

PERU, MACHU PICCHU & THE INCA TRAIL: TREKKING ADVENTURE

Peru offers great civilizations, vast landscapes, and a people rich and alive in their culture and history.

Find yourself wandering colonial cities, visiting the Inca capital of Cuzco, exploring the lost city of Machu Picchu and walking the ancient trails and ruins of the Incas. The four days and three nights we spend on the Inca Trail are the highlight of this trip. We walk on the very stones laid down by thousands of workers more than 500 years ago, a trail system called the Cápac Ñan network after the Emperor Cápac.

Our days on the trail are filled with the stunning sights surrounding us, while nights are spent swapping stories and learning about the area from our local guides. We sleep in tents for our three nights on the trail and have local porters carry our equipment and cook our meals. While this is camping, it is luxurious and truly exotic. Before and after the Inca Trail, we'll have plenty of time to take in the many other ruins and significant cultural experiences that are found in this region.

Note: This trip offers two different trekking routes. You can choose the more difficult [Classic Inca Trail](#) or the easier [Original \(Royal\) Inca Trail](#) (which avoids the high altitude issues, intense climbs and steep descents associated with the Classic Trek)!

DAILY ITINERARY

DAY 1: A Zephyr representative will be waiting for you at the airport when you arrive in Lima, Peru, and will transfer you to our hotel. If you arrive early enough, you can explore the fabulous Miraflores area of Lima on your own.

Accommodation: *Casa Andina Miraflores*, Lima

DAY 2: Our destination today is Ollantaytambo, which is at 2750 meters (over 9000 feet) above sea level. We'll fly from Lima to Cuzco and then transfer to our hotel in the quaint village of Ollantaytambo. We'll spend our afternoon acclimatizing to the altitude while we hike around town and visit the archeological remains. Ollantaytambo was an important fortified city, built to control the roads to the jungle and, according to many historians, to allow the great Incan capital to protect its people from their enemies, the Antis.

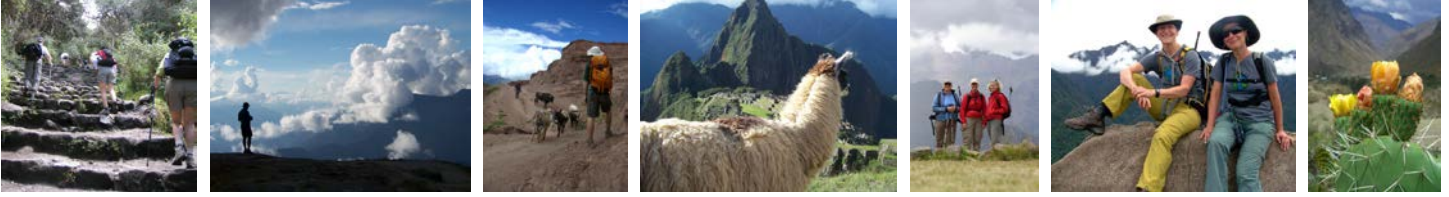
Activity: Optional hike for several hours among significant archaeological ruins.

Accommodation: *Hotel Pakaritampu*, Ollantayambo

DAY 3: After breakfast, we drive along the Sacred Valley to the Moray agricultural laboratory. This impressive off-the-beaten-path site has a cavernous amphitheater-like bowl with dozens of concentric terraces, each with its own microclimate. The Incas used this outdoor laboratory to determine the optimal conditions for growing crops of each species. From there, we hike to the nearby town of Maras for a lunch prepared by our guides. Afterwards, we'll continue on foot to visit the nearby salt pans, where local families make their living mining salt. We'll return to Ollantaytambo for dinner and our comfortable beds.

Activity: Touring and hiking local archaeological sites and ruins. Our total hiking time today is approximately three hours and will help us acclimatize for our trek.

Accommodation: *Hotel Pakaritampu*, Ollantayambo



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DAY 4: Today is the day the routes diverge: the Classic Inca Trail goes through the mountains and the Original (Royal) Inca Trail stays along the Urubamba River and avoids the steep mountain passes and high altitude of the Classic route.

CLASSIC INCA TRAIL: After a morning transfer by private motorcoach to the town of Piscacucho (2750m/9075 ft), which is also Kilometer 82 of the railway, we have an introduction to our equipment, the route and our porters, and begin trekking through semi-arid terrain along the left bank of the Urubamba River, with magnificent views of snow-capped mountains on the horizon. After two hours we arrive above the ruins of Llastapata (2650m/8745ft). Here we leave the Urubamba and set off up the Kusichaca River Valley to our camp near Wayllabamba (3000m/9900 ft). Walking from Piscacucho to Wayllabamba is approximately 12 kilometers and takes us four to five hours.

ROYAL (ORIGINAL) INCA TRAIL: After a short transfer to the Inca Bridge, we begin hiking to the Cachiccata Quarry. Here we will admire the process of working and transporting stones, and the technique ancient people used to carve them. From the quarry we have an impressive view of Mount Veronica, one of the most important in the Urubamba range. During our descent we admire breathtaking views of the Sacred Valley of the Incas, its beautiful typical little houses, and its green corn fields, crossed and irrigated by the sacred river of the Incas. Our hike ends at Las Canteras Cachiccata restaurant where we will have our lunch. After lunch we shuttle to Chilca (the first start of the Inca trail was Chilca), and from this point we will start our trek along the Urubamba River towards to Kilometer 82, where we have our first camp (2750m/9075 ft). Total mileage is eight kilometers.

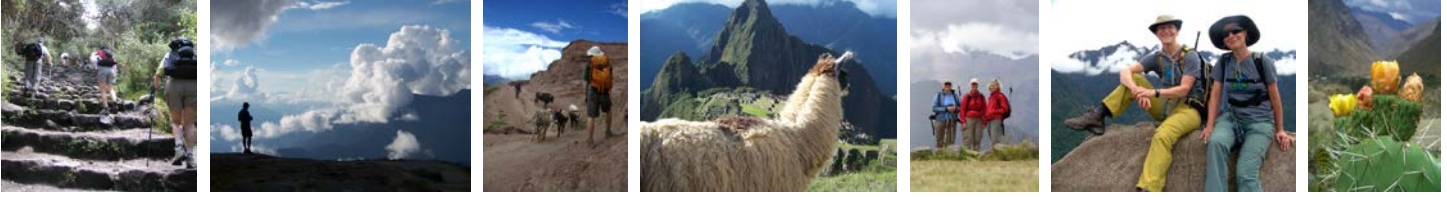
DAY 5:

CLASSIC INCA TRAIL: After a healthy breakfast we begin to walk uphill to the great Warmihuañusca (Dead Woman) pass, which at 4200m/13860ft is our highest point on the trek. We have a steep climb in the morning with a gain of 1200m/3960ft. This is a day we'll be very happy to have porters! The top of the pass offers a view you will not soon forget and we allow plenty of time at the top to appreciate it. We descend 2000 feet on stone steps to Pacaymayo (3600m/11880 ft), our second camp. Note this is the most difficult of the four days and will be very challenging for some people. The key is to go slowly and steadily. Walking time from Wayllabamba to Warmihuañusca Pass is nine kilometers and four to five hours. Walking time from the pass down to the campsite is about two kilometers and another one to two hours.

ROYAL (ORIGINAL) INCA TRAIL: For most of the day we follow the little-used right bank of the Urubamba River, the original Inca Trail, with magnificent views of snow-capped mountains, along the route that Pachacuti, the Incan Ruler who built Machu Picchu, originally took to visit his retreat. We hike about four hours over gently rolling terrain, stopping along the way to visit the impressive Inca city of Llastapata (2650m/8692ft). We continue through eucalyptus forests, and there will be few or no other groups on the trail at this point. Eventually we arrive at Qente, our second camp, we will take our lunch and in the afternoon we will visit the Inca Ruins of Machu Q'ente and Wayna Qente (2550m/8364ft). Total distance for the day is about ten kilometers.

DAY 6:

CLASSIC INCA TRAIL: From our campsite, we take a steep but short ascent to the Runkurakay circular ruins, a lookout point over the passes below. From here there is no sign of human life, only great forests and abrupt hills. The uphill continues for a short while after the ruins and then we head down on a well-preserved section of trail to the Sayacmarca ruins (3580m/11814 ft). These ruins are another short but steep climb off the main trail and are well worth visiting. After lunch the trail heads into jungle terrain and a spectacular cloud forest before arriving at our third camp (3760m/12400 ft), where we'll have a view of the surrounding peaks like you've never seen! Walking distance for the day is eight kilometers and four hours, so we have plenty of



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time at Runkurakay and Sayacmarka. Although we will have several ascents and descents, our total elevation gain will be only 40m/132ft.

ROYAL (ORIGINAL) INCA TRAIL: Starting early in the morning, we continue trekking through the cloud forest, following the river bank up and down mossy Inca stairs and hanging bridges. Today is our longest day at 18 kilometers, and a slow and steady pace is key. We spend the morning hiking through dense vegetation and past delicate purple and white orchids. When the sky is clear, we enjoy views of the glacier-topped peaks above. The narrow river canyon offers picturesque scenes of the Urubamba River winding through the canyon. Our porters pass us on the trail and set up our camp near the small ruins of Chachabamba, with plenty of time to prepare a lovely hot meal for us on our arrival.

DAY 7:

CLASSIC INCA TRAIL: We rise early today, our final day on the trail, to watch the sun's rays splash onto the surrounding mountaintops. The entire morning will be downhill on stone steps. We stop for a brief visit at the ruins below our campsite, Phuyupatamarca, before continuing our descent through the jungle to the Wiñay Wayna Ruins (2650m/8745ft). These are significant ruins, second only to Machu Picchu. We continue to Inti Punku (also known as the Sun Gate), our final mountain pass and from here you'll have your unforgettable first glimpse Machu Picchu. Walking time from Phuyupatamarca to Wiñay Wayna is seven kilometers and three hours and on to Machu Picchu is another six kilometers and two to three hours. We have a total elevation loss of 1240m/4092ft.

ROYAL (ORIGINAL) INCA TRAIL: We will be joined on the trail today by other travelers who get off the train and do a one-day hike to Machu Picchu. The trail goes uphill about 3.5 hours to the Wiñay Wayna ruins (2650m/8745ft) where we stop for lunch. This will be the most difficult part of the trek. After that, we have an hour and a half of hiking through jungle trails with a final short uphill push to the Sun Gate. We emerge to the wondrous site below us of the Lost City of the Incas, Machu Picchu. We simply sit on our perch above the ruins and soak in the beauty of the area.

From here, both the Classic Inca Trail and Original Inca Trail trekkers are back on the same schedule. It is a short one-kilometer descent from the Sun Gate into Machu Picchu itself (2400m/7920ft) and from there we will take a quick shuttle (sitting on a bus never felt so good!) to our hotel. You might be tired from your days on the trail, but you will definitely want to take time to explore bustling little Aguas Calientes, the town directly below Machu Picchu, and perhaps purchase some last-minute souvenirs.

Accommodation: *El MaPi Hotel, Aguas Calientes*

DAY 8: We will return to Machu Picchu today, just in time to see the sun rise, and we'll have it mostly to ourselves for a few hours. You'll have the option to learn more about its fascinating history via our own guided tour or to take a challenging hike up the steep mountain of Huayna Picchu (we need to purchase ahead of time a separate \$60 permit for each person who elects to participate in this option) before returning to Aguas Calientes. We will return to Ollantaytambo by train and then transfer by private coach to Cuzco (which takes a little over three hours) before enjoying our farewell dinner in town.

Accommodation: *Picoaga Hotel, Cuzco*

DAY 9: Our final day of exploration is in Cuzco, the cradle of the Incan Empire and a beautiful city. The day includes options of a walk through Sacsayhuaman ruins, a guided walk through the city or time for you to explore and shop on your own. After lunch, we will transfer to the Cuzco airport for our scheduled flight to Lima, at which time you are free to depart the country or extend your vacation in Peru.



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TRIP DETAILS

DATE CLASSIC INCA TRAIL: April 13 – 21, 2012

ORIGINAL (ROYAL) INCA TRAIL: October 20 – 28, 2012

COST \$2,700 USD per person

+ roundtrip airfare between Cuzco and Lima (*we will purchase this for you and the cost will be approximately \$400 but is subject to change*)

OPTIONAL COSTS

- Single supplement of \$800 (*single supplement is always optional; otherwise we will find you a roommate of the same gender*)
- Permit cost of \$60 to climb Huayna Picchu on Day 8 (*we will purchase this for you when we purchase your Inca Trail Pass*)

HIGHLIGHTS

- Hiking in the footsteps of an ancient culture on the Inca Trail
- Visiting Machu Picchu, the astonishing remnant of a past civilization
- Joining local guides and porters for a rich and diverse cultural experience

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE You can fly into Lima, Peru at any time on the first day of the trip. Your return flight from Lima should be late in the afternoon of the last day of the trip. If you choose to extend your trip, you will need to secure your own hotel reservations in Lima or elsewhere.

TRANSPORTATION A Zephyr representative will wait for your arrival in Lima. We'll also handle the booking of your internal Lima to Cuzco roundtrip flight and all other local transportation details. You will receive further details upon booking.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Santiago, our Peru-based guide, will accompany the group the entire trip; we also sometimes send an American-based guide with larger groups. Porters, cooks, and camp staff will accompany us on the trek itself.
- Double occupancy lodging is included. If you are traveling solo, we will match you with another traveler of the same gender. However, you may pay a single supplement to have your own room.
- All ground transportation is included, including pickup at the Lima airport if you arrive in Peru either the day of, or the day before, the trip starts.
- All meals (including gratuities) from breakfast on Day 2 through breakfast on Day 9 are included. Meals on Day 1 are not included, since arrivals may be at different times.
- All group camping equipment, including tents and sleeping pads, is included, as are permits and entry fees to hike on the Inca Trail and visit Machu Picchu and other ruins.

NOT INCLUDED

Flight to & from Lima, roundtrip Cuzco-Lima flight (approximately \$400), airport departure taxes (approximately \$45), optional sleeping bag rental (\$75), beverages when dining out, gratuities for your guides and trekking staff, and personal expenses.



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ACCOMMODATIONS

Night 1: Casa Andina, www.casa-andina.com

Casa Andina is a group of casual Peruvian hotels offering visitors an original way to know Peru and to experience the spirit of the Andean world. The staff's warmth and hospitality allow guests to enjoy the wonderful magic and splendor of the Andes. Rooms are comfortable and secure. Our Lima hotel is 45 minutes from the airport and is situated in the heart of the beautiful Miraflores area of Lima.

Nights 2 & 3: Pakaritampu Hotel, www.pakaritanpu.com

Located in Ollantaytambo, 56 miles from Cuzco, in the heart of the Inca's Sacred Valley, the Pakaritampu is in an ideal location for acclimating for our trek. We love the spectacular gardens here, as well as the friendly staff that makes sure we always have plenty of warm coca tea.

Night 7: El MaPi Hotel, <http://www.elmapihotel.com/>

The contemporary El MaPi Hotel is a comfortable landing spot after three nights on the trail, especially when you are handed a refreshing lemongrass lemonade upon arrival. It is located in the center of town and provides a perfect base for exploring.

Night 8: Picoaga Hotel, www.picoagahotel.com

This four-star luxury hotel was originally a mansion of the Spanish nobility. Located only two blocks from the Plaza de Armas, the main square of Cusco, it is a wonderful retreat in which to pamper ourselves after our nights on the trail!

BOOKING DETAILS

INTERESTED IN JOINING US? Call us at 888.758.8687 or [email](mailto:info@zephyradventures.com) us to check availability, or to ask any questions you may have regarding this trip or any other travel ideas you may be considering.

TO BOOK YOUR ADVENTURE You can book [online](http://www.zephyradventures.com) or by calling us at 888.758.8687. Zephyr Adventures requires a \$500 deposit (payable by check or credit card) at the time of booking. The remaining balance is payable by check or credit card no later than 60 days prior to the start of the trip.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? We will send you a confirmation email after we receive your booking, as well as a link to detailed printer-friendly pre-departure documents: arrival and departure information, suggestions for making travel arrangements, a packing list, an invoice, information about your trip location and guides. It will also include a link to an information form and liability waiver. We will also provide you with a link to information about travel insurance. We highly recommend you purchase [travel insurance](http://www.zephyradventures.com) because it protects you if you have an unexpected change in travel plans.