Code BXXI **Inti Express**

Tour Dossier Introduction

Dossier Last Updated: 13-05-2015
Tour Code: BXXI
Duration: 41 nights / 42 days
Joining City: La Paz
Departure City: Quito
Nearest Joining International Airport: La Paz El Alto International Airport (LPB)
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
- Peru Dossier
- Bolivia Dossier
- Ecuador Dossier
- Spanish Language Guide
- Inca Trail Passport Declaration Form

What's Included

- 26 nights in hotels, hostels & guesthouses, 11 nights camping
- 14 breakfasts, 17 lunches, 10 dinners
- Travel by **Tucan Travel Expedition Vehicle**, taxi, on foot
- Tucan Travel tour leader, Tucan Travel driver

What's not Included

- Sleeping bag & sleeping mat
- Local payment
- International flights and departure taxes
- 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 La Paz

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.

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. 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 forthe fainthearted and great care must be taken!

Optional Excursions: Red Caps walking tours – free (tips appreciated) • Death Road Mountain Biking – US$110

Day 2 to 4 - Puno & Lake Titicaca

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 into Puno we hope to arrive in time to visit the colourful markets.

From Puno 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. 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.

Optional Excursions: Lake Titicaca & Uros Islands overnight excursion – US$45 + lunch US$8

Day 5 to 5 - 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 Compañia 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 the next eight days for some really special optional excursions, including the challenging four-day Inca Trail trek and Jungle excursion both of which **must** be requested at the time of booking your tour. We have plenty of time here to squeeze in both of these excursions and more, or if you prefer, to relax and absorb the great atmosphere of such a cultural and friendly place.

Some of the optional excursions available include full-day trip through the Sacred Valley of the Incas 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. 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).

Optional Excursions: Cuzco Visitor Ticket, this gives access to most museums and monuments – US$22 • 10-Day Cuzco Visitor Ticket- US$24 • Massages – US$25/hr • City tour – US$25 but included free in visitor ticket option • Chocolate making course - US$22

Day 6 to 8 - Optional Amazon Jungle

Covering the greatest area of South America, the Amazon Jungle is a must see part of your trip. If you wish to take part in this excursion, please inform your reservations consultant at the time of booking as this excursion has to be arranged in advance.

You will take a quick flight from Cuzco, deep in to the jungle to Puerto Maldonado where you will board canoes to take you further in to the canopy. Checking in to your jungle hut, it is not long before you are out exploring the trails with a trained guide. Your guide will help you identify some species endemic to the jungle with Peru's Amazon Jungle being home to some of the most diverse wildlife. You will journey out to Monkey Island where monkeys are rescued and rehabilitated, cared for by the jungle lodge. You will also have a chance to swim in nearby lakes.

Optional Excursions: Amazon Jungle excursion – US$699 or equivalent in your currency (must be booked in advance)

Day 9 to 11 - Optional Inca Trail Trek

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 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 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.

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, **click here**.

Optional Excursions: Inca Trail trek or Lares Valley trek • Train to Machu Picchu overnight excursion – US$379 (these activities must be booked in advance, please check prices with a member of our team)

Day 12 to 13 - Cuzco

After an action packed few days, return to Cuzco for the night and celebrate reaching Machu Picchu.

Day 14 to 16 - Arequipa

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 Santuarios Andinas’, where you can see 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.

Optional Excursions: City tour – US$12 • Monastery of Santa Catalina – US$10 • Museo Santuarios Andinas, where you can see the frozen ice mummy princess ‘Juanita’ – US$5 • Plaza de Armas and churches – free

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. On the way to the canyon, we stop at Chivay where you can dip your toes in some hot springs. We spend the night in a lodge nearby, reaching the canyon the following morning. 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.

Optional Excursions: Colca Canyon overnight excursion – US$60 + $22 park entrance • City tour – US$12 • Monastery of Santa Catalina – US$11 • Museo Santuarios Andinas, where you can see the frozen Inca ice mummy princess 'Juanita' – US$5 • Plaza de Armas and churches – free

Day 17 to 17 - Puerto Inca

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.

Day 18 to 18 - Nazca

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.

Optional Excursions: Scenic flight over Nazca Lines – US$110 + S/25 tax • Planetarium show & lecture – US$20 • Chauchilla Cemetery – US$2

Day 19 to 19 - Huacachina

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 down the dunes is an unreal way to spend the afternoon and night. This excursion ends with a delicious barbecue and pisco sours, the recipe for a good time on the sand dunes!

Optional Excursions: Overnight dune buggy trip – US$55 (overnight) US$18 (two hours)

Day 20 to 22 - 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.

Optional Excursions: Museum Inquisition – free • Monastery and Catacombs – US$3 guided tour • Plaza San Martin, one of the largest and most impressive squares • Paragliding – US$60

Day 23 to 25 - Huaraz

As we head north up Peru's Pacific Coast we stop at Paramonga, where we explore a ruined temple by the side of the highway. We then head inland until we hit the Cordillera Blanca mountains and the small town of Huaraz. The town is at an altitude of 3,052 metres and is located close to Peru's highest peak Huascarán (6,768 metres). Huaraz is renowned for its trekking, climbing and spectacular scenery. We have plenty of time to enjoy the beauty of this place with some great optional excursions to keep us busy.

Optional Excursions: Lake 69 excursion – US$15 • Chavin de Huantur pre-inca temple – US$18 • Ice climbing at Pastoruri & park entry – US$55 • Horse Riding – US$27

Day 26 to 28 - Huanchaco

Continuing north, we stop off at Sechín Alto, another important ruin with temples dating back to 1500 BC, with over 500 carvings gruesomely depicting warriors and their captives. We then arrive at Huanchaco, which is renowned for great beachside seafood restaurants and the reed boats that the fishermen use to ride the huge surf, reputedly, one of the longest left hand breaks in the world (just outside the town). We will have a few days here to make the most of this beachside resort, camping on the beach. Huanchaco is also our base for those who want to check out Chan Chán, the largest mud -

city in the world built by Chimú kings and covering 26 square kilometres and the famous Pyramids of the Sun and Moon are also nearby.

We leave the coastal town of Huanchaco, stopping off en route to visit the museum in Lambayeque to see some of the many treasures uncovered from the tomb of the Lord of Sipan (one of Peru's finest museums), the oil derricks in the Sechura Desert and also the attractive oasis town of Piura. We arrive at the beautiful beachside town of Mancora in the late aftenoon.

Optional Excursions: Chan Chan and the Pyramids of the Sun & Moon – US$4 entry each + transport & guide • Surf lessons – US$45

Day 29 to 31 - Mancora

We have two full days in Mancora where we can enjoy the sun, surf and relaxation. We stay in a party hostel in this small town and with three nights here, there is plenty of time to recover after one too many pisco sours. Kite surfing is a popular activity to do here.

Optional Excursions:Optional Excursions: Surf lessons – US$45 • Horse Riding – US$15

Heading to the boarder of Ecuador, we travel through villages where fishermen work with their small hand nets. We make our way to the old colonial market city of Cuenca, (full name Santa Ana de Los Cuatro Ríos de Cuenca), Ecuador's third largest city, founded in 1557. Visit the historic area, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, between the river Tomebamba and the street Gran Colombia to the north, General Torres to the west, and Hermano Miguel to the east. There are plenty of sites here in the city to fill your time. Cuenca is where the Panama hat originated and you'll have the opportunity to visit one of the factories.

We make our way into the Andes, along the edge of the rainforest where we reach Baños, a health resort renowned for its hot thermal springs. Besides soaking in the hot pools, there are opportunities for walks or horse riding in the hills, or you can try some of the optional activities that vary from canyoning to bridge swinging or relax with a massage or try some salsa lessons.

Day 32 to 33 - Cuenca

Day 34 to 36 - Rio Verde/Baños

We make our way into the Andes, along the edge of the rainforest where we reach Baños, camping just outside in Rio Verde, a health resort renowned for its hot thermal springs. Besides soaking in the hot pools, there are opportunities for walks or horse riding in the hills, or you can try some of the optional activities that vary from canyoning to bridge swinging or you can relax with a massage or try some salsa lessons.

Optional Excursions: Ingapirca Ruins - US$6 entry + transport • Canyoning – US$50 • White water rafting – US$40-75 • Bridge swing/bunjee jump – US$20 • Massage - US$30 • Hot baths – US$2-3

Day 37 to 39 - Misahualli/Tena

The next three days you can take an optional excursion into the steaming Amazon Jungle staying in thatch-roofed bungalows on the shore 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.

If you decide not to do the Amazon Jungle excursion, you can stay on the outskirts of Tena and meet the group at their next destination. Tena is a peaceful city surrounded by wilderness and green hills.

Approximate Driving Time: Eight Hour Drive
Optional Excursions: Three nights in the Amazon Jungle including local guides and excursions – US$150

Day 40 to 40 - Otavalo

After stopping at the equator for photos and souvenirs, we move onto the famous Otavalo market which is located north of Quito. It's a wonderful place to shop for all kinds of handicrafts and to take really good photographs. The indigenous Otavalo locals, who come from their villages to sell livestock, produce and textiles, are all distinct in appearance. The men wear calf-length white trousers and sandals and have their long hair braided, while the women wear white frilly blouses, black skirts and have gold coloured jewellery twirled around their necks.

Included Excursions: Otavalo Market

Day 41 to 41 - 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: Teleferico sky tram to Volcan Pichincha – US$10 + taxi fare • La Mitad del Mundo with taxi – US$15 • City Tour US$15 • Plaza de la Independencia – free, US$1 to enter cathedral • Museo de la Ciudad – US$3

Day 42 to 42 - 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	La Paz	Bolivia	
Day 2	Puno	Peru	BL
Day 3	Puno (optional Lake Titicaca excursion)		
Day 4	Puno		
Day 5	Cuzco		L
Day 6	Cuzco		
Day 7	Cuzco		
Day 8	Cuzco		
Day 9	Cuzco		
Day 10	Cuzco		
Day 11	Cuzco		
Day 12	Cuzco		
Day 13	Cuzco		
Day 14	Arequipa		LD
Day 15	Arequipa (optional Colca Canyon excursion)		B
Day 16	Arequipa		BLD
Day 17	Puerto Inca		BLD
Day 18	Nazca		BLD
Day 19	Huacachina		BL
Day 20	Lima		L

Day 21	Lima		
Day 22	Lima		
Day 23	Huaraz		L
Day 24	Huaraz		
Day 25	Huaraz		
Day 26	Huanchaco		LD
Day 27	Huanchaco		BLD
Day 28	Huanchaco		BLD
Day 29	Mancora		BL
Day 30	Mancora		
Day 31	Mancora		
Day 32	Cuenca	Ecuador	L
Day 33	Cuenca		B
Day 34	Baños		BLD
Day 35	Baños		BLD
Day 36	Baños		BLD
Day 37	Tena (optional Amazon Jungle excursion)		B
Day 38	Tena (optional Amazon Jungle excursion)		
Day 39	Tena (optional Amazon Jungle excursion)		
Day 40	Otavalo		
Day 41	Quito		
Day 42	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 a Budget Expedition for young people aged 18 to 35 in South America, travelling by custom built vehicle and staying in a mixture of camping, hotels and hostels. There is a maximum of 34 travellers with an average group size of 15-24. Please read the Budget Expeditions travel style dossier to ensure you understand the style of travel you are undertaking: **http://www.tucantravel.com/travel-styles/dossier/budget-expeditions**

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. You

are required to pay the local payment that is current at the time of your tour's departure. This amount may change throughout the year and we advise clients to check your specific tour page on our website for the current amount if you are unsure about this. 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

Optional Excursions in Cuzco, Peru

Your tour includes time in Cuzco for optional activities which must be booked in advance.

4-day Inca Trail Trek or Train to Machu Picchu

This tour allows time to complete the famous Inca Trail Trek at an additional cost. If you prefer not to complete the multi-day trek and just want to visit Machu Picchu, you have the option to book the train to Machu Picchu instead. 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 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.

Inca Trail Packing List

If you are hiking the Inca or Lares Trail 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**

3-day Amazon Jungle Excursion

Your tour also has time to include an optional visit to the Amazon Jungle. This excursion includes flights into the jungle, sleeping in authentic jungle huts, eating delicious jungle meals and navigating the river by boat with specialist local guides.

Joining your tour

Your joining location is:

Hotel Sagarnaga
Calle Sagárnaga no. 326 - 328
Zona Rosario
La Paz

Tel: (+591) 2 235 0252 / 231 0893
www.hotel-sagarnaga.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 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 La Paz

At over 3,600 metres above sea level La Paz is the highest capital on Earth and 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 recommendations below:

- 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

When arriving at El Alto International Airport in La Paz we suggest that you change some money into the local currency at the exchange office ("Cambio") in the main terminal building. The local currency is the boliviano. Change enough money to see you through the first few days of your trip – particularly if it is a weekend. Please note you can only change cash (not traveller's cheques) at the Cambio in the airport. There are also ATMs at the airport.

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 decide not to pre-book an arrival transfer, you will find a 24 hour taxi rank outside the airport (all the taxis are white). You shouldn't have too much of a problem getting a taxi as they all wait in an orderly line outside the terminal and are fairly safe to use. The cost of a taxi from the airport to our hotels in La Paz should be approximately 50-80 bolivianos (US$7-10). Taxi drivers do have a tendency to switch their lights off at night (to save the battery!) so if they do this, insist that they switch the lights back on. To get to the hotel, the taxis will have to drive through the sprawling city of El Alto, which can be an interesting experience. Make sure you lock the taxi doors, as theft can be a problem in La Paz and El Alto. The drive into the city however has spectacular views.

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 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
- [ ] East to pack wide-brimmed hat of cap
- [ ] Towel - you will need a towel for most overnight excursions
- [ ] Swimwear
- [ ] Sandals or thongs/jandals/flip flops

Suggested items:

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

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 you for purposes of medication, please inform your tour leader and ensure that you carry a copy of your prescription or letter from your doctor.