



## Peru's Culture

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This information has been gathered from a variety of sources – Wikipedia, peru-travel-adventures.com, peru.gotolatin.com, Globe Aware staff, and past volunteers.

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## People

The Culture of Peru was shaped by the relationship between Hispanic and Amerindian cultures. The ethnic diversity of Peru allowed diverse traditions and customs to coexist. Peru has passed through various intellectual stages - from colonial Hispanic culture to European Romanticism after independence. The early 20th century brought "indigenismo", expressed in a new awareness of Indian culture. Since World War II, Peruvian writers, artists, and intellectuals such as César Vallejo and José María Arguedas have participated in worldwide intellectual and artistic movements.

Since pre-Columbian times Peruvians have been divided by nature. From the arid deserts of the coast, the Andean Sierra rises up to 19,700 feet. The highlands comprise about a quarter of Peru's territory, but are home to about half of Peru's population. This mountain mass poses major problems for development and integration into a single society.

The result is dramatic regional diversity, and considerable inequalities in services and living standards. Health, education and law enforcement programs are unevenly distributed across Peru.

At first sight, Peruvian culture may seem brutally divided between indigenous and colonial societies - the mountains and the city. Elite white creoles trace their bloodlines back to the Spanish Conquest in 1536. Like generations before them, most live in Lima, where a European visitor will feel a comfortable familiarity in the cafes and supermarkets.

On the other side, rural communities now also aspire to ownership of televisions and blue jeans but this comes into conflict with their traditional cultural values. The people of the Andes are maintaining the traditional practices of their ancestors in a rapidly changing world. Their livelihood continues to be based on family-owned fields, or charkas, which are farmed by hand or with the assistance of draft animals.

The social organization of communities in the Andes differs greatly from that of Europeanized creole culture. Work, marriage and land-ownership are centered around a complex extended family organization called the ayllu in Quechua which dates back to at least Inca times. One of the main functions of ayllus is to organize reciprocal work exchange.

Over the past 400 years, there has been a long process of inter-cultural mixing, creating the mestizo of part-American Indian, part-European heritage. Today the majority of Peruvians would fall into this category. In Peru, you can become mestizo not only by birth but by choice. Peruvian social divisions can thus be said to be not so much racially as culturally defined.

The Andes have two large ethno linguistic groups: the larger of the two speaks Quechua; the smaller group speaks Aymara and is settled around Lake Titicaca and also in neighboring Bolivia. Beyond these global distinctions, other complexities arise. There are "white" ethnic groups called the Morochucos of Pampa Cangallo who have light-colored eyes and hair and speak Quechua.

The *misti*, the dominant social class in the Andes, may speak Quechua and share other cultural traits but enjoy access to education and the luxuries of the modernization. Meanwhile in the Amazon jungle, there are at least 53 ethno linguistic groups, although only around 5 percent of Peru's population live in the Selva (the tropical region east of the Andes in the jungle).

Due to its New World history, Peru also enjoys a rich cultural diversity. Up to the 19th Century, landowners brought in African blacks to serve as slaves on their haciendas and frequently used them to repress the local Indians. Between 1850 and 1920, Chinese and Japanese laborers provided the hands and backs to build railways over the Andes and farm the land where there was a scarcity of labor.

A large majority of highland people live a marginal and impoverished existence and are removed from the modern benefits of the national economy. While retaining an unchanged loyalty to their ancestral heritage, so well identified to the outside world through their bright homemade costumes, the poor of the Andes are nevertheless equally eager to share in the luxuries of a "modern" lifestyle which includes education, electricity, sewage and running potable water. But rather than improving, the economic conditions of these communities is deteriorating, leading to massive urban migration.

Peru's middle class is the most difficult to define. In the 1970's, with the integration of modernization, the middle class grew into its own, both in Lima and in provincial cities. This growth was due to the diversification of the economy and to the expansion of the Peruvian state, both as a purveyor of public services and as an entrepreneur. During this period, roads penetrating into the Sierra and the Amazon Basin started to link the hinterland with Lima and important coastal markets. Mass communication began to reach out to new audiences.

Today, Lima, the capital has come to represent all that went wrong with Peruvian development. One city now concentrates most of country's services and other resources, but they are grossly inadequate to sustain its 8 million inhabitants.

A striking feature of contemporary Peruvian society is the massive scale of the informal economy. The decay of the national economy has led to an abundance of traditional market street trade and bartering at market stalls as an integral part of daily life. *Ambulantes* (street vendors) can be found on every corner selling a huge variety of goods.

Despite decades of political upheaval and social unrest, Peru can now be seen to be entering a more stable phase in its history. An increasing level of governmental consistency and growing economic strength has led to growing confidence from within.

## Food

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Peru is considered an important center for the genetic diversity of the world's crops:

Maize (corn), 35 varieties

Tomatoes, 15 species

Potatoes, 2,000 varieties (in Peru), and 3,000 in the world. The International Potato Center, which goes by its Spanish name's initials (CIP short for Centro Internacional de la Papa) that is devoted to the investigation and genetic conservation of the potato, is located in Lima, Peru.

Sweet potatoes, 2,016 varieties

Peanuts are found as decorative pieces made of gold in several pre-Columbian tombs. Peanuts were later taken by Spanish and Portuguese merchants to Africa. They then spread to the American south by way of African slaves.

In Peru there are 2,000 species of fish, both freshwater and saltwater (more than any other country on Earth). There are 650 native species of Fruit. Peru is famed for its large number of species of bananas. The variety of climate itself can provide for the growth of fruits from anywhere in the world. From Peru, the Spanish brought back to Europe foods, which would become staples now common in cuisine in many nations.

### Peruvian potatoes

Potatoes: Potatoes were considered livestock feed in Europe until French chemist Antoine-Augustin Parmentier began serving dishes made from the tubers at his lavish banquets. His guests were immediately

convinced that potatoes were fit for human consumption. Parmentier's introduction of the potato is still discussed in Europe today.

### **Peruvian corn**

Maíze: Maíze is native to all of Central and South America.

Tomatoes: Tomatoes were introduced to Europe from Latin America and many other food products.

From its interaction with Africa through Spain, Peru imported diverse foods such as bananas, and yams. Some plants that were cultivated by the ancient societies of Peru have now been rediscovered by modern Peruvians and are carefully studied by scientists. Due to the characteristics of its land and climate and due to the nutritional quality of its products, some Peruvian plants will play a vital role in the nutrition of the future: this is true for quinoa, which is an excellent source of essential amino acids, and kañiwa which appear to be and are prepared like cereals but are not cereals. Root vegetables such as maca and real cereals like kiwicha are also plants nutritionists are researching today.

For many of Peru's inhabitants, these food stocks allow for adequate nutrition even though living standards are poor. The abandoning of many of these staples during the Spanish domination and republican eras has brought down nutritional levels in the country.

Some of these food stocks have been used since 1985 by NASA for astronaut food, like quinoa, kiwicha and maca.

Peruvian cuisine is often made spicy by means of aji pepper, a basic ingredient. Some Peruvian chili peppers are not spicy but serve to give taste and color to dishes. Rice often accompanies dishes in Peruvian cuisine, and the regional sources of foods and traditions give rise to countless varieties of preparation and dishes.

Fine Peruvian cuisine emphasizes the mix of colors and ingredients, in a dynamically growing restaurateur industry and trends led by young and talented chefs.

The following are just a few of the many popular Peruvian dishes. Some of these originated in other parts of Peru but most are well known and can be found in some part of Lima.

### **Regional differences**

Peru is a country that holds not just a variety of ethnic mixes since times ranging from the Inca Empire, the Viceroyalty and the Republic, but also a climatic variety that sometimes is not believed by outsiders: 28 of a possible 32 world climates. The mixing of cultures and the variety of climates differ from city to city so geography, climate, culture and ethnic mix determine the variety of local cuisine.

### **Cuisine of the Coast**

The cuisine of the coast can be said to have five strong influences: Japanese, the Moorish, the African, the Chinese and the local native.

The Pacific Ocean is the principal source of aquatic resources for Peru. Peru is one of the world's top two producers and exporters of unusually high-protein fishmeal for use in livestock/aquaculture feed. Its richness in fish and other aquatic life is enormous, and many oceanic plant and animal species can only be found in Peru. As important as the Pacific is to Peru's biodiversity, freshwater biomes such as the Amazon River and Lake Titicaca also play a large role in the ecological make-up of the country.

Every coastal region, being distinct in flora and fauna populations, adapts its cuisine in accordance to the resources available in its waters.

Ceviche, with its many different variations (pure, combination, or mixed with fish and shellfish) is a good example of this regional adaptation. Ceviche is found in almost all Peruvian restaurants specialized in this country's world-renowned fish and seafood. Lima alone holds thousands of them, from the simple to very fancy ones. Typically served with camote, or sweet potato.

The chupe de camarones (shrimp cioppino) is one of the most popular dishes of Peruvian coastal cuisine. It is made from a thick freshwater shrimp (crayfish) stock soup, potatoes, milk and chili pepper. Regarded as typical from Arequipa, Chupe de Camarones is regularly found in Peruvian restaurants specialized in Arequipan cuisine.

### Cuisine of Lima and Central Coast

A center of immigration and centers of the Spanish Viceroyalty, Lima and Trujillo have incorporated unique dishes brought from the arrival of the Spanish Conquistadors and the receiving of many waves of immigrants: African, European, Chinese, and Japanese. Besides international immigration—a large portion of which happened in Lima—there has been, since the second half of the 20th century, a strong internal flow from rural areas to cities, in particular to Lima. This has strongly influenced Lima's cuisine with the incorporation of the immigrant's ingredients and techniques (for example, the Chinese extensive use of rice or the Japanese approach to preparing raw fish).

Creole cuisine is the most widespread in this cosmopolitan city. Some international cuisines with a large presence include Chinese (known locally as Chifa) and Italian. The city's ubiquitous bakeries are another culinary treasure, where you may find just out of the oven bread from 6 to 9 am and from 4 to 6pm. Few coastal cities bakeries produce "bollos", which are loaves of bread baked in stone and wood-ovens from the Andes, the great Peruvian mountains.

Anticuchos are brochettes made from a beef heart marinated in a various Peruvian spices and grilled, often sided with boiled potatoes and corn. They are commonly sold by street vendors and served shish kabob-style, but you may find them in creole food restaurants.

Also frequently sold by street vendors are tamales: boiled corn with meat or cheese and wrapped in a banana leaf. They are similar to humitas, which consist of corn mixed with spices, sugar, onions, filled with pork and olives and finally wrapped in the leaves of corn husks. Tamales are a common breakfast food, often served with lima and/or "Salsa Criolla."

Another favorite food to be found in many restaurants is Papas a la huancaína (Huancayo-style potatoes), a dish consisting of sliced boiled potatoes, served on a bed of lettuce with a slightly spicy cheese sauce with olives. Even if the name says that it is from Huancayo, it is actually from Chosica, in Lima, made by a "Huancaína" (a person from huancayo)

Ceviche, often spelled "cebiche" in Peru, is the flagship dish of coastal cuisine, and one of Peru's favorites. It is the quintessence of fusion: Andean chili peppers, onions and acidic aromatic lime, of a species imported by the Spanish, though with origins in Northern Africa ("limon" in Spanish). A spicy dish, it consists generally of bite-size pieces of white fish (such as corvina or white sea bass), marinated raw in lime or lemon juice mixed with chilis. Ceviche is served with raw onions, boiled sweet potatoes (camote), toasted corn (cancha), and sometimes a local green seaweed yuyo. Leche de tigre (tiger's milk), is the Peruvian colloquial name for the juice produced from the ingredients of ceviche. It has a light spicy flavor and serves as a good reconstituent. Local custom recommends ceviche as a breakfast for sleepwalkers, a hangover cure and as an aphrodisiac. Unlike ceviche from Mexico and Ecuador, it does not have tomatoes, and unlike that of Tahiti it does not use coconut milk, though both are abundant in Peru. A variation available in Callao replaces mango for fish.

Tiradito is the younger brother of ceviche, and shows more clearly the influence that Japanese cooks have had in Peru's seafood cuisine (though some suggest that it's closer to Italian carpaccio, popularized by Genovese immigrants). The fish is sliced in fine strips (about 6 cm by 2 cm) that are similar to sashimi, and then marinated in a mix of limejuice, ginger and ají limo. Unlike ceviche, tiradito lacks onions, which translates into a subtler taste.

### Other Dishes of Lima and the Central Coast:

- Papa rellena (stuffed potato): mashed potatoes stuffed with ground (minced) meat, eggs, olives and various spices and then deep-fried.
- Arroz tapado (covered rice): uses the same stuffing of papa rellena, but rather than used as a stuffing, it is accompanied by rice.
- Sancochado: A hearty beef and vegetable stew which includes yuca (cassava) and camotes (sweet potatoes).
- A local staple found in many cheaper, as well as more up-market, restaurants is lomo saltado, sliced beef (if made from the tenderloin it is "lomo fino") stir fried with onion, tomato, soy sauce, vinegar, chili (aji) and served or mixed with French fried potatoes (aka "chips"), and accompanied with rice.
- Lima has an abundance of Peruvian-style Chinese restaurants or "chifas" as they are known locally; indeed, arroz chaufa or Chinese style rice is one of the frequently sampled dishes that has found its way into Peruvian cuisine.

- Arroz con pollo, or rice with chicken, is enjoyed for its rich-flavored rice combined with chicken.
- Chupe de pescado or fish cioppino is popular in Lima and along the coast.
- Lima butter bean (pallares) salad: a salad made with (obviously) Peruvian Lima butter beans (called pallares in Perú), boiled (but still whole) and mixed (when cooled) with a "salsa" of onions, slices of tomatoes, and green ají (chili), marinated in green Peruvian lime juice, oil, salt, and vinegar. Lima butter beans (pallares) have been part of the Peruvian cuisine for at least 6,000 years.
- Butifarras: a sandwich in a hamburger-type bread roll and consisting of Peruvian ham with a special spicy sauce consisting of sliced onions, sliced chili peppers, lime (or lemon), salt, pepper, and oil.
- Causa in its basic form is a mashed yellow potato dumpling mixed with lemon, onion, chili and oil. Varieties can have avocado, chicken, tuna (typically canned) or even shellfish added to the mixture. Also Causa is very popular in Lima, which distinguishes this dish by saying Causa Limeña Causa is usually served cold with hard boiled eggs and olives.
- Carapulcra is an appetizing stewed dish of pork and chicken, dried potatoes, red chilis, peanuts and cumin. The version from the Afro-Peruvian Ica region uses fresh potatoes.
- Empanadas peruanas (Peruvian pastries/meat pies. These are not to be confused with the meat pies found in many northern Western countries) They can be filled either with chicken, beef, cheese or be strictly vegetarian. They have a unique taste due to the addition of olives and sometimes hard-boiled eggs and raisins.
- Ají de gallina (chili chicken) is thin strips of chicken served with a creamy yellow and spicy sauce, made basically with ají amarillo (yellow chilis), cheese, milk, bread, and walnuts. Traditionally from non-laying hens, but today almost exclusively made from more tender chickens.
- Escabeche criollo (pickled fish): "Escabeche" when the word is used alone normally refers to escabeche of fish. Other varieties can use duck or chicken. The escabeche dishes rely in the cooking on the heavy use of vinegar and onions together with other spices and chili.
- Cau cau is a meal consisting of mondongo or tripe stew and accompanied by rice. There are a number of versions of Cau-Cau. In general cau-cau is a style of cooking being there seafood cau-cau, shellfish cau-cau, etc. Two noteworthy styles are the creole style simply called Tripe Cau-Cau, and the Italo-Peruvian style. The creole is made with strips of previously cooked tripe, seasoned by a mixture of sauteed onions, garlic, yellow ají, a pinch of turmeric, salt and pepper and chunks of boiled potatoes. The mixed is allowed to cook together to blend the tastes and acquire consistency. It is then sprinkled with spearmint or mint. The other common version is the "Italian" style. It consists of strips of precooked tripe sauteed with a mixture of red onions, peeled tomatoes, tomato paste and dried mushrooms (Porcini). After the flavors blend is is seasoned with parsley and mixed with fried potato strips just prior to serving. Some chefs add a few tablespoons of wine or pisco following the sautee step. These recipes may have African and Chinese influence as well as Italian.
- Chicharrones: a dish consisting of deep-fried (in its own fat) and heavily salted pork. There are at least two kinds of chicharrones: pork skins, and country style ribs first boiled until dried and until they render their own fat where they continue the browning process required for them to be called chicharrones. There are other types of chicharrones including deep fried squid, and other seafoods. They can be served at breakfast or any time of day.

### **Cuisine of the Northern Coast**

The cuisine of the northern coast offers a difference in style from the central and southern varieties. This is not only due to the coastal native Indian influence (less Andean), the Moorish and Spanish influence, the African and the Gypsy influence (Hindustani); but also to the warmer coastal seas, hotter climate and immense geographical latitude variety.

The widely different climates of Tumbes, Piura, Lambayeque, La Libertad, Cajamarca and San Martín contribute to the variety of dishes in this area.

### **Northern Style Dishes:**

- Shambar is a soup made with wheat, pork rinds, smoked ham, assorted beans, and green onions. It is served with toasted corn (cancha) and is made only on Mondays.
- Seco de Cabrito (goat stew, but goat is often substituted by lamb, chicken, or beef) is made in a pot after marinating with chicha de jora or beer and other spices including fresh coriander leaves (cilantro) and garlic. This is most popular in the northern coast especially in Cajamarca and Lambayeque.

- Seco de Chavelo (typically from Catacaos - Piura is a type of seco that is made of cecina stewed and dried meat that has been clotted and dried along with bananas, yuca, aji panca and the addition of Clarito (from Chicha de Jora the Piurano style).
- Cebiche de Conchas Negras (ceviche with black shells) is a dish of Piura and Tumbes is also popular along the southern coast of Ecuador due to Peruvian influence. In this version of ceviche, the seafood used in the dish should be black clams accompanied toasted corn.

### Cuisine of the Andes

In the valleys and plains of the Andes, the locals' diet continues to be based on corn (maíz), potatoes, and an assortment of tubers as it has been for many hundreds of years. Meat comes from indigenous animals like alpacas and guinea pigs, but also from imported livestock like sheep and swine.

As with many rural cultures, most of the more elaborate dishes were reserved for festivities, while daily meals were simple affairs. Nowadays, the festive dishes are consumed every day, although they tend to be on the heavy side and demand a large appetite.

### Andean Dishes:

The pachamanca is a very special banquet in and of itself. Cooked all over the Andean region of Peru, is made from a variety of meats (including pork and beef), herbs and a variety of vegetables that are slowly cooked underground on a bed of heated stones. It demands skillful cooks to create and a large number of guests to consume. Because of its tedious preparation it is normally only done for celebrations or festivals in the Andes, though recent years have seen the appearance of many "campestre" restaurants outside Lima where urban families can escape to spend an afternoon in the fresh air eating pachamanca. Such as in Cieneguilla. Places for Pachamanca in Lima Surroundings

Andean cooking's main freshwater fish is the trout, raised in fisheries in the region.

Currently, ostrich meat is being raised from farms in Arequipa, although its consumption is not widespread and limited to urban areas.

- Cuy chactado: A dish more popular in the highlands is this meal of fried guinea pig. Often the indigenous women of the Peruvian Andes will raise the guinea pigs in their huts where they run around loose on the floors of the dwellings. Prior to consumption they can reach a surprisingly large size. Besides the use of guinea pigs as separate meals, they are often cooked in a Pachamanca with other meats and vegetables.
- Olluquito con charqui is another typical Andean dish. Olluco is a yellowish tuber (*Ullucus tuberosus*) domesticated by pre-Inca populations, and is visually similar to colorful small Andean potatoes, but with a distinct crunchy texture when cooked. Charqui is the technique employed in the Andean highlands to cure meat by salting, then dehydration. Incidentally the word "jerky" in English is derived from this Andean (Quechuan) word. The dish is a stew of finely diced ollucos with charqui pieces (traditionally alpaca, or less frequently llama meat, though today it is also very commonly made from sheep), served with white rice.
- Rocoto relleno: Arequipa dish made from stuffed rocoto chilis. Rocotos are one of the very hot (spicy) chilis of Peru. In this dish they are stuffed with spiced beef or pork, onions, olives, egg white and then cooked in the oven with potatoes covered with cheese and milk.

### Cuisine of the Jungle

Naturally, jungle cuisine is made using the products local to the area. Although many animal species are hunted for food in the biologically diverse jungle, two standouts are the paiche (one of the world's largest freshwater fish) and turtles. Hunting turtles is prohibited in Peru, therefore turtle-based dishes are scarce and expensive and not sold à la carte in restaurants.

- Among the fruits of Peru's jungle is the camu camu, which contains 40 times more vitamin C than the kiwifruit. Exotic fruits such as mango and pineapple are also in abundance.
- Juane is rice seasoned with palillo, a Peruvian spice akin to turmeric, and chicken wrapped in banana leaves.

### Other regional dishes

- Chalona is a cured meat originally obtained from alpaca but today lamb is often substituted. Its origins are not very clear, but it is presumed that it comes from the Incan empire. It is used as an ingredient in a variety of dishes of the Puno region, Cusco, and Arequipa. It is prepared using

recently-cured lamb in which furrows are made with a knife in order for the salt to penetrate into the meat. The process of salt penetration is important, because from this depends how long the cured meat will last. The meat is left to dry in the sun and cold nights for almost one month.

- Chairo: A typical soup of the Puno and Arequipa regions, consisting of black chuño, aji panca (red chili pepper), sweet potatoes, meat and chalonga.
- Ocopa: A dish with some similarities to Papas a la Huancaína. It consists of boiled and sliced yellow potatoes covered with a sauce made of aji (chili pepper), walnuts, a Peruvian herb called "Huatacay" (*Tagetes minuta*) (that gives it a vivid green color) or "Huacatay" as people from Lima, the capital call it, and fresh or white cheese, sided with lettuce, boiled eggs and olives. It is usually served in restaurants specialized in Peruvian Typical or Creole Food[3] or restaurants serving food from Arequipa[4], a southern Peruvian City.
- Copús is one of the best known dishes of Piura. Its ingredients are ripe fried bananas, camotes (sweet potatoes), and seasoned hen, turkey, goat, and mutton. The meat is cooked in a furnace under the ground; this method is different from using a pachamanca since the furnace is covered with blankets and clay.
- Yuca chupe or cassava soup is one of the variations in which the Peruvians enjoy cassava.
- Crema de tarwi (tarwi soup): Tarwi is a vegetable native to the mountains of Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru. In addition to its use in soup, tarwi is used in much of Peruvian cuisine, including sancochado. Fresh tarwi can be used in stews, purees, sauces, desserts and in a variation of cebiche. In some areas, locals call it chocho. Its cultivation has recently expanded to all the countries of the Andean region. In Peru, it is principally grown in the areas of Cajamarca, Ancash, the Mantaro Valley, Ayacucho, Cusco, and Puno.
- Tarwi can also be found in beverages (such as papaya juice with tarwi flour). Tarwi has been shown to have a higher vegetable protein content than soy. In pre-Incan and Incan times, it was an important part of the mostly vegetarian diet of the region. It was consumed with small quantities of meat and dried fish, providing an abundant source of protein for the population. Tarwi seeds have been found in Nazca tombs and in representations of Tiahuanaco ceramics.

### El Chifa

Chifa (from the Mandarin words for "to eat food") is the Peruvian term for Chinese food (or for a Chinese restaurant). In the 150 years since its arrival in Peru, the Chinese Peruvian culture has revolutionized Peruvian cuisine, gaining international recognition from those who have had the opportunity to sample it while visiting Peru.

Chifa reflects a fusion by Chinese Peruvians of the products that the Chinese brought with them to those that they found in Peru, and later cultivated themselves. Even some creole dishes such as tacu-tacu, lomo saltado, and arroz chaufa were influenced by the Chinese.

In downtown Lima, on Capón Street, is the barrio chino (Chinatown). The great variety of savory and sweet dishes there, with different types of meats, vegetables, and soups, created a new culinary alternative for Peruvians.

### Sweet dishes and desserts

- Alfajores: a common dessert made in several varieties. The basic recipe makes use of a base mix of flour, lemon rind, margarine, and powdered sugar which is then oven-baked. Alfajores consist of two or more layers of this baked pastry, and is usually filled with either manjar blanco (a caramel-colored, sweet, creamy filling made with milk and sugar) or molasses.
- Turrónes (or nougat) (similar to fudge) are of several varieties. One common variety to be found in Lima is Turrón de Doña Pepa, an anise and honey nougat that is traditionally prepared for the Señor de los Milagros (or Lord of Miracles) procession, during October. Turrónes are most commonly made from almonds, and can be found in Spanish-speaking countries all over the world.
- Almost exclusive to Peru is the fruit known as lúcuma. Lucuma juice, ice cream, and corresponding lucuma shakes are very popular throughout Peru. Only lucuma ice cream normally can be found in large US cities (typically in Peruvian restaurants). One popular brand of ice cream in Peru is Donofrio, which is owned by Nestlé.
- Helados (ice cream): Peru has the usual assortment of common ice cream flavors but also some more exotic flavors such as camu camu, guaraná and tuna, the latter being the local name for the fruit of the prickly pear cactus, and not to be confused with the fish. Peru is one of few countries in the world where the third most popular ice-cream (after vanilla and chocolate) is not strawberry, it is in fact the "nutty" flavored, orange colored lúcuma, which is an exotic fruit grown in quantity only in its native Peru, and only in recent years being exported in very limited quantities as a gourmet

flavor (for ice cream and savory sauces) to the USA, and available in Europe essentially only in food shows.

- Mazamorra morada: a jelly-like dessert which takes on the color of one of its main ingredients—purple maíz. Mazamorra morada is a dessert typical of Peru. A variety of purple corn (maíz morado) grows in Peru that colors and adds a particular flavor to the water in which it is boiled. When that water is cooled and chopped fruit, lemon and sugar is added, and the mixture is served as a beverage, its name is "chicha morada".
- Picarones: a sweet, ring-shaped fritter with a pumpkin base; often served with a molasses syrup.
- Picarones are pumpkin fritters that are also eaten as late-afternoon street food during El Señor de los Milagros celebrations. This is another dish that has its origins in the colonial period. Some believe they are a local adaptation of Spanish buñuelos. Picarones are made of squash or pumpkin dough and sweetened with chancaca, raw cane sugar melted into a syrup.
- Tejas: candy filled with manjar blanco and coated with a fondant-like shell. Some are also made with a chocolate shell (chocoteja).
- Suspiro Limeño: a dessert made of milk. This classic criollo dessert is said to have been named by the famous Peruvian poet and author José Gálvez whose wife doña Amparo Ayarez was famous for her cooking. When asked what inspired the name, he reportedly replied 'because it is soft and sweet like the sigh of a woman'. In this case, it would be a woman from Lima, a Limeña.

### Soft Drinks

Well-known soft drinks include:

Chicha Morada: a beverage prepared from a base of boiled purple maíz to which are added chunks of pineapple, sugar, and ice as it cools. First-timers compare it to Kool-aid, with a pleasant, almost fruity taste. Not to be confused with the fermented beverage chicha (chicha de jora)

Inca Kola: the brand of a popular fizzy soda drink (gaseosa), which is a cultural icon, served literally on the most humble to the most exclusive tables nationwide, alone or with any type of food. Yellow in color, it is sweet and refreshing, said to resemble the taste of bubble gum. Inca Kola is the only national beverage in the world that beat worldwide Coca-Cola in sales.

Less common are:

Refresco de camu camu: Refrescos are basically non-fizzy type and simple juices of various flavours often served with the set menu of the day at smaller restaurants. Besides camu camu, there are more common flavours such as orange juice.

Té de uña de gato: a tea made from a plant from the Amazon, cat's claw (*Uncaria tomentosa*), known for its healing or medicinal properties.

### Alcoholic Drinks

Pisco, a kind of brandy, is the national drink of Peru. This distilled beverage made from grapes is produced in various regions of the country. Pisco Sour is a cocktail made from pisco combined with lemon juice, the white of an egg and sugar.

Wines come from many different regions of the country, most notably from the Ica Region.

Beer as in many countries, is popular in all levels of society. Local brands include Pilsen and Cristal. A couple of regional beers are Arequipeña and Cuzqueña (Cusqueña), from Arequipa and Cuzco, respectively; though Cuzqueña is popular nationwide and is exported worldwide. A common beer drinking ritual among many Peruvian men involves a group sharing one glass. The party holding the bottle waits for the prior person to drink from the glass before receiving that glass, filling it and passing the bottle on to the next in line. While this custom is more common among men of lower echelons of society, people of higher social status, particularly youth and occasionally women, take part in this custom.

Chicha or Chicha de Jora is another well-known drink, based on different varieties of fermented maíz and different aromatic herbs, depending on the region of the country. Its consumption is mostly limited to the Andes area.

## Art

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During pre-Columbian times, Peru was one of the major centers of artistic expression in The Americas, where Pre-Inca cultures, such as Chavín, Moche, Paracas, Huari (Wari), Nazca, Chimú, and Tiahuanaco developed high-quality pottery, textiles, jewelry, and sculpture. Drawing upon earlier cultures, the incas continued to maintain these crafts but made even more impressive achievements in architecture. The



mountain town of Machu Picchu and the buildings at Cuzco are excellent examples of Inca architectural design.

During the colonial period, Spanish baroque fused with the rich Inca tradition to produce mestizo or creole art. The Cuzco school of largely anonymous Indian artists followed the Spanish baroque tradition with influence from the Italian, Flemish, and French schools. Painter Francisco Fierro made a distinctive contribution to this school with his portrayals of typical events, manners, and customs of mid-19th-century Peru. Francisco Lazo, forerunner of the indigenous school of painters, also achieved fame for his portraits.

In the decade after 1932, the "indigenous school" of painting headed by Jose Sabogal dominated the cultural scene in Peru. A subsequent reaction among Peruvian artists led to the beginning of modern Peruvian painting. Sabogal's resignation as director of the National School of Arts in 1943 coincided with the return of several Peruvian painters from Europe who revitalized international styles of painting in Peru. During the 1960s, Fernando de Szyszlo, an internationally recognized Peruvian artist, became the main advocate for abstract painting and pushed Peruvian art toward modernism. Peru remains an art-producing center with painters such as Gerardo Chavez, Alberto Quintanilla, and Jose Carlos Ramos, along with sculptor Victor Delfin, gaining international stature. Young artists continue to develop now that Peru's economy allows more promotion of the arts.

## Transportation

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### Highways of Peru

The Peruvian road network is made up of more than 70,000 kilometers (43,750 miles) of highways; 16,000 km (10,000 miles) are national routes. The highways are categorized by quality and by the type of automobile that travels on them; freeways, paved roads (asphalted highways), and dirt roads (roadbeds).

The freeways have two main lanes and one safety lane, good sign postings, and all types of vehicles transit them. The majority of these routes correspond to the access circuit to Lima along the Pan-American highway, and you are required to pay a toll to use them.

The paved roads have one main lane and a safety shoulder. All types of vehicles can circulate on the roads without problems and like the highways you must pay a toll. The traffic on the asphalt highways is more intense at night and if you are driving in the Sierras it is recommendable to travel in the first hours of the morning. In the Sierra and in the jungle between January and March, the roads are blocked because of the rains and frequent landslides.

The dirt roads are constructed from a base of dirt and gravel, connecting important cities in the Sierra or in the jungle, small cities, towns, archaeological sites, or other places of tourist interest. All-terrain vehicles are ideal as some of these routes are not in very good condition.

Some dirt roads have assigned ascending and descending days.

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### Road Infrastructure

The service stations (grifos) that are found along the Northern Pan-American Highway from Lima to Piura, and on the Southern Pan-American from Lima to Nasca, have bathrooms, shops selling lubricants and replacement parts, fast food, mini-markets, automobile repair shops, and car washes, along with providing petroleum and gas of different octane grades. The further away you get from these main roads, the scarcer the service stations become. Selling fuel in a can is also quite common.

Service stations do not normally accept credit cards in the provinces. The fuel price increases in relation to the distance and isolation of the stations. Using a low octane fuel over 1,500 m (4,920 ft.) does not cause any problems, but it can affect the engine if used below 1,500 m. Fuel in a can should always be filtered with a canvas or flannel material.

Some cities have automobile garages that specialize in specific makes of cars and in the smaller cities there are more general garages that do not offer any kind of guarantee. Because of this it is best to verify the vehicle's condition before setting off on a trip. Tire repair shops are found in any part of the country.

The tow truck service is generally expensive and scarce, however, there is insurance for auto rescue and towing that provides national coverage at a reasonable cost.

### Driving in Peru

Driving in Peru, whether in the city or on the highway, can be an adventure. Transit in this country is chaotic for anybody who is not used to it: Peruvian drivers are very aggressive and there are not many signs (the signs you do see can be ambiguous). In addition, be careful with thefts of windshield wipers, hubcaps and even the wheels themselves; it is not a good idea to park in the streets. If you are going to drive at night, be very careful, because the roads are not in good conditions, the buses drive at high speeds and the trucks do not have lights.

### Taxis

Taxis are a highly recommended method of transportation within the city, especially in Lima given the size of the city and the mess of traffic. You should decide on the cost of the ride with the taxi driver before heading out. It shouldn't cost more than US \$ 5 in the big cities, so haggle over the price if necessary.

In the larger cities, there are some radio taxi companies which offer more security and can pick you up when and where you prefer, but prices are a bit higher.

### Urban buses ( Microbuses )

These buses are found only in the main cities, and they can hold twenty to forty passengers. There are no defined bus stops, so you should watch out for where you need to get off so you can warn the driver on time.

Collective pick up trucks (Combis)

This means of transportation involves pick-up trucks, each one with a capacity for 10 people. They move quickly throughout the city and are cheaper; nevertheless, they are not recommended due to the high speed and aggressive manner of driving.

### Interurban buses

In Peru, there are two ways to travel by bus between towns. The first option involves buses, called 'caleteros', that stop in every town along the route. Direct buses are more expensive but a lot better.

### Trucks

In some parts of the country, cargo trucks are used as a means of transportation for passengers. Passengers and drivers agree on the price at the time of departure; but you should get there early in order to find a good seat.

### Trains

In Peru, the company in charge of the railway system is the 'Empresa Nacional de Ferrocarriles' (ENAFER) or the National Railway Company. There are two routes in the country; the most touristy and widely used is the Southern one, linking Arequipa with Juliaca, Puno and Cusco, or Juliaca and Puno. The last route departs from Cusco to Machu Picchu and Quillabamba, though the stretch to this last destination is interrupted. The other railroad links Lima with Huancayo and Huancavelica, however, the first stretch is not in service.

When traveling by train, you may choose from several categories depending on your necessities and budget. The best ones are Pullman or buffet; then, first class, business/tourism and the always-overcrowded second class. For the route from Cusco – Machu Picchu there is an auto coach, a kind of faster but costlier electric train.

## Education System

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Education in Peru is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education, which is in charge of formulating, implementing and supervising the national educational policy. According to the Constitution, education is compulsory and free in public schools for the initial, primary and secondary levels. Free secondary education was introduced in 1946. It is also free in public universities for students who are unable to pay tuition and have an adequate academic performance. As of 2008, various institutions such as UNESCO, World Bank, and the Inter-American Development Bank have stated that Peru has the best education system in Latin America and that primary, secondary, and superior education attendance rates were the highest in Latin America. According to an estimate in 2000 the adult literacy rate was 10.1%.

The education policy of Peru aims at the spread of indigenous culture and language. Primary education is imparted in native languages of Peru. Students learn Spanish and other foreign languages in the secondary schools. The Ministry of Education of Peru which is based in Lima looks after the education curricula. It

decides on the content of the text books of the schools. Teachers are given great respect in Peru. A profession in teaching is looked at with much respect. College professors are more esteemed in Peru. Higher education is given much importance and people pursuing a post-graduate degree get better job opportunities in Peru.

In order to spread education in the remote areas like Sierra or Selva many long-term projects have been initiated. The Ministry of Education was empowered in 1972 so that it had control over the appointments of teachers in the public schools and also in the private sector.

## Language

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Peru is a multilingual nation. Its official languages are Spanish and, in the zones where they are predominant, Quechua, Aymara, and other aboriginal languages. (Political Constitution, art. 48) The most common languages are Spanish and, to a lesser extent, Quechua and Aymara languages.

### Original languages

The aboriginal languages of Peru are spoken mainly in the central Andes and in the Amazon forests. A considerable number of languages were once spoken on the northern coast and in the northern Andes, but other than some endangered pockets of Quechua in the northern highlands (Cajamarca, Inkawasi-Cañaris and Chachapoyas), all others have died out - Mochica is thought to have gone extinct in the 1950s.

The only aboriginal Andean languages in use in the highlands today are those of the Quechua and Aymara families (the latter including Jaqaru/Kawki). The Amazon region, however, is home to a great variety of languages, the most commonly spoken of which are Asháninka and Aguaruna, not to mention lesser known languages, such as Urarina, which is deemed by most linguists as an unclassified language isolate.

There are currently 14 defined linguistic families in Peruvian territory, in addition to many more isolated and unclassified languages.

It is known that the number of languages that were used in Peru easily surpasses 300; some observers speak of 700. Yet from the time of European conquest, epidemics and periods of forced work (in addition to the influence of the hegemonic Spanish language), fewer than 150 can be counted today. The following is an incomplete list of languages spoken today, and a number that became extinct in the twentieth century or that are endangered.

### Spanish language

In Peru, the most common language is Spanish, which is spoken with three dialects within the country:

Peruvian Coast Spanish

Andes Spanish

Amazonian Spanish

### Foreign Languages

In Peru there is also a large community of immigrants, of which few keep their languages. Within those, there are the Japanese and the Chinese (Cantonese dialect), for example, and in smaller numbers, the Germans (central Andes), the Arabic speakers, and the Hindi speakers retain their native languages in Peru. The last two are products of the recent wave of immigrants from Palestine and Pakistan.

## Employment and the Economy

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Traditionally the economy of Peru, was based on natural resources in fields such as mining, farming, fishing, and agriculture. Lately, though, there has been a noticeable increase in slight industries, services and high technologies. In 2007, the Peruvian economy grew 9%, the largest growth rate in all of South America. Poverty has been reduced substantially in the past decade as in 2004, it was slightly under 50%, in 2006 was at 45%, and in 2008 is at 36%. According to government sources, poverty is projected to be reduced to under 10% in eight years, and the President Alan Garcia has stated that by this time Peru will cease to be a third world nation. The Lima Stock Exchange grew 185.24% in 2006 and in 2007 grew 168.3% making it one of the fastest growing stock exchanges in the world. However, the Bolsa started falling in mid-2008 and up's and down's have continued through 2009, leaving the index at 80% of its peak of the previous year. There was a slight recovery in the last half of March 2009. Inflation was the lowest in Latin America at only 1.8% in 2006, but it started to increase in late 2007 with rising oil and commodity prices. For the first half of 2008, it was about 5.5%.

### Economic outlook

Forecasts for the medium- and long-term remain highly positive. Peru's real GDP growth in 2007 was the largest in Latin America and in 2008 was an outstanding 9.8% the highest in the whole Latin American and the world.[citation needed] Inflation remained low, at about 3%, while the budget surplus is expected to remain at about 1% of GDP.[citation needed] Private investment should keep growing at a rate of 15% a year.[citation needed] Exports and imports are expected to keep rising.[citation needed] The unemployment and underemployment indexes (7.2% and 54%, respectively, in Lima) should keep coming down as the economy grows[citation needed], other cities in Peru like Cajamarca, Ica, Cuzco and Trujillo are starting to show less unemployment nowadays. Peru's economy grew by 8.03% in 2006 and 8.3% in 2007.[citation needed] Over the next few years, the country is likely to attract both domestic and foreign investment in the tourism, agriculture, mining, petroleum and natural gas, power industries and financial institutions.

The government has signed an agreement with the IMF in which the perspectives of the economic growth are excellent. The GDP will grow at 7% for the next 6 years; private investment will reach 25% of the GDP in 2007, with perspectives of reaching up to 30% of the GDP by 2009; and inflation is under control at 2% per year for the next 5 years.[citation needed] International Debt will reach 20% of the GDP by 2010, down from 35% in 2006, and will be only 12% of the GDP by 2015. The International Monetary Reserves of the National Reserve Bank (Dollars, Euros, Yens, Gold, and other currencies) reached US\$ 27 billion by the end of 2007, and US\$ 31 billion at the end of 2008. Currently reserves are at a 32 billion level while forecast to be reaching US\$ 45 billion by 2010, which will be twice the amount of international debt by then.

Exports are growing at a pace of 25% and will reach US\$ 28 billion by the end of 2007 and US\$ 50 billion by the end of 2010. High technological investment is growing fast in Peru, and will be 10% of the GDP by 2010.

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## Religion

According to the 1993 Census, 89% of the Peruvian population over 12 years old declared themselves as Catholics, 6.7% as Evangelicals, 2.6% as of other denominations, 1.4% as non-religious and 0.2% did not specify any affiliation.

### Catholic Church in Peru

Most Peruvians are Catholics, although only two-thirds participate in the liturgy and services. The main authorities of this church are in Lima, Arequipa, Trujillo and Cusco. The most important celebration is in honour of the Lord of Miracles. There are also October festivities in Lima.

### Popular celebrations

Popular celebrations are the product of every towns' traditions and legends. These celebrations gather music, dances, meals and typical drinks. In addition to the religious celebrations like Christmas, Corpus Christi or Holy Week, there are others that express the syncretism of the indigenous peoples' beliefs with Christianity. For example, there is the Alasitas (an Aymara word that, according to some studious people, would mean «buy me») that combines crafts and miniatures fair with dances, meals and a mass. Another example is the peregrination of the Qoyllur Rit'i (Cuzco), that gathers the ancient cult to the apus (tutelary divinities of the mountains) with a peregrination to a Christian Sanctuary in a long trek to the top of a mountain, of more than 5000m above sea level, that is covered with snow. More than 6,000 people make this trek every year, although not all of them come back

Most Andean people believe in their Inca religion though non census has ever been made of this truth. Afro-Peruvian's also practice non-western religions yet no census covers this fact.

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## Music

Peruvian music is an amalgamation of sounds and styles drawing on Peru's Andean musical roots and Spanish musical influences.

Native Peruvian music is dominated by the national instrument, the charango. The charango is a type of mandolin, and was invented in Bolivia by musicians imitating Spanish lutes and guitars. In the Canas and Titicaca regions, the charango is used in courtship rituals, symbolically invoking mermaids with the instrument to lure the woman to the male performers. Until the 1960s, the charango was denigrated as an

instrument of the rural poor. After the revolution in 1959, which built upon the Indigenismo movement (1910–1940), the charango was popularized among other performers.

Raul Romero's recordings of saxophone and clarinet ensembles from the Mantaro Valley have proved extremely influential.

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