



# Exploring South America: Rio, Buenos Aires, Patagonia & Chilean Fjord Cruise 2019

## **EXTEND YOUR TRIP**

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**Brazil: Manaus & Amazon Rain Forest**

**Machu Picchu, Cuzco & Lima**

**Santiago & Easter Island, Chile**

**Your Travel Handbook**

# CONTENTS

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|  |    |
|--|----|
| <b>Travel Documents &amp; Entry Requirements</b> . . . . .         | 3  |
| Your Passport . . . . .  | 3  |
| No Visas Required . . . . .  | 3  |
| Migration Forms . . . . .  | 4  |
| Emergency Photocopies of Key Documents . . . . .                   | 4  |
| Overseas Taxes & Fees . . . . .                                    | 4  |
| <b>Health</b> . . . . .  | 5  |
| Is This Adventure Right for You? . . . . .                         | 5  |
| Steps to Take Before Your Trip . . . . .                           | 6  |
| No Vaccines Required . . . . .                                     | 6  |
| Yellow Fever Vaccination: Recommended . . . . .                    | 6  |
| Staying Healthy on Your Trip . . . . .                             | 8  |
| <b>Money Matters</b> . . . . .                                     | 10 |
| Top Three Tips . . . . .   | 10 |
| Local Currency . . . . .   | 10 |
| How to Exchange Money . . . . .                                    | 11 |
| ATMs . . . . .   | 11 |
| Credit & Debit Cards . . . . .                                     | 12 |
| Tipping Guidelines . . . . .                                       | 13 |
| <b>Preparing for Your Trip</b> . . . . .                           | 14 |
| Land Only Travelers & Personalized Air . . . . .                   | 14 |
| Optional Tours . . . . .   | 14 |
| Communications . . . . .   | 15 |
| <b>Packing</b> . . . . .   | 17 |
| Your Luggage . . . . .   | 18 |
| Clothing Suggestions . . . . .                                     | 19 |
| What to Bring . . . . .  | 20 |
| Electricity . . . . .  | 22 |
| <b>Climate</b> . . . . .   | 24 |
| Climate Averages & Online Forecast . . . . .                       | 25 |
| <b>Aboard Your Ship</b> . . . . .                                  | 28 |
| M/V <i>Skorpios</i> . . . . .                                      | 28 |
| Ship Specifications . . . . .                                      | 29 |
| <b>About Your Destinations</b> . . . . .                           | 30 |
| O.A.T. Trip Experience Leaders: A World of<br>Difference . . . . . | 30 |
| Culture & Points to Know . . . . .                                 | 30 |
| Travel in South America . . . . .                                  | 31 |
| Shopping . . . . .   | 33 |
| U.S. Customs Regulations & Shipping<br>Charges . . . . .           | 34 |
| Agricultural Statement for Chile . . . . .                         | 35 |
| <b>Demographics &amp; History</b> . . . . .                        | 36 |
| <b>Resources</b> . . . . .   | 46 |
| Suggested Readings . . . . .                                       | 46 |
| Suggested Movies . . . . .   | 50 |
| Useful Websites . . . . .  | 53 |

# TRAVEL DOCUMENTS & ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

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## Your Passport

- Must be in good condition
- Must be valid for at least 6 months after your scheduled return to the U.S.
- Must have the required number of blank pages (details below)
- The blank pages must be labeled “Visas” at the top. Pages labeled “Amendments and Endorsements” are not acceptable

## Need to Renew Your Passport?

Contact the National Passport Information Center (NPIC) at **1-877-487-2778**, or visit their website at **www.travel.state.gov** for information on obtaining a new passport or renewing your existing passport. You may also contact our recommended visa service company, PVS International, at **1-800-556-9990** for help with your passport

## Recommended Blank Pages

Please confirm that your passport has enough blank pages for this adventure.

- **Main trip only:** If you are taking only the main trip, you will require 6 blank passport pages.
- **Pre-trip extension to Brazil: Manaus & Amazon Rainforest:** This extension does not require any additional pages.
- **Post-trip to Santiago & Easter Island:** This extension does not require any additional pages.
- **Post-trip to Machu Picchu, Cuzco & Lima:** You will need 1 additional blank page.
- **Both the pre and post-trip extensions:** If you are joining the Easter Island post-trip, you will need a total of 6 blank pages. If you are joining the Machu Picchu post-trip, you will need 7 blank pages.

## No Visas Required

Travelers with a U.S. passport do not need any visas for this adventure, including the optional trip extensions.

## **Traveling Without a U.S. Passport?**

If you are not a U.S. citizen, or if your passport is from any country other than the U.S., it is your responsibility to check with your local consulate, embassy, or a visa services company about visa requirements. We recommend the services of PVS International, a national visa service located in Washington D.C.; they can be reached at **1-800-556-9990** or **www.pvsinternational.org**.

## **Traveling With a Minor?**

Some governments may require certain documentation for minors to enter and depart the country or to obtain a visa (if applicable). For further detail on the required documentation, please contact your local embassy or consulate.

## **Migration Forms**

When entering a new country, you might be given a Migration form. Keep it with you until the end of your trip, as the Migrations Authority might require it.

## **Emergency Photocopies of Key Documents**

We recommend you carry color photocopies of key documents including the photo page of your passport plus any applicable visas, air itinerary, credit cards (front and back), and an alternative form of ID. Add emergency phone numbers like your credit card company and the number for your travel protection plan. Store copies separate from the originals.

If you plan to email this information to yourself, please keep in mind that email is not always secure; consider using password protection or encryption. Also email is not always available worldwide. As an alternative, you could load these documents onto a flash drive instead, which can do double-duty as a place to backup photos during your trip.

## **Overseas Taxes & Fees**

This tour may have taxes and fees that cannot be included in your airline ticket price because you are required to pay them in person onsite. All taxes are subject to change without notice and can be paid in cash (either U.S. or local currency). If applicable, you will receive a list of these fees with your Final Documents.

# HEALTH

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## Is This Adventure Right for You?

**Please review the information below prior to departing on this adventure.** We reserve the right for our Trip Experience Leaders to modify participation, or in some circumstances send travelers home, if their condition would adversely affect the health, safety, or enjoyment of themselves or of other travelers.

### GROUP SIZE

- This adventure has a group size of 20–25 travelers (average of 22) with our local Trip Experience Leader

### PACING

- 7 locations and 3 nights aboard a ship in 19 days

### PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Not appropriate for travelers using wheelchairs, walkers, or other mobility aids
- You must be able to walk approximately 3 miles unassisted and be comfortable participating in 6–8 hours of physical activities each day
- This trip takes you to remote places with no medical facilities nearby
- We reserve the right for Trip Experience Leaders to restrict participation, or in some circumstances send travelers home, if their limitations impact the group's experience
- Due to early morning flights, there are several very early wake up calls on this trip.
- Activities on Day 5 and 6 include walking on narrow catwalks and up steps in hot and humid weather for 2 to 4 hours
- Activities on Day 11 include walking on narrow catwalks and up steps for 2 hours while visiting the Perito Moreno Glacier
- Activities on Days 13 and 14 include 2 hike of up to 2 hours on uneven terrain where you may be exposed to high winds
- You must be able to go up and down the stairs of your ship to get from your cabin to the dining room, as the *Skorpions III* does not have an elevator.

### CLIMATE

- Daytime temperatures average 50–60° F in the Andes and Patagonia and 75–100° F in Brazil
- Rain or high winds are possible at any time in the Andes and Patagonia, while Brazil's tropical climate features high humidity

## **TERRAIN & TRANSPORTATION**

- Travel over city streets, rugged paths, hard sand, icy surfaces, and bumpy and icy roads; walk and hike through uneven terrain and high winds on 3 treks of about 2 hours each
- Agility and balance are required for boarding or disembarking small motor boats
- Travel by air-conditioned minibus
- Cruise aboard a 90-passenger small ship shared with other travelers. We'll also board small motor boats for excursions during our cruise
- Two overland drives of 3 hours each and a 10-12 hour drive and border crossing
- 4 internal flights of 2-5 hours each

## **ACCOMMODATIONS & FACILITIES**

- Hotel rooms are smaller than those in the U.S. and offer basic amenities
- 3 nights aboard a small ship with full hotel amenities
- All accommodations feature private baths with showers

## **Steps to Take Before Your Trip**

Before you leave on this adventure, we recommend the following:

- Check with the CDC for their recommendations for the countries you'll be visiting. You can contact them online at <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel> or by phone at **1-800-232-4636**.
- Have a medical checkup with your doctor at least 6 weeks before your trip.
- Pick up any necessary medications, both prescription and over-the-counter.
- Have a dental and/or eye checkup. (Recommended, but less urgent)

## **No Vaccines Required**

At the time of writing there were no required vaccines for this trip. The CDC recommends that all travelers be up to date on their routine vaccinations and on basic travel vaccines like Hepatitis A and Typhoid, but these are suggestions only. However, this could change in future so we encourage you to check with the CDC yourself before meeting with your doctor.

## **Yellow Fever Vaccination: Recommended**

The CDC recommends that you get the Yellow Fever vaccination for Brazil and Argentina (Iguassu Falls), as well as Peru on the optional Machu Picchu post-trip extension, if your health allows. The vaccination is not for everyone. Please discuss this health recommendation with your doctor, because he or she can offer a suggestion tailored to your personal medical

history. If you and your doctor decide the vaccination is not right for you, you are NOT REQUIRED to get it. If you and your doctor decide to move forward with the vaccination, then he or she will issue you a Yellow Fever Card that shows you have been vaccinated.

***TIP:** If you do get the vaccine, we recommend that you bring your Yellow Fever Card with you on the trip. If you don't get the vaccine, then we suggest you bring a letter from your medical provider stating that you cannot receive it for medical reasons. If these countries make a last-minute change to their entry policies before you leave, having one of these documents with you could make all the difference.*

## **Medication Suggestions**

- An antibiotic medication for gastrointestinal illness
- Prescription pain medication in the unlikely event of an injury in a remote location
- Motion sickness medication, if you are prone to motion sickness or seasickness
- Anti-malaria medication is recommended but you should check with the CDC and your doctor first because these medications can have strong side effects.
- For travelers on the Machu Picchu post-trip extension: Altitude sickness medication – Cuzco is roughly 11,000 feet above sea level. At this altitude, almost everyone feels some of the symptoms of Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS), including headache, nausea, loss of appetite, trouble sleeping, and lack of energy.

## **Traveling with Medications**

- **Pack medications in your carry-on bag** to avoid loss and to have them handy.
- **Keep medicines in their original, labeled containers** for a quicker security screen at the airport and a better experience if you get stopped by customs while overseas.
- **Bring copies of your prescriptions**, written using the generic drug name rather than a brand name to be prepared for any unforeseen loss of your medications.

We recommend checking with the State Department for medication restrictions by country:

**<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages.html>**. (Pick the country and then follow the links to “Local Laws & Special Circumstances”; if you don't see any medications specifically mentioned, then you can presume major U.S. brands should be OK).

*IMPORTANT TIP: At time of writing, the State Department did not have any special warnings about American over-the-counter medications for Peru, but did have the following warning about bringing medicines back to the U.S.: “Travelers should be aware that some drugs and other products readily available over the counter or by prescription in Peru are illegal in the United States. The prescription sedative flunitrazepam (Rohypnol) is one such drug; others may come on the market at any time. Although coca-leaf tea is a popular beverage and folk remedy for altitude sickness in Peru, possession of these tea bags, which are sold in most Peruvian supermarkets, is illegal in the United States.”*

# Staying Healthy on Your Trip

## Jet Lag Tips

- Start your trip well-rested.
- Begin a gradual transition to your new time zone before you leave or switch to your destination time zone when you get on the plane.
- Attempt to sleep and eat according to the new schedule.
- Avoid heavy eating and drinking caffeine or alcoholic beverages right before—and during—your flight.
- Drink plenty of water and/or fruit juice while flying
- Stretch your legs, neck, and back periodically while seated on the plane.
- After arrival, avoid the temptation to nap.
- Don't push yourself to see a lot on your first day.
- Try to stay awake your first day until after dinner.

## Allergies

If you have any serious allergies or dietary restrictions, we advise you to notify us at least 30 days prior to your departure. Please call our Traveler Support team at **1-800-221-0814**, and we will communicate them to our regional office. Every effort will be made to accommodate you.

## Water

- Tap water is generally safe to drink in Chile and Argentina, but it is processed differently than in the U.S., so it may feel “heavy” and could upset your system. Fortunately, if you prefer bottled water, it is readily available for you to buy and is inexpensive compared to the U.S.
- Tap water is not safe to drink in Brazil or Peru. Drink only bottled water.
- On the cruise ship, bottled water is provided free of charge.
- When buying bottled water, inspect each bottle before you buy it to make sure the cap is sealed properly. To fight dehydration, carry a bottle in your daypack at all times.

## Food

We've carefully chosen the restaurants for your group meals. Fruits and vegetables are safe to eat in Chile and Argentina, but you should not eat fruits and vegetables that have been washed when you are in Brazil or Peru.

## **Insect Repellent**

At time of writing there were reports of dengue fever in the Iguassu Falls area. We recommend that you bring insect repellent as a preventative measure against dengue and other mosquito-borne diseases.

# MONEY MATTERS

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## Top Three Tips

- **Carry a mix of different types of payments**, such as local currency, an ATM card, and a credit card
- **Traveler's checks are not accepted** in these countries.
- **You will not be able to pay with U.S. dollars on the majority of this trip**; you will need local currency instead. U.S. dollars may be accepted in larger cities but you should always ask about exchange rates before making a purchase.

## Local Currency

For current exchange rates, please refer to an online converter tool like [www.xe.com/currencyconverter](http://www.xe.com/currencyconverter), your bank, or the financial section of your newspaper.

### Brazil

The monetary unit of Brazil is the Real (R\$). The R\$ is divided into 100 centavos. Banknote and coin denominations are as follows:

- Bills: 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50, and 100
- Coins: 1, 5, 10, 25, and 50 centavos; 1 Real

You may not need Brazilian reals as some shops are willing to take U.S. dollars. Plus, they can be hard to find in the U.S., depending on where you live. However, you can always bring dollars and exchange them once in Brazil.

### Argentina

The official Argentinean currency is the peso. Banknote and coin denominations are as follows:

- Banknotes: 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200, 500, and 1000 pesos
- Coins: 1, 2, 5 and 10 pesos

In Argentina, U.S. dollars are generally preferred due to the strong exchange rates, but always be sure to ask first. At time of writing, tips to our staff in U.S. dollars are generally more appreciated than tips in pesos. Previous travelers have suggested bringing a mix of different denomination U.S. bills—some small ones for tipping, and some larger ones for exchanging.

### Chile

The basic unit of currency in Chile is the peso. Banknote and coin denominations are as follows:

- Banknotes: 1,000, 2,000, 5,000, 10,000, and 20,000 pesos

- Coins: 10, 50, 100, and 500 pesos

In Chile, U.S. dollars are accepted at tourist-related businesses or for large-ticket purchases, but local currency is usually preferred. It can be difficult to change a bill larger than 10,000 pesos in rural areas or in a small business.

## **Peru**

The official currency of Peru is the Sol (S/), which is divided into 100 centimos. Banknote and coin denominations are as follows:

- Banknotes: 10, 20, 50, 100, and 200
- Coins: 5, 10, 20, 50 céntimos and 1, 2, 5 soles

U.S. dollars are commonly accepted in Peru, especially for large transactions or at businesses that cater to visitors. However, not every business will want U.S. dollars, and the ones that do accept them will want crisp bills in very good condition—bills that are worn, torn, or even folded might be rejected. Large U.S. bills (such as \$50 or \$100) command a better exchange rate, but small bills are more readily accepted for payment. For this reason, we recommend that you bring a mix of denominations in U.S. dollars. Previous travelers have recommended bringing a lot of \$1 bills for tipping (but not for exchanging). When paying in sols, know that it can be difficult for a shop to make change for a 100-sol bill on small purchases.

## **How to Exchange Money**

If you want to exchange money before your trip, you can usually do so through your bank or at an exchange office. Your departure airport in the U.S., a travel agent, or an AAA office are also possible outlets. Or you can wait and change money on the trip instead—but it might be helpful to arrive with some local currency in case you run into a bank holiday or an “out of order” ATM.

On your trip, the easiest way is to withdraw funds from a local ATM. The ATM will give you local money and your bank at home will convert that into U.S. dollars.

You can also exchange cash at some hotels, large post offices, and money exchange offices. To exchange cash, you’ll usually need your passport and bills in good condition (not worn, torn, or dirty). New bills (post 2004) are best. Never exchange money on the street. All exchange methods involve fees, which may be built into the conversion rate; ask beforehand.

## **ATMs**

When using the ATM, keep in mind that it may only accept cards from local banks, and may not allow cash advances on credit cards; you might need to try more than one ATM or more than one card.

Many banks charge a fee of \$1–\$5 each time you use a foreign ATM. Others may charge you a percentage of the amount you withdraw. We recommend that you check with your bank before you depart.

Lastly, don't forget to memorize the actual digits of your card's PIN number (many keypads at foreign ATMs do not include letters on their keys—they only display numbers.)

**Brazil:** ATMs are fairly common in larger cities and towns, but may not be readily available in undeveloped areas. Not all ATMs are open 24/7—many are only open from 7 am until 10 pm, and then they shut down overnight. (It can be confusing because they may still be lit, even when closed.) Also, keep in mind that not every ATM will accept foreign cards. You may need to try more than one machine.

**Argentina:** ATMs are available in larger cities like Buenos Aires, Ushuaia, and Bariloche, but will not be available in remote locations.

**Chile:** ATMs are available in larger cities, such as Santiago, but will not be available in remote locations.

**Peru:** ATMs are available in large cities and towns like Lima and Cuzco but are less likely to be found in more rural locations. For example, in the Amazon you may only see an ATM at the regional airport. We suggest that you bring cash for expected expenses while traveling in the rural areas.

## Credit & Debit Cards

Even if you don't plan on using a credit card during your trip, we still suggest that you bring one or two as a backup, especially if you are planning a large purchase (artwork, jewelry). We also suggest that you bring more than one brand of card (i.e. Visa, MasterCard, American Express) if possible, because not every shop will take every card. For example, although the Discover card is accepted in some countries outside the U.S., it is not widely adopted, so other brands will work at a much larger range of stores, restaurants, etc.

**Brazil:** Credit and debit cards are widely accepted in Brazil, especially for major purchases or in businesses that cater to visitors (hotels, souvenirs shops, etc.). Nonetheless, there are some businesses—street vendors, small “Mom and Pop” stores, some restaurants—that are still “cash only”. If you don't see a credit card logo on the door or the cash register, then check with the cashier or server. In undeveloped areas, cash is usually the preferred form of payment.

*TIP: Credit card fraud can occasionally be an issue in restaurants in Brazil, especially if the waiter takes your card away to process the payment. You can easily block this scam by not letting your credit card out of your sight. That is why you will see portable credit card machines in many upscale restaurants in Brazil—they bring the machine to you instead of taking your card away. And in restaurants that don't have a portable machine, it is completely OK to walk your card to the register and watch as the transaction is processed.*

**Argentina:** Credit and debit cards are widely accepted in Buenos Aires for major purchases and in shops associated with the tourist trade (souvenirs, museum gift shops, etc.), but may not be accepted by smaller shops or restaurants. Some businesses add a surcharge of 5–10% to

use a credit card; look for the word “recargo”. Some restaurants will accept credit cards—but not all—and you usually cannot leave a tip on a credit card. Visa is commonly accepted, but MasterCard and American Express are not.

**Chile:** Credit and debit cards are widely accepted in large cities for major purchases and in shops associated with the tourist trade (souvenirs, museum gift shops, etc.), but may not be accepted by smaller shops or restaurants. Some businesses add a surcharge of 2–4% to use a credit card. Credit cards are generally not accepted in more remote locations, such as Easter Island.

**Peru:** Credit cards are more likely to be accepted large cities like Lima than in the countryside. Stores in Peru may charge you up to 8% for the use of a credit card.

### **Notify Card Providers of Upcoming Travel**

Many credit card companies and banks have fraud alert departments that will freeze your card if they see suspicious charges—such as charges or withdrawals from another country. To avoid an accidental security block, it is a good idea to notify your credit card company and/or bank you will be using your cards abroad. You can do this by calling their customer service number a week or two before your departure. Some banks or credit card companies will also let you do this online.

You should also double-check what phone number you could call if you have a problem with a card while you are abroad. Don’t assume you can use the 1-800 number printed on the back of your card—most 1 800 numbers don’t work outside of the U.S.!

### **Tipping Guidelines**

Of course, whether you tip, and how much, is always at your own discretion. But for those of you who have asked for tipping suggestions, we offer these guidelines.

- **O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader:** It is customary to express a personal “thank you” to your Trip Experience Leader at the end of your trip. As a guideline, many travelers give \$7–\$10 USD (or equivalent in local currency) per person for each day their Trip Experience Leader is with them. *Please note that these tips can only be in cash. If you are taking any of the optional extensions, your Trip Experience Leader during the extension(s) may not be the same as the one on your main trip.*
- **Housekeeping staff at hotels:** \$1–\$2 per room, per night
- **Waiters:** Your Trip Experience Leader will tip waiters for included meals. If you are dining on your own, 10–15% is customary, and tips are usually left in cash.

*Please Note:* Your tour price includes gratuities on the main trip and optional extensions for local guides, drivers, and luggage porters that may assist you during the scheduled activities on your adventure. All tips are quoted in U.S. dollars; tips can be converted and paid in local currency or in U.S. dollars. Please do not use personal or traveler’s checks for tips.

## PREPARING FOR YOUR TRIP

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### Land Only Travelers & Personalized Air

#### Quick Definitions

- **Land Only:** You will be booking your own international flights. Airport transfers are not included.
- **Air-Inclusive:** You booked international air with us. Airport transfers are included as long as you didn't customize your trip's dates (see next bullet).
- **Personalized Air:** You booked international air with us, and have customized it in some way. If you have customized your trip's dates to arrive early, stay longer, or stop on your own in a connecting city, airport transfers will NOT be included. You must also arrange your own accommodations for any additional nights. For your convenience, a preliminary list of your included hotels is available on your My Account at [www.oattravel.com/myaccount](http://www.oattravel.com/myaccount) under "My Reservations".

#### Airport Transfers Can Be Purchased

For eligible flights, airport transfers may be purchased separately as an optional add-on, subject to availability. To be eligible, your flight(s) must meet the following requirements:

- You must fly into or fly home from the same airport as O.A.T. travelers who purchased included airfare.
- Your flight(s) must arrive/depart on the same day that the group arrives or departs.

Airport transfers can be purchased up to 45 days prior to your departure; they are not available for purchase onsite. To learn more, or purchase airport transfers, please call our Traveler Support team at **1-800-221-0814**.

*If you don't meet the requirements above, you'll need to make your own transfer arrangements. We suggest the Rome to Rio website as a handy resource: [www.rome2rio.com](http://www.rome2rio.com).*

When booking your international flights, please also note that the tour will end on Day 19 of the main trip (Day 26 of the Machu Picchu post trip; Day 24 of the Easter Island post-trip) for your overnight flight back to the United States.

#### Optional Tours

Optional tours are additional add-on tours that allow you to personalize your adventure by tailoring it to your tastes and needs. And if you decide not to join an optional tour? Then you'll have free time to relax or explore on your own—it's about options, not obligations.

#### What You Need to Know

- All optional tours are subject to change and availability.

- Optional tours that are reserved with your Trip Experience Leader can be paid for using credit/debit cards only. We accept MasterCard, Visa, and Discover credit cards; we can also take MasterCard or Visa debit cards as long as the card allows you to sign for purchases. (You won't be able to enter a PIN.)
- To ensure that you are charged in U.S. dollars, your payment will be processed by our U.S. headquarters in Boston. This process can take up to three months, so we ask that you only use a card that will still be valid three months after your trip is over. The charge may appear on your credit card statement as being from Boston, MA or may be labeled as "OPT Boston".
- Your Trip Experience Leader will give you details on the optional tours while you're on the trip. But if you'd like to look over descriptions of them earlier, you can do so at any time by referring to your Day-to-Day Itinerary (available online by signing into My Account at [www.oattravel.com/myaccount](http://www.oattravel.com/myaccount)).

## **Communications**

### **Cell Phones**

If you want to use your cell phone on the trip, check with your phone provider to see if your phone and service will work outside of the U.S. It may turn out to be cheaper to rent an international phone or buy a SIM card onsite. If you want to use a local SIM, just make certain your phone can accept one.

### **Calling Apps**

Another option is to use a smartphone app like Skype or FaceTime. These services are usually less expensive than making a traditional call, but you'll need a Wi-Fi connection and the calls may count towards your phone plan's data allowance. Many smartphones—and some tablets or laptops—come with one of these apps pre-installed or you can download them for free from the appropriate apps store.

### **Calling Cards and 1-800 Numbers**

When calling the U.S. from a foreign country, a prepaid calling card can be useful because it circumvents unexpected charges from the hotel. Calling cards purchased locally are typically the best (less expensive, more likely to work with the local phones, etc.).

One reminder: Do not call U.S. 1-800 numbers outside the continental United States. This can result in costly long distance fees, since 1-800 numbers do not work outside the country.

### **Internet**

Most hotels in South America offer WiFi in the rooms.

## **How to Call Overseas**

When calling overseas from the U.S., dial 011 for international exchange, then the country code (indicated by a plus sign: +), and then the number. Note that foreign phone numbers may not have the same number of digits as U.S. numbers; even within a country the number of digits can vary depending on the city and if the phone is a land line or cell phone.

**Brazil:** +55

**Chile:** +56

**Argentina:** +54

**Peru:** +51

# PACKING

## Luggage Limits

| MAIN TRIP LIMITS         |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| Pieces per person        | One checked bag and one carry-on per person.   |
| Weight restrictions      | <p>If your regional flights are on LATAM or Avianca, the weight limit for this adventure is 50 lbs for checked bags and 17 lbs for a carry-on.</p> <p>If any of your regional flights are on Aerolineas Argentinas, your checked bag is limited to 33 lbs instead. If any of your flights are on Norwegian Air, your checked bag is limited to 44 lbs. See note below for details.</p> |
| Size Restrictions        | Varies by airline. Measured in linear inches ( <i>length+width+depth</i> ). Generally, <b>62 linear inches is the checked bag limit; carry-on limit is 45 linear inches.</b>   |
| Luggage Type             | Duffel bag or soft-sided suitcase suitcase. Please do not bring a hard-shell suitcase.   |
| TRIP EXTENSION(S) LIMITS |  |
| Same as the main trip.   |  |

## REMARKS/SUGGESTIONS

**Luggage rules:** Luggage rules and limits are set by governmental and airline policy. Enforcement of the rules may include spot checks or may be inconsistent. However one thing is the same across the board: If you are found to have oversized or overweight luggage, you will be subject to additional fees, to be assessed by—and paid to—the airline in question.

**Please note:** On some departures our regional flights will be on LATAM or Avianca airlines, on other departures they must be on Aerolineas Argentinas or Norwegian Air instead. Please refer to your air itinerary to determine which restriction applies to you. If you are flying on Aerolineas Argentinas, most previous travelers were able to stay within the 33 lb limit, but if you go over you will be required to pay Aerolineas a luggage fee (approximately \$20 per flight) for bags weighing up to 50 lbs. Bags weighing over 50 lbs are not permitted.

**Luggage storage on extension to Easter Island:** If you wish, you will be able to leave a bag with some clothes at the hotel in Santiago during your extension, to be picked up when you return. If you would like to take advantage of this “left luggage” service, please bring a second bag with a lock to hold the items you want the hotel to store.

### Don't Forget:

- **These luggage limits may change.** If the airline(s) notify us of any changes, we will include an update in your Final Documents booklet.
- It's a good idea to reconfirm baggage restrictions and fees directly with the airline a week or so prior to departure. For your convenience, we maintain a list of the toll-free numbers for the most common airlines on our website in the FAQ section.
- **Baggage fees are not included in your trip price;** they are payable directly to the airlines.
- The luggage limits above are based on your regional flights, which may be less than your international flights. Even if your international airline offers a larger weight limit, you will need to pack according to the lower restrictions.

## Your Luggage

### Checked luggage

One duffel bag or suitcase. Look for one with heavy nylon fabric, wrap-around handles, built-in wheels, and a heavy-duty lockable zipper. Please do not bring a rigid (plastic shell) suitcase.

TIP: Consider bringing a second, empty, lockable bag folded into your main suitcase, with a luggage tag and small lock. Use this to carry souvenirs home. Also, when traveling with a companion we recommend “cross-packing,” i.e., pack 2 outfits of your clothing in your companion's luggage and vice-versa, in case one bag is delayed.

## Carry-on Bag

You are allowed one carry-on bag per person. We suggest a tote or small backpack that can be used as both a carry-on bag for your flight and to carry your daily necessities—water bottle, camera, etc.—during driving excursions and walking trips. Consider a backpack or waistpack that keeps both hands free and distributes the pack's weight onto your back or hips.

## Locks

For flights that originate in the U.S., you can either use TSA-approved locks or leave your luggage unlocked. Outside of the U.S., we strongly recommend that you lock your luggage as a preventative measure against theft.

## Clothing Suggestions

### Functional Tips

You will experience a wide range of temperatures and weather conditions, from hot and humid to cold, windy, and rainy. Therefore, we suggest several layers of clothing. You'll want fairly good-quality rain gear for the Iguassu extension. If you like to hand-wash your clothes, look for fabrics that will dry out overnight. You can buy clothing designed especially for travel, with features like wrinkle-resistant fabric or built-in sun protection.

- **Dress in layers:** You can add or remove layers according to weather shifts, especially for traveling to the tip of South America. Suggestions include turtlenecks, long-sleeve shirts, sweatshirts, sweaters, a warm jacket, long underwear, etc. in addition to light summer clothing for warmer areas.
- **Warm clothing:** We suggest a warm sweater, a windproof jacket, gloves, and a hat for your time in Patagonia (Calafate and Paine). These mountainous areas are cool year-round, and it has been known to snow at the higher elevations even in summer.
- **Walking shoes:** You'll be on your feet and walking a lot, so choose your footwear carefully. You can find especially supportive shoes designed for walking. Light hiking boots might be useful on some days.
- **Hiking sticks/Trekking poles:** Many past travelers have recommended bringing a folding hiking stick (sometimes called a trekking pole) sold in most camping stores. An alternative is a folding ski pole.
- **Rain gear:** You'll want good, light rain gear all year round. Because mist and unpredictable rain occur year-round in the Patagonia region, we strongly suggest you bring a sturdy waterproof shell or jacket (this will also keep you comfortable on windy days), waterproof pants, waterproof shoes, and a rain hat or folding umbrella.

### Style Hints

- **Dress on our trip is functional and casual.** Women might want to bring one casual dress and a pair of dressier sandals.

- **On board the ship it is very warm;** bring both thick and light clothing.

## What to Bring

We have included suggestions from Trip Experience Leaders and former travelers to help you pack. These lists are only jumping-off points—they offer recommendations based on experience, but not requirements. You may also want to consult the “Climate” chapter of this handbook.

### Year-Round Clothing Checklist

- Shirts: A mixture of short and long-sleeved shirts to layer
- Trousers and/or jeans: Comfortable and loose fitting is best.
- Walking shorts: Shorts may be more useful for travelers in Iguassu Falls and Rio de Janeiro
- Shoes and socks: Comfortable walking/ running shoes or low-cut hiking shoes, with arch support. Light hiking boots might be useful on some days, but are not required. You’ll want at least a couple pairs of heavier socks for active days or hiking.
- Waterproof gear: Waterproof jacket with a hood, waterproof pants, waterproof gloves
- Light wool or Polartec fleece jacket: Even in summer, Patagonia can be cool, especially in the mountains.
- Wide-brim sun hat or visor for sun protection
- Underwear
- Sleepwear
- Optional: Swimsuit

### Essential Items

- Daily essentials: toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, hairbrush or comb, shaving items, deodorant, etc. Hotels provide shampoo and soap but usually not washcloths.
- Spare eyeglasses/contact lenses; sunglasses
- Sunscreen: SPF 30 or stronger
- Insect repellent with DEET (we recommend 30–35% strength). Some previous travelers have mentioned that this is more useful on the extensions than on the main trip.

- Flashlight or headlamp: Consider a small but powerful LED version or a version with an alternative power source (wind-up, solar powered).
- Pocket-size tissues
- Moist towelettes (baby wipes) and/or anti-bacterial “water-free” hand cleanser
- Electrical transformer & plug adapters
- Camera gear with extra batteries or battery charger. We recommend bringing ziploc bags to protect your camera.

### **Medicines & First Aid Gear**

- Your own prescription medicines
- Travel first aid kit: Band-Aids, headache and pain relief, laxatives and anti-diarrhea tablets, something for upset stomach. Maybe a cold remedy, moleskin foot pads, or antibiotic cream.
- An antibiotic medication for gastrointestinal illness
- Optional: A strong prescription pain medication for rare emergency purposes
- Optional: Motion sickness medication, if you are prone to motion sickness or seasickness
- Optional: Anti-malarial medication—discuss with your doctor first
- Optional for travelers on the post-trip extension to Machu Picchu: Altitude sickness medication

### **Optional Gear**

- Travel alarm or travel watch with alarm
- Lightweight binoculars (if birding)
- Hanging toiletry bag (with hook to hang on doorknob and pockets to organize items)
- Basic sewing kit
- Hair dryer. Bring this only if you feel you need one 100% of the time. Most hotels will provide them during this trip.
- Hand-wash laundry soap

- Reading materials
- Travel journal/note pad and pens
- Phrase book
- Small gift for Home-Hosted visit
- Folding walking stick

## Home-Hosted Visits

Many of our adventures feature a visit with a local family, often as part of the *A Day in the Life* experience. It is customary, though not necessary, to return your hosts' generosity with a small gift. If you do bring a gift, we recommend that you bring something the whole family can enjoy, or something that represents your region, state, or hometown. Get creative and keep it small—peach jelly from Georgia, maple sugar candy from New England, orange blossom soap from California; something that can be used or used up is best. When choosing a gift, be certain to consider the local culture as well. For example, we do not recommend alcohol in Muslim countries because it is forbidden in Islam, and your hosts may be religious. Not all O.A.T. adventures include a Home-Hosted Visit; please check your final itinerary before you depart.

## Electricity

When traveling overseas, the voltage is usually different and the plugs might not be the same shape.

### Voltage

Electricity in Brazil, Chile, Argentina, and Peru is 220 volts. In the U.S. it is 110 volts. Most of the things a traveler will want to plug in—battery chargers, MP3 players, tablets or computers—can run off both 110 and 220–240. But you should check the item or the owner's guide first to confirm this before you plug it in. If you have something that needs 110 volts—like a shaver or a hairdryer—you can bring a transformer to change the current. (But transformers tend to burn out, so it might be better to leave whatever it is at home.)

### Plugs

The shape of plugs will vary from country to country, and sometimes even within a country depending on when that building was built. To plug something from the U.S. into a local socket you'll need an adapter that fits between the plug and the socket. Because there are many different types of plugs in this region, it may be easier to purchase an all-in-one, universal adapter/converter combo. Versatile and lightweight, these can usually be found at your local electronics goods or hardware stores. Sometimes you can buy them at large retailers too, like Target or Walmart. If you forget to bring an adapter, you might also find them for sale at the airport when you arrive at your destination.

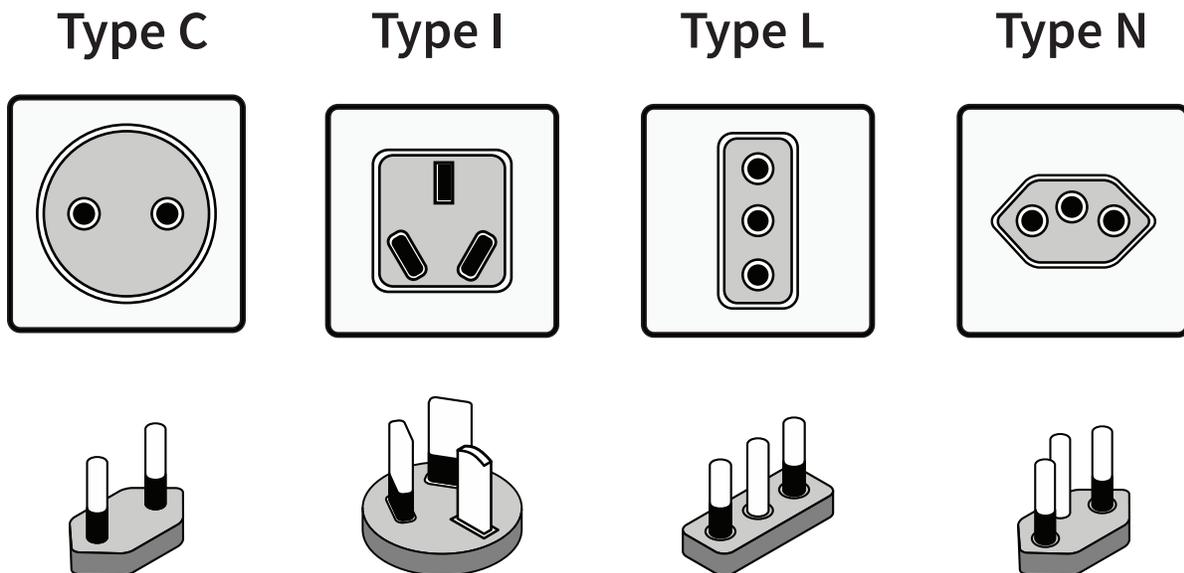
Different plug shapes are named by letters of the alphabet. Standard U.S. plugs are Type A and Type B. Here is the list of plugs for the countries on this trip:

**Brazil:** A and/or C/N. Sockets in Brazil are not uniform. The same hotel might have A sockets in one room and C sockets in another room. Some hotels even have a special socket that can take both A and C plugs. Brazil has also introduced a new plug type (N).

**Argentina:** C and I

**Chile:** C and/or L

**Peru:** A, B, or C



### Availability

Barring the occasional and unpredictable power outage, electricity is as readily available on this adventure as it is in the U.S.

## CLIMATE

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**Rio de Janeiro, Brazil:** Rio is known as a city of sun, considered to have a climate that is a blend of summer and springtime. There are many more sunny days than rainy ones, although being in a tropical climate the weather can be somewhat unpredictable. Being at sea level near the Tropic of Capricorn, it is warm and often humid year-round. Spring and fall are the more temperate seasons and are very pleasant. The sunny spring days are especially bright and clear, with less humidity than other seasons, contributing to the beauty of long-distance views. Summer, considered to be December into March, can have days that get quite hot, with most of the area's rain falling during this season, although the occasional storms are usually brief. During winter in Rio, June through August, temperatures stay comfortably warm during the day, but residents consider some winter nights to be quite "chilly" when the thermometer reading drops into the 60s.

**Iguassu Falls, Argentina & Brazil:** Iguassu Falls experiences a humid subtropical climate. Temperatures are hot year-round – around 90° (and sometimes feel hotter than they really are because of the humidity). Rainfall is distributed fairly evenly throughout the year. The average humidity most mornings is more than 90%, but it lessens in the afternoon.

**Buenos Aires, Argentina:** While the official high temperatures in summer (December through February) are usually in the 80s, with the humidity it often feels much hotter. It is common to think it is actually in the 90s, so be prepared. The changeable spring and mild fall of Buenos Aires are similar to those seasons in New York City, but the proximity of the South Atlantic makes winter temperatures milder than New York's comparable months and the possibility of snow almost nonexistent. You might experience some rain at almost any time of the year, as there is no true rainy season. The almost-constant breezes during all seasons except summer refresh this city's air and renew its skies.

**Punta Arenas, Chile:** Similar to the rest of the towns in this region, Punta Arenas has a cold steppe climate. The average summer temperatures are in the mid 50s and the average winter temperatures are in the mid 30s. The seasonal temperature in Punta Arenas is greatly moderated by its proximity to the ocean. This is not to say that it is known for stable constant temperatures, only small variability with season. Punta Arenas is also quite dry, with only 1.7 inches of rain in its wettest month of May. The city is also known for its strong winds, up to 80 mph. Winds tend to be strongest during the summer.

**Santiago, Chile:** Santiago has such delightful year-round temperatures that its climate is often compared to that of southern California. During your travel season, daytime highs are typically in the 70s and low 80s. Nights are significantly cooler. From Santiago to the south, the climate evolves much like that of the coastline from San Francisco north to Alaska.

**Easter Island, Chile:** The cool Humboldt current keeps this sub-tropical climate cooler than most of its kind. The annual average temperature is 70°. February is hottest; July and August coolest, with winds adding a chill. Some amount of rain falls 140 days a year, though much of it falls at night. The heaviest months for rain are March-June. August-December are the driest months.

**Lima, Peru:** Lima is situated in one of the world's great deserts, and has a dry desert climate. The city has virtually no rainy days, with the very small annual precipitation coming in the form of the sea mist and occasional drizzle of the winter season, June to September. Only during the summer months of January through March is it warm and humid on the coast, with temperatures the rest of the year falling in the 60s and 70s.

**Cuzco, Peru:** Cuzco's high altitude, approximately 10,909 feet above sea level, results in a somewhat large range of daily temperatures. Considered a moderate climate, it is typically sunny and pleasant during the day but with evening temperatures that can be refreshingly chilly. During the winter months of June through August, nights can even bring frost at these heights. Interestingly, average daytime temperatures do not fluctuate greatly over the entire year, with the high thermometer readings staying in the 60s throughout all seasons. The summer months of December through March bring most of the rains, while May through September offer usually sunny, comfortably cool days with only occasional sudden showers.

### **Climate Averages & Online Forecast**

The following charts reflect the **average** climate as opposed to exact weather conditions. This means they serve only as general indicators of what can reasonably be expected. An extreme heat wave or cold snap could fall outside these ranges. As your departure approaches, we encourage you to go online to **[www.oattravel.com/myaccount](http://www.oattravel.com/myaccount)** for your 10-day forecast.

## Average Daily High/Low Temperatures (°F), Humidity & Monthly Rainfall

| MONTH      | RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL |                             |                           | IGUASSU FALLS, ARGENTINA & BRAZIL |                           |                           |
|------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
|            | Temp. High-Low         | % Relative Humidity (am-pm) | Monthly Rainfall (inches) | Temp. High-Low                    | % Relative Humidity (avg) | Monthly Rainfall (inches) |
| <b>JAN</b> | 89 to 69               | 92 to 58                    | 6.8                       | 88 to 68                          | 80                        | 7.5                       |
| <b>FEB</b> | 88 to 68               | 94 to 59                    | 6.8                       | 88 to 68                          | 80                        | 6.3                       |
| <b>MAR</b> | 87 to 66               | 94 to 59                    | 4.5                       | 90 to 66                          | 80                        | 6.3                       |
| <b>APR</b> | 81 to 62               | 94 to 61                    | 7.9                       | 84 to 61                          | 85                        | 6.7                       |
| <b>MAY</b> | 75 to 56               | 96 to 63                    | 7.3                       | 75 to 54                          | 90                        | 7.1                       |
| <b>JUN</b> | 69 to 51               | 96 to 66                    | 6.1                       | 73 to 50                          | 90                        | 5.9                       |
| <b>JUL</b> | 72 to 51               | 93 to 61                    | 5.2                       | 73 to 50                          | 85                        | 3.9                       |
| <b>AUG</b> | 75 to 54               | 93 to 60                    | 4.9                       | 79 to 52                          | 80                        | 5.5                       |
| <b>SEP</b> | 78 to 56               | 91 to 57                    | 5.4                       | 81 to 54                          | 80                        | 7.1                       |
| <b>OCT</b> | 83 to 61               | 91 to 57                    | 7.2                       | 86 to 59                          | 80                        | 7.5                       |
| <b>NOV</b> | 86 to 64               | 92 to 57                    | 8.2                       | 88 to 63                          | 75                        | 8.3                       |
| <b>DEC</b> | 89 to 67               | 92 to 55                    | 5.3                       | 90 to 66                          | 75                        | 7.5                       |

| MONTH      | BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA |                             |                           | PUNTA ARENAS, CHILE |                             |                           |
|------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
|            | Temp. High-Low          | % Relative Humidity (am-pm) | Monthly Rainfall (inches) | Temp. High-Low      | % Relative Humidity (am-pm) | Monthly Rainfall (inches) |
| <b>JAN</b> | 87 to 69                | 86 to 47                    | 4.2                       | 57 to 45            | 74 to 61                    | 1.4                       |
| <b>FEB</b> | 84 to 67                | 89 to 52                    | 4.0                       | 57 to 45            | 77 to 61                    | 1.1                       |
| <b>MAR</b> | 80 to 63                | 90 to 54                    | 4.0                       | 54 to 42            | 82 to 66                    | 1.6                       |
| <b>APR</b> | 73 to 57                | 91 to 59                    | 3.3                       | 49 to 38            | 85 to 73                    | 1.6                       |
| <b>MAY</b> | 66 to 51                | 89 to 60                    | 3.1                       | 44 to 35            | 88 to 83                    | 1.7                       |
| <b>JUN</b> | 60 to 46                | 89 to 62                    | 2.1                       | 39 to 32            | 87 to 84                    | 1.3                       |
| <b>JUL</b> | 59 to 45                | 89 to 62                    | 2.3                       | 38 to 31            | 86 to 82                    | 1.3                       |
| <b>AUG</b> | 63 to 48                | 88 to 57                    | 2.3                       | 41 to 32            | 86 to 77                    | 1.3                       |
| <b>SEP</b> | 66 to 50                | 87 to 53                    | 2.4                       | 46 to 35            | 84 to 69                    | 1.1                       |
| <b>OCT</b> | 73 to 55                | 88 to 56                    | 4.0                       | 50 to 38            | 78 to 63                    | 0.9                       |
| <b>NOV</b> | 78 to 61                | 86 to 53                    | 3.6                       | 53 to 40            | 73 to 61                    | 1.1                       |
| <b>DEC</b> | 83 to 65                | 86 to 48                    | 3.3                       | 56 to 43            | 74 to 61                    | 1.2                       |

| MONTH      | SANTIAGO, CHILE |                             |                           | EASTER ISLAND, CHILE |                             |                           |
|------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
|            | Temp. High-Low  | % Relative Humidity (am-pm) | Monthly Rainfall (inches) | Temp. High-Low       | % Relative Humidity (am-pm) | Monthly Rainfall (inches) |
| <b>JAN</b> | 85 to 54        | 84 to 37                    | --                        | 78 to 70             | 87 to 70                    | 3.6                       |
| <b>FEB</b> | 84 to 53        | 86 to 38                    | 0.1                       | 79 to 71             | 88 to 71                    | 3.4                       |
| <b>MAR</b> | 80 to 49        | 89 to 40                    | 0.2                       | 78 to 70             | 88 to 71                    | 3.4                       |
| <b>APR</b> | 72 to 45        | 91 to 48                    | 0.5                       | 76 to 68             | 86 to 73                    | 4.6                       |
| <b>MAY</b> | 64 to 41        | 94 to 62                    | 2.3                       | 73 to 66             | 84 to 74                    | 5.0                       |
| <b>JUN</b> | 58 to 38        | 94 to 68                    | 3.1                       | 70 to 64             | 84 to 73                    | 4.0                       |
| <b>JUL</b> | 57 to 37        | 95 to 68                    | 3.0                       | 69 to 62             | 84 to 73                    | 3.7                       |
| <b>AUG</b> | 61 to 39        | 95 to 64                    | 2.1                       | 68 to 62             | 84 to 73                    | 3.4                       |
| <b>SEP</b> | 65 to 42        | 93 to 59                    | 1.1                       | 70 to 62             | 85 to 72                    | 3.3                       |
| <b>OCT</b> | 71 to 45        | 92 to 50                    | 0.5                       | 71 to 62             | 86 to 70                    | 2.9                       |
| <b>NOV</b> | 77 to 48        | 89 to 44                    | 0.2                       | 73 to 65             | 87 to 70                    | 3.2                       |
| <b>DEC</b> | 82 to 51        | 86 to 39                    | 0.2                       | 76 to 67             | 87 to 70                    | 3.6                       |

| MONTH      | LIMA, PERU     |                             |                           | CUZCO, PERU    |                             |                           |
|------------|----------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
|            | Temp. High-Low | % Relative Humidity (am-pm) | Monthly Rainfall (inches) | Temp. High-Low | % Relative Humidity (am-pm) | Monthly Rainfall (inches) |
| <b>JAN</b> | 79 to 68       | 89 to 70                    | --                        | 64 to 45       | 79 to 53                    | 5.9                       |
| <b>FEB</b> | 80 to 69       | 91 to 69                    | --                        | 64 to 46       | 80 to 53                    | 5.9                       |
| <b>MAR</b> | 80 to 69       | 91 to 70                    | --                        | 64 to 46       | 80 to 51                    | 3.8                       |
| <b>APR</b> | 76 to 66       | 92 to 72                    | --                        | 66 to 43       | 80 to 48                    | 1.5                       |
| <b>MAY</b> | 72 to 63       | 92 to 75                    | --                        | 67 to 39       | 81 to 42                    | 0.3                       |
| <b>JUN</b> | 69 to 61       | 89 to 76                    | 0.1                       | 66 to 35       | 82 to 40                    | 0.1                       |
| <b>JUL</b> | 67 to 60       | 89 to 76                    | 0.2                       | 66 to 34       | 81 to 38                    | 0.1                       |
| <b>AUG</b> | 66 to 60       | 90 to 77                    | 0.1                       | 66 to 37       | 79 to 39                    | 0.3                       |
| <b>SEP</b> | 67 to 59       | 90 to 76                    | 0.1                       | 67 to 41       | 77 to 43                    | 0.9                       |
| <b>OCT</b> | 69 to 61       | 89 to 74                    | 0.1                       | 68 to 44       | 74 to 44                    | 1.9                       |
| <b>NOV</b> | 72 to 63       | 87 to 72                    | --                        | 67 to 45       | 74 to 47                    | 2.7                       |
| <b>DEC</b> | 76 to 66       | 88 to 70                    | --                        | 66 to 45       | 76 to 49                    | 4.3                       |

## **ABOARD YOUR SHIP**

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### ***M/V Skorprios***

The 230-foot *M/V Skorprios III* is a 90-passenger expedition ship uniquely designed for cruising the ice-encrusted waters of the Chilean fjords. Onboard, our group can relax in two bar lounges and enjoy the views from the panoramic dining room. We'll enjoy regional cuisine and wines, plus complimentary drinks.

### **Cabin Amenities**

Your cabin features twin beds, a private bathroom with shower, a TV, and a safe.

### **Cabin Assignments**

You will receive confirmation of your deck and/or cabin category upfront in writing; it will be on your invoice and online in My Account at [www.oattravel.com/myaccount](http://www.oattravel.com/myaccount). However, your cabin number may not be assigned until you arrive on board the ship. (This is normal procedure for small ships.) If there's no cabin number on your invoice or online, you can presume it will be assigned later and communicated to you when you board.

### **Dining**

All meals are taken in a spacious window-lined dining room. The food onboard includes international food and typical local dishes. If you require a special diet please request this in advance, you may do so by contacting one of our Travel Counselors. There is no room service on board. Dining times will vary according to the scheduled daily activities. In keeping with regional custom, dinner is served at a later hour (8:00 pm) than Americans may be accustomed to. Dinner will be served a la carte, while breakfast and lunch will be buffet style.

Chilean or Argentinean wines will be featured with meals. No outside alcohol is allowed onboard but the ship features an open bar.

### **Electricity**

The electricity onboard and in your cabin is 220 volts.

### **Internet Access and Email**

Please note that there is no internet access available on board the ship.

### **Public Spaces**

The ship features a two bar lounges, a panoramic dining room, and a sun deck.

### **Shipboard Payments**

MasterCard and Visa credit cards are accepted for payment in the shop, but since the system is not online during sailing, the charged will be completed at the end of the cruise.

## **Smoking Policy**

Smoking is prohibited on board this vessel.

## **Elevators**

Please note, there is no elevator on board. You will need to use the stairs to go to the dining room.

## **Ship Specifications**

### ***M/V Skorprios III***

- **History:** Built in 1995
- **Size:** 230x33 ft
- **Capacity:** 92 passengers
- **Layout:** 44 cabins

## ABOUT YOUR DESTINATIONS

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### **O.A.T. Trip Experience Leaders: A World of Difference**

During your adventure you'll be accompanied by one of our local, expert Trip Experience Leaders. All are fluent in English and possess the skills, certification, and experience necessary to ensure an enriching adventure. As locals of the regions you'll explore with them, our Trip Experience Leaders provide the kind of firsthand knowledge and insight that make local history, culture, and wildlife come alive. Coupled with their unbridled enthusiasm, caring personalities, and ability to bring diverse groups of travelers together, our Trip Experience Leaders ensure that your experience with O.A.T. is one you'll remember for a lifetime.

### **Culture & Points to Know**

#### **Cuisine in Brazil**

Brazil offers its own style of barbecue: churrascaria, where a server comes to your table with skewers of many varieties of meat and cuts it off directly onto your plate. Treat your taste buds to exotic fresh fruits, from papaya and mango to pineapple and bananas. Palmito (heart of palm) is another specialty. Wet your whistle with caipirinhas, made from sugar cane alcohol, lime, and sugar. But be careful—they are addictive—and it is said, “with two you speak Portuguese!” Other inexpensive Brazilian-style restaurants are the “comida por kilo,” self-service buffets where you pay by weight.

#### **Cuisine in Argentina**

Beef or bife (beef-eh), as they say in Spanish, is the tale of Argentina, the golden El Dorado of her economy. Somewhere around 50 million Aberdeen Angus and Hereford cattle graze on nutritious pampas fields and, thanks to the gauchos, provide locals with abundant, tasty fare. Restaurant menus everywhere in the country feature some type of beef selection. At-home diners, too, often have beef as the main staple of their diet. Gauchos themselves have spent lifetimes eating native beef—and sometimes nothing else. That's why they know how to prepare it so deliciously!

There simply is nothing quite like the flavor of bifes grilled over the coals or roasted on an open fire (asado). The truth of the matter is, you've never really tasted charcoal-broiled steak until you dine with the gauchos of Argentina. Their cooking techniques are apparent in Buenos Aires's many steakhouses, from deluxe establishments to fast-food types, as well as at estancias (ranches).

Argentinean wines of excellent quality are currently available. You will want to try a Malbec, the local grape. And if you celebrate with the “bubbly” in South America, why not do it with Argentina's superb, inexpensive champagne? Just a note of precaution: Argentines thoroughly salt almost everything, particularly meats and salads. If you dine out, you may want to request

unsalted food. When you order, simply tell the waiter no use (oo-say) sal, por favor. You may also want to try dulce de leche (“sweet milk”), a caramel topping that Argentines eat with everything.

### **Cuisine in Chile**

Chile is a cosmopolitan country, and this is strongly reflected in its food and drink. Santiago, for instance, is filled with French, Chinese, Italian, and Spanish restaurants. But the best way to dine in the capital is to sample from the great quantity of foods and beverages that are typically Chilean.

At the head of the list comes the empanada, a flour based pastry shaped like a small turnover that is stuffed with a combination of meat and onions cut into small pieces, hard-boiled egg, raisins, and olives. It can also be made using chicken or fish. Humitas are made from corn, and are rather like the Mexican tamales but seldom so seasoned. The cazuela de ave is a kind of “souped-up soup.” It contains rice, corn, green beans, chicken, carrots, pumpkin, salt, and a number of herbs. Curanto is not so much a dish as a complete dinner. In Santiago, it is made in pots and served in some restaurants. The dish is a hearty combination of peas, pork, seafood, potatoes, and any number of other savory ingredients.

Chile’s world-famous grapes are the foundation of its three most popular drinks. First, of course, is wine itself. Grapes are also used to make chicha, a brownish beverage somewhat reminiscent of apple cider with added punch. The last, and most powerful, is aguardiente, which translates literally into “fire water,” although it is more commonly called “pisco” and is considered Peru’s national drink (although it is also made and consumed in Chile.)

### **Cuisine in Peru**

*Ceviche* is a local specialty (uncooked fish marinated in lemon juice and hot pepper, served with corn-on-the-cob, sweet potatoes, and onions). All varieties of seafood are excellent here. Among the popular liquors is *pisco* (which takes its name from a town south of Lima), a powerful liquor distilled from grapes and most often seen in the pisco sour Cocktail. This spirit is a favorite and is considered the national drink. It can also be found at some supermarkets or grocery stores.

## **Travel in South America**

Part of the adventure of this trip is the possibility that things may change. Local influences may make it impossible for us to follow the planned itinerary exactly and the sequence of sites visited may change. Rest assured that we have considerable experience at responding to changing circumstances on the spot. Our goal is always to offer you the best travel experience and the most memorable explorations of this intriguing land.

Complex, multi-layered cultural traditions and stunning natural geography make South America a fascinating destination. To get the most enjoyment out of your trip, remember that many South American countries are still considered developing nations, and be aware that you may be approached to buy crafts or solicited by children to take photographs.

In restaurants, hotels, and at cultural sites, everything works according to a slower sense of time than what you are used to. It's best to wind down and adjust to the local pace and philosophy.

## **Language Barrier**

You can have some great “conversations” with local people who do not speak English, even if you don't speak a word of the local language. Indeed, this non-verbal communication can be a highly rewarding part of travel. To break the ice, bring along some family photographs, or a few postcards of your hometown.

Your attire is a key part of your non-verbal presentation. Your clothing should show a respect for local tradition. In South America, this means you should dress in a relatively modest style.

## **Taking Photographs**

The etiquette of photographing most people in the countries on your itinerary is about the same as it would be on the streets of your hometown. You need permission to take a close-up, but not for a crowd scene. Be especially polite if you want to photograph an older woman. If you want to shoot a great portrait, show interest in your subject, try to have a bit of social interaction first. Then use sign language to inquire if a picture is OK.

## **Safety & Security**

### **Common Sense and Awareness**

As you travel, exercise the same caution and awareness that you would in a large American city. Don't be overly nervous or suspicious, but keep your eyes open. If you are venturing out after dark, go with one or two other people, and always by taxi.

### **Pickpockets**

Like any other big city or tourist destination, pickpockets will sometimes target travelers. Fortunately, there are a few easy steps you can take to minimize your exposure. The first step is to avoid attracting attention. Don't wear fancy jewelry or expensive watches in the street (or even cheaper items that look expensive).

The next step is to limit what you have on you. Instead of carrying all your money, all your credit cards, and your passport in your pocket or purse, stick to what you'll need for that day—a one-day supply of money and one or two cards. (You won't need your passport, so our regional office recommends that you leave it at the hotel.) Replenish your pocket supply when you are in a safe and quiet place, at the hotel, or in our vehicle. Don't leave valuables out and unattended in your hotel room. Every hotel will offer use of a hotel safe at the front desk or an electronic in-room safe; please use them.

**TIP:** *Our regional office recommends that you leave your passport in the room safe or hotel safe, and that you carry a photocopy instead when you are out and about.*

Lastly, know that pickpockets may create a sudden distraction. In any sort of puzzling street situation, try to keep one hand on your valuables. If an encounter with a local turns out to be long and complicated and involves money or your valuables, it might be a scam.

## **Regional Flights in South America**

In South America, it is simply a fact of life that schedules for internal flights often change on short notice. When this happens, our air travel experts strive to get you on new flights as close to the original schedule as possible, but limited availability of seats may require us to use early-morning flights or change the day of the flight. *If schedule changes make it necessary, we may have to rise before dawn on some days where early-morning wake-ups are not mentioned in your printed itinerary.*

## **Photography in Machu Picchu**

The use of professional cameras in Machu Picchu requires special permission by Peru's Ministry of Culture, so you will not be able to use a professional-grade camera or camcorder during our visit there. Your average camera - point-and-shoot or DSLR - is not considered professional-grade. However, lenses over 200 mm, tripods, and monopods are not allowed in Machu Picchu.

## **Shopping**

There may be scheduled visits to local shops during your adventure. There is no requirement to make a purchase during these stops, and any purchase made is a direct transaction with the shop in question, subject to the vendor's terms of purchase. O.A.T. is not responsible for purchases you make on your trip or for the shipment of your purchases.

## **Returns**

If you discover an issue with an item, you should contact the vendor directly and expect that any resolution will take longer than it would in the U.S. We recommend that you keep a copy of all your receipts, invoices, or contracts, along with the shop's contact information. Keep in mind, local practice may vary from U.S. standards, so don't assume that you have a certain number of days after the purchase to speak up or that you are guaranteed a refund.

## **Crafts & Souvenirs**

### **Brazil**

Brazil is a shopping bonanza. Traditional handicrafts like wooden carvings, masks, ceremonial figures in wood or clay, and handmade lace or textiles complete for your attention with modern brands like Havaianas flip-flops, and Granado beauty products. To make your own caipirinha cocktails at home, bring back a bottle of the local sugarcane liquor called cachaca. Or for a non-alcoholic option, chose a bag of Brazilian coffee. Other items for sale include soccer memorabilia and props for the yearly carnival festival.

## Argentina

Argentina is world-famous for its leather goods and you'll find them readily available in Buenos Aires. Popular buys include belts, jackets, boots, shoes, skirts, pants, briefcases, and purses. These come in a rainbow of pastels and vivid colors, and a variety of textures from rough suedes to soft leathers. Other items worth considering include wool sweaters, clothing made of the Argentine equivalent of cashmere, ponchos, wine, and antique silver gaucho accessories. Top-quality jewelry is also sold, with the best buys being items made with Inca Rose or rhodochrosite. Argentina is one of the few places in the world where this is found and it is used in everything from jewelry to carved figures.

In the much smaller and more remote city of Ushuaia, there is excellent souvenir shopping—you will find everything from T-shirts to leather goods to divine chocolates, and even a local craft market.

**Bargaining:** Argentina does not have a bargaining culture; prices in shops are fixed. The only place you may be able to bargain is in the open-air markets. If you try to bargain at a market, keep in mind that if you make an offer, you should be prepared to buy at that price. Bring a mix of small bills so that you can pay in exact change.

## Chile

Among Chilean goods, the excellent textiles are worth perusing. For “typical” items, colorful hand-woven ponchos are a good buy, as well as vicuna rugs, and—although perhaps a little heavy for air travel—there is excellent artisan copper work. Chilean stones have achieved much popularity abroad, and there are many “rock shops” in the city and suburbs selling quality work in lapis lazuli, Chilean jade, amethyst, agate, onyx, and others. Salmon, canned and smoked, is also a good buy.

**Bargaining:** In Chile, shops generally have fixed prices. In places other than shops (like markets), you may be able to bargain. The only rule is that if you make an offer, you should be prepared to buy at that price. Bring a mix of small bills so that you can pay in exact change.

## Peru

Traditional souvenirs available in Lima and Cuzco include gold and silver jewelry, old and new weavings, ceramics, woolen clothing, hand-knitted alpaca sweaters, woven ponchos, rugs, coats, and blankets. A much more limited selection is available in Iquitos.

## U.S. Customs Regulations & Shipping Charges

For all things related to U.S. Customs, the ultimate authority is the U.S. Bureau of Customs & Border Protection. Their website, [www.cbp.gov](http://www.cbp.gov) has the answers to the most frequently asked questions. Or you can call them at **1-877-227-5511**.

The top three points to know are:

- At time of writing, your personal duty-free allowance is \$800 for items brought with you. Items totaling more than \$800 are subject to duty fees.

- **Items shipped home are always subject to duty when received in the U.S.** Even when the shop has offered to include shipping and duties in the price, this typically means shipping to the nearest customs facility and payment of the export duties—not door-to-door shipping or payment of the import duties. All additional duties or shipping charges would be your responsibility. Unless an item is small enough to send by parcel service (like FedEx), chances are you will need to arrange shipping or pick-up once the item is in the U.S. and will need to pay customs duties.
- It is illegal to import products made from endangered animal species. U.S. Customs & Border Protection will seize these items, as well as most furs, coral, tortoise shell, reptile skins, feathers, plants, and items made from animal skins.

## **Agricultural Statement for Chile**

Like some parts of the U.S. such as California and Hawaii, Chile severely restricts the entry of agricultural products to protect against the accidental transport of pests. Chile's requirements are very strictly enforced and incur large fines for violation. If you are arriving in Chile by air, we advise you to discard any fruit, nuts, vegetables, seeds, dairy products including cheese, flowers (including dried flowers), or unprocessed meats before landing.

If you are arriving by air, the flight attendants will distribute an Agricultural Products form that you must complete. On this form you'll be asked to declare whether or not you are bringing any fruits, nuts, or other organic products into Chile. If you are carrying any items of this nature, you must declare them on this form. Fines of up to \$200 could result if customs officers find even a simple pack of peanuts or an apple.

# DEMOGRAPHICS & HISTORY

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## Brazil

### Facts & Figures

- **Area:** 3,286,470 square miles
- **Capital:** Brasilia
- **Languages:** Portuguese is the official language; English is also spoken
- **Ethnicity:** White 47.7%, biracial 43.1%, black 7.6%, Asian 1.1%, indigenous 0.4%
- **Location:** Brazil is bordered by Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, French Guiana, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay, and Venezuela.
- **Geography:** Brazil is geographically divided into highlands and plateaus in the south and the Amazon River Basin in the north.
- **Population:** 202,656,788 (2014 estimate)
- **Religions:** Roman Catholic 64.6%, other Catholic 0.4%, Protestant 22.2% (includes Adventist 6.5%, Assembly of God 2.0%, Christian Congregation of Brazil 1.2%, Universal Kingdom of God 1.0%, other Protestant 11.5%), other Christian 0.7%, Spiritist 2.2%, other 1.4%, none 8%, unspecified 0.4%
- **Time Zone:** Brazil has four time zones. When it is 6am in Washington D.C., it is 7am in Rio de Janeiro.

### National Holidays: Brazil

In addition to the holidays listed below, Brazil celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit **www.timeanddate.com/holidays**.

01/01 New Year's Day

04/21 Tiradentes Day

05/01 Labor Day / May Day

09/07 Independence Day

10/12 Our Lady Aparecida / Children's Day

11/02 All Souls Day

11/15 Republic Proclamation Day

12/25 Christmas

### Historical Overview of Brazil

Modern day Brazil was inhabited as far back as 8,000 years ago by migrating hunters who traveled from Asia by land or coastal sea routes. The Portuguese, who eventually settled much of this land, did not arrive until the 15th century. Motivated by competition with Spain, and inspired by advances in navigation, Portugal first sailed toward Brazil in search of a path to the Far East. They were granted land rights below a north-south line through an agreement with

Spain known as the Treaty of Tordesillas. An expedition commanded by Pedro Alvares Cabral then formally claimed the land on behalf of the King of Portugal. Brazil was finally settled in 1532 by São Vicente. Later, a system of twelve “captaincies” united it under Tome de Souza.

As the new colony began to prosper, interest grew from other European countries. In 1630, the Dutch occupied the northeast, and the city of Recife flourished under Count Maurits, but the Dutch were eventually driven out. Settlement in Brazil remained heavy on the east coast until a boom beckoned people from all over the country to move inland in search of gold and, later, diamonds. A group of bandeirantes (colonial scouts) pushed west in search of riches and slaves; they established outposts where many of today’s Brazilian cities still exist.

Throughout the next two centuries, Portugal benefited from Brazil’s prosperity through a series of taxes and restrictions that were common for the time. In 1788, Jose da Silva Xavier led an unsuccessful movement for independence from these practices.

That independence came years later, after Napoleon Bonaparte invaded Portugal and the Portuguese royal family fled to Brazil. When the war was over and they returned home, their son, Pedro, declared independence and later became Emperor of Brazil. He later abdicated to his five-year-old son, Dom Pedro II, who officially took over at the age of 15 and led Brazil through a period of progress and expansion. After freeing all slaves in Brazil in 1888, Dom Pedro II was overthrown in favor of a new republican government.

The Republic saw Brazil through World War I and the Great Depression, but was overthrown by a military junta. Getúlio Vargas outlawed the elected government and replaced it with the Estado Novo. Vargas instituted nationalist policies, developing the country’s vast resources and uniting Brazil with the Allies during World War II. He was later accused of corruption and asked to resign, but committed suicide in 1954. Military-appointed presidents followed until 1985, when a civilian was again elected to the presidency. Brazil then entered a period of economic prosperity and, in 1989, returned to a democratic government with the election of Fernando Collor de Mello (often simply referred to as “Collor”).

Unfortunately, the election did not result in the political stability that Brazilians had hoped for. Initially it started well—Collor introduced measures to counter inflation, which was one of Brazil’s biggest challenges. And the measures seemed to work for roughly six months, but then inflation began to climb again. Then in 1991, Collor was accused of corruption by his own brother. The resulting scandal led to wide-spread protests, a congressional inquiry, and impeachment hearings. (Technically Collor stepped down before he was impeached, but congress still banned him from politics for the next 8 years; his vice-president served the rest of his term.)

Then in 1994, a former Minister of the Treasury, Fernando Henrique Cardoso was elected president. President Cardoso’s administration put a strong emphasis on improving Brazil’s economy and reaching out the international community at large. Despite some setbacks, he was re-elected in 1998, and managed to somewhat control the rampant inflation that had been an issue for Brazil in the past. However, with the 2002 election of Luiz Inacio Lula de Silva (Lula for short) inflation began to creep up again. Lula, who was elected as a member

of the Socialist Worker's Party, decided to abandon some of his more radical ideas in favor of continuing the plans set forth by Cardoso; this split his party and may have led to some members to accuse each other of bribery and corruption.

Nonetheless, Lula was re-elected for a second term, and in 2009 was faced with his biggest challenge: the world financial crisis. Although the Brazilian economy was impacted, certain tax measures and investments in industry and manufacturing helped the country bounce back. In 2010 Dilma Rousseff was elected as Brazil's first female president; one of her first challenges was preparing the country to be a host of both the World Cup Finals (in 2014) and the Summer Olympics (in 2016). She has also instituted new programs designed to reduce poverty, especially childhood poverty.

## Argentina

### Facts & Figures

- **Area:** 1,073,518 square miles
- **Capital:** Buenos Aires
- **Languages:** Spanish is the official language. English is widely spoken in major cities and tourist centers.
- **Location:** Argentina is bordered by Bolivia, Paraguay, Brazil, Uruguay, and Chile
- **Geography:** Located in the South and West Hemisphere, Argentina features a diverse landscape ranging from the ice fields of Patagonia to the fertile pampas to the Andes Mountains.
- **Government Type:** Republic
- **Population:** 43,024,374
- **Religions:** Roman Catholic 92%, Protestant 2%, Jewish 2%, other 4%.
- **Time Zone:** Argentina time (ART) is 3 hours behind Coordinated Universal Time. Generally Argentina is 1 hour ahead of Eastern Time in the U.S. So usually, when it is 6am in Washington D.C. it is 7am in Buenos Aires. But Argentina doesn't use daylight saving time like the U.S. does, so from November to March there is a 2 hour difference—6am in D.C. is 8am in Buenos Aires.

## National Holidays: Argentina

In addition to the holidays listed below, Argentina celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Carnival and Easter. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit [www.timeanddate.com/holidays](http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays).

|       |                     |       |                                    |
|-------|---------------------|-------|------------------------------------|
|       |                     | 04/03 | Good Friday                        |
|       |                     | 05/01 | Labor Day / May Day                |
|       |                     | 05/25 | National Day/May 1810 Revolution   |
|       |                     | 06/20 | Flag Day                           |
| 01/01 | New Year's Day      | 07/09 | Independence Day                   |
| 03/24 | Memorial Day        | 12/08 | Feast of the Immaculate Conception |
| 04/02 | Day of the Veterans | 12/25 | Christmas Day                      |

## Historical Overview of Argentina

Little is known about societies that occupied prehistoric Argentina, though fossil records indicate a presence here as early as 11,000 B.C., in today's Patagonia. Millennia later, as the first settled cultures formed in South America, the Inca took an interest in Argentina, conquering the northwestern region and incorporating it into their empire. Central and southern Argentina remained nomadic.

European explorers arrived in the early 1500s, and Spain established Buenos Aires as a colony in 1580. Spanish immigrants and their descendants, indigenous people, and descendants of slaves developed the area over the next 200 years. Many colonists settled in Buenos Aires while others took to the surrounding pampas to live as gauchos. The Viceroyalty of the Rio de la Plata, consisting of today's Argentina and several surrounding countries, was created in 1776.

After two failed attempts by the British to overtake Buenos Aires in the early 1800s, word arrived that Napoleon had overthrown the Spanish king. This prompted a push for independence and the country's first assembly was formed. A formal declaration of independence was signed in 1816. Four years later, the viceroy and his armies were defeated. Bolivia and Uruguay broke off from Argentina during this period (Paraguay had seceded in 1811).

Investment and immigration after 1870 bolstered Argentina's economic strength, industry, and agriculture. Through 1929, both its population and its economy grew at an alarming rate, but often to the detriment of the working class. Juan Perón, who was elected president in 1946, recognized this and sought to empower workers, increase union membership, and expand social and educational programs. His first lady, Eva Perón, became a staunch supporter of the working class. Her Eva Perón Foundation provided basic needs to the poor and built schools, orphanages, and hospitals throughout Argentina. She died at the young age of 33, a national heroine. President Perón, having been pressured to increase industry more than support its workers, was overthrown in a violent coup in 1955.

Perón returned to office in 1973 after he wielded his influence from afar to encourage student and labor protests against an increasingly oppressive regime. But his next term was short-lived; he died in 1974, leaving his third wife, Isabel (also his vice president), to take his place. However, she was loyal to Perón's more fascist advisors, which led to social unrest and financial chaos. She was deposed by a military coup.

But what followed was far from an improvement. From 1976 to 1983, a series of military leaders ruled the country under a program officially known as the "National Reorganization Process". Unofficially, this time is often referred to as the "Dirty War". (Although for some historians, that term also covers the human rights violations started under Perón). Opposition and left-leaning groups were oppressed. Many dissidents disappeared, as did ordinary citizens who were suspected of having ties to dissidents. A policy of wage-freezing was frequently put in place. Living standards plummeted, foreign debt soared, and the peso collapsed. Finally, when Argentina lost the Falklands War (in Spanish, the Guerra de las Malvinas) to the British in 1982, the military's credibility languished, leading to the next free elections.

It took Argentina 20 years and seven presidents to dig out of this dire economic and social instability. Administrations through the '80s and '90s were marred by corruption, the freezing of bank accounts, violent protests, and political infighting. In late 2001, the country saw three different presidents over a two-week period. Trust in the government was low.

Things turned around in late 2002, and the economy has been growing since, largely under the presidency of Néstor Kirchner, a Peronist. In 2007, he forfeited the office to his wife Cristina Fernández de Kirchner. Her stated objectives included the reduction of inflation, and to that end new tariffs on agricultural exports were introduced in March of 2008. But the tariffs proved to be widely unpopular, and provoked a 129-day strike by farmers and agricultural unions. Eventually the tariffs were defeated in the legislature. With Néstor Kirchner's passing in October 2010, public opinion increasingly supported his widow, Cristina, and her efforts to reduce the national debt.

Other recent controversies in Argentine politics have included the mounting tension over the possible oil reserves under the Falkland Islands, which have rekindled the debate on whether the islands should belong to Argentina or Great Britain. There have also been a number of recent high-profile trials and convictions of leaders from the 1976-1983 military government for crimes against humanity.

## Chile

### Facts & Figures

- **Area:** 291,933 square miles
- **Capital:** Santiago
- **Languages:** Spanish
- **Location:** Chile is bordered by Bolivia, Peru, and Argentina

- **Geography:** One third of Chile is covered by the Andes. Five distinct geographical regions make up the country: the Northern Desert, the Central Valley, the Lake District, Patagonia in the south, and remote Easter Island 2,400 miles offshore in the Pacific.
- **Government Type:** Republic
- **Population:** 17,508,260
- **Religions:** Roman Catholic 66.7%, Evangelical or Protestant 16.4%, Jehovah's Witness 1%, other 3.4% none 11.5%, unspecified 1.1%
- **Time Zone:** From roughly mid-September to mid-April, though it can vary year to year, Chile is on Chile Summer Time (CLST), two hours ahead of U.S. Eastern Standard Time (EST). When it is 6am in Washington D.C., it is 8am in Santiago. The rest of the year, Chile is on Chile Standard Time (CLT), 1 hour ahead of EST, and the exact same time as Eastern Daylight Time (EDT). Chile's seasons are opposite to those in the U.S., so just as we are starting daylight saving time, Chile is finishing it.

### National Holidays: Chile

In addition to the holidays listed below, Chile celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter and Reformation Day. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit **[www.timeanddate.com/holidays](http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays)**.

01/01 New Year's Day

05/01 Labor Day / May Day

05/21 Navy Day

07/16 Our Lady of Mount Carmel

08/15 Assumption of Mary

09/18 National Day

09/19 Army Day

11/01 All Saints' Day

12/08 Immaculate Conception Day

12/25 Christmas Day

### Historical Overview of Chile

Evidence shows that Native Americans moved into Chile's fertile valleys between the Andes and the Pacific 10,000 years ago. The Incas briefly settled in the north, but found the desert climate too harsh. Ferdinand Magellan arrived on southern Chilean shores in 1520 by way of the strait that was later named for him. In 1535, Spanish conquistadores moved in from Peru in search of gold, led by Diego de Almagro. But hundreds of thousands of indigenous people kept them at bay. Just five years later, with support of more Spanish troops, the conquest of Chile began. Francisco Pizarro's lieutenant, Pedro de Valdivia, made his capital at Santiago and claimed the region under the Viceroyalty of Peru.

Conquest continued in fits and starts. For more than 100 years, native Mapuche people from the central valleys resisted the colonial front coming from the north, successfully pushing the Spanish border back several times. With the Mapuche to the south, the Andes to the east, the desert to the north, and the Pacific to the west, the Spanish colony became an isolated frontier,

self-sustaining and homogenized. Soon, the Mapuche were not their only concern; the Dutch and English moved in from the ocean, including Sir Francis Drake, who raided Valparaiso in 1578. But the invaders were up against the most militarized Spanish colony on the new continent.

In 1808, when Napoleon took Spain and placed his brother on the throne, colonists began talking of independence from Spain. Diplomatic and military struggles followed for the next ten years until Bernard O'Higgins and Jose de San Martin crossed the Andes with their troops and defeated the royalists. Chile declared its independence in 1818 under the leadership of O'Higgins.

Through the rest of the century, Chile launched an aggressive campaign against the Mapuche to push its border south. To the north, the War of the Pacific earned Chile the Atacama Desert and beyond, stripping Bolivia of its access to the ocean and enriching the economy with profits from newly won nitrate and copper mines. The Chilean Civil War of 1891 drove a wedge between industrialists and bankers and Chile's government evolved into an oligarchy. By the 1920s, the growing working class was large enough to elect a reformist president, but a conservative Congress frustrated his efforts to achieve real change.

By 1970, after decades marked by exchanges of power between liberals and conservatives, Chile was looking at many social and economic reforms. And with the election of Salvador Allende, a member of Chile's Socialist Party and uncle to famed Chilean-American novelist Isabel Allende, many of them began to take shape. But it wasn't enough to raise the country out of a depression, or to quell mounting inflation. International support was also hard to come by, since Allende was moving to nationalize all foreign-owned companies that operated in Chile, including those owned by the U.S. A military coup overthrew him—and Augusto Pinochet stepped in. Allende took his own life.

So began 17 years of darkness for Chile. Pinochet's dictatorship was one of the bloodiest of the 20th century, marked by killing, torture, and other human rights violations. More than 3,000 people died or went missing. Chile eventually rid itself of the Pinochet regime by electing a new president in 1989. In 2006, Michelle Bachelet Jeria was elected President, becoming the first woman to hold Chile's highest office. Her policies, which included pursuing free trade agreements with other countries, helped Chile reach another first—in 2010 Chile became the first South American member of the OECD (Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development). Despite record high approval ratings President Jeria stepped down at the end of her term in March 2010 because the Chilean constitution forbids the immediate re-election of a president. She was succeeded in office by Sebastian Pinera.

The first order of President Pinera's administration was the recuperation from a large earthquake that occurred off the coast on February 27, 2010. Fortunately, Chile has used knowledge gained from previous events towards earthquake preparedness. In stark contrast with Haiti, which was also hit with an earthquake in the beginning of 2010, the preparation paid off with a very low casualty rate and a very high rate of economic recovery.

Yet just as Chile was getting back on its feet, a mining accident in August of 2010 brought international attention back to the normally quiet country. A cave-in at the San Jose mine in the Atacama Desert left 33 miners trapped underground for a record 69 days. It is estimated that nearly one billion people worldwide tuned in for the daring and successful rescue operation, which was televised live around the globe.

Recent events in Chile have centered on the economy, education, and equal rights. In 2011, two large demonstrations (trade unions in May, students in July) caught the public attention, as did the passing of a landmark anti-discrimination law in 2012.

## Peru

### Facts & Figures

- **Area:** 496,225 square miles
- **Capital:** Lima
- **Languages:** Spanish and Quechua are the official languages; Aymara, and a large number of minor Amazonian languages are also spoken.
- **Location:** Peru is bordered by Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, and Ecuador.
- **Geography:** Peru is the third-largest country in South America. Topped by towering Andean peaks, its landscape also includes a portion of the Amazon River Basin and an extension of Chile's Atacama Desert along the coast. Three of Peru's largest cities—Lima, Trujillo, and Chiclayo—are in the coastal desert region. The city of Iquitos (population 400,000) is the capital of Peru's Amazon region on the eastern slope of the Andes. It is accessible only by airplane and Amazon riverboat.
- **Population:** 31,331,228 (2018 estimate)
- **Religions:** Roman Catholic 81.3%, Evangelical 12.5%, other 3.3%, unspecified or none 2.9%
- **Time zone:** Peru is on Peru Time, which is the same time zone as U.S. EST. When it is 6am in Washington D.C., it is 6am in Lima.

## National Holidays: Peru

In addition to the holidays listed below, Peru celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter . To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit [www.timeanddate.com/holidays](http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays).

01/01 New Year's Day

05/01 Labor Day / May Day

06/29 St. Peter & St. Paul

07/28 Independence Day

07/29 Independence Day (Day 2)

08/30 Santa Rosa De Lima

10/08 Battle of Angamos

11/01 All Saints Day

12/08 Feast of the Immaculate Conception

12/25 Christmas Day

## Historical Overview of Peru

### Early History

Although Peru is well known as the land of the Incas, its rich ancient history pre-dates the Inca Empire by thousands of years. The earliest evidence of indigenous societies goes back to the eighth millennium BC. There are indications that organized village life was present as long ago as 2500 BC.

By 1200 BC, several groups had begun moving from the north into what is now Peru. These included the Chavín, Chimú, Sechín, Nazca, and Tiahuanaco. The ruins of the Chimú city of Chanchan, which was built around 1000 AD, still exist today. Another legacy of these early peoples is the striking religious iconography of the Chavín, who had great influence in the coastal area in their time. They portrayed animals, particularly the jaguar, in a distinctive and impressive style.

New regional cultures arose following the decline of the Chavín and Sechín around the 5th century BC. The Saliner and the Paracas made artistic and technological advances including kiln-fired ceramics and sophisticated weaving techniques. The Nazca, creators of the huge, cryptic Nazca Lines, were successors to the Paracas culture.

### The Incas

The Inca Empire had a surprisingly brief reign at the end of this long pre-colonial history. In less than a century, the Incas expanded their domain from the river valley around Cuzco to the whole region from northern Argentina to southern Colombia, including much of present-day Peru and Ecuador. In addition to their military skill, the Incas had a knack for assimilating the best features of the peoples they conquered. They built their entire empire between the early 1400s and 1532, when the Spanish conquistadors arrived.

In its prime, the Incan capital at Cuzco was the richest city in all of the Americas, dominated by gold-plated temples. Though only fragments of Cuzco's Incan architecture remain, the renowned ruins at Machu Picchu, an Incan ceremonial center, have survived to astonish the world.

At the very moment when Francisco Pizarro landed with his band of Spanish conquistadors, the Inca Empire had been divided and weakened by a dispute over succession to the throne. Pizarro's possession of horses and cannons gave him a military advantage, and he also used deception to exploit the situation. Concealing his true intentions, he arranged a personal meeting with the Inca ruler Atahualpa, then proceeded to assassinate him. The conquistadors sacked the city of Cuzco and took control.

Though Inca resistance continued for several years, Atahualpa's death ended the Inca Empire. Francisco Pizarro established a new capital city at Ciudad de los Reyes, now Lima, in 1535. It was there that a rival conquistador killed Pizarro during a factional dispute six years later.

### **Colonial Period and Independence**

For 200 years, Spanish officials ruled Peru using native intermediaries as go-betweeners to deal with the indigenous population. In 1780, some 60,000 native people rose up in revolt against Spanish rule, led by a Peruvian patriot who used the Inca name of Tupac Amaru. The Spanish ultimately put down this revolt and another in 1814.

Peru finally broke free from Spain in the 1820s as wars of independence swept across South America. Jose de San Martin of Argentina and Simon Bolivar of Venezuela played key roles in driving the Spanish military out of Peru, which declared independence in 1821.

A series of Bolivar's lieutenants known as the "marshals of Ayacucho" governed Peru in the following decades. One of the most able of these, Ramon Castilla, presided over the adoption of a liberal constitution in 1860.

### **The Modern Era**

Since then, Peru's history has been a dramatic alternation between democratic and dictatorial governments, each of which has faced pressing social and economic issues. Opposition to dictatorship has played a prominent role in Peruvian politics since the 1920s, when Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre founded the American Popular Revolutionary Alliance (APRA).

Peruvian democratic reformers have long advocated guaranteed civil liberties and improved living conditions for the nation's Native Americans. There have also been radical and violent opposition movements, including the Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path), whose leaders were captured in 1992. Peru's next four heads of state were democratically elected presidents: Fernando Belaúnde Terry in 1980, Alan García Pérez (an APRA candidate) in 1985, Alberto Fujimori in 1990, and Alejandro Toledo in 2001. In 2006, Alan Garcia Perez was elected President again and—in contrast to his earlier term—he presided over a period of economic growth until 2011 when Peru's current president, Ollanta Humala was elected.

## RESOURCES

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### Suggested Readings

#### Brazil

*Brazil* by Michael Palin (Travel Narrative) What would it be like to travel Brazil with a cultured and funny travel enthusiast who happened to be a member of the famed British comedy group Monty Python? This book tells you.

*The Brazilians* by Joseph Page (Culture) A useful review of how Brazil's people, history, economy and politics have shaped its modern-day culture.

*Dona Flor and Her Two Husbands* by Jorge Amado (Literature) After Dona Flor's passionate scoundrel of a first husband drops dead at Carnival, she remarries a steady but dull pharmacist. How can she reconcile the two extremes? Brazilian writer Amado makes use of magic, recipes, ghosts, and bawdy humor in this, one of his best-known novels.

*Bossa Nova, The Story of the Brazilian Music That Seduced the World* by Ruy Castro (Musical History) The story of the emergence of Bossa Nova is retold in gossipy detail by Brazilian journalist who was lucky enough to have interviewed many of the great bossa nova musicians firsthand.

*Brazil: Five Centuries of Change* by Thomas E. Skidmore (History) It's hard to condense 500 years of history into roughly 250 pages, but this useful volume on Brazil's colonial history and post-independence era mostly succeeds. Unfortunately, the book hasn't been updated since it was written, so it is missing more recent events. (But for more recent history, you could pick up *The New Brazil* by Riordan Roett or *The Throes of Democracy: Brazil since 1989* by Bryan McCann.)

*Brazil* by Errol Lincoln Uys (Literature) A massive and sweeping historical novel that follows the lives of two families across multiple generations, set against the backdrop of historical Brazil. Reminiscent of Alex Haley's *Roots* or *Shogun* by James Clavell, but this time set in South America.

*Child of the Dark: The Diary of Carolina Maria de Jesus* by Carolina Maria de Jesus (Memoir) The everyday life of a poor favela (shantytown) in the 1950s is captured in this diary, written by a woman with very little formal education but lots of determination. Look for the 50th anniversary edition.

#### Argentina

*And the Money Kept Rolling In (and Out)* by Paul Blustein (Economics/History) An interesting and thought-provoking account of the 2001 collapse of Argentina's economy.

*Argentina, 1516-1987: From Spanish Colonization to Alfonsín* by David Rock (History) A thought-provoking history that does much to explain why a country with such potential regressed from a major world power to a developing nation.

*Evita: The Real Life of Eva Peron* by Nicholas Fraser and Marysa Navarro (Biography) Although written in 1996, this book is still considered to be one of the best-researched and most balanced accounts of the woman behind the myth.

*In Patagonia* by Bruce Chatwin (Travel Narrative) A masterpiece of travel, history and adventure. This engaging book captures the spirit of the land, history, wildlife, and people of Patagonia.

*Natural Patagonia: Natural Argentina & Chile* by Marcelo D. Beccaceci. (Field Guide) A natural history guide to Patagonia's incredible wildlife and plants.

*Night Flight* by Antoine de Saint-Exupery (Literature) Follows a pilot alone in a storm over the Andes en route from Punta Arenas to Buenos Aires. In this wonderfully evocative novella by the author of *The Little Prince*, de Saint-Exupery captures the thrill of early flight and the courage of the pilots.

*The Buenos Aires Quintet* by Manuel Vazquez Montalban (Mystery) A Spanish detective travels to Buenos Aires to help an uncle find his missing son—a mystery that could be personal or political. One of the popular *Pepe Carvalho* crime series.

*The Motorcycle Diaries: Notes on a Latin American Journey* by Ernesto “Che” Guevara (Memoir/Travel Narrative) The true-life story of Che Guevara's attempt to see South America from the back of an old motorcycle at the age of 23. Later in life, he would claim that it was this journey that started to form his political beliefs.

*The Whispering Land* by Gerald Durrell (Travel Narrative/Nature) An account of the author's eight-month odyssey in pursuit of Patagonian wildlife from seals to parrots.

*Tierra del Fuego* by Francisco Coloane (Short Stories) These nine stories of adventure, exploration, and voyage are peopled with ravenous explorers, fortune hunters, foreign revolutionaries, ill-fated seafarers, intrepid ships' captains, and ruthless smugglers.

## **Chile**

*By Night in Chile: A Nostalgic Journey Through Chile* by Roberto Bolano (Literature) A highly imaginative story that takes place over the course of a single night when a priest, believing himself to be dying, recalls some of the crucial events and personages of his life.

*Clandestine in Chile: The Adventures of Miguel Littin* by Gabriel Garcia Marquez (Memoir) The true story of an exiled film director who snuck back into Chile in 1985 to make an undercover documentary.

*Deep Down Dark* by Hector Tobar (Non-fiction) In 2010, the world was gripped by the news reports of 33 miners trapped for 69 days below the surface—this is their story.

*Easter Island* by Jennifer Vanderbes (Fiction) This novel had two intertwined stories—one set in 1913 just before the outbreak of World War I and one in the 1970s—both featuring a heroine of her time.

*My Invented Country* by Isabel Allende (Memoir/History) Written by an accomplished novelist who is related to Salvadore Allende (the Chilean President assassinated in 1973), this book mixes recent history (the assassination, the 9/11 attacks) with the author's personal journey as a writer.

*The Dictator's Shadow: Life Under Augusto Pinochet* by Heraldo Munoz (Biography/History) Recounts the many terrifying acts of Chile's former dictator, his rise to power, and what it took to be rid of him.

*The House of the Spirits, Daughter of Fortune, and Portrait in Sepia* by Isabel Allende (Literature) Three books by one of Chile's most famous authors. *The House of the Spirits* follows the passionate ups and downs of four generations; *Portrait in Sepia* is a novel about memory and secrets as a woman attempts to trace her family history; and *Daughter of Fortune* is about a young woman from Chile who follows her heart to the California gold rush.

*Miracle in the Andes* by Nando Parrado (Non-fiction) A fresh and engrossing look at the plane crash disaster that inspired *Alive*, told from the point of view of one of the survivors who went for help.

*Travels in a Thin Country: A Journey Through Chile* by Sara Wheeler (Travel Narrative) The author recounts her solo, 2,600-mile trip from the top of Chile to its southernmost tip.

*Hinchey Report* published by the CIA (History/Politics) Although somewhat dry, this report does offer handy—and free—background reading on the role of the CIA in Chile's politics during the 60s and 70s. The report is sometimes available online. For travelers interested in an opposing view, our regional office suggests seeking out Allende's *Chile, An Insider View* by economist Edward Boorstein. The book can be hard to find, and a bit dense to read, but it does offer a unique viewpoint—Boorstein was an economic advisor to Allende.

*The Essential Neruda* by Pablo Neruda (Poetry) Chile's famous poet printed several volumes during his lifetime—all worthwhile—but this edition is a good introduction to his best-known works.

## **Peru**

*Ancient Kingdoms of Peru* by Nigel Davies (Anthropology). An archaeologist (and Inca expert) analyzes recent findings and reassesses scholarly theories surrounding the ancient Inca kingdom. This book may not be in stock at your local bookstore, but it can still be found online.

*Conquest of the Incas* by John Hemming (History). A masterful history of the Inca struggle against the Spanish invasion. An engaging work that brings together wide-ranging scholarly material in the interests of telling a good story.

*Conversation in the Cathedral* by Mario Vargas Llosa (Literature). A novel about power, corruption, and identity, set in 1950s Peru under the dictatorship of Manuel Odria.

*Eight Feet in the Andes* by Dervla Murphy (Travel Account). Murphy and her nine-year-old daughter traveled 1,300 miles by mule through the Andes, from Cajamarca to Cuzco. This account describes their three-month journey.

*Incas: People of the Sun* by Carmen Bernard (History). The story of the rise and fall of the Inca civilization. It includes excerpts from the writings of conquistadors, travelers, and the Incas themselves.

*Lima: A Cultural History* by James Higgins (History). An erudite guide to the cultural gems and literary history of Peru's capital city. James Higgins, who specializes in Peruvian literature, covers the scope of the city's history from its pre-Columbian museums, to its conquistador heritage, to its dynamic present.

*Lost City of the Incas* by Hiram Bingham (Exploration). A first-rate tale of adventure by the man who rediscovered Machu Picchu in 1911. This classic account is a gripping story of exploration, archaeology, and natural history—and still an outstanding overview of the site itself.

*The Bridge of San Luis Rey* by Thornton Wilder (Literature). A 1928 novel by the Pulitzer Prize-winning Wilder, set in the Peru of 200 years ago. The story, about five travelers who are killed when a bridge built by the Incas collapses, is told from the point of view of a Franciscan missionary.

*Turn Right at Machu Picchu* by Mark Adams (History/Travel Narrative) The humorous and engaging tale of what happens when a modern-day adventurer tries to follow the steps of Hiram Bingham by re-creating the expedition that discovered Machu Picchu.

*1491: New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus* by Charles C. Mann (History). Mann portrays the richness of culture and history that already existed before the arrival of European settlers. And contrary to popular belief, what he describes is not remote villages in a pristine wilderness, but a series of populous, sophisticated societies stretching from South America, through Mexico, and up the U.S. Mississippi Valley.

*At Play in the Fields of the Lord* by Peter Matthiessen (Literature). A wild tale about the impact of outsiders on an indigenous tribe, set in the Peruvian Amazon.

*Life in the Treetops: Adventures of a Woman in Field Biology* by Margaret Lowman (Memoir). The sprightly memoir of an ecologist who climbs, studies, and sleeps in trees for a living, balancing multiple roles of scientist, wife, and mom. She continues her story in a second memoir (written with her now-grown sons) entitled *It's a Jungle Up There, More Tales from the Treetops*.

*Little Tiny Teeth* by Aaron J. Elkins (Mystery). When a forensics professor joins an Amazon riverboat expedition, he expects a vacation. But in a jungle full of predators, he realizes the humans may be the deadliest of all. (We promise, this won't happen to you.)

*Tales of a Shaman's Apprentice* by Mark Plotkin (Culture). An ethnobotanist recounts his work documenting the use of medicinal plants among remote Amazon tribes.

*The Enchanted Amazon Rain Forest: Stories from a Vanishing World* by Nigel J.H. Smith (Culture). This is a fascinating introduction to the people, culture, and geography of the rainforest.

*The Lost City of Z: A tale of Deadly Obsessions in the Amazon* by David Grann (Biography/Memoir). This riveting, real-life adventure tale bounces between a biography of Colonel Percy Harrison Fawcett and the author's own quest to find out what happened to the great explorer, who disappeared in the Brazilian Amazon in 1925. (Although set in the Brazilian Amazon, we've included this book because it gives a good sense of exploration in the mysterious Amazon forest).

*The Mapmaker's Wife: A True Tale of Love, Murder, and Survival in the Amazon* by Robert Whitaker (History) Colonial politics, the travails of a cartographer, and a good old-fashioned murder all add intrigue to this absorbing tale of 18th-century European exploration of the Amazon and one woman's quest to find her husband deep in the jungle.

*The River of Doubt: Theodore Roosevelt's Darkest Journey* by Candice Millard (History/Biography). A must-read account of a journey to the Amazon by Teddy Roosevelt late in his life—and one that almost ended his life.

*The Three Halves of Ino Moxo: Teachings of the Wizard of the Upper Amazon* by Cesar Calvo and Kenneth A. Symington, Translator (Culture). A Peruvian author's portrayal of the world of Amazonian sorcerer Ino Moxo and the deep and complex folklore of the region. Explains how this "green magician" continues ancient traditions including the use of plant medicines and chanting.

## Suggested Movies

### Brazil

*City of God* (2003, Foreign) The film follows a group of friends from the 1960s through the 80s as they grow up in a Brazilian shantytown—ironically named "the City of God". The film deals frankly with violence, drugs, poverty, and other topics that can be hard to watch, but was considered an instant classic by critics. The original title is *Cidade de Deus*.

*Favela Rising* (2005, Documentary) A documentary about the work of Anderson Sa, a reformed drug trafficker who formed a non-profit group that promotes music and education in the *favelas* (shantytowns) of Brazil.

*The Mission* (1986, Historical Drama) This period drama is about a group of Jesuits trying to convert indigenous tribes by Iguassu Falls. But suddenly, everything they have worked for is thrown into disarray when the land their mission stands on goes from being Spanish territory to Portuguese.

*Notorious* (1946, Classic) The plot of this tense and suspenseful thriller centers on flushing out Nazi spies in Brazil, but the movie is really about the conflict of loyalty and love. Although most of the action is set in Rio, that's not central to the story; but even though the film isn't typically Brazilian, we couldn't resist the powerhouse stars (Cary Grant, Ingrid Bergman) or the director (Alfred Hitchcock).

## Argentina

*Blessed by Fire* (2005, Drama) A film about the Falklands War (Malvinas War) and its aftermath, as told from the point of view of an Argentinean soldier looking back at his experiences two decades later. In Spanish with subtitles.

*Down Argentine Way* (1940, Musical) A light musical about a blossoming romance between an American heiress and an Argentine horse breeder. Features the feisty Carmen Miranda in her first American film.

*Evita* (1996, Musical) Although only loosely based on the real life of Argentina's first lady, the detailed sets, period costumes, and real-life Argentine locations convey the glamour of Buenos Aires in the 1930s. Travelers interested in documentaries should look for *Evita: The Woman Behind the Myth* from A&E or *Evita (The Documentary)* directed by Eduardo Montes-Bradley.

*Gilda* (1946, Classic) Set in the shadowy underworld of 1940s Buenos Aires, this film follows a strange love triangle: the casino kingpin, his lieutenant, and the sultry beauty that they can't trust.

*The Motorcycle Diaries* (2004, Biopic) Follows a 23-year-old Che Guevara and his friend Alberto Granado on a motorcycle journey across South America.

*The Official Story* (1985, Drama) As Alicia searches for more information about her adopted daughter's birth mother, she begins to uncover the history and extent of "the Disappeared"—political prisoners held captive by Argentina's ruling military government. In Spanish with subtitles.

*The Secret in Their Eyes* (2009, Drama/Thriller) Part murder mystery, part love story, this Argentine thriller follows a retired cop who is revisiting a haunting case from the 1970s as source material for his first novel. In Spanish with subtitles. Remade in 2015 as an American film with Julia Roberts.

*Tetro* (2009, Drama) Two brothers reunite in Buenos Aires after one disappeared from his family for ten years.

## Chile

*Missing* (1982, Drama). When an expat writer living in Chile during the 1973 coup goes missing, his wife and father-in-law must navigate complex and dangerous political waters to search for him.

*The Battle of Chile* (1975-1979, Documentary). A three-part documentary series about the 1973 coup d'état that deposed President Salvador Allende and raised General Augusto Pinochet to power. Unique in that it was filmed over four years in Chile as events were unfolding.

*No* (2012, Drama). Set in the 1980's and based on an unpublished play by Antonio Skarmeta, this Chilean drama explores the role of advertising tactics in General Augusto Pinochet's campaign for re-election.

## **Peru**

*Fitzcarraldo* (1982, Adventure) The story of an obsessive rubber baron who is determined to build an opera house in Iquitos (the gateway to the Peruvian jungle) and will go to incredible lengths to achieve his goal.

*In Search of History: Lost City of the Incas* produced by the History Channel (2005, Documentary) An informative overview of fabled Machu Picchu, including the story of its rediscovery in 1911.

*Jean-Michel Cousteau's Ocean Adventures: Return to the Amazon* produced by PBS (2008, Documentary) In the 1980s, Jean-Michel accompanied his famous underwater filmmaker father, Jacques Cousteau, on an expedition down the Amazon River. Twenty-five years later, he returns with his children.

*Secret of the Incas* (1956, Adventure) Heston stars as a fedora-wearing adventurer racing against a rival treasure hunter to track down a fabulous Inca artifact in Peru. This film is notable for being the first time a Hollywood studio filmed on location in Machu Picchu, and for its influence on the Indiana Jones series.

*The Celestine Prophecy* (2006, Drama) When an American history teacher joins a friend in Peru on a whim, the last thing he expects is to get caught up in an ancient prophecy and a religious controversy.

*The Naked Jungle* (1954, Adventure) Deep in the South American jungle, a swath of ravenous ants are eating everything in sight, and Heston's cocoa plantation is right in their path. Also in harm's way is his new mail-order bride, played by Eleanor Parker. Not for serious cultural study; just a lot of fun.

## Useful Websites

**Overseas Adventure Travel Forum** (tips from previous travelers)  
[www.oattravel.com/forum](http://www.oattravel.com/forum)

**Overseas Adventure Travel Store**  
[www.oatshop.com](http://www.oatshop.com)

**Overseas Adventure Travel Frequent Asked Questions**  
[www.oattravel.com/faq](http://www.oattravel.com/faq)

**International Health Information/CDC (Centers for Disease Control)**  
<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>

**Electricity & Plugs**  
[www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/plugs-and-sockets](http://www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/plugs-and-sockets)

**Foreign Exchange Rates**  
[www.xe.com/currencyconverter](http://www.xe.com/currencyconverter)  
[www.oanda.com/converter/classic](http://www.oanda.com/converter/classic)

**ATM Locators**  
[www.mastercard.com/atm](http://www.mastercard.com/atm)  
[www.visa.com/atmlocator](http://www.visa.com/atmlocator)

**World Weather**  
[www.intellicast.com](http://www.intellicast.com)  
[www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com)  
[www.wunderground.com](http://www.wunderground.com)

**Basic Travel Phrases** (80 languages)  
[www.travlang.com/languages](http://www.travlang.com/languages)

**Packing Tips**  
[www.travelite.org](http://www.travelite.org)

**U.S. Customs & Border Protection**  
[www.cbp.gov/travel](http://www.cbp.gov/travel)

**Transportation Security Administration (TSA)**  
[www.tsa.gov](http://www.tsa.gov)

**National Passport Information Center**  
[www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov)

**Holidays Worldwide**  
[www.timeanddate.com/holidays](http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays)

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