

# Walk Peru

## Machu Picchu Lodge Trail



Salkantay trail - Machu Picchu – lodge based trek - spectacular mountain scenery – lush cloudforest - expert guides – no camping remote and beautiful hiking – avoid the crowds – lovely food

Walk between remote lodges on the way to Machu Picchu.

Enjoy incredibly varied landscapes as you hike from Salkantay mountain through cloudforest to Machu Picchu.

End each day with a hot shower, great food and a comfy bed.

Genuine community involvement in this great example of responsible tourism.

This is a Pura *handpicked* holiday with an activity rating *high* and a comfort rating *first*.



Remote, first class lodges en route to Machu Picchu.



**"I was completely blown away by the variety of this trek. I was just not expecting to experience such stunning and dramatic scenery. The fact that we had the trail pretty much to ourselves from start to finish was amazing."** Sarah B.

### Holiday Itinerary

#### Day 01 | Soraypampa | **hiking the trail**

After an early breakfast, you are picked up at 7am.

Drive towards the Sacred Valley, stopping en route at the Incan ruins of Tarawasi.

Continue as far as the remote village of Mollepata where you stop for a short coffee break.

Start walking to your first lodge at Soraypampa following an ancient route called the "Camino Real" (Royal Path), this should take around five hours.

This is a good chance to acclimatise with a gentle and beautiful four-hour hike with a picnic lunch to break the journey.

You have views of Salkantay, the 2nd most sacred peak in Inca mythology and, at 20,600 ft (6,270m), the highest peak in the region.



Please note that anyone who does not wish to walk may be transported to the lodge in the vehicle.

This afternoon is spent at leisure to adjust to the altitude.

An evening briefing by the fireplace is followed by aperitifs and dinner.

The lodges you are staying in are small and more comfortable than you would imagine possible given their remoteness. They are all run by a friendly team.

The food is delicious and particularly welcome after full days of hiking at altitude.

Each of your lodges is different in character but all have private facilities and are run with the same dedication to sustainable and responsible tourism. (b,l,d)

#### Day 02 | Soraypampa | **mountain walk**

Today is spent in the area of the lodge, either resting or being active, depending on your degree of acclimatisation.

There is a moderate to challenging four-hour hike from the lodge to a glacial lake where the more adventurous might take a dip.

This afternoon you might enjoy a relaxing soak in the outdoor jacuzzi.

This evening, your guide will brief your group on gear and the itinerary for the next four days. (b,l,d).

Questions? Ready to book? Call us on **01273 676 712**

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Tough walking through remote and beautiful countryside.



The glacial lake above your first lodge.



Rooms at the Salkantay Lodge.

### What's the trek like?

The trek is very varied starting with the stunning mountain scenery of the high Andes, dropping down through lush cloudforest and on through coffee, avocado and banana plantations. You then of course end with the amazing sight of Machu Picchu.

The **first two days** are spent acclimatising at Soraypampa in the shadow of Mt Salkantay (6,270m). All rooms have spectacular views. We do recommend that you try the walk up to the glacier lake. It is a great way to acclimatise and is only a half-day walk. The views alone at the lake are well worth it.

**Day three** is the hardest day as you climb over the pass at 4,600m. It is a really beautiful days' hike starting off with a long gradual incline in the shadow of the south face of Salkantay. You can usually see condors up here.

The pace is slow and steady with plenty of rest stops to allow you to re-fuel and take in the views. You then come to a plateau where the snow-capped peaks of the entire Vilcabamba range open up before you in every direction. You can usually enjoy this view in the solitude of your own group. This trail is very remote.

It is then a final push to the top of the pass. The last ten minutes are hard as you feel the altitude but once at the top any discomfort is immediately forgotten as the sense of achievement takes over. It is traditional to have an Inca ceremony at the top of the pass to honour Mother Earth and the mountains.

It is then downhill all the way to your lodge where you are greeted by a warm friendly smile from the staff. Take a hot shower, a nap, a dip in the hot tub.

The **next two days** the scenery changes as you descend through cloudforest. The colours of the forest are very vibrant, the air gets thicker again and is filled with the sounds of birds and forest wildlife. After the relative silence of the mountains it is quite overwhelming at first. You may see many different species of orchids.

The **last day** is a tough but beautiful walk up through the coffee plantation along a ridge with spectacular views. It can be hot and humid. At the top you will catch a glimpse of Machu Picchu from a viewpoint seen by very few people.

Have lunch at a local family home overlooking Machu Picchu. It is then two hours downhill to the river and the end of the trek. Take a refreshing dip in the river and then travel by train to Aguas Calientes.

### Day 03 | Wayra Lodge | **cross a pass**

Early this morning you start your four-day hike to Machu Picchu following a remote route on which you are unlikely to see any other trekkers at all.

Today is a challenging five to seven hour hike. Set off up the Rio Blanco valley, circling the peak of Humantay in front of Salkantay.

The highest point of today's route is a pass at 4,600m. At the pass you stop to take in views of snow-capped peaks of the Vilcabamba Range in every direction as well as the towering south face of Salkantay. Condors are a common sight here.

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The lodges are very much integrated into their communities.



From the pass, descend towards the Wayra Lodge for the night. Enjoy a well deserved rest before dinner and a good nights' sleep. (b,l,d)

### **Day 04** | Colpa Lodge | **walk downhill**

Following yesterday's exertions, enjoy a leisurely breakfast at Wayra Lodge.

Today is an easy to moderate three to four hour walk. Set off downhill towards the Salkantay River, through increasingly verdant scenery.

When you arrive at the next lodge you will be served a "Pachamanca" style lunch.

This is a form of traditional underground stone cooking (subject to availability).

The Colpa Lodge is located in an open promontory at the confluence of three rivers.

The outdoor hot tub in this lodge has stunning views of lush mountains and a small town in the distance. (b,l,d)

### **Day 05** | Lucma Lodge | **cloudforest walk**

After an early breakfast head down the Santa Teresa River Valley, through more populated rural areas with coffee plantations, bananas and pomegranates.

This area is said to be home to one of the best organic coffees in the world.

Stop for a picnic beside the river.

After another hour of trekking a private vehicle arrives to take us to the beginning of the "Llactapata Inca Trail" (30-minute drive).

From the head of the trail it is a short climb to the Lucma Lodge, set in an avocado orchard.

Arrive in time to allow for exploration of the small village of Lucmabamba and possible meeting with members of the local community.

Today is five to six hours of moderate to challenging hiking. (b,l,d)

### **Day 06** | Machu Picchu | **last day walking**

After an early start and a hearty breakfast set off on the last day of your trek.

Total hiking time today is four to six hours, moderate to challenging.

Walk uphill for two or three hours towards the Llactapata pass (2,700 m/8,900ft) from where you will hopefully have your first, distant but special, views of Machu Picchu.

Enjoy a picnic lunch served with views of Machu Picchu (if the weather is good).

After lunch, start your final descent to the Aobamba River through lush bamboo forests and more orchards and coffee plantations.

Aguas Calientes and Machu Picchu are a short (30 minute), scenic train ride away.

Arrive in Aguas Calientes to check-in to your hotel for the night. (b,l,d)

### **Day 07** | Cusco | **explore Machu Picchu**

This morning if you are feeling energetic, you can catch one of the first buses up to Machu Picchu, heading slightly up the hill beyond the site to catch sunrise over the mountains.

Enjoy a full guided tour of the site this morning.

Afterwards you can continue to explore the extensive ruins on your own or climb the emblematic peak of Huayna Picchu for a 'condor's-eye' view of the city.

Return to Cusco by train this afternoon to arrive some time after nightfall.

End of services. *No hotel is included tonight.* (b)

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### Holiday Information

#### Responsible travel

When someone decides to build lodges in the middle of remote, stunning mountain scenery then alarm bells ring for those who care about protecting these places.

You should be reassured to know that the lodges are owned and operated by a team genuinely passionate about the environment and communities they work in.

#### The background

Mountain Lodges of Peru is a Peruvian family business. The driving force behind the project is to eliminate poverty in the Salkantay region within 20 years.

#### The staff

Before the lodges were built hardly anyone in the community had regular income. The owners offered work to any and all locals who wanted to work and showed the willingness to learn.

Each lodge has a female manager. This is seen as hugely important in the community.

Salaries are four times the national minimum wage and everyone has a pension and health insurance.

#### The community

Aside from those working directly for the lodges, the company also supports the wider community and you are welcome to visit these projects if you have an interest.

#### The environment

There are four lodges built along the trek. Each one designed by a local architect using local stone, wood and straw in the traditional adobe Inca style.

Nevertheless, it took over 10,000 mule journeys to get the materials to complete them.

Construction was supervised and approved by the National Institute of Natural Resources.

Electricity is provided using state-of-the art gas generators. Water is from local sources and there are 'filling stations' at each lodge. Water from plastic bottles is charged at a premium and profits are donated to the community.

The company has also set up an eco-team to maintain the trail, clean up litter and assist with conservation.

#### How active?

The trail covers 39 miles over five days at high altitude. The going can be slow and fairly tough. You can opt out of the walks on the first two days if you prefer and stay at the lodge but we do recommend you try the walks so that you get used to walking at altitude.

There are mules available on each day for you to ride if you get tired.

**Day one** is a five-hour walk to your first lodge. There is a steep uphill section at the beginning but the majority of the walk is flat along a canal. **Day two** is a fairly challenging but short hike to a glacier lake. **Day three** is the hardest day as you go over the highest pass on the trail at 4,600m. The pace is slow with plenty of stops. **Day four** is easy to moderate and downhill.

**Day five** is a long day (six hours) but mainly on the flat. **Day six** starts with a fairly steep uphill and ends with a steep downhill so it can be hard on the knees.

#### How comfortable?

The lodges are very comfortable 3\* superior to 4\*.

Each room is en suite. There are no baths in any of the lodges, just very good showers. Three of the lodges have outdoor hot tubs. The first lodge has 12 rooms and the rest have just 6 so when you set off on the hike you will just be with your group until the end. The trek is fully portaged.

#### How independent?

Groups are no larger than 14 and are fully guided throughout. Usually groups are of no more than 10-12.

#### When should I go?

You can walk this route any time from March through to December. January and February it is closed. April to November is considered the best time with predominantly dry, sunny conditions during the day. Nights can be very cold at altitude.

#### Not quite right?

If this holiday's not quite right for you, call us to discuss your ideas or consider:

**Walk Peru: Inca Trail** The classic Inca Trail to Machu Picchu but with a Pura twist: slower pace, quieter campsites, no crowds as well as time to fully appreciate Machu Picchu.

**Walk, Wildlife & Culture Peru: Peru Uncovered** Peru in depth: Inca Trail, Amazon Rainforest, Colonial Cusco, Lake Titicaca, Cultural Exploration.

#### How do I book?

As a tailor made holiday we need to check availability and prices before taking your booking. If you would like us to prepare you a detailed proposal then simply email [info@pura-aventura.com](mailto:info@pura-aventura.com) or call 01273 676 712 with your preferred dates plus any other changes you would like us to make.

Once you have the proposal and decide you would like to go ahead then please call in with the following:

- Full names
- Address
- Contact telephone numbers & email
- Deposit of 15%

Deposits can be paid by card, cheque or bank transfer, whichever suits you best (the balance of your holiday is due 60 days prior to travel).

We send you a confirmation email detailing all of the services agreed between us. We ask you to check through all of this carefully and sign off on the holiday.

#### Prices & set departures

<b>2012</b>	<b>Low \$2,560</b> (06 Mar-11 Apr/02 Nov-17 Dec) <b>High \$2,850</b> (16 Apr-30 Oct/18-31 Dec)
Prices include	First class lodges, one night in a premium hotel Full time guide; entrance fees in Machu Picchu; porters; train tickets; private transfers; and Meals (b,l,d) as per itinerary.
Not included	Flights; personal expenses; tips.
Please note	For the definitive list of our departure dates please see below or call us on <b>01273 676712</b> .

*Prices are per person, based on two sharing.*

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2012

MLP Fixed Departure Dates (Updated December 9<sup>th</sup> 2011)

March: 11, 17 (full), 18, 24, 25, 30, 31

April: 1, 5, 8, 9, 10 (full), 14(full), 15, 18, 20 ,23 (full), 24, 28

May: 1, 3(full), 4 (full), 6, 7, 10, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, 21, 24 (full), 27 (full), 28 (full) , 29(full), 31

June: 1, 6, 7, 10, 11, 14, 15 (full), 17, 21, 23, 24, 25, 28, 29, 30

July: 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 10, 12, 15, 16, 20, 21, 24 (full), 29, 30

August: 3, 4, 7, 9 (full), 13, 15, 17, 18, 21, 23, 26, 27, 29, 31

September: 1, 3, 4, 9, 10, 12, 14, 15(full), 20, 23, 24, 26, 28, 29

October: 4, 7, 10, 11, 12, 16, 18, 21, 22, 24, 26, 27, 31

November: 2, 4 , 11, 12, 16, 17, 19, 21, 18, 24, 25, 30

December: 2, 9, 14, 15, 16, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31

