

Andes to Amazon bike ride,

q&a



do I need a visa?

No; when entering Peru, participants will be asked to fill out a white embarkation card. This piece of paper is very important. You cannot leave the country without a copy however if you do happen to lose it you are able to buy another for 14 Nuevo Soles on departure. Ensure your entry stamp is legible as it is required by hotels for the exoneration of Peruvian tax. Please see the Peru Fact File for more information.

how big is the group?

Each group is intended to be a minimum of 12 people in order to run and a maximum of approximately 20 people.

who do we fly with?

You will be flying from London Heathrow Airport to Peru via Madrid. The journey will take approx. 14-16hrs including the stop at Madrid airport. Internally, you will fly from Lima to Cusco. The flight takes 55mins. Your flight tickets will be issued upon departure at the airport. If you choose to book your own flights you must confirm with the Charity Challenge office before paying otherwise you may be liable for your included group flights (please contact flights@charitychallenge.com for further assistance).

what's the luggage allowance?

As no formal clothes are needed, luggage should be kept to the absolute minimum - details on what to pack are provided in your Kit List. Your main kit bag or rucksack (suitcases are not appropriate) must not exceed 15kgs in weight, some of your kit can be safely stored in Cusco. Each day, your personal kit will be transported to the next camp by support vehicle and will be waiting for you on arrival. You will carry a daypack / panier bag for your daily needs such as sun cream, water, camera and lightweight waterproofs.

what will the accommodation be like?

In Lima & Cusco the accommodation will be in 3 star standard hotels. In Ollantaytambo you will stay in a 1-2 star family run hostel. During the trek you will camp in spacious two person tents. If you would like your own room / tent, this can be arranged but there will be a single room supplement. Please let Charity Challenge know if you are travelling with a friend or partner who you wish to share with.

do we need to take our own sleeping bags and mats?

Thermarests are provided in Peru. You will need a good four-season sleeping bag. The dual bag that offers 3-season as standard and upgrade to four-season with fleece liner is ideal. Also see Kit List.

what are the toilet/washing facilities like?

Chemical toilet tents are supplied during the expedition. They are set up near the campsite at specific locations away from watercourses and toilet paper is provided. You will be provided with warm water for washing yourself at camp. During the actual cycling days, you will have to make use of the trees and bushes. If you are brave enough, you can wash in the nearby rivers/streams but only if you have bio-degradable soap.

will my valuables be safe?

While we will do everything to provide adequate safety for the group and security for your possessions, the general rule is that if you don't need it, don't bring it. This includes jewellery, necklaces, rings and even watches. Your passport and money should be kept on you at all times. If you want to leave any belongings in the hotel in Cusco on Day 2 you may, in a locked bag, at your own risk.

what is the food and drink like?

The meals we provide are nutritionally balanced according to the particular environment and altitude. Breakfast usually includes cereals, bread, fresh fruit, juice and coffee. Lunches will either be in the form of a snack pack given out at breakfast to be carried in the daypack, or set up along the route, or taken in a local restaurant. Dinner always includes a soup, main course and a dessert. The vegetarian food is excellent. Please let Charity Challenge know prior to departure if you have any dietary requirements or allergies

who will be leading the group?

We employ a number of first aid qualified expedition leaders, all of whom speak English. They will be ultimately responsible for the running of the itinerary and the safety of your group.

what is a typical day?

During the cycling days you rise early and pack up camp after breakfast, then cycle with only your daypack / panier bag. There will be a lunch en route either in a local restaurant or it will be set up and waiting for you along the trail. There will be plenty of time to stop and view the remarkable scenery. The evenings are spent in beautifully located camps in the shadows of nearby mountain peaks. The food and facilities are fairly good.

what are the bikes like?

The bikes are good quality lightweight custom built Mountain bikes with Shimano components, V Brakes and front suspension. We can offer a range of frame sizes from 14" to 22". Please indicate your height on your registration form so that we can book the correct size well in advance.

how fit do I need to be?

Training and fitness are definitely required as this expedition is graded as 'Tough'. Anyone who leads a fairly active and moderately healthy lifestyle should be OK as long as they train regularly over a period of at least three months leading up to the expedition. Don't forget that the temperature and the altitudes are different from the UK. You will be cycling constantly for days on end. While strength is important, endurance training should be your primary focus. Also see Fitness Training notes.

what happens if I fall ill, can't keep up or there is an emergency?

It is policy that participants must wear a helmet. We can provide helmets in Peru but advise you to take your own for comfort reasons. Be aware that cycling can be dangerous and accidents can happen, you must be responsible for your own safety whilst riding. Throughout the expedition, back-up support will be close by, and we maintain phone contact with the back up team. If for any reason any injury

should occur, or continuation is not possible, a relief vehicle will be made available. The relief vehicle will be a private bus, minibus or jeep that will support the riding throughout the tour. The support bus is there for clients who need to rest & to carry the spare bike parts and will often contain refreshments such as water, snacks and soft drinks to make riding more enjoyable. The support bus will follow at a discreet distance all the time. During transfer sections, the bikes will be carried on the bus or support truck where necessary. The guide will carry water and the first aid kit with him/her until the trail joins the main track where the bus will be waiting. The event is not run as a race and there is always a large discrepancy in people's cycling ability, which is catered for. There will always be a staff member at the back of the group to ensure you are not left behind and can take things at your own pace.

what is included in the cost of the expedition?

The following items are included in your expedition: international flights to and from Peru, internal transfers, all meals and drinking water unless otherwise stated in the itinerary, all accommodation whether in tents or hotel, group first aid supplies, an English-speaking expedition leader and full local support team, backup, a Charity Challenge T-Shirt, US\$20 to the local community project, and discount from Field & Trek and Nomad Travellers Stores for personal equipment. We also make a contribution through Climate Care to offset the equivalent CO2 emissions of your international flight.

what is not included in the cost of the expedition?

The following items are not included in your expedition and will be at your own expense - tips for the local support team, activities not mentioned in the itinerary, personal spending money, international departure tax (approx USD\$31) and internal taxes(\$6 each way), any extra drinks, travel to and from UK airports and any required vaccinations.

what shall I do about spending money?

You will not need large amounts of money during this trip and other than at the start and end of the trip, you will be in the mountains away from any foreign exchanges or banks. You will only need money for tips, food & drink (additional), gifts & souvenirs, international airport departure tax and domestic departure tax. There are a wide range of things to spend money on including rugs, ponchos, jewellery and so on. On average around £200 + a credit card in case of an emergency.

should I take gifts or clothes for the locals?

Generally we advise against giving small gifts to children as it can encourage begging. However, if you have any small items of clothing, balloons, toys, pens, stickers that you would like to donate, your expedition leader can advise you on how to ensure they are distributed where they are most needed.

how much would you recommend for tips?

Tipping is personal and at your sole discretion. You should only tip if you feel that you have received good service. We recommend approx. US\$10 per person per day and this should be given to the expedition leader at the end of the expedition who will distribute it among the support team, including guides, assistant guides, cooks, and porters.

what is the weather likely to be like?

Peru's climate has two seasons - wet and dry - though the weather varies depending on the geographical region. In

the Andes there is a dry season (April to October) and a wet season (December to March). The average temperature throughout the year goes from 8.5°C/47.3°F (June to August) to 10.8°C/51.4°F (September to May). In the Andes the temperature can drop up to 15° from day to night-time, especially at higher altitudes during the challenge. As the trip goes from the Andes to the Amazon rainforest you can expect to experience all different types of weather and should be suitably equipped to cover this. Temperatures are unlikely to go below freezing at night and during the day will be pleasant cycling weather. Expect some rain (it's called a "Rainforest" for a reason!), hot sunshine, humid jungle conditions and dry, cold high altitude conditions.

what do you do to protect the environment?

We are keeping to a small group so that we limit the impact we have on the surrounding environment. We will ensure that all rubbish is carried out of the area and disposed of responsibly. We follow the local guidelines on cultural and environmental protection and respect. We will also be donating US\$20 per participant towards a local Andean community project (educational, health or environmental) to enhance local living conditions, which you will be informed about after our expedition.

can you recommend any literature about the region?

- ? *The conquest of the Incas* by John Hemming is the best regional history book.
- ? *The Rough Guide to Peru*.
- ? Pablo Neruda, a Chilean poet, describes Machu Picchu as *Mother of stone & sperm of Condors*, which is only one of the many powerful images he uses in his epic poem, *The Heights of Machu Picchu* available in English.

english

Hello
 Goodbye
 Good morning
 Good evening/night
 Please
 Thank you
 How are you?
 You're welcome
 Excuse me
 I'm sorry!
 I understand
 I don't understand
 Yes
 No
 How much?
 Toilet
 Do you speak English?
 I don't speak Spanish
 Zero
 One
 Two
 Three
 Four
 Five
 Six
 Seven
 Eight
 Nine
 Ten

nepalese

Hola
 Adios/Ciao
 Buenos dias
 Buenos noches
 Por favor
 Gracias
 Como esta?
 De nada
 Disculpe
 Disculpe/Lo siento
 Entiendo
 No entiendo
 Si
 No
 Cuanto?
 Bano
 Habla ingles?
 No hablo Espanol
 Cero
 Uno
 Dos
 Tres
 Cuatro
 Cinco
 Seis
 Siete
 Ocho
 Nueve
 Diez

N.B: The information provided above was correct at the time of going to print