



## “The lost Empire of the Chachapoya”

21st of July – 1st of August 2012  
556,= euro per person

### Description

This adventure tour is the northern contrast to the “gringo trail” that runs through southern Peru including Machu Picchu. This alternating round trip eventually leads to the heart of the mysterious Chachapoya civilization, also known as the cloud people, and their former stronghold the spectacular Kuelap fortress. This fortress on a 3000 meter high ridge is bigger, older and higher than Machu Picchu and is one of the highlights of this journey. The lost empire of the Chachapoya covered at its peak, between 1200 and 600 years ago, a large area in northern Peru on the border of the rainforest and the Andes Mountains. Today the area is still littered with ruins of their characteristic tombs and carved round building structures on the steep slopes of the mountains.

Because of its isolated location in the cloud forest of the Andes Mountain range, this future touristic highlight is rarely visited by tourists. Also the touristic infrastructure is still in its early days. An adventurous tour far away from the beaten track full of authentic picture moments is guaranteed! The journey starts in the friendly fishing village of Huanchaco, where the residents still fish in the graceful reed fishing boats, a tradition that goes back many centuries. In Huanchaco you’ll have the opportunity to get used to the Peruvian lifestyle. You can relax on the beach or take some surfing lessons. You can also have a look at the various attractions in the area, like the largest pre-Columbian mud city of Chan Chan, the former capital of the Chimu empire or the various pyramid temples of the Moche culture. In Huanchaco you will also meet the FairMail teenagers and see how they live their daily lives.

After several days in Huanchaco, you travel by public transport with the entire group from the desert to the Andes Mountains. We get settled in the valley of Utcubamba, where the Chachapoyas ruled during their power. In this area we spend more than a week to discover the remains of the sites of this tribe of warriors. Most of the sites are often still covered by vegetation like orchids, bromeliads and beard moss. The residents of this area are hardly in contact with tourists and soon you will be touched by their genuine friendliness and hospitality.

### About travelling with FairMail

The FairMail team likes to invite travellers during our photography journey. If you want to join us, you have to realize that you travel with teenagers and that you’ll have to adapt to their mode of transportation. The main goal of the whole group is to take pictures, not to view as many touristic sites



as possible. Due to the limited budget of FairMail and the teenagers, we sleep in a basic accommodation, use public transport as much as possible and we eat in local restaurants. Sometimes we will walk for a few hours in a row in a mountainous area with primitive footpaths. Walking shoes and a raincoat are part of your equipment! Alternately we speak Spanish and English in the group. There is an English speaking tour guide, so it is not necessary to speak Spanish fluently. However, you will get more out of your journey when you speak some Spanish words, because that's the way to make contact with the teenagers and the locals. It is possible to take some Spanish lessons during your first days in Huanchaco.

### **About the accommodation**

We mostly use family home stays or small basic hostels during this journey. We use them because there is no alternative on the destinations we visit, but also because of the limited budget we have for the teenagers. The teenagers are not accustomed to luxury and for you it can be a new experience. By this way of travelling you get to understand what living in Peru is like, and it also gives the local families a benefit from tourism in their area. Imagine staying one night at a Peruvian farmer's house on a straw mattress and an outside toilet! All carefully selected family home stays and hostels do have at least basic bathing facilities, although not always with hot water. During family home stays you can have your breakfast with the family and easy make contact. The accommodation in Huanchaco is a bit more luxurious than in the inland areas, for example they all have hot showers.

### **About the meals**

The food is included during the journey through the inlands, only in Huanchaco you pay for your own food. This means that you eat the same food as the rest of the group. This is the best way to experience some of the excellent local dishes! Due to the budget and the expectations of the teenagers we often eat in simple and inexpensive local restaurants and not in tourist restaurants. Of course you are free to order something else at your own costs.

### **About transport**

We use buses and sometimes private cars during this journey. On the main roads there are luxurious bus services with many facilities on board, like large and adjustable seats, a toilet and sometimes hot meals. For the routes between smaller cities there are only simple buses available. When the quality is acceptable and the distance not too long on these routes, we use public transport. It is nice for a couple of times to experience how the public transport is organised in a developing country like Peru. Sheep on the roof, chickens in the bus, loud cumbia music on the radio and there you go. And stop again, and go! On routes where there is no regular public transport, we use a type called "colectivos" a private car with a driver. These are reasonably comfortable station wagons used as public transport on the remote routes. The advantage of this way of transport is that we can



stop to enjoy the overwhelming landscape, to take a picture or to buy some fruit along the way.

### **The level of comfort during this journey**

Tourism is only just developing in Chachapoyas, so infrastructure may be different than you're normally used to. The accommodations are fine, but consider that you mostly stay with local families or family run hostals and not in luxury hotels. Also the transport with the private car with driver will be comfortable enough. But you must realize that the Chachapoyas area has mainly unpaved roads and some parts are in a poor condition. The advantage is that you drive pretty slowly, so you can enjoy the beautiful scenery.

### **Best travel period**

Another name for the Chachapoya is people of the clouds. The moist air from the rainforest hits this side of the Andes and develops clouds. The rainy season is from January to March, but showers can occur every day of the year and during the rainy season it can be sunny and dry for a couple of days as well. The average temperature varies between 11 and 29 degrees Celsius.

### **What to take?**

- Cash, during the last week of the journey there won't be any ATM's.

(There are ATM's in Chachapoyas)

- Raincoat/ clothes
- Warm clothes (during the night-time on high altitude)
- Hiking shoes
- Light clothes (during hot days)
- Cap or sun protection for your head
- Bathing suit
- Photo or video camera
- Passport (valid for 6 more months after entry to Peru)
- Copies of travel documents
- Daypack
- Towels
- Sunscreen
- Sunglasses
- Insect repellent
- Flashlight
- Pocketknife

### **What makes this journey sustainable?**

Why is this journey different than the original destination? Or in other words, what makes this journey sustainable?

The good thing about FairMail photography journeys is that you not only treat yourself to a unique holiday but also one of the teenagers from FairMail. With your contribution to the journey, we can cover the costs for one of the FairMail teenagers to go with us on tour. It's obviously not just about money. You can also share your western view on beauty with the teenagers, so they learn what customers of FairMail cards like to see on their postcards. This helps them to sell more cards and earn more money for their education. In a fun and relaxed way you support talented, but underprivileged teenagers, to improve their future!

You also have the option to "make your seat green" during your flight to Peru by using Atmosfair. This organisation plants trees to reduce your greenhouse gas emissions, for a small additional amount. Atmosfair is one of the few CO2 compensation options that have the 'Gold Standard' by the World Wildlife Fund. For more information you can check their website [www.atmosfair.com](http://www.atmosfair.com).

By booking this journey you also support economic development of the communities we visit. We mainly

use services from people who live in the area like accommodation, transport and guides. Other travel agencies mainly use large tour operators who visit the area, but don't leave any positive things for the residents. You stay with local families in Huanchaco, Leymebamba and Maria and you use also local transport services. The guides we use are also local farmers from the area itself. In Chachapoyas you don't stay with a local family, but in a local hostel.

### **Minimum amount of days**

Minimum of 12 days and the possibility to extend your journey with extra days in Huanchaco to relax, learn Spanish, surf or volunteer at a local organisation.

### **Prices**

Everybody has different wishes and a different budget. That's why we offer the Basic Program of 12 days for a fixed low price.

For people who want more, there is an opportunity to choose for Extra Options besides the Basic Program. The Basic Program is a total journey without hidden costs. We expect that our customers support the Fair-Mail teenagers, so € 165,00 contribution to the project is included in the price of the Basic Program. For this amount of money we can take one of the teenagers on this journey!

*Basic Program - 10 days: € 556,00*

Included::

- English speaking guide (founder of FairMail or former FairMail photographer)
- All overnight stays in a shared room in hostels or with local families.
- All meals, except the first day in Huanchaco
- Transport during basic program
- Entrance fees during basic program
- Bus station of Airport pickup in Huanchaco
- Lunchmeeting with the FairMail teenagers before departure
- Preparation Package
- Project contribution (€ 165,00)

Excluded:

- Flight to Peru
- Transport by bus or airplane from Lima to Huanchaco (from 15 euro)
- Airport pick-up Lima (from 10 euro)
- 1 overnight stay in Lima (from 10 euro)
- Any (taxi) transport besides the basic program
- Food and drinks besides the 3 daily meals.
- Photography equipment
- Tips
- Optional tours around Huanchaco

*Extra Options:*

Besides the Basic Program we also offer extra options:

1. Lima comfort package outward - 1 day - 50 euro
2. Lima comfort package return - 1 day - 50 euro
3. Extra beach holiday in Huanchaco - 4 days - 60 euro
4. Fee single room - 10 days - 50 euro
5. CO2 compensation flight - 150 euro each person

### 1. Lima comfort package outward - 1 day - 50 euro

With this package deal you don't have to worry about anything when you arrive in Lima. Also your transport to Huanchaco will be arranged for you. You can also arrange your transport and overnight stay in Lima by contacting Casa Ana.

#### Included:

- airport pickup Lima
- 1 overnight family home stay in Lima after arrival
- breakfast
- bus ticket Lima - Trujillo in luxurious day bus

#### Excluded:

- transport to busstation in Lima
- other meals

### 2. Lima comfort package return - 1 day - 50 euro

With this package deal you don't have to worry about anything when you go back to Lima. Also your transport to Lima will be arranged for you. The next day you will be dropped off at the airport. You can also arrange your transport and overnight stay in Lima by contacting Casa Ana.

#### Included:

- airport drop-off Lima
- 1 overnight family home stay in Lima before departure
- breakfast
- bus ticket Trujillo - Lima in luxurious day bus

#### Excluded:

- transport to bus station in Trujillo (near Huanchaco)
- other meals
- airport tax

### 3. Extra beach holiday in Huanchaco - 4 days - 60 euro

This extra option gives you more time in Huanchaco after the photography journey. You can chill out on the beach or visit various sights around Huanchaco. During these days you can also already meet the FairMail teenagers. They like to take you to their neighbourhood and introduce you to their parents. If you like you can stay for dinner with them.

#### Included:

- 4 days overnight stay in a shared room in a cosy hostel (without breakfast) or with a local family (including breakfast).

#### Excluded:

- breakfast if you stay in the hostel
- other meals

### 4. Fee single room - 10 days - 50 euro

If you want more privacy it is almost always possible to book a private room. In some cases it is not possible; we will explain it to you if you make a reservation with us.

### 5. CO2 compensation flight - 150 euro each person

The emissions of a persons return flight from Amsterdam to Lima are the equivalent of 6060 kg CO2. You

can choose to offset these emissions in a climate project of Atmosfair project for 150 Euros. You will receive a certificate of Atmosfair. Unlike other CO2 compensation possibilities Atmosfair is one of the few who have the 'Gold Standard label by the World Wildlife Fund. For more information check [www.atmosfair.com](http://www.atmosfair.com).

### Spanish lessons

We have a good relationship with a local language school in Huanchaco called *Espaanglisch*. They offer Spanish lessons for all levels. The lessons are in a private setting with an English speaking Peruvian teacher. You can decide yourself how many lessons you want. We really recommend this extra option if you want to take most out of your journey. You can contact them through: [www.espaanglisch.com](http://www.espaanglisch.com)

### Volunteering

Besides the possibility to volunteer for FairMail (minimum of 6 weeks), there are many different projects in and around Huanchaco to volunteer for a shorter amount of time. You can contact Otra Cosa Volunteer Agency or check their website for more information [www.otracosa.org](http://www.otracosa.org).

## Travel itinerary

Day	Route
1	Huanchaco
2	Huanchaco
3	Huanchaco – Chachapoyas
4	Chachapoyas – Huancas – Chachapoyas
5	Chachapoyas – Leymebamba
6	Leymebamba – Museum – Leymebamba
7	Leymebamba – Maria
8	Maria – Kuelap fortress- Maria
9	Maria – Cocachimba
10	Cocachimba – Gocta waterfall - Cocachimba
11	Cocachimba – Chachapoyas – Huanchaco
12	Huanchaco

This is the Basic Program. If it's possible to spend more time, we recommend to stay for example 4 extra days in Huanchaco at the beginning of your journey. This is only € 60,00 extra.

## Day to day program

### *Day 1. Huanchaco*

You will get a warm welcome from your Dutch speaking tour guide on the bus station in Trujillo. Together you drive in 20 minutes by taxi to the coastal town of Huanchaco. Depending on your reservation, we take you to your local host family or hostel. Today you can use to acclimatize and get used to the Peruvian pace of life. Have a nice wander along the beach to see the fishermen bring in their days catch, try one of the local fish restaurants, visit the local Chan Chan ruins, take some spanish or surfing lessons.

### *Day 2. Huanchaco*

Today you meet your travel companions in Huanchaco, the FairMail teenagers and the other participants. In the morning we take a combi (public transport) to the FairMail office in Trujillo, 12 km away. You'll get the chance to meet everyone and to see how FairMail works. In the afternoon we all have lunch together. After that you go back to Huanchaco by yourself. A lot of new impressions will pass through your head when you reach your bed in your hostel or at your host family.

### *Day 3. Huanchaco - Chachapoyas*

In the morning you have some time to do grocery shopping at the market in Huanchaco. Around lunch time we leave to the bus station in Trujillo to take the bus to Chachapoyas. This bus ride takes in total around 13 hours and fortunately we drive in a luxury bus with lazy chairs. They also serve food on board. Out of the window you will see how the dry coastal desert slowly changes into the green Andes Mountains.

### *Day 4. Chachapoyas – Huancas - Chachapoyas*

We will arrive early in the morning in Chachapoyas, We check in our hostel in the capital of the department Amazonas. After recovering from the bus journey we go to the picturesque village of Huancas, about 10 kilometres from Chachapoyas. The population of Huancas was deported by the Inca Tupac from central Peru in 1640. The Inca's often used that strategy to conquered people who refused to submit to their new ruler. Over here, it seems as if time has stood still with many traditional mud-built houses with straw roofs. If we want, we can also visit a traditional pottery workshop. You can have a look at the highlight of Huancas from the watchtower at the edge of the Sonche Canon. With a bit of luck you can see a condor floating on the air! We spend some time taking photos in the village and walk back downhill to Chachapoyas.

### *Day 5. Chachapoyas – Leymebamba*

We leave by public transport (a small minibus) for a 4 hour journey to Leymebamba in the south of the Utcubamba valley, in the morning. On the way we drive up the beautiful valley along the river. The bus will stop on the way and we can have some food in a small restaurant. When we arrive in Leymebamba we go to our comfortable family home stays where we will spend the next two nights. We can take the advantage of the afternoon light to take beautiful pictures in Leymebamba at the end of this day.

### *Day 6. Leymebamba – Museum – Leymebamba*

Today's program is an easy but beautiful hike to the Leymebamba museum and the hummingbird garden and an important photography exercise in the afternoon.

This museum houses more than 200 mummies of the Chachapoya, recently found in the nearby Laguna de los Condores. For more then 500 years, these mummies were hidden in their tombs in a steep rock formation above the lake deep into the cloud forest. You can visit the mummies and get an idea of what the Chachapoya culture was like until they were conquered by the Inca's in the museum. Next to the museum is a beautiful hummingbird garden. Because they get fed sweet water many different hummingbirds come to this open garden. It allows you to take spectacular pictures of these amazing birds.

After lunch the teenagers will present their ideas for their “perfect picture” to the rest of the group. The perfect picture is the visualization of the picture they will take during this trip that will become a FairMail postcard in the end. By visualizing and presenting their idea to the rest of the group they make their goal very clear. With your feedback and help to execute the idea you can concretely help the teenagers to get a new FairMail postcard!

### *Day 7. Leymebamba - Maria*

We leave Leymebamba in the morning to go to one another picturesque village called Mary, the base for visiting the fortress of Kuelap. It is not a long distance, but the mountainous area and the state of the road makes it a 4 hour drive to Maria. The used transport will a private car with a driver. The tour is not boring at all, because of the beautiful scenery. In the village of Maria we stay with several local families who work in the countryside and also try to earn some money out of tourism.

In the afternoon we will work for a second time on the perfect pictures. The surroundings and friendly inhabitants of Maria make it a good place to work together with the locals who often volunteer to be models! In the evening the guide and volunteer photography trainer will have prepared a presentation of the best pictures taken so far. Plus a selection of pictures to show the kids how they can still improve if they want their picture to be selected for a FairMail card.

### *Day 8. Maria – Kuelap - Maria*

In the morning we leave Maria to take a panoramic path to the ruins of the Chachapoya fortress Kuelap. Kuelap is also known as the Machu Picchu of the North, but it really doesn't have to compete with this famous opposite from southern Peru. Kuelap is in fact higher, older and had more residents than Machu Picchu. Kuelap fortress is the main heritage from the Chachapoya civilization. It is located in a strategic position high on a limestone cliff with views on the trade routes below. The view from the fort overlooking the valley is absolutely overwhelming. The total complex is less than 500 hectares and has 420 round houses, some decorated with beautiful three dimensional stone work. The fort is surrounded by a wall which is on some parts up to 40 meters high. The cloud forest grows both in and around the fortress. The remains of the structures in the fort are overgrown with orchids and bromelias, the lamas are unable to eat it all! After having good look around, paying a visit to the museum (with English translations) we have a picknick lunch on site.

Afterwards we return to Maria and enjoy some relaxation.

There is also the possibility to visit a local textile workshop and the group of women there loves to show their natural and traditional "techniques".

### *Day 9. Maria – Cocachimba*

In the morning we leave Maria to return to Chachapoyas and take another car to the coffee growing village of Cocachimba. This tiny village is the closest village to the Gocta waterfall: with 771 meters of fall the world's third highest waterfall. It was only "discovered" in 2005. The impressive waterfall had remained unknown to outsiders until now, because local people feared the curse of a beautiful blond mermaid who lived in its waters, if they revealed its whereabouts.

We will check in a small and basic hostel run by a local family and have the afternoon free for a photography exercise.

### *Day 10. Cocachimba – Gocta - Cocachimba*

Today we will undertake the hike to reach to the bottom of the waterfall. The hike leads first through hilly fields and coffee plantations. Before jumping into the dense and moist cloud forest. After about 3 hours walking you will reach the pond at the bottom. The waterfall is so high that the water turns into a rain shower before it reaches the bottom. It is cold but a refreshing place to swim. And to listen to the local legends regarding the waterfall told by a local farmer who will be our guide during the walk. After a picknick lunch on site we head back to the village and have a last chance to take some pictures in the village.

### *Day 11. Cocachimba – Chachapoyas - Trujillo*

In the morning we leave Cocachimba back to Chachapoyas. The last part of this ride is on paved road, a welcome change after 6 days! Back in the capital of the Amazonas department we feel like we are back in civilization. Time to check the e-mail again, look for a good cappuccino and cards on the streets! The teenagers have another photography assignment in Chachapoyas, and if you want you can join. But you can also explore the city once again or check your email. At the end of the day the luxury night bus (the only option) takes us back to Trujillo.

### *Day 12. Trujillo - Huanchaco*

We arrive early in the morning in Trujillo. The teenagers go back to their parents. You can go back to Huanchaco and freshen up at your hostel. Big chance the teenagers you have shared the trip with will invite you to visit their parents house later that day or the next day. This is usually one of the most impressive days for the people who travel with FairMail. After experiencing these warm, fun and positive teenagers during the trip for 10 days it is impressive to see where they actually come from. In the village they live most inhabitants work on the garbage dump and live in very basic housing. Despite the harsh reality of their daily lives these teenagers stand so positive in life. That is what is so inspiring about being able to travel with them! It makes the circle complete by meeting their parents, brothers and sisters, visiting their schools and neighbourhoods.

### *Extra days in Huanchaco*

At the start or end of the journey you can book some extra days in the nice fishing town of Huanchaco. This is the only place in Peru where they still fish in the traditional reed fishing boats, the cabellitos de totora. This is a tradition that goes back for centuries. Huanchaco is a village with a lot of facilities for tourists, still has character and very friendly people for who it's not all about money.

When you stay in Huanchaco you have more time to get to know FairMail en to visit the teenagers at their house. They love to show you their place and for you it will be an impressive experience.

Huanchaco is by far the perfect location to visit other tourist attractions in North Peru. In a radius of 2 hours from Huanchaco you find many ruins of different pre-Inca empires, like the capital of the Chimu empire, Chan Chan. Chan Chan is the biggest pre Colombian mudcity of the America's, a world heritage monument of Unesco. You can also visit the Moche temples of the sun and the moon and El Brujo. A little bit further you can visit the tomb of "El señor de Sipan", the biggest tomb ever found since Tutanchamon. Also Batan Grande and Tucume, two big pyramids are relatively close by. All these archaeological monuments are not covered with tourists and pretty easy to visit. The area is also attractive because of the warm beaches and the good surf breaks. Chicama for example is the longest wave in the world and goes on for one kilometre!