



The Best of Peru Day by day description

Day 1 LIMA (Friday)

Arrival and transfer to your hotel. If you arrive early in the day optional tours are available. Overnight. All meals on your own, overnight at hotel.

Day 2 LIMA/HUARAZ (Saturday)

Early morning departure by first-class coach to the city of Huaraz, located about 400 Kms. north of Lima. Following the Panamerican Highway north across Lima we will pass several lush green valleys that cut through the coastal desert until we reach the town of Pativilca. Turning inland the main road winds its way up along the Fortaleza River for a good two hours. Finally we reach the Pass of Conococha (4,000 m.a.s.l. / 13,120 ft.) where we will get our first glimpse of the Cordillera Blanca, the highest tropical mountain range in the world. From here the road descends slowly along the Santa River as we pass a vast area of highland pastures. As we approach Huaraz, the vegetation changes into that of an interandean valley, surrounded by clusters of red-tiled houses. Arrival at a hotel and overnight at 3,000 m.a.s.l. / 10,000 ft. Dinner on your own.

Day 3 HUARAZ/VAQUERIA (Sunday)

Leaving early in the morning we drive down along the Santa Valley passing several villages until we reach present-day Yungay. The road winds slowly up into the gully between the Huascarán massif and the Huandoy three-pronged peak. As we reach the overhanging valley we arrive at the boundary of the National Park of Huascarán. Llanganuco, as the area is known, has two lakes that have turquoise waters, and passing them we will arrive at Quebrada Demanda, a small valley where we will undertake a short hike. In the early afternoon we continue on this narrow road as it twists and turns to the Pass at Portachuelo of Llanganuco at 4,750 m.a.s.l. (15,580 ft.) From this point, if the evening is clear, we will get a spectacular panorama of Mt. Huascarán, Huandoy, Pisco and Chacaraju, the latter being one of the most difficult mountains to climb in Peru. As the evening falls, we drive down to our first campsite at Vaqueria. Time: 2 hours. Distance: 3 kms.

Day 4 VAQUERIA/TUCTU (Monday)

The day starts with a leisurely walk down towards Colcapampa. Before we reach the village, a trail will make its way to the left over a small ridge into the Huaripampa valley. As we slowly head up this valley past small settlements of farmers, surrounded by agricultural activity and andean vegetation, the snow-capped peaks of Paria and Taulliraju will come into view, passing meadows and fields along the way. Camp in the vicinity of Paria or Tuctu, in the heart of Huascarán National Park. (Time:5-6 hours. Distance: 7 Kms.)

Day 5 TUCTU/TAULLIPAMPA (Tuesday)

The trail starts ascending towards Punta Union, a pass at 4,700 m.a.s.l. (15,711 ft.) This old trail was heavily used in pre-columbian and Colonial times as a route for transporting goods from the eastern side of the Andes to the main valley. As we approach the pass, Mt. Taulliraju will loom above us and on the other side its glacial lake and glacier will add color and contrast to the amazing view down the Santa Cruz Valley. The peaks of Santa Cruz, Quitaraju, Artesonaju, will come into view as well as the two lakes of Ichicocha and Jarhuacocha. The trail descends into Taullipampa or Quiswarpampa, where we will camp at 4,000 m.a.s.l. (13,200 ft.). (Time:7 hours. Distance: 8.5 Kms.)



Day 6 TAULLIPAMPA/LLAMACORRAL (Wednesday)

Past the side-valley of Arhuaycocha with a possibility to view Mt. Apumayo, we continue down the Santa Cruz Valley. The landscape changes, and scree slopes appear on each side of the now marshy meadow as well as rock boulders fallen from the eroded walls above us. Finally towards the end of the day we walk out of the ever-narrowing gully into Llamacorrall, where we will camp. (Time: 6 hours. Distance: 6 Kms.)

Day 7 LLAMACORRAL/CASHAPAMPA/HUARAZ (Thursday)

A steep descent brings us to Cashapampa in the early morning. We meet a vehicle that will take us back to Huaraz saying good-bye to our the herders as the road winds slowly down to the main valley, arriving in the afternoon. Dinner on your own, overnight at hotel. (Time: 2 hours. Distance: 3 Kms.)

Day 8 HUARAZ/LIMA (Friday)

Morning bus ride to Lima, box lunch included on the way. Late afternoon arrival in Lima. Transfer and overnight in a hotel, dinner on your own.

Day 9 LIMA/CUSCO (Saturday)

Transfer to the airport to board your 55-minute flight to Cusco, center of the Inca world. Meet and transfer to your hotel. The rest of the morning free to acclimatize to the altitude (3,400 m.a.s.l./11,400 ft.). An afternoon tour of the city and nearby ruins of Sacsayhuaman, Kenko and Tambomachay will educate you on the history of this astonishing town. Lunch and dinner on your own.

Day 10 CUSCO/CHILLCA/Q'ENTE (Sunday)

We transfer you from the hotel to Cusco train station (or includes the transfer from Urubamba Htl to Ollanta train station) in order to take the train that bring us to the Km 88. From here the small bridge brings us over to Qente where we will camp. A chance to visit the surrounding archaeological remains of Patallacta (also known as Qentamarca) and in the afternoon Qente and Machu Q'ente - located amidst Inca Terracing. (Time: 4-6 hours, Distance: 11 kms). (L,D)

Day 11 Q'ENTE/LLULLUCHAPAMPA (Monday)

The trail winds slowly uphill through a small forest to reach the site of Patallacta. After a short visit we continue up the Cusichaca Valley passing houses of settlers to finally reach the andean community of Huayllabamba. From here the trail ascends steeply to a large pampa below the first pass, where we camp. Here we have a breathtaking view of Mt. Huayanay. Along the trail up this narrow hanging valley we begin to see a cloud forest that harbors the Queñua tree, a rare forest to be found in the Andes. Camp overnight at Llulluchapampa. (Time: 6 hours. Distance: 9Kms.)

Day 12 LLULLUCHAPAMPA/PHUYUPATAMARCA (Tuesday)

The trail ascends at a typical angle of 30 degrees towards the pass across the hillside of Puna grassland as we leave our campsite at the edge of the treeline behind, bringing us to Warmiwa-usca pass (4,050 m.a.s.l./13,280 ft.). The trail descends to the Pacaymayo River and then climbs slowly past Runkuraqay ruins. From here over a lower pass to Sayacmarca, the "waiting village" A clear Inca Trail across a causeway on a now dry lake past a cave, we continue our way along a ridge to finally reach Phuyupatamarca (the town at the edge of the clouds in quechua) where we camp. (Time:8 hrs. Distance 9 Kms)



Day 13 PHUYUPATAMARCA/MACHU PICCHU (Wednesday)

After continuing along a buttress and passing Phuyupatamarca ruins, the flagstoned trail winds sharply down into the cloud forest to the ruins of Wiñay Wayna located below the ridge on the same water course as the previous site, it has well restored Inca Ruins. After a two hour walk through a cloud forest covered Inca Trail we arrive at Machu Picchu the way the Incas used to come, watching the magnificent citadel at our feet from Intipunku, the door of the sun.

Day 14 MACHU PICCHU/CUSCO (Thursday)

The whole day can be dedicated to explore these extraordinary Inca remains. Including a visit to Wayna Picchu the hill overlooking the site. The mid-afternoon train takes you back to Urubamba or Ollantaytambo, transfer to your hotel. Dinner on your own.

Day 15 URUBAMBA/CUSCO (Friday)

Having rested we will spend the rest of the morning visiting the town of Ollantaytambo, an Inca fortress and now one of few living Inca villages. In the afternoon we will get a chance to visit the village of Pisac, in the heart of the Sacred Valley of the Incas, visiting the ruins poised high above the valley on a ridge top with a commanding view. In the late afternoon we arrive in Cusco. Lunch and dinner on your own.

Day 16 CUSCO (Saturday)

Free day to relax, do laundry and maybe some shopping. Optional one-day adventures available: river running, bicycling, horse riding or touring. Lunch and dinner on your own.

Day 17 CUSCO/OCONGATE/TINKI (Sunday)

Pick-up at your hotel in Cusco and start of our journey. The road south towards Puno passes many important towns as it heads along the Huatanay river and later along the Vilcanota river coming from Sicuani. As we travel we will drive past the Wari site of Pikillacta and the villages of Andahuaylillas and Huaru, of colonial origin. Finally we reach Urcos, and a short distance from here the dirt road starts winding its way uphill until we reach small villages of herders and weavers in the highland savannah, households and small villages dot the landscape and impressive undulating hills blending into the horizon amidst a patchwork of agricultural fields. In the late afternoon the Cordillera Vilcanota will loom in the distance with Ausangate (6,372m.a.s.l.) and Jampa dominating the landscape until we reach Ocongate and our campsite at Tinki (3,800 m.a.s.l.)

Day 18 TINKI/UPIS (Monday)

Crossing the river of Ocongate we pass a small community and start crossing the puna, approaching the base of the Ausangate massif, with impressive views of the rolling landscape around us. We will hike past small houses with adjoining corrals until we reach Upis, an area with thermal springs which can be enjoyed depending on the water level and weather conditions since they are in the open. (camp at 4,400 m.a.s.l.). (Hiking Time: 4-6 hours. Distance: 6 Kms).

Day 19 UPIS/PUKACocha (Tuesday)

Ascending the scree slopes we hike over the pass at 4,700 m.a.s.l. (14,760 ft.) and make our way to lake Pukacocha, with the western ice-fall of Mt. Ausangate dominating the view of this campsite at the shores of the lake. Even though the day is not too long the altitude and the astounding glacial environment with rocky terrain make it an active day. (Hiking Time: 5-6 hours. Distance: 5 Kms).



Day 20 PUKACOCCHA/AUSANGATECOCHA/PALOMANI/WANU WANU (Wednesday)

Leaving camp, a slow ascent will bring us to the Alcatani pass at 4,650 m. (15,252 ft.). Here we begin our descent to Ausangatecocha - a beautiful blue lake formed by the melting glacier with a view of the southern face covered with glacial formations. From Ausangatecocha we start a steep ascent to the Palomani pass at 5,050 m. (16,564 ft.). As we cross into the valley of Machuraqay we will see beautiful views of Mt. Mariposa with its cone peak. We descend to Chillcaphinaya at 4,400 m. (14,432 ft.), a valley filled with grazing Alpacas. The surrounding ridges of the Cordillera Vilcanota have varying hues of rock, sand and reddish earth - a unique Andean panorama. We ascend to the large pampa of Waru Waru where we camp at 4,450 m. (14,596 ft.)

Day 21 - WANU WANU/NINAPARAYOC/PACCHANTA (Thursday)

Walking to the headwaters of Wanu Wanu, with Mt. Acero looming above us (also known as Huamantilla) we reach the run off from the glacier. As we begin our ascent to the pass of Jampa, Mt. Callangate, with its jagged spires covered in ice, dominates our trek as we edge our way over the pass at 4,950m. (16,236 ft) with its retreating glacier and ice-fields beckoning us closer. We have lunch at Pachapata. The ridge above offers a view of the Lake Qomercocha and Hamacocha. We traverse the ridge and enter the waterhead of Mt. Ninaparayoc with its lake below. A nice walk down this valley with Mt. Ausangate behind us - we have now completed almost a full circle around the mountain. Rolling hills now extend below us as we hike into Pacchanta for a chance to visit the hot springs, camp and overnight.

Day 22 - PACCHANTA/TINKI/CUSCO(Friday)

Leaving our community camp-site with a chance to buy local textiles, we head down to Tinki crossing the vast hills and fields that are occupied by local peasants, until we reach Tinki at midday. After lunch we get in our vehicle returning to Cusco the way we came.

Day 23 CUSCO/LIMA (Saturday)

Transfer to the airport for your ongoing flight to Lima or elsewhere and assistance with any connections anywhere in Peru or abroad.

Note: It is possible that on this itinerary you will be joined by passengers doing just one of the three treks. Special small group rates available.

SERVICES INCLUDED: Transportation by vehicle to start and from the end of trek to your city of departure, hotel night at the beginning and end of treks in Lima, Huaraz and Cusco, two-man tents including sleeping pads, pack animals or porters, kitchen crew and commissary gear with all meals included as well as a bilingual guide on the trek, who will handle the first aid kit. Entrance fee to the Machu Picchu Sanctuary Inca Trail (USD\$50.00 per passenger).

NOT INCLUDED: Meals in the cities, alcoholic beverages, extras, tips, laundry service, additional tours, insurance and airline tickets (Lima/Cusco/Lima) sleeping bags, hiking boots and other personal gear.