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# Lonely Planet: Peru, 8th Edition



## Synopsis

#1 best-selling guide to Peru\* Lonely Planet Peru is your passport to all the most relevant and up-to-date advice on what to see, what to skip, and what hidden discoveries await you. Take in the spectacle of Machu Picchu at sunrise, treat your taste buds to Lima's famous ceviche, or try to solve the mystery of the Nazca Lines; all with your trusted travel companion. Get to the heart of Peru and begin your journey now! Inside Lonely Planet Peru Travel Guide: Color maps and images throughout Highlights and itineraries show you the simplest way to tailor your trip to your own personal needs and interests Insider tips save you time and money and help you get around like a local, avoiding crowds and trouble spots Essential info at your fingertips - including hours of operation, phone numbers, websites, transit tips, and prices Honest reviews for all budgets - including eating, sleeping, sight-seeing, going out, shopping, and hidden gems that most guidebooks miss Cultural insights give you a richer and more rewarding travel experience - including customs, history, art, literature, religion, sports, landscapes, wildlife, food, drink, and more Over 70 color local maps Useful features - including Travel with Children, Trekking the Inca Trail, and Peru Outdoors Coverage of North Coast, Basin, Northern Highlands, Huaraz, the Cordilleras, Central Highlands, Lima, Cuzco, Sacred Valley, South Coast, Arequipa, Canyon Country, Lake Titicaca, and more The Perfect Choice: Lonely Planet Peru, our most comprehensive guide to Peru, is perfect for those planning to both explore the top sights and take the road less traveled. Looking for just the highlights of Peru? Check out Lonely Planet's Discover Peru, a photo-rich guide to the country's most popular attractions. Authors: Written and researched by Lonely Planet, Carolyn McCarthy, Carolina A Miranda, Kevin Raub, Brendan Sainsbury, and Luke Waterson. About Lonely Planet: Started in 1973, Lonely Planet has become the world's leading travel guide publisher with guidebooks to every destination on the planet, as well as an award-winning website, a suite of mobile and digital travel products, and a dedicated traveler community. Lonely Planet's mission is to enable curious travelers to experience the world and to truly get to the heart of the places they find themselves in. TripAdvisor Travelers' Choice Awards 2012 and 2013 winner in Favorite Travel Guide category 'Lonely Planet guides are, quite simply, like no other.' - New York Times 'Lonely Planet. It's on everyone's bookshelves; it's in every traveller's hands. It's on mobile phones. It's on the Internet. It's everywhere, and it's telling entire generations of people how to travel the world.' - Fairfax Media (Australia) \*Bestselling guide to Peru Source: Nielsen Bookscan. Australia, UK and USA, September 2011 to August 2012.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Carolyn McCarthy divined a future passion for exploration with her first word: door. Yearly childhood pilgrimages to her mother's native Quebec whetted an appetite for travel. After growing up restless in Massachusetts she made a break for Colorado, where she studied comparative literature and powder skiing while pursuing a BA from Colorado College. She later earned an MFA in creative writing from Emerson College and an ice-climbing certificate from a now-defunct Andean institute. Carolyn has been writing about the Americas since 1998, when she bumped across Mexico and South America solo by bus. Her writing is informed by a concern for the natural environment and the everyday experience of those off the grid and outside of modern norms. Between wanderings she has taught English to executives in Buenos Aires, worked with immigrant families in the western U.S. and guided trekking trips in Patagonia. On a good day, working for Lonely Planet means flying over the Beagle Channel or cruising the basin by canoe. A bad day means fleeing a bus fire, sampling the dodgy fare that won't get recommended or self-diagnosing intestinal bugs. Such misadventures make an occasional success all the sweeter. Her advice for those hitting the road: don't rush. Wandering can yield greater pleasures than racing to that so-called destination. And forget day packs. When tooling around pickpocket hot spots, it's best to tote your necessities in a plastic grocery bag. Carolyn has coauthored Lonely Planet's *Ecuador & the Galapagos* and *South America on a Shoestring*, and contributed to *Bluelist*, *The Middle of Nowhere* and *Travels with Lonely Planet* columns. A contributing editor to *South American Explorer*, Carolyn has written for the *Boston Globe* and Spanish language titles. A former Fulbright recipient, she is currently working under a grant from Banff Mountain Center to write about northern Patagonia's fading pioneer culture. She lives in southern Chile. You can follow her tracks at

Maybe we've been spoiled by traveling using Rick Steves so much in Europe, but we've tried other Lonely Planet books in the past and at least thought they were acceptable. This book was terrible. A few of the things that made me feel the need to review it (my first ever guidebook review, even though I have about 30 on the bookshelf):

1. Someone else mentioned this, but the restaurants are heavily skewed to international fare. Peru, and specifically Lima, is supposed to have the best cuisine in world, so why is LP suggesting so many pizza and Asian food places?
2. The number of hotels listed is outrageous. I don't remember the exact number, but I just remember there being a daunting task while we planned of trying to find a place to stay, especially in Lima. We had already decided on either Barranco or Miraflores, but had to go through and pare down the list to about 15 and then go check pricing and availability.
3. Others have said this but its worth repeating that the pricing in the book is way off base in some cases. I expect some differences, but in some cases the price of admission to sites was nearly double the price listed in the book.
4. We were trying to take a bus from Cusco to Puno, and the book focuses on the tourist buses (\$60), whereas we wanted an overnight bus (\$12). It mentioned a few companies, but we couldn't find any details about these companies online, and ended up having to wait until we arrived to book the seats, which was annoying.
5. There is really no way rating between sites. There might be 20 things listed in an area that you can see/do, but the book has no way of distinguishing between what is #1 and what is #20. For example in Cusco it says that Qorikancha is "the one site you must see in Cusco" but that description is buried about 6 pages into the Cusco section, well after other minor sites. This also popped up in central Lima where there were about 10 different churches listed.
6. We wanted to go to the Larco Museum in Lima, one of the top rated sites in the city and mentioned a couple of times in the book, including the section on what to do there in 2 days. The directions to the museum say to get on a bus in Miraflores "marked for Bolivar, and get off in the 1500 block of Bolivar street." What it doesn't say is that this is a 30 min or longer bus ride on a pretty scary public bus that takes about 17 turns and the only way you know you're on Bolivar is by watching the street signs. And you need to watch close to get off at the right spot. Needless to say we took a cab to get back from the museum. It is crazy that the book doesn't mention more about these logistics. Luckily I'd looked at a map and knew it was kinda far, but I could see someone thinking after 20 minutes and 10 turns and never seeing Bolivar that they were in the wrong place and just hopping off.
7. One of the highlights of Lima is supposed to be "walking around the gardens of Barranco." This was the only mention of gardens in Barranco that we found in the book - the Barranco section didn't say anything about

gardens at all.

Terrible ! just returned from Peru where I "tried" to use this book as a guide. Here are some lowlights : The book says Macchu Picchu and Huwyna Picchu tickets cannot be bought online ...wrong !!!! I bought both at the official website ( you may need a very basic knowledge of spanish ) Other low lights include .. non existent restaurants, shops, wrong timings, wrong phone numbers ... now some of these things could be forgiven had this not been the latest edition. We began our travel only 5 days after the book was released. I am a lonely planet fan but this one is the worst I have seen.

I recently returned from a 16-day trip to Peru. Before I left, I was delighted to see that Lonely Planet had a new edition of their Peru guidebook, as I frequently use their guides for my travel. This one was strongly disappointing. Although there were some good tips, much of the information was inaccurate or misleading at best. My trip involved travel to a rural area of the North Coast (not covered in the guidebook, which was completely expected and understandable; I was visiting my sister who volunteers there), Trujillo/Huanchaco, Lima, and Cusco/Sacred Valley. The overviews and basic information about each region were helpful. I enjoyed the self-guided tour of Lima's historical center, information about the Ollantaytambo ruins, and rough guidelines about taxi/transportation fares. Some of the most glaring inaccuracies and disappointments are as follows: 1) The book says tickets to Machu Picchu cannot be purchased online and must be done through a separate travel agency. Our entire travel group of nine people purchased tickets online before we left. The website is in Spanish, but it's easy to follow. As Machu Picchu is a must-see for many travelers, this erroneous information is highly surprising. 2) Buses to Machu Picchu from Aguas Calientes have nearly doubled from what was written in the guidebook. For a supposedly "updated" guidebook, I find it hard to believe that they weren't at least in a rough ballpark on this figure. 3) The Lima Cathedral is not free as mentioned in the guidebook (which says only the museum costs money). It costs 10 soles for entrance and has for a while, according to the worker I asked. 4) Numerous prices for entrance tickets, meals, etc. have changed drastically from what is listed in the guidebook. Some price fluctuation is understandable, but many of the prices were unbelievably different than listed. 5) The guidebook recommends procuring a guide for the Cusco Cathedral. However, a comprehensive audioguide is available for free with an entrance ticket. At least mentioning this would be helpful for budget travelers. 6) The Spanish phrasebook at the end is very skimpy. I would expand this section somewhat to include more relevant phrases for travelers.

And I certainly recommend that non-Spanish speakers bring a separate Spanish-English phrase book or dictionary; this is not going to get you very far.<sup>7</sup>) The restaurant recommendations were heavily skewed toward non-Peruvian cuisine in establishments run by expats. I understand that after traveling for a while, you might get a hankering for some Chinese food or Italian cuisine. However, the restaurant recommendations (sections for Cusco, Lima, and Huanchaco were especially guilty of this) had just a few Peruvian options scattered among American-style cafes, Chinese joints, and pizzerias. Perhaps this is my own personal prejudice, but I didn't travel to Peru for a "concoct-your-own-pizza" experience (Huanchaco) or "huevos rancheros to target the gringo palate" (Ollantaytambo). Tell me where to get some fantastic ceviche or the best aji de gallina. I found the *Â Moon Peru (Moon Handbooks)* *Â* book to be much more helpful with restaurant recommendations.<sup>8</sup>) I found the accommodations recommendations to be almost completely unhelpful. Lonely Planet seems to have lost its roots as a budget-minded travel guide in this regard. I ended up using TripAdvisor and HostelWorld reviews for all of my accommodations bookings. I should also note that I do not envy anyone who writes guidebooks for South American countries, as prices, hours, and regulations change regularly. I understand how difficult it must be to keep this type of guidebook up-to-date. However, the gross inaccuracies for a supposedly "new" guidebook were unacceptable. From reviews I have read, past editions have been disappointing as well. Lonely Planet needs to start from scratch and completely rehaul this guide. Overall, the Lonely Planet Peru guidebook is disappointing and full of inaccuracies. However, I didn't find any alternative guidebooks that completely met my needs. Combined with *Â Moon Peru (Moon Handbooks)*, this was adequate for my trip. My brother and sister-in-law, who also traveled with us, had some success with *Â The Rough Guide to Peru* *Â* but also found it inaccurate in many ways. Unfortunately, you'll probably have to cobble together information from two or three books (plus other online sources) to get the information you need for a fantastic trip to Peru.

My rating is about the electronic format, not the content (which was informative, though in cases out of date, as with restaurants having closed years prior). I read the Kindle version on my iPad, and the navigation capabilities were almost non-existent. There are infrequent links that summarize a chapter's contents, but in general you have to page one page at a time to find what you are looking for. And yes there is search, but that is not the proper way to find a section in the book. The main problem is that there is no comprehensive linked index or comprehensive table of contents that would allow you to skip directly to what you are looking for. A nightmare which makes this electronic version virtually unusable. You would think the editors never actually tried to use this format in

practice on a trip. Wake up Lonely Planet. Enter the digital age!

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