



THE COTAHUASI CANYON 4D/3N



The *Cotahuasi canyon* is located in *La Unión* province, one of the remote provinces in the region of Arequipa. With 3,535 meters depth it is deeper than the *Colca Canyon*, however not as deep as some canyons in the Himalayas.

The canyon itself is an impressive gorge carved by the *Cotahuasi River* passing between the two enormous volcanoes *Coropuna* (6425m) and *Solimana* (6093m). The river starts from the *Huanzococha* lagoon at more than 4750 meters and later receives the contributions of the River *Huayllapaña* in the district of Pampamarca

to the north, and the *Huarcaya River*, near *Tomepampa*, from the west, traversing the whole canyon to later be united with the *Maran River* and eventually form the *Ocoña River* which flows all the way to the Pacific Ocean.

In Cotahuasi, which in Quechua means **The Deep House**, we will find many attractions for friends of nature and Andean life, such as *Sipia*, a magnificent waterfall of 150 meters height, the *Huaynacota* terraces, a bunch of traditional towns, several snow-capped mountains, a couple of plank bridges, ancient traditions and costumes, natural hot springs, Pre-Hispanic and historical ruins, and the unique flora of *Ayahuasi* and *Cahuana*.

To visit the Cotahuasi Valley we have to pass through *Cotahuasi town* (the capital of the province) that is located 375 kilometres northeast of Arequipa City.

First day

Depart early in the morning (5 am). Today on our journey we will pass through *Corire* and *Aplao* Valleys, where we will find a suitable place to have our breakfast at about 7:30 am. During the drive we will visit the famous petroglyphs of "*Toro Muerto*", located in the *Majes* Valley, where we find about 3000 volcanic rocks with drawings dating back to the *Huari* Culture (our visit there takes about 1 hour). We carry on until we arrive at "*Chuquibamba* town", a traditional place where we can have lunch at a local restaurant.

We hit the road again, enjoying the beautiful landscape of the "Puna" highland and diverse geographical areas.

On the way, we stop to visit "*Pallarcocha Lake*", located at the bottom of the snow-capped "*Coropuna*", and an ideal place to observe this impressive volcano close at hand.

After a short stop at the natural viewpoint of "*Allahuay*" offering an incredible view over the Cotahuasi valley we arrive at our lodge in the town of Cotahuasi at about 6 pm.





Second day

Today we'll have a full day excursion toward *Puyca* town (3560 m), enjoying the area with its wild surroundings and deep gorges. On the route we will visit also the traditional towns of *Tomepampa* and *Alca*, arriving at *Puyca* around midday.

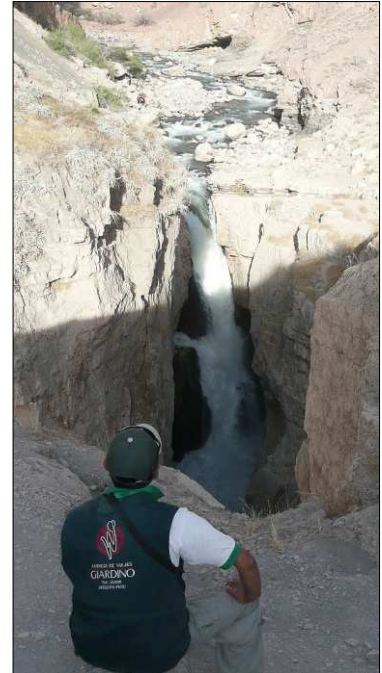
After lunch at a local place in town, we will walk up to the remarkable Inca ruins of ***Maukallacta*** having an impressive view of the area. On the way back to Cotahuasi town we'll visit the thermal baths of *Luicho* with the possibility of a relaxing bath in its 35 degree water (Celsius ☺).

Overnight at our lodge in Cotahuasi.

Third day

About 6 am we'll start our visit to the *Sipia* waterfall. The 150m high cataract is an impressive natural spectacle which is located at the lower and warmer regions of *Cotahuasi*. On the route to *Sipia* we will have a short hike, crossing hanging bridges, enjoying the landscape with its unique flora and fauna and taking a look at the walls of the canyon.

In the afternoon, after returning to Cotahuasi and having a short rest we will drive to the village *Huaynacotas* (2700 m), whose inhabitants still live deeply rooted in ancient customs and traditions. Return and overnight in Cotahuasi.



Four day

At about 7:30 am we will take the road back to Arequipa. On route we will have some stops for pictures and lunch. Our tour ends in the city at about 6 pm.

End of our excursion

The program includes:

- Transport; English/Spanish guide, accommodation (regular basic with bathroom and water)

The program does not include:

- Meals (Breakfast, lunch and dinner), entrances fees, beverages and other extras.

¡Giardino thanks you for your preference!

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