

### About Huaraz

Huaraz is the capital of the State of Ancash and the seat of government of the Province of Huaraz, with a population of about 120,000. Huaraz is in north-central Peru, about 420 km north of Lima at an altitude of 3,100 m, making it a great place to acclimatise. It is the largest population centre in the agriculturally important Callejon de Huaylass valley, a north-south valley bounded on the east by the Cordillera Blanca mountain range and on the west by the Cordillera Negra. The Cordillera Blanca includes Huascarán, the highest mountain in Peru at 6,768 m as well as almost 30 other huge peaks, many of which are visible from the city. In 1970 avalanches, earthquakes and flood waters destroyed most of the city, leaving behind an ugly, concrete jungle.

That said, Huaraz is now prospering from the tourist industry and there are plenty of restaurants and bars to keep visitors happy.

### Flights and travel

Most people arrive in Peru via the airport at Lima. Air France, Iberia, Continental, Lan Peru and KLM fly from major UK airports to Lima, usually via Amsterdam or Madrid. It's an expensive flight, expect to pay £800 or so. Note that if your flight takes you through the United States, even as a transit passenger, you will need ESTA (Electronic System for Travel Authorisation) clearance.

<https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov/>

There are plenty of ATM's at Lima airport which accept most major debit and credit cards, so you can stock up on Sols on arrival. Most ATM's dish-out US\$'s too. There is no need to order local currency in advance.

There is an international departure tax of US\$30.

Unfortunately, there is no easy way to get to Huaraz from Lima. It takes 8hrs on a coach. The price includes a meet-and-greet service at Lima and travel to Huaraz.

If you'd like to make your own way to Huaraz, the following may be of use:

There are several reliable companies that operate modern, comfortable buses between Lima and Huaraz. Book your ticket online and take a taxi from the airport to the bus terminal. Traffic in Lima is awful, allow AT LEAST three hour between landing in Lima and departing for Huaraz. Have a look at:

Cruz del Sur: [www.cruzdelsur.com.pe](http://www.cruzdelsur.com.pe)

Cial: [www.expresocial.com](http://www.expresocial.com)

If you would like to stay overnight in Lima before heading off to Huaraz, here's a few hotel suggestions:

Hotels at the airport:

Hotel Costa del Sol Ramada. This 4 star hotel is located inside the airport complex. [www.costadelsolperu.com](http://www.costadelsolperu.com)

Hotels near to the airport:

Hotels in San Miguel, a 10 minute taxi ride from the airport:

Hotel Melodia (Av La Mariana 2247). This is a two star hotel located 10 minutes from the airport. [www.hotelmelodia.com](http://www.hotelmelodia.com)

Hotel Sky (Calle Chamaya 137). This is a two star hotel located 10 minutes from the airport. [www.hotelskyperu.com](http://www.hotelskyperu.com)

Hotels in the Miraflores District: (popular with tourists, good for bars and restaurants) 45mins from the airport in a taxi (in good traffic).

Miraflores Colon Hotel (Jr. Colon 600, Miraflores). Four stars. [www.miraflorescolonhotel.com](http://www.miraflorescolonhotel.com)

Carmel Hotel (Calle Atahuallpa 152, Miraflores). Three stars. [www.hotelcarmel.com.pe](http://www.hotelcarmel.com.pe)

Miraflores Suites Centro (Av Benavides 1959, Miraflores). Two stars. [www.mirafloressuitescentro.com](http://www.mirafloressuitescentro.com)

### **Visa requirements/ Passports**

UK nationals do not require a Visa for tourist stays of up to 90 days.

You must carry your passport with you on the trail.

### **Money/ Currency**

The official currency is Nuevo Sol. Visa is the most widely accepted credit card, but all major international credit cards are accepted. US Dollars are the easiest currency to exchange and plenty of restaurants, hotels and shops in the main cities accept dollars for payment.

Most ATM's pay out US\$ and Sol.

### **Equipment transportation**

We use mules to carry group camping equipment and your personal equipment during the trek. Bring a duffel bag to pack your personal equipment so that it to be carried by the mules. If you intend to use the Moraine Camp in order to climb Pisco, it will be necessary to load carry for 3 hrs, or engage a porter.

### **Tipping**

Our guides, cooks and porters are paid a fair wage. However, tipping is a good idea if you are happy with the service they have provided. 50 Sols per trekker would be an appropriate tip. As ever in the developing world, it's a good idea to bring your old but serviceable kit as gifts for your staff. Jackets, fleece jumpers, socks, boots all go down a treat!

### **Accommodation**

Tents on the trail (bring your own sleeping bag and camping mat) and refugios where possible. There will be a mess tent for meals, playing cards and general merriment. We use mountain refugios when climbing Pisco and the mountains in the Ishinka Valley. They are very comfortable and warm with hot showers and off-and-on electricity, so bring your wash kit and battery chargers.

When 'off the hill' you will stay in a mid-range hotel in Huaraz.

### **Climate/ weather/ seasons**

You can trek the Santa Cruz and Huayhuash trails any time of the year, April to September is best. Mountaineering is confined to the months of June, July, August and September (+/- 2 weeks). Expect cool conditions after dark at lower elevations, it gets very cold at night above 4000m. Conditions on the higher peaks are arctic.

### **Red Tape**

Confusing and ever changing but not particularly expensive. It'll cost about 65 Sols (£16) for a 7 day permit into the national parks. This fee is not included in the price. You can buy a permit at the park gate.

Bring a copy of your passport for the usual, pointless form-filling.

## Vaccinations

Malaria: medication is recommended for all areas of Peru except Lima and its vicinity, the coastal areas south of Lima and the highland tourist areas such as Huaraz, Cusco, Machu Picchu and Titicaca.

The following vaccines may be recommended for your travel to South America. Discuss your travel plans and personal health with your doctor to determine which vaccines you will need.

Hepatitis A Transmission of hepatitis A virus can occur through direct person-to-person contact; through exposure to contaminated water, ice, or shellfish harvested in contaminated water; or from fruits, vegetables, or other foods that are eaten uncooked and that were contaminated during harvesting or subsequent handling.

Hepatitis B, especially if you might be exposed to blood or body fluids (for example, health-care workers), have sexual contact with the local population, or be exposed through medical treatment.

Rabies, pre-exposure vaccination, if you might have extensive unprotected outdoor exposure in rural areas, such as might occur during camping, hiking, or bicycling, or engaging in certain occupational activities. Whilst South American cities appear to be infested with stray dog, rabies is considered to be very rare.

Typhoid vaccine. Typhoid fever can be contracted through contaminated drinking water or food, or by eating food or drinking beverages that have been handled by a person who is infected. Large outbreaks are most often related to faecal contamination of water supplies or foods sold by street vendors .

Yellow fever, vaccination is not required for travellers heading to Lima and Cusco only.