



## PERU

### Custom Sample Itinerary

#### Andes & Amazon Explorer

The best of Cusco, the Sacred Valley, magnificent Machu Picchu  
plus the tropical rainforest of Southeastern Peru

11 days/10 nights

(can be adjusted longer or shorter according to preference)



[Map of South America](#) (interactive links)

Destination Maps: [Peru](#)

**SEASON:** April through December during Peru's dry season.

**TRIP RATING:** Moderate Cultural, Archaeological & Natural history Tour, Grade (II): This first-class adventure is an activity-oriented program featuring optional daily walking tours through villages and Inca sites (2-3 hours in duration at elevations above 8,000 ft). Although the trip reaches a high point of 12,350 ft, the itinerary has been designed to allow gradual adjustment to the altitude. In the Amazon, boat travel is necessary to and from the lodge. Nature walks in the rainforest can sometimes be on muddy trails (rubber boots are provided).

This is a personalized guided trip with your own private guide and vehicle/driver in Lima and the Andes. In the Amazon, you'll have an all-inclusive stay with daily excursions led by on-site expert guides in small groups with other guests.

**INTRODUCTION:** The Incas...Sons of the Sun...mysterious builders of stone fortresses, mountaintop citadels and golden temples. According to legend Manco Inca and Mama Ocllo, the first Inca rulers, came forth from Lake Titicaca to unite warring tribes under a common language and a unified religion, creating **one of the most fabulous of ancient empires, Tawantinsuyo**, "the four quarters of the world." At its apex in the late fifteenth century, this impressive kingdom spanned an area more than five times the size of the state of California! The Incas governed this vast realm, which was connected by thousands of miles of stone-paved highways, from their cultural and religious center in Cusco. Persecuted by Spanish *conquistadores*, much of the Inca's history was destroyed. Even so, many stone monuments stand today, a testament to the skill of their master architects.

Less than 100 miles from Cusco and Machu Picchu, the **Amazon region** of Puerto Maldonado is relatively isolated and very rich in biodiversity. The region offers travelers with limited time a wonderful taste of the Amazon Basin rainforests based from the Reserva Amazonica Lodge, 45 min by motor boat from Puerto Maldonado. You have access to small oxbow lakes as well as forest trails and rivers with a variety of habitats. Sleep in individual casita bungalows with mosquito netting over the beds and private bathrooms with hot showers, flush toilets and electricity. A 1,128 ft long canopy walkway gets you up to the treetops via 7 hanging bridges and 8 treetop observation platforms to help glimpse wildlife inhabiting these forests.

**DATE      TOURING / HOTELS / MEALS** (indicated as B,L,D)



<b>DAY 01</b>	<p><b>TO PERU</b>  Depart home and arrive this evening to Peru's capital city, Lima. Reception by your private Southwind guide providing check-in assistance to the Wyndham located near the International Terminal.  <a href="#">Wyndham Costa del Sol Hotel</a></p>	
<b>DAY 02</b>	<p><b>LIMA / PUERTO MALDONADO (AMAZON)</b>  Meet your guide and walk to the terminal to check-in for a spectacular morning <b>flight over the Andes from Lima to the Amazon</b>. Upon arrival, transfer to the port to board a covered motor boat and travel down the Madre de Dios River 45 minutes to Inkaterra's peaceful lodge to settle in and begin your <b>4 day/3 night rainforest visit</b>.</p> <p>This lodge was voted among top 25 ecolodges in the world by National Geographic Adventure. Welcome orientation upon arrival. Afternoon guided <b>nature walk</b> to begin learning about the flora and fauna of the rainforest. Later, enjoy a twilight river excursion to observe caiman and transformation from diurnal to nocturnal sights and sounds. When the sky is clear, Southern hemisphere constellations such as the Southern Cross can be viewed. (B,L,D)  <a href="#">Inkaterra Reserva Amazonica Lodge</a></p>	
<b>DAY 03</b>	<p><b>AMAZON</b>  This morning, approach hidden <b>Lake Sandoval</b> in the Tambopata National Reserve with a boat ride on the Madre de Dios River and 1 hour nature walk through the tropical rainforest. Board a wooden canoe and glide across the mirror-like oxbow lake home to the endangered giant river otter, red howler monkeys and brown capuchin monkeys (two of 6 monkey species frequently seen), red-bellied macaws, anacondas, side-neck turtles, black caimans, hoatzin (a prehistoric-looking bird), rufescent tiger herons, Amazon kingfishers and parrots. You will be surrounded by palm trees and other primary forest flora. The excursion is weather permitting.</p> <p>This afternoon, explore the <b>canopy treetop walkway system</b>. Walk through the rainforest canopy on a network of suspension bridges linking 8 observation platforms. Be on the lookout for bright toucans, woodpeckers, trogons, monkeys and the three-toed sloth. After descending from the canopy, walk along wooden bridges over wetlands home to amphibians, birds, mammals, abundant flora, trees and anaconda. You can choose to extend your excursion and appreciate the sunset from one of the towers. Return by boat or on foot to the lodge to relax in your hammock. Buffet and a la carte meals are served in the comfortable lodge dining room. Sunset and evening excursions by foot or boat provide additional opportunities to view nocturnal inhabitants of the rainforest such as 5-6 foot caiman, tree frogs, night monkeys and possums. (B,L,D)  <a href="#">Inkaterra Reserva Amazonica Lodge</a></p>	 
<b>DAY 04</b>	<p><b>AMAZON</b>  This morning, explore <b>Gamitana Creek</b>, a 25 min boat ride from the lodge. Here you have the chance to explore a winding, dark-water creek home to fish, caiman, turtles and birds. Continue to the Sanipanga landing point. Navigate back downstream, appreciating the abundant flora and fauna along the way to reach <b>Gamitana Farm</b> for a short guided tour to see how local farmers raise fruits and vegetables.</p>	



	<p>This afternoon, walk along the lodge trails to the <b>rainforest garden</b>, started by locals more than 10 years ago showcasing native plants, trees and orchids. An explanation by your guide helps to familiarize you with the traditional use and benefits of the plants and trees used for clothing and local construction, including the lodge building. There is also time to enjoy the lodge amenities, perhaps a massage overlooking the river or simply relaxing in your hammock taking in the sounds of the forest. A <b>Rainforest by Night</b> excursion allows the chance to experience the mystery of the animal activity that awakens in the rainforest after dark. Listen to the nighttime forest sounds and spot interesting nocturnal species. (B,L,D)</p> <p><a href="#">Inkaterra Reserva Amazonica Lodge</a></p>	
<b>DAY 05</b>	<p><b>AMAZON / CUSCO / SACRED VALLEY</b></p> <p>Following an early breakfast, return to Puerto Maldonado by boat and visit the butterfly house before checking-in for an early afternoon <b>flight from Puerto Maldonado to Cusco</b>. Meet your Andean guide and drive 1 hour to Pisac in the <b>Sacred Valley of the Incas</b>. The route follows a winding mountain road providing superb vistas of the rugged canyon formed by the Urubamba River. Descending into the village of <b>Pisac</b> (9,708') where we catch the traditional weekly market. Artists and vendors set up their stalls around the main plaza to sell food and colorful handicrafts. We tour Pisac's impressive Incan ruins, perched spectacularly on a ridge overlooking the town and countryside. The walking tour is about 2 miles and follows a wide, exposed, stone-paved trail high above the valley. We visit the main sections of the site and time permitting, the religious center <i>Intihuatana</i>, or Hitching Post of the Sun. Observing dozens of agricultural terraces, these formations were aesthetically built to follow the contours of the hillside rising from the Urubamba River valley.</p> <p>Continue down the valley to the community of Urubamba and check-in to your charming Andean hacienda-style lodge at 9,430'. Enjoy some leisure time to relax on the lovely grounds before dinner together this evening. (B,BL,D)</p> <p><a href="#">Sol y Luna Lodge &amp; Spa</a></p>	 
<b>DAY 06</b>	<p><b>SACRED VALLEY (CHINCHERO / OLLANTAYTAMBO)</b></p> <p>This morning, drive to the highlands with panoramic views of the snow-capped Urubamba range including <b>Mount Veronica and Pitusiray</b>-both over 18,000 feet high. Arrive at <b>Chinchoero</b> (12,335'), a charming community characteristic of Andean towns in that it combines both Incan and colonial architecture. We can observe a massive Inca wall with ten trapezoidal niches, which dominates the village's main square, and visit the colonial church. After exploring the ruins of Inca Yupanqui's palace, we join a local community in their courtyard for an overview of the Andean weaving process. After wool is carded, spun, and dyed, learn about the different techniques used to create ponchos, belts (<i>fajas</i>), and shawls (<i>mantas</i>). On the way back to the fertile Urubamba Valley we stop at the Inca Salt Mines, then continue in our private vehicle to enjoy a buffet-style Andean lunch. Here we have a chance to sample a variety of native delicacies including: several types of potatoes (tubers such as oca); quinoa (sacred to the Incas, referred to as the "mother of all grains"); fava beans; and perhaps try a taste of <i>cuy</i>, a savory meat roasted with a variety of herbs traditionally used in fertility celebrations.</p> <p>This afternoon, we drive past burial tombs and ancient farming terraces still in use today to grow barley, wheat, and corn to reach the town of <b>Ollantaytambo</b>. We visit the main plaza and some of the side streets of this unique community which still retains the original street plan and foundations designed by the Incas. We'll explore the impressive terraced remains of the Sun Temple before returning to the peaceful comforts of the hotel to relax and unwind. (B,L)</p> <p><a href="#">Sol y Luna Lodge &amp; Spa</a></p>	 

<p><b>DAY 07</b></p>	<p><b>SACRED VALLEY / MACHU PICCHU</b></p> <p>This morning, board the <b>Vistadome train</b> for a 1.5 hour ride to the village of Machu Picchu. Ascend by bus above the valley to reach Machu Picchu (7,973'). With your expert guide begin a private tour of this superb archaeological site. Perched atop a crest high above the meandering Urubamba River and surrounded by rugged, green Andean hillsides, <b>Machu Picchu</b> stands as more than just the jewel of Inca architecture. It represents the perfect union of human engineering and the natural environment, a city in harmony with its surroundings. Never reached by the Spanish, this magical place was brought to the world's attention in 1911 by the Yale historian, Hiram Bingham.</p> <p>Our explorations of <b><i>The Lost City of the Incas</i></b> include the industrial area, the Temple of the Sun and the Royal Tomb, the ceremonial fountains and Sacred Plazas. There should be time in the afternoon for the 30 minute walk to the Inca Drawbridge. We overnight in the village at Inkaterra's award winning property situated at 6,627' among 12 acres of cloud forest gardens along the Urubamba River. Dinner is included this evening in the hotel's glass-walled restaurant overlooking the river. (B,L,D)</p> <p><a href="#">Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel</a></p> <p><b>Note:</b> The approach to Machu Picchu today can be done as a dayhike instead of the train – see optional Km 104 hike below.</p>	 
<p><b>DAY 08</b></p>	<p><b>MACHU PICCHU / CUSCO</b></p> <p>Rise early if you wish to head up to the ruins (gates open at 06:00) to catch the early <b>morning light</b> as the sun comes over <i>Intipunku</i>, or the Gateway of the Sun. There are several optional guided hikes in and around the site if you want to be active this morning. At 8,836' <b>Huayna Picchu</b>, or Young Peak, looms over the citadel. An optional 1 hour climb along a very steep and exposed trail ends at terraces and ruins on the mountain's top, providing an excellent, bird's-eye view of Machu Picchu. Another 1.5 hour up and downhill hike on a shaded trail ends at the mysterious, partially excavated <i>Temple of the Moon</i>. This passage is an excellent off-the-beaten-path alternative to the main ruins.</p> <p>The <b>schedule is flexible</b> to relax or explore a favorite spot at your own pace inside Machu Picchu. Lunch is in the village before catching the early afternoon <b>Vistadome train</b> for the 1.5 hour scenic journey back to Ollantaytambo. Tracing the course of the Urubamba River, we wind our way past Incan terraces and Quechua communities as we leave the lush cloud forests and make our way back to the highlands. Reception upon arrival and transfer by private vehicle to your hotel in <b>Cusco</b> (11,150') centrally located near the main plaza. Dinner is on your own this evening, after a full day, we recommend the hotel restaurant offering a variety of Peruvian and international cuisine. (B,L)</p> <p><a href="#">Libertador Palacio del Inka Hotel &amp; Spa</a></p>	 
<p><b>DAY 09</b></p>	<p><b>CUSCO</b></p> <p>After breakfast, join your guide for a private tour (walking and vehicle) of this friendly, historical city. In the <b>main plaza</b> and side streets, we see how Cusco is still a very colonial city. There are no skyscrapers and most buildings are whitewashed adobe with red tile roofs set on Inca foundations. Cobble streets lead up narrow passageways with brightly painted balconies overhead. Small plazas are filled with flowers and fountains. Visit the impressive <i>Coricancha</i>, the <b>Inca's Sun Temple</b>; the Cathedral, many of whose stones were taken from nearby Inca palaces; and the Incan walls along <i>Hatunrumiyoc Street</i>, which is named for the 12-angled stone that is clearly visible. Driving up to the surrounding hills we explore the Incan fortress of <b>Sacsayhuaman</b>, a spectacular complex with commanding views of the Cusco valley, and time permitting, <i>Tambo Machay</i>, whose ceremonial pools have remained clear and cold since the time of the Empire.</p>	



	<p>Lunch is on your own today with the remainder of the <b>afternoon at leisure</b> for shopping or exploring town at your own pace. Cusco has many fine museums. We recommend the Religious Art Museum built on the foundations of the Inca Roca palace with fine collection of colonial religious paintings and furniture. The Casa Concha Museum houses Machu Picchu artifacts returned to Peru from Yale University. If you are looking for a striking piece of art or just want to appreciate the work of one of Peru's masters, you'll find it at the Maximo Laura workshop of contemporary textile art in San Blas. Laura is an UNESCO award winning tapestry weaver internationally recognized as one of South America's most unique textile artists. Tonight, we recommend trying one of the gourmet restaurants near the main square. (B)</p> <p><a href="#">Libertador Palacio del Inka Hotel &amp; Spa</a></p>	
<b>DAY 10</b>	<p><b>CUSCO / LIMA / DEPARTURE</b></p> <p>This <b>morning is un-structured</b> to walk through Cusco's colorful San Pedro market on your own and the many side-street craft shops, museums and plazas. Midday pick-up at the hotel and transfer to the airport with check-in assistance for an early afternoon <b>flight from Cusco to Lima</b>.</p> <p>Upon arrival back in the capital, join your local guide for a private tour of <b>colonial Lima</b>. UNESCO has declared the historic center of the capital a World Heritage Site for its originality and high concentration of Spanish colonial monuments. At the fascinating <b>Larco Herrera Museum</b> view the extensive collection of pre-Columbian artifacts. Dinner is on your own to try a typical seafood meal such as ceviche at one of the several gourmet restaurants in the upscale Miraflores district. Your guide will transfer you back to the airport this evening to check-in for your <b>overnight flight home</b>. (B)</p>	
<b>DAY 11</b>	<p><b>ARRIVE HOME</b></p> <p>Arrive in your gateway city this morning and make onward connections home.</p>	

**Meals:** B=breakfast; L=lunch; BL=box lunch; D=dinner. If a meal is not indicated above, you have flexibility to dine out at your leisure.

### OPTIONAL UPGRADES:

**Hotels:** In Lima, you can select the luxurious Miraflores Park Hotel or elegant JW Marriott Hotel. In the Sacred Valley, consider the lovely Belmond Hotel Rio Sagrado or Libertador Tambo del Inka. In Cusco, the historical Monasterio Hotel or Palacio Nazarenas Hotel delights discerning travelers. At Machu Picchu, consider the exclusive Sanctuary Lodge adjacent to the citadel. Due to high demand these reservations are recommended at least 4-5 months in advance. Upgrades are quoted on request and are subject to availability. See [Accommodations](#) for details. Please contact our office for prices and upgrade information.

**Km 104 Inca Trail dayhike on Day 07:** With your private trekking guide, disembark the Vistadome train at Km 104 for a classic hike on stone-paved Inca Trail. Pass through the Gateway of the Sun to approach Machu Picchu on foot as the Incas did centuries ago. The 7-mile hike is moderate/difficult but highly rewarding and takes approximately 6.5 hours. Extra costs apply for the required permit and logistics and advance planning is recommended (at least 4-5 months in advance). Please notify our office if interested.



**NEXT STEP:** Please contact Tom Damon to setup a custom planning phone call. With your feedback on the destinations, activities and accommodations in this sample itinerary, Southwind will create a custom proposal tailored to your travel style, goals, dates and budget. Your proposal will provide Land Cost pricing and more details. Accommodations shown in this sample are in the 4-5 star category with superior or preferential rooms with views. Optional upgrades to exclusive top tier hotels can be provided during the planning. Note that space or room types cannot be guaranteed until a design fee or deposit is paid and Southwind receives confirmation. It will help to finalize plans at your soonest convenience for best selection. For high season or holiday dates, we are able to place a complimentary hold with a design fee to help secure space while we fine tune your itinerary.

**We look forward to having you travel with us in Peru!**

For more information please contact your personal travel planner:

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