

Code BXDG2 **Grand Discoverer**

Duration: 91 Days **Route:** Rio de Janeiro to Lima **Style:** Budget Expeditions



Brazil, Patagonia, Chile, Argentina, Bolivia, Peru

Explore the authentic South America and discover **Grand Discoverer (BXDG2)**. From the authentic landscapes to cosmopolitan Latino cities. We visit many popular attractions and natural wonders, such as the world-renowned Iguazu Falls and the world's largest salt lake, plus we also take you to some rural, out-of-the-way places to make your experience as 'real' as possible. If you have the time, we have the means to show you the adventure of your life and a journey you'll never forget!

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Tour Dossier Introduction

Dossier Last Updated: 10-04-2013

Tour Code: BXDG2

Duration: 90 nights / 91 days

Joining City: Rio de Janeiro

Departure City: Lima

Nearest Joining International Airport: Galeao Antonio Carlos Jobim Intl Apt Rio (GIG)

Nearest Departing International Airport: Jorge Chavez International Airport Lima (LIM)

This dossier is designed for this particular tour and should be read in conjunction with the country dossier(s), regional pre-departure booklet and optional excursions guides relevant to your itinerary. You will also receive a joining letter in advance of your journey with further information, while last minute updates may be posted in the Latest News section of our website.

Tour Documents

 PDF Document  Web Page

 [South America Pre Departure Booklet - Budget Expeditions](#)

 [Packing List for Overlanding Tours](#)

 [Joining Letter for Tours Beginning in Rio de Janeiro](#)

 [Optional Excursions Guide for Tours to South America](#)

 [Argentina Dossier](#)

 [Peru Dossier](#)

 [Bolivia Dossier](#)

 [Brazil Dossier](#)

 [Chile Dossier](#)



Patagonia Dossier



Rio de Janeiro City Map



Portuguese Language Survival Guide



Spanish Language Guide



Inca Trail Passport Declaration Form

Inclusions

Accommodation: 35 night(s) in hotel(s), hostel(s) & guesthouse(s), 51 night(s) camping

Meals: 51 breakfast(s), 60 lunch(es), 50 dinner(s)

Transport: Expedition Vehicle, Tucan Travel vehicle, boat, taxi, on foot

Age: 18-35, max. 35 (recommended)

Group: Average 15-24

Staff: Tucan Travel tour leader, Tucan Travel driver, local guides

Exclusions

- Sleeping bag & sleeping mat
- Local payment
- 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 Rio de Janeiro

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.

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.

The city has so much to offer from its natural sites to its famous landmarks including Pão de Açúcar (Sugarloaf Mountain) and Corcovado with its famous 'Cristo Redentor' (Christ the Redeemer statue) - both of which offer great views over the city. You of course have to visit the famous beaches of Copacabana, Ipanema and Leblon. And of course, if you are in Rio around February/March time, get ready for the world's biggest party, the Rio Carnival!

Please note that the four nights during Rio Carnival are not included in the tour price and it is essential to pre-book accommodation if you wish to stay on for the Carnival. Please see our brochure or the 'Useful Information' section of our website for important booking info and prices.

Day 2 to 9 - Parati – Enroute – Pantanal (optional excursion)

On the Costa Verde we arrive at Parati, a preserved Portuguese colonial town (1500-1822). The town is renowned for its historic town 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 and recommended excursions include a sailing schooner cruise around the bays, rainforest treks and walking the gold trail.

We continue our trip making our way towards the Pantanal. During the drive you will get some idea of the size of Brazil as it will be two days driving inland from the coast. We will camp en route to break up the journey with travel times determining the locations.

Our next stop is the Pantanal Wildlife Reserve, a massive wetland of 230,000 square kilometres. One of the unusual things about the Pantanal is that there are also many farms in the area and the animals from these farms live quite comfortably with the other wildlife in the region. Wild animals include

approximately 650 species of birds, capybara, howler monkeys, pumas, jaguars, ocelots, coatis, yellow anacondas, marsh deer, caiman, tapir and many more. The Pantanal is excellent for wildlife watching as the region is more open and flat than a jungle setting. Please note the Tucan Travel vehicle will go to the Pantanal, if you choose not to do this excursion then Tucan Travel will pay for your transport to the next destination, however accommodation and food will be at your own cost.

Day 10 to 17 - Bonito – Enroute – Foz do Iguazu – Puerto Iguazú

Bonito is located in the state of Mato Grosso do Sul and is renowned for the unbelievable blue of its rivers and cave lakes. The waters are filtered through the enormous quantity of limestone in the ground and the impurities are deposited at the bottom of the river bed making the rivers appear some of the clearest in the world.

We have time here to take in some great optional activities which include cave and river snorkelling, rainforest walks and wildlife spotting. We hit the road making our way south. It is a long drive and we will stop for one night en route to break up the journey.

Next we arrive at the little Brazilian town of Foz do Iguazu (Iguazu Falls), where some 275 separate waterfalls cascade over a two-and-a-half-kilometre wide cliff face. We first visit the stunning falls from the Brazilian side which offers panoramic views of the numerous waterfalls on the Argentine side. If you feel like 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.

For a bird's eye view over the entire falls you can take an optional scenic helicopter ride. There is also an excellent bird park nearby and you can visit the world's largest hydroelectric dam at Itaipu where videos show the environmental planning behind the dam project. If you're keeping a keen eye on your country tally you can pop into neighbouring Paraguay by public bus (you don't even have to get your passport stamped) for a bit of shopping in Ciudad del Esté.

We then cross over to Argentina to spend time in Puerto Iguazú. Here we visit the falls from the Argentinean side where you can walk through rainforest and along catwalks directly above the falls and you will also find the famous Garganta del Diablo, Spanish for "Devil's Throat", where fourteen waterfalls drop with such force that there is always a massive cloud of spray overhead.

Day 18 to 22 - San Ignacio Miní – Buenos Aires

Making our way to San Ignacio Miní where we will find some of the best kept Jesuit ruins in the region.

Founded in 1632, San Ignacio Miní was one of the many missions settled by the Jesuits in the Americas during the Spanish colonial period. San Ignacio Miní is one of the five Jesuit missions of the Guaranis that were inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1984. The ruins are one of the best preserved among the several built in a territory today belonging to Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay, and one of the most visited due to its accessibility.

Buenos Aires is a beautiful city known as the "Paris of South America" due to its lovely green parks, plazas and wide boulevards. The balcony of the presidential palace the Casa Rosada (Pink Palace) is where Eva Perón made many of her speeches and is 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!

Day 23 to 31 - En route – Puerto Madryn – En route – Ushuaia – En route

We head south along the Atlantic coast of Patagonia with travel times determining where we will camp en route.

As we continue on we eventually come to 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 can 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.

Leaving Puerto Madryn we drive across the windswept 'pampas' where cattle graze and enormous fields of sunflowers sway in the wind (the oil from which is a large export for Argentina). We cross the Colorado River and enter Patagonia, again travel times will determine where we camp for the night.

We arrive into Ushuaia, the world's most southerly town, with a population of about 42,000. Here you can take an excursion on the Beagle Channel to visit the Isla de los Lobos (Sea Lion Island) where you will see colonies of sea lions and aquatic birds and, with a bit of luck, maybe a whale. You also have the option to visit the Tierra del Fuego (Land of Fire) National Park where there are various trails along the coast and the surrounding snow-covered peaks. The park is also home to a large population of beaver (introduced by the Canadians), the world's most southerly train and it is also where the exhaustive

Pan-American Highway ends at the Lapataia bay, 17,848 kilometres from its start in Alaska.

We leave the archipelago of Tierra del Fuego and cross the Straits of Magellan by ferry and make our way into the heart of the Patagonian landscape, stopping en route to camp for the evening.

Day 32 to 41 - Torres del Paine National Park – El Calafate – El Chaltén – En route

On to the incredible Torres del Paine National Park, 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. You have plenty of time to trek the main trails in the park to see the famous Torres (towers) and both the Francés and Grey Glaciers. You will also have the chance to travel by ferry across Lake Pehoé to wonder at this unbelievable panorama.

The next part of our journey takes us to the pleasant town of El Calafate, on the north-eastern edge of Lake Argentino. This is our base for visiting the Moreno Glacier, 80 kilometres away. The glacier is one of the few in the world that is still advancing. It is continuously moving at a rate of 1.5 metres per day and when you get close enough to the face you can hear cracking and creaking and see large lumps of ice crash into the lake below. With a height of around 60 metres, a width of five kilometres at its face and made up of various hues of blue, white and grey, it is an awesome sight.

We continue to El Chaltén with the picturesque Fitzroy National Park nearby where you can enjoy some of Argentina's most scenic hiking. The park is at the foot of the Fitzroy massif which has spectacular jagged snow-capped peaks. Depending on your budget, you can take a days trek to and on the wonderful Viedma Glacier – reputedly the best ice-trekking in the country. Or walk to the Capri Lagoon or a variety of other free walks that exist in this stunning national park.

We continue through the northern parts of Patagonia's dry windswept expanse, there are some long drives on this sector but take in some spectacular scenery. We will stop en route and camp for the evening.

Day 42 to 50 - Bariloche – Pucón – Santiago

Next we reach the resort town of San Carlos de Bariloche on the shores of Lake Nahuel Huapi. This town is a famous winter ski resort, but it also has plenty to offer during other seasons. Built by Swiss and German immigrants in the alpine style, here you will find Swiss-style chalets, numerous chocolate shops and St. Bernard dogs with brandy barrels around their necks. There are excellent optional opportunities to take in the breathtaking views from the cable car, also the chance for some hiking or cycling.

We make our way into the stunning Argentine Lake District passing Lago Espejo (Mirror Lake) before coming to 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 we have two free days to take advantage of the activities on offer such as volcano treks, white water rafting, horse riding, mountain biking and water sports.

Pedro de Valdivia established Santiago in 1541 but, except for Santa Lucia hill where the original fortress was constructed, not much remains of its original glory. The hill offers good views of the city below, but 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 the viewing area there are wine-tasting facilities and a couple of brilliantly located swimming pools. In the Plaza Constitucion at the Palacio de la Moneda you can see the changing of the guard or you can take an optional excursion to the port of Valparaiso and the resort of Viña del Mar. Santiago is a very clean modern city with fountains, parks and buildings.

Day 51 to 57 - Mendoza – Cordoba – Catamarca – Cafayate

Now we hit the wine producing heartland of Argentina making our way past the vast vineyards to Mendoza.

Mendoza is the location where General José de San Martín organised the army with which he liberated Chile and Peru from Spanish rule in 1818. Unfortunately, few historic buildings remain after an earthquake devastated the city in 1861. However, the city was rebuilt with broader tree-lined streets and beautiful large green plazas, irrigated by a network of 500 kilometres of water channels, fuelling Mendoza's reputation as an oasis of the region. There are great photo opportunities from the top of the hill "Cerro de la Gloria" at Parque San Martín, where you can also visit the local zoo. Beyond their limits you'll have the chance to get wet and wild on a white water rafting excursion, or try out your rope skills on a rappelling option. For a more chilled experience you could hire bikes and take the 'Ruta de los Vinos' (wine route), visiting ancient cellars and tasting excellent local wines at your leisure.

Cordoba is a busy modern industrial city near the geographical centre of Argentina in the foothills of the Sierras Chicas mountains. Established in 1573, Córdoba boasts the country's oldest university and a young, dynamic student population. During the day you can visit an array of richly decorated churches, including Argentina's oldest cathedral and the Manzana Jesuitica (Jesuit Block) which has been declared a UNESCO World Heritage site.

We continue our way to San Fernando del Valle de Catamarca, more commonly known as Catamarca. The city offers both natural and cultural attractions and offers many activities such as hiking, mountain-bike rides and horse riding. We have a night here before we hit the road again.

Our journey takes us into lush farmlands where we may catch a glimpse of traditional subsistence farmers at work. Stunning multi-coloured sedimentary

rock formations offer beautiful photo opportunities near Cafayate. For an adrenaline rush you can hire mountain bikes for a couple of hours of thrilling descents or take a quad bike tour to explore less challenging terrain. For a more peaceful excursion you can stretch your legs on a trek, taking in beautiful local flora and fauna, as well as an impressive series of cascadas (waterfalls).

Day 58 to 68 - Salta – Tupiza – Uyuni – Sucre – Potosí

We carry on to the north of Argentina and the striking city of Salta in the Lerma Valley at the foothills of the Andes, 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. A variety of excursions await you here including rafting, horse riding and mountain biking.

Next we arrive in Tupiza where we will take a rest before we hit the roads of Bolivia. 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.

Travelling on we head north to the desolate town of Uyuni, to visit what is claimed to be the largest salt flat in the world, the brilliantly white and vast Salar de Uyuni. We will have an overnight stay here and you will have the opportunity to take an excursion onto the salar in four-wheel-drive vehicles, stopping at places such as Fish Island, where there are great views of the surrounding lake and giant cacti and llama 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. This area proves to be a very popular place for some creative photo opportunities.

Continuing through Bolivia, we make our way to Sucre, the official capital of Bolivia even though the governing of the country actually takes place in La Paz. Sucre is a small attractive city where, by law, all the buildings are painted white. The city is a UNESCO World Heritage site thanks to its well-conserved downtown with buildings from the 18th and 19th centuries. Nestled at the foot of the twin hills of Churuquilla and Sika Sika, Sucre is the gateway to numerous small villages that date from the colonial era.

Winding our way along the dusty roads of Bolivia, which are some of the most rugged in South America, we head through the vividly coloured rock formations and giant cacti to our next stop 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 69 to 74 - La Paz – Puno (optional Lake Titicaca excursion)

La Paz is built in the basin of a spectacular ancient crater caused by a meteorite, with the snow-capped Illimani in the background. At an altitude of 3,660 metres, the city is said to host the highest football stadium in the world.

The city has colourful indigenous street markets including the 'witches market' where women in flared skirts sell, amongst other things, dead cats and llama foetuses which are placed under new buildings in a bid to keep evil spirits away. The main square, Plaza Murillo, is where many years ago a president of the republic was lynched from a lamppost. La Paz is one of the best places to see a traditional peña show of Andean music and dance where local musicians play their time-honoured instruments such as zampoñas (pipes) and charangos (ukulele).

There are plenty of excursions available in La Paz. Check out the Moon Valley with its strange rock formations shaped by the weather or take in the incredible views from Chacaltaya, home to the world's highest ski resort at 5,221 metres. Another fantastic excursion is to Coroico, the gateway to the Bolivian jungle region and a great place to see sub-tropical vegetation and plants. En-route you will cross a 5,000 metre high pass before descending to 1,300 metres on narrow mountain roads bordered by sheer drops. The excursion to Coroico can also be done by mountain bike, as it is downhill nearly all the way and very exhilarating, but beware, colloquially known as 'Death Road', it is not at all for the fainthearted and great care must be taken!

Leaving La Paz, we head past the pre-Inca ruins of Tiahuanaco, which date back to 1,600 BC, where we have the opportunity to look around. The site has the famous Gate of the Sun, the Acapana Pyramid with six magnetic pillars and an underground temple.

Continuing across the Altiplano (high plane) and crossing into Peru we stop at the border town of Desaguadero where we will change money. From here we drive around the southern end of Lake Titicaca which, at 3,855 metres above sea level, is the highest navigable lake in the world. Driving onto Puno we hope to arrive in time to visit the colourful markets. From here you have the chance to take an excursion to the islands of Amantaní and Taquile. On Amantaní we arrange home-stay accommodation with local Quechua families and you will have the chance to eat with the family, perhaps enjoy a party and dancing and maybe play football with the local children. The next morning you'll visit Taquile Island where the people live in simple adobe huts and the men knit colourful hats. You will also visit the astounding floating reed islands in the Bay of Puno, to see the first-hand the indigenous Uros' way of life and ride in a traditional reed boat. Continuing back to Puno, you'll arrive in time to visit the colourful markets. That night back in Puno, you can try some of

the local dishes; guinea pig, llama or some of the trout or kingfish from the lake and maybe check out some of the nightlife.

Should you choose to not visit the islands of Lake Titicaca you will have time to relax in Puno.

Day 75 to 83 - Cuzco – Optional Inca Trail Trek – Cuzco

The landscape gradually becomes greener as we get closer to the former Inca capital of Cuzco, which means 'Navel of the Earth' in the Inca language of Quechua. This enchanting city has a mostly indigenous population of around 275,000 and is centred on the Plaza de Armas, which is dominated by the cathedral and La Compañía de Jesus church. Nowadays, Cuzco is also legendary for its party atmosphere and brilliant nightlife and is jam-packed with arcades housing many fine restaurants, bars and shops.

Cuzco is our base for some really special optional excursions, including the challenging four-day Inca Trail trek and Jungle excursion. We have plenty of time here to squeeze in most of these excursions, or if you prefer, to relax and absorb the great atmosphere of such a cultural and friendly place.

We have a full-day trip through the Sacred Valley of the Incas (optional and at additional cost) which visits the Pisac ruins perched on a hill high in the mountains and the famous local market of the same name, in the valley below (that's free). This is a great place to buy textiles, pottery and jewellery, not to mention the delicious empanadas (pasties) at the famous bakery. After spending time here, we move down the valley to the temple fortress of Ollantaytambo, with its enormous terraces climbing up the hillside (you'll need your visitor's ticket again). If you are trekking the Inca Trail you will spend the night here with a local family in preparation for the next four days.

If you are not hiking the Inca Trail, you will return to Cuzco where there are many other options available including an overnight trip by train to Machu Picchu, white water rafting, horse riding, mountain biking, jungle excursions, shopping (make sure you bargain), sightseeing, etc.

For tours in Cuzco before 1st February 2013, passengers will enjoy the Inca Trail two days earlier.

Please see the brochure or the 'Useful Information' section of our website for important booking regulations and prices. You may not be able to complete the trek if you have not read this information. For more details about the trail facilities, equipment, preparation etc. please ask your agent for an 'Inca Trail Info Sheet'. If you are trekking the alternative Lares Trek you should ask for a 'Lares Trek Info Sheet'. Both documents are available to download from our website.

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) that 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 down hill as the trail winds its way down old Inca stairs to our campsite. On the third day we pass the ruins of Runkurakay, Sayacmarca and Phuyupatamarca, walking approximately 15 kilometres in seven hours. On 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 our 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 such 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.

Whether you have just finished the great Inca Trail Trek, or have spent your time in Cuzco, these are your last days to make the most of this incredible Inca centre and explore its amazing churches, colonial buildings and picturesque streets, most of which have Inca walls, arches and doorways.

Day 84 to 86 - Arequipa – (Optional Colca Canyon excursion)

Arequipa is located 2,380 metres above sea level and dominated by the conical snow-capped El Misti volcano. 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 visiting.

Another popular attraction is the acclaimed 'Museo Santary', 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 our own leisure.

From Arequipa you have the option for an overnight visit to the Colca Canyon. Twice as deep as the Grand Canyon, it is the world's second deepest. From the lookout point at Cruz del Condor you can see the river flowing 1,200 metres below and from this vantage point have a good chance of seeing condors as they soar out of the canyon on the hot thermal currents.

If you choose not to travel out to the Colca Canyon you can while away your time in Arequipa.

Day 87 to 90 - Puerto Inca – Nazca – Huacachina – Lima

Heading down from the Andes we make our way to the coast to Puerto Inca, the Inca's original fishing port, which was only rediscovered in the 1950's. Tonight we camp by the beach just down from the actual ruins.

We head north on the Pan American highway to Nazca, and on our way we will visit the bizarre Chauchilla Cemetery where you'll see ancient mummies that still have skin and hair intact after thousands of years.

Nazca is renowned for the mysterious parallel lines and geometrical figures etched into the desert floor. Here you can take a flight in a light aircraft to see the 'monkey', 'hummingbird', 'condor', 'spider' and even what appears to be a spaceman. There are many more designs to be seen on this 30-minute flight. To this day no one is entirely sure why they are there.

Continuing up the coast, we stopover at spectacular Huacachina, a desert oasis surrounded by massive sand-dunes. You'll have the option to do an overnight excursion into the desert, sleeping under the stars. This also incorporates the chance to take an awesome ride in dune-buggies or, for the even more courageous, 'sandboarding' down the dunes is an unreal way to spend the afternoon and night, a good time for a Pisco sour party!

We leave for Lima, but not before stopping in at Paracas where upon arrival we will have the option to go by speedboat to explore the Ballestas Islands, passing the unusual 'Candelabra', a giant design carved into a desert hill, along the way. On and around these celebrated islands you'll see thousands of sea lions plus many varieties of aquatic birds.

After our boat trip we will have a chance for some food at the port before heading further up the coast to the capital, Lima.

Day 91 to 91 - Depart Lima

Lima was founded by the Spanish conquistador Francisco Pizarro in 1535, after he eradicated the Incas and made the city his capital. Now the fifth largest city in Latin America, Lima is home to around one-third of the country's population.

The Historic centre of Lima is a UNESCO World Heritage site and the city has many fine colonial buildings and some of the best museums in South America including the Gold Museum, Museum of the Inquisition and the Catacombs below the San Francisco Church. Peru's capital has plenty to offer and many of the sights, including the city's two main squares the Plaza de Armas and Plaza San Martin, are within easy walking distance of your hotel.

Lima offers an ample range of restaurants and bars where local as well as international cuisine is served – the city is known as the gastronomic capital of the Americas. A nice spot to head out at night for a meal is Miraflores on the coast.

Your adventure of a lifetime comes to an end today, please confirm with the reception the check out time. 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.

The itinerary listed above is to be used as a guide only. Occasionally we may need to update this document and it may be different to the information printed in our current brochure. Tour leaders may need to make adjustments due to unforeseen circumstances during the tour. It is very important that you visit our website and review a copy of this dossier as close as possible to your departure date in case of changes that may affect your plans. Any last minute changes may also be posted in the latest news section of our website.

Group Size

The average group size is between 15 and 24 although our vehicles comfortably seat up to 34 on some popular dates.

The Inca Trail Trek

This tour allows time to complete the famous Inca Trail Trek at an additional cost. Permits are strictly limited and sell out months in advance. In addition the trail is closed every year for the month of February in order to carry out maintenance work. Please see [here](#) for more information on booking your Inca Trail Trek.

The Inca Trail involves trekking at high altitude and requires a certain level of fitness. Please [read the Inca Trail Trek information pages](#) carefully.

Other Services – pre & post tour accommodation and airport transfers

Very little time is spent in each of the starting and finishing cities and you will need to allow a few days at the beginning or end of your tour if you want to

explore them further. Airport transfers in joining and departing cities are not included in the tour price but can be booked through Tucan Travel at an additional cost. For details about how to book pre & post accommodation please refer to the Extra Services information page in our website. Price information can be found on the price page of each tour. If you would prefer to make your own way to and from your hotel, you can find further details on the joining letter for this tour.

About Budget Expeditions

Budget Expeditions are designed to suit travellers who are looking for choice and flexibility and who want to travel in the company of other young people aged 18 to 35. [Visit the Budget Expeditions dossier page](#) for further information on the type of transport and accommodation provided on this style of travel, as well as group size, staff, meals, degree of difficulty and recommended age. The meal and accommodation summaries are based on participation of the optional activities on offer. Inclusions will differ slightly should you not wish to participate in the excursions.

Don't forget that Tucan Travel also offers [Tailored Travel](#) tours as well as other [Group Travel](#) tour styles.

Day by Day Itinerary

Day	Activity	Country	Meals
Day 1	Rio de Janeiro	Brazil	
Day 2	Parati		BLD
Day 3	Parati		BLD
Day 4	Parati		BLD
Day 5	En route		BLD
Day 6	En route		BLD
Day 7	Pantanal (optional excursion)		B
Day 8	Pantanal (optional excursion)		
Day 9	Pantanal (optional excursion)		
Day 10	Bonito		LD
Day 11	Bonito		BLD
Day 12	Bonito		BLD
Day 13	En route		BLD
Day 14	Foz do Iguaçu		BLD
Day 15	Foz do Iguaçu		BLD
Day 16	Puerto Iguazú	Argentina	BLD
Day 17	Puerto Iguazú		BLD
Day 18	San Ignacio Miní		BLD
Day 19	Buenos Aires		B
Day 20	Buenos Aires		
Day 21	Buenos Aires		
Day 22	Buenos Aires		

Day 23	En route		LD
Day 24	Puerto Madryn	Patagonia	BLD
Day 25	Puerto Madryn		BLD
Day 26	En route		BLD
Day 27	En route		BLD
Day 28	Ushuaia		BLD
Day 29	Ushuaia		BLD
Day 30	Ushuaia		BLD
Day 31	En route	Chile	BLD
Day 32	Torres del Paine NP		BLD
Day 33	Torres del Paine NP		BLD
Day 34	Torres del Paine NP		BLD
Day 35	Torres del Paine NP		BLD
Day 36	Torres del Paine NP		BLD
Day 37	El Calafate	Argentina	BL
Day 38	El Calafate		
Day 39	El Chaltén		LD
Day 40	El Chaltén		BLD
Day 41	En route		BLD
Day 42	Bariloche		BLD
Day 43	Bariloche		BLD
Day 44	Bariloche		BLD
Day 45	Pucón	Chile	BLD
Day 46	Pucón		BLD
Day 47	Pucón		BLD
Day 48	Santiago		BL
Day 49	Santiago		
Day 50	Santiago		
Day 51	Mendoza	Argentina	LD
Day 52	Mendoza		BLD
Day 53	Mendoza		BLD

Day 54	Cordoba		BL
Day 55	Cordoba		
Day 56	Catamarca		LD
Day 57	Cafayate		BLD
Day 58	Salta		BLD
Day 59	Salta		BLD
Day 60	Salta		BLD
Day 61	Tupiza	Bolivia	BL
Day 62	Uyuni		L
Day 63	Uyuni		
Day 64	Uyuni		
Day 65	Sucre		L
Day 66	Sucre		
Day 67	Potosí		L
Day 68	Potosí		
Day 69	La Paz		L
Day 70	La Paz		
Day 71	La Paz		
Day 72	Puno	Peru	L
Day 73	Puno (optional Lake Titicaca excursion)		
Day 74	Puno		
Day 75	Cuzco		L
Day 76	Cuzco		
Day 77	Cuzco		
Day 78	Cuzco		
Day 79	Cuzco		
Day 80	Cuzco		
Day 81	Cuzco		
Day 82	Cuzco		
Day 83	Cuzco		
Day 84	Arequipa		LD

Day 85	Arequipa (optional Colca Canyon excursion)	B
Day 86	Arequipa	LD
Day 87	Puerto Inca	BLD
Day 88	Nazca	BLD
Day 89	Huacachina	BLD
Day 90	Lima	B
Day 91	Lima	

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

Please note the day to day itinerary above is given as a GUIDELINE ONLY.

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