



Manu Wildlife & Ancient Cultures 7 days 2025

Duration: 7 days/ 6 nights

Highlights: Salvador Oxbow Lake, canopy tower in Otorongo Lake, Macaw Clay Lick at Casa Machiguenga, navigation by motorboat on the Manu River, Giant kapok Trees, Cloud Forest, Guadalupe Caves, offspring in Manu, Pristine Forest exploration in Manu basin, Mammal's clay lick at Dorado Lodge, Native Community

Minimum participants: 02

Max participants: 8

Type Service: Group basis rate

Frequency: Daily Departures for groups / Fixed departures

DAY 1

Cusco – Guadalupe Lodge

The journey begins in Cusco, following the scenic Manu Road through dry inter-Andean valleys and vibrant highland villages, where traditional clothing and rural life offer a glimpse into local culture. A stop at Ninamarca reveals pre-Inca tombs perched on the hillside—an evocative archaeological site full of history. Further along, Paucartambo welcomes you with its colonial architecture and iconic arched bridge over the Mapacho River.

As you ascend to the Acjanaco Pass (3,550 m / 11,647 ft), the environment shifts dramatically. Lush cloud forests replace arid slopes, cloaking the landscape in mist, moss, and cascading waterfalls. This is one of the world's most delicate ecosystems and a haven for bird enthusiasts. Look for tanagers, toucans, and—if fortune favors—the striking Andean Cock-of-the-Rock. You may even catch sight of woolly monkeys swinging through the canopy.

Descending into the rainforest, you arrive at Guadalupe Lodge (560 m / 1,837 ft), nestled in the lowland jungle. In the afternoon, explore forest trails in search of capuchin and night monkeys, along with vivid birdlife such as macaws, woodpeckers, and oropendolas. After dark, delve into nearby caves and canyons to observe nocturnal wildlife—from elusive bats to whip spider scorpions. Bring your flashlight; this is a glimpse into the secret life of the forest. Overnight at Guadalupe Lodge – enjoy private bathrooms, showers, and Wi-Fi in a jungle retreat like no other.

DAY 2

Guadalupe Lodge – Boat Navigation – Machuhuasi Lake

Awaken to the melodies of the Amazon as the day begins with a scenic drive toward Atalaya Port, passing through lush tropical plantations of papaya, banana, and other regional crops. Along the way, enjoy sightings of vibrant birdlife and the rich fauna characteristic of the lowland forest. At the Atalaya river dock, board a motorized canoe for a tranquil one-hour journey down the crystal-clear Madre de Dios River.

Disembark for a 40-minute hike to reach Machuhuasi Oxbow Lake, a wetland sanctuary teeming with biodiversity. Glide across the lake and explore its surrounding trails—an area home to hoatzins, macaws, herons, horned screamers, and possibly monkeys, caimans, capybaras, or even the elusive river otter.

This nature circuit lasts approximately three hours, with your guide providing snacks and refreshments along the way. Lunch will be served aboard the boat or along the shaded riverbank, depending on weather conditions. In the afternoon, delve into the primary rainforest in search of wildlife such as toucans and monkey troops, eventually arriving at the towering Kapok tree, a sacred giant of the forest. Before returning to Guadalupe Lodge, guests may opt to visit the nearby Hummingbird Garden—a serene spot for observing these dazzling creatures (entry fee: 10 soles, optional, ~30 minutes). Overnight at Guadalupe Lodge, where comfort meets wilderness: private bathrooms, showers, and Wi-Fi await in this jungle retreat.



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DAY 3

Guadalupe Lodge – Atalaya Port - Casa Matsigenka

We set off early toward Atalaya Port, where a roofed motor canoe waits for our river journey. As we leave behind the rugged Andean foothills, the landscape transitions into the endless green of the Amazon rainforest.

Watch as the mountains fade into the horizon and the lower basin of the Alto Madre de Dios River opens before us, flanked by dense jungle and vibrant wildlife. This stretch of river offers excellent opportunities to spot colorful birds such as macaws, parrots, toucans, caciques, and oropendolas. Keep an eye out for capybaras lounging along the banks and perhaps a monkey troop navigating the treetops. After approximately five hours of navigation, we arrive at the confluence of the Manu and Madre de Dios rivers, making a brief stop at the Limonal Ranger Station for park check-in. From here, we head upriver into Manu National Park, entering one of the most pristine corners of the Amazon. This section of the Manu River is a remarkable place—one of the few where spotting a jaguar is possible, though sightings remain rare and depend on luck. As we continue, the biodiversity intensifies. Expect to see clouds of butterflies, hundreds of swallows, and sandbars teeming with wildlife—each bend in the river revealing something new.

By late afternoon, we reach Casa Matsigenka Lodge, located deep within the park and near the riverbank. We'll spend the next two nights here, immersed in the heart of the jungle. Optional night walks are available depending on group interest.

DAY 4

Casa Matsigenka (Lake Exploration, Trails Network, Macaw Clay Lick)

We dedicate this day to exploring the untamed beauty of Manu's wilderness, beginning with a visit to Salvador Oxbow Lake, renowned for its population of Giant River Otters. These highly social mammals are often spotted throughout the day—fishing, sunbathing on driftwood, or playing along the lake's edge.

Our exploration takes place aboard a comfortable floating catamaran, designed for easy wildlife viewing. As we paddle quietly, we'll search not only for otters but also a vibrant array of birdlife including hoatzins, agami herons, raptors, macaws, oropendolas, and caciques. Simply drifting across this secluded lake is an experience in itself.

The surrounding forest is equally rich. We may encounter species like the white-fronted capuchin and pygmy marmoset, as we explore one of the finest stretches of Amazon rainforest—with well-marked trails offering an easy, immersive walk through its ecological wonders.

In the afternoon, we venture into the terra Firme forest, home to towering trees like the Brazil nut (*Bertholletia excelsa*) and a likely spot to observe monkey troops and other forest dwellers. A major highlight awaits at the Macaw Clay Lick, where red-and-green macaws gather dramatically in flocks to feed on mineral-rich clay—a spectacle of color and sound unique to this region.

Overnight at Casa Matsigenka Lodge.

Note: Access to Salvador Lake is subject to availability and park logistics.

DAY 5

Casa Machiguenga – Dorado Lodge

We begin the day navigating down the Rio Manu, surrounded by the primeval beauty of Manu National Park. We'll stop at the Otorongo Oxbow Lake trailhead, where a short walk-through untouched rainforest reveals the heart of the Amazon.

A network of trails leads us to a canopy observation tower, offering panoramic views of the lake and its surrounding wetlands. Additional viewing platforms provide opportunities to spot aquatic wildlife, including alligators and an abundance of birdlife.

This area is also home to one of the region's largest kapok trees, its immense root system forming a dramatic natural monument amid the forest floor—an unforgettable symbol of the rainforest's grandeur and resilience.

Once back on the river, the landscape comes alive. Sandbars buzz with bird activity, and side-necked turtles bask on sunlit logs. This is another prime section of river where jaguar sightings, while rare, are possible—especially along the quieter banks.

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After about four hours of navigation, we pause at the Limonal Ranger Station for registration and a brief rest. A picnic-style lunch is served aboard the boat as we continue to Dorado Lodge, where we arrive by mid-afternoon.

Depending on the group's interest and energy, the day may end with an optional night walk, offering another glimpse into the forest's nocturnal life.

Let me know if you'd like this folded into your overall tour materials—I can help format your full itinerary with a cohesive style and pacing. You're curating something truly special.

DAY 6

Dorado Lodge- Guadalupe Lodge

This morning, we'll venture deeper into the forest on foot, exploring a more remote network of trails to appreciate the region's rich biodiversity one last time. Later, we board our boat and begin the upstream journey along the braided, crystal-clear waters of the upper Madre de Dios River, navigating through fast currents and ever-changing channels.

As we travel, we'll keep a keen eye out for capybaras, the world's largest rodent—this stretch offers one final chance to spot them in the wild. The skies above may reveal raptors, including kites, eagles, and vultures, often seen circling above the riverbanks.

After approximately five hours of navigation, we arrive at Atalaya Port, marking our re-entry into civilization. A one-hour drive brings us back to Guadalupe Lodge, where you can unwind and, if you choose, participate in an optional night walk to encounter the forest's nocturnal wildlife.

DAY 7

Guadalupe Lodge-Cusco

For early risers, an optional morning walk offers the chance to observe blue-and-yellow macaws soaring over the palm forest—an unforgettable sight. You may also encounter other vibrant species such as toucans, woodpeckers, and various canopy dwellers beginning their day.

After returning, a hearty breakfast will be waiting, followed by time to pack and begin the journey back to Cusco. The return drive offers additional opportunities to spot wildlife and enjoy the sweeping scenery of the cloud forest, where waterfalls and lush greenery cascade down the slopes in spectacular fashion.

Arrival in Cusco is expected by approximately 4:00 PM, marking the end of a journey filled with unforgettable landscapes and encounters with the Amazon's rich biodiversity.

Let me know if you'd like this included in your full itinerary layout or adapted for a guest briefing. Happy to help keep everything seamless.

***IMPORTANT.** Please bear in mind that there is road construction and improvement in Manu Cloud Forest some delays are expected due to traffic time being limited to certain hours. Apologies for any inconvenience in advance.

Inclusions

- Accommodation on double bed room at Casa Machiguenga, Dorado Lodge & Guadalupe Lodge (6 nights total)
- Activities Listed in the Program
- All meals included (vegetarian, vegan mentioned in advance)
- Best available Lodges in the area
- Duffel Bags for Travelling Light
- Entrance tickets to Manu National Park (Reserved Zone)
- Free Storage Room in Cusco
- Professionally Local Guide
- Rubber Boots
- Snacks (fresh fruits, cookies, chocolate)

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- Unlimited Purified Water

Exclusions

- Alcoholic Drinks
- First day breakfast
- Nights on Single Supplement
- Entrances Fees to the Hot Springs