

9 DAYS & 8 NIGHTS

THE ANDEAN EXPLORER 9 DAYS

SALKANTAY TREK | Easy



DESCRIPTION

THE ANDEAN EXPLORER 9 DAYS

The majestic Andes through the Andes. Discover the greatest in Cusco's architecture design on our 9-day Salkantay & Rainbow Mountain tour. This journey takes you to Machu Picchu, one of the World's New Seven Wonders, and Peru's Rainbow Mountain, also known as Vinicunca. Before beginning the Salkantay Trek, you'll also have the chance to take a guided tour of Cusco and a one-day journey to the Sacred Valley of the Incas to acclimatize to the high altitude. This tour provides the ideal balance of culture and adventure. Join us for an extraordinary journey that highlights the finest examples of Cusco's natural beauty, history, and architecture.

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DURATION
9 Days & 8 Nighths

DIFFICULTY
Easy

DISTANCE
47 mi / 75.8 km

GROUP
Up to 12

FROM
US\$ 1,200



EXPLORE THE ROUTE

FULL ITINERARY.

TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

- Acclimate your body during the first two days and get ready to live without limits or regrets, one of the best hiking experiences in Peru.
Discover the magnificent capital of the Inca Empire by visiting the most important sites in and around Cusco.
- Immerse yourself in the stunning beauty of the Sacred Valley of the Incas, where you'll marvel at the awe-inspiring Inca architecture.
- Experience the tranquility of nature by spending nights in our exclusive campsites, surrounded by breathtaking natural scenery that will lull you into a peaceful slumber.
- Embark on a breathtaking hike to the stunning Humantay Lake, a glittering gem nestled amidst the snow-capped mountains that will leave you spellbound.
- Witness the grandeur of the imposing Salkantay Mountain and the snow-clad peaks surrounding it.
- Immerse yourself in the breathtaking Andes, and the Amazon landscapes, where you can spot unique flora and fauna found only in this region.
- Unravel the secrets of the mystical Machu Picchu, one of the world's most iconic wonders.

DAY 05

Collpapampa - La Playa - Lucmabamba (Super Jungle Domes)

Jungle Adventure and Coffee Experience

Today we'll begin the day at 6:00 a.m. with a hot cup of tea and a nourishing breakfast at camp. We'll then set out on a scenic hike through the Santa Teresa Valley, following a gently descending trail that rewards us with spectacular views of rivers, waterfalls, orchids, and plantations of bananas, coffee, and avocados. Keep your eyes open—if we're lucky, we may spot the iconic Andean cock-of-the-rock, Peru's national bird.

Upon reaching Zona Propiedad, our private vehicle will be waiting to transfer us to La Playa, allowing us to arrive with more energy and time to enjoy an authentic coffee experience. Here we'll explore the coffee fields, take part in the cultivation process, and finally roast, grind, and brew our own cup.

After this enriching activity, we'll continue by private transport to Lucmabamba (2,000 m / 6,562 ft), where we'll enjoy a delicious lunch and settle into our exclusive Super Jungle Domes. In the afternoon, you'll have free time to explore the surroundings or visit the nearby Cocalmayo hot springs if you wish (not included in the package).

In the evening, we'll return to Lucmabamba for a restorative dinner before resting in your lodge surrounded by the sounds of nature. The night ends in the comfort of your lodge, where the gentle murmur of the forest becomes the perfect soundtrack for a deep and peaceful sleep.

From the comfort of our domes, you get to be in intimate contact with the surrounding nature. As you hear the voices of the wind, rain, and flora and fauna in the area, immerse yourself in this green environment.

- 17 domes
- 2 people per dome
- Dining room and kitchen
- Toilets and Hot Shower

- Opcional:
- Wi-Fi

Day Facts

- MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner
- ACCOMMODATION: Super Jungle Domes
- DIFFICULTY: Moderate
- WALKING DISTANCE: 10.3 km / 6.4 mi
- WALKING TIME: 4 hours
- STARTING ELEVATION: 2,950 m / 9,678 ft
- MINIMUM ELEVATION: 2,000 m / 6,562 ft
- HIGHEST ELEVATION: 2,950 m / 9,678 ft
- CAMPSITE ELEVATION: 2,000 m / 6,562 ft

DAY 06

Lucmabamba - Llactapata - Hidroelectrica - Aguas Calientes

Explore Inca Sites and Catch a Glimpse of Machu Picchu

Like previous mornings, the trek guide will wake you up early with a hot cup of coca tea served in your dome. After enjoying your last breakfast prepared by the talented trek chef, you will get ready for the day's activities. We will start the hike early, allowing you to experience a small part of the famous Inca trail.

After a climb of 3 hours with amazing views of the Santa Teresa valley, we will arrive at the Llactapata Inca site (2,700 m / 8,858 ft) right in front of Machu Picchu. This exceptional location is the perfect place to learn about the land's roots and history. Our guide will take you on a tour of the site, providing insight into how the Incas used and worshipped the land. From this spot, you can see the Inca City of Machu Picchu, as well as Huayna Picchu and Machu Picchu Mountain. You will have plenty of time to take photos and capture memories to share with your loved ones back home.

After exploring Llactapata, we will continue our trek for 1.5 hours downhill to Aobamba for lunch. Then, we will continue our way to our next featured spot in the hike, the Hidroelectrica train station (1,800 m / 5,906 ft). One of the most impressive sites in this area is the 250-meter-tall artificial waterfall, which generates electricity for the entire city of Cusco.

If you feel exhausted, you can take a train from Hidroelectrica to Aguas Calientes (not included, US\$ 37.00). Otherwise, we will continue our walk from Hidroelectrica to Aguas Calientes for about three hours along the train track. A few minutes ahead of Hidroelectrica, we will arrive at Intihuatana, a famous ancient rock used as a ceremonial table in the Inca era. The people used this stone, together with the famous Intihuatana in Machu Picchu, to measure and read the winter solstice, which marked the beginning of the new farming season for the Incas.

Next to the railroad, there is a beautiful path through the warm paradise of the cloud forest, the same trail used by American professor Hiram Bingham who rediscovered Machu Picchu after centuries of it being lost to the outside world. After three hours of walking, we will arrive at Aguas Calientes town, where we will head first to our hotel. Your room will have a private bathroom, hot shower, Wi-Fi, breakfast in the morning, and luggage storage while you visit Machu Picchu. You can rest before dinner or explore this peaceful town. There are no cars in Aguas Calientes, giving it a calm and serene atmosphere.

At 7:00 p.m., we will have dinner at a local restaurant and organize everything for the highlight of our adventure: Machu Picchu!

Note: During the rainy season, the hike up the Llactapata Trail is not 100% guaranteed due to safety concerns. When heavy rains are frequent, this trail becomes very dangerous.

We offer a selection of well-located hotels in the town with very comfortable and tasteful decorated rooms. You'll find them impeccable with clean rooms and beds as well as adequate toilets and showers. It's a perfect place to rest before the most important day of your trip!

- Single, Double, Matrimonial, and Triple
- Dining room and kitchen
- Toilets and warm showers
- Wi-Fi

Day Facts

- MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner
- ACCOMMODATION: Hotel
- DIFFICULTY: Challenging
- WALKING DISTANCE: 25 km / 15.53 mi

DAY 06 - Continued

- WALKING TIME: 8-9 hours
- STARTING ELEVATION: 2,000 m / 6,562 ft
- MINIMUM ELEVATION: 1,800 m / 5,906 ft
- HIGHEST ELEVATION: 2,800 m / 9,186 ft
- ACCOMMODATION ELEVATION: 2,040 m / 6,693 ft

DAY 07

Aguas Calientes - Machu Picchu - Ollantaytambo - Cusco

Visit the Magical, Mystical Machu Picchu

Today we will finally visit Machu Picchu - one of the 7 Wonders of the World and a UNESCO World Heritage Site! Rise early after a refreshing night at our hostel to enjoy the serenity of Machu Picchu in the soft morning light before the crowds arrive. The Machu Picchu entrance checkpoint opens from 6:00 a.m.

In the morning, we'll board the bus to Machu Picchu and be among the first to enter the royal city of the Incas. Our expert guide will lead us on a fascinating 2-hour tour through this wonderful ancient site, where we'll see temples, terraces, palaces, priests' houses, cultivated fields, and much more. Marvel at the remarkable engineering talent of the Incas, who were so advanced for their time, and whose techniques still leave us in awe today.

Despite lacking modern tools, steel, and iron, the Incas were geniuses in organizing this community sustainably and beautifully on the side of a mountain. They even brought water in canals and aqueducts through its streets for the people to use. When a Peruvian guide showed this site to Hiram Bingham, it was almost unrecognizable, covered in thick vegetation and a state of disrepair. Today, it has been cleaned and restored and is now protected and treasured by the world.

After the guided tour, you can climb Huayna Picchu Mountain (2,720 m / 8,924 ft) or Machu Picchu Mountain (3,000 m / 9,843 ft); these tours will take you an hour and a half and three hours between ascent and descent, respectively. Make sure you reserve your tickets in advance.

After basking in the magic of this citadel, we'll return to the town of Aguas Calientes to take the train to Ollantaytambo. Our private transportation will then take you back to your hotel in Cusco, where you can rest your feet and body.

Day Facts

- MEALS: Breakfast
- DIFFICULTY: Easy

- ACTIVITY DURATION: 2-3 hours exploring Machu Picchu
- MACHU PICCHU CITADEL ELEVATION: 2,430 m / 7,972 ft
- OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES: Moderate to Challenging
- MACHU PICCHU MOUNTAIN ELEVATION: 3,000 m / 9,843 ft (3-4 hours)
- HUAYNA PICCHU MOUNTAIN ELEVATION: 2,720 m / 8,924 ft (2 hours)
- HUCHUY PICCHU MOUNTAIN ELEVATION: 2,497 m / 8,192 ft (1.5 hours)

DAY 08

Cusco | Quiquijana - Llacto - Peru's Rainbow Mountain, Vinicunca - Cusco

Hike to the Mountain of Seven Colors: Vinicunca

Our final day of adventure begins at 4:00 am. We'll pick you up from your hotel and head towards the Southern Valley for a three-hour journey in our private transport. Remember, our walk starts at 4,630m / 15,190 ft, but you should now be accustomed to the altitude. Along the way, we will observe picturesque Andean towns, agricultural platforms from the Inca period, fertile valleys, and beautiful rolling mountains. Even at this early hour, herds of llamas and alpacas will entertain you while you enjoy a delicious continental breakfast to give you the energy you need to get started.

We will continue our journey until we reach the hike's starting point. From there, we will head down a meandering path in the Andean mountains, following a pretty stream. As you ascend, you will be rewarded with an impressive view of the Ausangate glacier (6,372m / 20,905 ft), the tallest in the Cusco region. Take a few minutes to understand why this mountain is so important to the Andean people. This whole region is home to many people and small communities, and you will have the opportunity to see them working the land. You will be amazed to see the traditional clothing they use that they make themselves, thanks to the practice of textile art that they have inherited from their ancestors. The colorful patterns on their garments are similar to those of Vinicunca mountain.

By keeping these traditions alive, ancient culture is preserved. Your guide will teach you about the meaning of some clothes and, if you want, you can ask him to teach you some words in Quechua—the language of the Incas and local communities to this day. After walking an hour and a half, we will reach the amazing Rainbow Mountain of Cusco (5,100m / 16,732 ft).

Day Facts

- MEALS: Breakfast and Lunch
- ACCOMMODATION: Hotel

- DIFFICULTY: Moderate
- WALKING DISTANCE: 7 km / 4.35 mi
- WALKING TIME: 2 - 3 hours
- HIGHEST ELEVATION: 5,100 m / 16,732 ft
- ACCOMMODATION ELEVATION: 3,400 m / 11,155 ft

DAY 01

Cusco Cathedral - Temple of Qoricancha and Convent of Santo Domingo - Sacsayhuaman - Qenqo - Puka Pukara - Tambomachay - Cusco

Enjoying the most important sites in the city of Cusco

Welcome to the imperial, Andean Inca city of Cusco, the cultural capital of Peru! Upon arrival, we will take you to your hotel to drop off your luggage and freshen up. After lunch and when you are ready, we will take a leisurely half-day tour of this amazing place as you acclimatize to the high altitude (3,400 m / 11,155 ft).

Cusco has a long history and is the oldest continuously inhabited city in all the Americas! Since about 1,000 B.C., people have lived in Cusco and regarded it as a center of the surrounding culture (then called Qosqo). It has been an important part of every civilization that has lived in the area throughout history, starting with the native people of Peru long before the famous Inca people.

On the arrival of the Inca Empire to Peru and beyond, Cusco became the navel of their far-reaching and powerful empire. Of course, the Incas were then conquered by Spaniards who also used Cusco as a colonial, regal capital for the area.

The attractions visited on this tour include:

- The Cusco Cathedral
- Qoricancha Temple and Santo Domingo Convent
- Sacsayhuaman
- Q'enqo
- Puka Pukara
- Tambomachay

Day Facts

- MINIMUM ELEVATION: 3,390 m / 11,122 ft
- HIGHEST ELEVATION: 3,800 m / 12,467 ft

DAY 02

Cusco - Qorao - Pisac Market - Pisac Archaeological Site - Urubamba - Ollantaytambo Archaeological Site - Chinchero - Cusco

Tour the Amazing Sacred Valley of the Incas

Today, you will have the opportunity to visit some of the most beautiful and historically rich towns of the Sacred Valley of the Incas. We begin the day by picking you up from your hotel in Cusco at 8:30 a.m. and heading toward the town of Pisac. Before reaching Pisac, we will stop at both the Qorao and Taray lookouts, so you can admire the Sacred Valley's beauty from afar and take pictures.

Once in Pisac, we will visit both the Pisac archaeological site and its famous traditional market. Then, we will drive to the town of Urubamba for lunch, where you will enjoy a delicious buffet lunch of traditional Peruvian dishes.

Continuing, we will drive to the classic Inca town of Ollantaytambo and visit its unique archaeological site with its royal water sources, high terraces, temples, etc., surrounded by towering mountain peaks and colorful valleys, plus the view of the faraway Veronica glacier.

Ollantaytambo is the most well-preserved layout of a typical, Inca-built city with its narrow, cobbled streets and stone walls. Its conservation allows for the enduring legacy of the Incan people to live on for us today.

To finish our day, we will visit Chinchero and meet some of the town's talented women in a textilemaking presentation. The Cusco region is known for its superb, colorful textiles, and here you will learn how each color of wool is naturally dyed, how the intricate cloths are woven, and the symbolism held by the traditional designs you find in their beautiful creations. Here, you will also visit an archeological site and a colonial church.

After your tour, you will be brought back to Cusco and dropped off at your hotel at 6:45 pm to rest up for tomorrow's exciting activities!

Day Facts

- MEALS: Lunch

- MINIMUM ELEVATION: 2,792 m / 9,160 ft
- HIGHEST ELEVATION: 3,762 m / 12,343 ft

DAY 03

Cusco - Mollepata - Challacancha - Soraypampa - Humantay Lake - Sky Camp

Hike to the Jewel in the Mountains - The Stunning Humantay Lake

Get ready for an early start today, as we'll be picking you up around 4:30 a.m. to begin your adventure. Don't worry though, our comfortable transportation comes with blankets so you can catch a bit more sleep during the 2-hour drive. We'll make a quick stop in Mollepata for breakfast before continuing on to Challacancha, where we'll begin our hike.

Before hitting the trail, you'll have a chance to meet the cooks and horsemen and do a final equipment check. Then, we'll start the 3-hour moderate hike to Soraypampa (3,900 m / 12,795 ft), where we'll spend our first night. The trail starts relatively flat, passing through a deep valley of glaciers and following a restored Inca water channel still used by local farmers. The section is 7 km / 4.35 mi overall.

Upon arriving at Soraypampa, you'll get settled in at our exclusive Sky Camp and enjoy your first lunch in the mountains. After some rest, we'll hike up to the stunning Humantay Lake (4,200 m / 13,780 ft), which takes about 3 hours round trip and covers 3 km / 1.86 mi. Although not far, taking things slowly at this altitude is important. At the lake, you'll be mesmerized by the turquoise waters reflecting the Humantay glacier - a view straight out of a fairy tale!

After returning to camp, you'll have a delicious dinner while watching the sunset. You'll feel the peaceful energy of the surroundings as you settle into your Sky Camp igloo. The glass roof provides a perfect view of the stars, constellations, and comets. And when you wake up, you'll see the majestic Apu Salkantay watching over you.

Our dazzling SKY CAMP is located in front of the impressive mountains Humantay and Salkantay. This campsite creates the perfect union of sky and earth. It allows you to sleep calmly under a clear sky starred with an exceptional view of the constellations. At the same time, you can enjoy all the comforts of a first-class vacation home.

- 32 igloos
- 2 person per hut

- Dining room and kitchen
- Toilets
- Optional:
- Wi-Fi

Day Facts

- MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner
- ACCOMMODATION: Sky Camp
- DIFFICULTY: Moderate to Challenging
- WALKING DISTANCE: 10 km / 6.21 mi
- WALKING TIME: 5 to 6 hours
- STARTING ELEVATION: 3,800 m / 12,467 ft
- MINIMUM ELEVATION: 3,800 m / 12,467 ft
- HIGHEST ELEVATION: 4,200 m / 13,780 ft
- CAMPSITE ELEVATION: 4 3,900 m / 12,795 ft

DAY 04

Soraypampa - Salkantay Pass - Huayracmachay - Collpapampa (Mountain Sky View)

Defeat the Trek to the Salkantay Pass and Descend Through the Cloud Forest

Waking up with the first rays of the sun, we await you with a hot cup of coca tea. Then, we will enjoy one of our nutritious and delicious breakfasts before starting the hike to the highest point of the entire route, the Salkantay Pass (4,630 m / 15,190 ft). This part of the hike is a difficult ascent on a winding trail, takes approximately three hours, and has a distance of 7 km / 4.34 miles.

Once you reach the top, you will be able to appreciate the most spectacular view of the valleys surrounding the Salkantay mountain located in front of you (6,271 m / 20,574 ft); it is considered the second highest peak in all of Cusco and is known as one of the Inca gods called Apus. You will also enjoy incredible panoramas of the mountains: Humantay, Tucaruay, and Pumasillo. After taking in the views and recovering your energy, we will descend on a 6 km / 3.72-mile hike along a rocky trail to our lunch spot at Wayracmachay (3,850 m / 12,631 ft). While enjoying a delicious lunch prepared by our chef, you will appreciate the beautiful scenery of the area.

Afterward, we will resume our hike to descend into the valley. This section is 9.5 km / 5.9 miles and will take us about three and a half hours to complete. As we go on, you will notice that the climate changes drastically because of the "cloud forest"; from this point, we will say goodbye to the snowy peaks of the mountains, and we will head to the Peruvian Amazon jungle. In this place, you can observe impressive wildlife unique to the area and many colorful landscapes. You will find it amazing that a few hours earlier you were in the middle of snow-capped glaciers, as the weather will also become much warmer here.

Your longest day of hiking ends when you arrive at our exclusive Mountain Sky View campsites at Collpapampa (2,950 m / 9,678 ft). You will enjoy a hearty and well-deserved dinner before going to rest.

Like in the times of our ancestors, our commitment is to our Pachamama (Mother Earth) and the Apus (sacred Mountains). Our campsite Mountain Sky View is adapted to the natural environment without generating any audio-visual impact, constructed with elements found in the same area, and located in a place surrounded by tropical mountains and rocky rivers under the shining stars.

- 37 huts
- 2 people per hut
- Dining room and kitchen
- Toilets and Hot shower
- Optional:
- Wi-Fi

Day Facts

- MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner
- ACCOMMODATION: Mountain Sky View
- DIFFICULTY: Challenging
- WALKING DISTANCE: 23.5 km / 14.60 mi
- WALKING TIME: 10-11 hours
- STARTING ELEVATION: 3,900 m / 12,795 ft
- MINIMUM ELEVATION: 2,900 m / 9,514 ft
- HIGHEST ELEVATION: 4,630 m / 15,190 ft
- CAMPSITE ELEVATION: 4 2,950 m / 9,678 ft

DAY 09

Cusco - Cusco's Airport (or Bus Station)

Say Goodbye to Imperial Cusco

Today, you'll get up, eat breakfast, and pack your belongings, as it's time to bid farewell to the imperial city of Cusco for the time being. We'll arrange a time to pick you up and transport you to the airport or bus station so you can continue your holiday or return home.

This isn't a permanent goodbye, and we're sure you'll want to return to relive all of the great experiences, learn more about the ancient city and cultures, and sample more of the excellent restaurants and their delectable cuisine. So it's not farewell, but rather see you soon!

SERVICES FOR YOUR JOURNEY

INCLUSIONS

WHAT IS INCLUDED

Inclusions

WHAT IS INCLUDED?

Permits & Entrance Tickets

Cusco Tourist Ticket (Boleto Turístico)

This ticket is required to access many of the most popular attractions in Cusco and the Sacred Valley, including archaeological sites and museums.

Day 1: Cusco's Cathedral Entrance Ticket

Day 1: Qorikancha Entrance Ticket

Day 3: Entry Ticket to Humantay Lake & the Salkantay Trek

Day 7: Entry Ticket to Machu Picchu Archaeological Site (Circuit 2)

Machu Picchu Circuit 2 offers the most complete and popular route through the citadel, making it the most requested. Although included in this experience, availability is limited, so we strongly recommend booking at least three months in advance.

If Circuit 2 is unavailable, we will arrange Circuit 3-B, which explores the lower area of the citadel, including the urban sector and key ceremonial sites. If this is also sold out, Circuit 1-B will be arranged, covering mainly the upper panoramic area with the iconic postcard viewpoint.

Day 8: Entry Ticket to Vinicunca (Rainbow Mountain, Peru)

High Quality Service & Safety

Pre-departure Briefing

The evening before your trip, you'll meet with your guide for a briefing to ensure you're fully prepared. For multi-day tours, this takes place at 5:00 p.m. in our office or, depending on your itinerary, at your hotel. For day tours, you'll receive a detailed WhatsApp message or call with packing tips, your pick-up time confirmation, and your hotel address verification. This ensures you're ready for your adventure.

Day 0: Transfer from the airport to your hotel

Day 1: Half-day Cusco city tour

Day 2: Full-day Sacred Valley tour

Day 3-7: Salkantay Trek to Machu Picchu

Day 8: Full-day Hike to Vinicunca (Rainbow Mountain, Peru)

Day 9-N: Transfer to the airport or bus station

Experienced Tour Guide

Our official tour guides are professionally trained and certified in safety and quality service, fluent in English and Spanish. Selected for their experience, responsibility, and passion for exploration, they share deep knowledge of the region's history, culture, flora, and fauna. With their guidance, you'll stay informed, safe, and comfortable—ensuring a worry-free and unforgettable adventure.

One Duffel Bag for the Salkantay Trek

For the trek, you'll receive a duffel bag to pack your personal belongings, with a maximum weight limit of 5 kg (11 lb), which will be carried by our staff.

Sleeping Bag for the Salkantay Trek

Our sleeping bags are durable and designed to keep you warm in temperatures as low as -18°C (0°F). They feature a mummy shape and include a sleeping liner for added warmth. Each bag is thoroughly cleaned and carefully maintained after every use.

Trekking Poles for the Salkantay Trek and Rainbow Mountain Hike

Trekking poles enhance stability on hard terrain while minimizing impact on joints.

Inclusions

WHAT IS INCLUDED?

Medical Kit or First AID Kit

All Salkantay Trekking guides have specialized first aid training and attend mandatory training sessions every February. Your guide will always carry a first aid kit and oxygen to handle basic emergencies (altitude sickness, diarrhea, cuts, scrapes, etc.). If needed, we will evacuate you from the trail as quickly as possible and ensure you arrive at a clinic for treatment.

Backpack Cover for the Salkantay Trek

Our attention to detail sets us apart. You'll receive a cover to protect your backpack along the way.

Professional long-range walkie-talkies

Walkie-talkies optimize communication, ensuring quick response and coordination in key situations and locations.

Accommodation

Accommodation in Exclusive Campsites

Like our ancestors, we deeply respect the Pachamama (Mother Earth). That's why our campsites and lodges are thoughtfully designed to blend with the environment and minimize any negative impact.

Our campsites are designed for your comfort and convenience:

- Bathrooms: Shared bathrooms are available at our Sky Camp, while our Mountain Sky View and Super Jungle Domes Campsites offer private bathrooms.
- Showers: Enjoy refreshing showers at both the Mountain Sky View and Super Jungle Domes Campsites.

- Dining & Kitchen Areas: Each campsite features dining rooms and fully equipped kitchens, ensuring you can enjoy your meals comfortably and worry-free. Our mules transport all fresh cooking supplies.

Hotel in Cusco for 4 nights (Days 1, 2, 7, and 8 of the itinerary)

2 nights before and 2 nights after the Salkantay Trek to Machu Picchu

Hotel in Aguas Calientes for 1 night (Day 6)

You will spend one night in a comfortable hotel in Aguas Calientes, including luggage storage while you visit Machu Picchu. Accommodation is in double, twin, and triple rooms.

Meals

Day 2: Breakfast at your hotel in Cusco and buffet lunch during the Sacred Valley tour

Days 3 to 7: Meals on the Salkantay Trek – 5 breakfasts, 4 lunches, and 4 dinners

Our chef prepares the best dishes in the middle of the mountain. Our passengers love our food! We respect all diets (vegetarian, vegan, or special menus are available at no extra cost), so let us know if you have any particular allergies or restrictions on your reservation form and remind your guide during the briefing. You'll enjoy breakfast, lunch, and dinner, in addition to hot drinks and snacks.

Day 8: Breakfast and lunch during the Rainbow Mountain hike

Day 9: Breakfast at your hotel in Cusco

Water on the trail

We'll provide you with warm, previously boiled water throughout your trek—from lunch in Soraypampa to breakfast in Lucmabamba. Be sure to bring an empty water bottle or a CamelBak for refills—we recommend a 2-liter capacity.

WHAT IS INCLUDED

Inclusions

WHAT IS INCLUDED?

For day tours and hikes, we'll provide you with a bottle of water at the beginning of the journey.

Wake up tea during the Salkantay Trek

Every morning at the campsites, you'll wake up to a hot cup of coca tea, delivered straight to your bed—perfect for warming up before you start the day.

Tea Time (Happy Hour) during the Salkantay Trek

During the trek, every afternoon before dinner, our cooks will serve popcorn, cookies, coffee, hot chocolate, tea, and hot water. After a long day of hiking, you won't have to wait until dinner to unwind, warm up, and enjoy a tasty treat!

Daily Snacks

Before starting any tour, your guide will provide you with a cloth bag containing local fruits, cookies, chocolate, caramels, and more. For multi-day treks, we'll refill it each morning so you can enjoy your snacks along the trail.

One cloth snack bag per person

Before starting any tour, we'll provide you with a cloth bag for your snacks—perfect for storing wrappers and keeping the environment clean. Feel free to use it throughout your daily journeys!

Transportation

Transfers

- Day 1: We'll pick you up at the airport and take you to your hotel in Cusco by private transportation. Private transportation for the Cusco city tour and return to your hotel.

- Day 2: Private transportation for the Sacred Valley tour and return to your hotel in Cusco.
- Day 3: Private transportation to Challacancha, the trek's starting point.
- Day 5: Private transportation from Zona Propiedad to Lucmabamba.
- Day 7: Bus transportation from Aguas Calientes to Machu Picchu. Private transportation from Ollantaytambo train station to your hotel in Cusco.
- Day 8: You'll be picked up from your hotel and travel by private transportation to the trek's starting point. Later, private transportation will be waiting to take you back to your hotel door in Cusco.
- Day 9: Private transfer from your hotel in Cusco to the airport or bus station.

Carriage of Personal Belongings During the Salkantay Trek

- On Days 3, 4, and 5, cargo mules will carry all camping equipment and your personal baggage allowance (5 kg / 11 lb). Our muleteers will be responsible for your duffle bag and personal items throughout the trek.
- On Day 6, your duffle bag will be transported by car and then by train, ensuring it is safely delivered to Aguas Calientes — the town at the base of Machu Picchu — where your belongings will be waiting for you.

WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED

Exclusions

WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED?

Huayna Picchu Mountain

Up for a challenge? Climb Huayna Picchu, the iconic mountain behind Machu Picchu. This 45-minute uphill trek rewards you with breathtaking views and a profound sense of achievement. It's not for the faint-hearted, but if you're afraid of heights, push through—the reward is truly worth it!

- Booking: Reserve 2–3 months in advance due to high demand.

Machu Picchu Mountain

Machu Picchu Mountain is one of the breathtaking peaks that surround the archaeological site. Its trails are less steep, wider, and less intimidating than those of Huayna Picchu, making it an excellent option for those seeking a more relaxed climb. Reaching the summit takes approximately 1.5 hours and offers unforgettable panoramic views. This hike requires an entrance ticket, which we can secure for you in advance upon request.

Huchuy Picchu Mountain

Huchuy Picchu is a small mountain just above the Machu Picchu citadel, offering a short, scenic, and less crowded alternative to the more demanding Huayna Picchu. Its gentle, well-maintained trail is perfect for travelers seeking a light yet rewarding hike, with sweeping views of the citadel and the surrounding Andes. While Huayna Picchu involves a steep and strenuous climb, Huchuy Picchu delivers a more relaxed and accessible experience—without giving up the stunning scenery.

- Availability: High season, from May to September.

Meals not specified

- Day 1: Breakfast, Lunch and dinner
- Day 2: Dinner
- Day 7: Lunch and Dinner

- Day 8: Dinner

Optional Horse/Mule Ride: Soraypampa – Humantay Lake (Day 3)

Optional Horse/Mule Ride: Soraypampa – Salkantay Pass (Day 4)

Train from Hidroelectrica to Aguas Calientes (Day 6)

If you feel tired or unwell after the previous trekking adventure, you have the option to take the train to Aguas Calientes from Hidroelectrica train station instead of walking.

- US\$ 41.00 per person.

Personal Hiking Clothes and Gear

Travel Insurance

Tips for our staff

While our team receives fair salaries, any additional gesture is always appreciated in recognition of their hard work and dedication. Participants often choose to pool their tips and present them directly to the hiking team or through their guide.

Additional costs or delays beyond our control

Landslides, bad weather conditions, itinerary modifications due to a safety concern, illness, pandemic, government policy changes, political instability, strikes, acts of God, etc.

Before You Go

We want to make your trip to Peru as memorable and as carefree as possible. In this section, you'll find the answers to all the questions you have about traveling with Salkantay Trekking in one place. Please read the following information carefully – it will help you with any questions about our services. Have another question that we haven't answered here? Drop us a line and we will get back to you asap!

Is it for me?

The Salkantay Trek to Machu Picchu is an excellent alternative for the Inca Trail trek and better suited for more adventurous trekkers who can handle higher altitudes and longer distances. Ascending to reach the famous Salkantay Pass (4,630 m / 15,190 ft) is not too strenuous nor very steep since it is at the beginning of the trek. Still, it does require stamina and a little time in Cusco to acclimatize to the altitude before beginning the trek.

Briefing or Informative Meeting

All information meetings and briefings are held in our main office in Cusco (or your hotel) at 5:00 pm, one night before the tour begins. These meetings last approximately 30 to 45 minutes. If you're unable to attend, you must coordinate another time by email, by phone or at the Salkantay Trekking office.

Trek Balance Payment (in Cusco)

If you still have a pending balance, you must pay it 2 days before your hike/tour. Otherwise, your trip reservation will not be confirmed.

If possible, it would be greatly appreciated if you could settle the remaining balance for the trek/tour in cash, either in US dollars or the local currency, at our office in Cusco. You can withdraw funds from various ATMs located along Avenida Sol, offering both US dollars and Peruvian Soles. Alternatively, you have the option to pay using a credit/debit card or PAYPAL, either online or in person, but please note that a 5% service charge will be applied by our payment gateway (Niubiz) and PAYPAL. We regret to inform you that we are unable to accept bank checks or traveler's checks as forms of payment for the balance.

Duffel Bag or Canvas Case

The evening before you start your trek, we will provide you with a duffel bag to pack your clothes for the 6 days. Your weight allowance is up to 5 kg / 11 lb. Our horses will carry your duffel bag for you together with the food and camping gear. It is important to be aware that you will not have access to your items in the duffel bag until the end of each day, as the horsemen and horses will always be ahead of the group.

During the trip, you need a day backpack big enough to carry your personal belongings such as a warm jacket, raincoat, camera, sunscreen, snacks, water, etc. Usually, a 30 to 50-liter backpack is sufficient.

Can I store my luggage at your office?

Of course! During the trip, your main luggage can be stored at our office (you can organize it with us on the briefing day or by email) or at your hotel, both free of charge.

Any equipment that you won't need on the trek can be stored safely in your hotel. Nearly every hotel will provide this service. Don't leave items of value with your bags; put them in the hotel safe and obtain an itemized receipt (in the unlikely case of theft, many insurance companies require that you have a copy of the receipt itemizing everything). It's best to put items such as credit cards inside a sealed, signed envelope for extra peace of mind.

Pick up of guests

Salkantay Trekking can pick you up from your hotel, as long as it's in the Historical Center of Cusco. Your guide will coordinate the pickup time in the briefing session, but please keep in mind that the time may vary between 30 and 45 minutes due to traffic.

Cusco is an old city, meaning it has many narrow cobbled streets. Some hotels and Airbnbs may be located on streets without access to cars or on long, steep slopes, making it difficult to transport luggage. We strongly recommend that you book accommodation with good access.

Return to Cusco

Before You Go

Returning from Machu Picchu requires quite a bit of logistics, but don't worry. Everything is included in your tour!

- In Machu Picchu, you'll board a bus that'll take you for 25 minutes to the small city of Aguas Calientes. The buses are boarded according to arrival.
- In Aguas Calientes, you'll board a train to Ollantaytambo. Your guide will give you the train tickets where the boarding time will be shown. Make sure you're on the platform 30 minutes early. The train from Aguas Calientes to Ollantaytambo takes 1:45 hours.
- Once you arrive at the station, our representative, identified with the Salkantay Trekking clothing, will be waiting to transfer you to Cusco or directly to your hotel. The trip from Ollantaytambo to Cusco takes 1:30 hours.
- In Cusco, depending on your hotel's location, we'll take you to a smaller car from our company (Hyundai H1) to transfer you faster to your hotel.

Note: Your tour includes a One-Way Consettur Bus Ticket Aguas Calientes - Machu Picchu, so you can choose to use it from Aguas Calientes to Machu Picchu or from Machu Picchu to Aguas Calientes. If you want a round-trip bus ticket, you'll need to pay an extra of US\$ 12.00.

Group Tours

Group tours are made up of different types of people, then physical conditions and ages can vary. By agreeing to be part of a group tour, you also accept that some people may be faster or slower than you. Therefore, each person can go at their own pace on the route.

It may be the case that a group wishes to modify the tour; however, the guide will be the one who decides, after consulting with all the participants, if such modifications are possible.

Strikes and demonstrations

Strikes and demonstrations are common in Peru, and this may interrupt some of our tours. Roads can be blocked, and train tracks can be taken over. However, we will try to keep your trip as originally planned, even if it means leaving the night before the scheduled date.

Under these circumstances, tours may also be canceled. In case of changes or cancellations, everything will be coordinated with you by our operations department. Your safety is our highest priority, and our decisions will be made to protect it.

Lost objects

Please pay attention to where you leave your things and remember to take everything once you leave our transport, tents or restaurants. You're the only one responsible for your objects during the tour.

WHAT SHOULD YOU BRING?

- Valid Passport
- Extra money (recommended soles)
- Personal medication
- Water bottle or CamelBak – (optional water purifying pills)
- Sunblock: factor 70 or more
- Insect repellent
- Personal Care Products
- Hiking boots or shoes (preferably waterproof)
- Light footwear or sandals
- Trekking pants (*)
- Trekking socks
- Pair of thermal pants
- Shorts
- Waterproof gaiter
- Long sleeve t-shirts
- Warm jacket
- Waterproof jacket
- Raincoat or rain poncho
- Waterproof or wool gloves
- Sun hat to protect neck and face



Packing List - Continued

- Wool hat for the cold
- Neck gaiter or buff
- Sunglasses with UV protection
- Sleeping bag (-15°C)
- Trekking poles
- Medium trekking backpack (15 - 25 liter)
- Camera and charger
- Power bank
- Snacks: Energy bars, chocolate, candies, dried fruits, etc.
- Bathing suit
- Towel
- Flashlight



Plan your next adventure with Inja Expeditions

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