

DEPARTURES

OCTOBER 2006

URUGUAY
JON LEE ANDERSON ON
CARTAGENA
DESIGN
WHERE HAVE YOU GONE
FERNANDO
BOTERO?
PATAGONIA
BUENOS AIRES BEEF
COPACABANA
PALACE
WHO'S WHO
IN RIO
POLO BOOTS
ANYONE?
ANGRA
DOS REIS
CONFESSIONS OF A
BIKINI
DAYS & NIGHTS
IN BAHIA
NIEMEYER
ARCHITECTURE
SAO PAULO

*THE LATIN ISSUE
**SOUTH
AMERICA**
2006



the
**INTREPID
TRAVELER**

Clouds." The stone-walled buildings, which cover five square miles, date back to about 1450, when the Incan empire was at its height. Today the Peruvian site has become so popular—despite the strenuous hike up the Inca Trail—that laws now require visitors to be part of an organized tour escorted by a guide.

A sojourn to Machu Picchu starts by flying into Lima, then connecting, after an overnight layover, to Cuzco. This is the jumping-off point for any trip to the ancient city, whether it be by foot, rail, or helicopter. The latter is now offered by our favorite place to stay here—the Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel, a wonderful lodge set around a rainforest and a 25-minute ride from Machu Picchu. For hard-core hikers, there are two options: a daylong walk or the more arduous four-day trail. The firm **Inkas** takes small groups on the second course—the long way, just as the Incas did it, trekking 30 miles of stone



Machu Picchu, 7,700 feet up in the Peruvian clouds, has been a must-do trek for nearly a century.

Blue Parallel offers

the best of both worlds, with a train ride most of the way up, followed by a guided hike to the top (from \$5,500 a person for a seven-day trip including the Sacred Valley; 800-256-5307; blueparallel.com).

Sanctuary Lodge awaits at the summit (from \$4,255 a person for a two-week trip that includes Lima and Peru's Sacred Valley; 212-787-0500; inkas.com). **Blue Parallel** offers

the best of both worlds, with a train ride most of the way up, followed by a guided hike to the top (from \$5,500 a person for a seven-day trip including the Sacred Valley; 800-256-5307; blueparallel.com). For anyone not up for even a short hike, **Inkaterra's** new heli service, which launched in April, departs from Cuzco (from \$900 per person; 800-442-5042; inkaterra.com). The 30-minute flight arrives at the Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel's helipad. **Orient-Express** does perhaps the most luxe trip (\$500 per person; 800-237-1236; orient-express.com). It's aboard the *Hiram Bingham* train, departing from Poroy Station (20 minutes from Cuzco's center) at 9 A.M.; the journey takes three-and-a-half hours. Then it's a 30-minute drive to the Sanctuary Lodge, located right next to the ruins. You can stay overnight (\$715-\$1,045) or go back for cocktails and dinner on the evening train to Cuzco. —DANIELLE JOHNSON CONTRAY