

PERU INFO

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ABOUT PERU

FULL NAME COUNTRY: REPUBLIC OF PERU

AREA AND LIMITS:

Peru owns an area of 1,285,216 square km and as a result become the third-largest country in South America after Brazil and Argentina, ranking it amongst the world's 20 largest nations.

Peru is bordered north by Ecuador and Colombia, to the south by Chile and Bolivia, to the east by and Brazil and Bolivia and to the west by the Pacific Ocean.

The borders are: Bolivia 900 km, Brazil 1,560 km, Chile 160 km, Colombia 1,496 km, Ecuador 1,420 km.

Peru also holds sway over the sea up to 200 miles from the Peruvian coast and has territorial rights to an area of 60 million hectares in the Antarctic. Peru is divided into 24 departments. Lima is the capital of Peru.

CLIMATE:

The combination of tropical latitude, various mountain ranges, topography variations and two ocean currents (Humboldt and El Niño) gives Peru a large diversity of climates, 28 out of a possible 32. No other country in the world has as many different climates as Peru.

In the Coast, the weather varies, with a damp and cloudy winter that runs from June to September. Average temperatures come in at 14°C. During the summer, temperatures can peak at 28°C or over. In the Highlands, the sun shines all year round during the morning, but temperatures descend at night, averaging 5°C.

The climate in the Amazon jungle is tropical all year round. In both regions, the rain season runs from December through April.

Lima is a city that features a moderate climate, ranging from a light drizzle in winter to a warm summer.

Average temperature in summertime -from mid-December to mid-March is 25 / 28°C. Winter, which usually features overcast skies and high humidity, has temperatures ranging from 10 to 16°C.

GEOGRAPHY:

Peru has three major regions: a narrow coastal belt, the wide Andean mountains and the Amazon Basin.

The Costa is an arid, mistily hilly region between the Pacific shore, much of which is bordered by high cliffs, and the Andes farther east. In the north, it is characterized by a low, extremely faulted plateau, a substantial part of which is an almost flat, arable land where water for irrigation is available. Because of the nature of the terrain and its aridity, settlement is almost entirely confined to river valleys and small sections of the coast, mostly near the mouths of rivers. The coastal strip is predominantly deserted, but contains Peru's major cities and its best highway, the Carretera Panamericana.

The Andes comprise two principal ranges that are the Cordillera Occidental and Oriental, where the highest Peruvian mountain called Huascarán (6768m/22,200ft) is. Valleys and basins, which follow the same direction and in the south broaden into the Altiplano (with lake Titicaca and a few smaller lakes), are generally cited as the structural features that separate the western range from the eastern one. Both the western range and eastern ranges, with peaks rising over 20,000 feet are not continuous, which are in most cases arranged in echelon. The high peaks and slopes are permanently snow-covered, with some remnants of glaciers. Volcanoes, active and dormant, are confined mainly to the southern part of the highlands.

The eastern lowlands are generally divided in the selva alta, the higher hilly areas at the foot of the Andes, and the selva baja, the lower areas farther east (especially in the northeast) that slope toward the boundaries of Colombia and Brazil. The selva alta is dominated by low, gently sloping eastern spurs of the Andes (1,200-3,000 feet) with broad valleys that have potentially arable land. There is a gradual transition to the selva baja, a much lower undulating plain where the relief is dominated by a dense network of rivers and river terraces. It slopes gently northeastward from approximately 1,200 feet to 300-400 feet. The eastern lowlands are covered with dense tropical rain forest. Over large areas the forest is so dense that access is possible only via the rivers. The eastern lowlands of Peru are, in fact, part of the western margin of the huge Amazon plain.

POPULATION AND PEOPLE:

Peru is populated by over 27,000,000 inhabitants with an annual growth of 1.9%. The distribution of the people goes like this according to the last census in 2004:

- Urban: 72, 3 %
- Rural: 27, 7 %

The age structure is:

- 0-14 years: 32.1% (male 4,496,146; female 4,340,580)
- 15-64 years: 62.8% (male 8,709,098; female 8,594,351)
- 65 years and over: 5.1% (male 660,734; female 743,396)

In Peru we find a mixture of cultures and roots due to the mixed ethnic origins. Along Peruvian history some other groups of people apart of the native Americans joined to be part of this country. About 500 years ago the Spaniards arrived to mix the culture and the blood. With them, black people that were brought as slaves found in this place a new home.

After time more immigrations, people from Asia and Europe arrived. Now a days Peru represent a multicultural country and it is part of its richness.

The ethnic groups are: Amerindian 45%, mestizo (mixed Amerindian and white) 37%, white 15%, black, Japanese, Chinese, and other 3%.

LANGUAGE:

Spanish is the official language in Peru and it is spoken by more than 80% of the population.

Quechua language is a legacy from the Incas and is spoken specially in the Andes region. In Puno region people spoke Aymara, a pre Inca language. In the jungle region there are many dialects that are still used by families or ethnic groups.

RELIGION:

Spain had a strong influence in the religious area in Peru. The different orders arrive here since the time it was conquered and built so many churches everywhere trying to convert people to the Catholicism. Now a day it is possible to see the mix between the old pre Inca and Inca rituals and the

catholic celebrations.

As a result Peru is a religious country and the majority of the people are catholic (about 88 % of the population).

The last years the evangelists are growing quickly and are about the 7% of the population. Other religions form the 4 % and about 1% does not have a religion.

GOVERNMENT:

Peru is a constitutional democratic republic. Lima is the capital.

The current constitutional president of Peru is Alan García Pérez (2006-2011); the president is the chief of state and head of government; additionally two vice presidents are provided for by the constitution.

The president and members of Congress are elected every five years by universal suffrage. Only people over 18 years of age can suffrage and it is obligatory; members of the military may not vote.

CURRENCY:

The official currency in Peru is the Nuevo Sol (S/.), which is divided into 100 centimos. The currency includes coins for 5, 10, 20 and 50 centimos and 1, 2 and 5 sol coins. There are bills in the denomination of 10, 20, 50, 100 and 200 Nuevos Soles.

Many places, shops, markets, travel agencies and people accept American dollars.

However, it is not difficult to find a money exchange place or a bank to get the Peruvian coin from American dollars or Euros.

ECONOMY:

Peru's economy reflects its varied geography - an arid coastal region, the Andes further inland, and tropical lands bordering Colombia and Brazil. Abundant mineral resources are found in the mountainous areas, and Peru's coastal waters provide excellent fishing grounds. However, overdependence on minerals and metals subjects the economy to fluctuations in world prices, and a lack of infrastructure deters trade and investment. After several years of inconsistent economic performance, the Peruvian economy was one of the fastest growing in Latin America in 2002 and 2003, growing by 5% and 4%, respectively, with the exchange rate stable and an annual inflation lower than 2%. Foreign direct investment also was strong, thanks to the ongoing Camisea natural gas pipeline project (scheduled to begin operations in 2004) and investments in gold mining. Risk premiums on Peruvian bonds on secondary markets reached historically low levels in late 2003, reflecting investor optimism and the government's fiscal restraint.

President Alan Garcia and his economic team have continued the policies of the last governments. Recent economic expansion has been driven by construction, mining, export growth, investment, and domestic demand. Inflation is projected to remain under 2% in 2006, and the fiscal deficit is only 0.6% of GDP. In 2006 external debt decreased to \$22 billion (est.), and foreign reserves were a record \$14.1 billion at the end of 2005.

Peru is a source of natural gas and petroleum. In August 2004, Peru inaugurated operations of the Camisea natural gas project. Camisea gas is fueling an electricity generator and six industrial plants in Lima, with other facilities in the process of switching to gas. In a second phase, liquefied natural gas (LNG) will be exported to the west coast of the United States and Mexico. The gas and condensates from Camisea are equivalent to some 2.4 billion barrels of oil; approximately seven times the size of Peru's proven oil reserves. The Camisea project, when completed, is expected to gradually transform Peru's economy, catalyze national development, and turn Peru into a net energy exporter.

Peru is the world's second-largest producer of silver, sixth-largest producer of gold and copper, and a significant source of the world's zinc and lead. Mineral exports have consistently accounted for the

most significant portion of Peru's export revenue, averaging around 50% of total earnings in 1998 to 2005.