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GET READY FOR PERU



The Local
Experience Curator



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NOMAD TIPS

Preparing for Your Trip & Answers to Other Frequently Asked Question

We are so delighted that you've decided to travel with us and we can't wait to host you in beautiful Peru! In order to help you pack and prepare, we've put together this list of helpful tips. If you have any additional questions, don't hesitate to contact your Travel Designer. See you soon!

- Your Nomad Patagonia Team

Entry and Exit Requirements

To enter Peru

- The use of a KN95 mask or single surgical mask plus a cloth mask is optional in open and closed spaces with ventilation.

Passports and Visas

US, Canadian, Australian, New Zealand and (most of) Western European citizens need ONLY A PASSPORT that is valid for at least six months after your departure date from Peru. Before you land, your flight attendants will issue you an international customs card to complete. Hand this in at the immigration counter in Lima, and your customs agent will issue a tourist visa via a stamp in your passport. U.S., Canadian, Australian, New Zealand, and (almost all) Western European citizens DO NOT require a visa to enter Peru.

Others should check with the Peruvian Embassy or consulate in their respective area/region for entry requirements. Travelers who do require a visa can obtain one through the Peruvian Embassy or consulate. Times to acquire a visa may vary. For more information check: <http://embassy.goabroad.com/embassies-of/peru> You can also check the following link for the address of your nearest Peruvian embassy (in Spanish only). www.consulado.pe/paginas/Inicio.aspx

Packing

Weather and Activities Considerations

Weather in Peru varies greatly by region and season, so dressing for success (and comfort) means packing layers!

- The Mountains (Cusco, Puno, the Sacred Valley, Cordillera Blanca): Mid-April through October is considered the dry season, which means hot dry days (temperatures in the 70s) and cold, cold nights, with temperatures close to freezing. Even during the day, if you step out of the sun, the mountain air can chill, so be sure to always have a layer. Jackets, gloves, and hats are not inappropriate during this time, though there are great woolen goods to purchase in Peru! November through March/April is the rainy season, with heavy rain in January and February. Generally, the mornings are clear, with rain in the afternoons and temperatures are a bit warmer than they are in the dry season.
- Machu Picchu: The dry season is also mid-April through October, though it is a bit more humid and warmer at the Inca site. You'll definitely want a t-shirt for sightseeing when the sun is high and something waterproof to protect from frequent showers.

- The Central and Southern Coast (Lima, Paracas, Nazca, Arequipa): December-April is summer, with very hot weather. Pack for temperatures in the 70s and 80s. Peruvian winter is May-November and Lima will be cloaked in mist and drizzle with moderate temperatures – in the 50s, usually. The Northern Beaches: Mancora and Punta Sal are hot enough for swimming all year round. Sunscreen is a must! The Jungle (Manu, Tambopata, Iquitos): April-October is the dry season, with daily temperatures in the upper 80s. That said, cold fronts aren't uncommon, when temperatures can drop to the 50s. November through March is the wet season when it is very hot and humid and heavy rain is common. Waterproof and mud-proof boots are key – but don't worry, your lodge will provide boots for everyone!

If you plan to partake in outdoor activities (trekking, rafting, jungle hikes, etc.), you'll need to pack appropriate gear. Otherwise, you'll be packing to accommodate the weather and sightseeing. Comfortable walking shoes are a must! And, a word to the wise: Cusco's streets are cobbled, with very slippery stones when it rains, so make sure your shoes have good tread and ankle support.

Fashion and Dress Codes in Peru

Overall, Peru is a much more casual place than other international locations – you won't encounter many dress codes during your trip. That said, Lima is quite cosmopolitan, with many restaurants where you'll feel better in a relaxed but nice outfit. Cusco is fairly casual, but you won't want to be in your hiking clothes all of the time, so it may be wise to pack a comfortable sightseeing and strolling outfit. Flashy jewelry and accessories should be left at home, as they are a draw for pickpockets.





Baggage Size and Weight Restrictions

Please triple-check luggage restrictions for your international flights secured on your own. You will likely want to pack for greater restrictions on domestic flights and ground transportation within Peru, which means packing a bit lighter and bringing something that can serve as an overnight bag if you don't want to be subject to extra baggage fees on your domestic flights.

Permitted baggage on domestic flights (you'll have all your luggage):

- Latam: Checked bags are one piece of 50 lbs. (23 kg) and carry-on is 17.6 lbs. (8kg)

Allowances depend on the category of ticket bought, so please check carefully before your travels.

Trips to the jungle may require further weight restrictions. Lodges there often have weight limits for luggage that you can take on the boat to your destination; typically this is between 10 and 15kgs per person (each lodge defines the weight). If you have more than the allowance, the remainder of your belongings will be securely stored at your lodge's local office until you return. Trains to Machu Picchu all allow just 11 lbs. (5 kg) of luggage, with a total of 62 square inches in dimension (length + width + height) – the exception here is the Belmond Hiram Bingham train, which allows slightly more luggage. While it is uncommon for bags to be measured or weighed, we still recommend simply taking an overnight bag for this portion of your trip. Nomad Patagonia will transfer the rest of your luggage to your next hotel.

Suggested Packing List

Our team's experience says, the lighter the better. This of course is quite difficult, given the varied climates of Peru. The great thing is that you can have laundry done in your hotel or in town within 24 hours. Here is our suggested packing list:

General list:

- Passport and flight tickets; after you've been given the all-clear by Peruvian migrations and customs, you'll need to have your passport at most hotels and attractions, including on treks
- We recommend also bringing an extra photocopy of your passport, kept in a secure location separate from the original.
- Secure day bag with enough space for camera gear, water bottle/s, poncho and snacks (pack toilet paper or tissue packets in your day bag as many Peruvian bathrooms don't have it).
- Lightweight poncho or waterproof jacket
- Lightweight trousers
- T- shirts and long-sleeved shirts
- Underwear, of course
- Long underwear (if you are visiting the Andes April-October and tend to get cold easily)
- Insect repellent
- Basic first aid kit
- Sanitizing hand gel (good to keep in your day pack with some spare tissues)
- Basic toiletries (though most of your hotels will provide shampoos and soaps)
- Secure money belt or pouch
- Camera, battery charger, spare battery and plenty of memory cards
- Bathing suit/plastic sandals
- Good quality locks for luggage
- Converter, since electricity is 220 volts

When trekking, add:

- Hiking daypack for your day-to-day supplies on the trail
- Waterproof hiking boots/shoes
- Flashlight or headlamp with extra batteries
- Hat, gloves and warmer clothing for cold nights
- Ziploc plastic bags to protect clothes and cameras from damp
- Optional: Sleeping bags and walking sticks as they can be rented

When traveling to the jungle, add:

- Backpack, sturdy duffel bag or easily managed suitcase
- Binoculars
- Long pants and long sleeve shirts made from a light breathable material
- Good water-resistant trekking shoes
- Raingear and light rain clothes
- Insect repellent with DEET (diethyl-meta-toluamide)
- Flashlight or headlamp with extra batteries
- Ziploc plastic bags, these will help protect spare batteries or equipment from humidity

Voltage

Voltage, Sockets and Plugs

Electricity in Peru is 220 volts, alternating at 60 cycles per second. If you travel to Peru with a device that does not accept 220 volts at 60 hertz, you will need a voltage converter. Check your devices for what voltages they are compatible with. Many laptops, cellphone chargers, tablets and e-readers have dual voltage, so you won't need a converter.

Money and Budgeting

Exchanging Money and Using ATMs

The official currency of Peru is the Sol (PEN S/), which is divided into 100 centimos. Coins in circulation include the amounts of 10, 20, and 50 centimos, as well as 1, 2 and 5 soles. Paper bills come in 10, 20, 50, 100 and 200 soles. For current information on exchange rates, please visit: www.xe.com

We recommend changing money at Casas de Cambio (money changing booths) or banks whenever possible. Note that dollar bills with rips or tears will often be denied or exchanged at a significantly lower rate. It is best to bring new bills from your bank. It is better to not change money at the airport where the rates are not as favorable. \$1 bills are usually exchanged for around two thirds of the going rate, so try to avoid using these where possible. You can use your ATM card at banks. Please make sure to call your bank before your trip, to let them know you will be in Peru – this will avoid potential fraud scares, and ensure your card is not blocked while traveling. Credit cards are accepted in the bigger cities but bring cash for small towns or pueblos and local markets. Travelers' checks are rarely, if ever, used.

Always agree on prices in advance of purchasing services or goods. Additionally, this is a bargaining culture, so when purchasing souvenirs, you can bid a bit lower than the vendor's opening price! Often, merchants do not have much change, so try to have an ample supply of small bills. You can ask for change at your hotel, a money changer, or a bank.



Tipping

Tipping is not required but is a welcome gesture if you feel you received excellent service. For guides and drivers the suggestions are for the total tip from your group, per day. It is best to tip in soles, but dollars will be accepted too. It is not necessary to tip everywhere, but here are some good rules of thumb:

- Your guide – \$ 20 USD per day (from your whole party, not per person)
- Your driver and/or host – \$ 10 USD per day (from your whole party, not “per person”)
- Waiting staff at great restaurants – 10% (sometimes service is included in your bill, please check first)
- Bellboys – \$1 USD per piece of luggage

Budgeting

While most charges are included in your trip cost, you will need a bit of extra cash for:

- Meals not included in your itinerary: there is a huge variety in price available, but generally, US dollars are worth a bit less than 3 times what they are worth in the U.S. So while a nice main plate in the U.S. might cost \$14-20, a nice meal in Peru might be 25-40 soles (under \$15 USD).
- Souvenirs – absolutely up to you. You can find great little gifts for 30 cents and Peruvian hats for about \$10 USD. A high-quality alpaca sweater should cost around \$100 USD.
- Taxis or other transport on your free days – this will depend on where you are. Your guides can provide estimates for costs.
- Tipping. We’ve provided more information below. - Airport taxes. More information below.

Health, Safety, and Insurance

Before You Go: Vaccinations, Questions for Your Doctor and Preparing for Altitude

Beside the CDC recommends vaccine for He-patitis A and B Typhoid for general travel to South America, and Yellow Fever if you are visiting the jungle. They also recommend bringing malaria pills if you are visiting the jungle. We highly recommend speaking with your health care provider before you leave; it is even better to speak with a doctor at a travel clinic.

Those with heart disease, asthma or other respiratory ailments should speak with their doctor prior to heading to Cusco and other high altitude locations. There is a prescription medication available (Diamox) that can help all travelers adjust to the altitude more smoothly, but some people may be allergic. Again, check with your doctor. If you are preparing to trek at high altitude, you'll feel much better if you are physically fit! Good aerobic health will help a great deal!

Travel Insurance

Nomad Patagonia does not include travel insurance in its trip prices, but we strongly encourage you to purchase a plan before you travel in Peru. This is relatively inexpensive (usually falls under \$100 USD) and it protects you financially from sickness abroad and cancellations due to unforeseeable events. If you are trekking, you are required to have insurance coverage. We recommend using www.travelguard.com or you can check www.insuremytrip.com for a list of options.

Food and Water Precautions

While in Peru, please drink only bottled water which is readily available in all hotels and local stores. Eat fruit that can be peeled and stay away from lettuce and other uncooked vegetables. Make sure the cooked foods you do eat are well-cooked and that meats are hot. Water cleanliness and sanitation is not all it could be here, so sticking to these rules and eating in reputable restaurants will prevent stomach ailments.



Cusco is over two times higher than Denver. Puno is even higher. For many people, this high altitude will make itself felt. Common effects are headache, nausea, loss of appetite, trouble with sleep and lack of energy. For most people, keeping hydrated, taking Diamox (check with your doctor as mentioned above), avoiding heavy meals and alcohol in the first days, taking it easy and drinking coca tea are sufficient remedies. If any symptoms worsen, please contact your Nomad Patagonia as Acute Mountain Sickness, although rare, can have more serious consequences.

Medical Care

If you have any medical issue whatsoever, contact your Nomad Patagonia Team as soon as possible and they will help you find the best medical care.

Safety Tips

Extra caution should be taken in Lima, where theft is more common. Don't wear flashy jewelry or display expensive electronics. Keep purses and bags close, cab doors locked and cab windows rolled up. Use caution throughout the rest of Peru and always be aware of your surroundings. That said, you'll most often be with a guide, who will be on the lookout for you and there's no need to be overly worried!

Staying in Touch

Internet

All of our hotels will have Wi-Fi available and your guides will be happy to help you find locutorios where you can connect to the Internet, print and even make international phone calls. *Please note there is little-to-no internet connectivity when visiting the jungle.



Your Mobile Phone

If you have a newer smart phone and it is unlocked, you may be able to purchase an eSIM, which does not require inserting a physical card into your device. Instead, you can purchase an eSIM online before you leave and it will start connecting as soon as you land and turn on cellular data on your smart phone. Most eSIMs give you data only, not a local telephone number. This means they will not work for phone calls or regular SMS messages. They will work, however, with message services such as Whatsapp, which is very popular in Peru.

One of the sites listing compatible devices is <https://www.getyourguide.com/c/esim-device-support>.

There are a few options for eSIMs that cover Peru. One option is Mobimatter (<https://mobimatter.com/esim-peru>), which has a few options for data-only eSIMs for Latin America, with the price depending on how much data you want. Considering that while you are in your hotels and many restaurants with access to Wi-Fi, you will not need to connect with your eSIM, 10 Gigs of data when you are out and about should be plenty for a month-long trip. If you do run out, you can purchase additional data if you need to. If you do need to make calls from your smart phone, you may want to consider setting up Wi-Fi calling *before you leave home* so you can make calls while you are connected to Wi-Fi (such as in your hotel). Ask your telephone provider about setting up Wi-Fi calling before you leave home and how to avoid roaming charges.



Calling Peru and Calling Home

The telephone country code for Peru is 51. When dialing Peru from overseas, dial the country code (51), followed by the regional code (see below) minus the initial 0, followed by the number.

If dialing a Peruvian cellphone number from the USA, simply dial: 011 + 51 + the 9-digit mobile number. Regional codes for the largest cities:

- 01 Lima
- 084 Cusco
- 084 Machu Picchu (Aguas Calientes)
- 054 Arequipa
- 051 Puno

From within Peru, there are plenty of places available to make long-distance calls easily. Phone cards are also available. In order to call home, dial the country code (eg. 001 for the United States) then the area code and number. If you are bringing a smart phone or tablet on your journey, certain apps allow you to make phone calls and send messages via Wi-Fi for free. We recommend the app WhatsApp, as well as FaceTime for Apple users. Skype is also popular and allows video calls. Please note there is little-to-no cell reception or internet when visiting the jungle or other remote areas.

Arrival and Departure

Upon Arrival

Most flights arrive quite late in the evening or early in the morning. Once you've claimed your baggage and cleared customs, look for our unmistakable welcome board in the arrivals lounge with your names clearly marked. Our Lima Host will warmly welcome you to Peru, assist you with your luggage, and take you to your hotel. Please do not leave the airport terminal building unless you have made contact with them. Also, ignore the calls from taxi drivers as your private transport has been provided for you.



Airport Taxes

All airport taxes for domestic and international departures and arrivals are now included in flight ticket costs. You will not need to pay additional taxes in Peruvian airports.

When it's Time to Say 'Goodbye'

Your Nomad Patagonia Host will bring you to the airport, help you check in and bid you “adios!” Make sure you have a tour tourist card readily accessible to hand in as you pass the immigration counters.



Cultural Considerations

Language

While Peru's primary language is Spanish, many people in the Andes speak Quechua, and people in the Lake Titicaca region speak Aymara. Luckily you'll be with your English-speaking guide most of the time, so you won't miss a thing.

Food

Peruvian cuisine is tasty, varied, and regional. Seafood is best on the coast, while the Inca delicacy, cuy (roasted guinea pig), can be sampled in the highlands. Specialties include beef, kabobs, rocoto relleno (spicy bell peppers stuffed with ground beef and vegetables), adobo (spicy pork stew), choclo con queso (corn on the cob with cheese), rice and beans, potato, and a variety of chicken dishes. Vegetarian options are available throughout whole Peru. Do ask us and your guides for restaurant recommendations!

Accommodations

We have personally stayed in each of the hotels and lodges we recommend to you, and we prefer accommodations that are quiet and centrally located. Please note that some accommodations, particularly jungle lodges and homestay opportunities, are rustic at best. This means no central heat or air conditioning, electricity only at select times of the day, and oftentimes no cell reception, Wifi, or TV.

Festivals and Celebrations

Peru is a developing country. Travel here requires patience and openness to cultural differences. You will visit diverse and sometimes remote regions. The indigenous people of Peru are colorful and photogenic, and it is recommended to ask (hand signals are fine) before taking their picture. In more heavily travelled regions (Machu Picchu and Cusco) it is common to pay the person 1 Sol. Traveling responsibly does not solely mean preserving the environment, but also respecting and supporting local communities and their customs and traditions.

Traveling responsibly is also about experiencing new cultures, sharing, and learning something new. Peruvians love to celebrate and there are many religious festivals throughout the year. These festivals often involve large parades with dancing and bands (and as a result, unexpected street closures), as well as many fireworks. In general, you will hear fireworks in Cusco on Sunday mornings for the weekly parades.

At key times of the year, especially throughout May, June and July when the main local (Cusco), national and religious festivals take place, you are likely to hear gunshot-like fireworks at various times throughout your stay. Please don't be alarmed by the loudness of them at times: this is just part of the way of life in Peru!



“Traveling – It Leaves You Speechless,
Then Turns You Into a Storyteller”
-Ibn Battuta