

quest overseas

MANU AMAZON PROJECT & ANDES TO ATLANTIC EXPEDITION

- Work in one of the most pristine rainforests in the world – the Manu Biosphere Reserve in Peru
- Experience ice climbing, sand-boarding and bungee jumping
- Tango the night away in Buenos Aires

Volunteer on a ground breaking conservation and community project in one of the most pristine areas of the Peruvian Amazon before embarking on an exhilarating expedition through Peru, Bolivia and Argentina.

Four weeks working on this project gives you a fascinating insight into the unique way of life of the communities of the Amazon rainforest. The project site itself is remote and absolutely stunning. You will be helping to protect 1000s of acres of rainforest, living and working with those who rely most on its survival, and offering much needed support to settlers in the region.

You'll then take a 6-week, adrenalin-filled, adventure expedition exploring the natural wonders of Peru, Bolivia and Argentina. Starting off on the awe inspiring Inca Trail to Machu Picchu, we then head south across the altiplano, enjoying ice climbing, mountain biking, 4x4ing across the Uyuni Salt Flats, horse trekking along the old routes of Butch Cassidy, not to mention the Iguazu Falls and the vibrant city of Buenos Aires

Sights: Amazon Jungle, Bolivian Salt Flats, La Paz, Lake Titicaca, Bolivia's "Wild West", Mendoza vineyards, Mt Aconcagua and surrounding Andes, Esteros del Ibera Lagoon, Iguazu Waterfalls, Buenos Aires City

Activities: Conservation work, Planting, Scientific surveys, Community environmental education, Getting muddy, Experiencing life in the Amazon Basin, The Inca Trail to Machu Picchu, White Water Rafting, Trekking, Ice Climbing, Wildlife Spotting, Bungee Jumping, Snowboarding and Horse Riding. Boating to the base of the mighty Iguazu falls and ending it all in the Tango Capital, Buenos Aires.

Team size: 10 -16 people

For: Gap Year students

Duration: 10 weeks total: 4 weeks project work + 6 weeks expedition.

Departs: Late April/Early May each year

Cost: £3550 + £750 project donation
Includes all accommodation, food, activities, in-country travel, local tipping, airport transfers, two Quest leaders and travel insurance. £750 contribution to your project to cover short and medium-term costs and long-term ongoing support. Excludes international flights.



Project

The Project gives you a fascinating insight into the unique way of life of the communities of the Amazon rainforest. You will be helping to protect 1000s of acres of rainforest, living and working with those who rely most on its survival, whilst offering much needed support to tribes and settlers in the region. The Manu Biosphere Reserve is one of the most biodiverse areas of rainforest in Peru. Although remote is under real threat from all sides; immigrant communities, oil prospecting, tourist "eco-lodges" and agriculture. Working with our project partner CREES you will be reforesting areas of damaged jungle, developing sustainable forestry practises and improving facilities for the communities so they don't have to move on elsewhere. This intense involvement with the local community twinned with the chance to truly learn and understand the challenges faced by the rainforest environment provides an unrivalled cultural experience.

Expedition Itinerary

Week 1: Cuzco and the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu

Moving out of the jungle, we make our way to the Inca capital, Cuzco. This is the start point for our first trek, the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu. Four days tackling mountain passes, deep valleys and enjoying breathtaking landscapes, before stepping through the sun gate to see the lost city appearing through the swirling mist.

Week 2: Lake Titicaca and Mountain Biking.

Relax on the beautiful shores of Lake Titicaca and discover indigenous communities on islands on both the Bolivian and Peruvian side of the lake. From there we travel into the city of La Paz, a town which really should still be viewed in black and white! Starting from here, we also make our way in mountain bikes down the world famous "Road of Death", before treating ourselves to some well earned rest in the sleepy village of Coroico.

Week 3: Ice Climbing through the Bolivian Andes

Time for our second trek, this time a little more challenging. Trekking over passes in excess of 5,000m, we make our way to the base of the Condoriri mountains and make our way up the ice to the summit of Pequeno Alpamayo, higher than any point in Europe!

Week 4: The Bolivian Salt Flats and Butch Cassidy Land.

Travel through the altiplano to discover one of the most inspiring sights of the whole of South America, The Uyuni Salt Flats. 4 days exploring bright green and red lakes filled with hundreds of flamingos, surreal desert landscapes, bubbling geysers, thermal waters, and volcanoes in 4x4 Land Cruisers. Moving on to Tupiza, we follow in the footsteps of Butch himself on a two day horse trek through the surrounding villages and scenery.

Week 5: Adventure pursuits in Northern Argentina

After getting a new stamp on the passport, we make our way through northern Argentina to the wine producing town of Mendoza. What better way to spend each day than bungee jumping, snowboarding at the foot of Mt Aconcagua and trekking in the breathtaking Argentinean landscape before celebrating with a fine bottle of merlot?!

Week 6: Iguazu Falls and Buenos Aires

Heading back up towards the North East we visit the less well known but even more beautiful Esteros del Ibera lagoon, spanning 13,00sq km. Here we can spot caiman, howler monkeys and other elusive creatures. From here we find Iguazu Falls, nestled in between Brazil, Paraguay and Argentina. It is a sight to behold! 275 different cascades spread along two miles of the Iguazu River will blow you away. To complete the journey, what better a finale than to reach the tango capital of the world, Buenos Aires.

Day 22: Buenos Aires, Argentina, END OF EXPEDITION

Team members are free to go travelling onwards or fly home from BA.

Food & drink

During the project, volunteers eat simple local food "al fresco" which is cooked by the lodge staff. Whilst on expedition you will generally eat at your hostel for breakfast, out and about in town for lunch and in a local restaurant for dinner. On treks the team will take it in turn to cook simple meals on camping stoves.

Accommodation

During the project volunteers live in palm thatched huts in the middle of the rainforest. On the expedition accommodation will range from tented accommodation on treks to hotels and jungle camps depending on the location and activity.

Weather

From the heat and humidity of the rainforests to sunny skies and cold nights of the mountains, you will experience a variety of weather depending on the altitude and environment. You are provided with a detailed kit list to ensure that you are suitably prepared.

Leaders

You will have one leader with you for the Project phase, and two leaders for the 6 week Expedition. They are there to make sure everything runs smoothly, safely and to give maximum reward to all those involved. We are incredibly thorough about selecting our leaders and you can guarantee that they will be some of the most experienced, passionate, enthusiastic and up for it people you will ever meet. They are also a really good laugh and have heaps of knowledge that you can tap into. Leaders receive Quest training every year. All leaders are Wilderness First Aid trained and our Expedition Leaders having a minimum of Summer Mountain Leader training.

Preparation

Quest provides Pre-Departure Training in the UK for all team members. It covers Responsible Travel, Cultural Awareness, Health & Hygiene, Risk Assessment, Teamwork and Onward Travel. It also provides you with the opportunity to meet the rest of your team and your leaders before going overseas.

Vaccinations

We provide a full list of vaccinations required for this expedition. You will also need to take malarial prophylactics for the duration of the project.

Responsible Travel

Responsible Travel is an ethos that should be at the heart of all travel. For all of us at Quest it is about making a tangible 'positive impact' on both man and the environment with everything that we and our clients do. We ensure that we make a positive impact on communities and environments that we are lucky enough to visit.

Recommended reading

Inca Cola by Matthew Parris

Touching the Void by Joe Simpson

The Silver River by Ben Richards



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