

Peru

PRE-DEPARTURE INFORMATION



Congratulations on your decision to visit Peru! This information will help you prepare for your exciting travel experience and get the very most from your travels. Our suggestions are based on involvement in thousands of trips to Latin America, so while all trips (and travelers) are slightly different in their requirements, our expertise should help you adapt your own style and preferences. This booklet is written for both trekkers and non-trekkers. Any special considerations that apply only to trekkers are stated as such.

GETTING READY FOR YOUR TRIP

Passports

- ❖ Passports are required of U.S. Citizens to enter Peru
- ❖ Must be valid for at least 6 months after your trip – if not, apply or renew immediately
- ❖ Keep a copy of the picture page of your passport in a separate place while traveling
- ❖ Carry an extra passport photo in case you need to apply for a quick replacement

Visas

- ❖ No visas required for US citizens for visits of up to 90 days
- ❖ You will obtain your tourist card from the airlines en route
- ❖ Nationalities of other countries please inquire regarding visas
- ❖ For further information regarding entry requirements, travelers should contact the Peruvian Embassy in Washington, D.C.; Tel: (202) 833-9868; Website: <http://www.peruvianembassy.us/>

Health, Immunizations

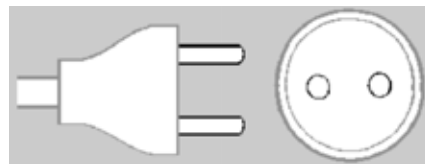
- ❖ Some immunizations are highly recommended, but none are required for entry
- ❖ Recommended standard immunizations include: polio, tetanus, MMR, hepatitis A & B
- ❖ Typhoid and Hep A vaccines are highly recommended for visits to Peru
- ❖ Malaria prophylactic may be recommended if traveling to the rain forest
- ❖ Yellow fever vaccine is highly recommended for visits to rural and especially rain forest areas
- ❖ Yellow fever vaccination certificate IS required for stays at Amazon Lodges
- ❖ Yellow fever vaccination certificate is not required for entry to Peru unless arriving from other infected countries, including Ecuador, Bolivia, Panama, Columbia or Brazil
- ❖ SEEK INDEPENDENT MEDICAL ADVICE from your physician or local travelers health service
- ❖ For the latest recommendations for immunizations or malaria prevention contact the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta, Georgia: 800-311-3435, or visit their website: <http://www.cdc.gov/travel>
- ❖ Many universities have immunization clinics that can assist you

Time Difference

- ❖ Peru is on Eastern Standard Time (-5 GMT) all year round

Electricity

- ❖ Electricity is AC, 220 volts, 60 cycle
- ❖ You may need an appliance converter kit with appropriate plug adapters, as well as converters for any appliances that do not switch between 110 and 220 volts
- ❖ Some plugs may be similar to those used in the US, and others may be the 2-pronged round plugs commonly found in some European countries and elsewhere in South America



ARRIVAL

Entry

- ❖ A valid passport is required to enter and depart Peru
- ❖ Tourists must also provide evidence of return or onward travel
- ❖ The U.S. Embassy in Lima can be contacted by phone at 51-1-434-3000 and the Consular Agency in Cusco's number is 51-84-9-62-1369. For further information concerning travel to Peru, travelers should consult the Department of State's web site found on the Internet at <http://travel.state.gov>



Customs

- ❖ Anything you are bringing into the country for personal use - camera gear, snorkeling equipment, binoculars, etc. - will be readily allowed

GETTING ALONG AS A VISITOR

Food & Restaurants

- ❖ Look for a restaurant where lots of locals are eating - chances are the food will be delicious and reasonable
- ❖ Eat only foods that are thoroughly cooked, and raw fruits and vegetables that you have peeled yourself
- ❖ Drink only bottled drinks, and avoid tap water, fountain drinks and ice cubes
- ❖ Don't buy food from street vendors or stalls
- ❖ Avoid fresh salads unless the vegetables are washed with purified water, and avoid dairy products that are unpasteurized or may not have been refrigerated properly

Altitude Sickness

- ❖ **PLEASE NOTE:** The information below is provided to increase awareness of symptoms that some travelers experience, and is not meant to be alarming. Most people experience few, if any, symptoms.
- ❖ Altitude sickness is caused by abrupt change from low elevations to high altitudes. Mild symptoms include: headache, shortness of breath, light-headedness, difficulty sleeping, loss of appetite, mild nausea or vomiting, and fatigue.
- ❖ Take it easy the first day or two upon arrival at high altitude. Be sure to drink fluids, avoid alcohol, eat regularly and get plenty of rest. Your body will soon acclimatize and you will feel fine.
- ❖ Trekkers hiking up to high elevations may feel the continuing effects of altitude as they make their ascent. Our itineraries are planned to allow for a slow pace and plenty of time for acclimatization to minimize these effects. Local guides will not allow you go too high too fast and are prepared to adjust the pace if necessary, so the risk of Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS) is extremely low. On rare occasions, extreme symptoms may manifest themselves. If this occurs in yourself or if you notice symptoms in a fellow trekker, please tell your guide immediately.
- ❖ The first response to severe symptoms should be a quick descent to a lower altitude. Most cases, if they occur, are mild, and symptoms improve promptly with a return to lower altitude.
- ❖ Some travelers ask us about Acetazolamide (Diamox), which can help to speed acclimatization and reduce minor symptoms. Be aware that some people have a severe reaction to Diamox. Consult your physician for further information about this drug.

Money and Currency Exchange

- ❖ Peruvian currency is the Nuevo Sol
- ❖ We recommend bringing cash with you for exchange upon arrival at a bank, major hotel, or cambio
- ❖ You may need to show your passport when you exchange money or travelers checks, so keep it handy
- ❖ Major credit cards are widely accepted. You may need to show your passport when using a credit card.
- ❖ ATM machines are available in major cities, but not all accept foreign cards
- ❖ We suggest bringing at least \$500 for items and meals not included in the cost of the trip, emergency money, and for shopping
- ❖ Be sure to have small bills, both in local and US currency. \$1 US bills can be very useful
- ❖ Your U.S. cash for exchange should be newer than 2001, and not torn or marked – older bills may be refused
- ❖ An airport exit tax of approximately \$30 (in cash, U.S. or local currency) must be paid when departing
- ❖ There is also a \$5-6 airport fee for domestic flights (in cash, U.S. or local currency)

Tipping

- ❖ Be sure to carry enough small bills for tips



- ❖ Tipping is generally expected in Peru as a reward for good service. We suggest the following guidelines, although all tips are entirely at your discretion.
- ❖ Drivers or Transfer agents: \$1-2 per person per day (or \$10-15 pooled among the group)
- ❖ Adventure or Tour Guides: \$7-10 per person per day (or about \$15-25 per day of tour, pooled among the group)
- ❖ When trekking, camp crews tend to be with you a minimum of 4 days. These are voluntary contributions and if desired, we recommend that the following guidelines be followed:
- ❖ Head Cook: \$3-5 per person per day (or \$40 pooled among the group for a 4-day trek)
- ❖ Camp Crew, each: \$1-2 per person per day (or \$20 pooled among the group for a 4-day trek)
- ❖ Porters/ mule drivers: \$1-2 per person per day (or \$10-15 pooled among the group for a 4-day trek)
- ❖ In the Amazon: You will find tip boxes at each of the lodges for staff tips. We suggest leaving \$3 per person/per day. To tip your guide, wait until the end of the trip, and do so personally. We suggest about \$10 per person/per day.
- ❖ Tips of \$1-2 per person to hotel porters is appropriate. Tipping for porters at airports, train or bus station transfers (where qualified porters certified by the proper authorities are located) are generally included in your tour cost. (Please ask your guide if in doubt.)
- ❖ It is customary to tip service people such as waiters, bartenders, and hotel help. The bill in most restaurants will have an added local tax and a 10 or 15% “servicio” charge. Neither of these is a tip. An additional 10-15% is usually appropriate to leave for good service.
- ❖ Anytime you especially appreciate someone particularly informative or helpful, an extra tip is always gratefully accepted.

Emergency Services

- ❖ Medical care is available for minor medical conditions, and the guides are trained in first-aid
- ❖ Prevention of injury is always the best policy.
- ❖ For trekking, you must be reasonably fit, healthy and sure-footed.
- ❖ Emergency services and care for major medical illnesses may be limited in the rain forest
- ❖ Medical care is generally good in Lima, but it is less so elsewhere in Peru
- ❖ Public hospital facilities in Cusco are generally inadequate to handle serious medical conditions
- ❖ Although some private hospital facilities in Cusco may be able to treat acute medical problems, in general the seriously ill traveler should return to Lima for further care as soon as is medically feasible
- ❖ Your guide will advise you in the case of urgent medical need during your tour or trek

SPECIAL REMARKS

People

- ❖ You will find the people very friendly and welcoming
- ❖ It is best to ask permission before taking portrait photos. If in doubt, ask your guide

Time

- ❖ Relax and enjoy the easy-going rhythm of Latin America
- ❖ Do not expect everything to happen on time; remember that in some places time is not as important as it is back home, and there is often little concern for punctuality
- ❖ Despite best efforts, departures and arrivals could be a little before or after the time given. This applies particularly to aircraft movements. Operating requirements, weather and terrain sometimes present problems, and on these occasions, to ensure your safety, flight times may vary

Restroom Facilities

- ❖ It is a very good idea to carry your own small supply of toilet paper. In cities where there are flush toilets you will usually find a wastebasket next to the toilet - most sewage systems can't handle paper. Most bathrooms will neither look nor smell as sanitary as those you are used to.



Safety

- ❖ Observe the same precautions taken at home
- ❖ Do not flaunt a bulging wallet, always lock unattended vehicles, do not leave baggage unattended in public
- ❖ Make use of security facilities provided for valuables in your accommodation and on the boat
- ❖ In towns, the best place to carry your passport and money is in a pouch worn around the neck inside of the shirt or in a money belt around the waist
- ❖ It is highly recommended that you buy travel insurance that covers your baggage before you leave
- ❖ Don't take anything you can't afford to lose or can't replace

Shopping

- ❖ Bartering is the norm at local street markets. The actual price you can expect to pay may be closer to 70-80% of the original price. But don't push too hard - remember that what is only a few dollars to you may mean a great deal to the average seller or artisan. Never barter unless you intend to buy.
- ❖ Great souvenirs include: hand-woven textiles, llama and alpaca wool items, sweaters, wall hangings, blankets, rugs, silver and gold jewelry, ceramics, wood and stone carvings, leather and straw items.

Equipment & Packing

- ❖ A good goal is to fit everything into a single piece of checked luggage and a carry-on daypack
- ❖ We recommend a durable, water-resistant, soft duffel bag or lightweight soft-sided suitcase as your checked luggage. Hard suitcases are not practical due to space limitations.
- ❖ A small backpack or hip-pack is ideal for carrying bottled water, camera, extra sunblock, etc, while on excursions where the terrain requires your hands to be free.
- ❖ Choose a distinctive, easily identified bag, and use a JOURNEYS luggage tag for bag identification by staff, and your name and address should be also indelibly affixed inside the luggage.
- ❖ Lightweight & light colored clothes will help keep you cooler. Also keep in mind that synthetic fabrics dry faster than natural fibers like cotton, especially in humid areas, so you can pack less if you are able to wash and dry your clothes easily.
- ❖ Casual clothing is appropriate at all times
- ❖ Some hotels may have laundry services, but you will probably need to wash out some clothes en route
- ❖ Weight limits on checked luggage for in-county flights are 44 lbs per person, and weight limits on Amazon trips are 32 lbs per bag due to luggage being hand carried onto the dugout canoes.
- ❖ You may want to bring an extra smaller, collapsible (lockable) duffel, to leave items at your hotel in Cusco while trekking, at the local office in Puerto Maldonado for rain forest trips, or for souvenirs
- ❖ TREKKERS: Tents and community camping gear is provided on the Inca Trail, but you must bring your own sleeping bag, which should fit inside your soft duffel bag or frameless backpack. Sleeping bags may be rented through our local office in Cusco for a pre-paid fee - please inquire with us before you depart.

CLOTHING & EQUIPMENT SUGGESTIONS CHECKLIST

Pre-Departure Tasks

- Obtain or renew passport
- Buy travelers checks in low denominations
- Evaluate and obtain trip cancellation, baggage and medical insurance
- Consult with physician for immunizations and prescription medicine recommendations
- Break-in primary footwear
- Make final payment to JOURNEYS at least 60 days before trip departure

Clothing

- Lightweight hiking boots or comfortable athletic or walking shoes
- Sport sandals with Velcro strap
- Flip-flops or sandals
- Shorts
- Comfortable, lightweight pants
- Nicer pants or skirt (optional)
- Lightweight long-sleeve shirt, for warmth and/or protection from sun or mosquitoes
- T-shirts, short sleeve shirts and/or tank tops
- Sweater or sweatshirt
- Rain gear - poncho or jacket and pants
- Sun hat or cap with wide brim
- Bandana
- Swim suit
- Socks
- Sleepwear
- Under clothes

Personal Items

- Sunblock (waterproof, high SPF)
- Lipbalm with SPF
- Insect repellent with DEET content
- 2 spare passport photos (in case of lost passport)
- Wrist watch and/or travel clock
- Sunglasses (with strap, case)
- Extra eyeglasses/contacts
- Money belt or pouch for valuables
- Small flashlight with extra batteries
- Copies of all important documents
- Day pack (can also serve as an airline carry-on bag)
- Camera, memory cards, film, batteries, charger
- Underwater camera (disposable kind is very handy)
- Lead bag/containers to protect film in X-ray machines
- Lightweight binoculars
- Plug adapter (if needed)
- Soft duffel with shoulder strap or durable suitcase
- Luggage tags
- Ziploc-type bags for packing shampoo or other liquids
- Stuff sacks or plastic bags for organizing inside luggage (also useful for dirty laundry)
- Thread, needles, safety pins for minor repairs
- Small packable umbrella



Personal First Aid Kit

- Aspirin or other pain killer
- Cold relief tablets, antihistamine, cough drops
- Band-aids, gauze pads
- Antibiotics
- Prescription medicines
- Aloe gel or lotion in case of sunburn
- Anti-diarrhea medicine
- Antibiotic cream/ointment
- Supply of feminine hygiene items
- Motion sickness tablets
- Earplugs

Essential Items For Your Carry-On Bag

- Passport
- Domestic and international air tickets
- Travelers checks, money and credit cards
- Insurance certificates
- Address and telephone number of emergency contact
- Prescription medicines
- Extra set of underclothes
- Toiletries in small leak-proof bottles
- Camera gear, film and other valuables

Optional Items

- Binoculars
- Address book, writing paper, or journal, pen/pencil
- Small washcloth
- Wet wipes/moist towelettes and Kleenex
- Favorite snack foods (pre-packaged)
- Pictures of your house and family
- Mask, snorkel, fins, wetsuit (if applicable)
- Map
- Silica bags for moisture (protect camera equipment)
- Video camera
- Phrase book

Additional Items For Trekkers

- Duffle Bag (w/ lock)
- Sleeping Bag (rated to 10 °F) (to rent from our Cusco office, please inquire before departure)
- Sleeping bag liner (recommended if renting a sleeping bag)
- Extra lightweight sleeping pad (optional)
- Comfortable Hiking Boots
- Hiking Pants
- Outdoors/Hiking Shirts
- Medium weight jacket, or equivalent (cold nights or snowy conditions in high elevations)
- Warm hat and gloves (if desired)
- Hiking Socks
- Long Underwear
- Soap and Container
- Biodegradable/Camp Shampoo
- Walking Stick or Poles



Essential for Amazon Trips

We recommend that each visitor to the Amazon limit gear to the following:

- ankle-high hiking boots
- sneakers
- tight-weave, lightweight, light colored, long cotton pants
- long sleeved, tight-weave, light colored cotton shirts
- undergarments
- absorbent socks
- good binoculars
- camera gear
- powerful flashlight with batteries
- small toiletry kit (biodegradable soaps recommended)
- water bottle
- sunblock
- sunglasses
- secure, broad-brimmed hat
- 100% waterproof, head-to-ankle rain suit
- insect repellent
- yellow fever inoculation certificate
- cash in small denomination bills
- small daypack

