

PERUVIAN ANDES ADVENTURES

CIRCUIT OF THE CORDILLERA HUAYHUASH via TRAPECIO PASS

09 days trekking (option for 08 days)

Grade: Hard

Highest Point: 5050m

The Cordillera Huayhuash Circuit has been nominated in several guidebooks as one of the classic trekking circuits of the world.

The Huayhuash is a compact, rugged range of jagged, vertical summits, including the second highest peak in Peru, Yerupajá Grande (6634m), as well as half a dozen other peaks above six thousand metres.

Every day on this trek, hikers are treated to awesome views of towering snow capped peaks, glaciers and turquoise-blue trout-filled lakes. There are 7 passes to cross on this spectacular trek, the highest Trapecio Pass at 5050m



Descending from Trapecio Pass – past Lake Huanacpataycocha

Note 1: Acclimatisation & Fitness:

This is a **VERY HARD** trek and it is important that you are well acclimatised to the altitude before you depart from Huaraz to start the trek. On the first day when you travel from Huaraz (3070m) to Quartelhuain (4200m) by road you have an altitude gain of 1130m and on the first day trekking you cross a pass of 4700m.

We **highly recommend** three days (four nights) for acclimatisation in Huaraz, doing day hikes progressively gaining altitude to above 4000m to be well acclimatised for this trek.

If you start your trek from Quartelhuain at 4200m without sufficient acclimatisation, the risk of becoming unwell with altitude related problems during the first days of the trek is high

It is important to have good physical fitness and be able to hike up to 2 hours to the top of a high pass each day during the trek.

Trails on this trek are often steep – both ascending and descending and can be slippery & rocky in places. Trails are not formed paths and are not maintained, they are dirt trails also used by animals and are uneven underfoot.

The trail over Trapecio Pass is not a formed trail. Much of the way is route finding through tussock grasses and over moraine rock. You need to be comfortable with this type of hiking

You should NOT consider this 9 day trek unless you have good physical fitness and are well acclimatised to the altitude.

Note 2: Walking times are average hiking times. The altitude affects people differently. Some people will be faster than the indicated times and others will be much slower.

Note 3: The Cordillera Huayhuash is becoming known to be one of the most beautiful high altitude treks in the world. Although you are trekking through a remote area, you can expect that there will also be several other groups and also independent hikers on the route

Note 4: The **Huayhuash** trek route is all on community owned farmland. There are small farm houses and some farm animals (cattle, sheep, horses and sometimes alpacas & llamas) all along the trekking route, included surprisingly at the top of the high passes

Note 5: All land along the Cordillera Huayhuash trekking routes is privately owned community farmland (not National Park or Government owned). The local Huayhuash communities allow trekking groups to pass through and camp on their private land and we ask that all hikers respect their goodwill in allowing us to hike in the beautiful Cordillera Huayhuash by leaving no rubbish, taking care of farm animals and respecting the local people that we will meet along the trek route and in campsites. Each community charges access and camping fees for each campsite (included in trek fee). As part of the camping fee they provide toilets in the campsites.

Itinerary

Day A: Arrive Huaraz (3070m).

Day B & C & D: Acclimatization days in Huaraz, three days (4 nights). We can organise day hikes.

Day 1: Huaraz to Quartelhuain via Chiquián & Llamac by Road

We drive from Huaraz to Chiquián, enjoying distant views of the awesome Huayhuash range from afar. From Chiquián we descend to a cactus-and-scrub environment and continue to the village of Llamac (3300m) and then into a wide U-shaped grassy valley with rolling hills and flanked by some broad expanses of *quenual* (polylepis sp.) forest. We camp at Quartelhuain. (4200m)
6 hours drive, 174kms



Quartelhuain

Day 2: Quartelhuain to Laguna Mitucocha via Cacanán Punta Pass

This morning we cross our first pass, Cacanán Punta (4700m). Here, at the Continental Divide, we sometimes observe the Andean Condor flying overhead.

From the pass we have a view of the Lake Pucacocha. Then we descend down to the Quebrada Caliente and to the Jalca Plain and on to our camp at Janca (4180m) located in a beautiful plateau area at the foot of the stunning Jirishanka Grande peak, and its neighbours Rondoy and Ninashanca. If you have the energy, there's the option this afternoon of walking around the lake Mitucocha (4200m) or up to one of the nearby hanging valleys.

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 30 minutes hike down river from the lake in a flat area

Approx. 12kms

5 to 6 hours' hiking.



Cacanán Pass



Mitucocha lake



Mitucocha Campsite - Janca

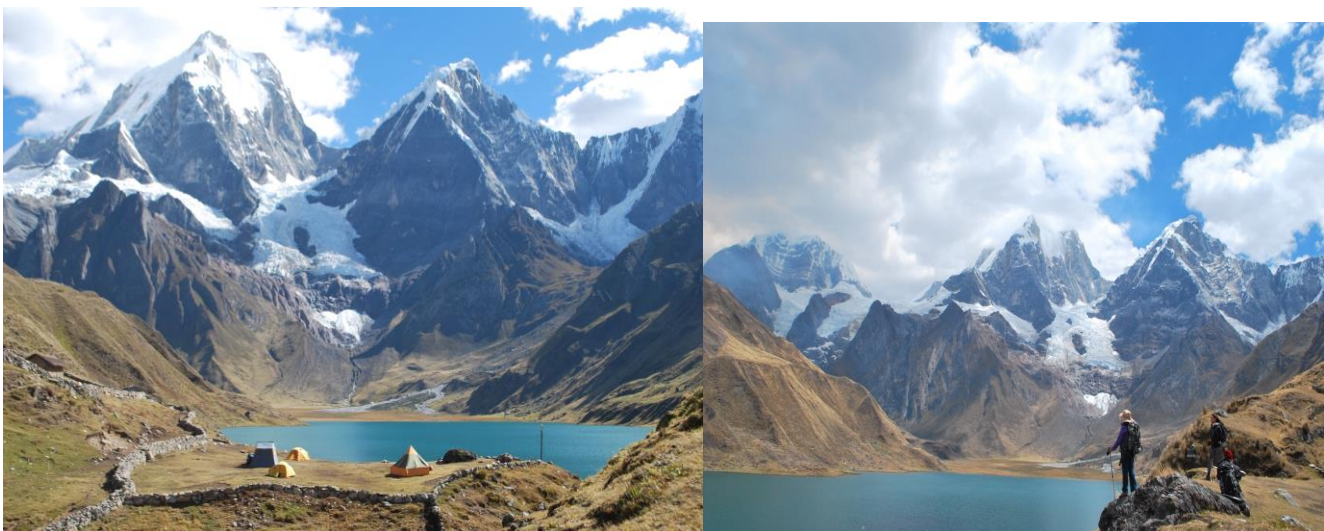
Day 3: Laguna Mitucocha Lake to Laguna Carhuacocha Lake, via Punta Carhuac Pass

We flank the Jalca floodplain then ascend south to the Paso de Carhuac pass (4650m). From here an awesome panorama suddenly comes into view; a row of Huayhuash giants: Yerupajá Grande, the second highest mountain in Peru, Yerupajá Chico (6121m) and Siulá Grande (6344m), of "Touching the Void" fame.

From here we descend to the large Laguna Carhuacocha (4150m), with the chance en route of spotting Viscacha rodents among the moronic debris. We walk around the side of the lake, passing by some shepherds huts to arrive at the campsite by the lake. From our camp we look directly up the lake to the peaks and ice fields of the famous Siula Grande, Yerupajá Grande and Chico and Jirishanka Chico.

Approx. 12kms

6 hours



Carhuacocha Lake

Note: *If the weather is good and you are feeling strong, we can take an alternative and far more demanding route between the Laguna Mitucocha and Carhuacocha lakes via a 4800m pass, with great close-up views of Jirishanka Chico and a beautiful deep-blue high lake Alcaicocha. There is*

no track to follow on the alternative route, and a short section of scrambling on rock has to be negotiated, so we only use this route for very fit and experienced trekkers.

Day 4: Free Day at Laguna Carhuacocha for Rest or Day Hike

Delete this day for 8 day trek

We spend an extra night in this idyllic spot to enjoy our spectacular surroundings. You could take a half-day hike around the lake, maybe taking in a hanging valley at the foot of Jirishanka Chico, or a day hike up to the three glacial fed lakes at the base of Siula Grande. Alternatively, have a rest day or catch some trout for dinner!



Siula Lakes



Ice on Siula Lake

Day 5: Laguna Carhuacocha Lake to Huayhuash

We leave Laguna Carhuacocha behind heading east, then turning up a side valley, ascend southwards towards the Paso Carnicero pass (4600m). It is not a difficult climb, although we will still feel the altitude. We make an easy descent to camp among a sprinkling of local farm homes in the open Huayhuash valley (4330m)

Approx. 13kms

7 to 8 hours



Carnicero Pass

Most groups that have the extra night at Carhuacocha choose to hike to Siula lakes on the extra day and then hike over Carnicero Pass to Huayhuash. This way they enjoy the scenery on both routes

Day 6: Huayhuash over Trapecio Pass to Elefante Campsite in Huanacpatay Valley

From Huayhuash camp we start a steady uphill climb towards Trapecio Pass. As we climb we have nice views of Mitococha and Barroso lagoons. Some sections of the trail are difficult to find as we are walking through *ichu* grass (tussock) and as we are getting closer to the pass the trail is across moraine rock. At the pass (5050m) we stop to enjoy stunning views of Trapecio, Puscanturpa and Cuyoc mountains and surrounding valleys. We then start the descent from the pass on an unmarked rock moraine route passing by a beautiful turquoise glacial lake Huanacpatay on the way. We continue the descent to our camp (named Elefante) in the Huanacpatay Valley at 3350m

This is one of the longest and toughest days of the trek – we recommend starting early
Approximately 8 hours



Hiking up to Trapecio Pass – past Trapecio Glacier

Day 7: Elefante Camp Huanacpatay Valley to Huatiac Camp, via Huayllapa Village

This is a hard day also because we have a sustained climb to camp late in the day. We begin by resuming our descent of the Quebrada Huanacpatay valley, culminating in a steep switchback drop off the Huanacpatay valley before turning west into the agricultural Quebrada Huayllapa valley (the first sign of crops for over a week). We continue until, just before the tiny village of Huayllapa (the first since Llamac and last before we return to Llamac), we begin a hard climb in

the afternoon of about 2 to 2½ hours to our campsite high up on the flat pasture of Huatiac (4350m).

Approx. 18kms

8 to 9 hours



Huayllapa Village



Huatiac Camp

Day 8: Huatiac to Laguna Jahuacocha lake, via the Tapush & Yaucha Passes

Another long, tough day - today sees us cross two passes. First we complete the climb to the Punta Tapush pass (4750m), then descend past Laguna Susucocha for an 1 to 1½ hours before turning east and climbing again to the Punta Yaucha (4800m) pass. During the descent the peaks of Rondoy, Jirishanca, Yerupajá, Rasac (6017m) and Sacra come into view. We follow the Quebrada Huacrish valley to its confluence with the Quebrada Jahuacocha valley and descend on zig-zags to our picturesque camp at the head of the beautiful Laguna Jahuacocha (4150m). Across the lake from our camp we enjoy one of the best panoramas in the Andes; the west face of the highest peaks in the range rising dramatically skyward. There are Jirishanca, Yerupajá Grande with its vast snaking glacier, Yerupajá Chico and Rondoy.

Approx. 20kms

8 hours



Huatiac to Tapush Pass



Laguna Jahuacocha

Day 09: Walk from Jahuacocha to Llamac via the Llamac pass. Drive 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.



Donkeys Crossing River Jahuacocha



Llamac Pass



Llamac Pass

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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