



PERUVIAN ANDES ADVENTURES

HUAYHUASH MINI TREK & CLIMB ISHINCA

10 days trek & climb (plus a rest day in Huaraz)

For those clients who would like to enjoy the spectacular scenery offered by the Cordillera Huayhuash and also take on the challenge of climbing a high altitude snow peak, but do not have time for a longer expedition – we combine a short trek through some of the most beautiful passes and campsites in the Huayhuash, followed by a short three day climb of the beginner suitable Ishinca in Cordillera Blanca mountain ranges.

The trek & climb combination allows you to experience the grandeur of both mountain ranges – the Cordillera Huayhuash and the Cordillera Blanca



Huayhuash Mini Trek

7 days trekking

Grade: Moderate

Highest Point: 4750m

This awesome short trek takes you to the pristine heartlands of the Cordillera Huayhuash, one of the most stunning mountain areas - and best-kept secrets - in the Americas.

Our Huayhuash Mini Trek is specially designed for those trekkers who do not have sufficient time to trek the complete Huayhuash Circuit (12-15 days), but still want to get to the heart of the awesome Cordillera Huayhuash and undertake some serious hiking.

We have designed the trekking route to include the overwhelming majority of the many breathtaking sections the Huayhuash range has to offer. You camp beside beautiful lakes which offer the most stunning panoramas of the range's largest mountains. These include Yerupajá (6634 metres), the second highest peak in Peru, Siula Grande (6344m), made famous by the book and film "Touching the Void", recounting Joe Simpson's epic feat of survival, Jirishanka (6094m) and many more.

There is a relaxing start to this trek. We drive from Huaraz to the eastern side of the Huayhuash and visit the impressive Inca ruins of Huanuco Viejo. After a night's camp on the extensive plateau of Huanuco Pampa, we continue to our trail head at Queropalca and begin the anti-clockwise trek which sees us through the beautiful wilderness of the Cordillera Huayhuash.

Ishinca Climb: 5530m (18143 ft)

Grade: PD- /Moderate snow climbing, beginner suitable, physically demanding
3 days

Ishinca can be climbed without previous climbing experience. We will provide basic instruction and support. Ishinca is a rewarding climb for both experienced and beginner climbers, with long enjoyable slopes of good snow. Most of the way is not very steep and not technical. Some years there can be short, steep sections, or some hard ice which is difficult to negotiate for beginner climbers; we would help you with this. Previous experience on snow and ice is not necessary, and we will provide some basic instruction at Base Camp, as well as support during the climb itself. Nevertheless, you do need to be strong to undertake the climbs.

Note 1: Grading & Fitness:

Trek: Although we grade the trek as moderate, you do have to cross four passes above 4500m. This implies demanding hiking and consequently both a reasonable level of fitness and adequate acclimatisation to altitude are necessary.

Ishinca Climb: Although we grade the climb Moderate and as being suitable for beginner climbers, the altitude at 5530m does make the climbing physically demanding. Although many guidebooks grade the climbs as "trekkers (or "trekking") peaks", you are actually climbing with rope, with ice axe and crampons and are at high altitude. Consequently it is more difficult climbing than similar climbs at lower altitudes. We do not classify any peaks in the Cordillera Blanca as "trekking peaks" and both these climbs are true physically demanding mountaineering. The climb has a long approach to the glacier over steep rocky moraine which many clients find demanding & difficult. The climb should be considered as being physically challenging. You should only consider climbing if you have good fitness and stamina levels and are strong and comfortable with hiking on steep & loose moraine rock.

Note 2: The routes used and the conditions on all the peaks are changing year by year, and even from month to month. The descriptions we have given are general only, and the routes used, conditions on the mountain and description of routes may change considerably by the time we are climbing. Conditions on all the mountains are changing rapidly due to global warming and rapid recession of glacial ice, and descriptions of routes that you may find in some guide books can be out dated within 12 months.

In some years on Ishinca it has been necessary to climb a steep ice wall at the glacier face to get from the moraine rock up onto the snow. Other times there has been an easy route from the rock to the glacier. The glacier face of Ishinca changes continuously and we cannot say how easy it will be to get up onto the glacier and the good snow until we arrive there. If the climb onto the glacier is steep the guide(s) will help you.

Note 3: The guide in charge of your climb will be one of our local experienced & professional UIAGM International Mountain Guides.



Itinerary:

Day A: Arrive Huaraz (3090m).

Day B & C: Huaraz acclimatisation days. We can organise day hikes to help with acclimatisation.

Day 1: Drive Huaraz/Huanuco Pampa & Visit Remote Huanuco Viejo Ruins

We drive in our private bus for some 5 or 6 hours 230kms from Huaraz to Huanuco Pampa (3736m). Along the way we have our first distant views of the breathtaking Cordillera Huayhuash. We stop to take in the amazing views and marvel at the vastness of the surrounding countryside. We set up camp under vast blue skies at Huanuco Pampa, near the Inca ruins of Huanuco Viejo which we spend the afternoon visiting. The site was an important Inca settlement, probably a *tambo* - major stopover point and storage site - built on the main Cuzco-Quito route. The site covers several hundred hectares and substantial ruins remain, including the main temple *usnu*, accommodation for the Inca elite, women's quarters and a garrison, not to mention private quarters and baths for the visiting Inca. We see fine examples of the same intricate stonework found in Cusco, with solid walls of precisely interlocking stones which have withstood centuries of earthquakes.



Huanucopampa Ruins

Day 2: Hiking to Laguna Carhuacocha Lake and Camp on the Lakeshore

Drive for 3 to 4 hours 105kms from Huanuco Viejo via Baños village to Queropalca village at 3800m. In Queropalca we meet our donkey drivers and donkeys and start the trek with a relaxing uphill hike on a gentle gradient to Laguna Carhuacocha (4200m). From the camp we have astonishing views across the lake to the Yerupaja Grande, Yerupaja Chico (6121m), Jirishanca and Siula Grande.

Approx. 11kms hiking

4 hours



Hiking to Carhuacocha



Carhuacocha Lake

Day 3: Side Trip to the Spectacular Laguna Siula Lakes and Return to Carhuacocha Camp

We stay another night at Carhuacocha to enjoy the mountain surroundings. We take a day hike up a side valley past the base of Yerupaja and Siula Grande. Here we find 3 glacial lakes, all unique in that each has a different shade of blue or green. Sometimes we see avalanches coming off the glaciers into the lakes.

Note: For the fit and adventurous, it is possible to continue by hiking a circuit up past the Siula Glacier to a pass at 4800 metres, and then return along an unmarked trail through a high hidden valley where we often see wild vicuña grazing, before descending back to Laguna Carhuacocha (a total 8 hours for the day). Alternatively, you may prefer a quiet afternoon trout fishing!



Siula Lakes

Hiking towards the Pass

Day 4: Via Punta Carhuac to Laguna Mitucocha

A steady ascent on a good path takes us to Punta Carhuac (4650m) pass, with good opportunities en route of spotting the elusive Viscacha rodent, endemic to the high Andes. From here, weather permitting, we will enjoy excellent views of the Yerupaja and Siula Grande peaks.

We descend on grass to the Janca plateau then head southeast to reach tonight's camp at another large, trout-filled lake; Laguna Mitucocha (4250m). After lunch, you have the option of walking around the lake. From our camp we have superb views of the sheer face of Jirishanca (6094m) and Jirishanka Chico. [In 2013 season the local community have requested that groups do not camp](#)

next to the lake to protect the grass for their animals in the area. The campsite is now 15 minutes hike down river from the lake in a flat area

Approx. 12kms

4 to 5 hours



Mitucocha Lake

Day 5: Via the Cacanan Punta Pass and Quartelhuain to the Rondoy Valley

In the morning we continue anti-clockwise across *puna* grasslands (paramo) and cross the pass – indeed the Continental Divide - at Cacanan Punta (4700m). We descend to the Quebrada Cuncush, a broad valley flanked by vast expanses of quenual forest, and pass a collection of crofts known as Quartelhuain, the site of tonight's camp (4350m).

Approx. 12kms

6 to 7 hours.



Cacanan Pass



Quartelhuain & Rondoy Valley

Day 6: To Laguna Jahuacocha via the Rondoy Pass

We make a long traversing ascent to the Rondoy Pass (4750m). From here we enjoy yet more awesome views of the nearby peaks, the highest Huayhuash peak, Yerupaja (6634m), as well as Rondoy and others, dominating the panorama.



Rondoy Pass

The descent from the pass takes us first past a stunning, milky-blue glacial lake, Solteracocha, and then along the shore of the beautiful Laguna Jahuacocha to our picturesque camp at the head of the lake (4150m).

Approx. 14kms

A harder day - 7 hours.



Laguna Jahuacocha

Day 7: Walk from Laguna Jahuacocha to Llamac. Drive from Llamac to Huaraz

After an early start and gentle descent for an hour, we start our gradual climb to the final pass, Pampa Llamac (4300m), from where we have our final views of much of the Huayhuash range. Then it is a long descent back to the Llamac valley and the village of Llamac.

Approx. 14kms hiking

5½ to 6 hours

In Llamac the bus will be waiting to take us back to Huaraz and your hotel for that long-awaited hot shower!! We arrive in Huaraz at about 06:00pm.



Huayhuash Trout



Llamac Pass



Llamac

Day 8: Rest Day in Huaraz & prepare for climbing trip

Day 9: Drive from Huaraz to Pashpa or Collón. Hike to Ishinca Base Camp

We drive 1½ hours from Huaraz to the village of either Pashpa or Collón (3400m). We then walk up the Quebrada Ishinca valley on a gently rising path to our camp at the head of the valley. This is a lovely walk, starting on a plateau with views of Huascarán, then passing through beautiful Quenual (polylepis sp.) forest. As we walk up the valley, it opens out, and we see Tocllaraju ahead. Ishinca Base Camp is at 4390m. 5 to 6 hours.



Local Collon Ladies



Hike from Pashpa



Approaching Base Camp – the peak to the left is Tocllaraju



Ishinca Base Camp

Day 10: Ishinca Base Camp to Ishinca Summit and Rack

Today we climb Ishinca. We leave camp at 3am and undertake a steady climb, initially on a good path to Lake Ishinca (2½ to 3 hours). Then we continue hiking over more demanding, steep moraine rock until we reach the glacier. We put on crampons and rope up then climb the north face of Ishinca, a steady slope, not too steep overall, although with a few short steeper sections. The final 40 metres to the summit, however, is on a gradient of some 50 deg. which the guide(s) will help you with. Some years, depending on the condition of the glacier, there can be some hard ice, especially at the glacial face to climb up onto the start of the glacier which involves a short section of steep ice climbing, but we will help you with this. It's about 3 to 3½ hours on the ice to the summit. Depending on conditions on the mountain, we may instead climb the East face of Ishinca, approaching from the Ranrapalca glacier. This side is also a medium climb and suitable for novice climbers. Return the same way to Base Camp. 9 to 12 hours, depending on fitness.



Ishinca Early Morning



On Ishinca Summit



On Ishinca, Behind is Ranrapalca



Day 11: Descend Hiking to Collón or Pashpa and Drive to Huaraz

A relaxing 4-hour walk down the Quebrada Ishinca valley to Pashpa or Collón and return to Huaraz in our vehicle.

The ultimate decision about whether a route is safe to climb, or whether an alternative route must be found, or at worst that it is not safe to continue, will be made by the Peruvian Andes Adventures guide.

Trekking & Climbing Hours:

Climbing times are estimated times and based on our average climbing groups from 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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