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June 2017 Latin America Magazine Onsite & Onboard Reviews

Globetrotting: Inkaterra Hotels: A Sustainable Success Story

By **Carla Hunt** - June 1, 2017



...t year, those in our industry selling travel to South America celebrated the 40th anniversary of **Inkaterra**, whose award-winning luxury lodgings set new standards for your travel industry, and whose founder, Jose Koechlin, is honored industry-wide as a pioneer in ecotourism and a major force in hotel development focused on conserving environment and enriching local communities—all financed by sustainable tourism revenues.

...ure just one phase of this anniversary celebration: a press trip, checking out and/or staying in Inkaterra lodges, from the heart of the Amazon rainforest to the Machu Picchu cloud forest to the Sacred Valley of the Incas, ending in the Inca capital, Cusco.

The Inkaterra Trail

Puerto Maldonado is the airline gateway to **Inkaterra Reserva Amazonica**, a 45-minute boat ride down the Madre de Dios River to the heart of a 40-sq.-mile private reserve, located adjacent to Tambopata National Reserve. First of the company's hotels to open and still the epitome of jungle chic, Amazonica's guests check into 35 elevated, rustically elegant cabanas. The central pavilion houses the bar and restaurant,

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whose chef never seems to run out of creative jungle cuisine. Excursions include paddling around beautiful Lake Sandoval, and bouncing through the treetops along seven hanging bridges that connect eight observation platforms.

These excursions—and others—are also part of the action at the company’s newer lodge, **Inkaterra Hacienda Concepcion**, about 30 minutes by boat from Reserva Amazonica. Here, it’s all about jungle-chic accommodations, designed with screens replacing exterior walls to bring in the sights, sounds and scents of the rainforest. There are six spacious rooms in the main building and 19 stylish cabanas perched on stilts amid the foliage.



Inkaterra Hacienda Urubamba in the Sacred Valley.

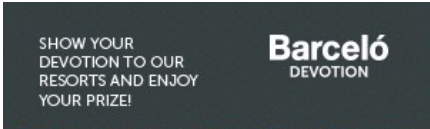
We flew aboard **LATAM** from Puerto Maldonado to Cusco, where, in order to acclimate to the Andean altitudes, we transferred on landing to the Sacred Valley (9,776 ft.) for a couple of nights at the **Inkaterra Hacienda Urubamba**, the company’s newest lodging. Here in the Sacred Valley, guests can visit the markets of Pisac and Chinchero; and explore the pre-Columbian sites of Moray, Maras and Ollantaytambo. Back at the lodge, guests are encouraged to pick their own dinner produce when touring the hotel’s 10-acre organic farm; learn how to whip up a batch of *chicha* (corn beer); or take part in a *pachamama* ceremony led by a local shaman. The Hacienda—contemporary in style, colonial in inspiration—is full of excellent indigenous art, textiles and handicrafts. Walls of windows frame Andean and Valley views in lounge areas and in the dining room, where delicious meals highlight ingredients harvested on site. Set on a slope are stand-alone casitas that come with comfy beds, fireplaces and terraces.

We continued on to Machu Picchu (6,627 ft.) for a stay at the **Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel**. The hotel forms a hillside complex of 85 cozy rooms and suites with fireplaces, spread about the cloud forest above the Vilcanota River. The property is justly acclaimed for its authentic cuisine, its *UNU Spa*’s Inca purification treatment, and two new smashing villas (think plunge pools and butler service). On site, jungle-savvy guides lead guests along trails that wind past waterfalls and through the forest. Of course, Machu Picchu is the *numero uno* excursion; however, physically fit guests will want to stay longer to tackle activities offering new perspectives on Machu Picchu such as climbing Putukusi, trekking up Huayna Picchu, or hiking Apu Machu Picchu.

Our final stay was in Cusco at the 11-suite **Inkaterra La Casona**. This 16th century former manor home offers elegantly comfortable public areas furnished with glowing antiques, paintings and tapestries; ringing the courtyard, 11 suites have chimneys,

Destination Barbados

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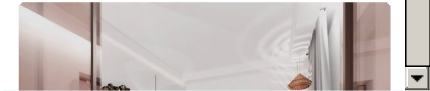
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heated floors and extra-large bathtubs. Its Yacu therapy room offers delightful treatments and, like the manor’s dining room, uses locally sourced products.

New & On the Horizon

No doubt, such a trail blazing company has not come to the end of its creative destination reach. Already open in Machu Picchu Pueblo is **El MaPi by Inkaterra**, the first hotel of its new and more affordable brand. This month, the **Inkaterra Guides Field Station** opens in the Tambopata Reserve, with an educational experience for eco-conscious travelers who want to explore the rainforest and join in conservation projects.

Contact Information

Inkaterra: inkaterra.com

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