



*Machu Picchu - Salkantay Route*

## TRIP ITINERARY

Mountains are the temples of Andean culture, the locus of life, the source of water, food, and spirit. The arduous but rewarding Salkantay Trek carries you via pristine mountain country, over a 15,000-foot pass, and down undisturbed valleys to the foot of Machu Picchu. Set amid the deeply-incised Vilcambamba range, this high-altitude lodge-to-lodge hike is a premier entry into the footloose, uncrowded Peru of old, with breathtaking views of the Inca empire's heartland. After a total 35 miles of solitary trekking, you arrive, weary and elated, in the Machu Picchu valley.





## Schedule

### DAY 1

#### *Arrive Cusco*

A group briefing and dinner is a chance to get to know your guides and fellow guests, and address equipment and other questions.

### DAY 2

#### *Cusco*

Cuzco was “the navel of the world,” the Incas said. Walking a variety of urban archaeology sites and visiting the most important temples and landmarks in and around the city will serve as both historic orientation and acclimatization to altitude.

### DAY 3

#### *Cusco to Soraypampa*

**Elevation Range:** 11,021ft-12,690ft

**Hiking Time** 4 hours

Early start by road to Mollepata and the beginning of your trek, a 3-hour acclimatization hike into Soraypampa valley, with picturesque views of the startlingly-steep 20,500-ft Salkantay mountain, highest in this range. After a section of Camino Real, or Royal Road, you arrive in late afternoon at the Salkantay Lodge. Rated easy-to-moderate, this hike takes 4 hours.



## DAY 4

### *Humantay Lake*

**Elevation (ft)** 12,690-13,845

**Hiking Time** 4 hours

A high-altitude training day, with an ascent straight from the lodge to Humantay Lake, reached by a half-day hike that continues your acclimatization and fitness conditioning. The reward for this moderate trek is a stunning turquoise lake and the sight of your first tropical glacier. Return to the lodge for lunch, and rest up for the mighty pass tomorrow. Second night in Salkantay Lodge.

## DAY 5

### *Salkantay Pass*

**Elevation (ft)** 13,845 to 15,213ft to 12,812ft

**Hiking Time** 8 hours

An early start for a big day. Ascending through unusual plateaus dotted with boulders left behind by an extinguished river, you switchback up to the Salkantay Pass, at 15,213 feet the highest point of the week. (Watch for condors.) Building on your acclimatization hikes, this is a challenging 8-hour excursion, with a hot field lunch after the pass, and finishes through bucolic rolling hills and wetlands at the Wayra Lodge, located at a comparatively comfortable elevation

## DAY 6

### *Descending into the Cloud Forest*

**Elevation (ft)** 12,812ft to 9,414ft

**Hiking Time** 4 hours

Following the Salkantay river, continue your descent from high pampas into a verdant green cloud forest where three rivers meet. At 6 miles, this hike finishes at the Colpa Lodge, on a dramatic promontory over the river.

## DAY 7

### *Santa Teresa River Valley*

**Elevation (ft)** 9,414ft to 7,003ft

**Hiking Time** 5-6 hours

The Santa Teresa River valley ushers you from cold glacier streams down to fruit orchards and Amazonian warmth, and in the afternoon a short vehicle transfer extends your trek onto the Llactapata trail and, after a total of 6 hours of hiking, the Lucma lodge (7,003 ft.) for an overnight. Today is challenging for the distance involved.

## DAY 8

### *Lucmabamba/Exploring Llactapata Pass*

**Elevation (ft)** 7,003ft to 8,974ft to 6,627ft

**Hiking Time** 4-6 hours

During a 2-3 hour climb up a path mostly comprised of original Inca steps, you will get a sense of what hiking through the rainforest would be like. A lush treeline creates green canopies overhead and the constant sound of rushing water suggests that the river is still nearby. Your first milestone today will be the top of the peak, the last one before you reach the Aobamaba River valley that connects you to Machu Picchu. When you arrive at the ruins of Llactapata below the Llactapata Pass you will be delighted to see a southeast view of the “back” of the Machu Picchu ruins, a sight few travelers ever get a chance to admire. At this point you will also take a short break to explore Llactapata, and then have lunch a bit farther down the trail in a meadow with panoramic views. Rainforest and coffee plantations finish out the trek and you will take an unusual 1-hr train ride into the “back side” of Machu Picchu, and a stay at the the Inkaterra Pueblo hotel, in an oasis of green and rushing streams.



## DAY 9

### *Machu Picchu/The Sanctuary*

**Elevation (ft)** 6,627ft to 7,972ft

At dawn, you begin your journey to Machu Picchu with a short and rollicking uphill bus ride. Then, it happens: You walk into the life-changing experience of seeing this lost city for the first time. Awe at the expanse of ruins in this mystical, improbable setting, as an expert guide walks you through principal sites and place the whole in context, but also leave time for solo examination. As you enter the “Sanctuary” (as locals refer to it), the morning sun rises over the iconic Sun Gate and washes the structures and terraces with resplendent light. Prepare to be awed by the imposing and skillful architecture of the Watchtower, the Temple of the Sun, and the royal Inca residences, among many others. Take a moment to quietly sit and listen to the wind...or to meditate and absorb the mystical energy that envelops you. Your imagination will soar as you contemplate the history of Machu Picchu and its mysterious origins. Some may even choose a hike to Huayna Picchu (if tickets are available), the iconic towering mountain

often seen in photographs, for dramatic views that stretch from the Urubamba River valley to the edge of the Amazon Jungle. Either way, you will be touched by a feeling of peace and rejuvenation which will linger even as you journey back to civilization. Overnight at Inkaterra Pueblo Hotel again.

## DAY 10

### *Departure*

Departure by train & vehicle for Cusco airport for flight to Lima and connection home.





## INCLUDED

- All accommodations as noted on daily itinerary
- All meals as noted on daily itinerary
- Bilingual local guide and assistant guide  
Guided city tour of Cusco
- Full baggage support/transport during the trek
- All transfers per the itinerary, including airport transfers
- Inca Rail round trip tickets to/from Aguas Calientes (Inca Train service)
- Shuttle bus tickets from Aguas Calientes to Machu Picchu (1 day)
- Machu Picchu entrance tickets (1 day)
- Huayna Picchu hiking permit (1 day)
- Entrance fees to all historic sites and ruins as noted on the daily itinerary
- Filtered water and soft drinks for all provided activities and meals in the lodges as per itinerary

## NOT INCLUDED

- International flights to/from Peru
- Domestic flights to/from Cusco
- International/domestic airport departure taxes
- Gratuities for guiding staff
- Excess baggage charges
- Activities not listed on the itinerary
- Supplemental overseas travel/medical insurance
- Alcoholic beverages
- Expenses of personal nature such as laundry, bar bill, telephone calls etc.

## Disclaimer

The outline itinerary is a guide that the Embark Exploration Co. will adhere to. The final itinerary may differ in the order that you visit areas and the places where you stay overnight. We reserve the right to make changes based on weather, road and/or operating conditions imposed by owners of accommodation facilities, etc.

