



## PERUVIAN ANDES ADVENTURES

### THREE CLIMBS in the ISHINCA VALLEY

7 Days

#### Peaks:

**Urus:** 5495m (18028 ft)

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

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

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

**Tocllaraju:** 6034m (19797 ft)

Grade: D / Hard / Some steep & technical climbing



*Tocllaraju*

From our base in the beautiful Ishinca Valley we can climb three peaks. Urus & Ishinca are non technical peaks which are ideal as warm up climbs, then finally we attempt 6034m Tocllaraju.

Some years, depending on amounts of snowfall, Urus involves more time climbing on a moraine ridge rather than on snow & ice, but it is nonetheless an excellent peak on which to gain further acclimatisation and strength. Ishinca is a rewarding climb for both experienced and beginner climbers, with long enjoyable slopes of good snow.

Ishinca can be climbed from two different routes. The North Face route is the left ridge as you approach the mountain and has the easiest access to reach the glacier but the actual climb is steeper with much of the climbing on 35° to 50° degrees snow and there can be some sections of hard ice. There are also many crevasses to negotiate around and a final 50m steep section to reach the summit.

The alternative option is to approach the mountain via Ranrapalca & this may be preferred by less experienced snow climbers. The hike up to the glacier is tougher with some large moraine rock to climb around, but once on the glacier it is a relatively gently and pleasant snow climb on an open ridge of 25° to 30° degrees slope. There are some small crevasses but they are easily negotiated around. Only the last 2m to 3m to the summit is steep.

We climb Urus & Ishinca first to gain acclimatisation and fitness, then you should be ready to challenge the more technical Tocllaraju - maybe your first 6000m peak.

Tocllaraju has some sections of steep and technical climbing, and we recommend that clients have previous experience climbing on snow and ice with crampons and ice axe, and experience with belay techniques, anchor placement and descent by rappel. Tocllaraju is not a suitable climb for clients who do not have good basic climbing skills.

There are about 5 large crevasses during the route, which during the 2013 season were safely negotiated via secure snow bridges or by jumping over them. However, the conditions of these snow bridges may alter and the guide may make a decision to try to find an alternative route to negotiate around crevasses.

The final shoulder summit of Tocllaraju involves more technical climbing with some open crevasses to be climbed through with 2 or 3 short pitches of 30° to 45° degrees ice climbing required. After the crevasses the final obstacle is a steep and exposed bergschrund lasting around 65m with grades 60° to 70°. The guide may set up a fixed rope to climb the bergschrund. Once at the top of the bergschrund there is a gentle walk on nice snow to the summit.

**Note 1: Acclimatisation & Fitness** *It is important that you are well acclimatised to the altitude before attempting to climb any peaks in the Cordillera Blanca, thus avoiding possible problems with lack of energy or altitude-related illnesses when climbing. Climbing above 5000m is physically demanding and it is particularly important to be well acclimatised to the altitude for a 6000m peak.*

*We always recommend a trek of minimum 4 days for acclimatization before departing for the climbing trip.*

*We can also organise a suitable acclimatisation trek for you if you are not organising your own trek.*

*Tocllaraju is a physically demanding climb and a high standard of fitness & strength is necessary.*

**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.*

**Tocllaraju** *is subject to very rapid changes in the condition of the glacier and large crevasses can open up or close within a period of just a few days.*

**Note 3:** *Donkeys carry all equipment to Ishinca Base Camp. You carry just a light day pack. It is necessary to carry all equipment up to Tocllaraju Morena Camp. Porters carry tents, rope, food and cooking equipment, but you need to carry your own personal gear & climbing equipment.*

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



### **Day 1: 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. Base Camp is at 4390m. 5 to 6 hours.



*Local Collon Ladies*



*Hike from Pashpa*



*Approaching Base Camp*



*Ishinca Base Camp*

### **Day 2: Ishinca Base Camp to Urus Summit and Return**

Today we climb the East Face of Urus. Leaving camp at 4am, we make a steep climb directly up a ridge and across large moraine rocks until we reach the ice after 3½ hours. There's a steadier gradient on the ice for one hour, then the last half hour to the summit is an easier rock climb. **Note**, however, that some years and months there can be deep snow all the way to the summit. Arrive at the summit to see the sun rise on Tocllaraju, Akilpo, Palcaraju and Ishinca. A steep & long descent back to camp by the same route. 7 hours.



*Urus Route*



*On Urus*

**Day 3: REST DAY**

**Day 4: Climb Ishinca**

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 for the climb. Which route we climb will be decided by the guide having regard to weather, experience and fitness of the clients.

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, but we will help you with this. It's about 3 to 3½ hours on the ice to the summit. 9 to 12 hours for the day, depending on fitness.



*Ishinca Early Morning – North Face*



*On Ishinca – North Face*



*On Ishinca, Ranrapalca Route - Behind is Ranrapalca*



*Ishinca Summit*

**Day 5: Base Camp to Tocllaraju Morena Camp**

We leave Base Camp mid-morning, carrying all our equipment, and climb to Tocllaraju High Camp. It is a steep climb on a moraine ridge and across large moraine rocks for 3 to 4 hours to where we set up our camp on the moraine immediately below the glacier at Morena Camp (5100m).



*Tocllaraju Morena Camp 5100m*

**Day 6: Tocllaraju Morena Camp to Tocllaraju Summit and Descend to Base Camp**

We leave camp early (around 1 or 2am) to climb to the summit. From the Morena Camp there is steady and pleasant climbing which is not very steep for the first 3 ½ hours. We come to the first large crevasse *which in 2013 season was able to be crossed*. We then negotiate a steep section of 60m of about 70 to 45 degrees slope.



We then climb steadily and not too steeply along a ridge until we reach a second large crevasse at the start of the north ridge of Tocllaraju. We cross the crevasse by another snow bridge, then continue to a steep bergschrund of up to 70 degrees and about 65m in length; this marks the start of the summit climb, and feels quite exposed. The guide will fix a rope for climbing this section.



*Arriving At the Bergschrund*



*Climbing the Bergschrund*

After reaching the top of the bergschrund it is a relaxing snow hike to the summit. From the summit we descend with several rappels, collect our things from Moraine Camp and descend to Base Camp. From 12 to 14 hours for the day.

**Day 7: Walk from Base Camp to Pashpa, then drive to Huaraz**

We walk down the Ishinca Valley to Pashpa (4 hours) and return to Huaraz in our vehicle.

***Important Note:*** *Conditions on all the glaciers in the Cordillera Blanca change rapidly. It can be the case that during the course of the season, the large accumulations of snow disappear and more crevasses can open or existing crevasses become larger. Alternatively, the route can become easier to negotiate. Although this is the general description of condition at this time, when we go to climb we may encounter different conditions or obstacles.*

***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.***



*Happy Group Celebrating on Tocllaraju Summit*

**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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