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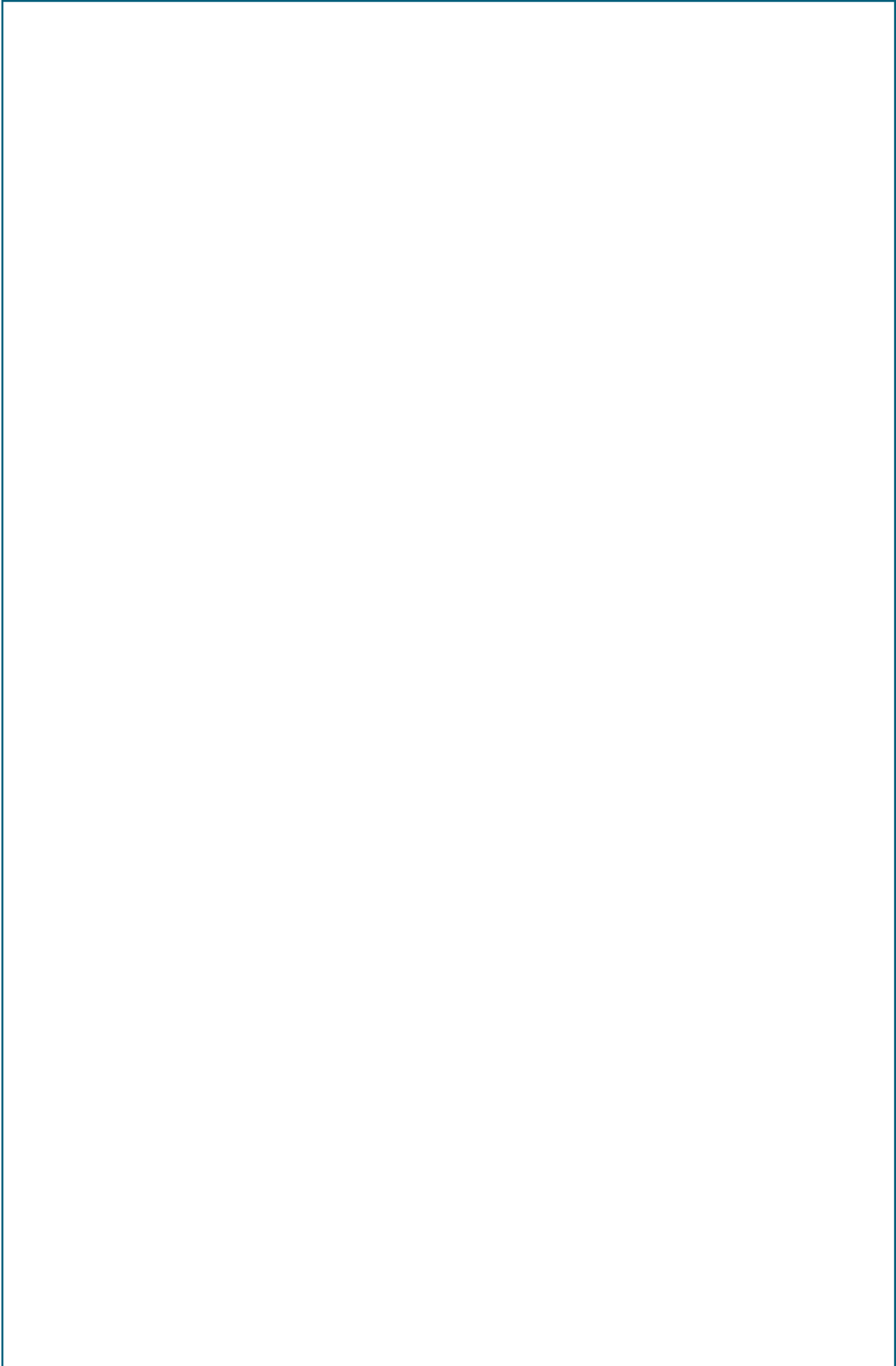
TREKKING TO MACHU PICCHU

Trip Summary

HIGHLIGHTS

- Exploring Machu Picchu, one of those destinations whose magic and mystery lives up to its hype
- Challenging yourself on an ancient Incan trail under towering Andean Peaks that traverses fifteen different bio-zones
- Relaxing in comfortable and small environmentally sustainable remote lodges at the end of each day
- Learning the culture and customs of local Andean families
- Supporting local businesses that believe in sustainability

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TRIP AT A GLANCE

- Location:** Cusco and Machu Picchu, Peru
- Activities:** Hiking
- Arrive:** Our first meeting is at 4PM in the hotel lobby in Cusco on Day 1
- Depart:** We will have you back to the Cusco airport by 1PM and you can plan to fly out anytime after 3PM on the last day

Trip Overview

While visiting Machu Picchu is definitely one of the highlights of this trip, there is so much more of Incan culture and history to explore. We start our immersion with a half-day of exploring Cusco, followed by a full day in the Sacred Valley with extremely knowledgeable local guides. Then we start our trek on the Salkantay Trail, an ancient Incan Trail (a more remote offshoot of THE Inca Trail). Trekking through constantly changing ecosystems, our trail traverses high passes and follows rivers, on paths through rocky plains and thick forest, as we go beyond the crowded guidebook trails and into the authentic heart of the Incan empire. At night we rest in remote and beautiful mountain ecolodges, enjoying delicious and expertly prepared cuisine. At the end we visit Machu Picchu, situated on the spine of a jungle-cloaked granite peak towering some 2,000 ft. above a roaring river, the crowning glory of the Incas. Maximum group size: 12.

NOTE: DUE TO THE NATURE OF PERMITS FOR MACHU PICCHU, DEPOSITS AND PAYMENTS ARE NON TRANSFERABLE AND NON REFUNDABLE 6 MONTHS PRIOR TO DEPARTURE OR LESS. Also, because the backcountry lodges where we stay run on generators and shut off their electricity at night, we are unable to accommodate anyone traveling with a CPAP machine on this trip.

Rating

This trip is appropriate for women in very good physical condition with previous hiking experience, who can hike 6 to 8 hours a day on rocky and sometimes steep mountain paths. The most challenging day includes hiking over a 15,000 foot pass with a 2500 foot elevation gain in 3 miles. This trip is rated 4 because on most days we hike 3 to 5 hours and there are a couple of 6 - 8 hour days. Prior to beginning the trip, participants should be engaged in aerobic conditioning for at least 40-50 minutes 4-5 times a week. Additional endurance exercise (e.g. going for a 2 hour hike once a week) and strength training for your legs is strongly recommended.

Rating: 1 2 3 **4** 5.

What's Included

- Experienced bilingual local guides and an Adventures in Good Company guide
- Nine nights double occupancy lodging in hotels and lodges (no single supplements available on this trip)
- All meals from dinner the first day through breakfast the last
- All transport once you arrive in Cusco including airport transfers
- Entrance fees to Machu Picchu and the Salkantay Trail
- Gratuities for staff and drivers and luggage transport by mules on the trek

Not included: Airfare to Cusco, travel insurance, guide gratuities, alcoholic beverages, items of a personal nature

OUR ITINERARY

Below is the itinerary we have planned for the trip. As is true on any adventure travel trip, plans for any specific day may be modified due to weather considerations, unforeseen circumstances, new opportunities, and group interests.

DAY 1

Fly into Cusco airport where you will be met by our Peruvian partners and transported to our boutique hotel in Cusco. Located a few blocks from the Plaza de Armas or main town square, this charming hotel is a perfect jumping off point to explore the impressive architecture and complex history of the city. Located at a lofty altitude of 11,200 ft, Cusco was the capital and geographic center of the Inca Empire which is why the city's name is Quechuan for "navel of the world." We'll meet in the lobby of our hotel at 4pm for introductions and orientation and then we'll walk to our first delicious dinner together. (D)

DAY 2

Today we start our full day by exploring the Koricancha Sun Temple. Koricancha was one of the most important and sacred temples of the Inca empire and roughly translates to "ægold building" . When the Spanish arrived in Cusco, they were mesmerized by the grandeur of the gold covered walls and ornate figures made of precious metals. Devastatingly, the conquistadors destroyed most of the temple and built the Santo Domingo church on its foundations, preserving only small pieces of indigenous beauty. We will see the intersection of the Spanish conquest and Incan architectural feats first hand. After Koricancha we will tour the Cusco Cathedral and the bustling San Pedro market, where you can find everything from exotic fruits to hand woven tapestries. Try delicious fresh cheese and figs or the unfamiliar lucuma and chirimoya. We end our Cusco tour with an exploration of Sacsayhuaman, the "house of the sun" located a few miles outside the city. The walls of Sacsayhuaman are made from more than 200 tons of limestone rock blocks, chiseled into perfect alignment that stretches over 1,000 feet in length. (B, L, D)

DAY 3

After an early breakfast, we will be picked up at 7:00 am for the drive to the starting point of our trek. Along the way we will take a short break to visit the Inca ruins of Tarawasi near the town of Limatambo. After leaving Limatambo, we pass through the mountain village of Mollepata where we stop for a short coffee break before a half hour drive up a winding mountain road to a place called Marcoccasa. Here, we begin our trek on an old route called the "Camino Real" (Royal Path). On the way we'll stop to catch our breath: you'll have to decide if it's because of the spectacular views of the mountains or because of the altitude. In any case we'll also stop to eat our boxed lunch. Our destination is the Salkantay Lodge and Adventure Resort, located in the high Andean Valley of Soraypampa at an elevation of 11,800 ft. Although we could drive there, this beautiful trek will help further our acclimatization and get us used to hiking at altitude. The lodge has spectacular views of the majestic Salkantay peak at the head of the valley. It's the second most sacred peak in Inca mythology and, at 20,600 ft, the highest in the region. After having some time to get settled in our rooms, we'll have time to relax before an evening briefing by the fireplace followed by appetizers and a hearty dinner. After dinner we might relax in the hot tub or, on a clear night, gaze at the achingly beautiful star-studded sky. Our hiking time is 3-4 hours, 7.4 miles, and 1,950 feet elevation gain. Overnight: Salkantay Lodge (B, L, D)

DAY 4

We've built in an extra day, partly so that you have one more day to acclimatize before we start and partly to give you a chance to explore this stunning area. Of course the lodge is also a delightful place to relax. If you're up for it, we highly recommend joining us for a hike to a glacial lake at the base of Humantay Mountain. If you like cold water plunges, you could even go for a quick dip! The hike takes about 3 or 4 hours and is an excellent activity for acclimatization and a first experience of high-mountain trekking. We have free time in the afternoon, and you might opt for a relaxing soak in the outdoor jacuzzi or curling up in the comfortable reading room with a book. That evening, after another delicious dinner. We'll make our final preparations for our trek. Our hiking time is 3-4 hours, 3.7 miles, and 1450 feet elevation gain and loss. Overnight Salkantay Lodge (B, L, D)

DAY 5

Today is undoubtedly our most challenging day! After an early start, we will hike up the Rio Blanco valley, circling Humantay Peak across from Salkantay Peak. We traverse the highest point of the trek today at 15,213 ft. We gain 2,500 feet in 3 miles. And it is amply rewarded, as we stop to take in views of snow-capped peaks of the Vilcabamba Range in every direction, with the south face of Salkantay towering above us. We will keep our eyes out for the Andean condors that are often visible in this area. Our spirits are further lifted and our bodies rejuvenated by a hot lunch along the trail. From the pass we descend toward the Wayra Lodge (Wayra means wind) our destination for the evening. After hiking between 6 and 8 hours, we are delighted to reach the lodge where hot showers and hearty dinners are most welcome. Our hiking time is 6 - 8 hours, 7.4 miles, and 2,575 feet elevation gain, 2,410 ft elevation loss Overnight: Wayra Lodge (B, L, D)

DAY 6

Today we leave the land of snow-capped peaks and begin descending to the valley. This is an easier day and we can enjoy a leisurely morning and breakfast at Wayra Lodge. After breakfast we begin our trek by hiking downhill above the Salkantay River, through increasingly verdant scenery as we enter a cloud forest. Cloud forests are both fascinating and endangered, with dramatically different flora and fauna than we've just seen.

Our destination for today, the Colpa Lodge, is located in an open headland at the confluence of three rivers that are all fed by snow melt. The outdoor hot tub in this lodge has prominent views of lush green mountains and a small, far-away, local town. Dinner and overnight at the lodge Our hiking time is 3- 4 hours, 5.5 miles, and 150 feet elevation gain, 3550 ft elevation loss Overnight: Colpa Lodge. (B, L, D)

DAY 7

Today's trek is longer so we'll depart early this morning and head down the Santa Teresa River Valley, through more populated rural areas. Our trail rises and falls before descending to the river. We'll stop along the river to relax and enjoy a hot picnic lunch. We'll cross the river on a bridge and then continue up along the side of the mountain. This area is known for banana, granadilla, and avocado orchards, and coffee plantations that are said to produce some of the best organic coffees in the world. After another hour of trekking we'll be picked up by a private vehicle for a 30-minute drive to the beginning of the "Llactapata Inca Trail", a restored ancient Incan trail. From the head of the trail it's a short climb (30 min.) to the inviting and cozy Lucma Lodge. If time allows, we may explore the small nearby village of Lucmabamba. Our hiking time is 6 - 8 hours, 8 miles, and 1,160 feet elevation gain, 2,510 ft elevation loss. Overnight: Lucma Lodge (B, L, D)

DAY 8

After a hearty breakfast and an early start, we tackle the last day of our trek. We head uphill for about 3 hours and 1,900 feet towards Llactapata pass (8,974ft). Here we have a distant but amazing view of the Incan fortress, including both Machu and Huayna Picchu (or "old" and "young" peaks) from the southwest. This is a vista few tourists ever glimpse. An added value are the Llactapata Ruins, which have recently been restored. There couldn't be a better place to enjoy our lunch. We then begin our final steep descent of 2 - 3 hours to the rushing Aobamba River, through lush bamboo forests and more orchards and coffee plantations. At the end of the trail we hop on a train for a short (45 minutes) scenic train ride to Aguas Calientes. We'll celebrate the end of the hike with dinner in Aguas Calientes ("hot springs"), where an early bed time will re-energize us for the following day's trip to Machu Picchu. Our hiking time is 4 - 6 hours, 6.8 miles, and 2150 feet elevation gain, 3300 ft elevation loss. Overnight: Inkaterra. (B, L, D)

DAY 9

Today we visit Machu Picchu, the "Lost City of the Incas". Recent research has shown that it wasn't actually a true city but rather a retreat for the Incan elite. It is absolutely as stunning as the pictures indicate, with the sheer rock face of Huayna Picchu towering in the background. We'll start with a guided tour of this world wonder for about three hours. Our guide will explain how the area is divided into distinct sections and help us understand the significance of each temple and park. The stonework has been painstakingly restored and the temples are exquisite. You may choose to return to our lodge to relax at this point or you may continue on exploring different aspects of the park like the Sun Gate. Regardless of which you choose, we'll gather again in our comfortable hotel in Aguas Calientes for dinner and the night. Overnight: Inkaterra (B, L, D)

DAY 10

This morning after breakfast we'll return by train, enjoying one final ride through the beauty of the Sacred Valley, and then by private vehicle to Cusco. If you're returning today, we'll have you back to the Cusco airport by 1pm and you can plan for flights out after 3pm. Alternatively you can be dropped off at your hotel if you want some more time in Cusco. If you're staying on for more time in Peru, we'll be glad to put you in touch with people who can help you plan the rest of your time. Peru is a fascinating place and a trip to Lake Titicaca, the Nazca Lines, or into the jungle would all be amazing additions to your adventure. (B)

ADDITIONAL TRIP INFORMATION

Getting There

All planes to Cusco (CUZ) fly through Lima, and depending on the connections available, you may want to spend a night there (there is even a hotel within the Lima airport: Wyndham Costa del Sol Lima Airport). Regardless of what time you arrive in Cusco on Day 1, you will be met at the airport and transported to our hotel.

If you would like assistance with airfare, we recommend contacting our AirDesk Partner, [Exito Travel](#). Start by submitting this [form](#). Just fill in your dates and destinations, including any additional notes about preferred carriers, class of service, possible stopovers, etc., and an agent will typically respond via email within a few hours. If you prefer to call, the number is 800-655-4053; be sure to tell them you are traveling with Adventures in Good Company.

Please note: Exito charges a one-time, non-refundable processing fees of \$35 per passenger.

Accommodations

We stay two nights in a 4-star hotel in Cusco and 2 nights at a 5-star hotel in Aguascalientes ([InkaTerra Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel](#)). On the Salkantay Trail we stay in small remote mountain lodges where, with the exception of the first lodge, we are the only ones there. They are known for exceptional comfort and hospitality, and offer comfortable rooms and beds with glorious views, hot tubs, and excellent food. We can accommodate most dietary restrictions on this trip.

Travel Insurance

We recommend that you purchase a travel protection plan to help protect you and your travel investment against the unexpected. For your convenience, we offer travel protection through Travelex Insurance Services. For more information on the available plans or to enroll, visit www.travelexinsurance.com or call 1-800-228-9792 and reference location number 06-0331.

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Cancellation charges reflect the many expenses Adventures in Good Company cannot recover if you cancel, even if you must do so due to illness, injury, or personal emergencies. These fees are not meant to be punitive. The charges made reflect the expenses Adventures in Good Company has incurred in administering your reservation and planning for your participation. We recognize that the majority of those who cancel their reservations do so out of necessity. Please note that we do not make any refunds for any unused portion of your trip, not arriving, arriving late, or leaving the trip early.

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