



Peru



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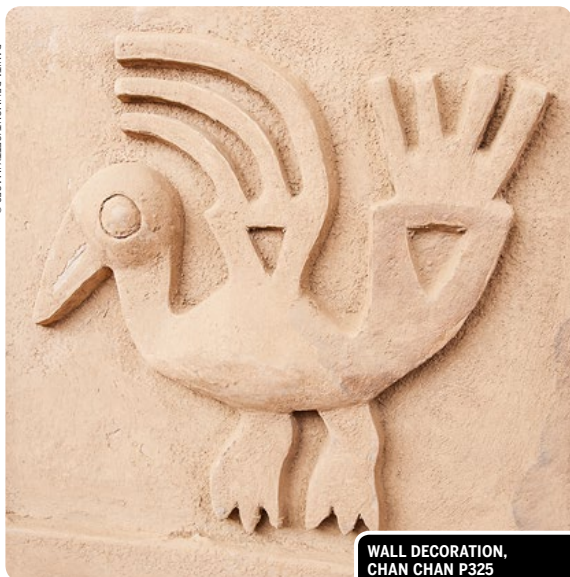
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Itineraries



**2-4
WEEKS**

The Gringo Trail

This trip hits some of the pre-eminent highlights of the continent. Leaving **Lima**, journey south to **Pisco** and **Paracas**, where you can boat to the wildlife-rich **Islas Ballestas**, lodging in Paracas. Then it's on to **Ica**, Peru's wine and pisco capital, and the palm-fringed, dune-lined oasis of **Huacachina**, famous for sandboarding and a good place to overnight. Next is **Nazca** for a flight over the mysterious Nazca Lines.

Turn inland for the 'White City' of **Arequipa**, with its colonial architecture and stylish nightlife. Lace up your boots to trek the incredible **Cañón del Colca** or **Cañón del Cotahuasi** – perhaps the world's deepest – or climb **El Misti**, a postcard-perfect 5822m volcano. Continue upwards to **Puno**, Peru's port on **Lake Titicaca**, one of the world's highest navigable lakes. From here you can boat to traditional islands and explore the strange *chullpas* (ancient funerary towers) at **Sillustani** and **Cutimbo**.

Wind through the Andes to **Cuzco**, South America's oldest continuously inhabited city. Browse colorful markets and explore archaeological sites in the **Sacred Valley**, then trek to **Machu Picchu** via an adventurous alternative route.



MATT MONRO / LONELY PLANET ©



PHILIP LEE HARVEY / LONELY PLANET ©

Top: Colorful facade on Plaza de Armas (p315), Trujillo

Bottom: Rafting expedition on the Río Alto Madre de Dio (p456), Manu area

4
WEEKS

The Best of Peru

If you're set on getting a taste of everything, this whirlwind tour hits Peru's top must-see attractions. Give yourself a full month to fully take it all in.

Conquer your jet lag with the exquisite tastes of Peru in the restaurants of **Lima**, strolling through parks and museums between meals. Head south through the coastal desert to **Nazca**, for a flyover of the Nazca Lines before arriving in stylish, cosmopolitan **Arequipa**, with its mysterious monasteries, deep canyons and smoking volcanoes.

Fly high into the Andes to reach the ancient Inca capital of **Cuzco** for a few days of acclimatization, exploring the cobblestone city and visiting **Sacred Valley** villages to check out colorful markets selling textiles, talismans and dozens of types of tubers. Then board the train to **Machu Picchu**, the most visited archaeological site in South America.

From Cuzco, fly to **Puerto Maldonado** (or brave the 10-hour bus ride) where you can kick back at a wildlife lodge along one of the mighty rivers of the Amazon Basin. Alternatively, you can take an overland tour from Cuzco to the **Manu area**, with remote tracts of virgin forest holding diverse animals from kinkajous to caimans. It's one of the most biodiverse areas of the planet. Another option for exploring the Amazonian *selva* (jungle) is to first fly back to Lima, then onward to **Iquitos**, a bustling port that will launch you deeper into the jungle.

Back in Lima, take a bus or fly north to the adventurers' base camp of **Huaraz**, where a short trek will take you to the precipitous peaks of the **Cordillera Blanca**. A day trip to Chavín de Huántar will lead you to one of Peru's oldest ancient sites. Rumble back down to the coast at **Chimbote**, then dash north to historic **Trujillo**, which offers spicy northern dishes, surrounded by a cornucopia of archaeological sites. These include the ruins of the largest pre-Columbian city in the Americas, Chan Chan, and the fascinating Huacas del Sol y de la Luna. Finish up the journey by taking a seaside break at the bustling surf town of **Máncora**.



The Inca Heartland

From Lima, fly to Cuzco but move on to the lower **Sacred Valley** to spend your first three to four days acclimating to the altitude. Visit the bustling market of **Pisac**, and see the ruins and ride horses at **Moray and Maras**. The best accommodations are in the quaint Inca village of **Ollantaytambo**, at a swank valley resort or area B&B.

From Ollantaytambo, hike the town ruins in the morning or visit the cool salt pans of **Salinas** and take an afternoon train to **Aguas Calientes**. Enjoy a leisurely dinner and tuck in early so you can take the first bus to the great Inca citadel of **Machu Picchu**. Spend the day browsing the ruins.

The following morning, hop on the train to **Cuzco**. Now that you're acclimated, spend a few days enjoying the colonial charms of this former Inca capital, taking a walking tour, visiting a few museums, admiring the splendors of **Qorikancha**, the Inca's most spectacular temple, and enjoying the city's outstanding cuisine.

Grab a comfortable tourist bus (or take the historic train) to the altiplano (Andean plateau) city of **Puno**. If you can coincide with a festival, this is the place to do it, with wild costumes, brass bands and fervent merriment. Otherwise, take in folkloric music at a dinner show or adventure to aquatic accommodations on the retired steamship *Yavari*.

From your base in Puno, the funerary towers of the Colla, Lupaca and Inca cultures can be found at **Sillustani** and **Cutimbo**, an easy day trip, and worth combining with lovely **Lampa** and its historic church. Take a boat tour of **Lake Titicaca**, visiting the famous reed islands and staying overnight in traditional family lodgings on **Isla Amantani**. If you have a few extra days, take a catamaran tour, which also visits the Bolivian islands of **Isla del Sol** and **Isla de la Luna**, landing you in **Copacabana**, from where you can take a tourist bus back to Puno.

Returning to Puno, explore the coast of the **Capachica Peninsula**, home to places still steeped in the ancient traditions of the altiplano with nary another traveler in sight.

Get ready for the culture shock of big city living, and fly back to Lima.



2-4 WEEKS Exploring Amazonia

More than half of Peru is jungle, populated by spectacular wildlife and tribal peoples. Go overland and drop dramatically away from the eastern slopes of the Andes to slip deep into the Amazon Basin, which stretches all the way to the Atlantic. This entire itinerary takes a month, or it can be divided by region into one- or two-week segments.

The most popular excursion starts from **Cuzco** and heads to the **Manu area**, itself the size of a small country, albeit one with kingdoms of jungle lodges. Another option is to fly from Cuzco to **Puerto Maldonado** and kick back in a thatch-roofed bungalow with a view, either along the **Río Madre de Dios**, the gateway to lovely **Lago Sandoval**, or along the **Río Tambopata**, where a national reserve protects one of the country's largest clay licks. The dry season (July and August) is traditionally the best time to return overland back to Cuzco, although the recent paving of this route means it's now possible outside these months.

Alternatively, return to Lima and turn your focus to the north. The easiest way to get there is to fly from Lima to **Pucallpa**, staying in a lodge or bungalow in nearby **Yarinacocha**. The lovely oxbow lake is ringed by tribal villages. You can visit some of these, including those of the matriarchal Shipibo people, renowned for their pottery. Hardcore overland travelers can opt to reach Pucallpa from Lima via the coffee-growing settlement of **San Ramón**.

From Pucallpa, begin the classic slow riverboat journey north along the **Río Ucayali** to **Iquitos**, the world's largest city with no road access! This northern jungle capital has a floating market and a bustling port, where you can catch a more comfortable cruise into Peru's largest national park, **Reserva Nacional Pacaya-Samiria**, via **Lagunas**. It's also tempting to float over into Brazil via the unique **tri-border zone**.

It's best to fly if your time is limited; if not, lose yourself for weeks on epic river and road journeys through jungle terrain. Bring bucket loads of patience and self-reliance – and a lot of luck never hurts.

1-2
WEEKS

North Coast

The first stop north of **Lima** could be **Caral**, where the oldest known civilization in South America arose about 5000 years ago. Further north, spy ancient engravings of human sacrifice at **Sechín** and continue to **Trujillo**. Nearby attractions include the Moche pyramids of Huacas del Sol y de la Luna and ruins of the Chan Chan.

Off the sleepy beaches at **Huanchaco**, surfers paddle out to the breakers while local fishers trawl the coast. To the north, the surf spot of **Puerto Chicama** boasts one of the world's longest left-hand breaks. Then it's **Chiclayo**, with world-class museums nearby showcasing riches from the archaeological site of Sipán.

Craft-market hub **Piura** has great dining, while the witch doctors of **Huancabamba** are hidden away in the Andes. Peru's best beaches lie along the Pacific shoreline. Feast on fresh seafood and dance the balmy nights away at resorts such as **Colán**, **Máncora**, and **Punta Sal**.

The journey ends at **Tumbes**, a gateway to Ecuador and jumping-off point to endangered mangrove swamps, which teem with wildlife (mind the crocs!).

2-4
WEEKS

The Wild & Ancient North

From **Lima**, head to **Trujillo**, sampling the fiery coastal cuisine and exploring nearby ruins at Chan Chan and Huacas del Sol y de la Luna. From Trujillo, take the freshly paved scenic old highway to Cajamarca via the magnificent mountaintop ruins of **Marcahuamachuco**.

The lovely highland town of **Cajamarca** is where the conquistadors captured Inca Atahualpa. In the dry season, adventure on the slow, spectacular route to friendly **Celendín** and on to **Leimebamba** to see the Marvelous Spatuletail Hummingbird. Continue on to **Chachapoyas** where the cloud forest obscures the fantastic monolithic fortress of Kuélap.

From Chachapoyas, journey via **Pedro Ruíz** to **Tarapoto**, where you can hike in lush forest to waterfalls. Next, fly to the jungle city of **Iquitos** or continue via **Yurimaguas**, where cargo boats make the rugged two-day trip to Iquitos via the village of **Lagunas**, the entry point to the **Reserva Nacional Pacaya-Samiria**, for an unforgettable glimpse of the world's greatest river basin. At Iquitos, you can arrange boat trips that go deeper into the rainforest and on to Brazil or Colombia.

Map Legend

Sights

- Beach
- Bird Sanctuary
- Buddhist
- Castle/Palace
- Christian
- Confucian
- Hindu
- Islamic
- Jain
- Jewish
- Monument
- Museum/Gallery/Historic Building
- Ruin
- Shinto
- Sikh
- Taoist
- Winery/Vineyard
- Zoo/Wildlife Sanctuary
- Other Sight

Activities, Courses & Tours

- Body surfing
- Diving
- Canoeing/Kayaking
- Course/Tour
- Sento Hot Baths/Onsen
- Skiing
- Snorkeling
- Surfing
- Swimming/Pool
- Walking
- Windsurfing
- Other Activity

Sleeping

- Sleeping
- Camping

Eating

- Eating

Drinking & Nightlife

- Drinking & Nightlife
- Cafe

Entertainment

- Entertainment

Shopping

- Shopping

Information

- Bank
- Embassy/Consulate
- Hospital/Medical
- Internet
- Police
- Post Office
- Telephone
- Toilet
- Tourist Information
- Other Information

Geographic

- Beach
- Gate
- Hut/Shelter
- Lighthouse
- Lookout
- Mountain/Volcano
- Oasis
- Park
- Pass
- Picnic Area
- Waterfall

Population

- Capital (National)
- Capital (State/Province)
- City/Large Town
- Town/Village

Transport

- Airport
- Border crossing
- Bus
- Cable car/Funicular
- Cycling
- Ferry
- Metro station
- Monorail
- Parking
- Petrol station
- Subway/Subte station
- Taxi
- Train station/Railway
- Tram
- Underground station
- Other Transport

Routes

- Tollway
- Freeway
- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary
- Lane
- Unsealed road
- Road under construction
- Plaza/Mall
- Steps
- Tunnel
- Pedestrian overpass
- Walking Tour
- Walking Tour detour
- Path/Walking Trail

Boundaries

- International
- State/Province
- Disputed
- Regional/Suburb
- Marine Park
- Cliff
- Wall

Hydrography

- River, Creek
- Intermittent River
- Canal
- Water
- Dry/Salt/Intermittent Lake
- Reef

Areas

- Airport/Runway
- Beach/Desert
- Cemetery (Christian)
- Cemetery (Other)
- Glacier
- Mudflat
- Park/Forest
- Sight (Building)
- Sportsground
- Swamp/Mangrove

Note: Not all symbols displayed above appear on the maps in this book



Phillip Tang

[Arequipa & Canyon Country](#), [Lake Titicaca](#) A degree in Latin America studies brought Phillip Tang to these shores, and over a decade later he still finds himself feeling breathless (only slightly literally) pondering a canyon in Colca or the ocean in Miraflores. He writes about travel on his two loves, Asia and Latin America, and has contributed to Lonely Planet's guides to China, Japan and Mexico, and has written about Peru for other publishers. Find his Peru Insta-photos from this visit

through philliptang.co.uk.



Luke Waterson

[Central Highlands](#), [Amazon Basin](#) Back for his 3rd edition of Lonely Planet's *Peru*, Luke has a love for getting off the beaten track, which is evident in him writing the Central Highlands and Amazon Basin chapters of this guide. He specialises in writing about Andean and Amazonian South America as a travel writer and as a novelist: his debut novel, *Roebuck: Adventures of an Admirable Adventurer* is set in the 16th-century South American jungle. He writes on Latin America for

the *Independent*, the *Telegraph* and the BBC, and runs a travel-and-culture blog about his current home, Slovakia: Englishmaninslovakia.com. Luke also wrote the 'Peru's Cuisine' chapter.



OUR STORY

A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that's all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, *Across Asia on the Cheap*. Within a week they'd sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born.

Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Franklin, London, Melbourne, Oakland, Beijing and Delhi, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony's belief that 'a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse'.

OUR WRITERS



Carolyn McCarthy

Coordinating Author, Lima, Cuzco & the Sacred Valley Author Carolyn McCarthy first discovered *cumbia* camping on the Inca Trail many years ago. On this trip she embarked on a quest for the perfect ceviche (with success). She has contributed to more than 30 titles for Lonely Planet, including *Panama*, *Trekking in the Patagonian Andes*, *Argentina*, *Chile*, *Colorado*, *The Southwest* and national parks guides. She has also written for *Outside*, *BBC Magazine*, *National Geographic* and other publications. For more information, see www.carolynmccarthy.pressfolios.com or follow her on Instagram @masmerquen and Twitter @RoamingMcC.



Greg Benchwick

North Coast, South Coast Greg Benchwick has been trucking around South America for the past 15 years. For this trip, the Lonely Planet veteran covered over 5000km of coastline, going that extra mile to explore offbeat surf destinations along the way. Greg has written speeches for the United Nations, interviewed Grammy-award winners and created dozens of videos and web features for LonelyPlanet.com, *National Geographic Traveler* and other international publications. He is an expert on sustainable travel, international development, food, wine and having a good time.

Read more about Greg at:

<https://auth.lonelyplanet.com/profiles/gregbenchwick>



Alex Egerton

Huaraz & the Cordilleras, Northern Highlands A journalist by trade, Alex writes about travel and culture in destinations all over Latin America but has a particular passion for the Andes and the seldom visited jungle-covered parts of the map. Based in southern Colombia, he makes regular trips down to Peru in search of the best spicy eats and most spectacular/sketchy mountain bus rides. When not on the road for work, you'll find him hiking in the mountain plains or watching way too much football.

OVER MORE
PAGE WRITERS

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