

# The Beauty of the South 11D/10N

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## Overview

This tour includes some of the best of Cusco & South Peru. You'll experience cosmopolitan city life but also different communities out in the country and further south. After spending a couple days in Lima, you'll travel to Cusco & journey through the Sacred Valley admiring the beauty and splendour of this valley. Then after trekking Huchuy Qosqo, visiting the Inca ruins at Ollantaytambo and being guided through the Inca citadel of Machu Picchu, you'll begin to head south to Lake Titicaca and appreciate the majesty of this lake and its inhabitants.

## Trip Summary

Activity	Duration	Meals	Hotel Options
Arrival in Lima	-	-	Casa Andina Select
Lima Gastronomic Experience	6 hrs	L	Casa Andina Select
Sacred Valley	½ Day	Picnic	El Albergue
Maras Moray	8 hrs	B, L	El Albergue
Huchuy Cusco	8 hrs	B, L	El Albergue
A.M Ollantaytambo P.M Machu Picchu	8 hrs	B, L	La Encantada, El Balcon, Andean Wings
Cusco Walking Tour	½ Day	B	La Encantada, El Balcon, Andean Wings
Cusco - Puno	8 hrs	L	Acienda de Chinchero
Lake Titicaca & Amantani	8 hrs	B, L, D	Homestay
Amantani - Sillustani	8 hrs		Departure from Juliaca Airport

## Day 1: Arrival at Lima Airport. Transfer to Hotel

After landing in Lima city, our representative will be at the airport to greet you and escort you to the hotel, in Miraflores The district is a diverse cultural center, with theaters, cinemas and art galleries. A great place to stay for your first night.. Tonight it's all about resting to recovering your energy for the wonderful trip that awaits you.

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## Day 2: Lima Gastronomic Experience !!

We'll start the morning in a local market, shopping alongside families and sous chefs. We will sample fresh fruits and explore Peruvian produce. Peru is one of the world's most biodiverse countries and producer of an exotic array of jungle, highland and coastal foods. The local market will whet your appetite for the day.

From there, we'll walk in Lima's historic center, checking out the Plaza Mayor, Cathedral, the Archbishop's residence, the Presidential Palace and the bright-yellow Franciscan church, built in 1546, which was used as a cemetery in the colonial era.

Afterwards, we'll take a break to enjoy Peru's flagship dish: ceviche. These sublime fish and seafood cocktails, gently marinated in chilli and fresh lime juice, are a Lima staple. We'll also be tasting other mind-bogglingly delicious options like *Causa* (avocado and shrimp layered between mashed potato),

We culminate our gastronomic adventure with the lightest and crispest Picarones (fried dough), while every culture has a version, the Peruvian edition is special. Crafted from wheat flour that is dotted with anise and blended with sweet potatoes and pumpkin, they're then slathered with a liberal helping of molasses syrup. In other words, gratifyingly glorious sweetness, hot and fresh out of the fryer. The sort of thing that makes a doughnut look dour by comparison. Tonight we rest well after our busy city adventure for tomorrow we meet the Andes!

## Day 3: LIMA – CUSCO – VALLE SAGRADO

*AM Breakfast at Hotel*

This morning you will take the private transportation to the airport and head straight to the domestics check-in desks in the centre of the airport. Please present your passport in order to enter the airport. Once you have your boarding card you can now head upstairs to departures.

**NB:** Please ensure you find the gate with plenty of time to spare, as flights are not always announced and gate allocations often change and may not follow those written on your boarding ticket. Enjoy the flight.

On arrival to Cusco you will be met by a representative from Quechua Treks with a sign with your name on it.

Welcome to the Sierra!! Once we gather together after breakfast, we break away from Cusco and descend into the Sacred Valley of the Incas. While still at considerable altitude, 2600m, spending our first day in the Sacred Valley is a good way to acclimatise, allowing our bodies to adjust to the potential dizzying heights of the Andean mountain range.

We will enjoy a light picnic lunch, then continue to our Lodge in the Valley. This is a day to relax, eat well and enjoy your surroundings.

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## Day 4: MARAS – MORAY – PACHAMANCA

After a delicious breakfast we will drive through the valley, weather permitting enroute we will hopefully glimpse the snow-capped Urubamba Mountain range, the holy mountains of the Sacred Valley.

Our first stop is in Chinchero, a lovely town traditionally renowned for its specialised weaving techniques and unique hand made textiles. Here we will watch and learn about the art of Peruvian weaving, absorbed by colour, in naturally made dyes a genuine feast for the eyes.

Next is a drive to the circular Inca ruins of Moray, an extraordinary Incan earthwork. Three natural, crater like depressions are lined with a series of concentric circular terraces that get smaller as they disappear down into the earth. This is thought to be one of the Incas 'Green Houses', where they experimented with the different temperature zones or micro climates (created by the terraces) and developed new varieties of staple Andean foods.

Then by car we follow a dust track through agriculturally rich plains, with examples of the finest Andean farming set amongst some of the most breathtaking scenery of the Andes, imposing mountains provoking wonderful sensations of freedom, wilderness and spirituality. Our next stop is the Salinas de Maras the naturally occurring, yet mysterious salt pans that cover the entire side of a canyon made of red rock. They have been in continual operation since pre-Incan times. Wonder at the ingenuity and practicality of the terracing system, whilst being mesmerised at the simplistic beauty and the shimmer of these pinkish white salt pans; it's a view to behold.

After a great morning we head down towards Ollantaytambo & the Hotel El Albergue for 'pachamanca' a traditional style of Peruvian cooking. There is an organic farm here at the hotel where they host a Pachamanca Farm Lunch as well as visits to a Cañazo (sugar cane liquor) distillery and coffee roasting facility with tastings of these artisanal products.

The Pachamanca is a traditional Incan meal cooked upon hot rocks and includes a tour of the hotel and our adjacent organic farm. You're welcome to participate in the preparation of the Pachamanca, and while the food cooks, You can visit the farm and learn about traditional and contemporary organic farming practices. The lunch includes a variety of cuts of chicken, pork, and lamb with alpaca, rabbit and cuy upon request, Andean potatoes and camote, organic vegetables, a variety of house-made salads and sauces as well as chicha morada (purple corn beverage). Most dietary restrictions can be covered, and wine and beer are available upon request. The lunch is served at covered picnic tables right on the farm with breathtaking views of the surrounding mountains, glaciers and Inca archeological sites.

After lunch we Interact with a family of weavers typical from the Chinchero Area.

Return to hotel B/L

## Day 5: HUCHUY QOSQO

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Let's enjoy an optional one day hike to this fascinating place built by the Incas. It is called Huchuy Qosqo which in the local Quechua language means "Small Cusco". This place is very special because of the outstanding location overlooking the Sacred Valley 600 meters below, with great views of the Urubamba Mountain Range and some of its APUS or sacred mountains known by the locals since pre-Incan times.

The hike begins in the small village of Siwas (3,800 masl), after 1:30 hours driving from the city of Cusco. In the morning we have to go up to the highest point of the day, to reach it we walk slowly and steady for 1 hour and 30 minutes along this not too difficult ascent to 4060 masl. If the weather permits in the Southeast we can see far into the distance the massive snow-capped Nevado of Ausangate, one of the three most sacred mountains around Cusco.

After we take some pictures and enjoy the views from the top we begin the two hour walk down to Huchuy Qosqo. After a few minutes of hiking we join the principal path of the Inca Trail, passing through the picturesque village of Puka Marka. This place is just the entrance to an amazing section of a ravine. This part criss-crosses a creek, with picturesque small bridges above the water which flows down to the valley.

We continue walking and enjoy awesome views of agricultural terraces, some examples of the local fauna, like deer or unique birdlife and amazing viewpoints. Carrying on walking we finally reach our principal destination of the day: HUCHUY QOSQO!!!

We are going to have plenty of time to have our box lunch and then wander around the Inca Site, getting a great lesson to learn more about these incredible people who were able to build such complex sites around the Andes of Perú. Huchuy Qosqo shows a cultural example of agricultural engineering with irrigation channels and terraces.

In the afternoon we leave Huchuy Qosqo and descend for about two and a half hours towards the Village of Lamay, which is the place where we meet our transport to take us back to our hotel.

**Hiking time:** Around 8 Hrs

**Altitude range:** 4,060m-2,800m

**Degree of difficulty:** Hard - Moderate

**Meals Included:** Box Lunch

## **Day 6: Morning visit Ollantaytambo and P.M. in Machu Picchu**

After an early breakfast we will walk around the Inca Fortress and ceremonial site of **Ollantaytambo**, marveling at these extraordinarily well preserved ruins. Set around a tranquil plaza, renowned for its peaceful charm. The little altered layout of the town offers an unprecedented peek into the way of life of its past peoples, the Incas. Even the street names are the originals.

Then we will take the train to Aguas Calientes (train station is located in the town of Ollantaytambo). As the train travels along, the valley turns into a canyon and the scenery changes as the cloud forest begins to appear with the approach to the Machu Picchu Sanctuary. You will disembark the train at Aguas Calientes where we get a convenient buffet lunch. After that, as other people begin leaving, we will board the bus to go up and start our exploration of **Machu Picchu** and visit some of the most important places in the archeological site. There will be plenty

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of time for pictures after which we take the bus down to Aguas Calientes to take the train back to Ollantaytambo where our private transportation will be waiting for us, to drive us back to Cusco.

## **Day 7: CUSCO**

Our last day in Cusco begins in earnest today with a feast for the eyes, as we spend the morning walking through some of the most beautiful streets of Cusco. We will explore the old bohemian quarter of San Blas, famous for its picturesque white walls and blue doors and it's historically artisan community. On the other side of Cusco we will find the San Pedro market, a Cusqueñan institution, not to be missed. Famous for its tantalizingly exotic fresh fruits and vegetables, mouth-watering juices (too many to choose from) and its natural medicinal herb stalls.

Onwards down Avenida el Sol, Cusco's central avenue, we arrive at the magnificent temple of Koricancha. Originally dedicated to the sun god Inti and said to have been the most important temple in the Inca Empire. Lunch will at a local peruvian restaurant. After lunch we enter the awe inspiring fort of 'Saqsayhuaman' and also seek out the less visited archeological areas such as the temple of the moon.

## **Day 8: CUSCO – PUNO**

Today we will drive to Puno, with several stops along the way, we will pass by Oropesa the capital of bread! Yes this huge sweet bread that you probably tried in Cusco, but if not, this is your opportunity.

During our trip we can see some beautiful colonial churches like Andahuaylillas. The church itself is enchanting, but the little plaza and the atmosphere of a small town in the Andes is what is most memorable about the place. In the middle of the way there is this family that run a ranch that produce the most popular cheese of Cusqueno people, here in this warm home we will enjoy another amazing meal.

After lunch we will continue and if time allows us we will stop at the rock forest with gigantic rock formations. From here in two more hours we will be in Puno.

Fundo Chincheros is an end 19th century ranch, dedicated to traditional Andean animal husbandry, such as llamas, alpacas, cows, sheep and horses. There is the possibility for visitors to share daily farm activities, or just spending some relax time out in the nature.

It is a very quiet place not more than 20 minutes from Puno city, has 125 hectares and it has been part of the natural reserve Titicaca.

## **Day 9: TITICACA - UROS – AMANTANI**

Lake Titicaca is the world's highest commercially navigable lake. We will transfer you from your hotel to the harbour. We will visit 2 islands on the lake where the unique living cultures and traditions are still alive. The first is the famous manmade Uros Reed Islands, where we'll have a tour and an explanation of the unique way of life of the people who live here.

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Then we will head to Amantani island, located 26 miles (38 Km) away from the city of Puno (3 ½ hours of navigation in normal boat). Because of its more distant location, tourism on the island of Amantani has not developed in the same way as in Taquile. The main difference is that home-stays have remained a more authentic and cultural experience.

The 3,600 inhabitants of Amantani are of Quechua origin and they are mainly small scale farmers. We will spend one night on the island with a local family. The houses are very simple and services are basic. There is no running water, no electricity and of course no comfortable toilets or showers.

For many people this home-stay experience and time spent with the host family is a revelation of the reality of the lives of Andean people at such altitude. This cultural exchange experience in Amantani is very touching and fascinating. In this tour, every traveler is welcome to share with the locals their time, some artistic gift, educational activities or just conversations. By participating in this tour you will contribute to improving the library that we are trying to implement in coordination with the local people from this island.

## **Day 10: AMANTANI – PUNO - SILLUSTANI**

After awaking under a huge, beautiful blue sky, we will enjoy an authentic homemade breakfast and will say good bye to our gracious hosts. Getting back on the boat we will head to Taquile Island.

In Taquile we will hike to the highest point of the island for breathtaking views of Lake Titicaca, from where we will be able to see the Capachica Peninsula and the Bolivian Mountain Range.

Lunch will be at a beautiful ranch built in the 19th Century we will have the chance to enjoy a traditional meal with a spectacular view all by ourselves, far from other tourist ...

We will head back to Puno In the afternoon to the Sillustani Archeological Site, a pre-Incan burial ground on the shores of Lake Umayo. The tombs, which are built above ground in tower-like structures called chullpas, are the vestiges of the Colla people, Aymara, who were conquered by the Inca in the 15th century. The structures housed the remains of complete family groups, although they were probably limited to nobility. Many of the tombs have been dynamited by grave robbers, while others were left unfinished. –

Evening departure to Lima from Juliaca Airport, late arrival to Lima, check in Hotel. Costa del Sol Miraflores. B/L

After this wonderful 10 days we will fly from Puno to Lima where you will take your flight home.

## **SERVICES INCLUDED:**

Private car for all of the transfers and tours.

Private bilingual guides for all excursions.

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Professional bilingual rafting guides (02 plus a safety kayak).

First Aid kit and oxygen bottle.

Kitchen tent & dining tent with camp table and chairs.

Drinking water in our private transportation and in every camping place.

Box lunch for Huchuy Qosqo Trek

Saddle horse in case of an emergency.

Meals indicated in the itinerary.

Train tickets between Machupicchu and Ollantaytambo.

Entrances and permissions for the hike to Machupicchu.

Entrances for Machupicchu and all the other sites we visit in Cusco, Sacred Valley and around.

Bus ticket to go down to Aguas Calientes the day when we finish the KM 104 hike to Machupicchu.

Round trip bus ticket to Machu Picchu from Aguas Calientes the day when we visit Machupicchu.

All Entrance fees to all sites

All Hotels Included

## **SERVICES NOT INCLUDED:**

Meal not mentioned in the itinerary.

International and domestic flights.

Accommodation in Cusco.

Tips for guides and field staff.