

5-DAY ADVENTURE

COLCA CANYON EXTENSION

Peru

Colca Canyon is truly immense: twice as deep as the USA's Grand Canyon and the river at its bottom is a staggering 4160 metres beneath the rim. Unlike the Grand Canyon though the area is remarkably fertile and you can see the local people farming here on the pre-Inca stepped terraces.

And of course Colca is really famous for the rare Andean Condors which can be seen at close range as they fly past the canyon walls at 'Cruz del Condor'. Condors have been known to live to 50 years old and can weigh up to 12kg with a wingspan often in excess of 3 metres. Soaring above and below you in the canyon they really are stunning.

All trips to Colca Canyon start from the beautiful colonial city of Arequipa located at an elevation of 2380m at the foot of the now dormant Misti Volcano. While it is possible to drive to Arequipa the journey from Lima is over 17 hours so we would recommend that you fly in from Lima and then after visiting the Canyon catch a second flight to Cuzco.

Arequipa town is largely built of white volcanic stone, so it is nicknamed the White City. Adding in a walking tour of Arequipa, a visit to Colca Canyon or a trek into the canyon is a great way to acclimatise before you begin your trek to Machu Picchu.

TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

- Visit Colca Canyon and see its condors at close range
- Enjoy a trek into the immense canyon
- See the local farmers on pre-Inca stepped terraces


Llahua
Paclla
KANDOO
ADVENTURES
Sangalle
Trek
Transfer
Cabanaconde
To Arequipa

ITINERARY

DAY 1

ARRIVE IN AREQUIPA

Our representative will meet you at the airport for the transfer to your hotel. A free day to spend in Arequipa and to rest following your journey. Guided tours can be arranged if required.

Transport: **Private transfer**
Accommodation: **Hotel**

DAY 2

AREQUIPA TO CABANACONDE TO LLAHUAR

We will collect you from your hotel around 3am to begin the drive to Chivay, the main town of the Colca valley, which takes approximately 4 hours. As we drive we will reach 4900m, from where there are great views of all the volcanoes in the area – Misti, Chachani and Ampato – as well as the mountains of Sabancaya, Halka Halka and Chucura. We will stop in Chivay for breakfast before continuing to Cruz del Condor, which will take a further 2 hours driving. There will be opportunities to stop and take photographs of the villages across the canyon before we finally arrive at the Cruz del Condor viewpoint. From here you can truly appreciate the Colca Canyon and the condors circling above. A final short drive from here will take us to the village of Cabanaconde where we will have lunch before beginning our trek.

The descent into the canyon takes around 4 hours, visiting the Achachiwa lookout point. The trek down to the Colca River has magnificent views of the villages and traditional farming terraces. We will take a break at the bottom of the canyon, where we can watch the small geyser that is located opposite the river. We cross the river on a suspension bridge before trekking for a further hour to our lodge at Llahuar. Here we can enjoy the hot springs, or explore the surrounding area. There is an opportunity to try fishing for trout in the Colca River.

Transport: **Private transfer**
Hiking time: **4 hours**
Accommodation: **Lodge**
Meals included:
Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 3

LLAHUAR TO SANGALLE

After breakfast we trek for around 4 hours along the right bank of the Colca River. We trek up through the little village of Paclla which is thought to have a mysterious character because of its abandoned witches' houses. We will also see the most impressive view of the canyon from the Apacheta lookout point. From the viewpoint we descend once again to the Colca River to reach Sangalle (the Oasis). The afternoon is free to relax in the volcanic water swimming pool, or to explore the abandoned mines and waterfalls of the surrounding area.

Hiking time: **4 - 5 hours**
Accommodation: **Lodge**
Meals included:
Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 4

SANGALLE TO CABANCONDE TO AREQUIPA

Another early start, as we set off around 5am to begin the ascent of the canyon, back to Cabanaconde. From here we transfer back to Chivay for lunch, visiting villages such as Pinchollo and Maca along the way. In Chivay we will visit Calera hot springs – thermal baths of medicinal waters with a constant temperature of 35-40°C. We will have lunch in Chivay before heading back to Arequipa, with stops on the way in the National Reservation of Salinas and Aguada Blanca. We arrive back in Arequipa around 6pm and will drop you back at your hotel.

Transport: **Private transfer**
Hiking time: **3 - 4 hours**
Accommodation: **Hotel**
Meals included: **Breakfast**

DAY 5

TRANSFER TO AREQUIPA AIRPORT

We will collect you from your hotel and transfer you to the airport for your departing flight.

Transport: **Private transfer**
Meals included: **Breakfast**

PLEASE NOTE

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

Although not considered to be very strenuous, the Colca Canyon trek **can be demanding at times**. You will be required to trek down into the canyon which is a gruelling 4 hour, 1000m descent that can be very tough on the knees! Climbing back out of the canyon in the early hours of the morning, you can watch the sunrise over the mountains as you slowly plod your way up the zig zag path to complete the 1000m ascent. As this trek is unsupported, you will need to carry all of your own equipment and belongings so packing light is essential. You should have a good level of fitness and determination to complete the trek.

FOOD & DRINK

The lodges on the trek are booked on a **full board basis**. On the first day you will stop for a packed breakfast on your way to the trek start point. On the last day, you will have a very early start and will have breakfast once you reach the canyon rim at Cabanaconde. You will then have lunch at a restaurant in Chivay as you drive back to Arequipa.

Each day starts with a breakfast of fruit juice, cereal, pancakes and tea or coffee and a picnic lunch will be provided. The lodges may not be able to provide a choice of evening meal and you should expect fairly basic food. Soup starters, pasta dishes and milk based deserts are commonly prepared.

Drinking water is not included on this trek. You should bring 2 litres of water with you from Arequipa for the first day. Additional water can be purchased at the lodges.

Your hotel in Arequipa before and after the trek is booked on a **B&B basis**.

ACCOMMODATION

The lodge accommodation in Llahuar is **very basic**. Simple, unadorned rooms with single beds and shared bathroom facilities. Cold showers are available or you may like to take a short walk to the nearby hot springs. The lodge in Sangalle, although still basic, offers en-suit rooms set around a central garden area and also has a swimming pool.

Your hotel in Arequipa is booked on a **B&B basis**. You can purchase snacks or meals at the hotel, which can be paid in Peruvian Sols, or often in US Dollars. Alternatively, there are plenty of restaurants in Arequipa within walking distance of your hotel.

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

This trek is unsupported so you will need to carry all your own gear each day. It is important that you pack light and carry only what you need in a **40-60 litre day pack**. Your main bag can be left securely at the hotel in Arequipa and collected when you return.

HOW DO I GET THERE?

Our trek through the Colca Canyon starts from the city of Arequipa. You can book a flight to Arequipa from Lima or Cuzco. For those on a budget you can also travel by bus, from Lima this will take around 15 hours or 10 hours from Cuzco. Please inform us when you have made your travel arrangements and a member of our team will be ready to meet you when you arrive.

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.

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.

TIPS

We realize that tipping may not be a common practice in all countries but for Peru it is a **standard practise that all operators support**. The decision on how much to tip should be determined by how well the guide 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. For the guide in Colca Canyon we recommend $15-20 per day.

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.

MEDICATION

It is always a good idea to carry a small first aid kit with elasticated bandages, plasters, pain killers, antiseptic cream and any personal medication.

EQUIPMENT & CLOTHING

CLOTHING TO BRING

- Sun Hat
- Warm hat (beenie)
- Sun glasses
- Sturdy walking boots
- Comfortable trainers for the evenings
- Socks and underwear
- T-shirts and Long sleeved shirt for sun protection
- A warm fleece / soft shell
- Thermal layers
- Waterproof jacket / trousers
- Trekking trousers / shorts

EQUIPMENT TO BRING

- Sunscreen and lip balm - high SPF
- Toiletries, wet wipes and hand sanitiser
- Insect repellant
- Camera and spare batteries
- Plug adapter
- Personal medication and first aid kit
- Day pack (40-60 litre)
- Water bottles or hydration system
- Head torch
- Microfibre towel

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.