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The Perfect 10-Day Peru Itinerary for First-Timers (No Trekking)



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If you're planning your first trip to Peru and wondering where to start, I've got you covered. After my latest trip to Peru, I carefully crafted what I think is the perfect 10-day itinerary for most first-timers.

This itinerary will take you to all the Peru classics at a realistic pace. It's a modified version of the route I personally followed (but with a few tweaks to help you avoid my mistakes!).

Note that there is *no trekking* involved, so this itinerary works for all ages.

I've done most of the work for you, including **day by day suggestions for exactly where to stay and what to do**. Just follow along, amend to your liking, and [drop a comment](#) if you have questions.

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10 Day Peru Itinerary



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Me in the small town square of Machu Picchu Pueblo (town)

 [Google Maps](#) | [Where to Stay for Machu Picchu](#)

 **Where to Stay:** [Jaya Machu Picchu Boutique Hotel](#) (\$\$, modern & central; [see my review](#)) • [Casa del Sol](#) (\$\$\$, stunning boutique) • [Inkas Land](#) (\$, budget-friendly, great reviews) • [Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel](#) (\$\$\$\$), luxury property set in nature) • [Sanctuary Lodge, a Belmond Hotel](#) (\$\$\$\$), 5 stars, only hotel at Machu Picchu itself)

Today, we'll **take a scenic train journey to Aguas Calientes**, which is also known as Machu Picchu Pueblo (town). Staying here will make tomorrow's big visit more convenient. Optionally, you could instead stay another night in the Sacred Valley and take the train early tomorrow morning (particularly for luxury travelers staying at [Tambo del Inka](#), which has its own train station).

You'll need to **purchase train tickets well in advance** for the 1.5-hour journey from Ollantaytambo Station to Aguas Calientes.

Two Peruvian rail companies run this route: [Peru Rail](#) and [Inca Rail](#). I've taken both and they are very similar. Both offer different classes of service. Be aware that only small bags are allowed on the trains, so you'll need to store large luggage in Ollantaytambo or at your hotel.

Arrive in Aguas Calientes and continue to your hotel on foot.

For most travelers, I recommend staying at [Jaya Machu Picchu Boutique Hotel](#). I stayed here on my most recent visit, and I think it's the best mid-range option in town. It's clean, modern, and just steps from both the train station and the buses to Machu Picchu. The rooftop breakfast is also great. You can [read my full review](#) or [watch my video review](#) for more.

Alternatively, for luxury travelers, [Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel](#) is a stunning property set at the bottom of town inside the forest. If you really want to splash out, [Sanctuary Lodge, a Belmond Hotel](#) is the *only* hotel up the mountain actually at the entrance to Machu Picchu itself.

If you're on a budget, check out [Inkas Land](#).

The first thing you'll want to do after checking in is to **consider if you want to buy any of the 1,000 next-day tickets** available in the offices of the Ministry of Culture in Aguas Calientes ([map link here](#)).

You should have already bought your Machu Picchu tickets many months in advance on the [official website](#). But, as I cover in [my Machu Picchu YouTube video](#), you may want to buy an additional circuit as a backup plan in case of fog

or if you wanted to, for example, summit one of the mountain circuits. Staying in Aguas Calientes tonight gives you the chance to do that.

Aguas Calientes is a small town that does not have cars. You can **visit the market by the train station** to buy any last minute gear (I recommend a rain poncho during the rainy season). Spend an hour walking around the town and soak in the beautiful natural setting. Pop into one of the many cafes or bars for a drink.

If you have time and want an activity, you can hike down to the **Machu Picchu Hot Springs** (though travelers give it mixed reviews). You can also hike about a half hour to see the small waterfall **Cascadas Alcamayo** (it's more impressive during the rainy season).

At some point during the day, try to **stop by the Consettur bus ticket office** by the river, and pre-purchase your bus tickets to ascend to Machu Picchu the next day. They are good for any bus (there is no set time). But buying the day before will save you time tomorrow. Note that you'll need your passport.

Grab dinner at one of the restaurants recommended below in the mini guide. And get to bed early, because tomorrow is the biggest day of your itinerary.

Aguas Calientes Mini Guide

Book for Night 6

[Google Map](#)

🌟 **Best Hotels** – [Jaya Machu Picchu Boutique Hotel](#) (\$\$, modern & central; [see my full review](#)) • [Casa del Sol](#) (\$\$\$, stunning boutique) • [Inkas Land](#) (\$, budget-friendly, great reviews) • [Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel](#) (\$\$\$\$), luxury property set in nature) • [Sanctuary Lodge, a Belmond Hotel](#) (\$\$\$\$), 5 stars, only hotel at Machu Picchu itself)

 **Apartments** – [Browse Top Rentals in Aguas Calientes](#)

 **Where to Eat** – [Tao Dulce Salado](#) (\$), [Chullos Machupicchu Restaurant](#) (\$\$), [Mapacho Craft Beer Restaurant](#) (\$\$)

 **Where to Drink** – [Inka Happiness Lounge Bar](#)

 **Cafes** – [La Rivera Coffee Center](#), [La Chuta café](#)

 **Top Attractions** – [Machu Picchu Historic Site](#), [Machu Picchu Hot Springs](#), [Butterfly Zoo](#), [Cascadas Alcamayo](#)

Machu Picchu & Cusco (Day 7)

Clara on the upper terrace of Machu Picchu Circuit 2-B (the best photo spot, in my opinion)

 [Google Maps](#)