



THE PANCHO FIERRO RIDE

LUXURY RIDING HOLIDAY, 6 DAYS/5 NIGHTS



Starting from the heart of the historically rich and colourful Sacred Valley, the ride follows ancient cobblestone Inca roads taking you along secluded mountain trails to access Peru's hidden marvels. The route passes through isolated villages of the Quechua communities with numerous visits to the finest Inca sites.

This 6-day luxury riding adventure includes five overnights at the charming Hotel Sonesta Posada del Inca in the Sacred Valley, delicious meals and a support team of grooms, driver, an experienced English speaking trail guide (usually the owner of the ranch) and a 4x4 back-up vehicle throughout the ride. A visit to the legendary Inca citadel of Machu Picchu is also part of the itinerary.

The Pancho Fierro Ride is a private tour with no set departures (contact us for availability). With a minimum group size of only two riders, this ride is very suitable for private parties or couples on honeymoon, who can appreciate extra personal attention and a more intimate ambience. Riding level: intermediate-advanced.

Recommended: If arriving from sea level (Lima), we recommend you spend at least one day in Cusco before starting the ride to acclimate to the altitude.

ITINERARY

Day 1 .

The meeting point of the ride is in Cusco. Our driver will pick you up at 9h00 from your hotel. From Cusco, it is a 1hr20 drive to your accommodation in the Sacred Valley.

For the next five nights, you will stay in comfortable accommodation in the heart of the Sacred Valley of the Incas; just a short drive from the stables. Once you have unpacked and refreshed yourself, transfer to the ranch. Today you will have an opportunity to get to know our beautiful Peruvian Paso horses and traditional Peruvian riding gear.

Enjoy a delicious barbecue lunch at the ranch, some good wine and, of course Maria's famous Pisco Sours. After lunch, there will be a demonstration and explanation of classic Peruvian equitation, followed by a short evaluation of your riding ability. We will then match you with a mount suitable for your riding ability, preference, personality and weight class. All horses are forward going, very well-trained and a pleasure to ride.

Dinner will be at the ranch or a local restaurant.

Overnight at the Hotel Sonesta Posada del Inca in the Sacred Valley.

Day 2 .

After a hearty breakfast at your hotel, you will be transported to the ranch where the ride will set off. We cross the Urubamba River via a bridge and pass the village of Pichingote. From this point, we climb with our horses to Salinas up a narrow track. Along the way, you will see the

salt pans from Inca times. They are still being used to extract salt from the mountain spring water by the local owners. The salt pans consist of a series of platforms where the salty water is channelled through an impressive irrigation system and left to evaporate in the sun.

Today you climb approx. 800 meters, to reach the Andean altiplano. This climb takes about two hours. We ride or try to ride, at a slow pace because the change of altitude does not only affect the horses. Once at 3,550 m (over 11,400 ft.), you will be impressed by the stunning scenery and the snow-capped mountains of Chicon, Veronica and Pitusuray. Continue your ride to Maras, a typical Andean village with a beautiful 400-year-old colonial church, where a picnic lunch will be waiting for you nearby. The church at Maras was built just after the Conquest and is one of the ten oldest churches in South America.

From Maras, you will visit the ruins of Cheqoq. Here the Incas constructed fascinating cold-storage areas (pre-Hispanic refrigerators) to conserve the agricultural produce of this region. The cooling of the products was achieved through a system of wind tunnels to circulate the cold air coming from the glaciers and a network of water channels to circulate the cold water from a nearby mountain spring. Continue riding until approximately 4:30 pm. The horses will stay with the grooms at a campsite, and you will return to your hotel by private car.

After some rest and a hot shower, we will take you for dinner at one of Urubamba's local restaurants or the ranch. Overnight at the Hotel Sonesta Posada del Inca in the Sacred Valley. (B,L,D).

Riding time: 4 to 4,5 hours. Altitude: 2,800 - 3,550 m/9,190 - 11,650 ft.

Day 3.

After a sound and restful sleep, you will be picked up at 09h15 and transferred back to where we left the horses. Today is a day for following primitive trails across the altiplano, enjoying spectacular scenery along the way with snow-capped mountains, wildflowers and beautiful mountain lakes. Meet smiling Quechua children with their herds of sheep or cattle and see campesinos traditionally ploughing

their fields, oxen hitched to a wooden plough. You may even share a chicha (a traditional maize drink) with them. Just before Chinchero our backup team awaits you with a delicious picnic lunch. On a clear day, the views from Chinchero are tremendous; to the west and northwest stretches a vista of rolling altiplano, ringed in the distance by the dramatic snow-capped peaks of the Cordilleras Vilcabamba and Urubamba.

After lunch, we ride to Lake Piuray. From this lake we continue north in the direction of Cusco along beautiful trails. At a small village, we will meet a local family who will offer their hospitality. We will leave our horses with grooms at a campsite for the next two nights. If time allows, we have a short trip by car to visit Chinchero to visit a textiles workshop and see a demonstration of ancient techniques of spinning, dying and weaving wool.

The beautiful fabrics are still made in a traditional way, as they would have been in Inca times. Bring some money as you may want to purchase souvenirs, though don't feel obligated to buy anything. Dinner today will be early and quick so you can rest well for your trip to Machu Picchu tomorrow. Maria might get a takeaway pizza or "polo a la brasa", a wildly popular dish in Peru, for dinner. Riding time: 4 to 5 hours.

Altitude: 3,550-3,800 m / 11,650-12,470 ft.

Day 4.

Today you visit Machu Picchu by train. Pick up from your hotel around 6-6.30 am. Since its discovery by Hiram Bingham in 1911, Machu Picchu has captivated the hearts and minds of the modern world. The experience of visiting Machu Picchu is not limited to the ruins themselves; the train journey is one of the most spectacular in the world. Before it was declared a World Heritage site by UNESCO in 1983, the existence of the Inca citadel was almost unknown to the world. Since the 80s, visits to Machu Picchu have increased so much that it is now one of the favourite destinations for travellers. As of July 2017, the Peruvian government has established new regulations to preserve the

facilities of this Wonder of the World. There are different entrance times: morning from 6 am to 12 am and afternoon from 12 pm to 5 am. The capacity of the Citadel is limited to 2,500 visitors per day, distributed in the two shifts mentioned. Because of the increase in tourism in Peru, your ticket to Machu Picchu must be booked and reserved in advance. Tickets are booked for the afternoon shift and with the most convenient train schedule. Depending on availability at the time of booking, you will be travelling with the luxurious Vistadome train service leaving from the train station in Ollantaytambo in the morning (a 30-minute drive from your hotel) and returning to the same station around 7 or 8 pm where you will be picked up again by our driver. You will stop at the ranch for dinner on the way to the hotel. Lunch is an out-of-pocket expense today.

Day 5.

Today's ride will take you to incredible landscapes (and the highest point of the ride) with spectacular views. Dress well because if you ride at a high altitude, the weather can be more harsh and unpredictable. Ascend a steep and narrow valley to reach a pass at 4,150 m (13,600ft) and enjoy the view of Lake Q'oricocha. Many herds of Llamas and Alpacas can be seen around here grazing among the farmland. The people living at this high altitude are friendly, hardworking farmers who grow mainly potatoes. After we explore the area around the lake, we ride eastward to a small lake called Quellacocha, where we meet our backup team and stop for a delicious lunch. After lunch, the ride heads Northeast in the same direction as the Sacred Valley. Descend from the altiplano into the valley of Umaspampa on a zig-zag trail for about two hours.

Close to the village of Umasbamba, we leave the horses in the caring hands of the grooms. Our driver will bring you back to your hotel in the Sacred Valley. Dinner at a local restaurant or the Ranch. Riding time: 5 to 6 hours. Altitude: between 3,800 – 4,290 m / 12,470 – 14,000 ft.

Day 6.

Today is another stunningly scenic day, and you will have plenty of breaks and photo stops. From the village of Umaspampa, ride to Cuper Alto and Cuper Bajo village, arriving in the early afternoon at a beautiful small lake near Chinchero, where you have lunch. Much of the riding today is along trails that are part of the great Incan Empire's road system, the Capac Ñan. The Incan road network was one of the greatest engineering feats ever undertaken in the New World, rivalling the Roman road system in the Old World. The 25,000 km network linked Cusco, the Inca capital, to the empire's far-flung domains. The road system reached almost all the Andean territories, including Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, Argentina and Chile and formed four recognisable main roads and many secondary roads. After lunch, we ride across the countryside to a small settlement, nearby Maras, where the rides end. Here the horses will be trucked back home. Our driver will take you back to the Ranch to enjoy our last Pisco Sour together before saying goodbye. Our driver will bring you back to Cusco late afternoon. (B L)

Riding time: approx. 5 hours.

Altitude: 3,800 – 3,600 m/12,470 – 11,850 ft.

The itinerary is flexible. Changes may occur due to weather and other unforeseen circumstances.

DATES & PRICING

Price

US\$ 3950.00 (Trip price per person, group size: 2 or more participants)

US\$ 490.00 (Single supplement, if applicable)

Price includes

- 5 overnights at the Hotel Sonesta Posada del Inca in Yucay (based on double occupancy).
- Visit to Machu Picchu on day 4. Includes all land transfers, train tickets, bus tickets, entrance fees.
- All meals except lunch on day 4 and dinner on day 6.
- Dinners at local restaurants (alcoholic beverages are not included).

- Dinners at the ranch (include all drinks).
- Experienced English speaking trail guide, grooms, driver and support team.
- 4WD back up vehicle. All land transfers to and from Cusco or the Sacred Valley.
- All tack including saddlebags, woollen poncho, snacks, water bottle.

Price does not include

Single supplement (if applicable): US\$ 490. The trip price is based on shared occupancy of hotel accommodation, the so called 'Double Room' for two persons. The single supplement fee covers the extra cost for a 'Single Room'.

Dates and availability:

The 6-day Pancho Fierro Ride is a 'private tour' and has no set departure dates. Please contact us for availability. A minimum group size of only 2 riders is required to run this ride. This ride is very suitable for private parties and couples.

Single supplement

The price for each ride is based on shared occupancy. If you are traveling solo and wish to share accommodation, we will make every effort to find a roommate (always of the same gender). If you are willing to share and no roommate materialises, then the customary single supplement will apply. A single supplement is always applicable for participants who specifically request single accommodation.

LODGING OPTIONS

Depending on availability at the time we make our final reservations, the Pancho Fierro Ride includes 5-night hotel accommodation at the Hotel Sonesta Posada del Inca in Yucay.

The Hotel Sonesta Posada del Inca in Yucay is only 5 miles from our ranch, has comfortable heated rooms with private bathrooms and plenty of 'local colour'. The Sonesta Yucay Posada is a former 18th century colonial-style monastery and is surrounded by beautiful gardens. The 69-room hotel is like a little village with plazas, gardens and a small chapel. The rooms, with tile floors, wood ceilings, and hand-carved headboards, have balconies that overlook the gardens or the terraced hillsides.

TRIP DETAILS

Meeting Point

Clients will be met in Cusco or any other place in the Sacred Valley. You will be taken to the Maria Zans ranch by private transport. At the end of the ride (day 6) our car will bring you back to Cusco or any other place in the Sacred Valley.

Riders requirements

Riders must

Be comfortable in the saddle for five to six hours

Be comfortable at the walk, trot and short canters

Be able to ride up and down steep hills

Be physically able to hike at high altitudes (9,000 - 12,000 ft)

Riders Weight Limit

To ensure the welfare of our horses there is a strict rider weight limit of 85 kgs / 13.5 st / 190 pounds. There are scales at the stables and riders may be weighed prior to the ride setting off. Riders exceeding our weight limit may be excluded from the ride and no refund will be made.

Horses and Tack

The horses are locally bred Peruvian Pasos. This breed dates back to the colonial era of Peru and originates from the Spanish Andalusians. Peruvian Paso horses are bred for their grace, spirit, and intelligence and are a symbol of their historic and noble past. These horses like to amble, moving fore and hind limbs on the same side at the same time, unlike other equine races that typically move diagonal limbs at the same time. During the ride you will experience traveling on horseback at the smooth Paso Llano gait (4-beat lateral gait, between 8 to 10 Km. per hour). The horses are well cared for, strong, and even-tempered.

The tack utilised is very traditional and demonstrates refined Peruvian craftsmanship. The hardwood hex stirrup and the guarnición, or tailpiece, are unique elements of the Peruvian tack. The saddle is a box saddle and has a deep seat.

Responsibilities

All care will be taken, but we assume no responsibility for injury, loss or damage in any way. Guests are responsible for having an adequate, valid insurance policy including coverage for all the sporting activities that they are likely to participate in. Appropriate medical insurance is obligatory.

It is understood by Maria Zans that guests are in a suitable condition to partake in a riding tour, are not riding against any medical advice, and that guests know of no reason why they should not be participating in such a tour. Guests will be required to sign a waiver of liability at the start of the tour.

Age Limit

16 or older. No maximum age limit as we had very fit and experienced riders of 75+ years old!

Suggested Packing List

Since you will be riding at elevations between 2800 and 4350 meters (9,200 and 14,270 feet), lightweight, warm clothing worn in layers is highly recommended. Dinner is casual; there is no need to bring special attire.

- Comfortable riding trousers
- T- shirts
- Long sleeved cotton shirts.
- Wind-bloc Fleece or jacket (for cold evenings especially at these high altitudes).
- Hat. We recommend a hard hat for riding and something with a wide brim is advisable as protection against the sun (baseball caps work well). Your hard hat must be secure on your head.
- Good sunglasses with a neck cord. Your eyes will become bloodshot if you do not wear sunglasses.
- Sunscreen and Lip Balm, essential because of the altitude and dry air. Suggest at least Factor 30, if not total block.
- Scarf/bandana, useful for protection against the sun.

Leather saddlebags are provided for you. Each person has a set of saddlebags and carries what they need for the day. Jackets and ponchos can be tied behind the saddle so it is easy to put them on and take them off. We provide each rider with a warm Alpaca poncho and rain poncho during the ride on request.

