

Salkantay – Machu Picchu Trek, including Rainbow Mountain Hike, Peru

Salkantay to Machu Picchu Trek - 12 Days, including Rainbow Mountain Hike

Date: 03 August – 14 August, 2026

Price: \$3,590.00 USD

Per Person/Twin Share

(Price may change due to fluctuations in exchange rates and minimum group size requirements.)

* Single room/tent supplement is available for USD 400.00 (please request at booking).

About Salkantay – Machu Picchu Trek

The Salkantay to Machu Picchu Trek follows a beautifully remote and ancient footpath in the same region as the classic Inca Trail. This adventure is exceptional because the less-frequented trekking route spans several days, allowing you to savor myriad diverse and spectacular views and truly appreciate the natural beauty of the Andes away from crowded trekking areas. This breathtaking journey is an excellent option for adventure travelers who wish to challenge themselves at remote high altitudes or for trekkers simply seeking an alternative to the traditional Inca Trail.

The distinctiveness of this incredible trek allows you to witness the change across various ecological zones, from subtropical areas and stunning peaks to glaciers, ultimately leading to the acclaimed "Lost City of the Incas, Machu Picchu." The first steps of this exciting journey commence in Mollepata, located west of Cusco, a place that differs from the other Inca trails leading to Machu Picchu. After several thrilling and challenging days at altitudes exceeding 4,000m, the trek will have us descend to join the traditional Inca Trail beyond Paucarcancha, at Huayllabamba. This unique itinerary offers superb walking with fewer trekkers, allowing you to fully appreciate and enjoy the breathtaking Peruvian nature and Andean peaks. You will encounter raw, dramatic scenery not found on the Classic Inca Trail. We will explore the beautiful Rio Blanco Valley before crossing an exceptionally steep and snowy high pass at an altitude of 4,600m – the Salkantay Pass. Trekking beneath the grand, snow-capped mass of the impressive Sacred Inca Mountain, Salkantay (6,264m), will astonish us as the south face of this revered peak soars high above. Mesmerizing panoramic views across the expansive Valcabamba Range will captivate the senses and make every step of your trekking adventure truly unforgettable.

To conclude this incredible trek, we will hike to the summit of "Rainbow Mountain," hidden deep in the Andes. This one-day hiking journey will lead us through a vibrant green valley with the impressive Peruvian (Ausangate) mountains towering in the distance. The undiscovered land of wild desert landscapes, snow-capped peaks, and herds of alpacas is remarkable. Finally, we will arrive at the ultimate destination: the top of Rainbow Mountain, standing at 5,200m.

This spectacular mineral-colored landscape will offer a 360-degree view of this sacred land, creating an experience vividly painted in your memories forever.

Suppose you desire a trek with an unparalleled and exclusive difference. In that case, the Salkantay – Machu Picchu adventure is the top alternative, offering fewer distractions and disturbances than you encounter on the Inca Trail. You will experience a remarkable blend of awe-inspiring scenery, high snow-capped mountains, lowland jungle, challenging trekking, culture, and natural beauty unique to the Andes.

Escape the crowded Machu Picchu-bound Inca Trail and explore the magnificent Salkantay—Machu Picchu trek with me at Cherie Horne Adventure Trekking.

Itinerary

Day 1: Monday, August 3rd

Arrival at Jorge Chávez International Airport, Lima (1,550m) – Connecting Flight to Cusco (3,400m) – Transfer to Hotel, Cusco, Peru

Flight time (Cusco): 1 hour

Drive time: 30 minutes from the airport to the hotel

Day 2: Tuesday, August 4th

Acclimatisation day in Cusco (3,400m) – Hotel

Tour of Sacred Valley Day 1 – history and culture of the Incas and Peruvian lifestyle. Exploration of Cusco.

Meal Plan: Breakfast

Day 3: Wednesday, August 5th

Acclimatisation day in Cusco (3,400m) – Hotel

Tour of Sacred Valley Day 2 – history and culture of the Incas and Peruvian lifestyle. Exploration of Cusco.

Trek orientation led by Cherie alongside her Peruvian guides. Review of clothing and equipment.

Meal Plan: Breakfast

Drive time: Touring Cusco by bus for the day

Day 4: Thursday, August 6th

Cusco (3,400m) – Mollepata (2,900m) – Soraypampa (3,850m) – Hike up to Humantay Lake (4,200m) – Soraypampa (3,850m) – Salkantaypampa Tent Campsite (4,000m)

Meal Plan: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

Drive time: 2-3 hours driving from Cusco

Walking time: 6-7 hours

Day 5: Friday, August 7th

Salkantaypampa Tent Campsite (4,000m) – Salkantay Pass (4,600m) – Huayracmachay – Qollapampa (3,100m) – Colpapampa Camp (2,850m) – Tent Camping

Meal Plan: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

Walking time: 7-8 hours

Day 6: Saturday, August 8th

Colpapampa Camp (2,850m) – La Playa (2,400m) – Lucmabamba (2,150m) – Tent Camping

Meal Plan: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

Walking time: 5-6 hours

Day 7: Sunday, August 9th

Lucmabamba (2,150m) – Llactapata (2,650m) – Hydro-electrica (1,800m) – Train to Aguas Calientes (2,040m) – Hotel

Meal Plan: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

Walking time: 5-6 hours

Train time: 30min

Day 8: Monday, August 10th

Aguas Calientes (2,040m) – Machu Picchu (2,450m) – Cusco (3,400m) – Hotel

Meal Plan: Breakfast

Walking time: 3-4 hours exploring Machu Picchu

Drive time: Aguas Calientes – Machu Picchu (60min return)

Train time: Aguas Calientes – Ollantaytambo – 2 hours

Drive time: Ollantaytambo – Cusco – 2 hours

Day 9: Tuesday, August 11th

Cusco (3,400m) – Rest Day in Cusco – Hotel

An extended tour of Sacred Valley & Exploration of Cusco (optional)

Meal Plan: Breakfast

Drive time: 1 hour

Day 10: Wednesday, August 12th

Cusco – Day Hike to Rainbow Mountain (5,200m) – Cusco (3,400m) – Hotel

Meal Plan: Breakfast/Lunch

Walking time: 4-5 hours

Drive time: Cusco – Rainbow Mountain – Cusco – 8 hours total

Day 11: Thursday, August 13th

Cusco (3,400m) – Rest Day and sightseeing in Cusco – Hotel

Meal Plan: Breakfast

Day 12: Friday, August 14th

Cusco – (3,400m) Airport transfer for flights to Lima or other travel plans

Meal Plan: Breakfast

Drive time: 1 hour

* Itinerary subject to change

* A single room supplement is available for an additional USD 400. Please request it when booking.

*** Trek itinerary, clothing & equipment list; medical information, vaccinations, and Q&A will be provided upon booking.**

Trek Inclusions:

- Arrival/Departure transfers on both domestic and international flights
- Transfer from the hotel in Cusco to Mollepata or Soraypampa
- Acclimatisation Day in Cusco
- Sacred Valley Tour
- Quality Hotel accommodation in Lima, Cusco, and Aguas Calientes (twin-share – including breakfast)

- Hotel in Lima (1 night)
- Hotel in Cusco (6 nights)
- Hotel in Aguas Calientes (1 night)
- Train ticket from Hydroelectric to Machu Picchu town
- Train ticket from Aguas Calientes to Ollantaytambo
- Bus ride from the final train station back to the Cusco hotel
- Bus ride from Aguas Calientes to Machu Picchu and back to Aguas Calientes
- Private transportation for the sightseeing tours in Cusco, Salkantay Trek, and Rainbow Mountain Day hike
- Local guide service for all different activities (sightseeing tour in Cusco, Salkantay trek, Machu Picchu, and Rainbow Mountain)
- Professional Peruvian Mountain Guide – English speaking (Cherie's co-guide)
- Experienced Salkantay trek specialist assistants
- Boiled water during the trek
- Complete meal plan during Salkantay trek – Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner
- Camping equipment/high-quality 4-season performance tents
- Experienced camping chef and cooking equipment
- Catering equipment – Dining tent with tables and chairs, kitchen tent, toilet tent
- Free use of quality trekking gear – sleeping bag & sleeping mattress for the trek
- Transportation for personal belongings on the trek by pack horses/mules and or/porters
- Horses to carry tents, food, and cooking equipment
- Muleteers to manage horses
- Trip briefing
- Emergency horse if needed during the 3-day Salkantay trek
- All Park fees and permits
- Rescue fee on the trek
- 1.5L bottled water on the first day of the trek and 4-5L boiled water each day during the trek
- Transfer to and from Lima and Cusco International Airport
- Expedition Kit-Bag
- Professional and experienced Peruvian mountain co-guides and assistants well-trained in Wilderness First Aid
- Comprehensive First-Aid Kit
- Pulse Oximeter
- Supplementary oxygen

Trek Exclusions:

- International flights to and from Lima, Peru
- International flights from Lima – Cusco – Lima
- International airport departure taxes
- Tips to Peruvian guides and assistants
- Alcoholic beverages and bottled drinks (excluding boiled water during the trek)

- Lunch on Days 1,2,3,8,9,11
- Dinner on Days 1,2,3,9,10,11
- Single room/tent supplement
- Travel Insurance
- Visa (if applicable)
- Vaccinations
- Any add-on tours or activities not mentioned in the program
- Personal gear (see clothing and equipment list)
- Sleeping bag
- Flat sleeping mattress
- Expenses of a personal nature (laundry, phone calls)
- Excess baggage charges and airport taxes
- All costs incurred during early departure (evacuation fees, transport, extra hotel nights, etc.)
- Charges incurred as a result of delays beyond Cherie Horne Adventure Trekking's control

Would you like to experience other tours and activities in South America?

I can arrange various other South American tours and activities at your request. Please let me know if you would like to arrange extended travel plans.

FBI Travel, Group Travel experts are my preferred travel manager for all Adventure Treks.

FBI Travel requires a non-refundable booking fee of AUD 250 per person to confirm your reservation and ensure a seamless experience. This essential fee secures your participation in the tour and allows us to initiate the meticulous preparation process that distinguishes the quality and reliability of our services.

From trek bookings, flights, and accommodations to travel insurance and visa assistance, they will help you with everything you need to make your journey to and from easy. Please contact the FBI Group Travel Leader Deanne at 03 8573 0900 or via email: groups@fbitravel.com.au

