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Trekking in the Cordillera Blanca

June 6 – June 19, 2020 (14 days)

The mountains of Peru's Cordillera Blanca are among the most incredibly beautiful on earth, with their ice-fluted peaks, sprawling glaciers, turquoise lakes, and lovely alpine flora. Lying in the heart of Huascaran National Park, a World Heritage Site, the range features more than 25 peaks over 19,000 feet high and remote valleys linked by age-old trails. Join trekking guide Cathy Ann Taylor for a sensational traverse of this high Andean realm, an absolute “must” for avid mountain hikers. It's a challenging but ultimately rewarding journey: you'll cross seven passes, most of them more than 15,000 feet high, and camp beside impossibly blue lakes with views of snowcapped peaks and glaciers. Isn't it time you added this to your personal list of “Great Treks of the World?” Join us for a truly unforgettable experience!

TRIP DETAILS

Very challenging ▶ 11 days strenuous hiking on rocky, steep terrain at high elevation (maximum 15,908'; 4 nights hotels, 9 nights camping)

ITINERARY

Day 1, June 6 ▶ Arrive in Lima

Fly to Lima, Peru. You will be met upon your arrival in Lima and transferred to the Wyndham Airport Hotel. Overnight.

Day 2, June 7 ▶ Lima - fly or drive to Huaraz (10,170')

Travel by private van to Huaraz, a drive of about seven hours. Our journey brings us through green valleys, alongside rivers, and through highland pastures. Transfer to the Hotel Andino, a comfortable hotel with a Swiss ambiance that's just a few minutes from the central plaza. Lively Huaraz is the "adventure capital" for climbs and hikes in the famed Cordillera Blanca, and views of Huascarán and the surrounding mountains are breathtaking right from our hotel and the town. Dinner is on your own tonight.

B,L...Hotel Andino

Day 3, June 8 ▶ Acclimatization Hike

Today's acclimatization hike helps us prepare for the days ahead. A one-hour drive brings us to Huillcacocho (12,221'), a lake that offers spectacular views of the snowy peaks of the Cordillera Blanca, including Huandoy and Huascarán (22,204'), the highest peak in Peru. Our trail from here leads to another lake, Ararcocho, then up to a viewpoint at 12,566 feet, with a sweeping panorama of the mountains, the river basin, and the town of Huaraz. We descend toward the villages of Purucuta and Quetscapu, and then meet up with our vehicle for the ride back to Huaraz. In the evening we gather for a trip orientation and welcome dinner.

(6.5 miles, 4 hours hiking.)

B,L,D...Hotel Andino

Day 4, June 9 ▶ Begin Trek – Vaqueria (12,136')

A morning's drive of 4 -5 hours brings us to the beautiful turquoise lake of Llanganuco. After a hot lunch on the way up to the pass—the Portachuelo de Llanganuco (15,580'), with its vistas of the northern Cordillera Blanca, including Huascarán, Huandoy, Chopicalqui, and Pisco, a popular trekking peak (it's 17,900 feet) we continue to drive a short ways over the pass. Hiking downhill from the pass, we reach Vaqueria (12,136'). (5 miles, 2 hours hiking.)

B,L,D...Camp



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Day 5, June 10 ▶ Vaqueria – Tuctupampa (13,500’)

Passing small settlements and farmlands, we head up the Tuctu Valley to our camp at 13,500 feet. The views from here are tremendous—knife-edged Taulliraju, Rinrijirca, and the east peak of Chararaju—all peaks more than 19,000 feet high. (7.2 miles, 7-8 hours hiking.)
B,L,D...Camp



Day 6, June 11 ▶ Tuctu – Huecrococha (13,000’)

We continue hiking through the valley on age-old trails and ascend to Pucahirca Pass (15,252’), with a panorama of snow-clad peaks including Piramide, Chararaju, and Huascaran. We descend from the pass to our camp, set beside Laguna Huecrococha at 13,000 feet. (4.2 miles, 7 hours hiking.)
B,L,D...Camp

Day 7, June 12 ▶ Huecrococha – Jancapampa (11,600’)

A three-hour hike brings us up to Tupatupa pass (14,380’), then down to our campsite (11,600’) at Jancapampa, a valley below the massif of Pucajirca (19,844’). This is one of the most beautiful valleys we’ll hike through on our trek, and we’ll pass houses and cultivated areas where rural Peruvian life remains unchanged. This evening we may enjoy a visit by the children of the nearby village of Tingopampa. (6 miles, 7-8 hours hiking.)
B,L,D...Camp

Day 8, June 13 ▶ Jancapampa – Huilca (13,2000’)

We make a steep, five-hour climb through woods, meadows, and glacially polished rock to the narrow Yanajanca pass (15,088’), then head downhill toward the settlement of Huilca. Our camp is just below the pass at 14,000 feet, with spectacular views of the monstrous massif of Pucajirca. (5.7 miles, 8 hours hiking.)
B,L,D...Camp



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Day 9, June 14 ▶ Huillca – Moyobamba (14,700’)

The views of mountains and glaciers are absolutely stunning as we hike up to Mesapata pass (14,718’). Camp at Moyobamba at 14,700 feet. (4.5 miles, 5 hours hiking.)

B,L,D...Camp

Day 10, June 15 ▶ Moyobamba – Jancarurish (14,000’)

Hike to Caracara pass (15,800’), with fabulous vistas of the pyramidal peak of Alpamayo (19,506’), a favorite climbing objective of mountaineers, as well as the Santa Cruz Mountains and the Cordillera Blanca stretching south. Optional afternoon hike up to the moraine (two hours round-trip). Our

camp is in the Jancarurish Valley just a couple of hours below Alpamayo Base Camp at 14,000 feet. The alpenglow on Alpamayo is unforgettable. (3 miles, 4 ½ - 5 hours hiking.)

B,L,D...Camp



Day 11, June 16 ▶ Jancarurish – Osoruri (14,800’)

We hike down a long valley to Ruinapampa, and then ascend slowly up scores of switchbacks to Hatunviento pass (15,252’). Descend to our camp at 14,800 feet, our highest campsite. (7.2 miles, 7 hours hiking.)

B,L,D...Camp

Day 12, June 17 ▶ Osoruri – Huisccash (13,450’)

We hike two hours to our last—and highest—pass, Toro Pishtanan (15,908’), then descend to Cuillicocha (15,252’), one of the most gorgeous lakes in this area of the Andes, framed by the three peaks of the Santa Cruz Mountains. Hiking along the lake, we reach our camp at Huisccash (13,450’). (4.2 miles, 6-7 hours hiking.)

B,L,D...Camp



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Day 13, June 18 ▶ Huishcachi – Hualacayan – Huaraz (10,170')

A short downhill hike brings us to Hualacayan (10,500'), where we meet our vehicles and drive back to Huaraz. Tonight we'll celebrate the successful completion of our trek with a festive farewell dinner. (3 miles, 2 hours hiking, 3 hours driving.)

B,L,D...Hotel Andino

Day 14, June 19 ▶

We make the drive to Lima, with a transfer to the airport upon arrival. Evening departure on homeward-bound flights, arriving home the following day (Please schedule your departing flights after 8:00 p.m.).

B,L...

(You will arrive home on Day 15, June 20)

LAND COST

\$5,395 per person (10-14 members)

\$5,695 per person (8-9 members)

\$5,895 per person (4-7 members)

Single Supplement - \$700

*Should you choose to pay with credit card there will be a service charge of 3%, the fee we incur from the bank.

Rates quoted are per person, based on sharing double accommodations.

Note—Prices listed are subject to change. We are occasionally faced with unavoidable cost increases (flights, etc.) or currency fluctuations that we cannot absorb. We will, however, do everything we can to keep prices the same as published.

Single Supplement—\$700 for requested singles or forced singles. If you prefer single accommodations, you must pay the Single Supplement Fee. If you wish to share accommodations, we'll try to match you up with a roommate. If that's not possible, we will still have to charge the full single supplement.

LAND COST INCLUDES...

- Expert leadership of Cathy Ann Taylor and local guides throughout
- 1 night accommodation at hotel in Lima
- 3 nights accommodation at hotel in Huaraz
- All trek arrangements, including tents, sleeping pads, community camping and commissary equipment, services of camp and commissary crew, including camp and cook staff
- Meals as noted (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
- Airport transfers
- Sightseeing as noted in the itinerary

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- o Ground transportation
- o Entrance fees and permits

LAND COST DOES NOT INCLUDE...

International airfare to Lima and return; internal air (Lima/Huaraz/Lima, see separate costs above); insurance (we strongly recommend you purchase the optional trip insurance offered by Cattara, which includes trip cancellation insurance); optional tipping to leader and local guides; meals not noted on itinerary; excess baggage charges; airport taxes (if any); cost of medical immunizations; and items of a personal nature (alcoholic beverages, laundry, etc.); meals not noted on itinerary.

TRIP PAYMENT SCHEDULE

At time of reservation25% of land cost
 120 days prior to departure25% of land cost
 90 days prior to departure.....Balance

CANCELLATION FEE SCHEDULE

From time of reservation
 until 90 days prior to departure25% of land cost
 89-60 days prior to departure.....50% of land cost
 59 days or fewer prior to departure.....100% of land cost

EXPERT LEADERSHIP

Expert leadership is the key to every successful trip. Cattara attracts knowledgeable and gifted leaders who are passionate about guiding trips and truly enjoy sharing the experience with others. They understand the cultures and traditions they work in and are a fountain of information. In addition to making sure everything runs smoothly and safely, Cattara guides enhance your experience by being educators, companions, and the best of friends.

TRIP LEADER



Cathy Ann Taylor, a high altitude trekking & cultural guide for the last 30 years will be leading his trip. Cathy Ann has trekked all over Nepal, Tibet, India and Bhutan, with well over 200 trips in the Himalayas (she still considers the Himalayas her “second home”)! She has also hiked extensively in the European Alps (Tour du Mont Blanc—six times, The Haute Route, Gran Paradiso, Scotland, and the Dolomites—two times), the Georgian Caucasus—four times, South America (15 trips in Peru, 1 in Patagonia), and Uganda & Rwanda—four times. A devout hiker and mountain biker, she leaves no trail undiscovered, and her passion for the mountains, caring nature, and boundless energy are renowned. Her experience, knowledge, positive attitude (she can find the good in anything!), and her wonderful rapport with the local staff will enhance your experience. With the help of caring and like-minded individuals she has been able to manage the sponsorship of nineteen remote village children, all of whom are in boarding school in Nepal or in universities in India, Nepal, and the

United States. She consistently gets rave reviews from members of her groups and has quite a following. Cathy Ann is active in the Breast Cancer Prevention Partners and has participated in seventeen expeditions, including Mount McKinley, Mount Cho Oyu, Mount Fuji, Mount Shasta, and Mount Rainier, which helped increase awareness of breast cancer (she alone has raised over \$775,000 for the cause!). Cat's special trekking program, Sacred Treks, benefits Breast Cancer Prevention Partners (formerly the Breast Cancer Fund). Past trips include Bhutan, Mont Blanc, Peru, Everest, Ladakh, Mustang, Georgian Caucasus, Sikkim, Dolomites, Cordillera Blanca, and Annapurna Sanctuary treks, and the program has raised over \$780,000. Cathy Ann has also been active in the American Himalayan Foundation and has helped raised \$25,000 for their STOP Girl Trafficking project. She has also reached the summit of Ama Dablam (22,500') in Nepal and Argentina's Aconcagua (22,834'), the highest peak in South America. Cathy Ann received an honorable mention in *Hooked on the Outdoors* magazine's Outdoor Person of the Year Awards, and also received a letter of recognition for her fundraising and environmental work from Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi.

PHYSICAL EXPECTATIONS

You should be an experienced hiker in very good physical condition. This trip is extremely challenging and is designed for those who are very fit and experienced in the outdoors. You will be hiking five to seven hours a day on steep and rocky mountain trails, and mostly at elevations above 13,000 feet (highest elevation reached is 15,908'), and with many campsites at around 14,000 feet. Pack animals will carry the gear; you'll just need to carry your daypack with essential things you need during the day. Even so, hiking at high altitudes is challenging, as you can experience a variety of symptoms you wouldn't encounter at sea level (shortness of breath, sleeplessness, and headaches). You should be aware of the demands and risks imposed by very high altitude, be in excellent underlying health, and prepare by training rigorously. We recommend you have a thorough physical exam and evaluation to uncover any general medical problem that might flare up while trekking in the remote areas of Peru, where medical care may be many days away. Some experience with exercise at high altitude is highly recommended.

While on trek, you should drink a lot of water—this helps to avoid dehydration. The prescription drug Acetazolamide (Diamox) can also help acclimatization, prevent acute mountain sickness, and treat mild cases of mountain sickness. It is also very helpful for altitude insomnia and should be used in preference to sleeping pills or Valium, which are dangerous at altitude. Consult with your physician for advice on trekking at high altitude and any prescription medications you may need.

For physical preparation for this very challenging trek, we strongly recommend regular cardiovascular exercise for one to two hours at least 4-5 times a week. We suggest stair climbing, running, and mountain biking on hills or elliptical or treadmill training in the gym with 10-15 pound daypacks. This gets the heart rate going, which will be very beneficial for the type of high altitude trekking you will be undertaking. And, of course, the best way to train for a trek is to go hiking! We recommend you get out on the trails at least once a week for 5-6 hours. Wear your boots and daypack with 20-25 lbs of gear in it and pick some trails with hills so you can strengthen your leg muscles and build up your stamina.

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TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

You will need a passport, valid for at least six months beyond the date of completion of the trip. No visas are required for this trip (for US citizens); you will receive a Tourist Card at the airport upon arrival. Note—it's a good idea to make a photocopy of the photo page of your passport and carry it separately from your passport. If your passport is lost or stolen, a photocopy will help the local consulate speed up authorization for replacement.

AIR TRAVEL

Airfare is not included in the land cost of the trip. For air reservations, please contact the airlines directly, either by phone or via the Internet. Many travelers elect to use their "frequent flyer" miles when traveling, but please check with us before purchasing or obtaining your tickets. We need to verify your arrival and departure schedule and ensure we have enough participants to operate the trip. Note—Names on air tickets and passports must match!

MEDICAL MATTERS

No vaccinations are currently required to enter Peru, but usual immunizations for typhoid, tetanus, hepatitis A, and polio are recommended. These regulations and recommendations change frequently, so please check with your local health department or the CDC for more information (www.cdc.gov).

Please advise us of any pre-existing medical conditions that may affect your health on the trek (recent injuries or surgeries, chronic illnesses, etc.). We recommend you bring your own personal first-aid kit, painkillers, and allergy medicines if you are prone to allergic reactions (especially epipens if you are allergic to bee stings). Moleskin or Second Skin for blisters is also recommended, as well as Band-Aids and antibiotic ointment. Consult your doctor about bringing other medications, such as diamox for altitude, antibiotics like Cipro for stomach ailments, and azithromycin as a broad-spectrum antibiotic. The trip leader will also carry a basic kit for emergencies, but will not have any prescription medications. We strongly recommend you get a medical check-up before the trek if you are over 60 years of age.

EATING OUT & HYGIENE

Although you need to be careful about eating out in Peru, we believe it is fun learning experience, and Huaraz is full of wonderful little restaurants. Make sure you drink water that is treated or bottled and food that is fully cooked. Most importantly, wash your hands frequently with soap and water and carry hand sanitizer.

MONEY MATTERS

You should bring enough money for any souvenirs you may buy, plus a few meals that are not included in the cost of the trip (e.g. various meals in Lima or Huaraz, or meals and accommodation En route to Peru). Depending on how much of a shopper you are, \$400-\$600 should be enough for incidentals and souvenirs. The ATMs give both US dollars & Nuevo Soles. ATMs are available at the airport, and in downtown Lima and Huaraz, make sure you make arrangements with your bank.

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The currency in Peru is the Nuevo Sol, but US dollars are widely used and accepted, **be sure to bring crisp US bills, as torn and defaced currency is not accepted.** Credit cards are generally accepted at most restaurants and shops (Visa is the most widely accepted). The exchange rate as of May 6, 2019 is 3.31 (PEN) Nuevo Sol per one US dollar.

You should bring an additional amount for optional gratuities to the trip leader, local guide, and camp staff. At least US \$500 per guest is recommended for the trip leader; at least \$330 per guest for the local lead guide, the assistant local guide, and the camp staff. You can present your gratuities to your trip leader individually. The tips for the local guides and camp staff will be collected and divided by the trip leader. When tipping in hotels for your luggage it's generally \$1.00 per bag. Tips to the drivers and transfer agents are included in the cost of your trip.

WEATHER & CLIMATE

As in most mountain environments, the weather in the Andes can be unpredictable, so each day on the trail you need to be prepared for a variety of weather conditions: hot sun, wind, rain. The months from May through October are usually the driest and clearest. However, you will carry your raingear and jacket in your daypack every day, even if the morning starts out bright and hot. Dressing in layers that can be adjusted to suit the prevailing conditions is highly recommended. The temperatures during the day can range up to the mid-70s and drop to 25-30° at night.

LIFE ON THE TRAIL

Your trekking day typically starts at 6:30-7:00 a.m., when the camp staff will bring you “bed tea” to start the day, along with a large bowl of hot water for washing. (Bring along a washcloth and you can have a full sponge bath in the privacy of your tent!) After packing your bags, you'll enjoy a hearty breakfast of oatmeal, eggs, and toast or pancakes. By 8:00 or 8:30 you're off on the trail. A trailside lunch breaks up the day, giving you time to rest and refuel before heading out on the trail for the afternoon hike. You usually arrive in camp by 4:00 p.m. and have time to wash up and get settled in your tent before enjoying tea and snacks in the dining tent. While waiting for dinner, you can write in your journal, read a book, play cards, or simply relax. The day ends with a hot, multi-course dinner. After dinner you can gaze at the stars (incredible viewing in this part of the world) and the moonlit peaks, go over the events of the day, or retire to your tent to read for a while before heading off to sleep.

INCIDENTALS

Laundry: Laundry service is available at the hotels. On trek, it may be possible to hand wash a few items and hang them to dry in your tent. Synthetic, quick drying fabrics are best (see the equipment list).

Electricity: Most hotels in Peru feature both 110 and 220V, 60Hz outlets. It's a good idea to buy a converter set with a selection of plug adapters before you leave the US. If your appliance has a dual voltage switch, you will simply need an adapter plug but not a converter (camera chargers can be

used as they are—no need for an adapter). Of course, there won't be electricity when we're camping.

Time Zones: Peru is Greenwich Mean Time minus five hours. That means that Lima and Huaraz are the same time as New York and three hours ahead of California. Peru does not observe Daylight Savings Time.

Communications: While we discourage the use of cell phones on our trip, we can't deny the fact that you may want to be in touch with your friends or family. Please be sensitive to the needs of others and use them in the privacy of your room. Contact your cell phone service about international coverage.

WHAT TO BRING: CLOTHING & EQUIPMENT LIST

Packing Notes

It's best to go as light as possible and take only the essentials. Excess baggage can be a burden, not only to you but to support personnel.

Always bring all irreplaceable items, such as camera, medications, important documentation, and trekking boots in your carryon luggage.

Luggage

- Duffel bag. A good size is about 14" x 15" x 36" (7,560 cu. in)—large enough to hold your sleeping bag plus your trekking clothes and gear. It should have a full-length zipper (for easy access), and be sturdy and water-resistant or waterproof.
- Daypack with a capacity of 2,500-2,800 cubic inches, with a good padded waist belt. It can double as your carryon bag. Remember, you must carry your fleece jacket and rain gear with you every day on the trail, as well as your snacks, 2 liters of water, sunscreen, warm hat, gloves, camera, and cover for daypack in case of rain. Be sure your daypack is large enough!
- Spare roll-up duffel (optional). This is essential to store city clothes in Huaraz while on trek and if you wish to bring home those great souvenirs! It should be lockable.

Clothing Notes

As in every mountain environment, the weather can be unpredictable. You can expect some sunny days (the Cordillera Blanca is known for having nice weather), but there is always the possibility of rainy and windy conditions. At high elevations, you can expect to encounter cool climates, so bring comfortable clothing that will protect you from cold and possibly wet weather. Synthetic fabrics (such as capilene or wool) are the most effective barriers against the cold. They provide the best insulation, are light in weight, wick away perspiration, and dry quickly if wet. (Cotton garments are not good in cold or wet mountain conditions.)

When layering, your innermost layer should be a synthetic T-shirt or long underwear. The middle layer can be a synthetic turtleneck or wool shirt, and pants. The outermost layer should be a synthetic fleece jacket, and/or a good quality wind/rain parka and over-pants.

We haven't included quantities for each item listed. Use your own judgment, based on the expected weather conditions, your personal needs, and the overall weight restrictions for your luggage.

Underwear

- Regular underwear. Synthetics are easier to wash and dry.
- Thermal underwear—one lightweight, one medium-weight in a synthetic blend (wool is also good). You can use them to sleep at night and as layers for maximum warmth.

Socks

- Casual socks (synthetic for easy washing and drying) that are suitable for walking (not hiking) shoes.
- Mid-weight hiking socks (synthetic or wool/synthetic).
- Synthetic or silk sock liners—optional. Some people wear sock liners to help prevent blisters, and some wear the same pair of hiking socks for three days in a row and achieve the same result.

Shirts

- Long-sleeved, synthetic or wool shirts.
- Short-sleeved synthetic T-shirts (in case we have some hot, sunny days on trek).

Pants

- Full-length synthetic hiking pants.
- Fleece pants, ideal for around camp.
- Casual pants or skirts for non-hiking activities (in Huaraz).

Outerwear

- Medium-weight jacket of synthetic fabric, such as fleece or a lightweight down sweater.
- Medium-weight down or synthetic-fill jacket (ideal for camp time).
- Rain/wind shell (must fit over bulky clothing).
- Rain/wind pants, preferably with full-length side zipper (must fit over your other pants).
- Gloves or mittens (fleece or combination of fleece with waterproof shell overmitt or glove).
- Waterproof daypack cover.

Head Gear

- Sun hat with wide brim, preferably with a chin strap to keep it from blowing off, or baseball cap.
- Fleece or wool hat.
- Waterproof hat, if your jacket doesn't have a hood.

- Bandanna. A generally useful item—it will keep your neck from getting sunburned and can double as a hand towel in the field.

Footwear

Please break new boots in well before the trip.

- Medium-weight, sturdy hiking boots with padded ankle, good arch support, and lug sole for traction. Your hiking boots should be waterproofed, well broken in, and suitable for prolonged walking on rocky terrain and possibly snow.
- Comfortable walking shoes to wear while in towns (can be stored in Huaraz while on trek).
- Tennis shoes, slip-on clogs, down booties, or Teva-type sandals to wear in camp.

Sleeping Gear

- Sleeping bag with a recommended rating of -5° to 5°F.
- We provide 72" long thermarest sleeping pads.

Other Items

- Water bottles, 1 or 1.5 quart capacity. Make sure they are leak-proof and heavy duty. Bring 2 and mark them with your name or initials as several people may have the same bottle.
Note—CamelBaks or other bladder hydration systems are not recommended, as they often break or leak, are difficult to fill with boiled water, and are hard to keep clean.
- Hiking poles—optional, but highly recommended. These are essential to relieve the impact on your knees during long downhill; they are also useful on uphill. Practice with them before the trip.
- Parachute cord to use as a clothesline inside your tent.
- Toiletry kit—biodegradable soap, toothbrush, feminine products, etc.
- Roll of toilet paper. Toilet paper is provided at camp, but you need to carry your own on trek during the day.
- Purell hand sanitizer for quick hand washing and hygiene (a must!).
- Personal medical kit, including diamox, antibiotics, and blister protection.
- Throat lozenges (antiseptic menthol or hard candies), about 20 of them. Good for soothing sore or dry throats at altitude.
- Body lotion for dry skin at higher altitudes.
- Small towel of synthetic-type fabric.
- Sponge or washcloth to wash up at camp.
- Ace bandage or brace if you're prone to sore knees or ankles.
- Sunglasses (100% UVA/UVB protected).
- Spare pair of prescription glasses, prescription sunglasses, or contact lenses.
- Sunscreen lotion and lipstick of SPF 25 or higher.
- Small headlamp with spare batteries.
- Insect repellent for the lower altitudes.
- Small padlocks or combination locks for your duffels.
- Heavyweight plastic garbage bag(s) to help keep the contents of your daypack and duffel bag dry during hikes.

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- Money belt or neck pouch to store cash.

Optional Travel Accessories

- Camera and plenty of memory cards and extra batteries.
- Repair kit with needle, thread, and safety pins.
- Pair of compact binoculars.
- Swiss Army-type pocket knife.
- Powdered mixes such as electrolytes for your water.
- Your favorite trail snacks or candy, especially if you have dietary restrictions.
- Reading and writing material.

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