



PERU AND THE GALÁPAGOS ISLANDS

From archaeological showstoppers to landscapes of beauty, Peru is a nation of superlatives, while the Galápagos offers a wilderness adventure wild and free.

Tailor-Made Journeys, Suggested Itineraries



Peru, Ecuador & Galápagos
Islands, Latin America



14 days from AU\$22,115 pp



Private

Journey Overview

From archaeological showstoppers to landscapes of beauty, Peru is a nation of superlatives, while the Galápagos offers a wilderness adventure wild and free. Unearth past and present in Lima and Cusco, marvel at the spectacular landscapes of the Sacred Valley and make the pilgrimage of a lifetime to the ruins of Machu Picchu. Next, hop over to the Galápagos Islands for a wildlife expedition like no other. Encounter species found nowhere else on earth as you go from island to island exploring rugged lava piles and their surrounding waters. You'll count a mind-boggling range of sea birds, come face to face with the gargantuan, prehistoric tortoise, and swim with sea lion, fur seal, turtle and more.

Journey Highlights

- Discover the mystery of the lost city of Machu Picchu
- Explore one of South America's oldest colonial dwellings and a treasure trove of period curios in Lima
- Lose yourself in Cusco's rich tapestry of old and new
- Discover the spectacular ruins and breathtaking landscapes of the Sacred Valley
- Spend four nights cruising the Galápagos Islands on a luxury catamaran
- Get up close to Galápagos sea lion, turtle, Darwin's finches and more
- View an incredible array of sea life and play with friendly sea lion while snorkelling
- See giant tortoise, majestic Frigate bird and marine iguana



Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive Lima

Welcome to the City of Kings. Meet your A&K representative and transfer to your luxury accommodation in the vibrant Miraflores neighbourhood. Spend time discovering the area full of resplendent boutiques, or head down to the Pacific Ocean and watch the mighty Pacific disappearing over the western horizon.

Miraflores Park, A Belmond Hotel

Day 2: Lima

Unlock the secrets of the city on a private walking tour led by a local expert. Get the key to one of South America's oldest houses, Casa Aliaga, among hidden courtyards and ramshackle rooftops. Stand in Lima's birthplace, the Plaza Mayor, and appreciate architectural masterpieces including the historic cathedral, grand presidential palace and Santo Domingo Convent. Later, lose yourself among more than 45,000 classified pre-Colombian archaeological objects in the Larco Museum.

Miraflores Park, A Belmond Hotel | Meals: B

Day 3: Lima - Cusco - Sacred Valley

Transfer to the airport for your short flight to Cusco, the former ancient capital of the Inca Empire.

Upon arrival in Cusco, you are met and transferred directly to the Sacred Valley of the Incas (2,900 metres above sea level). Once the epicentre of the Inca Empire, the Sacred Valley is speckled with little-known but spectacular ruins, many of which remain unexplored. It is difficult to imagine anywhere better to soak up the tranquillity of the mountain-ringed valley than from your luxury property, Inkaterra Hacienda Urubamba Hotel. Take time to acclimatise the local way — with rest and coca tea.

Inkaterra Hacienda Urubamba Hotel | Meals: BD

Day 4: Sacred Valley

This morning, experience a unique visit to an Andean highland community to meet local Quechua-speaking farmers and weavers. This personal encounter introduces you to the lifestyle and traditions of these Incan descendants. Experience a complete cultural immersion as you join in the daily activities and discover how local communities live today. Learn how vibrant food is being cooked in wood-fired, mud-brick stoves and delve into the ancient agricultural methods used for centuries in this unique Andean mountain environment.

Afterward visit the dramatic salt mines of Maras. These evaporation ponds — numbering 6,000 in total — have been used to produce salt here since pre-Inca times, and the natural colour variation of the pools, staggered in terraces down the side of the canyon, make them a breathtakingly beautiful sight. Continue to Moray, where a mysterious Inca archaeological site is located. The ruins of the circular agricultural terraces are thought to have been used by the Incas to determine the optimal conditions for growing crops.

Inkaterra Hacienda Urubamba Hotel | Meals: BLD

Day 5: Sacred Valley - Machu Picchu

Begin your pilgrimage to Machu Picchu, stopping en route at the imposing fortress of Ollantaytambo, where the Incas celebrated their greatest victory over the invading Spanish. Afterward, board your train and absorb the majestic Andean landscape as the train winds through the mountains and cloud forest to Aguas Calientes where a short bus ride will bring you to the ruins of Machu Picchu.

Overlooking the raging Urubamba River and discovered by American explorer Hiram Bingham in a hidden tangle of trees, the true history of Machu Picchu will forever remain an enigma, as the Incas left no written records. Unravel its mysteries as you explore with your expert guide.

Return to your hotel, located within an intimately styled Andean village with terraced hills, waterfalls and stone pathways.

Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel | Meals: BLD

Day 6: Machu Picchu - Cusco

Spend time exploring the natural beauty of your lodge, seeking out the more than 200 species of bird, before heading back to further discover the ruins. Delve deeper into the mysteries of the ancient citadel with the opportunity to climb to the 'Inti Punku', the famous Sun Gate. Or, for superior views across the ruins, pre-book to climb further to the highest mountain, Huayna Picchu, or continue a leisurely tour of the rambling stone terraces. Later board the Vistadome train to Ollantaytambo and continue by road to Cusco, the former ancient capital of the Inca Empire.

Monasterio, A Belmond Hotel | Meals: B

Day 7: Cusco

Cusco's rich tapestry of Spanish and Quechua influences is yours to explore this morning on foot with an expert guide. The cathedral in the central Plaza de Armas is considered one of the most beautiful churches in the Americas, and it will leave you breathless. Seek out the fresco of 'The Last Supper' with Jesus eating guinea pig, a sacred motif of Incan paganism. Later, unearth the well-preserved ruins of Sacsayhuaman, a testament to Incan architectural skill and precision. Enjoy an afternoon at leisure. Stroll at your own pace along the cobblestone plazas and winding alleyways, and search for treasures in one of the fascinating markets that dot the city.

Monasterio, A Belmond Hotel | Meals: B

Day 8: Cusco

Venture into Cusco's South Valley, Peru's hidden treasure. Gaze in wonderment at Tipón, where the Incas created an impressive hydraulic system of baths, canals and aqueducts worthy of an empire that stretched from Colombia to Chile. Journey onwards to the enormous red adobe archaeological complex of Pikillacta, the only pre-Inca site in the Cusco area. Then, step into the surprisingly vivid 'Sistine Chapel of Peru' in Andahuaylillas.

Monasterio, A Belmond Hotel | Meals: B

Day 9: Cusco - Guayaquil

Fly to Guayaquil in Ecuador, gateway to the Galápagos Islands. Accompanied by your A&K representative transfer to your hotel in the exclusive Samborondón neighbourhood.

Hotel Del Parque | Meals: B

Below is a sample itinerary for five days on the luxury catamaran, M/C Elite. Your final itinerary will depend on the individual vessel and route taken. This itinerary is suggestive only.

Day 10: Guayaquil - Santa Cruz Island

Transfer to the airport and fly from Guayaquil to the Galápagos Islands which lie some 1000kms off the mainland. A short ferry ride from the airport will take you to your first Galápagos Island, *Santa Cruz*. Follow your expert naturalist into the mist-covered highlands, where giant land tortoise roam — marvel at these gargantuan creatures, some reaching 1.5 m in length and more than 220 kgs. Take a surreal walk through an extraordinary underground lava tube, before continuing to the summit of the island's highest hill for views over the entire archipelago. Your guide will introduce you to numerous endemic plants as well as up to seven species of finch and the vermilion flycatcher.

Your next stop will be a privately owned hacienda (farm). Learn how the first settlers survived making coffee, fine aroma chocolate and sugarcane liquor, and meet more ancient tortoise. Then, arrive at the small city of Puerto Ayora, where sailboats fill the bay, sea birds cruise the air, and marine iguana dot the shore. Board your luxury catamaran *M/C Elite*, your home on the sea for the next four days.

M/C Elite | Meals: BLD

Day 11: El Barranco - Darwin Bay

The morning starts with a very interesting panga ride along the remote cliffs of *Genovesa Island*, home to literally millions of birds belonging to many different species including red footed boobies, frigate bird, swallow-tailed gulls, and even endemic owl. Ascend up Prince Phillip's Steps (El Barranco), a steep path (27 m) carved into rock which leads to a plateau full of forested bird life. Admire Nazca boobies, Galápagos dove, mockingbird, and storm petrel. You may even spot a short-eared lava owl.

After a BBQ lunch on the yacht's sun deck and a demonstration on how to make Ecuadorian ceviche, you'll have the option to explore the cliffs up close, either by kayak or stand-up paddleboard, or on a snorkelling excursion from the Zodiac.

Later in the afternoon, land at Darwin Bay, a gorgeous coral sand beach teeming with wildlife. This scenic bay is named after Charles Darwin, the famous scientist and naturalist who created the Origin of Species theory. Here, you'll see both swallow-tailed gulls, and lava gull — one of the rarest birds in the world — gathered near the tide pools. Relax on the beach, or choose to swim with friendly, playful sea lion in these warmer northern waters.

M/C Elite | Meals: BLD

Day 12: Espumilla Beach - Puerto Egas

Espumilla Beach is on the northern coast of *Santiago Island* nestled into James Bay. An important site for nesting sea turtles, embark on a gentle walk up a small rise for a magnificent view of the bay. Spy Darwin's finch, Galápagos hawk, mockingbird and white-checked pintail. There's also a lagoon where flamingos can be seen occasionally. Explore the Palo Santo Forest, home to some of the tallest specimens in the entire archipelago. The beach itself is a scenic spot to relax, snorkel and kayak after the hike.

This afternoon, step onto the black sandy beach at Puerto Egas and walk along century-old lava flow at Sullivan Bay. Get up close to a variety of resident and migrant birds, including the bizarre, yellow-crowned night heron and an astounding array of marine wildlife including sea urchin, octopus, lobster, starfish, and marine iguana grazing on algae beds alongside brightly covered sally light-foot crab. Colonies of endemic fur seal swim in cool water pools formed by volcanic rocks. Choose to swim, snorkel, or kayak off the beach, alongside sea lion and reef shark.

M/C Elite | Meals: BLD

Day 13: Bachas Beach - Los Gemelos

Arrive on the north side of *Santa Cruz Island* and search for two small flamingo ponds with iguana, black-necked stilt, whimbrel, Darwin's finch, mockingbird, gulls, as well as interesting native and endemic vegetation, red and black mangrove, salt bush, and more. You'll also search for nesting sea turtle.

Continue to the twin craters of Los Gemelos. The lush green scenery of the highlands is in stark contrast to the more arid lowland coasts, providing a very different Galápagos experience. Viewpoints over the crater sink holes showcase the breathtaking landscape, and there is plenty of interesting birdlife to look out for too. In addition to the forest-filled sink holes, you'll also be able to observe a variety of flora and fauna.

M/C Elite | Meals: BLD

Day 14: Isla Lobos - Depart San Cristobal

Spend your last morning exploring Isla Lobos, located about an hour panga ride from Puerto Baquerizo Moreno on *San Cristóbal Island*. The islet is named after its large colony of sea lion; however, the small islet offers so much more, including blue footed boobies, frigate bird, and even a glimpse of the Galápagos fur seal.

This afternoon depart Galápagos for your flight to mainland Ecuador.

Meals: B

Map



Accommodation

Miraflores Park, A Belmond Hotel, Lima



Renowned for its beautiful garden location beside the Pacific Ocean, the Miraflores Park enjoys breath-taking views out to sea. In typical Belmond style, it combines personalised service, exceptional dining and indulgent facilities to create the perfect base from which to explore - colonial architecture, superb museums and glamorous shops, bars and restaurants are all just moments from the hotel.

The suites are very well appointed and have huge windows to let the light, and the views, flood in. Tastefully decorated in neutral tones, they are brought to life by colonial style furniture and details like freshly cut flowers. As you'd expect, every detail, from the fine cotton linen on the beds to the size of the showerheads in marbled bathrooms has been designed with the utmost care, to create comfortable and stylish accommodation.

Why we like it

- The suites offer wonderful city, ocean or garden views, whilst the Presidential Suites all have private terraces
- Set in one of Lima's most fashionable areas, the Miraflores Park Hotel puts guests at the heart of all that's best about this great capital city
- Dining options include Mesa 18 for a culinary experience based on local ingredients, and The Observatory Restaurant

- The hotel has a lovely roof terrace swimming pool
- Other facilities include bars and lounges, a fitness centre and the innovative 'Bath Butler' service

Inkaterra Hacienda Urubamba



Built in the heart of the Urubamba Valley, among the flowers and trees that carpet the mountainous region, Inkaterra Hacienda Urubamba has been designed with the architecture of the Cusco region in mind. Local life is also reflected in the kitchen, with alpaca steaks, river trout, lamb and guinea pig bred at Inkaterra's own organic homestead near that quite well-known ruin, Macchu Pichu. From the arrival drinks (pisco sours, Peruvian beers made from quinoa, wheat and maize, or chilled purple corn) to the vegetable garden, it's unlikely you'll go hungry. You can work off the indulgence in the 14-acre grounds or roam further afield with one of the hotel's ecological guides.

Each room is designed as a calm retreat to return to after a busy day of exploring, with warm fireplaces for the colder mountain nights, terraces for panoramic views, dining areas for private meals, and a living area to take some time out. VIP treatment comes as standard so take an extra day just to enjoy the calm of your private palace.

Why we like it

- Nothing but awe-inspiring views over the Sacred Valley
- Modern design with colonial inspiration, set in an iconic Peruvian valley
- The 10 acre organic plantation affords the freshest produce: you can pick your own vegetables for dinner
- Experience a multitude of activities, including horse riding, bird watching and star gazing

Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo



Located just a short shuttle ride from the entrance to Machu Picchu, the lodge serves as an excellent base from which to explore. Skilled artisans built the 85-room hotel using stone, adobe stucco and eucalyptus beams to create a delightful Andean village ambience.

Rooms are large, well equipped and located in one or two-storey whitewashed cottages, reached via stone pathways weaving their way through the tropical gardens. All the rooms and villas feature thick alpaca blankets and handmade wool coverlets, crackling fireplaces and comfortable spaces for sitting and dining, as well as spa-style bathrooms.

This hotel creates an authentic Andean ambience and offers a rare slice of barefoot luxury in this ancient location.

Why we like it

- Some suites and villas have private terraces with plunge pools
- Inkaterra Machu Picchu is located in a five-hectare cloud forest garden alongside the Vilcanota River and on the edge of the village of Aguas Calientes
- A first-class restaurant boasts stunning views of the rushing Vilcanota River from an outdoor terrace
- The hotel's UNU Spa is one of a kind, offering treatments based on a combination of classical options with a mystical Andean approach
- Other facilities include Café Inkaterra, a bar and gift shop

Monasterio, A Belmond Hotel, Cusco



One of the cities most unique hotels, Monasterio, A Belmond Hotel, Cusco combines centuries-old charm with professional service. A national monument, you can experience a touch of Peruvian history without even leaving your room, each one remaining largely unchanged. All rooms are unique, varying in design and size. Most offer pleasant views across the courtyard of the cobbled streets of Cusco.

With a 300-year old cedar tree as its centrepiece and a chapel complete with an art collection, this elegant hotel is rooted within the local culture. The Belmond's team will be happy to arrange guided cultural tours, traditional crafts classes or even a hands-on cooking class. In the evenings, sit back and relax at the elegant lobby bar with a pisco sour in hand whilst listening to the finest jazz musicians.

Why we like it

- A restored 16th-century monastery, the hotel is renowned for its magnificent architecture and impressive art collection
- Discover the origins of Peru's national drink, pisco, and enjoy tasting several varieties
- Take a tour of vibrant San Pedro Market before taking part in an action-packed cookery class

Hotel del Parque, Guayaquil



Guayaquil might be known to travellers as a port-stop en route to the Galápagos, but the opening of the chic Hotel del Parque puts this stopover city firmly on the map. What was once a 19th-century Catholic hospice is now a luxurious, waterfront boutique hotel. All interiors are cool and fresh, inspired by the tropical surroundings. The 44 guest rooms are light, airy and decorated in go-to boutique hotel shades of grey, white and yellow. Botanic themes dominate and Ecuadorian artworks hang on the walls. The hotel's restaurant offers rich seafood and delicious dishes inspired by local ingredients.

The historic wooden beamed bell tower provides the perfect setting for a spa treatment. Guests can indulge in a traditional afternoon tea infused with herbs fresh from the garden. For chocolate-lovers, head to the grounds of the park to seek out cacao pods, watch as they are turned into chocolate. You can sample the produce, obviously.

Why we like it

- The hotel's historic building is located within Parque Historico, a luscious tropical park
- Enjoy a unique spa experience in the bell tower

Abercrombie & Kent

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