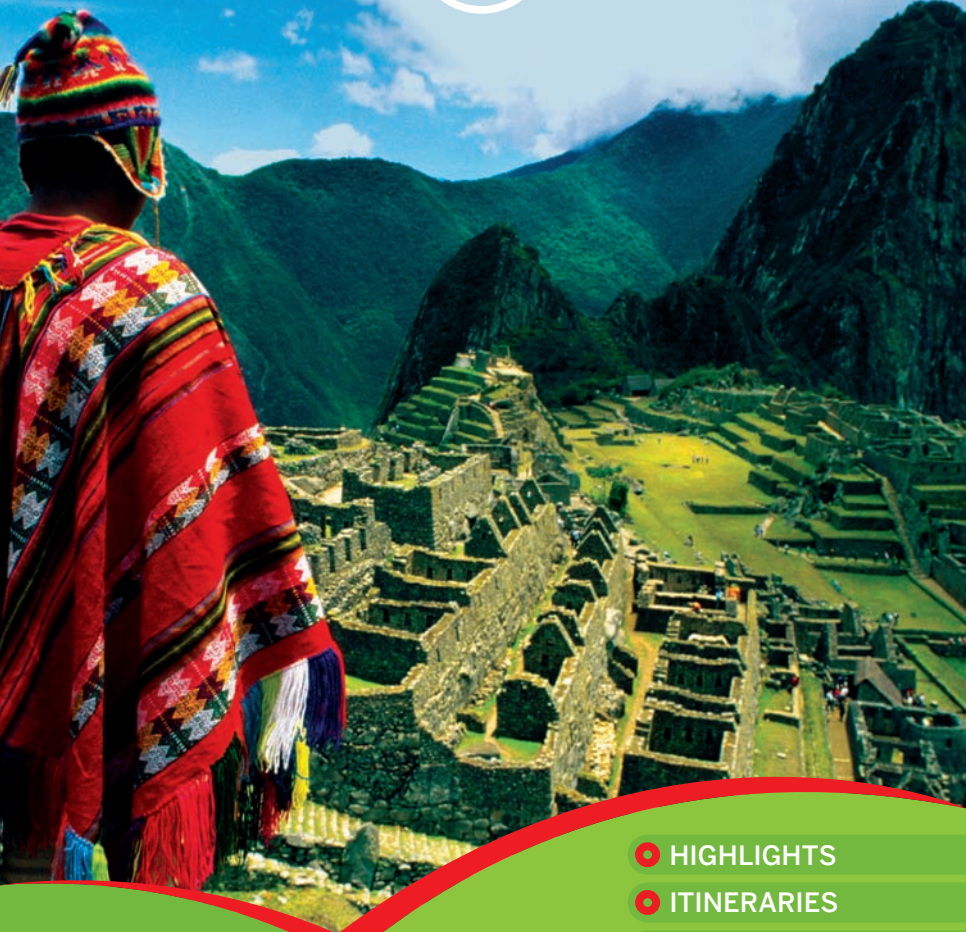




lonely planet



- HIGHLIGHTS
- ITINERARIES
- LOCAL EXPERTS
- EASY-TO-USE MAPS

Discover Peru

Experience the best of Peru

Discover Peru

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Throughout this book, we use these icons to highlight special recommendations:



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Lists for everything from bars to wildlife – to make sure you don't miss out



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Local experts reveal their top picks and secret highlights



Detour

Special places a little off the beaten track



If you like...

Lesser-known alternatives to world-famous attractions

These icons help you quickly identify reviews in the text and on the map:



Sights



Eating



Drinking



Sleeping



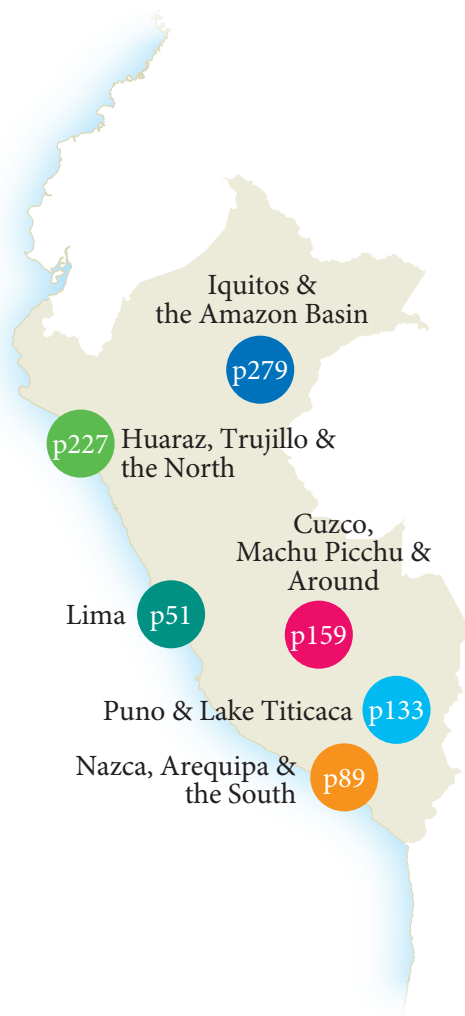
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This edition written and researched by

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Aimée Dowl, Katy Shorthouse, Luke Waterson,

Beth Williams



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This Is Peru

Luminous archaeological sites? Check. Lush rainforest? Check. An arid coast lapped by a highly surfable Pacific swell? Check. Peru, it seems, has it all.

Every cranny of the Andes offers a unique glimpse into singular cultures.

Not to mention incredible foods and enough natural wonders to keep a *National Geographic* cameraman employed for decades. On the coast, adobe pyramids and ancient temples sit quietly amid shifting desert sands and bulging seaside cities. Here, the culture is boisterous – infused with African soulfulness, indigenous know-how and the feistiness of the Spanish. The people are effusive and the music is bound to get your hips shaking.

To the east, lie the Andes. This mountain range has served as the heart of countless empires. Its sights are staggering: mountains that seem to erupt from the earth and reach straight towards the heavens, plunging gorges, icy pinnacles and steamy cloud forest. Plus, of course, the masterful ruins of a civilization that could be put on par with ancient Rome in terms of size and infrastructure: the Incas. This is a place of chilly windswept plains and coffee-colored soil, where Catholic ritual veils indigenous belief, where the culture is stoic and the music is laced with pre-Columbian instrumentation. In comparison to the coast, it might as well be another planet.

Lastly, there is the Amazon – the earth's most fabled rainforest. It is in this tangled jungle that Peru fuses with the lowland cultures of so many other South American countries. This sprawling lowland area is home to clutches of cackling macaws and playful pink river dolphins, as well as remote ethnicities that maintain a deep knowledge of the forest. Scattered about are old rubber boomtowns, where a previous century's entrepreneurs left behind town squares dotted with graceful tropical architecture.

All of this, combined, comes together to make up Peru. It is a wondrous, surreal mix of peoples, cultures, geographies, languages and food. Enjoy the trip. It's going to be an adventure.

The ruins at Machu Picchu (p214)

PHOTOGRAPHER: SEAN CAFFREY

“
This
mountain
range has
served as
the heart of
countless
empires.
”





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