

## **Andes Exploration with Dolly Beaver**

This journey is designed for each day to be a memorable exploration, filled with discoveries and experiences that will bring you closer to the greatness of the Inca culture and the natural beauty of the Andes. It's a trip that will leave a mark on your soul, a journey of introspection, history, and natural wonders that you will cherish forever.

### **14 June, 2025 - Arrival to Cusco**



Upon arrival in Cusco, we will transfer you to your hotel.

Cusco has been inhabited since pre-Inca times by a succession of cultures. The Quechua- speaking Inca ethnic group came to prominence in the early 15th century and began its imperial expansionist phase under the great Inca leader Pachacutec, around 1438. As the Inca empire expanded, their capital was enlarged to reflect their growing might. Great temples and palaces were erected, and the vestiges of these magnificent edifices can be seen to this day, as they form the basis for the splendid colonial-era structures built by the Spanish from the third decade of the 16th century onwards. Cusco offers endless attractions, the architecture of the historic center of the city, with its Spanish colonial mansions and churches built over the remains of imposing Inca structures.

**Cusco walking city tour** - The city tour on foot includes the colonial-era cathedral, the Inca Temple of the Sun, or Qoricancha, and the San Blas neighborhood. This half-day guided tour enables visitors to learn more about many of the most important attractions in Cusco. We will walk-through streets lined with Inca walls on our way to the San Blas neighborhood, famous today, as it was in Inca times, for its skilled craftsmen.

We visit the Cathedral, which was built between 1560 and 1654 on the site of the palace of the Inca Wiracocha. It is a magnificent example of European art made by

the indigenous population. Its main altar is completely covered in silver, and the church contains many fine paintings from the Cusco School of religious art.

From the Cathedral we move on to Qoricancha, the Inca Temple of the Sun, where we will be able to see some of the finest remaining examples of Inca stonemasonry.

We will visit the Cusco's San Pedro produce market. Local vendors here sell foodstuffs that vary from fresh and tasty produce (think fruit, vegetables, and cereals), medicinal herbs or even supplements, some of which are said to have magical effects. The market, is a lively and animated place, is worth visiting for atmosphere alone. Bargain with vendors for the best price, rub shoulders with the locals and enjoy just a little taster of what life is really like in Cusco.

## **15 June - Sacred Valley of the Incas – Sacsayhuaman & Pisac**



### **Sacsayhuaman**

Morning visit to the Sacsayhuaman Archaeological Park. Sacsayhuaman is an extraordinary archaeological site set on the hill to the north of the city of Cusco, overlooking the main square. This is a complete tour including the great plaza and its adjacent three massive terrace walls.

The stones used in the construction of these terraces are among the largest used in any building in pre-Hispanic America and display a precision that is unmatched in the Americas. The stones are so closely fitted that a single piece of paper will not fit between many of the stones. This precision, combined with the rounded corners of the blocks, the variety of their interlocking shapes, and the way the walls lean inward, is thought to have helped the ruins survive the devastating earthquakes that have shaken Cusco in the past. The largest of the three walls is about 400 meters in length. These ramparts are about 6 meters tall and estimated volume of stone

employed at the site is over 6000 cubic meters. Estimates for the weight of the largest limestone block vary from 128 tons to around 200 tons.

From here, you will continue through this picturesque landscape in the hills above the imperial city to the Inca temple of Qenqo ("zigzag," in Quechua), a limestone outcrop carved into a subterranean altar associated with worship of the Inca earth goddess, or Pachamama, we will also visit the Inca fortified complex known as Puca Pucara ("red fort," in Quechua) and the water shrine of Tambomachay.

Leaving the Cusco valley behind, after crossing the mountains, our bus will take us to the Sacred Valley of the Incas, the road descends to the traditional artisan center of Awanacancha, a tourist complex where we will learn about the Andean Camelids; the Llamas and Alpacas, in addition, native people will show us their techniques of weaving and dyeing of traditional textiles. Next, we continue along the paved road to the picturesque town of Pisac. Pisac on the banks of the sacred Urubamba River. Every Sunday, the sleepy town of Pisac comes alive when indigenous Quechua communities from the surrounding highlands come to Pisac to sell their produce and stock up on supplies for the week.

### **Pisac**

The PISAQ typical market of souvenirs (that is performed in a daily basis) is one of the most famous markets in the Cusco region. A large section of the market is dedicated to tourist-oriented souvenir stalls where you can find weavings, alpaca products, ponchos, ceramics, jewelry, hats, Andean instruments and a complete range of other gifts and souvenirs to take home with you. The handcraft market is open every day from 9 am to 4.30 pm and is a good place to pick up some gifts all in the one place.

After an excellent lunch we will visit the PISAQ ruins. The PISAQ archaeological site stand high above the Sacred Valley of the Incas, the ruins are separated along the ridge into four groups: PISAQA, Intihuatana, Q'ALLAQASA, and KANCHIRACAY and extensive agricultural terracing, with the beautiful Urubamba River far below.

The Intihuatana a volcanic outcrop carved into a "hitching post" for the Sun is the focus of the complex, the angles of its base suggest that it served some astronomical function the religious complex includes a number of baths for rituals and temples. The Inca constructed agricultural terraces on the steep hillside, which are still in use today. They created the terraces by hauling richer topsoil by hand from the lower lands. The terraces enabled the production of surplus food, more than would normally be possible at altitudes as high as 14,000 feet.

Near the sunset we head to our hotel located in Urubamba, the most picturesque area of the valley.

## 16 June – Sacred Valley – Chinchero, Moray & Maras, Ollantaytambo



### **Chinchero**

Early in the morning we will take you to Chinchero. Chinchero is a typical Andean village, located on the patchwork of Andean crops which is the plain of Chinchero, at an altitude of 3,762 meters / 12,342 feet. The native Indian market is open on Sundays, when local people wearing the traditional dress of their respective communities, often unchanged since the 17th century, come from outlying villages to trade their goods. Aside from Sunday there is a daily market traders offer handcrafts, including textiles and jewelry, alpaca products, ponchos, ceramics, etc.

The village is also an important archaeological site. One side of the main square is bordered by a massive stone Inca wall featuring a series of niches, and beyond the village several outlying constructions and the remains of Inca terracing can also be visited. The Inca remains of Chinchero are attributed to the reign of Inca Tupac Yupanqui, the son of Pachacutec, who may have used the village as a kind of country retreat.

From Chinchero, we will continue our drive to Moray. Here, the Incas built concentric agricultural terraces, forming a 150-meter-deep amphitheater, with each level reproducing the temperatures found in various parts of the Inca empire, enabling the Incas to develop new crop strains and increase yields.

From Moray, it is a short drive to the village of Maras where we will have lunch in a local restaurant where we will enjoy a traditional food, before going to visit the salt mines.

### **Maras & Moray**

The salt pans of Maras have been exploited since pre-Inca times. This series of pools constructed to evaporate the salt water produced by a subterranean stream offer visitors a uniquely photogenic sight, with their flat, white surfaces contrasting with the surrounding green, vertical scenery. Our guide will explain how these ancient salt pans remain important to the local economy.

Later we drive 30 minutes through the Sacred Valley to the village of Ollantaytambo.

### **Ollantaytambo**

The village of Ollantaytambo retains the original street plan of the Inca town, making it the only surviving example of Inca urban planning. During the Inca Empire, Ollantaytambo was the royal estate of Emperor Pachacutec who conquered the region, built the town and a ceremonial center. At the time of the Spanish conquest of Peru it served as a stronghold for Manco Inca, leader of the Inca resistance. The Temple sector is built out of cut and fitted stones in contrast to the other two sectors of the Temple Hill which are made from fieldstones. The main structure is the Sun Temple, an uncompleted building which features the Wall of the Six Monoliths. Our tour will include a visit to the agricultural areas around the village, the irrigation system, granaries, and the fortress-temple built by Inca Pachacutec using stonemasons from the Colla culture around Lake Titicaca.

After visiting the village and temple of Ollantaytambo, hotel in the Sacred Valley

### **17 June – Machu Picchu (Day 1)**



Traveling by train from the Sacred Valley of the Incas to the ruins of the Inca city of Machu Picchu is an experience no visitor to Peru should miss. After leaving behind the Sacred Valley, your train will follow the course of the Urubamba River as it carves a narrow gorge between cliffs that are crowned with dense tropical cloud forests, filled with endemic flora and fauna and home to many Inca archaeological sites. Visit Machu Picchu, the most iconic travel destination in South America!!!

We will take a bus from Aguas Calientes to Machu Picchu (30 minutes). Located at the top of a steep, forested hill overlooking the Urubamba River, Machu Picchu was hidden by thick cloud forest vegetation for centuries until the American explorer Hiram Bingham began to clear the site after its rediscovery in 1911.

Today the city has been extensively restored, creating an unforgettable sight for visitors like you who arrive from all over the world. Our experienced and knowledgeable guide will escort you as you visit the temples and palaces of Machu Picchu and explore its residential and agricultural areas.

After the most memorable experiences during the tour, we return to the town of Aguas Calientes by bus to take the train back to Cusco. Upon arrival in Cusco, you will be met and escorted to your hotel.

### **18 June – Machu Picchu (Day 2)**

Visit the upper part of the Inca City (panoramic route) and hike to Machu Picchu mountain. Here you can have the most stunning views of the Machu Picchu site with the best photo opportunities of any route. This is the only place you can take the typical photo of Machu Picchu with Wayna Picchu in the background.

To visit the upper part of the Inca city, it is necessary to ascend a zigzagging path with stairs that cover a difference in height of 97 meters (318 feet). This ascent leads to the highest point of the city, from where you can enjoy breathtaking panoramic views.

The Machu Picchu lookout point at 2,488 meters (8,160 feet) offers one of the most iconic and spectacular views of the ancient Inca city. From this vantage point, visitors can admire the majesty of the archaeological complex in its entirety, framed by the imposing mountains and lush natural surroundings.

The hike to the summit of Machu Picchu Mountain begins at the Mirador located above the city at 2,488 meters (8,160 feet). The top of the mountain is at 3,082 meters (10,109 feet). The hike is approximately 3.24 km (2 miles), round trip, and takes an average of 2 to 3 hours total, depending on the pace and physical condition of each person. The ascent is steep, with steps and narrow paths, but the panoramic views from the top are extraordinary and it is well worth the effort. Approximately maximum stay 7 hours.

Return back to Aguas Calientes. Lunch at local restaurant return to Cusco by train.

### **19 June – Cusco to Lima (or optional extension)**

## 19 June – Rainbow Mountain (Palccoyo) – Inca Temple of Wiracocha Raqchi



In just one day, visit two of the Cusco region's most unusual attractions, the rainbow-colored Palccoyo mountain peak and the historic Inca Temple of Wiracocha: Raqchi.

This excursion offers the chance to visit the Rainbow Mountain and enjoy the walk to and from Palccoyo. This is not a difficult walk; however, the altitude can be a problem for some travelers, as the route involves a gradual ascent from 4,630 meters / 11,186 feet to 4,891 meters/ 16,046 feet. It is important to spend a few days in Cusco before this excursion to acclimate.

### **Cusco – Rainbow Mountain – Racchi - Cusco**

We will pick you up from your hotel in Cusco and set off in our private vehicle, heading southeast in the direction of Puno. Before starting the trek, we will pause to enjoy a nourishing hot breakfast. After a journey of around 3 hours and thirty minutes, taking us through the typical high Andes scenery of the Cusco region, we will arrive at our first destination: Palccoyo viewing point, with its fine vista of the rainbow-colored mountain peak and the entire Palccoyo valley. From here, the brief ascent on foot to view the rainbow mountain more closely is not a difficult walk. The ascent is gradual, along a good trail through pastureland, with spectacular views of Mount Ausangate and other mountains of the Andes. However, the altitude may affect some walkers, during the gradual climb from 4,787 meters/ 15,705 feet to 4,891 meters/ 16,046 feet. After having enjoyed the incredible views and taken many photos, a short walk to Bosque de Piedras awaits us.

After lunch, we will drive to the historic **Inca Temple of Wiracocha: Raqchi**.

The most prominent structure at Raqchi is the Temple of Wiracocha, the creator god of Inca mythology. It is an enormous rectangular two-story roofed structure measuring 92 meters by 25.5 meters. This structure consists of a central adobe wall some 18 to 20 meters in height with an andesite stone base. Windows and doors allow passage. It is flanked on each side by a row of eleven columns. The bases of the walls and the columns are made from classic imperial Inca stonework, with the upper sections fashioned from mud brick.

Prior to its destruction by the Spaniards, the temple had what is believed to be the largest single roof in the Inca Empire, with the central wall forming its apex, from which the roof stretched some 25 meters (82 feet) in both directions, where it rested on the great columns. The enormous proportions of the temple and its prominent location have led to it being known as the Temple of Wiracocha, in honor of the creator god of Inca religious beliefs. **Return to Cusco.**

## **20 June – Cusco to Lima**

Transfer to Cusco Airport in time for your departing flight

End of services

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### **Pricing details:**

#### **Main Trip - Andes**

Deposit – USD \$200.00 per person

\$1395.00 per person in double occupancy room

Single in a room adds \$350.

#### **Rainbow mountain extension (optional):**

\$250.00 per person in double occupancy room

Single in a room adds \$90.00