

### Chapter 1 : The Ancient Ruins On and Beneath the Sacred Lake Titicaca | Ancient Origins

*The Pisac ruins are among Peru's most intact ancient sites, and a perfect example of ingenious Inca architecture. They are built on top of a mountain that towers over the small town of Pisac; the views of the countryside are spectacular and the ruins and their makers are remarkable.*

The walls and floors were once covered in sheets of solid gold, and the courtyard was filled with golden statues. Like so many other Inca monuments it was severely devastated by the conquistadors, who built a Christian church, Santo Domingo, on top of the ruins. Major earthquakes have severely damaged the church, but the Inca stone walls, built out of huge, tightly-interlocking blocks of stone, still stand thanks to the sophisticated stone masonry of the Incas. It was probably used for crop production and storage. Llactapata was burned by Manco Inca Yupanqui, during his retreat to discourage Spanish pursuit. In part due to these efforts, the Spanish never discovered the Inca trail or any of its Inca settlements. According to the Inca religion, it was the first land that appeared after the waters of a great flood began to recede and the Sun emerged from the island to illuminate the sky once again. As the birthplace of the Sun God, the Incas built several sacred sites on the island. Among these Inca ruins are the Sacred Rock and a labyrinth-like building called Chicana. The imperial city Cusco, was laid out in the form of a puma, the animal that symbolized the Inca dynasty. There are three parallel walls built in different levels with lime stones of enormous sizes. The Inca wall is built in such a way that a single piece of paper will not fit between many of the stones. Inca tradition dictated building cities in the shape of birds and animals, and as such, Pisac is partridge shaped. The Inca ruins included a military citadel, religious temples, and individual dwellings, and overlooks the Sacred Valley, between the Salkantay Mountains. Choquequirao Seated on the border of Cuzco and Apurimac, Choquequirao meaning Cradle of Gold , is located meter 10, feet above sea level. The Inca ruins contains a staircase configuration, made up of terraces. Built in a completely different style than Machu Picchu, Choquequirao is much larger in area. One can only travel to Choquequirao by foot or horseback, and as such, is visited much less often than Machu Picchu. Without benefit of wheels, the trek to Choquequirao from Cachora can take up to four days! At the time of the Spanish conquest of Peru it served as a stronghold for the Inca resistance. Nowadays the Inca ruins of Ollantaytambo is an important tourist attraction and one of the most common starting points for hike known as the Inca Trail. Although known locally, it was largely unknown to the outside world before being rediscovered in Since then, Machu Picchu has become the most important tourist attraction in Peru. You Might Also Like.

### Chapter 2 : Machu Picchu History

*So, we left the markets behind and met up with our private guide who drove us up to Pisac's hilltop Inca citadel. About the Pisac Ruins The Pisac ruins, also known as Inca Pisac, guard the southern entrance to the Sacred Valley.*

Machu Picchu city or Machu Picchu ruins! Picture of ruins inspired lot of people to visit Machu Picchu. Still when they reach this place they become stunned for some moment. Now what are those structures! Once you will reach that place your tour guide will certainly explain you every single structures. But sometime they go fast, and when you will reach there, you remain so absorbed, it is really difficult to concentrate on what somebody is telling Hey, you are there to see something , not to eat lectures, right? I think you better get some idea of those elements before you reach there. The far left is the sacred plaza, you will find Intiwatana there. Then towards the bottom of the picture you can see Principal Temple, the Temple of the Three Windows, and royal houses. Near the bottom the semi circular structure is the Temple of the Sun. On the middle and right around the main plaza are gardens, prisons and residence for common people. From here you can see whole Machu Picchu. There is a big stone behind this hut, known as Funerary Rock. This rock is the place for drying bodies in the sun for mummification. Temple of the Sun and Royal Tomb It is a semi circular tower. Stonework of this tower is exceptionally good. Which indicates the importance of Temple of the Sun. You will see a curved rock at the center of the temple. This rock has a straight edge which is in line with the sunlight during summer time. Sacred Plaza Sacred Plaza is the important part in the ruins. You will see most of time a big group standing there some how I got the picture when it was less crowded , listening the lectures of the guide. One group leaves another one comes. Intihuatana Intihuatana is the famous stone of Incas. It is known as "Hitching Post of the Sun. It is a vertical stone column based on a irregular pyramid. This stone column is called gnomons. Though in all Inca center these stones were found Archeologists and scientists have not yet undiscovered their function. Most popular theory states that they were used during the winter time to hitch the sun from going further away. Though in all Inca center they were found, they were not found intact. The Spanish destroyed most of the hitching posts. They had taken it as objects of pagan worship. Since Machu Picchu remained hidden to them, here Intihuatana remained intact. But you would laugh to know that after surviving all those centuries this famous Intihuatana was knocked down not whole though, only! It is common in all Inca villages or towns. How much time you need to move around all the sections of the ruin. Though from picture it looks like a small place, practically it is not that small. And there are lots of things to see. Many plazas, stones, agricultural sector, urban sector Wayna Picchu and what not. But still after all these you can finish your visit to the ruins in tow to three hours, if you like to go slow of course, after traveling a lot still you may need five hours, after then there will not be much things left for further study. But yes, I have more things to say, sorry if you are planning to see sunrise in Machu Picchu, or you want to climb onto Huayna Picchu, or you want to spend time in Machu Picchu when it is calm and less crowded, then, yes, then you should not go back on the same day. Spend at least a night in ruins, I mean the hotel next to the ruins, " Machu Picchu Sanctuary Lodge" if you have a deep pocket , or in some other hotels on Aguas calientes. If you are interested to climb up the Huayna Picchu Mountain the big mountain at the background of Machu Picchu ruins , you have to go there early, because only first people are allowed to climb up everyday. But if you choose to travel yourself which I recommend then you need to buy the ticket yourself. Usually entrance tickets are sold at the entrance, right? But that is not true at Machu Picchu ruins. So if you miss it and reach Machu Picchu, you have to come back again to Aguas Calientes. You can ask any body there to reach there. Those who are in a guided tour, usually stop at Puente Ruinas Station, since there guides already collect the tickets from Aguas Calientes. All this tickets are valid for one day only. Read more on entrance ticket to Machu Picchu.

**Chapter 3 : Inca Legacy by caleb eurich on Prezi**

*Pisac, a word of Quechua origins, means "partridge". Inca tradition dictated building cities in the shape of birds and animals, and as such, Pisac is partridge shaped. The Inca ruins included a military citadel, religious temples, and individual dwellings, and overlooks the Sacred Valley, between the Salkantay Mountains.*

Viracocha was the creator god of pre-Incan and Incan mythology. He fortified the town and its approaches in the direction of the former Inca capital of Cusco, which had fallen under Spanish domination. In , the native population of Ollantaytambo was assigned in encomienda to Hernando Pizarro. Several Inca structures are in the surrounding areas, and what follows is a brief description of the main sites. The single stone lintel is a sign of importance. Ollantaytambo dates from the late 15th century and has some of the oldest continuously occupied dwellings in South America. These buildings have a much larger area than their counterparts in the main settlement; they also have very tall walls and oversized doors. To the south are other structures, but smaller and built out of fieldstones. Araqhama has been continuously occupied since Inca times, as evidenced by the Roman Catholic church on the eastern side of the plaza. The part of the hill facing the town is occupied by the terraces of Pumattallis, framed on both flanks by rock outcrops. Due to impressive character of these terraces, the Temple Hill is commonly known as the Fortress, but this is a misnomer, as the main functions of this site were religious. The main access to the ceremonial center is a series of stairways that climb to the top of the terrace complex. At this point, the site is divided into three main areas: It is accessed by a stairway that ends on a terrace with a half-finished gate and the Enclosure of the Ten Niches, a one-room building. Behind them is an open space which hosts the Platform of the Carved Seat and two unfinished monumental walls. The main structure of the whole sector is the Sun Temple, an uncompleted building which features the Wall of the Six Monoliths. Some of the blocks show evidence of having been removed from finished walls, which provides evidence that a major remodeling effort was also underway. The andenes permitted farming on otherwise unusable terrain; they also allowed the Incas to take advantage of the different ecological zones created by variations in altitude. This type of high-prestige terracing is also found in other Inca royal estates such as Chinchero , Písaq , and Yucay. These conditions allowed the Incas to grow species of plants native to lower altitudes that otherwise could not have flourished at this site. Its interconnected buildings and plazas form an unusual design quite unlike the single-room structures common in Inca architecture. As the site is isolated from the rest of Ollantaytambo and surrounded by an elaborate terraces, it was postulated to be a palace built for emperor Pachacuti. Their location at high altitudes, where more wind and lower temperatures occur, defended their contents against decay. To enhance this effect, the Ollantaytambo qullqas feature ventilation systems. They are thought to have been used to store the production of the agricultural terraces built around the site. The site features three main quarrying areas: An elaborate network of roads, ramps, and slides connected them with the main building areas. In the quarries are several chullpas , small stone towers used as burial sites in pre-Hispanic times. During the Spanish conquest of Peru , emperor Manco Inca fortified the eastern approaches to fend off Spanish attacks from Cusco during the Battle of Ollantaytambo. The first line of defense was a steep bank of terraces at Pachar, near the confluence of the Anta and Urubamba Rivers. Past them, at the plain of Mascabamba, 11 high terraces closed the valley between the mountains and a deep canyon formed by the Urubamba. To the west of Ollantaytambo, the small fort of Choquequillca defended the road to Machu Picchu. In the event of these fortifications being overrun, the Temple Hill itself with its high terraces provided a last line of defense against invaders.

### Chapter 4 : Pisac Ruins- Gateway to the Sacred Valley of the Incas

*Attractions along the Inca Trail. There are many ruins, great vantage points, and beautiful landscapes along the Classic Inca calendrierdelascience.com following are a view attractions along the way, many being ruins left behind by the Incas.*

Is it all worth it? The Inca Trail is the awesome Andean trek with a serious reward at the end: The Inca empire was centred on Peru but stretched further than that of the Romans. Like the Romans, the Incas left behind them monumental stone constructions, built for the most part without mortar, yet strong enough to withstand centuries of earthquakes that have toppled more modern buildings. The image of the ruins straddling the saddle of a high mountain is instantly recognisable, making it hard to believe that as little as a century ago only a tiny handful of farmers and traders operating in the remote Lower Urubamba region of southern Peru knew of its existence. An intact site of several hundred structures built from these gracefully sculpted blocks, unknown to the outside world and hidden amidst spectacular granite pinnacles, Machu Picchu is the archetype of lost cities. It is at once breathtaking to behold and utterly mysterious. But what of the Inca Trail? Again, like the Romans, the Incas left behind them one of the most extensive road networks in the ancient world, for the most part paved and drained, which linked every part of their realm. Many of these tracks have been rediscovered. The classic Inca Trail, penetrating the forest above the Urubamba River, is the best such example. In the days of the Incas, Machu Picchu was a long, hard walk from Cusco. However, because these days you can reach the site without ever having to lace up a pair of trekking boots in earnest, why walk there? There must be something intrinsically appealing about the Inca Trail itself to justify trekking four days through tough terrain, over three passes of not inconsiderable altitude just to get somewhere you can catch the train to in only four hours? A lot of talk before tackling the Inca Trail is on the goal and the ruins waiting at the far end. But in this instance, the journey really is part of the adventure and the reason to go. Disembarking at a stop without even a station, you are instantly immersed in the landscape. The trek passes some stunning scenery, rich in flora and boasting awesome panoramas and dramatic views of snow-capped summits. Then there are the ruins along its entire length. All spectacularly and superbly sited, they seem to have simply grown out of the ground. In truth, there are a multitude of reasons to tackle the trek. In a trek full of literal and metaphorical highpoints, Machu Picchu is the last in a succession of celebrated features. To walk the Inca Trail is to uncover the rest of the engrossing story.

**Chapter 5 : Exploring Inca Ruins at Lake Titicaca - Bolivia Insider**

*However, Jamin discovered several Inca artifacts in the same area. In , a British expedition to investigate the Pyramids of Paratoari with Kenneth Gawne, Lewis Knight, Ken Halfpenny, I. Gardiner and Darwin Moscoso as part of the documentary "The Secret of the Incas" took place.*

We snuck in, and we snuck close. Some people may not agree with us here. So we looked for an alternative. Starting with the local ruins that reside in the hills overlooking Cusco city, we were delighted we opted in for the rough and ready way of visiting. The best part of our 5km hike was just that, the hike. Massive shout out to Along Dusty Roads for introducing us to this method. From Cusco to Tambomachay: Start your day off early and catch the minibus to Tambomachay from Puputi Terminal. You could grab a cab for a few sol but why not warm up the quads and enjoy a brisk morning walk? During our time in Cusco city, we stayed in Wanchaq and do highly recommend a stroll through this busy district. It is an easy 15 minute walk from the Plaza de Armas. Off to a great start can you sense the sarcasm? Still though, give it a go! The colectivo will drop you outside the entrance. With your back to the entrance, head back along the main road, the one you came in on. Our plan was to keep walking until we found a way in, but our guard stopped us in our tracks. Sure let us know if your mission is more successful. These ruins rest on a hill thus are easily seen from the roadside. For the best view, there is a hill adjacent. Climb as high as you can for that stunning shot. Look with your eyes, not your hands! Again, down the main road you drove in on. Now walking away from Puka Pukara, yes! along the same main road, after 5 minutes the next village will be in sight. About metres before the village, there is a dirt-path leading left, take it. Walking behind houses, beside a mini-reservoir, past llamas and donkeys; follow the dirt track straight, over a wooden bridge and pass the football field. Continue along the same path that may slightly disappear under moss , there should be a line of towering eucalyptus trees on your left. The now non-existing dirt road will veer to the left. Easiest way is to follow the trees and bushes on your left, all the way around to your right will be open marsh land. Eventually you will reach what looks like an open valley, with a downward hill. Head down the hill and continue straight, under the watchful eye of the looming rockface. You might see some people walking on top of the hill to your right, but stick to your own path and keep going straight until you reach the foundations of old ruins, hidden behind a barbed wire fence. Climb up the stony steps and enjoy a lil rest on top of the rock. The Temple of the Moon: There is a worn out pathway leading from Chuspuyoq straight across an open-field. Follow the path right up to the top, and enjoy that view. The view from The Temple of the Moon There is a small cave, should you wish to take a break from the sun, under said rock on the opposite side, facing away from the city. The Temple of the Monkey: Head towards the houses and as you approach there will be a grassy path aligned with stones, on your right. After no more then 7 minutes, you will arrive to the Temple of The Monkey aka Kusilluchayoq. Go forth, get lost in the monkey maze and search the rocks for carved monkeys, the reason why it got its name. There is only one rock that features carved monkeys. To find it, enter the ruins where the signpost is. There is a tall pointed rock sitting over this arch. From the Temple of the Monkey, head back towards the grassy path, aligned with stones i. Cross the main road and climb up onto the facing hill. Stay on this path and veer to the left, behind the small stone building, it has a red door and graffiti all over it. Up and over that hill there! Now you should see a perfectly formed hill ahead of you, walk towards it and follow the path leading up. Up, up, up ya go! This is the perfect place to lunch. You will see cars parked along the barbed wire fence. Here you will find a main road. Directly across the main road is a signpost and path leading to Qochapata. From Qochapata, head back to the main road, swing a right and head straight until you see the sign for Saqsaywaman. Take the road to the right hand side of the sign and continue on. All prices have been hiked. It might be worth mentioning that the Cristo Blanco the big white Jesus that hugs the city is up towards the left. Some nice views and photo opportunities here. Take one for your Grandmother. Cross the field to not only get a closer view but to bypass the ticket booths and arrive at the stone path. Unfortunately, this was as close as we got. Along with a local lady, we all tried to hope a nearby fence but failed. Although you can literally touch the Saqsaywaman stone, entering the site fully may be difficult. Alternatively, you can walk the entire

Saqsaywaman perimeter, firstly heading back across the field and out to the main road. Along this traffic ridden road, there are a number of breaks along the fence that offer good photo opps. To head back towards Cusco, follow the Saqsaywaman stone path, walking the away from the entrance and ticket booths. The path will eventually turns into steps, ones that lead straight back to Plaza de Armas. When the steps stop, just continue down the main road and across the church grounds. You should see a narrow left turn which leads to more steps and, eventually, back to the Plaza de Armas. A fun little adventure! Slightly thrilling and it cost you 4sol. Luke mooning the Temple of the Moon Any questions, or something to add? Pop a comment below. We would love to hear from you!

Chapter 6 : Ollantaytambo - Wikipedia

*Want more story behind the Machu Picchu ruins? An estimated 5, people constructed the city's buildings and nearly perfect water system over a 20 year time frame. An estimated 5, people constructed the city's buildings and nearly perfect water system over a 20 year time frame.*

As we wandered through the colourful markets of Pisac, all I could think about was visiting the Pisac ruins. The Pisac ruins were the only archaeological site in the Sacred Valley we could visit, since a strike was blocking access to all others. I wanted to get there quick, just in case the situation changed. Very little is known for sure about the site, including when and why it was built. One theory is that it was built by Inca ruler Pachacuti, to commemorate his victory over the Cuyos people. Another possibility is that Inca Pisac was constructed to protect Cusco from attacks by tribes of the Antis nation. The ancient city is also protected by a plunging gorge. Inca Pisac was grouped into sections, so the ruins are spread apart but accessible by paths. There was an agricultural zone, military sector, urban quarters, ceremonial centre and a cemetery. Gazing across the valley at the dusty mountains and patchwork of land below, I was stopped in my tracks, mesmerized by the scenery around me. As I walked into the archaeological site, every few steps I would turn my head to the left, staring over my shoulder at the sprawling view. Here we saw a group of Inca baths, possibly used for religious purposes, and some other urban buildings. Just around the corner from Qantus Raccay was the view I had been waiting all day to see- the terraces! I had seen pictures of these agricultural terraces before but was not prepared for the actual scale of them in real life. They went almost as far down the mountain as I could see! Following the path above the terraces, we made our way towards the back of the site where the gorge is. Our guide told us to look across at the rock face, drawing our attention to the hundreds of small holes in the cliff wall. This used to be a huge Inca cemetery, containing more than tombs. We spent most of our time at Pisac wandering through the buildings here. As we explored, we noticed they were made with smaller field stones, not the large, precisely fitting stone blocks the Inca are known for. The Inca reserved their best construction methods for ceremonial centres and buildings for the elite. Most of the buildings are built onto the side of a rocky cliff, making the most of the few areas of flat land and blending in nicely with the surroundings. The Inca also had running water here. In hindsight I wish we did, but at least we got to see an Inca ceremonial area at Machu Picchu. Final Thoughts About the Pisac Archaeological Site The Pisac ruins were one of our favourite attractions in Peru and the highlight of our tour of the archaeological sites near Cusco. The best part was that there were only a few other tourists here. It was a pleasure to have the ruins almost all to ourselves and not have to shuffle through in a crowd like at Machu Picchu, even Sacsayhuaman in Cusco. If I ever make another trip to Cusco, I would love to return to the Pisac ruins and explore some of the areas we missed out on. There are two ways to get to the Pisac ruins- drive or hike. To enter Pisac you will need a Boleto Turistico tourist ticket. It can be bought at the entrance and used to visit most archaeological sites in the Cusco region. Please consider booking your accommodations through the included link. It costs nothing extra and helps support this website. Get exclusive updates and content we only send to our subscribers. Your email will be used for delivering our quarterly newsletter. Unsubscribe anytime using the link at the bottom of our emails.

### Chapter 7 : Machu Picchu Ruins - An explanation to the structures in the ruins

*All Ruins of Machu Picchu Sacred places for pilgrimage, ancient silent stones that last forever, enormous constructions to worshiped their main gods and deities, the Machu Picchu Ruins are one of the main attractions of Cusco and of course Machu Picchu, with over 20 constructions that remain almost intact by the pass of the time, is a great.*

Little Pisac locals carefully crossing a bridge as we made our way to the Incan ruins of Pisac for a guided tour. As our shuttle slowly made its way along the twists and turns that led up to the ruins, we were treated to beautiful views over the surrounding mountains, and even got a glimpse of the famous Urubamba River that cuts through the Sacred Valley. On arrival at the entrance, we were greeted by many other tour buses, travelers and locals, who were selling everything from merchandise and food, to water bottles. The archaeological work at the Pisac Ruins is ongoing, uncovering new historical information with every dig. The good news was that Jeiko, our awesome G Adventures tour guide, already had our tickets, so all we had to do was follow his lead and go right past the entrance gate. It turned out that the site of the Pisac Ruins was large enough and with beautiful backdrops everywhere that there was plenty of space for everyone to walk around comfortably and get some lovely photos. The sweeping agricultural terraces of the Pisac Ruins which ensured surplus food was available to its Incan residents. The ruins are separated along ridges into four groups: Despite the Sacred Valley being known for its temperamental weather, not a single drop of rain fell from what was a gorgeous blue sky during the first half hour of our visit. Endless fluffy clouds created a great diffuser for the sunlight coming through, which not only made the land around us that much more green, but also blocked out some of the strong UV rays. A small waterfall tumbling into the Sacred Valley, as viewed during our guided tour of the Pisac Ruins. At 9,000 feet in elevation, the sun was much stronger than at sea level, and less oxygen in the air made each breath heavier. But despite the strain, this was all helpful in getting us ready for the start of the Inca Trail trek the following day. It was truly remarkable looking out at the mountains and landscape surrounding us. Even though we arrived to dozens and dozens of other tour company vehicles, by the time we reached the vista point near the top of the Pisac Ruins, we felt like we were the only tour group there. There was a lovely moment when we all got to look out across the Sacred Valley together, standing side by side with one another. Looking out across the incredible landscapes of the Sacred Valley from the top of the Pisac Ruins, which once defended the southern entrance of the valley. But soon the angry clouds that had moved in above us started to release some light rain. We all quickly put on our waterproof jackets and ran underneath a small roof to keep dry. For someone who gets hot easily, the rain came as a welcome relief, adding a hint of coolness to the rather warm and humid air. After about ten minutes of drizzle, the sky began to clear and we slowly made our way back to the entrance. Right before we left the ruins, we grabbed an opportunity to take a group photo, and I even got one with just Charlene and myself. Big thanks to our tour guide Jeiko for not only leading us around the Pisac Ruins and telling us about its history, but snapping a few photos too! I hope I speak for the whole group when I say we were thrilled with the pre-Inca Trail part of the tour. Arrive early to beat the crowds of other tourists if possible. Make sure to bring your camera to capture these spectacular ruins.

Chapter 8 : What's the story behind Machu Picchu? | Peru | Latin Trails

*Just like Machu Picchu, archaeologists cannot discern the original purpose of the structure. Further along, at the Wiñaywayna site, the Inca left behind have an important piece of their agricultural legacy - a mountainside shaped by man-made terraces. Terraces hold water in, allowing crops to survive hot, dry conditions.*

Machu Picchu Inca Citadel More photos Although there is much to see around Machu Picchu, the most important temples and structures all lie in a relatively small area about m by m in front of Huayna Picchu, the sugarloaf mountain directly behind the ruins. It is therefore possible to explore the main areas of the site in under two hours. However, to explore the ruins fully, and to visit the more remote parts of the site, a full day or longer is required. The different areas of Machu Picchu preserve the names given to them by Hiram Bingham, despite these being wildly inaccurate in many cases. Entering the site, you pass vast tracts of agricultural terracing, which was probably used for the production of food as well as maize for ceremonial chicha. Passing the terracing, there is a very fine fountain on the left. Next to this is the curved Temple of the Sun, where the finest stonework in the ruins is found. This temple would have been used for observing the sun, and the window in the eastern face of the temple aligns perfectly with the rising sun at the winter solstice. Climbing the stairs next to the Temple of the Sun brings you to the quarry, where much of the stone for the constructions was obtained. Next to the quarry is the Temple of the Three Windows, where there are indeed three temples facing east. It is likely this temple was related to the three worlds of the Incas, Hanan Pacha, the world of above representing the gods of the sun, moon and stars ; Kay Pacha, this world representing this life ; and Uqhu Pacha, the world of below representing death. The chakana, the Andean cross, with three levels, was a symbol used to represent the three worlds. Next to one of the windows is a stone half of a chakana. At the winter solstice, the shadow formed by this stone completes the cross. Climbing up from the Temple of the Three Windows brings you to the highest point of the ruins, the Intihuatana, which literally means the hitching post of the sun. Intihuatanas were found at the majority of important Inca sites, although the Spanish destroyed or damaged almost all of them. The Intihuatana at Machu Picchu is particularly important, as it was the only one not discovered by the Spanish. However, despite surviving the Spanish conquest, the Intihuatana has not survived capitalism as well. Although the company was fined heavily, the stone is permanently damaged. The Intihuatana works by casting shadows that line up in different positions at different times of the year. The winter solstice in June was the most important time, as the sun fell directly onto the stone. An interesting aspect to note about the Intihuatana at Machu Picchu is that it is not completely vertical but tilts 13 degrees to the north. This is the exact latitude of Machu Picchu south of the equator. Across the main plaza is a group of simpler buildings that probably served as a general residential area. To the south of this is the area known as the Temple of the Condor, although Bingham called this the Prison, due to some rocks which looked as if they were used to tie up prisoners. However, it is known that the Incas did not have prisons, as death was the punishment for most transgressions. This was almost certainly a temple to the condor, and a carving of the head of a condor can be seen on the ground, with the rocks in the temple forming the outstretched wings of the bird. Huayna Picchu and Temple of the Moon Apart from the main body of the ruins, there are several areas in Machu Picchu worth seeing, and visiting these areas is a good way of getting away from the majority of the crowds. The most commonly visited of these is the peak of Huayna Picchu, the sugarloaf mountain directly behind the open plaza. At first sight it would appear to be impossible to climb this mountain, and the terracing visible near its summit seems an impossible feat. However, there is a well-defined path and the walk to the top takes around forty minutes to one hour and offers a superb alternate view of the ruins. Climbing Huayna Picchu involves very steep drops and ladders up cliff faces. Part of the way up the climb to Huayna Picchu, a trail forks off to the left. Here, there is a fine building, called the Temple of the Moon, although it is unlikely it had anything to do with observing the moon. The Peruvian National Institute of Culture limits the number of people able to climb Huayna Picchu or visit the Temple of the Moon to per day and permits must be bought in advance. Although it is over twice the size of Huayna Picchu, its more gradual ascent and wide, well-marked pathways make it a slightly easier hiking option. A round trip will take around 4 hours but it is definitely

worth the effort. The trail to the top of the mountain takes you up ancient stone steps crafted by the Incas, with beautiful vistas of the Urubamba River, the surrounding mountain scenery and spectacular aerial views of the famous Inca ruins. There are a restricted number of permits to enter Machu Picchu Mountain so it is recommended these are purchased in advance. Sun Gate A common side-trip from the main ruins is up to the Intipunku, the sun gate, about 30 - 40 minutes from the main ruins. This is where the Inca Trail emerges, offering hikers their first view of Machu Picchu. The small ruins themselves are not very interesting, but the view is superb. Inca Drawbridge There is also a trail that leads behind the mountain to the Inca Drawbridge. Here, the path becomes very narrow with a substantial drop to your side. The drawbridge itself is a gap in the path that the Incas left to prevent unwanted visitors crossing. The gap was bridged by logs that could be easily withdrawn.

## Chapter 9 : Attractions along the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu

*Machu Picchu was built in the classical Inca style, with polished dry-stone walls. Its three primary structures are the Intihuatana, the Temple of the Sun, and the Room of the Three Windows. Most of the outlying buildings have been reconstructed in order to give tourists a better idea of how they originally appeared.*

Etymology[ edit ] In the Quechua language , machu means "old" or "old person", while pikchu means either "portion of coca being chewed" or "pyramid, pointed multi-sided solid; cone". Though Machu Picchu is considered to be a "royal" estate, surprisingly, the estate would not have been passed down in the line of succession. It was only used for approximately 80 years before being abandoned seemingly due to destruction of the Spanish Conquests in other parts of the Inca Empire. During the harsher season, staff dropped down to around a hundred servants and a few religious specialists focused only on maintenance. They lacked the chemical markers and osteological markers they would have if they had been living there their whole lives. Instead, there was bone damage from various species of water parasites indigenous to different areas of Peru. There were also varying osteological stressors and varying chemical densities suggesting varying long term diets characteristic of specific regions that were spaced apart. This suggests that several of the immigrants were from more coastal areas and moved to Machu Picchu where corn was a larger portion of food intake. Most people found at the site had lower levels of arthritis and bone fractures found in most sites of the Inca Empire. Not only people were suspected to have immigrated to Machu Picchu, there were several animal bones found that were not native to the site. Most animal bones found were from llamas and alpacas. Most likely, these animals were brought in from the Puna region [27] for meat consumption and for their pelts. Guinea pigs were also found at the site in special burial caves, suggesting that they were at least used for funerary rituals [21] as it was common throughout the Inca Empire to use them for sacrifices and meat. Due to their placements among the human remains, it is believed that they served as companions of the dead. These terraces were a work of considerable engineering, built to ensure good drainage and soil fertility while also protecting the mountain itself from erosion and landslides. However, the terraces were not perfect, as studies of the land show that there were landslides that happened during the construction of Machu Picchu. It can still be seen where the terraces were shifted by landslides and then stabilized by the Inca as they continued to build around the area. Because of the large amount of rainfall at Machu Picchu, it was found that irrigation was not needed for the terraces. The terraces received so much rain that they were built specifically to allow for ample drainage of the extra water. It was proven that the topsoil was probably moved from the valley floor to the terraces because it was much more rich than the soil higher up the mountain. Therefore, when studies were done on the food that the Incas ate at Machu Picchu, it was found that much of what they ate was imported to the area from the surrounding valleys and farther. The types of sacred rocks defaced by the conquistadors in other locations are untouched at Machu Picchu. The site may have been discovered and plundered in by a German businessman, Augusto Berns. Maps show references to Machu Picchu as early as Though Bingham was not the first to visit the ruins, he was considered the scientific discoverer who brought Machu Picchu to international attention. Bingham organized another expedition in to undertake major clearing and excavation. In addition to the ruins, the sanctuary includes a large portion of the adjoining region, rich with the flora and fauna of the Peruvian Yungas and Central Andean wet puna ecoregions. He organized the Yale Peruvian Expedition in part to search for the Inca capital, which was thought to be the city of Vitcos. In particular, Ramos thought Vitcos was "near a great white rock over a spring of fresh water. According to Bingham, "one old prospector said there were interesting ruins at Machu Picchu," though his statements "were given no importance by the leading citizens. En route Bingham asked local people to show them Inca ruins, especially any place described as having a white rock over a spring. Arteaga said he knew of excellent ruins on the top of Huayna Picchu. At the top of the mountain, they came across a small hut occupied by a couple of Quechua , Richarte and Alvarez, who were farming some of the original Machu Picchu agricultural terraces that they had cleared four years earlier. Because of the vegetation, Bingham was not able to observe the full extent of the site. He took preliminary notes, measurements, and photographs, noting the fine quality of Inca stonework of

several principal buildings. Bingham was unclear about the original purpose of the ruins, but decided that there was no indication that it matched the description of Vitcos. Guided by locals Bingham rediscovered and correctly identified the site of the old Inca capital, Vitcos then called Rosaspata , and the nearby temple of Chuquipalta. In , Gene Savoy further explored the ruins at Espiritu Pampa and revealed the full extent of the site, identifying it as Vilcabamba Viejo where the Incas fled after the Spanish drove them from Vitcos. The expedition undertook a four-month clearing of the site with local labor, which was expedited with the support of the Prefect of Cuzco. Excavation started in with further excavation undertaken in and Bingham focused on Machu Picchu because of its fine Inca stonework and well-preserved nature, which had lain undisturbed since the site was abandoned. During his studies, he carried various artifacts back to Yale. One prominent artifact was a set of 15th-century, ceremonial Incan knives made from bismuth bronze ; they are the earliest known artifact containing this alloy. In fact, Bingham removed many artifacts, but openly and legally; they were deposited in the Yale University Museum. Bingham was abiding by the Civil Code of Peru; the code stated that "archaeological finds generally belonged to the discoverer, except when they had been discovered on private land. The tradition is upheld by members of the New Age Andean religion. It is one of the most important archaeological sites in South America, one of the most visited tourist attractions in Latin America [45] and the most visited in Peru. Machu Picchu has wet and dry seasons , with the majority of annual rain falling from October through to April. The area is subject to morning mists rising from the river. The city sits in a saddle between the two mountains Machu Picchu and Huayna Picchu, [30] with a commanding view down two valleys and a nearly impassable mountain at its back. It has a water supply from springs that cannot be blocked easily. The hillsides leading to it were terraced, to provide more farmland to grow crops, and to steepen the slopes that invaders would have to ascend. The terraces reduced soil erosion and protected against landslides. Both could be blocked easily, should invaders approach along them.