Amazon River Cruise

May 14-24, 2025

Tentative Itinerary*

May 14, 2025 - Welcome to Peru!

Upon arrival, transfer to a hotel in the quiet Miraflores district, Lima.

Night in San Agustin Exclusive, Lima.

May 15, 2025 - Pucusana and Pantanos de Villa

Full day of birding along the coast south of Lima, we take the Panamerican Highway to the fishing village of Pucusana (40 miles south of Lima) where we will board a small boat to bird the bay and coastal cliffs in search of Blackish Oystercatcher, Inca Terns, Humboldt Penguin, Peruvian Booby, Guanay and Red-legged Cormorants, Peruvian Pelicans, Surf Cinclodes and more. We continue our drive heading back north to the coastal marshes of Pantanos de Villa, a protected area within the city of Lima. We will have our packed lunch here, before exploring the park. After lunch we’ll explore the marshes looking for White-cheeked Pintail, White-tufted Grebe, Croaking Ground-Dove, Gray-hooded, Gray, Kelp and Belcher’s Gulls, Sandwich and Elegant Terns, Yellow-hooded Blackbird, Many-colored Rush-Tyrant and more. Afternoon drive back to Lima.

Night in San Agustin Exclusive, Lima.

May 16, 2025 - Lima, the City of the Kings

This morning we will check out of our hotel and load our bags for the day. Around 8:30am we will depart for the old Peruvian capital with its colonial mansions, the pre-inca Oracle of Huaca Pucllana, the main square and the San Francisco Monastery and catacombs. We’ll head over to the Larco Herrera Museum (The top museum in the area) which has a great collection of pre-inca and inca pieces nicely displayed. Lunch at a museum restaurant and mid-afternoon transfer to the airport for our night flight to Iquitos. Upon arrival, transfer to the hotel. (B, L)

Night in DoubleTree, Iquitos.
May 17, 2025 - Iquitos

Early morning birding at the Allpahuayo Mishana National Reserve and the protected white-sand forest, where we will be introduced to our first birds of the Amazon Basin and Loreto area. We'll watch for our first Yellow-headed Caracara, Roadside Hawk, Silver-beaked Tanager, Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture, Yellow-tufted Woodpecker, Lettered Aracari and the incredible Paradise Tanager and Striolated Manakin. One of our targets here is the secretive Ancient Antwren...though hard-to-find, we'll give it a try! The rest of the day we will talk about some of the European influenced buildings dating back to the short-lived 20th century rubber boom. This will include a visit to the Ayapua Iron Vessel park on the Iquitos malecon, we'll also bird the wetlands as we walk along the malecon.

Night in DoubleTree, Iquitos.

May 18-24, 2025 - Amazon River Cruise

Mid-morning transfer and two hour bus ride to Nauta Port where we will board the W/H La Perla. After we check into our rooms we'll have lunch in La Perla.

Lodging each night (March 13-18) in spacious rooms aboard the W/H La Perla.

Itinerary is subject to change based on river level, weather and possible Covid restrictions (especially land based activities).

May 18, 2025 - Boarding, Introductions, and Yanayacu de Yacapana

We may offer a morning excursion before breakfast, to visit another part of the malecon. Otherwise you can choose a relaxed morning before we check-out to meet our Amazon river guides and board the cruise ship M/V La Perla. After you settle into your room our journey will begin up the Marañon River to the confluences of the Marañon and Ucayali rivers where the majestic Amazon begins. The observation deck will be a great place to be, to enjoy the amazing panoramic view. During the next few days, we will be navigating the Marañon and Ucayali rivers, the confluence of the Amazon and the amazing tributaries that are full of wildlife.

After getting familiar with your new environment, you will be invited to the dining room for lunch, where you will experience delicious local flavors. After lunch, our river cruise guides will provide a general briefing about the trip itinerary, activities, routes, wildlife and vegetation. We will take our first off-boat afternoon excursion, we'll see one of the biggest water plants in the world, the Victoria's Regia or Royal Waterlily, while watching for various birds, lizards, sloths, and pink river dolphins. Some of the birds we hope to spot include Cocoi Heron, Black-collared Hawk, Horned Screamer, Large-billed and Yellow-billed Terns, Wattled Jacana, Pale-vented Pigeon, Short-tailed Swift, Fork-tailed Palm-Swift, Smooth-billed Ani and Swallow-winged Puffbird.

We’ll return for a welcome dinner and some live music!

May 19, 2025 - Amazonas river / Yarapa river / Ucayali river / Vista Alegre / Yanayacu de Yacapana

We’ll rise early this morning to enjoy the beautiful sunrise on the Amazon river, while Ringed and Amazon Kingfishers, Wattled Jacana, Great and Snowy Egrets and Cocoi Heron welcome the dawn. This morning we hope to see Blue-and-Yellow Macaws, Three-toed Sloth, Saddle-backed Tamarin, White-throated and Channel-billed Toucans, Black-tailed and Green-backed Trogons, and
White-winged Parrots among others.

Later this morning we will take an excursion to explore the tributary rivers, like the Yarapa where we can observe a variety of animals such as iguanas, and sloths. We will be back on the ship to enjoy lunch and the fresh Amazon air. In the afternoon, there will be a short geography lecture and a discussion about the species that we have been observing.

Afternoon exploration of the area in search of river island specialties. We’ll return for dinner and enjoy some live music. Evening on board the La Perlan enjoying the sounds of nature.

May 20, 2025 - Yarapa river– Piranha creek / Ucayali river / Marañon river/ Pacaya Samiria National Reserve

This morning we’ll take an excursion navigating the black waters of the Yarapa River, where we will have an unforgettable experience searching for wildlife, while enjoying the amazing scenery and sounds of the jungle.

We will continue sailing along the path of the Ucayali toward the confluence of the Marañon river, until we arrive at Piranha Creek, one of the first tributaries of the Pacaya Samiria National Reserve.

Pacaya Samiria National Reserve is a 5 million acre reserve established in 1982. This is the largest protected flooded forest in the Amazon, an area that experiences the highest water levels from December - May when 10”-12” of rain falls each month. It’s the second largest reserve in the Amazon after the Grão-Pará Ecological station in Brazil.

Later this morning we’ll go by skiff to explore Piranha creek then return to the ship to have lunch.

If time allows, we may go back out on the skiffs or take a trek in the jungle, where we will learn about medicinal plants while always on the watch for strange insects and more birds. We’ll return to the ship to enjoy dinner, then take time to relax and appreciate the beauty of the Peruvian Amazon.

May 21, 2025 - Pacaya Samiria National Reserve / Marañon river / Ucayali river / Pacaya Samiria National Reserve

Morning exploration of the Reserve in search of birds and mammals. During lunch, the ship will start to sail on the Marañon river. When we set anchor in the afternoon, we will visit the Pacaya Samiria National Reserve where there is a chance of seeing the endangered Arrau turtle (Podocnemis expansa), locally called the Charapa Turtle.

Back on the ship our naturalist guides will share more information to enrich the experiences of the day then enjoy some live music followed by an exquisite dinner.

May 22, 2025 - Yanayacu de Pucate / Pacaya Samiria Natural Reserve / San Regis

This morning, we will explore Yanayacu de Pucate in the Pacaya Samiria National Reserve. We hope to find some pink river dolphins as well as Blue-and-Yellow Macaws, White-throated and Channel-billed Toucans, and Greater Ani.

Later, we will take a boat ride, through Nauta Creek in Pacaya Samiria National Reserve. This area is known as the mirrored forest, where the forest is reflected in the glistening black water.
May 23, 2023 - San José de Zarapanga Shiriyucu / Pacaya Samiria National Reserve / Nauta

After breakfast, we head for the black water stream of San José de Zarapanga or Shiriyacu, to get us close to the forest via these tannin rich water. This will give us some opportunity so look for understory species such as wrens and antbirds as well as forest species like woodpeckers.

This afternoon we’ll take a boat excursion before sunset on the Amazon River, searching for caymans, frogs, tarantulas, snakes and anacondas, while enjoying the sounds of the forest. After dinner, our naturalist guides will bring out the entire ship crew to thank and show our appreciation. We may not have met everyone, as they have been busy “behind the scenes” creating your seamless Jungle Experience.

May 24, 2025 - Return to Iquitos, Flight to Lima, and Connecting Flights

After enjoying your breakfast on board the La Perla we will proceed with deboarding and the transfer by bus from the city of Nauta to Iquitos.

We will make a stop at the Rescue Center Amazon - Manatee (ACOBIA), where you will be able to see Manatees and a host of other rescued animals. We say goodbye to our guides and take a flight back to Lima.

Continue on the Magical Machu Picchu and Sacred Valley trip...connect to your return flights home or onward to your respective destination.

*Itinerary is subject to change, depending on water levels, weather and any health risks.