

ADVENTURE DOSSIER FOR:

THE INCA TRAIL

CUSCO – OLLANTAYTAMBO - FIVE DAY INCA TRAIL TO MACHU PICCHU – AGUAS CALIENTES- CUSCO
(8 Days)

The former Inca Capital and Spanish colonial city of Cusco is our base for this great expedition, a wonderful place full of culture, history, good restaurants and fun nightlife. From Cusco we travel through the Sacred Valley of the Incas, passing the Inca Fortress town of Ollantaytambo, before embarking on the famous Inca Trail to the lost city of the Incas, Machu Picchu. This five day, four night trek involves spectacular Andean scenery along an ancient paved Inca trail. We have plenty of time to treasure each view and the many ruins en-route. A night is spent in the colourful town of Aguas Calientes before spending the whole day exploring the awe-inspiring, 'new wonder of the modern world', Machu Picchu. The return to Cusco is by 'Vistadome' train and private bus. The final day is spent relaxing in Cusco's ancient streets, artisan markets or excellent restaurants and bars.

This trip can be combined with a number of "Excellent Extensions" such as a trip to our Amazon rainforest lodge, the Colca Canyon, Rafting the mighty Apurimac River or a boat trip on Lake Titicaca.

DETAILED ITINERARY

For those requiring Lima hotel, airport transfers and internal flight services within Peru, please contact us for best options and availability.

DAY 1: CUSCO

On arrival from your spectacular flight along the Andes to Cusco, we transfer you to your hotel and start acclimatising to the rarefied air of this beautiful city (3326m). In the afternoon, we take a short walking tour of the centre of Cusco to familiarise you with the main sights, restaurants and a chance to stretch your legs and experience hiking at 3300m. At a convenient time your guide will arrange a full briefing for the days ahead.

DAY 2: START INCA TRAIL

Our Inca Trail guides pick us up this morning for the drive past the impressive Inca fortress of Ollantaytambo and a chance to buy any last minute supplies. After an interesting drive to the end of the road at Chilca we meet our support team of traditional porters before embarking on the famous Inca trail to Machu Picchu. The trek undulates along the banks of the Urubamba river and we camp the night at Llactapata (2,788m) beside some spectacular ruins which, if you have the energy, we have time to explore. This is camping and trekking in style. Whilst walking all you need to carry is a daypack, all camping equipment is carried by the porters. All camp chores are done for us and delicious food is served by a cook and his helpers. (B/L/D)

DAY 3: LLACTAPATA TO LLULLUCHUPAMPA

We trek up the Cusichaca valley to the small hamlet of Huallyabamba, the last inhabited place on the trail. The path continues on up beautiful Inca path, past humming birds and stunted cloud forest. Our camp is at Llulluchupampa (3680m) - a beautiful grassy area with outstanding views down the valley. (B/L/D)

DAY 4: LLULLUCHUPAMPA TO PHUYOPATAMARCA

Possibly the hardest day of the trek, we rise early and head to the top of Warmiwanusca (Dead woman's pass 4200m). This is the highest point of the trail before we descend into the Pacasmayo valley and then climb again passing the first of many Inca ruins Runkuracay. Our second pass of the day (3998m) gives us spectacular views of the Vilcabamba range. Walking on well preserved Inca pathway we pass Sayacmarca ruins with plenty of time for an in depth tour and explanation before passing through a tunnel and a gentle climb which brings us to Phuyupatamarca ruins (the place above the clouds) where we camp (3650m). (B/L/D)

DAY 5: ARRIVE MACHU PICCHU

After an early morning chance to catch the sunrise on the surrounding snow capped mountains of Salcantay (6,200m) and Veronica (5,800m), we say a farewell to our porters with a traditional song and dance. Our final day hiking brings us down into the cloud forest on a series of Inca stairway to Winay Wayna, another interesting ruin full of swallows and orchids. Finally we contour through cloud-forest to Inti Punku, the gateway of the Sun and our first glimpse of Machu Picchu. We pass through the ruins and catch a bus down to our hostel in the colourful town of Aguas Calientes and celebrate our return to civilisation. (B/L)

DAY 6: MACHU PICCHU

Returning first thing in the morning we have Machu Picchu virtually to ourselves for a full guided tour, with time afterwards to climb Huayna Picchu or else just wander through the ruins, soaking up the amazing atmosphere. In the afternoon, we board the train for an exhilarating ride along the Sacred Valley of the Incas. Here our waiting bus whisks us back to Cusco and our hotel. Then if we have the energy we can explore Cusco's excellent nightlife. (B)

DAY 7: CUSCO

There is so much to see and do in Cusco that we dedicate a whole day to doing just that. Whether your interest is exploring Inca ruins, visiting Colonial churches, bargain hunting in Indian markets or just relaxing over a cappuccino on a terrace overlooking the Plaza de Armas, Cusco has it all. (B).

DAY 8: CUSCO – HOME

Today, we transfer to Cusco airport in time for your internal and international flights home. ***Or for those with more time consider one or more of our Excellent Extensions to the Amazon Rainforest, Lake Titicaca, Arequipa and the Colca canyon, Nazca and the Ballestas islands or more adventures by bike, foot, canoe, raft or horse. Please contact us for more details.***

(B)

WE PROVIDE: All airport transfers, transport to the Inca Trail in private vehicle. All camping and cooking equipment: this includes Therm-a-rests, spacious two-person tents, dining tent and toilet tent. An emergency first-aid kit and oxygen. A registered, English-speaking Inca Trail guide, all porters, cook team, guided tour in Machu Picchu. Entrance to the Inca Trail and Machu Picchu, also the porters' Inca Trail entrances. Bus transfers between the ruins and Aguas Calientes. Transport from Machu Picchu to your hotel in Cusco will be the luxury Vistadome train service and bus transfer. Accommodation will be quality hotels in Lima, Cusco and a hostel in Aguas Calientes. All meals provided are indicated in the itinerary. (B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner).

NOT INCLUDED: International nor internal flights, personal belongings, sleeping bag (available for hire at \$10 a night), airport taxes (\$6 local, \$31 international), travel insurance, personal expenses and tips. **Lima hotels, airport transfers, day rooms, tours and all internal flights are not included but can also be organised and quoted for on request.**

Please Note: The price is based on twin share accommodation. Single supplements are available on request.

EQUIPMENT LIST: On this expedition we will be experiencing all extremes of Peruvian climate, from freezing Altiplano to extremely hot sunshine. During the day hopefully it will be generally sunny enough for shorts and T-shirts though having a fleece and rain gear handy is advisable. It will get cold (as low as -5°C whilst camping) especially in the evenings so bring a warm fleece jacket, a good waterproof and some warm clothes including thermal underwear, gloves, scarf and woolly hat as well as one set of smarter clothes for Cusco. Good quality Alpaca jumpers are available in Cusco. A good quality sleeping bag is essential for your enjoyment of this trip.

SUGGESTED LIST:

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| - Comfortable clothes for travel | - Smart clothes for night life |
| - Shorts | - T-shirts |
| - A warm fleece or down jacket | - Thermal underwear |
| - Warm hat, gloves, scarf | - Sweater (available in Cusco) |
| - Waterproof coat & trousers (poncho) | - Socks / underwear |
| - Trekking trousers | - After trekking trousers & t-shirt |
| - Good, well worn-in walking boots | - After trek shoes (sandals) |
| - Sleeping bag (-5°C) | - Towel |
| - Water bottle | - Sunglasses |
| - Swim suit | - Sun-hat, |
| - Head torch & spare batteries | - Book, notepaper & pen (optional) |
| - Suntan lotion factor 15+ / After sun | - Lip balm |
| - Insect Repellent | - Camera & spare film 100 & 400 (optional) |
| - Trekking poles & protective covers | - Personal toilet kit |
| - Money belt | - Day-sack & rain-cover |
- Personal first aid kit to include: painkillers, plasters (band-aids), moleskin, antiseptic cream, after-bite, anti-diarrhoea tablets, throat lozenges, re-hydration salts & personal medication. (Amazonas Explorer carries an extensive first aid kit & Oxygen on all trips, but these are generally for emergencies only)

BOOKING CONDITIONS: The purchase of Inca Trail permits is strictly controlled by the Peruvian Institute of Culture (INC). There are only 500 permits for guides, porters and trekkers per day. This has led to very competitive demand with permits often being sold out more than three months in advance.

With regard any trip that involves trekking the Inca Trail, we have therefore introduced the following booking conditions.

1: Space on the trip cannot be confirmed until:

A): Full client information (Full name, Passport number, Nationality and Date of Birth) are sent to us in order to purchase your Inca trail permit.

B): Amazonas Explorer has confirmed that an Inca Trail permit is available for the trip of your choice.

C) The USD \$200 non-refundable deposit has been paid.

2: Clients must bring with them the passport with which the permit was issued – ie **the passport number that was provided us with at time of booking – otherwise entry to the Inca Trail will not be permitted.**

3: Inca Trail, Machu Picchu and local ruins entrance fees for 2009 have not yet been confirmed and should there be a significant increase, Amazonas Explorer will not be able to assume this extra cost and the extra will have been passed onto the clients

Please note:

- The porters carry all your heavy camping gear but this is inaccessible during the day so please bring a small day-pack to carry your personal day gear in – i.e. water-bottle, camera, sun-block, insect repellent, light fleece and rain jacket.

- Due to Inca trail rules limiting the numbers of porters and the weight they carry, we have to limit your heavy gear to 8kg per person – this is usually more than adequate. Kit bags are supplied for these porter carried items.
- Any excess gear may be stored in Cusco at your hotel whilst on the Inca trail.
- New rules at Machu Picchu limit the number of visitors to Huayna Picchu to the first 400 people before 10am. Please let your guide know early if you wish to climb this peak so they can plan ahead.
- Inca trail regulations stipulate Ski poles are only allowed with plastic protecting covers. This is to prevent trail damage. ‘Native’ tree walking sticks are also banned on the trail, this is to prevent deforestation.
- We recommend trekkers take around six hundred soles in local currency for any emergencies and expenses in Machu Picchu.
- We have an extensive Tipping document available. – If you have not received this from your agent or have misplaced your document please ask your guide for a copy to be provided from the office.
- We implement a ‘porter protection policy’ that ensures all porters are well treated, paid, insured, fed and looked after.
- Most good quality sporting equipment is unavailable in Peru so if anyone wishes to donate any outdoor clothes, sleeping bags etc they will be gratefully received by any of our staff.
- Amazonas Explorer is a member of www.onepercentfortheplanet.org. We support a local native-tree re-forestation program www.ecoanperu.org and planted 13,000 trees in 2007 and 16,000 in 2008. We are dedicated to reducing our ‘foot-print’ by reducing waste, sourcing produce as locally as possible, recycling and discouraging the use of plastic bottles.
- If you would like to give a donation to charity whilst in Peru, Amazonas Explorer recommends the Dental Project Peru, run by a past client of ours, Jacqui Nimmo who provides emergency dental-treatment in the very poor Apurimac region. You can find out more about this excellent project and how to donate tax efficiently at www.dentalprojectperu.org.

RECOMMENDED READING: The White Rock or Cochineal Red - Hugh Thomson,
Manu or Where the Andes meets the Amazon – Kim MacQuarrie & Andre Bartschii
Field guide to the birds of Machu Picchu - Barry Walker

Exploring Cusco - Peter Frost

Neo-tropical companion - John C Kricher.

The last days of the Incas - Kim MacQuarrie

The bridge of San Luis Rey - Thornton Wilder

Into the forests of the night - John Simpson

Heart of the Amazon – Yossi Ghinsberg

Inca Gold - Clive Cussler

The Inca Trail - Richard Danbury

Running the Amazon - Joe Kane.

Birds of Peru - Clive Byers

Conquest of the Incas - John Hemmingway

Touching the void - Joe Simson

Inca Kola – Matthew Paris

Realm of the Incas – Max Milligan

AND LASTLY: The “Inca Trail” travels through a remote and rarely visited part of Peru and we believe our clients should be aware that the remoteness that makes the Inca Trail so very special could also cause certain problems. Thus, whilst Amazonas Explorer endeavours to minimise the chances of anything unexpected happening, it has to be noted that no itinerary can or should be rigidly adhered to. This is the very nature of Adventure Travel and we expect our clients to be prepared for delays and slight alterations in our programmed events.

The Inca Trail involves trekking over several high passes up to 4200m and involves steep descents on old Inca steps-it is recommended that all clients should have some previous trekking experience and should be in reasonable fitness.

Please note last minute international and internal flight changes, train times changes, also excess baggage charges are out of our control. In all cases we will advise you of any changes in the itinerary as early as possible. We have taken all these possibilities into account when planning this expedition and have allowed sufficient leeway to enable us to successfully run this exceptional trip.

The majority of dietary and medical requirements can be catered for, but we must be notified of these at the time of booking. Obtaining the correct vaccinations and visas required for Peru is the individual passenger’s responsibility.

You should also be aware that adventure travel, in particular trekking, white-water rafting, inflatable canoeing, mountain biking and travelling in remote areas such as Southern Peru, does carry with it certain inherent risks that you, the client, will have to assume. You will have to take out adequate **travel insurance** to cover these risks and any costs incurred due to sickness, delayed flights and other factors out of Amazonas Explorer control.

A pre-departure meeting will be held on the day before departure. It is highly recommended you attend. All clients will be asked to sign a risk assumption form and must provide a photocopy of their passport, Peru entry stamp and details of their travel insurance.

We look forward to seeing you in Peru.

