



Three Cultures of Northern Peru: Overland and Trek to remote highlands and their cultural heritage Day by day description

Day 1 LIMA/HUARAZ

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.

Day 2 HUARAZ/ LLANGANUCO

The trip begins as we head north from Huaraz, going through some towns of the Callejón de Huaylas such as Paltay and Jacas, until we reach the nearby province of Carhuaz where we will make a brief stop to visit its lovely Plaza. As we continue, we reach the villages of Ranrahirca and Yungay, considered holy ground, this village was destroyed and buried by a landslide on may 31st of 1970. Here we find the Yungas Christ. Two Kilometers from there, is the new village of Yungay where we take a detour of 23 km toward the Quebrada Llanganuco, to visit the pristine turquoise lakes of Chinancocha and Orconcocha (3,850 m.a.s.l.) We continue our trip towards Quebrada Demanda and take some short hikes, lunch on route. Beautiful views of Mt. Huandoy, Huascarán, Chacaraju and other peaks of the Huascarán National Park. Return to Huaraz

Day 3 HUARAZ/OLLEROS/SACRACANCHA

Drive to Olleros, the starting point of our trek. Here our llamas and drivers will wait for us while we start winding slowly along a river bed at first to reach the vicinity of tomorrow's pass - beautiful views of the rolling plains and snow - capped peaks of the Huascarán National Park. Camp at Sacracancha.

Day 4 SACRACANCHA/SHONCOPAMPA

We slowly ascend the pass at Yana shallash (4,700 m.a.s.l.). We will see the peaks of Umashraju, Huantsan, Rurec and other mountains as we hike over the continental divide into the Callejon de Conchucos on the eastern side of the Andes. The trail coming off the pass is clearly pre-hispanic with flagstones zig zagging down the mountainside. We will pass some family communities during the course of the day. Camp at Shoncopampa.

Day 5 SHONCOPAMPA/CHAVIN

The trail winds slowly down hill into the valley as we leave the mountains behind through agricultural fields. At midday we will arrive at Chavin de Huantar located on the outskirts of the village of the same name. During the afternoon we will explore the ruins. The site has many galleries and holds carved stone figures of anthropomorphic semblance reminiscent of the Maya culture. It is the oldest known pre-columbian culture discovered known as Chavin-Kotosh. Afternoon visit of this archaeological complex. Overnight at a hotel, dinner on your own.



Day 6 CHAVIN/ SAN MARCOS/HUANUCOPAMPA

Leaving Chavin we head towards San Marcos. From here a winding road with views of the Cordillera Blanca at a beautiful overlook, take us over the pass into the Antamina mine. We continue towards Huallanca and from here a dirt road takes us to Union, the province from which a short ride brings us to Huanucopampa, with its impressive Inca constructions and urban layout where we camp. Afternoon walk around the vast site which used to be an important Inca settlement

Day 7 HUANUCOPAMPA/ QUEROPALCA

Morning visit to this impressive Inca site, an important urban settlement right on the main Inca road between Cusco and Cajamarca. Located on a high plateau, no other urban development grew around it in colonial and republican times. After a few hours of roaming around the complex, we continue towards Rondos, down into Baños on the Nupe River and up to Queropalca, our base camp for the three day trek ahead of us. Camp and overnight.

Day 8 QUEROPALCA / MITUCOCHA

A half day hike nudging the foothills of the Cordillera Huayhuash will bring us to Lake Mitucocha with beautiful views of the mountains of Rondoy, Jirishanca and Yerupaja. Afternoon to roam the landscape and if lucky we may feast on trout from the Lake.

Day 9- MITUCOCHA/CARHUACOCHA

Over the Carhuacocho pass at 4,600 m.a.s.l. with views of Jirishanca Chico and the peaks of Siula, Yerupaja, Sarapo and Toro. Highland Savannah known as puna surrounds the campsite and the countryside. Located at another lake we have fantastic views of those snow-capped peaks, that surround the western side of Carhuacocho. (Time: 7-8 hrs. Distance: 8 kms).

Day 10 – CARHUACOCHA / QUEROPALCA

Morning hike up to the Pass to get amazing views of Mt. Suila, close up to the ice-fall and return for lunch. Afternoon hike out to Queropalca down this beautiful valley of pastures and small lakes.

Day 11 – QUEROPALCA/ GARU / HUANUCO

Leaving Queropalca on our vehicle, we will pass Baños and join the main road coming from Jesus to the origin of Marañon river and valley. A slow ascent along the valley and gorge will bring us to the ruins of Garu, a beautiful pre-inca settlement overlooking the Marañon. We visit the site, have lunch and continue to the city of Huanuco where we overnight in a hotel, dinner on your own.

Day 12 HUANUCO / LIMA

In the course of the day a vehicle will transfer us over the highest pass in the central highway to Lima.

SERVICES INCLUDED: Transportation by vehicle to start and from the end of trek to your city of departure, hotel nights during the itinerary, two-man tents including sleeping pads, pack animals, kitchen crew and commissary gear with all meals included as well as a bilingual guide on the trek, who will have a first aid kit available.

NOT INCLUDED: Meals in the cities, alcoholic beverages, taxes, tips, extras, laundry service, additional tours, insurance and airline tickets (where applicable), sleeping bags, hiking boots and personal clothing and equipment.