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 November

DEPARTURES: Guaranteed with a minimum of 2 participants

TRIP RATING: Moderate Cultural & Archaeological Tour, Grade (II): This first-class adventure is activity-oriented 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.

2027 DATES: On request any week. April/May and September/October are ideal months. June-August is peak season. January-March is the rainy season in the Andes (but this is also a greener and less crowded time to visit.

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 meaning “the four quarters of the world.” At its apex in the late 15th Century, this impressive kingdom spanned an area more than five times the size of the state of California! The Incas governed this vast realm from their cultural and religious center in Cusco using thousands of miles of stone-paved pathways connecting the empire. Persecuted by Spanish conquistadores, much of the Inca’s history was destroyed, yet 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 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. Machu Picchu was honored as one of the Seven New Wonders of the World. Returning to Cusco, we visit splendid royal palaces, admire precise stonework at the Coricancha and Sacsayhuaman pre-Columbian sites and taste delicious novo Andino cuisine. Our adventure ends with a tour of Lima’s magnificent Larco Herrera Museum and opportunity try fresh dishes from the Peruvian coast.

DATE	TOURING / HOTELS / MEALS (B=breakfast; L=lunch; D=dinner as indicated in itinerary)
DAY 01	**HOME / LIMA** Depart home and arrive this evening to **Peru's capital city, Lima**. After clearing customs, walk a short distance on your own to your hotel located across from the airport terminal. Wyndham Grand Costa del Sol Hotel **– 1 night** (elev 112') **Flight note:** Some flights from the USA to Lima are overnight, arriving in the morning on Day 02.
DAY 02	**LIMA / CUSCO / SACRED VALLEY** After breakfast and check-out, meet your Southwind guide and walk to the terminal with check-in assistance for your spectacular, 1 hr 30 min flight, over the Andes to **Cusco**. Arrive in the archaeological capital of the Americas and meet your Andean guide at the airport, drive together by private vehicle 1-hour to the **Sacred Valley of the Incas**. The route follows a winding mountain road with vistas of the rugged canyon formed by the Urubamba River. En route, we stop at the Awana Kancha craft center displaying some of the finest textiles in the Cusco region. 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 following a stone-paved trail high above the valley. Gain insight about the religious center Intihuatana, or Hitching Post of the Sun and observe 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 hotel, a charming Andean hacienda-style property at elev 9,430'. Relax and unwind with dinner at your leisure, you can dine a-la-carte in the hotel's Killa Wasi Restaurant, one of the best in the region. Sol y Luna Hotel & Spa *(a Relais & Chateaux hotel)* **– 2 nights** (elev 9,186') (B,L)
DAY 03	**SACRED VALLEY (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. A massive Inca wall with ten trapezoidal niches 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. This afternoon, 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 retain the original street plan and foundations designed by the Incas. We'll explore the impressive remains of the Sun Temple before returning to the peaceful comfort of the hotel where dinner is on your own at leisure this evening. Sol y Luna Hotel & Spa (B,L)

DAY 04	**SACRED VALLEY to MACHU PICCHU** Rise early to meet your private guide, drive to the Ollantaytambo station to board the **Vistadome train** for a 1.5-hour ride to the village of Machu Picchu. Ascend to **Machu Picchu** (7,973') by shuttle and continue with 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 most 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. We take a break for lunch at the Tinkuy restaurant just outside the gates which serves a variety of hot and fresh buffet selections. Today, there should be time for the 30-minute walk to the **Inca Drawbridge**, an ingenious defensive feature on the side of Machu Picchu. Later, we ride the shuttle down to the village and check-in to the hotel set among lush orchid gardens. Dinner is included this evening in the dining room featuring creative fusion cuisine. Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel **– 2 nights** (elev 6,627') (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 travelers. **Huchuy Picchu Mountain**, is a gradual uphill hike on a newly cleared trail about 30 min to a rewarding lookout point at 8,193'. Another side hike is **Huayna Picchu Mountain** (8,836') forming 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 elev gain) on a winding and sometimes exposed trail requiring hands for balance and to hold handrails on steeper sections. There is 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). The upper part of this trail has abrupt drops and exposure, so it's not recommended for anyone with a fear of heights or vertigo (it is possible to hike to a less exposed lookout point). 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 found here likely contained mummies during Incan times. This quiet ceremonial monument perched above the Urubamba River, is accessed via the same gate as Huayna Picchu, but then forks to the left following a stone-paved section that traverses up and around the base of the mountain. You'll arrive at a forested area to descend steadily on wider stone staircases 1,080 ft down to the Temple complex. This site, dated to about 1,500 years ago, remained hidden until rediscovered in 1936 (25 years after the Hiram Bingham expedition). After exploring the Lost City, we relax for lunch at the Tinkuy restaurant. This afternoon, we descend to the village by shuttle to enjoy the unique ambiance of the hotel where nature paths wind through the property. Dinner is served in the dining room this evening overlooking the river. Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel (B,L,D)

DAY 06	**MACHU PICCHU to CUSCO** Today offers a second guided morning to appreciate the glories of **Machu Picchu**. Enjoy discovering other sectors of the citadel, such as a guided hike to Intipunku or finding an overlook to photograph, meditate or continue personal explorations of this archaeological wonder. If you prefer, you can remain in town and stroll the community of Machu Picchu where artisans display a variety of crafts. We meet for lunch at Sumaq, one of the area's finest restaurants, before catching the afternoon **Vistadome train** for a 1 hr 30 min scenic journey back to Ollantaytambo. Tracing the course of the Urubamba River, the train winds past Incan terraces and Quechua communities leaving the lush cloud forests en route back to the highlands. At the station, meet up with your private vehicle and driver to transfer 1 hr 45 min to **Cusco** (11,150'). Arrive at your historic hotel centrally located near the main plaza. You'll be staying in the former palace of the first governor of Peru, Francisco Pizarro which 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. Palacio del Inka Hotel (Marriott Luxury Collection) **– 2 nights** (elev 11,150') (B,L)
DAY 07	**CUSCO** After breakfast, join your guide for a private walking and driving tour of this friendly, historic city. **Cusco** is a colonial city set on Inca foundations with whitewash adobe walls and red tile roofs. Cobbled streets lead up narrow passageways with brightly painted balconies, fountains and flower filled plazas. We visit the main Plaza de Armas, the impressive **Coricancha** (the Inca's Sun Temple), the Cathedral built with stones from nearby Inca palaces and Hatunrumiyoc Street, named for a precisely cut 12-angled stone, carved into the Incan wall. In the surrounding hills, we explore the Incan fortress of **Sacsayhuaman**, a spectacular complex with commanding views of the Cusco valley. Time permitting, we can either visit Tambo Machay, whose ceremonial pools have remained clear since the time of the Empire, or the Sulca Textile Museum to learn about recreating pieces from ancient Peru using ancestral techniques. Back at the hotel, you'll have some leisure time this afternoon to explore side-street craft shops, museums and plazas. Lunch and dinner are on your own today to try some of Cusco's excellent gourmet restaurants. Palacio del Inka Hotel (B)
DAY 08	**CUSCO / LIMA / OVERNIGHT FLIGHT** After a relaxed wake-up and breakfast, the morning is at leisure for sightseeing at the vibrant San Pedro Market or shopping in Cusco at your own pace. Later, meet your transfer staff in the lobby for a short drive to the airport in **Cusco** to catch an early afternoon flight to **Lima**. Back in the capital, join your Southwind city guide for a private tour of **colonial Lima** declared by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site for its originality and high concentration of Spanish colonial monuments. Tour the fascinating **Larco Herrera Museum** with an extensive collection of pre-Columbian artifacts. Your guide will recommend places where you can dine on your own at leisure to try a typical seafood meal, such as ceviche, at one of the several gourmet restaurants in the upscale Miraflores district. This evening, meet up with your guide and transfer to the airport with check-in assistance for your **overnight flight home**. The modern Lima airport has dining, Wifi and VIP lounges inside security, to relax prior to your flight. (B) **Flight note:** The majority of flights from Lima to the USA are overnight, but there are some daytime flights to Miami and LAX that depart Lima in the morning of Day 09.
DAY 09	**HOME** Arrive at your USA gateway airport this morning to clear customs and connect 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, acclimatization, weather, road/trail conditions, flight delays/cancellations or plane and train schedules. Distances and altitudes are approximate, travel times indicated do not include breaks for lunch, rest/photo stops, time to explore ruins, etc. This trip is suitable for healthy participants accustomed to outdoor activities, ages 7 and up. The Huayna Picchu ascent or the optional Km 104 hike are only recommended for kids ages 12 and older. At Machu Picchu, we stay at the comfortable **Inkaterra Machu Picchu Hotel** in the village. We also recommend the modern **Sumaq Hotel** with contemporary Andean style and exquisite cuisine. Both hotels provide an opportunity to visit the ruins in the early morning before most tourist trains arrive.

On Day 02, if the Cusco arrival is noon or later, it may not allow sufficient time to visit the Pisac ruins, so we may take a different, equally scenic, direct route to the Sacred Valley. **If you choose to arrive a day early to Cusco** (before heading to the Sacred Valley), we can arrange the Aranwa Cusco Boutique Hotel near the main square. This restored XVI century colonial mansion provides oxygenated rooms.

2027 LAND COST:

2-3 participants:	from $8,300 p.p.d.
4-6 participants:	from $7,500 p.p.d.
7-12 participants:	from $7,000 p.p.d.
Single Supplement:	from $1,900

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 10-20%. Please check with your personal Southwind Travel Consultant for more details.

AIRFARE ON REQUEST: **International and in-country airfare is not included in the land cost.** Tickets should only be purchased after Southwind advises that your trip is confirmed. Southwind has a ticketing partner who can quote and help coordinate all your flights (or just the in-country flights on Latam) to match your tour itinerary. You'll have a dedicated agent to arrange your seats according to cabin preference, to monitor schedule changes and work directly with the airline on your behalf, if any adjustments are needed after ticketing. United, Delta, American and Latam provide service to Lima via their US gateway hubs. You have the option to purchase any of the flights yourself or redeem award travel directly through your airline program. The airlines request that your tickets match your full name in your passport (including middle name if shown). If connecting, a 2-hour minimum buffer is important between flights.

OPTIONAL HOTEL UPGRADES:

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

Lima: **JW Marriott Hotel** (overlooking Pacific Ocean in the Miraflores district) or **InterContinental Real Miraflores Hotel**.

Sacred Valley: **Tambo del Inka Hotel** (Luxury Collection) or **Belmond Rio Sagrado Hotel**.
Cusco: **Belmond Monasterio Hotel** (Cusco's original boutique historic hotel with oxygenated rooms, colonial arches & fine colonial artwork) or the luxurious **Belmond Palacio Nazarenas Hotel**.
Machu Picchu: **Belmond Sanctuary Lodge** (located at the entrance gate to Machu Picchu).

Note: Due to high 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 (Day 04):

A private trekking guide accompanies participants who choose to disembark the Vistadome train at Km 104 and hike 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 can sell out 3-4 months or more in advance). Please contact our office for details.

Trip Extensions:

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

SERVICES INCLUDED:

- Comprehensive **pre-departure planning packet** and expert travel advice.
- **In-country transfers** as noted & 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.
- **Meals** when indicated on the itinerary (B=breakfast; L=lunch; D=dinner). **Vegetarian diets accommodated** on request with advanced notification. For other diets, consult your travel advisor before reserving.
- All **guided tours** (as listed) conducted on a private basis 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 8 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 $40-60 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 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.

WEATHER: Much of the World of the Incas Tour 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: Southwind strongly recommends that you purchase optional coverage to protect your trip investment. Having coverage provides peace of mind and is important in case of unexpected trip cancellation due to illness or health/medical condition/injury requiring medical treatment by a physician. Other benefits can include tour delay/interruption from flight issues, weather events, strikes, medical quarantine or emergency accident/illness with evacuation to nearest treatment by US standards. Southwind recommends the **Worldwide Trip Protector Deluxe** from Travel Insured International. We can provide an eQuote on request tailored to your trip. A policy can be purchased directly from TII online or by phone with their customer service in CT at 800-243-3174. You are also welcome to arrange travel insurance coverage through any provider of your choice.

NEXT STEPS: Please contact Southwind to speak with a personal Travel Advisor to help fine tune your travel plans and to receive a custom itinerary with a land cost quote based on your travel dates. You can reach us by filling out our Private Trip Request form, by email at info@southwindadventures.com, by phone at 800-377-9463 or by text to 303-972-0701.

Reservations can be made up to 60 days before departure, provided tour services and hotels are available. Due to the popularity of Machu Picchu and the limited number of visitors per day, 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 confirmed to operate, you will receive pre-departure planning materials, flight booking assistance and advice to help prepare for your exciting vacation in Peru.

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

Southwind Adventures, Inc

Your Latin America Travel Specialist since 1990
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