

THE Inca Trail

CUSCO & MACHU PICCHU

includes

High Inca Trail, Salkantay Trek
Lares, Choquequirao & Ausangate Treks
Lima City Guide

ALEXANDER STEWART &
HENRY STEDMAN



6th
edition



This sixth edition was researched and written by Henry Stedman. His work built upon that of Alexander Stewart who wrote the previous two editions of this book.

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Below: A young traveller dwarfed by the massive stones of Sacsayhuaman.



The Inca Trail, Cusco & Machu Picchu

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A request

The authors and publisher have tried to ensure that this guide is as accurate and up to date as possible. Nevertheless, things change. If you notice any changes or omissions that should be included in the next edition of this book, please write to Trailblazer (address above) or email us at ☐ info@trailblazer-guides.com. A free copy of the next edition will be sent to persons making a significant contribution.

Warning: mountain walking can be dangerous

Please read the notes on when to go (pp10-12), safety (p34, pp88-9 & p339) and on health and safety in the mountains (pp119-21). Every effort has been made by the author and publisher to ensure that the information contained herein is as accurate and up to date as possible. However, they are unable to accept responsibility for any inconvenience, loss or injury sustained by anyone as a result of the advice and information given in this guide.

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Photos – Front cover: Machu Picchu **Overleaf:** Condor soaring above the Apurímac valley at the start of the Choquequirao trek **This page:** Machu Picchu (All © Henry Stedman)

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TRAILBLAZER PUBLICATIONS

INTRODUCTION 7

When to go 10 For how long? 12

PART 1: PLANNING YOUR TRIP

With a tour group or on your own?

How to book 14 – Group service or private service trek 15 – Visiting Machu Picchu without doing a trek 16 – Tour operators and trekking agencies 17 – Porters, arrieros and guides 20 – Porter welfare 22

Getting to Peru 21 Budgeting 25

Route options

The classic Inca Trail 27 – **Route options map 28** – Variations on the classic trail 30; Shorter trails (Km104 and the Purification Trail 30; Km88 Riverside Trail 30) – Other treks to Machu Picchu 31 (High Inca Trail 31; Salkantay Trek 31; Choquequirao Trek 32; Lares Trek 33; Ausangate Trek 33; Vilcabamba Trail 34)

What to take

Footwear 35 – Clothes 35 – Equipment 36 – Food 37 – Toiletries 38
Medical kit 38 – Miscellaneous items 39 – Photographic equipment 39 – Maps 40 – Recommended reading 41

Health precautions, inoculations and insurance 45

PART 2: PERU

Facts about the country

Geographical background 48 – Historical outline 51

Practical information for the visitor

Documents & visas 76 – Money 76 – Getting around 78
Accommodation 80 – Food 81 – Drink 83 – Post & communications 85 – Electricity 95 – Time 85 – Holidays & festivals 86 – Shopping 86 – Safety 88 – Drugs 89

PART 3: THE INCAS

The Imperial Landscape

A Reading of Inca History in the Sacred Valley (Hugh Thomson) 90

PART 4: FLORA AND FAUNA

Flora 104 Fauna 108

PART 5: MINIMUM IMPACT WALKING & OUTDOOR SAFETY

Minimum impact trekking 115

Health and safety in the mountains 119



PART 6: LIMA

City guide 122

PART 7: CUSCO & AROUND

City guide 146

Around Cusco

Ruins near Cusco (day hike: Tambo Machay 184, Puca Pucara 186
Amaru Marka Wasi 186, Q'enko 187, Sacsayhuaman 187)

The Sacred Valley (Pisac 190, Chinchero 193, Urubamba 196,
Ollantaytambo 201, Cusichaca Valley 205)

Aguas Calientes (Pueblo Machu Picchu) 206

South and east of Cusco (Tipón 209, Pikillacta 210,
Rumicolca 210)

PART 8: TRAIL GUIDE AND MAPS

Using this guide 211

Getting to the trailheads 215

The classic Inca Trail 215

Variations on the classic trail

From Chilca (Km77) 231 – From Km82 232

The shorter trails

Km104 to Huinay Huayna (Purification Trail) 234

Km88 to Km104 (Riverside Trail) 237

The High Inca Trail 238

The Salkantay Trek 249

The Lares Trek 266

The Choquequirao Trek 281

The Ausangate Trek 297

PART 9: MACHU PICCHU

Historical background 311 – Practical information 318

Machu Picchu Guide 320 – **Machu Picchu map** 324

APPENDICES

A: Vilcabamba Trail 339

C: Glossary 349

E: GPS waypoints 356

B: Quechua/Spanish words & phrases 345

D: Rail information and timetables 351

F: Route map key 358

INDEX 359



INTRODUCTION

The mystery of the deep valleys which lie in the quadrant north to north-east of Mount Salcantay have long demanded attention. Separated from Ollantaytambo and Amaybamba by the Grand Canyon of the Urubamba, protected from Cuzco by the gigantic barrier of Salcantay, isolated from Vitcos by deep valleys and inhospitable, high windswept bleak regions called punas, they seem to have been unknown to the Spanish Conquerors and unsuspected by the historians... it appears to have been a terra incognita.

Hiram Bingham, *Lost City of the Incas*

In July 1911 the American explorer Hiram Bingham stumbled across the Inca ruins at Machu Picchu, the archetypal Lost City. The discovery was the realisation of many people's dreams and it has since proved to be the inspiration for innumerable adventure tales; none of the world's other great ruins can compare with Machu Picchu's location on a knife-like ridge, amid thick forest, high above a tumultuous river and frequently cloaked in swirling cloud, with the horn of Huayna Picchu punching through the mist and snow-capped mountains glittering on the horizon.

None of the world's other great ruins can compare with Machu Picchu's location on a knife-like ridge

These days, Bingham's first encounter with Machu Picchu is described as a 'scientific discovery', for the approximate whereabouts of the ruins was already common knowledge amongst several local farmers. Indeed, Bingham was directed to the region by these farmers. As Bingham describes it, after hacking through the forest for several hours, all at once they 'were confronted with an unexpected sight, a great flight of beautifully constructed stone-faced terraces, perhaps a hundred of them, each hundreds of feet long and ten feet high'. Pushing on, 'without any warning', Bingham happened upon a cave carved into a stunningly sculpted structure whose 'flowing lines... symmetrical arrangement



Impressive Inca stonework on the semicircular Temple at Machu Picchu.

(Opposite): Following the water channel towards Soray Pampa on the first day of the Salkantay trek and High Inca Trail, with the glaciated twin peaks of Humantay (5917m/19,412ft) rising ahead.



Huinay Huayna (see p230), the last major ruins on the Inca Trail before you reach Machu Picchu and the most spectacular up to this point.

the ruins at Choquequirao. He was also responsible for discovering two other Inca sites of great importance, Vitcos and Vilcabamba. Countless other expeditions have subsequently explored the region and numerous discoveries have been made, though none as significant as those unearthed by Bingham. In addition to this, a network of Inca roads crisscrossing the mountains and landscapes have been found; these led to the creation of trekking routes for modern-day pilgrims and adventurers to follow. The **Inca Trail** is just one such route, which penetrates the forest and crosses high passes to reach its goal, the ruins at Machu Picchu.

Heavily promoted and justifiably popular, the celebrated four-day Inca Trail almost became a victim of its own success, as a result of which strict rules were brought in that limit the number of people allowed each day on both this trek and the shortened two-day version.

In the wake of these stringent regulations, alternative options to reach Machu Picchu have been established and treks to the other Inca sites have developed as genuine alternatives to the crowded classic trek. In particular, the **Salkantay Trek** (see photo p6) starting from the village of Mollepata, which climbs over the



The **Lares region**(see p266) provides tough but rewarding treks with high mountain passes and remote villages such as Cancha Cancha (above).

of ashlar, and gradual gradation of the courses combined to produce a wonderful effect... It seemed like an unbelievable dream. Dimly, I began to realise that this wall and its adjoining semicircular Temple over the cave were as fine as the finest stonework in the world. It fairly took my breath away...'

This was not Bingham's first discovery in the region, 'scientific' or otherwise. Prior to the revelation of Machu Picchu, Bingham had explored and uncovered the

4635m/15,206ft Salkantay Pass and avoids many of the regulations associated with the Inca Trail – yet still gets you to Machu Picchu.

In this edition we have also included a trek of the little explored **Lares region**, a picturesque rural area of deep valleys connected by lofty mountain passes. This trek starts and ends at the Sacred Valley, from where it's easy to catch transport to the popular Inca towns of Pisac and Ollantaytambo. The railway station at Ollantaytambo is on the

main line between Cusco and Aguas Calientes, from where it's a quick bus trip up to Machu Picchu.

Alternatively, you may prefer to visit Inca ruins which, while almost as extensive as Machu Picchu, and which can be found in a location arguably even more dramatic, receive far fewer visitors. The **Choquequirao Trek** is a tough three- to five-day trek overlooking the roaring Río Apurímac. Or you can steer clear of Inca ruins altogether and head instead to the divine **Ausangate** region. In this book we describe a hike around the mountain after which the region is named, a four-day trek through exquisite high-altitude scenery replete with lakes, glaciers and isolated settlements that many trekkers agree is pretty close to perfection.

All the above are described in extensive detail in this guide. We also look at the **Vilcabamba Trail** (see p339) which explores puna, pampa, pasture, cloud forest and rainforest to lead you to Espíritu Pampa, the last refuge of the Incas. It was these ruins that Hiram Bingham was actually looking for when he stumbled upon Machu Picchu. The largely unrestored ruins of Vilcabamba are mostly still camouflaged and concealed by the forest.

But the charms of this region are not confined solely to walking. In particular there's **Cusco**, the Inca capital and a contemporary world-class city, which wears its celebrity lightly and remains true to its past. The Incas built temples, palaces, aqueducts and roads worthy of an empire that stretched



Inca doorway at **Choquequirao** (see p281). The ruins straddle a ridge surrounded by forest, with terraces clinging to the sheer slopes.



The **Ausangate** trek (see p297) is a gorgeous but remote trail and you'll need to be self-sufficient. Alternatively, you can hire an *arriero* and they'll provide food and mules to carry your luggage.



Cusco – Plaza des Armas and La Compañía Jesuits' church with its impressive facade.

(All photos on these pages © Henry Stedman).

from Colombia to Chile. The Spanish conquistadors under Pizarro then used the precisely cut stones as the foundations for their opulent churches and monasteries. It's a fascinating place to visit with well-designed museums to fire the imagination, including the Casa de Concha that houses the artefacts taken from Machu Picchu by Bingham and recently returned from Yale University.

Despite the pressures of mass tourism and the popularity of the better-known sites, it is still possible to explore the Cusco region free from crowds. Just take up the challenge and follow in the footsteps of the pioneers.

When to go

The trekking season in Peru typically runs during the dry season from April to October when there is likely to be the most sunshine and least rain on the trails.

The trekking season runs during the dry season from April to October

During this period the trails get particularly busy between June and July and it can be hard to

Below: On the Inca Trail, the ruins of Intipata (see p228) enjoy some of the best views down the Urubamba valley. © Henry Stedman.



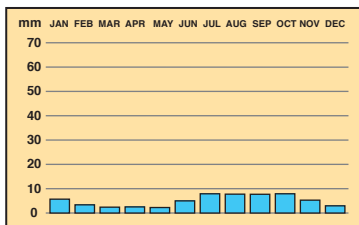
year. Remember that although Machu Picchu itself is open year-round and can be an enchanting, mysterious place when shrouded in cloud and clear of crowds, **the classic Inca Trail is closed completely in February.**

FOR HOW LONG?

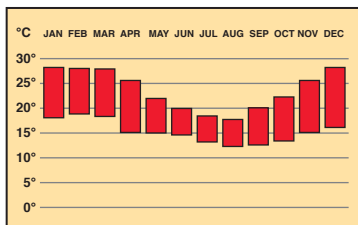
The popularity of the Cusco region with trekkers is entirely understandable. Amongst some exceptionally dramatic scenery are hidden ruins and lost cities to rival anywhere else in the world. The treks described in this book take between two and five days to complete. When calculating how long your trip needs to be, remember to allow a day each way to travel between Cusco and Lima (more if you decide to travel overland rather than fly) and a couple of days in Cusco at the beginning to aid acclimatisation. This last factor is very important and will improve your chances of enjoying and succeeding on your trek and reduce the likelihood of you suffering from altitude sickness and inadvertently endangering your life. Since this is South America you may also want to build in a contingency day in case there are problems with the flights in either direction.

If you haven't pre-booked your trek and are arriving in Cusco hoping to put something together on spec, remember that it is impossible, except perhaps in the middle of the rainy season, to secure a permit on the classic Inca Trail this quickly because of the restricted numbers permitted to start the trek each day (see p14). You should be able to put together a trek on one of the other routes within a couple of days, though.

LIMA – CLIMATE CHARTS

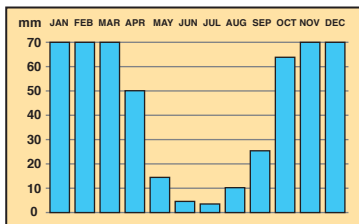


Max/min rainfall (mm)

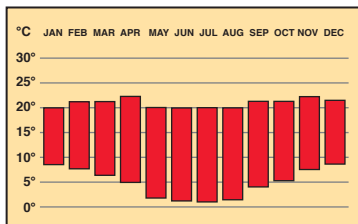


Max/min temperature (°C)

CUSCO – CLIMATE CHARTS



Max/min rainfall (mm)



Max/min temperature (°C)

PLANNING YOUR TRIP

1

This section is designed to help you plan your trip: to make travel arrangements, calculate how much the trip will cost, and decide both when to go and which trek to take. It also sets out some simple rules to maximise your safety and outlines what to do in an emergency. There is a well-established trekking culture and infrastructure around Cusco. With the use of this book, an internet connection and just a little Spanish it's entirely feasible to organise your entire trip yourself.

Ultimately, though, how you approach your trip is a matter of personal choice and there's no substitute for practical experience when it comes to trekking. That said, the more you plan and prepare, the better equipped you are to deal with events on the ground, allowing you to make the most of the trip.

With a tour group or on your own?

In 2001 the Peruvian authorities outlawed independent trekking in the Machu Picchu Historical Sanctuary and brought in a series of strict regulations as to who could trek the trails to Machu Picchu and how they could tackle them. For a full breakdown of the regulations see box pp212-13 but, essentially, **you can only tackle the classic Inca Trail by signing up with a tour company or taking an accredited, licensed guide.** When the laws were first introduced, it was still possible to sneak onto the trail without paying. Since then the authorities have tightened up security and clamped down on people not abiding by the rules. Don't attempt the classic Inca Trail without a guide or without paying the proper fees. It's highly unlikely that you'll get away with it. Yes, it is a little expensive to trek the Inca Trail (see box p14) but the costs of maintaining the route are high and the regulations prevent overcrowding, excessive damage and erosion and help to reduce littering. Besides, almost whatever price you pay, it's still worth it.

For those who don't want to be constrained by the regulations, however, there are plenty of options. If you still want to trek to Machu Picchu take the Salkantay Trek (see p31) which is as yet largely free from regulations. Or take a hike in the Lares region (see p33) which finishes in the Sacred Valley, from where a combination of bus and train (do pre-book the latter) can convey you to the town



of Aguas Calientes, from where you can catch a bus or hike up to Machu Picchu. Alternatively, head to the far less-visited ruins at Choquequirao (see pp32-3) or Vilcabamba (see box p34). Those whose interest in ruins is minimal, but who wish to see some of the most spectacular high-altitude scenery in South America, should take a bus over to Ausangate to tackle the 4-day hike around one of the region's most picturesque mountains (see pp33-4).

HOW TO BOOK

With the advent of tight restrictions on the number of people able to start the Inca Trail each day, your first priority on deciding to tackle the trek is to **book as far in advance as possible**. Long gone are the days of being able to turn up in Cusco and put together a trek there and then. Only 500 people in total are allowed on the Inca Trail each day, including guides and porters. This means that only around 200 tourists per day are able to begin the walk to Machu Picchu and each of these must have a permit that has been secured and paid for well in advance. The permits for the year used to be released in January, however, as we go to press it has just been announced that they will now be **released in October** for the following year. For the busy months they sell out within a few days.

Ultimately you should try and make a reservation as soon as you know your travel dates; during the peak season from June to August you ought to have

❑ Why is it so expensive?

The price of the classic 4-day Inca Trail may seem high but in comparison to other, equivalent treks worldwide it represents good value and has ensured a decent standard of general service, fair treatment of porters and increased revenue for a developing country. The flip side is that trekking on a budget is now nigh on impossible and as a result some less well-off individuals, including many Peruvians, are unable to tackle the trek.

The main issue is that there are some **fixed costs** that companies have to absorb whether you are taking a group service trek or a private service trek. Over recent years the cost of the classic Inca Trail has risen steeply as the government introduced minimum standards and started to enforce regulations. As a start point, the trek fee has to cover the accompanying crew's wages, food and transport. Then there's the entrance fee to the Inca Trail, s/292 (US\$90) per person at the time of research; porters have to pay an entrance fee as well but at the reduced rate of s/42. Then there's food and fuel for your meals, the cost of camping kit and first-aid equipment, a bus from Machu Picchu to Aguas Calientes (currently US\$12), a train ride from Aguas Calientes to Ollantaytambo (around US\$78) and a private bus from Ollantaytambo to Cusco. Plus office costs and bank fees for holding the trek deposit. And, there's also the sales tax at 18%. The tax authorities have tightened up this aspect and you can now expect to pay around US\$80 per person in sales tax, which is incorporated into the price of the trek. This all needs to be accounted for before the company running the expedition tries to make a profit.

The result is a minimum spend for every company operating an Inca Trail trek, although other costs vary considerably from company to company and are dependent on group size. If you choose a company with a smaller group size, expect the trip price to be higher.

It is equally easy, and potentially cheaper, to get to the ruins simply by using public transport. There is a train service from Cusco to Aguas Calientes and a bus service from there to Machu Picchu. For those on a really low budget there is a more arduous and time-consuming but usually cheaper way of accessing Aguas Calientes by bus followed by a short section of easy walking (see p183).

TOUR OPERATORS AND TREKKING AGENCIES

Booking with an agent in Peru (see pp177-82) is the cheapest way to organise your trek and most now have a website through which you can do this. Booking with a company in your home country, though, can provide additional peace of mind and get you a package that includes flights and transfers, albeit at a price. Most of the operators listed below operate treks on all the routes described in this book.

Agencies in the UK and Ireland

- **Amazonas Explorer** (🌐 www.amazonas-explorer.com), based in Peru (Cusco; see p177) but owned by British/Swiss expats, offer the Inca Trail, Choquequirao Trek and are one of the leading experts on the Lares region, a trek that culminates in the short Inca trail trek from Km104.
- **Andes** (☎ 01556 503929, 🌐 www.andes.org.uk) specialise in climbing expeditions but also tailor-make an Inca Mountain trek that is run on request.
- **Andean Trails** (☎ 0131 467 7086, 🌐 www.andeantrails.co.uk) organise treks for small groups including the Inca Trail, Lares, Ausangate (including a lodge-based Ausangate trek) and Choquequirao treks as well as tailor-made itineraries.
- **Audley Travel** (☎ 01993 838620, 🌐 www.audleytravel.com) offer a 14-day tour including the Inca Trail, and will also tailor-make a holiday round any of the treks in the region.
- **Charity Challenge** (☎ 020 8346 0500, 🌐 www.charitychallenge.com) arranges treks in the Lares region culminating in a visit to Machu Picchu, all for a number of charities.
- **Discover Adventure** (☎ 01722 718444, 🌐 www.discoveradventure.com) organise ordinary treks on the Inca Trail as well as treks for charity.
- **Exodus** (☎ 0845 863 9616, 🌐 www.exodus.co.uk) arrange a variety of treks and tours and are one of the few companies to offer the Salkantay Trek that links with the Inca Trail, which they call the High Inca Trail – a name we have adopted in this book too; see p31.
- **Explore** (☎ 01252 883726, 🌐 www.explore.co.uk) is a large company doing the Inca Trail and Salkantay Trek to Machu Picchu as well as several other Peruvian tours.
- **G Adventures** (formerly Gap Adventures; ☎ 0344 272 2060, 🌐 www.gadventures.com) A well-run international organisation offering many tours on the Inca Trail and the Salkantay Trek.
- **HF Holidays** (☎ 0345 470 8558, 🌐 www.hfholidays.co.uk) offer a couple of tours to Peru which include Machu Picchu and the Inca Trail.
- **High Places** (☎ 0114 352 0060, 🌐 www.highplaces.co.uk) operate an 18-day tour including Ausangate and Inca Trail treks.

❑ The life of a porter

The film *Mi Chacra* (📺 www.michacrafilm.com), meaning 'My Land', is an award-winning documentary by Jason Burlage that chronicles the life of a porter. Framed by the seasons, the film was shot in 2007 and 2008 and follows a Peruvian farmer and his family from planting to harvest and through a season as a porter on the Inca Trail. The film was shot on the Inca Trail and in the family's village of Mullacas, in the mountains above the Sacred Valley. It showcases the natural beauty of the Sacred Valley but also provides a window into the lives of the Andean people, whilst painting a vivid portrait of the complexities of rural life and the reality of the conditions for porters working the trek to Machu Picchu.

trek or town closest to the trailhead. For the Salkantay Trek look for arrieros in Mollepata (see box p240); for the Choquequirao Trek try Cachora (pp287-8) or Colmena (p288). For the Lares Trek, your best bet would not be Huaran, where the trail starts, but Cancha Cancha, meaning that you'll have to trek for the first few hours uphill without one. For the Ausangate region arrieros usually meet tourists off the bus at the trailhead at Tinke, so you should have no trouble finding one there. Finally, for the Vilcabamba Trail try Huancacalle (see p341).

At the time of hiring, negotiate a fair price for a fair service. Don't exploit the local populace and don't haggle ridiculously hard for the sake of a few *soles* (see p117). **Note, too, that in addition to his service you'll also pay a daily rate for each mule that you use.** The arriero may insist on taking a second mule. This is not a con trick to get you to part with more money, it is an insurance factor should one mule go lame or get injured, or should you need to ride at any point due to exhaustion. At the time make sure you agree exactly what is expected of the arriero. Also agree where he will sleep and who will feed him; you may be required to provide shelter and meals for the duration of the trek. Bear in mind that you will need to factor in a sum for the time it takes the arrieros to return home after the trek, and you should allow for a tip too if they provide particularly good service.

For an arriero, the rate is around s/30-50 per day, plus a similar daily amount per mule. A tip in the order of 5-10% of the total fee is reasonable, but consider how hard the guy worked on your behalf and give generously. A porter will expect a similar amount to an arriero per day. See also box pp22-3.

Getting to Peru

BY AIR

Getting to Peru by air is relatively straightforward and by far the most common means of accessing the country. All international flights from Europe and North America use Lima's Jorge Chávez International Airport (📺 www.lap.com.pe), a smart, modern airport voted the Best in South America in 2012.

OVERLAND

The Darien Gap separating Panama and Colombia is uncrossed by either roads or railways. This missing chunk of the Pan American Highway effectively prevents all but the most adventurous from travelling overland to Peru. There are routes to Peru from neighbouring South American countries, though. This isn't quite as straightforward as it might appear, but it is possible to access Peru from Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia and Ecuador.

From **Bolivia** buses from La Paz cross overland into Southern Peru. It is also possible to cross the border on Lake Titicaca and then access Cusco from Puno. Overland travel from **Brazil** to Peru is possible via Iñapari or through the jungle to Puerto Maldonado, which is a long bus ride from Cusco. Alternatively, catch a ferry from Manaus to Iquitos, a thrilling journey that takes around 10 days and from where you can fly to Cusco.

The Pan American Highway crosses from **Chile** to Peru between Arica and Tacna in Peru's south. Buses from Tacna then go to Arequipa or Puno from where you can connect with others going on to Cusco.

The route into Peru from **Colombia** is hardly ever used but is feasible, crossing from one country to the other at Leticia and then pushing upriver to Iquitos. From **Ecuador** there are several road options into Northern Peru.

Budgeting

If you are planning on trekking with an organised group the major expense on a trekking trip to Peru will be the trek itself. For an outing on the four-day classic Inca Trail, set aside at least US\$500 for a basic trek, more if you use a better agency with a well-established reputation or want to trek in a private group. Once on the Inca Trail though you won't have to pay for anything other than the occasional soft drink or snack from one of the locals' stands along the way. However, on any of the other routes which are not subject to the Inca Trail regulations you can trek independently and make all the arrangements yourself; carry your own bag and cook your own food and you'll find that the days that you spend trekking are the cheapest of your entire trip.

Away from the trails and the mountains, Cusco can cost virtually as little or as much as you like. In the main, transport, food and accommodation, the biggest three expenses in most people's travels, are reasonable and good value. You can of course treat yourself to a first-class train ride, a posh meal and deluxe accommodation, all of which are readily available in both Lima and Cusco.

As a guide, budget travellers can probably get by on less than US\$20 per day, whilst up to US\$50 buys you a better meal and the odd taxi ride as well as a private hot shower in more salubrious accommodation. More than US\$100 should mean that you enjoy a comfortable stay and eat very well. A fully guided tour run by an international agency will almost certainly cost you far more though.

(*cont'd from p27*) This trail is subject to the Inca Trail regulations and permits must be secured well in advance of departure. It is closed completely during February.

VARIATIONS ON THE CLASSIC TRAIL

There are two straightforward variations to the classic Inca Trail. The first (see p231) **begins at the village of Chilca**, which stands at Km77 on the railway line before tracking alongside the Urubamba River to join the classic trail from Km88. Dry and dusty, it isn't all that interesting and not really worth the additional day of hiking unless your tour happens to begin from there.

The other option (see p232) is to **begin at Km82**, which offers half a day's more riverside stroll than the Km88 option, but is less monotonous than the Km77 stretch. You also get to visit the ruins at Huilca Raccay, which overlook Patallacta. Trekkers on both these routes are at the mercy of the Inca Trail regulations and must secure a permit well in advance.

SHORTER TRAILS

For those pushed for time or not inclined to mount a 4-day trek to Machu Picchu, there are several options that allow you to get a sense of the approach route to the ruins and then explore the site itself without having to resort to the shuttle bus from Aguas Calientes.

Km104 and the Purification Trail **[2 days; see pp234-6]**

There are two route options from Km104 on the railway, both of which take two days to complete, although only one of these is actually spent trekking. From the Inca ruins at Chachabamba you can scale a steep hillside on a narrow, exposed path to reach Huinay Huayna and then join the classic Inca Trail for the final approach to Machu Picchu.

Alternatively you can head down the river to Choquesuysuy before tackling an arduous 3-hour climb to Huinay Huayna along a route nicknamed the 'Purification Trail'. The first option has the better scenery and views, the second option has more ruins but the walk itself is inferior.

Since the Trekkers' Hotel at Huinay Huayna has long since closed and you can't stay at the campsite there, you must descend through Machu Picchu to stay in Aguas Calientes overnight before returning to explore the site the following morning. Both options are subject to the Inca Trail regulations and trek permits must be reserved well in advance.

The route is open during February though, when the main, classic approach to Machu Picchu is shut.

Km88 Riverside Trail **[2-3 days; see p237]**

From Km88 on the railway line it is possible to follow the Río Urubamba all the way to Km104, from where you are able to ascend to Huinay Huayna via one of two routes (see the Purification Trail, above). The scenic stroll avoids the tough climbs associated with the classic Inca Trail but it also avoids all the ruins

Sleeping bags and mats

A **sleeping bag** is essential since you will be camping on the trek. Some agencies will hire out or provide sleeping bags as part of the package that they offer. However, if you prefer to use your own bag, a lightweight, compact sleeping bag offering three-season comfort in temperatures of -5°C ought to be sufficient unless you are particularly susceptible to the cold in which case a four-season bag may be more appropriate.

Equally useful and certainly worth taking is a **sheet sleeping-bag** – essentially a sheet folded and sewn along two sides – to use as an inner liner for your main bag, since they offer an extra layer of warmth, are easy to wash and keep the inside of the main sleeping bag cleaner. **Sleeping mats** are also a good idea and can immeasurably improve sleep quality by cushioning you and insulating you from the cold ground. Old-fashioned foam mats are OK but you are better off with an inflatable Therm-a-Rest. These can puncture so take a repair kit with you, too.

Tent

All agencies are obliged to provide tents for the treks you undertake with them. These ought to be of serviceable quality and completely sufficient for your trip. If you are considering trekking independently, make sure you have a lightweight, robust tent that packs up compactly. You need to seal the seams to stop rain getting in. If you decide to travel independently once in Peru, it is possible to hire tents from several agencies and equipment stores in Cusco; single-person tents are more difficult to find but you should find a couple of agencies in Cusco that stock them.

Stoves, pans and crockery

On an organised trek the agency is also obliged to provide all the **cooking equipment** and enough crockery and cutlery for the entire group. However, should you want to trek independently, you will need to take your own. **Gas stoves** with screw-top cylinders are perfectly adequate – you may want to buy cylinders containing a butane-propane mix that will work more effectively at altitude. These are readily available in Cusco. Take light aluminium **pans** that can be stored one inside the other. Plates aren't necessary as long as you don't mind eating from the pan. Do take **cups** and **cutlery** though, as well as some sort of **wire scrubber** to clean the dirty dishes. All of this can be bought or hired in Cusco.

FOOD

There's no need to bring much from home as there are lots of opportunities to buy food in Cusco. Agencies will provide all the main meals for organised treks and probably produce fruit and sweets at opportune moments as well.

If you are setting out alone, take food that doesn't weigh too much but which delivers large amounts of carbohydrate. Potatoes (though these are heavy), *quinoa* (an Andean grain) and polenta are all good sources, as are pasta and dried noodles. Dried sausage or tinned meat is also useful (though tins are

Health precautions, inoculations & insurance

Any form of outdoor physical activity carries with it the possibility of accidents and trekking in the Andes is no exception. However, there are certain golden rules to follow on the trail that will help to minimise the risk of accidents or getting lost. To avoid unpleasant or unwanted surprises, always plan each day's walk carefully, study a map and familiarise yourself with the route, the type of terrain to be covered and the length of time you expect to be trekking. There are also a few pre-trek preparations that you can take to further ensure that your walk is trouble-free, as described below.

FITNESS

Whilst a reasonable level of fitness is a good idea, there's no need to go overboard on training for trekking the Inca Trail. You will, however, enjoy the treks a lot more if you are fitter.

Pre-departure fitness preparation

If you lead a largely sedentary existence it is wise to do some pre-departure exercise before trekking. Any type of exercise is better than none at all just to confirm that you can walk for more than a couple of hours at a time, and for more than one day in a row.

The most efficient way to get fit for the trek is to walk up and down hills, preferably carrying at least a partially loaded pack. Climbing a staircase repeatedly will have a similar effect. Jogging helps to build up stamina and endurance. By walking regularly your body is becoming attuned to the rhythms and rigours of life on the trail.

HEALTH

Hopefully the worst complaint you'll have to endure is **sunburn**. The high Andean slopes are exposed and, as a result of the thin atmosphere and the reflection of sun off snow, ice or water, you will find that you burn very easily, even on an apparently overcast day. Wear a hat and use high-factor sun-cream to avoid getting burnt. Sun can do just as much damage to your eyes so protect them by wearing sunglasses.

The cold can be just as hazardous when trekking. The weather in the mountains is highly changeable and you should be prepared for sudden drops in temperature. Cold, wet and windy conditions can sometimes be the cause of **hypothermia**. General awareness, being properly equipped and the ability to react to the symptoms promptly should prevent a serious incident.

Blisters are the bane of trekkers and their most common complaint. Friction between the boot and the foot causes a protective layer of liquid to develop

Facts about the country

Peru! There it was: vast, mysterious, grey-green, dirt poor, infinite, wealthy, ancient, reticent.

Mario Vargas Llosa

There are few countries on earth that can rival Peru for diversity. The stories and legends associated with it have fired people's imaginations for centuries, luring visitors to its shores since the Spanish came looking for treasure in the 16th century. Frequently portrayed as the land of unimaginable riches, the bloodiest conquest, the most heart-wrenching ballads and the most merciless revolutionaries, this country of superlatives also boasts one of the highest mountain ranges in the world, some of the driest deserts, part of the world's largest jungle and endless empty beaches within its borders. Despite these rugged, inhospitable extremes, Peru also ranks as one of the great centres of ancient civilisation; the Incas are just one in a long line of highly developed cultures to have evolved and thrived here.

The country has had a chequered recent past coloured by a brutal ruling regime and terrorism. However, it has emerged from these troubled times and is now battling to entrench democracy and to achieve economic progress and growth. The signs are currently positive and although the country is still finding its feet as a modern nation (unemployment remains rife and the lack of real opportunities is a major concern), as confidence in the country grows, so the likelihood of stability becomes more real.

Despite apparent advances and a willingness to embrace the influences of a wider world, the country remains firmly rooted in its indigenous traditions and celebrates its ethnic origins and sense of self. Peruvians are rightly proud of their heritage and the cultural riches their country has to offer.

GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

Peru is the third-largest country in South America. Covering an area of 1,285,000 square kilometres, it is approximately eight times smaller than the USA but five times the size of the UK.

Geographical regions

Uniquely in South America, there are three distinct geographical regions: *costa* (coast), *sierra* (highlands) and *selva* (jungle).



began to expand, creating an empire that eventually encompassed the northern third of Chile, part of western Bolivia and an area of Peru that included Arequipa.

The **Huari** were originally based in the central highlands, with their capital near Ayacucho. They were powerful empire builders, dominating the coast and central highlands of Peru from south of Nazca and Cusco almost to the border with modern Ecuador. Their legacy for the Incas was in their urban and agricultural infrastructure: terraces for the efficient cultivation of mountain slopes, drains and canals to control water, and roads to link all parts of their empire. See also box p53.

Chimú and other regional cultures (1000-1450AD)

The repressive Huari were not popular and the unity imposed on much of the country by them began to disintegrate at the start of the second millennium. Regional states, including that of the **Chachapoyas** at Kuélap in the northern highlands, the **Chanca** north of Lima and the **Chimú** near Trujillo, began to replace them. The Chimú built Chan Chan; covering more than 20 sq km this is the world's largest adobe city and was the largest pre-Hispanic city in the Americas. The Chimú were conquered in 1450.

Incas (1200-1542AD)

[see Inca History, pp90-102]

The **first eight Incas** (strictly speaking the term refers to the ruler though it has come to mean the people) cover the period from about 1200 to the early 15th century, a time when their power and influence was limited to the Cusco area. It was not until 1438 under **Pachacutec** (see pp94-6) that they began to create an empire that was soon to become the largest in pre-Columbian America, stretching north as far as Colombia, south into Chile and Argentina and east into Bolivia.



Pizarro and Almagro set sail.

FELIPE HUAMÁN POMA DE AYALA,
FROM HIS *NUEVE CRÓNICA Y BUEN
GOBIERNO* (c1600)

The Spanish and the conquest of the Incas

[also see pp98-100]

It's likely that the Spanish unknowingly unleashed an advance attack on the peoples of South America in the form of smallpox, which swept south across the continent from Colombia. Some, however, believe it may have been a local sand-fly disease. Whichever it was, it claimed the Inca emperor **Huayna Capac** in 1527 and it's estimated that by 1550 it had decimated between 50% and 75% of the population. On his deathbed Huayna Capac further weakened his empire by dividing it between his sons, **Atahualpa** and **Huascar**, pitting them against each other in a civil war.

The Spanish advance on the Americas was rapid after the voyages of Columbus between 1492 and 1503 to the Bahamas, the Caribbean

Peru in the 21st century

Fresh elections were called in 2001, with the centrist **Toledo** narrowly defeating Alan García, the man who had so badly damaged Peru's economy in the late 1980s. Toledo stood on a manifesto promising the creation of a million new jobs and a strong, stable economy. Carefully exploiting his Andean ancestry he adopted the nickname Pachacutec after the great Inca emperor. Sadly he was unable to live up to his namesake.

Having inherited a sceptical, pessimistic populace, a damaged domestic set-up with slow growth and worsening social conditions, Toledo found his popularity rapidly falling. His pledge to create a million jobs remained unfulfilled, unemployment remained a serious problem, taxes increased, pledges to increase

□ Truth and reconciliation

In 2003 Peru formally petitioned Japan for Fujimori's extradition to face multiple counts of bribery, corruption and being an illegal president. The same year, the Truth and Reconciliation Committee reported into the civil war of the 1980s to '90s stating that almost 70,000 Peruvians had been killed. There were also accusations Fujimori had made a US\$15 million pay-off to Montesinos (see below) when he lost his job; established a programme of forced sterilisation of campesino women; and was linked to the Grupo Colina death-squad, who were responsible for a number of assassinations and kidnappings in the early 1990s. Since Peru has no formal extradition treaty with Japan there was no way of removing Fujimori, a Japanese national, and bringing him to trial to face charges. That is until he voluntarily left the country to mount a campaign to be elected president of Peru in 2006, claiming that he would be fully exonerated.

Upon entering Chile he was arrested on an extradition warrant and returned to Peru, the first time a court anywhere in the world had ordered the extradition of a former leader to be tried in his home country for human rights' violations. Following trial in 2007 Fujimori was sentenced to six years in jail for abuse of authority stemming from an illegal search of an apartment belonging to Montesinos' wife, which he ordered without a warrant. He was also fined the equivalent of US\$135,000. In a separate trial for human rights' abuses, the charge being that he ordered the murder of 25 people at the hands of military death-squads, he was found guilty and sentenced to 25 years. In 2009 Fujimori was convicted of embezzling and sentenced to a further 7½ years in prison, having admitted to paying Montesinos US\$15 million in government funds illegally. It is thought that he admitted the charge to avoid a protracted trial that might have harmed his daughter's candidacy for the 2011 presidential elections (see p66). Although she lost in a close-fought run-off, Keiko Fujimori went on to request a pardon for her father in October 2012 on humanitarian grounds, based on her father's deteriorating health and multiple (surgical) operations for oral cancer.

Montesinos fared little better. Having been traced to Venezuela, captured there and returned to Peru in 2001, he was convicted in 2003 of embezzlement (on relatively minor counts) and sentenced to nine years' imprisonment; he has since received tariffs of five and eight years on additional counts of bribery and abuse of power, as well as a further 15 years for corruption and conspiracy. Further trials convicted him of involvement in the Death Squad killings and awarded him a 20-year prison term for direct involvement in an arms deal to provide thousands of assault weapons to the Colombian rebel group, the FARC.

❑ Quipus

The Incas never created a written version of their language. Nonetheless, they were able to communicate complex ideas and record enormous amounts of information by using quipus.

Quipus, which were used by early Andean societies and adopted by the Incas, are essentially a series of different coloured strings with knots tied in them. The colour, position and number of knots in the string could then be read by trained, skilled interpreters. Quipus may have just a few strands, but some have as many as 2000. A group known as Quipucamayocs, the accountants of the Inca society, created and deciphered the knots. They were capable of simple mathematics as well as recording information such as keeping track of *mit'a*, a form of taxation. The system was also used to record the census and to keep track of the calendar.

Today there aren't many quipus left in existence, as the Spanish suppressed the use of them and destroyed a large number. Historians are still attempting to decipher the knots and their messages. Most people maintain that the quipus only recorded numbers, but there is some evidence to support the theory that actually they contain far more information and were effectively written records or books.



Record keeper with his quipu.

FELIPE HUAMÁN POMA DE AYALA,
FROM HIS NUEVE CRÓNICA Y BUEN
GOBIERNO (c1600)

The best-known contemporary Peruvian writer is **Mario Vargas Llosa**, whose novels and commentaries stand comparison with those of other great South American literary figures. Essentially a novelist, Vargas Llosa has also written about Peruvian society and culture. The best examples of his complex, meandering narratives are the rather disturbing *Death in the Andes* (Faber and Faber) which deals with the Sendero Luminoso and Peruvian politics, *Aunt Julia and the Scriptwriter* (Picador), a comic novel about a Bolivian scriptwriter who arrives in Lima to write radio plays, which is full of insights into Miraflores society, and *A Fish in the Water* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux) which describes Vargas Llosa's unsuccessful attempt to run for presidency. Vargas Llosa was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 2010 in recognition of his writing.

Daniel Alarcón is a Peruvian-American author whose work has been featured in the *New Yorker* magazine. His collection of short stories, *War by Candlelight* (Harper Perennial), touches on a number of aspects of life in Lima, whilst his novel *Lost City Radio* (Fourth Estate) is a thinly veiled look at the disappearances and turmoil associated with the Sendero Luminoso.

José María Arguedas is an indigenous author who writes about native Andean people in his novels *Los Ríos Profundos* (*Deep Rivers* – Pergamon Press) and *Yawar Fiesta* (Quartet Books). **Ciro Alegría** also carefully depicts Andean communities in *El Mundo es Ancho y Ajeno* (*Broad and Alien is the World* – Merlin Press). **César Vallejo** is one of South America's great poets and one of the

Practical information for the visitor

DOCUMENTS AND VISAS

Citizens of the EU, USA, Canada, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand do not need a visa to enter Peru and are entitled to remain in the country as tourists for up to 183 days. Check with your local Peruvian embassy before departure to ensure that this is still the case as the situation does change periodically.

Before entering the country you will have to complete a *Tarjeta de Embarque/Tarjeta Andina de Migración* (**embarkation card/TAM**) on the plane or at the border crossing. In theory you must have a return ticket before being given a card but in practice this is rarely checked. Keep the card and your passport with you at all times when moving about the country, particularly in remote areas. The law also states that you must carry these documents on the Inca Trail. If you lose the card you may be fined.

As you enter the country the immigration officer will stamp your passport to authorise a stay of 30, 60, 90 or 183 days; note **that this cannot be extended within Peru** so ensure you request up to the maximum period you might possibly stay.

If you need to **extend your stay**, you can cross one of Peru's borders and get a new tourist card when coming back in to the country.

MONEY

Currency

The **nuevo sol** (s/) is the currency of Peru and what you'll need for everyday transactions at local shops and restaurants, on transport and at places outside Cusco and Aguas Calientes. However the **US dollar** (US\$) can be used for some tourist transactions such as buying flights or a trek, and at international restaurants and big hotels.

The Peruvian *nuevo sol* (plural: *soles*), usually called just the *sol*, is broken down into 100 *céntimos* (cents). During the 1980s and early '90s Peru suffered very high inflation, running at thousands of percent at one stage, and the currency was devalued twice, changing from the sol to the inti and then again to the nuevo sol. Some of the old notes may still be in circulation but they are worthless. Fortunately they look very different to the new notes, which have 'nuevo' clearly printed on them.

☐ Rates of exchange

	Peru Nuevo Sol (PEN)	US\$
Au\$1	s/2.60	\$0.80
Ca\$1	s/2.66	\$0.82
€1	s/3.88	\$1.19
NZ\$1	s/2.37	\$0.73
UK£1	s/4.41	\$1.36
US\$1	s/3.25	–

At the time of going to print the exchange rates were as above but these will fluctuate over time; for up-to-the-minute rates of exchange check ☐ www.xe.com/ucc.

Hiring a car

Driving in Peru is not for the faint hearted. It's a long way from place to place, traffic jams in Lima are horrendous, pollution is a real problem, the roads aren't especially good and other road users are often aggressive and bad-tempered. There are major car-hire firm offices in Lima and a handful of larger cities, including Cusco. A driver's licence from your own country is usually sufficient unless you want to hire the vehicle for more than a month, in which case you will require an International Driving Licence. You will also need a credit card and usually have to be aged 25 or older.

Rates vary considerably from company to company and fuel is extra. For sound advice on motoring in Peru contact the Touring y Automóvil Club del Perú (📧 www.touringperu.com.pe); however, the website is in Spanish.

ACCOMMODATION

Rates

Rates in this book are split into three categories: **budget**, **mid-range** and **expensive**. Hotel rates are particularly changeable and may well vary in comparison to those quoted here. Nonetheless you will be able to make comparisons between the relative price brackets.

Rates are quoted for single/double/triple rooms (**sgl/dbl/tpl**); the description includes relevant information about whether bathrooms are attached (**att**) or shared/communal (**com**), other facilities and the availability of breakfast.

Budget rooms cost US\$5-35 for a room. Mid-range options are from US\$35 to US\$100. There has been a real explosion in this price bracket reflecting the growth in domestic and international tourism. Expensive hotels are defined as those charging more than US\$100 per night and again there has been a raft of top-end, luxury hotel openings with rates to match. These hotels may also add 10% for service and 18% for tax.

If you're travelling in the low season you may be able to negotiate a cheaper rate. Try asking '*¿Tiene algo un poco más económico?*' ('Have you got anything a bit cheaper?'). Paying cash might also get you a discount.

Standards

Peru boasts the standard range of South American accommodation options, from five-star top-end hotels to basic rooms and shared dorms in hostels. A Peruvian hotel is entitled to call itself *residencial*, *hostal*, *hotel*, *pensión* or *hospedaje* and must identify itself with a plaque posted outside indicating the type of establishment, even though this makes no difference to the standard of accommodation. There is no universal standard of grading accommodation in Peru. When booking a budget place you might find yourself in a filthy, basic bolthole in a dangerous part of town overseen by an intimidating hotelier, or you could end up in a charming, atmospheric colonial mansion. Your best bet, therefore, is to actually look at a room to see whether it suits you before handing over your money.

Camping is often possible and is usually free except in formal campsites. It is also possible to stay with local families on a **homestay** (see p163 & p181).

FOOD

Peru has the most extensive menu on the continent and some of the world's top chefs, who are finally getting international recognition and are encouraging the spread of Peruvian food worldwide with restaurant openings across the Americas, Spain and in London. Yet mention Peruvian food to most people and the few that have heard of it might think of guinea pig. The country's cuisine is about so much more than that, though. Lima is now one of the top gastronomic capitals of the continent with some world-class restaurants serving the *Novoandina* cuisine pioneered by the chef and restaurateur Gastón Acurio that blends indigenous, Spanish and Asian influences to mouth-watering effect. Other gastronomic centres include Arequipa, Chiclayo, Cusco and Trujillo.

Even in smaller regional restaurants Peruvian cooking can be very appealing; there's nothing finer than sitting in a darkened *picantería* (a traditional local restaurant often serving spicy food) with a steaming plate of *chicharrones* (fried pork and pork skin), and a mug of *chicha de jora*, the country's famous fermented maize beer. And *cuy* (guinea pig), be it fried, baked or barbecued, is actually very tasty.

Fish

Peru has excellent fish that includes *congrío* (conger eel), *corvina* (sea bass), *lenguado* (sole) and shellfish. Try the Peruvian version of fish & chips, *jalea* (fried whitebait) which is served with fried *yuca* (cassava or manioc), fried yellow peppers and a dollop of spicy *ají* sauce, *chupe de camarones* (traditional creamy prawn chowder), and that famous Peruvian dish, *ceviche* (see box below).

Meat

Meat dishes are numerous and varied. Most common are *lomo cordon bleu* (beef loin steak stuffed with cheese and ham), *lomo milanesa* (beaten into a thin

☐ Ceviche

Ceviche (cebiche) – fresh, raw white fish, marinated in lime juice, chillies and red onions and often served with two types of maize and sweet potato – is usually a lunch dish and is deliciously light and tasty. Many countries in South America lay claim to ceviche, but to suggest that it is anything but a Peruvian creation whilst in Lima or elsewhere along the coast is likely to get you into serious trouble.

How to make ceviche

- 1kg fresh raw white fish (lemon sole or halibut, alternatively mix half fish and half shellfish)
- 2 large red onions, sliced
- 1 or 2 chillies, chopped
- juice of 6 limes
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 4 tbsp fresh coriander
- Seasoning to taste

Method: Wash and cut the fish into bite-sized pieces. Place in a dish with the onions, chilli and coriander. Mix up a marinade (known as *leche de tigre*, or tiger's milk) using the lime juice and olive oil and season to taste. Pour over the fish and store in a cool spot or refrigerator. How long you leave it for is a matter of taste. Some restaurants serve it after less than ten minutes, sashimi style; to 'cook' it through thoroughly will take about an hour. Serve with boiled sweet potatoes and corn on the cob.

of his Peruvian friends had to tell his own mother that he was getting married at noon, when in reality the service wasn't until 4pm, in the hope that she'd be on time; even then she only made it to the service with ten minutes to spare!

HOLIDAYS AND FESTIVALS

Festivals are an intrinsic part of Peruvian life and take place with alarming regularity. The fiestas themselves are almost all vibrant, lively affairs that make for a great spectacle. Hard partying, dancing and drinking disguise the fact that the reason for the frenetic festival is usually a practical one, be it a plea for favourable harvests or the health of livestock. The carousing, eating and drinking are considered to be ways of showing thanks for and celebrating the sun and the rain, which give rise to all life. Try to remember this when you awake after several days celebrating feeling rather the worse for wear.

January

- **1st New Year's Day** (all Peru but major fiesta in Huancayo)
- **6th Fiesta de Ollantaytambo** (Cusco)
- **14th Feria de Pampamarca Agricultural fair** (Cusco)
- **18th Celebration of the founding of Lima** (Lima)
- **20th Procession of saints** (San Sebastián district of Cusco).

February/March

- Cusco hosts a wild and debauched **carnival**, with food and water fights in the streets and vast amounts of *chicha* drunk (Cusco).

March/April

- **Semana Santa**, Holy Week – the week before Easter is a series of colourful, frequently raucous celebrations and processions; and Easter (all Peru).
- **Easter Monday** The blackened crucifix El Señor de los Temblores (Lord of the Earthquakes) is paraded around Cusco, starting and finishing in Plaza de Armas where thousands of people gather to celebrate and make merry (Cusco).

May

- **1st Labour Day** (all Peru)
- **2nd/3rd The Vigil of the Cross** is held on any mountain top with a cross on the summit (Cusco).

June

- **7th-9th** The festival and pilgrimage of **Qoyllur Rit'i** led by the ukuku bear dancers (see box p300).
- **Ninth Thursday after Easter Corpus Christi**: all the statues of saints from Cusco's many churches are paraded through the city and brought to the Cathedral, which is packed with revellers (all Peru, but Cusco in particular).
- **24th Inti Raymi** (the Resurrection of the Sun) is the ancient Inca festival of the winter solstice. Re-enacted at Sacsayhuaman, the lavish festival actually begins at the Coricancha, from where a procession makes its way through Cusco and up to the ruins above the city. The entire spectacle lasts all day and is a great family day out for locals (Cusco).

THE INCAS

Hugh Thomson

The Imperial Landscape

A Reading of Inca History in the Sacred Valley

When the Inca emperor Atahualpa first met the Spanish conquistadors, he offered them a drink from a *qeros*, a drinking flask, in the traditional ceremony of reciprocal toasting that had always been practised in the Andes. The Spaniards refused, showing him a Bible instead – which Atahualpa, insulted by their refusal to drink with him, spurned. What was this ‘writing’ anyway, these scribbles on a piece of paper? Nor had the Spaniards arrived with the traditional gifts, so the Inca emperor sent them an insulting present of ducks gutted and filled with straw. This, went the inference, was what he could do to the conquistadors whenever he wanted. The Spaniards, in their turn, were outraged at Atahualpa’s insult to the Bible.

A more telling instance of the clash and mutual misunderstanding of civilisations could not be imagined.

But before we become too self-congratulatory and assume that we understand such things in ways the brutal Spaniards did not, it is as well to remember that an encounter with Inca civilisation is still almost the nearest we can find to experiencing an entirely alien mind-set – and as a result we can misunderstand them just as easily.

Ancient Peru is one of the oldest civilisations on earth; yet it is also one of the most isolated. Until the relatively late arrival of the Spaniards in 1532, the Incas and the many cultures that preceded them had a unique way of looking at the world – one that excluded writing, the wheel and many other necessities of the so-called ‘Old World’, but managed to build magnificent monuments and a stable society in a terrifyingly unstable landscape.



Conquista en los banos estaba Atagvalga Inga.

Conquistadors (Sebastián de Benalcázar and Hernando Pizarro) confront Atahualpa Inca at the royal baths, (Cajamarca).

FELIPE HUAMÁN POMA DE AYALA,
FROM HIS *NUEVE CRÓNICA Y BUEN
GOBIERNO* (c1600)



The Machu Picchu Historical Sanctuary is a **UNESCO World Heritage Site** and, unusually, it's a World Heritage Site for both architecture and wildlife. The Sanctuary covers some 325 sq km in an area of wilderness banded to the north by the watershed of the Nevado Veronica massif, in the east and west by the Cusichaca and Aobamba valleys, and in the south by the ridgeline of the Salkantay massif.

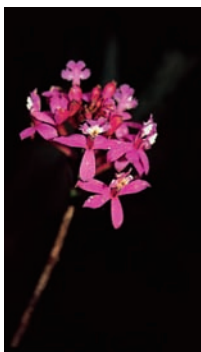
The area represents one of the world's most biologically diverse regions: 10% of Peru's entire **biodiversity** is represented within the confines of the Sanctuary alone. This includes around 200 species of orchid, more than 700 species of butterfly and over 400 species of bird. Of the 9000 or so registered bird species in the world, those found in Europe and North America account for around 1400. Peru accounts for almost 1800 on its own, of which 120 are endemic to Peru. The Sanctuary plays host to almost 5% of the world's known bird species.

❑ The Peruvian paso

The Spanish conquistadors were responsible for introducing the horse to South America. Initially used to intimidate the Inca troops who hadn't encountered horses in battle before, they were then used for transportation and breeding. Breeds included the jennet, an ideal light riding horse, the barb, which had great stamina and the Andalusian, an elegant, strongly built breed favoured as a warhorse. Horses with good endurance and a smooth gait were particularly prized; characteristics that led to the selective breeding of the Peruvian paso, noted for its good temperament and comfortable ride. Instead of a trot, the Peruvian paso performs an amble somewhere between a walk and a canter. The four-beat lateral gait – right hind, right front, left hind, left front – accounts for the smooth ride since it causes none of the vertical bounce associated with trotting. The gait, which is natural and doesn't require training, also makes the horse very stable as there are always two and sometimes three hooves on the ground. The horses have great stamina and spirit, known locally as 'brio', and are able to cover great distances without tiring, travelling at a comfortable canter over uneven terrain. They are also willing to work and very bid-dable, making them an incredibly useful steed.

The past 30 years have seen a resurgence in the Peruvian paso's fortunes. Indeed, the annual National Show just outside Lima that attempts to find the most elegant and beautiful horse in the country has developed into a major event in Peruvian cultural life.

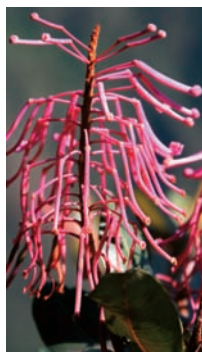




Huinay Huayna orchid
(‘Forever young’)
Epidendrum secundum



Huakanki orchid
(‘You’ll cry’)
Masdevallia veitchiana



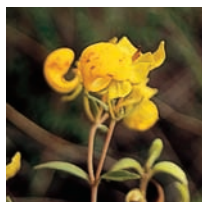
Llama llama
(‘Flames’)
Oreocallis grandiflora



Flor del Paraíso
(Inca orchid)
Sobralia dichotoma



Lupin
(Tarwi, Chocho)
Lupinus sp.



Ladies’ slipper
(Zaptitos: ‘Little shoes’)
Calceolaria engleriana



Wild potato
Solanum aloysifolium



Red datura/moonflower
Datura sanguinea



Broom (Retama)
Spartium junceum

ronment. Tropical forests are the preferred habitat of most butterfly species. Trekkers on the Vilcabamba Trail are likely to see the most diverse array of butterflies, often encountering huge swarms congregating together.

Unfortunately, you are also likely to become very well acquainted with the **midges** that can be encountered throughout the Sanctuary, but most especially in the Santa Teresa Valley. They also plague the approach to Choquequirao.

Reptiles and amphibians

Few reptiles are known about, as the forest tends to be so dense and inaccessible. Keep a look out for snakes; coral **snakes**, bushmasters and the rare velvet fer-de-lance are endemic to the Sanctuary. They are all poisonous and should not be approached if encountered. Fortunately most snakes found in the Andes are non-venomous. Most frequently encountered are harmless whipsnakes: slender green snakes with yellow underbellies.

Frogs of the genus *Ateopus* also live in the forest above 2000m.

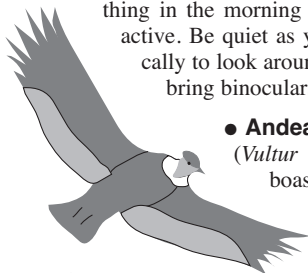
Birds

The Incas believed that birds were the messengers of the *apus*, the gods who lived on the summits of mountains. The condor, being the most impressive bird, was associated with the highest peaks whilst less-remarkable birds were considered to carry the thoughts and words of spirits residing on lower mountains.

The Sanctuary has an impressive array of avifauna for such a compact area. Many birds have relatively small altitudinal ranges, meaning that each of the Sanctuary's ten habitats is home to species that are found in no other zone. More than 400 species are known to exist in the Sanctuary and more than 200 of these can be readily observed along the Inca Trail or on the Salkantay, Lares, Ausangate and Choquequirao treks.

The *Polylepis* woodland contains some of the rarest birds, including tit-spinetails and high-altitude hummingbirds, but the cloud forest is home to the greatest diversity and here you can expect to see tinamous, guans, parakeets, hummingbirds, wrens, jays, swallows, quetzals, woodpeckers, flycatchers and tanagers.

The best way to spot these birds is to look for them at the correct time of day. Although you can see birds at any time, your best chance is first thing in the morning or at dusk, when they are singing and most active. Be quiet as you walk through the forest and stop periodically to look around carefully. To improve your chances further, bring binoculars on your trip.



ANDEAN
CONDOR

- **Andean condor** The emblematic Andean condor (*Vultur gryphus*) is actually an enormous vulture, boasting the largest wing span of any land bird. Some individuals have spans in excess of 3m/10ft and measure well over a metre from their bill to the tip of their tail. They can weigh up to 11kg. The adult plumage is uniformly black, with the exception of a white ruff

Picchu is the song of the **Inca wren** (*Thryothorus eisenmanni*), which is native to Peru and whose distinctive spotted breast marks it out from other types of wren.

● **Hummingbirds** Almost everyone can identify hummingbirds, which evolved in the Andes. They are mostly tiny birds, usually clad in iridescent metallic greens, reds, violets and blues. These tiny, nectar-drinking birds rely entirely on their wings for locomotion since their feet and legs are too weak for anything but perching. There are more than 130 species of hummingbird in Peru, the majority of which are found in the Andes.

The most commonly spotted hummingbird along the Inca Trail or in Cusco gardens is the **sparkling violetear** (*Colibri coruscans*), which has a violet-blue chest and violet ear that extends to its chin. It is a tireless singer.

The slightly larger **green-and-white hummingbird** (*Leucippus viridicauda*) is regularly recorded around Machu Picchu, where it can be identified by its white chest.

The world's largest hummingbird is the surprisingly muted (at least in comparison to its relatives) **giant hummingbird** (*Patagona gigas*), which can measure more than 20cm from the tip of its long bill to the end of its tail.

You will also come across **sunangels**, **sapphirewings**, **coquettes**, **golden-throats**, **sunbeams** and **coronets**, each of which is as beautiful as its name promises.

● **Waterfowl** In mountain streams as well as along the Urubamba River, you can find **torrent ducks** (*Merganetta armata*). Uniquely adapted to swimming, diving and feeding in the fast rushing waters that cascade off the mountains, the ducks rarely stray far from the streams and even nest in crevices between boulders on the water's edge. Male torrent ducks have striking black and white striped heads and red beaks, and females have orange underparts, grey backs and a yellow bill.

Andean gulls (*Larus serranus*), the only gulls to be found in the high Andes, also live along the Urubamba or can be found on the higher elevation tarns. You can also see the **Andean (or ruddy) duck**, which is rust-red with a spiky black tail, and has a white face with a black cap and wide blue bill, and the **crested duck**, a sleek grey with a touch of red on the wings.

The heavily built **Andean geese** (*Chloephaga melanoptera*), with white plumage and small pink bills, prefer being on land to swimming so that they can graze, whilst black and white **giant coots** are common on the water.

Elegant **puna ibis** (*Plegadis ridgwayi*), which have dark purplish-brown feathers and a chestnut face, can often be seen on the Ausangate and Lares trails and along the first stages of the railway trip to Machu Picchu, foraging slowly and probing the shallow waters and mud with their distinctive long, curved bills. You may also come across the **black-faced ibis** (*Theristicus melanopis*), rarer than the above though they can be encountered occasionally in the Sacred Valley, on the Salkantay Trek and the higher trails.

MINIMUM IMPACT & OUTDOOR SAFETY

Minimum impact trekking

Tourism is a vital source of income for Peru and, directly or indirectly, a great many Peruvians benefit from the increasing numbers of trekkers and tourists flocking to the country. However, there are undoubtedly problems along the Inca Trail and the other trekking routes in the region that are caused by the arrival of hordes of visitors. Litter, erosion, pollution and the destruction of the landscape and the Inca archaeological sites are all sadly the realities of large numbers of people visiting these areas.

The Peruvian authorities do nominally try to keep the place clean, but unfortunately their actions aren't all that effective. Whilst it's easy to blame the authorities for the decline of the pristine wilderness, trekkers are equally at fault. People on the trails also have to take responsibility for their own litter and actions; each individual should remember that their thoughtlessness and selfishness potentially has consequences for everyone else.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Damaged vegetation, litter, polluted waterways, deteriorating facilities and an increase in erosion are all indications that trekkers have had a negative impact on the landscape. Fortunately, most people are now much more conscious of the potential impact that they have on the environment and are more likely to adopt a considerate, responsible attitude whilst trekking or otherwise enjoying the landscape. It's important that we all maintain this new-found responsibility.

Pack it in, pack it out

All waste must be carried off the mountain. Human detritus is one of the most significant threats to the natural environment. Unightly and unhealthy, accumulated rubbish is a hazard for people and wildlife alike. If you are with an official group, in theory all you have to do is hand the litter to a staff member who will then ensure that it is removed from the trail. Unfortunately this isn't always the case and more unscrupulous guides or porters may dump or drop rubbish along the route.

Keep an eye on your team and make sure they understand that it is important to you that they adhere to this rule. In addition, don't



Health and safety in the mountains

SAFETY

Although there are hazards in the mountains, a properly prepared expedition with the right equipment and a bit of common sense should not be troubled by them.

Weather

The weather in the Andes is very changeable. You should expect rain whatever the season and ought to carry warm clothing at all times, even if it seems to be a sunny day, since temperatures can plummet and conditions change very quickly. As a general guide, check the weather forecast with your agency or online before setting out and keep an eye on the weather as you walk. For more information about the climate, see p10-12.

Keeping on course

Although the majority of trails in the Cusco region are well trodden, there are also plenty of areas where you will come across very few people and where the path has disappeared, particularly on the Vilcabamba Trail. Bad weather can also mean that a path previously simple to follow becomes obscured and much harder to trace. In thick cloud or fog do not leave the path.

An accurate topographic map and a compass are helpful, as long as you know how to use them. Similarly, a handheld GPS can help you to find your way. See the box p214 for further details about how to keep to the trail.

Tell someone where you're going

If you are planning on trekking independently, before you set off on your trek, tell someone responsible, at your hotel or hostel for example, where you are going and when you expect to return. They should be aware of what to do if you don't come back, and how long they should wait before raising the alarm.

Beware of the dog

Rural dogs can be dangerous, some may even carry rabies, but are more often just a nuisance. If confronted by an angry, barking dog often just bending down as if to pick up a stone is enough to cause them to turn tail – this is what the locals do and the dogs are used to being pelted.

HEALTH IN THE MOUNTAINS

Trekkers often revel in the horror stories about the diseases encountered on treks and trips to the developing world. Whilst Peru does have a handful of serious health problems, you are very unlikely to be affected by them and if you follow simple guidelines you'll minimise the risk to yourself.

At the centre of the city lies the decaying hulk of a great colonial shipwreck. In flaking baroque these relics gaze, stained and weary, over the tin and concrete and electric wires.

Matthew Parris, *Inca Kola*, 1990

Matthew Parris's words above were certainly true in 1990 but Lima has undergone massive changes over the last 25 years.

The city lies below a shroud of sea cloud for many months of the year and can look a little uninviting and uniform. It has also been subject to decades of negative press, with reports of how the city had become shabby and unsafe, or simply boring. Consequently it became just a stepping-stone for people travelling to the Andes or Amazon, an overnight stop to endure rather than enjoy. Yet the former Spanish capital of South America, originally christened Ciudad de los Reyes (City of Kings), was once one of the continent's most alluring and impressive cities. These days, a resurgent local middle class are taking pride in their city again and pioneering a renaissance to ensure Lima's reputation is restored.

Lima is a wonderful introduction to what you'll see and find elsewhere. Archaeological sites stand amidst residential neighbourhoods whose architecture spans styles from the last 500 years. There are good museums, world-class restaurants and a burgeoning food scene, lively night spots and an irresistible energy and edge borne out of the multicultural mix found here.

HISTORY

There's evidence of life and habitation in and around Lima dating back 7000 years. The earliest residents of the mouth of the Rio Rímac were settlers who came to the region to fish. They were followed by more sophisticated cultures who left their mark in the form of temples and pyramids. These adobe structures, dating from around 3000BC, still stand although they have been assimilated into Lima's urban sprawl and now appear amidst residential districts.

Around 500AD the local oracle, Pachacámac, was established, meaning that it was ancient even before the Incas arrived in the 15th century. The Incas adopted the site into their society and developed a chain of temples along the coast, supported by peaceful communities. They never placed excessive emphasis on the region though, as the centre of their Empire lay east, in Cusco.

In contrast, the conquistadors recognised the need for a coastal capital, a link to the outside world and to Spain in particular. Having





Lugar de la Memoria Museum (📄 www.lum.cultura.pe; Bajada San Martín 151; Tues-Sun 10am-6pm; free) Recently opened, in a modern building built into the cliff, this museum commemorates the victims of Peru's armed conflict with the Shining Path and MRTA from 1980 to 2000. There are no English captions yet but even if you can't understand much Spanish the pictures tell much of the story and it's a moving experience to visit.

Parks and cliffs Stroll through **Parque del Amor**, which has elements of Gaudi's Parque Güell in Barcelona but was designed by Victor Delfín. Pick your way past amorous couples to find benches decorated with mosaics and covered in hearts and romantic writings along with a giant statue of two people caught in a clinch. There are good views from the tall cliffs, too.

Barranco [see walking route box opposite, map p131]

Puente de los Suspiros When walking around Barranco, look out for the attractive wooden footbridge known as Puente de los Suspiros (Bridge of Sighs), so named for the sounds of sighs that could be heard by people passing by the house of a noble's daughter who fell in love with a road sweeper but couldn't act upon it so would watch him from her window.

The bridge connects to a small cobbled passageway, **La Bajada de Baños** (The Bathing Path), which leads to a good sea view. There are steps down to the beach here but you shouldn't stray too far as this section of the beach isn't safe.

Museo Pedro de Osma (📄 www.museopedrodeosma.org, Av Pedro de Osma 423; Tue-Sun 10am-6pm; s/20) Inside the ornate Palacio de Osma, the former beaux arts residence of the Osma family, is a private museum full of paintings by the Cusco School, colonial art, furniture and sculpture as well as silver pieces from the 16th to 19th centuries.

Pueblo Libre

Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Antropología e Historia del Perú (Plaza Bolívar, Pueblo Libre; Mon-Sat 8.45am-4pm, Sun 8.45am-3.30pm; entrance s/10) This excellent museum, in an attractive colonial mansion, gives a very good overview of Peruvian history.

Some of the most impressive pieces are from the Chavín de Huantar site close to Huaraz, including the Raimondi Stela, an elaborately carved statue that can be viewed both up and down to see a different image, and the Tello Obelisk, a carefully sculpted pair of caimans. There are rooms dedicated to individual pre-Hispanic cultures along with mummies from the Paracas region, ceramics, metalwork, textiles and models of Inca archaeological sites.

Next door stands **Quinta de los Libertadores**, once home to both the liberators San Martín (1821-2) and Bolívar (1823-6) and now a restaurant. There are several good places to eat here, perhaps the best being the traditional **La Sucursal de Quierolo**, (📄 www.lasucursaldequierolo.com) next door.

Museo Larco (📄 www.museolarco.org; Av Bolívar 1515; daily 9am-10pm, to 6pm on public holidays; s/30) Within a privately-owned colonial mansion that once belonged to the viceroy, itself built on top of the remains of a 7th-century

610 4000, Malecon de la Reserva 1035) is owned by Orient Express and as you'd expect from them, this place is opulent, with first-rate facilities and service. Set atop the Miraflores cliffs and amid some pretty gardens, it's a pleasant place to get your bearing and explore the city. The hotel also has an open-air, heated rooftop pool and spa and several excellent restaurants, making it a really attractive option in this price range. Suites are from US\$350.

JW Marriott (☑ www.marriott.com, ☎ 217 7000, Malecon de la Reserva 615) also trades on its location, standing on the cliffs just by Larcomar Mall; every room has sea views. Ultra modern and set up to indulge guests, it has an outdoor rooftop pool and tennis courts along with a really good restaurant. The rooms start at around US\$300.

Barranco [see map p131]

Budget The Point (☑ thepointhostels.com/peru/lima.html, ☎ 247 7997, Malecón Junín 300) is a spacious, sea-front house with high ceilings and wide corridors that attracts backpackers and travellers with its laidback attitude and tendency to host impromptu parties that move onto Barranco's nightspots after. Always busy, it can get a little overwhelming. There's a big range of dorm beds (s/34-42), twin rooms (s/90 com) and doubles (s/110 att). Includes breakfast, wifi, cable TV, films and a weekly BBQ.

Barranco's Backpacker Inn (☑ www.barrancobackpackersperu.com, ☎ 412 6918, Malecón Castilla 260) is a quieter proposition, even closer to the coast and with great ocean views. The rooms starting at US\$35 for a twin (US\$45 for a double) are cheery, as are the staff. Rooms have attached bathrooms. Dorm beds are US\$11.

Compact and bijoux, **Kaminu** (☑ www.kaminu.com, ☎ 252 8680, Bajada de Baños 342) has a great location below Puente de los Suspiros. There's a roof terrace to relax on and a weekly BBQ. Bunk beds cost US\$10-12 or beds in a tent for US\$8. In a nearby apartment they have a range of rooms from US\$16 (sgl) and US\$27 (dbl).

Cozy Wasi (☑ www.cozywasi.com, ☎ 984 108785, Nicolas de Pierola 229) is clean, cheap and friendly – sgl/dbl/tw rooms for US\$15/20/25 and doubles with bath attached for US\$30.

La Puerte Verde (☑ www.lapuerteverde.pe, ☎ 964 610154, Jr Pérez Roca 232), behind the green gate is a great family-run B&B. There's a sun terrace, friendly helpful staff and free use of bicycles. There are dbl/tw/tpl rooms from around US\$36/38/45 and dorms beds for US\$14. You'll need to book early as this place is justifiably popular.

Mid-range Second Home Peru (☑ www.secondhomeperu.com, ☎ 247 5522, Domeyer 366) is an impressive guesthouse with just five bedrooms, each incredibly comfortable, and equipped with luxurious linens and Louis XV tubs. Once the home of Peruvian sculptor Victor Delfin, it's tastefully and quirkily decorated with art and artefacts. It also has an outdoor pool, ocean and garden views. The rooms cost US\$135/150 depending on the view, marking it out as great value as well.

Expensive Hotel B (☑ hotelb.pe, ☎ 206 0800, Sáenz Peña 204) is a swanky boutique hotel and the top place to stay in Barranco. The luxurious rooms cost from around \$300. If you can't afford to stay here it's worth visiting just for a drink in the bar or for dinner.

San Isidro

Budget Malka Youth Hostel (☑ www.youthhostelperu.com, ☎ 442 0162, Av Javier Prado Este) is an affordable option in an often expensive part of town.

Run by a climber it's full of spectacular mountain photographs and has a small climbing wall in the garden along with all the usual facilities and add-ons such as cable TV, ping-pong tables and a café. Dorm beds with shared bathrooms cost s/35, whilst double rooms are s/112/128 with shared/private facilities.

Mid range Casa Bella Peru (☑ www.casabellaperu.net/sanisisidro, ☎ 421 7354,

has plenty of competition but the colourful restaurant decked in modern art still packs a punch and creates innovative and unusual combinations that will tantalise and satisfy. As well as ceviche there are delicious lamb recipes and Peruvian curries of tubers, vegetables and grains.

Panchita (Av 2 de Mayo 298), one of Acurio's later projects, focuses on street food and captures authentic flavours such as flame-grilled anticuchos and *tamales*. It is not possible to book a table here so queues can be long.

Restaurant Huaca Pucllana (General Borgoño cuadra 8) is a smart restaurant alongside the Huaca Pucllana ruins (see p127); the views of the site are good especially in the evening from the covered terrace as the adobe ruins are illuminated. The food is contemporary Peruvian, a reinterpretation of *criollo* cuisine, well-cooked and artfully presented, with a range of dishes from typical chowders to *cuy* (guinea pig).

Las Brujas de Cachiche (☎ www.brujasdecachiche.com.pe, Jirón Bolognesi 472; Mon-Sat noon-midnight, Sun 12.30-4.30pm), the Witches of Cachiche, is a series of bars and dining rooms in an old mansion house. Elaborately and elegantly decorated, it's an exclusive albeit expensive place to try Peruvian and criollo dishes, especially if you tackle the lunchtime buffet. Ancient and pre-Columbian recipes are also reinvigorated with unusual accompaniments to great effect. They also host live criollo music shows.

El Señorío de Sulco (☎ www.senorio-desulco.com, Malecón Cisneros 1470; Mon-Sat 12.30-11.30pm, Sun 12.30-4.30pm) is a popular place, fêted for its Criollo dishes, especially the seafood. Expensive, it is worth the extra cost for the cliff-top views and atmosphere.

San Isidro Malabar (☎ www.malabar.com.pe, Camino Real 101) is a consistently well-rated restaurant in the heart of San Isidro. They source many of their vegetables from their own farm. The cuisine includes Amazonian ingredients and a seasonal menu that draws on these. Try catfish caviar, tiradito of sole, or carpaccio of pig's

trotter. There's also a devilishly good cocktail list.

Barranco (see map p131) Also well established and reliable is **La 73** (Av El Sol Oeste 175, ☎ 247 0780; Mon-Sat noon-midnight, Sun and holidays to 10pm) where the cooking's imaginative and the menu's also in English. There's everything from wontons filled with mushrooms and tamarind sauce to lemon pie.

There are also several dedicated steak restaurants but they tend to be pricey. Try **La Cudra de Salvador** (Av Miguel Grau), or further north up the same street at 1502 and opposite MAC, **La Cabrera** (☎ www.lacabrera.com) where top class steaks cost around s/120.

Down in the new development by the sea there are several upmarket bars and expensive restaurants including **Cala Restaurante** (☎ www.calarestaurante.com; Playa Barranquito) which has an excellent reputation for its seafood and Peruvian dishes.

International

Lima centro (see map pp128-9) There are plenty of *chifa* (Chinese) restaurants but for something a little special, seek out **Wa Lok** (☎ www.walok.com.pe; daily 9am-11pm; Jirón Paruro 864) in Barrio Chino (Chinatown); the Cantonese dim sum are especially delicious but the noodles and stir fries are also very good.

French-influenced food with a Peruvian twist is available at **L'Eau Vive** (Ucayali 370), opposite Torre Tagle Palace in an old building. It has a fixed-price lunch (three courses for s/19) served in a simple dining room along with a broader à la carte menu available in a grand salon. Run by an order of nuns, there's a rendition of *Ave Maria* every evening at 9pm. Proceeds are donated to charity by the nuns.

Miraflores area (see map p130) **La Bodega de la Trattoria** (☎ www.labodega-delatrattoria.com, Av General Borgoño 784) serves good approximations of Italian cuisine, especially ravioli, and is part of a small reliable chain.

has a range of contemporary crafts, whilst **Agua y Tierra**, at Ernesto Diez Canseco 298, specialises in indigenous crafts from the Amazon. **Pasaje el Sucho** is an interesting area to explore with a small number of souvenir shops to browse and a range of cafés and bars in which to relax.

The shops belonging to **Kuna by Alpacca III**, branches of which can be found at the airport, on Av Larco and in Larcomar mall amongst other venues, are ideal for woollen clothing in contemporary designs and colours.

MOVING ON

Lima is an effective gateway to the rest of Peru and it's possible to go to every corner of the country from the capital. To get to Cusco, you can either fly or take a bus.

Air

The flight from Lima to Cusco takes just less than an hour; flights depart in the morning because the weather is generally better. Sit on the left-hand side of the plane for particularly good views of Mt Salkantay shortly before landing in Cusco.

Note that you may find that flying into Cusco from sea level leaves you poorly acclimatised and struggling to move around freely, at least for the first couple of days.

Bus

Lima doesn't have a central bus terminal so each operator manages its own departure points. Some even have several depending on the final destination so check carefully where you need to be to meet your ride. If

you're travelling a long way it's also worth checking that you've a comfy seat; buses marked 'bus cama' have more generous, reclining seats.

There are two **overland routes to Cusco**. The majority of bus companies work their way south along the coast, via Nazca to Arequipa, where you have to change and board a bus that loops inland and north to Cusco. The journey takes some 20 hours to complete.

The alternative is to travel through the highlands, via Ayacucho, a route that is more direct but more precipitous and adventurous to travel although it is no longer plagued by the terrorists that held sway in Ayacucho during the 1980s and early '90s.

Reliable companies include Cruz del Sur (☎ www.cruzdelsur.com.pe, ☎ 311 5050), which has several daily services that depart from either Quilca 531 in Lima Centro (economy Imperial and Ideal services to Cusco and elsewhere), or Av Javier Prado Este 1109 in San Isidro (luxury Cruzero and Cruzero suite services to Cusco and beyond). Tickets one-way are from s/185; you can book online.

Tepsa (☎ www.tepsa.com.pe, ☎ 617 9000) also travel to Cusco, departing from Paseo de la República 151-A in Lima Centro and Javier Prado Este 1091. Fares are a little cheaper at s/125. Also try Movil Tours (☎ www.moviltours.com.pe; Av Javier Prado Este 1093). These companies also offer bus services to other parts of Peru.

☐ Domestic airline offices in Lima

- **LATAM** (☎ www.latam.com, ☎ 213 8200), Av José Pardo 513, Miraflores
- **Star Perú** (☎ www.starperu.com, ☎ 213 8813), Av Comandante Espinar 331, Miraflores
- **Avianca** (☎ www.avianca.com, ☎ 511 8222), Av José Pardo 811, Miraflores
- **Peruvian** (☎ www.peruvian.pe, ☎ 715 6122), Av José Pardo 495, Miraflores
- **LC Peru** (☎ www.lcperu.pe, ☎ 204 1313), Av. José Pardo 269, Miraflores

Cusco (Qosqo, Cuzco)

In the whole of old Peru, there was undoubtedly no place that was as deeply revered as the imperial city of Cuzco, which is where all the Inca kings held court and established the seat of government.

Garcilaso Inca de la Vega *The Royal Commentaries of the Incas* (1609)

The cultural and religious centre of the Inca world, Cusco was once a truly awesome city. The seat of the God-king, the Inca, it was built to reflect the might of the Empire. Yet despite its brutal sacking by the Spanish conquistadors – and a subsequent history dotted with siege and earthquake – Cusco remains an exciting and vibrant place, much more than just a tourist town. The capital of Cusco Department, it's also the undisputed archaeological capital of South America and a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Spectacular colonial architecture stands astride monolithic ruined Inca palaces made of perfectly hewn stone, which line atmospheric, scorched cobbled plazas. White-washed alleys and terracotta-tiled roofs house a rich mix of history, lively nightlife and a vast array of museums, sights and scenery. Although it has embraced tourism and developed a sound infrastructure to support the influx of visitors, the city's magnificent historical past still has a powerful hold on its glorious present. The collision and fusion of indigenous Andean and imported colonial cultures is fascinating and always evident, even to those tourists who come to the city only as a staging post for the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu.

It would be a stretch to suggest that Cusco is anything but on the tourist trail these days, yet the city wears its celebrity lightly and retains an authenticity other must-see cities around the world lose. Although there are some tried and tested traveller haunts, and the cementing of the city's status has finally seen the arrival of global food chains and brands, there are also quirky finds, quiet corners and plenty of local eateries specialising in the country's indigenous flavours. Essentially, what was a backpacker Mecca has grown up. But it has done so in style as a rash of new boutique and top-end hotel openings demonstrate, which, coupled with the arrival of celebrity chefs from Lima, ensure that the city has a broader, more chic appeal than ever whilst the traditional reasons for visiting – the



the marriage of Martín García de Loyola to the Inca princess Ñusta Beatriz. The baroque style, gold-leaf-covered altar is vast and impressive and the catacombs beneath the church are worth exploring. Often illuminated at night, the church is visible from many of the hotels and hostels high on the surrounding slopes.

Inca walls

[see map p164]

The Inca walls that line the north-western side of Plaza de Armas are reputed to be part of Pachacutec's palace, whilst those in the northern corner belong to the palace of Sinchi Roca. There is also some fine Inca masonry (walls) on Calle Loreto; see map p153.

Coricancha (Temple of the Sun) and Santo Domingo [map p157]

(Mon-Sat 8.30am-5.30pm; s/15, s/6 for students, not on the Visitor's Ticket)

'All the Incas enriched this city and, among its countless monuments, the Temple of the Sun remained the principal object of their attention. They vied with one another in ornamenting it with incredible wealth, each Inca seeking to surpass his predecessor.'

Garcilaso Inca de la Vega *The Royal Commentaries of the Incas* (1609)

To the south-east of Plaza de Armas, the Inca Sun Temple, Coricancha (also written as Koricancha or Qoricancha) is Quechua for 'Golden Enclosure' and it was the centre of the Inca religion, having previously been the site of a Huari sun temple. The building comprised four small sanctuaries set around a central courtyard and was once lavishly decorated with gold plates and precious stones. Writing 50 years after the conquest, the historian Garcilaso de la Vega described the awe-inspiring magnificence of the main sanctuary, dedicated to the Sun:

'The four walls were hung with plaques of gold, from top to bottom, and a likeness of the Sun topped the high altar. This likeness was made from a gold plaque twice as thick as those that paneled the walls, and was composed of a round face, prolonged by rays and flames, the way Spanish painters represent it; the whole thing was so immense that it occupied the entire back of the temple, from one wall to the other.'

Garcilaso Inca de la Vega

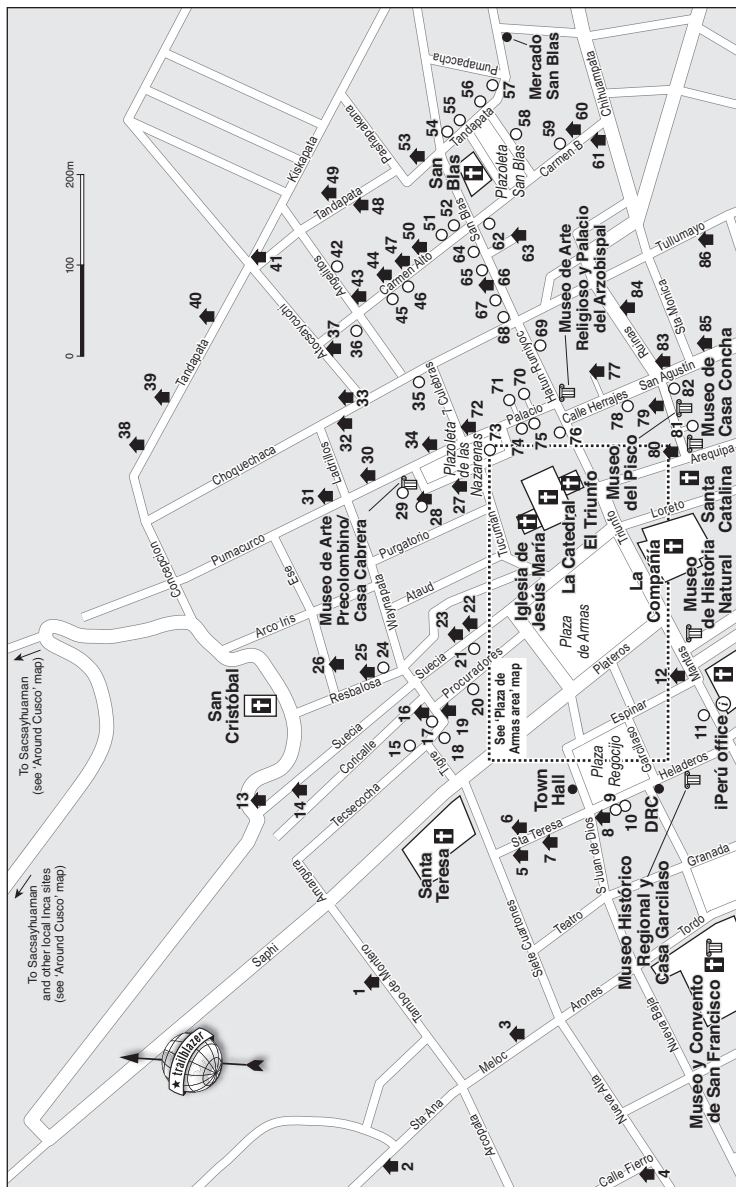
The Royal Commentaries of the Incas (1609)

The Spanish conquistadors pillaged the site and stole the lot.

The other sanctuaries within the temple, which boast some of the most exceptional stonework and polished jointing in the city, were dedicated to various deities including the Moon (the bride of the Sun); Venus, the Pleiades and the stars; Thunder and the Rainbow. Garcilaso de la Vega noted that, 'They called the rainbow cuichu and revered it very specially. When it appeared, they immediately put their hands over their mouths through fear, they said, that it might make their teeth decay. I can't say why'.

The mummies of previous Incas were kept here, as were the kidnapped principal idols of tribes that the Incas defeated. 'They were', wrote Garcilaso, 'so well preserved that they seemed to be alive. They were seated on their golden thrones resting on plaques of this same metal, and they looked directly at the visitor.' He went on to describe the astonishing garden outside the temple:

'In the time of the Incas, this garden, in which today the convent brothers cultivate their vegetables, was entirely made of gold and silver; and there were similar gardens



(cont'd from p155) The museum covers the artistic achievements of the various ancient Peruvian cultures and houses a superb collection of artefacts from the Moche, Chimú, Paracas, Nazca and Inca cultures. Dating from 1250 to 1532, these archaeological treasures include carvings, ceramics, and gold- and silver-work, all of which are superbly lit and well presented with both English and Spanish text explaining what you are looking at.

● **Hotel Monasterio** This hotel (see p168), Cusco's finest, was converted from the elegant old **Seminary of San Antonio Abad**. Although a very upmarket establishment, it is possible to visit if you drop in for a beer at the bar. Once through the Inca-colonial doorway you look onto a spacious courtyard, which is only slightly spoiled by the glassed-in cloisters surrounding them.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Arrival

As a result of its position high in the Andes, **you will need to take a couple of days to acclimatise** once you have arrived in Cusco, especially if you arrive from Lima or other low-lying places. Do not attempt anything too strenuous whilst your body adjusts. Acclimatisation (see p120) is quicker if you do not eat or drink excessively.

By air **Aeropuerto Alejandro Velasco Astete** (information ☎ 222611) lies 5km from the main Plaza de Armas at Quispiquilla. A 10-minute taxi ride will cost about s/10-15 from the airport car park or about half that from the street outside as drivers here don't have to pay the waiting fee levied by the car park. *Colectivos* to the centre cost even less and can also be hailed from the street outside the airport. You could walk to the plaza in around an hour but it's a bit of a schlep and not to be advised after dark.

By rail Trains from Juliaca and Puno arrive at **Huanchac station**, at the south-eastern end of Av El Sol, about a 20-minute walk from Plaza de Armas. Taxis from outside the station cost s/5 to the centre of town.

Trains to and from Machu Picchu or Ollantaytambo operated by PeruRail arrive and depart from **Poroy**, over a hill from Cusco on the road to Urubamba, about a 30-minute drive from Plaza de Armas. Those run by Inca Rail start and finish at Ollantaytambo; see p203.

Sadly trains no longer operate from Cusco's historic San Pedro station.

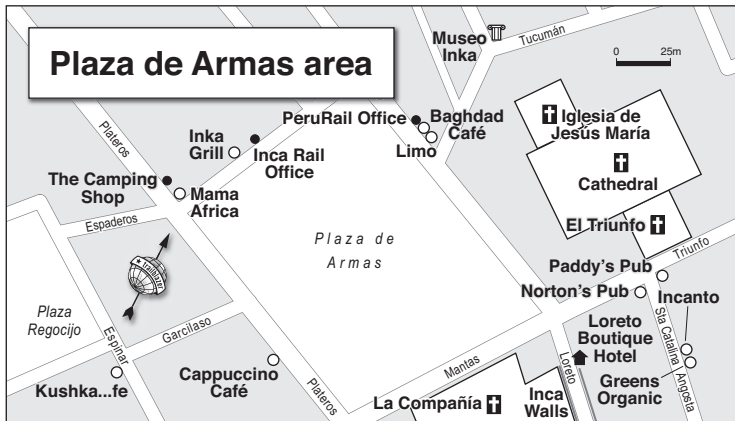
By bus Long-distance buses arrive and depart from **Terminal Terrestre** on Av Vallejo Santoni, close to the giant statue of Pachacutec, south-east of the city centre. A taxi from here to Plaza de Armas costs around s/5 whilst a colectivo to the centre will charge s/1.

Orientation

Cusco is divided into five districts, each centred on a square or temple. At the heart of the city lies Plaza de Armas. The majority of sights are within easy walking distance of here. South of the Plaza, Av El Sol runs past Coricancha. Heading uphill and south-west from Av El Sol there are Plaza San Francisco, Mercado San Pedro and Iglesia de Santa Clara. One block west of Plaza de Armas is Plaza Regocijo which has Inca origins and contains some of the city's finest mansions and municipal palaces.

From the south-east corner of Plaza de Armas, Calle Triunfo climbs steeply through a stunning Inca-walled street to the artisan quarter of San Blas, centred on an attractive church. Uphill and north-west from Plaza de Armas, Calle Plateros climbs towards the Inca fortress Sacsayhuaman and the giant statue of Christ that overlooks the city.

Incidentally, don't be fooled by the road names. For example, everyone may know the name of the major thoroughfare heading south from near the Plaza de Armas as Av El Sol – but that's not the name that you'll find on the road-sign for at least part of its length, which is



colonial house cost s/22-30 depending on the number of beds; just don't expect an early or especially quiet night.

It must be quite galling for The Point, however, to be usurped in the popularity stakes in this section, particularly by a hostel that lies less than 50m away at No 136. **Pariwana Hostel** (☎ 233571, 🌐 www.pariwana-hostel.com) boasts a really lovely courtyard and its own travel agency, arranging tours to local sights (though you can get cheaper prices elsewhere). Beds start at s/35 in a 12-bed dorm, with private rooms s/152/182 for twin/dbl rooms.

● **San Blas area** The top choice in San Blas for budget party hostels – indeed, perhaps the best of the lot – is the rather spectacular **El Mirador del Inka** (☎ 241804, 🌐 www.elmiradordelinka.com), owned and run by the ambitious Harry. Hidden behind a rather unremarkable wooden door on Tandapata is a huge hostel with very good-value rooms built around two courtyards (s/50/60 for sgl/dbl, com; s/60/80 for sgl/dbl, att; s/70/90 for rooms with a panoramic view). What really separates this place from its competitors, however, are the communal areas, with a TV & games room with pool table and dartboard, and above that the new glass-roofed Limbus Bar with perhaps the best view of all over the city.

Spectacular. Best of all, these communal areas are separated from the rooms themselves so there's a better chance of getting a good night's sleep.

● **Plaza Regocijo** To the west of the main plaza there are fewer options, but still some gems to be found. Our favourite is **Ecopackers** (☎ 231800, 🌐 www.ecopackersperu.com), Calle Santa Teresa 375. Less laid-back than some of the crusties' crash-pads in the city but with helpful staff, lots of facilities including a travel agency, and an excellent central location, it is housed in what was once one of the first colonial houses in the city. With hot power showers, lockers with chargers integrated within them (a great idea!), book exchange, satellite TV and a private cinema area, it really is a decent option. Rates (all including breakfast) are slightly more expensive than other hostels, with dorm beds US\$15 in a 15-bed dorm, rising to US\$23.50 to sleep in a 4-bed dorm. Private rooms are US\$48.50 (dbl, com).

Loki Backpackers Hostel (☎ 243705, 🌐 www.lokihostel.com/en/cusco), Cuesta Santa Ana 601, is a historic viceroy's residence transformed into a hairy backpacker's hangout, with mixed and single-sex dorms, a shared kitchen, a bar sporting superb views over the city and a lively (at

less than five hotels owned by the Tierra Viva chain in the city. Beyond the glass doors are 24 super-sumptuous rooms surrounding the courtyard of this old colonial residence, with all the facilities you'd expect. Prices hover at about the US\$90-130 mark. Nearest the square, **Illah Hotel** (☎ 253396, ☐ www.illahotel.com) stands apart as being the only one of the three that's not part of a chain, though in other respects it's similar to the other two, with lovely, facility-filled rooms surrounding the courtyard of what was once an old colonial residence. Rates are around US\$99/129/169 (dbl/tpl/suite).

On the other side of the street, the rooms at **Hostal El Grial** (☎ 223012, ☐ www.hostalelgrial.com), Carmen Alto 112, are modern and well-kept, as is the cosy lounge. Rates are US\$37/57/77 (sgl/dbl/tpl, att, breakfast) in high season, with low season prices about US\$7 lower.

Pensión Alemana (☎ 226861, ☐ www.hotel-cuzco.com), Calle Tandapata 260, is a Swiss-German hostel whose clean, European décor looks as if it would be more at home in the Alps. Popular with European travellers, it is a comfortable, attractive place to stay with good heating, cable TV, safes for your valuables and oxygen for those who are really struggling with the altitude. What's more, at US\$63/70 (sgl/dbl att) during the low season (add US\$5 for rooms that take advantage of the panoramic view, and US\$9 more during the high season) it shouldn't break the bank either.

Hotel Rumi Punku (☎ 221102, ☐ www.rumipunku.com), Choquechaca 339, is instantly identifiable because of the giant Inca stonework around the main door. This stylish colonial house has good-quality rooms costing US\$95-110/110-130/130-170 (sgl/dbl/tpl, att, breakfast) depending on the size of room and season. Suites cost US\$200. There is also a rooftop terrace as well as attractive gardens and the staff are particularly helpful.

For those who want to get away from it all, **Casa de Campo Hostal** (☎ 244404, ☐ www.hotelcasadecampo.com), at the very northern end of Calle Tandapata (No

298) in San Blas, is just delightful. Built on a slope overlooking the town, the rooms and terrace are simply gorgeous, the location peaceful, and they'll even throw in an airport pick up if you book in advance. The rooms start at US\$60/70/100 (sgl/dbl/junior suite), though bargaining is distinctly possible.

● **Plaza Regocijo area** One of the most impressive hotels in this category is **El Balcón Inn** (☎ 236738, ☐ www.balconcusco.com), Tambo de Montero 222, housed in a restored pre-colonial house dating back to 1630. All 16 rooms are en suite, many with magnificent views of the city, and the staff are incredibly friendly. It's a bit of a climb to get here, but it's worth every step: room rates are US\$59 on the 1st floor, US\$79 on the view-tastic 2nd floor (all att, with breakfast), with suites US\$129-149; though prices can be lower on their website.

● **Elsewhere** If you're looking for somewhere south of the plaza consider tranquil **Albergue Casa Campesina** (☎ 233466), Av Tullumayo 274. It is a pleasant hostel with rooms costing s/110/145/160 (sgl/dbl/tpl, com). The money generated here goes to support the Casa Campesina organisation that in turn works to promote and help local campesino communities. The **Store of the Weavers** is on the same site.

North of the plaza two places worth looking at are run by **Niños Unidos Peruanos Foundation** (☐ www.ninoshotel.com), which was established by a Dutch couple to support neglected and underprivileged street kids; the couple have adopted a dozen street children themselves. Both of their places are called **Niños Hotel** (☎ 231424); the first is at Calle Meloc 442, a 17th-century colonial house which has been converted into a stylish, spotless place to stay, with gorgeous rooms set around a pretty courtyard. Service is fabulous and the breakfast is sumptuous though it costs extra. The second, at Calle Fierro 476, a little further from the centre, follows a similar design. Rates in both are US\$55 (sgl/dbl, att) and US\$25/50 (sgl/dbl, com). The proceeds from both are used to fund the charity.

everyone's taste, of course, though they do at least offer several dishes that you won't find anywhere else, including their 'power salad' (s/19), a combination of 19 different fruits, vegetables and nuts on one plate.

However, the vegan restaurant that draws the biggest crowds and has the most glowing reputation is **Green Point** (☑ www.greenpointveganrestaurant.com), on Carmen Baja in San Blas. Indeed, this is one of only a handful of restaurants where you'll have to book beforehand or you may end up queueing (Jack's and Bodega 138 are two others). Their success is obvious, with a deli opened next door and a new place on Plaza San Francisco with a smaller and cheaper menu – and its own bakery. However, while there's no doubting the artistry involved in preparing the food, and some of the dishes are truly tasty (goulash s/25, mushroom risotto s/25), others are a little bland. Furthermore, the side order of smugness that comes with every dish leaves a bit of a sour taste in the mouth; make sure you don't read their mission statement on the front of their menu, or you may find yourself bringing your whole dinner back up.

Local cuisine

The following tend to be quite upmarket though you'll have no problem finding local food at local prices if you want – just head to the markets, or indeed anywhere away from the tourist heartland and you'll soon encounter lots of local restaurants.

La Cusqueñita, at Av Tullumayo 227, is a huge establishment and a great one to savour the flavours of Peru while watching one of their daily dance shows. The food is plentiful (try their guinea pig, cooked in the traditional way with head and feet all intact) and the dancing exuberant and lively. Classic Peruvian food can also be found at **Pachapapa** (☑ www.cuscorestaurants.com), Plazoleta San Blas 120. Dishes range from commonplace but expensive roast cuy (guinea pig, s/72), to the more exotic marinated alpaca brochette with stuffed hot peppers (s/48); a very pleasant

evening can be had munching on the native wildlife. The outdoor seating around an open fire pit is a bonus too, though you may have to wait awhile for your food. If it's out of your price bracket, **Amaranto Anticuchos and Cafe**, up Carmen Alto, also offers exotic local fare, this time in kebab form (eg guinea pig kebab s/35).

Inkazueta, on swish Plazoleta de las Nazarenas, is a breath of fresh air. Given its location, they could probably charge a fortune and there would be enough people falling out of the nearby five-star hotels in blissful ignorance of the price of things who would pay it. But they don't; instead, they're a decent mid-range restaurant serving some fine and filling fare (eg home-made chilli with beef and pork for s/20) with a lovely fireplace and a good view over the square. Note it's closed on Sunday.

On Plaza de Armas, on Portal de Carnes, to the left of the cathedral as you look at it, are several 1st-floor restaurants; **Limo** (☑ www.cuscorestaurants.com; at No 236) is a Peruvian cookery and pisco bar that rustles up a high standard Amazon fish stew (s/69). There's also a large number of pisco-based drinks to try.

Next door, **Baghdad Café** has a good balcony view over the plaza from which to enjoy baked *cuy* (s/44). It's also worth trying their pork *chicharrón* – pork fried in its own fat with golden potatoes and salad.

El Truco, Plaza Regocijo 261, is stylish and has good service although it is popular with tour groups who come for the generous buffet lunches and nightly folk music shows, so can be very busy. Their vegetarian jungle rice (coconut rice with tomatoes, pineapple, banana chips, cashews, ginger, coriander and chillies) is packed full of flavour. **Chicha**, on the 2nd floor here, is renowned chef Gastón Acurio's first Cusco restaurant and features his take on regional highland cooking. The results are full of bold flavours – try the river shrimp fried and served with yuca and salsa (s/40). The bar here also makes a mean pisco sour.

(Opposite) One of the many parades that take place in the Plaza de Armas, here passing in front of the impressive baroque façade of La Compañía. (Photo © Zoe Ashdown).



202; both are open daily 7am-10pm. Estación Huanchac is open for ticket sales (Mon-Fri 7am-5pm, Sat & Sun 7am-noon).

Rival company **Inca Rail** (☒ www.incarail.com), whose trains leave from Ollantaytambo for Aguas Calientes and Machu Picchu, also has an office (☎ 233 030; Mon-Fri 7am-9pm, Sat to 7pm, Sun to

2pm) on the Plaza, at Portal de Panes 105.

When buying tickets from either company make sure you have ID, preferably your passport. It is also possible to buy tickets in advance online with a credit card. This generates an e-voucher that is not valid for travel; it must be converted into a proper ticket at least an hour before departure.

Around Cusco

RUINS NEAR CUSCO (DAY HIKE)

[see map opposite]

The landscape around Cusco is dotted with small, interesting archaeological sites, many within easy walking, horse-riding or mountain-biking distance of the city. Five of the main sites can be visited in the course of a half-day's trek, which allows you plenty of time at each ruin. Note that between many of these sites you'll find other archaeology that is clearly Inca in origin – an altar here, a carved boulder there – which aren't marked on any map nor require any ticket to visit. What's more, this gentle stroll across the rolling grasslands is also an ideal way to acclimatise to the altitude here.

Access to four of the five main sites is with the Visitor's Ticket (BTU, see box p150). The fifth, Amaru Marka Wasi (also known as Salapunco or the Temple of the Moon), is free anyway. If you do not have a Visitor's Ticket it is possible to buy a separate ticket for just these four sites; the **Boleto** covering this 'circuit' is Circuit 1 (see box p150) which costs s/70.

The walk is almost exactly 6.3km (4 miles) long though this doesn't include any walking you do at the actual sites. The route detailed below gives access to Tambo Machay, Puca Pucara, Amaru Marka Wasi, Q'enko and Sacsayhuaman. The trek can be done in either direction but it is simpler to catch a taxi out to the furthest point and then walk back. This way each site builds in magnificence too, until you arrive at Sacsayhuaman, one of the most spectacular standing stone sites anywhere in the world. (That said, there is an argument to begin with Sacsayhuaman, before the crowds turn up and while you've still got the energy to fully appreciate it.) Taxis from Plaza de Armas to Tambo Machay cost around s/20 one way. Alternatively take a bus bound for Pisac and ask to be dropped off at Tambo Machay (about s/2).

In the past there have been robberies and muggings around the ruins close to Cusco, so keep your wits about you, leave all your valuables in your hotel and don't try to visit these places after dusk. It is always much safer to walk in small groups rather than on your own.

Tambo Machay

Tambo Machay (7am-5.30pm; only possible with Visitor's Ticket) sits near a bend in the main Cusco-Pisac road. The name Tambo Machay translates as 'Inn

well-made souvenir; the ceramics and rugs here are particularly high quality though they're not the cheapest. Locals pack the plaza early on and the chaotic scene unfolds throughout the morning, before easing down around lunchtime. There is an ATM (cashpoint) on Plaza de Armas.

Where to stay

There are a few options if you are tempted to stay in Pisac. **Hospedaje Beho** (☎ 203001), 50m north of Plaza de Armas, on the path to the ruins, started out as a small shop with a few rooms at the back though the B&B side of things now dominates. It's a friendly place offering simple bed and breakfast (s/35 per person in an en suite room, s/20pp in one with shared facilities) in rooms overlooking a pleasant garden. **Hospedaje Familiar Semana Wasi** (☎ 203018), on the eastern edge of the plaza, has basic but clean rooms (s/50/80 sgl/dbl att, s/70 dbl with shared facilities); **Pisac Inn & Cuchara de Palo** (☎ 203062, www.pisacinn.com), in the south-west corner of the square, has an attractive courtyard, a relaxed ambience and renovated rooms (s/147/183-210/237, sgl/dbl/tpl, att in low season, rising to s/185/230-265/295 in July & Aug).

A little further out are two superior places. **Paz y Luz** (☎ 216293, www.pazy luzperu.com; s/160/250/310 sgl/dbl/tpl, suites for s/280, breakfast), is 1km east of the centre, close to the river, with a homely feel, a well-kept garden and impressive views of the surrounding hills. The expat owner also offers healing courses drawn from Andean and international traditions, meditation classes, Reiki and yoga sessions.

The second option stands a 10-minute walk west of town, or five minutes by one of the little moto-taxis that buzz around the town. **La Casa Del Conde** (☎ 787818, www.cuscovalle.com; rates from US\$45-60/60-100 sgl/dbl) is a lovely little place of just seven well-appointed rooms with balconies set in a peaceful, rural setting with carefully tended gardens.

Where to eat

Should you get hungry, there are a couple of eateries boasting giant **clay ovens**, on



Mariscal Castilla, that are used to bake traditional flatbreads and empanadas or sometimes to roast guinea pig. Alternatively, there are several decent **café**s adjacent to the plaza on which the market is held.

Laid-back **Mullu** stands on the 2nd floor of a house opposite the church and has a rickety balcony from which to watch the activity whilst enjoying a selection of juices and smoothies, sandwiches and other Novoandina cuisine snacks. There's also an **art gallery** downstairs.

Blue Llama is good for coffee, breakfast, juices and sandwiches which can be consumed on the 1st floor balcony overlooking the square; they also have a tasty range of vegetarian dishes. **Ulrike's Café** has a rooftop terrace, wi-fi and book exchange though the coffee and cakes are better reasons to

Urubamba

This sprawling transport hub at the junction of the roads from Pisac and Chinchero is often a necessary stepping stone to somewhere else in the Sacred Valley. Urubamba's not a particularly attractive town, although it has a palm-filled plaza and grand colonial church, but the setting is magnificent, beneath a set of fine snow-capped peaks.

Many of the **adventure activities** run by agencies in Cusco, such as white-water rafting, hot air-ballooning and horse riding, begin from Urubamba. It also hosts a local **market** one block west of the plaza and is home to a number of artisans including weavers, ceramicists, potters, sculptors and artists. It is quite possible to spend half a day wandering about the **studios and workshops** watching the workers create their wares.

The town has a small **tourist office** (on the colectivo side; Mon-Fri 8am-1pm & 2-4.30pm) in the bus station, several **ATMs**, and the garage on the junction of Av Ferrocarril and Av Mariscal Castilla serves as a **supermarket** too.

Where to stay

There are plenty of hotels in Urubamba but also some cheaper places to the north of the Plaza de Armas. The best hostel is **Misky Illary Wasi** (✉ miskyllarywasy@hotmail.com), two blocks north of the main square at Calle Belen, Cuadra 6, with clean and comfortable rooms, hot water, wi-fi and some good information on attractions in the local area – and how to get to them. Rates are s/30/50-65/90 (sgl/dbl/tpl, att) and include use of the kitchen. Slightly further north, **Hotel La Florida** (Jirón Zavala 438) is a simple yet fairly charming place set round a courtyard with en suite rooms (s/80-120, dbl, not including breakfast).

Many of the more **upmarket hotels** are lined up along the main road running along the south-western edge of the town. Most luxurious is **Tambo del Inka** (☎ 581777, 🌐 www.libertador.com.pe; US\$206/206-459, sgl/dbl, att), Av Ferrocarril, which has large colonial-style rooms in expansive grounds and a world-class spa. There's also a private railway station in the grounds where the PeruRail service to Machu Picchu stops. The grounds are spacious and attractive and service is exemplary.

Just west of town is the charming **Soly Luna Lodge Spa** (☎ 608930, 🌐 www.hotelsolyluna.com; US\$350/350/425/525, sgl/dbl/tpl/quad, breakfast), now part of the Relais and Chateaux chain, boasting luxury

bungalows set in a pleasant garden full of eucalyptus and cypress trees, its own restaurant that hosts folk shows, tennis courts and a spa.

On the road to Ollantaytambo, 3km from Urubamba, is a handful of colourful, rustic cottages complete with small kitchen, terrace and balcony, to rent at **K'uychi Rumi** (☎ 201169, 🌐 www.urubamba.com; US\$120/140/180/230, sgl/dbl/tpl/quad); cottages that can sleep up to seven people cost US\$350.

San Agustín Urubamba (☎ 201444, 🌐 www.hotelessanagustin.com.pe) lies 1km east of town in spacious grounds and with a swimming pool, sauna and Jacuzzi. Rates start at US\$61 if booked online.

On the outskirts of Urubamba at Jirón Recoleta and part of the same chain is **San Agustín Monasterio de la Recoleta** (☎ 201666, 🌐 www.hotelessanagustin.com.pe; rates from US\$83 if booked online). Set in a converted 15th-century monastery, this striking hotel offers standard rooms and more luxurious suites but also retains the chapel and cloistered courtyards of its original incarnation.

Best of all though is **Rio Sagrado Hotel** (☎ 201631, 🌐 www.belmond.com; rates from US\$295, sgl/dbl), owned by the Belmond chain and set just above the river with a tranquil garden and raft of facilities including a sauna, Jacuzzi and well-tended

The excellent North American-owned **El Albergue** (☎ 204014, ☒ www.elalbergue.com; US\$99/109, dbl/tpl, att, breakfast, rooms with balcony US\$199), Estacion de Tren, has 16 elegant rooms set around a courtyard with a shop by reception selling handicrafts, all situated at the railway station with entrance via the platform. Good discounts are available during the low season. Handy for the trains, it is some 800m to the town though.

The modern terracotta-coloured **Hotel Pakaritampu** (☎ 204020, ☒ www.pakaritampu.com; US\$183/191/244, sgl/dbl/tpl, att), on the road just up from the station, is comfortable and friendly, has a bar and restaurant as well as a TV room.

Hostal Sauce (☎ 204044, ☒ www.hostalsauce.com.pe; s/312/390/546, sgl/dbl/tpl, att, breakfast) has the best location, overlooking the Inca ruins and close to the main plaza. The rooms are comfortable though service is sometimes brusque.

Where to eat

Our favourite spot is **Puka Rumi**, upstairs near the bridge. An extensive menu of hearty expertly cooked dishes, including excellent steaks and veggie burritos, are available in this unpretentious, friendly place. Next door, **Hearts Café** (☒ www.heartscafe.org), on Av Ventiderio, opens early for breakfast and specialises in vegetarian and wholefood dishes cooked with a local twist but also has a range of international dishes. The profits are ploughed back into the community and go towards children's and women's projects in the Sacred Valley. Across the way, **Uchucuta** has some exquisite and imaginative Peruvian dishes, all beautifully presented, including rolled chicken and alpaca ravioli; mains are around the s/30 mark, which counts as great

value for what you get. Nearby, back towards the plaza, **Il Piccolo Forno** does some authentic Italian dishes including lasagne, calzones and very good pizzas. On Plaza de Armas is **Esquina**, which is the perfect spot for a plum brownie or a combo salad bowl, hot chocolate and a chance to watch the activity in the square.

The restaurant at **El Albergue** is the smartest place in town. The food, largely organic and displaying a mix of Western, Asian and Peruvian influences, is fairly simple but the quality top notch; try the alpaca burger (s/33), or lamb with chimichurri sauce (s/42). Their vegetarian options are refreshingly wide too. If that's too expensive, and you've got an hour free during the day, at least come to their **Cafe Mayu** for a coffee (roasted on site) and cake (baked on the premises); it's a lovely place to sit and watch all the action at the railway station. If the station is too far, stop on the way at **Tutti Amore** for delicious homemade ice-cream in a wide range of flavours.

Transport

From here there are **trains** to Aguas Calientes. Having caught the train back from Aguas Calientes it is very easy to pick up an onward bus to Cusco. See pp352-5 for details of the tourist train service from Cusco to Ollantaytambo. The station is about a 10-minute walk from Plaza de Armas.

Buses and **colectivos** depart for Urubamba (s/2-3), Chilca and Km82 from the main plaza and outside the station. Direct buses to Cusco (s/10) sometimes depart from outside the station, where they meet the incoming trains. To avoid the scrum you may be better taking a colectivo to Urubamba and catching a bus on to Cusco from there.

Ollantaytambo ruins

[see map p204]

The daunting **fortress** was described by Pedro Pizarro as 'so well fortified that it was a thing of horror'. It was to this mighty castle that Manco Inca retreated following his uprising. Pursued by the Spanish, he holed up in the fortress high above the surrounding plain and faced the conquistadors. After two days of heavy fighting he forced the Spanish to retreat, the first time that the colonial army had been bested in combat by the Incas. Manco realised he wouldn't be

Aguas Calientes (Pueblo Machu Picchu) [see map opposite]

Officially known as Pueblo Machu Picchu, this village is very much the end of the line now that the track that used to run on to Quillabamba has been destroyed. Really just a dormitory town for the ruins themselves, it's an ugly rash in the pristine forest of the Sanctuary and has in the past been described as the 'Armpit of Peru'. The town is, however, undergoing something of a renaissance and amidst all the development work there now stand several fine hotels and some very good eateries, too.

Information is available from the **iPerú branch** (Mon-Sat 9am-1pm & 2-6pm, Sun 9am-1pm) on Av Pachacutec, in the same building as the **Machu Picchu ticket office** that sells entrance tickets to the ruins. (Note that you should already have bought your ticket online if you're hoping to visit the ruins in the next day or two – **for information on buying tickets see p318**).

For several years now, regulation changes have meant that you can no longer buy entrance tickets for Machu Picchu at the site itself. Similarly, if you want to climb Huayna Picchu or Machu Picchu Mountain you must buy a ticket in advance – in the high season, months in advance – as these also can no longer be arranged at Machu Picchu. If you are travelling with a trekking agency or tour group they should ensure that you are provided with an entrance ticket and any additional tickets. Tickets are available from the Dirección Regional de Cultura in Aguas Calientes, in the same building as iPerú (see above). The office opens at 5am and payment can be in cash or card. Tickets are for a single entry to the site; if you want to return to Machu Picchu you will have to buy a second ticket. Tickets are also available in Cusco (see p160).

There are plenty of **internet cafés** and **cash machines** on Av Pachacutec, around the plaza and throughout the town. Trawl the **market** adjacent to the main station for textiles, T-shirts and other souvenirs.

The **hot springs** (daily 5.30am-7.30pm; s/20) after which the town is named comprise a series of rather pungent communal baths several minutes' walk north from town. If you are tempted, the pools are cleanest and most pleasant first thing in the morning.

On the road to Machu Picchu it's worth visiting **Museo de Sitio Manuel Chávez Ballón – Machu Picchu Museum** (Carretera Hiram Bingham; 10am-4pm; s/22) a small museum displaying a number of objects uncovered at Machu Picchu. There are interactive displays and a wealth of information on excavations, Inca building methods, cosmology and other cultural bits and pieces. There's also an interesting **botanical garden** here.

Where to stay

Cheapest of all is the **municipal campground** (s/15 per person; cold water shower) about 1km downhill from the centre of town towards Machu Picchu and adjacent to the bridge over the Urubamba. Take great care of your possessions here.

For more solid accommodation, the local railway station is a branch of the excellent hostel chain **EcoPackers** (☎ 211121, 🌐 www.ecopackersperu.com). Like its sibling in Cusco, this is another facility-filled hostel with reasonable rates,

concrete where the train tracks pass over a small stream. The first buses leave at around 5.30am or half an hour before dawn and then depart every 10-20 minutes. The bus ticket office in Aguas Calientes opens

15 minutes before the first bus leaves.

See p319 for more information on transport from Aguas Calientes and Machu Picchu.

SOUTH AND EAST OF CUSCO

For many people the focus of a trip to Cusco is the Sacred Valley and Machu Picchu. However, there are also several fascinating ruins to see to the south and east of the city.

A paved road runs south-east from Cusco to **Sicuani**, following the upper reaches of the Río Urubamba. There are some ruins scattered across the altiplano here, indicating the spread of the Incas towards Lake Titicaca, where the road eventually arrives at Puno.

Just outside Cusco, making it virtually a suburb, stands **San Jerónimo**, which hosts an enormous fruit and veg market on Saturdays. South-east from here the valley narrows as you approach Oropesa, before which lie the ruins of Tipón and after which the ruins at Pikillacta.

Tipón (7.30am-4.30pm; s/20; free with Visitor's Ticket) is 25km from Cusco. About 2km before Oropesa, at Choquepata, you turn left and follow the road for 4km to the ruins. This turn off the main highway is sign-posted and it's opposite a bizarre larger than life statue of a woman holding a plate of *cuy* (guinea pig). She's advertising the fact that Oropesa and the surrounding area is one of the best places to try this Peruvian delicacy; there are *cuyerías* lining the roadside.

It'll take around an hour to walk from the main road up to Tipón, which is hidden at the head of a small valley beyond the remains of the hacienda Quispicanchi. The extensive Inca ruins here include a series of agricultural terraces, ceremonial baths, fountains and stone-lined irrigation channels, many of which still carry water. Above the last terrace a trail leads to a temple complex built around a *huaca*. An enormous reservoir collected water from a spring, which was then distributed to the terraces along a series of channels. Behind and to the left of the main site a faint trail leads to a further series of ruins and well-preserved Inca terraces that are now in use by local people. So extensive are the terraces here that archaeologists have suggested the site may have been an experimental farm, much like Moray (see p200).

Historians counter that Tipón could have been a palace but the accounts left by chroniclers make it difficult to say whose it was. Garcilaso de la Vega believed that it was the royal house of Viracocha whose father, Yáhuar Huácac,



This statue advertising *cuy* is a good marker for where to get off the bus for the side road up to Tipón.

Using this guide

ROUTE DESCRIPTIONS

Directions in the following chapter are shown as an instruction to go left or right and as a compass point. For instance, if the instruction stated 'turn right (west)', it would indicate that west is to your right.

Direction

The trails described in this book are laid out as they are usually walked, from the traditional start point to the typical finish point. In a number of instances it is possible to walk the trail in either direction. The exceptions are that you are not allowed to start at Machu Picchu and hike the Inca Trail in reverse, meaning that you can't finish at Km104, Km88, Km82, Chilca (Km77) or Mollepata. The Choquequirao Trek is typically done as a there-and-back hike along the same route, although it is possible to connect it to other treks and complete a linear hike, finishing at Vilcabamba or even Machu Picchu.

ROUTE MAP NOTES [See pp28-9 for route planning map]

Scale and walking times

Most of the trekking maps in this guide are drawn at the same scale, roughly 1:50,000 (20mm = 1km; 1¼ inches = one mile). Many of the trails are uphill and downhill so the length of a trek is not an accurate reflection of the time it will take you to complete. The times included on the maps are there only as a guideline. They refer to **walking times only** and do not include any stops for breaks or food. To calculate the total time it will take to complete a section you will need to make allowances for these and add on a few minutes.

Overall you may find that you need to **add between 20% and 40%** depending on your walking speed and average length of time taken at each break.

Gradient arrows

There are gradient arrows marked on the trekking maps throughout the book. The arrows point uphill; two arrows close together mean that the hill is steep, one on its own means that it is a gentler gradient. If, for example, you are walking between A (at 3100m) and B (at 3300m) and the path between the two is short and steep, it would be illustrated as follows: A --- >> --- B.



can follow his path on the trail; and if he's too fast for you to keep pace with and you think you might have lost your way, at least you know that there is somebody who knows that you've gone astray, and can either return to find you or raise the alarm.

Note that all distances and altitudes are approximate.

Getting to the trailheads

For the Inca Trail you will be trekking with an agency, which means that you will be collected in Cusco and taken to the trailhead either by bus or by train. Many agencies use minibuses to transport trekkers to Km82, as they are quicker and can depart at any time whereas trains operate to a schedule. The **trains** to Aguas Calientes, which go via the trailheads at Km77, 82, 88 and 104, leave regularly each day though; most trekkers using the train start walking from Km88. See pp352-5 for details of times and prices.

Information on how to get to the starting points of the other trails can be found at the start of each trail description. So, for information on how to get to Mollepatha for the **Salkantay Trek** and **High Inca Trail**, please see p240; for Cachora for the **Choquequirao Trek** see pp286-7; for Huaran Fondo at the start of the **Lares Trek**, visit pp268-9; while to get to Tinke, the starting point for the fabulous **Ausangate Trek**, go to p300.

The classic Inca Trail

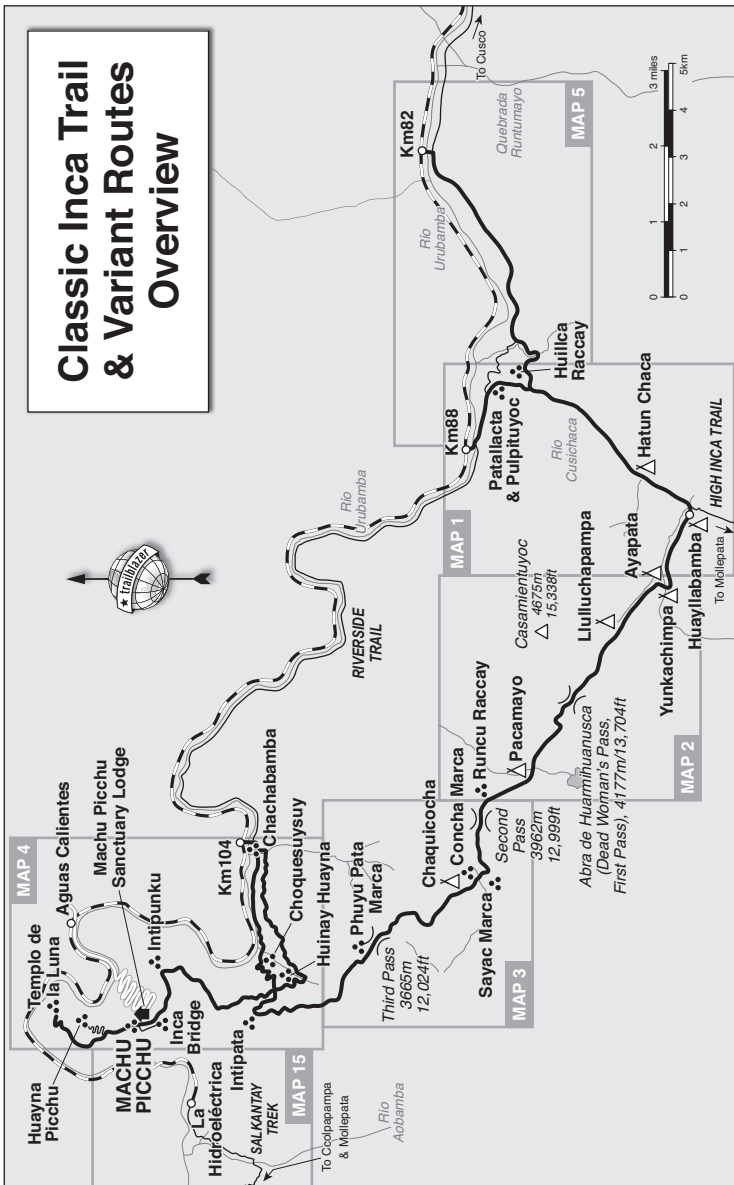
This **33km (20½-mile)** trek is the undisputed draw for most people coming to Cusco and is the most popular and over-subscribed trek in the region. Given that you can get to Machu Picchu in four hours on a train, there has to be something intrinsically exciting and rewarding about the Inca Trail to merit spending four days walking to the same destination. And there is. For one thing, it is a beautiful trek, with exquisite scenery and breathtaking panoramas. But outstanding views and dramatic landscapes are pretty much a certainty in this part of the world. No, the best thing about the Inca Trail is the chance it offers to visit ruins that aren't otherwise accessible except on foot. As a result, this often means you'll have them either all to yourself or, if not, you'll be sharing them only with other like-minded individuals who were also prepared to spend the money and time to tackle this trail.

There's no doubt it's a spellbinding way to arrive at Machu Picchu and, as a result, makes it the stand-out trek in this region – for all the undoubted charms of the others around here.

Classic Inca Trail & Variant Routes Overview



ROUTE GUIDE AND MAPS



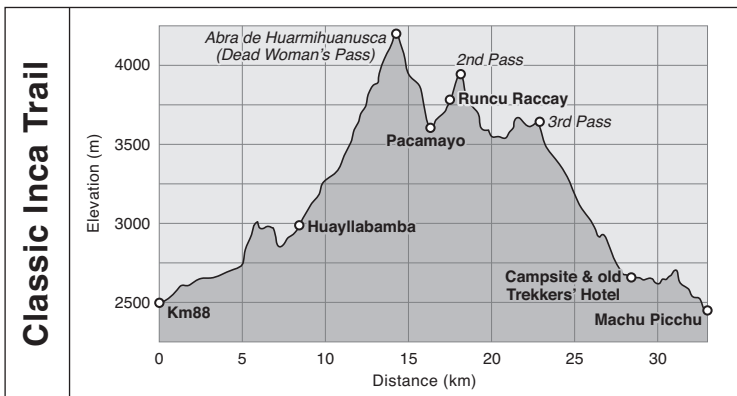
KM88 (QORIHUAYRACHINA) TO HUAYLLABAMBA [MAP 1, p219]

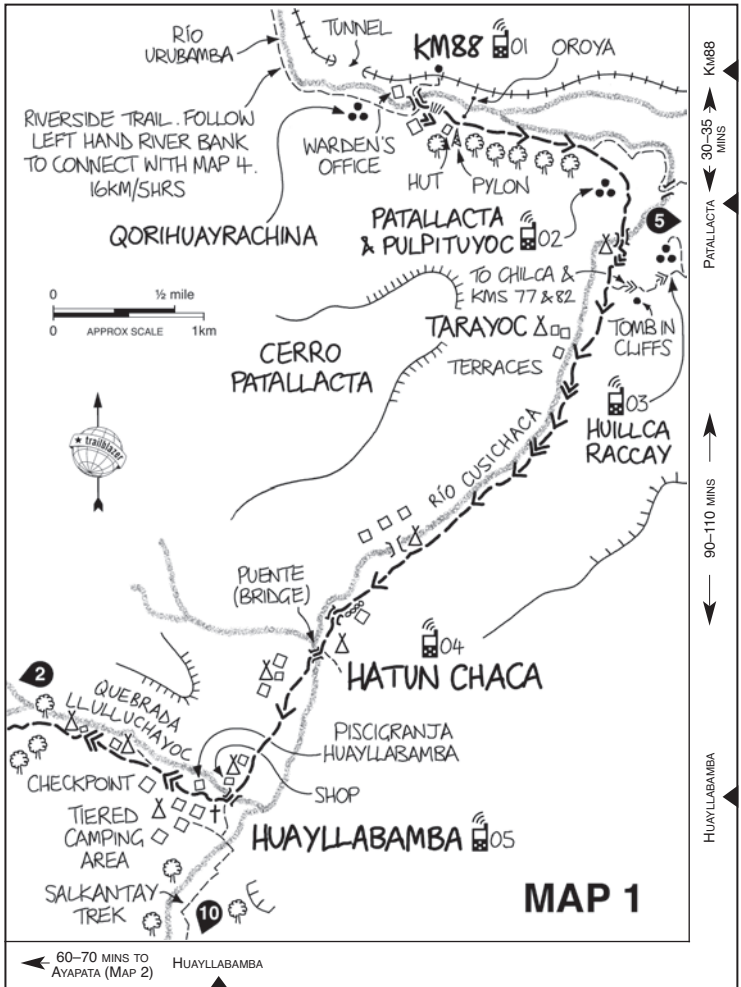
There are a couple of large and significant ruins on this **8.4km** first stage (**5¼ miles; 2hrs to 2hrs 25 mins**) of the classic Inca Trail – the first of which can be found at the very start of the walk. The train from Cusco only stops briefly at Km88, sometimes also referred to by its Quechua name Qorihuayrachina, so watch the kilometre markers after Km82 and be ready to disembark. Once off the train continue to walk west along the tracks, in the same direction as the train was heading. A path leads away from the tracks and down to the river, where there is a substantial **bridge and a warden's hut**. A guard here will check your permit and passport before letting you cross the river and begin the trail proper.

Once on the far side of the bridge you'll notice the considerable ruins of Qorihuayrachina on your right; your trail, however, takes you left (east) to climb gently through a stand of eucalyptus trees above the southern bank of the Urubamba.

About 30 minutes after setting off from the bridge you will come to the mouth of the Cusichaca Valley and the river of the same name. At the junction of the two valleys lie the sprawling ruins of **Patallacta** (see box p218). The trail bends along the edge of the lowest terraces of Patallacta, near the small round tower of **Pulpituyoc**, standing on a ridge by the river. On the far, southern, side of the terraces the path drops to a bridge over the Cusichaca leading to a couple of **campsites** on either side of the trail. Gently gaining height, the trail continues south to settle on the Cusichaca's eastern bank, heading upstream towards Huayllabamba.

The path climbs gently but steadily for an hour up the valley, passing first beneath cliffs covered in bromeliads and then through gentler terrain. It is possible to **camp** on this side opposite the houses on the western bank but most groups continue on the trail to the main bridge (**puente**), pausing occasionally to admire the good views back down the Cusichaca valley to Nevado Veronica, which is visible as a pyramid in the middle of the valley.

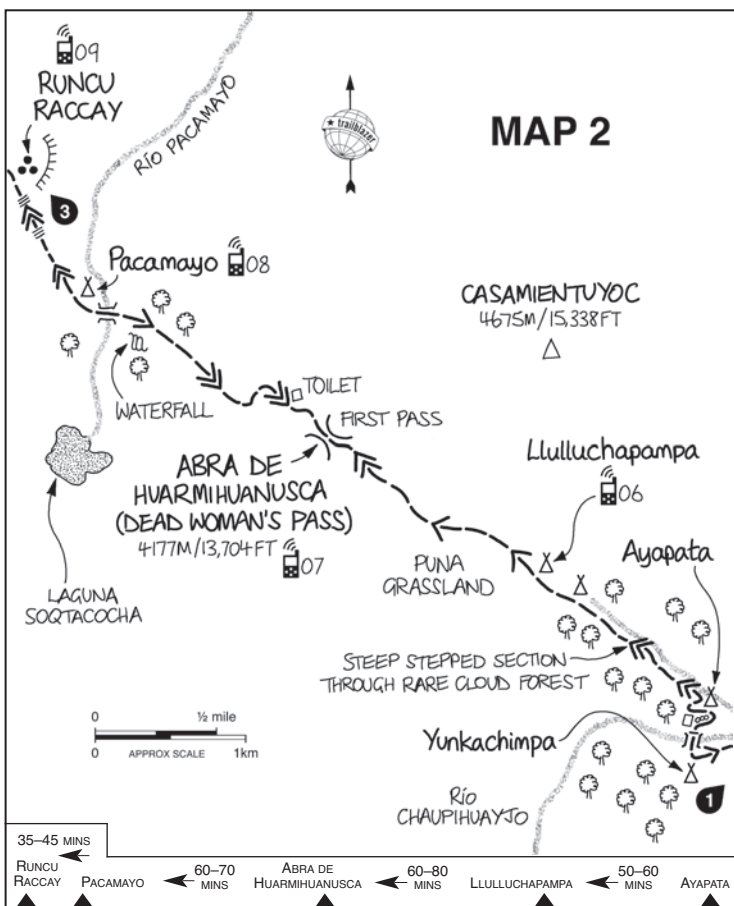




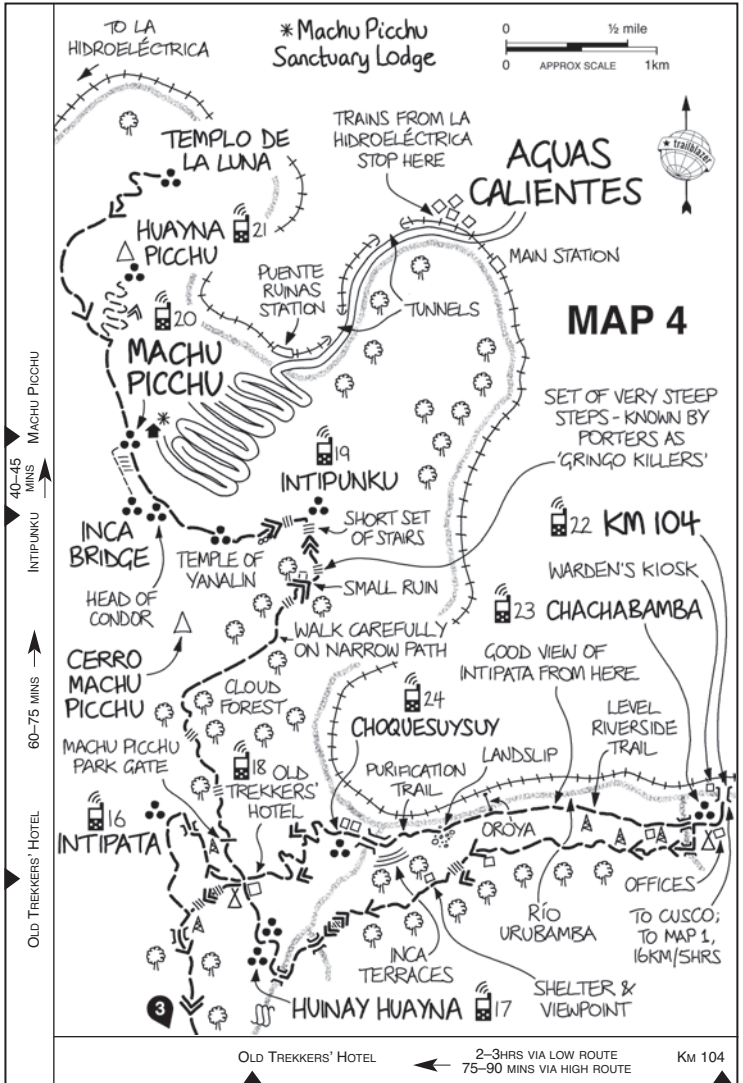
The trail now embarks on the toughest section of the entire trail. Hugging the left-hand (south-west) bank of Quebrada Llulluchayoc, the trail continues on its westerly way, with lupins and snapdragons lining the path. Soon you enter a beautiful cloud forest or *polylepis* woodland. The path climbs through the forest alongside the course of the river, occasionally close to the water and at other times high above it, on a series of steep steps.

Just above the fringe of the forest is the *Llulluchapampa Campsite*, an exposed campsite that can get very cold at night. Boasting running water and a toilet block, the camp's main attraction for most people are the exceptional views down the valley to Huayllabamba and up towards the pass, both of which are quite visible on a clear day.

The pass is **Abra de Huarmihuanusca (First Pass)**, sometimes spelled Warmiwañusqa but more commonly known as **Dead Woman's Pass**. It isn't known who the dead woman was or even if there was actually a dead woman at all, with many putting the name down to the fact that the pass resembles a woman lying on her back as if dead. (You'll see this more clearly on the other



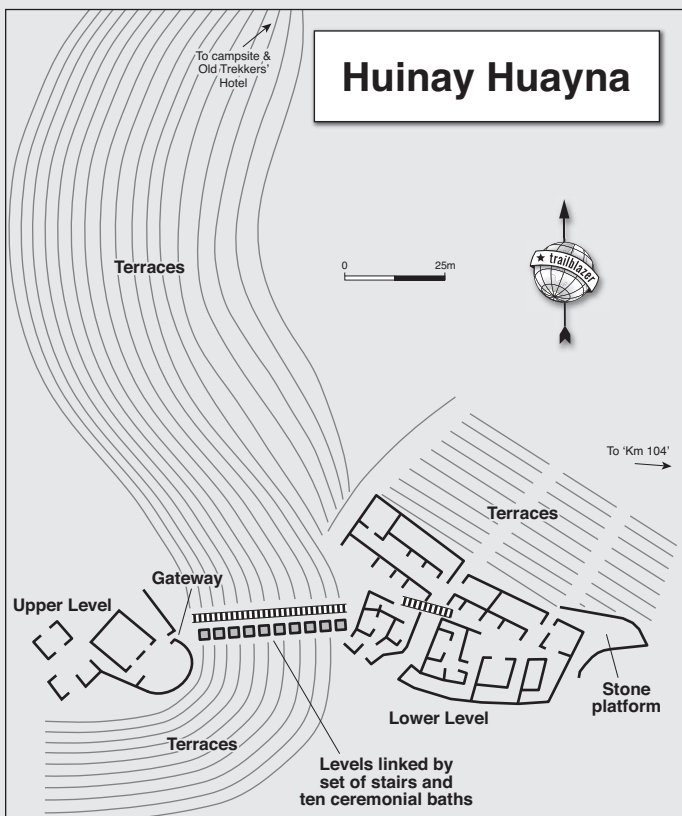
From Old Trekkers Hotel it takes about an hour to trek the 3km to Intipunku ('Gateway to the Sun'). Machu Picchu is another 40 minutes further on. Remember to have your torch handy as you'll be packing and starting to walk



□ Huinay Huayna (Wiñay Wayna)

This complex's sweeping terraces lead round to a series of buildings with high-quality masonry, a *double-jamb* doorway and a curved structure that looks out over Nevado Veronica. The finest examples of Inca stonework can be found in these buildings, which are constructed out of some of the largest and most perfectly fitted blocks along the Inca Trail. There are also lots of gables and exterior pegs used to secure thatched roofs. From this upper cluster a staircase descends to a second level, alongside a sequence of 10 stone baths, down which flows water from a spring that originates at Phuyu Pata Marca. The likelihood is that these were involved in the ritual worship of water and that the site had an important role as a ceremonial or religious centre.

From the last structure at the lowest level, there's a trapezoidal window that frames a nearby waterfall, reinforcing the idea that the site was connected with the veneration of water.



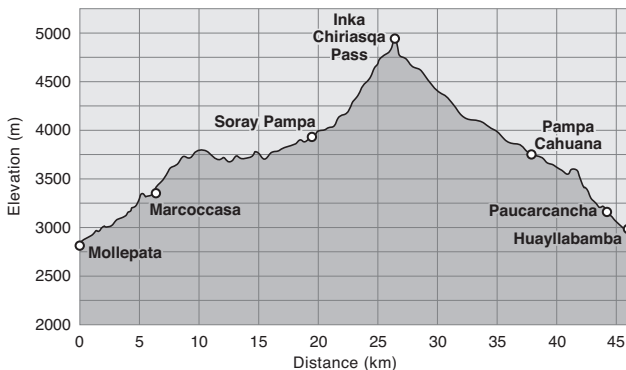
The High Inca Trail

This is essentially an extension of the Inca Trail that allows you to experience a fantastic section of wilderness, free from most of the crowds, before committing to the final three days of the classic Inca Trail culminating at Machu Picchu. The **6- to 7-day trek (71km; 44 miles)** from the watershed of the Apurímac to the ruins overlooking the Urubamba is quite arduous, as you must cross a high pass at a shade under 5000m. The views of the Vilcabamba range and the proximity to the bulk of Nevado Salkantay more than compensate for the effort required.

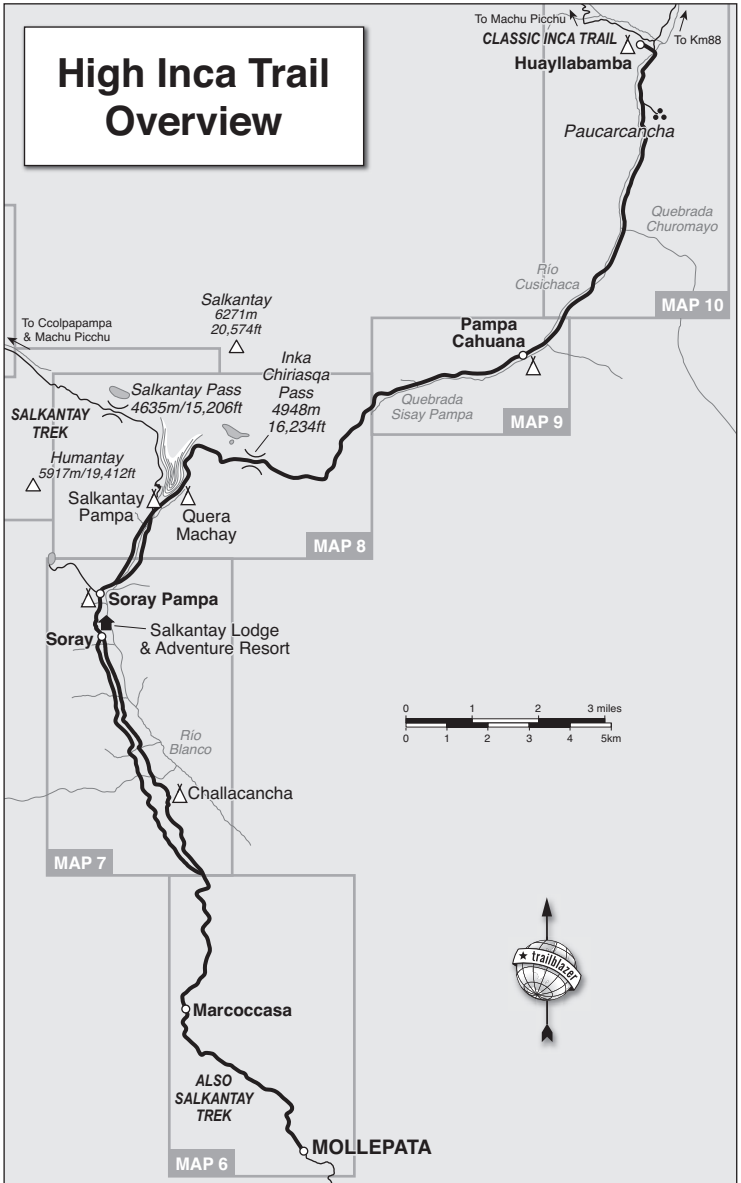
That said, this trek is seldom walked these days thanks to the regulations that insist that you take a tour group along the Inca Trail – ie, along the last half of this trek. As such, the only people who are likely to use this trail today are either organised groups who can turn left at Huayllabamba and continue on the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu; or independent trekkers who have accepted that they can't go on the Inca Trail but instead will have to continue down the valley to the Urubamba. At the river, two options present themselves: head left (west) to Km88, from where it's possible to catch a train to Machu Picchu; or right (east) to Km82, where it's also possible to catch the train, or the bus back to Ollantaytambo.

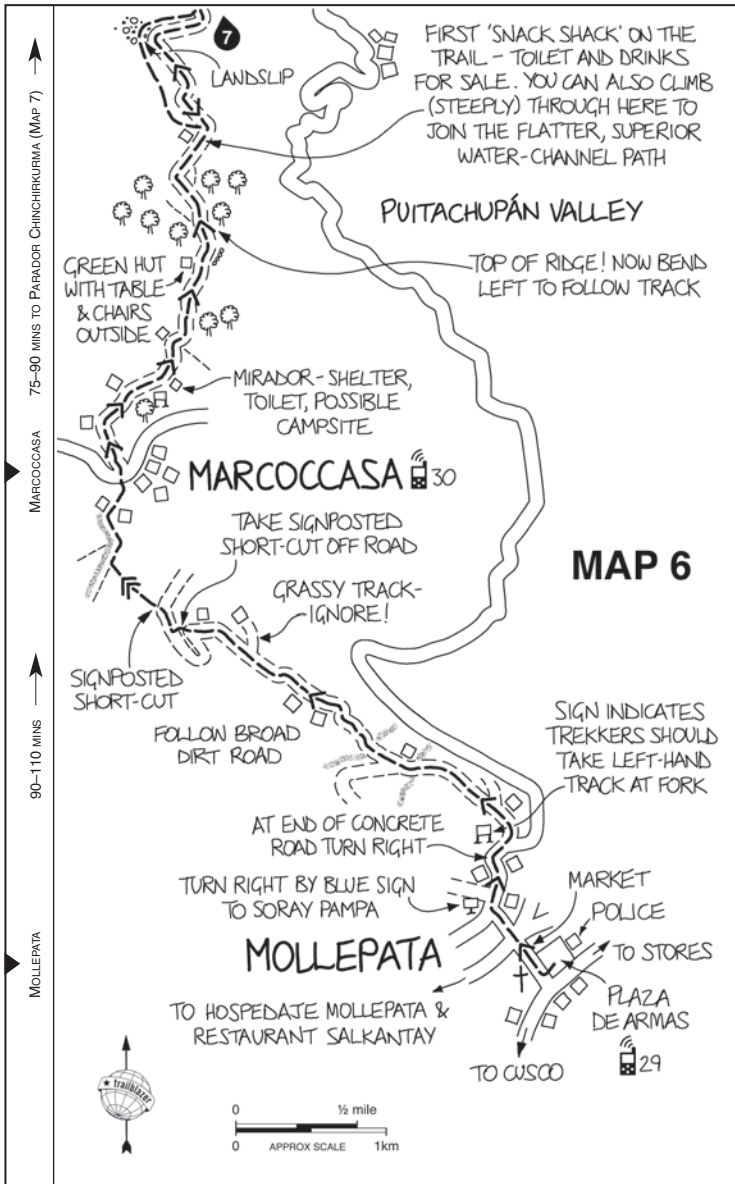
This trek is advertised under various names, and you may see it listed as the **Mollepata Trek** or **Salkantay Trek**. To avoid confusion with the 'other', more popular Salkantay route – which we describe beginning on p249 – we have called it the **High Inca Trail**, the name used by the British company Exodus, the largest agency using this trail.

High Inca Trail



High Inca Trail Overview





The road from the village eases along the left (west) side of a valley that's heading roughly north-west. Continue to obey the blue signs and after about an hour you'll be cutting between the bends and switchbacks of the road on several steep short-cuts. A concrete **irrigation channel** carrying snowmelt from Salkantay lies at the top of the last one. Turn right to follow it and a few minutes later you'll find yourself emerging onto the dirt road at the micro-settlement of **Marcocasa** (3341m/10,961ft). It takes 90 minutes minimum to reach this village from Mollepata. Fill up your water bottles at a spring behind some houses at the back of the cleared area (where the power lines lead to), because the streams are unreliable on the way to Soray. From Marcocasa there are some superb, expansive views of the snow-capped Huarohuirani (to the north behind the hill), the village of Qurawasi away in the distance to the west, and Mollepata off to the south.

The signboard at Marcocasa that shows the route of the trail also marks the start of the path to Soray. Take the small trail by the water channel which leads up towards a pleasant viewpoint with toilets and a shelter and a good place to camp for the night. The path climbs to a ridge overlooking a high valley feeding down to the Limatambo.

The trail now turns left, following the valley high on its western slope, before the trail passes the first of several shacks on this first day where you can **buy drinks** and use the toilet facilities (for a sol). Rather than following the regular trail, most trekkers these days climb steeply past the shelter here and continue up the slopes for a few minutes to a water channel.

Turning right, you can follow this channel all the way to Soray on a path that is pretty much flat the whole way. As such it's superior to the regular trail, which, at a viewpoint called **Parador Chinchirkurma**, drops steadily down to the valley floor and then spends most of its time climbing back up again to some high puna fields – **Soray Pampa**. By now you will have excellent views of the bulk of Nevado Humantay and to its right as you look at the sheer pyramid of Nevado Salkantay, whose name means 'Savage Mountain'.

The beginning of the pampa is latticed with small streams that you'll have to cross (though these disappear in dry years). Keep to the left (west) side of the pampa, close to the rock wall if you want to remain dry footed.

There are several lodges here. Near where the two paths to Soray meet is **Hospedaje Soray Pampa**, a small and informal place with very simple rooms. **Refugios Salkantay** (see pp181-2) is small but charming with its wooden balcony, hammocks and thatch-and-corrugated see-through-plastic roofs. Then there are the two more luxurious lodges reserved for the exclusive use of clients of two of the largest trekking operators. Right on the pampa is **Salkantay Lodge & Adventure Resort**, run by Mountain Lodges of Peru (see p181), which can only be used by people on the lodge-to-lodge trek to Santa Teresa. The second place is run by **Salkantay Trekking** (see p182) and features geodesic domes which look great when lit up at night and which have Inca-style entrances – it's all rather fabulous!

Beyond these two lodges are several **campsites**, most of which have shelters under which you can pitch your tent for extra protection. The last campsite in Soray is the biggest and has a pretty well-stocked **shop**.

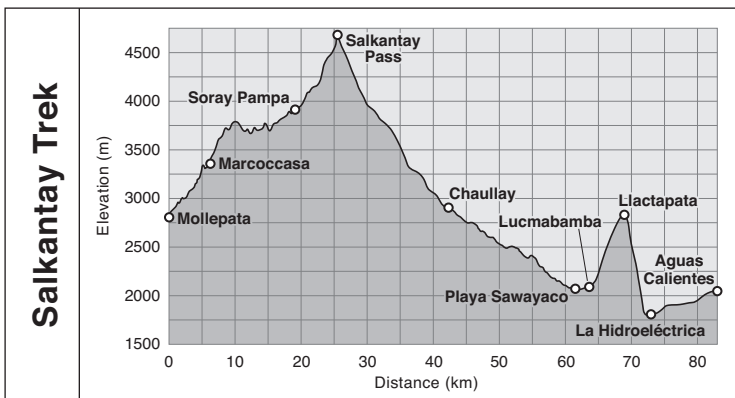
The Salkantay Trek

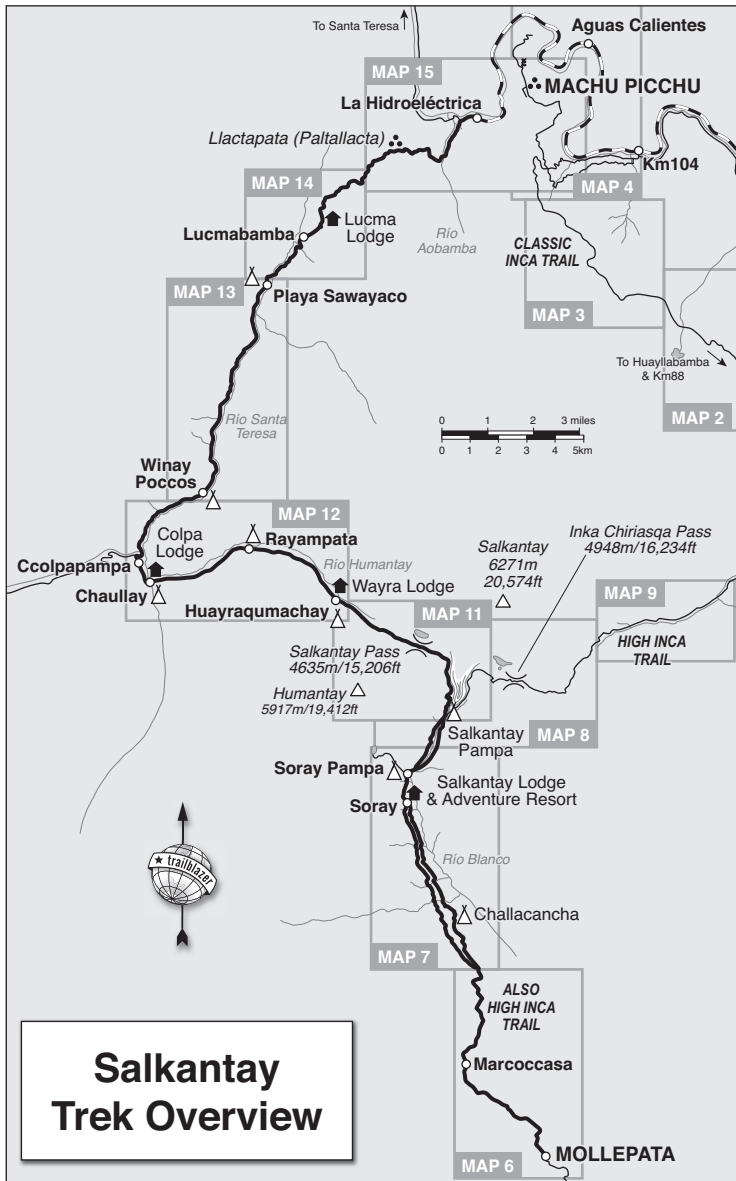
This route is the nearest thing to a ‘back door’ approach to Machu Picchu (see overview map on p250). Closed for a number of years in the wake of the massive landslide in 1998 that wiped out the village of Santa Teresa (see box p258) and the nearby railway line, it was only re-opened by the authorities to ease the pressure on the Inca Trail and provide an alternative for those who are short of time or money – or were simply too late to book their Inca Trail trek.

All this means it is no longer the deserted, remote route it once was and since there are no regulations on the number of people beginning the route each day it can get very, very busy during the peak season. As such, there are rumours that the government will impose a set of rules in line with those already in place on the classic Inca Trail. Check with Andean Travel Web (see box p44) for the latest status. However, for the moment **you don’t need any sort of permit to trek on this route.**

Although the routes finish at the same point, this **82.5-83km (51¼- to 51½-mile) trek** (if walking all the way from Mollepata to Aguas Calientes) is a very different type of trek to the classic Inca Trail. There are no Inca ruins until Llactapata, by which time you are in sight of Machu Picchu. However, the scenery is stunning and the varied range of landscapes that you pass through make the Salkantay Trek an excellent outing in its own right. You’ll climb closer to the snowline and descend further into the subtropical forest than you would on the classic Inca Trail, meaning that you’ll have a much better chance of seeing a wider range of birdlife and flora.

The best time to tackle the trek is during the dry season (May to September), as the high pass can be blocked by snow during the wet season. The





**Salkantay
Trek Overview**

PLAYA SAWAYACO

150-180 MINS

WINAY POCOS (40-50 MINS FROM COOLPAMPAPA, MAP 12)

PLAYA SAWAYACO
(AKA LA PLAYA)

Inca Llaqta
CAMPSITE & RESTAURANT

PATH DEVELOPS INTO
BROADER DIRT TRACK
AND THEN DIRT ROAD

DRINK & SNACK STANDS
INTERMITTENTLY LINE LAST
STRETCH BEFORE PLAYA SAWAYACO

REST PLACE SHOPPING
CENTRE - PAPAYA,
AVOCADO, COFFEE,
PASSION FRUIT, BANANA
AND SQUASH ALL
GROWING IN THE GARDEN



FOOTBALL
PITCH

Refugios
Salkantay

BRIEF VIEW OF
MACHU PICCHU
MOUNTAIN

MAP 13

SEVERAL LANDSLIPS
ON THIS SECTION - TAKE CARE

HUASCAMAYO
ANOTHER LOVELY
CAMPSITE. NOTE
OROYA ACROSS RIVER

FIRST PALM
TREE ON
PATH

DIRT ROAD THROUGH CLOUD
FOREST ABOVE CLIFFS

**WINAY
POCOS**



A TRULY LOVELY CAMPSITE
WITH AVOCADOS AND PASSION
FRUIT GROWN AND SOLD



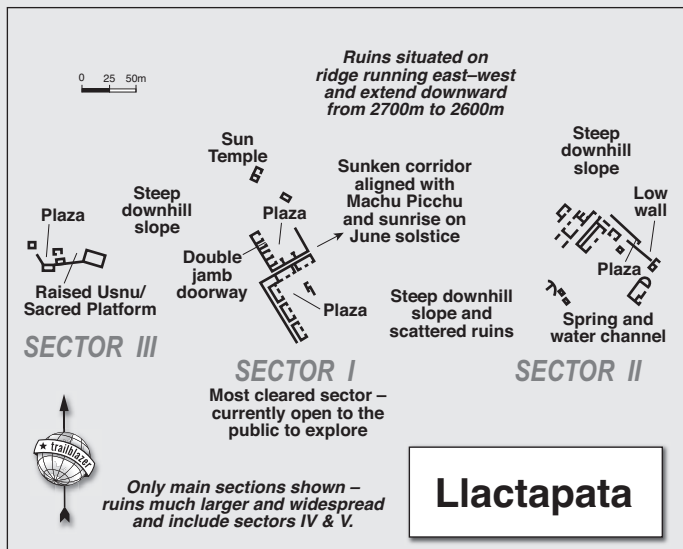
provided a suitably elaborate and spectacular entrance to the site. This would have allowed the Inca to visit the site for particular ceremonial occasions, such as the June solstice.

A unique feature is a 45m/145ft long **sunken corridor** set 1.8m/6ft into the earth and aligned so as to point directly at Machu Picchu. During the summer solstice, the sun rises over the Torreón in Machu Picchu, and falls directly along this channel. The building thought to be a sun temple and various viewing platforms throughout the site lend further weight to the ritual significance of Llactapata.

In his report on the site, Hugh Thomson suggests that the careful alignment (see p262) of the key buildings and features in relationship to Machu Picchu indicate that Llactapata was 'part of a carefully designed network of interrelated administrative and ceremonial sites supporting the regional administrative and ceremonial centre at Machu Picchu'.

Underlining the importance of the site and its ritual significance are the facts that a number of key buildings in Machu Picchu are set to look over the Aobamba valley towards Llactapata. The Intihuatana and the small structure at the summit of Huayna Picchu are both aligned to look west across the valley. The house on Huayna Picchu also contains a *huaca* that replicates the Llactapata ridge.

Much of the site is often off-limits to the public whilst investigations and excavations are carried out. Just a handful of buildings have been restored and since the pace of excavation is so slow, the forest has reclaimed some previously cleared areas, meaning that it takes no small amount of imagination to visualise the grandeur of the sprawling site and imagine the significance of the spectacular view of Machu Picchu spread out across the horizon to the east.



The Lares Trek

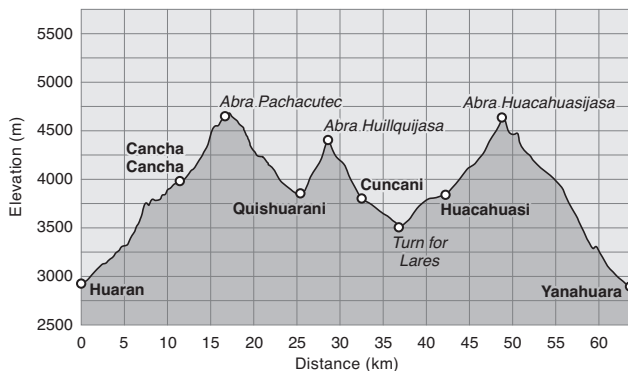
Peru's Sacred Valley attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors every year. They come, of course, largely to visit the valley's spectacular Inca ruins, from the citadel at Pisac in the east to the royal estate of Pachacutec at Ollantaytambo in the west. Hundreds of hotels, restaurants, tour agencies and other tourist facilities have sprouted up over the decades as a result to cater for these visitors and throughout the year the valley reverberates to the noise of tourist buses making their way from one archeological site to the next.

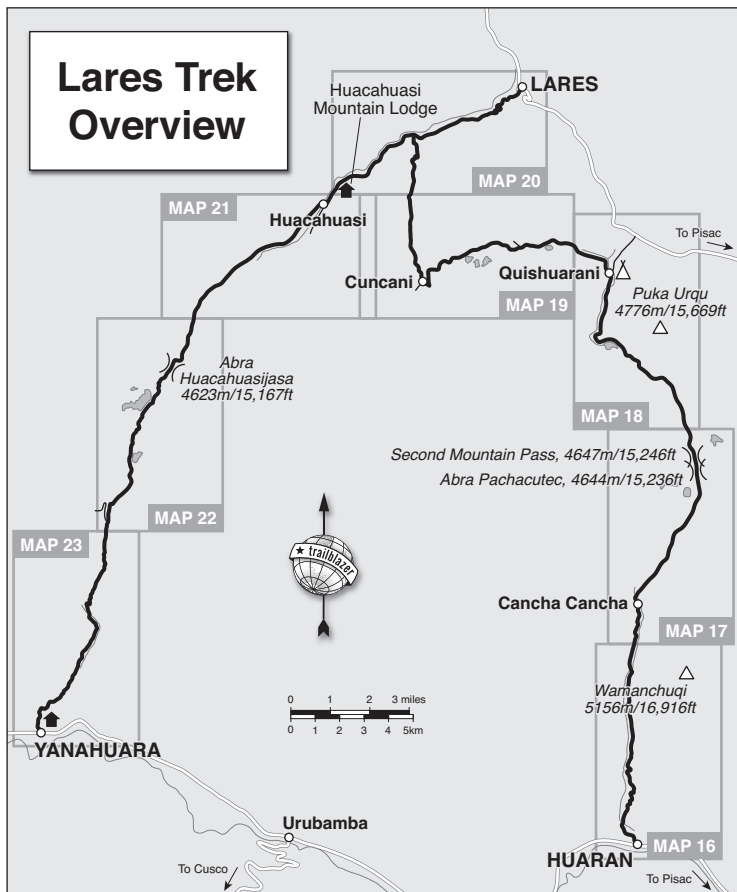
Walk for just a minute north off the main road, however, and you enter a quite different world. One where the constant rumble of traffic is replaced by the gentle bubbling of streams and the delicate melodies of songbirds; where the buildings are still made in the traditional way, using stone and thatch, rather than with concrete; and where the hordes of noisy tourists that infest the Sacred Valley are replaced instead by ruminating herds of llama and alpaca – interspersed with the occasional intrepid trekker keen to explore this tranquil, traditional region.

It's become traditional to call any trek in this area a 'Lares trek' even though it's possible to trek through this region without visiting Lares itself. This is the region's largest settlement, with hotels, transport links, a restaurant or two and other facilities that you won't find anywhere else in the region. You'll even find a set of thermal baths, the one real visitor attraction in the region and a magnet for tourist buses. But walk five minutes up the hill from the baths and you're back in a serene tranquil rural idyll.

Sound attractive? Well it certainly is a lovely region for trekking, and provides visitors with the chance to see a rural way of life that's little changed over

Lares Trek





the centuries, without the need to travel all the way to Ausangate or further afield to do so. But before setting off you do need to heed the warnings. Firstly, **the walking in this region is tough**. Because many of the tour agencies advertise their Lares treks using such gentle-sounding sobriquets as ‘The Weavers’ Route’, you may be misled into thinking that hiking in these parts is easy. It’s not. Every day on the trek we describe here you’ll be tackling at least one high mountain pass, which can be both exhausting and, on the jarring descent, excruciating.

Furthermore, the terrain underfoot is often horrible, with loose stones and rocks a menace to ankles. This means you may well spend most of your time on the trail looking where you’re treading rather than admiring the scenery itself.

the views of the nearby glacier-topped mountains, with the peaks of Pitusiray (5432m/17,823ft) and Chicón (5530m/18,140ft) both visible.

Eventually, assuming you've stuck to the correct path, you'll be able to experience something that you've still yet to enjoy on this trail: a descent. Unfortunately, as much as you may be anticipating it with relish, the reality probably won't live up to your expectations, for this downhill section becomes very steep as it curves westwards to drop into the **Quishuarani Valley**. The trail itself is terrible too, with loose stones causing footsteps to falter and ankles to twist. Distract yourself from the pain by trying to spot viscachas scurrying amongst the rocks below, or the views of the two small lakes below you as well as the larger **Laguna Pachacutec** ahead.

The steepness of this descent finally relents as you reach the lake (camping is available at the far end of the lake; s/5), whereafter the path bends north to drop down the valley alongside the Río Quishuarani and past an impressive waterfall to the village of **Quishuarani** (3858m/12,657ft) itself. Centred on a garish pink-painted Comunidad Campesina de Quishuarani building (camping for groups only), this village feels more sophisticated than Cancha Cancha with its metal roofs and large concrete community hall; there's even a car parked here! But there's still little for the independent trekker, though you can camp nearby (s/5).

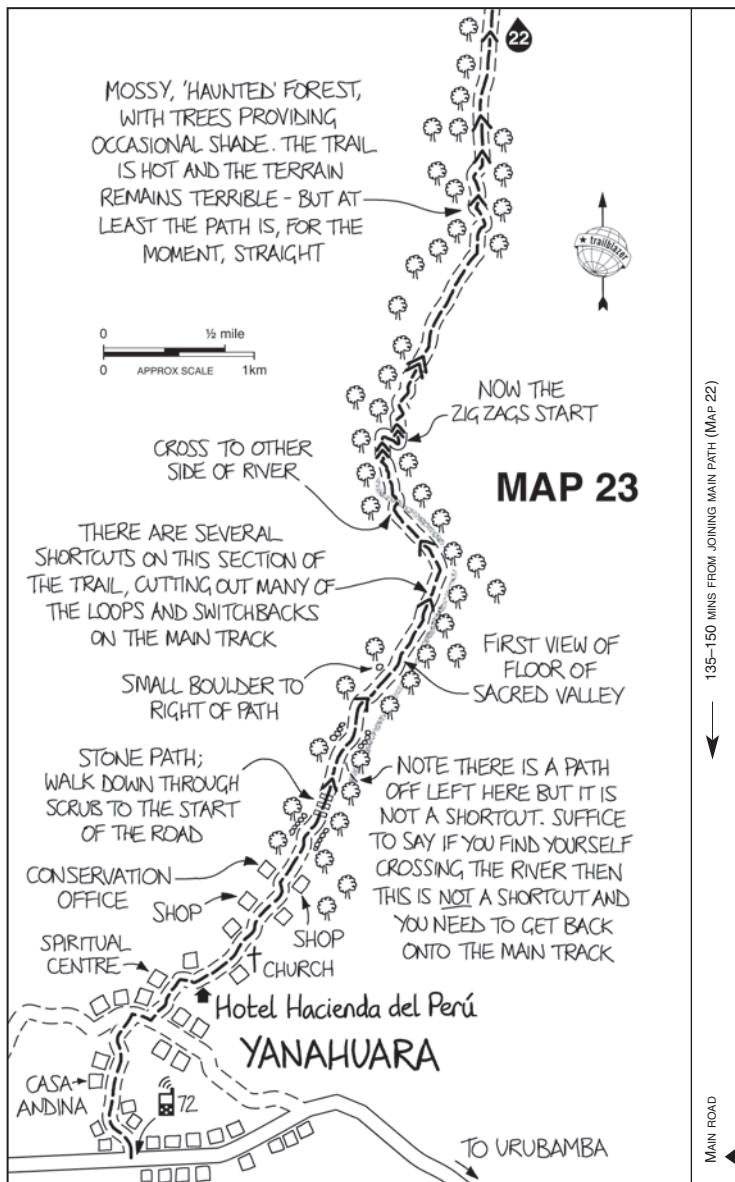
QUISHUARANI TO HUACAHUASI

[MAP 18, p273; MAP 19; MAP 20, p276]

Another day, another mountain pass to tackle. Yet the rewards on this **17km stage (10½-mile; 4hrs 55 mins to 6hrs)** are greater than on any other day on the trail. For one thing, once you've conquered the pass and stand at a lofty 4417m above sea level, the views down the other side over the several variegated lakes of the following valley is the best on the trail. And secondly, if you have the time and energy to tackle the straightforward 3.5km walk on the dusty 4WD track down to Lares, you can spend the rest of the day splashing around in the **thermal springs**, tending to tired tendons and soaking stressed-out soles and souls. (Though we should point out here that if you do decide to visit the baths, you will have to return back up the hill to continue on this trail.) And even if you decide to forego the baths, the hike to the next destination, Huacahuasi, is simple enough and the village itself is interesting, friendly and a nice place to relax for a night.

But first of all, you have to reach the pass, which lies at the top of a valley stretching west from Quishuarani. The route is generally uphill – of course! – though only as you approach the pass itself does it get properly steep. Before then, it's a fairly steady ascent with lovely **Laguna Queunacocha** on the way a perfect place to bolt down lunch, befriend a llama and gird your loins for the climb ahead.

Abra Huillquijasa (4417m/14,491ft) is a veritable knife-edge and provides little room for you to recuperate from your efforts. *(cont'd on p278)*



The Choquequirao Trek

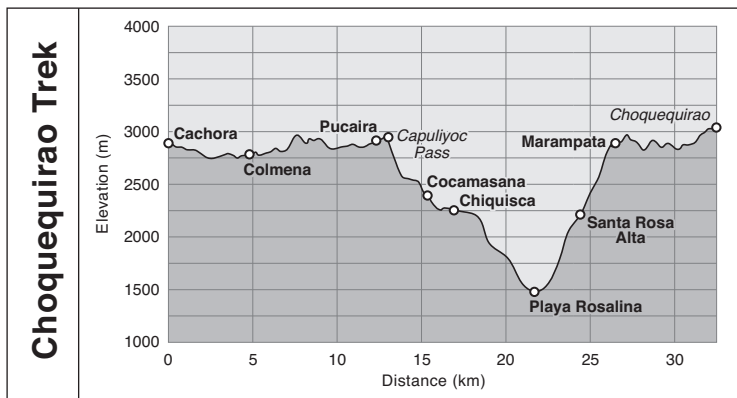
“We would need the better part of two days to reach Choquequirao. John said that we were a little less than six miles as the crow flies from the ruins, but we had more than twenty miles to cover on foot. The map I consulted at breakfast made clear that this would be a very long and winding road; the trail zig-zagged like it had been based with an oscilloscope. And that was just the horizontal part – the easy part.”

Mark Adams – Turn Right at Machu Picchu

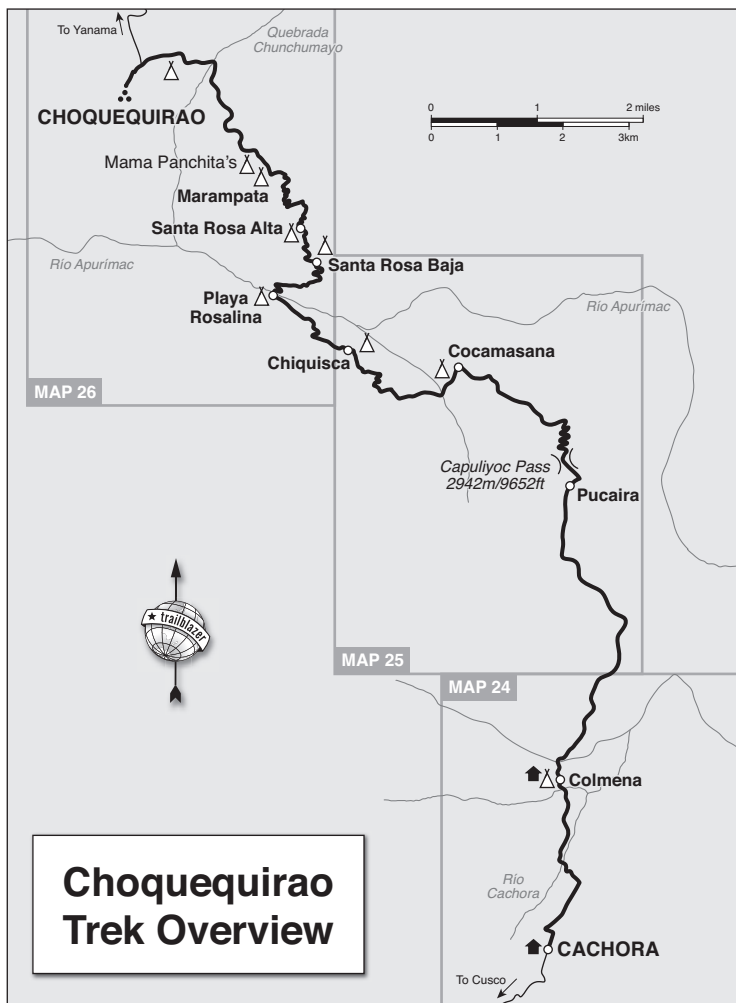
Regarded by many as the original ‘lost city’ of the Incas, Choquequirao was the first fabled set of ruins to be uncovered. People had been aware of its existence from at least the 18th century but it was rarely visited and despite several acclaimed ‘rediscoveries’ over the years, it wasn’t until Hiram Bingham arrived here in 1909 that it really came to people’s attention. For Bingham it was the discovery of Choquequirao that fired his passion to uncover Machu Picchu and Espíritu Pampa.

Set in a remote part of wilderness, on a ridge spur around 1750m/5740ft above the Apurímac River against a backdrop of sheer, snow-capped peaks, it is an awe-inspiring destination that requires a degree of effort to reach. As archaeologists increasingly recognise the site’s importance to the Incas, and awareness of the ruins grows, Choquequirao has gained in popularity as a trekking destination. A donation by the French government in 2003 (see p284) has also meant that further archaeological work at the site has been undertaken and further discoveries made that enhance the appeal of these ruins.

So is this **64.8km (40½-mile) trek** from Cachora to the ruins and back again a genuine alternative to the classic Inca Trail? Well, the ruins themselves are a pretty good substitute for Machu Picchu and the main features of both are



similar in many respects. Furthermore, even in the high season there's a good chance that there won't be more than half a dozen other trekkers visiting Choquequirao, all of whom have undergone the same privations as you to get there – which does add to a pleasant sense of camaraderie. Largely because of this absence of other visitors, we do find the place a whole lot more charming than Machu Picchu. The drama of the region's uncompromising wild landscape



Consequently Cachora hasn't benefitted from the influx of visitors and the infrastructure here remains very basic.

There are a few **hospedajes** (whose names frequently change), where families offer cheap double rooms, usually with a basic breakfast. The simplest just have mattresses on the floor, whilst the better ones also have hot water and may offer evening meals.

Also well worth considering is the small, friendly, family-run *Casa de Salcantay* (☎ 984 281171, 🌐 www.salcantay.com), situated just outside the main village. The house has hot water and wifi; evening meals are available too. The owner, a Dutchman with a wide knowledge of the area and experience of mountaineering in Peru, also organises horse rides, guided treks to Choquequirao and hires out mules and drivers to independent trekkers. Rates as advertised on the website are US\$30 per person, though when we called in this had dropped to s/60 per person, including breakfast. Further down the lane, to the left across a river, is perhaps an even better choice: *Casa Nostra* (☎ 958 349 949; 🌐 www.choquequiraohotel.com) is run by an Italian and his Peruvian wife and is an absolute treat, a spotless hotel with excellent views, wifi and kind and generous hosts. Rates are s/80 for a double, s/110 for a triple room.

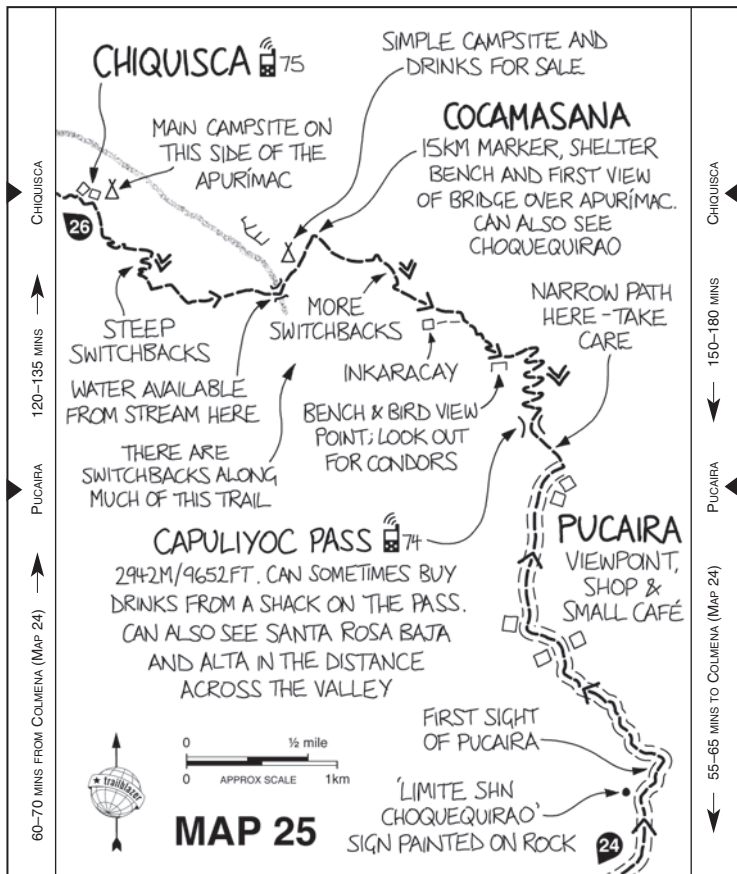
Around the town are a number of small, anonymous-looking hole-in-the-wall *cafés* that serve simple meals at very reasonable rates – look for one that's popular with the locals and stick your head round the door to see what's cooking. You can also pick up a small amount of fruit and vegetables from simple **shops** on the streets off the main plaza but don't expect to stock up for the full multi-day trek from here.

CACHORA TO CHIQUISCA

[MAP 24, p287; MAP 25]

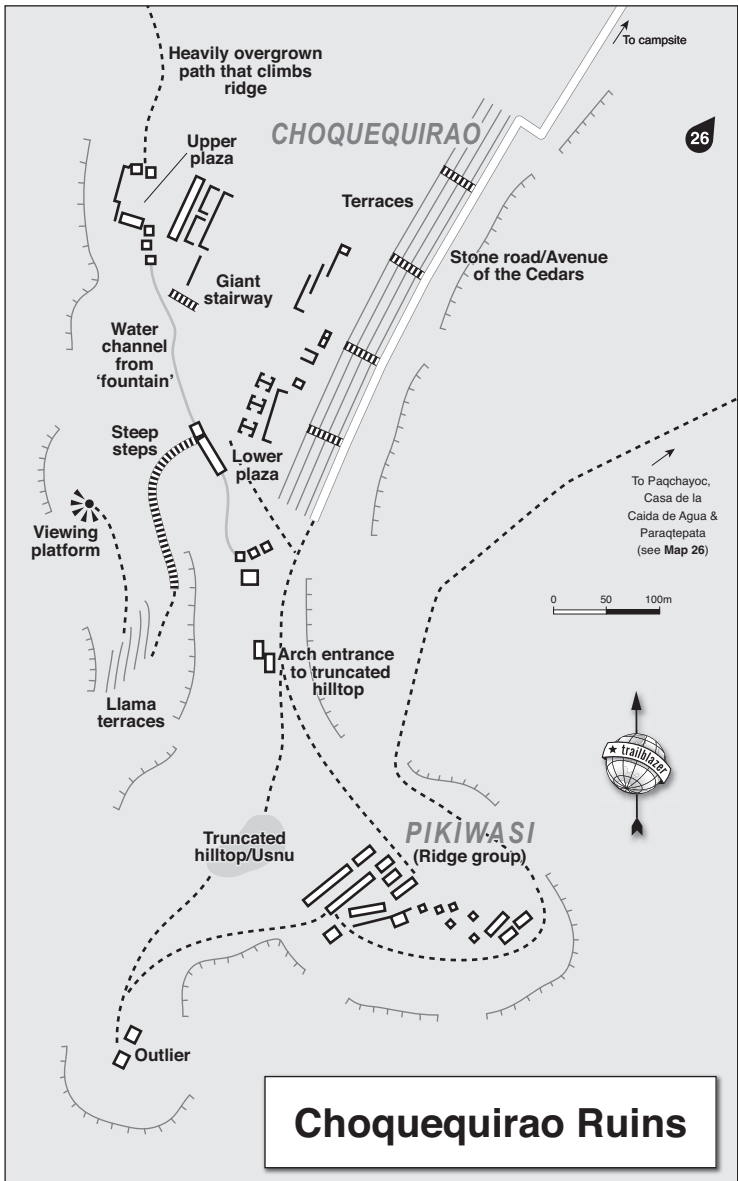
If you're going to lose your way anywhere on this trail, it's likely to be in the first 10 minutes of this **16.9km (10½ miles; 3hrs 50 mins to 4hrs 25 mins)** first day. In the north-western corner of the plaza a small road heads down the valley, directly towards the snow-capped peak of Padrayoc on the far side of the Apurímac valley. After passing the turn-off to Casa Nostra, branch left opposite virtually the last house in the village to follow a neat track as it descends for 5-10 minutes towards a multi-roofed house and an **'INC' waypost**. Turn left here and opposite a pond drop down, crossing road and channel, to a large red concrete Parque Arqueológico Choquequirao sign where you need to turn left. Follow the signs to the bridge, then climb gently through stands of eucalyptus to get up onto the left-hand side (west) of the valley.

Follow the wayposts and before long you'll arrive at **Colmena**, where several families live in ranch-style farmhouses. You can hire arrieros and horses from the last house here as well as **camp** (s/5), or sleep in the main house (s/50 for a double; s/20 per person for dinner). From Colmena, you can cross the Cachora river and climb up the western side of the valley to hit the main road heading north to **Pucaira**, 9.6km (just under 6 miles) from Cachora, where there's a small restaurant and a shack-cum-shop (Map 25).



The track curves around a rocky promontory, which gives outstanding views of the surrounding valleys and ridges. An even better view – this time of the walk ahead – can be had just a few minutes away at the **Capuliyoc Pass** (2942m/9652ft), a narrow wind-beaten arête, whipped by clouds which frequently shroud the vertiginous cliffs and jagged peaks nearby. However, on clear days and with binoculars you can just make out the hazy outline of Choquequirao, perched high atop a forested ridge away to the north-west. Sometimes you can buy soft drinks and water at a shack up here.

The pass also marks the start of the lengthy, relentless drop down the Apurímac valley, one of the deepest ravines in the Americas. About 3.6km (2¼



bridge severely damaged by landslips in 2012, meaning that the route remains closed. The bridge is unlikely to be rebuilt anytime soon, given the remoteness of the crossing, and though the path is still there (it begins at the campsite at Choquequirao), and you can walk down the first 20 minutes or so, thereafter it remains closed.

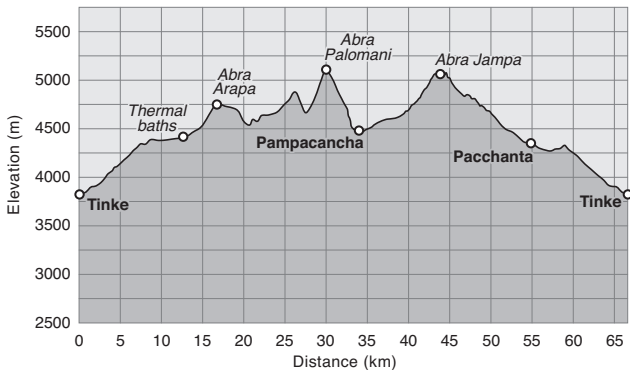
The Ausangate Trek

Around 115km to the south-east of Cusco in the Andes' Vilcanota Range stands one enormous mountain. At 6372m, Ausangate is the highest peak in the department of Cusco. Despite its relative remoteness from their capital of Cusco, and the fact it lies in the opposite direction to the Sacred Valley, the mountain did have spiritual significance for the Incas – and it remains important for their descendants today. In particular, the Festival of Qoyllur Rit'i (Quechua for 'Star Snow', or Ice Festival) is celebrated on the slopes of Ausangate's near neighbour Qullqipunku (see p300). If you're in Peru at the time, we strongly recommend that you endeavour to make it to the festival – it's a colourful clash of celebrations and religions, with the non-Christian and Christian populations each uniting together to party through the night, even though their reasons for celebrating are poles apart.

But even if your visit doesn't coincide with the festival, we strongly urge you to pay a visit to the region – and to attempt this trail; **because we cannot emphasise enough just how delightful this trek is**. I used to say, when asked, that Nepal was my favourite country. This trek has gone a long way to tipping the balance towards Peru. It's that good.

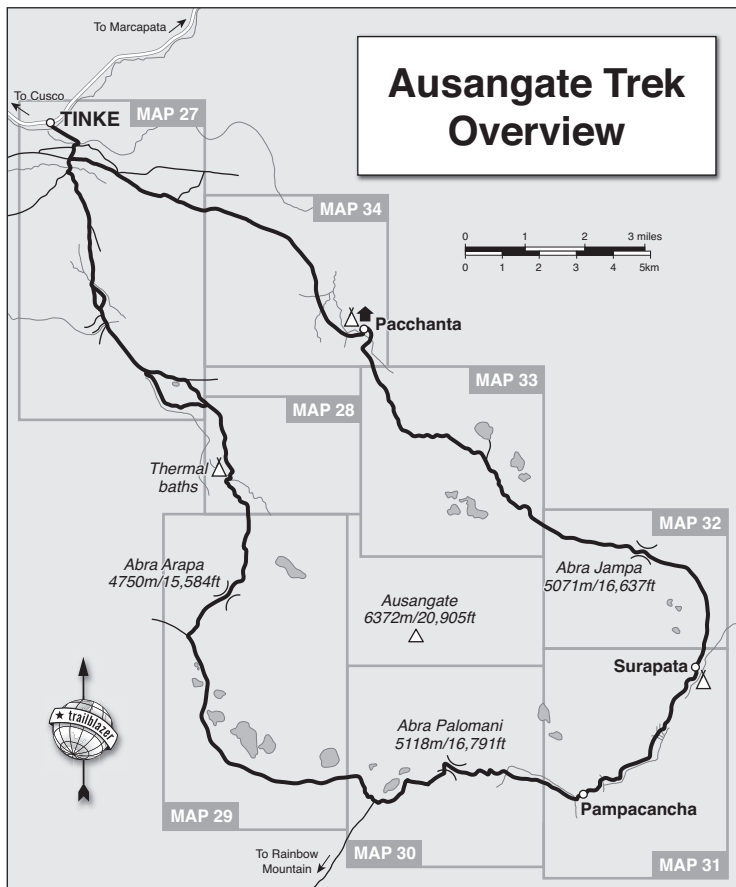
This trek has been in guidebooks since the 1980s, which is quite heartening – to find a trek that's at least thirty years old but yet which is still so unspoilt.

Ausangate Trek



Indeed, the paths that you take on this **4- or 5-day, 66.7km trek (41½ miles)** are actually much older, having been used by the local llama and alpaca herders for many, many centuries before the Gore-Tex-clad tourists turned up. Yet, its venerable-age notwithstanding, you won't find any hotels or restaurants on the trail (until the last night at Pacchanta, at least); refreshingly, for the time being, at least, the locals have refrained from capitalising on the wondrous trek they have on their hands, and apart from a couple of places where you have to pay some sort of 'community fee', there isn't much evidence that this trek is being exploited.

Indeed, it'll come as quite a surprise to find the locals still dress in their rather spectacular traditional attire, with the women wearing large, fringed hats decorated with sequins, and multi-layered skirts. If you spent a few days in



MAP 29

△
QIWLLAQUCHA

BOGGY GROUND -
FOLLOW STONE
MARKERS

Abra Arapa
4750M
15,584FT

82

KEEP TO THE RIGHT OF THE
SMALL GLACIER-FREE PEAK

GO LEFT OF GRASSY HILLOCK
THEN TURN SHARP LEFT & DOWN

BIG
BOULDER

AFTER THE PASS THE PATH BENDS RIGHT
IN FRONT OF THE TWO SMALLER SNOW- &
GLACIER-FREE PEAKS THAT FACE THE PASS
ACROSS THE PAMPA. THE TERRAIN IS QUITE
BOGGY AND THE PATH ON OCCASION DISAPPEARS,
BUT JUST KEEP ON THE SECOND PEAKS LOWER
WESTERN SLOPE. YOU SOON REACH A STEEP,
DEEP VALLEY RUNNING NORTH-EAST
TO SOUTH-WEST, WHICH YOU WALK ABOVE
TRAVERSING THE SCREE SLOPES

SHELTER
& LOVELY
SPOT FOR
LUNCH

LAGUNA
PUCAGOCHA

CRUDE FENCE;
KEEP TO THE
RIGHT OF IT

ASCEND AS YOU
BEND LEFT ROUND CLIFF

MYRIAD TRACKS SCORE THE SLOPES
BEYOND THE THREE SMALL LAKES.

TAKE THE MOST OBVIOUS ONE
HEADING LEFT BEHIND ROCK THAT
CURRENTLY HAS WRITING ON IT

LOVELY VIEW OF LAGUNA
PUCAGOCHA - WHAT
A PLACE!

BIG
BOULDER

TINY ROCK
SHELTER

CERRO AUSANGATE
APACHETA TO SOUTH

PATH SPLITS - KEEP ON
THE HIGHER SOUTHERN PATH

28

HOUSE - LOOK FOR VISCACHA
SCURRYING NEARBY

STEEP CLIMB
ON SWITCHBACKS

FOLLOW THE
STONES ACROSS
THE PAMPA



0 1/2 mile
0 APPROX SCALE 1km

60-70 MINS FROM
THERMAL BATHS (MAP 28)

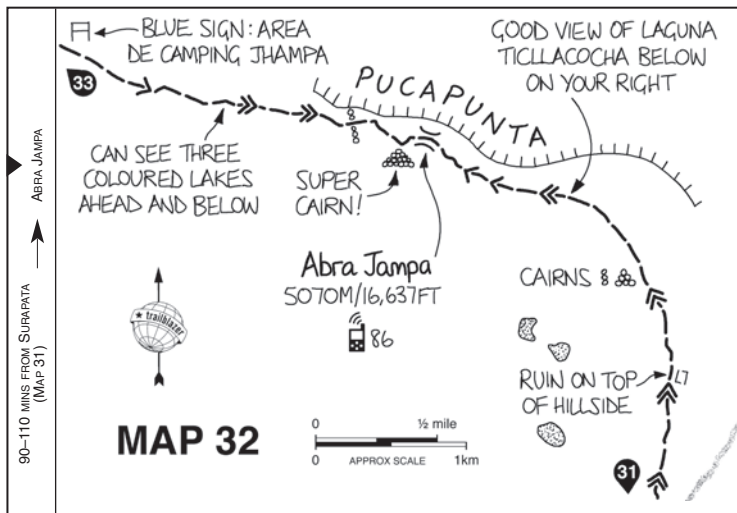
ABRA ARAPA

65-80 MINS

SHELTER

MAP 30

100-120 MINS TO ABRA AUSANGATE (MAP 30)



At the foot of the descent, by a rather incongruous toilet block, you may well be approached by a little old lady who's probably been watching your progress since your silhouette first appeared at Abra Ausangate, and who'll doubtless ask you for a **s/10 community fee**. As on the previous stage, it is all above board and should be paid. The path up to the final pass starts close by the eastern edge of the lake, though the moraine ensures that you won't actually see the lake itself again until you've climbed above it. It's a relentless and tough climb, and rare are those who complete it without pausing on several occasions to catch their breath. No technical skills are required to reach the pass, just a certain amount of obstinacy and perseverance.

At the top you may feel that the all-encompassing views, including colourful striations of the slopes on your right, and the justifiable sense of achievement could *just* be sufficient reward for all your exertions getting here. Plus there's the knowledge that it's all downhill from now to the end of the stage, a fairly straightforward wander to the floor of one valley, which in turn leads to the floor of a second, with the village of **Pampacancha** lying at the junction of the two. Camp here for the night – your rest has been well-earned!

PAMPACANCHA TO PACCHANTA

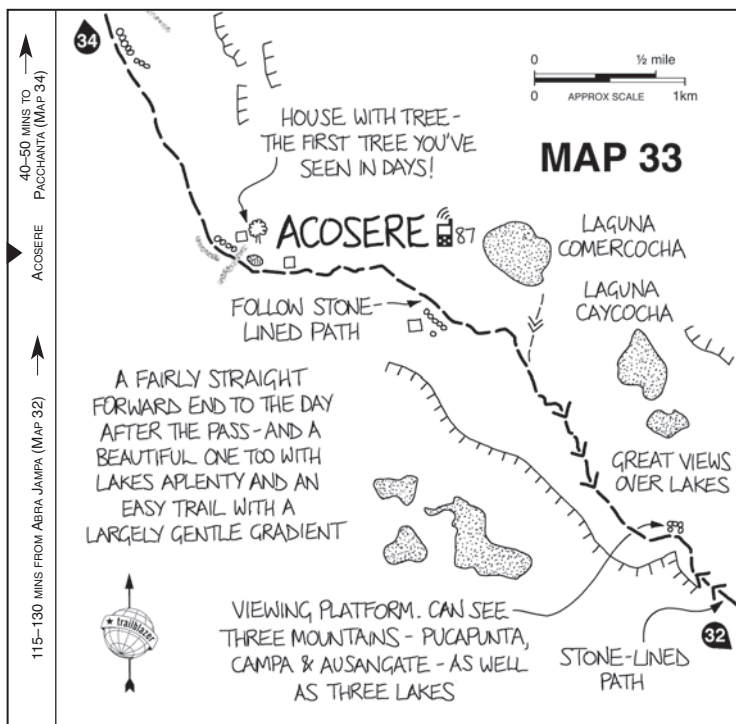
[MAP 31; MAP 32; MAP 33, p308; MAP 34, p309]

The previous stage of the trek is undoubtedly a tough act to follow, but this **20.8km (13 miles; 5¼hrs to 6hrs 10 mins)** stage makes a really good fist of it. In many ways the two stages are similar, for today's stage also involves a 5000m-plus pass, many gorgeous lakes and enough sumptuous views to send the soul soaring; oh, and you'll be delighted to hear that there are more thermal

baths at the end of this day too – and nobody can say that you don't deserve some time in these!

The start, however, is gentle enough, a simple limbering up along the floor of the Pampacancha valley which precedes a steady but increasingly steep foot-slog up via the settlement of **Surapata** to the 5070m-/16,637ft-high **Abra Jampa/Champa**. From Pampacancha to the pass takes about three hours in total and the majority of it is uphill; but it's pretty much the last uphill of the entire trek as from the pass you descend, gently at first, past numerous lakes – each vying with the next in the beauty stakes. The peaks of Pucapunta, Campa and, of course, Ausangate, watch your progress as you mosey on down to the next settlement on the path, **Acosere**. Life in this agricultural community, as everywhere else on this trail, is undoubtedly hard, and the people are poor; but when it comes to their surroundings, they are blessed, with 360 degrees of terrific scenery right on their doorsteps.

The path to the day's final destination is a relatively gentle one, though **Pacchanta** itself comes as a bit of a shock, with cars and concrete present for pretty much the first time on the trail. Every other building here appears to



MACHU PICCHU

In the variety of its charms and the power of its spell, I know of no place in the world which can compare with it. Not only has it great snow peaks looming above the clouds more than two miles overhead; gigantic precipices of many-colored granite rising sheer for thousands of feet above the foaming, glistening, roaring rapids; it has also, in striking contrast, orchids and tree ferns, the delectable beauty of luxurious vegetation, and the mysterious witchery of the jungle.
Hiram Bingham *Inca Land – Explorations in the Highlands of Peru* (1922)

Romance swirls about Machu Picchu like the mists that suddenly roll in from the mountains, bringing with it an equal degree of obfuscation. Why are these majestic ruins perched on a saddle ridge high above the Urubamba Valley? Who lived in them and what did they do? The briefest of visits to the site shows that the one thing everyone agrees on is that nobody knows for sure. That doesn't stop them having theories. From the most learned of academics to the youngest of guides, everybody has a hypothesis; just stop and listen to passing tours and you will hear the same place described in a dozen different ways. It adds greatly to the charm of the place – and it is unlikely that we will ever know the truth.

The fame that the 20th century brought to Machu Picchu has been a mixed blessing. It has fascinated the world since its rediscovery in 1911; tourism figures have risen steadily – to around 900,000 visitors a year – and are now supposedly capped at a 2500 maximum per day (though it's a figure that we think is being regularly breached). In 1983 it achieved international cultural status by joining the list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites. In 2007 it was chosen, by online public vote, as one of the world's 'New Seven Wonders'.

A dispute over the ownership of the land rumbles on. Two brothers, Edgar and Adolfo Abrill, are seeking compensation from the Peruvian government, claiming that the land was expropriated from their grandparents in 1935. Other issues include erosion of the Inca Trail and ruins from sheer numbers of enthusiastic visitors, and some controversial restoration programmes. However, a long-running dispute about the return of Machu Picchu artefacts from Yale University was settled in 2010 and the university has begun to return the 'goods, pieces and parts' that were taken from the ruins between 1911 and 1915 by Hiram Bingham and his team of archaeologists. Some of these are now displayed in Cusco (see p153 and p154).

But flawed beauty or not, whether it is your first time or your fifth, and whether you come by train, bus or on foot, you cannot fail to be amazed by the sheer, glorious improbability of Machu Picchu.



In *Inca Land – Explorations in the Highlands of Peru* (1922) he recounts the events of that historic day, 24th July 1911:

‘We had camped at a place near the river, called Mandor Pampa. Melchor Arteaga, proprietor of the neighboring farm, had told us of ruins at Machu Picchu... The morning of July 24th dawned in a cold drizzle. Arteaga shivered and seemed inclined to stay in his hut. I offered to pay him well if he would show me the ruins. He demurred and said it was too hard a climb for such a wet day. When he found that we were willing to pay him a sol, three or four times the ordinary daily wage in this vicinity, he finally agreed to guide us to the ruins. No one supposed that they would be particularly interesting.’

Indeed, the other members of his team, naturalist Harry Foote and team doctor William Erving, declined to go. Foote set off to catch butterflies and Erving’s excuse was that he had to ‘wash his clothes’. Bingham left accompanied by the police sergeant who’d been allotted to them and the farmer, Melchor Arteaga. They followed the Urubamba upstream for 45 minutes and then crossed the ‘foaming rapids’ on some slender logs.

‘Leaving the stream, we struggled up the bank through a dense jungle, and in a few minutes reached the bottom of a precipitous slope. For an hour and twenty minutes we had a hard climb. A good part of the distance we went on all fours, sometimes hanging on by the tips of our fingers. Here and there, a primitive ladder made from the roughly hewn trunk of a small tree was placed in such a way as to help one over what might otherwise have proved to be an impassable cliff. In another place the slope was covered with slippery grass where it was hard to find either handholds or footholds. The guide said that there were lots of snakes here. The humidity was great, the heat was excessive, and we were not in training.’

They reached a hut where ‘two pleasant farmers, Richarte and Alvarez’, gave them gourds of cool water. As they rested the farmers said they had come up here to use the old terraces and had been living here for about four years. They added that there were many more terraces and even some ruins nearby. Hot and exhausted by the climb Bingham was in no hurry to move on...

‘Furthermore, the view was simply enchanting. Tremendous green precipices fell away to the white rapids of the Urubamba below. Immediately in front, on the north side of the valley, was a great granite cliff rising 2000 feet sheer. To the left was the solitary peak of Huayna Picchu, surrounded by seemingly inaccessible precipices. On all sides were rocky cliffs. Beyond them cloud-capped mountains rose thousands of feet above us.’

The farmers said that soon after they had come up here they had cleared some of the ruins and rethatched some of the houses to live in but they were too far from the water sources. The aqueduct which had brought water into the buildings was blocked with earth from the terraces so they had abandoned the Inca houses and built their own. They continued to farm the old terraces, growing maize, potatoes, sugar cane, beans, peppers, tree tomatoes and gooseberries. When Bingham finally left the cool of the hut to investigate further, he found that:

‘Hardly had we rounded the promontory when the character of the stonework began to improve. A flight of beautifully constructed terraces, each two hundred yards long and ten feet high, had been recently rescued from the jungle by the Indians. A forest



Detail of exterior of Temple of Three Windows. (Hiram Bingham, from *Inca Land – Explorations in the Highlands of Peru* (1922).

He was also a talented photographer, and when the National Geographic Society devoted an entire issue to the story it ignited world interest. It was sheer romance: the geographical setting, the sun worship, the mythical gold of the Incas, the brutal conquistadors. Reading the article you can quite see why it's said that the character *Indiana Jones* is based on Bingham:

'There was nothing for us but to run, and we did that, tearing through the jungle down hill in an effort to get around the side of the fire... the grass and soil under my feet let go, and I dropped. For about 20 feet there was a slope of about 70 degrees, and then a jump of about 200 feet, after which it would be bump and repeat down to the river. As I shot down the sloping surface I reached out and with my right hand grasped a mesquite bush that was growing in a crack about 5 feet above the jump-off.' *In the Wonderland of Peru* **Hiram Bingham**, **National Geographic Society** (April 1913).

He wrote several books about Machu Picchu and the Incas, the best known being *Inca Land – Explorations in the Highlands of Peru* (1922) and, in 1948, the best-selling *Lost City of the Incas* (he simply transferred the label from Vilcabamba; it was too good a title to lose). The three conclusions that he reaches in the first book and develops in the second are certainly sensational but have lost their credibility over the last hundred years. Bingham was most excited to find a fine building with windows at Machu Picchu, the building he called the Temple of Three Windows, as he considered that it fitted a description of the temple at Tampu-tocco, **the birthplace of the first Inca, Manco Capac**, who lived around 1200AD. There are, however, several other more likely contenders for the site of Tampu-tocco, Choquepunkio near Cusco among them. Furthermore, in the historical description of the site it's difficult to separate myth from reality.

In his mind this was not just a lost city of the first Inca but *the* Lost City, the final refuge of the Incas who had fled in the path of the conquistadors. This was also **Vilcabamba**, the city of gold that the Spanish had been looking for. It was the position of Machu Picchu, on a promontory that afforded such good protection from attack and was easily defensible, that made him believe that it was their final stronghold. Actually Bingham did discover the true lost city when he found the ruins at Espíritu Pampa but the setting of Machu Picchu made it infinitely more romantic cast as a final refuge for this doomed civilisation. He ends the books with his most fanciful theory:

'In its last state it became the home and refuge of the Virgins of the Sun, priestesses of the most humane cult of aboriginal America. Here, concealed in a canyon of remarkable grandeur, protected by art and nature, these consecrated women gradually passed away, leaving no known descendants, nor any records other than the masonry walls and artifacts...'

Early excavations revealed that over 80% of the skeletons discovered in Machu

MACHU PICCHU GUIDE

Practical information

OPENING TIMES & TICKETS

The site is open daily from just before dawn (around 6am) until around 6pm but last entry is at 4pm. **Tickets must be purchased in advance as they cannot be bought at Machu Picchu.**

In July 2017, new regulations were announced allowing only half-day visits (*1er turno*: 6am-12 noon or *2do turno*: 12 noon to 5.30pm; both priced at s/152/77 adults/students and children) and the stipulation that these visits must be made with a guide (available at the site). As we go to press (Sep 2017), however, reports are that readers are visiting without guides and that the morning visitors are not being made to leave after 12 noon – but things may change as the new system gets going. If you want to be absolutely sure to spend the whole day there you need to also buy an afternoon ticket. There's also a cheaper ticket that runs from 1pm (*Vespertino*, s/100/50), as well as the full price *2do turno* ticket that runs from 12 noon.

To ensure you are able to visit on the day you want, buy your ticket online (www.machupicchu.gob.pe) well before arriving at the site; during the busiest times of year **consider buying it up to two weeks in advance**. However, if you also want to climb **Huayna Picchu** (see pp321-2) or **Machu Picchu Mountain** (Montaña, p323) you need to buy a combined Machu Picchu entrance and climbing ticket (s/200/100 adults/students and children) and these sell out **several months in advance**. Tickets can also be purchased from the offices in Cusco (see p160) or Aguas Calientes (see p206); take your passport and cash (either soles or dollars), or a Visa or MasterCard. If you're booking online sometimes the English version of the website doesn't work for payments and you'll need to revert to the original Spanish-language site; only Visa credit cards are accepted.

The authorities are also bringing in defined circuits to be followed when viewing the ruins. **Circuit 1** is the longest and roughly follows the route set out in this guide, taking 2½-3 hours to complete; **Circuits 2 & 3** cover just the lower sectors.

If you're walking the Inca Trail your permit will include entry into the ruins. Note that if you want to also climb one of the peaks, since the ticket to climb either peak includes an entrance fee to the ruins, in effect you are paying two entrance fees to Machu Picchu (as

MACHU PICCHU GUIDE

Above all, there is the fascination of finding here and there under the swaying vines, or perched on top of a beetling crag, the rugged masonry of a bygone race; and of trying to understand the bewildering romance of the ancient builders who ages ago sought refuge in a region which appears to have been expressly designed by Nature as a sanctuary for the oppressed, a place where they might fearlessly and patiently give expression to their passion for walls of enduring beauty.

Hiram Bingham *Inca Land – Explorations in the Highlands of Peru* (1922)

ORIENTATION

Machu Picchu is at 2430m/7970ft and most of the buildings are spread across a saddle between two mountains, Machu Picchu ('Old Peak', 3061m/10,040ft) and the soaring sugarloaf of Huayna/Wayna Picchu ('New Peak', 2700m/8860ft) – with the Urubamba river and Aguas Calientes far below at 2000m/6560ft. If you've bought tickets in advance you can climb either **Huayna Picchu** (see below) and visit the Temple of the Moon below it or **Machu Picchu Mountain** (see p323). Other excursions include the **Inca drawbridge** (20 minutes each way; see p334).

☐ CLIMBING HUAYNA PICCHU (WAYNA PICCHU)

[Tickets must be bought well in advance: see p318; limited to 400 people]

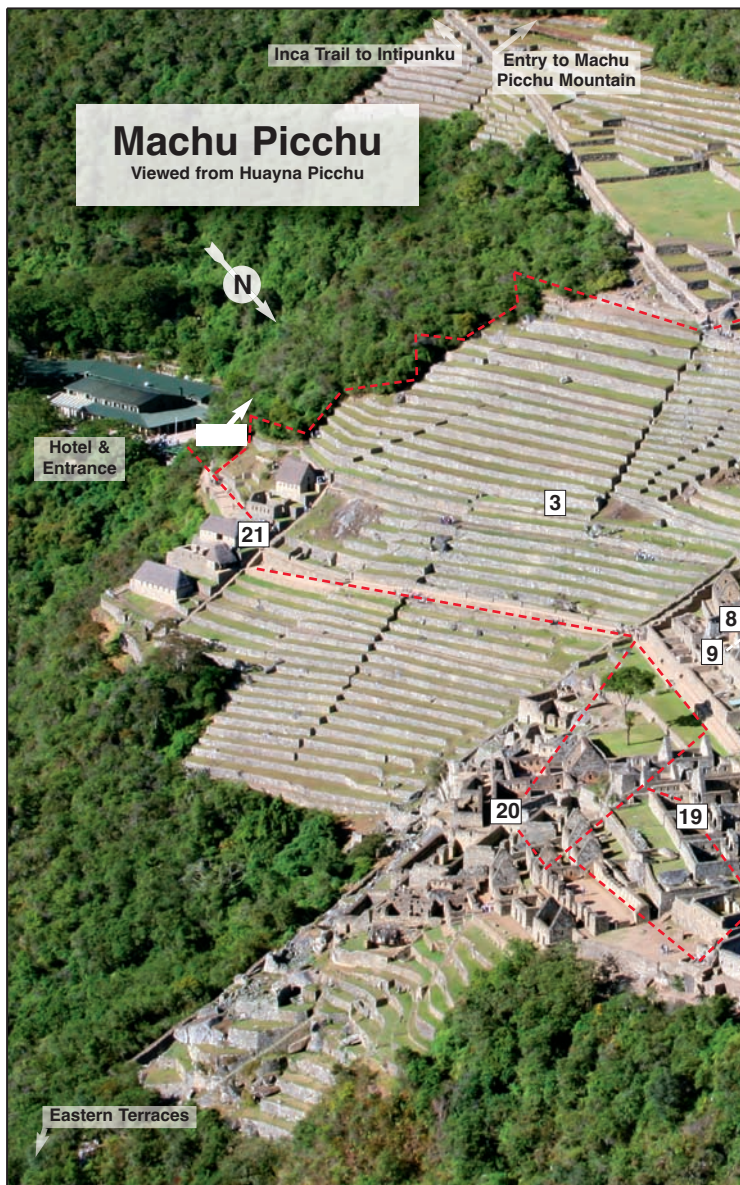
To sit on the 2700m/8860ft shaggy crest of Huayna Picchu on a clear morning, with the ruins laid out below you and the sun sliding up behind the mountains like a new *centavo*, is probably the most magnificent experience that Machu Picchu can offer. But it takes advance planning and shouldn't be attempted if you are unfit, struggling with the altitude or suffer from vertigo. Since only 400 tickets a day are available they sell out months in advance, so book early. Half this number are allowed to climb the peak between 7am and 8am and must be down by 10am; the second half are allowed to begin the ascent between 10am and 11am and must return by 1pm. A certain amount of scrambling is involved and you'll need good shoes.

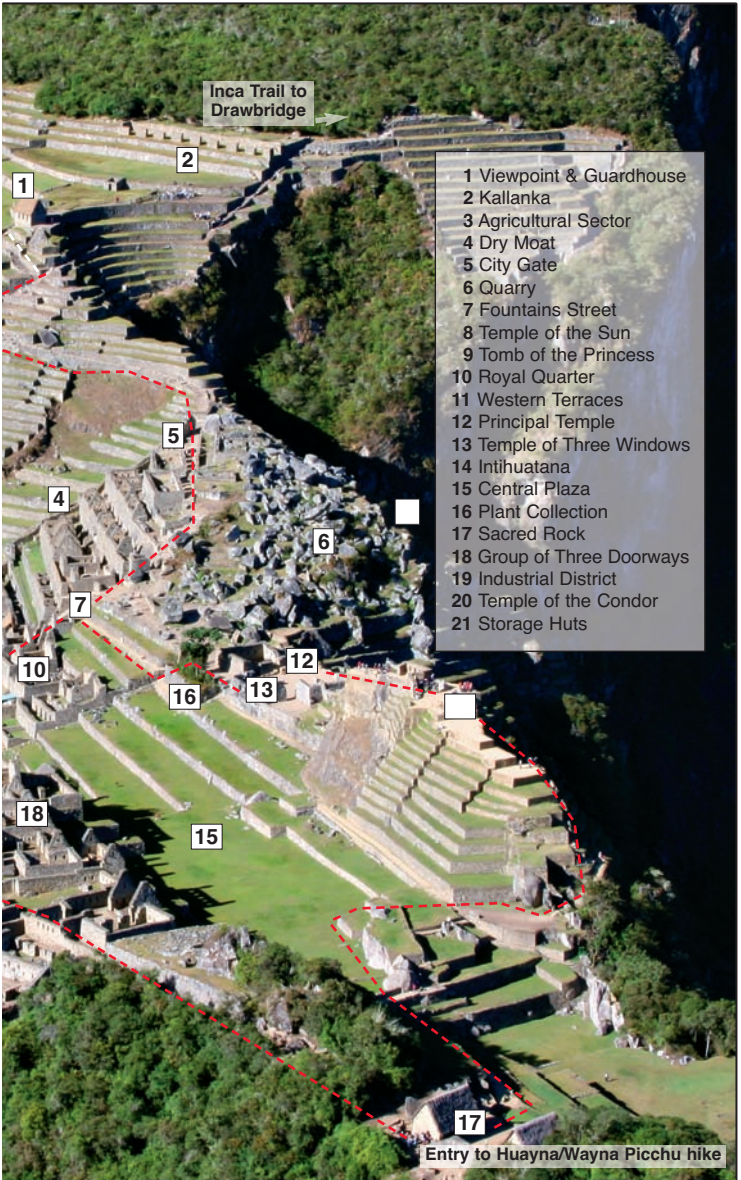


Huayna Picchu stairway.
Slip here and you could land
up in the Urubamba River.

Huayna Picchu summit

The vertiginous walk up takes anything from 40 minutes to 1½ hours depending on how busy it is and your state of fitness. The path zig-zags relentlessly upwards; after 15-20 minutes there's a junction: **take the right path for the top**; the left path is the Gran Caverna Trail to the other side of the peak. Near the top and some narrow terraces, there's **another fork**: to the right leads up eventually through a short tunnel to the summit and to the left also leads to the summit but via terraces and some small ruins including an intact, though roofless, building which catches the morning sun on its impossibly steep crag. No doubt offerings to the Sun God would have been made from up here and the building may have been a **temple**. (*Cont'd overleaf*)





sure of their exact function. It may have been that astronomical instruments were attached to them as this temple was used as an astronomical observatory. At the winter solstice (21st June), the rays of the sun as it rises align perfectly with the rock on the floor of the temple. Niches around the walls of the temple would have held offerings and idols. Animal sacrifices may have taken place on the carved central rock. Excavations nearby also discovered a tomb with excellent stone walls just outside the walls of the *Torreón*, leading some to speculate that this was the tomb of Pachacutec himself. Proponents of this theory also suggest that the Sun Temple had at its heart a gold statue of this, the greatest of the Incas, on top of the rock, which would dazzle in the sunlight on the midwinter solstice. It's an appealing theory – though there is no evidence of any gold statue, nor that the tomb was royal – nor, even, that it was a tomb at all.

Stairs lead from the temple down to the fine two-storey building which Bingham fancifully misnamed the **Palace of the Princess** (*Nusta*). Its position suggests that it was a kind of sacristy used by the high priest presiding over ceremonies in this temple.

The entrance to this area is through one of finest examples of an Inca gate.



Entrance gate to the Palace of the Princess and Temple of the Sun

THE TOMB OF THE PRINCESS [9]

Right underneath the Temple of the Sun is a striking triangular cave, formed by the hewn edge of the massive supporting boulder and carefully fitted masonry. Inside, a set of steps carved into the natural rock and markedly pale against the darkness, ascend to nowhere. This classic step symbol is often found at Inca sites. It's said to represent the three levels of the world: heaven, earth and the underworld. Again, the 'Princess' title is not based on fact and Bingham found no evidence of bodies buried here and probably didn't expect to as burial was only for the masses; nobles were mummified. It may, however, have been used as a temporary mausoleum for the mummies of important ancestors of the Inca king, which he would have brought with him when he was staying here.

Guides often explain that the four sites above (the fountains, wayrana, the Temple of the Sun and this tomb), symbolise the four elements of water, air (the wayrana being open on one side), fire and earth. The Incas certainly worshipped the elements but whether they identified these particular four sites as a symbolic group is debatable.



Directly beneath the Temple of the Sun is the Tomb of the Princess

Behind the Principal Temple is a separate structure which may have had a priestly function – Bingham named it the **Sacristy** and it's also known as the **Ornaments Chamber**; it contains a famously elaborate stone, with 32 edges carved into the raw rock, to the left of the doorway. The one on the right has 28 corners.

Next to the Principal Temple is the **Temple of Three Windows [13]** (*Templo de las Tres Ventanas*), with a wall of perfectly-finished masonry pierced by three trapezoid windows overlooking the ruins below. It was this building that convinced Bingham that he'd located Tampu-tocco, the birthplace of the first Inca, Manco Capac (see p315). The temple actually has five windows, two of which have been blocked up. Opposite the wall of windows and the remains of the roof pillar is a rock carved with the step symbol representing heaven, earth and the underworld.



Temple of Three Windows
(viewed from outside)

INTIHUATANA – THE HITCHING POST OF THE SUN [14]

Steps lead up to this startling carved stone, carved in situ into a wide step and squared-off post aiming skywards, the focus of the highest and perhaps the most significant part of this religious section of Machu Picchu. Similar stones were found at many of the Inca ruins and early archaeologists called them *intihuatana* meaning 'place where the sun is tied'. In winter, believing the sun was drifting further from the Earth, the Incas felt compelled to ritually secure it to hitching posts such as this one lest the life-giving sun desert them permanently. The festival of Inti Raymi was (and still is) held at the winter solstice (21st June). Realising their importance to Inca culture, the Spanish settlers damaged every intihuatana they found by breaking off the post; this post was the sole complete survivor.



Rock in the shape of
The Southern Cross

The archaeologist Johan Reinhard has shown that Machu Picchu was carefully aligned with sacred peaks, the intihuatana being at its very centre. The top of Huayna Picchu, for example, is due north. The position of the sun and stars was important to the Incas both for religious reasons and, more prosaically, in order to chart the progress of the seasons which was important to farmers so that seeds were planted at the right time to allow for the best harvest. At the equinoxes the sun rises behind the summit of Nevado Veronica. The careful alignment of the intihuatana means that it was probably used as an observatory. It has also been suggested that the stone was a

GROUP OF THE THREE DOORWAYS [18]

You are now in the residential area to the north-east of the site that was probably occupied by less elevated inhabitants – perhaps the people who did the work, fed and looked after the nobility, maintained the terraces and harvested the crops. It is so called because there are three fine doorways to be seen. Below it is another cemetery area, east facing, and outside the Machu Picchu equivalent of the city limits.

EASTERN TERRACES

Covering an area of four hectares, this is the most extensive set of terraces at Machu Picchu. Not quite as steep as their western counterparts but impressive nonetheless, there are two sections: a smaller run set below the lower residential area and a whole hillside of them, facing due east below. The terraces were constructed between 1470 and 1530 and include ceremonial watercourses.

INDUSTRIAL OR MORTAR SECTOR [19]

Bingham quite understandably believed, when he saw that one of the buildings in this more crowded, commercial zone had mysterious, crater-like protrusions on the floor of its courtyard, that they were mortars for grinding corn. It is now thought that the surfaces are too flat for the purpose. It is possible that they may have had some sort of astronomical function; water may have been poured into them, for example, and celestial events such as eclipses observed in reflection.



Temple of the Condor
(red lines showing how the rocks behind may be seen as the wings)

TEMPLE OF THE CONDOR [20]

This is one of most mysterious structures at Machu Picchu. On the ground is a piece of dark granite, unmistakably polished and wrought into the shape of a condor seen from above, with its distinctive head and white collar formed by a separate piece of stone. If you have a very vivid imagination you may be able to identify the swoops of natural rock behind as wings. The Incas worshipped the Apu Kuntur (Condor God) and even today some Andean villages such as Cotabambas celebrate the Yawar Fiesta. In this a captured condor, the spirit of the Incas, is tied to the back of a bull symbolising the Spanish Conquistadors.



The Jail

GETTING TO THE TRAILHEAD

The trek begins in Huancacalle. To get there, take the bus from Cusco's Santiago Bus Terminal to Quillabamba (7 hours). In Quillabamba, the **bus stations** for Huancacalle and Cusco are several blocks south of Plaza Grau; minibuses depart for Huancacalle before noon (4-5 hours; s/10-15). After visiting the ruins most people continue on the trail to the village of Chaunquiri (see p342), which is occasionally served by public transport. To maximise your chances of picking up a bus aim to reach the village in time for the weekend markets, after which you should be able to find a ride. Bear in mind it takes a long time to travel to the Vilcabamba region and that you may want to spend a day in and around Huancacalle, exploring the nearby ruins and archaeological sites. So, you should allow at least a week for the entire trip and possibly as many as nine days.

Huancacalle is a simple, typical Andean town set in a very pleasant part of the Vilcabamba valley, and you can hire arrieros and guides and pick up a smattering of last-minute provisions here. The best **accommodation**, *Sixpac Manco Hostel* (☎ 812714), at the far end of the village, is run by the Cobos family. This family are also the best-known and most reliable guides in the region. There are few other facilities in town.

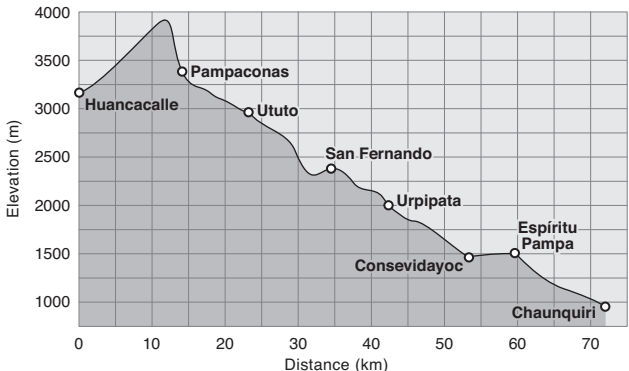
VISITING VITCOS

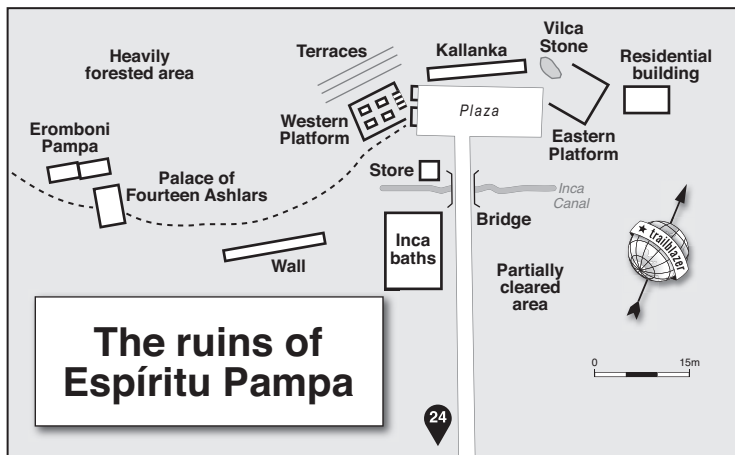
Before your Vilcabamba trek you can take a pleasant half-day side-trip from Huancacalle to Vitcos. Here, on the crest of the hill known as **Rosaspatha**, are the ruins of Manco Inca's first capital following their retreat from Cusco in 1537. Discovered by Hiram Bingham in 1911, this was the centre of operations for the Incas whilst in exile. On the far side of the plaza stands a series of finely crafted ashlars and double-jamb entrances opening onto large rooms filled with niches. Look out, too, for a finely carved stone throne.

It is believed to be at Vitcos that Manco Inca met with his untimely end, stabbed to death after a game of quoits by Spanish renegades who had come to Vitcos to seek refuge after assassinating Francisco Pizarro. Manco's son, Titu Cusi, witnessed the attack and the assassins were burnt to death by Manco's supporters. Their severed heads were paraded at Vitcos and staked there for more than 20 years as a gruesome reminder of their fate. Titu Cusi went on to become Inca in his turn and later also died at Vitcos, following a severe illness.

A path heads south from Rosaspatha via a number of **carved boulders** to the site known variously as **Ñusta España**, Yurac Rumi (White Stone), or Chuquipalta. Sculpted boulders, carved stone seats, water channels and baths surround an enormous carved granite boulder

Vilcabamba Trail





originally been sited or what its purpose was, is unclear. Other features include a number of crumbling walls that have niches in them; another has three carved water spouts jutting from it, which would have created small fountains.

In the north-east corner of the plaza is a huaca; the **Vilca stone** is a giant, uncarved boulder leaning slightly on its side and described as looking ‘like a great egg’ by Gene Savoy. A couple of minutes to the south of the plaza is a lengthy striking stone wall now covered in moss. Beyond this lies the section originally uncovered by Bingham, called **Eromboni Pampa**, where the **Palace of Fourteen Ashlars** stands.

Beyond this, the outskirts of this considerable city are subsumed by the jungle, providing a fascinating ‘before and after’ feel to the site. The still-buried ruins await discovery by you; be careful moving vegetation though so as to not disturb any of the stones.

For a fuller picture of the site, check out Vincent Lee’s book *Forgotten Vilcabamba*, which contains maps and drawings of the ruins.

So is this place really Manco’s capital?

Though he was responsible for their discovery in 1914, Hiram Bingham in fact refused to believe that the small collection of buildings he found was the last capital of the Incas and got himself into all sorts of intellectual knots arguing that Machu Picchu must have been the last city of the Incas simply because it looked more suitable and majestic. In fact, it wasn’t until 1964 that **Gene Savoy** realised the extent of the ruins and exposed the true scale of the site. Though it’s true they are less spectacular than other major Inca sites, the distinctive layout, style of craftsmanship and stonework coupled with the features found at the site including canals, baths, ashlars and sacred rocks are all indicative of Inca architecture and conclusively prove that this place is of Inca origin.

Debate has raged as to whether the site constituted Manco’s final capital, though. The giant sweeping staircase that descends to the site and the Vilca stone, positioned to dominate the plaza and eerily reminiscent of the celebrated *huaca* Ñusta España (see p341), lends weight to the theory that the site also had a special ceremonial significance. Furthermore the uncovering of a number of terracotta roof tiles, imitations of Spanish roof tiles, prove that the site must have been built after the arrival of the Spanish conquistadors. The type of structures built, allied to the date when they would most likely have been constructed, suggest that the site is indeed the last Inca capital, Vilcabamba.

ENGLISH	QUECHUA	SPANISH (<i>cont'd from p347</i>)
How much does it cost to hire ...?	<i>¿Maik'ata'g ...?</i>	<i>¿Cuánto cuesta para...?</i>
... a guide	<i>... pusawasqaykimanta</i>	<i>... contratar un guía?</i>
... a horse	<i>... caballoykikunamanta</i>	<i>... alquilar un caballo?</i>
... a llama	<i>... llamaykikunamanta</i>	<i>... alquilar una llama?</i>
... for a week / day	<i>... sapa semanán / p'unchay</i>	<i>... por semana / día</i>
Do you sell ...?	<i>¿Icha ... ta bendiwankiman?</i>	<i>¿Me vende ...?</i>

Food and drink (see pp81-3)

beer	<i>sirwisa</i>	<i>cerveza</i>
bread	<i>t'anta</i>	<i>pan</i>
chicken	<i>wallpa</i>	<i>pollo</i>
coca	<i>kuka</i>	<i>coca</i>
egg	<i>runtu</i>	<i>huevo</i>
fish	<i>challwa</i>	<i>pescado</i>
fruit	<i>ruru, añawi</i>	<i>fruta</i>
maize (corn)	<i>choqlló (sara)</i>	<i>maíz (choclo)</i>
meat (dried)	<i>aycha (ch'arki)</i>	<i>carne (charqui)</i>
potato	<i>papa</i>	<i>papa</i>
soup	<i>chupi</i>	<i>sopa</i>
roast	<i>kanka</i>	<i>asado</i>
boil	<i>t'impuy</i>	<i>hervir</i>
fry	<i>theqtichiy</i>	<i>freír</i>
raw	<i>hanku</i>	<i>crudo</i>
cooked	<i>chayasqa</i>	<i>cocido</i>
fizzy drink / pop	<i>bebida gaseosa</i>	<i>bebida gaseosa</i>
hot (temperature)	<i>q'oñi</i>	<i>caliente</i>
spicy	<i>haya</i>	<i>picante</i>
cold food	<i>kharmu</i>	<i>comida fría</i>

Food and drink glossary

<i>ají</i> hot pepper from which a spicy sauce is made	<i>ceviche / cevichería</i> (also <i>cebiche / cebichería</i>) raw fish marinated in citrus juice and spiced with chilli / restaurant that serves ceviche
<i>ají de gallina</i> shredded chicken stewed in a rich, gently spiced cream sauce	<i>chicha de jora</i> Peru's famous fermented maize beer
<i>anticucho</i> beef-heart kebabs cooked on a skewer over hot coals and served with a range of spicy sauces	<i>chicha morada</i> a drink made from purple maize (corn) and spices
<i>bodega</i> wine shop or bar that also serves snacks	<i>chicharrón(es)</i> deep-fried pork & pork skin
<i>butifarra</i> pork and sweet onion salsa sandwich; the pork is cooked with pepper, garlic, cumin, achiote and oregano	<i>chuño</i> type of traditional freeze-dried potato
<i>cafecito</i> small black coffee	<i>cuy</i> guinea pig
<i>cañazo</i> strong alcoholic spirit distilled from sugar cane	<i>huacatay</i> an aromatic Andean herb
<i>cantina</i> a bar room	<i>leche de tigre</i> literally 'tiger's milk', a mixture of lime juice, salt and hot pepper used to 'cook' classic ceviche
<i>causa / causa rellena</i> a lightly spiced potato cake mixed with tuna, egg, shrimp, avocado or chicken	<i>llicta</i> a mixture of lime or quinoa and potash taken with a plug of coca leaves and chewed together to release the active ingredients in the leaves

● **Inca Rail** (📄 www.incarail.com) operates one service daily from Poroy via Ollantaytambo to Aguas Calientes and four others from Ollantaytambo to Aguas Calientes. **Tickets** can be bought from their office on Calle Portal de Panes 105 on Plaza de Armas in Cusco (☎ 581860) or from the station in Ollantaytambo (☎ 204211) and Poroy. You can also buy tickets online. They have four classes, Presidential, Executive, First and Premium economy; Presidential is only available on request.

TIMETABLES AND FARES

Bear in mind that the **timetables** below are subject to change at very short notice and are a guide rather than a rule. To get the most up-to-date information check locally at the railway stations or try visiting the respective company's website.

Unfortunately there aren't any ways of making these journeys cheaper. In real terms the **fares** are representative of what you might expect to pay for such a spectacular ride elsewhere in the world; they just seem hugely inflated by Peruvian standards.

1. PERURAIL

Cusco (Poroy) to Machu Picchu (Aguas Calientes)

Services are daily, except for the Hiram Bingham which does not run on the last Sunday of each month.

SERVICE NAME	TRAIN NO	FARE (US\$) ONE-WAY FROM	DEP CUSCO (POROY)	ARR MACHU PICCHU (AGUAS CALIENTES)
Vistadome	31	\$95	06.40	09.54
Expedition	33	\$80	07.35	10.52
Vistadome	203	\$94	08.25	12.11
Hiram Bingham	11	\$403	09.05	12.24

Machu Picchu (Aguas Calientes) to Cusco (Poroy)

Services are daily, except for the Hiram Bingham which does not run on the last Sunday of each month.

SERVICE NAME	TRAIN NO	FARE (US\$) ONE-WAY FROM	DEP MACHU PICCHU (AGUAS CALIENTES)	ARR CUSCO (POROY)
Vistadome	32	\$84	15.20	19.05
Expedition	34	\$85	16.43	20.23
Vistadome	604	\$84	17.23	20.52
Hiram Bingham	12	\$392	17.50	21.16























La Hidroeléctrica to Machu Picchu (Aguas Calientes)

Note: This service uses the local railway station in Aguas Calientes. Locals are usually given priority on this service rather than tourists – so it is very possible you won't be allowed to buy a ticket.

SERVICE NAME	TRAIN NO	DEP LA HIDROELÉCTRICA	ARR MACHU PICCHU (AGUAS CALIENTES)
Expedition	72	07.53	08.35
Vistadome	504	15.00	15.42
Expedition	22	16.35	17.50

MAP REF	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	LOCATION
The Choquequirao Trek			
24	73	13° 30'43"S 72° 48'46"W	Cachora Plaza de Armas
25	74	13° 26'36"S 72° 48'38"W	Capuliyoc Pass
	75	13° 25'46"S 72° 50'29"W	Chiquisca campsite
26	76	13° 25'19"S 72° 51'12"W	Playa Rosalina campsite & river crossing point
	77	13° 24'49"S 72° 50'54"W	Santa Rosa Baja
	78	13° 23'59"S 72° 51'28"W	Marampata
	79	13° 23'35"S 72° 52'25"W	Choquequirao
The Ausangate Trek			
27	80	13° 42'34"S 71° 18'22"W	Football pitch at Upis
28	81	13° 45'04"S 71° 16'27"W	Thermal baths
29	82	13° 46'34"S 71° 16'29"W	Abra Arapa
30	83	13° 49'10"S 71° 14'37"W	Abra Ausangate
	84	13° 49'00"S 71° 13'22"W	Abra Palomani
31	85	13° 49'32"S 71° 11'27"W	Pampacancha
32	86	13° 46'05"S 71° 10'34"W	Abra Jampa/Champa
33	87	13° 44'29"S 71° 13'54"W	Acosere village
34	88	13° 43'07"S 71° 14'31"W	Pacchanta

Route map key

	Route		Steep slope		Accommodation
	Sealed road		Slope		Campsite
	Dirt track		Water		Building
	Railway		River/waterfall		Archaeological site
	Bridge		Mountain		Trees/forest
	Pass		Spur/ridge		Grassland/puna
	Steps		Cliff/sheer hillside		Viewpoint
					Map continuation

INDEX

Page references in **bold** type refer to maps

- Abra Arapa **304**, 305
Abra Ausangate **305**, 306
Abra Ccolpa Casa 342
Abra de Huarmihuanusca **220**, 220-1
Abra de Runcu Raccay (Second Pass) 221, **225**
Abra Huacahuasijasa 274, **275**
Abra Huillquijasa 274, **275**
Abra Jampa/Champa **307**, 308
Abra Pachacutec **271**, 272
Abra Palomani **305**, 306
acclimatisation 12, 47, 147, 158
accommodation 26, 80
see also place name and camping, homestay, Mountain Lodges of Peru
Acosere 308, **308**
acute mountain sickness (AMS) 47, 120
Adams, Mark 41, 264
quoted 264, 281
Aguas Calientes 206, **207**, 208-9, 215, **229**, 264, 319
airlines/airline offices 78
Cusco 182, Lima 145
airports
Cusco 158, 182, 195;
Lima 135
airport tax 78
Alarcón, Daniel 73
alcoholic drinks 84-5
Alegría, Ciro 73
Almagro, Diego de 55, 152
alpacas/alpaca wool 88, 109, 177
altitude & altitude sickness 47, 120
altitude profiles
see trek name
Amaru Marka Wasi 184, **185**, 186-7, **191**
Andean bears 108, 300
Andean condors 110-11
Andean Travel Web 44, 212
Angrand, Léonce 283
Aobamba river and valley 104, 260-1, 263, **265**
apps (maps) 214
APRA (Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana) 60, 61, 65
Apurímac river and valley 32, 238, 240, 251, 284, 286, 289-90, **291**, 292, 293, 294
Arayan Niyoc 254
Arguedas, José María 73, 290
quoted
arrieros (muleteers) 16, 28, 20-1, 214-15, 240, 268
see also place name
art, Peruvian 74
Arteaga, Melchor 264, 312
Atahualpa, Inca 54, 55, 56, 57, 90, 98, 100, 102
Atahualpa, Juan Santos 57
ATMs 77, 78
Ausangate Trek **29**, 33-4, 213-14, 297-309
altitude profile **297**
overview map **298**
waypoints 358
Ayapata, campsite 218, **220**
Aymara people 66
backpacks 36
Balta, President 58-9
banks 77-8
see also place name
Baño de la Ñusta, site **204**, 205
bargaining 88
Belaúnde Terry, Fernando 60, 61
Bingham, Hiram 7, 8, 27, 41, 43, 111, 154, 218, 222, 223, 226, 232, 260, 264, 274, 277, 281, 284, 310-38
passim
birds 110-14
blisters 45-6, 121
Boleto Turístico Unico (BTU), Cusco 150
Bolívar, Simon 58
booking a trek/tour 14-15, 179
books 41-4
boots 35
bromeliads 107
budgeting 25-6
Burger, Richard L 43, 102, 317
bus services
to Peru 25
within Peru 78-9, 79
see also place name
Bustamente, President 60
butterflies 109-10
Cachora 286, 287-8, **287**, 296
Cachora to Huancacalle trek 32
cacti 107
Cajamarca, Battle of 54
cameras 40
campfires 116-17
camping 80, 116-17
for campsites see place name
Cancha Cancha 269, **271**
Capuliyoc pass 289, **289**
car hire 80
Caral, site 51
Casa de la Caida de Agua 293
casas de cambio 77
cash machines 77, 78
Castilla, Ramón 58
Ccallabamba 232, **233**
Ccolpapampa **255**, 256
cell phones *see mobile phones*
ceviche/cebiche 81
Chachabamba, site **229**, 234, **235**, 235
Chachapoya people 54
Challacancha **243**
Chambi, Martín 74, 153

- Chanca people 54
 Chan-Chan, site 54
 Chaquicocha 225, **225**
 Chauilly 252, 254, **255**
 Chaunquiri 341, 342
 Chavín civilisation 51-2
 Chavín de Huantar, site 51
 checkpoints 89, 213
 264 (ST), 292 (CT)
 chicha drink 84
 Chilca (Km77) 231
 Chimú people 54
 Chinchero **191**, 193, 195
 Chincheros 96
 Chinchorro people 51
 Chiquisca **289**, 290
 Choquequirao, site 9, 32,
 96, **291**, 293-4, **295**, 296
 Choquequirao, trek 9, **28**,
 32-3, 213, 281-97
 altitude profile **281**
 overview map **282**
 waypoints 358
 Choquequirao to Machu
 Picchu trek 32
 Choquesuysuy, site **229**,
 234, 236, **236**
 Chuchumayo River and
 Valley **291**, 292
 Chuquipalta, site 341
 cinema, Peruvian 74
 classic Inca Trail *see* Inca
 Trail
 climate 10-12, 50-1, 119
 clothing 35-6
 cloud forests 104, 106, 108,
 110, 219, **220**, **225**, **229**
 Cobo Bernabé 99
 coca and cocaine 70, 84, 89
 Cocalmayo hot springs 256,
 258
 Cocamasana **289**, 290
Cochineal Red (Hugh
 Thomson) 41, 102,
 198-9, 286
 Cola de Mono Canopy
 zipline 258
 colectivos 79
 Colmena **287**, 288
 combis 79
 compasses 214
 Concachaca 286
 Concha Marca, site 223,
 225
 Condorcanqui, José Gabriel
 57, 149
 Consevidayoc 342 (VT)
 cooking equipment 37
 Coricancha, Cusco 151-2
 costa (coast) 49, 50
 costs 14, 25-6, 179
 credit cards 78
 Cristóbal Paullu, Inca 188
 Cruzpata *see* Marcoccasa
 cultural impact of trekking
 117-18
 culture, Peruvian 72-5
 Cuncani **275**, 278
 currency 76-7
 Cusco 9, 67, 146-55, **156-7**,
 158-64, **164**
 accommodation 162-70
 airport 158, 182, 195
 arrival 158
 ATMs 160-1
 Archbishop's palace 154
 banks 160-1
 bars 175-6
 bookshops 161
 bus services 158, 182-3
 Calle Loreto 153
 Calle Hatun Rumiyoc 154
 cambios 161
 car hire 160
 Casa Cabrera 155, 158
 Cathedral 149
 Christ, statue of **185**, 188
 climate 12
 colectivos 158, 182-3
 Coricancha 151-2
 emergency services 161
 equipment rental 161-2
 festivals 86, 87
 flights 182
 history 147-8
 hospitals 161
 Inca walls 151, 166, 186
 internet access 161
 language courses 162
 laundry 162
 map key 159
 massages 162
 markets 153, 160, 162,
 176
 Cusco (*cont'd*)
 Mercado San Pedro 153,
 162
 nightlife 175-6
 Oficina Ejecutiva del
 Comite (OFEC) 150
 orientation 158, 160
 pharmacies 161
 Plaza de Armas 148-9,
 164
 postal services 161
 rail services 158, 183-4
 Religious Circuit Ticket
 150
 restaurants 170-5
 shopping 176-7
 trekking provisions
 162
 safety 160
 sights 148-55, 158
 taxi 160
 telephone services 161
 tourist information 160
 tourist police 161
 tram service 160
 trekking agencies 177-82
 Visitor's Ticket 150, 184
 websites 43
 Cusco school of painting
 74, 127, 148, 149,
 152, 154, 195
 Cusichaca river and valley
 205, 217, 218, **219**, 232
 Cusichaca Trust 218

 dance, Peruvian 74-5
 Dead Woman's Pass **220**,
 220-1
 debit cards 78
 Díaz Topete, Juan Arias 283
 documents for tourists 76
 for trekking 15
 dogs 119
 drinks & drinking 83-4,
 348-9
 drinking water 82, 84,
 121, 213
 driving in Peru 80
 drugs 89

 earthquakes 49, 123, 148,
 149, 150, 152, 153, 155

- economic impact of trekking 117
 economy, Peruvian 69, 71
 education 67
 El Niño 50, 53, 63, 71, 93
 electricity 85
 embarkation card 76
 embassies, Lima 137
 emergency services (phone number) 85
 Cusco 161, Lima 137
 encomienda system of rule 55-6
 entrance fees (treks) 213
 environment 71-2, 103-4
 environmental impact of trekking 115-17
 equipment 34-7
 rental (Cusco) 161-2
 for Machu Picchu 318
 Eromboni Pampa 344
 erosion 116
 Espíritu Pampa, ruins 9, 34, 101, 102, 339, 342-5, **344**
 exchange rates 76

 fauna 108-14, 117
 Fejos, Dr Paul 27, 222, 223, 226, 228, 234
 festivals 86-7, 300
 field guides 43-4
 first-aid kit 38-9
 fitness 45
 flights *see also* airline offices
 from Cusco 182
 from Lima 145
 to Peru 21-4
 within Peru 78
 flora 104-8, 117
 food 37-8, 80-3, 121, 141, 348-9
 footcare 121
 footwear 35
 Fujimori, Alberto, President 61-3, 64, 65, 68, 71
 Fujimori Keiko 64, 66, 68, 69

 Gamarra, General 58
 Garcia, Alan, President 61, 65-6, 71

 Garcilaso Inca de la Vega 42, 72, 92, 146, 149, 151-2, 153, 155, 157, 187
 geographical background 48-51
 glossary 349-51
 food 348-9
 gloves 36
 GPS 39, 119, 214
 waypoints 356-8
 Gran Caverna Trail 321-2
 grasses 107
 group-service treks 15-16
 guano 58
 guidebooks 41
 guides 20, 214-15
 guinea pigs 51, 81, 82, 149
 Guzmán, Abimael 62, 63

 HACE & HAPE 120
 haggling 88
 hats 36
 Hatun Chaca **219, 247**
 Haya de la Torre, Victor Raul 60
 health 45-6, 82, 119-21
 Hemming, John 42, 43, 345
 high-altitude travel 47
 High Inca Trail **29, 31, 213-14, 238-48**
 altitude profile **238**
 overview map **239**
 waypoints 356
 historical outline 51-66
 Cusco 147-8
 Inca civilisation 53-4, 90-102
 Lima 122-4
 Machu Picchu 311-18
 hitch-hiking 79
 Hitching Post of the Sun *see* Intihuatana
 holidays 86-7
 homestays 80, 163, 181, 195
 horses 103, 299
 hostels/hotels *see* accommodation
 hot springs 180, 200, 206, 258, 259
 see also thermal baths
 Huacahuasi **277, 278**

 Huacarpay, village 210
 huacas 93, 95, 187, 209, 237, 261, 286, 344
 Huadquina *see* Santa Teresa
 Huallpa, Túpac 55
 Huamán Poma de Ayala, Felipe, Inca writer 43, 72
 Huancacalle 339, **340, 341**
 Huaran/Huaran Fondo 268-9, **270**
 Huari people 53, 54, 92, 147
 Huari-Tiahuanaco culture 53
 Huascamayo 256, **257**
 Huascar 54, 98, 99
 Huayllabamba 212, 218, **219, 247**
 Huayna Capac, Inca 54, 96, 97, 150
 Huayna Picchu 206, **229, 231, 261, 262, 263, 312, 317, 318**
 Huayna Pucará 342, 344-5
 Huayna Q'ente 237
 Huayraqumachay 254, **255**
 Huchuy Cusco 91, 94, 102
 Huilca Raccay, site 205, 232, **233, 234**
 Huinay Huayna, site 228 **229, 230, 230**
 huinay huayna, flower 106
 human rights 69
 Humantay river 254, **255**
 hypothermia 45, 120

 Inca jungle trek 180
 Inca Misanca, ruins 205
 Incajaya *see* Paucarcancha
 Incas 53-4, 90-102, 105
 books about Incas and Inca sites 42-3
 buildings & monuments 93-4
 civil war 98
 chasquis (couriers) 94
 creation myths 93
 & Cusco 147-8
 empire, birth of 92-3
 empire expansion 94-8
 epidemic (1527) 97, 98
 guerrilla campaigns 100-1

- Incas (*cont'd*)
 legacy and modern Peru 102
 mummies 98-100, 101, 133, 151, 155
 museum, Cusco 155
 roads 94
 & Spaniards 54-5, 90, 91, 92, 98, 99, 100, 101
 stones and shrines 93, 95
 walls 151, 166, 186
see also under names of Inca emperors
- Inca Trail 28, **30**, 215-31
 altitude profile **217**
 entrance fees 213
 overview map **216**
 permits & regulations 212-13
 variations on 30, **216**, 231-3
 waypoints 356
 websites about 44
- independent trekking 13-14, 119
- indigenismo movement 102
- Inka Chiriasqa Pass 244, **245**
- Inkaraqay 322
- inoculations 46
- insects 109-10
- insurance 47
- International Porter Protection Group (IPPG) 23
- internet access 85
- Intihuatana 193, **194**, **324-5**, 331-2
- Inti Raymi, festival 86
- Intipata 228, **229**, **265**
- Intipunku **229**, 229, 231, **265**, 335
- jungle trek 180
- kantu, flower 105
- Kendall, Dr Ann 205, 218, 234
- Killke people 147
- Kiteni 342
- Km77 (Chilca) 231
- Km82 232, **233**
- Km88 217, **219**
- Km88 to Km104 *see* Riverside Trail
- Km104 **229**, 234
- Km104 to Huinay Huayna *see* Purification Trail
- La Hidroeléctrica railway station 183, **262**, 263-4, **265**
- La Mar, General 58
- La Playa *see* Playa Sawacayo
- languages 67
- Lares **276**,
- Lares Trek **28**, 33, 213-14, 266-80
 altitude profile **266**
 overview map **267**
 waypoints 357
- Lee, Vincent 43, 293, 296, 342
- licence requirements (trek agencies) 178-9
- Lima 122-45, **124**, **128-9**, **130**, **131**
 accommodation 137-40
 airline offices 145
 airport 135
 arrival 135
 banks 136
 Barranco **131**, 132, 133, 135
 bars 144
 bookshops 136
 bus services 135, 145
 cafés 142
 car hire 136
 Casa Goyeneche 125
 casas de cambio 136
 cathedral 125
 climate 12
 colectivos & combis 135
 colonial architecture 125
 embassies & consulates 37
 emergency services 137
 festivals 86, 87
 flights to Cusco 145
 getting around 135
 history 122-4
 Huaca Pucllana 127
- Lima (*cont'd*)
 internet cafés 136
 laundry services 136
 Lima Centro 124-5, 127, **128-9**, 135
 maps 136
 medical services 137
 Miraflores 127, **130**, 133, 135
 nightlife 144
 orientation 135
 Palacio de Gobierno 125
 Palacio Torre Tagle 125
 pharmacies 137
 Plaza de Armas 124-5
 police 137
 post offices 136
 Pueblo Libre 133-4
 Puente de los Suspiros 132, 133
 restaurants 141-3
 shopping 144
 sights 124-7, 132-5
 taxis 135
 telephone cards & area code 136
 tourist information 136
 tours 135-6
 walking routes:
 Barranco 132,
 Lima Centro 126
 Miraflores 126
- literacy 67
- literature, Peruvian 72-4
- litter disposal 115-16
- Llactapata 212, 213, 260-1, **261**, **262**, 263, **265**
- llamas/llama wool 88, 109, 177, 213, 266, 294, 296
- Llulluchapampa 220, **220**
- Llulluchayoc, river and valley 218, **219**, 219
- lodges *see* Mountain Lodges of Peru
- Lost City of the Incas* (Bingham) 41
- Loyola, Juan Inigo de 74
- Loyola, Martín García de 151
- Lucmabamba **259**, 263

- Machu Picchu 7, 91, 100, **229**, 261, **265**, 310-38
 accommodation 319
 agricultural sector **324-5**, 326
 alignment with Llacapata 260-1, **261**, **262**
 books about 42-3
 Central Plaza **324-5**, 333
 City Gate **324-5**, 327
 Dry Moat **324-5**, 327
 Eastern Terraces **324-5**
 entrance charge 213, 318
 Fountains Street **324-5**, 328
 Funerary Rock 326
 Gran Caverna Trail 322
 Guardhouse **324-5**, 326
 getting there & away 183, 319
 historical background 311-18
 Historical Sanctuary 13, 103-4
 Inca bridge **229**, **265**, 335
 Industrial sector **324-5**, 334
 Inkaraqay 322
 Intihuatana **324-5**, 331-2
 jail 335
 kallanka **324-5**, 326
 left-luggage offices 319
 Mortar Sector **324-5**, 334
 opening times 317
 orientation 321
 Palace of the Princess 329
 plant collection **324-5**, 333
 Principal Temple **324-5**, 330
 quarry **324-5**, 327
 restaurants 319
 Royal Quarter **324-5**, 330
 Sacred Plaza **324-5**, 330
 Sacred Rock **324-5**, 333
 Sacristy 331
 side trips 335
 Storage Huts **324-5**, 335
 Temple of the Condor **324-5**, 334
 Temple of the Moon **229**, 322
- Machu Picchu (*cont'd*)
 Temple of the Sun **324-5**, 328-9
 Temple of the Three Windows **262**, **324-5**, 331
 Three Doorways, Group of **324-5**, 334
 tickets 158, 206, 317
 Tomb of the Princess **324-5**, 329
 Torreón **324-5**, 328-9
 viewpoint 326
 visiting without trekking 16-17
 Watchman's Post *see* Guardhouse
 Wayrana 328
 websites about 44
 Western Terraces **324-5**, 330
- Machu Picchu mountain 256, **261**, 317, 318, 323
 Machu Pucará 345
 Machu Q'ente 237
 malaria 46
 mammals 108-9
 Mama Ocllo 93
 Manco Capac, Inca 87, 93, 147, 315, 341
 Manco Inca Yupanqui 55, 100-1, 125, 188, 190, 203, 205, 260, 284, 344
 map key 358
 map scale 211
 maps 40-1, 214
 Marampata **291**, 292
 Maras, village **191**, 200
 Marcanay 342, 284
 Marcocasa **241**, 242
 markets *see place name*
 mate de coca 83, 84
 media, Peruvian 75
 medical insurance 47
 medical kit 38-9
 medical services *see place name*
 micros 79
 midges 110
 minimum impact trekking 115-18
 Miraflores *see* Lima
- Miskay, village 232, **233**
 mobile phones 39
 Moche people 52-3, 92
 Mollepata 240, **241**
 Mollepata trek 238, 251
 Mollipunku 342
 money 76-7
 moneychangers 77-8
 Montesinos, Vladimiro 63, 64
 Moray, site **191**, 200
 Mountain Lodges of Peru 181
see also place name
 MRTA (Movimiento Revolucionario Túpac Amaru) 61, 62, 69
 muleteers 16, 20
 mummies
 Chinchorro 51
 Inca 98-100, 101, 133
 music, Peruvian 74-5
- Nazca people & Nazca Lines 52
 newspapers 75
 Niles, Susan 91, 102
 Norte Chico civilisation 51
 Novoandina cuisine 81, 82
 Ñusta Beatriz, Inca princess 151
 Ñusta Espana, Inca site 341, **344**
- Ocongate 300
 Oficina Ejecutiva del Comité (OFEC) 150
 Ollantaytambo ruins 203, **204**, 205
 town **191**, 201-3, **202**
 orchids 106-7
 Oropesa, village 209
 overland to Peru 25
- Pacamayo, campsite and river **220**, 221
 Pacchanta 308, **309**
 Pachacámac 122, 134
 Pachacutec, Inca (Pachacuti Inca Yupanqui) 54, 91, 93, 94-6, **95**, 97, 100, 101, 147, 148, 201, 227, 293, 311

- Palace of Fourteen Ashlars 342
- Paltallacta *see* Llactapata
- Pampacancha **306**, 307
- Pampa Cahuana **246**, **246**
- Pampa Japonés **244**, **245**
- Pampaconas 342
- Paqchayoc **291**, 293
- Paracas-Necropolis culture 52
- Parador Chinchirkurma 242, **243**
- Paraqtepata **291**, 296
- Pardo, Manuel 59, 60
- Parris, Matthew 42, 122
- passports 76, 77, 89, 213
- Patallacta, site 205, 212, 213, 217, 218, **219**, **233**
- Paucarcancha, site & hamlet 246, **247**, 248, **248**
- peoples of Peru 66-7
- permits, trekking 212-13
- Peruvian paso 103
- phone services *see* telephone & mobile phone
- photography/photographic equipment 39-40, 118
- Phuyu Pata Marca, site **225**, 226, **227**, 227
- pickpockets 88, 160
- Pikillacta, site 210
- Pikiwasi **295**, 296
- Pinkuylluna, cliff 205
- Pisac 190, **191**, **192**, 192-3
- Pisac ruins 193, **194**
- Piscacucho *see* Km82
- Pisco/Pisco sour (drink) 84, 85
- Pizarro, Francisco 55, 56, 98, 123, 125, 341
- Pizarro, Gonzalo 152
- Pizarro, Juan 152
- Pizarro, Pedro 100, 101
- place names 212-13
- Playa Rosalina 291, **291**
- Playa Sawaco **257**, 258
- police 89
- politics 68-9
- polylepis trees/woodland 104, 110, 198, 219, 272
- Poma de Ayala, Felipe Huamán 42, 72
- Poroy/Poroy railway station 158, 183, **191**
- porters 20, 21
- welfare 22-3, 213
- postal services 85
- pre-Inca civilisations 51-4
- private-service treks 16
- public holidays 86-7
- Pucacocha, Laguna **304**, 305
- Puca Pucara, site **185**, 186, **191**
- Pucaira 288, **289**
- Pueblo Machu Picchu *see* Aguas Calientes
- Puente Antiguo 342
- Puente Ruinas station **229**, 264, **265**
- Pulpituyoc, site 217, 218, **219**, **233**
- Pumasillo, Mt 223, 226
- Purification Trail 30, **229**, 234-6
- Putucusi, Mt **262**
- Qanabamba 232, **233**
- Q'enko, site **185**, 187, **191** 286
- Q'enko Chico **185**, 187
- Qorihuayrachina *see* Km 88
- Qoyllur Rit'i 86, 29, 300
- Quebrada Sisay pampa 244, **246**
- Quechua people and language 66, 67, 107, 108, 109
- Quechua words & phrases 345-9
- Quera Machay 244, **245**
- Quillabamba 339, 342
- quipus 73, 91, 316
- Quishuarani **273**, 274
- Quispiquanca, site 97
- radio, Peruvian 75
- rail fares 352-5
- rail services 79, 352-5
- rail tickets, buying 183-4
- rail timetables 353-5
- Raimondi, Antonio 284
- Rainbow Mountain 181
- rainfall 12, 50, 51
- rainforest 50, 71
- Rasaspata **340**, 341
- Rayampata 254, **255**
- regulations, trekking 178-9, 212-13
- Reinhard, Johan 43, 317, 331
- religions 67-8
- reptiles 110
- Riverside Trail **29**, 30-1, **219**, **229**, 237
- Rocabamba, village 232
- route map key 358
- route options 27, **28-9**, 30-4
- Rowe, John Howland 102, 311, 317
- rubbish disposal 115-16
- rucksacks 36
- Rumicola, site 210
- Runasimi 67
- Runcu Raccay, site **220**, 221, **222**, **222**
- Sacred Valley 91, 94, 102, 191, **192**, 193-209
- Sacsayhuaman, site 1, 67, 86, 87, 95, 100, 101, **185**, 187-8, **189**, **191**
- safety 88-9, 119
- Sakramachay **270**, 272
- Salapunco 184
- Salazar/Salazar-Burger, Lucy 43, 317
- Salineras, site **191**, 200
- Salkantay, Nevado 240, 242
- Salkantay pampa (High Inca Trail) 244, **245**
- Salkantay pampa (Salkantay Trail) 252, **253**
- Salkantay pass **245**, 253, **253**
- Salkantay trek **28**, 31, 213, 238, 249-65
- altitude profile **249**
- overview map **250**
- waypoints 357
- San Jerónimo, market 209
- San Martín, José de 57, 58, 123
- Santa Cruz 58
- Santa Rosa Alta **291**, 292
- Santa Rosa Baja **291**, 292

- Santa Teresa 258
 Santa Teresa
 trek 251
 river **255**, 256
 Sapo, game 175
 Sartiges, Eugene, Comte de 283
 Savoy, Gene 43, 344
 Sayac Marca, site 223, **224**, **225**
 Sayhuite/Saywite 286
 Sayuri Túpac, Inca 152
 Sechín culture 52
 Sector Intihuatana **262**, 264, **265**
 selva (rainforest) 50, 51
 Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) 61, 62, 69
 service charges 83
 shopping 87-8
 see also place name
 Sicuani, ruins 209
 sierra (highlands) 49, 50-1
 Siete Culebras (Seven Serpents) 252, **253**
 sleeping bags & mats 37
 snakes 110
 Soray/Soray Pampa 242, **243**
 Soroyccochoa 252, **253**
 souvenirs 87-8
 see also shopping under place name
 Spanish
 language 67
 words & phrases 345-9
 spectacled bear *see* Andean bear
 sport 75
 sunburn & sun-stroke 45, 120-1
 Sunchumayo River and valley **291**, 338
 Surapata **306**, 308
- Tahuantinsuyo 92, 98, 286
 Tambo Machay, site 185-6, **185**, **191**
 Tampu-tocco 315
 Tarabamba 201
 Tarjeta de Embarque/
 Tarjeta Andina de Migración (TAM) 76
- taxes 83
 taxi services 79
 see also place name
 telephone services and codes 85
 television, Peruvian 75
 temperatures 12, 50, 51
 Templo de la Luna **185**, 186 (nr Cusco) **229**, 322 (Machu Picchu)
- tents 37
 terrorist movements 62
 thermal baths 274, **276** 303, **303**, 309, **309**
 Third Pass (Classic Inca Trail) **225**, 226
 Thomson, Hugh 41-2, 43, 44, 90, 102, 198-9, 260, 261, 286
 Tiahuanaco people & site 53, 92, 93, 94
 tickets, Machu Picchu 206, 318
 time 85-6
 Tinke 300-1, **302**
 Tipón, ruins 209-10
 tipping 83
 Titu Cusi, Inca 341, 342
 toilets 116
 toiletries 38
 Toledo, Alejandro 63, 64, 65, 66, 69, 71, 72, 102
 Toledo, Viceroy Francisco de 190
 Topa Inca (Túpac Yupanqui) 94, 96, 97, 227, 237, 293
 Torontoy 237
 Totora river and valley **255**, 256
 tourist information 44
 see also place name
 Tourist Protection Service 89
- tour operators and trekking agencies 17-20, 22-3, 212
 agencies based outside Peru: Australia 20, Austria 19, Belgium 19, Canada 19-20, Denmark 19, France 19,
- tour operators and trekking agencies (*cont'd*)
 Germany 19,
 Netherlands 19,
 New Zealand 20,
 South Africa 20,
 Switzerland 19,
 UK 17-18, USA 19
 agencies based in Peru (Cusco) 177-82
 licence requirements 178-9
- trailheads, transport to 215
 Cachora 286
 (Choquequirao Trek)
 Huaran/Huaran Fondo (Lares trek) 268-9, **270**
 Huancacalle (Vilcabamba Trail) 339, 341
 Inca Trail 215, 217
 Mollepatá (High Inca Trail & Salkantay Trek) 240
 Tinke (Ausangate Trek) 300
- trains *see* rail services
 transport 26, 78-9
 see also bus services, rail services, taxis
 travel insurance 47
 trees 104-5
 Trekkers' Hotel old, 228, **229**, **265**
 trekking agencies *see* tour operators
 trekking costs 179
 trekking permits 212-13
 trekking season 10-12
 Truth and Reconciliation Commission 64, 69
 Túpac Amaru, Inca 101, 152
 Túpac Amaru II 57, 74, 148
 Túpac Huallpa, Inca 55
 Túpac Yupanqui, Inca *see* Topa Inca
- UNESCO World Heritage Sites 103, 124, 146, 310
 Urcon, Inca 94, 95
 Upis 301, **302**
 Upis basecamp 303

- Urpipata 342
- Urubamba river and valley
91, 183, 190, **191**, 198,
201, **202**, 205, **207**, **219**,
226, **229**, 231, **233**, 234,
236, 237, 238, 258, 263,
265, 293, 310, 312
- Urubamba town **191**, **197**
196-200
- Ututo 342
- vaccinations 46
- Valle Sagrado *see* Sacred
Valley
- Vallejo, César 73-4
- Vargas Llosa, Mario 61, 73
quoted 48
- Veronica, Nevado 195, 217,
226, 230, 260, 331
- vicerealty of Peru 55-6
- vicuña 88, 109
- Vilcabamba/Vilcabamba La
Vieja, 32, 34, 43, 101,
315, 339, 342, 344, 345
books on 43
- Vilcabamba Trail 34,
339-45
altitude profile **341**
overview map **343**
- Viracocha (god) 53, 68, 93
- Viracocha, Inca 94, 209
- visas 76
- viscachas 109, 333
- Visitor's Ticket (Cusco)
150, 184
- Vista Alegre 342
- Vitcos walk and site **340**,
341
- walking poles 35, 39, 213
- walking times (maps) 211
- warden's huts/offices *see*
checkpoints
- War of the Pacific 59
- Wari *see* Huari
- waste disposal 115-16
- water
bottles/pouches 39, 84,
213
pollution 116
purification 39, 121
- Wari people *see* Huari
- waterproof clothing 36
- waypoints 214, 356-8
- Wayna Picchu *see* Huayna
Picchu
- weather 10-12, 119
- websites
tourist and general
information 44
- White Rock, The* (Hugh
Thomson) 41, 102, 285
- wildlife 108-14, 117, 333
- Winay Poccos 256, **257**
- wine, Peruvian 84
- Wiñay Wayna *see* Huinay
Huayna
- words & phrases 345-9
- Yale University 154, 310,
311, 313, 315, 317
- Yanahuara 278, **280**
- Yanama, hamlet 294, 296
320, **335**, 336
- Yawar festival 334
- Yunkachimpa, campsite
218, **220**
- Yupanqui, Manco Inca *see*
Manco Inca Yupanqui
- Yurac Rumi, site 341
- Zapata, Marcos 149, 154
- Ziegler, Gary 41, 260, 294
- zipline, Cola de Mono
Canopy 258



The symbol used at the start of each section of this book is the *Chakana* or Inca Cross, the Inca equivalent of the Tree of Life. The three steps on each side symbolise *Hana Pacha* (the abode of the gods), *Kay Pacha* (the world of men) and *Ucu Pacha* (the underworld or spirit world). The hole through the centre represents the centre of the Inca empire: Cusco; it also stands for the Southern Cross constellation.

Trekking Routes

Map 27 p302
 Map 28 p303
 Map 29 p304
 Map 30 p305
 Map 31 p306
 Map 32 p307
 Map 33 p308
 Map 34 p309

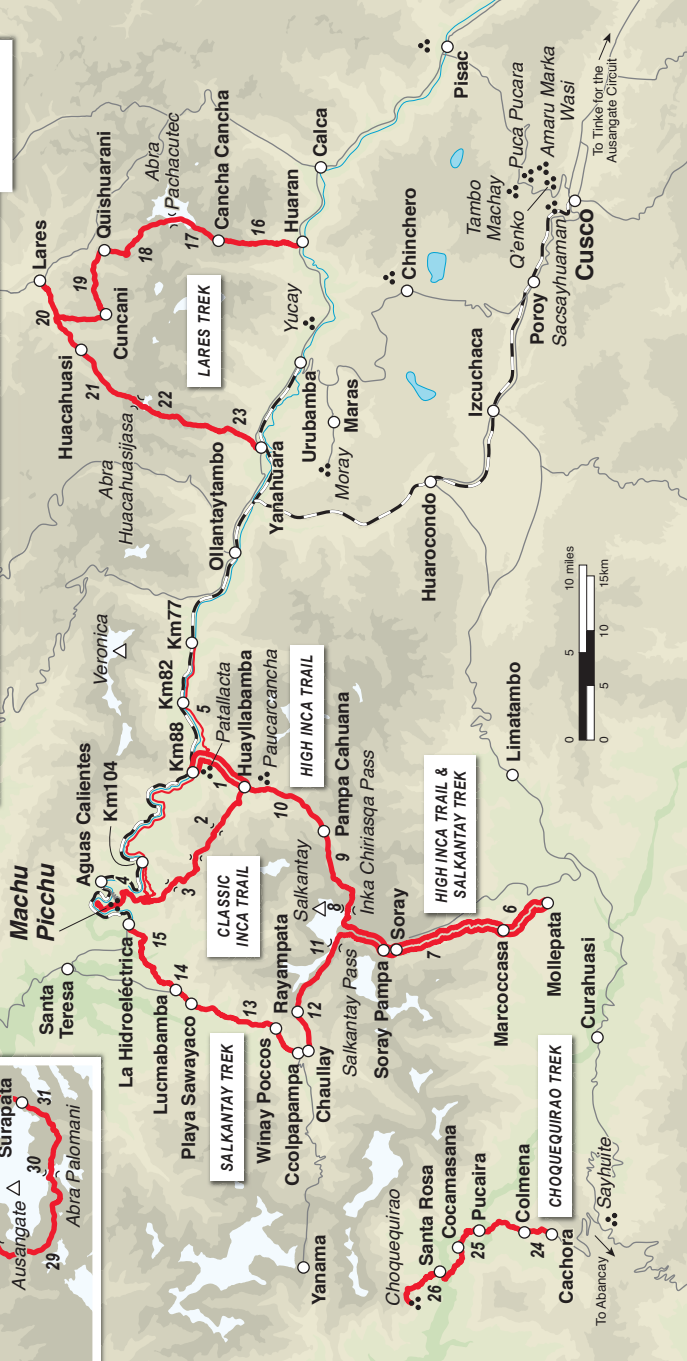
Map 20 p276
 Map 21 p277
 Map 22 p279
 Map 23 p280
 Map 24 p287
 Map 25 p289
 Map 26 p291

Map 13 p257
 Map 14 p259
 Map 15 p265
 Map 16 p270
 Map 17 p271
 Map 18 p273
 Map 19 p275

Map 9 p246
 Map 10 p247
 Map 11 p253
 Map 12 p255

Map 5 p233
 Map 6 p241
 Map 7 p243
 Map 8 p245

Map 1 p219
 Map 2 p220
 Map 3 p225
 Map 4 p229





6
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