

Ninth Graders Travel to Peru with Observant Minds and Open Hearts

Starting in the first grade, immersive trips that enhance learning through direct, hands-on experiences are central to the Nueva experience. In the Upper School, they provide opportunities for students to actively explore history, global studies, social anthropology, and environmental stewardship.

TRAVELERS, NOT TOURISTS

Adopting the mindset of travelers, not tourists, the 2017 ninth-graders who voyaged to Peru, strove to embed themselves into the cultures they visited.

Ninety students, accompanied by 20 teachers and chaperones, crisscrossed Peru in small groups. Each group observed Peru through a different lens:

Agriculture: Visited an independent school deep in the backcountry of Ollantaytambo and rehabbed ancient terraces at Pisac.

Anthropology: Spent time at three very different schools, from the traditional Colégio De LaSalle to the Colégio Pukllasunchis, where students are taught in Quecha, an ancient spoken, not written, Inca language, and the Kuska School, a farm school focused on hands-on learning, social justice, and social/emotional acuity.

Antiques/Art History: Discovered the National Museum of Lima, the Textile and Pre-Columbian museums, and famed Plaza de Armas in Cusco.

Architecture: Visited the ruins of the Sacsayhuaman site, the historic capital of the Inca Empire and undertook a seven-hour hike on the Inca Trail in the Sacred Valley.

Arts: Explored the Museums of Cusco, contemporary art and graffiti, the Center for Traditional Textiles, and a hands-on visit to a pottery studio.



EYE-OPENING

"Our visit to the Ccaccaccollo women's weaving project was eye-opening ... the experience of learning these women's practices ... provided insight into the lives of lesser-known communities. I was exposed to the true gravity of what has been lost globally to colonization." – Alice E.



I FINALLY UNDERSTOOD

"Before going on the Peru trip I thought of llamas as fluffy, cute, and slightly boring. Yet, at the farm, meeting the proud yet curious creatures in person, I finally understood their cultural significance in Peru as holy and respected animals." – Amy C.



AN ENLIGHTENING EXPERIENCE

"The locals were celebrating the town's anniversary with dance, music, and games. Toward the end of the evening, the dressed-up women and children pulled us into the square and began dancing with us. It was an enlightening experience being able to connect with these people on such a deep level while not even speaking the same language." – Quinn M.



TURNING BACK TO INCA PRACTICES

"Living in the United States and especially in Silicon Valley, I am accustomed to people turning to modern knowledge to solve our problems. I found it fascinating that Peruvians were turning back to Inca practices to save water. For example, as concerns about lack of water due to climate change arise, more and more Peruvians are turning to farming terraces. Originally created by the Incas, needed water from one terrace drips down to the next, ensuring that no water is wasted and that the water is utilized as efficiently as possible." – Chloe K.



THE POWER OF THE WORLD AROUND ME

"We had started on the other side of the mountain and sweated, bled, and cried to reach this moment. I realized in this moment that despite how small I was relative to everything else, I had the power to do what I wanted with my life. In that moment, I knew that I couldn't control anything else in the entire world — not nature, not other people — but I could control myself and my actions." – Natalie A.