



## **PERUVIAN ANDES ADVENTURES**

### **ALPAMAYO TREK HUALCAYAN TO POMABAMBA**

7 days trekking (option for 8 days)  
Grade: Medium to Hard  
Highest Point: 4850m



*Alpamayo*

Without doubt, the Cordillera Blanca range provides some of the most spectacular and varied trekking and climbing landscapes in the world. The range boasts more than 50 peaks of 5700m or higher of which some 20 surpass the 6000 metre mark. Huascarán is, at 6768m, the highest mountain in Peru while the pyramid of Alpamayo is arguably its most beautiful peak. We find, within this 170km-long range, the greatest concentration of tropical-zone glaciers on earth. Turquoise glacial lakes abound and vertical granite walls rise thousands of metres into the sky.

Our Alpamayo trek weaves a route through the heart of the Cordillera Blanca, crossing a number of high passes which lead us into valleys with hugely varied mountain landscapes. The focal point of the trek is the famous Alpamayo pyramid, once voted the most beautiful mountain in the world. We have the opportunity to see it from Laguna Jancarurish.

For people who do not have time to do a full Alpamayo Circuit Trek (10 to 13 days) or who do not wish to be trekking and camping for so many days - we offer this shorter version for an Alpamayo Trek of 7 days, finishing at Jancapampa and then driving back through the town of Pomabamba and over the amazing Punta Olimpica Pass and through the tunnel at the top of the pass to finally return to Huaraz.

You can also add a day to make an 8 day trek or spend a night in Pomabamba to relax and enjoy a soak in the thermal baths there before continuing the road journey back to Huaraz



*Laguna Cullicocha*

**Note 1: Grading** We have graded this trek Medium to Hard. Although the hiking is not technical, you cross several high passes via steep ascents. There are also some long, hard physically demanding days. The effects of altitude make the trek more demanding than a similar trek at lower altitudes. Before taking on this trek you should be well acclimatised to altitude, have a good fitness level and be comfortable with sustained uphill climbs on sometimes steep terrain and prolonged descents of two to three hours, as well as short sections on loose ground. The trek involves several nights' camping, sometimes in cold conditions. Some hiking days are long - up to 7 or 8 hours depending in fitness

Most trekking options in the Cordillera Blanca should be considered to be physically demanding owing to the altitude (you are above 4000m for the duration of the treks) and the mountainous nature of the terrain. Trails on this trek are often steep - both ascending or descending and can be slippery & rocky in places. If you do not think you can enjoy this type of trekking, let us know and we can suggest some easier options

**Day A:** Arrive Huaraz

**Day B & C & D:** Acclimatisation walks. **We recommend 3 days of day hikes for acclimatization for this program.** On the first day hiking you go from 2900m direct up to the second camp at 4300 metres, followed by a tough day where we cross 2 high passes, both above 4770m. 3 day hikes to altitudes of up to 4440m will help to ensure that you are well acclimatized and fit and that you will get maximum enjoyment from your trek.

**Day 1: Drive from Huaraz to Hualcayan via Caraz. Greeting Party at Hualcayan**

We drive north from Huaraz, descending the vast Callejón de Huaylas valley by its paved road. We first stop to visit the memorial to Yungay, the town completely destroyed by a rock, ice and mud slide which came from the flanks of Huascarán during the 1970 earthquake. There is also time for a visit to the busy market in the small town of Caraz. We then take an unpaved road up into the mountains to our first camp at Hualcayan village (2900m), where we will be greeted by the local children. 5 hours drive including stops, 116kms.



*Greeting Party at Hualcayan*

**Day 2: Hualcayan to Wishcash**

We set off on a steady, continuous climb up a zig zag path to our camp at Wishcash (4300m), perched high up the mountainside. We have terrific views across the Callejón de Huaylas west to the Cordillera Negra. At night we can see the sparkling lights of the villages high up in the Cordillera Negra.

Approx. 8kms

5 hours

**Day 3: Wishcash to Ruinapampa via Lake Cullicocha and the Osoruri pass**

A tough day. We climb on a generally good zigzagging path to the crystal blue Laguna Cullicocha Lake (4650m). From here we enjoy a magnificent panorama; the summits of Santa Cruz (6259m), Santa Cruz Norte and Santa Cruz Chico rising steeply at the opposite end of the lake. As we continue our ascent towards the first pass, Paso Osoruri (4850m; joint-highest point on our trek), views of lakes and peaks get better and better. We then descend and climb again to Paso Vientunan (4770m), before embarking on a long switch-back descent to the depths of the Quebrada los Cedros Valley. Nearby, the terraced fields surrounding the thatch-roofed crofters' hamlet of Alpamayo are right at the agricultural limit. Soon after, we reach our camp at Ruinapampa (4050m).

Approx. 17kms

8 to 9 hours



*Cullicocha Lake & Santa Cruz Mountain*



*Paso Vientunan*

#### **Day 4: Ruinapampa to Cruce Alpamayo**

An almost flat few hours' walk up the beautiful Cedros valley. On the way, we'll see some ruined structures and ancient standing stones. Eventually, the beautiful pyramidal form of Alpamayo (5947m) comes into view. Camp at Cruce Alpamayo (4150m). From the camp there is a view of the Northwest face of Alpamayo

Approx. 6kms

3 to 4 hours

#### **Optional: Extra day at Cruce Alpamayo for R&R, side trips and to enjoy panoramas**

We spend another night at Cruce Alpamayo camp to greater appreciate the beauty of Alpamayo. Climb up the nearby moraine overlooking the Laguna Jancarurish glacial lake for close-up views of the Alpamayo and Jancarurish (5601m) peaks (3 hour return trip from camp). If you feel energised, you can continue upwards and onwards towards Alpamayo Base Camp (4500m). 5 to 6 hours return. If you prefer, you can simply rest in camp.



### **Day 5 (or 6): Cruce Alpamayo to Safuna via the Cara Cara Pass**

We cross the Los Cedros river and climb steadily to our next pass, the sometimes windy Cara Cara (4830m). This is the continental divide; all rivers running west head for the Pacific and those running east eventually reach the Atlantic, via the River Amazon. From here, there are great views back to the peaks of Alpamayo, Jancarurish, Quitaraju (6036m) and Laguna Jancarurish and the three peaks of Santa Cruz mountain . We descend to a plateau and spend two hours on an easy traverse to a second, low pass (Mesapata; 4500m), before dropping to camp at Safuna in the Quebrada Tayapampa (4200m).

Approx 10kms

7 hours



*Cara Cara Pass*

### **Day 6 (or 7): Safuna to Jancapampa**

We cross the Huilca plateau, one of few locations in the Cordillera Blanca where Alpacas are found in abundance. We ascend a narrow valley to a rocky pass, Paso Pucajirca (4600m), from which, weather permitting, we are treated to awesome views of the Pucajirca Norte snow peak (6046m). For a short time the descent is on steep scree, but it soon levels out as we continue down a shrub-filled valley, flanked by *quenua* (*polylepis* sp.) forest. We pass the

beautiful tree-fringed Laguna Sactaycocha and continue our descent through rich vegetation to the broad Quebrada Jancapampa valley. We camp near the head of the valley at 3600m; directly behind camp we have views of a huge hanging glacier and waterfalls cascading down a vast horseshoe of cliff hundreds of metres high. A lot of farming families live across the valley, and it is our first opportunity since Huallapa to meet friendly local people and curious, happy children.

Approx 14kms

7 to 8 hours



*Beer sellers at Jancapampa*



*Jancapampa Camp*

**Day 7 (or 8): Drive Jancapampa to Pomabamba and back to Huaraz**

An early start with a long road trip of 10 or 11 hours –at 06:00am our private transport arrives at Jancapampa Camp to take us back to Huaraz. First we are driving along a dirt road for 2 hours passing through the small town of Pomabamba and then 4 ½ hours more to San Luis. On the way we see a lot of farms, fields with sheep and cows and traditional farming houses. From San Luis we are on a good paved road and we climb up to the pass Punta Olimpica at 4735m. On the top of the pass we pass through an amazing 1380m road tunnel and we have a great view of Contrahierbas mountain and its glacier fields. After passing through the tunnel there is a long zig zag descent still on a good paved road down to the Ulta Valley where we have more mountain views of Matteo, Ulta Chopicalqui and Huascarán



*Punta Olimpica Tunnel*



*Uta valley*

*Approx: 298km drive  
10 to 11 hours*

*We leave the camp at 6:00am and we get to Huaraz around 4 to 5 pm*

***Option: You can choose to stay a relaxing night in the delightful town of Pomabamba, enjoy the thermal baths there and then continue the drive to Huaraz next day (extra fee for transport and Pomabamba accommodation)***



*Pomabamba*

### **Hiking Hours & Kms Hiked:**

Hiking hours are estimated times including rest breaks and lunch stop. Times are for our average groups based on past experience. Some people may be much faster and others slower.

Kms hiked are estimated.

**Trek Roads:** Access roads to and from treks are generally dirt mountain roads (not paved) and in some places can be bumpy. Road travel times are slower than you may expect for the kms travelled.

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