

SOUTH AMERICAN HIGHLIGHTS

(Prices valid through December 24th 2011,
except for Carnival and Champions Parade in Rio)
(ST-192)

LIMA – CUSCO – PUNO – LA PAZ – BUENOS AIRES – IGUAZU – RIO
(16 days / 15 nights)



This journey is the perfect introduction to this huge and diverse continent. You will experience the best of South America's great cities alongside awe-inspiring natural wonders in a 16-day Panorama vacation. Your trip begins in Lima, the former capital of the Spanish Viceroyalty - yet considered South America's gastronomic capital. Next spend three nights in the ancient city of the Incas: Cusco. A trip to Puno will lead you to the glorious scenery of the world's highest navigable lake straddling the Peruvian-Bolivian border. Absorb the beauty of Titicaca's stunning blue water and snow covered mountains, before you fly to Buenos Aires. Enjoy the wide boulevards, boutiques and outdoor cafes of the 'Paris of South America'. Further north, our adventure takes in the natural beauty of the Atlantic rainforests and the magnificent Iguazu Falls. Finally spend three nights in fabled and fabulous Rio de Janeiro, home to Copacabana, Ipanema Beach and the famous Christ the Redeemer statue. This vacation lets you discover firsthand why South America is so well-known for its passionate approach to life.

DAY 1 ... – LIMA

You will be met at the airport and privately escorted to your hotel.

DAY 2 LIMA (B)

Afternoon colonial 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 exclusively explores Lima's historic quarter and unlike the conventional tours it includes the visit to the 'Casona San Marcos'. You will be able to retrace Lima's colonial past as you explore the different rooms and courtyards of this house founded in 1605 by Jesuit missionaries. After the suppression of the Jesuits the house became the Royal School of San Carlos.

The first generation of intellectuals, playing a key role in Peru's independence process, was educated here. Years later in 1867 the Casona was given to the University of San Marcos - America's oldest and Peru's most renowned university. Today, the restored

'casona' houses San Marcos University's cultural center and is used as venue for graduation ceremonies and cultural conferences.

DAY 3 LIMA – CUSCO (B)

Flight to Cusco. Our comprehensive afternoon tour includes the beautiful Temple of the Sun or 'Koricancha', the Cathedral and Quenqo, believed to have been an important sanctuary during the Inca period. This is followed by a visit to Puca Pucara, a strategically located 'red fortress' that dominates the entire area before visiting Tambomachay, with its two distinctive aqueducts. Afterwards, we head off to the hillside above Cusco to visit the mighty Inca fortress of Sacsayhuaman. When the Spaniards first arrived in 1533 they were overawed by its monumental walls some weighing up to 10 tons.

DAY 4 CUSCO – SACRED VALLEY – MACHU PICCHU – SACRED VALLEY – CUSCO (B,L)

Morning transfer to Ollanta train station. The 1 ½ -hour train ride 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. Guided tour. In the afternoon you will return through the mountainous switchback passes to Ollanta, where you will be met and transferred to your hotel.

DAY 5 CUSCO (B)

Day on your own. We suggest you to stroll through the streets of San Blas artisan quarter. Its steeped cobblestone alleys not only offer spectacular views of the city but are lined with workshops and galleries, a great way to soak in the artistic atmosphere. San Blas church houses an imposing pulpit considered one of New World's finest woodcarvings. In case you may want to enjoy a good cup of coffee in a cozy atmosphere we suggest you to visit the Coffee Shop of Bartolome de las Casas Cultural Center. Here you'll find international newspapers as well as interesting books in different languages. Our last tip is strolling Cusco's streets on board an old wooden streetcar, now motorized. The tour lasts 85 min. and departs several times daily from the Plaza de Armas.

DAY 6 CUSCO – PUNO (B,L)

A pleasant eight-hour bus trip takes you through picturesque Andean landscapes dotted by small villages and herds of llamas and vicunas. Your final destination is Puno, however you make three important stops along our way: the first one is Andahuayllillas known by its baroque church dating from the 17th century. Your bus will climb to La Raya Pass (4,335 m/ 14,172 ft) to enjoy a panoramic view of the snow-capped Andes. Then your tour continues to Raqchi to visit the Viracocha Temple. This was the only Inca temple featuring cylindrical columns covered by fine clay layers. Lunch will be served in a typical restaurant in Sicuani. Upon arrival in Puno you will be transferred to your hotel.

DAY 7 PUNO – LA PAZ (B,L)

After breakfast we depart for La Paz. We drive along the south side of Lake Titicaca to the ancient shrine of Copacabana, on the boundary between Peru and Bolivia. After a lunch we board a boat to the mythic Sun Island. According to the legend, the Inca couple Manco Capac and Mama Ocllo appeared here to found the Empire of the Sun. Visit the Inca Garden, steps and fountain as well as Pillkaina Palace. We then head to Yumani, a place with magnificent landscapes and a community who has kept their culture. Trip back by boat to Copacabana, followed by a bus ride to La Paz.

DAY 8 LA PAZ (B)

Today you enjoy a sightseeing tour of La Paz. Tour highlights in the old town include the Plaza Murillo and the Jaen street featuring Spanish colonial architecture. To change scenery, your tour continues to the residential areas of Obrajes, Calacoto and La Florida and ends with the visit to the bizarre Moon Valley offering a unique landscape.

DAY 9 LA PAZ – BUENOS AIRES (B)

Flight to Buenos Aires. Upon arrival you will be met and escorted to your hotel.

DAY 10 BUENOS AIRES (B)

Today we will enjoy an exciting excursion to see the sights of this impressive city. In the early part of the 20th century, Argentina was one of the richest countries in the world. The grand public buildings of Buenos Aires reflect this opulent era. The so-called 'Paris of South America' combines the atmosphere of a former European town with the features of a Latin American capital. Our guide will pick out some of the city's highlights such as Plaza de Mayo, Caminito, Casa Rosada and Recoleta with its cemetery to illustrate the history of Argentina. Moving on to San Telmo, the oldest district in the city, you will walk along ancient cobblestone streets, admiring old colonial houses, churches and famous antique shops and ateliers. You will confirm that no area in the city evokes the old Porteno spirit as the artists' quarter of San Telmo.

DAY 11 BUENOS AIRES (B)

Day on your own. We suggest you to visit the World Tango Museum and the former home of Carlos Gardel. In the restored headquarters of the National Tango Academy, Horacio Ferrer, a tango legend, has assembled an impressive collection of photographs, records, music scores, instruments and memorabilia outlining the history of Buenos Aires's most famous contribution to world music. There are also daily performances and a souvenir shop (the exhibition is in Spanish only).

The Carlos Gardel museum is based in the house Gardel lived in with his mother during the 1930s. Known as the 'criollo nightingale', Gardel (1890-1935) was a pioneer of tango singing, and his melancholy recordings made him a star throughout Latin America. For many music fans, Gardel embodies the soul of the tango, a musical form and dance which evolved in the barrios of Buenos Aires and Montevideo at the end of the 19th century.

DAY 12 BUENOS AIRES – PUERTO IGUAZU – FOZ IGUAZU (B)

Flight to Puerto Iguazu. Upon arrival we head towards the Argentinean side of Iguazu National Park. This place is known as the 'Hito de las Tres Fronteras' because at this point Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay converge. Enjoy a walk along the upper and lower trails around the spectacular Iguazu Falls, admiring the whole system of more than 275 different falls. Our visit includes a stroll to La Garganta del Diablo 'The Devil's Throat' which is 150 m (490 ft) wide and 700 m (2,290 ft) long. You might see here many species of wildlife such as toucans, parakeets, coatis, capuchin monkeys and several species of tropical butterflies. After the guided visit you will be transferred to the Brazilian side.

DAY 13 FOZ IGUAZU – RIO (B)

This morning, you cross the border over to Foz de Iguazu to enjoy a walking tour of the falls from the Brazilian side. From spots all along the path there are prime views of the 275 falls from different angles. Thunderous crash of tons of rushing water against basaltic rocks amidst the jungle of birds, butterflies and orchids will take your breath away. Depending on the force of the river, the spray can be quite heavy, so if you have a camera, be sure to carry a plastic bag.

In the afternoon you will be transferred to the airport to board your flight to Rio.

DAY 14 RIO (B,D)

This morning catch a first glimpse of the city as we tour one of Rio's best-known landmarks. The city is divided into a north zone and a south zone by the Serra da Carioca, steep mountains that are part of the Parque Nacional da Tijuca. These mountains descend to

the edge of the city center, where both zones meet. Corcovado, one of these mountain peaks, offers the best way to become familiar with the city's geography—from it you have views of both zones. The statue Christ the Redeemer with his outstretched arms, gazes down on the Bahia da Guanabara and a favorite on Rio's postcards the Sugar Loaf. We enjoy a sightseeing ride along Rio's famous beaches Ipanema and Copacabana. We take then a cable car to the top of Sugar Loaf Mountain. You can take prime views from the city, Baia de Guanabara, and the winding coastline from the top of this famous peak. This evening get ready for traditional Brazilian fanfare as we dine on succulent Brazilian barbecue and later attend a fiery Samba show.

DAY 15 RIO (B)

Enjoy a full day at leisure. Rio is an exhilarating city with so much to offer. You may catch some rays on one of the famous beaches and lunch on fresh seafood. There are literally dozens of museums in Rio for culture vulture. Petrópolis and Teresópolis are charming mountain towns less than one hour away from Rio.

DAY 16 RIO - ... (B)

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

Price per person in USD sharing TWIN

Hotels	Private Services				Single Suppl.
	2	4	10	15+1	
Tourist	3,284	2,631	2,342	2,294	669
First	3,540	2,937	2,737	2,738	1,076
Deluxe	4,446	3,793	3,498	3,563	1,779

Flights (net price per person in USD)*	
Lima - Cusco	190
La Paz - Buenos Aires	600
Buenos Aires - Puerto Iguazu	240
Foz de Iguazu - Rio	350

* Air fares subject to change according availability

HOTELS

City	Tourist	First	Deluxe
Lima	Girasoles	Sol de Oro	Casa Andina Private Collection
Cusco	Suenos del Inka	Novotel	Aranwa
Puno	La Hacienda	Sonesta Posada del Inca	Libertador
La Paz	Rosario	Ritz	Europa
Buenos Aires	Waldorf	Reconquista Plaza	Melia
Foz Iguazu	Carima	Recanto Park	Bourbon
Rio	Bandeirantes	Astoria Palace	Marriott

SERVICES INCLUDED

- Transfers from/to hotel
- Accommodation based on TWIN in the selected hotel category
- Private services with local English speaking guide

- Train ticket Ollanta - Machu Picchu – Ollanta in Vistadome class (First Class)
- Shared tourist bus Cusco - Puno with English speaking escort for less than 10 passengers (for groups with 10 or more passengers escorted trip in private coach)
- Meals as noted (B: breakfast, L: lunch, D: dinner)
- Entrance fees to the sites mentioned in the itinerary

NOT INCLUDED

- International air fares domestic flights (see separate cost above)
- Domestic flights (see separate cost above including airport taxes for Peru)
- Airport taxes in La Paz approx. USD 25 for international flights, in Buenos Aires USD 13 for domestic flights and USD 29 for international flight departures, in Rio approx. USD 8 for domestic flights and approx. USD 36 for international departure flights)
- Tips