

Excursions,
Activities & Transfers

INTRODUCTION

Surrounded by art, history and architecture, Cirqa also offers a large variety of excursions in and around Arequipa as well as private transfers from Arequipa to the Colca Canyon, Titilaka and Puno.

- As always, all our excursions and transfers come with our high-quality personal service and excellent vehicles.
- All our excursions are guided by a local friend who will showcase the essence of Arequipenean culture and the local genuine spirit.
- Fully Inclusive Plus bases includes several short excursions, 2 half-day excursions or 1 full day. For a detailed list, please refer to the second table. Special Activities or transfer services are available for an additional charge.
- All excursions, activities and transfers can be booked separately for Half Board Base.

EXCURSIONS SUMMARY

Excursions Summary	Duration			Difficulty Level	Schedule		Suitable for Children	Included in Fully Inclusive Plus
	1-3 hrs.	4-6 hrs.	7-10 hrs.		AM	PM		
SHORT EXCURSIONS								
● Santa Catalina	2			I	X	X	X	X
● Santa Teresa	1			I	X	X	X	X
● Cathedral Museum	1			I	X	X	X	X
● Santuarios Andinas Museum (Mummy Juanita)	1			I	X	X	X	X
● Sachaca Panorama	2			II	X	X	X	X
● Mario Vargas Llosa Museum	2.5			I	X	X	X	X
● Sillar Quarries (Añashuayco & Culebrillas)	3			I or II	X	X	X	X
HALF DAY EXCURSIONS								
● Colonial Arequipa		4		I	X	X	X	X
● Barrios around Chili		4		I	X	X	X	X
● Arequipa's Monasteries		4		I	X	X	X	X
FULL DAY EXCURSIONS								
● Cirqa → Titilaka			X	I	X		X	X
OVERNIGHT EXCURSIONS (1 or 2 nights)								
● Cirqa → Colca → Cirqa			X	I	X		X	-
SPECIAL ACTIVITIES at an additional cost								
● Mountain Biking		4		II or III	X	X	X	-
● Rafting	3			II or III	X	X	Over 12 years old	-
● Hiking	2			II	X	X	X	-
TRANSFERS								
● Airport or Train station	1			I	X	X	X	X
● Colca		4		I	X	X	X	-
● Puno			7	I	X		X	-

SHORT EXCURSIONS

- Santa Catalina
- Santa Teresa
- Cathedral Museum
- Juanita's Sanctuary (Santuarias Andinas Museum)
- Sachaca Viewpoint
- Mario Vargas Llosa Museum
- Sillar Quarries (Añashuayco & Culebrillas)

SANTA CATALINA

Perhaps the most photogenic convent in Peru, this 16th century convent is a labyrinth of multicoloured streets, courtyards and chambers. Once a place where wealthy nuns were waited on by servants and slaves, the historic place now tells a different story. Today, a part of this 'city within a city' is still an operating convent with only a small number of nuns, but mostly a delightful area of peace and tranquillity for its visitors.

Duration	2 hrs.
Level of Difficulty	I
Frequency	Daily
Schedule	Morning or afternoon
Includes	Guide and entrance fees
Highlights	Colourful sillar walls, authentic chambers and a viewpoint terrace
	Suitable for Children

SANTA TERESA

For nearly three centuries, time has stood still here in every space and feature. Albeit smaller lesser-known than Santa Catalina, Santa Teresa it is just as exquisitely beautiful thanks to a stunning collection of colonial religious art from the 17th and 18th centuries. Since Santa Teresa is still an active Carmelite convent, you'll hear the nuns singing prayers at noon in the private chapel. A small shop inside sells pastries homemade by the sisters.

Duration	1 hr.
Level of Difficulty	I
Frequency	Monday to Saturday
Schedule	Morning or afternoon
Includes	Guide and entrance fees
Highlights	Religious artwork, tranquil green patios
	Suitable for Children

CATHEDRAL MUSEUM

Arequipa is particularly famed for its colonial religious heritage. The grand white cathedral is the symbol of the city. Inside, a small museum showcases fine religious items, many of them made of gold or silver and decorated with precious stones. The museum also gives access the cathedral bell tower for a bewitching view of the main square and the volcanoes surrounding the city.

Duration	1 hr.
Level of Difficulty	I
Frequency	Monday to Saturday
Schedule	Morning or afternoon
Includes	Guide and entrance fees
Highlights	New-Renaissance style basilica, precious metals jewels and ornaments, Mannerist and Baroque style paintings
	Suitable for Children

JUANITA'S SANCTUARY

In 1995, American high-altitude archaeologist Johan Reinhard and local climber Miguel Zárate discovered a rare Inca mummy buried at Mountain Ampato's peak, about 70 kilometres North of Arequipa. The adolescent Inca girl, informally known as Juanita, had been sacrificed 500 years ago in a ceremony known as Capacocha. You can visit her and the beautiful artefacts buried with her in the Santuarios Andinas Museum. A 20-minute documentary will explain you all about her discovery.

Duration	1 hr.
Level of Difficulty	I
Frequency	Daily from May 1st until December 31st. From January 1st until April 30th, Juanita is placed under preservation and another mummy (Sarita) will be exhibited.
Schedule	Morning or Afternoon
Includes	Guide and entrance fees
Highlights	Juanita
	Suitable for Children

SACHACA PANORAMA

The Sachaca observatory tower, located in a small hillside barrio on the edge of the campiña, amazes you with a 360° view over Arequipa and its surrounding volcanoes. After a small climb - there is no elevator - the spectacular view will be well worth the effort.

Duration	2 hrs.
Level of Difficulty	II
Frequency	Daily
Schedule	Morning or Afternoon
Includes	Guide, transport and entrance fees
Highlights	An astonishing view of the city and its surrounding countryside
	Suitable for Children

MARIO VARGAS LLOSA MUSEUM

As Peru's most celebrated author and winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2010, Mario Vargas Llosa is one of Arequipa's proudest figures. Born in Arequipa, his birthplace has been turned into a Museum honouring his life and work. Vargas Llosa himself will lead you through period-restored rooms via a hologram or excellent video presentations telling you about his life, influences, politics and literature. The hologram is in Spanish only, but English guides are available.

Duration	2.5 hrs.
Level of Difficulty	I
Frequency	Monday to Saturday
Schedule	Morning or early afternoon
Includes	Guide, transport and entrance fees
Highlights	Holograms, rooms-turned-stages and interactive displays
	Suitable for Children

SILLAR QUARRIES (AÑASHUAYCO & CULEBRILLAS)

Arequipa is famously named 'The White City' after the white volcanic rock known as sillar that was used as the primary building material giving Arequipa its distinctive architectural style. In the Añashuayco valley, we'll discover how the quarrymen extract and shape this important material from the towering sillar stone walls. Afterwards, we'll visit the Culebrillas Canyon, a smaller and lesser-known quarry where local masons can be seen working the sillar alongside enigmatic petroglyphs dating from over 1000 years ago.

Duration	3 hrs.
Level of Difficulty	I or II
Frequency	Daily
Schedule	Morning or early afternoon
Includes	Guides, transport, snacks and entrance fees
Highlights	White and pink sillar stonework
	Suitable for Children

HALF-DAY EXCURSIONS

- Colonial Arequipa
- Barrios around Chili
- Monasteries of Arequipa

COLONIAL AREQUIPA

Explore the historic centre of Arequipa, declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO, guided by a local friend. We'll start our walk with the alluring Plaza de Armas, one of the most enchanting main squares in Peru, before heading to the vibrant and colourful San Camilo market. Here, the stalls are piled high with everything you could possibly imagine, from tropical fruit and vegetables to straw hats and health potions. We'll then make our way towards the quaint colonial cloisters of La Compañía, which are now home to many upmarket shops and cafes. Behind the white sillar courtyards hides Arequipa's very own Sistine chapel, the colonial art gem of San Ignacio's Chapel. After refuelling with a 'queso helado', quick coffee or sweet treat, we'll walk up from San Francisco street, filled with restaurants, to San Francisco Square before finally exploring the small but charming barrio of San Lázaro and its narrow, winding lanes.

Duration	4 hrs.
Level of Difficulty	I
Frequency	Daily
Schedule	Morning or afternoon
Includes	Guide, snacks and entrance fees
Attractions	History, architecture, religion, markets, shops
Highlights	Plaza de Armas, San Camilo Market, San Ignacio Chapel, San Francisco Street, San Lázaro neighbourhood.
	Suitable for Children

BARRIOS AROUND CHILI EXCURSION

We'll leave the historic centre of Arequipa and cross the Chili River to explore the charming neighbourhoods of Yanahuara and Cayma to enjoy splendid views of volcanoes and ancient terraced fields. This excursion is a mix of short drives and easy walks.

A 15-minute drive takes us from Cirqa to a viewpoint in Carmen Alto. From here we'll admire the impressive Chilina valley with the Misti (5.822m) and Chachani (6.057m) volcanoes overlooking a patchwork of verdant fields and terraces. A walk through the winding lanes of traditional Yanahuara leads us to its charming main square with palm trees, an Andean baroque church and views overlooking the city. We'll then discover the museum and public libraries of the La Recoleta Monastery before returning home via the Bolognesi Bridge, which was once the old entrance to the city.

Duration	4 hrs.
Level of Difficulty	I
Frequency	Daily
Schedule	Morning or afternoon
Includes	Guide, transport, snacks and entrance fees
Attractions	Panoramic views, history, architecture, gastronomy
Highlights	Yanahuara viewpoint, Yanahuara square, Carmen Alto, Bolognesi bridge
Suitable for Children	

AREQUIPA'S MONASTERIES

With its centuries-old cathedrals and many archaeological museums, Arequipa is jampacked with history and culture. Some of the most popular sites to see in Arequipa are the Santa Catalina Monastery and the Santa Teresa Convent.

The Santa Catalina Monastery is a spectacular religious citadel occupying one complete block and integrating architectural styles spanning 3 centuries. We'll visit this 'city-within-a-city' which testifies the splendour of the Viceroyalty era in each alley, passageway, courtyard, cloister and garden. Afterwards, we'll head over to the Santa Teresa Convent to admire its countless works of art in the chapels and art galleries. We'll end our walk in the Cloisters of la Compañía with its ornate double courtyard and its breath-taking colourful chapel.

Duration	4 hrs.
Level of Difficulty	I
Frequency	Daily
Schedule	Morning or Afternoon
Includes	Guide, snacks and entrance fees
Highlights	Santa Catalina Monastery, Santa Teresa Convent and Cloisters of La Compañía
	Suitable for Children

FULL DAY EXCURSION

CIRQA TO TITILAKA & TITILAKA TO CIRQA

An all-day scenic discovery drive across the high-altitude plains to our Titilaka Lodge.

After an early-morning departure, we'll drive past volcanos and begin our ascension towards the highlands and the Salinas and Aguada Blanca National Reserve. Here we'll spot herds of wild vicuñas, the smallest species of the South American camelid family. Their fur is among the finest and most valuable in the world. Along the way, we'll stop at a stone forest where wind and erosion have sculpted the rocks into strange formations over time. As we leave the region of Arequipa, some small lakes will appear as well as flamingos if we are lucky. We'll stop for a scenic picnic lunch before continuing on the Altiplano, passing through the city of Puno, and then finally arriving at the Titilaka Lodge on the shores of Lake Titicaca.

Duration	8 hrs.
Level of Difficulty	I
Frequency	Daily
Schedule	Morning
Includes	Guide, transport, driver, snacks and lunch
Highlights	The Salinas and Aguada Blanca National Reserve, stone forest, lakes
	Suitable for Children

OVERNIGHT EXCURSION (1 OR 2 NIGHTS)

TWO DAYS IN THE COLCA CANYON

We'll leave Arequipa, passing the Misti and Chachani volcanoes before entering the Salinas and Aguada Blanca National Reserve. Here we'll spot herds of wild vicuñas, the smallest species of the South American camelid family whose fur is among the finest and most valuable in the world. After reaching 4800 metres, we'll descend into the canyon itself, where we can recharge with a dip in a thermal bath. In total, the drive from Arequipa will take about 5 hours.

The following morning, we'll head out at dawn to and drive for 1.5 hours to spot the magnificent condors soaring in the thermal winds. After a hearty lunch, we'll continue our journey back to Arequipa (or to Titilaka), stopping at several quaint colonial-era villages along the way.

Duration	Two days, one night
Level of Difficulty	I
Frequency	Daily
Schedule	Morning
Includes	Guide, transport, entrance fees, snacks, lunch (does not include accommodation)
Highlights	Colca Canyon, Condors and original local villages
	Suitable for Children

THREE DAYS IN THE COLCA CANYON

Following the same itinerary as the two-day excursion, the three-day excursion includes several different options to further explore the valley as well as another tasty lunch.

Duration	Three days, two nights
Level of Difficulty	I
Frequency	Daily
Schedule	Morning
Includes	Guide, transport, entrance fees, snacks, lunch (does not include accommodation)
Highlights	Colca Canyon, Condors and local villages
	Suitable for Children

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

- Mountain Biking
- Rafting
- Hiking

MOUNTAIN BIKING

With stunning views and a wide selection of dedicated itineraries, Arequipa is a great place for mountain biking for both beginners and experts. Various half-day biking options are available to suit different aptitudes. Let us know which level you would prefer and we'll be happy to help you plan an active morning or afternoon.

Duration	4 hrs.
Level of Difficulty	II to III
Frequency	Daily
Schedule	Morning or afternoon
Includes	Guide, transport, equipment and snacks
Highlights	Unparalleled views: on one side you'll see the city, on the other side the Chilina valley and volcanoes.

RAFTING

Enjoy an exciting river rafting trip just 20 minutes from the centre of Arequipa where the Chili river runs through the magnificent Chilina valley. The rapids are mostly beginner to intermediate level (class II & III). Nevertheless, two advanced rapids (class IV) are available for those looking for an extra adrenaline rush.

Duration	3 hrs. (1.5 hour of rafting)
Level of Difficulty	II to III
Frequency	Daily
Schedule	Morning or afternoon
Includes	Guide, transport, equipment and snacks
Highlights	Crystal clear waters running over white volcanic stones, spectacular views of the surrounding volcanoes and the green campiña. Suitable for Children over 12 years old (class II) or 18 years old (class III and IV)

HIKING

Only 15 minutes outside of Arequipa's city centre are some of Peru's best hikes. Surrounded by stunning natural landscapes, we'll enjoy a walk through the terraced fields of the Chilina Valley.

Duration	2 hrs.
Level of Difficulty	II
Frequency	Daily
Schedule	Early morning or late afternoon to avoid the sun
Includes	Guide, transport, equipment and snacks
Highlights	The green countryside of the valley with its imposing terraces, peaceful atmosphere and epic views of the volcanoes.

TRANSFERS

- Airport or Train Station
- Colca
- Puno

TO AIRPORT OR TRAIN STATION

Airport and train station transfers are included as a complimentary service in our Fully Inclusive Plus base and as an additional service in our Half Board Base. Our private vehicles will get you safely to your destination with mini amenities and outstanding service to enjoy along the way.

Duration	1 hour
Level of Difficulty	I
Frequency	Daily
Schedule	Morning, afternoon or night
Included	Mini amenities

TO COLCA

If you are eager to explore Colca Canyon, our private transport can get you there in the most comfortable way possible.

Duration	4 hrs.
Level of Difficulty	I
Frequency	Daily
Schedule	Morning
Included	Amenities and snacks

TO PUNO

If you are looking for private transport to Puno, Cirqa offers safe and pleasant transfers to Lake Titicaca.

Duration	7 hrs.
Level of Difficulty	I
Frequency	Daily
Schedule	Morning
Included	Amenities and snacks