



Machu Picchu Challenge, 8 day Peru Itinerary

Duration: 8 days



About this trip

This 8-day itinerary through **Cusco** combines Inca heritage with some of the most well-known nature activities in the Andes. The tour begins with time to acclimate and explore Cusco, continues through the **Sacred Valley** and **Machu Picchu**, and then includes hikes to **Humantay Lake** and **Rainbow Mountain**, as well as visits to **Moray**, **Maras**, and its salt mines. The itinerary is designed for travelers who want to combine culture and adventure within an organized tour, saving the higher-altitude excursions for the second half of the trip.

Day 1: Airport – Hotel in Cusco

Our staff will be waiting for you at the Cusco Airport, to take you to your hotel, just let us know your exact arrival time and flight number. Here, you will be welcomed with a hot cup of the famous coca tea. You will have a free afternoon to acclimatize, as the city of Cusco is at an altitude of 3,399 m (11,151 feet).

IMPORTANT ADVICE ON ARRIVAL TO CUSCO

Please be prepared for the fact that the high elevation, will make you feel more tired than normal on your arrival, so we recommend that you take the afternoon easy. If you are feeling fine, then have a cup of coca tea, which will help you acclimatize quicker. It is recommended to take a light walk, maybe to see The Plaza De Armas, to see the incredible colonial buildings, built on top of Inca foundations. It is important to drink a lot of water at high elevation, which will help you with the process of acclimatization. For the first few days at high elevation, it is also important to eat light meals as your digestion will be slower and later on you will have the opportunity to try the famous Guinea pig, a dish which was revered by the Incas and is still a national dish of The Andes and is eaten on special occasions and celebrations. One thing you must not miss on one of your free days is a visit to the “Centro QOSQO” of native art a show which demonstrates traditional dances, costume and music of the region.

The show begins at 6pm, but we recommend that you arrive 40 minutes earlier and wait in line, as many people want to go to see this unique spectacular. If you have the “boleta turistica” included in your package, you will have free access to this incredible show.

Drink the coca tea on offer and each morning to help you acclimatize. Remember that it has a similar effect to caffeine so don't drink it too late in the evening or your sleep will be affected. Bring a decent and comfortable pair of walking shoes. We suggest a visit to the Plaza de Armas with its colonial and Inca temples, The Regional History Museum, The Contemporary Art Museum, the Museum of The Qoricancha, and the Museum of popular art. These places will make your trip an even more unforgettable experience and give you the perfect insight into local culture.

- NOTE: If your arrival time is earlier than the check-in time, you can use the hotel's common areas while you wait.
- Overnight: Hotel in Cusco Check in: 12:00pm Check out: 09:00am Meals: none
- Out: 09:00am

Day 2: Cusco City Tour

Today, we will visit some of the most interesting sites in Cusco and the surrounding area. We will begin with a visit to the Cusco cathedral found on the Plaza De Armas and is the principal church in this imperial city. It was built on the foundations of the temple of The Inca Wiracocha. The cathedral displays over 300 paintings belong to the Cusco school of art. We will then head on to the Qoricancha which is the Quechua Word for “Temple of Gold”. This was the first temple to be constructed by The Incas, and was originally covered with large amounts of silver and gold. We will next head out of Cusco City to the close by ruins of Sacsayhuaman, famous for its enormous megaliths and giant stones, that weigh over 150 tonnes. During Inca times, it was considered the “Temple of lightning”, in honour to the deity Illapa. We will then head to the nearby ruins of Q'enqo, a religious site dedicated to the Mother Earth where you can still see carved stones and constructions. There is also a sacrificial altar where the Incas were thought to make offerings and sacrifices to The Mother Earth. After this, we will visit the to the impressive Inca fortress of Puka Pukara, which means “Red Castle” in the ancient Inca language of Quechua. Our final visit will be



to Tambomachay, where we can appreciate a sacred temple dedicated to an ancient water cult which probably also functioned as a purification bath for the Inca governors. We will then return to Cusco City, where we will drop you off at your hotel or in the central "Plaza de Armas".

IMPORTANT ADVICE

The City Tour will begin in the afternoon. You will have a free morning to acclimatize and drink a coca tea with your breakfast. Wear comfortable walking shoes/boots. We suggest that you visit the Plaza de Armas with its colonial and Inca temples, The Regional History Museum, The Contemporary Art Museum, the Museum of The Qoricancha, and the Museum of popular art. These places will make your trip an even more unforgettable experience and give you the perfect insight into local culture.

- **Overnight:** Hotel in Cusco MEALS: Breakfast

Day 3: The Sacred Valley & Connection to

Today you will discover the incredible Sacred Valley of the Inca, also called the Vilcanota Valley after the river that flows through it. After breakfast, we will first head to the artisan centre of Awanacancha, where we can see up close the famous llamas. You will also have the opportunity to chat with the local craftsmen and learn about the techniques and appreciate the intricacy of their Peruvian textiles and artwork. This is the perfect place to buy souvenirs for your loved ones back home and contribute to local craftspeople and artisans of The Andes, as well as purchase an intricate and authentic piece of fine textile, with an original beauty that can only be found in this region. We will then head to the archaeological site of Pisac, situated on the mountain top. This magnificent site is composed of many sections of terraces and archaeological structures, built on the hillside of the high mountain. The perfect example of stunning countryside and impressive stonework, which combine to make this spectacular site. We will then head down to the town of Pisac and its famous handicraft market, where local people sell their variety of handmade products, using techniques dating back to ancestral times. We will then head along the Sacred Valley to the town of Urubamba, where we will stop for lunch and where we will have the opportunity to sample some of the local delicacies, of the Peruvian kitchen including salads, soups, ceviche a variety of main courses and delectable desserts. After lunch, we will visit the impressive archaeological site of Ollantaytambo, quite probably constructed to monitor the entrance into this part of the valley and protect the Incas from possible invasion. We will have the opportunity to walk through its narrow, cobbled streets and gain a better idea about how this site functioned during Inca times, as a strategic military outpost as well as a religious and cultural centre. After the visit, we will then board the train that will take us to Aguas Calientes, at the base of Machu Picchu. On arrival, the hotel representative will be waiting for us to take us to the hotel.

IMPORTANT ADVICE

After a hearty breakfast and the recommended coca tea, we suggest that you just take an overnight bag /daypack to spend the night in Aguas Calientes. (Include money, light clothing, travel documents, camera, repellent, sunhat, sunscreen and personal hygiene products). Your trip will be more comfortable for doing so. The rest of your baggage can remain at your Cusco hotel as you will be returning there tomorrow.

- **Overnight:** Hotel in Aguas Calientes Meals: Breakfast, lunch

Day 4: Machu Picchu – Return to Cusco

In the morning, according to the scheduled time, our guide will pick you up at your hotel to go to the bus station where you will climb 400m along a winding path for 20min to reach the incredible wonder of the world "The Historic Sanctuary of Machu Picchu", also known as "The Lost City of the Incas". Upon arriving at the Machu Picchu citadel with our guide, we will pass through the entrance and begin the tour of the entire citadel. For around 2h30m we will visit the main places in Machu Picchu.

We return to the town of Aguas Calientes in the afternoon, where you will have free time to enjoy lunch in one of the



many restaurants (lunch not included). After lunch, we will take the train to Ollantaytambo (depending on train departure time availability). The return will follow the same route as the departure. Upon arrival in Ollantaytambo, the train representative will be waiting to take you to the bus heading to your hotel in Cusco.

IMPORTANT

From the 1st of January 2019, the rules changed with regards to the Machu Picchu. The visit to the archaeological site will all be in one direction, which means that once you have passed by a certain site, you are not allowed to return. There is no re-entrance to the site, if we leave the site for any reason, we are not allowed to re-enter. The only exception to this new rule is, if you have an entrance ticket to either Machu Picchu Mountain or Huayna Picchu mountain. Also, if you wish to climb one of these mountains, the guided tour of the main citadel will be reduced to coincide with the mountain entrance time.

IMPORTANT ADVICE

Before you go up to Machu Picchu, we recommend that you leave your overnight bag /daypack at the hotel in Aguas Calientes and only take water, (please remember that Machu Picchu is a plastic free zone so plastic water bottles will be confiscated on entry). passport, cash, entrance ticket, sunhat sunscreen and insect repellent. When you head back down to Aguas calientes, you can collect your overnight bag from the hotel. If time allows, we recommend a visit to the Chávez Ballón Museum, the museum of Machu Picchu. There is a free entrance after midday and you simply need to show your passport. We should also take into account that there is usually a queue for the shuttle bus, to and from Machu Picchu. There is also usually a queue for the train back to Ollantaytambo also, so we will need to allow plenty of time in each case. Your guide will be there to orientate you in the best possible manner.

- **Overnight:** Hotel in Cusco Meals: Breakfast

Day 5: Humantay Lake

We will head out bright and early and the pre-arranged time, when we collect you from your hotel to begin our adventure. We will head out of Cusco in a North westerly direction. On the way, we will pass through a number of traditional villages, until we reach Limatambo. From here, we will begin an ascent until we reach the town of Mollepata, where we will stop for breakfast and where we will also return to for lunch. After breakfast, we will continue our journey in car to the village of Soraypampa and your guide will give you information about the flora and fauna, as well as the traditional customs of the area. On arrival, to Soraypampa, we will begin our hike and the guide will explain the correct way to trek through the mountains. He will provide a small snack and walking sticks to help you along the route. The hike takes approximately 2 hours, until we arrive at the stunning Humantay Lake where we can appreciate spectacular scenery and an impressive vantage point of the Humantay and Salkantay glaciers. After a short rest, we will return along the same Trail to Soraypampa, where our car will be waiting to take us back to Mollepata and where a delicious buffet lunch awaits us. We will then continue on our return journey to Cusco City.

- Hotel in Cusco Meals: Breakfast, lunch ENTRANCE TICKETS: Humantay Lake included

Day 6: Maras, Moray & Salt Mines

After breakfast, depart from Cusco for the Maras and Moray area. The first stop is **Moray**, known for its circular terraces built within natural depressions and associated with Inca agricultural practices.

The tour continues through **Maras** before reaching the Maras Salt Mines, where hundreds of terraced pools are still used for traditional salt production.

After the visits, return to **Cusco**.

- **Overnight:** Cusco
- **Meals:** Breakfast



Day 7: Rainbow Mountain (Vinicunca)

Early, at the pre-arranged time, our guide will collect you from your Cusco hotel to head out to Collasuyo, found in a Southern direction from the ancient Inca capital, Cusco. This formed part of the important “tawantinsuyo” (the 4 ancient regions of the Incas). Our first stop will be 2 hours out of Cusco, 78 km away, at the Paucarpata (CUSIPATA) community, where we will have a short rest to buy water, snacks etc and enjoy a buffet breakfast. After which, we will continue for another hour along the highway until we arrive at our basecamp of PHULAWASIPATA. Here we will get ready for our hike to the Rainbow Mountain, which is a gradual 2 hour, uphill hike (3.5km). Along the way, we will have the opportunity to see the impressive Hatun Ritti Glacier, standing at a whopping 4925m. The distinctive varieties of South American camelids and the stunning reflection of the Puka Qocha y Qomer qocha lagoons, will accompany us along the way. On arrival at the magnificent Rainbow Mountain, you will have plenty of time to take photos and videos of this enigmatic, coloured mountain as well as the impressive surrounding countryside. We will then begin our descent back towards the base camp for approximately 1h 30m (3.5km). where our transport will be waiting to take us to the town of Paucarpata, where we will enjoy a well-deserved delicious lunch. After lunch we will begin our journey back to Cusco City, arriving at 6pm approximately, where we will drop you off at your hotel.

- **ACCOMMODATION:** Hotel in Cusco MEALS: Breakfast, lunch

Day 8: Departure – Cusco Airport Transfe

Depending on the time of your flight, we will collect you from your hotel and take you to the Cusco airport. This marks the end of our services.

NOTE: If your arrival time is after the hotel check-out time, you can use the hotel's common areas while you wait.

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

At the moment you depart for any of the tours, it is important to remember to safe all of the entrance tickets that have been given to you by our staff on the briefing. (BTG, BTP, Ticket Qoricancha, Consetur shuttle bus, etc.). This will help avoid the repeat purchase of any of the tickets. If you lose any of these tickets, you must buy a new one by yourself. Also please be careful with your belongings and check hotel rooms and transport for any personal items you may have left behind.

- **Check in:** 12:00 pm **Check out:** 09:00am MEALS: Breakfast

What's included

- ✓ Private Airport Transfer
- ✓ Cusco City Tour
- ✓ Sacred Valley Tour
- ✓ Round-Trip Train Tickets
- ✓ Machu Picchu Bus Tickets
- ✓ Machu Picchu Visit
- ✓ Train Station Transfer:
- ✓ Humantay Lake Tour
- ✓ Maras & Moray Tour
- ✓ Rainbow Mountain Tour



- ✓ **Trekking Equipment**
- ✓ **7 Hotel Nights**
- ✓ **24-Hour Assistance:** Support throughout your trip.

What's not included

- ✗ Drinks except those mentioned in the itinerary
- ✗ **Meals**
- ✗ **Snacks**
- ✗ **Phone calls**
- ✗ **Tips / gratuities**
- ✗ **Travel insurance**

Packages

Economy – Single Room

\$1,307

- **Cusco** – Sueños del Inca Hotel / Hotel Inca Wasi Plaza / Sacha Centric / Hotel Rojas Plaza Boutique / Raymi Hotel
- **Aguas Calientes** – Terrazas del Inca Bed and Breakfast / Mapi Seven Machu Picchu / Sacred Stone Boutique

Touristy – Single Room

\$1,387

- **Cusco** – Hotel Ruinas Cusco / San Agustin Internacional / Maytaq Wasin Hotel
- **Aguas Calientes** – Inti Punku Machupicchu / Ferre Machu Picchu / Tara Machu Picchu

First – Single Room

\$1,694

- **Cusco** – San Agustin Plaza / Casa Andina Standard Cusco Catedral / XIMA Cusco Hotel
- **Aguas Calientes** – Tierra Viva Machu Picchu / Taypikala Boutique Machupicchu / Casa Andina Standard Machu Picchu

Premium – Single Room

\$2,003

- Cusco** – Novotel Cusco / Casa Andina Premium Cusco / Wyndham Costa Del Sol Cusco
- Aguas Calientes** – El Mapi Hotel By Inkaterra / Jaya Machu Picchu Boutique / Hatun Inti Boutique Machu Picchu



Luxury – Single Room

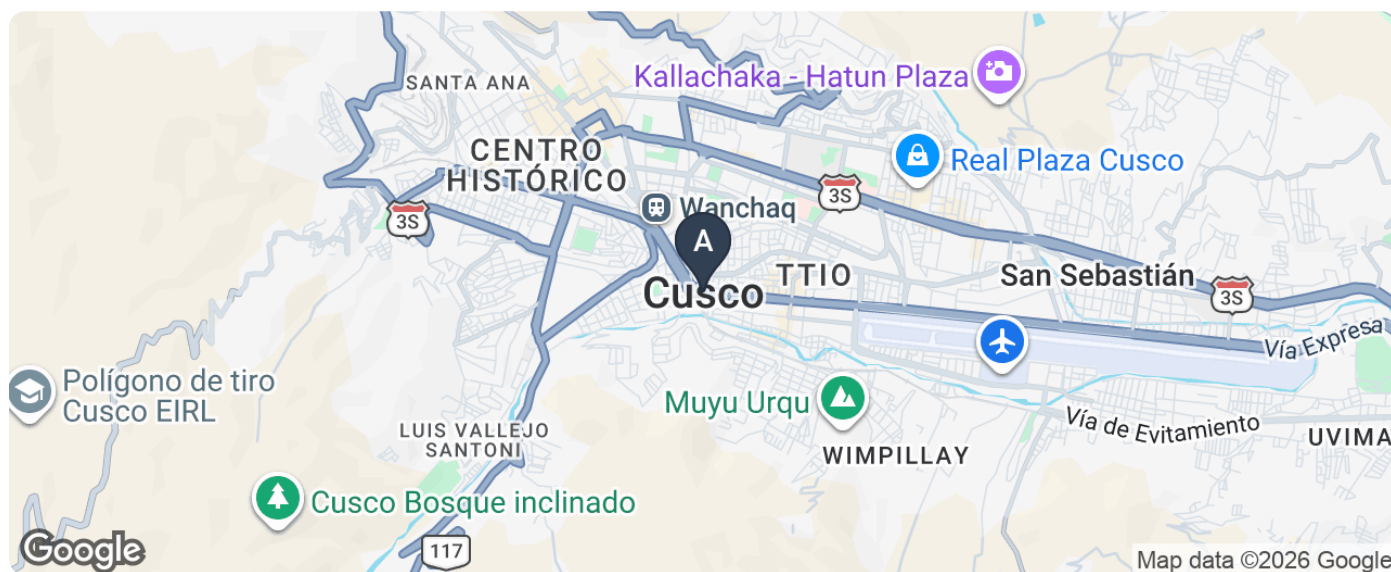
\$3,497

- **Cusco** – Casa Cartagena Boutique Hotel & Spa / Palacio del Inka Luxury Collections / Hotel Aranwa Cusco Boutique
- **Aguas Calientes** – Hotel Sumaq Machupicchu / Hotel Casa del Sol Boutique / Hotel Inkaterra Machupicchu Pueblo



See Availability

Package and add-on availability may change at any time. Scan the QR code or [click here](#) to see real-time availability and book your trip.



A. Cusco, Perú Cusco, Perú

About your organizer



PERU GRAND TRAVEL

4.7 ★ 53 reviews

Being true to our word, Perú Grand Travel will surpass all of your expectations and those of all our clients, with our classic and adventure programmes. If you use us to travel to Peru, we will guarantee you the best possible experience.

