

Footprint

Adventures

the way to go.....



Travel Itinerary



The Cordilleras

35 days - Santiago to Lima (or V. Versa)
(Peru, Bolivia, Argentina, Chile)

This tour encompasses the most intriguing part of the Andes Mountain Range. It brings us closer to the mysterious ancient culture of the Incas and makes us wonder what life is like on the moon, while visiting the vast Salt Flats of Bolivia. A fascinating and off the beaten track experience!

This tour can be joined in Santiago or Lima. For those beginning in Lima the itinerary below should be followed in reverse. We can reserve hotel accommodation for you before departure.

Day 1 - 4 (or days 30 - 35) Leaving the modern city of **Santiago** on the first day we head for the Pacific coastline and relax at a **beach campsite at La Serena** for a couple of days. Rejoining the Pan American Highway we enter the **Atacama Desert**. On our way north we stop off at a number of

settlements and we also camp overnight in this barren but beautiful wilderness. Leaving the Pacific Ocean coastline we head towards the oasis town of **San Pedro de Atacama**.

Day 5 - 10 (25 - 30) We spend a few days here, exploring the fantastic surrounding landscapes of the **Valley of the Moon**, salt lakes, as well as stone age dwellings. From the desert our ascent through the Andean passes is spectacular, with dozens of volcanic peaks all over 5000m, leading us to the attractive colonial city of **Salta, in Argentina**. From here we venture into **Bolivia**, you will notice the difference as paved roads become non-existent and locals still follow tradition, wearing bright woollen clothes and bowler hats. Quite a contrast are the shimmering white **Uyuni Salt Lakes**. Driving on the largest salt flats in the world with no road, and only vague tracks to follow makes for an unforgettable experience.

Day 11 - 15 (20 - 24) Continuing north we arrive in **Potosi**. At over 4000m it is the highest city of its size in the world and 400 years ago it was the largest city in all the Americas. Vast amounts of silver were extracted from Potosi and shipped to Spain. There are tours to the mines and it is still clear to see that unfortunately, working conditions here have hardly improved over the centuries. The adventurous among us will appreciate the **opportunity to go down one of these mines with a local guide**. Visiting the ancient mint or having a tour around the **Casa Nacional de Moneda (National Money House)** also provides a good look into Potosi's and Bolivia's past. The history and past colonial splendour make Potosi a fascinating place to visit. A tortuous drive across the **Altiplano**, where the **Aymara and Quechua Indians** scrape a living from their small plots of land in the harsh climate, brings us to **La Paz**. The highest capital city in the world, it is built on a steep slope that falls away from the Altiplano. The top of the city is about 2000ft above the bottom part. Unusually, all the rich suburbs are in the lower city area. This is because the air is thicker with oxygen lower down. La Paz is a great place to **visit a 'pena' club**, where live bands entertain us with **Andean folk music**.



Day 16 - 18 (17 - 19) Leaving La Paz we head to **Puno in Peru**. Nestling on the shores of **Lake Titicaca** it is a friendly, well-kept place and much calmer than the hustle and bustle of La Paz. Lake Titicaca is the world's highest navigable lake at 3800m, it is also the original place of the **Uros Indians** who have made their homes on **floating reed islands**. By boat we visit the floating islands during the day and then we go that one step beyond the average and overnight with one of the Indian families on the lesser known islands **Isla Amantani or Taquile**. Spending some time in these local communities will provide a unique opportunity to learn more about the traditional lifestyle of the Andean people and their customs.

Day 19 - 25 (10 - 16) From Lake Titicaca we now have to face some fairly arduous roads as we make our way to **Cuzco**, the outdoors capital of Peru and our base for the next 6 days. This gives us enough time to hike the 2 or 4 day **Inca Trail to Machu Picchu**, enjoy the architectural uniqueness of Cuzco and explore some of the colourful surrounding markets. Many believe that Machu Picchu itself cannot be understood without following the steps of the Incas on the Inca Trail.

Day 26 - 30 (5 - 9) From Cuzco we head west, passing herds of llama, alpacas and unspoilt Andean villages as we head towards the worlds deepest canyon. Twice as deep as the Grand Canyon, **Colca Canyon** is an awesome spectacle. Here you have the option, accompanied by a local guide, of a one day excursion to view **Condors** circling lazily on the thermals rising from the canyon floor. From here we begin dropping down out of the Andes as we head to **Arequipa**, a beautiful colonial city set at the foot of the impressive **El Misti Volcano**.

Day 31 - 35 (1 - 4) **Puerto Inca**, the ancient Inca port for Cuzco is our next destination and an interesting place to camp on the beach and relax for a couple of days. We now travel to one of the world's great archeological mysteries - **The Nazca Lines**. These huge figures and shapes, carved into the stony desert are best viewed from the air. Thought to have been made by three different groups of people going back more than 2000 years, there are many different theories and books about what they signify

and why they are there. Following the Coastal Highway the **Ballestas Islands in the Paracas National Reserve** is our next stop. Here we take a boat trip to view one of the most **important marine reserves in the world** with one of the highest concentrations of **rare and exotic sea birds and sea mammals**.

Our final days drive takes us to our destination of **Lima** the vibrant capital city of Peru.

What's Included

- Puerto Inca
- Colca Canyon
- Inca Trail Trek to Machu Picchu (4 days trek including all meals on Inca Trail)
- Boat Tour on Lake Titicaca
- Overnight stay with local family on Lake Titicaca
- Uyuni Salt Flat
- Valley of the Moon-Atacama Desert
- All transport on Expedition Truck
- All accommodation fees
- Camping and cooking equipment
- Meals prepared by group - 50% approx
- Services of 2 Crew

What's NOT Included

- International Flights
- Airport Taxes and Transfers
- Travel Insurance
- Visas
- Drinks
- Meals while in Hotels
- Tips and Optional excursions as listed.

Optional Excursions - Excursion Price (£) Price (\$)

- Ballestas Islands Boat trip £9.00 \$15.00
- Flight over Nazca Lines £24.00 \$40.00
- Chauchilla Cemetery £6.00 \$10.00
- Sacred Valley tour in Cuzco £9.00 \$15.00
- White water rafting £12.00 \$20.00
- Cuzco Museum Pass £6.00 \$10.00
- Potosi Guided Mine Visit £6.00 \$10.00
- Uyuni Salt Flats 1 day trip £18.00 \$30.00
- Colca Canyon/Condor 1 day tour £24.00 \$40.00
- Gravity Assisted Mountain Biking £30.00 \$50.00



Important: Before you travel please check your **Tour Voucher** and **Arrival Information** for the latest joining instructions. This will be sent to you upon receipt of final payment.

All itineraries are subject to change without prior notice.

South America - Essential Information Travelling Style

CAMPING / OVERLAND TRUCK TRIP - On our truck tours we stay in simple hotels, guesthouses or camp in both designated campsites, and desert or bush-camp using two person tents. We usually cook using gas stoves and take turns, so expect to cook about every 15 days or so. Driving days normally start around 8am and finish around 5pm with stops for lunch and buying of food, seeing local sights etc. We will not be travelling every day. The average group size is around 18 although our vehicles can carry a maximum of 23.

Climate

In South America you will experience a wide range of conditions. From very cold temperatures and snow in the highlands and mountains of the Andes, to heavy rainfalls in the tropical jungle areas, to blazing sunshine on the coast, South America has it all.

Spending Money and Local Payment

At the beginning of your trip the crew will collect the Local Payment in US Dollars Cash. For personal spending we suggest an average of \$150 per week. Personal spending requirements vary hugely depending on individuals. We cannot specify every cost, however, you need to allow for visas, drinks, occasional meals out, curios and local crafts, emails etc. Budget on optional side trips separately. Credit cards are only accepted in the main cities so you need to bring at least a third of your spending money in US Dollars cash and the rest in US Dollar Travellers Cheques.

Health

Vaccinations - It is advisable to be vaccinated against Typhoid, Tetanus, Polio, Hepatitis A and Meningitis.

Consult your doctor about having Yellow Fever, Hepatitis B and Rabies shots. Malaria - The only areas we visit with a recognised malaria risk are the Amazon Jungle, The Pantanal and Iguazu Falls. You cannot be vaccinated against malaria but there are a number of preventative treatments. While some GPs are quite well-versed in tropical medicine and malarial prevention many are not! If you are not happy with the information your doctor has provided, contact a reputable travel clinic in your area or phone us and we can give you details of several clinics.

Passport and Visas

At the time of printing, United Kingdom, Ireland and South Africa passport holders do not require visas for any of the countries we visit in South America. Australia, New Zealand, USA and Canada passport holders require a visa for Brazil only. Your passport must be valid for at least nine months from the start date of your trip and you will need one blank page for each country you intend to visit.

Starting and Ending your Trip

Quito, Lima, La Paz, Santiago and Rio de Janeiro are the start and finish points of our tours in South America. We recommend arriving a couple of days before your trip starts in order to acclimatise and give yourself a free day. Most people also give themselves a few days at the end of their trips to experience the cities our trips finish in and chill out before travelling on to their final destinations. We can advise you of places to stay and on getting around these cities. We can also reserve accommodation in Rio during Carnival and New Year.

Quito, Only 25 kilometres south of the equator it would be easy to imagine a city basking in intense tropical heat. However, at a height of 2850m (9350ft) it has a climate more similar to spring in southern England. The city was founded by the Incas and is set in a hollow below a towering volcano and surrounded by mountains. The old quarter is characterised by steep, narrow, cobbled streets. The restaurants here are cheaper and more likely to serve local dishes. If you are lucky you will find one serving Cuy, one of the national dishes of baked guinea pig. Quito also has many museums and 16th and 17th century churches, which are well worth visiting.

Lima, Like Quito has a mild climate. It was at one time the chief city of Spanish South America. With an estimated 8 million people inhabiting Lima it has a vibrant and varied atmosphere and is a great place to spend a couple of days. There are quite a few interesting and informative museums as well as cathedrals and churches in the old colonial part of the city to visit.

La Paz, the highest capital in the world lies in a steep canyon. The view from the air as you fly in is dramatic, with snow covered Mt. Illimani at 6400m towering almost 3000m above the city. It has interesting markets selling local cuisine and ethnic crafts including jumpers and woollen garments made from Alpaca, Llama and Vicuna wool. There are a number of festivals in La Paz and we try and time our visits to coincide with some of these.

Santiago, is essentially a modern city of 5 million people. A smart underground metro, well kept parks and cleanliness and efficiency are the things that strike a visitor on arrival. There are a number of very informative museums with pre-colonial and post-colonial history. Santiago is a pleasant and safe place to spend a few days.

Rio de Janeiro is visually, one of the most stunningly beautiful cities in the world. The Corcovado (hunchback) mountain and the Sugar Loaf dominate the skyline. This and the giant white sweep of Copacabana beach overlooking the azure Guanabara Bay, provide the 'cariocas', as Rio's citizens are known, with the setting for the explosive, frenetic sensuality of the annual 'carnival'.

Carnivals and Festivals

Fiestas (festivals) are a fundamental part of life for most Latin Americans. Arriving in a city or village during one of these inevitably frenetic celebrations is an experience you will always remember. However be prepared for some serious partying and a hangover the size of the Amazon! There are too many fiestas to mention but where possible your tour leaders will always try and incorporate one during your trip. Among the most notable celebrations are News Years Eve on Copabana Beach and the annual 'carnaval' which takes place the weekend before Ash Wednesday in towns and villages across the continent. The biggest 'carnaval' is in Rio which we visit each year on our Kingdoms and Carnivals and Coast to Coast trips. The dates for 'carnaval' in the next three years are; 21 - 24 Feb 2004, 05 - 08 Feb 2005 and 25 - 28 Feb 2006.

Local Customs

People in the countries we visit are usually extremely friendly and helpful. Most Latin Americans, if they can afford it, take pride in their clothes and appearance and it is appreciated if travellers make an effort to do like wise. Buying clothing locally can help you look less like a tourist. In the more remote Andean regions ask before photographing people as this may cause offence.

Average Day and Night Time Temperatures (°C) Average Monthly Rainfall (Millimetres)												
Temp Day-Night (°C) Rainfall (mm)	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
BUENOS AIRES, 25 metres (Argentina)	29-17	28-17	26-16	22-12	18-9	14-5	14-6	16-6	18-8	21-10	24-13	28-16
	29	21	109	89	76	61	56	61	79	86	84	99
LA PAZ, 3632 metres (Brazil)	16-6	16-6	17-6	17-5	17-4	16-1	17-1	17-1	17-2	18-3	18-4	18-5
	114	107	66	33	13	8	10	13	28	41	48	94
RIO, 15 metres (Brazil)	29-24	29-23	28-22	27-21	25-19	24-18	24-17	24-18	24-18	26-20	26-20	28-22
	125	122	130	107	99	53	41	43	66	79	104	137
QUITO, 2818 metres (Ecuador)	22-8	22-8	22-8	21-8	21-8	22-7	22-7	23-7	23-7	22-7	22-7	22-8
	99	112	142	175	137	43	20	31	69	112	97	79
SANTIAGO, 520 metres (Chile)	29-12	29-13	27-9	23-7	18-5	14-3	15-3	17-4	19-6	26-9	26-9	26-11
	3	3	5	13	64	84	76	56	31	15	8	5
LIMA, 137 metres (Peru)	28-19	31-19	28-19	27-17	26-16	20-14	19-14	19-13	20-14	26-16	26-16	26-17
	3	0	0	0	5	5	8	8	8	3	3	0
CUZCO, 3310 metres (Peru)	20-7	21-7	21-7	22-4	21-2	21-1	21-1	21-1	22-4	22-6	23-6	22-7
	163	150	109	51	15	5	5	10	25	66	76	137