Salkantay Trek to Machu Picchu 5 Days

from the glacier's edge to the stones of machu picchu

DURATION	DIFFICULTY	MAX. ALTITUDE	BEST SEASON
5 days / 4 nights	Challenging	4,630 m	Apr — Oct

The 5-day Salkantay Trek is the most complete way to walk to Machu Picchu on the classic alternative to the Inca Trail. Over five days you go from the turquoise waters of Humantay Lake and the glaciers of Salkantay (6,271 m / 20,574 ft) down into cloud forest, coffee farms in Lucmabamba and a stretch of original Inca path to Llactapata, where you get your first look at Machu Picchu across the valley. The pace is built for good acclimatization: on day one you hike to the lake and sleep around 3,900 m before crossing the 4,630 m pass. Horses carry your duffel of up to 6 kg, our cook prepares every meal on the trail, and you rest in mountain cabins plus one night in a hotel in Aguas Calientes. On the last day you tour the citadel with your guide and head back to Cusco by tourist van from Hidroeléctrica, or by train if you choose that upgrade.

01 Cusco — Mollepata — Soraypampa — Humantay Lake

Early drive to Mollepata and Soraypampa, then an acclimatization hike to Humantay Lake (4,200 m) and a restful afternoon at camp.

7 km · 4–5 h · 4,200 m

02 Soraypampa — Salkantay Pass — Wayracmachay — Collpapampa

The big day: climb to Salkantay Pass (4,630 m) and make the long descent into cloud forest to camp at Collpapampa (2,900 m).

22 km · 9–10 h · 4,630 m

03 Collpapampa — Santa Teresa Valley — Lucmabamba

An easy walk down the Santa Teresa River valley, past fruit groves and waterfalls, to a family coffee farm in Lucmabamba.

15 km · 4–5 h · 2,900 m

04 Lucmabamba — Llactapata — Hidroeléctrica — Aguas Calientes

Climb an original Inca path to Llactapata for your first view of Machu Picchu, then follow the railway to Aguas Calientes.

24 km · 8–9 h · 2,700 m

05 Machu Picchu — Return to Cusco

A 2 to 2.5 hour guided tour of the Inca citadel, then back to Cusco by van from Hidroeléctrica or by train.

Machu Picchu · 2–2.5 h · 2,430 m

WHAT IS INCLUDED

- Pre-trek briefing in Cusco the day before, plus your duffel bag
- Hotel pickup in Cusco and tourist transport to Soraypampa
- Professional bilingual guide (English and Spanish) throughout
- Horsemen and pack horses for up to 6 kg of personal gear
- 3 nights in shared mountain cabins
- 1 night in an Aguas Calientes hotel with private bathroom and hot water
- Meals listed in the itinerary, cooked by our trail chef (5B, 4L, 4D)
- Vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free or dairy-free meals at no extra cost
- Morning coca tea and water with meals
- Visit to a family coffee farm in Lucmabamba with tasting
- Machu Picchu entrance ticket (circuit based on availability)
- 2 to 2.5 hour guided tour of Machu Picchu
- First aid kit and emergency oxygen
- Return to Cusco by tourist van from Hidroeléctrica (train upgrade available)

NOT INCLUDED

- Humantay Lake entrance (about 20 soles for foreigners, cash)
- Aguas Calientes – Machu Picchu bus (about US$12 each way); you can hike instead
- Sleeping bag and trekking poles (available to rent)
- Cocalmayo hot springs and zip line (optional)
- Huayna Picchu or Machu Picchu Mountain ticket (subject to availability)
- Water refills between meals, snacks and drinks
- Hot showers and Wi-Fi at camps (paid on site)
- Travel insurance and tips

https://salkantaygo.com/en/tour/salkantay-trek-5-days/