



# Connection To Perú

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## Choquequirao to Machu Picchu Trek 9 Days

The name Choquequirao means “Cradle of Gold” and this settlement was one of the last refuges for those Incas who continued to resist Spanish occupation after the conquest. Choquequirao is less well-known than Machu Picchu and the trek to get there is a unique experience.

The site was eventually abandoned and became covered in dense cloud forest vegetation, and to this day archaeologists continue to unearth new sectors of the city.

On this adventurous trek we will walk Inca highways, hike through high Andean landscapes, descend into deep canyons and pass through biologically diverse cloud forest ecosystems.

This program combines visits to two major archaeological sites: remote and seldom-visited Choquequirao, and legendary Machu Picchu. It is a fascinating adventure through part of the old empire of the Incas and one of Peru's most unspoiled wilderness areas.

### Day 1: Cusco – Cachora – Chiquisca.

At 5:00am, we pick you up from your hotel, then drive in our private bus to Cachora (2,850m/9,407ft) for 4 hours. Along the way there are spectacular views of villages, valleys and snow-capped mountains. Once at Cachora we meet our horsemen and horses and pack all our equipment onto the horses.

After enjoying a boxed breakfast we start walking to Capuliyoc until lunch time where we enjoy great views of Apurimac Canyon, snow-capped mountains such as Padreyoc (5,571m/18,387ft) and the location of Choquequirao. After lunch we then descend to our first campsite at Chiquisca (1,900m/6,270ft).

Meals provided: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner.

Accommodation: Camping facilities

Maximum Altitude: 2,850m/9,407ft.

Minimum Altitude: 1,900m/6,270ft.

Distance to walk: 18km approx.

Difficulty: Easy/Moderate.

### Day 2: Chiquisca - Maranpata - Choquequirao.

After an early breakfast we descend to the magnificent Apurimac River (1,550m/5,117ft) and then walk uphill to the rural village of Maranpata (2,850m/9,350ft) where we have lunch whilst enjoying the spectacular views of the archaeological site of Choquequirao (3,150m/10,397ft). Then we will walk through a myriad of flora and fauna to our second evening's campsite located just 20 minutes from the Choquequirao ruins. Here, we may see condors and have the option to spend the late evening at the ruins.

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Meals provided: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner.

Accommodation: Camping facilities

Maximum Altitude: 3,150m/10,397ft.

Minimum Altitude: 1,550m/5,117ft.

Distance to walk: 14km approx.

Difficulty: Moderate/Difficult

## **Day 3: Choquequirao - Choquequirao pass - Rio Blanco.**

After breakfast we fully explore the ruins of Choquequirao (the "Cradle of Gold"). We visit the temples, palaces, ritual water fountains, llamas' section and the amazing Ushnu (ceremonial platform). In the afternoon we climb over the ridge to the stunning Choquequirao Pass (3,277m/10,814ft). Then we descend for 2 hours towards Rio Blanco (1,990m/6,567ft) and onto the third evening's campsite, enjoying all the great canyons and the Pinchiunuyoc ruin along the way.

Meals provided: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

Accommodation: Camping facilities

Maximum Altitude: 3277m/10,814ft.

Minimum Altitude: 1,990m/6,567ft.

Distance to walk: 8km approx.

Difficulty: Easy/Moderate.

## **Day 4: Rio Blanco - Maisal.**

After a late breakfast we climb up to Maisal (3000m/9,847f) enjoying the variety of microclimates and spectacular views of canyons, rivers and stunning landscape as we go. Arriving to our fourth camp site.

Meals provided: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner.

Accommodation: Camping facilities

Maximum Altitude: 3,000m/9,847ft.

Minimum Altitude: 1,990m/6,567ft.

Distance to walk: 8km approx

Difficulty: Moderate.

## **Day 5: Maisal - Victoria pass Yanama.**

Beginning at 7am, we walk uphill for 3 hours through semi-jungle via parts of the original Inca Highway, visiting ancient mines including the Victorias on the way, to reach Victoria's pass (4,170m/13,700f). From here you can appreciate the great canyons, the spectacular snow-capped mountains of Sacsara, Qoriwanachina, and Pumasillo. Then we descend to Yanama (3,650m/12,037ft), which is our fifth evening's campsite.

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Meals provided: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner.

Accommodation: Camping facilities

Maximum Altitude: 4,170m/13,700ft.

Minimum Altitude: 3,650m/12,037ft.

Distance to walk: 13km approx.

Difficulty: Moderate.

## **Day 6: Yanama –Totorá – Qolpapampa.**

A day of mountain peaks. On this day we walk for 9 hours, preferably rising early to appreciate the chain of snow peaks that can be seen from the first section of today's trek. We ascend to the highest point of our trek - Yanama pas (4,670m/15,407ft). The view from here is amazing as we will be surrounded by snow-capped mountains and impressive valleys. We then descend to Totorá for lunch and after lunch we walk for 2 hours to Colpapampa (2,870m/9,470ft) to our sixth campsite.

Meals provided: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner.

Accommodation: Camping facilities

Maximum Altitude: 4,670m/15,407ft.

Minimum Altitude: 2,870m/9,470ft.

Distance to walk: 19km approx.

Difficulty: Moderate/Challenge.

## **Day 7: Colpapampa - La Playa - Llaqtapata.**

On this day we walk for 3 hours through the beginnings of the rainforest; enjoying a myriad of flora and fauna including orchids, birds, coffee, cacao and fruit plantations. We arrive at La Playa for lunch, with free time to rest before climbing uphill for 3 hours through the Andean cloud forest to the Puncuyoc pass and then onto LLACTAPATA which is located at 2,700m/8,907ft (an Inca site located straight in front of the citadel of Machu Picchu), which is our seventh evening's campsite. The panoramic view from our campsite is breathtaking; you can enjoy a different view of Machu Picchu, the Huanay Picchu Mountains, the citadel of Machu Picchu and the Acobamba canyon, where another Inca trail can be seen.

Meals provided: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner.

Accommodation: Camping facilities.

Maximum Altitude: 2,850m/9,407ft.

Minimum Altitude: 2,000m/6,600ft.

Distance to walk: 15km approx.

Difficulty: Moderate.

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## **Day 8: Llaqtapata - Hidroelectrica - Aguas Calientes.**

After a late breakfast enjoying the spectacular views of Huaynapicchu, Machu Picchu Mountains and the citadel of Machu Picchu, we start walking downhill for 2 hours to Hidroelectrica for lunch. After lunch we walk to Aguas Calientes town through the national park of Machu Picchu and enjoy the surroundings of the iconic Machu Picchu and the wall which surrounds the Inca Citadel.

Meals provided: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner.

Accommodation: Hostel in Aguas Calientes with private room and bathroom

Maximum Altitude: 2,700m/8,407ft.

Minimum Altitude: 2,000m/3,600ft.

Distance to walk: 14km approx.

Difficulty: Easy.

## **Day 9: Aguas Calientes-Machu Picchu-Cusco.**

We leave our hostel after a very early breakfast to take the bus for the journey up to Machu Picchu ruins. Once inside Machu Picchu ruins we provide a guided 3 hour tour with plenty of free time for further exploring, taking photos and the option to climb Huayna Picchu or up to the Sun Gate. Then back to Aguas Calientes town for a buffet lunch and at approx 14:55 or 16:00 we take our return train to Ollantaytambo with a bus connection to Cusco city arriving back at your hotel / hostel.

Meals provided: Breakfast/Buffer Lunch.

Maximum Altitude: 2,440m/8,052ft.

Minimum Altitude: 2,040m/6,727ft.

Difficulty: Easy.

## **WHAT IS INCLUDED?**

- Pre-trek briefing with your guide
- Collection from your hotel in the morning of the trek departure
- Private transport from Cusco to Cachora (starting point of the trek)
- Entry fee to Machu Picchu and Choquequiraw.
- English speaking, experienced professional guide
- Comfortable tents (sleeping 2 people in a 4 person tent)
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary (optional vegetarian food with prior request)
- 1 emergency horse which can be ridden if you're feeling exhausted or are ill
- All camping equipment such as: dining tent, table, chairs, kitchen tent and toilet tent
- Bus ticket from Aguas Calientes to Machu Picchu and return
- First Aid kit including emergency oxygen bottle
- Train ticket (expedition service) from Aguas Calientes to Ollantaytambo
- Private transport from Ollantaytambo to your hotel in Cusco
- Celebration dinner in Aguas Calientes (touristic restaurant)
- Buffet lunch in Aguas Calientes on the last day
- Hotel in Aguas Calientes with private room and bathroom
- Mules or horses (for equipment and personal items) including horsemen - 7 kilos of your

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personal items such as extra clothes, sleeping bag will be carried by our mules.

- Basic sleeping mattress
- Guided tour within Machu Picchu
- Boiled water for drinking and washing purposes
- Transport from La Playa to Hydroelectrica (for equipment and personal items)

## WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED?

- Walkingsticks (rentable)
- Sleeping bag adequate for temperature of minus 10°C (rentable for \$35 for duration of the trek)
- Dinner on the 9th day
- Extra activities such as zip line and barbecues.
- Additional horses for extra personal luggage above that of the personal item allowance
- Optional up-grades (train and hotel)
- Tips for the cook, horsemen and staff

## WHAT YOU SHOULD BRING?

- A lightweight, waterproof day pack with change of clothes for the whole period of the trek (must not exceed 7 kilos)
- Sleeping bag adequate for temperature of minus 10°C (rentable for \$35 for duration of the trek)
- Hiking boots
- Warm clothes and trekking pants (trousers)
- Layers of clothes, include thermals, for variable temperatures especially at night
- Head torch with spare batteries
- Camera with extra film and batteries
- Sun protection: sunscreen, sun hat, sunglasses
- Woolen socks, gloves, scarf, woolen hat for cold nights
- Insect repellent
- Extra plastic bags, especially in the wet season
- Waterproof clothing or a rain poncho
- Water bottles and water purifying tablets - Optional
- Personal medical kit with a simple whistle
- Extra money for souvenirs, drinks, tips
- Walkingsticks (rentable)
- Favorite snacks
- Inflatable mattress
- Toilet paper
- Sandals or flip-flop
- Swimming costume
- Original passport and ISIC card if applicable.

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## ITENERARY NOTED – UNIQUE CHOQUEQUIRAW TO MACHU PICCHU TREK 9 DAYS

The time stated within this program is approximate and walking time may differ dependent upon the group's capability and progress and as such the guide may change the lunch spot and campsite if it is required. Each guide has his or her own preferred route and it may not follow exactly the schedule described here. However all items listed within the above schedule will be covered.

Trek conditions also vary according to the season. In the dry season ( May - September) the trail can be very dusty and hot in the day time, in the wet season (October - March) it can be slippery and muddy and during the shoulder season the conditions can be variable. All year round in the mountains the stone sliding can happen at any time, particularly after heavy rains. SAMtravelperu takes no responsibility for trail condition.

This Trek is adventurous and challenging experience, crossing several high passes and the Rio Blanco which does not have a substantial bridge and can be dangerous to cross in periods of heavy rain. This region is not frequently visited by tourists, therefore tourist infrastructure is limited. Visitors should be aware that things change, or may not go to plan. This is all part of the adventure! We can change the date of your train ticket to the following day. Hotels costs and costs associated with returning to Machu Picchu the following day are additional to trek costs. Please also note that your entry ticket to Machu Picchu is valid for one day only, if you wish to visit the ruins on a second consecutive day you will need to purchase the ticket again. Please bring an open mind, flexibility and a good sense of humor.

We strongly recommend this trek for experienced trekkers or campers.

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