Inca Trail Trek

Reaching the lost Incan city of Machu Picchu via the Inca Trail is a fascinating insight into Inca life. The 33km (20.5mi) journey is walked by thousands every year, winding its way over three high Andean passes to the best-known archaeological site on the continent.

Day One
Fly from London Heathrow to Cusco.

Day Two
It'll be an early morning wake up for breakfast today, as you will be picked up from your hotel and taken to the airport to catch a flight to Cusco. Once you touch down you will be met by our representatives and taken to your hotel. You'll need to acclimatise, so you'll have the afternoon to explore Ollantaytambo, an Inca vestige that served as a military, religious and agricultural center. The fortress is located in the highest part of the mountain, and the view from the top of the town's narrow streets and water channels is fantastic.

Returning to your vehicle you'll drive through the Sacred Valley of the Incas to Pisac, beautiful town famous for its handicraft market. The town has two different sides, the old town (with wonderful Inca architecture), and the new town (Colonial architecture).

Day Three
Today is another acclimatization day. The Inca Trail has areas that hit heights of 5000m and so it's important that everyone learns to cope with Cuzco's 3000m first!

You'll visit the huge circular agricultural terraces at Moray this morning. Built by the Incas in natural sinkholes on a limestone plateau, and overlooking the Urubamba valley, their function remains a mystery. Some believe they must be agricultural, others have suggested they have a cosmological meaning. Either way the structures are incredibly impressive. You'll also travel to the age-old terraced salt-mines and ponds that sit below the colonial town of Maras.

Day Four
With an early start from the hotel you will set off on a two and a half hour bus ride to Mollepata (2803 m). This is an attractive village built on a hillside overlooking the deep valley of Apurimac. From here you will continue your journey by truck as far as Sayllapata where you will collect the horses and horsemen that will carry your equipment.

Trekking from here you will pass through hillside villages built overlooking the deep citrus producing valley of the Apurimac, it's ascending valleys filled with flowering shrubs and buzzing with hummingbirds. We will enjoy some lunch at Challacancha before trekking for a further three hours to reach Soraypampa camp site (3700 m). Lunch and dinner included.

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Day Five
After breakfast we will set off at 08.00 am. The valley broadens and flattens and the beautiful conical snow-capped peak of Nevado Salkantay comes into view. You will stop at Pampa Japonesa for lunch before continuing towards the first and difficult pass of Incachiriascca (4800m), translated as ´the place where the Inca cools down`. From here you will get your first opportunity to glimpse the impressive snow peak of Salkantay (6,271 m) and to it's adjoining peaks; the Nevado of Umantay (5,917m) and Yanantay (5,200m). From the pass you continue descending to arrive at the camp of Sisaypampa (3,800 m) where you will spend the night. Full board is included.

Day Six
This morning the valley begins to narrow and the river becomes a canal. The Incas frequently cut canals through valleys to increase the amount of agricultural land and this route awards us some excellent examples of this. After about 3 hours walking down the steep valley, you will arrive at the camp of Paukarcancha (3,100 m) for lunch. You will have a chance to enjoy Pachamanca, which is a delicious traditional Indian style food and will give you plenty of energy for a post lunch game of football. Porters, horsemen and assistants join in and it's a great way to get to know your fellow Peruvians. The horses and horsemen will then return to Mollepata and you'll be introduced to the porters who will accompany you to Machupicchu. Full board is included.

Day Seven
After breakfast you will continue the descent towards the community of Huayllabamba (3,000m), arriving at mid morning. Crossing the valley of the same name, you will have lunch at Lluncachimpa. Tonight you will camp at Llulluchapamapa (3,750m). Full board is included.

Day Eight
Finally today you will cross the first and higher pass of the Inca Trail, Warmihuañusca (4,200m). From this point you will descend towards Pacaymayo, before climbing the steps to Runcuracay (3,900m). In the afternoon you will climb a third gentler pass, before arriving at the camp of Puyupatamarca (3,600m). This trek is the longest in the Inca trail, but in exchange for its difficulty you are rewarded with remarkable views of archaelogical ruins, as well as the chance to see beautiful orchids and a huge diversity of plants. Full board is included.

Day Nine
Today we will descend towards the archeological site of Wiñayhuayna, before continuing towards Intipunku or The Sun Gate. This is where you will have your first glance of the wonderful citadel of Machu Picchu in the distance. We will continue onto the town of Aguas Calientes (2,000m) where we will spend the night. Breakfast and lunch included.

Day Ten
Very early in the morning we will take a bus to visit the fantastic ruins of Machupicchu; probably the most outstanding feat of engineering in all of ancient America; temples, stairways, palaces and gabled stone dwellings are scattered everywhere, testifying to the energy and ingenuity of the builders. In the afternoon we return by train to Cusco and finally transfer from the train station to your hotel. Tonight, over your last dinner in Peru you will have the chance to reminisce over what will have been an amazing trip. Breakfast included.

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Day Eleven
Fly from Cusco to London Heathrow. Breakfast included.

Includes:	Camping equipment, guide, porters, dining tent, bathroom tent, meals, first aid kit, entrance to Macchu Picchu, meals as shown in itinerary, train from Macchi Picchu to Cusco.
Excludes:	Sleeping bag, alcoholic beverages, tips, personal equipment (for which a kit list will be issued), all meals not noted in itinerary.
Price per person:	Price on application
Best time to travel:	April to November
Is it for you?	The majority of the tour is done by foot and so you will need a reasonable level of fitness. You will also be walking at altitude so you should be prepared for it to be cold at night, and to take measures to help prevent altitude sickness.