

## KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

- ❑ Driving is on the right.
- ❑ Drivers are required to carry a valid national license, International Driving Permit (IDP), passport or passport copy, and rental car documents. Identification must be carried at all times. The 1968 version of the IDP is required and must be obtained prior to arrival in Peru.
- ❑ Drivers often disregard the presence of pedestrians.
- ❑ Pedestrians should avoid isolated areas, particularly after dark. There are frequent incidents involving rape, robbery and other violent attacks. Women traveling alone are vulnerable.
- ❑ Buses are generally regarded as unsafe. Many serious and fatal crashes involving buses regularly occur.
- ❑ Carjackings and vehicle robberies occur regularly at intersections and at stoplights en route to the airport in Lima. Drive with windows up and doors locked.
- ❑ Arranging for a driver-guide from a reputable agency or from a private taxi company prior to travel is recommended.
- ❑ Legal blood alcohol limit is below 0.05 g/dl for all drivers. Despite legal limits, an estimated 9% of traffic deaths involve alcohol use.
- ❑ There are 13.3 road deaths per 100,000 people in Peru, compared to 2.2 in Sweden and 2.3 in the UK.



Source: CIA Factbook

## ROAD CULTURE

- **Highly aggressive** driving and speeding is widespread.
- **Drivers** commonly ignore traffic laws.
- **Many drivers** fail to use turn signals.
- **Motorists** in middle lanes typically swerve through other traffic lanes to make turns.
- **Driver fatigue** is common. Many areas are remote with long distances between villages or towns.
- **Drivers** of large slow-moving vehicles, including buses and trucks, stop unexpectedly on roads without signaling.
- **Bus drivers** regularly behave recklessly with little or no regard for pedestrians or smaller vehicles.
- **Taxi and truck** drivers often block lanes in urban areas, disrupting traffic.

## ROAD CONDITIONS

- **There are** 175,053 km (108,772 miles) of roads; 21,434 km (13,318 miles) of the national road system and 1,859 km (1,155 miles) of departmental and local roads are paved.
- **Roads are** often in poor condition and lack regular maintenance.
- **Roads** and highways generally lack street lights, crash barriers and adequate signs.
- **Pedestrian** infrastructure is underdeveloped or non-existent. Where crosswalks exist, pedestrians remain at high risk from inattentive and reckless drivers.
- **Mountain roads** are prone to ice and heavy snow that is not regularly cleared in winter months. Many have steep drop-offs without guardrails.
- **Loose** animals on and near roads are common, particularly in rural and mountainous areas.
- **There are** many toll roads. Most use electronic tolling systems, but also have lanes for payment in local currency or by credit card.
- **Many** popular tourist sites are remote and lack phone or internet access. Personal GPS beacons are encouraged when traveling beyond urban centers.
- **When traveling** beyond cities, bring spare phone batteries and chargers, tools (jumper cables, spare tires, road flares, jack, lug wrench and flashlight), extra gasoline and windshield wiper fluid, a comprehensive first aid kit, spare eyeglasses and sunglasses, and supplies of food and water.
- **Carry** physical maps and leave details about your route and schedule with a trusted person or persons. Check in regularly with clear instructions on what your contact should do and who should be contacted in the event that you do not check in at a designated time.
- **Demonstrations** and public protests occur frequently. Demonstrations quickly become confrontational or violent, disrupting road travel and transportation. Roadblocks erected by protestors are common.
- **Protests** in Puno may result in the closure of the border crossing with Bolivia, including Lake Titicaca.



## Road Conditions, continued

- **Protests** in Machu Picchu may result in train and bus services being suspended.
- **Strikes** take place often and without notice. Roadblocks may be put in place by local strike groups.
- **Drug trafficking** and other crimes have resulted in a state of emergency in some districts of the Ayacucho, Huancaavelica, Junin, Madre de Dios and Cusco regions (Cusco City, Machu Picchu and Manu Park are not affected); and in the Apurimac-Cusco-Arequipa transportation corridor. This has given armed forces jurisdiction alongside the police. Some civil rights are suspended. Citizens and visitors may be impacted.
- **Security** has been heightened in border areas with Ecuador, Colombia and Brazil.
- **When crossing** the border with Ecuador, use only official checkpoints. Other areas may have unexploded landmines.
- **The following roads** may present particular challenges to motorists:
  - » **Serpentín Pasamayo** located in the Lima Province consistently ranks as one of Peru's most dangerous roads. The cliffside road is part of **Carretera Nacional 001B**, and follows the coast. The road lacks guardrails. Sheer drops of more than 100 meters (328 feet) flank the narrow road. Fatal crashes are common. The road is paved and is subject to heavy traffic from large trucks. There are many curves and few road signs. High humidity causes dense fog that makes visibility difficult. The route is in an area of high winds and sand deposits that combine with dampness to create slick driving conditions. Avoid this road.
  - » **The Balzas–Celendin Road** in the Cajamarca region in northern Peru is part of the **8B Road**. The 56.2-km (35-mile) road has a paved surface. The steep road is narrow, twisting and lacks guardrails. It includes 34 hairpin turns and more than 200 curves. Most of the road is bordered by sheer drops.
  - » **The road to the Tipon Incan ruins** near the Urubamba Valley in southeastern Peru east of Cusco is popular with visiting drivers. The steep asphalt road has many challenging bends and curves. The surface is obscured by heavy snowfall and avalanches in winter. During and after heavy rains, landslides are common.

## REGIONAL AND SEASONAL CONDITIONS

- **Peru is subject to** powerful earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, high tides, landslides and flooding. Natural disasters including seismic events and aftershocks may severely limit communication systems, road travel and transportation and significantly interrupt supply chains. Roads and bridges may become damaged or impassable.
- **Many cities**, including Puno, Cusco, Arequipa, Ayacucho, and Huaraz, are at high altitude. Heavy fog is common in mountain areas and along coastal routes, and may significantly impact driver and pedestrian visibility.
- **Be alert** to symptoms of altitude sickness. Dizziness, lack of coordination, headache, fatigue, shortness of breath and nausea can all impair driver judgment and increase road risks.
- **There are** many active volcanoes. High tides, flooding and landslides may follow earthquakes or eruptions.
- **Rainy season** is from November to April. Mountain areas are also susceptible to heavy rain and snow. Icy roads present a hazard.
- **During** heavy rains, rockslides, mudslides and flooding can occur. Mud and standing water can obscure potholes and other dangers.
- **Be familiar with emergency procedures.** The Red Cross provides a website and free, downloadable emergency app: <http://www.redcross.org/get-help/prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies>

### Maximum Speed Limits

Type of road	Maximum speed
Urban areas	60 kph (37 mph)
Rural roads	60 kph (37 mph)
Highways	100 kph (62 mph)

Always adjust speed according to signage, hazards and weather conditions.

Signs are generally pictorial and may not follow European Union conventions.

Pedestrians keep to the left	Detour	Follow posted route: no left turns	Vehicular traffic keep to the right	Stop sign	Use snow chains	No overtaking	Proceed straight ahead only	Highway directional sign

## TRANSPORTATION

- **Transportation** includes cars, taxis, colectivos (shared taxis), mototaxis (also called “trimovils”), buses, combis (small minibuses), rideshare services, sand buggies (small all-terrain vehicles), metro and boats.
- **Public transport** is limited. Most public transport is provided by buses.
- **Buses and combis** are generally overcrowded, old and poorly maintained.
- **Avoid** bus travel in mountainous and remote regions.
- **Leading causes** of bus traffic fatalities include driver fatigue, excessive speed, poor road conditions and poorly maintained buses. Crash rates increase at night.
- **Many** bus routes follow steep, narrow, winding roads lacking shoulders and unprotected by guardrails.
- **Theft** is common on intercity buses.
- **If bus travel** is necessary, make arrangements in advance through a reputable bus company or a trusted travel agency.
- **Use only** official, licensed taxis, including airport taxis. There is no standard vehicle color or type, but all legal taxis should have a “taxi” sign on the roof and a white license plate with a yellow bar at the top verifying that it is a registered taxi vehicle.
- **Fake taxi drivers** operating private vehicles are common. Vehicles may be uninsured or in poor condition.
- **Fake taxi drivers** may commit robberies including passport theft.
- **Taxis** are unmetered. Agree on fare prior to entering vehicle and do not pay until reaching your destination. Taxi drivers typically will not provide change.
- **Hailing taxis** on the roadside is not recommended.
- **Reserve taxis** by calling a reputable company, or by hiring a taxi through a respectable hotel.
- **Three-wheeled** mototaxis/trimovils are similar to auto-rickshaws, and provide service in some towns and in many jungle areas. Drivers may not be licensed.
- **Mototaxis** are unsafe. Many are motorcycles that have had bench seats attached to the rear. Vehicles do not have seat belts and are often not roadworthy.
- **Mototaxis** do not have set routes. Drivers set fares based on distance and may increase fares based on time of day, number of people and weight of passenger load.
- **Mototaxis** share roads with large trucks and buses.

- **Mototaxi drivers** often race on public roads.
- **Use only** rideshare services that have a dispatch app providing vehicle description, license plate number and driver’s name. Verify all information before entering vehicle.
- **Recreational sand buggies** are popular with tourists, particularly in sand dune areas near Ica and Lake Huacachina. Sand buggies are unregulated. Drivers and companies may be unskilled and uninsured.
- **There is** limited train service connecting major tourist areas. Providers include PeruRail and Belmond.
- **Cruise boats** along the Amazon river are operated by multiple companies. Many boats and ships have been involved in safety and security issues. Levels of safety and security vary between cruise operators. Bring your own life preserved if traveling by boat.

## TRAFFIC REGULATIONS

- **Drivers must be** at least 18 years of age. To rent a car, drivers must be 23 years old and have a minimum of one year’s driving experience. Some rental agencies may have other restrictions.
- **There are** few traffic lights. Most are found in Lima and central city locations.
- **Enforcement** of speed limits, driver alcohol use and traffic laws is low.
- **Seat belt use** is compulsory for all vehicle occupants. Compliance is low.
- **Children under** 12 years of age are prohibited from sitting in front seats of vehicles.
- **Child restraints** are required for children up to three years of age. Children from ages three to 12 must use seatbelts. For safety, children should be seated in rear seats in a restraint appropriate to age and size.
- **Helmets** are mandatory for motorcycle drivers and passengers. For safety, fasten helmets.
- **Helmet compliance** among drivers is moderate, and low among passengers.
- **Children** are not restricted from being motorcycle passengers. If possible, do not allow children to be passengers on motorcycles.
- **Regardless of** time of day, headlights must be turned on when driving outside of major cities, including on the Pan-American Highway.
- **Police** may carry out random breath tests.
- **On-the-spot** fines are illegal, but may be demanded by traffic police.

**Lima (Capital)**

- » Transportation options include cars, taxis, mototaxis, colectivos, buses, combis (microbuses), metro, rideshare services and boats.
- » Driving is not recommended. Roads are typically in poor condition with broken surfaces.
- » There are few road signs. Traffic is dense and chaotic; traffic laws are commonly ignored.
- » Undisciplined road users include pedestrians, cars, taxis, buses, commercial trucks, motorbikes and mototaxis.
- » Street vendors may step suddenly into slow-moving traffic in front of vehicles to force drivers to stop, or approach vehicles at traffic lights and intersections.
- » Pedestrians are at high risk. Drivers commonly ignore the presence of pedestrians.
- » Pedestrians often cross against heavy traffic, even on highways. Pedestrians may disregard official crossings.
- » Buses are the main form of public transportation. There are small combis and large city buses.
- » There is no central bus station. There are no printed bus schedules for combis or private buses; routes are confusing.
- » Many combis are independently owned, are in poor mechanical condition, and lack standard safety features.
- » Combis generally have signs above the windscreen showing route start and end (such as San Juan–Surco). Signs may also have a route number. Sides of buses may list major roads on that route.
- » Combi stops may not be clearly marked and are identified by groups of waiting people.
- » At bus stops, driver's assistant leans out of bus to call out upcoming roads where the bus will stop.
- » Combi drivers stop when passengers call out "baja" for a stop.
- » Metropolitano is a BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) system connecting north and south areas of Lima via dedicated bus lanes. Routes are limited and include express service.
- » Matellini Station is the beginning and end of Metropolitano routes. Buses run approximately every five to 10 minutes from 5:30 am to 11 pm.
- » Electronic, rechargeable Tarjeta Inteligente cards are required for travel on Metropolitano buses.
- » Metropolitano and other buses may be overcrowded during rush hour traffic.
- » Tren Electrico is a metro system with two lines. Line 1 is above ground, Line 2 is below ground. Trains are new. Tarjeta Inteligente cards are required for travel.
- » Metro cars are overcrowded at rush hours.
- » Use only official, licensed taxis. There is no standard vehicle color or type, but all legal taxis should have a "taxi" sign on the roof and a white license plate with a yellow bar at the top verifying that it is a registered taxi vehicle.
- » It is common for local drivers to present themselves as taxi drivers. Fake taxi drivers increase during peak tourist times. Vehicles may be uninsured or in poor condition.
- » Taxis are unmetered. Agree on fare prior to entering vehicle and do not pay until reaching your destination. Taxi drivers typically will not provide change.
- » Hailing taxis on the roadside is not recommended.
- » Taxi drivers regularly make sudden illegal U-turns in traffic to pick up roadside fares on the opposite road side.
- » Reserve taxis by calling a reputable company, or by hiring a taxi through a reputable hotel.
- » Avoid shared colectivo taxis and private taxis already occupied by other passengers.
- » Use only rideshare services that have a dispatch app providing vehicle description, license plate number and driver's name. Verify all information before entering vehicle.
- » Three-wheeled mototaxis/trimovils are similar to auto-rickshaws, and provide service in some towns and in many jungle areas. Drivers may not be licensed.
- » Mototaxis are unsafe. Many are motorcycles with bench seats attached to the rear. Vehicles do not have seat belts and are often not roadworthy.
- » Mototaxis do not have set routes. Drivers set fares based on distance and may increase fares based on time of day, number of people and weight of passenger load.



## Lima, continued

- » Mototaxis may share roads with large trucks and buses.
- » There is limited train service. Available routes include service to Huancayo.
- » Boats to nearby islands are operated by multiple companies. Boats may not be equipped with adequate navigational or safety equipment including life boats. Bring your own life preserver.

## Cusco/Cuzco

- » Transportation options include cars, taxis, colectivos, mototaxis, combis and rideshare services.
- » Driving should not be attempted by visitors unfamiliar with the city. Roads are steep and hilly with many switchbacks.
- » There are few parking spots. Many streets are one-way or pedestrian-only.
- » The city is positioned 3,400 meters (11,154 feet) above sea level. Altitude sickness poses serious risk. Signs include dizziness, lack of coordination, headache, fatigue, shortness of breath and nausea; all of which can all impair driver and pedestrian judgement and increase road risks.
- » Pedestrians should be cautious as drivers commonly ignore the presence of those on foot.
- » Roads are narrow and steep. Surfaces, including sidewalks, are uneven with broken sections. Many streets are constructed of cobblestones.
- » Many sidewalks are stairways connecting different levels of the city.
- » Bus service is provided by combis. Vehicles may be old and unsafe.
- » Combi drivers may behave recklessly.
- » Use only official, licensed taxis. All legal taxis should have a “taxi” sign on the roof and a white license plate with a yellow bar at the top verifying that it is a registered taxi vehicle.
- » Official local taxis are generally marked with black and gold stickers on each side of the vehicle and company phone number illuminated on rooftop.
- » Do not enter an unmarked taxi. It is common for local drivers to present themselves as taxi drivers. Fake taxi drivers increase during peak tourist times. Vehicles may be uninsured or in poor condition.
- » Taxis are unmetered. Agree on fare prior to entering vehicle and do not pay until reaching your destination. Rates increase in the evening. Most taxi drivers will refuse to provide change.
- » Hailing taxis on the roadside is not recommended, especially at night.
- » Reserve taxis by calling a reputable company, or by hiring a taxi through a respectable hotel.
- » Be sure that taxis are equipped with seatbelts before agreeing to ride, as many taxis lack seatbelts in rear seats.
- » Do not enter a colectivo taxi already occupied by other passengers.
- » Three-wheeled mototaxis/trimovils are similar to auto-rickshaws, and provide service in some areas. Drivers may not be licensed.
- » Mototaxis are unsafe. Many are motorcycles that have had bench seats attached to the rear. Vehicles do not have seat belts and are often not roadworthy.
- » Mototaxis do not have set routes. Drivers set fares based on distance and may increase fares based on time of day, number of people and weight of passenger load.
- » Rideshare services are available. Use only services that have a dispatch app providing vehicle description, license plate number and driver’s name. Verify all information before entering vehicle.
- » Limited train routes include Cusco–Machu Picchu and Cusco–Puno. Visitors are restricted to trains designed for tourists and are not allowed on local trains to Machu Picchu.
- » Rail service is provided by PeruRail and Inca Rail. Most trains to Machu Picchu operate out of Poroy station.
- » There are multiple train operators including Belmond’s luxury Andean Explorer sleeper trains.

## ACCOMMODATIONS AND INCLUSIONS FOR MOBILITY CHALLENGED

- **Peruvian laws** prohibiting discrimination against persons with physical and mental challenges are widely enforced.
- **Accessibility** may include ramps, elevators and dedicated service providers in public settings such as shops and tourist attractions.
- **Accessibility is** limited on public transportation, and more developed in lodging, communication/information, and general infrastructure.
- **There are** significant differences in available accessibility features between Lima and other areas of Peru. Accessibility may be severely limited in other towns, cities and rural areas. Cusco and other mountainous or remote towns and village are steep. Sidewalks are often broken and include steps and stairways. Many roads are built of cobblestones or uneven pavers.

## EMERGENCY INFORMATION

- **Responders to emergency numbers** in remote areas may not speak English.
- **Pre-program** emergency numbers into your phone before departure.
  - » Police, ambulance and fire: 113
- **Beyond** urban centers, rescue capabilities are severely limited. Responses to emergency situations in remote areas make take hours or days. Helicopters are unable to access high mountain areas.
- **Training** of emergency responders may be below western standards. Public medical clinics lack sufficient supplies and resources.
- **Ambulance services** are not widely available and are generally unreliable beyond Lima and other major urban centers. Injured or seriously ill persons should take a taxi or private vehicle to the closest major medical center.
- **Public hospitals** and clinics are minimally staffed during overnight hours.
- **Appropriate** medical treatment is generally available only in or near major cities. Rural areas may lack medical care. In the event of serious illness or injury, evacuation may be necessary.
- **Advance cash** payment or proof of adequate insurance is required for medical care. Some hospitals may accept credit cards.
- **If involved in a crash:**
  - » Call police.
  - » Do not move vehicle.
  - » Remain at the scene until authorities indicate you may leave. Under Peruvian law, moving a vehicle or leaving the scene of a crash may be interpreted as an admission of guilt.
  - » Contact rental car agency or rental agency insurance company.



### ABOUT THE ASSOCIATION FOR SAFE INTERNATIONAL ROAD TRAVEL (ASIRT)

ASIRT is a non-profit humanitarian organization established in memory of Aron Sobel, age 25, who was killed along with 22 other passengers in a Pamukkale Bus Company crash on the roads of Turkey.

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