



The 10th Update in Altitude & Expedition Medicine

Medicine on the Edge

August 17th – 30th, 2025

The Sacred Valley, Cusco, Salcantay and the Inca Trail, Peru

www.moteadventures.com

INTRODUCTION

In 2025 join MOTE for our 10th Update in Altitude and Expedition Medicine, the academic content of which will be reinforced by our participation in one of the world's greatest high altitude treks. Learn about altitude at altitude! We have decided to return to the Inca Trail for a 7th time after successful and oversubscribed trips in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2013 and 2015 and 2016! As with the last we anticipate this one will also fill up very quickly so an early booking is recommended.

The Inca Trail runs between the Sacred Valley of the Urumbamba River and the abandoned city of Machu Picchu. It is one of the most famous treks in the world. Although only 45km in length it manages to traverse a stunning and diverse mix of terrain including the Andean plains, high mountain passes and cloud forest. Along the way it passes many Inca ruins and constructions before culminating in Machu Picchu, the lost city of the Incas. We are combining the Inca Trail with the Salkantay Trail to offer an even greater adventure. The Salkantay Trail is quieter, more rugged and more remote than the Inca Trail. It traverses higher than the Inca Trail and, therefore, affords some truly spectacular views of the big Andean mountains. We have also allowed for a full day at Machu Picchu on completion of the trek.

REGISTRATION COST

- **Twin share AUD \$9850.00**
- **Single Supplement AUD \$2700.00**

Please be aware that as there are many logistical preparations and costs that we incur at an early stage the deposit is non refundable if you choose to make a subsequent cancellation after the 1st January 2025. Good travel insurance should cover you for such an eventuality and it is worth checking with your provider. Of course if for any reason we were forced to cancel the meeting all monies paid to us would be refunded in full. Please see the registration form for details of the MOTE cancellation policy.

NB: No application will be confirmed as registered until a deposit has been received.

INCLUSIONS

The following costs are included:

- Attendance at all conference sessions
- Access post event to all material presented at the conference sessions in PDF format (PPT format by specific request)
- English speaking guides
- Accommodation Sacred Valley 17-21 August

- Accommodation Machu Picchu Town 26,27 August
- Accommodation Cusco 28,29 August
- Inca Trail Permits
- Camping permits on the trek
- All non personal equipment eg tents (igloo tents will have 3 person capacity but be shared by 2 people for extra space), mess tents, tables and chairs, cooking equipment
- All meals except 1 lunch/1 dinner
- Internal transfers on trip
- Entry permits for Machu Picchu
- Excursions listed in itinerary
- Full support with guides, cooks and porters on the trek

If you are travelling alone we will try and match you with another same gender delegate to share accommodation. A single supplement will apply if you prefer not to share.

EXCLUSIONS

The following costs are not included:

- Flights to/from Cusco
- Travel Insurance
- Airport Taxes
- Visa Costs
- Personal equipment
- Meals other than those listed above
- Drinks
- Tips for porters and guides

DEPOSIT

We will require a deposit of 25% at the time of booking and the balance by the 1st March 2025 . The early payment is required to ensure we can hold all our reservations and permits for the Inca Trail. Permits for the Inca Trail are booked out very early and once the quota has been reached no exceptions are made (more on that further down). Please be aware that as there are many logistical preparations and costs that we incur at an early stage the deposit is non refundable if you choose to make a subsequent cancellation after 1st January 2025. Good travel insurance should cover you for such an eventuality and it is worth checking with your provider. Of course if for any reason we were forced to cancel the meeting all monies paid to us would be refunded in full.

NUMBERS

Numbers are currently restricted to 30 so an early booking is recommended. We believe it is unlikely we would secure any more permits than that for the Inca Trail but will endeavour to do so if there is greater interest.

EXTRA NIGHTS

In the past many delegates chose to either arrive early or stay on after the meeting in Cusco. Please be aware that we do not hold any hotel reservations outside of the conference period. However, we are happy to put you in touch with our in-country agents who can help you in this regard. If you are staying extra nights it is also worth trying to source accommodation yourself. Most Peruvian hotels are on the internet and easily accessible.

CME

Past meetings were accredited for MOPS points by the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine and CPD points by the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists. We will be applying for this again in 2025.

INCA TRAIL PERMITS

The increasing popularity of the Inca Trail has resulted in restrictions being placed on the number of trekkers. Each day the Peruvian Government allows 500 people to start onto the trail. These numbers include all guides and porters so equates to probably around 200 trekkers. Although this seems like a large number the popularity of the trail means that permits are sold out very quickly. Permits cannot be reserved in advance. They are issued on a strictly first come first allocated basis. Each permit must be issued to a designated named trekker for a given start date. We can only obtain a permit for a confirmed booking as we must supply the trekkers name at that point. Therefore, bookings will need to be made early to ensure a spot on this program. To be certain of a spot we believe that bookings should be finalised before December 2024 but clearly the permits for our trek dates could sell out earlier or later depending on demand from other groups. Once all permits are sold we will not be able to take any more registrations. Note also that if a permit is cancelled it cannot be reissued in the name of another trekker – it simply becomes null.

THEIR WAY

The vast majority of those 200 walkers do the trail which aims to arrive at Machu Picchu at sunrise. Once they arrive, they visit the site and catch that afternoon's train back to Cusco. Those going at this pace on the Inca Trail suffer a couple of disadvantages. Firstly, the campsites are very busy, particularly the last night in Winaywayna which can have over 300 people spending the night. That equates to a lot of tents, a lot of noise and some fairly unpleasant sanitary conditions.

Secondly, your first views of Machu Picchu can be rather compromised as people jostle for a perch in a small viewing area at the Sun Gate. This a quote from one, very good, operator "Almost every group wants to be at the sun gate for sunrise. Sheer numbers require an early start to make sure people are in place for the sunrise." Lastly, since Machu Picchu is in a cloud forest, sunrise happens probably around 30% of the time. More normal is that the clouds gradually drift clear later. If the weather isn't good, they will not get to see the site in all its glory as they will be on a train back to Cusco that same afternoon.

OUR WAY

Meanwhile...PuraAventura our partner in this experience ensure our group are half a day behind the main group of walkers on the Inca Trail. This is because we incorporate the Salkantay Trail at the start of our hike which joins the Inca Trail in the afternoon of Day 3 after the bulk of Inca Trail trekkers have already passed by. Our guides work hard to make sure that you walk in the peaceful conditions at any time of year. You enjoy a much quieter trail ahead of you. The places we camp reasonably peaceful. You arrive in Machu Picchu in the twilight when the site is at its prettiest and quietest. That afternoon you stroll down through the site to soak up the atmosphere before spending a welcome night in a hotel at nearby Machu Picchu town. The following day you come back up to the citadel to have your full guided tour before one more night in Machu Picchu town and then a leisurely trip to Cusco by train and bus the next day. In all you have about 24 hours at Machu Picchu spread over two days, giving you the best possible opportunity to see the site at its best.

THE PORTERS

The following is an extract from PuraAventura regarding their porters:

By the end of day one you are likely to really appreciate the work your porters are doing for you. In the mornings they are there to wake you for breakfast with a cup of tea and warm water for a wash. As you set off walking for the day, they pull up camp, overtaking you a while later fully laden with all of the gear.

A couple of hours later you come across them again and they will have prepared a three- course lunch for you on the side of the trail. After this, you waddle onwards and upwards only to be overtaken again soon afterwards. By the time you get to the day's stopping point, the team will have set up the campsite, have supper on the go and greet you with a cup of tea! PuraAventura adheres strictly to the Porter Protection Policies in place on the Inca Trail. In fact our porters are from the community of Chacllanca, about 45km from Cusco. Generally they are subsistence farmers who supplement their earnings by working on the Inca Trail. Our two head chefs, Virgilio and Herlin are in charge of getting the teams together and are therefore the bosses. Your team of porters is usually therefore made up of friends, family and neighbours who respect one another and work well together.

WEATHER

April to November is the best time for the Inca Trail with predominantly dry, sunny conditions during the day. Nights can be very cold at altitude. In 2009 the temperature on the first night on the Salkantay trail reached -15.

DAILY OUTLINE

There are dozens of licensed guide operators on the Inca Trail. Independent trekking is not permitted on the Inca Trail although it is possible on the Salkantay Trail. We have chosen to use PuraAventura as our preferred partner and their excellent guides. We have been impressed by their communication, professionalism and level of service throughout our past trips. We also prefer the arrival schedule that they help us operate into Machu Picchu itself - see above.

Ideally you will arrive in CUSCO on the 23rd June where we will meet as a group and remain together till the 4th July. From the 4th June you are then free to return home or travel on to even more adventures.

Day ONE

August 17th 2025

Arrive Sacred Valley

Your travels begin in Cusco, where your guide will welcome you to Peru. They then stay with you throughout your time in the Sacred Valley, Machu Picchu and Cusco.

Your first base is the Sacred Valley, whose dramatic, steep slopes are cut through by the Urubamba River. Running around 100km from Pisac to Machu Picchu, the valley is so called because it contained the best agricultural lands and was therefore considered personal property of the Incan rulers.

The valley is full of significant Incan sites, from mighty fortresses to vast hillside terraces and isolated ruins where llamas outnumber people. It is also a place where ordinary Andean rural life unfolds in the most extraordinary natural surroundings.

The valley is some 500m lower than Cusco, making it the ideal place to acclimatise to the Andes. We've made this afternoon nice and gentle for you. First stop is the pretty market town of Pisac. The views are breathtaking. After time to explore, you make your way to your first hotel, an old colonial manor house. The gardens are a flower-filled trove perfect for strolling in the cool evenings, with all sorts of local fruit and veg grown for the restaurant: quinoa, kiwicha, elderberry and more. From day one, you get a real sense of being in rural Peru, with the mountains all around

you.

Get to meet the other delegates. You have the rest of the afternoon free to relax after your long journey. In the evening there will be a short introduction to the meeting and program.

Lunch and Dinner included

Day TWO

August 18th 2025

The Sacred Valley

Today is an acclimitisation day. Weave together two ruins, two walks and slices of local life as you explore deeper into the valley's traditional landscapes.

Today is spent with your guide, largely on foot, as you follow old mule tracks through parts of the Sacred Valley that few visitors will ever see. You start at somewhere most do visit, taking a relaxed walk around the vast Royal Inca Palace of Ollantaytambo before the crowds arrive. The site is characterised by immense terracing tumbling down the steep hillside.

From here it's a short drive to the tiny village of Huilloq, at 3,500m. You'll see people in traditional dress, some washing clothes in the river and raising an eyebrow at your presence. As you walk past humble farmsteads, the owners will likely stick their heads out the window with curiosity. This is local life, uncontrived. And the scenery is just beautiful.

It's an easy 5km walk to path's end. From here it's a short hop to the hillside Inca fortress of Pumamarca. The site is likely to be empty, but even so they still mow the lawn and tend to the ruins with great care.

Your second 5km walk follows the Urubamba River through a steep-sided river canyon. The scenery gets increasingly dramatic high Andes, Inca terracing and the river, far below. End the walk back in Ollantaytambo in the late afternoon calm.

This evening we will also have a session on Critical Thinking in Altitude Medicine.

Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner included

Day THREE

August 19th 2025

The Sacred Valley

A full conference day – see the conference program.

This evening learn all about Pisco Sours, Peru's national drink – in a Pisco Class at our hotel. Made from Pisco, syrup, egg-whites, ice and angostura bitters, Pisco Sours are a firm favourite amongst Peruvians and visitors alike. You'll learn how to make this delicious cocktail for yourself before enjoying the fruits of your labour.

Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner included

Day FOUR
August 20th 2025

The Sacred Valley

A full conference day – see the conference program.

Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner included

Day FIVE
August 21st 2025

The Sacred Valley

A full conference day – see the conference program.

Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner included

Day SIX
August 22nd 2025

Salkantay Trail

Begin your trek along the Salkantay Trail, with views en route of the sacred snow-capped Salkantay mountain.

Set off early this morning to drive into the Sacred Valley of the Incas. The road passes through the Pampa de Anta region, past the small town of Mollepata, then up through eucalyptus groves to Markokasa to join the trail.

Set off at a gentle pace as you continue acclimatising. You will be walking for around four to five hours today, climbing gradually to your first campsite at 4,000m. Your efforts are rewarded en route with stunning views of Salkantay Humantay, the sacred snow-capped mountain.

While you walk all you need to carry is a daypack with water, a camera, rain gear, and snacks. The team of porters will carry the rest of your things and all of the camping equipment, food, toilet, etc.

Sleep in comfortable tents and enjoy delicious meals prepared for you by your cooks. Camp tonight near Soraypampa on the slopes of the mountain, looking out across the Andes.

This evening we will run a workshop session in our campsite – see the conference program.

Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner included

Day SEVEN
August 23rd 2025

Salkantay Pass

A spectacular day of hiking as you climb the Salkantay Pass close to the glacier. The zigzag path leads steadily north. En route you pass the terminal moraine, a large wall of scree left by the advancing glacier. On your left you pass the glacier itself. Seeing the bulky mass of the ice it's rather incredible to think that this is one of the origins of the Amazon.

On all our past trips this has been voted the best day of the trip.

Begin the descent through the Inca Canal valley towards Pampacahuana, your second campsite on the trek.

This evening we will run a workshop session in our campsite – see the conference program.

Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner included

Day EIGHT
August 24th 2025

Meet The Inca Trail

Walk along the Inca Canal into greener landscapes where you join the official Inca Trail.

A steady start today as you walk along the Inca Canal, passing through a huddle of farms and a local football pitch. As the path descends into the relative warmth of the Cuischaca Valley the sparse mountain vegetation mellows to rich scrub where snapdragons and orchids flourish.

Arrive at Llulluchapampa, your first campsite on the 'official' Inca Trail, which is set in a grassy spot with spectacular views across the valley.

A local porter holds the record for completing the 26 miles of the Inca Trail in just over 3 hours, 34 minutes. You will be taking rather longer to complete the trip as you walk at your own pace and linger to enjoy the surroundings, as well as the culture and history of the Inca.

This evening we will run a workshop session in our campsite – see the conference program.

Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner included

Day NINE

August 25th 2025

The Toughest Day !

The toughest day of the trail takes you over two high passes before you begin the descent into the cloud forest.

Today is the hardest day of the trail as you cross over two high passes, effectively hiking an ‘m’ shape. The morning begins with a steady and increasingly steep walk up to Dead Woman’s Pass at 4,215m, the highest point of the trail. From there, you head downhill through a deep valley before beginning another uphill section to Runcurakay Pass, at 3,900m. On the way, you stop to see the small Inca site of Runcurakay before continuing uphill for stunning views of the valley and the surrounding Andean peaks.

Shortly after you descend from the second pass, the scenery will begin to change from the sparse grassland of the high mountains to the cloud forest. Look out for butterflies, orchids and hummingbirds as the trail passes Inca ruins and winds around almost vertical cliffs, with stunning views of the Aobamba valley below.

Your campsite tonight has the most beautiful setting on the trail, set on a bluff overlooking the Vilcabamba mountain range. By the time you arrive you should be feeling a great sense of achievement.

This evening we will run a workshop session in our campsite – see the conference program.

Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner included

Day TEN

August 26th 2025

Arrive Machu Picchu

Complete the Inca Trail as you walk through the cloudforest, pass through the Sun Gate, and

arrive in the peaceful late afternoon.

The final day of the trail is perhaps the most beautiful, starting with what can be the most stunning sunrise. You begin with a long downhill section of steps leading to the impressive Inca sites of Intipata and Winaywayna. As the trail continues through cloudforest rich with orchids and birds, the evidence of Inca masonry is everywhere - archaeologists are still discovering Inca sites along this stretch.

Enjoy a picnic lunch with a view before the final push around the mountainside and up a steep stairway to the Sun Gate. As you take in your first views of Machu Picchu, spend some time soaking up your achievement and, hopefully, watch the citadel bathed in the warm afternoon light.

From the Sun Gate it is another 3km mostly downhill to Machu Picchu itself. You should arrive early afternoon, when most people have already left the site, so take time to enjoy the spectacular views in the quiet of the late afternoon. Catch a shuttle bus down the hill to the ramshackle village of Machu Picchu Pueblo (formerly known as Aguas Calientes) and spend tonight in a comfortable hotel.

Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner included

Day ELEVEN

August 27th 2025

The Citadel

Visit the remarkable citadel of Machu Picchu, the most enchanting and dramatic of the Inca sites.

This morning can be a relaxed one as you enjoy a bit of lie-in and have some time to explore the rather gloriously ramshackle village. If you're an early riser, we highly recommend a guided visit to the Inkaterra Gardens to look for hummingbirds, motmots and Peru's national bird - the Andean Cock of the Rock.

Either way, we wait for the afternoon when it tends to be quieter for your guided visit to Machu Picchu. Most visitors tend to arrive in the morning, either on foot or by bus up from the village, before heading off to Cusco later. Staying for longer gives you the advantage as we simply head up later when there are far fewer people.

Machu Picchu is one of the world's most iconic sites. But no amount of photos can quite prepare you for its immense scale, nor the beauty of its cloud forest setting. Your guide will share its stories and the many unsolved mysteries surrounding the origins and meanings of the citadel. Once you've gone back down to the village and had yourself a Pisco sour or two, you can then

start trying to wrap your head around how on earth the Incas built something so extraordinary up here...

Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner included

Day TWELVE
August 28th 2025

Cusco

Visit the Chinchero Weavers on the way to Cusco.

Today you travel by scenic train and road to reach Chinchero, a place of high lagoons and old Inca palaces. The women of this area were traditionally weavers, with each community having its own distinctive and often incredibly intricate patterns. This craft was passed solely by word of mouth for centuries between illiterate artists. Back in the 1970s, the art was dying out as Peruvian society went through radical change and younger generations stopped learning the skills.

It was at this point that a force of nature, a woman called Nilda Callañaupa, set up what the Centro de Textiles Tradicionales to provide not just a centre of excellence, but also a wider market for their work. The project has been remarkably successful in bringing economic independence to hundreds of families in the area. For us visitors, it is also simply fascinating to see the process, from dyeing the wool to spinning and weaving. Again, the experience is as authentic as can be.

After an early lunch, set off on foot from Chinchero as you walk out into the wide-open plains of the Quechua ecosystem. The landscape is of high grasslands with occasional bird-filled lagoons and remote shepherd huts. You will no doubt see women herding llamas, sheep and pigs across the hills. At certain times of year you might even see the villagers out planting or harvesting potatoes on the hillsides.

Crossing the pass at 4,200m, the path leads steeply downhill to the Inca staging post of Tambo Machay. Far below, the city of Cusco spreads itself out. Having come from the vast emptiness of the high plains, the bustle of Cusco will come as a shock to the system but will help to ease you back into civilisation.

Breakfast and Lunch included. Dinner on your own

Day THIRTEEN
August 29th 2025

Cusco

Today is yours to explore the markets, galleries, museums and restaurants of Cusco.

After a run of active and full days, you can spend today simply relaxing and enjoying some downtime. You will have your Visitor's Ticket, which includes entry to a number of sites.

Cusco is fairly compact and therefore easy to explore on foot. There are many small cafes and restaurants, often serving fantastic and imaginative cuisine. There is also a movement of micro-breweries in the country so you can occupy yourself with beer tasting if you fancy. And, believe it or not, Peru produces its own wines. Though well priced, they rarely make it to export - for reasons you'll probably work out when you try them. The most coveted of all tipples here is the pisco sour cocktail which combines grape brandy, lime juice and sugar to delightful effect. Breakfast included. Lunch and Dinner on your own

Day FOURTEEN
August 30th 2025

Farewells

Time to say goodbye and travel on to new adventures.

MORE INFORMATION

Contact us by phone or email if you want more information about this meeting. For all initial enquiries please contact Associate Professor Geoff Ramin on 0400 005 668 or via email at ketamine@internode.on.net

www.moteadventures.com