

This book is dedicated to all those who have inspired us and given us their reasons for feeling proud of this magnificent country.

Also to all members of the team that has worked so hard to make "101 Reasons to be proud of Peru" a reality.

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101 Reasons
to be proud of
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GENERAL DIRECTOR

Carsten Korch

COORDINATOR

Millie Coquis

DESIGN AND LAYOUT

Renzo González - www.renzogonzalez.com

COVER DESIGN

Carmen Domínguez

OUR THANKS TO

Mauricio Fernández, Diego De La Torre, Joe Lara, Pilar Pedraza, Virginia Velasco, Gonzalo Pérez Terry, Kenneth Bengtsson y PromPerú.

MANAGING EDITOR

Begoña Velasco

COPY EDITORS

Ben Jonjak, Gustavo Alvizuri

TRANSLATOR

Peter Spence

PHOTOGRAPHS

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Phone (511) 610-4242 - Fax (511) 610-4250



Av. Javier Prado Oeste 1586 # 401, San Isidro, Lima 27, Perú
Phone (511) 440-1723
www.LivinginPeru.com

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PROJECT DIRECTORS

María Rosa Arrarte
Cecilia Arrarte

COORDINATOR

Vania Gozalo

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Cat's claw
Inca waterfalls
River Amazon
Handicrafts
Candlemass
Lord of the Miracles
er week in Ayacucho
sayhuaman
Puroto pepper
Cock of the rocks
The Raimondi puma
The Peruvian cajón
Vicuña
Inti Ray
Choquequirao
Chan Chan
Ollantaytambo
The Nasca lines
Bosque de Piedra
Chavín de Huántar
The fortress of Kuélap
Lima
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The potato
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Mineral resources
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-17
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Mauro Mina
Coca leaves
Arequipa
Tarapoto
The Inca Trail
The Andes
Rita
Julio Grana
Cusco
The suspension bridge
Francisco
I p u

ABOUT LIVING IN PERU

I came to Peru eighteen years ago, in 1990. My first visit lasted some four months and I travelled about the country.

I got to know a different reality to my own, I changed my view of things and of life, and learned that in spite of all the difficulties, how valuable it is to live and share friendship.



I knew then that Peru is a land of opportunities, of projects to start, tasks to complete and dreams to fulfill”

In 2001 personal circumstances brought me back to Peru and what started as a short stay became permanent. I knew then that Peru is a land of opportunities, of projects to start, tasks to complete and dreams to fulfill.

It is also one of the world’s most prodigious countries, full of natural wonders. It has every climate type you can imagine, a variety of cultures and an extraordinary history. That is why we created *LivinginPeru.com*, to tell the world about the treasures of this country which extend far beyond Machu Picchu, even though that is its best-known attraction.

We want our website to give basic information and to serve as a directory for foreigners who are visiting the country on business or pleasure.



Since *LivinginPeru.com*'s official launch in 2005 it has grown and now has sections on travel, news, cinema, theater and business. The site receives more than 130,000 visitors a month and has 22,000 subscribers, most of them Peruvian.

This is a great encouragement to those of us taking part in the project and who love Peru deeply even though we were not born here. In many ways I am now more Peruvian than Danish. "101 Reasons to be Proud of Peru" was born out of our website and created with tremendous enthusiasm and a desire to emphasize the things that make this country and its people great. We now present a new edition, but it is the result of the same spirit that led us to produce the first one: to show Peru as the generous, unique and marvelous country that it is.



Carsten Korch

PROLOGUE

Peru's long history and ancient culture has bequeathed monuments and objects of incalculable value to us. Some of the textiles of the Paracas culture, for example, are the equal in beauty of textiles produced at that time anywhere else in the world.

The Inca Empire – which extended into several modern South American countries – was one of the most important autonomous civilizations on the planet. Inca buildings, roads and irrigation systems surprise and perplex engineers even today.

During Spanish rule, when “Peru” started to be used to refer to the country, the word was also a synonym for “very valuable.” Even today, one of the definitions accepted by the Royal Spanish Academy for the word Peru is “very valuable or sought after.”

Since its foundation, Lima was the most important city on the west coast of South America. Its republican history, according to Historian Jorge Basadre, was one of wealth alternating with poverty and this, under different circumstances, led Mario Vargas Llosa to pen the question asked by Zavalita in his “Conversación en la catedral.”

However in recent years, as globalization has advanced, Peru has reasons for feeling proud and optimistic: its economy has been growing rapidly; Machu Picchu has been declared one of the seven new wonders of the world; in May 2008, Peru hosted the summit meeting of Latin America and European heads of government (LAC-EU); and in November 2008 the annual meeting of the APEC countries will be held here.

Furthermore, the recent surge in interest in Peruvian cuisine is another reason for pride and optimism. Ever more tourists visit our country

attracted by the food. Peruvian restaurants are opening in the world's main cities and our chefs are sought after to lend prestige to these establishments.

The relevance of processes such as these is that every society needs a sense of identity and pride in itself. Peruvian cuisine reaffirms our identity to the world. We are a multi- ethnic mixture; a fusion of cultural diversity, creativity and the ability to adapt.

“101 Reasons to be Proud of Peru” brings together, selects and presents the best of the country in a single publication: its rich history and traditions; its marvelous geography, flora and fauna; its most emblematic personalities; its most important cities and its varied gastronomy.

This “national selection” of the best of Peru should serve as an insignia which we Peruvians can show to the world to demonstrate what our country has to offer.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Felipe".

Felipe Ortiz de Zevallos



PROLOGUE

The good fortune Peruvians are experiencing today is not just of today; it is rooted in the legacy, natural treasures, values, people and habits that mark our land and history. These components renew the vitality of our culture daily and project us into the immediate future; a future that, with the passage of a few, brief seconds, becomes the present.

“101 Reasons to be Proud of Peru” collects those elements of identity that unite all Peruvians and give them the strength to overcome their daily challenges.

That which many Peruvians have agreed upon in gathering up the 101 identifying features of our country (those of physical form as well as others that take shape in the memory and conscience of the people) is that we are speaking about a common ground; a solid foundation created, conserved, protected and developed in a manner that aligns diversity with unity. Let us continue to look for reasons to be proud of Perú. The list is endless.



A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large 'R' followed by a vertical line and the word 'León' written in a cursive style.

Rafo León

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Destinations





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Arequipa

The White City

Arequipa, in southern Peru at an altitude of 2,380 m.a.s.l., is the country's second largest city and one of the main tourist destinations after Cusco and Lima. The city lies at the foot of a great snow-covered volcano called Misti, whose summit is 5,822 m.a.s.l. It is called the white city because its colonial-era buildings are made from sillar, a white volcanic stone. With a population of more than one million inhabitants, the region of Arequipa is famous for the variety of its cuisine. Among Arequipa's notable sons - and daughters - is the father of modern rocket propulsion, Pedro Paulet; renowned economist Hernando de Soto; writer Mario Vargas Llosa; the intellectual and politician Víctor Andrés Belaunde; and nineteen fifties tennis star Alex Olmedo.

Chiclayo

The friendship capital

Chiclayo is a city on the northern coast of Peru. It lies at an altitude of 29 m.a.s.l. The city's population is around 738,000 inhabitants. Chiclayo was founded by a Spanish priest in 1560 as an indigenous rural settlement. It remained a small town compared with the nearby city of Lambayeque until the 19th Century; since then, however, it has grown into a large modern metropolis. It is Peru's fourth largest city. Being in a fertile valley, farming is an important activity; producing rice, sugar cane and cotton. From the beginning of the 20th Century to the 1970s, most of Chiclayo's exports were shipped through the port of Pimentel. Its attractions include 14 kilometers of beautiful beaches from Eten to Pimentel. Other important sites are Zaña with its mixture of Inca and European architecture and archaeological sites such as the Túcume complex; or Huaca Rajada where the remains of the Lord of Sipán were discovered. Its museums deserve a separate mention: the Bruning and Royal Tombs of Sipán museums. Finally, the gastronomy of this region – making use of local products such as the loche pumpkin – is one of the tastiest and most varied in Peru and includes such splendid dishes as northern duck and rice, which is eaten all over the country.





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Cusco

The navel of the world

Cusco, meaning in Quechua “navel of the world,” was the heart of the famous Inca Empire which stretched from Colombia to the north of Argentina. Now it is the center of Peru’s tourist trade due to its proximity to many magnificent attractions including Ollantaytambo, Sacsayhuaman and, of course, Machu Picchu. At an altitude of approximately 3,500 m.a.s.l., the city has more than 300,000 inhabitants who depend, directly or indirectly, on tourism. Cusco is also the home town of the Cienciano football club which won the South American cup in 2003. Cusco is Peru’s main tourist destination and as such it is and will continue to be considered as a unique setting for programs and travel reports by the world’s most important television channels. You are never far away from picturesque streets, the remains of Inca walls, beautiful colonial buildings and pieces of living history. The Imperial City – as it is also known – has a vibrant night life seven days of the week and many pubs, discos and places of entertainment. It also has an interesting selection of restaurants and cafes. An extra attraction of Cusco, sure to captivate visitors with its greenness and climate, is the marvelous natural scenery of the Sacred Valley of Urubamba.





Iquitos

Warmth and hospitality

Iquitos is the capital of the region of Loreto, province of Maynas, and is located in the heart of the Peruvian Amazon. It is the largest city in the Peruvian jungle and the commercial center of this region. It is also the largest city with no road access: the only ways to get to Iquitos are by air or river. During the early years of the 20th Century, Iquitos prospered thanks to the rubber industry. Today it has a thriving oil industry. Equally important is the boom in the tourist trade. Iquitos is the usual starting point for excursions into the jungle and also for the Great Amazon Race. Iquitos contains the Quistococha zoological gardens, which are home to many species of jungle animals. Other attractions include its various districts, lakes and the neighborhood of Belén (sometimes referred to as the “Venice of Peru”). A stroll along the promenade to see the world’s largest river is another of the city’s many attractions.

A WINDOW TO PERU

Machu Picchu



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Lima

The City of Kings

Lima, the capital of Peru, is the economic, social, political, and cultural center of the country. Almost eight million people live in Lima, which extends from Ancón in the north to Lurín in the south. It is limited by the Andes Mountains to the east and the Pacific Ocean to the west. Lima contains archaeological remains such as Pachacamac, Huaca Huallamarca and Huaca Pucllana, which provide an agreeable contrast to the modern urban areas such as the financial districts of San Isidro and Miraflores. We invite those stopping in Lima en route to Cusco or Arequipa to take a look at this marvelous city and get to know its people and its many attractions. The Peruvian capital has consolidated its position in recent years as a gastronomic destination. Its restaurants and cafes can hold their own in terms of variety and quality with those of any of the world's large cities. There are also museums, entertainment centers and attractions such as the Circuito Mágico de Agua, a park with more than a dozen fountains which look spectacular by day or by night.





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Piura

Sun on the north coast

Piura is located on the northern coast of Peru. It is the capital of the province and region of the same name. The population of the province of Piura today exceeds 600,000. It was here that Spanish Conquistador Francisco Pizarro founded the first Spanish city in South America: San Miguel de Piura, in 1532. Piura declared its independence on January 4, 1821. It was also the first port from which the Spanish shipped the Inca gold they had acquired to Spain. Famous Piura dishes include seco de chavelo, the drink algarrobina, different varieties of cebiche and sweet natillas. It is also renowned for its handicrafts such as ceramic ware from Chulucanas, hats from Catacaos and fine silverware. The tondero and cumanana are traditional dances of the Creole people of Piura and the northern part of Lambayeque. A series of famous Peruvian waltzes comes from this region. The “tecnocumbia” – originally a type of Peruvian cumbia rhythm – and salsa are also very popular in the region especially among young people.



Tarapoto

A green paradise

Tarapoto, known as the “City of Palms,” is a prosperous commercial city in Peru’s northeastern jungle in the region of San Martín. Although Moyobamba is the regional capital, Tarapoto is bigger and is connected to the upper Amazon region and the town of Yurimaguas by a well maintained highway across the Andes. The city is 350 m.a.s.l. and has a population of more than 150,000. It is frequently used by tourists as a starting point for excursions into the Amazon rainforest. The principal activities are tourism, trade and agriculture. The “City of Palms” also has a variety of hotels within the city and surrounding areas, as well as exquisite local food, beautiful scenery and adventure sports such as rafting.



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Trujillo

The City of Eternal Spring

Trujillo, on the northern coast of Peru, is the country's third city after Lima and Arequipa. It is known as the "City of Eternal Spring" because of its warm climate. Its proximity to important historical and cultural sites that once belonged to the Moche and Chimu civilizations make Trujillo an essential destination for visitors to Peru. The Chan Chan archaeological complex – a tourist attraction declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1986 – is the largest mud brick city in the world. Among other tourist attractions in Trujillo are the resorts of Huanchaco and Las Delicias, a few minutes from the center of the city. Trujillo also contributes to the prestige of Peruvian gastronomy with dishes considered among the finest in the country.





Gastronomy





Sacha inchi oil

Sacha inchi (*Plukenetia volubilis* L.) – also known as the “Inca peanut”– is a plant that grows in the Peruvian jungle and has been used by native peoples for thousands of years.

This species’ habitat is the tropical forest and it grows best between 200 and 700 m.a.s.l.. Its unique properties make it the richest vegetable source of essential fatty acids Omega-3 and Omega-6.

These fatty acids help to protect the heart and reduce cholesterol. Sacha inchi is ideal for improving the diet of children, young people and adults. It also aids elderly convalescents.



Camu camu

Camu camu is a fruit that grows in the Peruvian Amazon particularly in flood-prone or swampy areas. The tree can reach a height of 2 to 3 meters and it has large feathery leaves. The fruit is spherical, a soft orangey color and the size of a lemon. It has a high vitamin C content and it is in great demand in the natural products market.

It has been shown that camu camu provides 30 times more vitamin C than oranges, 10 times more iron, three times more niacin and fifty percent more phosphorus. For this reason it is also said to have antioxidant and anti-depressive properties.

Studies have started on methods for growing this important tropical resource, which today is only produced in the Amazon basin, in other locations.



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Cebiche

Perhaps Peru's most representative dish, cebiche is very simple but spectacular as it combines native and foreign ingredients. Fish and shellfish go perfectly with red onion and yellow chilli pepper. All the ingredients are marinated in lemon juice - originally brought here by the Spanish— to produce the most famous of all Peruvian dishes.

■ *Cebiche using pacific flounder*

■ *Ingredients:*

1 Kilo (or 2.2 pounds) of flounder or filleted fish (with skin and bones removed) cut into small pieces	2 crushed garlic cloves
2 red onions, peeled and cut long	1 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
4 yellow chillies with seeds and veins removed	1 tablespoon salt
	1/2 tablespoon pepper
	1/2 cup chopped parsley

■ *Preparation:*

Combine all the ingredients and stir carefully. Leave the mixture to marinate for 30 minutes to 1 hour in the refrigerator. Stir once more before serving.

Chicha morada

Chicha morada is a refreshing drink made from purple maize, a variety of maize that is found only in Peru. Sweet to the taste, it is generally served cold or at room temperature. In Lima and throughout Peru, chicha morada is popular in restaurants, cafes and pastry shops where it is often preferred to carbonated drinks.

Purple maize has medicinal properties that, for example, help to control blood pressure and counteract the effects of aging.





Chinese food

Peruvian Chinese food or 'chifa' is a fusion of Chinese cooking with Peruvian elements and is one of the most popular types of food in the country. The history of Chinese food in Peru begins with migration from China in the 19th Century which continued during the 20th. The integration of both cultures also affected their food as the Chinese preserved their culinary traditions and combined them with those of Peru. There are Chinese restaurants on every street corner and city in Peru. The center of Chinese cuisine is in Lima, on Calle Capon, in the center of the city. Chifa is also very representative of Peruvian culture as it contains a wealth of influences and flavors. The preferred dish is fried rice, although there is a vast variety of other exquisite dishes.

Cherimoya

The cherimoya (*Annona cherimolia*) is a fruit that is native to Peru; it has a green skin and a soft, sweet white flesh. Some describe its taste as a mixture of pineapple, strawberry, mango or pear. It is similar in size to a grapefruit. The seeds are large, shiny and dark in color and can be removed easily while eating the fruit. The seeds and skin are not edible. Cherimoyas should be left to ripen at room temperature and then kept in the refrigerator. When a cherimoya is ripe it is soft to the touch - like an avocado - and the skin turns brown. Fresh cherimoya contains around 15% sugar (approximately 60 Kcal./100 g) around 20 mg/100 g of vitamin C.

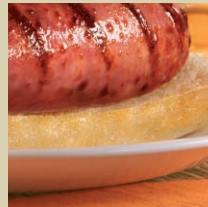
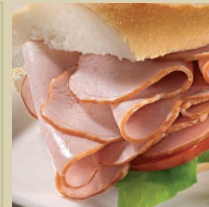


Peruvian cuisine

Peruvian cooking is famous throughout the world for its variety of flavors, dishes and original ingredients. Being a country with a large fishing industry, there are many highly creative dishes based on fish and shellfish. The most frequently encountered basic ingredients in Peruvian food are: rice, potatoes, chicken, pork, mutton and fish. The majority of dishes also include one or more types of chilli pepper: yellow, red, limo or rocoto. Other ingredients native to the country are potatoes and tomatoes, familiar to ancient Peruvians and taken by the Spanish to Europe. Peru has 468 typical dishes making it – according to the Guinness Book of Records – the world’s most varied gastronomy. Emblematic dishes include: cebiche prepared up and down the coast, Creole dishes (stir-fried beef and chilled chicken), pachamanca from the Andes and “juane” from the jungle.



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Coca leaves, maca and cat's claw

The Amazon jungle of Peru, like the Andes, produces various medicinal plants whose benefits are known throughout the world. One of these, maca, comes from the Andes at altitudes between 3,800 and 4,800 m.a.s.l. In Tahuantinsuyo it was considered a food of the nobles; in other words unavailable to the masses. Today the centers of production are in the regions of Junín and Pasco. A high-quality foodstuff, it possess energy -giving and restorative properties.

Another important plant is cat's claw (*uncaria tomentosa*) which grows in the jungle areas of Peru. This plant is widely known for its beneficial effects on asthma, colds, skin allergies, rheumatism and urinary tract infections as it acts as an anti-inflammatory agent. In Peru it grows in the regions of Loreto, Ucayali, San Martín, Amazonas, Ayacucho, Cusco, Huánuco and Madre de Dios.

Of course we cannot forget the coca leaf, which plays an important role in Andean culture. It is considered a divine plant and in Inca times was reserved for religious rites. It is a stimulant and overcomes tiredness, hunger and thirst, and is drunk as an infusion to counteract altitude sickness of 'soroche.'



Black mint

Black mint (*Tagetes minuta*), sometimes referred to as Peruvian black mint, is an herb which grows wild in the Andes. It is used as an additive either in hot sauces or regional dishes; one of the tastiest of which is the delicious pachamanca. It is also used for medicinal purposes.



Inca Kola

Peru's national soft drink. Some say that it tastes like pineapple or chewing gum, but in fact its incomparable flavor comes from a secret recipe involving extracts of different citrus fruits, gas and sugar. This yellow-colored carbonated drink obliged the mighty Coca Cola Company to put into practice the saying: "if you can't beat 'em, join 'em," which is what they did by buying 50% of Corporación José R. Lindley (creator of Inca Kola) in 1999. Drunk with all types of food, whether Peruvian or foreign, it is without doubt the most popular soft drink in Peru.



Refresca tu
Creatividad



Lúcuma

Lúcuma (*Pouteria lucuma*) is a subtropical fruit native to Peru that is greatly appreciated by Peruvians. It is green on the outside, a bright yellowy orange on the inside and has a creamy consistency. Its delicious taste means it can be eaten raw or used in desserts and ice cream. Drawings of this fruit have been found on ceramic utensils and other artefacts from ancient Peruvian civilizations. As well as being used in ice cream, it is also employed to flavor milk and yogurt and is used in desserts.





Paiche

One of the world's largest fresh water fish, the paiche (*Arapaima gigas*), is a tropical fish native to the Amazon region of South America. The paiche grows to more than three meters in length and can weigh up to 200 kilos. As one of the most sought after fish in South America, it is usually caught by spear for export so that today wild paiche more than two meters long are very rarely found. The paiche eats other fish or small animals including birds. This fish can breathe air on the surface as its throat contains a tissue similar to that of a lung. Certainly this ability is an advantage to a fish living in water with a depleted oxygen level, which is generally the case in the River Amazon. The paiche is therefore capable of surviving for long periods of drought by "taking a breath of air" and burying into the mud or swampy sand.

The potato

A gift from Peru to the world and one of the world's most widespread crops. Many believe that it comes from the United States (Idaho), Russia or Ireland given the quantity produced in those countries. Nevertheless, long before the Spanish arrived in America, hundreds of varieties of potato were grown in Peru. The earliest evidence of the potato dates from more than 8,000 years ago and was found near the town of Chilca, south of Lima, in 1976. The Spanish took the potato to the rest of the world and this led to its success.

Peru accounts for the largest variety of native potatoes. Succulent traditional dishes in Peru and elsewhere in the world include potatoes as a principal ingredient. Apart from this, it is nutritionally important because of its carbohydrate and nutrient contents.





Pisco and Pisco Sour

Pisco is Peru's national drink. It is an exceptionally pure spirit made by distilling fermented grape juice or "must." It takes its name from the port of Pisco in the region of Ica, south of Lima, from which it was exported to Europe and various parts of South America in the 16th Century. In those days the drink was kept in great clay jars called "botijas" made by potters called "piskos." Pisco is used to prepare Peru's most famous cocktail: pisco sour.

■ *Pisco Sour*

■ *Ingredients*

- 3 oz. quebranta pisco
- 1 oz. lemon juice
- 1 oz. sugar syrup (or sugar)
- The white of 1 egg
- Ice to taste
- Angostura bitters

■ *Preparation:*

Place all the ingredients in a cocktail shaker and shake for 10 seconds. Serve immediately. Add a couple of drops of Angostura bitters to each glass.





CUATRO GALLOS

Pisco

MEDALLA DE ORO 2006 Y 2007 CONCURSO NACIONAL DE PISCO

PISCO CUATRO GALLOS ES PRODUCIDO CON LAS UVAS MÁS FINAS PROVENIENTES DE VIÑEDOS PROPIOS EN EL VALLE DE ICA, PERÚ. LOS VIÑEDOS DE CUATRO GALLOS CUENTAN CON LA CERTIFICACIÓN DE BUENAS PRÁCTICAS AGRÍCOLAS EUREGAP.

LOS PISCOS CUATRO GALLOS SON "MOSTO VERDE", QUE ES LA DESTILACIÓN DE MOSTOS QUE NO HAN LLEGADO A COMPLETAR LA FERMENTACIÓN, SACRIFICANDO CANTIDAD POR CALIDAD, LO QUE PERMITE OBTENER UN PISCO MÁS FINO.

CUATRO GALLOS ES UN PISCO RESPLANDECIENTE CON FINOS AROMAS, Y UNA INCOMPARABLE SUAVIDAD EN BOCA





Rocoto pepper

Hot, hot, hot! That is the only way to describe this delicious Peruvian contribution to the chilli pepper family. A native of the Andes, the rocoto (*Capsicum pubescens*) is one of the chilli peppers domesticated long ago and some experts say that it has been cultivated for 5,000 years. Looking like a small capsicum pepper, the rocoto is used in everything from cebiche to different sauces and regional dishes.

The most famous dish made with it is stuffed rocoto, a classical dish from Arequipa, in which the rocoto is stuffed with a meat and cheese filling. Although it is not the hottest chilli found in Peru, it is one of the most popular, like the yellow chilli.

The tomato

According to some researchers, the tomato (*Lycopersicon esculentum*) came originally from Peru, although it is also believed to have been cultivated in Mexico.

The tomato is one of the world's most widespread vegetables and one of the most economically valuable. Various types of tomatoes are used in a myriad of dishes all over the world.





Historical and cultural heritage





Caral

The oldest city in America

Only 182 kilometers north of Lima, in the valley of the River Supe, Caral is considered to be the oldest civilization in America. It arose between 3,000 and 2,500 years B.C., and flourished in the valleys of the Peruvian rivers Huaura, Supe, Pativilca and Fortaleza. Twenty or so settlements and ceremonial centers have been found. Caral was discovered in 1996 by Peruvian archaeologist Ruth Shady.

According to archaeological studies, it was built by a peaceful civilization formed long before the Inca Empire and includes a number of monumental buildings.

The urban center of Caral covers an area of 65 hectares and consists of a central area with large buildings including residential and other buildings. This civilization achieved unprecedented progress in complete isolation, in contrast to other centers of civilization such as Mesopotamia, Egypt and India, which exchanged knowledge and experiences.

Chan Chan

The largest mud- brick city in the Americas

The citadel of Chan Chan is the largest pre-Columbian adobe settlement in the world and was built between the 12th and 14th Centuries A.D. Located in the Moche valley in Trujillo, region of La Libertad, on the north coast of Peru, it has been declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. Chan Chan was the ancient capital of the Chimu kingdom. It covers several square kilometers and its center is made up of a complex of palaces, walled enclosures and pyramids. Given its size, Chan Chan is an interesting tourist attraction.





Chankillo

The oldest observatory in America

The oldest solar observatory in the western world is located approximately 400 kilometers north of Lima: Chankillo. Built more than 2,000 years ago, this archaeological site consists of 13 stone towers that accurately indicate the position of the sun, the solstices and equinoxes, probably for ceremonial and political purposes. Its existence also suggests that ancient Peruvians had considerable knowledge of astronomy.



Chasquis

The Inca Express

The chasquis were highly trained messengers who took correspondence along the vast road system that connected the territories subjugated by the Incas. In general they were young men between 18 and 20 years of age who carried messages and food from the highlands to the coast and vice versa using a system of posts. Thanks to the chasquis, the different parts of the empire were able to exchange products such as fish, fine timber and feathers. This system also enabled the empire to be controlled and managed from the city of Cusco.

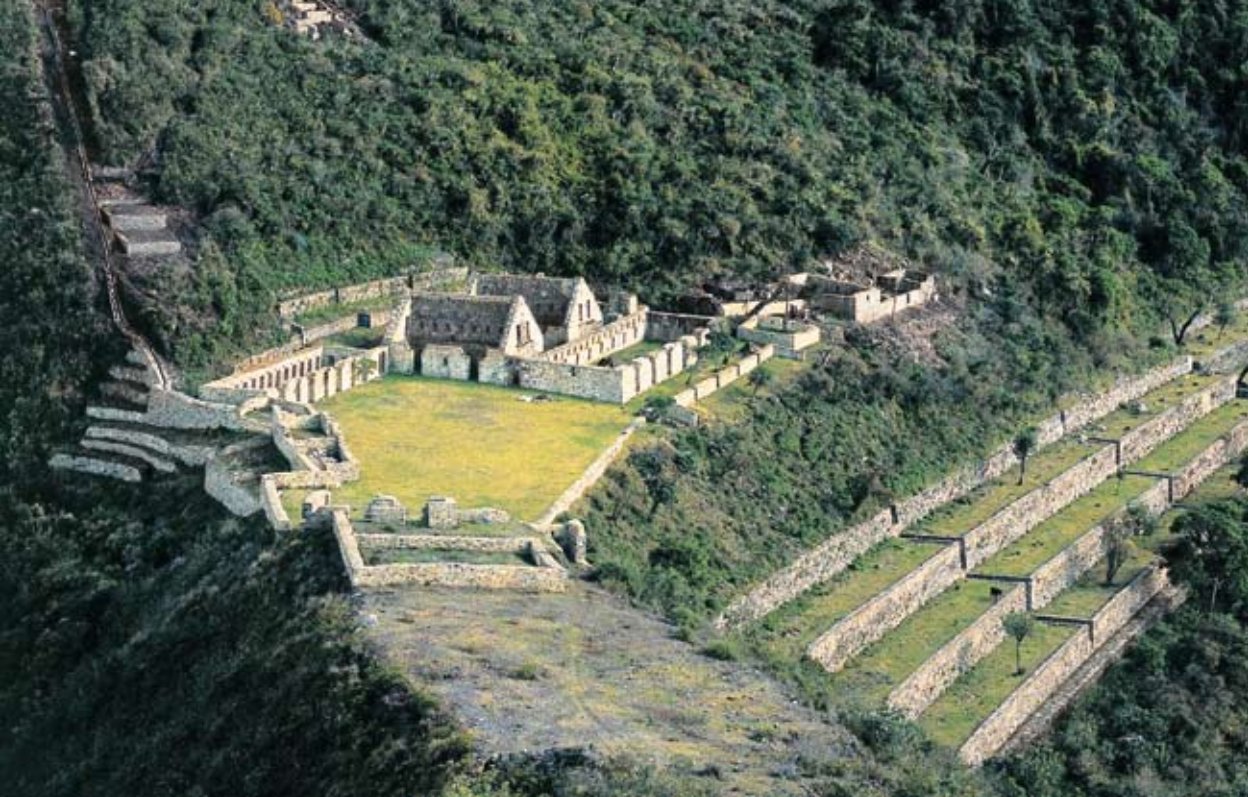
The chasquis had resting places known as tambos throughout the road system, usually stocked with food and drink. A true example of power, strength and efficiency, the chasquis could travel from Cusco to Quito in just a week. They were trained in techniques of attack and defense to ensure that their messages and products would arrive.

Chavín de Huántar

The monument looking up to the sky

The ruins at Chavin de Huantar are considered a center for magic / religion, consisting of open spaces, terraces and a system of underground galleries built in stone. It is thought to have been built around 900 years B. C. by the Chavín culture. Situated 250 kilometers north of Lima, at an altitude of 3,150 m.a.s.l., it has been declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. The so-called “Chavín obelisk” is one of its main attractions, as are the “head bosses” and carved stone reliefs of felines and fantastically-shaped divinities.





Choquequirao

The other Machu Picchu

The ruins at Choquequirao are in the province of La Convencion, Cusco on the boundary with the region of Huancavelica. During Inca times it was a religious, political and social center and became a place for cultural and economic exchange between the coast and the highlands. It is known as the “sacred sister of Machu Picchu.” Choquequirao receives far fewer tourists than its sister, but is no less enchanting and is an excellent alternative destination.

The archaeological remains of Choquequirao consist of nine sectors, including a political and religious center, buildings and terraces at different levels and a system of aqueducts and canals. The summit of the mountain has been flattened and circular stones placed so as to form a platform 30 x 50 meters wide. According to the chroniclers, Choquequirao was a refuge for the Incas for more than 40 years in which they resisted the Spanish Conquistadores.

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The Paracas culture

Ancestral textiles and medicine

The Paracas culture was one of the oldest civilizations that developed in southern Peru on the eponymous peninsular in the region of Ica. It went through two important stages: Paracas Caves (700 B. C) and Paracas Necropolis (200 B. C.) the second of which was studied by Peruvian archaeologist Julio C. Tello, who provided evidence of an advanced and complex pre-Columbian civilization. Paracas was also important for its textiles, including fine mantles made from cotton and native wool, as well as other materials. Furthermore, the Paracas people were noted for their medical practices such as cranial trepanning.

The Inca trail

The road that united an empire

Among all the roads and tracks built during the pre-Colombian era in South America, the Inca Trail was the longest. It crossed the Andes and reached altitudes of more than 5,000 m.a.s.l. This road is part of a system of more than 22,000 kilometers covering Tahuantinsuyo from southern Colombia to the center of Chile, through Quito, Ecuador, Cajamarca, Huánuco, Jauja, Huamanga and Cusco, and even modern -day Bolivia and Argentina.

Because the Incas did not have wheeled vehicles and had no horses until the arrival of the Spanish in Peru in the 16th Century, the roads were traversed almost exclusively on foot, sometimes accompanied by pack animals, generally native camelids. Today, hundreds of tourists hike the Inca Trail throughout the year.



El Peruano

The oldest newspaper in Latin America

El Peruano is officially the oldest newspaper in circulation in Latin America. It was founded by the liberator Simón Bolívar in 1825 and has been published continuously ever since. Today, its importance is based on the fact that it publishes new legislation and the actions, appointments and expenditure of the State; as well as having a news section and supplements.





The Lord of Sipán

Symbol of the power of the Moche

The discovery of the tombs of the Lord of Sipán was one of the most important and extraordinary finds of recent times, compared by experts to the discovery of Pharaoh Tutankhamon in Egypt.

This fabulous discovery was shown to the world in 1987 and magazines such as Time and National Geographic dedicated articles to it. The Lord of Sipán ruled the Mochica civilization around 200 A. D.

The items found show that the Moche people were skilled metal workers. On the site approximately 451 objects were found including ornaments, headdresses, clothing and offerings surrounding the remains of the sovereign.



The fortress of Kuelap

Treasure of the northeast

The fortress of Kuelap was built around the year 800 A. D. This site, in the modern region of Amazonas in northeastern Peru contained more than 40 buildings, many of which survive. It is thought that the Chachapoyas built the fortress to protect them from invading tribes such as the Huari. The site is 600 meters wide, 110 meters long and its walls reach a height of 19 meters. It is at an altitude of 3,000 m.a.s.l. and is comparable with other historical sites in the Americas because of its large size.



Huari

The remains of a glorious past

Huari was a civilization that flourished in southern Peru, in what is now the region of Ayacucho, between 500 and 1100 A.D. This city was the center of a civilization that covered a large part of the highlands and coast of Peru. In its early days its territory stretched as far as the ancient oracle of Pachacamac (Lima) although it seems to have retained much of its autonomy. It then expanded to include much of the territory of the Moche and Chimu cultures in La Libertad, Lambayeque and Cajamarca.

To the south it extended as far as modern -day Moquegua and Cusco. The best preserved Huari ruins are near to the village of Quinua (Ayacucho). Also well known are the ruins of Huari de Pikillaqta (“city of fleas”), southeast of the city of Cusco towards Lake Titicaca, which date from the Huari period before the development of the Inca Empire. The Huari administration was the most advanced of its day as far as roads and cities were concerned, which were used by the Incas to expand their dominions.

The Nasca lines

Enigmatic and eternal

The immense lines and drawings at Nasca form one of the world's most puzzling archaeological enigmas. These geoglyphs are in one of the driest regions of Peru: the Nasca desert, on the coast south of Lima. German expert Maria Reiche dedicated part of her life to studying and restoring the lines. Her theory is that the inhabitants of Nasca used the lines as a solar calendar and astronomical observatory. Other interpretations consider homage to water because of its importance for agriculture and the grave problems arising from its scarcity. Other researchers, such as Swiss author Erich von Däniken, suggest that the lines were landing strips, and that the ancient Nasca people had made contact with extraterrestrials.





Ollantaytambo

Should not be missed

The archaeological complex at Ollantaytambo is in the province of Urubamba, 80 Km north east of the city of Cusco, at an altitude of 2,792 m.a.s.l. It is admired for its design and construction as well as the size, style and originality of its buildings.

Many functions have been attributed to it, particularly religious, but its strategic location and fortress-like structure suggest that it was built to protect the Inca's imperial capital from possible invasion by rival groups. In fact it was the only place where the Spaniards could not defeat the Incas.

Machu Picchu

The wonder of Peru

What can we say about this remarkable tourist attraction that has not already been said? The most important of Peru's tourist destinations, Machu Picchu was recently recognized as one of the New Seven Wonders of the World in an Internet competition. Located at 2,360 m.a.s.l., to the north of the city of Cusco, it was built around 1450 (in the 15th Century)



and is believed to have been abandoned approximately 100 years later. Machu Picchu contains remains of buildings, temples and palaces. There are also altars, celestial observatories and many places used to worship the dead. The jungle vegetation hid the citadel which was never found by the Spaniards. Several centuries later Hiram Bingham “rediscovered” the Inca sanctuary in 1911, although it is said that many local people knew of its existence before Bingham arrived. Today, Machu Picchu is the largest tourist attraction in Peru.





The suspension bridge

An Inca invention

Chroniclers describe how the Spanish Conquistadors were astonished by the suspension bridges erected over gorges and canyons. Bridges of this type were suitable for the movement of people in Inca times as they never invented the wheel. They were used by the chasquis to carry messages and products along different routes. Such bridges consisted of two stone buttresses on either side of the canyon which were joined by many ropes made of ichu.



There were also two additional ropes that acted as handrails. The ropes supporting the deck were reinforced by woven branches. This structural system made the bridges strong enough to support the weight of the Spaniards on horseback. However, the bridges were so heavy that they tended to sink in the middle and swing to and fro in a strong wind. The suspension bridge is an excellent example of innovative Inca engineering.



Sacsayhuaman

The great fortress

Sacsayhuamán is one of the Inca sites that most astonishes both Peruvian and foreign tourists. Located to the north of the Main Square of Cusco, it is thought to have been a typical Inca fortress. Building is believed to have taken more than seventy years and required the efforts of some 20,000 men. Its name in Quechua means “the satisfied hawk,” alluding to the hawk which protected the capital of the empire. Some have suggested that it was built in the shape of a jaguar’s head which can be seen from the air. Apart from controversies over the reasons for its creation, historians marvel at the intricate stonework built by the Incas. The space between each stone and its neighbor is so small that not even a sheet of paper can be passed through. The precision is astonishing given the tools and technology available to the Incas at the time it was built. On the 24th of July each year, the ancient Inti Raymi ceremony is recreated at Sacsayhuaman in honour of the sun god.

Tambomachay

Water and an Inca resort

Eight kilometers northeast of Cusco are the Inca baths at Tambomachay. This site, also known as “Tambo de la caverna,” covers an area of 437 square meters and is located at 3,700 m.a.s.l.

It appears to have been a place of relaxation for the Incas, used as a resort but also as a means of defending the Cusco valley. The natural rock formations of the site were worshipped and the subject of magical rites in indigenous tradition.

The water system of Tambomachay – which suggests that the Incas worshipped water – carries clean water from fresh water and thermal springs all year round. The site is full of the sound of water, peace and tranquillity.



Ticlio

One of the highest railway stations in the world

For many years Ticlio was the highest point on any railway in the world. At an altitude of approximately 4,818 m.a.s.l. it is located on the boundary between the regions of Lima and Junín in the central Andes.

It is on the Central Railway of Peru, a triumph of railway engineering built in the 19th Century. To reach Ticlio the train crosses 41 bridges, 60 tunnels and around 13 switchbacks. Eight of these tunnels occur in a space of a little more than three kilometers.





San Marcos State University

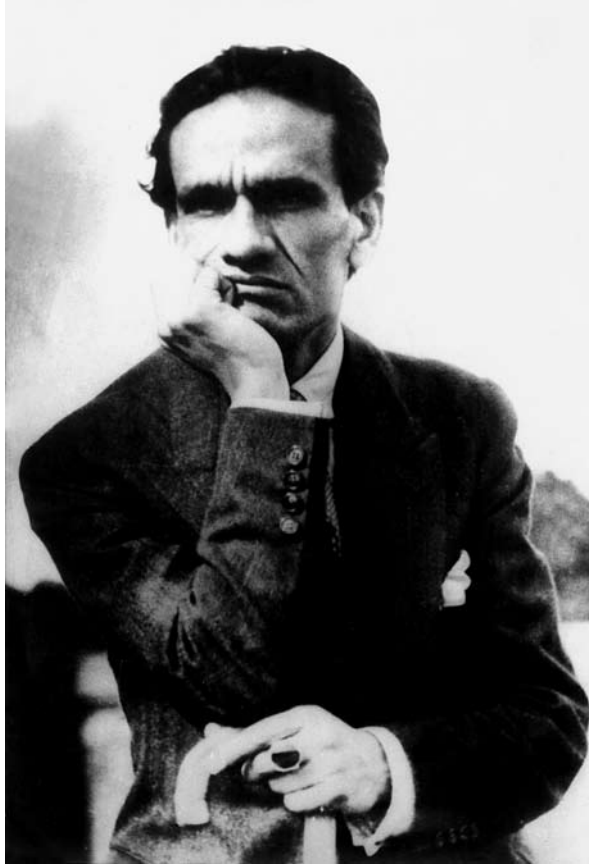
Tradition, science and knowledge

Founded on May 12, 1551, by decree issued by Emperor Charles the 5th, la Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos (UNMSM) is considered the oldest in the Americas. It is Peru's most representative educational institution for its tradition, prestige and quality. It has been the alma mater of many influential Peruvian and Latin American thinkers, researchers, scientists, politicians and writers including: medical researcher Daniel Carrión, historian Jorge Basadre, political leader Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre, archaeologist Julio C. Tello, and former president of Peru Valentín Paniagua. Some experts say that the accolade of oldest university in the Americas belongs to the Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo, founded in 1538 in what is now the Dominican Republic. However, there is a general consensus that the UNMSM is, in fact, the university that has been active for the longest amount of time on the continent.



*Notable historical
figures*





César Vallejo

César Vallejo was born in 1862 in Santiago de Chuco, a remote village in the Peruvian Andes. He is considered one of the 20th Century's finest poets. Vallejo was foremost a poet, though he also wrote newspaper articles, stories and plays.

Among his most important works are "Los Heraldos Negros," "Trilce," "Poemas humanos" and "España, aparta de mí este cáliz." He lived for many years in Paris, France, where he died in 1938. In the opinion of American critic and poet Thomas Merton, Vallejo was "the greatest universal poet after Dante."

Francisco Bolognesi

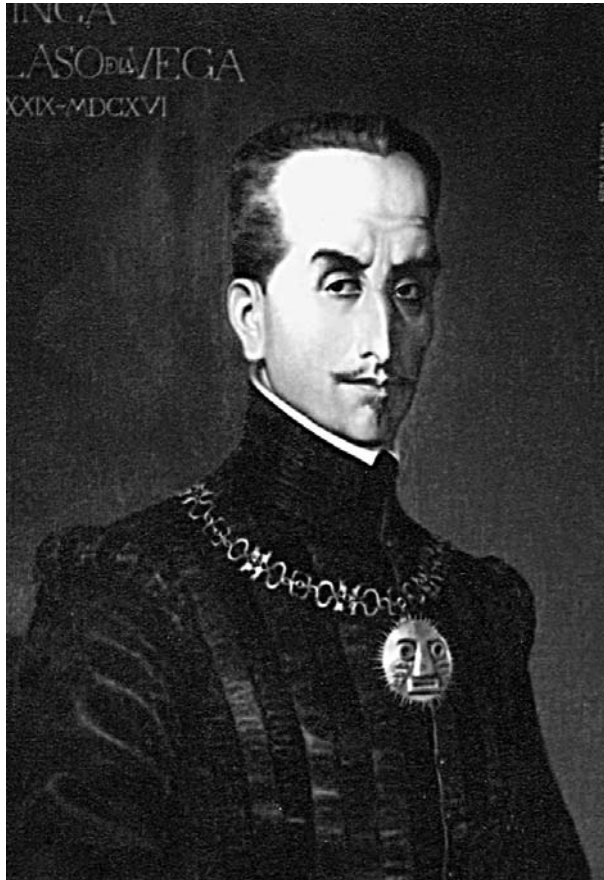
Francisco Bolognesi Cervantes was a Peruvian military hero. At the start of the Pacific War in 1879, Bolognesi was 62 years of age and retired from military life. Nevertheless, he decided to rejoin the Peruvian army. He took an active part in actions against the Chilean forces, such as the Battle of Tarapacá on November 27, 1879, in which Peru was victorious.

In April 1880, he commanded the forces defending Arica, which at that time was part of Peru. Bolognesi defended the city energetically though he had only 1,600 men against more than 5,000 Chilean troops. When called upon to surrender by the Chileans, he replied with his celebrated statement: "I have a sacred duty to perform and I shall do so until the last cartridge is spent." The valiant colonel perished with a further 1,000 Peruvian troops defending Arica, leaving a legacy of bravery and honor to future generations of Peruvians.



Inca Garcilaso de la Vega

Inca Garcilaso de la Vega was an illustrious mixed -race writer and poet. Born in Cusco in 1539, he was the son of a Spaniard and a lady of the Inca nobility. In Spain he wrote his famous work “Comentarios Reales de los Incas” (1609), on the origin of the Inca Empire. “La Florida del Inca” is another important work in which he describes the travails of a group of Spanish Conquistadors seeking El Dorado. In the words of writer Mario Vargas Llosa, “Inca Garcilaso de la Vega was the first writer to re-vindicate his mixed -race origins, and the first Peruvian or Spanish-American with a heart and a conscience.”



Miguel Grau

Miguel Grau Seminario was born in Piura on July 27, 1834. He was a Peruvian naval officer and hero of the Pacific War (1879-1884). He is referred to as the “gentleman of the seas” for his chivalrous behaviour which earned him the respect of allies and foes alike. An example of this occurred in the naval battle of Iquique (March 21, 1879) in which he rescued the crew of a Chilean vessel sunk after an engagement with the monitor Huáscar under Grau's command. Grau then wrote a letter of condolence to the widow of his opponent Arturo Prat and returned his sword and other personal effects. Grau's bravery was shown in the Battle of Angamos on October 8, 1879, in which the Huáscar fought the enemy ships for several hours until Grau fell mortally wounded by a shell. The remains of the great admiral were buried with honors in Chile and then repatriated to Peru in 1958. In 2000, Miguel Grau was acclaimed as the “Peruvian of the Millennium.”



Martín Chambi

Martín Chambi (1891-1973) was an indigenous photographer, born in Coaza to the north of Lake Titicaca in the region of Puno. He is considered the most important Latin indigenous photographer of his era. His work is recognized as a social, historical and ethnic testimonial, and an important record of urban and agrarian societies in the Peruvian Andes. His photographs include “commercial” work – portraits of people, wealthy families and events – as well as “personal” work in which he photographed the indigenous population, traditions, and archaeological remains. But his talent and mastery of the medium are evident in all of his works. Only after his death in 1973 were his photographs appreciated and admired throughout the world.







Pedro Paulet

Peruvian scientist born in Arequipa, Peru, in 1874. Thought by many to be ahead of his time, he was one of the first to explore the possibilities of rocket propulsion. History records that he first experimented with liquid fuelled rockets in 1895, almost 30 years before American scientist Robert H. Goddard (held to be the father of modern rocketry). Furthermore, in 1902 Paulet sketched a spacecraft he called the “torpedo aircraft,” a prototype for modern jet planes. His dedication and contributions mean that he is considered by the scientific community as one of the forefathers of the space era. He died in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 1945.

San Martín de Porras

The mixed -race “saint with the broom” was born in Lima in 1579, the son of a Spanish father and Panamanian mother. From childhood he felt a calling to help the needy and at the age of fifteen asked to be admitted to the Dominican friary in Lima. He worked tirelessly for the poor founding an orphanage and a hospital for infants. He lived in an austere fashion, including fasting and abstinence.

His devotion to prayer was outstanding even for the pious standards of his day. The many miracles attributed to him include levitation, instant cures and the ability to communicate with animals. He is also said to have been able to make a dog, a cat and a mouse eat together from the same plate in harmony which made him one of the patron saints of the animals. After his death, the miracles and thanks he received multiplied. They say that when his body was exhumed 25 years after his death, it was found to be intact and giving off an agreeable fragrance. He was canonized on May 6, 1962, by Pope John the 23rd.



Santa Rosa de Lima

The first saint of the New World and patroness of the Americas, Indies and Philippines, Santa Rosa was born as Isabel Flores de Oliva on April 30, 1586. Her face and appearance recalled the beauty of a flower, and she was



named Rosa. Her great piety and devotion were evident from an early age, as was her vocation for helping others. She died at the age of 31. She was beatified by Pope Clement the 9th in 1668 and canonized in 1671 by Pope Clement the 10th. Her sanctuary, together with that of her friend San Martín de Porras and Alonso de Abad can be seen in the Convent of Santo Domingo in Lima. The Roman Catholic Church says that many miracles occurred after her death. All places called “Santa Rosa” in the New World pay homage to this saint. Pope Benedict the 16th is especially devoted to her. Her feast day was originally the 30th of August, because the 24th of August was the feast of St. Bartholomew, but the Vatican’s calendar change brought it closer to the anniversary of her death. Now she is celebrated on the 23rd of August, except in Peru and other Latin American countries where the traditional date of the 30th of August remains as a national holiday. In addition to being the patron

of Lima, Peru, the Americas and the Philippines, she is the patron saint of the city of Santa Rosa in the United States. She is also the patron of the Peruvian Police Force.



Túpac Amaru II

Túpac Amaru II was born on March 19, 1742, in Tinta Cusco, being given the name José Gabriel Condorcanqui Noguera. From a wealthy noble family, he was the lord of Surimana, Tungasuca and Pampamarca. He led an indigenous rebellion in 1780, against the Spanish colonists. Despite a convincing victory in the battle of Sangarará, the uprising was crushed and its leaders captured. Túpac Amaru II was executed in front of his family in the Main Square of Cusco on May 18, 1781. His valor has made him a mythical figure in Peruvian history.



*Outstanding
figures*





Álex Olmedo

Luis Alejandro “Álex” Rodríguez Olmedo was born in 1936 in Arequipa, Peru, but emigrated while very young to the United States having been awarded a scholarship by the University of Southern California because of his talent as a tennis player. “El Cacique,” as he was known, played in the victorious Davis Cup team in 1958 against Australia. For this triumph the Peruvian government awarded him “Sporting Laurels,” the highest Peruvian decoration for sportsmen. In 1959 he was ranked number one in the world in the amateur category. He also won the Wimbledon singles title and Australian Open, and reached the final of the US Open. In 1987 he was admitted to the International Tennis Hall of Fame and is the only Peruvian to have obtained that distinction.

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Chabuca Granda

María Isabel Granda Larco – better known as Chabuca Granda – was a fine and much-loved Peruvian singer - songwriter. She wrote and interpreted a vast number of songs that still contribute to the prestige of Peruvian coastal music. Her best-known song is “La flor de la canela,” considered to be the most widely performed Peruvian waltz in the world. Other songs by Chabuca include “José Antonio,” “Fina estampa,” “El puente de los suspiros” and many more that reveal her poetic inspiration and great love for her country. Chabuca died in 1982, but will live forever in the hearts of all Peruvians.





Under -17 football team “Los Jotitas”

Peru's under - 17 football team, better known as “Los Jotitas,” have given the country great hope with their admirable performance in the world under 17 championships held in South Korea in 2007. Under their trainer Juan José Oré, the team demonstrated aggressive attacking and a solid defense, factors which helped them to beat rivals such as South Korea, Togo, Costa Rica and Tajikistan. “Los Jotitas” reached the quarter finals of the tournament but were beaten by the powerful Ghanaian team. Even so, they could hold their heads up high and were welcomed with open arms by a country proud of their representatives.

Gastón Acurio

Chef Gastón Acurio has achieved much recognition in Peru thanks to his popular cooking program on cable TV in which he makes traditional dishes and presents figures from the world of Peruvian gastronomy. His prestige as a chef is also based on the quality of his restaurants of which there are more than thirty in the cities of Lima, Santiago, Quito, Caracas, Mexico San Francisco and Madrid. At first, Acurio studied law but abandoned law school to devote himself to his passion, and studied haute cuisine in Paris without telling his parents. Because of his passion for turning Peruvian cooking into one of the world's most popular styles, he is today considered by many as an ambassador of the art. His work reflects the resurgence in Peruvian gastronomy.



Hernando de Soto

Hernando de Soto is a Peruvian economist and is considered one of the most brilliant investigators of the modern world. He was educated in Switzerland when his father was exiled from Peru. He has held many important posts in his professional career, including managing director of Universal Engineering Corporation (the largest consultant engineering

company in continental Europe), and a spell as a director of the Central Reserve Bank of Peru (BCR). At present Mr. De Soto is President of Instituto Libertad y Democracia (ILD) based in Lima, and considered by weekly magazine "The Economist" as one of the world's most important think tanks. He wrote "The Other Path" (1989) and "The Mystery of Capital" (2000), both best sellers that have been translated into more than 30 languages. The prestigious magazine Time chose him as one of the five most innovative Latin American leaders of the 20th Century. In 2004 he was included in a list of the one hundred most influential men on the planet.



Juan Diego Flórez

The world -renowned Peruvian tenor represents one of the country's best success stories as far as artistic talent is concerned. Born in Lima in 1973, he began to study music at the Conservatorio Nacional de Música at the age of 17. Later he received a scholarship from the Curtis Institute of Philadelphia in the United States. From his artistic debut in 1996 – at the Rossini Opera Festival in Pesaro, Italy – Juan Diego has performed with great success on the stages of La Scala, Milan, the Metropolitan Opera House in New York, the Maestranza in Seville and in Paris, among other venues.

Tenor Luciano Pavarotti named him as his operatic successor, while that other great opera singer Plácido Domingo described him as the greatest light tenor in history. His conquest of the world of opera is a story that fills music lovers with pride.



Julio Granda

Julio Ernesto Granda Zúñiga was born in 1967 in the Peruvian province of Camaná, Arequipa, to become one of the world's most respected chess players. His talent and skill were clear from a very early age.

At 13 he won the world children's tournament in Mexico and at 19 became an International Grand Master. He has won innumerable tournaments and for many years was the best Latin American player in the FIDE (World Chess Federation) ranking.



María Reiche

María Reiche (1903-1998) was a German mathematician, geographer and physicist who devoted her life to a study of the Nasca lines in Peru. In 1932 she started work as nurse and tutor to the children of the German consul in Cusco. In 1940 she became assistant to American archaeologist Paul Kosok, the discoverer of the Nasca lines. Around 1946 she started mapping the figures at Nasca. Reiche proposed the theory that the people who built the lines used them as a solar calendar and astronomical observatory. She explained her theories in a book "Mystery of the Desert," which enjoyed great success and was

translated into English. After several years of study and dedication, Reiche worked to get the National Cultural Institute to declare the Nasca lines a protected area. In the nineteen seventies, she was awarded the Order of Merit for Distinguished Service by the Peruvian Government and in 1993 was granted Peruvian citizenship. Such was her fascination with the Nasca lines that she used the profit from sales of her book on campaigns to encourage protection and conservation of the lines.





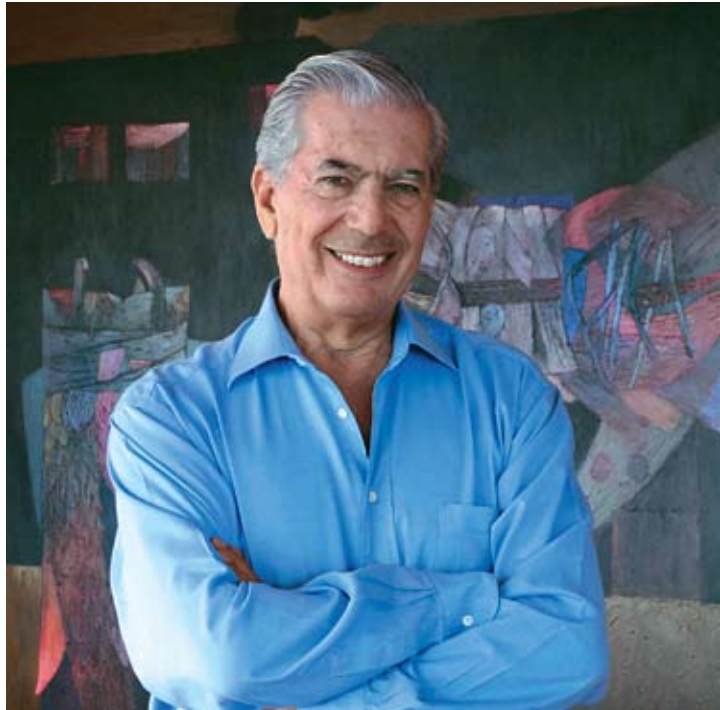
Mario Testino

Mario Testino is one of the best-known fashion photographers in the world. He grew up in Lima and studied economics, law and international relations – in Peru and the United States – before moving to London where he became a professional photographer. Testino has enjoyed great success and worked for prestigious magazines such as Vogue and Vanity Fair as well as companies like Versace, Gucci and Missoni. His lens has captured the grace and glamour of personalities in the world of fashion, cinema and music as well as royalty including: Gisele Bündchen, Jude Law, Madonna, Elton John and Princess Diana of Wales (whom he photographed in all her splendour for a special report five months before her death). Testino's reputation is based on his audacious approach to photography and creative advertising campaigns. Testino has not forgotten his Peruvian roots and recently published a book entitled "Lima Peru" containing images of the country's capital at different stages in its history.

Mario Vargas Llosa

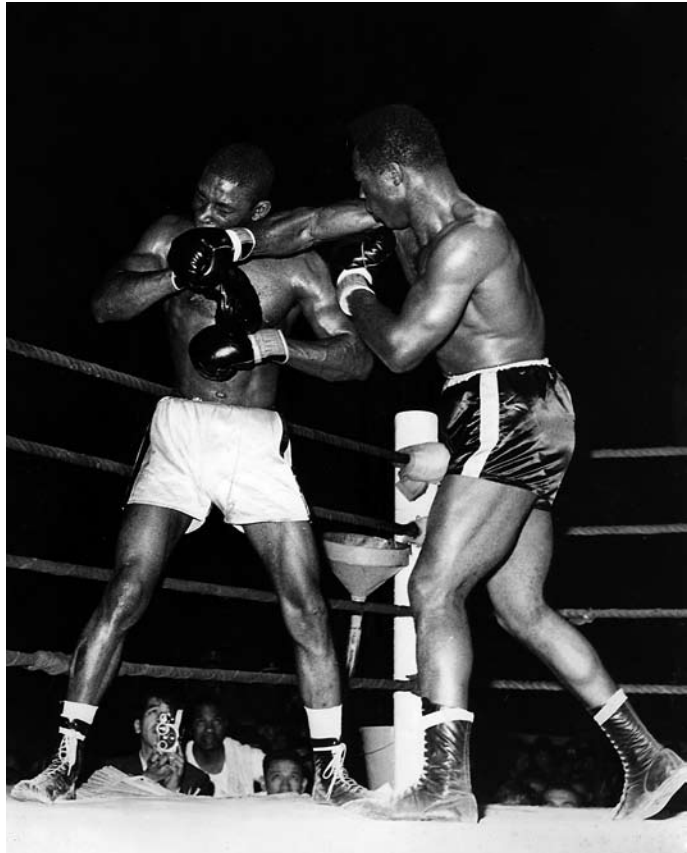
Recognized as one of the best modern writers, not just in Spanish-speaking countries but throughout the world, Mario Vargas Llosa was born in Arequipa in 1936. His first publication, “Los Jefes” won the Leopoldo Arias Prize. Since then he has gained many plaudits for novels such as “The Time of the Hero,” “Conversation in the Cathedral,” “The Green House,” “The War of the End of the World,” “The Feast of the Goat” and many more.

In 1990, Vargas Llosa stood for election as the President of Peru but was not elected; he then resumed his literary career. This Peruvian writer enjoys such prestige that his books have been translated into 33 languages. He is currently writing for various media outlets, and appears at conferences at universities and other institutions.



Mauro Mina

Mauro Mina was a light heavyweight boxer known as “El bombardero de Chincha” and remembered as the best Peruvian boxer of the 20th Century. He was born in Chincha on November 22, 1933, and died in 1993. As an amateur he won the Latin American Championship in the light heavyweight category in February 1952. In 1960 he became South American lightweight champion, a title he held until his retirement in 1966. In 1962, after beating Eddie Cotton in 10 rounds in Lima, “The Ring” magazine said he was the number one challenger to Harold Johnson for the world lightweight crown, but a detached retina prevented him from fighting for the title. After he retired he became a boxing teacher in his own gymnasium and is remembered today as one of Peru’s most glorious sons. Peruvian songwriter Chabuca Granda wrote a song in his honour: “Puños de Oro” (Fists of Gold).





Susana Baca

Susana Baca de la Colina is a prominent Afro-Peruvian singer who has achieved greater popularity abroad than in the country of her birth. She was born in Lima in the district of Chorrillos in 1944. She was interested in music from a very early age, influenced perhaps by her family, then studied it and performed. Susana's songs are poetic and her voice delicate and moving at the same time. Her international career took off in 1995 with her disc "The Soul of Black Peru." In 2002, Susana Baca won the Grammy Latino award for the best folk music album for her "Lamento Negro." Susana Baca is still a major figure in the resurgence of Afro-Peruvian music thanks to her work studying and recovering its traditional sounds.

Sofía Mulanovich

Peruvian queen of surfing, Sofía Mulanovich began her career in Máncora in northern Peru when she was only five years old. Her passion for surfing has made her the best woman surfer in the country. Known popularly as “La Gringa” because of her fair hair, she won fame in the surfing world through excellent performances at the world’s best tournaments.

The crowning moment in her career came in 2004 when she won the International Surfing Association World Championship. At present she is ranked number one by the Association of Surfing Professionals (ASP). She is sponsored by important companies such as Telefónica del Perú and Roxy de Quiksilver.



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Peruvian tennis players

For the first time in 34 years of taking part in the Davis Cup, Peru has gained a place in the world group after beating the Bielorrussian team 4-1. This historic event placed the Peruvian team among the 16 best tennis teams in the world. The team members were Luis Horna, Iván

Miranda, Mauricio Echazú and Matías Silva, with Jaime Yzaga as captain.

Furthermore, in an achievement unprecedented in Peruvian tennis, Luis Horna won the doubles title at the Roland Garros tournament 2008 in France. Horna's partner was Uruguayan player Pablo Cuevas and the pair's skilled and intelligent play took them to the final against Canadian Daniel Néstor and Serb Nenad Zimonjic who were favorites to take the title. Horna and Cuevas thus became the first Latin American pair to win a Grand Slam title. For Luis this triumph is all the sweeter and more important at this stage in his tennis career.



Yma Súmac

Born in Cajamarca, Peru on September 10, 1922, Yma Sumac is one of the most acclaimed sopranos in the history of music. She is known for her vocal range, which generally exceeds three octaves and can reach surprising heights.

She has been declared officially as a direct descendent of the last Inca, Atahualpa. In addition to her notable career as a singer, she has also acted in a number of Hollywood films. Yma Sumac returned to Peru in 2006 and was awarded the “Order of the Sun” by then president Alejandro Toledo. She now lives in the United States.





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Birds of Peru

Peru is home to more than 1,810 varieties

Peru contains more than 1,810 species of birds, 120 of which are not found anywhere else in the world. Last year at least five new species were discovered whose official scientific classification is still awaited. More than 50 species of birds have been discovered and described in the last 50 years. This variety of species is due to the ecological and geographical diversity of Peru: on the coast, the Pacific Ocean refreshes the arid desert; inland, the dry forest and mountains rise to the snowy peaks of the Andes; and to the east the cloud forest stretches towards the Amazon basin.





Alpamayo

The most beautiful mountains in the world

At 5,947 m.a.s.l. Alpamayo is the highest mountain in Peru's Cordillera Blanca in Ancash Region. With its steep sides (nearly 60 degrees) it looks like a near perfect ice pyramid. In 1966, UNESCO named Alpamayo as "the most beautiful mountain in the world."



Petrified forest of Huayllay

An impressive natural formation

The petrified forest of Huayllay has recently been chosen as one of the Seven Wonders of Peru in a competition organized by a Lima daily newspaper. It is in the province of Pasco in the central highlands of Peru; it covers 6,815 hectares and dates from the beginning of the Tertiary Period of the Cenozoic Era almost 70 million years ago. Erosion by the wind, water and other conditions has created curious and sculptural shapes resembling men and animals among other forms. In the middle of the forest there is an enchanting spring said to have curative properties. The so-called “Andean rock garden” also contains wild flora with different medicinal properties as well as mammals, birds and fish.



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Colca and Cotahuasi canyons

Two of the deepest in the world

The Colca and Cotahuasi canyons, formed by the eponymous rivers, are among the deepest in the world. The Colca is approximately 3,430 meters deep while the Cotahuasi is nearly 3,535 meters making the latter the world's deepest (deeper even than the USA's Grand Canyon in Colorado).

Adorning the skies of southern Peru over this impressive mountainous terrain, you will find the legendary condors which make the region their habitat.



The Quelccaya ice sheet

The largest tropical glacier in the world

The Quelccaya ice sheet is the largest glacier in the tropics. Located in the eastern Cordillera of the Peruvian Andes, the ice sheet lies at an average altitude of 5,470 meters and covers an area of 44 square kilometers. Like most of the world's glaciers, the Quelccaya ice sheet has contracted significantly since it was first studied. Since 1978 it has lost approximately 20% of its area and the rate of contraction is increasing. By comparing photographs taken in 1963 and 1978, the rate of contraction has been estimated at 4.7 meters a year. In the first years of the 21st Century, annual contraction was measured at 205 meters, more than 40 times faster. The principal face of the Quelccaya ice sheet, the Qori Kalis glacier, has also reduced considerably since 1963.





Gocta waterfalls

A hidden marvel

The Gocta waterfalls (the name comes from Quechua) are 771 meters high, the third highest falls in the world. They are located in the region of Amazonas in eastern Peru. They consist of two vertical falls. The falls are surrounded by marvelous scenery which is the habitat of flora and fauna (some of which are in danger of extinction) such as the yellow tailed woolly monkey, orchids, cock of the rocks and others.

This tourist attraction has been known for centuries to local people, but its existence became more widely known after an expedition in 2005. It shares the list of the world's highest waterfalls with the Angel Falls (Venezuela) and Tugelfalls (South Africa).



Cerro Blanco

The highest sand dunes on the continent

Cerro Blanco is located in the province of Nasca, region of Ica. It is considered one of the highest sand dunes on the continent. A beautiful natural landscape can be viewed from its summit. Cerro Blanco is 2,076 meters high and provides some extreme conditions for adventure sports such as sand-boarding and hang-gliding.

A few meters further down is a slope more than a kilometer long. For those who prefer other options, you can hire a dune buggy from tour operators in the area who have a variety of choices for visitors.

Collpas

Parrots' meeting place

Considered the world's largest clay deposits, there are collpas in Tambopata Protected Area and Bahuaja-Sonene National Park in south western Peru (Madre de Dios). Each morning hundreds of parrots and parakeets go there to peck at the clay, providing a brilliant spectacle. People from all over the world come to witness this impressive scene. Unfortunately, or perhaps fortunately, such marvels of wildlife, such as seeing the parakeets in action, are not among the plans of most tourists.



Ecology and biodiversity

A privileged land

Peru has 84 of the world's 103 possible ecosystems and 28 of its 32 climate types. It is also one of the 12 countries with the greatest biological diversity on earth. Its mountains, deserts, rivers and sand dunes are excellent for growing coffee, cocoa, tropical fruit and Andean cereals, among others.

As far as flora is concerned, Peru contains 25,000 species (10% of the world's total) of which 30% are endemic which gives it the fifth largest number of species in the world. The country is home to: 462 species of mammals, 1,816 species of birds, 395 species of reptiles, 403 species of amphibians, 2,000 species of fish, and 3,000 species of butterflies. Peru is divided into three main geographic regions: coast, highlands and jungle.





Cock of the rocks

Colorful protected bird

The Andean cock of the rocks (*Rupicola peruviana*) or tunqui in Quechua, is Peru's national bird and one of the most spectacular in the world. It measures approximately 32 cm. The male is a bright yellowish red with black wings and tail while the female is a dark reddish brown.

The male mates with several females which build their nests from mud and plant materials on rock faces, hence the bird's common name. This species inhabits the jungle areas of Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia and Venezuela. It feeds mainly on fruit. The tunqui is legally protected, and cannot be hunted or sold.



Lake Titicaca

The highest navigable lake in the world

Lake Titicaca, on the border between Peru and Bolivia, is the highest navigable lake in the world. It is at an altitude of 3,812 m.a.s.l. The lake is fed by more than 40 rivers and meltwater from glaciers in the Andes Mountains. It is also the home of the Uros, a people who live on a group of 43 floating islands made of totora reeds. The islands of the Uros have become a key element of the local economy as tourism is very important for local people.



We are happy for having so many reasons to be proud of Peru and want to share it with the rest of the world.

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The Andes

Chain of magnificent peaks

The Andes is the longest mountain range in South America, running continuously along the west coast. In total they stretch for 7,240 kilometers and in reach 500 kilometers wide in some parts. Their average altitude is around 4,000 meters. Some attribute the origin of their name to one of the four regions of the Inca Empire which developed in the northern Andes during the 15th Century.

Geological studies show that the Peruvian section may have been a great plain. But more than 100 million years ago geological processes created the Andes range which runs from north to south through the whole country. One of the few Inca cities that the Spaniards never found during their conquest was Machu Picchu in Cusco, hidden on the summit of a mountain in the southern Andes.



River Abiseo National Park

Nature and ruins

The River Abiseo National Park contains some of Peru's greatest biological and archaeological riches. It is in the region of San Martín. This park contains many species of flora and fauna. Also to be found there are more

than 30 ruins from the pre-Columbian period. The park has been closed to tourism since 1986 because of the fragile nature of both its ecosystems and ruins. There are at least seven climate zones in the park including: mountain forest, tropical rainforest, cloud forest and dry paramo. The park also contains artistic elements representative of the Chachapoyas culture, such as the Gran Pajatén ruins. The yellow-tailed woolly monkey (*Oreonax flavicauda*), which was thought to be extinct survives in the park and seems to be endemic to the region. Because this monkey is in danger of extinction, the area was made a national park in 1983. UNESCO proclaimed it a Cultural Heritage site and then World Heritage site in 1990 and 1992 respectively.





Huascarán National Park

Nature at its most spectacular in the highlands

Huascarán National Park – recognized by UNESCO as a Biosphere Reserve and then, in 1985 as a World Heritage Site – is located in the Cordillera Blanca in the Ancash Region of central Peru. The park contains the 6,768 meter high Mount Huascarán. Mount Pastoruri is another peak in the park, but it is suffering from retreating ice and global warming. Huascarán National Park possesses an enormous wealth of flora, fauna and geological formations. It has 663 glaciers, more than 200 snow-covered peaks, 296 lakes and 44 large rivers. 131 species of birds have been recorded, together with 850 species of flora including orchids and medicinal plants. The park is the habitat of the Raimondi Pine, Jaguar, Andean cat, Andean fox, vicuña, Peruvian tapir, Peruvian piedtail hummingbird and the southern pochard.



Peruvian hairless dog

Saved from extinction

More than 3,000 years old, the Peruvian hairless dog was part of the country's historic past. The breed is also known by the name "Viringo" and is registered under number 310 by the Fédération Cynologique Internationale as the Peruvian Hairless Dog. This breed of dog is represented in ceramic artefacts from pre-Inca cultures such as the Chimu, Moche, Vicus and Chancay. Some theories state that the breed was kept as a pet by the Incas and that the Spanish eliminated it and replaced it with other larger breeds. It is principally distinguished by its lack of coat, though some have hair on the head, tail and paws. It has a very acute sense of hearing. These dogs are considered beneficial to health and miraculous cures have been attributed to them.

Beaches

The best for surfing

With the increasing success of Peruvian surfers at the international level, more people are aware of stars like Sofia Mulanovich and, therefore, thinking of Peru as an attractive destination for surfers.

The extraordinary conditions for surfing at beaches on Peru's north coast such as: Máncora, Los Órganos, Lobitos, Cabo Blanco and others, have led to them being considered the best surfing beaches on this part of the continent. Other beaches such as Cerro Azul, Pico Alto, Punta Rocas and Punta Hermosa – only a few hours south of Lima – also offer excellent conditions and challenges for any surfer from beginners to the most experienced.



The Raimondi pine

A botanical curiosity

The Raimondi pine was discovered by Italian scientist Antonio Raimundi, and is one of the most spectacular plants on earth. It grows in the highlands of Peru and Bolivia, between 3,200 and 4,800 m.a.s.l. Not only is it the largest of its species, it is also the largest plant of the Bromeliaceae family.

It can live for 100 years and grow to a height of three meters, but when it flowers it can reach 10 meters in height. It holds the record for the largest inflorescence with more than 8,000 individual flowers. Like most Bromeliaceae, it dies shortly after flowering. It is an endangered species.



Mineral resources

From the earth

Peru has some of the largest reserves of minerals in the world. Thanks to a vigorous and continually growing mining industry, Peru's economy has expanded considerably improving the country's international position. Peru is a world leader in the production of gold, silver, copper, zinc and tin.

With backing from a solid and stable government, the Peruvian mining industry should be able to help the country's development in other areas such as reducing poverty and job creation.



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River Amazon

Flowing life in the jungle

The great River Amazon is the largest on the planet and, according to recent hydrological studies, is approximately 7,000 kilometers long. It flows through three countries: Peru, Colombia and Brazil on its way to the Atlantic Ocean. Its source is Apacheta creek on Mount Mismi, 5,150 m.a.s.l., in the region of Arequipa. It then continues to the Peruvian section of the Amazon basin and jungle. It is described as the “lungs of the world” as it absorbs large quantities of carbon dioxide.

The Amazon is also the deepest river on the planet reaching around 300 meters deep at Obidos, Brazil. The jewel of the Peruvian Amazon is without doubt Iquitos, the largest Peruvian city in the jungle.



Manu Biosphere Reserve

An immense natural refuge

The Manú Biosphere Reserve is the largest of the Amazon biosphere reserves and is located in the regions of Cusco and Madre de Dios. It is notable for the state of preservation of its forests, its diversity of ecosystems and species, and its cultural diversity. The reserve protects almost two million hectares of territory containing many species of flora and fauna. Manu possess more than 200 species of mammals; around 1,000 species of birds; 150 species of amphibians and reptiles; 1,000 species of butterflies; and more than 300 species of trees; as well as 3,000 plant species in mountain forests, pasture land and Amazon rainforest. It is also renowned as having the largest variety of parakeets in America as well as the largest collpa in the Peruvian Amazon region, a gathering point for parrots, parakeets and other birds.

In 1987 UNESCO officially recognized this natural paradise as a World Heritage Site.

Porque el Perú es una primera plana

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Machu Picchu para el Perú y el mundo



■ Es un homenaje a la cultura milenaria de los incas

■ Cien millones de personas votaron por la joya cusqueña

Todo el país estalló en alegría cuando a las 5:09 p.m. (hora peruana) del 7 de junio del 2007 llegó desde Lisboa, Portugal, el anuncio de que la ciudadela de Machu Picchu había sido elegida una de las Siete Nuevas Maravillas del Mundo. Miles de personas reunidas en la Plaza de Armas del Cusco celebraron, entre abrazos, cantos y danzas, se izaron la bande-

ra del Tahuantinsuyo. En Lima, el presidente Alan García abrió las puertas de Palacio para celebrar con la gente. El santuario inca fue elegido junto con la Muralla China, Petra, en Jordania; la estatua del Cristo Redentor, en Brasil; la pirámide de Chichén Itzá, en México; el Coliseo Romano, en Italia; y el Taj Mahal, en India. «Es del Perú, señores!» [A22]

► MERCEDES ARAÓZ, MINISTRA DE COMERCIO EXTERIOR Y TURISMO
"Las personas del mundo tienen una razón más para visitar nuestra ciudadela inca"

► MARINA SEQUIEROS, ALCALDESA DE CUSCO
"El sentimiento fue indescriptible. Recibimos el cariño de todos. Ahora tenemos que trabajar para retribuir este gran reconocimiento"

MEDIDAS DEL PARLAMENTO EUROPEO

OEA verá pedido para respaldar a los inmigrantes

A pedido del Perú, mañana se realizará una sesión extraordinaria del Consejo Permanente de la OEA para pronunciarse sobre la directiva del Parlamento Europeo respecto del retorno de inmigrantes. En la cita participará el canciller José A. García Belaunde, quien ayer expresó su confianza en que los países de la UE flexibilicen la norma a la hora de aplicarla. [A6]

INVERTIRÁN 264 MILLONES DE DÓLARES

Construirán megahotel en playa de Tumbes

■ Tendrá 1.500 habitaciones y 750 departamentos

La cadena estadounidense Fairmont Hotels & Resorts invertirá US\$264 millones en la construcción de un megaproyecto hotelero en Playa Florida, en la costa de Tumbes, que comprende 1.500 habitaciones y 750 departamentos, anunció el socio peruano de la iniciativa, Francisco Martínez. Obras empezarán en setiembre. [B4]

DEPORTE TOTAL

EURO 2008
CAMPO DE VUELO 1:30 p.m.

Alemania y Turquía por pase a la final
Tercer arquero turco jugará de centrocampista [D16]

'U' y Cristal juegan tres puntos claves
Serán las 8 p.m. en el Nacional [D14]

LDU recibe en Quito al Fluminense
Serán las 8 p.m. en el Nacional [D15]

Dos maratonistas se juntaron en la videsa
Irána los Juegos Olímpicos de Beijing [D18]

buenos días

La papa tendrá páginas propias

TODO EL MUNDO HABLA DE ESTE ingrediente, sabroso y reconocible. Y ahora, de origen peruano, la papa merece todos los honores que se le merecen a bien ofrecerle, pues no en vano ha sacado el hambre en casi todos los rincones del planeta. La escuela de cocina Le Cordon Bleu anunció por intermedio de su presidente, André Coustourea, la publicación de un libro que recopila sus bondades, a través de variadas recetas como parte de las celebraciones por el Año Internacional de la Papa. No hace mucho, en París, esta institución organizó un seminario de cocina peruana en el que nuestro tubérculo se hacía. Comentarios no ocultos se escucharon por los sabores "made in Peru", en los que la papa es figura. [C3]

tema del día

Jóvenes ven al país con optimismo



Las cifras son alentadoras: mientras el 80% de encuestados dice que el Perú está progresando, el 40% desea vivir permanentemente en nuestro país y el 30% cree que hay más posibilidades de empleo. [B22]

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LUCES

"Sinceramente me siento muy bien en este país"
Juliana Parodi, la "Nena", llegó a Lima y confirmó que escribe canciones [D4]

LIMA
Suprema reconoce en fallo carácter terrorista del MRTA
También envía las penas para sus cabecillas [A9]

MUNDO
Suicidio de un policía alteró la despedida de Sarkozy en Israel
Su esposa Carla Bruni entró en pánico [B15]

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The vicuña

The finest, most delicate fibre

The vicuña (*Vicugna vicugna*) is one of those South American camelids – the other is the guanaco – that live in the highlands between 3,000 and 4,600 m.a.s.l. It belongs to the same family as the llama and alpaca, and can grow to 80 or 90 centimeters tall and 1.60 to 1.75 meters in length. The vicuña produces exceptionally fine wool that has been used and valued by man since pre-Columbian times. Its wool is very costly as the animal can only be sheared every three years. It is thought that the Incas bred vicuñas for their wool and no one but royalty could wear clothes made from vicuña fiber. Peru is home to the largest number of vicuñas; 142,000 according to figures from 2001.

Nevertheless, organizations such as the World Wide Fund for Nature still consider it to be an endangered species and it is protected from illegal hunting.





Peruvian traditions



Handicrafts

Peruvian handicrafts are an expression of the country's culture, diversity and history. Some examples of this popular art form include: The pottery from Chulucanas, a village on the coast in Piura; alpaca clothing and hand made silver Inca jewelery. There are handicrafts from all over Peru which represent the country's three geographic regions: coast, highlands and jungle. This is an aspect of culture that has been preserved for centuries as craftsmen and women have passed their knowledge on to the next generation so that ancestral methods are still being used today.





The Peruvian paso horse

They say that the Peruvian paso horse has the smoothest gait of any breed of horse. It is distinguished by this unique, natural and efficient gait called “paso llano” which consists of an elegant trot. The ancestors of these horses – including the Berber, Spanish Jennet and Andaluz – came from Spain.

The breed was carefully refined in Peru over several centuries, and today’s animals are a source of pride. The Peruvian paso horse is ever more popular in the United States and other parts of the world thanks to their beauty and comfort when riding them.

It is estimated that in 2003 there were 25,000 such horses throughout the world, being used for pleasure, display, processions and racing. The horse was declared part of Peru’s cultural heritage in order to promote breeding in Peru. Today there are laws restricting exports of national champions.



The Peruvian cajón

The cajón is the Afro-Peruvian musical instrument most popularly played in the 20th Century and has been declared part of the country's cultural heritage by the government. It is thought that slaves brought to America from west and central Africa created the cajón. Although this instrument is used all over America – especially in Cuba where it is associated with the style of music, dance and percussion known as rumba – in Peru it is associated with different types of Afro-Peruvian music. At present, the cajón is widely used in the Creole music of the Peruvian coast: the tondero, zamacueca or Creole waltz. The cajón was introduced to flamenco music in the 1970s by Spanish guitarist Paco de Lucía when he was given one during a visit to Peru by Peruvian percussionist Caitro Soto.

Inti Raymi

The Inti Raymi is one of the largest festivals anywhere in America and is held in honour of Inti, the sun god of the Incas. This festival, held in Cusco, takes place during the winter solstice (June) as a way of thanking the Inti for a good harvest and a plea for similar good fortune in the coming year. Offering animal sacrifices, fasting and abstinence from physical pleasures were some of the ways the inhabitants of the Inca Empire sought the return of the Inti to thus prevent a poor harvest and consequent famine. With the arrival of the Spanish and Catholicism, this fiesta was prohibited and was later celebrated in clandestine fashion. The modern version of Inti Raymi has been held on the 24th of June each year since 1944 when it was resurrected in memory of the city's ancient origin. Today, the festival has become one of the biggest in the Americas, where thousands of people from Peru and abroad converge on Cusco to celebrate for a whole week.



Marinera

The marinera is a romantic and sensual dance inspired by the courtship of young couples. It is a Peruvian musical style that acquired its name after the Pacific War (1879 - 1884) in honor of the Peruvian Navy.



In 1880 the name “Marinera” was proposed by Mr. Abelardo Gamarra, “El Tunante,” a noted writer and journalist. It is danced by couples who use lace handkerchiefs as simple but elegant accessories. The dance, which originated in northern Peru, is perhaps the country’s most representative dance.

Marinera competitions are held all over Peru, but the most important takes place in Trujillo. The dancers who take part in these competitions are in some cases barely four years old, but display incredible coordination and maturity. The typical accompanying music makes use of the Peruvian cajón and guitar.



Acho bullring

Construction of the bullring at Acho, in Lima, began on January 30, 1766, on the initiative of Agustín de Landaburu, during the viceroyalty of Manuel de Amat y Juniet. It is the most important of the 56 official bullrings in Peru. Classified as a historic monument, Acho is very close to the historical center of Lima in the district of Rimac. It can seat 13,700 people. Built of classical materials such as timber and adobe, Acho has survived the many earthquakes that have shaken Lima in the centuries since it was built. Each year the world's best bullfighters perform at Acho. The annual Lord of the Miracles festival takes place every Sunday in October and November. The best matador of the year receives the Gold Scapulary. The Acho bullring is the oldest in the Americas and the third oldest in the world after La Maestranza in Seville and the bullring at Zaragoza; both are in Spain.

Qoyllur Rit'i

Qoyllur Rit'i is considered the largest pilgrimage in the Andes. This religious festivity was first held in 1780 in the district of Ocongate, eight hours from the city of Cusco. The principal ceremony takes place at the foot of Mount Ausangate at 4,700 m.a.s.l. The ritual consists of a pilgrimage of thousands of people carrying crosses and offerings up to the summit. Dancers symbolizing various mythical characters accompany the pilgrims. Although it is a Christian ceremony, the fundamental reason for the ceremony is the integration of man with nature. Catholicism and Andean devotions mix in this festival in honor of the Lord of Qoyllur Rit'i and Mount Ausangate.





Easter week in Ayacucho

In the highlands of Peru, the city of Ayacucho is known not only for its exquisite architecture, but also for its deep religious faith and traditional festivals. The popular expression of this faith can be seen in the 10 day Easter Week celebrations. Easter is not only a period of sincere respect for the death and resurrection of Christ; it is also a period of excitement that can be seen in the ceremonies and processions, as well as in cultural, artistic and commercial events. Just like Seville in Spain, the city of Ayacucho is considered to have one of the most traditional Easter celebrations in the world.

Lord of the Miracles

This great festival, which attracts the largest number of believers of any in South America, dates from colonial times, when a slave brought from Angola painted a picture of Christ on the wall of a humble dwelling in the area known as Pachacamilla near Lima. In 1655 a terrible earthquake struck Lima and while houses, churches and great buildings collapsed, the simple wall with its painting remained standing. After years of neglect, a neighbor started to pray to the image and is said to have recovered from a serious illness.

Worship of the image became more widespread until it became what it is today: an impressive example of popular faith. As the cult increased in importance, a copy of the image was painted in oils to be taken in procession around the streets. The central celebration of the Lord of the Miracles festivity takes place in October each year, in the form of a vast procession, the largest anywhere in America, in which hundreds of thousands of faithful sing hymns and pray alongside the image as it is carried through the city streets. In recent times, Lord of the Miracles processions have also taken place in Chile, Spain, the United States and Italy, wherever there are Peruvian residents devoted to the Christ of Pachacamilla.



Traditional costumes

The wide variety of traditional costumes is an example of Peru's cultural diversity. Design and colors vary from region to region. In the Andes for example, costumes are colored and intricately woven, generally in the form of llicllas – a sort of dark shawl decorated with red and green, with a clasp at chest height - ponchos and voluminous skirts called “polleras.” In the jungle clothing varies from tribe to tribe although it is generally light and loose, appropriate for the heat. These clothes are decorated with drawings, necklaces of seeds and feathered headdresses, while their owners paint their faces. Some tribes still use these costumes in their daily lives, although most have adopted western clothing. The same applies on the coast where traditional costumes can be seen in dances such as the tondero, zamacueca and festejo.



Candlemass

Candlemass is celebrated in Puno, the folklore capital of Peru. It is held in honour of “Mamacha Candelaria,” “Mamita Cantincha,” “Mamá Candi,” among other names, the patron saint of the city of Puno.

For 18 days, from the 1st to the 18th of February, Puno is filled with color and joy and more than 200 dances are held by people of all ages in honor of the Virgin Mary, in a display of devotion and thanks for prayers answered. The most important of these dances is the famous “diablada puneña” which comes from the Aymara tradition and symbolizes the eternal struggle between good and evil. Each year, more than 60,000 visitors have the opportunity to take part in the processions, music and fireworks displays, and also to sample local dishes.

The festival is clearly a mixture of Christian and Andean traditions. “Mamacha Candelaria” represents not only the Virgin Mary to Christians, but is also associated with the Pachamama and the beginnings of the Inca Empire at Lake Titicaca, as well as symbolizing thunder, purity and fertility.





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DESTINATIONS Arequipa: Magali del Solar-PromPerú / Chiclayo: Anibal Solimano-PromPerú / Cusco: Pilar Pedraza / Iquitos: Michael Tweddle-PromPerú / Lima: Pilar Pedraza / Piura: Domingo Giribaldi-PromPerú / Tarapoto: Carlos Sala -PromPerú / Trujillo: Carlos Sala-PromPerú.

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HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE Caral: Michael Tweddle-PromPerú / Chan Chan: Carlos Sala-PromPerú / Chankillo: Pilar Pedraza / Chasquis: Eduardo Rivera / Chavin de Huántar: Carlos Sala-PromPerú / Choquequirao: Renzo Uccelli-PromPerú / The Paracas culture: Archivo de PromPerú / The Inca trail: Sebastián Castañeda-Empresa Editora El Comercio S.A. / El Peruano: Pilar Pedraza / The Lord of Sipán: Archivo de PromPerú / The fortress of Kuélap: Luis Gamero -PromPerú / Huari: Carlos Sala: PromPerú / The Nasca lines: Heinz Plenge-PromPerú / Ollantaytambo: Jorge Sarmiento -PromPerú / Machu Picchu: Carlos Sala-PromPerú / The suspension bridge: Luis Pílares-PromPerú / Sacsayhuaman: César Vega-PromPerú / Tambomachay: Carlos Sala-PromPerú / Ticlio: Raúl Mayo-Empresa Editora El Comercio S.A. / San Marcos State University: UNMSM.

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Felipe Ortiz de Zevallos

The good fortune Peruvians are experiencing today is not just of today; it is rooted in the legacy, natural treasures, values, people and habits that mark our land and history. These components renew the vitality of our culture daily and project us into the immediate future; a future that, with the passage of a few, brief seconds, becomes the present.

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