

Title:

Overview of Peru for Travelers

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Summary:

Peru is located on the upper west coast of South America. If you are considering Peru as a travel destination, following is an overview of the country.

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Article Body:

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Overview of Peru for Travelers

Historically, Peru was the location of the dominant early cultures in South America. The city of Caral has pyramid remains dated to between 2000 and 2600 BC, which may make it the oldest city in the world. Peru is also the home of the Nazca Lines, the football field size drawings in the ground that are only apparent from the air.

The Incas are a mysterious civilization, but one that was clearly dominant during its time. The Incas were based in modern day Peru. Although it was not a major city, Machu Picchu is the best known archeological remains of the Incas. It was discovered in 1911.

The Spanish defeated the Inca Empire in 1533, who remained in control for nearly 300 years. In 1821, Peru declared independence, but wasn't able to defeat the Spanish until 1824. In fact, Peru was the last Spanish colony in South America.

Peru has seen periods of relative stability and near civil war since gaining its independence. In the late 20th century, conflicts with the Shining Path and Tupac Amaru rebel groups resulted in as many as 70,000 people being killed. Peru has moved beyond such conflicts and is experiencing a period of strong stability and economic growth. In a stunning development for patriarchal South America, Peru elected Beatriz Merino as the first female prime minister on the continent

in 2003.

Peru is an interesting climatic country because it contains stunning mountains, flat plains and over 1,500 miles of beaches on the Pacific Ocean. Figuring out what to take is entirely dependent on the part of the country you will visit. Travel to Lake Titicaca, one of the highest lakes in the world, and you will need to dress for warmth. Visit the dry desert in the east of the country, and you will be dressing just the opposite.

Modern Peru has a total population of 28 million people. Roman Catholic is the dominant language. The literacy rate is roughly 88 percent. After years of conflict, the country has suffered economically to the point that over 50 percent of the population lives below the poverty line. With stability returning, this situation is expected to improve.

Peru is one of the hottest travel destinations in South America. With the end of armed conflict, the chance to see Inca ruins should not be missed.