

trek to machu picchu, q&a



how big is the group?

Each Group is intended to be a minimum of 12 people in order to run and a maximum of approximately 30 people due to the wilderness environment in which the expedition is taking place.

what are the flight details?

You will be flying from Dublin to Madrid to Lima, Peru (via Madrid). You will be returning via London. Internally, you will fly from Lima to Cusco with a local airline. The flight takes 55mins. Your flight tickets will be issued upon departure at the airport. If you choose to book your own flights you must confirm with the Charity Challenge office before paying otherwise you may be liable for your included group flights (please contact flights@charitychallenge.com for further assistance).

what's the luggage allowance?

As no formal clothes are needed, luggage should be kept to the absolute minimum - details on what to pack are provided in your Kit List. Your main kit bag or rucksack (suitcases are not appropriate) must not exceed 15kgs in weight, but for the five days you are away from Cusco you can safely store any excess kit. Each day, your personal kit will be transported by mule, vehicle or porter to your next campsite and will be waiting for you on arrival. You will carry a daypack for your daily needs such as sun cream, water, camera and lightweight waterproofs.

what will the accommodation be like?

In Lima, Cusco and Aguas Calientes the accommodation will be in small family run hotels (2 or 3 star), and rooms are for two people sharing. During the trek you will camp in spacious two person dome tents. If you would like your own room / tent, this can be arranged but there will be a single room supplement. Please let Charity Challenge know if you are travelling with a friend or partner who you wish to share with.

do we need to take our own sleeping bags and mats?

Thermarests are provided in Peru. You will need a good four-season sleeping bag. You can hire them from Trek Hire UK (www.trekhireuk.com or telephone + 44 (0)1732 865 858). Also see Kit List

what are the toilet/washing facilities like?

Toilet tents are supplied during the expedition. They are set up near the campsite at specific locations away from watercourses and toilet paper is provided. You will be provided with warm water for washing yourself at camp. A portable toilet will be set up at all meal stops and camps. During the actual trekking day, you will have to make use of the trees and bushes.

will my valuables be safe?

We will do everything to provide adequate safety for the group and security for your possessions. The general rule is that if you don't need it, don't bring it. This includes jewellery, necklaces & rings. Your flight tickets can be left in a safe in the hotel in Cusco or with the ground handler and collected on your departure. You must take your passport

With you during the trek, it should be kept in a plastic bag to protect it from damp or water damage.

what is the food and drink like?

The meals we provide are nutritionally balanced according to the particular environment and altitude. Breakfast usually includes cereals, bread, fresh fruit, juice and coffee. Lunches will either be in the form of a snack pack given out at breakfast to be carried in the daypack, or set up along the route, or taken in a local restaurant. Dinner always includes a soup, main course and a dessert. The vegetarian food is excellent. Please let Charity Challenge know prior to departure if you have any dietary requirements or allergies.

who will be leading the group?

We employ a number of first aid qualified expedition leaders, all of whom speak fluent English. They will be ultimately responsible for the running of the itinerary and the safety of your group.

what is a typical day?

During the trekking days we rise early and pack up camp after breakfast, then trek carrying only daypacks for 6 to 8 hours. There will be a lunch en route which will be set up and waiting for you along the trail. There will be plenty of time to stop and view the remarkable scenery. The trek zone is remote and rare flora and fauna will be seen. The evenings are spent in beautifully located camps overlooking in the shadows of nearby mountain peaks. The food and facilities are fairly good.

how fit do I need to be?

Training and fitness are definitely required as this expedition is graded as 'Tough'! Anyone who leads a fairly active and moderately healthy lifestyle should be OK as long as they train regularly over a period of at least three months leading up to the expedition. Don't forget that the temperature and the altitudes are different from the UK - the highest pass on this trek is 4,400m. While strength is important, endurance training should be your primary focus. Walking up hills and climbing stairs are both ways to condition your lower body. Begin slowly, without the weight of a pack, eventually adding weight as you increase your training pace. Take a long hike (6-8 hours) several times with a weighted pack, up and down hills or on small mountains (weigh your pack with water containers and pour out the water before your descent to minimise knee stress). Also see Fitness Training notes.

what happens if I fall ill, can't keep up or there is an emergency?

The event is not run as a race and there is always a large discrepancy in people's walking abilities, which are catered for. There will always be a staff member at the back of the group to ensure you are not left behind and can take things at your own pace. Back up support will never be far away and can be brought in, in the event of an emergency. Contact will be maintained between guides and the support teams where possible. We will carry oxygen with the first aid kit.

what is included in the cost of the expedition?

The following items are included in the cost of the expedition: International flights to and from Peru, all internal transfers including internal flights to and from Cusco, all meals (inc. drinking water on the trek), all accommodation (whether in tents/ hotels), group first aid supplies, an English speaking expedition leader and full local support team (drivers, cooks, porters, mules etc), relevant back-up facilities, a Charity Challenge T-Shirt, water on hiking days, US\$20 to the local community project, and discount from Nomad Travellers Stores for personal equipment. We also make a contribution through Climate Care to offset the equivalent CO2 emissions of your international flight.

what is not included in the cost of the expedition?

The following items are not included in your expedition and will be at your own expense – travel to and from UK airports, tips for the local support team, activities not mentioned in the itinerary, alcoholic beverages, water on non hiking days and extras such as laundry, personal spending money, international departure tax (US\$33) and domestic departure tax (US\$5).

what shall I do about spending money?

You will not need large amounts of money during this trip and other than at the start and end of the trip, you will be in the mountains away from any foreign exchanges or banks. You will only need money for tips, food & drink (additional), gifts & souvenirs, international airport departure tax and domestic departure tax. There are a wide range of things to spend money on including rugs, ponchos, jewellery and so on. On average around £200 + a credit card in case of an emergency.

how much would you recommend for tips?

Tipping is personal and at your sole discretion. You should only tip if you feel that you have received good service. We recommend approx. US\$7 per person per day (approx \$55) and this should be given to the expedition leader at the end of the expedition who will distribute it among the support team, including guides, assistant guides, cooks, and porters.

what do you do to protect the environment?

We are keeping to a small group so that we limit the impact we have on the surrounding environment. We will ensure that all rubbish is carried out of the area and disposed of responsibly. We follow the local guidelines on cultural and environmental protection and respect. We will also be donating US\$20 per participant towards a local Andean community project (educational, health or environmental) to enhance local living conditions, which you will be informed about after our expedition.

can you recommend any literature about the region?

- The conquest of the Incas by John Hemming is the best regional history book.
- The Rough Guide to Peru.
- Pablo Neruda, a Chilean poet, The Heights of Machu Picchu available in English.
- The White Rock by Hugh Thomson is a wonderful account of modern day exploration of Inca sites and an easy to read insight into the history of the Incas.
- Lost City of the Incas by Hiram Bingham. His account of how he “discovered” Macchu Picchu.

english

Hello
Goodbye
Good morning
Good evening/night
Please
Thank you
How are you?
You're welcome
Excuse me
I understand
I don't understand
Yes / No
How much?
Toilet
Do you speak English?
I don't speak Spanish
Zero
One
Two
Three
Four
Five
Six
Seven
Eight
Nine
Ten

spanish

Hola
Adios/Ciao
Buenos dias
Buenos noches
Por favor
Gracias
Como esta?
De nada
Disculpe
Entiendo
No entiendo
Si / No
Cuanto?
Bano
Habla ingles?
No hablo Espanol
Cero
Uno
Dos
Tres
Cuatro
Cinco
Seis
Siete
Ocho
Nueve
Diez

NB: The information provided above was correct at the time of going to print.