

Machu Picchu & Rainbow Mountain, Peru New

Fabled mountains, Peru's must-see sights and superb, strenuous trekking through the high Andes.



Group departures

See overleaf for departure dates

Holiday overview

Style	Trek
Accommodation	Hotels, Camping, lodges
Grade	Strenuous
Duration	16 days from London to London
Trekking / Walking days	On trek: 8 days Walks on: 1 day
Min/Max group size	5 / 12. Guaranteed to run for 5
Trip Leader	Local Leader Peru
Land only	Joining in Cuzco, Peru
Max altitude	5,100m/16,732ft, Palomani Pass, Day 12

Private Departures & Tailor Made itineraries available



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Departures

Group departures

2021 Dates:

Wed 02 Jun - Thu 17 Jun

2022 Dates:

Wed 01 Jun - Thu 16 Jun

Group prices and optional supplements

Please contact us on +44 (0)1453 844400 or visit our website for our land only and flight inclusive prices and single supplement options.

No Surcharge Guarantee

The flight inclusive or land only price will be confirmed to you at the time you make your booking. There will be no surcharges after your booking has been confirmed.

Will the trip run?

This trip is guaranteed to run for 5 people and for a maximum of 12. In the rare event that we cancel a holiday, we will refund you in full and give you at least 6 weeks warning. Many trips do fill up quickly - we advise you to book early if you want to secure a place(s) on the dates of your choice.

Insurance

We offer a travel insurance scheme - please contact us for details.

Private Departures

We can also offer this trip as a private holiday. A Private Departure follows exactly the same itinerary as the group departure but at dates to suit you (subject to availability) - please contact us with your preferred dates.

Tailor Made service

We pride ourselves on the level of quality and choice we provide for our clients who want a fully tailor made holiday. A holiday will be created especially for you by one of our well-travelled experts. They will be able to advise on the accommodation best suited to your needs, the sights you should visit (and those to avoid!) and the best walks and activities matched to your ability. In short, we will work together with you to create your perfect holiday. If you would like to explore the idea of a Tailor Made holiday with Mountain Kingdoms then please call us on +44 (0)1453 844400 or see the Tailor Made pages of our website for further inspiration.

Your guide



You will be accompanied throughout your trip by a local English-speaking guide. These leaders are very knowledgeable and extremely charming and friendly and in their company you will enjoy an insider's view of Peru.

Your trip highlights

- Explore colonial Cuzco and impressive Inca sites including Sacsayhuaman, Ollantaytambo and Pisac.
- Step back in time on an acclimatising camping trek in the enchanting Lares region.
- Walk the final day of the Royal Inca Trail and arrive in Machu Picchu through the iconic Sun Gate.
- Cross high passes and marvel at the extraordinary colours of Rainbow Mountain on the spectacular high-altitude Ausangate eco trek where you are unlikely to see any other trekkers.
- Support local communities in the Ausangate region as your comfortable lodges employ local people and 30% of all profits are returned to the community

At a glance itinerary

Days 1-2	Fly London to Cuzco.
Day 3	Sightseeing around Cuzco including a visit to Sacsayhuaman. Drive to the Sacred Valley.
Day 4	Explore the Sacred Valley with a visit to Pisac ruins and the market.
Days 5-7	Transfer to Totora for start of the Lares trek, On trek via Huchayccasa Pass, Lares and Patacancha Valley, ending at Ollantaytambo.
Day 8	Take the train to Km104 and trek the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu.
Day 9	Enjoy sunrise at Machu Picchu with a guided tour. Return to Cuzco by train and vehicle.
Days 10-13	Drive to Chilca Tambo to start the Rainbow Lodge Trek. On trek via Machuracay, Palomani Pass, Anantapata, Rainbow Mountain and Huampococha.
Day 14	End trek and drive to Cuzco.
Days 15-16	At leisure in Cuzco. Fly to UK.

Trip summary

An active holiday that takes you on two of Peru's best off the beaten track treks, one a first rate camping trek in the lovely Lares Valley and the other a remote lodge trek in the Ausangate region, passing by the enchanting Rainbow Mountain. With a sunrise visit to Machu Picchu, trekking on arguably the best section of the Inca Trail, and time to explore several other remarkable Inca sites, this holiday really does pack a Peruvian punch.

Your time in Peru starts with sightseeing and acclimatisation in Cuzco and the Sacred Valley where you can revel in the beautiful scenery and marvel at the fascinating culture and architecture of the Incas.

Then, stepping away from the crowds you head off on a three day trek in the beautiful Lares region. Here, you follow trails through verdant valleys and over high passes, meeting the friendly local Quechua people who have retained a way of life little-changed through the centuries. Terraced fields are still hand tilled and traditional clothes hand woven from soft alpaca fur. The scenery in the Lares area is outstanding and, as you climb to over 4,400m, you will enjoy breathtaking views across to the peaks of the snow-clad Urubamba mountains.

Returning to the Sacred Valley you then take the train to Km104 to walk the impressive last day of the famous Royal Inca Trail emerging through the Sun Gate to one of the most iconic and arresting views on the planet.

It is then back to Cuzco, before you head off into the mountains again. It is difficult to find praise high enough for the Rainbow Mountain Lodge Trek. The locals consider 'Apu' Ausangate - the 6,384m mountain which dominates the landscape, to be a god of alpacas and llamas - its snow-capped summit soars above all others and it will be your majestic companion throughout most of this trek. With four passes of around 5,000m in just four and half days it is tough, but incredibly rewarding. You'll also have the wonderful bonus of seeing the fabulous multi-coloured 'Rainbow Mountain', one of most visually striking and magnificent geological features in the world. In fact, from the start of the Rainbow Mountain Lodge trek, to finish, you are treated to a constant visual feast. There is also much to enjoy with the local fauna which includes vicunas, alpacas, llamas, bobcats and pumas, and plenty to excite birders too, including Andean geese 'skating' on ice.

The lodges you stay in are built to a high standard and include en suite bathrooms with hot showers, large living and dining areas with wood-burning stove, and by staying in them you are genuinely making a huge difference to the local community. This lodge trek project trains and employs the local people as lodge keepers, cooks and llama drivers (the llamas carry your kit bags), so you are making a direct, positive contribution to the area through which you are trekking.

As this trek is entirely above 4,000m, you need proper acclimatisation to prevent high altitude mountain sickness, but this won't be a problem as you will be well acclimatised with the Lares Valley trek beforehand.

Special notes

Other group members

There will be clients from other tour operators joining for the Ausangate/Rainbow Mountain trek.

Your trip itinerary

Day 1: Fly London to Cuzco.

Depart London on your overnight flight to Cuzco.

Overnight: In flight

Day 2: Arrive Cuzco. Group transfer to hotel. Time at leisure

On arrival in Cuzco you will be met and transferred to your hotel. You are at 3,353m/11,483ft here so for the rest of the day you will need to take it easy to help your body acclimatise to the thin air at this altitude. It is a good idea to rest or maybe explore locally and enjoy your first impressions of this vibrant city.

Cuzco was formerly the capital of the extensive Inca Empire which stretched from Ecuador through to Chile. Today there are still reminders of this Inca city with many foundations and walls of Inca buildings still visible, even when overlaid today by Spanish architecture. Much fine Inca stonework has survived the ravages of centuries of earthquakes and Spanish colonialism. Your hotel is located in the attractive San Blas area of Cuzco, formerly the artisans' quarter and located not far from the attractive Plaza de Armas with its Baroque Cathedral and fine colonial buildings. There are plenty of excellent little cafés on the main square and in nearby streets, some with balconies overlooking gardens, fountains and cobbled streets. In the evening you may eat in one of the many fine restaurants in the area, where really excellent food from a wide range of national cuisines is available. You may find you have the added bonus of sitting alongside a finely worked Inca wall while you eat your dinner.

Overnight: Quinta San Blas or Similar, Cuzco (Meals: B L)

Day 3: Sightseeing in Cuzco. Visit Sacsayhuaman and Tambo Machay and continue to Sacred Valley.

After breakfast you will step out to do some sightseeing, exploring Cuzco's historic city centre, in particular the elegant Plaza de Armas dominated by the majestic cathedral and surrounded by colonial buildings, and continuing to the magnificent Inca Temple of the Sun, the Coricancha, one of the most important and sacred temples in the whole of the Inca empire.

Later you will travel up to visit two of the most celebrated Inca sites in the hills above Cuzco. Firstly Sacsayhuaman, the most impressive of these sites, with its magnificent Inca walls built from huge rocks fitted together with such precision that not even a piece of paper will fit between them. The site was originally thought to be a fortress but more recent theories suggest a great temple to the sun with evidence of an altar and seats cut into the rock. From Sacsayhuaman you can enjoy the fantastic views over Cuzco. Not far from Sacsayhuaman lie the ruins of Tambo Machay. These ceremonial Inca springs or baths are still in excellent condition and comprise several water fountains on three different levels and a rock pool which is ingeniously filled via a hidden channel. This is a very atmospheric spot.



You continue over the hills and descend into the Sacred Valley. The Sacred Valley, known as Vilcamayo by the Incas, is a beautiful, fertile valley carved by the Urubamba River which flows from the high Andes all the way to the Amazon. High above the valley snow peaks glisten in the sun, while in the fertile fields below local people harvest crops such as maize, quinoa and many kinds of potato - this valley was the breadbasket of the famous Inca Empire. Everywhere there is evidence of earlier Inca settlement with a host of terraces, walls, temples and burial towers in varying states of repair. And marking the opposite ends of the Sacred Valley stand the two remarkable Inca citadels of Pisac and Ollantaytambo.

Overnight: Villa Urubamba or Similar, Urubamba (Meals: BLD)

Day 4: Sacred Valley sightseeing. Explore Pisac town and market.

Today you will spend time in the viridescent Sacred Valley.

In the morning you will head along the Sacred Valley to the town of Pisac, which lies at the eastern end of the valley. Here, situated above the town, is an extensive and impressive Inca hill top complex clinging to the

mountain top. The citadel at Pisac was originally positioned on a major Inca route into the Sacred Valley and controlled access to the eastern jungle. The ruins are set high above the valley floor and have tremendous views. Terraces, water ducts and steps are cut out of solid rock, and in the upper sector of the ruins, the main Intihuatana is equal to any of the Inca structures at Machu Picchu. Above the temple lie still more ruins, mostly unexcavated, and among the higher crevices and rocky overhangs several ancient burial sites are hidden.

Pisac town itself dates back to colonial times and has an interesting artisan market where you can check out the local handicrafts and test your bartering skills. Ask your guide to show you the guinea pig 'castle' located in one of the town's bakeries!

Overnight: Villa Urubamba or Similar, Urubamba (Meals: BLD)

Day 5: Transfer to Totorá. Trek/transfer to first campsite on the Lares Trek.

A scenic two hour drive through the Sacred Valley of the Incas takes you to the start of your first trek at the small village of Totorá. From here you start walking following an ancient Inca Trail into a narrow canyon where you will find Inca tombs perched high up in the cliffs. Emerging from the canyon you pass through tiny rural communities where it seems time has stood still before reaching a lovely spot where you will have a picnic lunch.

After lunch you are transferred by vehicle to the small and very traditional community of Quishuarari, 3,700m/12,139ft, where you will be camping overnight.

Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)

Day 6: Trek over Huchayccasa Pass 4,300m/14,108ft. Transfer to camp at Chanchacacha. Optional hot springs visit.

This is a stunning day's trekking. You leave camp behind and climb past thatched stone houses surrounded by herds of llamas and alpacas and colourfully dressed local people. You continue up towards the native forests where we support tree re-planting for carbon setting. These Queña forests, which are essential to the future of this area, are bringing back diversity and encouraging many species which had almost become extinct. They are home to more than 150 species, including Andean deer, vizcachas (a cute South American rodent, not unlike a rabbit although not related to them) and several rare species of birds.

A further push and you reach the highest pass on this section of your trip, the Huchayccasa Pass, 4,450 m/14,600 ft to enjoy some really stunning view from the summit. A chain of emerald blue lakes lies beneath you, and in the distance rise the snow clad Urubamba Mountains. Descending through hand tilled potato fields you come to the upper reaches of the ancient community of Cuncani at 3,800m/12,460 ft. From here your bus takes you in twenty minutes to your camp at Chanchacacha, 3,440m/11,286ft.



There is an option in the afternoon to visit the Lares hot springs. These sulphurous yellow mineral springs are located at 3,250m/10,600ft and bathing in them is believed to alleviate rheumatic disorders, arthritis, and bone, joint and muscle pain and many other ailments. They would certainly ease any aches from the day's walk.

Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)

Day 7: Trek to Patacancha Valley via the Ipsaycocha Pass, 4,200m/13,780ft. Transfer to Ollantaytambo.

This is a wonderful day, filled with encounters with local people - men head off to work in the potato fields, wooden ploughs slung over their shoulder, women sit, legs outstretched, weaving their traditional clothes on wooden looms, and small children sit motionless guarding herds of alpaca and llama, their ever faithful dog by their side.

You start your trek this morning a fifteen minute drive from camp, to begin the trek towards the final pass. Lying at 4,200m/13,780ft the Ipsaycocha Pass marks the border between Lares and the Patacancha Valley. You start gently and then climb one final steep section to gain the summit. If you are lucky with the weather, you

will have spectacular views of Mount Veronica. You will have lunch by the beautiful Ipsay Lake then follow an ancient trail to the Patacancha Valley and the village of Patacancha where the trek ends.

A vehicle takes you down the valley and to your hotel for the night in Ollantaytambo. Ollantaytambo is an attractive little town located at the western end of the Sacred Valley. The town is built on top of original Inca foundations and is probably the best surviving example of Inca town planning. It is located at the foot of the spectacular ruins of an Inca fortress which protected the way to the lower Urubamba Valley. Here in 1536 Manco Inca managed to stem the tide of Spanish expansion. This victory was short-lived however when the Spanish returned with four times their previous force. Manco Inca retreated to his jungle stronghold in Vilcabamba and Ollantaytambo fell to the Spanish. The complex was still under construction at the time of the conquest and was never completed. The fortress and town represent some of the best of Inca architecture and construction, with fine examples of beautifully carved polygonal stones and monumental rocks.

Your hotel is located in the centre of town, not far from the train station.

Overnight: Hotel Pakaritampu or Similar (Meals: BLD)

Day 8: Travel by train to Km104. Trek the Royal Inca Trail to Machu Picchu 2,249m/7972m - 5-6 hours.

Another tremendous day with your arrival at iconic Machu Picchu as its climax. From the station at Ollantaytambo you catch a train to Km104 (about 1½ hours). Km104 is the starting point for those taking the short Inca trail to Machu Picchu which is a really wonderful walk in its own right. You cross the Urubamba by a suspension bridge and before starting the ascent proper, visit the recently restored ruins of Chachabamba at 2,396m/7862ft. You then ascend steadily through tropical cloud forest up towards the spectacularly situated Inca ruins called Wiñay Wayna (Quechua for Forever Young) at 2,650m/8,964ft where you join the main Inca Trail. There are wonderful views over the Urubamba Valley from here. Continuing on, you climb more steeply on old Inca staircases, through beautiful terraces, stopping along the way to explore various buildings and water features.



After a picnic lunch you continue on perhaps the loveliest part of the whole Inca Trail. Lush vegetation flanks you on either side, the scent of wild orchids fills the air, and brightly coloured tropical birds flit through the vegetation and fill the air with their song. Soon you will reach a final set of stairs to arrive at Inti Punku, the Gateway of the Sun. As you step through the old stone gate-way, Machu Picchu appears, laid out before your eyes. A truly magical and unforgettable sight. After plenty of photos you walk down through the ruins to catch the bus down to Aguas Calientes, a lively town, also known as Machu Picchu Pueblo.

Overnight: El Mapi Hotel or Similar, Aguas Calientes (Machu Picchu Town) (Meals: BLD)

Day 9: Return to Machu Picchu for sunrise and a guided tour. Train/drive to Cuzco.

After an early breakfast, you drive the short distance back up the zigzag road to Machu Picchu to get there before the main crowds and also when the light is better for those all-important photos. Machu Picchu is a place that really lives up to expectations; the setting is breath-taking and the ruins themselves are sensational.

For years Machu Picchu was lost to the jungle. Rediscovered in 1911 by the Yale professor Hiram Bingham, declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1983 and one of the New Seven Wonders of the World in 2007, Machu Picchu will exceed all your expectations. You will enjoy a guided tour of the ruins lasting around two hours, covering all the main points of interest such as the Temple of the Sun, the Royal Tomb, the Sacred Plaza and Intihuatana, 'the hitching post of the sun'. You will also have time free to wander amongst the old Inca walls and just sit and take in the scale of the place on your own.

Eventually the time comes to catch the bus back down to Aguas Calientes and to board your train back along the Urubamba River, a lovely train ride through beautiful scenery. You alight from the train and make the final stretch of the journey back to Cuzco by vehicle where you can celebrate the successful completion of the first part of your journey.

Overnight: Quinta San Blas or Similar, Cuzco (Meals: B L)

Day 10: Drive to Chilca, 3 hours, and trek to Chilca Tambo, 4300m/14,104ft - 1½ hours.

Today you leave Cuzco to travel to the start of the Rainbow Mountain Lodge Trek. Firstly you drive towards the Vilcanota Mountain Range, crossing the Abra Pass at an altitude of 4,370 meters. You pass by the city of Sicuani in the Vilcanota valley, from where you continue on a paved road to the village of Checacupe. Here you leave the paved road and drive up to the small Andean community of Chilca from where you start your trek to Chilca Tambo, the first lodge of the Ausangate trek.

From the trek start point you walk for an hour and a half to the first lodge situated at 4,300m. Tea, coffee and a light snack will be served soon after your arrival and you will be allocated your room in the lodge.

Built in 2006, the lodges on this route are very tastefully designed and atmospheric. Rooms are en suite with western-style toilets, a shower and a sink. Bedding and hot water are provided, as is a welcome hot water bottle before you go to bed. You are provided with complimentary biodegradable soap, shower gel and lip balm. Your trekking crew will be with you for the duration of the trek, and this evening you will get a first taste of your cook's cooking with a tasty and nutritious 3-course meal.

If you are lucky and village president may come to play the harp for you after dinner.

Overnight: Lodge (Meals: BLD)

Day 11: Trek to Machuracay 4,800m/15,748ft - 6-8 hours.

You will have breakfast and then begin your day's hike around 7.00-7.30am. You head up the valley of Upis, where impressive glaciated mountains loom above the valley. The going is fairly easy and very gently rising for the first couple of hours. Before the head of the valley you turn left and begin ascending more noticeably on a narrower trail which leads after another hour or two to a lake. Another hour of climbing brings you to a 4,880m pass, and the beautiful Pucacocha Lake where you will have lunch. In this serene spot there are spectacular views of Santa Catalina Mountain and Ausangate. The crew will usually erect a tent, tables and chairs for you to dine in for lunch. Your walk to the lunch spot usually takes around 5-6 hours, so the snacks you are provided with, plus a full water bottle, will be essential to keep you going.



Throughout your walk today your only other companions are likely to be local shepherds and alpacas and llamas roaming the hillsides. After lunch it is an easy 1-2 hour walk to the lodge. As you leave the lake you have a very brief ascent before descending for about 15 minutes. For the rest of the trail to the lodge you are contouring round the hillside and crossing a long series of moraines, taking in the breath-taking views of the surrounding snow-capped summits including Ausangate, a magnificent but dauntingly technical mountain.

Overnight: Lodge (Meals: BLD)

Day 12: Cross the Palomani Pass 5,100m/16,733ft and trek to Anantapata, 4,720m/15,485ft - 6-7 hours.

Today is a day where the superlatives for the scenery will run out. There may well be snow today from the moment you leave the lodge. You begin with a demanding, but straight-forward ascent of the Palomani pass, 5,100m, which takes approximately 2 hours. This is the highest point of this trek and of your trip. Throughout your ascent and at the pass you will have truly spectacular views of the intimidating, majestic Ausangate and the distinctive Santa Catalina. After taking the obligatory photographs and soaking up the serene atmosphere, you descend 500m to a stunning lake called Ausangate Cocha - a fabulous place for a lengthy snack break. Here you can marvel at the glaciated south face of Ausangate.

You now begin ascending very gradually and then the trail contours around the hillside for a couple of hours before you reach a small stone building which will usually be your lunch spot - so a total of approximately 5 hours to lunch. You can see the lodge in the distance from this point. From the moment you descend from the pass, the landscape changes and you can appreciate the red sandstone formations of the "Nevado de Inca". A further 1½ hours of undulating trail brings you to your lodge at 4,720m. This lodge differs from all the others in that it is a single storey building, with a lower roof, which makes it considerably warmer!

Overnight: Lodge (Meals: BLD)

Day 13: Cross two passes of Rainbow Mountain 4,950m/16,076ft and 5,050m/16,569ft and trek to Huampococha 4,820m/15,814ft - 6-7 hours.

Today is a tough day with two passes of around 5,000m to tackle in the morning. It is also an absolutely stunning walk with extremely varied scenery. You begin walking uphill towards the first pass, which is often snow-covered. It takes approximately one hour to reach the first pass, 4,950m/16,076ft, and you may be lucky enough to spot bobcat trails. You are treated to a different, equally spectacular view of Mt. Ausangate at the pass and the jagged peaks of Alcatari dominate the immediate landscape.



The descent from the pass is fairly steep and can be quite icy so caution is required. The llamas which carry your kit bags make short work of this! The descent finishes at an attractive lake where you will probably see ducks and coots skating on the ice. You then begin your ascent towards the second pass. You climb gradually to a saddle and then contour around the hillside until you reach the second pass at 5,050m. Rising directly from the pass is a striking hill with multi-coloured rock strata - often referred to as 'Rainbow Mountain'. It takes approximately 4½ hours to reach this second pass from the lodge. From here on, the scenery changes and you are treated to the red sandstone and copper hillsides, the signature of the Ausangate trek. You now descend for a short while before a gradual ascent and you then contour on the level, where you can see the famous faces of ancient warriors - use your imagination as you look at the jagged sandstone edges on the hillside. A 30-minute descent brings you to your lunch spot, which is approximately 6 hours from when you left the lodge, so when you spot the lunch tent, it will be a very welcome sight! From here it is approximately 1-1½ hours to the lodge on an undulating trail, contouring around the hillside.

The lodge is in a beautiful situation next to a lake, with a view of snow-capped summits from the dining room. The jagged red sandstone peak above the lodge is called Wayna Anta.

Overnight: Lodge (Meals: BLD)

Day 14: Trek from Huampococha to Congomire and Checacupe 4,000m/13,124ft -3-4 hours. Drive to Cuzco - approximately 2-3 hours.

You begin ascending to the Anta pass - approximately 45 minutes from the lodge. At the Anta Pass you wave a final 'goodbye' to Mt. Ausangate and from the pass you continually descend to the end of your trek. The descent is very beautiful as the sandstone hills change to limestone. You walk past many settlements with dry stone walls for corrals used for their animals and crops. Here farmers live a simple life in small communities. This terrain is a perfect habitat for vizcachas and you may also spot Andean geese. The very scenic walk down the valley takes approximately 3 hours from the pass, and you will find the descent easy compared with the preceding days. When you reach Congomire your bus will be waiting to drive you back to Cuzco where you may celebrate the successful completion of your trek.

Overnight: Quinta San Blas or Similar, Cuzco (Meals: B)

Day 15: At leisure in Cuzco until transfer to airport for flight home.

In the morning you can enjoy some free time in Cuzco for last minute sightseeing or shopping. Later you will be transferred to the airport for your overnight flight home.

Let us know if you would like to extend your time with extra nights in Cuzco and more time to explore this remarkable mountain city.

Overnight: In Flight (Meals: B)

Day 16: Arrive UK.

Our grading system

Machu Picchu & Rainbow Mountain is graded as a strenuous trekking holiday, as described below.

Strenuous

Our strenuous trekking holidays can involve anything from 10 to 30 days on trek and are often in remote areas, far from 'civilisation'. Rest days are interspersed but there may be up to 7 consecutive days of hard walking. Most treks reach altitudes of at least 4,900m/16,000ft and there will be a great deal of ascent and descent. The majority of our strenuous treks utilise camping, tea house or mountain lodge accommodation.

These holidays are suitable for fit individuals who have regular experience of mountain walking.

Trip altitude

Important - please be aware that this trip involves travel at altitude. Whilst all our itineraries are carefully designed to optimise acclimatisation to high altitudes, participants on this trip are likely to experience some symptoms of being at altitude. The Dossier pack we provide when you book your holiday includes comprehensive advice on safe travel at altitude. If you require further information or advice on travel at altitude prior to booking please contact the office to speak to an experienced member of our team. Alternatively we recommend www.medex.org.uk as a good source of information.

What the price includes

Mountain Kingdoms aims to offer the best value for money. We do not charge extra for meal packages or apply local charges and try to ensure that all the key elements of your holiday are included.

What's included:

- ✓ Economy class return air fares from the UK & UK Departure Tax (flight inclusive bookings)
- ✓ Single, timed, group airport transfers for international flights on arrival and departure
- ✓ Sightseeing where specified
- ✓ Good standard hotel accommodation (3 star) in Cuzco, Urubamba, Ollantaytambo and Aguas Calientes on a twin share basis.
- ✓ Most meals (except 2 lunches and one dinner in Cuzco)
- ✓ A local English-speaking leader
- ✓ 2 nights full service camping with good quality equipment and all meals
- ✓ Camp staff to carry out all camp work
- ✓ Four nights in good quality Ausangate lodges with all meals.
- ✓ Porterage of your kit bag by porter/pony/llama and porter insurance
- ✓ All road transport by private vehicles
- ✓ Rail fares to Km 104 and from Machu Picchu to the Sacred Valley
- ✓ Trail permit for Royal Inca Trail and park fees
- ✓ Carbon offset for clients taking our flight-inclusive option
- ✓ A free Mountain Kingdoms kitbag.
- ✓ The opportunity to attend one of our pre trek meets in the Cotswolds

Airport transfers

The cost of a transfer to/from the airport is included in the price of your holiday. This is a single group transfer which is arranged to coincide with the timings of the group flights. If you book your own flights which arrive/depart at different times to this, or we book flights at your request that have different timings, we will be happy to provide a quote for a separate transfer. Please contact us should you require any further information.

What's not included:

- ✗ Travel insurance
- ✗ Visa fees
- ✗ Sleeping bag
- ✗ Two lunches and one evening meal in Cuzco
- ✗ Optional trips
- ✗ Airport departure taxes (if applicable), excepting UK Departure Tax
- ✗ Tips

Water-to-Go Reusable Bottle Campaign

We have joined the campaign to help cut down on the use of plastics and, in particular, single-use water bottles. To do this we have teamed up with the revolutionary company, Water-to-Go who have developed a multi-use drinking bottle with a reusable filter that eliminates over 99.9% of all microbiological contaminants. This makes water from virtually any source safe to drink and significantly reduces the need for travellers to buy bottles of water wherever they are in the world.

Our clients who are not given a free Mountain Kingdoms kit bag for their holiday (these are required for certain treks), will instead receive a free Mountain Kingdoms Water-to-Go bottle. These unique Water-to-Go bottles can also be purchased from us at a discounted rate. For further information about our campaign visit [For further information about our campaign visit <https://www.mountainkingdoms.com/water-to-go-reusable-bottle-campaign>](https://www.mountainkingdoms.com/water-to-go-reusable-bottle-campaign).

Your accommodation

We will endeavour to secure the hotels named in the itinerary but if our first choice of hotel is unavailable we will book a suitable alternative of a similar standard.



Quinta San Blas or Similar, Cuzco

Located in the charming neighbourhood of San Blas, the Quinta San Blas is a converted Colonial-Republican hotel within easy walking distance of the Cuzco's central sights. Comfy, en suite rooms have Wi-Fi and the hotel provides a buffet breakfast and has a cafe.



Villa Urubamba or Similar, Urubamba

Villa Urubamba is a quietly situated 3 star hotel in the Sacred Valley just outside the town of Urubamba. The hotel is landscaped in lovely gardens with lots of birds and good mountain views. The large, en suite rooms are attractively decorated in local style and the hotel has a restaurant and free wifi in public areas.



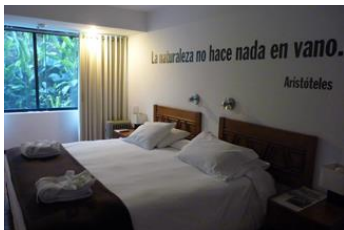
Camp

We believe in camping and trekking in style. Whilst walking all you need to carry is your daypack. Your support team of traditional porters carry all camping equipment and perform all camp chores. All your meals will be prepared by your cook.



Hotel Pakaritampu or Similar

This attractive hotel is situated in the small town of Ollantaytambo in the Sacred Valley. It has a restaurant, bar and terraces whilst the well appointed rooms have Wi-Fi, hairdryers and a small safe.



El Mapi Hotel or Similar, Aguas Calientes (Machu Picchu Town)

This is a contemporary hotel, located in the heart of Machu Picchu town (Aguas Calientes) just a few steps from the main square and the train station. The hotel is friendly and rooms are comfortable with all facilities.



Lodges

The lodges on trek in Ausangate are tastefully designed, have good amenities and are part community owned. 30% of all profits go directly to the local community, so this is a genuine sustainable tourism initiative. Amenities include full bedding, en-suite bathrooms with hot showers, wood burning stove in the living room, kitchen and dining room, good standard of food cooked for you by the locals involved in the project. You are provided with daily snacks as well as 3 excellent meals per day, and llamas transport your main kit bags. Alpaca wool slippers, biodegradable soap, shampoo and lip balm are also given to you on arrival in the lodges to keep.

Meal arrangements

Most meals are included. 13 breakfasts, 12 lunches, 12 dinners.

Flight arrangements

Flight inclusive from price

Our 'Flight inclusive from' price is based on the best fare available at the time of printing. As airfares change on a constant basis, this should be used only as a guide price. Rest assured that, at the time of booking, we will endeavour to get the best possible price for the flights you need. Remember, the earlier you book the greater your chances of securing the best fare.

Flight inclusive packages booked through Mountain Kingdoms are protected through our ATOL bonding scheme.

Flight upgrades and regional Airports

Please call us on +44 (0)1453 844400 for flight options from regional UK airports, Business Class upgrades, alternative airlines and stopovers. Please also check our website for the most up to date flight inclusive 'from' prices.

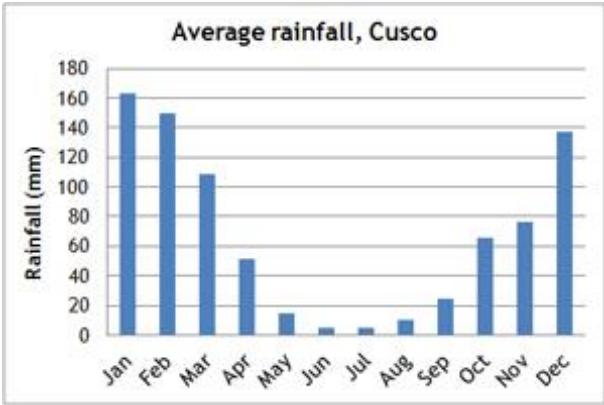
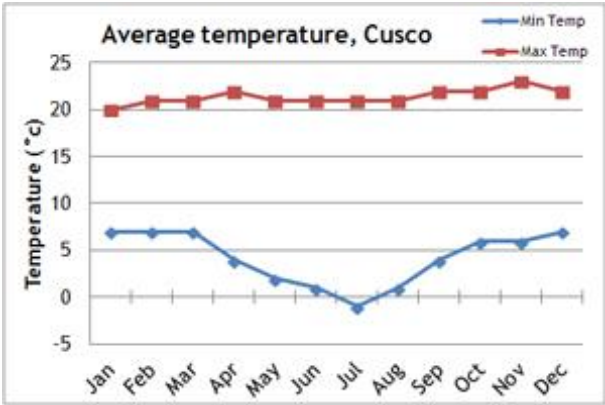
Further information

When we receive your booking, we send you a full Trip Dossier which contains details of any visas and vaccinations required, a suggested gear and clothing list and lots of useful information. If you do have queries at this initial stage do call us on 01453 844400 and we will be pleased to offer advice.

The nature of adventure travel

Every effort will be made to keep to this itinerary but we cannot guarantee that things may not change, either before you travel or while you are away. By its very nature, adventure travel involves an element of the unexpected, particularly in more remote areas. A variety of factors such as adverse weather conditions, changes to local schedules and difficulties with transportation can all contribute to the need to make changes to the itinerary, often at the very last minute. Our Operations Manager and your Trip Leader will make every effort to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary and minimise the impact of any changes, but an easy-going and flexible nature is a real asset! Please note that all timings and distances given are approximate.

Climate information



Extensions

Extending your holiday

If you would like additional inspiration on how or where to extend your holiday please call us on 01453 844400. Alternatively, you can download a range of extension information sheets on our website, at www.mountainkingdoms.com.



Additional hotel nights

If you would like to stay longer in Cuzco we can book extra nights or upgrades from our selection of hotels. We can also arrange a personal sightseeing tour or other exciting activities.

Amazon jungle

For a complete contrast to your trek or tour in the Andes why not visit the lush Amazon jungle? A short but spectacular flight will take you to the city of Puerto Maldonado from where you will travel down river to your jungle lodge. We offer a selection of lodges with a range of fantastic wildlife experiences. Stay for 2 or 3 nights or we can book an even longer, more adventurous 5 day expedition for you, to the Tambopata Research Centre.



Lake Titicaca

Lake Titicaca is the largest lake in South America and is generally considered to be the highest navigable lake in the world. Our two night extension begins with a ride on the tourist bus from Cuzco to Puno stopping en route to see several cultural attractions. At Puno, which lies on the shores of Lake Titicaca, you will spend a full day exploring the beautiful landscape and visiting the fascinating people of Taquile Island and the Uros Islands.



Galapagos Islands

A cruise amongst the Galapagos Islands is an unforgettable experience and we can organise this for you from Peru. You can join a cruise that best matches your interests and budget. We work with a variety of different sizes of boat, with cruises typically of four to eight days duration.

Why book this holiday with Mountain Kingdoms?

- Unique to Mountain Kingdoms, this superb trip combines a camping trek in the beautiful Lares region, the final day of the Royal Inca Trail to Machu Picchu, and a remote lodge trek in the shadow of Ausangate with views of Rainbow Mountain.
- We include sightseeing in the Sacred Valley - full of cultural interest and providing excellent acclimatisation.
- We use excellent English-speaking guides who are knowledgeable, well trained and great fun who will be delighted to share their expert knowledge of the history, culture and nature of their home country.
- We use carefully chosen hotels in Cuzco, the Sacred Valley and Aguas Calientes.
- Camping will be comfortable with good tents, delicious food and all camp facilities provided.
- The Rainbow Mountain trek stays in the very comfortable Ausangate Lodges. We are committed to Responsible Tourism and support the Ausangate Lodge Trek Project which employs local people as trek and lodge staff and gives 30% of all profits to the local community.
- Your gear will be carried for you, either by porters, ponies or llamas, so all you need to carry is a small daypack.
- This holiday avoids the issues of restricted trail permits on the classic Inca Trail. None are required for the Lares region and permits for the one day Royal Inca Trail almost never run out
- Our office team have extensive experience of travel throughout Peru and South America. We would be glad to talk to you about the detail of either this trip or any of the other tempting tours and treks we offer in this part of the world.
- Our maximum group size is 12 for this trip. This provides for a genuine small group travel experience and helps reduce the negative aspects often associated with larger trekking groups.
- We offer a flexible service and can extend your holiday with extra hotel nights, upgrades and other exciting activities.
- We are an IATA accredited agent and work directly with some of the world's major airlines. If you wish to fly with a specific airline, from a regional UK airport or on alternative dates to the main group we would be happy to arrange this for you. Please contact our Flights Manager, April, for flight options, quotes and further information.
- As part of our commitment to 'Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency', we will be carbon-offsetting all international flights booked through us by donating funds to the Ecoan Tree Planting Project in Peru.

If we've tempted you to take your next holiday with us, we advise you to check availability and you can do this via our website: www.mountainkingdoms.com or by calling the team on +44 (0)1453 844400. Bookings can be made online, by phone or by completing a booking form and returning it to us. We can also provisionally hold places if you need time to consider your options.

Mountain Kingdoms - distinctly different

Truly independent

In an age where many so-called 'independent' travel companies have in fact been bought out by multi-national giants, we remain fiercely independent with all the benefits this offers our clients.

Value for money prices with an emphasis on quality

We are not in the business of cutting our itineraries and services to the bone to offer eye-catching cheap prices. We use some of the best airlines, and typically 3 or 4 star hotels in cities. We include the majority of meals and private transport for road travel. We use excellent equipment and appoint well-trained staff and leaders. Last year, over 98% of our clients rated their Mountain Kingdoms holiday as 'excellent' or 'good'. We are members of AITO and bound by their quality charter.

Complete financial security

You can book with us confident that your holiday has full financial protection. Flight inclusive holidays are financially protected by the Civil Aviation Authority under ATOL licence number 2973 and 'Land Only' holidays are covered by a bond secured with ABTOT.

No Surcharge Guarantee

Your peace of mind is important to us so we have a No Surcharge Guarantee on all Land Only and Flight Inclusive bookings. This means that there will be no change to the price of your holiday once we have confirmed your booking, regardless of fluctuations in exchange rates or fuel prices.

Award winning Responsible Tourism

We feel strongly that all our holidays should benefit local communities, protect the environment and respect local traditions, religion and heritage. You can read more about the charities we support and our Responsible Tourism commitments and initiatives on the following page or at www.mountainkingdoms.com.

Genuine small group travel

Almost all of our holidays have a maximum group size of just 12, plus leader. This provides more contact with your leader, readier access to off-the-beaten-path areas, greater interaction with local communities and a reduced environmental impact.

Loyalty Discount

If you have previously travelled with us we recognise your loyalty with a discount on future trips.

Booking your holiday - it couldn't be easier

Once you've chosen your Mountain Kingdoms holiday you can book online, call the office or complete and post a booking form which can be found in our brochure or downloaded from our website. If you would like to hold a place on one of our trips, whilst you make up your mind, please give us a call to make a provisional booking. This is a no-obligation, no-cost booking and we will hold your place until space comes under pressure or we need your decision.

Comprehensive information

When we receive your booking we send you a full trip dossier which contains details of visas and vaccinations required, a suggested gear and clothing list and lots of useful information. In fact, everything you need to know to give you peace of mind and allow you to prepare for your trip of a lifetime.



RESPONSIBLE TOURISM STATEMENT CLIMATE EMERGENCY PLAN



For over 33 years, Mountain Kingdoms has been offering people the chance to visit amazing places on this extraordinary planet. We now offer trips to all corners of the world, but we are conscious that inevitably our holidays have a detrimental impact on the world around us, and we want to do all we can to reduce our carbon emissions. We are a signatory to Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency, along with a growing number of like-minded, reputable tour operators. For more information, please visit www.tourismdeclares.com

From 2020 onwards, we will be focusing on how we can reduce the carbon emissions that our holidays produce, and how to counterbalance this carbon by supporting carbon offset measures. Here are some of our current and future plans to minimise the impact of our business as a whole:

Carbon Offsetting

Already doing:

- ✓ We have been offsetting carbon since 2007, but will be increasing our donations to the [Ecoan tree planting project](#) in Peru this year. This is with a trusted partner where the funds go directly to a project where the community plants trees on its own land.

Will do:

- ✓ We are working on making our carbon offsetting more accurate and targeted.
- ✓ In future, we will add to that a further estimate for carbon produced by hotels, local road travel, trains and internal flights to arrive at a carbon offset sum for each trip we operate.
- ✓ Carbon offsetting will be included in our holiday prices. For our Flight Inclusive holidays it will include the international flight and any emissions produced by inland travel and accommodation. Our Land Only prices will include the cost of offsetting emissions caused by inland travel and accommodation.

Reducing Carbon Emissions

Already doing:

- ✓ We already offer the majority of our customers a free filtered water bottle which means they can instantly cut down on their single-use plastic consumption. This will be an ongoing project.
- ✓ We already predominantly use locally owned hotels, but will continue to ensure that, where possible, we use these rather than multinational chains.
- ✓ We have joined the Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency initiative to stand alongside like-minded travel companies, to work together to initiate best practices to make tourism as sustainable as possible.

Will do:

- ✓ We will re-evaluate our flights to make sure we are using the most fuel efficient airlines with the youngest fleets and, where possible, direct flights for each trip.
- ✓ We will stop offering unnecessary optional flights – for example our Everest sightseeing trip.
- ✓ We will eliminate unnecessary staff flights wherever possible.
- ✓ We will look at minimising internal flights.
- ✓ We will be asking all our worldwide agents and suppliers to look at their own carbon footprint and encourage them to reduce it.
- ✓ We will promote our more low impact trips to give customers an informed choice.

As part of our wider commitment to Responsible Tourism, we will continue to support a number of charities with whom we have had a long standing relationship over many years. These include: Shiva Charity in Nepal (Ginette Harrison School), Simien Mountains Mobile Medical Service and Porter Welfare, as well as setting aside a sum for emergency disaster relief should the need arise.

