



Islands & Incas

Worldwide Tour | 14 Days | Moderate

Quito – The Galápagos – Lima – Cusco

Encompassing two of South America's most impressive treasures, this tour visits both Ecuador and Peru with stops on the Galápagos Islands and at the breathtaking Machu Picchu. Best known for its associations with Charles Darwin, the Galápagos is home to some of the world's most unique and fascinating wildlife – you'll spend four days exploring the islands before jetting down to Peru. Here you'll be able to attempt to unravel the mysteries of Machu Picchu, the Incan city hidden high in the mountains of the Andes.

- Explore Quito's UNESCO-listed colonial old town
- Spend four nights on the Galápagos Islands
- Meet the unique and enigmatic wildlife of the Galápagos archipelago
- Wander the old Incan capital of Cusco
- Stand in the midst of the lost city of Machu Picchu



Islands & Incas tour inclusions:

- Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a land only option is selected)
- All accommodation
- All meals
- Touring with guides and entrance fees
- All transportation and transfers
- English speaking National Escort
- Specialist advice from our experienced travel consultants
- Safe and secure with ABTA, ATOL and IATA

The only thing you may have to pay for are personal expenditure e.g. drinks, optional excursions or shows, insurance of any kind, tipping, early check in or late checkout and other items not specified on the itinerary.

Worldwide Tours:

With these worldwide tours you can expect exactly the same Wendy Wu Tours experience. You'll get to see the iconic sites and magnificent treasures of Peru and Ecuador on an excellent value group tour, whilst also getting to travel with like-minded people. This tour includes all meals, so you'll get to taste a range of delicious local foods at handpicked local restaurants or at your hotel. You will be accompanied by our dedicated and professional National Escort and local guides throughout, whose unparalleled knowledge will turn your holiday into an unforgettable experience.

Moderate Tours:

'Islands & Incas' is a **moderate** tour. This means that the itinerary requires a good level of fitness.

- A number of destinations on this tour are at altitude. Quito sits at 2,850 metres above sea level, whilst Cusco is at 3,399 metres and Machu Picchu is 2,430 metres – activity at these altitudes will be at an easy pace.
- You will be required, on several occasions, to climb on and off boats without assistance and spend an extended amount of time on boats in open water.
- There will be several days of sightseeing on foot for a period of time and in some cases for an extended period of time.

Of course, our National Escort will always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance; however, they cannot be expected to cater for customers who are unfit to complete the itinerary.

Itinerary – Islands & Incas

Day 1: Fly to Quito

Fly to Quito arriving the same day. On your arrival you will be welcomed at the airport by your Wendy Wu Tours guide and transferred to your hotel. The transfer time is approximately 50 minutes. Depending on your time of arrival the rest of the day is yours to start soaking up the local culture.



Destination Information

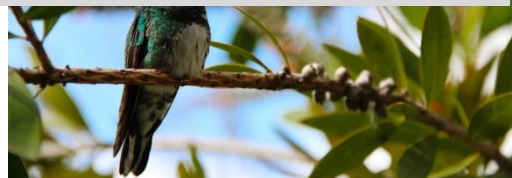
Quito – At 2,850 metres above sea level, Quito is the world's highest official capital. Set amongst the Andes, in the slopes of Volcan Pichincha, it is also the capital city closest to the equator. Quito's colonial centre is one of the largest and best preserved in to the whole of the Americas and was listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1978 – it was in fact, one of the first ever declared.

Day 2: Quito

Enjoy a tour to the Mindo Cloud Forest located 52 kilometres to the North West of Quito. The forest, set in the Andean foothills of Ecuador is well-renowned for its exotic birdlife. After returning to your hotel in the afternoon the remainder of your day is at your own discretion to relax or explore the city.

Destination Information

Mindo Cloud Forest – At 2,850 metres above sea level, Quito is the world's highest official capital. Set amongst the Andes, in the slopes of Volcan Pichincha, it is also the capital city closest to the equator. Quito's colonial centre is one of the largest and best preserved in to the whole of the Americas and was listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1978 – it was in fact, one of the first ever declared.



Day 3: Quito

Surrounded by mountain peaks, Quito is the world's highest official capital. The colonial old town is the city's pride and joy, and it is here that you'll start your tour. Explore the Plaza de la Independencia, flanked by the magnificent Government and Bishop's palaces. Marvel at the city cathedral and its museum, before heading to San Francisco Square to see the church, stopping en route at the intricate and ornate La Compania Church. Continue 50 minutes north of Quito to the Equatorial Line Monument where you can straddle the equator, standing with one foot in the northern hemisphere and one in the southern



Destination Information

Plaza de la Independencia – Independence Square, the central public square of Quito is focussed around the monument to the Independence heroes of 1809, when Quito's 'Criollo' became the first people in Spanish America to call for its independence. The square is flanked by the city Cathedral, the Archbishop's Palace, the Municipal Palace and Plaza Grande Hotel.

Equatorial Line Monument – The Ciudad Mitad del Mundo (Middle of the World City) is where you'll find a line and a monument marking the equator. The monument was built to commemorate the joint mission by the French and Spanish in the 18th century to find the approximate location of 0° latitude – you can straddle the line that they believed to mark it, one foot in each hemisphere.

Day 4: Galápagos Islands

hemisphere.

Fly to Santa Cruz, a two hour 10-minute flight, the most developed island of the Galápagos archipelago, where you will spend the next four nights. In an isolated spot, 620 miles off the mainland, the Galápagos are best known for nudging Charles Darwin towards his theory of Natural Selection after he experienced the incredibly rich biodiversity of flora and fauna that call the islands home. On arrival, stop in Santa Cruz's remote highlands to see a forest of endemic Scalesia trees and the Twin Craters. Continue to your hotel in Puerto Ayora. Later, visit the Charles Darwin Research Centre and learn about its important research and conservation work. Also meet the giant tortoises involved in the captive breeding programme.



Destination Information

Santa Cruz – At the centre of the Galápagos archipelago Santa Cruz is a large dormant volcano (the last eruption is thought to have been 1.5 million years ago) and the most populated of the islands, with the majority of people living in the town of Puerto Ayora. Just a short walk from Puerto Ayora is Tortuga Bay, where you can see marine iguanas, Galápagos crabs and Galápagos tortoise.

Charles Darwin Research Centre – Also located in Puerto Ayora, the Charles Darwin Research Centre leads research into the conservation of the Galápagos' land and sea eco-systems. The centre is best known for its captive breeding programme for the Galápagos tortoise.

Days 5-6: Galápagos Islands

You will spend the next two days exploring the unique and incredible nature of these enigmatic islands. The islands that are included on your tour will be chosen depending on local conditions and the National Park administration but may include North Seymour, South Plaza, Bartholomew or Santa Fe. Most days start with an hour long transfer across Santa Cruz by bus to reach the Itabaca Canal where you will board your boat. Once you have landed on the island you will be exploring that day, all your sightseeing will be carried out on foot, and will last approximately an hour. Whilst out on tour



you may see sea lions, marine iguanas, frigate bird colonies, blue-footed and Nazca boobies, lava lizards and a variety of endemic flora. Snorkelling in the crystal clear waters (for approximately 1 hour) is included on most island visits - you may be able to spot green turtles, eagle rays and other marine life.

Destination Information

Galápagos Islands – Located 563 miles off of mainland Ecuador, the Galápagos archipelago is a series of volcanic islands dotted either side of the equator. Around 25,000 people live on the islands – there are 18 main islands, 3 smaller islands and 107 islets in total. The number of endemic species that call the Galápagos home are what inspired Charles Darwin as he explored the islands as part of the *Beagle* voyage. His visit played an integral part in the development of Darwin's Theory of Evolution by Natural Selection. Described as a 'living museum and showcase of evolution', the Galápagos are completely unique and fascinating, and your own explorations will be unforgettable.

Day 7: Galápagos Islands

Today is free to spend as you wish, giving you time to explore Puerto Ayora and the surrounding area for yourself. There are also some beautiful beaches to relax on, or snorkel off.



Day 8: Lima

Fly to Peru's historical capital, Lima. Your flight will take you via the Ecuadorian city of Guayaquil – it takes 1 hour 50 minutes here, and then a further 1 hour 55 minutes to Lima. A city founded in 1535 by Spanish conquistador Francisco Pizarro, Lima was the seat of Spanish rule for 300 years. Transfer 40 minutes from the airport to your city hotel. Tonight, enjoy your first taste of Peruvian cuisine at a local restaurant.



Destination Information

Lima – Sit overlooking the Pacific in Peru's central region, Lima is a huge city of 10 million people. It was founded by conquistador Francisco Pizarro in 1535 and became the capital of the Viceroyalty of Peru, and remained capital after the War of Independence gave Peruvians their freedom. The historic centre of the city is beautiful, and was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1988.

Day 9: Lima

This morning, enjoy a city tour of Lima, starting in the charming colonial centre with visits to the Plaza des Armas to admire the cathedral, Archbishop's Palace and City Hall. Explore the San Francisco Monastery, including the catacombs, before heading into the more modern part of the city. Head to the districts of San Isidro and Miraflores, finishing at 'Parque de los Enamorados', where there are great ocean views. Finally, admire the exhibits of the Larco Herrera Museum, a trove of pre-Columbian treasures.



Destination Information

Plaza de Armas – The point where the city was born in the 16th century, the Plaza de Armas is surrounded by some of Lima's most magnificent (though not original) architecture – the Government Palace, Cathedral, Archbishop's Palace of Lima, Municipal Palace and the Palace of the Union.

San Francisco Monastery – The monastery complex, complete with church, monastery, library and catacombs, was completed in 1774 and is a prime example of Spanish Baroque architecture. Keep an eye out for Moorish designs in the central and two side naves of the church vaults.

Larco Herrera Museum - A museum of pre-Columbian art, the Larco Herrera Museum is housed in an 18th-century colonial building that was itself built over a 7th-century pyramid. Within is over 4,000 years' worth of pre-Columbian artefacts including gold, silver, ceramics, and erotic ceramics.

Day 10: Cusco

Fly from Lima to Cusco, a 1 hour 10-minute flight. On arrival, there will be a 20-minute transfer to your hotel. Home to an incredible Incan legacy, Cusco has some of the richest heritage in South America and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The tour will include visits to the Plaza de Armas, once the heart of the Incan capital of Huacaypata; and Qoricancha, the temple of the sun. Stroll down the Inca street of Loreto and marvel at the old Inca walls. Head just out of town to the ruins of Sacsayhuaman, from where you can get fantastic views back over the city. Today will involve about 4 hours on foot moving at a comfortable pace.



Destination Information

Plaza de Armas – The present day Plaza de Armas was called Huacaypata and it was the heart of the Incan capital, and is still the heart of the city today. The plaza is surrounded by colonial arcades, whilst the colonial cathedral and a number of other ornate churches stand imposingly around the edges. It is a vibrant and fascinating place to spend some time.

Qoricancha – Once one of Cusco's, and the whole Incan Empire's, most important temple, Qoricancha's walls were once covered in sheets of solid gold. Although the temple was demolished to make way for a colonial church, the Incan foundations remain and incorporates original Incan stonework.

Sacsayhuaman – Just north of Cusco, on top of a steep hill, some sections of the citadel of Sacsayhuaman date from around 1100, whilst others are 13th century. The complex stone walls are fascinating – huge boulders were carefully cut out and fitted tightly together without the use of mortar.

Day 11: Cusco

The Sacred Valley, also the Urubamba Valley, is home to colonial towns, Incan citadels and beautiful scenery. Transfer an hour out of Cusco to the charming town of Pisac, where you'll visit the excellent market to both mingle with the locals and to browse the plentiful Peruvian handicrafts. In the unlikely event that this day of touring is scheduled on a day that the market does not run, you will be taken to a suitable alternative market. This afternoon, meet a typical Inca community at Ollantaytambo, a 1 hour 15-minute transfer.



Above the town is an old Incan fortress, whilst there is also an area of wonderfully preserved houses, both of which you can explore. Travel 1 hour 30 minutes back to Cusco. Today's sightseeing is about 6 hours in total.

Day 12: Cusco

Transfer 1 hour 30 minutes to Ollantaytambo to board the train



Destination Information

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Machu Picchu – One of the world's great archaeological discoveries, Machu Picchu sits on a mountain ridge 2,430 metres above the Sacred Valley. Built around 1450, it was abandoned about 100 years later, and left 'undiscovered' (the local people knew of it) until 1911 when it was brought to international attention. A classic example of Incan style, there are three main structures – the Temple of the Sun, the Inti Watana and the Room of Three Windows.



that will take you through the mountainous landscapes to the small town of Aguas Calientes in 1 hour 30 minutes. From here you will ascend to the Incan citadel of Machu Picchu by shuttle bus, which takes about 30 minutes along winding roads. Stumbled upon by Hiram Bingham in 1911 after it had been long abandoned, it is considered by many to be a wonder of the world. A guided tour will give you some insight into the Inca Empire. This includes three hours of sightseeing, walking on uneven terrain. Return to Ollantaytambo by train and transfer back to Cusco. Transfer to the Cusco airport, approximately 20 minutes, and fly to the UK via Lima, a 12-hour direct flight, arriving home the following day.

Islands & Incas Travel Information

Visas

Irish passport holders currently do not require a visa to enter either Ecuador or Peru. Keep up to date at fco.gov.uk.

Insurance

It is a condition of booking with us that you take out suitable travel insurance. You must provide us with the name of your insurer, policy number and their 24-hour emergency contact number when you book with us or as soon as possible thereafter. These details will be available to your national escort should they be required. Wendy Wu Tours will not be liable for any costs incurred by you due to your failure to take out suitable travel insurance from the date of booking.

Eating in Peru and Ecuador



On this tour, all of your meals will be included, but what sort of local cuisine can you expect to be able to try? Ecuadorian cuisine is very much influenced by the country's geography and differing altitudes. In the mountainous regions, guinea pig (cuy) is a popular meat, along with carbby foods such as rice, corn and potatoes. In the rainforest a lot of cassava is consumed and in the southern regions there are plenty of green bananas and roasted pork. A typically Ecuadorian meal is two dishes, a soup and a rice platter which will include a meat such as beef, chicken, pork or fish. Lunch is usually the largest meal of the day. Peruvian food incorporates dish introduced by the indigenous population and from a wide variety of immigrant populations from Europe, Asia, and Africa. The four traditional staples of the diet are corn, potatoes, legumes and grains such as quinoa. Like Ecuador, the diversity of climates and altitudes in Peru have a strong influence on what is eaten – close to the sea, ceviche containing fish is popular, whilst in the Andes meat from indigenous animals such as alpacas and guinea pigs is eaten. A typical dish from this region is pachamanca, a variety of meats, herbs and vegetables slow cooked underground with heated stones. Savour the food in Lima, it is South America's gastronomic capital!

Accommodation

Your accommodation is selected for convenience of location, comfort or character, and can range from business hotels to rainforest lodges. Hotels are generally rated as local three to four-star standard, but please note that there is no international classification system for hotels and differences in facilities and quality may exist between the UK and Ecuador and Peru. All group tour hotels have private bathroom facilities, air conditioning, TV and telephone. If you experience any difficulty, please speak to your National Escort/Local Guide. Rest assure that all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and our partners to ensure that standards meet your needs.

Transport

Coaches: Coaches with air conditioning are used on our group tours for city short excursions to the countryside and longer transfers between destinations. Roads in Costa Rica have generally been improved over recent years, but please be aware traffic and/or weather conditions may extend driving times. There may be sections of road where the surface may be comparatively bumpy but our drivers will do their utmost to lessen the impact.

Planes: Internal flights are based on economy class, with reputable airlines.

A list of optional activities and approximate costs will be provided with your final documents. These can be

Optional activities

arranged by your guide and are paid for locally.

Souvenirs

There are plenty of interesting bits and pieces to buy as souvenirs in both Peru and Ecuador, such as indigenous textiles, handicrafts and artworks, coffee and chocolate, carved wood and products made of alpaca wool, such as gloves, scarves and socks. There will be some opportunities during your tour to pick up souvenirs, particularly when you visit Pisac's market in Peru.

Group Size

Most of our groups consist of 10 travellers or more and will be accompanied by a national escort. There will usually be no more than 30 travellers in each group.



All our departures are guaranteed to operate with a minimum of 8 travellers booked (unless cancelled due to factors beyond our control). However, at our discretion we may operate departures with a smaller group size as we try to operate advertised departures wherever it is viable to do so.

Tipping Policy

Tipping in both Ecuador and Peru is not part of the culture, however, for those working in the tourism industry, if you feel that the service you received should be rewarded, leaving a small tip is very much appreciated. Here are our recommendations for tipping amounts in Ecuador and Peru:

Guides:

Ecuador - \$7-10 per day, per person

Peru - \$3-5 per day, per person

Drivers:

Ecuador - \$4-7 per day, per person

Peru - \$1-3 per day, per person

Just a little tip, the traditional dressed women who carry their lambs around the streets of Cusco will expect money if you take a photo of them or with them.

Climate

Being right on the equator, Ecuador's climate is fairly consistent and really depends on the geography of the region you are in. In Quito, the weather is consistently cool year round, with a dry season that runs from June to September and a wet season that is from October to May. Due to its elevation, solar radiation can be extremely high here. The Galápagos Islands have a mixture of hot sunny days and heavy showers from January to June and dry overcast weather with potential mist for the rest of the year.

Peru's climate is also heavily influenced by its geography. The desert coast is very hot between December and March and cooler and misty from April to November. In the Andes, the seasons are more recognisable with a rainy season from December to March, and a dry period from June to September.

After your booking

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice followed by deposit documentation, which includes a visa application form (if applicable), and a help sheet. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately 2 weeks prior to departure.

Itinerary changes

It is our intention is to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, the order of events or sightseeing may change as we look to improve our tours or as local conditions dictate; in these circumstances we will make the best possible arrangements whilst maintaining the integrity of your trip.



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