

TREK MACHHU PICCHU 2026



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the beaten
track!*

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18 - 28 April 2026

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Machu Picchu Trek 2026

18 – 28 April 2026



Trip overview

Spend two days helping a local community before taking on one of the top 25 treks in the world. This challenging expedition will see you give back to the community you are visiting before taking you over the spectacular Andean peaks, through epic Peruvian landscapes and misty cloud forests.

We will start our adventure in the Colonial town of Cusco with an acclimatisation trek to the Inca ruins of Tambomachay. Our time at the community project will help us further acclimatise before we begin our hike towards Machu Picchu along the Salkantay trail.

The route follows an ancient and remote Inca footpath, where snow-capped mountains collide with lush tropical rainforests. The paths are filled with wild strawberries, colourful butterflies and other exotic flora and fauna. Off the beaten path, this trek is one of the most interesting and challenging ways to experience the land of the ancient Incas. One of the highlights will be catching our first glimpse of Machu Picchu across the valley!

We will spend our last night at the spa town of Aguas Calientes and in the morning we will take a short transfer to the ancient site where you can enjoy a guided tour, unlocking the mysteries of this glorious ancient city. After returning to Cusco we will have our final celebratory meal and more time to enjoy the sights of this stunning UNESCO World Heritage Site, before returning home via Lima.

Peru

Peru is the third largest country in South America and can be split into three regions: the Andes Mountains, the Amazonian lowlands and the Pacific coastal strip. Peru borders Chile, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia and Ecuador, while the western strip hugs the Pacific Ocean. The country possesses an enormous biological diversity and the flora and fauna are largely determined by the Andes and Amazon River. Peru is unequalled in South America for its archaeological and historical wealth and has witnessed many cultures and civilisations; the most well-known being the Incas, even though they were only dominant for around 100 years.





Machu Picchu

The awe-inspiring Inca site is instantly recognisable throughout the world. Reaching Machu Picchu at a height of 2,380m is a tremendous and exhilarating feeling. The city of Machu Picchu was hidden by lush vegetation until 1911 and is one of the best-preserved ancient kingdoms in the world. The quality of the buildings and their inaccessibility have inspired numerous theories about their purpose over the years.

Cusco

Formerly the head of the Inca Empire, Cusco is a fascinating and vibrant city full of history, dramatic scenery and the host of many fiestas and carnivals. This UNESCO World Heritage site is situated at an altitude of 3,400m so you need time to acclimatise. The city is an eclectic mix of Inca and Spanish architecture - everywhere you look you can see the remains of original Inca walls, doorways and arches.

The Community Project

You will spend two days helping a community project in the Sacred Valley. This is a truly immersive experience as you will be staying with villagers in homestays, giving you plenty of time to interact, engage in local traditions and learn all about their daily life and culture. Your tasks will vary depending on the need at the time but you're likely to get involved with refurbishment, redecorating and gardening which will make an instant impact to the community.

What is the experience like?

Who accompanies us?

You will be accompanied throughout the trek by English-speaking local guides who have an excellent knowledge of the local culture and hiking in the region. The guides are first-aid trained and will support you throughout your journey. You will also be supported by a team of professional cooks and muleteers from local communities and a Different Travel UK tour manager. You will be in very safe hands!

How tough is it?

This trek is graded as '*challenging*' as you will be trekking over varying terrain, exposed to high altitudes (up to 4,630m) and sleeping in campsites with basic facilities. You should be prepared for all weather conditions and variable temperatures. Each day's trek is between 5-8 hours and there are some big hills to climb! This is an endurance challenge so you are strongly advised to build up a good level of fitness – the fitter you are the more you will enjoy the challenge.



What's the terrain like?

The steep terrain and high altitude will make the going tough at times, but anyone with good fitness and the right attitude will love it. The first day is generally flat with a gradual incline as you gain altitude, there may also be some small streams to cross. The second day will be tough with a steep zigzagging ascent on rocky ground to the high pass, followed by an undulating descent through the rainforest where the terrain may be muddy and slippery. The next two days of trekking are undulating and will be a mixture of jungle and alpine trails, which can be muddy underfoot. There are several hills to climb, including a steep climb through the coffee plantations on the final day. **You must ensure your training includes plenty of hills!**

What's the food like on the trek?

Experienced chefs will be on hand to make amazing, hearty meals in the middle of the mountains. Breakfast is eaten as a group in the mess tent (hot drinks, bread, butter and jam, pancakes, scrambled eggs or oatmeal etc.) and the cooks will prepare delicious traditional Andean food for lunch and dinner. This will include dishes such as soup, chicken, beef or lamb, fish with potatoes, quinoa, rice or pasta. Snacks include fruit, chocolate, sandwiches, hot drinks and popcorn. Please let us know if you have any dietary restrictions.

How far will we trek?

Each day we will trek between 6-8 hours depending on group pace, altitude, weather and steepness of the terrain. As there is a lot of ascent and descent, the distances covered may not always sound very much (8-20km per day) but this does not demonstrate the difficulty of the terrain and hills you'll have to climb...

Where will we stay?

You will spend the first night in a hotel on a twin-share basis before staying in homestays for the project days. During the trek, you will spend three nights camping in three-man tents (two people per tent) and on the last night of the trek, you'll stay one night at a guesthouse in Aguas Calientes for a good night's sleep before heading up to Machu Picchu the following day. After the trek, you will spend a night at a hotel in Cusco. Tents, sleeping mats and sleeping bags are provided for camping.

Will we be at high altitude?

Yes, the maximum altitude on this trek is 4,630m (Abra Salkantay high pass); however, your exposure to high altitude will start from your arrival in Cusco (3,400m). Approximately 3,000m and above is considered high altitude. Upon arriving in Cusco, it quickly becomes evident to anyone un-acclimatised that they are at a higher altitude than they are used to, as simple activities such as walking upstairs feel more laboured than expected. The first two days in Cusco are acclimatisation days which will give your body a chance to adjust. These days are important to help you cope with the altitude demands during the trek.



What's the climate like?

The only thing you can say about the weather in Peru is that it is difficult to accurately predict. You can have beautifully clear hot days in the middle of the wet season and hail storms in the dry season – it's one of the beauties of Peru.

In the Andes, there are two main seasons – wet and dry. The wet season runs from November to April and the dry season from May to October. April is towards the end of the rainy season so you can expect some rainfall. You are likely to experience average daytime temperatures of around 20°C and nighttime average lows of around -10°C during the trek.

Why not the Inca Trail?

The Inca Trail has all the fame, but we have chosen the Salkantay trek as it's a more scenic and less crowded trek. It passes through more breathtaking and varied landscapes, past Inca Ruins and still ends at Machu Picchu. You'll also have more time and energy to explore Machu Picchu itself.

Filled with challenging passes and high altitudes, it's not for the faint-hearted. However, if you're up for the challenge, we promise you'll be really glad you did the Salkantay Trek, over the busy and over-crowded Inca Trail – you might even catch a glimpse of the local wildlife from chinchillas, foxes and spectacled bears! Something which disappeared from the Inca Trail a long time ago...

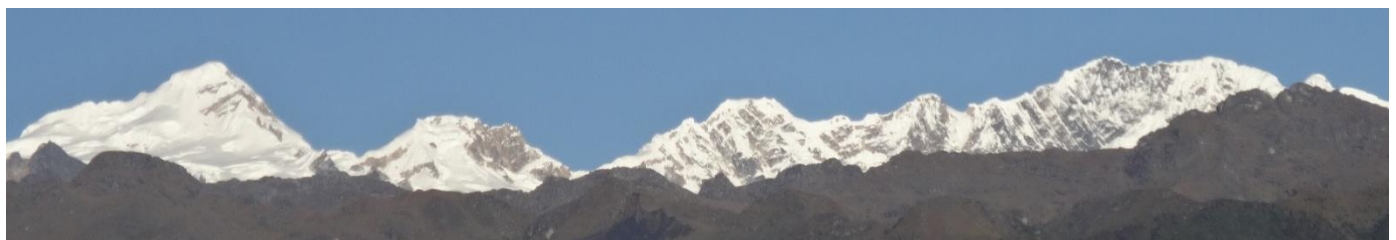
Practical information

What's the minimum age?

The minimum age is 18 (or 16-17 if accompanied by a parent/guardian). There is no upper age limit.

Who can take part?

An ideal candidate is someone who is open-minded, positive, flexible and enjoys the challenges of the great outdoors. Adventure travel involves elements of the unexpected so do not expect the standards to be the same as you are used to at home. Remote areas are sometimes unpredictable (be it because of group pace, weather conditions etc.) and itineraries may be altered to allow for this. You must also be willing to train hard for this challenge!





How should I prepare?

If you do not already regularly exercise you should aim to start training (including plenty of hills) as early as possible. The best training is hill walking, which will prepare you for the type of terrain you will experience trekking to Machu Picchu.

Other activities which can complement hill walking include running, cycling, gym workouts, boot camps etc.

Building up your core and leg muscle strength is important so exercises such as squats, lunges, push-ups, planks and crunches will enhance your training. These exercises can be done at home – no gym is needed. You can download several free apps, which will help you train and track your progress, e.g. MapMyWalk, C25K (couch to 5k run), and MyFitnessPal (for a variety of sports).

You must take your training seriously and arrive as fit as you can be, so you get the most out of this challenge.

Medical declaration

We require a medical form to be completed by everyone upon registering, and any pre-existing conditions, medications used and other medical issues must be specified. All your medical details are treated in the strictest confidence.

The information will be securely screened by a qualified medical professional, and details provided to your tour manager and local guides so our staff are adequately informed and prepared to support you during the trip. By completing our booking form you are giving consent for us to contact you confidentially with any follow-up questions regarding your health.

If you declare any medical conditions you may be asked to provide more information, or we may request to contact your GP.

If your medical issues at the time of booking represent a concern for your safety and wellbeing or the safety and wellbeing of others in the group, you may be recommended not to take part. If this happens your booking will not be confirmed and the deposit will be refunded.

We must be informed if any conditions or medication change, or if new conditions develop. If necessary confirmation of fitness to travel from your GP or specialist may be required.

Please note that we will never unreasonably deny participation on a trip nor contravene the Equality Act 2010.



Health & Safety Assurance

Your health and safety are our top priority so rest assured that we are taking steps to ensure you not only have a memorable experience, but a safe one too.

We constantly monitor and follow the advice of the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) who provide recommendations and advice to British travellers about travel to a certain destination.

Health and safety is our top priority so we will **NEVER** operate a trip in an area where there is clear and present risk to our team members, whether that is due to a health outbreak, political instability, natural disasters or anything else.

If travel restrictions either in the UK or Peru prevent safe travel we will look to either postpone or cancel your trip at no cost to you.

Please note that at the time of travel, there may be enhanced safety and security measures in airports, bag drop may take longer, and you may need to provide a certificate of health or proof of vaccination.

We will inform you about any information pertinent to your travel arrangements.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us at info@different-travel.com.

Trip costs

A £495 registration fee is payable at the time of booking and then you must fundraise at least £5,900 for Dorothy House Hospice Care.

A total of £4,838 (80% of your target) must have been raised by Friday, 23 January 2026. The remaining 20% (£1,062) must be raised by the date of departure.

A flexi option is also available upon request (*pay £495 deposit + £3,070 trip costs + fundraise at least £2,950*).

What's included:

- ✓ Return flights from London to Cusco (inc. airport taxes and supplements)
- ✓ All transfers and transport in Peru
- ✓ Accommodation in 3* hotels/guesthouse (4 nights), tents on the trek (3 nights) and homestay at the project (1 night)
- ✓ All meals as specified
- ✓ Local English-speaking guides, porters and full support crew on the trek
- ✓ Trekking permits and entrance fees to Machu Picchu
- ✓ UK Different Travel tour manager

What's not included:

- ✗ Personal expenses (e.g. drinks, souvenirs, etc.)
- ✗ Vaccinations
- ✗ Travel insurance
- ✗ Tips for local guides and support crew (approx. £55-£65)
- ✗ Trek kit and equipment
- ✗ Peru visa (not currently required for British citizens)



Itinerary

Day 1 (Saturday 18 April 2026):

London – Lima

Depart London on an indirect flight to Lima. On arrival in Lima you will be transferred to a hotel for an overnight stay and our first meal together.

Meals: Dinner

Day 2 (Sunday 19 April 2026):

Lima – Cusco

It's an early start this morning for our short flight to Cusco (3,400m). After arriving we transfer to our colonial hotel which features a beautiful central courtyard and cosy rooms. After lunch we will take a gentle acclimatisation walk in the San Blas neighbourhood, the city's most picturesque district and originally the dwelling of Inca nobles.

Meals: Breakfast, lunch and dinner



Day 3 – 4 (Monday 20 – Tuesday 21 April 2026): Sacred Valley

We will transfer to the Sacred Valley and meet our hosts for the next two days. We will be staying in homestays while we work on the project and become further acclimatised to the altitudes. This is your chance to immerse yourself in local culture, interact with villagers and learn all about their way of life while offering some hands-on help.

Meals: Breakfast, lunch and dinner



Day 5 (Wednesday 22 April 2026):

Cusco – Soraypampa

Today the trek to Machu Picchu begins! We transfer from Cusco early this morning and take a scenic drive along the winding mountain road to Challacancha (3,867m), stopping for a brief visit to the Tarawasi Archaeological site. We'll enjoy lunch in Challacancha while our pack horses are loaded and prepared. We'll start our trek to camp via Humantay Lake (3,869m), a brilliantly turquoise alpine lagoon hidden high in the mountains. We'll continue to Soraypampa (3,850m) where we'll set up camp with the magnificent Salkantay Mountain (6,271m) as our backdrop - the second most sacred peak in Inca mythology.

Trekking: Approx. 14km / 7 hours.

Meals: Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Day 6 (Thursday 23 April 2026):

Soraypampa – Andenes

Today the landscape changes drastically from dry and arid, to snowy peaks, before descending into the tropical zone. After breakfast, we leave our camp and start the toughest section of the trek! The mountain switchbacks lead us up to the pass and our highest point, Abra Salkantay (4,630m). We celebrate our achievements and admire the spectacular views of the mountains and imposing snowy peaks of Mt. Salkantay (6,271m) before descending through cloud forest, rain forest and jungle to our camp in Andenes (2,920m).

Trekking: Approx. 18km / 8 hours.

Meals: Breakfast, lunch and dinner



Day 7 (Friday 24 April 2026):

Andenes – Lucmabamba

Today we hike through lush rainforest along the Santa Teresa River Valley. We'll pass bamboo groves, waterfalls, coffee plantations and banana, granadilla and avocado orchards. After stopping for lunch, we trek to reach the start of the 'Llactapata Inca Trail' and our last campsite at Lucmabamba (2,135m). As the area is known for producing some of the best coffee in the world, we'll have a local coffee demonstration and tasting!

Trekking: Approx. 19km / 7 hours.

Meals: Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Day 8 (Saturday 25 April 2026):

Lucmabamba – Llactapata – Aguas Calientes

After an early breakfast, we hike for around three hours to reach Llactapata (2,700m). You'll have plenty of time to take in the panoramic views as you catch your first glimpse of Machu Picchu from across the valley! On the way, we pass coffee plantations, beautiful landscapes and diverse flora and fauna. We descend through a bamboo forest to Hidroelectrica train station and stop for lunch, before continuing along the riverside railway track to Aguas Calientes (2,040m). On arrival, we'll check into our hotel and meet for dinner.

Trekking: Approx. 15km / 6 hours.

Meals: Breakfast, lunch and dinner

Day 9 (Sunday 26 April 2026):

Aguas Calientes – Machu Picchu – Cusco

At dawn, we begin our journey to Machu Picchu! We start with a short and rollicking uphill bus ride - prepare to be awed by this incredible ancient citadel! You will start the day with a guided tour before returning to the bus.

This afternoon we take the train to Poroy, followed by a short transfer back to Cusco where we check into our hotel before a final celebratory dinner.

Trekking: Approx. 4km / 3-4 hours (650m ascent).

Meals: Breakfast, lunch and dinner



Day 10 (Monday 27 April 2026):

Cusco – Lima – London

Today we fly from Cusco to Lima before taking an indirect overnight flight back to London, landing on Tuesday, 28 April 2026.

Meals: Breakfast

NB: The day-to-day program is subject to flight schedules, weather, general conditions and the progress of the group. While we do not anticipate any changes to the itinerary, we cannot be held responsible for changes made due to unexpected circumstances. Ultimately, the safety and health of the group take priority in all circumstances.

Before you go! Information to prepare you for the trip

Travel practicalities and country information
Trek knowledge
Food and drink
Kit tips
Luggage

Responsible travel and culture
Fitness, health and safety
Altitude
Kit list

Travel practicalities and country information

Visa and passport

Your passport must be valid for at least 6 months from the date of entry to Peru. British citizens do not currently require a visa to visit Peru (this may differ for people of other nationalities). Upon arrival, you will need to complete an immigration card (Tarjeta Andina de Migración, Tarjeta Internacional de Embarque/Desembarque). You should complete it and present it to the immigration officials with your passport. You must keep this safe as you will be required to hand this to the immigration officials upon leaving Peru. Losing it will result in delays and often, a fine.

Travel insurance

The Different Travel Company will do everything possible to ensure a safe and enjoyable trip however unexpected things can occur such as delays, medical problems, baggage loss, cancellation by you etc. The purchase of travel insurance is mandatory; you are advised to organise it at the time of booking to ensure you are covered immediately.

Different Travel is an Unregulated Introducer of Campbell Irvine Ltd which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

You can find out more here: <http://www.campbellirvine.com/DifferentTravel>

Please note: most travel insurance policies protect you before departure too so it is advised to buy insurance as close to booking as possible as it may protect you against the loss of your non-refundable, non-transferable registration fee if you cancel due to injury, illness etc.

Your insurance must include: Trekking (max altitude: 4,630m) and medical evacuation.

Phone and Wi-Fi access

Peru is served by four mobile networks Movistar, Claro, Entel and Bitel. Coverage is widespread but your access to phone reception will vary depending on your home network, roaming capabilities, contract type and mobile handset. In general, most people should have reception while in the cities and possibly along some of the trek routes. Wi-Fi is available in hotels (although it may be very slow and unreliable). Please contact your phone provider to find out details about costs and remember to turn off data roaming on your phone to avoid incurring high data charges. You may want to consider purchasing an eSim for use abroad. Different Travel participants can receive 15% off their first purchase with EasySim. See the discount vouchers booklet for more details.

Money

The unit of currency is the nuevo sol which is divided up into 100 cents. The plural of sol is soles (pronounced sol-les). At the time of writing (April 2024) there are 4.67 soles to the pound. You will require cash for various things throughout the trek, including tips, drinks, snacks, souvenirs and other personal expenses. As a guideline, around £150 in Peruvian soles should be sufficient although, of course, it depends on how many drinks and souvenirs you wish to purchase.

Tipping

While tipping is not mandatory, it is recommended and greatly appreciated by the local staff and the trek team. We would recommend allowing around £55-65 per person.

Accessing cash

You can purchase soles in advance from the UK Bureau de Changes but the rate of exchange is very poor so this is not recommended. There are many ATMs in Cusco if you wish to withdraw cash but some banks block overseas transactions so inform your bank before departure. Please note that your bank may charge for overseas withdrawals and transactions so check before travel. There is no access to ATMs while trekking so you must bring enough cash with you for the trek (e.g. for snacks, drinks, tips, souvenirs). If you prefer to exchange cash locally you are recommended to take pounds sterling and change it to soles. Do not bring Scottish or Channel Islands notes as these will be rejected by the local Bureau de Changes.

Electricity

Electricity in Peru is 220V/60Hz. Plug sockets are either 2 flat parallel pins (US style) or 2 round pins (European style). In addition to the hotels in Lima and Cusco, electricity is available at the guesthouse in Aguas Calientes on the last night of the trek so you can charge cameras and other electrical items before you arrive at Machu Picchu. Please bring the necessary plug adaptor with you during the trek, ideally, one which has USB ports so you can charge multiple devices at once. If backup access to electricity during the trek is important to you, you are advised to bring a portable power pack (power bank or battery pack) which when fully charged allows you multiple charges of USB-powered devices such as phones. You should buy a power pack with a minimum capacity of 15,000mAh and these are widely available online.

Religion

The Inca religion was displaced by Roman Catholicism in the 16th century and today the official statistics are that around 93% of the population is Catholic. In reality, for the majority, religious life means a mixture of Catholic beliefs and indigenous beliefs based on animism and deity worship.

Language

The main languages of Peru are Spanish and Quechua (the indigenous language of the Highland areas). Here are a few useful phrases and numbers in Spanish:

Hola, como esta/estas? – Hello, how are you?	1 – uno
Muy bien gracias - I'm fine	2 – dos
Por favor - Please	3 – tres
Bueno - Good	4 – cuatro
Permiso - Excuse me	5 – cinco
Gracias- Thank you	6 – seis
Adios - Goodbye	7 – siete
Si - Yes	8 – ocho
No – No	9 – nueve
	10 – diez

Photography

In Cusco, families in traditional dress will eagerly pose for photographs but you are expected to pay so you must negotiate a price first. When taking photographs of the local people in rural areas (such as along the trail) you must ask for their permission first. Taking a photograph of someone without their permission can offend, particularly older people and ladies.

Photocopies

Remember to photocopy all your documents (insurance details, passport, credit/debit cards etc.) and take a copy with you during the trip, stored separately from the original copies. You should also consider leaving a copy with a trusted family member or friend. You may also wish to upload your documents to cloud storage such as Dropbox or Google Drive. If you lose any of your documents, you will then have access to a copy with you and online.

Trek knowledge

Trek itinerary

The itinerary may change due to unusual weather, the ability of the group and so on. We will do our best to keep to the itinerary but we cannot be held responsible for changes that occur outside of our control. In all circumstances, your guide and tour leader will have the final say in the interest of the group's health and safety.

Accommodation

You will stay in a hotel in Lima and Cusco, and a guesthouse in Aguas Calientes on the last day of the trek. Hotel/guesthouse accommodation is on a twin or triple share basis throughout. A single occupancy room (at a supplement) may be possible, subject to availability. During the project, you will be staying with locals in homestays. Please note the facilities will vary depending on which family you will be staying with and they will be basic. On the trek, you will be camping in tents (two people per three-man tent). Tents, sleeping mats and sleeping bags are provided for camping.

Hygiene and bathroom facilities

The hotels have en-suite facilities with flushing toilets and hot showers. During the trek you will be provided with a bowl of hot water and soap each morning to freshen up for the day ahead but other washing facilities are limited so you are recommended to bring a small pack of baby wipes and hand sanitiser for your general hygiene throughout the day (e.g. to clean your hands after toilet visits and/or before lunch).

There may be the opportunity to visit the hot springs during the trek, and at Aguas Calientes, so bring a non-cotton trek towel e.g. large travel towel and some basic bio-degradable toiletries should you wish to take this opportunity.

Toilet facilities at camp will either be a hole dug into the ground within a privacy tent, or a basic pit latrine toilet block. Toilet paper is not provided so you will need to bring your own. If you use the toilet during the day whilst on the trail, you must carry out any toilet paper you use in a sanitary/nappy sack, to dispose of properly at camp. You must NEVER leave toilet paper, fruit peel, nut shells or other litter on the trail.

Climate

The weather during the trip should be generally dry although light-moderate rain is to be expected, particularly on trek day 1. Temperatures will be dependent upon the weather and the altitude. The first two days of trekking are the coolest with a daily average of approx. 6°C to 15°C during the day, and dropping to approx. 0°C and -10°C at night. The third and fourth days of trekking through the jungle areas are warmer with temperatures of approx. 10°C - 25°C, and night temperatures dropping to approx. 0°C to -5°C.

Please note: the temperatures and conditions above are historically accurate for this time of year. Climate change impacts the seasons so you may experience uncharacteristic conditions which are out of our control. Should this happen the guide will assess the situation and make decisions to ensure the best enjoyment and ultimate safety of the group as a whole.

Mules

On the Salkantay trek, mules and horses carry luggage. The animals are well looked after and will go ahead of the group with the muleteers to meet you at camp.

Passport

You must bring your passport with you during the trek as this is required for entry into Machu Picchu. You can also have your passport stamped with the Machu Picchu stamp once you reach the ancient site.

Food and drink

Food

During the days in the cities, you will eat at your hotel or in local restaurants. During the trek, your cook will prepare meals for the team. Each morning you will start the day with a hot drink in the mess tent while breakfast is prepared. Breakfast includes bread, butter and jam, pancakes, scrambled eggs or oatmeal etc. For lunch, you will eat traditional Andean food such as vegetables, grains, meat and soup. Dinner will include dishes such as soup, chicken, beef or lamb, fish with potatoes, quinoa, rice or pasta.

Dietary requirements

Please ensure that you notify us of any dietary requirements at the time of booking. Dietary requests may not be possible to cater for without advance arrangement. The majority of special diets, such as vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free, etc., can be catered for but please note that we cannot guarantee that food preparation will take place in a contamination-free environment.

Snacks

You may wish to bring a selection of snacks for energy, a pick-me-up or a little taste of home. Please bring snacks you have tried before (and enjoy!) so they are appetising to you. Items such as sweets, individually wrapped cake bars, protein bars and dried fruit are ideal but don't forget to bring savoury treats also such as salted nuts, Cheddar biscuits or salted crackers.

Water

Tap water in Peru is not safe to drink. You must not brush your teeth with, or drink, tap water; only use purified, boiled or bottled water. Boiled water will be provided for you to drink during the trek however you are recommended to purify this too for peace of mind. Soft drinks may be available to purchase at small shops along the trail. Hot drinks are served at mealtimes (e.g. coffee, tea, hot chocolate) and there is also the option to have a cup of coca tea, which anecdotally helps people adjust to higher altitudes. If you have a particular preference for tea, coffee or hot chocolate (e.g. herbal tea or decaf coffee), please bring a small personal supply.

Water purification

A highly recommended purification is 'Biox Aqua' tablets which contain chlorine dioxide. These tablets claim to kill 99.9% of all known bacteria plus cysts such as cryptosporidium and giardia and don't leave water tasting of chemicals. Please wait for the specified time for the purification to work before adding any electrolyte tablets or water flavourings.

Keeping hydrated

During the trek, you will need to drink at least three litres of water per day to stay hydrated, plus any soups or hot drinks served. You will start the day carrying 3 litres of water so you must be prepared to carry this yourself. Electrolyte tablets (e.g. Nuun, High5, PowerBar, etc.) are flavoured effervescent tablets which contain salts and minerals which are naturally lost from your body when you sweat. By adding these tablets to your water it not only offers flavour to your water but can help prevent dehydration before it begins. Electrolyte tablets are widely available in outdoor stores and online for around £8 for 12 tablets. You may also wish to bring a small supply of rehydration salts (e.g. Dioralyte) which treat dehydration.

Water bottle

You will need to bring your bottles to carry at least three litres of water per day. Some people will bring a 2-3 litre CamelBak hydration system (for effortless access to water while you trek) **plus** a one 1-litre water bottle (e.g. plastic Nalgene or metal Sigg bottle). Some people prefer to bring three 1-litre bottles. The choice is yours. If you're bringing a CamelBak hydration system, a separate 1-litre bottle is essential as it can be used as a backup if your hydration system fails. Please write your name on all your bottles in marker pen. Please note that 'own brand' and cheap hydration systems are notorious for splitting, leaking or valves not functioning properly. CamelBak and Platypus are the leaders in this market because their products are significantly better quality and more reliable.

Kit tips

Discount

When you book you will receive a discount voucher booklet. Please check the documents section of your online profile.

Clothing

Your clothes should be made of technical fabrics designed to wick sweat away from your body which keeps clothes dry and smelling fresh. Nylon, polyester, polypropylene and merino fabrics are all effective technical fabrics. Cotton clothes absorb sweat, stay damp and can lead to chafing, and discomfort (and also get smelly fast). Technical items can be worn for days without smelling meaning you don't need to buy, or pack, as many items of clothing.

Sports, gym, or running clothes are usually non-cotton so check what you have already before you go shopping. If you select the right garments you can comfortably wear these for the entire trek. It gets very cold at night and in the mornings so please bring warm layers (e.g. fleece and insulated jacket), a hat and gloves.

For your time at the community project you should bring old clothing you don't mind getting dirty or with splashes of paint, and you should wear trainers or boots – no sandals.

Gloves

Temperatures will drop during the day and evening so you are recommended to bring warm gloves; a warm pair of waterproof and windproof gloves or mittens, plus a thin liner glove are ideal. You should also bring a pair of heavy gardening gloves for use during the project.

Clothing for Lima and Cusco

During your time in Lima and Cusco, smart casual clothing is suggested (e.g. jeans, t-shirt and light sweater). The Cusco area is fairly warm in April with historical temperatures between 17°C and 23°C during the day but cold winds can make it feel much cooler than this so warm layers and comfortable shoes or trainers are strongly recommended. Lima is slightly warmer as it is located on the coast, with average temperatures of approx. 25°C. Please note: The temperatures and conditions above are historically accurate for this time of year. Please check the forecast before.

Footwear

You should bring lightweight, breathable, trekking boots with good ankle support and a high-quality flexible sole, such as Vibram. Walking trainers are unsuitable. If you are buying a new pair of boots, please try on lots of pairs before you buy; don't buy online unless you've tried them on first. Please ensure you buy new boots well in advance of departure so you have time to break them in properly. You are strongly advised to wear your boots on the plane (or take in your hand baggage) in case there are any problems or delays with your luggage. You may also wish to bring lightweight trainers/crocs for around camp, and flip-flops for use at the hot springs at Aguas Calientes. Trainers are best for days at the project.

Socks

The socks you choose must be high quality, non-cotton and will not slip down in your boots which causes blisters. Never wear cotton socks which absorb sweat making them damp and more likely to rub against your feet, causing blisters. Socks containing Coolmax (a brand of polyester) or nylon have wicking properties which means that they pull sweat away from the skin for it to evaporate. Good brands to consider include, Bridgedale, Smartwool, and Brasher.

Swimwear

Don't forget a swimsuit and non-cotton trek towel for the hot springs at Aguas Calientes!

Head Torch

This is a vital piece of kit. Petzl is one brand which makes good quality headlamps but there are many head torches available from other companies. Please ensure you take an LED torch as the ones with bulbs are not bright enough. Bring your head torch with fresh batteries inside it, and take a full set of spare batteries. Do not bring a wind-up head torch as these are unreliable. Keep your head torch in your backpack every day.

Hiking Poles

Hiking poles can be very useful on ascents and descents, particularly when carrying a heavy pack on uneven terrain. Poles are also very useful for stability. They are not mandatory but are recommended. You should use them on your training walks to familiarise yourself with how to use them. If you bring hiking poles they must fit inside your suitcase/kitbag for the international flight.

Sunglasses

These are important even on overcast days. They must offer 100% UV protection, and polarized sunglasses are ideal. Taking a spare pair is recommended.

Headwear

You will need to bring a sunhat ideally with a brim for sunny days, a warm hat for the evenings and early mornings and you may wish to consider bringing a Buff – a useful multifunctional headwear item (see buffwear.co.uk or similar products).

Sleeping bag

A sleeping bag is provided for you during the trek. If you wish to bring your own you will need a sleeping bag which has a comfort rating of at least -10°C (please ignore any 'extreme' rating mentioned on the sleeping bag).

Examples of suitable sleeping bags include:

Snugpak Softie Winter (£65);
Mountain Hardware Lamina 0 (-12 °C comfort) (£120);
Sea To Summit Alpine III (£750): Comfort -12°C
Fjällräven Polar -20 (£725) : Comfort -12°C
Snugpak Sleeper Expedition (£59.95):
Comfort -12°C

Snugpak Tactical 4 (£169.95): Comfort -12°C
Montane Deep Heat (£450): Comfort -12°C
Snugpak Softie Chrysalis Expedition (-15°C comfort) (£80).
Snugpak Softie Expansion 5 (£122.50): -15°C
Snugpak 15 Intrepid/Discovery (£159)
Comfort -15°C

Please contact us at info@different-travel.com for more advice.

Sleeping mat

A sleeping mat is provided for you and is carried by the pack horses or mules to camp each night. If you wish to bring your own for additional comfort, an inflatable Thermarest mat is recommended.

Sleeping bag liner

A silk or thermal sleeping bag liner is highly recommended as it adds an extra layer of insulation to your sleeping bag but also helps to keep it clean from sweat and dirt. You sweat around 300ml each night and without a liner, this will absorb into your sleeping bag and will get very smelly. It is also handy to have if you get too hot at night and unzip your sleeping bag but want to be covered by something.

Luggage

This trip is different to a standard holiday so you will need the following five luggage items:

1. A small daypack

You are responsible for carrying your daypack containing essentials for each day. We recommend you bring a 25-30 litre rucksack which must have a hip belt and a chest strap. High-quality brands to consider when looking for a suitable pack include Osprey, Berghaus, and Lowe Alpine (amongst others) and you are strongly advised to visit a reputable store like Cotswold to have your backpack fitted, as they come in a variety of sizes, and some brands offer male and female specific fits. You can expect to carry your first aid kit, sun cream, three litres of water, snacks, toilet paper, wet wipes, and a camera. It could weigh 6-8kg when packed, so you should make your selection carefully and ensure it fits correctly and is comfortable. You will not have access to your main pack while trekking.

2. A kit bag/holdall

A soft-sided kit bag will be provided but you may wish to bring your own for comfort. This will hold your trek-specific items such as a change of clothes, toiletries and so on. This kitbag will be transported by mule and must weigh no more than 8kg for animal welfare reasons. If you bring your own, this can be a holdall, duffle bag, or large rucksack and it doesn't matter what size it is as long as all your kit fits inside; approx. 70-80 litres is sufficient for most people. A suitcase or holdall with wheels is not suitable.

If you wish you can use this bag to hold your checked luggage for the flights, just ensure you bring a small separate bag you can store items in, not required for the trek, at the hotel while you're trekking.

3. A suitcase (optional)

For the flights, you may be more comfortable packing all your items (including your empty trek kit bag) into a suitcase. This is entirely your choice. If you bring a suitcase, it will be stored at the hotel along with anything not required for the trek (e.g. toiletries, travel clothes, books, etc.).

4. A **lightweight dry bag** or **rucksack liner** to keep the contents of your daypack dry is an optional but recommended accessory (e.g. Exped dry bags). Rucksack waterproof covers tend to fly off in the wind or leave areas of your rucksack exposed to the elements so water soaks through.

5. You should bring two **combination padlocks** to secure your luggage (kit bag and suitcase, if applicable).

Responsible travel and culture

We are environmentally conscious and aim to minimise our impact as much as possible.

Key points:

- Never leave toilet paper or litter on the trail.
- Don't dispose of fruit peel, cores, or seeds on the ground; although they decompose eventually they are unsightly and may attract animals.
- Turn off lights when not in rooms.
- Minimise your water usage by having short showers.

Begging

You can expect to be asked for '*propina*' (pennies) and sweets from very persistent children (and occasionally adults) in Peru. Groups of children around the Plaza de Armas in Cusco will try to sell you postcards or finger puppets. As part of our responsible tourism policy, we strongly advise against giving directly to beggars or offering gifts to children. Gift-giving can lead to individuals pestering other travellers as they believe begging is more profitable than searching for work or attending school. In particular, sweets should not be given to children as dental care is difficult to obtain and tooth decay can lead to long-term health problems.

Haggling

When purchasing items from markets and shops where prices are not listed you are expected to haggle.

Please do so with respect and pay a fair price but have fun with it.

Animal welfare

In Plaza de Armas in Cusco, you may find traditionally dressed women or children trying to entice tourists into photo opportunities with baby llamas, for a fee. Please consider the animal welfare issues that may arise from this type of tourism and consider carefully whether you wish to participate.

Fitness, health and safety

Fitness training

You should start training at least six months before your departure. The best form of training for a trek is to get outside and start walking. If you're not a regular walker, start slowly with short distances then as you get more comfortable, increase your mileage and add in more challenging terrain until you can comfortably walk for several consecutive days, for around eight hours at a time, on hilly terrain while maintaining a comfortable pace without needing to stop more than frequently than once an hour for a five-minute rest.

Hill walking, carrying a fully packed backpack while wearing your hiking boots, should feature predominantly in your training as this will help prepare your body for the terrain and baggage load you will experience during the trek.

Other activities which can complement hill walking include; running, cycling, gym workouts, boot camps, etc. Developing your core and leg muscle strength is also important so exercises such as squats, lunges, push-ups, planks, and crunches will enhance your training. These exercises can be done at home with no gym needed. You can download several free apps, which will help you train and track your progress, e.g. MapMyWalk, C25K (couch to 5k run), and MyFitnessPal.

Please note that attempting to complete the trek without any training may make the experience unnecessarily difficult and detrimental to your experience, and also the experience of your teammates. The local guides, in consultation with your Different travel tour manager, may advise that, if you are not fit enough to continue, you leave the trek.

Safety

Please take common-sense precautions while travelling, to ensure your safety and the protection of your belongings. For example; leave flashy jewellery, watches, and accessories at home; keep wallets out of sight stowed in a handbag or backpack, rather than sticking out of a pocket; don't leave bags unattended at any time; carry cameras in their cases, rather than carrying them openly with the camera strap; split the cash into different pockets, rather than carrying all your money in one place, especially immediately after you have used the ATM; and so on.

Vaccinations and travel health

Different Travel regrets that we cannot provide medical advice or recommendations. You are advised to seek medical advice at least eight weeks before travelling from your GP or travel health professional for a consultation tailored to your medical history and to ensure that all appropriate vaccinations are up to date.

For general information visit www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk or www.travelhealthpro.org.uk. Please note that failure to be adequately vaccinated, or take necessary prophylactic medication, can invalidate travel insurance policies as it is considered that you have not taken necessary precautions.

First aid kit

You should bring a small first aid kit of essential items, which is for your personal use, and keep it in your backpack. Suggested items to include: personal prescription medicine, Compeed blister plasters, painkillers, plasters, antiseptic wipes, anti-histamine tablets, indigestion remedy, Imodium (Loperamide), rehydration sachets, lip balm with SPF, antiseptic cream, zinc oxide tape, 50% DEET repellent etc. Please keep the contents to a minimum as you have to carry it yourself.

Mosquitoes

It is recommended that you use 50% DEET insect repellent both day and night throughout your visit to Peru and cover your skin as much as possible to minimise mosquito bites.

Zinc Oxide tape

This tape is really useful to prevent blisters. When you feel your boots start to rub against your feet, you should stop and remove any debris from your boots and check your feet. If a hot spot is developing (a red, sore area without broken skin) you can apply zinc oxide tape to the area and it will stop (or slow down) a blister developing. If you are too late to prevent the blister, you should clean the area and apply a Compeed blister plaster instead.

Emergencies and evacuations

In the unlikely event of a serious illness or accident, the local team will ensure you are transferred as swiftly as possible to the nearest hospital. Transport may be for a short distance on horseback before connecting with an emergency vehicle on the road. Please ensure your travel insurance covers you for airlifting/emergency evacuations as this can be required to reach casualties on more remote trails. You are recommended to bring a credit card in case you need to pay for emergency medical treatment upfront.

Altitude

Your guides are very experienced in spotting the signs of altitude sickness but it is important that you also **do your research** into the effects so you can be aware of how your body is adjusting.

General information about altitude can be found here:

<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Altitude-sickness/Pages/Introduction.aspx> or

<http://www.traveldoctor.co.uk/altitude.htm>.

The maximum altitude on the trip is up to 4630m at Abra Salkantay (high pass). Common mild symptoms of altitude sickness are headache, nausea, loss of appetite, disturbed sleep and fatigue. These generally subside after a few days, once your body acclimatises to the altitude. You must make your guides and tour manager aware of any symptoms immediately so that you can be monitored. Your safety is our number one priority.

You must listen to the advice of the guides and if you are asked to descend because you are suffering from altitude sickness, you should not question their authority for your safety and the safety of the group. Drinking lots of water, eating plenty, resting well and trekking at a gentle pace helps you acclimatise.

You may wish to consult with your GP about Acetazolamide (Diamox) which anecdotally helps prevent, or minimise, altitude-related symptoms when taken prophylactically. Please note that this medication is an unlicensed prescription-only medication in the UK and interacts with several other prescription medications so your GP may not wish to prescribe it to you.

Important info about altitude:

- Take it easy and don't overexert yourself when you first arrive at altitude.
- Eat a high-calorie diet while at altitude.
- Stay well hydrated. You need to drink at least 4-5 litres of fluids each day to remain properly hydrated (at least three litres per day from water plus soup, tea, juices etc.). Urine output should be copious and clear to pale yellow.
- Acclimatisation is inhibited by overexertion, dehydration, tobacco and alcohol.
- Different people acclimatise at different rates. Keep aware of your symptoms.
- If you begin to show symptoms of moderate altitude sickness, don't go higher until symptoms decrease.
- If symptoms increase, you must descend immediately. Your tour guide and tour manager's decision for you to descend must be respected.
- You must not take depressant drugs such as barbiturates, tranquillisers, sleeping pills and opiates such as codeine as these decrease respiratory drive during sleep resulting in a worsening of symptoms. Speak to your GP for advice on alternative medications.

Last updated June 2024

Kit List – Salkantay Machu Picchu Trek & Project

The kit you take can make the difference between being ‘just a trek’ or a ‘memorable trek’.

Our kit lists are put together with feedback from our own experiences and those of participants who have taken part in our previous trips. The items on this list do not take into account your personal preferences based on your previous experiences, or individual requirements.

PLEASE NOTE: This list is just a guideline and is not exhaustive or take into account personal preferences.

For information about items on this list please refer to the trip dossier or contact The Different Travel Company on info@different-travel.com

*Please consider eco-friendly or biodegradable options.

ESSENTIAL

SUGGESTED

OPTIONAL

DOCUMENTS & FLIGHT ESSENTIALS	✓
Passport + copy	
E-Tickets + pre departure info	
Travel insurance	
ATM and credit card (s)	
Cash (£ Sterling)	
Pen for immigration forms	
Sunglasses (preferably polarized)	
Mobile phone + charger	
Camera + spare batteries	

LUGGAGE	✓
Suitcase/large holdall for flight	
Daypack (25 - 30 litres)	
Hand Luggage (take note of dimensions from airline)	
Combination padlocks	

CLOTHING & FOOTWEAR	✓
Trekking boots: either worn on flight or carried in hand luggage	
Sturdy trainers for project	
Trek trousers	
Non-cotton, technical t-shirts	
Non-cotton long sleeved top/shirt	
Trek socks	
Underwear	
Warm fleece or sweater	
Warm jacket (e.g. down or Primaloft)	
Waterproof jacket and trousers	
Old clothes for project	
Casual clothes for time with community and sightseeing	
Light poncho (can be bought locally)	
Thermal base layer trousers and top	
Sun hat with brim	
Warm hat for night	
Gloves (trekking and also heavy duty for project)	
Trainers for camp	

HEALTH & HYGIENE*	✓
Hygiene kit to include: toothbrush and toothpaste, antiperspirant deodorant, wet wipes, shampoo, conditioner, shower gel, nail brush and nail care kit	
Personal first aid kit to include: prescription medicine, insect repellent, ibuprofen, paracetamol, plasters, blister plasters (e.g. Compeed), Imodium, rehydration salts (Dioralyte), antiseptic cream (e.g. Savlon), Anti-histamine cream/tablets, lip balm with SPF protection, zinc oxide tape, nail scissors/tweezers, muscle rub (e.g. Deep Heat), throat lozenges, decongestant, Vaseline	
Hairbrush/comb	
Feminine care products	
Travel towel	

OTHER KIT	✓
Sleeping bag liner (cotton/silk)	
Sun block (high SPF)	
Toilet bag: toilet paper, wipes, hand sanitiser, nappy sacks	
2 ltr water hydration system (e.g. Camelbak)	
1 ltr metal/insulated water bottle	
LED head torch + spare batteries	
Adaptor (European 2 round pin + US 2 flat pin)	
Ear plugs	
Hiking poles – to be stowed in hold luggage for flight	
Energy food/snack bars	
Electrolyte (e.g. NUUN)	
Water purification tablets (e.g. Biox Aqua)	
Swimwear	
Bags for dirty washing	
Spare glasses/contact lenses	
Video camera + charger	
MP3 player/ipod	
Portable power bank	
Books/packs of cards	
Travel pillow	