

BOLIVIA - BOLIVIA ENCOMPASSED



INTRODUCTION

Bolivia hosts some of South America’s most striking vistas, from the soaring peaks of the Cordillera Real to the vast white expanses of the Uyuni Salt Flats and the remote Altiplano with its coloured lagoons and conical snow-capped volcanoes. Discover the colonial cities that whisper of ancient civilizations and delve into the vibrant indigenous cultures. Let us take you off the beaten track to explore this fascinating country.

ITINERARY

DAY 1: Arrival transfer in La Paz

On arrival, please make your way through to the Arrivals Hall where our representative will be waiting for you to transfer you to your hotel. He/she will be holding a sign with your name on it. Should you not be able to locate them, please refer to the front of your itinerary for emergency contact details of our representative office. El Alto airport is the highest International airport in the world at 4,080 metres above sea level.



TRIP CODE

BOTSBEN

DURATION

13 Days

LOCATIONS

Bolivia



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DAY 1: La Paz

La Paz has a spectacular setting in a deep bowl surrounded by snow-capped mountains of the Altiplano. It lies in the shadow of the towering 6,438m high Mt. Illimani, always snow-covered and visible from many parts of the city. The city (from the main square) is 3,636 metres above sea level but the neighbouring city of El Alto where La Paz International Airport is located lies at over 4,000 metres. Some of the highlights of La Paz itself include Plaza Murillo, San Francisco Church and the "Witches Market" where vendors sell dried llama foetuses and frogs, dried llama dung, herbs, remedies and other ingredients used in Aymara traditions and rituals.



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DAY 2: La Paz City Tour & Valley of the Moon

This afternoon you will be collected from your hotel for a tour of the city. Discover the fascinating city of La Paz, visiting the Gold, Murillo and Costumbrista Museums and to the 'Mirador de Killi Killi' viewpoint, offering magnificent views over La Paz. You will also visit various street markets including a traditional market where agricultural products from the highlands, such as quinoa, tunta, chuño (dehydrated potato) and oca (sweet tuber) are sold and the Witches Market, where locals buy supplies for ritual ceremonies like the Ch'alla and offerings to Pachamama (Mother Earth). Take a ride on the Teleférico cable car, the highest in the world. Then continue by road to the Valley of the Moon, where a clay mountain has been impressively shaped by erosion resulting in a formation that resembles the face of the moon. On completion of the tour you will be taken to your hotel.



DAY 3: La Paz - Copacabana - Island of the Sun

This morning you will be collected from your hotel for your road journey to Lake Titicaca. Travel north through the highlands and parallel to the Andes Royal Range to Copacabana, a small town on the shores of Lake Titicaca. Visit the famous Virgen Morena and its church and have a stroll through the town. Transfer to the pier to board the boat that will take you to the Island of the Sun. Enjoy a typical lunch "Aptapi" and hike for about 45 minutes to the Ecolodge La Estancia. Dinner included this evening.



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DAY 4: La Chincana - Island of the Moon - La Paz

We recommend that you get up early to see the sunrise. This morning after breakfast, we hike down through Yumani visiting the Inca stairs and the Water of the Eternal Youth. We then head north by boat for 1 hour to visit Chincana ruins and the Sacred Rock. We continue by boat for an hour to the Island of the Moon. Here we visit the ruins of Iñak Uyu Inca temple, returning by boat to Copacabana (1 ½ hours). Lunch is included at a local restaurant. From Copacabana you will be taken by private transport to La Paz (3 ½ hours).



DAY 5: La Paz to Sucre - Sucre City Tour

You will be collected from your hotel at the appropriate time and transferred to the airport for your onward flight. On arrival into Sucre you will be met and transferred to your hotel. Sucre is the constitutional and official capital of Bolivia and it was here that independence was proclaimed in 1825. It is known as the “City of Four Names” as it is also called Charcas, La Plata and Chuquisaca. It is nicknamed “La Ciudad Blanca” (The White City) due to its many white-washed colonial style houses and structures. Founded in the 16th century by Spanish colonials, the city lies in southern central Bolivia at an elevation of 2,810 metres, giving it a cool, temperate year-round climate. The city preserves a wealth of colonial architecture and was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1991. The half day city tour introduces you to the charming colonial city of Sucre. The tour includes a visit to the Casa de la Libertad, where the Act of Independence of Bolivia was signed in 1825. You will also visit Bolivar Park, to see examples of the aristocratic tradition in Sucre with small replicas of the Eiffel Tower and the Arc de Triumph of Paris. Also included is a visit to the church and museum of La Recoleta and the Museum of Indian Textiles (ASUR).



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DAY 6: Jatun Yampara Indigenous Centre

Today there is an excursion to Jatun Yampara Indigenous Centre located 23 kilometres from Sucre. Here we visit some typical homes and observe the lifestyle and customs of the ancient Yampara culture. We will see the native houses, burial and ceremonial buildings and we will also go to a "chichería" (local bar) and taste "chicha", a fermented drink usually made from maize. We continue to the Native Sanctuary and visit the small museums and the pottery and textile workshops. In the afternoon after lunch, we visit the small school in the community with time to talk with the children studying there. (Note: This visit is possible Monday to Friday only) At the end of the tour you will return to your hotel in Sucre.



DAY 7: Sucre to Potosi - Potosi City Tour

This morning after an early breakfast we depart from Sucre for the 3 hour drive by private vehicle to Potosi. From the valley (2,759 metres above sea level), the road leads to the Pilcomayo River, past the old bridge of Puente Arce and then climbs up into the highlands at over 4,000 metres to reach the famous colonial mining town of Potosi. Potosi lies at the foot of the 4,824m Cerro de Potosi or Cerro Rico (



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DAY 8: Cerro Rico Mine - Potosi to Uyuni

This unique excursion gives visitors the opportunity to experience an unforgettable trip underground, to see the living and working conditions of the Bolivian miners (protective clothing and helmets are provided). Cerro Rico (Rich Mountain) was famous for providing vast quantities of silver to the Spanish and resulted in Potosi becoming one of the largest cities of the New World. Even though the mines have been depleted of silver, they are still mined to this day. Conditions for the workers are very poor and many of the miners contract silicosis caused by lack of protective equipment resulting in constant inhalation of dust. After the tour, we depart from Potosi by private vehicle to Uyuni. This amazing drive takes us through the Andes, through a colourful landscape with eroded rocks and giant cacti. We pass the villages of Chaquilla and Tika Tika and the famous Pulacayo tin mine. After 3 to 4 hours we reach Uyuni. Uyuni, founded in 1889 by Bolivian president Aniceto Arce, is still an important military base. It lies in south-western Bolivia, 3,670 metres above sea level and situated on the edge of the Salar de Uyuni, the largest salt flat in the world. The Salar de Uyuni covers over 10,000 square kilometres of the Bolivian Altiplano and is fringed by the mountains of the Andes. Beneath it lies the world's largest lithium reserve estimated to be about 100 million tons and accounting for around 70% of the world's lithium reserves. The salt in the salt flats is over 120 metres deep. The area is remote, arid and cold, stark, yet stunning, boasting extraordinary beauty and a silence that is captivating. Dinner is included at the hotel.



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DAY 9: Uyuni Salt Flats

Today's tour starts with a visit to the cemetery of old trains on the outskirts of Uyuni. Uyuni was an important transportation hub and in the late 19th century, rail lines were built by British engineers and the trains carried minerals to the Pacific Ocean ports. After the collapse of the mining industry in the 1940's, many trains were abandoned outside Uyuni with the resulting Train Cemetery. The salt winds have led to the corrosion of the metal. We then set off across the Great Salt Flats to Colchani village, where we observe the methods of salt extraction and salt processing. We continue to Incahuasi Island (better known as Fish Island) - an oasis with a unique and isolated ecosystem that features algae and fossils. The area is covered with giant columnar cacti up to 10 metres high, some over 100 years old. Against the backdrop of the salt flats extending to the horizon, this landscape makes for spectacular photos. After a picnic lunch, we travel north to visit the pre-Colombian Pucara de Ayque fort and the nearby chullpares on the foothills of Thunupa volcano, before continuing to our hotel for the night, where dinner is included.



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DAY 10: Colchani - Siloli Desert

This morning after breakfast we begin our overland journey to Soniquera. En route we visit Kañapa Lagoon, a saltwater lagoon surrounded by Caquena, Tapaquillcha and Kañapa volcanoes. We also visit Hedionda Lagoon with its strong smell of sulphur, Chiarkota Lagoon (a freshwater lagoon where diverse fauna can be seen) and Honda Lagoon. Situated in the middle of a low concentration salt flat field, its light blue waters contrast with the earthy colours of the highlands. We have a picnic lunch and travel through the Siloli Desert, one of the driest deserts in the world, with its bizarre rock formations caused by wind erosion. Dinner is included at the hotel tonight.



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DAY 11: Villamar - Coloured Lagoons (REA) - Colchani

We make an early departure this morning to explore the Eduardo Avaroa Andean Fauna National Reserve (REA). Covering an area of over 700,000 hectares, the reserve features salt pans, volcanoes, snow-capped peaks, thermal springs and geothermal geysers and is home to unique species of fauna that have adapted to the extreme conditions of the region. We visit Laguna Colorado (4,278 metres), declared a RAMSAR site due to the 30,000 Andean flamingos that nest here. Laguna Colorado is characterised by the red colour of its water and it is the most important flamingo site in the region. You may also see vicuñas, llamas and vizcachas. We have a picnic lunch and continue on to the Sol de Mañana geysers with their active fumaroles and volcanic craters. The crater bottoms display boiling lava and the fumaroles emit spouts of mixed water and superheated steam that reach heights of 80 to 100 metres. We visit "Laguna Verde", a beautiful green lagoon at the foothills of the Licancabur volcano (5,865 metres), where flamingos are often seen, before continuing north to Uyuni. Dinner is included at the hotel.



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DAY 12: Uyuni to La Paz

You will be collected from your hotel at the appropriate time and transferred to the airport for your onward flight.



DAY 12: Arrival transfer in La Paz

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DAY 13: Depart from La Paz

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INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

Accommodation

Standard

- All services, lodging, food, and beverages mentioned in the itinerary
- Shared boat in Copacabana
- All excursions with English-speaking guide or escort
- 4 guests per 4WD car
- All entrances fees
- Accommodation as mentioned in the itinerary
- Air Tickets: La Paz to Sucre (OW) & Uyuni to La Paz (OW)

Inclusions

NOT INCLUDED:

- Early check-in, late check-out, services and food not listed in the itinerary, beverages during the meals, hotel extras, and personal expenses
- Anything not listed in the itinerary
- Airport Taxes
- Tips

Difficulty Rating

3 (Average fitness level required)

Single Surcharge

Available upon request

Notes

During the rainy season (Nov/Mar) the visit to Uyuni salt lake & Isla Pescado will be possible subject to weather conditions.
Contact us for more details.

Price Dependent upon

Season and availability

SUSTAINABILITY

Chimu Adventures undertakes a number of sustainability measures within its operations

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including:

- 1) Only using local guides and office staff to both maximise local employment opportunities and minimise carbon footprints. Local guides also ensure you benefit from the intimate knowledge, passion and culture of the country you're visiting.
- 2) Where possible, using locally owned and operated boutique hotels to maximise the return to the local community.
- 3) Chimu's "Pass it on" programme has provided funding to hundreds of local community projects in Latin America. Our aim is to empower local communities, helping them to develop their own infrastructure for the future. Since 2006, we have been working with Kiva (a well-known Non-Governmental Organisation), providing hundreds of loans to local businesses all over South America.
- 4) In our pre tour information we provide a range of tips and advice on how to minimise your impact on both local environments and communities.
- 5) Chimu Adventures' offices also take a number of sustainability measures including carbon offsets for company vehicles and most staff travel. Chimu Adventure's internal processes are also structured to create a paperless office and to reduce waste. There are also internal programmes to help staff minimise their carbon footprint such as our staff bike purchase assistance plan which encourages office staff to commute to work via bicycle. Currently almost half of our office based staff commute to work via bicycle.

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