

Places to visit and celebration dates

¿WHERE?

In Tarapoto:

- **Cumbaza River.** The two rivers that supply water to the city of Tarapoto are the Cumbaza and the Shilcayo. Yet, the Cumbaza is not just used by the city for water since on its sandy river banks a lovely recreation area has been developed where locals go for relaxing. Whole families love to go to its beaches and enjoy the sun and river all year long.
- **Calle Lamas.** This cobblestone street exudes a Bohemian air and is by far the center of the night life in Tarapoto. As night begins to fall, the restaurants, cafes and bars wake up and breathe life into this street. Dancing and eating as well as live music are offered in some of the establishments.

From Tarapoto

- **Lake Azul and Lake Lindo.** 1.5 hours away from Tarapoto sits the lovely Lake Azul (also called Lake of the Willow) and its reflective surface 8 miles in length. Getting there is an adventure in itself since you have to cross the Huallaga River in chatas, or flat bottomed boats. At one end of the lake is the charming town of Sauce, colonized by Lamista Indians at the beginning

of the 20th century. The town's main source of nourishment comes from the lake itself in the form of a fish called tilapia.

- **If your desire is visiting a wildlife refuge,** then you must check out Lake Lindo (30 minutes from Sauce). It is a private reserve on 1,400 hectares and in 2002 it was rated as one of the world's top 55 eco-tourism spots. All you need to do is look around at the surrounding forests, catch a glimpse of the monkeys jumping from tree top to tree top and listen to the raucous calls of the birds hidden among the vegetation to realize the truth of that distinction.
- **Paucar Yacu Hot Springs.** The site purports to have waters of therapeutic value within its 4 pools – 1 cold and the other 3 between 98.6° F and 104° F – that also possess the added attraction of being out in the open, in direct contact with nature: oropendolas and strident parrots fly overhead of people enjoying the water. The three bungalows there are at the disposal of visitors.
- **Polish Petroglyphs.** To come to this spot is to enter a mystery. The strange carvings on the rocks strewn about this 1 hectare area are veiled in an enigma. Plants and animals, predominately snakes, were engraved on these stones by unknown people, for unknown purposes and at a still unknown time period. The word "polish" means "cleared plain", an allusion to the place where this artwork is found.
- **Ahuashiyacu Falls.** A large, 131-foot waterfall located along the route from Tarapoto to Yurimaguas. The waters thunder down the steep sides of the Escalera Hill, producing a curtain of water that sprays mist over ferns and orchids, a vista not too often seen in the world.

- **Tunun Tunumba Falls.** 6.5-mile hike from Chazuta (1 hour from Tarapoto). As you hike along the Huallaga River, you will run into this lovely waterfall, located on the left bank of the river. The Quechua name means "a fall within a fall", aptly applied to this waterfall since there are three levels to this large cataract.
- **Lamas.** The community of Lamas is a clear example of how the Andean and the Amazonian cultures have merged together over the centuries. Antonio Raymondi called this place "the city of the three floors". In the lowest section of Lamas, called El Huayco, the inhabitants speak Quechua and express themselves through colorful and joyful traditions, evidence of their Andean roots. Even their homes are built from adobe and roofed with flagstones, as is the custom in the Andes. A visit to this community means shopping at any of the small shops for two things: regionally made handicrafts and charming traditional clothing. There are also stores selling other regional products, such as coffee liqueur, rosquitas de yuca, a type of wheel shaped cassava cookie, and chocolates. One peculiar aspect to Lamas is that it is one of the few important Amazonian cities not built next to a river.

From Moyobamba

- **Tingana–Avisado Forest.** 1.5 hours from Moyobamba. It is the last standing forest of aguaje palm trees and renaco trees left in the zone of Alto Mayo, once a vastly forested region. Its area, 5,757 hectares, follows the course of the lower Avisado River, from which we get the clever name Tingana, or "the forest that walks". Another

Essentials

of its singularities is that its humid ecosystem lies 800 meters above sea level. Wildlife abounds there: river otters, squirrel monkeys, black capuchin monkeys and sloths, not to mention an attractive variety of birds, fish, reptiles and insects.

- **Calzada headland.** A rocky point covered with upper jungle forests. If you climb to its top, you will capture a fantastic vista of the Alto Mayo River Valley. Likewise, it shelters important plant and animal species, above all, orchids that bloom from September to October.

WHEN?

Feast of Saint John the Baptist, June 24th. The entire Amazon region celebrates this feast day, chiefly because of its association with water, an allusion to the many rivers and importance of water to the populations there. People pull out all the stops to celebrate this day: live bands play traditional music, groups dance in parades and regional food is prepared and sold.



TARAPOTO

“Delight yourself and give free rein to your senses in this land of lakes and dreamy waterfalls.”

They say that some places are just not fit for people who suffer from heart conditions, and this proverb must be taken seriously in the case of Tarapoto since its joy, tropical atmosphere and colorful charm will seep into the heart of the traveler and then definitely take root there, making him or her collapse out of pure enchantment. It's a fact since a city like this one, flanked by green, flowery and rough terrain and under an eternally kaleidoscopic sky, can do no less to its visitors. Whoever first called this area "land of the waterfalls" was not mistaken since among its many attractions are some of the most beautiful and powerful waterfalls in the country. You can visit, for example, Aguashiyacu Falls, on symbolic Cerro Escalera; Huacamaillo Falls, in the delicious grape growing district of San Antonio de Cumbaza, and Tununtunumba Falls, in Chazuta. It would be unthinkable to travel these routes without carrying a camera or to do so listlessly. In either case, if your heart is indifferent, then a side trip to Lake Sauce or Laguna Azul (blue), with its fascinating and still crystalline waters, to the impressive Gran Pajatén, an archeological complex, to the picturesque mestizo town of Lamas or to the city of Moyobamba, capital of the department of San Martin and home to 2,500 varieties of orchids, will end up lifting you out of the doldrums and make you feel that you can finally stop your endless searching. Rather, it will become a well deserved respite for your senses and the restlessness of your soul.

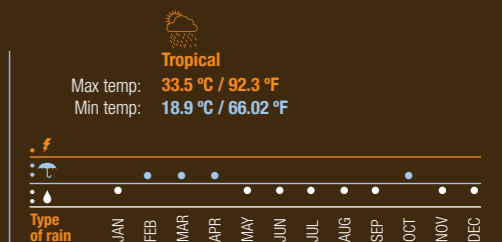


TARAPOTO 333 msnm / 1,093 fasl

How to get there?

- From Lima: 1,645 miles / 25 hr.
- From Chachapoyas: 550 miles / 8 hr.
- From Trujillo: 1,465 miles / 15 hr.
- From Moyobamba: 169 miles / 3 hr.
- From Chiclayo: 1,132 miles / 13 hr.

Daily flights from Lima,
1h 10min
Daily flights



In contrast to other cities found in our steamy Amazon, Tarapoto is relatively easy to get to and boasts an excellent network of roads that connects it with the outlying communities and several other cities.



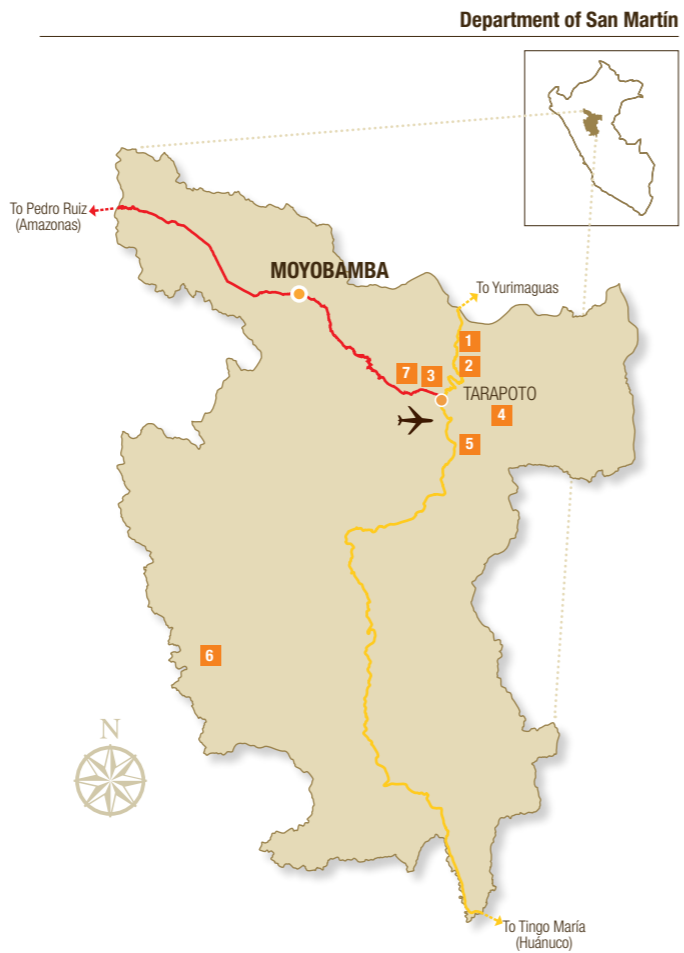
Lodging and tourist services

Tarapoto has hotels and hostels up to 3 stars as well as excellent lodges in the outskirts. Buses and taxis provide service from Tarapoto and Moyabamba to other towns. Restaurants in Tarapoto, Moyabamba and Juanjui serve a varied assortment of high quality food. Guided tours are available to the main waterfalls and lakes in the area.

Routes & length of stay

3 days
Minimum recommended length of stay

- 1/2 day Cultural – Lamas (El Huayco quarter)
- 1 day Waterfalls – Ahuashiyacu and Carpishoyacu falls.
- 2 days Scenic – Paucar Yacu hot springs, Lake Azul and Lake Lindo.
- 2 days Nature – Moyabamba orchids and Tingada-Avisado Forest.



- a. Lago Lindo en Tarapoto.
- b. Una experiencia inolvidable para los observadores de aves.
- c. La riqueza más importante de Tarapoto es su gente.
- d. Adrenalina y diversión en un escenario de película.
- e. Pobladora de Lamas con tradicional traje multicolor.
- f. Oquidea Phragmipedium Kovachii, especie académica del Alto Mayo.
- g. En Tarapoto aprenderá a comunicarse con la naturaleza.

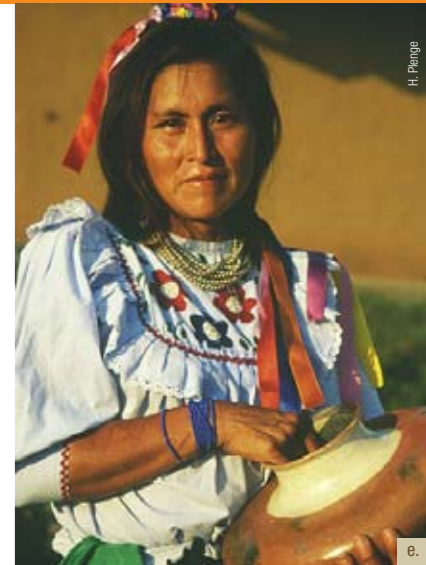
Recommended for:

Archeology and popular tradition lovers. Visita a los petroglifos de Polish, al poblado de Lamas y recorrido por las calles de Tarapoto.

Nature lovers and plant and animal watchers. Visita a los alrededores de la Laguna Azul y Lago Lindo, infaltable el Bosque Tingana - Avisado.

Trekkers. Cataratas de Aguasiyacu y Tununtunumba, Bosque Tingana- Avisado, Morro de Calzada.

Rafters and kayakers. Visita al Lago azul y el Lago Lindo.



What to buy?

If you want to purchase high quality straw hats and baskets, then go to the village of Rioja, whose artisans are experts weavers. There is also the fine pottery and unique wood carvings in the towns of Chazuta and Lamas, and in the latter, you can also pick up lovely clothing.

What to eat?

When it is about food in the department of San Martin, then it is about the typical jungle cuisine of Peru. Dishes like tacacho con cecina (mashed bananas, mixed with lard and dried beef, then baked) and ninajuane (mashed bananas, mixed with chicken, eggs and spices, then baked in banana leaves) are wonderful examples, not to mention the excellent tasting Burgundy wines made in the district of San Antonio de Cumbaza (the only San Martin village with vineyards) and another spirit called uvachado, San Martin's liqueur of choice, made from wild grapes macerated in brandy.



- 1 Catarata de Aguashiyacu
- 2 Cerro Escalera
- 3 Huamaillo
- 4 Tununtunumba
- 5 Laguna El Sauce
- 6 Parque Nacional Río Abiseo (Gran Pajatén)
- 7 Lamas

LEGEND

- Department borderline
- Capital city
- Asphalted road
- Non-asphalted road
- Airport
- World heritage Site - UNESCO



Seeing that San Martin is a jungle region, we recommend you to take the precautions common to all tropical areas, such as wearing light clothing, preferable long sleeve shirts and shorts, and a hat. Also, bring a waterproof coat or poncho in case of rain and waterproof boots, preferably rubber up to the knees, which keep mosquito bites on your legs to a minimum. Insect repellent is also a must. Likewise, if you plan on getting a yellow fever vaccination, remember to get it 10 days before you travel so it takes affect; make the proper arrangements with your physician beforehand.

Try to refrain from touching the wildlife, especially vividly colored frogs that appear quite harmless. Also, Peruvian law prohibits and penalizes the extraction, transport, sale and export of any type of wild plant or animal species, whether live or dead.

