



CENTRAL SOUTH AMERICA

# Andean authenticity with Mountain Lodges of Peru

By Chelsea Davis / March 14, 2018

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A resident llama at the Lamay Lodge, which serves as the starting point for a trek to the ruins of Huchuy Qosqo.



The Mountain Lodges of Peru is a luxury-adventure travel company that takes guests through regions of Peru in five to seven days, en route to Machu Picchu. Each day is filled with cultural activities and hiking, while each night guests settle into a different Andean-inspired lodge.

"The lodges are located in very remote locations, which offer guests beautiful views and close contact with local communities," said Andres Adasme, manager of product and adventure development at Mountain Lodges of Peru. "Each lodge is designed with a strong concept and a sense of place, where the guests can learn about the country's culture and natural environment from the local staff, the decor and their surroundings."

Adasme was one of several tour leaders during our Lares adventure. As an

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adventurer and student of archaeoastronomy (a combination of architecture, astronomy and symbology), he encourages guests to fully immerse themselves in each offered experience in the Sacred Valley, in what he has coined "transformational tourism."

"We visit isolated communities throughout our adventures, offering guests close and direct contact with their traditions," said Adasme. "Our deep intention and philosophy to maintain and preserve the culture allows us to keep in mind the authenticity and focus on enhancing our commitment to the communities, while maintaining their traditions in all aspects culinary, historical and archaeological. The preservation of culture is our main objective."

The following is an overview of the properties on our itinerary:

- **El Retablo:** This two-story, 17-room B&B is located in Cusco, around the corner from the historical Plaza de Armas.

Each room is hand-painted with vibrant designs by artisans from the Fine Arts School of Cusco. Walls are splashed with bright, floral-themed murals and patterns, all of which are inspired by Andean folk art, specifically *retablos*, which are three-dimensional figures in ornate portable boxes.

From the tapestries and throws to the linens and pillows, everything is handwoven and handcrafted.

- **Lamay Lodge:** This eight-room lodge is located in the Lamay Village and features a modern design influenced by Andean culture.

Soaking in the large Jacuzzi within the garden courtyard of the lodge is beyond relaxing, as you're surrounded by looming mountains and green scenery, not to mention the lodge has adorable resident llamas. Guests have their own terrace or patio overlooking this view. Lamay Lodge serves as the starting point for a trek to the ruins of Huchuy Qosqo.



Staff members at the Huacahuasi Lodge, an eight-room property in the Lares District.

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overlooking the community of Huacahuasi, in the Lares District. At an elevation of about 12,000 feet, this eight-room lodge provides an incredible view of the entire valley as well as the everyday life of the villagers (herding llamas and farming) from its hot tub-equipped terrace. The lodge features floor-to-ceiling windows and colorful Andean artifacts, and it is skillfully decorated with aerial woven designs.

The extremely attentive employees working at the lodge are locals who dress in traditional clothing.

"Our philosophy is to protect the ancient Andean knowledge by preserving its traditions and customs," Adasme said. "Keeping their traditional attire is to respect their culture and, even more, to highlight this aspect so important and traditional present in all the Andean communities: their beautiful clothes, colorful and full of meaning."

- **Kuychi Rumi Lodge:** Located in the Sacred Valley, the Kuychi Rumi Lodge is a hidden gem nestled within overflowing gardens, native fruit orchards and blossoming wildflowers. The lodge features seven bilevel Andean lodges, each of which offers two bedrooms and two bathrooms, along with a living room with fireplace, kitchenette, dining room and balcony.

The rustic lodges are beautifully furnished, cozy and welcoming. Situated near the Urubamba River, the Kuychi Rumi Lodge offers a relaxing stay for guests making their way to Machu Picchu.

- **Inkaterra Pueblo Hotel:** Situated near the town of Machu Picchu Pueblo, the opulent Inkaterra Pueblo Hotel is an exceptional boutique hotel nestled in the cloud forest of the Machu Picchu Historical Sanctuary. The property showcases terraced hills, stone pathways and 83 whitewashed adobe casitas and is home to more than 214 bird species and the world's largest native orchid collection, with 372 species registered. With 12 acres of lush, natural surroundings to explore, you'll find waterfalls and ancient Inca petroglyphs etched on rock formations on the property.

Also at Inkaterra is the Unu Spa, which has products derived from local botanical extracts as well as an Andean sauna built of eucalyptus and bamboo. On-property excursions include bird-watching, tours of the orchid trail and exploration of the tea plantation, and each is led by a friendly, knowledgeable guide.

- **Casa Andina Private Collection Cusco:** This 93-room property is located in the heart of Cusco, near the main square, and is ideal for those looking to explore the city and its countless cathedrals and historical attractions. It has been built within a 16th-century mansion and features a charming, rustic courtyard with fountains and alfresco seating.

For more information on the Mountain Lodges of Peru itineraries, visit



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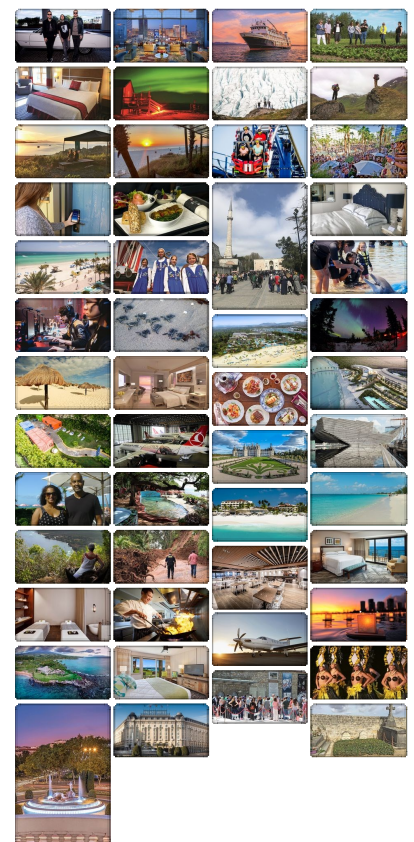
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