

tour dossier for:

Pacific To Atlantic

69 nights / 70 days • Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Argentina, Brazil



The Facts

Dossier Last Updated: 18-03-2008

Tour Code: BXPA2

Duration 69 nights / 70 days

Joining City: Quito

Departure City: Rio de Janeiro

Nearest International Airport (joining / departing):

This dossier is designed for this particular tour and should be read in conjunction with the country dossier(s), regional pre-departure booklet and optional excursions guides relevant to your itinerary. You will also receive a joining letter in advance of your journey with further information, while last minute updates may be posted in the Latest News section of our website. Please see tucantravel.com for details.

What's Included

- 60% tents, 40% hotels / hostels
- Most meals while camping, some lunches
- Entrance fees to sites listed as part of the itinerary are not included

What's Excluded

Choose your options! See our Optional Excursions Guide for details about the optional extras offered on this tour.

Brief Overview

Panama hats, pristine peaks and from the equator in the Andes to the world's most famous beach city, and from one coast to another, this is an epic adventure if ever there was one! We'll take you to the world's largest rainforest, through the ancient Inca Empire, across the Chaco of northern Argentina, up to the Iguazu Falls and Pantanal wetlands, and then we'll culminate on the coast of Brazil for the world's best party. From the Pacific to the Atlantic, you'll be immersed in the Latino way of life every step of the way.



Itinerary

Day 1 to 7

Quito - Otavalo - Misahualli - Baños

We begin in Quito, and our first stop is Otavalo, which is famous for its incredible markets. Then we travel to Misahualli on the edge of the Amazon; from here you can take an optional excursion into the Jungle. Following on we visit beautiful Baños, an adventure-sports haven, in the mountains.

Day 8 to 14

Ingapirca - Cuenca - Punta Sal

Our second week is all about ruins and beaches. We visit Ingapirca, Ecuador's major Inca ruin site, and then we travel via the quaint colonial town of Cuenca to arrive at Punta Sal along the Pacific coast.

Day 15 to 21

Huanchaco - Huaraz - Lima

We take in the delights of northern Peru and visit Huaraz in the high Andes as we travel down the coast to Lima, the celebrated City of Kings which was founded by Francisco Pizarro in 1535.

Day 22 to 28

Paracas - Huacachina - Nazca - Puerto Inca - Arequipa

This week is non-stop action: you'll have the chance to visit the Ballestas Islands from Paracas, sand board down sand dunes at Huacachina, fly over the mysterious Nazca Lines at Nazca, and wander through the beautiful Santa Catalina Convent at Arequipa. From here also a chance to visit the world's deepest gorge, the Colca Canyon (optional).

Day 29 to 35

Cuzco - Sacred Valley - Machu Picchu

We walk in the footsteps of the ancient Incas and explore their stunning ruin sites in Cuzco and around the Sacred Valley. You can choose to hike the Inca Trail or take a day train trip to Machu Picchu.

Day 36 to 42

Cuzco - Sillustani - Lake Titicaca - Puno - La Paz

Leaving the old Inca capital, we make our way across the Altiplano visiting Sillustani's burial towers before arrival at the shores of Lake Titicaca, where you can go on an overnight stay with local Indians. The exotic capital of Bolivia, La Paz, is our next stop.

Day 43 to 49

Sucre - Potosí - Uyuni

We spend a week in Bolivia taking in many of the sights of this beautiful little country is famous for, including the town of Sucre, the very basic silver mines at Potosi and the salt flats at Uyuni.

Day 50 to 56

Humahuaca - Salta - Chaco - San Ignacio Mini

We enter Argentina and begin our journey across the stunning northern landscape, taking in the Humahuaca canyon, the Argentine foothills, brilliant town of Salta and then we travel across the sparse Chaco on our way to the Jesuit ruin town of San Ignacio Mini.

Day 57 to 63

Iguazu Falls - Bonito

Arriving to hear the roar of 275 thundering waterfalls, we spend time at Iguazu Falls where you can go walking or take a zodiac ride under the falls. We then travel to the water wonderland of Bonito; here you can snorkel amongst stunning caves and river systems.

Day 64 to 70

Pantanal - Campo Grande - Bertioga - Parati - Rio de Janeiro

After visiting the Pantanal Wetlands, which are famous for housing the most exotic wildlife in South America, we enjoy some free camping on our way to busy Sao Paulo. We then visit the beach at Bertioga and then colonial Parati on the coast before arriving at our final stop, famous Rio de Janeiro!

Important note: The itinerary listed above is to be used as a guide only. Occasionally we may need to update this document and it may be different to the information printed in our current brochure. Tour leaders may need to make adjustments due to unforeseen circumstances during the tour. It is very important that you visit our website and review a copy of this dossier as close as possible to your departure date in case of changes that may affect your plans. Any last minute changes may also be posted in the Latest News section of our website.

Pre and Post Tour Accommodation

Very little time is spent in the starting and finishing cities and you will need to allow a few days at the beginning or end of your tour if you want to explore them further. For details of pre and post tour accommodation bookings (which should be made at the time of your tour booking) please refer to our current brochure or contact our reservations team.

About Budget Expeditions Tours

Because nothing additional is included in our tour price, Budget Expeditions are great value tours for 18 to 35s which offer young people optimum flexibility and control over their budgets. We travel in custom-built expedition vehicles, coaches and local transport and stay in pleasant hotels, hostels and campsites. Budget Expeditions are offered in Europe, East and Southern Africa and South America.

Don't forget that Tucan Travel also offers four other tour styles: Adventure Tours travel by public transport wherever possible and so have a high degree of interaction with the local people; Overland Expeditions (in South America only), which usually have a high percentage of camping, travel by overland truck and suit travellers who love the great outdoors; Discovery Tours (Central & South America) where we travel by private and comfortable, custom-built vehicle staying in hotels; Independent Travel offers personalised itineraries, stopovers and language schools with your choice of accommodation and flexible travel days.

Local Fund

The cost of your tour is divided into two separate, compulsory payments – the tour cost and the Local Fund. The tour cost is paid to your travel agent and the Local Fund must be paid directly to your tour leader in US\$ cash on Day 1 of your trip. The Local Fund covers most of the group expenses (such as meals when camping, campsite fees and cooking gas, hotels and hostels, national park fees). Your tour leader will manage the Local Fund and he/she will let you know throughout the trip how this money is being spent. We keep individual accounts for each client's Local Fund, so we can give you the choice (at the group meeting on day 1) to use multi share accommodation (when available) to keep your costs down. Once your tour finishes, any left over Local Fund will be refunded to you on an individual basis.

Pre Departure Meeting

Your tour leader will usually hold a group meeting at approx. 6.00pm on Day 1 (check the notice board in the hotel reception for the exact time and location). Your tour leader will give a briefing about the tour, outline the plan for the next few days, answer any questions and collect your Local Fund payment in full in US\$ cash. Then there will usually be the option for everyone to go out for dinner and drinks to start to get to know one another. Please note that you will need to bring the following important items to the pre departure meeting:

1. Passport (including any necessary visas) original document and a photocopy.
2. Vaccination certificates (e.g. Yellow Fever, if required)
3. Travel voucher
4. Travel insurance policy
5. Local Fund

Tour Personnel

Budget Expeditions use two crew members - a Tucan Travel Tour Leader and a Tucan Travel Driver. Both will work together as a team to give you the best possible service and are responsible for the safe and enjoyable running of the expedition.

Degree of Difficulty/Fitness

Budget Expeditions were designed for adventure-seeking 18 to 35s who are relatively fit and active. Although no particular experience is required, some treks can be fairly physically demanding.

Most people will suffer from some degree of altitude sickness at some point during the tour. We suggest that heavy smokers either cut down or stop completely for their time at altitude. The local coca tea is usually very helpful in combating altitude sickness.

In some areas the altitude can reach around 3,000 metres and although this is not excessively high, you will probably feel some effects of the thin air and lack of oxygen. It can become quite cold at these altitudes, sometimes falling below zero while the climate in the Amazon Basin is hot and humid most of the time. Away from the Andes, the majority of this expedition is spent at sea level.

If you are worried about any of the above you should consult your doctor and possibly obtain some altitude sickness tablets prior to leaving home.

Life on the road

These tours are very much hands-on and you are expected to be involved in many of the duties in the campsite including cooking, washing up, cleaning out the truck and vehicle packing. At times we will have long drives, but there will be toilet stops en-route plus photo stops and lunch breaks. Most evenings we will stop at a bush-camp or regular campsite and you and your tent-mate will put up your tent. Everyone will pitch in to unpack the gas stoves, gas bottles, pots, pans, tables, camp stools and put up the cook tent (if required due to bad weather). Someone can fill the kettles for some hot drinks while the cooks prepare the evening meal. If you are not an expert at cooking - don't worry! After all meals everyone is responsible for washing their own plates while the washing-up team clean the pots and pans.

Pre-departure Information

Once you have booked your tour, we will provide you our Latin America Pre Departure Information Booklet to help you prepare for your trip (if you do not receive this, please ask your agent for a copy or you can download it from our website). It is very important that you read this document before you travel for valuable info on the Local Fund, travel documents, insurance & health, money & budgeting, packing, joining your tour and life on the road, accommodation, transportation, crew & food details.

Country Dossiers

This Tour Dossier is designed to be read in conjunction with the relevant Country Dossiers which you can download from our website or obtain from your booking agent. The Country Dossiers contain essential information about visas, arrival transfers, spending money and costs, taxes and tips, climate, local food etc.

What you need to bring

A full list of suggested equipment can be found in the Latin America Pre Departure booklet. Large or rigid suitcases are totally unsuitable and are not permitted on these tours as they often cause problems in vehicle packing. We highly recommend that you bring a backpack (or similar soft luggage) and a daypack for everyday use and overnight excursions. You must be prepared to carry your own luggage so do not pack more than you can comfortably carry.

Sleeping bags are essential on all Budget Expeditions. You must also bring a camping mattress and towel. An insect repellent with a high concentration of DEET is also essential. The weather throughout is very changeable, so you should pack lots of layers and bring along wet weather gear – a raincoat/mac and waterproof pants/trousers are a must. We recommend a four season bag with side zip which can be opened out in warmer weather. If you do not have a four season sleeping bag, you can usually purchase extra blankets locally (and cheaply). In terms of sleeping mats, thermarest self inflating mattresses are comfortable and provide protection against the cold ground, while foam roll mats are compact, inexpensive and have similar features. Avoid air mattresses as these can be bulky and puncture easily. You may also want to bring a sleeping sheet as this keeps your sleeping bag clean plus can be used on its own in hot weather especially in Brazil.

You may find it useful to bring along a torch and you will need your own towel. (For a full Inca Trail / Lares Trek packing list please see the [Inca Trail Information Sheet](#) or [Lares Trek Sheet](#)).

Transfers

We do not offer airport transfers. Please see the relevant Joining Letter and map for detailed guidelines about how to get a taxi.

Accommodation

The accommodation on Budget Expeditions is mainly camping. Our self-contained expedition vehicles carry all the necessary top-quality equipment to ensure that camping is well organised and fun. Campsites vary from established sites with good facilities to more remote areas where we are totally self-sufficient. The campsites we stay at may also have alternative accommodation available if you feel like a change from your tent. The style and quality varies greatly from camp to camp and the rooms are usually allocated on a first come first serve basis and so generally can not be booked in advance. If you take this option then you just pay the difference between the camping and room/dorm price.

Spacious two-person tents are supplied so if you come alone, you'll be sharing with another group member of the same gender. There is a full complement of gas stoves and kitchenware for the group's use. You are expected to participate in the setting up at each campsite and in the preparation of meals for the group. Your expedition leader will organise groups to do various duties on a roster basis.

Transport

Transportation on this tour will be in one of our robust Mercedes-Benz overland expedition vehicles. On all Tucan Travel vehicles you will find superior comfort, from our carpeted interiors with curtained and tinted windows, modern reclining coach seats, overhead storage shelves, writing tables, and a small library (which you can use and add to!). Our vehicles are equipped with power inverters and inputs for your ipods and mp3 players. Most also have a refrigerator for cold drinks and food. There will also be plenty of storage space for your luggage and souvenirs. We carry a range of high quality camping and cooking equipment for the use of the group and crew. Tucked away will be specialised equipment for the maintenance and upkeep of the vehicle.

Meals

All meals are included while camping (healthy breakfast, buffet style lunch and a two course dinner. Lunches are included on days spent travelling on our expedition vehicle. The lunches usually consist of cold meats, cheeses, salad, bread and fruit (drinks are not included). All necessary cooking equipment and utensils are carried on our expedition vehicle. Those designated as cooks on the roster system will help in buying, preparing and cooking the food for the group under the guidance of the crew. Our crew are normally very skilled at organising appetising meals.

At all other times (i.e. when staying in hotels), meals, extra snacks and drinks are at your own expense giving you the chance to try the varied local cuisine. Some of our hotels may include breakfast and your Tour leader will inform you about these arrangements locally. Please see the relevant Country Dossier for more information about the local food.

Optional Excursions

Choose as many or as few optional excursions as you like! Your tour leader will be able to make recommendations and bookings in advance for most of these extras so you have more flexibility and control over your trip. Visit www.tucantravel.com and download our Optional Excursions Guide for details. Entrance fees to many sites described in the itinerary are not included but may be reduced if you show your student card.

Responsible Travel Tips

At Tucan Travel we are serious about our responsibility to care for the environment and people that we visit. Here are a few tips to help you to enjoy your tour while minimising your impact and enhancing your travelling experience. Learn more about our responsible travel policy at www.tucantravel.com.

1. Carbon offset your Tucan Travel tour and flights. Check out our website for details about how you can go about this www.tucantravel.com.
2. Bring your own metal water bottle. Fill up at restaurants or treat your own water on tour instead of buying lots of plastic bottles. Bear in mind that there may not be recycling facilities available at some destinations.
3. Cut out plastic – remove and recycle the packaging of new travel gear before you pack, and bring a light cotton or string bag for your shopping so you can politely refuse plastic bags at shops and markets.
4. Bring a stack of pens and pencils and hand these out to children rather than offering sweets. Your alternative gifts will still be popular and the parents will thank you for saving their children's teeth – access to dental services may not be readily available.
5. Learn a bit of the local language before you travel. Being able to say even a few words like hello, please and thank you will help you to connect with people in a positive way and really enhance your personal experience. Bring a phrase book on tour and keep practising to improve your confidence. You will also find some good language tips in the country dossier(s).

Feedback

At the end of your tour we would greatly appreciate it if you could take the time to complete a questionnaire about your experiences. The Tour Leader will give you a paper copy and an electronic version can be found on our website. We take feedback very seriously as it allows us to maintain and improve the very high standards we expect from our road crew, local operators, hoteliers, transportation and office staff, among others. We also use this information to improve our itineraries and optional excursions on offer. Thank you in advance for your help with this.

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Join our online communities

Make friends with fellow passengers in the Tucan Travel forums, and ask questions about any tour you like we've got the answers! See Share your tour photos and videos on Youtube and Flickr, and keep in touch with group members on Facebook, Bebo and Myspace. There are many Tucan Travel communities out there waiting to welcome you, just a few clicks away.

Write a travel diary and get published on our website

Share your experiences of life on tour and you may be rewarded! Get in touch with us for details through www.tucantravel.com.

We want your photos!

We've taken you to some of the most amazing places on earth why not share that with the world? Send us high resolution colour photos of your adventures, and you could be published on our website or our brochure. Contact us through www.tucantravel.com
