



# Bolivia

Bolivia is a country of great diversity. With the vibrant cultures and stunning scenery of the altiplano, the blinding whiteness of Salar de Uyuni, the lush vegetation of the lowlands and the amazing bio diversity of the Amazon Basin, Bolivia offers a wonderful 'off the beaten track' experience for the more adventurous traveller.

## At a glance

- Although Bolivia can be visited all year round, the lowlands and Amazon Basin in particular are best visited in the dry season (April to October). The altiplano can be extremely cold particularly at night from June to August.
- Amazing range of scenery including: Andes mountains, altiplano, lowlands, Amazon Basin
- Wide diversity of flora and fauna due to the great variations in altitude and climate
- Madidi National Park is thought to be the most bio diverse protected area in the world
- Colourful Andean culture
- Great 'off the beaten track' experience
- Must see sights include Lake Titicaca, the salt flats of Uyuni and the pre – Inca site of Tiwanaku

## → Getting there

Flights are available with British Airways / American Airlines from the UK to La Paz via Miami. There is also now an AeroSur flight 4 times a week from Madrid to Santa Cruz (with a London feeder to Madrid). Other routes involve flying to another South American city e.g. Lima or Sao Paulo (often with a stop in Europe en route), and taking a connecting flight to La Paz.

Land arrival points include Kasani on the Peruvian border (for crossing Lake Titicaca by hydrofoil from Copacabana) and Hito Cajon on the Chilean border (for crossing from San Pedro de Atacama to Uyuni).

See page 155 for suggested itineraries and prices.

Prices start from **£3,060** per person for a 10 night itinerary.

## Combinations

Bolivia has more than enough to hold a visitor's attention but it also combines well with a visit to **Peru** and / or **Chile**. Please see pages 22-29 for country combination itineraries and prices including the wonderful 'Journey through the Andes' that takes in the highlights of **Peru, Bolivia** and **Chile**.





## La Paz

Founded by the colonial Spanish, La Paz became the political capital of Bolivia in 1899 after a short civil war with Sucre, the constitutional capital from independence.

Built at 3,500m on the steep sides of the Choqueyapu River, overlooked by high mountains, (including the snow capped Mount Illimani at 6,439m), La Paz has a stunning setting. An ever expanding city, the area around the airport at 4,000m, known as El Alto, recently became a city in its own right.

La Paz is a city of contrasts. In the centre both old colonial and faceless commercial buildings provide the back drop to a vibrant and colourful street life, where markets and street trading are still an important feature of daily life. The 'Witches Market' provides a fascinating insight into the indigenous rituals and beliefs that have become part of urban life.

At the heart of the city centre is Plaza Murillo, the site of the Presidential Palace, the National Congress, the city's

cathedral and the National Art Gallery. Nearby is Calle Jaen, a wonderfully preserved narrow street of elegant colonial houses with wooden balconies, and home to 4 small cultural museums. The area around the Church of San Francisco is a more lively area, popular with local people, and the site of the famous 'Witches Market'. A few blocks further is the huge local open air market 'Mercado Buenos Aires'.

To the south of the city, beyond the sophisticated suburb of Sopacachi, lies the new upmarket suburb of Zona Sur some 500m lower than the centre of the city and a stark contrast to the sprawling new city of El Alto nearly 1000m higher. Beyond Zona Sur lies the area known as the Valley of the Moon, an area of fascinating rock and clay formations.

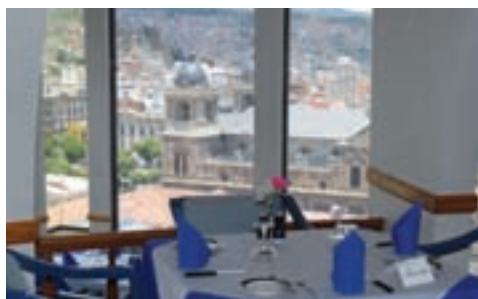
### Useful Notes

#### Tiwanaku

About an hour from La Paz lies the archaeological site of Tiwanaku. These remains of the capital of a vast pre-Inca empire comprising of nearly half of modern day Bolivia, part of southern Peru, nearly half of Chile and part of Argentina, are an integral part of Bolivian history. It is thought that this civilisation developed the characteristic architecture, stonework and agricultural techniques for which the Incas later became known. Although the site has yet to be fully excavated, the remains of a temple and a pyramid can be seen, as can some ancient monoliths. There is also an on site museum.

#### Altitude

La Paz is approximately 3,500m above sea level, so during your first couple of days, take care not to over exert yourself (particularly if you have flown in from low altitude), keep hydrated and eat only small amounts.



### Hotel Presidente

La Paz BB

This five star hotel is centrally located and is within easy reach of the historical and commercial districts of the city. There are 103 rooms with en suite facilities, a heated swimming pool, a Turkish and a dry sauna, a top floor restaurant with panoramic views of the city and a 'whiskeria' bar.

This is a great base from which to visit the city and is perfectly located within walking distance of the main square and the famous 'Mercado de Hechicheria' (Witches Market).



### El Rey Palace

Sopacachi, La Paz BB

Located in Sopacachi, a pleasant residential area, this comfortable hotel is near to El Prado, the main boulevard through La Paz, and only a short journey from the centre of the city. Away from the throngs of the centre, Sopacachi is an area known for its local restaurants and bars.

The 43 good sized, comfortable rooms all have en suite facilities, heating and air conditioning. Breakfast is served in the Art Deco style 'Rey Arturo' Restaurant. Evening drinks can be enjoyed in the small, characterful, subterranean El Pub Enrique VIII.





## Lake Titicaca

Straddling the border between Peru and Bolivia, Lake Titicaca is the highest navigable lake in the world and is extremely important in Andean history and culture. Its deep blue and crystal clear waters hold a mystical power for the Aymara, the indigenous people who along with the Quechua, still populate the Andes.

Said by the Incas to be the birthplace of humanity, the life-giving properties of the lake are not just founded in legend but also in science. The warmth retained by the water increases the fertility of the surrounding areas, an effect not lost on the Tiwanaku people – agricultural technology was one of the main reasons behind their power as a civilisation. Besides the obvious advantages for the local population, this makes the area particularly picturesque. Llamas graze contentedly at the shore and if the water wasn't so cold, or the weather so changeable, one could easily be tempted to swim.

There are a number of ways to spend time on the lake and a visit to Sun Island is highly recommended. This beautiful island played an intrinsic part in Inca legend. However Sun

Island was also an important religious shrine for the Tiwanaku culture even before it became revered by the Incas. The smaller Moon Island was also an important site for the Incas and there are more ruins here. The nearby Floating Urus – Iruitos Islands have restricted visiting. Less commercial than the floating islands near Puno, families here are being supported through a local sustainable tourism project.

The Cultural Centre at the Inca Utama hotel illustrates many aspects of Andean life such as weaving, farming and cultural beliefs. There is also an exhibition showing the work of the famous Limachi brothers who made the local traditional style reed boats for a number of long distance expeditions including Heyerdahl's crossing of the Atlantic.



### Posada del Inca – Sun Island

Sun Island, Lake Titicaca **IB**

This simple 20 room lodge sits in an elevated position with impressive views across the lake to the snowy peaks of the 'Cordillera Real', a chain of mountains stretching into the distance. The accommodation is decorated in typical Bolivian style with stone walls and wooden beams dominating the architecture, and all rooms have ensuite facilities. The beautifully kept garden courtyards and stonework combine with the views to make a stay at the Posada an unforgettable Andean experience. The pathway to the Posada is a steep track along the terraces (assistance with luggage is provided by llama). A mule is available if needed.



### Inca Utama Hotel

Huatajata, Lake Titicaca **HB**

Situated on the shore of Lake Titicaca, next to the hydrofoil pier, this 63 bedded hotel has wonderful views out over the water to the horizon. The Cultural Centre within its grounds gives a good insight into local life and on a clear night guests can also experience both the modern and Inca interpretation of the night skies using the telescope in the hotel observatory. For those wishing to relax there is a spa and massage centre with an emphasis on local therapies. The restaurant serves good local food while the first floor bar provides views to the lake. All the hotel rooms have ensuite facilities, telephone and heating.

### Useful Notes

#### Crossing Lake Titicaca

Our local representatives have a small fleet of hydrofoils, ranging in size, to transfer passengers across the lake. Although enclosed these boats travel at a slow speed so the views of the lake can be enjoyed. Leaving from Huatajata the hydrofoils call at the Urus-Iruitos Floating Islands, Moon Island, and Sun Island for lunch (where it is also possible to stay), before arriving in Copacabana mid-afternoon. The journey in the opposite direction is the same except the Urus-Iruitos Islands are not visited. There are also day excursions on the lake from Huatajata.





## Yungas

The comfortable warm climate of the semi-tropical Yungas is a welcome relief from the often harsh climate of the altiplano. It is a popular weekend and holiday spot for Bolivians especially those from La Paz, attracted by the climate, the stunning scenery and laid back atmosphere.

The journey from La Paz to the popular town of Coroico is dramatic, first crossing Le Cumbre Pass at 4,725m, surrounded by snow-covered peaks, before descending steeply through dense cloud forest to Coroico at 1760m.

The old road, known as 'the most dangerous road in the world', winds down along steep precipices, often through cloud. This route is now restricted to local traffic and is rapidly becoming a 'must do' bicycle route for adrenaline junkies. The new, wider road however winds its way slowly down through the same stunning scenery and still feels like an adventure.

Coroico is a picturesque town with a unique blend of Afro-Bolivian and indigenous cultures. Originally a gold mining town under the Spanish, Coroico today is an important market town for the local agricultural communities: fruit, coffee and coca are amongst the crops grown in this fertile area.

The town has a beautiful setting on a steep mountain side with magnificent views down to the river below and to the snowy peaks of the Cordillera Real in the distance. It is a wonderful place to spend a few days, especially if you enjoy walking.



### El Viejo Molino Hotel

Coroico **BB**

This lodge style hotel is located on the outskirts of Coroico. Most of the 20 rooms are off open corridors overlooking the gardens, and all have simple en suite facilities. The two junior suites and two suites are spacious with bigger bathrooms and can comfortably accommodate a couple or small family.

Breakfast is served in the dining room with large windows giving panoramic views to the mountains beyond the river below. Lunch and dinner can also be eaten here.

Within the gardens is a good sized heated swimming pool and a small gym with a jacuzzi and sauna (payable locally).





## The Bolivian Amazon & Chalalan Lodge

A short flight in a small plane through the mountain peaks of the Andes takes you to the lowlands and the jungle in just under an hour. The gateway to the Madidi National Park is Rurrenabaque, a sleepy town near the edge of the park, and it is often necessary to spend a night here in simple accommodation either on the way to or way back from Chalalan Lodge.

From Rurrenabaque you transfer by motorised canoe to the heart of this protected area and Chalalan Lodge. The transfer takes approximately five hours up river (less on the return) and is a great opportunity for spotting wildlife on the river bank. On arrival there is a 30 minute walk from the river to the lodge on Chalalan Lagoon.

Due to the huge variations in altitude within the Park there are numerous different habitats attracting a wide range of wildlife, and this area is thought to be one of the most bio diverse protected areas in the world. There are approximately 45,000 different plant species and over 1,000 tropical bird species. Animals that can be spotted include several species of monkey, capybara, a wide variety of birds including macaws, and with luck jaguar and tapir.



### Chalalan Jungle Lodge

Rio Tuichi, Madidi National Park

This lodge is notable for the fact that it is a truly community owned project, that is organised by and benefits the local community. Money raised from the lodge goes back to the Quechua – Tacana community of San José de Uchupiamonas 25km further up the Rio Tuichi, and has financed, amongst other things, a clinic there. All the staff come from the community and the English speaking guides learn English as part of their training. They have a wealth of

local knowledge that not only helps them spot and identify wildlife but also to explain the relevance of local flora and fauna to their culture. Accommodation is in comfortable, traditional style wooden cabins (with en suite facilities), and local meals are provided in the restaurant. Jungle packages included guided walks in small groups, canoe excursions on the lake and night walks. Longer walks and specialist activities can be requested in advance.



## Sucre

Sucre sits at an altitude of 2790m, and has a warm year round climate. It is an elegant city, with some beautiful colonial architecture, including many churches and interesting museums. Named after the first president of the Bolivian Republic, Sucre is host to 2 universities including Universidad de San Francisco dating from 1624AD, and has a lively local community.

The area around the main square, Plaza 25 de Mayo, has some fine buildings including the cathedral, and the palace intended for the president before Sucre (the constitutional capital) lost its capital status to La Paz. The square is a relaxed place where local people meet to chat under the trees, or drink in a local cafe.

Tarabuco market, a colourful local Sunday market 64km from Sucre, can also be visited for some insight into the rural surroundings and traditions. The area is particularly noted for the quality of its weaving. Local weaving can also be seen at Candelaria village (see below).



### Hostal de Su Merced

Sucre **BB**

Built around a central courtyard, this is a charming hotel. In keeping with the local surroundings, it is a converted 18th century house filled with antique furniture. The rooms are all en suite with a TV, and the sun terraces around the hotel have superb views of the city. It is walking distance from the main square where there is a good choice of restaurants and bars.



### Hotel Parador Santa Maria La Real

Sucre **BB**

This atmospheric, colonial style hotel is built around 2 internal courtyards. The 23 rooms include 2 junior suites and a luxurious Presidential Suite. All the rooms are individually styled and furnished with antiques. They all have a telephone, cable television and en suite facilities (most have a bath with a shower). Breakfast is served in the elegant dining room. There are local restaurants approximately 15 minutes walk away.

## Potosi

Potosi, located at 4000m, is a city that inspires mixed emotions. The town is dominated by 'Cerro Rico', (Rich Mountain), which has also dominated its history.

The mountain that was said to have provided 'a bridge of silver' from Potosi to Spain is still manually mined for minerals and is the mainstay of the local economy. Visitors to the mine are encouraged to take offerings of alcohol, coca leaves and dynamite for the miners. The spirit of the mountain 'El Tio' represented in a small shrine, can be seen in one of the caves near the mine entrance.

Potosi has little to show now for its rich heritage and historic importance apart from some grand buildings including Casa Nacional de Moneda (The Mint) where the mined silver was turned into ingots, and many churches.



### Hotel Cima Argentum

Potosi **BB**

Located 6 blocks from the main square, this friendly, courtyard style hotel has simple, comfortable rooms all with ensuite facilities. There are 9 standard rooms, and 9 suites with 2 bedrooms - great for families or friends travelling together. All the rooms have heating, a minibar, direct dial telephone and a safe.

Breakfast is served in the small restaurant on the ground floor. The restaurant is also open to the public, serving à la carte lunch and dinner.

### Useful Notes

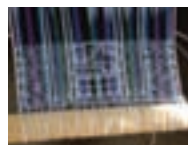
#### Hacienda Candelaria

A visit to Hacienda Candelaria gives a wonderful insight to both a rural community and life before the Land Reforms of 1952. It is possible to visit for the day or stay overnight in basic accommodation.



#### Tarabuco Market

Tarabuco's colourful Sunday market is famous throughout Bolivia for its beautiful woven items, and with care quality souvenirs can be purchased. However, this is a local event and local produce and hardware are also much in evidence.





## Salar de Uyuni

Salar de Uyuni are the largest salt flats in the world, covering over 10,000 square kilometres and reaching 150 kilometres in width at some points.

Originally a salt lake stranded inland by the collision of tectonic plates which formed the Andes, it is thought that the Salar de Uyuni dried out around 10,000 years ago. The feeling when standing in the middle of this salt desert is truly indescribable and will stay with you forever.

Salar de Uyuni can be visited all year round. The best time of year to visit these majestic salt flats is in June and July when the skies are clearer and the whole area is blindingly white. However, after the rains Salar de Uyuni becomes a giant mirror, which is also an amazing spectacle. Two or more day itineraries can be arranged in this unique area through the salt flats and desert, either ending back in Uyuni or in San Pedro de Atacama in Chile. Travel is by 4 x 4 vehicles.



### Luna Salada Hotel

Near Uyuni **HB**

The Luna Salada (Salt Moon) is a hotel built almost entirely from salt. The material makes good building blocks and although the outside has to be resurfaced after each rainy season, the building is extremely solid. Rooms are spacious with salt floors, en suite facilities, and additional individual heaters as well as the option of having a hot water bottle put in your bed whilst at dinner. Views to the salt flats from the hotel's slightly elevated position are spectacular.



### Tambo Aymara Hotel

Uyuni **BB**

Located in the small town of Uyuni, this simple new hotel is built in a traditional style. Its 14 rooms include 2 suites, all with en suite facilities, hairdryers and electric heaters. The owners are hoping to have phones and cable television in the rooms shortly.

Breakfast is served in the dining room off the central courtyard. It is only a short walk from here to local restaurants and shops.





## Salar de Uyuni to San Pedro de Atacama (Chile)

This exhilarating, classic, high altitude journey through the Andes and the altiplano takes you well off the beaten track. Travelling by 4 x 4 all terrain vehicle from the amazing, dazzling whiteness of the Salar de Uyuni through the colourful desert and lagoons of National Reserve Eduardo Avaroa, and over the mountains to Chile and San Pedro de Atacama, even seasoned travellers will be overwhelmed by the dramatic scenery.

The vast horizons, open skies, and, in many areas, the lack of roads enhance the feeling of isolation and adventure. Throughout the journey you are dependant on your driver's knowledge of the local area as they wend their way through the salt and then desert environments, and watching them navigate using only the mountains and the position of the sun is fascinating.

Along the route there are many interesting sites to visit with your guide. Isla Incawasi (also known as Fish Island) in the heart of Salar de Uyuni is famous for both impressive cacti and views over the salt lake. At the edge of the salt lake area are Galaxy Cave (lined by fossilised algae), and the Chullpas Tombs (also known as the Devil's Cave).





As the journey continues south the terrain becomes a combination of stone, volcanic rocks and colourful sand. The mountains marking the border with Chile accompany much of the route and include the active volcano Ollague, Bizarre stone formations such as 'the Stone Army' south of San Pedro de Quemez, 'the Stone Tree' in the Siloli Desert and 'the Dali Desert' also line the route, as do a series of lagoons supporting large colonies of flamingos and many other smaller wild birds as well as vicunas and llamas.

The most famous of these lagoons are the Laguna Colorada, which is bright red due to the algae that live in it, and Laguna Verde, which owes its colouring to the minerals suspended in its waters. Between these is the

Sol de Manana fumarole set at almost 5,000m amongst pools of boiling mud and sulphur.

The crossing point into Chile at Hito Cajon is a lonely hut at 4,350m, only overlooked by the dormant volcano Licancabur and with desert foxes as neighbours. Once through the formalities you are whisked off to the tarmac road that leads to San Pedro de Atacama and all this sleepy desert town has to offer. This journey can last 2, 3 or 4 days but the memories will last a lifetime.

For an example of this journey from Salar de Uyuni to San Pedro de Atacama please see our itinerary 'Journey Through The Andes' on page 27.



### Tayka de Piedra

San Pedro de Quemez **HB**

This simple 15 room lodge situated on the southern border of the Uyuni Salt Flats on the outskirts of the small ancient town of San Pedro de Quemez, is made from volcanic rock. It has stunning views over the altiplano and to the mountain behind.

The comfortable rooms have en suite facilities, including a shower and hot water, radiators and additional heating, and feather duvets.



### Tayka del Desierto

Ojos de Perdiz, Lipéz **HB**

Uniquely situated amongst the desert landscapes only overlooked by mountains marking the border with Chile, this simple 14 room lodge is a welcome oasis.

A little more rustic than Tayka de Piedra the rooms here also have en suite facilities, including a shower and hot water, radiators, additional heaters and feather duvets.

The night skies here are also an amazing sight.



## Suggested Itineraries

These itineraries are aimed at individual travellers (based on 2 sharing) rather than group departures, and are merely suggestions. Please feel free to ask us to help you to plan your own itinerary. For group quotations or single supplements please also contact us.

Throughout these itineraries accommodation is on a bed and breakfast basis in a standard room, and transfers and excursions (with English speaking guide) are private unless otherwise stated. Internal flights are also included as well as return international flights.

Bolivia is an interesting country with lots to offer: amazing scenery, interesting cultures and excellent wildlife. However travellers also spend time here to complement a trip to Peru or Chile. See pages 22-29 for suggested itineraries, including 'Journey Through The Andes', which includes the highlights of Peru, Bolivia & Chile.

### Essential Bolivia

10 NIGHTS

- La Paz 3 nights BB
- Sucre 2 nights BB
- Potosi 1 night BB
- Uyuni 1 night HB
- Uyuni to Oruro Train 1 night
- Huatajata 2 nights HB

**Day 1** Arrive at La Paz airport. Private transfer to El Rey Palace, Sopacachi for 2 night stay on bed and breakfast basis. Guaranteed early check-in. Rest of the day to acclimatise.

**Day 2** Morning Private guided tour of Tiwanaku pre – Inca archaeological site. Afternoon Private guided tour of La Paz.

**Day 3** Private transfer to La Paz airport for flight to Sucre. Private transfer to Hostal de Su Merced for a 2 night stay on a bed and breakfast basis. Private guided tour of Sucre including a choice of the local museums.

**Day 4** Private guided full day tour of Tarabuco (market Sunday only) and Hacienda Candelaria. Includes lunch.

**Day 5** Private transfer to Potosi. Check-in to Hotel Cima Argentum for a one night stay on a bed and breakfast basis. Private

guided tour of Potosi including Cerro Rico mine and lunch.

**Day 6** Private transfer to Uyuni (approx. 5 hours). Includes packed lunch. Check-in to Luna Salada for a one night stay on a half board basis. Opportunity to watch the sunset over the Salar de Uyuni from the terrace.

**Day 7** Full day private guided excursion to Salar de Uyuni, including Isla Incawasi when possible. Dinner and day use of Hotel Tambo Aymara. Late night private transfer to Uyuni train station for overnight Wara Wara del Sur Train to Oruro (reclining seats only).

**Day 8** Private transfer from Oruro to Huatajata (approx. 4 hours). Check-in to Inca Utama Hotel for a 2 night stay on a full board basis.

**Day 9** Group guided excursion by hydrofoil to Urus-Iruitos Floating Islands, Moon Island and Sun Island. Includes lunch.

**Day 10** Morning at leisure. Private transfer to La Paz. Check-in to El Rey Palace, Sopacachi for a one night stay on a bed and breakfast basis.

**Day 11** Early private transfer to La Paz airport for international flight.



### Discover Bolivia

19 NIGHTS

- La Paz 4 nights BB
- Rurrenabaque 1 nights HB
- Madidi National Park 3 nights FB
- Sucre 2 nights BB
- Potosi 2 night BB
- Uyuni 1 night HB
- San Pedro de Quemez 1 night FB
- Ojos de Perdiz 1 night FB
- Uyuni to Oruro Train 1 night
- Huatajata 2 nights HB

**Day 1** Arrive at La Paz airport. Private transfer to El Rey Palace, Sopacachi for 2 night stay on bed and breakfast basis. Guaranteed early check-in. Rest of the day to acclimatise.

**Day 2** Morning Private guided tour of Tiwanaku pre – Inca archaeological site. Afternoon Private guided tour of La Paz.

**Day 3** Private transfer to La Paz airport for flight to Rurrenabaque. Private transfer to hotel. Check-in to local hotel for 1 night on a half board basis.

**Day 4** Group guided transfer to Chalalan Jungle Lodge by motorised canoe and guided walk. Check-in to lodge for 3 night stay on a full board basis including group guided excursions.

**Day 5** Guided group jungle excursions.

**Day 6** Guided group jungle excursions.

**Day 7** Group guided transfer by motorised canoe to Rurrenabaque and minibus to airport for flight to La Paz. Private transfer to El Rey Palace for overnight stay on a bed and breakfast basis.

**Day 8** Private transfer to La Paz airport for flight to Sucre. Private transfer to Hostal de Su Merced for a 2 night stay on a bed and breakfast basis. Private guided tour of Sucre including a choice of the local museums.

**Day 9** Private guided full day tour of

Tarabuco (market Sunday only) and Hacienda Candelaria. Includes lunch.

**Day 10** Morning at leisure. Private transfer to Potosi. Check-in to Hotel Cima Argentum for two night stay on a bed and breakfast basis.

**Day 11** Private guided half day tour of Potosi including Cerro Rico mine and lunch.

**Day 12** Private transfer to Uyuni (approx. 5 hours). Includes packed lunch. Check-in to Luna Salada for 1 night stay on half board basis. Rest of afternoon at leisure.

**Day 13** 3 day / 2 night private guided tour of Salar de Uyuni and the Coloured Lakes on a full board basis. Day 1 includes visits to Colchani salt factories, Salar de Uyuni including Isla Incawasi, and Galaxia and Devil's Caves. Overnight at Lodge Tayka de Piedra, San Pedro de Quemez.

**Day 15** Day 2 includes visits to Canapa and Hedionda Lagoons. Overnight at Lodge Tayka del Desierto, Ojos de Perdiz.

**Day 16** Day 3 includes visits to the Coloured Lake, Sol de Manana fumeroles and Green Lake. Arrive back to Uyuni via San Cristobal. Dinner and use of room at Hotel Tambo Aymara. Check-in for overnight train to Oruro. Reclining seats only.

**Day 17** Arrive Ururo early morning. Private transfer to Huatajata. Check-in to Inca Utama Hotel for a 2 night stay on a full board basis.

**Day 18** Group guided excursion by hydrofoil to Urus-Iruitos Floating Islands, Moon Island and Sun Island.

**Day 19** Morning at leisure. Private transfer to La Paz. Check-in to El Rey Palace, Sopacachi for a one night stay on a bed and breakfast basis.

**Day 20** Early private transfer to La Paz airport for international flight.



#### Approximate driving times

La Paz - Coroico	3 hours
La Paz - Huatajata	1.5 hours
La Paz - Tiwanaku	1.5 hours
Oruro - La Paz	3 hours
Potosi - Uyuni	5 hours
Sucre - Candelaria	3.5 hours
Sucre - Potosi	3 hours
Sucre - Tarabuco	2 hours
Uyuni - Oruro (train)	6 hours

# Bolivia - A Few Guidelines

Bolivia has a lot to offer its visitors: stunning scenery, the friendliness of the people, amazing wildlife and a vibrant culture. However tourism here is still in its infancy and a visit to Bolivia should be seen as something of an adventure. That said our representatives in Bolivia have celebrated 50 years as a local agent and are proficient at providing exciting and enjoyable holidays for our clients. You will be well looked after throughout your holiday by their experienced team.

## Accommodation

Bolivia has some amazing and unusual properties, but luxury hotels can be thin on the ground. With the exception of a few hotels in the main cities most of the accommodation in Bolivia is of a lesser standard than accommodation with the same rating in Northern Europe. However, rather than detract from your holiday we feel that this will often enhance your overall experience as many of the properties are unique.

## Getting Around

Our holidays in Bolivia are based around private transfers and internal flights, with 4 x 4 vehicles used in the more remote areas. We do not offer self – drive itineraries in Bolivia as many of the roads out of the cities are gravel roads and driving can often be stressful. The internal flights are generally reliable.

## Excursions

The excursions that we arrange for you in Bolivia are generally private excursions with an English speaking guide, unless stated otherwise. In the jungle areas the excursions are usually in a small group with a guide provided by the lodge.

## Currency

The Bolivian currency is the Boliviano. There are 10 centavos to 1 Boliviano (BOB). However many hotels and larger restaurants and shops will accept payment in undamaged US dollars provided they are in small dominations. Most credit cards can also be used in larger establishments. Travellers cheques are not widely accepted outside the main cities. Also in the main cities many ATMs can be used to withdraw money. Further information about this service can be obtained from your card provider. At the time of going to press the exchange rate was £1 = 10.73 BOB, & USD\$1 = 6.87 BOB.

## Visas

Travellers with British passports do not need visas to enter Bolivia. However, please ensure your passport has at least six months to run from the date of arrival in the country. Please also take several photocopies of the main page of your passport with you. You are required to fill in a Tourist Card in duplicate on arrival. You retain a copy to be presented on departure. Please keep it in a safe place as non-production of the form may cause problems upon departure at the airport.

## Electronic System for Travel Authorisation (ESTA)

The USA government has enforced changes to its visa-waiver programme meaning travellers (including transit passengers) will be required to apply for authorisation to travel under the scheme before arriving at the airport. The changes, which came into effect in January 2009 will affect all passport holders from the 34 countries currently participating in the visa-waiver scheme, including UK passport holders. Further details will be supplied at the time of booking.

## Vaccinations and Health

Always check with your doctor / practise nurse for the latest health requirements no less than 4 weeks before departure. Typhoid, Tetanus, Polio and Hepatitis A vaccinations are usually advised, and depending on which regions being visited, an appropriate course of anti-malarial tablets. At present it is necessary to have a Yellow Fever Certificate to enter the Bolivian Amazon. Often these are also necessary to enter the Yungas. Please seek the latest advice on this before you travel. If travelling to the tropical areas the use of an effective mosquito repellent is also recommended. Effective sun block will also be needed against the sun at both high altitude and in the tropical areas. It is also important to keep hydrated. However take care not to consume local water, whether from the tap, a stream, in ice or on food such as washed salads. Always drink bottled water with a sealed lid. Altitude sickness is also a potential problem in Bolivia so always allow time to acclimatise. Rest for 3 or 4 hours when you first arrive at altitude, eat small meals, drink extra fluids throughout your stay, avoid alcohol, and take things slowly especially walking uphill.

## Language

Spanish is the main language of Bolivia but Quechua and Aymara are also widely spoken. English is spoken in the larger hotels, smarter restaurants, airline offices and travel agencies in the main cities and tourist areas, but is not common outside these areas.

## Food & Drink

Bolivian food largely consists of meat (usually beef, chicken or llama) and potatoes. However there are hundreds of

different types of potato, and interesting local variations on this theme. By Lake Titicaca fish is often on the menu, while in the tropical areas fruit is often added to dishes. 'Llajhua', a hot salsa like sauce is usually provided as a condiment, although some dishes can be very spicy on their own. Larger restaurants in cities also tend to serve some international dishes. Depending on the class of the restaurant a good meal will cost from \$3 to \$30 upwards per person, without wine. Local wines, as well as the better known Chilean and Argentinean wines are often available.

## Weather / When to go

There are 2 seasons in Bolivia: rainy and dry, with the rainy season being November to March. However the climate in Bolivia varies greatly depending on the geographical region and the altitude, going from the cold, semi arid climate of the altiplano to the humid, tropical climate of the Amazon Basin. The altiplano does not receive much rain and temperatures tend to be coldest during June & July when the skies are clearer. However in both the highlands and the lowlands the roads can become impassable in the rainy season due to poor surfaces and landslides. In the jungle the mosquitoes are also at their worst during the rainy season. Sucre and the surrounding area has a pleasant year round climate. Throughout Bolivia June, July and August tend to be the busiest months for visitors.

## Time

Bolivia is 4 hours behind Greenwich Mean Time.

## Flight details

At the moment, we are mainly offering scheduled return flights to La Paz with British Airways via Miami. This is a shared service with American Airlines who operate the flight from Miami to La Paz. For passengers arriving by land from Peru or Chile, or by plane from another South American country, we can provide flight arrangements to match the itinerary.



Daily			
<b>D</b> Heathrow	13.40	<b>D</b> La Paz	06.50 (via Santa Cruz)
<b>A</b> Miami	17.50	<b>A</b> Miami	15.55
<b>D</b> Miami	23.10	<b>D</b> Miami	20.45
<b>A</b> La Paz	05.45*	<b>A</b> Heathrow	10.00*

\* following day

Economy seat pitch  
Heathrow – Miami 31ins

The above details were correct at the time of going to press. However, all timings and routings are subject to change and will be confirmed at the time of booking. UK airport departure tax has been included in all prices.

**D** = Departure time  
**A** = Arrival time

## Prices for suggested itineraries

Holiday prices are in £'s per person for duration stated based on two persons sharing a twin/double room.

PLEASE NOTE AT THE TIME OF GOING TO PRESS FINALISED AIRLINE AND GROUND PRICES WERE NOT AVAILABLE. THEREFORE, THE PRICES BELOW ARE A GUIDELINE ONLY. PLEASE CONTACT US FOR AN EXACT QUOTE. DURING EASTER AND CHRISTMAS/NEW YEAR PERIODS SPECIAL SEASONAL RATES AND MINIMUM NUMBER OF NIGHTS MAY APPLY.

Departure date determines price.

See suggested itineraries for full details. See pages 154.

See country combinations section for a sample itinerary including Peru & Chile 'Journey Through the Andes'.

See itineraries on pages 22-29 when combining Bolivia with other countries.

Departure Dates  
01/01/11 - 31/12/11

ITINERARY	Number of Nights	Guideline price
<b>Essential Bolivia</b> - La Paz, Sucre, Potosi, Uyuni, Lake Titicaca	10 nights	<b>£3,060</b>
<b>Discover Bolivia</b> - La Paz, Amazon, Sucre, Potosi, Uyuni, San Pedro de Quemez, Ojos de Perdiz, Lake Titicaca	19 nights	<b>£4,094</b>

## Price includes

- Economy scheduled flights from London Heathrow with British Airways and American Airlines (via Miami) including UK airport departure tax and fuel surcharges
- Accommodation, internal flights, transfers, excursions and meals as outlined in the various itineraries

## Not included

- Personal Travel Insurance (see page 246)
- International airport departure tax
- Airport taxes for internal flights
- Park entrance fees (where not specified on the itinerary)
- Supplement for other airlines and airports
- Tips

## Notes

Single supplements are available on request.

## Important Note

Payment by credit or charge card will incur a 2% processing charge. This charge may rise if the credit card companies increase their charges.