

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a shallow wooden bowl filled with a mixture of quinoa, red and yellow corn, and dried herbs. Behind the bowl is a large ball of yellow wool. The person is wearing a vibrant, multi-colored traditional Peruvian garment with intricate patterns. The background is a solid red fabric.

INSIGHT  GUIDES

PERU



CONTENTS

Introduction

The Best of Peru	6
Ancient and Modern.....	19
Land of Extremes.....	21

History & Features

Decisive Dates.....	26
Lost empires: Peru before the Incas	31
The Incas.....	39
The Conquest	47
🔍 Looking for the past.....	57
From Colony to Republic.....	59
🔍 The covered ones	67
Democracy, Crises, and Resurgence.....	69
A Changing Society	79
Daily Life in the Andes	87
Peoples of the Amazon	91
How Crafts Have Adapted	97
🔍 Pottery culture	101
Music and Dance.....	103
📅 Festivals and Fusion	108
Fusion of Flavors.....	111
Andean Adventures.....	117
🔍 Running the Andes.....	125
Wildlife of the Sierra	127

Places

Introduction.....	139
■ LIMA.....	145
🔍 Oasis of hope.....	156
■ THE NORTH COAST.....	161
🔍 Witch doctor and wellness	168
📅 Buried Treasures	172
■ NORTHERN SIERRA.....	175
🔍 Huallaga, Valley of Coca	178
■ CALLEJÓN DE HUAYLAS	185
🔍 Cordillera Huayhuash	192
■ CENTRAL SIERRA	197
■ THE NORTHERN AMAZON	207
🔍 The Amazon by riverboat.....	214
■ MANU TO MALDONADO.....	219
🔍 Jungle lodges.....	220
📅 Birds of the Amazon	224
■ THE SOUTH COAST	227
■ AREQUIPA.....	243

	Colonial Art and Architecture	252
	CUSCO	255
	THE SACRED VALLEY	269
	MACHU PICCHU	277
	LAKE TITICACA	289
	Taquile Island	298

Travel Tips

TRANSPORTATION

Getting there	302
Getting around	303

A – Z

Accommodations	306
Addresses	306
Admission charges	306
Budgeting for your trip	306
Business travelers	306
Children.....	306
Climate.....	307
Crime and security.....	307
Customs regulations.....	308
Disabled travelers.....	308
Electricity	308
Embassies and consulates	308
Etiquette.....	309
Health and medical care.....	309
Internet	310
LGBTQ travel	310
Maps.....	310
Media.....	310
Money	310
Opening hours.....	312
Photography.....	312
Postal services.....	312
Public holidays.....	313
Religious services	313
Shopping	313
Student travelers	313
Telephones.....	313
Time zones	314
Toilets.....	314
Tourist information	314
Visas and passports.....	314
Weights and measures	314
Women travelers.....	314

LANGUAGE

Language	315
Pronunciation.....	315
Basics.....	315

Greetings.....	315
Telephone calls	316
Finding your way	316
In the hotel.....	316
In the restaurant.....	317
Menu decoder	317
Shopping	318
Tourist attractions.....	318
Airport/travel agency.....	318
Transportation	319
Driving.....	319
Road signs.....	319
Emergencies	320
Health.....	320
Months of the year	320
Seasons.....	320
Time	320

FURTHER READING

General.....	321
History.....	321
Amazon Jungle	322
Other Insight Guides	322

Maps

Peru.....	140
Lima	142
North Coast.....	162
Trujillo	164
Northern Sierra	176
Callejón de Huaylas	186
Ayacucho	199
Central Sierra	200
Northern Amazon	208
Manu to Maldonado	222
South Coast.....	230
Arequipa.....	245
Around Arequipa	247
Cusco.....	256
The Sacred Valley.....	270
Machu Picchu.....	282
Lake Titicaca	290

Inside front cover Peru

Inside back cover Lima

LEGEND

-  Insight on
-  Photo Story

THE BEST OF PERU: TOP ATTRACTIONS



△ **Colca Canyon.** Twice as deep as the Grand Canyon, Peru's Colca Canyon is one of the world's great natural wonders. From the Mirador del Condor, Andean condors can be seen gliding on the air currents high above the valley floor. See page 249.

▽ **Machu Picchu.** This ancient city lay hidden under jungle for centuries. Perched on a hilltop high in the Andes, it is an architectural marvel. See page 277.



△ **North Coast.** Home to Peru's best beaches, including Máncora, Punta Sal, Playa La Pena, and Huanchaco, famous for its *totor*a reed boats. See page 161.

▽ **Cusco.** Known to the Incas as "the navel of the earth," the high-altitude city of Cusco is where you'll find some of colonial Peru's most impressive buildings, built directly on top of stones laid by the Incas. See page 255.





△ **Monasterio de Santa Catalina.** Cut off from the outside world until 1970, this is an oasis of calm amidst the hustle and bustle of Arequipa's busy streets. See page 246.

▽ **Nazca lines.** Giant etchings of animals and geometric figures created many thousands of years ago, the lines are one of the world's greatest archeological mysteries. See page 236.



△ **Uros Islands.** The incredible floating islands of Uros on Lake Titicaca date back to pre-Inca times and are made of *totora* reeds, which must be continually replaced as they rot away. See page 293.



△ **Cordillera Blanca.** The Cordillera Blanca mountain range offers some of the best trekking in South America. See page 185.



△ **Plaza Mayor, Lima.** Lima's main square lies at the heart of the "City of Kings" founded by Francisco Pizarro in 1535. It is overlooked by the Cathedral, the Archbishop's Palace, and the Government Palace. See page 149.

▷ **Cameloids.** Peru is home to four types of cameloid: llamas, alpacas, guanacos, and vicuñas. See page 127.



THE BEST OF PERU: EDITOR'S CHOICE



A canopy walkway above the Peruvian Amazon.

BEST NATURAL WONDERS

The rainforest. Covering some 50 million hectares (125 million acres), home to some of the greatest biodiversity on the planet, and storehouse of traditional medicine. See page 207.

The Andes. The highest mountain range outside the Himalayas, with some peaks eternally covered in snow. See page 117.

The volcanoes. Near Arequipa, many are over 6,000-meters (19,000ft)

high, their craters filled with boiling mud. See page 243.

The northern beaches.

Girl from the highlands.

The northern beaches of Punta Sal, Máncora, and around Tumbes:

sparkling clear water, white sands, and palm trees. See page 170.

Lake Titicaca. The highest navigable lake in the world. See page 289.

The Coastal Desert. The world's highest dunes and a stark coastline for adventure sports and to view Andean and ocean wildlife. See page 227.

The Cotahuasi Canyon. Like Colca but more remote, one of the deepest river canyons in the world. See page 250.

Hot springs. The Baños del Inca in Cajamarca and the hot springs at Chivay. See pages 180 and 249.

BEST ADVENTURE TOURISM

Trekking. The Cordillera Blanca and the Cordillera Huayhuash, near Huaraz, offer some of the best trekking in South America.

The Inca Trail. The hard – and scenic – way to reach Machu Picchu.

Climbing. Peru is home to some of the highest mountains in the world, such as Huascarán, at 6,760 meters (22,200ft).

Whitewater rafting. Rapids and beautiful stretches of river can be found on the Urubamba and Apurímac near Cusco.

Mountain biking. Classic biking destinations include the Cordillera Negra, the ranges near Cusco, or the trails of the Colca and Cotahuasi canyons near Arequipa.

Kayaking. Paddling the clear waters of Lake Titicaca and visiting its unique islands is an unmissable experience.

Surfing. The Pacific Ocean offers some of the best surf breaks in the world.

See Andean Adventures, page 117, for details of adventure sports in Peru.

Royal Guardsman.



BEST NATIONAL PARKS



Macaws in Manu National Park.

Parque Nacional del Manu. Covering 1,716,295 hectares (4,290,738 acres) of rainforest, this is the largest national park in Peru and one of the largest on the planet. It is home to 800 species of bird, 200 types of mammal, and seven distinct indigenous tribes. See page 219.

Parque Nacional Huascarán. Around

340,000 hectares (850,000 acres) protect some of Peru's best high-altitude environments. See page 190.

Reserva Nacional Pacaya-Samiria. Two million hectares of lakes, rivers, and semi-submerged rainforest, territory of the rare manatee, pink dolphins, and giant anacondas. See page 215.

Parque Nacional Cordillera Azul. Protects the northern cloud forests between the Andes and the lowland rainforest. Little visited, home to indigenous communities. New species of birds are continuously discovered here. See page 179.

BEST FESTIVALS

La Virgen de La Candelaria. In early February in Puno, thousands of people in traditional dress participate in dances, songs, parades, folkloric plays, and fireworks to celebrate the city's patron saint. See page 291.

Inti Raymi. The Festival of the Sun. This yearly occasion on June 24 in Cusco is perhaps the biggest and most colorful festival in Peru, and celebrates the return of the sun after the winter solstice. See page 264.

Carnival. Celebrated throughout Peru in mid-February, most wildly in Cajamarca. See page 177.

Semana Santa. This festival in March or April is marked with solemn religious processions in the streets. One of the best is in Ayacucho. See page 198.

Independence Day. Celebrated on July 28 and 29 throughout the country. See page 108.

El Señor de los Milagros. Held on October 18, 19, and 28 in Lima, a huge procession in honor of the city's patron saint. See page 153.



La Virgen de la Candelaria festival in Puno.

BEST FOR FAMILIES

Train to Machu Picchu. The passenger train from Cusco is a spectacular way to travel to Machu, especially for kids who are too young to walk the Inca Trail. See page 281.

Islas Ballestas. Take a boat out to the Islas Ballestas, Peru's answer to the Galápagos, to see penguins, sea lions, seals, and pelicans. See page 231.

Parque de las Leyendas. Lima's zoo in Pueblo Libre offers a

great way to learn more about Peru's wildlife and is divided into coast, mountain, and jungle zones. It also has a children's playground. See page 155.

Circuito Mágico del Agua. Located in Lima's Parque de la Reserva, the Magic Water Circuit is composed of 13 fountains, with the largest shooting water to a height of 80 meters (262ft). Night-time light, sound, and water shows are amazing. See page 293.



Marinera dancer.

BEST FOOD AND DRINK

Pisco. Peru's national drink is a powerful type of brandy. Pisco sour is the national cocktail, made with pisco, lemon juice, sugar syrup, and egg white.

Ceviche. Raw fish and mixed seafood marinated in lemon juice, garlic, and spices.

Anticuchos de corazón. Marinated beef-heart kebabs.

Humitas and tamales. Cornmeal dumplings cooked in corn or banana leaves, sometimes with a savory filling.

Pachamanca. An Andean specialty of spiced meat, potatoes, and corn, cooked in the ground on hot rocks.

Pollo a la brasa. Roast chicken is one of Peru's

favorite meals and lip-smackingly good.

Potatoes. Peru has some 400 varieties of potatoes, or *papas*. They are the key ingredient for numerous dishes, including the delicious *papa a la huancaína*, a creamy dish with eggs.

Ají. A hot, spicy sauce made with chilis and garlic to accompany meals.

Chicha morada. A sweet, deep-purple non-alcoholic drink made from corn which is surprisingly refreshing.

Cuy. Although not to everyone's taste, roasted or fried guinea pig is a Peruvian specialty. See *Fusion of Flavors*, page 111, for more on Peru's food and drink.

Peruvian spirit.



Traditional Peruvian hats made from llama wool.

BEST CULTURAL EXPERIENCES

The Island of Amantani.

On this island in Lake Titicaca, visitors can stay as guests in villagers' homes and share the meals they prepare. See page 294.

Ayacucho during Holy Week.

As Peruvian festivals go, these *Semana Santa* celebrations are the ones to outdo all the rest. See page 198.

Handicraft shopping.

Shop in one of Peru's many craft markets, such as Pisac near Cusco. See page 313.

Visiting a market. Food markets are found in larger towns and offer an impressive range of Peruvian produce, including unusual fruits and vegetables. See page 272.

Session with a shaman.

Learn about your future or drink the powerful Ayahuasca in Chiclayo or the Amazon. See page 168.

Trekking with llamas.

Walks organized by villagers from the Callejón de Huaylas that use llamas as pack animals. See page 194.

Moche statue.



BEST HISTORICAL SITES

Chavín de Huantar.

Intricate carvings highlight this mysterious Andean cultural site, the greatest of the Cordillera Blanca. See page 191.

Kuélap. Little-visited ruined citadel in Peru's north, spectacular enough to rival Machu Picchu. See page 181.

Chan Chan. The ancient ruins of the Moche civilization, and the largest adobe city in pre-Columbian America. See page 166.

Caral. A circular court and pyramids in the desert reveal an ancient city. See page 161.

Cajamarca. This lovely colonial city is a relief after the crowds of Cusco. See page 175.

Huaca Pucllana. This well-preserved pre-Inca site in Miraflores, Lima, dates back to AD 400 and was the administrative center of the Lima culture. See page 158.

Huacas del Sol y de la Luna. Ancient temples just outside Trujillo were built over several generations of the Moche people and were once covered with brightly colored murals. See page 166.

Visiting the Huaca Pucllana in Lima.



Isla Amantaní on Lake Titicaca.

BEST MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES

Museo de los Santuarios Andinos. In Arequipa, exhibits include a fascinating display on Inca human sacrifice, and a mummified body of one of the victims. See page 248.

Qoricancha. Now the Iglesia Santo Domingo, the Qoricancha or Temple of the Sun in Cusco was the Incas' most sacred building. See page 261.

Monasterio de San

Francisco. In Lima, with its religious art and amazing skull-filled catacombs. See page 151.

Museo de Arte Precolombino. A wonderful collection of textiles, pottery, and gold in Cusco. See page 265.

Tumbas Reales. This world-class museum in Lambayeque contains gold treasures from the Tomb of Lord Sipán. See page 169.

TRAVELER'S TIPS

Go with the flow

Don't expect everything to go to plan. Things change with astounding frequency in Peru. Be flexible, and don't get angry when your plans need to be altered.

Keep your change

Always carry toilet paper, bottled water, and small change in Peru. Outside the biggest tourist spots, you

can rarely pay small amounts with large-denomination notes.

Make friends

You might well have been warned to be careful, but don't let this stop you enjoying people's generosity and kindness. Peruvians are an endlessly friendly and hospitable people, and are always keen to communicate and make friends with visitors.

Travel light

Arrive with your suitcase half empty: you can buy almost anything you need here, and clothes are stylish and cheap.

¿Habla español?

Even if you aren't a linguist, be sure to learn a few phrases in Spanish. The effort will be appreciated and will make for a more fulfilling trip.