

Laura Davis Presents . . .

**Write, Travel, Transform:
Machu Picchu and the Sacred
Valley of Peru**
(with an optional trip to the Amazon)

May 13 – 28, 2019

If you're looking for an inspiring, creative vacation that blends writing and yoga with cultural immersion, join Laura Davis for a transformative journey to the Sacred Valley of Peru.





In May 2019, this could be you . . .

Imagine quiet. Imagine a quiet so serene that the busyness and scatter finally calms. You can hear your heartbeat and the still rise of your own breath.

Imagine entering that quiet. Imagine stepping into a staggering vastness that **stops your momentum.**

Imagine a stillness so profound that **your deepest self finally has space to breathe and be known.**

Imagine reveling in **the joy of the deep creative** again.

Imagine entering a world where the ancient world still lives alongside the modern. Where **the sacred is a joyous part of everyday life.** Your everyday life.

Imagine spectacular vistas that surprise and delight you. **Beauty that enters you and speaks directly to your heart.** Smells so new and fresh that they awaken your senses, touching deep rusty places inside.

Imagine **time to write, to explore, to move, to connect,** to discover.

Imagine this: Beauty surrounds you. **Llamas graze across rocky ledges.** Brilliant stars flood a night sky unlike any you have seen before.

Textures abound: rough, woven fabric; jaded rock of pre-Colombian structures; **the soft fur of the ancient alpacas;** the worn earth cushioning our feet below.

You will have this and so much more during your sixteen days in the Sacred Valley of Peru.

Join Laura Davis for a creative, mystical, life-changing journey to the land of Machu Picchu. **Immerse yourself in the mystery and beauty of one of the stunning wonders of the world**, Peru's Sacred Valley and the ancient Incan capital of Cusco.

There is no landscape or culture on earth like the one that will greet you deep in the Sacred Valley of Peru, **the home of kings and priests for thousands of years**. The brilliant artistry of the nature-centered Quechua people, buttressed by **jagged Andean cliffs**.

This trip is **a rare opportunity to travel as a writer**: your senses awake and alert, your eyes seeing the world anew, your pen racing across the page, words capturing all that you see, hear, smell and feel, your spirit on fire.

This trip is **a rare opportunity to travel in community**: to meet a group of strangers who quickly become friends, to bond with other writers through shared words, experiences and stories. To know that whoever you sit with or eat with or hike with or share writing with will welcome and cherish you, see you for the person you truly are.



This trip is a rare opportunity to blend writing, cultural exploration, yoga and adventure. To **write in a sacred circle**, to explore the outer world and your inner world every single day. **To rest. To absorb. To say yes to discovery.** To have your body, heart and spirit touched and awakened.

This trip is a rare opportunity to say yes to yourself. Yes to life. Yes to quiet. Yes to stillness. Yes to adventure.

This magical journey will **blend daily writing workshops and yoga with deep rest**; adventures in nature with relaxing strolls through local villages. Local guides will introduce you to this sacred land and its history, culture and people.

While exploring the ancient culture of the Quechua people, **you will embark on your own physical, cultural and spiritual journey of transformation.**

Join me in **this place of stirring history and raw beauty** for a journey that will touch you and change you forever. After sixteen days in the Sacred Valley of Peru, you will **return home with spectacular memories and a rich body of written work**, deeply in touch with yourself and a close-knit writing community.

This journey to Peru is open to non-writing spouses and friends who'd like to use writing group time for their own explorations.



Does This Trip Have Your Name on It? Would You Like To . . .

- Study with a master teacher who will help you **free your voice**, find **your deepest stories** and **create a moving record of your travels**?
- Immerse yourself in the **historical, cultural, artistic and spiritual riches of Peru**?
- Learn about Peruvian culture from insiders who will show you **a side of Peru most tourists never see**?
- Participate in a **despacho**, an ancient indigenous ceremony of **gratitude and letting go**, led by a **local shaman**?
- Climb **smooth granite staircases**, built by the **Inca** nearly a thousand years ago?
- Feel the texture of **textiles woven with alpaca fur** on backstrap looms, in the tradition carried on by generations of **Quechua women**?
- **Stretch your body with yoga** for a truly embodied experience?
- Travel with a **warm, fascinating group of creative people** who share your passion for writing, culture, and adventure?
- Enjoy writing, yoga, adventure and cultural exploration in the **perfect balance day after day**?



Writing, Yoga, and Cultural Education

There will be a writing workshop almost every day, as determined by our tour schedule. Laura will help you sharpen your powers of observation and ability to write vivid description. You will learn to record your experiences and insights with clarity and depth, facilitating a richer travel experience. We will also use writing practice, developed by Natalie Goldberg, to discover our "wild mind" and tap our deep creativity.

Beginning and experienced writers are welcome, but since the material in the class builds progressively, this will not be a drop-in class.

Karyn Bristol, our Iyengar yoga instructor, will teach an Iyengar yoga class early each morning during our first nine days at Sach'a Munay. This class will be appropriate for those with an established yoga practice as well as for those new to yoga.

Most days, we'll have an hour of yoga and a 2-3 hour writing class, as well as time for adventures, exploration and rest.





The Place

Peru is a rich and fascinating country, with a wide diversity of landscapes and peoples. The region we will be visiting--the Sacred Valley--lies tucked in the Andes, between Cusco and Machu Picchu. A stretch of villages and ancient ruins ranging across broad fields and mountain slopes, the Sacred Valley is deeply steeped in Andean history, culture and beauty. Formed by the Urubamba River, this valley was the fertile and spiritual base of the Incan Empire. Corn, cocoa, and potatoes, grow in fields along terraced mountain slopes.

The mountain air is crisp and thin. Massive sky tumbles into tremendous landscapes. Farmers work the fields with methods unchanged since the ancient Incan era. Over 50% of the population is indigenous, carrying thousands of years of wisdom born from living closely with the land. While Spanish is the primary language, many other languages are spoken, including Quechua, the complex, unwritten language of the Incas.

Harmony and *ayni*, the concept of reciprocity, living in direct relationship with the earth are central aspects of the Quechua culture. The Quechua live a deeply spiritual life, blending Incan spirituality, the Catholic influence of the Spaniards and the earth-based rituals that are a result of living in direct relationship to the earth for thousands of years.

Although the Sacred Valley is deeply rooted in history, contemporary influences intertwine with tradition. The only thing more striking than the landscape is the cohesive, living blend of the ancient and the modern that you'll witness and delight in every single day.

Food: Peruvian food is an eclectic blend of indigenous tradition and a strong Spanish influence. In the Andean region, fresh, locally grown root vegetables, green vegetables and corn are the staples for most meals, supplemented with grilled local chicken and meats. The gastronomically adventurous can try *cuy*, the grilled guinea pig that the region is famous for.

For the first nine days of the retreat, we'll be eating most of our meals at our retreat center Sach'a Munay. The food there is plentiful, delicious, and varied, and leans toward vegetarian. Chicken or fish will be served for dinner. Eggs will be available for breakfast, either as a main dish or in the form of supplementary hard-boiled eggs.

Weather: Weather in the Andean highlands is similar to any mountain weather--hard to predict! April through October is considered the slightly colder but drier season in the Andean highlands. The average high in Cusco in May is in the sixties, with the overnight low in the forties, but most of our trip will be 3000' below Cusco, so it will be significantly warmer. If it's a typical May, most of our trip will likely be pleasantly warm during the day and cool at night. We will be taking one trip up to a pass at 14,000 feet and conditions there will likely be colder. We'll provide you with a suggested clothing list that will give you a good range of adaptability to the mountain climate.



Teachers and Guides

Laura and Karyn and your True Nature Journeys guide will work together as a team of three leaders, each with a different role. Laura will teach the writing workshops; Karyn will teach the yoga. Your True Nature Journeys guide will take care of logistics and provide daily guidance and personal support. Additional local guides will provide knowledge and perspective unique to native Peruvians for specific tours and ceremonies. Altogether, your leaders will create a safe environment that welcomes each traveler and helps the group bond as a traveling community.

Laura Davis: Writing Workshop Teacher

The author of seven non-fiction books, including *The Courage to Heal*, *Becoming the Parent You Want to Be* and *I Thought We'd Never Speak Again*. **Laura's groundbreaking books have sold more than 1.8 million copies around the world.** Laura has also worked as a columnist, talk show host, radio reporter, radio producer, blogger, editor and speaker. **Words have always been at the core of her work and her self-expression.**

Laura has been mentoring and supporting writers for the past 20 years. It is truly the work of her heart: **"I love teaching. I love watching my students find their natural voice and their rhythm. I love it when they find their true stories and discover the courage to put them on the page. I feel like a midwife as my students birth their stories, and I feel honored to witness their bursts of creativity and pure life energy pouring out on the page.**



Our writing circles are safe places where skills are honed, tears and laughter are welcome, and each writer is seen, heard and deeply known.”

Currently, Laura leads weekly writing groups and retreats in the Santa Cruz, CA region, as well as retreats internationally. She has taken writers to Bali, Scotland, Greece, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Peru. She documents these trips to the delight of many readers in her blog, [The Virtual Vacation](#). You can read about her past trips to [Bali](#), [Scotland](#) and [Peru](#). You can read a wonderful interview with Laura [here](#).

“*Laura is my favorite writing teacher. She creates a safe environment and balances instruction with the freedom to be your own creative self.*

--Joyce Bartlett, Marblehead, Massachusetts



Karyn Bristol: Iyengar Yoga Instructor

When Karyn Bristol took her first Iyengar Yoga class 25 years ago, she never dreamed that she would one day become a certified Iyengar Yoga teacher. Like many of today's yoga students, Karyn took her first yoga class in midlife. She loved yoga from the beginning - the way it increased her strength and endurance. She was also immediately drawn to Iyengar's focus on alignment and posture.

In 2000, Karyn took part in the Advanced Studies and Teacher's Training Program at the Iyengar Institute of San Francisco and became a yoga teacher. After six years of teaching all levels of yoga and becoming a back care specialist, Karyn became one of the few certified Iyengar teachers in Santa Cruz County. Becoming certified required years of practice, study and two rigorous examinations of skills. She has also studied extensively with the Iyengar family in Pune, India.



“*Karyn is a knowledgeable and thorough teacher. She cares about yoga as a healing path. It felt good getting up for her class every morning.*

--Kendra Dorfman, Santa Cruz, California



Would You Like to Add an Adventure to the Amazon Rainforest?

The Place: Inkaterra Reserva Amazonica is a gracious rainforest lodge, adjacent to the lush Tambopata National Reserve, just a 35-minute flight from Cusco. This remote pristine area is called the "biodiversity capitol of Peru," offering an incredibly variety of birds, mammals, reptiles, insects and trees. During your five-day stay, you will explore its 494 acres through a variety of land and river excursions that will introduce you to the magic of the rainforest.

This simple hospitable lodge, set on the steep banks of the Madre de Dios River, has been an ecotourism pioneer for 40 years, promoting sustainable use of the Southern Peruvian Rainforest.

Winner of both the 2012 Tourism for Tomorrow Award for Conservation and the 2012 Green Choice Sustainable Tourism Award and one hundred percent carbon neutral, Inkaterra is as committed to preservation as they are to guest comfort.

Thirty-five free-standing thatched roof cabanas, built on raised platforms in the indigenous style, surround a beautiful main building and dining room, built of native materials that blend almost seamlessly into the jungle. Luxurious furnishings: beds with billowing mosquito netting, fluffy robes and slippers, sumptuous towels, screened decks with comfy lounge chairs and hammocks--and delectable local food offer a lovely complement to the simplicity of lantern-light and the rich sounds of the rainforest.

You can read more about the Amazon Extension Trip on the website: www.lauradavis.net/peru



How Do I Sign Up for this Fantastic Retreat?

Your Investment

Cost: \$5825 for double occupancy accommodations in Peru, based on two persons sharing a double or twin-bedded room with private bath.

Single Rooms: Single room accommodations in Peru are available for an additional \$985. We will try to accommodate your request for a single, but singles are limited and subject to availability.

Amazon Extension: The cost for the whole extension is \$1190 for a double occupancy room and \$1390 for a single room.

Small Group Supplement: We will take a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 20 travelers. If we end up with 13 or fewer people, you will be charged a small group supplement of \$300 at the time of your final payment.

Roommates: If you're traveling alone and would like a roommate, we'll do our best to find you a compatible person. If we can't match you up with someone, you'll get your own room and pay the single supplement of \$985.

Deposit and Payment Schedule: A non-refundable deposit of \$1000 is due with registration, plus a \$200 non-refundable deposit if you intend on going to the Amazon. A second payment of \$2413, plus a \$400 payment if you are going on the Amazon Extension, is due on October 15, 2018. The final balance of \$2412 (as well as the single supplement and the remaining payment for the optional trip to the Amazon) will be due January 15, 2019. Please read the cancellation and refunds section carefully so that you understand the policy.

Please visit www.lauradavis.net/peru for full details.

