

MUSUQ CHASKI - El Mensajero Nuevo



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Culture Shock!

Before coming to a new country, the average volunteer usually has many questions about the customs, culture, currency, and language amongst many other things but it is difficult to describe to them exactly what to expect upon arrival. Finding out as much as you can about a country can help take the edge off homesickness and the “culture shock” which many seem to confront after arriving in Peru, a country which is very different to what most volunteers have experienced before.



In the popular imagination, Peru conjures up images of mysterious ancient civilisations, awe-inspiring Inca cities, spectacular Andean scenery, incredible biodiversity and colourful woven textiles. While these characteristics attract many visitors to Peru there is much more to it than this and is a place which is full of contradictions.

Culture shock is a very general term, but in this case it is the term used to describe the difficulties that many people face when adjusting to a new culture and environment which is extremely different to their own. The culture shock which volunteers might face upon arrival here in Cusco might take on a variety of forms but it will confront them as soon as their feet touch Peruvian soil. Coming out of the airplane at Cusco airport to the traditional sound of Peruvian panpipes, coming out of the airport viewing the towering mountains that surround you while seeing the local taxi drivers calling out to you (in Spanish) can be quite an overwhelming experience while looking for the Projects Abroad staff member waiting for you at the airport.

But it does not end there, on the winding drive through Cusco city out to the more rural Sacred Valley on to the office and finally, perhaps the most nerve-racking moment, the introduction to your host family. While our host families are very warm and welcoming hosts, do expect very little English to be spoken – so please try and brush up on some basic Spanish as your host family will be key to your adjustment to life here in Peru. Host family homes are always clean, safe and comfortable but do expect them to be more modest to what you are used to in your home country.

While you might feel reasonable prepared having researched as much as possible before hand, you should not underestimate the effect that change in climate, food and other aspects can have. Loss of appetite, tiredness, mild stomach upsets and headaches are very common in the first few days and normally pass as you adjust to the new environment. When you are feeling unwell, being the centre of attention every time you walk down the street, being surrounded by people speaking another language, the crowds, the noise and the unfamiliar smells can all become too much.



So in order to take the edge off your culture shock, here are a few tips:

When going into small local communities expect modest conditions and the possible lack of public facilities, although your placement school might have bathrooms, they might not be as up to scratch as the one in your host family home. Also don't forget to carry toilet paper around with you, which you should place in the bin beside the toilet!



At whatever time of year you visit you are extremely likely to experience at least one Peruvian festival. While there are wonderfully coloured costumes, music and dance at the heart of most festivals, expect crowds of people, lots of noise and fireworks, occasional drunks, few (if any) seating areas, a lack of public bathrooms and mostly street vendor food, which might not be the kindest to your adjusting stomach!

The local market is one of the best places to get insight into the hustle and bustle of everyday life in a small Peruvian town. It can also be over-crowded, have strong odours, and even seem a little shocking if you are not used to seeing live animals for sale or home-made food or drinks served from questionable containers...

People in small towns do gossip! Your behaviour will not go unnoticed, especially in provincial Peru which is more conservative than urban Western countries. Drunken behaviour in public will be frowned upon. Certain stereotypes of foreigners are held by the more conservative circles in the Sacred Valley, do not take it to heart and if you asked to be *madrina* or *padrino** it is possible to say no!

Despite all of this the best way to avoid culture shock is to throw yourself into the new situation: talk to your host family, improve your Spanish, fill your time with the positive aspects of Peru and you will soon forget your homesickness and become a part of everyday Peruvian life and make the most of your stay here in what is an incredible country. By the end of your stay you won't want to leave!

* a *madrina* or *padrino* is a godparent or sponsor to anything from a new school to a child's christening.

What's New?

In **Teaching** this month the "Minisaga writing competition" will be starting, so look out for the winners in November. This year the theme of the competition is Peruvian Cultural Identity and the fifth year students in our partner schools shall be taking part. Students have to submit papers of only 50 words and will be marked upon the following aspects: presentation, creativity of content, syntax, orthography, and most of all, ingenuity. There is also a prize for the school with the most entries, so teaching volunteers should aid their teachers in encouraging their students to take part.

In the **Care & Community** programme we shall be seeing the launch of the painting competition within all of our partner kindergartens. These results shall also be announced next month. All Care volunteers should encourage the children in their classes to take part. This year the theme is ... and prizes shall also be given to the winning students.

In the **Inca Project** this month things have been very busy. The essential task of painting the wood preservative on all windows, doors, furniture and roof before the wet season is in progress. Volunteers visited the "Miss Quillabamba" pageant, while new petroglyphs were discovered in Incatambo. An educational workshop was held on the 30th for teachers in the Huayopata region regarding heritage education. Football and volley continues with the local teachers. Community work has included the painting of the local kindergarten and the local police station. In the reforestation project, planting and clearing around the young trees has continued. The new road up Cochapata mountain is freeing up a lot of walking time for staff and volunteers to explore some of the more remote areas of the mountain. Clearing of ruins up the mountain has continued and more mapping of sector 1 and 2 has been done. A visit to Inca Carcel also took place last month. It was not all hard work though as volunteers were invited to a local birthday party, a kindergarten reunion, and a water fight or two. Finally, archeology and history lessons have continued with the volunteers.

In October we shall be welcoming 15 new volunteers to the Sacred Valley, Cusco and Huyro...

Joining the teaching programme are five new volunteers. **Meg Putnam** joined us to work in IEMx José Carlos Mariategui, Cachimayo for two months and staying with the Ramirez family in Urubamba. **Robert Pessalano**, also staying in Urubamba with the Gonzales family, is working in IEMx Mateo Pumacahua Chihuantito, Pongobamba. **Sally Bowman** shall be staying with the Aucca family in Calca and traveling to work in IEMx Eusebio Corazao, Lamay. **Monika Deptula** shall be joining us from the Conservation project to work alongside Profe Mario Cardenas in IEMx Humberto Luna in Calca. She will be living with the LaTorre family. Finally, **Gregory Wilkinson** shall be joining us to work alongside Professor Cesar in IEMx Agropecuario-Huaran.

In Care & Community **Elodie Deraedt** and **Jerome Drevet** are arriving from France early in October. Elodie shall be working in IEI Piste and is living with the Aucca family, while Jerome shall be helping out in IEI Lamay and living with the LaTorre family. **Liselot van Essen** shall be joining us for three months working in IEI 241 in Calca and living with the Zambrano family. Finally, **Elsa Bandelier**, shall be joining us for a month working in IEI Media Luna. At the end of the month **Katie White** shall be joining the other Care volunteers to work in IEI Media Luna, having completed a month and a half working in Agro-Urubamba on the teaching programme.

Joining the Spanish programme in Písaq are three new volunteers. **Lena Roling** will be here for a month before traveling onto the Conservation project in Puerto Maldonado. She will be staying with the Mogollon family. **Christine Beau**, from France, shall be living with the Nieto family. Finally, **Mia Kent** shall be staying with the Gilt family and taking a month's lessons before joining volunteers on the Inca Project in Huyro. Joining the Spanish project in Cusco is **Robert Wood** who shall be living with the Ramirez family.

Coming to us from the Conservation project is **Clare West** a PE teacher from the UK who shall be joining our Sports programme for a month working with Apu Pituiray Sports School in Calca teaching football and volleyball.

Finally, joining the Inca project is **Julia Cowell**, who shall be joining the project after completing a month in Puerto Maldonado on the Conservation project. **Kirsty Ryan** who has been with us since mid-August on the Teaching programme in IEMx Lamay shall also be going to Huyro.



Home to a number of our Care, Spanish and Teaching volunteers, Pisac is a must see location for all volunteers who come to projects in Huyro, Cusco and the Sacred Valley. Pisac is the home of what is now a ruined citadel which sits at the entrance to the gorge which controlled a strategic route connecting the Inca Empire to Paucartambo. It is also well known for its thriving market held on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays in the main plaza. Entrance to the site is with your *Boleta Turistica* from around 7am to 5.30pm. You can take the scenic route by foot passing agricultural terraces, astounding views of the valley below and ancient ruins along the way to the main site. Alternatively you can take a colectivo or taxi from the main road.

The stonework at Pisac is amazing as you ponder on how the Incas managed to cut the rock so precisely and that the large stones manage to fit so well and tightly together. The rows of the stone terraces are thought to represent a partridge's wing. In the upper sector of the ruins is the Temple of the Sun. The temple's peak is carved into a hitching post thought to have been used for keeping track of important stars, or for calculating the changing seasons with the accuracy critical to the smooth running of the Inca Empire.



After exploring the ruins in the mountains above Pisac, you can enjoy a refreshing drink in one of the many restaurants surrounding the Plaza before venturing into the market to buy souvenirs for your family back home.

Also situated in Pisac is the Royal Inca Hotel which boasts a recreation area where you can play various sports, such as football, volleyball and basketball. There



are facilities for a barbeque with picnic benches, and finally there is an indoor swimming pool which you can use at an extra price.

Volunteer News & Events:



Medics strike throughout Peru

Since the 15th of September Peruvian medics have been on strike in order to improve the situation for hospitals and doctors here throughout Peru. The strike is indefinite, however, luckily Medicine volunteers are still able to work in San Juan de Dios rehabilitation clinic while the strike continues.

Dia del Estudiante

On the 23rd of September it was Student day throughout Peru. Here in Urubamba the local schools celebrated with a science fair and concert for their students.

September Social

Last month's social took place in Cusco on Friday 26th September. Staff and volunteers met for a late lunch in Etapoy chicken restaurant. Volunteers from all the projects came and enjoyed a nice meal while new arrivals got the opportunity to get to know the staff and other volunteers.



Volunteer Stories



Hanging out with the tourists at the Plaza de Leidse: an Inca social in down town Amsterdam

At the end of August a very special Inca social took place; six previous volunteers (one German, two British and three Dutch) went to ancient Amsterdam. Although not everyone had met before, the common experience of being a “double hard” Inca volunteer simply was bonding.

The days were filled with catching up, sharing tough volunteer stories, reminiscing and laughter. Of course all this was combined with some serious research of plazas and terraces, studying architecture and canals and taking a history lesson. Of course – as good volunteers - mostly on foot, but without our machetes! Pachamama went with us where ever we went (especially to the discotheque).

We had the best of times and who knows maybe we will meet again in some other city or even in El Establo.

(Part of) The El Establo dream team

Izzy, Leonie, Pete, Steef, Roland and Annemarie



Veronique Brackel - Teaching
IEMx Señor de Torrechayoc, Yanahuara

I arrived on September 2 and I didn't really know what I was getting myself into. Of course I'd read all the basic information before hand but it's so different than actually being here. My first 2 days were free because of the everlasting strikes in Peru, but I started my classes after 2 days so I had time to settle in a bit. I remembered thinking; Oh dear, am I going to be able to do this? Teach children, make them learn things, and make them want to learn things. However soon I realized that the kids at school were so eager to get to know me that my first week was a very good way to ease into the whole school situation. The first week was a complete introduction week.

The next week I was more at ease in front of the classroom. I grew into the teaching role and I have learned bit by bit how to react in a situation and what's the best way is to teach.

Don't get me wrong, it isn't always easy; teachers don't show up, there are children who don't want to listen and not being able to speak Spanish perfectly. In spite of all these difficulties I wouldn't want to miss any part of the teaching experience, just because of the simple fact that you actually can contribute to a better future for the kids as well as the thrill you get from making kids understand what you are saying.

When I first arrived I was so completely flabbergasted by all the impressions; Peru, the people, the smells (hell, those smells!) the sounds. For that, I am so glad with my host family. They make me feel at home. When I am sick mama Luzmilla makes me nice coca tea, Papa Alfredo teaches me all about good music (the Beatles is his favorite) and Paco my little brother plays tag with me all day long. They have helped me through my difficulties here in Peru and I've grown very fond of them. It will be very sad to leave them when I go traveling.

This whole experience is, and has been an amazing journey. I've learnt more than I ever thought possible and I keep on learning every day.

Cocina Peruana: Cooking with the staff

This month is a special recipe for the Señor de los Milagros celebrations...

Turrón de Doña Pepa



Turrón de Doña Pepa is associated with the city of Lima and its Señor de los Milagros (Lord of Miracles) festival, during October. Doña Pepa was an african slave who is thought to have received the recipe in a dream after being cured of paralysis in her arms.

Ingredients:

Turrón:

- 5 cups of flour
- 1 cup of margarine
- 3 egg yolks
- 5 spoons of concentrated Aniseed water
- 1 teaspoon of salt
-

Syrup:

- 550g dark sugar (chancaca)
- ½ cup of water
- ¼ orange rind (only the orange part)
- 6 cloves
- Sprinkles
-

Preparation:

- In a boiler, bring chancaca, water, orange rind and cloves to boil. Simmer for 40 minutes until mixture forms a soft ball when dropped in cold water or reaches 238° F (113° C) on a candy thermometer. Cool.
- While the syrup is cooking, preheat oven to 350°F.
- In a large bowl, mix salt into flour.
- Cut the margarine into the dry ingredients with a pastry blender.
- Add egg yolks and aniseed water. Knead dough until soft.
- Take small portions of dough and roll, on a lightly floured surface, into sticks about 1/2 x 9 inches.
- Transfer sticks to a greased baking sheet, placing them 1 inch apart.
- Bake for 25 minutes or until lightly golden. Cool.
- Place sticks on a serving dish, one beside the other, in one layer. Pour cold syrup on top. Place a second layer of sticks crosswise and pour syrup. Repeat a third layer and cover with the rest of syrup.
- Decorate with sprinkles if desired.

What's happening in October?

Festival	Description	Place	Date
San Francisco de Asis	Catholic Festival	Tinta, Urcos and Maras	October 4
Virgen del Rosario	Catholic Festival	Cusco	October 7
Combate de Angamos	The naval battle of Angamos took place on the 8 th of October 1879 and was an important struggle in the War of the Pacific. The Peruvian ironclad Huáscar was surrounded and captured by the Chilean navy & the captain, Peruvian Admiral Miguel Grau, was killed in the combat. After this battle, the Peruvian Navy was unable to prevent the invasion of its territory as the seas were cleared for the invasion of Peru and Bolivia.	National holiday	October 8
Señor del los Milagros	Processions are held in honour of Señor de los Milagros every Sunday in Cusco. In Lima, however, this is a very important procession, which first took place in Lima after an earthquake on 20 th October 1687. After a second earthquake on 28 th October 1746, the Señor de los Milagros became accustomed to leave its resting place on 28 th October visiting streets, monasteries, churches and city neighbourhoods. Throughout the month people wear purple clothing to show their devotion to the Señor. Many people take to the streets to view or follow the procession, which is the largest Catholic procession in the Americas.	Peru	October 28

Announcements

- Please can all new arrivals be aware that you need to pick up your luggage in Lima when arriving from an international flight as it is not forwarded directly onto Cusco. Lima is the first point of entry into the country and you need to pass customs with your luggage.
- Just another reminder to make sure that volunteers are aware that the police are making more identification checks here in Cusco. Please be aware that you need to **always** carry your passport or a legalised photocopy of your passport (which has been signed by a notary) with you, especially if you are traveling within Peru, whether that is to your placement, Cusco or a long weekend in Puno. You may be asked by a police officer for proof of identification and you should be able to present this to them. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to ask in the office.
- Thank you to everyone who has helped bring about this months issue of *Musuq Chaski*. If you would like to contribute your experiences, stories, photos or anything else to the next edition then please send them to: hannahpartis@projects-abroad.org