



Itinerary

14 Day Colours of Peru and the Amazon

***IMPORTANT NOTE: Any extra nights, optional tours or other amendments, will not be visible on this itinerary.**

DAY 1: Arrive Peru

From the moment you arrive in Lima, a team member of MyHoliday2 will be waiting for you at the airport and will take you, on private transport, to your hotel (approximately 1 hour). After checkin you will have all day to relax and enjoy the beauty of Lima and its surroundings.

MEALS:

N/A

OVERNIGHT:

Arawi Miraflores Express, Lima

DAY 2: Lima ~ City of Kings

The first stop on our Lima city tour is Huaca Pucllana, a huge archaeological site in Miraflores, one of Lima's most popular districts. Huaca Pucllana was an important ceremonial and administrative center of the Lima culture, which developed along this part of the Peruvian coast between 200 AD and 700 AD. This sacred place was built from seven staggered platforms surrounded by a plaza and large walls. It's a very impressive site, and certainly not what you expect to find in lively Miraflores!

After exploring Huaca Pucllana with your bilingual guide, we'll drive to the historic centre of Lima, all of which is a designated UNESCO World Heritage site. We'll go to the beautiful Plaza de Armas (Lima's main square) which is surrounded by impressive colonial and Republican-era buildings, many of which have ornate wooden balconies. Some of Peru's most important buildings surround the square, including the Government Palace, Cathedral of Lima, Archbishop's Palace of Lima, the Municipal Palace and the Palace of the Union.

We'll visit the Cathedral of Lima, which was completed in 1649. It's a huge structure, with a large central nave and 14 side chapels. Inside, we'll see the sculptures and paintings that decorate the interior. The cathedral is also home to the tomb of the conquistador Francisco Pizarro. Next we'll walk one block to the Convent of Santo Domingo (entrance fee included). Founded in the 1530s and completed in 1766, it is one of the most important religious buildings in Peru, and its large bell tower is a landmark in the historic centre of Lima. As we walk around the interior of the convent, we'll see the beautiful Sevillian azulejos (ceramic tiles) that decorate the walls, dating from 1604 and 1606. There is also a series of paintings that present passages of the life of Saint Dominic, the founder of the Dominican order, which date to around 1608. Return to the hotel - the duration of the city tours is approximately 5 hours

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT: Arawi Miraflores Express, Lima

DAY 3: Lima ~ Puerto Maldonado ~ Amazon Exploration

After Breakfast, transfer from the Hotel to the Airport (approx 1 hour) for your flight to Puerto Maldonado. Your Amazon adventure begins when we pick you up from the airport in Puerto Maldonado. We'll then drive for 10 minutes to our Puerto Maldonado headquarters. If you have any luggage that you won't need during the next few days, you can safely leave it here, which will help keep the boats and cargo light. We'll then drive to the Tambopata River Port, entering the native community of Infierno. From here it's a beautiful 45-minute boat ride to Posada Amazonas in the community's primary forest reserve. On arrival at the lodge, the manager will welcome you and give you important navigation and security tips. After you've had lunch and settled in, we'll head off on a 20-minute walk from Posada Amazonas that leads to the 30-meter canopy tower. From the platforms above, you'll have spectacular views of the vast expanse of rainforest, with the Tambopata River winding through it. You'll also see toucans, parrots and macaws as they fly over the jungle, with many other birds in the treetops right next to you. Returning to the lodge, we'll have a delicious dinner and you can watch the nightly presentation about the Infierno ecotourism project, given by a local staff member.

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: Posada Amazonas

DAY 4: Amazon Exploration

Today we'll set off to the Three Chimbadas oxbow lake. We'll board our boat and cruise along the river for 30 minutes, followed by a beautiful 45-minute hike. Once we reach the lake, we can paddle around the lake on a catamaran, searching for the resident family of nine giant river otters! We can't guarantee that you'll see them, but around 60% of our visitors get to see these charming creatures. We should also see plenty of other animals, including caiman, hoatzin and horned screamers.

Afterwards we'll take a 20-minute boat cruise downriver that leads to a trail designed by the staff of the Centro Ñape. The Centro Ñape is a communal organization that produces medicines out of forest plants and administers them to patients at their little clinic. The trail leads through the various medicinal plants, and your local guide can tell you all about their properties and their various uses.

Later, we'll head out on a night walk. Many animals are still active after dark, but they are obviously a little harder to see. But some creatures, like frogs, are much easier to find. And the sound of the jungle at night is quite an experience, making these nocturnal excursions very memorable.

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: Posada Amazonas

DAY 5: Puerto Maldonado ~ Sacred Valley ~ Visit Ccaccacollo

After breakfast it will be time to make our return journey to Puerto Maldonado. We'll head back to the Tambopata River Port and then continue on to the city. When we arrive in Puerto Maldonado, we'll take you to the airport for your flight to Cusco!

After your arrival to Cusco, your cultural excursion will begin when we pick you up in Cusco and drive you out to the Ccaccacollo Community. When we arrive, we'll meet some of the locals who live in the community, which is home to some 50 families. Here, the two main activities are farming and weaving, with the men working the land while the women doing the weaving. The weaving techniques have been passed down from one woman to another for centuries, and today Ccaccacollo produces some of the most amazing textiles in Peru. During your visit, you'll be able to attend a talk and see a demonstration about how these textiles are made, learning all about the ancient techniques that are still used today. One of the Quechua-speaking weavers will tell us (through a translator) about the secrets of the traditional iconography used in their designs, and will show you the entire manufacturing process from the shearing of the wool to spinning and the washing of the wool with natural soap. You'll also learn about the plants and flowers that are collected to use as dyes. You can also have a go at weaving a blanket, a poncho, a chullo hat or one of the many other items made by the women weavers of Ccaccacollo. After the weaving, you'll have the rest of the day to explore the community at your leisure, getting to know the locals and seeing what else they do to keep the community thriving. And, of course, you'll be able to purchase the amazing high-quality textiles on offer, helping to support the community directly.

Later in the day we'll say our goodbyes and return to Cusco, where we'll drop you off at your hotel. Then spend the remainder of the day at leisure.

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT: Hotel Agustos Urubamba

DAY 6: Huilloc ~ Ollantaytambo

We will pick you up from your hotel after breakfast for the 1 hour drive to Huilloc. Arriving in Huilloc, we'll be greeted by the friendly locals, and then we'll begin to see how they have kept their language and customs alive, most immediately evident in the colourful traditional clothes that they wear. This is a cultural immersion experience, and as such you'll be free to interact with the locals, and choose how you spend your day. You can take part in their collective tasks, working in the fields or making clothing, or seeing how they educate their children or prepare their ancestral ceremonies. We'll also have a tasty and traditional Andean lunch with one of the local families, providing another great chance to see and experience their daily life.

Huilloc is particularly well-known for its weaving traditions, passed down through the generations. This work is carried out by the women of the community (the men work the land), often with their youngest daughters or granddaughters sitting next to them, learning the ancient techniques. The textiles they produce on their looms are decorated with the same images used in Huilloc for centuries, including condors, cougars and the local Huallata birds. The finished weavings are some of the most beautiful produced in Peru – a country known for its traditional weavers. You can see a demonstration of their weaving process, and then have a go yourself. And you can give back to the community by purchasing some of these wonderful textiles.

After spending time in Huilloc, we'll say goodbye to the locals and head back to Ollantaytambo, Ollantaytambo was the royal estate of the Inca emperor Pachacuti, who conquered the region and built the town and a ceremonial centre. We'll spend about an hour exploring these magnificent ruins, visiting the amazing Temple of the Sun and seeing massive blocks of rock that were perfectly carved and polished by master Inca stonemasons. Ollantaytambo is also a fine example of Inca agricultural construction and hydro-engineering, with a complex series of stone water fountains, channels and agricultural terraces, the latter organized by elevation to create different microclimates for crop

experimentation.

We'll see the extent of the water system when we return to the town, where fast flowing water channels built by the Incas are still in use today. Walking to the town square, we'll have great views of the ruins above us, as well as Inca granaries and store houses built on the sides of the surrounding mountains. Here we can also watch the daily life of Ollantaytambo, where many of the locals still wear traditional dress.

After the visit to Ollantaytambo ruins head to the train station to board the train to Aguas Calientes (also known as Machu Picchu Pueblo). The train leaves at approximately 16h40, although the exact schedule does change sometimes. The two-hour train journey is a memorable experience in itself, as we pass through river canyons and rolling hills. Aguas Calientes is the gateway to Machu Picchu, sitting in a deep gorge at the foot of the mountain upon which Machu Picchu is located. It's a pretty town that mixes traditional life with a huge tourism infrastructure, with plenty of markets, souvenir shops, hotels and restaurants. It's also largely pedestrianized, making it a fun place to explore on foot. Aguas Calientes is surrounded by jungle-covered mountains and cliffs, and the Urubamba River flows right next to the town, sometimes roaring through the canyon.

Aguas Calientes is also surrounded by thermal hot springs, and when we arrive you'll have plenty of time to relax and enjoy a dip in one of the steaming natural springs. You'll also have time to walk around the town, exploring the colorful markets and general buzz of this unique Peruvian settlement. It's an early start the next day, so we'll make sure you're settled in to your hotel and all set for the following day and your first glimpse of Machu Picchu!

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch

OVERNIGHT: Inti Punku Machu Picchu Hotel

DAY 7: Aguas Calientes ~ Cusco ~ Machu Picchu

To best appreciate Machu Picchu, we'll wake up early in the morning so we can get to the citadel in good time. You'll have time for breakfast first, and then your guide will pick you up from the hotel at around 5.30am. We'll then walk to the bus departure point for the short but zigzagging ascent up the road to Machu Picchu.

We'll then pass through the gates into the Machu Picchu archaeological site. Here you'll begin your guided walking tour with an experienced and highly knowledgeable guide. Our tour of Machu Picchu will last about two hours, and will take you to all the most famous and most spectacular parts of the extensive archaeological complex. These include the House of the Guardian, Intihuatana, Temple of the Sun, Sacred Plaza and other key locations. And as we walk around, we'll have spectacular views across the agriculture terraces of Machu Picchu and across to the surrounding mountains and plunging gorges.

Once we've finished our tour of Machu Picchu, we'll take the bus back down to Aguas Calientes where you can relax and have lunch (not included) before we board the train back to Poroy and Cusco. Upon arrival at the station, we'll be waiting to take you back to your hotel in Cusco, where you can think back to your incredible tour of one of the world's most famous and most impressive attractions.

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT: Prisma Hotel

DAY 8: Cusco City Tour

Our Cusco city tour begins in the morning, when we'll first head to the wonderful Koricancha, next door to Santo Domingo Church. According to the chroniclers who wrote during the period directly after the Spanish Conquest, the Koricancha was the most sacred and most important temple in the Inca Empire. Its walls were covered with gold, and life-size statues of plants and animals – all made of pure gold and silver – decorated its rooms and hallways. Sadly, this wealth was stripped out by the Spanish conquistadors. It remains a magnificent temple, however, and your guide will take you around the Koricancha, showing you details that you almost certainly miss if you visited without a guide.

After visiting the Koricancha, we'll head to Cusco Cathedral, located on the Plaza de Armas. Built between 1560 and 1654 on top of the foundations of an existing Inca temple, this spectacular cathedral houses many works of art by the Cusco School of painters, and its main altar and pulpit are covered in gold and silver relief work. Look carefully and you'll also see elements of indigenous religious symbolism incorporated into the church by the native people who worked on its construction, such as the carved head of a jaguar on the doors. Our next stop is the imposing Inca fortress of Sacsayhuaman, which sits on a hill above Cusco. Here you will see some of the finest examples of Inca stonework and construction, including massive rocks that were carefully cut and perfectly fitted together to form the walls. From here you'll also have beautiful panoramic views of Cusco.

After exploring Sacsayhuaman we'll head up the hill to the Tambomachay Archeological Complex. The exact purpose of this site is unknown, but it may have functioned, at least in part, as an Inca spa. Inca hydro-engineering is apparent here, with a series of aqueducts, canals and waterfalls running through the terraced rocks. Tambomachay is the last attraction on our city tour, after which we'll head back down into Cusco and drop you off at your hotel.

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT: Prisma Hotel

DAY 9: Cusco ~ Puno

After breakfast, you'll be picked up from your hotel at 6.30am and dropped off at the bus station to take a bus trip, more like a tour - a guide will be on board, and you'll stop at four exciting sites: • Andahuaylillas: The Sistine Chapel of South America. This church is one of the most beautiful examples of Andean popular religious art. • Raqchi (Wiracocha God Temple): This was an Inca church of considerable dimensions; 328 feet long, 85 feet wide and 45 feet high. The temple is divided into two naves, and each nave has 11 large columns. • La Raya: This is the half-way point between Cusco and Puno and also the highest point (14,222 feet above sea level). The landscapes here are stunning and typical Andean animals like the llama, alpaca and vicuña are familiar sights. It is also the geographic border between two cultures - Quechua and Aymara. • Pukara: This is the most important and oldest ceremonial center of the altiplano. There are new lite-sculptures and tombs.

Arrival time to Puno will be around 5 pm.

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch

OVERNIGHT: Hotel Royal Inn Puno

DAY 10: Uros ~ Taquile Islands

Our full-day trip begins at around 7am when we pick you up from your hotel in Puno. We'll then head down to the port and board our comfortable motor launch to ride out to the island of Taquile. Taquile is

one of the most beautiful islands in Peru, where the traditional way of life is still very much alive. We'll meet some of the master weavers of this ancient Andean community, whose textiles are considered among the best in the country. According to legend, the Incas themselves learned how to weave from the artisans of this island. On Taquile, the men are the weavers, and the women spin the yarn. After seeing the weavers and exploring the beautiful island, we'll head down to the small port on Taquile at around midday and head by boat towards the Chucuito Peninsula. This is in the Aymara region of Lake Titicaca and it represents the communal identity of the Peruvian-Bolivian altiplano. We'll visit the small and rarely visited rural community of Luquina, where we'll enjoy a wonderful buffet lunch at the local fisherman's house. Later in the afternoon, as we begin heading back towards Puno, we'll visit the amazing Floating Islands of the Uros people. When we arrive at the floating islands, you'll probably be amazed by the scale of these floating reed constructions. The Uros originally built these islands for defensive reasons: if a threat appeared, they could move their island homes to a safer location. The islands are made from the Totorá reeds that grow around the lake, and each island is in a constant state of reconstruction, as old reeds are replaced by new. Stepping onto the islands is quite an experience, as the springy reed floor feels strange beneath your feet. We'll explore the main island, and see the houses, watchtowers and other structures, all built of reeds. One of the locals will then give a brief presentation about how the islands are made, and then you can meet one of the local families to see how they live. After visiting the Uros islands, we'll head back to Puno, where we'll take you to your hotel.

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch

OVERNIGHT: Hotel Royal Inn Puno

DAY 11: Colca Canyon

Departure from Puno around 6am we'll drive toward Chivay Village. We will have a trip of around 5 hours with stops on the way to take photographs. You will observe the area called "Lagunillas", where with some luck American camelids maybe take some pictures of flamingos, birds and Andean ducks, on the way we will see Andean landscapes, South American camelids. Continuing on the road we will pass Tocra, a high plain at more than 4,500 meters, where we will observe lakes with migrant birds and get pictures of the Antiplano with its Llamas and Guanacos. The highest point of our tour will be Pata Pampa (Pata=high, Pampa=land) located at 4,820 meters, where we'll observe the volcanoes Ampato, Sabancaya, Hualca-Hualca, Mismi (the source of the Amazon River), and the Cordillera de Chila. Our next stop will be the town of Chivay, where one end of the Colca Valley begins. The traditional terrace systems found here, built by indigenous inhabitants of the area, are remarkable for their scale and precise construction. Chivay itself was founded by the Spanish, a fact reflected in its church and other colonial buildings. You can have a traditional lunch in the town (not included) before we check in to our hotel. You'll then have the afternoon to explore the town on your own, and, if you like, visit the hot springs at La Calera, about 3 km from Chivay. Colca Canyon and the Colca Valley are dotted with natural hot springs and thermal baths, thanks to the seismic activity in the region. La Calera has public thermal baths which are said to have healing properties, with temperatures around 38 C (98 F).

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT: Casa Andina Standard Colca

DAY 12: Colca ~ Arequipa

It's another early start today because there's so much great stuff to see! First we'll go to the lookout point known as Cruz del Condor (Cross of the Condor), near the small villages of Maca and Cabanaconde. Here, strong winds rise up from the canyon, providing a favourite spot for Andean condors. They soar on the thermals, often in pairs, normally in the early morning and late afternoon. There's a good chance you'll see these huge condors, with their three-meter wingspans, flying very close to the lookout point, providing a truly majestic sight. From the lookout point you'll also have incredible views down into the depths of Colca Canyon.

We'll then head back to Chivay, first stopping off at the traditional village of Pinchollo and the Antahuilque viewpoint. This viewpoint (or Mirador, as they are known in Spanish) offers wonderful views of the 1,500-year-old agricultural terraces that curve along the hillsides like an amphitheatre. You can also spot some of the enchanting lagoons of the Colca Valley. We will have lunch in Chivay in the afternoon and then begin the journey to Arequipa (4 hours).

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT: Hotel Conquistador

DAY 13: Arequipa ~ Lima

After Breakfast, the visit of convent Santa Catalina, you have the opportunity to walk around the white city and its surroundings. The architecture in the historic center is characterized by the prominence of ashlar, the use of which begins in the last third of the s. XVI. This volcanic stone, white or pink exceptionally soft, lightweight, and weatherproof, emerged as a seismic structural solution. Afterward, Arequipa Gastronomic Experience: Our gastronomic tour begins at 8 a.m. First we head to the local San Camilo market, located not far from Arequipa's Plaza de Armas. San Camilo is a very popular traditional Peruvian market, and arguably the most authentic and most interesting in Arequipa. The lively market is packed with butchers, spices merchants, fruit and veg stalls, souvenir sellers and more, as well as food courts selling a wide range of classic local snacks and dishes. It's a heady mix of colour and sound, as well as plenty of smells – so get ready to hold your nose, as it can become quite pungent, a certain sign of a truly authentic local market! We'll explore the market and buy all of the fresh ingredients we'll need to prepare two dishes: an entrée and a main dish. Then we'll go to a local family home and start cooking! You'll be given all the necessary instructions by a highly knowledgeable local cook, who will assist you in the creation of your classic arequipeño meal. If you don't speak Spanish, don't worry! Your guide will be on hand to translate, so you can understand the cook and ask any questions. Once you've finished cooking, you can sit down and enjoy your delicious Peruvian meal. And now that you know how to make it in the most authentic way, you can later prepare it again to wow your friends and family with your newfound culinary abilities. Ending with a transfer to Arequipa Airport for your flight to Lima. Upon arrival in Lima a representative of Valencia travel will be waiting at the airport for you and pick you up in our private transport and take you to your hotel where you will spend the night.

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch

OVERNIGHT: Arawi Miraflores Express, Lima

DAY 14: End of Tour ~ Departure

After breakfast in the hotel enjoy your last day at leisure. Hotel to Airport transfer (approx 1 hour) for your flight at home. We hope you loved your tour of Peru and the Amazon with MyHoliday2!

MEALS: Breakfast