

July 22 – August 4, 2008

Uncommon Journeys, LLC Wonders of Bolivia

As much of the world charges at lightening speed through the 21st century, Bolivia remains a shy, secretive, amazing and beautiful country. A good deal of the wonder can be attributed to its isolation, as South America's most remote country. This is a dream trip for anyone interested in astonishingly picturesque vistas and fascinating ethnic groups that have maintained their traditions intact for centuries. Happily, this fabled area of South America is still untouched by modern world intrusions. To discover the wonders of LaPaz and Lake Titicaca, the cultural treasures of Sucre, and the rich history of Potosí, please join us on a special journey to this timeless destination, this place whose very essence amounts to a rare and real glimpse of forever.

Tour Highlights

- Visit traditional Quechua and Aymara villages
- Explore the rustic oasis of Isla del Sol on Lake Titicaca
- Discover Sucre's colonial charm
- Be astonished by the wealth, splendor, tragedy and horror of Potosí's history
- Marvel at the lofty landscapes of the imposing Andes mountains

Please note: Our destination cities lie at altitudes ranging from 8,500 to over 13,000 feet. There is one 45-minute walk up to our hotel on Isla del Sol and the downhill return walk 2 days later. We also explore the island on foot, where vehicles are not allowed. If these are concerns, you should seek medical advice before signing up for this tour.

Tour price: \$2900

Single supplement: \$200

The tour price, based on a minimum of 6 participants, **includes** 12 nights hotel accommodations, all meals, domestic transportation, transfers, admission fees, tips to drivers and porters, and the services of a photographic guide and English-speaking local guide. The tour price **does not include** international airfare, airport departure tax (\$25), beverages, expenses of a personal nature and tips to local guides.

A deposit of \$500 is required to register and secure a place on the Wonders of Bolivia tour. The deposit is fully refundable if notice is given 60 days prior to departure. The balance of the tour cost is due 60 days prior to departure.

Passport Requirement

A passport with 6 months validity is required to enter Bolivia. Visas are not required for US passport holders.

Tour Leader

Wonders of Bolivia is organized and accompanied by travel photographer Debbie Jefkin-Elnkave. Debbie lived and studied in Bolivia for one year, and feels very much at home with the people and their customs. Her knowledge of the traditions, love of the culture and fluency in Spanish ensure a very rewarding journey.

Waiver of Liability

Uncommon Journeys, LLC assumes no responsibility for accidents or injury to participants in the Wonders of Bolivia tour. You will be required to read, accept and sign an agreement which releases Uncommon Journeys, LLC from any responsibility of liability.

Uncommon Journeys, LLC
Wonders of Bolivia
2008 Itinerary

Day 1: Tuesday, July 22 Depart USA for overnight flight to Bolivia.

Day 2: Wednesday, July 23 La Paz

The enchantment begins with our morning arrival in La Paz. We enjoy the lofty landscape as the highway sweeps into town in graceful curves. Descending into Bolivia's largest city, there is an intriguing sense of duality, of worlds overlapping. Modern buildings juxtapose adobe houses, and Aymara women in bowler hats stand in sharp contrast to women in mini skirts. This is a day of relaxation to rest up from the overnight flight and acclimatize to the altitude.

Day 3: Thursday, July 24 La Paz (Tijuanaco)

This morning we traverse the *altiplano* to Tiahuanaco, the greatest monument to a lost civilization, and the seat of untold mystery. The imperial expansion of the Tiahuanaco culture lasted from 500-900 AD. Hallmarks of their highly advanced society included sophisticated agriculture & roads, gilded ornamentation, engraved sandstone slabs and still-undeciphered hieroglyphics. We then proceed to Guaqui village for the Fiesta de Santiago.

Day 4: Friday, July 25 La Paz

We begin with a city tour, including the bustle of colorful markets that range from tiny sidewalk stalls, to the handicraft and witchcraft markets of Sagárnaga Street. You won't resist purchasing some of the fine textiles, alpaca sweaters, musical instruments and silver objects. This afternoon we proceed to Valle de la Luna, where we are greeted by the impressive and formidable folkloric *Diablos*.

Day 5: Saturday, July 26 La Paz

The annual *Entrada Universitaria*, a folkloric parade, is held today, and it is a rare opportunity to experience the rich cultural heritage; colorful, energetic dances; and authentic costumes of Bolivia. (Note: The *Entrada* is subject to change or cancellation, so while there is a high probability, there is no guarantee that it will take place.)

Day 6: Sunday, July 27 La Paz → Lake Titicaca → Isla del Sol

Titicaca is the world's highest navigable lake. The pre-Inca believed that the sun and their god, Viracocha, rose from the lake, and the Inca believed that it was the birthplace of their civilization. By late afternoon we reach our hotel on Isla del Sol, a rustic oasis with breathtaking views.

Day 7: Monday, July 28 Isla del Sol

Curiosity is our guide as we photo-explore the millennia-old terraced fields of Isla del Sol. Scenes from daily life are likely to include weaving, farming, tending llamas and men hunched under the weight of a week's firewood.

Day 8: Tuesday, July 29 Isla del Sol → La Paz

We visit Copacabana, founded as a wayside rest for Inca pilgrims visiting the shrine of human sacrifice. Today the Moorish style cathedral and altar of the “Dark Virgin of the Lake” are important Christian pilgrimage sites. This afternoon we return to La Paz.

Day 9: Wednesday, July 30 La Paz → Sucre

Today we fly to the charming colonial town of Sucre, known as “The Athens of America,” because all buildings are whitewashed by government edict. Sucre has always served as an important cultural and educational center, and its liberal thinking set the stage for the first independence revolution in 1809.

Day 10: Thursday, July 31 Sucre

After a breakfast of *api and pasteles*, today’s exploration includes sites of historic, religious and cultural importance: San Francisco Church, La Recoleta, Casa de la Libertad, the textile museum and San Felipe Neri.

Day 11: Friday, August 1 Sucre → Potosí

At 13,386 feet, Potosí is the world’s highest city. Evidence of bygone days abounds in the ornate churches, monuments and architecture of this once grand colonial city. Home of the world’s most prolific silver mine, Potosí’s history is full of wealth, splendor, tragedy and horror. This afternoon we visit Santa Teresa Carmelite Convent, founded in 1625. Haunting and ghostlike, it offers a glimpse into the life of Bolivian women under Spanish colonial rule.

Day 12: Saturday, August 2 Potosí → Sucre

La Casa Real de la Moneda was built between 1753 and 1773 to control minting of colonial coins. Today it serves as a museum for one of Bolivia’s finest collections of religious colonial art.

Day 13: Sunday, August 3 Sucre → La Paz

Fly to La Paz.

Day 14: Monday, August 4: Departure

Departure to Miami and onward destinations.