



From Choquequirao to the Machu Picchu Sanctuary Day by day description

Day 1 LIMA / CUSCO

Arrive in Cusco transfer to your hotel. Free day to acclimatize with a guided walk of Cusco and the highlights of the city.

Day 2 CACHORA /CHIQUISCA

Leaving Cusco due north on the main highway towards Lima, we leave the city behind, cross into Antapampa with views of Mt. Salkantay and Humantay at first and as we leave this high plateau area, Mt Pituiray, Chicon and Veronica come into view. Once we begin to descend into Limatambo we'll visit the Inca site of Tarawasi located in the outskirts. The road continues until we reach the Apurimac River, an impressive gorge. Past the village of Curawasi, visiting the Say – huite - stone – a carved map of the Inca empire, it is said. A small side road over a ridge brings us down to the village of Cachora, where we start today's hike. Taking our day packs we start walking along the edge of the mountain. At Capuliyoc, we get our first view of the Apurimac canyon and the trail that lies ahead. We begin our descent and camp by the river at a small campsite next to the river at Chiquisca at 2,450m (8,036 ft). (Distance: 12 kms, Time: 6-7 hours hiking).

Day 3 APURIMAC / MARAMPATA

The crossing of the river on a footbridge marks the start of the day. From here an uphill walk of half the day brings us to Inkamisana – a small meadow where we have lunch. As we ascend on the steep trail we begin to appreciate the canyonland vegetation and environment on both sides of the Apurimac canyon. The afternoon hike is not as steep a trail as we approach the hanging valley where the site of Choquequirao is found. We camp at the available flat area of Marampata. (Distance: 10 kms , Time: 8 hrs.)

Day 4 CHOQUEQUIRAO

We will spend the whole day exploring the various archaeological sites located at different points on the hillside overlooking the Apurimac River. We pass the stream of Chunchumayo, the views from here to the other side of the Canyon are spectacular. The restored buildings were areas used for storage, living quarters, a garrison, and the ceremonial sites are impressive. First reports of a visit to this complex are from 1768 with many more later-explorers, scientists and treasure hunters all the way through 1909 when Hiram Bingham also visited the area reportedly his first contact with a lost citadel of the Incas. We will have time to wander through this extended settlement spending most of the day looking at the different buildings, some were living quarters, ceremonial centers, garrisons or warehouses. Return to our campsite at Marampata at the end of the excursion.



Day 5 MAIZAL

We start our ascent from our campsite to the Pass of Choquequirao (3,250 m / 10,660ft), entering cloud forest where we find polylepis trees , epiphytes and bromelids. On the other side as we descend the Yuracmayo river we pass some terracing that supplied Choquequirao and finally arrive at the river bed, which we cross . We continue our ascent until reaching Maizal, a balcony with an impressive view of the Yuracmayo and Yanama gorges, as they join and rush towards the Apurimac Canyon. It's a natural viewpoint, looking out to the west with beautiful sunsets where we camp. (Distance: 5 kms, Time: 6 hours).

Day 6 MINA VICTORIA / YANAMA

The trail starts climbing steeply towards Mina Victoria, an Inca and later colonial mine. We hike along a hill called Qoriwayrachina, where recent archaeological explorations have taken place. Once over the pass at (3,900m / 12, 792 ft), we have lunch and begin our descent to the village of Yanama with views of the mountain country and Mt. Pumasillo towering above us and our campsite below. (Distance: 10kms, Trek: 7hrs)

Day 7 TOTORA

Heading up the Yanama valley, past fields of farmers we reach the trailhead below the Quiswar pass at (4,180m – 13,710ft). Cross over the pass, beautiful views of Mt. Salkantay and Humantay on a clear day. Descend on the winding trail to the valley of Totora below, camping in the vicinity of the Village. (Distance: 10 kms, Time: 8 hours)

Day 8 WIÑAYPOQO

Leaving our campsite we continue downhill passing small settlements to Colcapampa (2,850m / 9,348ft) . A chance to relax and soak in the thermal baths before continuing after lunch down the headwaters of the Santa Teresa Valley. As the trail slowly borders this valley the vegetation becomes cloud forest passing small plots of farmers growing coffee and tropical fruits until reaching the meadow of Wiñay poqo where we camp at (2,590m / 8,495.20ft) (Time: 6hrs , Distance: 8kms).

Day 9 PALTALLACTA

We continue our descent along the Sta Teresa Valley, passing by San Ignacio, the roadhead at Playa and Lucmabamba (2,135m/ 7,002.80). We cross the river to begin our ascent at the pass at Q'elloqasa (2,875m / 9,430ft). Traversing dense cloud forest with a chance to hear bird – calls, we pass a pre inca site to reach our campsite, surrounded by an immense avocado tree that gives the area its name. From here we get a magnificent view of Machu Picchu from its northern face, camp at 2,650m / 8,692.00). (Distance: 10km, Time: 7 hours).

Day 10 MACHU PICCHU

Today is a short day; we descend down to the Urubamba Valley, with a chance for a refreshing dip in the stream following the path to the hydroelectric plant. Picnic lunch on the way, and in the afternoon we take the train to Machu Picchu pueblo where we will spend the night at a local hotel. Depending on the time we arrive, there is a chance to visit the citadel at sunset.



Day 11 LIMA

All day spent exploring the famous citadel of the Incas, perched above the Urubamba River gorge in the heart of the Sanctuary, a protected area part of the National Park system of Peru, 65,000 acres in size. A full day guided tour of this extraordinary complex with an optional hike to the sun-gate (Intipunku) or Waynapicchu, the hill overlooking the saddle where the site is located. Afternoon train ride to Cusco, and overnight in a hotel. Transfer to the airport for your connection in Lima to your onward destination.

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.

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