

MUSUQ CHASKI

"THE NEW MESSENGER"

ProjectsAbroad

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Inti Raymi was an important Inca ceremony held around the winter solstice in honour of the Inti (Father sun)

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Baked round hot peppers filled with meat, onions and peanuts topped with mozzarella and parmesan cheese...



What makes Perú, Perú?

The Sacred Valley may have quietened down this month, but party season has certainly continued in Cusco. There are regular bursts of colour and music as people parade through the streets in honour of various saints and deities and special dates; and this will all culminate towards the end of June with Inti Raymi: the Festival of the Sun. Inti Raymi was an important Inca ceremony held around the winter solstice in honour of the God Inti (Father Sun), involving several days of dances, festivities and sacrifices. These days, thousands of people from all over Peru and from many parts of the world gather at the Temple of the Sun (Koricancha) and in the archaeological site of Sacsay Huaman on 24th July, to continue this tradition.

Getting involved in festivals and traditions is only one part of getting to know the culture of a country like Peru though. It is the day to day experiences – living the daily life of the local people – that really help us to understand what makes Peru, Peru. What will make



your experience, help you to see outside the box and open your mind to other ways of living, is being welcomed by your host family as if you were one of their own; being crammed into a minivan with a seemingly unfeasible number of other people, listening to two old ladies gossiping in Quechua; sitting at the dinner table with your host family looking at a pile of rice and potatoes that you can't imagine finishing, or staring at what was once a cute, little guinea pig; arranging a time to meet someone and finding yourself waiting, wondering if they'll turn up; experiencing the colours and smells of a local market when you go with your host Mum to buy provisions; sitting on a bench with the other volunteers and locals each afternoon in Huyro, watching the world go by; seeing the eight-year-old encumbered by a pick axe and a machete, following her ox home from a long day in the fields.

Your volunteer experience in Peru will be made up of the big things – like being away from home for the first time, visiting Machu Picchu, feeling like you've made a difference to the lives of others – and the small ones. Wherever you look, you will find something new or different or interesting. That's what travelling is about. That's how volunteering and cultural immersion can make a difference to your life, as well as the lives of others.



Travelling around Peru

By Florence Vincent, 18, UK, Three months Care program



As I was volunteering for three months I had the opportunity to take two weeks off as holiday. Before Easter I went traveling with my friends Sacha and Roxane. We had condors swoop over our heads in the Colca Canyon near Arequipa; island hopped on Lake Titicaca staying at the captain's house one night; watched the sun set over the lake' walked across the border to Bolivia; shopped 'till we dropped in La Paz and chilled in the beautiful plazas of Cochabamba. Not bad for a ten day road trip!

When three months were up I had a month to indulge in the rich culture and hugely varying landscapes of Peru. It was incredibly hard saying goodbye to my Peruvian family who sent me off on my way after a tear-jerking farewell dinner (so many tears were shed by all; I still get goosebumps thinking about that evening).

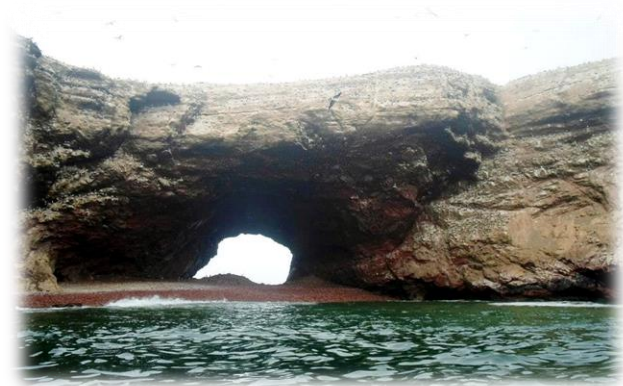


However, I knew that I still had a whole month of backpacking adventures ahead of me. Sacha, a Belgian volunteer who I became close to, was to be my "traveling buddy" and we also met up with other volunteers on the way that were making their way around Peru.

I could easily write a book about this month as we saw so many places and met dozens of interesting people. We started off doing the standard "gringo trail" working our way to Lima from Cusco. Arequipa was our first destination where we ambled around the beautiful monastery. We continued to Huacachina where our time was spent relaxing by the pool and sand boarding down the dunes that surround the oasis.



Our next stop was Paracas where the proximity and beauty of the wildlife on the Islas Ballestas made me feel like I was shooting for a David Attenborough programme. From Lima we took a flight to the north coast and were beach babes in the sunny surf spot of Mancora for a few days.



After a gruelling bus ride involving breakdowns and landslides we made it to Chachapoyas, a small town in the central highlands with the fortress of Kuelap as the main attraction. We were noticeably straying from the classic tourist routes by this point and noticed a huge difference in culture and attitudes.

Our next destination along our zigzagging down the north coast was Huanchaco, near Trujillo. We visited more ruins near this area, which were very interesting as they were from cultures that I had never heard of that existed before the Incas! From there we bussed it to Huaraz, a town in the Cordillera Blanca, to do some trekking. We did a day trek that took us from 3900m to a breathtakingly beautiful glacial lake at 4600m above sea level... it was worth every step!



We arrived in Lima just about in one piece (our backpacks got left in Huaraz but THANKFULLY were put on the next bus to Lima) after an amazing month. I would like to say that I saw it all but we did not see the Amazon jungle... I'll just have to go back!

Painting the kindergarten

Clara Elizabeth Musaeus, 19, two months Inca program



So, painting a kindergarten for kids aged three to five seems like a really nice thing to do for a community, but it is not as easy as it sounds.

When the supervisor at my project asked our group if anybody was artistic I was not an obvious candidate, but as we were only three girls, it seemed natural that we would all go to the kindergarten to plan the wall paintings they asked us if we would do. I could help more with ideas and planning, yet coincidentally the room I had the responsibility for, was chosen as the first room to be completed. Well, then, let us start doing base colours. First day and nobody understands what we are doing, as the main architect hasn't told her on-site assistant that we will be painting all the walls, not just two. After the second day, we also realise our own shortcomings as children of academics – no knowledge of practical work. However with the arrival of new

people we crack on, now with a common understanding with the architect and her assistant.

Problems still continue to pile up. We are not in Europe, as have been apparent from day one, and the materials given to us one day, is not there when we come back the next. The culture behind the language is also a barrier when I have to try to communicate on my only half-existing Spanish with the assistant – I may speak Spanish, but not Peruvian. Example, the assistant is going to find us one more brush, she never returns. Of course not – she did not find one. Things pick up when we start taking things into our own hands. We bring our own small brushes, our own plates, our own gloves.

Volunteer Story

The group is working very well together as we reach the detail work. Then we are 12 people working at the same time, some on individual tasks, and some together. For me, the hardest thing is to let the tasks go – I want to paint myself, but I also have to keep track of everyone, keep everyone busy and make sure everything gets done. And thankfully so it did. In time for inauguration the 3rd of June which was then postponed to the 11th. Oh well, I was really happy with the result, and we were all encouraged of the different townspeople, children and site workers who came by during our last days to watch our work.



Now it was no longer the curious stares of the workers through the windows: "What are those gringos doing?" but happy smiles and admiration. This is definitely something to be proud of, and I am looking forward to seeing pictures as the other rooms are being finished.

INCA

Yes! Here it is once again. All the latest gossip from Dan and his merry men in Huyro....

ARCHAEOLOGY: Thankfully Zenobio is back to full health after his operation and was once again able to join us on the project in Huyro. The volunteers had a lesson on some of the structures in the Lucumayo valley and we visited the sites Taeleros, Inkatambo, Huamanmarka, Capillayok and Yanayaco. From Yanayaco we then walked the Inca trail back to triunfo.

The excavation in sector III of Q'ochapata continues in usual systematic manner. Some ceramics potsherds have been uncovered already on the superficial cap.

We have also continued with small explorations up Q'ochapata but the weather wasn't too kind to us during June with quite a bit of rain at the higher climes. This also made it difficult for the archaeologists to get mapping done.

We have continued with the superficial clearing of archaeological structures up Q'ochapata too.

ESTABLO: The volunteers have been working hard on renovations in Establo to make space for more volunteers. This year there are going to be 27 volunteers on the project in the second week of July. The storeroom will now become a new room for volunteers arriving on the project this year.

COMMUNITY WORK: A big thanks to Clara Musaeus and all the other volunteers who worked very hard on getting the murals in the local kindergarten finished in time for the inauguration. All the volunteers on the Inca Project in Huyro can be quite proud of their achievement. At times it was a little stressful but you guys made it happen in the end! Library activities have continued and it is something that we have really managed to improve on this year. Unfortunately, sometimes the number of children attending can be low at this time of year due to the coffee harvest in the region and also schools preparing for the town's anniversary and the Huamanmarka Raymi dance festival.

SOCIALS: The volunteers had the chance to see some different examples of traditional Peruvian dances at the Huamanmarka Raymi festival on Sunday the 16th June. They all also took part in the annual celebrations for the 156th anniversary of Huyro and paraded representing Projects Abroad's Inca project on the main day.

Finally, it happened. Huyro will never be the same again. The main road that runs through the town has been finished. The final wearing course of asphalt was laid on Friday 31st of May. Goodbye dust!

TEACHING

In the Teaching Project during the month of May, Tabitha Serle and James Hancock-Evans and other volunteers started an after school programme to help students who are struggling with the course in the General Ollanta School in Urubamba. Volunteers are teaching two groups: one for the third grade and another for the fourth grade. Students show great interest and participate with enthusiasm.

At the teacher's workshop on May 21 our volunteers showed how to work with songs to improve student's English. Each teacher got a CD with the songs and the lyrics. It was surprising to see that many schools were actually using the songs and volunteers were singing with their teen students.

Alexandra Coon worked at Inka Tupac Yupanqui in Chinchero, she stayed for a month but she was confident she was going to make a difference. During the first week of work she realized that most of her students had a very good musical intelligence, so she found a way to bring music to the classes. She asked Projects Abroad to get one simple USB player and used it in her classes with great results.

James Hancock-Evans made some flash cards of the alphabet to help students remember sounds and names of letters. The cards were handmade and they were well planned to use pictures that sound similar in Spanish and English. Those flash cards can be used to teach letters and words. A great addition to our teaching materials' bank.

CARE

These first months were good; volunteers are very connected to their children. This past month we celebrated the Children education's day and our volunteers participated of the different events programmed for the occasion, like parades, dances, some of them dressing with traditional attire. Another important event for the children was Father's Day and a lot of work had to be done to prepare cards, gifts, dances and more.

This past month we saw volunteers who spent a great deal of time in the programme; Annabel, Julie, Clara, Isabelle, Margot, Michelle, Helena, Kali and Connor.

Connor Stubbs is the name of a 16-year-old volunteer who had it clear what he came here to do, working with kids and improving his Spanish before he goes back to finish high school. The teacher and children learned to love Connor really fast, he was always ready to help in whatever way he could, participated in all our workshops and the extracurricular activities at the school. Thanks Connor, we all want to see you back someday soon.

SPORTS

This past month most schools around the Sacred Valley had their Olympics and our volunteers were quite busy, painting volleyball and basketball courts were also a part of the job for some.

APU soccer academy keeps winning tournaments all over the place, our volunteers are paying special attention on the young divisions five, six and seven-year-old children organising their training.

Silke Baum, a German volunteer has been having fun teaching aerobics and dance at Valle Sagrado High School in Urubamba. The school took their routines to a special sports event at the beginning of June and had great success.

In June we welcomed Clinton West and Esben Rasmussen who are working in Urubamba and Calca respectively.

NUTRITION

Our Nutrition program at the Centro de Vigilancia in Ccotohuincho has accomplished its programmed activities with the help of Megan Charlish.

Our workshops on Nutrition and early stimulation were also on schedule paying special attention to the nutritional pyramid through games specially design for the purpose. We also continue with regular visits to pregnant mothers and mothers with small children to ensure adequate food ingestion.

Rocoto Relleno – Stuffed hot peppers

Ingredients :

- 8 rocotos (round hot peppers) substitute with red peppers if not available
- One cup red vinegar

Stuffing:

- ½ kilo ground beef meat
- 1 diced onion
- 3 cloves of minced garlic
- ¼ cup of butter
- ½ tablespoon flour
- 2 tablespoons of cream of milk
- ¼ cup of chopped peanuts
- ½ cup beef broth
- 1 tablespoon ají panca paste
- 8 potatoes cooked and peeled
- 1 cup grated mozzarella cheese,
½ cup parmesan cheese

Sauce:

- 2 tablespoons minced garlic
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 table spoons tomato paste
- ½ cup dry white wine



Preparation:

Cut the top part of red peppers, remove seeds and veins. Boil them tree times in water and vinegar.

Stuffing: In a medium size pan sauté in butter garlic and onions, add ají panca and meat. Season with salt and pepper, Add peanuts, flour and mix well, then add cream of milk and broth. Mix thoroughly and set aside.

Sauce: Sauté garlic in olive oil, add tomato paste and wine. Let mixture cook for 5 minutes.

Putting all together:

Stuff red peppers with meat mixture. Pour sauce on the bottom of a baking dish, then place red peppers alternating with cooked potatoes, cover with mozzarella and parmesan cheese. Bake in a 350 degree Fahrenheit or 175 Celsius preheated oven until cheese melts.

Serve immediately!