

AMAZON RIVER CRUISE

A BIRDING AND NATURAL HISTORY ODYSSEY

ABOARD *Zafiro*

JANUARY 27 – FEBRUARY 5, 2022

MACHU PICCHU PRE-TRIP: BIRDS, RUINS AND HISTORY

JANUARY 21-28, 2022

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The Amazon region conjures many images, but it is, above all, a realm of superlatives. The centerpiece of this vast region is the Amazon River itself, the largest river in the world. In fact, many of its tributaries rival or exceed the size of other great rivers of the world. The Amazonian region also



Hoatzin © David Ascanio

boasts the highest diversity of both birds and plants anywhere in the world. The very word “Amazon” brings to mind images of broad, sinuous rivers, tree-lined banks, strange animals, bright butterflies, torrential rains, and glorious sunsets. Along the rivers one may see macaws and parrots and oropendolas flying overhead, ponderous Horned Screamers rising from stream banks and exotic wildlife that includes hoatzins, umbrellabirds, sloths, fresh-water (river) dolphins, and primates coexisting in this untamed area.

We offer this relatively short excursion to the Amazon for those who want a full Amazonian rainforest and river experience without sacrificing comfort. We believe, in

fact, that the classically styled, triple-deck riverboat we’re using offers visitors the utmost in comfort, security and safety while still permitting us to visit remote and relatively unspoiled regions in Amazonia. The ship’s spacious cabins are individually climate-controlled, air-conditioned, and include private bathrooms, hot-water showers, laundry service, and bottled water available at all times.



In addition to the wildlife experience, we will offer a morning visit to a local community, where participants will learn about the challenges and lifestyle of the people living in this riverine habitat. Visitors can also be assured of having waterproof ponchos, walking sticks, and extra thick boat cushions as needed for off-boat excursions. The ship features excellent food and an open-air upper deck for great wildlife viewing by day and stargazing by night. The list of amenities offered by the ship and its attendant crew is impressive. Additionally, stable, flat-bottomed boats powered by exceptionally quiet engines permit intimate exploration of small streams and lakes with ease and comfort, and a minimum of noise intrusion.

The mobility of our ship and its excursion boats will allow us to explore different habitats and streams each morning and afternoon and provide exceptional opportunities to see birds and wildlife. Some birds will be common, widespread Amazonian species such as Black-collared Hawk, Black-fronted Nunbird, Oriole Blackbird, Yellow-rumped Cacique, and Russet-backed Oropendola. Others will be more local species such as Hoatzin, Black-tailed Antbird and Festive Parrot. We will surely explore some of the unique sedimentary river islands allowing views of river specialists such as Red-and-white, white-bellied and Parker's Spinetails as well as Black-and-white Antbird and Lesser Wagtail-Tyrant. During the course of the trip we'll explore small wooded streams, oxbow lakes, seasonally flooded forest (várzea or igapó), and flooded river islands. Depending on the water level, during the latter part of the trip we'll spend some time walking in high ground forest. Here or nearby we may find a fruiting tree frequented by colorful araçaries, tanagers, and honeycreepers, or be surprised with the presence of an army ant swarm with its attendant antbirds and woodcreepers.

Some of the spectacular species and memorable moments may include a brilliant blue Plum-throated Cotinga perched in a treetop, a pair of Blue-and-yellow Macaws winging overhead, a swirling of hundreds White-winged Parakeets landing on tall cane to roost, or a White-eared Jacamar in the morning sun—it is hard to predict which of these or many other experiences will delight you the most. We'll also fill some spare shipboard time with discussions and explanations of Amazonian natural history, as well as recaps of daily excursions in the evenings. We are confident that at the end of this extraordinary cruise you will have a greater appreciation and understanding of the Amazon region and the myriad creatures that make it the most complex ecosystem anywhere on earth.

Finally, many people harbor misgivings about visiting the Amazon, fearing excessive heat and humidity, torrential rain, hordes of mosquitoes or other insects. While it is indeed possible to experience such things, most visitors are pleasantly surprised at how comfortable travel can be even in the heart of Amazonia.

The airy, breezy ship and air-conditioned cabins mitigate the effects of even the hottest days, and visitors soon discover that insects and mosquitoes, far from being the torment they are imagined, are restricted or no problem at all. This trip, which is based aboard a relatively small river boat offers perhaps the most comfortable and luxurious way possible to explore the Amazon while still retaining the ability to visit remote regions. Visitors can be assured of a shipboard staff and crew that will respond to your every need; exciting exploratory trips on mornings, afternoons, and evenings; and some of the best birding and wildlife viewing in the Amazon.



Masked Crimson Tanager © David Ascanio

Those interested in maximizing their time in Peru are encouraged to join our optional Machu Picchu pre-trip which visits the incomparable ancient capital of the Inca in addition to seeking many of the special birds of the Peruvian Andes in the regions of Cuzco and the Urubamba River Valley.

January 27, Day 1: Arrive Lima. You should plan your flights to arrive Lima, Peru (Jorge Chávez Lima-Callao International Airport, airport code LIM) any time today. After clearing immigration and customs you will be transferred to your hotel. Most flights from the United States arrive sometime late evening. When making your airline reservations, bear in mind that you may want to arrive as early as possible in the evening as we are offering a trip on Day 2 to a wetland near Lima that is sure to have many birds, departing from the hotel fairly early.

If your time permits, we recommend arriving a day early in order to rest and to allow for flight delays that are sometimes associated with winter weather in your home areas. Please be aware that those participants who are delayed may risk missing the flight on Day 3 from Lima to Iquitos and would then be in jeopardy of arriving at the pier after ship has departed.

NIGHT: Swissotel, Lima

January 28, Day 2: Lima including Pantanos de Villa Marshes and Pucusana Fishing Village. We will meet as a group for the first time this morning at 6:50 a.m. for our trip southward toward the picturesque coast of Pucusana. We will have an opportunity to see some fine coastal marshes, a good cross-section of the stark Atacama Desert of western Peru, and many of the seabirds typical of the cold, rich waters of the Humboldt Current just offshore. Today we should see about 35 to 50 species of birds, most of which will not be seen elsewhere on this trip. These may include Humboldt Penguin (views depend upon ocean conditions); White-tufted and Great grebes; Peruvian Pelican; Peruvian Booby; Neotropic and Guanay cormorants; several egrets and herons; Least Bittern (hard to find); Puna Ibis (unpredictable); White-cheeked Pintail; Cinnamon Teal; Harris's Hawk; Plumbeous Rail; Slate-colored Coot (with several different frontal shield colors); Common Moorhen; Peruvian Thick-knee (now scarce); Belcher's (Band-tailed), Gray-hooded, Kelp, and Gray gulls as well as migrant Franklin's Gull (Oct-March only); Inca Tern; West Peruvian Dove; Croaking Ground-Dove; Amazilia Hummingbird; Wren-like

Rushbird; Surf Cinclodes; Many-colored Rush-Tyrant; Vermilion Flycatcher (black morph in Lima, normal red ones along the coast); Long-tailed Mockingbird; Peruvian Red-breasted Meadowlark; and Grassland Yellow-Finch. We should be back by late afternoon and will dine in the hotel this evening.

NIGHT: Swissotel, Lima



Large-billed Tern © David Ascanio

January 29, Day 3: Lima to Iquitos, Peru. Embarkation. Our flight to Iquitos is currently scheduled for a morning departure from Lima and our activities once we reach Iquitos will depend, in large part, upon the amount of time we have available. If our flight is early there may be some time available for birding along the promenade and/or a short drive through the food market area of Iquitos before lunch. Our afternoon activities will be determined by when the ship is outfitted and when we will be permitted to board, but we are sure to have some time to get settled in and have a little time for a short outing.

At the waterfront at Iquitos we should see many common and more widespread birds along the river. These species should include Cocoi and Striated herons, Great and Snowy egrets, Turkey and Lesser Yellow-headed vultures, Plumbeous Kite, Roadside Hawk, Yellow-headed Caracara, Large-billed Tern and Oriole Blackbird. If time permits, our late afternoon exploration of the Amazon will begin with a short visit to a river island or young river edge vegetation. All of the river islands should be flooded, or mostly so, at this time of year, which makes access to island habitats by boat relatively easy. There are more than twenty species of river island bird specialists here, almost all of which occur in one of four or five island vegetation types: tall grass (*Gynerium* spp.); willow (*Salix*) and *Tessaria*; *Cecropia* and *Heliconia* spp; and mixed *Ficus* trees.

River island are also used by forest or migrant species to roost, such as Short-tailed Parrot; Tui and White-winged Oarakeets; Yellow-rumped Cacique, Eastern Kingbird and Barn Swallows. But the importance to preserve this habitat is due to the fact that other species make their entire life there, including Olive-spotted Hummingbird; Lesser Hornero (sand bars); White-bellied, Parker's and Red-and-white spinetails; Castelnau's Antshrike (mainly older islands); Leaden Antwren; Black-and-white Antbird; Brownish Elaenia; River Tyrannulet; Lesser Wagtail-Tyrant; Riverside Tyrant; and Pearly-breasted Conebill. Other species we could see on or in the vicinity of river islands include Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture; Wattled Jacana; Greater and Smooth-billed anis; Ringed and Amazon kingfishers; Spotted Tody-Flycatcher; Great Kiskadee; Brown-chested and Gray-breasted martins; White-winged and Southern Rough-winged swallows; Orange-headed, Blue-gray, and Silver-beaked tanagers; Grayish Saltator; Red-capped Cardinal; Russet-backed Oropendola; Yellow-hooded blackbird; Shiny Cowbird; Lesson's, Chestnut-bellied, and Caquetá seedeaters.

NIGHT: *Zafiro*, Amazon River



Spectacled Owl © David Ascanio

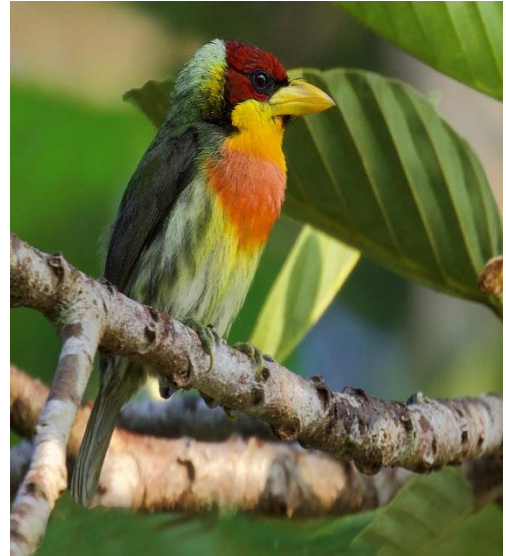
January 30, Day 4: Early morning birding Amazon tributaries near the junction of the Ríos Marañón and Ucayali. We will be off the ship early for exploration of river island and *várzea* (floodplain) habitat, most likely in the vicinity of the Quebrada Tahuayo, located in the Amazon river. A sampling of birds this morning could include most of the species mentioned yesterday as well as Gray-headed and Slender-billed kites; Black-collared and Slate-colored hawks; Pale-vented Pigeon; Dusky-headed, White-eyed, and Cobalt-winged parakeets; Greater Ani; Black-tailed Trogon; Green Kingfisher; Black-fronted Nunbird; White-eared Jacamar; Chestnut-eared Araçari; Crimson-crested Woodpecker; Pale-legged Hornero; Striped and Straight-billed woodcreepers; Barred Antshrike; White-headed Marsh-Tyrant; Short-crested Flycatcher; Masked Tityra; Bare-necked Fruitcrow; Black-capped Donacobius; Buff-breasted Wren; Black-billed Thrush; Chivi Vireo (split-off the Red-eyed Vireo); Hooded and Turquoise tanagers; Thick-billed and Purple-throated euphonias; Silver-beaked and Masked Crimson tanagers; Yellow-rumped Cacique; and Russet-backed Oropendola. There is also a good possibility of seeing Pink River Dolphins and perhaps even Gray River Dolphins. We should be back aboard the ship in the mid-morning for a break and will resume our field trip until the late morning.

After lunch, we will continue upriver towards the Rio Ucayali and we will be traveling along the border of the vast Pacaya-Samiria Reserve. We will keep our eyes opened checking the riverbanks for raptors, egrets, herons and the unique Drab Water Tyrant. In the afternoon, we will explore a channel with secondary growth that eventually ends in a oxbow lake, typical of the floodplains, and will be exposed to suitable habitat for Castelnau's Antshrike, Yellow-chinned Spinetail (patchily distributed in the Amazon), Wattled Jacana and the shy Bay (Pale-billed) Hornero.

NIGHT: *Zafiro*, Ucayali River

January 31-February 1, Days 5-6: Yarapa and Yanallpa / Río Ucayali.

During these two days we will explore small streams, rivers, riverbanks and maybe even a river island or two as we gradually make our way up the Río Ucayali. Along relatively narrow and heavily forested streams, we should continue to see species typical of *várzea* and *igapó* forest, although the taller forest and narrower channels of some creeks here should give us opportunities to add many new species each day. A sampling could include almost any of the species mentioned previously, as well as Horned Screamer; Black Caracara; Hoatzin; Muscovy Duck; Ruddy Pigeon; Gray-fronted Dove; Mealy and Festive parrots; Sand-colored Nighthawk; Short-tailed Swift; Glittering-throated Emerald; Scarlet-crowned and Lemon-throated barbets; Spotted Puffbird; Cream-colored Woodpecker; Dark-breasted Spinetail; Long-billed Woodcreeper; Great and Black-crested antshrikes; Amazonian Streaked-Antwren; Plumbeous, Band-tailed, and Silvered antbirds; Black-spotted Bare-eye; Plum-throated Cotinga; Varzea Schiffornis; Yellow-crowned Tyrannulet; Forest Elaenia; Social Flycatcher; and Velvet-fronted Grackle.



Lemon-throated Barbet © David Ascanio



Night Monkeys © David Ascanio

On our second day, as we continue exploring up the Río Ucayali, we will encounter an increasing number of black water rivers and lakes such as Yanallpa creek. On past trips we have recorded Wattled Curassow, Crested Eagle, Tiny Hawk, Collared Forest-Falcon and other large birds and their presence suggests that the wildlife here is not persecuted. Even if we do not find any of these species (all rare) we are sure to find many other interesting birds. During mid-day and early afternoon, we will reposition the ship again, moving further upriver, perhaps as far as the mouth of Zapote Creek. A small native community is located a short distance up the Zapote and the area beyond their village is designated as a reserve where they do not hunt. Consequently, this area also is particularly good for primates, raptors and other large birds. If we reach Zapote Creek, we'll depart in our skiffs for a late afternoon excursion up this beautiful stream, with the possibility of remaining out until after dark, before returning for dinner. On these evening excursions we often see Common or Great potoos, and sometimes a Tropical Screech-Owl, or Common Pauraque or Ladder-tailed Nightjar, but there also is the possibility of finding frogs, a small caiman, various kinds of insects, and occasionally even a snake with our spotlights. And, just being out enjoying the many exotic night sounds, and the star-filled sky is sure to be memorable.

NIGHTS: *Zafiro*, Ucayali River

February 2, Day 7: Dorado and/or Zapote Creek. If we were able to anchor near Zapote Creek overnight, we'll likely be out along this stream early this morning, or on another similar tributary of the Ucayali where we will continue to explore the area from small boats. Because the upper part of this river is a particularly wild area, we'll get an early start. This is a good region for raptors as well as parrots and parakeets, and we may see pairs or families of Blue-and-yellow Macaws, and even Scarlet Macaws along the river. In the upper portions of Zapote creek we have had good success with raptors, and have, on past tours, recorded both Harpy Eagle and Crested Eagle here, as well Gray-headed Kite, Hook-billed Kite, Slender-billed Kite, Buckley's Forest-Falcon (very rare) and commoner species such as Black-collared Hawk and Slate-colored Hawk. A sample of other birds here might include almost any of the species mentioned on days 3 and 4, as well as Capped Heron, Rufescent Tiger-Heron,

Green Ibis, Great Black-Hawk, Speckled Chachalaca, Sungrebe, Sunbittern (scarce), Chestnut-fronted Macaw, Black-throated Mango, up to five species of kingfishers, Forest and Yellow-crowned elaenias, Cinnamon and White-eyed (Dull-capped) attilas, Lesser Kiskadee, and Gray-capped Flycatcher. This also is an excellent area for primates and among the possibilities are Red Howler Monkey, Night Monkey, Squirrel Monkey, Saddle-backed Tamarin, Dusky Titi-Monkey, Brown capuchin, and perhaps even the unusual Monk Saki (scarce and retiring).

Late morning will find us back aboard our ship as we prepare to retrace our route back down the Río Ucayali. We will reposition ourselves downriver near the junction of the Marañon and weigh anchor for the evening. Time permitted we will make a short excursion by boat to a nearby river island or stream.

NIGHT: *Zafiro*, Marañon River



Sungrebe (singing) © David Ascanio

February 3, Day 8: Yarapa and San José de Paranapura / Iquitos creek. We will be spending the morning exploring slowly up one of the hundreds of small creeks and tributaries that feed the main Ucayali rivers here. Continuing some of the activities that we began our first afternoon in the channel of the Amazon, we will be looking for a number of river island bird specialist species that live almost exclusively in the various early successional stage vegetation on islands. River islands vary enormously in size, in age, and in vegetation structure but all of them harbor interesting arrays of birds that are generally fairly easy to see. Many of the species possible this morning has already been mentioned previously under the list for day two. Because of the ever-changing nature of the islands from one flood season to another one never knows what combinations or birds to expect, or even if a particular island has survived the previous high-water seasons. Typically, on these islands we may expect, from youngest vegetation to oldest: 1) sand bars, often with low colonizing grass; 2) marshes and tall grass; 3) small shrubby trees known as *Tessaria* (Asteraceae family) which attract birds that forage for insects on its leaves; 4) willows (*Salix*); 5) *Cecropia* of various ages; 6) large *Ficus* (figs); 7) on the oldest islands a more advanced and diverse array of trees that resemble second growth habitats on the mainland. Each of the various habitats harbor an array of interesting bird species and a good many of these birds are found nowhere else. We will try to reach several of these habitats by small boat and, of course, there will always be many other more widespread species ranging from herons, egrets, vultures, hawks and caracaras to kingbirds, saltators, orioles and seedeaters on the islands.



Ladder-tailed Nightjar © David Ascanio

In the afternoon, we should be anchored an hour or two above Nauta, in preparation for our field trip which will be our first Marañón river birding excursion. Because of the hilly terrain of this river, we are likely to see more terra firme forest birds than in previous locations. We will almost certainly encounter a rather different, community of birds here that is sure to include more antbirds and furnariids and possibly manakins. However, forest birding activities are typically more difficult and greater patience will be required to see some of these forest dwelling birds. Later tonight we will tie up close to Iquitos in preparation for our disembarkation tomorrow morning.

NIGHT: *Zafiro*, Marañón River

February 4, Day 9: Morning departure from *Zafiro*; flight from Iquitos to Lima. We will disembark *Zafiro* this morning and transfer to the airport in Iquitos in preparation for our flight to Lima. Because flights are sometimes delayed out of Iquitos, we have not scheduled any afternoon activities in Lima. Depending upon arrival time, part of the afternoon should be available for resting and repacking for international flights. There will be a farewell dinner this evening after which those departing for home should use the hotel's second floor overhead walkway, which leads directly into the airport prior to your international flight home.

DAY ROOM: Costa del Sol Airport Hotel, Lima

February 4-5, Days 9-10: Lima to home. Generally speaking, flights depart for the USA after 10:30 p.m. on Day 9, arriving in the USA early the following morning. Those wishing to avoid the long overnight flight should consider spending a final night in Lima and taking an international flight the following morning (if available). Arrangements can be made through the VENT office for overnight accommodations in Lima at an additional charge.

Due to the nature of the expedition, weather conditions or government regulations may require changes to be made to the itinerary and/or the cancellation of certain shore excursions. Every attempt will be made to adhere to the itinerary described, within the limits of safety and time. In the event of changes, passengers have no right to any refund or other compensation. Expedition fees are based on group participation. Should you choose not to take part in any activity or make use of services provided, no refund will be made.

MACHU PICCHU BIRDS, RUINS AND HISTORY JANUARY 21-28, 2022



Machu Picchu © Steve Hilty

On this optional pre-trip from the Amazon River Cruise, we'll visit the impressive Inca site of Machu Picchu for a chance to wander among some of world's most remarkable stone ruins. We'll also witness a broad swath of the Andes from the colonial city of Cuzco to the high mountain pass at Abra Malaga. Among the many highlights are opportunities to bird the high plateau marshes and hills outside Cuzco, transiting lengthy stretches of the Urubamba River Valley, experiencing a singular train ride to the famous archaeological site, and exploring the subtropical forests below the ruins. Beautiful Andean scenery, Inca history and culture, and marvelous birding are themes of this trip.

Outside Cuzco, we'll visit Lago Huacarpay where we expect to see many Andean waterbirds, including Puna Ibis, Yellow-billed Pintail, Speckled Teal, and Many-colored Rush-Tyrant, while the surrounding arid hills contain specialty birds such as the spectacular Bearded Mountaineer, and Black-tailed and Green-tailed trainbearers. An early morning departure for a high mountain pass will take us past snow-capped mountains, enormous glacier-filled valleys, golden panoramas of puna grassland, and Inca ruins.

At high elevations we may be able to find three Peruvian endemics: White-tufted Sunbeam, Creamy-breasted Spinetail, and Chestnut-breasted Mountain-Finch. Early the following day we will board a train for our Machu Picchu destination, arriving there in time for mid-morning birding. Located on a high ridge, this most famous and spectacular archaeological site is surrounded on three sides by sheer cliffs that fall away to the river far below.

We will also bird the subtropical forests in the valley below the ruins, where we may see Torrent Duck, Andean Guan, Plum-crowned Parrot, and a wonderful array of hummingbirds, antshrikes, tyrannulets, warblers, and numerous tanagers. These are but a few of the many experiences to be had on this special optional Amazon River Cruise Pre-trip to Machu Picchu.

January 21, Day 1: Arrive Lima. For those participating on the Machu Picchu pre-trip, you should plan your flights to arrive Lima, Peru (Jorge Chávez Lima-Callao International Airport, airport code LIM) between 9-11:00 P.M. today. Upon arrival and after clearing immigration, collect your bags from the carousel, pass customs, and then proceed outside the baggage claim area and walk directly across the street to the *Costa del Sol Airport Hotel* where a room has been reserved in your name. The hotel is located inside the Lima International Airport complex and within walking distance (200 yards) of international arrivals. If time permits, we recommend arriving a day early in order to rest and to allow for flight delays that are sometimes associated with winter weather in your home areas.

NIGHT: Costa del Sol Airport Hotel, Lima

January 22, Day 2: Lima to Cuzco and visit to Laguna Huacarpay; short afternoon drive to Yucay. Our day will start early with a morning commercial flight from Lima to Cuzco. Please make your way back inside the airport for check-in and to the flight departure gate. We suggest you use the hotel's second floor overhead walkway, which leads directly into the airport. Once inside, turn right and, a short distance beyond, take the elevator down to the first floor to access the check-in counters. Your LATAM flight will be scheduled to depart around 9:00 A.M. Upon arrival in Cuzco please proceed to the luggage pick-up (bathrooms near luggage pick-up carousel). Once you have your luggage, proceed outside the airport where you will be met by our local travel representative and tour leader, Doris Valencia. You will transfer to a bus for the 30 to 40-minute drive to Laguna Huacarpay. Because you will have just come from sea level, and the Cuzco area is situated at about 11,200 feet, we will take a relaxed pace to our travel, taking our time moving between birding areas. After a couple pleasant hours at this beautiful lake we will make our way by bus down the Urubamba Valley to lower elevation where we'll spend the night.

Birds are usually numerous and relatively easy to see at Laguna Huacarpay (elevation of about 10,500 feet) and in the surrounding arid hills. Among the possibilities are White-tufted and Silvery grebes, Puna Ibis, Speckled and Puna teals, Yellow-billed Pintail, Andean Duck, Aplomado Falcon (scarce), Cinereous Harrier (scarce), Plumbeous Rail, Common Moorhen, Andean Coot, Andean Lapwing, Andean Gull, Spot-winged Pigeon (irregular), Bare-faced Ground-Dove, Andean Flicker, Wren-like Rushbird, Spot-billed and Rufous-naped ground-tyrants, Andean (White-winged) Negrito, White-browed Chat-Tyrant, Yellow-billed Tit-Tyrant, Chiguanco Thrush, Yellow-winged Blackbird, Band-tailed Seedeater, and Greenish Yellow-Finch. This also is an excellent location in which to look for the spectacular Bearded Mountaineer, a hummingbird endemic to Peru. Black-tailed and Green-tailed trainbearers and Sparkling Violetear are seen here occasionally, as well. Later we will continue down the Urubamba Valley, watching for Puna Hawk, Andean Gull (along river), Andean Swift, and Giant Hummingbird and occasionally Brown-bellied Swallows en route.

The drive will take us along the rushing Urubamba River and we should arrive in time to relax, rest, or do some birding around the hotel grounds at dusk.

NIGHT: Posada del Inca Hotel, Urubamba Valley

January 23, Day 3: Early Morning Departure for the High Abra Malaga Pass in the Vilcanota Mountains. We will depart relatively early today for the approximately one hour drive up into a magnificent side canyon leading to the Abra Malaga Pass. Our route takes a winding but recently paved side road and, if we make it all the way to the top, eventually crosses the mountains at a 14,000-foot pass. The road is spectacular for its scenery alone, with snow-capped mountains, glacier-filled valleys, golden panoramas of puna grassland, and modern-day descendants of the Incas. We will spend most of the day here, perhaps reaching the pass before turning back. Above about 11,000 feet, we will leave the scrub zone and enter puna grassland.

Along this route we should see llama and alpaca tended by Indians who still wear their colorful, traditional dress. Three Peruvian endemics may be found here: White-tufted Sunbeam, Creamy-crested Spinetail, and Chestnut-breasted Mountain-Finch and with any luck we should find all three of them. Additionally, all of the following species have been seen on previous visits here and are possible: Puna Snipe; Andean Ibis; Andean Goose; Andean Condor; Puna (Variable) Hawk; Gray-breasted Seedsnipe; Shining Sunbeam, Great Sapphirewing, Scaled and Tyrian metaltails; Giant Hummingbird; Olivaceous Thornbill; Puna Thistletail; Rufous-fronted, Streak-throated, and Streak-backed canasteros; Cuzco Tapaculo (local); Yellow-billed and Tufted tit-tyrants; Brown-backed, White-browed and Rufous-breasted chat-tyrants; Spot-billed, Rufous-naped, Ochre-naped, Cinereous, and perhaps Puna and White-fronted ground-tyrants; Brown-bellied Swallow; Black-throated Flowerpiercer; Greenish and Bright-rumped yellow-finches; White-winged Diuca-Finch; Peruvian Sierra-Finch; Golden-billed Saltator; Plumbeous Sierra-Finch; and Black-backed Grosbeak. Other less common possibilities include Tawny Tit-Spinetail, and Stripe-headed Antpitta. All birding today will be along the roadside and will not involve strenuous walking, although just moving even short distances at these elevations requires effort. As we walk this road, we should be afforded magnificent views of the mountains.

We usually begin our return to the hotel by about mid-afternoon or slightly later, allowing time to stop briefly in the Inca city of Ollantaytambo on our return. Widely regarded as the most typical Inca city in Peru, it is surrounded by ruins and walls that attest to a long occupation by earlier civilizations. The city itself appears as if lifted from an earlier time, being composed mostly of ancient stone walls, open aqueducts to transport water and a population that adheres to mostly traditional dress.

Later, returning to our hotel, some participants also may enjoy a final walk around our hotel this evening, enjoying the lovely setting, crisp evening air and birds on the grounds. White-bellied Hummingbird, Green-tailed Trainbearer, Blue-and-yellow Tanager, Rusty Flowerpiercer, Black-backed Grosbeak, Chiguanco Thrush, and numerous Rufous-collared Sparrows can usually be seen in trees and shrubs around the hotel while Puna Ibis, Spot-winged Pigeon and American Kestrel may be seen flying up or down the valley.

NIGHT: Posada del Inca Hotel, Urubamba Valley

January 24, Day 4: Yucay to Machu Picchu. Following an early breakfast (5:45 a.m.), we will depart for the Ollantaytambo train station, where we may have some time, again, to see this remarkable city, which is one of the most traditional Inca cities remaining in Peru. Once aboard the train, we have about two hours before we reach the Machu Picchu ruins, along a route that follows the bottom of the Urubamba River valley. Torrent Ducks, White-capped Dippers, and more tremendous views of Mt. Veronica are part of this fascinating trip. Upon arrival, we will check into our hotel, and then start up the famous Hiram Bingham road (by bus) to the ruins, some 1,500 feet higher. Usually we take our lunch at the cafeteria near the ruins. Little needs to be said of the incomparable beauty of this place, one of the most famous and most spectacular archaeological ruins in the world. Located on a high ridge, the old city is surrounded on three sides by sheer cliffs that fall away to the river far below. Across the river on all sides are huge mountains covered with cloud forests. In the distance, even higher snow-capped mountain ridges can be seen. We may never know the true origins of this remarkable site, but whether ancient fortress, secret city, or elaborate agricultural project, it humbles us as we stand before such a magnificent panorama.

After the train departs for the afternoon, we will have the site almost to ourselves and enjoy the opportunity of seeing Machu Picchu in that special late-evening light. Our local guide, Doris Valencia, a Cuzco resident, who is an excellent birder and marvelous student of Inca history, will take us on a guided walking tour of the ruins and previous groups have been unanimous in their praise for her ability to bring Inca history to life, to discuss the many mysteries surrounding the ruins, and to answer questions. During the tour we will also keep an eye skyward occasionally for a few birds around the ruins. However, it is the subtropical forests far below, which we will see tomorrow, rather than the scrub vegetation around the perimeter of the ruins that are most interesting for birds. In the vicinity of the ruins, it is possible to see White-collared and White-tipped swifts; Black-tailed Trainbearer; White-winged Black-Tyrant; White-crested, Sierran, and Highland elaenias; White-winged Black-Tyrant; Blue-and-white Swallow; Cinereous Conebill; Slaty and Black-throated flowerpiercers; Inca Wren (endemic); Blue-capped Tanager; Tricolored Brush-Finch and Black-and-white Seedeater. Andean Condors are occasionally seen above the ruins and, of course, Rufous-

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collared Sparrows are to be seen almost everywhere. Most groups remain at this magnificent site as long as possible, enjoying the setting and history, and often catch the last bus back down the steep hill to the hotel. We will have dinner this evening at the luxurious Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel.

NIGHT: Hotel Machu Picchu Pueblo

January 25, Day 5: Full day in Machu Picchu area. This morning we may return to the ruins to enjoy the beauty and explore some of the area we may have missed the previous day, then return to the hotel for lunch. This afternoon, we will be birding around the hotel and along the railroad tracks.

Here we have the opportunity to see Torrent Duck; Fasciated Tiger-Heron (rare); Andean Guan; White-throated Quail-Dove; Plum-crowned and Red-billed parrots (irregular in occurrence); Mitred Parakeet (also irregular in occurrence); Green Violetear; Green-and-white and Speckled hummingbirds; Bronzy and Collared incas; Chestnut-breasted Coronet; Long-tailed Sylph; White-bellied Woodstar; Andean and White-tipped swifts; Highland Motmot; Crested and Golden-headed quetzals; Spot-crowned Woodcreeper; Variable Antshrike; Masked Fruiteater; White-winged Black-Tyrant; Dusky-capped Flycatcher; Smoke-colored Pewee; Mottled-cheeked and Sclater's tyrannulets; Ochraceous-breasted, Streaked-necked, and Golden-crowned flycatchers; Torrent Tyrannulet; Glossy-black Thrush; Slate-throated and Spectacled redstarts; Dusky-green Oropendola; Capped Conebill; Rusty Flowerpiercer; Thick-billed and Orange-bellied euphonias; Golden-naped, Saffron-crowned, Beryl-spangled, Silver-backed, Bay-headed, and Black-capped tanagers; Blue-winged Mountain-Tanager; Oleaginous Hemispingus; Silver-beaked Tanager; Pale-legged and Russet-crowned warblers; and Chestnut-capped Brush-Finch. There is also a reasonably good chance that we will see an Andean Cock-of-the-rock perched or flying across the railroad tracks during our walk this morning.

NIGHT: Hotel Machu Picchu Pueblo

January 26, Day 6: Morning train back to Cuzco. This morning we will board the train for the approximately four-hour trip back to Cuzco. If attendance is high at the ruins, we may travel only part way by train and then be transferred to a bus for the remainder of the trip. This afternoon we will have some time to explore Cuzco on foot.

NIGHT: JW Marriott Hotel, Cuzco

January 27, Day 7: Cuzco to Lima. There will be some time this morning to shop or see the main plaza and other sites in Cuzco before departing for the airport and your afternoon flight to Lima.

Those continuing to the Amazon River Cruise, upon arrival in Lima you will be met at the airport and transferred to the *Swissotel* where a room will be reserved in your name. **Dinner tonight is on your own.**

January 27-28, Days 7-8: Lima to home. For those participants departing home, upon arrival in Lima you will proceed across the street from the arrival terminal to the *Costa del Sol Airport Hotel* where a day room will be reserved for you. The remainder of the day will be available for resting and repacking. Depending on your flight time, tonight you should return to the ticketing booth at the airport with check in at least three hours prior to the time of departure. **Dinner tonight is on your own.**

Generally, flights depart for the USA after 10:30 p.m. arriving in the USA early the following morning. Those wishing to avoid the long overnight flight should consider spending a final night in Lima and taking an international flight the following morning (if available). Arrangements can be made through the VENT office for overnight accommodations in Lima at an additional charge.

EXTRA ARRANGEMENTS: Should you wish to make arrangements to arrive early or extend your stay, please contact the VENT office at least four months prior to your departure date. We can very easily make hotel arrangements and arrange transfers often at our group rate, if we receive your request with enough advance time.

MEDICAL EVACUATION INSURANCE REQUIREMENT: This tour visits remote locations where immediate access to primary medical care may **NOT** be available. **For this reason, travel insurance which covers you for emergency evacuation is required for participation on this tour.** This coverage is included in the **Ripcord Rescue Travel Insurance™** program. Through Ripcord, “emergency evacuation” can be purchased as a stand-alone benefit or as part of a comprehensive travel insurance policy. If you choose not to purchase insurance through Ripcord, you are required to obtain it through another provider.

TOUR SIZE: The Amazon River Cruise will be limited to 31 participants, and the Machu Picchu Pre-trip will be limited to 14 participants.

TOUR LEADERS: **David Ascanio, Steve Hilty, and Doris Valencia** will lead the Amazon River Cruise; **Doris Valencia** will lead the Machu Picchu Pre-trip with a second local leader added with a group size of 10 or more.



David Ascanio, a Venezuelan birder and naturalist, has spent 35 years guiding birding tours throughout his native country, Colombia, Brazil, Peru, Costa Rica, the Orinoco and Amazon river basins, Trinidad & Tobago, Suriname, the Guianas, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, the Lesser Antilles, Cuba, Chile, and Panama. He is especially interested in bird vocalizations and has a private library containing voices of more than 70% of all the birds of Venezuela. David combines superb birding skills with an astonishing command of bird vocalizations. He has published a book for children about bird songs and has coauthored the descriptions of two new species, the Rio Orinoco Spinetail and the Delta Amacuro Softtail. David has also published various manuscripts about the birds of the *llanos* (plains), the Orinoco River island species, and the pan-tepui endemic species for which he has become an authority. He is the first author of the *Field Guide to the Birds of Venezuela* (2017). David is an excellent communicator, has a great sense of humor, and is tireless in helping others find birds and wildlife. These traits have made him one of the most

popular naturalists/guides in the Neotropics.



Andrew Whittaker, a senior member of the VENT staff, has led VENT tours since 1993 throughout South and Central America, Antarctica, Europe, Israel, and, more recently, Asia. His birding passion began at the early age of seven (thanks to his father), but he is also a true all-around naturalist. Andy immensely enjoys sharing his bird knowledge and fascination for all other aspects of the natural world in a really fun way. Andy was born in England; however, he considers himself Brazilian, having lived more than 30 years in this mega biodiverse country, first working for the Smithsonian Institution, studying Amazonian rainforest birds in Manaus. Andy is a qualified ringer/bander trained by the late Dr. Clive Minton (famously known as the father of shorebird/wader studies). A lifelong fascination with bird migration has seen Andy working around the globe at several top bird observatories: Eilat,

Israel; Long Point, Canada; and in the UK at Sandwich Bay and on Fair Isle, Scotland. Andy is well recognized for his passionate and intimate knowledge of bird vocalizations and taxonomy, which has enabled him to discover several new species (such as the Cryptic Forest-Falcon in 2002) and rediscover others thought to be extinct. He is an excellent communicator and tour organizer and loves nothing better than finding and sharing a rare skulker, or telling one of his many fascinating bird stories. Andy had the honor of working with Sir David Attenborough as a consultant for the prestigious BBC *Life of Birds* series. He is widely considered an authority on Amazonian birds, having authored numerous technical publications on the region’s avifauna. At present, Andy is working with Kevin Zimmer on a comprehensive field guide to the birds of Brazil to be published by Princeton University Press. Andy is an associate researcher at the Museum Goeldi, Belem and an active conservationist. He loves photography (with many of his images being used in books) and is an avid football fan of Birmingham City FC and an orchid lover. Andy lives with his partner in life, Jaqueline, and their dog, Mozart, in Porto Alegre, southern Brazil.



Doris Valencia, a naturalist born in Cuzco, Peru, began her study of the Manu wilderness at a young age. She has served as a volunteer park ranger in Manu National Park and has been working as a naturalist tour guide for about twelve years. She is an avid student of the flora and fauna of Manu and has a special interest in birds. Doris is an excellent birder and leads birding groups throughout Peru including Paracas National Marine Reserve, Bahuaja-Sonene National Park, Tambopata-Candamo National Reserve, Pampas del Heath, Machu Picchu Historical Sanctuary, and Manu Biosphere Reserve. Doris is also an avid student of Peruvian history and of the history of Machu Picchu. Her lectures on the history of Machu Picchu are superb.

CRUISE INFORMATION

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS: All staterooms are outside cabins with two lower beds or one queen bed and have private facilities. Cabins will be reserved on a first-come, first-served basis. Quoted prices are per person.

Lower Suites, Cabins #1-8:	\$9,655
Lower Master Suites, Cabins #9 & #10:	\$11,075
Upper Suites, Cabins #11-18:	\$10,235
Upper Zafiro Suite, Cabin #19:	\$13,045
Single Lower Suites, Cabins #1-8:	\$15,450
Single Upper Suites, Cabins #11-18:	\$16,375

The fee for the **Amazon River Cruise** includes breakfast on day 2 through dinner on day 9; hotel and ship accommodations as stated in the itinerary; internal Peru flights (Lima-Iquitos-Lima)*; domestic departure tax; ground transportation during the tour; group transfers and baggage handling between airport, ship, and hotel; shore excursions and river cruises as described; gratuities to the crew and staff including the Naturalists and Expedition Leader of *Zafiro*; and the services of on-board leaders and lecturers.

Not included in your cruise fee is roundtrip airfare from your home to Lima and return; alcoholic beverages; phone calls; laundry; excess baggage charges; international departure taxes; passport or visa fees (if applicable); accommodations, meals, and transfers prior to joining/after tour; personal and baggage insurance; and all items of a personal nature. Rates are based upon group tariffs; if the tour does not have sufficient registration, a small-party supplement may have to be charged.

***Please Note: Domestic airfare Lima-Iquitos-Lima is included in the tour fee. At the time of printing the cost of these air segments is \$409 but is subject to change without notice until the time of ticketing. Victor Emanuel Nature Tours reserves the right to assess a surcharge for this air ticket should costs increase before ticketing.**

FUEL AND FUEL SURCHARGES: In the uncertain, often volatile oil market of late, it is difficult – if not impossible – to predict fuel costs over the long term, and more specifically, at the time of operation of this voyage. Our prices are based upon the prevailing fuel rates at the time of brochure printing. While we will do everything possible to maintain our prices, if the fuel rates increase significantly, it may be necessary to institute a fuel surcharge.

EXCHANGE RATE SURCHARGES: In the erratic global financial markets of today, it is difficult to predict foreign currency exchange rates over the long term or at the time of operation of a tour or cruise departure. Tour prices are based upon the rate of exchange at the time of itinerary publication. If exchange rates change drastically, it may be necessary to implement a surcharge. If a surcharge is necessary, every effort will be made to minimize the amount. In many cases, these additional foreign exchange rate surcharges are passed to VENT by its vendors and suppliers.



Technical Information

- Length: 164 feet; Width: 31 feet
- Built: 2015
- Registry: Peru
- Passenger Capacity: 40; Staff and Crew: 21

MACHU PICCHU INFORMATION

The fee for the **Machu Picchu Pre-trip** is **\$4995** in double occupancy from Lima. The tour fee includes all meals beginning with breakfast on day 2 through lunch on day 7; internal Peru flights (Lima-Cuzco-Lima)*; domestic departure tax; lodging as stated in the itinerary; ground transportation during the tour; two entrances into Machu Picchu; domestic departure taxes; and guide services provided by the tour leader.

Not included in your tour fee is roundtrip airfare from your home to Lima and return; a second entrance fee and bus transport for Machu Picchu on Day 5 (optional); international departure taxes; alcoholic beverages; special gratuities; phone calls; laundry; passport or visa fees (if applicable); accommodations, meals, and transfers prior to joining/after tour; personal and baggage insurance; or items of a personal nature. Rates are based upon group tariffs; if the tour does not have sufficient registration, a small-party supplement may have to be charged.

***Domestic airfare Lima-Cuzco-Lima is included in the tour fee. At the time of printing the cost of these air segments is \$330 but is subject to change without notice until the time of ticketing. Victor Emanuel Nature Tours reserves the right to assess a surcharge for this air ticket should costs increase before ticketing.**

The single supplement for the Machu Picchu Extension is **\$710**. You will be charged a single supplement if you desire single accommodations.

CRUISE REGISTRATION: A deposit of **\$2,000** is required to reserve a space on this cruise. A second deposit of **\$3,000** is due 210 days prior to departure (July 1, 2021). The balance of the fee is due 150 days prior to departure (August 30, 2021).

This cruise is designed for persons in reasonably good health. By forwarding the expedition deposit, you certify that you do not have a physical condition or disability which would create a hazard to you or other passengers. VENT reserves the right to decline to accept or retain you or other passengers should your health, actions, or general deportment impede the operations of the expedition or the rights, welfare, or enjoyment of other passengers.

MACCHU PICCHU PRE-TRIP REGISTRATION: The deposit for this tour is **\$1,000** per person with balance due 150 days prior to departure (August 24, 2021).

If you prefer to pay your deposits using a credit card, the deposit must be made with MasterCard or Visa at the time of registration. If you would like to pay your deposit by check, money order, or bank transfer, your tour space will be held for 10 days to allow time for the VENT office to receive your deposit and completed registration form. The VENT registration form (available from the VENT office or by download at www.ventbird.com) should be completed, signed, and returned to the VENT office.

PAYMENTS: All tour payments may be made by credit card (MasterCard or Visa), check, money order, or bank transfer (contact the VENT office for bank transfer information). These include initial deposits, second deposits, interim payments, final balances, special arrangements, etc. Full payment of the tour fee is due 150 days prior to the tour departure date.

CRUISE CANCELLATION POLICY: **\$1000** of your initial deposit is non-refundable if cancellation occurs up to 210 days prior to the departure date. For cancellations that occur between 209 and 151 days, both deposits are non-refundable; cancellations within 150 days of the departure date are 100% non-refundable whether previously paid or not. Any refunds will be reduced by applicable airline cancellation penalties. No refunds will be made in the event of “no shows” or cancellations made on the day of sailing.

<u>If you cancel:</u>	<u>Your refund will be:</u>
210 days or more before departure date	Your deposit minus \$1000
Between 209 and 151 days before departure	No refund of the deposit, but any payments on the balance will be refunded
Fewer than 150 days before departure date	No refund available

MACHU PICCHU CANCELLATION POLICY: Refunds are made according to the following schedule: If cancellation is made 180 days or more before the tour departure date, a cancellation fee of **\$500** per person will be charged unless the deposit is transferred to a new registration for another VENT tour that will operate within the next 12 months, in which case the cancellation fee will be **\$100** per person. If cancellation is made between 179 and 151 days before departure date, the deposit is not refundable, but any payments covering the balance of the fee will be refunded. If cancellation is made fewer than 150 days before departure date, no refund is available. This policy and fee schedule also apply to pre- and post-tour extensions. **For your protection, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance that covers trip cancellation/interruption.**

<u>If you cancel:</u>	<u>Your refund will be:</u>
180 days or more before departure date	Your deposit minus \$500*
179 to 151 days before departure date	No refund of the deposit, but any payments on the balance will be refunded
150 days or less before departure date	No refund available

*Unless the deposit is transferred to a new registration for another VENT tour that will operate within the next 12 months, in which case the cancellation fee will be \$100 per person. To qualify, cancellation must occur 180 days or more before departure date; deposit transfers must be made at the time of cancellation; and one transfer per deposit.

Upon cancellation of the transportation or travel services, where you, the customer, are not at fault and have not cancelled in violation of the terms and conditions of any of the contract for transportation or travel services, all sums paid to VENT for services not received by you will be promptly refunded by VENT to you unless you otherwise advise VENT in writing. This policy does not apply to air tickets purchased through VENT or to any special arrangements, such as additional hotel nights, that fall outside the services described in the tour itinerary.

Victor Emanuel Nature Tours is not a participant in the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires certain sellers of travel to have a trust account or bond. This business has a bond issued by Travelers in the amount of \$50,000. CST #2014998-50.

TRAVEL INSURANCE: To safeguard against losses due to illness, accident, or other unforeseen circumstances, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance as soon as possible after making a deposit. VENT has partnered with Redpoint Travel Protection as our preferred travel insurance provider. Through Redpoint, we recommend their **Ripcord** plan. Designed for all types of travelers, Ripcord is among the most comprehensive travel protection programs available.

Critical benefits of Ripcord include a completely integrated program with a single contact for emergency services, travel assistance, and insurance claims; **medical evacuation and rescue services** from your point of injury or illness to your **hospital of choice**; comprehensive travel insurance for **trip cancellation/interruption**, primary medical expense coverage, and much more. Optional expanded insurance coverage is available and includes items such as security evacuation coverage in case of a natural disaster or other security events, **waiver for pre-existing medical conditions exclusion**, and a **“Cancel for Any Reason”** benefit. Ripcord is available to U.S. and non-U.S. residents.*

For a price quote, or to purchase travel insurance, please visit: ripcordtravelprotection.com/ventbird; or click the **Ripcord** logo on our website (click Help and Trip Insurance); or call +1-415-481-0600. Pricing is based on age, trip cost, trip length, and level of coverage.

*To be eligible for the pre-existing medical condition exclusion waiver and the optional Cancel for Any Reason (CFAR) upgrade, you must purchase your policy within 14 days of making your tour deposit. The CFAR benefit provides reimbursement for 75% of covered costs, and increases the policy premium by approximately 50%. Policies may be purchased either for the full value of the tour fee at the time of deposit or in segments as individual tour payments are made (deposit, mid-payment, final balance, additional arrangements, etc.). The “pay as you go” approach reduces up-front expense and ensures that the amount paid toward your full policy premium is in proportion to the amount paid toward the full tour fee. If you choose to “pay as you go,” you must cover each deposit or payment within 14 days in order to maintain the CFAR benefit. Please refer to the policy for a full description of coverage.

Coronavirus (COVID-19):

The coronavirus pandemic has brought uncertainty for many people currently holding travel insurance policies or who are considering future travel and purchasing such insurance. Redpoint has added a **Coronavirus FAQ page** to its website that addresses questions and concerns regarding its travel insurance and the impact of COVID-19. We strongly recommend that you visit the page for an overview of topics such as policy coverage and limitations,

policy modifications, cancellation, refunds, and more. Among the most important points: 1) Trip cancellation solely for concern or fear of travel associated with COVID-19 is not covered; 2) Should you request cancellation of your policy, a full refund of your premium is available only under a limited set of conditions; and 3) Should you request cancellation, you may be eligible to receive a pro-rated refund of the unused portion of your premium or a travel insurance credit. Travel insurance credit (“Premium Credit”) is for the value of the policy purchased and may be applied to future policies. Premium Credits have no expiration dates. Rules and regulations apply.

Please visit the **Coronavirus FAQ** page at the following link:

https://redpointtravelprotection.com/covid_19_faq/

Additionally, as countries begin opening up for travel, many are instituting an array of COVID-19 entry requirements, including mandates to purchase travel insurance covering medical expenses due to COVID-19 Illness and accommodation in case of quarantine. Ripcord’s comprehensive travel insurance plans are designed to satisfy the various country-specific travel insurance entry requirements. Those who purchase a Ripcord policy will receive a “letter of confirmation” that affirms that the policy satisfies such requirements.

AIR INFORMATION: Victor Emanuel Travel is a full-service travel agency and wholly owned subsidiary of Victor Emanuel Nature Tours (VENT). Victor Emanuel Travel will be happy to make any domestic or international air travel arrangements from your home and return. All internal flights will be booked through our local operator. ***Please be sure to check with the VENT office prior to purchasing your air ticket to confirm that the tour(s) is sufficiently subscribed to operate. VENT cannot be responsible for any air ticket penalties.***

BAGGAGE: The airlines now strictly enforce baggage regulations. Excess baggage charges, which can be substantial, are the personal responsibility of each participant. **Please consult your pre-departure materials and airline to find out specific weight restrictions.** As a precaution against lost luggage, we suggest that you pack a change of clothes, toiletries, medications, important travel documents, optics, and any other essential items in your carry-on bag.

Due to ever-changing circumstances in the government’s attempts to improve airport security we recommend that you check the website of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) for the most updated information: <http://www.tsa.gov/>

Baggage limits for the domestic flights within Peru are one checked bag of no more than 50 lb. and one carry on of 17 lbs. Guests may also carry on one personal item such as a purse, duty free bag etc., and all luggage is weighed at check-in. Excess baggage fees will be calculated based on the weight of the bag and the route. Guests should consult the LATAM website (https://www.latam.com/en_us/) for more information if they have extra or overweight baggage. Persons with luggage in excess of this amount will be required to pay their own overweight charges. Therefore, we request participants limit their baggage to one medium-sized suitcase of no more than 50 pounds and one carry-on, as space in vehicles and on the riverboat may be limited. Please note, quoted restrictions are valid as of April 2019 and are subject to change without notice.

Participants on the Machu Picchu Extension should travel with only a small to medium-sized backpack and perhaps another hand or shoulder bag during the portion of the trip that visits the ruins. You will be able to leave any extra luggage with our local agents and they will return them to the hotel in Cuzco which will be waiting for you upon return. This will greatly facilitate getting on and off the train, checking in at the hotel, and re-boarding the train for the return trip to Cuzco. The train has very limited space for luggage; also, travelers will have to board a bus for the last 30 to 40-minute portion of the return trip to Cuzco, where, again, having less luggage will be more convenient. With this in mind, all travelers will be much happier with a minimum of luggage for this portion of the trip (**please do not bring any suitcases or large duffels for this portion of the trip**).

CLIMATE & WEATHER: In Amazonian Peru, temperatures will be warm, but they will rarely exceed 90° F and often are 85° or less at this time of year. However, because of high rainfall and humidity, it may feel somewhat uncomfortable at times. The climate, of course, is warm and humid. Along the main course of the Amazon River,

which is close to the equator, there is no pronounced dry season. In almost any month, rains may vary from brief afternoon showers to more extended periods of heavy rain.

Participants on the **Machu Picchu Extension** should be prepared for the possibility of rain, mainly in the vicinity of Machu Picchu itself, even though this trip is scheduled for the dry season. Bring an umbrella and/or a lightweight poncho. The Urubamba Valley can be quite chilly in the early mornings, and a sweater and/or fleece and jacket combination (layers) will be necessary for the first few hours. You also should bring gloves and a warm hat. Bear in mind, however, that although mornings can be chilly (upper 30s to upper 40s) temperatures warm rapidly by mid-morning, and mid-day is quite pleasant. Around Machu Picchu (about 6,500 to 7,500 feet), mornings are generally fairly warm and pleasant (70s or higher), and a light jacket or fleece should be sufficient. Mid-day temperatures can sometimes be quite warm and sunny but one should always be prepared for the possibility of a rain shower. The train is heated, so very warm clothing for the return train trip is not necessary. Participants should have long pants and long shirts to protect against a few black-flies that may be present around Machu Picchu.

CLOTHING: We ask that participants bring hats and clothing of mostly subdued colors (i.e. khakis, tans or shades of dull blue, green or brown) which serve to reduce the conspicuousness of our movements. White T-shirts or white shirts are suitable in boats but please do not wear them in the forest. We do not recommend wearing military-style clothing.

- **Pants and Shorts:** A couple pairs of pants and shorts each are recommended. Many people prefer loose-fitting pants made of cotton or other material. Shorts or other comfortable lightweight clothing will be desirable for warmer times of day while onboard the riverboat.
- **Field Clothing:** Outdoor stores such as Cabela's and REI carry field clothing that many birders find appealing. Pants and shirts made of lightweight, yet durable materials with multiple pockets and ventilated seams are popular and more reasonably priced than in the past.
- **Shirts:** Several shirts, (long and short-sleeved), in addition to other comfortable styles suitable for warm weather.
- **Lightweight Poncho:** Quite useful on boat outings in the event of rain.
- **Hat:** A good hat for protection from the sun and rain is essential.

For the **Machu Picchu Extension** please be aware that we stay only two nights at the ruins area (very elegant hotel), and that space for luggage is quite limited on the train. Train stations also are very crowded. Therefore, when we depart the city of Urubamba for Machu Picchu, your large luggage will be sent back to Cuzco by bus and will be waiting for you on our return. We recommend that participants bring only one or two small packs (e.g. back pack and a hand carry bag) for the nights at Machu Picchu. This will make it much easier to board and disembark the train and check in and out of hotel at Machu Picchu.

When we arrive Machu Picchu, we will not immediately have the use of our rooms (usually not until our return to the hotel in the evening as the staff needs time to clean rooms) so luggage must be stored at the hotel upon arrival. Therefore, it is important that participants have either a sturdy plastic bag or (preferably) a second light weight back pack that you can use for your day trip to the ruins as you will be leaving toiletries and your change of clothes in a bag or pack, checked at the hotel for the day. On the morning we depart we will not have to check out of our rooms until 11 a.m. so we will be able to spend the morning birding, then return and check out before lunch. The hotel at Machu Picchu supplies bottled water, shower thongs, robe (for room use); also, a small oil heater is present in each room in case temperatures get cool.

Clothing and equipment for the overnight ruins trip:

- Sturdy walking shoes (or hiking boots if you prefer)
- Walking Stick may be useful (optional)
- One change of clothes including long-sleeved shirt and long pants
- Light jacket or fleece (it will not be cold at Machu Picchu)
- Umbrella

- Broad brim hat and sunscreen (sun very intense at ruins)
- Binoculars, camera, field checklist of birds (supplied by VENT)
- Book: Birds of Peru
- Passport and air tickets (keep with you at all times)
- Toiletries, medicines, personal items such as small pocket notebook, etc.

CONDITIONS:

The Program – This **Amazon River Cruise** is an all-around natural history expedition as well as a birding trip. While seeing as many birds and other wildlife is of high importance, an overarching goal is to experience the many habitats that comprise the region we call “Amazonia,” one of the world’s most dynamic ecosystems. Travel on the river will be aboard a new and very comfortable riverboat. Off the boat, we will explore back channels and tributary rivers aboard stable motorized skiffs. In some years, the program includes a morning in “terre firme” habitat where we’ll have the opportunity to walk a forest trail on higher ground. Nevertheless, we might try other options based in the trail conditions. Physical demands for this trip are light.

Our routine for most days will involve an early morning breakfast (usually about 5:30 a.m.) followed by a skiff expedition lasting from approximately 6:10 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. Thereafter, we will return to the boat for a 15 to 20-minute break followed by a second late morning excursion (optional) lasting from about 10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. After a noon lunch we’ll enjoy some personal time, or down time, until about 3-4:00 p.m., at which point there will be a late-afternoon skiff trip exploring a new location. Dinner will usually be at 7:00 p.m. most nights and this will usually be followed immediately by a checklist and recap session in the lecture room. Depending on weather, also we will offer two or three 20 to 30 minute lectures or conservation discussion prior to our afternoon outings. An optional nighttime outing to search for night birds, frogs, and insects may be offered, at least, on one night. The schedule is always subject to amending based on discretion of your tour leaders or the boat’s expedition leader and the ship captains. Occasionally we may enjoy breakfast in the field.

The **Machu Picchu Pre-trip** is a birding trip with a strong slant on Inca history and regional culture. We’ll travel to Peru’s southern Andes and the old colonial city of Cuzco, jumping off point for the Urubamba River Valley and Machu Picchu. This trip will spend time at considerable high elevation, and with considerable daily elevational changes, so participants with any health problems or concerns should take this into account before registering. We will spend part of a day around Cuzco (approximately 11,000 feet) and another day birding the Andes up to 14,000 feet at Abra Malaga Pass. At Machu Picchu the ruins are at approximately 7700-8,000 feet but our hotel is at 6000 feet. We’ll travel aboard buses for most of the tour; however, the trip to Machu Picchu and return involves an exciting three-hour train ride through the Urubamba River Valley. At Machu Picchu we will participate in a guided walking tour of the archaeological site. Physical demands for this trip are generally light-moderate but with any visit to Machu Picchu there is a certain amount of physical exertion involved in walking and especially in climbing up and down the many uneven rock steps at the ruins and at significant elevation.

Dining – The riverboat’s spacious window-lined dining room accommodates all passengers in a single seating with tables unassigned. All meals are served buffet-style using fresh local ingredients when possible. The chefs prepare a range of culinary options to accommodate everyone’s tastes, including vegetarians. Participants with special dietary needs should inform our office at the time of registration.

While on the boat – While cruising the river, you’ll have options to join your leaders on the viewing decks for birding and wildlife viewing, or relax in your room, on deck, or in the Lecture Room. The January-March period is generally a time of high water on the Amazon River, but cruising conditions should be smooth throughout the voyage.

While on land – The nature of this program precludes walking on land; however, we will make at least one effort to go ashore in “terre firme” habitat for birding in the drier, more heavily forested uplands. This type of excursion will involve a short-to-moderate length walk on a forest trail. Please be forewarned that the trail could be muddy if it has recently rained. Please see the notes on FOOTWEAR.

Motorized skiffs – *Zafiro* is equipped with three motorized skiffs for exploring back channels and tributary rivers—places where the larger vessel cannot travel. Each skiff is of metal construction and features a flat bottom for better access to shallow water. This design also ensures a stable and comfortable excursion. Twin outboard motors of four-stroke design provide plenty of power while yielding a remarkably quiet ride.

FOOTWEAR: A lightweight hiking boot or trail shoe with good traction is strongly recommended throughout the **Machu Picchu Extension**. Heavy duty hiking boots are not necessary for either of these trips. While on the **Amazon River Cruise** you may prefer sandals and/or tennis shoes for the duration of the time spent on the boat.

Rubber Boots (optional): Rubber boots are not really needed. However, be prepared to get mud in your shoes when visiting communities or if a visit to a trail opportunity arises. Please be aware that the majority of our outings will be in the skiffs and we will not be doing extensive hiking. In the event of getting muddy walking shoes, the ship cruise is very effective in getting your field shoes cleaned! Boots will not be needed on the Pre-trip.

LAUNDRY SERVICE: Limited laundry service is available Monday through Thursday on the riverboat, with the first ten items are at no extra cost. Any overage will be billed to your ship account.

EQUIPMENT: One of the most important aspects of having an enjoyable travel experience is being prepared with proper equipment. The following items will come in handy during your trip to Peru:

- **Strong Sunscreen**
- **Insect Repellent (and some Permethrin-treated clothes)**
- **Reliable Flashlight:** A flashlight, or at least a small L.E.D. –type headlamp or SMA light is essential. These can be used in rooms and for doing checklists and writing in the evenings (even though the boat will have electricity on a 24-hr. basis)
- **Umbrella and Light weight, Waterproof Poncho:** We recommend you bring both, which are especially useful on the small boats. Ponchos are especially useful on the small excursion boats.
- **Plastic Bags or “Dry Bags”:** Rain showers are unpredictable and often appear suddenly in the Amazon. Those with larger camera and optical equipment should consider bringing plenty of plastic bags or a “dry bag” to protect equipment against moisture intrusion.
- **Other Plastic Bags:** Other plastic bags of various sizes, including a couple larger, heavier bags for protecting duffels and luggage from rain during transport to and from lodges; bring enough medium-sized plastic bags to fully pack all your clothes inside of them for waterproofing during boat and lodge transfers
- **Shower Thongs for Showers** (and for walking to and from them)
- **All personal medications and toiletries:** There will be no opportunity to restock once we leave Iquitos
- **Binoculars** – We strongly recommend good binoculars of at least 7x35, 8x42, 10x40, or 10x42 magnification. Please do NOT bring mini-binoculars of any kind. Some people like them because they are small and lightweight; but they have an extremely small field of view and very poor light gathering power. Trying to find a bird in your binoculars using “minis” is like trying to read a book through a keyhole. You will be very frustrated, and even if you do manage to get the bird in your binoculars before it flies, you will have a poor view. You will find that 7x35 or 8x42 binoculars are compact and light enough.
- **Spotting Scopes** – Since most wildlife viewing will take place on a moving ship or skiff, or among the birds and animals at very close range, you do not need to bring a spotting scope. Your tour leaders will have one available for group use on the occasions where it is necessary to have one. For the pre-trip and extension, we also recommend you refrain from bringing your scope as it adds to the size and weight of your luggage.

- **Small Backpack or Over-the-shoulder Bag:** For carrying items in the field; a pack that is completely or partially waterproof, or sheds water and dries quickly, is most useful

OPTIONAL ITEMS:

- A very lightweight, thin mesh head net in case insects are a problem.
- A small canteen and some packaged snacks. Bottled water is provided in abundance by the ship.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS:

PASSPORTS - A valid passport is required for entry into Peru for United States citizens. Please check the expiration date on your passport. **If it is not valid for at least six months after your trip return date, you will need to get it renewed.** You will also want to make sure that you have at least two blank pages in your passport for stamps. If you need a passport, you should get it well in advance of your trip departure date. For additional fees, a passport can be issued on an expedited basis. In the United States this can be done at the nearest passport office, most post offices, or the county clerk's office. You may also visit www.state.gov/travel/ for information on how to get or renew a passport.

As a safety measure, photocopy the first two pages of your passport. Keep the photocopies in a safe place, so if your passport is lost you will have proof of identification. Your passport should be signed and easily available at all times. You will need it for check-in at the airport on your first day of departure, so **do not pack it in your checked luggage.** On board ship, it is often customary for the purser to hold all passports for clearance with port authorities. Your passport may be collected upon embarkation and returned upon disembarkation.

VISAS – American citizens do not need a visa if they are traveling as a tourist with a valid U.S. passport to enter Peru. You will be issued a tourist card upon entry, which is valid for up to 90 days. Rules and regulations pertaining to non-U.S. citizens may vary; please check with the immigration office, consulate, or embassy of Peru for information on entry requirements. Visa requirements can change without notice, and you should check the latest entry requirements as far in advance as possible in order to allow time to obtain a visa in your home country should that be necessary.

CURRENCY & MONEY MATTERS: Your trip to Peru includes all necessary expenses, including all meals and accommodations aboard *Zafiro*. While U.S. dollars might be accepted in large cities and shops, it is always convenient to have a supply of local currency for such items as taxi rides, gifts, non-mealtime and off-ship refreshments, laundry tips, meals on your own, extra gratuities, and personal items. It is best to acquire local currency before leaving the U.S., although U.S. dollars can be exchanged in Lima at banks and major hotels. Small denominations of cash are always best as it is easier for individuals and businesses to provide change. It is not recommended to exchange money from street vendors.

Upon embarkation, a shipboard account will be opened for your convenience. The U.S. dollar is the official currency aboard the ship. Credit cards, Visa and MasterCard (not American Express or Discover) are accepted for expenses on board that may be paid and settled at the end of the cruise. Note that it may not always be possible to make change for travelers' checks and cash in large denominations; the ship staff would appreciate the use of U.S. dollars, if paying by cash in smaller denominations for settlement of your shipboard account.

There is no facility on board for exchanging U.S. dollars into local currency. Should you extend your vacation in Peru beyond what is offered in the cruise program, you should strongly consider obtaining local currency. ATM machines can be found in large cities and in some towns; you shouldn't have any problems using major cards in hotels, restaurants, and some shops. Please check with your bank and credit card issuer for more information regarding banking and the use of ATM and credit cards overseas.

The official currency of Peru is the Peruvian Nuevo Sol (PEN). You can check the latest currency conversion rate by visiting "XE-The World's Favorite Currency Site" at: <http://www.xe.com/>.

ELECTRICITY: Power in Peru is 220V, with use of outlet types “A” and “C” most prevalent. The “A” type outlet accommodates a flat two-bladed plug while the “C” type outlet, also known as the European-style outlet, accommodates a plug with two round pins. To ensure that use of American standard 110V equipment with the flat-pronged plugs will work, you should bring an all-purpose transformer to convert the current for 110V use, in addition to proper plug adapters.

LANGUAGE: Spanish is the primary language spoken in Peru; English is spoken by our local guides and agents in addition to the boat’s expedition staff.

TIME: The time zone of Peru is Peru Time (PET) and is standard all year. For Amazon River cruises departing in January and February, PET is the same as Eastern Standard Time (EST). Trips departing after day light savings time goes into effect will be one hour ahead of Eastern Daylight Time (EDT).

HEALTH: Those passengers who are not fit for a cruise, including those with physical disabilities that affect mobility and balance, heart or immune deficiencies, or other conditions associated with poor health, are advised not to join the cruise. A serious health emergency may result in an air evacuation, which will come at considerable expense to you. **Comprehensive optional insurance, including coverage for medical evacuation (REQUIRED), can be purchased with your trip cancellation policy. Please consult your insurance agent or existing policy, if in effect, for the terms and limitations of your existing coverage. Please refer to the section on Trip Cancellation Insurance.**

As of this writing (September 2020), no major shots or inoculations are required for entry into Peru; however, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends vaccination or prophylaxis against a variety of preventable diseases, including: **1) Routine Vaccinations / 2) Yellow Fever / 3) Malaria.**

- 1) **Routine Vaccinations** (if you are not up-to-date), which are measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine; diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) vaccine; and poliovirus vaccine (boosters for adult travelers who have received a primary series with either inactivated poliovirus vaccine (IPV) or oral polio vaccine (OPV); they should receive another dose of IPV before departure). You should also be up-to-date with your **Hepatitis A**, or Immune Globulin (IG), **Hepatitis B** and **Typhoid** vaccinations. Note that a combined hepatitis A/B vaccination is now available.
- 2) **Yellow Fever** is a viral disease transmitted between humans by a mosquito. It is a very rare cause of illness in travelers, in part because of the precautions taken by affected countries. In Peru it is recommended for all travelers visiting lowland/jungle areas east of the Andes, or travelers arriving from any country where Yellow Fever is endemic. It is not recommended for those whose travels will be limited to Lima on the coast or highland areas such as Cuzco and Machu Picchu. The yellow fever vaccine is a live virus vaccine which has been in use for several decades. A single dose confers immunity for ten years or more if you are not continually exposed. Adults and children over nine months can take this vaccine. The vaccine is not recommended for certain types of travelers, including pregnant women, persons hypersensitive to eggs, or persons suffering from a condition related to HIV/AIDS. Your doctor can help you make the best decision about the vaccine.
- 3) **Malaria** is a protozoan transmitted between humans by a mosquito. Malaria has been confirmed in Peru including the chloroquine-resistant strain in rural areas. Travelers to most places in Peru lying below 6,600 feet, except the Lima area, are advised to take anti-malarial medication. To reduce the risk of contracting this disease, travelers are strongly urged to take one of the following antimalarial drugs (brand names in parentheses): mefloquine (Lariam), doxycycline, or atovaquone/proguanil (Malarone). Some travelers may experience serious side effects from antimalarial drugs; consult with your physician to determine the best preventative medication. These medications are available by prescription only. Please consult your physician or local travel clinic for recommendations. Please see the **Biting Insects** section below regarding bite prevention.

If you are taking prescription medication or over-the-counter medicine, be sure to bring an ample supply that will allow you to get through the tour safely. Please consult your physician as necessary. Remember to pack all medication in your carry-on baggage, preferably in original containers or packaging. As airline baggage restrictions can change without warning, please check with your airline for procedures for packing medication.

COVID-19: The world has been in the grip of a pandemic since early 2020, a result of the uncontrolled spread of SARS-CoV-2, the novel coronavirus that causes the illness COVID-19. COVID-19 is transmitted through person-to-person contact, almost always through inhaling respiratory aerosols or droplets exuded from an infected person. Common signs of COVID-19 illness include fever or chills, fatigue, shortness of breath, cough, loss of taste or smell, and more. Based on what is known about the disease, COVID-19 is far more serious than seasonal flu. Few places in the world have been unaffected. The impact on travel has been substantial, as demonstrated by the fact that VENT did not operate a tour between late March 2020 and late April 2021. The development and deployment of COVID-19 vaccines, particularly in the United States, has allowed VENT to return to tour operations. We emphasize that our number one priority is the health and safety of our customers and employees. **With this in mind, VENT instituted a COVID-19 vaccination requirement.** All tour participants and tour leaders must be fully vaccinated in order to travel with us while we are still in a declared public health emergency. In accordance with the latest guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), full vaccination is defined as an individual being 14 days beyond having received the required amount of vaccine for reaching full immunity to the degree specific vaccines confer. In the United States, so far, this means either the two-shot sequence for the Moderna or Pfizer vaccines or the one-shot Johnson & Johnson vaccine. Proof of vaccination must be provided to our office at least one week before the start of the tour and kept with you while on the tour. Because the world is a very different place than it was before the pandemic, we've made a number of important adjustments to our processes to ensure that our tours can operate as safely as possible. Please visit the **Coronavirus Travel Update** page of our website <https://ventbird.com/covid-19>, where you may view our **COVID-19 Protocols for VENT Tours** document, which details the guidance VENT will follow in the operation of its tours in the time of pandemic. Our decision and policy are firmly rooted in the latest CDC guidance regarding recommendations for avoiding COVID-19. As we move forward, VENT will continue to follow the latest information from the CDC and will update our policy accordingly. Please visit the CDC website for the most up to date information about COVID-19 and associated guidance for proper health and hygiene: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>.

In addition to your physician, a good source of general health information for travelers is the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, which operates a 24-hour recorded Travelers' Information Line (800) CDC-INFO (800-232-4636). You can check the CDC website at <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>. Canadian citizens should check the website of the Public Health Agency of Canada: www.canada.ca/en/public-health.html (click on Travel Health).

Sun Exposure – The sun's ultraviolet rays are dangerous under prolonged exposure (sometimes only a matter of minutes). Anytime you are outdoors you will want to protect your skin, including your lips, eyes, nose, and ears. Severe sunburn is potentially very painful and will affect your level of enjoyment. Always protect yourself when outdoors and be sure to bring an ample supply of high SPF sunscreen and lip balm. We strongly recommend the use of ultra-violet blocking, polarized sunglasses.

Biting Insects – Mosquitoes occur along the Amazon River and can be numerous, particularly around the forest. To protect you from being bitten, we recommend wearing long-sleeved shirts, pants, and a hat when in the field, particularly between the late afternoon and cooler morning hours. If your cabin has an open balcony, please keep windows closed while you sleep, and make sure that your insect repellent contains DEET (we strongly recommend that you bring the stick one and avoid using spray types). Repellent can be applied to exposed skin and/or clothing. Clothing (two sets) sprayed with Permethrin is another option (pre-treated or you can treat yourself).

A Note About Chiggers: This tour visits a couple of areas where chiggers are known to occur, mainly around villages and settlements along the Amazon. Nonetheless, the chances for getting chigger bites in our cruise are minimal since we remain in trails when unloading the skiffs. Chiggers are tiny parasitic mites found in most warm

weather areas of the southern United States and the world's tropics. They are especially numerous in grassy areas, where, in the immature stage, they attach themselves to other animals or humans who make contact with the grass as they pass by. Chiggers do not suck blood and the majority of the world's species do not carry disease. They do feed on bodily fluids, however, through a process in which a digestive enzyme is produced by the chigger which essentially liquefies the skin around the area where the chigger is attached. The chigger is not usually attached to the skin for more than a few hours before it either falls off or is knocked off. Our bodies respond by producing a hardened area as a defense against the chigger's digestive enzyme. Though the chigger may be long gone, it is the presence of the hardened area, and the body's natural process of reabsorbing it that typically causes intense itching, often lasting for a week or more. Chiggers like to attach themselves to areas of thin skin, like around the ankles, beltline, undergarment lines, knees, and elbows.

Chiggers can be avoided by following these procedures:

- Avoid walking, or standing in particular, in areas dominated by grass. These areas are where one is most likely to encounter chiggers.
- Tuck your pants into your socks to avoid direct skin-to-grass contact. Chiggers can find their way through clothing, but this is a standard and effective prevention technique commonly employed by many.
- Apply a cream-style insect repellent, such as "Cutters" to your body from the waist down BEFORE putting on your clothing.
- Spray your pants and socks with a spray repellent such as "Cutters" or "Off." Repellents with high concentrations of DEET (70-100%) are most effective (must do prior to the cruise). You do not need to apply these to your skin, only to clothing. (Be careful as DEET will damage plastics and lens coatings). Repel Permanone is an odorless aerosol insecticide that offers perhaps the best defense against chiggers. It is available at various outdoor stores and can easily be found online. It should only be applied to clothes and allowed to dry before you dress. Never apply Permanone directly to the skin. Permethrin is known to be a highly toxic chemical to insects. It is the active ingredient in Permanone, but is present in a small amount (0.5%).
- Powdered sulfur applied to waist, bottoms of pants, sock and boots is also effective at repelling chiggers. However, be warned that clothes will retain the sulfur odor for several washings.
- Shower at the end of each day in the field. Use a washcloth to vigorously rub your legs, feet, and ankles.

By following these methods, you should be able to avoid all chigger bites, as well as tick bites. If, however, you are bitten by chiggers anyway, you can reduce or eliminate the symptoms by applying benzocaine or hydrocortisone creams, calamine lotion, After Bite, or any number of anti-itch products.

DEPARTURE TAX: At present, the international departure tax is about \$35. For travelers who purchased their air tickets from major U.S. carriers, the tax should be included in the cost of the ticket. We recommend that you keep some extra cash handy when checking in for your flight.

SUGGESTED READING: A number of traditional booksellers and online stores list excellent inventories of field guides and other natural history resources that will help prepare you for this tour. We recommend www.amazon.com which has a wide selection; www.buteobooks.com and www.nhbs.com which specialize in ornithology and natural history books; and www.abebooks.com for out-of-print and hard-to-find titles.

AMAZON CRUISE

BIRDS – ESSENTIAL:

Schulenberg, T. S., D. F. Stotz, D. F. Lane, J. P. O'Neill, & T. A. Parker III. *Birds of Peru*. 2010. Revised and updated edition. Princeton University Press. Long in preparation this up-to-date guide is now the essential field guide for all birders visiting Peru. Relatively compact (but remember, there are almost 1800 species in this book) although not as small or lightweight as field guides to North America and Europe.

Hilty, Steven. *Birds of Tropical America: A Watcher's Introduction to Behavior, Breeding and Diversity*. University of Texas Press, 2005. Highly recommended for background information on how things work

in bird communities in tropical latitudes; topics include diversity of birds, hummingbird communities; mixed species flocks; antbirds and army ants; colorfulness, song structure in relation to environments, and much more.

BIRDS – APP’S:

Schulenberg, T. S., D. F. Stotz, D. F. Lane, J. P. O’Neill, & T. A. Parker III. *Birds of Peru*. Birdeyes app. As of March 2018, available for iPhone only.

Merlin. Cornell Lab of Ornithology. An incredible source of photo, information and voice of several birds. Once the app is downloaded, go to the packs and download the ones for Colombia and Peru. If there is an Amazon pack available (it was in trial by Jan 2020), go ahead and download it.

eBird. Cornell Lab of Ornithology. The largest citizen science ever, this app allows the user to compile its bird observations in a easy way. Once downloaded, a username must be created with a password.

Bird Call Xeno. This app gives you access to one of the largest online bird libraries in the world. Provided that your phone has an active data service, you’ll be able to listen to the bird recordings uploaded in the site.

BIRD VOICES:

English, Peter and Theodore A. Parker III. *Birds of Eastern Ecuador*. Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, 1992. <http://birds.cornell.edu/LNS/CommercialProductns/csamerica/eastecuador.htm>.

Parker III, Theodore A. *Voices of the Peruvian Rainforest*. Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. <http://birds.cornell.edu/LNS/CommercialProductns/csamerica/perurain.htm>.

Schulenberg, T., C. Marantz, and P. English. *Voices of Amazonian Birds. Vols. 1 - 3*. CD. Library of Natural Sounds, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, 2000. <http://birds.cornell.edu/LNS/CommercialProductns/international/amazonvol1.html>.

Schulenberg, T., *Voices of Andean Birds. Vols. 1 - 2*. CD. Library of Natural Sounds, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY. <http://birds.cornell.edu/LNS/CommercialProductns/international/andeanvol1.html>.

Xeno-canto. <https://www.xeno-canto.org/> This website offers an impressive collection of recordings made by thousands of contributors.

GENERAL TOPICS:

Forsyth, Adrian, & Ken Miyata. 1984. *Tropical Nature*. Life & Death in the Rain Forests of Central and South America. Scribners Sons, New York. Does not deal much with birds but is a fantastic introduction to all kinds of topics relating to tropical wildlife including bugs, frogs, plant strategies, bot flies, and much more. Extraordinarily well written, a classic, and a book that ought to be read by anyone contemplating a visit to the American tropics.

Goulding, Michael, et al. *Floods of Fortune. Ecology and Economy Along the Amazon*. Columbia University Press, 1996. The book, on the present status of the river, enables the reader to grasp the issues and understand the immense devastation the Amazon Region has undergone—and the global implications of that destruction. Beautiful photographs. Highly recommended.

Grann, David. 2010. *The Lost City of Z: A tale of deadly obsession in the Amazon*. Doubleday.

Hemming, John. 2008. *Tree of Rivers: The story of the Amazon*. Thames & Hudson. Available as pdf in the App Store.

Kricher, John C. *The New Neotropical Companion*. 2017. Princeton University Press. An introduction to the animals, plants and ecosystems of the New World Tropics. Recommended as a general, broad-based introduction to plants and animals of Amazonia.

Insight Guide. *Amazon Wildlife*. (Geoffrey, E. ed.). APA Publications, 2002. An illustrated guide to the region and its wildlife. Covers biogeography, habitats, animal groups, and conservation.

Pearson, David L., L. Beletsky, and P. Barrett. *Peru: The Traveler’s Wildlife Guide*. (Paperback; 1st American ed.) Interlink Books, 2004. Covers a wide range of topics from ecotourism in Amazonia to geography, habitats, parks, reserves, ecology, and natural history. Nice introductory sections (well-illustrated) on amphibians, reptiles, birds, mammals, insects, and other arthropods. Excellent introductory book on Amazonian with especially good illustrations of more common wildlife.

FURTHER READING ON BIRDS, MAMMALS, REPTILES, & AMPHIBIANS:

- Bartlett, R. D., and P. Bartlett. *Reptiles and Amphibians of the Amazon*. 2003. Guide to 250 more commonly found snakes, lizards, turtles, frogs, and salamanders of the Amazon basin.
- Castner, J. L., S. L. Timme, and J. A. Duke. *A Field Guide to Medicinal and Useful Plants of the Upper Amazon*. 1998. A photographic guide to identification of commoner plants with practical uses in the upper Amazonian basin forest.
- Emmons, Louise and François Feer. *Neotropical Rainforest Mammals: A Field Guide*. University of Chicago Press, 1997. A color-illustrated field guide to the mammals of the Neotropics.
- Gentry, Al. *A Field Guide to the Families and Genera of Woody Plants of Northwest South America*. University of Chicago Press, 1996. A keyed reference to the plant genera of Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. Illustrated with black-and-white sketches. The only book of its kind on plant identification of the region, but not always easy to use.
- Henderson, Andrew et al. *Field Guide to the Palms of the Americas*. Princeton University Press, 1995. Valqui, T. 2004. Where to Watch Birds in Peru. www.granperu.com/birdwatchingbook. A very helpful book for birders interesting in exploring Peru. Published in Peru.

MACHU PICCHU

BIRDS:

- Schulenberg, T. S., D. F. Stotz, D. F. Lane, J. P. O'Neill, & T. A. Parker III. *Birds of Peru*. 2007. Princeton University Press. Excellent for Machu Picchu and perhaps more difficult to use than the Walker book listed below because it contains so many more birds, but this book has better illustrations and does have fine maps and a concise text.
- Walker, B. *A Field Guide to the Birds of Machu Picchu*. 2001. Peruvian National Trust for Parks and Protected Areas (PROFONANPE). Lima, Peru. This is the recommended book for Machu Picchu although it may be difficult to find. Advantageous because of its relatively small size and that it covers the subset of birds found in the Machu Picchu area. It illustrates all of the birds we will see on our trip and has a useful text.

GENERAL: (this is but a sample of the many books available on the Machu Picchu area and Inca History)

- Beech, C. *Lonely Planet Peru*. Fifth Edition. 2004.
- Bingham, Hiram. *The Lost City of the Incas*. Sterling Publications, 2002.
- Thomson, H. *The White Rock. An Exploration of the Inca Heartland*. Woodstock, 2001.
- Wright, R. M. and A. V. Zegarra. *The Machu Picchu Guidebook: A Self-Guided Tour*. 2004.

TIPPING: Tipping (restaurant staff, porters, drivers, local guides) is included on VENT tours. However, if you feel one or both of your VENT leaders or any local guides have given you exceptional service, it is entirely appropriate to tip. We emphasize that tips are not expected and are entirely optional. Tips should be given directly to your tour leader; they should not be sent to the VENT office.

RESPONSIBILITY STATEMENT: Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, Inc., a Texas corporation, and/or its agents (together, "VENT") act only as agents for the participant in regard to travel, whether by railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, or airplane and assume no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity which may be occasioned either by reason of defect in any vehicle or for any reason whatsoever, or through the acts or default of any company or person engaged in conveying the participant or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. VENT accepts no responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in airfare or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, terrorism, or other causes. All such losses or expenses will be borne by the participant, as tour rates only provide for arrangements for the time stated.

VENT reserves the right (i) to substitute hotels of similar category, or the best reasonable substitution available under the circumstances, for those indicated and (ii) to make any changes in the itinerary that are deemed necessary by VENT or which are caused by third party transportation schedules (i.e. railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, airplane, etc.).

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VENT reserves the right to substitute leaders or guides on any tour. Where VENT, in its sole discretion, determines such substitution is necessary, it will notify tour participants.

VENT reserves the right to cancel any tour prior to departure with or without cause or good reason. See the VENT Cancellation & Refunds policy set forth above.

Tour prices are based on tariffs and exchange rates in effect on April 23, 2021, and are subject to adjustment in the event of any change thereto.

VENT reserves the right to decline any participant's Registration Form and/or refuse to allow any participant to participate in a tour as VENT deems reasonably necessary, in its sole discretion. VENT also reserves the right to remove any tour participant from any portion of a tour as VENT deems necessary, in its sole discretion, reasons for such removal include but are not limited to, medical needs, injury, illness, inability to meet physical demands of a tour, personality conflict or situations in which such removal is otherwise in the best interest of the tour, the tour group and/or such participant. A participant may also voluntarily depart from a tour. If a participant is removed from a tour or voluntarily departs from a tour, such participant will be responsible for any expenses associated with such removal or departure, including but not limited to, transportation, lodging, airfare and meals, and VENT will have no obligation to refund or reimburse any such removed or departed participant for any tour payments or deposits previously paid by such participant.

Baggage is carried at the participant's risk entirely. No airline company, its employees, agents and/or affiliates (the "**Airline**") is to be held responsible for any act, omission, or event during the time participants are not on board the Airline's aircraft. The participant ticket in use by any Airline, when issued, will constitute the sole contract between the Airline and the purchaser of the tickets and/or the participant. The services of any I.A.T.A.N. carrier may be used for VENT tours, and transportation within the United States may be provided by any member carrier of the Airlines Reporting Corporation.

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