South America

Discovery -34 days

El Grande -42days

Discovery 34 Days

From NZ$13675 Quito-Buenos Aires

Departs:

28 April,9Jun,4 Aug,1 Sep 2023

Individual Departures any Fri

El Grande -42 days

Includes Galapagos Islands

From NZ$19995 Quito- Buenos Aires

Departs

20Apr,1 Jun,27Jul,24Aug 2023

Individual Departures any Thu









These trips have it all!!

5 countries

Ecuador
Peru
Bolivia
Brazil
Argentina
Chile (optional)

- **Option to visit Galapagos Islands**
- Quito-Cuenca Avenue of the Volcanoes
- Cusco-“Navel of the Universe”
- Mystical ‘Lost city of the Incas”
- Magnificent Andes crossing
- The amazing Colca Canyon
- Islands of Lake Titicaca
- Colourful and bustling La Paz
- Stunning and vibrant Rio de Janeiro
- Breathtaking Iguacu Falls
- Elegant and sophisticated Buenos Aires

Latin Link Adventure
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PO Box 352 Wanaka 9343 Tel: 03 4435036 Fax: 03 4431846 Email: info@latinlink.co.nz

Bonded Member of Travel Agents Association of New Zealand

Information Sheet: South America Discovery & El Grande

5 Countries: Ecuador - Peru – Bolivia – Brazil - Argentina

This kaleidoscope of South America is unbeatable for value, offering you the very best of this diverse continent.

Travelling with Lan Chile you will begin your adventure of discovery in Quito. The opportunity to visit the unique Galapagos Islands on the El Grande Tour. Visit the land of the Otavalo Indians, then a delightful overland journey to Cuenca including the famous "Devils Nose Railway".Fly to Lima Peru, City of Kings. Here you have an afternoon to browse through the world famous Gold Museum .Overland along the coast to Paracas then the mysterious Nasca Lines. Then to the white city of Arequipa and a spectacular journey into the Colca Canyon, home of the mighty Condor.

Then arriving in the Andes and Cusco the red-tiled capital of the Inca Empire. Spend two days exploring the famous and mystical citadel. Cusco is the Heart of the Inca Empire, city of terracotta roofs and cobblestone streets. Marvel at the precise Inca stone architecture and surrounding Inca ruins.Discover the magical Sacred Valley –fabulous Chinchero Indian market. From here the magical ruins of Machu Picchu await you! We guarantee this will be a moment you will never forget .

Journey to Lake Titicaca, lying at nearly 4000 metres above sea level, this is the largest lake in South America. Travel across the lake and the stark Altiplano enjoying spectacular scenery and dramatic landscapes all the way to colourful bustling La Paz where traditional culture still shares the streets with glass towers and the traffic of life in the new millennium. We then experience stunning and vibrant Rio de Janeiro. Spectacular views from the Sugar Loaf Mountain and Christ the Redeemer statue, plus time to watch people on the famous Copacabana and Ipanema beaches.Fly into the heart of South America, to Iguacu Falls. 275 cascades falling in a wild array of spray over a winding 3km cliff face into the gorge 60metres below! Afterwards we will enjoying the sophistication of stylish Buenos Aires

For those interested in **Galapagos** , this can be visited as part of the **El Grande Tour** which joins the Discovery Tour.

Discovery Group Departures 2023:28 April ,4 Aug,1 Sep NZ$13675: 9Jun NZ$13975

Individual Departures any Friday $13975 Single room supplement $ 1990

El Grande 2023 : 20Apr,27Jul,24Aug NZ$19995 1 Jun NZ$20295

Individual Departures any Friday $20295 Single room supplement NZ$2200(only share cabins on cruise)

2021 prices subject to change

4 Day Inca Trail Option: NZ$550 **1Day Inca Trail Option**: NZ$185

Bolivia Salt Flats Option: NZ$1195

Early Booking Discount: reserve your place on the tour by 30 Sep '22 &receive a early booking discount of $200

Please note these costs only apply if travelling internationally to/from South America on LATAM Airlines.

Inclusions:

ALL travel as per itinerary – buses, boats, flights, transfers, and taxis

ALL transfers as per itinerary

ALL accommodation twin share with private facilities in comfortable 3 star hotels

ALL entrance fees and sightseeing as detailed in the itinerary

Breakfasts daily,5 Lunches & 4 Dinners

Services of Naturalist Guide on Galapagos Cruise, Professional Tour Manager (subject to a minimum of 6 people travelling)

Services of local English speaking guides

Additional Inclusions El Grande : airfares Quito/Galapagos return, Galapagos Cruise with all meals & shore excursions

Not Included:

Meals not specified as above. It is necessary to allow USD$35-45 per day to cover this. Insurance, visa fees, medical expenses, tips & airport taxes (allow US$275 on Discovery US$370 on El Grande), optional sightseeing and personal expenses, Galapagos Park entrance fee & immigration fee of US$120 which must be paid in US cash on arrival.

NOTE ON FLIGHTS

****International flights on LATAM Airlines Auckland –Quito & Rio –Auckland are in addition to costs stated above . As there can be seasonal specials on airfares these can vary between NZ$1500 and $2200 depending on when they are purchased . We will quote you the best airfares at the time of booking and keep you informed on any seasonal specials between time of booking and departure**

Notes:

All costs are subject to airline increases and currency fluctuations.

El Grande –featuring Galapagos Islands

Day	Date	Program	Overnight
1	**Thurs**	**Quito** Fly to Quito , we suggest LATAM Airlines direct connection Auckland-Santiago-Quito . On arrival you will be met and transferred to your hotel Accommodation: Hotel Plaza San Francisco www.sanfranciscodequito.com.ec	Quito
2	**Fri**	**Quito** Morning at leisure. Afternoon scenic tour of Quito, the capital of Ecuador, will take you through its wealth of culture, history and tradition. Ending up at a lookout point with great scenic view.	Quito (B)
3	**Sat**	**Otavalo** Full day excursion to Otavalo.This excursion goes north, to the land of the Otavaleños and South America's most famous Indian fair.	Quito(B,L)

4	**Sun**	**<u>Quito –Galapagos</u>** You will be transferred to the airport for your flight to Galapagos Please note there is a US$20 immigration fee and US$100 National Park fee payable on arrival One of the world's greatest treasures of natural history lies in the bewitching Galapagos Islands, famed for its fearless and unique wildlife, and is the highlight of most trips to Ecuador. The Galapagos Islands have been named after the giant Galapagos Tortoises. The archipelago, 1000 Km. (600 miles) off Ecuador's Pacific Coast originated from undersea volcanic activity, six million years ago. The archipelago's 13 major islands, 6 smaller ones, and scores of islets are all part of Ecuador's National Park system. In 1835, the English naturalist Charles Darwin visited the islands and discovered this "living laboratory" which inspired his writings on the Theory of Evolution. Many of the animals on the Galapagos Islands have developed into different species from their continental relatives, and because they have never experienced man as a predator, they show no fear of humans. The world's most wondrous group of islands is yours for unhurried exploration. Follow the nature trails; enjoy the amazing sights, wade and even dive among the animals of land and sea. The sixteen passenger " Aida Maria "offers a great combination of comfort, style and economy for tours in the Galapagos. Each of the eight cabins has a private bath and hot shower, air conditioning and an ample external deck to enjoy sunny Galapagos days. Its design is based in efficiency and comfort with ample social areas and 8 cabins 2 in main deck, 2 in upper deck and 2 in solarium providing optimum comfort for your experience exploring the Galapagos.. All meals and shore excursions are included . Accommodation in 2 berth cabins . Please note that the Galapagos National park fee of USD100 is to be paid in cash on joining the cruise. As you prepare to land in Baltra, peer out the window. The landscape below will seem out of this world - a place like no other. The Galapagos Islands are unique to the world and you are about to see why. Your bilingual naturalist guide will greet you at the airport and assist you through customs. During lunch he/she will introduce you to the islands and specifically the flora and fauna you will encounter at our first destination, Las Bachas Beach. On the sandy white beaches of Las Bachas we will get a close look at a sea turtle nesting area and a lake frequented by leggy pink flamingos and other migratory birds. Afterward, we cool ourselves off with our first dip in the deliciously blue Pacific Ocean. As this is our first evening together, the crew will invite us to a pre-dinner cocktail on the yacht before the welcome dinner. If the night is clear, as it usually is, the stars above will bedazzle; look for the Southern Cross, the Big Dipper and Orion.	Cruise (B,L,D)
5	**Mon**	**<u>Genovesa Island</u>** Early in the morning we will take breakfast and later we will disembark at Genovesa (Tower) Island that is located in the northeast portion of the Galapagos (less than half a degree north of the equator). Tower is an outpost for many sea birds (as Española is in the south). Interestingly, there are no land reptiles on Tower, only very small marine iguanas. This is attributed to the direction of the ocean currents, which evidently wouldn't have carried the terrestrial animals here. Visit El Barranco during the morning then return to the boat for lunch, and later cruise to Darwin Bay. The anchorage at Darwin Bay, located on the southern portion of the island, is actually the caldera of an extinct, partially-eroded volcano, with the surrounding cliffs forming the inner portion of the rim. While the origin of the name Tower is not known, one can imagine it had something to do with these towering cliffs. The tour will be a long, fairly-easy walk, but it is usually hot and dry here, so you may want to carry some water. After a wet landing on a coral beach the trail begins in an area where there are several swallow-tailed gulls. As you walk back from the beach, there is a mixture of Opuntia cactus and mangroves.	On Cruise (B,L,D)

6	**Tues**	**<u>Bartolome Island</u>** Bartolome Island,at its highest point (114m), has one of the most photographed vistas in the archipelago. This island is quite young and quite volcanic. Therefore, it's relatively unpopulated; only a small handful of die-hard plant and animal species have survived long enough to call this lava-land home. After our visit to Bartolome island we will visit nearby Sullivan Bay, at the turn of the century a huge lava flow spilled forth and right down to the sea; today you can stroll across this black volcanic expanse admiring its time-frozen ripples, bubbles and ropes. After lunch we will have a short navigation to Chinese hat or Sombrero Chino, a small volcanic cone by the coast of James island, Sombrero Chino has a beautiful beach for snorkeling with sea lions as well as a small trail along the coast of this cone where we can spot lots of coast life and shore birds.	On Cruise (B,L,D)
7	**Wed**	**Daphne Island- Santa Cruz Island** Early in the morning we will arrive to Daphne Island, a tuff cone formed by the accumulation of volcanic ash which is home to thousands of birds such as blue footed boobies, frigate birds, tropic birds and many more.We will not go ashore but we will navigate around this volcanic cone, binoculars are recommended to get a good look at the birds. Daphne has been a great research site on which many scientists have spent years studying the behavior of Darwin's finches. After this visit we move on to our next site, Black Turtle Cove, a red mangrove lagoon on Santa Cruz, is a nursery for many sharks and rays. It is also a great location to observe mating turtles around this time of year. We will hopefully see large groups of resting white-tip reef sharks, schools of golden rays and spotted eagle rays, and a few juvenile scalloped hammerhead sharks and black-tip sharks. The water is nearly mirror-calm and we often used paddles instead of the loud panga engines to move around the area. After lunch we will navigate for a couple of hours to Cerro Dragon, we will have a dry landing on lava rocks, Cerro Dragon is a small bay on the west coast of Santa Cruz and got its name from the many land iguanas that live in the area, land iguanas are endemic to the Galapagos islands and have made of this place a good mating and nesting area.	On Cruise (B,L,D)

8	**Thurs**	**<u>Santa Cruz Island</u>** Here we can find small tortoises, hand-sized between the ages of one and five, and marvel at how they achieve such a large size as adults (500 lbs. or more!). Galapagos tortoises are believed to have a lifespan of over 100 years, so the young ones have a long life ahead of them as long as they receive the protection they need. Aside from the Station headquarters, Santa Cruz boasts the largest town and economic center of the Galapagos, Puerto Ayora. In this port-side town we can buy souvenirs of the islands (postcards, t-shirts, books, etc.). Check-out the uniquely Galapaganean ceramic shop near the entrance of the Charles Darwin Station. After shopping in Puerto Ayora and lunch on the boat (you may dine in town if you desire), we will explore the upper region ('parte alta') of the island, a moisture-rich area with fertile volcanic soils. We will learn about the vegetation and animal life of this zone, often strikingly different than that found at lower elevations. Darwin finches, yellow warblers, and bright red vermillion fly catchers will flit in and out of the moss-covered trees. From this high vantage point we are treated to beautiful views of the surrounding archipeliago.In the late afternoon we return to town.	On Cruise (B,L,D)
9	**Fri**	**<u>Floreana Island</u>** Today when you awake and peer out your porthole you will see Floreana, one of the greenest islands in the archipelago. Ask your guide to tell you about its mysterious history laden with rumors of witches, murderous baronesses, blackmail and dubious disappearances. Our first stop is Punta Cormorant, where we follow a footpath to a lagoon inhabited by flaming-pink flamingos. We will also pass by Carolina Beach, a sea turtle nesting area and a superb spot for watching sea birds and sea rays. Back on our yacht, we skirt the island's coast until we arrive at La Corona del Diablo (the Devil's Crown), a sub-marine crater that offers some of the most spectacular snorkeling in the Galapagos. This is a great spot for seeing the wide array of tropical fish endemic to the islands as well as purple sea stars and spiky sea urchins. The crater's most thrilling undersea creatures, however, are the white-tipped sharks. As with most of the creatures in the Galapagos they are unperturbed by your presence, so you can swim in their company freely and without fear. After returning to the boat for lunch we will sail on to Post Office Bay, where the island's original post office - really only a wooden barrel - was established in 1793. The current system still functions as it did three centuries ago: visitors drop off unstamped letters and postcards AND pick-up whatever mail they can hand deliver themselves when they return home! (Try it, it actually works!).	On Cruise (B,L,D)

10	**Sat**	**<u>Española Island</u>** Espanola is one of the most magical of all the islands. It is a place where the animals reign supreme and we humans are merely guests. As your dingy brings you to shore you will see sea lion pups sunbathing with marine iguanas and blue footed boobies nesting in between. Nearby may be a Galapagos Hawk. If it is boobie mating season watch the bonded pairs do the infamous boobie dance (if it's not mating season ask your guide to demonstrate - after all it's his job to teach you about the local fauna). As we follow the foot path around the island, we will pass hundreds of boobie nesting sites including one colony of masked boobies. There is a good chance we will see the thief-like frigate bird (which has the habit of stealing other birds' food), as well as the stunning red-billed tropic bird and the nocturnal swallow-tailed gull. If it is the right time of the year (mid-April to December) we will also encounter the giant waved albatross. Apart from a few pairs that breed on Isla de Plata off the Ecuadorian mainland, all of the world's 12,000 waved albatross breed on Espanola Island. At the end of the breeding season, the entire population leaves the island and heads out to sea, where they spend years without touching land. Astonishingly, four or five years may pass before the fledglings return to Espanola.	On Cruise (B,L,D)
		As we make our way around the island we pass by El Soplador, a giant blowhole that explodes to heights reaching 70 feet. In the nearby tide pools you can often find lounging sea lions enjoying the blowhole's misty spray. Following lunch on board the yacht, we will visit Garner Bay, a great place for sunbathing, swimming and snorkeling. Lion fish, flycatchers, and Galapagos hawks will keep us company as we relax under the rays of the evening sun. Dinner on the yacht completes our day.	
11	**Sun**	**<u>Galapagos – Quito</u>** On our 8th day of visiting the Galapagos we will arrive early in the morning to San Cristobal, the capital of Galapagos ,our first site will be Kicker Rock or Leon Dormido, a tuff volcanic cone which has been eroded by the wind and marine currents giving it the shape from the distance of a sleeping sea lion.Now it is home to blue footer boobies and frigate birds amongst many others which have made of this their nesting site.After navigating around Kicker Rock we continue on our way to Isla Lobos. A very small island made of volcanic rocks on which we will disembark, Isla Lobos gets its name from a small colony of sea lions (lobo de mar in Spanish) where we can observe the behavior and interaction of sea lions living in a small community. Following the visit to Isla lobos we head to Puerto Baquerizo Moreno, the main town in San Cristobal where the airport is located. Before taking the airplane back to the mainland you will have some time to visit the town on your own for last minute shopping or just getting to see how people live in the Galapagos. 11.45am Depart Galapagos on TAME Airlines flight EQ190 (Transit stop in Guayaquil) 2.30pm Arrive Quito Transfer to our hotel Accommodation: Hotel Plaza San Francisco Join the Discovery Tour this evening (Day 3 of Discovery Tour)	Quito (B)
1	**Fri**	# Discovery Tour **<u>Quito</u>** Fly to Quito, we suggest LATAM Airlines direct connection Auckland-Santiago-Quito. On arrival you will be met and transferred to your hotel Accommodation: Hotel Plaza San Francisco www.sanfranciscodequito.com.ec	Quito

2	**Sat**	**<u>Otavalo</u>** Full day excursion to Otavalo.This excursion goes north, to the land of the Otavaleños and South America's most famous Indian fair. Otavalo is located on the province of Imbabura, known also as the “lake province”, in the north part of the country. Imbabura counts with a pleasant dry climate with temperatures averaging around 18C and it is home of many indigenous handicraft markets of which Otavalo is the most famous. The Otavalo market is most popular on Saturday when many indigenous communities gather at the “Plaza de los Ponchos” to exhibit their textile crafts, especially blankets and tapestries, that date from colonial times. Lunch is included. Later this afternoon return to Quito	Quito(B,L)
3	**Sun**	**<u>Quito</u>** Morning at leisure. Afternoon scenic tour of Quito, the capital of Ecuador, will take you through its wealth of culture, history and tradition. Ending up at a lookout point with great scenic view.	Quito (B)
4 or 12	**Mon**	**<u>Quito –Patate</u>** A four-day immersion in the Andean World, from Quito, along the Avenue of the Volcanoes, to Cuenca, through the spectacular scenery of the Andes, with visits to centenary Haciendas, fertile fields of vegetables and roses, in close contact with the local culture. This is a journey along the history, the spirituality, the flavours, the customs, traditions and legends of the Andean Region. Along valleys and mountains, arrive to Cotopaxi National Park, which surrounds the magnificent Cotopaxi Volcano, for an up-close view of the Andean paramo habitat and its unique flora and fauna; a number of high-altitude birds can be observed around Limpiopungo Lagoon, and occasionally, wild horses. On clear days, the perfect snow-capped cone of the Cotopaxi Volcano is quite a sight! From here, descend towards the town of Patate, to spend the night at a 300-year old hacienda, hidden among the mountains, a magical ambience, where, as the afternoon mist descends, stories are told about those who left in search of the treasure of the Incas in the nearby Llanganatis – and never returned… Accommodation: Hacienda Manteles *www.**haciendamanteles**.com*	Patate (B,D)

5 or 13	**Tues**	**Patate- Riobamba** After breakfast, take a spectacular route along the gorge of the Pastaza River to the town of Baños (Baths), right at the foot of Tungurahua Volcano, from where the thermal waters that gave it its name emerge. Drive along the Route of the Cascades to El Pailón del Diablo (the Devil's Cauldron) -the most adventurous will descend (medium difficulty) to observe the impressive cascade up close, surrounded by subtropical vegetation and orchids. The force and sound of the waters can also be appreciated from a lookout point without descending In the afternoon a short stroll around Baños -a town with an international pulse, full of people from all over the world as well as many locals who pilgrimage to the Sanctuary of the Virgin of Holy Water. From here, the route to Riobamba is up the mountain, to where the clouds can be touched, alongside the massive Chimborazo, the highest mountain of Ecuador, on the high paramo where vicuñas graze and scamper - this is a protected Faunistic Preserve. On the hillsides, where the land is worked beneath the plow, one might think the farmer's true objective was to paint the hills in fascinating patterns, not just to till the dark, fertile soil. Great photo ops on this route! Arrive to Riobamba in time for dinner Accommodation: Hosteria Abrasrungo www.haciendaabraspungo.com	Riobamba (B,D)
6 or 14	**Wed**	**Riobamba-Devils Nose Railway - Cuenca** After an early breakfast depart by road, skirting the flanks of the Andes, an astonishing ride, twisting and turning, along bridging ravines and river gorges. Ride through Indian villages and cultivated fields; here is where most of the cereals in Ecuador are grown, among them, the quinua, considered the perfect grain for its nutritional value. After about 2 hours arrive at the small town of Alausí, the beating heart of the rehabilitation of the Ecuadorian Railway Company in the last years. Great effort has been made to restore the 100-year old train to its old glory and romance. Stations have been renewed, railways and sleepers replaced, engines and classic coaches renovate, and, most important, the project involves the local communities along the route in the rail operation. The highlight is the thrilling 800-metre (2630-foot) descent on the zigzag cuttings on the rock of the Devil's Nose. At the bottom one finds the newly renovated Station of Sibambe. Here there is time to visit the local museum "Condor Puñuna" built and run by the Nizag community, see the display of local handcrafts, fruit and medicinal plants and try the local coffee. The train whistle calls guests back on board for the return to the Station of Alausí, where a light snack is served to regain strength. Continue exploring the Andean world by motorcoach to the south, visiting the Inca Fortress of Ingapirca en-route. Lunch in the area. Arrival to Cuenca at dusk Accommodation: Hotel Victoria http://hotelvictoriaecuador.com/en/	Cuenca (B,L,)
7 Or 15	**Thurs**	**Cuenca** Cuenca is Ecuador's third largest city; yet it still retains its pleasant provincial air. Its red tiled roofs, cobblestone streets, flowery plazas and museums make it very special. This comprehensive visit includes the Plaza of San Sebastian, a colorful artisans market, where handicrafts are sold. Then, visit the Museum of Modern Art, featuring an excellent collection of contemporary fine art. Next is a visit to the flower market at the small plaza in front of the carved stone entrance to the church of El Carmen de la Asunción. From here, a stroll to the main square, surrounded by the imposing blue-domed Cathedral, the Court of Justice, the Municipal Palace, the Governor's Palace and the Church of El Sagrario. Then, a drive along the Tomebamba river to admire the city's overhanging houses. Lunch is at one of the excellent restaurants in Cuenca, and in the afternoon, drive for a short visit to a ceramics handcraft shop. Then, observe the whole process of making the famous Panama Hats of high-quality toquilla straw.	Cuenca (B,L)

8 or 16	**Fri**	**Cuenca – Quito – Lima** Morning at leisure to further explore Cuenca. This afternoon transfer to the airport for your flight to Quito to connect on Latam international flight to Lima. On arrival transfer to our hotel. Accommodation: Hotel Antigua Miraflores www.antiguamiraflores.com	Lima (B)
9 Or 17	**Sat**	**Lima** Lima, city of Kings and capital of Peru. This was the principal city of Spanish South America from its founding in 1535 until the independence of the South American republics in early 19th century. It never rains in Lima, except for 2 months of the year when the skies are blue, in January and February. You have the morning to explore Lima. A city tour of the Greater Colonial Lima this morning allows you to appreciate the wonderful colonial buildings in downtown Lima such as the Santo Domingo Convent and the Casa Aliaga, one of South America's oldest Spanish homes. Drive by the elegant tree-lined avenues of San Isidro and Miraflores. Afternoon at leisure or we suggest a visit to the Gold Museum or Larco Museum	Lima (B)
10 Or 18	**Sun**	**Lima - Paracas** This morning we travel south by bus along the Panamericano Highway through desert countryside alongside the Pacific Ocean Accommodation Hotel Paracas Sunset Hotel https://paracassunset.com/en/ Visit the Paracas Nature Reserve , a marine sanctuary located at the shore of the Pacific Ocean	Paracas (B)
11 Or 19	**Mon**	**Paracas – Nazca** This morning visit Ballestas Islands, known as Peru's mini Galapagos. An opportunity to watch resident and migratory birds, including flamingos, red-legged cormorants, Inca terns, boobies, as well as playful sea lions, amusing Humboldt penguins and, if we are lucky, we might see marine otters. This afternoon travel by bus to Nazca. This small oasis town is famous for the mysterious lines etched in the desert pampas. Are they messages to travellers from outer space that landed here thousands of years ago or the works of an ancient culture depicting a planting calendar? Cut into the stony desert, like a giant sketching pad, these many lines include geometrical figures, giant animals and birds. Accommodation: Hotel Alegria www.hotelalegria.net	Nazca (B)

12 Or 20	**Tues**	**Flight over Nazca Lines – then to Arequipa** This morning it is your turn to become airborne and theorise on these mysterious lines etched in the desert. Wow - up you go to witness this gigantic sketching pad in the desert pampa. Who drew them? Why? Draw your own conclusions or come away with as many questions as answers! This afternoon depart Nazca on our super comfy bus , arriving Arequipa later this evening . Transfer to your hotel Accommodation: Majestad Hotel Historical Center, Arequipa *www.**majestadhotel**.com*	Arequipa (B)
13 Or 21	**Wed**	**Explore Arequipa** Arequipa, situated at the foot of El Misti Volcano (5882m), is the 'Ciudad Blanca' – the white city, boasting a delightful climate, plenty of fascinating colonial buildings and gateway to the famous Colca Canyon, home of the condors, one of the world's deepest canyons. Must sees here are a visit to the peaceful Santa Catalina Convent, one of the most fascinating religious colonial buildings in Peru. The convent, opened to visitors in 1970, is surrounded by imposing walls and the 450 nuns who lived here led a completely secluded life. Also here is "Juanita" the mummy of a young girl found in 1995 by an American mountain climber on Mt Ambato. She is encased in a freezing chamber inside the Museum and is on display.	Arequipa (B)
14 Or 22	**Thurs**	**Arequipa - Colca Canyon Adventure** Drive through the awesome Colca Canyon, one of the world's deepest canyons which is only accessible by a dirt road over the Altiplano before dropping to the village of Chivay at 3600 metres above sea level. The landscape is remarkable for its Inca and pre-Inca terracing which goes on for many kilometres and is the most extensive in Peru. Life here has changed very little through the centuries where the campesinos still farm the remarkable Inca terracing as their ancestors did before them. We continue deep into the Canyon to the Cruz de las Condors. This is a remarkable highlight – you can watch the impressive condors rising with the thermals – your chance to get great photos of these wonderful birds Stay overnight in the small village of Chivay where you can relax in the hot thermal springs and delight in the haunting melodies of the panpipes. Dinner will be at a local restaurant Accommodation: Colca Llatqa Inn *www.**colcallaqtahotel**.com*	Chivay (B,D)
15 Or 23	**Fri**	**Colca Canyon- Cusco** After breakfast We then continue our journey of discovery and exploration in the hinterland of the Andes travelling overland to Cusco arriving early evening Accommodation: Royal Inka 1 Hotel www.royalinkahotel.com/hcusco.html *NB Please note the 5Jun Discovery &28May El Grande departures will have a change in order of the itinerary while in the Cusco area and will include the Inti Raymi Festival*	Cusco (B,L)

16 or 24	**Sat**	**Cusco** Cusco, heart of the Inca Empire, known by the local Quechua Indians as 'Navel of the Universe'. Cusco is an amazing experience. Lying in an exceptionally beautiful countryside 3300 metres above sea level, here you will encounter a fine blend of Spanish and Inca cultures, colourful Quechua Indian markets, Inca temples and massive stone walls which form the foundations of Colonial Cusco, originally part of the impressive monument of Sacsayhuaman, situated above the town. Morning at leisure. This morning enjoy a comprehensive walking tour of this delightful city, including the Cathedral, Plaza de Armas, Temple of the Sun.Visit Sacsayhuaman -this magnificent Inca fortress, which overlooks the city of Cusco. Sacsayhuaman can be variously translated as 'speckled falcon' or 'speckled head'. The last interpretation refers to the belief that the city of Cusco was set out in the form of a puma whose head was the hill of Sacsayhuaman. The origins are uncertain but the fortress is generally attributed to the period of Inca Pachacuti, the man who	Cusco (B)
17 or 25	**Sun**	**Cusco -Sacred Valley** Drive through stunning scenery to Chinchero, the most colourful and authentic market in Peru. Continue on to Maras Salt Pans. Another fabulous walk today. Discover these amazing salt pans still mined as they were hundreds of years ago, Also visit Moray –these unusual Inca ruins consist of several enormous terraced circular depressions, the largest of which is about 30m. deep. Continue through the Sacred Valley to our hotel an old monastery (completely restored of course!). Accommodation: Hotel Recoleta Monasterio **www.hotelessanagustin.com.pe/hotel_recoleta.htm**	Cusco (B)
18 Or 26	**Mon**	**Cusco – Sacred Valley Trekkers in group depart for 4 Day Inca Trail Day 1** Continue through the beautiful Sacred valley of the Incas. Next is Pisaq where you will enjoy a panoramic walk along the original Inca pathways and terracing to the ancient town below. Visit the markets then continue through this lush valley where the towering fortress of Ollantaytambo dominates the surrounding area.	Sacred Valley of the Incas (B)
19 Or 27	**Tues**	**Train to Aguas Calientes or Day 2 - Inca Trail** After breakfast you have an early morning transfer to Ollantaytambo to catch the train to Aguas Calientes, a small railroad town with tons of character – enjoy a soak in the hot pools under the Andean sky or explore the town Accommodation: Santuario Hotel www.santuariohotel.com **1Day Inca Trail Option** *For those wanting to experience the Inca Trail take the train to KM104 where you disembark to begin the full day hike to Machu Picchu . The one-day hike from Chachabamba to Machu Picchu is an excellent alternative to the full Inca Trail trek .Enjoy a beautiful day of moderate hiking en route to Machu Picchu. On the 9.6km hike from the trailhead at the Vilcanota River footbridge, ascend a total of 800m. Just prior to reaching Winya Wayna ruins you will reach a spectacular waterfall in a delightful cloud forest glade which offers the possibility of a refreshing shower on a hot day. This merges with the regular Inca Trail at Winya Wayna ruins. From Winya Wayna, most hikers take 1.5 hours for the mainly level walk along the spectacular Inca Trail to the final overlook at Inti Punku, the Gate of the Sun (2,700 m). With typical stops for lunch (included) and photography, overall walking time is 6-7 hours. After arrival at Machu Picchu descend by bus to Agua Calientes to join the rest of the group*	Aguas Calientes(B)

20 Or 28	**Wed**	**Bus to Machu Picchu- Cuzco or Day 3 – Inca Trail** It's an early start today. This is the best time to enjoy the peace and tranquillity not to mention the magic of Machu Picchu is before the trainload's of visitors arrive. Machu Picchu, known also as 'Lost City of the Incas'. It is undoubtedly the best known and most spectacular archaeological site on the continent and is considered a must for all visitors to Peru. You will travel by bus up the zig-zag, the Hiram Bingham highway, to the ruins where your first views will take your breath away. Enjoy a fully guided tour of the ruins, some time to explore on your own, before returning down the mountainside. Time for a snack and then board the train to Ollantaytambo and transfer to our hotel in Cusco. Accommodation: Royal Inka 1 Hotel www.royalinkahotel.com/hcusco.html	Cusco (B)
21 Or 29	**Thurs**	**Cusco or Day 4 -Inca Trail** Free day to explore this delightful city – everyone's favourite. The day is yours to enjoy, all the convents, churches, museums, alpaca and jewellery bargains.	Cusco(B)
22 Or 30	**Fri**	**Cusco - Puno** Bus ride to Puno through the dramatic landscapes of the highland plateau, with occasional views of tiny Andean villages and herds of llamas and vicunas. We will stop at Andahuaylillas, where there is a beautiful baroque church built at the beginning of the XVIIth century. It is very well known thanks to its beautiful mural paintings. We will make a second stop at Raqchi, where there is an Inca temple built to worship Wiracocha, one of the most important Inca gods. Finally, we will stop at the archaeological museum of Pukara (200BC-AD300) then we will lunch at a restaurant en route. Arrive in Puno late afternoon. Accommodation: Qelqatani Hotel www.qelqatani.com	Puno Lake Titicaca (B,L)
23 Or 31	**Sat**	**Uros Islands -Copacabana** What an experience! By boat visit the curious floating reed islands and the Uros Indians who live there. Everything is made of these reeds, houses, schools, boats, churches etc. Once you reach the reed islands, you can experience gliding across Lake Titicaca in an authentic reed boat - you can't beat it! Return to Puno. This afternoon continue through lovely scenery, which follows this mighty lake to the Bolivian border. After border formalities continue to the sleepy town of Copacabana. Accommodation: Hotel Rosario del Lago www.hotelrosario.com/lago	Puno (B)
24 Or 32	**Sun**	**Copacabana – La Paz** Morning at leisure to explore around Copacabana . The opportunity for an optional boat trip out on the lake to tranquil Isla del Sol (Island of the Sun) where legend has it that the first Inca King rose out of the lake. On this legendary island, visit the Pilkokaina Inca Palace and enjoy a short walk to the Gardens, Sacred Stairs and Fountain of the Inca. As we ascend to Yumani village, we have a magnificent view of the lake set to the backdrop of Mount Illampu. Depart Copacabana and continue through even more stunning scenery, with snow-capped peaks and the blue lake, to La Paz, capital of Bolivia and highest capital in the world. Known as City of Contrasts, here ancient traditions meet the new millennium of chaotic traffic and towering buildings. Accommodation: Hotel Rosario www.hotelrosario.com/la-paz	La Paz (B)

25 Or 33	**Mon**	**City tour and shopping** A morning tour takes you down to where the air is thicker and the elite live. Visit the witches markets, Calle Jaen with its museums, San Francisco Church, Plaza Murillo, National Congress, Cathedral, Presidential Palace, See local neighborhoods as you take public transportation up the hill to reach a spectacular viewpoint.Continue to the very unusual eroded formations of the Moon Valley. The afternoon is free to enjoy the uniqueness of this colourful bustling city and shop for bargains and gifts. *Option available for an overnight trip to the Bolivian Salt Flats.Itinerary on request*	La Paz (B)
26 Or 34	**Tues**	**Explore La Paz** Optional tour to Tiwanaku (Pre-Columbian) ruins outside the city or a Mountain Bike down the world's most spectacular road or spend the day with a little more shopping and people watching. A great city to do that!	La Paz (B)
27 Or 35	**Wed**	**La Paz –Rio de Janeiro** An early start as we say 'adios' to the Andes and transfer to the airport for our flight to Sao Paulo with a connection to Rio. Transfer to your hotel in Copacabana Accommodation: Hotel Martinique *www.**windsor**hoteis.com.br/martinique* *Located 1 block back from Copacabana beach*	Rio (B)
28 Or 36	**Thurs**	**Rio de Janeiro** This morning travel to the Cosme Velho Train Cog Station at the bottom of the Corcovado Mountain, you will stop by Lagoa Rodrigo de Freitas. Once at the mountain, you will take the ride up to the top, through the dense Tijuca rain forest to the 38m tall Christ the Redeemer Statue. From the top, you will enjoy the spectacular views of Rio and the surrounding countryside. This afternoon starts with a panoramic tour of downtown Rio where you'll pass by the infamous Sambadrome, the exhibition area for the renowned Samba schools in Rio. A brief stop is made at the Metropolitan Cathedral, made famous for its unusual pyramid shape. Admire its beauty and rareness from both the outside and the inside! Your panoramic city tour continues with a visit to the traditional Cinelandia Square where you'll tour the various historic buildings such as the Municipal Theatre, the National Library and the National Museum of Fine Arts. Head towards the Urca neighborhood, where one of Rio's most iconic symbols is located, Sugar Loaf Mountain. Travelling up Sugar Loaf mountain in a cable car, you will make a brief stop at a vantage point approximately 700 feet (215 meters) above sea level. Capture unparalleled panoramic views of the city, Guanabara Bay, the Rio-Niteroi Bridge and Corcovado Mountain. You'll then ascend to the peak of Sugar Loaf for breathtaking views of Copacabana Beach, the Santa Cruz Fortress and the beaches of Niteroi.	Rio (B)
29 Or 37	**Fri**	**Rio de Janeiro** Day at leisure , perhaps explore the quaint district of Santa Teresa or enjoy a day at the beach .	Rio (B)

30 Or 38	**Sat**	**Rio –Iguacu** Transfer to the airport for our morning flight to Iguacu . On arrival commence a tour to the Brazilian side of the falls followed by a visit to the Bird Park , an opportunity to enter the huge 8-meter high forest aviaries to study and photograph birds in their natural habitat without the restrictions of netting and cages. There are over 160 species, both indigenous and from other continents. Then transfer to your hotel Accommodation : Bourbon Business Hotel	Iguacu (B)
31 Or 39	**Sun**	**Iguacu Falls - Buenos Aires** Travel to the Argentine side of the falls, these falls defy description! Enjoy the majesty of the world's most spectacular waterfalls. Set in pristine rainforest with countless birds and butterflies, situated on the borders of Paraguay, Argentina and Brazil, they plunge in a series of gigantic waterfalls over 3kms long and more than 80 metres high. The thunderous roar of crashing water and the multicoloured mist is natural beauty at its best. It is undoubtedly one of the world's most impressive sights. Later see the mighty Devils Throat Cataract. We then transfer to the airport for your flight to Buenos Aires. On arrival you will be transferred to your hotel Accommodation: Intersur Recoleta Hotel http://intersurrecoleta.com.ar/en	Buenos Aires (B)
32 Or 40	**Mon**	**Buenos Aires** This morning our tour will allow us to discover the city of Buenos Aires. We will visit its Civic Centre, the impressive National Congress and May Square (Plaza de Mayo) surrounded by Government House (Casa Rosada), the Metropolitan Cathedral and City Hall from colonial days (Cabildo). We will visit the Colon Theatre (Teatro Colón), one of the world's best known opera houses and the cultural pride of the "Porteños" (Buenos Aires natives). Next, we will tour the traditional barrio of San Telmo where the magical atmosphere of the district will take you back in time. We will then stop at La Boca, home of the first Italian immigrants and you will observe its picturesque and colourful architecture. We will then continue to the residential neighborhood of Palermo and many parks. Finally, we will go to Recoleta, the city's most exclusive district, with its famous cemetery where Evita Peron is buried, elegant boutiques, gourmet restaurants and side walk cafés under ficus trees (gomeros). Tonight get into the Argentine mood with a juicy steak and Tango show	Buenos Aires (B,D)
33 Or 41	**Tues**	**Buenos Aires** There is still time to explore the city further or perhaps enjoy an optional trip across to Colonia in Uruguay. district. *If departing on Air NZ you will be transferred to the airport for your midnight departure*	Buenos Aires (B)
34 Or 42	**Wed**	**Buenos Aires** You will be transferred to the airport	(B)

Some comments from previous clients on this tour

Trip very well organised - Edwin & Jude Wanganui

The whole tours was a great adventure not to be missed.Probably the highlight must be our week in Galapagos - Robyn Auckland

I have travelled a lot ,with different tour companies and independently.Travelling with Latin Link was one of the best travel experiences I have had to date. Shane -San Francisco

Enjoyed the boutique hotels.Places visited were excellent representation of countries visited .Great variety of experiences -Bruce & Moira Wellington

This trip ticked all the boxes ,Carlos was an amazing guide.Bill & Sandra Tauranga

We are delighted we chose Latin Link to visit South America . The el Grande certainly exceeded our expectations ,so many memorable experiences which provided a good balance of nature and history. Graham & Stephanie Auckland

Inca Trail Description & Distances

Please note you will be given a duffel bag in Cusco to pack the items you need on the trail. Your main baggage will be stored for you while you are on the Trail. Sleeping bag,sleeping mat & sheet included

Day 1 (12km): You will be picked up from your hotel in Urubamba for the short trip to Km 82 where you will begin the trail.

Cross the Vilcanota River and follow the trail to the right as it climbs steeply up from the river. After passing through a small village, the ruins of the Inca hillfort of Huillca Raccay come into view high above the mouth of the river Cusichaca ('happy bridge'). It is a simple descent down to the Cusichaca river.

For a further 4.5-hour, 08- to 10-kilometre-walk the path follows the left bank of the river up to the village of Wayllabamba (3,000m). The name in Quechua means 'grassy plain'. You will spend the first night here – depending on everyone's fitness.

Day 2 (11km): Rising early (around 6am), today begins with a gradual climbing up from Wayllabamba for about 3 hours through steepening woods and increasingly spectacular terrain brings you to the treeline and a meadow known as Llulluchapampa (3,680m). It is another 1½ hours climb to the first and highest pass of the trail (Abra de Huarmihuañusca or 'Dead Woman's Pass) at 4,200m. During this part of the trail hikers are exposed to the Andean elements: first scorching sun and then, closer to the pass, freezing winds. Once at the top hikers can celebrate having completed the most difficult section of the trail.

The descent from the pass is steep although not difficult, following the trail on the left side of the valley to the valley floor and to the 2nd night's campsite at Pacaymayo (3,600m). There are toilet facilities here.

Day 3 (16km): From Pacaymayo it takes about an hour to climb up to the ruins of Runkuracay. These small circular ruins occupy a commanding position overlooking the Pacaymayo valley below. Another 45 minute hike will bring you to the top of the second pass: Abra de Runkuracay (4,000m). At last you'll feel that you are walking along the trail of the Incas with paving, for the most part, being original. The descent down the steps from the pass is steep so take care. This section of the trail, up till the 3rd pass, is particularly beautiful as the path crosses high stone embankments and skirts deep precipices. After about 1 hour from the 2nd pass you'll arrive at Sayacmarca by way of a superbly designed stone staircase. The name Sayacmarca means 'Inaccessible Town' and describes the position of the ruins perfectly, protected on three sides by sheer cliffs. No one knows the exact purpose of these ruins.

You have to backtrack a little to rejoin the trail as it passes Conchamarca, a small Inca dwelling situated in the shadows of Sayacmarca, which was probably a *tambo* for weary travellers on their way to Machu Picchu.

From then on the path descends into magnificent cloudforest full of orchids, hanging mosses, tree ferns and flowers, passing through an impressive Inca tunnel, carved into the rock, on the way.

The trail then climbs up to the 3rd pass (3,700m). The view from the pass offers excellent views of several snow-capped peaks including Salkantay (6,271m) and Veronica (5,750m). A few minutes after the pass is Phuyupatamarca (3,580 metres), the most impressive Inca ruin so far. The name means 'Town in the Clouds'. Access to the ruins is down a steep flight of stairs passing six 'Inca Baths' probably used for the ritual worship of water.

Leaving the site via an impressive Inca staircase leading from the west side of the ruins (the far end from the baths) you descend a thousand or so steps. Be careful with your knees which will feel the strain by the end of

the day. After about an hour of walking through cloudforest you may just be able to see the archaeological site of Wiñay Wayna (2,650 metres),
The campsite at Winay Wayna is a welcome sight and your efforts can be rewarded with a deserved cold beer, as well as hot showers ($1.5) and toilets. Trekkers on the Classic 4-day trek will camp here.
A short trail leaves from the southern end of the ruins of Wiñay Wayna. The name in Quechua means 'forever young' and is named after a variety of pink orchid which grows here. The ruins comprise magnificent agricultural terraces set in an impressive location. There are also many buildings of good quality stonework and a sequence of 10 baths, suggesting that the site was probably a religious centre associated with the worship of water. Ritual cleansing may have taken place here for pilgrims on the final leg of the trail to Machu Picchu.
Day 4 (6km): On the last morning we rise before dawn (4am) to begin the final section of the trail, after a light breakfast you will say goodbye to our porters as they pack up the camping equipment and head back to Cusco.Most people attempt to wake up early so that they can leave Wiñay Wayna to get to Machu Picchu before sunrise. The sky starts getting light by 6am and the first rays of the sun reach Machu Picchu at about 7am. The trail contours a mountainside and drops into cloudforest before coming to an almost vertical flight of 50 steps leading up

Suddenly the whole of Machu Picchu is spread out before you in all its glory - a fantastic sight for all – pure magic.

Around 7am, our guide will take you on a full guided tour. You will then have plenty of free time to explore this mystical Inca city, later in the afternoon descend by bus down to Aguas Calientes, you may decide to have lunch in one of the many restaurants (not included) then catch the train to Poroy and transfer by bus to our hotel in Cusco to rejoin the group