



Adventure tours that delve deeper

Adventurous Peru trip

TRIP LENGTH: 8 days
STARTS: Cusco
ENDS: Cusco

A group of 5 friends asked us to organize a trip with visits to ruins, outdoor sports and community interaction.

Day 1 Welcome to Cusco

Cusco, the historic capital of the Inca Empire, is one of the most beautiful cities on Earth! The trip starts at 1pm when your guide will pick you up and take you for a traditional Peruvian meal at one of our favourite local restaurants. Then spend the afternoon on a relaxed walking tour around Cusco's stunning historic centre – it's important to take it easy if you've arrived from sea level today, as you need to adjust to Cusco's 3,400m (11,200ft) altitude.

Accommodation: Comfortable hotel in Cusco

Meals: Lunch and dinner included

Day 2 Explore Pisac

Pisac, 45 minutes drive from Cusco, is the gateway to the Sacred Valley and was fiercely defended by the Incas, as evidenced by the massive fortress which bristles above the town. We'll spend the morning hiking and exploring its many terraces and fortifications, and enjoying the stunning views. In the afternoon we'll check out Pisac's other famous attraction - the largest artesanía (handicraft) market in the region - it's the perfect place to get all your souvenir and gift shopping taken care of in one fell swoop!

There's also time today to explore Pisac's cobbled, pedestrian backstreets where you can taste local specialty empanadas, and meet guinea pigs who live in elaborate miniature castles!

Accommodation: Comfortable hotel in Pisac

Meals: All meals included

Day 3 Hot springs and biking in Lares Valley!

This morning we'll head up to local favourite attraction, the Lares hot springs, where naturally occurring hot springs are surrounded by lovingly landscaped terraces carved out of a rushing river gorge. We'll relax and soak before lunch, then spend the afternoon biking down around craggy Andean peaks through high altitude farmland where traditionally-dressed locals tend flourishing llama flocks and potato crops.

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As we gently descend, the landscape gradually changes from austere open pasture and rock to a verdant, bushy river gorge that brings us down through the villages of Patacancha and Huilloc and eventually into Ollantaytambo – one of the most beautiful villages in Peru, and our destination for the night.

Accommodation: Comfortable hotel in Ollantaytambo

Meals: All meals included

Day 4 Community half day and Aguas Calientes

This morning we'll visit the coffee and cacao cooperative of Chichubamba, where we'll participate in both the processing and the consumption of these delicious Peruvian products, and experience firsthand how they underpin the local lifestyle and economy.

This afternoon there's time for a little exploration of Ollantaytambo - perhaps the most perfectly preserved of all Inca towns, a maze of cobbled alleyways and sun-drenched plazas presided over by a spectacular, llama-shaped ruin – before we take the 1.5 hour train ride to Aguas Calientes, our jumping-off point for Machu Picchu tomorrow.

Accommodation: Comfortable hotel in Aguas Calientes

Meals: All meals included

Day 5 Machu Picchu

A spectacular stone city surrounded by incredibly steep, incredibly green mountains, Machu Picchu needs no introduction and is deservedly one of the new Seven Wonders of the World.

We'll be up at sunrise so there's time for your guide to show you around Machu Picchu's main citadel, as well as our favourite hidden nooks and crannies, before the crowds arrive. Then there's time for your own exploration of the massive, still-mysterious site, before we catch the train back to Ollantaytambo.

Accommodation: Comfortable hotel in Ollantaytambo

Meals: All meals included

Day 6 Maras Salt pools and stand up paddle in Piuray

We'll explore Salineras, the still-operational Inca salt factory – a surreal and beautiful patchwork of twinkling pools and blinding-white paths that's one of our favorite sights in the Sacred Valley.

After a full briefing and warm-up, we'll take to the waters of serene, stunning Lake Piuray on stand up paddleboards. It's a mellow, meditative workout, and a great way to soak in the quiet majesty of the mountains all around us.

Accommodation: Comfortable hotel in Cusco

Meals: All meals included

Day 7 The South Valley!

The Valle Sur just outside Cusco is one of our favourite places to take our guests, because it offers a one day snapshot of the incredible variety of this whole region. We'll meet brujos (witches) who can read your future in coca leaves, and see how bakers create the area's famous chuta bread. We'll explore two charming, little-visited ruins: the Inca agricultural laboratory Tipón, with its still-working terraces and panoramic views, and

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Pikillacta, 'the flea village', which was home to 10,000 members of a pre-Inca tribe known for abundant procreation!

We'll check out the church of Andahuaylillas, so elaborate it's known as the Sistine Chapel of the Americas, and the deliberately-deformed skulls of departed Inca nobles displayed in the museum next door.

On the way home there's time to sample local specialty foods like toqto (pigskin), cuy (guinea pig), or for the less adventurous palate, the best cakes and ice-creams in the region!

Accommodation: Comfortable hotel in Cusco

Meals: All meals included

Day 8 Departure day

You can book your flight out of Cusco for any time today. If you're staying on in Peru, we'd be delighted to help out with suggestions and assistance for the rest of your time here.

Meals: Breakfast included

What's included:

- All accommodation (*based on twin-share. Single supplement available for US\$400*)
- All ground transport (*private vehicle, train and boat*)
- All activities specified in itinerary
- Entrance to all attractions specified in itinerary
- Dedicated Aspiring Adventures guide
- All meals as specified (*7 breakfasts, 7 lunches, 7 dinners*)
- Drinking water with meals

What's not included:

- Tips for your guide(s)

Accommodations:

Accommodations on our Peru itineraries are our favourites in each town. In Cusco, Sacred Valley and Aguas Calientes, we stay in clean, comfortable hotels of three-star standard.