



From
\$24,682 NZD

Single Room
 \$29,230 NZD
 Twin Room
 \$24,682 NZD

Prices valid until
 30th December 2026

25 days

Duration

Argentina, Bolivia

Destination

Level 3 - Moderate to
 Challenging

Activity

South American Small Group History and Culture Tour

Sep 04 2026 to Sep 28 2026

History and Culture Tour of South America | Small Group Tours South America

Our South American small group tour is a comprehensive and fully escorted introduction to Latin America. During 25 memorable days, we explore five key South American countries with our Odyssey Traveller



Australia program leader and knowledgeable local guides.

This in-depth tour allows travellers to experience many of the jewels of Latin America. Together, we explore the dramatic contrasts of this great continent as we journey through Chile, Peru, Bolivia, Argentina, and Brazil. We marvel at the ancient cultures and natural beauty of the Amazon. We experience the snow-capped peaks of the Andes Mountains, the calm waters of Lake Titicaca, and the sapphire-sparkling waters of the beaches of Rio. Learn about the art of Tango dancing, the history of the ruins of Machu Picchu and the amazing biodiversity of the world's largest rainforest, the Amazon.

Itinerary & highlights for this South America small group tour

Our South American small group tour begins in Santiago. While here, we discover some of the city's highlights such as the Plaza de Armas, surrounded by an 18th-century cathedral, and the central market with its colourful display of fruits, fish and flowers. Afterward, we ascend the San Cristobal Hill for a panoramic view of the city. Our next stop is Lima City, Peru, where we take a walking tour of the city and visit Pachacamac, the pre-Inca sacred and ceremonial site. Here, pilgrims arrive to leave their offerings and consult the oracle of Pachacamac. The site is comprised of pyramidal temples and enclosures built by several Pre-Columbian cultures. The remainder of the tour explores other significant sites in Peru, before heading south to Buenos Aires, Argentina. We finish in the vibrant, cosmopolitan city of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

A standout highlight of this South American small group tour is the opportunity to explore the Peruvian stretch of the legendary Amazon River. We stay in the heart of the Amazon rainforest, venturing out in search of caimans—fascinating crocodilian creatures native to South America. We experience many Amazonian wonders, learning about its lush rainforests and exotic wildlife as well as native communities that inhabit the area. We also have the opportunity to take several great train journeys including one from the Sacred Valley to Machu Picchu. In addition, we ride the Andean Explorer to Lake Titicaca. We will also

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marvel at the ancient Inca ruins of Machu Picchu, dramatically set high in the Andes beneath the peak of Huayna Picchu.

You can learn more about [Chile](#), [Peru](#), [Bolivia](#), [Argentina](#) and [Brazil](#) with our country profiles. For more details on this tour, click the 'Top 5' or 'Itinerary' buttons above! If you're keen to experience this tour, [please call](#) or [send an email](#). Or, to book, simply fill in the form on the right hand side of this page.

Tour Notes

- Effects of altitude, age, and ability to function enjoyably in this environment should be discussed with your doctor.
- Effects of heat and humidity are expected in some parts of the tour.
- Group size limited to 12
- Uneven terrain will be traversed in parts of this tour.

Highlights

1. Explore the Peruvian reaches of the legendary Amazon River, where lush rainforests and wildlife abound.
2. Enjoy the great train journeys from Sacred Valley to Machu Picchu and the Andean Explorer to Lake Titicaca.
3. Feel the Latino passion and excitement of South America in the cities Buenos Aires and Rio De Janeiro.
4. Be amazed by the ancient Inca ruins of Machu Picchu, perched high on the Peruvian mountain of Huayna Picchu.
5. See the astounding natural wonder of Iguazu Falls.



Itinerary

Day 1

Locations: Santiago

Overview:

Upon arrival in Santiago, we will come to our accommodation individually. We will enjoy dinner at the hotel.

Contact Odyssey if you plan to arrive a day or two early and would like suggestions of things to see and do in Santiago.

(D)

Accommodation:

2 nights at Marina Las Condes or similar.

Day 2

Locations: Santiago

Overview:

Today's half-day tour provides an overview of Santiago's main cultural and historical highlights. We begin with an ascent of Cerro San Cristóbal, offering panoramic views of the city and the Andes Mountains. The route continues to Barrio Bellavista, known for its artistic character, colourful facades, and lively atmosphere.

We walk through Parque Forestal and past the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes en route to Plaza de Armas, the historic centre of Santiago. Here, we can view the Metropolitan Cathedral and other nearby landmarks representative of the city's colonial and neoclassical architecture.

The excursion concludes in the Lastarria district, a cultural area featuring art galleries, cafés, and restaurants. Lunch is included today.

(B,L)

Accommodation:

Marina Las Condes or similar.



Day 3

Locations: Lima

Overview:

We will transfer to the airport to board a flight to Lima.

On arrival we'll be transferred to our hotel and enjoy some free time before meeting again for dinner at our hotel.

(B,D)

Accommodation:

2 nights at Hotel Indigo Lima Miraflores or similar.

Day 4

Locations: Lima

Overview:

In the morning we visit Pachacamac, the pre-Inca sacred and ceremonial site, dating back to the 3rd century BC, where countless of pilgrims from across the Andean world arrived to leave their offerings and to consult the oracle of Pachacamac. The site is comprised of pyramidal temples, plazas, roads, residential areas and enclosures built by several Pre-Columbian cultures and the Incas.

After lunch at a local restaurant we continue our a sightseeing tour of Lima. We begin with a stop at the Main Square from where we view the Government Palace, Cathedral and City hall, all examples of Lima's colonial architecture. We'll visit the inside of the Cathedral and see the various architectural styles within and learn more about the history and religion in Peru. Next we visit Santo Domingo convent, founded in 1540 with its beautiful cloister covered with tiles and a library with a collection of over 25,000 books. From the convent's bell tower one can see the entire city of Lima and the port of Callao.

In the evening, we enjoy dinner at Rosa Nautica Restaurant.

(B,L,D)

Accommodation:

Hotel Indigo Lima Miraflores or similar.



Day 5

Locations: Puerto Maldonado / Amazon Rainforest

Overview:

This morning we transfer to the airport for our flight to Puerto Maldonado. Upon arrival, we head to Capitanía port, where we board a boat to begin our journey along the Madre de Dios and Tambopata rivers. The ride, lasting about 25–30 minutes, offers sweeping views of the city and the lush Amazonian vegetation.

On arrival at our lodge, we will be welcomed with lunch and have time to relax before reconvening in the afternoon. We set out on a scenic boat ride along the Tambopata River to witness a breathtaking Amazonian sunset, its warm and vibrant colors reflected in the water. As dusk falls, we drift back slowly, scanning the riverbanks with spotlights in search of wildlife such as caimans and other nocturnal creatures.

Dinner tonight will be served at our accommodation, featuring fresh local ingredients and authentic regional flavors.

(B,L,D)

Accommodation:

2 nights at IKAM Riverview Amazon Lodge or similar

Day 6

Locations: Puerto Maldonado / Amazon Rainforest

Overview:

After breakfast, we set out on a half-day adventure to explore the majestic Lake Sandoval. Our journey begins with a boat ride, followed by a walk through the forest until we reach this natural treasure—one of the highlights of the Madre de Dios region. From there, we board canoes and, guided by our naturalist, glide across the lake's glassy surface, which mirrors the surrounding rainforest.

Lake Sandoval is alive with extraordinary biodiversity. Playful river otters, howler monkeys, vibrant macaws, and the prehistoric hoatzin can all be spotted here. The lake is also home to caimans, turtles, exotic birds, and clouds of multicolored butterflies. Every turn offers a chance



to witness the richness of Amazonian wildlife in its natural habitat.

We return to the lodge in time for lunch, after which the afternoon is free for you to enjoy at your own pace—perhaps with birdwatching, a gentle garden walk, or simply relaxing in the peaceful surroundings.

In the evening, an à la carte dinner will be served. Afterwards, you may choose to join the optional *Circle of Fire*, gathering around a campfire to share stories, or take part in an exciting night walk through the jungle to discover the fascinating creatures that emerge after dark.

(B,L,D)

Accommodation:

IKAM Riverview Amazon Lodge or similar

Day 7

Locations: Sacred Valley

Overview:

After breakfast we will check out and head back to Puerto Maldonado airport. From there, we will fly to Cusco, the ancient capital of the Inca Empire, marking the end of our jungle adventure.

On the way to the Sacred Valley, we will stop at Chinchero village (3,772 meters), famous for the extraordinary beauty and quality of its textiles. Afterward, we continue to our hotel in the Sacred Valley for dinner, followed by time to rest and begin acclimating to the higher altitude.

(B,D)

Accommodation:

2 nights at Sonesta Posadas del Inca Yucay or similar.

Day 8

Locations: Sacred Valley

Overview:

This morning, we will visit Pisac, a beautiful place where Incan and Colonial influences have reached a perfect balance and created the unique way of life of the local inhabitants. We will get a chance to

explore this quaint town, famous for its artisan markets where we can find extraordinarily fine jewelry and ceramic and textile craftwork. Afterwards, we will have lunch at Hacienda Huayocari.

Then, we visit one of the last remaining Inca towns, Ollantaytambo, which was once fiercely guarded by a massive fortress. We will discover the large archaeological complex of what used to serve as a wayside inn for royal delegations on long journeys.

(B,L)

Accommodation:

Sonesta Posadas del Inca Yucay or similar.

Day 9

Locations: Machu Picchu

Overview:

Early this morning, we will board a train to Aguas Calientes, the small village at the base of Machu Picchu. From there, we will take a mini-bus up the winding road to the citadel, where a guided tour will introduce us to its history and architecture, followed by time to explore at our own pace. Machu Picchu is the most iconic of the Inca settlements, perched on a mountaintop thousands of meters above the Urubamba Valley. Remarkably, it remained unknown to the outside world during the Spanish conquest and thus preserved. In 1911, American explorer Hiram Bingham brought the site to international attention, and archaeologists have since uncovered staircases, terraces, temples, palaces, towers, and fountains. Scholars believe the citadel was constructed in the mid-15th century under the Inca Emperor Pachacuti, inhabited and used by the Inca for religious, ceremonial, and administrative purposes.

We enjoy lunch at a local restaurant and dinner this evening is at our hotel.

(B,L,D)

Accommodation:

1 night at Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel or similar.

Day 10

Locations: Cusco

Overview:

This morning, enjoy a second visit to Machu Picchu to explore the site further. We then return to Aguas Calientes train station and board the Expedition train to Ollantaytambo, before we continue to Cusco.

We arrive at our hotel later in the afternoon and have some free time before dinner at the hotel. During your free time you can wander through the city's narrow, winding cobblestone streets and take in the striking blend of Inca stonework and colonial Spanish architecture.

(B, L, D)

Accommodation:

3 nights at Novotel Cusco or similar.

Day 11

Locations: Cusco

Overview:

In the morning, we will explore the city of Cusco and visit its main historical monuments. Our first stop will be at Sacsayhuaman, an important archaeological center located outside of the city and according to history it was an Inca ceremonial fortress built with stones, many of which would weigh between 90 and 125 tons. Returning to the city, we will visit the San Pedro market where many products and ingredients are sold for the preparation of Peruvian cuisine and experience the commercial activity of the daily life of the Cusco population. Next on our tour will be the Cathedral Church located in the Plaza de Armas, one of the most beautiful and significant monuments in America, which brings together in its architecture the combination of Gothic, Baroque and Renaissance styles, and where an important sample of mestizo art from colonial times.

Next, we will enter to visit the Compañía de Jesus Church which is also located in the Plaza de Armas and is considered one of the most beautiful and imposing Christian temples built during the colonial era, which, like many others, was built on an old Inca palace. We will then

continue with the visit to the convent of Santo Domingo which is built on the ancient temple of Qoricancha that was destined for the worship of the Sun god, being one of the most sacred and respected buildings in the times of the Incas. The Qoricancha was built with finely joined stones with impressive precision and inside which the walls of various enclosures were covered with gold and silver sheets. Our excursion ends with a panoramic visit to San Blas church, which is in handicraft neighborhood named that because artisans settled in this part of the city and to this day preserve fine handcrafted works. At the end of the tour, we will drop you at your hotel and afternoon is free for you to enjoy the city at your own pace.

In the evening we'll walk to a nearby restaurant for a group dinner at Limo Restaurant. , sampling Peruvian cuisine.

(B,D)

Accommodation:

Novotel Cusco or similar.

Day 12

Locations: Cusco

Overview:

We will enjoy a day at leisure in Cusco.

Contact Odyssey for suggested things to do.

In the evening we meet and walk together to a dinner and a cultural show at Tunupa Restaurant.

(B,D)

Accommodation:

Novotel Cusco or similar.

Day 13

Locations: Puno

Overview:

Today, we will journey by train across the vast Altiplano from Cusco to Puno, a scenic ride of a little over 10 hours. You can enjoy the sweeping

views from the brass-railed open carriage at the rear of the train or relax in the elegant bar lounge. The train's vintage style, reminiscent of the legendary Orient Express. Upon arrival in Puno, we will transfer to our hotel.

(B,L,D)

Accommodation:

2 nights at Casa Andina Premium or similar.

Day 14

Locations: Puno

Overview:

This morning, we will visit the remarkable floating islands of Lake Titicaca, constructed from layers of totora reeds and home to the Uros people, who continue to live much as their ancestors did centuries ago. The cheerful inhabitants will invite us to get to know their traditional lifestyle and customs.

After lunch, we will explore the Chullpas of Sillustani, an ancient pre-Inca cemetery featuring distinctive circular, tower-shaped stone tombs. After exploring this necropolis, we will visit a cozy Quechua Farm to learn about its adobe and straw constructions, traditional medicine, samples of religious syncretism and its South American camelid herds. We will then return to our hotel in Puno for the night.

(B,L,D)

Accommodation:

Casa Andina Premium or similar.

Day 15

Locations: La Paz

Overview:

After breakfast, we transfer to Copacabana to visit its famous cathedral, home to the revered Dark Virgin of the Lake. From Copacabana, we board a hydrofoil to Moon Island, where we visit the Sun Virgins' Temple (*Iñak Uyu*)—an important sacred site on Lake Titicaca, where the

rhythmic beating of the waves seems to whisper memories of the past.

In Inca society, women played a fundamental role, contributing to textile, agricultural, cultural, and religious development. Thanks to the dedication of these young maidens, traditions such as the preparation of dehydrated potato products, including *chuño* and *tunta*, continue to this day.

The temple itself is remarkable for its forward-vaulting technique and its trapezoidal, stepped design. From here, we continue on to Sun Island (*Isla del Sol*).

On the island, we will explore Inca ruins, including the famous staircases, and taste water from the so-called Sacred Fountain, which local tradition associates with youth and well-being. Lunch will be sat a local restaurant.

We return to Copacabana by hydrofoil and continue on a private overland journey, crossing the Tiquina Straits by motorboat en route to Huatajata, on the shores of Lake Titicaca. Upon arrival, we visit the Andean Roots Eco Village, which includes the Altiplano Museum, a handicrafts village, traditional mud igloos, and the mortuary towers of the Urus Chipaya culture.

Here we also meet the Limachi family, renowned for building the *RA II* and *Tigris* reed boats used in epic transatlantic expeditions. The visit concludes with the chance to see elegant vicuñas, llamas, alpacas, and the mythical suri (Andean ostrich).

We then continue to La Paz, travelling along a road that runs parallel to the majestic snow-capped peaks of the Andes.

Dinner will be at your hotel tonight.

(B,L,D)

Accommodation:

2 nights at Mitru Sur Hotel Room Type or similar.

Day 16

Locations: La Paz

Overview:

After breakfast, we depart for Valle de la Luna (Moon Valley), en route to the ruins of Tiwanaku & Puma Punkus, the ceremonial and political center of the Tiwanaku culture, which thrived between 500 and 1000 AD. The site features impressive stone monuments, temples, and the famous Gateway of the Sun.

(B)

Accommodation:

Mitru Sur Hotel Room or similar.

Day 17

Locations: Buenos Aires

Overview:

Very early this morning, we will transfer to the airport for our flight to Buenos Aires. As there are no direct flights, we will make a stopover en route. Upon arrival, we will be transferred to our hotel, and the remainder of the day will be at leisure. We will enjoy dinner at the hotel this evening.

Buenos Aires is a shopper's paradise, with high-quality leather goods among the city's best bargains. The elegant Recoleta district, especially along Alvear and Quintana Avenues, features a mix of top local and international brands, while the lively pedestrian street of Florida is ideal for browsing jewelry shops, art galleries, fur boutiques, and more.

(D)

Accommodation:

3 nights at 725 Continental Hotel or similar.

Day 18

Locations: Buenos Aires

Overview:

This morning, we will explore the southern side of Buenos Aires, a city renowned for its strong European influence, grand architecture, beautiful parks, and wide avenues. Highlights of our tour include Plaza de Mayo, the iconic Casa Rosada, and the colorful La Boca district. We will also visit the world-famous Teatro Colón. After returning to the hotel to relax, we will enjoy dinner at a local restaurant in the evening.

(B,L,D)

Accommodation:

725 Continental Hotel or similar.

Day 19

Locations: Buenos Aires

Overview:

Today we will explore the northern side of Buenos Aires, beginning with a visit to the historic Recoleta Cemetery, the beautifully landscaped rose garden, and the Evita Museum, which celebrates the life and legacy of Argentina's iconic First Lady. Lunch will be served at a local restaurant. This evening, we will experience the passion of Argentine Tango with a dance lesson at La Ventana, followed by dinner and a captivating Tango show.

(B,L,D)

Accommodation:

725 Continental Hotel or similar.

Day 20

Locations: Iguazú Falls

Overview:

We will take an early domestic flight to Iguazú Falls, followed by a transfer to our hotel on the Brazilian side. In the afternoon, we will enjoy

a guided walking tour offering breathtaking panoramic views of the falls. We will also visit the Bird Park (Parque das Aves), home to more than 1,320 birds representing approximately 143 different species.

Dinner this evening will be at our hotel.

(B,D)

Accommodation:

2 nights at Double Tree by Hilton or similar.

Day 21

Locations: Iguazú Falls

Overview:

This morning we will depart our hotel and cross the Tancredo Neves Bridge into Argentina for a tour of the Argentine side of Iguazú Falls. We will explore the upper and lower trails of Iguazu National Park, taking in close-up views of some of the 275 waterfalls cascading from the Iguazu River and enjoying the rich wildlife and lush jungle that surround them. At the end of the trails, we will marvel at the awe-inspiring Devil's Throat.

Be sure to bring a coat or purchase a disposable rain poncho for the included boat safari. On this adventure, we will board a twin-engine boat specially designed for the river's conditions and navigate the Iguazu Canyon, riding several rapids to reach the base of the magnificent falls. Guided by an experienced pilot, we will maneuver directly into the heart of the waterfalls for a thrilling and unforgettable perspective.

We return to our hotel in time for dinner.

(B,D)

Accommodation:

Double Tree by Hilton or similar.

Day 22

Locations: Rio de Janeiro

Overview:

After breakfast we will check out of our hotel and transfer to the airport where we will board a flight to Rio de Janeiro and stay close to Copacabana beach.

The remainder of the day is at leisure, allowing time to relax or explore the neighborhood near your hotel.

(B)

Accommodation:

3 nights at Hotel Windsor Leme or similar.

Day 23

Locations: Rio de Janeiro

Overview:

Today we enjoy a full-day tour of Rio de Janeiro, beginning with a scenic cruise of Guanabara Bay.

We enjoy lunch at a local seafood restaurant, and then we visit the iconic Sugarloaf Mountain, one of Rio's most famous landmarks. The mountain is reached via a two-stage cable car system, with each car carrying up to 80 passengers on short, two-minute rides.

The first stage takes us to Morro da Urca, where we can enjoy panoramic views of Botafogo Bay, the yacht club, and surrounding neighborhoods, as well as amenities including a restaurant, amphitheater, and a heliport offering optional scenic flights. The second stage ascends to the summit of Sugarloaf, named for its resemblance to the traditional sugar loaves once common in colonial Brazil. From the 396-metre-high peak, we are treated to unrivaled, sweeping views of Rio, its beaches, and surrounding mountains.

(B,L)

Accommodation:

Hotel Windsor Leme or similar.

Day 24

Locations: Rio De Janeiro

Overview:

This morning we will tour Corcovado Mountain to visit the iconic Christ the Redeemer statue, one of Rio's most famous landmarks. Our drive takes us along Rio's scenic beaches and the Rodrigo de Freitas Lagoon before passing through the Rebouças Tunnel, which connects the city's northern and southern zones divided by the Tijuca Ridge. Remarkably, Rio is the only city in the world with a national park just minutes from its downtown.

Arriving in the Cosme Velho district, we will board the cogwheel train that climbs through the lush rainforest of Tijuca National Park, ascending from 15 metres at the base to nearly 670 metres at the summit. From the upper station, a short elevator or stair climb brings us to the base of Christ the Redeemer, where we can admire sweeping views of the city, mountains, and coastline.

We return to our hotel and the afternoon is free for you to explore at your own pace. In the evening we'll head to a traditional Brazilian steakhouse for our farewell dinner.

(B,D)

Accommodation:

Hotel Windsor Leme or similar.

Day 25

Locations: Rio de Janeiro

Overview:

Our tour concludes after breakfast.

Contact Odyssey if you plan to extend your stay a day or two and would like suggestions of things to see and do in Rio.

Inclusions / Exclusions

What's included in our Tour

South American Small Group History and Culture Tour

<https://www.odysseytraveller.com>

- 24 nights hotel accommodation.
- 2 nights Inkaterra Hacienda Concepcion Lodge (or similar), including all meals and activities.
- 23 Breakfasts plus 1 boxed breakfast, 12 lunches plus 1 boxed Lunch, and 18 dinners.
- 5 internal flights including taxes.
- Transport by coach and rail.
- All sightseeing tours applicable to the itinerary, including entrance fees.
- Service charges and gratuities.
- Services of an Odyssey tour leader.
- English speaking local guides.
- Detailed tour information booklet.

What's not included in our Tour

- Return international airfares including taxes.
- Items of a personal nature such as telephone calls and laundry.
- Comprehensive travel insurance.
- Visa services and fees (if applicable)

Level 3 - Moderate to Challenging

Participants must be in excellent health, extremely mobile and live an active lifestyle. Program activities may include up to 6 hours of continuous strenuous, moderate to fast paced activity per day over varied terrain.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any requests for further information about this tour or any others offered by Odyssey Travel.