

Peru: Lima, Arequipa, Colca Canyon, Lake Titicaca

8 days

Tour Description

Peru is known for its ancient cultures and their great riches. The powerful Empire of the Incas has left us with amazing artifacts from the 14th and 15th-centuries. Explorers from Spain brought the region great art, architecture, music and cuisine in the 16th-century.

There are 3 distinct regions: the Pacific Coast to the west, the Andes mountain range running through the middle and the Amazon jungle in the east. Cosmopolitan city life in Lima originally started as a fishing village and evolved to what was referred to as the City of the Kings. The Colca Canyon is one of the world's deepest and affords amazing views. The floating islands of Lake Titicaca are one of the most unique things you'll ever see.

Highlights

- ❖ Lima's Plaza de Armas and Torre Tagle Palace
- ❖ Evening Dinner with historic dance show
- ❖ Colca Canyon provides vistas of one of the deepest gorges in the world
- ❖ Pampering spa day
- ❖ Pre-Inca tombs of the Sillustani Burial
- ❖ Floating islands made with reeds in Lake Titicaca

Sample Tour Itinerary

Lima – 2 nights

Day 1: Arrive in Lima

Upon arrival, you will be met at the airport by our local representative who will escort you to your hotel via private coach. The balance of the day you are free to relax or explore on your own. Perched on the cliffs above the sea, this capital city features expansive views, lovely city parks with unique statues, a variety of neighborhoods and colonial architecture.

Day 2: City Tour of Colonial and Modern Lima

We'll visit both the colonial and modern sections of this "City of Kings." Colonial sites include the lovely Plaza de Armas with its cathedral and palace, and the exquisite Torre Tagle Palace, modern day seat of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In modern Lima drive through the exclusive residential areas of Miraflores and San Isidro.

Dinner Show

Starting with a delicious Pisco Sour, a traditional Peruvian aperitif, we'll see a spectacular, folk dance ensemble while sampling exquisite Peruvian food. One of Lima's premiere dance troupes transports you through the different regions of Peru, and across the ages, by way of their traditional costumes and dances rich in history.

Arequipa – 1 night

Day 3: Flight to Arequipa

Transfer to the Lima airport for the short flight south. Upon arrival a host will transfer you to your hotel. In the afternoon, your half-day sightseeing of this beautiful city includes a visit to the Spanish Colonial Monastery of Santa Catalina. This remarkable relic of colonial times was called a city within a city and was closed to visitors and shrouded in mystery for over 400 years.

Chivay – 2 nights

Day 4: Tour to the Colca Canyon

Tour one of the world's deepest canyons north of Arequipa. We depart early, heading towards the highlands, passing through Yura-Pampa Cañahuas and La Pulpera. Passing by unspoiled Andean villages, we may get a glimpse of wild vicuñas. Stop en route to see petroglyphs in the Caves of Mollepunco. We'll also visit the town of Callali to see natural hill formations that resemble enchanted castles. Views of one of America's most active volcanoes sets off the perfect scenery. A very short Colca trek gives you a sense of this extraordinary land.

Day 5: Relaxation Day

Treat yourself to the hot springs of nearby La Calera. Considered the top spa in Peru, enjoy the soothing setting of the thermal baths. Take some time to explore the small cultural museum on site. Bring a bathing suit and towel.

Lake Titicaca – 2 nights

Day 6: Scenic tour en route to Lake Titicaca

Driving toward the border of Bolivia, we arrive at Lake Titicaca, the highest navigable lake in the world to see the unique culture that still survives today. You'll be surrounded by the Carabaya Mountains to the north, the Real Mountain range to the west and volcanic mountains to the south. This area is known for its folklore, music and dance, with over 300 dance styles surviving the ages. We'll visit the pre-Inca tombs of the Sillustani Burial towers en route to your hotel.

Day 7: Floating Island of the Uros Indians

When the Incas expanded their empire, especially under the great Inca Pachacutec, the Indians living on the shores used the Totora reeds, the only vegetation, to build floating islands in Lake Titicaca. The Incas left them alone and centuries later you can see them still living on their floating islands. Continue to Taquile where a native community of about 400 families still lives with the traditions of the 14th-century that respects the principals of an Incan way of life. Noted for its archaeological remains, sacred and ceremonial sites and festive activities, the inhabitants are devoted to farming, textile production and fishing.

Day 8: Depart

Transfer to the airport in nearby Juliaca for the short flight to Lima, connecting to your flight home.

INCLUSIONS

- Accommodations: Lima 2 nights, Arequipa 1 night, Colca Canyon 2 nights, Lake Titicaca 2 nights
- Continental breakfast daily. Lunch and dinners as noted in itinerary.
- Ground transportation via air conditioned luxury coach
- English speaking assistants and guides
- Admission tickets as outlined in the itinerary