



This all year round trip combines the most contrasting and fascinating landscapes of South America; the rich heritage of pre-Columbian cultures and the natural history of three exceptional travel destinations. Experience the most arid desert of the world in Chile and visit its salt lakes before crossing the Andes to the colourful Bolivian capital of La Paz. Get to know Lake Titicaca; crossing into Peru, home of the Incas, where you will be amazed by the magic of Machu Picchu and Cusco. This trip is offered as a daily trip, private and regular.

Accommodations

Private

Santiago : Hotel NH Ciudad

San Pedro de Atacama : Hotel Altiplanico

Putre : Hotel Qantati

La Paz : Hotel Presidente

Isla del Sol : Posada del Inca Ecolodge

Puno : Hotel Casa Andina Private Collection

Cusco : Hotel Casa Andina Private Collection

Sacred Valley: Casa Andina Private Collection

Machu Picchu: Sanctuary Lodge

***Hotels may change due to availability or size of the group.**

Day 1

Santiago de Chile

Arrival at Santiago airport and transfer to the hotel. In the afternoon you will take part in a city tour, enjoying the most interesting attractions of the Chilean capital. Overnight in Santiago.

Day 2

Santiago -Calama - San Pedro de Atacama .

After breakfast, a transfer will take you to the airport to board your connecting flight to Calama. On arrival, assistance and a transfer to San Pedro de Atacama will be provided for. San Pedro is an unusually colourful village at 2,000 m / 6,560 ft above sea level, located in the middle of a green oasis. In the afternoon you will be able to enjoy the eerily silent moonscape of Valle de la Luna with its backdrop of snow-capped volcanoes; being able to witness the beauty of a marvellous scenery, which is intensified during sunset. You will return to the hotel afterwards and stay overnight in San Pedro de Atacama. (B)



Recommendations

During this trip you will discover places which are located between 2.000m/6560 ft and 5.000m/ 16.400 ft above sea level.

Thermal oscillation during the day and night is quite high so please bring clothes for plenty of sunshine and low temperatures.

Don't forget your sun block, sunglasses and a hat is also recommend to bring.

The Andean Explorer to Puno operates only MON, WED and Sat(FRI: April to October only)

Day 3

San Pedro de Atacama & the Atacama Salt Lake

After breakfast you will visit San Pedro de Atacama - the centre of a Palaeolithic civilization, which is encircled by impressive rock fortresses, built on the mountains surrounding the green valley. The colonial church in the centre was constructed in 1577 and is the largest and most beautiful church in the region. The extraordinary archaeological museum of Padre Gustavo Le Paige shows, among its many archaeological pre-Hispanic artefacts, several amazingly well preserved mummies, including one known as "Miss Chile". Afterwards you will get to know the pre-Columbian village Tular, with an approx. age of 3,000 years. The archaeological remains are the oldest evidence of human settlement in the valley. You will continue your morning tour to Pukara de Quitor, a fortress, which was conquered in 1540 by the Spanish conquistadores, defeating the Incan troops who, in turn, had captured it from the pre-Incan cultures and extended the fortification. In the afternoon you will start your tour to Toconao, a village, where the locals dedicate themselves to manufacturing white volcanic stone sculptures. You will continue to the huge Atacama Salt Lake, an inland sea, formed millions of years ago. An overwhelming vastness and emptiness with white salt crusts stretching out as far as the eye can reach. It simply is one of the most spectacular and dramatic landscapes in Chile. Return to the hotel. Overnight in San Pedro. (B, BL)

Day 4

San Pedro de Atacama - El Tatio geysers - Puritama

Pick up at your hotel at around 4.00 am in the morning to depart from San Pedro, heading north to the famous El Tatio Geysers, a geothermal field flanked by soaring peaks. After three hours of travelling, you will arrive at El Tatio, situated at 4.320 m / 14.173 ft above sea level on the Altiplano, the Highland. Powerful spurts of steam shoot up from various blowholes. The steam hurling up from the geysers in the early morning light, in the midst of this spectacular scenery, is an unforgettable experience. There are about 40 geysers, thermal wells and fumaroles. You will then be able to enjoy a nice breakfast next to the geysers and afterwards take a walk around the geothermal field close to this natural wonder. If possible (depending on the activity of the geyser) you can take a bath in the hot thermal pools. After visiting the geysers you will drive back to San Pedro where you will be served lunch. In the afternoon you can enjoy a relaxing bath in the tranquil hot springs of Puritama. Overnight in San Pedro de Atacama. (B, L)

Day 5

San Pedro - Arica - Lauca National Park – Putre

After breakfast you will be transferred to the airport in order to catch your flight to Arica. Upon arrival you will leave Arica and take the road to the highland village of Putre. On the way you will enter the Lluta Valley, where fascinating geoglyphs mark the old Inca Trail from the coast to the highland. During a stop in Rosario you will have time to see a wall of geoglyphs. Afterwards you will carry on to Poconchile, to visit the Church of San Gerónimo, built in 1580 and its immense cemetery. The Cardones Canyon area displays a fascinating assortment of gigantic Candelabra Cacti. Next, you reach the Fort Pukara de Copaquilla, where you will have time to take a short walk to the little village Socoroma, home to the Aymara natives. On the main road you will continue to Putre, located 3.500m / 11.483 ft above sea level. You can get used to the changes due to altitude, while visiting the village-capital of the Parinacota Province, dating back to pre-Hispanic times. A scenic drive up to the Lauca National Park, a Biosphere Worldwide Reserve, visiting small Andean towns and villages along the way will be the next point on your program. Keep an eye out for the "cactus candelabro", which grows at 2,500m above sea level. You reach Lake Chúnगरa (4,600m), set against a stunning backdrop of snow-capped volcanoes, and home to varied and abundant wildlife, including vicuñas, vizcachas and flamingos. Overnight in Putre (B, BL, D)

Day 6

Putre - La Paz

In the morning you will depart to discover the fascinating beauty of Lauca National Park and its spectacular scenery of exotic plants and wildlife like vicuñas, alpacas, rheas and Andean flamingos among other species; it is also a birdwatcher's paradise. We will visit the Parinacota village (4.392 m / 14.409 ft. above sea level) with its beautiful church, dating back to the XVII century. After that we will continue to the highest lake in the world, Chungará Lake. Here we will have time for a walk; before enjoying our packed lunch on the lake shore. The trip continues passing through immigration and entering Bolivia at Tambo Quemado. Afterwards we will enter the Sajama Mountain National Park, to witness the highest peak of Bolivia at 6,542 m/21,450 ft and furthermore cross a big part of the Bolivian highlands, with lots of indigenous settlements preserving their old style and also old tombs (Chulpares) of pre-Colombian times until reaching the city of La Paz. Overnight in La Paz (B, BL)

Day 7

La Paz - Isla del Sol

After breakfast you will set out to visit the highlights of La Paz, like the moon valley, the San Francisco Church and the Market during a half day City tour. Afterwards you will take an overland transfer to the Hotel Inca Utama & SPA in Huatajata. On arrival, visit the "Andean Roots Eco Village": the Altiplano Museum; handicrafts village, the Mud Igloos and the mortuary towers of the Urus Chipayas. You will see vicuñas, llamas, alpacas and the mythical Suri. Continue by bus to Copacabana. A motor boat will take you to Sun Island. Visit the "Pilcoacaina" Sun Temple. Then you will walk the llama trek to "Posada del Inca". (B, L, D)

Day 8

Isla del Sol - Puno

Do not miss an early, breathtaking sunrise while on the island. You will take a motor boat to Moon Island and visit the Sun Virgins Temple "Inak Uyu". Once you return to Sun Island, you will visit the Inca "Grand Stairs" & the sacred fountain; here you will be able to try the water, promising eternal youth & happiness. Visit the small handicraft market. Arrive at Copacabana and visit the shrine and the dark Virgin. An overland transfer will take you to Puno, where you will be able to visit the church of Pomata. Drop off at your hotel in Puno. (B, L)



Day 9

Puno - Cusco

Departure by Inka Express bus from Puno to Cusco. On the way you will visit the ruins of Pukara and stop at La Raya Pass at 4,321m / 14,180 ft., to visit the steaming pools of hot water nearby. Lunch will be served in Sicuani. The journey will continue to the temple of Rajchi and to the remains of the central high wall of the Viracocha Temple, probably the largest roofed building built by the Incas. You will then visit the ruins of Pikillajta and the Church of Andahuaylillas, also called the "Sixtine Chapel of America", to finally reach the rich valley and city of Cusco. Overnight in Cusco. (B, L)

Day 10

Cusco

The morning will be at leisure. In the afternoon you will visit the Cathedral of Cusco, with its massive stone pillars and elaborate religious works of art, including sculptures of the saints and religious frescoes. Later, you will visit Koricancha (the Temple of the Sun,) which is the main religious centre of the Incas dedicated to the Sun cult, with some of the best Inka stonework in the city. The Santo Domingo Convent, with its elaborate carvings, paintings and other colonial-style works of art, was built on top of it by the Spanish Conquistadors. Later, we'll go to Sacsayhuaman (which is shaped as the head of a Puma,) Tambomachay (the sacred water site of the Incas,) Puka Pukara, known also as the Tambo (or the resting place and Qenqo, where we can see the Inka altar that was used for animal sacrifices). (B)

Day 11

Ollantaytambo (Sacred valley)

Early departure to Ollantaytambo in order to visit the Urubamba valley (The Sacred valley). Your first stop will be the ruins above Pisac and the market. During the early afternoon you will be able to enjoy lunch. In the afternoon you will be able to explore the ruins of Ollantaytambo. Overnight in the Sacred Valley. (B, L)

Day 12

Machu Picchu

Transfer to the train station, where you will board your train (Vistadome) for a 2 hours journey to Machu Picchu. Your guided tour of Machu Picchu will include a lecture about the natural limestone rock formations, which were adapted and incorporated into the construction of the citadel and the highly stylized temples. It is an amazing feat of architecture, considering the difficulties of the region it is situated in. Machu Picchu is also a site considered by many to possess a special mystical energy and you may experience it yourself, as you breathe the clean air. Buffet Lunch in the Sanctuary Lodge Restaurant (located a few meters to Machu Picchu citadel entrance). Overnight at Sanctuary Lodge (Machu Picchu)(B, L)

Day 13

Machu Picchu - Cusco

Morning at leisure. You can for ex. return to the ruins for more exploration. The train departs in the afternoon and will arrive in Cusco just after sundown. Upon arrival in Cusco, you will be met at the train station and transferred to your hotel. (B)

Day 14

Cusco - Lima

After breakfast, transfer to the airport and flight to Lima, where you start your half day City tour with a tasty lunch in a local restaurant. You will be visiting the Cathedral, Main Square, San Francisco Convent and its Catacombs, the Inquisition Court, the residential areas of San Isidro, Miraflores, the new commercial area south of Lima, and the ocean front to enjoy a magnificent view of the Pacific Ocean. Afterwards you will be taken to the airport catch your flight. (B)

