

Galapagos & Amazon

Ecuador - 8 day Galapagos Cruise, Quito , Otavalo Market
Peru- Amazon Tambopata Wildlife Reserve

17 Days

Departures: 27April,8Jun,27July,24Aug 2017

From NZ\$9350

OR

28 Days

**With 11 day extension to Cuzco ,Sacred Valley , Machu Picchu,
Lake Titicaca, Uros Islands , La Paz**

From NZ\$12745



Latin Link Adventure

Ph:0800 528465 www.latinlink.co.nz

PO Box 352 Wanaka 9343 Tel: 03 4435036 Fax: 03 4431846 Email: info@latinlink.co.nz

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Information Sheet: Galapagos & Amazon

Travelling with Lan Chile you will begin your adventure of discovery in Quito.

Visit the land of the Otavalo Indians then the unique Galapagos Islands, justifiably one of the world's great wildlife destinations. As it had been free of humans and predators for almost all of its history, the islands have developed some of the most unique life forms on the planet. We explore the islands for 8 days on our comfortable small motor cruiser.

Fly to remote Puerto Maldonado on the Rio Madre de Dios- a tributary of the Amazon - still unspoiled, where animal and bird spotting is among the best in South America. The Tambopata National Reserve is a 275,000 hectare conservation unit created by the Peruvian government in 1990 to protect the watersheds of the Tambopata and Candamo rivers. It is adjacent to the huge 1 million hectare Bahuaja Sonene National Park. Visit the unique Macaw Parrot Lick, and observe local communities.

Return to Lima or take the Incas Option to explore Cusco- the Inca temples and quaint cobble-stone villages where life goes on as it did so many years ago. Arrive into beautiful red-tiled Cusco, fabled Navel of the Universe, to explore the Inca Empire - still alive today. Option to hike the legendary Inca Trail to the 'lost city of the Incas' Machu Picchu. For those not wishing to take up the challenge of the Inca Trail we have an exciting alternative programme. See shaded days of the detailed itinerary.

Across the altiplano to Puno, on the shores of tranquil Lake Titicaca, where you can experience life on the floating reed islands while visiting the Uros Indians. Stop overnight in sleepy Copacabana on the lake where you will visit the scenic and tranquil Island of the Sun - legendary birthplace of the sun as it rose out of the lake.

We then take a picture postcard route to La Paz situated at 3900 metres above sea level and where ancient cultures meet the new millennium. This bustling city is unique, with bowler-hatted ladies selling their fruit and veges on the pavement outside towering skyscrapers.

Galapagos & Amazon Day 1-17 NZ\$ 9350

Inclusions:

ALL travel as per itinerary between Quito & Lima - buses, boats, flights, transfers, and taxis

ALL transfers as per itinerary

ALL accommodation twin/double share with private facilities in comfortable 3 star hotels

ALL entrance fees and sightseeing as detailed in the itinerary

Breakfasts daily, all meals in Galapagos and Tambopata Reserve

Services of Professional Tour Manager (subject to a minimum of 6 people travelling) from Cuzco onwards

Services of Naturalist Guide on Galapagos Cruise and in Amazon

Services of local English speaking guides

All applicable taxes on airlines tickets

NB These costs based on you flying internationally to/from South America with LAN Airlines. Should you travel on another airline a surcharge of NZ\$540 applies

Incas Tour Extension Day 17-28 NZ\$3395

Inclusions:

ALL travel as per itinerary between Cuzco and La Paz - buses, boats, transfers, and taxis

ALL transfers as per itinerary

ALL accommodation twin/double share with private facilities in comfortable 3 star hotels

ALL entrance fees and sightseeing as detailed in the itinerary

Breakfasts daily, 1 lunch

Services of Professional Tour Manager (subject to a minimum of 6 people travelling) from Cuzco onwards

Services of local English speaking guides

All applicable taxes on airlines tickets

Optional Inca Trail additional NZ\$495

Not Included:

Meals not specified as above. It is necessary to allow USD\$30-40 per day to cover this. Insurance, visa fees, medical expenses, tips & airport taxes that have to be paid en route (allow US\$180 Days 1-17 and additional US\$100 for Days 17-29), optional sightseeing and personal expenses, Galapagos Park entrance fee of US\$100 which must be paid in US\$ cash on arrival.

NOTE ON FLIGHTS

****International flights on LAN Airlines Auckland - Quito & Lima or La Paz - Auckland are in addition to costs stated above. At present the cost of these flights is between NZ\$1850-\$2500 plus taxes \$120. We will quote you the best airfares at the time of booking and keep you informed on any seasonal specials between time of booking and departure**

Galapagos & Amazon Tour with Incas Extension

Day	Date	Program	Overnight
1	Thurs	<p><u>Quito</u> Fly to Quito , we suggest LAN Airlines direct connection Auckland-Santiago-Quito . On arrival you will be met and transferred to your hotel Accommodation: Hotel La Rabida www.hostalrabida.com</p>	Quito
2	Fri	<p><u>Quito</u> Morning at leisure. Afternoon scenic tour of Quito, the capital of Ecuador, will take you through its wealth of culture, history and tradition. Ending up at a lookout point with great scenic view.</p>	Quito (B)
3	Sat	<p><u>Otavallo</u> Full day excursion to Otavallo. This excursion goes north, to the land of the Otavaleños and South America's most famous Indian fair. Otavallo is located on the province of Imbabura, known also as the Lake province, in the north part of the country. Imbabura counts with a pleasant dry climate with temperatures averaging around 18C and it is home of many indigenous handicraft markets of which Otavallo is the most famous. The Otavallo market is most popular on Saturday when many indigenous communities gather at the Plaza de los Ponchos to exhibit their textile crafts, especially blankets and tapestries, that date from colonial times. Lunch is included. Later this afternoon return to Quito</p>	Quito(B,L)

4	Sun	<p><u>Quito –Galapagos</u></p> <p>You will be transferred to the airport for your flight to Galapagos Please note there is a US\$10 immigration fee payable on arrival One of the world's greatest treasures of natural history lies in the bewitching Galapagos Islands, famed for its fearless and unique wildlife, and is the highlight of most trips to Ecuador.</p> <p>The Galapagos Islands have been named after the giant Galapagos Tortoises. The archipelago, 1000 Km. (600 miles) off Ecuador's Pacific Coast originated from undersea volcanic activity, six million years ago. The archipelago's 13 major islands, 6 smaller ones, and scores of islets are all part of Ecuador's National Park system. In 1835, the English naturalist Charles Darwin visited the islands and discovered this "living laboratory" which inspired his writings on the Theory of Evolution. Many of the animals on the Galapagos Islands have developed into different species from their continental relatives, and because they have never experienced man as a predator, they show no fear of humans. The world's most wondrous group of islands is yours for unhurried exploration. Follow the nature trails; enjoy the amazing sights, wade and even dive among the animals of land and sea.</p> <p>The sixteen passenger %Aida Maria %offers a great combination of comfort, style and economy for tours in the Galapagos. Each of the eight cabins has a private bath and hot shower, air conditioning and an ample external deck to enjoy sunny Galapagos days. Its design is based in efficiency and comfort with ample social areas and 8 cabins 2 in main deck, 2 in upper deck and 2 in solarium providing optimum comfort for your experience exploring the Galapagos.. All meals and shore excursions are included . Accommodation in 2 berth cabins . Please note that the Galapagos National park fee of USD100 is to be paid in cash on joining the cruise. As you prepare to land in Baltra, peer out the window. The landscape below will seem out of this world - a place like no other. The Galapagos Islands are unique to the world and you are about to see why. Your bilingual naturalist guide will greet you at the airport and assist you through customs. During lunch he/she will introduce you to the islands and specifically the flora and fauna you will encounter at our first destination, Las Bachas Beach.</p> <p>On the sandy white beaches of Las Bachas we will get a close look at a sea turtle nesting area and a lake frequented by leggy pink flamingos and other migratory birds. Afterward, we cool ourselves off with our first dip in the deliciously blue Pacific Ocean. As this is our first evening together, the crew will invite us to a pre-dinner cocktail on the yacht before the welcome dinner. If the night is clear, as it usually is, the stars above will bedazzle; look for the Southern Cross, the Big Dipper (turned up-side down!) and Orion.</p>	Cruise (B,L,D)
5	Mon	<p><u>Genovesa Island</u></p> <p>Early in the morning we will take breakfast and later we will disembark at Genovesa (Tower) Island that is located in the northeast portion of the Galapagos (less than half a degree north of the equator). Tower is an outpost for many sea birds (as Española is in the south). Interestingly, there are no land reptiles on Tower, only very small marine iguanas. This is attributed to the direction of the ocean currents, which evidently wouldnd have carried the terrestrial animals here. Visit El Barranco during the morning then return to the boat for lunch, and later cruise to Darwin Bay.</p> <p>The anchorage at Darwin Bay, located on the southern portion of the island, is actually the caldera of an extinct, partially-eroded volcano, with the surrounding cliffs forming the inner portion of the rim. While the origin of the name Tower is not known, one can imagine it had something to do with these towering cliffs. The tour will be a long, fairly-easy walk, but it is usually hot and dry here, so you may want to carry some water. After a wet landing on a coral beach the trail begins in an area where there are several swallow-tailed gulls. As you walk back from the beach, there is a mixture of Opuntia cactus and mangroves.</p>	On Cruise (B,L,D)

<p>6</p>	<p>Tues</p>	<p><u>Bartolome Island</u></p> <p>Bartolome Island,at its highest point (114m), has one of the most photographed vistas in the archipelago. This island is quite young and quite volcanic. Therefore, it's relatively unpopulated; only a small handful of die-hard plant and animal species have survived long enough to call this lava-land home.</p> <p>After our visit to Bartolome island we will visit nearby Sullivan Bay, at the turn of the century a huge lava flow spilled forth and right down to the sea; today you can stroll across this black volcanic expanse admiring its time-frozen ripples, bubbles and ropes.</p> <p>After lunch we will have a short navigation to Chinese hat or Sombrero Chino, a small volcanic cone by the coast of James island, Sombrero Chino has a beautiful beach for snorkeling with sea lions as well as a small trail along the coast of this cone where we can spot lots of coast life and shore birds.</p>	<p>On Cruise (B,L,D)</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>Wed</p>	<p>Daphne Island- Santa Cruz Island</p> <p>Early in the morning we will arrive to Daphne Island, a tuff cone formed by the accumulation of volcanic ash which is home to thousands of birds such as blue footed boobies, frigate birds, tropic birds and many more.We will not go ashore but we will navigate around this volcanic cone, binoculars are recommended to get a good look at the birds. Daphne has been a great research site on which many scientists have spent years studying the behavior of Darwin's finches.</p> <p>After this visit we move on to our next site, Black Turtle Cove, a red mangrove lagoon on Santa Cruz, is a nursery for many sharks and rays. It is also a great location to observe mating turtles around this time of year. We will hopefully see large groups of resting white-tip reef sharks, schools of golden rays and spotted eagle rays, and a few juvenile scalloped hammerhead sharks and black-tip sharks. The water is nearly mirror-calm and we often used paddles instead of the loud panga engines to move around the area.</p> <p>After lunch we will navigate for a couple of hours to Cerro Dragon, we will have a dry landing on lava rocks, Cerro Dragon is a small bay on the west coast of Santa Cruz and got its name from the many land iguanas that live in the area, land iguanas are endemic to the Galapagos islands and have made of this place a good mating and nesting area.</p>	<p>On Cruise (B,L,D)</p>

8	Thurs	<p><u>Santa Cruz Island</u> Here we can find small tortoises, hand-sized between the ages of one and five, and marvel at how they achieve such a large size as adults (500 lbs. or more!). Galapagos tortoises are believed to have a lifespan of over 100 years, so the young ones have a long life ahead of them as long as they receive the protection they need. Aside from the Station headquarters, Santa Cruz boasts the largest town and economic center of the Galapagos, Puerto Ayora. In this port-side town we can buy souvenirs of the islands (postcards, t-shirts, books, etc.). Check-out the uniquely Galapaganean ceramic shop near the entrance of the Charles Darwin Station. After shopping in Puerto Ayora and lunch on the boat (you may dine in town if you desire), we will explore the upper region ('parte alta') of the island, a moisture-rich area with fertile volcanic soils. We will learn about the vegetation and animal life of this zone, often strikingly different than that found at lower elevations. Darwin finches, yellow warblers, and bright red vermilion fly catchers will flit in and out of the moss-covered trees. From this high vantage point we are treated to beautiful views of the surrounding archipelago. In the late afternoon we return to town.</p>	On Cruise (B,L,D)
9	Fri	<p><u>Floreana Island</u> Today when you awake and peer out your porthole you will see Floreana, one of the greenest islands in the archipelago.</p> <p>Ask your guide to tell you about its mysterious history laden with rumors of witches, murderous baronesses, blackmail and dubious disappearances.</p> <p>Our first stop is Punta Cormorant, where we follow a footpath to a lagoon inhabited by flaming-pink flamingos. We will also pass by Carolina Beach, a sea turtle nesting area and a superb spot for watching sea birds and sea rays.</p> <p>Back on our yacht, we skirt the island's coast until we arrive at La Corona del Diablo (the Devil's Crown), a sub-marine crater that offers some of the most spectacular snorkeling in the Galapagos. This is a great spot for seeing the wide array of tropical fish endemic to the islands as well as purple sea stars and spiky sea urchins. The crater's most thrilling undersea creatures, however, are the white-tipped sharks. As with most of the creatures in the Galapagos they are unperturbed by your presence, so you can swim in their company freely and without fear.</p> <p>After returning to the boat for lunch we will sail on to Post Office Bay, where the island's original post office - really only a wooden barrel - was established in 1793. The current system still functions as it did three centuries ago: visitors drop off unstamped letters and postcards AND pick-up whatever mail they can hand deliver themselves when they return home! (Try it, it actually works!).</p>	On Cruise (B,L,D)

10	Sat	<p><u>Espanola Island</u> Espanola is one of the most magical of all the islands. It is a place where the animals reign supreme and we humans are merely guests. As your dingy brings you to shore you will see sea lion pups sunbathing with marine iguanas and blue footed boobies nesting in between. Nearby may be a Galapagos Hawk. If it is boobie mating season watch the bonded pairs do the infamous boobie dance (if it's not mating season ask your guide to demonstrate - after all it's his job to teach you about the local fauna). As we follow the foot path around the island, we will pass hundreds of boobie nesting sites including one colony of masked boobies. There is a good chance we will see the thief-like frigate bird (which has the habit of stealing other birds' food), as well as the stunning red-billed tropic bird and the nocturnal swallow-tailed gull. If it is the right time of the year (mid-April to December) we will also encounter the giant waved albatross. Apart from a few pairs that breed on Isla de Plata off the Ecuadorian mainland, all of the world's 12,000 waved albatross breed on Espanola Island. At the end of the breeding season, the entire population leaves the island and heads out to sea, where they spend years without touching land. Astonishingly, four or five years may pass before the fledglings return to Espanola.</p>	On Cruise (B,L,D)
		<p>As we make our way around the island we pass by El Soplador, a giant blowhole that explodes to heights reaching 70 feet. In the nearby tide pools you can often find lounging sea lions enjoying the blowhole's misty spray. Following lunch on board the yacht, we will visit Garner Bay, a great place for sunbathing, swimming and snorkeling. Lion fish, flycatchers, and Galapagos hawks will keep us company as we relax under the rays of the evening sun. Dinner on the yacht completes our day.</p>	
11	Sun	<p><u>Galapagos – Quito-Lima</u> On our 8th day of visiting the Galapagos we will arrive early in the morning to San Cristobal, the capital of Galapagos ,our first site will be Kicker Rock or Leon Dormido, a tuff volcanic cone which has been eroded by the wind and marine currents giving it the shape from the distance of a sleeping sea lion.Now it is home to blue footer boobies and frigate birds amongst many others which have made of this their nesting site.After navigating around Kicker Rock we continue on our way to Isla Lobos. A very small island made of volcanic rocks on which we will disembark, Isla Lobos gets its name from a small colony of sea lions (lobo de mar in Spanish) where we can observe the behavior and interaction of sea lions living in a small community. Following the visit to Isla lobos we head to Puerto Baquerizo Moreno, the main town in San Cristobal where the airport is located. Before taking the airplane back to the mainland you will have some time to visit the town on your own for last minute shopping or just getting to see how people live in the Galapagos. Arrive Quito later this afternoon and connect on LAN Airlines flight to Lima. On arrival you will be transferred to your hotel Accommodation: Wyndham Costa del Sol Airport Hotel</p>	Quito (B)

12	Mon	<p><u>Lima – Puerto Maldonado- Tambopata</u> Transfer to the airport for the short flight to Puerto Maldonado where you will be met by your naturalist guide and transferred to a dugout canoe for the trip up the Tambopata River to the lodge. On the journey the vegetation changes from colonized deforested areas to virgin rain forest. A box-lunch is provided on board. On arrival you'll have a welcome drink and meet the rest of the staff. After dinner a night walk to find nocturnal animals or insects by the eye-shine a specialization for increasing the light and see better, about 50% of the animals are nocturnal in the rainforest. We will be out at the river's edge at night, scanning the shores with headlamps and flashlights to catch the red gleams of reflection from caiman eyes Accommodation: Refugio Amazonas Lodge <i>Refugio Amazonas is built on a 200 hectare private reserve on the buffer zone of the Tambopata National Reserve. It is becoming integrated to the communities of Brazil nut extractors that surround it, attempting to extend the benefits of ecotourism to the families that commit to the sustainable use of the forest within this buffer zone. It is located ten minutes walking from the river.</i></p>	Tambopata (B,L,D)
13	Tues	<p><u>Refugio Amazonas –Tambopata Research Centre</u> Before breakfast ,a thirty minute walk from Refugio Amazonas leads to the 25 meter canopy tower. A bannistered staircase running through the middle provides safe access to the platforms above. The tower has been built upon high ground, therefore increasing your horizon of the continuous primary forest extending out towards the Tambopata National Reserve. From here views of mixed species canopy flocks as well as toucans, macaws and raptors are likely.After breakfast a few minutes hike from the lodge is a beautiful old growth patch of Brazil Nut forest that has been harvested for decades (if not centuries) where the precarious remains of a camp used two months a year by Brazil Nut gatherers can still be experienced. We will be demonstrating the whole process of the rain forest's only sustainably harvested product from collection through transportation to drying.Then a 4&1/2 hour journey by boat from Refugio Amazonas, in the pristine heart of the reserve, lies the Tambopata Research Centre.One and half hours into our boat journey, as we cross the confluence with the Malinowski River, we will leave the final traces of human habitation behind. Within the 700,000 hectare uninhabited nucleus of the reserve, sightings of capybara, caiman, geese, macaws and other large species will become more frequent. A 3-5km hike will lead us to overlooks commanding magnificent views of the Tambopata winding its way into the lowlands. The forest on this trail, regenerating on old bamboo forest, is good for Howler Monkey and Dusky Titi Monkey.After dinner attend a lecture providing a in depth look at the biology of macaws, their feeding habits, the theories for clay lick use, their breeding and feeding ecology, population fluctuations and the threats to their conservation Tambopata Research Center is built using a combination of traditional native materials (wood, palm fronds, wild cane and clay) and architecture and modern day eco-lodge technology. The lodge consists of one wing of 18 rooms connected by raised boardwalks to eight shared bathrooms, the research quarters and a dining room. The dining room is an open building that doubles as a bar. Rooms are small and hold two beds. The walls dividing each room are built using cane, and extend from the floor to about 2.5 meters height making each room private. The side that looks out to the forest does not have a wall or screening of any kind, acting as a large window facing the forest. The reason we have been able to incorporate this "luxurious" design into our lodge is because mosquitoes are not really a problem around the lodge clearing and the open section allows for an intimate contact with the rain forest.. Doors are replaced with drapes. Rooms are not soundproof. Each room has beds, mosquito nets, bedside tables and a rack of clothes hangers. Bathroom are shared, and have no hot water. The research quarters is a two story building usually full of scientists and their assistants from the macaw project.</p>	Tambopata (B,L,D)

14	Wed	<p><u>Tambopata Research Centre</u> On most clear mornings of the year dozens of large macaws and hundreds of parrots congregate on this large river bank in a raucous and colorful spectacle which inspired a National Geographic cover story. Discretely located fifty meters from the cliff, we will observe Green-winged, Scarlet and Blue-and-gold Macaws and several species of smaller parrots descend to ingest clay. Outings are at dawn when the lick is most active. They arrive in search of minerals and salts and the digestive properties of the clay particles themselves. On average several hundred Macaws and smaller parrots visit the clay-lick daily, including Scarlet, Blue and Yellow, Red and Green, Chestnut-fronted and Blue-headed parrots, among others. This clay-lick is considered one of the largest in the world. Following a late morning hike in the trail system in search of some of the nine species of monkeys present in the area, including Spider monkeys, Squirrel monkeys and Dusky titi monkeys as well as the elusive large mammals like Tapir, White-lipped peccaries and Jaguar. After lunch visit the Pond Platform-10 minutes upriver from the lodge is a tiny pond with a platform in the middle. It is a great place to spot waterfowl such as Muscovy duck, sunbittern and hoatzin along with the woodpeckers, oropendolas, flycatchers and parakeets that call this pond their home. After dinner you will have the option of hiking out at night, when most of the mammals are active but rarely seen. Much easier to find are frogs with shapes and sounds as bizarre as their natural histories</p>	Tambopata (B,L,D)
15	Thurs	<p><u>Tambopata Research Centre</u> Another outing at dawn when the macaw lick is most active. After breakfast hike the Terra Firme Trail An entirely different habitat characterized by smaller, thinner trees atop hills and slopes is covered by this five kilometer trail. Saddleback tamarins are frequently found here. As we walk near the limits of the swamp we will also keep our eyes open for rare tapir tracks. After lunch enjoy a hike on the Palm Swamp Trail Growing on the remains of an oxbow lake and providing both arboreal as well as terrestrial mammals with fruits throughout the year, the aguaje palms are one of the most important food sources in the rainforest. Demand for these fruits and great conditions for planting rice, makes the palm swamp also one of the most threatened habitats.</p>	Tambopata (B,L,D)
16	Fri	<p><u>Tambopata –Puerto Maldonado – Lima or Cusco</u> An early start today to return by boat to Puerto Maldonado and connect on LAN flight to Lima . Accommodation: Wyndham Costa del Sol Airport</p> <p>Or connect on LAN flight to Cusco On arrival you will be transferred to our hotel Accommodation: Royal Inka 1 Hotel www.royalinkahotel.com/hcusco.html</p> <p>Rest of day at leisure to relax and adjust to the altitude</p>	Lima or Cusco(B)

17	Sat	<p><u>Depart Lima</u></p> <p>OR</p> <p><u>Cusco</u> Cusco, heart of the Inca Empire, known by the local Quechua Indians as 'Navel of the Universe'. Cusco is an amazing experience. Lying in an exceptionally beautiful countryside 3300 metres above sea level, here you will encounter a fine blend of Spanish and Inca cultures, colourful Quechua Indian markets, Inca temples and massive stone walls which form the foundations of Colonial Cusco, originally part of the impressive monument of Sacsayhuaman, situated above the town. Morning at leisure. This afternoon enjoy a comprehensive walking tour of this delightful city, including the Cathedral, Plaza de Armas, Temple of the Sun. Visit Sacsayhuaman -this magnificent Inca fortress, which overlooks the city of Cusco. Sacsayhuaman can be variously translated as 'speckled falcon' or 'speckled head'. The last interpretation refers to the belief that the city of Cusco was set out in the form of a puma whose head was the hill of Sacsayhuaman. The origins are uncertain but the fortress is generally attributed to the period of Inca Pachacuti, the man who essentially founded the Inca empire. We also visit the ruins of Qenko, an area of well - preserved archaeological ruins and the Red Fortress of Puca Pucara.</p>	Cusco (B)
18	Sun	<p><u>Cusco -Sacred Valley</u> Drive through stunning scenery to Chinchero, the most colourful and authentic market in Peru. Continue on to Maras Salt Pans. Another fabulous walk today. Discover these amazing salt pans still mined as they were hundreds of years ago, Also visit Moray . these unusual Inca ruins consist of several enormous terraced circular depressions, the largest of which is about 30m. deep. Continue through the Sacred Valley to our hotel an old monastery (completely restored of course!). Accommodation: Hotel Recoleta Monasterio</p> <p>www.hotelessanagustin.com.pe/hotel_recoleta.htm</p>	Sacred Valley (B)
19	Mon	<p><u>Cusco – Sacred Valley Trekkers in group depart for Inca Trail Day 1</u> Continue through the beautiful Sacred valley of the Incas. Next is Pisaq where you will enjoy a panoramic walk along the original Inca pathways and terracing to the ancient town below. Visit the markets then continue through this lush valley where the towering fortress of Ollantaytambo dominates the surrounding area. Return to Hotel Monasterio</p>	Sacred Valley (B)
20	Tues	<p><u>Train to Aguas Calientes or Day 2 - Inca Trail</u> After breakfast you have an early morning transfer to Ollantaytambo to catch the train to Aguas Calientes, a small railroad town with tons of character . enjoy a soak in the hot pools under the Andean sky or explore the town Accommodation: Santuario Hotel</p> <p>www.santuariohotel.com</p>	Agua Calientes (B)

21	Wed	<p><u>Bus to Machu Picchu- Cuzco or Day 3 – Inca Trail</u></p> <p>It's an early start today. This is the best time to enjoy the peace and tranquillity not to mention the magic of Machu Picchu is before the trainloads of visitors arrive. Machu Picchu, known also as the Lost City of the Incas. It is undoubtedly the best known and most spectacular archaeological site on the continent and is considered a must for all visitors to Peru. You will travel by bus up the zig-zag, the Hiram Bingham highway, to the ruins where your first views will take your breath away. Enjoy a fully guided tour of the ruins, some time to explore on your own, before returning down the mountainside. Time for a snack and then board the train to Ollantaytambo and transfer to our hotel in Cusco.</p> <p>Accommodation: Royal Inka 1 Hotel www.royalinkahotel.com/hcusco.html</p>	Cusco (B)
22	Thurs	<p><u>Cusco</u></p> <p>Free day to explore this delightful city . everyone's favourite. The day is yours to enjoy, all the convents, churches, museums, alpaca and jewellery bargains.</p>	Cusco (B)
23	Fri	<p><u>Cusco - Puno</u></p> <p>Bus ride to Puno through the dramatic landscapes of the highland plateau, with occasional views of tiny Andean villages and herds of llamas and vicunas. We will stop at Andahuaylillas, where there is a beautiful baroque church built at the beginning of the XVIIth century. It is very well known thanks to its beautiful mural paintings. We will make a second stop at Raqchi, where there is an Inca temple built to worship Wiracocha, one of the most important Inca gods. Finally, we will stop at the archaeological museum of Pukara (200BC-AD300) then we will lunch at a restaurant en route.</p> <p>Arrive in Puno late afternoon. Accommodation: Qelqatani Hotel www.qelqatani.com</p>	Puno (B,L)
24	Sat	<p><u>Visit Floating Reed Islands Lake Titicaca – into Bolivia</u></p> <p>What an experience! By boat visit the curious floating reed islands and the Uros Indians who live there. Everything is made of these reeds, houses, schools, boats, churches etc. Once you reach the reed islands, you can experience gliding across Lake Titicaca in an authentic reed boat - you can't beat it! Return to Puno.</p> <p>This afternoon continue through lovely scenery, which follows this mighty lake to the Bolivian border.</p> <p>After border formalities continue to the sleepy town of Copacabana.</p> <p>Accommodation: Hotel Rosario del Lago www.hotelrosario.com/lago</p>	Copacabana (B)
25	Sun	<p><u>Copacabana – La Paz</u></p> <p>Morning at leisure to explore around Copacabana . The opportunity for an optional boat trip out on the lake to tranquil Isla del Sol (Island of the Sun) where legend has it that the first Inca King rose out of the lake.</p> <p>On this legendary island, visit the Pirkokaina Inca Palace and enjoy a short walk to the Gardens, Sacred Stairs and Fountain of the Inca. As we ascend to Yumani village, we have a magnificent view of the lake set to the backdrop of Mount Illampu. Depart Copacabana and continue through even more stunning scenery, with snow-capped peaks and the blue lake, to La Paz, capital of Bolivia and highest capital in the world.</p> <p>Known as City of Contrasts, here ancient traditions meet the new millennium of chaotic traffic and towering buildings.</p> <p>Accommodation: Hotel Rosario www.hotelrosario.com/la-paz</p>	La Paz (B)

26	Mon	<p><u>City tour and shopping</u> A morning tour takes you down to where the air is thicker and the elite live. Visit the witches markets, Calle Jaen with its museums, San Francisco Church, Plaza Murillo, National Congress, Cathedral, Presidential Palace, See local neighborhoods as you take public transportation up the hill to reach a spectacular viewpoint. Continue to the very unusual eroded formations of the Moon Valley. The afternoon is free to enjoy the uniqueness of this colourful bustling city and shop for bargains and gifts.</p>	La Paz (B)
27	Tues	<p><u>Explore La Paz</u> Optional tour to Tiwanaku (Pre-Columbian) ruins outside the city or a Mountain Bike down the world's most spectacular road or spend the day with a little more shopping and people watching. A great city to do that!</p>	La Paz (B)
28	Wed	<p><u>Depart La Paz</u> Adios to the Andes as you transfer to the airport for your onward flight</p>	(B)

Inca Trail Description & Distances

Please note you will be given a duffel bag in Cusco to pack the items you need on the trail. Your main baggage will be stored for you while you are on the Trail. Sleeping bag, sleeping mat & sheet included

Day 1 (12km): You will be picked up from your hotel in Urubamba for the short trip to Km 82 where you will begin the trail.

Cross the Vilcanota River and follow the trail to the right as it climbs steeply up from the river. After passing through a small village, the ruins of the Inca hillfort of Huillca Raccay come into view high above the mouth of the river Cusichaca ('happy bridge'). It is a simple descent down to the Cusichaca river.

For a further 4.5-hour, 08- to 10-kilometre-walk the path follows the left bank of the river up to the village of Wayllabamba (3,000m). The name in Quechua means 'grassy plain'. You will spend the first night here – depending on everyone's fitness.

Day 2 (11km): Rising early (around 6am), today begins with a gradual climbing up from Wayllabamba for about 3 hours through steepening woods and increasingly spectacular terrain brings you to the treeline and a meadow known as Lulluchapampa (3,680m). It is another 1½ hours climb to the first and highest pass of the trail (Abra de Huarmihuañusca or 'Dead Woman's Pass) at 4,200m. During this part of the trail hikers are exposed to the Andean elements: first scorching sun and then, closer to the pass, freezing winds. Once at the top hikers can celebrate having completed the most difficult section of the trail.

The descent from the pass is steep although not difficult, following the trail on the left side of the valley to the valley floor and to the 2nd night's campsite at Pacaymayo (3,600m). There are toilet facilities here.

Day 3 (16km): From Pacaymayo it takes about an hour to climb up to the ruins of Runkuracay. These small circular ruins occupy a commanding position overlooking the Pacaymayo valley below. Another 45 minute hike will bring you to the top of the second pass: Abra de Runkuracay (4,000m). At last you'll feel that you are walking along the trail of the Incas with paving, for the most part, being original. The descent down the steps from the pass is steep so take care. This section of the trail, up till the 3rd pass, is particularly beautiful as the path crosses high stone embankments and skirts deep precipices. After about 1 hour from the 2nd pass you'll arrive at Sayacmarca by way of a superbly designed stone staircase. The name Sayacmarca means 'Inaccessible Town' and describes the position of the ruins perfectly, protected on three sides by sheer cliffs. No one knows the exact purpose of these ruins.

You have to backtrack a little to rejoin the trail as it passes Conchamarca, a small Inca dwelling situated in the shadows of Sayacmarca, which was probably a *tambo* for weary travellers on their way to Machu Picchu.

From then on the path descends into magnificent cloudforest full of orchids, hanging mosses, tree ferns and flowers, passing through an impressive Inca tunnel, carved into the rock, on the way.

The trail then climbs up to the 3rd pass (3,700m). The view from the pass offers excellent views of several snow-capped peaks including Salkantay (6,271m) and Veronica (5,750m). A few minutes after the pass is Phuyupatamarca (3,580 metres), the most impressive Inca ruin so far. The name means 'Town in the Clouds'. Access to the ruins is down a steep flight of stairs passing six 'Inca Baths' probably used for the ritual worship of water.

Leaving the site via an impressive Inca staircase leading from the west side of the ruins (the far end from the baths) you descend a thousand or so steps. Be careful with your knees which will feel the strain by the end of the day. After about an hour of walking through cloudforest you may just be able to see the archaeological site of Wiñay Wayna (2,650 metres),

The campsite at Winay Wayna is a welcome sight and your efforts can be rewarded with a deserved cold beer, as well as hot showers (\$1.5) and toilets. Trekkers on the Classic 4-day trek will camp here.

A short trail leaves from the southern end of the ruins of Wiñay Wayna. The name in Quechua means 'forever young' and is named after a variety of pink orchid which grows here. The ruins comprise magnificent agricultural terraces set in an impressive location. There are also many buildings of good quality stonework and a sequence of 10 baths, suggesting that the site was probably a religious centre associated with the worship of water. Ritual cleansing may have taken place here for pilgrims on the final leg of the trail to Machu Picchu.

Day 4 (6km): On the last morning we rise before dawn (4am) to begin the final section of the trail, after a light breakfast you will say goodbye to our porters as they pack up the camping equipment and head back to Cusco. Most people attempt to wake up early so that they can leave Wiñay Wayna to get to Machu Picchu before sunrise. The sky starts getting light by 6am and the first rays of the sun reach Machu Picchu at about 7am. The trail contours a mountainside and drops into cloudforest before coming to an almost vertical flight of 50 steps leading up

**Suddenly the whole of Machu Picchu is spread out before you in all its glory -
a fantastic sight for all – pure magic.**

Around 7am, our guide will take you on a full guided tour. You will then have plenty of free time to explore this mystical Inca city, later in the afternoon descend by bus down to Aguas Calientes, you may decide to have lunch in one of the many restaurants (not included) then catch the train to Poroy and transfer by bus to our hotel in Cusco to rejoin the group