

## FROM THE AMAZON TO THE CRADLE OF THE INCA EMPIRE

(Prices valid through December 24th 2011)

(ST-178)

LIMA - IQUITOS - AMAZON CRUISE - CUSCO

(10 days/9 nights)



Our 10-day journey begins in Lima, the 'City of Kings' and once the center of Spain's colonial empire. We then will spend 4 days exploring the majestic Amazon in the luxurious Aqua river cruise. Your Amazonas journey starts in Iquitos. You will be witness of the incredible abundance of the flora and fauna in the Pacaya Samiria National Reserve and explore the source of the Amazon River. View howler monkeys or the barely seen pink dolphins, either on an adventurous day excursion or from the observation deck. From Iquitos we fly to Lima to grasp the splendor of colonial times in Pedro de Osma Museum. We then venture into the ancient Inca capital Cusco. The trip is crowned with a farewell dinner in one of Lima's most spectacular restaurants where you can get the chance to immerse into the culinary legacy of Lima, considered South America's gastronomic capital yet.

### **DAY 1** ... - LIMA

Arrival to Lima and transfer to the hotel.

### **DAY 2** LIMA (B)

Afternoon city tour of Lima. The city has always been one of the most important cities in South America since it was founded by the Spanish conquistador Francisco Pizarro in 1535. Our sightseeing tour explores the historic center and modern districts of the city: the main square with beautiful buildings. The Government Palace, the City Hall, the Palace of the Archbishop and the Cathedral are still the most important places in town. We continue on to the San Francisco Monastery and then the most popular place, Plaza San Martin. Our tour ends in the residential districts of San Isidro and Miraflores.

### **DAY 3** LIMA - IQUITOS - NAUTA - AMAZON RIVER (B, D)

Flight to Iquitos. Upon arrival to Iquitos airport you will be driven to the port in Nauta, where your journey begins. Your journey begins at the port of Nauta. As you settle into your suite, the Aqua will start on its journey toward the Ucayali River, deep in the heart of Amazonia.

Before dinner we will perform a routine safety drill. Cruise director and guides will give a brief orientation talk about life on board, where you will go and what you will see on your Amazon journey. Peruvian cuisine is considered one of the world's best. For dinner it is presented with a touch of European flair. Raise a glass of fine South American wine to toast the beginning of a beautiful journey as you watch the river go by from your window.

**DAY 4 AMAZON - TAHUAYO RIVER - CHARO LAKE - YACAPANA ISLAND (B,L,D)**

After breakfast and a first glimpse of the majestic river, you will board our comfortable excursion skiffs for your first adventure towards 'the isle of the Iguana' to watch the reptiles. Passing close to the island, you have the opportunity to take photos of the beautiful flora and fauna. Afterwards we will go fishing and have the chance to catch the infamous piranhas. After returning to Aqua and free time after lunch, we will start the second part of today's adventure. On the skiffs, while the sun sets, you have the chance to observe both, gray and pink freshwater dolphins.

During the High Water Season, after sunset when the jungle is dark, the search for caiman and frogs begins. In the evening, back on Aqua, you will have dinner.

**DAY 5 HIGH WATER SEASON (DEC-MAY)****MARAÑÓN RIVER - PACAYA-SAMIRIA NATIONAL RESERVE (NAUTA CAÑO AND YANAYACU-YARINA AND YANAYACA PUCATE) (B,L,D)**

After breakfast you can choose between two options.

The first option is to go by skiffs to see howled, capuchin monkeys, grey and pink dolphins and even more wildlife. Learn more about the jungle and the medical value of its plants, before having picnic in the jungle at the Park Ranger Station No. 2.

The second option is a guided Jungle Walk at Ranger Station No. 1, with a visit of a sustainable resource management project. After Lunch the dolphin and monkey expedition starts in the late afternoon. Watch out for alligators as well.

**LOW WATER SEASON (JUN-NOV)****MARAÑÓN RIVER - PACAYA-SAMIRIA NATIONAL RESERVE (YANAYACA PUCATE) (B,L,D)**

Visiting a sustainable resource management project and nests created on the sand to protect turtle eggs. Explore the jungle with its wildlife.

After lunch the dolphin and monkey expedition starts in the late afternoon. Watch out for alligators as well. During the night expedition after sunset, observe caimans, tarantulas and frogs.

**DAY 6 HIGH WATER SEASON (DEC-MAY)****BIRTHPLACE OF THE AMAZON - PUERTO MIGUEL VILLAGE - NAUTA CAÑO - IQUITOS (B,L)**

Trip to the flooded forest during sunrise. A breathtaking adventure, accompanied by abundant bird song. Travel to the native village Puerto Miguel, learn more about their culture and habits and purchase beautiful handicrafts. On our way back you get the chance to see the giant water lilies "Victoria Regias".

**LOW WATER SEASON (JUN - NOV)****YUCURUCHE LAKE - BIRTHPLACE OF THE AMAZON - PUERTO PRADO VILLAGE VISIT - IQUITOS (B,L)**

Travel by skiff along the Ucayali River to Yucuruche to see the giant water lilies "Victoria Regias" bloom. After breakfast you will, accompanied by abundant bird song visit the flooded forest. Travel to the native village Puerto Prado, to meet the Cocama Indians and learn more about their culture and habits as well as purchase beautiful handicrafts.

Last lunch on Aqua. After disembarking in Nauta you will be transferred to Iquitos to visit the Manatee Rescue Center. Your guide will then join you to Iquitos airport to board your flight back to Lima.

Upon arrival you will be transferred to your hotel.

**DAY 7 LIMA - CUSCO (B)**

An early morning flight brings you to the Inca capital of Cusco. Upon arrival, proceed to the hotel to have a welcome coca tea. This should help us to relieve altitude sickness. The remaining of the morning is free to relax, and slowly acclimatize.

Our comprehensive afternoon walking tour includes the beautiful church of Santo Domingo, the Cathedral, the 12-angle stone as well as the San Blas artisan quarter.

Our tour ends in the MAP or Museum of Pre-Columbian Art located in a charming 'casona' once residence of Count of Cabrera. The museum showcases an astounding collection of pre-Columbian art date from 1250 B.C to.1532 A.D.

The art and artefacts were made by the Huari and Nasca, as well as the Inca, cultures. On the walls is commentary from European artists on South American art. The casona hosts the MAP Café, one of Cusco's best and most elegant restaurants. We suggest you to may sample some specialties of Andean Nouvelle Cuisine in a special atmosphere that combines the restaurant's minimalist architecture in a colonial setting.

**DAY 8 CUSCO - SACRED VALLEY (B,L) (only on TUE, THU and SUN)**

This morning we drive to the valley of the Urubamba River the so called Sacred Valley of the Inca. We proceed then to Pisac where hundreds of visitors and people from remote communities dressed in their traditional and colorful attires meet to market and barter their products. Today, the market also has a tourist element, so there is an opportunity to buy souvenirs. Lunch will be served at a typical restaurant. Afterwards, we drive along the valley to Ollantaytambo, where the Temple of the Sun (formed of six gigantic monoliths, whose total weight exceeds 50 tons) and the Terrace of the Ten Niches stand out.

**DAY 9 SACRED VALLEY - MACHU PICCHU - CUSCO (B,L)**

Morning transfer by coach to Ollanta train station. The 1 ½ -hour train ride train takes you through the Sacred Valley of the Incas up to Machu Picchu. On arrival a small coach takes you up the steep roads to the entrance of the citadel. Machu Picchu remained for centuries undiscovered by the Spaniards, only to be found in 1911 by Hiram Bingham. The uniqueness of its location and the genius that went into its construction make this Inca archaeological site truly one of the great wonders of the world. After the guided excursion you will return to Ollanta train station, where you will be met and transferred by coach to Cusco.

**DAY 10 CUSCO - LIMA - ... (B,L)**

Morning flight to Lima. Upon arrival transfer to your hotel.

This afternoon we drive to Barranco, Lima's traditional 'belle epoch' district. This is a pleasant suburb of Lima that has kept its character much better than most of the city and the bohemian heart of the city. Here we visit the Museum for Colonial Art de Osma located in a century-old mansion.

The 'casona' in neoclassical style was formerly home of the de Osma Family and offers an insight of life in Peru during the Spanish Viceroyalty.

Paintings, sculptures, carvings and furniture of the 16th-19th centuries collected by Don Pedro de Osma in 30 years can be observed in this charming mansion.

Fine pieces of silverware are on display in the former dining room. The buildings are surrounded by gardens with marble sculptures, palms and geraniums.

The farewell lunch will be served in the Rosa Nautica one of Lima's most spectacular restaurants. 'La Rosa' is set in a Victorian-style pink-and-green rotunda at the end of a pier, with a great view of the Pacific Ocean. The setting is simply unique.

The restaurant's four dining areas, and its sophisticated bar 'El Espigón', rising from the midst of the ocean, allow the visitor to enjoy a magical experience, which can only be possible in a place of fantasy, capriciously constructed in the middle of the sea. Because of this wonderful location, the horizon, especially at the crucial sunset hour, can be best appreciated through the large windows or ample terraces.

At proper time you will be transferred to the airport to take your international flight.

Price per person in USD sharing TWIN	Private Services					SIC*	Single Suppl.
	2	4	6	8	10		
Tourist	4,194	3,788	3,705	3,614	3,588	3,884	1,552
First	4,334	3,927	3,844	3,753	3,727	4,023	1,695
Deluxe	4,540	4,133	4,050	3,959	3,934	4,229	1,901

\* min. 2 persons

Domestic flights (net price per person)	
Lima - Iquitos - Lima	380 *
Lima - Cusco - Lima	380 *

\* Air fares subject to change according availability

City	Tourist	First	Deluxe
Lima	Ibis	Sol de Oro	CA Private Collection
Iquitos	Aqua river cruise		
Cusco	Casa Andina San Blas	Novotel	Aranwa Cusco
Sacred Valley	Inkallpa	CA Private	Aranwa Valle

#### SERVICES INCLUDED

- Transfers from/to hotel
- Accommodation based on TWIN in the selected hotel category
- Excursions as noted
- Private services with local German, French, Italian or English speaking guide
- Excursions offered on river cruise in SIC basis (shared with other travellers with local English speaking guide)
- Train ticket Ollanta - Machu Picchu - Ollanta in Vistadome (First class)
- Entrance fees to the sites mentioned in the itinerary
- Meals as noted (B: breakfast, L: lunch, D: dinner)

#### NOT INCLUDED

- International air fares
- Domestic flights (see costs above including airport tax)
- Tips

#### IMPORTANT

Itinerary may vary based on wildlife sightings, water levels, navigability and air schedules.

The 4-day itinerary can be offered from June to November. Due to rainy season from December to May the itinerary will slightly vary.

## **ABOUT THE AQUA RIVER CRUISE**

The new M/V Aqua, Aqua Expedition's flagship, is a luxury vessel to cruise the northern Amazon. Its 12 oversized guest suites, including four 180° panoramic master suites, feature en suite sitting areas and generous outward-facing panoramic windows, twin beds that can be converted to a California king-sized bed, internal communications system, well-appointed bathroom with shower, toilet, sink, cabinet, hairdryer, and a basket of toiletries and hot water around the clock. Four suites can be interconnected to cater to families. You can socialize in the dining room, indoor lounge, on the observation deck, and in the outdoor lounge. The ship also has a small boutique. All has been designed by noted Peruvian architect Jordi Puig.

## **MAIN FACTS**

Built	2007
Type of Vessel	River Expedition Vessel
Length	130 feet / 39.80 m
Beam	24 feet / 7.30 m
Draft	7.3 feet / 2.25m
Gross Tonnage	180 tons
Cruising Speed	10 knots
Electricity	220 volts
Engines	2 new Cummins 380 HP Marine Engines
Water	7000-liter water treatment plant
Safety	Radio communication with separate battery pack, satellite phone, life jackets, flares and signals; fire extinguishers, and smoke detectors in each cabin.
Skiffs	Three skiffs equipped with four-stroke low emission engines; constant radio communication with the main vessel. Each boat has a capacity of 8-10 passengers
Crew	15, plus 3 English-speaking naturalist guides
Accommodation	Up to 24 passengers with private facilities (additional accommodation for one child in each cabin)

Meals on board are prepared each day from the freshest vegetables, fruit, fish and local produce. Packed lunches and breakfasts for some of the daily excursions are provided as well.

## **WEATHER**

The Amazon is tropical, hot and humid with an average temperature of 28°C (80°F). The average humidity ranges from 60% to 80%, and rainfall occurs approximately 250 days out of the year. Most showers occur in late afternoon or evening and are short in duration. The 'low water' period lasts from June to November and the 'high water' period from December to May. During the high water period, river levels increase due to the melting of snow and ice during the Andean summer as well as from an increase in precipitation in the high jungles.

## **WHAT TO BRING**

- Windproof/waterproof jacket
- 1 light raincoat or poncho
- Shirts /t-shirts
- Hiking pants/track pants
- 1 pair of knee high rubber boots
- Sport sandals
- Flashlight and batteries
- Hat or cap
- Sunglasses, sun block and insect repellent with DEET (diethyl-metatoluamide)
- Swimsuit
- Binoculars (essential)
- Cash