Peru Trip FAQs

\* Will there be cell and internet service when we are in the mountain villages?

* **Yes, but you will have spotty and slow service. In Chivay, you can go into restaurants in the local square to use the internet and Pedro's cell phone will be the "community phone" to use for incoming and outgoing calls.**

\* Is there electricity?  110 or 220?

* **220 volts. Plugs A, B & C. If you want to use a 110-volt appliance in Peru, you’ll need to buy a**[**power adapter**](http://goeurope.about.com/od/electricityineurope/tp/power_adapters.htm)**. But always check before spending money on an adapter, as many modern laptops and digital cameras can safely take both 110 and 220 volts (they are dual voltage). So if you're**[**taking a laptop to Peru**](http://goperu.about.com/od/perupostphoneinternet/fl/Taking-a-Laptop-to-Peru.htm)**, you'll probably only need a plug adapter.**

\* Do we need to bring bottled water with us?

  **No. You will be able to buy bottled water there at a much better price.**

\* Are there mosquitoes in late June in the mountain villages?  Do we need mosquito netting?

* **There will be no mosquitoes with malaria in the Colca Canyon area where you will be staying and virtually none in the area to worry about. The areas you would need to worry in Peru would be in the Amazon areas as well as Machu Picchu for both mosquitoes and possibly malaria. These two places are too far away from the Colca Canyon region of the Andes Mountains to be worried. Since ICN is based in the Colca Canyon and Arequipa, mosquitoes are not a factor and never have been on any service trip.**

\* Do we need to bring sleeping bags or air mattresses?

* **No, you should have all of the necessary bedding supplies. However, a towel to dry off may be needed.**

\* Do we need some type of document from ICN to say we are there to do mission work at security/customs?

* **No. When you go through customs, mark that you are going for a vacation or holiday. This is the cleanest way to always go through customs. As for working in the villages, this will all be arranged by ICN and our workers in the villages. Therefore, documents, clearance and security arrangements will not be a concern of yours and will be prearranged.**

    \*Will we need to pay any exit or entrance fees into the country?

* **This can vary. Many times the taxes for exiting Peru are in the ticket price. However, sometimes they are not. Therefore, please check online for the most current fees. As of 2015 the fees were roughly $7.00 usd leaving Arequipa and the mountain area and roughly $35.00 usd leaving Lima. They take no credit cards only cash. There should be money machines around but they will charge a fee.**

\* Where is the best place to exchange currency?

* **The best place to exchange your cash will be in Arequipa. Ask who has the best rate as they can vary. Take the largest bills possible (preferably the newest in hundred dollar bills your bank can provide) and exchange in the largest sum possible to get the best rate. Therefore, you can combine the team money for one total exchange and divide per person the total with the rate the bank exchanged for you. This will be the best rate for your dollar.**
* **Chivay also has a bank in the square but the rate is much lower. During our last trip to Peru the rate in Arequipa was 3.8 to 1 usd and in Arequipa it was 3.3 to 1 usd. This can be significant when working with larger sums of money. This rate alone works out to roughly a $15.00 usd difference per every $100.00.**

\* What type of food will we be eating?

* **The food in Peru is very good. You can choose to eat at restaurants every day or ICN can make your meals. At restaurants you can expect to get almost any kind of food, including Chinese, Italian, salads, soups, chicken and rice or vegetables, fish, etc.**
* **If you are honored enough to have them cook for you in the villages, you will most likely be served potatoes, rice, fish and guinea pig (which is their most expensive and favored meat). If you are lucky they will serve you chicken but this is rather rare. It is a high honor for them to spend their small amount of money on guests from outside the country.**

\* Do we need to get medication for elevation sickness?

* **Yes. The medicine is called Diamox. It should be taken a day before entering the mountains. This can be prescribed by your personal doctor or a travel doctor. This medicine can also be bought in certain places in Peru.**

\* Do we need to be able to speak Spanish?

* **No, you will always have an ICN director with you who can translate for you. In fact, you may even have some of the former Matsiko children providing a helping hand in this area.**

\* What gifts can we bring for the village children?

* **All gifts can be worked out with us in advance. We have found that to bring larger gifts, it is much better to send the money to ICN and we can have our directors purchase the requests directly in Peru. Doing this saves travel space, extra bag payments, valuable baggage weight and the logistics of travel with multiple gifts. Gifts can range from candy, books, small toys to whatever your heart desires. You will personally have the opportunity to deliver all the gifts to children in the villages!**

\* What types of clothing will we need?

* **Pack for weather in the upper 60's / low 70's in Arequipa as the climate there is very mild. The sun can become very intense in some seasons and can burn you fast. Therefore, sunscreen is always a must.**
* **The weather in the Colca Canyon and villages near Chivay will be 60's in the day time (sometimes can peak higher too with an intense sun) followed by later afternoons and evenings in the 30's. Therefore, pack accordingly.**
* **The summer and winter times are opposite from the USA and western countries. Therefore, in the winter, the degrees can also dip to low temperatures of as much as 10 degrees from what is listed.**

\* What vaccinations do you recommend we get prior to the trip?

* **There are no vaccinations recommended specifically for Peru. However, it is always best to be current on your basic immunizations, including Hepatitis, Tetanus, MMR, and Typhoid.**
* **Before travelling, it is always advised to consult with your personal doctor and/or a travel doctor. Also check the Center for Disease Control website (**[**http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list**](http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list)**) for additional travel recommendations.**

\* Can we bring a guitar or other musical instrument?  Is that a good idea or not?

* **Absolutely yes. If you love something that is wholesome, good, and fun then chances are the children will as well too!**

.\* Which airline should we fly with?

* **You can take any airlineand make sure it goes*all the way to Arequipa. If not, then to Lima and*you can arrange the round trip *on a local airline like Lan, Taco or Avianca (they are all good).***

What are the living conditions and travel arrangements like?

* **The living conditions can be like that of a summer camp all the way to a 5 star hotel. You must state what you wish. ICN can arrange for modest conditions at a flat rate and if somebody wants something extra, this can easily (and commonly) be arranged and that person would pay the difference is all.**
* **Transportation, like everywhere, is very expensive. Gas costs more that in the states. With this in consideration, private transport for the group will be arranged by ICN as much as possible, and when needed, the best seats will be arranged on public transport (which is still nice).**