

# Peru



The Only Lodge to Lodge Horseback Ride to Machu Picchu



Hidden Trails  
[www.hidden-trails.com](http://www.hidden-trails.com)

North America Toll Free:  
United Kingdom:

1-888-9-TRAILS  
0-808-189-0420



# Welcome!

## Your journey begins here...

- ...A once in a lifetime *physical, cultural, and spiritual* journey that will take you through the magnificent **Salkantay Inca Trail** to the legendary ruins at **Machu Picchu**...
- ...Challenge yourself as you hike through **nine different bio-zones**, changing altitudes and varied terrain...
- ...Marvel at the exquisite beauty of the **Salkantay Peak** and **Humantay Glacier Lake**...
- ...Share in the culture and customs of **local Andean families** who maintain century-old traditions...
- ...Witness environmental and social initiatives to **maintain the natural integrity** and improve quality of life in the region...
- ...Indulge in the comfort of our **enchanted mountain lodges**, the innovative gourmet cuisine, the warmth of our people, and your daily retreat to a **recovery Shangri-La for mind and body**...
- ...Be inspired by the **majesty of your surroundings** and the knowledge that you are following in the footsteps of the Incas.

## Table of Contents

About Mountain Lodges of Peru .....	3
Day to Day Itinerary .....	5
Inclusions .....	9
Route Map .....	12
Terrain and Time Data .....	13
Preparing For Your Trip .....	14
Guides .....	16
FAQ .....	19
Testimonials & Honors .....	20
Yanapana Peru .....	21

[www.hiddentrails.com/peru.htm](http://www.hiddentrails.com/peru.htm)

# Machu Picchu Mountain Lodges

## adventure at its finest

### About Mountain Lodges of Peru

Mountain Lodges offers "Adventure at its finest": the opportunity to experience the essence of adventure within the realm of revitalizing comforts. A great adventure does not end there: for it to be a life-changing experience for our guests, we believe that the experience has to be an adventure on many levels.

This is why our proposal goes far beyond comfortable lodges and great rides... it is a unique opportunity to experience ancient history in the land of the Incas, contemporary manifestations of deep-founded culture, the most interesting and exotic variety of flora and fauna, culinary surprises, the determination of local people to progress, new friends and like-minded souls.

### The Proposal

We propose an expedition...an exciting adventure of surprising comfort that takes you on an ancient Inca trail called the "Salkantay Inca Trail", the road less traveled to the lost city of the Incas. The route winds through the Cordillera Vilcabamba, a spectacular Andean mountain range, before plunging into forested canyons. Discover a world surrounded by magical moments which will stay with you far beyond your return home. See why the majestic peaks with their emerald-green glacial lakes inspired awe among the natives who consider them gods.

Riding on the unbeaten trails of the mysterious Incas, high in the mountains and on winding slopes, creates an intimate bond between horse and rider based on mutual trust and the excitement of the journey ahead. These athletic, surefooted and noble horses are well trained for high altitude and changing terrain, and travel with outstanding willingness.

Each day's ride ends not in a freezing tent but in one of four cozy lodges with hot showers, fine gourmet meals, select wines, goose-down bedding, outdoor jacuzzis and highly personalized service provided by local staff.

In our Machu Picchu Lodge-Lodge experience, riders spend two nights at the Salkantay Lodge, and one night at each of the three other lodges located along the trail: Wayra Lodge, Colpa Lodge and Lucma Lodge. The last night of the trip is spent in a luxurious hotel in the town of Machu Picchu in anticipation of the grand finale: a visit to Machu Picchu, the lost city of the Incas.



*Photo, at right: Salkantay Lodge with Mt. Salkantay in the background*





# Day to Day Itinerary

Arrival in Cusco is the day before

## DAY 1 | Cusco to Salkantay Lodge

Overnight at Salkantay Lodge at 3,869 m/12,690 ft

*Note: On the evening before there will be a briefing with your guide in Cusco - overnight at 4\* hotel included.*

After an early breakfast, we are picked up starting at 7:00 am at our hotel in Cusco by an MLP guide and vehicle for the drive in the direction of Salkantay Lodge in Soraypampa. En route we take a short break to visit the Inca ruins of Tarawasi near the town of Limatambo (approx. 1.5 hrs from Cusco). After leaving Limatambo, we pass through the mountain village of Mollepata where we stop for a short coffee break before ascending a winding mountain road to Coronilla Ranch.

Here, after a short period of familiarization with the equestrian team and the horses, we begin our ride to Soraypampa. This is a good opportunity for everyone to acclimate while enjoying a beautiful 3-4 hour ride. Salkantay Lodge takes its name from the majestic peak at the head of the valley—Mt. Salkantay, the second most sacred peak in Inca mythology and, at 6,270m (20,600 ft), the highest in the region. After a warm welcome by our friendly staff we are shown to our rooms and have time to wash-up before tea and cookies. The trip leader will hold a briefing by the fireplace, followed by aperitifs and dinner.

- Riding Time:** Approximately 4 hours (including picnic lunch en route)  
**Ride and Terrain:** Walk, trot, canter, gallop on open roads, some steep ascending trails  
**Non-rider activities:** Direct transfer or hiking to the lodge



Photo, top: Mt. Salkantay. |

Photo, bottom: The welcoming staff at Salkantay Lodge.



## DAY 2 | A Visit to the Humantay Lake and the Chakana

Overnight at Salkantay Lodge at 3,869 m/12,690 ft

Today's excursion takes us first to Humantay Lake, fed by glaciers far above on the slopes of the impressive Mt. Humantay. Our one-hour ride there is followed by a short 20-minute walk, which is necessary in order to reach the lake, but the view is well worth it and those brave enough can go for a swim! After a short snack break we hike back down to where we left the horses, and from where we begin a 30-minute ride to our next dismount spot: the gateway to the "Chakana" (the mystical Cross of the Incas, located on a view point high above Soraypampa). From here, we begin a one-hour excursion by foot to our destination, the actual "Chakana". This excursion allows guests to enjoy the best views of the Soraypampa Valley, Mt. Salkantay and Mt. Humantay, and is truly one of the high points of our journey... which should not be missed! A mystical offering to Mother Earth (or "Pachamama") at the Chakana, performed by a local Shaman, in full view of the awe-inspiring Mt. Salkantay, tops off this unique experience.

We return to the lodge for lunch, after which there is the option of riding out again for a couple of hours in the surrounding area, or you can choose to follow-up on the glacial swim with a relaxing soak in our outdoor hot tub instead. In the evening, the guide briefs us on gear and the itinerary for the following day. All meals are served at the Lodge.

**Riding Time:** Approximately 4 hours

**Ride and Terrain:** Walk, trot, canter on open roads, some steep ascending trails and open fields

**Non-rider activity:** Hike to Humantay Lake



## DAY 3 | Crossing the Salkantay Pass

Overnight at Wayra Lodge at 3,906 m/12,812 ft

Today we continue our journey towards Machu Picchu, riding up the Rio Blanco valley and circling Humantay Peak across from Salkantay Peak. The highest point of the ride is the Salkantay Pass at 4,638 meters (15,213 ft). At the pass we stop to take in views of snow-capped peaks of the Vilcabamba Range in every direction, with the glaciated south face of Salkantay towering above us. We will keep our eyes out for Andean condors, often visible in this area. From the pass we descend towards the Wayra Lodge, ("Wayra": wind; 'the place where the wind lives') our destination for the evening. A hot lunch is taken en route; dinner and overnight at the Lodge.

**Riding Time:** Approximately 4 hours

**Ride and Terrain:** Walk, trot on mostly steep trails, and some open slopes

**Non-rider activity:** Transfer to Ollantaytambo or Cusco or hiking along the trail

*Photo, top: Glacial lake below Mt. Humantay. |*

*Photo, bottom: Riding to the top of the pass.*

## DAY 4 | Descending into the Cloud Forest

Overnight at Colpa Lodge at 2,870 m/9,414 ft

On this day we enjoy a leisurely breakfast at Wayra Lodge, and then we continue downhill above the Salkantay River, descending into the cloud forest, through increasingly verdant scenery. We can feel the warm air rising from the jungle, accompanied by colorful butterflies and striking orchids. Upon arrival at Colpa Lodge we are greeted with a Pachamanca, a traditional festive Peruvian meal cooked by layering meat with hot stones and then covering the whole thing up to bake. Colpa Lodge is located on an open plateau at the confluence of three rivers. The outdoor jacuzzi has panoramic views of lush green mountains. We spend the afternoon relaxing or exploring the nearby orchid trail. Dinner and overnight at the lodge.

**Riding Time:** Approximately 3 hours

**Ride and Terrain:** Walk or trot, canter on steep trails and open fields

**Non-rider activity:** Free day in Ollantaytambo or hiking along the trail



## DAY 5 | Following the Santa Teresa River Valley

Overnight at Lucma Lodge at 2,135 m/7,003 ft

Today we ride along the Santa Teresa river valley, through more populated rural areas. We pass through banana, passion fruit, avocado orchards and coffee plantations. The coffee grown here is said to be one of the best organic coffees in the world. Our ride takes us to the beginning of the "Llactapata Inca Trail", which is where we say goodbye to our horses and equestrian staff. A short 30-minute walk through an avocado orchard brings us to Lucma Lodge. Dinner and overnight at the lodge.

**Riding Time:** Approximately 4 hours

**Ride and Terrain:** Walk, trot, and canter on steep trails and some open roads

**Non-rider activity:** Transfer by train and vehicle to Lucma Lodge, hiking along trail, or Canopy Zip Line Tour (please see page 10 for detailed information)



*Photo, top: Colpa Lodge after the morning hike. |  
Photo, bottom: A quick stop to rest and enjoy the scenery.*



## DAY 6 | First Views of Machu Picchu from Llactapata Pass

Overnight in Aguas Calientes at 1,900 m/6,232 ft

After a hearty breakfast, we tackle the last day on the trail. We head uphill for around 2-3 hours towards Llactapata Pass (2,736m / 8974ft) where we come upon a distant but spectacular view of Machu Picchu Sanctuary from the southeast, a perspective that few travelers ever get a chance to admire. We take a short break to explore the recently restored Llactapata Ruins. Lunch is served at a scenic viewpoint, looking out to Machu Picchu. We then begin our final descent to the Aobamba River through lush bamboo forests, orchards and coffee plantations. Aguas Calientes, the town of Machu Picchu, is a short train ride away. Upon arrival we check into our lovely hotel for a celebration dinner with our guide, and one last briefing!

Note - Those who prefer not to hike, can go to the train station by van after a leisurely morning including breakfast and lunch at the lodge. They will meet the rest of the group at the train station for the ride to Aguas Calientes together. (The guide confirms our preferences the night before.)

**Hiking Time:** 4–6 hours

**Hiking Level:** Moderate to challenging



## DAY 7 | Visit Machu Picchu Sanctuary

Return to Cusco at 3,360 m/11,021 ft

After a very early buffet breakfast at the hotel, we make our way to the bus station for the ride up to Machu Picchu Sanctuary (30 min). Our trip leader will give the group an introductory two-hour guided tour of the ruins, after which we have the rest of the morning to explore the site on our own—there is a lot to do and see! Afterwards, we return by bus to Aguas Calientes for a late lunch and to meet our train. The ride from Aguas Calientes to Ollantaytambo takes about one and a half hours, and then a private vehicle will drive us back to Cusco (an additional hour and a half). Upon arrival in Cusco (approximately 7-8 pm) we are dropped off at our hotel.

**Option:** Climb Huayna Picchu or Machu Picchu Mountain. Permits have to be purchased in advance (Please contact your Travel Specialist for information).

*Photo, top: First view of Machu Picchu Sanctuary from the trail. |*

*Photo, bottom: Citadel of Machu Picchu, with Huayna Picchu peak.*



# Rates & Inclusions

## TRIP RATE

US\$3,795\* per person

Rates are per person for the 8-day/7-night lodge ride program, based on shared accommodations in a twin, double or triple room (first night at hotel in Cusco is included).

**Traveling with Friends?** Bring a group of 10 or more and get one trip for free.

\*Trip Rate is subject to change without prior notice due to circumstances beyond our control.

## SINGLE OCCUPANCY

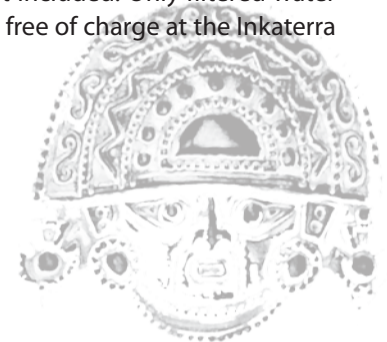
- Requested Single Room: 10% supplement of the retail cost per person
- If a guest is a single willing to share, we will do our best to pair up the guest with another traveler of the same gender.
- In case ultimately no roommate is found then the guest would only be subject to a 5% supplement of the retail cost per person

## TRIP RATE INCLUDES

- All services from Cusco on Day 1 to drop off in Cusco on Day 8.
- Transportation from hotel in Cusco to Soraypampa on Day 2 and from Ollantaytambo back to hotel on Day 8.
- 7 nights lodging (5 nights in lodges and 1 night in Cusco & 1 in Aguas Calientes in a 4-Star hotels)
- All meals except on Day 1 and dinner on Day 8
- Service of a bilingual guide (Spanish/English) from Day 2 to Day 8. Tours are led in English.
- Transportation of personal belongings on the trip by pack horses/mules and/or porters
- Guided visit of Machu Picchu Sanctuary (includes entrance and transportation to the site).
- Train transportation (Hydroelectric Station to Aguas Calientes, and Aguas Calientes to Ollantaytambo)
- At the lodges we provide filtered and sparkling water, tea and coffee, juice and soft drinks free of charge. Alcoholic and sports drinks, and natural bottled water are not included. Only filtered water and tea are available free of charge at the Inkaterra Pueblo Hotel.



Photo: Riding through the Salkantay Pass.





Photo, top: "Chakana" Inca cross above Soraypampa . |

Photo, bottom: Horseback riding excursion to the glacial lake below Mt. Humantay.

## Spend an Extra Day at Machu Picchu

Even though you have enough time to see the core of Machu Picchu Sanctuary during the regular guided tour, most of our guests realize that they would have liked to stay a little longer since there is so much to explore! Let us know if you want to add this optional day at time of reservation.

By spending an extra day at Machu Picchu, you will be able to...

- Make the best of your time visiting a World Heritage Site situated on a spectacular mountain ridge, overlooking the confluence of three rivers
- Explore areas of the site that are less visited by most visitors, such as climbing the steep staircase to Huayna Picchu or Machu Picchu Mountain (special permit to be purchased in advance) or hiking to the Inca Bridge or the Sun Gate
- Visit the town of Aguas Calientes and shop the local craft markets
- Treat yourself to a relaxing end to your vacation and fully enjoy the magnificent gardens, top-of-the-line spa, and hospitality of the unique Inkaterra Pueblo Hotel

### Notes

Includes: one additional night at the Inkaterra Pueblo Hotel with breakfast and dinner, bus tickets to/from the site, entrance tickets to the Sanctuary, and private transfer back to Cusco from Ollantaytambo (train ticket is included in your program cost). This extension cost does not include a guided visit of the Sanctuary, which can be provided at additional cost.

## Optional Activities During Trip

### Canopy Zip Line Tour

*On Day 5 of the trekking itinerary.*

Looking for more adventure? Join our exclusive half-day excursion on an exciting and scenic canopy zip line tour. This optional activity includes vehicle transfer, a two-and-half hour guided canopy zip line tour, all necessary safety equipment and training, and lunch.

Please let your Travel Specialist know if you would like to book this activity in advance (limited spaces available). If you are unsure at this time, you can book the excursion anytime until the afternoon on Day 4 of the itinerary (just let your trip leader know). This optional activity will run with a minimum of 2 guests.

# Pre- and Post-Ride Additional Travel Service

## Need help with your travel plans?

Don't know where to book hotels, domestic flights or other services in Peru? Or simply need advice on what to do? Let us give you a hand in making your travel hassle-free and enjoyable.

### Hotels in Lima

Did you know that most international flights arrive at Lima Airport either late at night (11pm) or early in the morning (5am) and that connecting flights to Cusco start at 6am? Spending the night at a Lima hotel (even for a few hours) will allow you some rest so that you can better enjoy the rest of your trip. We can book a range of hotels (from 3 to 5 stars) for you at the airport or in downtown Lima.

### Hotels in Cusco

We always recommend to spend at least two nights in Cusco (if your travel allows it) prior to the start of your trekking adventure in order to better adjust to the elevation. We can make hotel reservations in Cusco for your pre- and post-trekking needs. You will enjoy exploring the city of Cusco and its surroundings, which offer many great cultural and historical attractions. Additionally, you can enjoy fine dining, traditional shows, and bargain shopping.

### Extension Packages

Do you feel like exploring more of Peru? Ask for the extension brochure we have designed for you. Explore the colorful island communities of Lake Titicaca (the highest navigable lake in the world), adventure into the rich wilderness of the Peruvian Amazon jungle, or visit Colca Canyon, with its incredible depths, Inca terraces, and soaring condors.



*Photo: Women in traditional clothing in Cusco.*

# The Riding Route

**FINISH:** Aguas Calientes

End of Trek at Hydroelectric Train Station

Lucmabamba (2,135 m/7,003 ft)—Site of Lucma Lodge

Colpapampa (2,870 m/9,414 ft)—Site of Colpa Lodge

Huayracmachay (3,906 m/12,812 ft)—Site of Wayra Lodge

Abra Salkantay (4,638 m/15,213 ft)—High pass  
crossed on third day of the trek

**START:** Soraypampa (3,869 m/12,690 ft)—  
Site of Salkantay Lodge



# Locations, Altitudes, Distances, and Times

DAY	LOCATION	ALTITUDE		VERTICAL		VERTICAL		DISTANCE		DISTANCE		TIMES	TOTAL TIMES
		FEET	METERS	FEET	METERS	FEET	METERS	MILES	KM	MILES	KM		
1	CUSCO	11,021	3,360			2,039	622			72	118		Bus: 2h 30m Ride: 4h 30m
	Cusco-Izcuchaca	11,008	3,356	-13	-4			17	27			Bus: 35m	
	Izcuchaca-Huillque (Salkantay view point)	12,120	3,695	1,112	339			17	27			Bus: 25m	
	Huillque-Tarawasi Archeological Site (Limatambo)	8,751	2,668	-3,369	-1,027			14	23			Bus: 50m	
	Limatambo-Mollepata Town (coffee break)	9,371	2,857	990	302			13	21			Bus: 30m	
	Mollepata-Coronilla	9,504	2,897	133	40			1	2			Bus: 10m	
	Coronilla-Soraypampa (Salkantay Lodge)	12,690	3,869	3,186	972			11	18			Ride: 4h 30m	
2	Soraypampa-Humantay Lake	13,845	4,221	1,155	352	0	0	2	3	4	6	Ride: 2h 30m	Ride: 4h 30m
	Humantay Lake-Soraypampa	12,690	3,869	-1,155	-352			2	3			Ride: 2h	
3	Soraypampa-Salkantay Pampa	13,625	4,154	935	285	121	37	2	3	8	13	Ride: 2h	Ride: 7h
	Salkantay Pampa-Soyrococha	14,730	4,491	1,105	337			2	3			Ride: 1h 45m	
	Soyrococha-Salkantay Pass	15,213	4,638	482	147			1	1			Ride: 45m	
	Salkantay Pass-Ichupata (lunch spot)	13,799	4,207	-1,414	-431			2	3			Ride: 1h 30m	
	Ichupata-Huayracmachay (Wayra Lodge)	12,812	3,906	-987	-301			2	3			Ride: 1h	
4	Huayracmachay-Rayampata (resting spot)	11,460	3,494	-1,351	-412	-3,398	-1,036	3	4	6	9	Trek: 1h 30m	Ride: 4h
	Rayampata-Collpapampa (Colpa Lodge)	9,414	2,870	-2,047	-624			3	5			Trek: 2h 30m	
5	Colpa Lodge-Llactapata Inca Trail	7,938	2,420	-1,476	-450	-1,089	-332	14	22	15	23	Ride: 1h 30m	Ride: 1h 30m Trek: 30m
	Llactapata Inca Trail-Lucmabamba (Lucma Lodge)	7,003	2,135	387	118			1	1			Trek: 2h 30m	
6	Lucmabamba-Llactapata (Machu Picchu view point)	8,974	2,736	1,971	601	-771	-235	3	5	13	22	Trek: 3h 15m	Trek: 5h 45m Train: 1h
	Llactapata Pass-Train Station	5,809	1,771	-3,165	-965			4	7			Trek: 2h 30m	
	Train Station-Aguas Calientes	6,232	1,900	423	129			6	10			Train: 1h	
7	Aguas Calientes-Machu Picchu	7,872	2,400	1,650	503	N/A	N/A	8	13	N/A	N/A	Bus: 25m	N/A



# What You Need to Know to Prepare for the Trek

## Getting ready for your trip

We recommend that guests spend at least 2 nights in Cusco prior to departure. This helps with acclimatization to the altitude and also provides an opportunity to explore the beautiful city of Cusco. People can feel the effects of higher altitudes as low as 2000m (6000 ft) above sea level. They differ in their tolerance for high altitude conditions and how their bodies react to the changes in air pressure and oxygen level. Therefore we encourage guests to undergo preparation by regular cardio-vascular exercise, even if conducted at low elevation, and stick to a healthy, balanced diet prior to the trip. Beginner to Advanced Novice Riders: Allow 4 weeks of 3 one hour lessons per week to prepare. Week 1 should include lessons on basic control of your horse both on the ground and in the saddle. Week 2 should include lessons on body positioning to balance and control your horse and allow you to ride for 3 to 5 hours in comfort. Week 3 should include trail riding experience in a small group of horses. Trail etiquette and hand signals should be practiced. Week 4 should include lessons on riding on moderately steep, narrow trails, in hilly terrain.

**Suggested Reading:** "50 - 5 Minute Fixes to Improve Your Riding" by Wendy Murdoch.

## Horses

Mountain Lodges of Peru has bred a number of its own Quarter Horses which are specially exercised and trained for this trip, so they are highly aware and accustomed to the local terrain, wildlife and to performing at high altitude, making them a very secure ride. They combine responsiveness, energy, bravery and manners to produce the perfect trail horse. All horses are picked from a pre-selected pool especially for each trip, according to their level of fitness at the time.

For extra precautions horses are fitted with boots or bandages to protect their extremities. Also, replacement or back up horses are taken on every trip. Our horses are trained Western so they are used to neck reining and going on a loose rein. We mostly use American endurance saddles, but there are English saddles available for those who prefer them. We are very careful in checking that the saddles fit each horse well and we constantly ensure that the tack and shoeing are in excellent condition.

We keep groups small, carefully match horses to riders, see that people of similar skills ride together, and train ride leaders carefully.



*Photo: Starting the journey to the Salkantay Pass.*

## Packing List

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day pack                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Headlamp   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Safety equipment (helmet, gaitors, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Sunglasses   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Full rain gear or poncho                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Riding/hiking socks                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gloves (thin riding and warm gloves)     | <input type="checkbox"/> Sunscreen  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Riding pants                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Insect repellent   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Breathable dryfit top-wear               | <input type="checkbox"/> Bathing suit   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Comfortable shoes/flip-flops             | <input type="checkbox"/> Casual mountain wear for evenings                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cold-weather jacket                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo/video cameras and chargers                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Long-sleeve fleece/sweater               | <input type="checkbox"/> Binoculars   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wool hat                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Refillable water bottle (hydration bags are recommended) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Riding and hiking boots                  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Baseball cap or sombrero                 |   |

## Baggage Specifications

- Please, no hard suitcases or wheeled bags. Soft duffel bags and/or backpacks ("soft" luggage) are recommended.
- We provide a limited amount of hair-dryers at each lodge, due to limited energy supply and environmental concerns.
- Shampoo, conditioners and bath gel are provided at each lodge.
- Bathrooms are equipped with drying lines.
- Any additional clothing and luggage that you will not be needing on the trek can be stored at your hotel in Cusco.
- If you do not have an appropriate sized duffel bag, we can provide a duffel bag on loan at the pre-trek briefing (the night before departure from Cusco). Please return it to your trip leader after the trek.
- Peru Rail, the company that operates the trains from Aguas Calientes to Cusco, has a weight limit for all luggage on the trains, which is 1 backpack (5kg/11lbs) and 1 duffel bag (10kg/22lbs) per traveler. For luggage over this weight limit, Peru Rail will charge guests directly at the train station in Aguas Calientes (Rate: US\$0.82 per pound extra or US\$1.80 per kg extra).



Guido Huaman



Raul Ramirez



Washington Chucya



Pepe Noriega

## Guides

We provide one cultural and one Equestrian Guide and his/her assistant(s) for each group. In addition, groups of 6 or more guests are accompanied by a route doctor (depending on availability). Our guides are among the best in Peru (some have even won international awards!) and have on average at least 15 years of experience guiding in the mountains, not only in Peru but around the world. Many of them are considered pioneers in this area as well, having scouted many of the current routes in the country. All MLP guides have excellent language skills, and are highly trained in managing group dynamics. All guides undergo continuous medical and rescue training, with a certification in "Wilderness First Aid." You will appreciate their knowledge of history and cultural traditions, local flora and fauna, as well as their great insight (and stories) that goes far beyond any guide or history book! Since these leaders have been guiding this particular ride for several years now, they have made friends in the local communities, thus allowing genuine and spontaneous encounters during the journey which often provide unforgettable experiences for our guests. In their hands, you will feel safe and well taken care of! In addition, the equestrian support team traveling with our group is trained to treat health issues and injuries of our horse pack.

## Pre-Ride Briefing and Meet & Greet

We provide a pre-ride briefing in Cusco on the evening prior to the start of the ride. The meeting is held in a central restaurant by the trip leader and all participants are requested to attend. The briefing consists of the following:

- "meet and greet" with the group and the lead guide
- review of the detailed itinerary and any last-minute changes
- confirmation of specific dietary and medical information of the participants
- address frequently asked questions (and answers)
- verify that participants have the necessary gear and equipment

**Important Note:** You will be receiving an invitation via email with the time and place of the briefing, including a map with directions to the briefing. Please note that if your arrival into Cusco is delayed and you are unable to join your group for the transfer on Day 1 to the first lodge, we can arrange private transfer for you to join the group at additional cost.

## Brief Technical Trip Description

The ride consists of 5 days (2 days optional) of moderate to strenuous riding (and optional walking on day 6) at elevations of 2,000m-4,600m (6,600-15,000ft) on diverse types of trails ranging from flat and grassy to steep and rocky slopes. The ride crosses nine different eco zones in six days, with the possibility of changing weather conditions.

**Level of difficulty:** Intermediate to advanced. Beginners are welcome as we have different type of horses and direct assistance from a horseman available for them, however we recommend taking at least 6 hours of riding lessons prior to arriving in Peru.

**Age Limits:** The recommended minimum age of participants is 12 years old. However, we may consider exceptions depending on experience and physical condition.

**Tack:** We offer our guests two different types of saddles: American Endurance Saddles (similar to Western-type; synthetic) and Uruguayan Endurance Saddles (similar to English-type; leather), of which you can choose on Day 1.

**Helmets:** We strongly recommend the use of helmets on this ride. They are available for loan at Coronilla Ranch at no additional cost.



# While At the Lodges

All four mountain lodges have been designed and built in accordance with traditional building techniques, Inca architectural & mythological concepts, and respect for the surrounding environment. The Salkantay Lodge has 12 private double, twin or triple rooms with private bathroom facilities, while the other lodges (Wayra, Colpa, Lucma) have 6 private double, twin or triple rooms, all with private facilities. Salkantay, Wayra, and Colpa lodges have an outdoor jacuzzi. Every lodge guarantees an ample supply of hot water for showers; there are no bathtubs in any of the lodges. Starting July 2012, saunas will also be available at all lodges at no additional cost.

Room heating ensures the temperature remains a comfortable 68° F (20° C).

## Massage Services

We offer professional massage services at all lodges. The cost for a 50-minute massage service is US\$60.

## Check-In: Signature Account

At check-in at the Salkantay Lodge, you will be asked to open a voucher on your credit card for potential extras to be purchased during the trip, such as alcoholic beverages, massage, souvenirs, and others items of personal nature. At the Lucma Lodge (last day of the trek) you will need to settle your bill by charging the credit card previously presented or by paying in cash. If paying in cash, please take note that we only accept notes of US\$5, US\$10, US\$20, and US\$50 dollar bills; we do not accept notes of US\$1, US\$100, or coins. We accept Peruvian currency. If paying with a credit card, please note you will not be able to present a new credit card when settling the bill.

## Communications

We offer satellite-based communications at all four lodges along the Salkantay Trail to Machu Picchu. Due to the satellite-based nature of the system, signal reception may not be guaranteed in cases of continuous or extreme bad weather conditions.

## Rural Satellite Phone

Each Lodge has a stationary rural satellite phone which our guests can use. These phones require phone cards that can be purchased at the lodges. International calls can be placed and received. However, we kindly ask to refrain from receiving incoming calls unless in case of emergency, as a sign of respect and courtesy for other guests. As a reference, a US\$10 phone card provides 10 minutes to the US/Canada and 5 minutes to Europe.

## Rural Satellite Internet

We believe it's important for our guests to fully immerse themselves in the unique outdoor and nature experience provided by this trek. However, we understand that the Internet has become a necessary service for some of our guests. Thus, we provide rural wi-fi internet service at all four lodges free of charge.

If you decide to bring any electronic devices like laptops, iPads, or others, please keep in mind that you are responsible for their protection. We recommend appropriate covers for such sensitive devices (water proof, and anti-impact). Also, tell your guide that you are carrying the device so that extra measures can be taken for its protection.





## Travel Insurance

Hidden Trails requires that all guests making a reservation from March 15, 2012 onwards obtain a valid and enforceable\* insurance policy for medical expense and emergency evacuation/repatriation for the duration of their trip. Any rescue, evacuation, repatriation and/or medical costs that may be required during an MLP program including, but not limited to, cost of aircraft, must be paid by the guest.

All guests are required to provide valid proof of insurance to at time of final payment of their trip. In case proof of insurance is not provided at time of final payment, Hidden Trails and its partners in Peru will charge the guest the cost of an insurance policy with coverage for medical expenses and medical emergency evacuation\*\* at the rate of \$8 per person per day, according to the duration of their trip purchased through MLP.

In consideration of the normal nuances and situations regarding travel in general, MLP highly recommends

guests to purchase additional travel insurance which includes trip cancellation/interruption/delay and baggage and personal effects loss as a minimum. In the case that a guest abandons the trip by choice or as a consequence of MLP's medical emergency protocol (which allows MLP's guide or resident doctor to deny further participation of a guest on a trip), MLP will issue no refunds on the trip cost. Alternative plans can be arranged at additional costs to the guest.

\*Some insurance providers discriminate between "Standard Travel Activities" and "Adventure Travel Activities", for enforceability of medical coverage. Guests should make sure that the insurance policy acquired includes coverage for "Adventure Travel Activities" or similar.

\*\*In the event that a guest has not provided valid proof of the required insurance policy and Mountain Lodges of Peru provides the insurance policy under the terms explained above, the insurance policy is purchased by

MLP "in favor of the guest" and is provided through IHI-BUPA, with unlimited coverage for medical expense and evacuation. For detailed information about the coverage terms of this policy please visit the insurance provider's website. Due to the detailed and specific regulations regarding insurance, Mountain Lodges of Peru is not authorized to answer questions regarding this policy. Any questions must be directed to IHI BUPA. To view this insurance coverage, please follow this link (after you press the link, the insurance coverage terms apply to the table labeled "Basic Cover" only):

<https://global.ihid.com/travel+insurance/single+trip/cover.aspx>



# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Q: What is the terrain like? How challenging is it?**

**A:** The ride is rated as a moderate to challenging mountain trail ride and covers approximately 63 km / 32 miles on uneven, rocky terrain with steep uphill and downhill sections. Day 3 is the most challenging with an elevation gain of 1,000 meters / 3,000 feet in a span of 5 km / 3 miles to reach a maximum altitude of 4,640 / 15,000 feet. Prior riding experience is recommended as this is not a novice ride.

## **Q: Who should go on this ride?**

**A:** Advanced novice to professional riders. The trail and altitudes make this journey physically strenuous and we highly recommend prior riding lessons on a regular basis.

## **Q: What is the weather like on the Salkantay trek during the year?**

**A:** Weather in the region is extremely variable and you should pack for a variety of conditions. In addition, our ride passes through nine bio-zones ranging from high altitude alpine conditions to high jungle. During a sunny day you can expect about 65 – 80 °F (18 – 27 °C), however up on the pass weather is very unpredictable and temperatures can drop to 30 °F (0 °C) during the day (but you won't spend a lot of time up there). The zone of Machu Picchu has a climate more humid and tends to be warmer, since it is located at a lower altitude and near to the Amazon Jungle. There, the average temperatures are between 23°C (73°F) and 25°C (77°F), the minimum temperature being around 18°C (64°F). The region of Cusco has only two seasons well-defined: wet season and dry season. The wet season starts in November and finishes in March. In this time, it rains almost every day for three or four hours, but also there are several sunshiny days. The dry season begins around March and lasts until October. Between May and July it is quite cold. Paradoxically at noon the temperatures can reach 23 °C (the annual maximum).

## **Q: What kind of emergency procedures are in place if guests injures themselves in a way that disables them from continuing the ride (i.e. guest falls and breaks a leg)? What is the nearest hospital and how can they get there?**

**A:** In cases of emergencies or medical problems we have a detailed medical protocol to follow. There is basic medical equipment and attention at the lodges; our personnel traveling with the group are trained to handle emergencies. All of our guides have a "wilderness first aid certification". We have our own company doctor who is always available by telephone for any medical assistance. We also work with a medical helicopter rescue operation for emergencies. For minor medical attention that cannot be taken care of at the lodges but which requires special medical attention, the nearest medical centers, in the worst case, are one day distance by horse or mule. Guides carry a full first aid kit, portable oxygen, a portable hyperbaric chamber and radios with them at all times.

## **Q: What should we do with our remaining bags and clothing?**

**A:** Remaining luggage can be stored in Cusco at your pre-ride hotel.

## **Q: How is luggage transported from lodge to lodge? Is it with us at all times?**

**A:** Provided saddle bags hold everything you need for the day. For the hiking portions you should carry a day-pack with you. Mules and porters carrying the luggage will not walk with the group. Your luggage will meet you upon arrival at the next lodge.

## **Q: Do we carry our lunch food in our daypacks?**

**A:** On days 3, 5, and 6, which call for a picnic lunch en route, lunch will be prepared fresh on-site by the cooks and will consist of hot soup, gourmet sandwiches or a hot lunch, snacks and salads. Additionally, you will be handed a "snack-pack" to carry in your day packs with dry fruits, peanuts, chocolates and fresh fruits.

## **Q: How much I should tip?**

**A:** Tips are not included in the tripe rate. The recommended amount is as follows: US\$20 per guest at the Salkantay Lodge, US\$5 per guest at Wayra, Colpa and Lucma Lodges, US\$5 per guest for mule-drivers, and US\$10 per guest for route chef and assistant cook. For the lead guide the industry standard is US\$5-10 per day per guest; and US\$3-5 per day per guest for the assistant guide. All tipping is optional, but much appreciated by the entire staff. Ask your MLP Travel Specialist for details about how to pre-pay tips so that you don't have to carry too much cash with you.



*Photo: Evening happy hour in the jacuzzi at Salkantay Lodge.*

## Travelers' Quotes

Each aspect of the tour was first class.

There is a feeling at each lodge that you are staying with friends who have done everything imaginable to make you comfortable.

These horses are very well cared for and throughout the trip they were regularly checked for loose shoes, etc. They were shod all round and the tack was in excellent condition.

This was one of the most spectacular things I have ever done in my life.

The cozy inns (...) made the high, lonely route possible for a group that might otherwise have come here by train. In our case, the journey really was more important than the destination, and when you're talking about a place like Machu Picchu, that's saying a lot - Scott Wallace, National Geographic Traveler

On the trail we met no other tourist so we felt this was a very exclusive experience

I can't fault a thing! It was marvellous!

## Press Honors



## Visit Our Blog

Comment about your adventure!



# Yanapana Peru: Helping to Reduce Poverty in the Andes

Yanapana Peru is an independent, non-governmental, non-profit association, created as part of Mountain Lodges of Peru's program for Social Entrepreneurial Responsibility and Responsible Tourism in Peru. Its purpose is to reduce poverty in Mountain Lodges of Peru's areas of operation along the Salcantay Route through sustainable community development.

Due to the geography and distance of this area from urban developments, the Andean families here do not have access to basic services, such as drinking water, a sewage system, housing, health and education as a result of the government's lack of resources and organization.

In spite of their living situation, these Andean settlers preserve traditional values inherited from their forefathers: solidarity, work ethic and hospitality, and they have welcomed, and have high hopes for the projects that Yanapana Peru has set up with them and for them.

Mountain Lodges of Peru is fully committed to their welfare, and sees their venture as an environmental and ecological project rather than just a tourism enterprise. Together with local communities, MLP evaluates five basic areas of human development: health and nutrition, education, useful projects, work, and the environment.

It is true that your choice to utilize the services of Mountain Lodges of Peru in turn helps support Yanapana Peru—but further direct support from you—in the form of a monetary contribution or a donation of supplies (such as school or medical supplies) can make an even bigger difference in the lives of these wonderful Andean people. If you are interested and want more information please email us.

*On behalf of all of us at Hidden Trails, Yanapana Peru and the Andean people we work with and for, thank you for your consideration and support.*



*Photo: Guests with children at Machayhuayco primary school, one of the many projects sponsored by Yanapana and MLP.*

*"We cannot set up lodges living 'affluence' without looking outside where there is so much poverty."*

Ricardo Hernández San Martín  
Director, MLP Ecoteam

