



HEART OF THE ANDES

8 DAYS / 7 NIGHTS

Sacred Valley – Machu Picchu – Cusco – Humantay Lake – Southern Valley

Immerse yourself in the cultural, spiritual, and natural richness of the Peruvian Andes. This 8-day, 7-night journey is thoughtfully designed for travelers seeking more than just sightseeing - it's a pathway into authentic and transformative experiences. From iconic Inca ruins and breathtaking highland landscapes to vibrant living culture and hands-on traditions, each day opens a new window into the heritage and beauty of one of the world's most remarkable civilizations.

#### DAY 1: ARRIVAL IN CUSCO – SACRED VALLEY

Upon arrival at Cusco Airport, a Perú Increíble representative will warmly welcome you and transfer you directly to the Sacred Valley of the Incas. Located at a lower altitude than Cusco, it provides a gentler acclimatization to the Andes.

Along the way, enjoy scenic stops to admire the dramatic Andean landscape and observe daily life in traditional highland communities. The rest of the day is free to relax at the hotel, enjoy the peaceful surroundings, and adjust to the local pace.

Overnight: Hotel in the Sacred Valley

Meals: None

#### DAY 2: MARAS – MORAY – PISAC

After breakfast, begin your day exploring Moray, a mysterious circular complex believed to be an Inca agricultural laboratory. Continue to the Salineras de Maras, where thousands of terraced salt pools carved into the mountainside are still harvested by local families using techniques passed down since pre-Inca times.

Enjoy a buffet lunch at Tunupa Restaurant, located in Urubamba and overlooking the Urubamba River. In the afternoon, explore the archaeological site of Pisac, known for its impressive terraces, irrigation canals, and panoramic valley views. You'll also have time to browse Pisac's vibrant artisan market, offering a colorful array of handmade crafts and traditional textiles.

Overnight: Hotel in the Sacred Valley

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

#### DAY 3: ANDEAN POTTERY WORKSHOP – OLLANTAYTAMBO – AGUAS CALIENTES

After breakfast, take part in a hands-on Andean ceramics workshop at Kintu Studio, where you'll learn time-honored techniques passed down through generations. Using locally sourced materials, you'll craft your own piece while exploring the symbolic meanings found in Inca art and design.



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Enjoy a delicious lunch in the Sacred Valley before visiting the extraordinary Ollantaytambo Fortress, an Inca stronghold featuring ceremonial fountains, temples, and agricultural terraces. Ollantaytambo is one of the last living Inca towns, where centuries-old homes and cobblestone streets remain in use to this day.

In the late afternoon, board the scenic Vistadome train to Aguas Calientes. As you wind along the Urubamba River, enjoy views of cloud forests and steep mountain slopes. Upon arrival, settle into your hotel and enjoy a relaxing evening in Machu Picchu Pueblo. **Optional:** unwind at the local hot springs.

Overnight: Hotel in Aguas Calientes

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

#### DAY 4: MACHU PICCHU – CUSCO

Today is one of the highlights of your journey. After an early breakfast, board the bus to Machu Picchu, arriving in time to experience the morning light as it illuminates the sacred citadel - a breathtaking sight for many travelers.

Enjoy a guided tour of approximately three hours, visiting temples, plazas, agricultural terraces, and ceremonial sites. Your expert guide will bring the history, symbolism, and spiritual significance of this wonder of the world to life. **Optional:** For those seeking a more challenging experience, hike Huayna Picchu or Machu Picchu Mountain (advance reservations required and subject to availability).

After your visit, return to Aguas Calientes for lunch, then board the train to Ollantaytambo, where a private transfer will take you back to Cusco.

Overnight: Hotel in Cusco

Meals: Breakfast

#### DAY 5: FREE MORNING – PERUVIAN COOKING CLASS

Enjoy a free morning to explore Cusco's historic center, visit museums or colonial churches, or relax with a coffee in the Plaza de Armas.

In the afternoon, take part in a hands-on Peruvian cooking class led by a local chef. Begin with a guided visit to a local market to discover vibrant Peruvian ingredients, followed by a culinary workshop where you'll prepare a traditional four-course meal (vegetarian option available) and learn how to craft a classic Pisco Sour (non-alcoholic version also available).

This immersive culinary experience is a delicious way to connect with Peru's rich flavors and cultural heritage.

Overnight: Hotel in Cusco

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner



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## DAY 6: HUMANTAY LAKE HIKE

Begin your day early with a 4:30 a.m. departure from Cusco to the mountain village of Mollepata, where a hearty Andean breakfast awaits. Continue to Soraypampa, the trailhead for your hike to Humantay Lake.

The 1.5 to 2-hour uphill trek takes you to 4,200 meters (13,800 feet), with panoramic views of snow-capped peaks, the towering Salkantay Glacier, and lush valleys. Though the hike is demanding due to the altitude, the beauty of the turquoise lake and surrounding Andes makes every step worth it.

At the summit, you'll have time to take in the views, rest, and optionally participate in a traditional Pachamama offering to honor Mother Earth. After descending, return to Mollepata for a buffet lunch before arriving back in Cusco in the late afternoon.

Overnight: Hotel in Cusco

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

## DAY 7: SOUTHERN VALLEY TOUR

This morning, explore the lesser-known Southern Valley, rich in archaeological wonders and colonial architecture. Highlights include:

- **Tipón** – A masterclass in Inca hydraulic engineering, with sophisticated canals still functioning today.
- **Pikillaqta** – A pre-Inca Wari city featuring organized urban planning and adobe structures.
- **Andahuayllas** – A colonial village home to the “Sistine Chapel of the Andes,” renowned for its intricate murals and gilded altar.

Return to Cusco in the early afternoon. Enjoy your final evening at leisure - shop for souvenirs, revisit your favorite plaza, or celebrate with a farewell dinner in the historic center.

Overnight: Hotel in Cusco

Meals: Breakfast

## DAY 8: CUSCO – LIMA

After breakfast, enjoy a relaxed morning to rest, explore, or do any last-minute shopping. At the scheduled time, a private transfer will take you to the airport for your flight back to Lima.

Meals: Breakfast

## END OF SERVICES

Thank you for trusting us to guide you through this unforgettable journey into the heart of the Inca Empire.



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**INCLUDED:**

- All private guided tours and personalized experiences
- Professional bilingual guides (English & Spanish)
- Domestic flights (Lima – Cusco – Lima)
- All ground transportation, including private airport transfers
- Hotel accommodations (based on double occupancy)
- Meals as noted in the detailed itinerary
- Vistadome train service to and from Machu Picchu
- All entrance fees to archaeological sites and attractions listed in the itinerary
- All bus tickets, train tickets, and logistical support for excursions
- Personalized trip coordination and travel documentation
- 24/7 in-country support and emergency assistance

**NOT INCLUDED:**

- International airfare
- Travel insurance (highly recommended)
- Tips and gratuities
- Meals not specified in the detailed itinerary
- Optional hikes to Huayna Picchu or Machu Picchu Mountain
- Personal expenses

**WHAT YOU NEED TO BRING:**

- Valid passport (with minimum 6 months before expiration)
- Comfortable walking shoes or hiking boots and trekking clothes
- Warm layers (including gloves, beanie, and scarf) and windproof jacket for high-altitude locations, especially Lake Humantay
- Rain jacket or poncho
- Sun protection (hat, sunglasses, sunscreen)
- Reusable water bottle
- Daypack for daily excursions
- Small bills for local markets and tips
- Personal medications
- Travel insurance documents



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