



Cusco and Machu Picchu Extension

PRE-DEPARTURE INFORMATION



Wilderness Travel

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Travel Information

PASSPORT

A valid passport is required for your trip. Be sure to check the expiration date. Your passport must be valid for six months after your date of exit from Peru. In addition, we recommend your passport have at least two completely blank visa pages for every country you will be visiting. It is very important that the blank pages say “Visas” at the top. The last few pages of your passport, which say “Amendments and Endorsements,” and the final page of your passport, which may not have a page number, are not considered to be legitimate visa pages. The service of adding pages for visas was discontinued as of January 1, 2016. You can request a new passport through [US Passport Services Office](#) or use a visa service agency, which can take care of your passport renewal and expedite the process, if needed. We recommend [Passport Visas Express](#). Be sure to allow sufficient time to acquire this before your trip.

It is very important to carry photocopies of your passport's photo page and any acquired visa pages for your trip (if applicable) in case your passport is lost or as an additional piece of identification, as well as two extra passport photos.

VISAS & ENTRY NOTES

US citizens do not need a visa for countries visited on this trip. If you are a citizen of any country other than the US, check with a local consulate for entry requirements.

MONEY

The unit of currency in Peru is the nuevo sol. We suggest you carry some of your spending money in USD cash, and the rest in ATM or credit cards. Travelers checks are not recommended as they can be difficult and time-consuming to cash. Smaller denominations such as twenty dollar bills are a convenient amount to exchange, as the exchange rate from soles back to dollars is not nearly as good. Make sure your US bills are crisp and clean. Worn, tattered, or torn bills may not be accepted. We suggest you bring about \$50 USD cash in \$1 or \$5 bills for tipping baggage porters, transfer agents, etc., and larger bills for tipping your WT guide (see Tipping guidelines), and any meals paid in cash.

You will need to budget spending money for gratuities, any “on your own” meals (approx. \$10-\$25 for lunches and \$20-\$55 for dinners), and personal expenses. When you are with your WT guide, your guide will pay costs and gratuities for the meals included in your trip itinerary, as well as some snacks. Alcohol is not included in any trip meals, unless otherwise advised.

Visa, MasterCard, and American Express are widely accepted at major hotels and stores. There are ATMs in the Lima airport and in Cusco. To use an ATM internationally, you must have a four-digit PIN. If you plan to use your credit cards, inform your credit card company before your departure that you will be using the card abroad.

TIPPING

Tipping is completely discretionary, but over the years, clients have asked us for tipping guidelines to reward service. Gratuities can be paid in USD cash in good condition-bills should be new and clean with no tears or marks.

Lima Airport Agent: \$5 per traveler, or \$10 total for two or more travelers

Lima City Tour Guide: \$20-\$30 per traveler per full day tour (if you are adding extra touring in Lima)

Cusco Airport Transfer Agent: \$5 per traveler or \$10 total for two or more travelers, per transfer

Luggage Porters at hotels: \$1 per bag on check in and check out

Driver: \$5 per traveler per day

WT Guide (Cusco/Sacred Valley/Machu Picchu/Cusco): \$120-\$150 per traveler

Restaurants (for meals on your own): At your discretion. Established restaurants often add a 10% service charge to the bill. If the service is excellent, you can add an additional amount.

FOOD

Please reach out to us directly to discuss any dietary restrictions or concerns you may have. We can easily make arrangements for most diets, but please keep in mind that certain cultural differences or logistical limitations can make it difficult or at times impossible to accommodate all requests. With this in mind, please inform us at least eight weeks before your trip if you have a special diet, and any food allergies in particular, so we can do our best to meet your needs.

COMMUNICATIONS

Telephone

The international dialing code for Peru is 51. Please contact your cell phone company for specific instructions for international use.

Email & Internet Access

Internet access is available at our lodges with Wi-Fi.

ELECTRICITY

Peru has 220-volt current. Plugs have two round pins or two flat-blade pins. Bring a converter and plug adapter kit for appliance use. Note: Most newer appliances do not need a voltage converter.

LAUNDRY

Laundry service is available at most of the hotels.

Medical Information

The following recommendations should be used as a guideline only; consult your physician for medical advice. It is vital that you let Wilderness Travel know of any medical problems, allergies, or physical limitations you may have. Please fill out and return the personal medical questionnaire, and feel free to consult us if you have any questions about your ability to undertake this particular trip.

Wilderness Travel is not a medical facility and has no expertise or responsibility regarding what medications or inoculations you and your physician decide are necessary for your safe participation in the trip.

Traveler's health information is available from the Centers for Disease Control ([cdc.gov/travel](https://www.cdc.gov/travel)). Medical travel products are available from Magellan's Travel Supplies ([magellans.com](https://www.magellans.com)).

INOCULATIONS

Entry requirements and international health situations are subject to change; check with the Centers for Disease Control for updates. Please consult with your physician regarding the following:

Polio

People who have received the primary series of at least three doses of polio vaccine are considered fully immunized. People who are unsure of their status should receive the vaccine (three doses spaced at intervals).

Hepatitis

The vaccines HAVRIX and VAQTA (two injections, six to 18 months apart) give long-term protection against Hepatitis A and are worthwhile if you travel regularly to developing countries.

Tetanus Booster

It is very easy to get a small cut. A booster is strongly recommended (effective for 10 years).

Typhoid

The CDC recommends the shot or the oral vaccine, Vivotif Berna.

COVID-19

The Public Health Emergency for COVID-19 declared by the World Health Organization and the US Department of Health and Human Services expired in 2023. As of March 2024, we no longer require guests who exhibit cold or flu symptoms to test for COVID-19.

If a guest chooses to test for COVID-19 and tests positive, they will be required to wear a mask in group vehicles and during indoor activities (excluding meals) for the remainder of the trip. Any travel companion sharing a room with them will also be required to wear a mask at all times in the shared group vehicles for the remainder of the trip. If there are additional requirements in the country or region you are traveling, you will be subject to those protocols.

STAYING HEALTHY

Change of diet and a number of other factors can cause stomach upsets while traveling, especially in underdeveloped countries. To guard against illness, follow these guidelines:

Consider all tap water unsafe. Do not drink it or brush your teeth with it. Bottled water is available everywhere. Don't drink the water served in restaurants (order bottled water). Avoid ice in your drinks (it may not have been made with treated water).

Beware of uncooked or raw foods such as salads. Don't eat fruit unless you have peeled it yourself. Avoid custards, pastry creams, yogurt, and milk where refrigeration and pasteurization are unreliable. Don't eat food bought from sidewalk vendors. Overall, be conservative about what you eat. Frequent hand washing, especially after using the bathroom and before eating, can cut down on the possibility of traveler's diarrhea. On any airline, drink only the bottled water, not the tap water.

If you have a restricted diet, please let us know at least eight weeks before departure; we will try to accommodate you but certain limitations can make it difficult.

GETTING IN SHAPE

In high altitude locations like Cusco, even just a walk up a flight of Inca stone step can make you feel a bit breathless. Remember that the better physical condition you are in, the more you will enjoy your experience at these altitudes. Make an effort to get in good physical condition with some exercise beyond your normal routine. A brisk 30-45 minute walk every other day over moderately steep terrain can do wonders for your conditioning. Also be sure to drink plenty of water when you're at altitude, even if you don't feel thirsty.

MEDICAL CARE

In Peru, medical facilities are very limited and doctors are often unavailable. Cusco has only a medical clinic. People with serious medical concerns must take this into account in choosing Peru as a destination. We recommend you bring an ample supply of personal medications with you in your carry-on luggage

ALTITUDE CONSIDERATIONS

Cusco is at an altitude of 11,200 feet. It is impossible to predict how you will adapt to the altitude. Physical fitness does not confer any protection or facilitate acclimatization. Altitude acclimatization is a slow process that takes place over the course of a few days or longer. Individuals vary widely in their ability to acclimatize. Normal physiological changes at altitude include shortness of breath, changed breathing pattern at night, awakening frequently, and increased urination.

Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS) is not uncommon at the altitudes reached in the high Andes. Symptoms of AMS include a headache plus one or more of the following: nausea, loss of appetite, difficulty sleeping, fatigue, and light-headedness following a recent ascent above 8,000 feet. These symptoms result primarily from insufficient oxygen in the blood (hypoxia). You may experience some of the symptoms of AMS when you first arrive at high altitude. Improvement usually occurs in one or two days, but may take as long as three or four days. While acclimatizing, avoid pushing yourself too hard, however physically fit you may be or feel. Pace yourself comfortably, rest often. You may find that you walk more slowly than you are used to.

Proper hydration is essential at high altitude. You need to drink much more fluid than you are used to. Try to drink even if you're not feeling thirsty. Avoid caffeine, which is a diuretic, and avoid alcohol, which is dehydrating. Cut down on salt. Your appetite will probably decrease, but it is still important to eat well (especially carbohydrates), even if you're not feeling well. Sleeping pills and narcotic painkillers (such as codeine) should not be used at altitude because they depress respiration. Medical conditions aggravated or complicated by high altitude include heart diseases, lung diseases, pregnancy, anemia, and sickle cell disease. Anyone with these conditions should discuss participation on the trip with their physician.

Diamox (Acetazolamide)

The prescription drug Diamox can be used to accelerate the normal process of acclimatization. The standard dose is a 250 mg tablet every 12 hours, usually starting the day before the coming to a high altitude (such as Cusco) and discontinuing after the second or third night at the maximum altitude. Common side effects include more frequent urination as well as numbness, tingling, or vibrating sensations in hands, feet, and lips. Diamox does not protect against worsening symptoms of AMS with continued ascent. Diamox is a sulfa drug and should not be taken by people allergic to sulfa drugs.

Helpful Information

RECOMMENDED READING

Elevate your travel experience by delving into this curated collection of books tailored to your upcoming adventure. They will not only entertain but also provide invaluable insights into the history, culture, cuisine, wildlife, mountain trails, or even folklore of the places you're about to explore. Discover the perfect companions for your journey ahead by [following the link](#) or scanning the QR code.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Camera Recommendations

With the many advances in digital technology, a simple compact digital camera or even your smartphone is capable of taking pictures suitable for the needs of most people. For higher quality images and the ability to use long lenses for closer wildlife pictures, a DSLR camera is well worthwhile, though heavier. Most digital cameras and phones have good video options, but you may want to consider a GoPro for a lightweight, waterproof option. Always practice ahead of time with new equipment and bring your manual with you. You may want to consider renting camera equipment for your trip from places such as [borrowlenses.com](#). This is an especially good idea for renting large zoom lenses that you may need for just one trip. Adding their extra insurance fee to cover expensive equipment is recommended.

Camera Accessories

We recommend bringing at least two large capacity memory cards or a small digital storage unit (or tablet) to back up your photos, freeing space on your memory cards. Don't forget to bring a battery charger and a backup battery so one is always charged and ready to use. For trips where you may be away from power sources for multiple days, consider looking into a solar-powered battery charger or buying additional backup batteries, and check that you have the appropriate adapter for the electrical outlets in your destination.

Sharing Your Images

We would love for you to share photos from your trip, and with your permission, may even use your photos in our marketing materials or on our photo blog. We request that you send us a small sample of your best images. Please email your photos to wtphtoblog@gmail.com or tag us @WildernessTravel on social media.

Photography Etiquette

When taking pictures of local people, be aware of cultural considerations. Approaching people with a warm smile and using polite gestures or simple phrases to ask permission to photograph them usually works well. It is always recommended to engage people in conversation before asking to photograph them, but if people do not wish to have their photo taken, please honor their requests. We urge travelers to avoid giving money in exchange for photo opportunities, which makes it harder for future travelers to have a meaningful personal interaction with local people. Please always heed your Trip Leader's guidelines for what is appropriate.

For most people, a compact digital camera or even a cell phone with a fixed zoom lens work well, and newer point-and-shoots and phones can produce excellent quality pictures. For higher quality images, especially for printing, and the ability to use longer telephoto lenses for closer wildlife pictures, a digital SLR is well worthwhile, though heavier. Lenses of 200mm or 300mm, with image stabilization, allow you to hand-hold the camera with minimal camera shake. A polarizing filter is useful, especially to reduce reflection on water surfaces and to deepen the blue of the sky. Pack your equipment well and use plastic bags to protect it from dust or moisture. Bring wipes and a dust blower to keep your lenses clean. Most digital cameras and phones now have video options, and you may even want to consider bringing a GoPro. Always practice ahead of time with new

equipment and bring your manual with you. You may want to consider insuring your equipment. Camera equipment is available for rent from Borrow Lenses with a 10% discount offered to Wilderness Travel clients. Note: Camera tripods are prohibited in Machu Picchu.

We recommend bringing at least two large capacity memory cards. If you take a lot of pictures and save them at a high resolution, it can be helpful to bring a digital storage unit or laptop so you can download your pictures and free up your memory cards for reuse on a regular basis. Bring a backup battery or set of batteries so one is always charged and ready to use, and bring your battery charger (and appropriate plug adapter). If your camera uses replaceable batteries, bring spares with you. Note: for trips where you may be away from power sources for multiple days, consider looking into a solar-powered battery charger.

When taking pictures of local people, be aware of cultural considerations. Heed your Trip Leader's guidelines for what is appropriate, and always use gestures or simple phrases to ask permission. If people do not wish to be photographed, please honor their requests. We urge travelers to avoid giving money in exchange for photo opportunities, which only makes it harder for other travelers to take pictures and to have a meaningful personal interaction with local people.

We find that our clients create wonderful images that really define the unique aspects of our adventures. We would love to make use of your images in our marketing materials and our photoblog, and request that you send us a small sample of your best images and a simple email giving us permission to use the photos. Please email your photos to wtphtoblog@gmail.com. We look forward to receiving them!

Packing List

ESSENTIALS

- Air tickets (or E-tickets)
- Passport
- One other picture ID, such as a driver's license
- Expense money

LUGGAGE

Note: On internal flights, you are allowed one checked bag with a total weight of 50 lbs, plus a small carry-on with a 17 lb maximum.

Important Packing Note: The train to Machu Picchu has no overhead bins for luggage storage, so any luggage you bring on this segment of your trip may be sharing your seat with you! For the two nights that you will spend in the Urubamba Valley and at Machu Picchu, we recommend a small overnight bag, or possibly your daypack, with minimal clothing and toiletries. Small bags, backpacks, and duffels are readily available for purchase in Cusco, including many made with colorful local fabric. You can check your larger suitcase with the concierge at your Cusco hotel.

- Duffel bag or soft-sided suitcase, with small padlock (must be unlocked for air travel).
- Daypack, large enough for a fleece jacket, rain gear, water bottle, camera, and other items you want with you during the day.
- Small roll-up duffel for the Urubamba Valley/Machu Picchu section of the trip.

CLOTHING

- Rain gear, such as rain jacket and rain pants, or a raincoat
- Fleece jacket for warmth
- Fleece or wool sweater
- Down or fleece vest if you easily get chilled
- Lightweight long pants. Synthetic “travel” fabrics wash and dry easily. Convertible hiking pants with zip-off legs are a practical choice.
- Walking shorts
- Long-sleeved shirts; quick-drying “travel” fabrics like nylon are ideal
- T-shirts
- Shade hat with wide brim
- Sturdy walking shoes with good traction
- Running shoes, Tevas, or other comfortable Shoes for city wear
- Underwear/ socks; synthetics dry faster
- Sleepwear

EQUIPMENT

- Reusable water bottle (preferably Nalgene), 1 qt. capacity. Wide-mouth bottles are easier to fill.
- Good quality sunglasses with case. A spare pair of sunglasses is invaluable should your first pair be broken or lost.
- Personal toiletries
- Flashlight, extra batteries

- Money belt or neck pouch. Always carry your passport, credit cards, and cash with you in a money belt or neck pouch tucked down inside your shirt or
- blouse. Eagle Creek carries these products.

PERSONAL FIRST AID

Every trip member should bring a small kit for personal use. Your own experience will influence your choices.

- Sunscreen SPF #30 or higher. At high altitudes, the sun is very strong. We recommend mineral-based sunscreens with zinc oxide or titanium dioxide because they do not contain harsh chemicals that are harmful to the environment. Brands such as Honest Company, Badger, and Alba Botanica are found in most sporting goods stores and drugstores.
- Lip balm with sunscreen and/or zinc oxide
- Aspirin, ibuprofen, or Tylenol for muscle pain or headache, Tylenol PM for sleep
- Topical antibiotic (such as Neosporin) for cuts, bites, or sores
- Insect repellent. Repellent with DEET content of about 20-30 percent is ideal. Sawyer makes a 20% controlled-release DEET repellent that is odorless and very effective (available at REI). Very high DEET content (90%) can dissolve plastic and damage your camera or binoculars and is not recommended. Carry repellent in a plastic bag to avoid spills. Aerosol repellents are useful for spraying on clothes. Contact lens wearers should be careful not to get DEET in their eyes.
- Blister kit. Look for the long-lasting gel-type bandages that you can apply directly on blisters, such as Band-Aid Advanced Healing Bandages or Curad Gel Multi-Day Bandages. "Liquid band-aids," such as New-Skin, are useful because they dry rapidly to form a tough protective cover over a blister.
- Anti-bacterial gel for hand washing
- Antihistamine such as Benadryl and cold remedy such as Sudafed
- Imodium for diarrhea. If you wish to bring an antibiotic for diarrhea prophylaxis, please consult your physician.
- Prescription medications properly labeled
- Spare contact lenses or spare prescription glasses

OPTIONAL ITEMS

- Camera, spare batteries
- Reading/writing material
- Converter/plug adaptor for appliance use in hotels. Peru and Bolivia have 220-volt current; most plugs have two round pins or two flat-blade pins. The Monasterio Hotel in Cusco and the Machu Picchu Sanctuary Lodge at Machu Picchu provide 110 and 220 outlets and hairdryers.
- Collapsible walking stick
- Binoculars
- Travel clock

GEAR STORE

To help you prepare for your next WT adventure, we've put together a great collection of top brands including Patagonia, Outdoor Research, Eagle Creek, and more at our WT Gear Store (wildernesstravel.newheadings.com).