Machu Picchu Trek

The Hidden Valleys of Salkantay

Peru | 5200m



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You'll be captured by the beauty, remoteness, and solitude of the Andes during this exclusive trek. It is a different, unique, and pristine version of the Classic Salkantay trek to Machu Picchu.

Discover the southern face of this spectacular *Apu* Salkantay, "Wild Mountain Spirit", the highest peak in the Vilcabamba Mountain Range. Andean mountain dwellers hold a strong belief that mountains are powerful deities, which guard and protect the communities that live on and near them. The magic and power of the Andes mountains will soak into your bones as you traverse these little-known mountain paths.

This is truly the **"road less travelled"**. You will absorb the remoteness and solitude of the area, striding across Andean valleys and encountering Inca stone ruins, seemingly a part of the natural landscape. We'll hike near remote communities and run into the women and children who live their lives in this isolated region, as they watch over their herds. We'll challenge our endurance by hiking over a spectacular pass to face snow-capped **Mt. Salkantay**, and finally descend along the edge of the Machu Picchu Sanctuary towards the **Sacred Valley of the Incas**. Marvel at the remains of ancient homes, walls, and Inca stairs and terraces, then towards the end of our trek we head out onto the most beautiful section of the Royal Inca trail, a stunning jungle trek that will bring us to the Gateway of the Sun. As you step through the old stone gateway, Machu Picchu will appear before your eyes – a truly spectacular vision!

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Physical - P3

This trip is physically tough. Frequent exercise is necessary to prepare properly for this expedition. Regular walking mixed with training at the gym to build up endurance and cardiovascular fitness is key. Expect to be able to do 8 hour days in hilly and often steep train, carrying a pack of 6-10kg in weight with the occasional extra long day.

Technical - T2

Consider this a trek, although there may be occasion to use hands for short sections of easy scrambling. No previous climbing or trekking experience is necessary.

Please note that the grading system used is a rough guide only.



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ITINERARY

DAY 1 : Depart UK

We will depart the UK, most likely from London Heathrow, for our flight to Cusco, Peru.

DAY 2 : Arrive Cusco

On arrival at the airport, we will be met and escorted to our hotel. After checking in, we'll be introduced to the city with the "Locals' guide to Cusco". This short walking tour is a great way to get our bearings and also helps start with getting acclimatised to the altitude. The city's beautiful historic centre was declared a World Heritage Site in 1983, with Inca and colonial architecture evident all around. Later in the day our guide will give us a full briefing for the adventure ahead.

(D)

DAY 3 : Cusco Outlying Ruins

This lovely day's excursion is a superb introduction into the Inca heritage of Peru.

First, we visit the impressive site of Sacsayhuaman, where huge stone ramparts surround a beautiful grass amphitheatre. Once the scene of fierce battles, it now hosts the recreation of traditional Inca ceremonies such as Inti Raymi and Warachikuy.

Next is the Inca water temple of Tambo Machay, sitting at 3,700m, and the Red Fort of Puca Pucara, followed by a picnic lunch nearby. From here, we have the option for an additional hike following an ancient Inca trail which will take us downhill to Cusco (or it's possible to join the vehicle transfer), stopping at the Temple of the Moon and other historical sites along the way.

(BLD)

DAY 4 : Hike Moray to Maras

Today takes us towards Chinchero Plain, before taking a dirt road to the incredible ruins of Moray. These rarely visited circular ruins are thought to have been agricultural experimental stations in the times of the Incas.

After visiting the ruins, we follow an ancient mule trail with spectacular views of the snow-capped Cordillera Vilcanota. We will also see examples of the finest Andean farming on our way. We head back across the plains to the interesting town of Maras for a picnic lunch.

In the afternoon we descend from Maras to the amazing Salinas, a series of salt pans that have been worked since Inca times. We explore this intriguing site then descend to the Urubamba River and our awaiting vehicle, which returns us to our hotel for the night.

Trekking: 11km / approx. 6 hours, including time to explore.

Max. altitude: 3,352m.

(BLD)

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ITINERARY

DAY 5 : Cusco to Soraypampa

Today will see us make an early start, leaving from our hotel for a 4-hour drive to Marcojasa. We start our hike from here, following the path along the aqueduct to Soraypampa with a picnic lunch en-route. This day's hiking is mostly uphill and, as we are approaching the heights, we'll observe how the ecosystem changes with the altitude, starting in a relatively warm, sheltered valley where crops of fruits and vegetables thrive, then onto higher plateaus where native potatoes are grown. Finally, as we reach our camp, we'll observe herds of sheep and camelids grazing the high meadows. Depending on our pace, we will arrive at our campsite at Soraypampa in the late afternoon, for some downtime, then dinner, before settling into our tents for the night.

Trekking distance: 6km (approx 5 hours)

Ascent: 320m / Descent: 0m / Altitude: 3,600m – 3,920m

(BLD)

DAY 6 : Soraypapma to Salktantaypampa (4,150m)

Today, we have the day to acclimatise. We ascend from our campsite in Soraypampa to one of the most beautiful lakes in the region, at the base of the Humantay glacier (4,200m). The views are incredible, and after taking in the scenery, we will descend back to our campsite for lunch, before a two hour trek to Salktantaypampa.

As the day warms up during our climb, we may see some Andean bird species, including endangered Andean Condors, as they soar majestically above the mountains.

The Salktantaypampa campsite is at just over 4,000 metres, and it can get chilly, so you'll appreciate your sleeping bags here!

Trekking distance: 4km (approx 5 hours)

Ascent: 510m / Descent: 280m / Altitude: 3,920m – 4,150m

(BLD)

DAY 7 : Salktantaypampa to Sisaypampa (3,750m)

After breakfast, we will depart on a long and relatively challenging ascent towards the Salkantay Incachiriaska Pass, at an altitude of 5,200 metres. The vistas as we walk are spectacular, with the looming hulk of the sacred mountain Nevado Salkantay dominating the glaciated valley through which we pass. Lunch will be taken just after the highpoint of the pass, before we make a slow descent to Sisaypampa, arriving mid-afternoon, for some rest time at the camp before dinner.

Trekking distance: 16km (approx 8-12 hours)

Ascent: 1,050m / Descent: 1,450m / Altitude: 4,150m – 5,200m – 3,750m

(BLD)

DAY 8 : Sisaypampa to Chamana (2,600m)

After breakfast, we will take our leave of the imposing Mt. Salkantay and continue our hike downhill through the centre of the Pampacahuana Valley, passing through a landscape dotted with small farm settlements, following an amazingly well-preserved Inca canal, down which flows the rio Kusichaca. We will visit the ruins at Ranrapata and walk through several more ancient archaeological sites before we join the "official" Inca Trail, passing Huayllabamba and then on to Chamana.

Chamana, located just near to the impressive Llactapata ruins, once an important rest stop for the Inca on the way to Machu Picchu, will also be the base for our camp and a well deserved rest for this evening.

Trekking distance: 17km (approx 8-12 hours)

Ascent: 0m / Descent: 1,150m / Altitude: 3,750m – 2,600m

(BLD)

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ITINERARY

DAY 9 : Llactapata to Pisacucho (2,550m)

At this point, we will be on the edge of the Machu Picchu Historic Sanctuary. This morning we will explore the ruins of Llactapata, with amazing Inca terraces and impressive landscaping, before we follow the original Inca trail to the famous bridge at Quoriwairachina, also known as km88. Here, we cross the raging rio Urubamba and follow another Inca trail back to the road head at Pisacucho (also known as km82).

From here it is a short drive to our hotel in Ollantaytambo, for hot showers and a real bed for the night, before we visit the magical citadel of Machu Picchu tomorrow!

Trekking distance: 6km (approx 5 hours)

Ascent: 50m / Descent: 100m / Altitude: 2,600m – 2,550m

(BLD)

DAY 10 : Royal Inca trail from km104 - Machu Picchu Ruins - Machu Picchu Town

You start the day with an early transfer to catch the train towards Machu Picchu. Jumping off at km104 you pass through the control point and begin your Inca Trail trek.

First, you visit the recently restored ruins of Chachabamba before gradually ascending through tropical cloud forest up toward the base of Wiñay Wayna. Here you climb more steeply on old Inca stairways through these beautiful terraces, stopping to explore the various buildings and water features.

Here we can enjoy our packed lunch, with a great view. You then continue on perhaps the loveliest part of the whole Inca Trail. Lush vegetation flanks you on either side, the scent of wild orchids fills the air, and all around you, brightly coloured tropical songbirds fill your ears with song.

Soon you will reach a final set of stairs to arrive at Inti Punku, the gateway of the Sun. As you step through the old stone gateway, Machu Picchu appears laid out before your eyes. After plenty of photos, you carry on past this wonder of the world to catch the bus down to the lively town of Machu Picchu Pueblo and a well-deserved hotel and shower.

Trekking distance: 11km

(BLD)

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ITINERARY

DAY 11 : Machu Picchu - Cusco

Today you explore the pinnacle of Inca engineering – Machu Picchu. For years it was lost to the jungle. Rediscovered in 1911 by the Yale professor Hiram Bingham, declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1983 and one of the New Seven Wonders of the World in 2007, Machu Picchu exceeds all expectations.

This astounding site lies in an even more astonishing location. Perched high on an inaccessible hilltop it is protected by huge cliffs and the raging Urubamba river. Things are slightly easier now than in the time of the Incas and so you start your day with a twenty minute bus ride up to the site.

Please discuss with your guide exactly what time you wish to arrive at Machu Picchu. We usually aim for an 8am entrance. This avoids the sunrise rush and ensures you have a good breakfast before the long day ahead.

Enjoy a fully guided tour of the residential, religious and agricultural sectors of the fabled "Lost City of the Incas – Machu Picchu".

In the afternoon, we board the train for an interesting ride along the Sacred Valley of the Incas. Here our waiting bus whisks us back to our hotel. The scenery is beautiful and the train jolts softly along, allowing you to sit, stare out the window and reflect on all you have seen.

(B)

DAY 12 : Depart Cusco

We will transfer back to the airport early in the morning for our international flight back to the UK

(B)

DAY 13 : Arrive back in UK

Our flight will arrive back into the UK in the early morning.

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KIT LIST

Bags & Packs

Kit bag

A 90-110L duffel bag or kit bag. A duffel bag is a strong, soft, weather resistant bag without wheels but with functional straps for carrying. Suitcases and wheeled bags are not suitable. This does have a weight limitation during the trek (please see the kit FAQs) to hold your overnight camping equipment. This bag will be carried by the mules, so do make sure it is waterproof!

Drybags

Nylon rolltop bags that keep fresh clothing and other important items like passports and iPods dry in the event of a total downpour that seeps into your kitbag. Good for quarantining old socks. Please note that many countries are now banning plastic bags. We would always advise buying sustainable and re-usable nylon rolltop bags for keeping your kit dry.

Daysack

Approx. 30L capacity. Your day to day pack that you carry with your daily essentials, fitted with shoulder straps and, importantly, a waist belt.

Waterproof rucksack cover

To protect rucksack from rain.

Padlocks x 2

For use on your kit bag for travel and on the expedition plus your hotel bag.

Sleeping Gear

4 Season sleeping bag

You should get a sleeping bag rated to -10C and choose a sleeping bag that functions within the comfort rating of this temperature. A silk sleeping bag liner will enhance this rating on the colder nights. (If you do wish to hire a sleeping bag, this can be rented in situ for the camping nights, for US $40 per person – though please do let the 360 office team know in advance!)

Sleeping bag liner

Silk is best for keeping the bag clean and you a little warmer. You can also opt for a thermal liner if you prefer to be extra cosy!

Headwear

Warm headgear

This can be a warm hat, beanie, balaclava, anything to reduce the heat loss from your head.

Wide brimmed hat

Keeps the sun off exposed areas like ears and the nape of the neck.

Buff/Scarf

Essential for protection from the sun and dust.

Sunglasses

Worth spending money on good UV filters. Julbo is our preferred supplier.

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KIT LIST

Sunblock

Buy the highest SPF you can find and lots of it.

Lip salve

Sun cream will not work on your lips and they are very susceptible to burn without proper protection.

Upper Body

Base layer x 2

This is the layer closest to the skin and its principal function is to draw (wick) moisture and sweat away from the skin. You can also get thermal base layers for use at higher altitudes that provide an additional insulative layer while still drawing sweat during times of high exertion.

Mid layer

These are typically lightweight microfleeces or similar technology that provide varying degrees of warmth and insulation without being overly bulky or heavy to pack.

Gilet (optional)

Optional – A great low volume additional layer to keep your core warm, whether down, primaloft or fleece.

Light insulated jacket

A lighter jacket such as a Primaloft or lightweight down which can be worn at lower to mid altitudes is a great addition to your kit offering greater flexibility with layering.

Soft Shell (optional)

Optional – These should be windproof (not all are) and insulative. They are mostly made of soft polyester and sometimes resemble a neoprene finish which makes them very mobile and comfortable to wear. While offering a degree of weather repellence, they are not waterproof.

Hard Shell

These jackets are thin, highly waterproof and windproof and worn over all other items of clothing. You'll find these made of Gore-Tex or other proprietary waterproof yet breathable technology. Inexpensive hard shells that aren't breathable will prevent evaporation, making you sweat intensely and are not recommended.

Down jacket

Generally made using feathers, these are the ultra-warm and insulated layer that are used when at camp or in extremely cold environments. Those with a windproof outer fabric will provide the best insulation. Ask advice in the shop (or from us) when buying the jacket and mention you want it rated to -10C and the assistant will recommend the correct fill for you.

Warm gloves

Consider a polartec pair for higher altitudes and evenings.

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KIT LIST

Lower Body

Trekking trousers

These tend to be polyester so they dry quickly after a shower and weigh little in your pack. Consider perhaps a pair with detachable lower legs as an alternative to shorts.

Softshell trousers

Windproof or thermal lined trekking trousers for higher altitudes and the summit phase. Thermal leggings can still be worn underneath if necessary.

Shorts

Waterproof trousers

Like the jacket, an essential piece of kit to stay dry and should also be Goretex.

Underwear

Merino or wicking material, not cotton. How many pairs you take is entirely up to you.

Feet

3-4 season walking boots

3 season walking boots that are well broken in with mid – high ankle support.

Trekking socks x 3

Start with lighter socks lower down, working up to thicker pairs for higher up as it gets colder. Some people like a clean pair every day, others are happy to change every other day – that's a personal choice.

Spare laces

Just in case

Comfortable trainers

Trainers for camp and town, saves stomping around in heavy boots for the entire day.

Gaiters (Optional)

Helps prevent dust and mud from entering your boots.

Hydration

Water bottles / bladder

2L capacity either in a combination of bladder and Nalgene bottle or just Nalgene bottles.

Water purification

Although generally all water is boiled some prefer to double up and add purification tabs as well. Always good to have in your bag.

Toiletries

Wash kit

Keep it simple on the mountain. Essentials are toothbrush, toothpaste and deodorant. Moisturiser is advisable, everything else is a luxury!

Travel towel

Travel towels from the likes of Lifesystems are perfect.

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KIT LIST

Wet wipes

These are great for washing when shower facilities become a thing of the past.

Alcohol gel

A must have for good camp hygiene

Ear plugs

For protection against the inevitable snorers!

Insect repellent

For early stages and once back down

Toilet paper

Provided on the mountain but a spare in your daysack may be useful if you need to hide behind a rock between camps

Nappy sacks or dog poo bags

Only needed to bag your toilet paper if you are caught short in between camps and for keeping your rubbish tidy in your tent

Medications

Personal first aid kit

The 360 med kits are designed to be used in emergencies and akin to an A&E rather than a pharmacy on Expeditions so please come prepared with useful meds for yourself such as painkillers (Ibuprofen if you can take it and a Paracetamol) plus blister plasters, plasters, antiseptic, rehydration sachets and any muscle rubs you wish to use. We would advise you keep your personal medication in your daysack.

Miscellaneous

Head torch

We recommend Petzl head torches. Bring spare batteries.

Trekking poles

These tend to be a personal preference but help with your stability and can dampen the pressure on the knees coming down hill. These can also be rented in situ, for US $40 per person for the hiking days – please do let the 360 office team know in advance if you would like to rent these.

Camera

Bring plenty of spare batteries and memory cards

Penknife (optional)

Snacks

You will be fed very well and given snacks each day however we advise bringing a small selection as a little bit of comfort. Extra snacks can be bought en-route if needed.

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KIT LIST

Entertainment

iPod, book, Kindle etc.

Documentation

Passport

Don't forget this! Your passport should have at least 6 months validity. With your passport expiry date at least six months after the final day of travel.

Copy of passport

Just in case

Passport photos x 4 x 4

We need these to obtain your climbing and trekking permits

Dental check up

We recommend you have a dental check-up before your trip. New fillings can be an issue at altitude if there is an air pocket left in the gap.

Money

We recommend you take around $350 with you in small denominations. This will allow for tip money plus any extras such as satellite phone calls and emergency funds. Small denominations are recommended as it may be difficult to obtain change and it will be easier to divide tip money.

Travel insurance

Copy of own travel insurance details and relevant contact numbers. We have a partnership with True Traveller and would recommend that you contact them when looking for travel insurance for your trip with 360. However, it is vital that you ensure that the insurance cover they offer is suitable for you, taking your personal circumstances (items to be insured, cancellation cover, medical history) into account. Many other insurance providers are available and we do recommend that you shop around to get the best cover for you on the expedition you are undertaking. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the appropriate insurance for your intended trip. To include medical evacuation and coverage up to the maximum altitude of this trip.

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FAQ'S

The Trek

Where can I take the classic Machu Picchu photo from?

We will stop for photos when we get 'that' view point and also when we trek across it.

How many hours will I hike a day?

We will be trekking between 6-7 hours a day most days. The itinerary gives further detail on the distances and approximate times.

Training

How can I best train / prepare for the hike?

Obviously, the best way to train for any expedition is to recreate the conditions of the climb as closely as possible. This is going to be difficult depending on where you are based geographically and we appreciate people have busy lives with work and family commitments.

Personal fitness is important for this trek, if you are struggling from day one then you will not enjoy the rest of the trip. Physical preparation does not have to be Herculean: concentrate on cardio-vascular exercise during the week by taking short runs when time allows and try to spend at least 2 weekends a month going on long walks (a decent six hours or 12 miles) carrying a rucksack of around 5kg in a reasonably hilly environment. Not sure what 5kg is? Put 5 one litre bottles of water into your bag!

This kind of regime will not only prepare your body for carrying minor loads but will harden your body against the big days on the trek itself. In addition, it will help break in your boots and get you used to your equipment.

We have included a training plan at the end of the trip brochure, and several excellent training plans can also be found online to prepare you for this ascent. We'd recommend the thorough advice offered by UpHill Athlete too.

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FAQ'S

How out of my comfort zone will I be?

On a day to day level remember that you will be camping at altitude. You are likely to be cold, washing and toilet facilities will be limited, your appetite may be affected by the altitude and as you get higher on the trek you are likely to suffer shortness of breath and many people experience difficulty sleeping.

Remember that everyone on the trek is likely to be experiencing exactly the same symptoms: physical and mental.

Accommodation

What are the hotels like?

You'll spend 6 nights during your itinerary in 3* hotels, which included a delicious breakfast. Rooms are allocated on a twin sharing bases so do let us know if you don't want to share (and also see the below FAQ).

What about the camping, how big are the tents and how does tent sharing work?

We use high quality 3 man tents to be shared between 2 people to provide extra space for your comfort.

Tent share is organised according to sex and, where possible, age groups. Obviously if trekking with a friend or partner then you will be able to share tents.

If you have joined the team by yourself then it is highly likely that you will be sharing a tent with your pre-assigned room buddy unless prior arrangements have been made.

Will the camp be freshly set up or will we be staying at existing camps at set sites on the way up?

Our local camp crew will set up the tents for you each night. We send them ahead of the group to secure the best site and to get the site prepared before you arrive. Bear in mind that these guys are also porters and when our walking days are shorter we might get to camp before them. If this occurs then have a cup of tea in the dining tent and wait for your tents to be ready.

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FAQ'S

Will the toileting facilities will be "au naturel", or pit latrines?

We bring along our own toilet tents with Portaloo units. This allows us to maintain the best possible levels of hygiene without contributing to the toilet and subsequent health problems that can happen at some camps.

If I want my own room/tent how much will this cost?

We can make the arrangements for you to sleep solo throughout this expedition, if that's what you'd prefer.

If you want a single room for your hotel nights only, it will cost £150. If you'd like a single tent throughout the trek it will cost £40, and if you want single sleeping arrangements throughout it will cost £190.

Food and Water

What is the food like?

Breakfast can vary from oatmeal to scramble eggs. While we trek, snacks will be provided containing fruit, dry fruits, and an energy bar. During lunch and dinner, you will always be provided with a starter (soup), main dish, and dessert.

The underlying aim is to provide balanced, nutritional meals packed with carbohydrates to refuel hungry bodies and to replenish stores for the next day of activity. On top of well balanced meals you are provided with coffee, tea and snacks upon arrival into camp.

When camping the morning wake-up call is usually accompanied with a cup of tea or coffee in your tent.

Do bring along any of your favourite snacks and goodie bags from home if you want. Concentrate on high energy food-stuff to give you that little boost on an arduous day.

I have food allergies; can these be catered for?

Absolutely, please inform the office of any allergies or intolerances and we will ensure that these are taken into account on the trek.

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FAQ'S

Can I have vegetarian meals, vegan or other special meals?

Absolutely, please inform the office of any allergies or intolerances and we will ensure that these are taken into account on the trek.

Where does the drinking water come from?

For the first day bottled drinking water will be used. At higher camps we will use locally sourced drinking water from streams or springs. These are usually fresh being topped up from melt water above or by rainfall. We boil the water and then use water filters or purification tablets to make sure that no bacteria remain on our treatment of water. We always ensure that our drinking water is 100% bug free.

How often is fresh water available for replenishing during the day?

Before leaving camp in the morning you will fill your water bottles or camel bladder. If this runs low you will have ample water to replace it with. For most walking days water can be replenished at the lunchtime site – we would rather you brought reusable bottles with you, to reduce plastic use in-country!

Health and Safety

What happens if there is a problem on the trek?

In the vast majority of cases of emergency rescue the problems can be attributed to altitude and if so, the solution is immediate descent to lower altitudes. Our local trekking crew are all experienced in dealing with problems that could arise. Our leaders are either doctors or qualified with the highest standard of wilderness first aid qualifications and can handle an emergency to the highest level of competency, in the vast majority of cases without national park assistance.

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FAQ'S

Am I likely to suffer from altitude sickness on this expedition?

There are different types of altitude sickness. Although our acclimatisation regime ensures that everybody enjoys the best possible chance of getting high on the mountain, altitude related problems can happen. The most common of these is acute mountain sickness (AMS).

Symptoms for this generally include headaches, nausea and vomiting.

In all this sounds quite dramatic but generally this is just the process your body naturally goes through to adjust to the higher altitudes and the reduced partial pressure of the atmosphere. For some people the acclimatisation process is a little longer and harder than others.

For our leaders this is all part and parcel of ascending high into the mountains.

We don't recommend using Diamox as a prophylactic and if you have been prescribed it by your GP, please raise this with your expedition leader.

What should I do if I start suffering from AMS?

There are some basic measures you can take to help yourself should you start suffering from AMS. As headache is the most common symptom of AMS try taking a simple painkiller such as paracetamol or ibuprofen to relieve the headache. If the headache disappears all well and good.

Please remember to inform your 360 Leader of any altitude symptom you may have and any medication you have taken as a result so they can keep an eye on you and advise accordingly.

Should someone develop severe AMS then the only cure is descent and as safety is our priority you will be taken down appropriately.

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FAQ'S

What can I do to help prevent AMS?

In most cases AMS can be avoided by the following: drink plenty of water, walk slowly, stay warm and eat well – and listen and talk to your guides.

We recommend that you familiarise yourself with the various effects that altitude can cause. During your pre-climb briefing, we will describe altitude sickness to you in detail, and advise you how to cope with it.

The most important thing is not to fear it, but to respect it and to know how to deal with it and more importantly tell your guides how you feel. Our guides have seen every condition that the mountain produces, and they will always know how to deal with problems.

Should I bring Diamox on the expedition with me?

Although we recommend you come armed with a course of Diamox or other high-altitude drug on this expedition, we do not recommend that take you these as a prophylactic during the trek or climb. We view Diamox as a treatment drug rather than a preventative medicine. Most adventure medics give similar advice, however we do appreciate this can be confusing, as many GPs (who aren't necessarily mountaineers) do suggest taking it as a prophylactic.

We pride ourselves on designing all our itineraries with acclimatisation very much front and centre and this expedition itinerary has been carefully designed to allow for your body to adjust to the altitude gradually, safely and comfortably.

However, if you find that you are still having problems adjusting to the altitude (see our FAQ on Altitude Sickness) then your expedition leader or expedition medic will recommend the correct course of action regarding taking Diamox.

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FAQ'S

Should I take Diamox?

It is far preferable to take Diamox if and when needed during the course of the expedition. If you are already taking it and then start having altitude related problems you are left with few options but to descend to a more comfortable altitude which sadly often means that the summit is not attainable.

Furthermore, Diamox is a diuretic, meaning you will have to drink a lot of fluid to prevent dehydration. Of course, the upshot of this is you'll have to pee more which means you'll probably be having to get up more in the night and take cover behind rocks during the day. Another quite common side-effect is that it can cause your extremities to "buzz and tingle" including your fingers, toes and lips which can feel quite unsettling. Other side-effects can include dizziness and light headedness with loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea. Although all these side-effects are manageable when you have symptoms of altitude sickness, we personally believe it is counter-intuitive to take it unless necessary.

Of course, it is totally up to you, this is just our recommendation and we're not doctors. If you do decide to take Diamox on the advice of your doctor then please do let your leader know in situ so they are aware of this. We also suggest you take the drug for a couple of days a few weeks before travelling so you can experience the symptoms before taking them during the trek.

Do I need to take malarial drugs?

The malaria protozoa generally does not survive over an altitude of 1,500m so malaria should pose no threat. We recommend that you visit your doctor or travel clinic before departure to get the latest advice.

Machu Picchu Trek

The Hidden Valleys of Salkantay | Peru | 5200m

FAQ'S

You advocate taking a small first aid kit, what should it contain?

We advocate a self-help principle on this expedition for minor medical problems. If you have a blister developing, for example, then please stop, take off your boot and treat it before it becomes a problem.

We would recommend your own first aid kit should contain:

Diamox, or other high-altitude drug, enough for the duration of expedition; a basic blister kit, plasters, antiseptic, high factor sun protection, your own personal medication (sometimes the mules might get to camp after you and if one is carrying your medication you may not be able to take it according to the regime you are used to), basic pain relief (paracetamol /aspirin/ibuprofen,) a personal course of antibiotics if prone to illness – two different types are preferable, as back up, anti-diarrhoea tablets if you do have a more sensitive stomach etc. Foot powder in your socks every morning is great for preventing blisters.

Generally, the best approach to take when packing your first aid kit is to include such basic medications as if you would on a family or personal holiday.

Having said that, your 360 expedition leader and/or a member of the local crew does carry a very comprehensive first aid kit which contains a wide range of supplies, and they are fully trained to use whatever is needed for any emergency that may arise.

What vaccinations do I need?

The following vaccinations are generally recommended:

- Hepatitis A
- Typhoid
- Diphtheria
- Tetanus
- Polio

However, this list is not absolute and it is important you see your GP or visit your nearest travel clinic for latest recommendations and to ensure you are up to date on necessary vaccinations.

Kit

What clothing should I wear on the trek?

Think about the time of year, and how high you are going. While you may swelter at the bottom of the mountains, it can get surprisingly nippy at altitude.

Both long sleeve tops and trekking trousers are recommended rather than shorts. Long sleeves and trousers are recommended as a deterrent to insects, scratches from bushes and to act as sun protection. Equally, if you wish to bring short sleeve tops or shorts, that's fine, just be careful. Keep an eye on sunburn. The prevailing conditions of the day will dictate what you feel like wearing. And the layering system never fails. If you're cold, put a layer on, if you're hot, take one off.

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FAQ'S

What is the best type of footwear to use?

Because of the huge variety of terrain encountered when ascending in these mountain environments, it is very important to wear the right footwear. Boots should be sturdy, waterproof, insulated against cold temperatures and offer adequate ankle support.

In addition, it is highly recommended that your boots are well worn in to prevent the formation of blisters. A wide range of suitable boots are on the market and further advice as to which brand names are available can be found online or at your local outdoor store. The leather / Goretex combinations are endless and each with their merits.

When in-store (we'd recommend Cotswold Outdoor – and we'll send you a 15% discount code when you book on!) try lots of boots on, use the ramps in the shops to test their traction, make sure they are comfortable as you will be almost living in them for days on end and they are very important. Once you've found a pair you like, you think they're comfortable, and will be for several hours a day, buy them. It is not necessary to buy technical boots with crampon clips as crampons are not used for climbing this mountain. But you may enjoy wearing lighter trekking shoes on more gentle days.

What size bag or rucksack should I take?

We would recommend a daysack of approximately 30 litres capacity to carry your personal belongings whilst trekking.

You will also need a light duffel bag or kit bag for your overnight camping gear, which will be carried by the mules.

What should I carry inside my daysack?

A daysack is worn at all times during the trek. The content should include: a fleece or down jacket (for if we take a break later in the day when it has cooled down, or the weather changes), lightweight waterproof jacket and trousers (primarily to act as wind protection), sufficient water for the day, snacks, camera equipment, personal medication, sunscreen, insect repellent, a warm hat and sun hat, sunglasses, and a head torch is always handy for any nights we get into camp a bit later.

On the km104 section of the trek, there is a 5kg weight limit on the train for your daysack (anything else can be left with your overnight bag), and you will also need to carry your passport, Covid-19 vaccination card and money – your guide will remind you in situ!

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FAQ'S

What should be in my overnight bag?

Your overnight camping gear should contain warm clothes for the evening, any spare trekking clothes you wish to take for the next day, your sleeping bag and liner, and your washbag/toiletries. Plus, anything else you wish to have for the evening in camp, books or games etc.

These bags will be transported to the campsite each night by mule, and the cargo limit is 20kg, split between two trekkers; so the maximum limit is 10kg per person. This should be packed in a soft duffel bag or kit bag so that can be easily tied on to the mules, and do remember this will need to be waterproof – whether that's the bag itself, or you put your kit in stuffsacks or plastic bin liners.

This bag will not be accessible during the day, apart from some lunchtimes when they generally overtake the group, so anything that you need for the day should be in your daysack.

Are there weight limitations on my luggage?

Your daysack has no weight limit, but remember you will be carrying, it, so don't overload it!

Your overnight camping gear will be transported to the campsite each night by mule. The mule's cargo limit is 20kg and this is split between two trekkers; **so the maximum limit is 10kg per person.** This should be packed in a soft bag that can be easily tied on to the mules – either a light duffel or kit bag. We would recommend either waterproof bags, or lining the bags/putting your gear into stuff sacks or plastic bin liners. You can leave additional luggage at the hotel in Cusco.

Is there an option to hire a porter if I have additional luggage?

Yes, if you would like a personal porter for the trekking days, this is possible – lease do let us know in advance. This will cost an additional US $150, plus any additional (and optional) gratuity you may wish to leave.

Is it possible to leave some of my luggage at the hotel prior to the trek?

Yes, any non-trekking equipment such as heavy suitcases, travelling clothes, evening wear for your return to Cusco etc can be left in the secure store at the hotel in Cusco – though please do note that this is left at your own risk, and we would not advise leaving valuables.

Machu Picchu Trek

The Hidden Valleys of Salkantay | Peru | 5200m

FAQ'S

Are down jackets necessary?

They are highly recommended, our guides wear them every evening. A layer system comprising of several layer of base layers, fleeces, jumpers and a jacket will suffice on most nights but nothing beats the efficiency of a good down jacket (especially when topped with a water proof layer).

How warm does my sleeping bag need to be?

It should be rated within the -10 C comfort zone. From the first camp upwards it is not unusual to experience frosty nights and a good night's sleep is important to giving you the best chance to complete this trek. Ensure you get a sleeping bag that has this temperature rating as its comfort zone, not extreme zone. Our guides take sleeping bags rated to well below -10C to ensure that they are warm at night. 3 season sleeping bags can be enhanced by using an inner silk sheet (or similar).

The idea is to be as comfortable and warm as possible for the night and henceforth to ensure plenty of sleep for the arduous days ahead. It is important to remember that down sleeping bags work by your own body heating the down that's inside the bag. Once you have warmed up the bag the down will retain the heat and ensure that you sleep at a temperature that's your own body temperature.

For best results it is best to wear as little as possible when inside your sleeping bag. Our guides will often only wear a set of thermals in their bag. It is important for the bag to trap the heat. By wearing multiple layers of clothing your clothing will trap this heat and your bag will not function properly.

(If you do wish to hire a sleeping bag, this can be rented in situ for the camping nights, for US $40 per person – though please do let the 360 office team know in advance!)

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FAQ'S

Is it possible to rent equipment before I go?

It is possible to rent kit in the UK. While we recommend the use of personal equipment whenever possible if you will be doing many more expeditions, the cost of equipping yourself can be a big deterrrent and hiring (or borrowing) is a worthwhile economy. Should you wish to rent any equipment, please take a look at Outdoor Hire and then the 360 kit lists under "Partners Kit Lists". Peru Salkantay is listed. Sleeping bag and trekking poles can be hired in situ for a small cost, though we do need to request these in advance, so do chat to the 360 office team if you wish to hire in Peru.

What clothing is suitable for when we come back from the mountain?

Shorts and T-shirts are fine to wear during the course of the day. Evening wear generally tends to be casual with long trousers and casual shirt being appropriate for all hotels and restaurants.

Peruvians are generally quite conservative in their dress code and are generally well dressed. Your town and party clothes can be left in a safe lock up at the hotel and will not have to be taken on the trek.

Guides

Who will be guiding this trek?

When you head out on this expedition you will be guided and looked after by our highly accredited local guides. They have a wealth of local knowledge and bring the trip alive with their passion for the region.

They speak the local dialect, Spanish, and are fluent in English. All our guides have the relevant qualifications to keep you safe in the mountains.

If the group size is 8 or more, we will generally add one of our guides from the UK.

Entry into Country

Do I need a visa for Peru?

UK citizens do not currently need to obtain a visa to visit Peru (although once you visit Machu Picchu you can receive a stamp in your passport if you wish) – do check out the visa requirements for your home country, or give the 360 office a call!

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FAQ'S

Travel

What happens if I need to leave the trip early?

If a trekker needs to leave early, arrangements can be made with the assistance of your 360 Leader. Additional costs (transport, hotels flights etc.) may be incurred by you but our guides will be able to assist in every detail of your departure.

What if I arrive early or depart late?

If you would like to arrive early before the trek or stay out for a few days then let us know and we can make arrangements for you.

When will you let me know my flight times?

360 will send you a flight schedule as soon as we have booked your flights. E-Tickets will be sent to you about six weeks before departure.

The Weather

What is the best time of the year to do this expedition?

In the dry season, from April to November.

How cold can it get?

During the day temperatures can be warm and can even reach the mid 20C's. In the evening higher up, it could drop to below freezing and have a distinct chill in the air. As you will be trekking in a mountain environment, the weather can change rapidly for the worse so you need to be prepared for all conditions. Even in good weather it is not uncommon to have short heavy downpours.

Insurance

Do I need special travel insurance for the trek?

You must carry individual travel insurance to take part in the expedition. We cannot take you on the mountain without proof of insurance.

Our team are insured through True Traveller, and we are part of their affiliate programme. Other recommendations can be found on our links page.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the appropriate insurance for your intended trip, to include (at a minimum) medical evacuation and coverage up to the maximum altitude of this trip.

Your insurance details are requested on the booking form; however this can be arranged at a later date if you wish, though we would always suggest having at least insurance to cover you for cancellation in place at the time of booking. 360 Expeditions will be requesting your insurance details 8 weeks before your departure if we have not received them prior to this.

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FAQ'S

Finance

When is the money due for this expedition?

Generally speaking, deposits (which are non-refundable) are due upon booking, particularly if we are handling your flight bookings. The full amount should be paid 4 months prior to departure. However, having said this, our aim is to get you into the mountains and we understand that personal financial situations can vary. Please contact our friendly office crew to discuss a suitable payment plan. We have, after all, been in your shoes and go by the motto of 'where there's a will there's a way'!

If you are doing this for charity, your chosen charity may have particular requirements that they will communicate to you.

What currency is used in Peru?

Peru uses the Peruvian Nuevo Sol ATMs are widespread in more urban areas for both US dollars and nuevo soles but don't always offer the most favourable rates. When receiving local currency, always ask for small bills (*billetes pequeñas*), as $100 bills are hard to change in small towns or for small purchases.

The best places to exchange money are normally *casas de cambio* (foreign exchange bureaus), which are fast, have longer hours, and often give slightly better rates than banks. Do not accept torn money as it will likely not be accepted by Peruvians. It is best not to change money on the street as counterfeits are a problem.

What is the carbon offsetting charge outlined in the exclusions?

We are proud to be enabling this expedition to be Carbon Positive – not only does our team offset the carbon emissions of the trek, including the internal flights, but we also work to make the trip carbon positive, by planting 22 trees per person. We pay this in country, so instead of adding this to your expedition cost, we ask that you bring US $44 ($22 for the carbon offsetting, and $22 for the tree planting), and this will be collected in situ.

What additional spending money will we need?

We have done our best to be inclusive with our costs and, aside from carbon offsetting (see the previous question!), and a couple of meals in Cusco (2 lunches and 2 dinners), the amount of money you will need depends on how many presents you wish to buy or how much you wish to drink when you come off the hill. As a basic rule of thumb, US $200-$300 should be more than adequate for any post expedition spending, but don't forget to add your tip money to this!

Peru is a relatively cheap place and when indulging in the local custom of haggling then goods can be very good value for money. Your 360 Leader will be happy to point out the relative bargains and the suitable prices, plus where to get the best value for money.

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FAQ'S

How much do we tip our local crew?

Our local crew work extremely hard to ensure that your expedition runs well. While tipping is not compulsory, it is very much ingrained in the Peruvian culture. Once someone sees the hard work the crew provides and realises the small amount of money they get paid relative to your own income, tipping will seem the least you can do to say thank you. As a guide, we suggest around £140 – £180 per trekker for the entire local crew to be shared amongst them.

Tipping the 360 Leader is entirely at your discretion, although it is their skill, effort and dedication that can make an expedition a success.

What is your cancellation policy? What is your refund policy?

Please read our terms and conditions carefully before you depart for details on this. 360 Expeditions highly recommends trip cancellation insurance for all expeditions as we must adhere to a stringent cancellation policy.

Electronics

Will I be able to charge my camera/phone battery on the trek?

Opportunities are limited, please bring battery packs with you to charge your phone and camera. We use PowerTraveller for our power packs and solar charges and would highly recommend them!

Is there mobile phone reception on the trek?

There will be no phone reception during the trek.

Is a travel adaptor necessary for the plug sockets in the hotel or are they like UK?

Electricity in Peru is 220V, alternating at 60 Hertz which is similar to the UK. However, you will need either a flat blade or a two round pin plug adaptor or both as Peru generally accepts these two types of plug. You can buy these adaptors quite easily in the UK or at the airport.

General

Will my valuables be safe?

While we will do everything we can to provide adequate safety for the group and security for your possessions, the general rule is that if you don't need it, don't bring it. This includes jewellery, necklaces, rings and even watches. Your passport and money should be kept on you at all times. As with travel in any foreign country, you need to look after yourself and your possessions, and this is no different.

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FAQ'S

Who will I be talking to before departure?

We're all here to answer any questions you may have, but you will mostly likely be talking to Marni about the trek, and Helen about any flight, invoice or financial queries. If you do have any queries, whether it's about medical concerns, you're unsure about certain things on the kit list, or you want to add a few days onto the expedition at the end to relax a bit, we encourage you to get in touch with us! The better informed you are, the more likely you are to take on your expedition with confidence, and thus reach your objective. We will also set up a WhatsApp group for your group prior to the expedition so you can meet your fellow trekkers!

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360 EXPEDITIONS

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TRAINING PROGRAM

To begin 6 months prior to the expedition where possible.

1. CVS: Cardiovascular exercise which is low impact such as swimming, cycling, cross trainer, rowing.

2. Weekend walk should be done over undulating terrain. Only a light rucksack needs to be carried.

3. For specific exercises it is worth doing static squats and heel raises on a regular basis to improve leg muscles prior to the trip. Static squats are especially useful to help protect the knees. Please remember that it is still important to have a well balanced workout using a variety of muscle groups.

4. It is worth winding down and resting in the week leading up to the trip, doing several light walks to keep things going.

5. When walking going at a pace of a brisk walk with a light sweat and enough to feel breathless is recommended

6. During the program, rather than step up suddenly each month (example, going for 3 one hour walks each week during the weekdays in April to 3 one and half hour walks suddenly in May) it is better to build up gradually each week so there isn't a large transition (example, going for 3 one hour walks during week 1 in April, going for 3 one hour and ten minute walks during week 2 in April, going for 3 one hour and fifteen minute walks during week 3 in April, going for 3 one hour and twenty minute walks during week 4 in April)

6. It is important you seek medical advice prior to starting any training program, especially if you are not used to regular physical exertion

All the best with your training!

MONTH 1

OPT 1	OPT 2
2 x 30 mins weekday walk 1 x 1 hour weekend walk 1 x 10 mins CVS	1 x 30 mins weekday walk 2 x 1 hour weekend walk 1 x 10 mins CVS

MONTH 2

OPT 1	OPT 2
2 x 45 mins weekday walk 1 x 2 hours weekend walk 2 x 10 mins CVS	1 x 45 mins weekday walk 2 x 2 hours weekend walk 2 x 10 mins CVS

MONTH 3

OPT 1	OPT 2
2 x 45 mins weekday walk 1 x 2 hours weekend walk 2 x 10 mins CVS	1 x 45 mins weekday walk 2 x 2 hours weekend walk 2 x 10 mins CVS

MONTH 4

OPT 1	OPT 2
3 x 1 hour weekday walk 1 x 4 hours weekend walk 3 x 15 mins CVS	2 x 1 hour weekday walk 2 x 4 hours weekend walk 3 x 15 mins CVS

MONTH 5

OPT 1	OPT 2
3 x 1.5 hours weekday walk 1 x 5 hours weekend walk 3 x 20 - 25 mins CVS	2 x 1.5 hours weekday walk 2 x 5 hours weekend walk 3 x 20 - 25 mins CVS

MONTH 6

OPT 1	OPT 2
3 x 2 hours weekday walk 1 x 6 hours weekend walk 3 x 30 mins CVS	2 x 3 hours weekday walk 2 x 6 hours weekend walk 3 x 30 mins CVS

360 EXPEDITIONS



"Life should not be a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in a pretty & well preserved body, but rather to skid in broadside in a cloud of smoke, thoroughly used up, totally worn out & loudly proclaiming 'Wow! What a Ride!' "

Dream it. Plan it. Live it.

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