

Adventure Memo

Greetings from the WAI Travel Team,

Machu Picchu and the Galapagos Islands! Two destinations that conjure up images of the exotic, the remote, the illusive, the mystical! We return to South America in 2011 to explore this magical combo with a couple of new twists to the programs.

Peru - Mystical Machu Picchu begins and ends in Lima, but focuses on the Andean wonderland around Cuzco, the Sacred Valley, and Machu Picchu. Our program provides access to some of the Andes' most breathtaking scenery and some of the planet's most impressive and mysterious architecture—the massive stone structures of the Incas! The otherworldly ruins of Machu Picchu are amazing, but they comprise only a fraction of the historical, cultural, and scenic connections we'll make in Peru! We've also added a second night in Cuzco for 2011 to give you more time to enjoy this intriguing Inca capital.

Our *Ecuador & the Galapagos Islands* program begins in Quito, Ecuador with walks and sightseeing in the old town area of the capital, at the equator, and in the charming and scenically stunning regions of Otavalo, high in the Andes Mountains. After this immersion in the Andean world, we'll fly to the Galapagos Islands for 4 amazing days in one of nature's most delightful menageries. In 2011, we'll be exploring the Galapagos aboard the *M/V Galapagos Explorer II*, a new ship for Walking Adventures travelers, with all outside suites for cabins!!

Each destination is offered separately, or may be combined into one unforgettable Adventure of discovery! *Travelers joining us for both Peru-Mystical Machu Picchu and Ecuador & the Galapagos Islands will receive an extra night in Lima and complimentary airfare from Lima to Quito.*

How do I lock in my place on this Adventure?

FOR EARLY BIRDS

If you are among those who pre-reserved your spot for either of these Adventures with an Early Bird deposit, your space is guaranteed until **July 28**, depending on the order in which you submitted your Early Bird. Contact us with your \$450 deposit as soon as possible to formally register for this Adventure and secure your cabin choice (for Galapagos only)!

IF YOU HAVE NOT EARLY BIRDED

If you did not pre-register, you may secure a spot as space is available on this Adventure by contacting us with a \$500 deposit. **WARNING:** We currently have



a number of people pre-registered, so be sure to call in quickly if you'd like to join us.

Aboard the M/V Galapagos Explorer II

The *Explorer II* is a lovely 100-passenger yacht, perfect for plying the equatorial waters around the Galapagos Islands.

Cabin Options

We have booked passage in a category of cabins called Classic Suites. These are exterior cabin suites with large windows and significantly more room than prior Galapagos cruises. Upgrades are available to Premium Suites for an additional cost of \$190 per person on a space available basis. Deluxe Suites with balcony may also be obtainable for an additional cost of \$450 per person. Please call for more information on cabin upgrades.

NOTE: Our current booking allows for a limited number in each category of cabin, including only two single cabins for an additional fee of \$925. Our desire is to accommodate all travelers in their cabin category of choice, but cabins must be assigned on a first-come-first-serve basis! *Should we have additional single requests, other single cabins may be available for a higher supplement.*

Jack be nimble!—especially in the Galapagos

National park regulations forbid the docking of any ships, and require that we use inflatable rafts for shuttling back and forth between the ship and the islands. Disembarking ashore is accomplished either by a "dry landing," stepping from the raft onto rocks or steps, or a "wet landing," rolling from the raft into knee deep water or higher and wading ashore. More details will be available, but travelers need to be prepared for this element of the Adventure as your experience with us in the Galapagos remains distinctly different from our flagship motorcoach mode of transport.

Volkssport in Peru & Ecuador

Due to the absence of IVV walking clubs in this part of South America, we are attempting to sanction volkssport walking events, but cannot guarantee success as of yet. Be advised, as well, that walk distances will be shorter and segments of walks will be combined to qualify for any walk stamps we may receive.

A Word of Caution about Altitude

Both Cuzco, Peru and Quito, Ecuador are Andean cities at elevations around 10,000 feet (Machu Picchu, contrary to common belief, is situated at a lower elevation than Cuzco.). We have altered the flow of the program in the Cuzco area to start in the Sacred Valley, at the relatively lower elevation of under 9,000 feet before moving up to Cuzco at around 11,000 feet at the end of the program. Travelers continuing on to Ecuador, therefore, will have already acclimated to the altitude for the Ecuadorian highlands portion of the trip. We will then finish the Adventure at sea level in the Galapagos Islands.

It is important that you pursue any concerns you have about altitude with your doctor. As always, travelers are free to opt out of any activities. However, acclimation to these altitudes is an important aspect of a successful visit to the Andes for most of us who live near sea level.

How is Airfare Arranged?

The official start and finish point for *Peru - Mystical Machu Picchu* is the Lima airport. The official start point for *Ecuador & the Galapagos Islands* is the Quito airport; the official finish point is the Guayaquil airport. We recommend that you contact the travel agent we work with to help book your flight arrangements. In this age of airfare complications and airport uncertainty, using a travel agent is a good investment! More details about flight arrangements and travel agent contact information will be provided in the Adventure Advice flyer, enclosed with your first invoice after you register for the Adventure. **Please do not book your airfare prior to receiving the Adventure Advice flyer!**

NOTE: Travelers opting to combine both tours into one 17-day Adventure will receive free airfare from Lima, Peru to Quito, Ecuador, the start point for *Ecuador & the Galapagos Islands*, plus an additional night in Lima, which is necessary to match up with our flight to Quito.

Travel Insurance

Walking Adventures has negotiated with an insurance carrier to provide travel insurance in the form of a Preferred Benefits™ policy. We are pleased to make this package available and believe that it will provide travelers with an important element of security at a reasonable price. (See the back of the General Tour Conditions sheet for more detailed information.)

IMPORTANT: The insurance policy includes time-sensitive coverage provisions for a couple of extra benefits, including pre-existing conditions and trip cancellation coverage for any reason (with additional fee), **provided you purchase the insurance within 14 days of your registration.** Should you choose to add the cost of your airline tickets to your insurance policy, contact our office after you purchase your airfare.

Group Travel Credit

If you are part of a Group, remember that your full deposit of \$500 is still required to hold your spot on this Adventure. Your group leader is responsible to submit your name in writing to us before you register, qualifying you for the Group Travel Credit, but a full deposit is needed to officially reserve your place.

What Happens Next?

Upon registering for this Adventure, you will receive a welcome letter, initial invoice, and Adventure Advice flyer with important information about steps to take in the months before your trip. **Please do not buy your airline tickets until you receive the Adventure Advice flyer.** The final payment for the program is due 90 days before departure, and you will receive a final billing about 2 weeks prior to that point, along with a factsheet of additional information about the Adventure to help you get prepared! Then, about 3 weeks before departure, you will receive a final packet with all the details of the program, including hotel names and contact information, a list of fellow travelers, and a more detailed daily schedule.

These neighboring regions of Peru and Ecuador are brimming with a diverse array of attractions — amazing animals, spectacular scenery, captivating cultures, and spellbinding accounts of the story of South America. Join us for a walking adventure that will take you behind the scenes on a journey of discovery!

*More than a vacation...
it's an Adventure!*

