

PERU - SALKANTAY TREK



INTRODUCTION

This camping trek is a favourite amongst Chimu guides and provides a great alternative to the Inca Trail. Start your journey in Cusco in the Peruvian Andes before setting off on your journey which will take you through a variety of stunning backdrops. In Andean religion, mountains are worshipped as apus, and this trek makes it clear why, as we experience the majesty of the mighty Apu Salkantay; then descend through ever-changing microsystems to the high jungle of the Urubamba Valley and its ever-impressive citadel of Machu Picchu.

ITINERARY

DAY 1: Pre-Trek Briefing

This evening the trek operator will hold a pre-trek briefing at your hotel. Time will be reconfirmed with you directly on arrival. Please note your sleeping bag which is included will be provided to you at this briefing.



TRIP CODE

PETSSAT

DURATION

8 Days

LOCATIONS

Peru, Machu Picchu



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DAY 1: Cusco

Cusco, set at an altitude of 3,400 metres in the Peruvian Andes, was once the capital of the Inca Empire. It is known for its Spanish colonial architecture and Incan remains. Narrow, cobblestoned streets lined by Inca walls stretch out from the main plaza in every direction. Many of the colonial buildings were built on top of Incan foundations and the stonework is unparalleled in its precision and beauty.



DAY 1: On The Way to Soraypampa

After an early breakfast, your guide and driver pick you up at your hotel in Cusco. The first stop is a visit to the Quillarumiyoc archaeological site en route to the mountain village of Mollepata. Enjoy lunch at El Pedregal, a beautiful farmhouse in the village, where you will also have the opportunity to learn about local agriculture and livestock. After lunch comes a scenic ride on the winding mountain road to Challacancha. Here you will begin your hike to our flagship Salkantay Lodge at Soraypampa along a picturesque path called the “Camino Real” (Royal Path). Note: Although we highly recommend participating in the hike as part of your continued altitude acclimatization, guests may opt out and continue by transport to Salkantay Lodge.



DAY 2: Hike to the Humantay Lake

After breakfast, you begin an ascent up the slopes that border the plateau behind Salkantay Lodge*. An hour and a half later, your hard work will be rewarded with a first glimpse of the lake’s glistening turquoise waters and the Humantay glacier looming overhead. Upon arrival, you will have a chance to relax, enjoy a snack, meditate in the tranquility of this magical spot, and participate in a traditional ceremony to honor “Pachamama” (Mother Earth). After your descent back to the lodge, the Salkantay staff will be waiting with a hot lunch. Afternoon at leisure to relax, enjoy a massage, or soak in the outdoor hot tub for a spectacular view of the Salkantay Peak at sunset. PLEASE NOTE: While the morning hike to Lake Humantay is optional, we strongly recommend your participation in preparation for the strenuous hike on Day 3.



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DAY 3: Crossing the Salkantay Pass

After an early start, the ascent toward the Salkantay Pass begins. You will circle Humantay Peak, gradually making your way along expansive plateaus connected by enormous boulders, remnants of the Rio Blanco Valley that was once bisected by a fast-flowing river. The last and most challenging part of the ascent is conquering the mountain switchbacks that lead you to the pass, the highest point on the trek (15,213' / 4,636m). The journey continues with a dramatic descent through fields of large boulders and natural stone formations often shrouded in fog, followed by a very welcome hot picnic lunch. After lunch, you will have some time to rest before the final hike through the area's bucolic countryside; its rolling hills will eventually lead you through marsh-like plateaus to the Wayra Lodge at Wayracmachay



DAY 4: Descending into the Cloud Forest

Today's hike is mainly downhill, passing spectacular waterfalls, as the Andes gradually enter the Amazon jungle. As you descend, the ecosystems will change, offering plenty of opportunities to observe the myriad of flora and fauna - if you are very lucky, you will be able to spot the national bird of Peru, the beautiful Cock of the Rock. Passing the community of Collpabamba, head to Playa Sahuayaco, a 'beach' on the banks of the River Urubamba, and arrive at your campsite located in Santa Teresa at 1,900m.



DAY 5: Following the Santa Teresa River

Begin the day trekking to the ruins of Patallacta, passing coffee and banana plantations, in a beautiful landscape with diverse flora and fauna. Patallacta offers an amazing view of Machu Picchu, which you can savour before descending to the Hydroelectric plant that harnesses some of the power of the Urubamba River. From here, follow the train track to Aguas Calientes, located 400m below Machu Picchu. As the name suggests, there are thermal baths to be sampled in Aguas Calientes in the evening.



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DAY 6: First Views of Machu Picchu from Llaqtapata

In the morning, take the bus to Machu Picchu for an unforgettable guided tour of the ruins and monuments such as the Main Square, the Circular Tower, the Sacred Solar Clock, the Royal Quarters, the Temple of the Three Windows and the Cemeteries. This is the highlight of any trip to Peru and a fantastic reward at the end of the trek. You have the morning to explore Machu Picchu before returning to Aguas Calientes for the train back to Cusco. Upon arrival in Cusco in the evening, transfer to your accommodation. Please be aware that your tour of Machu Picchu does not include an entry permit to Huayna Picchu (the iconic hill behind the Machu Picchu ruins). If you want to climb Huayna Picchu then you need to pre-book your permit. Please contact your sales consultant if you would like to do this.



DAY 7: Machu Picchu Citadel

Your journey to Machu Picchu begins with a morning rollicking uphill bus ride. As you enter the 'sanctuary' (as locals refer to it), prepare to be awed by the imposing, skilful architecture of the Watchtower, the Temple of the Sun, and the royal Inca residences, among others. After a two-hour guided tour, you will have free time to explore on your own, including a hike up Huayna Picchu*, the iconic mountain that looms over the citadel, for dramatic views that stretch from the Urubamba River Valley to the edge of the Amazon Jungle. At some point, be sure to take a moment and sit quietly-listen to the wind, meditate, and absorb the mystical energy that envelops you. After the visit you will have lunch in Aguas Calientes before a scenic Vistadome train ride to Ollantaytambo (approximately 1.5 hours) and vehicle transfer to your hotel in Cusco (approximately 1.5 hours). As night falls and you arrive amidst the hustle and bustle of the city, you will be touched by a feeling of peace and rejuvenation that will linger long after your journey home.



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DAY 7: Private Transfer Ollantaytambo - Cusco

Transfer from Ollantaytambo train station in the Sacred Valley to Cusco.



DAY 8: Cusco

The services end after breakfast.



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INCLUSIONS & DETAILS

Accommodation	Hotel in Cusco and camping while on the trek.
Inclusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bus to Mollepata Entrance to Machu Picchu Bilingual tour guides Meals as outlined in itinerary, including all meals on trek Train ticket: Aguas Calientes - Cusco Trek permits Transfers (bus and train) Trek professional guide Mules to carry the food and equipment on trek Camping equipment: 2-man dome tents, mattress and sleeping bag
Difficulty Rating	4.5 (high altitude and tough terrain)
Single Surcharge	Available upon request
Notes	Entrance to thermal baths not included
Price Dependent upon	Season and availability

SUSTAINABILITY

Chimu Adventures undertakes a number of sustainability measures within its operations including:

- 1) Only using local guides and office staff to both maximise local employment opportunities and minimise carbon footprints. Local guides also ensure you benefit from the intimate knowledge, passion and culture of the country you're visiting.
- 2) Where possible, using locally owned and operated boutique hotels to maximise the return to the local community.
- 3) Chimu's "Pass it on" programme has provided funding to hundreds of local community projects in Latin America. Our aim is to empower local communities, helping them to develop their own infrastructure for the future. Since 2006, we have been working with Kiva (a well-known Non-Governmental Organisation), providing hundreds of loans to local businesses all over South America.
- 4) In our pre tour information we provide a range of tips and advice on how to minimise your impact on both local environments and communities.
- 5) Chimu Adventures' offices also take a number of sustainability measures including carbon offsets for company vehicles and most staff travel. Chimu Adventure's internal processes are also structured to create a paperless office and to reduce waste. There are also internal programmes to help staff minimise their carbon footprint such as our staff bike purchase assistance plan which encourages office staff to commute to work via bicycle. Currently almost half of our office based staff commute to work via bicycle.

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