



Chevy Chase, MD (US), May 8, 2015 The following update is based on the last chronicle that I sent to Portuguese-language media a couple of days ago.

"At home again, at the end of this huge adventure! All in all, it was 22 weeks "on the road," 10 and a half of them in South

America. During this time I covered a little over 27,700 miles (44,300 km), of which close to 10,300 miles (16,500 km) were in South America. Beautiful numbers indeed! To put them in perspective, keep in mind that the perimeter of planet Earth at the Equator is approximately 24,900 miles (40,000 km)! But much more important than the numbers was the experience in itself: an "once-in-a-lifetime" experience!

...but picking up the story in La Paz, Bolivia, leaving from this town was yet another one of those surreal experiences: public transportation and small truck drivers were in a protest and had cut the access roads to La Paz, and a few other main roads around the country. Talking my way through, and zigzagging around protestors, stones, tree branches, empty oil drums, and even burning tires, somehow I made it through the picket lines! In a few of the stretches between the barriers, the Mule and I were the only things circulating on the road! Fifty miles or so out of town, I turned onto a secondary road heading to Lake Titicaca, and the situation improved markedly!

From La Paz I went to Ollantaytambo in Peru, a tiny town between Cusco and Machu Picchu. The highlights on this stretch were Copacabana (a very *sympathique* little place in Lake Titicaca's Bolivian "Riviera"); Puno (where I stayed on one of the floating islands of the Urus of Lake Titicaca, another absolutely unique experience!); Cusco (perhaps the most beautiful "big town" of the whole trip); and the valley of the Vilcanota between Pisac and Ollantaytambo (better known as the Inca's Sacred Valley). Ollantaytambo was the base for my visit to Machu Picchu. The access to the "world's most famous ruins" is a bit complicated: one can only get there by train or...on foot! Ollantaytambo is the last station on the train line to which one can get to by vehicle. As such, this little town has developed as a kind of an alternative base to Cusco for independent travelers on their way to Machu

Picchu. That was my case. As far as Machu Picchu, it is indeed a fabulous place, kind of magic even!

From Ollantaytambo I went to Lima, the capital city of Peru, on what would end up being the last stage on South American roads. On my way there I stopped in Nazca to do what one does in Nazca: get on a little plane to overflight the famous lines!

Lima was a bit of a "difficult" stopover: the town itself is rather interesting (architecturally and on what pertains to its... gastronomy!), but this was the "end of the line" for the South American part of my trip. All in all I ended up staying close to two weeks in town, taking care of business to embark the Mule back to the US. Finally she would leave Lima on March 29 aboard M/V Gabriel Schulte heading to Miami, and I left on the following day, heading home.

After that, the only thing left to do was to pick the bike up in Miami and bring her home, which I ended up doing approximately two weeks after I got back to the US. The ride home—1,100 miles (1,800 km) in two days, but now back in North American roads—was for the most part uneventful. I finally got home a little bit before midnight of April 18, thus ending this adventure!"

...And don't miss the photos below!!! Until the next update. Cheers!