



## **My Drift**

**Title: Peru**

**Written by: Jerry D. Petersen**

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**I have never been to Peru. In fact, I have never been to South America, Central America, and except for one lost night in Tijuana, I have never been to Mexico. So far in my many years of writing these articles, I have only written about something in South America twice, once about the Amazon River and once about the city of Rio de Janeiro in Brazil. I picked Peru because it is one of the oldest civilizations in the Americas and one of the six oldest in the world. The Inca Empire was the largest and most advanced state in pre-Colombian America. There are many things to learn about in Peru and it has many beautiful sights to visit. We will start off with some general information about Peru.**

**Peru, officially the Republic of Peru, is a country in western South America. It is bordered in the north by Ecuador and Colombia, in the east by Brazil, in the southeast by Bolivia, in the south by Chile, and in the south and west by the Pacific Ocean. Peru is a megadiverse country with habitats ranging from the arid plains of the Pacific coastal region in the west to the peaks of the Andes mountains extending from the north to the southeast of the country to the tropical Amazon Basin rainforest in the east with the Amazon River. Peru has a population of 33 million, and its capital and largest city is Lima. With an area of 496,225 square miles, Peru is the 19th largest country in the world, and the third largest in South America.**

**Peruvian territory was home to several ancient cultures. Ranging from the Norte Chico civilization starting in 3500 BCE, the oldest civilization in the**

**Americas and one of the five cradles of civilization, to the Inca Empire, the largest state in the pre-Columbian Americas, the territory now including Peru has one of the longest histories of civilization of any country, tracing its heritage back to the 10th millennia BCE.**

**The Spanish Empire conquered the region in the 16th century and established a viceroyalty that encompassed most of its South American territories, with its capital in Lima. Higher education started in the Americas with the official establishment of the National University of San Marcos in Lima in 1551. Peru formally proclaimed independence in 1821 and following the foreign military campaigns of José de San Martín and Simón Bolívar, and the decisive battle of Ayacucho, Peru completed its independence in 1824. In the ensuing years, the country enjoyed relative economic and political stability, which ended shortly before the War of the Pacific (1879–1884) with Chile. Throughout the 20th century, Peru endured armed territorial disputes, coups, social unrest, and internal conflicts, as well as periods of stability and economic upswing. In the 1990s, the country implemented a neoliberal economic model which is still in use to this day. Since then, Peru has experienced a constant economic growth and a decrease in inequality.**

**The sovereign state of Peru is a representative democratic republic divided into 25 regions. Peru is a developing country, ranking 82nd on the Human Development Index, with a high level of human development with an upper-middle income level and a poverty rate around 19 percent. It is one of the region's most prosperous economies with an average growth rate of 5.9% and it has one of the world's fastest industrial growth rates at an average of 9.6%. Its main economic activities include mining, manufacturing, agriculture, and fishing; along with other growing sectors such as telecommunications and biotechnology.**

**Peru has a diverse ethnic population which includes Amerindians, Europeans, Africans, and Asians. The main spoken language is Spanish, although a significant number of Peruvians speak Quechua languages, Aymara, or other Indigenous languages. This mixture of cultural traditions has resulted in a wide diversity of expressions in fields such as art, cuisine, literature, and music.**

**The primary religion in Peru is Christianity with over 94%. The currency code is PEN. The name is a return to that of Peru's historic currency, the SOL was in use from the 19th century to 1985. \$1 US dollar = about 4 PEN.**



**PERU**



**Lima**



**Maps of Peru**

## **Lima**

Look at the top header picture on page 1. Lima sits high enough above the cliffs that “global warming” and the ocean raising will not be flooding its streets.

Lima, the capital of Peru, is located in the valleys of the Chillón, Rímac and Lurín Rivers, in the desert zone of the central coastal part of the country, overlooking the Pacific Ocean. Together with the seaport of Callao, it forms a contiguous urban area known as the Lima Metropolitan Area. With a population of 11 million, Lima is the third largest city in the Americas after São Paulo with over 22 million and Mexico City with almost 22 million people.



**Lima City Center**

**Lima was named by natives in the agricultural region known by native Peruvians as Limaq. It became the capital and most important city in the Viceroyalty of Peru. Following the Peruvian War of Independence, it became the capital of Peru. Around one-third of the national population lives in the metropolitan area.**

**Lima is home to one of the oldest institutions of higher learning in the New World. The National University of San Marcos, founded on 12 May 1551, during the Viceroyalty of Peru, is the first officially established and the oldest continuously functioning university in the Americas.**

**Nowadays the city is considered to be the political, cultural, financial and commercial center of the country. Internationally, it is one of the thirty most populated urban agglomerations in the world. Due to its geostrategic importance, it has been defined as a "beta" city.**

**Jurisdictionally, the metropolis extends mainly within the province of Lima and in a smaller portion, to the west, within the Constitutional Province of Callao, where the seaport and the Jorge Chávez Airport are located.**

**In October 2013, Lima was chosen to host the 2019 Pan American Games; these games were held at venues in and around Lima and were the largest sporting event ever hosted by the country. It also hosted the APEC Meetings of 2008 and 2016, the Annual Meetings of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank Group in October 2015, the United Nations Climate Change Conference in December 2014, and the Miss Universe 1982 contest.**

### **Bars and Nightlife**



**Lima Barranco Bar Area**



**By all accounts, Lima nightlife is a lot of fun. Some of the cool places to hang out after dark are located in the districts of Miraflores and Barranco. La Noche de Barranco just might be the best place to see live music in Lima. You'll see some of Peru's most well-known bands grace the stage. Warning – don't start too early because local Peruvians are late starting people, and the nightlife doesn't get lively until about 11pm.**



**La Noche de Barranco**



**Central Restaurant**

### **World Famous Food**

**Lima is famous for its food and of all the things to do in Peru, eating might very well be #1! Lima boasts about being on the list of the World's 10 Best Restaurants with Michelin-star restaurants, like #5 Central and #10 Maido.**



**Central Restaurante is a restaurant located in the Barranco District, Lima, Peru. Central Restaurante is the flagship restaurant of Peruvian chef, Virgilio Martínez Véliz, and serves as his workshop in the investigation and integration of indigenous Peruvian ingredients into the restaurant's menu.**



**A favorite dish served at Maido Restaurant is called Nikkei where chef Mitsuharu 'Micha' Tsumura fuses Japanese and Peruvian cuisine to brilliant effect. Nikkei translates to a welcoming spot where fresh fish and citrus-packed sauces reign supreme.**



**Ceviche is Peru's most popular and world-famous dish. It was perfected in Lima and is one of the most delicious dishes to order. It's made with fresh fish caught every morning that's then marinated in limes and rocoto peppers, served with onions, corn, and sweet potatoes.**



**Pilsen Callao is the most popular beer in Peru.**

### **Beaches and Surfing**



**Popular Beach in Lima**



**Best Beaches are on North Coast**



**Peru is one of the best countries in the world to score some epic surf. With thousands of miles of coastline and year-round swells, you'll always find somewhere in Peru to surf. While there are some crowds – especially in Lima and Mancora – with so much coastline, you're bound find some empty lineups.**



## Amazon Rainforest

The Amazon rainforest is a moist broadleaf tropical rainforest that covers most of the Amazon basin of South America. This basin encompasses 2,700,000 square miles. This region includes territory belonging to nine nations. The majority of the forest is contained within Brazil, with 60% of the rainforest, followed by Peru with 13%, Colombia with 10%, and with minor amounts in Bolivia, Ecuador, French Guiana, Guyana, Suriname, and Venezuela. The Amazon represents over half of the planet's remaining rainforests and comprises the largest and most biodiverse tract of tropical rainforest in the world.



When we think of the Amazon Rainforest, Brazil automatically comes to mind. Yet it is a little-known fact that its birthplace is actually the Peruvian region of the Amazon river and rainforest. This section of the Amazon is the most untouched, bearing a large concentration of wildlife and flora in the vast protected area of Pacaya-Samiria National Reserve.



Peru is the birthplace of the mighty Amazon River

**Wildlife experts believe Peru is the best country for exploring the Amazon. A staggering one in 10 known species on the planet can be found in the Amazon rainforest, including 40,000 plant species, 3,000 fish species, 1,500 bird species, and 370 types of reptiles. This area has also become the last remaining habitat where visitors have the opportunity to spot some of the world's endangered species in the wild, such as jaguars, pink river dolphins, and harpy eagles.**



**Jaguar**



**Pink River Dolphin**

### **Mountains**

**Peru has many tall and interesting mountains. After all, the Andes Mountains are the longest continental mountain range in the world, forming a continuous highland along the western edge of South America. The range is 4,350 miles long, 124 to 435 miles wide and has an average height of about 13,123 feet. The Andes extend from north to south through seven South American countries: Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Chile, and Argentina.**

#### **The Tallest Mountains in Peru**



**Huascarán (22,205 feet)**



**Yerupajá (21,768 feet)**



## **The Most Interesting Mountains in Peru**



### **The Incredible Ausangate Rainbow Mountains of Peru**

**One of the most magnificent geologic features in the world is the Ausangate Rainbow Mountain of the Peruvian Andes. The mountain sits at an elevation of 17,060 feet and is located approximately 63 miles southeast of the major city of Cusco. The mountain is striped with colors ranging from turquoise to lavender to maroon and gold. However, this "painted mountain" is notoriously difficult to find and get to, requiring several days of hiking to reach its peak deep within the Andes. In order to get to the trailhead (start of the mountain), it's a three-hour drive from Cusco.**

**The painted Ausangate Rainbow Mountain is also considered to be holy and believed to be the deity of Cusco by local Peruvians. It is a site of daily worship and offerings by local citizens. Every year thousands of Quechua pilgrims visit the Mountain for the Star Snow festival which takes place a week before the Corpus Christi feast.**

### **The Huacachina Oasis**

**Huacachina is a desert oasis and tiny village just west of the city of Ica in southwestern Peru. At its center are the green waters of the Huacachina Lagoon, ringed by palm trees and thought to have therapeutic properties. The lagoon's shores are dotted with bars and clubs. Dune buggies run across the high, rolling sand dunes surrounding the village.**



## Chan Chan

During its heyday, about 600 years ago, Chan Chan, in northern Peru, was the largest city in the Americas and the largest adobe city on earth. Ten thousand structures, some with walls 30 feet high, were woven amid a maze of passageways and streets. Palaces and temples were decorated with elaborate friezes, some of which were hundreds of feet long. Chan Chan was fabulously wealthy, although it perennially lacked one precious resource: water. Today, however, Chan Chan is threatened by too much water, as torrential rains gradually wash away the nine-square-mile ancient city.



Chan Chan

Located near the Pacific coast city of Trujillo, Chan Chan was the capital of the Chimú civilization, which lasted from A.D. 850 to around 1470. The adobe metropolis was the seat of power for an empire that stretched 600 miles from just south of Ecuador down to central Peru. By the 15th century, as many as 60,000 people lived in Chan Chan—mostly workers who served an all-powerful



monarch, and privileged classes of highly skilled craftsmen and priests. The Chimú followed a strict hierarchy based on a belief that all men were not created equal. According to Chimú myth, the sun populated the world by creating three eggs: gold for the ruling elite, silver for their wives and copper for everybody else.

The city was established in one of the world's bleakest coastal deserts, where the average annual rainfall was less than a tenth of an inch. Still, Chan Chan's fields and gardens flourished, thanks to a sophisticated network of irrigation canals and wells. When a drought, coupled with movements in the earth's crust, apparently caused the underground water table to drop sometime around the year 1000, Chimú rulers devised a bold plan to divert water through a canal from the Chicama River 50 miles to the north.

The Chimú civilization was the "first true engineering society in the New World," says hydraulic engineer Charles Ortloff, who is based in the anthropology department of the University of Chicago. He points out that Chimú engineering methods were unknown in Europe and North America until the late 19th century. Although the Chimú had no written language for recording measurements or drafting detailed blueprints, they were somehow able to carefully survey and build their massive canal through difficult foothill terrain between two valleys. Ortloff believes the canal builders must have been thwarted by the shifting earth. Around 1300, they apparently gave up on the project altogether.

Colca Canyon





**Colca Canyon, a river canyon in southern Peru famed as one of the world's deepest (up to 6,600 feet), is a well-known hiking destination. It's a habitat for the giant Andean condor, on view from overlooks like Cruz del Condor. The canyon landscape comprises a green valley and remote traditional villages with terraced agriculture that predates the Incas. Its Colca River is popular for rafting.**

### Cusco



**Cusco, a city in the Peruvian Andes, was once capital of the Inca Empire, and is now known for its archaeological remains and Spanish colonial architecture. Plaza de Armas is the central square in the old city, with arcades, carved wooden balconies and Incan wall ruins. The baroque Santo Domingo Convent was built on top of the Incan Temple of the Sun (Qoricancha) and has archaeological remains of Inca stonework.**

### Sacred Valley



**The Sacred Valley is a region in Peru's Andean highlands. Along with the nearby town of Cusco and the ancient city of Machu Picchu, it formed the heart of the Inca Empire. Stretching roughly 40 miles, it's an area of fertile farmland and Spanish colonial villages like Pisac and Ollantaytambo. Pisac is known for its Sunday handicraft market and hilltop Incan citadel.**

**Finally, the most famous and popular place in Peru - The ancient city of Machu Picchu.**



**Machu Picchu is a 15th-century Inca citadel, located in the Eastern Cordillera of southern Peru, on a 7,970-foot mountain ridge. It is located in the Machupicchu District within Urubamba Province above the Sacred Valley, which is 50 miles northwest of Cuzco. The Urubamba River flows past it, cutting through the Cordillera and creating a canyon with a tropical mountain climate.**

**Most archeologists believe that Machu Picchu was constructed as an estate for the Inca emperor Pachacuti (1438–1472). Often mistakenly referred to as the "Lost City of the Incas", it is the most familiar icon of Inca civilization. The Incas built the estate around 1450 but abandoned it a century later at the time of the Spanish conquest. Although known locally, it was not known to the Spanish during the colonial period and remained generally unknown to the outside world until American historian Hiram Bingham brought it to international attention in 1911.**

**Machu Picchu was built in the classical Inca style, with polished dry-stone walls. Its three primary structures are the Intihuatana, the Temple of the Sun, and the Room of the Three Windows. Most of the outlying buildings have been reconstructed in order to give tourists a better idea of how they originally appeared. By 1976, 30% of Machu Picchu had been restored and restoration continues today.**

**[Bigdrifter44@gmail.com](mailto:Bigdrifter44@gmail.com)**

**[Bigdrifter.com](http://Bigdrifter.com)**