

## SPIRITUAL JOURNEY IN THE ANDES

LIMA / CUSCO / MACHUPICCHU

10 DAYS / 09 NIGHTS



The Andes is one of the most powerful mountain ranges in the entire world. The ancient Incas knew of the energy concentrated in the peaks and valleys, and thus considered them sacred. These wise people had developed a way of life which embodied their religious beliefs to fulfill their spiritual needs, while simultaneously creating an empire which completely and efficiently met the economic needs of every individual in the culture. This phenomenal achievement had its roots in their deep religious attitude towards life, knowledge and work.

Our goals for this pilgrimage will include these major aspects of life in the Andes. We will visit the holy places, ancient shrines, and geographical areas known as POWER SPOTS. This will put us in direct contact with the energy which still exists as part of the living culture of the ancient Incas. We will follow this, if possible, with meetings with “priests”, still practicing the ancient ways and with discussions about the unique spiritual life in the Andes.

Our respect for the still living beliefs will not allow us performing any kind of rites or rituals in the holy spots. Our experience will be limited to speeches about the ancient wisdom in the Andes, and LEISURE MEDITATION in the Shrines.



## ITINERARY

### DAY 1: CLEANSING JOURNEY

A fantastic flight over the snow-capped mountains will bring us to Cusco. The dramatic approach to the Cusco Valley will help you appreciate the finely cultivated terraces, built centuries ago and still in use today. We will be met at the airport and transfer will be provided to our Hotel. The remainder of the morning will be at leisure and we recommend a rest in order to facilitate the acclimation to the altitude of 11,000 feet. After a light lunch, we will visit two of the most important Inca shrines devoted to cleansing rituals; TAMBOMACHAY, (temple of the water), and KORIKANCHA (Temple of the sun). In each location we will experience the importance of the elemental properties contained therein. The Incas honored the four elements with ceremonies and shrines constructed for this purpose: Water (Springs), Fire (Sun), Air (Wind shrines), and Earth (Burial grounds). Of these four, we will focus on FIRE and WATER.

After our visit to these two cleansing spots, we will conclude the afternoon with an introductory talk on the relationship between the energy of the Andes and the Inca concept of the Universe and how the places that we will visit fit in to this scheme of the world.

Our Host on this journey will be Mr. ANTON PONCE DE LEON, who has been involved for many years in a spiritual quest in the Andes. This search has led him to publish a series of books about the Cosmology of the Incas and to devote much of his time and energy developing resources available to present-day inhabitants of the valley.

We will have the unique opportunity to visit his workshop, which is called SAMANA WASI; in the qheshua language this name means "house of the peace and rest"

### DAY 2: JOURNEY TO THE SOURCES.

At the centre of a network of shrines located in the surrounding mountains, Cusco was the capital city of the Incas Empire, which at one time spread from Ecuador and Colombia in the North to Chile and Argentine in the South. Cusco which in the Qheshwa means "navel" was chosen as the centre because of the area's innate energy, its relationship to the surrounding mountains and to the stars which dominate the sky in the southern hemisphere. Out of the 328 surrounding shrines corresponding to both: the solar and lunar calendars, we will visit five, chosen for their relative importance and containment of earth and astral energy.

SAQSAYWAMAN, This "acropolis", is one of the most prominent of the Inca architecture. Apparently, it functioned as the centre of many activities, serving as a Temple, heater, Fortress, Astronomical Observatory and Councilhouse, of the Inca leaders. We will take a few hours to explore both: The known and newly discovered sections of this outstanding temple. Recent diggings have disclosed new aspects of the complex including numerous underground passages

KUSILLUCHAYOJ The ancient meaning of this temple is still unknown. Here we find a monument to a stellar deity, and the water mirrors used for the observation of stars and

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their movement.

**LAQO** Considered to possibly have been the tomb of Pachakuteq, the ninth Inca ruler, this complex consists in three underground chambers still guarded today by serpents and pumas

**LANLAKUYUQ** This labyrinth of natural rock formations, underground caves and passageways was most likely used for funeral rituals and as a quarry.

**KENQO** It is thought that this temple with its underground chamber was used for rituals and worship connected to funeral rites. This temple could perhaps be the most important link in enabling us to understand the ancient religion. Our visit to these five spots will not have a time limit in order to allow us sufficient opportunity to thoroughly explore and touch into the power, present in each place. A Box lunch will be provided and there will be time to take a short hike along some of the ancient Inca trails. Returning to Cusco after lunch, the rest of the day will be at leisure to stroll around the city and do some shopping (Hotel, B.L.)

### **DAY 3: MEETING WITH THE PAST:**

Today we will depart Cusco following the valley towards the ancient road which leads to the altiplano (High plateau) .On the way we will visit an ancient Inca temple, which was devoted to healing. The baths, shrines, and ceremonial centers of this temple will help give us a clearer understanding of the healing procedures and techniques. Next we will visit the community of Pumamarca and then, the town of Pikillaqta. Here we will be able to appreciate the development of the urban life of the old civilization as the town has maintained its streets, water channels, squares, and city buildings. From the remaining temples, archaeologists have found at least 40 precious stone idols. Lunch will be a picnic on the shore of the holy lake where over 30 varieties of birds can be found. Today's visit will require a long but easy hike (Hotel, B.L.)

### **DAY 4: IN SEARCH OF THE ANCIENT CITIES**

Today we will get an early start to the sacred valley. Driving along the Urubamba River, which runs through the valley on its way to the jungle. Our first stop will be at PISAQ, where the terraces surrounding the ruins provided the production of grains, corn, and potatoes to completely feed every inhabitant of the ancient citadel which was protected on all sides by high walls and gateways.

After lunch at a Country Inn, we will visit the only inhabited Inca city: Ollantaytambo. The people of this town live today in the same structures that housed the Incas in the 14th century. The water canals, which run through the streets, pass the main plaza and the system of irrigation used for agriculture still functions as an important part of the community's life.

The temple, which stands above the town on top of a hill, still challenges our imagination with its huge walls. Some of the blocks, which form these walls, weigh over 150 tons and were somehow transported from a quarry located several miles away. Our visit to Ollantay tambo will allow us a closer look at the ancient culture, which still lives today. The market in PISAQ, and our visit to the working city of Ollantaytambo will allow us to experience the Inca's way of living, thinking and worshipping.

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However, we must always have the most respectful attitude towards the privacy of the people we will be visiting. We will overnight at a charming country inn in Urubamba (Hotel Naranjachayoj, B, L, D,)

### **DAY 5: WORK A MISSION.**

Today we will experience the ancient ways in which the Incas worked: The AYNI (mutual help) MINKA (work for the common good), and MITA (compulsory work for ritual tribute)

In our visit to the salt mines of Maras, we will see how the salt has been extracted by the nearby communities for hundreds of years. A large section of land in a hillside was terraced into thousands of little ponds. The salty water was directed into the ponds and when the father sun evaporated the water, the salt was left behind to be gathered.

Despite the incredible low pay, these people have continued to make the long journey necessary to receive as little as \$ 2.00 per 100 pound bag of salt. This type of work is an example of the religious attitude, which pervaded even in today's work. This was a form of paying tribute, offering work as a divine gift from the community (AYLLUS), who continue the organisation and maintenance of work in the mines. A short hike will take us to Pichingoto, a village that still maintains this form of work. The houses of this fascinating town are carved directly into the mountainside.

We will complete the day with a visit to the village of Clincher set against the snowy backdrop of the mount Salqantay; here communities of Indians were obliged by the Spanish to live together in a town-like structure. It remains a good example of how the official mandate by the government has not been able to change the fundamental organization of the ayllus even when it does effect superficial changes. Tonight we will have a talk at our Hotel in Urubamba, about the Inca trail and the preparation for our trip MACHUPIJCHU (Hotel Casa Andina Private Collection B.L.D.)

### **DAY 6: DISCOVERING THE LOST CITY:**

We will leave early this morning to catch the train for MACHUPIJCHU, upon arrival at the base of the ruins; we will board the bus, which will take us up the winding road into the ruins. After lunch you will be free to walk around the ruins a bit, to have the opportunity to get a feel of this incredible place. Then, a guided tour to the most important landmarks of the city: The temples, farming terraces, housing areas, and the astronomical observatory. This place was first re discovered when a young man from Yale University named Hiram Bingham, in 1911.

He led an expedition in search of the Last Capital of the Incas (Vilcabamba). It is thought that the Spanish never visited this remote city and its original function has never really been known. However its significance is obvious even now. Leisure meditation at the Holly temples in the sacred city, and group prayer for the planetary transformation. (Hotel MachuPicchu Pueblo B.L.D.).

### **DAY 7: DEEPER IN THE LOST CITY:**

Today we will have the opportunity to explore some of the outlying areas of the ruins. Those who wish, can hike to the top of Waynapicchu, Visit the Temple of the Moon and later to Inca Bridge. A box lunch will be provided to allow those who want to, to explore on their own. Tonight we will have a TOP experience: Bathing in the Hot springs nearby MachuPicchu at nighttime. A Deep meditation journey will be possible by experiencing the relaxing power of these holy waters and the unique energetically environment (To

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have the chance of this experience we will have to spend the second overnight at the MachuPicchu Pueblo Hotel (B.L.D).

### **DAY 8: UNSPECTED EXPERIENCES:**

After having visited most of MachuPicchu, we will return to have the last sight of the city, and, depending on your energies, a hike to Wiñay Wayna, another Inca Citadel said to be of the "everlasting youth", and the previous step to the initiates before achieving MachuPicchu. We'll catch the train back to Cusco. Arrival in to Cusco's station by 7.00p.m.and transfer to our Hotel (Hotel B.L.).

### **DAY 9: BACK TO THE "NAVEL"**

Cusco was according to its builders, the "navel" of the world, and as the centre of cosmic energies its buildings were erected. The temples, palaces, squares, and streets were planned and shaped centuries ago, and are still intact despite the Spanish conquest. A city tour will put us in closer touch with the people and monuments, we will visit the artisan's district of San Blas and some churches and the Cathedral. Afternoon will be leisure for any last minute shopping. Our Farewell dinner will be at "El truco" which holds the best folklore shown in the area. (Hotel; B.D.)

### **DAY 10: FAREWEL TO THE ANDES**

Early morning transfer to the airport for our flight out, over the mountains and back to Lima. The City of the Kings. The images of the last week will live in our memories for a long time to come.

All transfers and transportation with English speaking guide and specialist.  
All entrances fees and meals where mentioned.

