

## Trip Dossier for Peru – Land of the Incas

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The fantastic contrasts of Peru makes it a great family holiday destination. From Andean peaks to coastal desert, from the Inca wonders of Machu Picchu to the colourful present day inhabitants, it offers activities that constantly change pace. Go trekking and marvel at Incan history: Peru is full of adventures for all the family. This is an exciting journey to take in the highlights of Peru; from ice mummies to Inca fortresses. Lake Titicaca is the world's highest lake and you visit its Indian villagers who live in reed houses on floating islands surrounded by the snow capped mountains. Experience a classic train ride through the Andes to Inca capital Cusco. Your first view of Machu Picchu is an unrivalled sight - a breathtaking mystery of an ancient civilisation.

### Day 1 Fly to Lima

Depart from London to fly to Lima, arriving late afternoon/early evening. On arrival you will be met by your tour leader and transferred to the bustling commercial suburb of Miraflores, where you'll check into your hotel. **Hotel, with swimming pool, 2 nights (breakfast)**

### Day 2 Lima city sightseeing tour & Gold Museum

Your trip starts with a sightseeing tour into the heart of colonial Lima, one of the first cities to be established in Latin America. Your local guide will take you initially to the Plaza de Armas, the huge central square which houses the Cathedral where Francisco Pizarro, conqueror of the Incas lies buried, and the imposing Presidential Palace. Nearby you'll visit the Church of San Francisco for a gruesome trip into the subterranean catacombs - here many thousands of people were laid to rest. In the afternoon there's an opportunity to visit the Gold Museum (optional) with its sumptuous collection of artefacts made from the precious metal that fascinated both the Incas and the Conquistadors - gold! This provides an interesting introduction to Inca culture, as well as other less well-known cultures that preceded it. The afternoon is free for you to relax.

### Day 3 Fly to Arequipa & visit the Andean Sanctuaries Museum

The day starts with a transfer to Lima airport for the short domestic flight (approximately one hour) southward to Arequipa. On arriving in this charming city, overlooked by the perfect snow-capped cone of the volcano El Misti (5822 metres), you'll check in at the Hotel Casa de Melgar. In the afternoon you'll head out with a local guide to explore the city - the centre has a fine collection of colonial buildings built from white *sillar*, the local stone. One of Arequipa's highlights is the much acclaimed Andean Sanctuaries Museum, which is internationally famous as the home of Juanita, the mummified ice maiden whose remains were discovered in an ice field at high altitude in the Andes. **Hotel 2 nights (breakfast)**

### Day 4 In Arequipa; visit Santa Catalina Convent

Your exploration of Arequipa continues with a visit to the Convent of Santa Catalina. For some 400 years (until 1970) this was an enclosed community which only women could enter. A town in its own right, it occupies an entire city block but has now been painstakingly refurbished to provide an insight into the daily life of the 450 nuns who once lived here. Nowadays only a few remain in seclusion. The afternoon is free to relax - Arequipa is the kind of place where it's easy to while away a few hours, shopping for handicrafts or simply enjoying its elegant atmosphere and balmy climate. **(breakfast)**

### Day 5 Fly to Juliaca & visit Sillustani en route to Puno

It's back to Arequipa's airport again this morning to pick up the short domestic flight (30 minutes) over the Andes mountains to land at the market town of Juliaca. You then drive across the extensive high plateau of the *altiplano* to visit Sillustani, the imposing burial site of the Colla tribe. Here a series of finely engineered stone *chullpas* - upside-down stone towers that are narrower at the base than the top - dominate a bleak peninsula overlooking a lake. Finally en route to the lakeside capital, Puno, you'll get your first sight of Lake Titicaca which, at 3800 metres above sea level, is the highest navigable body of water in the world. **Hotel 2 nights (breakfast)**

### Day 6 Puno; visit Uros islands on Lake Titicaca

After breakfast you head to Puno's lakeside port to board a wooden launch which you'll take to the Uros Islands in Puno Bay. Here you disembark onto one of the floating islands to learn how the Uros tribe live from the fish and birds they hunt under Titicaca's crystal clear skies. You'll hear how the lives of this Indian community are bound up with the totora reed which grows in the shallow waters of the lake and provides them with materials to build their houses, boats and even the islands on which they live. Their reed boats provided the inspiration for Ra, the boat in which Thor Heyerdal set sail across the Pacific Ocean. **(breakfast)**



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## **Day 7 Full day train to Cusco**

This morning you board a comfortable train for the 325 kilometre ride past Juliaca and on to Cusco. If, for any reason, it is not possible to take the train, we shall arrange a bus to follow an almost identical route. The altiplano becomes increasingly sparse and desolate as the train climbs a valley bordered by high peaks to La Raya Pass (4321 metres); along the way you'll spot herds of llama, alpaca and maybe vicuña. The railway passes steaming pools created by thermal springs before dropping into a fertile valley that leads down into the heartland of the Inca Empire. Agriculture is of paramount importance here and the industrious inhabitants still toil on the land, ploughing with oxen as they have done for centuries. On arrival in Cusco you will be transferred to your hotel.

**Hotel 2 nights (breakfast)**

## **Day 8 In Cusco; city sightseeing tour**

The Inca capital was originally laid out in the shape of a puma, and Spanish colonial buildings sit atop much older stonework that dates from Inca times. The city is at the same time both ancient and modern, as behind the old facades lie some surprisingly modern interiors - this makes for a fascinating mix of old and new. Your visit begins with a guided trip around the city centre - the highlights include the imperial palace of Koricancha, the enormous colonial cathedral that stands on the Plaza de Armas - the city's focal point - and the Hatunrumiyoc, the multi-angled stone set into a wall that demonstrates the skill of the Inca masons. Above all you'll learn more how the Inca Empire spread north and south along the mountain chain of the Andes, and about the sophisticated systems that held it together. In the afternoon you'll visit the great stone fortress of Sacsayhuaman on the hillside overlooking Cusco. Here you'll see the great plaza where the celebrations of Inti Raymi take place at the time of the summer solstice. **(breakfast)**

## **Day 9 Drive out to the Sacred Valley**

Today you head out of the city and into the surrounding countryside, bound for the valley of the Urubamba River. It's market day in the small town of Pisac and the main square and adjacent streets are packed with stalls selling handicrafts - in particular woven and knitted goods. It's a great place to shop for souvenirs and practise your bargaining skills, but there's also a fine Inca fortress to see if there's time. Further down the valley, at Ollantaytambo, original Inca stonework is still very much in evidence. At one end of the town a magnificent series of stone terraces rises to a temple consisting of massive blocks of dressed granite - all of which is framed by spectacular views of mountain peaks that overlook the valley. Your accommodation lies a little way back down the valley in the village of Yucay. **Hotel 2 nights (breakfast)**

## **Day 10 In the Sacred Valley**

Another day in the Sacred Valley allows you time to enjoy these idyllic surroundings to the full. The morning is free to relax, but if that doesn't appeal, you can do a fun whitewater rafting excursion on the river - there's just enough white water to raise your adrenalin levels, without going overboard - hopefully literally! It's great way to appreciate the Sacred Valley and is much enjoyed by participants of all ages. In the afternoon your tour leader will arrange a walk out in the countryside to show you how little everyday life has changed in these parts. The adobe houses and neat fields have a timeless air that has probably changed little since the time of the Inca Empire. **(breakfast)**

## **Day 11 Train to Machu Picchu**

An early start is needed this morning to get to the station on time to catch the train to Machu Picchu. After dropping your baggage at the Hotel Casita Pequeñita in the settlement down in the sub-tropical valley, a bus takes you up to the city of Machu Picchu - discovered amidst the jungle in 1911 by American adventurer Hiram Bingham. Nothing can prepare you for the sheer drama of the setting: the site is dominated by the sugar loaf shape of the peak of Huayna Picchu, which seems to rise straight out of the valley - but even that is dwarfed by a cordon of high snow-capped Andean peaks, while the Urubamba river winds along the valley floor far below. The vertiginous mountainsides are lined innumerable terraces, and steep staircases connect temples and palaces - all hewn with extraordinary precision from local stone. It's a breathtaking triumph of engineering and design!

**Hotel 1 night (breakfast)**

## **Day 12 At Machu Picchu ; train to Cusco**

It's worth rising early to get back up to Machu Picchu before the tourist trains arrive from Cusco, disgorging its crowds of visitors. Staying overnight in the nearby town gives you a head start, and by the time the arrive, you can watch them spreading out like ants from a lofty viewpoint. Take time to explore the site at your own pace today, before heading back down to the hotel to collect your baggage and board the train. As it winds its way back along the Urubamba Valley you'll have views of the sun setting over the Andes, but by the time you reach Cusco night will have fallen. **Hotel 2 nights (breakfast)**

### **Day 13 In Cusco**

To round off your stay in Cusco, you'll have a completely free day. There's a lot to do in the city: museums, art galleries, shopping, folklore shows and cafés; or you can simply wander the streets to take in the city's colonial charm. Cusco is also a great place for shopping - with something for all tastes and budgets; there's everything from an Indian market to some very glitzy designer shops selling up-market alpaca goods. **(breakfast)**

### **Day 14 Fly to Lima; afternoon flight to London**

This morning you depart for Cusco airport for a panoramic flight over the Andes Mountains back down to Lima, on the Pacific coast. On arrival in Lima you'll be transferred to your hotel in Miraflores, with the rest of the day free to explore further or enjoy some bargain hunting until the departure of your overnight international flight to the UK. **Hotel day room (breakfast)**

### **Day 15 Arrive London**

Arrive in London early morning.

## **Amazon extension**

For those people taking our Amazon extension the itinerary varies from the above as follows:

### **Day 13 Fly to Puerto Maldonado & Jungle lodge**

This morning you will be transferred from your hotel in Cusco to the airport for your flight to Puerto Maldonado (flight time approx. 2 hours). As you fly around the mountains out of Cusco you will see the scenery below change dramatically as you leave the highlands and head towards the jungle. On arrival at Puerto Maldonado you will take a transfer from the airport to the jetty where your boat will be waiting to take you through the rainforest to the Sandoval Lake Lodge – your base for the next three nights. The lodge is situated on the banks of a protected oxbow lake – not only a very attractive place but also brilliant for spotting wildlife and an excellent base for your jungle adventure. Accommodation is in fully screened rooms, complete with en-suite facilities and hot water showers, electricity and fans. As the sun goes down you will hear the rainforest come to life! **Sandoval Lake Lodge (breakfast) – 3 nights**

### **Days 14 & 15 Rainforest excursions**

Using the Sandoval Lake Lodge as your base you set out to explore the jungle with lake excursions by day amidst the wealth of wildlife here, as you search for giant otters, monkeys and spectacularly coloured macaws. When night falls you can try to identify the many sounds, and if you are feeling brave you can venture out to spot caiman (as you shine a torch into the darkness you see pairs of eyes blinking back at you!)

### **Day 16 Fly to Lima**

After breakfast you will travel again by boat from your lodge to the jetty in Puerto Maldonado, where you will be transferred to the airport for your flight back to Lima. You will then be transferred from Lima airport to your hotel. **Hotel day room (breakfast)**

### **Day 17 Fly to London**

The morning is free for you to use as you wish – with time for last-minute souvenir shopping. Later you will be driven from your hotel to the airport for an overnight flight back to Europe.

### **Day 18 Arrive London**

*This itinerary includes our group flights from London. If you are making other flight arrangements, please refer to your Confirmation Invoice and Joining Instructions for details of the start of the trip. Please remember international flights and trip dates do occasionally change, so please always purchase flexible tickets. Each itinerary is planned many months in advance. Consequently there are factors over which we have no control and which could make changes necessary. We will always endeavour to keep you informed of any such changes in advance.*

**Is this right for your family?** This trip is ideal for kids of five and upwards. Long journeys are by plane, so travelling is easy – although the effect of the altitude can make people feel unwell for a while. Most children know a little about ancient Peru from school and this will really bring it to life. They'll learn about Inca civilisation, the Conquistadores and modern Peru; anyone taking the Amazon extension will also discover the rainforest.



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## Optional Extras

These excursions, if available, can be arranged through your tour leader (per person cost shown below):

Lima – entrance fee to the Gold Museum	£5.50
Sacred Valley – White-water River Rafting	£18.00
Sacred Valley – Mountain Biking	£18.00

These prices are subject to change.

**Altitude Warning** This trip goes to a relatively high altitude where there is a risk of being affected by Acute Mountain Sickness. Our itineraries are designed to enable everyone to acclimatise to these altitudes, but you should be aware that you may still be affected. Although rare, a number of medical conditions can also reduce your performance at altitude and make you more susceptible to AMS. If you are worried about any pre-existing medical condition (i.e. heart or breathing problems) or unsure of your physical ability, we recommend that you seek medical advice prior to booking.

**Climate** The best time of year to visit Peru is between May and October. For much of this period in Lima, although it's generally grey and overcast rain is almost unheard of. Once summer arrives in November, the mist lifts and it becomes much sunnier. In the mountains the dry season lasts from April to October - during this period daytime temperatures are pleasant (mid 20s C), but at night can drop to just over freezing, so warm clothing is essential. Arequipa is pleasantly warm and sunny year round, but evenings can be cool.

Average monthly temperatures in Lima

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
<b>Max °C</b>	28	28	28	27	23	20	19	19	20	22	23	26
<b>Min °C</b>	19	19	19	17	16	14	14	13	14	14	16	17
<b>Rainfall (mm)</b>	3	0	0	0	5	5	8	8	8	3	3	0

**Accommodation** The hotels used throughout this trip are of 3 star standard, and are booked on twin share basis. All are modern, clean and comfortable and offer friendly service and rooms with private facilities. The mention of a swimming pool at a hotel should not be taken as a guarantee but rather an indication. You should also be aware that swimming pools at the hotels are often unheated and so can be cold in the winter months or even closed.

**Food and Drink** Breakfast is generally continental in style consisting of a small buffet. For meals not included in the itinerary you should allow US\$12-20 per person day to cover lunch and dinner. It is possible to eat relatively cheaply in Peru, but if you choose to eat in expensive restaurants you should allow a little more. Your local tour leader will be on hand to make personal recommendations. We recommend you drink plenty of bottled water during your trip.

## Local Costs

A small bottle of mineral water (500ml)	£0.30
A large bottle of mineral water (1 litre)	£0.60
A can of coke (soft drinks)	£0.60
A carton or bottle of fruit juice	£0.30
A bottle of beer	£0.90
A light lunch time snack – sandwich for example	£3.00
A two course meal* - excluding drinks	£7.00
A three course meal* - excluding drinks	£9.50

\*Based on a mid-range tourist restaurant.

**Currency** The unit of currency is the Peruvian Nuevo Sol (PES or N\$). At the time of writing (Nov 2009) the exchange rate is UK £1 = N\$ 4.75 and US \$1 = N\$2.88. US dollars cash is the most convenient way of carrying spending money as it can be changed almost anywhere (indeed many places will accept US dollars cash). ATMs are relatively widespread. Credit cards are accepted in large hotels and restaurants, but a surcharge is sometimes imposed.

**Tipping** is a recognised part of life although it is always at your discretion, you will be expected to reward service everywhere you go. We recognise that tipping can be both confusing and irritating, so your tour leader will happily

take this burden from you and run a tips kitty on your behalf. Please also remember that your tour leader works hard and for long hours to make your holiday run smoothly, a suitable reward for good service would be £1-£2 from each person, per day. It is usual to collect this between yourselves as a group and present it to the leader on completion of the tour.

**Language** Spanish, although English is sometimes spoken in tourist areas.

**Time** Peru is GMT -5 hours and -6 hours in during BST (end of March to end of October)

### Passports and Visas

Visas are not required; entry for 180 days is usually permitted on arrival. Your passport should be valid for 6 months beyond your departure date. You are recommended to carry proof of ID with you at all times in Peru, a photocopy of your passport is sufficient.

## Clothing & Equipment List for Peru - Llamas & Incas

### Clothing and Equipment List for Families

At altitude temperatures can change as quickly as the weather - the best way of coping with this is by layering: a wind and waterproof outer layer, a warm fleece to use as a mid layer, and a shirt or equivalent as a base layer. At night in the mountains it can get surprisingly cold, so a warm hat and gloves are useful, while during the day the sun can be fierce due to the thin atmosphere, so a sunhat and high factor sunscreen are essential.

CLOTHING	NUMBER PER PERSON	Check	EQUIPMENT	Check
Walking shoes	1 pair		Soft sided bag – 50-80 litres	
Trainers or strong sandals	1 pair – all purpose wear		Lightweight daypack – 25 litres	
Socks	3+		A variety of large plastic bags	
Waterproof jacket	1 lightweight		Sunglasses	
T-Shirts	3+		Personal First Aid Kit	
Long walking trousers or skirt	2+		Large water bottle	
Short trousers	2		Torch and batteries	
Long sleeve shirt	2+		Camera, film and accessories	
Track Suit Bottoms or Similar	Optional		Swimwear	
Thick Fleece	Not essential in summer		Sunhat / baseball cap / Essential (styled to shade face, ears& neck)	
Windproof jacket	1		Warm hat & gloves Woolly or fleece (essential in winter)	
Thin fleece or sweatshirt	1			

ITEM	Check	ITEM	Check
Passport/ Visa		Insect repellent	
Air Tickets		Universal travelling adapter	
Money/Travellers Cheques		Guide book & map	
Cash Cards/Visa		Binoculars	
Insurance Documents		Sunscreen – lots of it	
Trip Information & Itinerary		Moisturising Cream & lip salve	

For details regarding **hand luggage restrictions**, please visit [www.baa.com](http://www.baa.com) for details or click [here](#)