**SACRED VALLEY AND LARES ADVENTURE**

**TO MACHU PICCHU**

**5-Day Program Itinerary**

*The Sacred Valley and Lares Adventure to Machu Picchu—a journey through the ancient history, living culture, and magnificent landscapes of Cusco and the Sacred Valley of the Incas. Expert guides will tailor your individual experience from a daily list of adventure activities and cultural exploration options. Then, as breathtaking sunsets paint the Andean sky at the end of each exciting day, you will settle into our signature mountain lodges to enjoy exceptional Peruvian cuisine and top-notch accommodations.*

***DAY 0 | EVENING BRIEFING IN CUSCO***

 *Meet your MLP guide and fellow travelers for a general trip briefing and Q&A.*

* ***Time:*** *6pm*
* ***Location****: El Mercado, an MLP Signature Property*

*Calle 7 Cuartones 306, Centro Histórico de Cusco, Cusco*

* ***Duration:*** *Approximately 45 minutes\**

 *\*We recommend that you stay for dinner at* ***‘La Taberna’*** *in El Mercado, which offers Peruvian and other international cuisine in a cozy, elegant setting.*

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***DAY 1 | EXPLORING PISAQ***

 *After an early breakfast, your MLP guide and driver will pick you up from your hotel in Cusco to begin your journey from the busy streets of Cusco to the Sacred Valley of the Incas, full of lush green fields surrounded by striking mountain peaks. Start your day with either an invigorating hike from the village of Amaru to the community of Viacha, or a visit to the Awanakancha textile center followed by an exploration of the lively town and colorful artisan marketplace of Pisaq. Midday, both cultural explorers and hikers will reunite to enjoy exclusive access to the remote community of Viacha, learn about artisanal potato farming practices, and enjoy a traditional “Pachamanca” lunch with the locals. After lunch, either hike or drive to the Pisaq archaeological site, an afternoon excursion that offers the unique opportunity to explore the complex free of crowds.*

***DAY 1 | EXPLORING PISAQ (cont.)***

* ***Day 1 Activity Options***
* ***Cultural (morning):*** *Excursion to Awanakancha for an introduction to traditional Andean textile weaving techniques and an up-close visit with some friendly llamas, alpacas, and vicuñas, all camelids indigenous to both this region and other high-altitude regions throughout Peru. Next you will visit the town of Pisaq and explore the unique goods for sale in its famous artisan marketplace.*
* ***Active (morning):*** *Hike from the village of Amaru to the community of Viacha.*
	+ - * ***Duration:*** *Approximately 3 hours*
			* ***Hiking Level****: Moderate (max. elevation: 14,200’ / 4,328m)*
* ***All-Group Activity:*** *Share a traditional Pachamanca lunch with locals in the community of Viacha, followed by an optional hike (or vehicle transfer) and guided exploration of the Pisaq archaeological site.*
* ***Meals:*** *B,**L (Viacha), D (Lamay Lodge)*
* ***Overnight:*** *Lamay Lodge (9,705’ / 2,958m)*

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 *The day begins with a visit to the small town of Lamay followed by a scenic drive into the heart of the Lares Valley. Your first stop will be Ancasmarca for a guided tour of this seldom-visited archeological site. Afterwards, choose a visit with the expert textile weavers in the remote village of Choquecancha or a hike amidst turquoise blue lakes and towering peaks to the remote village of Huacahuasi, where both groups meet again to spend the night. Huacahuasi Lodge is operated by both MLP staff and members of the local community through a joint venture aimed at protecting the area’s cultural heritage and natural environment–a partnership that demonstrates the evolving role of traditional Andean communities in both the culture and commerce of modern-day Cusco.*

* ***Day 2 Activity Options***
	+ ***All-Group Cultural Activity (morning****)****:*** *Explore the town of Lamay and visit the archeological site of Ancasmarca.*
* ***Cultural (afternoon):*** *Visit to the remote community of Choquecancha where you will have the opportunity to meet locals and learn from the community’s expert textile weavers.*
* ***Active (afternoon):***
* ***Option A:*** *Hike from Quelquena to Huacahuasi.*
* ***Duration:*** *Approximately 2.5 hours*
* ***Hiking Level:*** *Easy to moderate (max. elevation 12,595´ / 3,839m)*

***DAY 2 | INTO THE HEART OF LARES (cont.)***

* ***Option B:*** *Hike from Cuncani to Huacahuasi.*
* ***Duration:*** *Approximately 4 hours*
* ***Hiking Level:*** *Moderate (max. elevation 13,838´ / 4,219m)*
* ***Meals****: B (Lamay Lodge), L (Cultural – Choquecancha; Active – Box lunch en route), D (Huacahuasi Lodge)*
* ***Overnight****: Huacahuasi Lodge (12,585’ / 3,835m)*

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 *Begin the day with a scenic drive to the community of Huilloc. From there, choose a morning hike from the village of Huilloc to the historic ruins of Pumamarka, or an extended visit to Huilloc and the nearby archaeological site of Marcacocha before regrouping for lunch and a midday exploration of the Pumamarka ruins. After lunch, choose to hike from Pumamarka to Ollantaytambo or drive and spend the afternoon exploring Ollantaytambo town’s maze-like alleys and passageways.*

 *Note: Afternoon hikers will meet the rest of the group at the hotel upon arrival in the Sacred Valley.*

* ***Day 3 Activity Options***
* ***Cultural (morning):***
* *Tour an Andean trout farm in Huilloc and enjoy a ceviche tasting.*
* *Tour the Marcacocha archaeological site nearby and participate, along with the local sheep herders, in a traditional Andean ceremony to honor the Inca gods as protection for the health of the community livestock.*
* *Drive from Marcacocha to Pumamarka for an all-group tour of the archaeological site and picnic lunch.*
* ***Active:***
* ***Morning:*** *Hike from Huilloc to Pumamarka.*
* ***Duration:*** *Approximately 3 hours*
* ***Hiking level:*** *Moderate*
* ***Afternoon:*** *Hike from Pumamarka to Ollantaytambo.*
* ***Duration:*** *Approximately 3 hours*
* ***Hiking level:*** *Moderate*

***DAY 3 | THE ROAD TO OLLANTAYTAMBO (cont.)***

* ***Optional All-Group Activity (late afternoon):*** *Visit a locally-sourced Sacred Valley craft brewery (subject to additional cost).*
* ***Meals****: B (Huacahuasi Lodge), L (Pumamarka), D (Kuychi Rumi Lodge)*
* ***Overnight****: Kuychi Rumi Lodge (9,284’ / 2,830m)*

***DAY 4 | DISCOVERING OLLANTAYTAMBO***

 *Today, early risers can choose a pre-tour hike to the Inca storage structures high above Ollantaytambo for a magnificent view of the archaeological site and the adjacent lush Urubamba Valley.*

*Afterwards, the entire group will meet at the entrance of the site for a guided exploration of this exalted Inca ceremonial center including its historical context, strategic architectural planning, and mystical attributes. Midday, you will embark on a scenic Vistadome train ride (approximately 1.5 hours) along the Urubamba River to the charming town of Aguas Calientes at the base of Machu Picchu.*

* ***Day 4 Activity Options***
	+ ***Active (early morning):***
* ***Option A:*** *Hike up**Lower Pinkuylluna Mountain above Ollantaytambo.*
	+ ***Duration:*** *Approximately 1.5 hours*
	+ ***Hiking Level:*** *Moderate*
* ***Option B:*** *Hike up Pinkuylluna Mountain above Ollantaytambo.*
* ***Duration****: Approximately 2.5 hours*
* ***Hiking Level:*** *Moderate to challenging*
* ***All-Group Cultural Activity (morning)****: Guided exploration of the Ollantaytambo archeological site.*
* ***Meals****: B (Kuychi Rumi Lodge), L (Box lunch on the train), D (Inkaterra Pueblo Hotel)*
* ***Overnight****: Inkaterra Pueblo Hotel, Aguas Calientes (6,232´ / 1,900m)*

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***DAY 5 | THE CITADEL OF MACHU PICCHU***

 *Your journey to Machu Picchu begins at dawn with a rollicking uphill bus ride. As you enter the ‘sanctuary’ (as locals refer to it), prepare to be awed by the imposing, skillful architecture of the Watchtower, the Temple of the Sun, and the royal Inca residences, among others. After a two-hour guided tour, you will have free time to explore on your own, including a hike up Huayna Picchu\*, the iconic mountain that looms over the citadel, for dramatic views that stretch from the Urubamba River Valley to the edge of the Amazon Jungle. At some point, be sure to take a moment and sit quietly–listen to the wind, meditate, and absorb the mystical energy that envelops you. After the visit you will have lunch in Aguas Calientes before the scenic train ride to Ollantaytambo (approximately 1.5 hours) and vehicle transfer to your hotel in Cusco (approximately 1.5 hours). As night falls and you arrive amidst the hustle and bustle of the city, you will be touched by a feeling of peace and rejuvenation that will linger long after your journey home*.

***\*****Entrance time - Huayna Picchu: 10am*

***Note****: Permits for Huayna Picchu are subject to availability; please consult with your MLP Travel Specialist when you confirm your reservation. In the event that Huayna Picchu permits are not available for your desired date, Machu Picchu Mountain (the second peak within the sanctuary) permits will be secured instead.*

* ***Day 5 Activity Options***
* ***All-Group Cultural Activity (early morning):*** *Guided exploration of the Machu Picchu citadel. (7,872´ / 2,400m)*
* ***Cultural (late morning):****Free time for further exploration.*
* ***Active (late morning)****: Hike up Huayna Picchu or Machu Picchu Mountain.*
* ***Duration:*** *Approximately 2.5 hours*
* ***Hiking Level:*** *Moderate to challenging (max. elevation 8,924´ / 2,720m)*
* ***Meals****: B and L (Inkaterra Pueblo Hotel)*

***END OF ITINERARY***

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***ADDITIONAL NOTES | SACRED VALLEY AND LARES ADVENTURE TO MACHU PICCHU***

* *Lodging in Cusco before and after your MLP adventure is not included in the itinerary; however, we invite you to book accommodations at one of our Signature MLP Properties in Cusco,* ***El Mercado (https://www.elmercadocusco.com/en-gb)*** *and* ***El Retablo (http://elretablo.com/)****. Please ask your MLP Travel Specialist for more details and help with securing reservations at your hotel of choice in Cusco.*

***ADDITIONAL NOTES (cont.)***

* *Extend Your Stay: Combine MLP Trip Extensions (*[***https://www.mountainlodgesofperu.com/trip-extensions-peru/***](https://www.mountainlodgesofperu.com/trip-extensions-peru/)*) with your MLP Signature Adventure to create your own customized travel experience. Contact your MLP Travel Specialist for more details and help with securing reservations at your hotel of choice in Cusco.*