



Peru: A Lodge-to-Lodge Trek to Machu Picchu

DURATION | 11 Days

TRIP LEVEL | Challenging

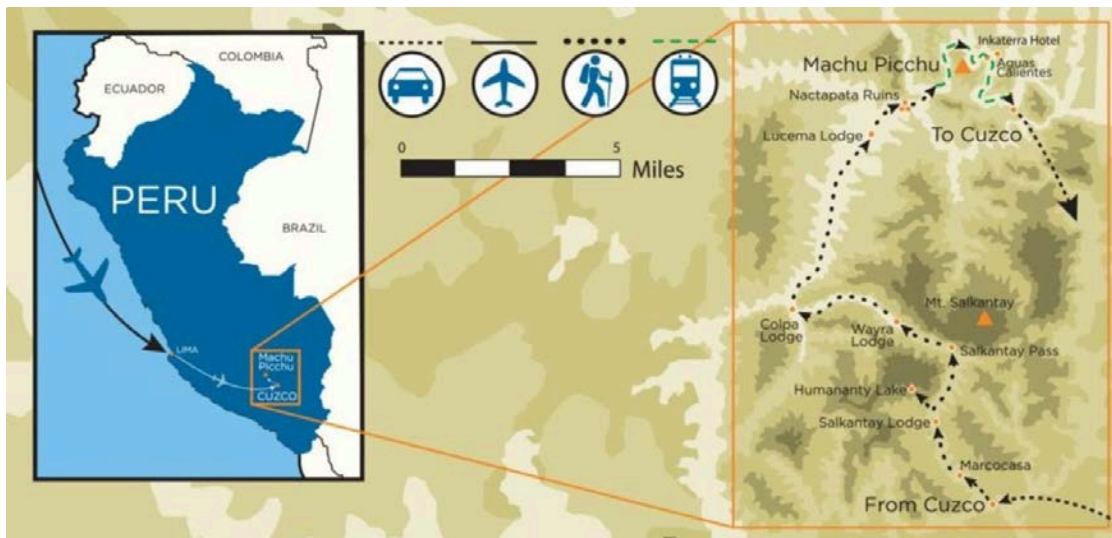
Trip Overview

Join AdventureWomen for a breathtaking lodge-to-lodge trek on the Salkantay Route to Machu Picchu. This less crowded, challenging path features stunning scenery, peaceful trails, and comfortable lodges with outdoor hot tubs. Begin in Cusco and the Sacred Valley, acclimatizing while exploring Incan ruins and markets. The trek involves daily hikes of up to nine hours, with highlights including a climb to the turquoise Lake Humantay, the high-altitude Salkantay Pass, and diverse landscapes from barren peaks to lush forests. Enjoy a scenic train ride to Aguas Calientes, where you'll explore Machu Picchu at dawn and optionally summit Huayna Picchu for spectacular views. Finish with a return to Cusco, visiting local female weavers and celebrating your adventure with a farewell dinner. Experience the challenge and wonder of walking in the footsteps of the Incas on this unforgettable journey to one of the world's great wonders.

Trip Highlights

- Embark on an adventurous journey along the less-traveled Salkantay Route from Cusco to Machu Picchu, bypassing the crowded trails for a more intimate and challenging experience.
- Explore diverse scenery on foot while staying in charming mountain lodges. Enjoy outdoor hot tubs and delectable Peruvian cuisine after each rewarding hike.
- Experience the rich cultural heritage of Cusco through its vibrant textiles, local markets, and traditional craftsmanship.

Map View



Trip Itinerary



Day 1

Arrive in the Sacred Valley

Welcome to Peru! After arriving at Cusco airport, you'll be transferred to your hotel in the Sacred Valley. This area, surrounded by the majestic Andes, is a perfect introduction to Peru's rich history and stunning landscapes. The evening will be spent getting acquainted with fellow travelers and preparing for the trek ahead. The Sacred Valley, with its ancient ruins and traditional mountain villages, sets the stage for a memorable journey. If you wish to acclimate further before the trek, AdventureWomen can assist with arranging additional nights in Cusco. Enjoy a peaceful night at the Hacienda Urubamba, a beautiful and comfortable base for the upcoming adventure.

Meals: dinner | Overnight: Lamay Lodge



Lamay Lodge

Nestled in the heart of nature and just steps away from Peru's finest hiking trails, Lamay Lodge is your perfect retreat for serenity and outdoor exploration. This lodge features cozy rooms, thoughtfully designed to cater to every traveler's needs. Relax in the outdoor hot tub and enjoy a delicious breakfast, making your stay feel like a true paradise.

Amenities: complimentary toiletries, Wi-Fi



Trip Itinerary



Day 2

Discover the Sacred Valley

Begin your day exploring the Archaeological Park of Pisac, famous for its impressive Intiwatana solar calendar and stunning views. The site features various altitudes and architectural wonders that highlight Incan ingenuity. After exploring Pisac, descend into the town to experience its vibrant markets, where you'll find exquisite jewelry, textiles, and crafts. Enjoy a farm-to-table lunch at a local hacienda, learning about traditional agriculture and Cusco's giant white corn. In the afternoon, visit the home of a female herbalist from Aquelarre (The Coven). Here, you'll learn about the botanical brews and herbal potions, participate in a healing ritual, and create a smudge stick to set positive intentions for your trek. Return to the hotel for a group dinner, reflecting on the day's experiences and preparing for the journey ahead.

Meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner | Overnight: Lamay Lodge



Trip Itinerary



Day 3

Journey to the Salkantay Route

This morning, depart for the Salkantay Route, starting with a visit to the Inca ruins of Tarawasi near Limatambo. Explore these ancient remains before heading to the mountain village of Mollepata for a delicious lunch. The journey continues with a drive along winding mountain roads to Marcoccasa, where your hike to Soraypampa begins. Follow the picturesque Camino Real (Royal Path) and enjoy the breathtaking views of the surrounding mountains. As you approach Soraypampa, you'll see the Salkantay Lodge come into view, with the sacred Mt. Salkantay towering behind it. This lodge will be your base for the next two nights, providing a perfect setting for acclimatization and relaxation. Settle into your room, meet your guide in the lounge for refreshments, and receive a briefing on the next day's activities. Trekking time 3.5 hours, approx. 2 miles, 1,689' elevation gain.

Meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner | Overnight: Mountain Lodges



Mountain Lodges

In these intimate 6-room lodges, enjoy hot showers, fine gourmet meals, select wines, goose-down bedding, massages, outdoor jacuzzis, and highly personalized service from local staff. Each room is presented with down comforters and amenities. The eco-minded architecture effortlessly mixes traditional heritage with contemporary design. Indulge in inventive menus, which provide a refreshing take on the region's most iconic dishes. All offerings are locally sourced – from organic coffee blends to healthy snacks.

Amenities: Soap, shampoo, conditioner, hair dryer; electricity; Wifi



Trip Itinerary



Day 4

Acclimatization Hike to Lake Humantay

Today's adventure includes an acclimatization hike to Lake Humantay, located just beyond the plateau behind Salkantay Lodge. The trek takes you up steep slopes, culminating in the stunning sight of the turquoise lake nestled against the backdrop of the Humantay glacier. Spend time at the lake enjoying the serene environment, having a snack, or participating in a traditional offering to Mother Earth. This hike helps your body adjust to higher altitudes and prepares you for the more demanding climbs ahead. Return to the lodge for a late lunch and spend the afternoon at leisure. You can soak in the outdoor jacuzzi, enjoy a soothing massage, or simply relax and take in the beautiful mountain scenery. Trekking time 4.5 hours, approx. 4 miles, 1,155' elevation gain / 1,155' elevation loss.

Meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner | Overnight: Mountain Lodges



Trip Itinerary



Day 5

Conquer Salkantay Pass

Prepare for the longest and most challenging day of the trek. Start early and hike through the Rio Blanco valley, navigating the switchbacks that lead to the Salkantay Pass at 15,213 feet. This is the highest point of your trek and offers a sense of accomplishment as you reach the summit. Celebrate with your fellow trekkers before beginning the descent through dramatic landscapes marked by giant boulders and often shrouded in fog. Enjoy a hot picnic lunch along the way and continue descending through rolling hills and marsh-like plateaus. Arrive at the Wayra Lodge in the afternoon, where you can admire spectacular views of Mount Humantay and reflect on the day's achievements. Trekking time 7 hours, approx. 8 miles, 2,522' elevation gain / 2,401' elevation loss.

Meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner | Overnight: Mountain Lodges



Trip Itinerary



Day 6

Descent Through Verdant Scenery

Today's trek continues with a descent along the Salkantay River, transitioning from high-altitude terrain to lush jungle. The warmer air brings colorful butterflies and vibrant orchids, creating a picturesque environment. As you pass by local homes and makeshift fences, you'll gain a glimpse into rural life in the Andes. Arrive at Colpa Lodge in time for a special Pachamanca lunch, a traditional Peruvian meal cooked using hot stones in the earth. Spend the afternoon relaxing, either lounging in the sun or enjoying the outdoor jacuzzi while soaking in the panoramic views of the surrounding green mountains. Trekking time 4 hours, approx. 6 miles, 3,398' elevation loss.

Meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner | Overnight: Mountain Lodges



Trip Itinerary



Day 7

Santa Teresa River Valley and Llactapata

Hike through the Santa Teresa River valley today, crossing small streams and fruit orchards. After a hot picnic lunch by the river, continue on foot until you meet a vehicle for a short drive to the Llactapata Inca Trail. This trail leads you to your lodge, passing through increasingly humid and tropical landscapes. Visit a local organic coffee plantation, where you'll experience the shift in climate and taste freshly brewed coffee. The lodge offers a comfortable resting place after the day's hike, preparing you for the final leg of the journey. Trekking time 5.5 hours, approx. 10 miles, 387' elevation gain / 2,798' elevation loss.

Meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner | Overnight: Mountain Lodges



Trip Itinerary



Day 8

Salkantay Route to Machu Picchu

For those up for it, an optional early morning hike will take you up a path of original Inca steps, leading to Llactapata Pass. From here, you'll enjoy a unique view of Machu Picchu from the southeast — a rare perspective of the ancient citadel. Explore Llactapata before descending to a meadow for a scenic lunch. The trek continues through lush bamboo forests and fruit orchards, culminating in a train ride to Aguas Calientes. Here, you'll stay at the Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel, preparing for the grand exploration of Machu Picchu the next day. Trekking time 6 hours, approx. 7 miles, 1,971' elevation gain / 3,165' elevation loss.

Meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner | Overnight: Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel



Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel

Located in the heart of Machu Picchu Historical Sanctuary, Inkaterra's boutique Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel is an Andean Garden of Eden. Its natural beauty spreads over 12 acres of low-rise cottages, plantations, and wild forest interspersed by stone pathways. Hummingbirds frolic in a private cloud-forest paradise, while you experience an authentic barefoot luxury hotel at the foot of Machu Picchu.

Amenities: Soap, shampoo, conditioner, hair dryer; electricity; Wifi



Trip Itinerary



Day 9

Explore Machu Picchu

Start your day with an early bus ride to Machu Picchu, catching the sunrise over the citadel. Explore the awe-inspiring architecture of the Watchtower, the Temple of the Sun, and other key sites within the ancient city. Enjoy lunch at Sanctuary Lodge near the entrance, and then spend the afternoon exploring Machu Picchu at your own pace. Absorb the mystical energy of the site, reflecting on its history and origins. The less crowded afternoon offers a perfect opportunity for quiet contemplation and further exploration of this iconic wonder.

Meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner | Overnight: Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel



Trip Itinerary



Day 10

Return to Cusco

Board the train from Aguas Calientes to Ollantaytambo and then drive back to Cusco. Visit a master weaver to learn about traditional Andean textile production, a key part of local cultural heritage. Enjoy a farewell lunch and explore Cusco on your own, immersing yourself in the city's historic charm. In the evening, gather for a farewell dinner with your AdventureWomen friends, celebrating the memorable journey you've shared and reflecting on the incredible experiences and friendships formed.

Meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner | Overnight: Palacio del Inka



Palacio del Inka

A storied mansion dating back nearly five centuries, the Libertador Palacio del Inka stands in the historic center of Cusco. Directly across from the Koricancha, it is a short walk from the main square and less than a mile from an array of museums, markets, and restaurants.

Amenities: Soap, shampoo, conditioner, hair dryer; electricity; Wifi



Trip Itinerary



Day 11

Departure

Enjoy your last morning in Cusco, where you can shop for souvenirs or take a final stroll through the city. Lunch is at your leisure before transferring to Cusco airport for your flight home. Depart any time after 12:00 pm, carrying with you memories of an extraordinary adventure and the beauty of Peru.



What's Included

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- Accommodations as per itinerary based on double occupancy
- All meals as listed in the itinerary
- All ground transportation
- Guided sightseeing and activities as indicated in the itinerary
- Entrance fees
- Professional English-speaking trekking guide throughout the trip
- One group transfer on arrival and departure
- Drinking water available in large jugs to refill personal bottles
- Gratuities for baggage handlers, drivers, and hotel/lodge staff

Not Included

- International airfare to and from Peru
- Domestic airfare if required
- Excess baggage charges
- Optional activities
- Meals not specified in the itinerary
- Alcoholic beverages (unless otherwise specified)
- Fees for passport, visas, immunizations, or travel insurance
- Cost of hospitalization or evacuation
- Items of a personal nature
- Gratuities for guides

Please note: AdventureWomen will attempt to adhere to the itinerary as much as possible. However, certain conditions (political, climatic, environmental, and cultural) may necessitate changes in the itinerary. AdventureWomen reserves the right to alter any itinerary at any time if necessary. We will attempt to notify participants of changes as far in advance as possible. Costs incurred by such changes will be the responsibility of the participants.

