



**TOUR INFORMATION FOR PERU:  
Machu Picchu and the Manu-Kosñipata Road**

*These notes are designed to help prepare for your tour. Please read carefully.*

**ENTERING PERU:** United Kingdom citizens will need a passport, which is valid for six months beyond the intended length of stay. A visa is not required. You will have been given an entry card to fill in on the 'plane and this needs to be presented with your passport. Make sure you put this card somewhere safe after you have entered the country as you will need to present it again on your departure. Citizens of other nations should contact the nearest Peruvian Embassy for entry requirements. No vaccination certificates are required in order to enter Peru. A Certification of yellow fever vaccination is not required unless you are arriving within six days of leaving an area infected.

Throughout Peru, you will be asked to present your passport with tourist entry stamp to check into hotels. It is also necessary to show your entry stamp to board the train to Machu Picchu as well as to enter the ruins.

It is always a good idea to take a photocopy of your passport and air ticket with you when travelling abroad. They can prove invaluable in helping you get replacements if your originals are lost or stolen. Obviously, you should keep the photocopies in a separate bag to the originals.

**INTRODUCTORY MEETING:** There will be an introductory meeting at 18.00 on Day 1 of the tour at our hotel in Lima. This informal meeting gives the leader the opportunity to introduce everyone to each other and to let you know generally what to expect on the trip - pace of the tour, daily routine, etc. After the meeting, we will have dinner.

You may be tempted by convenient flights arriving in Lima late that evening, however if you elect to arrive late in the evening of Day 1, please be aware that our flight to Cusco will probably depart early on Day 2, so you may only get a few hours' sleep that night. Please note too that the late flights into Lima can encounter problems with flight delays and baggage loss. If you can't arrive before early evening, we encourage you to consider arriving a day early.

**END OF TOUR:** On the last tour we departed Cusco for Lima at midday. We recommended that the earliest flight home from Lima should depart after 16.30.

**TIME DIFFERENCE:** Lima is 5 hours behind Greenwich Mean Time.

**CURRENCY:** The local currency is the Nuevo Sol (PEN). We will make arrangements to change money in Cusco. US currency can be changed into PEN without limit in *casas de cambio* in Lima and Cusco. US dollars are generally accepted at all hotels, lodges, and stores. Mastercard, Visa, American Express and Diners Club cards are accepted in some stores in Lima and Cusco. ATM machines, accepting most international credit cards, are also available in Lima and Cusco.

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**LANGUAGE:** Spanish and Quechua are the official languages of Peru. Spanish is spoken everywhere. Our leader will speak Spanish and you will not be required to converse in the language. However, you may want to consider bringing a Spanish phrase book. It may be helpful to you in negotiating simple hotel and restaurant situations, or speaking with the boat crew when no leader is around.

**CLIMATE:** At the time of our visit, the austral spring, coastal Lima is seasonally foggy, damp, and chilly, necessitating a sweater. Cusco, an Andean town, is cold at night and early in the day (potentially down to near freezing). During the afternoon, it can be very bright and sun protection should be used. At Wayqecha, morning could be in the low 40°F, but in the lowlands expect temperatures in the 70s to high 80°F with high humidity. Rain is probable in the eastern Andes and lowlands. To deal with all climatic contingencies we recommend light gloves and a rain jacket that could double as a windbreaker and a sweater for the highlands and light weight warm weather clothes for the lowlands. A compact umbrella is essential for birding in light rain.

**ALTITUDE:** This tour involves two days at elevations over 11,000 feet – one pass is at 13,700 feet (4170 m). If you have a heart problem, please consult your doctor concerning these higher elevations. If you would like to avoid the typical milder effects of elevation sickness (headache, nausea), the recommended prophylaxis is acetazolamide, a very effective drug (available on prescription or over the counter in Peru).

**PACE OF THE TOUR:** Sunrise in southern Peru this time of year is around 06:00 and sunset is at about 17:40. We plan to be in the field at dawn, with breakfast at about 05:30 each day in order to be out during the best birding hours. Except on travel days, we schedule time off after lunch for an hour or so before a late afternoon outing. We always have *at least* an hour off before dinner each day and typically end most days, having eaten and completed the day's bird lists, by 20.00. On some days, we'll schedule optional owling/nightjar outings either in the evening or before dawn.

We will be going over a pass at 13,700 feet (4170m) on the third day of the tour where we will likely get out and look around bit, with short, easy walks. We'll then spend time at a lower pass at around 11,500 feet (3500 m) and then end up at our lodge for the night at about 9600 feet (2925 m), and much of the next morning. After that we'll continue downhill to much more comfortable elevations. Most, if not all, of our birding in the first few days of the tour will be done while walking on roads. At Villa Carmen almost all our walking will be on trails. The longer walks are about two miles in length on even ground, but even on the shorter ones we go slowly and spend a lot of time standing and looking. Trails are mostly level, but there are some short but steep inclines where the trails cross ravines, and footing can be very unstable with rock and roots in places. Some trails at Villa Carmen could be muddy or even have short stretches of standing water; rubber boots are recommended here. Anyone with balance issues should carry a hiking stick.

When on the road we'll be quite close to the bus, but one should be prepared for long periods of standing and walking slowly. A small travel stool is handy for those who find this tiring. The forest trails may be muddy in spots, and short roadside vegetation could be wet from dew or rains, so waterproof footgear is highly recommended – waterproof hiking boots or even rubber boots are best, but if you don't mind having wet feet, a cheap pair of trainers would also work, as long as you have something dry and clean to change into back at the room (or even in the bus).

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**HEALTH:** It is essential that you contact your own doctor to obtain the latest information on the regions you are visiting. Please contact your doctor well in advance of your tour's departure as some medication must be initiated weeks before the period of possible exposure.

It is recommended that you are up-to-date on routine vaccinations including your yearly flu-jab. It is further recommended that most travellers have protection against Hepatitis A and Typhoid. We suggest that everyone come with an up-to-date tetanus booster.

Yellow Fever vaccination is recommended but is not required to enter Peru unless you are arriving from other tropical American or African countries.

Peru is considered to be of low risk for contracting malaria. While malaria is not common in the Manu area, it does exist, and it is recommended that an appropriate antimalarial drug has a greatly reduced chance of contracting the disease. Useful information on all aspects of malaria, including how to reduce your chances of being bitten can be found at the website <http://www.preventingmalaria.info>.

Insects: Many potential health problems can be prevented by adequate protection against insects. Even when mosquitoes may be sparse, biting gnats and chiggers can still be a nuisance. To be protected, bring plenty of spray repellent and wear long sleeves and pants when in the field. We recommend using insect repellents with a concentration of DEET of at least 20%, and remember that airlines usually do not allow aerosols; a pump spray or cream is best. Care must be taken, however, to avoid getting the DEET repellent on optical equipment as DEET dissolves some rubber and plastics and can damage coated lenses. Camping supply stores carry some alternatives that contain natural products and aren't corrosive.

In the Neotropics, chiggers are the main invertebrate nuisance, causing itchy and often persistent welts, usually on ankles and waistbands, a day after the nearly microscopic critters have imbibed their fill of externally digested epidermis and have fallen off otherwise undetected. The best prevention against chiggers (and ticks) is to treat your clothing with permethrin **one to a few days before you leave home**. This non-staining, odourless chemical is non-toxic to humans and protective on clothing through several launderings. Camping supply stores sell sprays containing 0.5% permethrin, while online sources also offer pump sprays as well as a more economical 10% concentrate which you dilute and then treat clothing by soaking it in a large bag and then hanging it out to dry; be sure to look into this option well in advance of the tour, especially if you live in a cooler, moister climate.

Anyone who is unusually sensitive to insect bites and stings (ants, wasps) should consider bringing an antihistamine such as Benadryl. Although pharmacies in Peru are excellent and well-supplied they are impossible to visit during this tour's schedule, so bring enough medications to last the duration of the trip. A first-aid kit will be available at all times.

One can never completely escape the risk of parasites or fungal infections. We avoid tap water but filtered and bottled water are readily available. Gastrointestinal problems are always a possibility while travelling; you may want to bring Imodium or some other reliable anti-diarrhea medication. You may wish to bring a broad-spectrum antibiotic in case of stubborn bacterial infections.

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We do not often encounter snakes and take time to observe them whenever possible; most are not venomous, and venomous ones are not aggressive; in any event, a small torch or headlamp is a necessity for navigating the paths between your rooms and dining areas at each lodge in the evenings. At times we will be remote, and while the lodges have emergency medical supplies, professional medical assistance will be several hours away from some of them. It may be difficult to obtain any special medication during the tour, so bring all you are likely to need.

For further information on health advice refer to the Medical Advisory Services for Travellers Abroad website [www.masta-travel-health.com](http://www.masta-travel-health.com)

**ACCOMMODATION:** Our hotels and lodges are always among the best available, comfortable and modern, and all have rooms with private baths. In Lima, we'll stay in a standard modern airport hotel. Elsewhere on the tour, our accommodation are more basic eco-lodge quality, but still very nice, wooden construction with hot water and private baths. Single accommodation cannot be guaranteed at Villa Carmen.

At Pillahuata, we stay at Wayqecha Lodge, a biological research station perched on the edge of a wild ravine overlooking the endless cloud forest of the Kosñipata Valley. Facilities include 10 twin rooms (each with two twin beds). Each room has recently been remodeled to contain a private bathroom. Electricity for charging batteries is available for a limited time in the evenings in the dining hall, and internet is very slow. The elevation here is about 9,600 feet (2925 m); temperatures may drop to 45° F (7° C) at night, and in the humidity, it can feel colder than that. Satellite Wi-Fi is available in the evenings when the generator is running, though sometimes is also turned on during the day with solar-charged batteries.

At San Pedro, we'll stay at either Cock of the Rock Lodge or Manu Paradise Lodge. Both are situated in the pristine cloud forest of the mountains of Manu just a few minutes' drive from a spectacular Andean Cock-of-the-rock lek furnished with a viewing platform to observe these colourful birds during their dawn displays. Facilities at Cock of the Rock Lodge include twelve large spacious bungalows with private toilets and two single beds in most cabins. There is no electricity in the rooms yet; lighting is by candle and lantern but there is a small generator available for charging batteries for a limited time each evening in the dining hall. There is a large dining area and lounge overlooking a feeding station for birds. Manu Paradise is more hotel-like with rooms in two adjacent two-story buildings that also house the dining room. Hummingbird feeders are also in the garden here. Hot water is provided by gas heaters in all places. There is no reliable wifi in San Pedro.

Villa Carmen Research Station, just outside of the town of Pilcopata, has six beautiful, newly constructed cabins with private bathrooms, hot water, and full-time electricity. Wi-Fi is usually available in the dining area.

As is typical in the tropics, occasionally, small lizards, amphibians, mammals, or unusual insects may visit a hotel room, especially in the lower elevations.

**LAUNDRY:** Laundry services are available at varying fees at Cock of The Rock Lodge, Manu Paradise Lodge, Villa Carmen, and in Machu Picchu. At all but the latter, at least a day and a half is needed for return of clothing, depending on weather, as laundry is air dried; you may find it more convenient to wash your own in small batches.

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**ELECTRICITY:** Where available, electrical current is 220V AC and, on the whole, most outlets accept European two-pronged plugs, however some sockets are US type, especially the extension leads in lodges used for recharging. An international travel plug is useful and can be bought in most airport departure lounges. It should be noted that we will not have electricity for most of this trip and recharging batteries will not be possible everywhere. You may find the following website helpful: <http://www.power-plugs-sockets.com>.

At Wayqecha and the San Pedro lodges electricity is provided by local generator only during certain hours (usually from 6-9 p.m.) and can be used only for recharging batteries and powering electronic devices (i.e., no hair dryers). At Cock of the Rock Lodge there are no outlets in the rooms and recharging is done only in the dining hall. Electricity is full-time in Lima, Villa Carmen, Cusco, and Machu Picchu.

**FOOD:** Food on our southeastern Peru tours is quite good. We'll start all days with warm breakfasts, almost always including scrambled eggs or an omelet. Lunches are either back at our lodge or, during transfer days, a boxed lunch prepared by the lodge, usually including something like a chicken-pasta dish, fruit, juice, and cookies. All dinners are at our lodges and, like the sit-down lunches, usually start with a delicious soup and then follow with a main dish with trout, chicken, or beef, rice, potatoes, cooked vegetables, and sometimes a salad. Dinners are followed by a simple dessert. We have no reservations about eating fresh vegetables or drinking beverages with ice at our lodges, which cater largely to foreigners like ourselves. A couple of our lodges have only a very limited selection of alcoholic drinks available, though all have wine and can also prepare pisco sours, the Peruvian national cocktail.

Sunbird tours are all-inclusive and no refunds can be issued for any tour meals participants choose to miss. While we will try to do all we can to accommodate the requirements of all participants, please note that we cannot guarantee all causes of food allergies can be avoided at every destination. Many restaurants offer set menus and are unable to accommodate all special requests within a group. Thus, participants with significant food allergies or special dietary needs should bring appropriate foods with them for those times when their needs can, regrettably, not be accommodated. Our tours are carefully scheduled to insure the best possible birding experience and although the leaders will do all they can to make sure the group eats at a reasonable time, sometimes early or late lunches and/or evening meals cannot be avoided. Any participants who need to eat at specific times may need to bring supplemental food with them.

**DRINKS:** Bottled water and/or a soft drink or a beer is provided at lunch and dinner, as is coffee or tea. All other drinks or 'personal' drinking water for use in your room etc. is your responsibility; our lodges have filtered water available for refilling your own bottles. As it can get hot and dry, we recommend you bring a large, good quality water bottle and keep it topped up.

**INTERNET AND MOBILE PHONE ACCESS:** Mobile phone access is rather limited on this tour and is only available in and around Lima and Cusco, though some might find a connection at Villa Carmen. WiFi internet is available at each of our hotels in Lima, Cusco and Aguas Calientes, but will be limited during our time at Wayqecha and Villa Carmen (see Accommodation section for details). There is no WiFi access in San Pedro.

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**FIELD CLOTHING:** Informal dress is acceptable throughout Peru. Be prepared for the possibility of muddy trail conditions. Comfortable field clothes and shoes are essential.

Sturdy footwear (lightweight boots, preferably waterproof)	Shirts for warm and cool weather
Rain clothes (rain coat for higher elevations and a poncho for lower elevations)	Light sweater
Canvas shoes (for hot weather and easy trails)	Fleece
Long trousers (preferably in a breathable, quick-drying fabric)	Light gloves
	Shorts (for around the lodges)
	Sun hat
	Wellingtons/rubber boots (see note below)

Note: We recommend not wearing clothing in the field that reflects ultraviolet light, including bright white and fluorescent (or "neon") colours. Birds can see near-UV light, and since shy birds are sensitive to our movements, such bright colours will alarm them, possibly meaning the difference between seeing a reclusive antthrush or tinamou and having it slink away unobserved. Normal reds, yellows, oranges, blues, and greens are fine.

**NOTE ABOUT RUBBER BOOTS:** Unless there has been a drought, the final two lodges, where almost all our birding is done on trails, rubber boots are very useful. If it has rained recently, the ground, especially inside the forest, can be very soggy, and mud is inevitable; at Villa Carmen we may even have to wade through a couple inches of water or muck for short stretches of trail. There are boots available to borrow here in case you really don't want to bring your own. In addition, boots offer extra protection against chiggers and other biting pests. We suggest 14-inch boots that cover the calf. Hot tip: rubber boots are more comfortable if you use the insoles from your hiking shoes.

### MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS:

Alarm clock	Sunscreen lotion
Notebook and pencil	Water bottle (1 quart or so)
Torch with extra bulbs and batteries	Travel clothesline
Small rucksack/day pack	Cool-water laundry soap
Pocket knife (packed in checked-in luggage)	Insect repellent (see below)
Plastic bags of various sizes	Ear plugs (if you are a light sleeper)
Flip-flops for showers (many are permanently damp and might have fungus or mould)	Folding umbrella (ESSENTIAL)
Personal medication	Small LED headlamp (Petzl make several models – excellent for doing the bird list at night).

**Optional:** Telescope & tripod (recommended if you have them), camera, film or memory cards, spare binoculars and spare spectacles (in case of loss or damage), field guide. Towels are provided but you might want to bring a facecloth as these are not usually provided.

**Note:** The most effective insect repellents are those containing at least 35% of the active ingredient diethyltoluamide (DEET). The higher the percentage, the greater the effectiveness. However, care must be taken to avoid getting the repellent on to optical equipment as it dissolves rubber and plastic and can damage coated lenses. A reasonably effective alternative, which isn't corrosive, is Mosi-guard, produced by MASTA, and we recommend this. It is available in most high street chemist (including those at the airport). Camping supply stores sell a product containing permethrin 0.5%, which must be applied directly to clothing in advance of wearing and allowed to dry. This non-staining, odourless chemical is non-toxic to humans and protective on clothing through several launderings.

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Please make sure you never to spray insect repellent inside the vehicle or when you are standing close to other participants – it may drift on to their optical equipment.

### LEADER'S EQUIPMENT

Telescope	Field library
Sound equipment	Basic first aid kit
Maps	Laser pointer

**LUGGAGE:** Our Final Information document, which will be sent to you approximately three weeks before departure, will give details about baggage weight and size restrictions imposed by the airline used for this tour.

If possible, please bring your luggage in soft-sided bags or cases (rather than large hard 'Samsonite'-type suitcases) as these pack more easily into our vehicles during the tour. Please note that on many tours there are no porters to carry your luggage so please ensure that **no bag is so heavy that you are unable to lift and carry it yourself**. As a general rule, in addition to using your luggage labels, it is a good idea to fix identification to the *inside* of each piece of luggage.

Airline limits for our flights within Peru are 23 kg (50 lbs.) of checked baggage, plus a carry-on limited to 5 kg (the latter seldom weighed unless it is a larger roll-on board type; a backpack is best if you intend to carry on heavy optics). In addition, a small day pack for bird walks is essential, as you will often need to carry water, lunch or snack, repellent, and plastic bags in addition to optical equipment.

**PHOTOGRAPHY:** Scenery and memory shots will be plentiful and simple to obtain. Although there will be occasions when bird photography is possible, a birdwatching tour is not normally the best means of pursuing this aim. Bring all your film or memory cards with you as it may be difficult to find precisely what you need during the tour. Camera equipment should be packed in moisture- and dust-proof bags, as a precaution. "Digiscoping" is perfectly compatible with the tour, though it is recommended you bring your own telescope as the leader's telescope is not available for this activity.

There will be plenty of opportunities to take photos of birds, mammals and scenery and the leaders will do all they can to accommodate anyone wishing to take photographs. However, if you are a serious photographer please bear in mind that this is first and foremost a birdwatching tour. Please do not allow your photographic desires to conflict with other participants' birdwatching activities.

**TRANSPORT:** The flights to Cusco and back will be in a modern, full-sized jets (such as an Airbus 320), and our transportation from there will be in a small bus provided by our ground agent. Most road travel will be on an unpaved, often bumpy road, but we are fortunate just to have roads into this fabulous area. Some roads may be quite bumpy and/or winding; anyone susceptible to motion sickness should bring an appropriate remedy. Participants should be able to sit in any seat in our vehicles.

Travel to and from Machu Picchu involves a 27-mile train ride over the course of 1 1/2 hours, so it is a slow, comfortable ride.

**SMOKING:** Smoking is not allowed in the vehicle, nor at meal times, nor when the group is gathered together for the checklist. If you are sharing a room with a non-smoker please don't smoke in the room. If you smoke in the field, please stand down wind of the group so that smoke doesn't drift into their faces.

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**TRAVEL INSURANCE:** Travel insurance is essential and we insist that you take out suitable cover as soon as your tour is booked. If you are bringing expensive optical equipment or other valuable items, please make sure they are also adequately insured on your home contents policy, as most travel insurance policies do not cover very expensive individual items. You may wish to consult your insurance broker regarding coverage. Please also ensure that your policy covers you in the event of a medical emergency, cancellation of a trip or severe delays. Medical costs abroad can often be extremely expensive.

Please note that Sunbird is not liable for any medical or repatriation costs resulting from injury or illness during a tour or for covering any costs resulting from a flight delay such as extra hotel accommodation.

If you wish, insurance can be arranged by Helen Fisher, Bullerwell Independent Insurance Brokers, 13 Goldington Road, Bedford, MK40 3JY. Tel: 01234-866964. Please contact Helen for a quote and she will send the schedule directly to you.

**TIPPING:** All tour-based tips are included in the tour price. These include tips to local guides, drivers, hotel porters, and waiters and waitresses when we have group meals together in restaurants. You only need to pay tips for personal services such as room service or drinks from the bar.

### **BIBLIOGRAPHY:**

#### Birds

Clements, James C. 2001. *A Field Guide to the Birds of Peru*. Ibis Publications. One might be tempted by the title, but it is now out of date and the overall the quality of illustrations is very poor; not recommended.

Schulenberg, Thomas S., D.F. Stotz, et al. 2007. *Birds of Peru - Revised and Updated Edition*. Princeton University Press, Princeton. The newest, and the essential, field guide to the birds of Peru. This is also available as a smartphone app, which is recommended over the eBook/Kindle version. **Recommended.**

#### General References and Natural History

Emmons, Louise H. 1997. *Neotropical Rainforest Mammals: A Field Guide*. Second edition. University of Chicago Press. Though out of date, it is compact and contains most lowland mammals we might encounter.

Garwood, Kim, Richard Lehman, et al. 2009. *Butterflies of Southern Amazonia*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. The paper volume is out of print, but a PDF can be purchased from <http://neotropicalbutterflies.com>.

McKeon, C. Seabird, et al. 2015. *A Guide to the Amphibians and Reptiles of Southeastern Peru*. Wust Ediciones, Peru. Not available quite yet.

Forsyth, Adrian and Ken Miyata. 1984. *Tropical Nature: Life and Death in the Rainforests of Central and South America*. Simon & Schuster, NY. A very good and worthwhile read, especially for newcomers to the Neotropics, but beware that the chapter on oropendola nesting is no longer valid.

Hilty, S.L. 1994. *Birds of Tropical America*. Chapters Publishing, Ltd., Shelburne, CT. Excellent treatment of natural history of Neotropical birds.

## PERU – Machu Picchu and the Manu-Kosñipata Road: Tour Information...9

Kricher, John C. 1999. *A Neotropical Companion*. Second edition. Princeton University Press. An introduction to the animals, plants and ecosystems of the Neotropics.

**OBTAINING BOOKS:** Most of the field guides and the major ornithological references in print are available by mail order from booksellers specialising in natural history titles.

Natural History Book Service Ltd  
Tel: 01803 865913  
[www.nhbs.co.uk](http://www.nhbs.co.uk)

Subbuteo Books  
Tel: 0870 010 9700  
[www.wildlifebooks.com](http://www.wildlifebooks.com)

WildSounds  
Tel: 01263 741100  
[www.wildsounds.co.uk](http://www.wildsounds.co.uk)

**MAPS:** Maps of the region may be available from:

The Map Shop  
Tel: 01684 593146  
[www.themapshop.co.uk](http://www.themapshop.co.uk)

Stanfords  
Tel: 020 7836 1321  
[www.stanfords.co.uk](http://www.stanfords.co.uk)

**NEOTROPICAL BIRD CLUB:** Please support this charity which aims to raise money to support conservation projects, encourages an interest in the conservation of birds, and liaises with and promotes the work of existing societies within the region. You will find their contact details and further information about the Club at [www.neotropicalbirdclub.org](http://www.neotropicalbirdclub.org)

**FINAL INFORMATION:** Final information with instructions for meeting the group, hotel addresses, etc., and your air tickets will be sent to you about three weeks before the start of the tour. Other news will be communicated as necessary. If you have any questions about any aspect of the tour, please contact us.