



## Animal Paradise in the Lost City – Machu Picchu



Llamas arrive daily at Machu Picchu to graze the grounds.

Peru – Truly is one of the Animal Wonders of the World. While the words “Machu Picchu” tend to ring a bell, the paradise they stand for is lost on most people. But Machu Picchu, a Peruvian wonder that means “Old Peak”, offers a new world entirely from the one we’re used to. And one fabulous boutique hotel, Inkaterra, unfolds Machu Picchu’s natural, ecological majesty like no other.

The richness of the Inkaterra experience, the Pueblo Inkaterra hotel, is intimate serenity. The retreat is adorned in Peruvian warmth, be it thick alpaca blankets, handmade wool coverlets, or crackling fireplaces. The hotel, rested in the heart of Machu Picchu, claims “an authentic Andean ambiance of barefoot luxury,” and this is precisely what it provides. First-class vacation elation.



The Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel

As if round-the-clock butler service, private terraces, pools and lush living were not enough, these luxuries are just the tip of the Inkaterra program. When you visit Inkaterra, you are cut a real slice of the Machu Picchu paradise. For one, imagine taking a guided, twilight adventure up the pre-Columbian, 15<sup>th</sup> century petroglyph. Imagine this excursion including an authentic Andean eucalypts sauna, a massage, and a midnight pool dip beneath the Peruvian sky (not to mention, the BEST quinoa pancakes to start ...).

Imagine finding yourself in an extravagant orchid garden, hosted at Inkaterra, where you can become immersed in the 372 various, native orchids they have in bloom. Imagine laying your eyes upon the largest orchid flower in the entire world—the *Phragmipedium caudatum*. Or the smallest, whose seeing requires a magnifying glass! According to the American Orchids Society Magazine, “Inkaterra Machu Picchu’s Orchid Collection is probably the world’s largest orchid species collection set in a natural environment in a private facility.”

Then, maybe you feel like taking an easy walk. Lucky for you, Inkaterra is veined with a wonderfully fascinating set of trails upon which you would not be surprised (only delighted!) to see an immense ecosystem of wildlife—some of the most breath-taking flora to fauna in the world.



### World's largest Orchid Collection - Inkaterra Machu Picchu Hotel

That's right—Inkaterra is an animal lover's happy place! The bird watching opportunities are endless. Love hummingbirds? Maybe you'd be interested in scoping out eighteen of the different types of hummingbirds on the property. And this is not to mention the sought-after torrent duck, the white-capped dipper, and silver-beaked, blue-necked, fawn-breasted and saffron-crowned tanagers. It is more than enough to make your heart chirp!

But that's *bear*-ly all. Amid the vast wildlife, bears are at the heart of Inkaterra. At the [Inkaterra Machu Picchu Spectacled Bear Project](#), on the hotel grounds, bears that have been negatively affected by human impact are protected and reintroduced to their natural habitat. The Spectacled bear is an endangered species endemic to South America. The Spectacled bear are immensely important. Seen in the pre-Columbian times as magical or divine, we now understand that they share a deep symbiotic relationship with the cloud forest. The result of this relationship is the conservation and extension of tree and plant life. The Spectacled bear are also a vital component in forest pollination, carrying on their fur throughout the forest, thus facilitating vegetal life in their ecosystem. Due to deforestation, irresponsible agricultural practices, and illegal hunting, these incredible animals now face extinction, which not only suggests dire consequences for their species, but for their ecosystem as a whole.

Inkaterra has invested in a substantial quest to reverse their endangerment: “Together with the concern to concern wild life, we [Inkaterra] must create a genetic reserve in captivity, as well as work with technologies that allow us to take care of the bear population in Peru.” In line with this goal, Inkaterra's rehabilitation efforts include a variety of methods, like feeding to correct malnutrition, veterinary medical treatment, specialized facilities aimed at re-familiarizing bears with their natural habitat and lifestyles. The rehabilitation process takes place in four steps: *rescue and transfer*, *captivity*, aimed at re-familiarizing the bears with their natural habitat, *semicaptivity*, which places the bears back in larger natural settings, but still isolated from human contact, and *reinsertion*, which reinserts the bears fully into their natural habitat so long as recuperation has been successful.



The Spectacled Bear is now critically endangered

Presently, Inkaterra is home to three male bears. One is a small, year-old cub, rescued from poachers in the region. Another is a full-grown adult that has been so influenced by human contact that it has lost many of its natural instincts. Thanks to Inkaterra, their futures are bright, as evidenced by a female bear named Paula, who has already enjoyed a successful reintroduction to her natural habitat.

The Inkaterra destination is a conservation destination. And it is this devotion that renders Inkaterra a uniquely deserving vacation retreat. Inkaterra helps bolster its beautifully natural surroundings by encouraging travelers to engage with their conservation programs. The goal here is not merely vacation, but betterment. Their triumphant effort to improve the circumstances for an endangered bear species sets this hotel above and beyond most others.

In their own words, “Inkaterra’s objective has a dual purpose, on the one hand to support *in situ* and *ex situ* conservation strategies, and on the other, to contribute to educating national and international visitors, as well as the local population.”

At first thought, who wouldn’t want to see Machu Picchu? It is, after all the “Lost City of the Incas”. But Inkaterra ups the ante, encouraging you to transform your vacation into a truly enriching experience. Come for the attraction, for the unbeatable hotel experience, but stay for the wildlife, for the nature, for the chance to become involved in the magic of saving an animal.

Link to story: <http://www.animalfair.com/home/animal-paradise-lost-city-machu-picchu/>