



Mt. Salkantay and the Inca Trail Day by day description

Day 1 CUSCO/MOLLEPATA/ PAROBAMBA (Thursday)

Drive over Tika-Tika pass with first view of Mt. Salkantay and Humantay in the horizon. Cross the plateau of Anta (Antapampa) an area that's considered the breadbasket of Cusco, important for grains and cattle. We reach the pass of Limatambo with an amazing view of both mountains and the panorama of the lush agricultural valley below. We visit the ruins of Tarawasi with its long asymmetric Inca stone wall. Continue down the paved road reaching (7,758 ft). At this point a winding road zig-zags uphill until reaching Mollepata at 2,900m (9,454 ft). We start hiking at the village for about an hour until we reach our campsite at Parobamba. Overnight at camp at 3,200m (10,430 ft) (Trekking: 1 hour)

Day 2 PAROBAMBA / CRUZPATA / CHECCHICANCHA / SORAYPAMPA (Friday)

The trail climbs sharply for about an hour until reaching Cruzpata (3,250m / 10,620ft), where we get the first magnificent view of Mt. Humantay at the end of the valley. We continue past Oncopata to the lunch-spot at Checchicancha located at 3,600 (11,736 ft), a small flat field with a view of Mt. Yanantay and Humantay. The last part of the trail brings us to 3,900 m (12,815 ft) at Soraypampa where there are small settlements of cattle herders. We camp at the Pampa (esplanade) below Mt. Salcantay, with Mt. Humantay out of sight. (Trekking: 6-7 hours).

Day 3 SORAYPAMPA / INCACHIRIASKA / SISAYPAMPA (Saturday)

An early departure starting with a slow uphill climb will bring us to Salcantaypampa below the terminal moraine of Mt. Salcantay. This beautiful mountain 6,040m (19,690ft) tall will dominate the views of the whole day. We start a steep ascent slowly reaching a pampa below the pass at 4,650 (15,150 ft) at a dry lake to make the last push to the Incachiriaska pass at 4,850m (15,810 ft), with a beautiful view of the two glacial lakes below the ice flutes of Mt. Salkantay. Leaving the watershed view behind, a steep descent at first brings us to a flat pampa below the eastern glacier of Mt. Salkantay. From here the trail levels off downhill, until we reach our campsite at Sisaypampa at 4,200m (13,690 ft) with a dominating view of the eastern face of the mountain. (Trekking: 8-9 hours, 9 kms)

Day 4 SISAYPAMPA / PAMPACAHUA / PAUCARCANCHA (Sunday)

The trail continues to the end of the valley, turns north and enters a wider valley called Pampacahua with an Inca canal running through the middle of it and small settlements of farmers along its edges. At the end of the Pampa the trail begins to get steeper as we pass the tree line, continuing to our campsite at Paucarcancha, our first Inca site, and the confluence of the Pampacahua and Keska valleys. Here we camp in the vicinity of the ruins at 3,150m (10,260 ft) (Trekking: 5 - 6 hours, Distance: 10kms)

Day 5 PAUCARCANCHA / HUAYLLABAMBA / LLULLUCHAPAMPA (Monday)

A slow day at low altitude at first, visiting the village of Huayllabamba, from where a steep ascent brings us to the Huayruro stream at 3,400m (11,084 ft). Here we stop for lunch at Yunkachimpa. At the village we meet a group coming from the Urubamba Valley and leave our pack animals behind-changing to a new crew of porters. From here we cross over to the Lullucha gorge and traverse a unique forest of Unca trees, a native species, which nowadays is hard to find except in isolated areas. We have now entered the Machu Picchu Sanctuary and will see fewer people living in the area. Once out of the forest we reach Llulluchapampa, with a view of Mt. Huayanay overlooking our campsite at 3,750m (12,225 ft) (Trekking: 5-6 hours, 8 kms)



Day 6 LLULLUCHAMPAMPA / RUNKURAQAY / SAYACMARCA / PHUYUPATAMARCA (Tuesday)

A steady ascent on an Inca Trail up to the Warmiwañusqa pass at 4,200m (13,692 ft) affords a magnificent view of our ascent and the trail ahead of us. We descend on a reconstructed Inca Trail down to the Pacaymayo River to then ascend again to the ruins of Runkuraqay and the second pass at 4,050m (13,200 ft). From here we walk down to the site at Sayacmarca at 3,850m (12,551 ft) on the original Inca Trail, passing a dry lake and the first signs of the cloud forest. A beautiful location overlooking the Aobamba Valley, it affords a respite for a leisurely walk through its imposing structures. Continue along the ridge through amazing landscapes, viewing Mt. Salcantay from the western side and Mt. Pumasillo, a silhouette to the north on the horizon. Walking through a rolling flagstoned trail we arrive at Phuyupatamarca (the village on the edge of the clouds) in whose vicinity we camp. (Trekking: 7-8 hours, Distance 14kms)

Day 7 PHUYUPATAMARCA / INTIPATA / WIÑAY WAYNA / MACHU PICCHU (Wednesday)

We leave the site traversing a ridge with magnificent views of the surrounding cloud forest below. This little known trail will bring us past the newly opened site of Intipata and then ends at Wiñay Wayna where we have lunch. From here another walk along the original Inca Trail will bring us to the door of the sun with a spectacular view of Machu Picchu below. Overnight at a local hotel, dinner on your own. (Trekking: 6-7 hours, Distance 10kms)

Day 8 MACHU PICCHU / CUSCO (Thursday)

The whole day can be dedicated to explore these extraordinary Inca remains, including a visit to Wayna Picchu, the mountain overlooking the site. In the mid-afternoon train takes you back to Cusco, transfer to your hotel. Lunch and dinner on your own.

Note: On day 5 you will be joining the Inca Trail group coming up the valley from the first camp at Q'ente. At Huayllabamba there is a change – over from horses to porters. Two full days of acclimatization in the mountains of Cusco area are mandatory prior to departure.

SERVICES INCLUDED: Hotel in Machu Picchu with breakfast (Day 7) tours where included, transportation, transfer on arrival and lunch. Two man tents, sleeping mats, all meals and commissary gear as well as a bilingual guide, pack horses and drivers. Entrance fee to the Machu Picchu Sanctuary (US\$ 50)

NOT INCLUDED: Meals in the main cities, alcoholic beverages, extras, tips, laundry services, additional tours, insurance and airline tickets during trek, hotel on Day 8 (Cusco)