

Tour:

PERU & THE INCA EMPIRE

Destination:

Lima, Cusco, the Sacred Valley & Machu Picchu

Specialization:

Archaeology, History, Geography & Culture

Itinerary:

10-days / 9-nights total trip

PERU & THE INCA EMPIRE				
Lima, Cusco, the Sacred Valley & Machu Picchu				
Day	Morning	Afternoon		Evening
1	Travel to Lima, Peru (overnight flight)			
2	Arrive Lima, Peru; clear customs & immigrations; transfer to hotel	Check into hotel; refresh	Welcome, Safety & Orientation	Hacienda "Los Ficus" Peruvian Paso Horse Show, Tour & Welcome Dinner
3	Private City Tour - Colonial Lima, Cathedral of Lima, Santa Domingo Convent, Larco Museo, San Isidro & Miraflores		Exploration in Lima	Local Dinner at La Tiendecita Blanca
4	Transfer to airport; domestic flight to Cusco	Private full-day tour in the Sacred Valley: Aqanacancha Textile Center, Pisac Market & Ollantaytambo Fortress		Hotel Dinner in the Sacred Valley
5	Private full-day tour in the Sacred Valley: Chinchero Village & Weavers, Maras' Salt Pans & Moray Archaeological Site			Hotel Dinner
6	Train/Bus to Machu Picchu	Historic Sanctuary of Machu Picchu - Private Tour		Local Dinner
7	Machu Picchu Citadel	Train to Cusco	Free time in Cusco	Hotel Dinner
8	Private Cusco Walking Tour - 12 Angles Stone, San Blas Neighborhood, San Pedro Market, Qoricancha Inca Temple & the Cusco Cathedral			Farewell Dinner & Reflections
9	Transfer to Cusco Airport; departure to home			
10	Arrive home Airport			



As with all sample itineraries, please be advised that this is an 'example' of a schedule and that the activities and hotels shown may be variable dependent upon dates, weather, special requests and other factors. Itineraries will be confirmed prior to travel.



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Peru... A Journey Through Time

From the colonial streets of Lima to the mountaintop mysteries of Machu Picchu, this trip is a deep dive into one of the most fascinating civilizations on Earth. Students will walk through ancient temples, bustling markets, and breathtaking landscapes as they explore Peru's rich history, vibrant culture, and scientific wonders. Whether you're learning about Incan engineering at Ollantaytambo, watching a Peruvian Paso horse show, or hiking through the Sacred Valley, every moment is packed with discovery.



This 10-day journey blends archaeology, anthropology, and hands-on cultural exchange. Students will meet local weavers in Chinchero, explore salt pans and agricultural experiments at Moray, and tour the legendary citadel of Machu Picchu. Along the way, they'll experience Peru's culinary traditions, visit world-class museums, and reflect on the legacy of the Inca Empire. With guided tours, expert-led sessions, and plenty of time to explore, this is more than a trip - it's a once-in-a-lifetime expedition into the heart of South America.

Peru's dramatic geography—from coastal cities to highland villages—offers a living classroom for students eager to connect science, history, and global perspectives. This program invites young travelers to think critically, engage deeply, and return home with unforgettable memories and a broader view of the world.

Day 1

Overnight flight; meals in flight

No activities; in flight.

Day 2

Breakfast in flight, lunch on own, dinner in destination

Groups will generally arrive Lima in the early afternoon. Upon arrival we'll transfer to our hotel, check in and get settled, and acclimated to our new surroundings. After a bit of downtime to rest and relax, we will reconvene for our Welcome, Safety & Orientation Meeting followed by a wonderful welcome dinner.



Sample Hotel: Britania Crystal Collection – Located in the Miraflores neighborhood, this location will give you access to enjoy the beach, sample delicious local restaurants, and nearby museums. Hotel amenities include 24-hour reception, in-room air conditioning, on-site restaurant, available wi-fi, outdoor swimming pool, sauna, laundry services, business center, in-room safes, solarium and more. Breakfast is served at your hotel.



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Peruvian Paso Horse Show, Tour & Welcome Dinner – This program is an absolutely wonderful way to say Welcome to Peru! Groups will be picked up and driven to the Lurin Valley (approximately 45-minutes) enjoying rural areas, fields and small towns en route. You will visit the Hacienda "Los Ficus", a private home/ranch owned and operated by a well-known Limeño family that breeds and shows Peruvian Paso horses. You will learn about the unique characteristics of the Peruvian Paso Horse, with a program and tour of the stables and pastures. You will see newborns, as well as horses being trained for show and competition, observing their strong qualities. The "chalanés" (riders), in typical Peruvian riding garments will demonstrate for you, on their horses with their luxurious outfit "apero". There is also a Marinera demonstration, a folk dance from the northern coast of Peru. For dinner, you will enjoy a typical Peruvian meal. Before you leave, there will be an opportunity to ride one of the amazing Paso horses. Welcome to Peru! [VIDEO](#)

A note about time: Lima's time zone is equivalent to the USA Central Time Zone. Peru Time (PET) is the official time in Peru. It is always 5 hours behind Coordinated Universal Time (UTC-05:00). Peru has only one time zone and does not observe daylight saving time.

Get to know the food in Lima: [VIDEO](#)

Day 3

Breakfast, lunch & dinner included

Good morning Lima! Today we will have an opportunity to learn all about Lima!

Lima City Tour - After breakfast, we will embark on a private city tour of Colonial Lima to explore the city's main avenues, boulevards, and squares.

- The tour will begin with an exploration of **Colonial Lima** – the Main Square, Government Palace, the Cathedral of Lima, and the City Hall - all examples of Lima's still-present colonial architectural opulence.
- Next, visit the interior of the **Cathedral of Lima**. As you walk through the Cathedral's numerous chapels, you'll travel the past to discover various architectural styles (from Renaissance to Neo-Classical) and learn about the religious history of Peru.
- Next, we will make our way to the **Santo Domingo Convent**, a religious and architectural gem that houses holy paintings, images, and relics of Peruvian saints, as well as written accounts of the endeavors of the Dominican Order across the country.
- Then, you will visit **Casa de Aliaga**, a colonial mansion that currently holds the distinction of being the oldest continuously inhabited private residence in the Southern Hemisphere.





The Larco Museum – Later in the day, we'll head to the Pueblo Libre District. Discover more than 5,000 years of history of ancient Peru and the intimate relationship that pre-Columbian societies had with nature. The museum boasts a supremely fine collection of gold and silver jewelry and worship paraphernalia that demonstrates the superb skill of ancient Peruvian gold and silversmiths. The Larco Museum also contains a famous collection of erotic ceramic tomb art that gives insights into various aspects of pre-Columbian sexuality. While here we will participate in a Master Class. Teachers will select one of the following prior to travel:



Sacred Animals of Ancient Peru - Students will discover the different sacred animals of ancient Peru. Exploring objects, identifying animals, and reconstructing mythological scenes, students will understand the role that these divinities played in people's lives. At the end of the visit, the students will participate in the creative workshop "Create your god". 1.5-hours

Rafael Larco Hoyle's Dream - Students will experience ancient Peru through the history and legacy of the museum's founder, Don Rafael Larco Hoyle. Exploring objects, old photographs and excavation cards, students will discover the pioneering work of this fascinating character in archaeological research, his avant-garde vision in museums and, finally, the realization of his great dream: the Larco Museum. 1.5-hours

The Incas: Building an Empire - Students explore the museum's galleries to discover how the Incas efficiently harnessed the achievements of other cultures, such as northern goldsmithing, coastal architecture, highland cattle ranching, and southern commerce. Exploring objects, reading myths and decoding messages, students will discover the cultures that inspired the great Inca Empire. At the end of the visit, the students will participate in the creative workshop "Create your quipu". 1.5-hours

This evening we will have a fabulous local dinner and get ready to depart Lima for Cusco the next morning.



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Day 4

Breakfast, lunch & dinner included

Rise and shine Peru! After breakfast this morning, we will head to the airport for a domestic flight to Cusco and the Sacred Valley.

Upon arrival in Cusco, we will continue onward to the **Sacred Valley**. A few miles farther along, we will reach **Pisac**, a beautiful place where Incan and Colonial influences have reached a perfect balance and created the unique way of life of the local inhabitants. You will get a chance to explore this quaint town, famous for its artisan markets where you can find extraordinarily fine jewelry along with ceramic and textile craftwork.

Our late Sacred Valley lunch will be held at **Wayra Ranch**. You'll be amazed by the dishes you receive on your table —local tamales, anticucho kebabs, roast lechón (sucking pork), chicken and salmon trout baked with local herbs, cooked to your taste, with abundant house salad made with products from the organic garden.

Sample Hotel: Hatun Valley - The vibrant energy of Cusco awaits you in Hatun Valley, a cozy retreat hotel located in the Sacred Valley of Urubamba, among incredible Andean landscapes steeped in history, tradition and spirituality. Legend has it that two locals once lived in the Sacred Valley, who enjoyed a deep and intense connection with Pachamama, the protective divinity of the Inca empire, who provides us with life and wisdom. It is said that in honor of these virtues, the locals honored their guests with a warmth comparable only to that which they could feel in the womb and that for years hundreds of visitors have left the valley with the feeling of having been reborn. Today Hatun Valley represents that warmth of the Pachamama that has hosted so many visitors, where you will feel reborn tuning into nature and discover the rich culture of a town that preserves the ancient folklore through its ancient rites. [VIDEO](#)



After getting settled in our hotel, we will visit one of the last remaining Incan towns, **Ollantaytambo**, which was once fiercely guarded by a massive fortress. Discover the large archeological complex of what used to serve as a wayside inn for royal delegations on long journeys. Surviving structures here include multiple walls and towers that were used to protect the citadel from possible invasions.

This evening we will have dinner in our hotel and then the night is free for exploration. Perhaps a walk, a quiz or a culture game?

Day 5

Breakfast, lunch & dinner included

Good morning Sacred Valley! Today we will embark on a full-day tour in the Sacred Valley: Chinchero Village, Maras' Salt Pans and Moray Archaeological Site.



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Chincheró Village - After breakfast, we'll travel to the Chincheró Village. With an altitude 12,375 feet above sea level (3,772 meters), Chincheró is famous for the extraordinary beauty and quality of its textiles and its Sunday fair, where local people dress in traditional colorful outfits and travel down from their villages to trade their goods.



Weaver's Workshop Tour - Walk along traditional alleyways, next to your guide, and visit the **weavers' workshop** of Nilda Callañaupa, who 28-years ago decided to bring together like-minded women who shared her passion for weaving, and in time was able to motivate younger women who had lost interest in weaving to learn from their elders and connect once more with this ancestral art. She began working in the yard of her own house in Chincheró, and in 1996 her project became the **Center for Traditional Textiles of Cusco**, a strong organization dedicated not only to the preservation, but also the commercialization of beautiful, high-quality textiles.



Salt Pans of Maras - In the afternoon, we will continue the trip toward the Sacred Valley. We will cross the Urubamba River and head towards Salt Pans of Maras. The sight of this still-operating salt mine, in use since Incan times, is amazing. The stark white of the steeply descending salt pans juxtaposed against the green of the surrounding mountain slopes is simply brilliant.

Moray Archaeological Site - The journey will continue on until we reach the archeological site of Moray. Used as an agricultural testing ground, the site's system of circular terraces descends 490 feet (150m) from where you stand, serving as a perfect testament to the level of advancement achieved by the Incas, who excelled at building masterful construction in harmony with nature.



Dinner will be at our hotel this evening.

Day 6

Breakfast, lunch & dinner included

Rise and shine Peru! This morning we will be transferred from our hotel to the Ollantaytambo train station where we will board the Voyager train service en route to **Santuario Histórico de Machu Picchu** (Historic Sanctuary of Machu Picchu). Aboard a comfortable train we will be able to enjoy a spectacular view en route. On arrival, we will take a bus to the entrance gate of the Machu Picchu citadel.

Important: PeruRail carry-on baggage allowance for Days 6 & 7 - Each passenger may take 1 bag— 05 kg/11 lb – 62 inches/157 cm (length + height + width). Baggage that exceeds these measurements will not be allowed as a carry-on on the train. Passengers should only take necessities for this overnight excursion; all other baggage will be held for us with safe keeping.



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Machu Picchu - At the top of a mountain, enormous and imposing stone blocks joined without using mortar were combined to create one of the most important religious, political and cultural centers of the Inca empire: Machu Picchu. Machu Picchu is a 15th-century Inca citadel, located in the Eastern Cordillera of southern Peru, on a 2,430-meter (7,970 ft) mountain ridge in the Cusco Region above the Sacred Valley. The Urubamba River flows past it, cutting through the Cordillera and creating a canyon with a tropical mountain climate. Most archaeologists believe that Machu Picchu was constructed as an estate for the Inca emperor Pachacuti (1438–1472). Often mistakenly referred to as the "Lost City of the Incas", it is the most familiar icon of Inca civilization. The Incas built the estate around 1450 but abandoned it a century later at the time of the Spanish conquest. Although known locally, it was not known to the Spanish during the colonial period and remained unknown to the outside world until American historian, Hiram Bingham, brought it to international attention in 1911.



Machu Picchu was built in the classical Inca style, with polished dry-stone walls. Its three primary structures are the Intihuatana, the Temple of the Sun, and the Room of the Three Windows. Most of the outlying buildings have been reconstructed in order to give tourists a better idea of how they originally appeared. By 1976, 30% of Machu Picchu had been restored and restoration continues.

Machu Picchu was declared a Peruvian Historic Sanctuary in 1981 and a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1983. In 2007, Machu Picchu was voted one of the New Seven Wonders of the World in a worldwide Internet poll. Its architectural beauty, spectacular natural landscapes and the energy held in its enigmatic structures will take your breath away. Follow in the footsteps of the ancient Incans as you explore this magical citadel along with the tour guide.

Notes from an insider:

- ✓ Bring your passport to Machu Picchu with you, you will need it to get in. And you can get it stamped, which is pretty cool.
- ✓ Drink lots of water and possibly take sachets of hydration salts just in case. Also, staying hydrated is an awesome way to reduce your chance of experiencing altitude sickness.
- ✓ Make sure you have a good reusable water bottle or a hydration pack to put in your backpack.
- ✓ Be ready for all four seasons. As you gain altitude, temperatures become more extreme. In one day, you can experience everything from a super cold morning to boiling hot sunshine in the afternoon. Dress in layers and ask your guide but prepare for anything.
- ✓ Bring a fleece and rain jacket for the wind and rain if suggested by your guide.
- ✓ Remember sunscreen and a hat. The sun is stronger up high, so make sure it's a high SPF.
- ✓ A final tip on what to wear relates to shoes. You will need well broken-in walking boots to support you through the day's hike (and I mean well broken-in – a friend of mine lost four toenails from wearing boots that she hadn't worn enough before the hike).
- ✓ High season is May to October. The site is especially busy during periods of national holidays – roughly from July 28 to August 10.



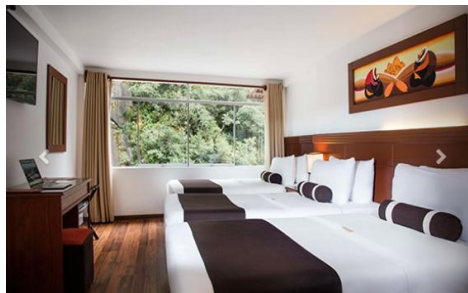
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- ✓ The rainy season is November to March. During this time, you are likely to get rain for brief periods during the day, and clouds obscuring the site in the mornings.
- ✓ If you are not able to hike, there is also a bus that may be available, at cost, for those that are unable to walk the steep steps.

After our amazing day, we will check into the hotel, have dinner and talk about the incredible things we accomplished today!

Sample Hotel: Ferre Machu Picchu - Boutique hotel Ferre Machu Picchu is surrounded by beautiful mountains with impressive vegetation and the closest access point to the Historic Sanctuary of Machu Picchu. The hotel is located one block from the Train Station and the area's commercial places, its famous craft fair, thermal baths and the Bus Station that goes to the citadel of Machu Picchu. The hotel offers spacious rooms with an excellent view of the Vilcanota River, equipped with heating, a minibar, a safe, private bathrooms with Spanish showers, a hair dryer, large closets, a 32" LED television, free internet and work desk. The facilities include a restaurant, business center and spa.



Day 7

Breakfast, lunch & dinner included

Good morning Machu Picchu! Following breakfast, we'll have a re-entry to the Machu Picchu Citadel followed by a buffet lunch at Machu Picchu Sanctuary Lodge. Afterwards, we'll be picked up and taken to the Aguas Calientes train station to board the return train (Vistadome Service). Upon the arrival at the station, a private transfer service will be waiting to take us to our final hotel in the city of Cusco.

Sample Hotel: Xima Cusco - Our Inka Experience by Xima Hotel is located in Plaza Regocijo, 150 meters from the main square, near local Museums and Churches such as the Regional Historical Museum "Casa del Inka Garcilaso" and the Cathedral of Cusco. With 58 comfortable rooms, Wi-fi, and in-house restaurant with buffet breakfast, groups will have a lovely evening.



On arrival in the city and after check-in, we will have free time to explore more of the city or just kick back and relax. Dinner will be at our hotel.



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Day 8

Breakfast, lunch & dinner included

Hello Peru! Today is our last full day in Peru. After breakfast at our hotel, we have fabulous sightseeing planned to get to know this last Peruvian city.

Cusco City Tour - Today, we will walk through **Hatun Rumiyoq**, a narrow Inca Street famous for its precise assembly of large stones believed to be the palace of the sixth Inca king, Inca Roca. Admire one well-known stone in particular that has twelve perfectly fitted angles. Next, discover the picturesque neighborhood of **San Blas**, home to many renowned artists. We will visit the **San Blas Church**, built in 1563 on top of an Inca Sanctuary. Then, we will explore the **San Pedro Market**, Cusco's main street market, inundated with aromas, tastes, sights, and colors of the local products of the Cusco region. Afterward, visit the **Qoricancha** (which means room of gold in Quechua), a temple dedicated to the Sun god. Legend has it that its inner walls were once completely lined with gold. Finally, we will head to **Cusco Cathedral**. We will take a guided tour to discover the mysteries of it and admire its lovely atria and priceless 17th and 18th century paintings of the Cusco school.



Our farewell dinner will be at a local restaurant this evening.

Day 9

Breakfast included but dependent upon flight time; other meals on own during travel

Good morning Cusco! Following breakfast at our hotel, we'll get ready to depart incredible Peru. Dependent upon flight considerations, we may depart direct from Cusco or fly to Lima prior to our international flight. We'll start to say goodbye to this beautiful city and stunning country, taking away memories that will inspire us as we move towards the future.



Day 10

Arrive at home airport.



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Important Notes

- Dependent upon your international airline, meals may be included in costs or at additional cost during flight. We will notify you of the specific inclusions once your ticketing has been completed.
- All guests are quoted on double/triple occupancy in the hotel property. If single occupancy is required, please understand that a supplemental fee will be required.
- Each guest should ensure they are aware of passport and Visa requirements. For Peru entry, as of last updates, **passports must be valid for 6 months after your scheduled return date.**
- Foreign visitors are exempt from the 18% VAT (Sales Tax) in accommodation and meals where the passengers are staying. This exemption is already included in prices. The documents required to validate this exemption are a) individual passports and b) migration cards (obtained when entering the country on arrival). These two items must be supplied by every guest or VAT fees will apply.
- **PeruRail carry-on baggage allowance for Days 6 & 7:** Each passenger may take 1 bag– 05 kg/11 lb – 62 inches/157 cm (length + height + width). Baggage that exceeds these measurements will not be allowed as a carry-on on the train. Passengers should only take necessities for this overnight excursion; all other baggage will be held for us with safe keeping.
- **Beverages are not included in meal costs.** Each guest should be prepared to purchase a beverage with their meal. The only exception is beverages at breakfast.
- **Please be acquainted with customary tipping for local guides.** Ask us for information if needed.



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Peru & the Inca Empire

Minimum Booking Numbers: 15 students

What's Included:

- ✓ Roundtrip international flights
- ✓ 7-nights' accommodation in Peru (+ overnight air)
- ✓ Breakfasts, lunches & dinners in destination
- ✓ Transportation to activities shown in Itinerary
- ✓ Domestic flight from Lima to Cusco
- ✓ Train to/from Machu Picchu area
- ✓ Hacienda Los Ficus Peruvian Paso Horse Show & Tour
- ✓ Private City Tour of Lima: Colonial Lima, Cathedral of Lima, Santa Domingo Convent, Larco Museo, San Isidro & Miraflores
- ✓ 2 Days Private Touring in the Sacred Valley: Aqanacancha Textile Center, Pisac Market, Ollantaytambo Fortress, Chinchero Village & Weavers, Maras' Salt Pans & Moray Archaeological Site
- ✓ Private Tour to the Historic Sanctuary of Machu Picchu
- ✓ Private City Tour of Cusco - 12 Angles Stone, San Blas neighborhood, San Pedro Market, Qoricancha Inca Temple & Cusco Cathedral
- ✓ Personal Tour Director
- ✓ 24-hour emergency cover

What's Not Included:

- ⊗ Fully comprehensive insurance (**mandatory**; suggested provider link available for Travel Insured)
- ⊗ Baggage costs, pay directly to airline if required
- ⊗ Baggage handling - everyone should be able to pull / load their own bag
- ⊗ Transfers to/from home airport
- ⊗ Snacks or beverages other than at designated mealtimes
- ⊗ Meal selections other than ones provided for the entire group (we are generally able to cater for allergy conditions, vegetarians, halal and in some cases vegan)
- ⊗ Cost of personal passports, visas or visa waiver fees
- ⊗ Cost of inoculations or medication required for travel
- ⊗ Sightseeing / Entertainment / Transport not shown in Itinerary
- ⊗ Hotel incidental deposits & bills – mini-bar, movies, etc.
- ⊗ Gratuities – drivers, hotel services, local guides, tour director
- ⊗ Credit card fees if individuals wish to pay via credit card instead of ACH
- ⊗ Additional taxes, fuel surcharges or fees levied by governments / suppliers

As always, our staff are always available to you to answer any questions you may have regarding programming. If we may serve you in any way, please do not hesitate to contact us.



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