

creativity now

the hilarious comedy of
**Seth Rogen
Bob Odenkirk**
Wonder Showzen

the supercreaky songs of
The Hold Steady
Jens Lekman
Jamie Lidell

the striking styles of
**Wu-Tang
Muzo**
and more's director
Ben Loiz

are gonna
go pop!

printed in canada
\$5.99US \$8.99CAN 55



GO

PERU

text & photos by
KEN MULLER

Most countries are just a country – people and buildings and stuff surrounded by an invisible line separating them from more people, buildings and stuff. But not Peru! Peru is three countries in one, each of which is pretty spectacular. On the coast there are lovely beach towns renowned among surfers. In the mountains are ancient ruins and still-surviving remnants of the culture

of the Incan empire. And on the other side of the mountains is the Amazon jungle, which you might have heard of because it's the biggest and most amazing jungle in the world. And if that's not enough, a trip to the south of the country brings you to the shores of Lake Titicaca, famous to dirty-minded children everywhere, and a haunting locale that feels passed-over by time.

getting there

LAN Peru and LAN Chile offer regular service from the US to Peru. The flight is surprisingly short, and since you don't have to cross multiple time zones, the trip is an easy one.

LIMA

Chances are, you will first arrive in Lima, Peru's much-maligned capital city. While Lima is hardly touristy, it is a bustling multinational metropolis and a testament to the power of the global economy. Physically, the city resembles Miami, Albuquerque and Mexico City, all rolled into one, and if you want some Starbucks or TGI Fridays to ease the transition to your new locale, they're here.

sights to see and things to do

Lima is dotted with the ruins of ancient, pre-Incan buildings, most notably in the upscale district of Miraflores, which hugs cliffs along the Pacific Ocean, meaning that it has the most pleasant climate and views of anywhere in town. For further touring, head into the center of the city to see the Plaza Mayor (central square) and various colonial churches.

things to eat

Lima has a sizable Chinese population, reflected in the numerous "chifas," or Chinese food joints, all over the city. A tastier option is ordering some ceviche – an absolutely delicious meal of raw fish that has been 'cooked' with lime juice, hot peppers and spices. A Lima specialty, it's not to be missed.



Punta Sal, Avenida de Conquistadores, San Isidro.

places to stay

Lima has a wide range of hotel options, from bargain to pricey. Just note that central Lima becomes somewhat dangerous at night, so you are better off picking a spot in the Miraflores or San Isidro neighborhoods.

CUZCO

Okay, this is why you really came to Peru. Cuzco is a UNESCO World Heritage City, a colonial outpost full of beautiful centuries-old architecture, perched at the top of the Andes Mountains. When the Spanish arrived in the city, they used the foundations of old Incan buildings to build their churches and mansions, and evidence of that mingling of cultures persists to this day. Proof of Cuzco's popularity with visitors can be found in the numerous bars, clubs, restaurants and knickknack shops catering to tourists. All of which combine to make this a terrific place to hang out for a couple of days while you get acclimated to the thin Andean air.

things to do

Once you're done catching your breath (and we're not kidding when we say it takes a day or so to adjust to the altitude – rumor has it that Viagra assists the process, though there might be certain 'side effects'), take some time to walk up and down Cuzco's cobble-stoned streets. Then head out of town, because there is much, much more to see...

Cuzco sits at the lip of the Incan Empire's SACRED VALLEY, a thin sliver of the Andean plateau filled with innumerable ancient ruins. You pretty much can't throw a rock without hitting a temple or fortification of some sort. In fact, there's a decent chance that rock you just chucked fell off another ruin, so perhaps it's best to leave these stones unturned.

None of these ruins is more spectacular than MACHU PICCHU, an abandoned city surrounded by lush vegetation that is, quite simply put, one of the wonders of the world. Machu Picchu's remote mountain locale meant that it was not 'discovered' until 1911, when American archeologist Hiram Bingham listened to some local legends and uncovered the mysterious city. Machu Picchu's history is so obscure that no one is quite sure who lived there or what purpose the city served – the most common theory is that the city was essentially a weekend retreat for the Incan

royal family. To get to Machu Picchu, you should give yourself a royal and take the special train service running along the valley floor, re and taking in the striking views.

things to eat

Cuzco and the Sacred Valley offer the opportunity to sample some of the local delicacies. Tops on the list is "cuy" – also known as guinea pig. B you get all high and mighty about eating a roast rodent, bear in mind cuy doesn't taste that different from rabbit, it just looks like a burn Mmmm... Better, perhaps, is alpaca, a small relative of the llama, t adorable ornery animals resembling nothing so much as hump-less camels, which is pretty much what they are. They are also surpris tasty. And why not wash your meal down with some Inca Kola, the soda pop, perhaps the sweetest thing you will ever, ever drink.

places to stay

Most visitors to Machu Picchu take the morning train in from Cuzco and head back to the city in the evening. But a far better option is to splurge for a stay at the Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel. The hotel is eco-friendly and incredibly relaxing. Even better, its location at the base of Machu Picchu's mountain-top locale means that you can get up to the ruins at dawn, long before the tourist crowds. Watching the sun rise at the ancient Inca Trail is a sight that can't be beat.

THE AMAZON

Inkaterra, the folks who run the Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel, are also one of several companies offering eco-tours to the Amazon. While you could visit the region on your own...don't. Getting around the jungle is prohibitively difficult without the help of a guide. And since the region is environmentally threatened, choosing a responsible guide is also for the best. More than anything, a visit to the Amazon is an immersion in nature – plants, bugs, birds, fish, reptiles, monkeys, alligators and even other plus all manner of other exotic critters. Film buffs will also recognize the region (and Machu Picchu) from director Werner Herzog's film *Aguirre: Wrath of God*, about the Spanish quest for the lost city of gold. While you probably won't find any lost cities, you can take pride in following in the adventurous director's footsteps as you relax at the Reserva Amazonica.

www.inkaterra.com

