



## THE INCA TRAIL TO MACHU PICCHU *Weekly Departures to Machu Picchu from \$735!*

See for yourself why this is the most popular hiking trail in the Andes! You'll enjoy spellbinding mountain scenery, unforgettable Inca sites, abundant orchids and hummingbirds. We spend four full days walking to Machu Picchu, and a fifth day exploring in the famous ruins themselves. After more than 25 years operating this route, we know how important it is to give all participants adequate time to enjoy the sights at a comfortable pace. Stroll down the Royal Road into the famous Lost City of the Incas!



Many of our returning passengers tell us they found the trek more strenuous and challenging than they had anticipated. During four hiking days you cover 35 km/21.9 miles, starting at 8,700' and finishing at 7,860' above sea level. You must cross two high passes, with a maximum elevation of 13,887'. While trail conditions are generally good, and indeed the condition of centuries-old Inca paving stones is astonishing, some steep trail sections require careful footing and good hiking boots with lug soles. Nevertheless, thanks to our careful pacing, dedicated guides and professional support staff, the trip is suitable for novices as well as experienced hikers.

Porters carry the heavy gear; you walk carrying only a day-pack. Cooks prepare wholesome meals from fresh ingredients and handle all the kitchen chores. You sleep warm and protected in high quality tents. Join the most reliable outfitter in the Andes for a trek you'll never forget.

**IMPORTANT:** Under current park regulations, trek permits are sold on a first come/first served basis, and are limited to 500 persons per day, including passengers, guides, cooks and porters. Book early! Permits sell out on popular dates. In order to include you in the trek roster, we must receive from you: your full name as it appears on your passport, your nationality, passport number, age, occupation and gender. Permits are sold on a non-refundable, non-transferable basis. If you are unable to secure a place on our Inca Trail to Machu Picchu, please ask about our excellent alternative trekking programs in the Andes. Important: please read our FAQ on trail permits, found at the end of this itinerary.

**Day 1 Huayllabamba** We pick you up at your Cuzco hotel and transfer by van 3 hours west, to our trailhead at Piscacucho, on the Vilcanota River (km. 82 on the train route to Machu Picchu). Here we meet our porters, pass through the trailhead control point, and cross the river on a suspension bridge to enter the park. We hike along the left bank of the powerful Vilcanota River, beneath the impressive snowcapped Nevado Veronica. The valley is dry, with Opuntia and Cholla cactus common; where irrigation is possible, we walk adjacent to fields of corn. In the rapids below the trail, you can spot Torrent ducks swimming in the eddies as they graze the algae growing on the riverbed. We explore the enormous Inca ruins of Llactapata, then turn south and begin to gain altitude, climbing up the narrow side valley of the Cusichaca River. We camp on a quiet terrace belonging to a local family in the hamlet of Huayllabamba (2,954 m/9,690 ft). Distance 11.4 km/7.2 miles, elevation gain 300 m/984 ft. (L,D)

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**Day 2 Pacaymayo** We climb steeply through fields and an intriguing forest of indigenous queuñal and chachacomo trees, then emerge above the treeline and reach Warmiwañusqa Pass (4,234 m/13,887'). Enjoy magnificent views from the pass to the Huaynay Range snowpeaks and distant Inca ruins. Descend to our camp at Pacaymayo in the valley bottom (3,613 m/11,850 ft. Distance 7.7 km/4.83 miles, elevation gain 1,280 m./4,200 ft (B,L,D)

**Day 3 Phuyopatamarca** We climb steeply to reach a second pass (3,975 m/13,038'), and follow a fine Inca highway down to the exquisite ridge-top ruins of Sayaqmarka. Further on, we pass through a tunnel amid luxuriant cloud forest vegetation. Camp at the superb Phuyopatamarca ruins (3,679m/12,067 ft) overlooking the Vilcanota River far below. Phuyopatamarca is Quechua for "City above the Clouds". The views from our campsite toward the sacred peak of Salcantay are sublime. Distance 7 km/4.5 miles, elevation gain 362 m/1,190 feet (B,L,D)

**Day 4 Machu Picchu** We descend steeply, following the Royal Highway through orchid-rich cloud forest to Winya Wayna ruins. The final part of the trail on the east side of Machu Picchu Mountain is a stunningly beautiful traverse on finest Inca stonework through cloud forest, leading to the Gate of the Sun overlooking Machu Picchu. We reach this highlight in the golden sunshine of late afternoon, and descend into the Inca city when it is nearly empty of visitors. We board a shuttle bus to descend a switchbacking road to Puente Ruinas and our camp by the river beneath the ruins (2,000 m/6,560 ft). See below for optional hotel accommodation in Aguas Calientes. Distance 9 km/5.8 miles, elevation drop 1,150 m/3,772 ft (to Machu Picchu. (B,L,D)

**Day 5 Machu Picchu/Cuzco** We return to the site by shuttle bus. Those wishing to view sunrise over Machu Picchu can take the pre-dawn shuttle bus, which delivers you to the main gate of Machu Picchu at 6.00AM when the gates are opened to the public. An early start gives you more options to hike some of the peripheral trails, such as Wayna Picchu and Machu Picchu Mountain. We include an in-depth guided tour of the ridge-top city. We descend to the nearby village of Aguas Calientes for return in late afternoon by train, arriving into Cuzco around 9.30PM. Transfer to your hotel. (B)

**2012 Cost: US\$735 pp / shared tent Group size: 2-16 passengers**

Additional Costs:

optional single tent \$80

optional winter-weight sleeping bag rental \$36

Internal Air Lima/Cuzco/Lima \$250 - \$450 (rate fluctuates greatly; depends on the rate at the time of booking)

Optional Hotel in Aguas Calientes the final night to replace camping in the town – strongly suggested - \$100

The trek cost does not include the Machu Picchu Sanctuary trail fee of \$95. This is a local payment payable at the trek orientation meeting.

#### **2012 DEPARTURES:**

We depart at **7.30 AM every Sunday starting March 25, 2012**. The last trek of the year starts Dec 23, 2012

**Included:** indicated meals, transport by train and bus, portorage of up to 10 kg personal gear, communal camp gear including tables and camp chairs, dining tent, spacious sleeping tents, trail duffel, Thermarest® sleeping pad, water filter and other amenities.

**Excluded:** Machu Picchu Historic Sanctuary fee. The current rate is S/. 251 (Nuevos Soles) for the 4-day trek, approximately US\$95. This rate is subject to change. At the trek orientation meeting we will collect from all participants the actual amount paid for the trail fee. Other Exclusions: personal trekking gear and sleeping bag; tips to guide and trek staff; city services; air Lima/Cuzco/Lima (currently \$300).

**Rental sleeping bag:** \$36. We provide mummy-style, **winter-weight** synthetic-fill sleeping bags, with sheet liners. We launder the liners between each trek. Please request rental sleeping bags well in advance of your departure, and preferably at the time you confirm your trek with us. If you are taller than 6 feet, please request an extra-long bag.

**Single supplement:** If you are traveling alone and are willing to share a tent, we will pair you with another trekker of the same gender and you pay no supplementary charge. If you prefer a tent on single occupancy basis, the surcharge is US\$80.

**RESERVATION INFORMATION:** We will need a \$400 US/pp non-refundable deposit for this trip. We purchase Inca Trail permits when we take your reservations and we are unable to replace anyone with your permit should you cancel. We will send you a trip cancellation insurance application for you so that you can insure your trip. We will also need your passport details to be able to make the reservations. If you need to renew your passport, it is still important to give us your current passport details so that we can get your permit. Please read below.

**Important: at the time we confirm your participation on this trek, we register your complete name and your passport number (as these appear on your trip application) with park authorities on the official trek permit. The trek permit is a legal document with specific restrictions limiting changes. You must bring this same passport with you on the trek. If for whatever reason you cannot bring the passport that is registered on the permit at the time of your original booking, or if you change your passport and cannot bring the original document, or if the information you originally supplied differs from what actually appears on your passport, park authorities may refuse access to the Inca Trail. Please make a photocopy of the ID page of your passport, and keep it with your important trip documents.**

### **Pre-Trek Acclimation**

**So that you have sufficient time to acclimate prior to starting the trek, we strongly recommend that you arrive in Cuzco or similar elevation a minimum of two days prior to the trek. This is a 45-km/28-mile trek with a maximum elevation close to 4,200m/14,000 feet. Let us know if you would like us to make Cuzco hotel reservations for you.**

### **Joining Your Group**

Once we receive your final payment, we will send a Confirmation of Service voucher with your prepaid travel details.

**At noon on the day prior to the trek, there is an important orientation meeting with your guide and other participants at our office in Cuzco.** We review trek arrangements, trail gear and packing strategies, health and dietary matters, tipping and other cash needs, and trail documentation requirements. We collect the park fee from you at this time, in travelers' checks or cash. If you pay in cash, bills must be in good condition – no rips, missing corners, or writing on the bills, please. We also distribute your trail duffel and sleeping pad. If you've rented a sleeping bag from us, we give it to you now so you can pack your duffel, ready for the departure early next morning.

**Passengers who have not contacted the office by noon on the day prior to trek departure to reconfirm their arrangements will be considered no-shows and deleted from the roster. In these situations your tour prepayment is non-refundable.**

**If your travel plans change at the last minute, due to airline delays, misconnections or any other reason, you must advise our Cuzco office (use the above number or after-hours tel 51-84-98465-1404) to see if alternate arrangements can be made for you.**

If you are a student 16 years and older with a valid International Student ID card you may be eligible for a reduced rate for your trail ticket. In order to qualify for a student trail ticket, we must receive documentation that you are a student when you register for the trek. Send us (as an email attachment, JPG is best) a digital version of your ISiC. The ID must show the school name, your student status, and an expiry date valid for the date of your trek. For passengers whose student ID is judged unacceptable to the INC, we will purchase the full adult rate ticket and collect this amount at the orientation meeting. While students 15 years and younger need no student ID, we must present digital images of the passport ID pages at the time we purchase the trekking permit. Again, a digital file sent as an email attachment is the best way to get this done. In the absence of correct documentation, the park authority will issue only the adult ticket at the full adult rate. Conditions for the student discount are subject to change by the INC with no advance notice. At our orientation meeting, we will collect the actual cost of the trail ticket, as charged by the INC. Additionally, passengers must bring their passport and student ID on the trek; failure to do so may result in the INC confiscating the student ticket and denying you the right to proceed with the trek.

### **Optional Extras**

Hotels in Lima or Cuzco are available from \$64 per night for a double and \$48 in single including taxes and continental breakfast depending upon the level of accommodations. Airport transfers in Lima and Cuzco may be arranged upon request. We are pleased to assist you with additional tour arrangements prior to and following your tour.

Many of our passengers request hotel accommodation in the service town of Aguas Calientes on the fourth and final night of their trek. The most popular hotels book up early, so the sooner you can let us know your preference, the better chance we'll have of securing your preferred hotel. The trekking guides coordinate all shuttle bus trips and Machu Picchu touring so that on Day Five of our program, both those who sleep in camp and those who are in hotels receive all the normal guided services.

### **Additional Expenses**

- Currency other than US\$ and € is difficult to exchange in Peru. Bring travelers' checks and/or cash. Major credit cards are also accepted in hotels and larger restaurants. You can find ATM machines in major cities but not in smaller towns. Food and beverages in mainstream restaurants and hotels are comparable in price range to what you'll pay at home. 19% government value-added tax plus service charges of up to 10% are added to your restaurant bills.
- You'll pay airport departure taxes averaging US\$6 for domestic flights in Peru, and US\$31 for international departure from Lima.
- The Machu Picchu National Sanctuary trail fee. As of July 1, 2010, the rate is S/.251 for the 4-day trek (typical exchange S/.2.8= US\$1). This rate is subject to change. We pre-purchase these trail tickets and will collect the fee from you at the trek orientation meeting. Under current regulations, the trail ticket allows you one day entry into the Machu Picchu ruins.
- Tipping your trek staff at the satisfactory conclusion to the trek is optional but customary. We suggest you take along between US\$40-\$80 in local currency for this purpose. On the final trek morning, trekkers distribute pooled funds among guide(s), kitchen crew and porters. Suggested distribution: to the Chief Guide \$3.50 per day, Asst guide \$2.50 per day, Cook \$1.50 per day, Asst cook \$1.00 per day. You will have two porters, allocate a total of \$5 per each of 2 porters (for the trip, not per day). Using these numbers as a rough guide, a modest tip would be \$40, and many passengers contribute double this sum. Porters appreciate receiving donations of used clothes that are in good condition, including children's clothes. Due to weight restrictions, if you bring extra clothes for donating to the porters, ask about this during the orientation meeting.

**PLEASE NOTE:** We reserve the right to make minor changes where necessary for the safety and comfort of our participants. Please reconfirm the current tour rate and park fee when you make your reservation. Additional expenses caused by circumstances beyond the control of the operator will be the responsibility of the tour participant.

### **PLANNING YOUR TRIP**

#### **Climate**

Cuzco has well-defined seasons. From June to August, while Andean winter days are typically sunny and warm, the temperature can drop to below freezing (27°F/-3°C) at night in our high camps. Rain seldom falls during winter. From January to March, the Andean summer months offer daytime temperatures to 85°F/30°C, milder nights (typically to 45°F/8°C) and plenty of rain. Despite some rain, December and April are among our favorite months for trekking, since the mountains are lush with summer flowers. During these summer months you enjoy plenty of sunshine, rainbows and everything in between. Departures during Andean spring and autumn offer weather patterns intermediate between these seasonal extremes.

#### **Clothing**

Expect a wide range of temperature and precipitation on your program. In high mountain environments, you must be prepared for inclement weather at any time. Even at mid-day, if clouds obscure the sun, the apparent temperature cools dramatically. By packing a system of thin, independent layers of clothing, you can easily add or remove layers to remain comfortable as conditions change throughout the day.

Most trekkers leave camp in the morning wearing cold-weather layers over synthetic T-shirt and shorts. At the first rest stop, after you and the day have warmed up, remove a layer and continue in warm-weather clothing. As the temperature cools off later in the day, add layers accordingly. At all times, carry rain-gear in your day-pack.

A time-tested strategy is to bring your day-time trekking layers (which will get dirty, and which remain with you, either on you or in your daypack during the warmer parts of the day); and a set of clean camp clothes, starting with full-length thermal underwear. On arrival in camp, change from your trail clothes to your clean, dry camp clothes. In the morning, change into your trekking gear, and pack your camp clothes to stay dry.

Basic clothing list: underwear, thermal underwear (tops and bottoms), socks, lightweight hiking boots, sneakers for around camp, loose-fitting long pants or wind-pants (convertible trek pants are best), shorts, T-shirts, long-sleeved shirt, Polarfleece jacket, full rain gear, sun hat, bathing suit, gloves and ski-type hat.

### **Other Gear**

**Essential:** Day pack, sleeping bag, water bottle, flashlight, sunglasses, sunscreen, toilet kit, insect repellent.

**Optional:** pocket knife, sewing kit, camera and film, binoculars, paperback book, snacks and/or energy bars.

**Your outfitter provides:** a heavy-duty, 4,100-cubic-inch trail duffel, Thermarest sleeping pad, tents and communal camping gear. The guide carries a hand-pump water filter.

### **Weight Restriction**

Our porters carry up to 10 kg (22 lb.) of your personal gear. If your packed duffel exceeds 10 kg. In weight (including sleeping bag and pad) at the trailhead, you will have to transfer excess weight from your duffel to your daypack. Note: maximum porter loads (and therefore duffel capacity) are enforced by government authorities, and are subject to change without prior notice. We will review current regulations during the trek orientation meeting when the guide discusses packing strategies.

### **Vaccinations**

While no vaccinations are mandatory for entering Peru, and no official is likely to demand to see proof of your vaccination against any disease, some protection is prudent. Consult your physician or local travelers' clinic for the latest recommendations. For general travel, the most common recommended vaccinations or boosters are against tetanus, typhoid/diphtheria, Hepatitis A, and polio. The World Health Organization does not recommend vaccination against cholera. If you're visiting the Amazon before or after your trek, ask about yellow fever and chloroquine-resistant malaria. Some countries (notably Brazil) require travelers to show proof of a valid Yellow fever vaccination when arriving from Peru.

### **Important Notice for Vegetarians, Passengers with Allergies and Other Restricted Diets**

In the cities, you will find sufficient vegetarian choices in most restaurants. We serve a variety of freshly-prepared foods in our camps. While our trek meals are designed for omnivores, we are able to satisfy most restricted-diet passengers. Strict vegetarians will have to bring many food supplements from home, as specialty items are unavailable in South America.

If you have food allergies you must detail these on your trip application when you register for your trek. Review these with our guide and operations staff during the trek orientation meeting. Note: we treat our camp water (both for drinking and for cleaning) with iodine.

Our approach in meeting the needs of restricted-diet passengers is the same: while our cooks concentrate on providing the main meal, they can heat and serve food supplied by the passengers that the passengers deem safe.

If you have a restricted diet, please ask for our memo detailing our approach to food service on the trek.

**After we have received your trip deposit, we will send you a complete trip information package including a trip packing list.**