This guide contains fun activities for exploring and learning about the objects that are exhibited in the Museo Larco. There are also some activities to do at home.

Enjoy this family guide and take it as a souvenir of your visit to the Museo Larco treasures from ancient Peru.
This sculpture has spots!

This big stone sculpture represents a jaguar.

How many spots are you able to find? Draw them on this jaguar’s silhouette.

Fun fact!
Jaguars live in humid regions, with large rivers, like the Amazonian basin. That is why the circles on the sculpture represent not only the jaguar’s spots but water symbols.
Is this a person or an animal?

Which are the traits that you can identify?

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Cupisnique Anthropomorphic Head
Formative Epoch (1200 BC - 1 BC)
ML040218

Which side of the head presents a larger amount of human traits?

Why would the ancient Peruvians create a half-human / half-animal figure?

Fun fact!

Human images with animal traits are common in the art of ancient Peru.

Ancient Peruvians believed that incorporating some animal traits like the feline’s fangs and claws, or the wings and peaks of birds, would make them more powerful.
These heads want to tell us something!

Ancient Peruvians made real portraits! Humans and mythological beings were represented.

Who do you think these portrait heads represent?

Fun fact! Observe the different ornaments, like the earrings and the headdresses. Look for the man who wears big circle earrings: he is probably a priest or a nobleman, definitely a person with a high status in his society. Now look at the personage with fangs on the mouth. Is this a human, or a mythological being?

Now, can you identify the man whose hair is visible? He represents a captive man ready for sacrifice.
What is this?

Take a moment to observe this object thoroughly

Can you identify its function?

Why did the Nasca make such an elaborate object?

Play with your family. Who can find...

- 2 stars
- 2 human faces
- 3 feline heads
- 6 snakes
- 1 plant or fruit
- 2 legs
- 1 feather necklace

Where was it possibly used?

Fun fact!

This object has been placed upside-down! Look again, and try to think about how it was used.

One clue: if you were a Nasca, you would have danced following its rhythm!
A mantle with the Bird-Feline-Snake!

The Paracas mantle is full of images and colors. But a more thorough observation shows that there is only one design that is repeated several times in the mantle.

The Paracas artists made subtle variations in each repetition, like exchanging colors.

Which colors were used in this mantle? There are 4 colors, find them!

Try to identify the following images in the Paracas mantle.

Hummingbird
Feline face
Snake body
Central image

Fun fact!

This fine mantle was woven by the Paracas artists not for its use in this world, but to cover the body of their dead. The Paracas mantles carry sacred messages for the afterlife.
Look for the treasures of ancient Peru!

What happens in the scene painted on this ceramic bottle?
For a better understanding of it, observe the scene on the wall.
Each family member should choose a personage of the scene, and play its role.
Then ask another person to take a picture of your family acting the scene.
Share the picture using #MuseoLarco.

In this scene you can see personages that are adorned with metal shirts, ear and nose ornaments and headdresses. They hold cups and bowls in their hands.
Next to the arrows, write the number of the museum showcase in which you find the highlighted object!

We suggest you to look in the Gold and Jewelry Galleries, for the following showcases: 88 – 95 – 107 – 110 – 132 – 137 – 138 – 151

Fun fact!
Gold and silver were very important for ancient Peruvian cultures, but not for their economic value. They represented the sun and the moon, their mayor gods. Rulers, priests and priestesses were adorned with these noble metals, since they were sacred and divine.
Become a Chimu Emperor!

Observe the gold attire made by the Chimu goldsmiths.

Who do you think wore this attire? Why was it made in gold?

What was this attire used for?

Where do you think this attire was found?

Gold in ancient Peru was important not because of its economic value, but because it symbolized the sun and the world of the gods. Rulers, priests and priestesses dressed in gold to communicate their sacred identity.