

## PERU – Lares Trek and Machu Picchu



### **TREK OVERVIEW**

The Lares trek is an excellent alternative to the Inca Trail. Still relatively unknown, this vehicle supported trek takes you back in time, into a world little changed since the time of the Incas. Each day, as the sun rises over the hill, locals clad in hand woven red ponchos and felt hats, emerge from simple stone cottages to pasture their alpacas in the shadow of Chicon and its shrinking glacier. Our guides have been walking this trail since 2007 and struck up special relationships with the indigenous people with whom you will be able to interact during the trek. At the end of the trek a day is spent exploring Machu Picchu before returning to Cusco.

### **Participation Statement**

Adventure Peaks recognises that climbing, hill walking and mountaineering are activities with a danger of personal injury or death. Participants in these activities should be aware of and accept these risks and be responsible for their own actions and involvement.

### **Adventure Travel – Accuracy of Itinerary**

Although it is our intention to operate this itinerary as printed, it may be necessary to make some changes as a result of flight schedules, climatic conditions, limitations of infrastructure or other operational factors. As a consequence, the order or location of overnight stops and the duration of the day may vary from those outlined. You should be aware that some events are beyond our control and we would ask for your patience.

## PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE/FITNESS

The Lares trek is much gentler on the knees than the Inca Trail which has a lot of stone steps. Although the Lares climb quite high, the ascents and descents are not too steep. This trek can be attempted anyone who is used to consecutive days walking in the UK. If this is your first time trekking, you should come with a good degree of fitness and stamina. A head for heights is advantageous.



## GROUP AND LEADERS

A fully qualified, English-speaking, Peruvian leader will accompany all groups. He / she will ensure your safety and provide an insight into the culture of the area. On this trip you will be joined by walkers who have booked with other agencies.

## WEATHER

Mountains are notorious for creating their own, localised weather conditions, so you should always be prepared for inclement weather conditions. April to October is the driest season and best for trekking. November and December are likely to be wetter but are usually warmer. Whilst on trek you can expect temperatures to drop to below freezing at night in July and August. It can be hot and sticky at lower levels or cold at the higher camps and passes.

## WHAT TO CARRY

This trek is fully supported by a team of horses who will transport your main baggage. You will only need to carry a light daypack at the very most. A 35l rucksack is a useful size to comfortably fit in essential items such as water bottle, camera, wet-weather gear and extra layers etc.

## CATERING ARRANGEMENTS

Our cooks pride themselves on their cooking, and ensure all food on the trek is freshly prepared using local ingredients and there is plenty for everyone. A typical menu on this trip would be:

**Breakfast:** Porridge or cereal, bread with cheese, jam, margarine, tea, coffee, hot chocolate and hot milk.

**Lunch:** A picnic lunch will be provided for you to carry with you.

**Dinner:** A hot meal is served every night consisting of soup, traditional or European main course and dessert.

In Cusco you will find wide choice of international restaurants providing an excellent range of food. Coca tea, a

local brew known to combat the effects of altitude, is widely available and well worth drinking.

## ACCOMMODATION

In Cusco and Machu Picchu Pueblo you will stay in 3\* hotels in rooms with private facilities. Twin, double or single rooms are available. In the mountains you will be in two-person tents. Toilet tents, or long drop loos, are provided at camps. Warm washing water will be supplied.

## LANGUAGE AND TIME

**Language:** Spanish and Quecha are the official languages but your guide and many hoteliers and restaurant owners will also speak English

**Time:** GMT-5 hours.

## HEALTH

All our leaders hold first aid certificates and carry a fully equipped first aid kit for medical emergencies. However you should bring your own supplies of plasters, blister prevention pads (Compeed), Paracetamol etc. and any medication you are taking. Contact your GP around eight weeks before your trip to check whether you need any vaccinations or other preventive measures. Country specific information and advice is published by the [National Travel Health Network and Centre](#), and useful information about healthcare abroad, including a country-by-country guide of reciprocal health care agreements with the UK, is available from [NHS Choices](#). Tap or stream water should never be drunk without first sterilizing with chlorine dioxide tablets or by boiling.



## INSURANCE

Insurance which covers mountain rescue, evacuation and medical expenses is **essential**. We will require a copy of your insurance prior to departure. Please also ensure your insurance covers you for walking above 4000m (some will exclude this option)

## ALTITUDE

If you are new to altitude you may have concerns about the effects. Cusco is at 3300m, so you need to take it easy to start with, so we allow time there to acclimatise. The trek reaches 4450m on Day 6 which you can expect to be a bit of a challenge. However we do have an emergency horse with us at all times to assist anyone who is having difficulties. By taking it slowly, most people suffer no more than some breathlessness. The best way to avoid

such symptoms is to walk at a gentle steady pace and drink plenty of fluid, especially the coca tea!

### USEFUL TIPS

Just in case your main luggage goes missing en route, it is a good idea to wear your boots on the plane. Most other things can be replaced but comfortable, well worn-in boots cannot. Pack important items in strong plastic bags.



### EQUIPMENT

A detailed equipment list is provided on booking but normal winter walking equipment is all that is required, together with a sleeping bag rated to -5° which can be hired from us. For equipment purchases Adventure Peaks offers a 15% discount off the RRP from their shop in Ambleside or online.

### BAGGAGE

For your own comfort travel light. Normally airlines restrict baggage to 23kg, but on long haul flights it is often higher. On trek the weight for pack animals or porters should be kept to 15kg - you will be wearing or carrying the rest! Some items can be left at the hotel in Cusco for your return.

### VISAS AND PERMITS

Visas for entry into Peru are not required by nationals of the UK, Ireland, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and most EU countries.

### LOCAL COSTS

All accommodation and most meals are included; please see the itinerary page for full details. Additional costs would include any drinks or snacks outside of mealtimes, tips for local staff. Optional entries to Huayna Picchu and Machu Picchu Mountain are not included and must be booked in advance through us. Please refer to the website for prices, or call the office

### CURRENCY

The currency in Peru is the Nuevo Sol (PEN). ATMs and change bureaux are available in the arrivals hall at the

airport and in Cusco. You may like to bring USD cash with you, ensuring you have some small denomination notes, as these can also be used directly. However you will get change in Sols.

### TIPS / STAFF BONUSES

Tipping is an accepted part of life in Peru. We generally tip our local trek staff as a whole and would recommend around £50 per person. Detailed tipping guidelines will be sent to you before departure. Tipping at meals and in hotels is also normal practice.

### ADVENTURE PEAKS KITBAG

All Adventure Peaks clients who reside in the UK will receive a **FREE** kitbag for any treks outside the UK. The bag will be posted to you approx. 3 weeks prior to your departure. If you have travelled with us before and already have an Adventure Peaks kitbag, or reside outside the UK, we will send you a lightweight AP branded fleece.

### FLIGHTS AND JOINING ARRANGEMENTS

Within the published price of your trip is an element we have allowed to cover the cost of flights, which is the difference between the Land Only and the With UK flight prices. This element is for a changeable, economy ticket on flights between LONDON and the destination city, using an airline that, in our experience, offers the best combination of cost, routing, flexibility and baggage allowance. It is stated in good faith and is based on research and costs in previous years, but is subject to change.

All clients will be met on arrival and transferred to the first hotel.



**The rendezvous for this trip is ARRIVALS HALL IN CUSCO AIRPORT when your flight arrives on Day 2.**

Return flights can be booked to depart anytime on Day 10, or later if you wish to extend your stay.

**PLEASE ENSURE YOU DO NOT PURCHASE YOUR INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL (FLIGHTS OR OTHER) UNTIL WE HAVE GUARANTEED YOUR TRIP IS RUNNING.**

## LARES TREK ITINERARY

Day	Today we...	We stay at...	Altitude (m)	Accommodation	Meals	hours	↑m	↓m
1	Fri	Fly		Plane				
2	Sat	Arrive Cusco		Cusco				
3	Sun	Visit Cusco ruins		Cusco				
4	Mon	Moray and Maras		Ollantaytambo				
5	Tue	Trek 1		Quishuarani				
6	Wed	Trek 2		Huacahuasi				
7	Thu	Trek 3		Patacancha				
8	Fri	Trek 4		Machu Picchu Pueblo				
9	Sat	Machu Picchu		Cusco				
10	Sun	Depart		Plane				
11	Mon	Arrive home		Home				

**Days 1 and 2** Depart UK on an overnight flight. On arrival in Cusco, we transfer you to your hotel and start acclimatising to the rarefied air of this beautiful city. In the afternoon, we take a short walking tour of the centre of Cusco to familiarise you with the main sights, restaurants and a chance to stretch your legs and experience hiking at 3300m. At a convenient time you guide will arrange a full briefing for the days ahead.

**Day 3** Today you stretch your legs with a delightful hike in the hills above Cusco. First you visit the impressive site of Sacsayhuaman. Huge stone ramparts surround a beautiful grass amphitheatre. Once the scene of fierce battles it now hosts the annual re-enactment of traditional Inca ceremonies such as Inti Raymi and Warachikuy. Sundays also see families from Cusco head up here to play, fly kites and dig the traditional huatias, a method of cooking potatoes in the ground. Next is the Inca water temple of Tambo Machay lying at 3700m followed by a special picnic lunch. A trail through the fields leads you to the intricately carved Inca Temple of the Moon. From here a beautifully preserved section of royal Inca Trail leads you down into the old San Blas district, home to the city's artists and finally into the Plaza de Armas.

**Day 4** The trek starts at the fascinating circular ruins of Moray.. Concentric circular terraces allowed the Incas to simulate different facing slopes and different growing temperatures to see which crops would grow where. They then used this knowledge to cultivate the varied terrain of their vast empire providing abundant amounts of food to feed the people. After exploring Moray you take a mainly downhill trail through the fields. Along the way you stop for a homemade picnic with marvellous views across to the snow capped Vilcanota mountains before carrying on down to the spectacular salt pans of Maras. Here you can stop and watch as local families extract the salt by hand, much as they have done for centuries. Finally you take the old track down to the Sacred Valley, where once llamas, then horses carried out the salt to be sent across the empire.

**Day 5** A scenic two hour drive through the Sacred Valley of the Incas takes you to the start of your trek, at the small village of Totora. You follow an ancient Inca trail into a narrow canyon, where Inca tombs perch in the cliffs. Emerging from the canyon you pass through tiny rural communities before emerging to a delicious picnic lunch. Your bus then takes you to the small and very traditional community of Quishuarani, your camp for the night.

**Day 6** This is a stunning day hiking. You leave camp behind and climb towards the native forests that our Peruvian colleagues has been heavily involved in re-planting. These forests harbour Andean deer, vizcachas and several rare species of birds and are essential to the future of this area. A further push and you reach the stunning views from your highest pass of the trek, the Huchayccasa pass (4450m). A chain of emerald blue lakes fills

the hillside below you, and in the distance rise the snow clad Urubamba Mountains. Descending through hand turned potato fields you come to the ancient community of Cuncani at (3800m). Fuelled by a hearty lunch you carry on along the valley floor to reach the once notorious village of Huacahuasi. Once home to bandits and cattle rustlers it is now a peaceful place to spend the night. You are likely to be visited by local women selling the hand woven textiles for which the area is famous and entertained by the cheery local children who accompany you as you walk.

**Day 7** This is a day filled with encounters with locals. Strong legged men head off to work in the potato fields, wooden ploughs slung over their shoulder. Rough handed women sit; legs outstretched weaving their traditional clothes on wooden looms, and small children sit motionless guarding herds of alpaca and llama, their ever faithful dog by their side. From camp you begin the ascent towards the final pass. Lying at 4200m the Ipsaycocha pass marks the border between Lares and the Patacancha Valley. You start gently and then climb one final steep section to gain the summit. If you are lucky, you will have spectacular views of Mount Veronica. You take lunch by the beautiful Ipsay Lake then follow an ancient trail to the Patacancha Valley and your final camp

**Day 8** You start with a short but sharp climb to the impressive and little known ruins of Pumamarca. After visiting this extensive site, you take the Inca trail that passes along the old terraces, before winding your way through eucalyptus forests to end at the impressive ruins of Ollantaytambo. After lunch you can look around this charming village. This was the site of the last battle between the Incas and Spanish before the remaining Inca rebels fled into the jungles of Vilcabamba. The presence of the Incas is still evident, with most houses still containing Inca stones, and the local women still washing their clothes in the old Inca canals that run through the village. You then catch the late afternoon train to Machu Picchu town.

**Day 9** You will arrive at Machu Picchu early, allowing you to explore the ruins in the company of your guide, before it gets too busy. The guided tour takes around two hours leaving you a few hours free to wander amongst the old Inca walls and just sit and take in the scale of the place on your own. For those who want to walk a bit more, you could take the hour long trail up to the Sun Gate, or a shorter trail to visit the Inca Bridge which once spanned a sheer cliff face. If you wish to climb Huayna Picchu please let us know when booking so we can obtain a permit (extra cost). In the afternoon, we board the train for an exhilarating ride along the Sacred Valley of the Incas. Here our waiting bus whisks us back to Cusco and our hotel. Then if we have the energy we can explore Cusco's excellent nightlife.

**Days 10 and 11** Today, we transfer to Cusco airport in time for your overnight flight home.