

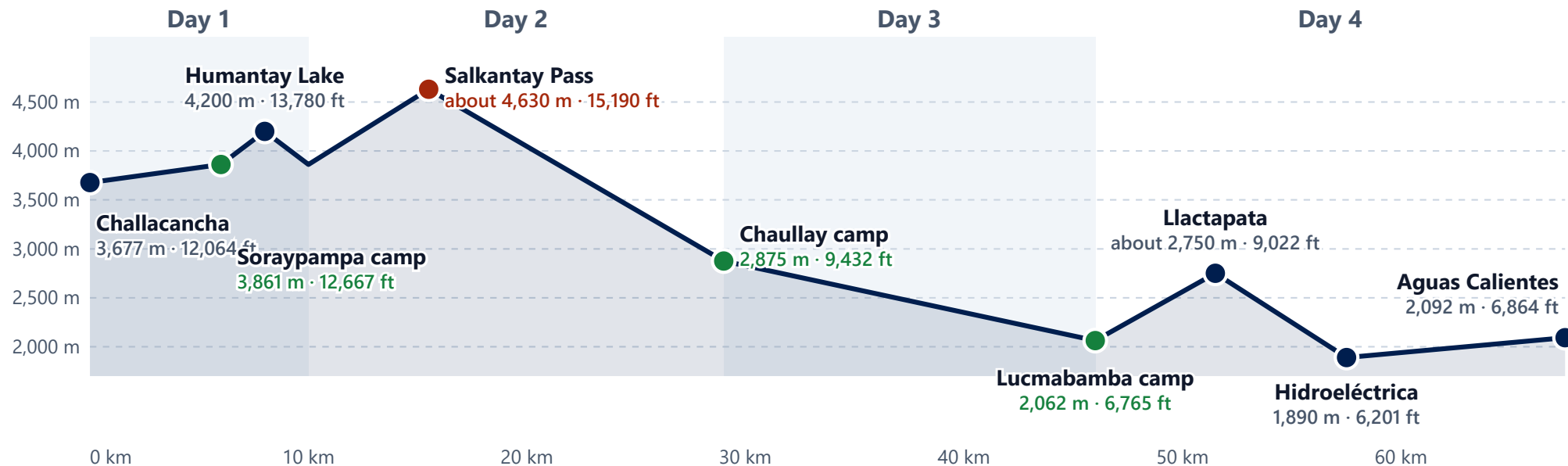
Salkantay Trek day by day

Elevation profile, daily effort and what to check · about 67 km in 4 days of hiking · pass at about 4,600 m

Salas Travel Peru · salastravelperu.com

Data checked on 15 October 2026

Elevation profile



Green: campsite · Red: highest point · Km from our own route profile. Salkantay Pass: official sources give 4,600 or 4,650 m; our profile measures 4,630 m. Llactapata has no official altitude.

Effort day by day

Day 1

Challacancha – Soraypampa – Humantay Lake – Soraypampa

about 10 km 5–6 h

About +180 m to camp, then +340 m to the lake and back down

Camp: Soraypampa (3,861 m), the coldest night

Day 2

Soraypampa – Salkantay Pass – Chaullay

about 19 km 8–9 h

About +770 m to the pass, then about –1,750 m

Camp: Chaullay (2,875 m). The hardest day

Day 3

Chaullay – La Playa – Lucmabamba

about 17 km 6–7 h

About –810 m, mostly gentle

Camp: Lucmabamba (2,062 m)

Day 4

Lucmabamba – Llactapata – Hidroeléctrica – Aguas Calientes

about 21 km 7–8 h

About +690 m to Llactapata, –860 m to Hidroeléctrica, then the railway path

Hotel in Aguas Calientes; day 5 Machu Picchu

Distances and times from our itinerary. Height differences are the net change between the start and end of each section, with official altitudes; the trail goes up and down in between.

Altitudes along the route

Point	Metres	Feet	Source
Mollepata (village on the road)	2,864	9,396	INEI
Challacancha (start)	3,677	12,064	INEI
Soraypampa (camp 1)	3,861	12,667	INEI
Humantay Lake	4,200	13,780	MINCETUR

Salkantay Pass	4,600–4,650	15,092–15,256	El Peruano (our profile: 4,630)
Chaullay (camp 2)	2,875	9,432	INEI
La Playa	2,094	6,870	INEI
Lucmabamba (camp 3)	2,062	6,765	INEI
Llactapata (Inca site)	about 2,750	about 9,022	Our route profile
Hidroeléctrica station	1,890	6,201	PeruRail
Aguas Calientes	2,092	6,864	INEI

Salkantay vs Inca Trail vs Lares

	Salkantay	Inca Trail	Lares
Distance	about 67 km	about 40 km	about 30 km
Highest point	about 4,600 m	4,215 m	4,680 m
Days of hiking	4	4	3
Permit	No	Yes, limited	No

What makes it hard

- **The pass:** a steep zigzag climb that starts before sunrise.
- **The long descent:** more than 1,700 m from the pass to Chaullay in one afternoon. Trekking poles help.
- **The distance:** about 67 km; days 2 and 4 are around 20 km each.
- **The cold:** SENAMHI gives winter lows of −8 to −4 °C in the high areas of Cusco, with frosts from May.
- **Rain and mud:** SENAMHI's rainy season runs from October to March; the cloud forest can be wet in any month.

Altitude

Spend at least two days in Cusco (3,439 m) or the Sacred Valley first: the first camp is then only about 420 m higher. Above 3,000 m, do not raise the altitude where you sleep by more than 500 m a night (CDC). Medicines only with a prescription. If symptoms get worse, go down.

Rules and fees

- **No permit needed.** Mollepata to Llactapata lies outside the Machu Picchu Historic Sanctuary; Hidroeléctrica to Aguas Calientes is inside it.
- **Entrance fee:** S/ 20 for foreign visitors, charged in Mollepata (included on our tour).
- **From Hidroeléctrica:** train about 30 min or walk about 2.5 h (PeruRail). Trains at 07:54 and 14:50 (May–December 2026).

What to check in 2026

- **Access from Mollepata** is the only way to Humantay and the pass. Visits were suspended from 6 February to 6 March 2026 after landslides at Balconpata.
- **Humantay Lake:** ice falls are infrequent; two in 2026 (27 July, 23 September), no injuries. Follow your guide at the shore.
- **Railway path:** landslides at Mandor closed the walk and the trains on 25 January and from 30 March to 6 April 2026.
- **Emergencies:** iPerú, 24 h: (01) 574-8000 · WhatsApp +51 944 492 314. Health centres in Mollepata and Santa Teresa.

On our 5-day tour

Mules carry up to 7 kg of your things, including a rented sleeping bag. Not included: sleeping bag and trekking poles (US\$20 each to rent), travel insurance.

[Salkantay Trek difficulty guide](#)
[Salkantay Trek 5 days](#)
[WhatsApp +51 961 231 767](#)

Sources: INEI, MINCETUR, El Peruano, SENAMHI, PeruRail, SERNANP, Andina, US CDC, iPerú, and our own route profile and itinerary.