

Peru Tips & Information Compiled by Alberto and Delphine

As of December 18, 2015

***Note:** these are my own notes for ourselves and our friends who traveled with us. It is not a public recommendations, so feel free to use as a reference, but your experience may differ from ours.*

To Do BEFORE Traveling:

- Make a copy of the main page of your passport and keep the copy separate from your passport, just in case. It is not a bad idea to keep a copy of the photo in your smart phone or tablet, in case you need to request a duplicate.
- Call your cell company and look into international plans. Every plan is different:
 - We normally get an international plan for emergency purposes (you can still make calls without the plan, but the international plan lowers your international call costs).
 - Most definitely get an international text plan. Texting is a very effective and cheap way to communicate. The international text plan will save you money.
 - Disable call and data roaming...you could end up with a large phone bill if you don't. Only turn on call roaming when making international calls. Consult with your cell service about this.
- International cellular plans can be expensive to use locally. If you need to make local calls for taxis, etc., consider getting a burner (i.e., "pre-pago") phone. See information for local telephone below.
- Call your credit card company and let them know where you are traveling and the dates you are traveling. If you don't do this they may cancel your card when they see international transactions.
- If you are traveling to places located in high altitude you may want to consider getting a prescription for Diamox. Our doctor prescribes 250 mg pills, one per day (or half a pill twice a day), starting two days before traveling to the altitude and continuing for 2 to 4 days once you have reached the altitude. After 2 to 4 days in the altitude you will be acclimated. Note that some doctors prescribe more than 250 mg, but knowledgeable Peruvian doctors say that 250 mg is sufficient. Please consult with your physician.
- Bring over the counter medications like Pepto and Imodium for minor stomach issues. Consult with your doctor if you want to bring a stronger medication with antibiotic like Cipro.
- If it is an emergency, you can call us directly to our U.S. cell numbers, but text us first in case our roaming is turned off.
- Here are **contact numbers** in Peru:
 - Note: the international prefix for Lima, Peru:
 - When calling from the U.S. to a land line (7 digits) is: 011-51-1
 - When calling from the U.S. to a cell number (9 digits) is: 011-51
 - If you are calling within Lima, you don't need the prefix
 - If you are calling outside of Lima but within Peru, the prefix is 01.

- Westin Hotel in Lima: 201-5000
- El Libertador Hotel at Sacred Valley (011-84) 58-1777
- El Libertador Hotel at Cuzco (011-84) 23-1961
- 3B Bed and Breakfast (Barranco) 247-6915

Weather (from Trip Advisor – please note the Cuzco is dry and Lima is very humid):

Cusco weather essentials			Machu Picchu weather essentials			Lima weather essentials			
Monthly Averages			Monthly Averages			Monthly Averages			
Month	High	Low	Month	High	Low	Month	High	Low	Precip
Apr	65°F	42°F	Apr	65°F	42°F	Apr	73°F	64°F	0 in
May	66°F	37°F	May	66°F	37°F	May	68°F	60°F	0 in
Jun	65°F	34°F	Jun	65°F	34°F	Jun	65°F	60°F	0 in
Jul	64°F	33°F	Jul	64°F	33°F	Jul	64°F	59°F	0 in
Aug	65°F	36°F	Aug	65°F	36°F	Aug	64°F	59°F	0 in
Sep	67°F	40°F	Sep	67°F	40°F	Sep	64°F	58°F	0 in

Local Transportation in Lima

Do NOT take street taxis. At the airport, take a taxi from a taxi counter inside the airport, not outside. While in Lima, call a taxi service, but don't hail taxis in the street. These taxis are not always safe mechanically and the drivers may not be reliable either. Only take taxis from a reputable taxi service inside the airport or by phone request (note that at peak times, especially at night when people go out, it may take as long as 45 minutes to get your taxi, other times it takes 15 minutes or so). The ones I know are listed below (or ask your hotel concierge to recommend a few taxi companies you can call).

- Blue Cars: 698- 9312 (moderate, but great service)
- Taxi Chacarilla: 994-054-595
- Taxi La Molina: 348-9888 or 981-165-810 (cell)
- Taxi Real: 215-1414
- Taxi Rinconada: 352-9593
- Taxi Seguro: 241-9292
- CMV Taxi Remise: 422-4838
- Mitsoo (or Mitsu): 261-7788; 517-1893; 517-1895 (expensive)
- Taxi Green: 484-4001

You can also call these private taxi drivers who can take you around for \$10 to \$12 an hour (these are two very responsible and very honest drivers we know and have used, recommended by our local friends):

- Mr. Jans: 994-144-519 (his daughter speaks English and will sometimes accompany her father as a guide for passengers – very reliable)
- Mr. Martin Coz : 981-165-810 (awesome – if he is not available he will find a driver substitute)

Local Telephone Service (Mobile)

Consider getting a cheap burner (i.e., “pre-pago”) phone at Claro or any other cellular company. I bought mine for only \$20, including the SIM chip and bought S/. 50 (about \$15) of pre-paid (i.e., pre-pago), which gave me 100 minutes of local cell calls. There are Claro offices everywhere, especially in supermarkets like Wong or Metro. You can re-load your pre-paid balance at the cashiers in any of these supermarkets and at Claro stores. All you need is your cell number. You can also rent a phone at the airport, but it will cost \$10 or \$15 per month.

Money Exchange

We usually exchange \$100 or so at the airport to have local currency with us, but the exchange at these bureaus is not that great. The best rates are usually at banks or exchange houses in the city. You may also find people in the streets with a municipal vest, who are authorized by the municipalities to exchange currency. These are official, but beware of anyone who may be monitoring the transaction. Most establishments accept US dollars and the exchange rate they give you is OK, although you can probably do better if you exchange the money yourself. Consult with the hotel too. Sometimes they have good exchange rates. Getting cash from ATM machines is some times more favorable in terms of exchange rate.

Tour Companies

Lima Tours

Sales rep in Lima: Sara Diaz

Lima Area Manager: Tania Jara: (011-51-1) 619-6945

Operators’ telephone numbers:

- Lima: 619-6911
- Cusco: 084-228431
- Puno: 051-352001
- Emergency service (24/7): 619-6911 / 997-516-250 / 997-575-676

Safety Tips

- Do not bring/wear/display jewelry or anything else worth stealing (e.g., expensive watch).
- While in the car, never display your purse or bag. Put it on the floor, **NOT on your lap** where is visible from the outside (some thieves like to break windows when they notice a purse through the window). Beware of merchants that approach the car window to sell you candy or other goods. Many times these folks work in combination with thieves and they are checking out what you have.
- Always be aware of who is around you, 360 degrees, and walk in groups.
- Keep your passport in a safe or with you (**NOT in a bag that could be snatched**).

- While in Lima, leave your passport at the safe deposit in the hotel if there isn't a safe in the room and walk around with your driver's license.
- Make a copy of the main page of your passport with your picture and passport number and keep the copy with you, just in case.
- Keep your cash and your wallet/credit cards in different pockets. If they pick pocket one, you have the other. Don't take all your cash with you. Take only what you need and leave the rest in the safe at the hotel.
- Don't take taxis in the street; have somebody phone a trusted taxi service.

Health & Eating Tips

- If you have stomach issues, order “sopa de dieta” (diet soup) or “dieta de pollo” (chicken soup diet). It is a bland soup with a few potatoes and chicken. All restaurants have their own version of this soup, but they are all light. You can also order “pollo a la plancha” or “pescado a la plancha” “sin aceite” (chicken or fish cooked with little or no oil). Or, order a “sancochado” – it is the softest food you can eat – it has meats, potatoes and vegetables boiled and served in a soup – pretty tasty and typical too.
- Drink bottled water only...San Luis is local spring water and one of the best you can drink (has won several awards); or drink the usual Evian, etc. If they put ice on your drinks or if you get frozen drinks (including pisco sours) ask if the water they used for the ice was bottled, boiled or filtered. Good restaurants do this.
- Don't eat any raw vegetables, no matter how clean and appetizing they look. Even though the vegetables may have been washed, the change in water quality will affect you.
- You can eat ceviche (raw fish marinated in lime juice) but only at reputable restaurants; the fish itself is rarely responsible for someone getting someone sick, rather it is the handling of the fish that might.
- If you want to eat/try oily foods (e.g., fried food, sauces), order them only at reputable restaurants. Cheap oil or oil not replaced frequently can get you sick really fast.
- Other cooked food is usually okay.
- If you get altitude sickness, people recommend Coramina (glucose pills), which you can get over the counter. Sucking candy always helps, you get glucose and keep the saliva flowing, which are both good for altitude sickness. Coca tea is very good too (sold at supermarkets – all hotels have it too). You should not have altitude problems in Machu Picchu because is not that high. Coming back, you adjust gradually to higher altitudes first in Ollantaytambo (higher) and then Cuzco (the highest). Again, the best thing is Diamox 250 mg, as we explain above, but you need to consult this with your physician.

Shopping

- Artesanales de Miraflores (artisan market in Miraflores) in Av. Petit Thouars – great selection of handicraft. DO NOT use credit cards, pay with cash and bargain for prices.
- Dedalo – Paseo Sáenz Peña 295, Barranco – finer handicraft and cool products.

- Larcomar at Av. Larco – Amazing shopping center with ocean views – upscale stores, restaurants, bars, live music, etc.
- Parque Miraflores – lots of hippies selling arts – lively neighborhood, lots of stores and restaurants too, this is where I grew up; watch out your pockets for shop lifting.
- Mili (by Mili Blume) – Av. Angamos Oeste 1041, Miraflores, 447-4373; 241-8026; fine, cool and trendy jewelry.
- Kuna – great selection of Alpaca, cotton and bamboo fabrics and products. There are several stores in Lima including two very good stores at the Airport (prices are the same in all stores).
- Wong – a great supermarket – you can get just about everything at Wong (food, pisco, wine, alfajores, books, etc.)

Hotels where we have stayed:

Lima

- ***El Libertador, San Isidro:*** great location with views to the San Isidro golf course. Next door to Starbucks and half a block from the Country Club Hotel, which is beautiful and has a wonderful English bar and a great restaurant. The hotel is comfortable and well-priced, but with limited amenities.
- ***Westin Hotel:*** One of the best hotels in Lima, but expensive. Good location in the heart of San Isidro's financial district with lots of shopping around. The rooms are comfortable and the restaurant is OK. Maras restaurant is also located inside the hotel, which is excellent (see description below). The spa and the pool are excellent.
- ***El Olivar --*** (San Isidro): the best thing about this hotel is the location. It is in the middle of El Olivar park (which is an olive park, which was preserved when the city developed). There are tons of restaurants and shops, all walking distance and also a shopping mall two blocks away. It is moderately priced. It has a nice restaurant (try the all you can eat Sancochado on Wednesdays for lunch – which is a great assortment of meats, vegetables and potatoes, all boiled in the same soup. It is awesome). There is also a great sushi restaurant in the basement (have not tried it). Our only complaint about this hotel is that the entire lobby smells like those aroma plug-ins, which we found very strong, almost offensive. We have allergies, so we can't stay at the hotel, but we enjoyed the facilities. There is a nice pool on the roof. The rooms are small.
- ***3B's Barranco Hotel (Barranco):*** this hotel is owned and managed by Enrique Illich. It is very well priced. The rooms have minimal amenities, but are impeccable and nicely decorated. I have sent a lot of people to this hotel and they have all raved about the service at this hotel. From what Enrique explained to me, their main service is ensuring that you have a great time while you are in Peru. They will organize for you tours, airport pickups, dinner reservations, etc. It is the best B&B of its kind, without question. It is walking distance from the center of Barranco. Barranco is the artsy, bohemian district in Lima, with museums, restaurants, bars and amazing colonial architecture, and a ramp to walk to the beach.

Great Restaurants in Lima

Peru (and specially Lima) has some of the best restaurants in the world. Typical Peruvian food is, and has always been wonderful, but a new breed of chefs, led by famous chef Gaston Acurio, have taken Peruvian cuisine to new levels. Most of the new reputation is based on new presentations of older traditional foods, new ways of making ceviches (e.g., tiraditos) and fusions with other cuisines. I think that it is the fusions that really make Peruvian cuisine unique (Peruvian-Chinese or Chifa; Peruvian-Japanese; Peruvian-Italian; etc.) – must try the ones in bold.

- **Guia Gastronomica del Peru: El Manual del Buen Gourmet** (Lima's Gourmet Guide), <http://www.peru.travel/es-pe/guia-gastronomica-del-peru.aspx> – this is an excellent restaurant guide for most districts in Lima. All the restaurants listed in this guide are excellent. The guide is updated every year and there is another guide for all of Peru's main cities outside of Lima.
- **Central** (one of the best restaurants we have tried in Lima): Modern cuisine with typical Peruvian flavors. Address: Santa Isabel 376 Miraflores, Across from Fatima Church, Phone: 242-8515 or 8575)
- **Maido** (great Peruvian-Japanese fusion restaurant). 399 calle San Martin (esquina con calle Colon), Miraflores, Lima, Peru. Reservations: 446-2512, 447-7554. <http://www.maido.pe/en/>. Expensive but highly rated. We had a great meal there and their tiraditos are excellent.
- **IK** (great modern Peruvian cuisine; the inside of the restaurant is decorated like a gigantic box of oranges – pretty elaborate but somewhat small dishes). Calle Elias Aguirre 179, Miraflores, Lima, Peru (1/2 block from Pardo Ave.), 652-1692, <http://ivankisic.pe/>. IK stands for Ivan Kisic, the original owner who along with his wife tragically lost their lives in a car accident in Cuzco. His twin brother renamed the restaurant in his honor.
- **La Huaca Pucllana** (fabulous restaurant located at the Huaca Pullana ruins in Miraflores): You can enjoy a meal with a great view to the ruins and can also take a tour of the ruins before or after your meal. A bit touristy, but nice.
- **Amor A Mar** (seafood) – Barranco, Garcia y Garcia 181, 651-1111 – Excellent food and service. The neighborhood is not that great, but the restaurant is very nice and a bit pricey. Don't walk there, take a taxi.
- **Pescados Capitales** (Miraflores – Av. La Mar 1337; Phone: 421.8808): Specializes in seafood and is the best place to eat the freshest seafood. Highly recommended. Within restaurant area there is a small artists' gallery and next to the restaurant there is a small café and very nice artisan shop, Algo de Diseno.
- **La Mar** (Miraflores – Av. La Mar 770; Phone: 421-3365): Gaston Acurio's seafood restaurant. No reservations taken. This same restaurant has opened in San Francisco and in New York (September 2011).
- **Tanta** (San Isidro, Gaston Acurio's excellent, informal restaurant, open until late, across the street from El Olivar Hotel, and many other locations in Lima. Try their lomo saltado empanadas, soups and mini-tacu tacus with tenderloin and quail eggs)

- **Panchita** (Miraflores): New restaurant by Gaston Acurio featuring typical Peruvian criollo food; it is excellent and very traditional. Many restaurants are altering the traditional dishes to distinguish themselves, but this restaurant keeps the traditional dishes).
- **Jose Antonio** (2 locations, original in Magdalena near San Isidro; and new location and fancier in Chacarilla): It is one of the oldest and most traditional restaurants in Lima and they make the best Pisco Sours.
- **Delifrance** (excellent French bakery). In my opinion, they have the best and most authentic French baguette bread in their Barranco location. Their Miraflores location has a nice café too.
- **Astrid y Gaston** (Av. Paz Soldán 290, San Isidro, reservations at 442-2775) <http://www.astridygaston.com/> – Gaston Acurio’s first restaurant. Gaston Acurio is accredited with single handedly bringing the Peruvian cuisine to world class level. Any of his restaurants are always at the top of anyone’s list. He first opened this restaurant in Miraflores, which is now closed, and then opened this one in San Isidro and some say that it is the largest investment made in a Peruvian restaurant. Have not tried it but friends have recommended it highly.
- **Madam Tusan** (Miraflores) – Gaston Acurio’s Chinese food restaurant.
- **18.7.5** (Chorrillos) – this restaurant is located inside the Club Regatas, which is a private club. You need to be a member or be invited by a member. The club also has an excellent bar with ocean views and a great Chinese restaurant “Chifa”.
- **Maras** – (San Isidro, inside the Westin Hotel): this is an excellent restaurant, specializing in novel cuisine. Rafael Piqueras is the chef, who used to be the chef at Fusion. Fusion closed down after Rafael left, but used to be one of the best restaurants in Lima specializing in fusions from various countries and regions. Many from the Fusion team now work at Maras. They just opened (in late 2015) a new bar at Maras, which is quite nice and very popular.
- **Brujas de Cachiche** (Miraflores): The best “Tacu-Tacu” in town (refried rice and beans with a breaded steak and fried egg on top).
- **Amaz** – Gaston Acurio’s restaurant for Amazon’s food, Avenida La Paz 1079, Miraflores, Lima, Peru, (511) 221-9393
- **Amor A Mar** (seafood, see above) – Barranco, Garcia y Garcia 181, 651-1111. <http://www.amoramar.com/>. We’ve been twice to this restaurant in different trips and it may be one of the best restaurants in Lima and favorite for many Limenos. They specialize in seafood and it is just excellent. It is located in a so-so neighborhood of Barranco, but they have valet parking and taxi service and the place is awesome inside, very open. Note: The owners of this restaurant just opened (November 2015) a new restaurant in Regatas Club called **A Mar**, which we tried on their second day and it was quite impressive for a newly opened restaurant.
- **Sagra** (Miraflores): Cozy informal restaurant, new Andean. Excellent food and inexpensive. Located in the cozy Suche shopping center, which resembles a small Andean village, in Ave. La Paz 640, 650-8884.

- **La 73:** Great little restaurant, unassuming. Looks like a whole in the wall, next to Barranco's movie theater, but the food is great and inexpensive. Av. El Sol Oeste 175, Barranco, Lima, Peru (Barranco) 011-247-0780
- **El Veridico de Fidel** (leche de tigre), Colon246, Miraflores District, Lima, 557-5546.
- **Huaringas Bar:** Bar at the **Brujas de Cachiche** restaurant. It is supposed to have the best selection of Pisco cocktails in Lima. Highly recommended by friends.
- **Rosa Nautica** (beautiful location on the water, built on a pier 100 yards into the ocean, surrounded by water): The food is okay but a bit pricy; you can definitely eat much better in other restaurants for less. There is nice bar upstairs with water views and there are shops all around. Not a bad place for a sunset happy hour.
- There is a good sushi restaurant in the basement of El Olivar hotel. Have never tried it, but hear it is quite good.
- On Wednesdays, **El Olivar Hotel** in San Isidro offers “**sancochado**” all you can eat. This is a typical Peruvian meal with all kinds of boiled meats, potatoes, yuccas and vegetables. The soup that comes out of cooking sancochados is simply awesome. If they offer sancochado during your stay, don't miss it.
- **Hantso:** Great sushi restaurant in Monterrico. Went there once long time ago.
- **San Antonio:** Café, and the best bakery/deli in Lima – they have locations in Pueblo Libre, San Isidro, Miraflores and San Antonio.
- **Cala** (by the beach – circuito de playas)
- MUST try a “Chifa” which is the name used in Peru for Chinese restaurants. Very different than Chinese restaurants in the U.S. Ask for a good recommendation. Some Chifa's are not that great.
- Go to **Larco Mar**, a great shopping center with theaters, live music, shops, ice cream, etc. in Miraflores overlooking the Pacific Ocean.
- Other restaurant recommended by reviews and friends:
 - Rafael (never tried it, very expensive)
 - Calla y Edo (never tried it)
 - Dario (recommended by Juani Bazo) – Ave. Petit Thouarz
- Recommended by Ignacio Mariategui (Peruvian Embassy):
 - San Isidro (near El Olivar Hotel)
 - Matsuei (sushi, near el Olivar Hotel)
 - La Gloria (2 de Mayo in Miraflores)
 - La Bombonaire (like San Antonio bakery)
 - Jugueria las Delicias (fruit juices)
 - Chifa Titi

- Salon de Te (Chinatown, 2nd floor)
- El Rincon Que No Conoces (38 bean dishes, rice with duck)
- Recommended by Carmen Weder:
 - **Costanera 700** (Miraflores): Peruvian Japanese fusion
 - Bachiche – La Paz, Miraflores. Gastón Acurio restaurant (Italian)
 - Papacho's (next to Bachiche), specialty is sandwiches – Gaston Acurio's version of healthy fast food.
 - La Habana – Nice café in San Isidro, Miguel Dasso or Larcomar.
 - Amano Museum (handcraft museum), in Miraflores, Calle Retiro 160; need a reservation 441-2909
- Recommended by Francisco Nugent
 - Palermo – coffee, breakfast and bakery.
- Buy “tejas,” which are a delicious sweet typical of Ica (which is a town four hours south of Lima). There are different kinds and they all have a sugar coating and home made caramel inside; some have a lime peel, others have prunes or pecans. The absolute BEST place to get the original, genuine tejas made in Ica (for many years) is: “**Tejas de Ica. Sra. Buen Día**”, Av. Caminos del Inca 1506, Surco; Phone: 279 1944; Frente a la cevicheria El Buzo. Also in calle Diez Canseco 306, Miraflores, tel. 446-7138, <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Tejas-Sra-Buendia/142290519179455>. Helena's tejas are good too, but Sra. Buen Dia's are the legitimate tejas from Ica and they are hands down the very best and the real thing.

Great Restaurants in Cuzco

- Hidden Treasure (mostly for shows, food is okay but not excellent)
- Inka Grill – good restaurant with nice bar and atmosphere
- Bako – typical food and local pizzas
- Chi-Cha – Gaston Acurio's local restaurant
- Granja Heid – German owned cozy small restaurant, great food and very clean
- Cicciolina (food with local ingredients – try the “milhojas de lucuma”; milhojas (thousand leaves) is filo dough pastry and lucuma is a Peruvian fruit, almost like a yam.
- Inka Wall (typical shows, don't eat there)
- Don Antonio (typical music)
- Quinta Pachamama (typical music)

Great Restaurants in Sacred Valley:

- El Huacatay (in Urubamba) – hole in the wall but the food is fantastic and very popular
- 3 Keros (excellent – the owner is very friendly and personable and their lomo saltado is the best)

A Quick Pisco Tutorial

Pisco is Peru's most traditional liquor. It is technically a brandy and one of the only liquors in the world that has nothing but grape pulp (no seeds, or stems, or peel, or any additives). Italian Grappa is made with the leftovers after making wine, but Pisco is produced directly from the grape pulp. Pisco was the Indian name of a bird (pisqu) and there is a region in Peru called Pisco after this bird, which is where most of the Pisco production takes place. Pisco, by the Peruvian official standards, can ONLY be made out of the following seven types of grapes, of two types:

Non Aromatic (for stronger Piscos and for Pisco Sour): Quebranta, Common Black, Mollar, Uvina

Aromatic (for milder sipping Piscos): Italia, Moscatel, Albilla, Torontel (Italia is the best if you like aromatic mild pisco and Torontel is really nice if you like stronger pisco and excellent for cocktails).

There are two types of Piscos: Puro (single grape) and Acholado (grape blends). Pisco can range in price from \$10 to upwards to \$80 (for ½ a liter bottle). Anything in the \$20 to \$25 range for a ½ liter bottle should be pretty decent. Here are some recommendations:

- Pisco Italia, pure aromatic, great for sipping: La Blanco, Biondi, Viejo Tonel.
- Pisco Mosto Verde: Mosto Verde is not really a pisco type, but the process used to produce the pisco. It is a term used for Piscos in which the sugar is not fully fermented into alcohol before going into distillation. Any grape or acholado blend could have a Mosto Verde production. Because of this production method, Mosto Verdes are the most enjoyable Piscos because the Pisco producers can control the smoothness of the Pisco. They are great sipping Piscos, almost like brandy. My favorite: La Blanco (Mosto Verde); La Blanco (Mosto Verde, Gran Herencia – i.e., great heritage, very expensive, the absolute BEST); Vinas de Oro (Collección, Mosto Verde – they have a variety of grapes on this type of Pisco, but the best are Italia and Torontel). Another great pisco is El Porton, Mosto Verde.
- Some acholado Piscos are excellent, but it all depends on the particular blend. The best acholados I have tried are La Blanco - Acholado - Mosto Verde and Viejo Tonel.
- If you want Pisco for Pisco Sours, don't spend a lot of money. The lime juice and sugar will mask the good taste of fine Piscos. However, a cheap Pisco could ruin the experience. Pure non-aromatic Piscos (e.g., Quebranta or Torontel) are best for Pisco Sours.

Altitudes:

- Lima: sea level
- Arequipa: 2,380 meters (7,740 ft)
- Colca: 3,600 meters (11,800 ft): Highest point en route from Arequipa is 4,800 meters (15,748 ft)
- Puno: 3,860 meters (12,421 ft)
- Cuzco: 3,380 meters (11,060 ft)
- Sacred Valley: 2,400 meters (9,000 ft); Weather is nice all year round, probably 70's.
- Aguas Calientes/Machu Picchu: 2,020/2,370 meters (6,560/7,710 ft)

Medicine Suggested by my Brother-in-Law (Peruvian Doctor)

- *Acetazolamida* or *Diamox* (250 mg tablets) – dose: 125 mg. (1/2 tablet) every 12 hours, starting 2 days before departure to the altitude and continuing during the trip. Once you have been at the highest point for 2 days it should be pretty safe to stop taking it because you should be acclimated to the altitude by then. Please consult with your doctor about what the right treatment is for you. Note: beer and carbonated drinks taste funny and spicy when taking Diamox.
- “Chupar” means to suck, but is also a slang word for “drinking.” My brother-in-law suggests to “chupar” on lemon candy during the ascent. I asked if we could “chupar” Pisco instead and he says that it is good too. Yesss!!! (beware: he loves Pisco too). Bring lots of hard candy for the altitude and have them all the time. The Peruvian lemon candies are absolutely awesome and you can get them at the airport. You can also get “chicha morada” candy; chichi morada is a purple drink made from blue corn; typical and delicious (like a natural Kool-aid) and the candy they make out of it is quite good. Hard candy/lozenges with Vitamin C also good.
- Drink “coca” tea. It is complimentary at most hotels in the Andes.

Stomach:

- You should bring over the counter medication such as Pepto, just in case.
- My brother in law has prescribed for me *Ciproflaxino* (sold in Peru as *Ciprolin*) 500mg. This medicine does NOT contain diarrhea; on the contrary, it loosens your stomach and it is supposed to flush out all the bad things you may have eaten that got you sick. He recommends taking 1 tablet if you suspect that you have eaten something bad, even if you feel okay. And if you get sick, to take it every 12 hours for a minimum of 3 days. Again, please consult your doctor about this. You can get this over the counter in Peru. So something like Pepto may be better to take if traveling for an extended time by land.

General Health:

- Immunizations: CDC says nothing required unless rainforest travel.
- Check with your own doctor.
- Bottled water; nothing raw (including fruits & veggies).
- Bring over the counter medications such as Pepto, etc and/or buy Coca tea and chew leaves.
- Airlift insurance: \$75 medivac.

Safety:

- Watch for pickpockets; don't leave things visible in cars.
- Bring color copy of passport to carry and keep separate from the passport.
- Call for taxi; don't hail from street (cheap).

Arriving in Lima:

- The duty free at the airport is excellent and most of the merchandise is priced similar to what you pay in stores. Check out the stores when you transfer to go to Cuzco to get a good idea of what you can buy there. They have good Alpaca stores. The Britt store has cool stuff and great candy, but it is way overpriced.
- 220v electric; check equipment tolerances and use 2-prong adapters.
- Rent cellphone if you need to communicate in Lima. You can do this inside the airport when you arrive near the baggage carousel.

Weather & What to Pack (in the winter):

- Travel light in the Andes.
- Arequipa: 70 degrees during the day, 50 degrees at night; Colca 50 degrees + day, cold night; Puno coldest 40 degrees + day, freeze night (August weather)
- Scarf, hat, gloves, shorts (once to Cusco & Sacred Valley 60 degrees; Machu Picchu 80s); swimsuit for calientes / hot springs (August weather)
- Mostly casual, jeans, etc.; dress pants and shirt for a couple restaurants;
- Not many bugs; probably no bugs in the Andes, too high
- Shoes: 1 walking, 1 disco (Travolta style)
- Binoculars, camera

Money:

- Exchange rate \$1 = 2.60 Soles.
- U.S. dollars accepted everywhere (exchange varies, obviously).
- Note, check prices carefully, some prices are listed in dollars and the symbols are very similar. This is S/.10 ten soles and this is \$10 ten dollars. If the vertical slash does not cross the S, then it is a price in soles.