Bolivia And Argentina Overland (ZZB)

La Paz to Buenos Aires 21 days, departing 15 Sep 2013

Comfort Zone: Basic Luxury
Physical Challenge: Easy Hard
Trip Style: Overlanding
Route: La Paz to Buenos Aires
Length: 21 days
Transport: Overland vehicle, jeep
Accommodation: Hotel (12 nts), campsites (4 nts), camp homestay (3 nts), village homestay (1 nt) Upgrades from camping to rooms usually available on the road.

Ratings for this trip

Comfort Zone: Moderate

Moderate Comfort Level. These trips allow you to get off the beaten track with a few of your home comforts. On OVERLAND TRIPS expect there may be some wild camps, but with a predominance of campsites with good facilities (often with upgrades to rooms available) or staying in small hotels. Hotels will range from basic up to reasonably comfortable. Sharing will be on a 2, 3 or 4 person basis. On ADVENTURE HOLIDAYS we will have standard style accommodation, usually budget or tourist-class (2-3 star) accommodation with private facilities. Some accommodation may be on a multi-share basis. Transport will be a mixture of local and privately hired.

Physical Challenge: Strenuous in parts

STRENUOUS IN PARTS: These are physical tours; we may well be travelling at high altitudes, across deserts or through hot and steamy tropical countries. Physically it can be quite tough, but not necessarily all the time and there will be plenty of rest days and time to relax as well. The fitter you are the more you will enjoy the trip.

Countries Visited

Argentina

Argentina is a vast country which has a staggering diversity of climates and landscapes. With vibrant cities, the pampas, jungles and wind swept Patagonia it is a country with a very special character all of its own. Its initial appearance is fairly western but this disguises a long history of its own cultural heritage.

Buneos Aires is the capital of Argentina, lying at the mouth of the River Plate, it is a real viberant city. Full of life, from great local restaurants to local street markets and dances, showing the amazing local tango dance, Buenos Aires is the heart and soul of Argentina. Also home to some exquisite wine bars and an amazing nightlife, Buneos Aires is a must see city if you visit Argentina.

On the pampas the Gaucho people of Argentina spend their days working, riding their horses and protecting their cattle. This has resulted in worldwide export for beef, sunflower oil and wheat, making the Argentina Pampas famous for agriculture.

Deep in the south of the country is Patagonia. This beautiful area is known for its breathtaking landscapes, magnificent lakes and beautiful glacial scenery. It is a great place for outdoor activities, such as, trekking, horse riding, kayaking and mountain biking.

Patagonia is also full of culture, with the Welsh language kept alive for generations, and although it is starting to die out, there are many Welsh communities in Patagonia, especially around the Chebut river.

Heading further south is Tierra del Fuego. Lying across from the Magellan Straights, "The Land of Fire" is mainly in Chile, but 30% of it, including Ushuaia, the most southerly city in the world, belongs to Argentina.

Argentina is also the home to some beautiful wildlife. The Valdez Peninsular, in the Atlantic ocean, is a protected area which is the habitat for whales, penguins and seals. At certain times of the year, there is a chance to see the killer whale. This is also the home for land animals such as the Patagonian fox, guanacos and hairy armadillos.

To the north of Argentina is the Esteros del Ibera reserve in an area of swampland. Near to the borders of Paraguay and Brazil, this is one of South America's most important wilderness areas and is also the place to spot the rare marsh deer, maned wolf, howler monkeys, capybara and over 350 different species of birds.

Bolivia

Bolivia's major attraction is its wild natural beauty, with much of the country being off the beaten track. The country is divided into two distinct regions, the Amazonas and the Altiplano. Between the two lie the Yungas or cloud forest. Bolivia is a country for the outdoor enthusiast, with horseriding, trekking, mountain biking and jeep trips available in many of the areas we travel through. It is a country that most visitors to the Andes miss as they seldom leave Peru and yet it has as much to offer the visitor as it's more popular neighbour. Its salt pans, high lakes and mountains and its beautiful jungle make it a great destination for any traveller.

The dizzying heights of the capital, La Paz are enough to take your breath away. With buildings that hug the side of the canyon, and the spectacular views of Mount Illimani, the city is over 3,650 metres (11,975 feet) above sea level and is one of the fastest growing in Latin America.

There are many area of natural beauty in Bolivia, and many that benfit from a low number of visitors such as the stunning lakes of the high altiplano. More famous are the perspective bending salt flats of Salar de Uyuni.

In the north in Lake Titicaca, the world's highest navigable lake and home to the floating islets home to the Uros people.

Predominantly a Roman Catholic nation, the statue of Cristo de la Concordia in Cochabamba is a symbol of the influence of the religion in Bolivia. With nearly 60% of the population following this religion, it is a national landmark which provides inspiration to millions.

Agriculture is important in Bolivia, with soybeans being the main product sold into the Andean Community market. Many foods such as potatoes, rice and fruit and vegetables are harvested across Bolivia. National diet ranges from spicy lunches in the higher parts of Bolivia, to the less spicy dishes and mainly plantain or boiled maize in the lower parts. Made from fermented maize, the drink Chica is not an oppurtunity to pass upon. Although normally non alcoholic, it can be served as a brewed beer, and is one of Bolivias fine gastronomies. A taste of Bolivia could be the start of a wonderful adventure.

Chile

With some of the most diverse landscapes in the world, Chile has the beauty of it all. From the driest deserts in the world, to the breathtaking sites of huge glaciers, this country is made for the outdoor enthusiast. Chile is a country full of volcanoes, lakes, rivers and beaches, and there is always an exciting adventure waiting to be found. If you venture off the beaten track, be prepared to make friends for life out of the welcoming locals.

A visit to Chile has to include a trip to the amazing capital of Santiago. This city stands at an amazing 1700 feet above sea level, and it is another place full of amazing landscapes and a gorgeous Mediterranean climate.

With so many locations to visit, the culture of Chile can be exposed through the sound of the music. Ranging from traditional folk music, to popular and classic sounds, the tradition of Chile is seeped into every area of the country.

Seafood is Chile's main cuisine and with so many dishes to try, it is an opportunity not to be passed upon. With 2700 miles of astounding coastline, Chile is the perfect location for the variety of dishes available.

So make friends with strangers, feel the vibe of Chilean music, and let Chile get into your pores.

Daily Itinerary

Day 1 to 2: La Paz
Sun 15 Sep to Mon 16 Sep 2013

Border information: If you are starting in La Paz, enter Bolivia at La Paz Airport.

Free time to explore La Paz, one of the highest cities in the world. There's to see and do including the prison tour or the down hill mountain biking. We stay in a good quality colonial hotel in the centre. On the 1st day there will be a group meeting at 18:00 hrs.

Hotel for the night: Estrella Andina
Estrella Andina
Av Illampu 716
Zona El Rosario
La Paz
+591 2 2456421

Activity	Approximate Cost
Free time to explore the vibrant city of La Paz	USD
Downhill "gravity assisted" mountain biking from La Paz to Coroico	USD 105
Guided tour to explore Tiahuanaco Inca Ruins	USD 20

La Paz

Bolivia's largest city, La Paz lies huddled in a canyon basin, hiding from the harsh conditions of the surrounding altiplano. It is a fascinating city; the old town and more expensive neightbourhoods at the bottom of the canyon in the centre, surrounded by sprawling shantytowns which extend up the slopes of the bowl, merging into "El Alto" back on the plains, a suburb of La Paz that has grown to be a city in it's own right.

The city skyline is dominated by the snow-capped peaks of Mount Illimani, a staggeringly beautiful back-drop that leaves many visitors stunned when then catch their first glimpse of the city as they descend into the canyon. The old town is full of markets and winding cobbled streets full of people selling anything and everything you could ever think of. Different areas of the city have established markets selling things you'd expect like food and flower, and also things you've probably never seen before - check out the dried llama foetuses on sale in the witches market (Bolivian's believe that burying one of these in the foundations of your home will ensure prosperity and good fortune)

There are plenty of other activities to do in La Paz, from playing a round at the highest golf course in the Americas, skiing at an absurdly high height, or trekking and gravity assisted bike rides through the Yungas. You can also arrange excursuibs ti Mount Chacaltaya and Moon Valley where you can take in the superlative mountain views. Another option is to visit the Tihuanacu Ruins which are a short journey away close to the Peruvian border. The city is also full of impressive churches and museums, including one dedicated to the history of the Coca plant.

Please be aware that you may not be able to do all these activities during the time you will have in La Paz at the start or finish of your trip with Dragoman, so you may want to consider allowing some extra time here.

Day 3: Livichuco
Tue 17 Sep 2013

This morning we will head to the small community of Livichuco for an overnight stay in this small Andean village. Accommodation will be in very basic shared accommodation but a chance to see an area of Bolivia few tourists ever will.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Overnight stay in the Andean community of Livichuco.	Included in tour

Livichuco

The village of Livichuco lies in a remote location where visitors can stay with a community of people of Aymara origin who delight in sharing their Qaqachaqa culture.
There are several short treks around the community that are possible, with ancient Inca paths and you are also able to share some songs and dancing, discovering the typical instruments of communities in this quiet and charming place.
The community will cook for us and food is typically original, made with local organic products and recipes passed down from generations. Staying here is a great way of giving back to the local community.

Day 4 to 5: Potosi
Wed 18 Sep to Thu 19 Sep 2013

Today we will leave Livichuco after breakfast and head to the colonial mining town of Potosi, the highest town in the world. We stay in a local, friendly hotel. Second day will be free for activities

Activity	Approximate Cost
Head down into the tunnels of the Potosi silver mine	USD 20
Visit the famous Casa de la Moneda museum in Potosi.	USD 3

Potosi

Potosi is a colonial mining town, founded in the sixteenth century after the Spanish discovered huge silver deposits in the nearby Cerro Rico mountain. Situated at over 4000m altitude, high up on the Bolivian altiplano the city can claim to be one of the highest in the world.

Whilst in Potosi you can arrange to visit a mine that is still being worked, which offers a challenging and yet fascinating insight into how mining has shaped the history and culture of this town. Entering a dark maze of tunnels you will descend to four levels below, down to the work face where miners use hammers, chisels and dynamite more reminiscent of the 1800's than the 21st century to dig out the remaining metal. Most of the silver here is long gone - it's tin the miners are looking for now.

If you do choose to head down into the mines it's become a custom to take the miners gifts of dynamite, fuses and cocoa leaves in exchange for their stories of how their working conditions have not changed in centuries. Life is harsh for all who work here but the mines have now all been organised into co-operatives and so at least today the men have a say in their own future. You should note that visiting these primitive mines is not for everybody as it is pretty tiring, you will be in enclosed spaces and it can be dangerous.

Back in the city of Potosi itself, the winding streets are worth a wander. The town has a bit of an air of fading grandeur, many of it's beautiful colonial buildings and plazas having seen better days, but it's a fascinating place to explore nevertheless. You can also visit the "Casa de la Moneda", the old mint, which is a great place to learn more about Potosi's history and the story of the mines.

Day 6: Uyuni

Fri 20 Sep 2013

Today we will journey 190kms to Uyuni, gateway to the salt flats of the Salar de Uyuni. We overnight in a friendly hotel serving the highest pizzas in the world!

Uyuni

Arriving in Uyuni feels a bit like you've reached the end of the road, which in many ways is true. This remote small town sits on the edge of the high altiplano, a wilderness that extends for hundreds of kilometres towards the border with Argentina and Chile. So it's hardly surprising that the town can have a bit of a wild-west feel about it.

Affectionately nicknamed 'La Huja Predilecta de Bolivia', which means "Bolivia's favourite daughter", Uyuni is perhaps best known for its proximity to the Bolivian salt flats known locally as the "Salar de Uyuni". Also in the area and definitely worth a visit is the Cementario de Trenes, a graveyard for the carcasses of old steam engines that have been left here to rust, an unwordly and eerie sight set in the bright altiplano sunshine, set against the background of the distant Salar.

Day 7: Salar De Uyuni

Sat 21 Sep 2013

We venture out on to the salt flats of the Salar de Uyuni in jeeps spending a full day on this stunning location. Great for all those perspective bending photographs.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Take jeeps out onto the dazzling Uyuni Salt Flats	Included in tour

Salar De Uyuni

The Bolivian Salt Flats are a truly unforgettable sight, this is a landscape quite unlike anything you're likely to ever have seen before. The Salar de Uyuni is a dry lake of over 12,000 sq kms made of blinding white interlocking salt crystals. It is Bolivia's largest salt pan and when there's a little water on the flats, it reflects the bright blue sky of the altiplano perfectly, acting like a mirror and making the horizon disappear. The effect is positively eerie. When dry, the Salar becomes a blinding white expanse that stretches for miles and miles, as far as the eye can see.

On the edge of the flats, local workers carve blocks of salt by hand for processing in nearby antiquated factories, covered head to toe in old rags to keep their bodies protected from the harsh conditions. Then when you head out onto the Salar proper, you'll experience this unique "nothingness" of this unusual landscape. Miles and miles of bright white salt. Bizarrely there is a hotel situated out on the flats, where everything is made completely of salt from the walls to the furniture

Day 8: Bolivian Altiplano
Sun 22 Sep 2013

Today we cross the altiplano in a spectacular 320kms drive towards the Chilean border via Laguna Colorado and Laguna Verde. We stay the night in a basic hostel.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Exploration of Bolivia's high Altiplano, Laguna Colorado and Verde	Included in tour

Bolivian Altiplano

The high Bolivian altiplano stretches hundreds of kilometres from the small town of Uyuni out across to the borders with Argentina and Chile. This is real wilderness, there are no roads up here, just a few tracks to follow and you're more likely to see a flamingo or llama than another human being. The only way to cross the altiplano is by travelling in a specialist expedition vehicle like one of our trucks, or local jeeps. The crossing is an adventurous one, with no roads to speak of it's rough travelling and the trip from Uyuni to the border normally takes a couple of days - but it's without a doubt one of the most unforgettable journeys you'll ever make, because the landscape here is out of this world.

Wild and remote, the high altiplano is barren semi desert, but impressive nonetheless. The open plains are dotted by streams and lakes, many of which appear vividly coloured, due to the mineral deposits in the water. In the background the lakes are flanked by the impressive volcanic peaks of the high Bolivian Andes, awe-inspiringly beautiful and undoubtedly some of the most spectacular mountain scenery you'll have ever seen. You'll also pass a few remote villages, Quechua farmers who try their best to eke out a living up here from the rough pasture, grazing a few llamas and alpacas.

The altitude here is considerable and it n be very cold and windy. When travelling here you should be prepared for the cold temperatures and it is worth making sure you have a really good quality sleeping bag.

Day 9 to 10: San Pedro De Atacama
Mon 23 Sep to Tue 24 Sep 2013

We descend from the altiplano and a 150kms drive takes us across the border into Chile. We camp for the night in San Pedro de Atacama in a good campsite and visit the extraordinary Moon Valley, hopeful of a stunning sunset. In the evening there is also the chance to go stargazing (only possible when there is not a full moon).

Border information: Exit Bolivia at Uyuni, enter Chile at San Pedro.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Explore the dramatic landscape of the Moon Valley	Included in tour
Observe the night skies at a Chilean observatory	USD 33

San Pedro De Atacama

San Pedro is a small oasis town in the Atacama desert. It's a quirky little place, low-lying adobe buildings line the narrow streets, leading to a sleepy tree-lined plaza that's home to a pretty white-washed church and a fascinating small museum, home to some interesting mummies and various other Indian artifacts.

Pleasant though the town is, the real attraction here is the surrounding landscape. This part of the Atacama has become well-known as a tourist destination because of the spectacular scenery. Perhaps most well known is the unusual desert landscape of "Moon Valley", just a short distance outside San Pedro, where other-worldly rock formations, unsual layer-cake landscapes and huge dunes combine to create some incredible views. The sunsets here can be amazing, the changing light turning the stone and sand a kaleidescope of different colours, so the end of the day is definitely the best time of day to visit.

There are also a whole host of other activities on offer here, from star-gazing to horse-riding and mountain-biking in the surrounding countryside. The town itself is also a pleasant place just to kick-back and relax, with some good bars and restaurants thanks to the developing tourist-trade.

Day 11: Salta
Wed 25 Sep 2013

A full 550kms drive takes us across the border into Argentina and to the fine Spanish colonial city of Salta. We stay in a simple hotel in the centre of the city.

Border information: Exit Chile at San Pedro, enter Argentina at Paso Jama.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Get the adrenaline pumping with some white water rafting in Salta	USD 40

Salta

Salta is an attractive town in the north west of Argentina. Nicknamed "Salta la Linda" (or "Salta the fair") the city is well known as a handsome town in a beautiful area. Home to some fantastic colonial architecture, the old town centres around the main plaza which is lined with cafes and restaurants, a great place to while away a couple of hours people-watching over a traditional morning snack of a cafe con medialunas (coffee and small croissant like pastries). It is an elegant and relaxed city, with a nice relaxed atmosphere, a perfect place to wander the streets and explore. To get a better view of the city and surrounding area you can take a cablecar from Parque San Martín up to the Cerro San Bernardo view point, and the many churches and the cathedral are also worth a visit. Salta is also home to some fantastic museums, making it a good place to learn a bit more about Argentinian history and culture.

Day 12: Salta

Thu 26 Sep 2013

Today is a non-driving day with free time to explore Salta staying in the same hotel

Day 13: Salta

Fri 27 Sep 2013

We have a short morning drive to a campsite just outside Salta where you have the opportunity to go rafting or get involved in other adventure activities.

Day 14: Cafayate

Sat 28 Sep 2013

150kms drive to Cafayate, lying at the centre of Argentina's principal wine producing region where we will visit a vineyard. We stay at a camp site with good facilities.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Discover the bodegas and stock up on wine in Cafayate	

Cafayate

Cafayate is a small town in north-west Argentina and an important wine-growing area. The surrounding vineyards produce some of the best quality wine in South America, and you should look out for the Torrontes in particular, a distinctive white wine that is typically Argentinian and similar in style to a Sauvignon Blanc or Pinot Grigio. Cafayate itself is small with a sleepy laid-back feel, although it can become busy during Argentinian holiday periods. Many of the local bodegas offer tastings and tours of their wine cellars and this is easily organised while you are here. Also worth seeking out is the local ice-cream parlour, which together with the more usual flavours, also offers red and white wine ice-cream! If wine is not your thing, the area is also popular for walking and mountain-biking, as the gently undulating terrain makes for pleasant hiking and cycling.

Day 15: Quilmes Ruins

Sun 29 Sep 2013

We cover around 400kms as we head south through beautiful scenery, visiting the Quilmes ruins en route. We will camp tonight

Activity	Approximate Cost
Visit the Quilmes ruins	Included in tour

Quilmes Ruins

The ruins of Quilmes are located in Tucaman province in north-west Argentina. The people of Quilmes were an indigenous tribe who inhabited this area as far back as 1000AD, resisting Inca invasions in the 15th and 16th centuries and even holding out against the Spanish for over one hundred years, before finally succombing to a siege led by the colonial powers in 1667. After the siege Spanish took the area over, deporting the few surviving indigenous people to a "reservation" close to Buenos Aires. The 2000 remaining Quilmes Indians were forced to make this 1500 km journey on foot, which meant that many died along the way, never reaching their final destination. At it's height, the city we see the ruins of here would have housed nearly 5000 people, today there are only a handful of Quilmes descendents left in Tucaman. It is interesting to wander among the ruins here today and imagine the city that would once have been.

Day 16 to 18: Rio Ceballos

Mon 30 Sep to Wed 02 Oct 2013

270kms drive via the National Jesuit Museum, to a unique Anglo Argentinean estancia for 3 nights. We will spend time with the Gauchos - learning their skills, go horse riding, hiking and have a traditional asado or Argentinian BBQ.

Activity	Approximate Cost
Spend 3 unique days staying at an Anglo-Argentinian estancia to ride pure-bred horses	Included in tour

Rio Ceballos

To the east of the Andes in the centre of Argentina is the country's second major city, Cordoba. Nearby are the beautiful hills of the Sierra de Cordoba where we will spend three nights at a unique Anglo Argentinean estancia. This has been in the same family for four generations, and is a working cattle ranch, farming the prized Argentinean Aberdeen Angus cattle. Here we will sample the traditional hospitality of the Anglo Argentinean ranching community, with great food straight from the farm. An asado or Argentinian BBQ with local wines will also be enjoyed on one of our nights here. The visit to the estancia is based on horse riding excursions on the beautiful horses here. Daily expeditions will be arranged to ride through the hills to neighbouring estancias. The horses are fabulous and even the most "horse-fearing" feel like Gauchos in a short time. For those who do not like horses, alternative hikes or maybe bike riding trips can be organised. There is also the chance of visiting the local school to see how rural Argentinean children live their lives.

Please note however that there is a weight limit for all riders of 15 stones / 95kg so to ensure the horses are in no way harmed. If you are heavier than this weight then unfortunately you will be unable to ride.

Day 19: Cordoba

Thu 03 Oct 2013

Leaving the Estancia we have a short 70kms drive to the lively university city of Cordoba. We stay in central Cordoba in a hostel

Cordoba

Cordoba is Argentina's second biggest city, located at the heart of the Argentinian Sierras. It's a lively university city and an important economic and commercial centre, which makes for a vibrant busy atmosphere and some excellent nightlife. There is plenty to see and do in the city, from great museums and galleries to beautiful colonial churches and bustling street markets. If shopping's your thing, it's also worth seeking out some of the specialist craft markets that have sprung up thanks to a growing alternative arts scene.

Day 20: Buenos Aires

Fri 04 Oct 2013

An all day drive brings us to the wonderful city of Buenos Aires, where we stay in a centrally located hotel.

Buenos Aires

At the mouth of the River Plate lies Buenos Aires, the cosmopolitan capital of Argentina. It's a buzzing, energetic city that often feels more European than Latin American, so much so that it's often referred to as "the Paris of the South". Not surprising when you consider how much the city has been influenced by immigration, with it's large Italian and Spanish communities.

There is a huge amount to do see and do here and a good place to start is with a city tour, which will help you get your bearings and see all the main sights. You can take in a lot on foot, as the wide streets are very pedestrian friendly and the underground metro system is cheap and easy to navigate. The neighbourhoods of San Telmo, Recoleta and Palermo are certainly all worth exploring, San Telmo for it's olde worlde charm, antique shops and Sunday street market, Palermo for it's unique quirky shops and restaurants and Recoleta is the "Mayfair" of Buenos Aires and home to the La Recoleta cemetry, Eva "Evita" Peron's final resting place. The waterfront area known as La Boca is also worth a look, this slightly down-at-heel neighbourhood is Buenos Aires' most colourful barrio, the ramshackle buildings painted in a rainbow of different bright colours.

In the evenings, you are also spoilt for choice. Buenos Aires has a vibrant nightlife, with a huge number of bars and night clubs to choose from. Restaurants here vary from cheap and cheerful to world class and it's a great place to get stuck into some of Argentina's finest steak and red wine. Of course this is also the home of Tango, and there are many evening Tango shows you can buy tickets for, or if you want a more "real" Tango experience you can check the local papers for details of where tango "milongas" are being held. This is where the locals go to tango, with dances held in school halls, meeting rooms and even warehouses. You might also like to visit the Teatro Colon, one of the world's greatest opera houses - even if you don't go to watch a show, it's usually possible to take a guided tour of the building during the day.

Everywhere you go you'll be surrounded by some fantastic architecture. The Plaza de Mayo is perhaps the most historically interesting - as this is the ste of the Cabillo (original town hall), Casa Rosada (the Presidential Palace) and the cathedral where the body of General San Martin lies. Finally, if you get the chance, try and get hold of tickets for an Argentinean football match while you're here, even if you're not usually a sports fan, the electric atmosphere of a local match is definitely something you'll never forget - tickets are usually available from local tourist agencies - and if you've still got time to spare, why not take the hydrofoil across the water to Uruguay for a day.

Day 21: Buenos Aires

Sat 05 Oct 2013

The trip finishes this morning. Night in hotel is not included tonight. If you wish to stay longer in beautiful Buenos Aires (and we highly suggest so), please contact the Dragoman Sales Team which can arrange extra post accomodation nights for you.

Border information: If you are leaving in Buenos Aires, exit Argentina at Buenos Aires Airport.

Hotel for the night: Hotel Splendid
Hotel Splendid
Avenida Rivadavia 950
Buenos Aires
Argentina
+54 11 4345 2800

Visa Information:

Important Notes

The routes, activities and places visited described in these trip notes are intentions and are meant as a rough guide only.

We intend following the planned route but exact night stops cannot be guaranteed. It sometimes happens that we decide to make a change to our basic planned itinerary. This may be for a variety of reasons - climatic, road or bureaucratic conditions may demand it. By their very nature overland itineraries need to be flexible and the regions that we are travelling through are often unpredictable. We run adventure journeys in off the beaten track areas, often in areas without western infrastructure. You should expect that some these areas do not adhere to western safety standards.

Specific notes

Because of its nature, this itinerary may vary: occasionally road conditions are too adverse during the rainy season (Jan & Feb) to make the crossing from Uyuni to Argentina and we may have to change the route. During the winter months in Argentina and Bolivia we will spend a higher proportion of nights in hotels and less time camping. Kitty may be higher than expected and you should allow extra funds for this and personal funds for more meals out. There may well be snow and you should be aware that it can get very cold at night. Please ensure that you bring a decent sleeping bag and adequate clothes, including thermals.

Physical Preparation

Physical preparation for South America Itineraries

South America is diverse continent from high altitude, to the steamy Amazon, to baking deserts. You should therefore be prepared for the full gambit of climates. There will be time for hikking and other activities such as horse riding and you will need to be reasonably fit. Overland travel can be demanding - long, rough travel days, dusty conditions can be challenging to some. You will need to be fit enough to help every day with the camp chores (cooking, washing up, general camp set up) as well as putting up and taking down your own tent. There are some long driving days and some early morning starts. The step up into the overland vehicle, while not overly high can become tiring and you need to judge yourself to be physically fit enough to haul yourself up and down the step at least 8-10 times a day. By and large the South America trips have a good range of hotel accommodation mixed up with camping so that life is not too rough.

Note on camping kit for South America

There is a miss conception about being cheaper to buy camping equipment in South America. Every where in South America is easy to find good quality camping kit if you want to fly light, but prices are very similar to UL if not more. Please keep this in mind when you are planning your trip.

Altitude

Please note that this trip spends time above 2800 metres/9200 feet where it is possible for travellers to experience some adverse effects on your health due to the altitude, potentially including Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS), High Altitude Cerebral Edema (HACE) and High Altitude Pulmonary Edema (HAPE).

Because of this it is very important that you make yourself aware of the cause and effects of travelling at altitude and monitor your health during this trip.

For further information please click here to download our AMS information sheet or check out the following website www.high-altitude-medicine.com

Your leader will also hand you a copy of the AMS information sheet during your trip as well as holding a short meeting prior to travelling to altitudes above 2800m/9200ft for the first time.

If you are starting your trip in a destination above 2800m/9200ft we strongly advise reading this information prior to arrival.

Visa Information

Most countries we visit on our travels will require visas. Some are best obtained before you leave home and others can be obtained en-route. Whilst the ultimate responsibility for obtaining visas is yours, we will endeavour to assist you wherever possible.

The visa requirements for your trip vary depending on where you are from and where you are going. The information provided is given in good faith and we do try to keep the visa information as up to date as possible. Please be aware though that rules do change, often without prior warning, which is why it is important that you check for yourself.

For visas that are needed in advance you can choose to submit the applications directly to the relevant embassy /consulate. However our recommendation is that you use a visa agent to assist you with your applications. While this does increase the cost it will make the process much easier for you. Dragoman have teamed up with 'The Visa Machine' to create a safe, secure, hassle-free way of obtaining visas and visa advice. Our unique link within their website is designed to make the visa process as straightforward as possible. Simply go to https://dragoman.thevisamachine.com and click on your region of travel followed by your trip route and 'The Visa Machine' will advise you about not only the required visas but also the dates by which you should apply. 'The Visa Machine' can then assist you in the actual visa application thus taking all the worry and hassle out of the process. This should apply for ALL nationalities and countries of residence.

As you will need to submit your passport together with your applications, we recommend that you avoid making any travel plans in the weeks leading up to your departure. However if you do need to travel in this period please let us know as soon as possible so that we can help you work out the options for your visa application process.

Bolivia

Nationals of most countries including Australia, the EU, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Switzerland, Turkey and the UK do not need a visa for tourist visits of limited duration to Bolivia. South Africans however DO require a visa which is advisable to obtain before departure.

USA citizens also DO require a visa to enter Bolivia. Please note: to support your visa application you will need a copy of the Dragoman voucher that you receive after purchasing your trip, as well as a copy of the itinerary, which you can obtain from the Trip Notes for your specific trip on our website.

Chile

Nationals of most countries including Australia, USA, the EU, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, South Africa, Switzerland, Turkey and the UK do not need a visa for tourist visits of limited duration to Chile

Argentina

Nationals of most countries including Australia, USA, the EU, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, South Africa, Switzerland, Turkey and the UK do not need a visa for tourist visits of limited duration to Argentina.

The Argentine government has recently introduced a reciprocity tax which applies to Canadian, US and Australian citizens. The amounts are as follows:

ARGENTINA RECIPROCITY TAX:

The Argentine government charges a reciprocity tax which applied to Canadian, US and Australian citizens. The amounts are as follows:

Australians - US$ 100 (multiple entry for up to 1 year from date of issue)

Canadians - US$75 (single entry) or US$ 150 (multiple entry for up to 5 years from date of issue)

Americans - US$40 (multiple entry for up to 10 years from date of issue)

Fee can be paid on line through the following websites:: www.migraciones.gov.ar orwww.provinciapagos.com.ar. For instructions on how to process this payment, please visithttp://cnyor.mrecic.gov.ar/userfiles/Online_payment_instructions_0.pdf

IMPORTANT: Up to June 2013 computers will be made available at Ezeiza International Airport and Jorge Newbery Airport (Aeroparque) to facilitate this online payment to travellers who fail to make this payment prior to arrival. We expect this will potentially cause long delays to those travellers so we strongly advise to pay this fee before arriving to Argentina.

Flying to Central or South America via the USA

If your flight to central or South America is via the USA then you MUST obtain an Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) before travel.

An ESTA can be obtained online via the following link and paying the appropriatefee - https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov/esta/

Personal Spending

Based on the range that previous travellers have spent on trips in South America, we recommend you allow between a minimum of US$15 and a maximum of US$30 per day. This amount is usually lower in countries such as Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru but slightly higher elsewhere.
This will covers expenses such as your drinks, meals whilst out and also when staying in hotels, souvenirs, tips and personal permits.

What else you need to know

Currencies & Cash

It is not really worth trying to buy local currencies before you travel. Bear in mind that many countries have strict regulations about the amount of their own local currency you are allowed to import - if you are found with amounts in excess of the allowed amounts, it may well be confiscated!

For obvious security reasons we hesitate to recommend you bring lots of cash with you, a sensible mix of cash and ATM cards is best. Most of our past passengers have said they wished they had been told to bring more cash. Apart from the convenience of being able to change money in many more places, you will sometimes get a much better exchange rate for cash.

More and more people are choosing to travel with cash passports such as TravelEx cards (you can visit www.cashpassport.com for further information on these). This is a very secure way of carrying your money whilst travelling. You treat them exactly like an ATM card and draw out local currency from an ATM within each country.

Travellers cheques have become increasingly difficult to change in South America with passengers and our leaders experiencing huge frustration and numerous hours spent trying to find a bank which will change travellers cheques. For this reason we no longer accept them on our trips.

You should take a mixture of denomination notes. However due to a recent counterfeit scam central banks in several South American countries (Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia and Chile) have temporarily banned the circulation of $100 notes bearing a series 2001 production date and a serial number starting with the letters CB or CF and ending in B2. The serial number is printed in green on the emblem. Banks and moneychangers in most countries will now only accept bills with a metallic strip running top to bottom of the bill and which are dated from 2003 or later. You should not take worn or damaged notes, or any that have been written on. Cash machines are readily available in most areas but are not always reliable therefore we recommend that you do not rely on them as your only source of cash. Credit cards such as Visa, MasterCard and American Express are the most commonly accepted, but be prepared for very high commission charges. Please do not rely on cards for daily use, as they are not always accepted outside of larger towns and cities. If you are taking traveller's cheques, we recommend that you should only take those issued by American Express. Please note that Thomas Cook traveller's cheques may be used in some places, but are becoming more difficult to change. Brazil can be difficult for changing forex, it’s handy to have a cash card as backup. Please bring a mixture of small and large denominations as in more remote areas it can be hard to change amounts over $50. Kitty contributions should be at least half in cash and be in the same denominations and currencies as suggested above. Any proportion of kitty contributions paid in travellers cheques should be increased to cover the commission charge incurred in exchanging them.

Pre and post trip accommodation and connecting flights

At Dragoman we believe you should make the most of the places you visit, so if you would like to see more of your joining or finishing point cities, why not book additional accommodation to extend your stay. Dragoman can take away

the hassle of time zones and language barriers by making the booking for you. This accommodation is only available at the joining or finishing city of your trip, immediately before or after the trip you are travelling on.

While Dragoman is happy to assist with booking your pre and post trip accommodation, it is important that you understand you may be able to book your own room at a cheaper rate directly through the hotel or on the internet. Our additional accommodation prices are based on the hotel's rate plus an administration fee. Please note our rates do not reflect last minute walk in rates or internet specials.

We can also book arrival airport transfers for you as long as we have your flight arrival details. These are normally payable in cash upon arrival, however we do have pre paid transfers in a few destinations.

Please contact our reservations team for details of the accommodation and transfers that we can offer as not all hotels offer this service.

Accommodation on tour

Dragoman overland trips are designed for shared accommodation, whether camping or staying in hotels and therefore do not involve a single supplement. Single travellers will share with people of the same sex for the duration of the trip, in accommodation ranging from twin to multi-share. The type and variety of accommodation is determined by conditions on each of our routes. The campsites will range from rather basic to those with excellent facilities, including swimming pools, restaurants and bars. In some cases it may also be possible to upgrade locally to bungalows, lodges or even tree-houses. One of the highlights of overlanding is that in more remote areas we will wild camp. This allows us to get far away from the tourist crowds to some beautiful, secluded spots. We will also arrange as many village or local homestays as possible, allowing us to get close to indigenous populations and ensures our money stays within local communities.

Group size?

The maximum group size we take on our overland journeys ranges from 19 to 22 depending on the geographical location, however the average number of passengers is more likely to be around 16.

Please note that there is an overlap of 2 trips in Zanzibar. This means a group starting a trip in Nairobi for example will visit Zanzibar at the same time as groups starting their trips in Dar es Salaam. In practical terms this means there could be up to 44 group members in Zanzibar at the same time.

Who travels with Dragoman?

Our passengers come from around the world and are always an interesting mix of nationalities and ages. On average there is a pretty even split, males to females and between solo travellers, couples and small groups of friends. We believe that overlanding should be open to as many people as possible and so although we have a minimum age limit of 18, as long as you are fit, healthy and passionate about travel, we are happy to take you, whatever your age is. One of the beauties of group travel is the camaraderie and friendships that are formed along the way and as well as the variety of people that you will meet.

Our Community

At any time before or after you book you can join our community - Dragoland. This is a great place to ask questions before you travel and catch up with your fellow travellers once your trip has finished. You can share photos, videos and stories You can also download a selection of free travel apps. See the home page to sign in, it's free and easy.

We also have a Facebook page where travellers regularly swap info with each other - you can join here

Our crew and guides

Our crew are passionate about travel and always up for adventure. It takes someone special to become a Dragoman leader. Our crew undergo the most intensive training program of all overland companies, spending 10 weeks learning the ropes at our base in Suffolk, UK and then up to six months on the road as a trainee. On all Dragoman overlanding trips two western crew who are responsible for the group and the overall organisation will accompany you. While not being guides in the traditional sense you can expect them to have a broad knowledge of the places visited and to offer suggestions of things to do and see. In East and Southern Africa we will also have an African camp master/cook who is in charge of running the camp and organising all of the meals. Their knowledge of the local produce makes shopping at the markets great fun and you will learn how to prepare and cook some unusual dishes. In the rest of Africa, South America and the majority of Central Asia and China we use local guides who may stay with us for just a few hours or will actually travel with us for some or all of the journey. In these cases they become a third crew member and are able to offer their local knowledge as well as a real insight into the lives of the local people.

(If travelling in East & Southern Africa, also please see the note about our code-share crew)

Your tour leader has a duty of care to all of their passengers and therefore they have the authority to ask passengers to leave the trip if they require medical assistance, are behaving in an anti-social manner or refuse to comply with local laws and customs. In all matters relating to the trip, the leader's decision will be final and we appreciate your respect of this.

Medical conditions

We ask all of our passengers to declare any pre-existing medical conditions and in some cases you will be asked to complete one of our medical questionnaires. For trips that travel to areas of high altitude we also require all passengers to complete an altitude questionnaire. The ratings for each trip are a good indication of how challenging they are and in some cases passengers should be prepared for some long driving days and possible limited facilities. We are always happy to give extra advice if you have additional concerns.

Vaccinations

Recommended vaccinations and other health protection measures vary according to region and recent bulletins issued by health authorities. It is essential to get the latest advice on the region(s) you are planning to travel in. It is essential that you check with either your doctor or a travel clinic in good time before you travel.

In the UK we have been working with Nomad Travel for many years and their website has comprehensive, up to date vaccination and health information. Dragoman customers will receive a 10% discount off all vaccinations given at Nomad Travel clinics.

A good source of up to date information is the World Health Organisation - http://www.who.int/en/

Malaria

Get expert advice before travelling about types of malaria pills and take them as instructed. Recommended types do change from time to time and from area to area. Consult your vaccination centre for the most up-to-date requirements

The mosquito usually bites between the hours of dusk and dawn and so covering up by wear long-legged and long-sleeved clothing, preferably light coloured and buttoned at the wrists can help. Do not sleep without closing windows, tent doors or, if sleeping out, use a mosquito net. Wear repellent applied directly to the skin or soaked into clothing.

Treating clothes and mosquito nets with a Permetherin solution provides significant protection. It should be available at most travel stores. Mosquito coils are useful on still nights, in hotel rooms but cannot be used inside the tents.

Meals and group participation

On an overland journey you are more than just a passenger, you're part of the crew, pitching in to set up camp, shop for food, cook and generally help out. We operate a rota system, dividing the group into smaller units of 5 or 6 people, so that these duties are shared equally amongst the group. These jobs will include things like collecting water and firewood, loading the back locker, supervising the kitty and food stores etc. While camping on overland journeys, all meals will be included in the kitty and this means that you will be working as a group to prepare meals and cook for your group. (On trips south of Nairobi we have a cook on board the truck, however you will still be required to help prepare meals). If you have any dietary requirements please tell us at the time of booking and also remind your crew at your welcome meeting. A typical camp breakfast might be toast with spreads, cereal and something hot such as eggs or pancakes as well as tea and coffee. Lunch is almost always a sandwich heaped high with healthy salad and assorted fillings, with fruit to follow. Dinner might be a BBQ, risotto, pasta dish and there is always the chance to try some local cooking. Generally our passengers find the more they put into a trip, the more they benefit from it.

Responsible tourism & code of conduct

Dragoman is committed to ensuring that we have a positive impact on local communities and that we implement policies to minimise any negative impact on the local environment. We are dedicated to making sure that we adopt a responsible attitude to the areas through which we travel and believe that our trips should benefit the local people and their environment. Dragoman recognises that we are guests of local communities and strive to make these communities our partners, so that they benefit directly from our visit.

You can find full details of Dragoman's responsible tourism policy linked from the home page. All passengers are required to obey all laws of the countries through which we pass. This particularly applies to the smuggling of contraband and possession of narcotic drugs, firearms, antiquities and ivory. Any passenger found contravening such laws or customs may be required to leave the trip immediately with no refund of the trip price.

Overland travel and security

One of the real advantages of overland travel is that the vehicle provides a very real level of security when travelling. There is no doubt that a properly equipped overland vehicle, with safes, fully lockable doors and windows is an obvious advantage when travelling in much of the world. We recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt whilst travelling

for the safe-keeping of your passport, air tickets, cash and other valuable items (although most of these can be locked in the safe whilst you are on the trip) and advise passengers to leave any valuable jewellery, watches etc at home. Generally speaking, you will not be travelling on local public transport and will have the added security of travelling in a group with experienced crew on hand to offer advice.

Please note: Any personal effects that are left on the truck, even if they are stored in the safe, are left at your own risk and Dragoman cannot be held responsible for any damage or theft that may occur.

The safety of our passengers, leaders and operators is a major priority of Dragoman. With this in mind we monitor world events very closely. By the very nature of the adventure travel that we take, there are risks and hazards that are inherent in our itineraries. Dragoman makes operational decisions based on informed advice from a number of sources:

The British Foreign and Commonwealth Office travel advice

Reports from other travel companies and local suppliers

Leaders reports from off the road

Local contacts we have built up over 29 years of experience

Many national governments provide a regularly updated advice service on safety issues involved with international travel. You should always make yourself aware of the travel advice before you book and again before you travel. Below are links to some of the websites

Britain. http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travelling-and-living-overseas/travel-advice-by-country

Australia. http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/

New Zealand. http://www.safetravel.govt.nz/

United States. http://travel.state.gov/travel/travel_1744.html

Canada. http://www.voyage.gc.ca/countries_pays/menu-eng.asp

Dragoman has comprehensive passenger liability protection and tour operator insurance. These policies have total indemnities of £3,000,000 and £10,000,000 respectively. This is in addition to local vehicle insurance and your personal travel insurance.

Emergency contact

We have a dedicated 24 hour telephone number which should only be used once you have left the UK and in the event of a real emergency. Should you need to call the number, we will do what we can to help but please bear in mind that real progress or action may not be possible until normal office hours.

If your flight is delayed or cancelled, please let us know and then make your way to the joining hotel as instructed in theses trip notes. If you cannot get through leave a message and a contact number as these will be regularly checked and the crew informed if necessary.

Emergency Number: +44 (0) 7985106564.

Insurance

It is a condition of booking that you have comprehensive travel insurance. Without evidence of valid travel insurance you will not be allowed to start the trip.

Whatever policy you choose, you must ensure that it is designed for adventure/overland travel. As such it must cover you for adventure activities such as white water rafting, trekking, horse-riding and that the 24 Hour Emergency Assistance Company must be experienced in handling situations in developing countries – for example they have the ability to arrange repatriation from remote areas such as the Sahara or if you were trekking in the Andes. Please double check if you have annual travel and/or credit card policies to ensure they have the cover you require, as many of these policies are not able to cope with adventure travel to remote areas. We recommend that any policy has the following minimum levels of cover: Medical (incl. repatriation) £5,000,000 Personal Liability £5,000,000 Cancellation and Curtailment £5,000 Loss of Baggage, personal effects, money and other inclusions are down to personal choice.

Issues on the trip

While we always endeavour to provide the best possible holiday experience, due to the nature of travel and the areas we visit sometimes things can and do go wrong. Should any issue occur while you are on your trip it is imperative that

you discuss this with your group leader or our local partner straight away so that they can do their best to rectify the problem and save any potential negative impact on the rest of your trip.

We recognise that there may be times when your group leader may not be able to resolve a situation to your satisfaction. If this is the case please contact our customer relations department on customer_relations@dragoman.co.uk. You may also choose to provide details in your feedback questionnaire which we ask you to complete at the end of your trip but we do ask you to be aware that it is very difficult for us to provide any practical help after the trip is complete.

Passports

Check that your passport will still be valid for 6 months after the end of the trip - this is important as some countries WILL refuse entry to anyone whose passport is due to expire. A temporary or "visitor's" passport is not valid on our trips. You will need to provide us with your passport details prior to departing for you trip. If you change your passport please remember to inform us.

Luggage & Kit List

Although you will not have to carry your main bag long distances you will need to help load and unload them onto the truck. For this reason we recommend that you use a backpack or soft bag rather than a heavy suitcase. During your trip your main luggage will be kept in the back locker so you will also need a small daypack. This can be used to carry your camera, water bottle and other personal effects for daily use.

The size of baggage that can be brought on this tour is limited by the locker space on the truck. Different trucks have different-sized lockers however to be safe we recommend that your bag be no larger than 66cm deep, 30cm wide, and 30cm high. The weight limit for luggage on all trucks is maximum 20kg. Backpacks should not have an external frame unless it can be easily removed and stored separately to avoid damaging other people's luggage.

Your clothes and equipment should be appropriate for the conditions you are travelling in. On overland trips Dragoman will provide all camping equipment apart from sleeping bags and ground mats (except on routes between Nairobi and Cape Town where ground mats are provided).

The clothes and equipment should be appropriate for the conditions you are travelling in, which will vary depending on which part of the world you're heading to. On overland trips Dragoman will provide all camping equipment apart from sleeping bags and ground mats*, so you'll need to bring those with you. Think about the climate and altitude of the areas you'll be travelling to, there's nothing worse than being cold at night so it's worth investing in a decent sleeping bag if it's likely to get cold. And remember even when it's warm during the day, it can often get cold at night, particularly in desert regions.

**Ground mats are provided on our non "in-depth" overland trips that run in South and East Africa, between Nairobi and Cape Town.*

For a general idea of what you need this list provides a guide:

- Sleeping bag - Check the expected climate en route. Nights in desert and mountain regions can be very cold in winter months
- Mattress or compressed foam
- A day pack is useful for short hikes in the countryside, wandering around cities, etc and also for keeping inside the vehicle for items used during the day
- 2 sets of comfortable travelling clothes (light, easily washable cotton clothes are best)
- 1 set of casual but smart clothes for evenings out. Women should bring a skirt that covers their knees and a scarf for visiting places of worship
- 2 pairs of shorts
- Sun hat or warm hat if trekking
- 1 pair of sunglasses
- Warm sweater/fleeces
- 1 waterproof jacket with hood
- 1 pair of comfortable walking shoes/boots (or ankle height canvas jungle boots)
- 1 pair of sandals or flip-flops
- Underwear and socks (thermals are also a good idea if you are travelling to altitude or to the desert as it can get very cold at night)
- Swimwear
- 2 small towels
- Washing kit, including a small mirror
- Clothes washing detergent, small scrubbing brush & washing line (just a length of cord)
- Head torch/flashlight with spare batteries & bulbs (only the 3 standard sizes of round 1.5v batteries are widely available en route)

- Passport photos (average of 2 per country for which visas will be applied for en route)
- Good water bottle at least 1 litre
- A pouch or money belt worn inside your clothing, or unobtrusive pocket sewn into the inside of a pair of loose fitting trousers, is a must.
- Alarm clock
- Pocket calculator (useful when exchanging money)
- Writing materials & notebook/diary
- Multi purpose knife
- Cotton sheet sleeping bag (or sheet folded and sewn up on 2 sides). It will help keep your sleeping bag clean, and can be used on its own on warm nights.
- Mosquito net - The tents supplied by us have mosquito netting and you will only need a net if you think you will sleep out under the stars a lot of the time.
- "Wet Ones" (moistened tissues) and hand gel
- Toilet paper – this can be purchased almost everywhere en-route but one roll is worth packing
- Assorted sized plastic bags - protects clothing and equipment from dust and damp

For a comprehensive kit lists take a look at the Dragoman kit list that Nomad Travel have created. Dragoman customers will receive a 10% discount on all equipment purchased either online or in store. Click to see the kit lists www.nomadtravel.co.uk/kitlist/overlanders-kit-list

Water

The sale of bottled water contributes to an enormous environmental problem around the world. In addition to the water in bottles, the production of a 1 litre plastic bottle takes 2 liters of water and 200ml of oil. A large proportion end up in limited landfill or discarded in waterways and natural environments.

Please avoid the purchase of bottled water by using the chemically sterilized water stored in the purpose built storage tank or in water jerry cans in your Overland vehicle. You are free to refill your bottle as many times a day as you like. You are helping the environment and your hip pocket!

Personal medical kit

All of our trucks have a fully stocked medical kit onboard for use in emergency situations only. Therefore in addition to this we recommend that you purchase your own personal medical kit. In the UK we have teamed up with Nomad Travel Stores and Clinics to produce the Dragoman Travel Medical Kit. It has been designed in conjunction with the truck kits and contains everything you would need for any minor accidents. For more details please visit their website:

nomadtravel.co.uk/catalog/view/dragoman-medical-kit

Electrical equipment

Your vehicle will be equipped with a 12 volt socket so to charge your iPod, MP3 player, camera, laptop and mobile phone you will need a DC 12 volt adapter - the type that can be used from a cigarette lighter in your car. Please be aware that only one piece of equipment can be charged at a time and it will not be allowed if there is a risk of running the vehicle's batteries low. Batteries may also be recharged from hotel room wall sockets and the majority of the campsites we stay at have electricity points so please bring along your normal charging adapters as well. You will need to ensure that you have the correct country adaptor for your specific charger.

The kitty

The Kitty is a group fund paid separately from the trip price at the start of your trip which covers all things that the whole group does, such as:

- Hotel accommodation and campsite fees
- Meals whilst camping (not in hotels)
- Activities listed as included (e.g. National Park entrances, excursions and local guides).

It is an amount that each passenger puts into a central fund and is monitored by the Dragoman crew. It's payable in full at the start of your trip, and in instalments at the start of each individual trip on combination trips

The kitty system is very unique to over landing as it allows us to have flexibility on the road. You can see exactly how your money is being spent and ensure that you are getting the best value by buying locally.

The kitty advertised in the brochure is an estimate at the time of printing. Local inflation and costs vary throughout the year and so we review kitties on a monthly basis. Once you book your trip it is very important that you check our website on a regular basis and just before departure for any changes to the kitty amount.

Your kitty can be paid in a mixture of US Dollar cash and local currency and most of our travellers choose to bring a cash passport with them for withdrawing local currency (you can visit www.cashpassport.com for further information

on these). This is a very secure way of carrying your money whilst travelling. You treat them exactly like an ATM card and draw out local currency from an ATM to give to your leader within each country.

Travellers cheques have become increasingly difficult to change around the world with passengers and our leaders experiencing huge frustration and numerous hours spent trying to find a bank which will change travellers cheques. For this reason we no longer accept them on our trips.

Continuing your trip

Having an amazing trip and met a great group of people? Having too much fun to go home yet? If on your trip you decide you would like to continue, then why not speak to your trip leader who can advise you of the cost and availability of continuing your journey.

Contingency emergency fund

Sometimes, civil or political unrest, or reasons beyond Dragoman's control (e.g. a natural disaster), can mean that an itinerary is disrupted and we have to make a contingency plan. This may involve hiring alternate transport or even the whole group flying over an area. Although Dragoman will help organise travel arrangements, in circumstances outside Dragoman's control you should be prepared to contribute towards the costs and therefore we ask you to bring along a 'Contingency Fund' of USD400. In almost all cases trips run smoothly and this fund is therefore never used. We also recommend that you take along an internationally recognised credit or charge card with a decent limit in case of emergencies, such as medical treatment en route, or even the need to be repatriated; though these occurrences are rare. Remember that travel insurance policies usually only refund you for expenses after you have already paid out.

Tipping

Tipping is entirely voluntary. The Dragoman crew may be travelling with you for many weeks and usually they become good friends with most members of the group. It is sometimes easy to forget that they do work hard to ensure that you do have a great trip. If you feel you would like to tip them, they certainly would appreciate it. On a number of our trips, we also use a local guide as well as our own Dragoman crew. These guides live and travel with you through their home country and it is usual to tip them when they leave. We recommend USD10 to USD15 per person.

These trip notes have been compiled to help you prepare for your journey, once you have booked. They include the full itinerary and dates, information and kit lists, meeting hotels, insurance, vaccinations, visas, and other information that will help you get ready for your trip.

Please ensure you have an up to date version of these Trip Notes

These trip notes were printed on 22/05/2013