CHILE, BOLIVIA & PERU

TRIP OVERVIEW

This unique 15 day tour is truly an Andean adventure.Travelling from the Chilean city of Santiago, through breath-taking Bolivia, it concludes with the magnificent Machu Picchu in Peru - one of the New Seven Wonders of the World. Explore the contrasting landscapes of the Atacama Desert, visit the astonishing Bolivian Salt Flats then experience the wonderful cities of La Paz, Cusco and Lima. This tour really does give you a true insight into three of Latin America's most incredible countries.

ITINERARY & DETAILS

This document aims to give you all the information that you require for a smooth and comfortable trip to Chile, Bolivia & Peru. Please take the time to read this dossier to familiarise yourself with all the aspects of our tour. It includes important details such as flight details, insurance and visa requirements.

Your included meal guide:
B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner

DAY 1: UK to Santiago
Depart London on your scheduled, overnight flight to Santiago in Chile, via Sao Paulo, Brazil.

DAY 2: Santiago
On arrival, you will be met by your local guide and transferred to your hotel. Enjoy today at leisure.

DAY 3: Santiago B
Following breakfast you will embark on a half day city tour of Santiago, visiting the main attractions of this charming capital city. Beginning at the Government Palace, you will then continue to the main square 'Plaza de Armas', known as the heart and soul of Santiago and the centrepiece of the city's grid pattern layout. Next stroll around Santa Lucia Hill, a beautifully landscaped park where back in 1833 Charles Darwin once proclaimed that the view from here is 'certainly most striking'. Finish your tour with visits to the exclusive residential neighbourhoods of Vitacura and Las Condes, then return to your hotel for some time to rest and relax.

DAY 4: Santiago to San Pedro de Atacama B
This morning you will be transferred to Santiago airport for your flight to Calama, a city in northern Chile's Atacama Desert. Considered to be the archaeological capital of Chile as well as the centre of Atacama culture, San Pedro's people once roamed this vast expanse of desert which is thought to be the driest place on Earth.

DAY 5: San Pedro de Atacama B
An early start takes you to the Tatio Geysers, situated on the highest geothermal field, some 4,300 metres above sea level in the Andean mountain range. Ringed by volcanoes, over 80 gurgling geysers shoot steam fumaroles reaching 50 metres in height of multiple vibrant colours; a dazzling spectacle to behold. Admire the varied fauna, such as the vicuña, the smallest of the six species of camelid which has adapted itself to survive in the extreme and inhospitable climate of the Andes. In the late afternoon your group will travel to Valle de la Luna to watch the sun set from this exquisite viewing point.

DAY 6: San Pedro to Ojo de Perdiz B/L/D
After breakfast and an early pick up you will begin your journey to the Bolivian Salt Flats via 4x4 jeeps to experience a full day tour of this incredible landscape. The first stop will be at the emerald Green Lagoon in the Eduardo Avaroa Reserve whose colour is caused by the moving sediments containing copper minerals. Then continue to the hot springs of Polques where you will have the chance to bathe before carrying on to the geysers of Sol de Mañana to marvel at the pools of boiling mud emitting pressurised steam.

DAY 7: Ojo de Perdiz to Uyuni Salt Flats B/L/D
Leaving your hotel after breakfast, you will continue to a chain of beautiful lagoons home to 3 different kinds of flamingo whose pink feet and feathers are a result of the active red algae which reacts with the sun's radiation. Lunch will be served outdoors on the shores of the lagoon before continuing your journey across the salt flats on to your unique accommodation for the night – a hotel built entirely of salt blocks!

DAY 8: Uyuni Salt Flats B/L/D
This morning journey to Isla Incahuasi, one of the main destinations within Uyuni Salt Flats. It was once a real island before the prehistoric lakes dried up, leaving a hilly outpost covered in hundreds of tall cacti growing haphazardly out of the ragged surface. Reach the top of the island and find your camera to take a panoramic shot of the 360 degree views over this spectacular sight. From here you will continue to see pyramids of salt piled on the land by salt miners who harvest the area for its lucrative minerals.

DAY 9: Uyuni Salt Flats to La Paz B
Depart the salt flats today after breakfast and transfer to Uyuni airport for your flight to La Paz, located 3,600 metres above sea level and known as 'the city that touches the sky'. Discover this dizzying city on a half day tour, visiting the main square, Plaza Murillo, the historic centre of La Paz and home to the Cathedral and Presidential Palace. Next continue to the 16th century San Francisco church whose mestizobaroque façade features carvings of masks, dragons and tropical birds. Take the stone tunnel stairway to the roof for views across the city's skyline, then visit the charming colonial street of Calle Jaén. Finally, the tour arrives at Valle de la Luna - a dramatic change of scenery where erosion has produced stony forms resembling the moon.

DAY 10: La Paz to Puno B
Today you will be transferred to Desaguadero to cross the border between Bolivia and Peru and arrive at Lake Titicaca, thought to be the birthplace of the sun and known to be the highest navigable lake in the world. Travelling by motorboat, visit the floating Uros Islands, constructed entirely by the buoyant reeds that grow plentifully in the lake below. Meet the Uros women in their brightly coloured petticoat skirts who will be happy to sell you their charming handicrafts. Continue to Puno where you will spend the night.

DAY 11: Puno to Cusco B/L
This morning you will travel from Puno to Cusco and be able to appreciate the surrounding valleys' wonderful landscapes en route. The journey includes a stop at La Raya pass, 4,300 metres above sea level, from where you will be able to take in some amazing vistas of the Andean snow-capped mountains. You will also stop at the Raqchi ruins, known as the Temple of the God Wiracocha, and Andahuaylillas village where there is a beautiful church from the 17th century. Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant before arriving in Cusco and transferring to your hotel.

DAY 12: Cusco B
Today's morning tour of Cusco will introduce you to this amazing colonial city built on the foundation of Inca Palaces. Visit the Temple of the Sun where you can appreciate the incredible masonry of the Incas, the Plaza de Armas and the Cathedral with its carved woodworks, altars and paintings. Later you will drive to the Inca fortress of Sacsayhuaman whose peculiar huge granite stone slabs of up to six metres in length fit perfectly on top of one another. Enjoy an afternoon at leisure to explore the rest of Cusco.

DAY 13: Cusco B/L
Rise early in the morning to take a train to Aguas Calientes then continue by road to reach one of the New Seven Wonders of the World, the awe-inspiring ruins of Machu Picchu. Only re-discovered in 1911 by the explorer Hiram Bingham, this 500 year old citadel is considered to be one of the most extraordinary examples of landscaped architecture in the world. Located on the saddle of a mountain, overlooking the deep canyon of the Urubamba River and in an area of lush

tropical forest, it served as a place of worship, a site for stargazing and a private hacienda for the family of the Inca Pachacutec.

DAY 14: Cusco to Lima B
Following breakfast your guide will transfer you from your hotel to the airport in Cusco for your flight to Lima. Known as the 'City of the Kings', today's tour combines the culture of historic downtown Lima with the modern district of Miraflores. You will first visit the main square to see the Cathedral, Government Palace and City Hall. Next see one of the best preserved monasteries in Lima, the beautiful Santo Domingo Convent and then on to Miraflores, a bustling shopping area with stupendous views of the Pacific Ocean. Retire to your hotel for the final night of your journey across Latin America.

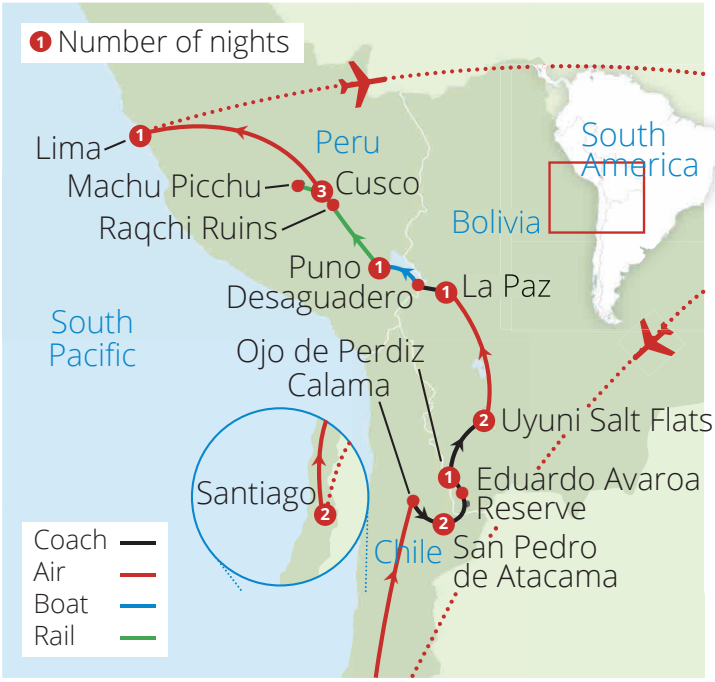
DAY 15/16: Lima to the UK or Extension
Transfer to Lima airport for your return overnight flight to the UK, via Sao Paulo, Brazil, or continue on to your chosen extension.

ACCOMMODATION DETAILS & MAP

Accommodation
Your accommodation is selected for convenience, location, comfort or character, and can range from business hotels to boutique hotels. Hotel accommodation is generally rated as local three to four-star standard, but please note there is no international classification system for hotels, and differences in facilities and quality do exist between the UK and Peru. All group tours hotels have private bathroom facilities and air-conditioning, where needed.
Rest assured that all accommodation used by Mercury Holidays is regularly inspected by our staff and partners to ensure that standards meet your needs.

Final confirmation of your hotels will be sent in a document approximately 10 days before you travel.

Meals
Breakfast is always western style and served in the hotel each morning. Dinner (when included) will be taken in local restaurants or at the hotel. A variety of restaurants are visited giving you the chance to experience a range of dishes and flavours



ON YOUR ARRIVAL

On arrival in Chile you will be met by a representative from our local agent, **Pure Chile**, holding a sign displaying: "Mercury Holidays".
The Mercury Holidays/Pure Chile representative will show you to your transfer vehicle. If you cannot see your representative they will be at Exit Gate 4.
There are many illegal taxis operating around Santiago Airport and they have been known to steal from tourists. Official taxis are dark blue in colour.
Your guide will be on hand 24 hours a day should you have any queries. However, if you need to contact Pure Chile during your stay the details are:

Pure Chile
Nueva Providencia 2214, office 186
Tel: 0056 9 5681 6943
E-mail: Sales1@pure-chile.com or info@pure-chile.com

Emergency contact information
The arrangements in Chile, Bolivia and Peru are handled by our representatives 'Pure Chile' and 'Pure Peru'.
If you need to contact them during your stay you can find the 24-hour emergency contact details below:
Pure Chile: 24hr Telephone Number: 0056 9 5681 6943
24hr Email Address: Sales1@pure-chile.com
Pure Peru: 0051 998 754 080

WHAT TO PACK

- Clothing - It is advisable to bring clothes for a range of temperatures and wear layers - due to the high altitude, even in summer months, temperatures can be very low in the morning and evenings but quickly get hot when the sun rises.
- Rain wear for rainy season
- Long-sleeved shirts and long trousers
- Insect repellent
- Personal toiletries
- High factor sunscreen – this is particularly important due to the high altitude where there will be less atmospheric protection from the sun
- Hat with a big brim for sunny days
- Comfortable shoes such as trainers
- A pair of light boots
- A torch with batteries and binoculars
- Sunglasses and plastic bags
- Towel and swimsuit
- Ruck sack or light bag
- Anti-bacterial hand gel
- Personal first aid kit containing travel pills, rehydration powder, plasters,stomach settlers, antiseptic creams, aspirin etc
- An electric plug converter - three different plug sockets are used, so it is best to bring a multi adapter

WHAT YOU NEED FOR YOUR TOUR

Visas
British passport holders do not need to obtain a visa prior to travel, you will be granted a tourist visa on arrival into Chile, Bolivia and Peru that will cover you for the duration of your stay on the tour. Further advice should be sought from the applicable tourist authority for other nationalities and for general queries. We strongly advise you to check your destinations' Tourist Board or Embassy for the most up to date guidelines regarding passport validity.

Insurance
We strongly recommend that you and all members of your party are suitably insured as soon as you book your holiday. It is a condition of booking that you must have suitable travel insurance. It is important that you purchase travel insurance that suitably covers your participation in whatever activities you may undertake at the time that you make your booking. To assist you with this, we have arranged travel insurance in partnership with Holiday Extras. To arrange your travel insurance with Holiday Extras, please call 0800 781 4237 and quote 'WK830' for preferential rates. Please ensure you provide us with the name of your insurer, policy number and their 24 hour emergency contact number as soon as possible. Mercury Holidays will not be liable for any costs incurred by you due to your failure to take out suitable travel insurance from the date of booking.

Health and Vaccinations
It is your responsibility to check any health and vaccination requirements applicable to your booked arrangements. We can only provide general information about this. Health and hygiene facilities and disease risks vary from country to country. You should take health advice about your own needs as early as possible and in good time before your departure. Sources of information include; www.fco.gov.uk, www.travelhealthpro.org.uk, www.hpa.org.uk, your General Practitioner or a specialist clinic.

Altitude Sickness
Altitude sickness is a fairly common condition that can occur when you ascend to a high altitude quickly (generally higher than 2,500 metres above sea level). The decrease in atmospheric pressure can make breathing more difficult as the body is not able to take in as much oxygen. Most cases are mild with symptoms that can include: headache, nausea, dizziness and exhaustion. Several of the places visited on this tour are located at high altitude (over 2,500 metres above sea level) including San Pedro de Atacama, Uyuni Salt Flats, La Paz, Lake Titicaca and Cusco. Therefore, you may find you experience some symptoms at this altitude. It is advised that at these high altitudes, you keep hydrated and avoid alcohol. If you do experience symptoms of altitude sickness during your tour, ensure you tell your guide immediately who will be able to advise the best thing for you to do. You can contact your GP before you travel for advice on medication for altitude sickness.

Physical Accessibility
This tour is accessible to most people with a good level of fitness and normal mobility. It involves climbing of steep stairs and getting on and off coaches. This tour is not suitable for anyone with walking difficulties. All our tours feature a "Tour Pace" to help find the right holiday for you. To travel on any of our tours requires unaided mobility and the ability to stroll around the sights, climb stairs and get on and off coaches and boats. Our tour paces are marked with dots out of 3, with the differences being as follows:
1 Dot the tour is Easy-Going
2 Dots the tour is Intermediate
3 Dots the tour is Advanced
Chile, Bolivia and Peru is rated as 3 Dots meaning that the tour pace is Advanced. A higher level of fitness as required as you may be on your feet for most of the day though this will be interspersed with regular breaks and vary from day to day. You will be walking around the sights, getting on and off coaches, trains, boats and climbing steps which may be irregular. There may be some time spend at high altitude. You will stay in variety of hotels, possibly including overnight trains, and accommodation standards may not match those you are used to at home.
Our guides will always endeavor to provide the highest level of service and assistance; however, they cannot be expected to cater for customers who are unfit to complete the itinerary.

Group Size
The minimum number of travellers in your group will be 10, and the maximum will be 15. If in the unlikely event there are less than 10 people booked on your tour date, we will endeavour to reduce any disruption to your holiday and try to operate your tour with lower passenger numbers. If we are not able to operate your departure date, then you may be asked to change to a different date and a full refund will be made available to you should this alternative not be suitable.

Tour Guides
This is a fully escorted tour, meaning that you will be with a local guide in each of the main destinations on the trip. In addition to the local guides, a national guide will meet you in Calama and remain with the group until Cusco. In Santiago and Lima you will be accompanied by a local guide only

Tipping
It is at your customary to tip both your driver and guide. We would recommend to tip approximately USD$2-$4per person per day. This is a total of USD$30-$60 per person to budget for tips on your trip. Tips will be collected at the end of your tour. Tips are accepted in US dollars.

Currency Exchange
Each of the three countries visited on this tour have their own currency: Chile = Chilean Peso (Ch$), Bolivia = Boliviano (Bs), Peru = Nuevo Sol (S/). US Dollars are widely accepted in large hotels and restaurants but local currency will be needed for payment in smaller establishments. Therefore, it is recommended that you either take a mixture of currencies or take US dollars and change this into the local currency as and when you need to. Cash machines are available in the major cities to withdraw money in the local currency of the country. We recommend that you exchange your currency before you leave the UK. It is important that you budget carefully and ensure you have the right form of currency before you arrive in the country. Cash machines will also be available throughout the tour in order to withdraw money in your local currency.

Personal Expenses
You will need to take money with you to cover any personal purchases such as souvenirs, laundry, any meals not included in the itinerary as well as drinks and any additional snacks. Approximately £400 per person will be sufficient for the duration of the tour. It is a good idea to try and maintain a supply of small notes and change in the local currency for tipping or small purchases.

Itinerary Changes
The order of events and sightseeing may vary according to local conditions or for operational purposes. The schedules of the domestic airlines in country are subject to frequent changes. For this reason, we have indicated approximate times only. Your local guide will inform you of any schedule changes as they are informed of them. Some road construction &/or weather conditions may lengthen the driving times. Our intention is to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, order of events and sightseeing may vary according to local conditions.

FLIGHT INFORMATION

Your flight is to Santiago International Airport in Chile via Sao Paulo, Brazil with TAM Airlines (JJ) departing from London Heathrow Terminal 3.

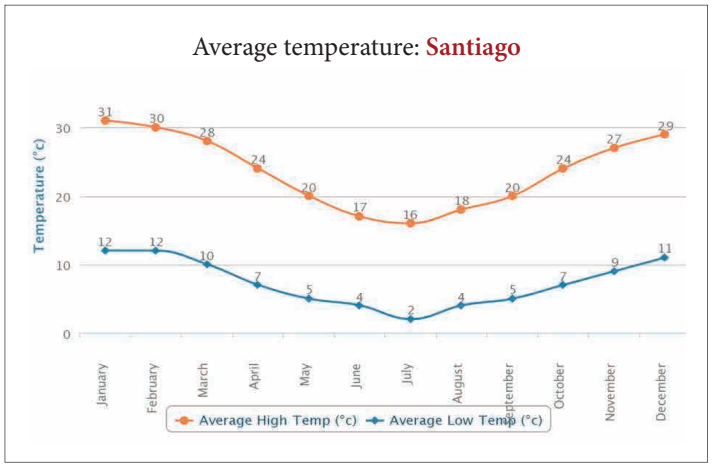
IMPORTANT: Please note that final flight details will be confirmed on your e-ticket and final documentation which will be sent to you approximately 10 days before departure.

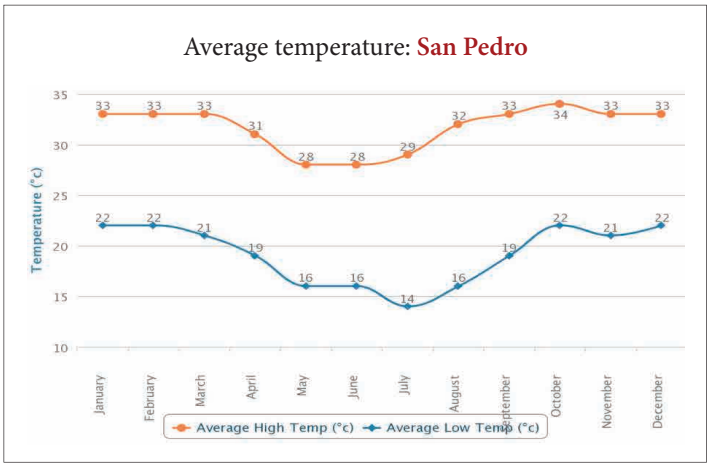
Baggage Allowance
Baggage allowance (per person): Each passenger is entitled to 23kg of hold luggage plus one item of hand luggage not exceeding 56cm x 40cm x 20cm in size and 1 personal item such as a handbag or laptop. Internal flights are with LAN airlines or Amazonas airlines. Each passenger is entitled to 20kg of hold luggage plus one item of hand luggage not exceeding 5kg. Please be aware of the difference between the weight restrictions of international and internal flights. Weight restrictions will be finalised on E-ticket receipt. Check-In should be at least 3 hours before departure. *Please note: your internal flight from Uyuni - La Paz is booked in resort by our partners and therefore will not appear on your e-ticket. These details will be given to you when you are in Bolivia

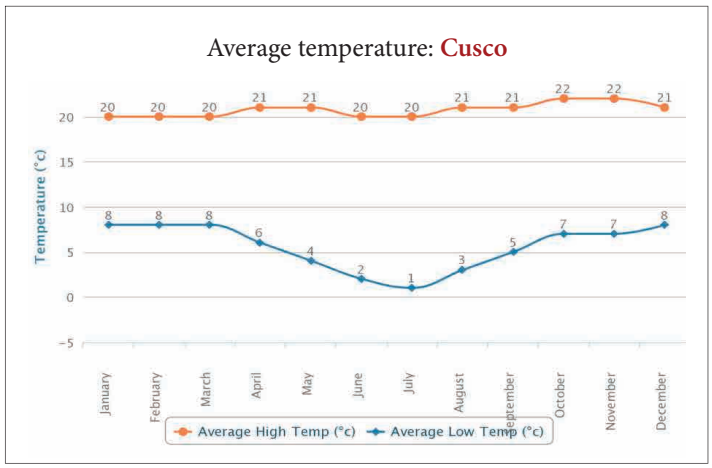
Airport Extras
If you wish to arrange Airport car parking or accommodation at preferential rates, we recommend you book this in advance with Holiday Extras on 0871 360 2000, quoting HX313.

WEATHER AND CLIMATE

Weather can vary quite considerably throughout the year, so please familiarise yourself with the climate charts below.

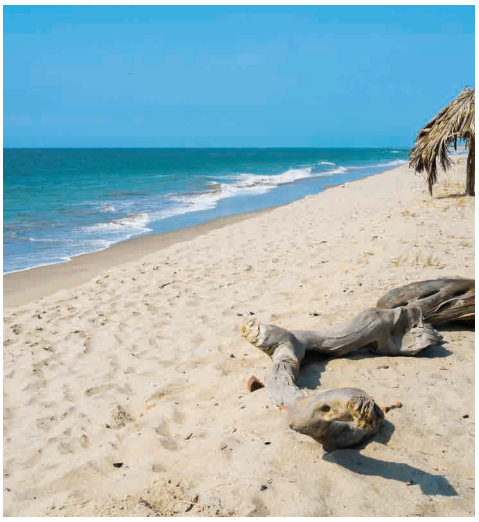






TUMBES, PERU BEACH STAY EXTENSION

If you have not yet booked this fabulous extension, there is still time to do so. Please contact 0843 224 0723



TRIP OVERVIEW

Head to the beautiful beaches of Tumbes for 3 nights of relaxation, with one night in Lima. With an idyllic coastline and diverse wildlife, Tumbes provides the perfect end to your Chile, Bolivia and Peru tour.

ITINERARY & DETAILS

This document aims to give you all the information which you will require during your extension to Tumbes.

Tumbes:
A uniquely lush area of coastal Peru, Tumbes boasts beaches of white sand, warm clear waters and almost year round sunshine. Offering an expanse of ecological reserves and mangroves, choose to spend this extra time in Peru exploring the local area, enjoying water-based activities and fresh seafood or simply unwind and relax on the picturesque beach and coastline.

Hotel
Tumbes (3 nights): Your Tumbes stay will take place at the 3★ Casa Andina Select Tumbes or the 4★ Aranwa Vichayito Tumbes on Bed & Breakfast, unless otherwise stated at booking.
All internal transfers are included.

3★ Casa Andina Select Tumbes
Address: 1A Zorritos, Peru
Telephone Number: 0051 1 2139700
4★ Aranwa Vichayito Tumbes
Address: Mancora, Peru
Telephone Number: 0051 1 4364173

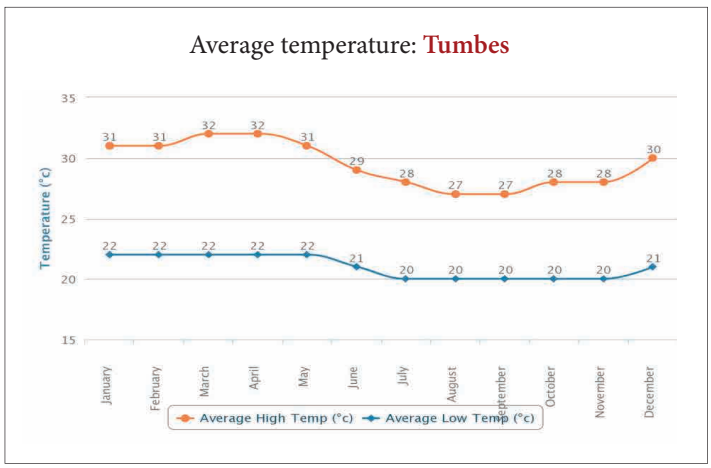
Lima (1 night): You will spend 1 night in Lima before your return flight to the UK staying at the 3★ Hotel Casa Andina Standard Miraflores Centro - Avenida Petit Thouars 5444, Miraflores 15074, Peru. Telephone Number: 0051 1 447 0263.

Tour Guides
Your stay in Tumbes is not escorted by a tour guide.

Personal Expenses
You will need to take money with you to cover any lunches and dinners, as well as personal purchases, such as souvenirs, laundry, drinks and snacks.

WEATHER AND CLIMATE

Weather can vary quite considerably throughout the year, so please familiarise yourself with the climate charts below.



Aranwa Vichayito Tumbes

FLIGHT INFORMATION

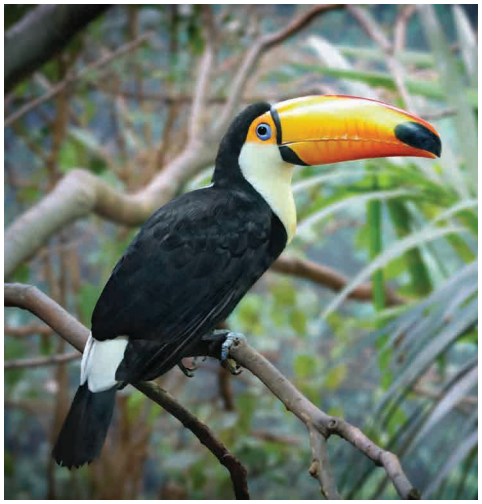
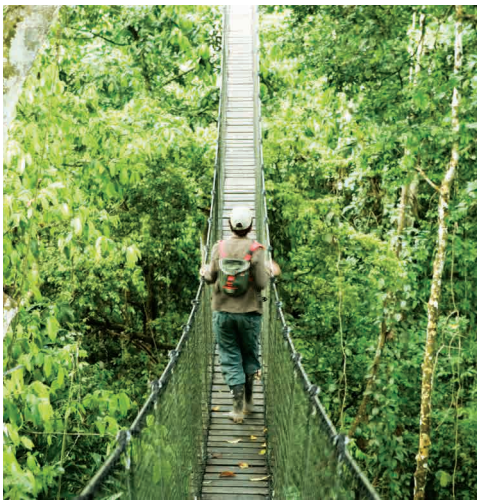
Please note: Final hotel and flight details will be confirmed on your e-ticket and final documentation which will be sent to you approximately 10 days before departure.

MercuryHolidays

YOUR TOUR DOSSIER

AMAZON EXTENSION

If you have not yet booked this fabulous extension, there is still time to do so. Please contact 0843 224 0723

TRIP OVERVIEW

Delve deep into the mighty Amazon basin with this fantastic 4 night, 5 day extension to witness the jungles rich flora and fauna.

ITINERARY & DETAILS

This document aims to give you all the information which you will require during your extension to the Amazon.

Your included meal guide:
B = Breakfast, D = Dinner

DAY 15: Cusco to the Amazon B/L/D
Departing Cusco after breakfast, transfer to the airport for your flight to Puerto Maldonado. Here you will be welcomed by the friendly staff and transferred to the nearby wharf where you will board a motorised canoe. Journeying along the beautiful Madre de Dios River, marvel at the never-ending forests and abundant wildlife that is home to this area with some of the richest biodiversity in the world. Upon reaching your lodge and getting back onto dry land you will enjoy lunch before taking a stroll through someone the property's nature trails to learn about primary and secondary rainforests in the region. When dusk falls, an exciting twilight river excursion awaits you. A motorised canoe will again take you along the Madre de Dios River where your guide will explain about its ecosystem, Amazonian creeks, nocturnal animals inhabiting the area and the southern sky's stellar constellations. Return to the lodge for dinner and your overnight stay.

DAY 16: Amazon B/L/D
This morning you will prepare for a long trek deep into the Tambopata National Reserve and towards the sparkling, palm-rimmed Lake Sandoval. Navigating across the tranquil, oxbow lake by dugout canoe you may be able to spot one of the many species of wildlife that call the area home, such as the endangered giant river otters, macaws, red howler monkeys and one of the world's biggest fresh water scaled fish, the paiche. After returning to the lodge for lunch you will take a 20 minute canoe ride to a canopy walkway where you can cross the seven hanging bridges connecting the treetops at a height of 90 feet before to gain a birds-eye appreciation of the vast jungle. Descend to walk along the 650 foot wooden bridge over the swamps which are home to the legendary anaconda. This evening get ready to further explore the nocturnal activity of the Amazon rainforest with an excursion into the surrounding jungle areas where you will listen to the sounds of nature and observe the intriguing behaviour patterns of the wildlife found here.

DAY 17: Amazon B/L/D
Rising early after daybreak, visit a native farm to learn local techniques of cultivation and even sample some of the products. Continuing on to the botanical gardens, discover the immense variety of medicinal plants considered part of the 'natural pharmacy' and used by the locals in the amazon region. This afternoon you will take a dugout canoe ride on the lake by your lodge to try your hand at the native 'catch and release' fishing technique whilst enjoying the beautiful scenery and wildlife.

DAY 18: Amazon to Lima B
Today journey back to Puerto Maldonado by motorised canoe and transfer to the airport there to board your flight to Lima. On arrival you will be met and transferred your hotel to spend the evening.

DAY 19: Lima to the UK B
After breakfast, transfer to the airport to catch your flight back to the UK.

Hotel Information
Amazon (3 nights): 3★ Hacienda Concepcion
Address: Rio Madre de Dios Km8, Puerto Maldonado 052, Peru.
Contact number: 0051 (0)1 610 0400

Lima (1 night): 3★ Hotel Casa Andina Standard Miraflores Centro
Address: Avenida Petit Thouars 5444, Miraflores 15074, Peru.
Telephone Number: 0051 1 447 0263
If the hotels listed are unavailable alternatives will be used of a similar standard.

Tour guides
This is a fully escorted tour extension, meaning that you will be met on arrival by your national guide who will remain with you for the duration of your trip ensuring that you have first-hand knowledge at all times.

PLEASE NOTE: It is important that you bring only necessary clothing and equipment to the lodge. Due to weight and space limitations on the boat, passenger luggage is limited to 10 kg (22 lbs.) Per person. Excess Luggage is stored in the main headquarters of the Lodge in the city of Puerto Maldonado, you will be reunited with your excess luggage at the end of the tour.

Hacienda Conception

FLIGHT INFORMATION

Please note: Final hotel and flight details will be confirmed on your e-ticket and final documentation which will be sent to you approximately 10 days before departure.

For any further enquiries or for more information call us on **0843 224 0723**