

## General Information of the Country

**Surface Area:** With an area of 1,285,215 km<sup>2</sup>, Peru is the third-largest country in South America after Brazil and Argentina. Peru also holds 200 miles of Peruvian coast and has territorial rights of an area of 60 million hectares in the Antarctic. Peru is divided into 24 departments. Lima is the capital of Peru.

**Population:** Peru is a nation of mixed ethnic origins. Throughout its history, Peru has been the meeting ground for different nations and cultures. The indigenous population was joined 500 years ago by the Spaniards. As a result of this encounter, and later enriched by the migration of African blacks, Asians and Europeans; the Peruvian man emerged as the representative of a nation whose rich ethnic mix is one of its main characteristics. Peru has a total of 27.000.000 inhabitants, 72,3% live in urban areas and a 27,7% in rural.



**Language:** As part of its rich cultural tradition, Peru features many different languages. Although Spanish is commonly spoken across the country, Quechua is a major legacy of the Inca Empire, and is still spoken with regional dialects in many parts of Peru. In addition, other languages are spoken such as Aymara (in Puno) and a startling variety of dialects in the Amazon jungle, which are divided up into 15 linguistic families and 43 different languages. An 80,3% of the populations speak Spanish, a 16,2% Quechua and 3% other dialects.

### VISA AND TRAVEL

#### VISA requirements to enter Peru

It is only required your valid passport and the citizens of the following countries do not require a visa:

**AMERICA:** All the citizens of countries of America, except Cuba.

**EUROPE:** All the citizens of the countries of the European Union.

**ASIA:** South Korea, Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand.

**AFRICA:** South Africa

**OCEANIA:** Australia

The citizens of other countries have to request a VISA in the Consulate of Peru in their respective countries.

**Currency:** The official currency in Peru is the Nuevo Sol (S/.), which is divided into 100 centimos. The currency includes coins for 5, 10, 20 and 50 centimos and 1, 2 and 5 sol coins. There are bills in the denomination of 10, 20, 50, 100 and 200 Nuevos Soles. The exchange rate is approximately 2.65 m. per U.S. dollar.

**Electricity:** The electric system of Peru is 220 volts and 60 cycles.

**Time Zone:** The time zone is Peru is -5 GMT during all year in the entire country.

**Climate:** During November, it is spring time until December 21<sup>st</sup>.

The coast has a temperate climate in general, warm in the north, slightly cooler in the center and south. The rains are almost non-existent except for the north, where there are strong rainfalls in the summer months. In some areas of central and southern coast, as in the cities of Lima and Arequipa, there is a very noticeable very faint precipitation, drizzle or chachani in the winter months.

The Andean zone has a cold and dry climate, in the north rainfall is much more intense. The Amazon or jungle region has a tropical climate, hot and humid, with the presence of heavy rains, which are increased in the summer months.

**Government:** Peru is a democratic republic. The president and members of Congress are elected every five years by universal suffrage. The current constitutional president of Peru is Ollanta Humala Tasso (2011-2016).

**Religion:** Peru is a naturally religious country: a diversity of beliefs and freedom of worship can be seen from the wide range of festivals and rituals that feature both Catholic fervor and the mysticism of age-old pre-Hispanic cultures. An 89,03% of the population are Catholics, 6,73% Evangelical, a 2,56% profess other religions and 1,65% are atheists.

**Telephone:** Peru features a far-reaching telephone network that provides services for national and international long-distance calls from private telephone lines and public cabins. There are currently 1.3 million clients who have mobile phones, and satellite communications are currently being developed.

**Taxes and Tips:** All purchases are subject to the payment of taxes and its rate is 18%. The services of restaurants and hotels have in addition a service tax with a 10% rate.

**Vaccines:** If you travel to the amazon area or jungle of Peru, it is advisable to get vaccinated against the yellow fever.

**Internet / Email:** A number of service providers across the country have given public access to Internet. They are known in Peru as Cabinas Internet, the average cost of an hour's connection is S/.3,50 (US\$1).

**Airports:** There are 14 airports available to receive commercial flights and 10 for international flights: Lima, Arequipa, Chiclayo, Pisco, Pucallpa, Iquitos, Cusco, Trujillo, Tacna and Juliaca. There are 17 airlines that operate international flights and 7 airlines that offer domestic flights.



**Ports:** Peru's largest port is Callao, located outside the city of Lima. Other major ports include Paita, Salaverry, Chimbote, Callao, Pisco, Ilo and Matarani.

**Roads:** Peru is criss-crossed by more than 78,000 km of roads, of which 16,705.79 km are national highways. Of these roads, 8,711.02 km. run from north to south and 7,994.77 km from east to west. The main roads running down the length of the country are the Pan-American Highway (North and South), which links up the towns along Peru's coast, and the Marginal Jungle Highway which links up the towns in the northern jungle with the south, near the Bolivian border. Cutting inland is the Central Highway, which starts out in Lima and runs up to the central highlands, climbing through the high mountain pass of Ticlio (Kilometer 132), which at 4,818 meters above sea level is also the world's highest railway pass. From here, the road descends to the towns of La Oroya and Tarma, continuing down to the Chanchamayo jungle valley in the department of Junín. The government plans to build another 1,819.2 km of roads in the next few years.

### **Touristic Attractions**

**The city of Cuzco:** It was declared a World Cultural Heritage by UNESCO in 1983. Cuzco was an important hub in Inca times that connected all South America, from Colombia to the north of Argentina. Today, centuries later, Cuzco continues to be the centre of attention, not only for the neighbour countries but for the whole world. In its streets, historical centres, churches, pubs and cafés you can hear not only Quechua and Spanish spoken, but such diverse languages as English, French, Japanese and Hebrew. All of them, united by the same experience, found in the charming and fascinating "belly button" of the world.

**Machu Picchu:** It was declared by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site in 1983. It was hidden for centuries until it came to light in the early 1900s, but it is difficult to describe in words what one feels when the citadel suddenly appears, like a challenge to the imagination and engineering, between the mountains that mark the beginning and the end of the Andes and the Amazon Basin.



**The Huascaran National Park:** It was declared a World Natural Heritage in 1985. The Huascaran National Park is a paradise and a challenge to adventure sports lovers. It has over 600 glaciers, around 300 lakes, and 27 snow-capped peaks that reach heights of over 6,000 metres, such as the Huascaran which is 6,768 meters above sea level.

**Chan Chan:** It was declared a World Cultural Heritage by UNESCO in 1986. It is known as the largest city of clay in pre-Columbian America. The birds that decorate the walls of Chan Chan seem almost to fly in the strong breeze that blows through this ancient Chimu site.

**The Manu National Park:** It was declared a World Natural Heritage in 1987. Manu is the feast of life and diversity, with more than 1,000 species of birds, 1,200 types of butterflies, over 20,000 varieties of plants and an unknown quantity of reptiles, insects and amphibians.



**Lima's Historical Centre:** It was declared a World Cultural Heritage in 1991. Lima is a sum of colours, textures and sounds. It is a cosmopolitan capital for excellence, where the taste is acquired from the flavours offered by its street-side cooks frying anticuchos or soft picarones in syrup against a backdrop of colonial balconies, old houses, and churches with secret tunnels.



**The Nazca Lines and the Pampas de Juma:** It was declared a World Heritage site in 1994. These lines and figures of different animals, drawn on the Peruvian desert and, were considered a mystery for decades because it was not known if they were a calendar or a form of communication with outer space.

**Arequipa's Historical Centre:** It was declared a World Cultural Heritage in 2000. The city of Arequipa is, precisely, an example of how culture in Peru is constantly abrew. Arequipa, it is known as the White City, because churches and homes are built with white volcanic rocks. Arequipa is the land of passions and contrasts, of the hot rocoto pepper and the magnificent condor which can only be seen flying over the Colca Canyon.

**Caral:** It was declared a World Cultural Heritage in 2009. Caral is one of 18 settlements identified in the valley. Covering an area of around 65 hectares, the city features a series of complexes such as the Great Pyramid, the Amphitheater Pyramid and the Residential Quarters of the Elite.