

# MAGICAL JOURNEY

A U T H E N T I C   S A C R E D   T O U R S



## INFORMATION FOR MAGICAL JOURNEY LEADERS OR PARTICIPANTS

Please take time to read the following important information and distribute to all program participants. An update with contact information for hotels and guide will be sent approximately one month prior to departure.

**Flight Arrangements and Airport:** Magical Journey will coordinate one group pick up from the Cusco airport with the program leader. We recommend scheduling your flight into Cusco to arrive no later than 10am to enable participants to rest. So as not to get up at dawn on the last day of the program, departing flights from Cusco should be scheduled after 11.30am. Please provide your group leader with your flight carrier and number with arrival and departure times. With advance notice, Magical Journey can arrange private hotel transfers with group leader for participants arriving separately for \$12 per person, however participants can easily hire a taxi as you step outside the baggage claim area within that immediate area, for less.

**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.

As you leave the customs area through the automatic doors, you will find a barrier, beyond which will be waiting people, taxi drivers, tour operators etc. If your travel agent has arranged for a transfer to your hotel, look for a board with your name. If you have not arranged a transfer, then to your right, within the barrier, you will see a desk for “Green Taxis”. For about US \$13 they 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 Cusco flight (domestic flights open after 4am), there are many clean toilets, restaurants, Starbucks, 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 you book a hotel in Lima, you should book a flight to Cusco not before 09:00 the next morning so you can sleep a little.

When you arrive the following day, or if you are staying at the 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. You will pass into the departure area into an area where you will pay your airport tax. Each person must pay approximately US \$6 in airport departure tax when checking in for any domestic flight in Peru. You pay the tax and have your boarding pass stamped. They accept \$ US as well as Peruvian currency at the airport. Bring a few \$10 bills (with no rips or tears) to pay domestic airport taxes. You'll be given change in Peruvian soles. Then, proceed through a thorough security check to the domestic departure gates.

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. Their exchanges fluctuate close to 2.8-3 soles to the US dollar.

**What to do on arrival in Cusco:** A Magical Journey representative will meet your 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 leaders will meet you in the lobby at 12.45pm. Guides will look for the leader at 12 noon to review the day's program before going with the group to lunch.

For participants arriving separately from the group, 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 travelers checks, change them in Cusco at the beginning of the tour, you will get much less for it in Machu Picchu. The change bureaus have a 5% surcharge to change travelers' checks.

There are many ATM's in Cusco and everywhere you visit. 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. 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 very 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 very 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:** 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, layers of cotton clothing works best. Days can be quite warm to hot.

**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. 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:** 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). The airport taxes may also be paid for in Peruvian soles. Please note that the departure taxes are subject to change.

**Tips:** It is customary in Peru for guests to tip all service providers in Peru. We suggest \$10 per person, per day, so a 9 day package means \$90. 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 odd musicians are tipped throughout the program in Cusco, 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 keep one self 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 us in writing of any illness 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 between 8000- 11,000 ft altitude 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 and you can buy coramina- a glucose tablet to suck. Sorroche tablets are sold for nausea and contain aspirin, tylenol and caffeine that brings fast release to a headache or nausea. In emergency situations, hotels carry oxygen tanks. Local doctors will tell you to drink coca tea or muna to hydrate, and coramina or a sorroche tablet is all you might need.

Bottled water is available for purchase everywhere in Peru. Diarrhea is a concern when traveling in Peru or Bolivia. Participants may ask their physicians for a suitable antibiotic such as Cipro to bring with them. These are 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 pro-biotic or natural grape fruit seed extract tablets are excellent to take daily while in Peru. Also, you can get sick from touching street and market children who have poor hygiene habits. Wash your hands or use hand wipes frequently and you won't get sick!

Some homeopathic remedies may be helpful for altitude sickness.

**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. Past groups wished we had shared this information ahead of time. There are no social services or government programs to help these families and children. 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.
- ♦ Common hardy vegetable seeds are specially appreciated in school greenhouse gardens.
- ♦ 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](http://www.magicaljourney.org) for more information and photographs regarding the Willka T'ika Children's Fund. All Special Interest groups are taken to 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 any jewelry or valuables. Wear a cheap 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, so you don't get upset.

### **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.

The main contact phone number throughout the journey is Willka T'ika Guesthouse: +51 84 201508. Staff members speak Spanish and understand some English. Willka T'ika Fax: +51 84 201181.

Emergency-only contact: for guests en route or already in Peru, E-mail: [reservas@willkatika.com](mailto:reservas@willkatika.com) at Willka T'ika

For USA or overseas emergencies, please email [info@willkatika.com](mailto:info@willkatika.com)

If your flights are delayed, please email [reservas@willkatika.com](mailto:reservas@willkatika.com) or call your assigned hotel in Cusco and leave a message for your Magical Journey guide. Or if available call your guide's cell phone number. (These numbers will be sent separately approximately one month prior to start of program with your hotel contact information). Leave a message with your new flight arrival info. If you arrive late and the transfer agent is not at the Cusco airport, take a taxi from directly outside the baggage claim area, within the airport, and expect to pay between \$5 - \$10, less if sharing.

**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.

**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.

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.

Please read this again before you leave for Peru. It is meant to help you and it will answer all your questions.

**Have a safe and wonderful journey to Peru.**