MEET
THE EXPERTS

INSIDER'S GUIDE TO SENSATIONAL SOUTH AMERICA



Kelly D'Aucourt, APT's South America product manager, is a seasoned visitor to the stimulating cities, nations, and landscapes of South America, having visited the region five times. Here, she shares why this magnetic destination continues to entice many a return visit, and what to expect when visiting this kaleidoscopic continent for the first time.

As a repeat traveller to South America, what do you find most memorable and unique about this region?
South America is a showcase of varietal extremes. From its striking landscapes including the Atacama Desert, the indelible Amazon, and the region's awe-inspiring fjords and mountains, to its vivacious cities and mesmerising islands, South America truly has something for everyone. The rich Indigenous diversity of the region blends with European influences, both leaving their mark on the architecture, gourmet fare, and overall cultural fabric of this unforgettable continent.

How would you describe South America in five defining words?
Colourful, captivating, spectacular, dynamic, and hospitable.

What would you recommend for those looking to discover South America for the first time?
Take the opportunity and time to explore and cover as much as possible. Luxury stays in the iconic cities of Santiago, Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro, Lima, and Cusco are ideal to compliment with soul-awakening visits to the majestic natural and pre-eminent historic sights of South America. Go with an open mind so you can really immerse yourself in the cultures and adventures ahead; and learn a few basic words or phrases in Spanish and Portuguese – a little effort can go a long way. Let your tastebuds explore all the local cuisine, from fresh ceviche in Chile to empanadas in Peru. Remember to keep a camera or smart phone handy to capture those magical moments and make sure you pack comfortable, well-worn shoes for walking.

What are some of your most memorable South American experiences?
Waking up before dawn to take the first shuttle bus up to Machu Picchu and then watching the sun rise above this gravity-defying Inca citadel was breathtaking. It is truly magical, seeing the first rays of light fall over the mountainside and light up the view. In the Amazon, it was incredibly special to see such diverse wildlife; stealthy pink river dolphins, sloths hanging out in the trees, caiman slinking off into the water, and much more.

As a connoisseur of the region, what is your favourite South American destination?
Peru – there is so much to discover, and the Peruvians are so welcoming and proud of their country, and really want to show off all its finest features. The fascinating remnants of the Inca Empire are on full display, not only at spectacular Machu Picchu, but throughout the country. There are so many amazing places to visit – it truly feels like multiple countries packed into one.

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WORDS Kelly D'Aucourt and Alexander Simpson



(From left to right) Quintessential Peru; Floating village, Amazon River.

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