

# trek to machu picchu, peru



Your first taste of the Inca world will be in and around the city of Cusco, the ancient Inca capital. After acclimatising to the high altitude by visiting local Inca ruins and Spanish Colonial churches, you will head towards the remote and rarely visited Lares Valley. Tucked behind the Sacred Valley, the region has remained largely unchanged for more than 500 years.

Boasting spectacular scenery, this trek will offer you a real insight into how the Andean peoples live. The Quechua people dress in brightly coloured ponchos and live in thatched stone houses. Farmers herd llamas and alpacas, and guinea pigs often run loose inside the houses. Potato and maize are staple crops, and locals are also known for their intricate weaving, which dates back to the time of the Incas.

The region is also home to the Baños del Inca, probably the best hot springs in southern Peru. Situated at an altitude of 2,667m, the springs offer spectacular views of snowy peaks and glaciers such as Mounts Veronica, Chicon and Pumahaunca. As you continue along your route, you will also take in the dazzling sight of glacial blue lakes.

You will eventually have some time to explore the ruins at Machu Picchu, the 'lost City of the Incas'. These breathtaking pre-Columbian ruins are nestled high in the Andes between two peaks. The ruins were rediscovered in 1911 by Yale archaeologist Hiram Bingham and are one of the most beautiful and enigmatic ancient sites in the world.

## Day 1: International Departure

Fly from London Heathrow to Lima, Peru. A Charity Challenge representative will meet you at the airport to

assist with check-in. Overnight flight to Lima. Depending on the group flights you may have an overnight stop-over in Lima, this will be confirmed before departure.

## Day 2: Lima to Cusco

Transfer at Lima airport to board your one-hour internal flight to Cusco, the ancient Inca capital, where you will be met by your Charity Challenge team. You will spend the rest of the day acclimatising to the altitude (3,350m/11,400ft) on a walking tour of the city. Among the highlights is the Inca sun temple of Qoricancha. In the evening you will be fully briefed about the week ahead and the challenge it entails. Lunch & supper included at local restaurants. Overnight in a centrally located 3-star hotel.

## Day 3: Pikillaqta (Acclimatisation Day) – 3hrs walking

Today you visit the lesser known yet very impressive Pikillaqta Ruins. You will be provided with lunch nearby to the ruins and head back to Cusco for dinner with a local family and overnight in a centrally located 3 star hotel in Cusco.



## Day 4: Cusco to Lares hot springs to Cuncani – 4 to 5 hours walking

The day begins early as you drive towards the Sacred Valley and over the high mountain passes to the Lares Valley (4 and a half hours). Your group will stop at a local market and then at the famous Lares hot springs

for a swim and some lunch. After lunch you start your trek with a 4-5hrs hike to the small village of Cuncani, where you will camp overnight – wild camping (3,800m).

### **Day 5: Cuncani to Huacahuasi – 6 to 8 hours walking**

After breakfast in Cuncani (3,800m/12,600ft) you will hike over a pass to the small community of Huacahuasi (6-8hrs). Along the way you will stop for a picnic lunch. Here you will start seeing alpacas and llamas roaming among the scattered houses. After lunch you will continue your trek down the valley to the Huacahuasi where you will get to meet the locals. Overnight camp near the river in Huacahuasi – wild camping

### **Day 6: Huacahuasi to Ollantaytambo – 8 to 9 hours walking**

Today is a beautiful day (8-9hrs). Over the course of the morning, you will gradually gain altitude as you hike for about four and a half hours. You will take a little used route through the Ranrayoc valley, passing the small community of Puñunayoc en route. Your route takes you over a high pass (4600m) and past a lake with views of the southward snow peaks. Lunch will be served along the way (4378m) with views of snowy mountain Tirijhuay. From here you will continue for a further 3hrs down through the valley until reaching the road at Palcac where you will meet your vehicles to take you to your campsite on the outskirts of Ollantaytambo (approx 1hr transfer).

### **Day 7: Ollantaytambo to Machu Picchu via Sun Gate – 6 to 7 hours walking**

You will take the early morning train to KM104, where you start your final trek on traditional Inca paths towards the Sun Gate climbing over 3000 steps over the duration of the day. At the Sun Gate you are rewarded with your first stunning views of the sacred site of Machu Picchu. We then have time to take photos of Machu Picchu and take in its splendour. Overnight in a hotel near the centre of Aguas Calientes.



### **Day 8: Machu Picchu to Cusco**

This morning is dedicated to exploring these extraordinary Inca remains. The early afternoon train takes you back to Ollantaytambo for a bus transfer back to Cusco. It's party time at a local restaurant in the evening, as you celebrate achieving your Charity Challenge goal and discovering the majesty of Machu Picchu. Overnight at a hotel in Cusco.



### **Day 9: Cusco to Lima. Fly to UK**

You will have a morning free in Cusco before transferring to the airport for your return flight to Lima, where you will transfer for your international flight to the airport for your flight back to London.

### **Day 10: Arrive UK**

Arrive back in the UK

N.B. The itinerary is there as a guide and may change due to unusual weather patterns, wildlife movements, the strength of the group, and so on. We will do our very best to keep to the set itinerary; however we cannot be held responsible for any last minute changes that might occur. In all such circumstances, your expedition leader will have the final say.

Should you suffer from vertigo, it is worth considering that on most mountain treks there will be occasional exposure to sheer drops. Therefore you should discuss the particular itinerary with a member of our team.

Inca Trail Passes; please note that for this challenge you need an Inca pass to complete the last days trekking. There are only a limited amount of passes printed for each day and to purchase them for you we need your passport details, so please try and book onto the challenge as early as possible and with passport details that will be correct on your chosen date of departure. Please note that should your passport details change, your pass will NOT be valid and we may not be able to secure another one. If you book onto the challenge late we cannot guarantee that we will be able to secure a pass for you and you may not be able to join the challenge. You will be advised on booking if this is the case and you may choose an alternative departure date.

## **Optional extensions:**

### **White water rafting and Cusco (2 days, 1 night)**

- Half day rafting on the Urubamba River
- Explore Cusco's colonial churches, monasteries, convents and extensive pre-Columbian ruins

### **Lake Titicaca by train or bus (4 days, 3 nights):**

- Spectacular journey through the Cusco and Vilcanota valley to Puno
- Visit the islands of Uros and experience the Titicaca National reserve. Discover pre-Incan ruins and see world famous hand weavings
- Overnight with a local family, who still live an ancient communal lifestyle

To find out more information, visit the Trek to Machu Picchu challenge page on our website or click on "extensions" in your member's area.