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TOURING
PERU





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CLASSIC PERU TOURS

ABOUT PERU

There is little doubt that Machu Picchu is Peru's most significant landmark.

Attracting almost half a million tourists every year, it is for good reason that this dramatic, historical mountaintop citadel inspires such fascination and appeal. But it is far from the only reason to visit the Land of the Inca.

Adventure, like the many lesser-known Incan ruins, seems to be around every corner, and Peru begs visitors to step out into its wild and undulating landscapes, a latticework of tumbling rivers woven across its valleys and plains. History enthusiasts too gain much from this nation steeped in mysterious tales of lost civilizations and unfathomable craftsmanship.

And yet Peru is far more than its past, and the more contemporary traveler will enjoy an abundance of choice. Gastronomy, culture, conservation and wellness coupled with rugged coastlines, expansive deserts, the jungles of the Amazon and isolated waterways on the top of the world to create an abundance of intrigue and entertainment.

QUICK FACTS:

- Machu Picchu means 'old mountain' and is as much the name of the hilltop city as it is its location
- Peru has a wide range of unique wildlife, including pink Amazon dolphins, the llama and alpaca family and the world's largest flying bird, the Andean condor, with a 10-foot wingspan
- Lake Titicaca is the highest navigable waterway in the world, and you can spend the night afloat a traditional reed island at its centre
- Peru is the source of the Amazon River, and two thirds of the country is covered by the Amazon rainforest
- Peru is the birthplace of weaving. Dating back over 5,000 years, this traditional craft that has remained almost unchanged for millennia

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CLASSIC ADVENTURE — TOURS —

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THE INCA TRAIL & MACHU PICCHU

Technically, the Inca Trail - the ancient thoroughfare along which much migration, trade and ceremony happened - spans over 2,000 miles and three countries.

However, the 'modern' Inca Trail is significantly abbreviated, at 25 miles (40km). This is the route favored by many active travelers as the authentic way to reach the summit of Machu Picchu. Spanning four days, the trail is relatively short, but the altitude and mountainous route make it a fairly challenging quest.

Smaller portions of the trail can be explored in half- or one-day excursions, or joined in its final stretch for a two-day hike.

If hiking holds little appeal, it is also possible to visit the citadel for a day, boarding a train to Aguas Calientes before taking a 30-minute bus ride to the summit.

Establishing oneself at Cusco with a view to taking several shorter hikes throughout Sacred Valley is highly recommended, with the spectacular mountainscapes best viewed on foot and in your own time.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Choose from two- to five-day hikes along the traditional Inca Trail
- Take the easy route, transported to the summit by train and bus
- Even by vehicle, a tour to Machu Picchu will take an entire day, but is more than worthwhile
- The conventional tour covers much of the site, but a private guide will share some fascinating and lesser-known areas

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WAKRAPUKARA TOUR

Wakrapukara is an archaeological site in one of the most dramatic canyons in Peru with spectacular Inca structures, including the sacred and rare “3-jambas” door. The trek can be done in a demanding full-day or, better yet, a 2-day trek into the remote highlands. Prior acclimatisation to altitude is recommended and necessary, as the trek reaches up to 15,000 feet (4,600m) above sea level.

MOUNTAIN BIKING TOUR (Cusco & Sacred Valley)

Peru has one of the largest networks of Inca and mountain biking trails in all of South America. Mountain biking offers the chance to visit Cusco and its spectacular surroundings in a different way, following the innumerable trails that connect with the most amazing sites in the region, passing through remote villages out of the reach of motorized vehicles, and having the chance to get to know local Andean communities and learn their amazing lifestyle.

WHITEWATER RAFTING TOUR (Cusco & Sacred Valley)

Whitewater rafting can provide one of the most exhilarating adventures. Rivers of swirling green and turquoise waters descend through picture-perfect gorges surrounded by high-stone walls. With sections varying from lake-flat to class III to V rapids, all experience levels and adventure-seekers can find a route that thrills and fulfills. Add magical nights camping under the stars on secluded river beaches for a more complete experience in remote nature.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Explore some of Peru's less frequented, though no less fascinating ruins
- Take a picturesque hike through dramatic valleys & mountains
- Access parts of the Sacred Valley rarely seen by tourists
- Enjoy the thrill of coasting downhill towards unspoiled valleys
- Experience the adrenalin rush of whitewater rafting
- Glide along cascading rivers & sample local cuisine along the way

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CLASSIC CULTURAL TOURS

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MARTIN CHAMBI STUDIO (Cusco)

Indigenous Peruvian photographer Martin Chambi was born in Puno in 1881. His work has had significant impact in documenting Andean culture and history, revolutionizing how we understand its heritage and importance today. Chambi's original studio in Cusco has undergone a radical transformation into a museum and gallery, photography school, and research centre for visiting academics. The gallery offers superb insight into the lives of an indigenous Inca culture that would have otherwise been lost.

VISITING THE ESE EJA (Amazon Basin)

The original people of this region of Peru, the Ese Eja live incredibly traditionally, their simple villages accommodating a sadly dwindling population of pure-blood tribespeople. Still abiding by the words of their spiritual healers, they have a profound connection to, and reverence for the natural world that surrounds them, the Amazon embodying their ancestors. Commercial interests, including mining, have devastated the Ese Eja population, but these proud people are now gaining respect, protection and acknowledgment. A visit to the villages of the Ese Eja will help sustain their fragile community and impart their wisdom and beliefs upon their guests. Added to this, it will place you in the periphery of the Amazon, affording the opportunity to take in some wildlife viewing.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- See the Inca faces of the past 120 years
- Learn more about ancient cultures & traditions
- View the work of this internationally-acclaimed photographer
- Step back in time & connect with the traditional Ese Eja people
- Learn of their spiritual beliefs, their village customs & their fight for survival
- Plunge into the Amazon, by foot or by boat, to go wildlife spotting

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LARCO HERRERA (Lima)

The privately-owned Larco Herrera hosts an art collection covering more than 5,000 years of Pre-Columbian history. Most of its pieces have been purchased and collected throughout the years from tomb raiders, and include indigenous art from numerous remarkable cultures.

THE MALI (Lima)

This is another superb gallery and museum, showcasing Peru's rich history, society and challenges through its art. Chronologically curated, the Mali enables visitors to walk along the timelines of history, providing for a deep understanding of the diverse cultural expressions in different forms.

PATACANCHA (Ollantaytambo)

Patacancha sits high in the mountains, about an hour's drive from Ollantaytambo. Despite many technological influences from the modern world creeping their way into life in Patacancha, its people maintain strong aspects of their traditions and lifestyle. The Patacancha people of all ages dress in very characteristic and lively red ponchos, and wear "chullos" or Andean wool hats embellished with decorative beads. Women wear black hats of a particular shape, with decorations on top that change depending on their civil status. They don't dress for guests; this is the way they are and live, making the entire experience truly authentic.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- View a wide array of artifacts dating back up to 5,000 years
- See ancient artwork that may have been lost forever if not for Larco Herrera
- Take a walk through time, observing the progression of Peruvian culture
- Gain a greater understanding of the people who existed prior to colonization
- Observe a traditional culture that, though modernized, has remained true to its cultural ways
- Purchase some of the most culturally authentic textiles available

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CLASSIC ART TOURS

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CALLAO (Lima)

Where some graffiti degrades a city's image, some enhances it, and so it is in Callao. A coastal suburb of Lima, Callao has been vibrantly adorned with a wide collection of portraits by Alexis Villanueva Puente, more commonly known as Salsa. Callao is passionate in its love of salsa music, and Alexis used his artwork to honor some of Peru's greatest *salseros*. Until recent years, Callao - which is also home to a number of historical sites - struggled with crime and poverty, but recent initiatives have turned it around, the younger generations taking up graffiti in a move towards solidarity and positivity.

TATER VERA CERAMICS (Cusco)

Tater Vera's ceramics have achieved recognition from the Peruvian government as well as internationally, being known today as one of the finest ceramists in the world. His workshop is in Cusco, with all his pieces continuing to be made in an artisanal way, hand-designed and painted in Vera's own wonderfully unique style. From his original colonial-style collection to the newer pieces he continues to produce, Vera's studio is strikingly vibrant, awash in color and with ceramics exquisitely crafted into a diversity of items and sculptures. Ceramic coloring workshops are available privately as well as introductory workshops to the stunning indigenous painting, a project led by his daughter, reproducing old motifs and styles with earthy natural colors.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Take a guided tour of one of Lima's most vibrant & regenerative suburbs
- Learn the stories of the many portraits adorning the buildings of Callao
- See how younger generations are using graffiti to encourage community spirit
- Visit the workshop of one of South America's preeminent ceramicists
- Try your hand at the delicate process of pot throwing & ceramics
- View a collection of Tater Vera's internationally-renowned works

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CLASSIC CULINARY TOURS

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Peru's culinary scene has expanded exponentially in recent years, offering a fascinating fusion of traditionally-inspired, yet definitively contemporary cuisine. Lima now boasts a bulging directory of widely-acclaimed eateries hosting and founded by some of the leading proponents of gastronomy, certainly within South America, possibly even the world.

FOOD TOUR (Lima)

Lima offers a wide array of culinary experiences, and local food tours can be customized to suit each guest's needs and desires. Wonderful artisanal bakeries waft tantalizing aromas into the morning air, boutique cafés bustle with locals and visitors alike, and huariques - intimate family-run restaurants - offer classic, home-cooked cuisine unlike anything you will find in the more renowned restaurants of the city. Street food should also be sampled, for it is at the small handcarts and the hauriques that a true flavor of Peru can be found.

The numerous bars and rooftop terraces flourishing throughout the trendy quarters of the city proudly celebrate their Peruvian origin in their fascinating and ingenious creations. An early-morning visit to the fish terminal is essential, especially when selecting a fish for oneself and having it freshly prepared in front of you and presented as a mouthwatering ceviche. These are experiences that Lima residents view simply as part of daily life, but tourists are rarely aware of. A guided tour gives a distinctly local perspective, uncovering many hidden secrets that will open eyes - and mouths - to the gastronomic potential of Lima.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Gain a more local perspective of Lima's thriving food scene
- Meet the families behind the humble, intimate huariques & sample their delicious traditional fare
- Discover Lima's most vibrant & innovative bars & restaurants
- Enjoy a traditional ceviche breakfast by selecting your own fish from the day's fresh morning catch
- Learn how Peruvians have eaten for hundreds of years, & how these traditions are now inspiring proud, contemporary Peruvian chefs

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CHOCOLATE & COFFEE TASTING TOUR (Lima, Pisac & Cusco)

Coffee and chocolate are fundamental to Peruvian life, and the two can be wonderfully combined in a private tour. A private chocolate tasting tour will open the senses to the world of chocolate and the rich Peruvian varieties which change according to the season, the region and the blend. Cacao is integral to the story of the Inca and has for centuries been used ceremonially. The thick, rich, bitter-sweet beverage must be sampled in its country of origin, as must the chocolate with which it is made. Like other South American nations, Peru grows a wide variety of coffees. Freshly roasted, ground and poured, these pair perfectly with the sweet, delectable chocolate.

PRIVATE DINING WORKSHOP

A range of more personal culinary tours can be also arranged. Lima's innovative chefs are combining traditional ingredients and dishes with more contemporary inspiration to create some truly innovative cuisine. They also offer private dining experiences including degustations and workshops. To discover the heart of Peruvian cooking, clients can join a chef for a half- or full-day tour. Visit the early-morning fish and fruit and vegetable markets, meet local bakers and producers and collect all the ingredients required for a lunch infused with the most authentic flavours of Peru.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Learn the history of chocolate & its cultural importance
 - Sample a wide range of delicious chocolates, washed down with a fresh Peruvian coffee
 - Learn how chocolate is processed from bean to bar
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- Discover unique local ingredients & how to use them with a leading chef
 - Meet the region's producers & select your own collection of ingredients
 - Craft your morning's harvest into a delicious lunch or dinner under the expert tutelage of a renowned chef

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