

EXPLORE!



Rio to Lima Explorer

22 days

Bolivia, Brazil, Peru - Trip code RLE

Rio to Lima Explorer

Beginning in the carnival city of Rio, this incredible journey is packed with contrasts and offers the opportunity to see two of the New Seven Wonders of the World in just three weeks. From one of the world's most famous cities to the astounding wildlife of the Pantanal wetlands, Brazil immediately wows with its diversity. Contrast this with Bolivia's indigenous culture at the local Tarabuco market, and wonder at the ethereal salt flats with their backdrop of distant mountains, before exploring the incomparable Lake Titicaca. The trip concludes at the fabled lost Inca city of Machu Picchu, a suitably impressive end to this epic adventure.

Trip highlights

- ★ Rio - Explore South America's most photogenic city, including a visit to Sugarloaf Mountain
- ★ Pantanal - Stay in a remote lodge and spot wildlife on foot and by canoe
- ★ Uyuni - Explore the amazing reflective landscape of one of the largest salt lakes on earth
- ★ La Paz - Explore the 'city that touches the sky'
- ★ Lake Titicaca - Watch the sun rise as we hike on the Isla del Sol
- ★ Machu Picchu - Travel by train to the ancient 'lost' city

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 trip in Rio

The spectacular setting of Rio de Janeiro presents us with one of the most instantly recognisable cityscapes on the planet, with almost 200km of golden beaches and a mountain backdrop that makes it an ideal starting point to this incredible journey. On arrival we check-in to our hotel.



Accommodation: Hotel Copa Sul (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: None

DAY 2 - Explore the city, cable car up Sugar Loaf Mountain

This morning we take a tour of the city, strolling along the Guanabara Bay coastline, decorated with the spacious lawns and native trees of Parque do Flamengo, before heading into the city centre to see the enormous stain glass windows of the Metropolitan Cathedral. From here we continue to the slopes of Sugar Loaf Mountain, rising out of the waters of Guanabara Bay. A cable car takes us to the summit, from where the views across the city are simply spectacular, with the famed beaches of Copacabana and Ipanema laid out below us, and the peaks of the Tijuca National Park behind us.



Accommodation: Hotel Copa Sul (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available

DAY 3 - Free day in Rio; visit Christ the Redeemer or explore the historic centre

Today has been left free for you to continue exploring this exciting city. Your Explore Leader can organise a visit to the towering summit of Corcovado topped by the immense statue of Christ the Redeemer, as well as the Sambadrome where the Rio Carnival takes place. Alternatively you may like to spend the time discovering more of Rio's historic centre, where a rich collection of churches and museums attest to the city's colonial heritage. Then of course there are the renowned beaches of Copacabana or Ipanema, great swathes of seemingly endless sand that are a magnet for the citizens of Rio, making them a great place for people-watching. An evening meal in a typical churrascaria (Brazilian barbecue) is a great experience, and our Explore Leader can recommend some of the best, all washed down with a caipirinha cocktail of course.



Accommodation: Hotel Copa Sul (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 4 - Fly to the Pantanal; evening exploration on foot or by boat

This morning we take a flight to Campo Grande, the capital of the Mato Grosso do Sul region, from where we drive to the expansive swamps of the Pantanal, an area of incredible natural diversity and certainly one of the best places in Brazil to view its abundant wildlife. Lying to the east of the mighty Andes and to the south of the Amazon, this magnificent region is one of the most spectacular wetland areas on the planet, and reputedly boasts the most comprehensive concentration of fauna on the continent. There are over 600 stork, duck and coot and 350 varieties of fish, including the piranha. Animals include deer, armadillo, tapir, boar, the unusual capybara and thousands of caiman. Our lodge for the next two nights is perfectly situated in this ecological wonderland, and on one of our evenings we will be able to take a nocturnal excursion on foot or canoe. Swishing our torches across the water we will see the eerie pairs of caiman eyes staring back at us through the darkness.



Accommodation: Pousada Fazenda Xaraés (or similar)



Standard Lodge



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast & Dinner

DAY 5 - Full day exploring the trails and waterways of the Pantanal

We plan to explore more of the planet's largest wetland area today. Covering an area larger than France the Pantanal's landscapes vary from forests and grassy savannahs to blue lakes and salt-water lagoons. We plan to explore the area around our lodge on foot, in small boats or on a jeep. Our time here is flexible as we have two days to explore, and our lodge offers a variety of excursions.

Early morning and dusk is the best time for wildlife spotting, and we split large groups into two for better viewing opportunities. We may also have the opportunity to do some piranha fishing.



Accommodation: Pousada Fazenda Xaraés (or similar)



Standard Lodge



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 6 - Take a jeep safari to spot wildlife; overnight train to Santa Cruz (Bolivia)

With a final chance this morning to relax and enjoy this unique setting, there is the opportunity to go out in a 4WD to spot wildlife along the wetland. After lunch, we drive to Corumba on the southwestern edge of the Pantanal. It is from here that we cross into Bolivia, heading for the railway town of Puerto Quijarro to catch our overnight train to Santa Cruz de la Sierra in Bolivia. Immediately upon crossing between Corumba and Puerto Quijarro, we'll start noticing the differences between Brazil and Bolivia, not just in the Spanish that now surrounds us but also in the manner of dressing and the types of buildings we'll see on route. Our overnight train is still known as the 'Tren de la Muerte' (or the Death Train), because of the railroad workers who died during the construction. Although simple, the small two-carriage train has reclining seat-beds, air conditioning, TV (often showing Latin American music videos on a loop - we recommend that you bring entertainment!) and toilets on board.



Accommodation: Overnight Train from Pantanal to Santa Cruz



Simple Overnight Train



Meals Provided: Breakfast & Lunch

DAY 7 - Explore Santa Cruz; fly from the lowlands to Sucre, in the Andes

On arrival to Santa Cruz today we'll head for breakfast in the city centre, and use the rest of the morning to explore the city on foot. Santa Cruz is a surprisingly culturally diverse city, being home to a Mennonite community, a large Japanese-Bolivian population and immigrants from the altiplano as well as the local lowlanders. The Recoba handicraft market will give you the first glimpse of some of the amazing weavings and handicrafts that are created in Bolivia.

In the early afternoon we'll transfer to the airport for our flight to Sucre (2810m), arriving in the late afternoon. 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. The colonial buildings with their wrought-iron balconies are reminiscent of a Spanish town, but there is a large indigenous population here in Sucre and we are sure to see ladies walking the streets, often carrying babies or food purchases slung across their backs, swaddled tight in a brightly woven scarf.



Accommodation: Hostal Paola Sucre (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 8 - Visit the indigenous market of Tarabuco; discover Sucre on foot

It's Sunday today, and we'll be taking a trip to South America's biggest indigenous market, just 65km southeast of Sucre, in Tarabuco (3300m). Hosted mainly by the Yampara people, this market is alive with villagers coming to shop at the many food stalls, where sellers sit enveloped in huge piles of wares, from bright red chillies and orange fruits to bags of coca leaves or meat, eggs and vegetables. The 'touristy' side to the market is growing, and as well as the produce you can find a mixture of handicrafts and textiles on sale, but more than anything this is a great experience to witness the daily interactions between these Andean communities.

We'll return to Sucre in the early afternoon, for an orientation tour of this charming city. This walking tour is designed to give us a taster of life in Bolivia's most attractive city.



Accommodation: Hostal Paola Sucre (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 9 - Drive to Potosi

A morning bus takes us through the mineral rich highlands of the south, towards the UNESCO Heritage site of Potosi (4090m). 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. Considered one of Bolivia's finest historical monuments, the city is littered with ornate mansions and glorious churches, filled with a glittering array of baroque interiors. Although we have been slowly climbing in altitude, today will be the first time that we've been over 4,000m during the tour, so we've left this afternoon free to relax, or explore the town on your own (we recommend taking this slowly). At any point in the city we will be in the shadows of the Cerro Rico (Rich Hill), the mountain that was exploited by the Spanish Empire for its silver, and which is today a gloomy reminder of Bolivia's violent colonial past.



Accommodation: Hostal Colonial Potosi (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 10 - Walking tour of Potosi; drive to Uyuni via a former salt-mining town

This morning we take a walking tour of Potosi, getting a feel for what this once-great city has to offer. If you wish, you can visit the

Casa de Moneda, the original royal mint built in the mid-1700's, and now housing a variety of displays from wooden colonial-era minting machines and religious art, to Bolivian war relics. Our Explore Leader will certainly talk to us about the importance of the city's mining heritage, but we will not be entering one of the mines, and Explore doesn't recommend this due to safety concerns and the voyeuristic nature of these tours. This afternoon we continue towards Uyuni (3650m), 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. Uyuni is the largest town in southwest Bolivia and serves mainly as a base from which to explore the salt pans of the largest and highest salt lake on the planet.



Accommodation: Hotel Samay Wasi (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 11 - Full day exploring the salt flats

We spend the day exploring the pans, driving first to the abandoned 'train graveyard', where Uyuni's once thriving rail connections are now rusting away in the harsh climate. After a quick visit, we travel across the Salt Desert to visit a salt works in Colchani, where piles of salt are ground, iodised and packaged to be sold. This tiny place is really the entrance to the salt flats, and its dull appearance masks the excitement to come. Once we get onto the flats, 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 and subterranean rivers flowing underneath the salar form breathing holes, whilst the peak of Volcan Tunupa (5,400m) looks far away in the distance. Later we visit Fish Island, where we see how nature has adapted to this harsh environment, with strangely shaped cacti growing defiantly amongst this sea of white salt. 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!

This evening we take a night bus up to the city of La Paz. The road is now fully sealed and provides a smooth ride, with the bus containing wide reclining seats and heating.



Accommodation: Overnight Bus to La Paz



Meals Provided: Breakfast & Lunch

DAY 12 - Arrive in La Paz; free day to explore or visit the Tiahuanaco Ruins

We arrive this morning at approximately 6.30am into La Paz's central bus terminal (approx. 3600m), and take a private mini-bus to our hotel. La Paz is impressively situated in the bowl between two magnificent mountains, meaning that you're normally pointing up or downhill in any direction. We have no plans for today, which means that you're free to explore on your own from our centrally-located hotel. There are many colourful street markets to explore as well as the new cable cars linking the central zones of the city to the higher outer limits. Alternatively your Explore Tour leader can organise a walking tour of the major landmarks, or a visit to the nearby pre-Colombian ruins of Tiahuanaco, Bolivia's largest archaeological site.



Accommodation: Hostal Naira (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 13 - Take the bus to Copacabana; boat to Isla del Sol on Lake Titicaca

Setting off early from our hotel, we travel on a public bus to the small town of Copacabana, standing on a peninsula jutting into Lake Titicaca. Here we gain our first sight of one of the great highlights of our trip, Lake Titicaca (3810m). It was from this lake that the Sun God sent forth the man and woman who founded the Inca Empire, the legendary Children of the Sun. While having lunch at Copacabana, we will be repacking our bags in order to just take one rucksack with us, which will carry only what we need for an overnight stay. A boat takes us across to the island, where our lodge has its own private pier. It's a short 5 minute uphill walk from the pier to the accommodation, which has incredible vistas across the lake. It's so vast that it resembles an ocean, and indeed Bolivia does have a 'navy' (despite being a landlocked country!) who patrol its waters. Our accommodation this evening is a locally run lodge - although simple, all the rooms are ensuite.



Accommodation: Puma Punku Eco Lodge (or similar)



Simple Lodge



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 14 - Full day exploring the Isla del Sol

We have a full day on the Island of the Sun to explore, and there is no better way to do this than on foot. Setting out from our lodge, we walk up and along a high ridge path, from where we have tremendous views across the lake. Once this short climb has been done, the rest of the approximately three-hour walk is very gently undulating, as we head towards the north of the island. We pass through three stone gateways before reaching the ruins of Chincana, the Temple of the Sun, for which the island is named. We spend a short time here before walking to the port at Challapampa, and returning to the south of the island where our lodge is located.

Currently, due to strikes on Sun Island we are unable to visit the northern part of the Island where the Communities of Challa, Challapampa and the ruins of La Chincana are.

Your Explore leader will take you on a short hike in the morning instead, heading out of the lodge to the community of Yumani where we will discover the vistas over the lake. We'll then head across to the Moon Island, where we will explore their Inca ruins. As soon as the local issues are resolved we will revert to the visits above.



Accommodation: Puma Punku Eco Lodge (or similar)



Simple Lodge



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 15 - See sunrise on Lake Titicaca; boat and bus to Puno (Peru)

This morning we're free to walk and explore some more of this magical place. No matter where you are on the island, the views are incredible and it's worth spending some time just sitting down in the peace and quiet, looking over the lake and soaking up the atmosphere. In the late morning we take the boat back to Copacabana. From here, we take a public bus across the Peruvian border, into Puno.



Accommodation: Hotel El Buho (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 16 - Bus to Cusco

Today we follow the legendary route taken by the first Inca ruler - Manco Capac - on his way to find Cusco. On route to Cusco we cross the northern limit of the Altiplana at La Raya pass (4335m) and descend to Cusco visiting the Inca temple ruins at Raqchi on route. Depending on time, those who wish may visit the colonial church at Andahuaylillas. The scenery is desolate but magnificent and we may spot flocks of llamas and alpacas grazing on the windswept pastures. We arrive at the fascinating mountain city of Cusco in the early evening and check into our hotel.



Accommodation: Hotel Amerindia (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available




Meals Provided: Breakfast


DAY 17 - Explore Cusco on foot; optional visit to Sacsayhuaman

The old capital of the Inca Empire is 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 Plaza de Armas, the Koricancha 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 don't include entrances to some of the sites, but for those who wish they can visit this afternoon. Alternatively, there is the chance to head up to one of the outlying Inca sites - Cusco's temple-citadel, 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.



Accommodation: Hotel Amerindia (or similar)

 Standard Hotel

 Single room available


 Meals Provided: Breakfast


DAY 18 - Bus and train to Aguas Calientes; option to hike on the Inca Trail

We take an early morning train along the side of the Urubamba River, flanked by high cliffs and peaks up to Aguas Calientes. Those who wish to walk part of the famous Inca Trail will disembark at KM104 just short of Machu Picchu (on the Cusco/Machu Picchu railroad) (optional) - this section of the trail will take you up from the valley floor, past magnificent views of the Urubamba River, to the abandoned ruins of Huinay Huayna and on to the Gate of the Sun for dramatic views down on Machu Picchu (about 5hrs walking). This option is dependent on Inca pass availability and needs to be paid at the time of booking. For those not wishing to walk we will continue on the train to Aguas Calientes, where we will meet the rest of the group after their walk.



Accommodation: Hotel El Presidente (or similar)

 Standard Hotel

 Single room available

 Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 19 - Visit Machu Picchu; return to Cusco by bus

We wake up early and take a bus to the famous 'lost' city of Machu Picchu, set in its grandiose landscape that amazes all spectators - temples, stairways, palaces and gabled stone dwellings are scattered everywhere, testifying to the energy and ingenuity of the builders, in the most dramatic setting of all of ancient America.

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.

This afternoon we then travel by train and bus to Cusco.



Accommodation: Hotel Amerindia (or similar)

 Standard Hotel

 Single room available

 Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 20 - Free day in Cusco; choose to visit the Sacred Valley

Today is a free day in the wonderful city of Cusco. There are plenty of sights to visit within the city, including the great food market of San Pedro with its rows upon rows of fresh juice makers. Alternatively you could take a full day trip out to the Sacred Valley, spending time in the terraced salt pans of Maras and Moray, which almost look like the rice terraces of Asia. 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.



Accommodation: Hotel Amerindia (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available

 Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 21 - Fly to Lima; optional city tour

This morning we fly to Lima, where on arrival we have the option to take a walking tour through the colonial centre of the city, with a visit to the famous Gold Museum. Alternatively the Larco Museum is also well worth a visit, alongside its lovely café. In fact, Lima is the best place to taste some of Peru's award-winning food including the famous ceviche, a delicious meal of fish or seafood marinated in lime juice and spices. Washed down with a pisco sour, this really is one of Peru's most typical meals.



Accommodation: Hotel La Castellana (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available

 Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 22 - Trip ends in Lima

Our trip ends in Lima this morning.

 Meals Provided: Breakfast



Why book this trip

The only Explore trip to offer the opportunity to visit two of the seven New Wonders of the World (Christ the Redeemer and Machu Picchu), this journey across the width of South America gives an overview of this incredible continent.

What's included?



Included meals

Breakfast: 21
Lunch: 3
Dinner: 2



Transport

Bus
4WD
Boat
Cable Car
Public Bus
Train



Trip staff

Explore Tour Leader
Driver(s)
Local Guide(s)



Accommodation

1 nights bus
15 nights standard hotel
2 nights standard lodge
2 nights simple lodge
1 nights simple overnight train

Trip information

Country information

Bolivia

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

Brazil

Climate

Due to its continental size, Brazil has many different climatic zones. Temperatures rarely dip below 20° C, only in the mountains and the extreme South it can get quite cold during the winter (June to August). The main rainy season runs from January to April. The Amazon region is characterised by a hot and sticky equatorial climate and can experience rains throughout the year. In the vast central area as well as a large part of the coastline the climate can be described as tropical, with warm to hot temperatures and a clearly defined rainy season. In the South, the climate is subtropical, similar to the warmest parts of the Mediterranean, with colder winters and hot summers (December to March).

Time difference to GMT

-3

Plugs

2 Pin Round

Religion

Predominantly Roman Catholic.

Language

Portuguese

Peru

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

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Rio - Half Day Sugar Loaf - US\$82pp (min. 4 pers), Half day backgrounds of Carnival US\$67pp (min 3 pers), half day historic tour US\$65pp (min 4 pers), Half day Santa Teresa and the Morrinho Project US\$69 (min. 4 pers)

La Paz- Half day walking tour La Paz US\$ 35 (min 05 pers); Excursion to Tiahuanacu ruins US\$ 45 (min 6 pers)

Aguas Calientes - Hot baths US\$5

Cusco - Full day Sacred Valley US\$ 80.00 pp; Sacsayhuaman visit; US\$ 50.00 pp; Day Trek on Inca trail from Km 104 - £130 - must be paid at time of booking. Please see Inca Pass notes below.

Notes for Inca pass -

1. In order to regulate the number of people walking on the Inca Trail it is necessary to buy an Inca Trail Pass specific to the days that you wish to travel. There are 200 passes per day for tourists, the remainder are for guides and porters.
2. If you are travelling on an Explore tour, Explore buy the necessary permit on your behalf. This is non-refundable and can't be refunded or transferred after you have confirmed your booking.
3. Passes are sold on a 'first come first served basis' and sell out quickly, so we would urge that you book your tour well ahead of your intended travel date. New Inca Passes are released in January of each year so ideally we would recommend that you book your tour at least 6 months ahead and by December for the following year where possible.
4. In order to buy your pass we will need your: full name, passport number, date of birth and nationality. If you change passport before travelling it will be necessary to provide a copy of both passports in advance of travelling and to carry a copy of your previous passport with you.

5. The Peruvian authorities may change the regulations for the Inca Trail Pass at any time. In the event of this we will inform you as soon as possible.

Clothing

You will be travelling through many different ecosystems during your time in South America, so lots of layers are essential. The Pantanal may be hot and humid, though evenings can be cooler. Lightweight raingear is essential. The highlands of Bolivia have dry sunny days but extremely cold nights so thermal underwear, a well-insulated fleece/jacket and a thick sweater are necessary. Bring a warm hat and gloves as the Island of the Sun can be especially cold during June and July. Bring some warm clothes to sleep in. A sun hat and sunglasses are advisable as is high factor sunscreen, due to the thinness of the atmosphere at altitude. Packing a swimming costume is also recommended as a couple of the hotels have pools.

Footwear

Comfortable lightweight walking/trekking boots, trainers and sandals.

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

One main piece of luggage and a small rucksack for day use. Remember you are expected to carry your own luggage - don't overload yourself. In Copacabana your main luggage will be stored for you while you take a small overnight bag to the Isla del Sol.

Equipment

Binoculars, torch, water bottle, insect repellent, suncream (at least factor 15), good quality sunglasses and a lipsalve with sun protection.

If you would like to do the optional Inca Trail trek, we recommend bringing out a pair of trekking poles. They MUST have rubber/plastic tips and not metal tips, as these are not permitted due to the damage they cause to the stones on the Inca Trail.

Tipping

Explore leader

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

Local crew

Local Crew: Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized 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. 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.

Accordingly you should allow approx. US\$70 for gratuities for local staff. 10% is expected in restaurants.

Country Information

Bolivia

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

Brazil

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
£10

Dinner price
£17

Beer price
£2.1

Water price
£1

Foreign Exchange

Local currency
Real.

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, in mixed denominations. Notes should be in good condition otherwise they might be difficult to exchange. RRC trip only – during Carnival it may be difficult to find an exchange in the first few days – we recommend you change enough for the first 2-3 days either before leaving home or at the airport on arrival.

Where To Exchange

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

Peru

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, 4WD, Boat, Cable Car, Public Bus, Train

Accommodation notes

Booking a Single Room

All of our group tours are planned and operated on a twin-share basis, meaning that the standard cost is based either on individual travellers sharing accommodation with another group member of the same sex, or people who book together sharing accommodation. Please refer to the tour notes where the single room option availability is detailed on a night by night basis for this tour, and the price for the available nights is detailed on the dates & prices tab by departure date. For Self-Guided trips the Single Room supplement offers the option of a single room each and is charged per person. The Single Room supplement also applies to the third person in a party of three that will be accommodated in a single room.

The accommodation on this trip is incredibly varied, from the rustic Pantanal lodge surrounded by nature, to colonial houses in Sucre and Potosi, through to the eco lodge situated on the banks of the Lake Titicaca. We will also be staying overnight on a train and a bus, both of which have reclining seats, on board toilets and some limited entertainment. Although simple, they are comfortable, warm and an excellent way to get from A to B.

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.

Price Guarantee

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 and Passport Information

Brazil: Visas are not required for UK citizens. They are, however, required for Canadian, Australian and US citizens. Other nationalities should consult the relevant consulate.

Bolivia: Visas are not required for UK, New Zealand, Australian, and Canadian citizens. However, US citizens will require a visa.

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 online - <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>

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.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

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, Polar, 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. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. 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.

Non refundable permits

Bolivia

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. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. 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 [Explore Travel Health](#) and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

Brazil

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, we recommend protection against malaria, 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. There is currently an outbreak of Yellow Fever in Brazil. Yellow fever is recommended for those travelling to Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo, Bahia, Iguazu falls and inland cities such as Brasilia. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. 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 [Explore Travel Health](#) and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

Peru

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. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. 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 [Explore Travel Health](#) and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.
