

Peru: Lima, Cusco, Machu Picchu

8 days

Tour Description

The combination of colonial charm, bustling metropolitan lifestyles, stunning natural wonders and quaint village life make Peru a top favorite for travelers in the know. There are European influences nestled among ancient Inca traditions. Go from sea level to high in the Andes, from cosmopolitan city life to legendary ancient ruins. Peruvian cuisine has gained in reputation, local artisans will tempt you with their creative wares, and mystical archaeological sites command our attention.

Everyone's top destination, the Incan fortress of Machu Picchu, proudly exhibits the Temple of the Sun and brings to life the Inca's once-flourishing civilization. Current-day indigenous people will help make this adventure memorable in a diverse country steeped in rich history.

Highlights

- ❖ Machu Picchu train excursion – see one of the Seven Wonders of the World
- ❖ Lima's Plaza de Armas
- ❖ Evening Dinner with historic dance show
- ❖ Sacred Valley formed by the Urubamba River, it was the property of the Incan Emperor
- ❖ Textile weaving workshop
- ❖ Pisac Market and Ollantaytambo Fortress

Sample Tour Itinerary

Lima – 2 nights

Day 1: Arrive in Lima

Upon arrival, you will be met at the airport by our local representative who will escort you to your hotel via private coach. The balance of the day you are free to relax or explore on your own. Perched on the cliffs above the sea, this capital city features expansive views, lovely city parks with unique statues, a variety of neighborhoods and colonial architecture.

Day 2: City Tour of Colonial and Modern Lima

We'll visit both the colonial and modern sections of this "City of Kings". Colonial sites include the lovely Plaza de Armas with its cathedral and palace; and the exquisite Torre Tagle Palace, modern day seat of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In modern Lima drive through the exclusive residential areas of Miraflores and San Isidro.

Dinner Show

Starting with a delicious Pisco Sour, a traditional Peruvian aperitif we'll see a spectacular, folk dance ensemble, while sampling exquisite Peruvian food. One of Lima's premiere dance troupes transports you through the different regions of Peru, and across the ages, by way of their traditional costumes and dances rich in history.

Cusco – 2 nights

Day 3: Fly to Cusco – Tour on arrival

Wed~~d~~ transfer to the airport for the short flight to the colonial town of Cusco, ancient capital of the Incas, the oldest continuously inhabited city in the western hemisphere. Upon arrival, enjoy a tour en route to your hotel to see Cusco's Cathedral, Santo Domingo Church & the Plaza de Armas. Wed~~d~~ also visit the nearby ruins of Kenko, Puca-pucara, and Tampumachay as well as the Sacsayhuaman fortress. You~~d~~ want to spend the rest of the day adjusting to the altitude . 10,000 feet above sea level.

Day 4: Tour Chincheros, Pisac Ruins & Ollantaytambo Fortress

Tour the Andean village of Chinchero, one of the best artisan markets in Peru, and visit with Nilda Callañaupa Alvarez. Her organization is dedicated to preserving ancient textile designs and weaving techniques from all over the Andes. As an accomplished artist she will lead a workshop on traditional back strap weaving techniques. Then visit Pisac, the first settlement outside Cusco, where we can shop in the artisan market and gaze upon the fortress clinging to the cliffs. Our last stop is Ollantaytambo to see the temple-fortress dating back to the Incas.

Machu Picchu Town – 2 nights

Day 5: Train to Machu Picchu Town

Early wake-up for the scenic train ride along the river, through the Sacred Valley of Urubamba, to the small town at the base of the "Lost City of the Incas." Formerly called Aguas Calientes, it~~s~~ now named for the iconic Machu Picchu soaring above. There are 3 trains of varying quality, comfort and price running roughly the same 3-hr route.

Day 6: Tour Machu Picchu

Perched 8,200 feet above the valley, this is truly one of the most spectacular sites on earth. Dating to the 1400~~s~~, it was hidden by semi-tropical jungles until discovered by Hiram Bingham of Yale University in 1911. Archaeologists believe that the Incan "Virgins of the Sun" took refuge from the Spanish Conquistadors here. A shuttle bus takes visitors on the 20-minute ride up the steep, winding dirt road where you~~d~~ have a guided tour of the fabled ruins. You can almost feel the eternal serenity emanating from the structures as you stroll the grounds. This ancient ceremonial marvel is unrivaled and one cannot help being impressed by the awe-inspiring story behind it.

Cusco – 1 night

Day 7: Train to Cusco

Wed~~d~~ take the train back to Cusco for one last night in the clear mountain air of the Andes. This beautiful city and indigenous styles, giving it a rare personality that has stood the test of time.

Day 8: Departure

After breakfast, transfer to the airport via private coach for your departure flight connecting in Lima

INCLUSIONS

- Accommodations: Lima 2 nights, Cusco 3 nights, Machu Picchu Town 2 nights
- Continental breakfast daily
- Ground transportation via air conditioned luxury coach
- English speaking assistants and guides
- Admission tickets as outlined in the itinerary