

Code BPS **Desert Horizons**

Tour Dossier Introduction

Dossier Last Updated: 14-10-2014

Tour Code: BPS

Duration: 13 nights / 14 days

Joining City: Santiago

Departure City: La Paz

Nearest Joining International Airport: Santiago A Merino Benitez Intl Airport (SCL)

Nearest Departing International Airport: La Paz El Alto International Airport (LPB)

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

Tour Documents

 PDF Document  Web Page

 [Bolivia Dossier](#)

 [Chile Dossier](#)

 [Spanish Language Guide](#)

What's Included

- Guided tour of the Valley of the Moon
- Entry to Laguna Colorada National Park
- Drive on the Salar de Uyuni salt flats
- 11 nights in hotels, hostels & guesthouses, 2 nights on overnight buses
- 7 breakfasts, 2 lunches, 2 dinners
- Travel by taxi, on foot, 4WD
- Tucan Travel tour leader, English-speaking local guide(s) on included excursions

What's not Included

- 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 Santiago

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.

Pedro de Valdivia established the city 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 very pleasant viewing area you'll find wine -tasting facilities and a couple of beautifully situated swimming pools. Santiago is a very 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.

Optional Excursions: Museo Histórico Nacional – US\$1 • Teatro Municipal, with daily shows ranging from opera, ballet, orchestras and concerts from US\$3-12 • Maipo region winery tours – US\$18-50

Day 2 to 4 - La Serena

The drive north takes us to La Serena, a pleasant coastal town founded in 1544. The surrounding district is one of the most important astronomical centres on earth, with observatories dotted among the hills. While in La Serena you can laze around on the long beach, visit the interesting town or stroll to neighbouring Coquimbo along the bay. There is also an optional excursion to the Elqui Valley the home of Chilean Pisco. In the evening enjoy a barbeque and visit the nearby casino (optional). From La Serena we take an overnight bus to San Pedro de Atacama.

Optional Excursions: Archaeological Museum – US\$1 • Parque Jardín El Corazón – US\$1 • Museo Mineralógico Ignacio Domeyko – US\$1

Day 5 to 7 - San Pedro de Atacama

We cross over the Tropic of Capricorn as we make our way to Calama in the heart of arid Atacama Desert, the driest desert in the world (it hasn't rained for over 250 years). The modern town of Calama is a former staging post on the silver route from Potosí and now Chile's major copper mining base.

A short drive further into the desert to San Pedro de Atacama, where the area is famous for its lunar landscapes, geysers, salt flats and hot springs. There is an excellent archaeological museum at San Pedro de Atacama, housing a good selection of mummies and other ancient artefacts. Here we have the included visit to the eerie eroded salt mountains of the Valley of the Moon.

Included Excursions: Entry to Laguna Colorada National Park • Guided tour of the Valley of the Moon

Day 8 to 10 - Uyuni

Travelling by 4WD vehicles we head up into the high Andes and come to Laguna Verde (Green Lagoon) rich in lead, sulphur and calcium carbonate and shadowed by the cone of the Licancabur Volcano. After crossing a 5,000 metre pass there lays a geyser basin with bubbling mud pots, hellish fumaroles and a thick aroma of sulphur fumes. Inside a small crater we observe boiling lava and we also stop at hot springs where you can bathe. We visit the volcanic zone 'Sol de Mañana' (Morning Sun) at 4,850 metres above sea level, followed by the Red Lagoon (Laguna Colorada), covering an area of 60 square kilometres, the lagoon has a rich red colouration derived from algae and plankton which thrive in its mineral waters. The shoreline is fringed with brilliant white deposits of sodium, magnesium, borax and gypsum and the lagoon is inhabited by numerous flamingos, three unique species of which breed there.

We now pass through the Siloli Desert, encountering spectacular landscapes with multicoloured volcanic rock formations and stop at other lagoons en route. In the afternoon we continue to San Juan near the Bolivian border where we will spend the night.

Crossing into Bolivia we visit what is claimed to be the largest salt flat in the world, the brilliant white vast Salar de Uyuni. We spend the day exploring the salt lake and surrounds. Firstly we will visit Fish Island, so named because it has the shape of a fish. Located in the centre of the salar, 100 kilometres from the town of Uyuni, this hilly outpost is covered in giant cacti amid a flat, white sea of hexagonal salt tiles. Visiting Fish Island is quite otherworldly and the fantastic contrast of the brilliant blue sky (weather permitting of course) and the pure white of the salt flats will take your breath away. We then come to Colchani, the main plant for the iodisation of salt and the best place to observe the methods of salt extraction from the salar. Here ovens are used to dry the salt, which is then formed into cakes. Lastly we make a visit to the Train Cemetery, where you can see the remains of 19th and early 20th century steam locomotives - a good place for artistic photographs. Moving on we reach the desolate town of Uyuni in the south of Bolivia.

Please Note: Occasionally in the rainy season the salt flats become overly flooded and we may have to alter the itinerary if the salt flats are not safe to traverse.

Included Excursions: Visit the Salar de Uyuni Salt Flats

Day 11 to 11 - Potosí

Travelling further into Bolivia we come to the mining town of Potosí. The city was established by the Spanish in 1545 soon after the discovery of a rich vein of silver in a nearby hill, the Cerro Rico (Rich Hill) It soon became the world's largest silver producer and silver from Potosí underwrote the Spanish economy, particularly the monarchy's extravagance, for over two centuries. Millions of indigenous South Americans, and later, African slaves, worked in the mines in appalling conditions. You have the option to visit the mines, stopping first at the miners market to buy gifts such as coca leaves, dynamite and cigarettes. In the mines we will experience the difficult conditions in which the miners work – including 50°C heat. We'll pass several of the shrines they have made to the "Tios" which they hope will protect them while they are working in what they believe is the devil's territory.

If you'd like to learn more of the historic silver industry you can take a tour of the Moneda, a museum exhibiting coins, artwork, mummies and many other interesting artefacts from Potosí's history.

Optional Excursions: Silver mine tour – US\$15 • City tour – US\$13 • Hot springs – US\$11

Day 12 to 13 - La Paz

We travel by comfortable overnight bus through the beautiful landscapes of the Altiplano to La Paz. Built in a steep valley that protects the city from the harsh elements of the Altiplano, just about every building in La Paz is built on some sort of hill, so sightseeing will literally take your breath away! You will have just one day to explore this bustling city, so we recommend taking a Red Caps walking tour to see as much of the city as possible in the time available to you. Our hotel is very centrally located and is just around the corner from the city's colourful indigenous street markets including the fascinating and suitably named "Witches Market" where local women in traditional 'Cholita' dress sell such items as dead cats and llamas foetuses said to ward off evil spirits. The main square, Plaza Murillo, is also within walking distance. The square still retains its colonial buildings including the Presidential Palace. La Paz is possibly the best place to experience a traditional peña show of Andean music and dance to local bands playing time-honoured instruments such as zampoñas (pipes) and charangos (the ukulele).

Optional Excursions: Red Caps walking tours – free (tips appreciated) • The World's Most Dangerous Road Mountain Biking – US\$107

Day 14 to 14 - Depart La Paz

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	Single Room
Day 1	Santiago	Chile		✓
Day 2	La Serena			✓
Day 3	La Serena		B	✓
Day 4	Overnight Bus to San Pedro de Atacama		B	
Day 5	San Pedro de Atacama			
Day 6	San Pedro de Atacama		B	
Day 7	San Pedro de Atacama		B	
Day 8	Entry to Laguna Colorada National Park	Bolivia	BLD	
Day 9	Salar de Uyuni		BLD	
Day 10	Uyuni		B	✓
Day 11	Potosí			✓
Day 12	Overnight Bus to La Paz			✓
Day 13	La Paz			
Day 14	La Paz			

(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 Adventure Tour, we see a destination from the locals' perspective using a variety of transport and staying in small locally owned accommodation. There is a maximum of 16 travellers with an average group size of 8-12. All our Adventure Tours are priced per person on a shared room basis meaning there is no compulsory extra payment for those travelling on their own. Please read the Adventure Tour travel style dossier to ensure you understand the style of travel you are undertaking: <http://www.tucantravel.com/travel-styles/dossier/adventure-tours>

I'd like my own room

If you are a solo traveller, a single room is available on most occasions at an extra cost. Price information can be found on the price page of each tour. This must be booked in advance.

Joining your tour

Your joining location is:

Hotel Libertador
Avenida Libertador Bernado O' Higgins 853
Santiago,
Chile

Tel: (+56) 2 639 4211

Fax: (+56) 2 632 7128

The hotel serves a continental breakfast consisting of bread, jam and tea/coffee or juice, or an American breakfast with eggs. Please check with reception for serving times and prices (breakfast is not included).

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 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 Santiago

On arrival in Santiago, we recommend you change enough money into the local currency (the Chilean peso) for the first four or five days of your trip. This is especially important if you are arriving on a Saturday night. The exchange rate at the airport is just as good as in the city centre. As you come out of immigration you will find the bank right in front of you before you turn left into the baggage claim area or you can use one of the ATMs outside the terminal.

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.

Contact your arrival transfer:

Contact: CTS

Phone: +56 9 9793181

Making your own way

If you would prefer to make your own way to and from your hotel, you can either take a taxi from the rank outside or you can arrange to pay for a taxi at one of the pre-pay taxi desks just before you get to the luggage hall. You then hand a ticket to the driver rather than paying in the taxi. Licensed and unlicensed taxis are also available outside but you will have to haggle for a good price which can be difficult if you do not speak Spanish. If you do use these taxis you should agree a price before setting off and get the driver to write down the price (be clear on whether they are talking about pesos or US dollars). The airport is approximately 30 minutes from the city centre (depending on traffic) and the cost of a taxi to our hotel in Santiago should be approximately US\$18.

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

It is important to bring luggage you can carry and lift comfortably, potentially up several flights of stairs in hotels where elevators are not available and between bus/train stations and hotels. There may be times when you have to get your luggage through crowded streets which may be cobbled or store your luggage in lockers. Luggage too large for lockers will have to be left insecurely or carried for the duration of the day.

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

Accommodations provide adequate bedding and sleeping bags are not required for the majority of Adventure Tours with the exception of the following:

- Tours including the Inca Trail or Lares Trail
- Tours including camping in the Torres del Paine National Park in Patagonia

Thick blankets are supplied on the the Amantani Island (Lake Titicaca) homestay, but they can be dusty, so you may wish to bring a sleeping bag or sheet (they cannot be hired locally). You may also wish to bring a sleeping sheet if you are going into the Amazon Jungle. A sleeping bag liner/sleep sheet is optional on all Adventure Tours. Some passengers like to use them on long bus journeys and overnight trains.

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:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Money belt | <input type="checkbox"/> Plastic bags for waterproofing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sunglasses | <input type="checkbox"/> Inflatable pillow |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Small calculator | <input type="checkbox"/> Swiss army type penknife |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Small collapsible umbrella | <input type="checkbox"/> Binoculars |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Universal washbasin plug | <input type="checkbox"/> Travel plug adaptor with a USB port |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Head torch or flashlight | <input type="checkbox"/> Small sewing kit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Travel alarm clock | <input type="checkbox"/> Insect repellent (DEET 35% min) and bite cream |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lip balm, sun block with high UV factor | <input type="checkbox"/> Antibacterial hand clensing gel |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wet wipes | <input type="checkbox"/> Ear plugs and sleep mask |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cheap plastic watch | <input type="checkbox"/> Travel sickness tablets |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Plenty of spare memory cards for your camera | <input type="checkbox"/> Spare pair of spectacles or contact lenses and solution |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spare rechargeable batteries for camera | <input type="checkbox"/> Hard drive or USB stick to back up your photos |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Writing materials, address book and diary | <input type="checkbox"/> Pocket size phrasebook |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Travel games, cards and a couple of paperbacks | <input type="checkbox"/> Pegless washing line & travel laundry detergent (bio-degradable preferable) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Toilet paper (best to carry a roll with you at all times and/or tissues) | <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. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Small medical kit with diarrhoea remedy, rehydration salts, antiseptic cream, sterile dressings, plasters, bandages, pain-killers, safety pins etc. | |

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.

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 public transport-based tour so it is essential that you be able to carry your bags over distances between bus and train stations and hotels, generally for up to 20 minutes. Disruptions happen 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 and help your tour leader are essential ingredients for a successful and happy 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 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. Tucan Travel cannot accept responsibility for any valuables left in safe deposits in hotels or on public transport.

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.