

Riding the Dunes - Sandboarding Is the Thing



Most visitors to Peru usually seek out its ancient treasures and sacred places, but a new, challenging and undoubtedly thrilling adventure activity is now available - riding down dunes on a sandboard.

A good starting point is the town of Huacachina, often omitted from guidebooks, which sits hidden behind massive sand dunes and is a manufactured oasis with hotels, hostels, and restaurants. Peru Adventure Tours are offering day-trips to the highest sand dune in the world - Cerro Blanco. It is located on the route to Cusco, and rises as high as 2070 meters above sea level. It takes about an hour-long drive to reach the dune itself, and then a 3-hour climb. It may not sound very attractive, especially when the sandboarders need to get up very early in the morning (in order to leave at 5 a.m.) then find themselves climbing the dune under the hot and tiring sun. Once at the top though, any tiredness is completely forgotten; the views from this mountain are absolutely amazing.

Those who have no experience with snowboard or sandboard can practise on the small dunes, before setting off down the mightiest one. Tourists are reminded that the key to achieving top speeds lies in waxing your board beforehand. Then, descending becomes one crazy experience; sand gets everywhere, and stopping can turn out to be a major complication, though most simply brave it and fall down. Given enough time, anyone can master the techniques necessary to really appreciate the freedom and thrill of this unusual sport.

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