



# Sacsayhuaman

## Cusco, 1 Day

### Table of contents:

- Guide Description 2
- Itinerary Overview 3
- Daily Itineraries 4
- Cusco Snapshot 6

# Guide Description



**AUTHOR NOTE:** A 1/2 day visit to this important site and the adjacent ones.

# Itinerary Overview

things to do  
restaurants  
hotels  
nightlife

## Day 1 - Cusco



### Sacsayhuaman

Tremendous Incan site perched above Cusco



### Quenko

Witness this religious archaeological find



### Tambomachay

A tribute to the water

# Day 1 - Cusco

QUICK NOTE

**location:**  
2 kms North of Cusco  
Cusco

## 1 Sacsayhuaman

### OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

Every year on the 24th of June the enormous festival of Inti Raymi (Festival of the Sun) is held in Sacsayhuaman where Cusqueños perform theatrical representations of the original Inca celebration. The event is a vibrant affair of dances, theater, drinking and appreciation of the sun's warmth and power.

**DESCRIPTION:** Providing impressive birds-eye views of the city and surrounding valley, the Incan archaeological site of Sacsayhuaman is a to-do not to be missed while in Cusco. Popularly believed to have been a fortress, more recent interpretations suggest that it may have been used for religious rituals and activities. The site itself is comprised of an enormous plaza bordered on one side by three parallel Inca walls reaching lengths of 400 meters. The rocks themselves are fitted with impressive accuracy and can reach heights of six meters and outlandish weights of up to 200 tons. The site is thought to have included other stone structures and temples which were later demolished by the Spanish so as to construct new buildings within the city of Cusco. Towards the back of the archaeological site, stone slides and serpent-like caves make for great recreation for younger travelers and adults as well. Visiting the massive Inca stonework of Sacsayhuaman is a must when traveling to Cusco and makes for a quiet half-day excursion outside of the lively city of Cusco. Accessible by taxi, public bus or by foot, entrance is included on the Boleto Turistico de Cusco and tour guides are available at the entrance. © NileGuide User

**MY NOTE:** Visit this site with a travel agency that one can find at the Plaza de Arma\*. If going for the Inti Raymi, visit in the morning and go to the show in the afternoon. Get tickets for the bleachers, in advance.



wcities

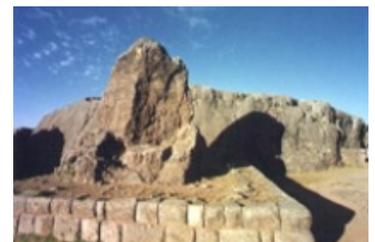
**contact:**  
[http://www.peru.info/e\\_ftociudadeseng.asp](http://www.peru.info/e_ftociudadeseng.asp)

**location:**  
4 kms NE of Cusco  
Cusco Cusco

**hours:**  
7a-5:30p daily

## 2 Quenko

**DESCRIPTION:** Huayna Capac Inca (at the end of the 15th century) ordered the construction of this complex altar for funeral rituals. It's made of a system of tunnels, galleries and geometric cuts carved into the stone. Opposite this area is the amphitheatre, a great elliptical wall with 19 entrances that appear to be wide seats or thrones, and an interesting monolith of 4,70 meters in height. Until 1934, the whole ensemble was covered beneath 3 meters of earth. Admission is included in the "Tourist Ticket." © wcities.com



wcities

MY NOTE: Part of the visit of Sacsayhuaman

---

**contact:**

[http://www.peru.info/e\\_ftociudadeseng.asp](http://www.peru.info/e_ftociudadeseng.asp)

**location:**

7 km from Cusco  
Cusco Cusco

**hours:**

7a-5:30p daily

**3 Tambomachay**

**DESCRIPTION:** Twenty-five minutes by car from Cusco, you'll find this magnificent construction attributed to the public works commanded by Pachacutec Inca. It's also known as the "Baths of the Inca" for its fountain, falls, and streams. This place of recreation for the Inca and the princesses was also used as lodging for hunting trips. The fountain, its terraces, stairways, portals, and walls give the place a devout atmosphere. It is considered to be a sacred place for water, a theory shared by past and present Andean inhabitants. Admission is included in the "Tourist Ticket." © wcities.com



wcities

MY NOTE: Also visit during the Sacsayhuaman trip.

---

# Cusco Snapshot

## Local Info

Without a doubt, the beauty and majesty of Cusco are unique. You only have to walk through its streets, to observe the lavish colonial-era houses and exquisite monuments, and you are transported back into the past. Cusco possesses a magic which charms even the most experienced traveler.

## Cusco

The best way to make the most of all the attractions in Cusco is to purchase the *boleto turístico* or "tourist ticket" with which you can access all the important cultural and historical museums and churches. In the center of the city is the Plaza de Armas, which was reputedly designed by the Inca Manco Capac. It is also called *Aucaypata*, which in Quechua means "warrior square." In the square stands the splendid La Catedral, which took 94 years to build. Next to this are the chapels *Capilla de la Sagrada Familia*, recently restored, and the *Capilla del Triunfo* whose walls are adorned with masterpieces from the Cusco School, including works by Diego Quispe Tito.

Ten minutes from the Plaza de Armas is Santo Domingo, and the stunning, extravagant *Korikancha*, or *Templo del Sol* ("Temple of the Sun"), believed to have once been covered with gold. In front of the temple is the "Casa de los Cuatro Bustos" now occupied by a hotel. Descending toward *Avenida El Sol*, you can get another view of the *Korikancha* and visit the museum.

The *Compañía de Jesús*, pride of the Jesuit order, is also located in the Plaza de Armas, a block away in *Calle Hatun Rumiyoq*. This houses the *Palacio del Arzobispado*, which has some valuable works of art. On this same street, you can observe the famous rock with 12 angles, which was a part of the Inca Roca's palace. From here, it is recommended to go towards the San Blas neighborhood, one of Cusco's most picturesque areas.

Towards the center again, on *Calle Mantas*, stands *La Merced*, which houses *La Custodia*, a grandiose colonial-era sculpture in solid gold one meter high. The *Casa Garcilaso* has a large collection of Pre-Hispanic and colonial art, and in San Francisco, there is the temple of the same

name, with one of the largest paintings in Latin America.

## San Blas

Formerly known as *Toqocachi* (Salt Cave), it was due to the works of artists *Mendivil*, *Olave* and *Merida* that this neighborhood came to be known as the artisans district. *Barrio de San Blas* is a unique, picturesque area that has recently been restored. When walking through the quaint streets of this magical neighborhood, you can easily imagine yourself in the 19th Century. The church of San Blas has an enormous wooden pulpit carved from a single piece of wood by the Inca artist and architect *Tomas Tuyro Tupac*.

## Urumbaba

Along the *Urubamba* river, which means "flat land of spiders", you will find the Sacred Valley of the Incas, once the domain where the Inca flourished. The valley is 26 miles long and is a way station for visitors on their trek to *Machu Picchu*.

## Outside of Cusco

On the outskirts of Cusco, many archaeological sites can be found, such as *Sacsayhuaman*. This imposing edifice is a wonderful example of late Incan architecture but was left unfinished after the arrival of the Conquistadors. In June, the festival of *Inti Raymi*, pays homage to the sun and attracts large crowds. Another important site in Incan culture is *Quenko*, this complex was primarily used for funerary rituals and is another one of the 300 different sites connected to the Temple of the Sun. The temple of *Tambomachay* is about 35 minutes by car outside of Cusco and is a site which the Incas used as a dedication to the life giving properties of water. The visitor can experience the tranquility of the water falling over the rocks and the quiet trickle of the nearby river. Another interesting archaeological town that is next to these baths is *Ollantaytambo* where ancient traditions are still practiced by its inhabitants. For an abundance of flora and fauna in the middle of the Eastern Andean mountains, you will find the Lower *Huatanay* Valley, this seemingly untouched paradise is also surrounded by lakes. To see these valleys from above, travel to the hills of *Tipon* and *Pucará Pucutupampa*, the ruins upon these hills provide excellent views of Cusco and its environs. Finally, a

visit to the Cusco area is incomplete without seeing *Phuyupatamarca*. This archaeological complex is a stunning outcropping on the side of a cliff which houses a labyrinthine set of buildings, channels, bridges and walkways. A definite stop on any visitors itinerary.

©

## History

The city of Cusco is the main tourist destination in the country and one of the most important ones in South America. The city of Cusco is built in the valley of the *Huatanay* River, in the southern sierra of Peru. "Cusco", from the quechua *Qosco*, means the "navel of the world", and refers to the fact that this city was long the center of a vast network of roads connecting each of the four parts of the world of Andean cosmology. Of course, Cusco is also a colonial city, with splendid churches and large houses. Many consider this mix of cultures the root of its charm.

It was during the reign of the Incas (1438-1532 A.D.) that Cusco's importance was at its height, but the origins of the city are shrouded in myth and legend. One of the most common stories, that has been handed down as part of the famous chronicles of the Inca *Garcilaso de la Vega*, tells of *Manco Cápac* and *Mama Ocllo*, the couple that magically emerged from the holy waters of *Titicaca* Lake around the Eleventh or Twelfth Centuries to establish the city of Cusco.

Cusco was the center of government for the four regions of the Inca empire, which covered large parts of what today are Ecuador, Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, Argentina and Chile. Inca society was fantastically organized, and had an impressive knowledge of architecture, hydraulic engineering, medicine and agriculture.

In the year 1534, the Spanish arrived under the command of the conquistador *Francisco Pizarro* and a Spanish city was founded on the site of the Inca Cusco, turning the Andean world—and its two thousand years of independent development—on its head. Many important Inca constructions were destroyed or served as the base for other new constructions, as can clearly be seen at many temple sites.

## Cusco Snapshot continued

Despite the clash of cultures, the phenomenon of mestizaje, the mixing of European and indigenous races, began to dominate the city. Still, all was not peaceful, and the following centuries were characterized by fierce rebellions of native people against the Spanish. The most well-known of these struggles include the revolution led by José Gabriel Condorcanqui (Tupac Amaru II) in 1780, that of the Angulo brothers in 1813, and the uprising of Mateo Pumacahua in 1814.

In 1911, using information provided by local peasants, the American researcher Hiram Bingham discovered the legendary Inca citadel of Machu Picchu, which is today one of the main tourist destinations on the American continent, and is considered one of the world's most outstanding feats of architecture. Nestled between the mountains of Machu Picchu ("Old Mountain") and "Huayna Picchu" ("Young Mountain"), in the middle of the tropical jungle, it comprises military fortifications, squares, temples and terraces for cultivation. It is known that the site was the center of a cult, an astronomical observatory, and private property of the Inca Pachacutec and his family.

©

### Hotel Insights

The number of visitors to Cusco has tripled in the last ten years and as a consequence, hotel capacity has increased dramatically. Currently, Cusco has enough hotels and guest houses to accommodate the nearly 10,000 visitors that come here each year. Most of these lodgings are to be found in the vicinity of the Plaza de Armas.

#### Cusco Center- Plaza de Armas

There are several luxury hotels in Cusco to satisfy the demanding tastes of travelers with means. The most outstanding of these are in beautiful old buildings such as the Hotel Libertador in the Casona de los Cuatro Bustos mansion on Calle San Agustín, the Monasterio Hotel, which occupies the old seminary of San Antonio Abad in the Plazoleta de las Nazarenas and forms part of a gorgeous ensemble of 17th Century Baroque architecture. Finally, there is the Hotel Savoy Internacional, a considerably more modern building, although no less elegant.

You can also find large hotels in the center which offer good quality service and facilities but at more accessible prices, such as the Hotel Cusco, built in the 50s and occupying an entire block a stone's throw from the Plaza de Armas; the Picoaga, in a charming old building in Calle Santa Teresa; the Sonesta Posada del Inca, part of a national chain of modern hotels; Hotel Don Carlos, on Avenida El Sol, which has excellent service; the Hotel Q'armenq'a; the El Dorado; and the Royal Inka I, in the Plazoleta del Regocijo.

The mid-range price bracket is occupied by such hotels as the Ruinas, the Hotel Cahuide, four blocks from the Plaza Mayor; and the Hotel de la Villa Hermoza, a little farther but in a very quiet residential area.

There are also many guest houses here. These smaller establishments can be found on nearly every street in the center, but some which stand out are the Carlos V, in Tecsecocha Street; the Hostal La Casona de San Agustín, on the same street; the Los Portales; the Qorikancha on Matará street; the Hostal El Solar in the Plaza San Francisco; and also, the Hostal Casa de Campo in the Barrio de San Blas district. Rates differ from place to place, but are generally very reasonable.

#### Urubamba

This is a village of Inca origin, seventy-five minutes from Cusco which is surrounded by very beautiful landscapes. It is not uncommon for visitors to stay for several days, and there are various options for accommodation, among them the Hotel Posada del Inca; Hotel San Agustín de Urubamba; Hotel Royal Inka Pisac; and the Hotel Valle Sagrado. All of them have good service and prices that range from USD35 to USD110.

#### Machu Picchu

The nearest village to the Machu Picchu citadel is Aguas Calientes. If you decide to stay here, your best options are the Machu Picchu Inn Hotel, which has very high quality service, the Hotel Qoni Unu in Calle Collaraymi, and the Hostal Los Caminantes, with reasonable rates. If you wish to be as close as possible to Machu Picchu, the comfortable Machu Picchu

Sanctuary Lodge, is located right at the entrance to the citadel.

©

### Restaurants Insights

Almost all restaurants in Cusco offer local, creole and international cuisine. During your stay, you should try a few of the typical dishes, such as alpaca meat cooked in various ways, fresh corn pie, or simply a delicious corn-on-the-cob with cheese. If you are looking for a nice warm place to have a coffee or an aperitif, there are plenty such places in Cusco.

#### Centro de Cusco

Many good restaurants can be found around the Plaza de Armas, such as the Inka Grill, the Tunupa or the Rapsodia, which with the recent popularity of Novo-Andean food, offer different recipes using local ingredients like alpaca meat, aguaimanto and quinoa. There are also many fine restaurants offering local and international cuisine, such as Los Portales, El Patio, El Paititi and El Arriero Churrasqueria.

To watch, from behind a good cup of coffee, the routine of a city and its inhabitants, is one of the prerogatives and pleasures of the traveler. In Cusco, there are ample places to do this: if you prefer a quiet conservative ambiance, you can sit down at the Plus Café, or the Varayoc, located in the Plaza de Armas. You can have a good breakfast there and then pass the time away with an aperitif. Near the square, in Calle Plateros, are Pucara and El Fogón. In Calle Procuradores, you can get Mexican food at El Cuate and East Indian food at Paloma India, which also offers a take-away service. Chezz Maggi La Antigua serves good pizzas.

If you want to be around people, there are Macondo Café-Restaurante, the Cross Keys and Norton Rat's Tavern bars, all of them with a very special atmosphere. Good places to meet local people are the Extra, the haunt of Cusco's intellectuals; or the Kusikuy, in front of the Casa Garcilaso. Ukuku's Pub Cultural is a good place to surf the internet and enjoy some local Peruvian beer and Trotamundos, in which they exhibit different works from local and international artists.

#### San Blas

## Cusco Snapshot continued

Beyond the square, there are places with Asian cuisine, such as Al Grano and Green's, in the charming neighborhood of San Blas. There is Japanese and vegetarian food in Calle Heladeros, at the little restaurant Kin Taro, and also Chinese food at Chifa Tai Won, in Avenida El Sol.

Some restaurants also feature shows with typical Cuscan dance and music, as at the El Truco in the Plaza Regocijo, and the already mentioned Inka Grill and Tunupa. And despite the abundance of meats that are served in restaurants, for the vegetarian, go to Moni Cafe Restaurant, where the ingredients are fresh and are meticulously prepared.

### Urubamba

Urubamba is the biggest town outside of Cusco and the gateway to the Sacred Valley of the Incas. There are some pretty decent dining establishments here, in addition to the local markets that sell street food. One such place is Pachapapa, where you can taste traditional Peruvian food and wash it down with a hearty, Chilean red or if you wish, some Pisco. Another restaurant in this area is the Map Café, housed on the patio of the Pre-Columbian Art Museum, this cafe has an extensive wine list and also prepares rich, Andean dishes. For a meal fit for a king or queen, you must stop by Killa Wasi, which means House of the Moon in Quecha. The cuisine here blends an amalgam of local dishes alongside ingredients with an international flair.

©

### Nightlife Insights

Modern Cusco pulses to the rhythm of its main activity, tourism. The overwhelming importance of this industry has meant the development of a great diversity in the products and services of this town of 1 million people. Nowadays, there is an adequate infrastructure to ensure that the huge number of visitors who come here each year are satisfied and have fun.

### Museums

There are many museums and galleries open in the city. In order to visit the most important ones, you should buy the "Boleto Turístico," or tourist pass.

The most important museum is probably the Museo Inka of Pre-Hispanic culture, located one block from the Plaza de Armas. The building was once the residence of the Marques de Vallumbrioso and housed the best library in the new world. One block further on is the Plaza Nazarenas, where you can find the Casa Cabrera with its permanent exhibition of works by the famous photographer Martín Chambi. Next to the Plaza de Armas, is the Plaza Regocijo and the Casa Garcilaso museum with its exhibition of colonial art. Here you will also find the Contemporary Art Museum. The Museo Arqueológico was built by the Spaniards on what was once sacred Inca ground. Today, the museum exhibits archaeological finds from throughout South America. For more knowledge on the Incans themselves, visit the Museo de Sitio Korikancha. This museum covers the pre-history of the Incan state up until its destruction in the 16th Century.

### Galleries

In the neighborhood of San Blas, a special gallery of interest is the Museo Hilario Mendivil, where the visitor can see artisanal handicrafts made by techniques handed down through the generations. Also visit the Taller Galería Hermanos Mendivil.

Other galleries of note include the Banco Wiese, the gallery of the Escuela de Bellas Artes, and the exhibition of pictures by children from Andean communities, called Irq'i Yacha, which can also be found in the neighborhood of San Blas.

### Dance

In the Centro Qosqo de Arte Nativo on Avenida El Sol, there is a daily show of the region's folk dances which has been running for more than 25 years. After watching the performance, if you feel like dancing yourself, there are a great many clubs and discos in Cusco, particularly on Procuradores Street. Some of the longest running places are the Kamikase, the Ukuku's Pub Cultural, Mama Africa, all of which are pubs with great drinks, good music and lots of spontaneity.

When it comes to clubs, Uptown is a good choice, with mostly electronic music, and there are also the Muki and the Xcess, two of the most popular venues amongst Cusco's residents. Most of these places are located in center of town, so it is easy to

visit several places in the same night. Make the most of it and enjoy!

### Festivals

The Incan civilization centered on religious tradition and culture, so there is no doubt that these traditions remained. Some have syncretized with Spanish rituals and ceremonies but nonetheless many processions are still to be found in Cusco today. Corpus Christi is one such festival, it used to be an Incan ritual to carry the exhumed bodies of priests throughout the village, but since the arrival of the Spanish, it is now an homage to various saints. The festival of Qoyllur Riti, which means "Snow Star" was originally an Incan veneration to nature, yet once again transformed and now more Catholic. Inti Raymi or the Sun Festival is a very important holiday for the people of Cusco. The ceremony is spoken entirely in Quecha and draws thousands to the Sacsayhuam fortress.

A festival that celebrates crosses and agriculture is Cruz Velakuy, paying homage to another harvest and a reverence to the goddess Pachamama, or mother nature. The Cusco Beer Festival is actually both a festival to enjoy beers as well as a music festival, it is one of the largest fairs of its kind in South America.

©

### Things to Do Insights

#### Sacred Valley of the Incas

In the vicinity of the city of Cusco lies the Sacred Valley of the Incas, where there are many Pre-Colonial sites and ruins that have managed to resist years of deterioration and neglect. Wakas (altars), ancient towns, temples and fortresses are the evidence of the grand legacy of the Inca in this region. A little more than a mile from the city, in the hills just overlooking it, is the imposing fortress of Sacsayhuaman. After passing the altar at Quenko, leave the city limits to visit the site of Puca Pucara and afterwards the sanctuary of Tambomachay, a route of around three and a half miles.

The most stunning sight is the valley of the Willkamayu (Sacred River), more commonly referred to as the Sacred Valley of the Incas. The valley route begins at the town of Pisac, 20 miles outside of Cusco. You can visit the Sunday market and the incredible archaeological complex,

## Cusco Snapshot continued

constructed on the hill behind the town, with a magnificent view of the valley. You can learn many legends and stories by visiting these ancient sites.

Passing through the towns of Coya, Lamay, Calca, (30 miles and an hour outside of Cusco) Huayllabamba and Yucay, historical locations where the friendly locals will ensure that your trip is interesting and pleasant, you arrive at Urubamba, a large village 48 miles from Cusco that boasts several recreational centers and accommodation.

Traveling another 20 minutes, you will come to Ollantaytambo, a classic Inca village that remains inhabited and is the site of a number of religious and military Inca ruins. After visiting the ruins, head back to Urubamba on the way to Cusco, this time passing through the towns of Maras and Chinchero. In order to arrive at Maras, you have to take a detour after reaching the high plateau that divides the Valle Sagrado from the Valle del Huatanay, where Cusco is located. This detour takes you to the picturesque town of Maras located about 25 miles from Cusco. From here you can travel an additional 4 miles to Moray, a huge Inca laboratory for agricultural experimentation.

Returning to the main road, you travel through hills and plateaus to Chinchero, 18 miles from the city of Cusco, where you can visit the temple, typical narrow streets, the remains of Inca palaces, and a colorful crafts market. You can return to Cusco, after a full day of traveling, entering the city from the opposite side to the one you left at the start of the tour. You will have covered around 57 kilometers altogether.

### Historic Route to Machu Picchu

Machu Picchu ("Old Mountain" in Quechua), set into the summit of the mountain of the same name 75 miles northwest of Cusco, was discovered by Hiram Bingham at the beginning of the last century. There are many theories to explain its existence, one postulates that it was the secret residence of the *acllas*, or "royal virgins" during the 15th Century. The site consists of two large, beautiful areas: one is agricultural, made of terraces and storage areas, and the other urban, where the sacred temples, squares and mausoleums are located. Throughout this extraordinary complex are stairways and stonework canals.

By train, the journey takes three hours and the price ranges between USD8 and USD80 dollars return. The train departs daily from San Pedro station (situated next to the market in Cusco) and arrives at Aguas Calientes or Puente Ruinas, both of which have buses going to Machu Picchu that leave every 30 minutes and cost USD6. There is also a helicopter that leaves the local airport and arrives at Aguas Calientes in 25 minutes. The price is around USD150 dollars return. Hardier travelers, you choose to walk the Inca trail, a journey that takes four days (see description below).

The climate is subtropical, with frequent drizzle, so it is advisable to bring waterproof clothing. The best months to visit Machu Picchu are May and June. Facilities in the area consist of a restaurant, toilets and a telephone at the entrance. You are not allowed to bring food past the entrance. Admittance to Machu Picchu costs ten dollars.

### Machu Picchu via the "Inca Trail"

The traditional "Camino Inca" (Inca Trail) is considered to be one of the most spectacular trekking routes in the world, not only because of the fascinating archaeological site at the end but also the spectacular natural beauty along the way. There are alternative routes that are recommended if you are not in the best physical condition, such as the Camino Real, (Royal Road) which can be done in six hours, or the Camino de Purificacion, (Road of Purification), which takes five hours. This trail has traditionally been limited to travelers willing to rough it, going without bed or bath for several nights. However, companies such as Mountain Lodges of Peru, (<http://www.mountainlodgesofperu.com>), now have lodges along the trail, for those who want a good night's sleep after a day of adventure.

The traditional 26 mile, four-day hike starts in Q'oriwayrachina (54 miles from Cusco), where you cross the Kusichaca suspension bridge. Then you go upward until you reach Llullucha for camping. On the second day, you reach the highest peak, Warmiwa'sqa at nearly 14,000 feet above sea level, at which point you should be alert for the symptoms of altitude sickness (called "soroche" here), typically,

dizziness and nausea. If you feel unwell, head for the Pacamayo River valley to rest.

On the third day, you pass the ruins of Runkuraqay, Sayaanmarca, and the mysterious cloud forest. Further along, there are more surprises among the dense vegetation, Phuyupatamarca and Wiñay Wiñay, with their very beautiful network of Inca settlements constructed in granite. On the fourth day you continue through lush undergrowth, with many species of orchids and birds. You already know the destination: the spectacular Machu Picchu, which, after about three hours hike, you enter through the Inti Punku or "Inca door." Many tour operators offer inclusive packages. It is important to know that during the trip there is no place where you can get food, so if you do not opt for an inclusive trip, you must take all that is necessary. There are sanitary facilities and a refuge in Wiñay Wayna.

### Manu Biosphere Reserve

Located between the departments of Cusco and Madre de Dios, this reserve is one of the largest protected natural areas in the planet. It has a huge diversity of landscapes and climates, as well as a very beautiful and diverse flora and fauna. There are more than 2,000 plant species here, and fauna which includes endangered species like the black lizard and the Andean bear. General access to the National Park is not allowed, but controlled access to the Reserved Zone and the Cultural Zone is permitted. In order to travel to the area, you need to go through one of the officially authorized tourism companies associated with the Ecotur Manu partnership. The expedition normally lasts from four to seven days and the most important routes leave from Cusco. There are two routes commonly used: the overland/river route (12 hours to Atalaya or Shintuya and 6 hours via the rivers Alto Madre de Dios and Manu) and the air/river route (30 minutes to Boca Manu and 4 hours through the river Manu). It has a tropical climate although there can be cold days between May and August. Typically, the weather is warm and wet from May to October, and rainy during the summer (from December to March). There is no infrastructure within the reserve so it is necessary to take all that is required (do not forget the insect repellent and a raincoat). Accommodation can be arranged in Cusco through authorized tour operators like Manu Lodge (Manu Nature

## Cusco Snapshot continued

Tours). The price for one person, per day, full board varies from USD40 to USD80; and the package for the excursion(including transportation, accommodation, food and equipment) ranges from USD700 to USD1,300.

**Andean Tours** Andean Tours(+1 800 683 8148/ <http://www.andeantreks.com/>) Inka Adventure(+51 84 233 742/ <http://www.theinkaadventure.com/>)

**City Tours** Magical Cuzco(+1 866 411 INCA/ <http://www.magicalcuzcotours.com/>) Travel Peru(+1 888 671 2852/ <http://www.travel-peru.net/>) Machu Picchu Discover(+1 866 753 5668/ <http://www.machupicchudiscover.com/>)  
©

### Travel Tips

#### Getting There

##### By Air

Jorge Chavez Aeropuerto Internacional de Lima(+51( 1) 517-3100;<http://www.lap.com.pe/>) is the only international airport in Peru. Transfer from Lima to the Cusco Airport, an approximately 70 min. flight. There are daily flights via the following airlines:

LanPeru(+51 01 213 8200/ <http://www.lanperu.com>) Tans Peru(+51 01 213 6000/ <http://www.tansperu.com.pe/>) Taca Peru(+51 01 511 8222/ <http://www.taca.com/index.asp>) Aviandina(+51 01 445 8700/ <http://www.airfleets.net/flottec/Aviandina.htm>)

##### By Bus

The overland journey is not recommended as it takes a day and a half. However, the following bus companies offer a Lima-Cusco route:

Transporte Flores Cruz del Sur Empresa Huari Ormeño is the recommended bus

service if you want both comfort and security. They offer regular service in both Royal and Econo-Class.

#### Getting Around

##### By Taxi

Unlike in Lima, taxis are regulated in Cusco and charge standard rates. They do not have meters. Licensed taxi companies include:

Okarina(+51 084 247 080) Aló Cusco(+51 084 222 222)

##### By Bus

You are not likely to need a bus in the city itself, but if you are interested in traveling to towns in the Sacred Valley such as Pisac, Calca, and Urubamba, taking a bus is your best bet. They depart from small terminals on Calle Huáscar and Calle Intiqhawarina, off Tullumayo.

**By Foot** Cusco is best navigated by foot because so many of the sights are in walking distance of the Plaza de Armas. Be warned, however, that walking in this city is demanding due to the high elevation and steep climbs.

**By Tranvia** A tranvia is a vehicle designed to look like the traditional mule-pulled streetcars that once populated Cusco; today they transport visitors around the city for a modest sum. You will find most of them on the Plaza de Armas.(+51 084 962 0732)

##### By Train

The most popular means to visit Machu Picchu and the Sacred Valley sights is by train. Reservations should be made at least a day in advance.

PeruRail(+51 084 238 722 [www.perurail.com](http://www.perurail.com))

##### By Car

Renting a car in the Cusco region is a more practical idea than in most parts of Peru.

Avis(+51 084 248 800) Localiza(+51 084 233 131)

##### By Motorcycle

Cuzco Rent a Harley(+51 084 249 248 [www.cuzcorentaharley.com](http://www.cuzcorentaharley.com))

©

### Fun Facts

**Cusco Province:** Cusco **Country:** Peru

#### Cusco by the Numbers:

Population: 300,000 Land Area: 523 square kilometers/ 202 square miles Elevation: 3350 meters/ 10,991 feet Average Annual Rainfall: 67.7 mm/ 2.66 in Average January Temperature: 13.5°C/ 56.3°F Average July Temperature: 10°C/ 50°F

#### Quick Facts:

Major Industries: Tourism, Education, Government, Publishing and Printing Electricity: 110 volts AC Time Zone: GMT-5( GMT-4 daylight saving time); Eastern Standard Time( EST) Country Dialing Code: 51 Area Code: 84

#### Did You Know?

Cusco was originally built in the shape of a puma. The body of the puma contained the most important palaces, temples and governmental buildings. The square between the legs of the puma is the Plaza de Armas.

In 2006, Cusco was found to have the highest ultraviolet light level on the planet.

©