

welcome to Peru



All Things Ancient

A visit to South America isn't complete without a pilgrimage to the glorious Inca citadel of Machu Picchu, but, the truth is, this feted site is just a flash in a 5000-year history of peoples. Walk through the dusted remnants of a vast ancient city at Chan Chan, the largest pre-Columbian ruins in all the Americas. Fly over the puzzling geoglyphs etched into the arid earth at Nazca. Or venture into the rugged wilds that hem the stalwart fortress of Kuelap. Lima's great museums, with priceless ceramics, gold and some of the finest textiles in the world, reveal in full detail the sophistication, skill and passion of these

lost civilizations. Visit remote communities and see how old ways live on. Immerse yourself, and you will leave Peru a little closer to the past.

Pleasure & the Palate

Some cultures are haunted by the existential. For many Peruvians, the question that gnaws at them daily would seem simple: what to eat? Ceviche with slivers of fiery chili and corn, stews simmered for hours in beer and cilantro, velvety Amazonian chocolate. In the capital of Latin cooking, so many choices can be perplexing. Great geographic and cultural diversity has brought ingredients - ranging from highland tubers to tropical jungle fruits - to a

Peru is as complex as its most intricate weavings. Festivals mix ancient pageantry with stomping brass bands. The urban vanguard beams with artistry and innovation. Trails mark the way from dense jungle to glacial peaks.

(left) San Antonio Pass, Cordillera Huayhuash Circuit (p384)
 (below) Traditionally dressed indigenous girl, Cuzco (p194)



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cuisine created with the complex history of Spanish, indigenous, African and Asian influence. The truth is, fusion existed here long before it came with airs. Treat your taste buds with missions to the chaotic markets. Sample grilled *anticuchos* (beef skewers) on the street corners and splurge a little on exquisite *novoandina* (Peruvian *nouvelle*) cuisine. Because going hungry was never an option.

Oh, Adventure

Giant sand dunes, chiseled peaks and Pacific breaks a few heartbeats away from the capital's rush-hour traffic: from downtown

Lima to smack-dab nowhere, this vast country translates to paradise for the active traveler. All the usual suspects – rafting, paragliding, zip lines and bike trails – are present. But that doesn't mean your adventure has to be an Olympic event. It could be spotting scarlet macaws and following big cat tracks in the Amazon, watching the sun set over the dusty remnants of an ancient civilization, or joining a holy pilgrimage to an Andean peak believed to be a god. Our advice? Don't rush. Set out to do less than you think you should. Delays pop up. Festivals can swallow you whole for days. And that's when you realize: the adventure is getting there.