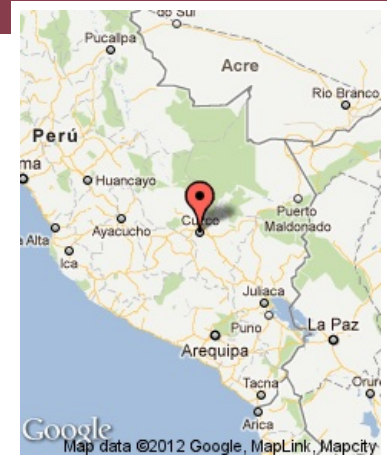


Lares Valley Trek to Machu Picchu



Highlights

This four day trek through the Lares Valley will bring you to small Andean communities who still go about their days much like their ancestors did hundreds of years ago. Most are farmers or weavers, responsible for those gorgeous ponchos you will see people wearing around Peru. This trail is less well known than the Inca Trail trek to Machu Picchu, but people are finding out about it so hurry up and book this wonderful opportunity to get to know Peru before everyone else discovers it!

The traditional way to reach the ruins **Machu Picchu** is the Inca Trail, which has become so well traversed that now the Peruvian government has limited the number of permits for that route. An amazing alternative that will still allow you to trek to Machu Picchu while letting you in on the Peru of today is the trail through the Lares Valley. It is dotted with small Andean villages of alpaca farmers and weavers who use natural plants for dye. The meandering mountain trails - sometimes rocky, sometimes green - wind through majestic mountains and low lying clouds. This is one of the best places in the world to get to know a beautiful natural environment and the people who live there.

Trekking through the Lares Valley will give you a glimpse into how people of the Andean mountains have lived for centuries and how they relate to and use the Earth for their livelihood. You will visit important spots like the hot springs just outside of Lares village where people go to relax and sooth their muscles in a natural way. On day one you will be able to visit some weavers in the village of Quishaurani and see how they have been making colourful ponchos and clothes for years. In addition to the quaint mountain villages you will be surrounded by mind-boggling natural beauty - mountain flowers, pastures and trees, snow capped mountains, crystal clear lakes, packs of llamas and alpacas, even part of the trail that cuts through the clouds!

Is it for me?

If you just like to lounge around on holiday, you probably won't have the best time on this trek. There are a few early mornings and a lot of hiking, so make sure that's something you're really up for. This trip also features a lot of camping so if you only want to stay in hotels you might not want to do this tour either.

You will learn a lot about indigenous culture, the history of Peru and the geology of the Andes but you don't need to be a history or science geek to enjoy all the new information or find it interesting. This is a great trip for someone who wants to be active on holiday while seeing not only gorgeous scenery but getting to know the people of the region and how they live. It may not be luxurious, but it will be a great trip with lots of fond memories of the people and area.

Let's not beat about the bush here, this trek is about hiking so you do need to be in good shape to participate. It is recommended that you do some regular exercise in the month before you depart. That said, you don't have to be a fitness freak; children as young as 7 and adults of 68 have completed the trail. You will be hiking at altitude, so it is recommended that you **acclimatise** for a couple of days before embarking on the trip.

The maximum group size is 16 people. The guide to walkers ration is 1 : 9. Don't worry about being rushed along too fast, there will be plenty of time for comfort breaks and chances to admire the views along the way. The guide will always walk at the back with the last person in the group, so you really don't need to be concerned about

Prices from

471 GBP (4 days) per person

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taking too long. This is a cultural journey, not a running race!

This trek is organized by a professional and licensed tour operator who has been operating in the region for the past 12 years.

Accommodation

You will be camping for the duration of the trip except for one night so you will be staying mostly in tents and sleeping bags at established campsites. All of the camping equipment and luggage (7kgs worth) will be carried from campsite to campsite by horses. There is a horseman in charge of this. Your cook usually goes ahead of the group to have your meals ready when you reach each campsite and he and your horseman will set up camp for you!

In addition to a guide you will also have a chef, who will be preparing filling and energy-releasing food so you will never go hungry on the trek. They will also be able to feed vegetarians and others who have specific dietary needs.

Itinerary

Day One: You'll have to wake up early as your guide will meet you in the morning at your hotel with the tour vehicle. You will be driven through the Sacred Valley past the village of Calca and finally to Lares village (about a three hour drive). In town you'll have the chance to visit the hot springs for a relaxing bit of time and lunch. Then you're back on the bus for another 20 minute ride to the start of the trail known as PASCANA. The hike will take you to the town of Quishaurani, where you'll meet up with the horsemen who will be packing the horses with everything you will need on the trek. After about two and a half hours you will arrive at the campsite - already set up! Then you will have some free time to just relax but it is suggested you take advantage of seeing as much as you can in Quishaurani - the local farmers or campesinos and some of the weavers. You'll be able to ask them about their way of life and see how they grow their crops and weave their beautiful textiles. After dinner you'll settle into your sleeping bag for a good night's sleep.

Day Two: Day two begins with another early start as this is the longest day on the trail. Your hike will be seven hours long with a break for lunch. You will first ascend to Pachacutec Pass, the highest point on the trail (4,450 meters/14,599 feet). But once you get to the top you'll realise it was all worth it as you take in the incredible views of Pachacutec Lake with the snow-capped peaks of Pitusiray, Sawasiray and Chicon in the background. Your sore legs will be well worth getting to the top of the pass! Then you will descend for about two and a half hours to the village of Cancha Cancha to the campsite for the night.

Day Three: You'll be happy to know that after day two, day three is the easy hike! After breakfast you will start to hike downhill and after about five hours you will reach the village of Huaran. Then you will hop on local transportation to Ollantaytambo, a gorgeous Andean mountain town. You may have a bit of time to look around but then you'll board the train for Aguas Calientes where you'll spend the night at a local hotel.

Day Four: Another early start on day four is rewarded with an amazing sunrise at Machu Picchu. The bus for the ruins departs at 5.30am then after the sun is up you will have a fully guided two hour tour of the site. At that time you will have the chance to explore on your own before boarding the train back to Poroy/Ollantaytambo and a transfer back to your hotel in Cusco.

Details

Getting there

Cusco can be reached from Lima via a one-hour flight. Lima is accessible from most other cities around the world

Price includes

Price includes transfer from your hotel to the start of trek, an English speaking guide, return Vistadome train tickets, waterproof duffles to put your luggage in, 7kg luggage allowance to be ported by the horses, hot water for washing and boiled water for drinking, meals except breakfast on day one and meals on day four, entrance fees for trails and Machu Picchu, tents and hotel in Aguas Calientes.

Price details

The price depends on the number of people travelling in your group (and others booked on your tour dates). If you have flexible dates, we can usually accommodate single travellers and couples at the lowest quoted price (for 6 or more people). Please ask for details. Private treks just for your group are available, please contact us if you would like to discuss this option.

Comfort level

Down to earth (hostels, camping, huts)

Experience required

A reasonable level of fitness and interest is all that is needed

Reviews (1)

Reviews of this experience

“ We really thought our trip was great. I would rate your service and the whole experience as a 5. The only piece that would make your service more convenient would be if the prices were conveyed in dollars instead of pounds. We would definitely recommend the trip and company to other travelers. We had our own trip for 3 people and were given lots of special attention. The transportation was very easy and all of our needs were met. Thanks so much for arranging everything for us! ”

 Rochelle Loughry reviewing Lares Valley Trek to Machu Picchu