

Salkantay to Machu Picchu Trek, with Rainbow Mountain, Peru

12-Day Trek, featuring Rainbow Mountain Hike

Date: 04 October – 15 October 2026

Price: USD \$5,999 per person, includes single room & tent supplement.

Boutique trek experience (maximum 4 trekkers)

This expedition is designed as a **small-group, high-touch experience**, offering a more **personalised level of support, comfort, and flexibility** throughout the journey.

Guaranteed Departure

This expedition is **guaranteed to depart** with a minimum of 2 trekkers.



About the Salkantay – Machu Picchu Trek

The **Salkantay Trek to Machu Picchu** is one of the most **spectacular trekking adventures in Peru**. Following an **ancient mountain route** through the heart of the **Andes Mountains**, this journey offers a truly **wild and unforgettable alternative** to the classic Inca Trail.

Unlike the busier trekking routes to Machu Picchu, the **Salkantay Trek** takes you deep into **remote Andean landscapes** where **dramatic glaciers, turquoise alpine lakes, and lush cloud forests** create an ever-changing backdrop to your adventure. Over several days of trekking, you will witness an incredible **transition of ecosystems** — from **high-altitude mountain passes** to **tropical valleys** rich with **wildlife, coffee plantations, and traditional farming communities**.

Our journey begins near the small Andean village of **Mollepata**, west of Cusco, where we start hiking beneath the towering presence of **Salkantay Mountain (6,264 m)**. Revered by the Inca as a **sacred Apu, or mountain spirit**, Salkantay has been worshipped for centuries by Andean communities who believe these majestic peaks **protect the surrounding lands and people**.

One of the highlights of the trek is **crossing the dramatic Salkantay Pass at 4,600 m** — a breathtaking moment surrounded by **towering glaciers** and panoramic views of the **Vilcabamba Range**. From here, the trail descends through the **spectacular Rio Blanco Valley** before gradually entering the **lush cloud forest** on the way to Machu Picchu.

Each day brings **new landscapes, new challenges, and unforgettable scenery** — from **sunrise at Humantay Lake** to remote Andean valleys dotted with **alpacas** and **ancient Inca ruins**.

Your adventure culminates in the unforgettable moment of arriving at Machu Picchu, the legendary "Lost City of the Incas" and one of the most extraordinary **archaeological sites on Earth**.

To complete this incredible Andean experience, the expedition also includes a **hike to Rainbow Mountain**, a stunning natural wonder high in the Andes where **mineral-rich layers create a vibrant spectrum of colours** across the mountainside.

This journey offers far more than a trek — it is an **immersive adventure** through one of South America's most beautiful and culturally rich regions, delivered as a **boutique expedition** with a **highly personalised** and truly memorable experience.



"Join me for an unforgettable expedition through the Andes and experience the magic of Peru on the Salkantay – Machu Picchu Trek."

Highlights of the Salkantay – Machu Picchu Trek

- Trek through the **spectacular Andes Mountains** on a remote and less crowded route to Machu Picchu
- Cross the dramatic **Salkantay Pass (4,600 m)**, surrounded by glaciers
- Witness the incredible turquoise waters of **Humantay Lake**
- Trek beneath the sacred peak of **Salkantay Mountain (6,264 m)**
- Experience **authentic camping in the Andes** with full trekking support
- Visit **traditional coffee farms** and fruit orchards in the cloud forest
- Hike a section of the **historic Inca Trail**
- Explore the ancient ruins of **Llactapata** with views of Machu Picchu
- Enjoy a guided exploration of the legendary **Machu Picchu**
- Complete the adventure with a hike to the spectacular **Rainbow Mountain**
- After each day on the trail, relax in comfort at **carefully selected 4-star hotels in Cusco** and **Aguas Calientes**, offering stylish rooms, modern amenities, and a restful retreat before your next adventure
- Enjoy **private single-room accommodation** in carefully selected **4-star hotels**, along with **spacious individual tenting** during the trek for added comfort and privacy throughout your journey



Expedition Itinerary



Day 1: Sunday, 4 October 2026

Arrival at **Jorge Chávez International Airport, Lima (1,550 m)**, followed by a **connecting flight to Cusco (3,400 m)**.

Upon arrival, you will be transferred to your hotel in Cusco.

- **Flight time:** ~1 hour
- **Transfer time:** ~30 minutes
- **Meal plan:** Dinner

Day 2: Monday, 5 October 2026

Acclimatisation Day in Cusco (3,400 m)

Today is dedicated to **acclimatisation** as you adjust to the altitude in Cusco. You will enjoy a **guided city tour**, exploring the rich **history and culture of the Inca civilisation** alongside insights into **modern Peruvian life**.

- **Activity:** Guided Cusco city tour
- **Transport:** Bus transport throughout the day
- **Meal plan:** Breakfast

Day 3: Tuesday, 6 October 2026

Acclimatisation Day in Cusco & Sacred Valley Exploration (3,400 m)

Today continues your **acclimatisation** with a full-day exploration of the **Sacred Valley**, one of the most culturally rich regions of Peru. Discover the **history and traditions of the Inca civilisation** while experiencing the beauty of the surrounding Andean landscapes.

A **trek orientation** will also be held, led by **Cherie alongside her experienced local Peruvian guides**, including a review of your **clothing and equipment** to ensure you are fully prepared for the days ahead.

- **Activity:** Guided Sacred Valley tour & trek briefing
- **Transport:** Bus transport throughout the day
- **Meal plan:** Breakfast / Lunch

Day 4: Wednesday, 7 October 2026

Cusco → Mollepata → Soraypampa → Humantay Lake → Salkantaypampa (4,000 m)

Today marks the **start of your Salkantay Trek** adventure. You will travel from **Cusco (3,400 m)** to **Soraypampa (3,850 m)**, where you'll embark on a **spectacular hike to Humantay Lake (4,200 m)**. After enjoying the breathtaking **turquoise waters**, you'll continue to **Salkantaypampa Tent Campsite (4,000 m)** for your first night in the Andes.

- **Meal plan:** Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner
- **Drive time:** ~2–3 hours
- **Hiking time:** ~5–6 hours
- **Hiking distance:** ~11 km
- **Altitude gain:** ~650 m
- **Lowest elevation:** 3,850 m
- **Highest elevation:** 4,200 m

Day 5: Thursday, 8 October 2026

Salkantaypampa → Salkantay Pass → Collpapampa (2,750 m)

Today is the **most challenging and rewarding day of the trek**. You will ascend from **Salkantaypampa (4,000 m)** to the **highest point of the trek, Salkantay Pass (4,600 m)**, surrounded by dramatic **glacier-covered peaks**. After taking in the breathtaking views, you will begin a long descent into the **lush cloud forest**, arriving at **Collpapampa Camp (2,750 m)** for the night.

- **Meal plan:** Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner
- **Hiking time:** ~9–10 hours
- **Hiking distance:** ~20 km
- **Altitude gain:** ~600 m (*to the pass*)
- **Descent:** ~1,850 m
- **Lowest elevation:** 2,750 m
- **Highest elevation:** 4,600 m

Day 6: Friday, 9 October 2026

Collpapampa → Lucmabamba (2,050 m)

Today, you continue your journey through the **lush cloud forest**, descending from the high Andes into a warmer, more tropical environment. Along the way, you'll pass **coffee plantations, fruit orchards, and small local communities**, offering a unique insight into rural Andean life. You will arrive at **Lucmabamba (2,050 m)** for your overnight camp. An **optional visit to nearby hot springs** is available for those wishing to relax and recover after the day's trek.

- **Meal plan:** Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner
- **Hiking time:** ~5–6 hours
- **Hiking distance:** ~15 km
- **Altitude loss:** ~700 m
- **Lowest elevation:** 2,050 m
- **Highest elevation:** 2,750 m

Day 7: Saturday, 10 October 2026

Lucmabamba → Llactapata → Hydroelectric → Aguas Calientes (2,040 m)

Today's trek takes you along a **historic Inca trail** to the impressive **Llactapata ruins (2,650 m)**, where you'll enjoy your **first distant views of Machu Picchu** from a unique and less-visited vantage point.

From here, you will descend to **Hydroelectric (1,800 m)** before taking a **short train journey to Aguas Calientes (2,040 m)**, where you will check in to your hotel and prepare for your visit to Machu Picchu the following day.

- **Meal plan:** Breakfast / Lunch
- **Hiking time:** ~6–7 hours
- **Hiking distance:** ~11 km
- **Train time:** ~30 minutes
- **Altitude gain:** ~600–800 m
- **Altitude loss:** ~1,000 m
- **Lowest elevation:** 1,800 m
- **Highest elevation:** 2,650 m

Day 8: Sunday, 11 October 2026

Aguas Calientes → Machu Picchu → Cusco (3,400 m)

Today is the **highlight of your journey** as you visit the legendary **Machu Picchu (2,450 m)**, one of the world's most extraordinary archaeological sites. Enjoy a **guided exploration** of this iconic Inca citadel, followed by free time to take in the breathtaking surroundings.

For those seeking an additional challenge, there is an **optional hike to Huayna Picchu**, offering spectacular views over Machu Picchu and the surrounding mountains.

After your visit, you will return to **Cusco** via train and road transfer.

- **Meal plan:** Breakfast
- **Guided exploration:** ~3–4 hours at Machu Picchu
- **Transport:** Bus and train transfers to Cusco

Day 9: Monday, 12 October 2026

Cusco (3,400 m) – Rest Day

Today is a **well-earned rest day** in Cusco. Take time to **relax and recover**, explore the city at your own pace, or enjoy the vibrant cafés, markets, and historic streets of this **UNESCO World Heritage-listed city**.

- **Meal plan:** Breakfast
- **Activity:** Leisure day in Cusco

Day 10: Tuesday, 13 October 2026

Cusco → Rainbow Mountain → Cusco (3,400 m)

Today you will have the opportunity to experience the spectacular **Rainbow Mountain (5,200 m)**, one of Peru's most unique natural wonders. This **optional day hike** takes you through high-altitude landscapes to a viewpoint offering views of the mountain's **vibrant mineral colours**.

After the hike, you will return to **Cusco** for the evening.

- **Meal plan:** Breakfast / Lunch
- **Hiking time:** ~4–5 hours
- **Transport:** Full-day return journey from Cusco

Day 11: Wednesday, 14 October 2026

Cusco (3,400 m) – South Valley Tour or Huchuy Qosqo Hike

Today offers a **choice of experiences** to suit your interests and energy levels. You may choose to enjoy a **cultural tour of the South Valley**, exploring traditional villages, archaeological sites, and local Andean life.

Alternatively, you can opt for the **Huchuy Qosqo hike**, a rewarding trek to a lesser-visited Inca site that offers **spectacular views of the Sacred Valley** and a deeper connection to the region's history.

Guests may also choose to spend the day at **leisure in Cusco**, enjoying the city at their own pace.

- **Meal plan:** Breakfast (*tour or leisure option*) / Breakfast / Lunch (*hike option*)
- **Activity:** Choice of cultural tour, hike, or leisure day
- **Transport:** Included for tour and hike options

Day 12: Thursday, 15 October 2026

Cusco (3,400 m) – Departure

Today marks the end of your **Salkantay – Machu Picchu adventure**.

You will be transferred from your hotel to the **Cusco airport** for your onward flight to **Lima** or to continue your travels.

- **Meal plan:** Breakfast
- **Transfer:** Airport transfer included

End of Trek & Departure

Your unforgettable **Salkantay – Machu Picchu adventure concludes today**. We hope you enjoyed the journey through the Andes, the Inca heritage, and the spectacular landscapes of Peru.

Final Notes

- Please note: the itinerary is subject to change.
- Accommodation is provided on a single-room basis for all trekkers as part of the boutique experience.
- Upon confirming your booking, you will receive all essential information and expert guidance to prepare for your trek — including your detailed itinerary, equipment recommendations, medical and vaccination advice, a 12-week preparation plan, and a comprehensive Q&A guide.

Salkantay to Machu Picchu Expedition

Departs 4 October 2026

Limited to a maximum of 4 trekkers

Boutique expedition experience

Guaranteed departure with just 2 trekkers

Bookings close once the expedition is full

Reserve your place



Trek Inclusions

- Arrival and departure transfers to/from domestic and international flights
- Transfer from your hotel in Cusco to Mollepata or Soraypampa
- Acclimatisation day in Cusco
- Sacred Valley tour
- **Private individual tent accommodation** throughout the trek, providing added comfort, privacy, and space during your expedition
- 4-star hotel accommodation in Cusco (7 nights) and Aguas Calientes (1 night) – **private single-room accommodation**, including breakfast
- Train ticket from Hydroelectric to Aguas Calientes (Machu Picchu town)
- Train ticket from Aguas Calientes to Ollantaytambo
- Bus ride from the final train station back to your Cusco hotel
- Bus ride from Aguas Calientes to Machu Picchu and return
- Private transportation for sightseeing tours in Cusco, Salkantay Trek, and Rainbow Mountain day hike
- Local guide service for all activities (Cusco city tours, 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, and 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 – duffel bag and sleeping mattress for the trek
- Transportation of personal belongings during the trek by pack horses/mules and/or porters
- Horses to carry tents, food, and cooking equipment
- Muleteers to manage horses
- Trip briefing before the trek
- Emergency horse available during the 3-day Salkantay Trek if needed
- All park fees and permits
- Rescue fee during the trek
- 1.5 L bottled water on the first day and 4–5 L boiled water per day during the trek
- Transfer to and from Cusco International Airport
- Professional Peruvian Mountain co-guides and assistants, trained in Wilderness First Aid
- Cherie Horne as your tour leader and escort
- Comprehensive first-aid kit
- Pulse oximeter
- Supplementary oxygen

Trek Exclusions

- International and domestic flights within Peru
- International airport departure taxes
- Tips to Peruvian guides, assistants, and porters
- Alcoholic beverages and bottled drinks (excluding boiled water provided during the trek)
- Optional Huayna Picchu hike permit (Day 8 – Machu Picchu): approx. USD \$70 per person (subject to availability, must be booked in advance)
- Optional Day 11 South Valley Cultural Tour (approx. USD \$45 per person)
- Optional Day 11 Huchuy Qosqo Full-Day Hike (approx. USD \$65 per person)
- Meals not included in the itinerary:
 - Lunch on Days 1, 2, 8, 9, and 12
 - Dinner on Days 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11
- Mandatory travel insurance (proof required prior to the trek)
- Vaccinations
- Any add-on tours or activities not mentioned in the program
- Personal trekking gear (see clothing and equipment list)
- Sleeping bag (not included, rental available upon request)
- Personal expenses (laundry, phone calls, souvenirs, snacks)
- Excess baggage charges and airport taxes
- Costs incurred during early departure or evacuation (transport, extra hotel nights, etc.)
- Expenses due to delays beyond the control of Cherie Horne Adventure Trekking

