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FAQ's ABOUT PERU

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WHAT IS PERU LIKE?

Peru offers one of the most diversified geographical settings in South America and in the world, as the Peruvian territory is considered to cover [three main geographical zones](#)



which are the coastal desert, the highlands mainly made up of the Andean Cordillera, and the Amazon Rainforest which covers about 50% of its overall territory, and paradoxically is the least populated area in the country. In contrast, the Amazon is the region with the largest concentration of quality drinkable water, in Peru. As far as neighboring countries are concerned, these are Ecuador, Colombia, Brazil, Bolivia and Chile.

Furthermore, and mainly due to its geographical mega-diversity, Peru also possesses a great variety of climates, life zones, ecosystems and habitats which make it so that its vast natural areas shelter and give support to an impressive biodiversity, as far as endemic, territorial and exotic species of fauna and flora are concerned, thus turning it into one of the most interesting countries to visit, in today's modern world, as it also presents a wide array of cultures and ethnic groups that still

live according to ancestral traditions and customs, as they carry thousands of years of inherited wisdom, especially in the Amazon Rainforest, where indigenous tribes have recently been contacted, and if they are properly approached, in many cases, they are willing to share their ancestral wisdom with people who are respectful of their ways of life and thinking.

Therefore, if we combine all that geographical, natural and cultural wealth with Peru's modern Occidental lifestyle which makes it easier today to travel by air, land and water across that vast and rough territory, along with the unstoppable development of more and more tourist infrastructure on the coast and in the Andes, with some areas of jungle that have been protected by the State which created [national parks](#) and [natural or ecological reserves](#):

http://www.sernanp.gob.pe/sernanp/archivos/biblioteca/mapas/ListaAnps_17122013.pdf

in which humans, animals and plants can live in peace, harmony and mutual respect; places where many world renowned scientists and ecologists are doing research and field work, to know more about that seemingly unending and ever renewed natural wealth that thrives in the vast green shelter of the great rainforest which also welcomes conscious, responsible and respectful visitors, to teach them about a different world with its own laws and rules the local natives know better than anyone else, as it is their motherland and vital support.

WHAT TYPE OF FOOD IS TYPICAL IN PERU?

Staple foods on the coast are generally rather spicy and mainly based on fish, seafood, rice, chicken and a whole variety of fruit and vegetables which are cultivated in its more fertile valleys and areas, as well as in the Central High Jungle and in the Cordillera's inter-Andean valleys which produce great amounts of many varieties of fruit and vegetables that can easily be transported by road to the coastal area.

In the highlands, most dishes include potatoes, corn, rice and meat, often served with a spicy sauce, and in inter-Andean valleys, like the [Sacred Valley of the Incas](#), near [Cusco](#), great amounts of cereals, vegetables and fruit are produced, as these are very fertile valleys, many of which the Incas had intelligently adapted for the broad practice of agriculture, as much at the bottom of the valleys, as on their mountainous slopes, by means of skillfully built [benched terraces](#) which they took great advantage of for growing a broad range of crops.

In jungle areas, there is a great variety of fresh fruit, typical of each region, fruit juices, fried bananas and exotically prepared vegetables, in combination with nutritious native jungle plants, manioc and other native tubercles or roots known by the local indigenous populations, allowing them to compose quite attractive dishes, complemented by meats and river or lagoon fish they are masters in catching. The great thing about the jungle is the warm or even hot climate that makes it that you don't eat as much as in the highlands, and food doesn't need to be hot, to keep proper body temperature, which ends up being cheaper, as well as much more healthy and energetic for our organism.

Though vegetarians can easily find their luck in all areas of the country, more popular and common options simply leave out the meat or fish, rather than adding vegetarian mainstays and plant protein rich sources such as tofu, beans, lentils or nuts. But, in tourist cities such as Lima, Cusco, Arequipa, etc., there are evermore exclusively vegetarian restaurants and places which offer mixed menus with a sufficient number of vegetarian options to let you choose what suits you best. For example, most Chinese restaurants (Chifas) offer vegetarian options, pizza places (Pizzerías) always have a vegetarian pizza or can easily prepare one to your taste, and evermore traditional restaurants that serve local, Peruvian or international food don't want to miss out on that growing public. So, they generally offer a few dishes that are veggie acceptable.

So, one thing is for sure, whether you are vegetarian or not, you won't die of hunger in Peru, as its vast and mega-diversified territory offers a great variety of foods of so many different kinds, which are prepared in so many different ways that Peruvian gastronomy is now considered as one of the richest and most varied in the world, and much of it is due to the great and so wise plant genetic and cross-breeding work the Incas and some other

pre-Incan cultures developed in their own time, to produce new consumable plant species and varieties, some of which, like corn, potatoes and different kinds of beans have become worldwide spread and common foods in most developed countries. Therefore, we all owe quite a lot to the Incas who had mastered plant genetics and engineering in their own way and time.

Now, if you are the kind of people who cannot live without Mc Donald's, Kentucky Fried Chicken and all that kind of toxic junk food that ruins your health, well, don't worry, these big chains have already invaded the Peruvian market and are present, at least, in the larger cities and tourist towns like Cusco, for example. We just hope that you will not blame us if you feel sick after having eaten one or several of these fast food meals which, at the altitude of Cusco, don't react in your organism the way they would at a lower altitude. Therefore, we consider that we've warned you about that sort of repeated experience in the mountains, especially if you combine junk food with smoking, drinking alcohol and who knows, ingesting some kind of drug or other damaging substances which could really ruin your vacations and that of others.

As a last recommendation concerning food and drink, we only want to remind you to always be on the lookout for hygiene issues, when you eat for the first time at a restaurant. For example, don't be ashamed of asking the Maître D or waiter to let you have a peep at the kitchen and bathrooms, before you place your order, and always ask about a detailed explanation of the ingredients that compose each dish that catch your eye, as well as how it is prepared, what seasoning is used and so on, until you're really sure that it is what you want, in order to avoid bad surprises when your order gets to the table or when you start eating. But all in all, there's no doubt you will have

great fun trying different foods, once you've convinced yourself of their quality, hygiene, ingredients and preparation. Bon appetit!

HOW DO I GET AROUND PERU, ONCE I'M THERE?

With the exception of [Nazca](#), you can fly from [Lima](#) to all the major national and international destinations, although you will probably have to go to some of them by road, rail or river, which is a much more authentic way to get to see a bit more of the territory, at ground level. Now, of course, there are more and more tourist destinations in Peru that offer good or decent enough road and tourist infrastructure that will make you want to travel there on a good quality tourist bus or a private transportation which always is the best option, since you can ask the driver to stop wherever you want, on the way.

Car rental is mainly an option you might consider on the coast and using mostly the [Panamerican Highway](#) which runs from North to South, all along the coastline, as it is flat and safe, with good road infrastructure and signalization. But, we don't recommend it in the mountains or jungle, because there are more dirt roads with stretches that are not that safe or not safe at all, especially during the rainy season (October to April), as there are frequent landslides with rocks and mud falling and blocking many roads, in quite a number of places, as much in the Andes, as in the jungle, and fatal accidents do occur in some cases. Therefore, it's always best to plan your trip with a specialized travel and tourism

agency which guarantees its staff's expertise, as well as the quality of its products and services.

[River boat](#) trips and even [luxury river cruises](#) are mainly available in the jungle area, and more particularly on the great rivers, such as the [Amazon](#), [Marañon](#) and [Yucavali](#), on which you can easily spend a week or two traveling on a river boat or cruiser, which is another great way of getting a better idea of what life is like for local indigenous populations who cohabit in full harmony and integration with one of the world's most diversified and fascinating environments.

Finally, if you decide to include [Lake Titicaca](#) in your plans, there is a great opportunity to sail on the world's highest navigable lake (Over 3,800 m. above sea level), to get a wonderful "top of the aquatic world" feeling that will make you want to try every kind of available craft, from simple [motorized barges](#), to fancy modern [tourist motorized boats](#), and from [catamarans](#) to the traditional [totora paddle canoes](#) the natives use to move about the lake, to fish or travel from one island to the next or to the mainland. Just go for it. It's great fun!

IS IT SAFE TO TRAVEL IN PERU?

Overall, Peru is a rather safe country. Of course, like in any other parts of the world, there are still pickpockets, and no one escapes from the unending crazy Lima traffic, as these typically are the biggest problems travellers will encounter, when staying in the Peruvian capital city. Now, regarding provincial cities, towns and villages, life is a lot more easy going and there are more opportunities to relax and enjoy nice spots which are generally preferred by travel agencies to take their customers to, as they already know where their visitors feel safe and cozy. However, this doesn't mean that you can be distracted or careless, because it is those moments and behaviors that pickpockets take advantage of to take something or sometimes, everything away from easy victims who are unaware of the pending danger.

But, in general, if you remain within the city's tourist area, there are much less risks to be the victim of a theft, since there is good police coverage, and in some strategic places, there even are cameras filming everything that goes on, with specialized security staff on the lookout, watching the screens, to see if there is anything wrong going on, or to call [emergency police staff](#), [firefighters](#) or [ambulances](#), [http://exotic-adventures.com\(pdf/emergency-phone-number.pdf\)](http://exotic-adventures.com(pdf/emergency-phone-number.pdf)), in case their intervention is necessary.

Furthermore, we highly recommend that you should not walk around the streets late at night or with visible valuables, such as fine jewels, expensive camera in sight or handling a whole bunch of money under the public eye, as this might expose you to risks of being followed and pickpocketed on the fly or lead to a place where it is easier to rob you.

Another good piece of advice from experienced travelers is that you should always make sure your hotel room door is fully locked and that you are not leaving any valuables or money in your room. If you have any valuables, you'll want to keep them safe. So, the majority of hostels and hotels with three stars and up offer at least a safeguard service at the reception, for valuables and important documents, and many hotels have built-in safes

in the rooms, which allows you to have full control over the safekeeping of your valuables. So, good luck, be on the lookout and enjoy everything in sight.

IS GOOD QUALITY MEDICAL CARE AVAILABLE IN PERU?

Medical care is generally quite good in [private healthcare facilities: http://exotic-adventures.com/pdf/emergency-phone-number.pdf](http://exotic-adventures.com/pdf/emergency-phone-number.pdf), in urban areas, but much less so in public hospitals or health posts in provincial towns and the rural parts of the country. Private urban facilities in tourist destinations usually have modern equipment and at least one member of the staff on shift who speaks English. However, we highly recommend that you hire a good travel insurance policy with full coverage, before you leave home.

Now, beware that most hospitals and clinics generally ask for up-front cash payment. So, make sure you keep all receipts and especially medical prescriptions and bills which you must request for every purchase you make, wherever it is possible, since insurance companies generally don't consider simple handwritten receipts as acceptable proof of payment, so that you might get reimbursed once you return home. Also, make sure that your travel insurance includes emergency medical evacuation and repatriation. If you plan on doing any "dangerous sports", such as riding motorcycles, scuba diving or even trekking, ask if those activities are covered. They usually aren't, but you can buy supplemental insurance that covers you for those higher risks.

IN CASE OF ACCIDENT, INJURY, ILLNESS OR THEFT, WHAT ARE THE EMERGENCY NUMBERS I CAN CALL?

In those cases, here are lists of useful emergency numbers you can call, if you find yourself on your own and in trouble, and have to call one or several of them:

[TOURISM POLICE – EMERGENCY AMBULANCE SERVICE – FIREFIGHTERS – CLINICS: http://exotic-adventures.com/pdf/emergency-phone-number.pdf](http://exotic-adventures.com/pdf/emergency-phone-number.pdf)

But, in general, this won't be necessary, since at least one member of our staff will always accompany you and your group, throughout the whole trip, and if you wish to, you will be in constant cell phone contact with that staff member, as well as with our office personnel who will swiftly attend your needs or requests. So, you will never be left completely on your own, during your whole trip with **WorldWide Exotic Adventures**.

HOW CAN I FIND A REASONABLY PRICED AIRLINE TICKET TO PERU?

No matter where you are in the world, **WorldWide Exotic Adventures**' staff can help you find the best airfares and flight schedules to Peru. We can assist you as well with hotel accommodations, tours, plane, train or bus reservations within the country, and much more.

ARE TRAINS AND BUSES SAFE, COMFORTABLE AND AFFORDABLE IN PERU?

Yes, in general, tourist trains and buses are safe, and onboard service is good. In **WorldWide Exotic Adventures'** Tourist Transportation Area, we have an extensive list of schedules and fares. By European or North American standards, prices are quite affordable, although we suggest [4 different service categories](#) with prices that vary according to the amenities offered in each category. Some buses even have waitress service and onboard movies. However, a word of caution: Keep a close eye on your hand luggage and camera onboard buses, trains and in terminals, as it could happen that pickpockets and thieves might target weary travelers, in those places.

MAY I RENT A CAR IN PERU?

Yes, you can, but it is not recommended, because there are sometimes aggressive or drunk drivers, poor road conditions and signalization, as well as long distances to cover between tour destinations, which makes taking tourist or private transportation a better (and usually more affordable) alternative. However, if you do want to rent a car, we have a list of the best known car rental companies, including [Hertz](#), [Budget](#) and [Avis](#). Make sure you look closely for hidden charges such as mileage and insurance, before booking and paying. Therefore, you might prefer booking your rental vehicle from your home country and with a trustworthy agent. And don't forget to get an international driver's license in your country, before coming to Peru.

HOW CAN I FIND THE PERUVIAN EMBASSY IN MY COUNTRY?

Generally, there is a Peruvian embassy in most capital cities and you can get in touch with it by phone, using a paper or virtual phone directory, or you can write in your Internet browser: Peruvian Embassy in (the name of your country), and you will automatically get all the data on how to contact that embassy in your country, and ask for information or get an appointment for an onsite consultation or eventual administrative procedure.

HOW CAN I CONTACT MY COUNTRY'S EMBASSY IN PERU?

The best thing you can do is enter the Internet and write in Google's browser: Embassy of (your country's name), and this will give you direct access to all the information you need to contact your embassy in Peru, which will generally be located in Lima. In other tourist cities, there are some consulates, but not always of every country. So, take advantage of your stay in Lima, to get in touch with your embassy, and its staff will be able to give you general information on Peru, as well as a list of consulates of your country and their location, phone number and other useful data which you might need during your trip.

ARE THERE ANY RESTRICTIONS ON WHAT I CAN BRING IN OR TAKE OUT OF PERU?

You may bring 2 liters of alcohol and 400 cigarettes in Peru, on a duty free basis. You can also enter the country with items for personal use, such as cameras, laptops and travel gear. It is illegal to take any original pre-Columbian art out of Peru and it is usually illegal to

enter into most countries with these artifacts. If you are going to buy reproductions, do so from a reputable dealer and obtain appropriate certification documentation from the Regional Direction of Culture's vendors, to show it to customs officials.

In the jungle, there are vendors who still sell live exotic birds and animals. However, it is illegal to take these endangered species outside the country, and you would expose yourself to heavy fines, if you should be discovered in possession of hidden or concealed animals or certain plant species like protected orchids, for example.

Bags of coca leaves are legally sold in Peru. But, they are not legal in most other countries. Although it would be impossible to produce any significant amount of cocaine from one of these bags of coca leaves, it's not worth taking the risk of bringing them back home. Just enjoy them in their place of origin and if there are any left, give them away to whoever you feel will appreciate and make good use of them.

DO I NEED SPECIAL VACCINATIONS TO TRAVEL TO PERU?

No specific vaccinations are required by law, to enter Peru. However, there are some which are recommended, like those against Cholera, Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Diphtheria, Typhoid and Yellow Fever. Many of these vaccinations are recommended if you are spending any time in the jungle, and generally, vaccination against Yellow Fever is considered as basic, if you are going to stay and hike in the jungle for several days, and even more so, if you plan on staying there for more than a week. Therefore, in

order for your Yellow Fever vaccination certificate to be valid, you must have received the vaccine at least ten days before entering the jungle area.

Malaria is also common in the deep Peruvian and Brazilian Amazon regions. So, ask your physician to prescribe you malaria tablets, to cover the duration of your stay in the jungle. Check with your doctor at least six weeks prior to traveling, because some shots take time to become effective. Ask him/her what he/she recommends and the possible side effects of each vaccination. For further details regarding vaccinations for Peru, visit the U.S. Center for Disease Control's website at:

IS TAP WATER SAFE TO DRINK?

Crude tap water is generally not safe to drink as such, in Peru, unless you boil it before drinking it. But, bottled water is readily available in all cities, towns and even villages, as well as at tourist sites, hotels and restaurants. Don't forget to use bottled water when brushing your teeth as well. In addition, ice is not always made with boiled or bottled water. Therefore, order your beverages without ice ("sin hielo") or ask your tour leader if the ice is safe in a particular restaurant or bar.

DO I HAVE TO GET A VISA TO VISIT PERU?

All professionals who visit Peru on business are required to have a visa. For those who come as tourists, such as US, Canadian, Australian and New Zealand citizens, as well as most people from Western Europe, only need a valid passport. Most visitors are given a

tourist card allowing them to stay in the country for up to 90 days. However, if you wish to extend your stay, you can do so, paying a fee for that purpose.

WHERE SHOULD I GO TO RESOLVE IMMIGRATION MATTERS?

If you are in Lima, you can get in touch or physically go to the DIGEMIN's main offices: <http://www.migraciones.gob.pe/index.php/quienes-somos/oficinas-en-lima/> , in order to resolve any matter related to your stay in the country. And once in Cusco, you will find the Immigration Office on Avenida El Sol,:

<https://mapsengine.google.com/map/edit?mid=zjVF4-cp9a1U.kDNZsuQ6FZQI> about 100 meters going up from the Central Post Office, on the left sidewalk, looking towards the top of the Avenue and the Main Square's location.

WHAT IS THE BEST TIME TO VISIT PERU, WEATHERWISE?

It all depends on which part of the country you plan on visiting, as there are three main geographical zones in Peru: The Coast (La Costa), the Mountains (La Sierra) and the Jungle (La Selva). If you are visiting the coastal desert area, which includes Lima, then it is better to come during Peru's summer months, from December to March. Once you go up to the mountains or enter the jungle areas, there are two seasons: The wet and dry seasons. If you are planning on visiting the Andes (La Sierra) which include tourist destinations and attractions, such as [Cusco](#), the [Sacred Valley of the Incas](#), [Machu Picchu](#) and the [Incan Trail](#), in our area of the country, you should come during the dry season which runs from May to September. Likewise, the best time to visit the jungle is during the dry months, between May and September.

WILL I BE ABLE TO USE MY CREDIT CARDS, ATM CARD AND TRAVELER'S CHECKS IN PERU?

Visa is the most widely accepted credit card in Peru. Mastercard is also popular, but American Express and Diner's Club are not that widely accepted. We consider that ATMs are the best way to draw cash at any time of day and night in larger cities, as well as in tourist localities like Cusco, Písaq and Urubamba (Sacred Valley), for example. Most ATMs work with the Plus system, although you can find some that accept Star, Cirrus and Interlink. The downside of credit and debit cards is that stores, hotels and restaurants will sometimes add up to an 8% commission to the final bill. Your best bet is to take money from the ATM and pay for your purchases in cash. Traveler's checks are usually good to take as "insurance", just in case. But, they are more difficult to change and the exchange rate is not as favorable as if you used cash.

CAN I USE MY CELL PHONE IN PERU?

Check with your cell phone provider, as each company is different, and they will give you the most up-to-date information.

DO I NEED TO TAKE A VOLTAGE CONVERTER OR ADAPTOR ALONG, TO USE PERSONAL APPLIANCES?

Peru uses 220 volt and 60 cycle electricity. Therefore, some travelers will require a voltage converter for 110 volt devices. Plugs are generally the 2 pronged flat plugs found in the US, though more and more public and private facilities are now using the European 2 rounded pronged plugs, with built-in electrical inlets that accept both models.

WHAT TIME ZONE IS PERU IN?

Peru is five hours behind GMT (Greenwich Mean Time), which is the same as Eastern Standard Time (EST), like in New York, and our country does not observe daylight-savings time. Therefore, from April to October, Peru is aligned with United States' Central Standard Time (CST), like in Chicago or Michigan.

WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT, WHEN I GET TO LIMA?

Upon your arrival at Lima's Jorge Chavez International Airport, our welcoming staff member will be waiting for you in the arrival lounge, with a quite visible sign with your name written on it and our company's logo, so that you might be able to identify them easily and not get lost in the crowd. Then, he or she will help you with your luggage and eventual last procedures, before leaving the terminal, to board a private vehicle that will take you to your hotel, if you plan on staying in Lima. On the way, our transfer staff member will fill you in and answer your questions on general information about Lima, your hotel and whatever plans you have during your stay in Lima.

Now, if you have to catch a direct connection flight, our staff member will assist you with check-in procedures, and will make sure that everything is in order to catch your plane to Cusco or any other destination, within Peru. Once that is over with, he or she will accompany you to the immigration checkpoint beyond which you will be going on your own, to the duty-free area and boarding lounge.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF THERE IS NO ONE TO WELCOME ME AT THE AIRPORT?

In the rare event that our staff member should have a mishap or might get to the airport late, please don't panic and remain in the arrival lounge where there generally are public phone booths you can call us from, unless you have your cell phone at hand, to call one of our [emergency numbers](#),

- ❖ 986770011
- ❖ 984294400
- ❖ 984000688

so that we might check with our welcoming staff and get back to you, to let you know about how much time it will take for that person to get to the airport, to meet you and take you to your hotel.

In the meantime, enjoy something to drink and eat, if you feel hungry, and our staff member will take care of the bill which we hope won't exceed USD\$ 10.00 per person. But, all in all just keep calm and collected, good humored and get acquainted with Peru's "flexible" schedules, although we will do everything possible for such situation never to happen.

WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT IF I DECIDE TO STAY IN LIMA, TO VISIT THE CITY AND SOME SURROUNDING TOURIST DESTINATIONS AND/OR ATTRACTIONS?

Good question! First of all, our welcoming staff member will give you some general data about Lima, on the way to your hotel, and will set a time that suits you, in the evening, for a briefing with your guide who will then give you more specific and detailed information about the activities you have planned to go on, while in Lima.

Then, in the morning of the following day and at the indicated time, your guide will be waiting for you at your hotel's reception, to start with your chosen program for the day.

WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT WHEN I TRAVEL TO CUSCO?

If, for example, you have chosen to travel from Lima to Cusco by plane (Which is what most people do), our private vehicle or the hotel's shuttle vehicle will take you to Lima's airport, where one of our staff members will be present, to help you with your luggage and check-in procedures, and will accompany you through the whole process, until you step through the immigration checkpoint, to then get on your plane.

WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT WHEN I GET TO CUSCO?

Upon your arrival in Cusco, you can expect the same scenario as in Lima, with the exception that the private vehicle ride from the airport to your hotel will be shorter (Between 10 and 20 minutes, depending on your hotel's location).

Once settled in your hotel room, we recommend you to have some coca leaf tea, a shower and a good rest, to refresh, recharge your batteries and let your organism adapt a bit to Cusco's altitude (About 3,350 m. above sea level, in the city's Historical Center).

Afterwards, you might want to have a short stroll around your hotel's immediate area, and if you feel hungry, try to keep to light food, in small quantities and avoid any alcoholic beverages, as well as smoking, if possible, in order to give your body and head a chance to get accustomed to such important and fast altitude change, from the coast to about 3,350 m. up in the Andes, just to see how you adapt to that new reality.

As far as getting accustomed to altitude is concerned, every individual reacts differently to it. Therefore, there is no ready-made recipe for everyone... Sorry about that! So, you'll have to be quite aware of how your organism and general humor might be affected by this altitude change, and should report any unusual dizziness, headache, nausea or fatigue, either to the hotel staff or to your guide, and if you are on your own, we recommend you to

first rent a local cell phone at our agency, so as to be in constant contact with our staff, just in case you don't feel well while out and on your own.

IF I DECIDE TO TAKE A TAXI AT CUSCO'S AIRPORT, AND GO TO MY HOTEL ON MY OWN, HOW MUCH SHOULD IT COST ME FROM THE AIRPORT TO THE CITY'S HISTORICAL CENTER?

Well, in general, if you take a taxi at the terminal's main exit door, it will cost you between S/. 15 and 20 Nuevos Soles (Peruvian currency) which is equivalent to between USD\$ 6.00 and USD\$ 8.00. Now, if you want to bargain a cheaper price, you may flag a taxi from the road, in front of the airport's main exit gate, and that should cost you from S/. 8.00 to 12.00 (From USD\$ 3.00 to 4.50), as a maximum fare. Of course, if your hotel is located outside the city's Historical Center, then the taxi driver will charge you extra, but in any case, it shouldn't be more than S/. 30.00 or USD\$ 8.00. Anyway, always ask for and try to bargain the price of the ride, before you step into the cab.

Also, it's always best to write the taxi's license plate number on a piece of paper or to memorize it, just in case you would have to complain about any exaggerated pricing or unduly behavior on the driver's part.

Finally, you should always prefer taxi cabs with on-board radio and an advertising sign on top of their roof, as those belong to officially registered companies and are submitted to stricter regulations, and so, are usually safer, cleaner and driven by responsible people, which is not always the case with private taxi drivers.

But, if you really want to play it on the safe side, we highly recommend you to use our private transfer services, as they avoid you a whole lot of hassles, carrying your luggage and waiting for a hypothetic perfect taxi to come along, which sometimes can be quite lengthy and frustrating for someone who has just arrived in Cusco.

HOW MUCH DOES A TAXI RIDE COST, INSIDE CUSCO'S HISTORICAL CENTER?

If you take a taxi to go somewhere within Cusco's Historical Center, the ride should not cost you more than S/. 4.00 (USD\$ 1.75), before 10:00 p.m. After that, the fare might rise up to a maximum of S/. 6.00 (USD\$ 2.40).

AND HOW MUCH WOULD IT COST ME TO TAKE A TAXI TO A PLACE OUTSIDE CUSCO'S HISTORICAL CENTER?

Well, it all depends on the distance, traffic and time of the day or night at which you board the taxi, in the way that prices vary in function of the distance and itinerary the driver will have to follow to get to where you want to go to. Then, peak hour traffic, from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m., makes prices rise as well, and finally, after 10:00 p.m., prices also rise, as the nighttime fare is enforced for all taxis, in the city.

So we might say that, in most cases, you'd have to pay between S/. 5.00 (USD\$ 2.10) and S/. 15.00 (USD\$ 6.60), for most taxi rides, from the city's Historical Center, to other districts of Cusco, without leaving the valley.

AND WHAT ABOUT IF I WANT TO VISIT THE SACRED VALLEY, PAYING A TAXI DRIVER TO TAKE ME ALONG?

In that case, you'd have to go to a taxi terminal, where you should ask for prices for a private ride to and visit of the Sacred Valley, and try to bargain prices, to get to a balanced amount which should not exceed S/. 200 (USD\$ 80.00), considering that you will have to pay for the driver's lunch and give him a tip of at least 10% of the total charge for the ride. So, your total budget for that kind of private excursion should amount to about S/. 350 (USD\$ 120), including any extras along the way, without considering entrance fees to the sites you will visit, your midday meal and whatever other expenses or purchases you might have to face during the excursion, which could easily take your overall budget up to about S/. 500 (USD\$ 190).

That's why we recommend you to book a private visit of the Sacred Valley at our agency, with a private guide who will give you a full commentary about each place you visit, instead of blindly setting off with a simple taxi driver who probably doesn't know much about the history of the place, or could tell you any fantasy or sheer lies, just to fill in the blanks in the conversation, and impress you.

Also, don't take the risk that a road accident, due to speeding, for example, or a lousy service might ruin your whole experience and vacations. Remember that you're not going to come to Peru every year. Therefore, it's better to make sure everything runs smoothly and turns out to be a memorable day, instead of a nightmare holiday, to start your stay in our beautiful region.

IF I DECIDE TO HAVE A TASTE OF NIGHTLIFE IN CUSCO, WHICH ARE THE BEST PLACES TO GO TO, AND WHAT INDIVIDUAL BUDGET SHOULD I RESERVE FOR THAT KIND OF OUTINGS?

OK! That's a tricky question, because there are places for every taste and budget, in Cusco, and you could spend the whole night having fun, since there are so many bars and discotheques you can go to that you wouldn't be able to try them all in a whole week, visiting at least 4 every night. Yes, Cusco has become a party town and nightlife is quite active here.

Now, if you want to select 2 or 3 places among the best in town, we would recommend the following: El templo, Mitology Bar and Mama Africa . As far as bars and pubs are concerned, as well as discos, we'd recommend the , El Norton which we consider as the most appropriate and safe to go to. Of course, if you want a complete list of nightlife entertainment places in Cusco, we could get one out for you, with our advice and recommendations, according to order of preference, prices and opening schedules.

In any case, without setting a fixed price for such outings, we would say that you should consider a minimum individual budget of S/. 100.00 (USD\$ 40.00) for a simple night out on the town, and that budget could easily rise up to S/. 500.00 (USD\$ 200.00) or more, if you decide to go to first class places, to give yourself the time of your life.

So, make sure you calculate your available budget well, before going all out, and try not to get drunk, because there are people who are on the lookout to rob or take advantage of tourists who have had too much to drink.

ARE THERE NIGHTLIFE ENTERTAINMENT PLACES WHERE I COULD MEET LOCAL PEOPLE?

Yes, of course, there are plenty of them, and they can be classified into 2 categories, as well as in several quality levels in each one of these, in the way that there are touristy places where Peruvians go to have some fun, and typical local joints where tourists are welcome to go and meddle with Cusco's crowd, dancing on and listening to popular Latin American tunes that will certainly be a curiosity and novelty for you and your eventual accompanying party.

So, go for what you feel suits you best, and enjoy Cusco by night, in so many ways that it will seem like a different world to be discovered, as long as you don't get lost, in that process. In any case, if you have rented a local cell phone at our agency, you will still have a way of getting in touch with us, 24-hours-a-day, if you find yourself in a tight spot, during one of your nighttime sprees. Good luck and take good care of yourself and of whoever accompanies you.

IS BREAKFAST ALWAYS INCLUDED IN HOTEL-OVERNIGHT RATES, IN PERU?

Yes, in general, most hotel and hostels include breakfast in their prices, although there are properties that do not serve breakfast on the premises. However, when this is the case, these usually have a contract or agreement with a nearby restaurant or coffee shop that can deliver that service and the hotel's reception staff will show you the place where you can have breakfast, and in those cases, it's not included in the hotel's price.

ARE THERE DECENT AND CLEAN PUBLIC BATHROOMS IN CUSCO'S HISTORICAL CENTER?

Well, not precisely. So, we would recommend you should enter a tourist coffee shop, fruit juice or ice cream place, and ask if you may use the bathroom. Generally, most local business owners or managers will let you use their facilities, in the hope that you will decide to stay and consume something, or at least, come back later on or some other day, to have something to drink or eat at their place. So, just give them a hint about your intention to come back, and if you like the place, you might even decide to sit and enjoy something on their list, just to secure their approval, next time you have to use their business for a bathroom emergency.

WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF I GET ROBBED WHILE ON THE STREET AND ON MY OWN?

In this case, the best you could do is keep as calm as you can and try to find a policeman or woman in the nearby vicinity. Then, immediately call us from any closest public phone, to let us know about the theft, your exact location and whether you have managed to make direct contact with a Tourist Police Officer (They wear a greenish-brown uniform and are better dressed than local traffic police). We will then do everything possible to assist you

with your claim. And if you have suffered any injury, just let us know, and if need be, we'll call an ambulance to take you to the closest clinic, where you will directly be attended.

However, we hope that none of this will ever happen during your stay in Cusco and program with us. So, we insist that you should hire a good health and theft insurance, in order to properly cover that sort of dramatic experiences, and avoid nightmares, for not having taken the right precaution, before traveling.

WHAT OTHER ENTERTAINING ACTIVITIES ARE THERE IN CUSCO, APART FROM BARS AND DISCOS?

OK! If you don't particularly care for bars and discos, but would like to enjoy your stay in Cusco, in other ways, there also are museums, cultural events, concerts, theater plays, folkloric dance and music shows, etc. you can go to, and if you'd rather participate in sports activities, we have a whole array of them on offer, which you can browse through and choose from on our website and in-office manuals.

Now, don't worry about things to do while in Cusco, as there are so many options at hand, that we could keep you busy for a whole month, both in the Incas' ancient capital city, as in its surrounding area. So, just enjoy it, and you'll tell us about it all, afterwards.

ARE THERE ANY PLACES WHERE I COULD QUIETLY SIT, HAVE A DRINK AND READ A GOOD BOOK?

Yes, there are a few places that offer that type of atmosphere, and although they are not that many around town, we could give you their address and show you where to find them on your map.

ARE THERE ANY MOVIE THEATERS IN CUSCO?

Unfortunately, videos and Internet have sunk movie theaters about 2 decades ago, and today, it's better to watch your favorites in your hotel room commodity, thanks to cable TV available in hostels and hotels from 3 stars up, or at some bar that offers that kind of service.

ARE THERE PLACES WHERE I CAN WATCH MY FAVORITE SOCCER, FOOTBALL, BASKETBALL OR CRICKET GAMES ON A LARGE SCREEN?

Yes, there are a few pubs in the Historical Center that offer that kind of entertainment to their foreign and local clients, as long as you have something to drink and/or eat on the premises, and some even charge a small entrance fee, to assist to the game on a giant home theater screen.

ARE THERE ANY PARKS OR GREEN SPACES TO TAKE A LEISURELY WALK, IN THE CENTER OF CUSCO?

Sadly, Cusco's Historical Center has no such open green spaces or wooded areas for that sort of walks. So, you might see with us the options at hand that could satisfy your craving for getting away from the city's hustle and bustle, breathe a bit of fresh air and relax or spend special moments with your partner or family. Remember that Cusco is surrounded by hills, mountains, small valleys and countryside that are well-worth enjoying on a sunny day.

IS THERE A LOT OF DISTURBING NOISE LATE AT NIGHT, DUE TO PARTIES AND NIGHTLIFE, IN THE CITY'S HISTORICAL CENTER?

Depending on the area your hotel is located in, there might be that sort of nighttime nuisance, especially on Fridays and Saturdays. So, if you want to avoid sleepless nights, let's just mention the [center's hottest spots](#), so that you might book your hotel in a quieter neighborhood, to secure peaceful nights, and if you want us to book a quiet hotel for you, we will be more than glad to do so, at a cheaper rate than most other tour operators would.

ARE THERE ANY INTERESTING AND/OR TYPICAL PUBLIC MARKETS I COULD VISIT ON MY OWN WHILE IN CUSCO, APART FROM SAN PEDRO'S CENTRAL MARKET?

Yes, for example, there is the Flower and Handicraft Market, every Saturday, which offers you an interesting array of plants of all sorts, as well as local handicraft, furniture, books in Spanish, toys and games, natural products and light food, along with some cultural or commercial events, on a large square, outside the city's Historical Center. It's well-worth visiting, to give yourself the opportunity to mix with the local crowd, learn some Spanish and practice bartering with vendors, which is fun, as long as you don't try to bring prices down to excess. Always remember that these people also deserve living decently, without for that much exploiting others, in order to be able to do so

Another option on Saturdays, is Cusco's famous Flea Market; one of the largest in Peru, where you will have plenty of chances to see and buy all sorts of curiosities and secondhand objects, taking a real popular mass bath with all kinds of people who go there to browse around and escape from their daily routine.

ARE THERE ANY FREE STREET SHOWS OR EXHIBITIONS I COULD SEE, IN THE HISTORICAL CENTER?

Yes, there are free open-air shows and concerts that are generally organized on the Main Square (Plaza de Armas), mainly in the course of the months of June, July and August, each year. So, check the [Agenda of Cultural Events in Cusco](#), to know more about dates and events you'd like to attend, while you're here.

IS THERE A PLACE WHERE LOCAL AND/OR TYPICAL ART AND HANDICRAFT ARE EXHIBITED AND SOLD BY THEIR PRODUCERS, ON THE STREET, IN CUSCO'S HISTORICAL CENTER?

Of course! The typical place to find such art and handicraft is on the Plazoleta San Blas (San Blas Square), in the neighborhood that bears the same name, since it is the main

activity center for artists and craftspeople, in Cusco. It's located about three blocks uphill from the Main Square, and is a hive of workshops of all kinds, meanwhile the square is the scene of a number of on-the-street displays of a wide array of locally homemade handicraft and art, generally presented and sold by their producers themselves, which gives it all a typical and more personal touch that tourist shops cannot match, along with prices that are often more accessible than those found around the Main Square.

IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT IS CUSCO'S MOST ROMANTIC AND PLEASANT NEIGHBORHOOD TO ENJOY A STROLL ON MY OWN OR WITH MY PARTNER?

Well, that's an easy one! Once again, we would warmly recommend San Blas as the most romantic and cozy neighborhood in town, either for a leisurely stroll, a meal at a typical or international restaurant, a drink at a concert pub or a sit on a bench, to exchange confidences, hugs and kisses, as long as you don't push it too far...