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T: 305-720-2539

F: 305-716-9216

info@latindiscover.com

TRIP DETAILS

12 days / 11 nts - Peru

Departures Daily

Trip Ref 2188

ITINERARY IN BRIEF

Lima 1nt

Arequipa 1nt

Colca 1nt

Arequipa 1nt

Puno 2nts

Cuzco 2nts

Sacred Valley 1nt

Machu Picchu 1nt

Cuzco 1nt



PRICES FROM \$1,640

Wonders of Peru

A tour of the marvels of Peru, covering the Sacred Valley, Cuzco, Machu Picchu, Arequipa, the amazing Colca Valley, and the highest navigable lake in the world, Lake Titicaca. Note that you select your preferred hotel category, and meet your group mainly during day trips so this is really a semi-private tour.

Day 1: Arrive in Lima

Upon arrival in Lima, assistance at the airport and transfer to selected hotel.

Day 2: Lima - Arequipa

Transfer to Lima airport, assistance on departure flight. Upon arrival in Arequipa, transfer to your hotel. Tour the lovely "White City," built from the white sillar rock that spewed out from the Volcan Misti, including the Santa Catalina Convent, the most astonishing site in Arequipa, which was opened to the public in 1970 after 400 years as a cloister. Santa Catalina takes visitors back four centuries. Entering the cloister you see the numerous and spacious patios and gardens, the kitchen and slave quarters and stone wash-tubs of this convent where entrance requirements were among the strictest in Peru. Novices, daughters of aristocrats, had to prove Spanish origin and come up with a dowry of at least 1,000 gold pesos.



About 20 nuns still live in a section of the tile-roofed convent, which once housed up to 500; Plaza de Armas, one of the most beautiful in Peru; La Compañía church, the frontispiece of this two-story Jesuit church is a compilation of columns, zigzags, spirals, laurel crowns, flowers, birds and grapevines, into which is embroidered in rock abbreviations of the Holy Friday Masses. A careful look reveals that the European influence had its limits: the angels have Indian faces; one face is even crowned with feathers. The interior La Compañía is equally impressive. The gilded main altar is typical of the height of the Peruvian Baroque, and the sacristy's ceiling is covered with miniature paintings and carvings of crimson and gold. Tour the districts of Yanahuara and Chilina, with a magnificent view of the Misti volcano. Breakfast.



Day 3: Arequipa - Colca Valley

Drive to the Colca Valley, towards Yura climbing to the Puna, or high plateau, and desolate plains on Pampa Cañahuas at the Aguada Blanca National Reserve, protected habitat for vicuñas (llamas relatives with finer wool). The valley has beautiful pre-Columbian terraces still used by native Collagua to plant corn, potatoes, broad beans, alfalfa, quinoa, barley and wheat. Overnight at selected hotel in the Colca Canyon. Breakfast , lunch , dinner.



Day 4: Colca Valley - Arequipa

An opportunity to explore Colca valley unique towns and to share old traditions with its people; each one has managed to maintain its original appearance despite the passing of the years. The traditional clothing, still worn by the majority of women, the legends recounted by its friendly inhabitants, and the festivals by which agricultural cycles are marked with song and dance, all reveal the history of the Colca Valley. The valley is noted for its textiles: beautifully designed rugs and brocade work (women's vests, dresses and blouses), trimmed with embossed tin details. Don't forget to taste the delicious prickly pears (tunas). Stop at the "Condor's Cross" near the town of Cabanaconde, a natural observatory from which you can see the deepest part of the Colca Canyon and, quite frequently, the flight of the impressive Condor

-the great Andean bird- in its native habitat.



One of this bird's most amazing characteristics is its ability to soar on currents of air for hours on end, without ever flapping its wings. From here the valley narrows considerably, with an impressive geological formation carved out by the river as it has descended between the mountains (made of largely volcanic materials) over millions of years, giving origin to the fame of the Colca Canyon as one of the deepest in the world. The deepest part of the canyon has been calculated at 3,680m/12,074ft, almost twice as deep as Colorado's Grand Canyon. Enjoy the panorama. After lunch return to Arequipa and selected hotel. Breakfast, lunch.

Day 5: Arequipa - Puno

Transfer to Arequipa's airport, assistance on departure flight. Upon arrival to Puno transfer to selected hotel. Breakfast.

Day 6: Lake Titicaca

Motor-boat ride on Lake Titicaca (with a surface area of 8,300 km²) to visit the unique floating islands of the Uros. For hundreds of years the livelihood of this "Water Tribe" is based on the benefits of a unique plant: the totora reed (*Scyrpus totora*). They use it to build their homes, boats and even the floating islands they live on, periodically adding new layers of reeds. They also use it in their highly developed weaving. Continue to the natural island of Taquile on Lake Titicaca inhabited by quechua-speaking natives who have developed, through generations, both an efficient and original social system and a fine hand weaving technique. Breakfast, box lunch.



Day 7: Puno - Cusco

Assistance at the hotel for departure. Prepare to enjoy views of Andean landscapes spotted with little villages and herds of llamas and alpacas as you drive to Cusco area. On the way, visit the pre-Columbian complex of Pucara (200 bc), consisting of six, stepped, stone pyramids. The temple of Raqchi, which contains the ruins of a temple built by the Inca Pachacutec for the god Wiracocha. Raqchi had a great reputation as an important destination for pilgrims, a fact that explains the warehouses and other buildings around the temple that served as dwellings for priests, servants and farmers. Also visit to the largest and most beautiful temple built to commemorate Wiracocha Pachayachachi (maker of the wall), built on the splendor time of the Inca Empire, under the ruling of Inca Pachacutec who unified the indians territory with a well organized administration and also established the use of the Quechua language on the people conquered by him. In Cusco, assistance at arrival to selected hotel. Breakfast & lunch.



Day 8: Cusco

Explore the magical capital of the Incas on a tour including a visit to Plaza Regocijo, Plaza de Armas, the Cathedral and the Santo Domingo Convent Monastery. The Santo Domingo monastery was built over the Koricancha temple, one of the most important temples devoted to worship of the sun. According to the chronicles, it was covered in gold sheet and filled with golden representations of nature. Then walk around the old town with its very narrow streets. After seeing the most interesting sites of the city, you will drive to the countryside outside Cusco to visit some of the remarkable inca ruins in the area: the cult centre of Sacsayhuaman, the temple and amphitheatre of Kenko and the Red Fortress of Puca Pucara. Breakfast.

Day 9: Cusco - Sacred Valley of the Incas

Drive to the "Sacred Valley of the Incas", a succession of picturesque towns, agricultural terraces, and many archaeological sites, as well as the world's most famous corn, combine with an exceptional climate to visit Ollantaytambo, the Inca fortress, which guarded the entry of this part of the valley and protected it from possible invasion from the lower jungles. The fortress consists of a series of superimposed terraces of carved stones accessed by long staircases. An opportunity to walk through the quaint streets of the nearby town, the design and foundations of the majority of its buildings date from the Inca era, when it was a strategic military, religious, and agricultural center. Lunch at a nearby inn. Visit Pisac, a lively and colorful Indian market where locals sell or exchange their products, as the ancestors did hundreds years ago. Overnight at selected hotel in the Sacred Valley. Breakfast & lunch.



Day 10: Sacred Valley of the Incas - Machu Picchu

Transfer to Ollanta train station to board the Orient Express rail coach for a one and a half hour train ride to Machu Picchu, discovered in 1911 by the American explorer Hiram Bingham. Then make the 25-minute motor coach ascent to "The Lost City of the Incas." This citadel is considered one of the most extraordinary examples of landscape architecture in the world. It straddles a mountain ridge surrounded by lush tropical forest. The guided tour of this fascinating place is an awe-inspiring experience. Visit the Main Square, the Royal Quarters, the Temple of the Three Windows, the Circular Towers, the Sacred Sun Dial and Burial Grounds. Overnight at selected hotel in Aguas Calientes town. Breakfast, lunch.



Day 11: Machu Picchu - Cusco

Morning at leisure. (No guide is included this day). Early rise is recommended to admire Machu Picchu at sunrise, a truly mystical experience. For the hiking enthusiasts, going up the Huayna Picchu peak overlooking the site is suggested. Afternoon Vistadome rail coach service to Cusco. Upon arrival, transfer to the selected hotel. Breakfast.

Day 12: Cusco - Fly out from Lima

Transfer to Cusco airport, assistance on departure flight. Breakfast

Prices are per person

Hotels 2009 - 2011 REGULAR GROUP TOUR		Single	Double	Triple
STANDARD	City			
Carmel	Lima			
Posada del Inca	Arequipa			
Collahua	Colca	\$1,960	\$1,465	\$1,356
La Hacienda	Puno			
Eco Inn	Cusco			
Casona Yucay	Urubamba			
Hatuchay Towers	Machu Picchu			
SUPERIOR				
Jose Antonio	Lima			
Cabildo	Arequipa			
Colca Lodge	Colca			
Jose Antonio	Puno	\$2,768	\$1,940	\$1,893
Picoaga	Cusco			
Sol y Luna	Urubamba			
Sumaq	Machu Picchu			
DELUXE 2				
Swissotel	Lima			
Libertador	Arequipa			
Colca Lodge	Colca			
Libertador ls. Esteves	Puno	\$3,833	\$2,476	\$2,396
Libertador	Cusco			
Sol y Luna	Urubamba			
Machu Picchu Pueblo	Machu Picchu			
DELUXE 1				
Miraflores Park	Lima			
Libertador	Arequipa			
Colca Lodge	Colca			
Libertador ls. Esteves	Puno	\$4,611	\$2,851	N / A
Monasterio	Cusco			
Sol y Luna	Urubamba			
Machu Picchu Pueblo	Machu Picchu			

* Rates subject to change, without notice.

* Rates valid to Dec 31, 2011

Price includes:

Transfers in/out airports, piers, train or bus stations and hotels. Porterage at airport, pier, station and hotel on transfers. Entrance fees on sightseeing tours, Cusco Tourist Tax. Official Spanish/ English speaking guide on all tours. Twin or double room in the hotel you select (assumes 2 people) although if unavailable specific properties may be replaced by others of same quality. Meals as per itinerary. Hotel taxes.

Price does not include:

Domestic air fares. Lima-->Arequipa-->Juliaca / Cusco-->Lima. International (US\$30.25) and domestic (\$6.05) airport departure taxes. Meals not mentioned in the itinerary . Personal expenses (laundry, beverages, communications, etc).

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Ways to
contact us

email: info@latindiscover.com or **Skype:** latindiscover
Tollfree: 1-866-369-8046 USA
Tel: 305 720 2539 USA, (506) 2290 4017 Costa Rica