

# GUIDE FOR PERU MISSION VOLUNTEERS

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We are praying for your preparation and service in Peru, and we thank you for giving generously your time, prayers, and finances to bless the Peruvians of the Central Andes mountains and jungle region. Your presence in Peru will be a great spiritual blessing to many, a blessing that will spread beyond what our physical eyes can see over the time you will be here.

We know that many of you have traveled internationally and/or have served on previous mission trips, therefore, some of this information will not be new to you. However, we do encourage you to read the following information thoroughly, as there are some issues specific to Peru. We hope this letter will help you to plan, prepare, pray, and praise God for your upcoming trip and all that He has in store for you and those you will serve.

**A word on Peru:** As a developing 3rd-world country, you may have to do without some of the comforts and efficiency that we all enjoy in the United States. Even when we go as servants prepared to make sacrifices, the vast differences in North and South American culture can still be a surprise. With that in mind we would like to mention a few differences so that your travel and service might flow smoothly, and so that you would have slightly clearer expectations. It would be impossible to list all of the differences that might be challenging, however we do want to mention the top 10. First, there may be a lot of waiting in line. Peruvians are accustomed to waiting in lines from 30 minutes to over an hour with no visible aggravation. You may also have to wait a while for a waiter or salesperson to find change from someone else and bring it to you after you have paid your bill. When in Peru, carry your own toilet paper and, if you like, wipes or a little bar of soap to clean your hands. It is very rare to find toilet paper, paper towels, or soap in bathrooms, except in nicer hotels or restaurants—but don't count on it being there, either. Water availability, water pressure, and hot water can be unreliable in Peru, particularly during the dry season, June through December. you may step into a shower and find the water temperature fluctuates a great deal. Be careful not to get burned. Frequently, the water shuts off in the late afternoon and evening in the dry season. Bottled drinking water is widely sold, and we will try to provide filtered drinking water on the work sites as well. We mention these because we've found that previous groups appreciated a little heads-up. Finally, the currency in Peru is the Nuevo Sol. The exchange rate is roughly 3.1 Soles to the US dollar. There will be an opportunity to change money once you arrive in Peru.

**Altitude:** Huancayo is a mile higher than Denver at 11,000 feet. If the group travels by bus to Huancayo or any other place in the mountains, it will cross over Mt. Ticlio at 16,000 feet. Even if you are in good health we encourage you to discuss with your doctor that you plan to travel to these altitudes and follow his counsel. Good news: the majority of short-term missionaries who come to Huancayo have very few if any high altitude symptoms (these symptoms include headaches, shortness of breath, difficulty sleeping, nausea, irritability, and weakness). For those who will be working on construction sites, please rest frequently and stay hydrated, respecting your environment and the limitations it places on those not accustomed to altitude. Being at high altitude also means you will be more susceptible to sunburn. Sun block, sunglasses, and a hat are highly recommended. Some visitors have

noticed that the dry air in Huancayo causes sinuses trouble. If you are prone to sinus problems please bring your medicine. You may also find relief from saline nose sprays during your stay, which can be picked up in a pharmacy. If someone does have difficulty with the altitude and needs to go down, please let us know and we will make arrangements as soon as possible.

**Climate and clothing:** You will be visiting in the Andes Mountains where the temperature will range from 70° during the day to 30° at night. Bring warm socks and sleeping wear as well as a hat, gloves, long underwear, warm shoes, and a coat. Bring clothes that you can layer. Keep in mind that at this altitude the sun is very intense during the day so you may need to shed and add layers as the day progresses. Nights will be cold. There may be occasional rain showers. Women do not need to wear dresses or skirts, even to church. Church dress is less informal than in the States. Pants, sweaters, casual coats will be fine. Please note that the buildings are not heated nor are they well insulated, so warm clothing is a must. Blankets and sheets will be provided in the hotels and dorms, but we encourage you to bring whatever else you need to keep warm. The temperature in Lima will be warmer than in the mountains, but still cool and damp. In the jungle areas, such as San Ramon and Satipo, the weather can range from hot and muggy during the day to hot and muggy at night. Some times the nights can be cool. Rain is more common in the jungle areas, but is usually a welcome relief from the heat.

Now that you have a general overview, here is a list of specific things that you should bring:

1. Valid U.S. Passport and a copy of the information page kept in a separate place.
2. Snacks. Small, lightweight, high-energy snacks may be needed for our days of travel. Some suggestions are pepperonis, granola, trail mix, energy bars (if you like them), and saltine crackers.
3. Medicines. You may want to have Dramamine for travel (for any long bus rides), Imodium, Fibercon, and Tylenol or Advil or aspirin. There's a new Imodium out that is anti-diarrial, anti-gas – good stuff. Also, if you take any prescription medications it would be wise to bring extra supplies.
4. Hide-away travel wallet and/or money belt.
5. Water. It's always good to have one or two small water bottles for the bus trips. Bottled water may be bought here but you may want to bring a few to start out. You can dehydrate easily, especially when you have to travel through the high mountains in the bus. The half-liter bottles are good to carry.
6. Clothing. See "Climate," above.
7. A Bible. We find it best for the group to have daily morning devotions with each member taking a day to share.

Other suggestions:

1. Small flashlight. Electricity is quite reliable here, but you may need a light to find your way around or read at night.
2. Flip-flops or sandals for the shower.
3. A cheap, non-descript watch.
4. A camera, film, and necessary batteries.

Things not to bring:

1. Jewelry. Lima is a fairly dangerous city as far as petty crimes are concerned. Even what we would consider modest jewelry back home stands out so much here. We may be spending some time in public places in Lima, so except for a plain wedding band and nondescript watch it's best to leave jewelry at home.
2. A wallet carried in your back pocket—too easily picked.
3. Purses, or at the very least a purse of value that contains valuables. They are a target in Lima and Huancayo and are frequently jerked away from their owners.
4. Excessive amounts of food or water. They are too heavy and not necessary. We'll have water and filters with us as well as cooks to cook for us. The restaurants where you will eat have not caused any illness in previous groups. Your meals in Huancayo will be prepared by women who have been serving groups for several years, and they know how to clean and cook everything to protect your health.

Your luggage allowance from the airline is one carry on and two checked bags at 50 pounds each. If everyone is going to bring the full allowance please let me know so I can plan for carrying the bags. In addition it is possible that the bus company will charge you for excess baggage. So travel as light as possible.

We want to warn you about working at altitude. We've seen groups come and work very hard the first day only to have to take the next two days off. Working at 10,000 feet is a lot harder than at sea level and you don't necessarily feel it right away. We encourage everyone to pace yourself and not try to overdo it.

We invite you to e-mail us at any time if you have further questions about the trip. And, if you should need anything during the trip or if you become sick, please let us know right away. We have you by name in prayer, and we're excited about serving the Lord together. You are a great blessing.

In Christ,

Arthur and Mary Alice Ivey

**ENTRY AND EXIT REQUIREMENTS:** A valid U.S. passport is required to enter and depart Peru. Tourists must also provide evidence of return or onward travel. U.S. citizens do not need a visa for a tourist stay of 90 days or less. U.S. citizens remaining in Peru more than 90 days must pay a monthly fee to extend their visa for up to three additional months, for a total of six months. U.S. citizens, including children, who remain in Peru over six months without obtaining a residence visa will have to pay a fine in order to depart Peru. Visitors for other than tourist or family visit purposes must obtain a Peruvian visa in advance. Business visitors should ascertain the tax and exit regulations that apply to the specific visa that they are granted. U.S. citizens whose passports are lost or stolen in Peru must obtain a new passport and present it, together with a police report of the loss or theft, to the main immigration office in the capital city of Lima to obtain permission to depart. An airport tax of \$33.00 per person must be paid in U.S. currency when departing Peru. There is also a small airport fee for domestic flights. For further information regarding entry requirements, travelers should contact [the Peruvian Embassy](http://www.peruemb.org) at 1625 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Suite 605, Washington, DC 20036; telephone (202) 462-1084 or 462-1085; Internet <http://www.peruemb.org>; or the Peruvian Consulate in Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New York, Patterson (NJ), San Francisco, or San Juan.

**ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR MINORS:** In an effort to prevent international child abduction, many governments, including Peru's, have initiated procedures at entry/exit points. These often include requiring documentary evidence of relationship and permission for the child's travel from the parent(s) or legal guardian not present. Having such documentation on hand, even if not required, may facilitate entry/departure.

Peru's specific procedures mandate that minors (under 18) who are citizens or residents of Peru and who are traveling alone, with one parent, or with a third party, must present a copy of their birth certificate and written authorization from the absent parent(s) or legal guardian, specifically granting permission to travel alone, with one parent, or with a third party. When a parent is deceased, a notarized copy of the death certificate is required in lieu of the written authorization. If documents are prepared in the United States, the authorization and the birth certificate must be translated into Spanish, notarized, and authenticated by the Peruvian Embassy or a Peruvian consulate in the United States. If documents are prepared in Peru, only notarization by a Peruvian notary is required. **This paragraph does not apply to children who enter Peru with U.S. passports as tourists, unless they hold dual U.S./Peruvian citizenship.** Children born in Peru of U.S. citizen parents (except diplomats) are also considered to be Peruvian citizens and must obtain Peruvian passports in order to depart Peru. In 2001, the waiting period to obtain a Peruvian passport was over two months due to a shortage of blank passport stock. This delay is expected to continue.

**Declaración Jurada**

Yo, \_\_\_\_\_, soy el padre / la madre natural de sangre de \_\_\_\_\_, y le doy a \_\_\_\_\_ mi permiso para llevar mi hijo / hija a Perú como una turista. También, \_\_\_\_\_ tiene mi permiso para actuar in cualquier manera que es necesario para asegurar y proteger la seguridad y salud de mi hijo / hija.

Testigo \_\_\_\_\_  
Notario

Firme \_\_\_\_\_  
Padre / Madre

Fecha \_\_\_\_\_

Fecha \_\_\_\_\_

Sello de Notario

**AFFIDAVIT**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, am the natural and legal mother/father of \_\_\_\_\_, and I give \_\_\_\_\_ my permission to take him/her into Peru. \_\_\_\_\_ also, has my permission to take what ever action may be necessary to protect and insure the safety, health, and well being of my child.

Witness \_\_\_\_\_  
Notary

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

SEAL