5-DAY ADVENTURE

INCA TRAIL – LITE

Peru

Please note that permit availability in 2026 is already extremely limited. Please contact us before making your booking.

With over 12 years of experience providing memorable experiences on the ancient Incan trails, you are in safe hands with our experienced Peruvian team. Lead by our knowledgeable manager, Jose, our local staff are our priority and we ensure their welfare needs are aptly met, meaning they can focus their skills on making your trip a fantastic experience. When you trek with Kandoo Adventures, you may also rest in the knowledge that your trip is fully carbon offset as standard.

The most well-known of all the trekking routes to Machu Picchu, the Inca Trail is the original pilgrimage route to this most sacred temple and is by far the most popular route. The trip begins in Cuzco, the ancient capital of the Incan empire. As well as having the opportunity to soak up the local culture, we recommend spending a couple of days here to help your body to acclimatise before you begin the trek itself.

Access to the Inca Trail is restricted by permits to 500 people per day, which includes all the guides and porters. All permits go on sale in October and dates in the high season sell out on the first day. The earlier you can book your trek, the better chance we have of securing your permit.

On a Kandoo Lite adventure, you get the same great guides and service but we exclude extras such as private airport transfers, hotels in Cuzco, city tours etc. If you are looking for high quality operator but would like to save a little money by making some arrangements yourself, this is a great choice.

TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

- Trek through the Andes up to 4200m
- Arrive at the Sun Gate at sunrise

- High guide to client ratio
- Trip fully carbon offset as standard

Machu Picchu
Aguas Calientes
Sun Gate
Winay Huayna
Choquicocha
Runkuracay Pass
Dead Woman's Pass
Ayapata
KM 82
KANDOO ADVENTURES
Trek
Transfer

ITINERARY

DAY 1

PRE-TREK BRIEFING IN CUZCO

This evening you will meet your local Kandoo representative and have a full pre-trek briefing, at the Kandoo group hotel, to ensure you are prepared for the trek. You will need to arrange your own hotel accommodation in Cuzco for this night.

DAY 2

CUZCO TO KM 82 TO AYAPATA

We will meet at the group hotel at 4:45am, ready to leave Cuzco at 5:00 am by a private bus heading to the Sacred Valley of the Incas. We will make a short break in the beautiful town of Ollantaytambo for breakfast. The official beginning of the Inca Trail is called Km 82. Here we will meet our crew and register for our trek.

After crossing the Rio Urubamba we start the legendary Inca Trail. The first day of the trail is relatively easy and a good warm up for the following days. On the way we will pass a beautiful archaeological site called Llactapata before we reach Tarayoc. After that, we will continue our hike to Ayapata (3300m), the camping site where we will spend the night, passing Wayllabamba on route.

Hiking time: **6 - 7 hours**
Ascent: **580 m**
Descent: **400 m**
Max. altitude: **3400 m**
Accomodation: **Camping**
Meals included:
Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 3

AYAPATA TO CHOQUICOCHA

Leaving early in the morning, our trail first leads through the Valley of Llulluchapampa (3750m). The first 4 km trekking are steep and take approximately 2 hours. From Llulluchapampa, the path continues less steeply for another 2 hours until we reach the Warmihuañusca Pass (Dead Woman Pass), the first of three passes on the Inca Trail and the highest point of our trek at 4200m. This climb is the most difficult part of the Inca Trail. After a short break at the summit, we continue our hike down with a long and steep descent to the Pacamayo River where we will have lunch overlooking the cloud forest. After a well deserved break and feeling re-energised, we climb up to the oval-shaped ruin of Runkurakay, which is believed to have once been an Inca tambo or post house. From here we continue to ascend to the summit of our second pass, Runkurakay Pass at 3900m. From here you will be rewarded with spectacular views of the entire snow-capped Vilcabamba range, before another steep descent down to our campsite for the night.

Hiking time: **8 - 9 hours**
Ascent: **1620 m**
Descent: **1020 m**
Max. altitude: **4200 m**
Accomodation: **Camping**
Meals included:
Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 4

CHOQUICOCHA TO WINAY WAYNA

This morning we will climb up to our third pass, to Phuyupatamarka, an Inca ruin named "The Town in the Clouds" from where there are great views of the Urubamba river far below. From Phuyupatamarka, we continue to descend into a beautiful orchid-filled cloud forest, visiting the site of Intipata (Terraces of the Sun), before reaching our campsite at Wiñay Huayna. Arriving here by early afternoon we have plenty of time to explore the nearby ruins and have a lesson in cooking Lomo Saltado, a Peruvian specialty.

Hiking time: **8 - 9 hours**
Ascent: **80 m**
Descent: **1000 m**
Max. altitude: **3680 m**
Accomodation: **Camping**
Meals included:
Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 5

WINAY WAYNA TO MACHU PICCHU. TRANSFER TO CUZCO

An early start is required today, and we will have breakfast around 4:30 am so that we are ready to hit the trail. We say goodbye to our porters and set off on the final section of the Inca Trail to the famous Inti Punku (The Sun Gate) which will take around 2-3 hours. Weather permitting, from here you will enjoy your first views of Machu Picchu, the Lost City of the Incas. You will be given a guided tour of the site which will last for around 2½ to 3 hours. There is also an option to climb Huayna Picchu, the famous mountain behind the ruins, but you will need to book a permit in advance. In the afternoon, we will catch the train from Agua Calientes to Ollantaytambo, where you will be met by our driver who will transfer you to Cuzco.

Meals included: **Breakfast**

PLEASE NOTE

Please note that due to restricted availability at campsites, your itinerary may be different to the one shown. The start and end points will still be the same, however some campsites and distances may change. Please speak to a member of the team if you would like more information. It is in the nature of a trip of this kind that arrangements and participants have to be flexible. While we use all reasonable endeavours to ensure a trip runs according to your itinerary, the day-to-day agenda and ultimate goal of the trip are taken as aims and not as contractual obligations. It is a necessary condition of your joining any of our trips that you accept this flexibility. Occasionally, we may have to make changes and we reserve the right to do so at any time.

TRIP INFORMATION

DIFFICULTY

If you are used to **multi-day hiking** with ascents and descents each day then the Inca trail is well within your ability. You need to bear in mind that even though the paths are generally good there are a huge number of steps to tackle. And you will be **trekking at altitude** which in itself is a challenge.

Most Inca Trail treks begin at Cusco, which, at 3,400 metres, is already considerably higher than Machu Picchu. By staying there prior to your trek, you will give your body time to acclimatize to the Inca Trail altitude. The Inca Trail altitude varies greatly throughout the trek and your body will notice the differences, especially at the higher points.

The second day is the toughest on the Inca Trail as it is spent hiking up and over Dead Woman's Pass and Runkuracay pass at 4,200 metres. Your body will almost certainly feel the effects of the altitude here as the air is providing less oxygen than your body is used to. You do not spend long at this altitude and the rest of the day is spent descending down to 3,600 metres where you camp at Choquicocha.

FOOD & DRINK

Staying well-fed on your trek is absolutely vital, especially when conditions are such that you might not want to eat or drink as much as you should.

Because so many trekkers experience a loss of appetite at altitude, our head chef has developed special menu plans that are appealing, healthy, and filled with all the energy you need to make it to Machu Picchu. By default, our meals include fresh fruit and vegetables every day, as well as fresh meat and fish.

BREAKFAST

Breakfast is usually fairly hearty. Of course, you'll also have hot drinks, generally a choice of tea, coffee or hot chocolate. Let your guide know if you are still hungry, or even if you think you could 'pack in a few more bites'. Our cooks always try to provide more food than necessary to ensure everyone gets a good meal.

LUNCH

We stop for a hot lunch, freshly prepared by our cook.

AFTERNOON TEA

Afternoon Tea is served at the end of the days walking, once you get to camp. In addition to tea and other hot drinks, there are plenty of snacks to help restore some of the energy you've just burned off.

DINNER

Dinners are quite filling. They usually begin with a nice hearty soup, and then a main course with fresh vegetables, and plenty of rice, pasta or potatoes, followed by a yummy dessert.

DRINKING WATER

On the trek, we filter and boil all the water that we give to you for drinking. You may wish to bring purification tablets as an extra precaution but they are not essential. Every morning we will fill up your water bottles or hydration bladder with at least 2 litres of water.

COCA TEA

Coca tea is thought to help relieve the symptoms of altitude sickness. In Cuzco, all the hotels have dried leaves and hot water available throughout the day so you can make your own tea whenever you wish. On the trek we will take coca leaf tea bags for you.

ACCOMMODATION

We use only the very best **high altitude mountain tents**, Eureka K-2 XT, to ensure you stay warm, dry and comfortable on your Inca Trail trek. Please bear in mind, these are proper mountain tents, designed to cope with extreme conditions so don't expect to be able to stand up and walk around inside!

Your meals will be taken in a separate mess tent where you will be able to sit comfortably, while you relax and chat to your team mates and enjoy the wholesome food that our cook has freshly prepared for you. Inside, you'll be pleased to find a table (of course) and a proper, comfortable chair. With a full 2 metres of headroom, even the tallest climbers will be able to stretch a bit, and move about without hunching over. They are fully waterproof, and regularly withstand the worst weather the Andes has to offer.

The hotels in Peru all have western, flushing toilets. Whilst on the trek the toilet situation will be a little less luxurious. At camp each evening we will set up a **toilet tent**. This is a simple facility that provides a little privacy and comfort whilst on the trail. The toilet tent will contain a sit down toilet with a bag to collect waste. Whilst trekking, if you need to go you will have to find somewhere hidden, off the path and go wild. There's plenty of places to hide in the Peruvian forests!

TRANSPORT

We insist on using a **high standard of vehicle** and driver for all of our transfers. In Peru it is not a legal requirement to have seatbelts fitted in the back of vehicles, and while we try to use vehicles that do have rear seatbelts fitted, this cannot always be guaranteed. If you are unhappy about any aspect of the vehicle or the standard of driving, please speak to the driver or our local office immediately.

LUGGAGE

Bag Weight: 7kg

Kandoo Adventures operates a **strict limit of 7kg** for your main equipment bag. This limit includes your sleeping bag, even if it is rented from us. This is more than sufficient for your needs on the trek. Your bag will be weighed before you leave the hotel to start the trek and if it is overweight you will have to take items out and leave them at the hotel.

It is much easier for our porters if you bring a lightweight holdall or duffle bag for them to carry, and not a large rucksack. You can hire one from us if required.

HOW DO I GET THERE?

On this trip you will meet at the group hotel for a pre-trek briefing on Day 1, then again on Day 2 ready for departure on your trek.

There several good ways to get to Cuzco from the UK. The first is to fly KLM to Lima with a stopover in Amsterdam. The second is to fly with Air France who offer flights to Lima via Pairs, or alternatively you can use Iberia who fly to Lima via Madrid. From Lima you will have to get a domestic flight to Cuzco. Domestic airlines include LATAM, Avianca, Star Peru or Peruvian Air. We recommend flying with LATAM as their planes have the capability to land in the foggy conditions that can affect Cuzco and Lima. Most flights from Europe land in the evening, local time. Most flights for Cuzco don't leave until the morning, so if you don't fancy loitering in the airport all night (which we do not recommend), you'll need an overnight stay in Lima.

Trekkers starting off in North America have a much wider set of options. American Airlines and US Airways both offer flights into Lima, as do several other carriers. In addition to existing security measures at international airports, passengers MAY be required to show that the electronic devices in their hand luggage are charged up. You may therefore be asked to turn on any electronic devices such as mobile phones, tablets, e-books and laptops in front of the security team and/or demonstrate the item's functionality. We recommend that any electronic devices that you are carrying in your hand luggage are fully charged before you travel. If you have any further questions then you should check with your departure airport.

If you are changing airlines or re-checking your luggage at an airport on route, please ensure you leave a minimum of 3 hours between flights. This will account for any delays on arrival, travel time across airports (this can take longer than you think) and time taken to re-check baggage.

Travelling Responsibly

Here at Kandoo, we like to support our guests to make their travel more sustainable. As of 2025, we are offsetting the carbon on all of our trips in destination. As we don't include flight travel in our trips these aren't included in our offsetting calculations, so we are providing you with the calculator below for you to do this yourselves.

eC02 Flights Calculator

BUDGET & CHANGE

The **Peruvian Sol** can be purchased in advance, although US Dollars are also widely accepted in larger establishments. If you want to change money when you arrive we can take you to an ATM or foreign exchange bureau. When changing money, request small denominations (10's, 20's and 50's) as the larger notes can be hard to spend. If you withdraw money from an ATM, you are likely to receive 100 sol notes. Peru is generally still a cash society, particularly whilst you are travelling through the smaller villages and towns it is worth having enough cash with you for personal expenses. ATMs will also not be available in these areas so ensure you have exchanged enough money whilst in Cuzco, before leaving on your trek. If you are relying on a credit or debit card for emergency funds, make sure you tell your card issuer that you will be using it abroad, or you may find that it won't work when you really need it.

In Cuzco, the cost of public transport is around 22p (33 cents) for a one-way ticket. If you prefer to travel by taxi, starting price is about £1.10 (US$1.40) for a 1km ride. When eating out, a meal in a budget restaurant for 2 people is around £5 (US$7) or a mid range restaurant (for 2 people) will cost around £22 (US$28). For souvenirs to take home, we recommend budgeting around £40 (US$50) which should get you plenty of little gifts. If you wish to buy a big blanket or poncho then budgeting a little more would be worthwhile.

Our recommended guidance for spending budget in Peru would be between £80-100 ($100-125) on top of your tips, to give you ample souvenir and meals out spending money.

TIPS

We realize that tipping may not be a common practice in all countries but for Peru it is a standard practice that all operators support. The decision on how much to tip should be determined by how well the team served you while you were on the trek. Tips are always discretionary and if you are not happy with the service you have received you do not have to pay tips. Tips can be made in US dollars or Peruvian Sols. It is very important that US bills be new (less than 10 years old), crisp and untorn.

We say goodbye to our porters in Winay Wayna before we visit Machu Picchu. Any tips that you wish to give to the porters will need to be carried on the trek with you.

You will be sent a tip recommendation 3 weeks prior to your trip departure which will give you specific tipping amounts based on the number of people in your group. This is usually around $100 per trekker.

FORMALITIES & HEALTH

PASSPORT

Please double check that your passport is valid for 6 months beyond the date of arrival in Peru. We recommend that you take a photocopy of your passport and keep it separate from the original, and this will be useful if the original is lost while you are travelling.

VISA

Most visitors (including nationals from the UK, Europe, USA and Australia) do not require a visa to enter Peru, and will be granted a 183 day stay. You will need at least two blank visa pages in your passport. Certain nationalities not mentioned above must apply for a visa in advance, so check with your local Peruvian Embassy.

Chinese and Indian nationals may enter Peru without a visa if they have a UK, Canada, Australia, Schengen or US visa valid for a minimum of 6 months at the time of entry to Peru.

VACCINATIONS

The standard vaccinations required for Peru are diphtheria, tetanus, typhoid and hepatitis A, but you should always consult your doctor or travel clinic for the most up to date advice. Yellow Fever is recommended for some areas of Peru, which includes the Amazon basin.

INSURANCE

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are fully and adequately insured for the duration of your trip. Please ensure that all activities, excursions and destinations in your itinerary are included in your travel insurance policy, in addition to your regular cover for cancellation and medical expenses. Most of our treks in Peru do not exceed 4700m with the exception of the Ausangate Trek which will reach 5200m. If you are only doing the Short Inca trail your trek will not exceed 3500m. Please ensure that your insurance policy covers you for trekking at these altitudes.

We ask that you keep a copy of your policy summary (containing policy number and the emergency contact number for your insurer) in your day sack at all times, so that we can access this information should we need to contact the insurer on your behalf.

HEALTH

Altitude Sickness

Altitude sickness, called soroche in Peru and also known as Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS) or hypobaropathy, is an illness caused by exposure to low air pressure, especially low partial pressure of oxygen, which many climbers experience at high altitudes. AMS is caused by exerting yourself at high altitudes, especially if you have not been properly acclimatised. It is most common at altitudes above 2400 metres. Our routes have been designed to aid your acclimatisation wherever possible, but the following will also help your body adjust:

Slow and steady. You need to keep your respiration rate low enough to maintain a normal conversation. If you are panting or breathing hard, you must slow down. There is no pressure on you to keep up with other members of your group.

Drink much more water than you think you need. Proper hydration helps acclimatisation dramatically. You need to drink at least three litres each day.

Diamox

There has been a lot of research on Diamox that shows that it has been reasonably well proven to be helpful in avoiding AMS by speeding up the acclimatisation process. In the UK it is a prescription drug which must be prescribed by a doctor, but some doctors are reluctant to prescribe it. The concern is that by taking Diamox, people believe that they are immune from AMS and can ignore the symptoms. In reality, although Diamox can help prevent the symptoms, should symptoms still develop it means that you are not acclimatising and you have to take notice. Diamox is taken before you start treking to prevent altitude sickness, not once you are on the mountain and symptoms have developed.

Malaria

There is no risk of malaria in Cuzco or on the Inca Trail due to the altitude. However, there is a risk of malaria in rural areas of Peru below 2,000m. This would include Tambopata National Park, so if you are planning an extension to the Amazon Rainforest, you need to plan anti-malarial medication for this part of your trip. In addition to taking medication, we would recommend you take every precaution to prevent mosquito bites by wearing long-sleeved trousers and shirts at dusk and dawn when the mosquitos are active, and by using a DEET based mosquito repellent. If you are planning on taking Diamox, please let your doctor know, as daily malaria tablets taken alongside Diamox can cause an upset stomach and nausea. A weekly malaria tablet may be a better option, but you would need to discuss this with your doctor.

Dehydration

You can easily become dehydrated at high altitudes. The lower air pressure forces you to breathe more quickly and deeply, and you lose a lot of water through your lungs. You will also be exerting yourself, and sweating, and may even suffer from diarrhoea. As a result, you will have to drink much more water than you normally would and you should drink at least 3 litres of fluids every day while climbing. Even when you do not feel thirsty you have to drink this amount as a minimum preferably more. Stay on the look-out for signs of dehydration in yourself and your fellow climbers. The most common symptoms include thirst, dry lips, nose or mouth, headache and feeling fatigued or lethargic.

EQUIPMENT & CLOTHING

EQUIPMENT SUPPLIED BY KANDOO ADVENTURES

High quality mess and sleeping tents with a comfortable insulated sleeping mat.

RENTAL GEAR

If you've decided to rent gear, then below is a list of equipment available. Just let our team know what you'd like to hire at your Pre-Trek Briefing.
All payments are made locally in US Dollars (cash only):

- North Face 0° Sleeping Bags $15 per trek
- Trekking Poles $10 per trek
- Duffle Bag $5 per trek

All items must be packed in your main equipment bag.
They should not be attached to the outside, as we are not responsible if items fall off when the bags are being carried on the trek. The sleeping bags weigh approximately 2kg each

CLOTHING TO BRING

HEADGEAR

- Warm beanie style hat – knitted or fleece
- Neck gaiter or scarf - comes in useful for keeping dust out and can double as a warm layer for your neck / face!
- Sun hat – preferably wide-brimmed for protection
- Sunglasses – high UV protection
- Headlamp (plus extra batteries)

UPPER BODY

- Thermal or fleece base layer (x1)
- Long sleeve shirt/tshirt – light or medium weight, moisture wicking (x 1)
- Short sleeved shirt/tshirt – lightweight, moisture wicking (x2)
- Fleece or soft shell jacket (x1)
- Insulated jacket – down or primaloft
- Lightweight water/windproof hard shell outer jacket
- Poncho – a cheap plastic poncho is the best way to cope with a sudden downpour
- Gloves – lightweight, fleece or quick drying fabric

LEGS

- Trekking shorts (x1)
- Trekking trousers – light or medium weight (x1) – convertible trousers work well
- Waterproof hard shell trousers – ski pants work fine

FEET

- Trekking boots – mid weight with good ankle support
- Training shoe or similar – to wear around camp
- Mid-weight trekking socks (x3 pairs)
- Breathable, high-wicking liner socks (x2 pairs)

EQUIPMENT TO BRING

- Small Rucksack or Daypack (25-30 litres) to carry water and personal items
- Lightweight duffle bag (approx 50 litres) – max weight when full should be 7kg. This weight restriction includes your sleeping bag, whether you brought one with you or rented one from us. Your duffle will be carried by a porter
- Sleeping bag (3 season or 0 Deg C) and compression sack
- Trekking poles with rubber tips
- Water bottle or hydration bag – must be able to carry 1.5-2L of water

OTHER ACCESSORIES

- Sunscreen high SPF
- Toiletries, **including toilet paper**, wet wipes and hand sanitiser – please carry all rubbish back off the trek
- Camera and spare batteries
- Personal medication and first aid kit
- Insect repellent – ideally contains DEET
- Personal snacks and energy bars – dried fruit and nuts are also a good source of energy
- Isotonic drink powder / energy drink powder to mix in with your water. This improves flavour and helps replace electrolytes
- Microfibre towel for wiping hands and face each day
- Ear plugs, if you are a light sleeper
- Pee bottle, if you prefer not leaving the tent at night
- Dry bag (only required if your main duffle bag is not waterproof)

HOW TO BOOK THIS TRIP

1 CHOOSE YOUR DATE AND CHECK AVAILABILITY

A full list of available dates can be found on our website.

2 CONTACT US

Contact us by phone, email or through our website. We will answer any questions you may have and send you a personalized itinerary and quote.

3 COMPLETE BOOKING AND PAYMENT

When you are ready to book, we will send you a link to our online booking forms and participation agreements. We accept all major credit and debit cards and require a low 20% deposit to secure your place.