Ultimate South America

Go Beyond Tour | 29 Days | Physical Level 2

Lima – Sacred Valley – Machu Picchu – Cusco – Puno – Copacabana – La Paz – Uyuni – San Pedro de Atacama – Santiago – Valparaiso - Mendoza – Buenos Aires – Iguazu – Rio de Janeiro

The ultimate tour of South America is an all-encompassing journey that will take you through the landscapes of Peru, Chile, Bolivia, Argentina and Brazil on an epic adventure.

- Marvel at Machu Picchu
- Discover the Salt Flats of Uyuni
- Taste wine in Maipu Valley in Mendoza
- Experience gaucho life in the pampas
- See the incredible Iguazu Falls
- Take a tango class in Buenos Aires

TOUR MAP

ULTIMATE SOUTH AMERICA TOUR INCLUSIONS:

- Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a land only option is selected)
- All accommodation
- Meals as stated
- All sightseeing and entrance fees
- All transportation and transfers
- English speaking National Escorts (if your group is 10 or more passengers) or Local Guides
- Specialist advice from our experienced travel consultants
- Visa fees for Australian passport holders

The only thing you may have to pay for are personal expenditure e.g. drinks, optional excursions or shows, insurance of any kind, customary tipping, early check in or late check out and other items not specified on the itinerary.

GO BEYOND TOURS:

Venture off the beaten track to explore fascinating destinations away from the tourist trail. You will discover the local culture in depth and see sights rarely witnessed by other travellers. These tours take you away from the comforts of home but will reward you with the experiences of a lifetime.

These tours include:

- Walking through classic sites
- Unique cultural experiences and encounters
- Off the beaten track destinations
- Evenings at leisure for independent exploration

The cost of your tour includes most meals, however on occasion you will have the opportunity for some free time around mealtimes to experience the local restaurants for yourself. At these times meals will be at your own expense. The meals which are included in your tour are clearly stated on each individual day of the itinerary below.

Our Latin America tours are designed for those who wish to see the iconic sites and magnificent treasures of this continent on an excellent value group tour whilst travelling with like-minded people. We are sure you will have a wonderful time - prepare to be immersed in the authentic charm of the countries you will visit.

PHYSICAL LEVEL 2:

All our tours feature a physical rating to help you select the right holiday for you. To travel on any of our tours requires unaided mobility and the ability to stroll around the sights. 'Ultimate South America' is rated 2 on the physical level scale. A reasonable level of fitness is required but it's more about spending time on your feet rather than covering large distances. You'll be getting on and off coaches and boats, walking around the sights and climbing some steps.

- There will be sightseeing on foot for both short and extended periods of time
- Sightseeing will involve climbing several steps, often without handrails
- Some days will be spent at altitude, notably during your time in Cusco, Bolivia and San Pedro de Atacama

Of course, our National Escorts and Local Guides will always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance; however, they cannot be expected to cater for customers who are unfit to complete the itinerary.

JOINING YOUR TOUR:

The tour is 29 days in duration including international flights.

Travellers booked on 'Land Only', the price includes your arrival/departure airport transfers if arriving/departing on the start and conclusion date of your tour. Please advise your international flight times to Reservations.

Join the tour on Day 1 in Lima and end the tour on Day 27 in Rio de Janeiro. Please refer to your final itinerary for more specific meeting instructions pertaining to your departure.

ITINERARY CHANGES:

It's our intention to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, the order of events or sightseeing may change as we look to improve our tours or as local conditions dictate. In these circumstances we'll make the best possible arrangements maintaining the integrity of your trip.

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1: Fly to Lima Meals: D

Fly to Peru's historical and sophisticated capital Lima, arriving the same day due to crossing the International Date Line. You will be met at the airport and transferred approximately 40 minutes to your hotel. Enjoy the rest of the afternoon at leisure before your welcome dinner this evening.

Early check-in is not included. Additional nights' before and after your tour can be arranged. Please contact our Reservations team to book.

Destination Information

Lima – Overlooking the Pacific in Peru's central region, Lima is a huge city of 10 million people. It was founded by conquistador Francisco Pizarro in 1535 and became the capital of the Viceroyalty of Peru, remaining as capital after the War of Independence gave Peruvians their freedom. The historic centre of the city is beautiful and was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1988.

Day 2: Lima Meals: B

Originally named the city of the Kings, Lima is rich in heritage, which you'll see for yourself today. Visit the ancient pyramid of Huaca Pucllana, built in 500 A.D. and located in the heart of Miraflores, one of Lima's affluent districts. Continue to the UNESCO World Heritage site, the historic centre, Plaza de Armas, and admire the colonial magnificence of its buildings, from the Government Palace, Cathedral of Lima and Archbishop's Palace of Lima.

One block from Plaza de Armas (Main Square) is the Convent of Santo Domingo founded in 1530 and completed in 1766 and is now considered to be of the most religious buildings in Peru. The remainder of the day is at leisure.

Destination Information

Plaza de Armas – The birthplace of Peru's capital, Plaza de Armas continues to be Lima's main hub. Here, you will be surrounded by many of Lima's historic landmarks including the 17th Century Government Palace, the official residence of Peru's President, the Municipal Palace and Cathedral of Lima which was built in 1649 and features a beautiful 1650 bronze fountain set on the site of what was once the city's gallows.

Day 3: Lima to Sacred Valley Meals: B, L

Fly to Cusco and transfer approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes to the Urubamba Valley, also known as the Sacred Valley, and home to Incan citadels and beautiful landscapes.

Enroute you will visit Manos de la Comunidad, where you will catch glimpses of the heritage and authentic culture of the valley's Quechua communities. You'll be able to interact with the villagers, witness their day-to-day life and learn about weaving, pottery and jewelry making. By participating you will gain a deeper understanding of their skills and the significance of preserving these ancient techniques.

Afterwards take a tour around the Pisac town and archaeological site, before you continue to your hotel in the Sacred Valley.

Please note, this day is at altitude.

Day 4: Moray, Maras & Ollantaytambo Meals: B, L, D

Begin the day in Moray, walking through the striking circular terraces, believed to have been used by the Incas for agricultural experiments. Afterward, you will visit Maras, where over 3,000 salt ponds carved into the mountainside capture salty spring water, producing the famous sal de Maras.

Continue to Ollantaytambo where we'll explore the old fortress. Later this afternoon board the Vistadome train and begin your epic rail journey to Machu Picchu, a journey of approximately 1 hour and 20 minutes.

You will stay overnight in Aguas Calientes.

Destination Information

Ollantaytambo – Ollantaytambo was once the royal estate of the emperor Pachacuti and is the starting point for the famous Inca Trail. The Incan ruins here are huge, whilst the town itself is a prime example of an Incan city – it is still laid out as it was when it was built by Pachacuti in the 13th century.

Aguas Calientes – Just 110km from Cusco, Aguas Calientes is in a unique setting, being surrounded by stone cliffs and forest greenery on all sides. The town was founded in 1901 as a camp for labourers and their families working on the nearby railroad to connect Cusco to the mine of Santa Ana. Nowadays, Aguas Calientes more commonly serves as the gateway for travellers to Machu Picchu.

Day 5: Machu Picchu Meals: B

This morning you will ascend to the Incan citadel of Machu Picchu by shuttle bus, which takes about 30 minutes along winding roads. Long abandoned by the Inca, it came to international attention when it was stumbled upon by Hiram Bingham in 1911 and is considered one of the New 7 Wonders of the World.

A guided tour will give you some insight into the Inca Empire. This includes up to four hours of sightseeing, walking on uneven terrain. Return to the village of Machu Picchu before riding the train back to Poroy followed by your transfer to Cusco. This day is at altitude.

Please see IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT MACHU PICCHU in this document.

Destination Information

Machu Picchu – One of the world's great archaeological discoveries, Machu Picchu sits on a mountain ridge 2430 metres above the Sacred Valley. Built around 1450, it was abandoned about 100 years later, and left 'undiscovered' until 1911 when it was brought to international attention. A classic example of Incan style, there are three main structures – the Temple of the Sun, the Inti Watana and the Room of Three Windows.

Day 6: Cusco Meals: B, L

Home to an incredible Incan legacy, Cusco has some of the richest heritage in Latin America and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The tour will include visits to the Plaza de Armas, once the heart of the Incan capital of Huacaypata; and Qoricancha, the temple of the sun. Head just out of town to the ruins of Sacsayhuaman, an old Incan fortress overlooking the city. This afternoon you have as time at leisure. This day is at altitude.

Destination Information

Cusco – Cathedrals and Inca temples overlook the narrow streets where alpaca knitwear can be bought for a fair price. For anyone interested in the Incan civilization, Cusco is the must-see destination.

Day 7: Cusco to Puno Meals: B, L

Take a train through the magnificent scenery of the Andean altiplano from Cusco to Puno, a city on the shores of Lake Titicaca. The journey time is 10 hours and 30 minutes. The train boasts dining cars, a bar car and an observation car, included is a gourmet lunch made with the finest Andean ingredients. Check in to your hotel and enjoy the evening at leisure. Today you will be at an altitude of up to 3830 metres.

Destination Information

Puno – A beautiful and charming town located on the banks of Lake Titicaca. The town is home to traditional Andean architecture which spreads down from the sides of the hill to the banks of the lake.

Lake Titicaca – The largest lake in South America and the world's highest navigable body of water, it is surrounded by a slow pace of life where crops are still harvested by hand and vast plateaus stretch for miles.

Day 8: Lake Titicaca to Copacabana Meals: B, L, D

Today, you bid farewell to Peru and cross into Bolivia, continuing to the lakeside town of Copacabana. Here, board a comfortable catamaran and set sail across the spectacular waters of Lake Titicaca. As you cruise, enjoy 360-degree views across the lake, with comfortable onboard facilities and a bar available throughout the journey.

Upon arrival at the Island of the Sun, explore the southern part of the island, beginning with a visit to the Inti Wata Cultural Complex. Discover underground museums and a llama breeding centre, gaining an insight into the island's rich cultural heritage and traditional way of life. You will also have the opportunity to witness a traditional ceremony led by an indigenous person with ancestral knowledge, offering a fascinating insight into the spiritual traditions of the region.

After your visits, return to the catamaran and enjoy lunch on board as you cruise back towards Copacabana, taking in the spectacular scenery and panoramic views of Lake Titicaca along the way. On arrival, continue to your hotel in Copacabana for the evening.

Destination Information

Copacabana – Nestled between Mount Nino Calvario and Mount Calvario on the southern shore of Lake Titicaca, the quirky little town of Copacabana is well-known throughout Bolivia as being a centre for religious pilgrimages, with centuries-old festivals still being celebrated to this day. Many tourists come here each February specifically to celebrate the festival of the Virgin of Candelaria.

Day 9: Copacabana to La Paz Meals: B, L, D

Today, travel by road to La Paz, journeying through the spectacular landscapes of the Andes with views of its mighty snow-capped peaks along the way.

On arrival, enjoy a half-day tour of this fascinating city, beginning with a visit to the Indian Market and the colourful Witches' Market, where you can browse traditional crafts, remedies and Andean curiosities. Throughout the city, enjoy breathtaking views of the mighty Illimani mountain rising dramatically in the distance.

Continue to the Moon Valley, a remarkable landscape of eroded clay formations said to resemble the surface of the moon. Finally, take to the skies aboard La Paz's famous Teleférico cable car, gliding high above the city for panoramic views across its dramatic valley setting and surrounding mountains.

Destination Information

La Paz – Resting at an altitude of 3,660 metres, La Paz is one of the highest cities in the world. It is therefore important to take time to acclimatise. La Paz is one of the fastest growing cities in Latin America. The tradition is rich and lively markets are ever-present with some of the finest alpaca knitwear to be found.

Day 10: La Paz to Uyuni Meals: B, L, D

Transfer to the airport and fly approximately 1 hour to Uyuni. The Salar de Uyuni is the world's largest salt flat spanning 10,000km^2 and is one of South America's most remarkable landscapes.

Begin by visiting the train cemetery where you'll see ruins of dozens of vintage train cars at this unique desert attraction. Proceed onto Colchani Village - a small salt-processing settlement located right on the edge of the salt flats. Here, you will observe the process of salt extraction by hand.

Enjoy a packed lunch on Incahuasi Island where you'll also make a stop at the Salt Museum at Playa Blanca.

Tonight, you will check into your unique hotel that is made entirely out of salt.

Destination Information

Salar de Uyuni – The area's unique landscape was a result of the now-extinct lake suffering from a lack of drainage in the earth. The high salt content here meant that once the lake's water evaporated, a thick layer of salt remained. This geographical phenomenon is now one of Bolivia's most iconic sights, and a must see for any traveller.

Day 11: Uyuni — Meals: B, L, D

Spend another day continuing to explore the extraordinary Salar de Uyuni. Journey towards the striking Tunupa Volcano, which rises dramatically from the northern shores of the salt flat.

Continue to the small community of Coquesa, located at the foot of Tunupa, where you will discover an important archaeological site containing ancient mummies. Preserved for centuries in caves on the slopes of the volcano, these mummies offer a fascinating insight into the ancient communities who once inhabited this remote region and the traditions surrounding death and burial in the Andes.

Take time to appreciate the remarkable landscape and panoramic views across the Salar de Uyuni before returning to your hotel.

Please note: Visits to the Coquesa Mummies are weather dependent.

Destination Information

Tunupa Volcano – Residing on the northern side of the Uyuni Salt Flat, the volcano is mostly constructed from lava flows that erupted approximately 1.56 million years ago. The mountain also has a rich history and features a cave with several mummies.

Day 12: Uyuni to San Pedro de Atacama — Meals: B, L

Today you will bid farewell to Bolivia as you transfer to San Pedro de Atacama, Chile. En-route, visit Laguna Colorada (Red Lagoon) home to the famous James Flamingos and Sol de Mañana Geysers, an area with much volcanic activity, full of boiling mud lakes and sulphur steam pools. You will also encounter Laguna Verde, renowned for its stunning emerald colour. This day is at altitude. The journey will take approximately 9 hours due to the distances and international border crossing procedures.

Destination Information

San Pedro de Atacama - San Pedro de Atacama is a town sitting in the Andes mountains of North East Chile. The dramatic surrounding landscape incorporates desert, salt flats, volcanoes, geysers and hot springs. Interestingly, San Pedro de Atacama is the driest place on earth!

Day 13: Atacama Desert Meals: B, L

This morning, drive out into the otherworldly landscapes to visit the Salar de Atacama and the quaint desert village of Tocoano. This afternoon, you'll see some of San Pedro's most famous landscapes with a drive out to Moon valleys, one of the driest spots on the planet. With lonely volcanoes populating the horizon, enjoy the views and the silence as the afternoon sun's rays turn the hues of the rock from orange, to red to purple.

Destination Information

Salar de Atacama – The largest salt flat in Chile is an intriguing natural phenomenon. The basin was formed by evaporated water which flowed down from the Andes. There are numerous lakes within the basin, some of which are home to flocks of flamingos.

Moon Valley – The Moon Valley is a vast lunar backdrop of scattered hills in the Atacama Desert. The Valley is at its most impressive at sunset and sunrise when the sunlight creates a magical series of colours from orange to purple and pink.

Day 14: El Tatio Meals: B

Rise early and travel for around 2 hours deeper into the Atacama to visit El Tatio Geysers, set within a ring of volcanoes. Here, there are about 80 lively geysers and fumaroles, which are at best during sunrise.

Have a guided walk amongst the mud craters and small bubbling geysers. Wander freely before travelling through the Andes Mountain Range with impressive views of Putama Volcano and Tocorpuri Mountains.

Visit the small desert village of Machuca to see the typical terrace farming system, mud houses with straw rooves, and its local fauna such as llamas, alpacas and flamingoes. Today is a full day touring. This day you will be reaching an Altitude of 4320 metres above sea level for a short period of time

San Pedro de Atacama is also renowned for one of the best places in the world for star-gazing due to it being the driest desert in the world with little rainfall, clear skies, and high altitudes. Take advantage of some of the darkest skies in the world with a spot of stargazing.

Destination Information

El Tatio – A geothermal field that is said to be the third-largest geyser field in the world and sits at the foot of a series of startovolvanoes that run along the border between Chile and Bolivia.

Day 15: Santiago Meals: B, D

This morning transfer to Calama to fly to Chile's capital city, Santiago. This afternoon explores the city on a tour which will allow you to experience its eclectic contrasts.

Stroll around the Plaza de Armas and the Cathedral to admire the colonial facades, before walking down Ahumada Boulevard, the city's main commercial street.

Visit Cerro Santa Lucia, the hill that was founded in 1541 and now a park with fountains and stairs leading up to a fort that offers panoramic views of the city and the towering Andes Mountains. Conclude the day with dinner in a local restaurant.

Destination Information

Santiago - Santiago is a vibrant and cultural city set on the plains of the Andes and home to 40% of Chile's population. Split into 32 boroughs (comunas), each area has its own distinct character, yet all the streets are alive with the energy of the city.

Day 16: Valparaiso Meals: B, L

Travel 3 hours to the coast to visit the bohemian port town of Valparaiso. Designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Valparaiso is a unique and delightful tangle, draped over a series of hills. Funiculars connect the industrial seafront with the cerros (hill) neighborhoods, each a maze of colourful, artfully dilapidated mansions and enchanting street art.

Pay a visit to the La Sebastiana Museum before heading on to the Casablanca Valley. Here, in one of Chile's premier wine regions, you'll visit a winery where you'll be served an indulgent lunch and enjoy a tasting session amid the vineyards. Return to Santiago this afternoon

Destination Information

Valparaíso – Overlooked by an imperious hillside and set on a wide bay, Valparaiso is considered to be the most captivating and unique city in Chile. Designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2003, the colourful houses are dotted across the hillside in a haphazard, disorganised fashion and the main method of getting up and down through the city is on the city's old funicular lifts.

Day 17: Santiago to Mendoza Meals: B

Today bid adios to Chile and hola to Argentina! Transfer to the airport for your flight over the breathtaking Andes Mountains to the city of Mendoza

Destination Information

Andes Mountains – Consisting of a series of extremely high plateaus and surrounded some of the highest peaks in the Western Hemisphere, most of which are volcanic, the Andes Mountains remains a central hub for biodiversity and is home to an astronomical range of wildlife. Much crop has also originated from the Andes Mountains, including potatoes, tomatoes and coca leaves.

Day 18: Mendoza Meals: B, D

This morning, explore the city on a walking tour and see how the city was restored after a devasting earthquake in 1861. Pass by the magnificent landmarks and must-see attractions.

This afternoon is at leisure.

Destination Information

Mendoza – Famed for its many red wines such as Malbecs, Mendoza is the gateway to Argentina's best bodegas (wineries). The region that surrounds Greater Mendoza is the largest wine-producing area in South America, whilst Mendoza alone, accounts for two-thirds of the entire wine production in Argentina.

Day 19: Maipu Valley Meals: B, L

Head just outside of the city to Maipu, the heart of one of Argentina's most important and oldest wine growing regions. From here you'll visit some of the region's most prominent wineries, tasting some wonderful wines, including Argentina's most famous red, Malbec, as well as enjoying a delicious lunch.

Destination Information

Maipu Valley – Home to some of Mendoza's top-quality and high end producers of red wine, including Malbec, Cabernet Sauvignon and Pinot Noir. Maipu Valley sits on the southern outskirts of Mendoza City and is dominated by flat vineyards with high altitudes.

Day 20: Mendoza to Buenos Aires Meals: B

Today fly to Argentina's flamboyant capital, Buenos Aires. The flight will take approximately an hour and a half and upon arrival you will be transferred to your hotel.

A Buenos Aires municipal tourist tax is payable locally at your hotel. The charge is up to USD $2 per person, per night, depending on the hotel category. This amount is subject to change by the local authorities.

Destination Information

Buenos Aires - The Paris of South America, Buenos Aires is a romantic and lively city. The culture of the city is extremely diverse and the asado (barbecue) restaurants are second to none. Most importantly of all, Buenos Aires is the home of Tango and performers can be seen dancing in restaurants, bars or even on the streets.

Day 21: Buenos Aires — Meals: B, L, D

After breakfast, enjoy the irresistible combination of Latin flair and European elegance on a Buenos Aires city tour. Your tour will last approximately 5 hours. Visit the vibrant districts of La Boca, San Telmo, Puerto Madero, Palermo and Recoleta. This evening, sit down for dinner and an exciting tango show.

Destination Information

La Boca – A buzzing barrio of Buenos Aires packed with colourful shacks built from Zinc, La Boca is a popular area to see street artists and tango dancers. La Boca is also home to the world-famous Boca Juniors Football Club, who play at the intimidating La Bombonera stadium.

San Telmo – One of the oldest neighbourhoods of Buenos Aires filled with cobbled streets, cafes, restaurants, antique stores and the 19th century Central Market.

Recoleta – An affluent area of Buenos Aires and home to lavish former palaces, Paris-style townhouses and the famous Recoleta Cemetery.

Puerto Madero – Deemed as one of the most exclusive neighbourhoods in the city, Puerto Madero is home to upscale steakhouses, hotels and an ecological Reserve that you can explore by foot or on bike.

Day 22: Estancia Experience in Buenos AIres — Meals: B, L

Spend the day just outside the city on the vast, fertile grasslands known as the pampas, on a traditional estancia (ranch). Here you'll get some insight into the life of folk heroes, the gaucho and after a typical Argentinian asado lunch, there will be a fun folklore show.

Destination Information

Pampas – The Pampas remain as the lush and fertile flatlands that surround the city of Buenos Aires. The open grassland has played an important part in Argentina's economy and is also home to up-and-coming vineyards in all of Argentina. Much of Argentine folklore also centres around the gaucho figure who continue to work on the estancias today.

Day 23: Buenos Aires to Iguazu — Meals: B, D

Say farewell to Buenos Aires and transfer 30 minutes to the airport to board your plane over to Puerto Iguazu, the town closest to the incredible wonder that is Iguazu Falls. Your flight is just under two hours, and a transfer will take you from the airport to your hotel. You have the rest of the day at leisure.

Destination Information

Puerto Iguazu – Located along the borders of Brazil, Paraguay and Argentina, Puerto Iguazu is where the cultures of the 3 nations come together. The Iguazu National Park homes 275 waterfalls as well as the famous 270 feet tall Iguazu Falls, all surrounded by a plethora of wildlife and unparalleled views.

Day 24: Iguazu Falls (Argentina) — Meals: B, L, D

Today, transfer 25 minutes to the falls. You will wander along the Argentinian side of Iguazu, which offers a fantastic overview of the whole of the falls and showcases its power and magnificence. Don't miss the viewpoint of one of the falls' most impressive sights, the Garganta del Diablo.

Take the Ecological Jungle Train, a 15-minute journey, which takes you to the most impressive observation point – the Devil's Throat. This afternoon, take a unique opportunity to learn about the indigenous culture of the Mbororé Aldea people, who open the doors to their community to share fascinating stories of their ancestors, rituals, myths, and legends. Sightseeing today will be a full day with around six hours on foot.

Destination Information

Iguazu Falls - The incredible Iguazu Falls spans the border of Argentina and Brazil and features hundreds of rushing cascades, set in a lush rainforest scene. The region was declared a world heritage site and received the status of one of the New Seven Wonders of Nature in 2011.

Day 25: Iguazu (Brazil) to Rio de Janeiro Meals: B

This morning you'll cross the border to visit the Brazilian side of the falls. Wander the paths and catwalks to numerous smaller cascades that dance their way along gullies and through lush greenery.

Bid farewell to the falls before hopping on a plane for a 2 hour flight to Brazil's 'Cidade Maravilhosa', Rio de Janeiro. Upon arrival you will be transferred to your hotel. The rest of the evening is at your leisure.

Destination Information

Rio de Janeiro – Founded in 1565, the city became the capital of the Portuguese Empire from 1815 – 1822 after the royal family fled their homeland following the conquests of Napoleon. Nowadays, this city is famous for its beaches, lush scenery and samba fueled nightlife. Rio is also home to Christ the Redeemer and the impressive Sugar Loaf Mountain, both of which you will experience on this tour.

Day 26: Rio de Janeiro Meals: B, L, D

Today you will venture to some of Rio's many wonders Drive about 20 minutes to Cosme Velho Street, then in Paineras station transfer into a van to ascend the Corcovado, on the peak of which Christ the Redeemer watches over the city. On the way you will pass through the lush vegetation of the Tijuca Forest. You can take the steps at the final stage to Christ the Redeemer; however, there is an escalator if you prefer.

Enjoy a delicious Brazilian barbecue lunch before continuing to Aterro do Flamengo, transfer about 20 minutes to the neighbourhood of Urca where you will ascend to the heights of Sugarloaf Mountain by cable car. The first cable car will take you 215 metres high. From there, board the second cable car which will lead you to breath taking views at the top of the Sugar Loaf Mountain, 395 metres high. Take in the incredible sights of the Guanabara Bay and its islands, Rio-Nitero Bridge and Corcovado. This evening, meet up with the group for a farewell dinner at a local restaurant.

Christ the Redeemer Construction

Please be aware that from August 2026 to July 2027, the Christ the Redeemer and Corcovado Plateaux visitor area will be undergoing essential renovation works to preserve this iconic monument. Visitors should expect some construction activity on site, including scaffolding around parts of the monument, and certain views and photo opportunities may be partially affected.

During this period, the escalators will be out of service and visitors will need to use the stairways (approx. 220 steps), although a dedicated lift is available for those with mobility issues.

Destination Information

Corcovado – Originally known as Pinaculo da Tentacao, or Pinnacle of Temptation, Corcovado mountain is a 710m granite peak overlooking Rio, and is easily one of Brazil's most iconic landmarks. It is surrounded by the Tijuca Forest and is home to Christ the Redeemer.

Sugar Loaf Mountain – Known as Pao de Acucar in Portuguese, Sugarloaf Mountain sits at the entrance of Guanabara Bay and is named for its unusual shape as it resembles a traditional form of sugar widely used two centuries ago. Your cable car journey will take you to the summit of the mountain, where you will take in the magnificent views from a height 395 metres. This is an awe-inspiring site, and one that is popular not just with locals and tourists but rock climbers also, as the mountain is one of the largest and most popular urban rock-climbing destinations in the world, featuring over 270 different routes to the top.

Days 27-29: Depart Rio de Janeiro Meals: B

Today, fly out of Rio de Janeiro for Australia. Arrive home in two days due to crossing the International Date Line once again.

Any time before your flight is at leisure. You will be transferred from your hotel to the airport, according to the departure time of your international flight.

Late check-out is not included. Additional nights' before and after your tour can be arranged. Please contact our Reservations team to book.

TRAVEL INFORMATION

VISAS:

Australian passport holders currently do not require a visa to enter **Peru, Chile, Bolivia & Argentina**.

Australian passport holders currently require a visa to enter **Brazil**. Wendy Wu Tours Visa Department can assist you with the process of obtaining a visa.

Please be advised that your passport must have at least six months validity left on it when you arrive back into Australia.

For the latest information on visa procedures, processing times and requirements, please kindly refer to our website https://www.wendywutours.com.au/help-and-advice/passports-and-visas/

Please note the visa procedures and requirements may change at any time. These changes are often made by the relevant embassy or consulate, Wendy Wu Tours acts as a third party and has no influence on the process of a visa.

INSURANCE:

It is a condition of your booking that you are insured for the duration of your trip. We recommend comprehensive travel insurance to cover cancellation, medical requirements, luggage, repatriations and additional expenses. At a minimum, the policy is required to cover medical requirements including medical evacuations / repatriations. The choice of insurer is yours. We strongly suggest you purchase insurance at the time you pay your deposit. This is because cancellation fees and charges are payable from that time.

We may request you to provide evidence that you have taken out and paid for a policy to comply with this condition. If you fail to provide a certificate of currency of insurance within a reasonable time after our request, then this will be deemed a cancellation by you and standard cancellation fees will apply.

ACCOMMODATION:

Your accommodation is selected for convenience of location, comfort or character, and can range from business hotels to rainforest lodges. Hotels are generally rated as local three to four-star standard, but please note that there is no international classification system for hotels and differences in facilities and quality may exist between Australia and South America. All group tour hotels have private bathroom facilities and air conditioning where needed. If you experience any difficulty, please speak to your Local Guide. Rest assured that all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and our partners to ensure that standards meet your needs.

ALTITUDE:

On this tour you will be spending several nights at altitude, and this will be marked on your day by day itinerary. At these sort of altitudes, Altitude Sickness is a risk. Symptoms may include dizziness, fatigue, nausea and shortness of breath. It is recommended that travellers utilize their first day in high-altitude destinations to acclimatise. To help you acclimatise we have designed our tours to be at a slower pace with more convenient stops and more free time, during the first few days. Staying hydrated, eating light meals and following a very light schedule will all help. We recommend that any symptoms that are unusual should be brought to the attention of your guide. Your guide will be extremely well-trained in dealing with its effects – taking it easy and taking some time to acclimatise are the best ways to prevent and combat it. Serious cases, meaning that you must descend immediately, are rare. We have adapted the itinerary to make sure that your time at these heights is as relaxed and easy as possible.

There are no specific factors, such as age or fitness, that can cause you to suffer from Altitude Sickness. It can affect anyone at any time and symptoms may vary. In some instances, a short spell on oxygen can help enormously. All the hotels that we have selected to use on our programmes provide oxygen free of charge, please ask to use this. There is medication - such as Diamox, and the local Peruvian version, Soroche pills - that can help treat and prevent symptoms. Consult a doctor before taking any of these medications, before engaging in strenuous activity at high altitude, and regarding any necessary vaccinations in plenty of time before travelling.

IMPORTANT INFO ABOUT MACHU PICCHU:

You must provide full name, date of birth, nationality and passport number to us at time of booking. Visitors must bring their passport with them to be allowed entry to Machu Picchu and this must match the information provided to us in advance.

Hand luggage on board train to the citadel should not exceed 5kgs and measure no more than 40 cm x 35 cm x 20 cm. You will need to bring an overnight bag of this size for your one-night stay at Machu Picchu on day 6.

The following items are not allowed in – single use plastics, professional cameras (i.e. equipment that needs accessories for its use such as tripods) and cameras that have magnifying lenses exceeding 2kg; drones; selfie sticks; walking sticks without a rubber tip; aerosol sprays; high heeled shoes; sharp objects; banners or posters.

EATING IN SOUTH AMERICA:

South American cuisine is some of the most eclectic in the world, and each country has its own regional specialties worth sampling.

Peruvian food incorporates dishes introduced by the indigenous population and from a wide variety of immigrant populations from Europe, Asia and Africa. The four traditional staples of the diet are corn, potatoes, legumes and grains such as quinoa. The diversity of climates and altitudes in Peru have a strong influence on what is eaten – close to the sea, ceviche containing fish is popular, whilst in the Andes, meat from indigenous animals such as alpacas and guinea pigs are eaten. A typical dish from this region is pachamanca, a variety of meats, herbs and vegetables slow cooked underground with heated stones. Savour the food in Lima, it is Latin America's gastronomic capital! Peru also has plenty of international cuisine options.

Argentinian food incorporates many European influences predominantly from Italy and Spain. The Argentinian barbecue (asado) with steak and ribs is widely recognised as the country's national dish; however, in Patagonia lamb, goat and seafood are popular. Empanadas, stuffed pastry parcels, are a traditional snack and Dulce de leche (similar to caramel) features heavily in desserts throughout the country. Lunch is usually seen as the main meal of the day in Argentina with dinner being a lighter dish.

Brazilian food is strongly influenced by European and African cuisines, whilst there is not a single national cuisine there is an assortment of regional traditional dishes. In Rio and Sao Paulo the Brazilian Feijoada is the traditional dish, being a stew made from meat and black beans. In Northern Brazil Cassava (a root vegetable) features heavily in meals. Popular dishes throughout the country include rice and beans, served with meat and salad, fresh tropical fruit is a common dessert. Typical snacks include Pao de Queijo (cheese bread), Coxinha which is a chicken croquette, and Kibe which is a bulgar wheat and beef croquette.

Whilst we strongly recommend trying as many local dishes as possible, Argentina and Brazil also have a wide range of international foods available.

Drinking bottled water and eating well-cooked food is strongly recommended. It's much safer to stick to bottled, treated or boiled water. Ice, along with salads or fruits washed in tap water should likewise be avoided.

Those with dietary requirements will be well catered for - just make sure to inform your booking agent of any specific requirements well in advance of your trip.

All the restaurants we visit will be researched and inspected regularly to ensure that they follow the strictest health, cleanliness, and safety guidelines. All waiting staff will wear face masks and gloves and self-service buffets will be avoided in favour of à la carte dining, waiter-served meals, or waiter-assisted buffets. Hand sanitiser will be provided to the group before and after every food and beverage service.

TRANSPORT:

Coaches: Coaches with air conditioning are used on our group tours, for city short excursions to the countryside and longer transfers between destinations. Roads in Chile have generally been improved over recent years, but please be aware traffic and/or weather conditions may extend driving times. There may be sections of road where the surface may be comparatively bumpy, but our drivers will do their utmost to lessen the impact.

Planes: Internal flights are based on economy class, with reputable airlines. Within South America flights are often changed multiple times before departure, both timings and flight numbers. The utmost care will be taken to ensure that your final documents will have the latest information, however your local guide will confirm this in destination. Boarding passes can be collected directly at the airport. The flights booked as part of your itinerary will always reflect the best timings to suit the touring itinerary, with direct flights wherever possible, however due to limited schedules some flights may require an early departure or late arrival.

SOUVENIRS:

There are plenty of interesting bits and pieces to buy as souvenirs in all the visited destinations, such as indigenous textiles in Peru, handicrafts and artworks. In Argentina and Brazil, there are indigenous textiles, handicrafts, leather and artworks. There will be some opportunities during your tour to pick up souvenirs.

LUGGAGE:

All travellers are limited to two items of luggage each, a suitcase with a maximum weight of 20kg and one piece of hand luggage with a maximum weight of five kilograms. It is essential that your luggage is lockable.

Please note that your tickets for your Aerolineas Argentinas flights indicate that your luggage allowance is to a maximum weight of 15kg as it is not possible to pre-book extra allowance, however your National Escort will arrange for the weight allowance to be increased to 20kg when you check in at the airport.

Please note that authorities will only allow bottles onto the aircraft if they have been checked in as main baggage. Bottles in hand luggage may be confiscated.

Please note luggage restrictions apply when travelling to Machu Picchu by Rail, please refer to the information listed under IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT MACHU PICCHU in this document.

TIPPING POLICY:

Local tipping is customary in Latin America; however, this can often lead to awkwardness in knowing when it is appropriate to tip and how much, as well as ensuring you have a suitable amount of change available at the time. For your convenience, with years of experiences in providing the best customer service, Wendy Wu Tours operates a kitty system on our Group Tours so your National Escort will look after this aspect of your trip for you. It also ensures that the amounts paid are reasonable for you but still fair for the local people. The amount is stated on each Group Tour page and will be advised again on your final documentation. Tipping is in US Dollars and will be collected by your National Escort on arrival and distributed throughout the tour on your behalf. Any additional tipping on any of our tours is welcomed at your discretion. Further guidance for tipping contributions will be outlined in your final documentation.

We generally find that most customers appreciate the convenience of our tipping policy, but we do recognise that it may not suit everyone. As this is a group tour, we ask that everyone follows the same protocol to be fair to other group members and to ensure smooth operation of your tour. Tipping while on holiday is common in most parts of the world and South America is no exception. We will provide suggested tipping amounts with your final documents for your convenience; however, tipping is entirely at your own discretion.

PORTERAGE:

Please be aware that porterage is not included on our tours in Latin America. You will therefore need to be able to handle your own luggage within the hotel and when using transportation like trains and coaches.

EXCHANGING CASH:

The unit of currency in Peru is the Peruvian Nuevo Sol (PEN), Bolivia is the Boliviano (BOL), Chile is the Chilean Peso (CLP) , in Argentina it is the Argentinian Peso (ARS) and in Brazil it is the Brazilian Real (BRL). US Dollars can be easily exchanged provided notes are new and undamaged. We suggest exchanging your money before travelling to remote areas and smaller towns, as exchange facilities can be limited. Try and keep some small notes and coins on you, as on street stalls and in small shops they may not have the change to break up a high denomination note. If you decide to use US dollars, make sure they are in a good state (not ripped etc) or they will not be accepted. ATMs are common across Latin America and we recommend using an ATM inside a bank where possible. Please note, currently there are restrictions on how much cash you can withdraw from ATMs in Argentina. Most major credit cards are widely accepted across the continent; please bear in mind the charges of your provider. Debit cards are also widely accepted but may have a limit to the amount of cash you can withdraw, so consult your bank about this before travelling.

PERSONAL EXPENSES AND OPTIONAL TOURINGS:

Personal Expense - You will need to take some extra money to cover drinks, laundry and souvenirs, plus any additional sightseeing that may be offered to you. Based on the advice of previous customers an approximate amount of AU$250 per person, per week should be sufficient; however, for those that can't resist a bargain or may wish to participate in all of the optional excursions, consider allocating a higher amount.

Optional tours may be offered in each city you visit during your tour at an additional cost. These are not included in the standard itinerary and will only be available if time permits. Each option will be arranged locally by your National Escort/Local Guide.

GROUP SIZE:

Most of our groups consist of 10 travellers or more and will be accompanied by National Escorts. There will usually be no more than 18 travellers in each group. All our departures are guaranteed to operate with a minimum of 8 travellers booked (unless cancelled due to factors beyond our control). However, at our discretion we may operate departures with a smaller group size as we try to operate advertised departures wherever it is viable to do so.

VACCINATIONS AND YOUR HEALTH:

We recommend that you contact either your GP or Travelvax (1300 360 164) for advice on vaccinations and travel health. Travelvax has a comprehensive website that you may also find useful www.travelvax.com.au

BEFORE YOU LEAVE:

We strongly recommend registering your travel plans with www.smartraveller.gov.au as in the event of an emergency, Australian Consular assistance will be more readily available. You can also access the Australian Government's travel advisory service for up to date information about your destination on the same website.

AFTER YOUR BOOKING:

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice including a visa application form (if applicable), and a help sheet. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately 2-3 weeks prior to departure.

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