Code BXNA **Northern Andes**

Tour Dossier Introduction

Dossier Last Updated: 27-05-2015
Tour Code: BXNA
Duration: 20 nights / 21 days
Joining City: Quito
Departure City: Lima
Nearest Joining International Airport: Quito Mariscal Sucre Intl Airport (UIO)
Nearest Departing International Airport: Lima Jorge Chavez International Airport (LIM)

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

Tour Documents

PDF Document Web Page

	Peru Dossier
	Ecuador Dossier
	Spanish Language Guide

What's Included

- 11 nights in hotels, hostels & guesthouses, 6 nights camping
- 11 breakfasts, 10 lunches, 6 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 Quito

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

Quito, Ecuador is the second-highest capital city in the world at 2,850 metres above sea level. It was founded in 1534 by the Spanish prior to which it was

an Inca stronghold. It is situated in a hollow at the base of the live volcano Pichincha and the whole length of the city can be seen from atop Panecillo hill where the enormous statue of the Virgin of Quito stands. The city has two main sections, the old and the new city. The latter is the main commercial area and has all the good restaurants and bars, whereas the old city is the colonial sector with steep calles, busy plazas and local markets.

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

Optional Excursions: 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 2 to 2 - 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.

Approximate Driving Time: Four Hour Drive
Included Excursions: Otavalo Market

Day 3 to 5 - Tena & the optional Amazon Jungle

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 6 to 8 - Rio Verde/Baños

Travelling back into the Andes, along the edge of the rainforest, 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 from our campsite just outside the town in Rio Verde 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.

Approximate Driving Time: Four hours
Optional Excursions: Canyoning – US$50 • White water rafting – US$40-75 • Bridge swing/bunjee jump – US$20 • Waterfall and volcano viewing Hot baths – US$2-3

Day 9 to 10 - Cuenca

After a few days in Baños 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 then continue onto 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.

Approximate Driving Time: Full Days Drive
Optional Excursions: Ingapirca Ruins - US$6 entry + transport • Catedral Vieja and Catedral Nueva – free • Museo de Arte Moderno – free

Day 11 to 13 - Mancora

As we pass into Peru we travel through villages where fishermen work with their small hand nets, and we stay at the beautiful beachside town of Mancora for three nights. We have two full days of sun, surf and relaxation.

Approximate Driving Time: Full Days Drive
Optional Excursions: Surf lessons – US$45 • Horse Riding – US$15

Day 14 to 16 - Huanchaco

We pass the oil derricks in the Sechura Desert and the attractive oasis town of Piura on our way to the small coastal town of Huanchaco. 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).

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.

Approximate Driving Time: Full Day Drive
Optional Excursions: Chan Chan and the Pyramids of the Sun & Moon – US$4 entry each + transport & guide • Surf lessons – US$15 (2 hours)

Day 17 to 19 - Huaraz

We'll stop over at Sechín, another important ruin with temples dating back to 1500 BC, with over 500 carvings gruesomely depicting warriors and their captives.

As we continue our journey south 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.

Approximate Driving Time: Full Day Drive
Optional Excursions: Llananuco Lake excursion – US$15 • Chavin de Huantur pre-inca temple – US$18 • Ice climbing at Pastoruri & park entry – US$50

Day 20 to 20 - Lima

On the way to Lima, we stop at Paramonga, a well preserved temple by the side of the highway.

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.

Approximate Driving Time: Full Day Drive

Day 21 to 21 - Depart Lima

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

Day by Day Itinerary

Day	Activity	Country	Meals
Day 1	Quito	Ecuador	
Day 2	Otavalo		
Day 3	Tena (optional Amazon Jungle excursion)		

Day 4	Tena (optional Amazon Jungle excursion)		
Day 5	Tena (optional Amazon Jungle excursion)		
Day 6	Rio Verde		LD
Day 7	Rio Verde		BLD
Day 8	Rio Verde		BLD
Day 9	Cuenca		BL
Day 10	Cuenca		B
Day 11	Mancora	Peru	BL
Day 12	Mancora		B
Day 13	Mancora		B
Day 14	Huanchaco		BLD
Day 15	Huanchaco		BLD
Day 16	Huanchaco		BLD
Day 17	Huaraz		BL
Day 18	Huaraz		
Day 19	Huaraz		
Day 20	Lima		L
Day 21	Lima		

(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

Joining your tour

Your joining location is:

Hotel Majestic
Mercadillo 366 y Versalles
Quito,
Ecuador

Tel: (+593) 2 2543 182
Fax: (+593) 2 2504 207
info@majesticquito.com

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

Arriving in Quito

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

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

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

Airport Transfers

Airport transfers are not included in the tour price and must be booked separately in advance through Tucan Travel. If you have booked an airport/hotel transfer with us, please look out for someone with a sign which has your name, Tucan Travel, or both after exiting the customs hall.

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

Making your own way

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

Pre-Departure Meeting

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

- Your passport, including any necessary visas and at least one photocopy to give to your tour leader
- Vaccination certificates if relevant to any destinations on your tour
- Travel insurance policy and a photocopy to give to your tour leader

- Your travel voucher
- Your local payment in US$ cash (Budget Expeditions only)

Missing the tour departure

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

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

Time Keeping

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

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

Emergency Contact Details

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

Tel: (+51) 984 76 21 64 (phone only)
Email:**sacrew@tucantravel.com**

In the unlikely event that you 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.