Overview

Machu Picchu (from the quechua machu pikchu, “Old mountain”) is the current name for an Inca llacta (ancient Andean town) built in the mid-XV century. At an altitude of 2490 meters above sea level or 8169 feet, Machu Picchu was built on the rocky area between Machu Picchu and Huayna Picchu mountains in the central Andes of southern Peru.

Machu Picchu is considered a masterpiece of architecture and engineering because of its magnificent terraces and landscaping. It has become one of the main tourist destinations in Peru and the world.

Students will take a guided tour of the citadel in the morning and have the afternoon free to explore the energy and magic of Machu Picchu.

Discovery Areas

A primary goal of all ISA programs is to facilitate learning & development for program participants. Each excursion & cultural activity is designed to help participants reach a specific set of learning objectives related to 5 areas of discovery: Intercultural, Historical, Sociopolitical, Professional, and Environmental. During this activity, participants will focus on objectives related to the following areas of discovery.

Learning Objectives

- Students will learn how to differentiate between the types of construction present at Machu Picchu and will be able to explain the positive and negative aspects of each type of architecture.
- Identify the local inhabitants’ main sources of income and discuss the sustainability of tourism (service industry) versus agriculture production (goods industry).
- Question the tour guide about tourism’s effects on the ruins and whether the Inca Trail’s strict limits the number of people entering per day is a successful method of preserving the trail – reference Times Healy article below.
- Learn about some of the daily habits of the Incans who inhabited Machu Picchu.
- Understand the concept of soil erosion and its effect on steeply inclined agricultural areas and how the Incas were able to control erosion using terraces, channels, and advanced water irrigation systems.

Related Articles, Books, Videos and Websites


**Key Terms**

- Machu Picchu
- Llaqta
- Huayana
- Terrazas
- Andenería
- Paisajista
- Ciudadela
- Turismo Sostenible