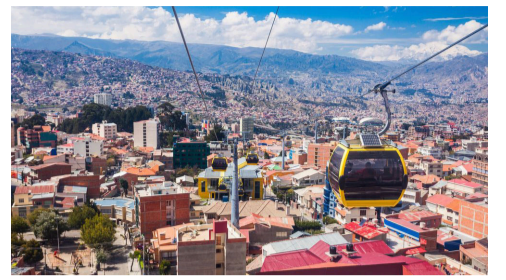
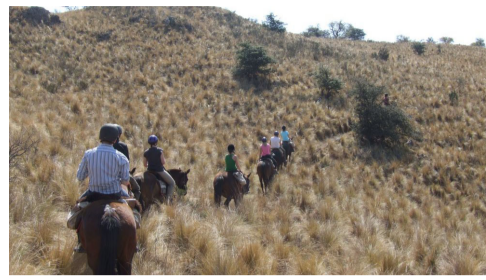


THE ANDES, IGUAZU & RIO, (LCR)

Rio de Janeiro to Cuzco 50 Days, departing 24th November 2020



TRIP OVERVIEW

Trip Style: Overlanding

Route: Rio de Janeiro to Cuzco

Duration: 50 Days

Transport: Overland Expedition Vehicle, Jeep, Local Bus, Canoe, Boat, Private Bus, Train

Accommodation: Comfortable Hotel 14 nights
Multishare Hostel 7 nights
Camping 16 nights
Basic Hotel 9 nights
Wild Camp 3 nights

Meals: Breakfasts x 43, Lunches x 24, Dinners x 22

Physical Challenge: ● ● ● ● ○

The trip may include multi-day treks at high altitude, walking for 5-8 hours per day.

Lifestyle Challenge: ● ● ● ● ○

This is a fairly challenging trip; you may well be travelling at high altitudes, across deserts or through cold and windy or hot and steamy areas. The terrain and roads may be rough and the facilities can be very basic or non-existent. There may be some long drive days followed by wild camps, and physically and mentally it can be tough, but there will be some rest days and time to relax as well.



DAILY ITINERARY

Day 1 - Rio de Janeiro (24th November 2020)

Border information: if you are joining in Rio de Janeiro, you will most likely enter Brazil at Rio de Janeiro Galeão International Airport (IATA code: RIO/GIG).

Welcome to the iconic Brazilian city of Rio de Janeiro! There will be an important group meeting at 6:00pm at the joining hotel - please look out at the hotel reception for a note from your leader with more details about this important meeting.

Please note that many of the options listed below will only be possible for those with extra time in Rio de Janeiro before the start of your trip with us - please contact the Sales team if you would like to book pre-tour accommodation with us to have extra time exploring Rio de Janeiro.

In Rio de Janeiro we will stay in a great hotel in the Flamengo district, close to the beach and the metro station.

Accommodation: Hotel Argentina "A"

Daily Activities

Optional Activities

Visit the world famous statue Christ the Redeemer

Train and entrance: 83 BRL

Take a hike into the Tijuca Rainforest, one of the largest Urban Rainforests in the world.

Hike: 65 USD

Take a cable car up Pão de Açúcar (Sugarloaf Mountain)

Cable car (return ticket): 85 BRL

Take a brilliant free walking tour with an expert local guide around Lapa and Central Rio de Janeiro (or Copacabana and Ipanema on certain days)

Walking Tour: Free

Explore Brazilian flavours in a half day cooking class

Half day class: 75 USD

Day 2 - Paraty (25th November 2020)

Meals: Breakfast

Today our journey begins with a short drive to the colonial town of Paraty on the Emerald Coast of the Atlantic!

Day 3 - Paraty (26th November 2020)

Today we will have an included boat trip around the incredible islands and beaches off the emerald coast.

Daily Activities

Included Activities

Boat trip out to islands and beaches

Included

Day 4 - Paraty (27th November 2020)

Today we will have free time to explore the town, take a historical tour, walk along the stunning scenery of the coastline, head out snorkelling or diving, or simply relax on the idyllic beaches.

Daily Activities

Optional Activities

Learn all about the fascinating history of Brazil and the Gold Trail on an excellent walking tour of the old colonial town of Paraty

Walking Tour: 35 USD

Enjoy some of the best and most scenic treks in the country on the coastal trails hills and 'tropical fjords' near Paraty

Walking Tour: 50 USD

Go for a scuba diving trip in the incredible oceans around Paraty

Diving trip: 250 BRL

Try your hand at stand-up paddle boarding by hiring a board from one of the many vendors at the Jabaquara beach in Paraty

Hire: 35 BRL

Explore the ocean islands beaches and mangroves of Atlantic coast in a more serene and tranquil fashion on a sea kayaking expedition around the bay of Paraty

Kayaking: 80 BRL

Day 5 - Brotas (28th November 2020)

Meals: Dinner

Today we will drive to the remote town of Brotas in southeastern Brazil. From our campsite here it's possible to take part in a whole host of water activities such as rafting.

Day 6 - Brotas (29th November 2020)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today we will have a free day to take part in adventure activities such as white water rafting and canyoning, or maybe just to relax by the pool.

Daily Activities

Optional Activities

Go on a half-day canyoning trip through the gorges of the Jacare River near Brotas

Activity: 270 BRL

Head out white-water rafting on the fast moving waters of the Jacare River (approximately Grade 3-4)

Activity: 150 BRL

Float down the Jacare on a fun tubing trip down the River Jacare near Brotas

Activity: 100 BRL

Day 7 - Campo Grande (30th November 2020)

Today we will start driving west towards the Southern Pantanal, and stay in a local Pousada close to the city of Campo Grande.

Day 8 - Pantanal (1st December 2020)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today we have an early start to meet our guide in Campo Grande, and then drive on to Brazil's amazing Southern Pantanal region, where we have a visit a local eco-tourism ranch (or 'fazenda').

Daily Activities

Included Activities

Spend 2 nights in the Pantanal, the world's largest tropical wetland area, exploring the flora and fauna with local guides

Included

Day 9 - Pantanal (2nd December 2020)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

At the Fazenda we have a wonderful package of included activities such as exploring the beautiful surrounding countryside on horseback, trips down the wildlife-abundant rivers in boats and canoes, and safaris on the ranch's trucks and on foot where we hope to spot capybaras, caimans, and (if we are very lucky) jaguars and ocelots. Our stay here is an incredible highlight!

In the Southern Pantanal we will stay in dorm accommodation in a well equipped lodge with all the meals and activities included.

Day 10 - Bonito (3rd December 2020)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

After our morning activities and one final lunch in our beautiful ranch, it is time to leave the Pantanal and drive to the Brazilian eco-tourism capital of Bonito.

In Bonito we will camp in the grounds of an excellent hostel with a pool and good facilities.

Day 11 - Bonito (4th December 2020)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Take part in a plethora of incredible optional activities here. You could go out on a world-class snorkelling trip, explore the nearby caves, or go abseiling down some of the largest waterfalls in the area, among many other possibilities!

Daily Activities

Optional Activities

Head on an unforgettable trip to Abismo Anhumas an incredible day out where you abseil through a fissure into a colossal underground cavern and snorkel in the lake at the bottom

Abseiling and snorkelling (incl transport): 800 BRL

Abseiling and Scuba Diving (incl transport): 1,089 BRL

Hire a mountain bike in Bonito to freely explore the incredible countryside of Mato Grosso do Sul

Bike hire: 20 USD
Lobo Guara guided bike trip (half day): 98 USD

Visit the ethereal and other-worldly Blue Lake Cave near Bonito an underground lake with an incredibly vivid shade of blue
Guided visit (incl transport): 105 BRL

Abseil down the Boca da Onça waterfall (meaning 'Jaguar's Mouth') the largest waterfall in the state of Mato Grosso do Sul
Abseil: 499 BRL

Visit the phenomenal Buraco das Araras one of the world's largest sink-holes and a natural aviary of macaws and toucans
1hr visit: 75 BRL

Go on a stunning sunset horse ride around the beautiful countryside around Bonito
Riding: 80 BRL

Go rafting or tubing in the beautiful waters near Bonito
Tour incl transport: 150 BRL

Bonito Sucuri
Snorkelling trip and transport: 255 BRL

Visit the stunning São Miguel Caves near Bonito
Entrance: 50 BRL

Take an incredible snorkelling trip through the crystal clear waters of the Rio da Prata getting a phenomenal view of the fish and aquatic plants underwater
Snorkelling trip and transport: 290 BRL

Day 12 - Bonito (5th December 2020)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Enjoy another day in Bonito to relax or take part in activities.

Day 13 - Foz do Iguacu (6th December 2020)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today we have a full drive day south to the city of Foz do Iguacu.

Day 14 - Foz do Iguacu (7th December 2020)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today we will visit the Brazilian side of Iguacu Falls, to get some incredible panoramic vistas of the mighty waterfalls. There is also time to visit the bird park, take a helicopter ride over the falls, see the incredible Itaipu Dam, or quickly stop into Paraguay to pick up some bargains in the nearby Ciudad del Este.

Daily Activities

Included Activities

Discover the unbelievable Iguazu Falls from the Brazilian side

Included

Optional Activities

Take a short trip into Paraguay to experience the chaos of Ciudad del Este and pick up a bargain or two (price listed is for a return trip in a taxi)

Taxi to border: 140 BRL

Visit the colossal Itaipu Dam the second largest hydroelectric dam in the world

Special Tour: 68 BRL

Visit the Parque das Aves bird park near Foz do Iguazu a wonderful conservation project which provides an excellent home to over 1000 iconic birds from the region such as toucans macaws and eagles

Entrance: 36 BRL

Take an exhilarating speed boat ride around the base of the falls from the Brazilian side

Boat: 75 BRL

Take an unforgettable 10-minute helicopter flight over the Iguazu Falls enjoying a bird's eye view of one of the world's most incredible set of waterfalls

Price: 430 BRL

Day 15 - Foz do Iguacu (8th December 2020)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today we will take a day trip back into Argentina to see the incredible Iguazu Falls from the other side. This is well worth doing as the views are even more spectacular, and you'll be able to look right down into the mighty Garganta del Diablo (the largest waterfall here) from a gantry walkway viewing point). We will have a full day at the Argentine side of the falls, allowing us lots of time to freely explore the site, hike some nature trails, or perhaps take an exhilarating (and very wet) boat ride!

We will return to our base in Foz do Iguacu tonight.

Daily Activities

Included Activities

Spend the day exploring the amazing Iguazu Falls from the Argentinian side

Included

Optional Activities

Get a soaking on a boat trip to the Falls

Boat: 1,500 ARS

Day 16 - Yapeyu (9th December 2020)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Border information: Exit Brazil at Tancredo Neves, enter Argentina at Tancredo Neves.

Today we cross the border into Argentina, and aim to reach the beautiful village of Yapeyú on the banks of the River Uruguay. Yapeyú is very famous amongst Argentines for being the birthplace of their national hero General Jose de San Martin, one of the liberators of South America from Spanish colonial rule.

Day 17 - Buenos Aires (10th December 2020)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Today we have a full day drive north through the provinces of Corrientes and Entre Rios to Buenos Aires, the wonderful capital of Argentina!

Day 18 - Buenos Aires (11th December 2020)

Meals: Breakfast

Today will be a free day to explore the incredible city, soak up the atmosphere of its streets, and discover its amazing culture, art, and music.

Daily Activities

Optional Activities

Learn all about the cuisine of Argentina on a food tour of Buenos Aires visiting several incredible local top-class eateries that you won't find in the guidebooks!

Tour: 85 USD

Watch a football game at La Bombonera

Entrance: 300 ARS

Enjoy a free city tour of Buenos Aires

Tour: Free

Explore the beautiful area of Palermo Viejo see the incredible modern sculpture of Floralis Genérica and head out to the area's bars and restaurants at night

Entrance: Free

Visit the strangely beautiful cemetery of Recoleta the final resting place of many ex-presidents and Argentine icons most famously including the tomb of Eva Peron

Entrance: Free

Head out to a tango show in Buenos Aires' oldest cafe the Gran Cafe Tortoni - seeing a slice of iconic Argentine culture in an ideal and intimate setting

Show: 650 ARS

Try your hand at the art of tango dancing with a private lesson in Buenos Aires

Lesson: 25 USD

See a different side to Buenos Aires on a tour of its incredible street art with some of the local artists

Tour: 20 USD

Day 19 - Buenos Aires (12th December 2020)

Border information: if you are joining in Buenos Aires, you will most likely enter Argentina at Buenos Aires Ministro Pistarini International Airport, also commonly known as Ezeiza Airport (IATA code: BUE/EZE).

Welcome to Buenos Aires, the wonderful capital of Argentina! There will be an important group meeting at 6:00pm at the joining hotel - please look out at the hotel reception for a note from your leader with more details about this important meeting.

Please note that many of the options listed below will only be possible for those with extra time in Buenos Aires before the start of your trip with us - please contact the Sales team if you would like to book pre-tour accommodation with us to have extra time exploring Buenos Aires.

Day 20 - Buenos Aires (13th December 2020)

Meals: Breakfast

Today we have a free day to enjoy the sights of Buenos Aires, soak up the atmosphere of its streets, and discover its amazing culture, art, and music.

Daily Activities

Optional Activities

Learn all about the cuisine of Argentina on a food tour of Buenos Aires visiting several incredible local top-class eateries that you won't find in the guidebooks!

Tour: 85 USD

Enjoy a free city tour of Buenos Aires

Tour: Free

Visit the strangely beautiful cemetery of Recoleta the final resting place of many ex-presidents and Argentine icons most famously including the tomb of Eva Peron

Entrance: Free

See a different side to Buenos Aires on a tour of its incredible street art with some of the local artists

Tour: 20 USD

Try your hand at the art of tango dancing with a private lesson in Buenos Aires

Lesson: 25 USD

Head out to a tango show in Buenos Aires' oldest cafe the Gran Cafe Tortoni - seeing a slice of iconic Argentine culture in an ideal and intimate setting

Show: 650 ARS

Try some of Argentina's most delicious wines on a top-level wine tasting afternoon in Buenos Aires

Price: 52 USD

Day 21 - Cordoba (14th December 2020)

Meals: Breakfast

Today we will have a full day drive to the lively university city of Córdoba.

Day 22 - Estancia (15th December 2020)

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Today we will have a free morning to explore Córdoba, before driving to a unique Anglo-Argentine Estancia after lunch, where we will stay for 3 nights.

During our time at the Estancia, we will head out horseback riding, taste the excellent wines produced by their vineyards, be entertained by a local musician, learn some of the skills of the gauchos, and enjoy a traditional asado (Argentine BBQ). This is a magical experience in a beautiful and atmospheric location, and many people's highlight of the trip!

Please note that some of these activities are subject to weather conditions. Please also note that there is a strict weight limit of 15 stone (210lbs) or 95kg to partake in the horse riding - if you should weigh more than this, then unfortunately you will not be able to participate in the horseback riding.

At the Estancia we will camp with facilities in the grounds near the main house.

Daily Activities

Included Activities

Spend 3 unique days at an Anglo-Argentinian estancia to experience the Gaucho way of life

Included

Day 23 - Estancia (16th December 2020)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Full day at the Estancia.

Day 24 - Estancia (17th December 2020)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Full day at the Estancia.

Day 25 - Tafi Del Valle (18th December 2020)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today we will drive north across the lush flat pampas and start climbing into the drier mountains, stopping near the town of Tafí del Valle, near the ancient ruins of the indigenous city of Quilmes.

Day 26 - Cafayate (19th December 2020)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today we will have an included visit to the Quilmes Ruins en route, then arrive in the serene town of Cafayate. This small, unassuming town is the centre of one of Argentina's principal wine producing regions, famous for the quality of its Torrontes and Tannat wines! We will have the opportunity to go to a few of the vineyards nearby to see how the wine is made, and of course to try them!

Daily Activities

Included Activities

Visit the Quilmes ruins

Included

Day 27 - Cafayate (20th December 2020)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today we will drive through the spectacular rock formations of the Quebrada de las Conchas, and reach our campsite in Cabra Corral, a small village south of Salta where we have the opportunity to go rafting or zip-lining!

Daily Activities

Optional Activities

Discover the bodegas and stock up on wine in Cafayate

Wine tasting: 150 ARS

Day 28 - Salta (21st December 2020)

Meals: Breakfast

Today we will have a short drive to the beautiful town of Salta, with a free afternoon to explore upon arrival.

Daily Activities

Included Activities

Visit the impressive rock formations of 'El Amphiteatro' and 'La Garganta del Diablo' en route through the primeval landscape of the Quebrada de las Conchas

Included

Day 29 - Salta (22nd December 2020)

Meals: Breakfast

Today we will have a free day to explore the town of Salta, visit its many museums, or explore the beautiful surrounding hills on foot or by mountain bike. We will also have the chance to take the cable car to the viewpoint on San Bernardo Hill overlooking the town.

Daily Activities

Optional Activities

Explore the beautiful mountains and forests near Salta on a mountain biking trip

The Bull circuit: 1,300 ARS

Rainforest Circuit: 900 ARS

Downhill Cuesta del Obispo: 2,000 ARS

Bike Rental (full day): 600 ARS

Take the cable car up to the top of San Bernardo Hill and take in the breathtaking views out over the city of Salta below

Return cable car: 200 ARS

Go trekking in and around Salta

Rainforest Trek: 1,100 ARS

Urban Trek: 700 ARS

Day 30 - Purmamarca (23rd December 2020)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today we will have some more free time in Salta before heading up to the small village of Purmamarca, at the base of the aptly-named 'Hill of the Seven Colours'

In Purmamarca we will camp at a local campsite.

Estimated Drive Time - 3-4 hours.

Day 31 - San Pedro de Atacama (24th December 2020)

Meals: Breakfast

Border information: Exit Argentina and enter Chile at Paso Jama.

Today we will have a long drive day to cross the mighty Andes, cross the border into Chile, and then descend all the way into the Atacama desert.

Day 32 - San Pedro de Atacama (25th December 2020)

Meals: Breakfast

Today we have a free day to explore the incredible highlights of the Atacama desert surrounding San Pedro. In the evening we will take an included trip out to the extraordinary Moon Valley, where we will hopefully see an incredible sunset. At night we will also have the chance to go stargazing, in one of the world's premier regions for astronomy (please note that this is only possible when there is not a full moon).

Daily Activities

Included Activities

Explore the dramatic landscape of the Moon Valley

Included

Optional Activities

Take a tour of the stunning Lagunas Altiplánicas backdropped by the incredible deserts and volcanic scenery of the region

Entrance: 35,000 CLP

Head out for an exciting sand-boarding excursion in the sand dunes of the Atacama Desert

Tour: 23,000 CLP

Observe the night skies at a Chilean observatory

Tour: 25,000 CLP

Visit the incredible salt plains of the Salar de Atacama and take a swim in the salty pools of Laguna Cejar

Entrance: 15,000 CLP

Relax in the blissful natural volcanic hot springs of Puritama in the hills above San Pedro

Entrance: 15,000 CLP

Day 33 - Altiplano (26th December 2020)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

We will depart San Pedro de Atacama early today to drive to the world's highest Geyser field, at 4300m above sea level, the El Tatio Geysers are an impressive sight first thing in the morning. After time to explore, we will continue our journey into the Reserva Nacional Alto Loa, we will have plenty of opportunities for photographs along the way on this scenic drive.

Please note: The weather in this region can be unpredictable and has been known to close the road to the border. On these occasions we will take an alternate route across the Altiplano, crossing into either Chile or Argentina at a different border point. Your Tour Leaders will keep you informed of any changes that may be necessary

Daily Activities

Included Activities

Take the epic journey across the Altiplano - an incredible high-altitude adventure through a surreal desert landscape taking in bizarre rock formations and stunning lakes

Included

Optional Activities

Experience the incredible El Tatio geysers in the mountains high above the Atacama Desert

Entrance: 10,000 CLP

Day 34 - Uyuni (27th December 2020)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Border information: Exit Chile and enter Bolivia at Ollague

After breakfast we will break camp and cross the border into Bolivia. We will take our time to enjoy the views on the way to the town of Uyuni, the gateway to the incredible salt flats of the Salar de Uyuni.

Day 35 - Uyuni (28th December 2020)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Today we will venture out onto the salt flats of the Salar de Uyuni, spending a full day exploring this phenomenal location by jeep and on foot. En route we will explore the nearby train graveyard and the cactus-filled 'Fish Island', and take all the time we need to get plenty of perspective-bending photographs!

Daily Activities

Included Activities

Take jeeps out onto the dazzling Uyuni Salt Flats

Included

Day 36 - Potosi (29th December 2020)

Meals: Breakfast

Today we will head to the colonial mining town of Potosí, the highest town in the world, and once famous for the area's abundance of silver!

This afternoon there will be a chance to visit the infamous silver mines of Cerro Rico near to the town.

Daily Activities

Optional Activities

Visit the the Casa de la Moneda museum in Potosí to learn all about its colonial past and the silver that once flowed from the area

Tour incl camera fee: 60 BOB

Head down into the tunnels of the Potosi silver mine

Tour: 120 BOB

Day 37 - La Paz (30th December 2020)

Meals: Breakfast

Today we will drive north to La Paz, Bolivia's seat of government and the highest administrative capital in the world!

On the following day we will have a free day to independently explore the fascinating city and take part in some optional activities.

Day 38 - La Paz (31st December 2020)

Meals: Breakfast

Today we have a free day to independently explore the fascinating city and take part in some optional activities

Daily Activities

Optional Activities

Take a trip out to the mountain resort of Chacaltaya and the other-worldly landscape of the Moon Valley near La Paz

Full day tour: 130 BOB

Downhill "gravity assisted" mountain biking from La Paz to Coroico

Full day tour (not incl 50 BOB road fee): 125 USD

Discover Bolivia's history art and culture in some of La Paz's many museums such as the San Francisco Museum and the Museum of Ethnography

Entrance: 20 BOB

Guided tour to explore Tiahuanacu Inca Ruins

Full day tour: 220 BOB

Enjoy some zip lining in Coroico

Price: 220 BOB

Take a guided tour of the main sights and viewpoints around La Paz

City tour: 150 BOB

Day 39 - La Paz (1st January 2021)

Border information: if you are joining in La Paz, you will most likely enter Bolivia at La Paz El Alto International Airport (IATA code: LPB).

Welcome to La Paz, Bolivia's seat of government and the highest administrative capital in the world! There will be an important group meeting at 6:00pm at the joining hotel - please look out at the hotel reception for a note from your leader with more details about this important meeting.

Please note that many of the options listed below will only be possible for those with extra time in La Paz before the start of your trip with us - please contact the Sales team if you would like to book pre-tour accommodation with us to have extra time exploring La Paz.

A note on altitude: If you are joining in La Paz, we strongly recommend arriving at least 24 hours before the trip begins to allow additional time to acclimatise.

Daily Activities

Optional Activities

Take a trip out to the mountain resort of Chacaltaya and the other-worldly landscape of the Moon Valley near La Paz

Full day tour: 130 BOB

Downhill "gravity assisted" mountain biking from La Paz to Coroico

Full day tour (not incl 50 BOB road fee): 125 USD

Discover Bolivia's history art and culture in some of La Paz's many museums such as the San Francisco Museum and the Museum of Ethnography

Entrance: 20 BOB

Guided tour to explore Tiahuanacu Inca Ruins

Full day tour: 220 BOB

Take a guided tour of the main sights and viewpoints around La Paz

City tour: 150 BOB

Day 40 - Copacabana (2nd January 2021)

Meals: Breakfast

Today we will head to the beautiful town of Copacabana on the shores of Lake Titicaca, where we will have some time to explore.

Day 41 - Isla del Sol (3rd January 2021)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Today we will take an included day trip to Isla del Sol in Lake Titicaca, one of the holiest sites in ancient Inca mythology and supposedly the birthplace of the Sun God Inti. We will take a 14km walk across the length of the island, taking in the incredible and serene scenery and soaking up the calm atmosphere of the island (this walk can be skipped by anybody who does not want to do it).

Daily Activities

Included Activities

Stay overnight on Lake Titicaca's Isla del Sol and take a guided walk across the island

Included

Day 42 - Puno (4th January 2021)

Meals: Breakfast

Border information: exit Bolivia at Kasani, enter Peru at Yunguyo.

Today we will take a boat back to Copacabana, and then cross the border into Peru and head to the lakeside town of Puno.

Day 43 - Cuzco (5th January 2021)

Meals: Breakfast

Today we will leave Puno and head through the highlands of Peru to the former Inca capital of Cuzco.

Day 44 - Cuzco (6th January 2021)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today we have time to explore the wonderful city of Cuzco, discover its many historical gems, or take part in a number of optional activities near the city.

There will be a meeting today for our Wild Andes and Classic Inca Trails, where we will have a full detailed briefing from our local trekking guides about the next few days!

Daily Activities

Optional Activities

Visit the Cuzco Chocolate museum and take part in a workshop

Workshop: 70 PEN

Take part in a Peruvian cooking class in Cuzco learning how to make a variety of local dishes

Class: 79 USD

Explore Cuzco on a free walking tour

Tour: Free

Visit one of Cuzco's excellent museums

Entrance : 22 PEN

Take a Spanish class in the beautiful city of Cuzco (suitable for all levels)

1hr private Class: 20 USD

Day 45 - Inca Trail (7th January 2021)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

These four days will be spent either trekking in the Andes, on our pioneering Wild Andes Trek, on the Classic Inca Trek or for those not wishing to hike, free time to explore and a guided tour of the Sacred Valley on our Train package.

Option 1 - Wild Andes Trek

Leaving Cuzco early in the morning, we visit the ruined temples of Sacsayhuaman for a fascinating tour of the site. We then head on to Chinchero, a small Quechua-speaking village in the Sacred Valley. Here we will see a traditional weaving demonstration that has been unchanged for a thousand years, and explore their beautiful archaeological ruins. We will drive to a stunning viewpoint for a picnic lunch, and then visit the Quillarumiyoc temple (the Temple of the Moon).

We will start our trek from here in the afternoon, heading by foot to Zurite where we have a picturesque stay in a colonial house. Tonight we will enjoy a traditional dinner and get a taste of the local village lifestyle.

Approximate walking distance: 8km, Estimated time: 4hrs, Meals provided: Lunch and Dinner

Option 2 - Classic Inca Trek

This morning we go for a guided tour of the Sacred Valley, followed by a visit to the market town of Pisac, where we will have an included lunch. We then head to Ollantaytambo, where we have free time to explore the impressive archeological site. Tonight we stay in a comfortable hotel.

Please note that we have the evening to ourselves in Ollantaytambo, our Guide will meet us in the morning. No Meals are included in Ollantaytambo

There is no trekking today. Meals provided: Lunch

Option 3 - Train Package

You will leave Cuzco with your fellow passengers who will be trekking the Wild Andes Trek. You will visit the fortress of Sacsayhuaman, followed by a beautiful scenic drive over mountains and through valleys, via the ancient city of Pisac and on to the Sacred Valley of the Incas. After lunch you will head back to Cuzco where you will stay at our nice, centrally located hotel for a further 3 nights.

Meals included: Lunch

Daily Activities

Included Activities

Trekking Options:

Option 1 - Trek the Classic Inca Trail up the Royal Inca Road.

Option 2 - Hike unspoilt Inca Trails in remote stunning Andes scenery away from tourist treks on our exclusive Wild Andes trail.

Option 3 - Take a Sacred Valley Tour, visit Ollantaytambo and take the train to Machu Picchu without trekking.

PLEASE NOTE: YOU MUST ADVISE AT TIME OF BOOKING IF YOU WISH TO BOOK THE CLASSIC INCA TRAIL OR THE NON TREKKING OPTION, OTHERWISE YOU WILL AUTOMATICALLY BE PUT ON OUR WILD ANDES TREK.

Included

Visit the incredible remains of the Inca temple of Sacsayhuaman and the Sacred Valley on a guided tour

Included

Day 46 - Inca Trail (8th January 2021)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Option 1 - Wild Andes Trek

Zurite to Amaruwatana

After a hearty breakfast we leave Zurite and head towards Amaruwatana camp. The walk will take us through Qenteqentiyoc (the Hummingbird Temple), where we will visit and admire this Inca archaeological site. We will then follow the ancient path all the way to the top of our first pass at 4,400m, where we will have a dramatic view of both the Vilcabamba and Vilcanota mountain ranges. From here we start walking down on the way to our first camp in the Sambor Valley where we will spend the night camping.

Approximate walking time: 8hrs, Distance: 13kms, Meals provided: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Option 2 - Classic Inca Trek

Ollantaytambo to Wayllabamba

After breakfast, we catch a bus to Piscaycuscho and the start of the Classic Inca Trek - the railroad KM82 marker (at 2,700m altitude). Here we are joined by our crew of local porters and cooks. We will cross the bridge over the River Urubamba and following a trail along the left-hand shore of the river, enjoying stunning views of the snow-capped Mount Veronica (5,830m) and the Incan archaeological remains at Llactapata. Continuing through lush farmland and woodland, we gradually climb for approximately 5 hours to our first campsite at Wayllabamba (3,000m).

Approximate trekking time: 5-6hrs, Distance: 12kms, Meals provided: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, Snacks

Option 3 - Train Package

Today is a free day to enjoy Cuzco, with its museums, churches, incredible colonial architecture, beautiful restaurants and a vast array of shops, selling textiles and handicrafts.

Day 47 - Inca Trail (9th January 2021)

Meals: Breakfast

Option 1 - Wild Andes Trek

Amaruwatana to Ancascocha

We have an early start this morning, trekking for approximately 2 hours to reach the top of our second pass at 4,700m. From here we have fantastic views of the rock formations below us, and if we're lucky we may spot Andean ibises, caracaras, eagles or foxes up here!

After descending for approximately 2 hours, we arrive at a stunning highland valley with a glacial river named Kenqo Mayu (meaning "Zig-zag River") flowing down it - which makes an idyllic stop for lunch!

After lunch we will continue trekking downhill following the ancient trail, which leads us to our campsite in the Ancascocha area.

Approximate trekking time: 6-7hrs, Distance: 10kms, Meals provided: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Option 2 - Classic Trek

Wayllabamba to Pacaymayo

This is the most challenging day of the trek as we ascend a long steep path (approximately 4 hours) through Andean cloud forest and highland puna to reach the highest point of our trek, Warmiwañusca (meaning "Dead Woman's Pass") at a height of 4,200m. During our ascent, we can appreciate the wide variety of plant, flower and bird species supported by this unique eco-climate. On reaching the pass, our challenge is rewarded by an astonishing panoramic view of the Vilcanota and Vilcabamba mountain ranges. From here we descend for 2 hours into the Pacaymayo Valley (3,650m altitude) and to our second campsite.

Approximate trekking time: 6-7hrs, Distance: 11kms, Meals provided: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, Snacks

Option 3 - Train Package

Today is a free day for you to enjoy Cuzco, with its museums, churches, incredible colonial architecture, beautiful restaurants and a vast array of shops selling textiles and handicrafts.

Day 48 - Inca Trail (10th January 2021)

Meals: Breakfast

Option 1 - Wild Andes Trek

Ancascocha to Ollantaytambo

Today we will descend the narrow Silque Canyon, allowing us to observe its tall granite walls which are populated by a large variety of orchids and bromeliads, filling the environment with magnificent colours when they bloom. After crossing many little bridges we will reach the Camicancha area, where we stop at a magnificent volcanic viewpoint looking towards the snow-capped Mt. Veronica.

From here it is only a short trek to Chilca, where our trail ends. We'll be picked up by our vehicle and head to Ollantaytambo, taking a well-earned shower and rest at our hotel.

In the afternoon we will have an included guided tour around the incredible archaeological site of Ollantaytambo and its world-famous Temple of the Sun. Please note that we have the evening to ourselves in Ollantaytambo, our Guide will meet us in the morning. No Meals are included in Ollantaytambo.

Approximate trekking time: 5hrs, Distance: 12kms, Meals provided: Breakfast, Lunch

Option 2 - Classic Inca Trek

Pacaymayo to Wiñay Wayna

Today we follow ancient stone paths and steps to ascend the well-preserved Inca remains of Runkurakay, Sayacmarca, and Phuyupatamarca (the "Town above the Clouds") where we can appreciate the Incas' complex architectural style and reverence of natural geography and beauty. Heading down the Andean slope, we reach our final night's camp by the Wiñay Wayna (meaning "Forever Young") ruins, with panoramic views of the valley below.

Approximate walking time: 8hrs, Distance: 16kms, Meals provided: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, Snacks

Option 3 - Train Package

After being picked up from your hotel in the morning you will be driven to the fortress city of Ollantaytambo and our hotel for the night, the Tunupa Lodge. Here you will rejoin the Wild Andes Trekkers and your tour leader who will be arriving from their trek this afternoon.

Daily Activities

Included Activities

Take a guided tour of the fantastic Inca temples at Ollantaytambo

Included

Day 49 - Cuzco (11th January 2021)

Meals: Breakfast

Option 1 - Wild Andes Trek

Ollantaytambo - Machu Picchu - Cuzco

Today we will have an early start to catch the train to the small town of Aguas Calientes. From there, we will take a bus up the winding mountainside to the legendary ruined city of Machu Picchu - one of the world's most iconic sights! We have a guided tour with our expert local guide and there will be plenty of free time to explore this magical place.

In the afternoon we will head back to Ollantaytambo and then on to Cuzco, where we return to our joining hotel at the end of a long but phenomenal day!

Meals provided: Breakfast

Option 2 - Classic Trek

Wiñay Wayna to Machupicchu

Leaving Wiñay Wayna, we descend gradually further through the highland jungle to our destination - Intupunku (the "Sun Gate") leading into Machu Picchu. Arriving at daybreak, we catch our first breathtaking view of this historical wonder. As with the Wild Andes Trek, our local guide will show us the most important constructions as well as explain the history and the mythology of this magnificent place. There is also some free time to explore the ruins further at your own pace or just chill out and watch the hummingbirds or vizcachua. In the afternoon we head back down to Aguas Calientes and take the train back to Ollantaytambo and return to Cuzco for a well-deserved rest.

Approximate walking time: 2hrs, Distance: 4kms, Meals provided: Breakfast, Snacks

Option 3 - Train Package

After an early breakfast and walk to the train station, your stunning 2 hour train ride to Aguas Calientes begins. The journey takes you through several different micro-climates, past Inca terraces, lookout posts, ancient river bank reinforcements and small towns. You will get a glimpse of different temples and the beautiful Mount Veronica (5,750m). Passing through 8 tunnels, the train journey finally comes to an end in the busy pueblo, Aguas Calientes. From here you take a local bus that winds up the mountainside for about 30 minutes until you arrive at the entrance to Machu Picchu (2,400m), the awe inspiring 'Lost City of the Incas'. The guide will take you around the immense, mystical ruins for about 2 hours to 2 hours 30 minutes, explaining the rich history of the ancient site. Afterwards, you will have time to explore on your own before returning down the mountain to Aguas Calientes.

In the afternoon you will catch a train from Aguas Calientes to Ollantaytambo and a private transfer will take you back to your hotel in Cuzco.

Meals provided: Breakfast

Daily Activities

Included Activities

Guided visit to the fabled Incan citadel of Machu Picchu

Included

Day 50 - Cuzco (12th January 2021)

Meals: Breakfast

Border information: if you are finishing in Cuzco, you will most likely exit Peru at Cuzco Alejandro Velasco Astete International Airport (IATA code: CUZ).

Today is the end day for passengers finishing their trip in Cuzco. Please note there is no accommodation included on the trip tonight - please contact your sales agent if you are interested in booking extra nights of accommodation in order to fully explore and take part in some of the optional activities available.

Accommodation:

ITINERARY DISCLAIMER

The routes, activities and places visited described in these notes are intentions and are meant as a rough guide only. By their very nature, overland itineraries need to be flexible and the regions that we are travelling through are often unpredictable. We intend to follow the planned route but exact night stops and inclusions cannot be guaranteed and it sometimes happens that we decide to make a change to our planned itinerary. This may be for a variety of reasons; climatic, road or bureaucratic conditions may demand it. Changes to the itinerary may occur with little notice so please be prepared for modifications to your trip.

Drive Times

Drive times are listed in the day-to-day itinerary. These are the approximate number of hours that the vehicle will be in motion, and does not include any time taken for coffee or lunch stops, border crossings, photo stops, activities en route, comfort breaks, shopping stops, toilet stops, etc. The times given are approximate estimates only and whilst given with the best of intentions, the drive times are heavily dependent on traffic, road conditions, weather, police roadblocks, and many other factors.

Accommodation and Meals Included

The type of accommodation and included meals are listed for each day of the itinerary. These listings show our intention and on most departures the listings will be accurate. However due to the flexible nature of overland itineraries, climatic, bureaucratic or road conditions may demand changes to our listed intentions or groups may simply decide to amend the plans from time to time.

Optional Activities

A selection of optional activities is listed in the day-to-day itinerary. This list is designed to be a helpful guide as to what is commonly available in each location, and is neither an exhaustive list, a guarantee that the activity is available, or an endorsement or recommendation. Certain activities may not be available on your particular visit and it may not be possible to do all the activities listed in the time available at each destination. It is recommended to give yourself extra time in your joining or ending city if you would like to participate in some optional activities there. Prices listed are for entrance only and do not include transport costs to and from the sites or local guides unless indicated. The prices are displayed according to our latest information and in the best faith, but prices do fluctuate due to exchange rates, season, numbers of participants, and simple increases from the operator, and therefore any prices listed are a guide only and cannot be guaranteed. If you partake in any optional activities, you do so at your own risk and it must be clearly understood that your participation is your own decision and does not form part of your contract with Dragoman. You may be required to sign/complete a waiver form or optional activity form for some optional activities. For more information around activity safety and insurance, please see the Essential Information document.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

In the event of a real emergency once you have left your home country, please contact us on our out of office hours number. If you cannot get through on the phone, please leave a message with your name, reference number, contact details and a message with the help that you need and we will get back to you. Please bear in mind that real progress or action may not be possible until normal office hours, depending on the issue.

If your flight is delayed, please inform us as soon as you can and then make your way to the joining hotel as instructed in the Joining Point section of these notes.

Out of hours Number: +44 (0) 7985 106564

A FEW RULES

We expect all group members to act respectfully towards our staff and other group members. Bullying will not be tolerated.

Engaging in commercial or exploitative sexual activities, committing acts of violence or threatening violence towards local people, other group members or any member of our staff is not allowed. Any customer engaging in such activities will be required to leave the trip immediately with no refund of the trip price.

You must at all times comply with the laws, customs, foreign exchange and drug regulations of all countries visited and conduct yourself in accordance with our responsible travel policy. Any customer found contravening such laws or regulations will be required to leave the trip immediately with no refund of the trip price.

Although we are aware that in some parts of the world taking, carrying or selling drugs, or carrying weapons may be legal, it is not acceptable for Dragoman customers and our tour leaders have the right to ask you to leave the trip immediately with no refund of the trip price if you are found to be engaging in such activities.

ISSUES ON THE TRIP

While we always endeavour to provide the best possible holiday experience, due to the nature of travel and the areas we visit sometimes things can and do go wrong. Should any issue occur while you are on your trip, it is imperative that you discuss this with your group leader or our local partner straight away so that they can do their best to rectify the problem and save any potential negative impact on the rest of your trip.

We recognise that there may be times when your group leader may not be able to resolve a situation to your satisfaction. If this is the case please contact our customer relations department on customer-relations@dragoman.co.uk.

You may also choose to provide details in your feedback questionnaire which we ask you to complete at the end of your trip, but we do ask you to be aware that it is very difficult for us to provide any practical help after the trip is complete.

IMPORTANT NOTES

OVERLANDING LIFESTYLE

Dragoman was founded in 1981, and has had many years of experience of leading overland trips across 4 continents. Overlanding is all about sharing a great travelling experience with like-minded people. On your trip you'll travel in one of Dragoman's purpose-built iconic expedition vehicles on an off-the-beaten-track adventure along rugged roads, experiencing the sights, sounds and smells of the world up-close. Your journey will be overland, sometimes across vast distances, so some long days spent driving are inevitable - but these will be interspersed with breaks of a day or two at a destination or activity.

On an overland journey, you are more than just a passenger and everyone gets involved setting up camp - we supply the tent but it's up to you to pitch it! As part of your trip, you will be assigned a truck job which could be collecting firewood or water, luggage loading, organising food, stores, etc. Like all great adventures, the more you put in the more you'll get out! For more details of how an overland trip works, please see the Essential Information document.

SAFETY STANDARDS

We run adventure journeys in off the beaten track areas, which often have poor infrastructure. You should expect that some of these areas do not adhere to 'Western' safety standards. For more information, please see the Essential Information document

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN REMOTE AREAS

We will be travelling to areas in remote locations where medical assistance will not be available, and communications may be sparse. We do not carry satellite phones on our regular trips. Therefore, if you have a medical condition such as a heart condition that would put you at risk, we would suggest that this is not the trip for you. Also, please be aware that should an emergency occur, there is likely to be a considerable delay in accessing medical care, and by joining our trip you accept this risk.

VISAS, HEALTH, INSURANCE & MONEY

Before you travel there are vital things to consider such as:

- Any visas needed for your trip
- Any vaccinations needed (please consult your GP or travel clinic)
- Organising your local payment (the kitty)
- Buying travel insurance (insurance is compulsory to be allowed to join our trips)

For more information on these topics, please see the Essential Information Document.

ALTITUDE WARNING

Warning - this trip goes above 2800m.

Please note that this trip spends time above 2800 metres/9200 feet where it is possible for travellers to experience some adverse effects on your health due to the altitude, potentially including Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS), High Altitude Cerebral Edema (HACE) and High Altitude Pulmonary Edema (HAPE). Because of this it is very important that you make yourself aware of the cause and effects of travelling at altitude and monitor your health during this trip.

For further information please [download our AMS information sheet](#) or refer to the following website: www.high-altitude-medicine.com. If you are starting your trip in a destination above 2800m/9200ft we strongly advise reading this information prior to arrival. Your leader will also hand you a copy of the AMS information sheet during your trip as well as holding a short meeting prior to travelling to altitudes above 2800m/9200ft for the first time.

Some travel insurance companies will stipulate a maximum altitude limit. Please ensure that you are covered and if necessary pay the additional premium of extended cover.

HIGH ALTIPLANO NOTE

Because of its nature, this itinerary may vary - occasionally the road conditions are too adverse during the rainy season (January-February) to make the crossing from Uyuni to Argentina, and we may have to change the route.

During the winter months in Argentina and Bolivia, we will spend a higher proportion of nights in hotels and less time camping. Kitty may be higher than expected and you should allow extra funds for this and personal funds for more meals out. There may well be snow and you should be aware that it can get very cold at night. Please ensure that you bring a decent sleeping bag and adequate clothes, including thermals.

We will also be travelling to very high altitudes (over 5,000m if you take the crossing from Uyuni to Argentina or vice versa), so please be aware of the effects of altitude sickness.

THE WILD ANDES TREK, CLASSIC INCA TREK AND TRAIN PACKAGE - MORE INFORMATION

THE WILD ANDES TREK

Dragoman first developed and launched their pioneering **Community Trek**, the **Tarpuy Yachay project**, in 2006 - a fantastic, award-winning alternative to the Classic Inca Trek, the project also helped several educational and sustainable development initiatives in the Andean villages of Quishuarani and Cuncani.

After almost a decade of this successful venture, we decided that our support could be better used in a new area. In 2013, Dragoman developed an exclusive, brand new Community Trek to take our passengers really off the beaten track, to enjoy pure, unspoilt Andean trails, explore remote Inca ruins, whilst at the same time finding new ways to 'give back' to the people of the area. We have done this by funding the release of alpaca herds, offering training to local people in animal husbandry and weaving to provide a source of income. Another aspect of this project has been reforestation, which is crucial for preventing landslides to protect the local area.

In 2016, we decided to rename our Community Trek "the **Wild Andes Trek**", because we feel it better represents the trek we run. However, nothing has changed but the name - Dragoman's firm commitment to genuine, responsible tourism continues as it always has, so rest assured that whilst you take to the mountains your money is supporting local people. The Wild Andes Trek follows the same route that we have been following since 2013, which boasts some of Peru's most spectacular and remote mountain scenery.

THE CLASSIC TREK

Of course if you prefer, there is also the option to complete the Classic Inca Trek, so called, because the trek follows the old royal route to Machu Picchu. Over the course of four days you will trek over 40km through farmland, cloud forest and mountain scenery, the trek culminates on the final morning where you will rise early to trek to Intipunku, better known as the Sun Gate, where you will catch your first glimpse of Machu Picchu. Here we can take our time to watch the mist clear over the Citadel, and walk down to the site and have some time to enjoy it before we have our guided tour.

THE TRAIN PACKAGE

For those of you who would prefer to take Machu Picchu at a gentler pace, we offer our non-trekking, Train Package. As part of this package you will enjoy a guided tour of Sacsayhuaman and the Sacred Valley, followed by 2 days to relax or explore Cuzco at your own pace. Finally you will transfer to Ollantaytambo where you will spend the night in a lovely hotel and have time to explore the fascinating and impressive fortress here. Our your final morning you will take the train to Aguas Calientes, and then onwards to Machu Picchu for your tour and free time to explore.

GENERAL

Whichever option you choose, you are sure to have an unforgettable experience at one of the most impressive and iconic World Heritage Sites.

The kitty has been budgeted to include the cost of the Classic Inca Trek as this is the most expensive option. This means that you will receive a small kitty refund if you do the Wild Andes Trek, and a substantial kitty refund if you do the Train Package.

All three trekking groups will return to Cuzco by train and private transfer. Please note that during high season or in the case of late bookings, some trekkers may be booked onto a later train. You will always have a Guide to accompany you back to Cuzco but you should be prepared for a later arrival.

PLEASE NOTE: You must tell us at the time of booking if you want to book the Classic Inca Trek or the Train Package. If you do not tell us this you will automatically be booked onto the Wild Andes Trek.

In order to book the relevant permits and tickets, it is vital that you provide the following information at the time of booking:

- Full name (EXACTLY as it appears in the passport you are travelling on)
- Date of Birth
- Gender
- Passport Number
- Passport Expiry Date

Please be sure that all the details are correct and are for the same passport on which you will travel to Peru - any changes made after your application is submitted may not be granted and will involve fees being charged to you. Changes to name and nationality after your application is submitted are absolutely not allowed, so please ensure no changes of this sort will be needed.

There is an overlap for the Inca treks. This means a group starting a trip in Lima or La Paz will do the Inca trek at the same time as a group starting their trip in Cuzco. This means there could be several groups on the Inca trek at the same time.

INCLUSIONS

| Wild Andes Trek | Classic Inca Trek | Train Package |
|---|---|--|
| Professional bi-lingual Guides | Professional bi-lingual Guides | Professional bi-lingual Guides |
| Guided tour of Sacsayhuaman, Ollantaytambo and Machu Picchu | Guided tour of Sacsayhuaman, Ollantaytambo and Machu Picchu | Guided tour of Sacsayhuaman, Ollantaytambo and Machu Picchu |
| All transport between Cuzco and Machu Picchu | All transport between Cuzco and Machu Picchu | All transport between Cuzco and Machu Picchu |
| Return Train from Ollantaytambo to Aguas Calientes | Return Train from Ollantaytambo to Aguas Calientes | Return Train from Ollantaytambo to Aguas Calientes |
| One night accommodation in Ollantaytambo | One night accommodation in Ollantaytambo | Three nights accommodation in Cuzco and one night accommodation in Ollantaytambo |
| Entrance to Machu Picchu | Entrance to Machu Picchu | Entrance to Machu Picchu |
| High quality double-occupancy tents, sleeping mat and camping equipment | High quality double-occupancy tents, sleeping mat and camping equipment | |
| Hot water in the morning for washing | Hot water in the morning for washing | |
| Drinking water throughout the trek | Drinking water throughout the trek | |

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| Dining tent, kitchen tent, latrine tent | Dining tent, kitchen tent, latrine tent | |
| First Aid Kit and Oxygen | First Aid Kit and Oxygen | |
| Team of Camp staff, Porters and Cooks | Team of Camp staff, Porters and Cooks | |
| All camping meals (vegetarian and gluten free meals can be catered for) | All camping meals (vegetarian and gluten free meals can be catered for) | |
| Pack animals and emergency horse in case of injury | | |

BENEFITS OF THE WILD ANDES TREK

- Protecting the environment - reducing the number of people travelling on the Classic route to minimise the impact on these ancient paths.
- Responsible Tourism - providing funding for reforestation of the area, to reduce landslides.
- Sustainable - providing funding to introduce Alpacas and training in animal husbandry and weaving to create a sustainable source of income from the animals
- Trekking virtually deserted routes, with no other tourists - so you are free to enjoy the surroundings without feeling rushed or crowded
- Arriving to Machu Picchu well rested and refreshed after a comfortable night in a hotel in Ollantaytambo - ready to get the most out of the visit to this unforgettable site. (NB we do not trek into Machu Picchu, we arrive by train and bus from Ollantaytambo)
- Time to explore the citadel of Machu Picchu, many group members chose to trek up to the Sun Gate to see the famous view, after their tour.
- Trekking a unique route in the Andes

BENEFITS OF THE CLASSIC INCA TREK

- The original Royal route is still the most popular trek because of its history (trekking is limited to 500 people per day departing on the trek, which still can feel crowded at times)
- The Classic Trek is not quite as challenging as the Wild Andes Trek as the passes are not quite as high. That said, it is still a pretty tough and you will need to be reasonably fit.
- There are fantastic views of varied terrain from cloud forest to mountains.
- The Classic Trek culminates with a morning trek to the Sun Gate, where you will experience your first glimpse of Machu Picchu (this is the only trek to do this).

TREKKING FITNESS

Trekking at altitude should not be undertaken lightly. Regardless of which trek you choose, you need to be in good health with good physical fitness to enjoy the experience. It is not about speed; trekking slowly is far better at altitude but you do need to have the stamina to keep going and altitude can have a negative impact on your general condition and physical performance. For your own safety you must accept that it is at the complete discretion of the professional trekking guides to decide if you are not fit enough to trek, whether it be before or during the trek. The Wild Andes Trek reaches 4,700 m in altitude when we cross one of the passes. The trail can be steep and rocky but has few steps. The Classic Inca Trek has lots of steps and the highest pass is Dead Woman's Pass at 4,200 m. If you are in any doubt about your suitability to trek please consult your local doctor. We recommend arriving in Cuzco at least 24 hours prior to your trip starting (if you are joining in Cuzco). It is also important that you inform your trekking guides and Tour Leaders of any pre-existing medical issues, as well as any medications you may be taking, especially medication for altitude sickness.

TREKKING - WHAT TO BRING

Tents, sleeping mats and all food and drinking water during the trek are provided, as well as duffle bags for your personal gear that you don't need to access during the trekking hours (such as sleeping bags and extra clothes). On the Wild Andes Trek your duffle bag will be carried by pack animals and on the Classic Trek your duffle bag will be carried by porters. Please note that there is therefore a strict weight limit of 6 kgs per bag. You will have to carry your own daypack with any items you need during the day.

You will need to be prepared for 4 seasons' weather in one day. Basically it will be cold after dark and in the mornings. During the night you will need to layer up with thermals and warm socks. In the morning when you've walked for a little while you will warm up and gradually strip off. Think layers! Wild Andes trekkers, you should also bring a set of clean clothes for the night you will spend in Ollantaytambo where you have hot showers and the evening meal out in a restaurant.

Some very useful things to bring:

- Daypack (less than 30 litres)
- Waterproof bag(s) to keep you stuff dry (bin liners or similar are fine)
- Warm sleeping bag (also available to rent from our local supplier)
- Sleeping bag liner (for extra insulation)
- Sleeping mat (only if you want extra insulation/padding as a mat will be provided)

- Walking stick (basic wooden sticks will be available to buy)
- Water bottle(s) with a total capacity of at least 2 litres
- Head torch or normal torch
- Small towel
- Camera (also charger, extra batteries and memory cards)
- Walking boots
- Light shoes or sandals (to allow your feet to relax and breathe during the evenings)
- Waterproofs
- Thermal underwear
- Warm socks
- Fleece or other warm sweater
- Woolly hat & gloves
- Sunglasses
- Sun hat
- Basic toiletries (lip salve, sun block, insect repellent, wet wipes, hand sanitizer, etc)
- Toilet paper + plastic bags to carry your used toilet paper with you (only needed during the trekking hours, at night a dug toilet with toilet paper will be provided)
- Basic medical kit (any personal medication, plasters, painkillers, etc)
- Pack of cards / book / game for evenings
- Money (for souvenirs, snacks, drinks, food, etc + tip for the guides and porters)
- PASSPORT + passport photocopy
- Cuzco Visitor's Ticket (this will be arranged for you by your tour leader)

We recommend a tip of US\$20 for your guide and perhaps US\$30 for all the rest of the staff.

RESPONSIBLE TREKKING

Frostbite, altitude sickness and even death can be the cost for the guides and trekking staff. Tourism Concern has a campaign aimed to put a stop to the abuse of trekking staff's human rights. Equally pack animals suffer abuse and mistreatment. Mountain trekking is exhilarating and challenging, but how could many of us do it without the assistance of trekking staff? Once they have started a trek, trekkers are often horrified by the reality of the working conditions for the staff.

The prices that tour operators charge for trekking does vary enormously, mainly due to the rates of pay and conditions that the trekking crew receive. It is easy to book a trip based purely on price, but in the case of trips involving Inca trails, this will probably be because the tour operator is using local suppliers without regard to the treatment of porters and guides.

In keeping with our Responsible Tourism Policies, Dragoman has a strict Suppliers' Policy, which also covers our trekking partners. We follow Tourism Concern's policies on trekking companies and the way that guides, porters or animals are looked after. We therefore use a local Cuzco-based trekking company called Andina Travel to run all our Inca trails trekking trips. They have an excellent trekking record and good, knowledgeable guides. They have been at the cutting edge of developing codes of responsible tourism practice and involving the local Quechuan communities in the development of their various treks. They supply us with evidence of their code of practice concerning their guides, staff and pack animals.

Please bear this in mind when deciding which travel company you will travel with. Remember many of the trekking organisations, as well as many overseas tour operators who use these suppliers, are happy to promote low cost trips, even if it is at the expense of the welfare of the guides and porters that they use.

COMMUNITIES SUPPORTED

The communities that we support are remote Andean farming communities with traditions dating back to the Incas. They are primarily Quechua speaking, with some Spanish, and little contact with the general population. Their daily lives consist of potato cultivation, weaving, and the herding of llamas, alpacas, and sheep. Considered by the Peruvian government to be living in extreme poverty, they often face malnutrition, severely cold weather, poor hygienic conditions, and little medical or health assistance. Villagers live in thatched-roof stone huts and cook with firewood. Because of the disproportionate supply and demand of native trees and bush, there is a great need for an effective reforestation project in the area. Since 2006, Dragoman has worked with Ecoam (who helps us with our reforestation project) and thanks to the support from Dragoman and our passengers, the area we used to visit around Quishuarani, Cuncani and part of the mountain range of Lares has been declared a Private Landscape Reserve.

The fairly recent introduction of tourism to the region has brought some needed assistance and economic development to the communities, but there is still much more to do. Our local trekking operator working within the guidelines of sustainable tourism has met with the communities and discussed the pros and cons of tourism in the area. Together they have established still unofficial guidelines for trekking and tourism through the Cordillera such as: established campsites to avoid contamination of community areas, use of community animals and personnel on treks, training of community members through workshops on camp maintenance, hygiene, client service to enhance their economic viability, maintenance of camp trails, camp sites, and environmental conservation. Many agencies respect these guidelines, but because making things official often brings on unwanted government intervention, they are an informal agreement between the communities, agencies, and tourists.

BRAZIL NOTES

ARGENTINA NOTES

BOLIVIA NOTES

CHILE NOTES

PERU NOTES

Please ensure you have an up to date version of these notes. **These notes were printed on the 28th September 2020**