Past and Present in the Context of the Best Peruvian Journeys by Tracy Narvaez

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Tourists may reflection on change whilst on the best Peru trips. A once thriving world may be viewed as a stone cold archaeological remains. The ruins invite reflections on the futility of human endeavor and power. The experience can help tourists develop humility as they contemplate what has happened and what can happen to people who seem powerful and stable.

The high Andes mountain range and the thick jungle of the Amazon River basin are natural barriers that discourage intruders into the country. However, the Spanish conquistadors were able to penetrate, driven by lust for gold. The result was that a huge civilization was brought crashing down because it had not evolved in competitive circumstances and could not cope with foreign diseases and motivations.

The modern visitor will see signs of a culture that endures to some extent in a changed world, but also signs of a magnificent past that was obliterated. Only man made alterations to the environment survive and signify how powerful people who once thought of themselves as immortal and all powerful were in fact vulnerable. They remind us that modern humanity may be vulnerable to a disease as yet unnamed but perhaps lurking, ready to make a sudden appearance.

Large areas of the country are covered in tropical rain forest but comparatively few live in these regions. Most live in the coastal areas of the country or in the mountainous areas. About half the population have descended from the indigenous people of the country and the remainder are a mixture of Spanish and diverse ancestors.

Remains of the ancient Inca culture are to be experienced in Cusco, often described as the cultural capital of the country. Otherwise, they may also be observed in some of the more remote mountain villages. A journey to see the archaeological wonders of South America should include the Sacred Valley, Machu Picchu and Cuscos. It might strike visitors that a civilization that could build so effectively in stone could yet be so vulnerable to threats of which it appears to have been oblivious. Also of interest is the craftsmanship evident in buildings made of stone that fit so perfectly that mortar was unnecessary.

In a world in which diversity is rapidly being depleted Peru is an interesting place to visit. Not only is there a rich mix of old and new but also of biodiversity. A trip to the Titicaca Lake communities and to the tropical rain forest will include experiences in diversity that will be refreshing in the light of contemporary convergence.

The Peruvian rain forest includes only a small part of the human populations but is about 68,742 000 ha in extent. It occupies about half of the country and is the third largest extent of tropical rain forest in the world, after Brazil and the Congo. The government has undertaken a campaign to embark on a program of sustainable development. The aim is to develop tourism as an alternative to agricultural practices like cocoa production which is very largely responsible for deforestation.

There is much food for thought in the best trips to Peru. Ancient symbols may be studied both in archaeological remains and in the contemporary textiles that are decorated with ancient symbols. But mixed with old are aspects of the new, especially in current environmental issues that are re being played out.

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