exchange rates with your own currency visit www.xe.com.

**Changing money, credit cards & ATMs**

We recommend that you bring cash/travellers cheques in US dollars only. Visa, Mastercard, Diners and American Express are the best credit cards to bring however there can be problems at times getting money out from ATMs, so make sure you have sufficient cash for emergencies. Travellers cheques must be changed before 12pm except at ‘casas de cambio’ (which do tend to offer better rates than banks anyway).

There is no restriction on the amount of foreign currency that you may bring into Chile, however very large sums should be declared on arrival. There is often a general lack of small change and very large sums should be declared on arrival. Obviously this does depend on what you order and if you have wine or other drinks which will certainly increase the bill. In cheaper restaurants where Chileans and backpackers eat, you can get meals for as little as US$3 if you shop around.

Your tour leader will be able to recommend restaurants.

**Food**

In Chile the basic diet focuses around chicken, beef or seafood, mostly with french fries or rice (or both) and sometimes salad. Compared to countries further north, Chile’s cuisine is quite creative and tasty. ‘Cazuela de ave’ is a stew of large chunks of chicken, potatoes, rice, onions with green peppers and ‘pastel de choclo’ is a casserole of beef, onions and olives topped with a maize mash baked in an earthenware bowl. ‘Parillada’, a mixed grill of meats, offal and intestines served at your table in a charcoal brazier (miniature barbecue) is popular here as in all the southern countries. Other favourite dishes include ‘lomo ala pimiento’ (pepper steak) and ‘humitas’ (mashed com mixed with spices and butter baked in a maize leaf).

Seafood is the basis for many of Chile’s favourite dishes and the ‘congrio’ is their national fish. One of the most popular ways to serve it is ‘caldillo de congrio’ (a soup with large pieces of the fish with onions and potato balls). Other delicious fish include ‘corvina’ (bass), ‘albacore’ (swordfish) and ‘cojina’ (no translation). Try a ‘paila choncha’ (a bouillabaisse type dish with heaps of flavour) or a ‘parrillada de mariscos’ a mixed seafood grill. There is a whole host of other seafood available including clams (almejas), mussels (choritos/cholgas), sea-urchin (erizo), barnacles (picorocos) and seaweed.

**Vegetarians**

If you are a strict vegetarian you may experience a distinct lack of variety in the food available, especially in small towns. However vegetarian alternatives are becoming more popular you will just have to search a little harder for the restaurants that cater to your tastes. Our tour leaders will do their best to provide interesting vegetarian alternatives when arranging group meals in the campsite, but your patience and understanding is requested.

**Drink**

All drinks such as water, soft or alcoholic drinks are at your own expense at all times. The following is a guideline for drinks bought in a shop in the street. Prices in restaurants and hotels can sometimes be more than double the prices specified below:

- 1 litre of water US$1.50
- 30cl bottle of soft drink US$1
- 30cl bottle of beer US$1.50
- 50cl bottle of beer US$3

You should be wary of drinking the local tap water (especially outside of Santiago). Bottled water, carbonated soft drinks and fruit juices are widely available and much safer. However fruit juices are sometimes made from unboiled tap water, so could upset your stomach. An easy way around this is to order the juice ‘con leche’ with milk instead. For decent coffee try one of the cafe chains: Cafe Haiti, Tio Pepe or Cafe Brasil.

In Chile some of the hotels we use have bars or serve alcoholic drinks. If there is not a bar in the hotel then there is sure to be one within

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**Santiago to Lima - 21 days**

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Santiago to Lima

walking distance. In more up-market hotels, imported beers and spirits are available, but tend to be expensive. Alternatively there is an array of local rums, gins, brandy available and the fabulous Chilean wines which can be extremely cheap (from US$1.50 a bottle). There are various brands of beers including Cristal, Escudo, Austral, Heineken and Royal Guard (light), there is also a brown ale type beer from the south called Malta. Please note that many places will charge a refundable deposit for the bottles.

Peru Country Guide

Peru - Fact File

- Official Name: Republic of Peru
- Capital: Lima
- Population: 28 million
- Total Area: 1.3 million square kilometres (twice the size of France)
- Official Language: Spanish, Quechua and Aymara also spoken in places
- Religions: Roman Catholic 90%
- Voltage: 220 volts. Sockets are a mixture of the European, two-pronged round variety and US flat-pin.
- Dialling Code: +51
- Time Difference: GMT/UTC -5. For other time differences please visit www.timeanddate.com
- Airport Departure Tax: US$30.25

Peru - Visas

Currently EU, US, Canadian, Australian and New Zealand citizens can visit Peru for up to 90 days (ask on arrival for a 90 day entry as 30 days is the standard issued) without a visa. However, the situation does change periodically, so you should always check with your local Peruvian embassy before departure. All nationalities need a tourist or embarkation card (‘tarjeta de embarque - or tarjeta Andina’) to enter Peru. This is issued at frontiers or on the aircraft before landing. Tourist cards are usually valid for between 30 and 90 days (same as above, it’s the same stamp that goes in your passport). In theory you have to show an outbound ticket (by air or bus) before you’ll be given a card, but this is rarely checked (by law the airline that flies you into Peru must check this). For your own safety and freedom of movement, a copy of the tourist card together with a copy of your passport must be kept on you at all times (according to Peruvian law, everyone must carry ID at all times) - particularly when travelling outside of the main towns. You must also retain this card for when you exit Peru (this is a big deal, you lose it and you can’t leave, have to go through all sorts of bureaucracy for sometimes days). Take a copy or digital photograph.

Peru - Climate

Peru is unique in its wide variety of ecosystems ranging from the driest/hottest desert in the Americas, to the high Andean peaks (over 7,600 metres above sea level); and a two-thousand-kilometre-long belt of cloud forest, rich in flora and fauna, to a vast area of lowland Amazon jungle, covering more than half the country. The three main zones of Peru are known as La Costa (the coast), La Sierra (the mountains) and La Selva (the jungle).

Over the last few years, the Peruvian weather has been rather unsettled possibly as a result of global warming. However, it still rarely rains on the coast, although the Lima region does experience substantial smog, coastal fogs or mists and even drizzle; particularly between the months of May and November.

The climate in the Sierra and Selva regions can be divided into a wet season (November-April) and a dry season (May-October). There is, of course, some rain during the dry season, but it is much heavier and much more frequent in the wet season. Don’t be put off by the expression ‘rainy season’ however, as this normally means a couple of downpours each day rather than continuous rain.

Peru - Money

Local currency

The monetary unit in Peru is the Nuevo Sol. For up-to-date exchange rates with your own currency visit www.xe.com.

Changing money, credit cards & ATMs

We recommend that you bring cash/travellers cheques in US dollars only. For more information about the best way to carry your money please see the Pre departure information (which will be sent to you with confirmation of your booking).

There is no restriction on the amount of foreign currency that you may bring into Peru, however very large sums should be declared on arrival. There is often a general lack of small change and we recommend maintaining a supply of small denomination notes and coins.

Change enough money to see you through the first few days of your trip – particularly if it is a weekend. Please note you can only change cash (not travellers cheques) at the Cambio and there are other ATMs in the city (and in Arequipa, Cuzco and Puno) where you can get money out 24 hours a day.

Important

Please note that ATMs in Peru do not always automatically release your credit or debit card at the time when you receive your money. Please be aware that you sometimes have to push a button to request your card to be returned. Many ATMs in main towns have instructions in English.

Peru - Local Transport

Taxis are recommended for all journeys within a city. In Peru, taxi meters are not normally in evidence, so you will find yourself engaging in a bit of haggling with the driver to agree upon the fare. It is a good idea to find out in advance, from your tour leader or the hotel receptionist, approximately how much the fare should be. It will also help if you can speak a few words of Spanish. You will almost certainly have to accept that you will pay more than the locals do.

Local buses are very cheap to use, but you really need to be able to speak reasonable Spanish to get by. There are also some bus stops/stations, especially in Lima, that are not recommended for tourists.

Peru - Food & Drink

Food

In Peru the basic diet focuses around chicken, beef or seafood, mostly with French fries or rice (or both) and possibly a little salad. Soups are also common and good value. Coastal dishes are seafood based and include ‘ceviche’ which is fish marinated in lemon juice, onion and hot red peppers, prawns, cumin, hard boiled eggs, olives and sprinkled with cheese. The most
Santiago to Lima

common fish is 'corvime' (sea bass) which can come simply grilled or fried or with sauces. 'Chupe de camerones', a prawn stew, is another delicious dish certainly worth trying.

Corn and potatoes are Peru’s main vegetables – particularly in the highlands. 'Causa' is a dish made from yellow potatoes, lemons, peppers, hard-boiled eggs, olives, lettuce, sweet corn, sweet potato, cheese and onion sauce. 'Choco con queso' is a large corn cob with very salty cheese. Other local favourites include 'tomales' which is like a boiled corn dumpling filled with chicken and wrapped in banana leaf and 'lomo saltado' which is a kind of stir-fry beef with tomatoes, onions, fried potatoes on a bed of rice.

An interesting local speciality is cuy (pronounced: cooee). This is roasted guinea pig which some people say tastes like chicken, others, like cooked cardboard.

In most of the larger cities and towns you will find an array of international cuisine. There are pizzerias on every corner and Chinese (chifas) food is very common. In places like Cuzco even Indian and Japanese restaurants have now opened. A cheap, filling three-course lunch (normally called a "menú económico") can often be had for about US$1.50.

Vegetarians

If you are a strict vegetarian you may experience a distinct lack of variety in the food available, especially in small towns. However vegetarian alternatives are becoming more popular. Our tour leaders will do their best to provide interesting vegetarian alternatives for included meals, but your patience and understanding is requested.

Budgeting for meals in Peru - as a guideline a simple snack (e.g. a sandwich) can cost as little as US$0.70, a light meal will cost around US$3-5, and even a meal in one of the best restaurants in Cuzco or Lima costs very little in comparison to what you would expect to pay at home (usually around US$20-30). Obviously this depends on what you order and if you have wine or other drinks which will certainly increase the bill. In cheaper restaurants where Peruvians and backpackers eat, you can get meals for as little as US$1.50. Your tour leader will be able to recommend restaurants.

Drink

In Peru some of the hotels we use have bars or serve alcoholic drinks. If there is not a bar in the hotel then there is sure to be a bar within walking distance. In more up-market hotels, imported beers and spirits are available but usually at a high price. If you are happy to drink the local spirits then there is an array of rums, pisco (white brandy) and even palatable wine. All these are very cheap, e.g. a bottle of rum could be as little as US$5 in a local shop. Quite often the mixer to go with it (Coke) is more expensive. There are various brands of beers including Cuzqueña, Arequipeña, Cristal and Pilsener.

The soft drink of choice in Peru and a source of national pride is the bright yellow Inca Kola. Possibly an acquired taste, but indisputably popular. So popular in fact that McDonalds forced Coca Cola to allow it to be sold in its Peruvian branches.

The origins of pisco - a grape-based spirit - is keenly contested between Peru and Chile. Regardless of origin it is the national drink of Peru (the fact that the town Pisco is in Peru lends credence to Peru’s claim). Drank in a variety of ways, the most iconic is the pisco sour, which has a raw egg amongst its ingredients.

All drinks such as water, soft or alcoholic drinks are at your own expense. The following is a guideline for drinks bought in a shop in the street. Prices in restaurants and hotels can sometimes be more than double the prices specified below:

- 1 litre of water US$0.70
- 30cl bottle of soft drink US$0.50
- 30cl bottle of beer US$0.70
- 50cl bottle of beer US$1.00

You should be wary of drinking the local tap water. Bottled water, carbonated soft drinks and fruit juices are widely available and much safer.

Peru - Bugs

If your tour includes a visit to a jungle region you should be prepared to encounter an array of wildlife – including many insects and spiders etc. Most creepy crawlies are completely harmless and will cause you no problems at all – in fact this is all part of the jungle experience. If you find something in your room it certainly doesn’t mean that the room is unclean – rather that you are in the jungle and it is completely normal. If you are uncomfortable with creepy crawlies it is a good idea to bring plenty of insect repellent spray and coils to place in your room and of course don’t leave any food lying around.