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Chaski News

Winter 2008-2009

Explore the Peruvian Amazon on a Stunning Riverboat

To continually provide our travelers with the best South America has to offer, our [Peru Amazon Cruise](#) now features the newly-christened M/V Aqua. This elegant, 24-passenger vessel takes natural history cruising to a new level. Return from your daily excursions to the air-conditioned comfort of an ample suite with panoramic windows and an en suite sitting area. Gourmet meals created by an internationally-renowned Peruvian chef are paired with vintage South American wines. Experience the Amazon's flora and fauna, meet with local villagers, and stargaze on the observation deck aboard the most luxurious riverboat plying these waters.



Travel Facts: This past November Aqua travelers were offered the opportunity to help release 300,000 new baby Taricaya turtles into Pacaya-Samiria Reserve, to help offset their declining population. Also, in an effort to participate in an ongoing project, the itinerary has been modified to include a visit to the Amazon Manatee Rescue Center, the first tour operator to make regular visits to this fascinating facility.

Luxury Resort & Spa To Debut in Peru's Sacred Valley



As completion draws to a close, 2009 will see the opening of the Sacred Valley of the Inca's most impressive property, the Aranwa Resort & Spa. The 115-room hotel will feature a remarkable list of amenities, including: 25,000 square-foot Spa with a full array of services; gorgeous adobe chapel situated on an island within the resort; fully-equipped business center; boutique; glass-covered orchid

pyramid; museum; hair salon; movie room; and an extraordinary art gallery with a permanent collection of traditional paintings from Cusco, along with pieces from Peru's modern artists. Southwind travelers will have the option of upgrading to The Aranwa on trips featuring the Sacred Valley, including [World of the Incas](#), [Inca Trail to Machu Picchu](#), [Galápagos & Machu Picchu](#), [Southern Highlights Tour](#), and extensions to Machu Picchu.

Travel Facts: Aranwa is committed to benefiting the local community, including projects such as: developing a medical center in the town of Urquillos, an area previously lacking healthcare; allowing nearby communities to access the hotel's sewage system; and educating local residents on organic farming.



Short Itineraries Provide Travelers More Options

Southwind has developed a number of short versions of our classic itineraries. Whether it's cruising the Amazon in an elegant riverboat, or hiking the Incan ruins of Machu Picchu or its sister-city, Choquequirao, these trips accommodate our discerning travelers with limited time to explore the wonders of South America. The itineraries still include the highlights of each region, along with off-the-beaten-path local experiences, while still maintaining a comfortable pace. Our short [Peru Amazon Cruise](#) version is 7 days, including 5 days on an exquisite riverboat. The 6-day [World of the Incas-Iconic Itinerary](#) was featured in Condé Nast



Traveler magazine and includes upgraded accommodations, an optional dayhike on the Inca Trail, and time to explore Machu Picchu. The 9-day [Choquequirao Exploratory Trek](#) takes us to remote ruins that are still being uncovered, with a mixture of tent camping, mountain lodges, and first class hotels. In the Galápagos Islands, most of our yachts not only offer the classic 8-day cruises, but 5-6 day excursions as well. Since we specialize in custom adventures, we can also work with clients to design short trips to any of our destinations in South America.

Travel Fact: A Travel Industry Association report indicates that ¾ of those polled plan to purchase a package vacation this year, predominantly due to the value they represent. Also, a CNN article on a recent psychological study demonstrates that people gain more happiness from life experiences than possessions. Some new purchases may be around for a year or two, but that memory of snorkeling with sea lions in the Galápagos is there forever.



South America is Ideal for Families!



Nothing brings families together like experiencing a new culture, and South America has some of the safest and most intriguing destinations in the world. Whether it's horseback riding, hiking, biking, viewing exotic wildlife, or snorkeling, we can use our years of experience to put together a custom adventure based around your family members' varied interests, so everyone comes away happy and more knowledgeable about the world. And

increasingly-popular multigenerational travel provides grandparents and grandchildren the opportunity to spend quality time together like no other experience can.

Some of our most popular family adventures include: [World of the Incas](#), where we explore pre-Columbian civilization and one of the new Seven Wonders of the World, Machu Picchu; our [Galápagos Wildlife Odyssey](#) features a week-long cruise aboard an intimate yacht with nature hikes, snorkeling, and kayaking; and the [Peru Amazon Cruise](#) takes us deep into the world's largest rainforest on a graceful riverboat to explore the jungle canopy and meet local villagers.

Travel Fact: According to the Travel Industry Association, more than 5 million family trips each year include 3 generations. The most common reasons for this type of travel include 50th Anniversaries, 75th Birthdays, and family reunions.



Peruvian Guide Percy Salizar Relocates to Denver

Some of you may remember one of our most distinguished guides from your time in Peru, Percy Salizar. As a native of Quillabamba (a high jungle region near Machu Picchu), Percy has led groups for Southwind for the past 10 years, gaining a reputation as one of the most caring, knowledgeable, enthusiastic and detail-oriented guides in Cusco. This winter he and his wife, Kalindi, along with their daughter, Quilla, made the move to Denver. He will be joining us here at our home office to help promote the wonders of Peru and South America by designing custom trips, while continuing to guide exclusive groups in Peru & Ecuador during the summer. Percy will also be using his extensive local knowledge to help us develop community support projects in the region. If you are interested in having Percy create a personalized Southwind Adventure for you, please contact us.



Fact about Percy: He graduated from the University of Cusco with a degree in tourism, and is not only familiar with Peru's hiking and biking routes, but has a passion for the birds and wildlife of the highlands as well as the native cultures. Along with fluency in both English and Spanish, he also speaks Quechua, the native language of the Incas.

What's a Chaski?

"Chaski" refers to the messengers of the Inca who would run along the kingdom's vast network of trails delivering vital information. News, intricate communication, quipus - knotted strings conveying regional statistics or perhaps exotic foods were relayed between Chaskis as they made their way towards the Incan capital of Cusco.

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