EXPLORE!



Peru Encompassed + Amazon Extension

Based in comfortable hotels, we explore Peru - the sacred land of the Incas. We visit the historic remains of Machu Picchu and sail along Lake Titicaca - the highest navigable lake in the world. Along the way we discover the ancient Inca capital Cusco, the colonial streets of Lima and the beautifully preserved city of Arequipa. A particular highlight is the journey from Puno to Cusco; a chance to relax and watch the stunning Andean scenery pass us by.

Trip highlights

ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

Premium

Our premium accommodation is hand-picked and chosen for its character, location or local importance. These properties have excellent facilities and a higher level of comfort and service. They provide the perfect wind down after an active day.

TRIP PACE:

Moderate

Moderate pace tours are ideal if you want a holiday which combines exciting activities and experiences with plenty of time to relax and unwind. Typically you'll be active and busy for part of the day but then also have time to rest and recharge your batteries.

GROUP SIZE:

10 - 16

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

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

DAY 1 - Join tour Lima

Arrive Lima and check-in at hotel.



Accommodation: Hotel la Hacienda (or similar)

Premium Hotel

Meals Provided: None

DAY 2 - Tour Lima, fly to Arequipa

Founded in 1535 and called the City of Kings, Lima today is both ancient and modern. We will make an orientation tour on foot, passing through the colonial squares and under the intricate modern balconies of old Lima, seeing some of the city's best surviving examples of colonial architecture (optional). Time permitting there might be the opportunity to stroll through Plaza San Martin and Bolivar and enter the fascinating Catacombs of the convent of San Francisco. In the afternoon, we transfer to the airport where we will take our flight to reach the beautiful city of Arequipa.



Accommodation: Casa Andina Standard Arequipa (or similar)



Premium Hotel

Single room available

Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 3 - In Arequipa; visit the Santa Catalina Convent

This morning we visit Santa Catalina Convent, a miniature walled town which once housed 450 nuns and serving ladies in total seclusion. The rest of the day is free to explore this charming city, situated at 2380m and surrounded by snow-capped mountains including the perfect conical peak of El Misti (5822m). Arequipa is famed for its colonial architecture and the arcaded city square, dominated on one side by the twin towered cathedral, is among the finest to be found in South America.



Single room available

Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 4 - Drive to Chivay

This morning we head north where we enter the world of the altiplano. We pass behind the volcanoes that ring Arequipa and onto Chivay. Passing herds of Ilama and alpaca - if lucky we may spot the elusive vicuña. Today we cross the Patapampa pass to briefly reach the highest point of our trip at 4910m where we stop for a photo before descending towards the Colca Canyon.



DAY 5 - Visit the Colca Canyon, continue to Puno

We have an early start this morning to the Colca Canyon. A spectacular river gorge, the Colca Canyon measures twice the depth of the more famous Grand Canyon and at one time it was believed to be the deepest gorge on earth (until it was eclipsed by the deeper Cotahuasi Canyon). Largely unknown to the outside world until the latter years of the 20th century, today it affords us an opportunity to discover a world of Andean villages and Inca terraces that make up one of the most outstanding natural settings in the Americas. This is the world of the Altiplano, where the Rio Colca meanders through a landscape of towering volcanic peaks that offer a stunning backdrop to a land inhabited by Cabana and Collagua Indians. Home to the massive and majestic Andean Condor, these awe-inspiring vistas derive their name from the old Incan practise of storing harvested grain in natural vaults carved into the canyon walls, vaults that the Indians called colcas. This afternoon we drive east, via the Patapampa pass again at 4910 m, heading towards the beautiful landscapes that surround the unique waters of Lake Titicaca, the highest navigable lake in the word (3856m). Our destination is the town of Puno, a centre of Incan folklore nestling in a bay at the northwestern tip of the lake and the perfect base from which to explore something of the cultural and historical significance of the lake itself.



Accommodation: Royal Inn Hotel (or similar)



Standard Hotel

Single room available

Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 6 - Boat trip on Lake Titicaca; visit Uros and Taquile Islands

From Puno we take a boat trip on Lake Titicaca to explore the floating reed islands, home to the Uros people who live on the lake itself. Their islands are made from totura, a reed-like papyrus that grows in the shallows and is used in most aspects of their life, including the construction of their boats and homes. We then continue to the less visited island of Taquile which has preserved much of its Inca and pre-Inca heritage and the islanders still speak the language of the Inca - Runa Simi or Quechua. We take our time walking across the island and we will have the chance to buy locally produced embroidery - the men's handiwork for once! After lunch we then descend to the jetty to board our boat back to Puno.



DAY 7 - Journey to Cusco

Today we follow the legendary route taken by the first Inca ruler - Manco Capac - on his way to find Cusco. Travelling aboard our private bus, we will watch the spectacular Andean scenery rolling past our window as shepherds graze their flocks of llamas and alpaca on the altiplano grasslands. En route, we make two valuable stops to the archaeological sites at Sillustani and Raqchi. Sillustani is a pre-Incan burial ground with impressive views across Lake Umayo, near Puno. An old vestige of the Aymara culture, it makes an interesting comparison with our second stop at the Inca ruin of Raqchi, near Cusco, whose remnants have been kept in remarkable condition. We arrive in Cusco in the late afternoon and head to our hotel.



DAY 8 - In Cusco; visit Sacsayhuaman Fortress

The old capital of the Inca empire survives only in its ruins, imbued with an atmosphere of mystery and grandeur. The Spanish colonial city, with its attractive pink tiled roofs, arcaded plazas and steep winding alleyways, stands upon tremendous Inca foundation stones. This morning we take a walking tour of this lovely city to see important Inca and Colonial monuments, such as the Plaza de Armas (main square) and the Inca wall of Hatunrumiyoc with its famous twelve-sided stone. The stone, measuring some 5 feet across, has the typical bevelled joints which create the patterns of light and shadow on Inca walls. We will continue on by bus to the outlying Inca site of Sacsayhuaman which broods high above the town, its huge, zigzagging stone walls broken into 66 sharply projecting angles to catch attackers in a withering crossfire. 20,000 conscripted workers toiled for 90 years to finish it. The afternoon is left free for some further exploration of Cusco.

Accommodation: Eco Inn Hotel Cusco (or similar)

Premium Hotel

Single room available

Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 9 - Free Day in Cusco, optional Misminay village trip

Today has been left free for you to enjoy further optional activities in and around Cusco or perhaps finish off the final souvenir shopping in the winding streets and alleys of the city.





DAY 10 - Train to Aguas Calientes; visit Machu Picchu

We take an early morning train along the side of the Rio Urubamba, flanked by high cliffs and peaks, then climb by bus to Machu Picchu - the famous \lost city\at 2400m. The existence of this exquisite masterpiece of ancient civilisation remained unknown to the outside world until it was \discovered\by an American archaeologist, Hiram Bingham in 1911. We explore this mountain-top stronghold - the most spectacular feat of engineering in ancient America. Returning to the valley floor, we stay in a hotel in Aguas Calientes, with the chance to soak in the nearby natural hot baths.



DAY 11 - More time to discover Machu Picchu (optional); train to Ollantaytambo

We have another chance this morning to explore the site. It is also 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. Later we take the train to Ollantaytambo and transfer to our hotel in Yucay, nestled in the heart of the Sacred Valley where we can relax and enjoy the views as the sun sets.

Accommodation: Mabey Hotel (or similar)

Premium Hotel

Single room available

Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 12 - In the Sacred Valley; optional whitewater rafting

Today is a free day with a wide choice of things to do. For river-lovers there is a the opportunity of a full-day raft-trip (optional and seasonal) down the Urubamba in the Sacred Valley of the Incas. This is an exciting way to see the valley and no previous experience of rafting is necessary - full instruction and safety equipment are provided. Please note: Participation in rafting requires that you are able to swim 25 metres unaided. There is also the opportunity to visit Misminay, home to many of the porters who work along the

Inca Trail and within the valley itself. We can learn a little more about the lives of these descendants of the ancient Inca during our visit. Alternatively you could visit Maras and Moray where hot springs at the top of the valley have been diverted into terraced saltpans. Ollantaytambo itself is also worth spending time in; during the Inca Empire it was the royal state of Emperor Pachacuti who conquered the region and built the town as a ceremonial centre. After our sight seeing or rafting is finished we will drive back to Cusco.



Accommodation: Eco Inn Hotel Cusco (or similar)



Single room available

Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 13 - Fly to Puerto Maldonado, transfer to Amazon lodge

Today we transfer to the airport for a short flight to Puerto Maldonado, located in the Southern Amazon area of Peru. You can 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 Tambopata River by dugout canoe (approximately 40 minutes) and check into our Amazon lodge. The lodge is comfortable but as it 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 have a guided walk through the jungle and the local guide will explain the tropical trees, medicinal plants, insects, butterflies and other animals we see en route. Then we will make a quick stop at a lookout point to hopefully spot toucans, macaws and other birds. In the evening we will enjoy a twilight boat journey searching for animals including caimans and capybaras.



Accommodation: Corto Maltes Lodge (or similar)



Standard Lodge

Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 14 - In Amazon Jungle; visit Monkey Island and Sandoval Lake

Starting early we head off to the Madre de Dios river, where we take a 20 minute boatride up-river, arriving at the border to the territory of the Tambopata National Reserve. Following the boat ride, we will trek 5km through the dense vegetation of the tropical rainforest, within the reserve itself, looking out for snakes, monkeys and birds. Our destination is Sandoval Lake, where we board small rowing boats and set off onto the lake itself. Numerous species of animals live around the waters, and we may see giant river otters, black caiman or piranhas, while on the river banks we'll keep our eyes peeled for kingfishers, cormorants, squirrel monkeys, and capuchin monkeys. On our return we'll visit '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: Corto Maltes Lodge (or similar)

Standard Lodge

Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 15 - In Amazon Jungle; travel by boat to visit a native community

This morning, we will follow the course of the river for approximately 1.5 hours in order to visit a native community. Occasionally we can see monkeys, river turtles, caimans and various birds in the dense vegetation of the riverbanks. We will also see some medicinal plants. The 'Project for the Rescue of Cultural Values' supports the local native community of Palma Real. It is the biggest in the area with approximately 200 families of the Ese'eja tribe. This project, located at Gamitada Island works together with two families that will introduce us to the cultural values of their ancestors including their language, customs and their dances. Afterwards we will visit a chakra (farm), where we will learn about a variety of tropical fruits and other local products. We will enjoy a typical Amazonian dish for lunch.

Accommodation: Corto Maltes Lodge (or similar)

Standard Lodge

Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 16 - Early morning boat to Puerto Maldonado and end trip at airport

If time permits this morning, we'll walk to a nearby clay lick, where we'll have the opportunity to watch several species of parrot feeding. Afterwards, our Amazon adventure comes to an end 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.

Meals Provided: Breakfast



Why book this trip

This tour is ideal for travellers who are interested in discovering all the main cultural sights of Peru in comfort. A particular highlight is the journey from Puno to Cusco; a chance to relax and watch the stunning Andean scenery pass us by.

What's included?

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Included meals Breakfast: 15 Lunch: 3 Dinner: 3



Transport Bus Boat Flight Train



Trip staff Explore Tour Leader Boat Crew Driver(s) Local Guide(s)



Accommodation

8 nights premium hotel 4 nights standard hotel 3 nights standard lodge

Trip information

Country information

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

Puno - Titicaca Train £155 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 and Sacred Valley - Rafting on Urubamba River (grade 2-3) US\$ 45 (depending on numbers); Maras Moray tour US\$ 58 (based on 4 people); Misminay Tour US\$ 89 (minimum 4 people); Ollantaytambo site visit US\$ 59 (based on 3 people); Aguas Calientes - Hot Springs US\$ 4. Machu Picchu - Second visit approximately US\$ 54 (subject to availability), bus to site US\$ 25, Huayna Picchu - £80; Machu Picchu Mountain £80 (both including transport) - 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. Lima - Larco Herrera Museum US\$ 41 guided, US\$ 11 unguided; Pucusana Fishing Village US\$65 (based on 3); Pachacamac site US\$45 (based on 4) inc. pottery class US\$60 (time permitting)

Clothing

Bring warm clothing such as a warm fleece, thermal underwear, warm hat and gloves for cooler nights in the mountains when temps drop dramatically. Lightweight waterproofs are essential. Bring your swimsuit. For your jungle extension, you can expect warmer and more humid conditions. However, there may also be heavy rain showers (it tends to be cooler and drier between May and October). Bring light and loose clothing - long sleeved shirts and long trousers are best when walking through jungle, and a lightweight rainjacket. The warmer clothes from your time in the mountains may also come in useful during the evenings, in case of cool weather.

Footwear

Comfortable shoes and lightweight walking shoes and sandals. If participating in the rafting, bring old trainers (as they will get wet).

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

One main piece and a daypack and an extra bag for your night in Aguas Calientes - on this night, your main bags will be left in storage in your hotel in Cusco, and will be transported to meet you when you arrive in Ollantaytambo. In the Amazon your main luggage will be stored in the offices in Puerto Maldonado. 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 good insect repellent is essential, particularly for use in the jungle. Also bring a small torch, sunhat, sunscreen, and a swimsuit and a small towel (for rafting and thermal baths). Equipment that you will need for your jungle experience is: A good torch and spare batteries for night walks and when the generator is not on. Card games or books for your evenings in the lodge, particularly if there is no electricity Long sleeved tshirts and full length trousers are recommended to avoid insect bites A small backpack for walks and boat trips A good camera with zoom, spare battery and memory cards

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 US\$ 45 for tipping. 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

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, Boat, Flight, 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

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 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 addition, it is a legal requirement in Peru for transport operators and hotels based at altitude to carry oxygen. 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 4190m.

Non refundable permits

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.