



YOUR LOCAL TRAVEL GUIDE

WHEN IS THE BEST TIME TO VISIT PERU

Your Expert Guide For Great Times In Peru

YOUR LOCAL TRAVEL GUIDE



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An aerial photograph of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, showing the city's dense urban landscape, the bay, and the mountains. The word "INTRODUCTION" is overlaid in large, bold, yellow capital letters.

INTRODUCTION

Planning a vacation and not sure where to go? Most people have South America on their travel list; the continent has a wide variety of things to do along all its countries. And, Peru is the ice on the cake in any South American journey; with an exotic Amazon, a high and dry mountain range, and a warm and humid coast, practically it can be enjoyed of each of them any time of the year.

Therefore, if you love to travel, there is no bad time to visit Peru. Every month and season has its benefits, including festivals to make your visit an unforgettable memory. Therefore, in this article that we prepared with Machu Travel Peru, we will go through the best seasons and months to visit the magical Andean country.

BEST TIME TO VISIT PERU



In general, **the best time to visit Peru is from May to September, specifically May, during the dry season or Winter season. This is due to clear and blue skies, a warm climate, and a majority absence of rain.** So, the perfect photos, postcards, and memories will be guaranteed in you come to Peru during this season.

But also, Peru has three well-defined natural regions that cross it longitudinally.

We refer to the coast (west end), the Sierra (central part), and the Amazon (east end). Each one of these shows a different Peruvian weather, consequently, each one presents a different season to visit them.

The best time to visit the Andes and the Amazon is from April to November (the dry season). With clear skies and cool breezes.

On the other hand, from December to March (the rainy season), you will find cloudy skies, heavy rain, and muddy roads. Note that the Andes host the majority of Inca archaeological places in all of Peru like Machu Picchu, Ollantaytambo, Cusco, Sacsayhuaman, and others. For its part, the Amazon hosts the majority of Nature Reserve and Parks like Manu, Tambopata, and Pacaya-Samiria, among others.

On the contrary, **the best time to visit the Peruvian coast is between December to March (The summer season) since this presents clear skies, hot weather, and the presence of sun every day.** The rest of the year, the coast suffers from cloudy skies, cold, fog, and drizzle. Note that the coast hosts the most beautiful beaches and paradise of Perú.



WHAT IS THE BEST TIME TO VISIT MACHU PICCHU?

The best time to visit Machu Picchu is in the dry season, from April to November, specifically in May. Sunny days, clear skies, warm and humid weather, and dry path (In the case of the Inca Trail) with few people. So you will have perfect photos, a memorable experience, and secure trekking over paths. Regarding the hour of visit, the early schedules (from 06:00 am to 10:00 am) or during lunch time (from 1:00 to 3:00 pm) are perfect. Because there are not many people and you can enjoy the entire Inca citadel for you.

Also, we recommend spending 1 to 2 weeks in Peru during July to enjoy all the natural, archaeological, and even cultural attractions that the Andean country has to show you.



3 PERUVIAN REGIONS

A. THE COAST

This is a desert strip that borders the Pacific Ocean (east end) with an elevation of around 150 - 600 m.a.s.l. Usually, the north coast is hotter than the south coast, but both have a temperature of around 25-35 °C throughout the year.

The south and center coasts reach their peak heat between December to March. This season coincides with the summer in Peru. And this is perfect for visiting attractions like the Nazca Lines, and the Huacachina Oasis. Or the Arequipa beaches, the Paracas National Reserve, the Ballestas islands, or the restaurants of Lima, the capital of Peru. The rest of the year cloudy skies, humid, and a misty gray fog called "Garúa", that covers their sky, are present.

On the other hand, the north coast presents sunny days and clear skies for most of the year and it is famous for its beaches, like Mancora, Lobitos, Huanchaco, Pocitas, and Cabo Blanco, among others. Many of them have nothing to envy about the paradisiacal islands of the Caribbean of Central America.

B. THE ANDEAN HIGHLANDS

This Mountain range is located between the Peruvian coast and the Amazon jungle with an elevation of 600 to 6768 m.a.s.l. Snow-capped peaks, mountain chains, and inter-Andean valleys are the most important characteristics here. The area presents temperatures around 05 – 25 °C.

The months between December to March are the coldest. The temperature can drop to 15° C during the day and 0 °C at night. And even this sensation can continue until May, besides rains and grey days.

Between April to November, the dry season is present with clear and sunny days and a pleasant climate that doesn't drop below 15 °C.



Also, it is considered the best time to visit Peru, in its Mountain ranges and Amazon region. Dare to take your backpack, and make a plan about things to do in Peru. Machu Picchu returned to normal and now receives tourists with total normality.

Most Inca buildings, archaeological rests, and colonial structures (a mix of Spanish and Inca architecture) are located in Andes cities like Cusco (Machu Picchu), Puno (Lake Titicaca), and Ayacucho.

C. THE PERUVIAN JUNGLE

The Peruvian Amazon is located at the east end of the Peruvian territory. It borders Colombia, Brazil, and Bolivia with an altitude between 80 – 3800 m.a.s.l. (Low jungle 80 – 800 m.a.s.l. And high jungle 800 – 3800 m.a.s.l.) **It has sub-tropical weather with temperatures around 20 – 32 °C.**

Between November to March, hard rains occur throughout all of the Amazon. Therefore, season is not recommended to visit it during these months. The rest of the year, from April to October, clear skies, and humid and hot breezes are present, and is the perfect moment to enjoy the jungle. However, rainfalls can be also present during the afternoons during this period.

The meteorological characteristics of the Peruvian Amazon coincide with those of the Andes, but not with those of the coast. For this reason, the majority of travelers who visit Machu Picchu, Cusco, or the Sacred Valley (The Andes) take advantage of visiting the Amazon rainforest, too.



THE DRY SEASON (APRIL TO NOVEMBER)



Between April to November, the Andean Highlands and Peruvian Amazon have their dry season, with a lack of rain, clear and sunny days, dry paths and routes, and warm breezes. Instead, the coast presents opaque and gray days, with cold humid winds. **The temperature is around 18 to 25 °C in the Andean Highlands. And from 18 to 30 °C in the Peruvian Amazon.**

The dry season represents the main tourist season in Peru . Also, this is perfect for doing Machu Picchu tours and visiting Andean cities like Cusco (Sacred Valley, Ollantaytambo, and Pisac inter alia). Arequipa (Colca Valley). Puno (Titicaca lake).

Also, when planning a trip to Peru Amazon **you should pay attention to the area like Puerto Maldonado (Tambopata National Reserve and Manu National Park), Iquitos (Pacaya-Samiria National Reserve), and Kuelap Citadel in Chachapoyas City.** Wonderful places to visit in this season.

THE RAINY SEASON (DECEMBER TO MARCH)

The rainy season occurs between December to March throughout all Andean Highlands and the Peruvian Amazon. Torrential rains, cloudy skies, icy winds, and humidity, beside muddy paths are the most common facts here. **Of course, the people crowd is minimal. While the coast has sunny and clear skies with humid and warm weather and fresh breezes but many more people. The temperature range is 0 - 18° C in the Andean and from 15 - 20 °C in the Peruvian Amazon.**

This season is perfect to visit Peruvian beautiful beaches (Mancora, Cabo Blanco, Zorritos, Vichayito inter alia), Archeological sites located on the coast cities (Chan-Chan, Paracas, Lord of Sipan museum), the famous Nazca lines. Coast cities like Lima, the capital of Peru, Trujillo, Piura, and Tumbes.



PERU WEATHER MONTH BY MONTH

1. JANUARY (ENJOY BEAUTIFUL NORTH BEACHES)

The weather in January differs from region to region.

In Lima, the weather is warm and dry with the night's balmy, sunny days and clear skies, making the stay pleasant and the enjoyment of the northern beaches.

In the highlands, in Cusco and Puno will rain most days. So make sure you prepare, even the jungle experiences wet season and it can be hot but with heavy rains, too.

Festivals of note in January include **the Adoration of the Magi in Lima on January 6** with processions in the city center. This is also held in other regions of Peru in January. Lima also celebrates **its foundation on January 18**.

2. FEBRUARY (VIRGEN LA CANDELARIA FESTIVITY IN PUNO)

On the coast, **the warmest month in Peru is February, specifically for swimming and realizing summer activities.** Among summer experiences you can practice **surfing, paddling, jet skiing, diving, and fishing among the most popular.** With ocean temperatures rising compared to the other months of the year, the beaches in Peru are your best option here.

On the other hand, in the Andes, the park rangers and specialists maintain the Inca Trail, and they close the trail all month. Even so, you may still visit Machu Picchu by train because the site is less crowded but with more fog. And the Jungle presents heavy rain with a storm.

The month has many festivals, notably Carnival which sees much partying in the streets, complete with the throwing of water balloons (Cajamarca city has the most important Carnival festivity). Also, in the southern town of Puno, at the beginning of February, the local population celebrates the Virgen de la Candelaria Festival.

3. MARCH (ENJOY PERUVIAN EASTER)

The weather in March is the same as in February.

The summer season and its high visitor rates are coming to an end, at least along the entire strip of the Peruvian coast.

In the Andes, the high season has not yet entered and it is the time in which several businesses lower their prices, and offer discounts for lodging, restaurants, and tours. For this reason, March represents the cheapest month to visit Peru.

On the other hand, all over Peru, there are street parades. **Generally, the Catholic population celebrates Easter at the end of the Month.** And normally statues of Christ pass through the streets and the adoring crowds throw flower petals to show their love for Christ.



4. APRIL (APPRECIATE THE DEEP COLCA CANYON)

In April, the weather starts to change in Cusco, and in the Andes, the rain stops, and the intensive cold starts. Despite this, it is considered one of the best months to visit the region as the valleys are green and the tourist crowds are lower. The fourth deepest canyon in the world, the Colca Canyon, located in the Peruvian southern city of Arequipa, will be the icing on the cake this month to be visited.

The jungle, however, sees higher rainfall in April, the rivers are higher but more areas are accessible by boat.





In the mountain city of Ayacucho, the celebrations of Holy Week in Peru take place in the first week of April. The week features cultural activities and there will be a lot of food and reflection.

5. MAY (THE BEST TIME TO VISIT PERU)

May sees the weather start to turn colder and cloudy in Lima, and most parts of the Peruvian coast.

On the other hand, the Andes are dryer and clearer, and it's the best time to visit Machu Picchu with a perfect climate and few people. Also, in the jungle, the rains have stopped, and share the climate characteristics of the Andes.

This is a good month to travel to Peru especially the highlands, as the landscape is green and lush with blue skies. On May 1 in the southern city of Arequipa, the Festival of the Virgin of Chapi is celebrated. Thousands of people walk around 28 miles to pay respect to the Virgin. Musicians pilgrimage alongside the worshipers and this usually takes around 15 hours to reach the virgin.

6. JUNE (VISIT THE JUNGLE CITIES OF NORTHERN PERU)

June the weather in the Andes and Cusco is dry (like the jungle region) with days warm and the nights cool, perfect for entering the jungle and exploring its charms, yes, together with a specialized guide.



Instead, in Lima, the central and southern coasts are colder and the sun has disappeared. Not so on the north coast, which has an eternal summer.

Also, **June sees some notable festivals in the highlands such as Corpus Christi in Cusco. Fifteen statues of saints from all over Cusco** neighborhoods are paraded around the main square and its close streets, making it a spectacular sight. Do not forget the Inti Raymi festival, which is held on 24 June every year.

7. JULY (EXPLORE THE PERU AMAZON JUNGLE)

Next, we have July; and in this month one of the best things to see in Peru is its Andean cities and the nature parks and reserves in the Amazon, like Manu, Pacaya-Samiria, Tambopata, and Bahuaja Sonene, and enjoy the awesome biodiversity in Peru, jaguars, black caimans, pumas, harpy eagles and more. Both sites experience a dry and warm climate with beautiful blue skies and fresh weather.

This month is the most popular in Peru with a high tourist flow. Sites like Cusco can get very crowded and for most is the best time to visit Machu Picchu. Also, in the town of Paucartambo around 4 hours from Cusco, the festival of the Virgen del Carmen is celebrated. The town is overflowing with people who come to see the traditional dancing that many groups offer to Virgen del Carmen.

8. AUGUST (CONQUER THE HEIGHTS BY HIKING THE INCA TRAIL)

April to October (especially June, July, and August), is considered by experts the best time to do the Inca Trail, which crosses the Sierra and the jungle. It is due to its excellent trekking weather conditions. In the jungle, it is dry and very warm, and the rivers are low, perfect to do trekking, and even sailing by the Amazon river.

Instead, in August, the weather in Lima is cold. Despite this, the Peruvian capital on 30 August, celebrates the religious festival of Santa Rosa de Lima, She was South America and Peru's first saint declared by the Vatican.

9. SEPTEMBER (EXPLORE THE ANCIENT CAPITAL OF THE INCA EMPIRE, CUSCO)

September continues to be cold with drizzle in Lima.

In the Andes, the weather drops at night but can get warm during the day. It is perfect to visit Cusco and enjoy its wonderful Rainbow Mountain!

The Festival of Spring is held in Trujillo (north of Peru) every year. The festival features folkloric dancers of Marinera and artists and they turn the streets into a feast of color and music.

10. OCTOBER (OBSERVE THE WILD FAUNA OF THE AMAZON)

In October, **the rains are starting to return to Cusco and the highlands. Lima is in spring, and it is getting rid of that gray drizzle that had accompanied it since June.** That is why, October could be considered as a shoulder season between the dry to rainy seasons in the Andes.

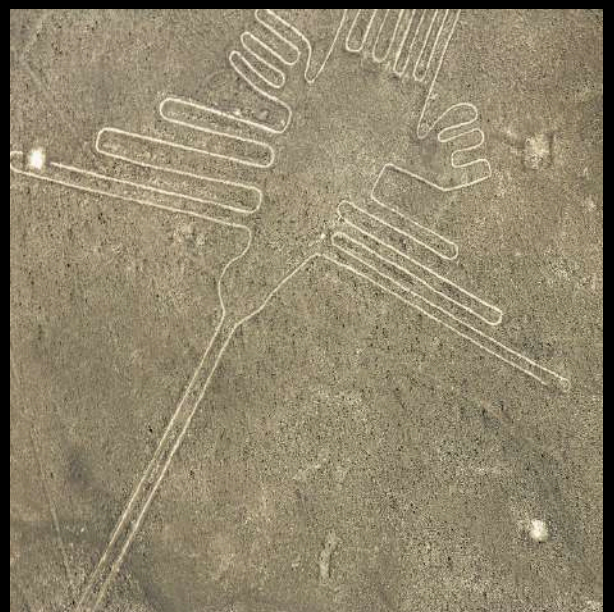
In the jungle, the cloud cover is increasing and it is perfect to sail by the Amazon River before to rains appear. **If you are going to stay in Cusco, you should know that it is good that you know about altitude sickness.** This can affect everyone who is not used to the altitude. So it is advisable to stay for a few days to acclimatize.

11. NOVEMBER (OVERFLY THE MYSTERIOUS NAZCA LINES)

In Cusco and the entire Andes in November, the rainfall is increasing and it will rain most days. In the same way, the jungle will be getting set for the rainy season.

Lima and in general the entire coast are warming up and clearing. At northern beaches, the temperature is increasing, the sea is getting warmer and the sand is perfect for getting a tan or practicing surfing without a lot of people.

There are many festivals and special days in November. Day of the Living, Day of the Dead, and Puno Festival Week just to name a few.





12. DECEMBER (SUMMER AND BEACH IN LIMA)

December, as you would imagine, is a month with the rainy season in the Andes and the Amazon.

On the other hand, Lima is enjoying warm and sunny weather and its surrounding beaches are one of the best places to visit in December.

In the Andean, **for most Catholic Peruvians**, this is a time for family and to enjoy special meals together. During Christmas in Cusco, the main square is turned into a market selling nativity scenes, handicrafts, and everything else you would need for Christmas. This traditional market is called Santurantikuy.



“OH, THE PLACES YOU’LL GO”



In conclusion, with a variety of climates and many cool things to do, any time is the best to visit Peru, don't you think? Even so, your decision to visit Peru Month by Month will depend on when you plan to visit this wonderful Andean country. We hope together with the experts of **Machu Travel Peru** to have been of help. With so many places to visit in Peru, you can explore Peru at any time of year. Book a trip today.