



South America

The Ancient Flavours of Peru with Ben Groundwater



trip highlights

Escorted by author, journalist and passionate food writer Ben Groundwater, whose curiosity and local connections bring each destination to life

The remarkable Incan citadel of Machu Picchu where terraces and temples reveal an extraordinary understanding of engineering, landscape and design

A multi-course dining experience at MIL Centro, a unique research centre and restaurant offering a contemporary interpretation of ancient ingredients and food systems

Discover Lima in depth, from the creative streets of Barranco to the coastal energy of Miraflores and the revitalised port of Callao

In the Sacred Valley meet the people behind Peru's famous corn and potato cultivation, as well as handcrafted spirits and colourful weaving and textiles



Trip Duration	11 days	Trip Code: BGPP
Grade	Introductory	
Summary	10 nights boutique hotels	



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Single travellers are required to pay a single supplement when joining this adventure. Please refer to our website for the additional cost.

the trip

From Lima's coast to the grandeur of Cusco, through the Sacred Valley and on to Machu Picchu, this journey through Peru explores the deep connections between landscape, history and food, tracing a story that begins with ancient civilisations and continues through to Peru's contemporary food scene.

Beginning in Lima, one of the world's most dynamic food cities, we take an in-depth look at Peru's capital, exploring markets, street art and the distinct neighbourhoods of Barranco, Miraflores and Callao to understand how the country's diverse ingredients and influences come together on the plate.

From here, the journey moves to Cusco and the Sacred Valley. In Cusco, the former capital of the Inca Empire, grand Spanish colonial buildings stand alongside original Inca stonework, reflecting the city's transformation following the arrival of the Spanish in the 16th century. Here, a hands-on cooking class offers the chance to recreate the flavours of Peru back home. In the Sacred Valley, the connection between land and food becomes clear, with visits to farms and local communities revealing agricultural practices developed over thousands of years. Time in local markets showcases vividly coloured textiles alongside regional produce, while tasting locally crafted spirits adds another dimension to the flavours of the Andes.

This leads to one of the defining moments of the trip: a guided walk and tour through Machu Picchu. Set high among the Andes, this remarkable Inca citadel reveals an extraordinary level of engineering, vision and connection to the natural world.

The journey culminates at MIL Centro, located in the highlands above Cusco where Peru's biodiversity and ancient food systems are explored through ingredients sourced from different altitudes across the Andes. Each course reflects a distinct ecosystem, offering a contemporary interpretation of traditions encountered throughout Peru. Among its many awards, MIL was named the Best Gastronomic Experience in the World, at the 2023 World Culinary Awards.

There'll be stories, plenty of laughs and, of course, more than a little pisco - all shared with your host, Ben Groundwater

about your leader/escort

Ben Groundwater is one of Australia's best-known travel and food writers, and someone who holds a deep passion for northern Spain after living for 18 months in the beautiful town of San Sebastian, and making frequent foodie adventures into southern France. Ben is a newspaper columnist with the Sydney Morning Herald and The Age, a feature writer, a broadcaster, and the author of six books. Ben has also been sharing his passion for travel by hosting small-group food and travel experiences, taking curious travellers beyond the obvious to discover the people, places and traditions that define a destination.

at a glance

DAY 1	THU 15 JULY: ARRIVE LIMA
DAY 2	FRI 16 JULY: LIMA: SURQUILLO MARKET AND LARCO MUSEUM
DAY 3	SAT 17 JULY: LIMA: NEIGHBOURHOODS OF MIRAFLORES AND BARRANCO
DAY 4	SUN 18 JULY: LIMA: CALLAO PORT FOR STREET ART AND SEAFOOD
DAY 5	MON 19 JULY: TO CUSCO, THE FORMER CAPITAL OF THE INCA EMPIRE (3400M/11,115FT)
DAY 6	TUE 20 JULY: CUSCO: CITY TOUR AND COOKING CLASS
DAY 7	WED 21 JULY: SACRED VALLEY: ANDEAN FARMS AND MARKETS, ON TO URUBAMBA (2870M/9416FT)
DAY 8	THU 22 JUL: SACRED VALLEY: HACIENDA SARAPAMPA, ON TO OLLANTAYTAMBO (2792M/9160FT)
DAY 9	FRI 23 JULY: THE UNESCO SITE OF MACHU PICCHU (2430M/7972FT)

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trip dates

2027 15 Jul - 25 Jul

fast facts

Visas:

Please check visa requirements with your reservations consultant*

Singles:

Single travellers who are unable to be matched with another single traveller of the same gender, must pay a single supplement on this trip.

DAY 10 SAT 24 JULY: MIL CENTRO RESEARCH CENTRE AND DINING EXPERIENCE
DAY 11 SUN 25 JULY: TOUR CONCLUDES CUSCO

additional deposits required

An additional deposit is collected at the time of booking. This is to secure a number of the visits and restaurants, along with entrance permits for Machu Picchu.

This is non refundable and non transferable.

what's included

- Hosted by Ben Groundwater
- Local guide
- 10 nights boutique hotels
- 10 breakfasts, 7 lunches, 5 dinners
- MIL Centro research centre and dining experience
- Entrance fee and guided visit to Machu Picchu
- Cooking class Cusco
- Walking tour of Cusco
- Entrance fee and guided visit to Larco Museum Lima
- Tasting at Destilería Andina
- Vista dome scenic train journey Agues Calientes to Ollantaytambo
- Entrance to ALQA - Museo de Arte Popular Andino in Ollantaytambo
- One group arrival transfer on day 1 in Lima
- Private vehicle transport throughout

what's not included

- Travel to Lima and from Cusco
- Flight Lima to Cusco - Required, a group flight will be nominated.
- Travel insurance (compulsory)
- Single supplement - limited to 3 only
- Lima arrival transfer if arriving aside of nominated group transfer flight
- Departure transfer from Cusco
- Extra nights in Lima or Cusco if extending your stay
- Meals & drinks not noted on itinerary
- Tips

detailed itinerary

DAY 1 Thu 15 July: Arrive Lima

Arrive in Lima, Peru's coastal capital, where a rich culinary identity has been shaped over thousands of years, from ancient civilisations to the vibrant food culture of today. Throughout this journey, we will explore how Peru's landscapes, history and traditions come together. In the evening, meet your host Ben Groundwater and fellow travellers for a welcome dinner enjoying traditional Peruvian flavours.

Overnight: Hotel Indigo Lima Miraflores by IHG, Lima (or similar)
meals: D

DAY 2 Fri 16 July: Lima: Surquillo Market and Larco Museum

We visit Surquillo Market, one of Lima's most vibrant local food markets, where the diversity of Peru's ingredients is on full display and we'll be making a stop at a

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very popular chicharroneria. Peru is considered one of the world's great centres of agricultural origin. Potatoes, for example, were first domesticated in the Andes over 7,000 years ago, and today there are more than 3,000 varieties found across the country. Similarly, maize has been grown here for over 5,000 years.

Later, we visit the Larco Museum, home to one of the world's most extensive collections of pre-Columbian art and artefacts. Housed in an 18th century colonial mansion built over a 7th century pyramid, the museum offers a remarkable insight into Peru's ancient civilisations, some of which date back more than 4,000 years. Through beautifully preserved ceramics, textiles and goldwork, we begin to understand the depth and sophistication of the cultures that shaped this region.

Overnight: Hotel Indigo Lima Miraflores by IHG, Lima (or similar)

meals: B,L

DAY 3 Sat 17 July: Lima: Neighbourhoods of Miraflores and Barranco

A free morning to relax or explore on your own. In the afternoon we set off through different neighbourhoods of Lima. In Miraflores, modern life meets the Pacific Ocean, with clifftop parks, ocean views and a contemporary food scene shaped by both local and international influences. Nearby Barranco presents a contrasting character, a bohemian neighbourhood known for its historic architecture and creative energy. Tonights dinner is at a multi award winning restaurant known for it's innovative approach to Peruvian cuisine.

Overnight: Hotel Indigo Lima Miraflores by IHG, Lima (or similar)

meals: B,D

DAY 4 Sun 18 July: Lima: Callao port for street art and seafood

In Callao, we learn about it's long history as one of South America's most important ports. For centuries, goods from across the continent passed through Callao on their way to Europe, bringing both wealth and cultural influence to the region.

Today, parts of the district are undergoing a creative revival. At Callao Monumental, a community-led urban art project has transformed historic buildings and streets into a vibrant centre for contemporary art.

Then in the coastal neighbourhood of La Punta, we enjoy lunch at a traditional cevicheria overlooking the harbour and Pacific Ocean.

Overnight: Hotel Indigo Lima Miraflores by IHG, Lima (or similar)

meals: B,L

DAY 5 Mon 19 July: To Cusco, the former capital of the Inca Empire (3400m/11,115ft)

A short flight from Lima brings us to Cusco, gateway to the Andes. Set at an altitude of 3,400 metres (11,150 feet), the city is surrounded by dramatic mountain landscapes. Cusco was once the capital of the vast Inca Empire, which extended across much of western South America before the arrival of the Spanish in the 16th century. At this elevation the air is noticeably thinner, and some travellers may experience mild symptoms of altitude sickness, locally known as soroche, such as a headache, shortness of breath or tiredness. The best approach on arrival is to take things slowly, rest and drink plenty of water while your body adjusts. As such we have set aside time to rest and acclimatise to the elevation before dinner. Tonight we are introduced to Nikkei cuisine, a distinctive blend of Japanese technique and

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Peruvian ingredients that reflects the country's diverse cultural influences. It also reflects a personal interest of Ben's, whose love of Japanese food is explored in his book on Tokyo's dining scene 'Neon Lights'.

Overnight: Novotel Cusco, Cusco (or similar)

NOTE: The Lima-Cusco flight is not included in the tour cost. We will nominate a group flight. We are happy to assist with flight bookings, often internal flights for Peru are best booked as part of your main international ticket.

meals: B,D

DAY 6 Tue 20 July: Cusco: City tour and cooking class

We set off to explore Cusco, noticing the striking contrast to Lima. Where the capital is coastal and contemporary, Cusco is defined by its Andean setting, high altitude and deep historical roots. Walking through the city reveals a remarkable combination of Inca and Spanish colonial architecture where narrow cobbled streets open into lively plazas. This history is also reflected in the local cuisine. In Cusco and the surrounding highlands, ingredients such as corn, potatoes and grains take centre stage, shaped by altitude, climate and long-standing agricultural traditions. Trout from nearby rivers is a regional staple, offering a fresh counterpart to the coastal seafood of Lima. A hands-on cooking class provides the opportunity to prepare and enjoy classic Peruvian dishes such as lomo saltado and ceviche de trucha, bringing together influences from both the coast and the Andes in a shared lunch experience.

Overnight: Novotel Cusco, Cusco

meals: B,L

DAY 7 Wed 21 July: Sacred Valley: Andean farms and markets, on to Urubamba (2870m/9416ft)

The Sacred Valley reveals a very different side of Peru. Located between Cusco and Machu Picchu, this region has long been an agricultural heartland, valued since Inca times for its mild climate and fertile soils.

We begin with a visit to Chinchero, a traditional Andean village. Here, we gain insight into the extraordinary diversity of crops that originate from the Andes. At a family-run project, we meet Manuel Choque, a local Cusco farmer, affectionately known as the 'potato whisperer' who has dedicated his life to conserving and improving the genetic diversity of crops in the Huatata, Chinchero, and Urubamba areas. After learning about the region's agriculture, we will taste a remarkable range of potato varieties, from deep blue and purple to golden and red, along with home made wine.

At Pisac market, one of the most well-known markets in the region, farmers, artisans and traders from surrounding communities come together. Alongside fresh produce, the market is particularly known for its vibrant textiles, where richly coloured weavings display intricate patterns that often carry symbolic meaning. We enjoy dinner at our tranquil accommodation out on the terrace, surrounded by nature.

Overnight: Andenia Boutique Hotel, Urubamba (or similar)

meals: B,L,D

DAY 8 Thu 22 Jul: Sacred Valley: Hacienda Sarapampa, on to Ollantaytambo (2792m/9160ft)

Take some time this morning to relax and enjoy Urubamba and our tranquil hotel and it's surrounding gardens and views.

Today we lunch at Hacienda Sarapampa, to learn about one of Peru's most important ingredients: corn. This family-run estate, just outside Pisac, has been dedicated to

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the cultivation of Cusco's renowned giant white corn for generations. Exploring the hacienda provides an understanding of both traditional and modern farming methods, and the role corn has played in shaping the region's culture and economy.

We end our day at Destilería Andina, the Sacred Valley's first distillery. Using locally sourced botanicals and ingredients, the distillery produces handcrafted spirits that reflect both the landscape and the creativity of modern Peru. The owners of Destilería Andina are also our hosts for our stay in Ollantaytambo, and tonight we share a relaxed dinner with fresh produce from their organic farm.

Overnight: El Albergue, Ollantaytambo (or similar)

meals: B,L,D

DAY 9 Fri 23 July: The UNESCO site of Machu Picchu (2430m/7972ft)

A visit to Machu Picchu is a defining highlight of any journey to Peru. A guided exploration reveals one of the most remarkable archaeological sites in the world. Built in the mid-15th century during the height of the Inca Empire, the site reflects the ingenuity and sophistication of its builders. Terraces, temples and ceremonial spaces are carefully integrated into the natural landscape, demonstrating a deep understanding of both engineering and environment. After time to explore the site, we descend to Aguas Calientes for lunch. In the afternoon, we return by train to the Sacred Valley, travelling on the scenic Vistadome service, with large panoramic windows offering views of the surrounding mountains and river valleys.

Overnight: El Albergue, Ollantaytambo

meals: B,L

DAY 10 Sat 24 July: MIL Centro research centre and dining experience

Before leaving Ollantaytambo, we visit the highly rated ALQA - Museo de Arte Popular Andino with its vibrant display of Andean folk art, weavings, ceramics and masks in a beautifully restored historic house.

Our time in Peru culminates with a unique culinary experience at MIL Centro, set beside the Moray archaeological site in the Sacred Valley at an elevation of 3,568 metres (11,706 feet). MIL Centro is overseen by Virgilio Martínez, Peru's superstar chef, whose Lima restaurant Central was named No. 1 in The World's 50 Best Restaurants. More than a dining experience, MIL Centro is also a research centre dedicated to exploring Peru's biodiversity, ancient agricultural systems and cultural traditions through food. Drawing on ingredients sourced from different altitudes across the Andes, the experience reflects thousands of years of knowledge and adaptation. Each course tells a story of landscape, climate and tradition, offering a contemporary interpretation of the ancient food systems encountered throughout the journey. Set in a remarkable location overlooking the Andean plains, this experience brings together the themes of land, culture and cuisine that have shaped our journey from Lima to the Sacred Valley and Machu Picchu. We return to Cusco and celebrate our time in Peru with a final pisco at a speciality bar close to our hotel.

Overnight: Novotel Cusco, Cusco (or similar)

meals: B,L

DAY 11 Sun 25 July: Tour concludes Cusco

Our time discovering Peru's landscapes, cultures and culinary traditions - from the Pacific coast to the Sacred Valley and Machu Picchu, draws to a close and the tour concludes in Cusco after breakfast. Depart at your leisure, or continue your travels.

meals: B

This itinerary is subject to change with any change in Community regulations as well as Governmental changes and natural circumstances beyond our control.

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climate

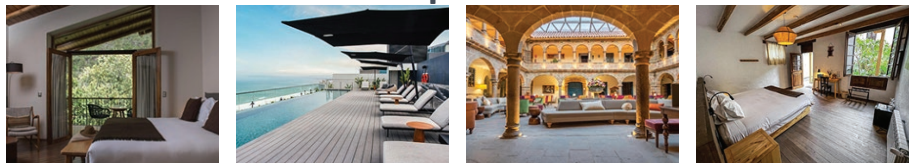
July falls within Peru's dry season, making it one of the best times to travel through the Andes. In Lima, located on the coast, temperatures are mild, typically ranging from around 15 - 20C/59 - 68F, with overcast skies common but little rainfall.

In contrast, Cusco, Urubamba and Ollantaytambo experience clear, sunny days with daytime temperatures generally between 18 - 22C/64 - 72F). Nights are much cooler, often dropping to around 0 - 5C/32 - 41F, particularly at higher elevations. Conditions are typically dry, and early mornings and evenings can feel quite cold.

dietary requirements

This is a food focussed itinerary and we want you to get the absolute best out of it so it's essential you let us know any dietary needs. These regions are unfortunately not well suited to those with a vegan or vegetarian diet. Pescatarian and gluten or lactose free can be accommodated. We are unable to guarantee a peanut-free or allergen-free trip, and therefore, we strongly encourage that travellers with life-threatening or severe allergies take all necessary medical precautions to prepare for the possibility of exposure. Group members must travel with all necessary medications for food allergies and be capable of self-administering these medications.

accommodation on the trip



A carefully selected range of boutique and historic hotels, each chosen for their superb location and distinctive character. We have detailed our intended accommodations however these are subject to change, in which case a hotel of equal standard will be provided.

pre and post tour accommodation

Please ask our team if you will be arriving into Lima earlier, or staying on in Cusco, and wish to book additional nights at the group hotels. We recommend booking this well in advance.

visas

A visa is exempt for passport holders from the following countries visiting Peru for short term tourism purposes:

Australia

New Zealand

Canada

United States

United Kingdom

For all other nationalities and longer stays please contact the relevant embassy.

If you are entering Peru from Bolivia, Ecuador, or any land border, please ensure you source a Peruvian entry stamp at the border. Take initiative at the immigration checkpoint, as they may not approach you. Failure to obtain an entry stamp requires applying for an exit or expulsion order at the Immigration Office in Lima. Without this order, air travel out of Peru is not allowed, and it may lead to a 10-year ban on re-entry. Please note however that passports will not receive immigration entry or exit stamps at any international airport in Peru. Instead, entry and exit from the country will be digitally recorded.

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how to book

Bookings can be made online at www.worldexpeditions.com

A higher deposit is due at the time of booking to secure arrangements at a number of visits and restaurants including MIL Centro.

This is non refundable and all travellers are encouraged to have their travel insurance in place as soon as their place on the tour is confirmed.

This tour requires a minimum of 10 people to proceed, and will have a maximum group size of 14.

We are happy to quote on airfares and can book extra hotels nights at the group start and end hotels if you wish.