



Introduction

Welcome to Grand Journeys Peru by Grand Classroom! This handbook is intended to prepare each participant and his/her family for this summer's expedition. It outlines and identifies important safety information as well as destination highlights and features. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with this handbook, as it is crucial to the safety and enjoyment of yourself and the team. We hope you have an amazing Grand Journey!

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Before You Go

The information below will help you prepare for the trip.

Health

All participants are expected to visit the family doctor prior to departure to address the most up-to-date health risks and concerns regarding your expedition. Some topics to discuss with your physician could be altitude, mosquito-borne disease and illness, food-related illness, proper hygiene, and any pre-existing medical concerns that could arise during the trip.

Each participant should carry their own medications including: inhalers, EPI pens, prescription medication, and other medical related items. In addition, each participant is encouraged to carry a small medical kit with over-the-counter



medications such as ibuprofen, band-aids etc. Your trip leaders will have a more extensive medical kit and medical training in addition. Please declare any and all pre-existing medical conditions to Grand Classroom prior to your departure.

Gear

Gear for Grand Journeys is intended to be sufficient, minimalistic and efficient. Please check the most up to date packing list online for a full list of appropriate gear to pack.

Sufficient Packing

Participants should not need to spend a lot of money on gear. You will likely already own many items on the list or will be able to borrow them from family or friends. The packing list is the minimum of what you should bring on expedition, but it is mandatory that you bring all of these items. Insufficient or missing gear may need to be replaced in country at the participant's expense. Items such as rain gear, shoes etc. should be thoroughly tested prior to the trip departure to ensure quality and comfort. Clothing for jungle portions should be treated with Permethrin prior to expedition.

Minimalist Packing

The packing list is very concise and is considered sufficient for your expedition. Please do add some personal items if necessary, but beware of excess items that are likely not needed. Common items not needed are:

- Snacks - You can bring Gatorade powders, protein etc., but your destination has amazing new snacks to try. You won't go hungry!
- Too many shoes - Please only bring a comfortable pair of hiking shoes, water shoes and possibly around-the-town shoes for everyday use.



- Gifts - Please remember that our gift of friendships with locals goes much further than our gift of plastic. Perhaps bring something personal to share appreciation with a newfound friend.
- Multiples of everything - It is good to have plenty, but don't double your pack weight and size by taking too many multiples.

Efficiency Packing

A 40-50 liter pack should be more than enough storage for all of your gear. Pack items least used such as extra clothes in the middle or bottom of your pack. Most used items such as medications, sunscreen, and journal should be packed to be easily accessible either in zippered pockets or near the top. Money, passports and valuables should be kept on you at all times. Pack everything inside your backpack(s), as airport conveyor belts and sticky hands can easily remove items dangling outside your pack. Leave plenty of room for souvenirs!

Learning a new Language

Learning a new language is exciting and daunting at the same time. Make it easy on yourself by preparing as much as possible. You won't regret it while you are bargaining for that handmade souvenir. Consider trying to learn a new word every day until your departure, or talk to your school's language department about the best ways to learn while in country. Have a friend or teacher make a cheat sheet for you. Know this is a great opportunity to start or improve your foreign language skills. The more prepared you are, the more you will learn!

Safety

This contains a summary of the main hazards of the destination. It is important to note your destination and its activities have been assessed for possible risks and



chosen for their general safety. Incidents can and do happen and our aim is to identify risks and minimize the likelihood and severity of given hazards.

General Safety Practices

- Participants shall familiarize themselves with the potential risks and hazards of each activity and place and ask questions when unclear.
- Participants shall speak with appropriate leaders or staff if feeling unwell or unfit in any form during expedition to ensure proper care and well being of individuals and the group.
- Participants shall remain in a minimum group of 3 if separated from the main group during the day and a minimum of 4 with an adult leader at night.
- Participants and leaders shall know the whereabouts and intended plans of all parties at all times.
- Participants should be aware when granted free time or otherwise travelling in small groups of personal safety precautions to prevent theft. Leaders shall brief participants to site-specific safety precautions when necessary.
- Participants shall secure and conceal passport and any team funds in a money belt to be kept on the body at all times.
- Participants shall ensure proper hygiene while on expedition including showering when available and adequate hand washing before meals and after using the toilet.
- Participants shall ensure quality and suitability of food and drink before consumption. Leaders shall brief participants regarding specific purification techniques and safety with handling and consuming food.



- Participants shall not consume any alcoholic beverages, tobacco products or illegal drugs while on expedition.
- Participants shall not engage in any sexual activities with other individuals while on expedition.
- Participants are prohibited from receiving tattoos, piercings or massages while on expedition.
- Participants shall be briefed by leaders on public transportation and shall not ride in a vehicle without the leader's knowledge beforehand.
- Participants shall not touch or feed any animal while on expedition (including street dogs!)
- Participants shall take care while crossing streets as drivers are often not as considerate to pedestrians.
- Participants shall gain permission from adult leader to partake any activity that could be otherwise considered dangerous. (I.E. biking, swimming, climbing etc.)
- Participants shall alert staff leaders regarding any emergency, annoyance, close call or other matter of concern during the expedition.

Hiking Safety

- Participants shall ensure proper hydration and energy consumption during the hike.



- Participants shall dress appropriately for the weather anticipated for the duration of the hike.
- Participants shall be briefed and aware of the risks of hiking in specific environments such as mountain, desert and jungle when necessary.
- Participants will know limits and not over extend their abilities on the trail.
- Participants shall ensure proper sun care including sunscreen and covering skin when necessary.
- Participants shall actively prevent mosquito-born illness by using repellents and covering skin with fabric treated with Permethrin.

Trip Specific Information: Grand Journey Peru

Grand Journeys Peru is intended to be a challenging journey of self and team through one of the most majestic countries in the world. Each team consists of two leaders male and female and a number of participants up to 15 maximum. Leaders, participants and local contacts work together to create an unforgettable 18-day experience.

Overview: Sites to be Visited

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Cusco, a Mountain Home

Once you arrive at your home base of Cusco, you won't have to travel far to find history and culture. Simply walk down the street and you will be amongst 500-year-old Spanish churches and 800-year-old Incan ruins. The city is alive day and night with amazing food, spectacular architecture and plenty of shopping in Andean markets. Cusco will be the main hub for all your excursions and you will never run out of things to see and do in this high mountain city.

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Sacred Valley

The Sacred Valley is rich in archeological sites as well as adventure sports like biking, zip lining and whitewater rafting. Small towns scattered throughout the valley provide ample activities for exploration. The team shall spend several days in this region including: hiking days on the way to Machu Picchu, a home-stay, and the team's first choose-your-own-adventure day.

Machu Picchu

Machu Picchu needs no introduction, as it is a wonder of the world and THE destination for so many travelers that come to this part of the planet. Not only will the team be hiking to this wonder, but also they will be spending a day exploring the actual ruins. If permitted, the team may have the opportunity to climb the small mountain of Huayna Picchu, the dramatic feature seen behind the ruins.

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The Amazon

A stark difference from the Andean mountains of Cusco and Machu Picchu, the Amazon is likely the most famous jungle in the world. The team will be taking a plane to the port town of Puerto Maldonado before catching a boat downstream to a jungle lodge. The team's stay will include some hikes and exploration of this vast jungle environment and will be sure to include some animal and bug encounters!



Overview: Peru Daily Life

Money

The currency in Peru is the Sole, and the exchange rate is around 3.3 sole to the American Dollar. Some places will accept American dollars, and so it would be wise to not change all of your money when you arrive. ATM's are plentiful in Cusco and most major towns but are not always reliable with foreign cards. Paying with credit or debit is nearly nonexistent and should not be considered an option on this trip.

Food

One of the best parts of traveling in Peru is the amazing food! The team will mostly be eating meals in restaurants, but also may choose to check out the local markets for new and interesting fruits and vegetables. Some common Andean dishes include: *Lomo Saltado* (beef, veggies and rice); *Papa Rellena* (stuffed cheesy potatoes with beef and egg), and *Cuy* (guinea pig) Lunch is the biggest meal of the day in Peru so expect bigger portions for this meal. Packaged snacks can be purchased everywhere in the country from *tiendas* (small shops). Care should be taken when choosing food as stomach issues can quickly arise. Food allergens can generally be easily accommodated.

Water

Water and other beverages shall be purchased from a reputable store generally in bulk and distributed in individual water bottles. Leaders shall also carry purification drops for occasions when this is not available.

Altitude

Most participants will suffer the effects of mild altitude sickness. It is common at the elevation of Cusco (11,300 ft), but generally is not life threatening. Acclimatization, or your body adjusting to given altitude, generally takes 1-3 days and can be helped with medications such as Diamox. Please consult your doctor about these



medications. Participants shall also try local teas that help with altitude adjustment.

Weather

Participants should be prepared for a variety of weather in Peru. The Andean mountain towns of Peru are at high elevations making for drastic temperature changes throughout the day. During the day, the temperatures can be pleasant in the 50's-60's and drop below freezing after dark. The Amazon will be hot and humid and may have more frequent rain. Take these fluctuations seriously while packing and be prepared for all sorts of weather.

Spanish

Participants should be ready and willing to practice their Spanish with the locals. By the end of the trip, the team will be comfortable placing orders at restaurants, bartering for market items, and catching the bus to destinations. Whether you bring a little or a lot of Spanish with you, you will leave knowing much more than when you arrived!

Hostels and Hotels

The team shall be staying at a variety of accommodations while in Peru. Generally, the team will stay in a youth hostel with private rooms and a shared common space such as a lounge, bathrooms and kitchen. If you are someone who gets extra cold at night, consider bringing an extra liner, or fleece bag for your bed in Cusco. While in the Amazon, the team will be in thatched roof bungalows in a closed resort. It is important to remember to mind your possessions while in hostels and hotels.

Peru Safety

In Cusco and the surrounding Sacred Valley, many steps have been taken by the police department and Peru Tourism Board to ensure the personal safety of visitors to their country. Participants should be reminded of the safety precautions provided above as well as instructions from their leaders in country. Care should be taken not to become too comfortable despite the level of assumed safety. Loss of



items and accidents generally occur in the first few days and the last few while on expedition.

Communication and Emergencies While on Expedition

This contains an overview of reasonable expectations in regards to communication between participants and home while on expedition, and lays out the plan in case of an emergency from either side.

Peru is a progressive nation in terms of mass communication. Most hostels have wifi in rooms and common areas for use with a cellular device. In addition, the town of Cusco is riddled with Internet cafes if you choose not to bring a device. Despite recent innovation of this technology, participants and families alike should NOT expect these systems to be guaranteed and predictable. In order to reduce the stress of this unpredictable communication system, it would be wise to set expectations for either party while on expedition:

1. It is reasonable to expect a few emails and some contact including calls and texts at various times during the trip.
2. It is unreasonable to expect either side will be able to reach each other at any given moment and unreasonable to believe this communication will happen as often and in the same capacity as it would in the United States.
3. In case of an emergency or annoyance, participants shall immediately inform team leaders, who can respond in an efficient and effective manner to the issue. Families shall be informed as soon as possible once a plan of action has been put into place.
4. In case of emergency at home, families in the US shall contact a 24-hour hotline with Grand Classroom at 1-866-211-7399 in order to efficiently and effectively prepare an appropriate course of action.



A Final Word Before Departure

We are so glad to have you participate on this Grand Journey! It will truly be the adventure of a lifetime. You will come away from the trip with new friends and a new outlook on the world. The memories and experiences gained are those that you will take with you wherever you go. And we look forward to meeting you in person soon!

Sincerely,

The Grand Journey's Team