



Hidden Treasures of Peru

10 days / 9 nights – Price From: \$3,499

DAY 1: Lima

Upon your arrival to Lima you will be met and privately chauffeured to your hotel.

DAY 2: City of Lima

Visit the Casa-Solar de Aliaga, perhaps Lima's oldest which, uniquely, is inhabited by descendants of its original owner, Jeronimo de Aliaga, one of the first Spanish conquerors to arrive in Peru. We will visit one of Lima's beautiful colonial convents. After that you will visit the private collection of pre-Columbian and vice regal art belonging to Enrico Poli, an artistic and cultural treasure.

DAY 3: Cuzco – The Sacred Valley of the Incas

Morning flight to Cusco. Upon arrival, transfer to The Sacred Valley of the Incas. We will spend two days in the valley. In the morning we can ride, go canoeing, hang gliding or just walk amid nature in the Sacred Valley. Maras is the name of a place and of an indigenous community. The soil of Maras is rich in salt, its people have always made a living by extracting this resource using terraced salt pans. The salt pans are a magical sight, gleaming white in the sun. Today we will visit Maras and see the salt being extracted in the traditional way. After that we will go to Moray, another Inca site, where different crops were planted on circular terraces built to create microclimates and for research with different species.

DAY 4: The Incas

There are Inca remains all over the valley, such as the village of Ollantaytambo, which contains a fortress built to defend it against the invading Chankas. Ollantaytambo is also an Inca village whose stone houses are still inhabited by the descendants of those ancient Peruvians. The people of this area are characterized by their woollen costumes dyed in red and black. We will visit Huilloc, a small community of weavers to see the ancestral textile industry. Today's lunch will be unforgettable. At noon we will arrive at the Orihuela estate, located on high ground in the valley which provides a unique view of this green and fertile land. The house was built by the old Lambarri Orihuela family as a place to keep and exhibit their valuable collection of art from the pre-Columbian and vice regal periods. The Lambarri family await with a buffet lunch based on the valley's culinary traditions

DAY 5: The Sacred Valley - Machu Picchu

Between the Sacred Valley and the marvellous city of Machu Picchu, the Incas built a stone-paved road conceived as a ritual journey of purification that would take pilgrims to the sacred city of Machu Picchu. Today we will walk a section of this Inca road from the point at which we alight from the train. The walk will take around five hours, through a landscape of cloud forest containing archaeological remains of great ceremonial and productive importance, such as Chachabamba and Winay Wayna. We will continue walking until we reach a place called Intipunko, which means the Door of the Sun. This was designed by the Incas to give a panoramic view of the city of Machu Picchu from above. We will spend the night in a hotel and before retiring we may ask to participate in the ceremony of homage to the Pachamama or Mother Earth (an offering to the land) (optional), an ancient part of the ancestral Andean culture that is still practiced today.

info@discoversublime.com

Toll Free: 1 (877) 805-7969

US Fax: (708) 810-9350

24 Hour Numbers

+ 507 6617-6566 or + 507 6000-6060

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Hidden Treasures of Peru (continued)

DAY 6: Machu Picchu - Cuzco

Dawn in Machu Picchu is a spiritual experience that has no rival. Then we will descend to the Inca city to tour it accompanied by professional guides who will answer all our questions and concerns. We will get to know the ritual city, the palace of Inca Pachacutec and his royal panaka (court). Machu Picchu was rediscovered in 1911 by the American explorer and archaeologist Hiram Bingham, with support from Yale university and National Geographic. As part of our visit we will climb to Huayna Picchu, which is also rich in Inca relics; from there we will have an impressive view over the archaeological complex and the high jungle valley. Optional activities in Machu Picchu include bird watching, searching for orchids, trekking among nature and Inca ruins or a restorative session of aroma therapy. In the afternoon we will board the train to Cusco

DAY 07: Cuzco

Cusco, which in quechua means Navel of the World, was the capital of the Inca empire and the centre of the four-way expansion of that culture, known as the four suyos. The city is filled with Inca buildings designed for religious, administrative, military and domestic purposes. After the conquest the Spanish built a new city on top of the one they found, such that visitors can see something unique in history: a culture superimposed upon another, older one, for the purpose of domination. The Spanish colonial monuments in Cusco are among the richest and most luxurious in the Andes. In the morning we will visit some of them, and also stop at Koricancha, which was the most important Inca temple as it was dedicated to the worship of the sun. The Spanish built a church and Dominican monastery on top of this temple, which reveals the two cultures existing together. Today we will also visit the recently inaugurated Museum of Pre-Columbian Art in a marvelous colonial mansion, the Casa Cabrera, on the Plazuela de Las Nazarenas. In the afternoon we will stop at the Inca complex of Tipon, a splendid testimony of that culture, built by a cult that venerated water. Then, we leave for the village of Huasao, south of Cusco, an ancient settlement of faith healers and shamans who continue to make contact with invisible worlds today as they have since before the Spanish conquest.

DAY 08: Chinchero / Pampa de Anta

Today we will go where few conventional tourists venture. We start to the north of the city of Cusco and our first destination is the ancient Inca and Spanish village of Chinchero, with its beautiful church full of murals and frescoes and its traditional handicrafts market where bartering was the rule until just a few years ago. Then we will carry on to Anta, crossing an immense plain covered with different traditional Andean crops. We will stop at the village of Limatambo to see the colonial hacienda of Sondor, still inhabited by the descendants of the original landowners. Near Sondor is the Inca temple of Tarabamba, little visited but an architectural jewel. On this route we can see how the Incas were masters in the construction terraces, winning cultivable land from the mountains; some of them here are more than one hundred meters long. (B,L)

DAY 09: Cuzco

Today we are free to walk around this marvelous city. We recommend the Main Square, the district of San Blas and its artisans; the churches of La Compañía, La Merced, San Francisco and San Cristobal, the Palacio del Almirante Museum of Archaeology, the old district of Santa Ana and the surrounding archaeological remains of Sacsayhuaman, Quenqo, Tambomachay and Puka Pukara. Nevertheless, the most enjoyable way to spend the day can simply be to walk around the city and enjoy its immense vitality. Cusco is a very cosmopolitan city and this is evident by day, but especially at night, in its infinite number of bars, discos and restaurants.

DAY 10: Cuzco / Lima

In the morning we will take our flight back to Lima to connect with your international flight, or you could continue your adventure in Peru and discover more hidden treasures

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