

ECOTOURISM AND EDUCATION PROJECT WITH THE LOCAL ASSOCIATION OF LIVING TOURISM QOLLAS SILLUSTANI



LOCATION: The project is developing in the district of ATUNCOLLA, in the province of PUNO in the department of PUNO. The community of Atuncolla is located 30 km from the city of Puno and 10 km off the highway between Juliaca and Puno.

HISTORY OF THE QOLLA KINGDOM:

The local residents are the descendants of the Qollas, pertaining to the Qolla Kingdom between 1200 AC and 1400 BC in the highland region of Peru. The Qollas rose to power following the collapse of the Tiahuanaco culture of the 12th century. The Incas later conquered them.

DESCRIPTION AND STAGE OF THE PROJECT

In the community of Atuncolla 14 families have organized to form the Association of Living Tourism under the name **LOS QOLLAS SILLUSTANI** or **ASTURIS**. The association is open, meaning that other families are welcome to join as long as they accept the obligations and rights established by the statutes of the association.

Families participating in the association have improved their housing facilities and have prepared kitchen and lodging with the objective to provide services of room and board to visitors interested in the rural tourism experience.

In order to help these families, we as the business of **ALL WAYS TRAVEL TITICACA PERU** in Puno, are designing the circuits and itinerary of activities that will be carried out, preparing local guides and helping prepare the local population so that this project succeeds

as a new product of RURAL LIVING TOURISM. To qualify, the project must meet conditions to ensure of respect for the environment, customs, and traditions of locals, develop self-esteem in the local population, and, especially, put in order local inversion in children's education. To summarize, the objective is to create a product of *ecotourism, which is auto-sustainable and sustainable over time.*

Other responsibilities we will carry out are:

- Organize and train fishers/fish boat owners so that they are prepared to provide excursion on their boats in the Umayo lagoon. Conditions of service will be standardized for the security of visitors.
- Organize and train family parents in the Cacsi school so that they can serve the typical "Huatia" dish (cooked potatoes prepared in a traditional country oven).
- Motivate and train family parents or older siblings as reading tutors in homes or in a small library.
- Implement libraries in the small towns that make space (a locale) available, which will be refraction and painted by participating local residents and with the collaborative effort of the project's national and international volunteers.

PROPOSED CIRCUITS:



Option 1

The group leaves Puno with a guide, provided by the travel agency, to the town of Atuncolla where they will stop to contact a local guide. The local guide will join the group in the transport service and they will continue to the pier of Casci where they will take a ride in fishing boats in the Umayo lagoon to the pier of Sillustani. After docking the boats, the group will visit the Funeral Towers of Sillustani. Finishing the excursion, the group will return to the town of Atuncolla where they will have lunch and either return to the city of Puno or continue on to the airport of Juliaca.

Option 2

The group will depart from the Juliaca airport with their guide and visit the town of Atuncolla where they will stop to contact a local guide. The local guide will join the group in the transport service and they will continue to the pier of Casci where they will take a ride in fishing boats in the Umayo lagoon to the pier of Sillustani. After docking the boats, the group will visit the Funeral Towers of Sillustani. Finishing the excursion, the group will return to the town of Atuncolla where they will have lunch and continue on to the city of Puno.

Option 3

The group leaves Puno at 8:00 am, with their guide, to the town of Atuncolla where they will stop to contact a local guide. The guide will accompany them in a walk for roughly an hour and a half (optional to make the trek in the transport service) to the town of Cacsi, where they will participate in activities with the children in the school (for example, reading stories, drawing, painting, and playing). Meanwhile, the host families prepare grilled potatoes for the guests in an earth oven or with rocks. After activities with the children, the group will enjoy a snack of cooked potatoes and later leaves for a ride on the fishing boats in the Umayo lagoon to the island of Umayo where they will see vicuñas in their natural habitat. Next, the boats will take them to the pier of Sillustani where they will dock to visit the Funeral Towers of Sillustani. Upon finishing the visit, the group will return to their transport service and travel to Atuncolla, where they will have lunch, and later continue to Puno.

Option 4

Day 1

The group will leave Puno, with their guide, to the town of Atuncolla. There they will spend the night in homes of families of the Association, housing two people per family. Later, after settling in

with their respective families, they will go with their guide and a local guide to the peak of Patas hill for a trekking outing. In route, they will be able to see the ruins of the pre-Inka and Inka Funeral Tours. In the fields they will find different types of plants used for medicinal purposes as well as for dying wool. The guide will offer explanations about the different plant types and will also explain about agricultural activities practiced locally. Finally, they will arrive to the town of Cacsí where they will visit a school and participate in activities with the children (for example, reading stories, drawing, painting, and playing). Meanwhile, the host families prepare grilled potatoes for the guests in an earth oven or with rocks. After activities with the children, the group will enjoy a snack of cooked potatoes and later leave for a ride on the fishing boats in the Umayo lagoon to the island of Umayo where there are families of vicuñas in their natural habitat or they will go directly to the pier of Sillustani. Next, they will dock the boats and visit the Funeral Tours of Sillustani, and finally return to Atuncolla in their transport where lunch will await them.

In the afternoon, they will have free time to rest as well as play sports. At 18:00 hrs, they will have a dinner and in the evening enjoy music performed by local families or read and paint with the children.

Day 2

Breakfast will be served at 8:00Am. Afterwards, tourists will accompany their respective families to participate in their daily activities/chores such as planting or harvesting potatoes, quinoa, oats, etc. (activities depend on seasonal practices), feed cows, llamas, alpacas, or prepare the earth for the upcoming planting season. Lunch is served at 12:00PM and at 14:00 the group will return to Puno

OBJECTIVES OF THIS PRODUCT FOR EDUCATIONAL ECOTOURISM

First:

Give an opportunity to a segment of Peru's tourists (both national and international) to participate in different and relaxing activities for a few days, through which they will forget daily worries. At the same time, they will feel pleased to know that they are supporting families with few resources in some of Peru's communities that need sources of additional income. This will be possible through their work in providing services. Guests will return satisfied and content to their respective countries, knowing that they not only enjoyed their travels but also were able to help others to improve their quality of life.

Second:

These guests will bring a small amount of material support, such as children's books, academic books, maps, drawing paper, and colored markers or crayons to work with the children. They may also provide youth with chess or checker boards, ping pong tables as well as other games that help motivate youth to develop their intellect and interest in reading or scientific games.

Third

Generate sources of work for the community through the training of services they will provide to guests.

Fourth

Work to promote a habit of reading in the children, the youth, and parents. If children become better readers they will be better students and, later, better professionals, technicians, and businessmen. This we find to be true because reading provides a good change in children, youth, and the population in general.

Fifth

Train parents to help improve the education of their children so that they provide them a better nutritional base, that they do not pollute the environment (countryside rivers, lakes) with garbage and recyclable goods. In this way locals will learn the importance of caring for the environment.

CONCLUSIONS

The development of this class of **participative ecotourism** provides the opportunity to give and receive benefits to participants. It takes advantage of the new tendencies towards the practice of this style of tourism; the tourist is able to enjoy and feel good in their travels knowing that they are doing something to change the world. As a tourist, they are able to help people who do not have access to better economic resources in order to give their children a better education and nutrition.

Community members located in the site of the tourism project will improve their quality of life, their children will have better opportunities, and it will provide a support system to parents, the community, and our country.

This style of tourism also helps visitors, especially those who have children, because the youth will see an example of their parents support and generosity, instilling in them the respect for needs. At the same time, it will allow visitors to reflect upon and consider others in their own communities at risk of failing into drugs and alcohol addiction. The experience will promote future participation in similar projects of ecotourism.