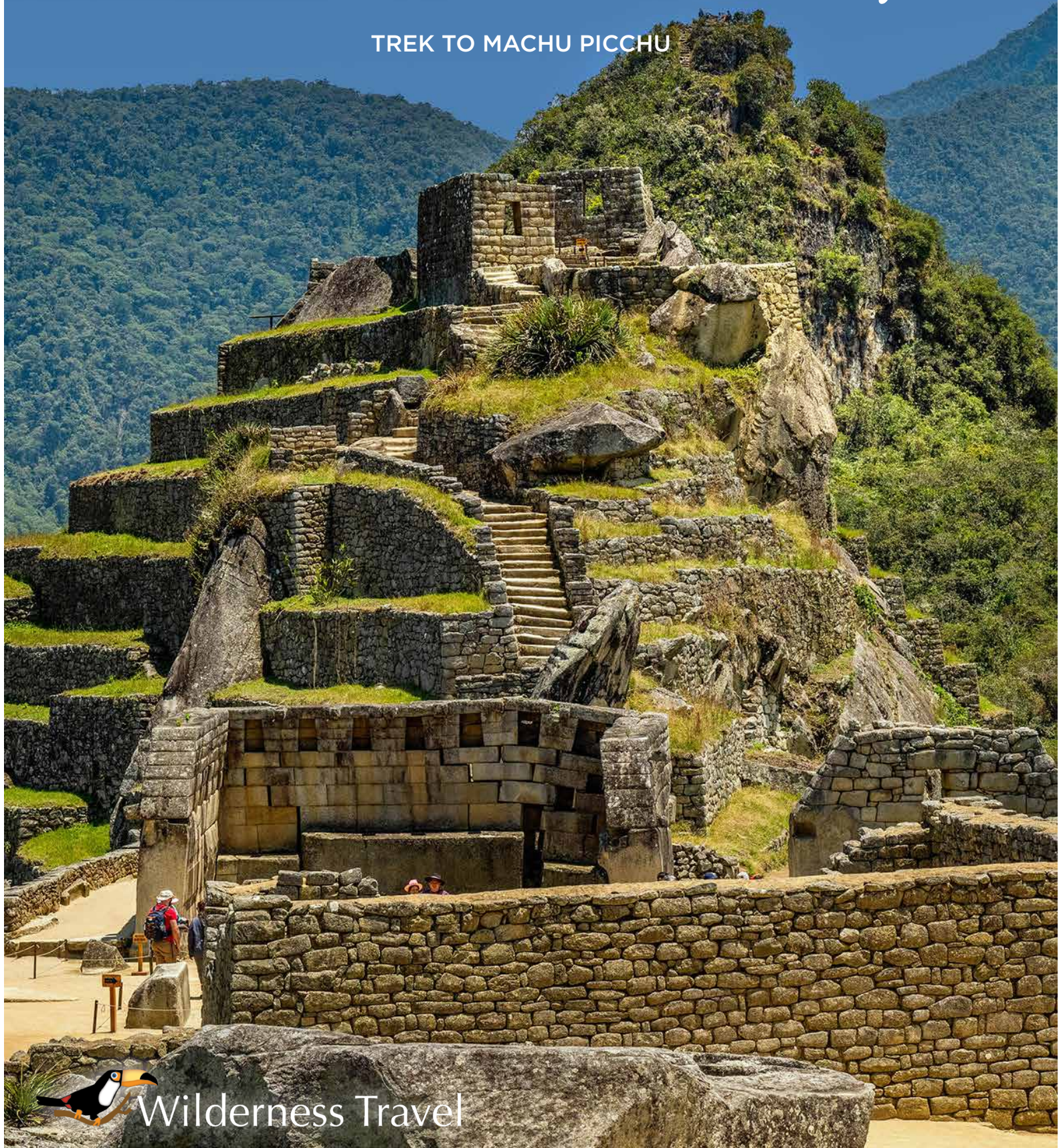


Inca Trail Private Journey

TREK TO MACHU PICCHU



Wilderness Travel

Introduction



ABOUT PRIVATE JOURNEYS

Wilderness Travel Private Journeys are designed for people who want to travel with their own small private group, but who still want to experience the same superb itinerary design, great accommodations, and signature quality of Wilderness Travel's escorted group trips. These Private Journeys allow you to choose your own dates and your traveling companions—and enjoy the WT touch on all aspects of the journey.

CHOOSE YOUR OWN DATES

March to December

This Private Journey is one of the great hikes of the world! Join your private guide for an amazing trek on the world-renowned Inca Trail to Machu Picchu, lost city of the Incas. On the trail, you just carry a daypack as you experience this unforgettable journey with our famous Wilderness Travel full-service camping support. Many other treats are in store on the Inca Trail: absolutely spectacular campsites, haunting Inca fortresses tucked among the rugged crags of the Cordillera Vilcabamba, the beauty of walking in a cloud forest of bamboo and orchids, and the mysterious dancing clouds that shroud, then reveal, these steep green mountains. We designed the trek for maximum altitude acclimatization and to get the most out of each trekking day on your incredible five-day hike. Along the way, enjoy the rich experience of hiking to three of the most fantastic Inca ruins on the trail: Runkuracay, Sayacmarca, and Phuyupatamarca (“Town in the Clouds”), then make your much-anticipated hike to Intipunku, the Gate of the Sun, to enter the magical world of Machu Picchu.

Itinerary

Please Note: We highly recommend arriving in Cusco one day early to acclimatize to Cusco's altitude (it's also a delightful place to explore on your own). An extra day makes a world of difference after the long flight from the US. We are happy to book additional hotel nights for you (an "on your own" expense).

DAY 1 TO CUSCO, PERU (VIA LIMA)

Arrive early in the morning at the airport in Lima and connect with a spectacular flight over the Andes to Cusco (11,200'). Upon arrival, you are met and transferred to your hotel, then set out for a walking tour through central Cusco for a glimpse into the ceremonial heart of the Inca Empire. We first head up to stunning Saqsayhuaman, a monumental Inca fortress overlooking the city, to marvel at the sheer size of this military and religious complex, with its zig-zag walls of enormous, perfectly fitted stones. Afterwards, we set out for a walking tour through central Cusco for a glimpse into the ceremonial heart of the Inca Empire. Our walk includes a visit to the Coricancha, a sacred Inca temple whose walls were once covered with sheets of gold, the Plaza de Armas, and the Baroque cathedral, built on the site of an old Inca palace. Overnight at hotel. A Welcome Lunch or Welcome Dinner is included this day depending on your arrival time...L or D

Cusco: Cusco was the heart of Tahuantinsuyo, the Land of the Four Quarters, as the Incas called their empire. The boundary lines of each quarter of the kingdom originated from the main plaza. An elegant imperial city, Cusco was laid out in the shape of a puma. The great fortress of Saqsayhuaman formed its head, while palaces, temples, squares, and streets formed the puma's body and legs. Cusco's paved avenues were flanked by temples, and there were rock-hewn palaces with gold- and jewel-encrusted doors and villas for the brilliantly clad Inca nobles and their retinues. The capital's opulent inner sanctum was the Coricancha, or House of the Sun, once a glittering temple to the gods, full of golden statues (today it forms the foundation for the colonial Santo Domingo church). Although the Spaniards looted the gold and silver from the elaborate Inca temples, most of Cusco remained undisturbed after Pizarro, the Spanish conqueror, made his triumphant entrance into the city in 1533. But in 1536, Manco II, the rebel Inca, led an attack against the Spanish. His men used slingshots to rain hot coals into the city, setting it ablaze. The Spanish triumphed, but the once-glorious city was left a smoking ruin.

DAY 2 PISAC / SACRED VALLEY OF THE INCAS

After breakfast, transfer to the beautiful "Sacred Valley of the Incas" and Pisac (9,751'), a colonial and modern village above which lies a majestic Inca fortress overlooking the valley. Explore its towering fortress-ruin (11,100'), which has some of the finest examples of Inca terracing in existence, still in use by local inhabitants, then descend to the colonial Pisac village. After lunch here, you'll have some time to visit the local Pisac market. Overnight at a lovely hotel in the valley...BL

Hiking Details: approximately 2.5-3 hours, 1,349' descent



TRIP DETAILS AT-A-GLANCE

- Length:** 9 days
Arrive: Cusco, Peru
Depart: Cusco, Peru
Lodging: 4 nights beautiful hotels, 4 nights full-service camping
Meals: All meals included except 1 lunch and 2 dinners (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
Activity: Archaeology, Cultural Adventures, Hiking / Trekking
Trip Level: 1 2 3 4 ⑤ 6
5-day trek on moderate to steep trails, 5-6 hours a day, altitudes between 8,000-13,776 feet

HIGHLIGHTS

- Hike in the footsteps of the Incas and enter the citadel of Machu Picchu on foot
- Your own private guide and porters, delicious camp cuisine prepared by your personal cook
- Enjoy the comforts of our legendary Inca Trail camping services—the best on the trail!
- Discover Peru's vibrant traditional culture and renowned archaeological treasures
- Deluxe option includes an overnight at the Machu Picchu Sanctuary Lodge, with its extraordinary access to the ruins

Itinerary



“All our guides showed such a passion for their work, the country of Peru, the Peruvian people, and the Inca archaeological sites.”
Gayle G., Silvertown, OR

Pisac and the Urubamba Valley: The Urubamba Valley was sacred to the Incas for many reasons, a key one being that it has a moderate climate and fertile plains, a rare combination in the high Andes. It is also the route to the jungle, from which the Incas liked to bring tropical fruits and plants. In the Urubamba Valley is the picturesque Andean village of Pisac and a major Inca ruin of the same name. The ruin at Pisac was the largest fortress-city complex of the Incas, yet is another enigma to archaeologists. It was a classic Inca pucara, a huge defended area where the entire population of a wide area could retreat during a military threat, but despite its natural defenses, the Incas made no stand here against the Spaniards. Pisac is particularly well known for the Inca-built terracing. These are the best preserved and most extensive Inca terraces in Peru and were used during Inca times for growing maize, a prestige crop that needed irrigation in the dry highlands. Another interesting feature of the site is its many cliff tombs, found especially in the steep walls to the west of the ruins. Huaqueros (grave robbers) reached them before the archaeologists and today all that is left is a honeycomb of empty tombs in the nearby cliffs.

DAY 3 OLLANTAYTAMBO / BEGIN TREK

Visit the stunning ruins at Ollantaytambo (9,160'), a major Inca fortress-temple and one of the few places where the conquistadors lost a battle with the Incas. The lower ruins consist of beautifully preserved terraces, while the upper ruins boast some of the finest Inca masonry known today. The village below the ruins is unique in that the foundations have survived exactly as the Incas laid them out hundreds of years ago. The major difference between this and modern-day towns is that each block, known as a cancha, is a self-contained unit with only one entrance onto the street. You have the opportunity to stroll through these narrow, quiet streets along with the local inhabitants. After lunch, drive to the trailhead and begin your trek with a three-mile hike to a beautifully situated permanent campsite set on the banks of the river at 8,900 feet and close to the park entrance. The amenities at this camp include wonderful walk-in tented chalets with en-suite bathrooms and hot showers as well as a wood-fired sauna and hot tub! You'll also enjoy panoramic views of the snow-capped Cordillera Urubamba and dazzling Mt. Veronica (18,700'). This is the staging site of all our Inca Trail treks and is a wonderful spot to relax and prepare for the trek ahead...BLD

Hiking Details: approximately 3 miles, 2-3 hours, 200' ascent / descent

Maximum Elevation: 9,251' / Campsite Elevation: 8,900'

DAY 4 TREK TO SALAPUNKU AND LLACTAPATA

One of the fascinating aspects of this trek is the opportunity to explore remote Inca sites that can only be reached on foot. Walk across a hanging bridge over the Urubamba River to Piskacucho at KM 82 and then follow the right bank of the Urubamba River until you reach the well preserved archaeological complex of Salapunku. You'll pass a few other



Itinerary

ruin sites before crossing another hanging bridge over the Urubamba River and continue up the Huayllabamba valley to your second campsite. At this point, you'll be on the main trail of the "royal highway" found by Hiram Bingham in 1915, four years after his discovery of the hilltop city of Machu Picchu, when he returned to clear vegetation from the site. The campsite has delightful views and is typically only enjoyed by our groups (though we cannot guarantee our exclusive use of it)....BLD

Hiking Details: approximately 8-8.5 miles, 6.5 hours, 1,544' ascent / 308' descent

Maximum Elevation: 10,236' / Campsite Elevation: 10,100'

DAY 5 TREK TO PACAYMAYO / WARMIWAÑUSQA PASS

After a hearty breakfast, pass through the small village of Huayllabamba and make a long, uphill climb alongside a stream to soon emerge above the tree line and continue on the slow but steady ascent up the very steep switchbacks of the famous Warmiwañusqa ("Pass of the Dead Woman") at 13,776 feet. At the summit (the highest altitude we reach on the trek), you are rewarded by sweeping panoramic views of snow-covered Andean peaks. After a rest to enjoy the view, descend down many steps to our camp at Pacaymayo at 10,990 feet. The campsite has wonderful views, but since it's the only option available along this part of the trail, you'll share it with other groups. Our staff will arrive early to secure the most favorable spot within the camp...BLD

Hiking Details: approximately 5 miles, 7.5-8 hours, 3,540' ascent / 2,790' descent
Maximum Elevation: 13,776' / Campsite Elevation: 10,990'

DAY 6 TREK TO PHUYUPATAMARKA

Most trekking groups rush out early on this day, but we take our time and enjoy having the trail largely to ourselves. Today's hike brings you to three of the most fantastic ruins on the classic Inca Trail: Runkuraqay, Sayaqmarka, and exquisite Phuyupatamarca. After visiting Runkuraqay in the morning, continue your ascent along the original Inca Trail. The second pass is the Abra de Runkuraqay at about 12,860 feet, with a steep descent on Inca stone stairs to the pretty ruins at Sayaqmarka. There are Inca baths here and you can see many varieties of orchids. The landscape becomes more lush as you head closer to Machu Picchu and away from the Urubamba Valley. Heading uphill again, cross a relatively short pass at nearly 12,000 feet near wonderful Phuyupatamarca. Our support staff will have gone ahead to secure a camp spot above the ruins of Phuyupatamarca. From our special camp here, views of Humantay (19,239') and Salcantay (20,574') are breathtaking. You'll feel like you're at the top of the world!...BLD

Hiking Details: approximately 6.5 miles, 6-7 hours, 1,870' ascent / 895' descent
Maximum Elevation: 12,860' / Campsite Elevation: 11,965'



"I can't give enough wonderful feedback! Our Trip Leader did a superlative job of helping to balance challenge with wonderment. The rest of the team on the trail were warm, professional, and kind. The food was terrific!"

Faithi B., Potomac, MD



Itinerary

“What a great time we had on the Inca Trail Private Journey! We were very impressed with the quality of the staff and the planning that went into the itinerary.”

Tom H., Raleigh, NC

Runkuraqay: This circular ruin was probably a frontier outpost of the Machu Picchu province. Hiram Bingham named it by asking his local porters what it was called. He heard runku but the porters might have said runcu, which translates as basket or basket-shaped, or rumpu, meaning ball or sphere. Its circular shape is unusual and its outer walls are massive and have no windows, but the eastern quarter of the courtyard has a magnificent view of the Pacaymayo Valley. It might have been a lookout post or a tambo, a place where travelers could stay.

Sayaqmarka: A small, maze-like ruin perched atop a sheer cliff at about 12,204 feet, Sayaqmarka (“Inaccessible Place”) is clearly illustrative of the military aspect of much Inca architecture and city planning. Bingham found this ruin in 1915 and called it Cedrobamba, Plain of Cedars. Since this is not a plain and there are no cedars, Paul Fejos, an archaeologist who visited the area in 1940 while studying Machu Picchu, subsequently gave it the Quechua name of Sayaqmarka. Sayaqmarka and the surrounding land have no significant remains of Inca agricultural terracing, so the site must have been supplied by food from somewhere else. One of its interesting features is a parabola-shaped building with trapezoidal openings on its west side.



Itinerary

Phuyupatamarca: This is the “Town in the Clouds,” aptly named by Hiram Bingham. Set at nearly 12,000 feet, it has a beautiful set of linked stone baths and carved stone channels where mountain water still runs. There are many agricultural terraces around it. From Phuyupatamarca, an Inca-built stone staircase plunges a half-mile down into high jungle vegetation. This section of the original Inca Trail was only uncovered in 1984. Before then, hikers had to skirt around a modern footpath built to connect two original trail sections.



DAY 7 TREK TO MACHU PICCHU

Depart camp early this morning to explore the ruins of Phuyupatamarca, Initpata, and Wiñay Wayna, the last major site on the trail before you reach Machu Picchu. After lunch, make the long-anticipated hike up to Intipunku, Gate of the Sun. Here, a magnificent view unfolds before us: the storybook ruins of Machu Picchu, straddling a green ridge high above the Urubamba River. This spot has the absolutely classic view of Machu Picchu, and you’ll hike down into the ancient city just as the Incas would have done. Our overnight is at a five-star hotel in the valley, or upgrade to Machu Picchu Sanctuary Lodge, the only hotel right at the entrance to the archaeological site, allowing unparalleled access (it’s just 50 feet away!) and sunset views over the Urubamba Valley...BLD

Hiking Details: approximately 8 miles, 5-6 hours, 485' ascent / 4,350' descent
Maximum Elevation: 11,965' / Machu Picchu Elevation: 7,972'

Wiñay Wayna: Wiñay Wayna (“Forever Young”) is one of the most beautiful small Inca ruins, especially when it is seen from a distance, clinging to the side of a ravine. It’s named for an orchid, once abundant in this region, that blooms year-round and hence had the Quechua name of “forever young.” A large round structure commands the site and below it a flight of stairs leads down past ten ritual baths. Ritual baths are a feature of major Inca sites.

Machu Picchu: American historian Hiram Bingham, who had a fascination with Peruvian archaeology, found the site in 1911 while searching for the ruins of Vilcabamba, known to be the last place where the rebel Manco II took refuge. A villager told Bingham about some ruins on a high ridge above the Urubamba River and led him there; thus, Bingham found the ruins not of Vilcabamba, but of a mysterious Inca city now believed to be one of the royal estates of the 9th Inca king, Pachacuti—whose name translates as “Transformer of the World.” Bingham returned in 1912 and 1915 to undertake the difficult task of clearing the thick forest that had engulfed the ruins. Peruvian archaeologist Luis Valcarcel undertook further studies and vegetation clearing in 1934, and in 1940 and 1941, a Peruvian-American expedition led by Paul Fejos did more study. Archaeologists know that Machu Picchu was built, occupied, and then abandoned in the course of 100 years. The Palace of Princesses, Temple of the Sun, Temple of the Condor, and the astronomical observatory are only a few

“First class service from our moment of arrival until departure. It was very apparent on the trail that Wilderness Travel was a higher level experience than any other agency. We were very pleased with all services.”

Randy F., Laguna Niguel, CA

Itinerary



of the remarkable restored ruins here. The many beautiful altars, terraces, fountains, and mysterious chambers all display intricate stonework. Discoveries in the 1980s of many other small ruin sites close to Machu Picchu have given weight to the theory that Machu Picchu also served as the administrative center of a huge and populous region. Whatever Machu Picchu's purpose was, it is certainly one of the most stunning archaeological sites in the world.

DAY 8 MACHU PICCHU / CUSCO

Continue your exploration of this extensive and dramatically sited ruin. Those who wish to climb Huayna Picchu will set out at 7:00 am up the steep yet rewarding mountain trail to its summit. The view here is stunning, with sweeping vistas of Machu Picchu in the morning's soft light. Continue to explore Machu Picchu until lunch, at which point you'll descend to Aguas Calientes and board a train bound for Cusco in the afternoon, arriving in Cusco around 7:00 or 8:00 pm, with dinner on your own... BL

DAY 9 CUSCO / LIMA / DEPART

Depart from Cusco to Lima anytime for homeward-bound flights or join one of our trip extensions...B

Extend Your Adventure!

To help you make the most of your adventure, we've created several exciting trip extensions. For detailed information, including full itineraries and complete pricing, please visit our *Inca Trail Private Journey* webpage and click on "Extend Your Trip": www.wildernesstravel.com/trip/inca-trail-private-guided-trek/

AMAZON RAINFOREST EXTENSION: RESERVA AMAZONICA

Enter the enchanting world of the Amazon rainforest as you listen to the dawn chorus of bird songs, hear the howls of monkeys in the high forest canopy, walk lush rainforest trails, explore by boat along vine-draped waterways, and learn about the ecosystem of a tropical rainforest from knowledgeable local guides. Accommodations are at Reserva Amazonica, set in a 40-square-mile private ecological reserve adjacent to Peru's Tambopata National Reserve.

4 days. From \$985.

AREQUIPA AND COLCA CANYON EXTENSION

Take in the colonial splendor of Arequipa, set on the edge of the Andes and surrounded by spectacular mountains, including snow-capped El Misti, a 19,000-foot volcano that makes a striking backdrop for the city. Explore the city's harmonious and beautifully preserved colonial center of white stone architecture, recently listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, then head out into the countryside to enjoy the grandeur of massive Colca Canyon, one of the deepest in the world, flanked by glaciers and volcanoes. The canyon's walls preserve some of the finest Inca terracing in Peru and shelter traditional Indian villages. Here you may spot Andean condors circling up from the canyon depths.

4 days. From \$2,295.



Pricing

TRIP COST

Prices are per person, valid through December 15, 2026

\$5,895 (6-15 members)

\$6,395 (4-5 members)

\$6,795 (3 members)

Single supplement: \$650

Inca Trail Permit: \$110

Note: We need a minimum of 3 trip members to run the trip.

Hotel upgrade options available in each location. Call for details and pricing.

Peak season rates are quoted separately: December 13, 2025-January 5, 2026.

Prices are based on double occupancy and not guaranteed until services are confirmed.

Make it *Your* Trip!

The prices above are for the ready-to-book adventure outlined in this Detailed Itinerary, a popular option that has been handcrafted by our Area Specialists to include the best of every destination. While many travelers choose to book this tour as is, our Area Specialists are also happy to work with you to customize this Private Journey to suit your specific interests and style of travel. We can arrange for longer or shorter stays, offer hotel upgrades (see below for sample costs), or add an extension to additional places of interest. We can even add special activities or customize excursions depending on your interests. We invite you to contact us to discuss your options!

TRIP COST INCLUDES

- Accommodations in hotels, based on double occupancy, as described, and in top quality tents on trek
- All meals as indicated in the Detailed Itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
- Land transportation as noted
- Entrance fee to Machu Picchu and Huayna Picchu
- Airport transfers
- Private WT Guide, Day 1-8, private porter & cook crew on the trail

TRIP COST DOES NOT INCLUDE

International airfare, any meals not specified after each itinerary day, any activities described as optional, airport departure taxes, optional tipping or gratuities to staff, additional hotel nights made necessary by airline schedule changes or other factors, pre-trip expenses such as medical immunizations (if any), travel insurance, or passports and visas; and other expenses of a personal nature (alcoholic beverages, laundry, etc.).

Pricing

SIGNING UP FOR A TRIP

Early reservations are recommended since Inca Trail permits and accommodations often sell out far in advance. We highly suggest you try to book this trip one year to no later than six months prior to departure. Please call 1-800-368-2794 and ask for our Latin America Manager or email us at latinamerica@wildernesstravel.com with any questions that you may have about this trip. To reserve your Private Journey, we will need to know your preferred dates of travel. We will then check availability and send you a proposed itinerary with exact pricing for your adventure. We can typically hold a provisional booking for one week. At that time, we must collect your initial deposit or accommodations will be released. We accept Visa, Mastercard, or American Express card. Upon receipt of your deposit, we will send you a Welcome Packet that includes a letter of confirmation, Detailed Itinerary, Trip Application, Medical Form, and Pre-Departure Information Booklet with information to help you prepare for your adventure. Please see our Cancellations and Transfer Fee Schedule for specific payment information.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

At time of reservation	\$1,000
90 days prior to departure	Balance

CANCELLATION AND TRANSFER FEE SCHEDULE

Minimum fee (including Inca Trail permit fee): \$1,000 per person

61-90 days prior to departure: 25% of trip cost

46-60 days prior to departure: 50% of trip cost

45 days or less: 100% of trip cost

*Please note that this differs from our regular catalog departures.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

We highly recommend you purchase travel insurance. You can take advantage of a comprehensive Travel Protection Plan designed for Wilderness Travel by Travelex, or purchase other insurance on your own. See our website for details: www.wildernesstravel.com/insurance

Accommodations

DAY 1 (1 NIGHT), DAY 8 (1 NIGHT): CUSCO, PERU

In Cusco, we stay at one of the following properties based on availability and choice of accommodation:



CASA ANDINA PREMIUM CUSCO

Just three blocks from the Plaza de Armas in the heart of old Cusco, this charming hotel is a renovated colonial manor house. It features a series of interior garden courtyards and a small sitting room and bar with a wonderful stone fireplace—a great place to relax after a day of exploring the city. The hotel's entire staff is most helpful, and the restaurant is known for its selection of Novo Andino dishes.



HOTEL MONASTERIO (OPTIONAL UPGRADE)

A 16th century monastery that is now an elegant hotel, the Monasterio has a stunning historic ambiance, with several inner courtyards, a chapel, wonderful furnishings, and antique paintings and carpets. The grand lobby bar, warmed by a fireplace, is a great place to sit and unwind at the end of a busy day. The hotel also has a great location just steps from the Plaza de Armas. As with any historic building, the guest rooms vary in size and configuration, but all are well appointed. This hotel even offers to pump oxygen into guest rooms to help acclimatization to Cusco's high altitude! The Monasterio is a member of the Leading Hotels of the World.

DAY 2 (1 NIGHT): OLLANTAYTAMBO, PERU

In the Sacred Valley of the Incas, we stay at one of the following properties based on availability and choice of accommodation:



HOTEL TIERRA VIVA OLLANTAYTAMBO

A cozy hotel with a countryside feeling, the Hotel Tierra Viva Ollantaytambo (formerly known as Pakaritampu—"House of the Dawn") is just a few blocks from the main plaza in the traditional village of Ollantaytambo. This peaceful retreat offers a lodge-style lounge with a large fireplace, a library, and games—perfect for relaxing after a day exploring Ollantaytambo—as well as a restaurant serving the best in Peruvian cuisine. Guest rooms are simple and comfortable, Wi-Fi is available throughout the property, and there are lushly landscaped grounds for birdwatching and great mountain views.



HOTEL RIO SAGRADO (OPTIONAL UPGRADE)

Nestled into a steep hillside above the roaring Urubamba River, this superb Belmond property is a tranquil retreat with a prime location and 21 spacious suites with private garden decks and stunning views out over the Urubamba Valley. Hot-stone massages are among the treatment options at the on-site spa. The restaurant serves seasonal Andean cuisine; ingredients are locally sourced and many items even picked from the kitchen garden. The hotel has extensive landscaped gardens with endemic plants—and baby alpacas roam around the grounds!

Accommodations

DAY 3 (1 NIGHT): INCA TRAIL, PERU



PRIVATE CAMP AT KILOMETER 82

We have exclusive use of the private walk-in tented chalet camp at legendary Kilometer 82, right by the start of the classic Inca Trail. This “only-with WT” feature gives us wonderful privacy for our groups, incredible views of the Veronica snow peak, and great access to the Inca Trail. The thatched-roof chalets feature twin or king-size beds, electricity, full bathrooms with hot and cold running water, tiled solar-heated showers, and flush toilets. Each tent has its own veranda where you can savor views of the surrounding mountains. Stone pathways connect the tents through landscaped gardens to a cozy lounge area with a fireplace and an enclosed dining room where our delightful meals are served, featuring a wonderful mix of Peruvian and North American dishes. The comfort factor is high here, yet your environmental footprint is small—solid waste is managed with bio-digesters and power is supplied by a hydro-electrical source. The camp also has an on-site sauna and hot tub so be sure to bring your suit! This is a unique, exclusive experience, and promises to be a highlight of your Inca Trail hike.

DAYS 4 TO 6 (3 NIGHTS): INCA TRAIL, PERU



INCA TRAIL TREK CAMPS

We make hiking and camping in the Andes as comfortable as it can get! On the trail, you are accompanied by our experienced team of trail guides, and all your gear is carried for you, leaving you free to hike with just a light daypack to hold your camera, water bottle, jacket, etc. Our camp amenities include a dining tent with a dining table, chairs with backs, camp meals prepared by our highly trained staff. We provide sleeping bags, sleeping bag liners, and sleeping pads while on trek. Our camp crew takes care of all camp chores, including bringing tea or coffee to your tent each morning and providing beautiful picnic lunches each day at a scenic spot along the trail. Accommodations are in sturdy mountain-style tents. Our camps are operated to the highest environmental standards.

Accommodations

DAY 7 (1 NIGHT): MACHU PICCHU RUINS, PERU

At the Machu Picchu Ruins, we stay at one of the following properties based on availability and choice of accommodation:



MACHU PICCHU PUEBLO HOTEL

Located in Aguas Calientes below the Machu Picchu ruins, this hotel is spread over 12 acres of lush cloud forest. The rooms are comfortable bungalows with fireplaces and private terraces for admiring the tropical foliage and watching birds. Not having TVs in the rooms adds to the “away from it all” feeling, and you can take guided early morning bird walks or stroll one of the most extensive orchid gardens in the world. Meals are exceptionally good, and check out the hotel’s traditional-style Andean sauna. It’s easy to get to and from Machu Picchu by bus (a 30-minute ride). People love this hotel’s peaceful natural setting, and you can walk across a bridge into Aguas Calientes town for a visit to the extensive local handicraft market.



MACHU PICCHU SANCTUARY LODGE (OPTIONAL UPGRADE)

You can’t get closer to the Machu Picchu ruins than this! With only 31 rooms, this property is famously set right at the gate of Machu Picchu. Not only does this save you from having to make the 30-minute bus trip to get up to or back from the ruins each day, but it also allows you the luxury of popping back to the hotel for a rest or a bite to eat whenever you like throughout the day. The hotel features a garden with a view of Huayna Picchu, two restaurants, and the food and service are wonderful. While the rooms are small and few offer views of the ruins, the Sanctuary remains the absolute top choice of travelers who decide that if they are only going to do it once, they might as well do it right!

These are our signature accommodations for this trip. Although it is highly unlikely, we may make substitutions when necessary. To see more photos and descriptions, please visit our *Inca Trail Private Journey* webpage and click on “Accommodations.”

Arrival & Departure

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE

Upon confirming your trip reservation, we will send you a Welcome Packet that includes a list of documents required for your trip.

ARRIVAL & MEETING PLACE

Cusco, Peru

Suggested Airport: Cusco, Peru (CUZ), via Lima (LIM)

Suggested Date & Time: Day 1, before 11:00 am

Meeting Place: Upon arrival, you will be met by your WT representative outside the arrivals hall at the Cusco airport.*

*Please leave a 3-hour connection time in Lima before flying on to Cusco.

Please Note: We highly recommend coming to Cusco one day early to acclimatize to Cusco's altitude (it's also a delightful place to explore on your own). An extra day makes a world of difference after the long flight from the US. We are happy to book additional hotel nights for you at the Hotel Monasterio (an "on your own" expense).

DEPARTURE

Cusco, Peru

Suggested Airport: Cusco, Peru (CUZ), with an onward connection in Lima (LIM) or any of our trip extensions

Suggested Date & Time: Day 9, depart Cusco any time this day

At the end of the trip (Day 9), we will transfer you to the Cusco airport for your departing flight.*

*Be sure to leave a 3-hour connection time in Lima before your international flight home.

INTERNATIONAL AIR TRAVEL

You are responsible for making your own arrangements for flights to and from Peru. Airlines with the most convenient schedules for this trip include American Airlines, United Airlines, and Delta.

There are many online consolidators for booking travel, but for more personal help arranging air transport, you can contact Exito Travel at 970-818-8459 in the US or Canada. They are very adept at putting flight itineraries together, to even the most far-flung places. More information can be found on Exito's website at www.exitotravel.com.

Note: It is necessary to depart from the US at least one day prior to Day 1 of the trip itinerary. We also encourage you to arrive in Cusco a day earlier to help adjust to the altitude.

The name on your airline ticket must match the name on your passport exactly, and your passport must be valid for at least six months after your date of return to the US.

Please do not purchase your tickets until you are confirmed on the trip. Once tickets have been purchased, please forward a copy of your email confirmation from the airline. It is your responsibility to ensure your flight times coordinate with the arrival and departure logistics for this trip.

EXTRA HOTEL NIGHTS

We are happy to arrange additional hotel nights for you in Cusco or Lima. Please contact our office to book these reservations.

What to Expect

WHAT THE TRIP IS LIKE

This trip is rated **Level 5, Moderate to Strenuous**, according to our trip grading system. Most hiking is between 8,000 and 12,000 feet. The maximum elevation we reach is 13,766 feet, and the highest place we camp is 12,033 feet. The total mileage hiked is about 29. Our group will spread out along the trail during about 6 to 7 hours of hiking each day (shorter on some days). On the trail, you will just carry your own daypack for the items that you want with you on the trail, such as a water bottle and a jacket. Our team of Inca Trail porters carries all your other gear from camp to camp.

Average Hiking Day

- 6 miles
- 6-7 hours
- 2,000' ascent/descent

Challenge Day

- Day 5: 5 miles, 7.5-8 hours, 3,540' ascent/2,790' descent

TERRAIN

Trails can be rugged, not the well-maintained trails you may be accustomed to in the United States. For the most part, you can hike at your own speed. The altitudes are high, but our first hotel night is in Cusco at 11,200 feet, our second overnight is in the Sacred Valley of the Incas at 9,500 feet, our first two nights on the trek are around 9,000-10,000 feet. These four days will help your altitude acclimatization before climbing the first pass.

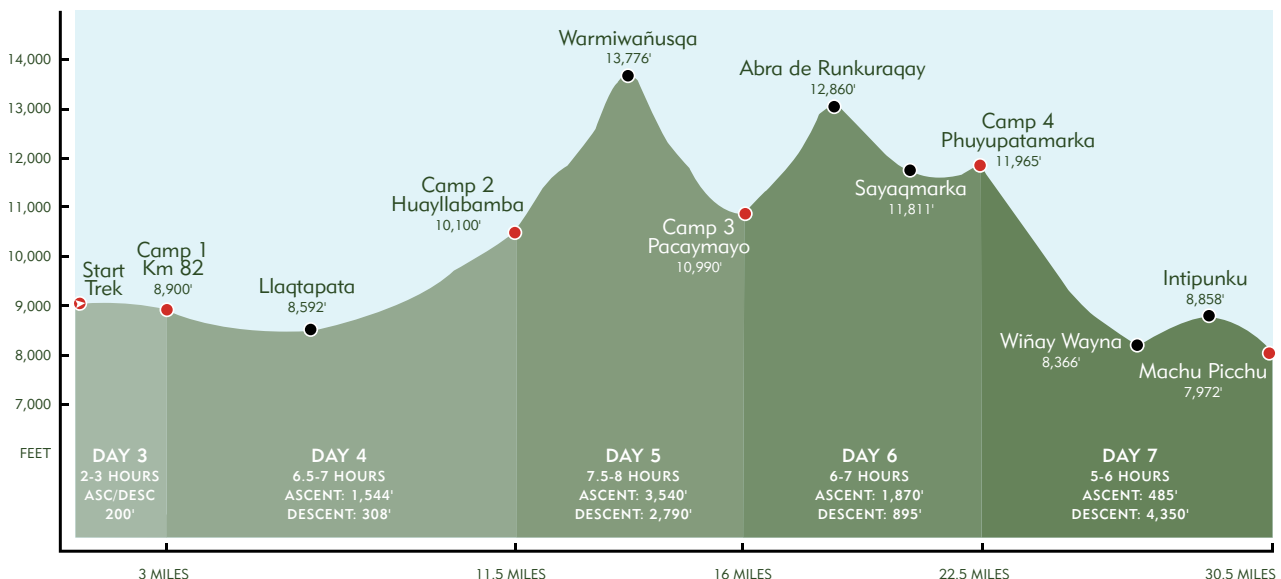
GETTING IN SHAPE

The Inca Trail is mostly stone-paved (Inca stones!) and it undulates up and down across green mountains while crossing two high-altitude passes. Any fit, experienced hiker will enjoy this hike, but we recommend you make an extra effort to prepare by engaging in regular exercise well beyond your normal routine. To accelerate your conditioning, try walking faster than 1.5 miles per hour, walking on steeper inclines, using your gym's stair-climbing machines, or going on long hikes (also a good way to break in your boots). Please be aware that there are a few sections of long, steep stone "staircases," so we do suggest hiking poles to protect your knees. The trek takes place at altitudes between 8,700 feet and 13,776 feet.

A TYPICAL TREKKING DAY

Hiking distances on trek are traditionally measured in hours, not miles, since distance at altitude feels quite different to the miles you might do at home. With rest stops and photo stops, few people walk faster than one mile an hour in a mountainous region. Some hiking days are shorter than others, and some days are more difficult than others due to altitude gain and loss.

On a typical trek day, you'll wake up to hot coffee, cocoa, and a choice of teas, brought right to your tent. This is followed by a freshly prepared breakfast of eggs, pancakes, French toast, oatmeal, and local breakfasts like quinoa and maca. We set off on the trail while the crew strikes camp and the porters shoulder their loads. There is always a guide in the lead, usually the Trip Leader or the camp manager, who supervises the crew, and someone who hikes behind



What to Expect

the slowest hiker. On most days our hikers tend to spread out over the trail, taking photos, stopping to rest, and enjoying the scenery. We typically walk for three or four hours in the morning, depending on the day, then stop for a leisurely lunch at a scenic spot. After lunch, we walk for another three hours or so until we reach our next night's camp. The porters and crew pass us in mid-afternoon and set up our next camp. We do ask that on Day 5 everyone make a point to not dally too long at points of interest along the trail, as we need to be assured everyone gets into camp well before dark.

Lunches consist of a wide variety of dishes, including delicious pasta salads, soup, casseroles, and other offerings. When we arrive at camp in the afternoon, snacks are available, including popcorn, cookies, crackers, and hot or cold drinks. Dinner begins with hearty soup followed by an entrée of fish, beef, or chicken (with vegetarian options), along with vegetable dishes, fruit, and a light dessert.

WHEN IS THE BEST TIME TO GO?

The Inca Trail can be hiked all year except in late January and February, the rainiest months, when the trail is closed for repairs. High season begins in June and extends through August, as these are the driest months. March through May and September through December are considered shoulder season, when occasional rain is possible, but keep in mind that the highlands of Peru are a temperate desert and it is not uncommon for it not to rain for weeks at a time even in the height of the rainy season. This is also the time with the fewest hikers on the trail, more flowers in bloom, and fewer tourists at Machu Picchu as well as in Cusco. Temperatures in the Cusco-Machu Picchu region range from the high 60s in the daytime to the low 40s at night, with some variation depending on the time of year you go.

WHY DO YOU NEED TO BOOK SO EARLY?

To protect the Inca Trail's monuments and environment, Peruvian authorities only issue 200 permits each day for hikers (plus an additional 300 permits for the licensed porters and staff who carry the gear and work on the trips). Permits sell out extremely fast! We must Inca Trail permits as well as Machu Picchu and Huayna Picchu entry tickets when you sign up, so we urge you to book your trip at least six months in advance, especially if you are considering going between April and September.

WEATHER

Being so close to the equator, Peru has only two climate seasons: a dry season from April to October, and a wet season from December to March. Altitude is the main factor controlling the climate. In the mountains, you'll encounter sunny days with daytime temperatures ranging between 65°F and 70°F, dropping to the 40s and lower at night. The sun is very strong at high altitude and it can often be warm enough to hike in shorts and a t-shirt. However, it can also get extremely cold; if you're familiar with mountain weather, you know how suddenly it can get cold even in the daytime if the sun slips behind a cloud. Nighttime temperatures can drop to below freezing. Rain should not be a problem on our treks, but always keep in mind that mountain weather is unpredictable and sudden storms can occur, especially on high mountain passes.

Lima lies in a coastal desert where rainfall is rare and temperatures are usually warm (70s and 80s). Days are overcast most of the year due to the Humboldt current that comes up from Antarctica and meets the warm, tropical El Niño current from the north to create the garua, or coastal fog/mist.

The climate in the Amazon Basin is generally warm and humid throughout the year but can also be unexpectedly cool (usually 60s) due to the breezes that blow down from the Andes.

AVERAGE DAILY MAX/MIN °F												
	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Lima	79/68	80/69	80/69	76/66	72/63	69/61	67/60	66/60	67/59	69/61	72/63	76/66
Cusco	64/45	64/46	65/46	66/43	67/39	66/35	66/34	66/37	67/41	68/44	67/45	66/45
RAINFALL - INCHES												
Lima	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0
Cusco	5.9	4.5	3.8	1.5	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.9	1.9	2.7	4.3

What to Expect

CHILDREN

The recommended minimum age is 10. Triple rooms (subject to availability) can be requested.

PRIVATE JOURNEY GUIDED SERVICES

You will have a private guide throughout the trip.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT TRIP

Adventure travel often involves exotic destinations, unusual levels of physical exertion, or activities you may not have participated in previously. We work hard to help you choose the right trip for you, paying attention to your individual interests, abilities, and needs. If you have questions about the level of comfort or any of the activities described in this itinerary, please call Wilderness Travel at 1-800-368-2794 and ask for the Latin America Manager or email us at latinamerica@wildernesstravel.com.

REFERENCES

We'd be happy to put you in touch with a past client that has traveled with us on this or a similar trip.

ABOUT PRIVATE JOURNEYS

Wilderness Travel Private Journeys are designed for people who want to travel with their own small private group, but who still want to experience the same superb itinerary design, great accommodations, and signature quality of Wilderness Travel's escorted group trips. These Private Journeys allow you to choose your own dates and your traveling companions—and enjoy the WT touch on all aspects of the journey.

TOUCAN CLUB

Please note that Toucan Club discounts do not apply for our Private Journeys. However, your participation on these trips will count toward your Toucan discount on future departures of Wilderness Travel's regular expeditions. For more information regarding our Toucan Club bonus program, please visit our website at www.wildernesstravel.com/resources/toucan-club/

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

At www.wildernesstravel.com, you can book your trip online or find out about added departures, last-minute deals, and one-time Limited Edition adventures that aren't listed in our catalog. You can also access our complete library of detailed itineraries filled with enticing photos and videos, read bios of our Trip Leaders, find descriptions of trip accommodations, and check real-time availability of any trips that interest you.

Travel Notes



WILDERNESS TRAVEL HAS BEEN AWARDED:

World's Best Tour Operators: *Travel + Leisure*, 2025, 12-time winner

Best Travel Specialists in the World: *Conde Nast Traveler*, 2025, 5-time winner

Best Wildlife, Hiking & Walking Trips: *AFAR Magazine*, 3 years in a row

Best Adventure Travel Companies: *USA Today*

Trip of the Year: *Outside Magazine*, 9-time winner

50 Tours of a Lifetime: *National Geographic Traveler*, 9 years in a row

Best Adventure Travel Companies: *National Geographic Adventure*, 3-time winner

Please be advised that California has established a Travel Consumer Restitution Fund under the California Seller of Travel Law that took effect January 1, 1996. This fund is designed to protect consumers from unscrupulous practices by discount airfare ticket sellers or air charter operators. Unfortunately, this law does not cover non-California residents and, even in the case of California residents, it does not cover any foreign travel where the foreign "providers of transportation or travel services" are not in compliance with the Sellers of Travel Law (compliance being defined as registered as a Seller of Travel in California and a participant in the Travel Consumer Restitution Fund). Thus none of Wilderness Travel's tours qualify and we are required by law to advise each client that they are not covered by the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires sellers of travel to maintain a trust account or bond. This business has a trust account. California Seller of Travel #100769640

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Revised: May 26, 2026 2:23 PM