

SAMPLE ITINERARY · THE DETOUR ARCHITECT

Ancient Wonders of Peru

Lima to Cusco via the Sacred Valley — an immersive 10-day journey through one of the world's great civilizations.

DURATION	TRIP STYLE	BEST TIME	BUDGET TIER
THE JOURNEY			

More than a bucket list. A journey through time.

Peru is one of those rare destinations that delivers on every expectation — and then quietly exceeds them. The food alone would justify the trip. But add Incan citadels carved into the clouds, colonial cities alive with color, and highland landscapes that feel prehistoric, and you have 10 days that will genuinely reshape how you see the world. This itinerary is designed to let Peru breathe — we don't rush from ruin to ruin. We spend real time in Lima's food scene, we acclimatize properly in the Sacred Valley, and we arrive at Machu Picchu having earned it.

"The best travel isn't about checking boxes — it's about the moment you stop taking photos because you just want to be present."

DAY BY DAY

Your 10-Day Journey

DAY

01

LIMA

Arrival & the Flavors of Miraflores

Arrive into Jorge Chávez International Airport and transfer to your boutique hotel in the Miraflores district. After settling in, the afternoon is yours to explore the clifftop boardwalk above the Pacific — the views at sunset are striking. Your first dinner in Lima is the introduction: Peru's food scene is world-class, and Miraflores is the perfect starting point.

■ Check-in: Miraflores · ■ Malecón boardwalk · ■■ Dinner in Miraflores

DAY

02

LIMA

Colonial Lima & Culinary Deep Dive

Morning in the UNESCO-listed Historic Centre — the Plaza Mayor, the Baroque cathedral, and the remarkable catacombs of San Francisco. Afternoon: cooking class or Lima food tour (ceviche, anticuchos, pisco sours). Evening flight to Cusco.

■■■ Historic Centre · ■ San Francisco catacombs · ■■■ Cooking class · ✈ ■ Flight to Cusco

■ *Thomas's tip: Don't skip the catacombs under San Francisco — one of Lima's most memorable and underrated sights.*

DAY

03

SACRED VALLEY

Arrival & Acclimatization Day

Arrive Cusco, but transfer immediately to the Sacred Valley (2,800m vs Cusco's 3,400m) — the secret weapon against altitude sickness. Gentle afternoon walk through a local village or the artisan market at Pisac. Let your body adjust in comfort.

■■ Sacred Valley arrival · ■■ Pisac artisan market · ■■■ Altitude acclimatization

■ *Thomas's tip: Drink coca tea, go slow, skip alcohol day one. This approach makes the entire Cusco experience dramatically better.*

DAY

04

SACRED VALLEY

Ollantaytambo & the Living Inca Town

Ollantaytambo is arguably the most underappreciated site in all of Peru. A functioning Inca town — street grid, water channels, residences — continuously inhabited since the 15th century. Climb the sun temple terraces for valley views. Optional horseback riding or hike to the Inca granaries.

■ Ollantaytambo ruins · ■ Optional horseback ride · ■ Valley panoramas

DAY

05

AGUAS CALIENTES

The Vistadome Train & Evening at the Base

Board the Vistadome train from Ollantaytambo — panoramic windows through the Sacred Valley and into the cloud forest. Arrive Aguas Calientes by late morning. Afternoon to explore the town, soak at the thermal baths, and prepare for tomorrow's sunrise. Early dinner, early bed.

■ Vistadome train · ■■ Hot springs · ■ Cloud forest arrival

DAY

06

MACHU PICCHU

Machu Picchu — Sunrise to Afternoon

The main event. Early bus up before dawn to be among the first through the gates. The mist-draped citadel emerging in first light cannot be overstated. Guided tour through the agricultural terraces, Temple of the Sun, the Intihuatana stone. Afternoon: optional Sun Gate hike or simply sit and absorb where you are. Return train toward Cusco.

■ Sunrise at the citadel · ■■ Guided ruins tour · ■ Optional Sun Gate hike · ■ Return train

■ *Thomas's tip: Book timed-entry tickets well in advance — Machu Picchu limits daily visitors. Huayna Picchu requires a separate ticket and sells out months ahead.*

■ CUSCO — DAYS 7–10

DAY

07

CUSCO

The Imperial City Arrives

Transfer to Cusco — by now fully acclimatized. Check into your hotel in the historic center, many inside converted colonial mansions built on Inca foundations. Afternoon: Plaza de Armas, the Cathedral, and the Coricancha — the Inca Temple of the Sun with a Spanish church built directly on top.

■ Historic center hotel · ■ Cusco Cathedral · ■■ Coricancha Temple

DAY

08–09

CUSCO

Sacsayhuamán, San Blas & Deeper Exploration

Day 8: Sacsayhuamán fortress (massive interlocking stones that defy modern engineering), the bohemian San Blas neighborhood, pisco sour tour. Day 9: optional day trip to the circular Moray terraces and the Maras salt mines — a landscape that looks almost alien. Evenings in Cusco's vibrant restaurant scene.

■ Sacsayhuamán · ■ San Blas · ■ Moray terraces · ■ Maras salt mines

■ *Thomas's tip: The Cusco tourist ticket (Boleto Turístico) covers multiple sites and is excellent value — I'll help you figure out the right version.*

DAY

10

DEPARTURE

Final Morning & Homeward

Final morning at the San Pedro Market, last-minute souvenirs, and a proper farewell meal. Fly home from Cusco, or extend with an optional add-on to Lake Titicaca or the Amazon jungle — both are extraordinary.

■ San Pedro Market · ✈️ Fly from Cusco (CUZ) · ■ Optional Titicaca extension

THE ROUTE

Your Journey, Mapped

■■ View the interactive route map online:

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/embed?mid=1WqJ-t62WcPuDyeAG6051fNQOadp3rLQ>

NEED TO KNOW

Practical Information

Best Time to Visit

May–October is dry season and ideal. June–August is peak but busy. May and September–October are the sweet spot — good weather, fewer crowds. Avoid November–March (rainy season) for Machu Picchu.

Budget Guide

Mid-Range: ~\$250–350/day Boutique
Luxury: ~\$450–650/day Includes: hotels, meals, guides & transfers
Excludes: international flights

Important Notes

- Machu Picchu requires advance timed-entry booking
- Cusco is at 3,400m — take altitude seriously
- Huayna Picchu tickets sell out months ahead
- No visa required for US/EU/UK passports

Ready to make this trip yours?

Every itinerary I build is tailored to you — your pace, your interests, your budget. This is just the starting point.

Book a free consultation: www.tdatrips.com