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Peru - Experiencing a Golden Age in Gastronomy

Peruvian gastronomy has recently experienced a golden age and is setting the standard for all international contenders. The culinary world has once again celebrated the finest restaurants across the globe, with Virgilio Martinez's Central in Lima, Peru, named as the world's best restaurant for 2023 at The World's 50 Best Restaurants awards ceremony. Irresistible Peruvian cuisine is guaranteed to tantalise the traveler's taste buds!

If you'd like to learn more about the history of how Peru has become a gastronomic world force, please get in touch for a Peruvian sampling like no other here in London on the 30th November.

Gastronomic tourism

It is estimated that by 2023, approximately 277, 651 foreign tourists will travel to Peru first and foremost to try the food! Gastronomy is now the third most popular reason to visit, behind Machupicchu and culture/history. Gastronomic tourism in Peru includes a whole host of activities other than dining: culinary tours, cookery lessons, interactions with local communities, gastronomic fairs, encounters with celebrity chefs, visits to street markets, tastings and many more.

History and diversity

With over 5,000 years of history, Peru's wealth of cultural diversity gives it one of the most unique and varied gastronomies on the planet. Peru's famed culinary fusion has developed over a long process of cultural exchange between the Spanish, African, Chinese, Japanese and Italian settlers, among others. The dishes became more and more varied as migrants mixed so that each city and region now boast its own regional dish with distinct flavors.

PERUVIAN AMAZON The diversity, freshness, color and flavor of ingredients found in the Peruvian jungle are outstanding. Products that are most sought after in markets and restaurants include cacao and coffee, and exotic fruits such as cocona, camu camu, aguaje and pitahaya. The highlights of regional cuisine include tacacho with cecina (fried plantain with smoked meat), juanes (ball of rice with chicken wrapped in bijao leaf), patarashca (fish wrapped and cooked in a leaf) and inchicapi (soup based on ground peanuts, corn and yucca with chicken soup). River fish species such as paiche, gamitana and dorado are staples of this incredible culinary culture.

AREQUIPA The local restaurants or picanterías of Arequipa are the modern expression of an ancestral custom that merges rural life with food and dining. Traditional restaurants still cook over a wood fire as the natural heat intensifies the aromas of the seasonings. One of the most famous dishes from Arequipa is rocoto relleno, a baked spicy pepper native to the region, stuffed with minced meat, onions, garlic, and spices. Another beloved Arequipan dish is adobo, a flavorful stew consisting of pork marinated in vinegar and spices, then slow-cooked until tender. Adobo is often accompanied by white rice, potatoes, and sometimes served with a side of rocoto sauce for an extra kick of spice. Arequipa is also known for its soups, the most famous being chupe de camarones (shrimps).

LIMA has earned the title *Culinary Capital of Latin America* because of the variety and quality of its street food and high-end dining. An extensive and delectable menu of dishes includes a wide selection of seafood, starring the famous ceviche. African influences brought innovation to Peru's cuisine such as anticuchos, skewered cow hearts grilled over a charcoal fire. The Chinese introduced new dishes such as arroz chaufa (fried rice with soy sauce, small pieces of chicken, egg and chives) and lomo saltado (sautee beef tenderloin with fries, tomato, onions and Peruvian yellow hot pepper). Desserts are another source of creativity, such as mazamorra morada based on purple corn and the deep-fried picarones. The purple corn beverage known as chicha morada is a traditional drink in Lima.

Peru has a biological diversity that constitutes a mainstay of its cuisine. With the biggest variety of potatoes and peppers, many species of corn, Andean grains, tubers, Andean roots and fruits, Peru represents a natural pantry that constantly renews its cuisine.

Awards and recognition

In September 2022, Peru was chosen as the Leading Culinary Destination in South America at the ceremony of the World Travel Awards (WTA), considered the 'Oscars' of the tourism industry. The country has obtained this recognition on 9 occasions. Furthermore, it has won 8 times as the Leading Culinary Destination in the World.

About PROMPERU

As an independent division of the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism, PROMPERU is a government promotion agency, connecting both public and private initiatives, whose mission is to promote a competitive and diversified offer of products and services with the highest quality standards suitable for the international markets. PROMPERU carries out a wide range of activities related to trade, investment, and tourism promotion, focused on those linked with the expansion of businesses in foreign markets, the generation of job opportunities and spreading the image of Peru as an exporting country and an attractive investment and tourist destination <https://www.peru.travel/en>

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