



Travel Amazing South America

Grand South America

REF: SA53

VERSION: 12

Duration:	114 days - Quito to Rio de Janeiro
Countries Visited:	Ecuador - Peru - Bolivia - Argentina - Chile - Uruguay - Brazil
Age Guide:	18-45 years
Max Group Size:	20
Transport:	Boat, Domestic Flight, Dugout Canoe, Ferry, Jeep (seasonal), Overland Truck, Minibus, On Foot, Train
Accommodation:	35%hotel,43%camping,11%hostel,10%lodge,1%homestay (113 Nights)
What's Included:	Fully Escorted Tour, Tour Leader and Driver - All Activities, Sightseeing and Entrance Fees as Per Itinerary - All National Park and Reserve Entrance Fees as Per Itinerary - All Meals Whilst Camping Included - All Meals Included on Amazon Jungle Trip, Inca Trail or Lares Trek, Lake Titicaca Family Homestay, Rurrenabaque Jungle Trip and Salt Flats & Altiplano Crossing - All Tolls and Entrance Fees - Amazon Jungle Trip - Guided Visit to Chan Chan Mud City - Ballestas Islands Excursion - Chauchilla Cemetery - Colca Canyon Excursion - Cusco Tourist Circuit - Sacred Valley Tour - Inca Trail or Lares Trek to Machu Picchu & Guided Visit to Machu Picchu - Lake Titicaca Family Homestay - Rurrenabaque Jungle Trip - Bolivian Salt Flats Excursion - Wineries Excursion Cafayate - Talampaya National Park - Moon Valley National Park - Wineries Excursion Mendoza - Torres del Paine NP - Los Glaciares NP - Penguin Colony Punta Arenas - Guided Tour Valdes Peninsula - Salto Thermal Springs - Jesuit Ruins - Iguazu Falls - Pantanal Trekking - Parati Schooner Boat Cruise
Local Payment:	NO LOCAL PAYMENT
Highlights:	Ecuador - Otavalo Markets - Amazon Jungle Trip - Banos - Cuenca - Peru - Northern Beaches of Punta Sal - Chan Chan Mud City - Huaraz - Ballestas Islands - Marine Park - Huacachina Oasis - Chauchilla Cemetery - Arequipa - Colca Canyon - condors - Cusco - Inca Trail or Lares Trek - Sacred Valley - Lake Titicaca and Floating Reed Islands - Amantani Family Homestay - Bolivia - Rurrenabaque Jungle Trip - Salt Flats Excursion - Tupiza - Argentina - Salta - Cafayate - Talampaya National Park - Moon Valley National Park - Puente del Inca - Mendoza - Wineries - Alpine Bariloche - El Calafate (for Moreno Glacier) - Ushuaia - Valdes Peninsula - Buenos Aires - Jesuit Ruins at San Ignacio - Iguazu Falls - Chile - Pucon - Patagonian Lake District - Punta Arenas Penguin Colony - Torres del Paine National Park - Uruguay - World Heritage Site of Colonia - Salto Thermal Springs - Brazil - Bonito - Wildlife at the Pantanal - Schooner Boat Trip Parati - Rio
Optional Highlights:	Ecuador - The Equator Monument - Salsa Lessons - White Water Rafting - Tubing - Horse Riding - Canyoning - Cuenca City Tour - Cajas National Park

Peru - Massage - Salsa Lessons - Ice Climbing - Trekking - Lima City Tour - Dune Buggy Ride & Sandboarding - Nazca Lines Flight - Arequipa City Tour - Juanita the Ice Mummy - Santa Catalina Convent - Chivay Hot Springs - White Water Rafting - Mountain Biking - Bolivia - Tiahuanaco Ruins - La Paz City Tour - Downhill Mountain Biking - Silver Mine Tour - Combined Horse Riding, Biking & Jeep Tour - Argentina - Combined White Water Rafting, Canopy & BBQ - Paragliding - 4x4 Excursion to Cerro Frias - Trekking Cerro Frias - Moreno Glacier Boat Trip - Horse Riding - Trekking and Canoeing - Beagle Channel Boat Cruise - End of the World Train Ride - End of the World Museum - Chile - Winery Tour - Mt. Villarica Volcano Climb - Hot Springs - Gray Glacier Boat Cruise - Lake Pehoe Ferry - Torres del Paine Trekking - Uruguay - Brazil - Go Karting - Macuco Boat Safari - Bird Park - Helicopter Over Iguazu Falls - Snorkelling Bonito - Kayaking - Rio City Tour including Christ Statue and Sugar Loaf Mountain - Favela Tour

Introduction: This 114-day adventure takes you to all the major sites of South America and beyond. Travelling from the equator towards the tip of the continent of South America, we journey through the Andean countries which are home to colourful indigenous populations and haunting music, llamas and condors, great deserts and remote altiplano. Along the way, enjoy the highlights of Machu Picchu and the Inca Trail, Otavalo Market and Lake Titicaca, the Salt Lakes and the Moreno Glacier. In Ushuaia, we change direction, heading north towards Rio, crossing the great Pampas and subtropical plains. Our trip calls in at the Valdez Peninsula, Iguazu Falls, the Pantanal Wetlands, then it's on to the emerald coastline of Brazil before our great journey finally draws to a close shortly after crossing the Tropic of Capricorn, in the nearby city of Rio.

Please note that the 07 Oct 09 departure includes a 4 day Navimag cruise from Puerto Montt to Puerto Natales, and excludes Bariloche (ferry schedule permitting). A Local Payment supplement applies (guide price USD320). Please note that the initial Patagonia itinerary may be subject to modification depending on the ferry schedule.

Meeting Point: Hotel Jardin del Sol
Calama 166 y Diego de Almagro
Quito new town
Ecuador

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Day 1: Quito. Quito is the capital of Ecuador. It was once one of the main cities of the Inca Empire before the Spanish Conquest. The Spanish established Quito on the same site as the Inca city, and founded Quito in 1534. Quito is divided up into the old city and the new city. The Old City of Quito is very attractive with many churches, plazas, buildings with balconies and steep cobble-stoned streets. It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and we recommend a visit here. Local colour is supplied by markets and the Quechua Indians. You can't help noticing that the Pichincha Volcano dominates the city.

The new city, where our hotel is situated, is approximately half an hour walk from the Old City area. In the new city you will find many outdoor cafes, restaurants, nightclubs, internet cafes and shops here. The Old City of Quito is unfortunately earning a reputation as a city with many pickpockets and muggings. Be especially careful with your belongings here. We strongly advise to not visit the Old City area after dark. During the day wear your daybags at the front, and your money securely put away. The new city has not got quite the same reputation, but it still

	pays to be cautious here too.
Days 2-7:	<p>Otavalo, Mishualli and the Amazon Jungle. We leave Quito and head north across the Equator to the famous market town of Otavalo. Otavalo has one of the best textile markets in Ecuador. You can easily spend an afternoon shopping in the Plaza de Ponchos, buying hammocks, blankets and Alpaca jumpers. And if you are all shopped out, the surroundings of Otavalo are great for hikes and bike rides also.</p> <p>We leave the Andes and journey down into the lush Amazon jungle. From here, the true adventure begins as we head further inland to the remote jungle town of Tena, the gateway to the Ecuadorian Amazon. This will be our starting point for our adventure into the heart of the Amazon. We continue from Tena to Mishualli, where we board motorized dugout canoes to navigate down river to our lodge. We will enjoy a 3-day jungle trip, exploring the jungle vegetation and searching for the local wildlife. The terrain is rich and lush, and alive with hundreds of species of plant and trees. A shaman explains the many medicinal uses for these plants and trees, which are practiced by the local people, and talks about how he uses jungle plants to treat many of the rainforest illnesses. As well as hikes through the jungle and a visit to the Kichwa Indians, you will also have the opportunity to swim in a lagoon and spot wildlife – including early morning bird watching. We may even see some of the rarest birds of the Amazon, the “hoatzins” , a living fossil.</p> <p>Leaving the jungle, we stay at Shangri-La lodge, just outside Tena, for a couple of days, where you can relax and soak up views over the rainforest of clouds snaking across the jungle and fabulous sunsets. For the energetic this is the chance to do a tubing excursion downriver or perhaps some white water rafting (optional).</p>
Days 8-10:	<p>Baños and Rio Verde. From Tena we travel back into the Andes to the lovely resort town of Baños in the mountains. The town is tucked into the foothills of the active volcano, Tungurahua, and affords spectacular views down the valley in both directions, with many waterfalls in the surrounding area. In such a setting, it is no wonder Baños is one of the adventure capitals of Ecuador. It’s a great place for walking, white water rafting, canyoning, mountain biking and horse riding (optional). But Baños is most famous for the hot springs, which give the town its name. After a day exploring the area, a relaxing soak in the baths is a perfect end to the day (optional).</p> <p>We base ourselves just outside the town, in the rainforest setting of Rio Verde, surrounded by mountains and waterfalls. This is an idyllic location with easy access to Baños.</p>
Days 11-12:	<p>Cuenca. Our next destination is Cuenca. Cuenca is the third largest city in Ecuador, and considered to be the most attractive. It has many fine colonial churches, a lovely plaza and cobbled streets. Cuenca is also home to the Panama Hat. We will visit the factory for a tour to see how they are made, and then you have the opportunity of buying one of these famous hats from the factory shop.</p>
Days 13-15:	<p>Punta Sal Beach. We travel from the Andes through the tropical lowlands, past banana plantations on the way to the Northern coast of Peru. Then get ready for a dramatic change in landscape when you cross the Peruvian border. The lush vegetation of Ecuador gives way to the deserts of Northern Peru. From the border we drive along the coast through many fishing villages, to the tiny beach resort of</p>

Punta Sal, where we will set up camp on the beach for the next 2 nights.

Punta Sal is a fantastic place to relax and soak up the sun and play in the surf. A fishing trip is available here, as well as the chance to learn some of the local dance moves with some Salsa classes and horseriding excursions (optional).

Days 16-17: Sechura Desert - Huanchaco - Chan-Chan. From Punta Sal we then drive south through the Sechura desert on our way to the Peruvian coastal resort of Huanchaco. The village is unique for its caballitos - "little horses". These are strangely shaped canoes are lined up along the beach, and you will see the fishermen surf them onto the beach with their day's catch. While we're here we take a step back in time with a visit to the amazing archaeological site of Chan Chan, the imperial city of the Chimú culture, and the largest adobe city in the world, covering 28 square kilometres. The ruins contain the remains of palaces, temples, workshops, streets, houses, gardens and a canal. There are well preserved molded decorations showing small figures of fish, birds and geometric motifs. We take a guided tour of these fascinating ruins, as well as the huge pyramid Temple of the Moon built by the Moche tribe nearby. The Temple of the Moon has brightly coloured molded decorations found on interior walls.

Days 18-19: Huaraz. The Andean town of Huaraz is sandwiched between the Cordillera Blanca ("White Mountain Range") and the Cordillera Negra ("Black Mountain Range"), two of the most spectacular mountain ranges in the Andes. The surrounding area is stunning and Huaraz sits against a backdrop of 6km-high peaks with permanent glaciers, glacial lakes and hot springs. There are plenty of outdoor activities to try out: trekking or a visit to a glacier. One great day out is a day trip to a glacier about 2 hours from Huaraz, and you can try your hand at ice climbing there if you're up for it (optional).

Days 20-22: Lima. Our next stop is Lima, the capital city of Peru. Lima is a huge, sprawling and very busy city with a population of 8 million people – one third of the population of Peru. After the conquest of the Incas, the leader of the Spanish Conquerors, Francisco Pizarro looked to establish a capital for the new Spanish colonies in South America. The Inca capital of Cuzco was not considered suitable as the Spanish were sea-faring people, and so Lima was founded in 1535. It was originally known as the City of Kings. Lima became the seat of the Spanish Viceroyalty of South America.

Lima has some great colonial architecture and some of the best museums in Peru. The Plaza de Armas has the main Cathedral, which houses the remains of Francisco Pizarro as well as many beautiful monuments. Also on the Plaza is the Presidential Palace, where each morning the palace guards perform a changing of the guard ceremony. The fabulous Gold Museum houses a private collection of gold and weapons, and the Museo de la Nación houses many exhibits and artifacts from the ancient cultures of Peru.

Days 23-25: Ballestas Islands, Huacachina Oasis, Nazca Lines And Puerto Inca. Time to leave the bustle of city life and check out more of the coastline with a trip South to the fishing village of Paracas.

Paracas is the gateway to the Paracas National Park, with fantastic desert scenery, great beaches and spectacular coastline. We hop on a boat here for the trip out to the Ballestas Islands. Our voyage takes us past the Candelabra - a giant figure carved in the hillside, which can only be seen from the sea. The Ballestas Islands are home to a great variety of wildlife. You can't miss the huge colonies of sea lions and unusual marine birds, such as - Humboldt's Penguin,

cormorants, Peruvian booby and Peruvian pelican. There are some mega jellyfish around as well. As we return you might get lucky and see dolphins and flocks of flamingos in search of food in the shallow waters of the bay. We continue to the oasis village of Huacachina that same afternoon. For the active, there are optional dune buggy and sandboarding excursions. Or you can kick back and relax beside the pool in the sunshine!

Next stop is the town of Nazca, which has an ancient culture. The people of the Nazca culture are responsible for creating a very mysterious series of shapes on the desert floor in the area surrounding the town of Nazca. This series of shapes is known as the Nazca Lines. They were discovered in the 1930's when the first flights started to go over this area. The discovery prompted many archaeologists to come to this area to try and decipher these mysterious figures. Many theories have been brought forward as to the significance of the lines. While you're here you can take a flight over the desert (optional), which is the best way to see the intriguing Nazca Lines and develop your own theory on the meaning of the lines. The lines were etched into the desert floor over 2000 years ago. They show a series of shapes - huge birds, spiders, whales and other creatures plus geometrical figures.

From Nazca we continue through the desert to the ancient Inca fishing port of Puerto Inca. On the way we make a guided tour of the Chauchilla Cemetery, which also dates from the Nazca period. Excavations at the site have uncovered real mummies with hair and clothing intact. We camp on the beach at Puerto Inca. There are ruins of the Inca fishing village on either side of the bay. This is where ocean produce was stored and traded for items brought down from the Andes. It is said that in Incan times messages and fresh sea fish were sent 240km to Cuzco using a series of runners posted every 7km, the whole delivery taking 24 hours. While you are here you can relax on the beach, and in the evening by the light of a campfire.

Days 26-27: Arequipa - Chivay. From the coast we journey up into the Andes to Arequipa. Peru's second largest city, Arequipa is set in a spectacular backdrop of snowcapped peaks.

Arequipa is a very attractive colonial city with beautiful plaza, cathedral and cobble stoned streets. Take a visit here to the once mysterious Monasterio de Santa Catalina. It was built in the 16th century and became a secret city within a city. Behind its walls up to 450 nuns and their servants lived lives that no one else knew about. It was opened to the public gaze in the 1970s, and you are now able to take a guided tour through its maze of alleyways and gardens.

Another interesting optional trip is to visit Juanita. Juanita is an Inca mummy, sacrificed to the Inca gods over 500 years ago, and then found by a team of archaeologists at the top of the Volcano near Ambato, over 5000 metres high, in 1995. Many of the textiles and gold, which adorned the female mummy's body were very well preserved, and they continue to be well preserved, along with many other artifacts, at her home in the Universidad Catolica near the Santa Catalina monastery.

From Arequipa, we take an overnight excursion to Colca Canyon. Chivay is our base to do our trip to see the Condors in Colca Canyon nearby and is a very traditional mountain town with many of the locals dressed in traditional costume.

Days 28-29: Colca Canyon - Arequipa. We head to Cruz del Condor, the edge of the mighty Colca Canyon. Not only does this spot provide some spectacular mountain views, but we are in a prime position at 1,200 metres above the canyon floor to get a memorable sight of the magnificent Condors, the heaviest flying bird in the world, and a wingspan of 3 metres, soaring majestically up the canyon on the thermals. Great photo opportunity! Our route from Colca Canyon takes us past amazing Inca farming terraces and away from the valley as we continue further into the Peruvian Andes. We also see many of the South American Camelids, the most well known being the Llama, along with its smaller relations the Alpaca and the Vicuña, which is said to have the finest wool in the world.

Another great attraction of Chivay is the nearby hot springs. You can enjoy a drink as you relax in the soothing waters of the baths, before returning to Arequipa.

Days 30-37: Cuzco And The Inca Trail. After the canyon comes the beginning of your Inca adventure. We leave Chivay and drive over two mountain passes at an altitude of 4,700m -and arrive into the beautiful city of Cuzco.

This was the capital of the Inca Empire. The word Cuzco actually derives from the word Qosqo (from the Inca language of Quechua), which means Navel of the World, for this city was the hub of a network extending to each of the 4 regions which formed the 4 parts of the world according to the Incas world view. This is where the Inca Emperors held their throne during the period of the Inca Empire in the 15th and early 16th centuries. The city is abundant with historical buildings, and still has original Inca built walls, as well as many colonial churches and houses. Cuzco has some stunning attractions. Take a look at the magnificent Plaza de Armas; the Cathedral is on one side and the La Compania de Jesus on the other. And there are many ancient Inca sites to visit in and around Cuzco. Most notable are those of Koricancha and Sacsayhuaman. Koricancha, or place of gold, was the Incas principal religious building, dedicated to the worship of the sun. Sacsayhuaman is situated on the outskirts of Cuzco overlooking the city. This spectacular fortress guarded the Inca Capital. The ruins are renowned for their enormous carved stones joined together with incredible precision. Cuzco has some great markets for souvenir hunting – good buys are jewellery, ceramics, and woodcarving, which you can get from workshops that are open to the public. And while you're here you can eat to your hearts content for the trek ahead. Cuzco has lots of restaurants and bars. Peruvian food is good and hearty, featuring tamales filled with cheese or meat, soups and stews, kebabs and peppers. Don't forget to try the guinea pig. Cuzco is also renowned as a party town - with some of the best nightlife in Peru.

The trip now takes you to the Urumbamba Valley for a tour of what is known as the Sacred Valley. We visit the magnificent ruins of Pisac, set high in the walls of the valley, and then to the famous markets in the town of Pisac below the ruins. These markets offer a great selection of blankets, jumpers and other local handicrafts. From here we continue along the valley to Ollantaytambo, where we visit another Inca Ruin before staying here the night.

From Ollantaytambo we begin our four day hike to mythical Machu Picchu. The trek takes you in the footsteps of the ancient Incas along original pathways and past many ruins. Day one of the trek includes approximately 6 hours walking, taking in some spectacular scenery and local life as we walk through a couple of

villages. Day two is the tough one as we reach the highest point of the trail at Dead Women's Pass with an altitude of just over 4200 metres above sea level. Day 3 requires a bit more uphill climbing before beginning the gradual descent down towards Machu Picchu. We rise very early on the morning of Day 4 so that you arrive at the Sun Gate for dawn on the final day. Providing the weather is clear, the view from the Sun Gate down to Machu Picchu is breathtaking and something you will never forget. Imagine what it was like for the explorer Hiram Bingham who discovered this long lost city back in 1911 and gave the world one of its most breathtaking ancient sites. The city, with its temples stairways and gabled dwellings is probably one of the most astounding engineering feats of the whole of the Ancient American civilisations. What you see is never to be forgotten - but have your camera ready as well, just for the record. Upon reaching the ruins, our experienced local guides will give you a tour of the ruins for approximately two hours and then the rest of the day is yours to explore the ruins. If you're still feeling energetic you can climb the nearby Huayna Picchu Mountain and get some more great views of the city and some great pictures as well! That afternoon you can lie back and relax in the hot springs at Aguas Calientes before taking the train back to Cuzco.

In the event that we are unable to obtain Inca Trail permits, we will include the Lares Trek or Classic Train to Machu Picchu.

Days 38-40:

Puno, Lake Titicaca and the Floating Islands. Our next destination is the town of Puno, which is across the Altiplano on the shores of the legendary Lake Titicaca. At an altitude of 3,820m, Lake Titicaca is the highest navigable lake in the world. The lake has great spiritual significance for the local people, and particularly the Inca culture, as it was here that Inca legend says that the first Inca Emperor, Manco Capac rose from its waters to begin the Inca Empire. Titicaca means rock of the Puma.

In the early morning we take a boat trip across the blue waters of the lake to the Floating Reed Islands of the Uros Indians. They make the islands from the tortoro reeds that grow beside the lake. Our experienced local guide will give us information on the various customs of these people and you have the chance of buying some of their handicrafts and taking a short boat ride on one of their traditional fishing boats.

From there we travel across the lake to Amantani Island where the Ayamara Indians live. Here we spend the night with a friendly local family, and get to know about how they live - a very different life from our own. In the early evening we climb to the top of the island for spectacular views of the sunset around Lake Titicaca. That night after dinner your family will dress you up in traditional costumes and take you dancing. Dance the night away to traditional music and learn some of the local dance moves.

The next day we cross to the nearby island of Taquille. After a 45-minute hike to the top of the island you arrive at the small plaza, which has fantastic views of the lake. Taquille Island is famous for its superb handicrafts, which you can see in the cooperative market in the plaza. After a delicious fish lunch we return on the boat back to Puno for the night.

Days 41-43:

La Paz. We follow the lakeshore and travel into Bolivia to La Paz the highest capital city in the world at 3700m. It was built in a canyon at the base of the Altiplano to keep it sheltered from the cold but over time it has grown and now

spills up the canyon walls. It's a stunning sight from the heights of the Altiplano. La Paz has buckets of charm, winding cobble stoned streets with lots of busy little markets. Visit the intriguing Witches Market where stall holders sell magical mixes of herbs plus some even weirder objects aimed at curing illness or keeping evil spirits at bay. La Paz is great to explore and while you are here there are optional trips to the highest ski resort in the world at Mount Chacaltaya, the Valley of the Moon and a hair raising downhill descent on a mountain bike in the area surrounding La Paz. And laze your evenings away in a colourful bar listening to local bands and their haunting music.

Days 44-46:	Rurrenabaque - La Paz. We catch an early morning flight and cross the impressive Andes range near La Paz, descending from the giddy heights of the Altiplano to the lush jungle town of Rurrenabaque for the start of our 3-day Pampas trip. Approaching Rurrenabaque we can see flat land stretching as far as the eye can see and jungle, which stretches 3000km all the way to the mouth of the Amazon! Here we board motorised canoes and we head upriver to our lodge, which set on stilts by the riverbank, for the start of our adventure. Between thick forests of trees are large areas of Pampas grasslands, birds swoop low over the river and turtles hop into the water as you approach. You might even spot a troop of curious Capuchin monkeys clambering down from the trees to get a better look. Jump into the river to and take a swim to keep cool – perhaps even swim alongside pink dolphins if you're lucky! Watch the sun go down from a viewing deck accompanied by a cold beer before we head back to the cool climates of La Paz at 3700m. Please note that flights to and from Rurrenabaque can sometimes be delayed due to local weather conditions. It may occasionally be necessary to make this journey by road instead of plane OR substitute an alternative jungle trip to Coroico for the jungle trip to Rurrenabaque. Minor modifications to this itinerary may be necessary depending on the flight schedule to and from La Paz - Rurrenabaque.
Days 47-48:	Potosi. Heading south across the Altiplano, we arrive in the colonial city of Potosi. Potosi began its journey to fame almost 500 years ago when silver was discovered in Cerro Rico, a hill just outside the town. In the late 1700s, Potosi was the richest city in Latin America. The situation declined when the silver demand diminished but these days you can still choose to take a guided tour of Potosi's silver mines (optional) as mining still continues today in primitive conditions, or wander around the colonial streets but whatever you choose to do, bring plenty of warm clothes. Potosi's altitude of 4070m makes it not only the highest city in the world but also one of the coldest as well!
Days 49-50:	Uyuni and the Salt Flats. Our journey continues southwest towards Uyuni, the jumping off point for our expedition out on to the great, blinding-white Salt Flats. This natural phenomenon is a massive, salt lake, which forms a strange lunar landscape that shimmers in the sunshine and stretches for hundreds of kilometres dotted with cacti and a few islands, which are home to strange colonies of rodents! Don't forget your sunglasses! Please note that occasionally at the height of the rainy season (February, March) it may not be possible to drive across the salt flats due to flooding. Instead we will drive up to the edge of these. This is for safety reasons.
Days 51-52:	Uyuni – Tupiza. Our next stop is Tupiza. The drive here is stunning, taking us through canyons and mountains covered with cacti. This is the land that Butch Cassidy and The Sundance Kid once roamed. Once at Tupiza we have the chance to do one of the many optional activities here including horseback riding, hiking, or a jeep safari.
Days 53-55:	Humahuaca – Salta. After entering Argentina we descend from the Altiplano, and travel through the stunning Humahuaca Canyon with its many colourful rock

	<p>formations, giant cacti and the small colonial towns of Humahuaca, Tilcara and Purmamarca, the latter that is famous for its seven-coloured mountain. The land becomes more fertile as we journey towards the picturesque colonial city of Salta, a tourist and handicraft centre. There are many fine colonial buildings and a cathedral with the highest church tower in South America! Other attractions include a cable car ride, excellent shopping and 'Empanadas', small meat pasties for which Salta is famous.</p>
Day 56-57:	<p>Cafayate Gorge – Cafayate – Valles Calchaquies. The road south from Salta leads us through the spectacular Cafayate Gorge, home of a variety of fascinating and colourful rock formations and the entrance to the Andean town of Cafayate. Surrounded by vineyards, you'll be spoilt for choice for wine-tasting and winery tours, with several wineries within 10 minutes walk of the main plaza. Furthermore, the town's other specialities are ice cream, flavoured with the local wine and "vino patero", wine produced by stamping on the grapes! This is also a great town to try out delicious northern Argentinean corn-based food such as humitas, tamales and locro. South of Cafayate we visit the Quilmes ruins, built by the Quilmes Indians on a mountainous site, which offers spectacular views over the surrounding countryside. There is also an optional and highly recommended visit to the regional museum. Heading south out of this area known as the Valles Calchaquies, we camp for one night at a bush camp under the stars, en-route to the south.</p>
Days 58-59:	<p>Valle de La Luna (Moon Valley National Park) and Talampaya National Park. Heading south we drive towards La Rioja and the stunning National Park of Talampaya, situated nearby. Within the deep, red cliffs of the wild-west style canyon you can find all manner of rock formations as well as pre-Colombian petroglyphs. We also take a trip to the magnificent Valley of the Moon National Park, which is a paleontologist's paradise with a multitude of bizarre and beautiful rock formations and 200-million year old fossil remains. This entire area is famous for its wine and olive production.</p>
Days 60-61:	<p>Mendoza. Our next stop is Mendoza, quite possibly the prettiest big city in Argentina with its tree-lined streets and shady plazas with the backdrop of the snow capped Andes. Mendoza is situated on the 33rd parallel and wine lovers will tell you that the world's finest wines come from the 33rd parallel. Vineyards and wineries surround the city, each offering wine tasting tours so you may want to go and decide for yourself. In addition to the wineries, you might also want to visit the "bodega" of Chandon and indulge in a little sparkling wine tasting as well. Mendoza also has many fine restaurants and cafes, and for those who are a little more inclined towards action and adventure there are optional opportunities for white water rafting, trekking and hiking and a whole host of other outdoor activities.</p>
Days 62-64:	<p>Mendoza to Santiago. Today we say goodbye to Argentina and cross the great mountain range of the Andes to Chile. We climb to the Chilean frontier high in the Andes, along the way stopping in the shadow of Mount Aconagua, which at 6,959m above sea level is the highest mountain in the Americas. Further on, we stop en route at Puente del Inca, a striking, natural rock bridge which runs across Las Cuevas river. Here, mineral deposits have created multicoloured rocks, from rust red to golden ochre and burgundy – a fantastic photo opportunity – and after crossing into Chile we descend around 3000m to just above sea level. Our tour ends in Chile's pleasant capital, Santiago, which still retains some of its old charm with a magnificent, tree-lined plaza, dominated by the main cathedral. You might want to catch the changing of the guard at Plaza Constitucion, or take an optional cable car ride up San Cristobal hill for magnificent views of the city and the backdrop of the snow-capped Andes in the distance.</p>

- Days 65-67: Pucon. From Santiago we travel South through the lake district, vineyards and fertile farmland, and onto the picturesque town of Pucon, a small resort on Lake Villarica, nestled below the perfect cone-shaped Volcano Villarica. The area is surrounded by lakes, mountains, forests, rivers and waterfalls and offers many exciting activities. A fabulous optional activity offered here is a trek to the top of the Volcano. It is a tough climb but the views at the top are spectacular, and to be able to look into the crater of this active volcano as it roars softly and belches steam, is an amazing experience. Other activities available in Pucon are white water rafting, horse riding, mountain biking and water sports on the Lake.
- Days 68-71: Bariloche. From here we travel into Argentina and through the spectacular Nahuel Huapi National Park and onwards to Bariloche. Bariloche has a beautiful setting on the shores of Lake Nahuel Huapi. It is a Swiss-like resort town famous for its chocolate, fondue and winter skiing, but also home to many other outdoor activities in the surrounding area particularly in Summer. There are many hiking and mountain biking options around, and some great horse-riding adventures.
- Days 72-74: El Chalten. We finish our journey through this area in the spectacular Argentinean lake district and start the long drive south to El Chalten. We spend a night in the lovely Los Alerces National Park, which has many beautiful lakes and mountain views. The area to the north of here is also famed as once being the home of Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid. They spent time here in the early 20th century attempting to avoid the detectives looking for them from the United States.
- As we follow the long road south, we are treated to many beautiful views of the Andes, and opportunities to see condors, flamingos and the odd armadillo scuttling across the road. El Chalten is a small town dwarfed by the magnificent, surrounding mountains, and now considered to be the trekking capital of Argentina. This is the northernmost section of the Parque Nacional Los Glaciares, and there are countless hiking opportunities branching out in every direction from this little haven. One of the most popular is the trek to the base of Mount Fitzroy. The views of this mountain are breathtaking as its jagged peak punctures the Patagonian sky. There are also many options for horse riding in the surrounding area. Another fantastic day out here is an optional hike on a glacier and ice climbing. After the initial hike to Laguna Torre, which has a glacier running into it, you will then hike onto the glacier after being issued with crampons. You spend a couple of hours hiking around the glacier past many crevasses and ice formations, and all against the spectacular backdrop of Cerro Torre. And to conclude the time on the glacier you receive some instruction on ice climbing and you are then able to have a go for yourself.
- Days 75-76: El Calafate - Moreno Glacier. Leaving El Chalten, we continue south to the next destination of El Calafate. As we approach El Calafate, we drive along Lake Viedma, a spectacular lake with a backdrop of snow-capped peaks and the Glacier Viedma. From here you can take an amazing optional excursion to the spectacular Moreno Glacier, a massive field of ice towering up to 60 metres and reaching four kilometres across. It is an awesome sight to behold, and even more so when massive chunks of ice break off and plunge into the icy water below. Two optional excursions are available here, and both include transport and English-speaking guides. The first is a trip, which includes a hike in the forested area in front of the glacier with a boat trip taking you up close, both of which ensure that you get spectacular views from the best vantage points. After firstly spending some time at the best viewing points, you will be fitted with crampons and can then walk around on the glacier for up to 2 hours.
- Days 77-80: Torres del Paine N.P. From El Calafate we begin our long journey across the

dry, windswept expanse of Patagonia, drive along the shores of Lago Argentino, the third largest lake in South America, re-enter Chile and onto Torres Del Paine National Park.

The spectacular Torres (towers) del Paine National Park is named after its enormous granite towers. It is a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve and occupies an area of 2400 square kilometres. We camp at a beautiful site overlooking Lake Pehoe, with the backdrop of the nearby Cuernos (horns) del Paine. As well as the stunning scenery, the park is home to a variety of fauna and flora, including condors, guanacos and rheas (the South American ostrich). The park is one of the trekking capitals of the world, and with good reason as it has plenty of opportunities for trekking on the many trails.

We spend three full days in the park to enable you to fully enjoy all the park has to offer. A couple of the more popular trails are those going up to the base of the towers themselves, and also the trip to Gray Glacier. The trip to Gray Glacier begins with a boat ride across Lake Pehoe, and then trekking up to a vantage point where you can get fantastic views of this huge glacier. The trek to the base of the towers is a fantastic walk. Not only does it provide beautiful views of the mountains and valleys around, but also breathtaking views of the towers at the end.

Days 81-82:	Punta Arenas. We head south with the destination of the coastal city of Punta Arenas. The city was declared a duty free zone in 1868, and was once a major port before the opening of the Panama canal early in the 20th century. Here you can shop and get bargains at the duty free area.
Days 82-84:	Ushuaia. We proceed south again, and cross the Straits of Magellan towards the Southernmost town in the world, Ushuaia.

Driving towards the Argentinean border, we enter the region of Tierra del Fuego (Land of Fire), where the scenery changes once again into rugged mountain wilderness. Situated in this beautiful setting is the lovely town of Ushuaia. It is perfectly located overlooking the Beagle Channel and with a backdrop of snow-capped peaks behind. From Ushuaia it is possible to take an optional boat excursion onto the Beagle Channel. The boat trip offers the opportunity of not only spectacular views of Ushuaia and surrounding area, but also to see the local wildlife such as sea lions, albatross and many other species of sea birds. You can also make a visit to the nearby Tierra del Fuego National Park where the Pan-American highway ends. Here you will find some wonderful hiking trails through the beautiful beech forests.

Days 85-86:	Southern Patagonia. From Ushuaia we have a long journey north across the open plains of Southern Patagonia. This journey will take 2 to 3 long days driving, requiring a lot of patience until we reach our next destination of Puerto Madryn, gateway to the Valdes Peninsula.
Days 87-89:	Valdes Peninsula. Reaching the Valdes Peninsula we spend a day visiting various sites renowned for sea lions, sea elephants and a variety of bird life. At certain times of the year (July to December) it is also possible to see Southern Right Whales, which gather in great numbers for the breeding season in the waters around the peninsula.
Day 90:	Pampas. Heading north from Puerto Madryn, we have a long journey across the rolling grasslands of the Pampa region. When we cross the Colorado River, this is considered to be the point at which the Patagonia region ends. This is cattle-rearing country and the origin of some of Argentina's best beef.

Days 91-93:	<p>Buenos Aires. Commonly known as the "The Paris of South America", Buenos Aires is a lively city with many attractions it offers fantastic restaurants, shopping and nightlife. Our hotel is centrally located and close to a lot of the major attractions and main shopping streets of Florida and Santa Fe. At Plaza De Mayo you may see the Mothers of the Disappeared and nearby you can find the obelisk and bustling Recoleta. We recommend you take a city tour, which the hotel can organise, for you. This will take you to all the major sights, which are centrally located, and also to the area of La Boca, the home of Buenos Aires most notorious football team, Boca Juniors. Another must in Buenos Aires is a Tango show. Buenos Aires is the home of tango and our hotel can organise for you to see one of these fantastic shows, an opportunity not to be missed. Buenos Aires is a lively, cosmopolitan city with many attractions. From the charming main plaza with government palace, to the many shopping streets and cafes, there is always something to keep you occupied in Buenos Aires. You may wish to see a Tango show in the city where the dance originated or visit the cemetery where Eva Peron is buried.</p>
Days 94-96:	<p>Colonia – Montevideo. We head north and cross into Uruguay to visit the town of Colonia, now a World Heritage Site. Stroll the colonial streets, maybe snack on a Uruguayan chivito, or perhaps kick back and relax on one of the sandy beaches that line the Rio de la Plata. Montevideo, the capital, contains more than half of Uruguay's population and is the country's natural trading centre. It is a delight for lovers of culture. Museums, theatres, exhibitions, shows, popular feasts... there is an intense agenda all year round and the city itself is a collection of art and history.</p>
Days 97-98:	<p>Salto – San Ignacio - Jesuit Ruins. We travel through the rolling hills and citrus groves of western Uruguay to Salto where we can enjoy a couple of days at the thermal springs and spas – this is overlanding at its most luxurious. Onto the Jesuit Ruins of northern Argentina. Once settlements of the Guarani Indians, we take a trip to one of the best-preserved ruins. The Jesuits established many communities in this area of Paraguay and also Northern Argentina, with great success in the 17th and 18th centuries. However, it was their success, which brought about their downfall, as jealous landowners nearby could not compete with their production methods, forcing the Spanish government to expel them in 1767. However, many ruins of these communities remain, and Trinidad is one, which has been very well preserved. While visiting this area we camp at a nearby farm where you can explore by horse or jeep, or just relax by the pool.</p>
Days 99-102:	<p>Iguazu Falls. The town of Foz do Iguazu is our base for exploring the spectacular Iguazu Falls. We spend two full days here taking in the fantastic views from both the Brazilian and Argentinean side of the falls. These are some of the most spectacular waterfalls in the world, with 275 separate falls over a frontage of 2.7 kilometres.</p> <p>Our day trip to the Brazilian side of the Falls will begin with an optional trip to a bird park which houses a fantastic array of not just native birds like Toucans and Macaws, but also other birds from around the world. From here we continue on for our initial breathtaking views of the falls. There are many trails and walkways to explore, revealing more great views. Helicopter rides over the falls are possible in order to shoot the most spectacular photos of all.</p> <p>For our day on the Argentinean side, we are treated to more fantastic views. One of which is the breathtaking Garganta del Diablo, or Devils Throat, where much of the river converges into one section to create an amazing sight. A walkway takes you right out to the edge of this area and you will hear the thundering noise and</p>

	<p>feel the spray well before you reach the edge. There are many other walkways to explore on the Argentinean side as well, where you can easily occupy your day. Another option on the Argentinean side is to take a boat trip right up close to some of the falls where you can really get an idea of the power and volume of the water.</p>
Days 103-105:	<p>Bonito. From Iguazu we continue north to the town of Bonito. Here we spend two full days with many optional activities available. The most popular of these is a trip to what the locals refer to as one of the clearest rivers in the world. The river, fed by natural springs, is kept incredibly clear because of the limestone at the bottom of the river. Here you will have the opportunity to drift down this crystal clear river with a wetsuit, snorkel and mask and gaze at the abundance of different species of fish living there. It is a truly amazing and unique opportunity. Other trips available from Bonito include a trip to the Blue Cave with its amazing colour and formations. There is the possibility to abseil down into other caves and then scuba dive or snorkel through them.</p>
Days 106-109:	<p>Pantanal. We then proceed towards the Pantanal Wetlands where we spend 2 fantastic days exploring this region. The Pantanal Wetlands is an area of 230,000 square kms and houses an abundance of wildlife. From our base camp where we stay in hammocks, we will make various trips into the region, including hikes, horse riding, jeep safaris, and piranha fishing. The wildlife you can see includes caimans, anacondas, giant anteaters and various species of monkeys as well as many different species of birds including macaws and toucans.</p>
Days 110-113:	<p>Eastern Brazil - Parati. From the Pantanal region, we proceed east towards the coast and the beach. This is a long 2-day journey across Brazil, but the beautiful coastline is worth the wait. Arriving at the coast we discover the lovely town of Parati, with its cobblestone streets and quaint little shops. Here we can treat you to a fantastic day out on an old schooner sailing around the nearby islands. Spend the day relaxing on board or swimming in the warm waters and soaking up some sunshine.</p>
Day 114:	<p>Rio de Janeiro. We then head north to Rio one of the worlds most famous cities, and with good reason. No visit to Rio is complete without a trip to the world famous statue of Jesus Christ on the Corcovado mountain, which can be viewed from almost anywhere in the city.</p> <p>Standing 100 feet high on the mountain, the statue commands the best view in town. We advise getting there early in order to beat not only the crowds but also the haze, which covers the city about, mid-morning. Keep an afternoon free to spend at the golden beaches of Copacabana and Ipanema, sunbathing and watching the locals in their element. Visit the many market stalls along the waterfront areas at both beaches. From the beach, head up to Sugarloaf mountain to enjoy a fantastic sunset and a few drinks. Another recommendation is to take a Favela Tour to some of the poorer districts of Rio. It is a very unique and interesting insight into how the local people live.</p> <p>This tour may co-incide with the world's largest party, RIO CARNIVAL!! There can be no better way of ending your mammoth tour of South America than to stay an extra week and enjoy the festivities of this unique and colourful event.</p>
Finishing Hotel:	<p>Florida Hotel Rua Ferreira Viana 81 Flamengo Rio de Janeiro</p>

Tel: ++55-21-2555-6000

Please note: This tour ends on arrival in Rio de Janeiro. Accommodation is not included for the final day of the tour. If you would like to enjoy the festivities of Rio Carnival then please consult Travel Amazing South America with regard to booking our Rio Carnival Accommodation Package (6 days / 5 nights).

Please Note:	<p>Please be aware that arrival times and the itinerary may change due to unforeseen delays or events such as festivals and public holidays. However, we shall endeavour to ensure all sites are visited and that your tour runs as smoothly as possible but please note that Latin America does not run like clockwork, therefore do not expect the streamlined travel arrangements associated with some other continents. Things do not always go to plan; there will be times when you will need to be patient and philosophical about your travels. Conditions in South America can change rapidly and changes to the itinerary may be necessary.</p> <p>Be flexible, you will enjoy your tour much more. We make a point of visiting the indigenous populations of each country you visit, in order to give a true reflection of the country; please treat the local people and their customs with respect.</p> <p>Lastly, your tour leader is always conscious of everybody's views, but sometimes he/she will have to make an unpopular decision and your understanding will be appreciated in these circumstances.</p>
What's Not Included:	All optional excursions and meals unless otherwise stated in the itinerary, visas, pre and post tour accommodation.
Pre Departure Meeting:	<p>The Pre-Departure meeting is held at 6pm THE DAY BEFORE the scheduled departure date. The pre-departure meeting is held to discuss the tour itinerary in more detail, meet your crew and fellow passengers.</p> <p>In addition the crew will check that all passengers have the necessary travel documents, insurance and immunization certificates for the tour. It is IMPORTANT that you attend this meeting. Please advise TRAVEL AMAZING SOUTH AMERICA if you CANNOT attend this meeting.</p> <p>All passengers MUST bring:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Passport.2. Vaccination Certificate.3. Travel Voucher.4. Travel Insurance Policy.
Insurance:	Travel insurance is compulsory for all tours. All clients MUST be insured to cover personal accident, medical expenses, cancellation, curtailment, repatriation, etc. Also, be aware that many activities such as trekking, bungy jumping or white water rafting may not be covered on your insurance policy. If you plan on doing any of these activities please purchase additional insurance. We recommend that you have a photocopy of this document, which you keep separate from the original. If you have not already arranged your own travel insurance then please visit our Travel Insurance page for more information.
Passport:	<p>Please Note: You will not be permitted to join a Tour without travel insurance.</p> <p>Your passport is a valuable document and you should exercise extreme care in keeping it safe. We recommend that you keep your passport on you at all times, preferably in a money belt that is worn under your clothing. It must be valid for</p>

at least six months after the end of your tour and it must have at least one blank page for each visa required. We advise that you take copies of relevant pages in your passport and any visas that you may purchase in case of loss or damage. Your tour leader will require your passport details at the pre-departure meeting. Again, we recommend that you have a photocopy of all passport details, kept separate.

PLEASE NOTE IF YOUR TOUR INCLUDES THE INCA TRAIL, WE MUST HAVE YOUR FULL NAME, PASSPORT DETAILS AND DATE OF BIRTH AS SOON AS POSSIBLE IN ORDER TO SECURE YOUR TREKKING PERMIT. ALL PERMITS ARE SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY.

Visa Requirements: It is important that you obtain the appropriate visas before you embark on your South America trip. Please consult your Travel Agent or relevant embassy for all details such as opening hours or costs.

EACH CLIENT IS SOLELY RESPONSIBLE FOR OBTAINING ALL NECESSARY VISAS BEFORE JOINING A TOUR.

Please note that clients travelling on SA6 Buenos Aires to Rio tours should be aware that Brazilian visas (if required) can take up to 3-4 working days to issue. We strongly advise that you arrive into Buenos Aires at least 4 working days before your trip starts in order to ensure that you have sufficient time to obtain your Brazilian visa.

We for changes in regulations or requirements for visas. The information provided is given in good faith.

Medical Information and Vaccinations: Vaccinations:
It is necessary to obtain an International Certificate of Vaccination before travelling. This is a record of your injections and should be issued with your first inoculation. Make sure that after each injection your certificate is dated, signed and stamped.

Compulsory Inoculations:
Yellow Fever for Ecuador, Paraguay and Peru but only if arriving from an infected area.

Please refer to the Yellow Fever information under the Latest News section on our website. Yellow Fever vaccination is now recommended for parts of Argentina, Bolivia (if arriving from Paraguay or Brazil) and parts of Brazil. We strongly recommend that you consult your GP or Travel Clinic at least several weeks prior to departure to check current Yellow Fever vaccination requirements. Your Yellow Fever vaccination certificate should be carried with you at all times.

Recommended inoculations:
Yellow fever, hepatitis A, diphtheria, typhoid, tetanus and polio.

We also recommend:

- A dental check-up prior to travelling.
- That you know your blood group in case of emergency.
- That if you have any pre-existing medical conditions which might affect you on tour, you make these known to your tour leader and your Travel Amazing South

America at the time of your booking.

Medical Supplies:

We advise that all passengers bring along their own personal first aid kit. Below is a list of some recommended items:

Band Aids/Bandages, Laxatives, Upset stomach remedy, Anti-diarrhoea remedy, Panadol/Aspirin, Rehydration remedy, Antiseptic cream/powder, Sterile dressing, Any relevant course of medication such as contraceptive pills.

A complete Travellers Medical Pack can be purchased for approximately US\$25 at most Vaccination Centres, Chemists and outdoor travel shops.

Malaria: Prophylactic tablets are essential in some areas of South America. They are prescribed by your vaccinating doctor and should be taken as directed.

Security:

- We recommend that you do not take unnecessary valuables with you. Wearing jewellery and expensive watches will attract attention.
- A money belt, or something similar, worn close to your body is the best way to carry passports, airline tickets and money.
- DO NOT leave any valuables in ANY hotel room, please use SAFETY DEPOSIT BOXES. Items are left at your own risk.
- Pickpockets operate everywhere, particularly in tourist areas and in crowded markets; you must always exercise care. Be aware that anything left lying around will also be liable to theft.
- Overland vehicles carry a safe on board. We recommend using it to store your valuables. They also have secure doors and windows but it is never foolish to be cautious.

Books and Reading Material: You might like to read up on the destinations that you are about to visit as these cities all have interesting sites and histories. We recommend a variety of guidebooks such as Lonely Planet, The Rough Guide and Insight Guides. All these publications have good general information as well as more specific country information that will help orientate you in the countries you visit.

Money: We suggest passengers budget for between US\$25-30 per day for personal expenses, souvenirs, evening out, alcoholic drinks etc. Be aware that some countries are more expensive than others and that if you are travelling through several your expenses will vary enormously. Similarly there will be some days when you spend nothing at all and others when you exceed your budget.

Take your money in US dollars only. This is the only foreign currency readily exchanged in Latin America.

Traveller's cheques should be AMERICAN EXPRESS. American Express is the most widely accepted.

Cash is far easier to exchange than Travellers Cheques, but also more risky as once lost, is irreplaceable. However, we do recommend that you take some US dollars cash in small denominations (\$10 and \$20).

In many countries (except Brazil), you may exchange US Dollars traveller's cheques for US cash, or retrieve US dollars cash from ATMs (with a credit card), usually for a small commission but please do not rely solely on this option.

	<p>Credit cards are accepted frequently, particularly in the larger cities. They can also be used to get money from ATMs.</p> <p>Visa, MasterCard and American Express are the most widely accepted credit cards. Visa being the most useful.</p>
Local Customs:	Please use your discretion and be sensitive to cultural differences in the countries that you visit, in particular visits to religious buildings and when taking photographs. Your Tour Leader will advise you of any specific customs to observe.
Luggage and Personal Equipment:	<p>How much should I take?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The best rule for packing is to limit your self to a weight limit of 20 KGs. It will inconvenience you and your fellow passengers if you bring more. If your luggage does not arrive at the airport, please inform your crew at the Pre Departure Meeting. • A frameless or internally framed backpack is the best way to carry your belongings since it is easy to lift on and off vehicles. Please note that we do not recommend that passengers bring suitcases. • A small daypack is practical for keeping general items (e.g. camera, books, wallets etc.) at hand when your main pack is out of reach. It is also handy for day trips and excursions. This can also be used for carrying 2 days of clothing so it is not always necessary to unload the large backpacks every night. • Sleeping Bag - a good quality sleeping bag, rated for sub-zero conditions is the best for tours, which travel through the Andes and Patagonia. You can purchase extra blankets in South America cheaply. We recommend a Four Seasons sleeping bag. • Inner Sheet - for your sleeping bag. Can also be used as a sleeping bag when it's hot. • Sleeping Mat - A self-inflating mat. "Thermarest" is best, although a compressed foam mat is adequate. • Mosquito Net -if you wish to sleep outdoors. All tents have built in mosquito nets. • We also recommend that you keep your passport, credit cards travellers cheques etc. on you at all times, preferably in a money belt worn under your clothes. <p>TRAVEL TIP: You might be tempted to buy a few souvenirs here and there, so leave a little room for those extra purchases!!</p>
Climate Information:	<p>Travel Tip: Always bring a lightweight, waterproof jacket and/or an umbrella even during the height of summer - this should prepare you for anything!</p> <p>In Patagonia temperatures can fall to below zero, even in the height of summer. Be prepared for very cold conditions. You should bring a warm jacket, gloves and woolly hat if you are doing a trip in Patagonia.</p>
Personal Effects:	<p>We suggest that you take into account the time of year you will be travelling, and pack accordingly to the season. Quick drying clothes are recommended, and at many hotels there are laundry facilities. Your tour leader will advise where this is possible.</p> <p>Personal Effects: Camera & film, Spare passport photos, Water bottle, Money belt, Sewing kit, Sunhat/Sunglasses, Music cassettes /CDs, Books, Wet Ones, Soap to wash</p>

clothes, Writing materials, Swiss Army knife, Calculator, Personal toiletries, including tampons, Contraceptives, Insect Repellent, Sunscreen.

NOTE: If you wear glasses, it is advisable to bring a spare pair since opticians are uncommon. If you wear contact lenses you may find that climatic changes and dust can create visual irritation, therefore, it is advisable to bring a pair of glasses.

Language: Spanish is the language most widely spoken in the countries we visit in Latin America but English will be spoken in the larger cities. You might like to take the time before your trip to read up on the country you will be visiting and perhaps learn a few words of the language. Your effort will always be welcomed and will make your trip all the more enjoyable.

Photography: Most passengers will travel with digital cameras. Should you run out of memory you can download your photos onto CD at the local internet cafes or camera shops on your tour. Alternatively, you may be able to purchase extra memory cards.

With regards to film, all types of camera film are readily available in South America. However, it is often cheaper to purchase it in your country of origin or through duty free.

Please remember, we are guests in the countries through which we travel and we may sometimes inadvertently cause offence by taking photographs without first asking permission. Most Latin American countries have very strict rules about taking photos of army, police or any official personnel; restrictions apply at borders, bridges and any government building. Please exercise care in this regard as the penalty may be to have your camera confiscated. It is absolutely forbidden by law to take photos at any borders, as they are all active military installations.

Food: We provide hearty meals, and your tour cost covers most breakfasts, lunches and dinners while camping, as well as some road lunches when travelling on the vehicle.

Most food substances are stored on the truck in bulk quantities including all types of condiments, pastas, rice etc. Markets in the countries through which we travel are always well stocked and we purchase as much fresh food as possible including fruit, vegetables and meats on the road. Those designated as cooks on the rotating roster system help in buying, preparing and cooking the food for the group under the guidance of your Tour Leader. The variety of food will differ, as you will be visiting a number of different countries. Everyone helps out with the cooking and all are encouraged to put their culinary skills (or lack there of!) to the test over the campfire! You will be surprised with what you can create over the campfire with a little imagination!

Vegetarians or those with special dietary needs or allergies can also be catered for however in some countries the type of food may be limited. Please let the Reservations team know your special requirements as soon as possible so we can do all possible to assist your needs. Please note we will attempt to provide for these special requests, however they cannot be guaranteed - please ensure the tour leader is aware of any special requests.

When camping, we usually prepare and cook our own meals, at other times whilst staying in hotels it is more convenient to eat out. When staying in hotels, meals

are the responsibility of each passenger. This allows you a chance to try the local cuisine. The amount of time spent in hotels on each tour section is given in the brochure and in the itineraries. These are flexible and each tour will differ from the next.

Local Restaurants - Latin American food is delicious, nutritious and varied and local restaurants provide an important insight into local ways of life. There is always an excellent range of restaurants to choose from. An evening meal can range from US\$1 up to US\$20. Most travellers spend an average of US\$5 to US\$10 plus drinks. Local alcoholic drinks are generally inexpensive even in restaurants and bars.

Vegetarians are easily catered for.

Accommodation: We have put a lot of thought and effort into locating the most appropriate type of accommodation for each tour. Overland tours will spend most time in campsites and some time in hotels as it is much more appropriate to the overland style of travel.

CAMPING - Camping is always great fun and our vehicles are loaded with all the first class equipment needed. Campsites vary from established sites with all facilities to the occasional roadside stop or free camp. We use large two person tents, and if you are traveling alone we'll team you up with another group member of the same gender.

HOTELS - We choose our hotels, guesthouses and hostels for their location, comfort, security and hygiene standards. All are located near the city centre usually within easy walking distance of services and facilities. Most rooms are on a twin, double or triple share basis with private bathrooms, although there may be the occasional multi share dormitory room.

Accommodation is not included in the city of departure or arrival (unless within the specified tour dates). Passengers doing a combination tour will have accommodation included when passing through a joining city (maximum 2 nights) providing they have booked on the combination tour code. You should allow US\$25 to US\$30 per day to cover food and accommodation during this time.

Pre & Post Tour Accommodation: All our tours begin with a pre-departure meeting when you meet your tour leader and fellow travellers. If you wish to spend a few additional days in your start city before the departure of your tour, then we can arrange accommodation for you. On the last day of the tour we usually arrive at our final destination in the late afternoon, when the tour ends. If you would like to book accommodation for that night or even stay additional nights, we will be more than happy to arrange this for you as well. All our accommodation is carefully chosen, conveniently located, clean and comfortable. (All rates per person per night and subject to availability).

Participation: The more you put into your tour the greater the experience you will get from your trip. It is all about participation and mucking in with your fellow passengers!

Participation is a key factor on a tour of this nature and everyone is expected to pull their weight and get involved with the daily duties (e.g. cooking, cleaning and food shopping). The most successful trips are those where people become involved.

This is not only the best way to get to know your fellow passengers; while

	<p>cooking dinner or flapping dry the dishes, but also the local people while you are putting your bartering skills to the test at the local markets!</p> <p>Please note: The longer journeys are combinations of shorter tours. Lima, La Paz and Buenos Aires are also pickup and drop off points for passengers so new faces and personalities will join the tour.</p>
Tipping	<p>Tipping porters and trekking crew is a tradition on the Inca Trail and Lares treks. However, tipping is at your discretion: please do not feel obliged to do so.</p> <p>On the Inca Trail you will be expected to tip US\$12-15 for general porters, cooks and trekking crew and a further US\$5 for the porters who carried your personal allowance of 9kgs. These tips are shared out amongst the trekking crew on the 3rd night. It is also customary to voluntarily tip the guides after the Machu Picchu tour on the 4th day.</p>
Staying in Touch:	<p>Whilst on tour you will probably want to stay in touch with family and friends. There are several ways of doing this:</p> <p>Mobile Phone – Before departing your home country check with your phone supplier to see if it compatible with the mobile phone networks in the countries that you are traveling to, and how much will it cost to use abroad. You can opt to use an International SIM Card.</p> <p>Email – Internet Cafes are very cheap and popular, and you are sure to come across several during your tour. If you haven't done so already, set up a free Google Mail, Hotmail, or Yahoo email account which you can then access from any computer. Internet Cafes will charge a nominal fee for using their computers.</p> <p>Blog – You can keep your friends and family updated by blogging about your adventures. You can create your free blog by registering on our forums.</p> <p>Postcards – The good ol' fashioned postcard. But you will probably get home before the postcard does!</p>
Tour Feedback:	<p>Tour Questionnaire - We would like to hear about your experiences on tour. Seven days after your tour ends you will automatically receive a feedback questionnaire via email. If we do not have your email address you can still write a review on the tour page you've done on our site.</p> <p>Email - If you have any specific comments about your tour then please write to us by email at tours [at] travel-amazing-southamerica.com</p>
Drug Policy:	<p>Under no circumstances are any illegal drugs allowed on any part of the trip. Anyone discovered in possession of any such drugs, will be asked to leave the tour immediately without question or refund.</p>
Inca Trail:	<p>Introduction</p> <p>This is a moderate to strenuous hiking trek to the Lost City of Machu Picchu. The gateway for this trek is Cuzco, where passengers leave their luggage at the hotel and only need to take their mats, sleeping bags and personal items necessary for the duration of the excursion (4 days).</p> <p>Porters</p> <p>Porters are included. General porters carry tents, food, cooking equipment. We also include personal porters for approx 6kgs per person. They carry sleeping bags, clothes etc. You need to carry a day pack with water bottle, jacket, camera</p>

etc. As porters are split between group members, 6kgs is a rough guide as to the weight that a personal porter will carry. Additionally, it may sometimes be possible to hire extra porters on Day 2 (the most difficult day of the trek) if you require, to carry day packs etc to second campsite. Approx cost is USD25 - this is not organised through us or our ground handler. Foam sleeping mats are provided by the ground handler, weighing 800g and counted as part of the 6kgs carried by personal porters.

Tipping

Tipping is entirely at your discretion although it is commonplace for trekkers to tip their guides and porters on the during the Inca Trail and Lares treks. We recommend you carry approximately USD35-40 to cover the tipping tradition.

Itinerary and Distances

This is a guideline to the average distances and altitudes during the Inca Trail (please note all the information is a guideline only and every person must judge their own physical condition personally). Should you believe you are not fit enough for this hike, you can go to Machu Picchu by train, please advise your tour leader.

- Day 1 - trailhead to first camp Huayllabamaba (2700 m), distance 13 km, an average hiking time 7 hours with stops.
- Day 2 - hardest day, ascending to 4200m, distance 15KM, average hiking time 8 hours with breaks.
- Day 3 - very scenic day with many Ruins en route, distance 14 KM, camp at Winaywayna 2700m. 7-8 hours hiking.
- Day 4 - start in the dark to get to Machu Picchu at sunrise, 3 hours hike and free morning to explore Machu Picchu. If you wish to climb Wayna Picchu, please co-ordinate this with your guide as the park has restricted climbing times and numbers. Return to Aguas Calientes (bus down from Machu Picchu payable locally). For those who have hired personal porters, blue sacks will be given out a lunchtime for you to transport your belongings back to Cusco. Train back to Ollantaytambo.

Permit Availability

Availability of Inca Trail permits is limited, particularly during high season when the number of tourists wishing to walk the Inca Trail is greater than the number of permits available. Whilst we will endeavour to organise an Inca Trail permit for you, these are subject to availability and are not guaranteed. In the event that permits for the Inca Trail are unavailable, we will advise you as soon as possible about the two possible alternatives for reaching Machu Picchu 1- The 4 day Lares trek and 2- The 2 day Classic Train trip. Our website tour departure dates are updated frequently to indicate availability or non-availability of Inca Trail permits, however, permit availability can change with little warning; whilst we endeavour to keep this information as current as possible, we cannot guarantee permit availability.

Passport Details

Please ensure that you provide Travel Amazing South America with your passport details at the time of booking. Failure to do so may mean that you miss out on an Inca Trail permit as these can sell out very quickly. We will apply for your Inca Trail permit with the passport details which you provide us at the time of booking.

If you hold more than one passport you must advise us which passport details we should use in order to apply for the Inca Trail permit.

Pre-payment of Inca Trail deposit

The cost of the Inca Trail deposit must be paid in full at the time of booking. This is in addition to the tour deposit and is non refundable. Inca Trail permits will be applied for ONLY once full payment of deposit, and written confirmation of your full name, passport number and date of birth have been received. These deposits are included in the total tour price, and this amount will be deducted from the tour balance once paid.

Late Permit Applications

Late Inca Trail permit applications may occasionally incur an extra charge as we may need to organise an additional guide and pay for their trekking permit in order to secure your permit. We will advise you at the time of booking.

Changes and Amendments

Note that fees apply if you need to make changes and/ or amendments to your Inca Trail permit due to factors such as passport loss or renewal, illness, failure to provide us with correct details, date changes and tour transfers.

No Permit Availability

We can normally arrange the alternative 4 day Lares trek. Lares departures generally coincide with high season. Due to lesser demand and inclement weather, departures on the Lares Trail are limited during the low season. If there is no availability for either the Inca Trail or the Lares trek, we can normally arrange for you to spend 2 extra days in Cusco and then take the 2 day Classic Train trip to Machu Picchu, where you will meet with your original group for the guided visit to Machu Picchu. Please note that if we are unable to secure you an Inca Trail permit and you do not wish to hike the alternative Lares trek or take the Classic Train trip, your deposit will be returned to you.

High Season/ Low Season Information

November to March is considered low season. We can often obtain permits at short notice during this time. April to October is considered high season. We require your passport details as far in advance as possible during this time. The trail is closed during the month of February for maintenance. If your tour coincides with the Inca Trail closure, we can normally offer Lares or the Classic Train.

Map:

