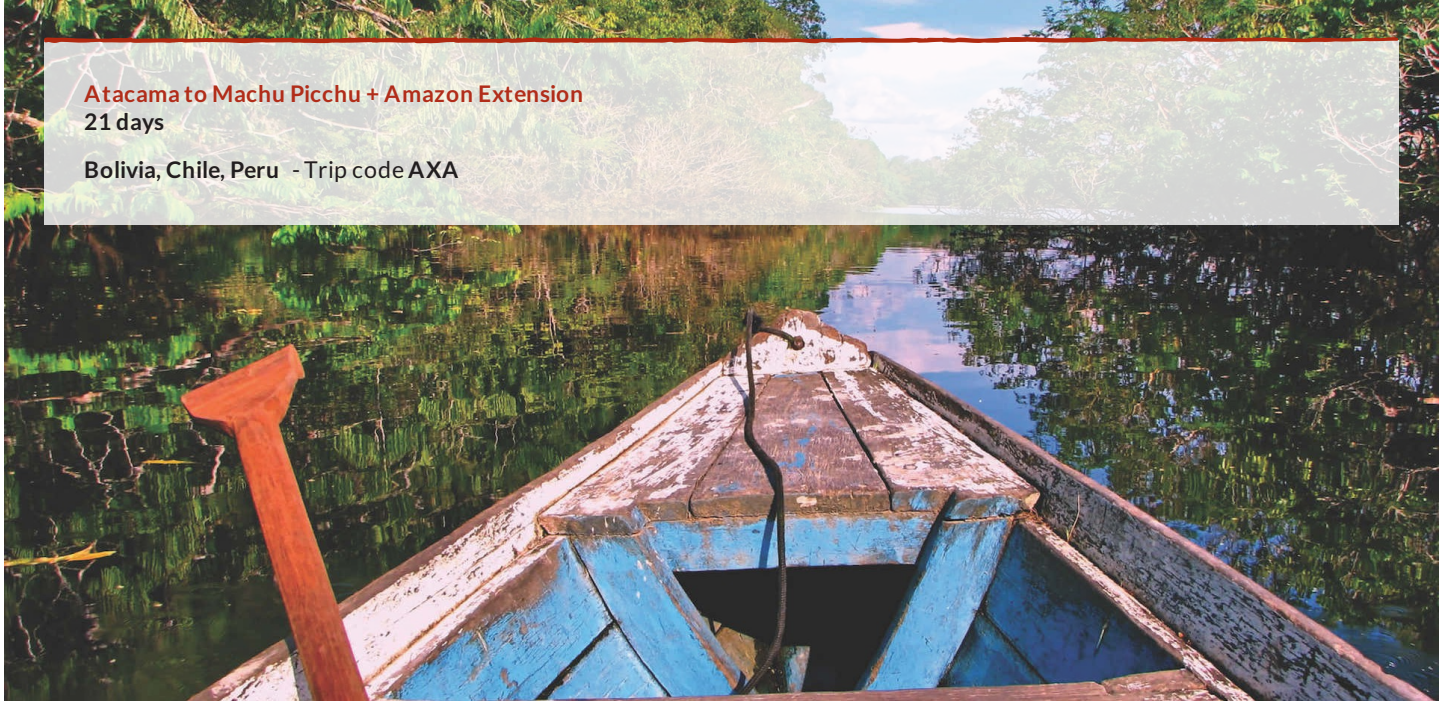


EXPLORE!

Atacama to Machu Picchu + Amazon Extension

21 days

Bolivia, Chile, Peru - Trip code AXA



Atacama to Machu Picchu + Amazon Extension

Come with us on an Andean adventure as we travel from the Chilean city of Santiago to the magnificent Inca citadel of Machu Picchu in Peru. Along the way we explore Cusco, the historical capital of Peru, traverse the spectacular salt flats of Uyuni and visit the city of La Paz, 'the city that touches the sky'.

Trip highlights

ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

Standard

Our standard, mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service, often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en suite facilities.

TRIP PACE:

Full on

Full on paced trips are for travellers who like their holidays packed with activities and experiences, moving on quickly from place to place with lots of early starts and long, busy days. Some may find them tiring, but others get a buzz from packing their precious holiday-time as chock-a-block full of new experiences as possible!

GROUP SIZE:

12 - 18

Maximum group size ranges from between 6 to 20 people, depending on the type of trip, the transport and accommodation used and activities included. We rarely have groups that are smaller than five or six people and the average is 12 people plus an Explore leader.

Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

DAY 1 - Join tour in Santiago de Chile; afternoon city tour

Joining the tour in Santiago today, our intention this afternoon is to take an orientation tour of the city. One of the most scenic destinations in South America, Santiago lies in the imposing shadow of the majestic Andes, and the old part of the city, around the Alameda, contains an array of fine buildings, statues and gardens, including the impressive Presidential Palace and the monastery of San Francisco. We aim to take in the Government Palace of La Moneda during our tour, as well as the cultural heart of both the city and the country, the Plaza de Armas. In the eclectic Bellavista district we can find the unusual house of the famous Chilean poet and Nobel Prize winner Pablo Neruda (optional visit), just one of the many artists and writers who made this charming city their home. We also plan to visit San Cristobal hill to enjoy spectacular views out over the city.



Accommodation: Eurotel Providencia (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: None

DAY 2 - Free day in Santiago de Chile; optional Valparaiso visit

Today has been left free to explore some more of the city, to wander its streets and parks and perhaps the vineyards that lie on the outskirts of the city. The Maipo Valley is considered by many to be the best winegrowing region in the country. Certainly the oldest, it is renowned for its Cabernet Sauvignon and a tour of the vineyards, lying in the shadow of the magnificent Andes is the perfect combination of sensory delights. Alternatively there is the option of a trip to the nearby city of Valparaiso, Chile's cultural capital. Once a colonial port linking trade with neighbouring Peru, the city suffered numerous raids at the hands of pirates, including Sir Francis Drake. Reaching the height of its prosperity during the 19th century it finally fell into decline with the onset of the steam age and the opening of the Panama Canal. The city today is a major port and its surrounding hills, a natural amphitheatre covered in colourful houses and mansions, are a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



Accommodation: Eurotel Providencia (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 3 - Fly to Calama, transfer to San Pedro de Atacama and walk in the Moon Valley

Flying to Calama early this morning we transfer by bus to the oasis town of San Pedro de Atacama (2400m), set high among the spectacular volcanoes of Los Andes Cordillera and our gateway to the dramatic landscapes of the Atacama Desert. Arriving later this morning there will be time to relax, or perhaps take an optional visit to the impressive archaeological museum, containing the collection of artefacts assembled by Padre Gustave Paige, a Belgian missionary who spent some 25 years here during the later years of the last century. This afternoon we will take a walk amongst the dunes of the nearby Valle de la Luna (Moon Valley), a nature reserve to the west of the town, where the surreal landscape has been formed by the erosion of the salt mountains, and where we intend to watch the setting sun cast its golden glow across the spectacular landscape before returning by bus back to San Pedro.



Accommodation: Casa Don Tomas (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 4 - Visit El Tatio Geysers, optional salt flats trip

Before the arrival of the Spanish San Pedro was the centre of the Atacama culture, and its dusty streets and evocative setting still exudes an air of times long past. An early departure by bus this morning sees us heading through the desert landscapes of the remarkable Atacama, one of the most barren and dramatic natural features in the entire country. Our destination is the remarkable El Tatio Springs, a geothermal field of spouting geysers and steaming fumaroles surrounded by a vista of volcanic mountains. Arriving in time for the sunrise affords us an opportunity to witness these active geysers in the golden light of the rising sun. Returning to San Pedro via the volcanic landscapes we then have the rest of the day free to enjoy at our leisure. One possible option for this afternoon is to take a visit out to the extensive salt flats of the Salar de Atacama, at 300,000 hectares the third largest area of salt flats on the planet. Rich in minerals, the lake is home to flocks of pink flamingos during the winter months and the air out here is so dry that the views across the Salar have to be seen to be believed.



Accommodation: Casa Don Tomas (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 5 - Drive to Hito Cajon and enter Bolivia

Driving to the Bolivian border at Hito Cajon today we will meet with our new transport and cross the expansive landscapes of the altiplano by 4WD. During our last moments in Chile, we drive over a high pass at 4650m, the highest point of our trip. Our journey takes in the windswept views and spectacular waters of Laguna Verde, lying before the imposing slopes of the Lincancabur Volcano (5960m). It is said that the winds change the lake's colour, from a deep azure to a vivid turquoise as it whips across the rippling surface. From here we continue past Challviri Lagoon, onto the amazing blood-red depths of Laguna Colorada, home to rare James flamingos who feed on the rich red algae that cover the lake. Travelling across the surreal and tortured lands of the high altitude plains of the Siloli Desert we then head for Villamar, our destination for the night.



Accommodation: Mallcu Cueva (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 6 - Discover the Uyuni Salt Flats.

Today we travel via Ollague Volcano and San Juan into a desolate wilderness of scrubby wasteland. Salt deserts add to the barrenness, but pockets of cultivation and settlements within this seemingly inhospitable land stand out like oases. The landscape is surreal in the extreme, the bright blue of the skies contrasting sharply with the blinding white salt crust. Flamingos inhabit the shoreline, whilst the snow-capped peak of Volcan Tunupa (5400m) looms far in the distance. Crossing the salt flats we then head for Incahuasi Island, where we find an expanse of huge cacti occupying an isolated island in the heart of the Salar de Uyuni. The island once lay beneath the lake that covered this area some 40,000 years ago and all around are scattered rocks that look like ancient coral beds. The cacti themselves have been here for millennia and some tower some 6 metres above the floor of the plains, no mean feat given that it is estimated that they only grow one centimetre a year! Time-permitting, we will travel to the petrified pre-Columbian mummies of Pucara de Aique, a sacred site that occupies a small canyon at the base of Tunupa. Otherwise, we move directly on to Colchani, driving across the desert pans to visit a salt works, where villagers have sent piles of salt to be ground and iodised before being sold. The small village marks the extreme edge of the salt pans.



Accommodation: Hotel Jardines de Uyuni (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 7 - Travel to the UNESCO World Heritage town of Potosi

Our adventure continues by public bus across the mineral rich highlands of southern Bolivia today as we head for the UNESCO Heritage town of Potosi. This trip starts in Colchani and passes through Uyuni, to enter through branches of the Andes Range, pass through Pulacayo, a main tin mining center. The views on the road are great, with lots of colors and formations done by the erosion, as well as remote villages, whose people are dedicated to basic agriculture. Reaching Potosi lying beneath the towering peak of Cerro Rico, at a lofty 4090m above sea level, it is considered the highest city of its size anywhere on earth.



Accommodation: Hotel Cima Argentum (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 8 - Morning city tour of Potosi, continue to Sucre

The Spanish were attracted to these high terrains by the promise of abundant deposits of silver and zinc and during the early years of the 17th century the town itself was the largest in the region, producing over half the silver found in the Americas. The pink conical slopes of the mountain are peppered with old mines and one Spanish writer once described it as 'the mouth of hell'. Conditions even today are still very basic, with all the work being done by hand and with the most primitive of tools. However, as it is a cooperative and the miners can work what hours they want and sell what they extract to the cooperative at the market price. Potosi itself is considered one of Bolivia's finest historical monuments, a city littered with ornate mansions and glorious Baroque churches. This morning we take a tour of the city, its architecture accentuated by the bright clear light that bathes the landscape, made even more intense by its high altitude. An interesting overview of the city's varied past can be found in the Casa de Moneda, the original royal mint built in the mid-1700's, which now houses a variety of displays, from wooden colonial-era minting machines and religious art, to Tiahuanaco artefacts and Bolivian war relics. It even has the country's first locomotive. This afternoon we depart for Sucre by local bus.



Accommodation: Casa Kolping (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast & Lunch

DAY 9 - Explore Sucre on a guided tour; free afternoon for personal discovery

A UNESCO Heritage site, the Bolivian capital is a spectacular surviving example of colonial grandeur, with a number of beautifully preserved churches that reflect a distinctive mix of local and European influences. Unofficially known as 'the city of four names', Sucre was originally known as La Plata, until new territorial divisions in 1776 saw it changed to Chuquisaca. In the mid-1800s its name was changed once more, this time to its present incarnation, in honour of the second president of the country, Antonio Jose de Sucre. Its final moniker has more to do with the whitewashed walls of its central buildings which, repainted every year, have earned the city the name of La Ciudad Blanca - the white city. This morning we will take a tour of its cultural heart, affording us a little taster of its colonial charm. The 17th century cathedral in the centre of town contains the stunning jewel encrusted 'Virgen do Guadalupe' by Bernardo Bitti, an artist who studied under Raphael and went on to become the first great painter of the new world. We'll also take in the Museo de la Recoleta, which once served as a Franciscan convent, a barracks and a prison and now contains a vast collection of paintings that span some four centuries. The rest of the day is free to continue exploring at your leisure. Bolivia's most attractive city presents a captivating setting to wander through at will. Its large plazas and elegant facades offer an enchanting backdrop, and a walk along its tree-lined streets unearths a rich heritage and a unique insight into its rich history. Sucre has also embraced the future of the country and is renowned as being the country's student capital, investing it with a youthful and relaxed atmosphere that makes it a true pleasure to explore.



Accommodation: Casa Kolping (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 10 - Fly to La Paz; afternoon tour of the city

Leaving Sucre we fly this morning to the lofty heights of La Paz. Standing at 3636m above sea level (higher even than Lhasa in Tibet), La Paz is cupped in the palm of two magnificent mountains and surrounded by the high Altiplano. Its poetic nickname of 'the city that touches the sky' is well earned. Located on the La Paz River, the city was founded by the Spanish in 1548 and its strategic location along the trade routes between the Bolivian silver mines and the ocean helped it to flourish and grow. We will take a tour of the city, enjoying the delights of its vibrant street markets and the captivating grandeur of the church of San Francisco. We'll also take in the pre-Columbian gold and silver artefacts in the Museo del Oro and the fascinating exhibits in the Casa de Pedro Domingo Murillo. Murillo was a martyr of the revolution of 1809 who was hanged in the square that today bears his name and his museum presents us with a rich collection of furniture, textile and artwork that perfectly captures the history of those colonial times.



Accommodation: El Rey Palace Hotel (or similar)



Simple Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 11 - In La Paz; optional trip to Tiahuanako archaeological site

Today is free to explore La Paz. It's a good opportunity to explore the old centre further, with its markets and beautifully ornate churches. Alternatively, you may wish to visit the ruins of Tiahuanaco, dating back to approximately 1500 BC. It was one of the most important pre-Inca civilisations and is considered to be one of the most developed in its time. The Kalasaya temple, the Gate of the Sun, the Akapana pyramid are amongst some of the buildings to explore and this can be followed by visiting the nearby pottery and stoneware museum. Alternatively, take a full day trip to the sub-tropical area of Las Yungas, a region characterised by its lush vegetation, its many rivers and waterfalls leading to the Amazon basin, and its diverse flora and fauna. A day trip to Las Yungas is a huge contrast to the high mountains of the Andes, and this day trip includes a lunch at a local coffee company, as well as a visit to the coffee plantations, and a trip to the wildlife refuge at La Senda Verde, home to over 450 rescued animals.



Accommodation: El Rey Palace Hotel (or similar)



Simple Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 12 - Public bus to Copacabana, boat to Isla del Sol

From La Paz we head towards the deep blue waters of Lake Titicaca by public bus, at 3810m it is the highest navigable lake in the world and the second largest in South America, after Maracaibo. An immense body of water its shoreline has been the home to the Aymara and Quechua for millennia. The sacred waters of the lake have long been a site of religious ritual and devotion, from the earliest civilisations in the Americas, to the Inca conquerors who believed the lake to be the site where the Children of the Sun, the legendary founders of the Inca dynasty, Manco Capac and Mama Ocllo, arrived on earth. Our journey takes us to the town of Copacabana; a place of mystic reverence since the times of the Tiahuanako and which today holds favour with thousands of Christian pilgrims. From here we take a boat out to the Isla del Sol, landing near the Pilkokaina ruins and soaking up the mystical ambience of an island steeped in the legends of the ancient Inca. From here we walk up to our lodge (approx. 200m ascent + 1-1.5 hrs of walking at high altitude), where we will be spending the night.



Accommodation: Hosteria Las Islas (or similar)



Standard Guesthouse



Single room available




Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner


DAY 13 - Visit Chincanca Ruins, return to Copacabana and drive to Puno (Peru)

The Isla del Sol is the largest of the islands that lie dotted around this spectacular lake, lying just off the Copacabana Peninsula, at the southern end of the lake. The island is covered with nearly 200 archaeological sites that attest to the importance the ancient Incas attached to this site and this morning we take a boat north, towards the labyrinthine Inca ruins of Chincanca. At Chincanca we find a meandering network of rooms and passageways that link together around a sacred rock, overlooking the sparkling azure waters of the lake below. Then we take to the waters again, taking our boat to the neighbouring Island of the Moon to visit its ruins. We then continue by boat to Copacabana and then take a charter bus across the border into Peru, following the shores of the lake to its north western corner and the bustling town of Puno. As of May 2017, strikes are occurring on Sun Island which means that we are unable to visit the northern part of the Island where the ruins of La Chincanca are. Local information tells us that they hope to have resolved the situation by 2018. However, if this is not the case then there will be alternative hikes on the Island of the Moon to ensure that you can make the most of this beautiful place.



Accommodation: Eco Inn Hotel Puno (or similar)

 Standard Hotel

 Single room available

 Meals Provided: Breakfast & Lunch


DAY 14 - Bus to the Sacred Valley via the ancient Sillustani site

Today we follow the legendary route taken by the first Inca ruler - Manco Capac - on his way towards Cusco. Our destination is in the Sacred Valley at Ollantaytambo. During our bus journey we stop at the beautifully scenic site of Sillustani - a fitting home for the chullpas (funeral towers), which probably date from the 14th century. Driving up to the northern limit of the Altiplano we cross La Raya pass (4,335m) and descend to Cusco. Depending on time, those who wish may visit the colonial church at Andahuaylillas or the Inca temple ruins at Raqchi. The scenery is desolate but magnificent and we may spot flocks of llamas and alpacas grazing on the windswept pastures. We arrive into Cusco in the late afternoon, and from here drive to the Sacred Valley, heading towards our hotel for the evening.



Accommodation: Augusto's Urubamba (or similar)

 Standard Hotel

 Single room available


 Meals Provided: Breakfast


DAY 15 - Free morning in Sacred Valley, train to Aguas Calientes

A free morning affords an opportunity today to visit the Inca salt pans at Maras and the remote ruins of Moray, famous for its fascinating Inca terraces, known locally as the laboratory of the Incas (optional). These terraces were believed to have been carved on different levels by the Incas, in order to experiment with their crops, each being carved to different depths in order to try and ascertain the ideal conditions in which to grow them. Many still believe the site to possess magical powers and there is certainly no doubting the atmospheric feel and stunning location of the site. This afternoon we then catch the train to Aguas Calientes, the gateway to one of the greatest of all archaeological sites, the mountain complex of Machu Picchu, the fabled 'lost city' of the Incas, probably the most spectacular feat of engineering in ancient America. On arrival we walk to our guesthouse and check in, after which you might like to relax in the thermal baths.



Accommodation: Gringo Bill's Hostel (or similar)

 Standard Guesthouse

 Single room available

 Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 16 - Visit Machu Picchu, afternoon return to Cusco by train

Catching the bus this morning we head up to the incredible complex of Machu Picchu. On arrival, it's possible to climb the steep peaks of either Machu Picchu Mountain or Huayna Picchu Mountain to look down on the citadel. Machu Picchu Mountain is a 700m climb from the top of the citadel. There are cobbled stairs all the way up with a few eye-opening drops in some parts, and the round-trip takes about 2.5-3 hours. Huayna Picchu Mountain is only 350m, half the size of Machu Picchu Mountain, but much steeper. There are many more sheer drops, and it is definitely not suitable for someone with a fear of heights. For those who fancy doing the 1 hour climb, you'll be rewarded with world-beating views of Machu Picchu, and the feeling that you're standing on a precipice at the top of the world. These must be pre-paid at time of booking. If you change your passport between your time of

booking and prior to travel please take your original passport with you. The rest of the morning is then spent in this magnificent city, dividing our time between a guided tour and some free time to explore the spectacular ruins privately. Temples, stairways, palaces and gabled stone dwellings are scattered everywhere, testifying to the energy and ingenuity of the builders. Not without reason this site is probably the most revered attraction in the Americas, its location alone is dramatic in the extreme, teetering on the saddle of a high mountain peak that towers above the valley below. This afternoon we then travel by train and bus to Cusco.



Accommodation: Inkarri Hostal (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 17 - Free day to explore Cusco; optional trip to Pisac in the Sacred Valley

Today we have a free day to enjoy Cusco, the old capital of the Inca Empire and the oldest continuously inhabited city on the continent. Imbued with an atmosphere of mystery and grandeur, the Spanish-style city of today, with its attractive pink tiled roofs, arcaded plazas and steep winding alleyways, stands upon tremendous Inca foundation stones. A free day here is a fantastic opportunity to explore Cusco's links with the Inca Empire, from visiting the Qoricancha, or the 'Temple of the Sun', which is a fascinating museum dedicated to Cusco's Inca heritage, to simply wandering the ancient stone walls that line the city streets. We can recommend a visit to the fortress-citadel of Saqsayhuaman (optional), a huge fortress built high above the town, with the aim of defending the Inca empire. Another option is a trip out to nearby Pisac to visit its market and perhaps explore the magnificent ruins of its citadel. Strategically located at the head of the Urubamba Valley, Pisac once controlled the road connecting the Inca Empire with Paucartambo on its eastern borders and the magnificent Inca ruins that once so dominated this valley still occupy the mountainside above the town. On market days the square is awash with noise and colour as vendors trade local produce for medicines and tools and there are bargains to be had amongst the weavers and potters. The ruins occupy a rocky spur, its citadel strategically located at the head of the gorge, overlooking the patchwork of fields and terraces that dot the valley floor. Climbing up to the ruins you pass through a magnificent collection of temples, palaces, terraces, solstice markers and baths.



Accommodation: Inkarri Hostal (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 18 - Fly to Puerto Maldonado. Travel to lodge by minibus and canoe.

Today we transfer to the airport for a short flight to Puerto Maldonado, located in the Southern Amazon area of Peru. You will leave your main luggage in Puerto Maldonado and just take with you what you need for the next few days. The Amazon comprises 60% of Peru and the Peruvian Amazon is the second largest section of the Amazon Rainforest after Brazil. The Amazon basin covers two fifths of South America over many countries including Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru and Venezuela and it is the most bio-diverse environment in the world. Most of the basin is covered by the rainforest, which is the largest rainforest in the world. We travel along the Madre de Dios River by dugout canoe (approximately 1 hour) and check into our Amazon lodge. As the lodge is in a remote location, the electricity is provided by a generator and is only available for certain hours of the day. After lunch, we will walk to the Caiman Cocha, a small lake with an abundance of caimans.



Accommodation: Eco Amazonia Lodge (or similar)



Simple Lodge



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 19 - In Amazon Jungle; walk in the rainforest, visit Monkey Island

After breakfast, we'll hike towards the depths of the forest, walking on trails crossing gorges and rivers. During the journey we will observe the flooded forest and a variety of flora and wildlife as we continue to the crystal clear Lake Apu Victor which is surrounded by marshes and giant trees. Afterwards, we'll go up to the observation deck to enjoy a panoramic view of the lake and observe wildlife such as parrots, toucans and herons. If we are lucky, we may be able to observe the giant river otter, one of the rainforest's most spectacular animals. After lunch, we head off to 'Monkey Island' where four species of monkeys live, the largest being the spider monkey. These monkeys were originally captured by local people but were since rescued and now live on this island in freedom.



Accommodation: Eco Amazonia Lodge (or similar)



Simple Lodge



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 20 - In Amazon Jungle; walk to the Lost Cocha, canoe ride around the lake

Today we will hike in the virgin rainforest to get to the Lost Cocha which constitutes a refuge and feeding ecosystem for a huge variety of animals. This area has huge swamps and palm tree forests and from here we'll have the chance to observe the local fauna. We will visit the observation deck for great views of the rainforest. Afterwards, we'll have a pleasant canoe ride around the lake and will return to the lodge for lunch. In the afternoon, you can choose to pay an optional visit to the local botanical garden or if you prefer relax around the swimming pool.



Accommodation: Eco Amazonia Lodge (or similar)



Simple Lodge



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 21 - Early morning boat to Puerto Maldonado, and end trip at airport.

Our Amazon adventure comes to an end today after breakfast and we will travel by boat back to Puerto Maldonado, before transferring to the airport. If you prefer you can end your trip at the office in Puerto Maldonado and arrange a taxi transfer to the airport yourself at a time that better suits your own itinerary. The office is a short taxi ride from the town, and about 20 minutes by taxi from the airport.



What's included?



Included meals

- Breakfast: 20
- Lunch: 9
- Dinner: 7



Transport

- Bus
- Flight
- Public Bus
- Train



Trip staff

- Explore Tour Leader
- Boat Crew
- Driver(s)
- Local Guide(s)



Accommodation

- 2 nights standard guesthouse
- 13 nights standard hotel
- 2 nights simple hotel
- 3 nights simple lodge

Trip information

Country information

Bolivia Holidays & Tours

Climate

Conditions vary from region to region and with altitude. Bear in mind that at high altitude temperatures can drop dramatically, and

conditions can change suddenly. Inland - Hot and humid from October to March (summer). Mild to hot from April to September (winter). Highlands -- All year, sunny days, chilly to cold evenings. Rainy December to March. Mainly dry rest of year best time for mountain travel.

Time difference to GMT

-4

Plugs

3 Pin Flat

Religion

Roman Catholic

Language

Spanish

Chile Holidays & Tours

Climate

The best time to visit is spring (Sept-Nov) and autumn (March- April). Between June and September the heat in the northern part of the country is less intense. Remember rain can fall at any time of the year and the weather is changeable in the mountains. Easter Island has a tropical climate so is likely to be quite hot and humid. It can also rain there in the evenings and become chilly.

Time difference to GMT

-4

Plugs

2 Pin Round

Religion

Predominantly Roman Catholic.

Language

Spanish, Aymara, Rapanui.

Peru Holidays & Tours

Climate

There is a rainy season from Dec - Mar however on the coast it rarely rains. Jun-Oct is damp and misty, but temperatures never drop below 10°C. At high altitudes although there are sunny days temperatures can drop dramatically, and conditions can change suddenly.

Time difference to GMT

-5

Plugs

2 Pin Flat

Religion

Catholicism

Language

Spanish

Budgeting and packing

Optional activities

Santiago de Chile - Visit to Valparaiso US\$ 110 (min 3 pers), Wine tour US\$ 69 (min 3 pers). San Pedro De Atacama - Trip to the Atacama Salt Lakes US\$ 115; Archaeological Museum - US\$5; Astronomy tour US\$30 La Paz - Half day Tiahuanaco (min 4 pers) US\$ 70; Full day Las Yungas US\$102 (min. 4 pers) Sacred Valley - Visit to Maras and Moray approximately US\$ 58 (min 4 pers) Puno - Titicaca Train £190 Subject to availability - these must be pre-paid at time of booking. If you change your passport between your time of booking and prior to travel please take your original passport with you to avoid being fined. Cusco - Visit to Sacsayhuaman US\$ 53 (based on 2 pers.), trip to Pisac Market US\$ 60 (based on 2 pers). Huayna Picchu - £25; Machu Picchu

Mountain £25 - Subject to availability - these must be pre-paid at time of booking. If you change your passport between your time of booking and prior to travel please take your original passport with you to avoid being fined.

Clothing

Bear in mind that several different climatic zones will be experienced. Lightweight clothing is necessary for some warm and humid daytime conditions, though evenings can be cooler, and temperatures at altitude can drop considerably, so please come prepared. The highlands enjoy dry sunny days but extremely cold nights so thermal underwear, a well insulated fleece/jacket and a thick sweater are essential. Bring something warm to sleep in. Lightweight raingear is essential at any time of the year. Bring a swimming costume for the thermal baths at Aguas Calientes.

Footwear

Comfortable lightweight trail boots, trainers and sandals.

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

One main piece and a daypack and an extra bag for the two nights on Isla Del Sol and the overnight in Aguas Calientes. In Aguas Calientes your main bags will be left in storage in your hotel in the Sacred Valley, and will be transported to meet you when you arrive in Cusco. On Isla del Sol, your main bags will be transported on to Cusco. Your overnight bag is carried by mules so you only have to carry daypacks. Remember, you are expected to carry your own luggage (i.e. on and off transport etc.) so don't overload yourself. It is recommended you bring lockable bags.

Equipment

A sunhat and sunglasses are advisable as is high factor sunscreen and lipsalve with sun protection, due to the thinness of the atmosphere. A torch is also useful in case of power cuts or emergencies. Don't forget your camera and a towel.

Tipping

Explore leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Local crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognised part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. Accordingly you should allow approx. US\$ 70 for gratuities for local staff. In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

Country Information

Bolivia Holidays & Tours

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price

£5

Dinner price

£8

Beer price

£1.47

Water price

£0.6

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Boliviano.

Recommended Currency For Exchange

Carry all your funds in US cash NOT Sterling or Travellers Cheques which are more difficult to exchange. We recommend to take a minimum of US\$400-\$500 of your total spending money in cash for your tour, in mixed denominations. Notes should be in good condition otherwise they might be difficult to exchange.

Where To Exchange

Most major towns - your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival.

ATM Availability

Available in Major towns. Always have some cash as back-up as they are not always reliable

Credit Card Acceptance

Credit cards are useful and can be used in many places, but may be subject to a 10% service charge

Travellers Cheques

Travellers Cheques can be awkward or expensive to change

Chile Holidays & Tours

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price

£13

Dinner price

£20

Beer price

£2.00 - 4.00

Water price

£1.3

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Peso.

Recommended Currency For Exchange

Carry all your funds in US cash NOT Sterling. We recommend to take a minimum of US\$400-\$500 of your total spending money in cash for your tour, in mixed denominations. Notes should be in good condition otherwise they might be difficult to exchange.

Where To Exchange

Tour Leader will advise on arrival

ATM Availability

Available in Major towns. Always have some cash as back-up as they are not always reliable

Credit Card Acceptance

Credit cards are useful and can be used in many places, but may be subject to a service charge.

Travellers Cheques

Travellers' Cheques can be awkward or expensive to change

Peru Holidays & Tours

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Breakfast price

£4.00 - 7.00

Dinner price

£6.00 - 8.00

Beer price

£2.00 - 4.00

Water price

£1

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Nuevo Sol

Recommended Currency For Exchange

Carry all your funds in US cash NOT Sterling or Travellers Cheques which are more difficult to exchange. We recommend to take a minimum of US\$400-\$500 of your total spending money in cash for your tour, in mixed denominations. Notes should be in good condition otherwise they might be difficult to exchange.

Where To Exchange

Most major towns - your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival.

ATM Availability

Available in Major towns. Always have some cash as back-up as they are not always reliable

Credit Card Acceptance

In major restaurants. In some establishments Master card is not accepted.

Travellers Cheques

Travellers Cheques are not always easy to exchange.

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

Bus, Flight, Public Bus, Train

Essential information

FCO Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice [click here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, [click here](#)

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Essential Information

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

Visa Information

Bolivia: Visas are not required for UK, New Zealand, Australian, and Canadian citizens. However, US citizens will require a visa. As you will enter Bolivia overland please make sure 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 otherwise you'll have to pay a fine to leave. Chile: Visas are not required for UK, New Zealand, Australian, US and Canadian citizens. On arrival to Chile you will receive an immigration document - please keep this safe as this will be needed when you leave the country to enter Bolivia. Please note all passengers arriving with

passports from Australia, Canada or USA will have to pay a reciprocity tax before getting into the migration area. The amount to be paid for each passport holder is as follows: Australia \$95, Canada \$132. Peru: Visas are not required for UK, New Zealand, Australian, US and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult the relevant consulate. USA: (including those in transit) Citizens of the UK, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and passport holders from several EU countries can enter the United States without a visa under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) - where you apply for an ESTA (Electronic System for Travel Authorisation), which applies if you enter the country by sea or by air. This must be done on line - <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov> no later than 72 hours prior to travel. Travellers who have not registered before their trip are likely to be refused boarding. You must have an electronic passport with a digital chip containing biometric information about the passport owner. UK passports which are biometric feature a small gold symbol (camera) at the bottom of the front cover. If you have visited Iraq, Syria, Iran or Sudan since 2011 or are dual nationals of these countries, you cannot travel with an ESTA and instead you will need to apply for a visa from the nearest US Embassy or Consulate. If you are unable to provide a valid visa before boarding flights to the US, or entering via another method, you may not be permitted to travel. Please note for your ESTA application you will be required to supply Point of Contact information. Explore's USA contact information will be listed on your final documentation which you will receive approximately 3-4 weeks before departure. If you are leaving for the USA before this, please call the Explore team to get this information. (Not necessary if in transit) For further information please check out the US embassy website. Visa applications - <http://london.usembassy.gov/niv/apply.html> Canada: An electronic travel authorisation (ETA) is required by British citizens transiting via Canada. For more information see the official Canadian government website: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/visit/eta.asp> Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our Essential Information and Booking Conditions.

Transfers

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

[Read more information about what travel insurance is required.](#)

Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. [Read more about them here.](#)

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Altitude information

This trip goes to an altitude where there is a risk of being affected by Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS, or Altitude Sickness) - this is a common and usually harmless condition caused by reduced air pressure and a lower concentration of oxygen. We have specifically designed this itinerary to allow you to acclimatise gradually. In the vast majority of cases, minor symptoms such as headaches and shortness of breath are experienced for a day or two before acclimatising. If any symptoms do occur - whether minor or more severe - then you should let your Explore Leader know immediately. As this tour reaches altitudes of over 4000 meters, we strongly recommend that travellers with heart or lung conditions, anaemia, asthma, high blood pressure or on the pill should seek the advice of their GP. Please also ensure that your insurance policy covers you to the maximum altitude of 4650m.

Non refundable permits

Bolivia Holidays & Tours

Vaccinations

A yellow fever certificate is necessary for passengers visiting the lowlands Bolivia (BA trip). We also recommend protection against typhoid, polio, infectious hepatitis and tetanus. Please consult your travel clinic for the latest advice on Malaria, Dengue and Zika Virus. Please take preventative measures to avoid mosquito bites - these include mosquito repellent as well as long trousers and long sleeve shirts to cover up when necessary. Please note many countries in Central America, South America and the Caribbean require a yellow fever vaccination certificates if travelling from infected areas. A detailed list of these countries can be found on the NaTHNaC website - <http://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>. Also on the NaTHNaC site there is a list of Countries (and specific areas within a country) which are at risk of infection and a vaccination is therefore recommended.. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/> and from your local healthcare provider.

Chile Holidays & Tours

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, we recommend protection against typhoid, tetanus, diphtheria, polio and hepatitis A. Please consult your travel clinic for the latest advice on Malaria, Dengue Fever and Zika Virus. Please take preventative measures to avoid mosquito bites - these include mosquito repellent as well as long trousers and long sleeve shirts to cover up when necessary. Please note many countries in Central America, South America and the Caribbean require a yellow fever vaccination certificates if travelling from infected areas. A detailed list of these countries can be found on the NaTHNaC website - <http://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>. Also on the NaTHNaC site there is a list of Countries (and specific areas within a country) which are at risk of infection and a vaccination is therefore recommended.. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/> and from your local healthcare provider.

Peru Holidays & Tours

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, we recommend protection against typhoid, tetanus, polio and hepatitis A. Please consult your travel clinic for the latest advice on Malaria, Dengue and Zika Virus. Please take preventative measures to avoid mosquito bites - these include mosquito repellent as well as long trousers and long sleeve shirts to cover up when necessary. Please note many countries in Central America, South America and the Caribbean require a yellow fever vaccination certificates if travelling from infected areas. A detailed list of these countries can be found on the NaTHNaC website - <http://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>. Also on the NaTHNaC site there is a list of Countries (and specific areas within a country) which are at risk of infection and a vaccination is therefore recommended.. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/> and from your local healthcare provider.