

PERU AT A GLANCE

POPULATION: 31,036,656 (July 2017 est.)

LANGUAGES: Spanish, Quechua, Aymara

PREDOMINANT RELIGIONS: Christian (Roman Catholic, Evangelical)

TIME ZONE: One hour behind Eastern Daylight Time (New York City)

TELEPHONE CODES: 51, country code; 1, Lima city code; 74, Piura/Chiclayo city code

Lake Titicaca, which straddles Peru's border with Bolivia, is the highest navigable lake in the world, and one of the most beautiful. The Inca ruins of Machu Picchu, which would be stunning anywhere, are truly spectacular in their Andean setting, high above the Urubamba River. And Cusco, once the center of the Inca Empire and now a vibrant gateway to Inca ruins, is also high in the Andes. Yet even at sea level, Peru can leave you breathless. With unspoiled beaches, coastal desert, deep canyons and dense Amazon jungle, its variety of natural wonders is astonishing.

Then, there are the cultural treasures. The contrast between old and new runs throughout the land: Poncho-clad indigenous people walk their llamas through modern cities, past Spanish cathedrals built on the foundations of ancient Incan ruins. Giant, stylized designs were etched in the earth by the Nazca — a great pre-Columbian civilization. Peru is where pre-Columbian culture reached its most graceful peak. Like the Parthenon in Greece or the Pyramids of Egypt, the Inca and pre-Inca ruins of Peru provide an unforgettable glimpse of the genius of a lost world.



COMPASSION IN PERU

Compassion's ministry in Peru began in 1980. Today, more than 60,200 children are served by more than 240 Compassion-assisted child development centers throughout the country. Compassion's church-based child development centers are places of hope for impoverished children in Peru. Under the guidance of caring Christian adults, children's pressing needs for nutrition and medical attention are met. Children also receive tutoring to help with their academics. Health and hygiene lessons teach them to care for their own physical well-being, and positive social skills are modeled and encouraged.

WEATHER

There is no single climate in Peru. The rainy season is October through April in the mountains, and most travelers come during the dry months that coincide with North American and European summer vacations. Bring a sweater (or something heavier) if you're going to Cusco and Machu Picchu.

CURRENCY

Peru's currency is the Peruvian *sol* (PEN), available in bills of 10, 20, 50, 100 and 200. When exchanging U.S. dollars, bring crisp, new bills. Money changers and banks often refuse to change even slightly damaged notes.

FOOD

Most hot, freshly cooked food should be safe, but peel fresh fruit and raw vegetables before eating, choose meat that is cooked thoroughly, avoid local dairy products, and assume the water is unsafe (stick with prepackaged or boiled drinks).

SHOPPING

Shop for alpaca-wool sweaters and rugs, gold, Inca walking sticks, miniature handmade statues, woven-straw items, ponchos, llama rugs, cotton and linen fabrics, blankets, silver, tapestries, wood and leather products, Andean oil paintings, silkscreen prints and pottery. Bargaining is the rule in markets, but prices are fixed in hotel shops. Exporting artifacts or antiques is not allowed. Be cautious of buying anything that looks remotely old.

ELECTRICAL OUTLETS

Peru uses a voltage of 220V, and electrical outlets accommodate plug types A, B or C. (For up-to-date plug and outlet information, check whatplug.info and click on your destination country.) You may wish to take a universal plug adaptor, available in the baggage/travel sections of most major big-box stores.



DO'S AND DON'TS

- **Do** find some time to relax in Cusco's main plaza. It's an enjoyable place to sit and watch the world go by. But don't relax too much — the plaza is also a hangout for pickpockets and petty thieves.
- **Don't** throw toilet paper down the toilet; use the trash can next to it.
- **Do** carry toilet paper with you. Many public places and restaurants don't provide it.
- **Don't** get into a taxi before negotiating the cost of the ride. Taxis in Peru don't have meters.
- **Don't** count on getting a hot shower or hot tap water, even in hotels that advertise they have it. Electricity, used to heat water, is sporadic in most medium-sized and small towns in Peru.
- **Do** take adapter plugs. Peru is a confusion of U.S.-style flat-pin plugs and European-style round-pin plugs. It's best to be prepared for both.

DRESS

In Lima and on the coast, temperatures vary little and are balmy enough for a shirt or T-shirt and light pants in the day. At night, it's best to have a lightweight sweater or jacket for the coastal breezes. In the Andes, take precautions against both the plummeting temperatures at night and the high UV radiation during the day (wear long-sleeved shirts to protect against sunburn; also wear a sunhat and strong sunscreen). Fleece jackets are essential, as is a warm hat (wool hats are available on every street corner).

Women: Modest, loose-fitting tops (nothing form-fitting) are recommended; sleeveless tops are acceptable, but please cover your shoulders in places of worship; pants, capris, longer skirts and loose-fitting, casual dresses are recommended for women.

Men: Button shirts and polo shirts are recommended. T-shirts are allowed in casual settings. Long, non-denim pants are recommended for center visits and church services.

Both: Shorts are highly discouraged outside of beachside locations. A light jacket is recommended for cool evenings or rainy days.

Shoes: Closed-toe shoes are recommended during the day due to potential unsanitary or uneven terrain.

GENERAL SECURITY PRECAUTIONS

Leave at home all unnecessary credit cards, Social Security card, library cards and similar items you may routinely carry in your wallet. Carry items in front pockets, not back pockets. Do not display large sums of money in public; make visible only the amount of money that approximates your purchase. Never leave items with cash in them (purse, wallet, backpack, etc.) on a bus, car or any other location. Stay alert and be cautious at all times. Don't take safety and security for granted.

U.S. EMBASSY INFORMATION

Website: pe.usembassy.gov

Phone: (51-1) 618-2000

Address: Avenida La Encalada cdra. 17 s/n, Surco, Lima 33, Peru

We strongly advise you to contact the CDC (www.cdc.gov) or check with your personal physician for more information about your specific health needs while traveling, including any recommendations for immunizations.

*All information taken from the World Factbook and
Compassion International.*

USEFUL WORDS AND PHRASES

The official language of Peru is Spanish. The country's secondary language is English. Some common Peruvian greetings include:

Hello	¡Hola!
How are you?	¿Cómo está usted?
Pleased to meet you	Mucho gusto
Very well, thank you	Muy bien, gracias
Goodbye	Adiós (or chou in Bolivia)
What is your name?	¿Cómo te llamas?
My name is ...	Me llamo (name)
How old are you?	¿Cuántos años tienes?
Yes	Sí
No	No
Please	Por favor
Thank you	Gracias
You're welcome	De nada
I do not speak Spanish	No hablo español
Do you speak English?	¿Usted habla inglés?
I don't understand	No entiendo
You can do it!	¡Sí, se puede!
I love you	Te amo or te quiero
I am praying for you	Estoy orando por ti

Jesus loves you

You are precious to God

God bless you

I believe in you

Tell me about your family

Good/OK

I need

How much?

Too expensive

Cheaper

Where is the bathroom?

Where is the church?

Where is the bank?

Where is the hotel?

Jesús te ama

Eres precioso(a) para Dios

¡Qué Dios te bendiga!

Creo en ti

Cuénteme de tu familia

Bueno

Necesito

¿Cuánto?

Demasiado caro

Más barato

¿Dónde está el baño?

¿Dónde está la iglesia?

¿Dónde está el banco?

¿Dónde está el hotel?

SPANISH TIPS

The h is silent in Spanish; therefore, *hola* is pronounced “ola.”

The ñ is pronounced ny; therefore, *pequeño* is pronounced “pe-kenyo.”