

Best Amazon Lodges, Peru – A Peruvian Amazon Adventure

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by [TARA CANNON](#) on **NOVEMBER 2, 2017** with **NO COMMENTS**

I will admit to having a serious fear of missing out. A Peru family vacation that was originally centered around visiting the great Machu Picchu, quickly grew in scope. We eventually settled on a 12 day adventure that would include time spent in [Lima](#), Cusco, the Sacred Valley, Machu Picchu, Lake Titicaca and the Peruvian Amazon. Although it was an demanding itinerary for such a short period of time, we were determined to squeeze in a Peru Amazon jungle experience, having not quite made it to the Amazon on past trips to Brazil and Ecuador. Read on to learn more !

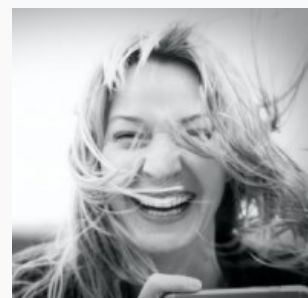


How to Visit the Amazon Rainforest in Peru

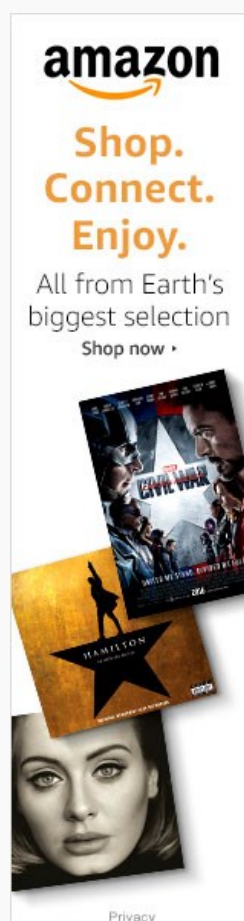
As I started to research the Amazon rainforest, Peru, I discovered that there are several different regions to consider. For travelers to Peru planning their own trip (rather than using a Peru Amazon tour company), these options can seem a bit overwhelming. For that reason, outlined below are the 3 main ways to have a Peru Amazon rainforest adventure.

1. You can visit Iquitos, a northeastern Peruvian city that can only be accessed by flight or by boat. There are several Peru ecolodges along the river in this area. It is also the primary departure point for Peru Amazon River cruises. Of the three

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Peruvian jungle adventures mentioned in this post, this is the one where you are actually on the Amazon River in Peru as opposed to on a Peruvian Amazon tributary (which may matter to some people who would like to tick this off a travel bucket list). What should be understood, however, is that Iquitos is quite a large city (more than 350K people) and that the river is more than 2 miles wide at this point — making the area not necessarily the best for wildlife viewing.

2. Another option to experience the Amazon Jungle of Peru is to visit Manu National Park (a UNESCO World Heritage Site). This incredibly biodiverse protected area is generally reached by taking a 3-5 day guided Peruvian Amazon tour from Cusco. These tours do not require any flights, and are generally quite reasonable in price. That said, if you are looking for a Peru luxury tour experience, most of the lodges in this area are fairly basic — although you will be rewarded with some pretty spectacular wildlife viewing (and possible sightings of the elusive Cock-of-the Rock — Peru's national bird).
3. A third option, is to experience the Peruvian Amazon by visiting a lodge in the Madre de Dios Region of Peru's Tambopata Province. You can easily reach this area by flying into Puerto Maldonado (a short flight from Cusco). While technically, a rainforest lodge here will be on a feeder tributary to the Amazon River, this region is within the Amazon Basin and has an abundance of jungle flora and fauna to behold. For those who do not have a month to spend in Peru (and even for those who do), experiencing the Amazon from this region provides a wonderfully rich rainforest experience and is logistically, a very convenient add-on to a Machu Picchu trip.

Peru Amazon Tour Adventure

For our Peru Amazon adventure, our family chose option #3, as it made the most sense with our travel itinerary. There are a number of lodges to choose from along the Madre de Dios River in the Tambopata Province, but if you are looking for a luxury Peru Amazon vacation, the Inkaterra properties are a great choice. In fact, both Inkaterra Peru Amazon lodges (which are only about 1/2 an hour apart by boat) are included on Condé Nast's Top 20 South America Resorts List for 2017 (*Readers' Choice Awards*). No other Amazon rainforest lodges (from any country bordering the river system) made this list.

Professional Disclosure: As a family travel blogger, I was offered a discounted stay with the Inkaterra lodges. All opinions in this post are entirely my own. Regardless of my working relationship with Inkaterra, from my own extensive research (researching travel is my favorite hobby), these properties would have definitely been at the top of my list as to where to stay for our family trip to Peru.

In the following sections, I will share a little about our experience at both the Inkaterra Hacienda Concepción and the Inkaterra Reserva Amazónica. Typically, guests would choose to stay at one lodge or the other, not both, as there is not a huge difference between them. That said, most guests will in fact visit both properties during their stay, as day trip excursions and activities are run out of both. For example, a popular canopy walk is found at Reserva Amazónica, and guests from Inkaterra Concepción can take the short boat ride over to experience it.

Accommodations – Inkaterra Hacienda Concepción



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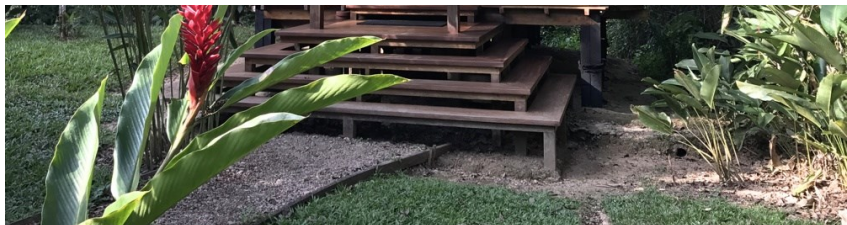
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We loved our cabana nestled into the jungle at this property. Although the cabanas are relatively close to one another, they are staggered in such away that they still offer guests a fair bit of privacy. Inside the cabanas are nice little touches such as complimentary bags, high quality linens, toiletries, insect repellent, robes, flip-flops, flashlights and umbrellas for use during your stay. While the cabanas are not air conditioned, there are fans above the beds. There is hot water and electricity (although the electricity is shut off for a couple hours in the late afternoon and in the wee hours of the morning). What we loved most about our open air cabana at Inkaterra Concepcion, was the ability to sit quietly in front of the screened wall and watch the abundance of jungle life right outside our room. This property also has rooms available within the main lodge for a slightly lower rate (but I think the cabanas are preferable).

Note: Dawn is a very active (noisy) time in the jungle. In a cabana such as this, your day is going to start early, whether you are on an early morning excursion or not.

Want to see a little more? Check out our 1 minute [video of Inkaterra Hacienda Concepción](#).



Accommodations – Inkaterra Reserva Amazónica





The cabanas at Inkaterra Amazónica are also very luxurious for jungle living, with complimentary water bottles, high quality linens, toiletries, insect repellent, robes, flip-flops, flashlights and umbrellas for use during your stay. The cabanas have hot water, fans and electricity (also shut off for several hours in the late afternoon and early hours of the morning). The layout of the cabanas is different than at Concepción in that at Amazonica they are grouped together in one area, rather than nestled in the jungle. While this makes for a little less privacy, you tend to spend very little time in your room anyway as you are frequently out on excursions. If you really need some privacy, you can book a special romantic night in their super cool jungle treehouse suite. Amazonica also has several very lovely cabanas with plunge pools*. We found ours simply heavenly after a hot trek in the jungle.

***Note:** Amazonica has one luxury family-sized cabana *without* a plunge pool as well, which would be perfect for families traveling with a baby or toddler.

Want to see a little more? Check out our 1 minute [video of Inkaterra Reserva Amazónica](#).



Inkaterra Excursions – Peru Jungle Tours

Presumably you want to visit the Peruvian Amazon region to truly experience the jungle, so this part of your Peru trip will be heavy on adventure. A stay at an Inkaterra jungle lodge includes several guided excursions a day, and there are also some add-on optional tours (additional fee). The early AM can be the best for certain wildlife viewing, so guests can expect to rise early (it's also much cooler). There are quite a number of experiences to choose from, but some of the really cool ones that we enjoyed included the Treetop Canopy Walkway and the Twilight River Tour (to view caimans, capybaras etc.). With more time, we would have most definitely gone on a piranha fishing trip (Amazónica only) and canoeing on Lake Sandoval (something many guests spoke highly of). Personally, my favorite experience was a private early morning boat trip to watch parrots and macaws feeding on a clay lick, followed by breakfast on the river. For our family, it was simply magical and worth every penny (additional fee – available at Concepción only).



Note: The tours at the Inkaterra rainforest lodges area all guided, not self-directed. Presumably, this is because it is never a good idea for guests to go wandering off into the jungle. Typically, I am not a huge *tour* person, but I found the guides at Inkaterra to be excellent and extremely knowledgeable — most having grown up in the area.



Specifically for Children: Both Inkaterra rainforest lodges offer an add-on treasure hunt activity for kids that takes them around the grounds. My daughter (10) said that the clues and activities were excellent, providing a lot of fun while also teaching her a lot about the rainforest. There was even a special prize at the end.



Included in Your Stay at Inkaterra Rainforest Lodges

A stay at an Inkaterra Amazon Lodge includes:

- nightly accommodation
- airport welcome in Puerto Maldonado and transport to/from lodge
- breakfast, lunch and dinner
- afternoon tea time
- turndown service
- daily excursions

Not Included:

- airfare and taxes
- soft drinks and alcoholic beverages
- additional excursions and services (spa etc.)

Learn more about the Inkaterra Amazon lodges and check availability here: <http://www.inkaterra.com>. Be sure to take a look at their packages that include some unique experiences.

I also really like to encourage my readers to read reviews from other travelers before making a booking. Please see Tripadvisor [reviews for Inkaterra Hacienda Concepción](#) and [reviews for Inkaterra Reserva Amazónica](#).

Know Before You Go

I cannot even imagine how difficult it is to try to run anything other than a very rudimentary lodge in the Amazon rainforest. There are so many factors that make this a challenge, from a lack of basic infrastructure (roads, electricity), to the incredible power of nature (torrential tropical rain, insects etc.). So that said, luxury in the jungle is different from luxury in the city. I mention this because I like people to have their expectations in check when planning such an adventure.

At a luxury lodge in the Peruvian rainforest, you can expect knowledgeable guides, attentive service, pleasant accommodations and good food. That said, you are in the jungle, so things will be a little different. You might get wet, and possibly muddy. You will need to be vigilant when it comes to applying bug spray and you will need to be careful what you touch (biting ants, angry plants etc.). The beautiful sounds of tropical birds will wake you at sunup, and your daily adventures will have you falling into bed earlier than usual. You will be largely disconnected (although Concepción has some wifi and cell service from the lodge) and there will be a short period during the day when you will not have access to electricity.

Part of the beauty of this is that you can truly unplug. We did more reading, and played more board games with our kids, than we would typically do in a month at home. We also loved quietly observing what nature had to behold for us right outside our cabana (beautiful birds, red howler monkey, *rodents of unusual size* – actually the uber-cute Agouti). We also left the lodges exhilarated, but quite exhausted, so planning a little down time after a Peru jungle adventure is not a bad idea. In our case, we flew to Cusco and spent a relaxing night at the luxurious Inkaterra Hacienda Urubamba in the



Frequently Asked Questions

When is the Best Time to Visit the Peruvian Amazon Basin?

It can rain anytime in the tropical Madre de Dios Region of Peru, but generally the best time to visit is in the dry season which runs June to October. We visited in August and had nothing more than a little sprinkle of rain. That said, the dry season is also the busiest time to visit and you should book well in advance to secure your accommodations.

How do you Get to Puerto Maldonado?

Several flights run daily from Cusco to Puerto Maldonado Airport (also known as Padre Aldamiz International Airport – PEM). We actually started our Peru family trip in Lima, followed by the Amazon, so we took an easy 9am flight from LIM, that stopped in Cusco to pick up more passengers, and had us in Puerto Maldonado by 1pm. We were greeted at the airport by an Inkatererra host, offered some chilled water and quickly ushered on to an air-conditioned bus that took us to the dock. By 2pm we were in a motorized canoe on the Madre de Dios River en route to lunch at our lodge.

Parklane Resort, Limassol

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Note: I love to pretend that I am low maintenance, but in the humid tropical heat, I must say that the seamless welcome service offered by Inkatererra was very much appreciated. Please don't judge – I have put in my shoestring-budget backpacking days too.

Peru with Kids – Should You Take Kids to the Amazon?

Considering a family trip to the Peruvian Amazon? You may be wondering what the right age is to take kids on a Peru family vacation that includes the Peruvian rainforest. In the case of the Inkatererra Amazon lodges, they welcome children of all ages. That said, I would certainly say that kids 5 years and up are going to get more out of the experience than wee ones. Our kids were 10 and 12 at the time of our Peru family trip

and it was fantastic (although we could have gone with them at an earlier age had the opportunity presented itself). The key to me for a family trip to the Amazon, is that kids are old enough to remember it later (because it is so amazing!) and truly understand the words “Please don’t touch that!”.

Which Vaccinations do you Need for the Peruvian Amazon?

The CDC (Center for Disease Control) makes a number of recommendations for the Peruvian Amazon. The primary area of concern is around mosquito-borne illnesses. I recommend that you review these recommendations on the [CDC website](#) and visit a travel immunization clinic at least 6 weeks before your travels.

Note: In our family, we chose to pass on malaria medication, but were militant when it came to applying insect repellent (with either DEET or Picaridin). The Inkaterra rainforest lodge accommodations are well screened and have mosquito nets over all the beds.

What Should You Pack for the Amazon, Peru? (Inkaterra Lodges)

Wondering what to pack for the Amazon? Along with your regular travel items, I would suggest the following additions to your Peru Amazon packing list:

- Quick dry lightweight nylon, linen or cotton clothing (including quick dry socks). Long sleeve lightweight shirts and long pants are nice because they will help to protect you from both sun and bugs.
- A lightweight waterproof rain jacket. Do not make the mistake of simply buying a *water resistant* jacket. While cheaper, these are not practical for tropical downpours. Columbia, North Face and Arc'teryx make really nice waterproof jackets. Look for fabrics such as Gortex, HyVent and Omni-Tech.
- Hiking shoes or sturdy running shoes. The lodges have rubber boots for loan (even for kids).
- A lightweight backpack (ideally waterproof).
- A good camera and extra batteries. There is not always a lot of time between excursions to charge batteries, so this is where it is nice to have extras.
- Mosquito repellent.
- Sunscreen.
- Sunglasses.
- Sun hat with a full brim.
- Walking sticks (if necessary).
- Antibacterial handwipes.
- Medications.

If you like to shop online like me, the following companies have a decent selection of gear suitable for the Amazon rainforest: [The House](#), [Columbia](#) and [Backcountry](#).



Learn more about Inkaterra Peru jungle lodges and their other lovely Peru hotels here: <http://www.inkaterra.com>.

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