

TRAVEL TIPS

The following is a list of useful information about travel to Peru. If you have any specific questions concerning our itinerary, please contact BenchMark Incentives at (978) 792-5150 or toll-free at (866) 535-8600 from the USA and Canada, between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday. You may also contact us via e-mail at tut@benchmarkincentives.comor by fax at (978) 834-6082.

**WHAT SHOULD I PACK?**

In Peru the dress code is casual! Remember, less is more when packing. We will be moving from hotel to hotel so packing light, in small bags is a smart choice. Keep in mind that the weather in Peru can vary dramatically during the day. You should bring a variety of sensible layers to add or remove according to the temperature. Some essentials we suggest:

1. Walking shoes, sneakers or water-resistant hiking boots
2. Wind and waterproof jacket, hat or cap, rain poncho
3. Swimsuit if you plan to take advantage of the hotel pools
4. Personal medications and prescription eyeglasses
5. Small backpack
6. Binoculars
7. Sunglasses and sunscreen
8. Calculator or currency converter - if you have a smart phone, there’s an app for that
9. Camera with charger or extra batteries, and plugs and converters
10. Travel Insurance certificate, if you’ve purchased insurance (highly recommended)
11. Passport and money
12. A copy of the picture page of your passport – keep separate from your passport
13. Electric plug adapters

**PASSPORTS**

ALL travelers (regardless of nationality) must carry a passport, valid for at least six (6) months after your intended return date to your home country. Two pages must be available for the entry stamp. If you hold a passport with an expiration date less than six (6) months after your return date, you must renew your passport prior to departure.

If you are not a U.S. Citizen, your National Consulate or Embassy can answer any questions you may have regarding the individual travel documents required. You can find a worldwide index of Embassies for Peru via the web at: [http://www.embassyworld.com](http://www.embassyworld.com/).

*PLEASE NOTE: IF YOU WILL BE EXTENDING YOUR TRIP TO ANOTHER COUNTRY, YOU SHOULD CHECK WITH THE CONSULATE OF THAT COUNTRY TO ESTABLISH IF A VISA OR ANY ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION WILL BE REQUIRED.*

**AIRPORT CHECK IN**

Strict security measures at the airport may impact your travel plans and cause delays, which is why it is important that you allow plenty of time to get to the airport and check in at least three (3) hours prior to your flight’s departure time. Due to constant changes of flight schedules, it is highly recommended that you confirm your flight’s status before you leave for the airport.

Please take note of the check-in policies, carry-on restrictions and airport security rules that may impact your travel plans. Due to the fact that these security measures change regularly, we suggest that you visit the following website for the most up-to-date information: [http://www.tsa.gov](http://www.tsa.gov/).

*Please note: the department of transportation requires airlines to solicit emergency contact information for u.s. passengers traveling internationally. Please be prepared to give an emergency contact name and telephone number upon check in.*

 **LUGGAGE**

Checked Bags

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has strict luggage regulations. At this time airline passengers are allowed to check two (2) pieces of luggage. Each suitcase that you plan to check on the plane should not exceed the weight limit or luggage allowance; you may be charged an additional fee by the airline. Most airlines now charge for each piece of checked luggage. The average fee is $25 per bag. Please check your airline’s website for luggage fees.

When you check your bags at your home city airport, be sure the airline representative labels them with the special airport code “CUZ” which stands for Alejandro Velasco Astete International Airport in Cusco, Peru.

*Please Note: The airlines advise that you include full identification information inside each piece of luggage in case the other tags are lost in handling.*

Carry-on Bags

You are permitted to carry one item of hand baggage (max 22 lbs. - 22x14x9 in. or 56x3x23 cm) in addition to one small personal item onboard the aircraft. Your personal item (e.g. small handbag or laptop case) must fit comfortably under the seat in front of you.

Passengers with more than one carry-on, plus a personal item will be required to check the additional luggage. Be sure to pack the essentials in your carry-on bag, such as your airline tickets, passport, a light change of clothing, any valuables, medications, toiletries, and perhaps a book or a snack.

Although regulations have recently changed, the TSA still recommends that sharp objects be placed in your checked luggage. It’s not just the obvious items, but includes such innocuous items as razors for shaving, nail files, Swiss army knives, and corkscrews. Lighters and matches, or any type of scissors (e.g., from a sewing kit or first aid kit) should also be packed in your checked luggage.

Additionally, liquids and gels are forbidden as carry-on items unless they are under three

(3) ounces and declared by showing them in a plastic, one-quart bag. A few exceptions to this rule apply and include diabetic glucose medications such as insulin, baby formula, and prescription liquid medications labeled with a name that matches the passenger’s ticket. These items must be declared to the transportation security officers at the security checkpoint. Beverages and other items purchased in the secure boarding area may be brought onto the aircraft.

Laptop computers must still be screened separately at the security checkpoint, but will be allowed on board the aircraft.

Lost Luggage

In the event that one of your bags goes astray, you’ll want to file a Baggage Claim Report before passing through customs at the airport. Also, be sure to inform a member of the TUT Travel Staff so that they can work with the airlines to recover your lost luggage as quickly as possible.

**EMERGENCY TRAVEL SERVICE**

At this point in time, airlines have not scheduled flights for us to utilize for group flights. In early fall we will revisit booking group flights, which will likely be from either Miami or Dallas. If Benchmark Travel Services arranges your flights, and you are in need of assistance on your travel days, you may contact us at the numbers listed above. If you are traveling before or after normal business hours, you may contact Emergency Travel Services at the number listed on the back of your airline ticket jacket – a representative will be available on a 24-hour basis to assist you. If you have an emergency while in Peru, our TUT Travel Staff will be on-site with you throughout the trip to offer assistance.

**IMPORTANT TRAVEL DOCUMENTS**

Your travel documents, including your e-ticket receipt (if BenchMark booked your flights), will be sent to you approximately three (3) weeks prior to your departure date.

**HEALTH PRECAUTIONS**

The following general information has been provided only as a guideline. Please consult your personal physician for his or her advice based on your health history and current situation. We will experience altitudes of above 11,000 feet. Shortness of breath and heart palpitations are normal due to the scarcity of oxygen. Some people may experience headache, loss of appetite, fatigue, and nausea.

ALL TRAVELERS should make sure that your standard adult immunizations and "boosters" are up to date. Additional vaccines are not necessary. Travelers are also reminded to follow the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html) travel guidelines as well as local and state advisories regarding COVID-19.

**TIME ZONE**

Peru will be one (1) hour behind Eastern Daylight Time. If it’s 2:00 p.m. on April 2 in New York City, it is 1:00 p.m. in Peru.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

Private mobile phones may be used in Peru although reception may vary, and charges may be high. If you plan to use your cell phone be sure to confirm with your wireless provider that you have an international calling plan and advise them that you will be traveling to Peru. In addition, all hotels have land lines with phones in the rooms. We suggest you use Skype, email or Facetime to communicate with friends, family and work back home utilizing free hotel Wi-Fi.

If family and friends need to contact you during the program you can be reached by phone at:

March 30, 31 and April 1 at Hotel Tambo del Inka: (011) (51) 84 581-777

April 2, 3, and 4 at Inkaterra Hotel Pueblo, Machu Picchu: (011) (51) 84 211-122

April 5 at Palacio del Inka, Cusco: (011) (51) 84 231-961

The international prefix and country code for Peru is 51. To call a Peruvian number from abroad, dial the country code before the 8-digit phone number. If you are calling from the USA or Canada you will also need to dial 011, prior to dialing the number.

Internet

There is free Wi-Fi available at all hotels to connect laptops, mobile phones, etc. Be aware that reception may be intermittent and internet and Wi-Fi cannot be guaranteed.

**WEATHER**

During the months of March and April, Peru will have pleasant weather with the possibility of showers at any point. Average daily temperatures reach 55°-65° Fahrenheit. In the evenings, it can drop to 45°-55° Fahrenheit. In the mountains, the weather can be wet and changeable, especially in and around Machu Picchu so, be sure to layer each day. Brisk breezes and brief rainstorms are possible at any time. Nights can be chilly so be sure to pack a sweater or light jacket.

**ELECTRONICS**

Peru has 220 volts, (North America operates at 110-120 volts and the electricity is generated at 60 Hertz). Electric appliances use continental-style two-pin plugs for which an adapter is required. If you need an adapter/converter, please bring your own with you.

Important: If your home supply is 110 volts and your electrical equipment does not have a 110/220 or 110/240 switch on it, you will need to get a voltage converter to step the Peruvian 220 volts down to 110 volts. These are best purchased in your home country as electrical supply stores in Peru do not usually sell adapters. Electronics you should check are your phone charger, camera chargers, electric tooth brush, traveling clothes irons, hair curlers, shavers, hair dryers, laptop chargers etc. Many of these devices are “dual” voltage meaning they operate either at 110v or 220/240v. There should be a label on the appliance advising that it is capable of dual voltage, (if not or in doubt don’t use it).

**FOOD IN PERU**

The food in Peru is varied, natural and delicious! Many vegetarian options are staples in Peru. Additionally, local trout, and Peruvian specialties like Causa, Lomo Saltado, and of course Cuy, (guinea pig) are all widely available. Special diets, (e.g. vegetarian and vegan) may be accommodated if requested in good time.

**WATER SAFETY**

Bottled water will be included at all of our meals and all of our group functions and transfers. While the water is clean, the microbes are different from what we are used to and bottled water is suggested for drinking.

**FOR YOUR PROTECTION**

Remember, neither the airlines nor the hotels will take responsibility for lost or stolen valuables. We suggest that you simply not bring valuables, such as expensive jewelry, with you.  If you feel you need to, pack them in your carry-on bag and when you arrive they can be stored in your room’s safe. While touring or shopping leave your passport and the bulk of your money in the safe. Take with you only the money you intend to spend. Carry a copy of the picture page of your passport with you as you may need it in case your passport is lost.

**THE LANGUAGE**

In Peru there are two official languages; Spanish and Quechua. In most of the areas we will visit, the people in shops and hotels understand some English. Our guides speak excellent English and can help with any translation you may need. In addition, you will be accompanied throughout the trip by American Travel Staff who will be ready to assist you at all times.

**SHOPPING IN PERU**

Peru is one of the top shopping destinations in Latin America, with some of the finest and most reasonably priced crafts you'll find anywhere. Most shops, malls, and handicraft markets are open every day. Additionally, traveling sales people will always be available almost everywhere we go. Bartering for price is very common in the markets and stalls in Peru. Many places will accept U.S. dollars however, you must make sure they are new, undamaged notes or they will not be accepted by shop keepers or by banks if you’d like to exchange them.

**CUSTOMS REGULATIONS**

Upon Departing for Peru

If you have just bought a new and expensive digital camera, camcorder, watch, laptop computer or similar item, it will be worth your while to stop at the Customs Office at your international departure airport and register these items. It usually does not take much time and will save you from the possibility of delays and/or having to pay duty on these items on the return home.

Returning from Peru

Per the norm, you will need to declare everything that you may have bought in Peru or did not take with you when you left your home country. Of course, how much you will be permitted to bring home under “duty free” status varies by country and is often determined by the length of your trip. For those traveling from outside of the United States, it is wise to confirm details with the Customs personnel at your departure airport or contact your local Consulate prior to your departure.

Each U.S. citizen may bring back $800.00 USD worth of “duty free” items (a maximum of $1,600.00 USD per household) as long as they are in your possession or brought back as accompanied baggage. Duty will be waived on items that you mail home to yourself, if the value is $200.00 USD or less. Antiques that are at least 100 years old and fine art are considered “duty free.”

Citizens who individually declare between $800.00 USD and $1,000.00 USD will be charged a duty on the amount over $800.00 USD (up to $1,000.00 USD) by Customs officials at the first point of entry, so remember to keep your receipts handy. The $800.00 USD “duty free” exemption may include 200 cigarettes (1 carton) or 100 cigars and, if you are over the age of 21, one (1) liter (33.8 ounces) of an alcoholic beverage (beer, wine, liquor, etc.).

**MONEY MATTERS**

Currency Exchange

The official currency of Peru is the Nuevo Sol (S/.), divided into 100 cents. There are 5,10, 20 and 50 cent coins and S/. 10, 20, 50, 100, and 200 banknotes. Currency can be exchanged at banks, our hotels, and travel currency exchange offices in the airport, and in areas around town. If you would like to check the current international rates of exchange, please visit the XE website: <http://www.xe.com> or download the XE Currency APP ([www.xe.com/apps](http://www.xe.com/apps)) so you can calculate currencies on-the-go!

Credit Cards

We recommend that you use credit cards or cash while in Peru. Visa, MasterCard, Eurocard, Diners Club and American Express credit cards are widely accepted throughout Peru at larger shops. Please note that not all places accept debit cards. Some of the smaller establishments do not accept American Express or any credit cards, so it is always good to ask if you do not see a sign in the window or at a register. Many of the small craft stalls only accept cash. When you receive your monthly credit card statement it will show the converted costs and will reflect the rate of exchange at the time of your purchase. Please be aware that in most cases, an extra fee for converting from foreign currency will be added to your credit card.

*Please Note: Before you depart for Peru, be sure to call your bank and/or credit card issuer(s) to alert them that you will be traveling to Peru and plan to use your card(s) while traveling. It is also a good idea to make sure you understand how to take cash advances out on your credit card prior to your departure.*

ATM Transactions

ATM machines can be found adjacent to many banks and near busy public places, such as airports, train stations and in shopping centers. You can withdraw cash using major credit cards or Cirrus, Visa Electron or Plus debit cards with a 4-digit PIN. Banking fees for ATM withdrawals and foreign transactions vary widely, so please check the rates with your bank(s).

Tipping

Tips vary in Peru depending on the level of service rendered. It is customary to tip any of the indigenous Indian population you take photographs of in Peru. Gratuities for all of our group meals and for maid and bellman services at our hotels are included in the package price. At the end of our trip you can contribute to a tip for our Peruvian Guides. Your American TUT Travel Staff will not expect or accept any tips.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

BenchMark Incentives strongly recommends the purchase of travel insurance\* before any TUT trip! Travel insurance offers coverage for unforeseen problems, from a cancelled flight to a serious illness—or in rare cases, even an act of terrorism or the financial default of a travel supplier. If you miss a travel connection, even for reasons beyond your control, you are NOT necessarily protected from financial loss unless you have travel insurance. For example, if you encounter mechanical problems, flight delays, or inclement weather that causes you to miss connections, the airline might re-book you, although in many cases (such as bad weather) it is NOT guaranteed (in which case you may either have to purchase an entirely new round-trip ticket or forego the entire prepaid trip without any reimbursement). Travel insurance can cover new flights or provide trip cancellation coverage (for a covered loss), as well as emergency medical expenses and medical transportation. Travel insurance also provides 24-hour “911” emergency travel service, in case a traveler has to change a flight or a hotel room, in addition to assistance with emergency cash transfers, lost baggage, and pre-trip consultation services (travel advisories, passport requirements, inoculation information, etc.).

**HOW TO PURCHASE TRAVEL INSURANCE**

You can obtain travel insurance from Travel Guard International. To view the various policies offered, log onto [Travel Guard Insurance.](http://www.travelguard.com/compare/pct.asp?ta_arc=22735731&amp;pc=PCTUSASLG&amp;agencyemail=stephp%40benchmarkin.com) You will have two options to purchase travel insurance: 1. US and Canadian residents may call Travel Guard directly at 1-800- 826-1300. 2. Visit Travel Guard’s website at [Travel Guard Insurance](http://www.travelguard.com/compare/pct.asp?ta_arc=22735731&amp;pc=PCTUSASLG&amp;agencyemail=stephp%40benchmarkin.com)to process the insurance yourself. In this case you will be asked for a travel agent code, please give Travel Guard the code 22735731 as this code will identify your booking with BenchMark Travel Services. Please be sure to read all policy information thoroughly and note that if you have a pre-existing condition you must apply for the insurance within 14 days of the trip deposit date.

\* Please note that Travel Guard insurance is only available to US and Canadian residents at this time. If you live elsewhere, please check for such coverage within your home country from independent providers.

**MORE QUESTIONS?**

If you have any questions prior to traveling, please contact BenchMark Incentives at the numbers below. We expect that questions will arise during your stay in Peru; therefore, the TUT Travel Staff will be readily available at the Hospitality Desk, located in a convenient area in each hotel. If you need assistance, feel free to stop by the Hospitality Desk any day during the trip.

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