

BEST OF THE ANDES (10 Days / 9 Nights)

(PBTR04)

Destinations at a glance : Lima / Arequipa / Cuzco / Sacred Valley / Machu Picchu / Puno

TRIP DESCRIPTION

This package includes excellent destinations in the Andes. You will be able to visit fantastic tourist attractions like the Colca Canyon in Arequipa, where you will see the majestic Condor flying over the canyon. The spectacular lost and sacred city of the Incas, Machu Picchu in Cuzco and the life at Lake Titicaca in Puno visiting amazing native communities that maintain their age old customs and traditions.

DAY BY DAY ITINERARY

Day 1: Lima

Whatever the time of your arrival you can be assured of a warm welcome by the Peru Best Tours staff at the airport. Once you and your group have passed immigration and customs you will be transferred by private vehicle to your selected comfortable hotel.

Depending on your arrival time you will have the rest of the day to relax and enjoy the city.

Day 2: Lima – Arequipa & City Tour (B)

As with your whole journey all transfers are taken care of. You will be collected in the morning for your transfer to the airport. Once in Arequipa you will receive a warm welcome from our staff who will transfer you to your selected comfortable hotel.

In the afternoon you will be collected from your hotel by our guide for your city tour of Arequipa, on which you will visit all of the main attractions the city has to offer.

Many of these buildings are located on the Plaza de Armas regarded by many as the most beautiful plaza in the country. Also located on the plaza is the magnificent cathedral.

Close to the main square is the Monastery of Santa Catalina built in 1580 as a city within the city and opened to the public after 400 years of being totally cut off from the outside world.

Our expert guide will share his knowledge with you on all the places included on the tour answering any questions you may have.

Day 3: Arequipa – Chivay – La Calera (B)

Our guide will collect you from your hotel around breakfast time heading quickly out of the city toward the canyon. Soon afterwards we will be able to appreciate spectacular views of the volcanoes, Misti (5825 m), Chachani (6075 m) and Pichu Pichu (5664 m). Following this route we will pass through the town of Yura, where we can observe geological formations caused by years of ecological changes. Continuing on our way we will visit the National Reserve of Salinas and Aguada Blanca where we can observe Vicunas in their natural habitat, we then stop in the village of Patahuasi, where you can buy mate de coca and mate muña that help control fatigue or discomfort that can be caused by altitude. The trail will pass by the Tojrapampa wetlands, here you will be able to see birds and South American camelids such as Llamas and Alpacas. Finally heading onward to the highest point on the tour, Patapampa (4910 masl) or viewpoint of the Andes where we can observe the volcanoes Ampato, Sabancaya and Hualca Hualca. We will then descend to the town of Chivay (3651 m), to have lunch and go to the hotel. In the afternoon we visit the thermal medicinal baths of La Calera and the ethnological museum. Finally we will end our evening with dinner accompanied by traditional Andean music.

Day 4: Chivay – Cruz del Condor – Arequipa – Puno (B)

We start early on the second day of the canyon tour, around 5:30 a.m. with a continental breakfast. Departing after this to Cruz del Condor, visiting villages Yanque, Maca and the Choquet lookout on the way. Choquet is where we will appreciate the natural rock formations and the magnitude of the canyon, before continuing our journey to the famous Cruz del Condor. Here we will see again the depth of the Colca Canyon and also the spectacular flight of the Condor as the birds fly past majestically. One of the stops on the way back will include the viewpoint of Antahuilque in order to observe the pre-Inca agricultural terraces, and our final stop of the day will be in Chivay for lunch before returning to the city of Arequipa, arriving at approximately 5:00pm.

Day 5: Arequipa – Cuzco

On your last day in Arequipa our driver will collect you from your hotel and bid you farewell, as you make your onward journey by plane to Cuzco.

Our guide will collect you from your hotel or the airport in the afternoon for your tour of the city. Cuzco, the ancient capital of the Inca Empire, is considered the archaeological capital of South America. In the city of Cuzco, as in no other place, the mixture of Spanish and Inca cultures can be appreciated as well as its architecture of enormous cut-stone blocks fitted so perfectly that no mortar was needed.

Your tour will take you to the Cathedral, Temple of the Sun, Korikancha, Sacsayhuaman, Puca Pucara, Qenqo, and Tambomachay. Most of these sites are of the smaller Inca ruins in and around the city. This tantalizing look these amazing Inca ruins will only further whet your appetite for the following days of tours to the Sacred Valley and Machu Picchu.

Day 6: Cuzco - Sacred Valley – Cuzco (B)

Your day will start with an early breakfast before we head off to the sacred Valley of the Incas. Here our expert guide will take you to the Ollantaytambo ruins and Písaq market. Here you will have chance to interact with the locals most of whom will be in their traditional dress. You will also have the chance to buy locally produced handicrafts from the region.

In the evening we return to Cuzco where you will have the evening free to relax before the next exciting day of activities.

Day 7: Cuzco – Machu Picchu – Cuzco (B)

This day is sure to be the highlight of every traveller's trip to Peru, Machu Picchu. The day will start with an early pick up from the hotel and transfer to the train station for your train to the citadel.

Our expert guide will meet you at the station and take you to the citadel. Here you will be able to look in amazement at the beauty of the ruins before you. The guided tour will last around two hours, giving you the chance to learn all about the ruins and ask any questions you may have. Once the guided tour is over you will have the rest of the afternoon to explore the site at your leisure, taking photographs and enjoying moment with your group.

As an option you may add an extra night here to your trip and overnight in the small town of Aguas Calientes below Machu Picchu. You can then return the next day to the site to explore the ruins in more detail. Or even stay just to see the sunrise over the mountains, a truly amazing sight.

Day 8: Cuzco – Puno (B)

There are three options for this transfer, plane, train or bus. We really recommend you take either the bus or the train, as the Andean mountain scenery between these two cities is not to be missed.

The Andean Explorer train that serves the route is wonderfully decorated in 1920's Pullman style, with all the class and finesse you could expect of a train from that era.

During the 10 hour relaxed journey you will be served a wonderful three course meal in the dining car, followed by tea or coffee in the open air observation car.

The photographic opportunities will be almost endless throughout the journey as rolling plains turn to mountains.

The bus journey is just as filled with opportunities for photographs, stopping at many places of interest along the route. From the comfort of this first class bus service you will relax and enjoy the ride as the mountains and valleys pass you by. The journey time by bus is around 8 hours. The plane journey is by far the quickest route with less than one hour flying time. We only really advise this option to traveller who are short on time, as the journey between the cities really is beautiful.

Day 9: Puno – Lake Titicaca (B)

Our guide will collect you from your hotel after breakfast for your full day tour of Lake Titicaca. The lake is actually the highest navigable lake in the world at an incredible 3890 meters above sea level! The lake is home to many species of fresh water fish and bird including different types of ducks and even flamingos.

Our first stop will be at a group of the nearby Uros Islands, famous as they are actually man made floating islands. Around 30 of these islands dot the surface of the lake. Their inhabitants use the totora, which grows in the lake, to create the conditions that enable the islands stay afloat. The dense roots that the totora develop support the islands.

Later we will visit the natural island of Taquile where you will be given a warm welcome by the locals, and you will be able to witness first hand the traditional way of life of the islanders. You will also have the opportunity to buy locally produced handicrafts made by the residents of the various islands

Day 10: Puno – Lima (B)

After breakfast we will collect you for your transfer back to capital for your last hours with us in Peru. Your final day will be finished with a private tour of the city at a time of your choice.

The tour will take you to both colonial and modern Lima. Giving you an insight as to how Lima has changed, grown and developed since its independence from Spain in 1821.

The tour will start from your hotel where our guide will collect you and your group. The tour will visit places such as the Plaza de Armas (Presidential Square). The catacombs of the San Francisco church where you will see the bones of 100's of Lima's ancient dead. Followed by visits to both Barranco and Miraflores where your tour will end. You will then have the remainder of your day free until we come to collect you for your transfer to the airport for your flight home.

We all have a great passion for Peru here at Peru Best Tours, and once you have completed this amazing package we are sure you will too. We look forward to receiving you as our guest

INCLUDED

9 hotel nights

All breakfasts

All the tours stated in the itinerary

All transfers and entrance fees

Accredited tour guides

Personalized assistance by Peru Best Tours during your whole stay

NOT INCLUDED

Domestic Transportation

Lunches and dinners, other than those mentioned above.

Travel insurance

Tips
Airport taxes

HIGHLIGHTS

Arequipa City Tour (Private tour)
Colca Canyon Tour (Regular group tour)
Cuzco City Tour (Regular group tour)
Sacred Valley Tour (Regular group tour)
Machu Picchu Tour (Regular group tour)
Lake Titicaca Tour (Regular group tour)
Lima City Tour (Private tour)

STYLE

History/Culture
Family
Nature

PHYSICAL DIFFICULTY

Easy : Lima, Puno – No strenuous activities involved.
Medium: Arequipa, Colca Canyon – Some travelers may be effected by the high altitude.
Medium: Cuzco, Sacred Valley, Machu Picchu – Some travelers may be effected by the high altitude.

CUSTOM MADE TRIPS

At Peru Best Tours, we do our best to meet your travel needs rather than you adjusting your trip to fit a company's schedule, It means: A more personalized service, greater flexibility of travel options, and better over all value giving you more for your money.

We can make you and your group any itinerary you wish from 1 day to 1 year! From budget to luxury 5 star. We can make anything you wish from something as simple as an amendment or addition to one of our standard packages, or something custom made from scratch. Just let us know what you want, we are at your service!

DOMESTIC TRANSPORT

We always strive to give our customers the lowest prices on all domestic transport. Due to the number of bookings for flight, trains and buses we make each year, we are often able to give the cheapest prices on the market to customers booking packages with us.

You may also if you wish make your own transportation arrangements for your trip, just that most clients find it easier and less hassle to let us do the work for them.

Luggage for LAN Peru flights. The maximum weight limit for flights within Peru is 23 kgs of hold luggage (Max. 2 Bags). Hand luggage is limited to 8 kgs and one personal item such as a purse or, laptop. We recommend checking the website of the airline before traveling to check for the latest baggage and security information.

INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT

Following our desire to pass on savings to the customer, we suggest booking your international flight via one of the large internet based providers such as www.opodo.com , www.travelocity.com or www.kayak.com as these companies are some of the market leaders in international discount airfares. Please note we do not work with any of the above companies, nor do we receive a commission for recommending them.

HOTELS

We only work with the best hotels in each rating category. We constantly review our choices and listen to feedback from clients when we make reviews of the hotels we use. Before booking we will give you a list of our recommended hotels for you to select from. If you wish to stay in a hotel that's not listed, say one you read a review about on TripAdvisor for example just let us know the name and we will be happy to book it for you.

WHAT TO BRING?

Luggage

All types of luggage are fine to bring with you to Peru, although we do recommend something like a backpack or a rucksack. As they are often easier to handle in places such as Cuzco where cobble stone roads make suitcases with wheels for example a little cumbersome.

Also recommended is a day bag, something light weight but big enough for your daily needs. Such as a bottle of water, your camera, tickets and other travel documents etc.

Clothing

This will depend on the season you are travelling but generally winter on the coast is summer in the mountains and vice versa. The rainforests are exactly as you would expect and you can expect rain at any given moment irrespective of the season. So it's best to pack for all eventualities, take a look below at the recommended packing list.

- Trousers / Jeans / Shorts / Jogging Pants
- T-Shirts / Shirts
- Waterproof Jacket
- Sturdy shoes or Hiking boots / Trainers / Sandals

Other things to pack

- Camera / Extra Memory or Films / Batteries / Charger
- Binoculars
- Sunglasses & Sun Cream (It can often feel cool at altitude but burns are still possible)
- Small First Aid Kit
- Medication – Remember if you are taking medication to bring enough with you to complete your journey.

Documents

- Passport + copies (We advise you leave your passport in the hotel and carry copies with you when outside)
- Andean Immigration Card – You will be given this card at the airport do not lose it as you have to hand it back in on your departure.
- All Peru Best Tours vouchers and coupons.
- Entry Visa (Should you require one.)
- Travel Insurance + copies.

TRAVEL MONEY

How much will I need for my trip? This will of course depend on your personal choices and preferences. Included at all hotels is breakfast, and some parts of your itinerary may include all your daily meals (See above). You will also need some money for souvenirs, and personal items.

Meals in a budget café or restaurant start at around \$4.00 per person, and dining at a top class restaurant can be upwards \$30-60 per person. So there really is something to fit every budget and taste.

Souvenirs start from as little as \$1.00 for a post card to \$100+ for such things as the fine alpaca woolen knitwear items that you will see for sale at many of the tourist shops and markets.

Airport Taxes are also a consideration as they have to be paid at the airport by the traveler. They have to be paid in cash in either US\$ or local currency. Domestic departure tax is \$6.25 per person and international departure tax is \$30.25 per person.