CUSCO, SACRED VALLEY OF THE INCAS & MACHU PICCHU  
(4 days / 3 nights)

Visit Cusco and explore its amazing Inca ruins, travel through the Sacred Valley for more ruins and artisan markets before catching the train to Machu Picchu and spending a full day exploring this awe-inspiring World Heritage site and then returning to Cusco and home. This is about the shortest time worth spending to truly explore Cusco, the Sacred Valley and Machu Picchu.

DAY 1: CUSCO - CATHEDRAL – QUORICANCHA - TAMBO MACHAY - PUCA PUCARA - QUENQO – SACSAYHUAMAN –CUSCO

On arrival in Cusco airport or bus stop, we will meet you and transfer you to the hotel. Once checked in your guide will coordinate with you to start the tour of Cusco with a walking tour of the main Plaza de Armas including a visit into the fascinating Cathedral and followed by a visit to Quoricancha – the very heart of the Inca Empire and home to some fantastically well preserved Inca stonework.

In the afternoon, your guide will pick you up for a visit to the many interesting ruins outside Cusco. This lovely tour is a superb introduction into the Inca heritage of Peru. At 3650m this is also a perfect way to acclimatize to the altitude of the Andes.

We start about ten kilometers out of Cusco at the Inca ruin of Tambo Machay. This is popularly called the Inca’s Bath due to its finely preserved waterfalls, carefully diverted through fine stone channels. The Incas acknowledged water as one of the principal elements of life and revered it accordingly.
A few hundred meters back towards Cusco we visit the site of Puca Pucara. This delightful ruin on a small prominence is believed not to be the ‘red fort’ its name suggests but a ‘Tambo’ – a rest house for travelling animals, goods and travellers.

With Cusco now in our sights we visit the fascinating Qenqo. This waca contains some of the finest examples of Inca carvings in-situ. The eroded limestone fissures have been artfully carved into zig-zag channels (from where Qenqo derives its name), pumas, condors, snakes and houses. Bountiful Mummy Niches in the caves, an amphitheatre and the central phallic column all add to the mystery of its multi-functional use. Our final and most stunning ruin is the extensive Sacsayhuaman. Although the smaller stones of Sacsayhuaman were used to build modern day Cusco, the remaining stones are up to 8.5m high and weigh over 360 tones. The distinctive zig-zag ramparts that form are attributed to being Puma teeth, lightening & also fortification. This major centre obviously had many functions with storehouses, administration buildings, reservoir and play area. It was also site of a crucial battle between the Incas & the Spanish.

A downhill on old Inca road brings us to San Cristobal church built on top of Inca Manco Capac’s Palace and a fantastic view point of Cusco. The final steps down the streets of San Blas bring us to the Plaza de Armas and the end of the tour and return to your hotel.

DAY 2: PISAC - URUBAMBA - OLLANTAYTAMBO - AGUAS CALIENTES:

This trip leaves Cusco early in the morning and is suitably flexible to your needs. We will pick you up from your hotel around 08:00. Our first stop is the picturesque Andean village of Pisac. The village is famous for its Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday market and superb artisan stalls throughout the week. Time can be spent shopping or for the more energetic visiting the extensive Inca ruins at the top of the hill. Old Pisac ruins have much to explore with a circular hike along a well defined through Royal buildings, look-outs, terraces, tunnels and irrigation channels before returning on another good trail to the bus. We may also visit a traditional bakery to try freshly baked bread and learn about the guinea pigs of Peru.

Afterwards we take a short journey along the river brings us to Urubamba for a delicious buffet lunch. In the afternoon, we visit the Inca fortress town of Ollantaytambo: this was the site of the last big battle between Incas and Spanish before the remaining Incas rebels fled into the jungles of Vilcabamba. In this lovely, well-preserved village and ruins you can still feel the true magic of the Incas. The hill-top, Inca sun temple displays some of the finest stone work. The site was unfinished and some magnificent stones still lie un-erected providing important clues to the building methods.

In the late afternoon, your guide will accompany you on the train to Machu Picchu town (formally known as Aguas Calientes) where he will assist you to the hotel and will brief you on tomorrow’s plans. (L)
DAY 3: MACHU PICCHU TOUR AND RETURN TO CUSCO:

Coordinating with your guide as to what time you want to get up, a short bus ride takes you direct to the "Lost City of the Incas-Machu Picchu". Once there, your guide gives you an extensive walking tour of the ruin and explains the fascinating history of the Incas to you. If time permits you may wish to explore further to the Inca Bridge, walk back up the Inca Trail to the sun gate or try the strenuous climb of Machu Picchu Mountain for an awe-inspiring Condor's eye view of Machu Picchu (due to permit restrictions, please let us know when booking if you want to climb Huayna Picchu or Machu Picchu mountain). Some may prefer to just relax and take in the awesome location. We catch an afternoon bus to Aguas Calientes and transfer to the train station from where you catch the afternoon train back to the Ollantaytambo and so onto Cusco where we drop you off at the hotel. (B)

DAY 4: TO CUSCO AIRPORT OR BUS STOP

This day we transfer you back to Cusco airport for your on-going travel.

WE PROVIDE:

- Pick-up from your hotel.
- Private registered, English-speaking local guide.
- All entrances including Cathedral, Quoricancha, Sacsayhuaman, Quenko, Puca Pucara, Tambo machay, Pisac, Ollantaytambo and Machu Picchu.
- Bus transfers between the ruins and Aguas Calientes.
- Transport from Sacred Valley / Machu Picchu / Hotel in Cusco will be the train service and bus transfer.
- 01 night accommodation in Aguas Calientes.
- 03 nights accommodation in Cusco.

NOT INCLUDED:

- Meals in Aguas Calientes and Cusco.
- Entrance to Huayna Picchu ($10) & Machu Picchu mountain ($5).
• Snacks.
• Souvenirs.
• Tips.

WHAT TO BRING: Machu Picchu's climate is sub-tropical, its location is often described as the ‘eyebrow of the jungle’. Please come prepared for varied weather, the sun is usually very strong during the day, yet rain is always a potential hazard. The few, small biting sand-flies are easily deterred with insect repellent. Cusco and the Sacred Valley can be colder at night so bring some warm clothes for the evenings.

We recommend wearing: long-sleeved t-shirt, trekking trousers, sun hat and comfortable walking shoes. A small day-pack to carry your personal belongings of: light rain jacket, warm jumper or fleece jacket, sun tan lotion, insect repellent, camera, water bottle, small-denomination local currency. Optional: Binoculars and guide book.

• Any excess gear should be stored in Cusco at your hotel whilst in Machu Picchu. Please note Luggage on the train is restricted to 5kg, 20litres hand luggage only.
• We have an extensive tipping document available. – If you have not received this from your agent or have misplaced your document please ask your guide for a copy to be provided from the office.

PRICE:
• 01 PASSENGER: US $730.00 American Dollars
• 02 PASSENGERS: US $460.00 American Dollars (price per person).

PRICE IN AMERICAN DOLLARS, NO COMMISSION & INCLUDES TAXES

We look forward to seeing you in Cusco.