

2012/2013

South American Holidays 02 9548 0222

BEST OF CHILE, PERU AND BOLIVIA

(Prices valid through 24 December 2012)

(ST-176)

SANTIAGO – SAN PEDRO DE ATACAMA – UYUNI – LA PAZ – PUNO – CUSCO – LIMA

(15 days / 14 nights)



We start our trip exploring Chile's cosmopolitan capital before venturing out into the nearby Viña del Mar and Valparaiso. Next stop is San Pedro de Atacama in the far north. This Indian village encircled by volcanoes is the center for exploring the stunning desert surrounds including the Moon Valley and the Tatio Geysers. An overland trip through astonishingly beautiful lagoons and the surreal Uyuni salt plains follows. We cross Lake Titicaca, the Sacred Lake of the Incas, to reach Puno. Our adventure is crowned with a stay in Cusco offering amazing archaeological sites including Machu Picchu. We complete our journey in Lima, boasting Peru's finest museums and restaurants and considered yet by gourmets as the gastronomic capital of Latin America.

DAY 1 ... – SANTIAGO

Welcome to Santiago, the capital of Chile. You will be met at the airport and privately escorted to your hotel.

DAY 2 SANTIAGO (B)

Afternoon city tour Santiago. We start our tour in the colonial city center and the neoclassical La Moneda Palace, seat of the Government. You will also visit Plaza de Armas, a picturesque square surrounded by the 18th century Cathedral Metropolitana and the Central Post Office. Nearby, housed in an exquisite 19th century wrought iron building, is the Central Market, a colorful conglomeration of seafood, fruits, vegetables and flowers. We continue to the artistic life center of Bellavista and climb the Santa Lucia Hill, site of the foundation of Santiago in 1541. We finish our tour exploring in the modern part of Santiago exploring the elegant residential and commercial areas of Providencia and Las Condes.

DAY 3 SANTIAGO – VIÑA AND VALPARAISO – SANTIAGO (B)

Today we head northwest of Santiago to Viña del Mar and Valparaiso. You can admire the view as you travel through the coastal mountain range towards the Pacific Coast. We first drive through Viña del Mar, an elegant and sophisticated seaside resort with fine hotels, palm tree-lines avenues and lovely villas. We visit its famous 'Quinta Vergara', formerly home of Viña's founding family and today internationally known for its annual

music festival. We then continue to the historic port of Valparaiso. This UNESCO World Heritage Site, set on a crescent of hills, is famous for its labyrinth-style hills and funicular railways.

DAY 4 SANTIAGO – CALAMA – SAN PEDRO (B)

Early flight to Calama. In the afternoon we'll drive from San Pedro to the Moon Valley to see the setting sun. The Valley of the Moon is a fantastic moon landscape that is a part of the Cordillera de la Sal (Salt Mountain Range) within Los Flamencos National Reserve. It is a small depression of salt, 500m in diameter, which has formed, over the years into strange shapes. Because of the total lack of water, there is no life here, so this is one of the most inhospitable places on earth.

DAY 5 SAN PEDRO – TATIO – SAN PEDRO (B,L)

We leave the hotel at 04:00 AM to see the spectacular geysers of El Tatio, elevation 4,400 m (14,500 ft), arriving before sunrise. Super-heated water gurgles in the frozen ground and then emerges violently as steam in over 100 geysers, boiling pools, and fumaroles. After breakfast we proceed to the hot springs to soak in the thermal pools with soaring volcanoes. We then return to San Pedro and arrive there approx. at midday.

DAY 6 SAN PEDRO DE ATACAMA – HITO CAJON – VILLAMAR (B,L,D)

In the morning we drive towards the Bolivian border (2 hours). Some minutes after crossing the border we find lagoon at the base of the Licancabur Volcano. After leaving, another great extension of land will open in front of us: The Ladies of the Desert with rocks that have resisted the wind per millennia. We drive through the 'Pampa Siloli' and 'Bosques de Piedra'. Both feature artistic shapes sculpted by the wind in the stones evoking a surrealist painting of Dali.

Not far away from here we make a stop to observe the field of geysers called 'Sol de Mañana' (morning sun) with its bubbling mud pools. Later on we enter Eduardo Abaroa National Reserve to visit the emerald green and red lagoons. Surprisingly, both wildlife and flora manage to survive and even thrive in the desolate landscape. This includes vicunas (a South American cameloid), flamingos (Chilean, Andean and the rare James flamingos) and assorted varieties of cacti. We reach the town of Villamar in the afternoon, where we spend the night.

DAY 7 VILLAMAR – TAHUA (B,L,D)

Heading toward north to Alota, pass through San Agustin town before we enter the Uyuni salt plains. In the center of the unendingly white salt plains Incahuasi Island rises defiantly and provides welcome relief to the eyes. The cacti on the island are slow growers, and some reach over 10 m (30 ft).

Today you overnight in the town Tahua dominated by the Tunupa Volcano.

DAY 8 TAHUA – UYUNI (B,L)

We drive across the salt flats, a fantastic experience, particularly due to the contrast of blue skies and unendingly white salt on the flat lakebed (3,800 m /12,470 ft). The 'Salar de Uyuni' is the result of repeated evaporating and reflooding of a massive ancient lake and covers a total area of over 1,200 km² (4,800 square miles). Absorb stunning views of the vastness and smooth white surface surrounded by snow-capped peaks and an endless azure horizon in one of the most amazing and unique places on the globe. We continue towards Coquesa village to visit its pre-Inca mummies.

Afterwards we drive east to see Colchani the water springs 'Ojos de Agua' and how local people produce salt using traditional methods. Once in Uyuni town we visit its train cemetery. Right before midnight we will be transferred to the train station.

- DAY 9 UYUNI – ORURO – LA PAZ (B) (train operates only on WED and SAT)**
We depart with the local train from Uyuni (00:05 AM) and arrive in Oruro in the early morning (07:00 AM). Here we take a bus through the plateau to La Paz (3 hours). Upon arrival, transfer to the hotel. This afternoon you enjoy a sightseeing tour of La Paz. Tour highlights in the old town include the Plaza Murillo and the Jaen street featuring Spanish colonial architecture. To change scenery, your tour continues to the residential areas of Obrajes, Calacoto and La Florida and ends with the visit to the bizarre Moon Valley offering a unique landscape.
- DAY 10 LA PAZ – PUNO (B,L)**
After breakfast we depart for Puno. We drive from La Paz to Copacabana. Here, we board the boat to the mythic Sun Island. According to the legend, the Inca couple Manco Capac and Mama Ocllo appeared here to found the Empire of the Sun. Visit the Inca Garden, steps and fountain. We continue from Sun Island to the ancient shrine of Copacabana. Once, here we visit its church and the famous 'Dark Madonna'. Departure by coach to Puno, on the way we pass through the towns of Juli and Pomata, whose churches are jewels of colonial architecture.
- DAY 11 PUNO – CUSCO (B,L) (389 km - approx. 10 hours)**
A ten-hour bus trip takes you through picturesque Andean landscapes dotted by small villages and herds of llamas and vicunas. Your final destination is Cusco, however you make three important stops along our way: the first one is La Raya Pass (4,335 m/ 14,172 ft) to enjoy a panoramic view of the snow-capped Andes. Lunch will be served in a typical restaurant in Sicuani. Then your tour continues to visit the Viracocha Temple. This was the only Inca temple featuring cylindrical stone columns covered by fine clay layers. The last stop is in Andahuaylillas known by its baroque church dating from the 17th century. Upon arrival in Cusco you will be transferred to your hotel.
- DAY 12 CUSCO (B)**
Our comprehensive afternoon tour includes the beautiful church of Santo Domingo, the Cathedral and Quenqo, believed to have been an important sanctuary during the Inca period. This is followed by a visit to Puca Pucara, a strategically located 'red fortress' that dominates the entire area before visiting Tambomachay, with its two distinctive aqueducts. Afterwards, we head off to the hillside above Cusco to visit the mighty Inca fortress of Sacsayhuaman. When the Spaniards first arrived in the 16th century they were overawed by its monumental walls.
- DAY 13 CUSCO – SACRED VALLEY – MACHU PICCHU – SACRED VALLEY – CUSCO (B,L)**
Morning transfer by coach to Ollanta train station. The 1 ½ -hour train ride takes you through the Sacred Valley of the Incas up to Machu Picchu. On arrival a small coach takes you up the steep roads to the entrance of the citadel. Machu Picchu remained for centuries undiscovered by the Spaniards, only to be found in 1911 by Hiram Bingham. The uniqueness of its location and the genius that went into its construction make this Inca archaeological site truly one of the great wonders of the world. After the guided excursion you will return to Ollanta train station, where you will be met and transferred by coach to Cusco.
- DAY 14 CUSCO (B)**
Day at leisure. Take the chance to explore the city in from a different perspective. A coach emulating the mule-pulled streetcars that once traversed Cusco takes you around the city. Several departures from the main square are offered daily. The 'Tranvia de Cusco' travels 75 minutes and passes by 40 attractions and sites around the city. Among others the beautiful Plaza Regocijo, the church La Merced (1651), the Fortress of Sasayhuaman and the statue Cristo Blanco. The tour costs S/. 15 per person and is accompanied by a Spanish/English speaking guide.

DAY 15 CUSCO – LIMA – ... (B)

Flight to Lima. Afternoon city tour of Lima. The city has always been one of the most important cities in South America since it was founded by the Spanish conquistador Francisco Pizarro in 1535. Your sightseeing tour explores the historic quarter and modern districts of the city. Opportunity to take pictures from the Government Palace, the City Hall, the Palace of the Archbishop and the Cathedral as you walk in Lima's historic main square. You continue on to the San Francisco Monastery. Like vodka to Russians and tequila to Mexicans, 'pisco' is part of the Peruvian heritage. Among a varied recipe book of pisco drinks 'pisco sour' is the best known throughout the country. You will sample a 'pisco sour' in an historic building - the hotel Bolivar -. Located on the San Martin square, this yet 3* hotel used to be Lima's most elegant and sophisticated hotel some decades ago. And it was here that the 'pisco sour' became popular in the 60's. Moreover the hotel's barman will show you how to mix a genuine pisco sour in the bar featuring interesting pictures from old Lima. After an introduction to Lima's colonial past you will be driven to the residential district of Miraflores.

At proper time you will be transferred to the airport to take your international flight.

Price per person in USD sharing TWIN	Private Services					SIC *	Single Suppl.
	2	4	6	8	10		
Tourist	4,546	3,388	3,118	2,830	2,641	3,869	588
First Class	5,038	3,880	3,607	3,318	3,132	4,357	1,129
Deluxe	5,831	4,673	4,404	4,114	3,934	5,161	1,849

* min. 2 persons

Domestic flights (net price per person in USD)	
Santiago – Calama	216 *
Cusco – Lima	228 *

* Air fares subject to change according availability

City	Tourist	First Class	Deluxe
Santiago	Standford	NH Ciudad	Hyatt
San Pedro	Casa Don Tomas	Altiplanico	Tierra Atacama
Villamar	Basic lodge		
Tahua	Hotel de la Sal		
La Paz	Cordillera Real	Rey Palace	Ritz
Puno	La Hacienda	Sonesta Puno (with view)	Libertador Puno
Cusco	Casa Andina San Blas	Novotel	Aranwa Cusco

SERVICES INCLUDED

- Transfers from/to hotel
- Accommodation based on TWIN in the selected hotel category
- Excursions as noted in the itinerary
- Private services with local English, French, German or Italian speaking guide
- Services in SIC basis (seat in coach – non private services, with local English/Spanish speaking guide)
- The 3-day trip in the Salt Flats is provided in 4WD jeeps
- Train ticket Ollanta– Machu Picchu – Ollanta in Vistadome Class (First Class)
- Shared tourist bus Puno-Cusco with English speaking escort for SIC services and private services
- Entrance fees to the sites mentioned in the itinerary
- Meals as noted (B: breakfast, BoxL: Box lunch, L: lunch, D: dinner)

NOT INCLUDED

- International flights nor Tips
- Domestic flights (see separate cost above including airport taxes)