

MUSUQ CHASKI - El Mensajero Nuevo



ProjectsAbroad



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Why you should bring a Raincoat to Peru in February...



February is a month which many look forward to in Peru as it is the month of Carnavales, a time when it can be dangerous to walk the streets if you do not want to end up getting wet!

Carnaval is a festival season, which typically involves a public celebration or parade and takes place in a number of places around the world. The world's largest carnival celebration is held in Brazil, but many countries worldwide have large, popular celebrations.

Inspiration for the carnival lies in the fact that during Lent, traditionally no parties may be held and many foods, such as meat, are forbidden; the forty days of Lent serve to commemorate the Passion of Jesus. It is natural for people to have the desire to hold a large celebration at the last possible opportunity before fasting. The Carnavales in the Peruvian highlands generally take place during the month of February. In each town and district town throughout Peru carnavales are celebrated with different traditions. In the sierra carnival is a mixture of the celebration of products collected and thanking Pachamama or Mother Earth. Dancing, drinking, and celebrating characterize the festival. The main celebration in the Sacred Valley will take place in Coya, between Calca and Pisac. About a month before the festival begins children play carnavales, throwing water balloons at each other and at passers by in the street. Closer to the main festival day (Feb 3rd), more and more people play carnival, but during the whole of the month many people will keep on playing.

On the main day of the festival a typical ritual that takes place is that of **la Yunza**, (umisha in the jungle, and cortamonte in the coast). This is a tree which is planted somewhere, full of presents and gifts. Couples (single and married) dance around the yunza. The idea is to cut the tree so that it falls down, so after every dance a couple hacks at the tree. The couple that gives the final cut before the tree falls down, is in charge of the organization of the yunza next year and the presents on the tree can be enjoyed.



Afterwards people play with water, flour, even shoe polish and/or mud. People from Cusco come to the Sacred Valley to take part in the Carnival celebrations. In all the towns in the Sacred Valley, but especially Pisac and Coya, there are big festivals where people come down from the mountains and dance, play music and celebrate. Carnavales in the Cusco region have Incan roots, such as the music played in

Quechua. The people dance to typical Carnival songs and huaynos. In some places electing a Carnival Queen is the custom. About a week after the main festival day festivities end, though children and others enjoy continuing the festival throughout the whole month of February. So beware and don't forget your rain jacket! Please do not get upset all the time as experiencing Peruvian culture is part of the reason why you came out!

Project Updates:

What's New?

The **Teaching** programme saw the start of the Teacher Training Programme which we run every year from mid January. The teaching volunteers took part in workshops preparing for the programme from January 7th. Around 65 teachers took the exam to be placed in the programme and were placed in five groups. Also last month the winners of the scholarship programme organised in IEMx Ollantay by ex-volunteer Esther Goldsmith were announced and given their prizes of dictionaries or talking translators which Esther sent over from the United States.

In **Care** last month, the Summer School programme began, with volunteers working in Yucay, Saccllo and San Roman. We took boxes of materials to each of the placements. These boxes were filled with paints, crayons, paper, balls, amongst other things for the volunteers and teachers to use in their lessons.

The **Inca** project expanded last month with the arrival of guinea pigs in Establo along with two orphan Cihuairo. Thirty more Citrus and Avocado trees were planted. A visit to Inca Carcel with an INC representative took place as well as a visit to Incatambo and Huamanmarca with the INC. Volunteers carried out work cleaning ruins. Community work last month included helping paint a shop in Huyro. We also started off carnival early ☺ (see next months newsletter article: THE WEDNESDAY!) and had a lovely stroll up the mountain to look for the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu. Finally the project has seen the start of archaeology lessons with Jhon Valencia once a week.

The **Medicine** programme was still affected by the strike carried out by medical professionals. However, volunteers continued working providing help to doctors that worked throughout the strikes and at the Clinica San Juan de Dios.

In **Sports** this month Jaime will be welcoming the help of new volunteer, Jadria Cincotta, having said farewell to previous Sports volunteer Michiel.

Introducing...

...New Volunteers

This month six new volunteers will be joining us in the Sacred Valley, Cusco and Huyro...

One new volunteer will be joining the rest of the Care & Community volunteers this month to take part in the Summer School. Patricia Opitz will be arriving from London.

The Inca project will be welcoming **Carol Lovelock**, who took part in the Arts & Craft Project in Mexico. **Rob van der Woude** will be arriving in early February to join the project. Fellow Dutchman **Roland de Bruijn** will also be changing to Inca from his Spanish programme in Urubamba.

The Spanish programme this month will have one new volunteer arriving to practice and improve her language skills. **Sarah Allat** will be joining us for a month working with the Centro Cultural Hispano-Peruano Spanish School.

The Medicine programme will also be welcoming **John Rennie** who will be changing projects from the Spanish programme.

The Sports programme will be welcoming **Jadria Cincotta** from the United States, who will be helping out Jaime in Apu Pitusiray's football lessons.

Volunteer News & Events:

Teacher Training Programme 2008

The teacher training programme got off to a good start last month after volunteers completed their preparatory workshops in the first week of January with Teaching Supervisor, Claire. These workshops were designed to turn our young volunteers into teachers in just four days! Due to their hard work and enthusiasm though, our volunteers have done a remarkable job already and have surprised even themselves with their own professionalism. Six volunteers have been split between groups of Peruvian English teachers who took an exam to place them in their correct ability levels. Veteran volunteers Jennifer and Evelyn are teaching the basic and lower intermediate groups. New arrivals Jacob and Laura are teaching the intermediate and high intermediate groups. Finally recent arrival Malou has been placed with Jacob and Tracy, a teacher in Scotland, is teaching the advanced group. Classes take place in secondary school IEMx Jose Abelardo Quiñones in Cusco from Monday to Thursday each morning, with preparations, marking and workshops filling the afternoons. Our volunteers are working very hard but remain positive and dedicated to the program. They started their carnival season early as well, read next months article THE THURSDAY! They definitely deserve their Fridays off!



Trek to Yanacocha Lake

Last month volunteers, guided by Tim, went on a half day trek to Yanacocha lake. Spanish volunteer Anna Loake tells us more...



I chose to come to Peru on my gap year to improve my Spanish and get an insight into Latin American Culture. I got far more than a mere insight, I felt almost like a Peruvian by the end, minus the Bowler-style hat! Living with the Ramirez family not only helped my Spanish no end, but gave me a key to the door of Peruvian culture, something that is much harder to obtain when staying in a hostel or hotel.

After a fortnight or so you really do stop feeling like a tourist and despite sticking out like a sore thumb owing to my blond hair, I settled into the swing of everyday life once I began to get used to the prices and local customs.

Having chosen to do the Spanish project in Peru, my lessons proved extremely helpful for things that I had failed to understand when practicing with the family and through the intensive four hour one-to-one lessons, I gained so much confidence and fluidity in my conversational Spanish. I particularly chose Peru having heard that Peruvian Spanish was of a very good quality and, as a bonus, is coupled with the chance of seeing some of the most amazing sights in the world; I particularly recommend Machu Picchu (of course!) and Lake Titicaca.



One of the good things about Projects Abroad is having support and people around you. Within my first week we went on a trek to the beautiful Lake Yanacocha. Little did we realise how much the altitude would affect our fitness (at least that was our excuse!). Us British girls were shown up as we huffed and puffed up the mountain at the back but it brought out some good team spirit, meant that we all got to know each other pretty quickly and made the lake look ten times more exquisite to us when we finally made it, still all in good humour!

This trek provided us with a springboard for other expeditions and in between working hard on my Spanish and eating 'Choclo con queso', we were haggling for Alpaca jumpers, going to football matches, travelling 7 hours to Lake Titicaca and I topped off my trip with a final trek to Machu Picchu.

My month in Peru was truly one of the most spectacular of my life and I don't feel as though I wasted a single day of it, educationally, physically or socially.



The start of Summer School

The Care Summer School programme began early January with volunteers working in three summer schools throughout the Sacred Valley. Volunteers Emily, Connie and Nienke work in Yucay. After carrying out lessons in the early morning, they help out in workshops making masks, painting & drawing, and even theatre & story telling. In San Roman volunteers Linda and Maggie were given a special teaching space, allowing the children to come to them for their lessons. In Saclo, Alice, Tessa and Lucy rotate amongst the classes providing support to this small rural summer school outside Calca. Below see our volunteers at work...



SOCIAL

Last month's social took place on Friday January 25th. Projects Abroad volunteers and staff came together for a traditional Peruvian lunch in Ch'uccllas restaurant in Urubamba. After enjoying some delicious dishes, volunteers took part in salsa lessons provided by Profe Gustavo of Salseros Cusco dance school. While some volunteers decided to watch and enjoy the music (claiming they only dance to Peruvian Huayno), others learnt some basic salsa steps under Gustavo's instruction. The afternoon was enjoyed by both those who did not bring their dancing shoes, as well as those who took to the dance floor and are ready to try out their new skills in Cusco.



We will keep you informed about our next social...

Volunteer Stories



Laura Gent – Teaching
Teacher Training Programme

One of the many rewarding experiences that Projects Abroad offers is the six week teacher training course. Kicking off in early January, teachers from Cusco and the surrounding area have the chance to attend English classes for four days a week, led by our team of enthusiastic volunteers in a school in Cusco. This project is not only aimed at improving the level of their own English, but it also gives the teachers a valuable certificate proving their attendance and dedication, (as long as they attend 80 %!)

This year, the 6 enthusiastic volunteers are taking classes of up to 15 students of different levels, and through fun and interactive teaching styles, are aiming to relay these methods to the teachers themselves so they can use them in their own classrooms. After 2 weeks of singing, dancing and chanting, we are getting to know our pupils very well, with some being more enthusiastic (and punctual!) than others. Tardiness and mobile phones are strictly a no-no, and homework and vocabulary tests are essential, so there is certainly no room for class clowns in our lessons!



When classes end at 12.30, the volunteers all head to the Cusco office where we use the extensive range of resources to plan lessons for the next day. We have posters, flashcards, books and files of information at our disposal which makes it so much easier for us to decide on themes and topics, and with the help of our super supervisor Claire (She's fantastic!), we are fully equipped with a fun and jam-packed lesson plan.



Our pupils are great, and we have all already established a great atmosphere within the class, helped by various team-bonding renditions of "Incy Wincy Spider" and "The animals went in two by two". In fact, our students are so kind that we've already had offers of weekend farm breaks, nights out and even a declaration of love!

It's incredible to think we're already a third of the way through the course, but so far so good, and a fantastic time has been had by all, thanks to a bunch of great volunteers, superwoman Claire ☺, and most of all to our willing group of eager teachers!

**Leonie Dorn - Inca
Huyro**



12 Symptoms of the Inca – Syndrome (when you've been on the Inca Project too long)

12. You wear a belt around your poncho (Dan's styles: monk, pilgrim or Judas) and a machete is your weapon of choice.
11. You leave the room without turning the radio off (which plays "Happy Birthday" every 5 minutes, all day long).
10. The word "Pancakes" is enough to get you out of bed in the morning.
09. You constantly find yourself looking for some other fruit than banana, mango (or avocado).
08. When working on the mountain, you rely on nothing else except the APS (Americo Positioning System)
07. Your supervisor can effectively threaten you with the words "Inca Carcel" (Inca Prison)
06. You see your dinner alive 2 hours before you eat it (prob. even fed it and cleaned its cages)
05. You find word games like "sexy woman" (Sacsayhuaman) and "serial" (serious) even funny when being uttered for the 10th time.
04. Every mealtime is just another part of the everlasting battle with the saltshaker.
03. You're under the impression that you are the double hardest volunteer in all of Peru (perhaps even South America)
02. You turn your underwear around about 4 times before you realise your in a serious laundry situation.
01. A power socket, internet and a warm shower is the highlight of your week and to you well worth the extra 15 soles in a hostel, the 7 hour bus ride (one way) and the landslide risk.

For more details, risks or side effects, talk to a previous Inca volunteer.

I enjoyed my time in "The Establo" immensely and I shall be heartbroken to leave. The past 5 months have been the most productive of my life and I shall never forget the people of Huyro, the nice (chocolate addicted) staff in the office and the wonderful "Team Establo" (Americo, Jhon, Daniel, Isa, Frida, Raul, Sarah and Garcia), which has become my second family.

Meet the Family

Projects Abroad works with a number of host families throughout the Sacred Valley and Cusco, this month we meet the **Farfan** family in Urubamba...

FARFAN FAMILY FACTS

Family members: *Melva, Axel, Ana María, Lady, Liz Danae & Mariel*

No. of family members: *6*

Town: *Urubamba*



Projects Abroad: How long have you been working with Projects Abroad?

Señora Melva: We have been working with Projects Abroad for five years.

Projects Abroad: What is the best thing about having a volunteer living in your family?

Señora Melva: The intercultural exchange is the best thing, but learning some English is also an advantage.

Projects Abroad: What is your most memorable experience with a volunteer?

Señora Melva: There are many memorable experiences, all of which are special. The daily sharing, learning about the volunteers in our home and their customs. Many volunteers, in fact the majority, help in the kitchen and prepare something special for us, and help with daily tasks.

Projects Abroad: What are the most valuable experiences the volunteers living in your family take away with them once they leave your home and Peru?

Señora Melva: They learn all about our customs and culture, and many leave having learnt our language.

Projects Abroad: Have you or your family learnt anything during your cultural exchange with volunteers?

Señora Melva: Yes, we learn typical dishes from their countries, they tell us about places in their country, their customs and their way of life.

Projects Abroad: In a few words how would you define your family?

Señora Melva: United as a family, happy, welcoming...

Cocina Peruana: Cooking with the staff

This month's choice is typical for the Carnaval festival...



T'jampo

Serves 4 people

A little bit of history...

This dish is traditionally associated with Carnavles in Cusco and is also known as Puchero or sancochado. It is eaten on the main day of the festival, which this year falls on February 3rd.

Ingredients:

- ½ kg beef
- ½ kg lamb
- 2 white onions
- ½ kg potatoes
- medium sized cabbage
- 2 carrots
- garbanzo bean
- yuca
- sweet potato
- 4 peaches
- 4 pears
- choclo
- 100g rice
- salt

Preparation:

- Chop the meats, carrots and yuca into large pieces.
- Boil the meats, onions, carrots and cabbage in a saucepan for about half an hour. Then place the other ingredients in a second saucepan to boil.
- Then place the cooked ingredients on a plate to serve. The cooked sauce from the second saucepan is used as a soup with the rice, and the rest is eaten as the second course.

What's happening in February?

Festival	Description	Place	Date
Carnavales	The Cajamarca & Puno Carnival is, perhaps, the most representative of the country, having acquired very singular characteristics and a specific organisation. It has very typical customs with the participation of institutions, districts, etc. The celebration lasts approximately a month, but the central days are reduced to 8. In cities like Huánuco, Ayacucho, and Abancay, the carnivals are also very colorful, with dances and parades with groups of people masked and costumed.	Throughout Peru	Variable
Virgen de la Candelaria	During 18 days the faithful and dancers worship the Virgen de la Candelaria in the church of San Juan. This worship is possibly associated with the pre-Hispanic ritual to the Pachamama or Mother Earth. The catholic origins of this demonstration of Andean faith, go back to the XVI century. The celebration begins nine days before, when the mayordomos fix the temple and organise three masses with banquets and fireworks. The central day, 2 of February, the Virgen de la Candelaria leaves the temple to cross the streets in an unimaginable display of folkloric demonstrations.	Puno	February 2 nd

Announcements

- Thank you to everyone who has helped bring about this months issue of *Musug Chaski*. If you would like to contribute your experiences, stories, photos or anything else to the next edition then please send them to: hannahpartis@projects-abroad.org