

Code ATZ **Circuito 1**

Tour Dossier Introduction

Dossier Last Updated: 24-11-2014

Tour Code: ATZ

Duration: 170 nights / 171 days

Joining City: Quito

Departure City: Quito

Nearest Joining International Airport: Quito Mariscal Sucre Intl Airport (UIO)

Nearest Departing International Airport: Quito Mariscal Sucre Intl Airport (UIO)

Please check this document just before departing in case of last minute changes to your tour.

Tour Documents

 PDF Document  Web Page

 [Optional Excursions in South America](#)

 [Argentina Dossier](#)

 [Peru Dossier](#)

 [Bolivia Dossier](#)

 [Brazil Dossier](#)

 [Chile Dossier](#)

 [Colombia Dossier](#)

 [Ecuador Dossier](#)

 [Paraguay Dossier](#)

 [Venezuela Dossier](#)

 [Portuguese Language Survival Guide](#)

 [Inca Trail Passport Declaration Form](#)

What's Included

- > Otavalo Market
- > Three Night Amazon Jungle Excursion in Ecuador
- > Entry to Lambayeque Museum
- > Guided tour of Chan Chán ruins
- > Guided tour of the Pyramids of Sun & Moon
- > Boat tour of the Ballestas Islands
- > Visit the Huacachina Oasis

- Entrance to Chauchilla Cemetery
- Entrance to & guided tour of the Colca Canyon
- Guided Tour of the Sacred Valley of the Incas
- Inca Trail Trek
- Guided Tour of Machu Picchu
- Excursion to and overnight homestay on Lake Titicaca
- Take a day trip on to the Uyuni Salt Flats
- Guided tour of the Valley of the Moon
- Lunch near Salto de Laja Falls
- Entry to Torres del Paine National Park
- Entry to Seno Otway Penguin Colony
- Beagle Channel cruise
- Guided tour of Trinidad ruins
- Entry to Iguazú Falls in Argentina
- Entry to Iguazú Falls in Brazil
- Entry to Parque Das Aves Parque Das Aves Bird Park
- Ubajara National Park
- Sete Cidades National Park
- Sail down the Amazon River by ferry
- Catatumbo Lightning Excursion
- Tayrona National Park
- Zipaquirá Salt Cathedral
- Las Lajas Cathedral

- 87 nights in hotels, hostels & guesthouses, 70 nights camping, 2 nights in homestays, 3 nights in hotels or campsites on the trek route, 5 nights on overnight ferrys
- 126 breakfasts, 109 lunches, 77 dinners
- Travel by **Tucan Travel Expedition Vehicle**, train, taxi, on foot, 4WD
- Tucan Travel tour leader, Tucan Travel driver, English-speaking local guide(s) on included excursions

What's not Included

- Accommodation in Rio during Carnival. This is available at an extra cost.
- Sleeping bag & sleeping mat
- International flights and departure taxes
- Domestic flight taxes if applicable
- Tips on included excursions, visas, travel insurance, personal items and single rooms.
- Airport transfers and pre and post tour accommodation
- Spending money – budget for meals, snacks, drinks, limited souvenirs, laundry, tips and any extras
- Optional excursions - Please see our optional excursions guide on the dossier page for a comprehensive list of optional activities and excursions available on this tour.

Detailed Itinerary

Day 1 to 1 - Arrive Quito

The first day of your tour is simply an arrival day with no pre-organised activities. In order to allow time to relax and see some of the sights you may wish to add pre tour accommodation. On arrival please ask at the reception for information on when the pre departure meeting will be held.

Quito, Ecuador is the second-highest capital city in the world at 2,850 metres above sea level. It was founded in 1534 by the Spanish prior to which it was an Inca stronghold. It is situated in a hollow at the base of the live volcano Pichincha and the whole length of the city can be seen from atop Panecillo hill where the enormous statue of the Virgin of Quito stands. The city has two main sections, the old and the new city. The latter is the main commercial area and has all the good restaurants and bars, whereas the old city is the colonial sector with steep calles, busy plazas and local markets.

UNESCO has listed Quito as having the largest best-preserved, and least-altered historic centre in Latin America. Along with Krakow, Quito was the first

city inscribed onto the UNESCO World Heritage list in 1978. Some churches you might like to visit are the Cathedral of Quito, Church of the Society of Jesus (La Compañía), Church and Convent of St. Francis (San Francisco) and Basílica del Voto Nacional.

Optional Excursions: TelefériQo, a sky tram to the top of Volcan Pinchincha for views over the city – US\$3 taxi (approx.) and US\$4-7 entry • La Mitad del Mundo, where the equator crosses Ecuador – US\$3 • Museo Solar Inti Nan, located near to La Mitad del Mundo with exhibitions of astronomical geography and water and energy displays – US\$4 • El Panecillo, the hill just south of the old town where you can see the winged statue of Virgin of Quito – US\$1 approx. • Wander the Old Town – free • Walking tours – US\$10 • Plaza de la Independencia – free, cathedral entrance US\$1 • Plaza San Francisco and the Monastery of San Francisco (Ecuador's oldest church) – free • La Compañía de Jesús church – US\$1 suggested donation • Museo de la Ciudad, museum depicting daily life in Quito through the ages – US\$3

Day 2 to 2 - Otavalo

Otavalo, the famous market town has a local population made up of a mixture of European descendents, mestizos (people of mixed descent) and indigenous people known as indígenas, who mainly wear traditional dress. The men keep their hair in long braids down their backs and wear calf length white trousers, blue ponchos, dark felt hats and sandals, while the women traditionally wear white frilly blouses with flared lace sleeves, black skirts with layers of gold, and coral necklaces twirled around their necks. Every Wednesday and Saturday you can visit one of the best markets to be found anywhere in South America. People come from remote villages to sell their livestock, produce and colourful textiles. The market offers a wide variety of wool handicrafts and high-quality wood carvings as well as polished leather products made by artisans from nearby villages. And whatever the wares you can be sure of fantastic photo opportunities.

Included Excursions: Otavalo Market

Day 3 to 5 - Amazon Jungle

Descending into the steaming Amazon Jungle, the next three nights will be in thatch-roofed bungalows on the shoreline of the Arajuno River. The grounds surrounding the cabins have lots of native trees and flowers attracting hummingbirds and toucans.

Your local guide will take you trekking in the jungle, explaining the different birds and the incredible variety of plants and trees and their medicinal value. The terrain is dense jungle and marsh with giant ferns and flowers – a true wilderness.

You'll also have a chance to meet and learn about the communities that live in the jungle which may include a visit to a local shaman, learning about the local crafts such as pottery and weaving, shooting arrows from a blow pipe and learning how they catch animals and fish. For a spot of relaxation enjoy the sounds of the jungle from a hammock back at lodge, or float down the river in an inflatable tube and take a swim to cool off.

Included Excursions: Three nights in the Amazon Jungle including local guides and excursions

Day 6 to 8 - Baños

Along the edge of the rainforest we climb back up into the Andes along a spectacular route to Baños, a health resort renowned for its hot thermal springs. Before soaking in the hot pools, there are paths where you can walk or ride horses into the hills, or for the more athletic, there is the opportunity to go bridge swinging, canyoning, white water rafting & mountain biking (optional).

If you're more interested in chilling out you can spend your time laid back in cafés or buying souvenirs, have a relaxing massage or even try your hand at salsa dancing. This is also the best place to buy beautifully painted balsa wood animals.

Optional Excursions: Waterfall and volcano views • Hiking • Thermal pools – US\$3-4 • Trout fishing – US\$4.50 • Horse riding • Mountain biking (half day) • Bridge swing – US\$20 • Zip-lining – US\$12 • Butterfly farm – US\$1.50 • Canyoning – US\$50 • White water rafting – US\$40-75

Day 9 to 10 - Cuenca

We continue on to the old colonial market town of Cuenca, Ecuador's third largest city, which was founded in 1557. Located in the highlands of Ecuador at about 2500m above sea level, the centre of Cuenca is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site because of its many historical buildings, such as the Iglesia de El Sagrario, a cathedral built over 450 years ago. Cuenca is where the Panama hat originates, so why not visit a factory where you can see the entire hat-making process? It is also a great place to buy cheap, high-quality gold and silver.

Optional Excursions: Panama Hat museum – free • Museo de Arte Moderno – free • Museo del Monasterio de la Concepción with religious artwork – US\$2.50

Day 11 to 13 - Punta Sal

After the banana plantations in the tropical lowlands, we cross into Peru and quickly the landscape changes to arid desert where vegetation is sparse. We pass through villages with fishermen working with their small hand nets, and onwards through the oil region where derricks pump out 'black gold'. We

camp at Punta Sal, a semi-circular beach fringed by sand dunes and groves of carob trees, for three nights

Day 14 to 15 - Huanchaco

Leaving Puna Sal, we drive through the Sechura Desert. Here the barren land is irrigated to create fertile fields of rice, sugarcane and other cereal crops. We will stop off en route at the Lambayeque Museum, one of Peru's finest museums, which displays artefacts found at the tomb of the Lord of Sipán, one of the richest archaeological finds of the 20th century. We continue on to the small coastal town of Huanchaco, where the fishermen still ride the surf in traditional reed boats. You too will be provided the opportunity to rent one of these reed boats for a paddle or race through the waves!

It is from Huanchaco that we visit the largest mud-city in the world at Chan Chán. Featuring ten walled citadels covering 26 square kilometres, the city is decorated with motifs of marine life. Built by Chimú kings, Chan Chán was once home to 30,000 people and is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. While here, we take the opportunity to visit the Moche built pyramids known as Huaca del Sol and Huaca de la Luna (temples of the sun and moon). There is also an excellent museum in Trujillo (optional); the Cassinelli Museum which houses one of the best private collections of pottery (including erotic pottery), as well as a mummified baby in a bell jar. We enjoy another free day in Huanchaco where you have another opportunity to go surfing before making our way to the capital.

Included Excursions: Lambayeque Museum • Chan Chan Ruins • Temple of the Sun • Temple of the Moon

Day 16 to 18 - Lima

On the way to the capital, we'll stop at Sechín Alto, another important ruin with temples dating back to 1500 BC, with over 500 carvings gruesomely depicting warriors and their captives. We'll then stop again at Paramonga, a well preserved temple by the side of the highway. From the Paramonga ruins we continue travelling to Lima, the capital of Peru.

Lima was founded by Francisco Pizarro in 1535 and called La Ciudad de Los Reyes (City of the Kings). It was the capital of the Spanish conquistadors until its independence in the early 19th century. Here you will find some of the finest museums in South America, such as the Gold Museum and the Museum of the Inquisition, to name but a few (optional). Our hotel is in close proximity to the main Plaza de Armas, where you'll discover fine old buildings with intricately carved wooden balconies and ceilings, a marvellous place for the culture vultures among us. The Government Palace facing the Plaza de Armas is beautifully built in white marble, as is La Cathedral, built in 1555, which also faces this square. You'll see an elegant bronze fountain at the centre of the square and standing tall behind the palace is the Cerro San Christobal Mountain, which offers great views of the city and the sea. San Francisco Monastery is a must see with its splendid interior, fine and detailed mosaics covering the walls, and the stunningly macabre catacombs with their thousands of bones - this display is certainly not for the faint hearted! With an estimated population of 8 million inhabitants, Lima is a melting pot of Peruvians, so you'll see a good cross section of the population. Lima has an array of churches, markets and other grand plazas plus an assortment of modern suburbs to visit.

Included Excursions: Sechin & Paramonga

Day 19 to 19 - Pisco

Continuing south we arrive at Pisco. Peru's national drink, the 'pisco sour', was named after this town. We spend the night in Pisco where you will have the opportunity to try some wonderful local seafood and perhaps sample one (or two) of the finest pisco sours to be found in Peru. In neighbouring Paracas, we will travel by boat to the Ballestas Islands the following morning - sometimes known as the 'poor man's Galapagos' because of the excellent opportunities to view wildlife such as boobies, pelicans and penguins so near to the mainland. The trip takes us past the giant "Candelabra" figure etched onto the side of a mountain. After our visit to the colonies of seabirds and sea lions basking on the rocks we'll head deep into the desert towards the stunning Huacachina oasis where you have the chance to try your hand 'sandboarding' or take an exhilarating ride in a dune buggy down the enormous dunes. The brave can go for a dip in the murky lagoon, which is said to have therapeutic properties.

Included Excursions: Ballestas Islands • Huacachina Oasis

Day 20 to 20 - Nazca

Nazca, an oasis town, is renowned for its mysterious parallel lines and geometrical figures etched onto the desert floor. Although there is a viewing tower, these giant designs can only be fully appreciated from the air. You can take a fascinating flight (optional) over the enormous lines and shapes, which include a monkey, hummingbird, condor, spider and even a spaceman. The designs are thought to have been made by three different groups of people: the Paracas (900-200 BC), the Nazca (200BC-600AD) and then new migrants from Ayacucho around 630AD. Other attractions around Nazca include watching workers extracting gold and a visit to ceramic workshops where you will receive a demonstration of their art.

Day 21 to 21 - Puerto Inca

On our way out of town, towards Puerto Inca, we visit the incredible Chauchilla Cemetery. The sites have been excavated so you can see ancient

mummies with their hair and even skin still intact. We travel along the rugged coastline to Puerto Inca, the Inca port which connected the coast with the ancient city of Cuzco up in the mountains. Just five minutes walk away are the preserved ruins, which once stored sea produce to be traded with wares brought down from the Andes. In Inca times, messages and fresh sea fish were sent 240 kilometres to Cuzco using a series of relay runners each doing seven kilometres, taking 24 hours to complete the journey.

Included Excursions: Chauchilla Cemetery

Day 22 to 23 - Arequipa

We wind our way into the foothills of the Andes and the stunning colonial city of Arequipa, overlooked by the massive volcano "El Misti". This city has some of the best examples of colonial architecture and the main plaza is quite magnificent, decorated with archways and dominated by the splendid cathedral, which was completed in 1612. Although an earthquake in 2001 damaged the cathedral, it has not diminished any of the splendour of this charming square. One of the 'must see' attractions here is the vast Santa Catalina Convent (optional), a maze of cobbled streets, cloisters and other decorative buildings, it has only been open to the public since 1970 and it is certainly well worth the visit.

Another popular attraction is the acclaimed 'Museo Santuarios Andinas', which highlights well preserved mummies including the famous 'Ice Princess Juanita' - a young Inca maiden who was sacrificed some 500 years ago atop the Nevado Ampato volcano. You can enjoy a free day in Arequipa to explore these sights and more, at your own leisure.

Optional Excursions: City tour – US\$12 • Monastery of Santa Catalina – S/35 • Museo Santuarios Andinas, where you can see the frozen Inca mummy princess 'Juanita' – S/20 • Plaza de Armas and churches – free • Local markets

Day 24 to 24 - Colca Canyon

Our next destination is the Colca Canyon, one of the deepest in the world. The drive takes us through a high Andean desert, with amazing scenery all the way. We pass ghost towns destroyed by earthquakes and with luck we will see a condor or two soaring out of the canyon from our vantage point, 1,200 metres above the canyon floor. In the evening we have time to soak in the thermal springs near Chivay, where we spend the night.

Included Excursions: Colca Canyon

Day 25 to 25 - Cuzco

The oldest continuously inhabited city in South America, Cuzco was the hub of the Inca Empire and features a population of around 300,000, most of who are indigenous. This marvellous colonial city is situated 3,310 metres above sea level and has numerous churches, some of which were built using recycled Inca masonry, as were many other buildings in Cuzco. The main square is called the Plaza de Armas, which has the beautiful cathedral on one side, which took a century to build, and the Church of La Compañía de Jesus on the other. The colonial arcades, which occupy the remainder of the plaza, are full of restaurants and shops. Enjoy a cup of coca tea at one of the local cafés and take time to acclimatise to the altitude. There are also many fascinating markets in Cuzco, the most well-known being San Pedro where all kinds of textiles and artisan merchandise are sold. Enjoy wandering the streets, visit the many markets and soak up the friendly atmosphere. If you're in the mood for a cultural experience, take a peek inside the 14th-century Inca palace which was later converted into the city's Museo de Arte Religioso (Museum of Religious Art). Well worth exploring during your time here is the ancient archaeological site of Sacsayhuaman, which has the largest and most impressive Inca stonework of all. It is also well worth your time to visit some of the nearby Inca ruins: Kenko, Tambomachay and Puka Pukara.

Day 26 to 28 - Amazon Jungle Optional Excursion

Today you have a chance to visit the Amazon Jungle on an optional excursion. This trip must be booked in advance as flights are required to get to Puerto Maldonado where you will stay in rustic lodges deep in the Amazon and enjoy guided walks and hikes through the forest.

Day 29 to 29 - Ollantaytambo

On our full day excursion to the Sacred Valley of the Incas we will visit the isolated Pisac ruins perched on a hill high in the mountains and visit the famous local market of the same name in the valley below. This is a great place to buy textiles, pottery and jewellery and a great place to admire the fantastic view. After some time at both the ruins and the markets, we move down the valley to the temple fortress of Ollantaytambo, with its enormous terraces climbing up the hillside. For those trekking the Inca trail, you will spend the night here in Ollantaytambo for your early start in the morning.

For those who have chosen not to trek the trail, you will continue back to Cuzco where you will have some time to further explore Cuzco before your trip to Machu Picchu by train. There are plenty of other optional excursions available, including white water rafting down the Urubamba River, horse riding through native villages and Inca ruins.

Included Excursions: Sacred Valley of the Incas Guided Tour

Day 30 to 32 - Inca Trail Trek

You will have a briefing to prepare for the trek by your local guide. They will cover ideal things to take, what the porters will assist you with and what you can expect from the trek each day. This briefing will take place during your initial days in Cuzco.

If you have chosen to hike the Inca Trail you will cross spectacular passes and visit more Inca ruins en route to the Lost City of the Incas, Machu Picchu. A local guide will lead this expedition and there will be cooks and porters to carry the main equipment, leaving you with just a small daypack. The trek begins after a short bus journey and the first day is a relatively easy four-and-a-half hour, 13-kilometre-walk, which will get you limbered up for the highest pass at Warmiwañusca (4,200 metres) which you will reach before lunchtime on the second day (Warmiwañusca translates as 'Dead Woman's Pass') . During the second day you will cover approximately nine kilometres in about five to seven hours and after the high pass it's all downhill as the trail winds its way down old Inca-built stairs to our campsite. On the third day we pass the ruins of Runkurakay, Sayacmarca and Phuyupatamarca, walking approximately 15 kilometres in seven hours. The last morning, after an overnight stop at Wiñay-Wayna, you will rise early for the final walk to Machu Picchu and greet daybreak over the famous "Sun Gate". There will then be time to explore on your own or simply take in the magnificence of the place after your guided tour.

The Lost City of Machu Picchu was originally completely self-contained, surrounded by agricultural terraces sufficient to feed the population, and watered by natural springs. Located high above the fast flowing Urubamba River, the cloud shrouded ruins have palaces, baths, temples, storage rooms and some 150 houses, all in a remarkable state of preservation that will simply take your breath away.

The ruins were only uncovered by the outside world in 1911, when American explorer Hiram Bingham found them while looking for another 'lost city' called Vilcabamba. Due to their isolation many of the buildings are still relatively intact and you can't help but admire Huayna Picchu or 'Young Mountain' (Machu Picchu means 'Old Mountain'), which towers above the ruins. After spending most of the day at Machu Picchu you have the chance to soak your tired muscles in the hot springs at Aguas Calientes or meander through the markets before returning to Cuzco by train.

Due to a limited number of people being allowed on the trail a day, permits are limited and can sell out far in advance. If you wish to book the Inca Trail, please provide your Reservations Agent with your passport details by email as soon as possible so that we can secure your permit. Without your passport details, we are unable to arrange your Inca Trail Trek. Please [click here](#) for more information. For information on the Lares Trek including which meals are included, [click here](#). If you are not participating in either trek then you will visit Machu Picchu by train and have plenty of free time to enjoy the activities available in and around Cuzco. Meals are not provided.

Included Excursions: Inca Trail Trek • Guided tour of Machu Picchu

Day 33 to 34 - Cuzco

Returning to Cuzco after the Inca Trail, enjoy your first hot shower in days and grab a drink at one of the lively bars.

Day 35 to 37 - Puno & Lake Titicaca

We are now destined for the town of Puno, on the shores of Lake Titicaca. The journey takes us alongside majestic snow-capped mountains before reaching the La Raya pass at 4,321 metres. There is a research station, which studies high altitude animals such as llamas, alpacas and vicuñas. From Puno we visit the astounding floating reed Islands of the indigenous Uros people and experience their way of life. We will have the option to take a ride in a traditional reed boat made of totora plants, which also form a staple part of the local people's diet and medicine. We then make our way to Amantani Island to spend the night in the homes of local families. This beautiful, traditional island is home to Aymara people and is situated in the centre of Lake Titicaca. The following morning we'll stopover at Taquile, where the men stand, knitting typical woollen hats, while the women tend the fields. We return to Puno in time to do more shopping, Puno is one of the best places to bargain for alpaca sweaters.

Included Excursions: Lake Titicaca excursion & homestay

Day 38 to 40 - La Paz

Just about every building in La Paz is built on some sort of hill, so sightseeing will literally take your breath away! Our hotel is close to the fascinating indigenous markets. One is called the 'witches market' because the bowler-hat-wearing women here sell dead cats, llama foetuses (these are placed under the buildings to keep evil spirits away) and other strange potions. The main square is the Plaza Murillo, where a president of the republic was once lynched from a lamppost. One of the evenings here can be spent at a peña listening to locals playing "Andino" music on zampoñas and charangos.

Day 41 to 42 - Potosí

We now travel across the Altiplano to Potosí, the highest city of its size on Earth at 4,070 metres, with a population of 110,000 people. The history of Potosí, its fame and splendour, as well as its tragedy and horror, is closely linked to silver. The city was founded in 1545 soon after the discovery of silver in a nearby hill, the Cerro Rico (or Rich Hill). The veins proved to be so prolific that they quickly became known as the world's richest source of the

precious metal. Silver from Potosí underwrote the Spanish economy, particularly its monarchy's extravagance, for over two centuries. Millions of indigenous people, and later, African slaves, were made to work in the mines where conditions were so appalling and dangerous that miners died in horrific numbers, either in accidents or from silicosis pneumonia. During the three centuries of colonial rule, it is estimated that eight million Africans and locals died in the Potosí mines. Reminders of the grand colonial city are still evident in the narrow streets, formal balconied mansions and ornate churches. We offer you the opportunity to visit one of the mines (optional) where you will learn from first-hand experience some of the hardship that miners still suffer. You soon realise that the mines are worked today in much the same way as they were under Spanish rule.

Day 43 to 44 - Uyuni

Travelling along scenic passes we come to the desolate town of Uyuni in the south of Bolivia. From here we visit what is claimed to be the largest salt flat in the world, the brilliant white vast Salar de Uyuni, which covers some 10,500 square kilometres and is estimated to contain 10 billion tons of salt. A four-wheel-drive excursion across the lake takes us to a world of white and blue. Fish Island offers stunning views of the lake which can prove quite otherworldly as giant cacti and wandering llama punctuate the scene and provide perfect photo opportunities. The fantastic contrast of the brilliant blue sky (weather permitting of course) and the pure white of the salt flats is surreal.

Included Excursions: Uyuyuni salt flats excursion

Day 45 to 45 - Tupiza

Winding our way along the dusty roads of Bolivia, which are some of the most rugged in South America, we head towards the Argentine border amidst the vividly coloured rock formations and giant cacti. We arrive at Tupiza where we will take respite from the arid surrounds and dusty road. Legend has it that Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid met their end at the hands of the Bolivian army near Tupiza, concluding their notorious string of bank raids.

Day 46 to 48 - Salta

Our next stop is the attractive city of Salta in the Lerma Valley, established in 1582. Salta has many old colonial buildings, a Cathedral with ancient statues of the Cristo del Milagro (Miracle of Christ) and the Virgin Mary, which were brought over from Spain in 1592. You will also find pavement plaques, which will guide you on an interesting walking tour of the city. During our time here a great optional excursion you may like to take is a day trip to Cafayate, one of Argentina's great wine regions.

Optional Excursions: Full day rafting with BBQ lunch – US\$60 • Horse riding at ranch with BBQ lunch – US\$70

Day 49 to 52 - San Pedro de Atacama

We head due west and cross the mighty Andes before entering Chile via the border at Jama. Over the Jama Pass, we drive by way of salt lakes and volcanoes and, if we're lucky, we may see pink flamingos and a variety of other wildlife before our descent into the arid Atacama Desert, the driest desert in the world (it hasn't rained for over 250 years). Here our first camp is the quaint little town of San Pedro de Atacama. From here you have the option to visit the excellent archaeological museum at San Pedro de Atacama, housing a good selection of mummies and other ancient artefacts. We visit the Valley of the Moon with its eerie landscape and eroded salt mountains as we drive south we pass through the mining town of Calama. After passing by Antofagosta, we stop for a group photo at a strange figure of a gigantic hand rising from the desert. We then arrive on the coast where we camp by the beach at Bahía Inglesa (English Bay).

Included Excursions: Valley of the Moon

Day 53 to 54 - La Serena (Guañeros)

We make our way to La Serena, a pleasant little town founded in 1544. The surrounding district is one of the most important astronomical centres on earth, with observatories dotted among the hills. We have another full day in La Serena where we can laze around on the long beach, visit the interesting town or stroll to neighbouring Coquimbo along the bay. In the evening you can enjoy a barbeque or a night out at one of the many nightclubs (optional).

Day 55 to 57 - Santiago

Pedro de Valdivia established the city of Santiago in 1541 but not much remains of its original glory. At Santa Lucia hill where the original fortress was constructed, there are excellent views of the city below. However, for even better photo opportunities, take a funicular railway to the top of San Cristobal where the Statue of the Virgin overlooks the capital and the distant Andes. At this pleasant viewing area there are wine-tasting facilities and a couple of beautifully situated swimming pools. Santiago is a clean, modern city with fountains, parks and imposing buildings. In the Plaza Constitución at the Palacio de la Moneda you can see the changing of the guard on most days or you can take an optional excursion to the port of Valparaiso and the resort of Viña del Mar.

Day 58 to 60 - Pucón

We continue to the Lake District of Chile and the picturesque town of Pucón, a small resort on Lake Villarrica below the perfect cone-shaped Villarrica Volcano. The whole area is surrounded by lakes, mountains, forests, rivers and waterfalls and offers many exciting optional activities such as trekking to the top of the active volcano, white water rafting, horseback riding, mountain biking and water sports on the lake. We have a free day to allow time to take advantage of some of the great activities on offer or simply relax. Whilst in the area we will visit Salto del Laja, the waterfalls which drop an impressive 47 metres to the rocks below.

Day 61 to 63 - Bariloche

We cross over into Argentina to the resort town of San Carlos de Bariloche on the shores of Lake Nahuel Huapi. Bariloche is a famous winter ski resort that also has a great deal to offer during other seasons. Built by Swiss and German immigrants in the Alpine style, there are Swiss-style chalets, numerous chocolate shops and even St. Bernard dogs with brandy barrels around their necks. There are excellent optional opportunities to take in the breathtaking views from the cable car and also the chance for some hiking or cycling.

Optional Excursions: Museo de la Patagonia – ARG20 donation • Cerro Catedral ski lifts – from ARG155 • Mountain bike hire – ARG100 • ~~Chico~~Chico, a 60km circuit of nearby attractions which can be completed by local bus • Lakeside beaches – free • Hiking in Parque Nacional Nahuel Huapi

Day 64 to 64 - En route

We now enter Patagonia, a dry windswept expanse stretching to the southern tip of the continent. Travelling along the barren windswept roads towards our destination of El Calafate, we will stop en route to camp for the night to break up this long journey.

Day 65 to 66 - El Calafate

El Calafate is a town on the edge of Lake Argentino which will be our base to visit the Ventisquero Moreno Glacier. With a height of around 60 metres and a width of five kilometres at the front, it is an incredible sight. You will have the chance to walk around some paths and terraces where we get some great views of the glacier. There is also a boat cruise which can take us across almost the full width of the glacier for amazingly close-up views. The glacier is constantly 'calving', so it's not possible to get too close.

Optional Excursions: Regional Museum of El Calafate – free • Boat trip on Lago Argentino – ARG120 • Reserva Municipal Laguna Nimez, bird watching small entry fee • Perito Moreno Glacier Tour – US\$42 + ARG215 national park entry fee

Day 67 to 70 - Torres del Paine National Park

We visit Torres del Paine National Park in Chile, named after the massive granite towers that rise above the earth. The scenery is stunning with snow-capped peaks, glaciers, beautiful lakes and valleys. The park is also home to interesting native flora and fauna. Some of the varied and amazing creatures you might spot include Andean condors, guanacos (a relative of the llama) and rhea (a type of emu) to name but a few. We have plenty of opportunities to trek the many trails in the park. Some of the walks are quite demanding, but there is a good range for all grades of walker.

There are many trekking options available in the Torres del Paine National Park, ranging from single-day trips to longer multiple-day hikes. Please be sure to advise your expedition leader as early as possible if you wish to complete an optional excursion in Torres del Paine National Park so that he/she can assist you with your accommodation and bookings.

Note: No food is allowed to be taken into Chile so please ensure you have eaten or disposed of any snacks you may have with you before we cross the border.

Included Excursions: Entry to Torres del Paine National Park

Day 71 to 71 - Punta Arenas

Punta Arenas is a duty-free port and early frontier town and will be a stopover on our way to the southernmost city in the world, Ushuaia. Enroute we will visit the nearby Magellanic Penguin colony at Seno Otway, where thousands of these strange, docile birds return annually to breed and make their homes by burrowing into the earth. They can be seen in great numbers between November and February moving on towards the end of the summer.

Included Excursion: Seno Otway Penguin Colony

Day 72 to 74 - Ushuaia

We cross the Straits of Magellan to Tierra del Fuego (Land of Fire) and re-enter Argentina, travelling to the town of Rio Grande which used to be an airbase during the Falklands war. From here it's only a short drive to Ushuaia. People come from far and wide to base themselves here and visit the spectacular surroundings. We will take an excursion on the Beagle Channel and visit the Isla de los Lobos (Sea Lion Island) where you can see colonies of sea lions. You can visit the nearby Lapataia National Park where the exhaustive Pan-American Highway ends. This park covers 63,000 hectares of

mountains, lakes, deep valleys and rivers. You can trek along various trails through the beautiful beech forests spotting wildlife along the way. There are also some interesting museums in Ushuaia, such as the Maritime Museum and the Museum at the End of the World. If you want a bit more walking, the Martial Glacier can be climbed, which towers high above the town of Ushuaia. Those interested in steam trains might like to go for a ride on the 'Train at the End of the World' and send a postcard to friends and family with a stamp from the post office at... you guessed it... the end of the world!

Included Excursions: Beagle Channel cruise

Day 75 to 76 - En route

Heading northbound we follow the Atlantic coast passing through thousands of kilometres of virtually uninhabited wide open spaces with a couple of overnight stops along the way.

Day 77 to 78 - Puerto Madryn

Along our way we visit the Welsh community of Puerto Madryn, where in 1865 1,500 Welsh immigrants arrived from the Clipper Mimososa and named the natural port 'Port Madryn' then settled and founded the town.

From here we will have the option to visit the nearby Valdés Peninsula. The Valdés Peninsula is renowned for its wildlife and you will hopefully see penguins, sea lions, elephant seals, armadillos, guanacos, rheas, southern right whales, killer whales, Patagonian hares and a great variety of seabirds.

Optional Excursions: Valdés Peninsula National Park – entry ARS130 / group guide US\$100 • Whale watching – US\$70

Day 79 to 79 - En route Azul

We have another night camping en route as we head towards Argentina's capital.

Day 80 to 83 - Buenos Aires

The beautiful city of Buenos Aires is known as the "Paris of South America" due to its lovely green parks, plazas and wide boulevards. From the balcony of the presidential palace, the Casa Rosada (Pink Palace), Eva Peron made many of her speeches. It's also the place where Madonna sang, "Don't cry for me Argentina" in the film Evita. Across the Plaza de Mayo you will also find the Cabildo (the old town hall) the Palacio Municipal (City Hall) and the cathedral. Every Thursday afternoon in this plaza the "Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo" march in remembrance of their family members who disappeared in the 1970s when the country was under military rule. There are many excellent restaurants in the Puerto Madero area and it is well worth a visit to the port of La Boca for its colourful buildings and cultural history. In nearby San Telmo, the bohemian area, there is a fascinating antique market every Sunday. The Recoleta Cemetery, almost like an enclosed city of its own, is where Eva Peron and many other rich and famous Argentines are buried - well worth a visit. The reputation of Buenos Aires' nightlife is not overstated as there are many nightclubs, bars, restaurants and cinemas open until all hours. For a great evening out, you may want to see a tango show in the city where the dance originated, and you shouldn't leave Buenos Aires before trying one of the best steaks you'll find in the world!

Optional Excursions: Tango show & dinner – US\$90 • Tango lessons – from ARS200 for 1 hour • Hop on/hop off bus – ARS170 (US\$20 approx) • Explore La Boca and San Telmo artistic neighbourhoods – free • Various historic plazas & squares – free • Tigre Delta day trip, exploring the elegant neighbourhood by train and catamaran – ARS170 • Football match including transfers and guide – from ARS650 • Buenos Aires city tour – US\$20

Day 84 to 84 - En route

We pass through the town of Roque Saenz Peña as we make our way into the thorny scrublands of the Gran Chaco. This is also where the quebracho tree grows, the bark supplying much of the world with a red-brown tannin used for dyeing leather. Our journey takes us to Posadas through the Department of Mesopotamia, hopefully seeing the local cowboys (gauchos) and spotting rheas (South American emus) along the way. We will camp en route depending on travel times to continue our journey.

We cross the Rio Paraná into the poor country of Paraguay, destined for Trinidad. It is here that we visit the Jesuit Ruins, which were built in the early 1700s and give us a good idea of how the Jesuit missionaries lived. The Jesuits came to this area to convert the indigenous Guarani population to Catholicism, but were eventually expelled from South America by the Spanish in 1767. Subsequently we camp at Mantania Park with its surrounding farmland and pristine swimming pool. The park is a great place to relax with optional horse riding available.

We make our way to the capital, Asunción, a pleasant city with a hot and humid climate. Built on the banks of the Paraguay River, the streets are laid out in the Spanish grid pattern and lined with beautiful trees. Asunción is a good place to stock up on cameras and electronic equipment as it's another duty free port. Along the riverfront are the Government and Municipal Palaces, the cathedral and a shantytown. There are a few markets where you can buy local handicrafts.

Day 85 to 85 - Trinidad

We enter Paraguay and visit the Jesuit ruins of Trinidad. The Jesuits came to Paraguay in the 16th century and built these magnificent missions to convert the indigenous Guarani population to Catholicism. The buildings fell into ruin with the expulsion of the Jesuits from South America in 1767. We camp at Mantaniel Park with its surrounding farmland and pristine swimming pool. This is a great place to relax, with optional horse riding available.

Day 86 to 87 - Asunción

We make our way to the capital Asunción, a pleasant city with a hot and humid climate. Built on the banks of the Paraguay River, the streets are laid out in the Spanish grid pattern and lined with beautiful trees. Asunción is a good place to stock up on copies of designer watches and clothing, as it's another duty free port. Along the riverfront are the Government and Municipal Palaces, the cathedral and a shantytown. There are a few markets where you can buy local handicrafts.

Day 88 to 91 - Foz do Iguaçu

Welcome to Foz do Iguaçu, home of over 275 separate waterfalls that cascade over a two-and-a-half-kilometre-wide cliff face. There is also an excellent bird park which we will visit near the entrance to the falls. The falls straddle the border between Argentina and Brazil and we visit both sides of the falls. From the Brazilian side there are panoramic views of the numerous falls and if you feel like a cooling-down, take a zodiac boat ride up the river and under the falls - a fun way to get a different perspective of these impressive falls. From the Argentine side, you can walk through rainforest along catwalks directly above the falls and the "Devil's Throat" (optional). For a bird's eye view take the optional helicopter ride.

You may like to take the option to visit the world's largest hydroelectric dam at Itaipu where videos show the environmental planning behind the dam project.

Included Excursions: Iguazú Falls in Argentina & Brazil • Parque Das Aves Parque Das Aves Bird Park

Optional Excursions: 4WD and boat trips – ARS180-380

Day 92 to 93 - En route

Making our way east we spend one night near the city of Sao Paolo and another near Curitiba, one of the most prosperous cities of Southern Brazil.

Day 94 to 96 - Paraty

Following the stunning coastline along the Costa Verde where we arrive at Parati, which is a preserved Portuguese colonial town (1500-1822), with streets made of stone slabs designed to let the tide wash over and clean them. The town is renowned for its historical centre, the coast and mountains in the region. Parati was also a major port for the exportation of gold and coffee during the 17th and 19th centuries respectively. You have an option to go on a full-day boat cruise around the bay with plenty of time for swimming in the turquoise waters and eating the fresh seafood. We have plenty of time to relax and soak up the coastal atmosphere.

Day 97 to 102 - Rio de Janeiro & Carnival

Rio de Janeiro, or more commonly known as Rio, is the second largest city in Brazil and arguably one of the most beautiful cities of the world. In the late 17th century the Portuguese found gold and diamonds in the nearby state of Minas Gerais and thus Rio became the main port for exporting the new found wealth. During the colonial Portuguese period of 1763-1815, Rio was the capital of Brazil.

Visit Rio's stunning beaches, such as Copacabana, Ipanema or Leblon. There are excursions up Pão de Açúcar (Sugarloaf Mountain) and Corcovado with its famous 'Cristo Redentor' (Christ the Redeemer) statue and great city views. You can also wander around the cobblestoned streets of the hill-top neighbourhood of Santa Teresa. A walking tour of Rio's historic buildings in the city centre is also a lovely way to pass an afternoon, or you may like to visit the Botanical Gardens.

Your tour may meet Rio de Janeiro in time for Rio's famous Carnival. Your accommodation is **NOT** included while in Rio de Janeiro and you will be required to find your own accommodation. Alternatively, we offer a Group package. Find out more about this package [here](#).

Rio Carnival is Rio de Janeiro's busiest time, as tourists and locals flock to the streets and celebrate until the early morning. Elaborate and beautiful costumes are worn, parades fill the streets and the city prepares for the main event held at the Sambadrome.

During this period, Rio's hotels increase their prices and it may be challenging to find hotels at reasonable prices at the last minute. We block book hotels, well in advance but still recommend booking in as advance as possible. By purchasing Rio Carnivals Group Package, you also get a ticket to the Sambadrome.

Day 103 to 104 - Ouro Prêto

Ouro Prêto is a fabulous city located deep in the valley of Minas Gerais' mountains. The city was part of what was once a mining region. Founded in

1711 it is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site and National Historic Monument due to its outstanding Baroque architecture.

We have time here to explore this fascinating city and take an excursion to see some of the old mines.

Day 105 to 105 - En route

We continue our journey through Brazil camping en route in the municipality town of Linhares located in the state of Espírito Santo.

Day 106 to 107 - Puerto Seguro

Next we make our way towards the beautiful coastal town of Puerto Seguro. It has miles of palm-fringed beaches and bars, which are great places to sample delicious fresh fruit juices, or the Brazilian national cocktail of caiparinha (be careful with this one though). Just north of here is where the Portuguese, led by Pedro Alvares Cabral, first landed in 1500 and a cross marks the site. There is plenty of typical Bahian food available in Porto Seguro and you may want to try the delicious moqueca, a hot spicy seafood casserole. This is also a great chance to top up the holiday tan or to experience some of the local nightlife.

Day 108 to 110 - Salvador

We enter the city of Salvador by ferry over the bay of all saints to the capital city of the state of Bahia. The centre of Salvador has many historical colonial buildings and dates back to 1549; it was the original Brazilian capital until 1763. It is situated on the bay of Todos los Santos which is the largest bay on the Brazilian coast and has 38 islands, some of which can be visited by ferry on an optional excursion. There are also enormous elevators going from the upper to the lower city, where the docks are situated. It is in this area, just outside Mercado Modelo, where we can find the Bahians practising the foot-fighting sport of Capoeira, which was originally brought to Brazil by black Angolan slaves. Another key feature of Bahian life is the Afro-Brazilian religion of candomblé and you may be able to see one of their amazing ceremonies (please check locally for schedules of these optional tours). Alternatively, we can enjoy the traditional music of the area with a strong emphasis towards drums in the evening. You can be sure that you will hear music all over the city during your visit.

Day 111 to 112 - Maceió

Our next stop is Maceió, a port city which is located between Lake Mundaú and the Atlantic Ocean. The city developed in the 19th century from exporting sugar, tobacco, coconut & leather. Here we will have the opportunity to hire jangadas, a typical Brazilian sailing boat. The boatmen can take you out to a natural reef swimming pool about two kilometres from the shore, where you can order cocktails and crayfish from the surrounding boats.

Day 113 to 114 - Olinda

Following the coast northward our next exciting destination is the old colonial town of Olinda, which has a variety of historic churches, convents and monasteries, dating back to 1537. Nearby is Recife, a city built on three islands and joined by a series of bridges. Here an old prison has been converted into a cultural centre, which is not only impressive and interesting, but also houses some unique shops. If you want to see how the other half live in Brazil, then you can visit the rich suburb of Boa Viagem. Continuing our journey north we enter the State of Rio Grande do Norte, which is famous for its beautiful beaches.

Day 115 to 116 - Praia da Pipa

As we work our way up the coast we will take another break with a stopover in Praia da Pipa, one of Brazil's most famous beaches. The area offers some decent surfing options, crystal-clear waters with the chance to see dolphins, fine white sands and some reasonable restaurants. A great time to soak up some sun and relax.

Day 117 to 118 - Canoa Quebrada

Continuing our travels, we carry on to Canoa Quebrada, a fishing village built on a sand dune with long deserted beaches ideal for relaxation and swimming. For the more active there are two exciting optional activities: sandboarding down the dunes or horse riding along them. The nightlife, however, is not to be missed.

Day 119 to 119 - Ubajara

Leaving the coast behind, we head inland to our next stop at Ubajara National Park famous for its caves, spectacular forest scenery and waterfalls.

Included Excursions: Ubajara National Park

Day 120 to 121 - Sete Cidades

About half a day's drive brings us to the Sete Cidades National Park, which contains mysterious rock formations over 190 million years old, caverns and

natural swimming pools. Sete Cidades Park was named after the 'seven cities' its rock formations are said to resemble.

Included Excursions: Sete Cidades National Park

Day 122 to 122 - En route

Continuing inland we travel along the rough roads of Brasil's northern region to Bom Jardim. We will make an en route stopover depending on travel times before we reach the mouth of the mighty River Amazon and the port of Belém.

Day 123 to 124 - Belém

Belém is located on the banks of the Pará river, part of the greater River Amazon system. The city's extremes go from modern buildings and skyscraper to colonial tree-filled squares, churches and blue tiles in the old town. See the fascinating waterfront markets, the Theatre of Peace (one of the largest theatres in Brazil) and the excellent Goeldi Museum which houses a zoo. There are plenty of restaurants on offer as well as many stalls in the markets for cheap and tasty meals. Another interesting spot to visit is the Bosque Rodrigo Alves, a public garden with many species of native flora as well as a small collection of animals.

Day 125 to 129 - Amazon ferry

From Belém we change means of transport and board a riverboat to cruise up the South America's longest river, the Amazon, which flows for 6,200 kilometres. We travel by riverboat for a total of 1,368 kilometres, heading into the jungle. At the start of this adventure the river is narrow as we travel through one of the hundreds of estuaries in the delta but it soon widens to in excess of 10 kilometres and it is still around eight kilometres wide at our destination, the city of Manaus. As we are going upriver, the boat stays mostly close to the shoreline to avoid the stronger currents coming downstream in the centre of the river. Accommodation on the riverboat is in hammocks for five nights (upgrades to cabins may be available, your tour leader can advise once the riverboat is confirmed) and usually each boat has a bar and restaurant on board. The duration of the cruise is usually five days, but this will be dependent on the river flow. A stop is generally made at the port city of Santarem so you can take respite from the boat and get a taste of solid ground again.

Being onboard the river ferry provides a great opportunity to relax, read books and enjoy incredible sunsets. Make sure to keep an eye out for the pink dolphins on the first couple of days. We will disembark the riverboat in Manaus with new Brazilian friends and fond memories of the mighty Amazon.

Day 130 to 135 - Manaus

The jungle city of Manaus used to be the world's largest supplier of rubber. During that heady era the famous Teatro Amazonas (opera house) was built and completed in 1896. Manaus will be our base for the opportunity to join an exciting optional excursion deep into the jungle by boat or dugout canoe in search of caiman, fresh water dolphins, jaguar and many other creatures of this threatened rainforest. The local guide on this trip will give you an in-depth view of the past- and present-day lives of the indigenous Amazonian population. They will also explain the importance of manioc (a root vegetable which must be processed to remove the cyanide) to the indigenous economy and diet as well as explaining the uses of numerous other jungle plants. You will also go to the meeting point of the black waters of the Rio Negro and the yellow-brown waters of the Solimões River, where they run side by side for several kilometres, providing an excellent photo opportunity. We return to Manaus where we highly recommend a visit to the fascinating waterside markets.

If you choose not to do the optional into the Jungle you will have free time in the city of Manaus with accommodation provided.

Day 136 to 136 - Boa Vista

Back onboard our expedition vehicle we hit the road again and head north through the jungle with a photo stop at the Equator Monument. We gradually leave the jungle behind, as we reach the drier climate near the city of Boa Vista.

Day 137 to 137 - Santa Elena

Continuing north, we cross into Venezuela, a country renowned for its large oil reserves. This is savannah country, dotted with hundreds of mountains and the whole region is known as La Gran Sabana. This area was totally inaccessible until the 1970s when a road was built. It was finally completed in 1990 and is now one of the best roads in the country. We take this road to Santa Elena travelling through the Gran Sabana region which has an abundance of delightful waterfalls, lagoons and flat-topped mountains called tepuyes. Santa Elena is known for its population of indigenous peoples and has a community called Manakrü (mah-nah-CREE) populated entirely by indigenous people.

Day 138 to 141 - Ciudad Bolívar

Ciudad Bolívar is located on the Orinoco River. The town was once called Angostura and is where Angostura Bitters originate. It is also where Simón Bolívar was declared President of Gran Colombia. The city has a well preserved historic centre with original colonial buildings around the Plaza Bolívar.

Ciudad Bolívar is a popular base for excursions to the famous Angel Falls located in Canaima National Park. At a height of 979 metres (3,212 feet), Angel Falls is the world's highest falls and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The falls are named after an American pilot, Jimmy Angel, who was the first person to fly over them in 1937.

From here we will have the choice to take an optional excursion out to the falls. We will fly out to Canaima, with a flight over of the falls to get a bird's eye view.

You can then choose to spend the day visiting sites in Canaima National Park, or stay overnight and take an excursion to the falls by dug-out canoe and foot. These options are dependent on the season and weather conditions.

Canaima National Park has an abundance of delightful waterfalls, lagoons and flat-topped mountains called tepuyes. Throughout the park you can see many local Pemòn settlements in this sparsely populated land, which covers an area of 30,000 square kilometres. You will never forget the beauty of this 'lost world' region.

If you do not wish to travel out to Angel Falls on the optional excursion you can enjoy some free time in Ciudad Bolívar with accommodation included.

Day 142 to 143 - Caracas

Venezuela's capital city, Santiago de León de Caracas, more commonly referred to as Caracas, is 960 metres above sea level and is renowned for having one of South America's most pleasant climates.

Venezuela is one of the largest oil producers in the world and Caracas is a very modern city with an efficient metro system, which goes from our hotel area into the city centre in minutes. Caracas has many lovely plazas, parks, museums and impressive buildings and was the birthplace of the Liberator, Simón Bolívar, whose presence is still seen everywhere. Because of the warm climate there are many outdoor cafés and restaurants where you can sit and watch the world go by.

Day 144 to 145 - Los Llanos

Our next destination is the flatlands of Los Llanos, a vast tropical grassland plain area which harbours abundant wildlife including a vast variety of birds, capybaras, caimans, anacondas, pumas, monkeys and freshwater dolphins. Most of the country's cattle also graze in this area living side-by-side with wildlife. The cattle are mostly the Zebu variety, which comes from Brazil and India.

On the way to the campsite, accompanied by a local guide you will see the varied birdlife as well as caiman, turtle, capybara and possibly anaconda. After dark, you can observe the animals in their nocturnal environment. You will spend two nights at a small lodge owned by a local family. You can sleep in hammocks if you prefer. During the day, you travel by 4WD and boat observing the animals and birdlife.

Day 146 to 149 - Mérida

Sitting on a plain in the valley of the Chama River at an altitude of 1,600 metres, the city of Mérida is surrounded by Venezuela's high Andes. You will have plenty of time to get to know this picturesque city. The city was founded in 1558 and still retains many interesting colonial buildings. In the nearby Sierra Nevada National Park there is an opportunity to hike through breathtaking scenery culminating in an exciting cable car (teleférico) ride back to the city. This cable car was built by the French in 1958 and is the longest and highest aerial cableway in the world. Please be aware that the cable car is frequently closed for maintenance.

It is from Merida that we can watch the natural phenomenon that is the Catatumbo Lightning show. Unique atmospheric conditions around Lake Maracaibo mean that the night skies above the lake are usually lit up by hundreds of explosive streaks of lightening, with up to 25 streaks a minute. On an overnight excursion, you travel west by truck and boat, far off the beaten track, passing villages built on stilts. Travelling through Juan Manuel National Park, you can see monkeys and iguanas and cross Lake Maracaibo spotting freshwater dolphins. Spending the night in a stilt village close to the lake, when the show starts, you will be woken by a guide and taken to the view point to watch the spectacular natural phenomenon.

Day 150 to 150 - Riohacha

After crossing the border into Colombia we come to the sleepy beach city of Riohacha on the Caribbean coast. Founded in 1535, the city was an important port in colonial times due to the discovery of vast numbers of pearls in the area. Today the city offers an authentic picture of Colombia to travellers, with the beach normally frequented by locals and Colombian tourists. In the historic centre of the city there are numerous attractive colonial buildings.

Day 151 to 153 - Taganga

Our next stop is the delightful coastal town of Taganga. This laid-back fishing village is a great place to swim and snorkel in the warm Caribbean waters and there are many diving shops in the town. From here we will take a day-trip into Tayrona National Park, known for its tranquil beaches and pre-

Columbian ruins. Here we have some free time to explore the beautiful, unspoilt beachside woodland where you may see iguanas, other lizards, snakes and the occasional monkey.

Included Excursions: Taganga National Park

Day 154 to 156 - Cartagena

We continue to the historic city of Cartagena, one of the most interesting colonial towns on the continent and where the film *Romancing the Stone* was made. Enjoy a walk along the city walls or wander through the fascinating narrow streets adorned with wooden balconies and hanging plants. There are several interesting sites to see such as a visit to Castillo San Felipe and the fortress on San Lazaro hill. Beneath this fortress is a maze of tunnels and there are still cannons in place along the battlements. Also worthwhile is a trip up La Popa hill to visit the colourful convent with great views over the city. The Bocagrande area of Cartagena is where Colombians come for their beach holidays and it is full of shops, nightclubs and bars. For an excellent evening out you could take a tour around the city by night in a chiva (also known by some as a "booze bus"). Frequent stops are made to see local street performers en route to a local disco. An optional excursion that can be arranged here is a boat ride to the beautiful Islas del Rosario where it is also possible to go snorkelling or scuba diving around the islands. Near Cartagena is the Volcán de Lodo El Totumo, a mud volcano where you can relax and wallow in the mud, which is believed to be a good treatment for the skin.

Day 157 to 157 - En route

Our only chance to free camp in Colombia, we drive towards San Gil, camping close to Aguachica.

Day 158 to 159 - San Gil

Officially named Colombia's adventure sport capital, there is a plethora of activities to do in and around San Gil to kick start the adrenaline. In the evenings, father in the Parque la Libertad, the town's main square and enjoy the local nightlife.

Optional Excursions: Hiking • Mountain biking • Rafting • Swimming • Caving • Kayaking

Day 160 to 160 - Villa de Leiva

We continue on to Villa de Leyva, an attractive colonial town founded in 1572 which has been preserved, with virtually no modern architectural influences at all, as a National Monument by the Colombian Government. You'll have time to enjoy its incredible colonial plaza, quaint cobble-stoned streets, red-tiled roofs, white-washed walls, beautiful balconies and private courtyards. This is also a popular area for hiking and mountain biking options.

Day 161 to 162 - Bogotá

On our way to Bogotá we will stop to take a look at the Zipaquirá Salt Cathedral, a church built within the tunnels of a salt mine, 200 metres underground. The cathedral is considered one of the most notable achievements of Colombian architecture.

We head to Bogotá, formerly called Santa Fe de Bogotá, the capital and largest city of Colombia with a population of 6 million. The main square - Plaza Bolívar, the Cathedral, Simón Bolívar's house and the colonial area of Candelaria are all points of interest. You may like to take the funicular to Monserrate for the incredible city views, or visit the world famous gold museum. Finally, a trip to Bogotá would not be complete without an evening out, dancing the night away to salsa and merengue music at one of the city's pulsating nightclubs.

Included Excursions: Zipaquirá Salt Cathedral

Day 163 to 164 - Zona Cafetera

Next we visit the terraced slopes of the Zona Cafetera (Colombia's coffee zone) which produces almost half of the country's coffee. This area is particularly scenic with green valleys surrounded by imposing snow-capped peaks. The area was only settled by the Spanish in the 1800s. You will have plenty of time to explore this area which offers a range of activities, such as a butterfly park, botanical gardens, Parque del Café and Panaca - an agricultural park. Ask your tour leader about some of the more adventurous activities available.

Day 165 to 165 - Popayán

We visit the old city of Popoyán. Commonly referred to as the 'white city', due to the colonial architecture distinctly painted white, Popoyán has one of the best preserved colonial town centres in all of Latin America. There are numerous cathedrals to peruse and the snow-capped Puracé volcano can be seen in the distance.

Day 166 to 167 - San Agustín

The area around San Agustín is known for the pre-Colombian sites with many fascinating statues. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, there are hundreds to

see with some amazing views from the Archaeological Parks.

Optional Excursions: Archaeological Parks

Day 168 to 168 - Ipiales

Next we reach Ipiales for our last overnight stop in Colombia. Here, built between a bridge and the wall of a ravine, the surreal Las Lajas Sanctuary is a stunning building where an apparition of the Virgin was said to be seen in the 18th century. Today many still make the pilgrimage in the hope of receiving miracles and many plaques in the rock testify to some of the miracles meant to have occurred here.

Day 169 to 169 - Otavalo

Today we will cross the border into Ecuador along the Andean corridor on the way to the town of Otavalo. The local population is made up of a mixture of European descendents, mestizos (people of mixed descent) and indigenous people known as indígenas, who mainly wear traditional dress. The men keep their hair in long braids down their backs and wear calf length white trousers, blue ponchos, dark felt hats and sandals, while the women traditionally wear white frilly blouses with flared lace sleeves, black skirts with layers of gold, and coral necklaces twirled around their necks. Every Wednesday and Saturday you can visit one of the best markets to be found anywhere in South America. People come from remote villages to sell their livestock, produce and colourful textiles. The market offers a wide variety of wool handicrafts and high-quality wood carvings as well as polished leather products made by artisans from nearby villages. And whatever the wares you can be sure of fantastic photo opportunities.

Included Excursions: Las Lajas Cathedral

Day 170 to 170 - Quito

Quito, Ecuador is the second-highest capital city in the world at 2,850 metres above sea level. It was founded in 1534 by the Spanish prior to which it was an Inca stronghold. It is situated in a hollow at the base of the live volcano Pichincha and the whole length of the city can be seen from atop Panecillo hill where the enormous statue of the Virgin of Quito stands. The city has two main sections, the old and the new city. The latter is the main commercial area and has all the good restaurants and bars, whereas the old city is the colonial sector with steep calles, busy plazas and local markets.

UNESCO has listed Quito as having the largest best-preserved, and least-altered historic centre in Latin America. Along with Krakow, Quito was the first city inscribed onto the UNESCO World Heritage list in 1978. Some churches you might like to visit are the Cathedral of Quito, Church of the Society of Jesus (La Compañía), Church and Convent of St. Francis (San Francisco) and Basílica del Voto Nacional.

Optional Excursions: TelefériQo, a sky tram to the top of Volcan Pinchincha for views over the city – US\$3 taxi (approx.) and US\$4-7 entry • La Mitad del Mundo, where the equator crosses Ecuador – US\$3 • Museo Solar Inti Nan, located near to La Mitad del Mundo with exhibitions of astronomical geography and water and energy displays – US\$4 • El Panecillo, the hill just south of the old town where you have see the winged statue of Virgin of Quito – US\$3 approx. • Wander the Old Town – free • Walking tours – US\$10 • Plaza de la Independencia – free, cathedral entrance US\$1 • Plaza San Francisco and the Monastery of San Francisco (Ecuador's oldest church) – free • La Compañía de Jesús church – US\$1 suggested donation • Museo de la Ciudad, museum depicting daily life in Quito through the ages – US\$3

Day 171 to 171 - Depart Quito

Your adventure of a lifetime comes to an end today. If you have a late flight or have lengthened your stay by adding post tour accommodation you will have more time to explore the sights.

Day by Day Itinerary

Day	Activity	Country	Meals
Day 1	Quito	Ecuador	
Day 2	Otavalo		
Day 3	Amazon Jungle		LD
Day 4	Amazon Jungle		BLD
Day 5	Amazon Jungle		BLD
Day 6	Baños		BLD

Day 7	Baños		BLD
Day 8	Baños		BLD
Day 9	Cuenca		BL
Day 10	Cuenca		B
Day 11	Punta Sal	Peru	BLD
Day 12	Punta Sal		BLD
Day 13	Punta Sal		BLD
Day 14	Huanchaco		BLD
Day 15	Huanchaco		BLD
Day 16	Lima		BL
Day 17	Lima		
Day 18	Lima		
Day 19	Pisco		L
Day 20	Nazca		LD
Day 21	Puerto Inca		BLD
Day 22	Arequipa		BL
Day 23	Arequipa		
Day 24	Colca Canyon		
Day 25	Cuzco		L
Day 26	Cuzco / Jungle Option		
Day 27	Cuzco / Jungle Option		
Day 28	Cuzco		
Day 29	Ollantaytambo		
Day 30	Inca Trail Trek		LD
Day 31	Inca Trail Trek		BLD
Day 32	Inca Trail Trek		BLD
Day 33	Cuzco		B
Day 34	Cuzco		
Day 35	Puno		L
Day 36	Lake Titicaca		LD
Day 37	Puno		B

Day 38	La Paz	Bolivia	L
Day 39	La Paz		
Day 40	La Paz		
Day 41	Potosí		L
Day 42	Potosí		
Day 43	Uyuni		
Day 44	Uyuni		L
Day 45	Tupiza		L
Day 46	Salta	Argentina	LD
Day 47	Salta		BLD
Day 48	Salta		BLD
Day 49	San Pedro de Atacama	Chile	BLD
Day 50	San Pedro de Atacama		BLD
Day 51	San Pedro de Atacama		BLD
Day 52	Bahía Inglesa		BLD
Day 53	La Serena (Guañuqueros)		BLD
Day 54	La Serena (Guañuqueros)		BLD
Day 55	Santiago		BL
Day 56	Santiago		B
Day 57	Santiago		B
Day 58	Pucón	Patagonia	BLD
Day 59	Pucón		BLD
Day 60	Pucón		BLD
Day 61	Bariloche	Argentina	BLD
Day 62	Bariloche		BLD
Day 63	Bariloche		BLD
Day 64	En route		BLD
Day 65	El Calafate		BL
Day 66	El Calafate		
Day 67	Torres del Paine National Park	Chile	LD
Day 68	Torres del Paine National Park		BLD

Day 69	Torres del Paine National Park		BLD
Day 70	Torres del Paine National Park		BLD
Day 71	Punta Arenas		BL
Day 72	Ushuaia	Argentina	BLD
Day 73	Ushuaia		BLD
Day 74	Ushuaia		BLD
Day 75	En route Rio Gallegos		BLD
Day 76	Comodoro Riadavia		BLD
Day 77	Puerto Madryn		BLD
Day 78	Puerto Madryn		BLD
Day 79	En route Azul		BLD
Day 80	Buenos Aires		BL
Day 81	Buenos Aires		B
Day 82	Buenos Aires		B
Day 83	Buenos Aires		B
Day 84	En route		BLD
Day 85	Trinidad	Paraguay	BLD
Day 86	Asunción		BL
Day 87	Asunción		
Day 88	Foz do Iguaçu	Brazil	LD
Day 89	Foz do Iguaçu		BLD
Day 90	Foz do Iguaçu		BLD
Day 91	Foz do Iguaçu		BLD
Day 92	En route Sao Paulo		BLD
Day 93	Paraty		BLD
Day 94	Paraty		BLD
Day 95	Paraty		BLD
Day 96	Paraty		BLD
Day 97	Rio de Janeiro		B
Day 98	Rio de Janeiro (optional Carnival Package or free time)		B
Day 99	Rio de Janeiro (optional Carnival Package or free time)		

Day 100	Rio de Janeiro (optional Carnival Package or free time)		
Day 101	Rio de Janeiro (optional Carnival Package or free time)		
Day 102	Rio de Janeiro		
Day 103	Ouro Prêto		BLD
Day 104	Ouro Prêto		BLD
Day 105	Linhares		BLD
Day 106	Puerto Seguro		BLD
Day 107	Puerto Seguro		BLD
Day 108	Salvador		BL
Day 109	Salvador		B
Day 110	Salvador		B
Day 111	Maceió		BLD
Day 112	Maceió		BLD
Day 113	Olinda		BL
Day 114	Olinda		B
Day 115	Praia da Pipa		BL
Day 116	Praia da Pipa		B
Day 117	Canoa Quebrada		BL
Day 118	Canoa Quebrada		B
Day 119	Ubajara		BLD
Day 120	Sete Cidades		BLD
Day 121	En route (Santa Ines)		BL
Day 122	Belém		BL
Day 123	Belém		B
Day 124	Amazon ferry		B
Day 125	Amazon ferry		B
Day 126	Amazon ferry		
Day 127	Amazon ferry		
Day 128	Amazon ferry		
Day 129	Manaus		
Day 130	Manaus		

Day 131	Manaus		B
Day 132	Manaus		B
Day 133	Manaus		B
Day 134	Manaus		B
Day 135	Manaus		B
Day 136	Boa Vista		BL
Day 137	Santa Elena		BLD
Day 138	Ciudad Bolívar	Venezuela	BLD
Day 139	Ciudad Bolívar		BLD
Day 140	Ciudad Bolívar		BLD
Day 141	Ciudad Bolívar		BLD
Day 142	Caracas		BL
Day 143	Caracas		B
Day 144	Los Llanos		BLD
Day 145	Los Llanos		BLD
Day 146	Mérida		BL
Day 147	Mérida		B
Day 148	Catatumbo Camp		BLD
Day 149	Santa Apolonia		BLD
Day 150	Riohacha	Colombia	BL
Day 151	Taganga		BL
Day 152	Taganga		
Day 153	Taganga		
Day 154	Cartagena		L
Day 155	Cartagena		B
Day 156	Cartagena		B
Day 157	En route		BLD
Day 158	San Gil		BL
Day 159	San Gil		B
Day 160	Villa de Leyva		B
Day 161	Bogotá		B

Day 162	Bogotá		B
Day 163	Zona Cafetera		BLD
Day 164	Zona Cafetera		BLD
Day 165	Popayán		BL
Day 166	San Agustin		BL
Day 167	San Agustin		B
Day 168	Ipiales		BL
Day 169	Otavaló	Ecuador	BL
Day 170	Quito		
Day 171	Quito		

(B - Breakfast, L - Lunch, D - Dinner included)

For tours that include the option of a single supplement, a ? will indicate in which destinations single rooms are available. The detailed and day by day itineraries above are provided in good faith and it is our intention to adhere to the published route. Changes may be made before or during your tour for operational or safety reasons or to incorporate improvements. Impromptu changes may also occur whilst you are travelling as a result of one-off circumstances such as an excursion being closed on a particular day, weather conditions or transport. Delays are rare but occur occasionally and for this reason and the reasons above this itinerary should be considered as a guide only. Published transport times are approximations and may vary depending on local conditions.

Travel Style

This is an Overland Tour, travelling by custom built vehicle and camping along the route. There is a maximum of 34 travellers with an average group size 6 15-24. Please read the Overland Tour travel style dossier to ensure you understand the style of travel you are undertaking:

<http://www.tucantravel.com/travel-styles/dossier/overland-tours>

Local Payment

The tour price is divided into a set amount paid in advance and a compulsory local payment which is due to your tour leader in US\$ cash at the group meeting on the first day of your tour. The local payment amount is found on the tour price page and will be printed on your invoice and tour voucher. Our brochures are updated in September/October each year and the local payment you will pay will be the cost published at the time of your departure. It can be very difficult to obtain US\$ in some South American countries and virtually impossible in others, so we recommend organising your local payment before you arrive for your tour.

In general your local payment will cover:

- Meals while camping and some lunches on travel days on the expedition vehicle
- Campsite fees and cooking gas
- Hotels and hostels when staying in towns/cities (and possibly lodges if bad weather on camping days)
- National park entrance fees when visited in the expedition vehicle

Rio Carnival

Your tour is scheduled to arrive in Rio de Janeiro in time to enjoy the famed Rio Carnival. During the 4 nights/5 days of Carnival, your accommodation in Rio de Janeiro is NOT included and you have the option to either make your own arrangements, or book one of our Rio Carnival tour extensions. These extensions include your accommodation in designated Tucan Travel hotels as well as your ticket to the Samba parade at Sambadrome (sector 13). Should you choose to add Rio Carnival to your booking, you will stay in the same hotel as your fellow tour participants, enjoy the convenience of a helpdesk from 9-11 am and 5-7 pm, and attend the parade with your group. Read more about [Rio Carnival](#).

If you wish to make your own arrangements during Carnival, you will rejoin the group after Carnival has finished and continue with your tour.

Rio Carnival Supplement

If you are in Rio de Janeiro on a group tour or have pre or post accommodation booked in Rio de Janeiro on the Thursday night immediately before or the

Tuesday night immediately after the Rio Carnival weekend you will be required to pay a supplement of US\$119 or equivalent per night. This is paid in addition to the cost of your tour, pre or post accommodation or local fund. The supplement is to cover the markedly increased cost of accommodation in Rio de Janeiro at this time.

4-day Inca Trail Trek or Train to Machu Picchu

Inca Trail Trek

This tour includes the famous Inca Trail trek. The Inca Trail trek is a permit regulated activity which can have limited availability and sometimes sells out months in advance. It is closed in February for maintenance. Permits are booked with your passport details which must be provided to us in writing. We cannot guarantee permit availability until we have received your deposit, passport details in writing and have applied for your permit with the government-run office in Cuzco. You can view the current Inca Trail permit availability on our permit calendar: www.tucantravel.com/travel-highlights/inca-trail-trek/booking-and-inca-trail-permit.

If permits are not available over your dates we offer an alternative trek called the Lares Trail - www.tucantravel.com/travel-highlights/lares-trek/lares-trek-overview. Both treks involve high altitude and require a certain level of fitness. Please check this with your doctor before travel and contact us if you have concerns.

Train to Machu Picchu

If you prefer not to trek, you can take the train to Machu Picchu. This is included in the tour price at no extra charge.

Inca Trail Packing List

You will need a good warm sleeping bag and ideally a sleep sheet for added warmth and comfort. Sleeping bags can be hired locally for approximately \$10 but we cannot guarantee the quality of these, so we recommend bringing your own if possible. Roll mats are provided on the Inca Trail however for greater comfort and warmth, Thermorest style mattresses can also be hired in Cuzco for US\$10.

Additional advice on packing for the Inca Trail can be found here: <http://www.tucantravel.com/travel-highlights/inca-trail-trek/inca-trail-trek-packing-list>

Joining your tour

Your joining location is:

Hotel Majestic
Mercadillo 366 y Versalles
Quito,
Ecuador

Tel: (+593) 2 2543 182

Fax: (+593) 2 2504 207

info@majesticquito.com

The hotel has safe deposit boxes for your use (you will get an itemised receipt). Please leave all of your important documents, money and travellers cheques here when you go out but remember to carry some form of ID and a photocopy of your passport with you. It is Ecuadorian law that you carry a copy of your passport with you at all times. It is advisable not to wear chains or expensive looking watches or jewellery while in major South American cities. You should also keep your camera concealed when not in use and carry daypacks on your front for extra safety.

Arriving in Quito

Quito is located at 2,800 metres above sea level, making it the second highest capital city in the world. You may feel the effects of altitude, which affects all people differently. If you have just arrived it is suggested you take it very easy for the first day and follow the below recommendations:

- Drink plenty of water, around two to two-and-a-half litres per day. Bottled water is available everywhere.
- The affects of alcohol and cigarettes are made considerably worse by the thin air. Try to avoid these in excess for the first few days.
- Take it easy. Walk slowly and avoid sudden movements

On arrival in Quito we recommend you change enough money into the local currency for the first four or five days of your tour. The currency used in Ecuador is the US dollar. These are available from ATMs or with US\$ travellers cheques. Ecuadorian notes tend to be of poor quality and you will have trouble exchanging these if you are travelling outside of Ecuador.

Airport Transfers

Airport transfers are not included in the tour price and must be booked separately in advance through Tucan Travel. If you have booked an airport/hotel

transfer with us, please look out for someone with a sign which has your name, Tucan Travel, or both after exiting the customs hall.

If you have booked an arrival transfer with us and you are going to be delayed by more than two hours, you must advise us of the delay at least six hours before arrival. If we are advised in time, we will make every effort to reschedule your transfer and your driver will be asked to wait for two hours after your new expected arrival time. However, if we are not made aware of any change, the driver will only wait for two hours after the original scheduled arrival time and after this point it will be up to you to arrange transport to your hotel at your own expense. Please contact us on the emergency contact details below if you are likely to be delayed.

Making your own way

If you would prefer to make your own way to and from your hotel, you will find a 24-hour taxi rank outside the airport. You shouldn't have any problem getting a taxi as they are all metered (yellow taxis) and tend to wait in an orderly line outside the terminal. Unlicensed taxis are also available but you will have to haggle for a good price which can be difficult if you do not speak Spanish. In 2013, Ecuador opened its new international airport in Quito. The airport is approximately 90 minutes from the city centre (depending on traffic) and the cost of a taxi to our hotel in Quito should be approximately \$25-35. Given the airport's location out of town, please allow plenty of time to arrive at the airport before your departure.

Pre-Departure Meeting

When you arrive on day one of your trip, you should find some local information at the hotel lobby. Your tour leader will be staying in the hotel and should have put up a welcome note to let you know what room they are in. A pre-departure meeting is usually held in the afternoon or early evening of day one. You will need to bring the following important items to the meeting with your tour leader:

- Your passport, including any necessary visas and at least one photocopy to give to your tour leader
- Vaccination certificates if relevant to any destinations on your tour
- Travel insurance policy and a photocopy to give to your tour leader
- Your travel voucher
- Your local payment in US\$ cash (Budget Expeditions only)

Missing the tour departure

If you miss the start of your tour, please ask at the reception of the hotel for a message from your tour leader which will give you instructions on how to catch up with the group. Any associated costs will be at your own expense (although, depending on the reason, you may be able to claim these from your travel insurance so ensure you keep all receipts).

If you know in advance that you are unlikely to arrive on time, please contact Tucan Travel immediately so we can inform the tour leader. Tucan Travel cannot be held responsible should your airline/boat/coach be delayed and we are unable to refund any unused portion of your tour.

Time Keeping

Punctuality is very important and throughout the tour your tour leader will give you the time to meet in reception. Tour leaders will often post notes at reception with meeting times, so remember to always look out for these.

Although rare, delays can occur and we therefore advise you not to arrange your onward travel too close to the end of the tour. We take no responsibility for any missed flights or additional expenses if the group arrives late into the departure city at the end of the tour.

Emergency Contact Details

In the case of an emergency before you meet your tour leader, please contact Rolf Stanley, Latin American Destination Manager:

Tel: (+51) 984 76 21 64 (phone only)

Email: sacrew@tucantravel.com

In the unlikely event that you are unable to reach the number above, please contact Keiko on (+51) 984 65 3726

Please note that these numbers are a service for emergency calls only. We respectfully request that you consider the urgency of your enquiry. Non-urgent enquiries should be made during office hours. Please be considerate of time zones.

Opening Hours: Monday-Friday 9am-5.30pm; Saturday 9am-1pm (based in Peru)

Keeping in Touch

Your tour leader will point out internet cafes in all major cities and towns and Wi-Fi may be available in some hotels. Mobile phones may not work locally depending on your network. If you have an unlocked phone you may be able to purchase a local SIM card. Hotel details, apart from the joining hotel, are not given in advance and are subject to change, so if someone needs to contact you urgently during your tour the best method is to contact our office who

can pass a message on to the tour leader.

Money

For personal spending money you should bring US dollars to use alongside the local currency (where applicable). Some countries do not accept US dollars printed before 2006 and it can be very difficult to obtain US dollars in Brazil. While bank cards provide a very good way to access funds overall, it is not recommended to rely on them as your sole source of funds as cash machines do not always work and may not be available in remote locations. Carry a mix of cards and cash with you, including notes in small denominations.

Your spending money should cover some meals, optional excursions, souvenirs, drinks, laundry, border and airport taxes and any visas obtained locally. We provide guideline prices for optional excursions in the itinerary to help you budget, but ultimately the amount you will need to budget for your trip very much depends on your individual requirements. We recommend bringing extra money to cover emergencies or unexpected situations.

Tipping

Tipping is a part of the life in South America, but you should not feel obliged or pressured to tip if you have not received good service. A gratuity of 10% of the total bill is recommended in restaurants. Gratuities are usually expected for local guides on included and optional excursions. Tips are also appreciated by Tucan Travel tour leaders at the end of your tour and we recommend an average of \$2-\$4 per person per day for the duration of your tour. This is only if you feel that their service was up to standard and is completely at your own discretion.

Packing List

The best advice when packing is to travel light and leave space for souvenirs in your bag.

Luggage

The majority of the time, your luggage will either stay in the overland truck or a few metres away in your tent. However, it is important to remember that in some major cities and towns, you will be staying in hotels and hostels and the overland truck may struggle to get down narrow or busy roads and you may need to walk from the parked truck to your accommodation, potentially down cobbled streets or dirt roads. Space is also an issue on the overland truck and with up to 34 other passengers, it is important to take a versatile and sturdy rucksack that can take wear and tear.

We recommend a frameless backpack or a sports type shoulder bag which fits comfortably on your shoulders, as they are less bulky and easier to handle than rigid suitcases or framed backpacks. Suitcases are not suitable for our tours and are not recommended. Tucan Travel takes no responsibility for damage to your luggage while on tour.

In addition to your main bag, you will need a small daypack for your everyday excursions. Try to keep this bag as light as possible and make sure that all main sections of your bags can be padlocked. This daypack should have enough room to carry food and snacks for long hikes and treks and space to carry belongings for overnight excursions.

Sleeping Bags and Mats

Sleeping bags and sleeping mats are essential. For all tours through Patagonia and areas of high altitude (such as the Inca Trail) we recommend a four season bag with side zip which can be opened out when you reach warmer weather. If you do not have a four season sleeping bag, you may be able to purchase extra blankets locally. If you are doing an 'Amazonia' Overland Tour, you do not need a thick sleeping bag as the climate will be warmer. However, please be aware that weather can change from region to region and quite suddenly.

Therm-a-rest self inflating mattresses are comfortable and provide protection against the cold ground, while foam roll mats are compact, inexpensive and have similar features. Avoid air mattresses as these can be bulky and puncture easily.

Clothing and Footwear

We recommend packing lightweight and durable clothes. Nights can be cold at higher altitude (Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador) and in southern Patagonia, so it is a good idea to bring at least one pair of warm trousers plus several thinner sweaters / fleeces which you can layer. Please avoid military or camouflage-patterned clothing as it can cause problems and in some countries may be illegal.

Good, comfortable walking shoes are essential. These do not need to be expensive boots, but they should have good ankle support and grip, be worn in and ideally waterproof.

Essential items:

- A lightweight water/windproof jacket with hood
- Easy to pack wide-brimmed hat or cap
- Towel - you will need a towel for most overnight excursions

- Swimwear
- Sandals or thongs/jandals/flip flops

Suggested items:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Money belt <input type="checkbox"/> Sunglasses <input type="checkbox"/> Small calculator <input type="checkbox"/> Small collapsible umbrella <input type="checkbox"/> Universal washbasin plug <input type="checkbox"/> Head torch or flashlight <input type="checkbox"/> Travel alarm clock <input type="checkbox"/> Lip balm, sun block with high UV factor <input type="checkbox"/> Wet wipes <input type="checkbox"/> Cheap plastic watch <input type="checkbox"/> Plenty of spare memory cards for your camera <input type="checkbox"/> Spare rechargeable batteries for camera <input type="checkbox"/> Writing materials, address book and diary <input type="checkbox"/> Travel games, cards and a couple of paperbacks <input type="checkbox"/> Toilet paper (best to carry a roll with you at all times and/or tissues) <input type="checkbox"/> Small medical kit with diarrhoea remedy, rehydration salts, antiseptic cream, sterile dressings, plasters, bandages, pain-killers, safety pins etc. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Plastic bags for waterproofing <input type="checkbox"/> Inflatable pillow <input type="checkbox"/> Swiss army type penknife <input type="checkbox"/> Binoculars <input type="checkbox"/> Travel plug adaptor with a USB port <input type="checkbox"/> Small sewing kit <input type="checkbox"/> Insect repellent (DEET 35% min) and bite cream <input type="checkbox"/> Antibacterial hand clensing gel <input type="checkbox"/> Ear plugs and sleep mask <input type="checkbox"/> Travel sickness tablets <input type="checkbox"/> Spare pair of spectacles or contact lenses and solution <input type="checkbox"/> Hard drive or USB stick to back up your photos <input type="checkbox"/> Pocket size phrasebook <input type="checkbox"/> Pegless washing line & travel laundry detergent (bio-degradable preferable) <input type="checkbox"/> As gifts for local children - pens, coloured pencils, small notepads. To discourage a begging mentality we recommend that you try to give these gifts at schools or childcare centres rather than on the street. |
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Laundry

There are usually laundromats or laundry services in or near most of our hotels. Hotel services can be pretty costly however your tour leader will be able to recommend cheaper options. If you wash clothes yourself take care not to be too obvious where you hang them as most hotels do not like guests washing and drying their clothes in the hotel rooms.

Electricity Supply

The power supply and plug types in South America vary from country to country. The power supply in Peru, Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay is 220-240 volts and uses either a typical European rounded two prong plug or North American flat pronged plug (Argentina also sometimes uses a 3-pronged plug such as that used in Australia). In Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela it is 120 volts with North America flat pronged plug. Brazil has both voltages depending on the region and uses a number of different outlets. We recommend bringing a universal plug adaptor with you. You can also charge your iPods, MP3 players, laptops, cameras, etc using power boards aboard the overland truck, while travelling.

Health, Fitness & Safety

Vaccinations

It is important to consult your doctor or travel clinic in good time before your tour departs to determine what vaccinations you require. You may need several vaccinations and/or malaria tablets and you should be aware that some inoculations require more than one visit and can take several weeks to administer. Always carry your International Certificate of Vaccination with your passport.

For areas with malaria, make sure you pack sufficient prophylactics for the duration of your tour and the incubation period after. Some countries prevent entry for travellers without a valid Yellow Fever certificate. This must be acquired before departure and takes ten days for your body to build up a resistance. This certificate must be taken with you on your tour with a photocopy stored somewhere safe.

Pack a Medical Kit

A medical kit is handy for minor wounds and ailments. In areas with limited or dubious medical facilities, an emergency medical kit containing sterile syringes is also advisable. By law our staff are not allowed to administer first aid or give drugs to travellers, so please be prepared with your own supplies.

If you are taking medication, please ensure you bring an adequate supply and a letter from your doctor to avoid potential issues at border crossings.

Fitness & Suitability

This is a participatory tour involving camping and with basic facilities at times. Disruptions are likely, and while your tour leader will make every effort to ensure your trip runs smoothly, patience, a sense of humour and willingness to get involved are essential ingredients for a successful and happy overland group.

If you have any pre-existing medical conditions please let us know at the time you book or as early before departure as possible. Depending on the severity of the condition, you may be asked to produce a medical certificate from your doctor approving your participation in this tour. While this would only happen in very exceptional circumstances, if we consider you incapable completing this tour or you have concealed an existing medical condition which is affecting your ability to participate in the tour of Tucan Travel reserve the right to turn you away without reimbursement.

Safety & Security

South America is generally very safe, even more so in a group. Reasonable precaution is advised; do not bring valuable jewellery or watches (even fakes can catch the eye of a thief), do not walk by yourself at night, heed your tour leader's advice and always keep an eye and a hand on your camera and bags in public places.

Bathrooms

In some countries it is customary to leave a gratuity of 20-50 cents when using public conveniences. An attendant may collect this or a dish/box will be left out. Our vehicles do not have toilets on board for hygiene and logistical reasons. This may mean roadside toilet stops on travel days and our crew always try and stop in isolated areas with as much privacy as possible if this is necessary. There will be some occasions where free camping is necessary. On these occasions there will not be any facilities available and you will have to use the facilities mother nature provided. On these occasions we recommend wet wipes while your Tour Leader will tell you about environmentally sound 'bush toilet' practises.

Travel Guides

If you would like to discover more about your destination, including history, geography, climate and language, please have a read of our country travel guides available here: <http://www.tucantravel.com/destination-travel-guides/south-america-travel-guides>.

Documents

Passport

Your passport should be valid for at least 6 months after you have finished your tour with sufficient blank pages for visas and immigration stamps. Photocopy your passport, leaving one copy at home and taking one with you on tour. If you lose your passport while on tour, you will be responsible for any expenses incurred such as extra accommodation and transport while replacing your passport and will not be entitled to a refund of any unused portion of your tour.

Tour Documents

Before you depart you will be issued with a voucher for your tour and separate vouchers for any extra services such as airport transfers and pre/post tour accommodation. Please print these out and bring them with you. This dossier is updated regularly, so we recommend checking our website for the latest version just prior to the start of your tour.

Final Balance

The balance for your tour is due no later than 60 days prior to the start of your tour and no tour vouchers will be issued until this is received. In addition please send the following details at least 60 days before you depart:

- Passport number, date of issue, date of expiry, nationality and place of issue
- Your full name and date of birth
- Flight arrival details in your starting city
- Special requirements, e.g. special dietary requirements or allergies

Please let us know if you are travelling with another person on the tour but have made separate bookings and we will endeavour to make suitable rooming arrangements.

Visas

All countries have visa requirements that are subject to change at short notice. A general guideline for visa requirements is available here: <http://www.tucantravel.com/before-you-go/visa-guide>, but you must check with your local embassy or consulate for the very latest visa requirement information based on your nationality. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have all necessary visas for your tour. If you would like help applying for visas, we have recommended visa agencies on our visa page that we work with regularly.

Important things to check when applying for visas:

- Does the validity of the visa cover the duration of your time spent in the country?
- Do you require a single or multiple entry visa(s) for your tour?
- Are you required to show additional documentation when you arrive in a country? (Examples include proof of onward travel and travel itinerary)

Some visas are only valid for entry within three months of the date of issue which means on some of our longer tours the visa would expire before you are scheduled to enter the country. In these cases you must obtain the relevant visa during your tour. If it is necessary for you to obtain any visas en-route, please contact Tucan Travel or your travel consultant and inform your tour leader at the start of the tour. If you do not have the appropriate visas, Tucan Travel will not reimburse any expenses incurred in acquiring visas or any unused portion of the tour.

It is best to apply for visas in your home country if possible. If applying for visas by post, please allow plenty of time before departure and send your application by registered mail. Postal applications tend to be given a lower priority than in person applications and can take longer to process.

Special Note: If you have dual nationality it is advised not to obtain different visas in different passports. Although this may sometimes be cheaper, you may encounter problems at border crossings if your exit stamps from one country are not the same as your visa for the next.

Travel Insurance Policy

Travel insurance is compulsory for all tours. You must be adequately insured for medical, hospital, baggage and personal expenses, any necessary extra travel (rejoining tour or repatriation) as well as curtailment and cancellation.

We strongly recommend that all clients carry a copy of their full policy document with them at all times, together with any certificate showing the policy number and emergency contact details. Your tour leader will also ask for a photocopy of your insurance document, so please take this to the pre-departure meeting at the start of your tour. You will not be able to commence your tour unless you can provide proof of insurance to your tour leader.

Document Checklist

- Tour Voucher & Vouchers for extra services
- Passport (with photocopies of information pages and visas)
- Tour Dossier
- Cash & credit/debit cards (best to take a mixture and more than one card in case one does not work)
- Travel Insurance Certificate and photocopy for tour leader
- Travel consultant's phone number and email address
- Proof of onward travel, ie airline ticket

Optional Excursions

Optional excursions are not operated by Tucan Travel and while every effort is made prices may not be up-to-date and are intended as a general guide to help you budget for your trip. Prices for vehicle-based excursions such as game drives are approximate based on the optimum number of participants and the actual price may vary depending on group size.

Sufficient safety equipment such as helmets and life jackets are sometimes not available and Tucan Travel is unable to provide this equipment. If you intend to participate in an optional excursion you may like to consider bringing your own safety gear.

Excursions are run by a local operator or third party with both Tucan Travel and the Tour Leader acting as a booking agent only. Optional activities are not part of the tour and Tucan Travel's booking conditions do not apply to them. It is your responsibility to ensure you have the correct travel insurance for the excursions you intend to take part in and Tucan Travel is not liable for any injuries incurred.

Responsible Travel

We work hard to ensure our tours are sustainably and ethically run. You can read our responsible travel policy and advice on how you can travel responsibly here: <http://www.tucantravel.com/about-us/responsible-travel>.

Meet Up

Our free Meet Up app, available on Facebook, on iTunes and Google Play is an opportunity to chat with others passengers before you depart or keep in touch when you arrive back from tour. Information on the app is available here: <http://www.tucantravel.com/before-you-go/meet-up>

Add-ons & Extras

On many of our Group Tours, we spend one night in our arrival and departure cities. If you want to explore these cities more we can book pre and post tour accommodation, city tours and airport transfers for you. Price information can be found on the price page of each tour. We also have **Add-ons** - short packages that can be booked alongside a tour or on their own and have been carefully designed to ensure you don't miss out on popular highlights.

Illegal Drugs

The possession or use of illegal drugs will not be tolerated on our tours. When overseas you are subject to local laws and the penalties for breaking these laws can be harsh. In order to safeguard the interests of the group as a whole, our tour leaders have been instructed to insist that any person found with illegal drugs leave the tour immediately – without refund. The tour leader's decision on this matter is final. If you need to carry certain drugs with your purposes of medication, please inform your tour leader and ensure that you carry a copy of your prescription or letter from your doctor.