

Riding high *in* Peru

We ran out of room in this issue for the full story on The Bear's recent Compass Expeditions (www.compassexpeditions.com) ride through Peru but we thought we'd give you a taste anyway, with a few photos. There will be much more in a future issue!

Pollution, both of the air and every other aspect of the environment, is unfortunately a bit of a problem in Peru. It makes for great sunsets, though.



Local transport. Obviously there is little point in having buses for the people who live on the floating reed islands in Lake Titicaca.



Yes, it's high but we got higher – to just a couple of metres below 5000, in fact. I discovered that I'm not good with those kinds of heights.



It might look like graffiti but it's political advertising. Widespread illiteracy means that the parties need an easily remembered symbol – such as this coca leaf.



Wonderful old colonial buildings are everywhere and a lot of them, of course, are churches. They make for great sightseeing with over-the-top decorations.



Machu Picchu is every bit as fascinating as it's made out to be and also rather bigger and more impressive once you're actually up on that mountaintop.



Roads up in the high plains are rarely sealed and vary quite a lot in quality. This is a really good one and there's a lot of road works to improve others.

Andean adventure



Under the volcano ... Peruvians are cheerful people who return a wave from a passing gringo on a motorcycle with enthusiasm. Or with death threats (see the full story, to come).



Cities such as Arequipa have a remarkable amount of style, not only in their architecture but also in the way the locals dress and behave. The food's good, too.



The gang's all here – almost – for a refuelling stop. Yes, believe it or not this is a petrol station. No bowsers, just a gallon can and a badly needed filter.



Chinese bikes, in all kinds of weird and wonderful configurations, are everywhere – but the people who are better off (including the police) ride Hondas.



The Humboldt Current keeps the Peruvian coast cold and incredibly dry. Most Australian deserts have nothing on this desolate but highly scenic countryside.



Culture clash in Nazca, where we flew high above the mysterious Nazca Lines with their drawings of animals and what looks like ... airports!