Latin America
2013-15

YOU HAVE ONE LIFE ONE SHOT SO MAKE IT COUNT

#NOREGRETS
Welcome to Contiki...

You’re about to head out on the adventure of a lifetime & experience the way we travel. We can’t wait to show you our Backstage Pass to Latin America on our small group adventures.

Here at Contiki, we’re a bunch of passionate travellers like you, so we know all the top tips that you need to know before & during your trip.

We’ve put together this handy (& exclusive!) Traveller’s Guide to set you out right.

Before you go...

From the big stuff, like where does my tour start & what should I pack, to the smaller stuff, like where’s the best place to find free WiFi on tour – it’s all here in our handy guide.

When you’re on the road...

We’ve packed in a load of ideas about cool things to do in some of our start cities & other cities we visit. It’s the stuff the locals love – from the best places to shop, where to try some authentic local food or just chill.

Keep this in your pocket or take the sharing is caring approach & pass it onto a friend when you’re done.

For even more info check out the Travel Resources section of our website: contiki.com/travel-resources. Or jump on Facebook or Twitter & ask us direct. Simple!

Let the adventure begin...

Love,
Team Contiki

NO ONE LOOKS BACK ON THEIR LIFE & REMEMBERS THE NIGHTS THEY HAD PLENTY OF SLEEP.

#NOREGRETS
WHAT’S INSIDE?

BEFORE YOU GO ................................................................. 4-8
• Packing • Hand luggage • Visas • Kick-start meetings • Keeping charged • Money • Access to cash on tour • Budgeting on tour • Join us online • Contiki Community • Online on the road

DEEP VEIN THROMBOSIS (DVT) .................................................. 10-11

CONTIKI ON THE ROAD .............................................................. 12-13
• Your Contiki Team • Where you stay • How we travel • Your coach • Internal flights • Laundry on tour • Tipping

DEPARTURES ................................................................................. 14

THE ESSENTIAL STUFF ............................................................... 15-16

OUR LATIN AMERICA ..................................................................... 17

WHERE WE TRAVEL ..................................................................... 18-19

WELCOME TO LIMA ................................................................. 20-21

WELCOME TO CUSCO .................................................................... 22-23

WELCOME TO BUENOS AIRES .................................................... 24-26

WELCOME TO SAN JOSE ........................................................... 26-28

WELCOME TO QUITO ................................................................. 28-29

WELCOME TO RIO DE JANEIRO .................................................. 29-31

WELCOME TO MEXICO CITY ...................................................... 32-33

WORLDWIDE OFFICES .................................................................... 34
PACK YOUR BAGS...

Packing for your trip can be niggly, so we make it easy with some handy tips.

On our tours, you can bring 1 bag or suitcase of 29” x 20” x 10” or (73cm x 50cm x 25cm), with a max weight of 20kg (44lbs) & one piece of hand luggage.

Here’s an idea of what you could pack before you go. As well as all the standard stuff like jeans, jumpers, t-shirts, plus your iPod etc here are a couple of ideas about what else you might need on tour…

- Rainproof jacket
- Comfy walking shoes
- Travel alarm clock
- A watch!
- Swim wear & a towel
- A diary (for writing down all your travel stories)
- Medical stuff & insect repellent
- Travel adaptor/s
- Sunblock

NOTE: Latin America operates two vertical flat pin adaptors, at 120 volts.

- Spare camera memory cards
- Going out gear & shoes
- A couple of fold away travel bags (for all that shopping, girls!)
- Some portable speakers (perfect if you’re hitting the beach).

NOTE: Weather in Latin America can vary depending on the destination or the season. It’s a good idea to look online to check the temperature, before you pack your bags.

AND DON’T FORGET…

- Your passport!
- Your Contiki Tour Documents & hotel vouchers
- Travel insurance details
- Visas (if applicable, see below)
- Credit cards & cash
- A spare print out of all your important details, just in case…

For more, head to contiki.com/travel-resources for all our suggestions.

IMPORTANT TO NOTE... HAND LUGGAGE

On some of our tours, it is necessary to use an overnight bag on the occasional nights when it’s not possible to unload your bags from the coach (like our Peru Jungle Lodge & at Machu Picchu). It’s a good idea to bring an overnight bag, or hand luggage that’s big enough to double up as an overnighter when needed.

NOTE: In the Sacred Valley Contiki will supply you with an overnight bag however you will need a small bag for the Jungle Lodge and the Galapagos.

VISAS

Depending on your nationality, you may need visas to enter some of the countries included in your tour. Check with your travel agent or go online to determine whether or not you need visas to travel.

KICK-START MEETINGS

On all our tours, a Kick-Start meeting with your Tour Manager will be held the night before your tour – check your tour docs & the hotel notice board for details.
KEEPING CHARGED
The majority of the locations where Contiki travel in Latin America operate on 120v as opposed to other countries which generally operate on alternating current (AC) which varies between 220 – 240v.
As well as bringing a 2-pin US adaptor, if you’re travelling from outside Latin America, it’s important to note that there’s a change in voltage, so it’s key to bring a power converter to enable your electrical stuff to work & keep you up & running.

MONEY
The main 6 (six) currencies you’ll encounter are as follows. In Peru, the currency is the PEN or Peruvian Sole. In Brazil, the currency is the BRL or Brazilian Reale. And in Argentina, the currency is the ARS, Argentine Peso. In Costa Rica, the main currency is the Colon, in Ecuador it’s the US$ & in Mexico it is the MEX Peso.

ACCESS TO CASH ON TOUR
It’s a good idea to carry your cash in a number of different ways, so you’re never caught short. It’s recommended that you have some cash, a credit card & a debit card when you travel.
Debit cards mean you can access money at ATM machines throughout Latin America, or you can get a pre-loaded cash card (like Travelex) & load it up before you leave home. Your Tour Manager will let you know the best places to find cash. Just make sure you have a pin associated to the card before you leave home.

NOTE: ME Time activities are paid for in cash only.

BUDGETING ON TOUR
Budgeting for your trip is one of the hardest things to do before you leave home. Everyone is different, so it’s hard to know how much money to bring on your trip. On our tours, we include loads – like breakfast every day & lots of evening meals & we’ve got lots of ideas online to help.
Check out contiki.com/travel-resources & the spending money tab for more.
EVERY WAY TO STAY CONNECTED

We know there’s more to your travels than the time you spend away, so there are a number of exclusive Contiki online tools to help you get the most out of your travel experience.

Find out more at contiki.com

TOOLS

MEETUPS
Meet the rest of your travellers before you go in our private Meet-Ups. Access it on the go with our new iPhone app, ‘Shout’.
contiki.com/meetups

PART PAY
Register your tour online & share with your family & friends to help you pay off your trip, or use the tool to budget your own payments.
contiki.com/partpay

CHECK-IN
Check in for your tour before you go. It’ll save you time & paperwork on the first day of your trip & makes sure we have your important details on file.
contiki.com/checkin

E-BROCHURES
Create a personalised Contiki e-brochure. Choose the tours you want to compare, then download or share on Facebook & Twitter.
contiki.com/brochures

REVIEWS
Don’t just take our word for it, check out tour reviews & see what our past travellers have to say.
contiki.com/reviews

SOCIAL MEDIA

FACEBOOK
- We realise questions can come up anytime & our team are here to help 24/7. facebook.com/contiki

TWITTER
- All our tweeters have been on Contiki trips themselves & can help with questions or advice. twitter.com/contiki

YOUTUBE
- Join us as we take you behind the scenes of Contiki trips around the world. youtube.com/contiki
Shout!

DOWNLOAD OUR APP TODAY - IT’S FREE.

Shout brings together the photos, videos & updates of everyone travelling on the same tour to create one epic story of your trip together. Save every moment & create a real-time timeline of your awesome travels to share with your friends back home.

Find out more at contiki.com/app

THE EXCHANGE

The Exchange brings together the hottest trends in music, fashion, food, nightlife & so much more from around the globe. From the best spots to get your European fashion fix, to a guide on the best festivals & the European music scene, we’ve got you covered.

We pull together the insider goss from a host of contributors including some of the coolest brands, bloggers, our travellers & of course our very own Contiki team out on the road. It’s everything you’ll need to know for your upcoming Latin America trip written by young & fun people just like you.

Find out more at contiki.com/exchange

TIMELINE

Create a shared group time line of your travel adventures.

CHAT

Meet other travellers before you go on your trip & chat on the go.

TRAVEL TOOLS

View your trip itinerary, maps & more. Plus view nearby hotspots provided by Lonely Planet. Looking for a restaurant? A museum? The population of Quito? Shout has you covered.

Download our App today - It’s FREE.

Shout brings together the photos, videos & updates of everyone travelling on the same tour to create one epic story of your trip together. Save every moment & create a real-time timeline of your awesome travels to share with your friends back home.

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the
EXCHANGE

The Exchange brings together the hottest trends in music, fashion, food, nightlife & more from around the globe. Keep in the know & get your fix on The Exchange.

BEATS
TURN UP THE VOLUME
Check out what we’re listening to at the moment, who’s got the best remix & what’s recommended to us.

LOOKS
THE STREET IS YOUR RUNWAY
From cute boutiques in LA, the catwalks of Paris, to street styles in Sydney & more, we have your fashion fix covered & show you how to get the hottest local look.

CRAVE
YOUR GUIDE TO EATS & OUTS
Go local & find the best places to drink, dine & party abroad – or check out fun new places closer to home!

PLAY
GET MOVING
Whatever it is that gets your blood pumping we have it covered. Get the go on sport, the low down on new fitness trends & the hottest adrenaline fixes.

EXPLORE
WHERE TO GO, WHAT TO SEE
The Exchange brings together all the coolest things to do around the world. We’ve got the inside goss on all things local & we’re always on the hunt for new gems to share with you!

WWWWHAT??
WHAT WE LOVE ON THE WEB
We love cruising the web to find the most awesome & quirky content online. Check out what’s trending on twitter or tumblr & whose YouTube channel we’re watching!

GET YOUR FIX AT CONTIKI.COM/EXCHANGE
DEEP VEIN THROMBOSIS (DVT)

Although DVT is rare, we love our travellers & keeping healthy before, during & after your tour is important. If you are flying to and/or from your tour, please read the DVT info below for our hints on what to look for & how to minimise any risks.

WHAT IS DVT?

DVT is when blood clots develop in the veins of the legs, the groin & sometimes the arms. For some people, the risk of DVT can significantly increase after a flight of 4 hours plus, & it’s important to note that it can take a few days before the side effects of DVT become known. If you’re on tour & you feel any symptoms below then let your Tour Manager know.

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO DVT INCLUDE

- Immobility or cramped seating positions
- Flying
- Recent major surgery
- Personal or family history of DVT, heart disease or Pulmonary Embolism
- Cancer, pregnancy, obesity, or if you’re taking contraceptive pills

THE SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

- Redness or skin discolouration, warmth, hardening & swelling in the ankle, calf or thighs
- Tenderness and/or pain on walking, raising or flexing the foot

HOW CAN YOU LOWER THE RISK?

- Make more leg room (pop your hand luggage in the overhead lockers)
- Try not to sit with your legs crossed
- Try some of the exercises listed
- Elevate your legs whenever you can
- Wear your favourite comfy threads when travelling
- Take a short walk every 2-3 hours
- Drink plenty of fluids & keep hydrated
- Avoid too much alcohol & taking sleeping tablets
- If you think you’re at risk – throw on some compression stockings for your flight
Go for a walk – the coach will stop regularly to give you the chance to stretch your legs.

You can also exercise whilst seated. Use the following movements to keep your circulation moving & to avoid getting stiff:

- Bend & straighten your legs, feet & toes regularly
- Press the balls of your feet down hard on the floor
- Take a short walk

**DVT TOP EXERCISES**

- **Bend & straighten your legs, feet & toes.**

- **Press the balls of your feet down hard against the floor.**

- **Perform regular upper body movements & breathing to relax the back & shoulders.**

- **Make sure you drink water regularly to avoid becoming dehydrated.**
CONIKI ON THE ROAD

ON-ROAD TEAM

YOUR TOUR MANAGER

Our Tour Managers are like your walking, talking guidebook – just for you. Because they know everything about where you’re going, you will too! They really know their stuff & they take care of all the niggly details – so you don’t have to.

YOUR DRIVER

Your Tour Drivers are the experts on getting you from A to B in Latin America with no hassle, like finding the bus, train station or airport. They know their way around like the back of their hands & they’ll drop you at your door & unload your bags – too easy!

YOUR LOCAL GUIDES

Contiki works closely with our ‘on-the-ground’ partner & local English speaking guides. These professional, Local Guides ensure you learn & discover even more with their in-depth knowledge of the places you’re visiting. It’s that access only a local in the know can give.

WHERE YOU STAY...

We have chosen a wide range of accommodation in order for you to get a taste of what Latin America has to offer. Our accommodation has been chosen for their particular character, charm, location & style. (Contiki Latin America is almost entirely all hotel accommodation. You’ll stay in centrally located 3-star hotels & resorts on a twin-share basis.) They’re all very comfortable & have some great amenities, like WiFi (if you’re carrying a laptop, iPad & iPhone), ensuite bathrooms & a TV. We mix it up with our Special Stay experiences, like an amazing Jungle Lodge in the heart of the Peruvian Amazon & a lodge in the Colca Canyon with panoramic Sacred Valley views or our rainforest eco-camp in Costa Rica.

PLEASE NOTE: All contracts for your accommodation are negotiated by Contiki many months in advance. There may be times when hotels will provide alternative accommodation to that advertised in the brochure. Such situations are beyond Contiki’s control & we will do our utmost to minimise any inconvenience.

HOW WE TRAVEL

In Latin America, half the fun is not where you go, but how you get there. We have mixed in planes, air conditioned coaches & mini vans with tuk-tuks, tricycles, bicycles & boats so that you have some funky & fun ways to get around. Travelling with Contiki in Latin America is varied & we make the most of what’s on offer so you get a true taste of how the locals live.

PRIVATE COACHES

We always use private, air-conditioned coaches instead of local buses, meaning we can get you to more remote places, quickly & easily in style & comfort. There’s no 18 hour journeys being cramped in with other travellers when you travel Contiki!

Your comfort is our top concern whilst you travel. We do make frequent stops every few hours where you will have the opportunity to buy a drink or snack, smoke (if you do) & use the toilets.

INTERNAL FLIGHTS

To reduce travelling time between destinations we use internal & international flights with reliable LATAM airline, giving you more time in the places that count.
MORE FUN WAYS TO GET AROUND

On land, you’ll take rides in tuk-tuks, tricyclos & on bicycles; plus when you hit the water there are boats, it’s all part of the fun!

LAUNDRY ON TOUR

Most of our hotels have laundry facilities, so it’s easy to get your washing done fast. And at some of them, there’s even someone to do it for you! As a guide it’s always a good idea to start your trip with a reasonable amount of clothes so you’re not caught out. Your Tour Manager is the best person to advise on the best places to do your washing while you’re on tour.

NO COMPULSORY TIPPING - REWARD ONLY EXCELLENCE

Every country in the world has different tipping customs & in Latin America, within service industries, tipping is common practice. Tipping is totally optional & only given if you feel the service has exceeded your expectations.

If you think your Contiki Team have done an exceptional job then you may wish to tip them.

This is entirely discretionary – it’s completely up to you. No compulsory tipping – reward only excellence!
DEPARTURES

LIMA DEPARTURES

WHAT TOURS?

Peru Uncovered, Inca Panorama, & The Adventurer

Kick-start meeting? Your kick-start meeting is at 7:00 p.m. the night before your tour begins. Please bring your passport (If you are traveling on to Brazil we need to verify your Brazilian visa), emergency contact details & traveler’s insurance info.

Check-in: 8:00 am Day 1

CUSCO DEPARTURES

WHAT TOURS?

Andes & Amazon Highlights, The Explorer

Kick-start meeting & check-in? Your kick-start meeting/check-in is at 8:00am the morning your tour begins. Please bring your passport (If you are traveling on to Brazil we need to verify your Brazilian visa), emergency contact details & traveler’s insurance info.

BUENOS AIRES DEPARTURES

WHAT TOURS?

Argentina & Brazil Experience

Kick-start meeting? Your kick-start meeting will be held at 7:00 pm the night before your tour begins. Please bring your passport (we need to verify your Brazilian visa), emergency contact details, & traveler’s insurance info.

RIO DEPARTURES

WHAT TOURS:

Argentina & Brazil Experience (Start Rio) Carnival, The Adventurer start Rio

Kick-start meeting? Your kick-start meetings will be held at 7:00pm the night before your tour begins. Please bring your passport, emergency contact details, & traveler’s insurance info.

Check-in: 7:00am Day 1

Rio Carnival starts at 5:30pm & there is no kick-start meeting

QUITO DEPARTURES

WHAT TOURS:

Ecuador & Galapagos Island Hopper, Galapagos & Andes, The Latin Quest

Kick-start meeting? Your kick-start meetings will be held at 7:00pm the night before your tour begins. Please bring your passport (If you are traveling on to Brazil we need to verify your Brazilian visa), emergency contact details, & traveler’s insurance info.

Check-in: 7:00am Day 1

MEXICO CITY DEPARTURES

WHAT TOURS:

Mexico Grande, Mexican Fiesta, Yucatan Highlights

Kick-start meeting? Your kick-start meetings will be held at 7:00pm the night before your tour begins. Please bring your passport (we need to verify your Brazilian visa), emergency contact details, & traveler’s insurance info.

Check-in: 7:00am Day 1

SAN JOSE DEPARTURES

WHAT TOURS:

Costa Rica Unplugged

Kick-start meeting? Your kick-start meetings will be held at 7:00pm the night before your tour begins. Please bring your passport, emergency contact details, & traveler’s insurance info.

Check-in: 7:00am Day 1
THE ESSENTIAL STUFF...  
GENERAL PACKING TIPS

• Make sure you have insect repellent (Machu Picchu, the jungle, Costa Rica, etc.)
• Sunblock & chapstick/lipbalm (important for the entire trip) / sunglasses / hat / rain jacket or rain poncho
• Always bring in your daypacks: toilet paper and/or tissue packets, hand-sanitizer & some small currency as some restrooms require a 1 sol charge to use the facilities.
• Hygienic products (tampons etc)
• Toiletries
• Towel (For optional hot springs, jungle, etc).

NOTE: You can purchase a towel in some destinations, or you can often rent one. Your Tour Manager can advise.

• On most of our trips, there will be opportunities to soak & swim in hot springs, lakes & jungle creek, so if you didn’t bring a swimsuit, the best place to purchase one is in cities, your Tour Manager can advise (although don’t expect to find the most trendy swimsuits!)

WEATHER & CLOTHING

It’s important to pack as you would for any holiday – jeans, shorts, tees, flip-flops, hoodies & jumpers as well as comfy footwear. Please note that in many destinations there are cobbled streets, so heels aren’t ideal. Please also note that weather in Latin America can vary greatly depending on the season & country. It’s strongly advised to check the weather before you start packing for your trip.

PERU TRIPS

Please make sure you have warm clothing for the evenings in Cusco & the Sacred Valley, Arequipa, Colca, Puno & Cusco & rain protection as the weather in the Andes is very unpredictable & changes quickly. The Amazon tends to be hot & humid. If you need to make quick purchases please ask your Tour Manager for the best places to head.

• Please be sure to keep hydrated especially since we are at a high altitude on some trips & dehydration occurs much faster. It is recommended to drink 3 litres of water minimum per day. Remember that the altitude will intensify the effects of alcohol & it will dehydrate you, making the adjustment to the climate more difficult.

• If anyone is having any issues please contact your Tour Manager immediately.

ARGENTINA & BRAZIL TRIPS

Please make sure you have warm clothing for the winter evenings in Buenos Aires & rain protection as the weather can be unpredictable. If you need to make quick purchases there are plenty of shopping malls, the closest being “Shopping Abasto” about 4 kilometres from the hotel, located on Av Corrientes #3190.

ECUADOR & GALAPAGOS TRIPS

Weather changes quickly in the mountains (Quito & Baños) so it is best to be prepared & have a good fleece or jacket & always rain protection.

The Galapagos has two seasons – dry and wet. It is best to bring a light windbreaker with a hood. Sand shoes are a must and a hat is essential.

COSTA RICA TRIPS

Please make sure you have rain protection as showers are common in the jungle. It is also advised to bring closed toe shoes for the walks in the rainforest and water shoes are a good idea as well.

MEXICO TRIPS

Mexico City & Taxco are at a high elevation so we advise you to bring warmer clothing for the evenings. The beach cities are quite warm and the Yucatan is warm & humid but can be rainy so a light windbreaker is a good idea for rainy days.
Packing for your tour... important to note

• The night before leaving for the Sacred Valley you need to pack for 3 days & 2 nights in the Sacred Valley & Machu Picchu as we will not be returning to Cusco prior to your Trek & visit to Machu Picchu. Our main luggage will be safely stored at the Cusco hotel & we won’t have access to them until we return from Machu Picchu.

• The same applies for our tours that visit the Peruvian Amazon, you will need to pack a bag for our overnight at the Jungle Lodge. Your luggage will be safely stored in Puerto Maldonado for our overnight.

• We will supply you with our cool Contiki duffel bags for Machu Picchu/Sacred Valley. These bags are sturdy, with specific numbers & name tags so you know what’s yours.

• It is much easier to have a smaller pack for the Galapagos given that the mode of transport is by boat. We recommend that you bring a smaller bag and repack in Guayaquil where your main bag can be stored.
Our Latin America

Your tour could start in Lima or Cusco in Peru, Buenos Aires in Argentina. So, what do you do when you arrive there? How do you get around the city? What sights should you see so you don’t double up on things included in your tour? We’ve put together a guide of the essentials & some of the cities cool stuff too, so you can go it local & experience the coolest stuff.

Note: On our tours, you’ll need to make your own way to the start location for your trip. Info about where your tour starts can be found in the Info section of your tour documents.

- Lima p.18
- Cusco p.20
- Buenos Aires p.22
- San José p.24
- Quito p.26
- Rio p.27
- Mexico City p.30
WELCOME TO LIMA

Hola! Bienvenidos to Lima & Contiki Latin America, we are excited to introduce these incredible destinations & share amazing experiences with you! If you arrive early you have time to wander around Peru’s capital, Lima, so here’s some info, tips & ideas for things to do & see:

BANKS & ATM’S/CASH MACHINES
There are a few different banks on Av Larco. Banco de Credito del Peru, Scotiabank or Interbank, among others. All of these banks accept international debit cards. Banks in Lima are also the best places to exchange traveller’s cheques. It will be difficult to exchange traveller’s cheques during the rest of the trip, so please get it out of the way when you arrive. If you have Citibank there is one located at Av Jose Pardo & Diagonal at the roundabout.

HUNGRY?
We love going local & in the park, there are various different sit-down restaurants serving local & international cuisine so there’s loads of choice. There is also a pedestrian avenue called “calle de las pizzas” or pizzas’ street where you’ll find Italian & pizza restaurants as the name suggests (they also serve other items). There is a supermarket in the park named “Metro” or a more gourmet supermarket named “Vivanda” 5 blocks toward Av Larco on Alcanfores street. Named Lima’s best Ceviche restaurant, La Mar Cevichería is located on Av. Mariscal La Mar & 8 de Octubre Street. Try the ceviche sampler which gives you smaller portions of five ceviches. Also, their pisco sour was voted one of the best in Lima too! The restaurant closes at 5 p.m. a taxi costs around 10 soles.

TAXIS
Taxis are the most efficient & safest way to get around Lima, although caution should be taken. Should you wish to take a taxi please have the hotel call one for you or the more adventurous can hail a cab from the street, you must negotiate a price before getting in the taxi as cabs are not metered in Lima.

Hotel to Barranco = Agencia taxi 20 soles or street taxi 13 soles
Hotel to Central Lima = Agencia taxi 25 soles or street taxi 18 soles
Hotel around Miraflores = 10 soles

PERSONAL NECESSITIES
Close to the hotel is a pharmacy & mini-market where you will find the basic necessities: ie., water, toothpaste, hygienic products, bug spray, sunscreen, painkillers, etc.

LIMA’S DON’T MISS... MIRAFLORES DISTRICT (AREA AROUND THE HOTEL): Please ask the hotel for a map (like the one posted) with points of interest within walking distance from the hotel. Those interested in shopping for Peruvian handicrafts can visit the Indian Market (although you will have opportunities to shop for traditional crafts in Cusco & in the Sacred Valley) or for general shopping visit the Larcomar Mall which is located right on the coast. For a more cultural experience visit the 5th Century pre-Incan ruins of Huaca Pucllana. You can take a taxi there & on arrival you’ll find the archaeological ruins, a museum, an area for workshops, a souvenir shop & a restaurant.
Open: Wednesday – Monday, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. & costs 10 soles
Restaurant Huaca Pucllana: (General Borgoño cdra. 8, Huaca Pucllana) Overlooks the ruins. Open: Tuesday – Saturday, 12:30 p.m. – midnight.

Parque del Amor (Love Park): Love nature? This for you! It’s a great walk along Lima’s coast. Colourful, tiled walls with love quotes & a romantic statue adorn the park. Parque El Faro has a nice lighthouse & also a skate & BMX park that is great for people watching.

Barranco (Bohemian District): Not far from Miraflores is Barranco, a charming seaside neighbourhood whose colonial character remains intact. Considered the heart of the bohemian section of the city, Barranco is home to many working artists, writers & musicians. The main plaza is beautiful & there is a scenic walkway to the sea that runs through Barranco, called the “Bajada de Baños”. Crossing over this walkway is the “Puente de los Suspiros” (Bridge of Sighs). You will also find nice restaurants around the bridge & in the main square two blocks away.

Centro Historico (Historic Center of Lima): Lima’s historic centre of the city is home to Plaza Mayor, the Cathedral, Government Palace, the Convent of San Francisco, & it’s also a beautiful place to admire the architecture of colonial Lima. Sightseeing attractions in the centre are listed below. Their locations are on the map given by the hotel.

San Francisco Convent: This is definitely a must-see. The highlight is the catacombs with an estimated 25,000 bodies buried underneath the church. There is also the old, colonial library which looks like a set straight out of Harry Potter! You need to visit via a guided tour which you can purchase there. Open: Monday – Sunday, 9:30 a.m. – 5:45 a.m. & costs 7 soles.

Important: Please note there are some neighbourhoods nearby in Lima where you need to be cautious. Please make sure to leave your passport & valuables with the reception or in your room safe. We recommend carrying a copy of your passport at all times as opposed to carrying the actual document. Passports are needed by banks for exchange of traveller’s cheques, but otherwise should be left at the hotel. Use of a credit card will normally require identification of some sort too.
Hello Cusco! This is the gateway to visit the incredible Machu Picchu & was once the heart of the ancient Incan Empire! Here are some handy hints for when you’re in the city, some cool places to head for shopping or a night out, & handy places to head for the essentials.

Note: Please make sure to leave your passport & valuables with the reception safety deposit. We recommend carrying a copy of your passport at all times as opposed to carrying the actual document. Passports are needed by banks for exchange of traveller’s cheques, but otherwise should be left at the hotel. Passports are essential for the train & entrance into Machu Picchu & the hike, please be certain to collect your passport prior to departure to the Sacred Valley.

BANKS & ATM’S/CASH MACHINES
Walk straight to the main square, Plaza de Armas. There you will find banks & ATMs. Alternatively, make a left on San Augustin, a left on calle Abracitos, & a right on Tullumayu & find a Globalnet ATM located at 530 Tullumayu.

MONEY EXCHANGE
Located at 427 on calle Ruinas. Exchanges US dollars & euros in to soles. Open: 7 a.m. – 8 p.m.

PHARMACY (“FARMACIAS” OR “BOTICAS”)
Near the hotel you will find a pharmacy & local shop where you will find the basic necessities: i.e., water, toothpaste & painkillers etc. In case of an emergency contact our local office at (+51) 962395088 or make a left on San Augustin, a left on calle Abracitos & a right on Tullumayu. Boticas located on right at 508 calle Tullumayu. Open: 7:30 a.m. – 9 p.m.

HUNGRY?
The main square is considered the centre of activity in Cusco, & has the biggest concentration of restaurants & bars. Some of our favourites are:

- International Cuisine: Jack’s Cafe (Calle Choquechaca)
- International/Peruvian Fusion: Inka Grill (Main Square)
- Traditional Peruvian Cuisine: Pachapapa – (San Blas Plaza)
- Fusion Peruvian/Mexican: Aguaymanto – (Calle Hatun Rumiyo)
- Bars: Paddy Flaherty’s Irish Pub & Norton Rat’s (Both in the main square)

GETTING AROUND
The hotel can call you a taxi or hail one on the street. Taxis should cost no more than 5 soles around the centre of Cusco & 10 soles to the airport. Having the hotel call you a taxi and/or taking a taxi that has a phone number placard on top is recommended.

SHOPPING
From Alpaca knitwear to antique art, head to the San Blas area for good value on Peruvian goods. Bargain with street vendors as there are many options for shopping in this area.

CAMERA REPAIRS/PHOTO DEVELOPMENT
Make a left out of hotel & a right on calle Ruinas. A small store called “El Chaska” can put digital photos on a DVD for 10 soles. If you need to repair or rent a digital camera visit Camera Repair Cusco at Av El Sol 102 (upstairs).
INTERNET/INTERNATIONAL CALLS
Locurtorio (call center) & internet house located at 200 calle Ruinas next to Andina Spa 200.
A large sign says Internet in front. Cost is 2 soles per hour for internet & Skype use & 1 sol per minute for international calls. Note: Our hotel has free WiFi in the lobby.
Open: 8 a.m. - 10 p.m.

POST OFFICE (SERPOST)
To buy stamps & send postcards visit 228 calle San Augustin. The mini-market says “Serpost” out front & sells international stamps (6 soles) & postcards which you can mail right there. The Serpost office is located at Av. El Sol in between calle Chasqui & Av Gracilaso.
Open: 8 a.m. - 8 p.m.

LAUNDRY
Contact Angel Sullcapuma Mayo, of the The Lost Sock, for pick-up & delivery at 84-984209395 or 84-974384756. 6 soles per kilo. He picks up before 8 pm & drops at hotel the next day. Save money by walking to T’Aqsana laundry. From the hotel make a left on San Augustin & a right on calle Ruinas. 3 soles per kilo.
Open: Mon.- Sat. 8 a.m- 8:30 p.m. & Sundays 8 a.m. - 2 p.m.

PAMPER YOURSELF
Treat yourself! Cusco is home to many massage centres offering some seriously good prices.
Close to the hotel is Yin Yang Massage which offers many one-hour full body massages, manicures, pedicures, facial treatments, etc. Located inside Arte Inka Gallery on the 2nd floor, office 219 at 392 Triunfo Street. Walk-in or book ahead by calling 984-939717 or 084-635235.
Open: Daily from 9 a.m. - 9 p.m. or they can come to your hotel between 6 a.m. - 10:30 p.m.

CUSCO’S DON’T MISS...
You have an included walking city tour so save visiting La Catedral (Cathedral), Koricancha Temple & San Pedro Market. Our is hotel is within very close walking distance to the Plaza de Armas (main square) which was centre of the Cusco of Inca times & remains at the heart of modern Cusco. The Plaza is lined by arcades with shops selling Peruvian crafts, restaurants, bars & coffee shops with beautifully carved wooden balconies overlooking the Plaza – a great place to relax & enjoy the view.

SAN BLAS: One of the oldest in the city, this neighbourhood has streets whose patterns follow those of the Incas – narrow & steep much like a medieval city. The old houses have been built upon Inca stone walls. In & between the zig-zagging streets are picturesque little squares & viewpoints of the city. This area is also known as the Barrio de los Artesanos (Artisan Quarter), & it is dotted with workshops & stores of some famous Cusqueños’ artisans.

CALLE HATUN RUMIQOY: On your way to San Blas walk down Calle Hatun Rumiyqoq famous for the twelve angled stone, a symbol of beauty & soundness in Incan architecture. The peculiar stone is one of the very great stones from the walls of the ancient palace of Inca Roca. The street is rich with personality & local craftwork. Don’t attempt to touch the stone or you will be quickly reprimanded by the guard.

ARTISAN/SOUVENIR MARKET: Down Avenida Sol there is a large artisan/souvenir market, it’s located about 1 kilometre (downhill from the main square). Here you will find almost anything along the lines of souvenirs, but make sure to bargain hard.

SAQSAYHUAMAN & INCA ARQUEOLOGICAL SITES ABOVE CUSCO: These very important Incan sites are located from 5 kilometres, to the furthest being 8 kilometres. These sites are easily walked by returning from the last, which is called Tambo Machay, passing Puka Pukara, Qeniko & Saqsayhuaman all towards Cusco.
Hola! Bienvenidos to Buenos Aires. Here are some hints on places to go when you arrive & hints on where to go for essential bits you might need.

**Banks & ATM’s/Cash Machines**
On Av Corrientes to Av 9 de Julio you will find a few banks with ATMs. On Av Florida various exchange houses are available, make sure to check the rate before actually changing your money.

**Hungry?**
The most accessible areas of the city to find good restaurants would be Palermo. Around Plaza Serrano the neighbourhood is safe & is a newly fashionable area perfect for fashion, design, restaurants, bars & street culture. The atmosphere in many cafés & restaurants strives to be alternative, which makes this area of the city especially popular with young, upper-middle class Argentinians as well as foreign travellers. The traditional low houses have been adapted into boutiques & bars, creating a bohemian feel.

Another area that is nice in the evenings is Puerto Madero. This old river port & its warehouses has been renovated & houses some higher end but very nice restaurants. One that is recommended is Sigue la Vaca: this steakhouse (Parilla) has every cut of beef & other meats imaginable.

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**PLAZA DE ARMAS.** The people watching haven is known as the “Square of the Warrior” from the Incan era because it was the site of the death of Túpac Amaru II, who was the indigenous leader of the resistance against the Spanish. Today it is home to the cathedral, many restaurants, pubs, nightclubs, & shopping.

**SAN PEDRO MARKET.** Come here to experience how the locals buy many of their goods from bread to fabrics to make clothes. Stop by the juice area for a refreshing smoothie or fresh fruit juice. If you are adventurous try caldo de cabeza (head soup) in the eatery section. The soup consists of a lamb’s head (yes, including the brain!) boiled in a broth.

**MUSEUMS & ARCHAEOLOGICAL RUINS**
To enter museums & Incan ruins in Cusco you need to purchase a Boleto Turistico (Tourist ticket). You can purchase these tickets at the OFEC office on Av El Sol 10, Office 101, in Tourism Galleries.

**Open:** Mon. - Fri. 8 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. & Saturday 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Call (+51) 84-227037 or 226919.

**All inclusive ticket:** Ticket is valid for 10 days & includes entrance to the Museo Histórico Regional (The Regional Historical Museum), Museo de Sitio del Korikancha (Korikancha Museum Site, only partial entrance ), Museo de Arte Contemporáneo (Museum of Contemporary Art), Museo de Arte Popular (Popular Art Museum), Monumento al Inca Pachacutec (Inca Pachacutec Monument), Convento de Santa Catalina (Santa Catalina Convent), & the Incan ruins of Sacsayhuamán, Q’enqo, Pucapucara, Tambomachay, Pisac, Ollantaytambo, Chinchero, Tipón y Pikillacta. Neither transportation nor guide is included in the price of this ticket.

**A partial ticket:** You choose an option (listed below). Neither transportation nor guide is included in the price of this ticket. Both circuits are valid only for one day.

- **Circuit 1** – Cusco City (The Regional Historical Museum, Korikancha museum site, Institute of American Art Museum, Inca Pachacutec Museum, Santa Catalina Convent, Cusco Center of Native Art)

- **Circuit 2** – The Archeological ruins of Sacsayhuamán, Q’enqo, Pucapucara, Tambomachay (Usually the most popular option to buy so you can see the famous Incan ruins of Sacsayhuamán)

**Please note:** Many of the sites that are offered as a part of the tickets above are also included in your tour. This information is provided to you for informational purposes.

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**WELCOME TO BUENOS AIRES**

Holal! Bienvenidos to Buenos Aires. Here are some hints on places to go when you arrive & hints on where to can head for essential bits you might need.

**BANKS & ATM’S/CASH MACHINES**
On Av Corrientes to Av 9 de Julio you will find a few banks with ATMs. On Av Florida various exchange houses are available, make sure to check the rate before actually changing your money.

**HUNGRY?**
The most accessible areas of the city to find good restaurants would be Palermo. Around Plaza Serrano the neighbourhood is safe & is a newly fashionable area perfect for fashion, design, restaurants, bars & street culture. The atmosphere in many cafés & restaurants strives to be alternative, which makes this area of the city especially popular with young, upper-middle class Argentinians as well as foreign travellers. The traditional low houses have been adapted into boutiques & bars, creating a bohemian feel.

Another area that is nice in the evenings is Puerto Madero. This old river port & its warehouses has been renovated & houses some higher end but very nice restaurants. One that is recommended is Sigue la Vaca: this steakhouse (Parilla) has every cut of beef & other meats imaginable.
The style is self-serve & all you can eat, & they also include a bottle of wine, pitcher of beer, or soda of your choice. Price is between 93-120 pesos depending on the day, & is very popular with the locals possibly resulting in a wait for space so we recommend you head there early. It is located at: Alicia Moreau de Justo 1714, Puerto Madero, Ciudad de Buenos Aires, Tel: 4315 6801 / 6802

Out the front door of the hotel, turn right & on the first corner on the left there are many restaurants & a theatre, just don’t get lost inside it’s a bit of a maze, but all are of good quality & there’s lots of choice.

GETTING AROUND & TAXIS

Taxis are the most efficient & safest way to get around Buenos Aires, although caution should be taken. Should you wish to take a taxi, please have the hotel call one for you or the more adventurous can hail a cab from the street. All official taxis are metered, just make sure the taxi turns it on when you enter, or you could be paying a steep price upon arrival to your destination.

PERSONAL NECESSITIES

On Av Corrientes there are several pharmacies where you will find the basic necessities: ie., water, toothpaste, hygienic products, bug spray, sunscreen, painkillers etc.

BUENOS AIRES DON’T MISS...

DOWNTOWN BUENOS AIRES (AREA AROUND THE HOTEL): Please ask the hotel for a map with points of interest within walking distance from the hotel. Those interested in shopping, Florida Street has just about anything & is a popular shopping area or for general shopping visit the Abasto Shopping Mall which is located a few kilometres from the hotel. For a more cultural experience visit the Café Tortoni located at Avenida de Mayo #825. You can take a taxi there. Opened in 1858, Café Tortoni is one of the oldest & most traditional cafés in Buenos Aires & a great place to see the past in the present & people watch.

BOSQUES DE PALERMO: Bosques de Palermo has two sides to it: day & night. During the day, the park is one of Buenos Aires’ largest & most active parks. Joggers, rollerbladers & cyclists compete for space with the walkers & those that prefer to mosey. Lounging sunbathers & families with the kids & a picnic blanket soak up rays. A small lake in the centre of the park is picturesque & offers the opportunity for paddling lazily in a rowboat. Take the Subte D line to the Palermos Station.

PALERMO HIPODROMO: Located at Avenida del Libertador 4100 (between Avenida Dorrego & Olleros) This beautiful race track was inaugurated on 7th May 1876, when a horse called Resbaloso took the honours in the first race, watched by 10,000 people. The race meets are held every Monday, plus each week either on Friday or Saturday, & also on about one Sunday per month.

You can check ahead by calling 4778-2800 or www.palermo.com.ar & enter the tabs for “Horseracing > Horserace Information > Racing Schedule & Results”

LUNA PARK: Luna Park is an 8,000-seat arena, located on the corner of Corrientes & Bouchard Avenues, in the barrio of San Nicolás, near Puerto Madero. Built on the site of the former amusement park of the same name, it is known for hosting sporting events & music concerts. Events can be researched on their website www.lunapark.com.ar

RUGBY

The first rugby match played in the country dates back to 1873, as the game was introduced by the British. The Argentina national team, sometimes referred to as the Pumas, have competed at the Rugby World Cup, & are considered a tier one nation by the IRB. The Unión Argentina de Rugby (UAR) was formed in 1899 as the River Plate Rugby Football Union, 26 years after the first rugby match had been played. It was affiliated to the English Rugby Football Union until 1932. The union is a member of the International Rugby Board with a seat on that body’s Executive Council. The UAR is one of the oldest rugby unions in the world. The union became a
member of the International Rugby Board (IRB) after being invited to the inaugural Rugby World Cup in 1987.

The Rugby schedule can be found at [www.urba.org.ar/torneos(fixture) (in Spanish)]

**Important:** Please note there are some neighbourhoods nearby in Buenos Aires where you need to be cautious. Please make sure to leave your passport & valuables with the reception or in your room safe. We recommend carrying a copy of your passport at all times as opposed to carrying the actual document. Passports are needed by banks & exchange houses for exchange of traveller’s cheques & cash, but otherwise should be left at the hotel. Use of a credit card will normally require identification of some sort too.

**TIPS**

- Buenos Aires Biking, Iguassu Falls Tour, Buzios Boat trip, & Rio city tour & sight-seeing can be hot & sunny but in the evening the temperature can drop, & a sweater or light jacket can be useful.
- Buenos Aires is the best place to stock up with toiletries, hygienic products & any personal medication you may need.

**Other Important Things to Bring:**

- Make sure you have insect repellent (Buenos Aires, Iguassu Falls, etc.)
- Sunblock & chapstick/lipbalm (important for the whole trip) / sunglasses / hat
- Always bring in your daypack: toilet paper and/or tissue packets, hand-sanitiser, & local currency Argentine Pesos or Brazilian Reales as some restrooms charge to use the facility.
- Bathing suit & towel (swimming at Iguassu Falls, Buzios beaches, hotel pools, Rio, etc.)

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**Welcome to San Jose, Costa Rica**

Famously labeled by National Geographic as ‘the most biologically intense place on earth’, the San José area is the gateway to the last great original tract of tropical rainforest in Pacific Central America. It is home to Costa Rica’s largest population of scarlet macaws, as well as countless other endangered species, including Baird’s tapir, the giant anteater and the world’s largest bird of prey, the harpy eagle.

**Banks & ATM’s/Cash Machines**

ATM machines or cajero automatico can be found along Paseo Colon or at Banco Nacional de Costa Rica on Calle 42 and Paseo Colon. There is also a Scotiabank on Av de las Americas on the north side of the National Stadium.

**Hungry?**

Rub shoulders with the locals and get your sporting fix at Ozzy’s Sports Bar, located just left out the front of the hotel on Calle 40, a 5 minute walk. Have a few Imperials (Costa Rica’s national beer), eat some “tico” food and watch some football on the TVs. If you’re looking for something easy on the wallet & a bit different, “Sodas” are inexpensive restaurants that serve local specialties like gallo pinto and tamalito on banana leaves (located 5 blocks from the hotel on San Francisco between calles 2 and 4). Great for late night snacks as they are open 24 hours.
For a big mix of options, head to Mercado Central located in the main shopping area of Costa Rica. Try some local fare including arepas, carne de olla or empenadas. Wash it down with a cup of coffee from the stand right near the south door. A must-see. To get there just head west along Paseo Colon (a right out of the hotel on Calle 38 then left on Paseo Colon) until it turns into Avenida Central.

**TAXIS**

We recommend using one of the red taxis which are metered. You can hail one from the street or hire one from the taxi stand located at Parque Central near Teatro Nacional. The fare from the centre of San José to the hotel is around $7000 CRC. Note: After dark, it is a good idea to take a taxi back to the hotel from the Parque Central area.

**PERSONAL NECESSITIES**

You can find essentials here like painkillers, bug spray and sun screen. A walk down Paseo Colon and you will find many shops that we can visit. Also called farmacias.

**COSTA RICA’S DON’T MISS…**

Please ask the hotel front desk for a map of downtown San José.

**MERCADO CENTRAL:** Or central market, spans a whole block of Av Central. It’s the go for shopping indoors, then you can pop over to Plaza de Democracia for some open-air markets. Here you can shop for local craft items, snack on empanadas or stock up on supplies.

**THE MUSEUM OF COSTA RICAN ART:** (Some of Central America’s most well-known museums are here in San José. The Museum of Costa Rican Art (42nd street, Central Avenue). La Sabana Metropolitan Park (located near the hotel at Sabana Park) is housed in an art deco building once used as the terminal of an old airport. It holds 3,200 pieces of art dating back two centuries. Check out the sculpture garden in the back of the museum, some of Costa Rica’s most famous artists have sculptures on display there. The museum is open Tuesday to Friday from 10am to 6pm, and 10am to 4pm on weekends. They are closed Mondays. Entrance is $5.

**THE GOLD MUSEUM:** (5th street, Between Central and 2nd avenue) located near the National Theatre in the centre of San José displays pre-Columbian examples of gold items influential in the cultural history of Costa Rica. It’s open 9am to 4:30pm every day & admission is $6.

**THE NATIONAL MUSEUM:** (Between Central and 2nd avenue) is home to artifacts from pre-Columbian times and explains the history up until modern day. The Old Fort in which the museum is housed is also a historical artifact, it was caught up in a battle during the 1948 revolution and bullet holes can still be seen embedded in its walls. It is open 8:30am to 4pm Tuesday to Saturday & Sunday 9am to 4pm. Admission is $4.

**OTHER COSTA RICAN SITES YOU’LL LOVE**

**MONTEVERDE:** This misty cloud forest based in the central highlands is one of the main reasons for Costa Rica’s international fame as an ecotourism hot spot. Located in the Cordillera de Tilarán & host to numerous reserves, it’s known as one of the seven wonders of Costa Rica & the jewel in the crown of cloud forests found here. Having the largest number of orchids in the world, it’s a must to see a selection of over 500 species that call this beautiful forest their home.

**MANUEL ANTONIO:** Take in & witness Costa Rica for all its glory. Situate yourself high above the enchanting national park & inhale some world-class views. Then take a stroll in paradise down the stunning tropical beaches & get to know the local wildlife. The cheeky capuchin monkeys will surely grab your attention, as will the iguanas, howlers, sloths and cute fur ball squirrel monkeys… probably one of the cutest things alive!
Bienvenidos a Quito, the capital city of Ecuador and the starting point of your Contiki adventure. We trust you arrived safely and have settled into the hotel. Get ready for an Epic Experience!

Quito is located on a horizontal strip of land running north to south between beautiful mountains. The splendour of the city’s natural setting, combined with its attractive squares, parks and monuments as well as the warmth of its people, makes it a unique and unforgettable place. Its beautifully preserved colonial churches, convents, palaces, and other buildings of note contrast with the contemporary architecture of modern Quito, a cosmopolitan city of great cultural diversity. Quito has been designated the “Heritage of Mankind” by UNESCO.

**BANKS & ATMS/CASH MACHINES**

There are a couple of banks on Avenida Amazonas. The best one is Pichincha (it has a green ATM with Nexo sign) here you can withdraw up to 500 USD.

*There are ATMs on Santa Cruz & San Cristobal but they are not always reliable so it is a good idea to withdraw money in Quito or at the airport. Credit cards are accepted on the Galapagos Islands but some places only take cash. Isabela tends to be cash only whereas Santa Cruz is credit friendly. Visa & Mastercard are the most common and AMEX is rarely accepted in Latin America.

**HUNGRY?**

For a big mix of options, head to La Mariscal not far from the hotel. We recommend taking an official cab at night. Try some local fare including locro de papa (traditional potato soup) empanadas & sweetcorn tamales. Quito has a large expat community so you can also find Tapas, Thai, Chinese etc. all around La Mariscal. Make sure you taste the coffee & chocolate!

**TAXI’S**

We recommend using official taxis (yellow with green writing).

**PERSONAL NECESSITIES**

**PHARMACY OR FARMCIA**

**Fybeca Pharmacy**: Av Amazonas and Patria St. You may want to purchase motion sickness tablets if you tend to get seasick. If you need toiletries it is best to buy them in Quito Things are available in the Galapagos but tend to be a bit more expensive.

**DON’T MISS...**

Please ask the hotel front desk for a map of downtown Quito.

**CHURCH OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS (IGLESIA DE LA COMPANIA DE JESUS)**: It can only be described as one of the great baroque masterpieces in Latin America. Completed in 1765, this ornate structure took over 160 years to build & had almost half a ton of gold poured into it. Witness the lavish altars, gilded columns, unbelievable carvings & Arab-inspired plasterwork. It’s easy to see why La Compañía is rated as the ‘most impressive’ of the capital’s 86 churches & voted the best attraction in Quito.
LA RONDA STREET: Walking down La Ronda is like walking into 18th Century Quito. The narrow, pedestrian-only road is lined by remnants of the city’s Spanish influence – narrow wooden doors opening into homes built around interior stone patios, wrought-iron balconies where geraniums hang from window baskets & whitewashed walls.

La Ronda has experienced a gentrification as some of the homes have been converted to art galleries, restaurants & small corner stores selling traditional items. Signs along the street tell the stories of the people who once lived there. There are also a number of quaint restaurants serving traditional Quiteño food, from humitas (sweet & savoury cornbread-like cakes steamed in the corn husk) to empanadas de viento (cheese-filled turnovers with a flaky crust that puffs up and fills with air during the frying process). During holidays such as Fiestas de Quito (the celebration of the city’s foundation) & All Souls Day, there are events such as concerts, marching bands, and street theatre.

QUITO OLD TOWN: Prepare for the narrow streets & Spanish colonial architecture, as you explore this world heritage site. It’s a great visit if you don’t have much time on your hands. This historic site has heaps of attractions & it’s here that Quito distinguishes itself from all other cities in the world. Make sure you check out the Plaza & Monastery of San Francisco, the Plaza de la Independencia (Plaza Grande), and the Museo de Arte Colonial.

It’s a lively place & a marvel to wander through, with street vendors shouting, cars zipping by & amazing buildings built centuries ago. A truly special area that is perfect for exploring without a map.

OTAVALO MARKET: If you’ve done Quito & looking for something else that’s different, make your way over to Otavalo & check out the thriving markets (especially during the weekend). It’s more than just a shopping experience as you mingle through the crowd & interact with the local culture, while hunting for a bargain or two. Here you can find everything from home furnishings, food, clothing, handicrafts & textiles, leather goods, toys & more. It’s a lot of fun & a great place to pick up a few souvenirs for people back home.

WELCOME TO RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL

Olá, bem-vindo à Rio de Janeiro and Contiki South America, we are excited to introduce these incredible destinations & share amazing experiences with you! If you arrived early, you have time to wander around “The Marvelous City,” Rio de Janeiro. Here’s some info to help get you acquainted with the city.

BANKS & ATM’S/CASH MACHINES

All banks & ATMs are located on Rua Visconde de Piraja. Bradesco Bank has a 24-hour ATM & is located at Rua Visconde de Piraja, 414 on the corner of Rua Maria Quitéria.

MONEY EXCHANGE

Money exchange businesses are located on Rua Visconde de Piraja. Cambio Exchange is located on the second level inside the Quarties Shops on Rua Visconde de Piraja, Loja: 224, Ipanema. Call (21) 2287-5389 for more info. They exchange USD, pounds, euros, and yen for reais. Open Mon.-Fri., 10 a.m.–6 p.m., Sat., 10 a.m.–1 p.m., closed Sunday. Make sure to check the rate before actually changing your money. To exchange money you need to bring the original copy of your passport.

RESTAURANTS OR EATERIES IN IPANEMA

POLIS SUCOS: (Sandwiches & Fresh juices, quick & easy on the wallet) – R. Maria Quitéria, 70 (cross street is R. Visconde de Praia), R$ 10-15 per person
ZAZA BISTRO TROPICAL: (Mediterranean inspired dishes) – R. Joana Angélica, 60 (cross street is R. Prudente de Morais), R$ 40-60 per person

PORCÃO: (Brazilian steakhouse called a churrascaria) – R. Barão da Torre, 218 (cross street is R. Vinicius de Moraes), All you can eat for R$ 92,00 (drinks extra)

MARKET IPANEMA: (healthy & delicious meals, great for vegetarians) – Rua Visconde de Pirajá, 499 (cross street is Av Garcia de Avila), R$20-50 per dish

CASA DA FEIJOADA: (Great place to try Brazil’s national dish of feijoada which is a stew of beans with beef & pork) – Rua Prudente de Moraes 10 (cross street is R. Jangadeiros), R$70 full feijoada for one to two people

TRANSPORTATION

TAXIS: The most efficient & safest way to get around Rio de Janeiro, although caution should be taken. Should you wish to take a taxi, please have the hotel call one for you. All official taxis are metered, just make sure the taxi driver turns it on when you enter, or you could be paying a steep price upon arrival to your destination.

METRO: An efficient way to get around the city costing only 3.10 reais for a one-way ticket. The closest subway stop is Ipanema/General Osorio located at Rua Visconde de Piraja and Rua Jangadeiros. Take it to Siquiera Campos & find yourself in Copacabana neighbourhood. Cinelandia will take you to the heart of Lapa. The metro is open Mon.-Sat., 5 a.m. – 12 a.m. and Sun., 7 a.m. – 11 p.m. Check out www.metrorio.com.br for more info.

BUS: The Ônibus Municipais (City Bus) covers a lot more ground than the metro & costs 2.75-3.10 reais one-way depending on where you take it. There is a bus stop located on Rua Visconde de Piraja and Rua Maria Quiterra. Bus 161 & 573 go to Copacabana. Bus 161, 511 & 583 go to Leblon. Bus 161, 573 & 583 go to Jardim Botanico. Bus 433, 464 &162 go to Lapa.

VANS: White vans called “vans” by the locals drive the stretch between Leblon, Ipanema, and Copacabana & cost only a couple of reais (no more than 3 per person). These are not official means of transportation by the city but locals & tourists alike find it a cheap, convenient way to get from point A to B. They follow a fixed route but just flag one down like a taxi & let them know when you want to get off.

PERSONAL NECESSITIES

Drogasmil is a popular pharmacy chain in Rio de Janeiro. There is one located at Rua Visconde de Piraja, 294 and Rua Vinicius de Moraes. Open Mon.–Sat., 8 a.m.–10 p.m., and Sun., 8 a.m.–8 p.m. Drogasmil sells many toiletries in addition to having a pharmacy & over-the-counter medication. The Lojas Americanas stores along Rua Visconde de Piraja sells many items as well.

WEATHER ON THE TRIP & CLOTHING

In general everyday clothing is enough for our travels. Please make sure you have a light jacket for the evenings in Rio de Janeiro & rain protection as the weather can be unpredictable. If you need to make quick purchases there are plenty of clothing stores along Rua Visconde de Piraja. The Lojas Americanas store along Rua Visconde de Piraja sells many items necessary for travel such as sunscreen, bug repellent, etc.

THINGS TO DO

IMPORTANT: Please note there are some neighbourhoods nearby Ipanema where you need to exercise extreme caution. Please make sure to leave your passport & valuables with the reception or in your room safe. We recommend carrying a copy of your passport at all times as opposed to carrying the actual document. Passports are needed by banks & exchange houses for exchange of traveller’s cheques & cash, but otherwise should be left at the hotel. Use of a credit card will normally require identification of some sort as well.
HIT THE WORLD’S SEXIEST BEACHES!

Copacabana, Ipanema, and Leblon are right along side with Christ the Redeemer as a main attraction in Rio. The vendors lining the beaches will rent you an umbrella, chair, or sell drinks & snacks. Make sure to negotiate a price beforehand if prices aren’t visible. Once you are tanning, locals selling everything from henna tattoos to bikinis will quickly approach you.

**COPACABANA** (Posts 2-6) – Take in the sun at Copacabana’s famous 4 km beach lined by its beautiful Portuguese paved sidewalks. In Copacabana you will also find the famous Copacabana Palace. At the far end of Copacabana is Leme beach (Post 1) & there you can find the Morro do Leme for some cliff jumping or watching.

**IPANEMA** (Posts 7-9) – Travel Channel named Ipanema as the sexiest beach in the world & once you go there you will quickly learn why. From the beach you can see the two famous mountains Dois Irmãos (Two Brothers) on the western side. Grab a lounge chair & umbrella from one of the many vendors & stake your territory near the famous posto 9 (post 9) for some much needed relaxation.

**LEBLON** (Post 10) – Leblon is the affluent, upper class neighbourhood in Rio. If you are looking for a more relaxed atmosphere with less people compared to Ipanema & Copacabana then head here. You also have a better view of the Dois Irmãos (Two Brothers) mountains.

**FORTE DE COPACABANA**

In between Copacaba & Ipanema beaches is the Copacabana Fort (Forte de Copacabana), built in 1914. The fort costs 4 reais to get in & offers one of the best panoramic views of Copacabana Beach. The Confeitaria Colombo is a nice spot for brunch especially if you can snag an outdoor table. Located at posto 6 at Praca Coronel Eugenio Franco, 1. Open Tues.-Sun., 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. More info on the fort & restaurant at www.fortdecopacabana.ensino.eb.br

**WATCH THE SUNSET**

Ipanema Beach in Rio de Janeiro has been named one of the top ten places in the world to watch the sunset. For the best & most popular spot go to Pedra do Arpoador (Arpoador Rock) located right near the intersections of Av. Francisco Bhering, Rua Francisco Otaviano and Av. Vieira Souto.

**SANTA TERESA NEIGHBORHOOD**

Santa Teresa is the bohemian neighbourhood of Rio where all the artists live. Many of the cobblestoned streets offer eclectic restaurants & boutiques. The historic yellow bonde (tram) used to run through the neighbourhood but is closed until 2014 for updating. The Museu do Bonde (Tram Museum - Rua Carlos Brandt 14) tells the history of the iconic tram. Catch the metro & get off at Cinelandia. Tell the taxi driver Santa Teresa which will be about a 10 reais ride.

**JARDIM BOTANICO**

In the beautiful tree-lined streets of Jardim Botanico is the Botanical Garden, for which the neighbourhood was named after. The Botanical Garden features over 8,000 varieties of plants & is open daily 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. English guided tours are available. Located at Rua Jardim Botanico, 1008. For more info visit www.jbrj.gov.br

**RENT A BIKE**

Rio offers more than 132 km of bike paths. On Sundays the street closest to Ipanema & Copacabana beaches closes to traffic & is a great place for a late morning ride. The Lagoa (Lake) is also highly recommended to bike for beautiful views of the city. You can rent a bike in Copacabana at Special Bike located at Rua Barata Ribeiro, 458 Loja D. For more info call 21-2547-9551.
WELCOME TO MEXICO CITY, MEXICO

Stunning beaches & clear water, the Yucatan Peninsula, ancient Mayan ruins, incredible food & some of the world’s best nightlife make Mexico a must. Love beaches, sun & relaxing your way? Or prefer an in-depth cultural experience with a twist? Experience the good times in Mexico, Contiki-style. Visit contiki.com or pick up our Latin America brochure for more.

HUNGRY?

It’s no secret that Mexican food is legendary, so indulging in as much as you can while you’re here is essential. You’ll love spots like Fonda Margarita – we think it’s a must! Don’t let its interiors fool you, this is an amazing place to head for oversized portions of local Mexican favourites like guisados (Mexican stews) & the usual delights like guacamole, enchiladas & yummy tacos! We love the busy atmosphere & local vibes. Or, hit the streets & let your nose lead you to some amazing street food carts.

OUR TIP: look out for where there’s a crowd of locals – it’s guaranteed to be a great place to head. Gracias!

TRANSPORTATION

Mexico City is vast, so we recommend buying a detailed map of the city.

METRO: El Metro is the main rail-based system in Mexico City. The trains run mainly underground, although there are some that run overground too. Some 4.5 million people use Mexico City’s metro system each weekday. The system has 11 lines; construction of a twelfth is under way. The Tren Ligero (Light Train) is an extension of Mexico City’s Metro system. In years past, the line was a 1950s style Tranvia (Tram), which was upgraded to Tren Ligero & connects the southern-most Metro terminal, Metro Taxqueña, with Xochimilco, one of the southernmost suburbs in the capital.

TAXI CABS: There are several different kinds of taxis available in Mexico City. However if you are not familiar with the area or if you don’t speak Spanish, it’s best to call to arrange a taxi via the hotel or phone a taxi rank (Sitio). They cost more than street cabs, but are safe & still good value. They charge a fixed fee of about $1-2 USD when you get in & then around $1 USD per kilometre. If you get stuck in a traffic jam a time-lapse charge is applied automatically by the meter when the vehicle is stationary.

Although some taxis are beginning to accept credit & debit cards, most don’t & those that do will add 10% to the fare to cover bank charges they pay to offer the card payment facility. We recommend you pay with cash as drivers prefer it & it will save you money.

Be sure, whatever taxi you get into, that the driver’s licence card is visible. The licence card is a white, laminated document with official stamps, a hologram & a photograph of the taxi driver on it. The card should be presented in full colour & not be a photocopy. Gratuity is not included in the final fare.

NOTE: Public transport & taxi rates are subject to change

MEXICO CITY’S DON’T MISS...

The Centro Historico (Historic Centre): The Centro Historico focuses around the Plaza de la Constitución (Constitution Plaza) or more commonly known as the Zócalo (Main Plaza), the second largest city plaza in the world. This is the heart of Mexico City & its government, business & financial centres all operate in & around this area. There are over 1,400 colonial buildings in this area with a distinctly Spanish feel. Off the Plaza you can find the city’s Cathedral & Palacio Nacional (National Palace) – both are examples of colonial architecture.
TEMPLO MAYOR: Mexico City was built on top of the destroyed Aztec City of Tenochtitlán. You can see some of the remains of the old city by visiting Templo Mayor – the archaeological site in the heart of Mexico City.

ZONA ROSA: The Contiki hotel is in the Zona Rosa which translated means, ‘the Pink Zone’, referring to the pink coloured tiles on the street. It was once the high-class residential area of Mexico City before tourism, shops, restaurants, hotels & commercial office space took it over. Today, it is the centre of commercial activity in Mexico City. This area, along with Polanco is one of Mexico City’s main nightspots.

COYOACAN: The streets in this area are all cobbled & the area is home to some of Mexico City’s finest mansions & great museums. Many present-day celebrities live around here, as past celebrities have, including: Frida Kahlo, Diego Rivera & Leon Trotsky.

CHAPULTEPEC: Mexico City’s largest ‘green area’. You’ll find Chapultepec Park itself, the Castle where French leader Maximilian ruled from before he met his fate in Queretaro. There’s also Mexico City’s extensive Zoo, The Anthropology Museum, Chapultepec Fun Fair with its “Russian Mountain” wooden roller-coaster, several top-class museums & cultural centres & some of the city’s finest hotels & restaurants. Just north of Chapultepec is the district of Polanco, an ultra-high class residential area, which is also host to Mexico’s biggest & most elaborate US-style shopping mall, Santa Fe.
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If you choose to write to Contiki via the internet, please provide your home address so we are able to reply to you in writing.

The information in this booklet was, to the best of our knowledge, correct at the time of going to print but we cannot be held responsible for any subsequent changes to the contents of it.

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