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Peru Experience

Adventure



Relaxation



Culture



Trip Name: Peru Experience **Trip Code:** PEXP **Duration:** From 28 days

Trip Highlights

- Explore the epic Peru in just four weeks
- Get a taster of the life of locals in Cusco
- Something to impress your mates- learn Spanish!
- Visit the awe-inspiring Machu Picchu
- Spend time with island communities on Lake Titicaca
- Embark on the Lares Trek (trekking option) and see Peru's amazing scenery



Overview

Want to see Peru, but only got four weeks to spare? You're in luck Real Gappers, not only is our Peru Experience completely awesome, but it'll show you the highlights of the country in just 28 days! Lend a hand on one of our fantastic community volunteer projects in Cusco, stay with island communities on Lake Titicaca and visit one of the world's wonders, 'Mr Inca himself'- the awe inspiring Machu Picchu!

Not only will you see the main tourist attractions of Peru, you'll also be spending time off the beaten track by seeing the nitty gritty too- visiting lesser known Inca sites and discovering more about Peru's fascinating culture and history. To help you make the most of your time in Peru, you'll also take some Spanish lessons to boost your confidence with the language, so you'll be chatting to the locals in no time!

For those of you Real Gappers that are feeling even more adventurous, you can choose our trekking option and embark on the Lares trek through rural areas of Peru, visiting Inca ruins en route and witnessing some amazing Andean scenery!

Destination Info

You'll start off in Cusco, the base for most of the month. The ancient Inca capital, Cusco positively oozes history – with amazing ruins to feast your eyes on. Now a lively modern city, it's the stopping-off point for everyone heading for Machu Picchu – perfect for meeting other travellers and shopping for the rest of your trip.

It's a great place to catch a little bit of everything Peru and you're going come face to face with real deprivation – not everyone has an easy life. The good news is that you have the chance to lend a hand – the trip includes ten days as a volunteer working with disadvantaged children in Cusco.

Your final week is on and around the highest navigable lake in the world – Titicaca – and you'll be spending time with local communities who live on the lake's islands.

Itinerary



Day 1: Welcome to Peru, Real Gappers! On arrival at Cusco Airport you'll be met by one of our awesome in country team who'll take you back to your host family's accommodation on the outskirts of the city to settle in. This is where the adventure begins, exciting stuff!

Lunch included.

Day 2: To get you lot settled in, we'll hold an orientation first thing to really give you the chance to find out more about Cusco. Our in country Real Gappers will be giving you a quick Spanish test today too to determine your Spanish level in preparation for your Spanish classes later in the week.

Breakfast and lunch included.

Peru Experience

Day 3 - 6: To help you get the most out of your time in Peru, we're going to teach you some Spanish over the next few days! Whether you are a complete beginner or you know the ropes already, our lessons provide an awesome start to the trip as it'll give you extra confidence when speaking to local people. In the evening of day 4, you'll be given some Latin dance classes too which makes for an epic night out! On day 6 as well as your Spanish lesson, you'll visit the bustling central market where you'll be able to try out your Spanish and practice your haggling skills!

Breakfast and lunch included.

Day 7: In the afternoon we'll visit the Cathedral of Cusco as well as some other historical sites in and around the city including Tambomachay, Pukapukara, the amphitheatre of Q'enqo, Qorikancha and the Oracle of Sacsayhuaman (we don't know how that one's pronounced either!). The visit's will give you an insight into Inca history, and you'll learn so much about the area too!

Breakfast and lunch included.

Day 8: Today we'll all take a day trip into the heart of the Sacred Valley. There's so much to see- we'll explore the famous market in Pisac, the awesome Inca town of Ollantaytambo and wander through the traditional Peruvian village of Chincheros. Keep your eyes peeled, there'll be loads of cool scenery to see along the way!

Breakfast and lunch included.



Days 9 - 11: For the next three days all of you Real Gappers will be lending a hand at one our our volunteering projects, all of which help out vulnerable children in Cusco. The projects are completely worthwhile, and often it's a highlight of those who've been on the Peru Experience before! Our in country Real Gappers will match you with projects needs at the time of your visit but fundamentally the projects are similar- as they all help develop the children's education, self-confidence and key skills- and obviously you're going to have loads of fun too!

Peru Experience

Some of the projects involve you working in the morning or afternoon, so you'll probably have bundles of free time to explore Cusco. In the evenings you could go out with the rest of your group and sample some of the local restaurants, cafes and the Latin dance clubs. There's so much to see!

Breakfast and lunch included.

*For the next 3 days, you have the choice of continuing with your volunteer project or choosing the Trekking option and embarking on the Lares Trek.

Volunteer option

Days 12 – 13: For those choosing the volunteer option, you'll be continuing your community volunteer project for the next two days and staying with your host family in Cusco!

Breakfast and lunch included.

Day 14 - 15: No trip to Peru would be complete without a visit to Machu Picchu, so Guess where we're going next? That's right, Mr Inca himself- Machu Picchu! Brace yourself for an early start Real Gappers- we'll catch the train to the popular town of Aguas Calientes and in no time we'll be ready to take the bus to Machu Picchu itself. On day 15, you'll need to be up nice and early for the climb to Machu Picchu in time to witness sunrise! In the morning you'll have a two hour guided walk of Machu Picchu, so you'll get the chance to learn more about this awesome place. After the tour you'll have the free time to explore the ruins independently before heading back to Cusco in the early evening.

Breakfast included.



Trekking option

Day 12: Rise n' shine, it's adventure time! We'll be getting up very early to take the scenic journey from Cusco

Peru Experience

through to the Sacred Valley to Quishuarani, whilst passing by small Andean communities, alpacas and llamas, and taking in the epic views along the way! Quishuarani marks the start of your trek, and you'll meet the trekking staff there.

The trek begins with a gentle climb to Queuña Cocha lagoon where you'll be able to see Mount Sawasiray and Colque Cruz. The next phase is a short, steep climb to Hualcacasa and your first pass where Mount Veronica (a sacred Apu mountain in this Valley) can often be observed in the high mountains. After a stop for lunch beside the beautiful 'Seven Lagunas', you'll continue your trek down through the community of Cuncani before starting another ascent to your second pass at Qolqecasa; following a short descent passing some lovely waterfalls and lagoons, you'll reach your campsite for the first night of the trek in the late afternoon.

Minimum altitude: 3800m/12502ft
Maximum altitude: 4400m/714476ft
Trekking distance: approximately 14km
Approximate walking time: 6-7 hours

Breakfast, lunch and dinner included.

Day 13: Bring on day two! With another early start, you'll take the long descent to Chaqchapata. From here you'll be heading to your lunch stop destination by a glacial stream at Champacocha- an awesome place to have a bit of nosh! After a well deserved break you'll be ascending to the highest point of the trek, the passage of Auroracasa, where you'll be able to see the Auroracocha lagoon and the epic views.

We'll then start to go back down to reach the valley of the Queuñas. You'll notice a dramatic change in the scenery before reaching your beautiful campsite in Mantamay for the evening.

Minimum altitude: 3900m/12831ft
Maximum altitude: 4600m/15134ft
Trekking distance: approximately 16km
Approximate walking time: 7-8 hours

Breakfast, lunch and dinner included.

Day 14: Today marks the last day of trekking as you descend to lower altitudes and enjoy amazing views of the mountains, Moray Maras, Salineras and Queuñas bush valley. As we do start to travel down you'll notice changes in the weather and environments along the way; this area offers much better conditions for farming and it's likely that you'll see local villagers and farmers tending to the land and growing crops to sell at the markets in Sacred Valley. The final section will take you to the picturesque Peruvian village of Yanahuara which marks the finishing point of your Lares trek adventure.

After the final meal of your trek (lunch!), it'll be time to say goodbye to the trekking team as you'll be collected by private bus and taken to Ollantaytambo train station where we'll catch the train to the bustlin' town of Aguas Calientes, in the shadows of Machu Picchu. When you reach Aguas Calientes, you'll have free time for the rest of the day to recover from your trek or go out and explore some more!

Minimum altitude: 2700m/8883ft
Maximum altitude: 3900m/12831ft
Trekking distance: approximately 12km
Approximate walking time: 4 hours

Breakfast, lunch and dinner included.

Day 15: Today's one of the big ones Real Gappers- it's time to visit the world famous Machu Picchu! It'll be an early start this morning as we travel up to Machu Picchu in time to witness the mind-blowing sunrise over the Inca ruins. You can either take the bus up to the site, or if you're feeling extra energetic you can take the 1.5 hour hike up to Machu Picchu.

Today you'll also be able to enjoy a two hour guided tour of the archaeological park where you'll learn more about the Inca culture and the fascinating history behind Machu Picchu. After the tour you'll have free time for the rest of the day to explore independently. In the early evening, you'll be travelling by bus back to Cusco and your host family.

Minimum altitude: 2100m/6909ft
Maximum altitude: 3400m/11186ft
Trekking distance: approximately 9km
Approximate walking time: 4-5 hours

Breakfast and lunch included.

Please note -You will be able to leave your main luggage at the accommodation in Cusco during your trek, so you should only pack the bare necessities for your trek and carry them in a day pack. You will be required to carry your own bag/day pack during the trek, therefore a relative level of health and fitness is required for this tour, as each day consists of around six hours of walking. You are advised to pack light but please don't forget to bring a sleeping bag with you.

The guides and porters who will be leading the trek, will be carrying equipment for the trek only, and not your personal luggage.

Peru Experience



Days 16 – 20: For the next five days we'll be helping out at our volunteer projects in Cusco, sure the children will be really pleased to see you again! Your main activities at the volunteer project will depend on which project you're placed at, but generally it will involve some basic teaching, giving the children a hand with their English skills, and playing games.

Breakfast and lunch included.

Days 21 – 23: It's free time, time! There's loads to do in the local area, so you can really get stuck in. You could stay in Cusco, go a bit further afield, or just chill out for the next few days after your stint of volunteering!

Breakfast and lunch included.



Day 24: Today we'll be travelling from Cusco to Puno, which is on the shores of Lake Titicaca. We'll stop off and visit some awesome Inca ruins along the way too!

Breakfast, lunch and dinner included.

Day 25: Today we'll be exploring Lake Titicaca and seeing some of its amazing islands including the awesome

Peru Experience

Uros Islands- floating islands which are made up of reeds! You'll be able to see the traditional way of life first hand- it's a cool experience.

As well as your expedition to the the Uros Islands, you'll also be visiting Amantani Island where you'll be staying for the night with a friendly local family, giving you a great opportunity to find out more about island life.

Breakfast, lunch and dinner included

Day 26: 'Lake Titicaca: The Adventure' continues on day 26! We'll head to Taquile Island and visit another unique island community. You'll have time to explore the island and learn more about the lifestyle.

Breakfast, lunch and dinner included

Day 27: As your Peru Experience draws to a close, you'll travel back to the lakeside city of Puno. You'll have free time today to explore the city and stock up on some souvenirs to take home for family and friends.

Breakfast, lunch and dinner included

Day 28: After an action packed four weeks of exploring the high and lows of Peru, today's the day we all say goodbye- nooo! The programme finishes in Puno, where you will be free to continue travelling or make your own way to the airport.

Breakfast included.

Please note: Itineraries and activities are subject to change.

Accommodation

During your time in Peru you will be staying in a variety of different accommodation styles. Whilst based in Cusco, you'll be staying with a local host family where you'll have your own bedroom and will be sharing bathroom facilities. During your time in Aguas Calientes, you'll be staying in a local backpackers hostel. And for your final few days of the Peru Experience, you'll be heading to Puno where you'll be staying two nights in a local hotel and Lake Titicaca where you will be spending two nights with local island families on Amantani and Taquile islands.

For those choosing the trekking option, you'll be camping for most of the trekking days and staying in a hostel in Aguas Calientes.

Programme Services and Facilities

Internet

There is wireless Internet at the school, which you are free to use, should you bring a laptop. Otherwise you will find an Internet café located just a few doors down and many more throughout Cusco. An hour's connection is roughly around 60p per hour.

During week four, it will be more difficult to come across the Internet because of the amount that you will be moving around, but it is likely that you will be able to find Internet facilities in Puno, the town on the shores of Lake Titicaca.

Telephone

You will find public telephones in most towns, especially Cusco, and these usually operate with a phone card, which you can purchase in shops and kiosks. Make sure the phone card you buy allows international calls.

Your mobile phone may or may not work in Peru, depending on your network, and if it does, please be aware that in many areas you may not always get a signal. It may be worth taking your phone with you and buying a pay-as-you-go SIM card when you arrive, or getting a Real Gap SIM before you depart, to enable you to call and text cheaply.

Before you depart, please ensure that your mobile is set up with international roaming and unlocked, so that you are able to use a pay-as-you-go SIM while you are away.

The international dialling code for Peru is +51. To place an outgoing, direct dialled international call, dial +44 for the UK followed by the telephone number. For example to call Real Gap dial +44 1892 516164.

Laundry

Your host family will provide a washing service for you once a week. On week four you will need travel wash to do your own washing.

Electricity

You will have access to electrical sockets throughout your Experience, with the exception of the Machu Picchu trek (if you choose to do the full hike) and during your stay with the villages on the islands of Lake Titicaca.

Meals

A number of meals will be included during the Peru Experience and these are indicated on the trip itinerary. The meals provided to you will generally be traditional local dishes made from locally sourced ingredients.

On some days you will see that dinners are not included, this gives you a great opportunity to sample some of the local restaurants and cafes in the area.

What's Included

- Accommodation
- Meals as per itinerary
- Activities and excursions as per itinerary
- Spanish Lessons
- Transport during programme as per itinerary
- Arrival airport transfer
- Support of in-country team throughout



What's Not Included

- Flights
- Travel Insurance
- Some meals
- Optional activities and excursions
- Items of a personal nature including spending money, drinks, souvenirs etc
- Airport taxes
- Return airport transfer



Additional Information

Orientation

On your first day at the language school, you will have a comprehensive orientation. This orientation will cover all the information that you need to know about your Experience as well as information about Cusco and Peru and essential topics such as banking, money, transport, things to do and information about the volunteering section of your programme.

What to Pack

Please note that this kit list is intended to help you plan what you may need to take with you and therefore you may not need all of the listed items on your travels.

Personal Admin

- Passport, insurance certificates and personal documentation
- Photocopies of all the above to be left at home with your next of kin
- Spending money
- Cash for airport departure tax
- Proof of inoculations (please speak to your Doctor about necessary immunisations)
- Guidebook on country – recommended Lonely Planet or Footprints

General

- Camera / Film / Batteries
- Notebooks and pens, diary
- Torch / Extra Batteries
- Sunglasses
- Pocket-knife (comes in handy for general use)
- Water bottle – at least one litre
- Water purification tablets, especially useful for your trek to Machu Picchu
- Day pack / rucksack for everyday use
- Personal enjoyment - books, cards, music, to enjoy with your fellow volunteers etc.
- Sleeping bag - Trekking option - these can be hired locally subject to availability but we would recommend bringing your own
- mosquito net
- Personal hygiene items (deodorant, soap, shampoo, toothbrush etc)
- Spanish dictionary, verb book etc

Clothing

- Hat
- Comfortable walking shoes
- A pair of thick socks for walking
- Sandals
- Waterproof Jacket
- Plenty of T-Shirts and shorts
- Fleece/pullover (for cool evenings)
- Long trousers
- Warmer clothing for mountain areas
- Smarter clothes for going out
- Swimwear
- Towel

Medical Kit

- Personal Hygiene Kit (ex. Antihistamines, Anti-diarrhoea tablets, headache tablets)
- Personal Toiletries
- Sunscreen
- Mosquito and insect repellent

N.B. If you are on medication and you need to bring prescribed drugs with you, it is advisable to ask your physician or specialist for a "medical passport". Painkillers and contraception can be taken with you without any problems.

Minimum Age

Minimum age 17 years with parental consent, maximum decided on health and fitness of participant.

Flights

Your international flight to Peru should arrive at Cusco Airport on your programme start date. Your experience ends on Saturday in Puno. From here you need to make your own way back to Juliaca Airport. Your return flight should be arranged from Juliaca Airport for your programme end date.

Optional Internal Flight - Juliaca Package

This Juliaca package includes a transfer from Puno to Juliaca airport at the end of your programme; an internal flight from Juliaca to Lima and a night in Lima. A transfer to Lima is then provided the following day for your onward flight.

Optional Internal Flight - Basic Juliaca Package

Alternatively we offer a basic package that includes an internal flight from Juliaca back to Lima but no transfers or hotel night. Please note that if you book this option your return flight from Lima should not be arranged to depart any earlier than 5pm on your programme end date.

If you do decide to book either of these packages you will need to book your flight to arrive into Cusco and your return flight to depart from Lima.

To book your flights, please contact your travel advisor who will do their best to get you the best deal on the day. Please provide them with your full name as it is stated in your passport. Before you make the call please make sure you have your required departure dates, return dates and other details you may require.

It is important that once you have booked your flights you add these details to your Online account, or alternatively you can contact us with your departure date, the flight number and arrival time at your destination.

Please note: If you are flying to Peru via the USA you will need to obtain Travel Authorisation by registering online through the Electronic System for Travel Authorisation (ESTA) no later than 72 hours before departure. This is compulsory and will cost USD\$14 to register. To register, please visit: www.esta.cbp.dhs.gov

FAQs

1. Can I do longer on this placement?

No it's a set itinerary.

2. At the homestay will I get my own room?

Yes your own room with shared bathroom facilities.

3. Do we get any free time?

Yes during the week that you will be volunteering from Monday to Friday with evenings free to socialise in the many bars, restaurants and Latin dance clubs in the centre of Cusco.

4. Is Spanish is required for this placement?

Yes, a reasonable level of Spanish is needed.

Police Check

This trip requires a Police Check to be carried out - please contact us for further information on how to do this.

Support & Advice

Your safety is paramount which is why all our programs have been visited and assessments have been conducted to ensure any major risks have been minimized.

In addition, you will have access to a 24 hour emergency contact number so you can contact one of our staff at any time should you need to. In addition our overseas partners and coordinators are on hand in-country to assist you.

Financial Security

We know that the last thing you want to worry about when you're planning your trip of a lifetime is whether your money is in safe hands. As a leading global gap year provider it's our job to make sure your finances are secure, so when you book with us you can be confident that we do just that.

Real Gap Experience is part of TUI Travel Plc, one of the largest travel organisations in the world, and these days in the travel industry, large means secure.

Insurance

Whether you're traveling for two weeks or two years, trekking the Amazon in Ecuador or on safari in Africa, insurance is an essential part of your adventure and will help you enjoy your travels, secure in the knowledge that you have the protection you need. In fact, everyone traveling with us must have adequate cover before their trip begins.

Of course you are free to buy insurance from any provider, however at Real Gap Experience, we have partnered with World Nomads to offer policies that have been specifically designed to meet the needs of global travel. If you think you're already covered by an existing policy, such as those offered by credit card providers, check the policy wording very carefully to ensure it covers you for your Real Gap Experience.

For more information on travel insurance please contact us to speak to one of our travel advisors.

Money Matters

The currency in Peru is the Nuevo Sol (PEN, symbol S/.), which is divided into 100 Céntimos. Coins come in denominations of 1, 5, 10, 20 and 50 Céntimos and 1, 2, and 5 Nuevos Soles. Notes come in 10, 20, 50, 100, 200 Nuevos Soles.

While Peru's close proximity to North America means that US Dollars are widely accepted at most establishments in Lima and some large country towns, it is advisable to have some local currency to pay for transportation or goods at smaller establishments.

Credit cards such as MasterCard and Visa are accepted in Lima and most tourist areas, though use in less

commercial areas may be limited. This is also true of ATM machines or 'Cajeros automáticos'. ATMs commonly dispense both US Dollars and Nuevos Soles and usually charge for using international cards.

Meal, Inexpensive Restaurant \$5.00
Domestic Beer (0.5 litre draught) \$1.38
Coke/Pepsi (0.33 litre bottle) \$0.67
Water (0.33 litre bottle) \$0.60

(Prices quoted in US Dollar)

Passports and Visas

All nationalities require a full passport that must be valid for 6 months beyond the intended length of stay. It is your responsibility to have the correct personal documents and to obtain your own visa, if one is necessary, in accordance with the regulations of the country you are to visit. The information offered below is to help you with that process. We are not responsible for the actions of local immigration and customs officials, whether at points of entry or otherwise, and any subsequent effects.

Citizens of the European Union, the USA, Canada, South Africa, New Zealand and Australia will be issued a Tourist Visa on entry for stays of up to 90 days. For longer stays and visa information for other nationalities, please consult your nearest Peru Embassy or High Commission.

Cultural Considerations

Greetings

Pleasantries are taken seriously in Peru. It is simply polite to always say "Buenos Días" upon entering a building or when meeting somebody, and to say "con permiso" when leaving or passing someone. You should address people in the polite "usted" form and show additional respect for older people. If you know the person then it is customary to shake hands or kiss in greetings. Any kind of conversation is usually preceded by small talk, and being able to speak at least basic Spanish will go a long way with the locals and demonstrate your keenness to fit in.

Gestures

Many gestures are used in Peru. A common one is the lifting of the chin to indicate "up the street" when giving directions, and the lowering of the chin to indicate "down the street" – a useful one for any traveller! Body language is considered an integral part of daily speech in Peru and, as a foreigner, it may be hard to understand. It is important to remember that as a general rule, Peruvians tend to be physically closer than other cultures and greetings generally involve a lot of body contact.

Saying "no"

A Latino always wants to help you and it's considered impolite to say 'no' or 'I don't know'. Whatever you ask, always expect to get an answer, even if it is not correct. The best thing to do is to ask three different people the same question and if you always get the same answer it's probably right!

Religion

Peru Experience

Peru is predominately Roman Catholic. The indigenous population often blends Catholicism with their traditional beliefs. Religion is an important part of life in Peru, and we would urge that you be respectful at all times in and around places of worship. Do not be surprised to see individuals crossing themselves when passing any object of religious significance or reciting religious adages at appropriate times.

Clothing

It is important to remember, especially for female travellers, that the kinds of clothes you feel comfortable wearing in your own country may not be an acceptable form of dress in Latin America. Short skirts for example, will invite unwanted attention. Just use your common sense and adapt your style in accordance with your surroundings. Often in churches you will be required to cover your shoulders and knees. Cover up for your own safety, and in respect of the local culture and customs.

Peru can have very cold mornings and evenings, but then may get warm during the day. Therefore we advise that you pack a selection of lightweight clothing than can be layered. It is advisable to always carry a jumper or jacket with you. Always bear in mind the activities you will be doing when you are packing, both at the project and socially.

Smoking, Alcohol and Drugs

Smoking and drinking is acceptable in Peru and readily available. However, please respect others. Smoking is not permissible in shared rooms or host family homes. Drink in moderation and don't let it impact on your full itinerary. While we want you to have fun in your free time, antisocial behaviour will not be tolerated on the programme.

It is absolutely forbidden to bring drugs into Peru. Always keep an eye on your luggage while travelling. Never bring anyone else's luggage through customs. If you get caught there is little chance that you will walk away without punishment. As in most countries, Peru has very strict rules when it comes to the possession of drugs. All drugs, including "soft" drugs like marijuana, are ILLEGAL. Please do NOT use any illegal substances whilst travelling – it is not worth the risk and is not acceptable on the programme.

Tipping

A 10% tip is customary at restaurants and hotels and is usually included in the bill. Tips are not necessary (but always welcome) in small restaurants or for taxis. Hairdressers expect 20% and a couple of dollars is normal for airport/railway porters.

Vaccinations & Health

Travel health can often be something people forget about before going away, but a little preparation and knowledge can go a long way to help you stay fit and healthy while abroad. The risks to your health whilst travelling will vary depending on your general health and the type of activities you are going to be partaking in and the length of your stay.

Since we are not medically qualified, it is recommended that you consult with your Doctor or a recognised Travel Medical Advisory Service who will assess your particular health risks before recommending vaccines and/or anti-malarial tablets and advising you on what precautions you should take.

Safety

Unfortunately, tourists are often targets for pickpockets and thieves. Please educate yourself about South America and Peru in particular, before you leave, so that you can be alert to all types of situations. Safety guidelines will be covered in detail at your orientation session upon arrival but please familiarise yourself with the following general travel safety rules.

- Avoid travelling alone, especially at night
- Find out where the unsafe areas are and avoid them
- When travelling keep all-important documents and valuables in a safe place, like an inner hidden pocket or money belt
- Carry only as much cash as you think you will need for the day
- Don't wear expensive jewellery or watches
- Be wary of people who seem too friendly too fast
- Keep cameras out of sight. Always keep bags and purses in your sight, especially on public transport.
- Before swimming, ask how safe the area is
- If you wish to travel independently around Peru we advise you to make use of the services of a reputable bus company.

We advise that you check your government's advice before travelling abroad. For UK, American and Australian customers please see the relevant links below;

UK: www.fco.gov.uk

USA: www.travel.state.gov

Australia: www.smartraveller.gov.au

ATM Theft

It is very likely that you will need to withdraw cash at some point during your travels. Please be cautious when withdrawing money from an ATM and ensure that you are vigilant of other people near the ATM, especially those that offer unsolicited assistance if your card is detained. It has been recognised that individuals are operating unlawful withdrawals by placing 'traps' in ATMs whereby personal bank cards are being detained, causing the victim to believe their card transaction has not been completed, and leaving their bank card in the ATM which is then later retrieved by the thief.

For more information on travelling in Peru we suggest you purchase a Lonely Planet or Rough Guide.

Language Guide

Both Spanish and Quechua are the official languages of Peru. Many indigenous dialects, such as Aymara, are also spoken. Here are a few basic Spanish phrases that should help you get by during your trip. We also suggest you obtain a Lonely Planet or language guide for the destination(s) you are travelling to.

Hello - *Hola!*

Good day - *Buenas días!*

How are you? - *Como estas? ('Como estas usted?' if you need to be extra formal!)*

Goodbye - *Adios*

Please - *Por favour*

Thank you - *Gracias*

I don't understand - *No entiendo*

I don't speak Spanish - *No hablo espanol*

Sorry/excuse me - *Lo siento*

Where is...? - *Donde esta...?*

The bill please - *La cuenta por favor*

Food & Drink

As with many countries in Latin America, lunch is the main meal of the day in Peru. Be aware that tax and service charge is added to the bill at restaurants. Here are some of the typical dishes you will no doubt come across during your travels.

- Fritos - fried pork or "chanchó" Cancau - tripe, potatoes, peppers, parsley served with rice
- Ceviche - raw fish, shrimp etc. marinated in lemon with onions, red peppers
- Parinada - popular bouillabaisse with yuyo de mar (a tangy seaweed)
- Anticuchos - hearts of beef with garlic, peppers, cumin, vinegar on a skewer served with a potato at the top
- Á la Huancaína - sauce made with eggs, milk, cheese, served with a meat or potato dish
- Carne en adobo - cut and seasoned steak
- Ollucos con charqui - A kind of potato with dried meat
- Caus and Carapulca - potato dishes
- Chupe de camarones - shrimp stew
- Desserts:
- Mana - almond paste
- Tejas - sugar candies
- Turrón - the Lima nougat
- Pastelillos - yucas with sweet potatoes, sugar and anise. Fried, powdered with sugar and served hot.
- Manja blanco - milk, sugar, eggs
- Mazamorra morada - deep purple pudding, made of purple corn with lemon, dried fruits, cinnamon, cloves
- Common fruits are also eaten a lot for dessert - bananas, citrus fruits, avocado, papaya, mango, passion fruit.

Drinks

If you like beer, the Cusco and Arequipa brands are probably the best. Cristal and Pilsner are good too. Remember the alcohol content of Peruvian beer is twice as high as standard beers!

Pisco sour is a drink made from the national grape brandy, lemon juice, sugar, egg white, nutmeg - this is a potent mixture!

Other common drinks include:

- Guinda - sweet cherry brandy
- Aguardiente - sugar cane alcohol
- Chicha de jora - corn beer (usually homemade)
- Chicha morada - softdrink made with purple maize.
- Some of the local wines are OK - i.e. the Inca wines Tacama and Ocucaje.

Public Holidays

To view a list of the public holidays for Vietnam, please see the link below:

<http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays/peru/>

When planning your trip, you should be aware of the major national holidays celebrated throughout the country. Many schools, government offices, stores and banks are closed on National Holidays. Please note that there may be slight date variations for some of the holidays each year and that the list is not exhaustive. The Peruvian Government have been known to introduce new bank holidays or commemorative days at short notice.

Weather

Peru's climate has two main seasons; wet and dry, though weather depends greatly on the geographical region. The country's climatic zones can be roughly divided into the tropical Amazon in the east, the dry coastal desert of the west and the Andean mountains in the centre, where temperatures can dip below freezing! The rainforest is unsurprisingly the wettest and most humid area with the drier months between June and September. The best time to visit the mountains is in the dry season between June and August while the coast rarely sees any rain, getting particularly hot between December and March.

Time

Five hours behind GMT (January to April, four hours behind GMT due to daylight saving).

Electricity

In Peru the electric system is 220 Volts and frequency 60 Hertz. If your device does not accept this voltage you will need to bring an adapter.

Outlets in Peru generally accept 2 types of plug:



Trip Note Disclaimer

The information contained in this trip note has been compiled with great care and is provided in good faith. Any itinerary featured is correct at time of release. However, our itineraries may change as we make improvements that result from travellers' comments, our own research or from time to time as a result of recommended travel advice.

You can rest assured that it is always our goal to provide you with the most rewarding trip and experience ever!

Our Details

If you have any questions about this trip please do not hesitate to contact us and we'll be happy to answer them.

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