
GEEO ITINERARY

Bolivia 12/22/2024

Day 1: La Paz Arrive in La Paz at any time. Meet your group for a welcome meeting around 6:00 or 7:00 p.m.

Arrive in La Paz at any time. Due to the potential for flight delays or cancellations, we recommend that you plan to arrive in South America at least a day in advance. This will also give you time to rest and adjust to any time difference. We can book extra hotel nights for you in La Paz before and/or after the trip. Please note that check-in at the hotel is usually around 2:00-3:00 p.m. There are no planned activities until an intro meeting around 6:00 or 7:00 p.m., usually in the hotel lobby. Check for a sign or ask at the reception desk about the exact time and location of the group meeting. Please make every effort to arrive in time for this meeting. If you are delayed and will arrive late, please inform us. Your tour leader will then leave you a message at the front desk informing you of where and when to meet up tomorrow. After the meeting, you might choose to get dinner at a nearby restaurant with your traveling companions and your tour leader to further get to know one another. La Paz, which lies between 10,650 and 13,250 feet above sea level, is the world's highest national capital. We recommend taking it easy for the first 24 hours, as physical activity can exacerbate symptoms of altitude sickness. See our optional activities list further below for suggested activities in La Paz.

Day 2: La Paz/Sucre (B) Spend the morning exploring La Paz. Board a flight to Sucre. Explore the beautiful colonial city or opt to go hiking in the surrounding area.

This morning, you are free to explore La Paz before boarding an afternoon flight to Sucre. Once in Sucre, you might choose to explore the beautiful colonial city or go hiking in the surrounding area. See our optional activities list below for other suggested activities in Sucre. Sucre is considered Bolivia's most beautiful city and the symbolic heart of the nation. It was here that independence from Spain was first proclaimed. While La Paz is now the seat of the federal government and treasury, Sucre is recognized in the constitution as the nation's capital. Approximate travel time: 1 hr by plane

Day 3: Sucre (B) Enjoy a free day in Sucre.

There's plenty to see and do in Sucre, and we want to make sure that you had some time to take it all in. Today, feel free to relax or try optional activities like hiking, mountain biking, or visiting the Textile Cooperative. Your tour leader has more ideas if you need them. Just ask! You might enjoy a visit to the Tarabuco market where indigenous groups from the surrounding area gather every Sunday to sell their goods. It offers a glimpse into daily Bolivian life and the diversity of its people.

Day 4: Sucre (B) Enjoy another free day in Sucre.

Today is another free day for you to explore Sucre. Perhaps you'll choose to go on an excursion to see dinosaur tracks! Or maybe stroll through the Tarabuco market to catch a glimpse of daily Bolivian life. Feeling adventurous? Embark on a hike through the scenic area or maybe book a mountain biking experience. If you're hungry, grab a salteña, which is a juicy, sweet-doughed, empanada-like snack. Check out our recommendations for optional activities further below.

Day 5: Sucre/Potosí (B) Journey from Sucre to Potosí. Spend the afternoon exploring the city.

Today, we journey from Sucre to Potosí, where you will spend the afternoon exploring the city. Opt to go on a silver mine tour or check out the National Mint museum. Potosí's story is tied to its silver. During the boom years, when the country was still a part of the Spanish Empire, the metal must have seemed inexhaustible. It became the largest and wealthiest city in the Americas, which you can still see

evidenced by its grand cathedrals and ornate colonial architecture. Despite this colonial prosperity, working conditions for miners were appalling, and the indigenous population was decimated. African slaves were brought in to replace the native workers, and it is estimated that as many as 8 million indigenous and African people died in the mines during the first three centuries of Spanish colonial rule. Once the silver ores were depleted, the city fell into decline and its citizens slipped into poverty. Silver ore, along with tin, lead, and other metals, is still extracted by miners today. Unfortunately, little has changed about the miners' working conditions over time. While not for everyone, we do recommend an optional tour of the mines as an eye-opening experience that gives you a chance to glimpse the realities of life in the Andes in general, and more specifically in the mines. Please note, we do not condone the working conditions of the mine. Approximate travel time: 3 hrs by private vehicle

Day 6: Potosí/Uyuni (B) Travel south to Uyuni.

Today, we head south to Uyuni, the starting point for an excursion to the Uyuni Salt Flats. The area is cold and windy, especially at night, so be prepared to put on a warm coat. Despite its geographic isolation and challenging climate (cold and blustery most of the year), the town of Uyuni has earned the nickname of Hija Predilecta de Bolivia (Bolivia's Favorite Daughter). Founded in 1889, Uyuni occupies a desolate corner of southwestern Bolivia. It has an important military base, and most jobs in the town are focused on the tourism and mining industries. The world's largest lithium reserve—about 100 million tons—lies beneath the neighboring salt flat and could potentially fuel all the smartphones and electric cars that the world will build over the next century. Approximate travel time: 4 hrs by private vehicle

Day 7: Uyuni/Salar de Uyuni (B, L, D) Start a 3-day excursion to the Uyuni Salt Flats and the surrounding desert altiplano. Settle in for the evening in a G Adventures-supported community lodge.

Today is the first of three days spent in the stunning landscape between the Salar de Uyuni and the Atacama Desert in Chile. We will enter a world unlike anything else as we take 4x4 vehicles across the salt flats, where the piercing blue sky contrasts with the blinding white of the flat salt beds. You will have plenty of opportunities to take memorable photos of the unusual landscape, which includes mountains, active volcanoes, geysers, and boiling mud pools. We will stop by the red lagoon of Laguna Colorada. We will also visit the Santiago de Agencha community, located two hours across the salt flats from Uyuni. The rural village is surrounded by towering cacti and is part of a small desert oasis. The community-owned salt lodge was renovated and expanded through a major project in 2016 funded by the Planeterra Foundation. With many of the village's younger residents leaving for economic opportunities elsewhere, the lodge is a way for the community to generate income, provide opportunities for the future, and preserve their indigenous culture. While at the lodge, learn about traditional agricultural practices, including their specialization in quinoa production, and take a guided walk with a community member to the sacred Jukil mountaintop for a beautiful view of the village below and the salt flats beyond. Meals of local ingredients grown in the village are prepared by women who received culinary training through the Planeterra project. In the evening, settle into your salt-brick bungalow, complete with salt floors and furniture.

Day 8: Salar de Uyuni (B, L, D) Continue to explore the Uyuni Salt Flats on a 4x4 excursion.

Depart the Jukil Community Lodge knowing your visit helped to create opportunities for a whole new generation of people in this community. We will spend the day continuing to explore the Uyuni Salt Flats on a 4x4 excursion.

Day 9: Salar de Uyuni/Uyuni (B, L) Enjoy a final day on the Uyuni Salt Flats before boarding an overnight bus back to La Paz.

This will be our final day on the Uyuni Salt Flats before we board an overnight bus back to La Paz. Approximate travel time: 8 hrs by night bus

Day 10: La Paz (B) Enjoy a free day back in La Paz.

Our final full day in Bolivia is a free day to explore La Paz some more. Thrill seekers might opt to bike the famous "death road" (North Yungas Road). In 1994, the Inter-American Development Bank dubbed it the "most dangerous road in the world." People risk their well-being to travel the road because of the spectacular views, with stunning panoramas from the mountainside and across the Amazon canopy. For safety reasons, it is important to use a reputable tour guide/company. Alternatively, you might opt to visit the Witches' Market or take one of several other optional excursions in La Paz. Walk along the winding streets, shop in the markets, and enjoy the nightlife.

Day 11: La Paz (B) Depart La Paz at any time.

There are no planned activities today, so you may depart La Paz at any time. If you wish to extend your stay in La Paz, consider booking post-tour accommodation with us. Please note that check-out time from the hotel is usually mid-morning, but luggage storage services are available at the reception desk. Want more adventure? Book two or more GEEO programs in the same school year and receive a discount! GEEO will give you 10% off of the lesser value program(s) (up to 3 programs per year). If you would like to extend your time abroad but don't see another GEEO program that interests you, let us know. We can work with you to find a trip from our tour operator's much larger catalog. Their tours are open to the general public and not designed specifically for educators, but we can still offer you and your travel companions a discounted educator price on any additional tours that you book.