



The Cordillera Huayhuash Escape Day by day description

Day 1 - LIMA / HUANUCO

Leaving the capital city we head up into the Andes on the Central Highway. A very steep ascent along the Rimac valley first and then the river as it becomes a gorge will bring us past numerous villages and mines operating in the area. We reach Ticlio, at 4,820m (15,809ft) the pass of the highest railway in the world and begin our slow descent past various mining complexes until reaching Oroya. From here we turn off to Cerro de Pasco and Huanuco. We will have a chance to see vicuña along the road as we travel through the National Reserve of Junin and the Natural Sanctuary of Huayllay. The first harbors a huge lake –lake Chinchaycocha as the central ecosystem surrounded by highland savannah (puna) and the second has thousands of curious vertical slabs of rock probably from a past intrusion. We continue across the plateau and start our descent, this time definite, to Huanuco a town of 50,000 located at 1,800m (5,904ft) after having spent a good part of the day at 4,500m (14,760ft). Arrive at our hotel and relax.

Day 2 - HUANUCO / QUEROPALCA

Leaving early we travel west towards the valley of the Marañón River. A short distance from Huanuco, we will briefly visit the pre-Inca site of Kotosh before we continue on the road towards Choras, our first stop off. Located 75km from the Huanuco, the road winds its way up the valley passing small villages of Pampas, Huancapulla and Jacas Chico. A fork in the road will take us to Choras, located overlooking the Marañón Valley. From here we will start a three-hour walking tour of Garu, the main site of the Yaro or Yaravilca, ethnic group that dominated the Marañón Valley before the Incas assimilated them. The site is spectacularly located at the junction of the Ticrash Valley and the Marañón with rustic flat rock stone buildings, windows and some two and three storey construction still standing. A magnificent introduction into pre-Inca culture. Lunch at the site.

In the afternoon continue up the Marañón valley past the small villages of Huancabamba, Rayapata and Huarin , origin of the Marañón River. Here the Lauricocha river joins the Nupe to form the Marañón. From here we cross the bridge and head towards Baños, a small village on the Nupe Valley. Continue up the Nupe river then the road ascends slowly into the Queropalca Valley. As we enter the valley before us we will see a fantastic view of the Northern section of the Cordillera Huayhuash – Mt. Jirishanka, Yerupaya and Rondoy. We camp below the village of Queropalca, in view of the mountains we will see close up tomorrow.

Day 3 - QUEROPALCA/CARHUACOCHA

A half – day hike will bring us to the foot of Lake Carhuacochoa, a beautiful location. On a calm day the snow-capped peaks of Jirishanca and Yerupaja are reflected in the water. After lunch a chance to hike around to the upper part of the lake to view Mt. Siula, its icefall and the two glacial lakes below it – Siulacocha and Solterococha. If we are lucky, late in the day we may witness an ice-fall. Return to camp.

Day 4 – CARHUACOCHA/MITUCOCHA

Leaving our campsite behind we hike over another pass at 4,650m (15,252ft) with great views of the surrounding area. Once over the Punta Carhuac Pass we come into view of Lake Mitucocha and again in the background Mt. Yerupajá and Rondoy form the backdrop of our day's hike. Lunch on route. We arrive in the early afternoon with a chance to walk around the lake and get closer views of the mountain. Overnight and camp at Mitucocha.



Day 5 – MITUCOCHA/CACANAMPUNTA/CUARTELWAIN/HUARAZ

Leaving the lake we hike up the Cacanampunta Pass at 4,750m (15,580ft), the “aquarium divertium” of the Andes at this point. A last view of the Cordillera Huayhuash and we descend into the Llamac valley and end our hike into the early afternoon at Cuartelwain. Here a vehicle will pick us up and take us back to Huaraz via Conococha on the newly built road. If the weather is clear and it's sunset we will get an awesome view of the Cordillera Blanca and its snowcapped peaks. Overnight at the hotel, dinner on your own.

Note: Optional one day extension to visit the citadel of Chavin, a unique pre-inca site driving via Huallanca to San Marcos and Chavin via Antamina, a huge mining complex. Also visit the village of Ayash.

SERVICES INCLUDED: Transportation by vehicle to start and from the end of trek to your city of departure, 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 handle the first aid kit.

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