



HD From big chill to life in the freezer - what a trip!

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LP

Teenagers swap holidays for roughing it on Peru adventure

Mountains of Macchu Picchu While most of their pals were lounging by the pool, a group of teenagers were baking under the desert sun on a trip to Peru.

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And when the sun went down the party shivered in their tents in sub-zero temperatures.

The 11 A'level students from Tewkesbury School and six from Churchdown School raised #14,000 to go on the trip of a lifetime.

They were joined on the four-week adventure by teachers Roger Madge, from Churchdown, and Jenny Gunter and Luke Messenger, from Tewkesbury School. It was all part of their studies to measure sand dunes, map out the desert and get to know the lifestyles of the country's people.

The group's experiences ranged from nearly freezing in their tents in temperatures of -21C near Lake Titicaca to sweltering in the heat and humidity of the Puerto Maldonado rainforest.

The expedition trail started in Lima, where the group met up with an **Encounter Overland** truck plus experienced drivers and navigators.

The self-sufficient unit enabled the explorers to carry food, water and tents which allowed them to tour remoter regions of the country away from main roads.

Mrs Gunter said: "On the journey from Arequipa to Lake Titicaca we made camp and got into our sleeping bags in tracksuits and thermals and anything else we could lay our hands on but we were still cold.

"We were fine at -15 but -21C was too much for any of us." Student John Fisher said: "I felt as if my toes had been amputated and was so grateful to see the sunrise."

Insects and tummy upsets also plagued the explorers but they were more than compensated by the spectacular views, human experiences and great fun they had.

Becky Roberts, 18, like the rest of the group, was knocked out by an experience she thinks had a lasting effect on her.

The best part was the view of the ancient lost city of Macchu Picchu by sunrise. They trekked there via Inca ruins along precarious cliff walks, through a rainforest and under waterfalls - but it was well worth it. She said: "Seeing the sunrise was incredible. It was the highlight of the expedition for me, and it made me determined to travel much more in future." The full adventures with pictures will be the subject of an evening of entertainment at the school at a later date.

The students who took part were: Chris Banting, 18, John Fisher, 18, Chris Freeman, 18, Neil Hayden, 17, Daniel Little, 18, Becky Roberts, 18, Becci Shervey, 18, Natasha Wood, 18, Edward Davies, 17, Chris

Fox, 18, Ben Gwilliam, 17, Lisa Hendry, 17, Wade Nottingham, 17, Chris Sanders, 18, Merrion Thomas, 18, and Rachel Yeates, 18.

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