



# YASC in Peru: Along the Marañon

Newsletter 1  
January 10, 2020

## Bienvenido a YASC en Perú!

Are you ready to make a difference?  
Are you ready for an adventure? Are  
you ready to make friendships and  
memories that will last a lifetime?

You and more than 70 other people  
who have already registered are in for a  
spectacular experience. We are so  
excited and inspired by your  
enthusiasm.

We all know that anticipation is part of  
the fun and good preparation is the key  
to success. With this and all the other  
Newsletters to come, we will help you  
prepare for the trip and, we hope, get  
excited about the adventure that  
awaits us all. Please read this  
Newsletter and all the other  
information we share in the next few  
months.

The enjoyment and fulfillment that you  
will get from this trip will be  
proportional to the time and energy  
that you invest in the trip before we  
leave. Our preparation will make us  
better team members and better

partners with the people of our three  
host communities and Minga Peru, our  
primary partner.

We are writing to you now because  
there is already so much news to  
share. We will try to anticipate all of  
your questions in the Newsletters  
including information about the many  
volunteer opportunities to explore as  
well as travel and project details to be  
explained, so please read carefully.

If you have any questions along the  
way, feel free to email us.

Happy travels!

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Speaking of preparation...Please hold  
April 2 at 7 pm (east coast) for the first  
orientation video call. Details to  
follow...



Approaching Amazonas from the Marañon

## Our Partner



**MINGA**  
PERU

For our adventure in Nauta, we are partnering with Minga Peru. *Minga* is a non-profit organization that promotes sustainable change for indigenous

communities throughout the *Peruvian* Amazon. Minga strengthens leaders, organizations, and social networks representing the most marginalized communities of Latin America and the Caribbean to collaboratively build social justice with gender equity, environmental stewardship and cultural identity. The core of their efforts has been the radio program *Bienvenida Salud!* which has broadcast 3,000 episodes sharing crucial information throughout the region.

YASC was introduced to Minga through Eliana Elias, co-founder and executive director. Since the summer, we have been working closely with Luis Gonzales, co-founder and program director, and the team for all the planning. You can read more about [Minga Peru by clicking here](#).

## Along the Marañón

The Marañón River is the principal or mainstem source of the Amazon River, arising about 160 km to the northeast of Lima, Peru, and flowing through a deeply eroded Andean valley in a northwesterly direction, along the eastern base of the Cordillera of the Andes, as far as 5° 36' southern latitude; from where it makes a great bend to the northeast, and cuts through the jungle Andes, until at the Pongo de Manseriche it flows into the flat Amazon basin.

## A bit about Peru

Peru is a megadiverse country with habitats ranging from the arid plains of the Pacific coastal region in the west to the peaks of the Andes mountains vertically extending from the north to the southeast of the country to the tropical Amazon Basin rainforest in the east.

Peruvian territory was home to several ancient cultures. Ranging from the Norte Chico civilization in the 32nd century BC, the oldest civilization in the Americas and one of the five cradles of civilization, to the Inca Empire, the largest state in pre-Columbian America, the territory now including Peru has one of the longest histories of civilization of any country, tracing its heritage back to the 4th millennia BCE.

The Spanish Empire conquered the region in the 16th century and established a viceroyalty that encompassed most of its South American colonies, with its capital in Lima. Peru formally proclaimed independence in 1821, and completed its independence in 1824. In the ensuing years, the country enjoyed relative economic and political stability, which ended shortly before the War of the Pacific with Chile. Throughout the 20th century, Peru endured armed territorial disputes, coups, social unrest, and internal conflicts, as well as periods of stability and economic upswing. Alberto Fujimori and his government were credited with economically stabilizing Peru and successfully ending the Shining Path insurgency, though he was widely accused of human rights violations and suppression of political dissent.

The sovereign state of Peru is a representative democratic republic divided into 25 regions. It is classified as an emerging market with a high level of human development and an upper-middle income level with a poverty rate around 19 percent. It is one of the region's most prosperous economies with an average growth rate of 5.9% and it has one of the world's fastest industrial growth rates at an average of 9.6%.

## Machu Picchu Extension

**July 26 – 30** – Register Now (if you haven't already!)

Machu Picchu, one of the New Seven Wonders of the World, is an Incan citadel set high in the Andes Mountains above the Urubamba River valley. Built in the 15th century and later abandoned, it's renowned for its sophisticated dry-stone walls that fuse huge blocks without the use of mortar, intriguing buildings that play on astronomical alignments and panoramic views. Hiram Bingham III (Yale 1898) "rediscovered" the site in 1911.



The three communities that we will be visiting share the Kukama heritage. They have been isolated from much of the economic development of Peru and are facing increasing environmental challenges especially pollution. Domestic violence has been a problem in all the communities.

Minga Peru broadcasts its show to all the communities and has helped train women leaders called Promotoras. There are also Corresponsales, student leaders, in each place.

## Amazonas

This riverside community has a population of 300 people and Minga is currently partnering with four community *promotoras*. The primary school has 50 students and the secondary school has 30 students. As the community is looking to grow its income generation opportunities, Minga is supporting a new community initiative in the creation of fish farms near Amazonas. The majority of the community is self-employed working in agriculture, fishing, and artisan work.

## Puerto Prado



Our second location, Puerto Prado, is a 20 minute boat ride from Nauta. It is a community of approximately 75 people with three Promotoras. There is a primary school with about 28 students and older students travel to a neighboring community for their secondary studies. The community is

interested in tourism with activities such as a trail walk allowing visitors to learn more about the rainforest and some of the natural remedies that are abundant in the area. Puerto Prado also has a "health promoter."

## San Francisco



San Francisco is the largest community with 400 people and four Promotoras. It is about a 30 minute boat ride from Nauta. Minga has been working in this community for almost 20 years.

The primary school has about 60 students and the secondary school has about 30. The community faces all the same challenges although it is noticeably more built up including having a church on the hill and the "zoo."



In all three communities, the women artisans make baskets and other items from locally sourced reeds. They are eager to discuss marketing and learn about business. Some of the women have expressed an interest in learning some English to help with their business negotiations.

Given that these communities are only accessible by water, a potential construction project (or 3) for YASC is to improve the existing paths and stairs that lead to the communities from the river.

## Flights

The group will meet at the Lima, Peru airport at **8:50 a.m.** on July 18. You must make your own flight arrangements to and from **Lima**. There are non-stop flights from many cities. If you are flying in on July 18, we recommend that your flight arrive at the airport no later than 6:30 a.m. to enter through immigration, etc. Your passport must be valid for 6 months after entry and you need proof of a departure flight. A free tourist visa is issued on entry.

The program finishes in **Lima** on July 26 or July 30 if you are on the extension. If you need a place to stay, there is a Wyndham hotel at the airport as well as many hotels in the city

Where do we meet? In LIMA!  
YASC is taking care of your flight to Iquitos.)

## Health Prep

There are immunizations recommended for travel to Peru. We cannot provide medical advice, so we suggest that you consult your doctor regarding immunizations. It is best to do this several weeks before the trip, since some vaccinations are administered in installments and some medications may take time to order. The Yellow Fever vaccine is in limited supply in the U.S. This area of Peru is considered a malarial area. Your producers took anti-malarial pills during the planning trip. For general information about immunizations and health issues, you can visit the Center for Disease Control and Prevention website [Peru information page](#). Also, remember to bring a sufficient supply of all your regular medications (don't forget the extension time, too.)