

Salkantay Trail 4 days (5 days including Machu Picchu)

The famous Salkantay trail gives hikers the chance to view some stunning glacier lakes and snow-capped peaks. This trail has become an alternative to the Classic Inka Trail and rightly so. This is due to its close proximity to getting to Machu Picchu at the end and also nominated as a top 25 route in the world by National Geographic - just go to their webpage to see the recently added video at their on-line magazine and video footage reveals everything for itself.

ITINERARY

DAY 1

Travel from Cusco or Sacred Valley, to Mollepata (2800m) and onto Tucurhuay Glacier lake and Soraypampa camp (3850m)

On our first day we go from Cusco or the Sacred Valley to the small town of Mollepata (2800m) approximately 3.5 hours drive. We then head another 45 minutes onto a 4wd dirt road taking us to the trail-head at Soraypampa camp and lunch. From here we walk up to one of the prettiest features we will see in the next few days, the glacier lake of Tucurhuay (4150m). This is a photogenic glacier lake which projects turquoise green and blue and has the glacier of Tucurhuay behind it also. This 3 hour round trip from camp Soraypampa (3850m) is the best way to acclimatize on the first day and also in order to prepare for day 2, most like the toughest of the 4 day hike!

DAY 2

Hike from Soraypampa camp (3850m) to high pass (4630m) then down to Chaullay camp (2800m).

After an early breakfast, we take this tough 2-3 hour uphill hike to the pass. At the top we can almost reach out to touch the Salkantay mountain glacier and are about eye-line level with the foot of the ice. There will be time for photos but go down briskly as the cold winds channel over the top and our bodies will feel it as soon as we stop walking. From here the rest of the day is all downhill.

Our first part down is following gentle streams on some tough stony track so we need to watch our footing as we descend down quickly. After 2 hours we should arrive at Huaramachay a small 'pampa' where we can take some respite and lunch. From there we then head down further into high forest and where we shall feel a change of climate rapidly becoming more warm and humid. From lunch to our camp of night 2, Chaullay, should take us a further 3 hours downhill.

At Chaullay there is an opportunity to purchase some small snacks, gatorades or beer. minutes to 1 hour in order to get to the high pass. From here the 360° panoramic viewing for surrounding peaks is incredible providing we get clear weather. From here it is downhill again on light switch backs and barren terrain, after 3 hours we should arrive at Huacahuasi and stop for the day. Option will be to camp stay with the locals or in a basic rustic hostel.

DAY 3

Option A (tougher option) hiking to ruins of Patallacta Hike from Chaullay (2800m) to La Playa (2200m) to Lucmabamba (2200m) to ruins/camp (3400m)

Option B (easier option) for day 4 (Hot springs and Zip-lining)
Hike from Chaullay (2800m) to La Playa (2200m) and drive to Santa Teresa (1650m)

Day 3 Gives the opportunity to go two ways and different choices of activities on Day 4.

NOTE: If group are under 10 and with only 1 guide we cannot offer a split and choices must be made as a whole group. IF over 10, we can employ a 2nd guide and 1 shall go with each of the parties.

Both options involve a 5 hour hike from camp along the Santa Teresa river to La Playa. The route follows the base of the valley and ideally we shall have another early breakfast and get away as soon as possible to avoid the heat of the day as we descend further downwards and into the high jungles of the Santa Teresa Valley.

Depending on timings and group pace, in either La Playa or Lucmabamba we can stop for lunch. For **option A** in the afternoon we would then be heading uphill again through coffee plantations a further 3 hours on Inka road to camp at the Patallacta ruins which host wonderful views across the valley to Machu Picchu ruins and mountain and our first glance from afar. These are our only opportunity on the trail to visit any Inka ruins.

Option B involves a simple 1 hour taxi transfer down to Santa Teresa town. The road itself is dusty and uninteresting to hike and would take a further 4 hours to hike in the heat and humidity of the afternoon. We can according to advance request either decide to camp or stay in a simple hostel with shower/bed for the night (20 USD per person extra). In the evening, we can visit the beautiful hot springs of Cocalmayo and relax. Dinner included will be in one of the towns restaurants.

DAY 4

Travel from Lares back to Cusco or onto Aguas Calientes for Machu Picchu overnight in a hostel.

Option A After breakfast and hopefully a very impressive sun-rise we take a downhill descent of 1-1.5 hours on switch-backs to a river. We cross a foot bridge and hike to the hydroelectric power dam where we can continue 1.5-2 hours along the railroad that takes us to Aguas Calientes town (also known as Machu Picchu village). Those going this way can have a chance to try the hot-springs here instead. You will be given a box lunch/snacks for this day as crew go back home after breakfast.

Option B After breakfast we can have the opportunity to try Zip-lining here in town and famous for several professional companies. (50 USD per person extra) Afterwards, lunch will be handed out for the way to Machu Picchu. This involves a 3 hour hike (or 40 minute taxi) for those wanting to further relax. At the point where the road finishes (Hidroelectrica), we must then continue on foot along the railway for around 2 hours before getting to Machu Picchu village/Aguas Calientes.

Overnight in Aguas Calientes will be a basic 2* hotel/hostal, private shower and twin share room. Further upgrades or requests can be granted depending on extra payment.

We can settle into our hotel and then go out for an evening meal. The guide will have plenty of suggestions. Likelihood is we take an early night sleep in order to wake up early for the next day.

DAY 5

Visit to Machu Picchu ruins and return to Sacred Valley or Cusco.

Ideally, we should get up around 4am and take a light breakfast in order to get up to Machu Picchu citadel for opening hours (6am). We take a bus up in around 25 minutes from town to ruins. Once we have entered the site we can move to a spot for sunrise and to truly appreciate this magnificent work of the Incas. More often than not the site is covered in mist and cloud until the sun rises causing the thermals to rise and with it the clouds to disperse. By 9 or 10am we hope you can view the entire place, majestically form.

Optional extras to Climb Huayna Picchu Mountain (reservation needs to be secured at least 2 months before in order to secure the permits – check in advance at time of booking for availability) or Machu Picchu mountain. **(Add 10 USD per person)**

**PRICES 2016 EXPRESSED IN AMERICAN DOLLARS PER PERSON
SUPPLEMENT FOR THE TC: 680/380 USD**

Pax	USD/Pax with Machu Picchu	USD / Pax just hike /without Machu Picchu
2	1095	795
4	795	515
6	695	435
8	650	395
10 +	625	340

The price includes:

- Private transportation according to the itinerary.
- English speaking guide.
- Cook
- Campsite entry. Route entry fees.
- Porters and/or llamas-mules to transport most of the gear. (we highly recommend to limit the weight to a maximum of 7 kilos per person).
- Three meals per day (except breakfast on day 1 and dinner evening of day 3) during the trekking portion
- All group cooking gear for the trek.
- Camping equipment (two-person tents - 3 season good-quality, foam mattresses.
- Dining and kitchen tents.

For Machu Picchu section Day 4 and 5

- Hotel accommodation in Aguas Calientes 2* base double
- Entry to ruins at Machu Picchu
- Train 1 ways Aguas Calientes to Ollantaytambo (expedition class)
- Bus up to the ruins
- Guided tour of approximately 2 hours
- Bus transport from Ollantaytambo back to either the Sacred Valley or Cusco

Land Costs Do Not Include:

- Meals, hotels and transportation outside the regular itinerary.
- Dinners while the group is in Aguas Calientes (we suggest an average of 10-12usd per person, for the meals not included)
- Personal gear (inflate thermal rest, walking poles, medicine, clothes, sun glasses, sleeping bag -5º) we are able to hire from Cusco
- Single-room supplement for hotels (Around \$20 USD for Aguas 2* accommodation)
- Bus down from the ruins (\$12) some people refer the option to walk down in 1 hour or can decide on a bus ticket at the ruins if tired.
- Single supplement for tent: 5 usd per night.

- Early check in or late check out
- Medical/Evacuation trip insurance
- Charges incurred as a result of delays and itinerary changes beyond our control
- We recommend travel insurance to cover any unforeseen costs.
- Tips and gratuities
- Alcohol and/or bottled drinks
- Hotels, meals and transportation should the trekking tours end early.
- All expenses for early departure from tour (such as non-scheduled transfers, meals and hotel rooms).
- Option B/Day 3-4 – entry to hot springs 3 USD, Zip-lining 50 USD, Hostal upgrade 20USD p.p.
- Day 4 train from Hidroelectric to Aguas calientes – 28 USD