

Background notes for walks with The Moving Mountains Project in Peru

Getting there: The usual way to travel from Australia to Lima, Peru's capital, is to fly via Auckland and Santiago de Chile or Buenos Aires. European flights often fly via Spain or the US, and many North American connections are via Los Angeles or Miami. Please arrive at the latest, the day before the trip commences. Please let us know your arrival flight number and time: we can meet you at the airport and can advise on pre-trip hotel bookings.

Travel insurance: Please have comprehensive travel insurance for the whole period of the trip, from the date you leave home to the date you return. Your travel agent can advise you. Prior to departing, we'll ask you to sign a form confirming you have this.

Fitness: This 170km trek is very demanding mainly because of the sustained high altitude – but a walker with good fitness, endurance, motivation and experience of multi-day trekking can achieve it enjoyably. Most of the walking is between 4000m and 4500m and the highest pass is 5050m. The route rarely descends below 4000m over the whole period of the trek and demands 6-8 hours of walking most days. To get the most out of the walk, participants need to have a high level of fitness and to have done some long multi-day hikes (5-7 days, 70+ km) as well as being happy with sleeping in tents and carrying a rucksack. Preparation for the hike should include an hour of vigorous, sustained aerobic exercise (eg: running, cycling, swimming) a minimum of 4 times a week. This must be high intensity exercise: you should be out of breath for the whole hour that you train. Also include some long day walks and weekend walks carrying a rucksack in your preparation. Practice climbing and descending steep slopes. The rule of thumb for any hike is the fitter you are, the more you're able to enjoy the experience. A detailed discussion on fitness is contained in the trip medical form, which can be downloaded [here](#). Please talk to us to ensure your experience and fitness preparation will be adequate to allow you to achieve this walk enjoyably.

What you need to carry: There are two possibilities here. You can either carry your own light rucksack (should weigh less than 15kg) containing your clothes, sleeping bag, camera and personal items, water and lunch; or carry just a light daypack with the gear you need through the day and let the pack donkeys carry remaining gear. If you bring your own tent, this can be carried by donkeys. Please discuss with us if you would prefer to have donkeys carry all your gear except a day pack.

Clothing requirements: Basic requirements are your usual, comfortable hiking boots and clothes, and a very warm - preferably down - jacket to wear at night. A very warm down sleeping bag and a light, comfortable sleeping mattress are also essential. See the trip Gear list [here](#).

Visas: Australian passport holders do not need visas to travel to Peru. There is usually an 8-hour stopover in Santiago de Chile en route to Lima, and if you wish to visit the city rather than remain in the airport, you have to pass through immigration. This incurs an entry fee of about \$70 for Australian passport holders. Other passport holders, please check requirements for citizens of your country, or ask your travel agent.

Vaccinations: There are several vaccinations that are necessary for travellers to developing countries like Peru. If you have been in a developing country in the last 10 years, you may have already have had the required vaccinations. The Moving Mountains Project walks [medical form](#) details the necessary vaccinations. Please visit your local travel health clinic with this form a minimum of 8 weeks before your trip's departure.

Staying healthy: The group will have a comprehensive first aid kit and the trip-coordinator has wilderness first aid training. Your travel health clinic will recommend a traveller's medical kit. We ask each walker to bring their own traveller's medical kit containing anti-diarrhoeal medicines and instructions on how to take them. Please also discuss with your doctor medicine to counteract the effects of high altitude, know how to take it and bring this in your kit. Please consult the The Moving Mountains Project walks [medical form](#) for further information.

Food & Water: In Lima the group will eat in good restaurants showcasing the excellent Peruvian cuisine. In Huaraz and Chiquian we will have tasty food in small guesthouses and restaurants. In the villages of Llamac, Huayllapa and Paillon walkers eat mostly as locals do: rice, potatoes and meat or fish perhaps with corn or tomatoes. On the hike itself, there are plenty of high-energy foods with two or three course dinners most nights, and sandwiches and sweet snacks during the day. It's important to drink clean water. You will be supplied with filtered and UV treated water each morning and this will be replenished during the day. Please bring a water bottle of at least 2 litres.

Accommodation: in Lima, Chiquian and Huaraz we stay in comfortable hotel rooms with ensuite bathrooms. In the villages the group stay in villagers' homes where possible, or camps in their compounds. There is no hot running water here and limited toilet facilities. On the trek itself, accommodation is in 2-man tents. There is a large cooking tent to congregate in each evening to socialize, help out with making the meal, and stay warm. There will be a toilet tent set up each night. Half way through the walk there is a chance to wash in warm water at natural hot springs.

Money: If you have a card with a Visa logo on it, you can access your account from many ATMs in Lima and Huaraz to obtain local currency. It is also a good idea to bring some US dollars to exchange. Travellers' Cheques are not widely accepted.

Language: Our local guides and arrieros are learning English, and will be keen to practice with you. They don't speak much English, though, so any Spanish words you have will be appreciated. Try to learn some Spanish before coming on the walk and bring a small notebook and pen to record words learnt along the way.