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BOTTOMS UP!

Introducing our
new drinks column



PERU, POSHLY!

Leave the backpackers behind and hit the Peruvian heights in style, says **Devanshi Mody**



EXPLORA VALLE SAGRADO

SACRED VALLEY

'We wept when we checked out of explora,' is a refrain rippling across Peru. And it's explora with a lower case 'e'. Capitals are for Experience whereas explora is about 'the art of travel' and, like all fine arts, its appeal is niche. The sleek wooden structure emerges from a hazy speckle of purple and golden corn, as if from an Impressionist painting. Beyond, green-mantled mountains soar, their summits like rock-sculpted ancient temples. And explora was created to scale these peaks. The Chilean owners spent over three years crafting 36 hikes that unveil the Sacred Valley's secret splendours. The adventurous are swung across mountain passes, past streaming glens, shark-jaw canyons and shimmering lagoons until, suddenly, a sly slink into an Inca trail leads to some fabulous esoteric site. After a nine-hour, 19km hike you'll need Peru's most gorgeous destination spa, set in aromatic gardens. In such perfumed purlieus your masseuse, naturally, is called Rosemary.

BOOK IT: Three-night all-inclusive programme, from £1,387pp. explora.com

HOTEL PARACAS

A LUXURY COLLECTION RESORT, PARACAS

This is Peru's sexiest address. You'd think you were on the French Riviera as impeccable lawns flow down to seas bobbing with boats. Lounge on your own terrace and drink in that view, unless you've booked with Aerodiana to visit the mysterious Nazca lines. In paradisaal, multi-faceted Paracas, piercing blue seas embrace palm-swooned deserts and the hotel offers desert odysseys that culminate in dune-top sunsets with sundowners. Morning excursions include speedboat rides to the splendid Ballestas Islands to see bird-sheeted islets, sea lions and wondrous marine creatures. Grab the spa for top-notch massages and then devote yourself to the pool, where girls flaunt their Barbie-doll beach bodies and glowing tans. The food is excellent, debunking snobbish notions that sprawling buffets are tacky. They also offer the best pizzas this side of Rome.

BOOK IT: Doubles from £175. hotelparacasresort.com



BELMOND LAS CASITAS

YANQUE

If you've traipsed across Peruvian expanses and exhausted yourself at more archaeological sites than is seemly, seek respite at the reclusive serenity of this colonial river-set retreat. You'll need to drive there, and the drive is an unmissable experience – snaking around craggy escarpments to exalted viewpoints of epic and beguiling Andean landscapes. The hotel takes you to Colca Canyon, one of the world's deepest, where giant condors soar. Otherwise, relax with a book on a garden bench, have a rigorous massage or just soak in your outdoor tub, fragrant with minty muna, watching the light change over the hills.

BOOK IT: Doubles from £885. belmond.com/es/las-casitas-colca-canyon



INKATERRA HACIENDA URUBAMBA

SACRED VALLEY

By night the hotel glitters like a bejewelled casket on the hillside. Perched in the embrace of the imperial Andes, this tranquil temple is among Peru's loveliest hotels. The main building, behind which casitas rise on the lilt of the hill, recreates a Spanish hacienda enclosing a central courtyard. Breakfasts seduce, but for gourmet suppers drive out to Sol y Luna.

BOOK IT: Doubles from £360. inkaterra.com

South America specialist Katrina Trotter organises tailor-made trips in Peru from £3,700pp based on two travelling for 10 days, excluding flights. katrinatrottertravel.com