

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

For Projects Abroad Peru



*May's Photo Competition Winner
Henrik Søgaard, Denmark
Night Sky above Calca*

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EDITORIAL

Taking a break - the importance of discovering your destination

Volunteering is a rewarding experience, which leaves a lasting impression. It is also hard work and involves huge amounts of energy and concentration each and every day of the week. That is why it is so important that volunteers take weekends and assigned holidays to explore this great nation. An opportunity to discover the diversity of this amazing country is rarely wasted and, by the time they leave, most volunteers have seen more of Peru than the average Peruvian.

There aren't many countries where you can see deserts, mountains, high plains, glaciers and the rainforest, all within a few hours of each other. Peru is a stunning place and its diversity makes for difficult travel choices when the weekend rolls around. In Ica, to the south of the capital Lima, there are vineyards stretching as far as the eye can see along the arid, sandy coastline. A tour of one of the 'bodegas' is the perfect way to appreciate Peru's simple past and its rapidly developing present. Family vineyards display the old oak barrels that once stored their wine alongside the modern facilities that process vast quantities of alcohol for national and international markets. Even when it is over 35°C outside, the vast barrel rooms remain fresh and breezy.



The nearby town of Huacachina, which is an artificial oasis in the Ica desert, offers sand boarding and dune buggy rides for the adrenaline junkies and a host of cafes to sit and admire the tremendous dunes that surround it. The sunsets over the dunes are fabulous and the temperature drops quickly after the extreme heat of the day.

This region is one of hundreds that tempt our volunteers each weekend. They return with renewed energy, enthusiasm and tales to tell of what they've seen and done. Our volunteers care about their placements and are committed to helping our local partners achieve their goals. There is nothing better than seeing more of Peru to appreciate the particular challenges faced by some of our communities here in the Cusco region. Visiting tourist attractions and experiencing all that this country has to offer, motivates volunteers to continue helping so that one day the children at their projects will also have the chance to explore their country.

Get involved on our social media platforms to contact others who have volunteered and learn about the opportunities you'll have once here on one of our placements. We have Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts that are perfect for learning more about Peru.

PROJECT UPDATES

Inca Project

The weather is finally on the turn, which means that volunteers are now up the mountain Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday. The excavation site has been pegged out and the detailed mapping continues. This needs to be completed before any excavations commence. Visits were made to the archaeological sites of Taeleros, Inkatambo, Huamanmarka, Capillayok, Yanayaco before taking the Inca trail back to Triunfo. This gave the volunteers an opportunity to see the different structures and building techniques throughout the valley. The Stimulation Centre for children aged up to 3 years old is running again in Huyro and the volunteers visit every Monday and Wednesday afternoon to help out. This involves using developmental toys to interact with the children while their mothers learn about nutrition and other aspects of parenthood. As always, volunteers are at the library every Thursday afternoon for activities with the local children and they also visit the four PRONOEIs in Huyro Antiguo, Calquina, Ipal Bajo & Iyape on Friday mornings for educational games with the pre-school children from the district.

Care Project

As usual, our care placements are alive with activities around the Sacred Valley. World Cup themed activities included face painting, football matches and colouring in special Brazil 2014 posters for our Projects Abroad Instagram and Pinterest accounts. Schools have the option of starting later during the winter months to avoid the bitter chill of the early morning. This is a good example of adapting to the environment that really helps the smaller children get to school. Claudine Balsiger, a volunteer from Switzerland, has been battling the cold and temporary classrooms at Huquqi near Calca. She has also had some stray dogs wander in to the room during lessons as there is no electricity in the building. In spite of this, she is doing an amazing job with her children and local teacher.

Teaching Project

Our teaching volunteers have been doing all sorts of activities this month. Tatjana Krivaltsevit, an Estonian volunteer, taught her students about her home country and gave them some sentence construction games to work on. Classwork is just one part of the experience as a volunteer at a teaching placement; extra-curricular events are just as important in becoming part of the school community. Ellen Limback from the USA danced at her school's anniversary party; she wore traditional clothes and joined other staff members in a fantastic show. At their placements, Matthew Claring-Bould from Australia and Camilla Wagenius from Norway, marched with students and staff with signs supporting environmental awareness for World Environment Day. Activities like these are a nice way to get to know colleagues and students, and can have huge benefits when returning to the classroom.

Medical & Nutrition Projects

Thirteen volunteers are working at our Nutrition and Medicine Projects this month. Gwendoline Helin has been working at Hospital Lorena since March. We wish her a safe and happy return to the UK and thank her for all of her hard work. Lisa Martin is a nutritionist from Canada who has come to lend her expertise to our efforts in and around the Cusco region. Finally, British volunteer, Megan Docksey, has joined the medical project after completing a month at one of our care placements.

Sports Project

With the 2014 FIFA World Cup, everyone is talking about football and the young students at the Apu Pitusiray football academy demonstrated their skills for us recently on a visit to their training ground in Calca. Some of the footage from this visit can be seen in a wonderful video produced by our Global Information Office to celebrate the twelve destinations that support football. You can watch the video [HERE](#). We have nearly ten volunteers working on both volleyball and football in June and all of them will be enjoying the warm, dry weather that has finally arrived after an extended rainy season.

VOLUNTEER STORY

Mikaylie Page, Australia: Teaching and Care Projects



"I love Peru, I don't want to go home; it's such a beautiful country and I really like the people. I wanted to really get to know a place and not just travel through it."

Volunteering has definitely had a positive impact on Mikaylie during her five month stay with Projects Abroad. She arrived in January to throw herself with tremendous energy into work on our teacher training project, which is backed by the Ministry of Education. The programme teaches regional English teachers better language skills and classroom techniques. This, for Mikaylie, is the perfect use of her gap year.



"I really enjoyed it, it was great [...] we had our own class and you got to know the teachers really well because you're working with them Monday to Thursday every week."

After nearly two months helping on this important project, Mikaylie worked with a local teacher at a high school in the Sacred Valley to deliver English lessons. After this experience, she moved her focus to our care program in the hills above Calca, where she looked after a group of fifteen young children. Her journey to her placement involved taking a moto taxi and then walking along the river to the school. The scenery at Mikaylie's placement was sublime but there were a number of challenges that she had to face on a daily basis.



"...there's no water at the moment, which makes things hard... and the food from the government didn't come [...] they're supposed to provide breakfast and lunch but it only arrived last week."

Mikaylie explained that this made things very difficult for the children's families as most were farmers who worked in the fields. They relied on this free food for their children as they often couldn't get back home to cook for them. Seeing Mikaylie in action with the children and working alongside the local teacher, it was clear that she was perfectly at home in this environment and that the children loved her. They have been doing a lot of fun activities.



"We've done colouring... we've done some cooking, making fruit kebabs, we're planting soon and we've also made some modeling clay with them."



On one visit to Mikaylie's placement, we watched the children have their faces painted with the flags of the World Cup teams before they threw a party and each child received a football. This sort of lively interaction makes the learning experience so much richer for the children and it is a credit to volunteers like Mikaylie who bring ideas and enthusiasm to these locations. This particular kindergarten faces closure if student numbers drop any further. It is the only kindergarten in this community so its loss would be catastrophic and Mikaylie's input has been crucial.

Mikaylie also travelled extensively during her time in Peru but she says that it was living with a host family that helped her to improve her Spanish the most. It's a year she will never forget.

PERU IN PICTURES

The beauty of this amazing country

The photos below are a mixture of volunteer contributions for our monthly photo competition and snaps taken on visits to placements. Peru is a photographer's paradise and if you're interested in this field you will find inspiration around every corner.



Top left: Machu Picchu

Top right: night sky above Calca (Sacred Valley)

Left middle: Flamingoes, lake Titicaca

Bottom: Corn drying,
Mountains above Urubamba,
Woman on Taquile Island

To see our monthly photo competition winners
check out the album on our facebook page:



Don't forget to check out our Instagram account where you will find beautiful imagery from our other destinations. Follow our global account and get to know more about the way we see this wonderful world.

SCENE / SEEN

Goings on around Peru with Projects Abroad



Mikaylie Page, a volunteer from Australia, painted flags on faces in celebration of the World Cup in Brazil. We also threw a tiny party and handed out footballs to the children. Later the same day, we visited the amazing trainees at the 'Apu Pitusiray' football initiative who gave us a demonstration of their skills at the foot of the mountain that is their name-sake.



A trip to the Inca project with Lauren Calderera, a visiting supervisor from Rice University in Houston. Our journey took us to the 'Ccochapata' excavation site where our volunteers were working meticulously to remove the top soil under the supervision of archaeologist, Jhon Valencia, and project coordinator, Dan O'Shea. Our visitor was initiated by having her face painted with 'achiote', a local seed that is used as a dye in both food and clothing.



Socials take us to different locations. Recently we have had meetings in Urubamba for cooking classes, where we were taught how to prepare 'Ceviche', which involves marinating raw fish in lime juice. We also had a lovely trip to the chocolate museum in Ollantaytambo, where we were taught about the history of this fabulous bean and also tried some samples in their wonderful shop.