

PERU ITINERARY IDEA:

The below itinerary is designed to simply give you an idea of the areas that you may wish to include within your trip. If you prefer a longer trip we can of course include more areas & / or extend your stay in the areas. We tailor-make all of your holidays to Peru & will design the itinerary to perfectly suit clients specific interests, preferences & budget.

14 NIGHTS

This itinerary idea is based on flying with KLM or Iberia as they leave Lima in the evening & we can therefore avoid having the final night back in the city.

Δ 1 night Lima

Δ 2 nights Arequipa

Δ 2 nights / 3 day tour to Colca Canyon

Ending in Puno

Δ 2 nights Puno

With a full day boat trip on Lake Titicaca

Δ 2 nights Sacred Valley

With a full day private tour incl PISAQ market & Ollantaytambo
& optional full day private tour to Moray & Maras

Δ 1 night Machu Picchu

With a private guided tour of the Machu Picchu citadel

Δ 4 nights Cusco

With a half day city & surrounding ruins tours

Day 1 LIMA

On arrival into **Lima** International Airport our ground agents will meet you and you will have a private transfer to either the Standard grade Casa Andina Hotel or for the deluxe itinerary the Melia Hotel BB for 1 night BB.

Lima is not at all what you would expect. With a population of over 9 million it is huge; a 1/3 of Peru's total population lives here. Lima dates back to its foundation by the Spanish conquistador Francisco Pizarro in 1535. Lima grew rapidly to become one of the richest cities in the world, remaining Spain's most important centre in South America for almost 300 years. There are many impressive colonial buildings in the historical centre around the Plaza del Armas and San Martin. Lima is home to many important and excellent archaeological museums and a wonderful Gold Museum well worth visiting. The central commercial areas are very modern. Especially visit the Miraflores commercial area (Larco Mar) which is an open-air 3-

storey shopping/ restaurant area by the sea. Prices in Lima are generally quoted in US dollars. Taxis are very cheap so you do not have to stay in the most central hotels. The San Isidro area has the most exclusive hotels, including the Country Club. There is an excellent fish restaurant called the Costa Verde and they offer on certain days a huge buffet with 450 dishes.

Day 2 LIMA - AREQUIPA

You will be collected and driven to the airport to take a flight to **Arequipa**. On arrival you will be met by your private tour guide and be driven to either the Casa Andina Arequipa Hotel or the Casa Andina private Collection Hotel for a 2 night stay BB.

Arequipa is in the mountainous desert and set at an altitude of 2325m above sea level. It is a beautiful city surrounded by spectacular mountains, including the famous snow capped El Misti Volcano. Other volcanoes in this area are Chachani and Machu Picchu. It is believed that the Incas would sacrifice a virgin to the volcanoes to stop any earthquakes or eruptions. In fact an Inca princess was recently found and had been well preserved by the snow and ice. It is still tradition for local farmers / shepherds to sacrifice their best Llama. The city is nicknamed "the white city" due to the volcanic rock used to construct many of the buildings.

One of the most interesting places to visit is the Monastery of Santa Catalina, which was actually a convent.. I have never been able to find out clearly why it was named a monastery!!. It was originally built in 1580 and founded by a widow, Maria de Guzman who only accepted the daughter of wealthy Spanish families. Traditionally the 2nd daughter of the wealthy Spanish families was sent to a convent. At the Santa Catalina the family had to make a monthly payment and when the girl was ready to become a fully-fledged nun they had to pay a large dowry. Life was very strict; the girls were kept in their own room for hours on end with food and water passed to them through the window. When they had visitors they sat behind a double wooden grill (making it impossible to actually see the visitor) and were accompanied by an elderly nun. During the earthquake of 1600 destroyed most of the convent the rich families built individual houses for their daughters, the size of the house depended on how rich the family was. Sometimes 2-3 nuns would share a house. There are a total of 30 houses, many of which you will see. The nuns now have a new convent next-door, but they still visit the chapel every day.

Breakfast

Day 3 AREQUIPA

Day @ leisure to relax & enjoy the city. We can arrange a city tour for you but the Santa Catalina Monastery have their own English speaking guides.

Breakfast

Day 4 AREQUIPA – COLCA CANYON

Early morning pick-up, with a guide, to travel to the Colca Canyon with 2 nights at the Casa Andina Hotel or the Colca Lodge. This would be a 3 day / 2 night private or shared tour on a full board basis, ending in Puno.

Private tour option: The big advantage of having this on a private basis is that you can dictate how early you go to the Cruz de la Condor in the morning.. The earlier you go the better & if in a group there is less flexibility on the times.

From Arequipa you can visit the amazing **Colca Canyon**. At its deepest the Colca Canyon is more than 3,400 metres deep (the Grand Canyon is 1,800 metres at its deepest). You definitely need to stay overnight to see the most impressive sights. After leaving Arequipa you will drive to the Reserva Nacional Salinas y Aquada Blanca which covers a total area of 367,000 hectares and is at an average elevation of 3850 metres. Here you will see small groups of Vicuna, these animals are similar to llamas and alpaca but their fleeces are very fine and strong which makes it very expensive and sought after. All animals in the National Park are protected and it is illegal for the animals to be hunted. After approx 3 hours you will stop for some coca tea, don't forget the lemon and sugar!! The family pet llama will keep you company!. The scenery is amazing, especially the Inca terraces that are still used today by the farmers. You will stay at the Casa Andina Hotel.

Breakfast, lunch & dinner

Day 5 COLCA CANYON

After an early breakfast you will leave Chivay to drive to the Cruz del Condor, the Cross of the Condor. En route you can visit Yanque, which was the capital of Colca Valley before Chivay. In Yanque there is a church worth seeing which was built in the 1700s. Traditionally dressed people will be there for you to see. Different regions have varying types of dress and more importantly hats; In this region of Peru the women wear hats which will let you know if they are married or single.. 1 flower on the side means she is single, a flower on both sides says she is married, women with 2 flowers and some black braiding are widows. At the Cross of the Condor there is a great view of the river 1200 metres below with Mount Misti on the other side of the canyon. The condors will swoop gracefully up from underneath the cliff. It is an amazing thing to see as these birds are huge, I was lucky enough to see 11 of them.

During your trip to Colca Canyon you will be up to an altitude of 4800 metres.. take it easy!!

Breakfast, lunch & dinner

Day 6 COLCA CANYON / PUNO

Departure for a 7 hour ride to Puno across the Peruvian high plateau. Enjoy the magnificent view of clear blue skies and unusual highland vegetation, known as Ichu. You will be dropped off in **Puno** at either the La Hacienda Hotel or the deluxe 5* Libertador Hotel in Puno for a 2 night stay.

Breakfast & box lunch

Day 7 PUNO – Lake Titicaca

Depart after an early breakfast from the hotel dock to go by boat in a group to the Uros Islands and Taquile Island. It is possible to just do a half day boat tour & just visit the Uros Islands, however this would be a real shame as Taquile Island is where people still live traditionally.

Uros Islands are the famous floating reed islands that traditional people still live on. The islands are constructed with many layers of the totora reeds. The reeds do eventually rot away from the bottom and are replaced at the top, so the ground is very soft and springy. The island is then fixed in place with long canes through the base into the lakebed. The biggest of the islands has a school for the children of the islands. When a couple gets married a new island is constructed for them. As you pass through the islands on the boat you will see some tiny ones approx. 3feet by 3 feet where the pigs live.. It is a weird sight seeing a pig on its own piece of reed island.

Taquile Island is a wonderfully traditional island. It is a proper island, not of the floating variety. The islanders are primarily vegetarian, as most traditional Quecha people, and the pigs etc are used to barter for other goods in Puno. Another “dress” tradition here is that the single men wear red hats (similar in style to floppy nightcaps) whilst the married ones wear red and white ones. One of the most intriguing traditions practised on this island is that a couple have to live together for 1 year before they are allowed to get married. Even if they should have a child in this period they do not have to go through with the marriage if they are not happy..

The trip to Taquile island will take approx. 3 hours in each direction by boat and you should be back at the hotel by late afternoon, enough time to visit the alpaca factory shop if you wish to purchase any jumpers etc.. Puno is the cheapest place to buy alpaca garments.

Note: the price below includes the regular motor boat but I will give you the supplement to take the speedboat option..

Breakfast & lunch

Day 8 PUNO – Cusco – SACRED VALLEY

To travel from Puno to Cusco you have 3 options:

1. On certain days there is the Orient Express Train journey. The views are wonderful, but it does take over 9 hours!.
2. Take a 40 minute flight from Juliaca to Cusco
3. The least expensive option (options 1 & 2 are similar prices) & is to take the tourist bus, which takes just over 7 hours

For the purposes of this example itinerary we have included the flight option so that on arrival into Cusco Airport you can have a private full day tour to the Sacred Valley & then stay in the beautiful Sacred Valley for 2 nights at either the La Casona de Yucay Hotel or the deluxe option, the Sol y Luna Hotel BB. This means you do not have to split your stay in Cusco & the Sacred Valley is at a lower altitude than Cusco so again gives you time to acclimatise.

If you did prefer to take the train or bus you would need to have at least 1 night in Cusco.

On arrival into Cusco Airport you will be met & have a private guide tour to the Sacred Valley. A full day tour combining Pisac market with the archaeological complex of Ollantaytambo, which was a gigantic agricultural, administrative religious & military centre. Lunch is also included.

Breakfast & lunch

Day 9 SACRED VALLEY

Today can be a day at leisure or we can include a full day private guided tour to Mara & Moray Salt pans, with a box lunch included. These are really interesting places to visit & not generally included on the big group tours itinerary.

Day 10 SACRED VALLEY – MACHU PICCHU

NOTE: We generally include a private tour to Machu Picchu as this is the most important tour & for not much more money you have a private guide, can go @ your own pace & avoid the group tours. Another advantage of having a private tour to Machu Picchu is that you can take the earlier Vallee Train & arrive at the ruins before the arriving Cusco train & all the day tourists coming from Cusco. You will have a transfer from the Sol y Luna to Ollantaytambo station, where you will meet your private guide. The train goes to Aguas Calientes & then take the bus to Machu Picchu ruins. You then have a private guided tour of the ruins & have lunch @ the Sanctuary Lodge.

American historian Hiram Bingham accidentally discovered Machu Picchu in 1911. He was actually searching for the lost city of Vilcabamba when he stumbled across this city which was hidden in the thick vegetation of the jungle. Despite the relentless stampede of tourists to the ruins, this amazing site still retains an air of grandeur and mystery. This is a very mysterious place.. it is not known why it was built in the first place although it is most likely a very sacred place where only the hierarchy of the Inca Empire were admitted. Nor is it known why this city was abandoned, again there are many opinions ranging from some disease killing the inhabitants to them escaping the Spanish (who never actually got this far).

1 night @ either the Hatuchay Towers Hotel BB or @ the deluxe option, the Sanctuary Lodge Hotel on an all inclusive basis.

Breakfast, lunch (& dinner at the Sanctuary Lodge)

Day 11 MACHU PICCHU / CUSCO

You have the morning at leisure. With the Sanctuary Lodge option re-entrance (unguided) to the ruins is included as well as lunch.

In the afternoon take the Vistadome train to Cusco. On arrival you will be transferred to either the Casa Andina Koricancha Hotel or the Casa Andina Private Collection Hotel for 4 nights BB.

Breakfast (& lunch with the Sanctuary Lodge option)

Day 12 CUSCO

This morning or afternoon you will have a shared or private half day Cusco city & surrounding area tour.

Cusco was the capital of the Inca Empire as it was the geographical centre of the Inca Empire. When Pachacutec (the Inca warrior king who instigated the building of the famous monuments) rebuilt the city of Cusco, he laid it out in the shape of a puma. The outline can still be seen in the layout of the city centre. Sacsayhuaman was the puma's head, while the tail stretched most of the way to where the Pachacutec monument now stands. Inca Cusco was not really a city. It was an elite settlement with special ceremonial and administrative functions. There was no bustle of commerce here and no poor district. It was a holy city, the centre of the known world. This city has a fascinating mix of Inca and colonial Spanish architecture; colonial churches, monasteries, extensive pre-Columbian ruins interspersed with countless hotels, bars and restaurants with a great night-time atmosphere. Almost all central streets have remains of Inca walls, arches and doorways. Cusco stands at an altitude of 3,310m, I recommend you allow yourselves 2-3 hours relaxation time on arrival to become acclimatised. If you have arrived on the domestic flight you can have an afternoon private city / area tour. Otherwise this will be the following day.

You will visit the Cathedral, Santo Domingo & Qoricancha, Sacsayhuaman, Q'engo, Tambomachay & PucaPucara. Santo Domingo & Qoricancha.. The church of Santo Domingo is most famous as the site of Coricancha Cusco's major Inca temple. The church has been hit by 2 earthquakes and you will see that the Inca walls sustained minimal damage, compared to the Colonial buildings. This temple was the Inca Empire's richest temple and its name is translated as "Court of Gold" and was quite literally covered in gold. With the arrival of the Conquistadors this amazing wealth was melted down. Within the temple there are temples for the Sun, Moon, Stars, Rainbow and thunderstorms. The Temple of the Sun is very important as it represents the centre of the Inca Empire. Inta Rimin, the Sun Festival is a very famous festival in Peru which is held in Cusco. Cusco Cathedral. This cathedral dates back to 1559 and it took 100 years to build and is Cusco's main church. There is lots to see here, including the vault containing the remains of the famous Inca historian Garvilaso de la Vega. There are hundreds of paintings including the huge painting of the Last Supper by Marcos Zapata. This painting shows that the supper consisted of the Peruvian traditional roasted guinea pig and also shows Judas having darker skin than the others. It was thought that darker skinned people were bad!! One of the most interesting things I saw in the cathedral was the black Jesus statue. He was originally white but over the years has been darkened by all the candles burnt at the altar. The current Bishop of the Cathedral has made himself very unpopular with local people by replacing all the candles with grotesque fake electric candles. Once a year at Easter the statue is paraded through Cusco to ward off Earthquakes.

Sacsayhuaman's origins are uncertain. It has been suggested that it took 20,000 men to construct this supposed fortress over a period of 50 years. The zig zag configuration of the outer walls are said to represent the teeth of the puma. The head of which is represented by Sacsayhuaman. The limestone blocks in the 3 tiers of the outer walls, which form the perimeter of this awe-inspiring ruin, are the

vastest of any Inca site. The largest stone stands 8.5m high and weighs an amazing 361 tons, yet even these enormous stones are fitted with extraordinary Inca perfection.

Q'enqo meaning zig zag was a waca, a shrine. It consists of a large limestone rock completely covered with carvings, including the zigzaggings channels that give the site its name. These are thought to have been used for the ritual sacrifice of the chicha or perhaps blood. Inside its caves you will find large niches and what looks like an altar.

Day 13 CUSCO

Full day @ leisure in Cusco. There is a lot to see & do in Cusco – it is a wonderful city, so having 2.5 days at leisure will not be too much & gives you time to enjoy the city.

Breakfast

Day 14 CUSCO

Full day @ leisure in Cusco

Breakfast

Day 15 CUSCO – LIMA //

Private transfer to Cusco airport to take an afternoon flight to Lima, which will connect with your KLM or Iberia flight check-in. Assistance will be given to you @ Lima airport between flights.

Approx. Prices per person EXCLUDING International flights

There are many hotel choices that we can include, we have simply used an example hotel in each area for the purposes of giving an example. We can also mix & match the hotel standards to suit client preferences & budget.

Option A: with the Standard grade hotels;

from £1739.00

Lima: Casa Andina Miraflores Centro
Arequipa: Casa Andina
Colca: Casa Andina
Puno: La Hacienda
Urubamba: La Casona de Yucay
Machu Picchu: Hatuchay Tower
Cusco: Casa Andina Koricancha

Option A supplements per person:

- For a private Colca package: £137

- To upgrade to the speedboat option on Lake Titicaca would be an extra £25 per person. The motor boat option departs at 07.15 and gets back @ 1700. The speed boat makes exactly the same visits for the same amount of time but leaves Puno @ 07.30 but gets back @ 15.20 & also has a toilet on board.
- To upgrade the night @ Machu Picchu to the Sanctuary Lodge, on a all inclusive basis – with re-entrance included the following day to the citadel would be an extra £297 per person.
- For a second visit to Machu Picchu (bus and entrance – no guide): £50
- For a private Cusco city & nearby ruins tour: £23

Option B: With the Deluxe grade hotels

from £2579.00

Lima: Meliá
Arequipa: Casa Andina Private
Colca: Colca Lodge
Puno: Libertador
Urubamba: Sol & Luna
Machu Picchu: Sanctuary Lodge (includes lunch on day 11)
Cusco: Casa Andina Private

Option B supplements per person:

- For a private Colca package: £137
- To upgrade to the speedboat option on Lake Titicaca would be an extra £25 per person. The motor boat option departs at 07.15 and gets back @ 1700. The speed boat makes exactly the same visits for the same amount of time but leaves Puno @ 07.30 but gets back @ 15.20.
- For a private Cusco city & nearby ruins tour: £23

Included:

- Domestic flights (prices for which could change)
- Transfers, tours and sightseeing in private basis with English speaking guides, except the Colca, Canyon, Titicaca Lake and Cusco city tours in shared basis with bilingual guides.
- Accommodation as noted in the itinerary.
- Meals mentioned in the itinerary.
- Domestic and international airport departure taxes.
- Entrance fees.
- Cusco Tourist Tax.
- Return train tickets to Machu Picchu in Vistadome service.

Not included:

- International Airfares.
- Meals not mentioned in the itinerary.

- Second bus and entrance to Machu Picchu for standard grade hotels.
- Personal expenses.

Note: The domestic flight prices may change as these are only guaranteed when paid in full & ticketed. Airport taxes can also change.

Extension options:

These are just some of the possible extensions available in Peru. There are others we may recommend to suit your interests.

Amazon Extension:

Domestic flights to & from the Amazon region of Puerto Maldonado operate to & from Lima & Cusco. There are several lodge options but here are 3 of the ones we recommend:

Refugio Amazonas was built in 2005 & has 24 bedrooms. It is location 3 hours upriver from Puerto Maldonado so deeper in the jungle than some other lodges. Rooms have cold water only & limited electricity. 3 night prices from £ 280 per person plus domestic flights

Sandoval Lake Lodge is a 35-minute journey by motorized canoe down the Madre de Dios River to the Sandoval Lake Lodge trailhead. From here, it is a 45-minute walk down a wide forest trail to a lush canal where you begin the 30-minute paddle across the lake to the lodge. Rooms have hot water. 3 night prices from £380 per person plus domestic flights

Inkaterra Reserva Amazonica Lodge is a 45 minute boat ride from Puerto Maldonado. Inspired by native Amazon design, 35 private thatched roof cabañas combine natural materials with contemporary amenities. There are 4 cabaña categories that offer the most luxurious accommodation of all lodges in the Peruvian Amazon. 3 night prices from £490 per person plus domestic flights.

2 day 1 night Nasca Lines flight & Ballestas Islands:

Day 1 : Early morning departure (private car/guide or bus) to Ica. Ica is located 300 kms, (186 miles) south of Lima and it is Peru's main grape grape-growing region. Upon arrival assistance to take a 45-minute flight by high-wing light aircraft over the desert and the mysterious Nasca Lines (also known as the Nasca markings), which can only be appreciated from the air. Visit the regional museum in Ica, where you will be able to see its great collection of archaeological remains, including ceramics, mummies and textiles. Overnight at selected hotel either in Ica or Paracas.

Day 2 : Morning boat ride to the Ballestas Islands, inhabited by boobies, pelicans, sea lions and Humboldt penguins. The still unexplained Candelabro marking lines can be seen on the way. Afternoon departure to Lima (private car/guide or bus).

Prices from £ 310 per person with the non-private bus service

Beach extensions:

North Peru Coast : Flights operate from Lima to Piura followed by transfer to either the Las Arenas de Mancora Hotel or to Punta Sal Club Hotel.

A 3 night stay including return flights & transfers start from: £258 per person