



## PERUVIAN ANDES ADVENTURES

### ALPAMAYO BASE CAMP TREK & CLIMB ISHINCA 5530m

13 days trek & climb , plus a rest day in Huaraz  
Option for 12 days



*Laguna Cullicocha- Alpamayo Base Camp Trek*

For strong hikers who would also like to attempt to climb a 5000m mountain, this program offers some of the best of the Cordillera Blanca. An exciting high altitude trek combined with a summit – maybe your first attempt at a snow & ice covered peak

#### **Trek Vaqueria to Hualcayan**

10 days trekking (can be 9 days)  
Grade: Moderate to HARD  
Highest Point on Trek: 4860m

#### **Ishinca Climb:** 5530m (18143 ft)

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

### **Alpamayo Base Camp Trek:**

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 Base Camp trek: Vaqueria to Hualcayan 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 the lake Laguna Jancarurish.

### **Ishinca Climb:**

Ishinca can be climbed without previous climbing experience. We will provide 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 climb.



*Ishinca*

Of all the climbs in the Cordillera Blanca, we would consider Ishinca (and Urus) to have the least amount of difficult climbing and possibly therefore to be most achievable objectives for clients who want the experience of attempting to climb a 5000m plus peak.

### **Note 1:**

**Grading Trek:** We grade the trek as Moderate to HARD because you cross several high passes and there are some long hard days mixed with short easier days. The effects of altitude make the trek demanding and harder than a similar trek at lower altitudes. You need to be well acclimatised to the

altitude before starting this trek and need to have good fitness levels, be able to hike for a long day up to 7 or 8 hours, and manage the steep climbs up to the top of the passes and descents back down to enjoy this trek.

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

**Grading Climb:** Although we grade the climb as being 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 all climbs are true physically demanding mountaineering. All climbs including Ishinca have long approaches 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 this climbs if you have good fitness and stamina levels and are strong and comfortable with hiking on steep & loose moraine rock.

#### **Note 2: Trek 9 or 10 days**

The penultimate day of this trek is a hard day when we have to climb to the top of two passes in a single day.

The 10 day trek is a more relaxing option with an extra day being spent at the camp near Alpamayo to admire the views of Alpamayo & surrounding mountains, maybe hike up towards Alpamayo Base Camp or just relax in camp, enjoy good food and recover energy levels.

**Note 3:** 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 4:** The guide in charge of your climb will be one of our local experienced & professional UIAGM International Mountain Guides.



## **Itinerary**

**Day A:** Arrive Huaraz

## **Day B & C: Huaraz, Acclimatisation day hikes**

### **Day 1: Drive Huaraz to Vaquería via Llanganuco pass. Hike to Paria Camp**

Drive from Huaraz down the broad Callejón de Huaylas valley to Yungay, then up towards the Cordillera Blanca peaks, into the Huascarán National Park and past the famous turquoise Llanganuco Lakes. We continue onwards and upwards to the Portachuelo de Llanganuco road pass (4767m). Here we stop to enjoy views of a number of spectacular high Andean peaks, including Huascarán, Huandoy (6395m) and Chopicalqui (6,345m), as well as the Llanganuco lakes a kilometre below us. We descend to Vaqueria (3600m), arriving after 4 to 5 hours 135kms drive.

At Vaqueria our equipment is loaded onto donkeys and we have a relaxing hike on a gradually rising path to a secluded campsite in the Quebrada Paria Valley (3900m)



*Paria*

During the walk up the Quebrada Huaripampa valley to Paria, we pass by many farm houses and see a lot of local people, children, sheep, goats and donkeys along the trail.

Approx. 7kms

4 to 5 hours hiking

(We may decide to camp at an alternative earlier campsite near the river at Cachina 3700m about one hour before Paria).

### **Day 2: Short Walk to Tuctubamba, with optional side trip to Punta Union Pass**



*Punta Union Pass*

Options today of either a short day, with 3 hours' hiking on up the Quebrada Huaripampa valley to camp at Tuctubamba (4200m), OR we can take a side trip en route and climb up to the top of the

Punta Union pass (4750m) to have fantastic views down into the Santa Cruz Valley, before returning to our camp at Tuctubamba. Allow 3 to 4 hours extra for this round trip.

**Day 3: Tuctubamba to Laguna Huecrococha, via Pass Alto de Pacaraju**

We climb steeply on a rocky trail to the top of the Alto de Pacaraju Pass (4650m). At the pass there are magnificent views of many peaks, and at 5830m the Nevado Taulliraju mountain towers over us. We then have a long descent - initially on switchbacks, then on a sweeping path - down through lupin covered hillside and *quenual* (*polylepis* sp.) forest to camp at a small lake, Laguna Huecrococha, at 3950m.

Approx. 7 ½ kms

7 hours.



**Day 4: Huecrococha to Jancapampa, via Tupatupa Pass**

After a short initial descent, we climb gradually, then more steeply to the Tupatupa pass (4400m), with views back to several big snow capped peaks of the Cordillera Blanca, including Pucajirca Norte (6050m), and then descend to camp at the top of a wide valley at Jancapampa (3600m). Directly behind camp we have views of a huge hanging glacier releasing waterfalls down a broad, horseshoe-shaped wall of granite hundreds of metres high. A lot of farming families live in the valley, and we will be visited at camp by some of the friendly local people and curious, happy children.

Approx. 12kms

7 to 8 hours



*Jancapampa*

**Day 5: Jancapampa to Safuna via Pucajirca pass**

We start with a long climb - gradual in parts, steeper in others - up a forested valley with occasional clearings, to the beautiful Laguna Sactaycocha lake. From here, now amid grassy shrubland, we climb steeply to the top of the rocky Paso Pucajirca pass (4600m). On a clear day, the awesome Pucajirca Norte can be seen rising steeply to the southwest.

We descend to camp at Safuna in the Quebrada Tayapmapa (4200m), passing a large Alpaca flock at Huillca. A long day.

Approx. 14kms  
7 to 8 ½ hours.



**Day 6: Safuna to Cruce Alpamayo via Mesapata and Cara Cara Passes**

We cross two passes today. The first is via a gradual, grassy ascent to the Mesapata Pass (4500m). We then enjoy a long traverse, skirting around swamplands, and continue with a steep climb to the high and sometimes windy Cara Cara Pass (4830m). From here we get our first great views of the pyramid shaped Alpamayo (5947m), its neighbouring peaks Jancarurish and Quitaraju (6036m), and Laguna Jancarurish lake directly below us. We descend to camp below the majestic Alpamayo at the camp named Cruce Alpamayo (4150m). From the camp there is a view of the Northwest face of Alpamayo

Approx. 10kms  
7 hours



*Cara Cara Pass*

**Day 7:** *(can be omitted to make a 9 day trek)*

***Extra day Cruce Alpamayo for Rest or 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).



*Laguna Jancarurish & Alpamayo*

If you feel energised, you can continue upwards and hike up past Alpamayo Base Camp (4500m). 5 to 6 hours return. If you prefer, you can simply rest in camp.



*Hiking to Cruce Alpamayo – Alpamayo Mountain is in the Distance*

**Day 8: Cruce Alpamayo to Plataforma de Valle Dos Cedros**

Tomorrow is a hard day so today we take it easy with a relaxing hike, initially descending down the valley Quebrada Dos Cedros for 2 hours to Ruinapampa before a final hour of uphill hiking on a zig zag path to our secluded campsite on a plateau away from the main trail (4200m). From the camp we can admire the jagged peaks of Milluacocha & Tayapampa.

Approx. 7kms

3 hours

**Day 9: Plataforma de Valle Dos Cedros to Laguna Cullicocha, via Vientunan & Osoruri passes**

This is a hard day with two big passes to cross. We start with a long climb towards the south on a well-used trail to the Paso Vientunan pass (4770m). We then descend for about 150 metres and climb again to a second pass, Paso Osoruri (also called Cullicocha) (4860m). As we begin our descent, there are fabulous views of the surrounding mountains, especially the magnificent triple summit of Santa Cruz (6259m). We camp at the crystal blue Laguna Cullicocha lake (4650m); from camp we have a phenomenal view of Santa Cruz at the top of the lake.

Approx. 9kms

6 to 7 hours.



*Cullicocha Lake*

**Day 10: Long descent to Hualcayan village. Vehicle to Huaraz**

It's a long downhill from here all the way from Laguna Cullicocha via switchbacks and traverses to the last, long zig-zag track down to the village of Hualcayan (2900m).

Approx. 11kms

5 to 6 hours.

Our private van will be waiting for us at Hualcayan to drive us about 4 hours 116kms back to Huaraz.

**Day 11: Rest Day in Huaraz & Prepare for Ishinca Climb**

**Day 12: 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 Quenua (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.



*Ishinca Base Camp – the peak to the left is Tocllaraju*

**Day 13: Ishinca Base Camp to Ishinca Summit and Back**

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.



*On Ishinca - Looking Across to Tocllaraju*

***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.

**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.

**Copy:**

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