

# Our Glorious AFS Itinerary

## **Sept 2 - Depart USA**

Depart USA to Lima. You can arrive any time on Sept 2 when land portion begins. You can arrange your own air from hometown to Lima for more flexibility or wait until we can present group air later within Trip Tips. You may want to come a day early to explore the fun Miraflores neighborhood.

For easiest arrivals we booked you at Costa del Sol Wyndham Hotel to relax. Greet and assistance with check-in at hotel located within the airport. Overnight at Costa del Sol Wyndham Hotel located within the airport.

Welcome to Lima, Peru's capital founded in the 1500's by Conquistador Francisco Pizarro.

Overnight: Costa del Sol Wyndham Lima Airport

## **Sept 3 - Fly Lima to Cuzco**

After breakfast, we meet guide at airport check-in for flight to Cusco: 8:10 – 9:45am. Welcome to fabulous Cusco! Balance of day at leisure to relax and acclimatize to 3400 meter (11,000')

The old ways are not forgotten in this magical city, which one is called the “belly-button of the world” and capital of the Inca Empire, until the Spaniards conquered it in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Today this UNESCO World Heritage Site is filled with ancient wonders. You can uncover layers of Cusco's vivid history. It's such fun to explore this charming town crowned with main square Plaza de Armas, a great place for coffee shops and people watching. There's a great shopping and evenings are come alive with music. Massages are now omnipresent and dirt cheap or indulge your sweet tooth at the Chocolate Museum tour of Cacao as well as other museums.

In the early evening enjoy a Walking City Tour of the Imperial City and learn its history. Visit one of the most impressive buildings of Incan Cusco: the Korikancha or Golden Temple, dedicated to the Sun God. Its walls were said to be covered in gold. Continue on a leisurely stroll to the Main Square and it's markets. Discover the Cathedral adorned with exquisite vestibules and priceless paintings from the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Jose Antonio Cusco Hotel B

Located in the heart of Peru, this 4-star hotel is a 10-minute walk from Plaza de Armas. It has a colonial design and offers free Wi-Fi. Savour Peruvian cuisine at El Rejo Restaurant, and enjoy a wide range of cocktails at El Moilino Bar or relax at the hotel's hot tub and sauna.

## **Sept 4 - Sacred Valley**

Visit to the Sacred Valley, Awanakancha, Cochawasi & Pisac Market

Peru's Sacred Valley is a treasure of dramatic landscapes, ancient ruins and Andean villages clinging to age old traditions. We'll enter the lush green lowlands beneath snow peaked mountains into the foothills of Urubamba.

This morning, we head out to reach the must-see stop of Awana-Kancha means, “Place of the Weavers.” Watch weaving demonstrations and get some excellent textile pieces like soft alpaca scarves (I got 12 for perfect gifts.) Here, you will learn about the various types of camelids (Llamas, Alpacas, Vicuñas, and Guanacos) that

live in the Andes region. Additionally, the local villagers will teach you about the ancestral methods and techniques used to produce their textile art.

Along the route to Pisac, we will come to Cochahuasi, an animal sanctuary dedicated to rescuing, caring, and preserving native species, some of which are in danger of becoming extinct. Within this admirable private initiative, which seeks to raise awareness about respecting the environment, you will be able to see condors and other species native to the Andes.

Lunch in a local restaurant is included.

A few miles farther along, we will reach Pisac, a beautiful place where Incan and Colonial influences have reached a perfect balance and created the unique way of life of the local inhabitants. You will get a chance to explore this quaint town, famous for its artisan markets where you can find extraordinarily fine jewelry and ceramic and textile craftwork. It's fun to test your bargaining skills in the colorful markets.

Jose Antonio Cusco Hotel B, L

### **Sept 5 - Full Day Tour to Machu Picchu!**

Time to discover the mysteries of the Lost City of the Incas! Begin with an exhilarating ride on the new glass domed Vistadome train through deep valleys and steep slopes. Then depart for the Aguas Calientes train Station, enjoying spectacular views along the way. Upon arrival, we board a bus that will take you to the entrance gate of the Machu Picchu citadel.

Rediscovered by Hiram Bingham more than a century ago, Machu Picchu is considered one of the Seven Wonders of the World. Its architectural beauty, spectacular natural landscapes and the energy held in its enigmatic structures will take your breath away.

Follow in the footsteps of the ancient Incans as you explore this magical citadel along with the tour guide who will commentate as we hike the ancient site. Get your best pics at the famous Sun Gate, the Citadel and terraced hills. Note, pavement uneven.

At the scheduled time, you will be taken to the Aguas Calientes train Station to board the return Vistadome train. We then transfer to Cusco to take you back to your hotel in the city. There's so much fun to be had here. Just Google "Top 10 things to do in Cusco."

Overnight: Jose Antonio Cuzco Hotel (B)

### **Sept 6 - Puerto Maldonado**

After breakfast transfer to Cuzco's airport and fly 1 hour to Puerto Maldonado 11:50am-12:55pm.

Welcome to Puerto Maldonado! Begin to experience the enchantment of the rainforest as you take a 45-minute boat ride along the Madre de Dios River to arrive at Inkaterra Reserva Amazonica lodge. After a short briefing, settle into your beautiful cabaña and enjoy your lunch in the dining room. Take a siesta, share a refreshing tea time and get ready for an afternoon excursion.

Tambapota Nature Reserve is rich in wildlife that is protected here. It hosts 100 types of mammals, 600 bird species and the most unique trees and plants. Colorful macaws and parrots flock to the clay licks. Keep your

camera ready on jungle walks for the healthy populations of tapirs, jaguars, sloths, jungle cats, anacondas, giant otters, anteaters, capybaras (my fav), 30 species of monkeys and many other cool creatures. From the tree top Canopy Walk 100 feet high, spot toucans, parakeets, eagles and more. On water cruises, look for caimans, big turtles, pink dolphins, piranha and unique river critters. Until recently, only scientists were allowed here.

After gathering with your Inkaterra Explorer Guide, choose from the 14 different excursions available at the Inkaterra Reserva Amazonica. On your first day, we recommend a guided walk along the Trail system, into the Inkaterra Reserva Amazonica natural area, where you will discover the Amazon Basin. This trail offers an excellent introduction to the forest environment, winding past impressive trees such as the Shihuahuaco, and the strangely beautiful strangler fig, offering excellent opportunities for bird watching and observing exotic insects.

We also recommend on the first night, the Twilight River excursion — a guided afternoon boat ride on the Madre de Dios river. Witness the transformation from a diurnal to a nocturnal world: animals and birds of the daytime give way to species specially adapted to the night. As you enjoy their paradise, you will learn about their habits, while you search for nightjars, owls and up to three different caiman species.

It's full board here with gourmet cuisines prepared by renowned chefs. Enjoy dinner served in the main dining room from 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. After dinner, you may retire early to your own cabana, or share your experience in the rainforest with other guests and interpreters, as you listen to the intriguing sounds of the jungle at night.

Inkaterra Reserva Amazonica was named one of National Geographic Traveler's 25 Best Ecolodges in 2013. We will be sleeping in one of the 35 wood-and-thatch cabanas built in the Amazon's traditional style. Each room is attractively furnished with log chairs, comfortable beds shrouded by mosquito netting and a small porch with two hammocks. The cabanas have no electricity adding to the charm and authenticity. After dinner, guests return to their cabanas across tree-trunk-boardwalks to find lit candles and kerosene lamps lighting the entry and bathroom.

Follow link to read more...

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/fathom/2014/04/26/explore-the-inkaterra-reserva-amazonica-peru/#6e8ba47c31ab>

Overnight: Inkaterra Reserva Amazonica B, L, D

## **Sept 7 - Amazon Jungle Fun!**

Wake up late or rise early — the choice is yours. For those who want to avoid the heat, and enjoy nature at its fullest. A full buffet breakfast is served from 5:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. During the morning, you may take the Lake Sandoval excursion into the Tambopata National Reserve. Glide in a wooden canoe, across a beautiful, mirror-like oxbow lake that is home to the endangered giant river otter, as well as red howler monkeys, red-bellied macaws, anacondas, side-neck turtles and black caimans. Return to the Inkaterra Reserva Amazonica for lunch.

After lunch, consider the remarkable Inkaterra Canopy Walkway. Ascending the first tower, 29 meters above the forest ground, you begin your encounter with the treetop realm. For more than a quarter of a mile, you will literally walk through the rainforest canopy on a suspension bridge network linking eight observation platforms. During this hour-and-a-half expedition, be on the lookout for colorful toucans, woodpeckers, trogons, monkeys, and sloths. If you wish you may extend your excursion and watch the sunset from one of the towers. Back at the lodge, enjoy the daily nature presentation in the Eco Center and the Happy Hour.

Overnight: Inkaterra Reserva Amazonica (B, L, D)

## **Sept 8 - More Exploration**

Enjoy a trip to Gamitana Creek and village, located 25 minutes by boat from the lodge. For one and a half hours, explore the rainforest along the banks of a winding, dark water creek that is home to many piranha, caiman, turtles and birds, until the Sanipanga landing point. Navigate your way back downstream, observing the abundant flora and fauna along the way. You will return to Gamitana Farm to do a short-guided tour to see how local farmers grow fruits and vegetables.

Return to the lodge for lunch. After lunch, enjoy the Hacienda Concepcion excursion, with over 200 different plant species. Learn about the medicinal uses and benefits of local flora. This is followed by a 30-minute canoe trip to look for turtles, sun grebes, nightjars and exotic herons. Return to the lodge.

Then consider the Rainforest by Night excursion through the Inkaterra Ecological Reserve for approximately a 2-hour excursion. Venture into the forest and experience the mystery of the animal activity that awakens in the rainforest after dark, enhancing animal resources to create new adaptation mechanisms. Listen to nocturnal forest sounds and spot species that only emerge at night. Return to the lodge.

Overnight: Inkaterra Reserva Amazonica (B, L, D)

## **Sept 9 - Puerto Maldonado to Lima**

Enjoy breakfast buffet before departure. A 45-minute return trip by boat on the Madre de Dios River takes you to Puerto Maldonado, where you will visit the **Butterfly House**. Peru boasts the greatest variety of butterflies in the world, with 3,700 known species. Many of these can be seen at the Butterfly House, a showcase for the variety, beauty, and adaptability of these fascinating insects.

Continue on for transfer to airport for flight to Lima (1:40pm-4:35PM) and connect to your outbound flights. All flights at night so you may arrive home next day.

## **Sept 10 – Arrive USA**

All USA flights depart in evening. So you may arrive home Sept 10.

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**Fitness Level Two** - I have no trouble walking and if necessary, can walk for 3+ miles. Uneven surfaces are not a problem. I do not need a cane or walking device.