

# CUSCO to LA PAZ (19 days) Peru & Bolivia Explorer (Inc. Amazon Jungle)



**COUNTRIES VISITED: BOLIVIA, PERU**

## **INCLUDES**

- All accommodation - simple hotels & guesthouses, 3 nights camping on Inca Trail & basic Jungle Lodge
- Meet and greet on arrival in Cusco airport & transfer to Hotel
- Cusco Orientation Walk with local guide
- All airport transfers
- Inca Trail Trek to Machu Picchu (4 day trek including all meals & guide)
- Entrance to Machu Picchu and guided tour of site
- Return train from Machu Picchu
- Boat trip on Lake Titicaca
- Overnight stay with Local Family on Lake Titicaca
- 4 day Amazon jungle and Pampas wetlands trip, meals and guide
- Meals as per itinerary - approx. 65%
- Services of Oasis Tour Leader and local guides on Inca Trail and in Amazon
- All local transport

## EXCLUDES

- Visas
- International Flights
- Meals not listed in the itinerary
- Travel Insurance
- Airport Taxes
- Drinks
- Optional Excursions as listed in the Pre-Departure Information
- Tips

## TRIP ITINERARY

### DAYS 1 CUSCO

Our local guide will meet you at **Cusco airport** and transfer you to the joining Hotel in the serene area of San Blas. Our guide will arrange a suitable time to take you on an **orientation walk of the City**, so you can get your bearings and make the most of your time in Cusco. *(No meals included)*

Overnight: Andean South Hotel

### DAYS 2 CUSCO

Cusco, the outdoors capital of Peru and our base for the next 7 days. A mecca for adventure travel, Peru's famous Inca Trail begins near this city. Although Cusco is today a colonial city, most of its churches and museums are built on top of original Inca stonewalls which are clearly visible. You have the option of doing a day tour of the beautiful Urubamba or Sacred Valley of the Incas where you'll find temples, terraces, local communities and markets before returning to Cusco for a good night's sleep before your Inca Trail! *(Breakfast)*

Overnight: Andean South Hotel

### DAYS 3 - 6 INCA TRAIL

We head out early from Cusco to the Urubamba Valley from where we begin our 4 day hike along the Inca Trail to **Machu Picchu**. This moderate to strenuous hike is a once in a lifetime experience and anyone with a good level of fitness will enjoy it. A stunning combination of awesome views, Inca ruins, magnificent mountains and exotic adventure. There are several treks which you can take in Machu Picchu. When permits are still available, we will organise the **Classic Trail** trek, but great alternative Inca Trail treks, like the **Lares** or **Salkantay** can be arranged when the Classic is not available or by your choice (must be pre-arranged at time of booking). These alternatives mean that you still get to visit Machu Picchu. Tours to Machu Picchu are absolutely unbelievable; a trip to this City in the Clouds is an ancient and awe-inspiring part of our South America travel tour. Besides seeing Machu Picchu, you are able to enjoy the architectural uniqueness of Cusco and explore some of the colourful surrounding markets. Please note that for all those visiting Machu Picchu there is now the option to buy a ticket to go up the summit next to Machu Picchu, Huayna Picchu. Tickets for this must be requested at the time of your booking with us, and payment made in advance in the UK. You will have the option to add the tickets to go up Huayna Picchu when you make your booking online, be sure to add them if you would like them.

Our route back to Cusco for all options is by train. *(Breakfast x 4, Lunch & Dinner x 3).*

Overnight: Inca Trail camping (three nights)

Overnight Cusco: Andean South Hotel (or similar)

## DAYS 7 - 8 CUSCO

We have 2 free days in **Cusco** to relax and recover as well as explore more of the city and its museums and churches or look for local crafts from Alpaca woollen jumpers to Andean musical instruments and local jewellery. The adventurous can go white water rafting on the Urubamba or Apurimac River. (*Breakfast x 2*)

Overnight: Andean South Hotel (or similar)

## DAYS 9 - 11 CUSCO TO PUNO

Bordering Peru and Bolivia at 3800m lies **Lake Titicaca** which will be one of the most memorable stops on your tour. Lake Titicaca is the original place of the **Uros Indians** who have made their homes on **floating reed islands**. By boat we visit the floating islands during the day and then we go that one step beyond the average and spend the night with one of the Indian families on the lesser known islands **Isla Amantani or Taquile**. Spending some time in these local communities is a definite highlight of travel to Peru and is almost like stepping back in time. This experience will provide a unique opportunity to learn more about the traditional lifestyle of the Andean people and their customs as well as supporting these families with some extra income.

On return from the Islands, you have the rest of the day to relax in Puno, on the shores of **Lake Titicaca**, and experience the rich Andean culture. (*Breakfast x 3, Lunch & Dinner x 1*)

Overnight Puno: Hotel Italia (or similar)

Overnight Lake Titicaca: Family homestay

## DAYS 12 - 13 TITICACA TO LA PAZ

Our tour of Peru draws to a close this morning, as we leave for **Bolivia**. After crossing the border we continue onto the impressive city of **La Paz**, where the rest of the day is yours to explore. Bolivia is considered the most indigenous of all South American countries and this is clearly visible in La Paz. The capital is a hilly city full of markets and traditionally dressed people. (*Breakfast x 2*)

Overnight: Estralla Andina Hotel (or similar)

## DAYS 14 LA PAZ

Today we have a free day to explore the city of **La Paz**. **La Paz** is like no other city you will have visited, set in a stunning valley, surrounded by **6000mtr peaks!** The streets are narrow and winding, full of brightly dressed Andeans selling their wares! You may choose to visit the main sights such as **Murillo Square** & Cathedral, Congress and Government Palace (built in 1800's), The **Incan Gold Museum**, **Valley of the Moon** and the famous **Witches Market**. Alternatively you could make your way out to the **Killi Killi lookout point** to enjoy a 360 degree view of the city!

For those who are feeling adventurous, you may wish to partake in the **Gravity Assisted Mountain Biking** down the **Worlds Most Dangerous Road**, or visit the worlds highest ski resort at over 5000mtrs! (*Breakfast*)

Overnight: Estrella Andina Hotel (or similar)

## DAYS 15 LA PAZ TO AMAZON JUNGLE

We depart early from La Paz for our flight to **Rurrenabaque** in the **Amazon basin (flight time approx 40 minutes)**. Once we arrive, we head to the shores of the **Beni River** to board a boat to Madidi National Park. On the way we'll see the impressive **Estrecho del Bala**, which is a pass where the Beni River becomes narrow and deep. We navigate **Beni and Tuichi** rivers for approximately three hours to arrive at our lodge where we'll take our lunch and rest a little preparing ourselves for our adventure in the **Bolivian Amazon**.

In the afternoon, we follow jungle paths to learn about the rich flora of the region, **medicinal plants**, toxic plants, mushrooms, and much more. Later we return to the lodge for our dinner, before venturing out on a night walk to feel and hear the sounds of the Amazon and to **observe nocturnal animals**. (*Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*)

Overnight: Amazon Jungle Lodge

## DAYS 16 AMAZON JUNGLE

In the morning we continue exploring the **beautiful jungle** learning from our indigenous guides about the trees, leaves, flowers and plants as well as visiting a clay lick to observe several species of **macaws, parrots and parakeets** licking salty clay to help with their digestion.

Next we travel by river and then switch to 4x4 vehicles to drive towards **Yacuma River**. On the way we'll pass by the picturesque towns of **Reyes and Santa Rosa**. On the river you will enjoy the extraordinary beauty of the region and its **rich wildlife**. On the way to the lodge we hope to see on the river banks, **alligators, turtles, capybaras, Bolivian squirrel monkeys**, and much more. (*Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*)

Overnight: Amazon Jungle Lodge

## DAYS 17 AMAZON JUNGLE

After breakfast we go for a walk to learn about, and experience, another **Amazonian Ecosystem** well known as **Pampas**. This area is characterised by its wetlands and as the jungle becomes less dense our opportunities for spotting tropical wildlife become much greater. Here we are going to search for more fauna, such as birds, caiman, and the famous Amazonian **Anaconda**. In the afternoon we get back to the river and we look for a good spot for fishing piranhas and swimming with the extraordinary **Pink Dolphins** known as Bufeo. After dinner, we'll need our torches as we explore the river in search of **caiman!** (*Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*)

Overnight: Pampas Lodge (or similar)

## DAYS 18 AMAZON JUNGLE TO LA PAZ

Today we explore the pampas on foot, and our aim is specially to find monkeys such as the **Squirrel Monkey** called by locals the "Mono Chichilo", the **Howler Monkey** called locally "Maneche", the **Spider Monkey** "Mono Negro", and others. There is also the opportunity to try your hand at **piranha fishing** and, if the water level is high enough, **swimming with river dolphins**. We return to the lodge for our lunch, and prepare for our drive back to **Rurrenabaque** where we'll take our late afternoon flight back to **La Paz**. Upon arrival in La Paz we transfer back to our hotel. (*Breakfast, Lunch*)

Overnight: Estrella Andina Hotel (or similar)

## DAYS 19 LA PAZ

The tour ends in La Paz after breakfast, and your time is free to enjoy the city until your included departure airport transfer. If your flight departs after hotel checkout (12:00), there is safe luggage storage for your bags until you are ready to go to the airport. If you want to stay longer in La Paz we can book post-trip accommodation for you, or if you are travelling on in South America the city is well-connected and a great place for onward travel. (*Breakfast*)

## ESSENTIAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR TRIP

---

## ARRIVAL & ACCOMMODATION

**Trip Joining Point:** Andean South Hotel - Cusco

**Start Time Day 1:** 14:30

**Address:** Tandapata Street, 635 Sanbla's Neighborhood, Cusco

**Website:** [www.andeansouth.com](http://www.andeansouth.com)

**Email:** [reservas@andeansouth.com](mailto:reservas@andeansouth.com)

All prices listed are approximate and subject to limited availability.

Room Type	Price	Description
Single en-suite	US\$30.00	Per Room
Double/Twin en-suite	US\$45.00	Per Room
Triple en-suite	US\$60.00	Per Room

The trip starts from the Andean South Hotel. On Day 1 a suitable time will be arranged for an orientation walk of the city with your guide. You will meet in the hotel reception.

The Andean South Hotel is located in the San Blas district just one minute from the peaceful and charming Plaza San Blas. San Blas is a young and hippy area, with a great selection of nightlife, yet it's also quiet enough for a good night's sleep. The Andean South takes pride in its guest services and the staff will ensure you a memorable stay in the "City of the Incas".

### **PRE-TRIP ACCOMMODATION:**

We provide a free service for booking pre-trip accommodation and airport transfers. Just log in to [My Oasis Account](#) and select the accommodation / transfer required, or contact us direct. We will require your flight number, arrival time, and arrival date so please ensure this information is forwarded to us as soon as you have booked your flight. Please book this service as soon as you have booked your flight and no later than 6 weeks prior to departure, after which a late booking fee will apply. If you have booked through a travel agent you will not have an account allocated, so please contact your agent to request pre-trip accommodation and airport transfers.

Double, twin, and triple rooms will be provided subject to availability, where requested. However when not available we may need to book other rooming arrangements, and will fit these as closely as possible to your request. Those travelling solo will be put in shared rooms to reduce the costs to them, which may be twin/triple shares with other Oasis Overland travellers. Single rooms may be available in some cities for solo travellers, and we will arrange this for you on request, subject to availability.

If you are arriving early in the morning and you would like to check in immediately, you may have to reserve your room for the previous night to ensure direct check in, otherwise you may have to wait until normal check in times (usually 1pm to 2pm).

Accommodation costs for any additional nights booked are payable direct to the hotel on arrival in Nuevo Sol or \$US.

## **AIRPORT TRANSFERS:**

**Airport Transfers are included** in the cost of your adventure (provided you request these via the UK office or your account six weeks before your departure).

On arrival into Cusco airport you will be met by a local representative who will take you to the group joining Hotel. The driver will have your name on a sign with Oasis Overland.

If your flight is delayed or cancelled and is going to arrive more than 1 hour later than the time you have provided us with, please call us immediately (emails may not be received- particularly on weekends). If for any reason upon your arrival at Cuzco airport (eg. problem with immigration or lost baggage) you are delayed by more than 1 hour before getting through to the arrivals hall, you will need to call our local representative Sonia on +51 84 266935 or +51 989 551082 to rearrange the transfer. If you do not inform us of any delays and your transfer is missed, you will need to take a taxi to the starting hotel, at your own expense.

## **PRE-DEPARTURE MEETING**

Day 1, your arrival day and Day 2 of the itinerary are both free days. After your arrival on Day 1, your guide will take you on an orientation around Cusco, free time will also allow you to take it easy and help with altitude acclimatisation. There will be a pre-departure meeting in the starting hotel on the evening of Day 2, usually around 6:00pm. There will be a notice in reception advising the exact time and here your crew will explain how the day to day running of the trip works. Your Tour Leader will **collect your Local Payment** money as well as a photocopy of your **passport information page, insurance policy details** with policy number and confirmation that the duration will cover you for the entire trip and a **24-hour emergency assistance** telephone number. It is essential that you attend this meeting - please let the UK office or your tour leader know if you are unable to do so.

## **POST TRIP ACCOMMODATION AND AIRPORT TRANSFERS**

Post-trip accommodation & airport transfers can be arranged with your tour leader during the trip or directly with the hotel on arrival. The return airport transfer is not included and is at your own expense. We regret these services cannot be arranged via the Oasis office before departure.

## **FLIGHT INFORMATION**

Normally our trips start in the evening of day 1 with a pre-departure meeting (you will be given exact details on when and where to meet either on collection from the airport or it will be clearly noted in the reception of our joining hotel). Please check the start time of your trip in the Accommodation Information section and allow extra time for your arrival wherever possible.

We recommend allowing an extra day post trip for any itineraries that include an internal flight or a jungle option, to allow for flight delays. You may also wish to allow some extra time to explore your arrival and departure cities

There are many online flight search engines such as [www.skyscanner.net](http://www.skyscanner.net) or [www.ebookers.co.uk](http://www.ebookers.co.uk), flights can also be booked direct with airline websites or through travel agencies. Please inform us of your flight details through your online account, as airport transfers can be arranged for various trips.

**One way ticket:** If you intend to travel on a one way ticket to meet up with one of our trips, without possessing an onward flight ticket - we recommend that you have a copy of your payment confirmation/receipt (that you will be sent at time of your balance payment) available at immigration to assist easy entry.

**Departure Taxes:** Please check with your Travel Agent or Airline if your flight ticket already includes a departure tax payment out of the country. If it does not - please budget for approx US\$30 to \$70 USD - to be paid in US\$ only.



## PASSPORTS

Your passport must be valid for at least 6 months AFTER your trip finishes. This is a general requirement for all of the countries we travel to on our trips.

If you have dual nationality you can only use one passport for the entire trip. It is your responsibility to ensure you have all the relevant visas you require.

Please bring 2 photocopies of your passport details to give to your tour leader.

As a guideline, you will need at least 1 blank page per country in your passport, (for the 31 weeks Trans South America, you should allow at least 13 blank pages).

**Inca Trail Trek** - you will need to provide your passport details to apply for your Inca trail trekking permit, please enter these correctly on your booking form. If you are intending on renewing your passport then please let us know at the point of booking. In order to trek you will need to be in possession of both your passport and your permit - and the passport details have to match otherwise the permit issuing authorities will not let you trek.

## VISAS

The information below is to be used only as a guide and may change without prior notice. It is advisable to contact the relevant embassy in plenty of time before the trip departs to check the current visa requirements. It is **your responsibility** to ensure you have all the relevant visas you require.

### **Visas must be paid for in USD cash ONLY.**

On arrival to countries in South America, you will be given an 'Immigration card'. It is important that you keep this with your passport during your entire stay in the particular country as it is needed for departure. Failure to produce this immigration slip can result in a fine.

**Transiting via the USA** - Travellers who are flying to South America via the US will require either a US visa or for certain nationalities an Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) to take advantage of the visa waiver programme. These can be processed and paid for [here](#).

If you have travelled to Iran, Iraq, Sudan, Syria, Libya, Somalia or Yemen since March 2011 you will not qualify for the ESTA and must apply for a visa.

It is very important you establish your ESTA eligibility and have the correct documentation before departing, as if you do not have the right authorisation upon checking in at the airport you may not be permitted to travel.

For more information on other nationalities & visas checkout [www.projectvisa.com](http://www.projectvisa.com)

### **Peru**

Passport Holders from UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada and most EU countries will not require a visa to enter Peru.

Passport Holders from other countries, will need to check the current visa requirements with the relevant consulate, and whether you need to obtain the visa in advance.

**Inca Trek** - you will need to provide your passport details to apply for your Inca trekking permit, please enter these correctly on your booking form. If you are intending on renewing your passport then please let us know at the point of booking. In order to trek you will need to be in possession of both your passport and your permit - and the passport details have to match otherwise the permit issuing authorities will not let you trek.

### **Bolivia**

Passport Holders from UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and most EU countries will not require a visa to enter Bolivia.

**American passport holders** will require a visa to enter Bolivia, you can purchase these upon arrival for approximately US\$165. You will need one passport-sized photograph (3cm x 4cm), a colour photocopy of the passport information page, a copy of your yellow fever certificate, paper copy of your trip booking confirmation and a bank statement. For travellers joining one of our **Regional Explorers in Peru and Bolivia** you may wish to obtain this visa in advance.

Passport Holders from other countries, will need to check the current visa requirements with the relevant consulate, and whether you need to obtain the visa in advance.

## VACCINATIONS AND HEALTH

It is possible that you may require some vaccinations for your trip, depending on the areas that you are visiting. As we are not medically trained, we are unable to give detailed advice on vaccination requirements, so please use the information below as a guide only. We have worked closely with **Nomad Travel Clinics** for many years and they offer Oasis travellers a **10% discount** on vaccinations, anti-malarial drugs, first aid items, clothing and equipment, just enter discount code OASIS1000 at [www.nomadtravel.co.uk](http://www.nomadtravel.co.uk). Alternatively you can check out the [fit for travel website](#) for more travel health information or consult a reputable travel clinic or your GP for information and advice. We suggest that you allow at least 8 weeks to get all your vaccinations.

**Yellow Fever** - Being vaccinated against Yellow Fever and having a valid certificate and a photocopy is deemed compulsory in some countries we visit, especially at certain borders and are needed if you are entering from an infected country. You can view a list of countries requiring a certificate through the World Health organisation [http://www.who.int/ith/ITH\\_country\\_list.pdf](http://www.who.int/ith/ITH_country_list.pdf)

**Rabies** - Vaccinations are regularly advised for many countries that we travel through - especially if time and money are not a deterrent.

**Malaria** - In some of the areas we visit there is a risk of contracting Malaria. You must be aware that whatever malaria prophylactics you are taking, they only offer partial protection. They must be coupled with your own physical efforts against being bitten - which is the best prevention. Malaria-carrying mosquitoes come out at sunset so from this time you should wear long sleeves and trousers. Exposed skin, especially ankles, should have insect repellent containing 'Deet' applied to them. Your crew will advise on where the worst affected areas are on the trip. There are a number of prophylactic malaria treatments on the market & requirements change. It is also wise to take a sample of whichever prophylactic you choose, a few weeks before you leave. This way you may determine early on if you have any adverse reactions so you can change the regimen if necessary. Please consult a reputable travel clinic or GP for advice. For more information visit [www.nomadtravel.co.uk](http://www.nomadtravel.co.uk) or [www.fitfortravel.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.fitfortravel.scot.nhs.uk)

Medical advice should be taken particularly if you are visiting the jungle in either Ecuador or Peru, the Brazilian Pantanal or Iguazu Falls in either Argentina or Brazil as part of your trip.

**Altitude sickness** - This is caused by thin air (due to lack of oxygen) and can affect anyone arriving at high altitude (above 3000mtrs). The symptoms are headaches, dizziness, shortage of breath and possibly nausea. To avoid this or alleviate the symptoms make a point to acclimatize by arriving into a high altitude destination a few days early and make sure you do not over exert yourself, rest for a few hours, avoid drinking alcohol, smoking, large meals and drink plenty of water.

As we are travelling mostly by land (as opposed to flying into a high altitude location) we should acclimatise gradually, and so avoid 'soroche', mountain sickness.

**Dengue** - Unlike the malaria mosquito, which bites at night, the dengue carrying mosquito bites during the day. Some areas we travel to do have occasional outbreaks & it is therefore advised that you take care not to be bitten during the day as well as at night. There is no vaccine available.

**Health** - To join our trips you should be in good general health. Your medical insurance company must be told if you have any pre-existing medical condition / allergy or if you are on any regular medication,



otherwise you may not be covered under your policies for these. Our crew will need to know of any medication or conditions you may have. For general health advice log onto [www.nathnac.org/travel/](http://www.nathnac.org/travel/)

## TRAVEL INSURANCE

It is a compulsory requirement that you have adequate travel insurance before you join any Oasis Trip & at the very least are insured for all necessary medical & repatriation costs incurred.

You will be asked to provide the following details in [My Oasis Account](#) if you have not already done so: travel insurance name, insurance policy number & insurance emergency telephone number. You will also be required to give a copy of your policy with this information to your Tour Leader on arrival with confirmation that the policy duration is sufficient to cover you for the entire duration of your trip. It is also wise to leave a copy of your insurance policy with a friend or relative for safe keeping.

We believe that your safety and holiday enjoyment are very important. It is a mistake to think that "it will never happen to me". It is also very important that you are covered for all the activities that you may wish to undertake while on our trip. It is extremely important that you check the full extent of your cover related to 24 hour Medical Emergency Assistance. In the event of you needing medical treatment you want to know that you have the best cover available to you. Your policy should include adequate Medical Emergency and Repatriation cover as well as Cancellation, Baggage and Personal Liability cover. You need to be aware of EXACTLY what activities your policy covers you for. Please note that skiing is not usually covered in most insurance policies.

We offer tailor made Overland Adventure Travel Insurance that covers most of the adventure and sporting activities on our trips.

For further information on the insurance we offer, the activities covered and costs, check out the [Travel Insurance](#) section of our website. You can purchase our insurance by logging into [My Oasis Account](#) and click 'Buy Insurance' or through the following [link](#).

## MONEY, BUDGETS AND LP

### Local Payment (LP)

LP is part of your overall trip payment and is the most cost effective and practical way to get hard currency to South America to pay for a variety of your day to day local costs (i.e. all meals prepared by the group, hostel/hotel fees, gas, and certain activities listed on the trip page) which cannot be pre-paid from the UK. It is a guaranteed amount, set before your trip departs, and unlike 'group kitty' systems we will not ask you to contribute more once the trip is underway.

**Please note:** Your LP is payable to your Tour Leader on the morning of departure in US\$ Dollars CASH ONLY. Make sure that all your notes are in good condition. Old, torn or marked notes are often refused by the banks and we will therefore be unable to accept them either. Please do not bring all of your Local Payment in US\$100 notes and also make sure that they are post 2013 and do not have a serial number starting with CB.

### How to bring your currency?

Past Oasis travellers have fed back that they have felt, as a general rule it is best to bring your money in a combination of cash US dollars, pre-paid travel currency cards and debit/credit cards.

**Make sure that all your notes are in good condition. Old, torn or marked notes are often refused by the banks and shops. Please ensure your notes are dated post 2013** and do not have a serial number starting with CB. When buying US Dollars before you travel it is best to ask for clean notes with no tears or markings. It can be difficult using US\$100 bills in Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia so if possible, bring US\$50 bills for these countries. Some travellers worry about carrying so much cash with them, however all Oasis Overland trucks are equipped with an onboard safe for the security of your money and passport. Please also remember that Visas, where required, need to be paid for in US dollars cash only.

## **Spending Money**

From past trips and traveller feedback US\$150 to US\$200 per week should cover costs such as some meals out (on average 50% of meals on the trip are supplied), soft drinks and beers, email & communications, souvenirs and other general spending. Personal spending habits & budgets differ greatly from person to person. Budget on visa costs and optional activities separately (see visa section above & optional excursions page) & allow extra for your Local Payment contribution. There is often a departure tax payable in the airport, so allow up to US\$50 for this.

## **Changing money**

Change your money only at banks, hotels, airports or forex bureaus. It is illegal to change money on the street, as these people will normally be opportunistic thieves or undercover police. Your crew will advise you where & when you can change money & with what means. It is also a good idea to have a small CASH emergency fund, to allow for the unexpected.

## **Credit & Debit Cards**

If you are intending using your credit or debit card, we suggest taking more than one card with you as you may find that your card is not accepted in the first ATM you try. For credit and debit cards Visa is best. Mastercard and American Express are generally not accepted throughout South America. We recommend that you inform your bank that you will be using your card abroad to avoid it being blocked.

## **Pre-Paid Travel Currency Cards**

These cards are similar to normal Credit and Debit cards but they can be pre loaded with cash before you travel with a set amount allowing you to withdraw this cash using the card at normal ATMs. It is a more secure way to access cash on your trip, but again do not rely on these as your sole means of funds on a trip - (please refer to the ATM section). Several banks and companies now offer these cards, but be sure to look into the rates for withdrawing cash when making your decision. When using these cards abroad you will use them to withdraw the local currency from an ATM and not the currency that you loaded onto the card.

## **ATMs**

These are available in most major cities along our route and allow you to withdraw local currency only. We discourage you from relying on your ATM card as a primary source of funds in case it is lost/stolen/ swallowed, or the machine isn't working. In some destinations we probably won't even see a bank or ATM for days on end. Even where do find them, they cannot always be relied upon - things change, and ATMs don't always work! Besides memorising your PIN, it is also important to be aware of your daily withdrawal limit and bank withdrawal costs.

## **Tipping**

Tipping in South America is customary and often expected, and local attitudes towards tipping are different to what we are used to in the West. It is often more than a reward for services well done but as wages are extremely low, it is an accepted means of supplementing an income. As a general rule, tipping around 10% of the total bill in restaurants is a good guide, and the same amounts usually apply for activities and excursions.

Because it can be difficult to know what to tip, and as it has such importance in some areas both economically and culturally, there may be times and activities for which your crew will make it clear what level of tipping is 'customary/expected'. They may also be quite enthusiastic or assertive in encouraging you to take account of these suggestions. This is motivated by the knowledge of how important tipping can be, and the offence or confusion that can be caused when local people are tipped poorly. In the end, tipping remains at the discretion of the individual, but our crew will continue to advise on normal rates, and we would ask you to carefully consider the economic or personal impact of being seen to 'under tip'. We know that many who travel with us are on a tight budget, but ask you to remember that those we work with locally may also face financial hardship, and also work very hard to try to give you unrivalled service/experiences.

As a very rough guide, we would suggest that you budget for an amount equal to 10% of the local payment for your trip, plus 10% of the cost of any of the listed optional excursions that you wish to do. The amounts you end up tipping may vary from a rigid 10%, but hopefully this will help you budget in general.

On the Inca Trail, your crew will advise you what the expected tipping amounts are before the trek. It may seem unusual to be asked to tip before receiving a service, but the tips are a crucial part of the income for the guides, cooks and porters, and it is important that this gets shared out equally and fairly between them, so you can expect your Oasis Tour Leader to take an active role in ensuring it is done in the correct manner. The tips are usually spread out by the Tour Leader and then given to the travellers to hand out on the last day of the trek.

In the past we have been asked by travellers about tipping your Oasis Crew. If you choose to do this, it would be budgeted separately from the above. Our guys work very hard at making your trip a great travel experience. Working overseas can often be challenging and they are pretty much on call for you 24 hours a day, so it's appreciated as a thank you for hard work and good service, but of course not mandatory. Our suggestion is to budget around US\$1, per person, per day.

## CLIMATE

The climate in Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador is varied, from hot and humid in the Amazon Jungle, to cold nights at altitude on the Inca Trail. It is best to prepare for a variety of weather conditions, as it can be quite unpredictable!

Peru has three different climates: the coastal area is an arid desert climate, the Andes have a sub-tropical weather system and can vary according to the altitude, and the Amazon rainforest is tropical. Year-round, the coastal area gets hot during the day and cooler at night; rainfall is rare. During the winter months of April to November the coastline, including Lima, is usually covered by a near-permanent mist, though inland this burns off to allow the sun to break through and hotter conditions. In the Andes, during the European summer months of June to August it is generally warm and pleasant during the day and cold at night, again with little rain. November to April are the rainy season with tropical afternoon showers and higher temperatures. In the Amazon Jungle tropical showers are common on most days in the afternoon, and it is hot and humid year-round.

In Bolivia similar to Peru you will also experience the sub-tropical weather system which will vary according to the altitude, and the Amazon rainforest is tropical.

Quito in Ecuador enjoys a year-round spring-like climate. The Galapagos is generally dry and bright from June to December, with some afternoon shower being drawn from the south, while the months from January to May tend to be more tropical, with more cloud and heavier showers and generally warmer temperatures.

## WHAT TO TAKE

The less you take the less you have to pack, wash & lug home & you can always pick up extras along the way. Most people make the mistake of bringing too much gear. Clothes washing or laundry facilities will be available at least once a week. You will be travelling in the heat & camping in the cold, so bring clothes for all climates; rough stuff is best. Pack according to season: use the climate guide above (remember, nights are cold in deserts and the mountains). Make sure that you bring your gear in a 70 - 90 L rucksack or holdall - suitcases are not suitable.

### Equipment

- Sleeping Bag - 4 season bag, (can be hired locally where required - subject to availability, but most people prefer

### Toiletries - Most available to buy on trip

- Soap, shampoo, toothbrush/paste, antibacterial hand wash, lip balm &

- to bring their own) & sleep sheet
- Small day-pack or small bag to carry daily items
- Soft rucksack, holdall or suitcase
- Water bottle - for personal use - we recommend Water-to-Go (see below Responsible Travel)

- moisturiser
- Sun block 35 + after sun, hat & sun glasses
- Tampons (can buy in most places)
- Contraception

### Clothes

- One pair of trainers or boots
- Sandals/flip flops/jandals/thongs
- Underwear/socks
- T shirts/shirts
- Shorts/swimwear
- Jeans/trousers/jog pants/leggings
- Skirt or dress
- Sweat shirt/jumper
- Jacket/fleece & waterproof jacket

### Personal Effects

- Camera with protective case, spare batteries, film/memory card
- Torch and spare batteries (head torch is best)
- Travel adaptor plug/charger (for cameras and mobile phone batteries)
- Money belt
- Personal stereo - iPod/MP3 etc
- Towel and/or sarong

### Recommended Medical Kit List

- Antiseptic ointment/Antihistamine cream & tablets
- Nurofen or equivalent pain-killer
- Eye-drops/bath
- Anti-diarrhoea treatment
- A couple of bandages (elasticated & triangular)
- Medication for personal allergies/asthma etc
- Insect repellent containing Deet
- Re-hydration sachets/vitamin tablets
- Assorted plasters
- Some suitable antibiotics as recommended by your doctor for infected cuts or to treat severe dysentery

**Please note that in the winter months (June-August) it can be very cold, especially at altitude, so we would recommend that you bring extra layers or be prepared to purchase some when you are in Peru & Bolivia.**

We advise you to bring a small personal medical kit for general everyday use, as well as any personal over-the-counter medicines that you may wish to keep with you. Our Tour Leaders are familiar with the nearest pharmacies, doctors and hospitals throughout the trip if you need to seek medical attention. It will be your own responsibility to carry your medical kit on included excursions and optional activities as some local operators may not have medical kits to hand.

## PHOTOGRAPHY AND ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

**Cameras (incl. Digital & Video Cameras)** - An easy to use 'point and press' will get you some good photos. For memorable shots, it may be worthwhile investing in an SLR camera, but be sure to get some practice in before the trip! Most towns and cities have internet cafes where you can download onto CD/ internet sites - but don't rely on it.

**Photography** - Be aware of your surroundings when taking photographs and filming. Some locations will be sensitive or have local laws banning photography. For example it is usually forbidden to use cameras at borders or around government buildings, military installations, bridges and airports or to take photos of local officials. If you do take photos or film where it is not permitted you may find yourself being questioned by irate officials who may decide to confiscate your camera or instruct you to delete all the images/footage on your device. If in doubt ask for permission, or if there is no-one to ask use some common sense.

**Drones** - As the use of drones becomes more common, countries throughout the world are gradually updating their laws and restrictions on usage. The specific regulations will vary from one country to another, so do check the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice for the latest information. As with cameras, use your common sense if you do use a drone and avoid operation in sensitive areas. If you plan to bring a drone on your trip with us please contact us first to ensure there will be a suitable place to store

it while on your trip.

**Electrical charging & power supply** - It may be difficult to find a power source for charging at times, so a spare battery is a must. Log onto [www.whatplug.net](http://www.whatplug.net) for information regarding the different electrical plugs and voltage used in each country.

## CONTACTING HOME

The internet and WiFi are readily available in almost every town and city you will visit; most hotels and hostels will have free WiFi as will many bars and cafes. Do bear in mind that the connections can be unreliable and will not always be as fast as you are used to at home. If a lot of people try to use the internet at the same time the speed will be slower still, especially if trying to make Skype calls or upload photos/videos. During periods of the trip where we are camping, internet will be less common.

Some travellers choose to take an unlocked mobile phone with them and buy local SIM cards in each country, allowing them to use mobile data. If you particularly want or need regular internet access this may be a good option. Telephone calls can be expensive usually £1 to £5 for a three minute call.

**Online Diaries** - A great variety of free "travel blogs" are now available online, they are a good way of keeping relatives and friend up to date with what you are doing and a good place to upload photos, collecting messages as well as keeping a record for yourself.

## RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

### Before you go

- Remove unnecessary packaging before you go - waste disposal facilities are often stretched or non-existent in the places we visit. To avoid unnecessary pollution of local water supplies take environmentally friendly toiletries with you.
- Why not invest in a wind-up or solar-powered torch or media player before you travel or at least rechargeable batteries.
- Learn some of the local language and read up on the local history/culture before you go. You'll get so much more out of your trip.
- Why not pack some pens/pencils exercise books in your rucksack and they can be donated to a local school or project while you're away. You can also purchase these items cheaply, locally which will help local businesses.
- Take a sturdy water bottle with you from home that you can re-use throughout your trip. We carry large quantities of purified water with us on our Expedition vehicles and it is much better for the environment if you drink this, rather than purchase bottled water along the way. (It also saves you money).
- Water-to-Go: Oasis Overland have partnered with Water-to-Go to help reduce the number of plastic water bottles consumed during a trip. Water-to-Go is a filtration system that eliminates over 99.9% of all microbiological contaminants including viruses, bacteria, chemicals and heavy metals from any non-salt water source. Click here and enter the code OASIS15 to purchase your [Water-to-Go](#) products at 15% discount. Water-to-Go will then donate a further 15% to Oasis Overland Charity projects.

### While you're travelling

From experience gained in running trips, we have developed our own practical and manageable environmental policy which all of our crew practice on the trips we operate, and they will share this information with you at the start of your trip. We welcome your input on this, plus any new ideas you may have, to improve our existing procedures. As a guide here's a few tips to bear in mind.

- Don't waste water. It is a scarce resource in many of the places our trips visit. On all our Ultimate and Overland Expeditions we carry large quantities of purified water with us. We encourage you to refill your own water bottles from this supply, rather than purchase bottled water along the way-much more environmentally friendly and saves you money.
- Never buy endangered species or endangered habitat products. Apart from the fact of it being illegal it

also encourages the trade to continue.

- Look after and preserve the areas we visit. Be careful about stepping on coral reefs or trekking on undesignated tracks.
- Buy locally made crafts and products helping to support the local economy.
- Don't feel when bargaining that you have to get the cheapest price possible just for the sake of it. Pay what the item is worth to you & don't worry about what someone else has paid.
- Try the local food and drinks - this will help to support local farmers and food sellers. Sitting in a local cafe is also a great way to meet local people.
- Dispose of litter appropriately on your trip. This includes cigarette butts. Not only does litter look unsightly it can be lethal to wildlife.
- Where any toilet facilities exist, however unsavoury they might seem to you, they should be used. Where they do not, always bury your waste and make sure it is never near (at least 30m) a water source.
- When game viewing do not encourage your guides to get too close to the wildlife so that their natural behaviour is impeded.
- Respect local customs, traditions and beliefs of the people in the different regions that you travel through.
- Do not take photos of people, ritual events or special places unless you have asked first. Dress appropriately according to local codes and show respect around religious festivals.
- Recycling is almost non-existent in many of the areas and countries we visit - we do the best we can with limited resources & space on our vehicles.
- For books dedicated to travelling more responsibly & ethically see: [www.tourismconcern.org.uk](http://www.tourismconcern.org.uk)

**Community Projects** - Oasis are active in raising awareness and providing support to a number of projects and local schools where we believe we can make a positive difference. More information on the [projects we support](#).

## SECURITY

The UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) offer country-specific advice, regarding not only security but also entry regulations, local laws and customs and health. We strongly recommend all travellers visit the FCO website, or the equivalent in their home country, to familiarise themselves with local conditions and issues in the countries they plan to visit before committing to a trip with us. You can view their website [here](#).

If you have any questions at all about the safety or security of your trip, please do not hesitate to contact us and we will be happy to discuss your trip in more detail.

**In cities** - All major cities have their share of petty crime (just like our cities) and sensible precautions need to be taken. Wearing expensive looking jewellery or watches and carrying cameras will draw unnecessary attention to you. Leave valuables such as passports and excess money in your hotel safe (we recommend carrying a copy of your passport details page at all times). You may find a simple money belt is more discreet than a bag. Always be aware of your surroundings and when approached by people you do not know, use your common sense. At night in cities it's best to use a taxi, rather than walking around the streets, single women in particular need to be careful and we would suggest that it is safer to be in a group.

Oasis does not take responsibility for clients' personal items and we advise you to not take items of value that are not essential for the journey.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### The Inca Trail

We INCLUDE the cost of trekking to Machu Picchu in ALL our trips that visit Peru.

We offer 3 routes - **Classic**, **Salkantay** and **Lares** - (subject to season and availability), all accompanied by knowledgeable guides and porters.



Our first choice trek is the Classic trail. As availability is limited we will move quickly after booking to obtain you a permit where possible. It is VERY important to note that as soon as we purchase your permit it is non-transferable, and non-refundable. Your permit will be linked to your passport details, so please make sure you enter these correctly at the time of booking. If you are intending renewing your passport then please let us know at the point of booking. In order to trek you will need to be in possession of both your passport and your permit – and the passport details have to match otherwise the permit issuing authorities will not let you trek. If you need any further clarification then please contact [southamerica@oasisoverland.co.uk](mailto:southamerica@oasisoverland.co.uk)

When the Classic trail is not available, we will arrange the Lares trail at no extra charge (subject to minimum 2 people). If you wish to trek either the Lares or Salkantay by choice (or take the train option), you must let us know at the time of booking. An additional fee may be payable, but we will discuss this with you. All of the treks visit Machu Picchu for the day.

For more information about the treks including maps please click below for the three routes and treks: [Classic](#) [Lares](#) [Salkantay](#)

**Tipping on the Inca Trail** - Before you start your trek, your Oasis Tour Leader will advise you and other travellers of the suggested tipping amount for the guides, porters and cooks on the trek (this applies to the Classic, Lares and Salkantay treks). Tipping is a vital part of the income for the staff who work on the treks, and it is expected. It is not compulsory, but if you choose not to tip it will be viewed suspiciously and negatively by the local staff and as such we respectfully ask all our travellers trekking to pay the requested amount. We are advised by the local operators what the suggested tipping amount is for each trek, and you will be asked to contribute, before the trek departs. It is usually around US\$50 per person, which is then shared out amongst the guides, porters and cooks.

**Porters** - We can arrange a Porter to carry 5kgs of your equipment whilst on the Classic Inca trail, at the briefing the Guide will provide you with a duffle bag to pack your equipment into which will be available at camp each night, this is arranged on trip and will cost an additional \$30 paid locally to your tour leader. Lares and Salkantay treks

**Train Only** - For those who don't fancy trekking at all, there is the option of taking the train to the town of Aguas Calientes, at the base of Machu Picchu, staying overnight in a simple hotel, and heading up to nearby Machu Picchu the next day. This option gives you an extra two nights in Cusco, where we will provide accommodation. If you wish to take the train option you must state this at the time of booking.

**Huayna Picchu** - Some people like to climb the nearby summit of Huayna Picchu during their time at Machu Picchu. One of the main reasons for doing this would be for the view from the top of it over Machu Picchu. Because of its increasing popularity the local authorities have introduced a permit system to control numbers and collect funds from those wanting to do this. Permits can sell out a long time in advance, and you therefore need to request us to purchase you a permit urgently if you want to do this. You can request this by clicking the Huayna Picchu 'add-on' through your account. There are 400 permits available per day currently. Once requested your tickets cannot be refunded or exchanged, as it is arranged with your specific name and passport details.

The ascent of Huayna Picchu is very steep in places and it can take about an hour to the top. It will be your responsibility to be at the entrance point at the right time, and should you be late then you will unfortunately forfeit your opportunity to go up. The climb is done on the same day that you are visiting the ruins at Machu Picchu, so reduces your time wandering around the ruins. Please bear in mind that to get up and down can take around three hours, and is very steep in places. It is not really for those who are unfit, or scared of heights. The path is pretty deteriorated in places so some light scrambling is required.

## WHAT TO EXPECT

---

## **LIFE ON THE ROAD**

### **Oasis Tour Leader**

We have one Tour Leader on this trip whose duties are extensive & quite demanding. From organising accommodation, meals, travel arrangements, pre-booking some excursions and guides, to finding the best deals, socializing & making sure all runs as smoothly as possible. While your leader is experienced and knowledgeable about the regions that we travel through they are not tour guides as such. The diversity and extent of the history and cultures in this region is vast. In most historical areas we visit there are trained guides, who offer their services; they have spent many years, and have vast experience at particular sites.

### **Accommodation**

We use a mixture of local hotels and guesthouses along the way using shared rooms (between 2 people of the same sex from your trip) unless you are a couple or you have requested a specific type of room. It must be remembered that the Hotels we use are an integral part of Peru & Bolivia and can suffer from common problems that can affect all levels of hotels such as, electrical failure, plumbing faults and other technical difficulties and hot water may occasionally be temperamental if a lot of people are using the showers at the same time. This is a possibility throughout all classes of hotels. On our **Family Trips** we use shared rooms, usually with parents in one room and children in another, though we can make amendments to this if requested. Large family and interconnected rooms are not very common in South America; most rooms are singles, twins or doubles.

During the four days Inca Trail hike we camp. Tents are provided and sleeping bags can be hired (see Inca Trail section for more information on the various hikes).

### **Transport**

We use a mixture of public / local buses and trains, comfortable overnight sleeper coaches, private charter vehicles, boat and several internal flights (on some trips) between cities, allowing you more time to explore.

### **Meals**

Most breakfasts are included whilst on tour plus many other meals on activities such as the Inca Trek and the Salar de Uyuni. Please check your itinerary for a day by day breakdown. We find that most people appreciate sampling the culinary tastes of South America and class this as one of their favourite pastimes. This is why we do not include every meal - allowing each person the chance to try out some of the local cuisine from markets, restaurants & cafes. At times your Tour Leader may organize a group meal - which is another good way to sample some of the local and international delicacies.

### **Vegetarians / Vegans / Coeliacs / Gluten & Lactose intolerance**

Our Tour Leaders will always do their best to cater for any dietary requirement or intolerance whenever possible. However we do not cater for fussy eaters. It must be remembered that the variety of dishes available may not be the same as available to meat eaters. If there is anything in particular you require in your diet or because of an allergy or would miss from home, it would be best to bring these with you, due to the high cost and scarcity of these specialised and often imported foods.

Remember when eating out in local restaurants & hotels that vegetarianism or food allergies / intolerances, are still not widely known about or understood by many local people. i.e Vegetarians or Vegans will often be offered fish or chicken in error. Most large towns and cities, or areas used to tourists, will often have more choice but please be aware that it will probably not be as varied as you are used to when eating out at home.

### **Distance and Time 'En Route'**

Peru is a large country, and on this trip there is a lot of ground to cover. There are a few long drives, but the transport is clean, comfortable and safe, and we make sure that after a long drive we stay in the same

place for a few days, for example in Arequipa and Cusco. We also make comfort stops and stop off at sites of interest along the way, where possible, so you don't feel too rushed, even on travel days.

Optional Excursions are paid for on the day and organised during your trip, so you can decide whilst travelling which activity you may want to do. Prices listed are only a guide and may be dependant on fluctuating exchange rates and minimum numbers. Please see below for more details.

## OPTIONAL EXCURSIONS

---

### PERU

Title	From Price
Sacred Valley Tour	US\$25
Cusco City Tour	US\$10
Cusco Museum Day Pass	US\$20
Museum entrances - Cusco, from	US\$3
Sacred Valley Tour	US\$25
Museum entrances - Cuzco, from	US\$3
Guide & Staff Tips - Inca Trail treks	US\$50
Cuzco City Tour	US\$10
Cuzco Museum Day Pass	US\$20
Sacred Valley Tour	US\$25
Cusco City Tour	US\$10
Cusco Museum Day Pass	US\$20

### BOLIVIA

Title	From Price
Day trip to Chacaltaya, from	US\$95
Gold Museum Entrance Fee - La Paz	US\$1
Madidi National Park Entry Fee	US\$20

We feel that having optional excursions gives a greater degree of flexibility and independence to our group members; independence to decide how much your spending budget can afford; flexibility to decide when and what time of day or with whom to visit a particular site, rather than for example, with the whole group at a pre-ordained time. If you decide not to join a popular excursion, you will have free time to relax or wander off to a market, village or beach, depending on where we are.

You pay for the optional excursions to the local operator, ensuring the money stays with that operator in the local community and this ensures as well, that you are paying the true price for any optional excursions you want to do. This also applies to accommodation costs before and after the trip. Please note that the prices of optional excursions quoted are approximate as local prices can and do change. Please see the relevant trip page for the Optional excursions you can do on that trip and a list of prices.

**Notes downloaded on:** 25-06-2022

