

General Trip info

Map

Trip Code: IGGZP

Trip Length: 10

Trip starts in: Lima

Trip ends in: Cusco

Meals: 9 Breakfasts included

5 Lunches included

1 Dinners included

Accommodation: Hotel (8 nights), Farmstay (1 night)

Transport: Plane, Private Vehicle, Train, Taxi, Local Bus

Daily Itinerary

Day 1

Lima

Bienvenidos! Welcome to Peru. Your adventure begins with a welcome meeting at 2pm on Day 1. Please look for a note in the hotel lobby or ask reception where this meeting will take place. Afterwards you'll get out and discover the South American foodie hotspot that is Lima. On an afternoon walking tour in the heart of the colonial district you'll see San Martin plaza, visit the nearby San Francisco Monastery and catacombs, then stop past Lima's Central Market. Here you will discover the building blocks of Peruvian cuisine, including mouth-watering fruits, vegetables, meat and fish sourced from all over the country. This walk is also a great taste of Lima's excellent downtown street food scene. Savour a variety of bite-size treats, including 'anticuchos' (grilled beef hearts) and 'papas' (potatoes), 'masamorra' (purple corn), 'arroz con leche' (sweet rice with milk) and 'picarones' (Peruvian doughnuts). Finish up in Lima's main square with the option of dinner downtown or heading back to Miraflores.

Day 2

Lima

Pay a morning visit to the vibrant Chorrillos seafood market, then head to the home of a wonderful cook who will demonstrate the art of preparing mouth-watering ceviche, causa limeña and more. Settle in for lunch around the kitchen table, enjoying these classic staples of Peruvian cuisine and getting a unique insight into local life. In the afternoon, perhaps wander around Miraflores and head towards Parque del Amor (Love's Park) which has superb views across Lima's beaches. You might also want to visit the excellent National Museum of Anthropology, Archaeology and History. Alternatively, catch a taxi to the Gold Museum or the Larco Museum. The latter is renowned for its ancient pottery collection. In the early evening, join a walking tour through the bustling beachside district of Barranco, where the streets are lined with traditional casonas (colonial-style houses). This place is home to some of Peru's best nightlife, and you'll pop into a bar that specialises in the national spirit of Peru – pisco. Choose to grab a bite to eat in Barranco or return to Miraflores.

Day 3

Cusco

Before departing Lima, journey to a pisco distillery outside of the city for an insight into the production of this iconic Peruvian spirit and a tasting at the source. Head to the airport and fly to Cusco (flight approximately 1 hour), arriving mid afternoon. Stroll down the cobblestone streets and discover the town's interesting combination of Spanish and Inca cultures. There are also several impressive Inca ruins within the city to explore. The most easily accessible is Coricancha, which was the Inca empire's richest temple. The evening is free for your own food adventures. Your leader will have plenty of suggestions!

Day 4

Cusco

Today is your chance to get hands-on in the kitchen. Take a stroll around San Pedro market. Due to Cusco's location at the eastern edge of the Andes, there's ready access to locally grown avocados, potatoes (thousands of different types), quinoa and aji picante (hot chilli), to name a few products grown in the area. Learn about Andean ingredients, then join a passionate local cook to prepare some classic Peruvian dishes which you will enjoy over lunch.

Day 5

Sacred Valley to Ollantaytambo

Leaving Cusco, travel by private bus through the Sacred Valley. Known as Wilcamayo to the Incas, this beautiful and fertile valley has long been the lifeblood of the high Andes. Maize crops grow all the way from the riverbank, covering the terraces carved high into the valley walls. Along the way, stop in at Maras, one of the largest salt mines in the region, and Moray – a large complex of ruins with beautiful terraces that form a massive amphitheatre. It's believed that these terraces were an agricultural experiment of the Incas to improve their crop production. Call in on the Chichubamba community in Urubamba. See the fruit and vegetables they grow, be shown methods for extracting honey and learn about corn beer preparation on a chicheria visit before sitting down to a traditional lunch in a local home. Our final food stop today is a tour and tasting at one of the Sacred Valley's first craft breweries. Whet your whistle with a pint of the fruity local IPA, the citrus tinged American pale ale, the caramel malts of the Ayrampo Roja red ale or the hearty chocolate notes of the imperial porter. Arrive in Ollantaytambo, a stunning archaeological site that marks the start of the classic Inca Trail trek. The town itself has been built over an ancient Inca city, which is a beautiful example of Inca urban planning. Take a guided tour of these Inca ruins etched into the cliffs, keeping an eye out for the legendary Temple of the Sun (composed of enormous carved blocks, stone water fountains, Incan stairs and terraces, all surrounded by the misty mountains). This evening is free for your own food adventures.

Day 6

Coffee Farmstay

Take a scenic drive over the Abra Malaga pass, taking in views of Veronica Mountain (the third highest in Cusco) along the way. Continue along the winding road into a mystical land of cloud and thick rainforest as you steer into Huayopata. Lunch is included on arrival into Huayopata. The drive roughly stretches for 2-3 hours without stops, travelling at a slow pace which allows you to absorb the natural beauty of the area. Your first stop takes you to a local cacao plantation. Here, you'll get a hands-on chance to experience the cacao production cycle – from bean to bar. Cacao cultivation has been an important part of Central and South American history for centuries. Peruvian cacao often offers notes of cinnamon, dried fruits, floral hints and more subtleties. Decide for yourself, as you taste this coveted food at its source. After an insightful day of learning about life on the plantation, continue towards a nearby coffee farm where you'll spend the night. Treat yourself to a dinner made from locally sourced produce before spending the evening in your simple, yet comfortable accommodation, soaking in the surrounding countryside.

Day 7

Aguas Calientes

Today offers a hands-on insight into the production of one of the world's favourite drinks – coffee. Wake up and start the day with one of the freshest Peruvian blends you'll ever drink before taking a guided exploration of the coffee farm. Peruvian beans make for an excellent drop, bringing together a mellow acidity with a caramel sweetness and sometimes a nutty undertone. The sweet, medium bodied taste has made this strain a huge hit worldwide, and there's no better place to sample these flavours than here. Experience the production cycle from crop to cup. After an insightful morning on the plantation, farewell your hosts and drive back to Ollantaytambo. Stretch your legs before a train ride through the winding Urubamba Valley to Aguas Calientes. Sitting at the base of Machu Picchu in a picturesque valley, this quaint town takes its name from the numerous hot springs in the area. Settle in to your hotel for a well-earned rest.

Day 8

Machu Picchu to Ollantaytambo

Rise early for a morning tour of Machu Picchu, one of Peru's real highlights. Catching your first glimpse of the lost city of the Incas through the early morning mist is definitely a memorable moment. The ruins of this ancient (and, until 1911, secret) metropolis are beautifully located, hidden high in the Andes and surrounded by lush cloud, with the river Urubamba running through the gorge far below. Take in the amazing views and the fascinating history of the site as your local guide takes you through some of the 200 buildings, houses and temples. Then board a train back to Ollantaytambo (approximately 90 minutes). Visiting Machu Picchu: According to Machu Picchu visiting regulations, all visitors must follow a pre-determined route within the site. This route must be followed in one direction only and once the guided visit commences exiting and re-entering the site is not permitted. Once the guided visit concludes, visitors must exit the site and personal exploration of Machu Picchu is not permitted.

Day 9

Cusco

Stop in at the popular Pisac market, famous for a vast array of local handicrafts. Visit a restaurant and taste delicious empanadas hot and fresh, straight from the horno (a wood-fired oven) . For lunch, take part in an ancient cooking ritual known as 'pachamanca'. This cooking method, which dates back to the time of the Inca empire, sees meats marinated in spices then placed in a huatia (earth oven) with a selection of root vegetables, cooked slowly over hot stones. Your adventure comes to an end back in Cusco, where you may share one last pisco sour overlooking the Plaza de Armas. There's an optional farewell dinner this evening.

Day 10

Cusco

Your Peruvian Real Food Adventure comes to an end this morning. There are no activities planned today and you are free to leave at any time.

Additional Information

Included Activities

Lima - Colonial District City & Food Walk
Lima - Guided tour of San Francisco Monastery including The Catacombs
Lima - Barranco Walk
Lima - Ceviche Cooking Demonstration and Lunch
Cusco - Orientation Walk
Lima - Pisco Distillery Visit and Tasting
Cusco - Andean Cooking Class
Sacred Valley - Brewery Tour and Tasting
Sacred Valley - Moray Incan Archaeological Site
Chichubamba Community Lunch - Sacred Valley
Archaeological Site Visit - Ollantaytambo
Maras - Salt Mines Visit
Pachamanca Experience & Lunch - Sacred Valley
Pisac Market & Empanada Tasting - Sacred Valley

Optional Activities

Lima - Archaeological Museum
Lima - Gold Museum
Lima - Larco Herrera Museum
Lima - Museo de la Nacion
Cusco - Coricancha Temple entrance fee

Notes for Peru

Combining amazing mountainous terrain with lush jungle, fascinating historical ruins and excellent outdoor activities, Peru is deservedly one of the top countries on travellers' lists! Take the Inca Trail to the breathtaking ancient Inca city of Machu Picchu, explore the Amazon jungle with its wealth of flora and fauna, or travel to Arequipa - the beautiful 'White City' beneath the Misti Volcano. Choose to travel overland across the high plains of the Altiplano and Lake Titicaca, visit the mysterious and ancient Nazca Lines, or for something a little different, go white water rafting in the Sacred Valley!

Citizens of the UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada and all EU countries will not need a visa to visit Peru as a tourist for up to 183 days. Citizens of other countries should check with the relevant consulates as to whether a visa is required. If a visa is required, you will need to obtain it in advance. Only a very small number of nationalities will require a visa.

Important Notes

The routes, activities and places visited as described in these trip notes are intentions and are meant as a rough guide only.

These trip notes have been compiled to help you prepare for your journey once you have booked. They include the full itinerary and dates, and information about kit lists, meeting hotels, insurance, vaccinations, visas, and other information that will help you get ready for your trip.

These notes are updated regularly, so please ensure you have an up-to-date version of these trip notes.

The planned route and itinerary is the intention, but exact night stops and inclusions cannot be guaranteed. It occasionally happens that there must be a change to our planned itinerary - this may be for a variety of reasons, such as climatic, road or bureaucratic conditions. By their very nature, adventure travel needs to be approached flexibly and some regions can be unpredictable. Some Imaginative Traveller journeys go through off the beaten track areas, which often have poor infrastructure and less stringent safety standards than we are used to at home.

Our Groups

Our groups are made up of people from around the world and are usually an interesting mix of nationalities and ages. On average there is a pretty even split, males to females and between solo travellers, couples and small groups of friends. We believe that adventure travel should be open to as many people as possible and so although some trips have a minimum age limit, as long as you are fit, healthy and passionate about travel, we are happy to take you. One of the highlights of group travel is the camaraderie and friendships that are formed along the way, and as well as the variety of people that you will meet.

The maximum group size depends on the operator and the style of transport, but will usually be a maximum of 15-16 or up to 21-22 on our overland journeys.

Accommodation

Imaginative Traveller trips are designed for shared accommodation, whether staying in hotels, hostels, homestays or campsites, and therefore do not involve a single supplement. Single travellers will share with people of the same sex for the duration of the trip and those that book together will usually be able to share accommodation.

The type, variety and standard of accommodation will vary greatly depending on what options are available in the region you are travelling; hotels can vary from very basic rooms without electricity or running water to high standard hotels with good facilities! Generally in hotels most rooms will be twin-share. Hostels, gers and yurts are nearly always multi-share.

Many trips will feature a stay in a local homestay or community tourism initiative, allowing us to experience a slice of local life in the areas we travel through. On our overland trips, we will sometimes camp in campsites ranging from rather basic or even wild camps to those with excellent facilities, including swimming pools, restaurants and bars.

Dietary Requirements

If you have any dietary requirements please tell us at the time of booking and also remind your leader at your welcome meeting. Our crew will try to cater for any particular dietary requirement or food intolerance whenever possible.

Health

You need to be in good physical health in order to participate fully in our trips. When selecting your trip

please make sure you have read through the itinerary carefully and assessed your ability to cope with the style of travel on that trip. We are always happy to give extra advice if you have additional concerns. Please note that if, in the opinion of our leader, you are unable to complete the itinerary without undue risk to yourself and/or the rest of the group, Imaginative Traveller or our partner operators reserve the right to exclude you from all or part of the trip.

You should consult your doctor for up-to-date medical travel information prior to travel, particularly if you have a pre-existing medical condition. We also advise you to declare any pre-existing medical conditions to your travel insurers upon purchase.

Altitude

Imaginative Traveller offers some trips that travel to above 2,800m altitude above sea level - it is imperative at high altitudes to drink lots of water to stay hydrated, be careful not to get burned by the sun, and try not to exert yourself too much. Some pre-existing medical conditions are known to severely worsen at high altitude and be difficult to adequately treat on the ground, leading to more serious consequences. It is imperative that you discuss your pre-existing medical condition/s with your doctor. We understand certain medications are reported to aid acclimatising to high altitude; please discuss these options with your doctor.

Yellow Fever

A valid international certificate of vaccination against Yellow Fever is required in many countries. You may need to present this on arrival at the airport or border crossing. Some countries will refuse entry if you are unable to present your certificate - please see each country's note above for details. It's also quite common for your home country to request a Yellow Fever certificate on your arrival back home.

It is your responsibility to check with your doctor well in advance of leaving home about the Yellow Fever requirements for the countries you'll be visiting.

Malaria and other mosquito-borne diseases

Some areas we travel to have the risk of contracting malaria. If this applies to your trip, please get expert advice before travelling about types of malaria pills and take them as instructed. Recommended types do change from time to time and from area to area. Consult your GP / travel clinic for the most up-to-date requirements and to find the right option for you. If advised by your doctor to take a course of anti-malarial tablets, please complete the course as instructed as malaria can often manifest itself upon your return home if the course is not followed.

Other mosquito-borne diseases such as Dengue Fever, Chikungunya and Zika are continuing to spread and becoming a bigger problem around the world. Bite prevention is vital to avoid contracting any of these diseases as there are no vaccines or specific treatments available. Health professionals have issued warnings for pregnant women travelling to areas affected by the Zika virus.

The mosquito usually bites between the hours of dusk and dawn and so covering up by wearing long-legged and long-sleeved clothing, preferably light coloured and buttoned at the wrists, can help. Do not sleep without closing windows, use a mosquito net where possible and use mosquito repellent applied directly to your skin or soaked into your clothing.

Vaccinations

Recommended vaccinations and other health protection vary according to different regions and recent bulletins issued by health authorities. It is essential to get the latest advice on the region(s) you are planning to travel in so please check with either your doctor or travel clinic in good time before you travel.

We also recommend you check out any specific health advice for the country you are travelling to either via your GP or the following websites: www.nathnac.org or www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk

In the UK, we have been working with Nomad Travel for many years and their website has comprehensive,

up-to-date vaccination and health information. You will receive a 10% discount off all vaccinations given at Nomad Travel clinics.

Activities

Included activities are listed in the day-to-day itinerary, all other activities are optional and at your own expense. If you choose not to participate in the included activities on this itinerary, the cost will not necessarily be refunded; this is something you will need to check with your leader.

A selection of optional activities is listed in the day-to-day itinerary. This list is designed to be a helpful guide as to what is commonly available in each location, and is neither an exhaustive list, a guarantee that the activity is available, or an endorsement or recommendation. Please note that certain activities may not be available on your particular visit if they are overbooked, underbooked, out of season, or for any other reason - the list of activities is made according to our latest information and in the best faith, but please be aware that things may change between our last visit and your arrival. Please also note that it may not be possible to do all the activities listed in the time available at each destination, and it is recommended to give yourself extra time in your joining or ending city if you would like to participate in some optional activities there.

If you do any optional activities, you do so at your own risk and it must be clearly understood that your participation is your own decision and does not form part of your contract with Dragoman. You may be required to sign/complete a waiver form or optional activity form for some optional activities.

Insurance

It is a condition of booking that you have comprehensive travel insurance. Without evidence of valid travel insurance you will not be allowed to start the trip. This can be arranged by Imaginative Traveller through our website or by contacting our team of travel consultants.

If you prefer to arrange your insurance independently, it should have a minimum medical (including repatriation) cover of £2,000,000. We recommend that any policy also has a minimum level of cover for Personal Liability of £2,000,000 and for Cancellation and Curtailment of £5,000. Cover for loss of baggage, personal effects, money and other inclusions are down to personal choice although please bear in mind that personal effects are more likely to go missing whilst travelling and you should ensure that your policy is adequate to cover the value of your personal effects e.g. cameras, tablets, phones etc. Please note that Imaginative Traveller and our partner operators are not responsible for your personal effects and are not insured for their loss.

If you prefer to arrange your insurance independently, it should cover you for any activities that you may wish to participate in, such as white-water rafting, trekking, horse-riding, etc. and the 24-hour Emergency Assistance Company must be experienced in handling situations in developing countries if applicable (e.g. they have the ability to arrange repatriation from remote areas such as the Sahara or trekking in the Andes). If you are travelling to high altitude (such as embarking on a trek to the summit of Kilimanjaro), please make sure that this is also covered.

Please double check if you have annual travel and/or credit card policies to ensure they have the cover you require, as many of these policies are not suitable with adventure travel to remote areas. Many credit card medical insurance policies are not valid for travelling outside your country of residence or outside the EU.

Please also check the age limits on any policy you wish to take out and make sure that you thoroughly inform the insurance company of any pre-existing conditions.

Passports

Check that your passport will still be valid for 6 months after the end of the trip - this is important as some countries WILL refuse entry to anyone whose passport is due to expire. A temporary or emergency passport is not valid on our trips. You will need to provide us with your passport details prior to departing for your trip. If you change your passport please remember to inform us.

Pre and Post Trip Accommodation and Transfers

At Imaginative Traveller we believe you should make the most of the places you visit, so if you would like to see more of the joining or finishing point cities, why not book additional accommodation to extend your stay? We can take away the hassle of time zones and language barriers by making the booking for you. This accommodation is only available at the joining or finishing city of your trip, immediately before or after the trip you are travelling on. Please note our rates do not reflect last minute walk-in rates or internet specials.

We can also book arrival airport transfers for you as long as we have your flight arrival details. These are normally payable in cash upon arrival; however we do have pre paid transfers in a few destinations.

Please contact our reservations team for details of the accommodation and transfers that we can offer, as not all hotels offer this service.

Responsible Tourism

Imaginative Traveller is committed to ensuring that we have a positive impact on local communities and that we implement policies to minimise any negative impact on the local environment. We recognise that we are guests of local communities and strive to make them benefit directly from our visit. You can find full details of Imaginative Traveller's responsible tourism policy on our website.

Issues on the trip

While we always endeavour to provide the best possible holiday experience, due to the nature of travel and the areas we visit sometimes things can and do go wrong. Should any issue occur while you are on your trip, it is imperative that you discuss this with your group leader or our local partner straight away so that they can do their best to rectify the problem and save any potential negative impact on the rest of your trip.

We recognise that there may be times when your group leader may not be able to resolve a situation to your satisfaction. If this is the case please contact our customer relations department on

customer-relations@imtrav.net

You may also choose to provide details in your feedback questionnaire which we ask you to complete at the end of your trip, but we do ask you to be aware that it is very difficult for us to provide any practical help after the trip is complete.

Feedback

After your travels, we want to hear from you! We rely on your feedback. We read it carefully. Feedback helps us to understand what we are doing well and what we could be doing better, and it allows us to make improvements for future travellers.