



The Best of South America 2012

Peru – Argentina – Brazil – Chile

**Lima – Cusco – Urubamba – Machu Picchu – Buenos Aires
Iguassu Falls – Rio de Janeiro – Santiago**

Tour 1: 05 May thru 19 May, 2012

Tour 2: 03 Nov thru 17 Nov, 2012

Price: \$4,795.00* + taxes + visas (Brazil and Chile)

Fly with LAN Chile-the one and only airlines to South America with best routing.

**Tour price is based on double occupancy and is subject to change. Please confirm with AV Travel.*



Schedule

Day 1: Flight to **Lima** (Capital of Peru)

Day 2: Flight to **Cusco** and half-day city tour in Cusco South America's archaeological capital. Sacred Valley

Day 3: Machu Picchu.

Tour Cusco-Sacred Valley-Cusco: *Pisac Market and Ollantaytambo*

Day 4: Pisac Market and Ollantaytambo. Calientes

Day 5: Cusco city tour before return to Lima

Day 6: Flight direct to **Buenos Aires** (capital of Argentina)

Day 7: City tour in Buenos Aires- Tango show

Day 8: Flight to **Iguassu Falls** (Argentina side of the falls)

Day 9: Iguassu Falls (Brazil side of the falls)

Day 10: Flight to **Rio de Janeiro** (second largest city of Brazil)
Visit Sugar Loaf

Day 11: Corcovado - Enjoy private beach of Sheraton hotel.

Day 12: Flight to **Santiago** (Capital of Chile)

Day 13: City tour of Santiago

Day 14: *Optional wine tasting tour.* Late return flight to the US

Day 15: Arrive early at your home town

Sightseeing includes:

Lima is known as The City of Kings, Lima was once the center of the Spanish Empire in the New World for three centuries after Pizarro's conquest. Now, the capital of Peru and one of the most important cities in South America, it has been declared Humanity Cultural Patrimony and is the starting point for all programs in Peru. Located in the middle of Peru's coastline, Lima is an economic magnet for struggling highland and Amazonian villagers. A vibrant city with friendly people, it quickly snares the curious traveler with fine museums, striking architecture and richly historical neighborhoods. Lima boasts some of the best dining in the country and has an impressively restored colonial center. Its churches provide welcome respite from the outside clamor, and its many markets overflow with handicrafts. There's also a marvelous mix of excellent museums, public plazas, historical buildings and a few important archaeological sites.

Cusco is South America's archaeological capital and oldest continuously inhabited city is now an important link in the region's travel network. Its legacy as the hub of the Incan empire is readily apparent: Quechua-speaking Incan descendants crowd the centuries-old stone-walled city streets. Cusco also features magnificent repositories of colonial art - fine examples can be found in La Cathedral and Museo de Arqueologia. West of the city is **Machu Picchu**, the most spectacular site on the continent. Despite the relentless stampede of tourists, it still retains an air of grandeur and mystery. Most archaeologists believe that Machu Picchu was built as an estate for the Inca emperor Pachacuti (1438–1472). Often referred to as "The Lost City of the Incas", it is perhaps the most familiar icon of the Inca World. Machu Picchu was built in the classical Inca style, with polished dry-stone walls. Its three primary buildings are the *Intihuatana*, the *Temple of the Sun*, and the *Room of the Three Windows*. These are located in what is known by archaeologists as the *Sacred District* of Machu Picchu. The **Intihuatana stone** is one of many ritual stones in South America. These stones are arranged to point directly at the sun during the winter solstice. The name of the stone (coined perhaps by Bingham) is derived from the Quechua language: inti means 'sun', and wata- is the verb root 'to tie, hitch (up)' ('huata-' is simply a Spanish spelling). The Quechua -na suffix derives nouns for tools or places. Hence inti watana is literally an instrument or place to 'tie up the sun', often expressed in English as "The Hitching Post of the Sun". The Inca believed the stone held the sun in its place along its annual path in the sky. At midday on October 27 and February 14, the sun stands almost above the pillar—casting no shadow at all. Researchers believe that it was built as an astronomic clock or calendar.



Rio de Janeiro, the so-called Marvelous City, is the capital of Rio de Janeiro State. Second biggest city in Brazil, it is nevertheless a beach resort, located by the Atlantic Ocean and by the big Guanabara Bay. Rio is graced by its topography. The city spreads on a 24 km-long strip of land, nestled between mountains and sea. There are some 45 kms separating downtown Flamingo from far flung Recreio, bordered on one side by the blue ocean, on the other by verdant hills. Between them lies a colorful state of mind called "carioca", relaxed and high-spirited. Located close to the point where the Iguassu River empties its waters into the Parana River forming the world's widest waterfalls and giving rise to the double border of Brazil and Argentina, the city of **Foz do Iguacu**, is of great tourist interest.

Buenos Aires is one of the most important metropolises in the world and the center of the political, economic and intellectual life of the country. This cosmopolitan city of 13 million people possesses an European cultural influence, displayed in its refined cuisine, architecture and in the elegance of its inhabitants. Modern and dynamic, it has managed to preserve old traditions and charming neighborhoods. Visitors can enjoy the plentiful nightlife, visiting "tango" bars, cabarets, discotheques, restaurants or eternally open bars. During the day, a wide variety of attractions is offered: museums, art galleries, tasteful shops, fascinating antiques, large green areas, parks, wide tree-lined boulevards, clubs and sporting events.

Dinner and Tango Show: Visiting a Tango Show is a MUST for visitors in Buenos Aires. The Tango tradition started at the end of the last century, developing from a mixture of various rhythms, which were originally danced in the poorer quarters. In the beginning Tango was only danced by men, accompanied by flutes, violins and guitars. The flutes were later replaced by the "bandoneón" (a type of accordion), which gave the Tango its distinctive flavor. Reflecting the nostalgia and melancholy of mostly European immigrants, the tango brought up some great musicians, such as Astor Piazzolla and Anibal Troilo.

Santiago de Chile is a city of contrasts with remains of its Colonial past to the ultramodern, high-rise buildings of the financial center; Chile's capital city will surprise visitors. This tour offers the possibility to experience this eclectic mix for yourself. Starting at the south end of the downtown area, passing the **Club Hípico**, a beautiful horseracing track in the older residential area of the city, you will then proceed alongside the Parque O'Higgins and the Cousiño Palace, built between 1870 and 1878 for the wealthy Cousiño family. From there you will head along the famous **Alameda**, Santiago's colorful main avenue, to the heart of the city, seeing the Chilean University, San Francisco Church and the Santa Lucia Hill, site of Santiago's foundation in 1541. Then you will visit the **Plaza de Armas** and the cathedral. Just around the corner, you will visit the **Pre-Colombian Art Museum**, one of the most complete collections of ceramics, ancient textiles and relics of American culture (*Monday closed*). Nearby is the famous **Central Market**, which is the main market for fish and seafood, an interesting building, dating back to the end of the 19th century: It is a metal construction, built in London and brought by ship to Chile. Afterwards, crossing the Mapocho River to reach the bohemian Bella vista district on the way to the **San Cristóbal Hill**. From one of the hill's view points, we will have the finest views of Santiago and the Andes Mountains. To round off the tour, passing through the modern residential areas of the city with their daring architecture and, finally, the bustling Providencia shopping zone.

Tour includes:

- Roundtrip international air transportation from Los Angeles International airport (LAX) to destination countries. All in economy class.
- 4-5 star hotel with dual occupancy rooms (single occupancy room requires an extra charge of \$950).
- Deluxe coach between cities.
- Gourmet local dining cuisines.
- All entrance sightseeing fees.
- Daily sightseeing tours with professional English speaking local guides.
- Breakfast and dinners (some lunches will include in Machu Picchu).
- Travel insurance.
- The assistance of AV Travel tour director escorts from LAX.