

EXTENSIONS: CUSCO, MACHU PICCHU & THE INCA TRAIL



This information should answer some of your questions about the trip and give you a better idea of what we do day-to-day. It doesn't hope to answer everything. If you have any questions please get in touch.



Machu Picchu and Huayna Picchu. Photo Peter Wise

We can offer the following extensions to Cusco and Machu Picchu in conjunction with our trips to Peru:

- **CUSCO AND MACHU PICCHU BY TRAIN (5 Days)**
- **CUSCO AND THE INCA TRAIL TO MACHU PICCHU (8 Days)**

It's important to book early. This is essential as flights to Lima between June & September fill very quickly. The Inca trail also has new booking regulations which mean we advise booking at least 5 months in advance.

Cusco

Cusco was the capital of the Inca Empire, which at its peak, stretched from southern Chile to Ecuador. Cusco remains today the most important cultural centre in Peru and is a monument to the Incas. The Incas laid out the city in the plan of a puma - their most sacred animal. The head was the great fortress of Sacsayhuaman on a hill above the city, the spine was the stream of Tullumayo, and the body was the great plaza of Huacaypata. Their city layout persists to this day and there is much well preserved Inca stonework with walls of huge stones enclosing narrow alleys and the remains of palaces and temples. The later Spanish colonial development is often built on Inca foundations. The mix of Inca remains and colonial churches and houses is fascinating and amongst the narrow streets are many cafes and craft shops.

Machu Picchu

The American archaeologist Hiram Bingham rediscovered Machu Picchu in 1911. It is thought that the Spaniards never found Machu Picchu - perhaps it had been abandoned and 'forgotten' before they arrived. Since its rediscovery when it was swathed in jungle, much work has been done to both clear and renovate the site. With its dramatic setting, high above the Urubamba valley and the peak of Huayna Picchu towering above, it is the most remarkable Inca site in Latin America. It is most commonly reached by either train from Cusco or walking the Inca Trail, arriving at the site via Intipunku, the Gateway of the Sun.

Note: Cusco is at an altitude of 3350m and time is needed for acclimatisation. For this reason, it is better to plan your extension for the end of your trip when you will be better acclimatised.



Cusco: La Compañía Church.

EXTENSION: CUSCO & MACHU PICCHU BY TRAIN



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DAY BY DAY ITINERARY

(B, L, D) = meals included in the trip cost; breakfast, lunch, dinner.

LAST DAY OF TREK ITINERARY: Return to Lima with group. Hotel.

DAY 1 After an early transfer to Lima airport we take a morning flight to Cusco (1 hour). In the afternoon we are met by our guide and taken on a city tour around the principal churches and ruins of the city. A bit of a whirlwind tour but it will give us our bearings for tomorrow. (B)

DAY 2 A free day in Cusco. With good acclimatisation it is possible to walk to Sacsayhuaman, the massive Inca fortress overlooking Cusco and the neighbouring sites. 10 kms one way - return by local bus. (B)



DAY 3 An exciting train ride from Cusco along the Urubamba valley to Aguas Calientes, the small town in the valley at the foot of Machu Picchu. Train ride takes approx 4 hours and is fascinating throughout – this photo shows the local women plying their wares when the train stops at Ollantaytambo. We have an afternoon at the site before dropping back to Aguas Calientes where we stay the night. (B,L)

DAY 4 A first brief visit often overwhelms and this morning is spent again at Machu Picchu. For 'High Places' types, you must consider the energetic climb up Huayna Picchu, the peak overlooking the site. Amazingly, Inca steps go all the way, but it is still steep and exposed. In the afternoon we catch our train and return to Cusco. (B)

DAY 5 Transfer to Cusco airport for the morning flight to Lima. (B)

Accommodation in Cusco and Aguas Calientes in a mid-range hotel on a bed & breakfast basis.

Price

£520/NZ\$1,090 pp twin share, single supplement **£130/NZ\$280**.

Includes: train to/from Machu Picchu, first day's Machu Picchu entrance fee, accommodation and meals as specified, airport transfers.

Excludes: flights Lima/Cusco/Lima from **£230/NZ\$490**; Machu Picchu entrance fee for 2nd day, USD25, paid locally.

EXTENSION: CUSCO & THE INCA TRAIL TO MACHU PICCHU



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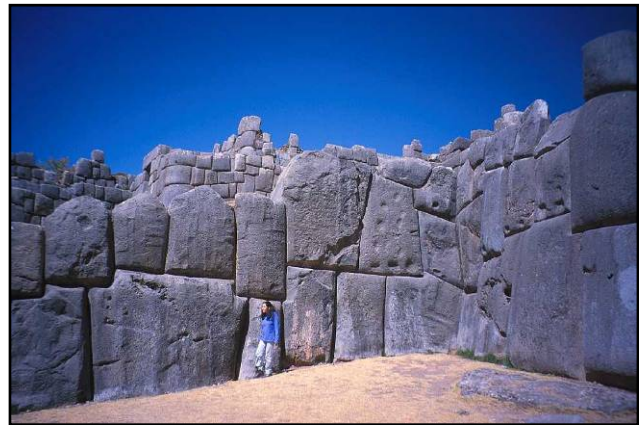
DAY BY DAY ITINERARY

(B, L, D) = meals included in the trip cost; breakfast, lunch, dinner.

LAST DAY OF TREK ITINERARY: Return to Lima with group. Hotel.

DAY 1 Transfer to Lima airport for an internal flight to Cusco (1 hour). In the afternoon we are met by our guide and taken on a city tour around the principal churches and ruins of the city. A bit of a whirlwind tour but it will give us our bearings for tomorrow. (B)

DAY 2 A free day in Cusco. With good acclimatisation it is possible to walk to Sacsayhuaman, the massive Inca fortress overlooking Cusco and the neighbouring sites. 10 kms one way - return by local bus. (B)



DAY 3 We take a bus from Cusco for the 2 hour ride to Km.88 in the Urubamba valley, the start of the trail. Here we'll meet our team, guide, cook and porters which always takes longer than expected. It's an easyish day however as we cross the river and pass through several small settlements. A short hike off the trail leads to some Inca ruins and terracing at Llactapata before continuing up to a saddle with good views down and across the main Urubamba valley. From the village of Huayllabamba. We make a final steep ascent to Llullucha and our first campsite. 3350m. (B,L,D)

DAY 4 After breakfast the trek continues through forest to the highest point of the trail, Abra de Warmihuañusca (Dead Woman's Pass). At 4200m this will be a good test of stamina and acclimatisation. After a welcome stop for lunch we descend to the valley of Pacaymayu where we camp for the night. (B,L,D)

DAY 5 Today the trail becomes more obviously an Inca highway. You will be walking on stone steps built into the mountain as the route zigzags up to the ruins of Runkurakay. Descending again towards Sayacmarca, (which in Quechua means 'Dominant Inaccessible Town') to explore the ruins, which command a sweeping view of the Aobamba valley. After crossing another high pass (4000m) the trail descends an ancient staircase to reach another Inca City, Huiñay Huayna ('Forever Young'), with beautiful stonework and an atmosphere of mystery almost exceeding that of the more crowded Machu Picchu. Here we make our camp. (B,L,D)

DAY 6 The path contours a final hillside and enters a cloud forest full of begonias, bromeliads and tree ferns. A steep flight of stairs leads to the first Inca gate and

shortly afterwards to the Sun Gate from where suddenly we can see Machu Picchu spread out below us (approx 2 hours). A dramatic moment impossible to describe and it should be relatively uncrowded, at least until the first train arrives from Cusco. There is a guided tour of the site and for the adventurous there may be time to climb the steep (really steep!) steps to the summit of Huayna Picchu, the peak overlooking the site (see photo on page 1). Finally we drop down to the valley and catch the train back to Cusco. What a day! (B,L)

DAY 7 Free day in Cusco, time to further explore this capital city of the Inca Empire (B)

DAY 8 Transfer to Cusco airport for the morning flight to Lima. (B)

Accommodation in Cusco in a mid-range hotel on a bed & breakfast basis.

Price

£750/NZ\$1,550 pp twin share, single supplement **£230/NZ\$490**.

Includes: 4-day Inca Trail trek; entrance fee to Machu Picchu; accommodation and meals as specified; airport transfers.

Excludes: flights Lima/Cusco/Lima from **£220/NZ\$500**; Inca Trail fee approx USD\$75 (will be added to final invoice).

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