



PRIVATE JOURNEYS WITH JOURNEY LATIN

ACTIVE PERU: THE SANTA CRUZ TREK

10 days from **£3,150pp**

PERU / LIMA / NORTHERN PERU



WITH OVER 40 YEARS EXPERIENCE, NO-ONE KNOWS LATIN AMERICA LIKE WE DO

EXPERIENCE SOMETHING EXTRAORDINARY

WHY US

We are the UK's No.1 specialist in travel to Latin America and have been creating award-winning holidays to every corner of the region for over four decades; we pride ourselves on being the most knowledgeable people there are when it comes to travel to Central and South America and passionate about it too.

OUR JOURNEY

As our name suggests, we are single-minded about Latin America. This is what sets us apart from other travel companies – and what allows us to offer you not just a holiday but the opportunity to experience something extraordinary on inspiring journeys throughout Mexico, Central and South America.

WE LOVE LATIN AMERICA

A passion for the region runs through all we do

All our Consultants have lived or travelled extensively in Latin America

Up-to-the-minute knowledge underpinned by 40 years' experience

TRAVEL WITH CONFIDENCE

Fully bonded and licensed

ATOL-protected

On your side when it matters

Book with confidence, knowing every penny is secure

THE REAL LATIN AMERICA

Our insider knowledge helps you go beyond the guidebooks

We hand-pick hotels with character and the most rewarding excursions

Let us show you the Latin America we know and love



OVERVIEW & OUTLINE ITINERARY

This is a beautiful trek for experienced walkers among the spiky, ice-tipped Andean peaks and turquoise glacial lakes of the Cordillera Blanca in northern Peru. A very different landscape from the harsh mountains around Cusco.

- DAY 1** Arrive in Lima and transfer to hotel in the Miraflores district.
- DAY 2** Fly to Huaraz and transfer onwards to Caraz
- DAY 3** Tzactza Community and Pamacocha Lagoon
- DAY 4** Day at leisure to acclimatise.
- DAY 5** Santa Cruz Trek.
- DAY 6** Hiking the Santa Cruz Trek, camp.
- DAY 7** Hiking the Santa Cruz Trek, camp.
- DAY 8** Finish the hike and transfer to Huaraz
- DAY 9** Full day excursion to Chavin
- DAY 10** Transfer to airport for international flight home via Lima.

ITINERARY

This is an awe-inspiring holiday designed for experienced mountain or hill walkers who want to experience the beauty and solitude of the landscapes covered by one of Peru's many and various Andean treks. You travel inland from the desert coast north of Lima to a dazzling white, snow-crested range of jagged mountains: the Cordillera Blanca.

You start with a couple of days to acclimatise among ice-blue lakes in the deeply glaciated scenery around the attractive little town of Caraz before setting off on the Santa Cruz Trek, which takes you through some of the most spectacular scenery in the Cordillera Blanca, Peru's premier trekking region.

The region is defined by its plunging valleys, dotted with glaciers and gemstone blue and minty green glacial lakes. Human activity is represented by tiny pockets of agriculture and isolated indian villages, dwarfed by the grandeur and scale of the scenery. This is a wild, uncompromising landscape, its harshness mitigated by the friendliness of its people.

DAY 1

Arrive in Lima and transfer to hotel in the Miraflores district.

You will be met at the airport and escorted to your hotel in the cliff-side Pacific residential and commercial district of Miraflores. The half-hour drive to the hotel through Lima's outskirts encapsulates the invigorating buzz of a modern-day Latin American capital.

DAY 2

Fly to Huaraz and transfer onwards to Caraz

Transfer back to the airport and fly north to Anta, near Huaraz, before continuing by land to Caraz, high in the Andes mountains. Travel along a paved road which climbs through increasingly fertile valleys speckled with rural settlements: then the snow-capped peaks loom ahead.

The Cordillera Blanca is known for its plunging valleys, dotted with glaciers and gemstone blue and minty green glacial lakes. Human activity is represented by tiny pockets of agriculture and isolated indian villages, dwarfed by the grandeur and scale of the scenery. This is a wild, uncompromising landscape, its harshness mitigated by the friendliness of its people.

Caraz (2,285m), famous for its bees and honey production, is a pretty little town of low whitewashed houses which has a colonial plaza peppered with palm trees and flowers. It is one of the main bases for trekking in the area.

DAY 3

Tzactza Community and Pamacocha Lagoon

This is the first of two days to acclimatise to altitude and stretch your legs in preparation for the trekking to come. Today you have a three-hour hike passing through the vibrant Tzactza community, where you can experience the local culture and learn about ancestral traditions. Continue your journey to visit the stunning Pamacocha Lagoon (3,350 m), surrounded by majestic mountains. Once at the lagoon, you will have the chance to partake in activities such as kayaking or paddleboarding, or simply enjoy bird and wildlife watching.

DAY 4

Day at leisure to acclimatise.

Today you have a day at leisure acclimatising to the altitude in this delightful region. There's a range of walks and other activities which can be arranged for you locally.

DAY 5

Santa Cruz Trek.

The Santa Cruz Trek is a full-service trek in the Cordillera Blanca. The four-day guided trek along the Santa Cruz Valley covers 40km of striking, ever-changing terrain. Be prepared to walk between 5km and 12km per day (5-7 hours walking): there's a lot of ascending and descending over this relatively short distance. Lunches will be packed and evening meals will be cooked for you, while your luggage will be transported from camp to camp. In the evenings you camp in large tents. Bear in mind that you'll overnight at up to an altitude of 4,200m. This is a private service: just you and your guides and porters.

Depart Caraz in the morning and drive for an hour to reach Cashapampa where the trail begins. Meet up with the mule drivers and their animals to begin the ascent. Hike up the Santa Cruz gorge. After a steady climb, the track opens out into an area of meadow with views of the snow-capped peaks of Aguja and Caraz. It's a steady hot and dusty climb to reach the Paccharuri waterfall, then from here gently up to the campsite at Llamacorral (3,850m). Approximate trekking time 4-5 hours.

DAY 6

Hiking the Santa Cruz Trek, camp.

Today is a full day of hiking and wonderful vistas. The day breaks with the day's destination silhouetted in the distance, Mount Taulliraju. Climb steadily upwards as glaciated peaks tower above on both sides and the track passes two glittering emerald lakes: Ichiccocha and Jatuncocha. Camp at Taullipampa (4,200m) at the foot of the impressive Mount Taulliraju.

DAY 7

Hiking the Santa Cruz Trek, camp.

The trail ascends towards Punta Union pass (about 2-3 hours' walk) the highest point on the trek at 4,750m. This old trail was heavily used in both pre-conquest and colonial times as a route for transporting goods from the eastern side of the Andes to the main valley. As you approach the pass you get amazing panoramic views down the Santa Cruz Valley to the west, and views of the Huaripampa Valley to the east. Descend for lunch, and continue along the green Huaripampa Valley. Camp in the vicinity of Paria or Tuctu, 3,750m, in the heart of Huascarán National Park.

DAY 8

Finish the hike and transfer to Huaraz

Descend to Colcabamba before the final ascent to the camp in the small village of Vaqueira (3,700m). Walk uphill towards Portachuelo Pass (4,767m), which enjoys splendid mountain views. There are also splendid vistas of the beautiful Llanganuco lakes. Road transport later picks you up and drives you to Huaraz.

DAY 9

Full day excursion to Chavin

Enjoy a full day tour that takes you to Chavín de Huántar, a UNESCO World Heritage Trust site situated approximately 110 km from Huaraz. The Chavín culture is considered the oldest major Peruvian culture and one of the most artistically advanced. Its influence began to be felt from approximately 800 B.C. when this complex was founded. The site comprises of a complex of terraces, squares, walls and columns adorned with the ornate sculptures of symbolic figures for which the Chavín are famous.

The main temple includes the 13m high Castillo built above a large sunken square with a remarkable system of drainage channels. Within the temple is a complex of underground tunnels constructed on several levels and thanks to a notable feat of 3000-year-old engineering, surprisingly well ventilated. At their heart the astonishing Lanzón de Chavín – a four-metre high, dagger-like rock stuck in the ground at the intersection of four narrow passageways. After visiting the site, continue to the museum to aid your understanding of the history and importance of the region, before heading back to Huaraz.

DAY 10

Transfer to airport for international flight home via Lima.

Transfer back to the airport and either fly back to Lima for an onward flight home, or continue your adventures elsewhere.

WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THE PRICE

Services of our team of experts in our London office
Services of Journey Latin America local representatives and guides
All land and air transport within Latin America
Accommodation as specified
Meals as specified
Excursions as specified, including entrance fees

INCLUDED EXCURSIONS

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED IN THE PRICE

Tips and gratuities
Meals other than specified
International flights to Latin America
Airport taxes, when not included in the ticket
Optional excursions

ESSENTIALS

TRANSPORT

1 flight (1hr 10 mins), 2 road journeys (1hr, 45mins and 2hrs 30mins)

ACCOMMODATION

On this tour we use good value budget hotels, they are small, friendly establishments, colonial or modern in style with well-equipped rooms, private bathroom and heating. Key camping equipment for the trek – tents and cooking equipment, toilet tent (enclosing a hole in the ground), mess tent and air mattresses are provided; a sleeping bag is also provided.

MEALS

Breakfast daily, full board days 2-7.

GUIDES

We carefully select our local partners, some of whom we have worked with for over 25 years. Their English-speaking guides understand the expectations of our clients very well, and are consistently singled out for praise by the latter on their return.

SUMMARY OF NIGHTS

10 days, 9 nights: Lima 1; Caraz 3; Santa Cruz Trek 3; Huaraz 2

CURRENCY

The unit of currency in Peru is the sol.

HOW TO TAKE IT

Cash machines are available in all major cities and towns including Lima and Caraz so taking a debit or credit card with a PIN number is the most convenient way of withdrawing money while on your trip, and in most shops and restaurants you can also pay by card. However, since cards can get lost, damaged, withheld or blocked, you should not rely exclusively on a card to access funds.

We recommend that additionally you take a reasonable quantity of US dollars cash (no more than is covered by your insurance), which you can exchange into local currency. Dollar bills should be in good condition, soiled or torn bills may be refused. You are not advised to take sterling: the exchange rate is not always competitive or even available.

When you are on the treks you will not be spending money but you might carry a reasonable amount of cash for tips, ad hoc or local purchases.

DAILY SPEND

It is very difficult to give a guideline for essential expenses but a budget of around US\$35 per day should cover the cost of the few meals not included in the holiday itinerary, drinks and the odd souvenir. Eat at the best restaurants and you will pay considerably more.

TIPPING

Tips are expected and local guides often rely on their tip as a significant proportion of their income.

Most service industry workers will expect a tip of some kind and so it is useful to have spare change for hotel porters, taxi drivers and the like. It is common to leave 10 – 12% in restaurants.

INSURANCE

Travel insurance is essential. Details of our recommended policy can be found on our Travel Insurance page.

AIRPORT TAXES

If you have purchased your flights through Journey Latin America, the international departure tax and taxes on internal flights are usually included in the ticket.

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This holiday is suitable for all able-bodied, fit visitors with hiking or hill-walking experience. The trek is at high altitude (parts at over 4,000m) which will affect breathing and pace. You should be able to walk over undulating rocky terrain for several hours.

VISAS

Holders of a full British passport do not require a visa, although passports must be valid for at least 6 months after the trip begins. Anyone with a different nationality should enquire with us or check with the relevant consulate.

If flying to the US, or via the US you will need to fill in your online ESTA application.

CLIMATE

The rainy season in the Andes runs between November and April. The dry season is in June, July and August when the sun is strong during the day, but at night the temperature drops dramatically. May, September and October are less predictable, with both rainy and sunny spells.

Lima is covered in a dull grey mist for much of the year. It almost never rains in Lima, and temperatures are moderate.

ALTITUDE

Your treks are at high altitude (some sections over 4,000m). You have two days for preparation near Caraz (2,240m) but on the first day of walking you gain 950m of height. The walk then undulates between 3,850m and 4,767m. Most people are only mildly affected and if you drink plenty of water and allow your body to acclimatise (don't exert yourself or drink alcohol for the first couple of days at altitude), you'll probably be OK. Symptoms vary: most common are mild headaches, slight nausea and breathlessness. If you don't recover in a day or two speak to our representatives; in very rare instances it is necessary to descend to lower altitudes.

Upon booking you will receive a detailed trek information sheet.

CLOTHING AND SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

For day-to-day wear in town or on day trips you should go prepared to encounter all seasons. Both warm clothing and a sun hat are essential at altitude; a light fleece jacket and a waterproof/breathable outer shell makes a good combination. Trousers, shorts or even a skirt made from light, quick-drying synthetic materials work well.

For the trekking you should have a small back pack to carry the personal effects you will need while walking. Bring comfortable and adequate clothing to protect you from cold (and possibly wet) weather. We recommend you layer with synthetic fabric clothing as these are the most effective barriers against the cold. We discourage the use of cotton garments in cold or wet mountain conditions. The innermost layer should be long underwear. The middle layer can be a synthetic turtleneck or woollen shirt, and shorts or trousers. The outermost layer should be a synthetic or down jacket, and/or a good quality Gore-Tex wind/rain parka and over-trousers. You will also need a bag in which to store the gear you aren't taking on the trek. Strong, comfortable hiking boots are essential as is a hat to protect you from the strong sun, and sun glasses.

For the camping on the Santa Cruz Trail you will need a minimum 3-season sleeping bag and a Thermarest-type mat. You can bring your own or hire one locally.

Trekking poles are an excellent aid, again you can hire them locally but they may not be very high tech.

You should ensure that you have sufficient sun block and insect repellent.

Please get in touch with the office before departure if you have any doubts. Good equipment is very important and hard to come by in South America.

VACCINATIONS

Preventative vaccinations are recommended against the following: typhoid; polio; tetanus; hepatitis A. You should consult your GP for specific requirements.

You can also find helpful information on the Masta Travel Health website.

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GET IN TOUCH WITH US...

Our friendly, knowledgeable team of travel experts are always happy to chat about holiday ideas and share helpful advice. Give us a call today and begin planning your perfect trip to Latin America.

GIVE US A CALL

We'd love to chat

0208 747 8315

OPENING HOURS

Monday – Friday: 9am – 6pm

Saturday & Sunday: Closed

SEND US AN EMAIL

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