

PERU

HIKING & CULTURAL TOUR



12 Days/11 Nights

19 -30 Oct 2027

Tour Highlights...

Sacred Valley | Lares Trek | Machu Picchu | Cusco | Amazonian Rainforest

Summary

This adventure brings together some of the very best experiences in the Cusco region: the beautiful Sacred Valley, remote Andean communities, the lesser-travelled Lares Trek and, of course, the magnificent Machu Picchu - followed by a once-in-a-lifetime adventure into the Peruvian Amazon.

Over twelve memorable days, we'll walk through dramatic mountain landscapes, meet local families, discover extraordinary Inca sites and arrive at Machu Picchu on foot through the Sun Gate. Best of all, we'll return the following morning for a guided visit, giving us two opportunities to experience this remarkable place.

And then, just when you think the adventure is over, we'll swap the mountains for the jungle and spend three nights at the wonderful Refugio Amazonas. Travelling deep into the rainforest, we'll discover an extraordinary world of wildlife, waterways and towering jungle, with the chance to experience the Amazon in ways that are far removed from everyday life. It's the perfect finale to an unforgettable Peruvian adventure - a chance to slow down, immerse ourselves in nature and discover a completely different side of this remarkable country.

There will be mountains. There will be llamas. There will be jungle. There may be tired legs. But we suspect the enormous sense of achievement will make every uphill step worthwhile.



Day 1 (D) Arrival in Cusco

Welcome to Peru! We'll be met by our local team and begin our journey into the Sacred Valley of the Incas. Our first stop will be a local women's weaving cooperative, where we'll learn how traditional Andean textiles are created using techniques passed down through generations. We'll then continue to the colourful town of Pisac. Here, we'll have time to explore the town and visit its impressive archaeological site, perched high above the valley with magnificent views across the surrounding mountains and farmland. From Pisac, we'll travel to Urubamba in the heart of the Sacred Valley and settle into our hotel for the next two nights.

O/N 2 nts, Hotel in the Sacred Valley

Day 2 (B) Maras, Moray & Ollantaytambo

After breakfast, we'll set out for a full day exploring some of the Sacred Valley's most fascinating sites. Starting at the extraordinary Maras Salt Mines. Thousands of small salt pools cascade down the mountainside, creating a spectacular patchwork of white, cream and ochre. Local families have harvested salt here using traditional methods for generations. We'll then continue to Moray, where enormous circular terraces descend into the earth like a giant green amphitheatre. It is believed the Incas used the terraces to experiment with growing crops in different conditions, demonstrating just how advanced their understanding of agriculture and engineering was. Our final visit will be Ollantaytambo, one of the Sacred Valley's most important archaeological sites and one of the finest surviving examples of Inca town planning. We'll return to the hotel mid afternoon.

Day 3 (B,L,D) Sacred Valley, Lares & Huarcahuasi 9km

Today, the walking part of our adventure begins. First, we drive along a spectacular mountain road, on our way to the Lares Pass at approximately 4,400 metres. From the pass, we'll descend into the Lares Valley and continue to the Hot Springs. Those who fancy a soak can relax in the natural thermal pools. After lunch we'll lace up our boots and begin the hike towards Huarcahuasi. The trail leads us through a beautiful Andean valley filled with native vegetation, traditional farming areas and wonderful mountain views. As we gradually climb, we're likely to encounter llamas, alpacas and sheep grazing beside the trail and see local families tending their crops. Huarcahuasi sits at approximately 3,650 metres and offers a fascinating glimpse into life in the high Andes. Traditional and modern buildings stand side by side, and many local residents continue to wear distinctive Andean clothing and follow customs that have been part of community life for generations. Tonight, we'll camp in the backyard of a local family's home. It is a wonderful opportunity to experience genuine Andean hospitality and connect with a community few visitors have the privilege of meeting.

O/N 1 nt Camping

Day 4 (B,L,D) Huarcahuasi, Ipsay Pass & Patacancha 17km

Prepare for the most challenging and rewarding day of our Lares Trek. Today we'll climb to Ipsay Pass, the trek's highest point at approximately 4,510 metres. Beginning in Huarcahuasi, the trail rises steadily through a remote landscape surrounded by snow-capped peaks. At this altitude, slow and steady wins the race. Along the way, we'll pass a beautiful blue lagoon and may meet local people walking between the isolated mountain communities. This is a wonderfully peaceful part of the Andes, far removed from Peru's busier trekking routes. We'll reach Ipsay Pass and be rewarded with panoramic views across the surrounding mountains and valleys. From the pass, we'll begin descending towards Ipsaycocha Lagoon, where our trekking crew will be waiting with lunch. We'll continue descending for approximately three hours towards Patacancha. The path follows the beautiful valley and river until we reach the community, where we'll settle into camp for our second night under the Andean sky. O/N 1 nt Camping

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Day 5 (B,L) Patacancha, The Short Inca Trail & Machu Picchu 11km

Today promises to be a very special one; we'll walk into Machu Picchu through the Sun Gate. After breakfast, our private vehicle will collect us from Patacancha and take us to the railway station in Ollantaytambo. After the train ride we begin walking at Chachabamba, an important Inca archaeological site once used for ceremonies and as a resting place for travellers. We'll reach Wiñay Wayna, (which means 'Forever Young') one of the most spectacular sites on the entire Inca Trail. We'll take time to explore its agricultural terraces, ceremonial structures and remarkable mountainside setting before continuing towards Intipunku; The Sun Gate. Then comes the moment we've been walking towards: our first view of Machu Picchu. Arriving on foot and seeing the ancient sanctuary spread across the mountains below is something we're unlikely to forget. We'll pause for photographs and simply take it all in before walking down towards the Machu Picchu sanctuary. From there, we'll travel by bus to Aguas Calientes, and check into our hotel. This evening will be free to choose one of the town's restaurants for dinner and reflect on an extraordinary day.

O/N 1 nt Aguas Calientes

Day 6 (B) Machu Picchu, Ollantaytambo & Cusco

Today we'll return to Machu Picchu to explore it properly. We'll take the bus from Aguas Calientes back up the mountain for a guided tour of this extraordinary Inca sanctuary. Over approximately three hours, our guide will lead us through Machu Picchu's temples, ceremonial spaces, residential areas and remarkable agricultural terraces. We'll learn more about its history, ingenious architecture and enduring mysteries while enjoying another chance to appreciate its unforgettable mountain setting. Following our visit, we'll return to Aguas Calientes for some free time to enjoy lunch, browse the shops or relax before boarding the train to Ollantaytambo. When we arrive, our private vehicle will be waiting to drive us back to Cusco. We expect to reach our hotel at approximately 8.00 pm.

O/N 2 nts Cusco

Day 7 (B) Cusco City Tour

After breakfast, we'll set out to uncover the fascinating layers of Cusco, once the heart of the mighty Inca Empire. Cusco's historic centre has the impressive Cathedral of Cusco with some distinctly Andean interpretations of Catholic traditions. Our final visit will be Sacsayhuamán, the magnificent archaeological complex overlooking the city. The remainder of the afternoon will be ours to enjoy at leisure. We might explore Cusco's lanes and plazas, shop for souvenirs, find a cosy café or simply put our feet up after everything those legs have achieved.

Day 8 (B,D) From the Mountains to the Amazon Rainforest

Today we swap mountains for jungle as we fly to Puerto Maldonado, gateway to the Peruvian Amazon. On arrival, we'll board our boat for the two-and-a-half-hour journey to Refugio Amazonas. Travelling deep into the rainforest is all part of the adventure, and the further we travel, the more the busy outside world begins to disappear. Our journey takes us to an enormous 1.3-million-hectare conservation area, our home for the next three nights in an eco-lodge located within its own 200-hectare private reserve. Surrounded by rainforest, it is perfectly positioned for exploring one of the most biodiverse regions on the planet.

O/N 3 nts Refugio Amazonas or similar

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Day 9 (B,L,D) Lakes, Treetops & Rainforest Remedies

After breakfast, we'll head out onto the lake to search for some of the Amazon's extraordinary wildlife. We may spot prehistoric-looking hoatzins, caiman, horned screamers, colourful macaws and perhaps even the otters occasionally seen playing and hunting in the area. Of course, this is the wild rather than a zoo, so sightings are never guaranteed. Back on dry land, we'll follow a forest trail to reach the lodge's 25-metre canopy tower. From the top, we'll enjoy wonderful views across the rainforest canopy and search for toucans, macaws and birds of prey. It is a completely different world up here, although anyone who prefers their feet closer to the ground is very welcome to stay low. After lunch, we'll visit a local farm to learn about traditional agriculture and some of the fascinating crops grown in the Amazon. We'll then take an ethno-botanical walk through the rainforest, discovering how local communities have traditionally used its plants and trees for medicine and healing. This evening, the team at Refugio Amazonas may offer a fascinating presentation about the wildlife, conservation challenges and community projects within the National Reserve.

Day 10 (B,L,D) Macaws, Brazil Nuts & Creatures of the Night

We'll make an early start this morning to witness one of the Amazon's most colourful natural spectacles. At the clay lick, macaws, parrots and parakeets gather to feast on mineral-rich clay. We may see dusky-headed and cobalt-winged parakeets among the many birds filling the trees with colour and noise. The rainforest is not known for offering a gentle wake-up call. Later, we'll take a short walk into a beautiful Brazil nut forest that local families have harvested for decades. Brazil nuts are one of the rainforest's few genuinely sustainable wild-harvested products. And maybe, just maybe in all the adventure walks you may see one of the most elusive creatures of all; the jaguar. Or a favourite, the leaf cutter ants. Or a hairy tarantula or many other creatures great and small. After dinner, those still feeling adventurous can join an optional night walk. Many rainforest mammals and smaller creatures are most active after dark, bringing an entirely different collection of sounds, movements and mysterious glowing eyes.

Day 11 (B,D) Puerto Maldonado to Cusco

It will be time to farewell our rainforest home today and begin the boat journey back to Puerto Maldonado. We'll transfer to the airport for our flight to Cusco, leaving the Amazon with muddy boots (well hopefully not as we won't make it through Australian customs), a thousand photos, and a much greater appreciation for every unexplained noise outside our bedroom window. On arrival in Cusco, we'll transfer to our hotel for our final overnight stay.

O/N 1 nt Cusco

Day 12 (B) Departure

After breakfast, our incredible Peruvian adventure comes to an end. Over the past twelve days we've explored spectacular landscapes, immersed ourselves in fascinating cultures and shared some truly memorable experiences along the way. We'll say our farewells and head to Cusco Airport, taking with us wonderful memories, new friendships and a healthy sense of achievement!

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The Details

PRICE INCLUDES

- Small-Group Escorted Tour - Min 6 - Max 14
- Australian host, professional guides & drivers
- Group airport transfers
- 5 nts hotels, 2 nts camping, 3 nts jungle eco-lodge
- Meals as per itinerary 11B, 5L & 7D
- All park fees and permits
- Entrance fees and sightseeing as per itinerary

LET US HELP YOU WITH:

- Booking flights
- Travel insurance
- Pre or post tour travel

PRICE EXCLUDES:

- Flights from Australia
- Travel Insurance (compulsory)
- Meals not mentioned
- Tipping for guides, drivers & trackers
- All expenses of a personal nature

COST PER PERSON

- Twin or double share: \$6,875/person*
- Single supp: \$1,870/person (own room)*
- Solo Twin share: availability subject to room mate match

*Prices subject to currency fluctuations until paid in full

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