



Peru & Bolivia

follow in the footsteps of butch cassidy and the sundance kid!

Tourcode: **SPB**

Groepsgrootte: **2-24**

Aantal dagen: **24**

Reisbeschrijving

Beautiful Plaza de Armas

On day 4 we'll go by night-bus along the coast and mountains to Arequipa, at the foot of the Misti volcano. Its central square, Plaza de Armas, is Peru's most beautiful. It's surrounded by **baroque churches** built from volcanic stone, cobble-stone streets and white-washed adobe walls. Arequipa's cuisine is famous, and we recommend 'cuy' (**grilled guinea-pig**).

Herds of vicuñas

On day 6 we'll drive towards the Colca Canyon along herds of vicuñas, llamas and alpacas (relatives of the llama; they produce small amounts of extremely fine wool). We'll arrive in the afternoon to the small Indian settlement of Chivay where we'll enjoy a **dip into the relaxing hot springs**. Llama steak is likely for dinner! Here we'll climb to 4800 metres and the views over the surrounding volcano peaks will be wonderful. On the excursion further **into the Colca Canyon**, one of the world's deepest gorges, you should see condor.

The highest capital on earth

Next we'll drive through the Altiplano, the world's most extensive high plateau outside Tibet, to arrive in Puno, on **Lake Titicaca**. At 3812 metres it's the highest commercially navigable lake in the world. There's an optional tour to the Uros islands, where Indians still have reed houses and boats. On day 9 we'll drive to La Paz, one of the two capitals of Bolivia and the highest capital on earth.

Salar de Uyuni

On day 11 we'll make a long trek by Jeep over the salt plains of Salar de Uyuni. On day 13 we continue to the legendary silver-town of **Potosí**. **At 4090 metres, it's the world's highest city**. Here you may tour one of the continent's largest silver mines. On day 15 we'll return to La Paz and then go on to Copacabana, the famous pilgrimage site on the Bolivian side of Lake Titicaca. Nearby Sun Island can be visited by boat too; legend says it's where the Inca dynasty began.

Explore Inca ruins

On day 17 we'll take a bus along the Altiplano to the royal city of Cuzco to explore Inca ruins, take a spectacular rafting tour on a cold Andes River, or visit the **Sacred Valley**. Around the Plaza de Armas you'll find great bars and restaurants serving great Peruvian



and international cuisine.

Famous Machu Picchu

On day 20 we'll travel by train to Aguas Calientes and its hot water springs. The main reason to go here however is of course Machu Picchu which you can either visit in the late afternoon or in the early morning when the surroundings are bathing in magical light. Should you so desire you can disembark from the train and hike the last part of the **Inca trail**.

On day 21 we return to Cuzco, then on day 22 we fly from Cuzco to Lima for one final night in Peru's vibrant capital city. The following day, day 23, the tour ends at noon and we say goodbye to our new friends.

Incatrail (not sold separately)

During this tour you have the option of booking a 2 day trip to the Incatrail. You will walk the old pathways of the Incas before you reach Macchu Picchu. It is strongly advisable to book this well in advance as we are unable to guarantee you if you book less than 3 months in advance.

Costs are £125 for 2 days /1 night. Before booking an Inca trail excursion please check real time availability <http://www.inca-trail.com.pe/dispo/index.php?lg=en> Please note that the Inca Trail is not available during the month of February.

Due to earthquake damage a decision to alter the itinerary of this tour has been taken. On day 3 you will transfer to Ica with a visit to Ballestas. Day 4 will be at leisure in Ica, the rest of the itinerary remains unchanged.

Routekaart





Uitgebreide reisbeschrijving

Welkom

Welcome to Shoestring!

Shoestring is looking forward to welcoming you on one of our unforgettable journeys. Be well prepared, get informed about your destination and make sure you know which vaccinations or other medication you require. During the trip, be flexible and don't feel obliged to always stay with the group. Your guide will advise and assist you, but remember that he or she will have a lot on their mind to ensure that everything runs smoothly. We hope you have a fantastic time in this beautiful destination.

Before you travel

If your trip is unexpectedly cancelled, we will let you know at least three weeks prior to departure. Cancellations are very rare though, so go ahead and prepare yourself for your trip.

Moeilijkheidsgraad Informatie

This holiday is classified as Category D

The difficulty of our travels varies greatly. Added to this is the fact that travel difficulty is a very personal perception. To give an impression of the difficulty of a particular holiday we have developed a classification system.

Category A: Light travel, possible for anyone. Short distances, good hotels, and slow travelling speed.

Category B: Feasible for anyone who prepares for the trip. Sometimes longer distances, good hotels or camping facilities, some adventure nights, average travelling speed.

Category C: Feasible for anyone who prepares well and is flexible, but some parts of the journey are difficult, distances may be long or require a day's walk, there may be some basic facilities.

Category D: Reasonably difficult trip because of long travel distances, often primitive facilities or tents, long walks.

Category E: Difficult trip. The traveller knows him/herself and is well prepared, he or she realises that the holiday can be demanding.

This trip is classified as **Category D**, feasible for a normally healthy and physically fit person. You will travel long distances quickly with few rest days. Once or twice, we will take night buses. Take this into consideration. The bus ride from Uyuni to La Paz is quite tough. Combined with the high altitude travelling may cause fatigue. At the beginning of the trip a number of travellers will suffer from headache due to a mild form of high altitude sickness. If you take it easy from the start, you will adapt quickly. We have built in some stops to rest. We stay in mid class hotels, but remember this is a developing country, with a significantly lower standard of living than you are used. Furthermore, roads may be temporarily impassable due to weather circumstances or bad maintenance, compelling us to take another route. A flexible and positive attitude is equally important as a good physical condition.

Nature of the trip



Rugged mountain chains and awesome volcanoes, remnants of mysterious civilizations and colourful natives characterise this spectacular trip. Wander along with Shoestring through the plains of Salar de Uyuni. Visit the ruins of the legendary Lost City of the Inca Empire, Machu Picchu. And there is a lot more to discover on this trip across the Altiplano.

Wat is inclusief

Accommodation in hotels; transportation with (mini) bus only for transfers from hotel to hotel; domestic flights; train journey Aguas Calientes; jeep excursion Uyuni; entrance fees Colca Canyon and Uyuni; English speaking tour leader.

Wat is exclusief

International flights; optional flight Nazca lines; Inca Trail and/or jungle extension (reservation should be done at time of booking tour); all meals; tips; visas; optional excursions; all entrance fees; border fees; airport transfers; booking fee; travel insurance.

Let op

◆ You will generally travel with other UK clients. However, if less than 6 people book the tour on the UK website then your group may be combined with a Dutch, German, Italian or Spanish group. Your tour would still be conducted in English.

Dag-tot-dag schema

	Vervoer	Route	Overnachting
1.		Lima	Lima
2.		Lima - Pisco - Ica	Ica
3.		Ica - Nazca	Nazca
4.		Nazca – nightbus to Arequipa	nightbus to Arequipa
5.		Arequipa	Arequipa
6.		Arequipa - Chivay	Chivay
7.		Chivay - Puno	Puno
8.			
9.		Puno - La Paz	La Paz
10.			
11.		La Paz - Uyuni	Uyuni
12.			
13.		Uyuni - Potosí	Potosi
14.			
15.		Potosí - La Paz	La Paz
16.		La Paz - Copacabana	Copacabana
17.		Copacabana - Cuzco	Cuzco
18.			
19.		Cuzco	
20.		Cuzco - Aguas Calientes	Aguas Calientes
21.		Aguas Calientes - Cuzco	Cuzco
22.		Lima (arrival by flight from Cuzco)	
23.		Lima	End of tour



Dag-tot-dag schema

Dag 1: Lima

Arrive into Lima, Lima is the capital of Peru and was founded in 1535 by the Spanish conqueror Pizarro. The town took the place of Cuzco as the country's capital and rapidly developed into Spain's largest and wealthiest settlement in the new world. Presently, the metropolis counts almost 9 million inhabitants. There are various interesting sights in the centre of town, such as the Anthropological museum (Museo Antropología y Arqueología), the Gold Museum (Museo de Oro), the Catacombs of the San Francisco church and the Plaza de Armas and the Plaza San Martín, the two most prominent squares in central Lima.

Dag 2: Lima - Pisco - Ica

In the morning you will take the bus to Pisco (some 3.5 hours driving). Pisco is a small fishing town near Paracas National Park. There's time to visit the Islas Ballestas, a paradise for sea lions, penguins, cormorants and gannets. Although you are not allowed to disembark you will see most of them. Curious sea lions swim around the boat while various sea birds fly overhead. On the return trip you will pass "Candelabro", a drawing of a candle etched in the rocks. The origin like that of the Nazca Lines, is unknown. Then you will go to Ica, a famous oasis surrounded by beautiful sandy dunes. In Ica you can opt the next morning to take a spectacular buggy ride and enjoy a beautiful sunset or go sandboarding, i.e. skiing the dunes on a waxed wooden board. In the oasis you can take a swim. You will stay overnight near the oasis in a hotel with a swimming pool.

Dag 3: Ica - Nazca

Today we will proceed to Nazca, famous for its intriguing Nazca lines. The origin and function of which remain a great mystery. Some lines represent animals, a 90-metre monkey and a 180-metre lizard. Others are line patterns, perfectly straight lines, going on for kilometres and huge triangles. Various theories have evolved. Perhaps the most plausible comes from Dr. Maria Reiche, a German mathematician, who has dedicated a great part of her life to studying the lines. She believes that the drawings are part of an astronomic calendar. Equally astonishing is the graveyard of Chauchilla, where sun bleached skeletons of Nazca people guard the ancient cemetery. Weather permitting; it is also possible to book a flight over the Nazca lines.

Dag 4: Nazca – nightbus to Arequipa

In the evening of day 4, we will leave for Arequipa by comfortable public night bus. The journey takes around nine and a half hours. After a long drive along the coast and through the mountains, we arrive the following morning.

Dag 5: Arequipa

Arequipa is a magnificent colonial city at an altitude of 2235 metres surrounded by volcanoes, of which the most famous, 'El Misti' (5822 m) is visible from the Plaza de Armas. Although the city was founded by the Spanish conquerors, there are still many relics left from the Pre-Inca and Inca periods. You have the day to make trips in the surrounding area. In Arequipa the Santa Catalina monastery is worth visiting. For 400



years, nuns lived here in total seclusion. It was only in 1970 that the monastery opened to the public. The Santa Catalina monastery is said to be the most beautiful in the new world. The complex covers about 20.000 sq, allowing you to wander for hours along the picturesque alleys. Visit the mummy of the young Inca girl 'Juanita' in the Museum of Sanctuaries Andinos (it might be that this famous mummy is temporarily exhibited elsewhere). The Incas offered her to the volcano to appease the mountain gods. The mummy is well preserved because for all those years she lay frozen under an icecap.

Dag 6: Arequipa - Chivay

This morning, we travel to the Colca Canyon . We shall cross the Andes to Chivay, where we stay overnight. The highest point on the route offers a breathtaking view over the surrounding volcano peaks. The tour takes us through the pampas where you will witness **the almost extinct vicuña grazing, alongside other llama-like animals**. We will pass various traditional Andean settlements. This trip is physically rather demanding due to the altitude, the highest point being 4800 metres. However, the village of Chivay where you will spend the night is an easier 3600 metres high. In the late afternoon you have time for a break in the pleasant hot thermal springs near Chivay.

Entrance fee for the National Park Colca Canyon is included.

Dag 7 - 8: Chivay - Puno

A highlight of this tour is the visit to the 'Cruz del Condor' from where we enjoy a breathtaking view over the Colca Canyon, one of the world's deepest gorges. With a little luck, we shall spot a majestic condor gliding around. These large birds live on the bottom of the gorge and ascend on morning thermals. We will visit some neighbouring villages and continue to Puno in the afternoon.

Puno is on Lake Titicaca; the world's highest navigable lake (3820 m). Visit the Sillustani Tombs. The Colla people, a pre-Inca civilization, buried their dead in these towers. Stroll around Puno and visit the colourful market. You can also visit the Uros Islands, possibly in combination with Taquile Island. The 300 inhabitants of the Uros live on Lake Titicaca, on floating islands made of totora reeds. Their small houses are also made out of reed, as are their boats. The largest island has two-storied houses and a school. Indians, well known for their weaving culture, inhabit Isla Taquile. It is mainly the men who weave and knit. You can buy colourful alpaca woollen goods here. Apart from tourism, the Indians earn a living from fishing hunting and farming.

Dag 9 - 10: Puno - La Paz

We travel by bus along Lake Titicaca, then head for our destination La Paz. At the border, we transfer into a Bolivian bus that takes us via the ruins of Tiahuanacu to La Paz (entrance fee not included). The Tiahuanacu culture is one of the Andes' great pre-Inca cultures divided by 5 periods covering almost 2000 years. Even now little is known about the people that built this grand ceremonial centre. Most of the, still visible, large stone structures originated between 300-700 AD. Only a small part of the ruins has been excavated, the remnants of various basalt and sandstone temples, statues and magical gates. The most famous building is the Puerta del Sol (Sun Gate), carved out of one giant block of anthracite. Despite the fact that many archaeological finds such as earthenware and jewels have been stolen from the site, the museum next to the complex has an excellent collection.

Coming from the heights of El Alto, the first sight of La Paz will stay printed on everyone's memory. On a beautiful day, you can see the Illimani (6402 m) rising in the



distance. The city is located at 3600 metres. The following day you'll have plenty of time for exploring the town and its surroundings. Narrow, steep streets lead you to awesome colonial buildings, churches, monasteries and market stalls. There is no shortage of museums, such as the Museo de Etnografía y Folklore exhibiting a study of different ethnic groupings and the Museo del Oro exhibiting pre-Columbian silver, gold and copperware.

Pay a visit to the extraordinary Mercado de Hechicería or witch market, where traditionally dressed Aymara women with their typical bowler hats, exhibit all kinds of miracle drugs that will bring you luck. Next to all sorts of herbs and stones, you will discover llama-foetuses that are used as offerings at the time of building new homes. On the border of the town, is a typical Latin American graveyard, where the dead are buried in long rows of stonewalls. Relatives frequently visit the graves and apply colourful decorations. Rich and poor are buried side by side yet the tombstones clearly signal their financial backgrounds. On November 1, the Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) is celebrated and the complete town turns out to commemorate their deceased ancestors. Around La Paz, there are various possibilities for walks. Explore the Valle de la Luna (Valley of the Moon). This area has bizarre eroded rock formations that look like a lunar landscape. The desert scenery is perfect for photography. The valley also houses cactuses that provoke hallucinations when treated and consumed in a certain manner. This trip can be combined with a walk to the Muela del Diablo (the Devil's molar), a prominent ancient volcanic outcrop near La Paz. Another beautiful viewing point is Chacaltaya Mountain, which has the world's highest ski slope (5300m.) A primitive mountain refuge is available and you can take a two-hour walk to Chacaltaya's two summits. If the sky is clear, you will be treated to unforgettable views.

Dag 11 - 12: La Paz - Uyuni

On day 11, we make our way to Uyuni, (3660 m.). This one day-trip leads us along a rough and desolate landscape. Late in the evening we arrive in Uyuni, our starting point for an adventurous trek in the Salar de Uyuni (entrance fee for the Salar is included). On day 12, by Jeep, we will cross the extensive surrealistic plains of the Altiplano, framed in the distance by the mighty peaks of the Andes. The Salar de Uyuni is Bolivia's largest saltpan, covering 12.000 sq.km. and it will not come as a surprise that salt extraction forms the region's main source of income. We will visit Isla de Pescado, and witness massive amounts of cactuses in the middle of the large plains of salt deposits. This alien scenery is the home of flamingos, alpacas and viscachas, a rodent. The salt plains are at a high altitude and therefore, it can be considerably cool, particularly during our summer months. At night, temperatures may drop to far below freezing point. It is even colder when it is windy. Warm clothing is necessary. Don't forget to bring along gloves and a hat (or buy one along the way at a market). Consider wearing long thermal underwear or leggings underneath your clothes. The sunshine on these bright white plains is intense. Wear sunglasses during the day and put on a good sun protection cream.

Please note that if there are less than 6 people booked on the tour, transport will be by public bus instead of by private minibus and the itinerary will change slightly, as follows: in the afternoon of day 11 the group will take a public bus from La Paz to Oruro in order to take the night train from Oruro to Uyuni. The group will arrive at 3am the next day (day 12) and will go on an excursion in the Salar Desert during the morning, departing at 9am.

Dag 13 - 14: Uyuni - Potosí



It will take us 5 to 6 hours to get to Potosí, the legendary silver town and at 4090 metres, the world's highest city. It can be very chilly. The Cerro Rico or Rich Mountain, towers even higher than the city. In former times silver was mined in such quantities that the Spaniards could have used it to build a bridge to Europe. The mountain was accidentally discovered in 1544 by the Indian llama-shepherd Diego Huallpa. After having searched in vain for two missing animals until late in the evening, he lit a fire at the foot of the mountain. As the fire became hotter, the soil around began to melt and streams of silver appeared. The Spaniards then claimed the mountain's vast resources. Indians and later, African slaves were used as forced labour on a huge scale. Sometimes these slaves would not see daylight for 4 months. Many of them died here. Once there were hundreds of silver mines but nowadays, the 'Rich Mountain' provides mainly tin and other metals, though silver is still mined on a small scale. Even now miners labour under terrible circumstances in extreme temperatures. Before they enter the mine, they give offerings to El Tío, the god of the underworld. You can visit the mines if you wish. Just put on old clothes and bring a flashlight. Perhaps you would like to bring along some coca leaves as a gift for the miners. Those who suffer from breathing or similar medical problems are strongly advised not to descend into the mines.

In 1987, UNESCO proclaimed the city of Potosí as a World Heritage Site for its tragic history and rich colonial architecture. The Casa Real de la Moneda is certainly worth a visit. In this building, silver coins were once minted. The museum houses an excellent collection of historical objects, such as paintings and furniture. Furthermore, in the city, there are many churches and monasteries to see and it is definitely worth the effort to stroll around the narrow alleys and look out for magnificent old buildings and monuments that still radiate the wealth of the past.

Dag 15: Potosí - La Paz

Today we shall have a long but varied ride back to La Paz. We will cross the highlands and arrive late in the evening in La Paz, where you can relax in the comfortable hotel.

Dag 16: La Paz - Copacabana

Today a short bus ride will take us to the friendly town of Copacabana where you can admire a breathtaking view over deep blue Lake Titicaca. Copacabana is an important pilgrimage town. The brilliantly white Moorish cathedral houses a 16th century wooden statue of the Virgen de Candelaria that is believed to work miracles. It is great walking in the area. Climb the Cerro Calvario and enjoy the fantastic view over Lake Titicaca and the sunset. In the afternoon, you may choose to take a boat trip to Isla del Sol, an island boasting an impressive history and Inca ruins.

Dag 17 - 19: Copacabana - Cuzco

On day 17, a beautiful 8-hour bus ride over Peru's Altiplano takes us to Cuzco, where you can start exploring the royal capital city of the powerful Inca Empire. Cuzco has many great monuments and countless Inca ruins. Cuzco means in Inca language: the navel of the world. In former times, the city served as the Inca's mighty administrative and religious centre. Nowadays it still seems to breathe the mystic atmosphere of ancient times. In 1533, the Spaniards conquered the town, destroyed it and used the foundations of the Inca constructions as the base to build a new colonial town. Most of these foundations can still be seen in the city. It is worth the effort to buy a special Cuzco Visitor Ticket at 70 sols (GB pound 11,50 admitting you to practically all significant monuments, churches and museums in town and all the most significant ruins. The impressive Cathedral borders the Plaza de Armas. It is connected to the El Triunfo



and Jesus María churches. Diagonally across from the churches you'll find La Compañía church, the most beautiful of them all. The Qorikancha was the most significant and wealthiest temple of the Inca Empire. On top of its foundations the Santo Domingo church was built. Fortunately some of the elaborate brickwork on the ancient temple can still be admired. Outside the city, there are interesting Inca ruins too, such as Tambo Machay (a water temple), Puca Pucara, Qenko and Sacsayhuaman, once a powerful fort and religious centre from where you have a great view of Cuzco. Colossal granite blocks were carved with such precision, that they fit perfectly. You can visit these four ruins in one day on foot or by horse. In the evening, you can eat in one of the many nice restaurants. There are many optional excursions possible such as mountain biking and rafting.

Inca Trail

For the real hikers, nature and culture lovers the 42 kilometre long Inca Trail forms a true challenge. Do not take the ruggedness of this trek lightly, because there are no hotels, you sleep in two-person tents and the weather can change everyday. Moreover, the terrain is everything but flat. Are these reasons not to walk the Inca Trail? No! But prepare yourself thoroughly, because the trek is tough, but thoroughly enchanting. It is best to walk the Inca trail between May and October, although there may be one or two showers.

You will be accompanied by a local guide, who will stay with the group during the entire trek through a number of truly wonderful Inca ruins. Local porters carry the cooking equipment, tents, provisions for two days. You carry yourself a small backpack containing your needs for these two days and a sleeping bag.

In two days, you can walk a shorter version of the Inca trail. The two-day trek starts near the holy Urubamba River. By the end of the afternoon, you arrive at Machu Picchu, where you stay overnight in the village of Aguas Calientes at the foot of Machu Picchu. The following day you have plenty of time to visit the ruins, led by the guide. At the end of the afternoon, you return to Cuzco by train.

If you want to walk the Inca Trail, indicate this on your booking form and book as early as you can. The trek is extremely popular and if you book late, the odds are that there will not be a place left. When booking, give your precise name and passport number (your passport must be valid until 6 months after the tour!) because this information will be printed on the entrance tickets.

The Inca Trail is always in high demand and only becomes fixed upon receiving our confirmation.

It is however strongly advisable to book this well in advance as we are unable to guarantee your space if you book less than 3 months in advance. Before booking an Inca trail excursion please check real time availability <http://www.inca-trail.com.pe/dispo/index.php?lg=en>. Please note that the Inca Trail is not available during the month of February.

The price per person for the two-day Inca Trail £ 125.00 per person.

Dag 20: Cuzco - Aguas Calientes

We travel by train to Aguas Calientes. The 4-hour train ride takes us through stunning scenery. The rest of the day, you are free to explore the village, take a walk or a break in



the hot water springs. You could visit the lost Inca city Machu Picchu. The bus ride from Aguas Calientes to Machu Picchu is at your own expense (on day 20 the bus ride is included), and then you will have to pay a 2-day entrance fee

Dag 21: Aguas Calientes - Cuzco

This morning you may visit the lost Inca city Machu Picchu, beautifully located on a plateau in the middle of freakish rock formations (entrance fee not included). Due to its unique location, the city was never discovered by the Spaniards and thus, has remained well preserved. It was only in 1911 that the American historian Hiram Bingham, who thought he had found the lost Inca city of Vilcabamba, discovered the ruins. Archaeologists believe it was once a religious Inca town, but its precise function is still unknown. You will have ample time to explore the whole complex of temples, terraces and holy places. The most famous photo of Machu Picchu was taken after a climb up to the Hut of the Caretaker of the Funeral Rock. If you prefer a completely different view of the ruins, a walk to the Inti Punku (Sun Gate) is highly recommended. From this point, people walking the Inca trail get their first glimpse of Machu Picchu. A steep climb of around an hour takes you to the top of the Huayna Picchu, where you will be again be rewarded with spectacular views. In the afternoon we travel back to Cuzco by train for an overnight .

Dag 22: Lima (arrival by flight from Cuzco)

On day 22 we fly back to Lima for one final evening in this Capital city before bringing the tour to a close at 12 noon on Day 23.

Dag 23: Lima

It is the last day of your tour but rather than being about 'Goodbye' your thought should be 'Go further'!

Visit your personal 'my.shoestring' page on our website. 'my.shoestring' is the perfect way to make contact with other travellers before and after your trip. You can read and create journals from trips and upload your photos onto the photo gallery. Visit my shoestring today.

When booking your tour, please check to see whether you need any post-tour nights, bearing in mind that accommodation for the night of the final day of the tour (day 23) is not included.

Landinformatie Bolivia

Achtergrondinformatie

Communications

Sorry, this information is not available at this moment. Please check back later.

Cultural differences and habits

In Bolivia, it is customary to start with a greeting and to inquire about someone's well



being. You will often hear "Buenos días, ¿cómo está?" . On meeting and parting, men and women give a short kiss on the cheek to women, even if they hardly know each other. Indians do not kiss, but sometimes give a weak handshake. Politeness is highly appreciated. They have a different notion of privacy than we are used to and subsequently can get very close. They emphasise being well dressed and therefore do not expect tourists to be dressed scruffily. Shorts are not actually considered improper; nevertheless, in less touristy regions long trousers are more appropriate. Anyway, most of the time it will be too chilly for shorts. It is considered offensive to call someone of Indian descent Indian, Indígena is preferred.

Food and drinks

Food: In Bolivia, the main meal of the day is lunch (almuerzo). Breakfast (desayuno) tends to be light, even though most hotels and restaurants serve desayuno Americano as well. Generally, Bolivians eat their dinner (cena) late. When eating in small restaurants it is best to opt for a busy place, the food is fresh and appetising. Be careful of salads; they may be cleaned in tap water.

Many local restaurants have a fixed menu (el menú) for around 3 dollars. You get soup followed by a main dish, usually chicken or pork, with rice and vegetables. Each region has its own specialty. In Bolivia, you must try trout (trucha) from Lake Titicaca, reputed to be the world's largest and most delicious freshly caught fish. Furthermore, you will come across alpacas not only in the wild on the Altiplano, but also in shops, as a woollen jersey; it could also turn up on your plate as a steak. You can buy delicious cakes and snacks.

Drink: Tap water is not suitable for consumption. Buy bottles of purified drinking water, available all over the country. Make sure that the bottles have their original seals intact. Ice cubes are also a bad idea, as these are made of tap water. Agua con gas means water with gas and agua sin gas means water without bubbles. Té means common tea as we know it, and 'mate' means herb tea. You will frequently come across 'mate de coca', tea made of coca leaves. It is supposed to be good for altitude sickness and is very popular in the highlands. Generally, coffee is available but don't expect much; usually it is Nescafe. **Café con leche means coffee with milk (it tastes more like milk with coffee!).** Hot chocolate is popular, as are fresh fruit juices. In La Paz market, you can compose your own mixed juice by pointing to the fruits you like and they will squeeze them for you. Soft drinks such as coke are on sale everywhere.

Landscape

Bolivia has a huge variety of cultural and geographical possibilities for the traveller. Bolivia borders Paraguay and Argentina to the South East and is a little smaller than Peru. Both countries lie in the tropics. After the Himalayas the Andes is the largest mountain chain in the world, it cuts through Peru and Bolivia from north to south. Geographically, Bolivia can be divided into five regions, of which we will mainly be travelling on the 'Altiplano'. This means 'high plain', but despite its name the Altiplano is far from plain; the Cordillera Real and the Cordillera Occidental have peaks as high as 6542 m.

Population



Bolivia has around 7,5 million inhabitants. The official language in Bolivia is Spanish, but there are communities, where the inhabitants still speak Quechua and Aymara. The life expectancy of Bolivians is 60 years for men, and 65 years for women. This is some 10 years less than in most Western countries.

A very characteristic feature of Bolivian women is their bowler hats. Various theories circulate about the origins of these hats. Many women wear different layers of skirts and they often wear their hair in two braids, the bottom end tied up with a piece of string. The people living around Lake Titicaca often wear knitted hats. In this region, the men knit clothes, while chatting with friends and walking the streets. The women weave large colourful cloths to carry their children and purchases on their backs.

Weather and climate

Climate: In Bolivia, we will be travelling across the 3000 to 4000 metres high Altiplano. On this bare and dry plateau, temperatures can drop substantially, especially at night and during the Bolivian winter. The salt plateau at Uyuni is known for its almost Siberian night temperatures of around **-20°C!** **By day, it is much warmer and even during winter** sometimes just a sweater or T-shirt will do. Lake Titicaca is about 3800 metres high and here too temperatures frequently drop below freezing point at night. This region has a similar climate to the highlands in Bolivia.

Best time to visit: The best time to visit is from May through October. It's true that temperatures are lower during this period, however showers are sparse. In the mountain areas you should count on brief showers occurring throughout the year.

Other background information

Bolivian architectures are characterized by two different styles: Spanish style and Inca style. A magnificent example is to be seen at Tiahuanacu, just outside La Paz. You will witness remnants of a once important religious centre. In ancient times, 20.000 people lived here in an area of almost three sq.km. Although only a small part has been excavated, it is South-America's largest pre-Inca ruin.

Praktische informatie

Electricity

In most places, 220 volts is customary. Power cuts occur now and then. In that case, hotels usually produce candles or oil lamps. A good torch is certainly useful, especially for evening walks. The abundance of holes, bumps and ditches in and along the roads can cause nasty falls if the streetlights suddenly go out.

Health

The following health information is a general text that applies to all our travellers in South America. Those who pay some attention to hygiene and skincare do not usually run into health problems.

Food and drink: Temperatures in Peru and Bolivia can be extremely high and if you do not drink enough you run the risk of getting dehydrated. This effect is magnified at high altitude. Tap water is unsuitable for human consumption. Generally, mineral water is



available. When ordering a drink, ask the staff not add ice cubes, as these are usually made of unboiled tap water and may contain germs. In small eating-places, it is better not to eat fruit or salads that have been skinned beforehand. Preferably, take your meals in busy restaurants. They are busy for good reason and the food is fresh. Clean your hands thoroughly before eating and keep your fingernails short.

Sunshine and heat : Sunburn, particularly at high altitudes, is a frequent cause of health problems. Sunburn and heat strokes are easier caught than you may think. You should therefore avoid the sun during the hottest hours of the day, always wear a hat (or carry an umbrella) and good sunglasses when you are walking, and use the recommended factor of suntan lotion. These are best brought from home. At high temperatures, the body's need for water increases very rapidly, as does its need for salt. Make sure you drink enough. Take it easy during the hottest hours of the day. Treat small scratches, wounds and insect bites before they become infected.

Diarrhoea: Next to sunburn, the most common health problem is diarrhoea. Travellers are often hit by it after they have been on holiday for only a few days. In most cases it is innocuous and caused by the change of diet, the heat or harmless bacteria, against which the body will soon develop its defences. The main risk is dehydration, especially in children. It occurs when the body loses more fluid, salt and sugars than it receives. The result is a feeling of listlessness and weakness. It can be prevented by drinking a solution of water and ORS (Oral Rehydration Solution). It is sold in bags at the pharmacies and contains all the minerals and sugars that are lost with diarrhoea. Instead of this solution you can also take noncarbonated soft drinks or heavily salted broth. For many people, Coca Cola has a constipating effect in the first stages of diarrhoea. When the diarrhoea is accompanied by high fever and/or bloody defecation it is sensible to consult a physician. When the diarrhoea lasts for more than a few days without the above-mentioned symptoms or when you have to travel, you may take Imodium (or Diacure) a couple of times. It is an opium-like preparation that prevents bowel movement for a number of hours.

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Altitude sickness: About half of the people who stay at heights above 3500 metres will suffer from altitude sickness to some degree. It is a reaction of the body to the decreasing oxygen content in the air. The danger is in the accumulation of fluid in the lungs or brain. Altitude sickness is potentially deadly. Be sure to be alert to the symptoms. Before giving a description of the symptoms, note that contracting the illness is not dependent on your physical fitness or routine when walking at altitude. Practised mountain hikers and even our bearers in Nepal can contract it even after long exposure.



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A yellow fever vaccination is compulsory in Peru. Recently, for travellers booking a time extension in the jungle in Peru a vaccination against yellow fever was made compulsory. You have to be able to prove this on arrival by showing a certificate or stamp.

Further advice to make your journey more pleasant
Allow your body and mind the time to steadily adjust to the new time zone and location. Avoid tension, do not draw up a plan immediately. In any event take it easy on the first day. Getting up early is a good habit; in warm countries, the morning temperature is usually the most agreeable. The people in these countries are used to getting up early. If you adapt to their rhythm, you will make the most of your time.

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Make sure that those at home know which country you are in and how long you are planning to stay away. You may fix a date when you will contact them again. Provide those picking you up from the airport with your flight times and numbers. Shoestring will not provide flight and/or travel information, accommodation names and telephone numbers to third parties. Any information on delays can be retrieved via the information number at the airport or Teletext, not via Shoestring.

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sweater or jacket. By day, it will be mostly sunny, so thin, cotton clothes and shorts are indispensable items. However, please note that for this trip extra warm clothes are a must, especially in the summer season (May – October) when temperatures may drop at night as low as -20°C. **Gloves, hat and / or a scarf should be part of your packing items!** Bringing too little clothing is better than bringing too much as you can buy anything you lack for next to nothing. An umbrella and a thin rain jacket might come in handy, the former protecting against both rain, and blazing sun. You need a good pair of worn-in hiking shoes, with good tread and a pair of flip flops. Other important items are sunglasses, sun creams, toiletries, a first-aid kit, a hat/scarf, a (video) camera and sufficient film/videos and spare batteries, a torch, towel, a pen-knife, a lighter, an alarm clock, writing equipment, books, passport, sufficient travellers' cheques and money, copies of your passport and travel insurance, a list of the numbers of your travellers' cheques and receipt of purchase, your flight ticket, all relevant travel insurance details and emergency contact numbers and your holiday guide with the important addresses. We advise you bring along a weekend bag or backpack. A solid suitcase is inconvenient if you have to carry it yourself on and off trains etc. Also, bring along a small backpack or shoulder bag for hand luggage. A thin money belt, to be carried underneath your clothing, is also advised for storage of valuable documents. Take care to put some clean clothes in your hand luggage, in case your main luggage is delayed. For example, the pill and your toothbrush should be in your hand luggage. Check that your luggage is not too heavy.

Money and currency

The amount of spending money suggested, is the minimum required to pay for your meals, drinks, optional excursions, entrance fees, local airport taxes and tips. The amount you actually need of course depends on your own spending pattern; therefore souvenirs are not included. The amount we recommend is £125 -£150 per week.

Photography

Bolivia and Peru are extremely photogenic countries. Unfortunately, not everyone likes to be photographed. The photographing or (video) filming visitor should realize that they cannot intrude into people's lives without being asked. Always ask permission first and respect any possible objections. Frequently, locals ask money for a snapshot and you'll find out soon enough whether you are dealing with a 'professional'; if you do not want to pay for a picture, you will have to find another subject. It is possible to buy film on the spot, but generally only in large towns. Make sure that the film is not past its sell-by date and that it is not stored in overly warm conditions. It is advisable to buy sufficient film/video materials prior to the trip and not to forget spare batteries. It is possible to develop and print your photographs in various places. Generally, the quality is acceptable, but do not take this for granted. Avoid leaving film or camera behind in a locked car as the fast rising temperatures can damage film quickly.

Safety

Theft does occur in the cities. A simple method to avoid pickpockets is to store money and important documents close to your body, ideally in a money belt. Have some pocket money ready, so you do not have to search for it in the middle of the street. Pay good attention to your possessions and to what is going on around you. Robberies tend to place, in the places you should avoid, such as dark alleys and dark deserted beaches.



Stay away from people offering drugs and do not go along with 'plain-clothes policemen' who don't show proper identification. Your belongings will be reasonably safe in your hotel room, but do not leave valuables behind. If you use your common sense and stay alert, you shouldn't have any problems.

Time difference

The time in Peru is GMT - 5 hours, in Bolivia GMT - 4 hours.

Tipping

The basic pay of hotel and restaurant staff is meagre at best. You may not have a ready solution for the poverty affecting these countries, but the least you can do is to provide the individuals working for you a with good tip. A so-called tipping box may come in useful, to be administered in turns by the passengers and in consultation with the guide. While the group is on the road, snacks etc. can be bought from this money. For that matter, the tour guide will expect a tip at the completion of his/her services, assuming he/she has provided a satisfactory service. Our guideline is £10 per person for the whole tour.

Other practical information

Contact Person

In case of an emergency, it is important for us to have details of someone we can reach as a contact person back home on your behalf. You will have entered a name on the booking form. It is possible that this person is unavailable or on holiday during your trip. If so, enter a second person so that we are sure to be able to get in touch with somebody.

Landinformatie Peru

Achtergrondinformatie

Communications

Sorry, this information is not available at this moment. Please check back later.

Cultural differences and habits

In Peru it is customary to start with a greeting and to inquire about someone's well-being. You will often hear "Buenos dias, como esta? ". On meeting and parting, men and women give a short kiss on the cheek to women, even if they hardly know each other. Indians do not kiss, but sometimes give a weak handshake. Politeness is highly appreciated. They have a different notion of privacy than we are used to and subsequently can get very close. They go through life well dressed and therefore do not expect tourists to be dressed scruffily. Shorts are not considered improper; nevertheless, in less touristy regions long trousers are more appropriate. Anyway, most of the time it



will be too chilly for shorts. It is considered offensive to call someone of Indian descent Indian, Indígena is preferred.

Food and drinks

Food: In Peru, the main meal of the day is lunch (almuerzo). Breakfast (desayuno) tends to be light, even though the majority of hotels and restaurants serve desayuno Americano as well. Generally, Peruvians eat their dinner (cena) late. When eating in small restaurants it is best to opt for a busy place, the food is fresh and appetising. Do be careful of the salads; they may be cleaned in tap water.

Many local restaurants have a fixed menu (el menú) for around 3 dollars. For this, you get soup followed by a main dish, usually chicken or pork, with rice and vegetables. Each region has its own specialty. You will find Peru's well known local specialty in and around Cuzco: grilled guinea pig (cuy). Furthermore, you will come across alpacas not only into the wild on the Altiplano, but also in shops, as a woollen jersey; it could also turn up on your plate as a steak. You can find delicious cakes and snacks.

Drink: Tap water is not suitable for consumption. Buy bottles of purified drinking water, available all over the country. Make sure the bottles have their original seals intact. Ice cubes are also a bad idea, as these contain tap water, especially at local restaurants or bars. 'Agua con gas' means water with gas and 'agua sin gas' means water without bubbles. **Té means tea as we know it, and mate means herb tea. You will frequently come across mate de coca, tea made of coca leaves. It is supposed to be good for altitude sickness and is very popular in the highlands. Generally, coffee is available but don't expect too much; usually it is Nescafe. Café con leche means coffee with milk (tasting more like milk with coffee!). Hot chocolate is popular, as are fresh fruit juices. Soft drinks such as coke are on sale everywhere. You can also try extremely sweet Inca Kola.**

Landscape

Peru offers a huge variety of cultural and geographical possibilities for the traveller. The first thing that comes to mind when thinking of Peru is Inca. The Inca civilization definitely is South-America's best-known and studied pre-Columbian culture. The landscape is scattered with Inca ruins and splendid examples are to be found in the surroundings of Cuzco.

Peru covers an area of 1.285.215 square kilometres; it is roughly five and a half times the area of Great Britain, the third largest country in South America. Peru borders Ecuador and Columbia to the North, Bolivia and Brazil to the East, Chile to the South and the Pacific Ocean to the West. Peru lies in the tropics, the equator is only a few kilometres distance north of Peru. Geographically, Peru can be divided into three regions: a dry coastal strip running along the country's entire length (the world's driest desert, the Atacama Desert, starts here), to the East the Andes and to the South East the Amazon rainforest. After the Himalayas the Andes is the largest mountain chain in the world, it cuts through Peru from north to south. **Peru's highest peak is the Huascarán (6768 m).** Half of the Peruvian population lives in the Andes at an altitude between 3000 and 4000 metres above sea level.

Population

Peru has around 28 million inhabitants. The population of Peru is mainly a mixture of Indians and "mestizos" (descendants of Indians and Spaniards). In addition, there are



some important communities as Chinese and Africans. The official language in Peru is Spanish, but there are communities, where the inhabitants still speak Quechua and Aymara. Life expectancy is 60 years for men, and 65 years for women, 10 years less than in most Western countries.

In Peru, and especially in Cuzco and the Colca canyon, you may see Peruvian women wearing traditional, colourful clothing and large, bright hats. Those living around Lake Titicaca often wear home-knitted hats. In this region, the men knit clothes, while chatting with friends and walking the streets. The women weave colourful cloths to carry their children and purchases on their backs.

Weather and climate

Climate: There are two seasons: a dry season, running from May through September and a rainy season, between October and April. Although, it is only in January that the real rain starts, January and February are the wettest months. As a rule, it showers in the evening. In the Andes, the weather tends to be unstable and unpredictable. In high altitude areas, it can be chilly. At night, temperatures may drop below freezing point. By day, temperatures are around 20 degrees.

Best time to visit: The best time to visit is from May through October. It's true that temperatures are lower during this period, however showers are sparse. In the mountain areas you should count on brief showers occurring throughout the year.

Other background information

Peruvian architecture has two different styles: Spanish and Inca. Upon arrival in Peru, you will be amazed by the very typical Spanish architecture of the splendid buildings around the Plaza de Armas, Lima's most prominent square. The large cathedral is worth a visit. The architecture in the central square of Cuzco also makes you feel like you are in Spain. One of this tour's highlights is a daytrip from Aguas Calientes to Machu Picchu where you will visit the ruins of an ancient Inca city. Notice the deliberate inclination of the walls to make them earthquake-proof. Also, you will see the ancient city's different sections, each one of them with different types of buildings. In the outer layers lived the 'common' folk, in the centre of town the high priests.

Praktische informatie

Arrival information

Take it easy for the first day in Peru. Take the time to recover from the flight, get used to the different climate, culture and country. Let it slowly work its magic on you. The more you can relax the more pleasure you will get out of Peru.

Electricity

In Peru the electric energy is 220 volts but in many 4 and 5 star hotels you can find 110 volts too.

Power cuts occur now and then. In that case, hotels usually produce candles or oil lamps. A good torch is certainly useful, especially for evening walks. The abundance of holes, bumps and ditches in and along the roads can cause nasty falls if the streetlights



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Adresgegevens