A Classic Machu Picchu Adventure





The Explorer's Passage (TEP) is the premier adventure travel company on the planet. No other operator provides more dynamic outdoor adventure travel experiences in the most raw and stunningly beautiful environments on Earth.

We are a 5 Star Rated Tour Operator. We encourage you to read our Client Testimonials on TripAdvisor by <u>clicking here</u>!

In 2020, we were honored to be selected as a TripAdvisor Travelers' Choice recipient, and also rated in the top 10% of travel companies globally. In 2018 & 2019, we received a TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence for outstanding client reviews.



Newsweek Future of Travel Awards

We are proud to have been a 2021 recipient of the Newsweek <u>Future of Travel Awards</u>, given to "companies and trips that are focused on a forward-thinking traveler and impacting the destinations and communities they touch positively."



Travel & Leisure's Global Vision Award

In 2021, Travel + Leisure awarded The Explorer's Passage a Global Vision Award, given to those *"re-envisioning what tourism looks like, and what it's for — making travel more accessible, and more meaningful, for us all."*



Why Explore With Us?



Exceptional Service

- Small group sizes (average 10 people, maximum 12 people)
- 8:1 average guest-to-guide ratio (one of the lowest in the industry)
- Personalized experiences, no two trips are the same

Insider's Access

- Local guides (the world's best) with ~20+ years tenure
- Intimate immersion into culture, history, people & land
- The experience unfolds with historical insights & deep local knowledge



Creative Itineraries

- No cookie-cutter tours
- Itineraries custom-crafted for each destination
- Structured activities, with room for spontaneity

Adventurers at Heart

- Exhilarating activities showcase the beauty of the region
- Flexible pace/level of difficulty
- Wrap up every day with a sense of accomplishment



Sleep Well. Eat Well.

- The best accommodations each region has to offer
- Tented camps with full support on remote excursions
- Emphasis on local fare, authentic to the region



Responsible Travel

- Low impact to the environment
- Utmost respect for the local people and culture
- Leave No Trace principles incorporated into each adventure

A Peruvian Adventure

Country:	Peru	
Airport*:	Cusco International Airport (CUZ)*	
Trip Dates:	All year long (except February as Inca Trail is closed)	
Trip Duration:	6 Days / 5 Nights [trekking for 1 Day]	
Accommodations:	5 Nights in 3.5 Star / 5 Star / 5+ Star Hotels	
Adventure Activities:	Trekking (total trekking distance: ~7.3 miles / ~11.7 kilometers)	
Adventure Activity Level:	Moderate (for more information, please refer to our <u>Trip</u> <u>Activity Level Guide</u>)	

*Note: international and in-country flights are not included in trip pricing. If you would like assistance booking your flights, we can connect you with Exito Travel, our air travel partner.



The Inca Trail to Machu Picchu

The Inca Trail, or the Camino del Inca, is one of the most important features of South America's past and present, and the trek to Machu Picchu is unlike any other adventure in the world. There are very few trails where you can walk through and experience pre-Columbian South American history like this. On this adventure, you will continuously encounter Incan archaeological sites over 500 years old, and at the end of the trek, you receive a great reward as you ascend the Sun Gate and reach the legendary Machu Picchu citadel.

Another factor that makes the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu trek one of the best adventure experiences on the planet is the diversity of the terrain that you will encounter along the way. Whether you are climbing stone staircases, crossing wooden bridges over rivers, weaving through lush jungles, or navigating through cloud forests surrounded by mountain peaks, it is truly a once-in-a-lifetime journey. Along the way, you may even spot curious llamas, alpacas, foxes, spectacled bears, enormous condors, and various other fascinating Peruvian fauna!

The high-altitude ruins of Machu Picchu are located on a mountain ridge 7,972 feet / 2,430 meters above sea level at the end of the Classic Inca Trail Route, in Urubamba Province. When looking at a map or satellite imagery of Machu Picchu, you can see that it is hidden within deep forestation, 50 miles northwest of Cusco (the former Inca capital).

Known as one of the 'New Seven Wonders of the World' and officially recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, there are plenty of excellent reasons to visit Machu Picchu at least once! As the most widely recognized surviving symbol of the Inca Empire and one of the most important archeological sites discovered on Earth, this Andean landmark is guaranteed to excite even the most experienced adventurer. Striking in both its natural beauty and rich cultural heritage, each year thousands of people come from all over the world to explore the site's temple complexes, residential areas, iconic gateways, and more. The Inca Trail to Machu Picchu trek is for any adventurer who is ready to travel back through history and follow in the footsteps of our Inca predecessors.

Peruvian Regions To Explore

Cusco

Every odyssey through the Sacred Valley should begin and end at Cusco. This is the ancient capital of the Inca, a city steeped in myth and legend, perched on the cusp of the high Andes, and brimming with culture and history at every seam. Cusco enthralls with stunning colonial-era architecture. Head to the bustling Plaza de Armas to encounter one of the finest Baroque cathedrals in South America. Go to San Blas for cobbled alleys and sweeping views. Or feel the pulse of the city at the San Pedro Market and in the backpacker bars that come alive after dark. The city is the perfect place to start for all things to do in the Sacred Valley.

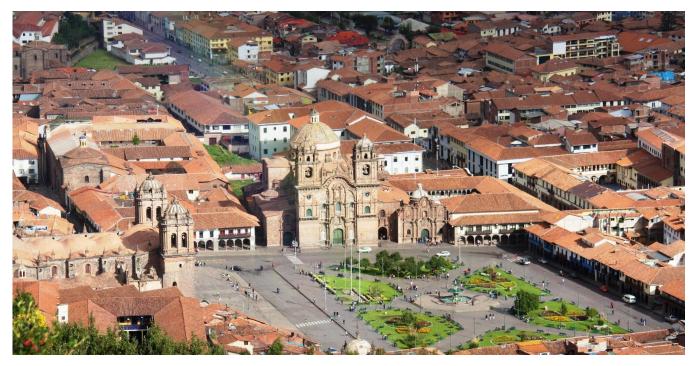
The Sacred Valley

The Sacred Valley is filled with trekking routes that skirt rocky mountain ridges and trails once walked by pre-Columbian civilizations. There are bustling market towns where weavers and farmers ply their trades, along with rushing rivers and salt pans carved into the mountains. And that's not even mentioning the wealth of bucket-list UNESCO sites and archaeological highlights that pepper the highlands, including the instantly-recognizable terraces and temples of Machu Picchu.

Aguas Calientes

The town of Aguas Calientes came into being after the completion of the Sacred Valley railway in the 1920s. It is a key destination for history buffs and trekkers alike, largely because of its immediate proximity to Machu Picchu, just up the mountain from the town. If you are completing the Classic Inca Trail, the Salkantay Trek, or coming to see Machu Picchu on a day trip from Ollantaytambo, you are sure to pass through Aguas Calientes. In the town, there are backpacker hostels and bars that buzz with the excited chatter of people fresh off the trails. Aguas Calientes does have one other claim to fame, and the clue is in the name: hot water. There are several natural hot springs here that are a gift for weary walkers. Look for them up a narrow cleft in the Andes to the north-east of the town.

Day 1: Arrival in Cusco, Peru



Bienvenidos a Peru! Upon arrival at Cusco International Airport, you will be greeted by a member of our team (your private driver will be waiting for you outside the terminal, holding a sign with the T.E.P. logo and your name[s]). Experience the scenery and history in the beautiful capital city of Cusco as you are transported to your hotel. This afternoon and evening, after settling in, you will have free time to explore this extraordinary high-altitude city (~11,000 feet / ~3,350 meters above sea level) and enjoy dinner with a special VIP guest at one of our favorite Cusco restaurants. Your guide will also coordinate with you to provide a detailed pre-trek Inca Trail briefing on Day 1.

Transportation Notes:

Private Transfer from Cusco Airport to Hotel

Start time: upon arrival at airport

Length of ride/trip: ~30 minutes

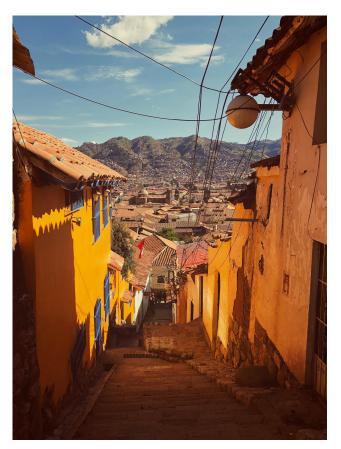
Other Notes: for dinner, a TEP representative will meet you at your hotel and walk you to the restaurant.

Please also note that all times listed in this itinerary are an estimate and may change slightly due to various factors. We do give our guides the flexibility to make small changes throughout your adventure in order to maximize your experience. Your guide will speak to you about any potential changes. Recommendations for things to do/see in Cusco are included later in this

Accommodations: Novotel (3.5 Star), Palacio del Inka (5 Star), or Belmond Palacio Nazarenas (5+ Star) Meals: Dinner

itinerary.

Day 2: Cusco Tour



Today is your first full day in Peru! After a delicious breakfast, you will set out to explore Cusco on a private half-day van/walking tour, where you will be able to truly experience the sights, sounds, and main attractions of one of South America's most impressive cities (which is also a UNESCO World Heritage Site). The tour will take you to visit the heart of this city and its emblematic highlights. You will travel by van to explore the archaeological sites at Sacsayhuaman, Tambomachay, Pukapukara, and Q'enqo, and will travel by foot to the Cusco Cathedral and the incredible Qorikancha temple. You will undoubtedly be struck by the unlikely yet intriguing intersection of antiquity and modernity in this ancient capital city of the Inca Empire, as fashionable Cusqueñans share the sidewalk with rural campesinos on busy avenues and plazas, the latter often dressed in traditional garb and sometimes leading

parcel-laden alpacas or donkeys. Following this tour, you will have the afternoon and evening to explore the city on your own. For lunch and dinner, you will be able to experience the gastronomy of the city at your leisure, at restaurants of your choosing.

Transportation Notes:

Private Transfer from Hotel to Half-Day City Tour (and back)

Start time: 9:00 AM

Length of ride/trip: ~4 hours

Other Notes: please ensure you speak to your hotel's front desk in order to arrange a pre-packed breakfast for the following morning, as the morning transfer to the trailhead will be very early.

There are weight limits for what you can bring on the trek (for more information, please see the page titled "Baggage Size/Weight Limits" later in this itinerary). You can ask your hotel about leaving your luggage and anything not needed for the trek there until your return.

Accommodations: Novotel (3.5 Star), Palacio del Inka (5 Star), or Belmond Palacio Nazarenas (5+ Star) Meals: Breakfast (at hotel), Lunch

Day 3: Sacred Valley Tour



After breakfast you will enjoy a full-day tour of Maras, Moray, and Ollantaytambo and enjoy a restaurant or picnic lunch. In the evening, you will have dinner and rest up before you embark on the Inca Express trail tomorrow. Join us as we ride to the Sacred Valley to begin our full-day guided tour at Moray, where you will have the privilege of exploring one of the earliest agricultural experimental "labs" in existence on

the planet. It is believed that the beautiful and elegantly constructed descending circular terraces were used to support a variety of microclimates, encouraging the growth of specific crops that are attuned to each climate. We'll next enjoy a picnic lunch surrounded by spectacular mountain scenery. We'll shortly arrive in Maras, famously known for its spectacular mountainside salt ponds. Here residents "mine" 3,000 bright white and multicolored salt ponds, which are divided among local families. You will be able to observe the saltpans from a viewpoint and taste the famous Maras salt, known for its beneficial health properties. You'll get a glimpse into a lifestyle very different from your own, as you learn about the techniques used to extract this mineral-rich condiment. In the afternoon, we'll head to Ollantaytambo, a town that still retains the original street planning set in place by the Incas centuries ago. Climb the ancient stone steps of the archeological Inca fortress, which is arranged as a series of terraces and platforms with amazing views of the surrounding mountains.

Transportation Notes:

Other Notes:

Private Transfer from Hotel to Sacred Valley Tour (and back)

1

Start time: 9:00 AM

Length of ride/trip: ~4 hours

Accommodations: Casa Andina (3.5 Star), Tambo del Inka (5 Star), or Sol y Luna (5+ Star) Meals: Breakfast (at hotel), lunch

Day 4: Inca Trail Express Hike



After breakfast, we will meet our private transportation and head to the town of Ollantaytambo, where we'll board the train. The train will chug alongside the Urubamba River in the Sacred Valley; we'll see a noticeable change in our surroundings as we enter the verdant and misty cloud forest of the Machu Picchu Sanctuary. We'll disembark at

KM104 and cross a hanging bridge that spans the mighty river, and visit the ruins of Chachabamba, which is believed to have been a spiritual center dedicated to water deities. Now it's a 3-hour ascent to a second important spiritual center, Wiñay Wayna. These ruins are built into a steep slope on the way up to the Sun Gate. After we explore for a bit, we'll cut across the ridge above Machu Picchu to reach Inti Punku, Gate of the Sun. This is a dramatic moment, as we look down on the magnificent Machu Picchu ruins spread out far below, gaining a glimpse into a mystical, forgotten world. We'll spend the night in a hotel in the village of Machu Picchu.

Transportation Notes:

1	2
Private Transfer to Ollantaytambo	Train ride to KM104
Start time: ~6:00 AM	Start time: ~8:00 AM
Length of trip: ~2 hours	Length of trip: ~1.5 hours

Other Notes: today's hike is approximately 7.3 miles / 11.7 kilometers (~6 hours of hiking)

Accommodations: El Mapi (3.5 Star), Machu Picchu Pueblo (5 Star), or Belmond Sanctuary Lodge (5+ Star) Meals: Breakfast (at hotel), Lunch, and Dinner

Day 5: Machu Picchu Sanctuary (Standard Train Option)



Now that you have experienced the beautiful Inca Trail, you will hike Huayna Picchu in the morning which will be followed by lunch. Then you will have time to explore the ancient ruins of Machu Picchu (7,972 feet / 2,430 meters above sea level) on a three-hour guided tour. As part of the enhanced experience, you will do the

Circuit 2 tour route (the longer route through the citadel). Having the privilege of wandering the various sectors and entering some of the houses and temples will really bring this iconic site to life and leave you with a sense of reverence and awe for what the Inca were able to achieve so long ago. This will be followed by a scenic train ride to Ollantaytambo Station. From there, you will be transported by private vehicle to your hotel in Cusco.

Transportation Notes:

1	2
Train Ride from M. Picchu to Ollantaytambo Station	Private Transfer from Station to Hotel in Cusco
Start time: ~4:30 PM	Start time: upon arrival at station
Length of trip: ~1.75 hours	Length of trip: ~2 hours

Other Notes: hiking Huayna Picchu is based on permit availability. If permits for this are not available, you will instead aim to hike Machu Picchu Mountain. For more information on these hikes, please see the next page of this itinerary.

To get you back to Cusco faster for a more enjoyable experience, we include a private transfer from Ollantaytambo Station to Cusco. Upon your return to Cusco, you will collect your other belongings at the hotel. For dinner in Cusco, we recommend having a reservation already in place (which we can help to make on your behalf).

Note: depending on the structure of your tour, the order in which you hike Huayna Picchu (or M.P. Mountain), tour the citadel, and have lunch may vary.

Accommodations: Novotel (3.5 Star), Palacio del Inka (5 Star), or Belmond Palacio Nazarenas (5+ Star) Meals: Breakfast (at hotel), Lunch

Day 5: Machu Picchu Sanctuary (Hiram Bingham Option)



Now that you have experienced the beautiful Inca Trail, you will hike Huayna Picchu in the morning which will be followed by lunch. Then you will have time to explore the ancient ruins of Machu Picchu (7,972 feet / 2,430 meters above sea level) on a three-hour guided tour. As part of the enhanced experience, you will do the Circuit 2 tour route (the longer route through the citadel).

Having the privilege of wandering the various sectors and entering some of the houses and temples will really bring this iconic site to life and leave you with a sense of reverence and awe for what the Inca were able to achieve so long ago. This will be followed by a luxury train ride on the Hiram Bingham to Ollantaytambo Station which features an included dinner. From there, you will be transported by private vehicle to your hotel in Cusco.

Transportation Notes:

1	2
Hiram Bingham Train Ride from M. Picchu to Ollantaytambo Station	Private Transfer from Station to Hotel in Cusco
Start time: ~5:50 PM	Start time: upon arrival at station
Length of trip: ~1.75 hours	Length of trip: ~2 hours

Note: depending on the structure of your tour, the order in which you hike Huayna Picchu (or M.P. Mountain), tour the citadel, and have lunch may vary. Please be aware that the Hiram Bingham service typically only runs every Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday & Sunday, Please check with our team on availability. Other Notes: hiking Huayna Picchu is based on permit availability. If permits for this are not available, you will instead aim to hike Machu Picchu Mountain. For more information on the hikes and your luxury train ride to Cusco, please see the next pages of this itinerary. To get you back to Cusco faster for a more enjoyable experience, we include a private transfer from Ollantaytambo Station to Cusco. Upon your return to Cusco, you will collect your other belongings at the hotel. For dinner in Cusco, we recommend having a reservation already in place (which we can help to make on your behalf).

Accommodations: Novotel (3.5 Star), Palacio del Inka (5 Star), or Belmond Palacio Nazarenas (5+ Star) Meals: Breakfast (at hotel), Lunch, dinner

Hiram Bingham Train



The Hiram Bingham train takes passengers on a luxurious journey through the Peruvian highlands towards the Lost City of the Incas, Machu Picchu. The train is named after Hiram Bingham, the American explorer who rediscovered Machu Picchu in 1911, and it celebrates the thrill of early exploration with added elegance and a lively atmosphere.

The Hiram Bingham train was launched in 2003, and it quickly became a popular choice for luxury rail travel in Peru. The train's chassis were manufactured in South Africa, and the carriages were furnished by the French company Compagnie Des Internationales Wagons-Lits, making it an international effort. The train's interiors evoke the classic parlour cars of the 1920s, featuring wood-panelled walls, brass finishes, and vibrant colors and motifs that reflect Peru's rich cultural heritage. The journey aboard the Hiram



Bingham train promises to be a once-in-a-lifetime experience, as mystical as the destination itself. Passengers can marvel at the breathtaking landscapes between Cusco and Machu Picchu, including fertile valleys and soaring mountains. Along the way, they can enjoy classic Peruvian flavors and gourmet cuisine, accompanied by live traditional music performances in the Bar Car. The Hiram Bingham train is a tribute to the enduring allure of Machu Picchu and the fascinating history of the Inca Empire. It offers passengers a chance to immerse themselves in the magic of this ancient land in unparalleled comfort and style.



Day 5: Machu Picchu Sanctuary (Cont'd.)

Huayna Picchu

Please note: if you have an aversion to heights, the hike up Huayna Picchu may not be suitable for you, because it is quite steep and much of the hike is on a 3 - 4 foot wide path with open exposure and significant drops on one side of the trail.

Huayna Picchu means "Young Peak" in the Quechua language. It is the mountain that rises over Machu Picchu, reaching 8,920 feet / 2,719 meters above sea level and offering magnificent views of the citadel and surrounding area. The Incas built a trail up the side of Huayna Picchu, leading to temples and terraces on its top. These were also the residences for the high priest and local virgins. Every morning before sunrise, the high priest would walk down to Machu Picchu with a small group to mark the arrival of the new day. The Temple of the Moon, one of the three major temples in the Machu Picchu area, is nestled into the side of the mountain. Adjacent to the Temple of the Moon is the Great Cavern, another sacred site with fine masonry. The round-trip hike up Huayna Picchu is approximately 2.5 miles / 4 kilometers and takes approximately 2 – 3 hours.

Machu Picchu Mountain

Machu Picchu Mountain is the highest peak behind the Inca citadel, opposite Huayna Picchu. The mountain had a special meaning for the Incas, because two rivers that come from the two most sacred mountains are joined below it: the Urubamba River (originating in the Ausangate area) arrives from the southeast, and the Aobamba River (originating from the Salkantay Mountain area) arrives from the west. To head for the summit, hikers start at the Machu Picchu site. Along the winding trail, hikers are surrounded by biodiverse flora and fauna such as orchids and begonias, ferns, and hummingbirds. Those that reach the summit are welcomed by a small shelter, providing protection from the sun, as well as 360° panoramic views of the Machu Picchu citadel and the surrounding area. The trail is well maintained, but with many steps. The round-trip hike up Machu Picchu Mountain is approximately 2.5 miles / 4 kilometers and takes approximately 2.5 – 3.5 hours.



For pricing, dates, & more details please call 855-208-6800 or visit us at www.explorerspassage.com

Day 6: Final Day in Peru



Today you will enjoy your last morning in Peru before being transferred by private vehicle from your hotel to Cusco International Airport for your flight home.

Transportation Notes:

Private Transfer from Hotel to Cusco International Airport

1

Start time: variable (depending on flight time)

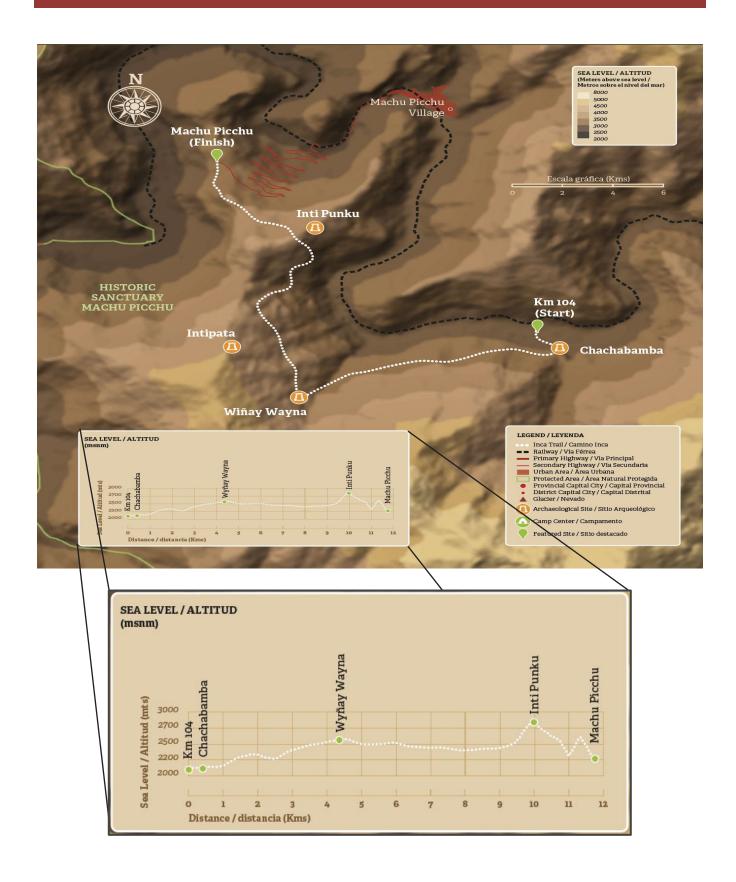
Length of ride/trip: ~30 minutes

Other Notes: we encourage you to arrive at the airport at least two hours prior to your flight's scheduled departure time. If your flight's departure time is later in the day (e.g. later in the afternoon or evening), you can leave your luggage with the hotel's front desk and explore Cusco a bit more!

Accommodations: N/A M

Meals: Breakfast (at hotel)

Route Map – Inca Trail Express



Sustainability and Responsible Trekking

The Explorer's Passage is a proud member of Sustainable Travel International, a partner/supporter of the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics, and a supporter of the Center for Responsible Travel (CREST).

In addition to 'Leave No Trace' principles, the concepts of sustainability and responsible trekking are at the forefront of our Sacred Valley journeys. As part of this commitment, we do the following:

- We minimize single-use plastic and require trekkers to have reusable water bottles and/or reservoirs
- We pack out all our litter
- We charge equipment using portable solar panels
- We use biodegradable soaps
- We minimize disruptions to wildlife and Sacred Valley communities (this includes noise moderation)
- We do not allow collecting of plants, rocks, or other items from the trail
- We only use authorized paths to prevent erosion and damage/disrespect to archaeological and cultural sites
- We prioritize the use of organic, locally-sourced ingredients for our meals and compost food scraps



Adventure Details

Our adventures are all-inclusive, crafted with the intent of providing you with an unforgettable adventure travel experience. From a detailed pre-departure information package to your trail permits and support vehicles, we've thought of everything – so all you have to do is show up at the airport!

During your trip, our knowledgeable guides and support staff take care of the details of your transportation, lodging, meals, permits, and activities. We've even scheduled in a bit of free time for you to explore, relax, shop, or eat on your own.

For this trip, the following inclusions/exclusions apply:

WHAT IS INCLUDED:

- □ Comprehensive pre-departure information package that includes trip details, all applicable forms, and packing list
- □ T.E.P. support before and during the entire trip
- □ All lodging (hotels in cities)
- □ Most meals (though all meals included on the trekking days), as noted in the itinerary
- **D** Experienced, bilingual professional guides
- □ All support vehicles and ground/train transportation
- □ Airport transfers
- Permits and entrance fees (incl. guided tour of Machu Picchu site)
- **u** Rubber-tipped trekking poles
- □ Private tour of Cusco, as noted in the itinerary
- □ All local taxes

WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED:

- Travel expenses between your home and Peru
- Domestic air travel expenses within Peru
- □ Airport taxes (if any)
- Excess or overweight baggage charges
- Pre- and post-trip accommodations or activities
- Optional hotel/lodging services and activities (e.g. spa service, room service, laundry, etc.)
- Personal items
- Insurance of any kind
- Cost of medical immunizations
- Alcoholic beverages
- Gratuities for dining, housekeeping, trip leaders, guides, drivers, and other local staff (as applicable)

Trip Activity Level Index

Moderate Level Adventure**: this trip includes hiking the Inca Trail Express Route to Machu Picchu in the Andes mountains. Although the trip does not require any technical climbing or mountaineering skills, excellent physical condition is a prerequisite, as terrain is varied and trekking day can be long. You will also be hiking at higher altitudes during the trek than you may be accustomed to.

**for more information, please refer to our <u>Trip Activity Level</u> <u>Guide</u>.

This trip will involve the following physical activities:

- Light walking as you explore the city of Cusco and the Sacred Valley
- Hiking the Inca Trail Express: on this express route of the Inca Trail, you will hike 7.3 miles / 11.7 kilometers – for a total of around 6 hours of trekking. Terrain varies and includes several ascents and descents.
- Exploring Machu Picchu, and hiking Huayna Picchu or Machu Picchu Mountain. The round-trip hike up Huayna Picchu is ~2.5 miles / 4 km and takes ~2–3 hours, and the round-trip hike up M.P. Mountain is ~2.5 miles / 4 km and takes ~2.5-3.5 hours.



Weather in Peru

The information below is for general guidance on the temperatures and conditions that you may experience in Peru as you visit different parts of the country. Please note that you could experience temperatures and conditions outside of this range depending on weather conditions and time of year.

Cusco, the Sacred Valley, and Aguas Calientes: generally, this higher-altitude region in southern Peru features a subtropical but semi-arid highland climate. In the summer months (October through April), average high temperatures are around 66-81°F (19-27°C) and average lows are around 41-50°F (5-10°C). In the winter months (May through September), average high temperatures are around 66-77°F (19-25°C) and average lows are around 66-77°F (19-25°C) and average lows are around 66-77°F (19-25°C) and average lows are around 32-46°F (0-8°C). Cusco is usually cooler than the Machu Picchu area.

Conditions along the Inca Trail: conditions and weather along the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu can be quite variable, ranging from below 30°F (-1°C) at night to 80°F (26.5°C) during the day. Trails are often windy. The rainy season lasts from December to March, and during that time trails can get somewhat muddier. The dry season generally lasts from April through September and is therefore a very popular time of year for hiking the Inca Trail.



Trip Guide

What truly sets The Explorer's Passage apart are our Trip Leaders. Simply put, they are the best in the industry, selected for their professionalism, contagious energy, and deep-rooted expertise. Committed to taking care of your every need and to 'wowing' you with an uncanny attention to detail, there's nothing our guides and trip leaders enjoy more than sharing their intimate knowledge of the land, culture, traditions and legends unique to the beautiful places they call home. Below, meet one of our guides in Peru:

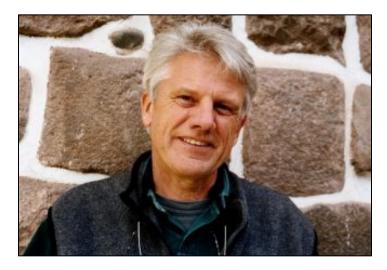


Neptali Ormachea

Without planning to, Neptali found a career in tourism. Ever since, he has not been able to go a day without travel and adventure. Following his degree in Production Mechanics, he went back to school in 2004 to study tourism in the hopes of improving and specializing in what he enjoyed most. Originally from Cusco, Neptali will make your trip to Peru unforgettable, sharing with you his knowledge about Peruvian culture, customs and history. He does not see his work as a job. For Neptali, it is simply a chance for him to share his passion for incredible adventure and the history of his country. Neptali was introduced to tourism in the kitchen where, little by little, he began to dabble in other areas. He quickly went from kitchen assistant to chef to guide assistant and finally the great guide that he is today. A trip with Neptali will be perfect for any type of traveler because he has learned everything he knows in the field and can go into detail about each of the places you'll visit on your trip.

Day 1 Cusco Dinner - VIP Guest

Peter Frost



Peter Frost is a famous British writer, photographer, and archaeologist who has spent the past 40+ years exploring the Andes and Amazon. In 1987 he made the move to Peru after having fallen in love with Cusco. During this time he wrote four books, including a guide to Cusco and Machu Picchu.

One of his greatest achievements happened in 1999 when he discovered an old and previously

unknown Inca and pre-Inca site in Vilcabamba called Qoriwayrachina, a Quechua word that means 'where the wind refines gold.' In 2001, he revisited the site with a group of archaeologists.

After many years of living, exploring, and learning about the Andes and Amazon, Peter Frost now guides and lectures on topics like Andean culture, Machu Picchu, Andean technology, the conquest of the Incas, and the rise and fall of Inca civilization. All of his lectures are highly regarded by travelers and are based on his investigations. Frost's most famous lecture is on Andean cultures, the region's difficult geography, and environmental variation. Most of his lecture is focused on the Incas but he also dives into the early years of the Caral culture. Often he brings his own investigations into the lecture, going deeper into topics like Choquequirao, Vilcabamba, and the Incas versus the Spanish and explorers.

Frost's other lecture is about Machu Picchu. It covers the varying perspectives about the site while sharing lesser-known information about the famous citadel. His lecture on Andean technology includes how the Incas cultivated and domesticated crops and how they employed stone construction, irrigation, and terraces. In his lecture about the conquest of the Incas, Frost talks about the Atahualpas and Cajamarca, Manco Inca, Vilcabamba, and the Incas that helped the Spanish. He can also share his knowledge and investigations about the expansion and fall of the Incas.

(Additional note: Mr. Frost's dinner and time are included as part of your trip pricing.)

Accommodations: 3.5 Star Hotels Package

Novotel | Cusco, Peru



The centrally located Novotel Cusco hotel is the perfect base for exploring this historic city and the surrounding area. The colonial and modern architecture continues in the spacious rooms, which offer free wifi. Relax under the shade of the canopy on the patio of this old colonial house while sipping coca tea. **Check-in time:** 3:00 PM **Check-out time:** 12:00 PM

Website: https://all.accor.com/hotel/3254/index.en.shtml

Casa Andina Premium Valle Sagrado Hotel & Villas | Urubamba, Peru

The hotel is located in the Sacred Valley of Cusco. It's only a 30-minute bus drive away from the City of Cusco. It's a cozy environment in the middle of the Urubamba Valley. Ideal if you want to relax and be close to the main tourist attractions of the valley. Alma Restaurant & Bar offers a breakfast buffet and a wide range of dishes. The hotel has games for



children and they can also feed the sheep. The hotel organizes "pachamancas" [traditional Peruvian dish made with the aid of hot stones, of lamb, mutton, pork, chicken or guinea pig, marinated in spices].

Check-in time: 12:00 PM Check-out time: 10:00 AM Website:

https://www.casa-andina.com/en/destinations/valle-sagrado/hotels/casa-andina-premium-valle-sagrado-hotel-&-villas El Mapi | Aguas Calientes, Peru

Step into the smart, contemporary and cozy confines of El Mapi, amidst the picturesque Machu Picchu Pueblo. Discover an efficient, lively and friendly atmosphere, welcoming guests expecting an unfussy, down-to-earth break. The flowing lobby creates a sense of vitality. Lofty ceilings, panoramic windows and an open café allow natural light to filter between tall eucalyptus dried branches, creating an ambience of order and wellbeing. Relax in a pleasant and wholesome ambience after your enlightening visit to Peru's most famous destination: Machu Picchu!

Check-in time: 1:00 PM Check-out time: 10:00 AM Website: https://www.inkaterra.com/byinkaterra/el-mapi-hotel/the-experience/

Accommodations: 5 Star Hotels Package

Palacio del Inka | Cusco, Peru



One of the finest hotels in Peru and part of Starwood Resorts' Luxury Collection, the Palacio del Inka is a 16th century mansion once occupied by Gonzalo Pizarro, half-brother of Francisco Pizarro (the Spanish conquistador who conquered Peru). Located in the heart of Cusco, it is

walking distance to shops, restaurants, and museums and is located across from the Koricancha, the most sacred temple in the Inca Empire. The spacious rooms combine Peruvian art and handcrafted furnishings with state-of-the-art technology. The on-site restaurant, Inti Raymi, serves authentic Andean specialties, with ingredients organically grown in the Sacred Valley. Take advantage of the full service spa that draws on the ancient healing mysticism of the Andes.

Check-in time: 2:00 PM Check-out time: 12:00 PM

Website: http://www.palaciodelinkahotel.com

Tambo del Inka | Urubamba, Peru

Escape to a luxurious and mystical journey at Tambo del Inka, a Luxury Collection Resort & Spa. This hotel in Peru is nestled in the heart of the Sacred Valley and stands as a doorway to the vast cultural richness of this region. You'll love lingering in your elegantly designed hotel room or suite with mesmerizing views of the Andes and the Vilcanota River from a private balcony. Savor the dining options available, with on-site restaurants featuring organic ingredients and local products.



Check-in time: 3:00 PM Check-out time: 12:00 PM

Website https://www.marriott.com/en-us/hotels/cuztl-tambo-del-inka-a-luxury-collection-resort-and-spa-valle-sagrado

Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel | Aguas Calientes, Peru

Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel is an intimate Andean village with terraced hills, waterfalls, stone pathways and 83 whitewashed adobe casitas tucked away in the cloud forest. The property has 12 acres of natural beauty, where 214 bird species – such as the golden-headed quetzal and the iconic Andean cock-of-the-rock – and the world's largest native orchid collection (372 species) have been registered.



The hotel also features an on-site restaurant overlooking the river, as well as a relaxing spa and sauna.

Check-in time: 1:00 PM Check-out time: 10:00 AM

Website: https://www.inkaterra.com/inkaterra/inkaterra-machu-picchu-pueblo-hotel/the-experience/

For pricing, dates, & more details please call 855-208-6800 or visit us at www.explorerspassage.com

Accommodations: 5+ Star Hotels Package

Belmond Palacio Nazarenas | Cusco, Peru



Bedding down in a former convent isn't necessarily what you might expect. Lovingly restored, 17th-century architecture gives each artistic room and suite a distinctly colonial feel. Recline on a four-poster bed splashed with hand-embroidered silk coverlets. Bathe beneath hand-painted frescos using soap perfumed by the Palacio's own flowers. Some suites feature original Inca stonework; others boast balconies with hypnotic views of Cusco's distant, mist-wrapped mountains.

Check-in time: 2:00 PM Check-out time: 12:00 PM

Website: https://www.belmond.com/hotels/south-america/peru/cusco/belmond-palacio-nazarenas/

Sol y Luna | Urubamba, Peru

Each of their forty-three casitas is surrounded by gardens filled with flora native to the Sacred Valley and all face the Andes Mountains where the Incas believed their gods dwelled. Within each sanctuary, an outdoor terrace leads into the high ceilinged living space with terra cotta tile floors and some of our favorite Sacred Valley artifacts, Spanish colonial style furniture, a king size bed or two double beds made with goose feather



duvets and Peruvian pima cotton sheets, and a spacious marble bathroom with deep soak bathtub.

Check-in time: 11:00 AM Check-out time: 10:00 AM

Website: https://www.hotelsolyluna.com/

Belmond Sanctuary Lodge | Aguas Calientes, Peru



Sitting in the shadows of the Lost City, our lodge is an oasis of calm before or after a day exploring Machu Picchu. Unwind with a yoga session, take part in a traditional shaman ceremony in the garden, or sip muña tea in Tampu Bar. Tranquility, wonder and beauty are at the heart of our unique experience. Cool botanical fabrics are offset by cherry-colored woods.

King-sized beds provide space to unwind. Outside your windows, the mountains ripple into the distance.Signature dishes like a Jungle Landscape salad or Sacred Valley grilled trout evoke the Andean setting. Take a seat and let our authentic menu kickstart your Peruvian adventure.

Check-in time: 1:00 PM Check-out time: 11:00 AM

Website: https://www.belmond.com/hotels/south-america/peru/machu-picchu/belmond-sanctuary-lodge

MEALS IN TOWNS/CITIES

The following applies to all included meals (when applicable):

Breakfast: all breakfasts at hotels will be a la carte or buffet style.

Lunch: all lunches will include bottled water, an appetizer, a main entrée, and a dessert.

Dinner: all dinners will be a la carte three-course meals that include an appetizer, a main entrée, and a dessert. Drinks are not included.

DRINKING WATER GUIDANCE

As a precaution, we advise you to only drink bottled water at restaurants and at hotels (this includes exercising caution with ice cubes as well as when considering uncooked food options such as salads, as the produce may have been rinsed/washed in local tap water). In the lobbies of some hotels, there are water stations available with filtered water.

EATING/DRINKING AT ALTITUDE

You will be landing in Cusco at approximately 11,000 feet above sea level. We suggest you eat light on your first day, as higher altitudes can affect digestion. For food safety, we also recommend that you do not eat any 'street food' and only eat at higher quality restaurants in Peru. Also, drinking alcohol at higher elevations can negatively affect you, so if you do decide to drink please do so in moderation.

Restaurant Recommendations: Cusco

Baco



Pizzas baked to perfection, exquisite seafood, Argentinean steaks, and great wine. Open daily from 15:30 to 22:30 hrs. Address: Ruinas 465 / T: +51 (84) 242 808

Pachapapa



A beautiful patio restaurant set in a colonial house, and serving excellent typical Andean dishes. Walk-ins are welcome for lunch, dinner is by reservation only. Open daily from 12:00 to 18:00 hrs., with only two times for dinner, at 19:00 and 21:00 hrs. Address: Plazoleta San Blas 120 / T: +51 (84) 241 318

<u>Top Peruvian meals</u> <u>to try:</u>

- Ceviche
- Lomo Saltado
- Anticuchos
- Papa la Huancaina
- Aji de Gallina
- Causa Rellena
- If you enjoy cocktails, try a Pisco Sour!



MAP Café

In the central courtyard of the Museum of Pre-Columbian (MAP), this café serves regionally-inspired plates. Open daily from 12:00 to 15:00 hrs., and from 18:00 to 22:00 hrs. Address: Plaza de las Nazarenas 231 / T: +51 (932) 929 474



INKAGRILL

INKAGRILL specializes in innovative dishes and Novo Andino cuisine, and also serves homemade pastries to go. Open daily from 11:30 to 00:30 hrs. Address: Portal de Panes 115, Main Square (Plaza de Armas) / T: +51 (84) 254 753 ext. 31

Incanto



A contemporary Italian restaurant featuring delicious pastas and various specialties from the grill. Open daily from 11:00 to 23:00 hrs. Address: Santa Catalina Angosta 135 / T: +51 (84) 254 753 ext. 20



Calle del Medio

A Creole/Peruvian kitchen. Open daily from 12:00 to 22:00 hrs. Address: Calle del Medio 113, Main Square (Plaza de Armas) / T: +51 (84) 248 340

San Blas Neighborhood (just a few blocks from the Main Square / Plaza de Armas)

In this neighborhood, you can find famous artisans and their many beautiful works of art. You can also visit the San Blas Observatory to see the entire city of Cusco. You can walk there via the C. Hatunrumiyoc cobblestone street (where the famous 12 Angled Stone is located). Continuing along this street you will reach the small but beautiful Plaza de San Blas. There is also a wonderful authentic Peruvian market in the San Blas neighborhood, which we would encourage you to visit.

Chocolate Museum (address: Plaza Regocijo 216)

Here, you can learn all about the cacao bean in Peru, the complete process of chocolate-making, as well as the history of chocolate through the centuries from the pre-Columbian era to today. Moreover, you will be able to have the ultimate experience with an amazing workshop called "Bean to bar" where you will prepare and take home your own chocolate.

Tika Chocolates (address: Avenida El Sol 823)

Tika Chocolates has some of the best chocolates in the city, made with ingredients from the Cusco region. Come and try their delicious hot chocolate or their liquors made from Peruvian pisco mixed with cacao fruits or herbs. Simply delicious!

Pisco Museum (address: Sta. Catalina Ancha 398)

At the Pisco Museum, you can learn more about and taste the famous Peruvian liquor. You can also learn about the process used to make the final product: the delicious Pisco Sour.

12 Angled Stone (address: C. Hatunrumiyoc 480)

This famous stone is recognized by the fine finishing and twelve-angled border, a very good example of perfectionist Incan architecture. It is categorized as a Cultural Heritage Site of the Nation of Peru.

San Pedro Market (address: Thupaq Amaru 477)

Not far from Cusco's main square is San Pedro Market, the city's main food market. Designed in 1925 by Gustave Eiffel, it is the oldest market in the city. Traditions, colors, flavors and aromas are fused in this market, where it is possible to buy traditional fresh products from throughout the region, including meats, cheeses, bread, coffee, chocolate, fruit, vegetables, flowers, as well as handcrafts. This is an unmissable attraction for visitors to Cusco.

Pre-Columbian Art (MAP) Museum (address: Nazarenas 231)

The MAP houses incredible artifacts created by the men and women who have lived for three thousand years in the lands that are now Peru.

Inka Museum (address: Ataud 154)

The charmingly modest Museo Inka, a steep block northeast of the Plaza de Armas, is a great place to learn more about the Incas. The restored interior is filled with a fine collection of metal- and gold-work, jewelry, pottery, textiles, mummies, models and the world's largest collection of queros (ceremonial Inca wooden drinking vessels). There is excellent interpretive information in Spanish, and English-speaking guides are usually available for a small fee.

Tipping Guidance

On this page, we have compiled guidance for tipping during your time in Peru. Please note that these are voluntary contributions, although tips are always appreciated among the staff and assistants that you think did an outstanding job during your adventure.

Tipping is not included in your trip pricing for drivers, city guides, or adventure guides. The suggested tipping amount depends on the number of days and the size of your group.

TIPPING GUIDANCE FOR YOUR TRIP:

In Peru, the standard industry practice suggests between \$20-30 USD per day for your head guide, depending on your level of satisfaction. For your driver, standard industry practice suggests between \$5-7 USD per day, depending on your satisfaction.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT TIPPING:

What is the preferred currency for tipping? Local staff prefer USD, but also appreciate Peruvian soles.

Guidance for tipping at restaurants: some restaurants will include gratuity in the bill, and others will not. If you would like to leave a tip we suggest about 10% of the total bill.

INCA TRAIL PERMITS

In order to preserve the various archaeological sites and natural habitats along the Inca Trail, the Peruvian government implements year-round restrictions on the number of people permitted to hike the Inca Trail Express each day. Only 250 permits are issued per day, of which are all allocated to trekkers.

Once you decide on a preferred start date for your trip, we will need to check to see if trail permits are still available for that date, as they are sold exclusively on a 'first-come, first-served' basis starting in October of each year (note: permits for 2024 go on sale starting in October 2023). The only way to secure a permit is through a Peruvian government-approved tour operator, so we will book permits for you. Permit costs are included in your trip costs with us.

HUAYNA PICCHU / MACHU PICCHU MOUNTAIN / MACHU PICCHU CITADEL

Separate permits are required to hike Huayna Picchu or Machu Picchu Mountain and visit the Machu Picchu archaeological site. Like the primary trail permits, these also have a daily quota and we will coordinate them as part of your trip.

OTHER NOTES

All Inca Trail permits are tied to individual passports and cannot be transferred, resold, or refunded. The Peruvian government monitors the trail and checks permits at various checkpoints. Even if you're only trekking the Inca Trail for a single day, you'll still need an Inca Trail Permit to gain entry.

The Inca Trail to Machu Picchu is a very popular route! A general rule to follow is to book permits for the Inca Trail at least 6-8 months in advance to ensure availability. If you are aiming to hike during the high season (generally June through September each year), we recommend booking 8-10 months in advance. If you have not yet booked and are interested in this journey, <u>contact us</u> so we can help you get there! (note: you can start pre-booking with us before permits go on sale, to have a better chance of securing preferred dates).

There are also alternative trekking options in Peru that are less restrictive and sometimes easier to access, such as the the Salkantay Trek, the Moonstone Trek, or the Vilcabamba Traverse. Please contact us for more information about any of these options.

ELECTRICITY

In Peru, the standard voltage is 220V and the frequency is 60 Hz (typical U.S. voltage is between 110 – 127V). Devices and adapters with the label 100-240V, 50/60 Hz typically work worldwide, but you may need a wall plug adapter as Peru uses Type A and Type C outlets.

IMMUNIZATIONS & OTHER MEDICAL CONSIDERATIONS

For all of our international adventures, we recommend that you consult with a physician in advance to determine whether or not you will require any vaccinations, boosters, or medications for your trip. Although no special vaccinations are required for this particular trip to Peru, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that travelers to Peru are current on their routine vaccinations* as well as vaccinations for COVID-19, hepatitis A and B, and typhoid. (*routine vaccinations include measles-mumps-rubella (MMR), diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis, varicella (chickenpox), polio, shingles, and a yearly flu shot.)

TRAVEL VISAS

There are no special visa requirements for U.S. citizens visiting Peru for up to 183 days.

INSECTS ON THE TRAIL

The most common type of bug on Sacred Valley treks are called zancudos. Zancudos are very similar to mosquitoes, but smaller. Although there tend not to be a very high volume of zancudos on the trail, it is a situation you should be prepared for and we therefore recommend that you bring insect repellent. Zancudos are more present on the trail in January, March, and November.

DIAMOX (ACETAZOLAMIDE)

Many of our travelers elect to take Diamox (acetazolamide) for higher-altitude hikes. If this is something that you may be interested in, you can speak to your doctor to see if you both agree that this is the right choice for you. It is also important to let your doctor know that you will be doing this trek at high altitude, as he/she may have additional guidance for you on your preparation. Additionally, all of our guides bring an oxygen therapy kit, a pulse-oximeter, and a first aid kit.

STOMACH REMEDIES

Many of our travelers elect to take stomach antibiotics as a dietary precaution. If this is something that you may be interested in, you can speak to your doctor to see if you both agree that this is the right choice for you. You may also consider bringing over-the-counter remedies such as Pepto Bismol or similar, to help with standard travel-related stomach unease.

Adventure Terms & Conditions

TRIP ITINERARY SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Our goal is to provide you with an unforgettable adventure. We take a lot of pride in our itineraries, as we have invested an enormous amount of time and energy into creating and organizing them. Sometimes, however, due to unexpected circumstances adventures don't always go according to plan. Because of this, we reserve the right to cancel or change aspects of the itinerary at any time, and for any reason. When necessary, we will substitute hotels, events, and/or activities. Each time we do so, we will on a best efforts basis keep the quality the same, ensuring that the category of service substituted is the same as what is in the itinerary.

SINGLE SUPPLEMENT

Our adventure pricing is based on double occupancy. For individuals who would like their own room and/or tent, each of our itineraries have an additional single supplement charge.

PRICE FLUCTUATIONS

We will make a strong effort to maintain price. As per industry norm, the adventure price is subject to increase based on unforeseeable changes beyond our control. The changes may include a change in the cost of travel, currency fluctuation, taxes, fuel surcharges, security costs, or unavoidable charges imposed by our activity providers. These fees are to be paid upon notification if such a situation does arise. The per person cost increase to clients is \$100 for these increases and The Explorer's Passage will absorb the rest.

TEP CANCELLATION POLICY

If you must cancel your reservation, cancellation charges will apply. Please see our full terms and conditions at www.explorerspassage.com.

FLIGHTS

TEP does not have an air department. When either booking your flights on your own or speaking to a travel agent, please ensure that the flight arrival and departure times are compatible with the activities listed in this itinerary. TEP does provide airport transfers at the start and conclusion of your adventure.

Adventure Terms & Conditions

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Given the active, often remote and international nature of our adventures, and our strict refund policy, we require you to purchase travel insurance. To learn more, please visit <u>https://explorerspassage.com/support/insurance/</u> or call one of our adventure consultants at 1-855-208-6800.

REGISTRATION

To learn more or to sign up for an adventure in Peru, please <u>click here</u>. An initial deposit of \$650 USD per person is required for each booking.



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