



Extreme Adventure to Machu Picchu : 15D

from : USD 7699.00

SEASON	March to November
DURATION	15 days / 14 nights (Cusco - Cusco)
FITNESS LEVEL	Active, steep climbs, short hikes
DEPARTURE DATES	Dependent upon availability of Inca Trail permits and the Sky Lodge.
ACTIVITIES	Hiking, climbing, biking, Amazon exploration

Combining Machu Picchu and the Amazon, this trip offers many ways to enjoy the challenges of Peru's splendid natural heritage. You will walk among Inca settlements, temples and shrines filled with history, stay with local people from whom you will learn ancient weaving techniques, sleep in hanging capsules reached by climbing along a via ferrata, and of course you will journey on foot to Machu Picchu, just as ancient Peruvians.

And to complete this expedition, we will visit the largest tropical forest biosphere reserve on the planet. Manu National Park protects three highly distinct ecosystems: high-altitude, tundra-like grasslands studded with lakes and surrounded by glaciers; cloud forest, inhabited by hummingbirds and the bright orange cock-of-the-rock, as well as the spectacled bear; and the rainforest, home to the giant otter, black caiman, 13 species of monkey and more than 1000 species of birds, including macaws.

Day 1: Arrival to Cusco (walking tour)

You will be met at the airport and transferred to your hotel. You will have the morning free to get used to the altitude (3300 meters / 10,900 feet) and to wander through the narrow streets of the historic center of the city. In the afternoon, we will visit the impressive Sacsayhuaman Archaeological Park. This great complex was once the Inca "House of the Sun", composed of temples, palaces and astronomical observatories. Many of the stones which form the walls weigh up to 130 tons each and were positioned with incredible precision.

Overnight stay in Cusco

Day 2: Chinchero - Weaving with locals

An early bus ride will take us to Lake Piuray. From here, we will hike on local trails for between 4 and 5 hours through fields of typical Andean crops, including corn, potatoes and quinoa. This is an area of outstanding natural beauty, with the high plain ending with a sudden drop into the Sacred Valley of the Incas, and a backdrop of glacial peaks.

After enjoying a typical local lunch, you will be invited to attend a presentation on the shearing, washing, dyeing and weaving techniques employed in the manufacturing by hand of traditional textiles. During the presentation, the significance of the iconographical patterns with which textiles are decorated will also be explained. Local people continue to work using traditional Inca techniques, and this is now one of the few communities to have conserved such ancient knowledge.

Overnight stay in the Sacred Valley of the Incas

Day 3: *Sky Lodge - via ferrata

Free morning to relax or to enjoy individual excursions or visits.

In the afternoon, our driver will take you to the village of Pachar, where the climbing adventure will begin!

It takes around two hours to climb up the 400 meters to the Sky Lodge with its 3 transparent sleeping capsules, hanging from the cliff offering a 300-degree view of the majestic sacred valley below. Staff will instruct you on the correct and responsible use of the capsules before you enjoy a fabulous dinner with spectacular panoramic views. A unique experience in the Andes!

Overnight in the Sky Lodge



Day 4: Ollantaytambo - Sacred Valley

After a good breakfast, you will descend by rappelling or zip-lining to the base.

From here, we will drive you to the village of Ollantaytambo. Located at the narrow end of the Sacred Valley, this village is often described as a living museum, where the descendants of the Incas continue to live in houses built by their ancestors, below the ruins of an imposing Inca temple complex.

Overnight stay in the Sacred Valley of the Incas

Day 5: Short Inca Trail to Machu Picchu

We will start our day with an early morning scenic train ride over the Andes down to Km 104. From the archaeological site of Chachabamba (2250 meters / 7,500 feet), we will start our Inca Trail with an approximately three-hour climb to the archaeological complex of Wiñaywayna (2650 meters / 8,750 feet). This site is considered one of the most beautiful on the entire Inca Trail, due to its spectacular location and particularly fine architecture. We will visit this fascinating site and enjoy a good lunch before continuing our hike through high cloud forest to the famous Sun Gate, or Intipunku. From here, there is a panoramic view of the Lost City of the Incas: legendary Machu Picchu (2400 meters / 8000 feet). After a short walk to the main entrance, we will board a bus to take us to the small town of Aguas Calientes, where you can choose to relax in the hotel or visit the nearby natural hot springs.

Overnight stay in Aguas Calientes



Day 6: Machu Picchu - Cusco

After an early breakfast, we will take an early bus up to Machu Picchu to enjoy the morning at this magical place. At the most famous attraction in South America, you will be escorted by an expert guide, who will explain the significance of this unique legacy of the great empire of the Incas. In the afternoon, we will return to Cusco by train and car.

Overnight stay in Cusco



Day 7: Free day in Cusco

You will have free time today to enjoy Cusco, get your laundry done, or do some shopping. Additional activities are also available, such as horseback riding, mountain biking, river rafting or bungee jumping.

Overnight stay in Cusco



Day 8: Cusco - San Pedro

Starting early from Cusco we will begin our 8-hour journey by private minibus, climbing up into the mountains to an altitude of 3900 m (13,000 ft). After a short stop in Ninamarca to visit a pre-Inca cemetery, and after passing through the colonial village of Paucartambo, we will descend the eastern slopes of the Andes through lush cloud forest vegetation (ferns, orchids, bromeliads, etc.). Along the way, we'll be able to enjoy spectacular views of the Andes and observe wildlife such as Peru's national bird, the bright red cock-of-the-rock (*Rupicola peruviana*), which performs a fascinating mating dance. Brightly colored tanagers, quetzals, trogons and hummingbirds can also be observed in these forests, as well as monkeys, including the woolly monkey.

Overnight in San Pedro



Day 9: San Pedro - Boca Manu

After an early breakfast, we will continue down to the village of Pilcopata and cross the river of the same name on our way the small port of Atalaya (600 meters). On the way, we will stop our vehicle and walk along the road to look for monkeys and birds. From Atalaya, we will journey for about 5 hours in a 15-meter motorized canoe down the Upper Madre de Dios River. During this river

journey, we'll be able to appreciate how the scenery changes, and enjoy the opportunity to observe wildlife along the rocky banks of the river, such as fasciated tiger herons, skimmers, kingfishers, vultures, caimans and some of the 13 species of monkey that live in Manu National Park. In the afternoon (at around 16:30), we will reach our lodge. In the evening, we'll take a night walk in the forest. Bring a good flashlight!

Overnight in Jungle lodge



Day 10: Boca Manu to Casa Matsigenka

Today, we will set off early to continue our boat ride, traveling into the Manu National Park Reserved Zone. After reaching the mouth of the Manu River, and after a stop at the Limonal Park Ranger Station, where our permits will be checked, we will travel upriver into the heart of Manu National Park. During this boat trip, the scenery and wildlife viewing along the banks of the Manu River is excellent, particularly in the dry season, when nesting birds and feeding herons, egrets, Orinoco geese, terns and skimmers can be seen, to name just a few species. Some of the beaches will also host sunning white and black caimans or river turtles. Hundreds of sand-colored nightjars roost during the day on logs and beaches. In this part of the park, there is also a good chance of encountering a sunning jaguar. We will also see some species of primate during this river trip, possibly red howler monkeys or the smaller squirrel monkey.

In the afternoon, we will arrive at the **Casa Matsigenka, where we will spend the next two nights. This is a rustic locally-owned lodge with shared bathrooms & showers.

Overnight in Casa Matsigenka

Day 11: Casa Matsigenka

Today we will set off early for a day excursion, exploring trails through the virgin forest of the Manu National Park Reserved Zone. As a highlight, we will visit the beautiful oxbow lake Cocha Salvador by catamaran, looking for giant river Otters (*Pteronura brasiliensis*) the world's largest freshwater carnivores, which remain common in Manu, having been hunted to extinction throughout most of their former range. Each otter consumes between 4 and 5 kilos of fish daily and often they can be seen eating large fish on logs at the lakeside. Other species found at oxbow lakes include caimans, monkeys, hoatzins and other birds. In the afternoon, we will take a walk along trails on the opposite side of the river. We will climb the 18-meter observation tower overlooking Lake Otorongo –a perfect place to observe birds, including toucans and woodpeckers. After a final walk through this biodiverse forest, we will return to Casa Matsigenka, where we will have the opportunity to meet members of the Machiguenga ethnic group. After dinner, there will also be an opportunity to take a night walk in the forest.

Overnight in Casa Matsigenka



Day 12: Casa Matsigenka to Blanquillo

We will start today at first light for our river journey along the Manu and Madre de Dios rivers, (around 8 hours).

Dawn and dusk are the best times to see wildlife on the riverbanks. Capybaras, caimans, birds and -with luck- big cats can be seen. We will make a short stop at Boca Manu village, the main settlement in Manu named after the confluence of the sediment-rich Manu River with the Madre de Dios River. In the afternoon, we will arrive at our lodge in Tambo Blanquillo. Here, we will have the opportunity to experience a night walk and navigate in a small catamaran on Lake Blanquillo, listening to the sounds of the nighttime forest!

Overnight at Blanquillo Lodge



Day 13: Macaw Clay Lick & Lake Camungo

Very early in the morning, we will go by boat to the macaw clay lick, where hundreds of parakeets, parrots, and macaws arrive every day to feed on the clay essential to their diet.

We will witness this natural wonder from the comfort of the blind constructed less than 50 meters from the clay lick. Some lucky nature lovers have seen jaguars and ocelots preying on Macaws and other birds at this clay lick. This is one of the best places in the Peruvian Amazon for nature photography. The keyword for today will be patience. We will spend between 4 and 5 hours experiencing this activity.

In the afternoon, after lunch, we will cross the river and hike for an hour to visit the Camungo oxbow lake, where we will use a small catamaran as we try to spot giant river otters, caimans, some of the 600 bird species that inhabit these forests, and other surprises.

Finally, we will climb one of the highest observation towers in the entire Amazon basin. This 50-meter tall tower stands beside a Kapok tree and offers a unique perspective on the rainforest canopy

Overnight at Blanquillo Lodge



Day 14: Blanquillo to Cusco

Today it will be time to say goodbye to this reserve -one of the most biologically diverse places on Earth!

After an early breakfast at the lodge, we will travel downriver to Colorado (3 hours), a small gold mining town. Together with our guide, we will take a car to Puerto Carlos (1 hour), before crossing the Inambari River to the small town of Santa Rosa, where our bus will be waiting to take us back to Cusco (around 7 hours). We will travel along the paved Transoceanic Highway, through cloud forest and up into the Andes, with spectacular views of Mount Ausangate (6300 meters)

Overnight in Cusco



Day 15: Cusco to Lima

Today, you will be transferred to Cusco airport for your domestic and international connections.



Included

TRANSPORT	Private transport and river boat
HOTEL	Hotel ***7/ Sky Lodge 1/ Jungle Lodge 6/ Total nights 14
TOURS	According to the program
ENTRANCE FEE / PERMITS	BTG, Machu Picchu and Manu national parks
MEALS	Bx1 Bx14 Lx10 Dx7

Not included

EXTRAS	Travel insurance, tips, tours & meals not mentioned in the itinerary.
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Rates 2024

2024 cost per person in US dollars

Service	1 Pax	2 Pax		
PRIVATE SERVICE	US 9,836	US 5,920		
LUXURY	US 11,811	US 7,042		

CULTURAS PERU SRL - 2019
Tandapata 354-A Cusco - Perú
Phone & Fax: +51 84 243629
reservas@culturasperu.com
www.culturasperu.com
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