



MAGICAL JOURNEY

INFORMATION FOR MAGICAL JOURNEY RETREAT PARTICIPANTS

Please take time to read the following important information. Participants will receive contact information for Willka T'ika Guesthouse, hotels and guide approximately one month prior to program start. Please note that pricing quoted herein is subject to change.

Flight arrangements and Cusco airport: Please provide your retreat leader with your airline carrier and flight number details, including the arrival time into and departure time from Cusco airport. Try to schedule a flight **arrival into Cusco no later than 10am**, to allow as much time as possible to rest and acclimate to the 11,200 ft altitude. At the end of the retreat, try to schedule a flight to **depart Cusco after 11am**, to avoid a predawn wakeup.

Check with your retreat leader for the scheduled group transfer from the airport to the Cusco hotel. Participants can easily hire a taxi from directly outside the baggage claim area within the Cusco airport compound or, with advance notice, Magical Journey will arrange with the retreat leader for private individual transfers to the Cusco hotel (\$12) or individual early morning transfers from Willka T'ika Guesthouse to the airport at additional cost (\$50-70).

What to do on arrival in Lima: When you arrive in Lima you will pass through Immigration where you will be given a stamped copy of your arrival slip to be kept with your passport. **Please take good care of this seemingly insignificant slip of paper, as it is required when you leave the country.**

Even if your luggage was checked through to Cusco, you must collect your luggage and pass through customs, where you will hand in the customs form you were given on the flight in. You will have to push a button that lights up a red or green light. Think Green - then you pass through. If the light turns red, you may have your luggage inspected.

For Lima overnights: As you leave the customs area through the automatic doors, you will find a barrier, beyond which will be

waiting transfer agents, taxi drivers, tour operators etc. If your travel agent has arranged for a transfer to your hotel, look for a transfer agent here. If you have not pre-arranged a transfer, then to your right, within the barrier, you will see a desk for "Green Taxis." For about US \$13, taxis will transport you to your hotel in Lima. You can arrange with them for your transfer back to the airport the next day.

We strongly recommend that you do not engage taxis other than those with their agents within the restricted barrier or the green taxi service.

Lan Peru operates a 24-hour check-in service in the domestic area. It is a good idea to pack so that you do not need your main baggage for that night in Lima. Even if you are staying in Lima, we find it worthwhile to check the luggage in straight away, get your boarding ticket so that you do not need to check in the next day. To do this, just wheel your baggage cart straight ahead, ignoring all the offered help, and walk straight down the hall to the end of the check-in counters, where you will find the domestic counter for Lan Peru (do NOT leave your baggage unattended).

If you have not arranged for Lima services and you are staying at the airport to await your early morning Cusco flight (domestic flights start after 4am), there are many clean bathrooms, restaurants, coffee shops, wi-fi, hair, manicure and massage services open 24 hours. The airport has the new Costa del Sol - Ramada Inn Hotel. It is expensive but very convenient. If you stay there, choose a flight into Cusco that leaves after 8.30am so you have time to sleep. If booking a hotel in Lima, book the Cusco flight a little later - after 9:00am the next morning - for a good night's sleep.

Domestic flights to Cusco: For domestic check-in at the Lima airport, go straight up the escalator to the right-hand end of the check-in counters to the second floor. The departure lounge for domestic flights is at the very end of the upstairs complex. As of publication, domestic departure taxes are included in the price of airline tickets. This is subject to change.

Local currency: You may wish to change \$50 or so into Peruvian currency at the Lima airport. There are currency exchange kiosks on the ground floor near the check in counters. Exchange rates fluctuate close to 2.8-3 soles to the US dollar.

What to do on arrival in Cusco: A Magical Journey representative will meet the group arrival outside the baggage claim area at

the small Cusco airport. Look to the left for the "Magical Journey-Willka T'ika" sign when you exit the airport for your transfer. An agent will transfer you to your Cusco hotel where your guide or retreat leader will meet you in the lobby at 12.45pm.

For participants arriving separately from the group transfer, if a Magical Journey airport transfer has not been prearranged with the group leader, or if your flight is delayed, take an official taxi from within the barrier area directly outside the airport doors. Negotiate your price of about \$5-\$10 maximum for the 25-minute drive to the Cusco hotel.

MONEY: Please note that US currency with rips or tears will not be accepted in Peru. The banks and no one else in the country accepts torn or worn US currency. Bring US currency in \$5 - \$100 denominations, as crisp and new as possible without rips or tears. Also, please do not bring many \$1 bills to Peru. Many vendors do not accept \$1 bills. We suggest that you wait until you arrive in Cusco to exchange larger sums of money. In Cusco, your guide will bring you to a reputable exchange agency with a good exchange rate. You will get the best exchange rate for cash in US dollars. Don't buy Peruvian money overseas, as the exchange rate is very poor. If you are using traveler's checks, change them in Cusco at the beginning of the tour (the exchange rate will be less favorable in other locations). The change bureaus have a 5% surcharge to change traveler's checks.

Bring a flat fabric money holder to wear around your waist and under your clothing. Please keep your money, passports and travel documents under your clothing at all times in the airports and city. That way you never have to worry if you are separated from your luggage. There are many ATM's in Cusco and everywhere you visit. Inform your card-issuing bank of your travel plans before departure. Peru is a cash country and not everyone accepts credit cards. Bring extra cash for shopping and special services. Cash in US dollars is easily exchanged, provided that the notes are not torn or overly worn.

Cash only is accepted at Willka T'ika for sundry expenses, massage and crystal bed sessions, solar baths, bottled water, sodas, beer/wine and additional services. Providers of extra guest services require immediate payment in cash and all the prices of extra services are listed in your itinerary. People always say that they wish they had brought more cash in US dollars. If you like to shop, you will be tempted by the wonderful goods for sale and you should plan to bring extra cash for shopping and items of a personal nature.

Travel suggestions: Please travel light. You might have to carry your own baggage at times and heavy luggage is a nuisance for you and others. Leave unnecessary "stuff" at home so that it does not distract you from the Peru experience. Dress is casual. No one cares if you wear the same outfit a few times. There is laundry service at Willka T'ika and a laundry area if you prefer to do some yourself. The laundry service is by hand, sun-dried. Clothes that dry quickly are convenient.

If your luggage has zippers please be sure to bring good US approved locks to secure them once you have cleared USA security areas. Rip-ties are also handy for securing luggage while in transit.

IMPORTANT Label luggage: For your incoming flights, please label each piece of luggage clearly with your name, "Magical Journey - Willka T'ika - Urubamba" and our telephone number in Peru: +51 84 201508. It's also a good idea to put this address information on a card on the inside of your luggage. Re-label your luggage with your home address for your return flights.

Weather: (for all times of year) Peru's climate can be divided into two seasons: wet and dry. The weather varies greatly depending on the geographical region. In the Andes, the dry season lasts from April to mid November. However in recent years the weather has fluctuated and a poncho or good rain jacket is advised throughout the year. Nights can be chilly at the high altitude - bring warm pajamas and layers of comfortable clothing. Days can be quite warm to hot, with intense sun exposure at the high altitude.

Dry season or Andean winter: May, June, July and August are regarded as colder winter months at night. The days are usually dry and sunny, about 65-70 degrees F. When the sun goes down or is hidden by clouds, it can be cold. Night averages 40-50 degrees F. There is no central heating in the Andes but all of our rooms have heaters. Bring extra layers of clothing at night and something warm to sleep in. September and October is the start of spring with similar weather but warmer nights.

Wet season or Andean summer: From November through April, a few scattered showers followed by sunshine can be expected each day. Nights are warmer and t-shirts can be worn during the day. Rain is soft and falls mostly at night; there are no monsoons.

What to wear: Bring only casual clothes. Clothes that dry quickly are handy. Laundry can be done inexpensively. Dress in

layers and bring warm clothes for the winter nights. You might wear a fleece jacket in the early morning or night and you should carry an outer rain jacket or poncho in a daypack. Once you walk, you start to peel off layers and during some hot days you may be able to wear shorts and t-shirts. Protect your skin from the intense sun at these high altitudes. When the sun goes down, you put on layers again. On outings, weather often changes during the day and wearing layers works the best. Rarely, you may need gloves and hats. Wool sweaters, hats and gloves are readily available in the markets.

Departure taxes: As of publication, departure taxes are included in the price of airline tickets. If this changes, set aside a total of about US\$44 cash for international and domestic airport taxes - \$32 in international departure tax when leaving the Lima airport to return home and \$6 for each domestic flight (Lima-Cusco roundtrip). Airport taxes may also be paid for in Peruvian soles. Please note that departure taxes are subject to change.

Tips: It is customary in Peru for guests to tip all service providers in Peru. For the retreat, set aside \$100 for service provider tips. Please hand the money in an envelope with your name on it to your guide on the first day. The guide will make sure that all porters, bus drivers, waiters, cooks, general staff, healers and musicians are tipped throughout the program in Cusco, at Willka T'ika and at Machu Picchu.

Guide tip: Your guide will travel with you at all times and is there to assist you and ensure that you have the journey of a lifetime. It is customary in Peru for groups to tip the guide directly. Feel free to show your appreciation to the guide. The amount of money offered to the guide is at your discretion. Please plan to make this offering collectively to the guide during the last evening meal of the program.

Food/Water: All meals at Willka T'ika Guesthouse are strictly vegetarian. Buffet breakfasts, lunches and all dinners are included at Willka T'ika. In Cusco a welcome lunch and buffet breakfasts are included. At Machu Picchu a continental breakfast and full dinner is included. Other meals can be bought inexpensively for around \$4-\$14 depending on where and what you eat. Wine, beer and nonalcoholic beverages are not included in any meals but are available for purchase. Bring some trail snacks and energy bars for personal use. Some ruins and meditation sites are a long distance away from civilization and sometimes meals are taken later than your body may require.

***Bottled water is available everywhere for purchase. New regulations have been imposed and in some areas they no longer allow plastic disposable water bottle into the ruins. But you can carry it in a backpack. At Willka T'ika all bottles are recycled in creative ways that you will see when we visit the Quechua school. It is important obviously being at such high altitude to stay well-hydrated. When at Willka T'ika it's easiest to buy a big bottle of water and have it in your room to fill up your own bottle for your daily outings.

Shopping: Cusco and the Sacred Valley are renowned for their wonderful markets. Beautiful hand-woven cloths, wall hangings, jackets and ponchos are very good value, as are hand knitted alpaca sweaters and silver jewelry. Woolen gloves and hats are colorful and very inexpensive. Andean musicians sell CDs in support of their music.

If you like to shop, remember to bring EXTRA dollars and an extra folding duffel bag to carry the goods home! Many people end up wishing they had brought more cash for the many beautiful items available in Peru. Bring extra cash if you like to shop.

Health and Insurance: **Important:** If you have not yet done so, please inform your retreat leader/Magical Journey in writing of any illness or medical condition you may have or prescription medication you may be taking. This information will be kept confidential.

In the unlikely event of problems requiring hospitalization, we strongly recommend that you take out travel insurance to protect your investment. At odd times there is disruption of flights due to weather or mechanical reasons. Insurance should cover the cost of emergency medical services, evacuation and repatriation to your home country. Magical Journey is not responsible for expenses incurred as a result of health problems, travel delays, flight cancellations or any other delay due to circumstances out of our control. Adequate travel insurance has proven to be extremely valuable for some participants when circumstances have warranted it.

Health tips: Please use this journey as an excuse to get into good physical condition. You will be at an altitude between 8000 - 11,000 ft for most of the journey. There will be times when the group must hike up paths and steps of ruins. Fitness will help you acclimate quickly and enhance your journey.

Altitude tips: If you feel you may react to the higher altitude, or have any known medical condition, please speak to your

physician prior to the journey. Few tourists get sick from altitude. Not all people need or respond well to the popular prescription sulfa-based drug Diamox. Diamox was designed for high-mountain trekking, which you will NOT be doing. If you rest and drink water and tea for a few hours on the first day, your body will acclimate. If you have any problems on the first or second day, please speak to your guide. Every street corner has a *botica* (pharmacy) that sells *soroche* tablets (containing aspirin and caffeine), to bring fast release to a headache or nausea. In emergency situations, hotels carry oxygen tanks. Local doctors will tell you to drink coca or *muna* tea to hydrate; adequate liquids and perhaps a *soroche* tablet may be all that is necessary to alleviate symptoms. Some homeopathic remedies may be helpful for altitude sickness. Consult your health care practitioner.

Bottled water is available for purchase everywhere in Peru. Diarrhea is a concern when traveling in Peru or Bolivia. Consult a health care practitioner for a suitable antibiotic such as Cipro. This is better than anti-diarrhea preparations like Lomotil, which stop diarrhea but don't kill the bacteria. One should also bring medication for stomach cramps. If you have any health concerns please consult your health care provider. A good probiotic may be suitable to take daily while in Peru. Practice good hygiene habits while traveling. Street and market vendors and local children may have poor hygiene habits or limited access to good sanitation. Wash your hands or use hand wipes frequently and you won't get sick!

Immunizations: There are no obligatory requirements. Please consult your health-care provider for recommended immunizations and please make your own decisions regarding immunizations. Malaria prophylaxis is not considered necessary in the Andes. Parts of the Amazon require different shots but you are not going there. Please remember that you are responsible for all decisions regarding your personal health.

Children's Fund: The Willka T'ika Children's Fund has been established to help support remote mountain schools and communities and Quechua children and families living well below the poverty level. There are no social services or government programs to help these families and children. Past groups wished we had shared this information ahead of time. The most-welcome contributions to this fund, besides cash donations are:

Gently-worn, hardy clothing for ages 3-12 (both sexes) is very welcome. The color red blends in well with traditional clothing, but all clothes are gratefully accepted.

Spanish language children's books (not outdated school text books) are appreciated.

Small hardy toys for all ages. Used for special children's day festivities.

Scissors, flashlights, notebooks, yarn.

Baseball caps and soccer balls are prized possession.

For adults, small - medium t-shirts. Andean adults tend to have small frames and extra large clothing is too big.

Cash donations are always welcome and go toward hot meals, nutritious food, construction, desks, vital school supplies requested by the teachers and at times toward life-saving medical emergencies. Our staff will gladly furnish you with a contribution receipt. Proceeds from sales of special goods sold at Willka T'ika support the fund. Please visit our website at www.magicaljourney.org for more information and photographs regarding the Willka T'ika Children's Fund. During your retreat, you may experience the wonderful heart energy shared with the smiling Quechua children in one of four isolated schools we visit.

Magical Journey to Peru Suggested General Packing List:

- ♦Flashlight. Needed for the nights in the gardens at Willka T'ika.
- ♦Good walking shoes or lightweight hiking boots.
- ♦Shade hat, sunglasses, sunscreen and lip balm are essential.
- ♦A good insect repellent for Machu Picchu.
- ♦Cameras (please insure); memory cards and/or film (twice as expensive in Peru as in US); Bring extra batteries.
- ♦Converter or transformer to 220V, 60 cycles AC for any equipment plugging into a wall socket. Transformer recommended for digital equipment.
- ♦Anti-bacterial wipes or hand sanitizer. Hygiene standards in the market places vary greatly. Human contact rather than food can be the main culprit for travel related illness. Wash or sanitize your hands frequently.
- ♦Travel Documents: Passport valid for at least 6 months from arrival date in Peru. No visas are required for South African, Canadian or USA citizens. Important: Please bring two copies of the page on your passport with your photograph and number

on it. Leave one copy hidden in your luggage and have one to carry with you. It is very important to keep a copy separate from your passport. It is safer to leave your documents and extra money at Willka T'ika or in your hotel room hidden in your suitcase or in the hotel safe when walking around.

♦Do not bring fine jewelry or other valuables. Wear an inexpensive watch.

♦Money holder belt. (See section on money). Wear it when in the streets. Be mindful of your surroundings.

♦Bring a small backpack for day use to carry water bottle, camera, trail snacks and sunscreen.

♦Always carry a good quality rain jacket or waterproof poncho.

♦Layer your clothes and bring warm layers. T-shirt, long sleeve warm shirt, jacket and/or rain gear. Warm pajamas for the Andean nights. We recommend long pants at Machu Picchu (biting insects). Shorts ok for Willka T'ika.

♦Slip-on shoes. It makes your life so much easier to walk in and out of the yoga and meditation studios.

♦ Earplugs are often very useful in Cusco, Willka T'ika and Aguas Calientes. There is no noise ordinance in Peru. Be prepared for those infrequent times when neighbors or dogs get rowdy.

Magical Journey Peru Contact Information:

Willka T'ika Guesthouse (pronounced WIL-kah TEE-kah) is located between Machu Picchu and Cusco in the Sacred Valley, at Paradero (bus stop) Rumichaka. Willka T'ika is 2km from the town of Urubamba, en route to Ollantaytambo. If headed from Urubamba to Ollantaytambo, it is on the left hand side. It is an hour and fifteen minutes drive from Cusco to Willka T'ika.

Telephone: The Peru COUNTRY CODE is +51. The area code for Cusco is 84. Willka T'ika and Aguas Calientes/Machu Picchu are within the Cusco area code. The area code for Lima is 01. When dialing from within Peru to a different city code, add a "0" before the city code. For example, when dialing Willka T'ika from Lima, you would dial 084 201508. When dialing from abroad, drop the "0" from the city code and add your international access code before the country code.

At Willka T'ika, there are no telephones in guest rooms. There is only one telephone line for emergency telephone use only. Please tell your family/friends to be mindful of the time when calling. If they need to reach you urgently, the best time is during dinner at around 7pm, or at 8:30am breakfast time. That way, our staff can find you quickly.

General phone calls can be made out of the country in an international booth or internet cafes. Some foreign cell phones get good reception. Emergency calls may be made inexpensively from Willka T'ika only with international calling cards, which are sold in the office. There is a new wi-fi room set aside for those who need to stay in touch. At times internet may be down. Please do not bring computers or phones into the reception and dining areas, or near other guests who prefer the quiet. There are convenient internet cafés in Cusco, Aguas Calientes and in Urubamba near Willka T'ika.

Time Zones: Peru is 5 hours behind Greenwich Mean Time. Peru does not observe Daylight Saving Time and so may be on the same time zone as Mountain or Eastern USA time, depending on the time of year.

Please review this information again before departing for Peru. It is designed to assist with your preparation for an optimal Peru adventure and may address many questions.

Have a safe and wonderful Magical Journey to Peru.

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