Peru - Southern

Ancash & Lima Extension

Classic Andes & Manu Road

Machu Picchu Extension



Golden-collared Tanager by Dubi Shapiro

Peru, a land of stark contrast and astounding beauty, is one of the leading South American destinations in which to enjoy both the snow-capped Andes and tropical Amazon rainforest.

The Cordillera Blanca (White Mountains) are an impressive range of snow-capped and glacier-riddled mountains some 200km north of Lima, a veritable Andean Switzerland. Popular amongst the adventure sports fraternity for the area's excellent granite rock faces, we will remain rather more tethered to the ground. The surrounding peaks contain Nevado Huascarán, Peru's highest peak at 6 768m (22 200 ft). Aside from the spectacular scenery, several range restricted species occur here, including the likes of White-cheeked Cotinga, Ancash Tapaculo, Giant Conebill, Great and Rufous-backed Inca Finches and Stripe-headed Antpitta endemic. We complement our extension by birding the coastal deserts for a host of endemics before returning to Lima.

Moving from Lima to Cusco for our Classic Andes and Manu Road tour, we will take in the scenic Apurimac River valley - the source of the mighty Amazon, the world's largest river system - in search of some highly localised and rarely seen endemics including Apurimac Spinetail and Apurimac Brushfinch. A full day up the might Abra

Malaga will take our breath away – quite literally! The remnant patches of polylepis forest host both Tawny and endemic, White-breasted Tit-Spinetails, exhibitionist Stripe-headed Antpitta, endemic Junín Canastero, Puna Tapaculo, Ash-breasted Tit-Tyrant, Blue-mantled Thornbill, and Red-rumped Bush Tyrant.

Returning to Cusco, we climb the famous Manu Road before descending the eastern Andean slopes, birding through temperate zones and montane cloud forest, offering chances for an incredible variety of exceptional species, including Cerulean-capped and Yungas Manakins, Rufous-capped Thornbill, Crested and Golden-headed Quetzals, Blue-banded Toucanet, Spotted Barbtail, the outrageous Amazonian Umbrellabird, Chestnut-crested Cotinga, Inca Flycatcher, Saffron-crowned Tanager, Golden-eyed Flowerpiercer and Peruvian Piedtail. We will also visit an Andean Cock-of-the-rock lek, where numerous males sometimes congregate and perform their strange mating ritual! With persistence, night birding in this area might yield the uncommon Napo and Rufescent Screech Owls, Rufous-banded Owl, Lyre-tailed Nightjar and possibly even Andean Potoo.

We complete our series of tours by visiting several Incan archaeological sites, which also includes some very interesting birding. Starting in the Incan Capital of Cusco, we explore the Sacred Valley and other Incan heritage sites covering Sacsayhuaman, Qenko, Pisac, Moray, Lago Huaypo, Ollantaytambo and perhaps the most famous tourist site in the world, Machu Picchu. We also have very good opportunities of finding the localised endemic, Inca Wren, alongside other avian treats, including Chestnut-breasted Mountain Finch, Bearded Mountaineer, and Parodi's Hemispingus.

Ancash & Lima Extension

Day 1	**Arrival in Lima**
Day 2	**Lima to Carhuaz via Lomas de Lachay**
Days 3 to 4	**Cordillera Negra & Cordillera Banca**
Day 5	**Carhuaz to Lima**
Day 6	**Lima coastline (Pucusana & San Pedro)**
Day 7	**Final departure**

Classic Andes & Manu Road

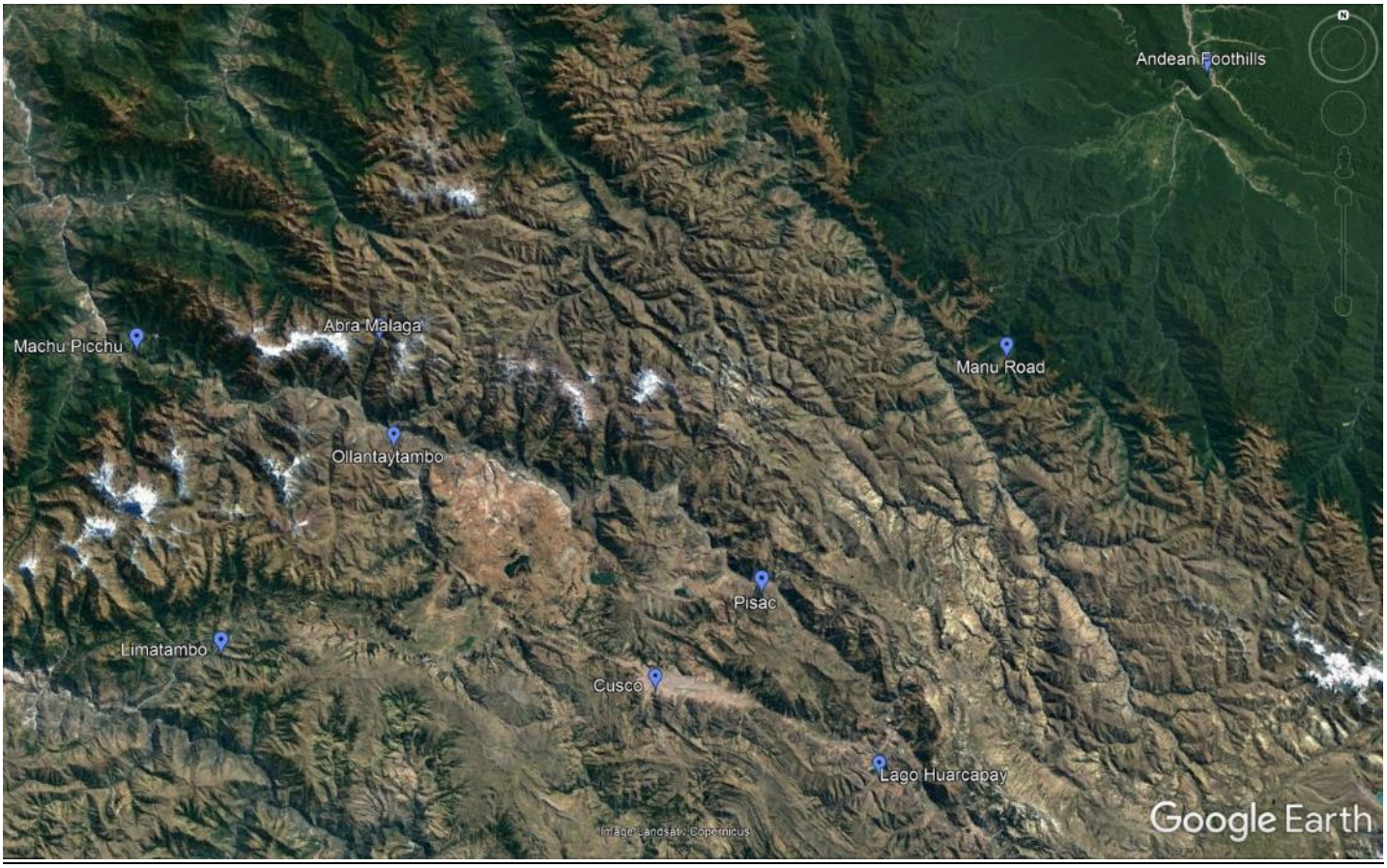
Day 1	**Lima; flight to Cusco**
Day 2	**Lago Huacarpay to Upper Manu Road (Elfin Forest)**
Day 3	**Upper to mid-elevation Manu Road (Cloud Forest)**
Days 4 & 5	**Mid-elevation Manu Road (Subtropical Forest)**
Day 6	**Mid-elevation Manu Road to Andean foothills**
Day 7	**Andean foothills**
Day 8	**Andean foothills to Cusco**
Day 9	**Cusco to Limatambo (Apurimac Valley)**
Day 10	**Ampay Massif, Apurimac Valley & Condor Viewpoint**
Day 11	**Limatambo to Ollantaytambo**
Day 12	**Abra Malaga**

Day 13	Abra Malaga & Ollantaytambo area
Day 14	Ollantaytambo to Cusco & final departure

Machu Picchu Extension

Day 1	Ollantaytambo to Machu Picchu
Day 2	Machu Picchu to Ollantaytambo
Day 3	Ollantaytambo to Cusco via Moray
Day 4	Qenqo, Tambomachay & Sacsayhuaman; flight to Lima & final departure




Andean Foothills
Machu Picchu
Abra Malaga
Manu Road
Ollantaytambo
Pisac
Limatambo
Cusco
Lago Huarcapay
Image Landsat / Copernicus
Google Earth

Birding sites in detail



Raimondi's Yellow Finch by Clayton Burne

Lomas de Lachay. We depart Lima early this morning heading along the northern coastline to the 'mist oases' of Lomas de Lachay. Located only a few kilometres from the Pacific Ocean, Lomas de Lachay is a remarkable site. It is completely dependent on capturing moisture from 'mist clouds' rolling in off the ocean, such that in summer, it is a dry and inhospitable place much like the rest of the coastal littoral in Peru. However, a transformation takes place during the winter, and our visit here is timed to behold what should resemble a cloud forest, with tall green vegetation dripping with moisture. Driving slowly along the dirt access road, we should have our first encounters with Least Seedsnipe, Burrowing Owl, the endemic Coastal Miner, Peruvian Meadowlark and with a little luck, Tawny-throated Dotterels and Peruvian Thick-knees. Flowering scrub holds several 'hummers', including Oasis Hummingbird, Peruvian Sheartail and Purple-collared Woodstar. A short walk among the surrounding vegetation may turn up the endemic Thick-billed and Greyish Miners, small flocks of the endemic Raimondi's Yellow Finch, Dark-faced Ground Tyrant, Yellowish Pipit and Band-tailed Sierra Finch.

Lomas de Lachay to Carhuaz. After an excellent start to our Peruvian adventure, we will drive northwards along the coast before turning east and climbing into the Andes. While much of the afternoon will be spent driving to Carhuaz, we may have time for the odd birding stop en route. Species of interest in the foothills include Black-necked Woodpecker, Spot-throated Hummingbird, and Scrub Blackbird. In the higher reaches we may find various species of Ground Tyrants, or if we are lucky perhaps a Rufous-bellied Seedsnipe.



Rufous-backed Inca Finch by Dubi Shapiro

Cordillera Negra and Cordillera Blanca. We have time to explore the environs of both the Cordillera Negra and Cordillera Blanca, birding several sites searching for the regions endemic or specialised species.

On one day we'll make an early start, heading high above the town of Yungay and into Parque Nacional Huascarán. The imposing Nevado Huascarán is not only Peru's highest mountain at 6 768m (22 200 ft) but is also the world's highest tropical peak. Named after the 16th century Incan emperor Huascar, the summit lays claim to the smallest gravitational force on earth.

As we stand on the dirt road a little over 3 000m above sea level, consider that the mountain right next to us is almost 4 km higher! Aside from the spectacular peaks and numerous emerald, green

lakes, the park has some of the most extensive and intact Polylepis forest in all of South America. We will leave the lakes and surrounding forests for a little later and head further into the park to reach Abra Portachuelo.



Great Inca Finch by Dubi Shapiro

Abra Portachuelo is one of the best sites to find White-cheeked Cotinga, a scarce and generally tricky bird throughout its fragmented range. While the cotinga is the primary point of focus, we will also have plenty of other species to keep our appetites satisfied, including the endemic Tit-like Dacnis, Striated Earthcreeper, both White-browed and Giant Conebills, and even a chance for the rare Rufous-breasted Warbling Finch. We should also find the common Line-cheeked (Baron's) Spinetail, Plain-tailed Warbling Finch and Stripe-headed Antpitta. As we head back towards Lagunas Llanganuco, we will make various stops in the paramo grasslands to search for the endemic Ancash Tapaculo, Blue-mantled Thornbill, D'Orbigny's Chat-Tyrant, Rufous-webbed Tyrant and Plain-breasted Earthcreeper. The picturesque lakes do not play host to many species, but residents include Crested Duck, Puna Teal, and Andean Duck.

Having sampled some Polylepis species around Abra Portachuelo, we hope to gorge ourselves on even more of these specialities. Walking along the spongy paths through these slow growing trees is liable to turn up the endemic Black Metaltail, Rufous-eared Brushfinch, Rusty-crowned Tit-Spinetail, Hooded Siskin, Giant Hummingbird, Shining Sunbeam, and more chances for Giant Conebill and Stripe-headed Antpitta.

We will certainly spend some time in and around the small town of Yungay. While we bird the local surrounds, it is sobering to consider that we are birding in the 'new' Yungay, the old town being some 1 500 metres to the south. The old town was for all intents and purposes erased from the map by the 1970 Ancash Earthquake that caused a huge debris avalanche (15 million cubic tonnes), which buried the town and more than 20 000 people in a matter of minutes. The 'old' town is now a national cemetery, and no excavation has ever been permitted.



The Cordillera Blanca by Clayton Burne



Peruvian Sheartail by Clayton Burne

We will spend some time in what at first glance appears to be unappealing, scrubby habitat on the hillsides – in fact home to two of the five endemic Inca Finches, Great and Rufous-backed. Separated by little more than altitude, we will search for Great Inca Finch at lower elevations before climbing higher for Rufous-backed Inca Finch. The higher reaches of the pass are home to Mountain Parakeet, Canyon Canastero and Greenish Yellow Finch. The rare Rufous-breasted Warbling Finch is known from the area, while we can also expect to see Band-tailed Seedeater and Band-tailed Sierra Finch.

The nearby village of Puerto Libre is equally xerophytic and scrubby, and while there may not be many species in the cactus-studded scrublands, it is home to an undescribed form of Pale-tailed Canastero (tentatively known as Ancash Canastero). The bird is not uncommon here and we should also find flocks of Greenish Yellow Finch and Drab Seedeater. Hummers are represented by Shining Sunbeam and Giant Hummingbird, while Black-crested Tit-Tyrant and Plain-tailed Warbling Finch often show themselves.

Conococha. We have a long drive back to Lima today, and much of our time will be spent travelling. En route we shall make a planned stop at this high-altitude lake where we should be inundated with Andean wildfowl including Giant Coot, Andean Goose, Chilean Flamingo, Crested Duck, Puna Teal, and Andean Ibis. Keeping an eye on the surrounding paramo grasslands may reveal Mountain Caracara, Andean Negrito, Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle, Bright-rumped Yellow Finch, or Bare-faced Ground Dove.

Pucusana. We depart Lima early for a day trip south of the capital city. The seaside fishing village of Pucusana offers some easy birding whilst also hosting several endemic and important species.

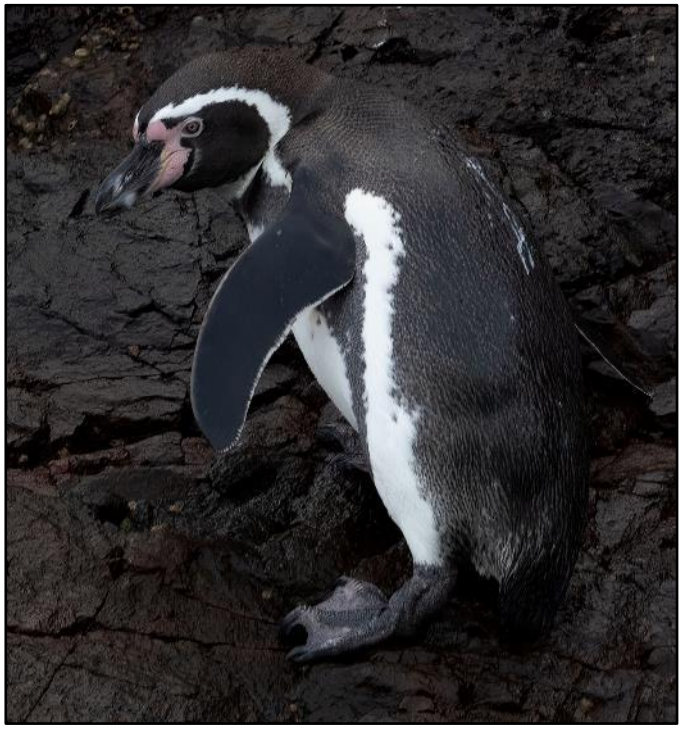


Peruvian Seaside Cinclodes by Clayton Burne

A short stop in the coastal scrublands should yield a cornucopia of hummers, including Peruvian Sheartail, Amazilia and Oasis Hummingbirds and Purple-collared Woodstar. Long-tailed Mockingbird, Bran-colored Flycatcher, Harris's Hawk, Croaking Ground Dove, and Short-tailed Field Tyrant make up the balance of the interesting birds here.

Coastal mist is an oft-prevalent weather phenomenon in the early mornings, keeping the impending heat at bay for a few hours. Shifting our focus to the

seaside, we can expect to see masses of Inca Tern, Peruvian Pelican and all three species of cormorants to be found in Peru, Red-legged, Guanay and Neotropic harassing the fishing boats for their catch as they enter the harbour.



Humboldt Penguin by Lev Frid

A short hike up a sand dune will put us in prime position to scour the surf and rocky shore for Humboldt Penguin, the endemic Peruvian Seaside Cincoldes and Blackish Oystercatcher. From our elevated position, we can often see Peruvian Booby in our eye line. Walking along the promenade, we will search the sandy beaches and inlets for Grey, Belcher's and Franklin's Gulls interspersed by Elegant, Cabot's and more Inca Terns.

San Pedro. We'll make our way back to Lima with occasional stops at any likely looking habitat until we reach the San Pedro fields. While seemingly unprepossessing, these abandoned agricultural fields can be a minefield of birding activity. Least Seedsnipe, Tawny-throated Dotterel and Peruvian Thick-knee will be high on our priority list if we have not seen them already, while other denizens include Tschudi's Nightjar (formerly a sub-species of Band-winged), Yellowish Pipit, Grassland Yellow Finch, Long-tailed Mockingbird, Dark-faced Ground Tyrant, Drab and Chestnut-throated Seedeaters as well as another chance for Amazilia Hummingbird and Peruvian Sheartail. If we have time, we may also visit the nearby seashore for Black Skimmer and the off chance of finding a Chilean Skua or Parasitic Jaeger. If the weather allows, we could well witness one of the most beautiful sunsets over the Pacific Ocean.

Cusco. The historical Incan capital city of Peru perched some 3 382 lung-busting metres above sea level. While construction of the city was started by the indigenous Killke culture, it is the building by the Inca and consequent destruction by the Spanish that the city is best known for. Since 1200CE, the Inca lived and enhanced the city for more than 300 years. The arrival of the Spanish conquistador Francisco Pizarro spelt the end of Cuzco, for despite re-naming it the "Very noble and great city of Cuzco", the Spanish pulled most of the stonework down and re-constructed the city in their own image. A strong earthquake in 1950 toppled many of the Spanish constructions, while the original Incan walls remained intact - some testament not only to the beauty of the architecture but also its incredible design. This evening we shall meet up for a welcome dinner, where the brave may try tucking into some traditional Incan Cuisine such as Cuy (Guinea Pig) or the far more palatable Ceviche (Raw fish marinated in citrus juice).



Giant Hummingbird by Adam Riley

Huacarpay Lake. We will spend the early part of the morning around the scenic Huacarpay Lake. The lake is surrounded by both Incan and pre-Incan ruins, and

we will have time to look for a wide variety of high Andean waterfowl. These include Puna, Yellow-billed and Cinnamon Teals, Yellow-billed Pintail, Andean Duck, Silvery Grebe, Andean Coot, and many other wetland-associated species. We will also search the surrounding reed beds for the furtive Wren-like Rushbird, beautiful Many-colored Rush Tyrant, Yellow-winged Blackbird, Puna Ibis, and Andean Negrito, to name just some of our targets. The seemingly barren arid scrub that covers the surrounding hillsides is loaded with birds, and we will search for the endemic Rusty-fronted Canastero, Streak-fronted Thornbird and the prime target of the area; the gorgeous endemic Bearded Mountaineer feeding in the yellow flowers of tobacco bushes. While the mountaineer is sometimes tricky to find, it is often associated with the larger Giant Hummingbird, Green-tailed Trainbearer, Greenish Yellow Finch, Blue-and-yellow Tanager and Peruvian, Ash-breasted and Mourning Sierra Finches. We may also encounter some raptors, including Aplomado Falcon, Cinereous Harrier, Variable Hawk, and the larger Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle.



Andean Hillstar by Dubi Shapiro

Huacarpay Lake to Acjanacu. Making our way up towards the famed Manu Road, we'll make several birding stops as we ascend, searching the inter-montane valleys for some very localised endemics. Our first stop is likely to be at a site for the endemic Chestnut-breasted Mountain Finch whilst also watching for the high-altitude Andean Hillstar, Black-throated Flowerpiercer, Chiguanco Thrush and the endemic Creamy-crested Spinetail.

Acjanacu. This is the last Andean pass where Andean Condors can sometimes be seen cruising high above. If the weather is clear, it may be possible to look out from this final range of the Andes, over the infinite expanse of the Amazon basin stretching to the horizon. Doubtlessly, the Incas also stood at this same place in ancient times worshipping the sun rising over the endless rainforest. Birding the roadside scrub might yield Scribble-tailed and Line-fronted Canasteros as well as Puna Tapaculo.



Grey-breasted Mountain Toucan by Lev Frid

Upper Manu Road (Elfin Forest). We will begin birding through the upper limits of the eastern slopes before gradually working our way down the eastern edge of the Andes during the coming week or so. Here the forest becomes more contiguous than in the highlands, as we make our way to our idyllically located elfin forest lodge perched at almost 2 800m (9 000 feet) above sea level. In the evening, we will have the opportunity to search for the exquisite Swallow-tailed Nightjar, Yungas Pygmy Owl and perhaps even White-throated Screech Owl.

Beginning from our lodge, some of the birds we will set out searching for this morning are the recently

described Diademed Tapaculo, Red-and-white Antpitta, Moustached Flowerpiercer, Tit-like Dacnis, Golden-collared Tanager and Puna Thistletail. We will spend most of the day birding through lush forest seeking out mixed feeding flocks that are sure to contain a variety of tanagers, flycatchers and *furnarids* (ovenbirds), including Grey-breasted Mountain Toucan, White-collared Jay, and Southern Mountain Cacique. Grass-green Tanager, Hooded Mountain Tanager, Black-throated Tody-Tyrant, Barred Fruiteater and both White-banded and White-throated Tyrannulets, to name just a few of the possibilities. Some of the scarcer denizens of the forest here include Peruvian Treehunter, Golden-plumed Parakeet, Kalinowski's Chat-Tyrant and Greater Scythebill.



Kalinowski's Chat-Tyrant by Clayton Burne

Mid-elevation Manu Road (Cloud Forest). As we move down the little-travelled forested road to lower elevations (approaching 1 600m / 5 000 ft), we will be keeping an eye out for White-rumped Hawk, Trilling Tapaculo, Black-and-chestnut Eagle, Andean Guan, Scaly-naped Amazon, Crimson-mantled and Bar-bellied Woodpeckers, the endemic Marcapata Spinetail, White-throated Antpitta, Band-tailed Fruiteater, Ochraceous-breasted Flycatcher, Barred Becard, Pale-footed Swallow, Mountain Wren and Citrine Warbler. This area also supports a wide variety of dazzling hummingbirds such as Collared Inca, Chestnut-breasted Coronet, Violet-throated Starfrontlet, Amethyst-throated Sunangel, Purple-backed Thornbill, Scaled Metaltail and White-bellied Woodstar.

Our lodge for the next few days offers only basic candle and lantern lighting at night, but more than makes up for this with a pleasant dining area and exquisite lounge overlooking fantastic hummingbird and fruit feeding stations. The mammal front may also get a boost here, with Brown Capuchin Monkey and Tayra both possible, the latter often arriving at night to pick through fruit scraps from the feeding station.

Our lodge is situated in the pristine cloud forest of the mountains of Manu, only a few minutes' walk from a spectacular Andean Cock-of-the-rock lek site. Furnished with comfortable blinds from which to observe these vibrant birds during their incredible dawn mating rituals, you should be sure to bring you camera and a spare battery or two. An adjoining trail system enables us to see right into the cloud forest understory where skulkers abound, including Chestnut-breasted Wren, Scaled Antpitta, Rufous-breasted and Short-tailed Antthrush, Slaty Gnateater and the endemic Cerulean-capped Manakin. The surrounding area also allows for views of



Andean Cock-of-the-rock by Adam Riley

several spectacular waterfalls as well as a plethora of beautiful orchids, with at least 80 species recorded in the lodge vicinity alone!



Rufous-capped Thornbill by Clayton Burne

We will take the time to concentrate on the different altitudinal zones, spanning from 2 500m to 1 500m (7 700 to 4 600 ft). This upper tropical forest zone has sadly disappeared from much of the Andean slopes throughout South America due to its suitability for cash crops such as tea, coffee, and cocoa, but in this part of Peru, the forest remains virtually untouched.

Among the many species on offer here, we will be searching intently for White-rumped Hawk, Montane Solitary Eagle, Rufous-capped Thornbill, both Crested and Golden-headed Quetzals, Masked Trogon, Andean Motmot, Black-streaked Puffbird, the charismatic Blue-banded Toucanet, Olive-backed and Montane Woodcreepers, Rufous-breasted Wood Quail, Plum-crowned Parrot, Chestnut-collared Swift, Three-striped and Three-banded Warblers, Long-tailed Sylph, the scarce Lanceolated Monklet, Versicolored Barbet, Russet Antshrike, Cinnamon-faced Tyrannulet, Marble-faced Bristle Tyrant, Fulvous-breasted Flatbill, Olive-tufted and Golden-crowned Flycatchers, Dusky-green Oropendola, Golden-collared Honeycreeper, White-winged Tanager, the striking Yellow-throated Bush Tanager, Spotted Barbtail, Montane Foliage-gleaner, the outrageous Amazonian Umbrellabird, Uniform and Variable Antshrikes, scarce Chestnut-crested Cotinga, Scaled Fruiteater, Bolivian Tyrannulet, the endemic Inca Flycatcher, Yungas Manakin, White-throated Spadebill, Fulvous-breasted Flatbill, Saffron-crowned Tanager, Yellow-rumped and Slaty Antwrens, Golden-eyed Flowerpiercer and the endemic Peruvian Piedtail. With persistence, night birding in this area might yield the uncommon Napo and Rufescent Screech Owls, Rufous-banded Owl, Lyre-tailed Nightjar and possibly Andean Potoo.

Mid-elevation Manu Road (Subtropical Forest). Our lodge is situated in the pristine cloud forest of the mountains of Manu, only a few minutes' walk from a spectacular Andean Cock-of-the-rock lek site. Furnished with comfortable blinds from which to observe these vibrant birds during their incredible dawn mating rituals, you should be sure to bring you camera and a spare battery or two. An adjoining trail system enables us to see right into the cloud forest understory where skulkers abound, including Chestnut-breasted Wren, Scaled Antpitta, Rufous-breasted and Short-tailed Antthrushes, Slaty Gnateater and the endemic Cerulean-capped Manakin. The surrounding area also allows for views of several spectacular waterfalls as well as a plethora of beautiful orchids, with at least 80 species recorded in the lodge vicinity alone!



Tit-like Dacnis by Rob Williams



Saffron-crowned Tanager by Adam Riley

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Waking up to the songs of Andean Solitaire and Paradise Tanager, we will depart our lodge and head to lower altitudes of around 500m (1 500 ft) and will spend most of the day birding the bamboo forests and open habitat near the villages of Pilcopata and Patria. High on our list of target species are Point-tailed Palmcreeper, Pavonine and Pheasant Cuckoos, Ornate and Dot-winged Antwrens, Ruddy-tailed Flycatcher, Bamboo Antshrike, Manu Antbird, Large-headed Flatbill, White-cheeked Tody-Flycatcher, Yellow-billed Nunbird, Peruvian Recurvebill, Rufous-headed Woodpecker and Flammulated Bamboo Tyrant.



White-cheeked Tody-Flycatcher by Clayton Burne

Andean foothills. We have time to explore the fabulous grounds of our lodge, situated in the transitional zone between the foothills of the Andes and the flat lowlands of the Amazon Basin proper, and boasts an almost unbelievable bird list of over 550 species! A canopy tower on the nearby hillside also enables us to watch upper-story foothill flocks with ease, and the numerous butterfly bushes often attract a variety of hummingbirds, including the

attractive Rufous-crested Coquette, Golden-tailed Sapphire, Western Emerald, Black-eared Fairy and Black-bellied Thorntail.



Black-banded Owl by Rob Williams

We will be birding through a variety of habitats including floodplain and hill forest. While the avian possibilities are enormous, some specific species we will be searching for include Black-capped Tinamou, Blackish Rail, Wattled Guan, Military and Blue-headed Macaws, Pheasant Cuckoo, the endemic Koepcke's Hermit, Rufous-webbed Brilliant, Bluish-fronted Jacamar, Chestnut-capped Puffbird, Fine-barred Piculet, Red-billed Scythebill, Dark-breasted Spinetail, Bamboo Foliage-gleaner, Bamboo and Chestnut-backed Antshrikes, Amazonian and Thrush-like Antpittas, Rusty-belted Tapaculo, Mottle-backed Elaenia, Red-billed Tyrannulet, Johannes's Tody-Tyrant, Yellow-browed and Black-backed Tody-Flycatchers, Ornate Flycatcher, Cuzco Warbler, the rare Buckley's Forest Falcon, Black-faced Dacnis, and Band-tailed, Fiery-capped and Round-tailed Manakins.

We will also have the option of night birding here and possibilities include Mottled and Black-banded Owls, Tawny-bellied Screech Owl and Great, Long-tailed, and Common Potoos.

Cusco to Apurimac Valley. Leaving Cusco behind, we'll embark on a visually stunning and altitudinally diverse journey. From the lofty Cusco at 3 382m, we drop more than 1 500m to the town of Limatambo and the Apurimac River valley. The source of the Amazon, the world's largest river system rises in the south-western mountains of Peru, less than 160 km from the Pacific Coast.



Rusty-belted Tapaculo by Lev Frid

The lower altitude and dry environs of the river valley will see our warm gear coming off in a hurry. We can look forward to numerous new species for the tour, including the scarce, White-tipped Swift, possible Andean Condors, Black Phoebe, Golden-billed Saltator, Black-tailed Trainbearer, Mitred Parakeet and Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle.

Ampay Massif, Apurimac Valley & Condor Viewpoint. We'll make our way through the sinuous Apurimac Valley towards the Ampay Massif. En route we will pass over the modern-day metal bridge spanning the Apurimac River, taking into consideration that the Inca bridged this very river as long ago as 1200CE, giving them access to western Peru.

Travelling first past Curahuasi, we will find ourselves ascending again, topping out at 4 000m above sea level before dropping yet again towards the town of Abancay situated at the rather more comfortable altitude of 2 400m.

The Ampay massif is an isolated humid montane forest, home to the only native conifer trees in Peru whilst also holding many desirable bird species, including some currently undescribed and potentially new species. Flowering trees attract several hummingbirds, and we could see quite a variety of species including Mountain Velvetbreast, Sword-billed Hummingbird, Shining, and the endemic White-tufted Sunbeams, Great Sapphirewing (the world's second largest hummingbird species), Tyrian Metaltail and Green-fronted Lancebill. Patches of scrub hold the endemic Chestnut-breasted Mountain Finch, while also supporting small numbers of the recently split Plumbeous Tyrant (formerly Andean) and the somewhat secretive Rust-and-yellow Tanager.



Apurimac Spinetail by Clayton Burne

The almost mythical Taczanowksi's Tinamou has been reported from the area, though we would be incredibly lucky to chance upon this species. Moving to virgin montane forest, we can expect to come across our first localised endemic in the form of Apurimac Spinetail. The sounds of cracked seedpods falling to the forest floor could reveal a flock of the unobtrusive Andean Parakeet. Another of our prime targets, the localised Apurimac Brushfinch, moves quietly through the understory thickets. Bolder, more vocal and with a rather funky hairstyle, the Creamy-crested Spinetail is one of the more attractive members of the genus and is also on our radars. Moving deeper into the forest, we hope to get views of the large Undulated Antpitta and perhaps the odd, dark black antpitta of unknown status.



Andean Condor by Lev Frid

Higher altitude forest patches are good for a multitude of commoner species, including Fawn-breasted and Blue-and-yellow Tanagers, Sierran Elaenia, Streaked Tuftedcheek, and Spectacled Whitestart. The higher up the trail we move, the better our chances of finding the endemic Ayacucho Thistletail and even the rarely recorded Vilcabamba Tapaculo is known from the area.

Having spent most of the day probing the forest for its various treasures, we start making our way back to Limatambo. We will make one final stop this afternoon near the village of Chonta, where a short hike will take us to an excellent viewpoint to watch Andean Condors working the thermals.

Soraypampa. We depart Limatambo early this morning and head up towards Soraypampa. We'll spend the morning looking for many of the same species as at Abancay, but we'll be specifically

targeting Vilcabamba Tapaculo, Creamy-breasted and Apurimac Spinetails, Ayacucho Thistletail, White-tufted Sunbeam, and Apurimac Brushfinch should we still need any of them.



Many-colored Rush Tyrant by Rob Williams

Lago Huaypo. We'll spend a short amount of time at Lago Huaypo, a high Andean lake. Our birding will concentrate on the numerous wildfowl that may include Blue-winged, Cinnamon and Puna Teals, White-tufted Grebe, and Slate-colored Coot, whilst also searching out some of the reedbed skulkers such as Wren-like Rushbird, Yellow-winged Blackbird and Many-colored Rush Tyrant. The surrounding grasslands may turn up Bare-faced Ground Dove, Andean Flicker, Peruvian Sierra Finch, Hooded Siskin, and Band-tailed Seedeater.

Ollantaytambo. Situated in the Urubamba Valley, Ollantaytambo is best known as the gateway to Machu Picchu. A former royal estate of Emperor Pachacuti and the stronghold of Incan resistance to Spanish colonisation, the town features several agricultural terraces that provides excellent photographic opportunities when the setting sun turns the rock faces golden.

Birding near our hotel may produce White-bellied Hummingbird and even a chance for the endemic Bearded Mountaineer.

It will be our base while birding the incredible Abra Malaga area. While driving the final stretch of road parallel to the Urubamba River, we should pay close attention to the river where both Torrent Duck and White-capped Dipper occur.



Peruvian Sierra Finch by Rob Williams

Abra Malaga. We day to tackle the various habitats and altitudinal specialities to be found in the Abra Malaga area. The pass is some 4 230m above sea level, at this altitude, everything gets done rather slowly, even a seemingly short hike takes rather longer that one might anticipate. Not that we are in any rush, for new species abound. The area is typically cold and often cloudy, but with a little luck, we may be treated to panoramic views of the snow-capped and glacier-ridden Mount Veronica.

We will continue down the pass, dropping into fabulous humid cloud and bamboo forests at the slightly lower altitude of approximately 3 500m. We will certainly be taking the easier option of birding slowly downhill. The thick

stands of *chusquea* bamboo hold several endemic and tricky species including the oft heard, but not so often seen Urubamba (Rufous) Antpitta.



Stripe-headed Antpitta by Clayton Burne

We have our first chance for the endemic Inca Wren, and only chance for the endemic Parodi's Hemispingus. The endemic Marcapata Spinetail occurs in low numbers as do the minute Scaled Metaltail, Amethyst-throated Sunangel and Purple-backed Thornbill. The flowering bushes come alive with Moustached, Black-throated, and Masked Flowerpiercers, White-browed Conebill and Rufous-breasted Chat-Tyrant. Flocks are not uncommon, often led by the bright, Scarlet-bellied Mountain Tanager and a profusion of other species may be seen in quick succession including Blue-backed Conebill, Three-striped and Superciliaried Hemispingus, Andean Guan, Yellow-billed Cacique, and the scarce White-throated Hawk.

Progressing further downhill, we will stop at further stands of *chusquea* bamboo which may hold Plushcap, endemic Puna Thistletail, Diademed Tapaculo, Tit-like Dacnis, Parodi's Hemispingus, Smoky Bush Tyrant and Unstreaked Tit-Tyrant. The rarely seen Cuzco Brushfinch occurs in the general area, as does Paramo Seedeater, the rare Chestnut-bellied Mountain Tanager, Yungas Pygmy Owl, and the particularly impressive Golden-collared Tanager. Climbing back up to Abra Malaga pass, we'll stop to scour the various high-altitude lakes that might host Imperial Snipe and Andean Ibis.



Parodi's Hemispingus by Lev Frid

On another day, we walk through a short section of barren grassland before descending a short section of the upper trail. The grassland habitat itself holds a few important species such as Glacier Finch, Streak-throated Canastero, Cinereous Harrier, Bright-rumped Yellow Finch, Paramo Pipit and possibly the rare Andean Ibis and Andean Hillstar. Upon reaching the nearby ridge, we can gaze across the valley far below us, and the remaining thick patches of mature *polylepis*. We start descending a narrow trail through patches of small *polylepis* trees. Our list of target species today is perhaps not huge, but rather particularly rich in scarcity and interest. Both Tawny and endemic, White-breasted Tit-Spinetails, exhibitionist Stripe-headed Antpitta, endemic Junin Canastero, Puna Tapaculo, Ash-breasted Tit-Tyrant, Blue-mantled Thornbill, Brown-backed Chat-Tyrant, Red-rumped Bush Tyrant and Giant Conebill all occur here.

Ollantaytambo Archaeolgical sites. We will have time to visit some of the local archaeological sites. Dating from the late 15th century. Ollantaytambo has some of the oldest continuously occupied dwellings in all South America.



Machu Picchu by Lev Frid

Machu Picchu. From Ollantaytambo, we will travel the short distance to the train station and climb aboard the narrow-gauge train for the 2½ hour ride through the mountains to our much-anticipated destination, the Lost City of the Incas. This train journey is an interesting experience, and we will find ourselves accompanied by the unique sights, sounds and smells of rural Peru while voyaging to the bustling town of Aguas Calientes. Even from the train we have a good chance of seeing Torrent Duck and White-capped Dipper on the Urubamba River that parallels a portion of our route. we will travel the short distance to the train station and climb aboard the narrow-gauge train for the 2½ hour ride through the mountains to our much-anticipated destination, the Lost City of the Incas. This train journey is an interesting experience, and we will find ourselves accompanied by the unique sights, sounds and smells of rural Peru while voyaging to the bustling town of Aguas Calientes. Even from the train we have a good chance of seeing Torrent Duck and White-capped Dipper on the Urubamba River that parallels a portion of our route.

Situated on a lofty forest-cloaked granite peak that towers some 700 metres (2,200 feet) above the roaring river below. The Machu Picchu ruins are often shrouded in misty clouds, pierced by the powerful equatorial sun. Constructed from precisely sculptured granite blocks, carefully joined to the projecting exposed stone of the surrounding mountain, the site is undoubtedly one of the finest remaining architectural achievements of the New World. Arriving at these magnificent ruins, we will take a guided tour of the archaeological complex. A moderate hike along a finely constructed Incan trail takes us to the impressive 'Gate of the Sun' overlooking Machu Picchu at over 2,950m (9,000 feet) above sea level. Our local guide will relay the story of the rise and fall of this ancient Andean civilisation, concluding with the tragic end of the Inca, and the enigma that remains of this remarkable site. On the birding front, White-tipped Swifts wheel overhead, and we shall search in the bamboo thickets surrounding the ruins for the



Torrent Ducks by Lev Frid

endemic Inca Wren. Other highlights here include Andean Cock-of-the-rock, Lyre-tailed Nightjar and White-eared Solitaire, while hummingbirds are ever present in the flowering trees, often containing the sought-after endemic Green-and-white Hummingbird.



Green-and-white Hummingbird by Adam Riley

We will also bird the Mandor Valley, located on the lower section of the Machu Picchu sanctuary. The remnant cloud forest here hosts an abundance of birds, and we will be looking for the endemic Cusco Brushfinch, Inca Flycatcher, Pale-legged Warbler, Sclater's and Bolivian Tyrannulets, Silver-backed Tanager, Pale-eyed Thrush, Oleaginous Hemispingus, Plum-crowned Parrot, Capped Conebill, Mitred and, Barred Parakeets, the endemic Masked Fruiteater, Black-streaked Puffbird, Saffron-crowned, Flame-faced, Rust-and-yellow and Beryl-spangled Tanagers, and Grey-breasted Mountain Toucan amongst many others.

We also have time to visit the Machu Picchu site museum before departing this amazing site for the train ride back to Ollantaytambo.

Urubamba Valley. We will spend the early morning birding a nearby high-altitude lake as we make our way from Ollantaytambo to Pisac. We hope to find Andean Goose, Puna Teal, Andean Gull, Andean and Puna Ibis, Mountain Caracara, Chilean Flamingo and Giant Coot. Searching the nearby grasslands may even turn up an Andean Hillstar.

We then explore the Urubamba Valley, though it is better known locally as Willkamayu (Quechua for Sacred River), the heartland of the Incan Empire. Arriving in Moray, we shall observe the strange series of concentric, circular depressions. While their purpose is still a topic of debate, it is strongly speculated that the Incan's used the area for agricultural experimentation. The large difference in temperature between the top and bottom depressions of as much as 15°C (27°F) has led scientists to think that the Inca were attempting to study the effects of different climatic conditions on crops.



Flame-faced Tanager by Dušan Brinkhuizen

Thereafter, we shall continue onwards to Pisac. Primarily known for its Incan ruins that lie high above the town at the entrance to the valley. Several groups of ruins exist here, some of which were considered particularly important to the empire, including the Temple of the Sun, baths, altars, and a ceremonial platform. There is also a large volcanic outcrop carved into an Inti (Incan Sun God). The angles carved into the base of the rock suggest that this Inti served to define the changes of the seasons. Aside from the hilltop ruins, there are a few agricultural terraces carved into the steep valley wall. While ancient, the terraces are still in use, further testament to the incredible Incan engineering. Piscac was not only an important religious site for the Incans though, but it was also a bastion of defence, serving to protect the empire from the south, while also controlling

the access route to the lowland Amazonian rainforests. On the birding front, we shall keep an eye open for the endemic Bearded Mountaineer, Creamy-crested Spinetail, Chestnut-breasted Mountain Finch and Long-tailed Sylph.



Long-tailed Sylph by Bobby Wilcox

Sacsayhuaman, Qenko, Tambomachay. We shall pay a short visit to Qenko or Q'inqu (Quechua for zigzag). It is known to be one of the largest holy places (wak'as) in the Cusco Region and is believed to have been used for sacrifices and mummification.

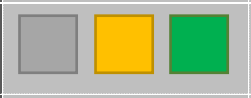
Next, we'll take in Tambomachay, also known as El Baño del Inca (bath of the Inca). While the precise purpose of the site remains unknown, it is speculated that the site could either have served as a military outpost protecting Cusco, or a favourite spa for the upper Incan elite. Composed of several finely carved stone structures, aqueducts and water falls that originate from nearby springs and thermals.

As we head into Cusco, our last stop will be at the delightfully named Sacsayhuaman (pronounced as 'sexy woman'). This massive, fortified complex was initially constructed in 900CE, before the Incans added considerably to it in the 13th century. Following the Spanish Conquest of the Inca, the new government in Cusco started to dismantle the rock structures of Sacsayhuaman block by block to build new Spanish governmental and religious buildings. While one can only imagine the scale of this site pre-destruction, what is left is incredible. The stones are so closely spaced that a single piece of paper cannot fit between most (and some of these stones weigh more than 100 tonnes!). The exquisite precision of the blocks themselves, combined with the variety of their interlocking shapes and inward leaning walls, is thought to have helped the ruins survive devastating earthquakes.



The Urubamba Valley by Clayton Burne

Tour Grading & Key

Overall Ease		Moderate to brisk paced tours suited for those in good health with good to very good level of fitness. Not suited for anyone with mobility challenges or serious medical conditions.
Birding Ease		Can be challenging with several low-density target species. Amazonia lowlands present typical dense forest difficulty.
Accommodation		Good to very comfortable.
Walking / Trails		Mostly roadside & trail birding. Several hikes, some vary from moderate to tough depending on weather conditions. Some are steep. MP Ext has many stairs.
Vehicles / Roads		Reasonable quality asphalt roads for the most part to more challenging dirt roads (Manu Road).
Photography		Reasonable to good. Several hummingbird feeders. Weather & habitat conditions can be challenging.
Annoyances		High altitude, winding roads, variably weather conditions including below freezing temperatures at times. Lowlands will be hot & humid, with biting insects present.

Financial Arrangements and Important Notes

Tour dates, prices, single supplement, approximate flight costs and tour spaces are displayed on our website.

Tour inclusions:

- All meals from dinner on day 1 to lunch on day 7 of the Ancash & Lima Extension;
- All meals from dinner on day 1 to breakfast on day 14 of the Classic Andes & Manu Road tour;
- All meals from lunch on day 1 to lunch on day 4 of the Machu Picchu Extension;
- All lodgings;
- All ground transportation during the tour;
- All reserve entrance fees;
- All guiding services
- Tips for local guides, drivers and services.

Tour exclusions:

- Visa fees;
- ANY flights;
- Any beverages (including mini-bar charges at hotels);
- Optional excursions;
- Special gratuities;
- Telephone calls, laundry and other items of a personal nature.

Single Supplement: The single supplement cost for this tour will be charged if you wish to have single accommodation. If RBL cannot provide you with a rooming partner for these nights although you choose to share, the single supplement will become applicable. We will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that a rooming partner is found if you do wish to share.

Tipping: As noted above, gratuities (drivers, hotel staff, restaurants etc.) are included on this tour. However, this does NOT include your Rockjumper leader/s. If you feel that they have given you excellent service, it is entirely appropriate to tip them at your discretion.

- **Due to constantly fluctuating exchange rates, we quote our tours in 4 currencies. The tour price is fixed only in the currency printed in bold, and the actual cost in the other currencies listed will be adjusted according to prevailing exchange rates at the time of final invoicing. The same applies to approximate flight and single supplement rates.**
- **Rates are based upon group tariffs; if the tour does not have sufficient registrations, a small group supplement will be offered to confirm the tour.**
- **Tour prices are subject to unforeseen increases in tour related costs and may have to be adjusted as a result.**
- **The designated tour leader/s may be changed at short due to unforeseen circumstances.**
- **The itinerary is indicative only. Changes may need to be made to the order in which the tour is conducted, or some of the venues we visit closer to departure. We will attempt to adhere as close to the original program as possible.**

- Space in the vehicles is limited, and since we have some long drives on these tours, it is important for the comfort of you and your fellow travellers that you do not over-pack. Kindly stick to 20 kg (44lb) for check in luggage and 8kg (+-18lb) for hand luggage.
- Fitness: We will be birding some mountainous and very high-altitude areas on foot. Trails are sometimes steep and, depending on weather conditions, slippery. A good level of fitness is required for this tour.
- Peru is a large country and there is great variety in the climate, mostly determined by altitude. While we time our tours to coincide with the relative 'dry' season, rain is to be expected, and you should bring adequate rain gear as well as an umbrella. We spend some days at particularly high altitudes that are often very cold and windy with the potential for snow and sleet; warm gear is certainly required.
- The thinner atmosphere exposes one to higher concentrations of ultraviolet light, precautions should therefore be taken against sunburn, sunglasses are advised.
- Crime is not commonplace for tourists visiting Peru; however, it is prudent to exercise caution as you would for any travel destination. Do not unnecessarily flaunt cash and valuables and do not leave valuables exposed in the vehicle.
- We will be birding in some very remote areas well away from modern medical facilities.
- The hotels are generally of a comfortable standard.
- Our route involves travel to areas affected by landslides. Whilst these are more infrequent during the drier months, they do have the potential to impact the tour significantly (ie: along the Manu Road where no alternate access is route is available.)

Arrival and Departure Details

The Ancash & Lima extension will begin with a welcome dinner at our Lima hotel on day 1. Do arrive in Lima by 17:00 to join us for a welcome dinner. The extension will end in Lima after breakfast on day 7.

The Classic Andes and Manu Road tour will begin with a flight from Lima to Cusco on day 1 (day 7 of the Ancash and Lima Extension). The tour will conclude after breakfast in Ollantaytambo on day 14. Guests departing at this time will have a private transfer to Cusco International Airport.

The Machu Picchu extension will begin on day 1 after breakfast in Ollantaytambo. The extension will conclude at Lima International Airport in the late afternoon of day 4.

The above information in respect of arrivals and departures is a guide only. Precise arrival and departure information will be sent to you in your Tour Confirmation package once the tour has been officially confirmed. If you wish to arrive early and/or depart late and would like assistance in this regard, kindly contact the Rockjumper office.

Jorge Chávez International Airport, Lima (IATA: LIM) is the main port of entry for international flights into Peru. Alejandro Velasco Astete International Airport, Cusco (IATA: CUZ) is the primary point of departure for some of the tours. Several international flights do depart from Cusco, otherwise connections may be easier from Lima, necessitating a short internal flight.

Visa requirements differ by country, nationality of the traveller and duration and purpose of your intended stay. It may be necessary to obtain a visa or an electronic travel authorization in advance of your travel. It is therefore vitally important that you check with your travel agent/consulate/embassy for exact visa requirements.

DO NOT book any flights until the Rockjumper Team have officially confirmed the tour.