



## TOUR PERU ORIENTATION PACKET PREPARING FOR THE TOUR

### Introduction

#### **Lima, Peru**

Peru is a country of wonderful contrasts. Any understanding of Peru must begin with its three very diverse geographic regions – the coast, the highlands, and the rainforest – that have helped to create strong and very diverse regional identities. With hundreds of indigenous languages and cultures still spoken and practiced in Peru, ethnicity is a very long continuum. Lima was the most important viceroyalty in the New World, and still exists as the center of commerce and politics in Peru, and it is the largest and most populated city in the country. Lima is at once global and local; rural and urban; indigenous and creole.

Lima's numerous neighborhoods speak to its colonial history and its modern multiculturalisms that are more developments of one another than separated identities. Early settlers of the area more than 1,000 years ago were hunters, gatherers and harpoon fishermen. Organized societies thereafter practiced a high level of agriculture, pottery and weaving. The city was formally founded by the Spanish in 1535 with some of the districts acquiring their present names much later. We may be visiting the following districts of Lima:

**Miraflores**, where our hotel is located, was formally founded in 1857. It's a colorful district of gardens, parks, cafes, hotels, international and local restaurants, pubs, art galleries and internet cafes. It offers beautiful views of the Pacific Ocean and is an area of intense artistic and cultural activity.

**Barranco** is a more relaxed, bohemian district and was founded in 1874. The neighborhood used to be a beach resort and has traditionally housed many of Lima's most renowned songwriters, poets, and actors. It lives in the romantic song lyrics of creole singers, and in modern times attracts a younger crowd with its nightlife, as well as a more eclectic crowd with its creole peñas and hole-in-the-wall bars and restaurants. A staple of Barranco life is la Peña Don Porfirio.

**Lima.** "El Centro de Lima" as it is referred to locally, is the site of la Plaza de Armas. This is where the governmental palace sits as well as the main governmental buildings, all colonial. Founded in 1535, El Centro de Lima is full of breath taking architecture.

**La Victoria.** This district is a working class section of Lima that you would never visit on any other trip to Perú. It's full of tradition. This is Huevito's home district. One of Peru's most famous soccer clubs is located here (Alianza Lima) as well as the origins of urban Afro-Peruvian music and cuisine. We will visit the home and peña of Pepe Villalobos, one of the most important patriarchs of Peruvian coastal music.

### General Information

Tour Perú is an active and participatory experience. Remember you are on the road with The Afro-Peruvian Sextet on a working tour. As such, it will differ from commercial tours in important ways. Scheduling, for example, may change day to day in order to take advantage of unexpected or special opportunities or to adapt to the band's rehearsal or sound check needs (for example, sometimes local musicians will participate as guest artists and so forth). While we have taken every step to insure every participant's comfort, this is not a tour where rigid schedules are the top priority. Rather, we are all on the road together sharing the energy of making music and

drawing life-experience from the events that happen while on the road. We will always let you know when specific meeting and departure times are and keep you well informed of the proceedings.

There will be free time built in to the tour. This typically happens during rehearsal and sound check times, or press commitments that the band may have at television and radio stations. You will always have the choice to accompany the band or to explore on your own. Please make your own plans for these down times (guide books are a great place to start) as these moments of personal exploration can be very rewarding.

On our tour, the band will have bilingual, friendly, knowledgeable and outgoing support staff. Here some additional information that we hope you will find helpful:

## **HELPFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS and WEBSITES**

### **Hotel Casa Andina**

511.213.9739 to direct dial from the U.S.: 011.511.213.9739  
(when calling within Lima, eliminate the (511))  
Av. Petit Thouars N° 5444, Miraflores, Lima  
[www.casa-andina.com](http://www.casa-andina.com)

### **Hostal El Otro Sitio**

Avenida Paraiso 851, Sunampe, Chincha  
(056) 271-349  
[www.elotrositio.com.pe](http://www.elotrositio.com.pe)

### **Hotel Munay Wasi in Cusco**

(51) (84) 240283 / 231245  
Av. Tullumayo 418  
Cusco, Peru  
[www.munaywasi.com](http://www.munaywasi.com)

**US Embassy in Lima, Peru:** (511) 434-3000 or 618-2000

**US Embassy in Cusco, Peru:** (51) (84) 231-474

## **General Safety**

Conduct yourself in Lima and Cusco as you would in any large urban destination. Although serious crime and violence are much less common than in the United States and generally speaking nobody carries a gun, petty theft does occur. We recommend carrying smaller amounts of money, cameras and other items securely on your person and avoid leaving items unattended. A money belt would give you added security and peace of mind. It's better to leave extremely valuable items, jewelry, etc. at home when you travel anywhere.

## **A note on the weather**

### **...in Lima**

Lima's proximity to Pacific Ocean and the equator would imply a warm and tropical weather, but this is surprisingly not the case. The weather that the city of Lima offers to travelers is mild with very few variations. The cold Humboldt Current, running along the Peruvian coast line means it never rains in Lima, yet there are very high levels of humidity (between 70-100%), combined with mild temperatures that are typical of the central coast. You will feel like you are wearing a nice moisturizer on your skin the whole time, especially if you come from dry weather where you typically use store-bought moisturizer. The summer months that include December and January are extremely pleasant and less humid. Temperatures will rarely exceed 85 degrees.

### **...in Cusco**

Cusco's weather in the winter months will be cold, but not freezing. Between June and October, temperatures can drop to the 30s at night, but because of the strong Andean sun, it will warm up to the 70s during the day. Layering is the most helpful dress code. The sun will shine high each day in the summer (November-March). During December and January there is more of a chance of rain, usually in the afternoons, and temperatures will be slightly higher.

### **Time difference**

The time in Lima and Cusco is currently the same as Central Standard Time in the U.S. However, when Americans set their clocks for daylight savings, Lima and Cusco will then be on Eastern Standard time (daylight savings is not observed in Perú).

### **Currency**

The local currency is *nuevos soles* but US dollars and Euros are widely accepted as currency in restaurants, clubs, grocery stores and most other locations. Just ask if dollars are acceptable before paying your bill. In most cases, your change will be given to you in nuevos soles at a good exchange rate.

### **Telephone**

When dialing Peru directly from any phone in the US you need to dial 011 first. Then, add the city code and number as in the following examples:

To call Lima: dial 011-511-XXX-XXXX. 51 is the country code and 1 is the city code.

To call Cusco: dial 011-5184-XXX-XXX. 51 is the country code and 84 is the city code.

When dialing the United States from Peru you will need to dial 001 and then the phone number.

## **In preparation for your trip**

### **Immunizations**

Lima and Cusco are both urban areas for which no immunizations are necessary. We will not be traveling to tropical destinations. Sometimes American travel clinics assume all of Peru to be tropical and suggest expensive immunizations for travel. These immunizations may also make you feel quite ill. You can consult your health care provider, but please be aware that they will not always be familiar with Perú or where we will be traveling. There is no medical reason for immunizations to travel to Lima and Cusco.

### **Documents**

You are only required to have a valid passport to enter Peru. You need to ensure that your passport is valid for at least 6 months after the date you enter Peru. On arrival you will fill out a standard immigration document, which has a small tear-off portion. Your passport will be stamped and you will be given the small tear-off document to keep in your passport. It's important not to lose this little piece of paper. While it looks insignificant, it is for immigration control so you may be delayed upon departure if you don't have it. Some hotels also take a photocopy upon check-in.

When traveling between Lima and Cusco, you should have your passport on you for the flights. We recommend not carrying your passport on you during the rest of the trip in order to minimize the possibility of losing it. Our recommendation is to make two or three photocopies of your passport before traveling – one copy to keep on your person at all times and one to leave in your hotel room, and one to leave with a loved one in the U.S. If you lose your passport, then the information can be faxed or e-mailed for easier passport replacement. You might also make a list of important numbers like your credit card numbers to leave at home in the unlikely event that you lose your wallet during the trip.

## **Packing**

A good rule of thumb for travel abroad is to bring twice as much money and half as many clothes as you think you'll need. We highly recommend you try not to bring a very large suitcase on this trip. Bring casual, comfortable clothes and shoes, as well as a few nicer outfits for going out at night if you wish (generally speaking, people in Perú dress casually), and keep in mind that layering is key in both Lima and Cusco.

Laundry is readily available in Lima for about \$2.00 per kilo of laundry washed, dried and folded. Note that they do it from one day to the next. This can be a good option instead of bringing more clothes. But do keep in mind that this may not work out well when we are moving from one place to another as musicians often do on tours! We do not recommend sending delicate fabrics. The hotels will also offer laundry services, but more costly.

In addition to the list below, you might want to take an outfit for our nights out in Lima and Cusco. Peruvians are never flamboyant but do clean up crisply for going out. Especially for your night out at the peña, you might consider closed-toed dress shoes and a buttoned-down shirt (for men) or a dress shirt for women (jeans, t-shirts and running shoes would be out of place). This shows a certain respect for the musical traditions as well as your hosts.

### **Clothes (please interpret to suit your personal style and needs)**

- 1 coat/ rain jacket (for afternoons in Cusco)
  - you may also want to bring a lightweight jacket for 60 degree nights in Lima and 60 degree days in Cusco.
- comfortable, closed-toed walking shoes
- Shoes suitable for light climbing/walking around Machu Picchu in particular
- A couple of long sleeve t-shirts (for layering under sweaters and jackets)
- A few t-shirts (also for layering)
- 2-3 pairs of comfortable pants/jeans (suitable for everyday wear around the city)
- One pair of comfortable pants suitable for climbing/walking around Machu Picchu
- 1-2 sweaters
- Undergarments
- Cap or sun hat for days in Cusco, particularly if you burn easily.
- Sun glasses

### **Items that you may also find helpful:**

- Kleenex travel packs (many public bathrooms do not stock toilet paper)
- Secure place for important documents, passport, and money (i.e. money belt)
- Camera: All types of film can be purchased in most major cities, but do note that if you are not a digital user, 35mm film tends to be more expensive in Peru than in the US.
- Sunscreen
- We don't recommend luggage locks with keys (since it's easy to lose the keys). If you use locks, make sure they are TSA compatible locks.
- 220V AC adaptor: Peru uses 220 volt, 60 cycle electricity. You want to be careful to not plug your appliances into the wrong voltage since this will ruin your appliance. Adaptors tend to be heavier items. For your convenience, you can also buy these in Lima for about \$25. Most laptops, shavers and such are now equipped with universal power adapters so this is a non-issue in most cases.

**Other Useful Items:** It is easy to find certain products and over-the-counter medicines like contact lens solution, camera batteries, or video and cassette tapes. Prices are usually comparable or lower than US rates. However, specific brand preferences might not be available. Here are some things you may want to bring with you:

- Extra pair of eye glasses, contact lenses
- Sunglasses
- Small pocket Spanish-English dictionary
- Peru guide book

- Other books/reading material for longer trips like the train ride to Machu Picchu (although it might be difficult to peel your eyes off of the country side)
- Day bag – while a money belt is more suitable for your money and credit cards and you want to stay away from anything too big, you might want a compact day bag or small back pack to keep other items, such as Kleenex, cameras, and bottled water.

Remember that the new TSA airport regulations restrict each traveler to 3 ounce bottles of liquids for your carry-on luggage. For the latest baggage allowances and requirements please check your airline's website.

## **Medical Care & Well Being**

### **Hospitals and Clinics**

Lima has a very efficient, low frills hospital and clinic system, as well as emergency clinics run by the State called "postas médicas". Healthcare is generally very affordable and available to everyone. Most outpatient treatments will be available at low cost. In Paracas and Cusco paramedics cost about \$75 that would cover a doctor to come and see you personally, treat you and prescribe whatever medicine you need. You can also purchase travel insurance if you'd like.

### **Medicine**

If you bring prescription drugs, it is best that the pharmacist's label is on the container. While also widely available, you may prefer to bring any favorite over-the-counter remedies (particularly if you are picky about brand names) for headaches, allergies, colds, and flu, antibiotic and anti-itch ointments, etc. *If you will be taking medication that requires refrigeration or special handling, please notify us in advance and we will be happy to make the necessary arrangements.*

### **Altitude sickness**

Altitude sickness is caused by decreasing levels of oxygen in the air at higher altitudes. The best way to avoid altitude sickness is to drink coca leaf tea (*mate de coca*). This is a healthy herbal tea made from the coca leaf plant. It is not cocaine. *Mate de coca* may be served on your flight from Lima to Cusco and will be available (for free at check-in) when you arrive at the hotel and throughout our stay. This is a custom that dates back to the Incas.

The most important thing is that you should REST when we arrive in Cusco. Move slowly, drink lots of water, and eat lightly. The Afro-Peruvian Sextet recommends (and will insist on) a 24-hour rest period. This is a great time to hang out, nap, talk about music, the mountains, etc. If you feel like you must go out to the Plaza de Armas, do it slowly and after you've sat in the hotel for at least four to six hours, and take frequent breaks when walking, particularly if you become winded. Please note that altitude sickness is in no way related to if you are in good or bad shape. It is also not related to your age. Each person will have their own reaction to high altitude and your body will let you know what you need to do. At most you will need to rest overnight until you adjust to the lower oxygen content. After this initial period you needn't worry.

### **Air Pollution & respiratory ailments**

Lima has an issue with smog generated by outdated vehicles. If you suffer from asthma, sinus, and other respiratory problems, then don't forget your inhalers, sinus medication, or anything else you like to keep on hand. Local pharmacies will sell inhalers, breathing treatments, Prednisone, etc. without a prescription, but if you normally suffer from breathing issues it would be better to pay a visit to your health care professional in the States to get extra medicine before traveling.

Cusco, on the other hand, despite the altitude, is literally a breath of fresh air!

### **Food & Food Allergies**

If you have special dietary needs, are a vegetarian, or very picky about brand names you should consider packing some snack foods like granola bars, nuts, trail mix, small boxes of soymilk, etc.

(they are also readily available in grocery stores in Lima). Lima and Cusco are full of street vendors and convenient stores with affordable, familiar and unfamiliar snacks on every corner. If you are **allergic to peanuts** (mani) then avoid *carapulcra* and *ocopa* (dishes made with peanut sauce).

### **Water**

We recommend drinking bottled water because unfamiliar bacteria can cause diarrhea and other stomach problems for travelers. When you arrive consider buying bottles of water to keep in your hotel room. There will be bottled water available almost everywhere we go. *You do not need to bring bottled water from the States.* Plenty will be available.

Stay away from uncooked salads in restaurants (probably washed in tap water) and brushing your teeth at the sink with tap water. In order to avoid bacteria “build up”, a great rule of thumb is to eat small portions of a great variety of foods. For this reason we will generally order food in groups (which will be fun) and will share with each other so that you are eating a bit of everything but no large amounts of any one thing. This will help your body cope with the unfamiliar foods, spices, etc. that you are going to be enjoying.

### **A few other things to remember while in Peru:**

- In practice, pedestrians generally do not have the right-of-way! (Be careful when crossing streets.)
- Men and women will greet you with a friendly kiss on the cheek if you are a woman. Men greet each other with a handshake.

### **Money And Expenses In Peru**

#### **How much money should I bring?**

Your program fee will cover most of your daily expenses except lunch and dinner. The itinerary will point out when you will need to cover your own meals. In general, meals will be between \$10 (for fixed daily menu items) and \$40 (for high-end meals and fine dining) but generally around \$20. You can also access cash at ATM machines located almost everywhere we'll go. Also see **Spending your dollars and soles** below for other items you might want to consider while budgeting.

#### **Money**

A few tips about handling money when traveling:

1. Carry only what you need, and ideally on your person.
2. When purchasing goods in open markets, keep small bills and change in your pockets. This will also be good for tipping (*propina*) when needed. Large bills are sometimes difficult to break when you are shopping straight from small regional vendors.
3. Please do not haggle with local vendors. Asking prices will be fair.
4. Very common word for money in Peru is “*plata*”.

#### **Exchanging US Dollars**

The current exchange rate is around 3 Peruvian soles to the US dollar. We recommend changing your money at nearby banks. Branches in grocery stores are open until 9pm. Also, ATM machines available everywhere will give you the option of giving you money in Peruvian currency. Very simple and convenient.

#### **Emergency Travel Funds**

It's always a good idea when traveling abroad to have at least \$150 of emergency funds in U.S. dollars.

#### **ATM/Debit Cards, Credit Cards & Traveler's Checks**

- ATM/ Debit card: In every major city and most minor cities in Peru ATM machines are available for debit cards with a major credit card symbol.  
Arrange for a fee waiver before leaving and save receipts in case there are errors.

- **IMPORTANT** – We highly recommend you call your bank and credit card carrier to notify them that you will be traveling to Peru. Otherwise, using your ATM card or credit card in Lima/Cusco may be delayed or blocked by your provider.

### **Communications**

You can make international calls from just about any town in the country and on any phone. For dialing direct to the US you will need to dial 001 + area code + number. Calling from your hotel room will be the most expensive. The cheapest way is to buy a phone card called “tarjeta 147” (readily available at all grocery stops, newsstands, etc.) and to follow its instructions from any public pay phone. In Cusco there will also be “call centers” which are like Internet + phone installations that also offer super cheap rates.

### **Internet**

Both Lima and Cusco offer a great number of internet cafes and also “cabinas” that charge reasonable rates for usage (like 3 soles or less for one hour). We will have low tech internet access at computers in the business centers in every hotel. Some will also have wi-fi. Finding wireless internet access during the trip may not be consistent, however.

### **Spending your dollars and soles**

#### **Purchasing Goods**

##### **Souvenirs/Art/Artisanry**

There are several places in Miraflores that sell Peruvian artisanry. Along Avenida Larco right off Parque Kennedy, there are several places that sell authentic Peruvian souvenirs. At the end of this stretch (if you walk towards the beach), there is an outdoor shopping mall called Larco Mar with several high-end artisanry stores (as well as beautiful views of the coast). If you are looking for high-quality goods, the prices (which are almost double what you will pay in Cusco) are worth it. There are open-air markets several days of the week in Parque Kennedy, and there are also huge warehouses of art, artisanry, clothing, and other goods on Avenida Petit Thouars.

You will be presented the opportunity to do plenty of shopping in Cusco. Along the main plaza, there are t-shirt and souvenir shops. Both Cusco and Lima will offer beautiful Peruvian jewelry. If you're looking for Peruvian gold, silver, or precious stones, you will be amazed.

##### **Tips**

When you spend money in soles in restaurants and bars we recommend that you leave a 15-20% tip. Taxis are not metered and therefore no tip is customary. We will work with each participant to advise what kinds of gifts are appropriate for the Peruvian organizers and guides.

We will collect a group tip donation from each participant that we will use to tip bus drivers, day trip guides, and other people who will be facilitating our trip along the way. We recommend \$20 for the group tip. If you do not want to participate in the group tip please advise us. We will collect the group tip at the beginning of the tour and unless we hear from you otherwise will be counting on your participation.

If you'd like to tip your hotel maids then we recommend leaving the tip each day so that the tip goes directly to that day's maid, rather than leaving one larger tip at the end of your stay.

Also be aware that you'll be expected to give a tip (small change that can be kept in your pockets) if you take pictures of people in regional dress, or of people's property (i.e. livestock such as llamas).

##### **Public Transportation**

Although navigating your way around Lima will give you a good idea of day-to-day life in urban Peru, public transportation in Lima is fast paced and can be a life changing experience. There are several types of buses – some numbered and lettered larger buses that have official routes and both formal and informal *combis* (minivans). Traveling from any one destination to another in Lima is possible, but probably not necessary. If you do decide to go on a bus or combi (and we

do not recommend that you do so), make sure you ask one of our Peruvian staff members for advice.

Taxis are much easier and not too expensive. Where possible try to take official yellow taxis. In Lima anyone can buy a taxi sign and turn their rented or owned vehicle into an informal, unregulated cab. If you take a taxi from the hotel, ask the front desk to hail one for you and to help you negotiate a fair price to your destination. In all cases you will need to negotiate the rate before taking the taxi. Most restaurants, clubs, and bars will do you the same favor. Our helpful staff and Tour Peru fan club and volunteers will also be around. No worries, this isn't anything to get stressed about. In fact, most participants find it fun!

#### **Expenses to Consider:**

- **Meals** – \$6 to \$40 depending on the type of restaurant that you choose. Most of our group meals will be about \$20.
- **Bottled water (about 1.5 soles for small bottles, 3 soles for 2 liter bottles)**
- **Beer or soda**
- **Group Tip** - \$20 is the recommended amount for the group tip. If you do not want to participate in the group tip, *please notify us ahead of time.*
- **Nightclubs**
- **Taxis**
- **Laundry services** - \$2.00 per kilo in Lima, higher in Paracas and Cusco.
- **Long distance phone calls to U.S. (a S./30 card will give you two hours)**
- **Airport taxes back to U.S.** – Please check with your airline to see if the airport departure tax is included in your airfare or not. Most are not (and sometimes they tell you they are and then it turns out they are not). This varies depending on your carrier.
- **Airport tax within Perú.** – you may need to pay a small airport tax each way in Lima and Cusco (less than \$10)
- **Musical instruments** - \$25 to \$150 for different types of Afro-Peruvian percussion instruments of the coast and wind instruments in the mountains.
- **CDs, DVDs**
- **Other Souvenirs**



## **TOUR PERU**



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