

## **KINGDOMS OF THE CLOUDS\***

(Prices valid through December 24th 2011)

ST-182

**LIMA – CHICLAYO – CHACHAPOYAS – LEYMEBAMBA – CAJAMARCA – LIMA**

**(9 days / 8 nights)**



\*Due to the rainy season this itinerary is only recommended from May through September

This journey concentrates in the archaeological legacy left by the pre-Inca cultures Mochica, Lambayeque and Chachapoyas in the north of Peru - a pristine region. Recent excavations on ongoing research in Trujillo and Chiclayo bring out more facts about the Moche civilization. Though, little is known about the Chachapoyas. Called the 'cloud people' the Chachapoyas built their cities on ridges in the cloud forest as the spectacular citadel, called Kuelap. This journey not only retraces the steps of pre-Inca cultures in Peru but also offers breathtaking landscapes as you are driven across the Andes to tropical cloud forest.

### **DAY 1**      ... – LIMA

Welcome to Lima, the 'City of Kings'. You will be met at the airport and privately escorted to your hotel.

### **DAY 2**      LIMA – CHICLAYO (B)

In the morning you will be picked up from your hotel and be driven to the airport to fly to Chiclayo. Upon arrival transfer to your hotel.

In the afternoon you will drive to Sipan, the site where the tomb of the Lord of Sipan was discovered in 1987. The Lord ruled around 200 AD over the Moche culture, and his gold-laden tomb is considered to be the richest in the Americas. You then travel to the town of Lambayeque to visit the Royal Tombs of Sipan Museum. This is one the best museums in the country. Shaped like a Moche pyramid it contains the gold masks, scepters, jewelry and other objects of the royal Moche tomb discovered 1987. Many archaeologists compare it to the tomb of Pharaoh Tutankhamun in Egypt. The exhibition succeeds in evoking the magnificence and high degree of development of the ancient Moche civilization (100-900 AD) difficult to imagine when exploring eroded adobe pyramids.

We then travel to Tucume. This area was a major population center, perhaps the capital of each of the successive cultures of the area, the Lambayeque/Sican (1000 / 1100 - 1350 AD), the Chimu (1350 - 1450 AD) and it was later occupied by the Incas. From the lookout on Cerro Purgatorio you can have a panoramic view over the entire complex embracing 26 eroded adobe pyramids. The local museum displays photographs and artifacts from the excavations. The uncovered 'Huaca Las Balsas' is, since 2010, opened to the public. Several friezes made of mud of special religious significance were discovered here. The most impressive scene depicts two birdmen paddling a reed boat and is thought to be related to the Naylamp legend. It tells the origin and foundation of the Lambayeque culture that flourished after the Moche civilization.

**DAY 3 CHICLAYO – CHACHAPOYAS (B,BoxL) (460 km – approx. 10 hours)**

Our trip departs from Chiclayo. A private bus will bring us to the city of Chachapoyas, the capital of the Amazonas and our base for the next three nights. We will arrive in the late afternoon in Chachapoyas.

This town was the center of the Chachapoya culture, which was then conquered in the 15th century by the Incas. In 1538 this town was founded years later by the Spanish conquerors under the name 'San Juan de la Frontera de los Chachapoyas'. The main square and the cobbled streets are still from that Spanish era.

We suggest you strolling through the main square with original elements from the colonial times. The archbishop's house is one of the most important buildings here and the birthplace of Don Alejandro Toribio Rodríguez de Mendoza, one of the most illustrious precursors of the national independence.

Due to its historic meaning, Chachapoyas is also the political capital of the Amazonas department. This is the cloud forest of eternal mist, high in the Andes, overlooking the Amazon Basin, hidden in a perpetual mist with orchids and bromeliads everywhere. Also the fauna here is unique.

**DAY 4 CHACHAPOYAS (B,BoxL)**

A characteristic of the Chachapoyas region is its sarcophagi, elaborately coffins, often stuck in inaccessible places as mountain cliffs.

This morning we head towards Karajia, 48 km from Chachapoyas. Here six sarcophagi, atop a gorge of difficult access overlook the left bank of Utcubamba River. The remote site for this cemetery tells us that the Chachapoyas had enormous respect for their ancestors because they hid them away for protection. Mummies placed inside sarcophagi are locally known as 'purunmachus' (from the Quechua 'purun' or wild and 'machu' old). The 2m funerary statues (1460 AC +60) represent men and women. Details such as necklaces or pectorals, feathered tunics, facial traits and genitals were added in shades of yellow ochre and two shades of red.

Afterwards we drive to 'Pueblo de los Muertos' (City of the Dead). Here, up to 2m high sarcophagi carved with human faces stare blankly across the Utcubamba Canyon from a natural fault in the rock face. If you get close, you can see that the casings are hollow, and some contain mummies wrapped in funerary shrouds; others are just filled with sun-bleached bones.

**DAY 5 CHACHAPOYAS – KUELAP – LEYMEBAMBA (B,L) (150 km – approx. 7 hours)**

After breakfast we begin our expedition to Kuelap. After 4 hours driving we arrive in Kuelap, an impressive pre-Inca fortress. Its 800 m (2,624 ft) length and 300 m (984 ft) width could probably give shelter to 4,000 people. Its spectacular location, on a high rock wall and its high, thick walls are awesome. There are about 480 structures inside. Most of them are circular constructions in the typical Chachapoyas style, adorned with friezes.

We then drive to Leymebamba located in the Utcubamba valley, 60 km south of Chachapoyas. Leymebamba is a town with a population of 5,000 and its architecture echoes local building traditions, which features carved wooden balconies and a church built of stone. Talented weavers here use a wide range of techniques and designs to produce colorful blankets, carpets, ponchos saddlebags and saddle blankets. The spindle or 'pushka' and the backstrap loom, both of pre-Hispanic origin, point to the continuity of region's weaving tradition. According to the Spanish chronicler Pedro Cieza de Leon the Chachapoya "made fine and highly prized clothing for the Incas, and they still make excellent garments and tapestry so fine and handsome that it is greatly esteemed for its quality".

**DAY 6 LEYMEBAMBA – BALZAS – CELENDIN – CAJAMARCA (B,L) (180 km – approx. 9 hours)**

Today we will visit the museum of Leymebamba that houses many objects from Laguna de los Condores, including 219 mummies, as well as an orchid garden with more than 100 species that grow in and around Leymebamba. Textiles as well as painted layers, in which mummies were wrapped, can be found in Laguna de los Condores are displayed in the museum as well.

Afterwards we will drive to Celendin and then to Cajamarca, crossing two cordilleras and several different habitats, such as cloud forest, agricultural land, desert-like areas and the Marañon Canyon. The journey from Leymebamba to Celendin, passing by the Marañon Canyon, is one of Peru's most spectacular drives. The Marañon River forms one of the world's deepest canyons, and you will descend through different ecosystems from over 3,000 m to the town of Balsas at 1,200 m. After crossing the river you then ascend back through the various habitats to nearly 3,200 m.

**DAY 7 CAJAMARCA (B,L)**

In the morning you will have a city tour to get to know the beautiful town Cajamarca. It is situated in the wonderful and fertile valley of the northern Andes and is one of America's historic and cultural heritages. Cajamarcas' buildings stem from the colonial time and reflect this era. The influence of the Spanish architecture can be seen in the cathedral, the San Francisco, Belen and La Recoleta Church.

In the afternoon you will have an excursion to the Ventanillas de Otuzco, a vast pre-Inca necropolis located 8 km (5 miles) from the city. It's characterized by the carved crypts in rocky cliffs resembling a huge funerary mosaic of small windows or 'ventanillas'. Most are simple niches, but some are multiple, forming corridors with lateral niches.

**DAY 8 CAJAMARCA – LIMA (B)**

You will be picked up from your hotel and transferred to the airport to fly to Lima. Arrival and transfer to your hotel.

**DAY 9 LIMA - ... (B)**

At proper time you will be transferred to the airport for your international flight.

Prices per person in USD sharing TWIN	Private Services					Single Suppl.
	2	4	6	8	10	
Tourist	2,603	1,780	1,713	1,490	1,378	259

\* min. 2 persons

Domestic flights (net price per person in USD)	
Lima - Chiclayo	190 *
Cajamarca - Lima	200 *

\* Air fares subject to change according availability

City	Tourist
Lima	Casa Andina Centro <a href="http://www.casa-andina.com">www.casa-andina.com</a>
Chiclayo	Casa Andina Gran Hotel Chiclayo <a href="http://www.casa-andina.com">www.casa-andina.com</a>
Chachapoyas	Casa Andina Kuelap <a href="http://www.casa-andina.com">www.casa-andina.com</a>
Leymebamba	La Casona de Leymebamba <a href="http://www.casonadeleymebamba.com">www.casonadeleymebamba.com</a>
Cajamarca	Laguna Seca Hotel <a href="http://www.lagunaseca.com.pe">www.lagunaseca.com.pe</a>

**SERVICES INCLUDED**

- Transfers from/to hotel
- Accommodation based on TWIN in the selected hotel category
- Excursions as noted in the itinerary
- Private services with English, German, French or Spanish speaking guide
- Private transportation for the trip from Chiclayo to Cajamarca
- Entrance fees to the sites mentioned in the itinerary
- Meals as noted (B: breakfast, BoxL: Boxed lunch L: lunch, D: dinner)

**SERVICES NOT INCLUDED**

- International air fares
- Domestic flights (see separate cost above including airport taxes)
- Tips