



Mystical Peru: From the Source of the Amazon to the Heights of Machu Picchu **Trip Planner**

Congratulations! You are about to embark upon the vacation of a lifetime...O.A.R.S.' Mystical Peru rafting and trekking adventure.

As you plan for your trip, many questions may arise. What should I pack? What equipment will be provided? What will the weather be like? What about accommodations before and after the trip? What about travel arrangements?

Please use this Trip Planner as a resource for general information on your Mystical Peru adventure. The information enclosed covers most everything you'll need to know before your trip. Of course, if you have questions that are not answered in this packet, we are happy to help! Just call 1-800-346-6277 in the USA or Canada or 1-209-736-4677 if outside the USA or Canada to speak with an adventure consultant, or email us at info@oars.com.

Pre-Departure Information

****Please fill out the enclosed Guest Registration form and return it to our office **at least 90 days prior** to your departure—this information is invaluable to us in planning your trip.****

Getting There

- You trip begins and ends in Lima, Peru. For your reference, American Airlines offers direct service from Miami, Continental Airlines from Houston, Delta from Atlanta and Lan Peru from Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York (JFK) and Miami. Connections through other Central and South American cities are also available.
- We will arrange your round-trip Lima-Cuzco flights at an additional cost of US\$340. Airfares may fluctuate and this is subject to change until ticketed.
- For assistance in making your flight arrangements to Lima, please contact Exito Travel. Exito has been an airfare specialist to Latin America since 1994. With 15 years regional experience, Exito knows Latin America intimately, along with the region's potential airfare pitfalls and how to avoid them. To obtain a quote, fill out an online request form at: <http://www.exitotravel.com/affiliate/templateform.php?id=OARS> or contact Exito at info@exitotravel.com or 800-655-4053.

Please do not purchase airfare until your departure has been confirmed by the minimum number of required guests.

Rendezvous

- Upon arrival at the Lima airport, you will be met by an O.A.R.S. representative and transferred to your hotel for your overnight stay. Dinner is on your own this first night, but there are several great places to eat, all within a short walking distance from your hotel.

The Last Day of Your Trip

- After breakfast we'll transfer to the airport in Cusco for our flight back to Lima. The city tour of Lima will begin at approximately 2:00 PM and will last about 3 hours, visiting both the colonial and modern sections of the city. Full use of a day room is provided to relax while waiting to transfer to the airport for departing flights. For international flights, passengers should arrive three hours prior to departure.

What's Included?

- Skilled professional guide service
- 7-nights hotel accommodation (based on double occupancy)
- 5-nights lodging at Mountain Lodges of Peru (based on double occupancy)
- 3-nights riverside camping
- All meals as outlined in the itinerary
- All activities and related equipment as outlined in the itinerary, including rafting and camping gear
- Airport transfers on scheduled days
- Ground transportation

What's Not Included?

- Flights to and from Lima, Peru
- Early arrival/delayed departure Lima airport transfers (may be arranged at additional cost)
- Roundtrip flight Lima-Cuzco US\$340 (*subject to change until ticketed*)
- Domestic airport security taxes approximately US\$7
- Airport departure tax US\$31.00
- Salkantay Trail Entrance Fee US\$50
- Single supplement US\$1375
- Excess baggage charges
- Meals not covered in itinerary
- Insurance of any kind, including travel or mandatory medical evacuation insurance
- Cost of immunizations (if necessary)
- Alcohol and personal items (See Packing List below)
- Gratuities

Equipment & Clothing

Footwear

For daily wear in the raft, we recommend an amphibious sport shoe such as those made by Teva, river sandals (with an ankle strap) or a comfortable pair of athletic shoes with good soles. These shoes will be wet all the time in the raft. Make sure you get good-grip, no-slip soles! In the boats, in camp and on shorter hikes from the river, river sandals are ideal. For trekking you'll need a pair of sturdy hiking boots, also with good tread. If you plan to buy footwear for the trip make sure you get it far enough in advance to break it in and wear your footwear until it's comfy—if your feet hurt you won't enjoy the trip.

Boat & Trekking Wear

For boating, start with sunscreen, a swimsuit, shorts, and long-sleeved shirt, and then add additional layers of long underwear, socks, rain pants, and rain jacket depending on the time of year. When wearing a wetsuit you'll start with your bathing suit and layer as well. In the morning, it can be cool on the boats. As the day warms up layers can be taken off and stored in your daypack. Similarly, when trekking, layering works well as you can expect extremely varied conditions.

Evening Wear

After a long day on the river or trail, you will want to refresh and change into clean comfortable clothing. Soft, loose-fitting shorts or pants, t-shirts, etc. will allow you to truly relax in the evening and you will want to have something dry and warm such as long sleeved shirts, pants and fleece. For the lodge and town, casual mountain and travel wear is appropriate.

Sun Protection

This trip takes place at very high elevations and protecting yourself from the sun should be taken very seriously. A sun hat, sunscreen, lip balm, and sunglasses are a must. Also, it's a good idea to have a long-sleeved cotton shirt and lightweight long pants (preferably light colors) to cover up when you need a break from the sun. Lightweight gloves can also protect your hands. At the end of each day, you will want to have some good moisturizing lotion or cream to replenish your skin from the drying effects of the sun, wind and water.

Suggested Packing List

If you do not already own any of the items on the suggested packing list feel free to call our office for suggestions. However, most items listed are available for purchase online at www.oars.com in the **OARStore**. Please be mindful of the natural environment when purchasing items for your trip. Whenever possible, consider recyclable containers, rechargeable batteries, natural (non-toxic) sunscreens, lotions, biodegradable soaps and so on.

Equipment:

- Duffel Bag: You must have a duffel or you can use one provided by the Mountain Lodges of Peru
- Backpack/Daypack: for day hikes and for trekking; it should be large enough to carry water, snacks and camera, as well as a rain jacket and an extra warm layer.
- Water bottles: 2 heavy-duty and minimum 1-liter capacity. For trekking, hydration systems like a CamelBak® are great, but you will still want 1 water bottle while in the boat
- Carabiner to attach your water bottle in the raft
- Headlamp or flashlight, extra batteries and bulb
- Plastic bags: large trash bags and zip-loc bags to organize luggage and to separate clean and dry clothes from wet and dirty
- Camera and accessories

Personal Items:

- Sunglasses with securing strap and a spare
- Towel: small, quick-drying and washcloth
- Toiletries including biodegradable soap and shampoo with moisturizer
- Sunscreen: waterproof & SPF 30 or higher
- Lip protection: SPF 30 or higher
- Moisturizing lotion (Skin tends to get dry – this is an important item!)
- Insect repellent (with DEET)
- Personal first aid kit (band-aids, antibiotic ointment, ibuprofen, moleskin, eye drops, stomach medication, etc.)
- Spare pair of glasses and/or contacts
- Cash for gratuities and incidentals

Clothing:

- Long-sleeved shirt: 2-3 lightweight (UPF-rated shirts are great)
- Long pants: 1-2 lightweight hiking pants
- Shade hat or visor with securing strap and a spare
- Bandana
- Rain jacket & pants: A hooded *waterproof* (not water resistant) jacket is recommended as well as good secure closures around your head, neck, wrists and ankles to prevent water from seeping in
- Bathing suit and/or swim trunks

- ___ Underwear: Quick-drying
- ___ Hiking shorts: 1-2 pair
- ___ T-shirts or lightweight quick-drying tops: 3-4
- ___ River sandals or amphibious sport shoes for rafting (such as *Teva*, *Chacos* or *Keen* brand)
- ___ Sturdy hiking boots: 1 pair, comfortable and with good tread
- ___ Casual shoes/slippers or thongs for the trail lodges
- ___ Hiking socks: 4 pair mid-weight minimum
- ___ Synthetic long underwear top & bottom: 1 set light- to mid-weight
- ___ Fleece top & bottom: 1 set mid- to heavy-weight
- ___ Warm hat and gloves
- ___ Casual clothes suitable for rural and urban travel

Optional Items:

- ___ Small day dry bag for the river portion of the trip (there will be a group dry bag to share in the boat)
- ___ Binoculars: lightweight and compact
- ___ Trekking poles: collapsible (Mountain Lodges of Peru provides quality wooden walking sticks)
- ___ Paddling gloves

To avoid being cold: Synthetic long underwear is a must-have on adventure trips. It can be worn under shorts, rain gear, T-shirts, etc., then stripped off when temperature rise. It keeps you warm even if it's wet (which can happen easily), dries quickly, and it's compact enough to be stuffed into your small waterproof bag or daypack after you take it off. It can be layered under your **waterproof** rain jacket and pants. **Be aware that cotton items, once wet, do not insulate; only synthetic and wool materials will keep you warm during cool, wet weather.**

Something warm for your top & bottom: Although the weather will probably be delightful, you need to be prepared for inclement weather. Bring a good fleece or wool top and bottom, along with a warm hat and gloves. You'll want to double up on your synthetic layers so that you'll have a set to wear in the boat and on the trail, then a set of warm, dry clothes for the evening.

Cameras

In addition to your regular camera case, we recommend using extra protection such as zip-lock plastic bags, a waterproof camera case or a small day dry bag on the river, with padding. Water and dust can be a problem—so clean your camera every night with tissue, a brush and lens paper. We strongly recommend you take out a rider on your homeowner's policy to cover your camera—especially if it's fine equipment. If you are planning to bring a digital camera, don't forget extra media cards, batteries, etc. Disposable waterproof and panorama cameras are also a fun option.

For Women Only

Even if you aren't anticipating your menstrual period, come prepared for it. We recommend you bring some sandwich size zip-lock bags. They can be used during the day while you are on the river or hiking and can be disposed of when you reach your night's lodging. (HINT for tampon users: o.b.® tampons are 1/3 the size of regular tampons, tuck discreetly into pockets and have less paper wrapping). Many women suggest bringing a small supply of baby wipes.

A number of our female guests have found a feminine urinary device (F.U.D.) very helpful on rafting trips and for camping in general. A F.U.D. allows women to urinate while standing and requires minimal undressing for discreet bathroom use. Previous guests recommend practicing with the device at home to maximize the benefits on your outdoor adventure. For additional information, see *Accessories and Unique Items* for the Pee Pod Feminine Funnel in the OARStore at <http://oars.newheadingsllc.com/>. For interesting and informative reviews, search for *FUD* at <http://www.rei.com/>.

Packing Your Gear

- Pack your gear in strong duffel bags. Attire is very casual – comfort, convenience and space take precedence over style. Also include casual clothing appropriate for adventure travel and evenings at your lodges. Bringing only what is necessary will save time packing and repacking. Extra baggage can be an unwanted burden for yourself and others.
- New weight regulations for Peru Rail (and thus for the trek) limit travelers to one carry-on backpack with a maximum weight of 11 pounds and one duffel bag with a maximum weight of 22 pounds. We do not have a weight limit outside of the trek but all flights now restrict baggage and charges for additional weight and bags can be expensive. Check with your carrier for their regulations.

Extra Luggage

- You'll be provided with a waterproof river bag the night before you leave Cusco for the Apurimac and you may leave your travel luggage and trekking gear at the hotel. Similarly, the night before your trek begins, Mountain Lodges of Peru will furnish you with an appropriate duffel that will hold the gear you'll need on the trek, and once again you can leave additional gear and your traveling luggage at the hotel. After the trek and for your day in Machu Picchu, you'll pack what you need for the day in your day pack, and your gear will be trained back to Cusco and will be waiting for you at your hotel.

Weather

You may want to check the weather in Peru a week prior to your trip for an up-to-date forecast. We recommend you use the following web sites: www.weather.com or www.wunderground.com.

The central and southern region of the Peruvian coast, where Lima is located, is generally sunny in the summer (November to May) and cloudy during the rest of the year. Temperatures vary between 20°C (68 °F) and 30°C (86°F) during the summer and 10°C (50°F) and 20°C (68 °F) during the winter.

The highlands of the Andes—the locale of Cusco, the Sacred Valley, Machu Picchu and the Apurimac River—usually have a rainless winter that extends from April to October, and a rainy season that lasts from November to March, with heaviest rains in January–February. Temperatures remain fairly constant year round with daytime averages in the upper 60s and nighttime lows in the 40s and upper 30s. Note that there are sudden temperature drops after sunset. Cusco and the Sacred Valley area are about 11,400 feet, or 3324 m, above sea level. At the higher elevations during the trek, daytime highs as low as 50 degrees are possible, along with nighttime lows below freezing.

Essential Travel Documents

Your Passport—If you don't have a passport, apply for one immediately because the process can be lengthy. If you do have a passport, find it and check the expiration date. **The passport must be valid for 6 months beyond your intended date of departure from Peru.** Make a photocopy of the photo page of your passport and carry it separately from your passport. If your passport is lost or stolen, a photocopy will help the local consulate speed up authorization for replacement.

Also check your passport for blank pages. If you do not have a least two blank pages in your passport, we recommend that you apply to have additional pages added.

Please do not pack your passport in your check-in luggage. You may be asked for your papers not only upon departure but a various times during your trip, even while checking into the hotel in Lima. If you are carrying a customs form, please keep it in a safe place at all times, perhaps in your pouch along with your other valuables. We do not recommend carrying it in the passport because we often must submit the passport at hotels, where the form can easily be lost.

Visas—Visas are not required for US citizens to enter Peru. For non-US citizens please check with the consulate.

When entering Peru you will be asked to fill out an embarkation card. This piece of paper is very important since it has to be given to the migratory authority when you leave the country. Do not lose it!

Travel and Evacuation Insurance—Travel insurance that includes medical emergency evacuation is mandatory in order for you to take part in this expedition. You must provide proof of purchase of evacuation insurance prior to the trip. Broader coverage that includes trip cancellation, trip interruption, baggage loss and medical protection is highly recommended. Information on Travel Insurance Services is included in your packet, however, there are many other travel insurance companies offering coverage. When selecting a policy please make sure you are very clear about what they will and will not cover. No travel insurance covers all scenarios. Proof of insurance will be required prior to your trip.

Immunizations and Health Considerations

Although we do not require any immunizations to participate on the Mystical Peru Adventure, it is important that you be up-to-date on several standard immunizations and that you check with your physician prior to departure. The CDC also is a good resource for recommendations pertaining to international travel immunizations. (www.cdc.gov)

Additionally, if you have a heart condition or high blood pressure we request that you please check with your physician prior to traveling at high altitude.

Physical Preparation

The Mystical Peru Adventure involves a variety of moderate to strenuous activities at high altitude. The trekking in particular requires a fairly high level of fitness due to the altitude involved. Hiking and rafting require a combination of cardiac and strength training. Jogging, swimming, and aerobic exercises will help increase endurance for the activities. Push-ups, sit-ups and other weight training exercises that increase upper and lower body strength for rafting and hiking will ensure preparedness for your trip. **We highly recommend that you undertake a vigorous training regimen to prepare yourself for the trek.** Regular exercise prior to your trip will certainly add to your enjoyment.

Trekking

There will be hiking and/or extended trekking on most days of your adventure. The trek is spread over four days and involves approximately 32 miles of moderate to strenuous hiking on steep and rocky trails and a section of stone paved Inca paths. Elevations range from 6,600 to over 15,000 feet, with the trek beginning at 10,560 feet. Day 3 is the most challenging with an elevation gain of 3,000 feet in a span of three miles to reach the maximum altitude of 15,000 feet. Good physical fitness is required and prior hiking experience is recommended.

Special Considerations

Please let us know if you're having a birthday or anniversary on the trip. We'll also need to know of any medical or dietary requirements that you'd like us to consider in planning your trip (i.e. if you're a vegetarian or vegan, or if you have any food allergies.). Please note this on the Guest Registration Form (be specific as to your needs) and return it to our office at least 90 days before your trip. If you're booking your trip less than 90 days before departure, please make sure you've discussed any special requests with our office.

During Your Trip

Meals

Peru is known world wide for its unique and varied cuisine. You will be able to experience a great variety of regional foods during your travels on this multi-sport adventure. Peru's variety in cuisines is based on the ancient cultural traditions of the Incas and their predecessors, the diversity of its ecosystems, and the more recent influence of European and Asian culinary traditions. In the markets, you will discover the great festival of colors, aromas and flavors.

The coastal area is noted for its ceviche and use of cumin, cilantro, various chilies and the rare Peruvian palillo to season dishes featuring kid-goat, duck, and beef. The mountainous region is noted for a great variety of corn dishes. There are also countless offerings of potato due to Peru's vast variety of the tuber. Researchers believe that Peru is host to over 4,000 varieties of potato. Other flavorful offerings of this region include alpaca and guinea pig seasoned with Andean products such as chili peppers, goosefoot, black mint or pampa savory. Regardless of where you are—urban or rural—you will be delighted by the incredible variety of traditional foods served.

Alcohol

Alcoholic beverages are not included with the cost of your Peruvian adventure, but are readily available at lodgings and restaurants. Pisco and chicha are well known cocktails in Peru. Pisco is the delicious result of the blending of European grapevines, sun of the south Peruvian coast and the traditional knowledge of the potters who make the jars in which the drink is aged. The color of pisco is transparent, its flavor strong and its odor slightly fragrant. The delicate brandy can be drunk straight or as the ever-popular cocktail—the Pisco Sour.

The other popular Peruvian alcoholic beverage is the corn-based chicha. Chicha is an integral part of many pre-Hispanic rituals. In many areas of the Andes it is still prepared as it has been for hundreds of years. It is drunk in fermented and unfermented forms, and tends to have low alcohol content. It is often spiced and served with fruit.

Water

We recommend you drink only bottled or previously boiled water, and that you bring a refillable water bottle or similar device, especially when traveling in distant zones from cities.

Money Matters

The official currency in Peru is the Nuevo Sol (S/). Money can be exchanged at the airport in Lima or Cuzco, at the Money Exchange Offices known as “Casas de Cambio” or at banks. The US dollar is accepted in most commercial shops at the daily rate of exchange. ATMs are available in the larger cities and many offer the choice of US or Peruvian currency.

Credit Cards

Credit cards are readily accepted in Lima and Cuzco, but it is suggested that you have cash for purchases outside of the cities. Small bills are helpful. On your trek, you will be asked to open a voucher on your credit card for potential extras such as alcoholic beverages, massage services, clothing/souvenirs or other incidentals. (You may also pay in US or Peruvian currency with some limitations.) Check with your credit card provider regarding surcharges for international purchases prior to your departure.

Shopping

Lima's shops, galleries and markets offer a typical sampling of Peruvian handicrafts. Handmade craft stores are found in the markets on Avenida La Marina, in Pueblo Libre and Avenida Petit Thouars in Miraflores. Markets outside major cities are usually less expensive, but unlike city shops, there is no guarantee on the quality of purchased items.

The sales tax (IGV) is 19%. Most stores, shopping centers, and hand made craft markets are open seven days a week (including holidays) from 9 A.M. to 8 P.M. You may bargain with street, market, and beach vendors on the price of some articles. This is called "regateo".

Electricity

Usually five- and four-star hotels offer electrical current of 110 volts. The lodges on the trail have an electrical current of 220 volts which is common throughout the country and guests should bring adapters for charging electronics as there is a limited supply at the lodges for their use.

Time Zones

Peru is located in the same international time zone as the US east coast. During Daylight Savings Time in the US, Peru is on Central Time.

Something Voluntary

In reviewing your statement, you'll note a \$1/person/day donation to Waterkeeper alliance, a non-profit conservation organization dedicated to fishable, swimmable and drinkable waterways worldwide. One-hundred percent of these funds go directly to worldwide watershed protection and your contribution is tax-deductible. This donation is voluntary and may be removed from your invoice if you choose not to participate. Please notify our office if you would prefer to delete the donation from your balance.

Gratuities

Guests often ask whether gratuities are appropriate, and in what amount. "Thank you" is always enough to put a smile on the faces of your guides and staff, but tipping is one of the many ways to reward them for their extra efforts. Because this adventure consists of several components with specific staff, we have created per person gratuity guidelines in order to guide you on how to extend a gratuity to the people who make your trip more enjoyable.

- Rafting crew: \$US 60
- Trekking lodge and route staff: \$US 50
- Assistant trekking guide: \$US 30
- Tour leader: \$US 160 (Your tour leader will double as your lead trekking guide; in some cases you may have an additional North American host on your trip.)

If you plan to tip, remember to bring cash as you will not be able to put a gratuity on your credit card or extend after your trip.

Contact Information

•For more information on this or any of our over 75 rafting, sea kayaking, or multi-sport adventures, please call 1-800-346-6277 in the USA or Canada or 1-209-736-4677 if outside the USA or Canada or email us at info@oars.com and one of our knowledgeable adventure consultants will be happy to help you.

Did you know that travel related activities account for about 1/3 of the greenhouse gas emissions worldwide? Visit www.oars.com/CarbonNeutral.html to join O.A.R.S. in making your entire travel experience environmentally friendly and 100% carbon neutral.

A Few Important Details

Reservations & Deposit

- An \$800/person deposit is required at the time of reservation. The balance is due 120 days prior to departure.

Cancellations & Refunds

- If you find it necessary to cancel your trip, notify us as soon as possible. You can telephone, but we also need a written notice. The cancellation fee after you've made your deposit can range up to the entire trip cost, based upon the number of days prior to your trip that we receive your cancellation notice. We regret we cannot make exceptions for personal emergencies. For this reason, we strongly urge our participants to investigate trip insurance (see Insurance). Cancellations more than 90 days prior to the departure earn a full refund less a \$500 per person handling fee. Cancellations 89 days or less prior to your trip are not refundable.

Medical

- Under most circumstances, if you are of an adventurous spirit and in reasonably good health, you should have no problem enjoying this trip. People with medical conditions, including pregnancy, should have a physician's approval before taking an adventure travel trip.

Insurance

- Although every effort is made to insure a safe trip for all, **we require that you purchase medical evacuation insurance to participate in this expedition.** Call Travel Insurance Services at 800-937-1387 or visit their website at <http://www.travelinsure.com/what/imedhigh.htm?32635> for inexpensive options that cover this requirement. We also strongly recommend that you protect yourself, your belongings, and your vacation through the purchase of a short-term traveler's policy. A trip cancellation policy covers your non-refundable payments in most cases, should you have to cancel your trip at the last minute due to illness or injury, as well as including the coverage required above. Trip participants should realize that in the event of illness or injury on a river trip, evacuation could be prolonged, difficult, and expensive. Personal belongings and cameras are carried entirely at the owner's risk, and we accept no responsibility for lost, damaged, delayed, or stolen property.

Liability Waiver

- Everyone is required to sign a standard liability release before the trip, acknowledging awareness that some risks are associated with the trip. Safety is of the utmost concern on our trips. However, due to the nature of the activities, a condition of your participation is that you will sign this form before the trip begins. Anyone who refuses to sign the form will not be allowed to participate, and consistent with Travel Outdoors, Inc. cancellation policy, there will be no refund of the trip fees at that time.

Responsibility – An Important Notice

- Travel Outdoors, Inc., Apumayo Expeditions, Mountain Lodges of Peru and cooperating agencies act only in the capacity of agent for the participants in all matters relating to transportation and/or all other related travel services, and assume no responsibility however caused for injury, loss or damage to person or property in connection with any service, including but not limited to that resulting directly or indirectly from acts of God, detention, annoyance, delays, and expenses arising from quarantine, strikes, theft, pilferage, force majeure, failure of any means of conveyance to arrive or depart as scheduled, civil disturbances, government restrictions or regulations, and discrepancies or change in transit over which they have no control. Reasonable changes in itinerary may be made where deemed advisable for the comfort and well-being of the participants, including cancellation due to water fluctuation, insufficient bookings, and other factors.
- You could be swept overboard. Your guide will make every attempt to assist, but you must be strong and agile enough to “self-help” without further endangering yourself or others. Please be advised our U.S. Coast Guard approved personal flotation devices are rated to accommodate persons with a chest size no larger than 56 inches. We are experienced at accommodating people with various disabilities. Please give us an opportunity to make you feel welcome. We need to discuss any special requirements ahead of time. We may decide, at any time, to exclude any person or group for any reason we feel is related to the safety of our trips. On advancement of deposit the depositor agrees to be bound by the above recited terms and conditions. Prices and itinerary are subject to change without notice.

Apumayo Expeditions and Mountain Lodges of Peru:

- Apumayo Expeditions and Mountain Lodges of Peru, travel partners of Travel Outdoors, Inc. are the operators of this trip. Upon arrival, a representative will meet you and escort you throughout the program. These staff members are the very best and will strive to ensure your complete satisfaction.