

# contiki

TRAVEL WITH NO REGRETS

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LATIN AMERICA 2018 - 20



# YOU ONLY GET TO LIVE IT ONCE



Way back in '62 one guy had a dream: to show young travellers the world and change their lives in doing so. 55 years later and we've perfected the secret formula. One of the most important things we've learnt along the way is to do things with passion or not at all.

Most companies provide good service. But at Contiki, we go further than that, making sure that every second is one to remember, every trip is one that will change your life and alter your perception of the world. That's what we live for and what keeps us up at night. Are you ready to become part of the story?

# BUT IF YOU DO IT RIGHT, ONCE IS ENOUGH

## **#NOREGRET**

# CONTIKI CARES

Powered by **TREADRIGHT**

Contiki Cares is our mission to protect and preserve the places we visit and the people we meet, so that the generations who follow us can see the world with the same wide-eyed wonder as we do. It's our dedication to treading lightly, acting with respect, and recognising when to speak for the planet when it can't speak for itself.

Advising us on our journey is the TreadRight Foundation, our older, wiser sister on all things sustainable and our guiding force in seeking to make the world a better, more interconnected place. Together with TreadRight, we're on a journey – to seek out the causes that need support, and the traditions and communities that need protection in our ever changing world.

## CONTIKI LOVES THE PLANET

Contiki is proud to be using 100% recycled LEIPA paper for the body of our brochures. By doing so, we proudly save 41,000 trees per year. It is just part of The Travel Corporation way.



**TREADRIGHT**

FOUNDATION

[TreadRight.org](http://TreadRight.org)

# 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 Latin America on our small group adventures.

Like you, we're a bunch of passionate travellers, 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 trip start & what should I pack, to the smaller stuff, like where's the best place to find free Wi-Fi on your trip – it's all here in our handy guide.

## **When you're on the road...**

We've packed in a heap of awesome things to do in almost all the 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 to chill.

## **Getting Social...**

We all know there's nothing better than posting pics from where you'd rather be to your friends & family back home. So make sure to use your trip hashtag, #contiki & #NOREGRETSS so everyone can follow your epic story!

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

## **Let the adventure begin...**

Love,

Team Contiki

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# BEFORE YOU GO

## CHECK IN ONLINE

Save time on Day 1 and check in online before you leave home. It's easy. Just give us your details and tell us what you're interested in before you start your trip & you're done! It will save you time, so you can get on having fun as soon as you arrive. Visit [contiki.com/checkin](http://contiki.com/checkin) for details.

## PACK YOUR BAGS...

Packing for your trip can be niggly, so we make it easy with some handy tips. On our trips, you can bring one bag or suitcase of 73cm x 50cm x 25cm (29" x 20" x 10"), with a max. weight of 20kg (44lbs). As with our other regions, luggage is restricted to only one reasonably sized backpack/suitcase plus one carry-on bag, and luggage policies are strictly enforced on our trips.

Due to the large number of flights on Contiki Latin America trips, your luggage needs to meet the size and weight restrictions imposed by airlines. These limits are imposed by the airlines, not by Contiki. Check out [www.lan.com](http://www.lan.com) for more.

**Please note:** Contiki is not responsible for any costs incurred by overweight luggage.

Here's an idea of what you could pack before you go. As well as all the standard stuff like jeans and jumpers, plus your iPod etc, here are a couple of ideas about what else you might need on your trip.

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

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

- Sunblock
- Spare camera memory cards
- Going out gear & shoes
- A couple of fold away travel bags (for all that shopping)
- 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 trip 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....

## OVERNIGHT BAG

On some of our trips, 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.

## FLYING HINTS

- Ensure you carry in your hand luggage all your travel documentation, your camera & any items to keep you occupied on your flight.
- Most airports have restrictions on the amount of liquids that can be in your hand luggage. Please check this before you pack.
- Take advantage of duty free shopping but check the current limits that apply in the country of your destination.
- Do not carry articles packed by others & never accept articles to carry from people not known to you.
- Adjust immediately into local time on arrival by staying awake until the evening before sleeping. This will help you recover from jet-lag.

## TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

You should bring a money-belt (or similar) to safely carry your travel documents & cash, and ensure that your luggage has a lock. Bring photocopies of your passport and visa, plus some extra passport photos if you are applying for an on-arrival visa.

On arrival in certain countries, you may be given baggage claim tags (they will be stuck to the back of your ticket.) Keep these, as you may need to show them when leaving the airport.

## KICK-START MEETINGS

On all of our trips, a Kick-Start meeting with your Trip Manager will be held at the beginning of your trip – check your trip docs & the hotel notice board for details.



## **PASSPORTS & VISAS – please read carefully**

Depending on your nationality, you may require visas to enter certain countries on your trip. You are fully responsible for obtaining all necessary visas that are required prior to the departure of your trip. Contiki is not legally permitted to knowingly allow anybody who does not have a valid visa to join a trip. Visa and other entry & exit conditions (such as currency, arrival/ departure taxes, customs and quarantine regulations) do change regularly.

At [www.contiki.com/contikipedia](http://www.contiki.com/contikipedia) we have put together some information for all of the countries that we visit on our Latin America trips. Review contikipedia and consult your Travel Agent to determine which visas you require, and how to obtain them.

Your passport must have at least six months' validity remaining when you arrive. Local immigration authorities may deny entry and deport people who do not meet this requirement, even if they only intend to stay for a short period. Important to consider:

- Visas can take up to six weeks and a fee is normally charged.
- Failure to obtain all necessary visas could cause you to miss part of your trip and will result in you incurring considerable expense and inconvenience.
- It is better for you to apply for all visas before you leave home.
- It is very important that the entry and exit dates are correct on the visa.

## **INSURANCE**

It is strongly recommended you take out comprehensive insurance cover for cancellation, medical expenses, personal accident, personal baggage, money & public liability before you travel. For insurance details, please speak to your Travel Agent or Contiki reservations agent at the time of booking.

## **CURRENCY**

The main currencies you'll encounter are as follows: Peruvian Nuevo Sol (PEN) in Peru; Argentine Peso (ARS) in Argentina; Brazilian Real (BRL) in Brazil; Chilean Peso (CLP) in Chile; US Dollar (USD) in Ecuador; Bolivian Boliviano (BOB) in Bolivia; Mexican Nuevo Peso (MXN) in Mexico; Costa Rican Colon (CRC) in Costa Rica; Belizean Dollar (BEZ) in Belize; Guatemalan Quetzal (GTQ) in Guatemala.

## **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 trips, we include loads – like breakfast every day & lots of evening meals – so to help plan your budget on the trip, check out [contiki.com/travel-resources](http://contiki.com/travel-resources) & click the spending money tab for more details.

## **ELECTRICITY & VOLTAGE**

**Argentina:** the power sockets are type C and I. The standard voltage is 220v and the standard frequency is 50Hz.

**Bolivia:** has both 110v and 220v electricity. Be sure to confirm the voltage before plugging in. The cycles (Hz) are 50 per second. La Paz is reported as having 110v.

**Brazil:** this country does not have a standard voltage. Every state is different, Rio de Janeiro uses 127v, 60Hz, 220v.

**Belize:** uses 110 voltage, 60 cycle electricity (same as the US.)

**Chile:** electricity is 220 volts, alternating at 50 cycles per second.

**Ecuador:** the standard voltage is 120v and the frequency is 60Hz. You can use your electrical appliances in Ecuador if the standard voltage in your country is between 110-127 volts.

**Guatemala:** uses 110 voltage, 60 cycle electricity (same as the US.)

**Mexico:** electrical sockets usually supply electricity at between 110 - 120 volts on alternating current, if you're plugging in a US or Canadian 120v appliance.

**Peru:** is 220v and 60Hz (cycles per second.)

### **TOILETRIES & MEDICATION**

Although imported beauty products are readily available in larger cities, it's advisable to pack staples like sunscreen, contact lens solution & mosquito repellent, as well as prescription medication. Many medicines are available in Latin America without prescriptions, but they may be poor quality. Larger cities have department stores which are good places to stock up on Western toiletries & medicines.

**Note:** in all of these countries, penalties for drug offences are severe. The possession of even small quantities of "soft drugs" for recreational purposes can result in a lengthy jail sentence and deportation.

### **VACCINATIONS**

At the time of production, the following immunizations were recommended for travellers to Latin America by the C.D.C. (US Centers for Disease Control & Prevention):

- Hepatitis A
- Typhoid
- Hepatitis B
- Malaria
- Rabies
- Yellow Fever



# DEEP VEIN THROMBOSIS (DVT)

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

## WHAT IS DVT?

Deep Vein Thrombosis 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, & it's important to note that it can take a few days before the side effects of DVT become known. If you're on a trip & you feel any symptoms below then let your Trip 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 ankles, calves or thighs
- Tenderness &/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 on the right
- 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

## OUR TOP EXERCISES TO KEEP YOU MOVING

- 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



Take advantage of any breaks by getting off the coach & 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.



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.

# CONTIKI ON THE ROAD

## ON-ROAD TEAM

### YOUR TRIP MANAGER & DRIVER

People are at the heart of everything we do, and our team is what make our trips the best. Our worldwide On-road Team, locally based staff & network of Local Guides are all extensively trained & travelled & are the best in the business. But we know it's not just about training, it's about passion & our team have it in their blood. Their passion for getting you in the know on every single detail of each destination is what makes our travellers walk away from their experience knowing that they made every moment count.

### WHERE YOU STAY...

Contiki's Latin America accommodation is almost all hotels on a twin-share basis. You will stay in centrally located 3-star hotels & resorts that have been chosen for their particular character, charm, location & style. They're all very comfortable & have some great amenities, like WiFi, en suite bathrooms & a TV.

We mix it up with our Special Stay experiences, such as an amazing Jungle Lodge in the heart of the Peruvian Amazon or Gauatemalan rainforest, a cosy locally-run hotel in the Colca Canyon and a rainforest eco-camp in Costa Rica.

**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 air-conditioned coaches & mini vans with trains, planes, 4X4s, triciclos, 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 are 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 & use the toilets.

### INTERNAL FLIGHTS

To reduce travelling time between destinations we use internal & international flights with reliable LATAM airlines, giving you more time in the places that count.

### ACCESS TO CASH ON YOUR TRIP

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 ATMs throughout Latin America, or you can get a pre-loaded cash card (like Travelex) & load it up before you leave home. Your Trip Manager will let you know the best places to find cash. Just make sure you have a PIN linked to the card before you leave home. **Important note:** ME Time activities are paid for in cash only.

### **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 has done an exceptional job then you may wish to tip them. This is entirely discretionary – it's completely up to you. There is no compulsory tipping – reward only excellence!

### **KEEPING CHARGED**

The majority of the locations where Contiki travel in Latin America operate on 120 volts, not 220 - 240v which generally operate on alternating current (AC) in other countries.

As well as bringing a two-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.

### **LAUNDRY ON YOUR TRIP**

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 Trip Manager is the best person to advise on the best places to do your washing while you're on your trip.

**Note:** All laundry services are at an additional cost.



# WEATHER & CLOTHING

## GENERAL PACKING TIPS

It's important to pack as you would for any holiday – jeans, shorts, tees, flip-flops, hoodies & jumpers as well as comfy footwear. On most of our trips, there will be opportunities to soak & swim in hot springs, lakes & jungle creeks, so if you didn't bring swimwear your Trip Manager can advise the best place to purchase (although don't expect to find the most trendy swimsuits!)

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.

## THE ESSENTIAL STUFF

- Make sure you have insect repellent (Machu Picchu, the jungle, Costa Rica etc.)
- Sunblock & lip balm (important for the entire trip) / sunglasses / hat / rain jacket or poncho
- Always bring in your daypacks: toilet paper and/or tissue packets, hand-sanitiser & some coins in the local currency as some restrooms require a small local charge to use the facilities.
- Hygienic products (tampons etc) & toiletries
- Swimwear & towel (swimming at Iguassu Falls, Buzios beaches, hotel pools, Rio, etc.)

**Note:** Your Trip Manager can advise where to purchase, or rent a towel in some destinations.

## PERU TRIPS

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

### Packing an overnight bag

The night before leaving for the Sacred Valley you need to pack for three days & two nights in the Sacred Valley & Machu Picchu as we will not be returning to Cusco prior to your trek. Your main luggage will be safely stored at the Cusco hotel & you won't have access to it until your return from Machu Picchu.

The same applies for our trips 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 which one is 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.

### **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.

### **BOLIVIA & CHILE TRIPS**

Bolivia is a land of contrasts, stark salt flats, high altitudes and bustling cities. Pack sensibly and you will be prepared. Layers are best to account for the warm days and cooler nights. During the Bolivian and northern Chilean winter (May to Oct), hats, gloves and jackets or fleeces are a good idea. Comfy hiking boots are also recommended.

### **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 km from the hotel, located on Av. Corrientes #3190.

### **COSTA RICA TRIPS**

Please make sure you have rain protection as showers are common in the jungle. Closed toe shoes are best for the walks in the rainforest, and water shoes are a good idea as well.

### **MEXICO, BELIZE AND GUATEMALA TRIPS**

Mexico City is at a high altitude 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.



# DEPARTURES

## WHICH TRIPS?

### FROM LIMA

**Andes & Amazon Highlights, Peru Uncovered, Inca Panorama, The Adventurer, Andean Crossing**

**Kick-Start meeting?** Your Kick-Start meeting is at 7:00 pm the night before your trip begins. Please bring your passport (if you are travelling on to Brazil we need to verify your Brazilian visa), emergency contact details & travel insurance info. **Check-in:** 8:00 am Day 1.

### FROM CUSCO

**The Explorer, The Ultimate Inca Trail, Bolivian Magic**

**Kick-Start meeting?** Your Kick-Start meeting/check-in is at 8:00 am on the morning your trip begins. Please bring your passport (if you are travelling on to Brazil we need to verify your Brazilian visa), emergency contact details & travel insurance info. **Check-in:** 8:00 am Day 1.

**Bolivian Magic**

**Kick-Start meeting?** Your Kick-Start meeting/check-in is at 5:00 pm the evening your trip begins. Please bring your passport, emergency contact details & travel insurance info.

**Check-in:** 5:00 pm Day 1.

### FROM QUITO

**Ecuador & Galapagos Island Hopper, Galapagos & Andes, The Latin Quest, The Lava Line**

**Kick-Start meeting?** Your Kick-Start meeting will be held at 7:00 pm the night before your trip begins. Please bring your passport (if you are travelling on to Brazil we need to verify your Brazilian visa), emergency contact details, & travel insurance info. **Check-in:** 7:00 am Day 1.

### FROM GUAYAQUIL

**Galapagos Island Hopper, Latin Icons, Trails Turtles & Treks**

**Kick-Start meeting?** Your Kick-Start meeting will be held at 5:00 pm the night before your trip begins. Please bring your passport, emergency contact details & travel insurance info.

**Check-in:** 6:00 am Day 1.

### FROM LA PAZ

**Bella Bolivia**

**Kick-Start meeting?** Your Kick-Start meeting/check-in is at 5:00 pm the evening your trip begins. Please bring your passport, emergency contact details & travel insurance info.

**Check-in:** 5:00 pm Day 1.

### FROM BUENOS AIRES

**Argentina & Brazil Experience**

**Kick-Start meeting?** Your Kick-Start meeting will be held at 7:00 pm the night before your trip begins. Please bring your passport (if you are travelling on to Brazil we need to verify your Brazilian visa), emergency contact details & travel insurance info. **Check-in:** 7:00 am Day 1.

### FROM RIO

**Rio Carnival**

**Kick-Start meeting?** Rio Carnival starts at 5:30 pm & there is no Kick-Start meeting.

**FROM SAN JOSÉ****Costa Rica Unplugged, Pura Vida**

**Kick-Start meeting?** Your Kick-Start meeting will be held at 3:00 pm the afternoon your trip begins. Please bring your passport, emergency contact details, & travel insurance info.

**Check-in:** 3:00 pm Day 1.

**FROM TAMARINDO****Canopies & Cabanas**

**Kick-Start meeting?** Your Kick-Start meeting will be held at 6:00 pm the night your trip begins. Please bring your passport, emergency contact details, & travel insurance info.

**Check-in:** 6:00 pm Day 1.

**FROM MEXICO CITY****Yucatan Highlights, Sol Seeker, Playas of Paradise**

**Kick-Start meeting?** Your Kick-Start meeting will be held at 7:00 pm the night before your trip begins. Please bring your passport, emergency contact details, & travel insurance info.

**Check-in:** 7:00 am Day 1.

**FROM CANCUN****Caribbean Encounter, Tropical Trails**

**Kick-Start meeting?** Your Kick-Start meeting is at 7:00 pm the night before your trip begins. Please bring your passport, emergency contact details, & travel insurance info.

**Check-in:** 8:00 am.

**FROM PUERTO VALLARTA****Mexico Grande, Mexican Fiesta, Coast to Canopies, Latin Legends**

**Kick-Start meeting?** Your Kick-Start meeting will be held at 7:00 pm the night before your trip begins. Please bring your passport, emergency contact details, & travel insurance info.

**Check-in:** 7:00 am Day 1.





# WHERE WE TAKE YOU



TACOS, SOMBREROS AND  
THE DREAMIEST OF SUNSETS

[#mexicogrande](#)

**VISIT MEXICO** ON COAST TO CANOPIES ×  
TROPICAL TRAILS × LATIN LEGENDS × PLAYAS OF  
PARADISE × SOL SEEKER × CARIBBEAN ENCOUNTER  
× MEXICO GRANDE × MEXICAN FIESTA × YUCATAN  
HIGHLIGHTS



RELEASE YOUR INNER EXPLORER &  
DISCOVER THE ISLANDS THAT HAVE  
INSPIRED SCIENTISTS FOR DECADES

[#galapagosislandhopper](#)

**VISIT THE GALAPAGOS ISLANDS & ECUADOR** ON THE LATIN  
QUEST × GALAPAGOS & ANDES × LATIN ICONS × TRAILS, TURTLES &  
TREKS × THE LAVA LINE × ECUADOR & GALAPAGOS ISLAND HOPPER  
× GALAPAGOS ISLAND HOPPER



THE HOME OF FINE  
WINE, COOL CITIES  
AND VAST LANDSCAPE

[#latinquest](#)

**VISIT ARGENTINA** ON ARGENTINA &  
BRAZIL EXPERIENCE × THE LATIN QUEST ×  
THE ADVENTURER × THE EXPLORER ×  
BELLA BOLIVIA × BOLIVIAN MAGIC ×  
ANDEAN CROSSING

10 countries, 30 unique itineraries and countless

No Regrets travel experiences. Want a taste?

We've got the crème de la crème.

CAULKER

MALA CITY

SARAPIQUI

RENAL

MONTEVERDE

SAN JOSÉ

MANUEL ANTONIO

COSTA RICA

INDULGE IN CHOCOLATE AND COFFEE TO YOUR HEART'S CONTENT

**#costaricaunplugged**

VISIT COSTA RICA ON COAST TO CANOPIES  
TROPICAL TRAILS x PLAYAS OF PARADISE x  
COSTA RICA UNPLUGGED x PURA VIDA x  
CANOPIES & CABANAS



COPACABANA BEACH, CARNIVAL & CHRIST THE REDEEMER – BUCKET LIST MUCH?

**#contikiriocarnival**

VISIT BRAZIL ON ARGENTINA & BRAZIL EXPERIENCE x THE LATIN QUEST x THE ADVENTURER x THE EXPLORER x RIO CARNIVAL

GALAPAGOS ISLANDS

ECUADOR  
QUITO  
TENA  
GUAYAQUIL  
BAÑOS

PERU

AMAZON LODGE  
AGUAS CALIENTES  
CUSCO  
LIMA  
COLCA CANYON  
AREQUIPA  
PUERTO MALDONADO  
SACRED VALLEY  
PUNO  
LA PAZ

BOLIVIA

POTOSI  
UYUNI  
AVAROA N.P.  
SAN PEDRO DE ATACAMA  
SALTA

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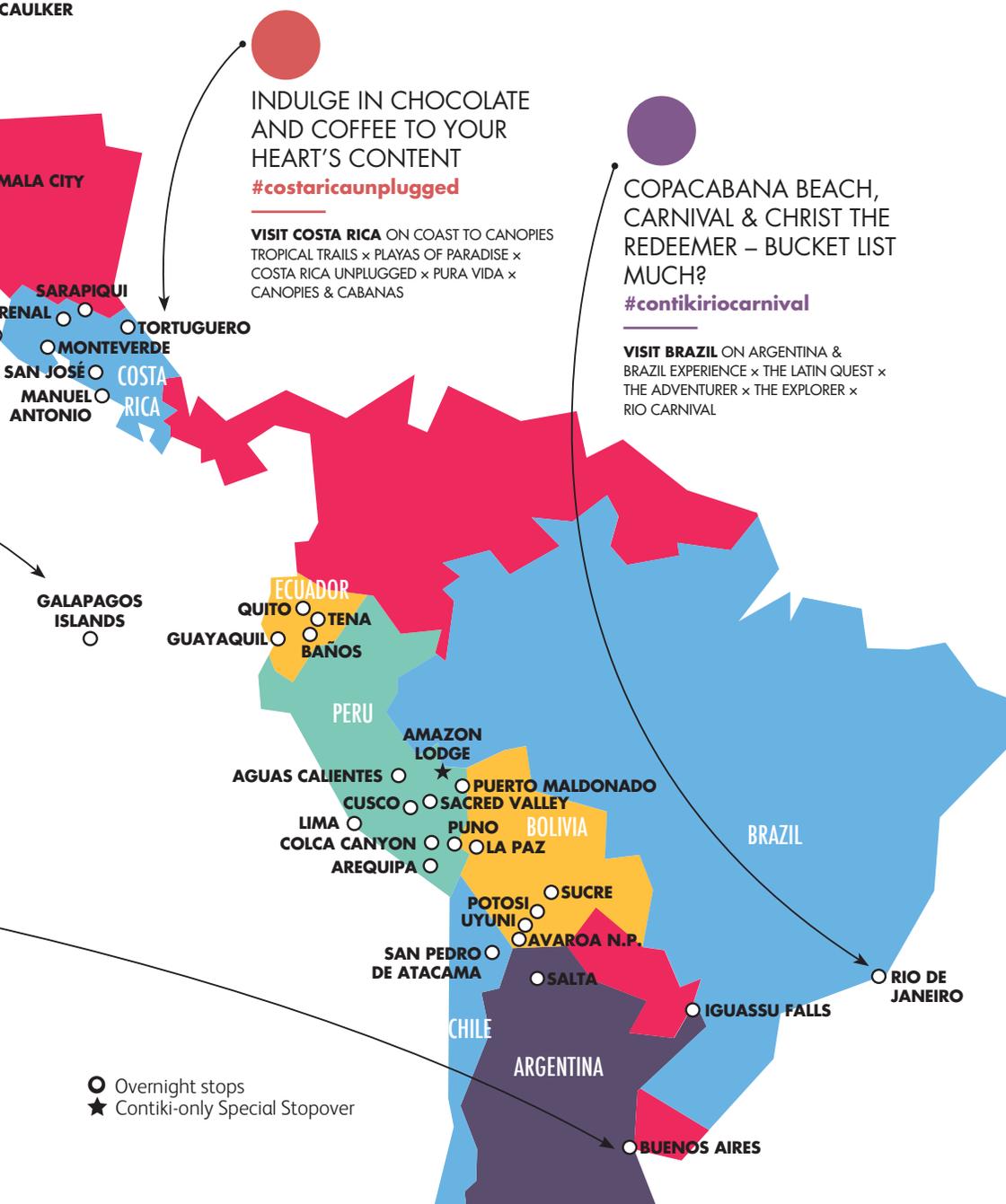
BUENOS AIRES

BRAZIL

RIO DE JANEIRO

IGUASSU FALLS

- Overnight stops
- ★ Contiki-only Special Stopover



# WELCOME TO PERU

## 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:

### 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 PEN or street taxi \$13 PEN

Hotel to Central Lima = Agencia taxi \$25 PEN or street taxi \$18 PEN

Hotel around Miraflores = \$10 PEN

### BANKS & ATMs/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 travellers cheques. It will be difficult to exchange travellers cheques during the rest of the trip, so please be sure to encash them before your trip departs. If you have Citibank there is one located at Av. Jose Pardo & Diagonal at the roundabout.

### HUNGRY?

We love going local & in the Parque del Amor, 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 5pm. a taxi costs around \$10 PEN.

### 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 at hotel reception for a map of the local area 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 am - 5 pm & costs \$10 PEN

**Restaurant Huaca Pucllana:** General Borgoño cdra. 8, Huaca Pucllana overlooks the ruins.  
Open: Tuesday – Saturday, 12:30 pm – 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.

**Important note:** there are some neighbourhoods 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 travellers cheques, but otherwise should be left at the hotel. Use of a credit card will also normally require identification of some sort.

## CUSCO

Hello Cusco! This is the gateway to visit the incredible Machu Picchu which 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.

## GETTING AROUND

The hotel can call you a taxi or hail one on the street. Taxis should cost no more than \$5 PEN around the centre of Cusco & \$10 PEN 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.

## BANKS & ATMs/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

There are several currency exchange offices located on Av. El Sol and in the Plaza de Armas.

## INTERNET/INTERNATIONAL CALLS

Locutorio (call centre & internet house) is located at 200 calle Ruinas next to Andina Spa 200. A large sign says Internet in front. Open between 8am - 10 pm, it costs \$2 PEN per hour for internet & Skype use & \$1 PEN per minute for international calls.

**Note:** our hotel has free WiFi in the lobby.

### **POST OFFICE (SERPOST)**

To buy stamps & send postcards visit 228 calle San Augustin. The mini-market says "Serpost" out front & sells international stamps (\$6 PEN) & postcards which you can mail right there. The Serpost office is located at Av. El Sol in between calle Chasqui & Av Gracilaso.  
Open: 8 am - 8 pm

### **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.

### **PHARMACY ("FARMACIAS" OR "BOTICAS")**

Near the hotel you will find a pharmacy & local shop where you will find the basic necessities such as 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 am – 9 pm

### **HUNGRY?**

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

**Jack's Cafe** (Calle Choquechaca) for international cuisine.

**Inka Grill** (Plaza de Armas) for international/Peruvian Fusion

**Pachapapa** (San Blas Plaza) for traditional Peruvian cuisine

**Paddy Flaherty's Irish Pub & Norton Rat's** (both in the Plaza de Armas) for drinks

### **CAMERA REPAIRS/PHOTO DEVELOPMENT**

Make a left out of the 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).

### **LAUNDRY**

The hotel can arrange laundry service any time or you can drop off laundry anywhere with a sign that reads "LAVANDERIA" (Spanish for laundry). Usually the cost is about \$4 PEN depending on weight.

### **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 084-939717 or 084-635235.  
Open: Daily from 9 am - 9 pm or they can come to your hotel between 6 am - 10:30 pm

### **CUSCO'S DON'T MISS...**

You have an included walking city tour so save visiting La Catedral (Cathedral), Koricancha Temple & San Pedro Market. Our hotel is within very close walking distance to the Plaza de Armas (main square) which was centre the of 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 square – 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 Rumiyoq:** on your way to San Blas walk down Calle Hatun Rumiyoq 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.

**Sacsayhuaman & Inca Archeological Sites above Cusco:** these very important Incan sites are located from between 5 - 8 kilometres away. These sites can easily be walked by returning from the furthest (Tambo Machay) and passing Puka Pukara, Qenko & Sacsayhuaman en route back to Cusco.

**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 Boletó Turístico (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 am - 5:30 pm & Saturday 8:30 am - 12:30 pm. Call (+51) 84-227037 or 84-226919.

**All inclusive ticket:** ticket is valid for 10 days & includes entrance to the Museo Histórico Regional (The Regional Historical Museum), Museo de Sitio del Koricancha (Koricancha 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'enko, 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). Transportation and guide are not included in the price of this ticket. Both circuits are valid only for one day.

**Circuit 1 – Cusco City** (The Regional Historical Museum, Koricancha 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'enko, 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 trip. This information is provided for your reference only.

# WELCOME TO ECUADOR

## QUITO

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.

## TAXIS

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

## 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) where you can withdraw up to US\$500. 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 loco de papa (traditional potato soup) empanadas & sweetcorn tamales. Quito has a large ex-pat community so you can also find Spanish tapas, Thai, Chinese, etc all around La Mariscal. Make sure you taste the coffee & chocolate!

## PERSONAL NECESSITIES

**Fybecca 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 as they tend to be a bit more expensive, or may not be available, in the Galapagos.



## DON'T MISS...

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

**Church of the Society of Jesus (Iglesia de la Compañía 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.

**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 folks back home.

**Quito Old Town:** prepare for the narrow streets & Spanish colonial architecture, as you explore this UNESCO 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.

**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.

## GUAYAQUIL

Bienvenidos a Guayaquil, the largest city in Ecuador. Head out to the Malecon 2000 and discover the history of Ecuador's Guayas River coastline, treat yourself to delicious cangrejo (crab), or enjoy a bottle of Pilsener, one of Ecuador's national beers. Get ready for epic adventures and lots of amazing sights.

### GETTING AROUND AND TAXIS

Taxis are also a good way to get around town. Be sure to use metered yellow radio taxis and its best if they are called from a hotel or business. Before the ride, agree on the price of the trip. Tips are not required, unless you feel it is warranted. Uber has just stated operating in Guayaquil so if you have WiFi access you can utilize the app.

### BANKS & ATMs/CASH MACHINES

ATM machines or cajero automatico can be found along Av. 9 SE Chile around the corner from the hotel or at Banco de Pichincha, and across from the hotel.

### PERSONAL NECESSITIES

The closest market for all your personal needs is "Mi Comisariato" it is on Av. 9 de Octubre between Chile and Chimborazo.

**HUNGRY?****Sweet & Coffee**

A local chain that serves up classic coffee beverages where you can order everything from lattes to vanilla milkshakes. They also have a wide selection of pastries made from all local ingredients. Try the cinnamon roll with a mocaccino for a sweet afternoon boost. Locations throughout the city.

**La Pata Gorda**

No visit to Guayaquil is complete without a dinner of red mangrove crab, a local delicacy. Served many different ways, our favourite is “criollo” style where it is boiled up with spices and served whole and ready to crack open with a mallet and fork. Pair it with a Pilsener and you’re in for one delicious Ecuadorian meal. Located at Cdla. Miraflores Av. Principal 116.

**DON'T MISS...**

**Malecon 2000:** the riverfront promenade for the Guayas River, with shops, theatres, museums, gardens and shopping arcades. The “Rotonda” monument in the middle of the Malecon commemorates the famous meeting of Simon Bolivar and Jose de San Martin that once took place there.

**Las Peñas:** the city’s roots can be traced to this neighbourhood located right downtown. Many of the colonial buildings on the narrow streets were rebuilt and painted bright colours. Meander the cobblestone streets and check out the art galleries and shops that now call the neighbourhood home. Start your walk here at the northern end of Malecon 2000.

**Parque Histórico Guayaquil:** this park is a fascinating recreation of Guayaquil’s history. Here you will find a small zoo, a hacienda-style building and a small countryside farmhouse. There is also a sustainable farm where you can see all kinds of tropical fruits being grown. No entrance fee. Located in Samborondon, km 1.05 via Samborondon and Av. Rio Guayas.

# WELCOME TO BOLIVIA

**LA PAZ**

Hola! Welcome to La Paz, this lung-busting city is 4,000 metres above sea level but don’t let that stop you from unravelling its adventurous and gritty layers. Embark on a bird’s eye view on a cable car ride up to El Alto, navigate through the crowds moving along the Prado, the city’s main avenue, and breathe deeply (or try to) as you take in peaceful tree-filled squares. The future is as bright as the midday sun here and after a few hours here you’ll see why La Paz is making moves to become one of Latin America’s celebrated destinations.

**GETTING AROUND AND TAXIS**

The best way to get around La Paz is on foot; however taxis are all over. Radio-taxis are more reliable and if you ask the hotel to call a taxi for you, they will always call one of them – they might also even have a specific driver at their service. Sticker taxis are not all bad and most will definitely take you to the destination safe and sound (especially those with a black and yellow checker on the side – they are registered ones), but being foreigners, it is recommended to avoid them.

**BANKS & ATMs/CASH MACHINES**

There is a BancoSol ATM located next to the Hotel Gloria on Genaro Sanjines. There is also a branch of Banco de Credito de Bolivia on the corner of Calle Comercio and Yanacochoa, just a few blocks from the hotel.

## HUNGRY?

### The Writers Coffee

Enjoy a cup of coffee (iced or hot) and cosy up with a good book or pop in to admire the collection of antique typewriters. If you like your coffee even stronger, opt for the Cappuccino Cowhis, a cappuccino spiked with whisky! Purchase a pastry and help local social projects centered around children. Located at: Comercio Street #1270, Interior Libreria Gisbert. Open Monday – Friday 8:30 am - 7:30 pm, Saturday 9:30 am - 12:30 pm.

### Ali Pacha

This vegetarian and vegan-friendly restaurant located in the centre of La Paz is known also for its creative dishes and irreverent style. An ever-changing menu delivers fresh ingredients and a unique dining experience, offering three to seven courses starting at \$100 BOB. Located at: Calle Colon #1306, between Mercado and Potosi. Open Tuesday – Saturday 12:00 pm - 3:00 pm and 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm.

### Namas Te

Colourful walls and peace signs adorn this breakfast and lunch spot which features healthy dishes like quinoa salads and sandwiches made to order. Located at: Calle Zoilo Flores 1334 between Calle Colombia and Almirante Grau in San Pedro, open Monday – Saturday 8:30 am - 7:00 pm

## PERSONAL NECESSITIES

Just a five-minute walk from the hotel is a pharmacy, Farmacia Carmelita, Zona 2, Ayacucho. Head southwest on Genaro Sanjines, turn left towards Ayacucho, then turn right on to Ayacucho (destination on the right). For 24-hour health and medical service Clínica Alemana, located at Av. 6 de Agosto #2821 is a short taxi ride from the hotel. Tel: +59 1 2 2432155.

## DON'T MISS...

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

**Mercado de Hechiceria:** tucked in on Calle Jimenez and Linares between Sagarnaga and Santa Cruz, this well-known market is also called the Witches Market. Here you will find various herbal medicines and ceremonial ingredients like talisman and incense. This market also gives a look at mystical culture of the Aymara and their holistic approach to healing. Colourful stalls are manned by knowledgeable artisans and traditional healers who can give you some good advice and maybe even tell you your fortune for a few bolivianos. The market is free to explore but it is suggested to purchase something if you would like to take a photo.

**Calle Jaen Museums:** one street covering four different museums is what you'll find on the colonial Calle Jaen. Museo de Oro (Gold Museum), Museo de Metales Preciosos (Precious Metals), Museo del Litoral (Museum of the Coast) and the Museo Costumbrista Juan de Vargas (containing art and photos) are all lined up on the cobblestone walkway. Located on Calle Jaen. Purchase tickets to all four museums for approx. \$4 BOB.

**Pipiripi:** immerse in an interactive experience at this children's museum that includes a huge Scrabble game and a word forest. Take the gondola from the Mirador Laikakota for panoramic views on your way to the museum. Located at: Av del Ejercito. Admission is \$3 BOB.

**Museo de Etnografía y Folklore (MUSEF):** this museum was once the Marquis de Villa Verde Palace, an 18th century palace and architectural marvel in itself. Today its mission is to preserve the diversity of Bolivia's cultural etymology. Don't miss the 3000 Years of Textiles exhibit which includes tapestries and textiles woven by native communities. Located at: Ingavi, La Paz Zona 10, Bolivia. Admission is US\$3 (US\$6 if you want to take photos).

# WELCOME TO ARGENTINA

## BUENOS AIRES

Hola! 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.

### 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.

### BANKS & ATMs/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 Argentines 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 Parilla (steakhouse) 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 \$200-220 ARS 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.

### 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.

### 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:** this 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 Palermo Station.

**Palermo Hipodromo:** located at Av. 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](http://www.palermo.com.ar) & enter the tabs for "Horsereading > Horsereading 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](http://www.lunapark.com.ar)

**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.



# WELCOME TO BRAZIL

## RIO DE JANEIRO

Olá, bem-vindo à Rio de Janeiro and Contiki South America! If you arrive early, you will have time to explore and get acquainted with “The Marvellous City”.

### GETTING AROUND

**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 \$3.70 BRL 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 am – 12 am and Sun. 7 am – 11 pm. Check out [www.metrorio.com.br](http://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 BRL one-way depending on where you take it. There is a bus stop located on Rua Visconde de Piraja and Rua Maria Quitéria. Bus #161 & 573 go to Copacabana; #161, 511 & 583 go to Leblon; #161, 573 & 583 go to Jardim Botânico; 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 three per people). These are not an official means of transportation in 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.

### BANKS & ATMs/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 Pirajá. Cambio Exchange is located on the second level inside the Quarties Shops on Rua Visconde de Pirajá, Loja: 224, Ipanema. Call (21) 2287-5389 for more info. They exchange US\$, pounds, euros, and yen for reais. Open Mon.-Fri. 10 am - 6 pm, Sat. 10 am - 1 pm, 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.

## PERSONAL NECESSITIES

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

## HUNGRY?

**Polis Sucos:** for sandwiches & fresh juices, quick & easy on the wallet – Rua Maria Quitéria, #70 (cross street is Rua Visconde de Pirajá), \$10-15 BRL per person.

**Zaza Bistro Tropical:** for Mediterranean inspired dishes – Rua Joana Angélica, #40 (cross street is Rua Prudente de Moraes), \$40-60 BRL per person.

**Porcão:** a Brazilian steakhouse called a churrascaria – Rua Barão da Torre, #218 (cross street is Rua Vinicius de Moraes) – all you can eat for \$92 BRL (drinks extra).

**Market Ipanema:** for healthy & delicious meals, great for vegetarians – Rua Visconde de Pirajá, #499 (cross street is Av. Garcia de Avila), \$20-50 BRL per dish.

**Casa da Feijoada:** a 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 Rua Jangadeiros), \$70 BRL full feijoada for one to two people.

## THINGS TO DO

**Hit the world's sexiest beaches!** Copacabana, Ipanema, and Leblon beaches are right up there 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 are not visible. Once you are tanning, locals selling everything from henna tattoos to bikinis will quickly approach you.

**Watch the sun set:** Ipanema Beach in Rio de Janeiro has been named one of the top ten places in the world to watch the sun set. 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.

**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.

## DON'T MISS...

**Ipanema beach:** (Posts 7-9) – The 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 Irmaos (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.

**Copacabana beach:** (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 (Posto 1) & there you can find the Morro do Leme for some cliff jumping or watching.

**Leblon beach:** (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 Irmaos (Two Brothers) mountains.

**Santa Teresa:** this is the bohemian neighbourhood of Rio where so many of the city’s artists live. Many of the cobblestone streets offer eclectic restaurants & boutiques. The Museu do Bonde (Tram Museum) on Rua Carlos Brandt #14 tells the history of the iconic tram. Catch the metro & get off at Cinelandia. A taxi from there to Santa Teresa will cost approx. \$10 BRL.

**Jardim Botânico:** in the beautiful tree-lined streets of Jardim Botânico 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 am – 5 pm. English guided tours are available. Located at Rua Jardim Botânico, #1008. For more info visit [www.jbrj.gov.br](http://www.jbrj.gov.br)

**Forte de Copacabana:** in between Copacaba & Ipanema beaches is the Forte de Copacabana, built in 1914. The fort costs \$4 BRL and 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 Praça Coronel Eugenio Franco, 1. Open Tues. - Sun. 10 am – 5 pm. More info on the fort & restaurant at [www.fortdecopacabana.ensino.eb.br](http://www.fortdecopacabana.ensino.eb.br)

**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 hotel 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.



# WELCOME TO COSTA RICA

## SAN JOSÉ

Famously labelled 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.

### 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:** it is a good idea to take a taxi back to the hotel from the Parque Central area after dark.

### BANKS & ATMs/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 five-minute walk. Have a few Imperials (Costa Rica’s national beer), eat some “tico” food and watch some football on the TV. 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 San José. Try some local fare including arepas, carne de olla or empanadas. 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 Av. Central.

### 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.

### 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 National Museum:** (between Central and 2nd avenue) is home to artifacts from pre-Columbian times and explains the history up to the 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 8:30 am to 4 pm Tuesday to Saturday & Sunday 9 am to 4 pm. Admission is \$4 CRC.

**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, Av. Central). 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 10 am - 6pm, and 10 am - 4 pm on weekends. They are closed Mondays. Entry is \$5 CRC.

**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. Open 9 am to 4:30pm every day & admission is \$6 CRC.

### **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!

**Arenal Volcano:** one of Costa Rica's most notable natural features is the 1635 metres high Arenal Volcano. This impressive volcano produced massive explosions, rivers of molten rock & ash columns daily from 1968 right up until 2010. Situated within the 30,000 acre National Park, this once mischievous crater now hosts a range of activities at its feet like whitewater rafting, waterfall rappelling, hiking and canopy tours – as well as the friendly town of La Fortuna.



## TAMARINDO

Hola! Bienvenidos to Tamarindo, Costa Rica! Famous for its surfing beaches and laid-back vibe, Tamarindo is the perfect town to relax on a beach or at the pool. This town truly is Pura Vida.

### TAXIS

The hotel offers a 24/7 tour desk and can arrange for transfers in the area, the cost is around US\$10 - \$20. Most services are within walking distance of the hotel.

### BANKS & ATMs/CASH MACHINES

There is a BAC and Banco de Costa Rica Bank just south of the hotel in Plaza Conchal, complete with ATM and bank services.

### HUNGRY?

Heaps of options are abound for food near the hotel. Here are a few of our favourites for all tastes and appetites!

**Cafe Tico:** grab a cup of Costa Rican coffee at this local spot, some say it's the best coffee in town! Located on Calle Tigris, just south and across the street from the Supermarket 2001.

**El Chilito Mexican Grill:** enormous burritos at awesome prices, this spot will fill you up and won't let you down. Choose your meat (beef, chicken or pork) or go vegetarian with beans and fillings. Located at 353 50309 Calle del Parque.

**La Bodega:** organic food store with breakfast and lunch offerings from sandwiches to pastries. Try the banana bread made with local bananas. Paired with a local cup of coffee, you can't go wrong! Find La Bodega next to Hotel Nahua on Av Central, across from Banco Nacional.

**Nogui's:** one of the best known restaurants in Tamarindo, it's been serving locals and visitors alike since 1974. Enjoy breakfast, lunch or dinner or just a drink from the beachfront location. But make sure you order a pineapple cream pie, one of their specialties. Free WiFi! 155 Callejon Oeste.

**Witches Rock Surf Camp:** friendly, laid-back surfer vibe spot with outside seating with amazing beach views. Nachos and local brew from El Vaquero Brewpub are a must at this beachfront favourite. Calle Central, across from Sprout restaurant.

### PERSONAL NECESSITIES

Near the hotel, you can find a pharmacy for basic necessities. Head to Plaza Conchal on Av. Central.

### DON'T MISS...

Tamarindo is a base for loads of activities from surfing to yoga. Ask your Trip Manager for the details on booking a sunset catamaran, surfing lessons, paddle boarding or diving, all of which are on option. Here's a few other ideas for must-see Tamarindo:

**Ser Om Shanti Yoga:** not far up the street from the hotel, you will find this English-speaking local yoga studio offering postures and styles for all levels. Located south of the hotel at Plaza Tamarindo CC, 2nd Floor (Above ABC) +506 8591-6236.

**Parque Nacional Marino Las Baulas de Guanacaste:** this national marine park at Playa Grande is known as one of the world's most important nesting areas for leatherback turtles which come ashore between October and May to lay eggs. The beach is also known for its mangroves and estuaries, the natural habitat for 174 species of birds.

# WELCOME TO GUATEMALA

## ANTIGUA

Hola! Bienvenidos to colonial Antigua, Guatemala's former capital and UNESCO World Heritage Site. This city is famous for its Spanish Baroque style architecture and picturesque cobblestone streets. Flanked by three volcanos and surrounded by coffee plantations, Antigua is a classic and fascinating city that is undoubtedly a must-see.

### GETTING AROUND

The easiest way to get around Antigua is by either taxi or tuk-tuk. Both can be found for hire on the east side of Parque Central (at the corner of 5a Avenida North and 5a Calle Poniente) near the bus station. Taxi around town for around \$25 GTQ (approx. US\$3) or tuk-tuk for around \$10 GTQ (US\$1.25.)

### BANKS & ATMs/CASH MACHINES

Banks are readily available near the Parque Central and it is best to withdraw cash directly from a teller. You can find a branch of Banco de Antigua SA on the corner of 6a Calle Poniente and Alameda de Santa Lucia.

### HUNGRY?

Guatemala is known for its coffee so don't leave without sipping a cup of it. Also on menu to try are tamales (masa which is steamed in a corn husk) and chiles rellanos (peppers stuffed with meat and vegetables).

**Café Condessa:** a favorite lunch spot, this café features local coffee and baked good as well as fresh salads, quiches and a spectacular tres leches cake (translated means 3 Milks Cake- a sponge cake soaked in three different kinds of milk.) Dine on the patio of this 16th century restored mansion and relax in their gardens. Located in Parque Central from 7am to 9pm.

**Casa de las Mixtas:** distinctive Guatemalan dishes are served here. Try a mixta, Guatemalan style hot dogs that are wrapped in tortillas. Layer on guacamole and onions and dig in! Located at 3a Callejon Poniente, open every day except Sunday.



## PERSONAL NECESSITIES

To find shops and drugstores, head left on 5 Av Sur out of the hotel up to the Parque Central to find plenty of shops for all needs.

### DON'T MISS...

**Jade Museum:** this free museum gives insight on the history and Mayan fascination with jade. Watch artisans create unique pieces and maybe pick one up for yourself. For everything jade, head to 4a Calle Oriente.

**Santa Catalina Arch:** one of the city's most photographed structures. Originally connecting the Santa Catalina Convent to a school, it enabled the nuns there to go back and forth without having to cross out on the street. The high arch features a working clock added later. Find it at 5th Av North and Instagram it!

**Parque Central:** located between calles 4a and 5a, the extensive plaza is a gathering place for locals and visitors alike. People watch from the central fountain and take in the sights.

# WELCOME TO MEXICO

## MEXICO CITY

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](http://contiki.com) or pick up our Latin America brochure for more.

### GETTING AROUND

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 Merto terminal Taxqueña with Xochimilco, one of the southernmost suburbs in the capital.

**Taxi:** 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 MXN when you get in & then around \$1 MXN 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.

## 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 guisadaos (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 go!

## MEXICO CITY'S DON'T MISS...

**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.

**The Centro Historico:** the Old Town or Historic Centre 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.

**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.

## CANCUN

Hola! Bienvenidos to glitzy Cancun, Mexico's super resort. This party paradise is a high energy destination, loaded with outdoor activities and a buzzing nightlife. If you have time to take a wander, here's some ideas and inspiration on how to start off your trip Caribbean style!

There are two parts to Cancun – the Zona Hotelera (hotel zone) is one long street that extends up and around the lagoon Nichupte. Almost all hotels are on the single thoroughfare called Blvd Kukulcan (pronounced KO KOL kan), named for the feathered serpent that features prominently in Mesoamerican religion. Locations are indicated on Blvd Kukulcan by kilometre number, as in how far from Cancun city, on the north side, the location is running south down the hotel zone.

## BANKS & ATMs/CASH MACHINES

There are several banks along Blvd Kukulcan, the main artery of Cancun's Hotel Zone. The most convenient bank to the Holiday Inn Cancun Arenas is Santander located across the street and to the left (when exiting the hotel). Visa and Mastercard are widely accepted and in many cases, so are US dollars.

## HUNGRY?

There are countless options on Blvd Kukulcan. From American chains to speciality restaurants and bars, there is no shortage of choice. If you have the urge to get out of the Hotel Zone, you can grab a taxi or bus and head to Ciudad Cancun for even more local options.

**La Destileria:** here you can find an impressive take on Mexican food like skirt steak with grilled cactus or Chiquihuite, a puff pastry filled with chicken and cream cheese over a poblano pepper sauce. It is located in the Zona Hotelera at Blvd Kukulcan km 12.65, open 1 pm to midnight.

**Fish Frianga:** if you're looking for some inexpensive fish and a good mojito check out this quick seafood stand in the Hotel Zone. Dine under palapa huts on a sandy floor as you chow down on local tacos and take in the sunset over the lagoon, Blvd Kukulcan km 12.6, open 11 am to 11 pm.

**Perico's:** Head into Ciudad Cancun to one of the city's oldest restaurants complete with nightly entertainment. Some say it's the "funniest" Mexican restaurant around! Av Yaxchilan 61, open noon - 1am.

## GETTING AROUND AND TAXIS

The Zona Hotelera is connected to Ciudad Cancun by the R1 (or route 1) bus, which costs \$6 MXN. When you walk out of the Holiday Inn Cancun Arenas, the buses headed to your right are bound for town while those headed left are going further south down the Hotel Zone.

## PERSONAL NECESSITIES

Toiletries and basic groceries are available at OXXO, a convenience store chain toward the south in the Zona Hotelera on Blvd Kukulcan km 9.5. Here you can find everything from bottled water to toothpaste.

## CANCUN DON'T MISS

**Museo Maya de Cancun:** this museum houses Mayan artifacts including over 400 pieces of historic items found all over the Yucatan. Enjoy one of the seasonal exhibits as you peruse the treasures found in this hurricane resistant building. Located at Blvd Kukulcan km 16.5. Admission is \$4 MXN and hours are 9 am - 6 pm Tuesday through Sunday.

**La Isla Shopping Village:** this indoor/outdoor shopping area has canals, an aquarium and a movie theatre. Grab some ice cream and take a wander through the many familiar shops.

**Isla Mujeres:** located in the Caribbean waters 13 km off the coast, this island is known for remarkable snorkelling and scuba diving due to its coral reefs. Exploring this island can also lead you to the remains of a Mayan temple and you may even spot a few sea turtles. Ask your Trip Manager about arranging a boat out to the island or take the Isla Mujeres Ferry. Tickets can be purchased for the ferry at the ferry dock and the ferry takes you across the Bay of Mujeres to the island. During the day the ferry runs about every 30 minutes and takes about 20 minutes to cross the bay. Ferry dock located at Playa Caracol and costs around \$20 MXN.



## PUERTO VALLARTA

Puerto Vallarta is one of Mexico's most popular beach towns. From glistening golden sand to picture-perfect sunsets against the Banderas Bay, Puerto Vallarta is as relaxing as it is thrilling. Escape and spend the day in the surrounding Sierra Madre Mountains for a zipline adventure through lush jungle or lay on the shore and get into the beach life.

### BANKS & ATMs/CASH MACHINES

There is an ATM located at the Soriana supermarket next door of the hotel (to the right when facing the front doors.) The nearest bank is Banamex located on Blvd Francisco Medina Ascencio #2485 a few blocks from the hotel.

### HUNGRY?

From beachfront restaurants selling fresh lobster to taco shacks, Puerto Vallarta has all of the Mexican must-haves. Here are a few of our favourites:

**La Palapa:** this open-air palapa-roofed restaurant on the beach is a decade's old local favorite. For lunch and dinner, seafood is the speciality; featured dishes are miso Chilean sea bass, pepper-crusted yellow fin tuna, and grilled shrimp in tequila. The Palapa's location in the heart of Los Muertos Beach makes it an excellent place end the day. Located at: Pulpito 10-3, Emiliano Zapata. Open every day from 8:30 am to 11:30 pm

**El Arrayan:** the spirited El Arrayán is the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow for anyone in search of authentic Mexican cuisine. The casual open-air dining area surrounds a cozy courtyard, while its exposed brick walls and funky-chic decor showcase a modern view of Mexican classics. Start with an order of delicious ceviche, sumptuous plantain empanadas filled with black beans, or a traditional salad of diced nopal cactus paddles with fresh cheese. Located at: Calle Allende #344, Centro. Open every day except Tuesdays from 5:30 pm to 11:00 pm.

### PERSONAL NECESSITIES

The Soriana supermarket is located next door of the hotel to the right when facing the front doors. They have everything from sunscreen to water and pharmacy items.

### PUERTO VALLARTA DON'T MISS

**Zona Romantica and Old Town:** This area is located along the city's Malecon, an 11-block stretch of boardwalk lined with shops, restaurants and bars on one side and the shoreline on the other. This is the spot to grab a beer and sit out on a table in the sand or bargain for fresh lobster. Considered the Old Town area, it is also home to the icon of the Malecon, Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, which opened in 1921 and dominates the city skyline.

**Playa de los Muertos:** translated roughly to "Deadman's Beach" this spot gets its name from fabled pirate raids that are said to have happened on the nearby village. A favourite for people watching and enjoying the sun, its central location makes it one of the Puerto Vallarta's most eventful beaches. Access the beach off Calle Olas Atlas in the Old Town area.

**Plaza Galerías:** a large mall located just north of Walmart and Sam's on the Northern Hotel Zone. Many of the most important stores and restaurant chains are located here, along with shops, banks, movies and much more. From the second floor, you have a nice view of the Maritime Terminal and the cruise ships that arrive during the week.

**Plaza Peninsula:** not far south in the middle of the hotel zone, by the Peninsula Condo buildings you'll find this more exclusive mini-mall at Av. Francisco Medina Ascencio #2485, Zona Hotelera Norte, Puerto Vallarta. There are some great restaurants, furniture stores, a Starbucks, various banks and even the Canadian consular offices are located here.

# SPANISH WORDS & PHRASES

Hola (hello)

Adios (goodbye)

Buenos dias (good morning)

Buenas tardes (good afternoon)

Buenas noches (good night)

Gracias (thank you)

De nada (you're welcome)

Por favor (please)

Si (yes)

No (no)

Con permiso (excuse me)

Perdone (pardon me)

Lo siento (i'm sorry)

No entiendo (i don't understand)

No hablo espanol (i don't speak spanish)

Hablas ingles? (Do you speak English?)

¿Donde esta el metro? (Where is the subway?)

Cuanto cuesta? (How much does that cost?)

Donde esta el sanitario? (Where is the toilet?)

Puedes llevarme a este hotel? (Can you take me to this hotel?)

Me podrias ayudar? (Can you help me?)

Banco (bank)

Derecha (right)

Izquierda (left)

Derecho (straight ahead)

Un menu (a menu)

Una bebida (a drink)

Agua (water)

Cerveza (beer)

La cuenta (the check)

Farmacia (pharmacy)

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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.

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