

Peru Magic and Amazon Jungle 21 days

Day 1: Arrival in Lima.

After a welcome from our team, take you to the hotel to rest.

Day 2: Lima - Iquitos.

We take a flight to the city of Iquitos, the capital of Peru's Amazon and the world's largest city without a road connection. We head to Puerto Bellavista to take a fast boat along the Amazon River towards the Yanamono reserve, where the Heliconia Amazon River Lodge is located. During the trip of around 1 hour 15 minutes we can see the confluence of the Amazon and Nanay rivers and take in the lush jungle landscape. After arriving at the lodge and having lunch, we take a 2-hour walk in the virgin jungle of the Yanamono Communal Reserve. The expert guides point out native flora such as the heliconia, medicinal plants, and giant trees such as the Lupuna (Kapok), which have a girth equivalent to more than 25 people. We can hear the cries of birds such as the turkey vulture and black-fronted nanager, and with luck can see small monkeys such as the marmoset, titi and squirrel monkey. We return to the lodge and rest. Later, we take a fascinating night time boat trip along the Yanamono gorge and Amazon River, to experience the mysterious sounds of the jungle.

Day 3: Amazonas

At dawn, we take a bird-watching tour through the Caceres gorge or a similar area (water levels permitting), where we can observe species such as the wattled jacana, ringed kingfisher and black-necked hawk. During this trip we can also see the striking Victoria Regis water lilies in the lagoons around Yanamono island (water levels permitting). We return to the lodge where a solid breakfast awaits.

After a brief rest, we visit an animal sanctuary where we can see anacondas, boas and other animals such as ocelots, monkeys, anteaters, toucans and parrots. We return to the lodge, where we have lunch and take some rest. Later, we take a boat down the Amazon, where we look for river gray and pink dolphins, do some fishing and have a swim (for those who want). We go back to the lodge, where we have lunch and spend the night.

Day 4: Amazonas

Breakfast. We head down the Amazon River to Monkey Island, where we will see 9 species of monkeys, living in their natural habitat. The monkeys will lead us to their fruit plantation, their main source of food. Here we can also appreciate the garden of medicinal plants, where the guide will demonstrate how these plants are prepared and explain their curative properties. We head back to the lodge, and after lunch return to the city of Iquitos, arriving at 3.00 PM.

Day 5: Iquitos - Lima

After breakfast we take a plane back to Lima.

Day 6: Lima City Tour - Pisco

Today we take a tour of the city, experiencing both colonial and modern Lima. We visit the main plaza, the government palace, the municipal hall, Lima cathedral, the archbishop's residence, the catacombs of San Francisco, and the plaza of San Martin. In the afternoon we head along the Panamerican highway towards Pisco, stopping on the way to sample the cuisine and relax on the beaches of the south coast. After checking into the hotel in Pisco, those who have the energy can head out to sample the nightlife.

Day 7: Pisco - Ballestas Islands - Nazca

After breakfast we take a boat to visit the Ballestas Islands. The trip takes us around the Bay of Paracas and the port of San Martin. On the slopes of an enormous sand dune we see the giant drawing of the mysterious "candle holder". We also see sea lions and a multitude of sea birds in their natural habitat, whose idiosyncratic rock formations create one of the most attractive landscapes of the Peruvian coast. At midday we continue our journey

towards Nazca, making a stop to visit a vineyard and the oasis of Huacachina. We arrive in Nazca and check in to the hotel.

Day 8: Nazca - Arequipa

In the morning we take a flight over the impressive and mysterious Nazca lines. Later we continue on towards Arequipa. We make a stop in Puerto Inca, where we can see the *Qolcas*, or storehouses, where the Incas kept their marine products. We arrive in Arequipa and check in to the hotel.

Day 9: Arequipa

At an altitude of 2,400 metres above sea level, Arequipa is Peru's second city, with a population of around 1 million. It is known as the "White City", for its baroque architecture made from the local chalky volcanic stone *sillar*, a colonial legacy recognised by UNESCO, which has declared the central city a World Heritage site. The perfect volcanic cone of El Misti (5,825 metres) and its neighbour Nevado Chachani (6,075 metres) hover over the city. Today we visit the labyrinthine monastery of Santa Catalina (considered by many the finest in South America), the cathedral, La Compañía church and the bustling San Camilo market. The night is free to enjoy the local restaurants and bars.

Day 10: Arequipa - Chivay

From Arequipa we head towards the Colca Valley, a picturesque Andean valley with villages founded in the colonial era, where the original inhabitants, the Collagua and Cabana ethnic groups, maintain their culture and traditions. Spectacular tiers of agricultural terraces, established from around 900 AD to allow irrigation and prevent erosion, are still maintained and cultivated by local people. We continue towards Cabanaconde, where the Colca Valley becomes the Colca Canyon. With a depth of more than 3,300 metres, the Colca competes with the neighbouring Cotahuasi for the title of the world's deepest canyon, and is the natural habitat of the majestic Andean condor. We spend the night in Cabanaconde.

Day 11: Cabanaconde - Chivay

After an early breakfast we head to the Cruz del Condor lookout point where we get close-up views of the condors rising on the morning thermals in search of food. Around 9:30 we return to Cabanaconde, where we are met by a local guide who will take us on a fascinating visit to the local countryside to see how local people live and work. We learn about Andean culture and traditions and other fascinating details such as the properties of the many medicinal plants that grow locally. Those who want can learn about and participate in the agricultural work in the fields. We enjoy a sumptuous and filling lunch in the countryside, made from natural ingredients. In the afternoon we return to the village and from there continue to the town of Chivay, where we spend the night.

Day 12: Chivay - Puno

After breakfast, we head towards Puno, on the shores of Lake Titicaca. On the way we visit the stone forest of Imata where we have lunch, enjoying the views of the landscape and native birds such as flamingos.

Day 13: Puno - Lake Titicaca

Today we take a boat trip around Lake Titicaca and its islands. First we visit the floating Uros Islands, made entirely from reeds and inhabited by descendants of the Aymara culture. Later we continue to the island of Amantani where we will be welcomed by a local family. In the afternoon we take a walk to one of the island's pre-Incan temples, and then in the evening enjoy a show of local folk music and spend the night with local families.

Day 14: Lake Titicaca - Puno

After breakfast we board our launch to the island of Taquile, where we can observe local people's customs including agricultural techniques which have been used since pre-Incan times. We have lunch and then return to Puno to spend the night.

Day 15: Puno - Cusco

From Puno we head to Cusco in a tourist bus, stopping by a number of interesting archaeological sites and picturesque Andean villages on the way. We spend the night in the hotel in Cusco.

Day 16: Cusco - free day

After breakfast the morning is free. In the afternoon we take a guided tour through the city. We visit the K'oricancha or Temple of the Sun - the most important Incan religious centre - and archeological sites including Kenco, Sacsayhuaman, Puca-Pucara y Tambomachay, absorbing something of the mystic tradition of the Incas in each site. Another night spent in Cusco.

Day 17: Cusco - Sacred Valley - Ollantaytambo

Today we visit the Sacred Valley of the Incas, including the markets of Pisac, the town of Urubamba, and the impressive ruins of Ollantaytambo.

Day 18: Cusco

Today is the day we have all been waiting for. Very early we take the train to Aguas Calientes and than go 20 minutes more by bus to reach the lost city of the Incas, Machu Picchu, where we take a 2-hour guided tour.

Day 19: Aguas Calientes - Cusco

Today is a good chance to get up early, see the sunrise and have a look around the town of Aguas Calientes. Later, there are opportunities for various activities. One of these is a trek to the waterfalls of Mandor. The falls are reached in 1 ½ hours by a trail that follows the railway lines alongside the rushing Vilcanota River. We can observe plantations of coffee, papaya, bananas, avocados and medicinal herbs. The waterfall is 20 metres high, and is formed by the crystal waters that descend from the peak of Mt Yanantin. We return to Cuzco by train and spend the night there.

Day 20: Cusco

Today is a free day to relax, shop, and enjoy the beautiful Imperial City of Cusco.

Day 21: Cusco - Lima - home

A morning flight leaves from Cusco to connect with international flights from Lima.

Included in the tour price

- Flights Lima - Iquitos - Lima.
- Flight Cusco - Lima.
- Flight over the Nasca lines.
- All land transport between destinations and hotel transfers.
- Private transport on days 4 - 10 of the trip (Lima - Puno).
- Jungle expedition 3 days / 2 nights from Iquitos.
- All tour programmes named in the itinerary.
- Local guides in each location.
- An experienced, English-speaking tour guide who will accompany the group until Puno.
- All entrance fees to national parks, museums, and the Machu Picchu sanctuary.
- 3 buffet lunches (Lima, Chivay and Cusco).
- 3-star hotels with breakfast

Not included in the tour price

- International flights.
- Food and drink for lunch and dinner except where indicated.
- Snacks, mineral water, alcoholic drinks, entry to discotheques.

Information on food and drink

In the major cities there is a wide range of Peruvian and international cuisine available. A meal with something to drink costs between \$2-7 USD. Mineral water or soda costs 0.30-0.50 USD for a half-liter bottle. A large bottle of beer costs \$1-2 USD.

What to bring

Walking shoes with a strong sole, flashlight or head lamp, hat or cap, plenty of sun cream, layers of light and warm clothing for a range of climatic conditions including a wind and water resistant jacket, camera with lithium batteries, ear plugs (optional), sleeping bag (optional).

For more information, see Frequently Asked Questions.