

Galapagos & Amazon

Ecuador - 8 day Galapagos Cruise
Peru- Amazon Tambopata Wildlife Reserve

15 Days
Departure: 2021 30April,4Jun,30Jul,20Aug

From NZ\$9240
OR

27 Days
With 11 day extension to Cuzco ,Sacred Valley , Machu Picchu,
Lake Titicaca, Uros Islands , La Paz
From NZ\$12995



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Information Sheet: Galapagos & Amazon

Travelling with LATAM you will begin your adventure in Guayaquil.

Visit 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 1-15 NZ\$9240

Single room supplement NZ\$900 (only share cabins on cruise)

Inclusions:

ALL travel as per itinerary between Guayaquil & 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 LATAM Airlines. Should you travel on another airline a surcharge of NZ\$540 applies

Incas Tour Extension Day 15-27 NZ\$3795 Apr, Jul, Aug departures; NZ\$4125 Jun departure

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

4Day Inca Trail Option additional NZ\$550; 1 Day Inca Trail Option NZ\$285

Bolivia Salt Flats Option : additional NZ\$195 per person

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 that have to be paid en route (allow US\$140 Days 1-15 and additional US\$100 for Days 15-27), optional sightseeing and personal expenses, Galapagos Park entrance fee of US\$100 & Galapagos Immigration fee US\$20 which must be paid in US\$ cash on arrival.

NOTE ON FLIGHTS

****International flights on LATAM Airlines Auckland –Guayaquil & 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	Fri	<p><u>Guayaquil</u> Fly to Guayaquil ,we suggest LATAM Airlines direct connection Auckland-Santiago-Guayaquil. On arrival you will be met and transferred to your hotel Accommodation: Hotel Grand Guayaquil</p>	Guayaquil
2	Sat	<p><u>Guayaquil</u> Day at leisure. Suggest visit the Iguana Park and Malecon(waterfront) in walking distance from your hotel</p>	Guayaquil (B)

3	Sun	<p><u>Guayaquil –Galapagos</u> 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. 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. 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 San Cristobal, 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</p> <p>After lunch we will go to the interpretation center, the local branch of the Galapagos National park service where your guide will explain to you about the formation of the islands, how the flora and fauna arrived and got established in Galapagos as well as visiting the corrals where we have several species of giant tortoises under the care of the National park service. Night navigation to our next destination.</p>	Cruise (B,L,D)
4	Mon	<p><u>Santa Fe -Plaza Island</u> After breakfast on the yacht, we continue to Santa Fe Island, upon arrival to the island, we will be treated to a noisy welcome by the local sealion colony. Following our naturalist guide on the island paths we will come to Santa Fe's main attraction, a towering forest of giant cacti. Scattered around the cacti trees you will see a number of the island's indigenous sun-seekers: marine and land iguanas, the rainbow-streaked lava lizards and, if you are lucky, land tortoises - the namesakes of the islands. After our walk we will plunge into the salty sea and snorkel in the company of sealions, lion fish and sea turtles. Finally, we will return to the yacht for lunch. After lunch we will navigate to Plazas Island, where a large colony of sea lions lounges daily in the equatorial sun. Soon you will notice their subtly diabolic grins and wonder what they find so humorous; you only hope the joke isn't on you! Plaza also boasts excellent examples of typical Galapaganean flora such as the towering cacti "trees" that form the principal diet for both the land iguanas and the cactus finch. Other birds that may flutter by include lava gulls, yellow warblers and red-billed tropicbirds with their elaborate tails.</p>	On Cruise (B,L,D)

5	Tues	<p><u>SANTA CRUZ - DARWIN CENTER - EL CHATO (Highlands)</u> Here we can find itty bitty 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 (guests may dine in town if they 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. This area in the highlands is called EL CHATO which is a giant tortoises reserve, one of the few places open to visitors where giant tortoises are found in their natural habitat interacting with the rest of the Galapagos life.</p>	On Cruise (B,L,D)
6	Wed	<p><u>ISABELA ISLAND - PUERTO VILLAMIL - HUMEDALES - MURO DE LASLAGRIMAS - CENTRO DE CRIANZA</u> Our first visit in the morning will take place in Puerto Villamil, one of the smallest towns in Galapagos, located right in front of a white sand beach is one of the most beautiful locations in the islands, after a dry landing we will go to visit the humedales which is a mangrove area with small brackish water lagoons that create the perfect environment for a small type of shrimp which serves as food for flamingos making it easy to find them in this site. Following this visit we will be transported to El Muro de las Lagrimas or the wall of tears, when the Ecuadorian government took possession of the islands their main purpose was to harbor Ecuadorian prisoners, since there wasn't much for them to do they were forced to carry rocks to a far location and build a wall which nowadays is known as the wall of tears. After this visit we return to the beach for relaxation before lunch on the boat. In the afternoon we will visit the local branch of the Galapagos park service which main purpose is to take care of the many species of giant tortoises that inhabit Isabela Island so we can see the efforts made by the national park service to protect and increase the decaying population of giant tortoises in this island. Back on board and night navigation to our next visitors site.</p>	On Cruise (B,L,D)
7	Thurs	<p><u>PUNTA MORENO - ELIZABETH BAY (B,L,D)</u> After a whole night navigation we arrive to Punta Moreno on the west coast of Isabela, a dry landing on a lava field. The vegetation found in the area is small and concentrated mainly in the mangrove area and around the lakes. It should be noted that the three kinds of cacti are found here. The main attractions at Punta Moreno are coastal lagoons amid black lava flows where there are several species of birds. It has a panoramic view of three volcanoes, the most active of the Galapagos that are Sierra Negra, Cerro Azul of Isabela Island and La Cumbre of Fernandina Island. After lunch on board we continue on our way to Elizabeth Bay, located on Isabela Island's west shore, this is extremely interesting for observing marine life. You can motor past a few islands where you usually see Galapagos penguins. One of the best areas to take their photos. A colony of these magnificent birds inhabit a rocky islet at the entrance to Elizabeth Bay. We let our boat drift through a small passage lined with mangroves you emerge into an enclosed cove. We will turn the motor off and look in the sheltered waters for marine turtles, rays, flightless cormorants, sea lions, and, circling overhead, Galapagos hawks.</p>	On Cruise (B,L,D)

8	Fri	<p>ISABELA CALETA TAGUS - FERNANDINA PUNTA ESPINOZA – ISABELAPUNTA VICENTE ROCA</p> <p>The visitors site of Tagus Cove is located west of Darwin Volcano on Isabela Island. The route of the trail is about 1800 meters. This was a favorite spot for pirates and whalers, a tradition is still observed that has continued since that time: the inscription of the names of boats. At the start of the walk, going up and passing the staircase, is a small cave where we find inscriptions dating to the 1800s. Its name originated from a British warship that went through the islands in 1814 looking for Galapagos Tortoise for food.</p> <p>The road, mostly gravel, leads into the interior, along Darwin Lake. During the walk, you can see various land birds; we can identify the characteristic vegetation of the arid zone. Finally, we observe the lava fields of Darwin's Volcano.</p> <p>Back on board for lunch and short navigation to Elizabeth Bay on Fernandina Island</p> <p>Punta Espinoza is a narrow ledge of lava and sand that extends from the base of the volcano to the sea. There is a vivid description given by Captain Benjamin Morrell that from its anchorage at Bay Banks witnessed and recorded an eruption of Fernandina in the decade of the 1820s that probably gave rise to the Point. In 1975, there was an uprising, about 90 cm, which is why the pier built for landing can only be used during high tide.</p> <p>Punta Espinoza is a place famous for its large colonies of marine iguanas and as the habitat of unique species like the flightless cormorant, Galapagos penguin, Galapagos hawk, Galapagos snake, among others. It is an ideal place to observe the lava cactus (<i>Brachycerus nesioticus</i>), which grow on young lava and survive with little water.</p> <p>After visiting Fernandina we will start our navigation to the central part of the Galapagos and on the way we will see from the Boat Punta Vicente Roca, a part of a mostly eroded and destroyed volcano which now is a great site for seeing blue footed boobies, frigate birds and other marine birds from the boat.</p>	On Cruise (B,L,D)
9	Sat	<p>JAMES BAY - RABIDA ISLAND</p> <p>James Bay is a black sand beach located on the west side of James Bay and northwest of Santiago Island.</p> <p>South of the beach is Sugarloaf Volcano, which has deposits of volcanic tuff, the same that has favored the formation of the black sand beach. El Cráter is just north of this site, it has a saltwater lagoon, which during the summer dry season becomes a salt mine. Between 1928 and 1930, there was the first exploitation of salt; there were no major achievement. Then in 1964 a new attempt was made that lasted for some time.</p> <p>After lunch on board we navigate to our next destination, Rabida</p> <p>Rábida Island, consists of a red sand beach, a coastal lagoon behind the beach, and a loop trail. The approximate distance of the trail is 1.1 kilometers.</p> <p>The color of the rocks and sand on the beach is due to the very porous volcanic material, which with the help of environmental factors (rain, salt water and sea breeze, has acted as an oxidizing agent. The main attraction of the place is the red sand beach, scenery, aside from the vegetation of the arid zone and the presence of native and endemic species.</p>	On Cruise (B,L,D)

10	Sun	<p><u>Galapagos – Quito-Lima</u></p> <p>After an early breakfast we will disembark at North Seymour Island. Here we will see frigatebirds, the clownish blue-footed booby, and of course the ubiquitous sea lions. With luck we will witness the striking courtship display of the male frigatebird, in which he inflates a red balloon-like sac below his throat and struts his stuff for all of the young females. Seymour North, Plaza Sur and Plaza Norte, Baltra, northeastern Santa Cruz, Santa Fe and part of Española, were formed by uprisings of underwater volcanic lavas. They were part of a volcanic lava table deposited in sheet form along cracks located on the ocean floor. The uprisings occurred sporadically and lasted more than a million years to reach its current level. All marine fossils found in the archipelago are found in these islands and the best example is the North Channel side of Baltra. The fossils date from the Pleistocene, and specifically in the case of Baltra, one can say that these volcanic tables were close to the surface about a million years ago.</p> <p>Return to the boat & sail to Baltra Island to catch our plane back to the mainland to Quito .Arrive Quito later this afternoon and connect on LAN Airlines flight to Lima.</p> <p>On arrival you will be transferred to your hotel Accommodation: Wyndham Costa del Sol Airport Hotel</p>	Lima (B)
11	Mon	<p><u>Lima – Puerto Maldonado- Tambopata</u></p> <p>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</p> <p>Accommodation: Refugio Amazonas Lodge</p> <p><i>Refugio Amazonas</i> 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.</p>	Tambopata (B,L,D)

12	Tues	<p>Refugio Amazonas –Tambopata Research Centre</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>Tambopata Research Center <i>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>	Tambopata (B,L,D)
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16	Sat	<p>Cusco 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)
17	Sun	<p>Cusco -Sacred Valley 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)
18	Mon	<p>Cusco – Sacred Valley Trekkers in group depart for Inca Trail Day 1 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)
19	Tues	<p>Train to Aguas Calientes or Day 2 - Inca Trail 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 Optional 1 Day Inca Trail to Machu Picchu</p>	Aguas Calientes (B)

20	Wed	<p><u>Bus to Machu Picchu- Cuzco or Day 3 – Inca Trail</u> 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 trainload's of visitors arrive. Machu Picchu, known also as '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: Hotel Royal Inka 1</p>	Cusco (B)
21	Thurs	<p><u>Cusco- or Inca Trail Day 4</u> 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)
22	Fri	<p><u>Cusco - Puno</u> 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. Arrive in Puno late afternoon. Accommodation: Qelqatani Hotel www.qelqatani.com</p>	Puno (B,L)
23	Sat	<p><u>Visit Floating Reed Islands Lake Titicaca – into Bolivia</u> 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. This afternoon continue through lovely scenery, which follows this mighty lake to the Bolivian border. After border formalities continue to the sleepy town of Copacabana. Accommodation: Hotel Rosario del Lago www.hotelrosario.com/lago</p>	Copacabana (B)

24	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 Pilkokaina 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)
25	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,</p> <p>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.</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)
26	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> <p>OPTIONAL TOUR To BOLIVIA SALT FLATS (B,L)</p> <p>Transfer to the airport early this morning for a flight to Uyuni</p> <p>On arrival commence a full day tour of the Salt Flat of Uyuni. Visit the train cemetery and then continue towards the great Salt Flat of Uyuni, visiting on the way the Colchani village, where you will enter into a domestic salt processing plant. Journey across the salt flats, visiting an area called "Los Ojos de Agua" (Eyes of Water) where you will see the manual extraction of salt by local communitarian industries. Continue the trip along the Salt Flats towards the Incahuasi Island, better known as "Isla Pescado" (Fish Island) where you will find enormous Cactus and hike around the interesting geology of the area. Lunch will be served on the shores of the Island. Return to Colchani and overnight out the unique Hotel - made entirely out of salt</p> <p>Accommodation: Luna Salada Hotel www.lunasaladahotel.com.bo</p> <p>Wed Day 27 UYUNI- LA PAZ</p> <p>After breakfast transfer to the airport for your flight to La Paz and connect with your international flight</p> <p>Additional cost : NZ\$895 per person, single supplement NZ\$150 <i>(Based on a minimum of 2 people travelling)</i></p>	La Paz (B)

27	Wed	<p><u>Depart La Paz</u> Adios to the Andes as you transfer to the airport for your onward flight</p>	(B)
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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 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