

Visiting Peru's Sacred Valley with Kids

Think of Peru and no doubt one of the first things that springs to mind is Machu Picchu, though it may surprise you to hear that there is much, much more to explore while you are in the area. In fact, the region surrounding Machu Picchu – the Sacred Valley – is an incredible destination for families to visit. If you have young children, it can be easy to rule this mystical region out as unmanageable; but this is far from the truth.

There's a plethora of things to do if visiting Peru's Sacred Valley with kids, not to mention family-friendly hotels and easy methods of transport: you don't have to do the Inca trail to get to Machu Picchu! For a more detailed look at Machu Picchu itself, you can check out our article on [visiting Machu Picchu with kids](#). In the meantime, let us give you a taste of what you can expect from one of the most iconic places in the world, Peru's Sacred Valley, that you could easily explore with the children.



The Sacred Valley, Surtrek

Skip Cusco but come back later

From Lima you will need to travel to Cusco, a wonderful destination in itself and well worth exploring. However, given its height, the dreaded altitude sickness could cause a problem for newly arrived visitors. We understand that when travelling with little ones the last thing you want to deal with is a sick child, or feel poorly yourself and still have to look after them. Symptoms can vary from headaches to nausea, however it is easily treated and better still, can be avoidable if you move on from Cusco quickly. Our advice is to take things easy to slowly get used to the altitude here. Then, you can always come back to discover Cusco and all its delights later on when you have had some time to acclimatise.



Cusco traditions, Surtrek

Things to do in the Sacred Valley with kids

The most straightforward way to get from Cusco to the Sacred Valley is by private transfer. Taking around an hour to 90 minutes, it is a great opportunity for you all to take a breather before reaching your hotel. Inkaterra Hacienda Urubamba is a great pick for families looking for accommodation in the Sacred Valley, with the freestanding Casitas being a particularly good option as they provide you with that extra bit of privacy.

The kids will love a visit to the ecological farm at Inkaterra, while if you are travelling with young adults who have some steam to let off, hire a bike and take the tour to Urquillos and back. For further excitement, white water rafting, treks of varying difficulty and even zip lining can all be found here. Just remember to take a day to relax before getting stuck in.



Birdwatching, photo credit [Inkaterra Hacienda Urubamba](#)

Sacred Valley excursions for the whole family

Although Machu Picchu is the big draw, there are dozens of other examples of Incan life in the Sacred Valley that give you a superb introduction to this remarkable civilisation. We highly recommend opting for a full-day tour of the Maras Salt Mines and Moray Terraces; two highlights of the Sacred Valley that could not be more different, so bound to keep the younger members of the family engaged.



Maras Salt Mines, Surtrek

That being said, the Sacred Valley is not just temples and archaeological sites (wonderful as they are); it is also a fabulous place to immerse yourself in local life. The bustling markets of Pisac are a feast for the senses and will thrill the whole group. Quintessential Peruvian textiles, fragrant spices and locally made handicrafts pack stalls bursting with colour. It's a real window into life here, having been a hub for trading for hundreds of years and the perfect place to pick up some keepsakes too.

While near Pisac, why not take a trip to the Awanakancha Alpaca Farm? Let kids meet and pet the Alpacas and then, once they have made friends, move on to watch local weavers create their masterpieces in the workshop; it truly is mesmerising. With lots of information about the animals themselves and the part they play in regional life, when you meet them at Machu Picchu you will already be equipped with a wealth of knowledge.



Llama, Surtrek

Onwards to Machu Picchu

Aguas Calientes, the closest town to the ruins of Machu Picchu, can of course be reached via the Inca trail, but the train is much more appropriate for those travelling with children. The Vistadome has huge windows, even on the ceiling so you won't miss a single bit of the scenery as you chug through the mountain range. Onboard entertainment includes traditional dance, fashion shows and music, which will keep the children happy if they get restless. The journey itself is only a couple of hours (so much quicker than the 4-day Inca trail!) and you get a snack on board as well, so you will arrive at Aguas Calientes with full tummies.

As mentioned earlier, for a more detailed description of how to make the most out of your time in this corner of Peru, check out our blog post ['Visiting Machu Picchu with kids'](#).



Machu Picchu with kids

More places in Peru to visit with children

On your return to Cusco from Machu Picchu and the Sacred Valley, book a tour to give you an easy introduction to this diverse Andean city, a place where ancient Inca ruins are juxtaposed with colonial architecture and modern-day buildings. A vast array of activities are on offer, from learning how to use a traditional loom to popping along to the Choco Museo and taking part in a chocolate-making workshop. However you choose to spend your time there together as a family, Cusco is sure to leave an impression on you all.

But why let your Peruvian adventure stop there? With the mighty Amazon and beguiling Lake Titicaca also waiting for you, your family's Peruvian journey is only just beginning!



Market in Cusco, Surtrek

Visit the Sacred Valley with the family as part of a wider *Peruvian holiday*. You can tailor-make your own trip using *Discover Your South America*, customising your itinerary to make it perfect for you and your family. If you'd prefer to speak to one of our Peru experts, don't hesitate to call us toll-free on 1 866 978 7398 (Canada and USA) or 080 8189 0438 (UK), and *Discover Your South America with Surtrek*!

Want to read more travel tips for *Peru*? Read about *exploring Machu Picchu on a family trip*, learn about Arequipa on our *travel guide* or see our *top list of luxury hotels in Cusco*.

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