

LIMA

Exploring Downtown Lima with local Emil Caillaux

"Start by taking a cab to Plaza San Martin. Get off, walk by the Plaza itself (it's pretty beautiful) and marvel at the surroundings. Go inside the Hotel Bolivar and peruse about - it's the first grand hotel in Lima and is historic for having been the place where the Pisco Sour was invented. You can also see the Club Nacional to the left, though you probably won't be able to go in.

After that, walk from one end of Jiron De La Union to the other. This Jiron is a walkable street that connects you to the Main Square of Lima, and used to be where all the high end stores were loow, not so much, but still it's a good safe way to walk from one end to the other. There's a couple of neat churches, too.

Once you reach Plaza Mayor, you'll have Palacio de Gobierno right in front. Make sure to get there before noon - every noon, there is a show called the Changing of the Guard and it's pretty cool in my opinion. Then go into the Cathedral, which is nice to check out especially since you've seen the one in Cusco - the comparisons are good to make.

There is a Tanta right across the street from the Cathedral - that's where you want to have lunch (see below for recommendations). Then, go around Plaza Mayor north through Jiron Carabaya (on the right side of Government Palace in the map) to a place called Desamparados (an old train station) and then to the right. There is a small museum of what a house used to be like back in colonial times. It's pretty neat. Then, go all the way to the Basilica of San Francisco and feed some birds. Check it inside too. Then, go to the Parque de la Muralla right behind it and buy some churros.

You might also want to check out the Correo Central which is west of the government palace, because it is awesome and a really good example of what Lima should look like as opposed to its current dilapidated state.

Then I'd recommend you go to the Lima Museum of Art (MALI), the wedding reception venue! It is pretty cheap entrance and I think you will like the permanent collection. They always have cool things. At sunset, you might want to check this "circuito magico del agua" which is a series of fountains & light show in Centro de Lima."



Restaurants

Central

Chef Virgilio Martinez's signature restaurant is all about the details. Take Central's impeccably maintained city-centre garden, home to a vast array of produce and to continual experiments with new fruit, herb and vegetable varieties. This year, Central Restaurant entered as number 4th in The World's 50 Best Restaurants.

Astrid & Gastón

Nowadays, Astrid y Gastón, is located in the Casa Moreyra, a historic hacienda in the San Isidro district of Lima. Here the 46-year-old and his influential head chef Diego Muñoz oversee tasting menus of immense scope and ambition. The current version, Region Lima, Acurio's personality and originality are evident in the clever plating, the relaxed service style and the upbeat atmosphere throughout.

This year, Astrid & Gaston Restaurant entered as number 14th in The World's 50 Best Restaurants.

Maido

Maido proffers an intriguing combo of traditional Japanese and Nikkei cuisine - the latter itself a fusion of Japanese and Peruvian food that has its roots in Lima. The restaurant is owned and fronted by Peruvian-born chef Mitsuharu Tsumura, who prior to opening the restaurant in the city's affluent Miraflores district completed a gruelling apprenticeship at one of the best sushi restaurants in Osaka, Japan. As such his stylishly minimalistic restaurant combines elements of sushi service— counter seating, omakase menu – with a more traditional restaurant experience. This year, Maido Restaurant entered as number 44th in The World's 50 Best Restaurants.

Rafael

Among the best known chefs in the region, Rafael Osterling has made a name for himself with authentic (save a few Mediterranean influences) but relatively haute takes on Peruvian dishes. On the menu Peruvian must haves such as cebiche and empanadas jostle with more original fare, including a hearty stew of grouper cheeks with clams, squid and confit potatoes.

Fiesta

The Solis family hail from Peru's northern city of Chiclayo, for that reason they focus on the traditional regional fare, ensuring Fiesta stands out in the restaurant-laden Miraflores district. Specialities include the famous arroz con pato a la Chiclayana (duck with seasoned rice, Chiclayo-style), cebiche a la brasa (lightly grilled cebiche), grouper fish and roasted kid goat. An unprepossessing exterior gives way to a simple but classy dining room, into which the exuberant Solis sends his uniquely hearty offerings.

La Mar

Immerse yourself in the genuine cebicheria experience – and there is nowhere better to do so than at Gaston Acurio's Avenida La Mar hotspot. The ceviche options are broad: tuna, sea bass, octopus, Dover sole, salmon and mixtures thereof. A pisco sour at the bar is also a necessity. Come early or late for lunch (cevicherias are only open in the daytime, as tradition dictates) if you don't want to stand in line.

Malabar

Weird roots, unfamiliar molluscs and dauntingly spiky fruits are sourced from the Peruvian Amazon and expertly prepared by Miguel Schiaffino. By the Peruvian-born chef's own admission, the cooking at Malabar is not at all high-tech or showy. But despite this relatively low-key approach, the Malabar kitchen is a hotbed of creativity, where botanical mastery and a respectful outlook meld to create extraordinary dishes.

Casual Fare at San Antonio Coffee

A very traditional spot in Miraflores, Pasteleria San Antonio has become famous in Lima due to its excellent pastries and sandwiches: almost any kind of dessert (cakes, pies, chocolates, etc.) and fruit juices can be found here, and if you are a coffee lover you can enjoy here of some good options in Peruvian specialty coffees. Pasteleria San Antonio has also become a well-known meeting point for friends and socializing, and currently has opened branches in some other

districts (San Isidro, Chacarilla, Magdalena and La Molina) so you have more than one chance to have a great time with either international or typically Peruvian desserts.

"Pollo a la brasa" at Pardo's Chicken at Larcomar

One of Peruvian most popular foods is the pollo pollo a la brasa, or "Roasted Chicken Peruvian Style"; you can find a pollería in almost every neighborhood, and there's also different prices to fit every budget. Peruvians are very keen on pollo a la brasa since it's affordable, kid-friendly, and the most important thing -delicious. Pardo's Chicken claims it serves the best pollo a la brasa in Peru, and its large servings are easy to share and unexpensive; they come along with fries and some greens, but you can also order any of the large house salads. The menu offers other Peruvian barbecue specialties, too.

Great Italian at Trattoria di Mambrino

After a quarter century in business, this Trattoria remains one of Lima's best Italian restaurants. You can watch cooks stuff the ravioli and drape the fettuccine on long wooden rods in the kitchen.

Great Sushi at Matsuei

The sushi chefs shout out a greeting as you enter the teak-floored dining room of this San Isidro standout. One of the best Japanese restaurants in town, Matsuei specializes in sushi and sashimi. If raw is not your thing, they also offer plenty of hot food such as tempuras, teriyakis, and kushiyak, a broiled fillet with a ginger sauce. There's plenty for vegetarians, including goma nasu, grilled Japanese eggplant with a sweet sesame glaze. Sushi fans often sit at the bar, but there are tables spread around both floors of this former home.

Great Sushi at Osaka

Although it has a small sushi bar, Osaka is much more than a Japanese restaurant. It also serves Peruvian standards such as cebiches and tiraditos, as well as Chinese dishes like wontons stuffed with grilled shrimp, and broiled scallops braised in a spicy sauce. Settle into one of the low tables and sink your teeth into Quinoa Maguro (seared tuna medallions served with mashed lucuma fruit and crunchy quinoa), or grilled sirloin and sautéed mushrooms atop miso mashed potatoes. The attentive service makes the meal that much more enjoyable.

La Gloria

La Gloria has been a landmark on Lima's dining scene for years. The menu is massive. There are ceviches and tiraditos, risottos, pasta, beef, black raviolis stuffed with prosciutto de Parma, and a few dishes from the Amazon such as juanes. More of a restaurant recommendation than a bar recommendation, but the bar area is an excellent place to have lunch or dinner. Expensive, but worth it. Order a double pisco sour - that's the only thing you'll need to drink. Also, if you can, order the "fideuá" - it's unique and amazing.

Restaurant Suggestions from our good friend, Emil Caillaux

HUARINGAS

First stop for good pisco sours. There are multiple levels so I recommend you go up to the second bar or the rooftop. Their sour selection is stunning - they have a lot of coca-infused sours that are not to be missed. Also, the maracuya sour - passion fruit - is fantastic.

TANTA

Again, good place to eat - excellent with small plates and very Peruvian. Order the aeropuerto, or a good lomo saltado. I've listed the location nearest to your airBnb, but I recommend you save this place for when you go explore downtown Lima, as there's a location near the Plaza de Armas (main square).

[AMAZ](#)

Amaz is like anything you've ever tasted - this is food that is sourced and prepared using traditional methods in the Peruvian amazon rainforest. The menu here is so diverse it's insane but fun. Make sure to order the paiche, which is a giant fish, in any way shape or form. The ants are also particularly tasty.

[LA 73](#)

My favorite restaurant in Lima. The menu is diverse, but I recommend the Quinoto de Lomo (which is basically a steak with a quinoa risotto) or the Guera, shrimp over spaghetti with aji amarillo cream. Heavy but delicious. However, the star of the place are their iced teas. Try the one with chamomile and verbena ("hierbaluisa con manzanilla") - there is NOTHING you've ever tasted that's as fresh as that place. Also, the chocolate churros are to die for. I also like the art and style, based on the bus culture in Lima.

[COSME](#)

My favorite new addition to the list. James Berckemeyer is a pretty new chef and his food is amazing. The decor is very eco-friendly too. I would consider this an unmissable one.

[HOTEL B](#)

Hotel B is worth going into because of the decor, which is awesome, but they also have a really nice bar and restaurant, from the same people as La Gloria. Pricey, but worth it and it's one of the IT places in Lima right now.

[BARRA 55](#)

A great gin bar at the tailend of Barranco.

[LA MAR](#)

A must if you like/want ceviche. This place is excellent. There isn't much more to say other than you won't be disappointed - it's from the same guy who does Tanta. Menus are in English as well. Important tip: ceviche is traditionally ordered during the day. Avoid it at night. This place closes at 5 so it's not like you'll get a chance. But make sure you arrive early - it fills up by 1pm.

[PESCADOS CAPITALES](#)

Pescados Capitaless is a very good alternative to La Mar and it's within walking distance. Much more traditional in its cuts and feel.

[PAN DE LA CHOLA](#)

Read the link above. This place has the best bread and is a great place to snack on. I recommend going, buying a couple of loaves and just keeping them in the apartment.

[LAS DELICIAS](#)

Best juice bar, ever. By far. Go order a glass of lucuma juice with no sugar and a little bit of milk (just a little bit) and enjoy the most delicious thing ever. And then take a nap.

Bars

[La Noche \(Barranco\)](#)

This is very special place that has recently turned 20 years old, and the owners (a Spanish-Peruvian couple) call it "a cultural bar" because they schedule concerts, parties, cultural events, plays, stand-up comedy shows, etc. It is located in

the middle of Barranco nightlife, pretty close to one of the Metropolitano bus stations, and in a large and traditional manor house turned into a bar and cultural center. The walls are covered with art from young local artists: there's beers, wines, and lots of cocktails, including the local star, pisco-sour and other pisco-based drinks.

[Olé Bar Restaurant](#)

This fancy bar and restaurant was established more than 15 years ago and not only maintains its top-class quality, but also keeps on creating new dishes regularly: this is a place cherished by business people, and an excellent choice to pamper yourself with a good drink and an original menu that blends Spanish, Peruvian and Asian cuisine. More than that, every detail of its decoration has been carefully planned to make your stay even more enjoyable: warm colors and lights, elegant style, relaxing music, very comfortable furniture, etc. It is located a few steps away from El Olivar park.

[Huarinas Bar](#)

One of the most popular bars in town, this place has several socializing spaces, from the ground to the attic. They specialize in pisco-based drinks, focusing of course in the Peruvian pisco-sour; but they have elevated it to a new dimension, mixing it with local and tropical fruits. In addition to the classical pisco sour, we strongly recommend the passionfruit pisco sour, and the one prepared with coca leaves, known as the "witch" or "brujo sour".

[El Dragon de Barranco](#)

Established in a traditional manor house in Barranco, El Dragon is considered by many people (especially young individuals) as the the best and most lively dance spot in Lima. There's always live music, very specially electronic, dance, rock, reggae and some jazz; drinks are quite cheap (between \$4-\$6.50) and the atmosphere is relaxed and informal. The owners describe this place as a "cultural bar" that promotes bands with a special kick on fusing funk and Latin rhythms with local jazz elements. The decoration includes art from local painters, and music changes according to the day: Tuesdays are for Afro, Jazz, Reggae and funk fusions; Wednesdays for electronic, Thursdays for local bands, and Fridays and Saturdays for local DJs.

[Ayahuasca Bar](#)

Lounge in a stunning restored casona full of Moorish architectural flourishes. Few actually admire the architecture, most guests are busy checking out everyone else. The hyper-real decor includes a dangling mobile made with costumes used in Ayacucho folk dances. There's a long list of contemporary pisco cocktails, like the tasty Ayahuasca sour made with jungle fruit tambo and coca leaves.

[Victoria Bar](#)

With outdoor seating on the porch and terrace of a restored mansion built in 1905, and a cozy indoor cellar-bar, Victoria Bar offers both intimate and lively options, along with its Old Barranco setting, trendy crowds, and excellent cocktails. DJs spin dance music on weekend nights, when this place is hopping.

[Picas RestoBar](#)

The modern and trendy Picas Resto-Bar is a great place to have some drinks and tapas with friends, and after renovations in 2010 and a new head chef and staff, this restaurant is living up to its motto to cater to "all the senses."

Things To Do

[Indian Market](#)

The Indian Market or Mercado Indio is probably the biggest market for your souvenir shopping. From Peruvian arts and crafts to simple souvenirs you find a huge variety to choose from. Take your time wandering around because there is so much to see! A great variety of silver jewelry and other silverware awaits you!

[Larcomar Shopping Mall Center](#)

Along the seawalk in the Miraflores district is Larcomar, a multilevel entertainment, food and shopping megacomplex that caters to most tastes. Larcomar has breathtaking ocean views, which you can enjoy from numerous restaurants offering Peruvian fare, as well as several American franchises serving everything from doughnuts to ribs. There's also a movie theater, bowling alley and pool hall here, and shopping galore. Many Peruvian fashion designers have boutiques in Larcomar, and there's no shortage of high-end jewelry and clothing stores.



Larco Avenue

Avenida Larco is an avenue located in downtown Miraflores which is home to various stores and restaurants. In this avenue you could visit places such as Kennedy Park, Municipal Palace, Ricardo Palma's Cultural Center, etc.

Kennedy Park

This park is located in the heart of the Miraflores district. To its northwest you will find the artisan markets and to its southeast the "Calle de los pizzas". It is also bordered by various hostels, coffee shops, bars, restaurants, a Cathedral and more. It often hosts public exhibitions on the weekends ranging from artisan crafts to paintings and live performances. Perhaps one of the most curious features of the park is its large population of cats. Legend holds that the cats were introduced to help fight off rats. Whether true or not everywhere you look in the park you will see them. The cats are well cared for by volunteers and are generally friendly. The volunteers provide food and medical care.

Huaca Pucllana

This historical ruin or huaca is an adobe ceremonial center that was likely built around 500 A.D., during the cultural height of Lima's history. Much of the site has been restored and excavations continue to uncover artifacts and the occasional mummy. The huaca is creatively illuminated at night, giving it a movie-set aura. To make your visit even better, there's an on-site restaurant that serves haute cuisine prepared by an internationally trained chef. There's nothing like dining while taking in 1,500-year-old views.



The Malecón

Walk the Malecon! Definitely take some time to walk the malecon, "Malecon Cisneros," the coastal walkway situated atop the cliffs looking over the ocean. It is a public walkway extending from San Isidro through Barranco.

The Malecón is perfect for jogging, biking or simply taking in the view. Dotting the walkway are statues created by famed Peruvian artists. The two most famous works of sculpture are located on either side of the Villena Bridge, which spans a deep ravine at about the midway point on the Malecón. On one side of the bridge is the "Intihuatana" (sun anchor), designed by Fernando de Szyslo; on the other is Víctor Delfín's massive carving of a couple in deep embrace. The latter is the central piece of a section of the Malecón known as Parque del Amor (Love Park), whose design borrows heavily from Antoni Gaudí



The Bridge of Sighs

The Bridge of Sighs (Puente de los Suspiros) is a lovely wooden structure spanning the Bajada de Baños, a stone walkway that runs down to the Pacific through Lima's bohemian district, Barranco. This comely neighborhood was the place to be in the 19th century and retains its laid-back charm today; there are lots of bars and restaurants in Barranco, plus views of the water, and it's worth strolling around here for an afternoon

Tandem Flights Miraflores

Experience the thrill of paragliding, with an expert pilot at the controls, over the beautiful Costa Verde's cliff in Miraflores, The paragliding site is located in Raimondi's Park, next to "Parque del Amor", 2nd block of Malecon Cisneros Avenue. Paragliding flight is 10 minutes long, flying between 80 and 180m.s.l

Check out limawalks@gmail.com for a walking tour in the city. Founder Ronald is from Holland, living in Peru for 8 years, and apart from his walking tours, he has been [recognized](#) for studying and publishing on the descendants of the Incans. My favorite walk is the Barrios Altos tour. The Center Lima tour is also very interesting. He does walks in about 15 of the different districts in Lima and each have their unique story to tell -- he has done incredible work to research the history of the buildings and piece together hidden secrets of the past. You can explore more at his website here: <http://limawalks.blogspot.com/>.

If guests are interested in museums, check out [Museo Larco](#) -- featuring a privately-owned collection of coastal artifacts and features some of the eldest populations of Peru. This is a beautiful museum and has a lovely cafe where you can have lunch or a coffee. There is also a nice gift shop and KUNA store!

[KUNA](#) - The Kuna stores sell beautifully made, fashionable clothing, scarves, sweaters, and other garments made with vicuna and alpaca fibers. You can find cheaper vicuna and alpaca products at the Mercado Indio, but not as good quality/design.