



PERU

AGENT: Vikki Mortimer from Tripaway Cruise & Travel – Coolangatta

Why we love it

Wander among alpacas and llamas roaming free in Puno, before cruising out onto Lake Titicaca. The lake's floating reed islands are a marvel of concept, construction and history. Visit the magnificent Colca Canyon, deeper than the Grand Canyon and dotted with ancient Indian villages. Scan the skies for the mighty Andean Condor, one of the world's largest flying birds. Marvel at ancient Inca architecture throughout the fertile Sacred Valley, before discovering the mother of all Inca cities, magical Machu Picchu. Enjoy a guided tour of the ruins and free time to explore on your own. Peru is a world-class culinary destination. Feast on local specialties and sample a delicious Pisco Sour, Peru's national drink. Experience the untouched world of the Amazon Rainforest. Stroll along jungle trails on the lookout for monkeys, parrots, otters and caymans, and sleep in a nature lodge lit by candles and kerosene lamps.

DAY 1 - LIMA

Welcome to Peru! On arrival into Lima's Jorge Chavez International Airport you will be transferred to your hotel. Meet your leader and fellow travellers for a pre-trip briefing, usually held at 2 pm. Please check the noticeboard near the hotel reception for confirmation of the location of the meeting. After the meeting your leader will take you on a brief walking tour of the Miraflores area. Your in-depth city tour will be tomorrow morning.

This evening you might like to head out for a group dinner at one of the city's many restaurants. Lima has some of the best cuisine in South America and is especially renowned for its seafood. Perhaps sample Peru's national dish of Ceviche, which is raw fish marinated in lime juice and often served with hot peppers.

Note: As this trip takes you to locations at high altitude, it's possible that some travellers may experience adverse health effects due to altitude sickness. Please see the 'Is this trip right for you?' and 'Health' sections of the trip notes for important information about this.

Accommodation: Antigua Mira Flores or Similar

DAY 2 - PARACAS

This morning head out on a half-day city tour of Lima with your guide. Founded in 1535 by the Spanish conquistador Francisco Pizarro, it was from Lima that all Spanish territories in South America were governed. The city's glory days ended in 1746 it was virtually destroyed by an earthquake. Many of the colonial buildings were rebuilt, and you will get a first-hand look at several of them on the tour. See the Plaza Mayor (Plaza de Armas) at the heart of the city, which is flanked by the city cathedral, the huge Government Palace and the Archbishop's Palace. Visit the San Francisco Monastery, with its catacombs containing some 70,000 human remains. Next head to the Central Market for a walking tour, where you'll have the opportunity to try some local Peruvian fruits and street food. Finally, the tour will make its way to nearby China town. In the afternoon, travel by minivan to Paracas. You'll arrive at your destination in the early evening after a four-hour drive.

Accommodation: Posada del Emancipador or similar

DAY 3 - NAZCA

Awake early this morning for an excursion to the Ballestas islands. Make your way to Paracas' port, where you'll board a boat bound for the islands. Often referred to as the Galapagos of Peru, The Ballestas Islands are home to an abundance of wildlife, including pelicans, red-footed boobies, flamingos, sea lions and even penguins. You will have the opportunity to see the wildlife up close on a boat tour of the area (approximately 1.5-2 hours). Please note that between June and September the port may be closed due to weather conditions. If this is the case, an alternative land tour of the Paracas National Reserve will be arranged.

Later in the morning you'll be driven in a private van from Paracas to Nazca. This is a three-hour drive, but we may stop at the oasis town of Huacachina on the way. Nazca's origins date back to the 2nd century BC. In the dry desert conditions, mummies, textiles, ceramics and other relics have been remarkably well preserved, hinting at what was once a highly developed ancient civilisation. Visit the viewing platform over the famous Nazca Lines, a series of huge symbols and shapes etched into the desert. There are many theories about how and why the lines exist and who created them. Tonight enjoy an included 'Pachamanca' dinner. Pachamanca is a traditional way of baking (usually meats) using hot stones.

Accommodation: Majoro or similar

DAY 4 - AREQUIPA

This morning you can choose to take a flight tour over the Nazca Lines to see the phenomenon from a different perspective. The tour is 30 minutes long and covers all 26 figures scattered throughout the desert. The flight can be bumpy and it is only recommended for those with a strong stomach. There have been safety issues with these flights in the past, so we have done our best to research the best operators in the area to recommend to you. Our leaders are prohibited from recommending or booking through any other operators. This optional flight costs about USD 100 per person (price subject to change).

From Nazca, head to Arequipa by private van. Although this is a ten-hour trip, it is well worth it, as Arequipa is one of the most beautiful cities in Peru. Set at the foot of El Misti volcano, Arequipa is known as 'La Ciudad Blanca' (The White City) because of the white volcanic material used to construct most of its buildings.

Accommodation: Casa Andina or similar

DAY 5 - AREQUIPA

Today enjoy a walking tour of Arequipa with a local guide. Explore the main square, the Santa Catalina Monastery, the San Ignacio Chapel with its colonial mural paintings and the suburb of Yanahuara. You may like to spend the rest of the day relaxing in a cafe in the plaza. Another option is a visit to the Juanita museum to see the Inca mummy of a young girl who died in the 1440s.

Accommodation: Casa Andina or similar

DAY 6 - AREQUIPA- COLCA CANYON

Today drive through the 'Altiplano' (High Plains) to the Colca Valley and Canyon. On the way you'll see grazing vicunas, llamas and alpacas, as well as stone cairns built by the local indigenous people. More than twice as deep as the Grand Canyon, the Colca Canyon provides some breathtaking views. The pre-Incan terraces carved into its walls are still cultivated today, and traditional Indian villages are dotted around it, where its possible to see locals in colourful traditional dress. Stop at the highest point (4,910 metres) to enjoy views of the bleak landscape below and the snowcapped volcano of the Nevado Ampato in the distance. At this point you might feel a little shortness of breath, but after taking some photos, you'll quickly get back in the vehicle and descend to a lower altitude. Continue on to the town of Chivay, where you'll have some time to visit the local hot springs. In the evening, you may wish to visit a local 'pena' to enjoy a Peruvian dance and music show. Spend the night in Chivay.

Accommodation: Eco Inn

DAY 7 - PUNO

This morning visit the Condor View point, where Andean Condors, one of the world's largest flying birds, can often be seen soaring in the air. After lunch it's about a four-hour drive in the van to Puno. On the way the group will stop at the Sillustani archaeological site. The ruined 'chullpas' or funeral towers of Sillustani were built by a pre-Inca civilisation centuries ago to house the remains of noble men. Arrive into Puno. Located on the shores of Lake Titicaca, Puno is a melting pot of Aymara and Quechuan Indian culture. The town is known as the folklore capital of Peru and is famous for its traditional dances.

Accommodation: Taypikala hotel or similar

DAY 8 - LAKE TITICACA/ SUASI ISLAND

Be enchanted by the striking scenery and unique cultures on a cruise around Lake Titicaca today. As Lake Titicaca is the highest navigable lake in the world, the sun can be extremely strong, so make sure you wear a hat and sunscreen, even on cloudy days. Stop by the floating Uros Islands. The Uros people constructed these islands to isolate themselves from rival tribes in ancient times. They are built completely from multiple layers of totora reeds, which grow in the shallows of the lake. Next call into Taquile Island for some woollen handicrafts. On the island, knitting is strictly a male domain, while women do the spinning. In the evening, retire to the private island of Suasi where you'll spend the night.

Accommodation: Suasi Island Eco lodge

DAY 9 - PUNO

Today the group will make their way back across the lake to Puno. Enjoy a free night in Puno to explore, eat dinner at a local restaurant or relax in the hotel. Puno is famous for its festivals. If you're lucky, your visit might coincide with an evening parade, when the streets fill with costumed dancers and musicians.

Accommodation: Taypikala hotel or similar

DAY 10 - CUZCO

Today take a local six-hour bus across the spectacular Altiplano to Cuzco. This region is truly the heart and soul of Peru. Cuzco is the South America's oldest continuously inhabited city, and was the home of the Incas for two centuries before the Spanish built their first capital here. Today Cuzco is a fascinating combination of both cultures. Inca-built walls line the central streets, and many of the city's colonial buildings are built on or around Inca foundations. Take time to acclimatise to the city's high altitude (3,450 metres, or 11,150 feet above sea level). Perhaps take a wander and explore the many Baroque churches and ancient temples dotted around town.

Accommodation: San Agustin Plaza Hotel or similar

DAY 11 - CUZCO

Your leader will take you on an orientation walk of Cuzco today. Visit the Coca Museum to learn how the infamous plant has been an essential part of life in the Andes for centuries. Head to the San Pedro market, where you can practice your bargaining skills and take some colourful pictures. The tour will also stop at the Plaza de Armas in the heart of the city. Here you will see the main cathedral, built on top of an Incan palace and one of the city's greatest repositories of art. There are several impressive Incan ruins within the city. The most easily accessible is Coricancha, which was the empire's richest temple. Once plated in thick gold, the Spanish built a Dominican church atop its walls.

Accommodation: San Agustin Plaza Hotel or similar

DAY 12 - SACRED VALLEY

Today board a private bus for the Sacred Valley. Treasured for its climate, fertile land and the Urubamba (Sacred) River, the valley has long been the main source of food in the high Andes. Head to the fortress ruins of Sacsayhuaman. The massive stone blocks forming the settlement's walls give you an idea of the ingenuity and military strength of the Incas.

Next you'll visit a nearby community to gain insight into the local lifestyle. If it happens to be market day, wander the stalls in search of hand painted beads and ponchos. Enjoy lunch with the community. Afterwards, continue on to the town of Ollantaytambo. Built over an ancient Incan settlement, this is one of the few places where the Incas defeated the Spanish. The ruins of the upper terraces offer great photo opportunities over the town below.

Accommodation: Samanapaq hotel or similar

DAY 13 - AGUAS CALIENTES

Travel by train for 90 minutes today through the Urubamba Valley to Aguas Calientes. The town is nestled in cloud forest at the foot of Machu Picchu. From here take a 30-minute bus up the winding road to Machu Picchu. It's thought the city was built around 1440 AD as a country retreat for Incan nobility, but there's evidence the land had been a sacred Incan site for much longer. Another school of thought is that Machu Picchu was an astronomical observatory. Take a guided tour around the ruins of temples, palaces and living quarters (1.5-2 hours), and enjoy free time afterwards to wander around on your own.

Note: Due to Peregrine's internal safety policy, our leaders are prohibited from recommending or assisting with booking a climb up the steep mountain of Wayna Picchu.

Accommodation: Santuario Hotel or similar

DAY 14 - MACHU PICCHU / CUZCO

At 5:30 am this morning, take the bus back up the winding road to Machu Picchu. On your second visit to the ruins you'll have free time to explore and take any photos you may have missed yesterday. In the afternoon, the group will return by bus and train to Cuzco, where you'll spend the night.

Accommodation: San Agustin Plaza Hotel or similar

DAY 15 - CUZCO

Bid farewell to any fellow travellers leaving the trip today. Enjoy a free day to relax, shop or explore more of Cuzco's sights. Perhaps head to a cafe on the Plaza de Armas, or for those seeking an active adventure, try mountain biking in the hills surrounding Cuzco. In the evening, you might like to unwind with a meal and drink in a local restaurant. You could even sample the Peruvian delicacy of cuy (guinea pig), if you are yet to try it and are brave enough.

Accommodation: San Agustin Plaza Hotel or similar

DAY 16 - FLIGHT TO PUERTO MALDONADO (AMAZON JUNGLE)

Today take a flight to Puerto Maldonado in the Amazon Jungle, where you'll be staying for two nights at the Posada Amazonas Lodge. A representative from the lodge will welcome you at the airport. You'll then make a quick trip to the lodge's office in town by van. Here you'll be able to pack the gear you'll need for the next few days and leave the rest, securely stored, behind.

Travel by bus or motorised canoe to the Amazon lodge. Once you arrive there is time to unpack and unwind before a short orientation and briefing. After dinner head to the river with your local guide, using a torch to search for caimans (similar to alligators) in the dark. Rooms at the lodge are simple but comfortable. They are built using local materials such as bamboo, adobe mud and palm trees, and are equipped with flushing toilets, hot showers, mosquito nets and kerosene lamps. Electricity and internet are only available in the common areas. The staff at the lodge are mostly local, including the multilingual guides, who can teach you all about the area's flora and fauna. Please note that drinks and tips are not included.

Accommodation: Posada Amazonas lodge or similar

DAY 17 - PUERTO MALDONADO (AMAZON JUNGLE)

Spend a full day exploring the rainforest on foot and by boat with your local guide. Walk along jungle trails and be on the lookout for monkeys, parrots, giant river otters, caymans and capybaras. Your guide will also point out Amazonian plant life. Back at the lodge, there is a canopy tower where you

can enjoy spectacular views over the forest and Tambopata River. From here there are also good chances of spotting toucans, parrots and macaws in the surrounding trees.

Accommodation: Posada Amazonas lodge or similar

DAY 18 - LIMA

Today head back to the airport and take an included flight back to Lima. After checking into the hotel, you'll have some free time in the afternoon to explore or relax. You could even head to the huge shopping complex of Larcomar, which is set over the ocean. In the evening, perhaps head out for one final group dinner to reminisce on your adventures.

Accommodation: Antigua Mira Flores or Similar

DAY 19 - LIMA

Today your Peruvian adventure comes to an end after breakfast. Flights out of Lima can be booked for anytime, as there are no planned activities.