

WEAVING WORDS & WOMEN

Cusco and the Sacred Valley, Peru

April 21- May 2, 2018

This itinerary is designed to allow for a relaxed and flexible pace with plenty of opportunities for cultural interaction, creative facilitation, writing and rejuvenation, and for your own individual needs. Lodging is double occupancy, in clean, comfortable accommodations, with private bath. Single rooms can be arranged for a single supplement fee. Please note that international travel is always subject to unforeseen circumstances, and lodging locations or other details of this itinerary may change!

DAY ONE – Travel (Saturday, April 21)

Peru begins to weave her way into your heart! Arrive in Lima in the evening and take pre-arranged transport to [Casa Bella Miraflores](#), a small cozy boutique hotel just half a block from the Malecon Cisneros, with a walking path overlooking the Pacific Ocean. Dinner on your own if you arrive early. No group activities planned for this evening since we'll be flying to Cusco in the morning.

DAY TWO - Arrive in the Sacred Valley (Sunday)

Fly to Cusco, where we will meet up with our driver. We'll have lunch on the way to the small Andean town of Pisac, our portal into the Sacred Valley. The hour drive down into the valley will join the Urubamba River at the edge of Pisac, where mountains rise on every side. We will stay at the Paz y Luz Healing Center, a quiet, peaceful bed and breakfast a short walk from the village. Massages, traditional healing, jacuzzi and dry sauna treatments are available (for an additional fee) at [Paz y Luz](#), where we will stay for three nights.

DAY THREE – Exploring Pisac and Shamanic Ceremony (Monday)

In the morning after breakfast at Paz y Luz, we will gather for some creative time, where Page will guide us on ways to weave with words what we learn from this ancient culture. We will explore the cobbled streets and local produce market of Pisac, followed by lunch and time to wander on our own, shop in the town square's souvenir market, or find a quiet place to journal inspired by the colorful sights and sounds of this Andean village. Early afternoon, we will return to Paz y Luz for a despacho, the traditional Incan ceremony of intention and letting go, led by a local Quechuan shaman. A home-cooked Peruvian dinner at Paz y Luz will complete the day.

DAY FOUR - Pisac Ruins (Tuesday)

After breakfast, we'll take a back-road by taxi to the ancient Incan ruins above Pisac. A dramatic Temple of the Sun, intricate stonework, and sweeping views of the Sacred Valley make this one of the best ruins in the region. We'll either picnic at the ruins or return to town for lunch. The rest of the afternoon is open to explore, write, or sign up for spa treatments. Late afternoon, we'll gather for more creative inspiration before a relaxing dinner at a nearby restaurant.

DAY FIVE - Explore Ollantaytambo (Wednesday)

In the morning, we'll pack up, and then gather for a brief farewell to Pisac. A beautiful hour and a half hour drive will take us to the town of Ollantaytambo, following the Rio Urubamba past

fields of drying corn and farms tilled by oxen. Ollantaytambo is a small town with an enormous ruin perched on the hillside above. After settling in at the [Apu Lodge](#), where we will be for four nights, we will relax, meet up for more creative inspiration, then spend a few hours exploring the narrow, cobbled passageways and visiting the Ollantaytambo ruins. During dinner, we'll learn a few basic phrases of Quechua to prepare us for our village visit the following day. Page will help us sprinkle our evening writing with the sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and textures of the day.

DAY SIX - A Day with the Women Weavers of Patacancha (Thursday)

We will journey to the remote village of Patacancha to immerse ourselves for a day in the lives of women who are practicing the traditional art of weaving on backstrap looms. After a morning of learning about the art and history of Andean weaving and watching the women work, we will have individual weaving lessons overlooking the village before gathering for a Pachamanca—a traditional meal of earth-cooked local potatoes and meat, which we will share with the women and their children. This will be our first, unique opportunity to buy beautiful weavings from local artisans who have raised the wool, spun and dyed the yarn, and woven the fabrics themselves. Our second opportunity will be when we visit Chinchero on Day Nine.

DAY SEVEN - Pumamarca Ruins- Hike, Drive or Horseback Ride (Friday)

A day of options. In the morning, we will journey up to the quiet, seldom-visited ruins of Pumamarca, with splendid views overlooking the Patacancha and Yuracmayo Rivers. You may hike, take the van, or *(for a modest additional fee), ride horseback on the small but sturdy Peruvian mountain horses. Once reunited at the ruins, our guide will share with us the history of this sacred Incan site. After time to reflect and journal, we will walk down out of the ruins and gather for a picnic lunch. We will all take the van back to town, where we'll have free time to journal, nap, or wander on our own. We will gather before dinner to weave together our adventures, reflections, and tall tales.

DAY EIGHT - Machu Picchu (Saturday)

Rising early in the morning, we will take the Vista Dome train along the spectacular Rio Urubamba River as it thunders and crashes towards the Amazon jungle and Machu Picchu, one of the *New Seven Wonders of the World*. Our local guide will explain the complex culture behind this intricate and ancient stonework. We will linger whenever possible to write and wander. After touring the ruins, we will have lunch at the Tinkuy Restaurant (a high-quality meal at the Sanctuary Lodge Hotel just outside the entrance to the ruins). After lunch, we will take a bus back to Agua Calientes, where we will take the late afternoon train back to Ollantaytambo. Dinner will be at Apu Lodge, our relaxing home away from home.

DAY NINE – Chinchero Market and Weaving Collective, arrive in Cusco (Sunday)

We'll drive to the mountain town of Chinchero to explore the historic Sunday morning market where traditionally dressed locals descend from the hills and still practice the ancient custom of *trueco* (bartering). After the market, we'll walk a block to The Center for Traditional Textiles, where (if her schedule allows), we will meet Nilda Callanaupa, founder, executive director, and renowned expert in Andean weaving. We will learn about the natural dyeing techniques that Nilda has helped to revive, and watch demonstrations by the Quechua master weavers and the younger women learning this ancient art. In the late afternoon, after a few minutes of quiet time to journal while the experience is fresh, we'll continue to Cusco, the former heart of the Incan

empire—a unique blend of Incan culture and the rich architecture of the conquering Spaniards. We'll lodge at [Casa San Blas](#), a charming boutique hotel located in the artistic heart of the city's historic district.

DAY TEN – Exploring Cusco (Monday)

Today, after gathering for a little creative inspiration, we will explore the bustling town of Cusco, taking the morning to do a walking tour of the beautiful plazas, Incan stone foundations, and the Spanish architecture built on top of this ancient Peruvian city. In the afternoon, we're on our own to pursue our unique interests, which may include a visit to the Incan temple of Koricancha, a visit to the many museums and galleries, or a relaxing massage, aromatherapy treatment, Shiatsu, or more (fee-based pampering provided by Casa San Blas).

DAY ELEVEN - Exploring Cusco (Tuesday)

A morning to unwind and follow your interests after we gather briefly for some creative focus. You may choose to visit the Mercado Central, where hundreds of women crouch next to their blankets and stands filled with vegetables, potatoes, breads, and meats. Or you might take a taxi up to the ruins of Sacsayhuaman, visit the impressive cathedral on the Plaza de Armas, visit the Chocolate Museum, cozy up in a café to write, or schedule a massage. In the afternoon, we'll gather as a group for creative reflection, and a celebration of our time in Peru, weaving together our memories of the land, the women, and the culture.

DAY TWELVE - Fly home (Wednesday)

Breakfast offers a chance for us to tie together the last threads of this amazing journey. A late morning flight from Cusco will get you to Lima in time to catch a flight home. Most flights to the States leave Lima in the late afternoon or evening and arrive the following morning, and Laura can help you with logistics if you have questions.

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***NOTE:** If you'd like to extend your stay in Cusco for a day or two, just let us know and we can book your room for those extra nights.*

DETAILS:

Meals: Breakfasts and dinners will be restaurant or catered meals. Lunches will be either restaurant meals or market/ picnic style. All non-alcoholic drinks are included with meals. Participants will provide their own drinking water, extra snacks or treats if needed, and alcoholic beverages if desired.

Lodging:

Lima, Day 1; Pisac, Days 2, 3, 4; Ollantaytambo, Days 5, 6, 7, 8; Cusco, Days 9, 10, 11.

Transportation: All transportation, except the return flights from the U.S. to Lima, and from Lima to Cusco, is provided. Transportation will be a combination of chartered van, public bus, train, and taxis.