

## Perú:

# The Ausangate Circuit Exploratory Trek

Nevado Ausangate (Ow-Son-Gah-Tay) at 21,028 feet is the highest peak in the Cuzco region and can be viewed from the ancient Inca capital. It is considered a sacred mountain by locals who believe the God "Apu" resides there. Local shamans still perform important ceremonies at the base of this stunning peak.

Covered in massive glaciers and surrounded by a patchwork of remote Andean villages, pristine alpine lakes, hot springs and rugged high mountain passes, the Circuit is a challenging and remote high altitude trek.

The trip's difficulty is softened by full support from our local staff including cooks and a local guide. We will use pack animals to carry all of our food, camping equipment and extra clothing leaving us with light daypacks to fully enjoy our days' efforts. Hot springs baths at the beginning and end of our trek will prepare and soothe sore muscles while we take in the stunning vistas that surround us.

Our journey begins in Cuzco, Peru where we will spend two full days acclimatizing to the higher altitude with explorations of Inca ruins around the city followed by a journey into the Sacred Valley where more remarkable ruins await us.

On day five of the trip we will drive to the town of Tinquí and the start of our seven day high mountain adventure.

## Trip Summary

- Explore Cuzco, the Ancient Inca Capital and the Sacred Valley
- 04 Nights Hotel/06 Nights Camping
- 07 Days High Altitude Trekking
- High Mountains, Rugged Passes, Alpine Lakes, Hot Springs
- View Traditional Andean Village Life

## Itinerary

*Key: B, L, D—breakfast, lunch, and/or dinner included; O/N—overnight in hotel or camping*

### Day One, Depart Home

### Day Two, Arrive Lima; Fly to Cuzco

After arriving in Lima and passing through immigration, proceed to the domestic terminal for your flight to Cuzco. A Lotus representative will meet you at the airport in Cuzco and transfer you to the Hotel Marqueses. Cuzco sits at almost 11,000 feet above sea level. The next few days will be spent in and around Cuzco acclimatizing to the higher altitude and exploring our surroundings. Trip orientation in the afternoon. The evening is free. *O/N, Hotel Marqueses*

### Day Three, Sacred Valley Tour

Early morning pick up at the hotel. From Cuzco, we travel by motor vehicle over the mountains and drop 1,500 feet into the Urubamba or Sacred Valley. Our first stop is the village of Pisac where we will visit an Indian handicraft market. From lower Pisac, we drive to the extensive ruins of Pisac with tremendous views over the valley. After lunch in Urubamba, we continue to the village of Ollantaytambo, built on traditional Inca foundations and the best surviving example of Inca city planning. We then return to Cuzco for the night. *B; O/N, Hotel Marqueses*

### Day Four, Half-day Tour to Sacsayhuaman

As our bodies continue to adjust to the higher altitude and in preparation for our trek we will visit the ruins of Sacsayhuaman above Cuzco and walk back to town. Sacsayhuaman had important religious and military significance to the Inca. It was utilized as a fort and provided food and shelter for 5000 Inca warriors. The fort was the site of one of the bitterest battles between Inca and Spaniards and was subsequently torn down by the Spanish after defeating the Inca. The afternoon is free to explore, rest or prepare for the trekking portion of your journey. *B; O/N, Hotel Marqueses*

### Day Four, Drive to Tinquí, Begin Trek

Our exploratory journey begins....We will drive 4-5 hours to the village of Tinquí at 12,500 feet where we will meet our trekking staff and pack animals. We will walk 4-5 hours up gentle slopes and across open grasslands to the hamlet of Upis at 14,765 feet. Herds of llama and alpaca and thatched-roof huts dot the landscape while friendly, but wary, Quechua Indians go about their daily lives. Our campsite is situated near the village of Upis where lovely hot springs await to soothe sore muscles while the alpenglow lights-up distant glaciers on Ausangate. *B, L, D; O/N, camping*

### Day Five, Rest Day in Upis

Today is a rest day, and, more importantly, a crucial day to acclimatize before we gain our first high pass at 16,400 feet. You may rest, soak in the hot springs or undertake an easy hike beneath the stunning and heavily glaciated Northwest Face of Ausangate. *B, L, D; O/N, camping*

### Day Six, Trek to Laguna Jatun Pucacocha

Today we cross our first major pass at 16,400 feet. Our trek takes us up a beautiful rocky valley beneath the massive West face of Ausangate as we gain 1,650 feet to Arapa Pass. A gradual descent leads us past a series of crystal blue alpine lakes and waterfalls. Our camp waits at the stunning turquoise Laguna Jatun Pucacocha where huge glaciers may be heard thundering in the distance as pieces of ice fall into the lake. *Hiking time 5–6 hours; B, L, D; O/N, camping*

### Day Seven, Trek to Pampa Cancha

Today may be our hardest day yet with steep climbs up two passes. Our reward will be stunning views of our route, Ausangate and distant mountain ranges. We begin the day with a steep, rocky two-hour ascent to Apuchata Pass at 16,500 feet. From the top we gain spectacular views of the surreal turquoise colors of Lago Ausangatecocha below. A steep descent leads us down into the valley before another steep ascent to Palomino Pass at 16,750 feet...our highest point on trek. From here we gain more incredible vistas of the snow-covered Vilcanota Range in the distance. A final steep descent leads in a valley where camp and hot food await! *Hiking time 6–7 hours; B, L, D; O/N, camping*

### Day Eight, Trek to Laguna Azulcocha

Today we cross our final pass. We begin our day walking up a broad, green valley towards Campa Pass at 16,400 feet. If we are lucky we will see viscachas or a rare vicuna. Campa Pass is by far the most impressive with massive glaciers nearby and rocky terrain. Once on top of the pass we have essentially completed the entire circuit as we descend back down towards the North side of Ausangate. We will end our day by another stunning alpine lake called Azulcocha. *Hiking time, 6–7 hours; B, L, D; O/N, camping*

### Day Nine, Trek to Pachanta Hot Springs

Our adventure is not over yet! It is all downhill from here to Pachanta Hot Springs at 14,400 feet. Pachanta is the largest settlement we will encounter on our trek. We may see children herding their animals or women spinning wool as they go about their traditional subsistence lifestyle. Spend the evening soaking in the soothing hot pools as you take-in the stunning panorama of the entire Ausangate Massif. *Hiking time, 4–5 hours; B, L, D; O/N, camping*

### Day Ten, Trek to Tinquí, Return to Cuzco

We will complete our circuit as we walk the final three hours back to our starting point in the village of Tinquí. We will say farewell to our staff and load up our vehicle for the return journey to Cuzco. Another 4-5 hours driving brings us back

to the comforts of the Hotel Marqueses where hot showers and hot food awaits!  
*B, L; O/N, Hotel Marqueses*

### *Day Eleven, Fly to Lima, Depart for US, Arrive Home*

An early morning flight to Lima should have you back in time for your international connection back to the US. Depending on your flight schedule you may arrive home today. If your flight departs Lima late in the evening you may explore Lima on your own until your departure. *B*

### *Day Twelve, Alternate Day to Arrive Home*

Some international flights depart Lima in the evening and subsequently you may arrive home today.

## What is Included

- 04 nights three-star accommodation at the Hotel Marqueses in Cuzco based on double occupancy
- All ground transportation
- One and a half days sightseeing to the Sacred Valley and Sacsayhuaman
- 07 days Ausangate Trek with 06 nights camping
- All entrance fees and trekking permits
- Professional, international trip leader, Raleigh Coburn
- Professional, English-speaking local guides
- All meals where noted on the itinerary
- Experienced, professional cooks prepare delicious meals on trek
- All camping equipment (excluding sleeping bags)
- Group first aid kit
- Baggage transport provided by porters (limited to 10kg)

## What is Not Included

- Domestic or international airfare to Cuzco
- Peru visa on arrival (free)
- Required travel insurance
- Airport or departure taxes and any excess baggage fees
- Rescue or medical expenses
- Personal clothing, equipment, first aid and drug kits
- Single room supplement fees for hotels and single tents
- Hotels, meals, transport or other fees incurred if leaving trip before schedule departure
- Meals not listed on your itinerary
- Additional porter (\$150 per 10kg)
- Local and international staff gratuities (suggested \$300)
- Personal items such as laundry, telephone, email, alcohol, bottled drinks, etc.
- Personal cash for emergencies, gifts, etc. (suggested \$500)