

# AREQUIPA

the white city and the majestic Misti



W. Wüst

Yanahuara viewpoint and volcano Misti

**A**requipa, Peru's second-important city 2,335 meters (7,659 feet), was listed as a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site in 2000.

It is also known as 'the White City', because many of its churches and colonial mansions are built from the sillar white volcanic stone. Three volcanoes rise above Arequipa, including the majestic Misti (5,821 meters – 19,092 feet) that can be seen from any point of the city.

One of the city's main attractions is the Santa Catalina Convent, considered 'a city within a city', founded in 1580 for cloistered nuns and opened to the public in 1970. There are also fine colonial homes such as the Casa del Moral and the Casa Goyeneche, which still feature Baroque-style sillar carvings in their doorways. Another of the city's impressive attractions is the Lady of Ampato or the Juanita Mummy, the mummy of an Inca adolescent who was offered as a sacrifice to the gods and which today can be seen at the Andean Sanctuaries Museum of the Santa Maria Catholic University (UCSM). The city is surrounded by countryside that includes the picturesque stone mill at Sabandia and the Yura hot springs.

Today, the city of Arequipa is a key trade hub for southern Peru, famous for its export quality textiles woven from alpaca and vicuña wool. It offers excellent hotel infrastructure is very suitable for international events, and it boasts some of the most varied and succulent dishes to be found in Peru.



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Compañía de Jesús cloister

# COLCA<sup>AND</sup> COTAHUASI

the deepest canyons on the world



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Colca Canyon

**T**he region of Arequipa features Peru's deepest canyons, the Colca (3,400 meters / 11,512 feet) and Cotahuasi (3,535 meters / 11,598 feet). Colca comes from the Quechua word for 'granary'. The canyon is formed by the Colca River and its length is covered in hundreds of pre-Hispanic terraces, which are still used today and are proof of the high degree of farming expertise of the ancient Peruvians. The valley is studded with 14 towns rich in tradition and which have preserved their original religious festivities and folk art and music. The surrounding landscape includes the Hualca-Hualca, Ampato and Sabancaya volcanoes. The highest point is the Cruz del Condor lookout spot, where visitors will enjoy an unforgettable experience of seeing condors in their natural habitat. It is recommended to take 2 days for this excursion, staying overnight at Chivay (3,660 meters/ 12,008 feet).

Cotahuasi Canyon (depth: 3,535 meters – 11,598 feet). Located in an inter-Andean valley with traditional towns such as Cotahuasi (2,683 meters / 8,803 feet), hot medicinal springs such as those at Luicho; waterfalls such as those at Sipia, with a drop of 250 meters / 492 feet; and vistas of snow-capped peaks of Coropuna and Solimana. Is home to a vast biological diversity, both flora and fauna.

The area is ideal for hiking, river-rafting, paragliding or mountain biking. It includes picturesque towns such as Pampamarca, whose inhabitants are experts in weaving alpaca wool into artistic rugs, sweaters and other items; and Callata, the prettiest town in the area, with its cemeteries perched on the mountainsides and known as the Tenajaja Cliffs.



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White water rafting Colca

