

Peru

Mosqoy Mamas and Inca Exploration



This 18 day adventure shows us the very best that Peru has to offer, from the awe inspiring sight of Machu Picchu after a spectacular trek through the Peruvian mountain tops, to white water rafting adventures and incredible Inca ruins. And amongst all of this we will have the opportunity to explore the life of Peruvian women as we join various discussions with local women from all walks of life, learn about traditional weaving techniques and join the Mosqoy community project in Parobamba an initiative which will bring long term benefit to their lives. This journey will be an unforgettable adventure for everyone!



Recommended itinerary:

Culture shock rating: 

Physical rating: 

Days 1/2: Depart UK and Arrive in Cusco We will board an overnight flight and arrive in Cusco on day 2 of our trip. Upon our arrival we will be met by our Trip Leader and transferred to our hotel where we will have the chance to freshen up. We will then enjoy a walking tour of the area which will not only allow us to get our bearings but also adjust to the altitude which is an impressive 3399m. The beautiful historic centre is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and offers many examples of Inca and colonial architecture.

Day 3: Cusco Ruins and City Today we will explore more of what Cusco and the surrounding area has to offer. We will start at the impressive site of Sacsayhuaman where huge stone ramparts surround a grass amphitheatre. Once, this was the scene of fierce battles but it is now used for traditional Inca ceremonies. Next we will move on to the Tambo Machay water temple which features intricately carved water channels thought to have been used for ritual cleansing and water worship. From here we will continue down to Cusco, stopping at the Temple of the Moon en-route. Back in Cusco we will stop at the Plaza de Armas to see its impressive cathedral and Qoricancha Temple, which was once home to life sized gold statues. Time permitting, we will visit one of the town's bustling markets and experience a taste of Peruvian life.

Day 4: Urubamba White Water Rafting and Meet with Local Women We will set off this morning on a white water rafting adventure! Our route will be along a beautiful section of the Urubamba River. After a thorough safety briefing we will begin, making the most of the gentle start to practice our technique before the river flows through the canyon. We will experience the exhilaration of rapids, torrents and views of the stunning peaks. This afternoon we will meet with local women to learn about their local way of life and what it means to be a woman in Peru. It will be an interesting insight into the local culture and attitude to the sexes.

Day 5: Pisac Ruins and Ollantaytambo Our first stop today will be the extensive Inca ruins above Pisac. Here we will enjoy a circular hike along an Inca trail through royal buildings, look outs, terraces, tunnels and irrigation channels. We will then visit Pisac market, the perfect opportunity to try a freshly baked empanada from the town oven. Afterwards, we will drive along the Urubamba River to visit the Inca fortress town of Ollantaytambo, the site of the final major battle between the Incas and the Spanish before the remaining Incas fled to the jungles. It is a superb place to see well preserved ruins and the hill-top Sun Temple which remains unfinished, proving clues to the building methods.

Days 6/7/8/9/10: Mosqoy Project We will spend the next five days in the lofty heights of Parobamba village where we will be working alongside local people and the staff at Mosqoy in their social enterprise project. Depending upon the time of our visit, this could see us building anything from a water collection and storage system to maintaining the vegetable garden or

digging eco loos! It will be an incredible opportunity to be involved first hand in a project which brings long term benefit to local people's lives.

Here we will be staying in remote accommodation with basic amenities and joining villagers in their day to day life, allowing us the opportunity to build a real connection with the people of Parobamba and to understand the life of rural women in Peru. We will also spend some time with local weavers, a job held by women to offer them some of their own financial independence. Weaving is a traditional handicraft in Peru and creating beautiful hand woven cloths and products is something which many local women depend upon. Mosqoy also works alongside local weavers to help them sell their products abroad at a significant premium and reinvest the profit into the community through development and educational programmes. It will certainly be a rewarding few days, allowing us to gain a true understanding of the roles of women and rural life high in the hilltops of Peru.

Days 11/12/13/14: Salcantay Trek to Machu Picchu We hope you are ready to stretch your legs! We will rise early on day 11 to begin our trek of the Salcantay Trail. During this four day trek we will be rewarded with panoramic views of the snow capped mountains and the valley of the Apurimac River. Over these days our surrounds will shift from dry scrub to snowy peaks to tropical jungle and we will see an endless array of water falls, fruit bearing trees, varied fauna and birds. Our days will start early, hopefully allowing us to see the spectacular sunrises and finish each day's trek with plenty of time to recover and relax in our camp for the night. On day 13 we can even visit the thermal hot springs in Santa Teresa, a much needed reward for our tired muscles! The trail finishes on day 14 in the Urubamba Valley from which we will enjoy a short but spectacular train ride to the bustling town of Machu Picchu Pueblo and a well deserved night in a local hotel.

Day 15: Machu Picchu Tour Relaxed after a comfortable night, we head up to Machu Picchu for a full guided tour before the crowds arrive. We've all seen the photos, but visiting Machu Picchu in person is a truly breath-taking experience. Perched high above the Urubamba River and surrounded by towering mountains and deep valleys, it is one of the Modern Wonders of the World and set in the most awe-inspiring location. Afterwards, there is time to hike to the Inca Bridge, Watchman's Hut or else just wander through the ruins soaking up the atmosphere. In the afternoon we descend to the waiting train to enjoy one of the great train journeys of the world back along the Sacred Valley to our hotel for the night.

Day 16: Cusco and Meet with Local Women: We will have this morning free for some rest and recuperation in Cusco and one last chance to explore the nearby Inca ruins, colonial churches, chocolate museum or hunt for some last minute bargains in the market. This afternoon we will have the opportunity to explore the darker side of life in Peru as we discuss with local women the effects of the forced sterilization programme which took place under President Alberto Fujimori. It will be a sobering discussion and will raise many questions as we discuss why, despite this, many women still fiercely support him as a leader.

Day 17: Depart Peru Today we will be transferred to the airport to wave a sad farewell to our Trip Leader and the wonders of Peru.

Day 18: Arrive UK We will arrive back in the UK this morning after our overnight flight, full of incredible stories to tell!

Important Information:

It is important to realise that the itinerary needs to be flexible. While every effort will be made to follow the above schedule, in the event of political problems, airline schedule changes or natural events, we will do our best to make your trip as enjoyable and hassle-free as possible, but it is important to EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED and be prepared to accept some slight changes. Relax and have faith in your guides.



DAYS FOR GIRLS This trip can include a session working alongside Days for Girls, a grass roots organisation aimed at giving every woman and girl access to proper feminine hygiene products and health advice. For more information look on our website: www.thestc.co.uk/travel/days-for-girls



The School Travel Consultancy

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