



Global Health Fellows

NORTHERN PACIFIC GLOBAL HEALTH RESEARCH
FELLOWS TRAINING CONSORTIUM

Peru Handbook

Global Health Fellowship Program

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NPGH CONSORTIUM IN PERU



Consortium Universities

- University of Washington
- University of Hawaii
- University of Minnesota

Partner Institutions

- Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia
- Asociación Civil Impacta Salud y Educación
- Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos

Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia (UPCH): UPCH is a private non-profit university founded in 1961 with 8 schools providing undergraduate and post-graduate education in medicine, dentistry, public health, nursing, sciences and philosophy, veterinary medicine and zoology, psychology, and education. The School of Public Health (FASPA) at UPCH was founded in 1998 and is the only School of Public Health in Peru. Dr. Patty Garcia, a prior UW Fogarty AIDS International Research Training Program trainee, was elected Dean of this School in 2011. FASPA's mission is to generate, apply, and disseminate knowledge relevant to health promotion, disease prevention, and treatment in human populations. FASPA has played a prominent role in training public health officials of the Peruvian Ministry of Health and other governmental and nongovernmental (NGO) organizations that develop and implement public health policy. The School provides a series of Master's degree programs, diploma and certificate courses, and continuing education in health and health administration in Lima and several provinces.

UPCH currently has more than 140 active projects funded by national and international agencies. Peru (and Mexico) rank second only to Brazil as the Latin American countries receiving the most NIH funding. This long-standing history of success reflects strong collaborations with other countries and institutions. The UW and UPCH have successfully competed for research and training grants in areas of communicable and non-communicable diseases – contributing to the emergence of many health scientists. In the past 15 years, 91 Peruvian trainees have received public health and biomedical ethics training at the UW, including 21 MPH or PhD degrees, with over 100 joint

publications. All have returned to work in Peru in academia, governmental, and nongovernmental organizations. Reciprocally, UPCH has trained more than 50 US medical and public health students through the Fogarty Multidisciplinary International Research Training (MIRT) Program and Fogarty International Clinical Research Scholars and Fellows Program. These training collaborations have resulted in the development of joint UW-UPCH research projects on HIV, STIs, TB, HPV, and reproductive tract infections (RTIs); and research training grants – including an ICOHRTA-AIDS/TB award, a FIRCA award, an NIH CIPRA award, two Frameworks in Global Health awards, a Bioinformatics award, a GRIP award and a Wellcome Trust-funded urban community randomized trial in 20 Peruvian cities.

Asociación Civil Impacta Salud y Educación (IMPACTA): Established in 2000, IMPACTA is an NGO founded by former UW AIRTP trainee, Dr. Jorge Sanchez, to perform HIV and STD research in Peru. In 2006, Dr. Sanchez received NIH funding to establish an IMPACTA Clinical Trials Unit (CTU) with 9 clinical research sites in Peru. These sites are supported by the HIV Vaccine Trials Network (HVTN), HIV Prevention Trials Network (HPTN), Microbicide Trials Network (MTN), and the AIDS Clinical Trials Group (ACTG). IMPACTA also collaborates on the Fogarty-funded Andean CIPRA, the ICOHRTA-AIDS/TB, INSIGHT, and several other NIH-funded projects. The IMPACTA Laboratory has over 2,400 square feet and is equipped to serve both HVTU and HPTU projects, with capacity to perform cultures, HIV and HSV-2 screening by ELISA, HIV detuned ELISA, Western blot confirmation, real-time PCR quantification, CD4 count and viral load.

Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos (UNMSM): Founded in 1551, the UNMSM is the oldest and largest public university in South America. The University offers 76 Master's degree and 21 Doctoral degree programs in five academic areas: Health Sciences, Humanities, Basic Sciences, Engineering, and Business. There are 46 Schools within these five academic areas. The Health Sciences area includes Schools of Medicine, Pharmacy, Midwifery, Nutrition, Veterinary Medicine, Public Health, Nursing, Dentistry, Psychology, Biologic Sciences, and Medical Technology; in 2008, there were 1,048 postgraduates enrolled in these Schools. The School of Medicine has 50 postgraduate residency programs with 35 affiliated training hospital, institutes and clinical sites. Other relevant Schools include: Social Work, Law and Anthropology.

Funded largely by the Fogarty International Scholar infrastructure awards, Dr. Jorge Alarcón, past Dean of the School of Public Health and current Director of UNMSM's Instituto de Medicina Tropical (IMT), developed a multimedia classroom and epidemiology website that serves as a repository for educational materials for clinical research methods and analysis, a point for training and communication for epidemiologists throughout Peru, and a data collection site for studies of HIV and STD in pregnant women. The renovated wing includes working space for the UW-Peru Global Health Fellows and Scholars and Peruvian epidemiology students. In addition to the Epidemiology section, the IMT has laboratories and clinical space for research and clinical studies in parasitology, bacteriology, virology retrovirology, and immunology.

UNMSM has hosted a UW Fogarty International Scholar each year since 2004. UNMSM has a long history of training the nation's epidemiologists and has continuing education programs for epidemiologists working for the Ministry of Health in all departments of Peru. In addition, UNMSM receives funding from the Global Fund for prevention of maternal-child transmission of HIV and is the major site for an NIH-funded study of HTLV infection in blood donors. With the largest Peruvian network of medical subspecialty training programs, and as the largest public university in Peru, UNMSM offers a wide variety of mentoring and clinical research training opportunities in multiple potential disciplines.

COUNTRY OVERVIEW



Health Statistics

Total population: 29,165,000

Gross national income per capita (PPP international \$): 7,950

Life expectancy at birth m/f (years): 74/77

Probability of dying under five (per 1 000 live births): 21

Probability of dying between 15 and 60 years m/f (per 1,000 population): 123/96

Total expenditure on health per capita (Intl \$, 2009): 400

Total expenditure on health as % of GDP (2009): 4.6

Health & Healthcare

In Peru, the HIV/AIDS epidemic revolves around core groups of men who have sex with men (MSM) and female sex workers (FSW). The HIV-1 seroprevalence in Lima is approximately 20% in MSM and between 1 and 5% in FSW. This contrasts with rates in

the general population of 0.5% among pregnant women. The dynamics of the HIV epidemic in Peru highlight the importance of targeting core groups who are often marginalized and not readily accessible using standard public health measures with interventions to promote HIV testing and prevent transmission. Prostitution in Peru, although not legal, does happen, and requires periodic STI examination at a Public Health Clinic. Both FSW and MSM are eligible to receive health care at these clinics. With the arrival of the Global Fund in Peru, all HIV-infected people are eligible to receive HAART therapy without charge. University of Washington collaborative research efforts in Peru target FSW and MSM populations and design and conduct interventions aimed at preventing and treating HIV and STI infections in core groups as well as in adolescents and in the general population. Current funded projects include epidemiology and neurologic manifestations of retroviral (HIV, HTLV-1 and 2) infections in high-risk populations (FSW, MSM) and indigenous groups, HPV acquisition in FSW, operational research regarding HIV and TB coinfections, tropical infections of the central nervous system, and cerebrovascular disease.

PREPARING FOR YOUR TRIP

Financial

Please notify your credit card and banking institutions that you will be abroad for 11 months to prevent problems accessing funds while you are abroad. When using a credit card, there are places that require your original passport, and places that accept a copy or even your driver's license. There are unfortunately no consistent methods; you will have to just try your luck, but it is more advisable to use cash whenever you can as fraud can be a problem. It is generally safe to withdraw money from ATMs at banks and supermarkets; be more cautious withdrawing from ATMs in small bodegas or remote places.

The exchange rate during 2013 – 2014 has been around 2.75 – 2.83. You will find money changers (wearing blue vests in Miraflores/San Isidro area) that change USD to Peruvian soles or at Casas de Cambio (Exchange Houses). Ask for the daily “tipo de cambio” (“exchange rate”) and check with the rates posted on the Casa de Cambio before accepting the rate from the money changers on the street.

A second way to change money is to use USD to make purchases in supermarkets (Wong, Metro, Vivanda, Plaza Veja, Tottus). The exchange rate is often better and more stable at these supermarkets, and the prices of your groceries will be listed along with the price in soles. If you pay in USD, you can request your change in soles or USD.

Always be sure to check the bills and coins that you are given. The amount number should be reflective under the light. Counterfeit soles are a big problem in Peru. Also make sure that your USD bills are not ripped, bent or have markings as most places (including supermarkets) will not accept them.

Entry/Exit Requirements

Passport & Visa

Upon entering Peru, your passport and white immigration form will be stamped and a number of days will be given for your tourist visa. Usually you will be given 90 days, but you may request up to 184 days (6 months). Make sure NOT to say you are working or studying – just traveling or visiting friends/family. Keep the white immigration form in a safe place as you will need it to exit the country.

Visit the Embassy of Peru website for the most current visa information:

www.embassyofperu.org

Vaccines

Check the CDC's web page for up-to-date information on recommended vaccines for traveling to Peru:

http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/peru?s_cid=ncezid-dgmg-travel-single-001

Other Documentation

Whenever traveling, it is important for you to be prepared in case your passport and other important documents are lost or stolen. Therefore, we recommend that all travelers have a Xerox copy of their important documents as well as an electronic copy. You may also email or mail a copy of these documents to the Support Center (hobbsn@uw.edu) for safe keeping in your personnel file.

Notes:

- Make sure that you keep the white immigration form (received upon entry into Peru) with your passport. When exiting the country, you will be asked to provide this form. There is a fine for not presenting the form. You can replace it at the Immigration Office (see below) by paying a fee, but you will need it to exit the country. In addition, various hotels waive the 18% tax (VAT) if you present a copy of your Andean immigration card.
- If you overstay your tourist visa, you will be charged a fine upon leaving, at the airport or border crossing. The amount of the fine is not clear – some say that it is \$1 per day, while others have been asked for \$20 or more and/or “informal” payments. You can request a visa extension in Lima at the Immigration Office in Breña (Av. España and Av. Arica). Use form F-4, which can be found in the lobby of the Immigration Office: <http://www.migraciones.gob.pe/index.php/quienes-somos/oficinas-en-lima/>

Traveler Security Registration & Emergency Contacts

Emergency Contacts

All trainees should provide emergency contact information to the Support Center at the start of their training experience. This information will be kept private but is important to have on file in case of an emergency that requires our assistance.

Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)

Sign up for the State Department's free Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (formerly known as “Travel Registration” or “Registration with Embassies”) to receive the latest travel updates and information. When you sign up, you will automatically receive the most current information they compile about the country where you will be traveling or living. You will also receive updates, including Travel Warnings and Travel Alerts (where

appropriate). Register on the STEP website:
http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/registration/registration_4789.html.

Packing for your Trip

Clothes

- Warm clothes, coat: especially if planning trips to the mountains. Past trainees have recommended bringing more warm clothes, as there is usually not indoor heat – or buy alpaca sweaters as souvenirs! If going on Amazon raft race, bring lightweight and fast-drying clothing.
- The coast and the jungle both get quite hot in the dry months, so light clothing is essential
- Dark pants (light colored get quite dirty)
- Sturdy, comfortable shoes (large sizes can be hard to find in Peru)
- Sufficient underwear: “Peruvian underwear is the worst”
- Professional Attire
 - For men: typically includes a button-down or guayabera shirt (guayabera shirts are very comfortable during the summer months and are typically worn by physicians)
 - For women: a dress or a blouse with pants or a skirt is acceptable.
 - More formal outfits (ties & sport coat for men, dresses for women) are typically worn for formal presentations and conferences
 - Shorts and sandals are not appropriate attire for work

Medications

- Prescription medicines (including birth control): Some may not be available in Lima, or may be available in a different form. Be sure to bring enough to last your stay in Peru. Don’t count on being able to receive the medicines in the mail from the U.S. because they may get stuck in customs.
- Other medications: medicines for gastrointestinal illnesses and altitude sickness (e.g. acetazolamide) are available in pharmacies in Peru.
- Malaria prophylaxis: You do NOT need malaria prophylaxis in Lima or Cusco; there are very few mosquitos and almost no risk of malaria. If going to a jungle area, consider bringing Malarone if you do not want to take mefloquine (Larium) or doxycycline. Also if you are planning to travel to the Amazon or other locations where malaria is endemic, make sure you bring a supply of malarone or similar generic from the States as it is not available in Peru. Only doxycycline and cyclosporine are available, and often have greater side effects or are less effective. More information about malarone is found here:
<http://www.webmd.com/a-to-z-guides/malarone-for-malaria..> You do NOT need malaria prophylaxis if you are going to Iquitos but plan to remain in the city itself. Many people advise it for jungle tours.

- Sunscreen with high SPF: finding a good sunscreen in Peru can be difficult and very expensive. The sun is VERY strong...therefore, a good hat, sunglasses, and sun protective clothing are also good things to bring

Supplies

- Surge protector- this will protect your laptop and other electronics from unexpected power fluctuations.
- Voltage transformer, if necessary. Peru runs on 220 volt electricity, as opposed to the 110 volt system used in the U.S. You will need a voltage transformer if bringing any electronics that do not automatically function with different voltages. Most laptop and digital camera power adapters will work with 110 and 220 volt systems – you can look on the adapter to check. These can be purchased in most hardware stores in Lima.
- Plug adapter: Most outlets in Peru will accommodate both North American style (flat prongs) and European style (round prongs) plugs. Adaptors are \$1 so you can buy them when you arrive. Note: these do not convert voltage – for that you need a voltage transformer.
- For women: tampons if you use them. They are expensive/unavailable in Peru.
- Sleeping bag (for cold nights in Cusco) – or consider purchasing a nice alpaca blanket as a souvenir.
- Hiking backpack for weekend trips
- Water filter or sterilizing pen is very useful
- At least 30% Deet repellent (hard to find, especially in high concentrations)
- Battery charger
- Water filter or SteriPen
- Rain gear: not needed if you will be mostly in Lima. It does rain during the rainy season in the mountains and year-round in the jungle.
- Pocket medical reference books (and text books relevant to your interests)
- Small medical Spanish dictionary
- Leisure reading books in English – available in bookstores, but more expensive
- Toiletries—only if you are very attached to a particular brand, as generic versions will be available.

What not to bring

- Ciprofloxacin and other common antibiotics are available without a prescription at pharmacies in Lima and are much cheaper (\$0.25 each) than what you would pay in the U.S.
- Fancy jewelry and watches: Anything that looks expensive, even if it's not, can attract thieves. If you are going to wear jewelry or a watch, wear ones that are not too flashy.

- High current, common electronics: hair dryers, straighteners, and similar items will burn out a voltage converter and likely burn themselves out in the process; better to buy them locally in Lima
- Shampoo, deodorant, etc: easy to buy in Lima unless you are loyal to a specific brand

IN-COUNTRY

Communication

Cellphones

- The prices of calling to and from mobile phones is surprisingly expensive in Peru, however, many people still find mobile phones to be useful
- Dr. Montano often has cell phones available for students to use – these are pre-paid (“pre-pago”); you can purchase additional minutes at most grocery or gas stations
- Recommended carriers
 - Claro
 - Movistar (Telefónica)
 - They are competitors and often have special offers, such as a certain amount of money in free calls when you sign up. Despite the competition, prices are still quite high.
 - Phones can be purchased at Movistar and Claro offices, major department stores (Saga), and third party electronics vendors.
- Plans and costs
 - Prepaid (“prepago”): you add credit to your account, from which money is deducted each time you make a call or send a message. Most gringos have opted for these prepaid plans. In an example of one prepaid plan from Claro, calls to other Claro mobile phones cost S./1.40 per min, calls to land lines cost S./2.30 per min, and calls to non-Claro mobile phones cost S./2.60 per min (these are approximate prices for Lima phones). Text messages nationwide cost 10 céntimos per message. So, many people use the phones primarily for text messaging and only occasionally for calls. There is no charge for incoming calls or messages (including calls made from Skype), and no difference in cost by time of day or day of week. Movistar price plans are similar. Find out what company your friends/colleagues use, because within-network calls are cheaper.
 - Postpaid (“postpago”): Here, you are charged a fixed amount each month and get a reduced rate for calls. The initial cost of the phone is usually less if you sign up for a postpaid plan. This may be a good option if you are going to be making LOTS of calls. However, if you think you won’t be making many calls and will primarily use text messages, the prepaid plans are probably a better option. Also, there is more red tape involved in signing up for a postpaid plan: non-Peruvian citizens have to present a variety of documents, and you may have to sign a 12-month minimum contract.

Internet

- There are plenty of Internet cafés with high-speed connections around Lima
- In Cusco, internet cafes (cabinas) are cheap (about 30 cents/hr) but slow. Some hostels have free wifi.
- In Iquitos: internet cafes are available but very slow
- For more reliable internet, try to get a landline for your apartment. Claro, Movistar, and Olo all sell packages.
- If you'll be doing a lot of traveling, you can also get a USB internet connection from Claro or Movistar that uses the cellular networks, but this is limited to areas with cell phone service and can be sluggish.

Landline phone

- Telefónica and Claro provide the majority of land telephone lines.
- Some gringos have chosen to have a line, while others have declined (remember that you have to have an active line in order to get the Speedy Internet service through Telefónica).
- Currently, the cheapest phone plan – the Super Económico – costs about S./47/month, and includes 120 min of call time per month to other land lines in Lima, as well as free incoming calls, and a voicemail service.
- If you surpass your monthly minutes, you can still use a prepaid phone card like the 147 from your land phone; this card is also useful for calling to mobile phones or phones outside of Lima, as well as for calling from public phones.
- Because of the prohibitively expensive cost of calls made from and to mobile phones, you may find it useful to have a land phone in your apartment.

Postal Service (Mail)

Postal service is notoriously slow and unreliable for letters or packages entering or leaving Peru. If you need to send or receive a package, your best option is to send via Fedex. The post office in Peru is called SerPost.

Bank Accounts and Paying Bills

Getting a bank account without a DNI or carnet de extranjero is tricky, so consider opening an account with Citibank or Bank of America before you get there (see money section, below).

Money

- Local currency is Nuevo soles (PEN), divided into 100 céntimos
- Exchange rate: 1 US dollar is around 2.86 PEN
- Traveler's checks are difficult to cash in most cities and incur a large transaction fee – consider leaving home without them
- ATMs are abundant in Lima. Note you may be charged a fee for each transaction by both your home bank and the ATM's bank (for example, some U.S. banks

charge \$5 for each transaction made at a foreign ATM, and Lima ATMs charge about 4-5 soles). At ATMs in Peru, you can withdraw money in either Soles or US dollars.

- Take money out in Peruvian Soles in amounts of S./80 so you get 4xS./20 instead of S./100 bills – saves you lots of headaches in smaller towns
- Citibank has branches and ATMs in Lima. If you open an account at a Citibank branch in the U.S. With this account, transactions at Citibank ATMs in Peru are free of charge, while those at non-Citibank ATMs in Peru incur a 3% transaction fee. However, with a Citibank USA account, one can use only the ATMs at Citibanks in Lima and not the branch services for making deposits, withdrawals, etc.
- ScotiaBank is affiliated with Bank of America and does not charge any fees for withdrawals only if you withdraw USD (as of November 2013). Lots of locations in every Peruvian city but only at ATMs – the offices will charge you to make transactions.
- Charles Schwab has an Investors Checking Account and Credit Card that refunds ALL transaction fees so you can use any ATM and make purchases without fear of fees.
- Beware of small towns, which may not have any ATMs – plan ahead.
- When traveling, carry enough money to get to the next town and pay for any immediate needs. You never know when a mid-size town will have 2 broken ATMs and a bank under construction. It is also a good idea to never have too much money available through your debit card in case it is stolen.
- You may find a credit card useful. Visa and MasterCard are the most widely accepted in Peru, although Visa is generally more widely accepted. Many U.S. banks charge a fee for transactions made abroad. Capital One does not charge a foreign transaction fee for some of its credit cards.
- Write down your card's 1-800 number for emergency cancellation on a separate, safe piece of paper in case of theft; unfortunately, credit card number theft is common – so best to use a credit card infrequently.
- Prior to leaving your home country, call the banks to inform them you will be using your card in Peru and inquire about fees for foreign transactions. Without prior notification, some banks will freeze accounts, as a safety precaution, when a transaction is made in another country.
- Most prices can be negotiated. Use the phrase “No menos?” which means “No less?” when a price is given to you.
- If you have secured your belongings at a hotel or residence and plan to go out use the rule, “take with you only what you are willing to lose.”

Personal Safety

- One of the best ways to understand the safety of situations is to talk to locals
- Watch for pickpockets constantly. While there is not much violent crime against tourists, opportunistic theft is rampant.

- If you carry a purse, a camera, a backpack or just a pair of sunglasses, hang on to them at all times. In crowded areas, put your backpack on your front and hold shopping bags close to you.
- Just keep your eyes open and be aware of people around you. In any case, if someone extremely friendly approaches (even wanting to shake your hand), just try not to talk that much, and they'll go away. It's normal to find polite people around trying to help tourists, but stay away from the extremely friendly ones.
- Taxicabs and ATM machines are the most common sites for crime. There are registered “taxi seguro,” or safe taxis available that you should use (see “Transportation and Traveling” below)
- Remember, safety in numbers
- Consider purchasing travel insurance with theft insurance for electronics or other valuables
- A money belt is especially nice for traveling long distances
- If you witness a crime being committed, do not intervene unless you are really sure of what you are doing: many criminals, even pickpockets, carry guns, knives, etc. and may use them if feeling threatened.
- In general, a tried and true technique for staying safe in Lima is to simply maintain a low profile. Leave the Rolex at home, don't wear the fine suit and don't carry a laptop when hailing taxis on the street, and keep a relaxed, friendly, smiling attitude. If you do need to go out while dressed up, call a taxi rather than hire one in the moment - the few moments you wait and the few extra soles you pay will be worth it.

Transportation & Traveling

The traffic is among the biggest downsides of Lima. Since the city is so sprawling, it can take quite a long time to get from home to work or other destinations. Unfortunately, there is no train or subway system in the city. If you do not have a car (and most students and fellows do not), then you have to rely on taxis and buses to get around. Be careful crossing the streets, the cars and taxi drivers are nuts!

~\$35/week for transportation costs in Lima

Taxi

- Ubiquitous in Lima and quite cheap compared to taxis in North America and Europe. For example, a ride in a taxi hailed off the street from Miraflores to NMRCO (about 20 min) will cost S./10-14. A ride within Miraflores will cost S./3-4.
- There are no meters in taxis in Lima - prices should be negotiated before starting; bargaining is very common
- Do not pick up just any taxi, especially when you are leaving the airport.

- It is most advisable to use one of the official taxi companies inside the airport (such as Green Taxi) with set fares to ensure your safety.
- Signs of a reputable driver
 - ask to see his taxi driver ID (a blue/purple card that has his photo and DNI number)
 - look for a SETAME sticker in the front windshield, etc.
 - There should also be a yellow painted license number across the side of the taxi cab doors. Never get in a cab without one of these painted strips.

- Always lock the doors while in a taxi and keep the windows rolled up, especially when going to areas that are known for theft.
- If you have a bag containing a laptop or other valuables, put it on the floor behind your legs, not on the seat or your lap – thieves are known to break car windows and snatch bags.
- If a taxi driver does not know where you want to go, it's a good idea to find another. If you suspect the driver is intoxicated, GET OUT.
- WEAR YOUR SEAT BELT WHILE IN TAXIS
- A good idea is to make a real (or fake) call to a friend when you get in and tell them loudly that you are on your way to ____ and will be there soon, so the driver knows that you are expected at your destination.
- Taxi drivers have been known to participate in robberies, express kidnappings, or serve as get away vehicles. Be alert if you are going to hail a taxi on the street, especially if you appear to be wealthy and/or a foreigner. Your safest bet is to keep the numbers of official taxi companies handy. Lima's tourist information centers will be willing to call one for you as well.
- Local Taxi
 - Taxi Mobil, Taxi Verde, Taxi Seguro (3-555555)
 - 511-422-3322

Buses

- Taxis to and from work every day can get expensive, so many take the bus
- All buses in Lima are run by private companies – there is no municipal bus system, and no map of all the bus routes
- There are 3 basic forms of buses you will see:
 - Large buses similar to U.S. school buses. All buses that go along the Vía Expresa and major avenues are of this type
 - Big combis, which are the size of big vans or mini-buses
 - Small combis, which are similar in size to minivans (though they have seating for about 17 people and sometimes some standing passengers).
- On the side of buses and combis you will see the names of main avenues the vehicles travel along. Ask someone who has been in Lima to take you on a bus or combi to take you to your destination the first time.

- Buses take more direct routes than combis, and drivers and cobradores (the people to whom you pay the fare/shout out the routes which the buses will travel) are trying very hard to fill their vehicle, so they may not be upfront in telling you which exact route they are taking. Always ask whether your bus will pass a particular destination or landmark.
- Be careful when getting on and off the combis as the drivers often do not bring the vehicle to a complete stop when passengers are getting on/off.
- A ride on a bus or combi typically costs S./1.00-1.50, so they are much cheaper than taxis, but the ride may take longer. For example, a 20-25 minute door-to-door taxi ride from Miraflores to NMRCDC takes 45-60 minutes on a combi/bus, plus a few minutes walking to and from the bus stop and waiting for the bus.
- Watch your belongings carefully on the buses, as thefts have been known to occur by thieves on the bus and who reach through the windows from outside

Long-Distance Buses

- If traveling by bus between major cities, go with the most expensive and well-known companies (For example, Cruz del Sur, Civa, or Soyuz). This is for safety reasons. For example, secure bus companies should search carry-on bags and videotape passengers boarding the bus. Cruz del Sur now has a GPS that tracks the location of the bus.

Metropolitano—in Lima

A rapid transport bus system. This bus system is modern with wheelchair access. The buses are folding and express routes have their own dedicated lanes on expressways. Rechargeable cards are used as tickets with a minimum purchase price of S/.5. You can recharge your cards at the station booths or with machine; make sure you see the words “Saldo Nuevo” (New Balance”) before you remove your card from the machine as you are recharging your card or the money you paid will not register.

Beware that the buses won’t always stop at the proper door as it is marked overhead. There are unfortunately no route maps until you get inside the station. You can, however, look online and print out route maps beforehand. No matter how far you go, the cost of one trip is S/.2.

Metro de Lima, also known as Tren Eléctrico

Start of limited trial service of Line 1, with passengers with trains serving Villa el Salvador, Parque Industrial, María Auxiliadora, Jorge Chávez, Ayacucho, Angamos, San Borja Sur, Arriola and Gamarra.

Housing in Lima

- **Types of Housing:** There are both apartments and houses in Lima, though most gringo students and fellows will end up living in hostels or apartments. Apartments come in many sizes, either furnished or unfurnished. In general, you can roughly divide apartment buildings into newer buildings and older buildings. The newer buildings have more modern apartments, though they tend to be smaller than the apartments in older buildings. You can choose to live by yourself in a 1-2 bedroom apartment, or you may wish to share an apartment with others.
- **Cost:** In Miraflores and San Isidro, a decent, furnished 1-bedroom apartment may cost \$250-800 per month (excluding utilities), though there is great variety in prices. Apartments with a view of the ocean, or those on very posh streets may be more expensive. When quoting these prices to Peruvian colleagues, many will tell you that these prices are too expensive. However, keep in mind that locals may be able to find better deals than gringos because: 1) they may be thinking of neighborhoods that are less expensive than Miraflores and San Isidro, 2) they are in less of a rush to find an apartment and may have contacts who tip them off on good deals for apartments when the timing is right, 3) they generally look for unfurnished apartments, 4) they can get a better deal by signing a long-term lease. So don't get discouraged if you think that you're spending more than what your Peruvian colleagues think you should be spending – talk to other gringos, in addition to Peruvians, to get their opinions and experiences with prices of housing.
- **Utilities:** The cost of utilities is not included in most apartment rents. Most apartment buildings will charge a “mantenimiento” fee, which goes to pay for doormen and general upkeep of the building. This fee can be anywhere from \$20-80 per month. Some places will ask you to pay municipal taxes, which go to the municipality for security, cleaners, etc. These “impuestos” may be about \$10 per month. You will receive bills for Internet, phone, cable, and electricity in the mail. The bills can be paid at a variety of places, including banks, supermarkets and pharmacies, but must be paid in cash. Electricity (“luz”) is usually not included in the rent. This can cost \$10-20 per month for a person living solo, depending on usage.

Strategies for finding an apartment in Lima

Finding an apartment in Lima can be a challenging endeavor, depending on what you are looking for. Before you arrive in Lima, contact people you know are there or have been there recently (previous or current students and fellows) to find out about possible openings. You can also check websites like Craig's List, Expatperu.com, adondevivir.com, urbania.pe, and www.livinginperu.com.

Once in Lima, you can look at the classifieds section of the El Comercio newspaper. The Sunday edition is the best to research. Apartments for rent are also listed on El Comercio's website. Most of the contact information you see in the classifieds will be for corredores (real estate agents); a few will be for the owners of the apartments. The

corredores and owners may also be showing, or about to show, other apartments that are not listed. Generally they will not charge you for their services if contacted in this way. There are some other real estate agents whom you could contact directly, and who would show you various apartments (often very nice apartments, though on the pricey side); these agents might charge a fee. Another approach is to walk around neighborhoods where you are interested in living, and look for signs saying “Se Aquila” on buildings (For Rent). You can also inquire with the doormen at some of the apartment buildings. Searching for apartments while in Lima is most effective. Therefore, securing temporary housing before arriving (through craigslist or another means) is a good strategy to create a stepping stone.

- **Deposit:** Once you’ve found a place that you like, it’s a good idea to leave a deposit (“garantía”) – can be any amount depending on what the corredor/owner wants, \$20-200 – to hold the apartment. No amount of verbal assurance (saying that you really like the place and that you want to take it, etc.) will guarantee you will get the apartment. As in most cities, money talks in Lima. When you give the garantía, get a receipt. It’s ideal to meet and to give the garantía to the owner rather than the corredor, because the owner may have hired several corredores to show the apartment, and it’s possible that another tenant has already been found via one of the other corredores. However, if not possible to give the garantía directly to the owner, you can give it to the corredor provided you know the/she has spoken with the owner and the owner will agree to hold the apartment for you. If you change your mind later, you may not be able to get back the garantía, though it may be worth a try.
- **Lease:** After this, generally you will be asked to return to the apartment within a few days to meet with the owner and sign the lease. Remember: nothing is guaranteed until you sign the lease and are handed the keys. The garantía will usually suffice to hold the apartment until you sign the lease, so sign the lease as soon as possible if you are really interested in the place. Some have had experiences where the owner agreed to lease the apartment, but changed his/her mind after a day or two for whatever reason. This has only happened when a garantía wasn’t provided. Most apartment owners will ask you to sign a lease. They may require a minimum length, such as 3, 6, 9, or 12 months. Sometimes, owners will allow you to have a shorter lease but will charge you more. Typically, they will ask for one month’s rent in advance, as well as one or two months of rent as a security deposit. They should give you a copy of the lease to review and sign. You should review the lease with a native Spanish speaker just to make sure you don’t miss anything.
- **Dr. Silvia Montano recommends a lawyer who helps review your contract: Dr. Hugo Leno. *DON’T SIGN ANYTHING BEFORE SOMEONE HAS REVIEWED YOUR CONTRACT! He charges USD \$55 and provides an overnight turn-around. Ask Silvia for his contact information.**

Housing in Cusco

- homestayincusco.com also has options for homestays
- If you stay in a hostel your first couple nights you get to see the hip parts of town, and you are almost guaranteed to find cheap housing quickly if you ask around with the docs and nurses at the hospital.

Food

Gastronomy has always been, since the days of the Spanish vice royalty, an essential aspect of life in Peru. During the last few years, however, the country's dining reputation has experienced a huge leap in the eyes of the world due to the fact that experts gathered in the Fourth International Summit of Gastronomy Madrid Fusión 2006 and formally declared Lima to be the "Gastronomy Capital of the Americas". The offerings in Lima are nowadays most varied and cover a wide range of types and cuisines, both regional and international. If you are in Lima by September, make sure to check out the "Mistura" food festival, where restaurants from all over Peru are represented and sell food for relatively cheaper prices. This popular food festival is very crowded and the venue is often dusty; plan to go in groups for safety and for fun.

Lunch is the biggest meal of the day, often around 1-2pm. Breakfast and dinner are much lighter in quantity, so get ready for some food coma after a big Peruvian lunch.

Peruvian food tends to be spicy and heavy. Try it and ask if any dish is *picante* (spicy), and if you are not fond of that, avoid it since it may be really *picante*. A full meal may be really heavy and cause problems even if it's perfectly nice and well prepared with fresh ingredients. If you want more flavor though, trying the local *ají* (salsa made from peppers, sweet or spicy) is a must. Most places make their own *ají* with a variety of spices; ask for the "*ají de la casa*" at any restaurant. *Ájí amarillo* (yellow *ají*) tends to be less spicy, with *rocoto* at the very spicy end of the scale.

Ceviche, "Peru's national dish", is delicious—but composed of raw seafood soaked in lime juice. Though the acidity of the lime supposedly kills germs, it is a dish best eaten before noon, as the seafood is usually caught in the morning.

"Chifas" are Peruvian-Chinese restaurants found across Peru and are usually down-to-earth neighborhood eateries, offering dishes like sweet-and-sour pork or wonton soup.

Peruvians love roasted chicken (*pollo a la brasa*) that usually comes with French fries and a small salad.

For more economical choices, always check out local eateries with *Menús del Día*, which are set meals that often include an appetizer (*entrada*), an entrée (*segundo*) and a drink (*refresco*). Prices range from 6 soles to 16+ soles at fancier places. You will often see locals eating here at lunch time, so make sure to get in line early before food and tables run out! Since most Peruvians eat around 1 – 2pm, going at the gringo time of noon for lunch will help you to beat the crowd.

Unfortunately for vegetarians, most Peruvians are meat-lovers, but vegetarian options do exist in Lima. Most places have some type of vegetarian option, but you will have to make sure to ask.

Gluten-free products do exist in supermarkets, but are pricey. It is usually unlikely that you will be able to find gluten-free alternatives in restaurants except in high-end and expensive places in Lima.

There is a heavy presence of Western fast-food chains such as KFC, Pizza Hut, Domino's Pizza, McDonald's, Subway and Starbucks Coffee in the larger cities in Peru for when you're craving comfort food. There are also Peruvian fast food chains you can try such as Bambos' hamburgers, traditional Peruvian sandwiches at Pasquale, and fusion pizza over at D'nnos Pizza if you want to give your everyday fast-food a local twist.

Food Safety

Water is potable in most hotels and hostels in Lima, but definitely not in smaller towns or the less-developed neighborhoods. Consider using a SteriPen, filtering, boiling, or drinking bottled water (about S/.1.50 for a 625ml bottle of water; S/.1.79 for a 2.5L bottle).

Also be wary of unpeeled fruit and vegetables or condiments that have been left out a long time.

Local Customs

- If people comment on your weight, race or clothing it's not personal – calling people by physical attributes (e.g. “flaco” or “gordita”) is common
- Don't expect a lot of personal space
- Bargaining: vendors always want to make money, but most are willing to bargain on prices
- The best way to contact people is in person: if you're trying to get someone over the phone it's perfectly acceptable (and may be necessary) to call them 7+ times throughout the day before they pick up.
- Definite answers are sometimes hard to come by; it helps to talk to multiple people to find answers to your questions.
- Punctuality is not strongly valued, so it helps to be clear and say “la hora en punto” if you want to plan something for a specific time. Even then, try not to get too upset if people are late; carry a book to read in case you end up with some extra time.
- Cat-calling is very common; the best strategy is usually to ignore it as any kind of response is seen as encouraging.
- People aren't expecting you to be Peruvian, so don't worry too much about trying to follow all the local customs

- Lima's traffic can be horrendous, so it's important to never be in a rush and it's good to maintain a flexible schedule.

Guide to Lima

Lima is a sprawling metropolis. Some compare its layout to that of Los Angeles - there are many distinct neighborhoods/municipalities within the metropolitan area.

The most popular neighborhoods for foreign students and fellows to live in have been Miraflores, San Isidro, and Barranco. *It is advisable to stay in the Miraflores or San Isidro area when you first arrive. There are numerous hostels and hotels around Av. Jose Larco close to Parque Kennedy. Check Tripadvisor or HostelBookers for the latest reviews. A great place to find temporary housing (if you don't want to pay for a hotel or hostel) is AirBnb.com, where you can find rooms or entire apartments for cheaper than a hotel room.

- Miraflores is a bustling area with many shops, restaurants, and cafes, as well as pubs and clubs to frequent at night. Some businesses and embassies are also based in Miraflores. It is probably the most popular neighborhood among gringos and tourists in general – you will see many roaming the streets here. In Miraflores, one has the conveniences of supermarkets, movie theaters, and public transportation all within easy walking distance. It is a relatively safe neighborhood, though petty theft does occur. Miraflores is right by the ocean, and there are nice trails and parks along the ocean (the Malecón area) where many people run or bike. It tends to be a bit cooler and cloudier than some other parts of Lima during the winter months, but there is a nice ocean breeze to cool you down during the summer months. With so much activity in Miraflores, there's usually something to do, even if it's just wandering around.
- San Isidro is a large municipality adjacent to Miraflores. It is home to some of Lima's elite. It is quieter than Miraflores, which has its pros and cons – on one hand, there is less noise in San Isidro; on the other hand, there is not as much activity, and it is not as easily walkable as Miraflores – supermarkets and other stores may be a bit farther to reach. San Isidro is home to many small parks and a huge golf course. There are many restaurants and some swanky pubs and clubs in this neighborhood. Many businesses (including the financial district) and embassies are based here. Public transportation is fairly accessible. Like Miraflores, it's a relatively safe area. In general, you may see more families living in San Isidro, whereas you may see more twenty- and thirty-somethings in Miraflores. San Isidro is much less "touristy" than Miraflores.
- Barranco is another nice neighborhood just south of Miraflores on the coast. It is fairly quiet and quite unique in Lima in that it maintains a bohemian feel. There aren't as many big chain stores here. Barranco comes alive at night as the home of Lima's most vibrant nightlife – there are many pubs, clubs, and peñas frequented by Limeños. Some foreigners have found beautiful apartments and

houses in Barranco. It is a tranquil haven within Lima; however, it's a bit farther than Miraflores and San Isidro from other parts of the city, and you may have to go to Miraflores to run errands. It is also a little more dangerous at night from pick-pockets.

- San Miguel: many Limeños live in this neighborhood, but you won't see many foreigners. There is a huge shopping complex – the Plaza San Miguel – and a movie theater but other than that not much to do in San Miguel. You will probably find yourself going to Miraflores, San Isidro, and Barranco in your free time. The advantages of San Miguel are that it's less expensive than other neighborhoods.
- Other reasonable residential neighborhoods include Surco, San Borja, Jesus Maria, and Pueblo Libre. Housing will likely be cheaper here, but your social life would be substantially facilitated by living in Miraflores, San Isidro, or Barranco.

Restaurants in Lima

~\$30/week is average for groceries .

Lima is home to around 220,000 restaurants, cafes, juice bars and runs a program (Restaurante Saludable) to recognize clean and healthy restaurants. Only around 800 or 1.2% of venues have received this award, so keep your eyes open for the logo Restaurante Saludable.

If you're a foodie, Gastón Acurio is Peru's most celebrated chef and operates multiple restaurants around the city, though they are on the pricey side.

- El Mercado
- La Lucha Sangucheria (Parque Kennedy, Larcomar)
- Las Mesitas
- Panchita
- Twist (hamburgers)
- Restaurante Arlotia (Barranco)
- Surquillo Market #1 Bioferria (weekend food market)
- Crepes & Waffles (San Isidro)
- Bisetti (coffee shop in Barranco)
- Arabica (coffee shop in Miraflores)
- Kulcafe (coffee shop in Miraflores)
- Enano (sandwiches in Miraflores)
- Hecho en Casa
- La Mora
- Rincon Chami (Peruvian food near Parque Kennedy)
- Cañas y Tapas (sausages and drinks)

Entertainment in Lima

Gyms

Lima has several gym chains with modern equipment. In Miraflores, options include Gold's Gym, Energym, and Sportlife. Each has branches in other parts of the city. Some membership plans allow you to use any branch at any time, while others limit you to one branch with only occasional visits to other branches.

Gold's Gym in Miraflores (at the intersection of Larco and Benavides) opened in December 2005 and has very modern equipment in a spacious setting. There are free weights, weight machines, cardiovascular machines, a myriad of aerobics/step/spinning classes, free monthly nutritional and progress consults, and trainers available to assist all while working out. The trainers can design a personal workout for you each month. There are also personal trainers if you wish to pay for this service – they stay with you during the entire length of your workout. The general memberships, which include basically everything except personal trainers, can cost anywhere from \$25 to \$75 per month, depending on the length of the contract you sign and any special offers available at that time. Keep in mind that bargaining does sometimes occur with regard to gym memberships. Most gyms will allow you a free trial period, so you can visit them and then decide which one you like the best.

Sportlife offers the same services as Gold's Gym. Prices are similar, staff is professional and it comes highly recommended. In San Isidro it is one of the only options as far as gyms go and is located next to the Sonesta Posada del Inca hotel at Parque de Los Olivos.

Energym: located in San Miguel

Spanish Classes

Spanish classes are available for those at beginner, intermediate, or advanced levels. Classes can be taken privately or with a group, either at a language school or at your home. Purwayna includes activities like cooking and field trips. Other options include El Sol (<http://elsol.idiomasperu.com/>), Vivaldiomas (www.vivaidiomas.com), and Idiomas Catolica (www.idiomas.pucp.edu.pe). Private teachers who come to your house are usually around s/35-50/hour. Ask around when you arrive.

Dancing

There are various types of Peruvian dance and one great way to get acquainted is to attend the "Retablo" show held monthly at the National Theater (Gran Teatro Nacional, Av. Javier Prado, cuadra 24). This show is put on by the Elenco Nacional de Folclore del Perú, with dancers from the National Lima Ballet. For about 20 – 30 soles (3rd level balcony for best views), this two hour non-stop show is put on and changes each month to display some of the most iconic dances from all over Peru. More information is found

in El Comercio, or from the Gran Teatro Nacional facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/GranTeatroNacional>

Another great way to get acquainted with cultural dances of Peru is to attend “Brisas del Titicaca”, a dinner plus dance show. There are shows for lunch and dinner, and cost between 30 – 58.50 soles. <http://www.brisasdeltiticaca.com/>

There are a variety of salsa dance classes available to beginners, intermediates, and advanced dancers. Some places offer private lessons either at a club or at your home. If you decide to take this route, you’ll likely be asked to pay in advance for a set of classes. If you do this, ask for a receipt and be sure to make note of the number of classes you have taken. Some locales offer group classes. One such place is Cohiba, located on cuadra 6 of Avenida del Ejército in Miraflores. The head instructor is named Julio Mendoza and his email is salsaschool@speedy.com.pe (website is www.salsa-school.com). The beginner course includes 10 classes on Saturdays from 5:30-7pm or from 7-8:30pm. There are also free guided practice sessions for students on Thursdays from 9-10pm. The cost of the beginner course is \$60 for an individual and \$70 for a couple.

South American Explorers

(www.saexplorers.org/club/home) They have a clubhouse at Calle Piura 135 in Miraflores. This is an organization with English-speaking employees who provide lots of information about travel around Peru and offer discounts to members on hotels, restaurants, and other travel services around the country. They also have a book exchange and various travel books for sale.

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