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Code BXAN **Northern Andes**

Duration: 21 Days **Route:** Lima to Quito **Style:** Budget Expeditions

Peru, Ecuador

Experience the highlights of the Peruvian and Ecuadorian Andes with this **Northern Andes (BXNA)**. This tour is an overland expedition encompassing bustling capital cities, ancient Inca ruins, colourful Indian markets, lush rainforest and thermal springs, with plenty of opportunities for outdoor excursions and cultural activities along the way.

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Tour Dossier Introduction

Dossier Last Updated: 10-04-2013
Tour Code: BXAN
Duration: 20 nights / 21 days
Joining City: Lima
Departure City: Quito
Nearest Joining International Airport: Jorge Chavez International Airport Lima (LIM)
Nearest Departing International Airport: Mariscal Sucre Intl Airport Quito (UIO)

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 Lima
- Optional Excursions Guide for Tours to South America
- Peru Dossier
- Ecuador Dossier
- Lima City Map
- Spanish Language Guide

Inclusions

Accommodation: 11 night(s) in hotel(s), hostel(s) & guesthouse(s), 6 night(s) camping
Meals: 5 breakfast(s), 9 lunch(es), 6 dinner(s)
Transport: Expedition Vehicle, Tucan Travel vehicle, 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 Lima

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.

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.

Day 2 to 10 - Huaraz – Huanchaco – Mancora

As we continue our journey north we 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.

Huanchaco 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. We will have a few days here to make the most of this beachside resort. 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. The famous Pyramids of the Sun and Moon are also nearby.

We leave the coastal town of Huanchaco, passing through the attractive oasis town of Piura then passing the oil derricks in the Sechura Desert before we arrive at the beautiful beachside town of Mancora. Along the way we 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). We'll also stop over at Sechín Alto, another important ruin with temples dating back to 1500 BC, with over 500 carvings gruesomely depicting warriors and their captives.

We'll then stop again at Paramonga, a well preserved temple by the side of the highway. We have two full days in Mancora where we can enjoy the sun, surf and relaxation.

Day 11 to 15 - Cuenca – Baños

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.

After a couple of days in Cuenca we travel onto Ingapirca, meaning ‘the Wall of the Inca’. We'll visit for an hour or so and you can take the chance to look around what is said to be Ecuador's most important Inca ruins.

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 16 to 19 - Misahualli – (Optional Amazon Jungle excursion) – Otavalo

We now head towards the little community of Misahualli in the heart of the Amazon Basin. Here you will have the option to take an excursion further into the jungle. If you choose not to take part in the excursion you will be accommodated in Misahualli and the time will be free to do as you please. The tour leader will join the group on the Amazon Jungle excursion.

We take motorised dugout canoes downriver to enter the jungle by foot, led by our local guide who provides a detailed account of the plants, creatures and people of the region. They will also teach us age-old methods of finding food and water hidden in trees; and even introduces us to the local monkeys! We stay overnight in rustic huts made of bamboo and leaves.

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.

Day 20 to 20 - 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.

Day 21 to 21 - Depart Quito

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.

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	Lima	Peru	
Day 2	Huaraz		
Day 3	Huaraz		
Day 4	Huaraz		
Day 5	Huanchaco		LD
Day 6	Huanchaco		BLD
Day 7	Huanchaco		BLD
Day 8	Mancora		BL
Day 9	Mancora		
Day 10	Mancora		
Day 11	Cuenca	Ecuador	L
Day 12	Cuenca		
Day 13	Baños		LD
Day 14	Baños		BLD
Day 15	Baños		BLD
Day 16	Misahualli (optional Amazon Jungle excursion)		
Day 17	Misahualli (optional Amazon Jungle excursion)		
Day 18	Misahualli (optional Amazon Jungle excursion)		
Day 19	Otavalo		L
Day 20	Quito		
Day 21	Quito		

(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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