**Overview**

Located between Bolivia and Peru, Lake Titicaca is one of the most fascinating lakes in the world. It is situated at a very high altitude, at over 3800 meters above sea level, and a tour at Titicaca is definitely an unforgettable experience for any visitor. It is the highest elevated inland lake that is navigable by boat in the world. When visiting Lake Titicaca, the town of Puno is the best place to stay, on the Peruvian side of the lake.

Lake Titicaca is a sacred place for the Inca civilization, as the Incan mythology says that the first Inca king, Manco Capac, was born here. According to the Incan mythology, this is the place where the world was created from, when the god Viracocha came out of the lake and created the sun, the stars and the first people.

**Top Attractions**

**Las Islas Uros or Las Islas Flotantes** Just 7km east of [Puno](http://lonelyplanet.com/peru/lake-titicaca/puno), these unique floating islands are Lake Titicaca’s top attraction. Their uniqueness is due to their construction. They have been created entirely with the buoyant totora reeds that grow abundantly in the shallows of the lake. The lives of the Uros people are interwoven with these reeds. Partially edible (tasting like nonsweet sugarcane), the reeds are also used to build homes, boats and crafts. The islands are constructed from many layers of the totora, which are constantly replenished from the top as they rot from the bottom, so the ground is always soft and springy.

Some islands also have elaborately designed versions of traditional tightly bundled reed boats on hand and other whimsical reed creations, such as archways and even swing sets. Be prepared to pay for a boat ride (S10) or to take photographs.

Intermarriage with the Aymara-speaking indigenous people has seen the demise of the pure-blooded Uros, who nowadays all speak Aymara. Always a small tribe, the Uros began their unusual floating existence centuries ago in an effort to isolate themselves from the aggressive Collas and Incas.

The popularity of the islands has led to aggressive commercialization in some cases. The most traditional reed islands are located further from Puno through a maze of small channels, only visited by private boat. Islanders there continue to live in a relatively traditional fashion and prefer not to be photographed.

Read more: <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/peru/islas-uros/introduction#ixzz4PFKLUoT1>

 **Isla Taquile**: Inhabited for thousands of years, Isla Taquile, 35km east of [Puno](http://lonelyplanet.com/peru/lake-titicaca/puno), is a tiny 7-sq-km island with a population of about 2200 people. Taquile’s lovely scenery is reminiscent of the Mediterranean. In the strong island sunlight, the deep, red-colored soil contrasts with the intense blue of the lake and the glistening backdrop of Bolivia’s snowy Cordillera Real on the far side of the lake. Several hills boast Inca terracing on their sides and small ruins on top.

The natural beauty of the island makes it stand out. Quechua-speaking islanders are distinct from most of the surrounding Aymara-speaking island communities and maintain a strong sense of group identity. They rarely marry non-Taquile people.

Taquile has a fascinating tradition of handicrafts, and the islanders’ creations are made according to a system of deeply ingrained social customs. Men wear tightly woven woolen hats that resemble floppy nightcaps, which they knit themselves – only men knit, learning from the age of eight. These hats are closely bound up with social symbolism: men wear red hats if they are married and red and white hats if they are single, and different colors can denote a man’s current or past social position.

Taquile women weave thick, colorful waistbands for their husbands, which are worn with roughly spun white shirts and thick, calf-length black pants. Women wear eye-catching outfits comprising multilayered skirts and delicately embroidered blouses. These fine garments are considered some of the most well-made traditional clothes in [Peru](http://lonelyplanet.com/peru), and can be bought in the cooperative store on the island’s main plaza.

Read more: <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/peru/isla-taquile/introduction#ixzz4PFJcR7Ka>

**Isla Amantani:** Remote Isla Amantaní, population 4000, is a few kilometers north of the smaller Taquile. Almost all trips to Amantaní involve an overnight stay with islanders. Guests help cook on open fires in dirt-floored kitchens. Witnessing the different aspects of rural life can create engaging and memorable experiences.

The villagers sometimes organize rousing traditional dances, letting travelers dress in their traditional party gear to dance the night away. Of course, your hiking boots might give you away. Don’t forget to look up at the incredibly starry night sky as you stagger home.

The island is very quiet (no dogs allowed!), boasts great views and has no roads or vehicles. Several hills are topped by ruins, among the highest and best-known of which are **Pachamama** (Mother Earth) and **Pachatata** (Father Earth). These date to the [Tiwanaku](http://lonelyplanet.com/bolivia/tiwanaku%22%20%5Co%20%22Tiwanaku) culture, a largely Bolivian culture that appeared around Lake Titicaca and expanded rapidly between 200 BC and AD 1000.

As with Taquile, the islanders speak Quechua, but their culture is more heavily influenced by the Aymara.

Read more: <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/peru/isla-amantani/introduction#ixzz4PFKA7pcG>

**Isla del Sol:** Easily the highlight of any Lake Titicaca excursion (and perhaps your entire Bolivia romp), Isla del Sol is a large island with several traditional communities, decent tourist infrastructure such as hotels and restaurants, a few worthwhile pre-Columbian ruins, amazing views, great hikes and well, lots of sun.

The large 70 sq km island definitely merits a night or two – you can then devote a day each to the northern and southern ends. While you can do a walking circuit of the main sights in a long day, whirlwind half-day tours are strictly for the been-there-done-that crowd.

The island’s permanent residents – a mix of indigenous peoples and recent émigrés/escapers – are distributed between the main settlements of **Cha’llapampa**, near the island’s northern end; **Cha’lla**, which backs onto a lovely sandy beach on the central east coast; and **[Yumani](http://lonelyplanet.com/bolivia/isla-del-sol/sights/neighbourhoods-villages/yumani%22%20%5Co%20%22Yumani)**, which straddles the ridge above the [Escalera del Inca](http://lonelyplanet.com/bolivia/isla-del-sol/sights/parks-gardens/escalera-del-inca%22%20%5Co%20%22Escalera%20del%20Inca) in the south and is the biggest town on the island.

There are no vehicles on Isla del Sol, so visitors are limited to hiking along rocky trails (some are now paved in Inca style) or traveling by boat.

Read more: <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/bolivia/isla-del-sol/introduction#ixzz4PHoKfY9C>

 <http://laketiticaca.com/index.html>