

Amazon & Incas

Peru – Bolivia

Giving you the 'very best' of the Amazon & Andes



Our favourite places ... Fully guided

- Remote Amazon Jungle
- Magical Machu Picchu
- Optional Inca Trail
- Cusco . Navel of the Universe
- Curious Reed islands of Lake Titicaca
- Scenic Island of the Sun Lake Titicaca
- Colourful bustling La Paz



Check out these Inclusions:

ALL airfares Lima-Puerto Maldonado-Cusco
ALL transfers airport stations etc
ALL transport buses, boats, trains, etc
ALL accommodation double/ twin share
ALL breakfasts as per itinerary
ALL sightseeing as per itinerary
ALL entrance fees as per itinerary
ALL food, accom etc Jungle Expedition
Services of professional Tour Manager
Services of English speaking local guides

Departs:

6May, 17Jun, 5Aug, 2Sep'17

19 Days Fully Guided

from NZ\$5900 from Lima to La Paz

Independent departures any Sat \$5995

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Information Sheet – Amazon & Incas

Fully Guided . 19 days from Lima to La Paz

A real kaleidoscope of the Andes - Peru – Bolivia

Begin this amazing adventure by heading direct to Lima . Here you will spend two nights to recover from the jetlag and time to explore this capital of Peru . known as City of Kings. From here, it's into the Amazon Jungle for an encounter you won't forget. 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.

Next we find ourselves with so much to see and do as you 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 . and prepare 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.

From **La Paz** you can connect by air to Santiago or Buenos Aires or Rio.

There are no unpleasant surprises once you are in South America, you know before you leave exactly what this trip will cost and it is a bonus not having to dip into your money belt all the time to pay for 'EXTRAS' like some companies do. We pride ourselves on being totally upfront before you leave. Compare our inclusions for yourself . detailed on our Trip Dossier.

We want your adventure to be as hassle-free as possible . so you can expect the following whilst planning to explore the "Amazon to Andes+

Costs: 2017 Group Departures: 6 May, 5 Aug, 2 Sep NZ\$5900; 17 Jun NZ\$6295 Single supplement \$1270

2017 prices subject to change

NB These costs based on you flying internationally to/from South America with LAN Airlines. Should you travel on another airline a surcharge may apply

Independent Departures : Saturday weekly NZ\$5995, Single supplement \$1270

Inca Trail Option: additional NZ\$495

Galapagos Islands Pre Extension :

Depart to Quito on Thurs , 1 week earlier for 3 nights in Quito, Otavalo Tour, 7 night Galapagos Islands Cruise
Additional Cost: NZ\$5495 (twin/double share , includes additional airfares) *Itineraries for Galapagos Extension available on request*

Inca Explorer Post Extension La Paz- Buenos Aires

NZ\$3860 additional per person share twin

Cost Includes:

ALL flights within South America	5 dinners, 5 lunches
ALL transport (boats, buses, taxis, trains etc)	ALL accommodation with breakfasts
ALL entrance fees as per itinerary	ALL camping fees, tents, sleeping mats on the trek
ALL national park entrance fees	ALL food during Inca Trail
ALL sightseeing as per itinerary	ALL transfers as per itinerary
Services of experienced local guides Inca Trail	Dinner & Tango show in Buenos Aires
Services of porters to carry gear on Inca Trail	NB: 4.5kg limit on all treks - rest of gear to be left at hotel
Services of experienced Tour Leader	Services of English speaking local guides

Does not include:

Tips allow USD160 per person
Insurance - Laundry - Personal Spending - Medical Expenses

Tour Leaders:

Our experienced bi . lingual Tour Leaders travel with the group departures (subject to a minimum of 6 people travelling)

Accommodation:

We use comfortable 3 star hotels throughout . All rooms have your own private bathroom . Hotels are chosen for their location and service and most would have free WIFI

Tipping :

It is customary in Latin America to tip service providers such as waiters, at approximately 10%, depending on the service. Tipping is an expected - though not compulsory - component of your tour program and an expression of satisfaction with the persons who have assisted you on your tour. Although it may not be customary to you, it is of considerable significance to the people who will take care of you during your travels. At the start of the tour your Tour Manager will explain the tipping system and will coordinate all tipping on behalf of the group to cover the local guides, drivers and porters

Personal Spending :

We suggest allow for US\$35-45 per day to cover incidentals, laundry, meals not included .**Group Size** : groups are limited to a maximum of 15 people

Day	Date	Program	Overnight
Day 1	Sat	<p><u>Lima</u> Arrive Lima On arrival you will be met and transferred to our hotel . Accommodation: Hotel Antigua Miraflores www.antiguamiraflores.com</p>	Lima
2	Sun	<p><u>Lima</u> Lima, city of Kings and capital of Peru. This was the principal city of Spanish South America from its founding in 1535 until the independence of the South American republics in early 19th century. It never rains in Lima, except for 2 months of the year when the skies are blue, in January and February. You have the morning to explore Lima. A city tour of the Greater Colonial Lima this morning allows you to appreciate the wonderful colonial buildings in downtown Lima such as the Santo Domingo Convent and the Casa Aliaga, one of South America's oldest Spanish homes. Drive by the elegant tree-lined avenues of San Isidro and Miraflores. Afternoon at leisure or we suggest a visit to the Gold Museum or Larco Museum</p>	Lima (B)
3	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>	Amazon Jungle (B,L,D)

4	Tues	<p><u>Refugio Amazonas –Tambopata Research Centre</u></p> <p>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</p> <p><i>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.</i></p>	Amazon Jungle (B,L,D)
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5	Wed	<p><u>Tambopata Research Centre</u></p> <p>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>	Amazon (B,L,D)
6	Thurs	<p><u>Tambopata Research Centre</u></p> <p>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>	Amazon (B,L,D)
7	Fri	<p><u>Puerto Maldonado – Cusco</u></p> <p>An early start today , transfer to the airport for a short flight to Cusco . Accommodation: Royal Inka 1 Hotel</p> <p>www.royalinkahotel.com/hcusco.html</p> <p>Rest of day free to relax and adjust to the altitude</p>	Cusco (B)

8	Sat	<p><u>Cusco</u></p> <p>Cusco, heart of the Inca Empire, known by the local Quechua Indians as 'Navel of the Universe'.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>This morning 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</p>	Cusco (B)
9	Sun	<p><u>Cusco – Sacred Valley</u></p> <p>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 www.hotelesanagustin.com.pe/hotel_recoleta.htm</p>	Sacred Valley (B)
10	Mon	<p><u>Sacred Valley Trekkers in group depart for Inca Trail Day 1</u></p> <p>Continue into the beautiful Sacred valley of the Incas. Next is Pisac 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.</p>	Sacred Valley of the Incas (B)
11	Tues	<p><u>Train to Aguas Calientes or Day 2 - Inca Trail</u></p> <p>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 www.santuariohotel.com</p>	Aguas Calientes(B)
12	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>	Cusco(B)

13	Thurs	<p><u>Cusco or Day 4 Inca Trail</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)
14	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.</p> <p>Accommodation: Qelqatani Hotel www.qelqatani.com</p>	Puno (B,L)
15	Sat	<p><u>Uros Islands -Copacabana</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>	Puno Lake Titicaca (B,L)
16	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.</p> <p>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)

17	Mon	<p><u>City tour and shopping</u></p> <p>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, continuing to the very unusual eroded formations of the Moon Valley.</p> <p>The afternoon is free to enjoy the uniqueness of this colourful bustling city and shop for bargains and gifts.</p>	La Paz (B)
18	Tues	<p><u>Explore La Paz</u></p> <p>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)
19	Wed	<p><u>Depart La Paz</u></p> <p>We say adios to the Andes and transfer to the airport for your flight</p> <p>Or start the Inca Explorer Extension to Southern Bolivia and Argentina</p> <p>Transfer to the airport for a morning flight to Sucre . On arrival transfer to your hotel</p> <p>Accommodation: Hotel de Su Merced</p> <p>The Hotel de Su Merced is set in the old site of the city, two blocks and a half from the 25 de Mayo central square.</p> <p>Sucre has some of the finest colonial architecture in the world.</p> <p>See the Constitutional Capital of Bolivia and the seat of the Supreme Court on our morning tour.</p> <p>Sucre is called the white city. It's a city of towers, beautiful churches where the architecture reflects the life of the colonial Spanish aristocracy.</p> <p>Sucre was the birth place of the independence movements of the Americas. In fact, Sucre was the first to rebel against Spanish rule on 25th May 1809. Its colonial past is visible in many religious and civil buildings distributed in the center of the city. Narrow streets, churches, fastidious residences, white facades, red roofs allow us to discover a past of art and religion. In 1991 Sucre was declared Cultural Heritage of Humanity by the UNESCO in light of its Historical and Cultural value.</p> <p>It is neat to just walk around this safe city and take in the different colonial buildings and wonder what life was like years ago.</p>	(B)
20	Thurs	<p><u>Sucre- Potosi</u></p> <p>This morning travel by bus into the highlands to the UNESCO World Heritage city of Potosi with its rich history and Spanish architecture. Potosi is known as the Imperial City and is situated at the foot of Cerro Rico (Rich Mountain) famed for its mineral wealth. The Spanish created one of the most important and populous cities on the continent, after the discovery of the silver-rich mountain in 1545. Situated at an altitude of more than 13,123ft (4,000m), it is also the highest city in the world although not quite the thriving metropolis that it once was.</p> <p>Potosi was founded in 1546. It soon produced enormous wealth, becoming one of the largest cities in the world with a population of more than 200,000 people. In Spanish there is a saying 'vale un Potosí!' ('it's worth a Potosí'), which means being worth a fortune. It is from Potosí that most of the Spanish silver came. According to official records, 45,000 tons of pure silver were mined from Cerro Rico from 1556 to 1783. Of this total, 7,000 tons went to the Spanish monarchy. The tradition tells that the Spanish conquerors found incredible amounts of silver, enough to build a bridge completely made out of silver from Potosí to Europe. During the early 19th century, struggles for independence caused many churches to be looted. Then the city's wealth was removed to Europe or to other parts of the Spanish realm. By then the population dropped to less than 10,000. By the time of independence in 1825, the mines of the Cerro Rico were almost exhausted.</p> <p>The opportunity to visit the mines this afternoon</p>	Potosi (B)

21	Fri	<u>Potosi</u> Visit to Casa de la Moneda, Convento de Santa Teresa and San Francisco. Tour through the old colonial center with its old narrow streets and mine neighbourhoods	Potosi (B)
22	Sat	<u>Potosi –Uyuni</u> This morning we continue across the altiplano to Uyuni then transfer to your hotel on the edge of the salt flats This hotel is one of the most extraordinary in the world, constructed out of blocks of salt.	Uyuni (B)
23	Sun	<u>Salt Flats – Uyuni-Villazon</u> The Uyuni Salt lakes area area of impressive beauty Full day visit to the Uyuni Salt Lake.Start your day visiting the huge Uyuni Salt Lake, the cold water springs, the Colchani Salt Factory and Isla Pescado famous for its giant cactus. After lunch continue to Coquesa Mummys and then back to Uyuni .We have arranged use of a hotel room at Hotel Tambo Aymara until late evening when you will be transferred to the railway station and depart on overnight train - executive class	Train (B,L)
24	Mon	<u>Villazon –Purmamarca</u> Arrive Villazon early this morning where you will be assisted across the border and connect by comfortable bus to Tilcara and connect by car to the charming town of Purmamarca	Purmamarca

25	Tues	<p><u>Purmamarca -Salta</u> Visit the Seven Colours Mountain surrounding Purmamarca- incredible colours . Then to Tilcara with its archaeological museum and Indian Fortress(entrance fee to be paid direct) Continue on to Humahuaca then visit Leon and Tumbaya.Travel past La Cienaga Dam, Campo Alegre Dam and La Caldera. Travel through Jujuy on the way to Salta Located in the northwest of the Argentine Republic, the province of Salta amazes the tourist with its geographical and cultural heterogeneity. Surrounded by three countries (Chile, Bolivia and Paraguay) and six provinces (Jujuy, Formosa, Chaco, Santiago del Estero, Tucumán and Catamarca), its vast territory covers all kinds of landscapes, from the arid desert of La Puna, to the lush green forest.This region is also the centre of the fruit production, lemons,olives , tobacco for Argentina and has a very pleasant climate at this time of year</p>	Salta (B)
26	Wed	<p><u>Salta</u> Salta is known not only for its inhabitants warmth but also for its cultural heritage. It inherited the diaguita-calchaquí nation of the Inca Empire, a result of the spanish colonial past and the native spirit that fought for national independence. Morning tour of Salta.</p>	Salta (B)
27	Thurs	<p><u>Salta- Train to the Clouds</u> It leaves from the train station at the city of Salta and ends its route at La Polvorilla Viaduct. The railways reach a height of 4,200 meters above sea level, turning this train into one of the highest in the world. The train offers meals onboard, translator services, and medical assistant for any passenger that may be affected by the lack of oxygen caused by the height. The trip lasts approximately sixteen hours, from seven am until midnight or later. The train runs 217 km. and passes through 29 bridges, 21 tunnels, 13 viaducts, 2 spirals, and 2 zigzags. There are two stops throughout the trip: one at San Antonio de los Cobres station, and the other one at La Polvorilla viaduct. It leaves from the city of Salta, the lowest point, and from there it begins the upward route until it reaches the final point at La Polvorilla Viaduct, the highest in the trip. As you reach the different stations, local villagers at picturesque stands sell craftwork, clothes, and regional products as interesting souvenirs of the trip. The train services include dining car, medical practice, audio, video, and bilingual guides.</p>	Salta (B)
28	Fri	<p><u>Salta – Cafayate</u> Leaving from the City of Salta,tour around one of the most impressive circuits in the Republic of Argentina as you visit the legendary Calchaquí Valley. In order to visit the Calchaquí Valleys and appreciate their beautiful sceneries and the quaint villages from the early XVIII century nestled in their geography,travel a total distance of 520 kilometers through three main roads, namely Provincial Route 33 and National Routes 40 and 68. From the very beginning, fascination takes hold of travelers as they enter the San Fernando de Escoipe Ravine. Surrounded by mountains and bordered by Provincial Route 33, it sets the start of adventure. The local vegetation is typical of the mountain rain forest, with the presence of hydrophile and xerofile plants. Ancient laurels, willows, walnuts, peachtrees, poplars and some conifers are always present in the area. At the end of the Escoipe Ravine, the winding %Cuesta del Obispo+(Bishop's Slope) begins. It got its name from Monsignor Cortázar, the maximum ecclesiastical authority in Salta, who was traveling from Salta to Cachi back in 1622 and spent the night at this spot lying at 3,400 m. At the top of the slope, known as %Biedra del Molino+(Millstone), lies a chapel raised to honor the Archangel Raphael, "Patron Saint of Travelers+ This spot features an unforgettable view of the endless slope, which gets mingled with the granite formation of feldspar, mica and quartz contained in the area. by natural wonders. Continue on to Los Cardones National Park .The road leads to Cachi Pampa . "salt pampa+in the Cacán tongue. After a few kilometers, the Tin Tin Straight is entered. Fully paved, this 12-kilometer-long stretch displays the impressive snow-capped Curacatao summits in the distance. The tour always features the characteristics of the scenery, totally worth beholding. A little further, the town of Cachi opens its gates to show its simple beauty. It is a good moment to make a stop, rest for a while and tour around the purely colonial district. Cachi means %salt+in the Quechua or Cacán tongue, and it was given such a name by the local natives, who had mistaken the summit of Nevado for a big salt deposit. When touring around the village, visitors can appreciate the politeness of the people, who appear to be in tune with the architectural surroundings. Continue through Malinao to the wine growing region of</p>	Cafayate (B)

		<p>Driving on, there appears a place which faithfully honors its name: the "Enchanted Valley", a dreamed-of place with red soil and green grass where the huge rocks and the uneven terrain astonish the most daring visitors, who are used to being delighted</p> <p>After a few kilometers, the Tin Tin Straight is entered. Fully paved, this 12-kilometer-long stretch displays the impressive snow-capped Curacatao summits in the distance. The tour always features the characteristics of the scenery, totally worth beholding. A little further, the town of Cachi opens its gates to show its simple beauty. It is a good moment to make a stop, rest for a while and tour around the purely colonial district.</p> <p>Cachi means %salt+in the Quechua or Cacán tongue, and it was given such a name by the local natives, who had mistaken the summit of Nevado for a big salt deposit. When touring around the village, visitors can appreciate the politeness of the people, who appear to be in tune with the architectural surroundings. Continue through Molinos to the wine growing region of Cafayate</p>	
29	Sat	<p><u>Cafayate – Salta –Buenos Aires</u></p> <p>Cafayate, dunes and vineyards in a fertile valley surrounded by colourful mountains are the best setting to taste delicious wines from an ancient cellar</p> <p>Return through the "Quebrada de las Conchas"(Shells Ravine) where traces of prehistoric times still remain in the many aeolic formations such as The Theatre, The Devil's Throat, The Toad and some others. As we get closer to Salta, the vegetation becomes more lush as we descend down towards the city Transfer to the airport for your evening flight to Buenos Aires</p>	Buenos Aires (B)
30	Sun	<p><u>Buenos Aires</u></p> <p>This morning a three and a half hour sightseeing tour visiting the most outstanding sites. Departing from the Hotel to get to 9 de Julio Ave. the widest in the world, past the famous Colon Opera house, the Obelisk commemorating the first founding of the city in 1536 to get to Plaza de Mayo (May Square), and the buildings surrounding it: Government House, Metropolitan Cathedral with the Mausoleum of General San Martin, Argentina's greatest national hero and the Cabildo, the colonia town hall built in 1751. Then on to La Boca, typically Italian district, where first Italian immigrants settled and Caminito street. The tour continues to Buenos Aires port area, past San Martín Square towards Palermo Chico residential district and Palermo Park with its jacaranda and palo borracho trees which flower in the spring and late summer. The ride continues to Recoleta elegant district to visit Recoleta Cemetery where the famous are laid to rest (including Eva Peron). Return to the hotel along the stylish Alvear Ave.</p>	Buenos Aires(B)
31	Mon	<p><u>Buenos Aires</u></p> <p>You will be transferred to the airport</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 Huilca 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 Llulluchapampa (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