EXPLORE! Tour Notes

PRICE GUARANTEE 100% NO SURCHARGES

Atacama to Machu Picchu (AX 2015)

CULTURAL DISCOVERY

TOURDURAT
19
DAYS

Tour Style: Classic
Tour Pace: Full On

Tour Type: Small Groups
Tour Comfort: Standard

tour Code: AX

Tour Highlights - Atacama to Machu Picchu

- ✓ Santiago de Chile - Chile's scenic capital in the shadow of the Andes
- ✓ San Pedro de Atacama - Discover the Valley of the Moon and El Tatio Geysers
- ✓ Uyuni - Explore the great plains of one of the largest salt lakes on earth
- ✓ Sucre - Visit Bolivia's colonial capital, a UNESCO World Heritage Site
- ✓ La Paz - Explore the 'city that touches the sky'
- ✓ Lake Titicaca - Traverse the highest navigable lake in the world and stay on the Island of the Sun
- ✓ Machu Picchu - Travel by train to the 'Lost City', one of the New Seven Wonders of the World
- ✓ Cusco - Explore the ancient capital city of the Incas

Tour Essentials

Accommodation:	14 nights Standard Hotel 3 nights Simple Guesthouse 1 night Standard Lodge
Included Meals:	18 breakfasts, 6 lunches, 4 dinners
Start Point:	Join tour: Santiago de Chile
End Point:	Tour ends: Lima
Transport:	Bus, Train, Flight
Countries:	Bolivia, Chile, Peru

Atacama To Machu Picchu

Come with us on an Andean adventure as we travel from the Chilean city of Santiago to the magnificent Inca citadel of Machu Picchu in Peru. Along the way we explore Cusco, the historical capital of Peru, traverse the spectacular salt flats of Uyuni and visit the city of La Paz, 'the city that touches the sky'.

Suitability

We've given each of our tours a comfort rating and a tour pace, walking or cycling grade to give you a general idea about the level of activity on each tour and the standard of accommodation you will be staying in at the end of your day's adventure.

Often you'll stay in different styles of accommodation during your tour; so we make an average rating across the entire tour. For more information on where you'll stay each night, please refer to the day by day tour itinerary.

Tour Comfort: Standard

Our mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en-suite facilities.

Tour Style: Classic

Packed with adventure, these tours offer inspiring destinations and authentic travel experiences at a reasonable price. Using all kinds of transport and accommodation, we'll take you off the beaten track to discover the true heart of the people and places you visit.

Tour Pace: Full On

These fast paced tours move on quickly from place to place and with lots of early starts and long busy days, they're packed with experiences.

Your tour itinerary

Tour itinerary notes

While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested.

Your Tour Leader

A Tour Leader is an integral part of any Explore tour and your tour will be led by one of our experienced tour leaders who have been handpicked and expertly trained. We believe that our Tour Leaders are the key to the success of our tours; they are passionate travellers who are bursting with first-hand local knowledge which they love to share. Your Tour Leader will also take care of all the planning and organisation throughout your journey. Their passionate approach will make this tour fun and inspiring, bringing the destination to life whether you're travelling alone or with others.

DAY 1 Join tour in Santiago de Chile; afternoon city tour

Joining the tour in Santiago today, our intention this afternoon is to take an orientation tour of the city. One of the most scenic destinations in South America, Santiago lies in the imposing shadow of the majestic Andes, and the old part of the city, around the Alameda, contains a dazzling array of fine buildings, statues and gardens, including the impressive Presidential Palace and the monastery of San Francisco. We aim to take in the Government Palace of La Moneda during our tour, as well as the cultural heart of both the city and the country, the Plaza de Armas. The city is filled with museums to its colonial and pre-Columbian past and in the lively and eclectic Bellavista district we can find the unusual house of the famous Chilean poet and Nobel Prize winner Pablo Neruda (optional visit), just one of the many artists and writers who made this charming city their home. We also plan to visit San Cristobal hill to enjoy spectacular views out over the city.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: None

DAY 2 Free day in Santiago de Chile; optional Valparaiso visit

Today has been left free to explore some more of the city, to wander its streets and parks and perhaps the vineyards that lie on the outskirts of the city. The Maipo Valley is considered by many to be the best winegrowing region in the country. Certainly the oldest, it is renowned for its Cabernet Sauvignon and a tour of the vineyards, lying in the shadow of the magnificent Andes is the perfect combination of sensory delights. Alternatively there is the option of a trip to the nearby city of Valparaiso, Chile's cultural capital. Once a colonial port linking trade with neighbouring Peru, the city suffered numerous raids at the hands of pirates, including Sir Francis Drake. Reaching the height of its prosperity during the 19th century it finally fell into decline with the onset of the steam age and the opening of the Panama Canal. Much of its colonial past has been destroyed by a number of powerful earthquakes over the years, but the city stills retains some of the grandeur of its halcyon days and its hills are dotted with the remnants of its glorious past. The city today is a major port and its surrounding hills, a natural amphitheatre covered in colourful houses and mansions, are a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 3 Fly to Calama, transfer to San Pedro de Atacama and walk in the Moon Valley

Flying to Calama early this morning we transfer by bus to the oasis town of San Pedro de Atacama (2400m), set high among the spectacular volcanoes of Los Andes Cordillera and our gateway to the dramatic landscapes of the Atacama Desert. Arriving later this morning there will be time to relax, or perhaps take an optional visit to the impressive archaeological museum, containing the collection of artefacts assembled by Padre Gustave Paige, a Belgian missionary who spent some 25 years here during the later years of the last century. This afternoon we will take a walk amongst the dunes of the nearby Valle de la Luna (Moon Valley), a nature reserve to the west of the town, where the surreal landscape has been formed by the erosion of the salt mountains, and where we intend to watch the setting sun cast its golden glow across the spectacular landscape before returning by bus back to San Pedro. We have the opportunity this evening to visit the Space Observatory. The dryness of the air and the altitude of the Atacama make it the perfect place to have clear views of the night sky and at the Space Observatory we can visit one of the most powerful telescopes in South America.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 4 Visit El Tatio Geysers, optional salt flats trip

Before the arrival of the Spanish San Pedro was the centre of the Atacama culture, and its dusty streets and evocative setting still exudes an air of times long past. An early departure by bus this morning sees us heading through the desert landscapes of the remarkable Atacama, one of the most barren and dramatic natural features in the entire country. Our destination is the remarkable El Tatio Springs, a geothermal field of spouting geysers and steaming fumaroles surrounded by a vista of volcanic mountains. Arriving in time for the sunrise affords us an opportunity to witness these active geysers erupting in the golden light of the rising sun. Returning to San Pedro via the volcanic landscapes we then have the rest of the day free to enjoy at our leisure. One possible option for this afternoon is to take a visit out to the extensive salt flats of the Salar de Atacama, at 300,000 hectares the third largest area of salt flats on the planet. Rich in minerals, the lake is home to flocks of pink flamingos during the winter months and the air out here is so dry that the views across the Salar have to be seen to be believed.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 5 Drive to Hito Cajon and enter Bolivia

Driving to the Bolivian border at Hito Cajon today we will meet with our new transport and cross the expansive landscapes of the altiplano by 4WD. Our journey takes in the windswept views and spectacular waters of Laguna Verde, lying before the imposing slopes of the Lincancabur Volcano (5960m). It is said that the winds change the lake's colour, from a deep azure to a vivid turquoise as it whips across the rippling surface. From here we continue past Challviri Lagoon, onto the amazing blood-red depths of Laguna Colorada, home to rare James flamingos who feed on the rich red algae that cover the lake. Travelling across the surreal and tortured lands of the high altitude plains of the Siloli Desert we then head for Villamar, our destination for the night.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 6 Discover the Uyuni Salt Flats; overnight in a salt hotel

Today we travel via Ollague Volcano and San Juan into a desolate wilderness of scrubby wasteland. Salt deserts add to the barrenness, but pockets of cultivation and settlements within this seemingly inhospitable land stand out like oases. The landscape is surreal in the extreme, the bright blue of the skies contrasting sharply with the blinding white salt crust. Flamingos inhabit the shoreline, whilst the snow-capped peak of Volcan Tunupa (5400m) looms far in the distance. Crossing the salt flats we then head for Incahuasi Island, where we find an expanse of huge cacti occupying an isolated island in the heart of the Salar de Uyuni. The island once lay beneath the lake that covered this area some 40,000 years ago and all around are scattered rocks that look like ancient coral beds. The cacti themselves have been here for millennia and some tower some 6 metres above the floor of the plains, no mean feat given that it is estimated that they only grow one centimetre a year! We journey via the petrified pre-Columbian mummies of Coquesa, a sacred site that occupies a small canyon at the base of Tunupa. Continuing East we move on to Colchani, driving across the desert pans to visit a salt works, where villagers have sent piles of salt to be ground and iodised before being sold. The small village marks the extreme edge of the salt pans. Tonight we stay in Palacio de Sal, a hotel made out of salt, a truly unique experience.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 7 Travel to the UNESCO World Heritage town of Potosi

Our adventure continues across the mineral rich highlands of southern Bolivia today as we head for the UNESCO Heritage town of Potosi.This trip starts in Colchani and passes through Uyuni, to enter through branches of the Andes Range, pass through Pulacayo, a main tin mining center. The views on the road are great, with lots of colors and formations done by the erosion, as well as remote villages, whose people are dedicated to basic agriculture. Reaching Potosi lying beneath the towering peak of Cerro Rico, at a lofty 4090m above sea level, it is considered the highest city of its size anywhere on earth.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 8 Morning city tour of Potosi, continue to Sucre

The Spanish were attracted to these high terrains by the promise of abundant deposits of silver and zinc and during the early years of the 17th century the town itself was the largest in the region, producing over half the silver found in the Americas. The pink conical slopes of the mountain are peppered with old mines and one Spanish writer once described it as ‘the mouth of hell’. Conditions even today are still very basic, with all the work being done by hand and with the most primitive of tools. However, as it is a cooperative and the miners can work what hours they want and sell what they extract to the cooperative at the market price. Potosi itself is considered one of Bolivia’s finest historical monuments, a city littered with ornate mansions and glorious churches, filled with a glittering array of baroque interiors. This morning we take a tour of this beguiling city, its architecture accentuated by the bright clear light that bathes the landscape, made even more intense by its high altitude. An interesting overview of the city’s varied past can be found in the Casa de Moneda, the original royal mint built in the mid-1700’s, which now houses a variety of displays, from wooden colonial-era minting machines and religious art, to Tiahuanaco artefacts and Bolivian war relics. It even has the country’s first locomotive. If we have enough time we will also take in the Santa Teresa Museum and some of the city’s beautiful colonial churches. This afternoon we depart for Sucre by local bus.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 9 Explore Sucre on a guided tour; free afternoon for personal discovery

A UNESCO Heritage site, the Bolivian capital is a spectacular surviving example of colonial grandeur, with a number of beautifully preserved churches that reflect a distinctive mix of local and European influences. Unofficially known as ‘the city of four names’, Sucre was originally known as La Plata, until new territorial divisions in 1776 saw it changed to Chuquisaca. In the mid-1800s its name was changed once more, this time to its present incarnation, in honour of the first president of the country, Antonio Jose de Sucre. Its final moniker has more to do with the whitewashed walls of its central buildings which, repainted every year, have earned the city the name of La Ciudad Blanca - the white city. This morning we will take a tour of its cultural heart, affording us a little taster of its colonial charm. The 17th century cathedral in the centre of town contains the stunning jewel encrusted ‘Virgen do Guadalupe’ by Bernardo Bitti, an artist who studied under Raphael and went on to become the first great painter of the new world. We’ll also take in the Museo de la Recoleta, which once served as a Franciscan convent, a barracks and a prison and now contains a vast collection of paintings that span some four centuries. The rest of the day is free to continue exploring at your leisure. Bolivia’s most attractive city presents a captivating setting to wander through at will. Its large plazas and elegant facades offer an enchanting backdrop, and a walk along its tree-lined streets unearths a rich heritage and a unique insight into its rich history. As well as its rich past, Sucre has also embraced the future of the country and is renowned as being the country’s student capital, investing it with a youthful and relaxed atmosphere that makes it a true pleasure to explore.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 10 Fly to La Paz; afternoon tour of the city

Leaving Sucre we fly this morning to the lofty heights of La Paz. Standing at 3636m above sea level (higher even than Lhasa in Tibet), La Paz is cupped in the palm of two magnificent mountains and surrounded by the high Altiplano. Its poetic nickname of 'the city that touches the sky' is well earned. Located on the La Paz River, the city was founded by the Spanish in 1548 and its strategic location along the trade routes between the Bolivian silver mines and the ocean helped it to flourish and grow. Today La Paz is the largest city in Bolivia and its administrative capital, making it the highest seat of government on the planet. We will take a tour of the city, enjoying the delights of its vibrant street markets and the captivating grandeur of the church of San Francisco. We'll also take in the pre-Columbian gold and silver artefacts in the Museo del Oro and the fascinating exhibits in the Casa de Pedro Domingo Murillo. Murillo was a martyr of the revolution of 1809 who was hanged in the square that today bears his name and his museum presents us with a rich collection of furniture, textile and artwork that perfectly captures the history of those colonial times.

Overnight: **Simple Guesthouse**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 11 In La Paz; optional trip to Tiahuanaco archaeological site

Today is free to explore the city.

Overnight: **Simple Guesthouse**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 12 Public bus to Copacabana, boat to Isla del Sol

From La Paz we head towards the deep blue waters of Lake Titicaca by public bus, at 3810m it is the highest navigable lake in the world and the second largest in South America, after Maracaibo. An immense body of water it covers over 8000 sq km, plummeting to depths of 300m and its shoreline has been the home to the Aymara and Quechua for millennia. The sacred waters of the lake have long been a site of religious ritual and devotion, from the earliest civilisations in the Americas, to the Inca conquerors who believed the lake to be the site where the Children of the Sun, the legendary founders of the Inca dynasty, Manco Capac and Mama Ocllo, arrived on earth. Our journey takes us to the town of Copacabana; a place of mystic reverence since the times of the Tiwanaku and which today holds favour with thousands of Christian pilgrims. From here we take a boat out to the Isla del Sol, landing near the Pilkokaina ruins and soaking up the mystical ambience of an island steeped in the legends of the ancient Inca. From here we walk up to our eco lodge (approx. 200m ascent +1-1.5 hrs of walking at high altitude), where we will be spending the night.

Overnight: **Standard Lodge**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 13 Visit Chincanca Ruins, return to Copacabana and drive to Puno (Peru)

The Isla del Sol is the largest of the islands that lie dotted around this spectacular lake, lying just off the Copacabana Peninsula, at the southern end of the lake. The island is covered with nearly 200 archaeological ruins that attest to the importance the ancient Incas attached to this site and this morning we take a boat north, towards the labyrinthine Inca ruins of Chincana. The island has been revered by the Aymara for centuries and most of the ruins on the island date form the 15th century AD, although some archaeological remains have been dated back as far as 3000 years BC. At Chincana we find a meandering network of rooms and passageways that link together around a sacred rock, overlooking the sparkling azure waters of the lake below. Then we take to the waters again, taking our boat to the neighbouring Island of the Moon to visit its ruins. We then continue by boat to Copacabana and then take a charter bus across the border into Peru, following the shores of the lake to its north western corner and the bustling town of Puno.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 14 Bus to Cusco via Sillustani or optional Andean Explorer train

Today we follow the legendary route taken by the first Inca ruler - Manco Capac - on his way to find Cusco. En route to Cusco we stop at the beautifully scenic site of Sillustani - a fitting home for the chullpas (funeral towers), which probably date from the 14th century. Driving up to the northern limit of the Altiplano we cross La Raya pass (4335m) and descend towards Cusco. En route the

scenery is desolate but magnificent and we may spot flocks of llamas and alpacas grazing on the windswept pastures. There is also the opportunity to take the classic train journey from Puno to Cusco (optional). One of the great railway journeys of the world, the full day journey covers some spectacular scenery over the high altiplano. We arrive at this fascinating mountain city and are transferred to our hotel in the Sacred Valley. Please note that the train journey must be pre-paid at the time of booking. Rail strikes are common in Peru and so there is the possibility that the train may not always be running. In the event that you have chosen the optional train ride and it is not operating, then we will make the journey from Puno to Cusco by public bus. Lunch is not included on the bus journey.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 15 Free morning in Cusco, train to Aguas Calientes

A free morning affords an opportunity today to visit the Inca salt pans at Maras and the remote ruins of Moray, famous for its fascinating Inca terraces, known locally as the laboratory of the Incas (optional). These terraces were believed to have been carved on different levels by the Incas, in order to experiment with their crops, each being carved to different depths in order to try and ascertain the ideal conditions in which to grow them. Many still believe the site to possess magical powers and there is certainly no doubting the atmospheric feel and stunning location of the site. Another option is a whitewater rafting trip along the Urubama River (no previous experience is necessary and all safety equipment is provided. Please note: Participation in rafting requires that you are able to swim 25 metres unaided). This afternoon we then catch the train to Aguas Calientes, the gateway to one of the greatest of all archaeological sites, the mountain complex of Machu Picchu, the fabled 'lost city' of the Incas, probably the most spectacular feat of engineering in ancient America. On arrival we walk to our guesthouse and check in, after which you might like to relax in the thermal baths.

Overnight: **Simple Guesthouse**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 16 Visit Machu Picchu, afternoon return to Cusco by train

Catching the first bus this morning we head up to the citadel to watch the sunrise over the incredible complex of Machu Picchu. It is also possible to climb the steep and difficult peaks of either Machu Picchu Mountain or Huayna Picchu Mountain to experience alternative viewpoints of the citadel. These must be pre-paid at time of booking. If you change your passport between your time of booking and prior to travel please take your original passport with you to avoid being fined. Alternatively, you can walk along part of the Inca Trail to the Sun Gate. The rest of the morning is then spent in this magnificent city, dividing our time between a guided tour and some free time to explore the spectacular ruins privately. Temples, stairways, palaces and gabled stone dwellings are scattered everywhere, testifying to the energy and ingenuity of the builders. Not without reason this site is probably the most revered attraction in the Americas, its location alone is dramatic in the extreme, teetering on the saddle of a high mountain peak that towers above the valley below. Built in the mid 15th century by Pachacutec, the city was thought to have been a major agricultural centre for the Inca Empire and its inaccessibility seems to have preserved it from the looters of the intervening years, resulting in the remarkably well-preserved ruins that we see today. From the lofty promontory of the Funerary Rock Hut the city is laid out before you: its extensive terraces, the Royal Tombs and the Temple of the Sun, with its ceremonial niches and Inca crosses. The crosses represent the three levels of existence, the first being death or the underworld (represented by a snake), then human life (the jaguar) and finally the highest plain, that of the gods (symbolised by the condor). The excavation of the Royal Tombs has seen a number of mummies unearthed, 80% of which were women, indicating perhaps that the site was occupied mainly by priests and chosen women. This afternoon we then travel by train and bus to Cusco.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 17 In Cusco; optional whitewater rafting

Cusco, the old capital of the Inca Empire and the oldest continuously inhabited city on the continent. Imbued with an atmosphere of mystery and grandeur, the Spanish-style city of today, with its attractive pink tiled roofs, arcaded plazas and steep winding alleyways, stands upon tremendous Inca foundation stones. The archaeological capital of the Americas, Cusco's links with the Inca Empire are everywhere to be seen, from the stone walls that line the city streets, to the museums filled with artefacts and relics of a long dead people. With a free day to enjoy this most remarkable of cities we can recommend a visit to the fortress-citadel of Saqsayhuaman (optional). Built to defend the Inca capital, Saqsayhuaman broods high above the town, its huge, zigzagging stone walls broken into 66 sharply projecting angles to catch attackers in a withering crossfire. Meant to represent the head of a puma, 20,000 conscripted workers toiled for 90 years to finish it and it was the site of one of the most fiercely fought battles of the Spanish conquest, when the Incas made one last ditch attempt to drive out the Spanish, an attempt that ended in defeat and death for thousands of them. Another option is a trip out to nearby Pisac to visit its market and perhaps explore the magnificent ruins of its citadel. Strategically located at the head of the Urubamba Valley, Pisac once controlled the road connecting the Inca Empire with Paucartambo on its eastern borders and the magnificent Inca ruins that once so dominated this valley still occupy the mountainside above the town. On market days the square is awash with noise and colour as vendors trade local produce for medicines and tools and there are bargains to be had amongst the weavers and potters. The ruins occupy a rocky spur, its citadel strategically located at the head of the gorge, overlooking

the patchwork of fields and terraces that dot the valley floor. Climbing up to the ruins you pass through a magnificent collection of temples, palaces, terraces, solstice markers and baths. The highlight of the site is without doubt the central Sun Temple, a worthy match for any of the temples of Machu Picchu and standing amongst these evocative ruins it is very easy to conjure up a timeless image of life in this valley as it has gone on for countless generations.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 18 Fly to Lima; optional city tour

This morning we transfer to the airport for the flight to Lima. Founded in 1535 the 'City of Kings', is an eclectic mix of the ancient and modern and the rest of your day here is free to explore as you wish. This afternoon there is the option to perhaps take a tour of the city with a local guide, taking in the delights of the archaeological and anthropological museums, or perhaps the Larco Herrera Museum, whose colonial halls hold the greatest collection of Moche, Sican and Chimu artefacts on earth. You may prefer to visit the Gold Museum, featuring one of South America's best collections of historical costumes and weaponry. Alternatively, you may just prefer to stroll through Plaza San Martin and Bolivar and enter the fascinating catacombs of the convent of San Francisco, or pass through the colonial squares and under the intricate modern balconies of old Lima, seeing some of the city's best surviving examples of colonial architecture.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 19 Tour ends in Lima

The tour ends this morning in Lima after breakfast.

Included Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation and Meals

Food & Drink

Included meals: 18 breakfasts, 6 lunches,4 dinners included in the price of this tour. Please be prepared to pay for non-included meals. Please note that costs for drinks and meals can vary depending on location.

Budgeting for your Tour

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the tour price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs and items of a personal nature such as laundry.

Food

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide.Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Bolivia

Lunch £: 5.00

Dinner £: 8.00

Chile

Lunch £: 13.00

Dinner £: 20.00

Peru

Lunch £: 9.00

Dinner £: 13.00

Drink

The prices for drinks can vary greatly depending upon location and the prices detailed below are an average guide. In general you would expect that drinks purchased in a supermarket or local bar to be less expensive, whilst drinks in an upmarket bar or restaurant may be more expensive.

Bolivia

Bottle of Beer £: 1.47

Water £: 0.60

Chile

Bottle of Beer £: 1.75

Water £: 1.30

Peru

Bottle of Beer £: 1.50

Water £: 1.00

Other Sightseeing & Activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations.

Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Optional Excursions

Santiago de Chile - Visit to Valparaiso US$ 90 (minimum 3 passengers), Wine tour US$ 69 (min 3 passengers).
San Pedro De Atacama - Trip to the Atacama Salt Lakes US$ 115.
La Paz - Tiahuanaco (min 3 passengers) US$ 60.
Sacred Valley - Visit to Maras and Moray approximately US$ 54 (based on 4 passengers), Whitewater rafting US$ 40/45 (depending on numbers).
Cusco - Visit to Sacsayhuaman US$ 40, trip to Pisac Market US$ 50.
Lima - City Tour approximately US$ 30, Larco Herrera Museum US$ 35 guided, US$ 11 unguided; Pucusana Fishing Village US$65 (based on 3); Pachacamac site US$45 (based on 4) inc. pottery class US$60 (time permitting)
Puno - Andean Explorer train - Puno to Cusco £115 (includes 3 course lunch and afternoon tea) - This must be pre-paid at time of booking. If you change your passport between your time of booking and prior to travel please take your original passport with you to avoid being fined.
Huayna Picchu - £60 (including transport) Machu Picchu Mountian £55 - Subject to availability - from 1st July 2015 this must be pre-paid at time of booking. If you change your passport between your time of booking and prior to travel please take your original passport with you to avoid being fined.

Tipping - Tour Leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Tipping - Local Crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognised part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. Accordingly you should allow approx. US$ 70 for gratuities for local staff.

In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

Foreign Exchange

Bolivia

ATM Availability: Available in Major towns. Always have some cash as back-up as they are not always reliable

Credit Card Acceptance: Credit cards are useful and can be used in many places, but may be subject to a 10% service charge

Travellers Cheques: Travellers Cheques can be awkward or expensive to change

Local Currency: Boliviano.

Recommended Currency for Exchange: Carry all your funds in US cash NOT Sterling or Travellers Cheques which are more difficult to exchange. We recommend to take a minimum of US$400-$500 of your total spending money in cash for your tour, in mixed denominations. Notes should be in good condition otherwise they might be difficult to exchange.

Where to Exchange: Most major towns - your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival.

Chile

ATM Availability: Available in Major towns. Always have some cash as back-up as they are not always reliable

Credit Card Acceptance: Credit cards are useful and can be used in many places, but may be subject to a service charge.

Travellers Cheques: Travellers' Cheques can be awkward or expensive to change

Local Currency: Peso.

Recommended Currency for Exchange: Carry all your funds in US cash NOT Sterling or Travellers Cheques which are more difficult to exchange. We recommend to take a minimum of US$400-$500 of your total spending money in cash for your tour, in mixed denominations. Notes should be in good condition otherwise they might be difficult to exchange.

Where to Exchange: Tour Leader will advise on arrival

Peru

ATM Availability: Available in Major towns. Always have some cash as back-up as they are not always reliable

Credit Card Acceptance: In major restaurants.

Travellers Cheques: Travellers Cheques are not always easy to exchange.

Local Currency: Nuevo Sol

Recommended Currency for Exchange: Carry all your funds in US cash NOT Sterling or Travellers Cheques which are more difficult to exchange. We recommend to take a minimum of US$400-$500 of your total spending money in cash for your tour, in mixed denominations. Notes should be in good condition otherwise they might be difficult to exchange.

Where to Exchange: Most major towns - your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival.

Joining your Tour

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a ‘flight inclusive’ package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the ‘Land Only’ arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific ‘Joining Instructions’ prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found on our website at www.explore.co.uk, in the tour specific dates and prices section.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer. For more information please refer to https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the ‘Land Only’ arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer please refer to https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Important Information

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of joining any of our tours that you must have valid travel insurance. It must indicate that you have cover for (at least) medical expenses and emergency repatriation in the event of illness or injury. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling in England and Scotland. We also strongly recommend your policy includes curtailment, personal effects and cancellation protection as all deposits paid are non-refundable. You will also need to ensure your travel policy covers you for all activities you intend to do whilst on tour.

We are delighted to include FREE travel insurance **for all qualifying customers** who book an Explore trip between 01 January 2015 and 31 August 2015.

For more information about Travel insurance and to check whether you are eligible to receive free cover, please visit www.explore.co.uk/insurance. Explore Worldwide Ltd are an Introducer Appointed Representative of Campbell Irvine Limited. who are

authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. The registration number can be checked by visiting the the FCA's website www.fca.gov.uk or by contacting them on 0800 111 6768.

Visa Information

Bolivia: Visas are not required for UK, New Zealand, Australian, and Canadian citizens. However, US citizens will require a visa.

Chile: Visas are not required for UK, New Zealand, Australian, US and Canadian citizens.

Please note all passengers arriving with passports from Australia, Canada or USA will have to pay a reciprocity tax before getting into the migration area. The amount to be paid for each passport holder is as follows: Australia $95, Canada $132.
Peru: Visas are not required for UK, New Zealand, Australian, US and Canadian citizens.

Other nationalities should consult the relevant consulate.

All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related issues with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

USA (If flights transit): According to US law, passengers will have to disembark, collect luggage and clear immigration before re-boarding for the onward flight.

Citizens of the UK, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and passport holders from several EU countries can enter the United States without a visa under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP). This applies if you enter the country by sea or by air on a carrier participating in the visa waiver scheme, holding a return/ onward ticket. The passport requirements are that it must be machine readable, and must contain a digital photograph of the holder and also an integrated circuit chip that stores biographic information.

All passengers travelling to the USA under the Visa Waiver Programme must provide their details online no later than 72 hours prior to travel. British travellers who have not registered before their trip are likely to be detained and sent home.

When completing an application for transit you should enter the words 'In Transit' with your final destination location in the address line. Anyone applying for an Electronic Travel Authorisation (ESTA) to travel under the Visa Waiver system will be charged a fee of 14USD (9GBP).

For more information, and to apply online, please visit the following website at https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov. Once obtained, the application will be valid for a period of two years, or for the validity of your passport (whichever is shorter).

For more information about who is eligible for the VWP, or any other questions you may have regarding your eligibility, or machine readable passports, please contact your local consular office, or visit www.usembassy.org.uk

Vaccinations & Protection

Bolivia

A yellow fever certificate is not compulsory to enter Bolivia for the areas we visit. We also recommend protection against typhoid, polio, infectious hepatitis, tetanus and malaria. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on different prophylaxis available against malaria. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/ and from your local healthcare provider.

Chile

Nothing compulsory, we recommend protection against typhoid, tetanus, diphtheria, polio and hepatitis A. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/ and from your local healthcare provider.

Peru

We recommend protection against typhoid, tetanus, polio, infectious hepatitis and malaria. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on different prophylaxis available against malaria.We recommend protection against yellow fever. There have been very few cases reported, but local authorities do recommend travellers get immunised against yellow fever. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/ and from your local healthcare provider.

Preparing for your Tour

Altitude Description

This tour includes nightstops where we sleep at altitudes in excess of 4000m. For this reason it is suitable only for participants aged 16 and over.
It is difficult to predict who is at risk from altitude sickness but if you have a heart or respiratory problem we advise you to check with your doctor and not to risk travel or trekking at high altitudes.
You must have adequate travel insurance for your trip. Please ensure that your insurance policy covers you to the maximum altitude indicated above. If you have Explore insurance you will be covered to this altitude.

Climate

Bolivia

Conditions vary from region to region and with altitude. Bear in mind that at high altitude temperatures can drop dramatically, and conditions can change suddenly. Inland - Hot and humid from October to March (summer). Mild to hot from April to September (winter). Highlands -- All year, sunny days, chilly to cold evenings. Rainy December to March. Mainly dry rest of yearbest time for mountain travel.

Chile

The best time to visit is spring (Sept-Nov) and autumn (March- April). Between June and September the heat in the northern part of the country is less intense. Remember rain can fall at any time of the year and the weather is changeable in the mountains. Easter Island has a tropical climate so is likely to be quite hot and humid. It can also rain there in the evenings and become chilly.

Peru

There is a rainy season from Dec - Mar however on the coast it rarely rains. Jun-Oct is damp and misty, but temperatures never drop below 10°C. At high altitudes although there are sunny days temperatures can drop dramatically, and conditions can change suddenly.

Clothing

Bear in mind that several different climatic zones will be experienced. Lightweight clothing is necessary for some warm and humid daytime conditions, though evenings can be cooler, and temperatures at altitude can drop considerably, so please come prepared.
The highlands enjoy dry sunny days but extremely cold nights so thermal underwear, a well insulated fleece/jacket and a thick sweater are essential. Bring something warm to sleep in. Lightweight raingear is essential at any time of the year. Bring a swimming costume for the thermal baths at Aguas Calientes.

Equipment

A sunhat and sunglasses are advisable as is high factor sunscreen and lipsalve with sun protection, due to the thinness of the atmosphere. A torch is also useful in case of power cuts or emergencies. Don’t forget your camera and a towel. If you intend to do the walking on Isla Del Sol you may want to bring a walking pole if you have one.

Footwear

Comfortable lightweight trail boots, trainers and sandals.

Luggage: On Tour

One main piece and a daypack and an extra bag for the two nights on Isla Del Sol and the overnight in Aguas Calientes. The main bags are left in Copacabana and Ollantaytambo (in the Sacred Valley) respectively. On Isla del Sol, the extra bags are carried by mules so you only have to carry daypacks. Remember, you are expected to carry your own luggage (i.e. on and off transport etc.) so don’t overload yourself. It is recommended you bring lockable bags.

Luggage allowance on tour: 20kg

General Information

Country details

Bolivia

Population: 10,907,778

Size of Country: 1,098,581 sq km

Major Language: Spanish

Religion: Roman Catholic

Time Difference to GMT: -4

Chile

Population: 15,500,000

Size of Country: 748,800 sq km

Major Language: Spanish, Aymara, Rapanui.

Religion: Predominantly Roman Catholic.

Time Difference to GMT: -4

Peru

Population: 29,496,000

Size of Country: 1,285,216 sq km

Major Language: Spanish

Religion: Catholicism

Time Difference to GMT: -5

Electric Supply & Plugs

Bolivia

3 Pin Flat

Chile

2 Pin Round

Peru

2 Pin Flat

Why Choose Explore

We've been creating award-winning pioneering adventure holidays for over 30 years, earning the trust of thousands of delighted customers, who feel safe in our hands. Our tour leaders have expert local knowledge and our tours are designed to take you off the beaten track to see the most exotic, inspiring and dramatic places in the world.

- With over 30 years' experience, we are passionate about what we do.
- Pioneering small group adventures, self-guided, private journeys & tailormade holidays.
- Award winning tour leaders who you can trust.
- Responsible travel is and always has been one the driving principles of Explore.

Our adventure holidays are full of exciting things to see and do, exploring in small groups travelling by bus, boat, plane, rickshaw, camel, elephant, or any number of unusual forms of transport . Often you will stay in family run hotels and village houses and enjoy authentic local cuisine. In this way, it's easy to discover the true heart of the people and the place you travel to – and make some new friends along the way. Each tour is uniquely different, so please feel free to browse through our tours to see what may whet your appetite.

Our commitment to the environment

We are passionate about sustainable travel and work hard to create tours where your holiday delivers real benefits to the local communities. We minimise our impact by travelling in small groups, respecting local cultures and traditional, reducing waste and offsetting 100% of the CO2 from our flights.

When you travel with Explore, you are directly contributing to local economies and helping empower the people you meet. We currently support a range of charities and good causes, including: Toilet Twinning (helping to flush away poverty), Lone Buffalo Foundation (a community project based in Laos providing creative skills for young people), Dekamer (a turtle rescue centre in Turkey) and Kids Saving the Rainforest (a wildlife rescue centre in Costa Rica supported through the LATA foundation). We also care passionately about the world's wildlife. We are patrons of the Born Free Organisation and Friends of Conservation.

Cool Earth

Explore are proud to support Cool Earth in their effort to reduce global carbon dioxide levels through the prevention of deforestation in the South America rainforest. Cool Earth focus on areas in immediate danger of deforestation, supporting local communities to be forest guardians. To date 350,000 acres of rainforest has been protected. Saving rainforest also protects rare animals and plants, allows local forest communities to maintain their way of life, and protects a major source of oxygen and fresh water. When you travel on an Explore holiday we make a donation to Cool Earth that exceeds the impact of our customers flights each year.

Earth Matters

- The Travel Foundation

  Explore are active members and supporters of the Travel Foundation which has established a variety of sustainable tourism projects in destinations and works with industry to improve practice. Visit their website www.thetravelfoundation.org.uk
- Tourism Concern

  Explore support the work of Tourism Concern who campaign for fairly and ethically traded tourism, and are part of its Ethical Tour Operator Group www.tourismconcern.org.uk
- For further information on responsible travel go to www.explore.co.uk/ResponsibleTourism/

Know before you go

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice follow the link at www.explore.co.uk/travel-safety

Booking Your Holiday

Peace of mind - book with confidence

You can book your Explore holiday with confidence, as all monies paid to us for your trip are fully protected. Explore is a fully bonded tour operator licensed by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and by ABTOT.

The air holiday packages (Tours including flights) that we advertise are ATOL protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's LicenceÂ granted by the Civil Aviation Authority.Â Our ATOL number is ATOL 2595. In addition, As a member of the Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT), Explore has provided a bond to meet the requirements of the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992. Please note that packages booked outside the UK are only protected when purchased directly with Explore.

Reserving your place

To reserve your place on this tour you will need to check availability on the Explore website or through our dedicated call centre based in the UK where you can. Our tours can fill up quickly so you are advised to book as early as possible. If your chosen date is ‘Available’ or ‘Guaranteed’ we will be able to provisionally hold you a space for up to 48 hours.

For Self-Guided holidays and Private Journeys simply choose your date of travel and let us know so we can confirm all ground services.

The easiest way to confirm your booking is through our website. When you are ready to book, we normally require a 10% non-refundable deposit, but for some holidays this may be more to cover such items as permit fees, internal flights or other non-refundable services. If your travel starts within 60 days of booking, full payment will be required at the time of booking

100% No Surcharge Guarantee

The price paid for our holidays is no longer subject to change. Once booked and confirmed we will guarantee the price you pay will not increase, whatever the circumstances. You will not be approached to pay fuel surcharges unlike the vast majority of other adventure tour operators. The price guarantee applies to all new bookings departing between 1st January 2014 and 31st December 2015.

Tour Itinerary Versions

Itinerary details may vary depending on departure date and alternative itineraries for this tour may exist. Please refer to the dates and prices page on our website to check which itinerary operates on each departure date.

Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour but small changes may just be added to these tour notes.

Please note: 2015 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2015. 2016/17 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 2016.

These tour notes were printed on 05/08/2015 09:41:43