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Secret Locations To Explore in Peru

Angie Davis
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Peru is a fascinating country blending ancient traditions with modern luxuries, raw desert coastlines with fertile Andean mountain regions, and a diverse mix of inhabitants. I set out to uncover Peru's gems, and found a treasure chest of experience. Here are my secret spots to explore.

Surf

Peru lucked out geographically, and is home to some of the best waves in South America. And whilst its most famous for the big wave break Pico Alto, Peru is home to waves for all abilities, and my favourite string of breaks is up on the north coast, in a little town called Lobitos.

Lobitos was built for as an oil town over 100 years ago, yet crumbled at the hands of internal conflict in the 60s. When waves

were later discovered, surf tourism put the town back on the map, and today Lobitos is experiencing a development boom of surf hostels and ceviche restaurants.



Lobitos. Photo: Gary Parker Photography

In order to protect the natural marine environment from overdevelopment, and have the surf breaks protected by national law, a group of Peruvian surfers have rallied together to raise awareness and funding to save their waves.

Check out www.doublebarrelfilm.com for a documentary film on Lobitos more information on the project.

Where to stay:

Lapa Lapa Bungalows

This idyllic surf hostel is one row back from the beach, with views of the ocean, a self service kitchen, private rooms, and hot water. The owner Roberto is a kind character and will take you around to some of the more hard-to-reach surf breaks with fewer crowds, just ask.

Lobitos Surf Natural

One of the first hostels in Lobitos, owner Kike is a great surfer and will show you the ins and outs of where to surf. The rooms are clean and the wifi is one of the fastest connections in Lobitos.

RELATED: [World's easiest waves: The best beaches to learn to surf](#)

Lobitos Lodge Hotel

Oceanfront accommodation with spacious private rooms, run by the charming Charlie and with good wifi. For those looking for something a little more personal, with uninterrupted ocean views.

How to get there:

Airplane: Flights leave daily from Lima to Piura, the closest airport to Lobitos. You'll need to arrange with your accommodation for a pickup from Piura, over an hour away.

Bus: The overnight bus is a lengthy 16 hours from Lima to Talara, the town closest to Lobitos, however if you book the affordable Exclusiva chain you'll score 180 degree flat beds, a personal TV, dinner and breakfast.

Guide: A private surf guide is one of the best ways to ensure you score great waves in north Peru. [Olas Peru Surf Travel](#) guided surf tours are the best in the business, with an intimate team of guides who have surfed all over Peru for decades.

Into the Mountains

Cusco – The Sacred Valley – Machu Picchu

No visit to Peru is complete without a journey into the Andean heart of Cusco, The Sacred Valley, and Machu Picchu. Fly into Cusco from Lima (one hour) and spend a couple days acclimatising and exploring this fascinatingly vibrant city that was capital of the Inca Empire.



Trekking near Cusco. Photo: Angie Davis

Next, take a taxi to The Sacred Valley, and settle into the intimacy of being enveloped by lush mountains and witnessing local villagers up keeping traditional agricultural methods. This is truly a place to re-connect with yourself, so spend some time and partake in practices such as yoga, meditation, or short hikes to really make the most out of your time in this powerfully energetic region.

RELATED: [Beyond Machu Picchu: Cusco's Hidden Gems](#)

Finally, take the train to Machu Picchu, spend a night in the base village, and head up to the glorious Inca ruins at dawn the next day. A Great Wonder of the World, Machu Picchu is an absolute must-see. Take your time walking around the ruins; it does pay to have a guide but I recommend enrolling in a tour that will allow you freedom to enjoy the ruins at your own pace at the conclusion of your tour.

Where to stay

The Inkaterra hotel series offer eco-luxury accommodations in Cusco, Urubamba (The Sacred Valley), and Machu Picchu, and will enhance your experience ten fold.

Getting around

Peru Rail is the best way to move around the region, and train is the only way to reach Machu Picchu village. I highly recommend spoiling yourself on the Belmond Hiram Bingham, a true once-in-a-lifetime experience aboard a train modelled as a replica of the Pullman cars of the 1920s. The experience includes full service meals, live music and entertainment, wine and champagne.

In the city

Lima

Dubbed the Garden City thanks to its lush parklands that hug the coastline 'La Costa Verde' in Lima's affluent city Miraflores, you won't walk far around here without spotting couples young and old making out in the parks, health fanatics out in the free outdoor gyms along El Malecon, and surfers dashing to the shoreline for a quick wave. The giant shopping precinct Larcomar is literally built into the cliffs, and home to a string of more expensive restaurants, bars, a cinema complex, and retail outlets.

At Kennedy Park you'll find an abnormal number of stray cats; at night the park comes alive with artworks and souvenirs for sale. Cafes, restaurants, bookstores and bars surround the park.

Next door, Barranco's leafy streets illuminate this artsy district, with gorgeous century-old architecture dotting the sidewalks. It's a hot spot for surfers and artists alike.

Where to eat:

Magma Sushi Lounge

Peruvian fusion sushi at its finest, Magma is a must visit for lunch or dinner. Try one of their speciality rolls and a pisco sour.

Choco Museo

The place to taste artisanal chocolate from raw cacao beans, with in-store demonstrations and everything from edible chocolate to cacao-derived beauty products.

Manduca

This quality burger joint now has a shopfront in the food court at Larcomar, great for a quick filling bite between shopping or before a flick at the cinema.

Where to stay:

Belmond Miraflores Park



Views don't get much better than that. Photo: Angie Davis

The Belmond Miraflores Park hotel offers luxurious accommodations featuring a private sauna in your suite's bathroom, a rooftop pool, and sweeping views of the coast.

Hilton Lima

Modern luxury in the heart of Miraflores, Hilton is walking distance to Larcomar and Kennedy Park, and boasts one of the best buffet breakfasts in Lima. Head to the heated pool and wooden jacuzzis on the rooftop for a great view of the sunset.

Hotel B

This century-old mansion has been delightfully renovated into a boutique hotel, and one of Lima's prized accommodations. You can spend hours just wading through the books and artwork that fill the hotel; even if you don't spend the night be sure to pop into the hotel's stylish bar for a drink.

Getting to Peru

LAN airlines and Qantas codeshare ex Brisbane and Sydney, with regular flights departing via Santiago.

Angie Davis is the film maker behind travel documentary, Double Barrel

Double Barrel is a cinematic travel documentary, following Australian journalist Angie Davis's journey to Peru where she meets Harold Koechlin, a Peruvian surf guide with a dream of helping an oil-dominated town toward a more sustainable future.

An inspiring true story, the film reflects how travel connects and motivates like-minded individuals with big dreams to act on preserving beautiful places for future generations to enjoy.

A story about travel, friendship, the ocean, and change, the film inspires us all to travel with a conscience and follow our dreams. Double Barrel will premiere in Australia on February 27 at the Stone and Wood Brewery in Byron Bay.