

# PERU

# WORLD OF THE INCAS

A classic tour of Cusco, the Sacred Valley and magnificent Machu Picchu







DURATION: 9 days, 8 nights

SEASON: April through December

DEPARTURES: Guaranteed with a minimum of 2 participants

TRIP RATING: Moderate Cultural & Archaeological 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'). Although the trip reaches a high point of 12,350', the

itinerary has been designed to allow gradual adjustment to the altitude.

2024 DATES: On request any week throughout the season for a minimum of 2 travelers

#### 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.

Designed for those who wish to deepen their appreciation of the Incas, this exciting cultural and archaeological adventure leads you into the heart of the Incan Empire, *Tawantinsuyo*. We begin in the Inca's Sacred Valley, joining Quechua villagers at their traditional shops in Pisac before surveying the ruins overlooking town. Next, we visit a family in Chinchero, enjoy a weaving demonstration by master craftswomen and view the fortress at Ollantaytambo. A scenic train brings us to Machu Picchu to spend two full days exploring this jewel of Inca architecture and the nearby village of Machu Picchu. Returning to Cusco, we visit splendid royal palaces and admire the precise stonework of the Coricancha and Sacsayhuaman pre-Columbian sites. Our adventure ends with a tour of Lima's magnificent Larco Herrera Museum.

## **DAY-BY-DAY ITINERARY:**

#### DAY 01: HOME / LIMA

Depart home and arrive this evening to **Peru's capital city**, **Lima**. Clear customs and walk a short distance to check-in to the **Wyndham Costa del Sol Hotel** located near the International Terminal. Meals are on your own today.

Note: some flights from the US are overnight to Lima arriving early in the morning on Day 02.

#### DAY 02: LIMA / CUSCO / SACRED VALLEY

Your Southwind guide walks with you from the hotel to the terminal to provide check-in assistance for your spectacular, one-hour flight over the Andes to **Cusco**, the archaeological capital of the Americas. Meet your Andean guide at the Cusco airport and drive one-hour to the **Sacred Valley of the Incas**. The route follows a winding mountain road with superb vistas of the rugged canyon formed by the Urubamba River. Descending into the warm valley, we visit **Pisac** (9,708') and its traditional artists shops and craft center. After a local style lunch, we tour Pisac's impressive Incan ruins, perched spectacularly on a ridge overlooking the countryside. The walking tour is about 2 miles and follows a wide, exposed, stone-paved trail high above the valley. Gain insight about the religious center *Intihuatana*, or Hitching Post of the Sun and observing dozens of aesthetically built agricultural terraces rising from the Urubamba River. We continue down the valley to the community of Urubamba and check-in to the Sol y Luna Hotel & Spa (9,430'), a charming Andean hacienda style Relais & Chateaux property where you can relax and unwind with dinner on your own this evening to try the hotel's **Killa Wasi Restaurant**, one of the best in the region.

#### DAY 03: CHINCHERO / OLLANTAYTAMBO

Enjoy a morning drive by private vehicle to the highlands with panoramic views of the snow-capped Urubamba range including Mt. Veronica and Mt. Pitusiray, both over 18,000 feet high. Arrive at Chinchero (12,335'), a charming community characteristic of Andean towns combining both Incan and colonial architecture. Observe a massive Inca wall with ten trapezoidal niches that dominates the main square. After exploring the colonial church and ruins of Inca Yupanqui's palace, 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 (fajas), and shawls (mantas). On the way back to the fertile Urubamba Valley, we stop at the Inca Salt Mines, a series of over 2,000 terraced mountainside pools fed by a natural spring. Local families still harvest salt in a traditional way. Continue into the valley for an Andean lunch and chance to sample a variety of native delicacies including several types of potatoes (tubers such as oca), quinoa (sacred to the Incas as the "mother of all grains"), fava beans and perhaps cuy, a savory meat roasted with a variety of herbs. Later, we drive to the village of Ollantaytambo, passing burial tombs and ancient farming terraces, still in use today to grow barley, wheat, and corn. The main plaza and some side streets of this unique community 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 Sol y Luna Hotel & Spa in Urubamba where dinner is your own at leisure this evening. (B,L)

#### DAY 04: MACHU PICCHU

Rise early to head back to Ollantaytambo to board the **Vistadome train** for a 1.5 hour ride to the village of Machu Picchu (formerly Aguas Calientes). Ascending to **Machu Picchu** (7,973') by shuttle, join your expert guide for 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, Machu Picchu 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 American historian, Hiram Bingham. Our explorations of *The Lost City of the Incas* include all of the sectors of the ruins; the industrial area, Temple of the Sun and Royal Tomb, the ceremonial water fountains and baths and Sacred Plazas. Take a break mid-day for lunch at the Tinkuy buffet restaurant just outside the gates which serves a variety of hot and fresh selections. There should be time in the afternoon for the 30-minute walk to the **Inca Drawbridge**, an ingenious construction. We stay at the charming Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel, a former National Geographic Unique Lodge of the World, situated at 6,627' in 12 acres of cloud forest garden along the Urubamba River in town with dinner included this evening. (B,L,D)

#### DAY 05: MACHU PICCHU

Early risers can head up to the ruins (gates open at 06:00) to catch the early morning light as the sun comes over *Intipunku*, or the Gateway of the Sun. There are several optional guided hikes in and around the site for active group members. Huchuy Picchu Mountain, departing from an access gate, a gradual uphill hike on a newly cleared trail about 30 min to a lookout point at 8,193 ft. Huayna Picchu Mountain (8,836') forms the backdrop to Machu Picchu. A steep and challenging trail requiring good physical conditioning leads to terraced ruins on top, providing an excellent birds-eye view. The route ascends steadily uphill approx 1.5 hours (850 ft) on a winding and sometimes exposed trail requiring hands for balance and to hold handrails on steeper sections. There is low cloud forest vegetation along the trail. The hike back down takes approx 1 hour, roundtrip is usually about 2.5-3 hours depending on rest breaks. This trail has abrupt drops and exposure, so it's not recommended for anyone with a fear of heights or vertigo. A nice less-crowded alternative hike is the **Temple of the Moon** (elev 7,220'). A 3 hour roundtrip up and downhill shaded trail leads to the mysterious, partially excavated ruins on the backside of Huayna Picchu. A series of caverns likely contained mummies during Incan times. This quiet ceremonial monument is perched above the Urubamba River, access is via the same gate as Huayna Picchu then forks to the left initially following a stone paved section that traverses up and around the base of the mountain. You then arrive to a forested area of the trail to descend steadily on wider stone staircases 1,080 ft down to the Temple complex. This site is about 1,500 years old, it remained hidden away until rediscovered in 1936 (25 years after the Hiram Bingham expedition). The schedule is flexible, those who prefer can relax or explore a favorite spot at your own pace. Lunch is on your own today to dine at Tinkuy or the snack bar at the entrance gate. In the afternoon, we return to the village by shuttle to relax among the unique ambiance of the Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel where dinner is included this evening. (B,D)

## DAY 06: MACHU PICCHU / CUSCO

Today offers a second guided morning to appreciate the glories of **Machu Picchu**. Enjoy some unstructured time to find an overlook to photograph, meditate or continue personal explorations of this archaeological wonder. Others might wish to stroll through the community of Machu Picchu where artisans display a variety of crafts. We meet together in town for lunch at the Sumaq hotel restaurant, one of the area's finest, before catching the early afternoon **Vistadome train** for the 1 hr 30 min scenic journey back to Ollantaytambo. Tracing the course of the Urubamba River, we wind our way past Incan terraces and Quechua communities leaving the lush cloud forests to make our way back to the highlands. Meet the private vehicle and transfer 1 hr 30 min to **Cusco** (11,150') arriving at the historic <u>Palacio del Inka Hotel</u> centrally located near the main plaza. This Luxury Collection hotel by Marriott is the former Palace of the first governor of Peru, Francisco Pizarro and is built over Incan foundations. Dinner is on your own this evening, for convenience after a full day of touring, we recommend the hotel's excellent Inti Raymi restaurant. (B,L)

#### DAY 07: CUSCO

After breakfast, join your guide for a private tour (combination of walking and vehicle) of this friendly, historical city. In the main plaza 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. Cobbled streets lead up narrow passageways with brightly painted balconies overhead. Small plazas are filled with flowers and fountains. Visit the impressive *Coricancha*, the Inca's Sun Temple; the Cathedral, many of whose stones were taken from nearby Inca palaces; and the Incan walls along *Hatunrumiyoc Street*, which is named for the 12-angled stone that is clearly visible. Driving up to the surrounding hills we explore the Incan fortress of **Sacsayhuaman**, a spectacular complex with commanding views of the Cusco valley, and time permitting, *Tambo Machay*, whose ceremonial pools have remained clear and cold since the time of the Empire. Return to the <u>Palacio del Inka Hotel</u>, lunch is on your own with leisure time for the remainder of the afternoon to visit town. For this evening's dinner try some of the nearby gourmet restaurants in town.

#### DAY 08: CUSCO / LIMA OR DEPARTURE

The morning is at leisure for personal explorations of Cusco's colorful San Pedro market and the many side-street craft shops, museums and plazas. We are picked up at the hotel late-morning for the drive to the airport in **Cusco** to catch the flight back to **Lima**. Upon arrival, we join our local resident guide for a private tour of colonial Lima and the fascinating **Larco Herrera Museum** with an extensive collection of pre-Columbian artifacts. Lunch and dinner are on your own to try a typical seafood meal such as ceviche at one of the several gourmet restaurants in the upscale Miraflores district. Participants leaving tonight have a return transfer to the airport this evening. (B)

## DAY 09: ARRIVE HOME

Arrive in your gateway city this morning to clear customs and make onward connections home.

**NOTES ON THE ITINERARY:** Although we do our best to adhere to the above schedule, this itinerary is subject to change for numerous reasons beyond our control, including group pace and acclimatization, weather, road and trail conditions, flight delays or cancellations, as well as changes in plane and train schedules. This trip is suitable for healthy participants accustomed to outdoor activities, age 7 and up. The Huayna Picchu ascent or the optional Km 104 hike are only recommended for kids age 12 and older. At Machu Picchu we stay at the comfortable Inkaterra Machu Picchu Hotel and there will be opportunities to visit the ruins in the early morning before most tourist trains arrive. In Cusco, if you choose to arrive early the night before the Sacred Valley, we recommend the deluxe boutique-style <u>Aranwa Cusco Boutique Hotel</u> (also located near the main square, this restored colonial mansion from the XVI century brings the added benefit of oxygenated rooms) instead of the Palacio del Inka Hotel. Distances and altitudes are approximate and travel times indicated do not include lunch breaks, rest or photo stops, time to explore the ruins, etc.

**2024 LAND COST:** 2-3 participants: from \$6,550 p.p.d.

4-6 participants: from \$6,000 p.p.d. 7-12 participants: from \$5,550 p.p.d.

Single Supplement: from \$1,500

p.p.d.=per person based on double or triple occupancy not including airfare.

**Note:** End of the year or holiday departures could have a Land Cost surcharge of 10-15%. Please check with your personal Southwind Travel Consultant for more details.

**ESTIMATED AIRFARE:** The Land Cost DOES NOT INCLUDE ANY FLIGHTS. Southwind's ticketing specialist can assist with all your air travel – providing an airfare quote to match your itinerary, personalized support for seating, monitoring schedule changes and coordinating directly with the airlines if any adjustments are needed. You'll also benefit from access to lower contract fares for some routes. Ask about Business Class which is often a good value flying to Peru (Delta, United and Latam offer lie flat seats in Business). Non-stop flights to Lima are available from these US gateways: New York/JFK (Latam 8 hr flight time), Newark (United 8 hr), Los Angeles (Latam 8 hr 30 min), Miami (American & Latam 5 hr 45 min), Fort Lauderdale (JetBlue 5 hr 45 min), Houston (United 6 hr 30 min) and Atlanta (Delta 6 hr 30 min). Estimated international coach fares are \$600-\$1,000/person and \$350/person for Lima-Cusco-Lima with Latam (part of SkyTeam Alliance). You have the option to arrange your own flights or redeem award travel yourself if you prefer. Tickets should only be purchased after Southwind notifies you that your trip is confirmed. The airlines request that tickets match your passport name. Upon receipt of your deposit, Southwind provides flight booking details for your travel dates.

## **SERVICES INCLUDED:**

- Comprehensive pre-departure planning packet and expert travel advice.
- All in-country transfers as scheduled. Ground transportation in comfortable private vehicles with professional drivers.
- First-class round trip Vistadome or similar train from Ollantaytambo to Machu Picchu town. Machu Picchu bus service to/from town and the archaeological sanctuary.
- Local and return flight reconfirmation, in-country airport check-in and luggage assistance.
- All accommodations in first-class (4-5 star) hotels as listed (or at similar hotels) on a shared basis with private bath. Advanced bookings are recommended if you require double beds (king/queen) for couples, or plan to arrive early or extend your stay.
- All **meals** indicated on the itinerary (B=breakfast; L=lunch; D=dinner). **Vegetarian diets accommodated** on request (advance notification required). For other diets, consult your travel specialist before making a reservation.
- All guided tours (as listed) conducted on a private basis (except the Inti Raymi Festival tour, when other Southwind travelers may join for the same tour) by knowledgeable, English-speaking native guides (includes entrance fees).
   A local English-speaking guide/escort is provided for Sacred Valley/Machu Picchu/Cusco segments (Day 02-07).
   An assistant guide is provided for groups with 9 or more participants. A separate English-speaking resident guide is provided in Lima.
- Single Supplement provides single room accommodations in all hotels. Due to the limited number of rooms at the boutique hotels making reservations well in advance is recommended.

#### NOT INCLUDED:

- US domestic, International flights, nor local flights within Peru.
- Tours, meals (at about \$30-45 each per person) or other services not listed on the itinerary.
- Early arrivals, dayrooms or late check-outs at hotels.
- Alcoholic beverages nor items of a personal nature; such as clothing, equipment, laundry and phone calls.
- Tips to the local staff.
- Expenses incurred in trip preparation such as, but not limited to, non-refundable airline tickets, travel insurance, and additional expenses resulting from flight delays, schedule changes, cancellations, or missed connections.

#### **OPTIONAL HOTEL UPGRADES:**

According to interest, Southwind can quote and reserve these upgraded accommodations:

Lima: the elegant 5-star JW Marriott Hotel in the Miraflores district overlooking the Pacific Ocean.

Sacred Valley: Tambo del Inka Hotel (Luxury Collection) or Belmond Rio Sagrado Hotel (both with a heated pool).

Cusco: **Belmond Monasterio Hotel** (Cusco's original historic boutique hotel with oxygenated rooms, colonial arches and fine colonial artwork adoring the walls) or select the newer and luxurious **Belmond Palacio Nazarenas Hotel**.

Machu Picchu: Belmond Sanctuary Lodge located at the entrance gate to Machu Picchu.

NOTE: Due to demand, we recommend booking these upgrades at least 4-5 months in advance. Space is subject to availability and cannot be guaranteed. Please see the Accommodations tab on the trip page for details.

# **OPTIONAL ADD-ON ACTIVITIES & TRIP EXTENSIONS:**

# Dayhike on Inca Trail from Km 104 to Machu Picchu:

On Day 04 of your itinerary, a private trekking guide will accompany those group members who choose to disembark the Vistadome train at Km 104 and trek the classic stone-paved Inca Trail through the Gateway of the Sun to approach Machu Picchu 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, advance planning is recommended (permits tend to sell out at least 3-4 months in advance). Please contact our office for details.

# ☼ Inti Raymi Festival Departure June 18-27, 2024 (10 days/9 nights):

A suggested June 18 departure is 1 day longer in order to incorporate the fabulous *Inti Raymi Celebration* on June 24 in Cusco. The schedule of activities is as follows:

JUN 18-23: As described on pages 2 & 3 for DAYS 01-06.

JUN 24 (MON): This is the principal day of the **Inti Raymi Festival**, the greatest of all Inca celebrations, which is recreated each year on June 24<sup>th</sup>, the time of the Winter Solstice, in honor of *Apu Inti Tayta*, or the Sun God-the source of life in the Andes. The current event is a re-enactment of the original pageantry. It is possibly one of the most spectacular Andean festivals in South America, with parades, processions, dance contests and folk music culminating in the main ceremony on June 24<sup>th</sup>. We join our local guide shortly after breakfast and head first to the **Coricancha**, or Sun Temple, where the Inca (a local resident selected to play this role) starts the celebrations with an invocation. Dancers and musicians offer their praises to Inti Tayta. Then the Inca and his procession go to the main square where we witness the rite of coca-in which the future of the Empire is made known through the sacred leaf. Afterwards, we continue up to the **Sacsayhuaman** ruins where we have excellent seats to watch as the Inca rekindles the sacred fire and offers sacrifices to bring the sun back from its long journey north. We return to the **Palacio del Inka Hotel** this afternoon. Dinner is on your own.

JUN 25-27: As described on page 3 for DAYS 07-09.

Please contact our office for details and pricing for a trip including the Inti Raymi.

# Extend your Trip:

Travelers with extra days may wish to extend their trip to the Galápagos Islands, Amazon Basin, Lake Titicaca, Northern Peru, Arequipa and Colca Canyon or Paracas Reserve and the Nazca Lines. All extensions require a minimum of 2 participants. Please see the Extend Your Trip tab on the trip page for details.

A TYPICAL TOURING DAY IN THE ANDES: Days begin early in the Andes as the pace of life often begins before dawn. The weather is typically most favorable in the morning hours, also tour logistics and ground transportation often require an early start. We recommend adjusting to the Andean schedule by going to bed early and rising early as the locals do. Your guide will explain each day's activities the evening or day before, so you'll know what to expect, what to take with you, etc. Your day begins with breakfast in the hotel dining room about 06:30-07:30 generally served buffet-style with a variety of cereal, fruit, yogurt, bread, proteins, and coffee/tea/juices available (eggs, sausages, omelets, pancakes or French toast are often an option too). Morning tours begin about 08:30 from your hotel. Half-day tours generally last about 3.5-4 hours. When lunch is included, we generally go to a restaurant at about 12:30-1:00 and enjoy the meal for an hour or so. For mornings at leisure, you may have breakfast anytime until the restaurant stops serving (generally 10:30). Afternoon touring when included in the itinerary, begins about 2:00-2:30 and lasts until 5:30-6:30.

**Note:** Some time variation for activities and meals should be expected as we adapt plans to each day and local weather/road conditions, flight delays, train/shuttle schedules, logistics, etc.

## **ANDEAN GUIDES:**

Romulo Lizarraga - Romulo is one of the most knowledgeable, experienced and professional guides in the Andes. This University of Cusco graduate was born in Intihuatana, at the foot of Machu Picchu Mountain where his grandfather grew up exploring the region, making Romulo a descendent of the local discoverers of Machu Picchu! Romulo has over 30 years of experience in the Peruvian Andes and has co-authored two books. He's an avid hiker having led trekking groups throughout the mountain ranges in the Cusco region. He is fluent in Quechua, Spanish and English.

**Rosa Garcia** - One of Cusco's finest guides, Rosa is a delightful and compassionate trip leader. She has been guiding trips professionally since 1992. She is exceptionally versed in Inca culture and history and enthusiastically shares her knowledge of local lifestyles with guests. She holds a degree in tourism, speaks fluent English and always receives glowing comments from Southwind groups.

**Francis Casapino, Jose Ayerbe & Ronny Peña -** each are native bilingual guides with a minimum of 10 years of extensive experience leading tours in the southern Andes of Peru. Their knowledge and caring personalities have led to exceptional reviews, they are among the finest professionals sharing the beauty of Peru with Southwind travelers.

**WEATHER:** Much of the *World of the Incas* trip takes place where atmospheric conditions can change suddenly. Participants must be prepared for all possibilities ranging from intense sunshine to rain, cold, and/or wind. Generally, the **Andean** climate during the months of April-November is clear, dry and cool, but time is included in the cloud forests on the eastern slopes of the Andes, so **rain should be expected any month**. Brief hail, sleet or snowstorms might also occur at the highest elevations mostly during the rainy season, January through March. Andean nights are cold while the days are pleasant and springlike. **Cusco** has daytime highs in the mid 70's and nighttime lows in the upper 30's. The **Sacred Valley** is about 10-15° warmer. The daytime temperatures at **Machu Picchu** are hot (80-85°F) with mild nights (lows around 45-50°F) and the likelihood of rain is high. Expect showers or mist on most departures. The sun can be intense at these elevations, a good sun hat and sunscreen is needed to prevent sunburn. Insect repellents such as Skintastic or Skin-so-Soft and long pants are helpful to guard against no-see-ums at Machu Picchu.

**TRAVEL INSURANCE:** We strongly recommend purchasing coverage to protect your trip investment. Travel insurance is important in case of unexpected events prior to departure causing the need to cancel or change your dates. Weather, natural events, medical reason, quarantine, local strikes, personal injury/illness (for you, your traveling companion or family members at home), could require itinerary interruption or changes. Missed connections, delayed arrival, lost/delayed baggage or the need for medical attention or evacuation are also reasons why coverage is important. Southwind recommends **Travel Insured International** which offers coverage options at a good value. If you, your traveling companion or a family member has a pre-existing medical condition, you can still receive coverage if a recurrence of the condition forces you to cancel your trip, but you do need to purchase a plan **within 21 days of your deposit**. Southwind can provide eQuote for insurance to review upon receipt of your deposit and Trip Reservation eForm. Learn more about coverage offered by Travel Insured International

**HOW TO SIGN UP:** Please complete Southwind's <u>Trip Reservation eForm</u>. There are fields for up to 6 travelers per form with the same address. The deposit is \$1,500 per person, <u>please click here to pay your deposit</u> by any major credit card through our secure CardConnect system. In the "total amount due" box, enter your deposit amount (without a comma) based on the number of travelers in your party. If you prefer, you can also call us at 1-800-377-9463 to make payment arrangements by phone or send a check. You will receive confirmation of your deposit.

Reservations can be accepted up to 60 days before departure, provided services and space are available. Due to the popularity of Machu Picchu and the limited number of visitors, we recommend making reservations at least 4-5 months in advance for non-holiday or about 1 year prior for holiday departures. Once your trip is guaranteed to operate, you will receive comprehensive pre-departure planning documents by email.

**Land Balance:** Final payment is due 120 days prior to departure by Visa, MasterCard, Discover, American Express, check, or electronic funds transfer. You can split your balance on two cards. You will receive a trip invoice indicating your balance and a secure payment link.

Cancellation Fees and other policies are outlined under the current Terms & Conditions on Southwind's website.

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

#### Southwind Adventures. Inc

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