

# MUSUQ CHASKI - El Mensajero Nuevo



ProjectsAbroad



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### Torrechayoc celebration / Fiesta de Torrechayoc

Yessica Espinoza

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This celebration is the most important in Urubamba.

This festival dates back to the year 1867, when a huge cross was placed in the snow and held a mass opening of a section of the road (Urubamba-Lares). Years later, the cross is taken in procession with all its jewels to the town of Urubamba followed by the worships, as well as the Mass. The celebrations include fireworks, parades, dances, bullfights and cockfighting navajeros.

This year “la fiesta de Torrechayoc” took place on 22nd and 23rd May. More than 40 dances were presented in the stadium of Nogalpampa after the solemn mass.

During the evening and night, castle burning and firework gave way to the great serenada where local people and visitors gathered.

On the first day, the procession went from the sanctuary of “Señor de Torrechayoc” with the authorities, worshippers, dancers following the rhythms of the andins bands paying tribute at the miraculous señor de Torrechayoc. 23rd May was the most important day of the celebration. The solemn procession started at 8am and took the crowd at the atrium at the Plaza de Armas at noon in order to celebrate the mass. All the worshippers and devouts of “el señor de Torrechayoc” asked for his blessing for the province of Urubamba as well as for the Peruvian people.

Local population hopes that this celebration will extend to a national and mondial level thanks to a coloboration between authorities and worshippers.

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### Inti Raymi celebration / Sun Festival

Mylène Lauberge

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The celebration of Inti Raymi is a tradition that has been handed down to us by the Inca Empire.

It has kept growing for over 50 years and is now a strong and attractive celebration.

The great old Inca city of Cusco appeals and attracts large number of visitors.

The Inti Raymi is a tribute to the sun and all nature. This is one of many religious events in Peru. Sacsayhuaman is an excellent representation of the Inti Raymi, with the participation of hundreds of people at the ceremony. It is the richest feast of the Inca Empire.

Cuzco, as the capital of the Inca Empire, was the seat of the most important celebrations that took place at the time, because there was focus on political and governmental power.

At the time of the Incas, the Plaza de Armas was called "plaza Aucaypata" and covering up what is now the Plaza San Francisco. This was the main place for all celebrations in the Tawantinsuyo also the feast of the "Inti Raymi" or "Sun Festival" as it is known in Spanish.

In the Southern Hemisphere June 24 almost coincides with the Winter Solstice, when the sun is the farthest point from the Equator. The moment in which the supreme ruler of the Inca Empire was surrounded by all his priests and together they waited for the sunrise.

Then everyone headed to Koricancha, the temple of the sun. A llama was sacrificed and the ceremony continued with the revelation of the predictions by the Inca priests. The men gave their offering to the sun that gave them the crops, life, water, and then expect the Inca gave to finalizada Fiesta. Today this ceremony holds many details that make the Inti Raymi ceremony special and magical. The Inti Raymi is done entirely on the strength of providing a majestic setting Saqsayhuaman and recovering the original place of performance of the festivities.

The ceremony of Inti Raymi reaches representatives of the 4 regions with traditional music to the rhythm of Cusco, all dressed in their finery and accompanied by their retinues of nobles and people. They represent the four regions where the Inca Empire was divide.

These four groups advance to the esplanade of Sacsayhuaman to receive the Inca who goes to the middle of the ceremony to worship the sun with The Sacrifice of the Flame.

The Sacrifice of the Flame, which is the image of life and purity, is the purification of the earth and is done to ward off evil spirits, to bring good harvests for the coming year.

## Project Updates

Projects Abroad offers you another Inca project supplementing the one we already have in Huyro. This new pilot program set up by the Technical Cooperation from Spain and the Peruvian Ministry of Culture takes place in Yucay which is located in the Sacred Valley of the Incas, about 4 km upstream from Urubamba. This project not only investigates the archeological remains but also helps promote tourism and works on agricultural activities on the same Inca terraces.

The two main activities composing this program are agricultural and archeological tasks. This could be anything from excavations and restoration to preserving the local flora and fauna. You will work with archeologists and agronomists in order to help conserve and maintain both the terraces and agricultural traditions. Delsi Espinoza will coordinate your work each day. This option will only be available from April to September.

## Family Updates

Projects Abroad is happy to introduce you to the new families we are working with.

Both of them are located in Yucay, 5 min driving from Urubamba. There is an attractive Inca palace construction that is currently being restored on the main square. There are some colonial houses and beautiful Inca terraces there too.

Juvenal and Veronica Durand Nuñez will be glad to welcome you in their two-storey house including a kitchen, a dining room, a living room and a bathroom with hot water and three bedrooms. The house is surrounded by plants and trees. The room allocated to the volunteers is spacious and fully furnished.

You will also live with their daughters Alondra, Kiara and their housekeeper Margarita.

The Durand Nuñez family is lovely and warm. I have no doubt that you will easily adapt and feel like part of the family.

Octavio and Margarita Ochoa Tapia offer a house with the same features as the previous family. Two stories, a kitchen, a dining and living room, a bathroom with hot water and three rooms on the second floor. The house is surrounded by plants and trees. The room allocated to the volunteers is spacious and fully furnished.

You will also live with their son Norman, their daughter Anani and their granddaughter Leticia. Like most of the Peruvian families Octavio and Margarita will enjoy sharing their customs and way of life, I am sure you will like getting to know them.

## Machu Picchu

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### MACHU PICCHU CELEBRATES ITS 100 YEARS OF DISCOVERY Mylène Lauberge

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On July 24<sup>th</sup> 2011 Machu Picchu, one of the New Seven Wonders, will celebrate its 100th anniversary of discovery by Hiram Bingham. Since then Machu Picchu hasn't stopped attracting people from all over the world becoming one of the most important tourist destinations.

This anniversary is very important for Peruvian people as it permits them to remember the world that the country was the homeland of one of the greatest civilizations; The Incas. As any other civilization living at this time - 15<sup>th</sup> Century - they conquered a huge empire by fighting neighboring people.

However, respect and integrity were really important. To make you understand their way of thinking, three unofficial "laws" guided them on their daily lives: "Ama Sua" - "Do not steal", "Ama Q'ella" - "Do not be lazy" and "Ama Llulla" - "Do not lie".

They left behind a considerable historical, culinary and architectural legacy. Machu Picchu being the most significant symbol of this civilization. Located 2430 meters above sea level, the Lost City of the Inca was officially discovered by the American explorer Hiram Bingham in 1911.

As a member of the New Seven Wonders since 2007 and being part of the UNESCO world heritage site since 1983, Machu Picchu has recently been visited by famous and important characters such as actors (Jim Carrey, Mel Gibson, Leonardo Di Caprio) and a politician (Barack Obama). The city of Cusco - ancient capital of the Incas empire - and its surroundings will live to the rhythm of the massive and numerous events organized for the occasion such as dance competitions, parades with floats, a music festival etc. It goes without saying that you if you are in Peru, you cannot leave without seeing Machu Picchu...☺



### Trip to Atalaya “The jungle of Cusco” / Viaje a Atalaya “La selva de Cusco”

Mylène Lauberge



Atalaya is located in the province of Paucartambo, about 10 hours drive from Cusco. People here call this part of the Jungle “La selva de Cusco” meaning “The Jungle of Cusco”. Indeed, even if you have to drive for so many hours, Atalaya is still a part of the Cusco region. You will pass by Paucartambo, a village famous for its 4 day celebration from 15/7 until 18/7. This traditional celebration pays homage to “La virgin del Carmen” its virgin, with processions, dances with masks, music and typical local costumes. As a matter of interest, the statue of “La virgin del Carmen” was crowned by Pope John Paul II during his pilgrimage in Perú in 1986.

Near Paucartambo there is the viewpoint of “Tres Cruces” meaning “The 3 Crosses”, also called “Balcón del Oriente” – “The Balcony of the East”. I would strongly recommend you stop by to watch the sunrise. Being at 3800 meters of altitude you will be above the clouds and have the chance to enjoy a breathtaking view over the sunrise with the jungle as a background. There are only a few spots like that in the world as it offers an impressive range of lights and colors. If you decide to stop by “Tres Cruces” don’t forget to dress warmly since it can be pretty cold...but it is definitely worth it.

The rest of the picturesque journey leading up to the Parc of Manú will not disappoint. The lush vegetation and the numerous ever-flowing waterfalls along the road will make you feel totally disconnected from the Sacred Valley.

The village of Atalaya has about 200 inhabitants and is situated in the national park of Manú which has one of the most important and diverse fauna and flora on earth. Just to give you an idea there are more than 20,000 types of plants, 1,000 species of birds, 1,200 of butterflies and 200 mammals including jaguars or giant otters...You will also try a huge variety of fruit that you will only find in the jungle.

Two main rivers cross the park, El Madre de Dios and el Manú, both of which meet in Atalaya.

It seems that time has stopped in Atalaya. People there wake up with the sunrise and end the day with the sunset as only a few houses are provided with electricity and they are almost all wooden.

The first thing I would advise you to do to refresh yourself after the journey on the road would be to have a swim down the Manú River. Most of the year the water is warm even if it’s cloudy or even raining. Don’t worry about the Piranhas, there are none in this part of the jungle!!!

Local people are warm and friendly. You can easily find a place to stay overnight in a local family’s house. They will also be happy to help you discover local cuisine such as Juane which is rice and chicken and egg cooked and wrapped in a banana leaf. If you are a fish person you will enjoy Patarashca. You can prepare it with any local fish cooked on the grill or in the oven, wrapped in a banana leaf supplemented with tomatoes, onions, herbs and spices.

If you fancy you can go on a boat trip which is really affordable as it only costs S/10. It will allow you to reach one of the islands facing the village. Those islands are ideal for relaxing and sunbathing on one of the surrounding beaches or you can also go for a stroll in the heart of the island. You will easily find a footpath. I have no doubt you will have a lot of fun, but please keep in mind that you are in the wild so only take pictures and only leave footprints behind...☺

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## Corpus Christi celebration – Fiesta del Corpus Christi

Tatiana Cueva

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For our June social event almost all the volunteers (32 in total) met at the post office in Cusco. The idea of this gathering was to help the volunteers discover the Corpus Christi celebration which was taking place the same day in Cusco. Please find more details about this celebration in the box below.

After meeting the volunteers, Yessika (Care Manager), and I headed to the Plaza de Armas passing by Qoricancha – the Temple of the Sun. It was important to explain to the volunteers that this ruin was once the most important temple of the Incas, which was later used as a base for the Church of Santo Domingo when the Spanish conquered the city.

After that we arrived at the Plaza de Armas where we had the opportunity to watch the procession of two virgins who were coming supported by a crowd of worshippers from the outskirts of the town to the cathedral in Cusco.

These processions were followed by mass, also celebrated outside.

After a morning in the sun, we were all treated to a great meal at the Panaka restaurant. The lunch started with a buffet where they could try several typical starters as well as main courses. After that they shared Chiri uchu. This is a cold and abundant dish usually served to celebrate the Feast of Corpus Christi. It is a complex course, bringing together in a towering mountain algaes, guinea pig, caviar, sausages, cheese, chicken.

After lunch, I explained to the volunteers the three main places of interest (Qoricancha, Plaza de Armas, Sascawhuaman) worth seeing during Intiraymi - Sun Festival – taking place the day after in Cusco.

As the day after - Friday - was a bank holiday due to the Intiraymi celebration, most of the volunteers decided to stay in Cusco over the weekend in order to keep celebrating.

*Corpus Christi is an annual festival celebrated on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday (generally in early June) by Roman Catholics everywhere.*

*In Cuzco city, Corpus is an exuberant and colourful pageant where profound faith and prayer share predominance with abundant eating and copious drinking.*

*All the Saints and Virgins are araded through the city to the Plaza de Armas and, after being blessed, they are carried into the great cathedral to be placed in a prearranged order, in two rows facing each other. The images are kept in the cathedral until the octava (the eighth day after their internment), when they are all escorted in procession back to their respective parishes and churches. During these days and nights in each other's company, the Saints and Virgins, so the stories go, decide among themselves the future of the people for the forthcoming year. It is also said that they gamble with dice.*

*Five hundred years ago, at the very same time of year and in this precise location, the mummified remains of the Incas were paraded in similar fashion and then laid in state. They consulted the Sun, the Moon, the Lightning and the Rains to learn what fate these elements were to bring in the course of the following year.*

*The Saints are the first to be paraded. The traditional race between San Jerónimo and San Sebastián is a joyous event. San Cristóbal, carved from a single tree trunk, is a heroic, elaborately painted figure who leans upon a great staff. His powerful muscles and thick sinews forever shoulder the body of the infant Jesus as they ford a river. It is the heaviest*

statue of all and popular legend tells that underneath it lies a huaca, or sacred rock. Santiago, the warrior saint and patron of Cuzco, enters astride his white horse, brandishing a sword. Trampled under the hooves of his steed lies a vanquished demon in the likeness of a Moorish soldier. Santiago's name was the battle cry of the Spanish soldiers, but he soon came to represent Illapa, the Andean deity of thunder and lightning. Next come the Virgins, dressed in pomp, some of them accompanied by archangels and cherubs. They are seen as the equivalent of the Mother Earth, Pachamama. The Virgin of Belén is always first, escorted by San José, who then stands to one side of the entrance of the cathedral waiting for all the Virgins to be carried in. Santa Bárbara, the pregnant virgin, is the last. Corpus is perhaps the city's greatest event. All the streets and the huge expanse of the Plaza de Armas are thronged with enormous crowds. The revered images, each several hundred years old and from a distinct parish of the city, command a host of fervent followers, including a band of musicians and troupe of dancers. Most important and conspicuous are the bearers, whose strenuous efforts are relieved at resting points known as descansos. The bier carrying the image is placed on top of a scaffold and the bearers and followers are all given a round of chicha, and/or beer while the band plays on and Ave Marias are prayed one after the other, like a mantra. The respite over, one final toast is made to the statue, also to Pachamama and to the surrounding mountain summits, los apus. In many cases this is accompanied by fresh coca leaves and lime. Then the parade resumes its journey. As the processions converge upon the centre, they merge together into a larger procession, which becomes engulfed by the multitudes in the Plaza de Armas. The images as they are carried along seem to become swaying vessels navigating a sea of humanity, riding its waves.

## Volunteer Events

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### Walk from Chinchero to Machu Colca Katie Gibson

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One of the social events last month was a walk from Chinchero. I went with Pati, Tali, Tiago – Tim’s wife and kids - to the Plaza de Armas at 2pm to meet with the volunteers. It was a sunny day with a nice breeze.

A bit later with another five volunteers having joined us, so we were 14 in total. It took us about two hours to get to Machu Colca from Chinchero.

We stopped a few times to have a quick snack, catch our breath and take pictures while Tim (Projects Abroad Peru’s Director) was explaining the mountains names, the Inca history related to the site as well as the Inca trail.

We stopped first in ceremonial grounds where the volunteers where told about the ruins. We got to Machu Colca just before sundown which made the landscapes even more charming.

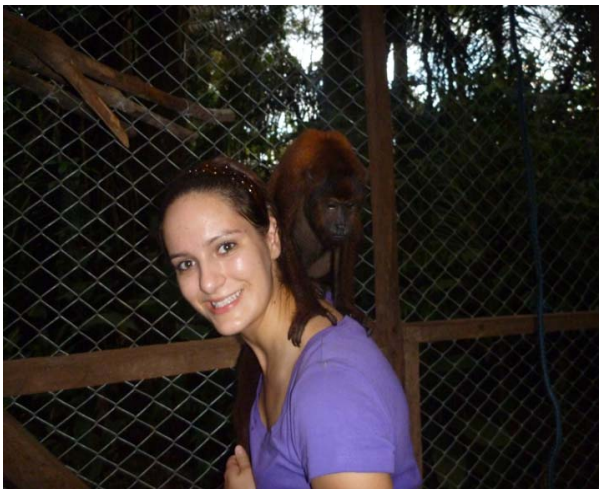
Then we walked back down and the volunteers took the bus back. Everyone had a really nice time as it allowed the volunteers not only to spend a day in the mountains but also to know a bit more about the great history of the Incas.

## Volunteer Story

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**Michelle Schultz**  
**Teaching and Conservation volunteer**  
**Canada**

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Teaching in Cusco followed by volunteering at the Taricaya Research Centre, was by far the best decision I could have made for my first post-graduate experience. Words can hardly describe what I experienced and was a part of, but I will give it a try.

After spending four years in university I knew I wanted to travel, see a new part of the world, experience a new culture and learn as much as I could about this new country. I came across Projects Abroad and decided that this company was for me. Being able to teach, putting my four-year degree into use, living with a host family with complete cultural emersion and then being able to volunteer in the Amazon provided me with unforgettable memories.

My time in Peru started out with a month of Teaching in Poroy, a small town outside of the main city of Cusco. To get to work every day I would take a series of buses for approximately one hour. Although at first I was shocked that I was on the bus for so long, I gained a real understanding and appreciation for what locals live with and face daily. I learned a lot about the bus system, and how to predict buses as there are not official “bus times.”

Once at school I had the opportunity to work with a wonderful teacher who had a good understanding of the English language. Often I helped her review topics and clarified any grammatical questions anyone on the staff may have had. I also had the opportunity to play various games with students. Although I was teaching secondary school grades one through five, the students loved to play games and sing songs. My students particularly loved the game of Michi (or tic tac toe), where to put a mark on the game board the student teams

would have to answer a question correctly. Playing games kept students' both interested and motivated. Making learning exciting and not just paper and pen exercises, and seeing students' smiles and excitement to learn and watching their leadership skills grow, were probably the best parts of teaching.

Following a month of teaching, I opted to complete the one-week add-on at Taricaya Research Center. I started out not knowing what to expect. All I knew was that the jungle experience would be far different from my teaching experience. Once I arrived at Taricaya I was amazed at how much was going on to help the environment and the animals. Throughout the week I had the privilege to experience many of the major projects which included: animal care, animal feeding, butterflies, bats, bird watching (on the various platforms), quarantine cage building, and spider monkey evaluation. For me, each activity provided a great experience although it was truly a lot of hard work most of the time. During my week at Taricaya I had the opportunity to meet great people, have a lot of fun (including swimming down the coffee coloured river), and to learn a lot about the wild life, flora and fauna of the jungle. The staff at Taricaya are truly doing an amazing job and without volunteers to help with the work, the work would not be able to be completed.

Major highlights of the trip included a true cultural experience living with a wonderful host family, playing English learning games with my students, feeding the animals (including the Jaguars) and expanding my knowledge and learning about the various animals in the jungle. I would say all my goals and wishes were completed beyond my expectations. In the future I hope to revisit Peru and volunteer again, helping and giving back to the people where I can.

My work with Projects Abroad was truly an experience that I would recommend to anyone with a love for adventure and a willingness to do good for the others.

## Feliz Cumpleaños....!!!!

Happy Birthday to Samantha Payne (Inca Project volunteer) 2nd July



## Cocina Peruana

How to make....Chiriuchu.

I am glad to offer you this month the typical dish served for the Corpus Christi celebration taking place every year in June.

Makes 3 portions

### Ingredients

1 chicken	Bell pepper
1 guinea pig	Seaweed
Toasted corn flour	Toasted corn
Cheese	1 kilo of white caviar
Salted beef	Pepper
Sausage	Spices

### To perpare

-Season the guinea pig (already cut into pieces and without its fur) with salt, pepper, and the spices and then place in the oven.

-Boil the chicken and cut into small pieces.

-Make a dough with the toasted corn, add salt and chopped sweet onions, and then fry into a tortilla.

-Let everything cool and then serve on a plate with the rest of the ingredients (corn, seaweed, cheese, sausage, sliced bell pepper, caviar, etc).



## Social Media

Join our Facebook group to keep up to date on the latest events, see our group photos and keep in touch with other volunteers!

Projects Abroad Peru – The Official Group  
<http://www.facebook.com/groups/projectsabroad.peru>.

Read our Projects Abroad Peru Blog that is updated weekly with new stories from here in the Sacred Valley, Cusco and Huyro

My Trip Blog  
[http://www.mytripblog.org/mod/blog/group\\_blogs.php?gl=true&group\\_guid=267](http://www.mytripblog.org/mod/blog/group_blogs.php?gl=true&group_guid=267)

You can find all past issues of our Peru newsletter online  
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<http://www.projects-abroad.co.uk/volunteer-destinations/peru/newsletters-from-peru/>

## What's happening in July....

Festival	Description	Place	Date
<b>Machu Picchu's Centennial Discovery</b>	Workshops of craft, talks, excursions, live music, cocktail parties, parades, awards ceremonies, dance exhibits, art festivals, food & street fairs etc.	Machu Picchu Cusco	June 20th – July 27th
<b>Independence Day</b>	Dawn on July 28 with a salvo of 21 cannons followed by the ceremony of raising the flag. On the day after, previous to the famous military parade, the Te Deum ceremony is held in Lima and attended by the president. Agricultural, livestock fair, cockfighting, bullfighting and Peruvian paso horse exhibitions	All over the country	28th–29th
<b>Yawar Feast</b>	This feast is celebrated by trapping a condor, then there is a fight between a bullfights and the condor lashed at its back then the condor is released and the dancers celebrate in the streets.	Cotabambas Abancay	27th–30th