



## ***Nine of Cups***

### **Notes for Cruisers – Inland Travel to Perú/Bolivia (October 2004)**

- **Libertad – Trujillo**
  - Liberpesa bus to Guayaquil
  - Walk from Terminal Terrestre to Ormeño Bus station. The Guayaquil bus drives right by the Ormeño station, but will not stop because of “Transito” rules.
  - Ormeño Bus (Royal Class) leaves once daily at 1:30pm (subject to change... check times before planning your departure) for Lima and several cities in between. Office opens around 11:30am for ticket sales. Comfortable double-decker bus, baños, videos, sleeper seats; serves a late, light dinner; stops and waits at Immigration in both Ecuador and Perú. Opt for a seat on the right side of the bus for dramatic ocean views if you’re heading directly to Lima.
    - Chiclayo - \$30, 15 hrs; Trujillo - \$40, 18 hrs; Lima - \$55, 24 hrs
  - Take lunch or snacks and water; the time between stops is long.
  
- **Trujillo**
  - We opted for Trujillo and passed up a stop in Chiclayo primarily because we preferred to arrive in the daylight rather than the middle of the night.
  - Hotel: Hostal Colonial (Jr. Independencia 618 - a 4-5 block walk from the Terminal Terrestre on the same street though the street name changes...take a right out of the terminal and head for the Cathedral domes). Clean, nice, hot water, matrimonial (double bed), cable TV; S/ 65/night (\$19); good restaurant, gift shop, offered tours. Room #203 was nice with a patio overlooking the courtyard. Rates are posted and they would not negotiate a cheaper rate. Centrally located to Plaza, restaurants, stores.
  - Tours (arranged through Colonial) and Sightseeing
    - Chan Chan including Palacio Tshudi, Site Museum, Huaca Arco Iris and a quick visit to the little resort town of Huanchaco – ½ day tour (5 hrs), pickup and drop off at hotel, English-speaking (?) guide – S/25
    - Huacas del Sol y de la Luna – ½ day tour (3-4 hrs), pickup and drop off at hotel, English-speaking (?) guide – S/20 ... We enjoyed this tour most!
    - Huanchaco was so neat, we took a local bus back and had lunch there and spent the afternoon; local totora reed boats called “cabellitos”, lots of crafts stalls along the beach, lots of restaurants and shops.
    - “Casas” (Spanish colonial mansions) around Plaza are free entry and beautiful to visit.
  - Restaurants
    - DeMarco’s – Italian food, nice atmosphere, a little pricey, but good!
  - Grocery store, well-stocked Meripisa Supermercado (Junin & Pizarro), also within a few blocks of hotel
  - Bus to Lima

- Ormeño Bus – 9am & 9PM (Business/Economico) – S/25
  - 10:30am & 10:30pm( Royal Class) – S/35; Opt for seats on the right side of the bus for best ocean views.
  - Note: Taxi drivers surround the bus when arriving in Lima Terminal; a fair price for downtown Lima is S/4, maybe 5, but not more, though cab drivers ask for S/8-10 initially.
- **Lima**
  - We opted to stay downtown in the Centro Historico area and had no problems, although most tourists stay in Miraflores or Barranco because of Lima’s bad reputation.
  - Hotel:
    - Hostal Roma (Jr. Ica 326) was our first choice based on Lonely Planet guide, but we were disappointed in it. Though clean, the rooms were cold and dark with poor lighting, no TV, the “hot” water was lukewarm and there were no matrimonials available. \$25/night with continental breakfast included. Their Café Carrara had pretty good sandwiches and they offered a good assortment of travel guides at very good prices. We bought “Exploring Cusco” by Peter Frost there for \$10.
    - Hostal Bonbini (Jr. Cailloma 209)– we moved to this hotel for our 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> nights in Lima; only a block away from the Hostal Roma and a world of difference. \$30/night (negotiated rate). Really nice, clean and modern, hot water (shower and tub!), double beds, continental breakfast included, heater, fan, cable TV, close to the Plaza Mayor (aka Plaza de Armas).
    - Hotel Gran Bolivar (Jr. de la Unión 958 at Plaza San Martin) – This 5-star hotel under renovation is the Grand Dame of Lima and they offered rooms with breakfast for \$45/night. We stayed here on our way back from Cusco. Though threadbare in some areas and not as grand as perhaps it was in the past, it was indeed a beautiful hotel with an absolutely grand lobby. The rooms were spacious, high-ceilinged with period furniture, a small entry room, a closet the size of some of our previous hotel rooms and a full hot-water bath with shower/tub & bidet; cable TV.
  - Restaurants:
    - The restaurant at the Gran Bolivar is excellent and offers tremendous Ejecutivo Lunches for S/15 including a free Pisco Sour (reputed to be the best Pisco Sours in all of Perú!). They also offer a set lunch in their bar for S/10.
  - Sightseeing/ Tours:
    - San Francisco Monastery – Tour of monastery and the catacombs is fascinating. Ask for English-speaking guide. \$1.50/each
    - Museo Rafael Larco Herrera (Bolivar 515, Punta Libre...about S/6 cab ride from downtown); private museum with incredible ceramics collection and unique “erotica” collection (pretty weird).
    - Huaca Puc’llana (Borgona & Tarapaca) is an active archeological dig of the Lima culture within the city; tour with English-speaking guide, small museum, gift shop, nice restaurant and small animal area with alpaca, cuy, etc.
    - Self-directed walking tour around the Plaza to view the Cathedral, Archbishop’s Mansion and the Government Palace.
  - Grocery store – Huge Supermercado Metro, off pedestrian mall on Emancipacion.
  - Shopping:
    - You can take a cab to Miraflores where there are several Feria Artensals (crafts markets) as well as a few funky boutiques. Prices are higher in

Miraflores than the crafts markets along Avenida de la Marina. Gifts and souvenir shops also downtown along Conde de Superunda with several nice cafes and restaurants.

- **Pisco**

- We have friends in Lima, so drove with them along the Peruvian coast on the PanAmericana to Pisco to the Reserva Nacional de Paracas and they left us in Pisco.
- Hotel: Hotel Regidor (Arequipa 201) – nice, modern, cable TV, hot water with shower & tub; \$24/double including continental breakfast. We were the only guests.
- ATM / Scam alert
  - There are 3 ATMs around the Plaza.
  - We went to one and were told it was out of order and were directed to another. At the second one, a fellow was just counting his cash and walking away when we approached. We noted there was the usual slot to insert our card as well as a scanner attached to the outside of the ATM. The “helpful” previous customer grabbed David’s card and swiped it through the scanner. David grabbed it back and inserted it in the ATM as usual. The fellow stayed close and we finally had to chase him off to get some privacy before inputting our PIN. Lucky, we did. On a hunch, we returned to the very same ATM that night and no external scanner. They had scanned our card, but had not been able to ascertain the PIN. Concerned, we asked our bank to change the PIN, but to date nothing has gone awry with the account.
- Sightseeing/Tours
  - Reserva Nacional de Paracas - \$1.50/pp entry (note: Paracas means sandstorm and this area is all desert...take lots of water).
  - Boat trip to Islas Balletas to view sea lions, Humboldt penguins, Andean terns, etc. ; \$12/person at dock in Paracas. Also nice boardwalk area there with lots of cafes and souvenir/artisan crafts.
- Bus to Ica – We took a local bus (SAKY station was right next door to the hotel) to Ica - 2 hrs/ \$1.80 each.

- **Ica/ Nasca**

- Bus – We took a “collectivo”, a 1974 Chevy refit with a diesel engine which crammed in 7 people (4 in the backseat) and carried a mattress on the roof. 3 hours (very, long hours)/ \$3.30.
- Sightseeing/Tours
  - Nasca Lines (Arranged at the Ormeño Bus terminal) for a Paracas Air tour; \$40/pp including 30 minute flight, informative video and transfers to and from airport. Quoted \$90 in Pisco, but fares seem to be somewhat negotiable.
- Bus to Arequipa
  - We were in Nasca only long enough to fly over the Nasca Lines, eat dinner at a local “chifa” and catch the 10:30pm Ormeño Bus to Arequipa (it actually arrived around midnight). Royal Class: S/90 (\$30) 8-9 hours; sleeper seats with blankets and hot tea in the morning.

- **Arequipa (This was our favorite city in Peru!)**

- Hotel: Hostal Miamaka (San Juan de Dios 402) – Great! \$20/matrimonial with continental breakfast; hot water shower, turn-down service (wow!), roof top patio. They kept our luggage and valuables while we went touring Cañón del Colca.
- Restaurants
  - Lots of restaurants and cafes with second floor balconies along the Arcades surrounding Plaza de Armas; you have to “walk the gauntlet” of hawkers in order to make your way around the plaza. Note that most



beautiful bathroom with tub; central location; complimentary tea/coffee in the lobby, even an elevator!

- Restaurants
  - Several along the pedestrian mall (Lima); all were fine, but we found none particularly outstanding. The local specialties are “trucha” and “peherrey” from Lake Titicaca and both were good.
- Sightseeing/ Tours
  - Floating Uros Islands / Taquile – We booked with Edgar Tours for a full day tour with English speaking guide. S/30 pp including hotel transfers. Not enough time in the Uros Islands and we could have spent more time at Taquile as well, but the tour was informative and fun and the guide (Henry) was excellent. We had lunch with the group at a nice restaurant for S/12.
  - M/V Yavari – The oldest steamship on Lake Titicaca (commissioned in 1862) is being refitted to again provide service across the Lake (2005/2006?). Tours are free, but a donation is requested.
  - Climb 624 steps (we counted) up to El Condor Mirador for fantastic views of the city and Lake.
  - Manco Copac Park – Statue of the First Inca who was supposedly born in Lake Titicaca.
- Grocery – small tiendas along the pedestrian mall
- Shopping – Several shops along the pedestrian mall; nothing outstanding.
- Bus to Copacabana, Bolivia
  - Also arranged with Edgar Tours – S/15 each including hotel pickup in the morning. 7:30am Colectur Bus to Copacabana(3 hrs). Get seats on the left side of the bus for great Lake views. Bus stops and waits at Peruvian & Bolivian Immigration to handle all paperwork. Get some Bolivianos here because there’s a 1B charge per person when entering Copacabana.
- **Copacabana, Bolivia**
  - Note: Lose one hour due to time change entering Bolivia
  - Hotel: Hotel Mirador...another work in progress...but a great value. \$5/person/night including hot water, TV, continental breakfast, and spectacular lake views (Rm #203).
  - Restaurants
    - Mankha Uta (6 de Agosto) had several set menus which were economical and very good and include a salad bar; they also have a fire going to take off the evening chill.
    - Márce (6 de Agosto) offers inexpensive, terrific and elegant set menu lunches outside or inside with great service.
  - Sightseeing/ Tours
    - Boat trip on Lake Titicaca to Islas del Sol y de la Luna; you can book your tour through most any agent and you end up with Titicaca Tours. Day tour includes boat trip to the northern part of Isla del Sol, then to Isla de la Luna, then to the southern part of Isla del Sol. There is no guide on the boat, but a local fellow meets you at the dock and shows you around the north part of the island (then asks for a contribution); a 2-hour+ trek. Nice. Alternatively, you can skip Isla de la Luna and hike to the pickup point, about a 3 hour trek. The hotel packed us a box lunch (S/15) since food on the island is very expensive. 25B for the boat trip plus entry fees of ~13B/pp including the guide.
    - Moorish Cathedral – Interesting and huge considering how little Copacabana is. Small museum and Chapel of Candles.
  - Book exchange at Alfa Internet (1:1); internet 14B/hour.
  - Grocery – small tiendas only, but water, wine, snacks, etc. are available.
  - Shopping – lots of shops and crafts around the Plaza.

- Bus to LaPaz, Bolivia
  - Colectur (Diana Tours); 1:30pm; 20B/person; 3 hours. The route takes you across Straits of Tiquina by ferry (~2B/pp).
- **La Paz, Bolivia**
  - Hotel: We looked long and hard for an acceptable hotel which was not too expensive; Hotel Majestic (Calle Santa Cruz on the corner of Illampu) was a good value at 100B/night (\$12.50) which included hot water, double bed, TV, clean room, continental breakfast and central location.
  - Restaurants:
    - El Lobo near the hotel on the corner of Santa Cruz and Illampu had a varied menu, good specials and good prices.
  - Sightseeing/ Tours
    - Highest zoo in the world – Admission 3B/pp. Great scenery, but limited number of interesting animals.
    - Witches' Market – “Mercado del las Brujas”, right near the hotel, is definitely unique and fun to visit. Every potion, powder, talisman and totem imaginable as well as llama fetuses, ocelot skins, desiccated toads and dried armadillos to ward off evil spirits or guarantee love, luck or money. We bought little ceramic “Pachamamas” (Earth mother figures), which we saw no place else. The vendors wrap them in llama wool to bring extra good luck.
    - Self-directed Walking Tour/ Museums
      - We followed the Lonely Planet guide to visit the main cathedrals, plazas and points of interest. There are several museums, but most were closed on Sunday and/or Monday...the days we were there.
  - Grocery – local tiendas offered everything we needed.
  - Shopping – Mercado de las Brujas for “novelty” items (and I do mean “novelty”); the streets adjoining this area are teeming with souvenir shops; specialty items are alpaca items (scarves, sweaters, hats, mittens, etc); handmade musical instruments; items from the Witches' Market.
  - Bus to Cusco, Perú
    - Transporte Litoral at the Terminal; 8:15 am, 11-12 hours; 110B/pp. They stop and wait at Immigration while you clear out and in.
- **Cusco, Perú**
  - Remember, you gain back that hour you lost when you cross the border.
  - Hotel: We stayed at three different places in Cusco.
    - The first place was a hospedaje, Munay Wasi (Waynapata 253), a 400-year old Spanish colonial house with some rooms converted into guest rooms. Our “host”, Luis, accosted us just as we got off the long bus ride from LaPaz and since we didn't have a reservation, his offer of a room with American breakfast for \$12.50/night sounded good. It was overpriced...we moved.
    - Hostal Loreto (Calle Loreto 115) just off the Plaza de Armas. It was a basic room with hot water and continental breakfast. We negotiated a rate of \$25/night, but the published rate for two was \$40. Good location.
    - Hatun Wasi Hostal (Plazoleta San Blas 619-B) in the funky San Blas area was the best. We had a beautiful rooftop room with double bed, modern bath, TV,continental breakfast \$21/night.
  - Restaurants:
    - La Baúta in the San Blas area (Calle Hatunruniyoc 487, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor) was just opening for business and we were their first customers! Pizza, Italian, etc. Nice little place, good atmosphere and great décor. We had calzones and they were terrific!

- Norton's Rat(Calle Loreto 115, same entry as Hostal Loreto)...good for motorcycle enthusiasts! Their hamburgers and fries were terrific. Good pub atmosphere.
    - Greens(Tandapata 700, Plaza San Blas behind the church) was small and intimate, only a few tables (and couches!); the food was great (and pricey).
    - Procuradores, a pedestrian mall, is also known as Gringo Alley and has loads of restaurants and cafes.
  - Sightseeing/ Tours
    - Boleto Turistico (BT) - \$10/each includes entry into 16 different ruins sites and museums. It's good for 10 days and can be renewed, we're told. Evidently the cathedral and Archbishop's Palace used to be covered by the Boleto, but they require separate admission now.
    - Sacred Valley Tour - We booked a full day tour (9-6pm-whew!) through Inkari Peru which we would not recommend. We were told to meet at the agency office in the morning at 8:20 for bus pickup and finally around 9am, the agent had us scurrying around, flagging down a bus which barely had room for us and ended up with no English-speaking guide. An effort was made by the guide to put us on another bus, but none had room. In spite of this, we enjoyed the tour which included visits to the following ruins: Pisac, Chincero, Urubamba, Ollantaytambo with a stop for lunch (buffet – S/12pp) and several crafts markets. Lots of exercise and stairs to climb to view the ruins. Entry to all with BT.
    - Sacsayhuamán (Sexy Woman) – You can walk to these ruins and it's worth the trek. Great ruins and great views of Cusco below. Note the directions on the local maps are incorrect if you're walking. Take either Suecia or Resbalosa up the hill to the end and turn right; go past the church and in about ½ mile you'll see the entrance to the ruins. Entry with BT.
    - While at Sacsayhuamán, we were approached by a local guide who offered us a horseback riding tour to 5 other ruins sites including Q'enquo, Pukapukara and Tambomachay (all entries BT) for \$10.50 each including horses (well-trained and in good condition with comfortable saddles) and a young Spanish-speaking guide. We enjoyed this trek through the countryside immensely, but our butts were sore after 4 hours of riding.
    - Self-directed Walking Tour – We enjoyed using the Lonely Planet Guide and wandering around the cobble-stoned streets looking at the architecture, walls, etc. It's a lovely town.
    - Cathedral – The Cathedral on the Plaza is actually 3 churches in one and is interesting to visit. Both LP and "Exploring Cusco" give some pointers on what to look for. The bell tower is closed to tourists and the entry fee is no longer BT. Entry: S/10/pp for the cathedral (all 3 merged churches) or S/15/pp for the cathedral plus San Blas and the Archbishop's museum.
    - Inca Trail – We had every intention of walking the Inca Trail, but were disappointed to learn that there was a one-month waiting list. Costs are competitive, but range from about \$250-300/person for the 4-day, 3 night hike including all food, camping equipment, porters, etc., but not including the \$40(?) trail/park fees.
  - Grocery - El Gato on the Plaza, pretty well-stocked for snacks, drinks and wine.
  - Shopping – Lots of funky shops in the San Blas area; upscale shops around the Plaza; side streets off the Plaza all had lots of shops; large artisan market near the Huancho Train Station.
  - Train to Aguas Calientes (Machu Picchu)
    - There are 2 train stations. The Huancho station is where you buy your train tickets to Aguas Calientes and the San Pedro station is the station from which you depart. The ticketing system is confusing as there are several different classes of service which leave at different times and from different places. We settled on Vistadome service (\$89/pp/RT) which was expensive,

but left from Cusco at 6am, offered en route snack and beverage service, roomy/ comfortable seats and safe luggage storage within each car. ~3-4 hours.

▪ **Aguas Calientes**

- Special note: The bugs in this area are vicious (in October anyway). We were eaten raw the first day. Take lots of bug spray and don't be afraid to use it. This was the only area in all of our travels that biting critters were a problem.
- Hotel: Gringo Bill's Hostal (off the square); published rates \$25/matrimonial with a 10% discount off additional nights includes basic room, hot water, continental breakfast, luggage storage. We opted to stay 2 nights in AC...one the day before our visit to MP and then the night of our visit. It proved worthwhile as we didn't have to rush our time at the ruins by worrying about trains to catch.
- Restaurants: There is only one main street in AC. It's a pedestrian mall and ALL up hill; the further up the hill you go, the better the prices for set menus. Watch out for extra service fees (\$2-3/pp) which most places seem to add on but which can be negotiated in advance.
- ATM: None, bring money from Cusco
- Sightseeing/ Tours
  - Machu Picchu
    - Bus: \$9 each/ RT; buses leave as soon as they fill up; we were on our way by 6:20am- 20 minutes
    - Park Entry Fee: \$20/ ea; open 7am-6pm
    - Note: The rules state you cannot bring in backpacks, lunches, etc., but we had a bag lunch packed at Gringo Bill's and no one questioned us at the MP entry gate. Bring LOTS of water. We ended up taking 5 bottles and gave one plus part of one away to hikers who were parched and had none left. There is a small snack bar outside the gate, but no services within the park at all.
    - We climbed Waynapicchu and watched from the top as the fog lifted from Machu Picchu, exposing the ruins. It was awe-inspiring.
  - Aguas Calientes – Hot springs for which the town was named; walk all the way up the hill and keep going; we're not into hot springs, but they looked OK and the walk was nice; there's a little snack bar there.
- Grocery – Tiendas all along the pedestrian mall
- Shopping – You can't miss the vendors...hundreds of them (aggressive) just as you get off the train and beyond the bridge.

We spent a few more days in Cusco, then we flew to Lima (Lan Perú - \$82/pp/including tax, but not including \$4.50/pp airport departure tax) to visit with our friends for a couple more days. We found that most of the souvenirs we wanted to buy, especially alpaca scarves and sweaters, were available and cost the same or less in Lima than any other place in Perú.

From Lima, we took the Ormeño Bus back to Guayaquil (3:30pm /\$45 – 24 hours, ugh!) which arrived late (6PM), but no problem catching a bus from the Terminal Terrestre back to Libertad.

**NOTES:**

**Trip Duration:** ~5 weeks; September/October 2004

**Average Daily Cost/2:** \$75\* including hotels, transportation, tours and all meals

\*This could have been reduced substantially. We chose to fly from Cusco to Lima, take a more expensive train to Machu Picchu and also chose to stay in a more expensive hotel our last two nights in Lima.

**Hotels:** Our criteria for hotels included private room and bath, a double bed, hot water and a toilet seat.

**Currency/Banks:** Perú – Nuevo Sol (~S/3.35 = \$1)  
Bolivia – Bolivianos (~7.95 B = \$1)

**ATMs** were available everywhere EXCEPT Copacabana and Aguas Calientas, and dispensed your choice of dollars or local currency.

**Peruvian/Bolivian Food Specialties:** Cuy (guinea pig), alpaca, Rocoto Relleno (stuffed peppers), Mazamorada (a sweet berry dessert), Pisco Sours (the national alcoholic drink...tastes like a Margarita and it's fabulous!), Palta Rellena (a la Reyna – a stuffed avocado), Causa (a layered potato and chicken dish), Ocopa (potatoes with a spicy sauce, Papas a la Huancaína (potatoes with a different spicy sauce), Trucha a la plancha (broiled trout from Lake Titicaca!), Pejerrey (kingfish from Lake Titicaca), local pizzas baked in wood fired ovens.

**Soroche** – high altitude sickness; we experienced headaches and nausea the most in Arequipa and Cañón de Colca. We drank mate de coca, chewed coca leaves, sucked on coca candies and though the symptoms were relieved, nothing worked better than acclimating. After 3-4 days, we were fine although sometimes had to catch our breaths a bit more than usual. Drugs are available over-the-counter, but we weren't sure of the side-effects and opted to tough it out.

**Internet** was available everywhere at very reasonable costs (S/1-2 / hr).

**Guides:**

Lonely Planet Guide to Perú (or South America on a Shoestring) was excellent;  
We also bought Peter Frost's "Exploring Cusco" in Lima for \$10 at the Hostal Roma (much more expensive in the U.S.) and used it lots while in Cusco and Machu Picchu.

**Lavanderias:** (same day service) were available in most towns and were fairly inexpensive; check to be sure they charge by weight, not per piece.

**Other Tips:**

- Most everything seems to be negotiable: hotel rooms, fixed meal prices in some places, taxis, souvenirs/gifts, tours. We rarely paid the first price asked for anything.
- I have a digital camera and took lots of photos then was afraid I wouldn't have enough space on my memory card for all the photos I wanted to take. We found several places throughout Perú and Bolivia, which downloaded memory cards onto CDs very inexpensively (\$7.00/128MB) which is how we handled the memory issue. Ask to check to CD before you leave the camera shop.
- The sightseeing and tours listed are only the things we did and are by no means the only things to see and do in each place. Sometimes we ran out of time; sometimes we ran out of steam; and sometimes we were just tired of being tourists.
- Carry your own toilet paper – it's rarely available.
- Spanish vocabulary differs in many parts of South America, including Peru and Bolivia. For instance:
  - Palta – avocado (not aguacate)
  - Grifo – gas station (not a faucet)
  - Playas – parking garage (not a beach)
  - Estacion de Bus – not Terminal Terrestre in Bolivia
  - Café cortado – coffee with a little milk
  - Café American – weak, black coffee

Buen viaje,  
Marcie & David

## **Peru Trip – Packing List (4-6 weeks)**

**Note: It's very cool in the high altitudes; we wore long sleeve shirts and our sweatshirts nearly everyday, but they were sufficient.**

### **Marcie**

Backpack + leather bag + fanny pack  
Camera/ batteries/memory sticks  
(1) T-shirt  
(3) Long sleeve jerseys  
Fleece pullover  
Rain poncho  
Spanish Dictionary  
Lonely Planet – Peru + Bolivia pages  
Passport & Copies (for both)  
ATM card  
Makeup / Hairspray/Handcream  
Hairbands/clips  
(3) Disposable razors  
Sandals  
Address book  
(3) socks & underwear  
Swimsuit  
Hat  
Journal/pencils  
(1) pr slacks (to wear while jeans are being washed)  
Eyeglasses/sunglasses  
Snacks

### **Wear:**

Jeans / belt  
T-shirt / denim blouse  
Running shoes/socks

### **David**

Backpack  
(1) T-shirt  
(3) Long sleeve jerseys  
Sweat shirt  
Rain poncho  
Extra nylon carry bag (for souvenirs)  
(3) socks/ underwear  
Swimsuit  
Hat  
Cash  
Electric razor & charger  
(1) pr slacks  
Extra plastic bags(laundry/trash)  
Eyeglasses/sunglasses  
Leatherman tool  
Cable ties (to “lock” backpacks)  
Flashlight

### **Wear:**

Jeans/belt  
T-shirt /denim shirt  
Deck shoes / socks

### Shared Dop Kit:

- Toothbrushes
- Toothpaste
- Shampoo/Conditioner
- Floss
- Hairbrush/comb
- Deodorants
- Soap
- Toilet paper

- Nail clippers
- Bug spray
- Sunscreen
- Ibuprophen/Aspirin/  
Naproxen
- Q-tips
- Band-aids

### Other:

Deck of cards  
(2) Books  
(exchanged en route)

## Separate trip: Iquitos on the Amazon River

August 2005

Duration: One week: 3 days at jungle lodge; 3 days in Iquitos City

Packing: We packed light...only medium-sized backpack each. Bring sunscreen and insect spray. During rainy season (Nov-May) you will need rubber boots, rain poncho. Very warm and humid as you might expect.

Airline info: We flew Lan Peru from Lima to Iquitos (1 ½ hours); ~\$190 each RT including tax and tour agency fee (\$5/pp). This does not include the airport departure tax of ~\$5.50 each.

Lodge: Heliconia Lodge, approximately 50km upriver from Iquitos by fast boat. Included transportation from airport, to & from lodge; 2 nights, 3 days at the lodge; 2 lunches, 2 breakfasts, 2 dinners. Soft drinks, bottled water, beer, etc. extra. English-speaking guide; pink dolphins, piranha fishing, canoe trips at night and dawn; jungle treks. Private room w/shower and double bed. Cold water only; limited electricity during the day. \$180/pp. We thought it was OK, but not outstanding; probably a good value for the money. You would need to go farther up or downriver to see more wildlife. We went in August, the dry season when the river was low. Not as much mud, but we didn't get to see as much. When the river is higher, you also visit Monkey Island (Islas de Monos) and the giant lilies (Victoria regia). Supposedly more wildlife and birdlife then.

### Iquitos City:

- Hotel -
  - Rio Amazonas on Plaza de Armas. Businessman's hotel. Clean, carpeted room with private bath; hot water, cable TV, mini-fridge, A/C, included continental breakfast; \$25/night first night; \$20/night for consecutive nights. Good bargain! We stayed here after checking out several other hotels.
  - El Dorado Hotel right on the Plaza de Armas (5-star) looked lovely; we checked out the lobby and gift shop only.
  - Victoria Regia Hotel – looked nice; \$40/night double; touristy.
  - Real Iquitos – on the Malecon with river views; used to be the “grand dame” of Iquitos; pretty shabby; ~\$28-32/night double; cold water.
- Restaurants –
  - Ari's Burgers – also known as “Gringolandia” but it's conveniently located on the corner of Plaza de Armas; varied, reasonable menu and open almost all the time; good for coffee, snacks and “cremolada fresca”.
  - LaTribu was our favorite and we ate dinner there twice. Great “merienda” (fixed dinner) for about S/7 each. Great décor; small & intimate. Napo 138 just off the Malecon.
  - Yellow Rose of Texas (yup!) - funky kind of place; pricey, but the food was pretty good; varied menu. Off the Plaza de Armas next to the Iron House.
  - Chifas – several; all were pretty good and cheap.
- Local Specialities :
  - Paiche – one of the largest fresh water fish in the world (fruit-eating, no less).
  - Patarascha – great! Paiche or other fish steamed in banana leaves with veggies and spices. Really good.
  - Local beer is “San Juan”...”brewed in the jungle”
  - Water buffalo meat, legarto (caiman), wild peccary are all offered.
  - We're told there is a large roasted worm and also large candied ants which are available for tasting (“muy rico”) and are considered local delicacies, but we begged off.

- Tourist Information office located next to El Dorado Hotel on Plaza de Armas was helpful; ask for a copy of English tourist newspaper “Iquitos News”; poorly written, but good information and city map.
- Sightseeing:
  - Iron House – Built by Eifel and shipped in pieces to Iquitos for assembly (and it looks it!). On the corner of Plaza Armas. You can’t miss it.
  - Azulejos – imported tiles used to decorate the exterior of many of the older mansions of the “rubber barons”.

Crafts/ Markets