

I asked a few people and they were on the train to ollantaytambo, my destination. in an overly anal move, i checked my tickets and saw the station listed was the nuevo station, a different place two blocks away. i asked a cop and he directed me, this was the only bad part of the trip, as i thought i may miss the train, so i ran 2-3 blocks, straight uphill, with full backpack. when i arrived at the gate, the cop there said, no, i was in the right place to begin with, that train does board at the other end of town. i ran back to find everyone still sitting and waiting, no more problems. the train arrived on time and i got on and settled in for the 1.5 hour ride from aguas calientes to ollantaytambo.

the plan for the day was to take the train to ollantaytambo, visit there, then bus to urubamba, then bus to cusco. this is the recommended route, and only costs about \$3.00, when done correctly. in all these places, taxi drivers try to snag you to do the same thing for \$30.

Arrived ollantaytambo at 11 AM and walked to the ruins. well walked halfway and then hired a bike taxi, as it was uphill and i was wearing my backpack. had read about the ruins, so i was ready. was not ready for the stairs and climbing, with my full pack. really starting to feel pain and soreness from the mountain climb and had a lot of trouble climbing. Once i got to levels i was fine, climbing really hurt. fortunately this city is at the base of the sacred valley and much lower altitude than cusco.

Asked around and found where to catch the bus to urubamba, the regular route.

Found a minivan, which eventually filled up with 20 people, all locals. Went bouncing down the road, stopping to pick up and drop off people, kids and more. 30 minute ride to urubamba, another town in sacred valley. by now i was hungry and went into a cafe in the square and had my favorite, ham and cheese sandwich and a coke. relaxed and then asked about bus to cusco. Bus this way goes thru calca and chinchero, two rural cities. This was a bigger bus, but also packed with people, and they would put their packages and sacks of flour on the roof rack. Stopped every mile or so to pick up and drop off people. Driver and a younger conductor, who would climb the ladder outside the bus, grab peoples bags and throw them down to them, he would say vamos as he would jump down from the ladder, the bus would pull away as he leapt in the door and closed it behind him.

Enjoyed the trip, seeing the countryside as well as the small towns along the way. Continued to stop every few miles to pick up or drop off various passengers. From old couples in traditional dress to kids coming home from school and everything in between.

Total cost for the minivan from ollantaytambo to urubamba was around \$0.50 and around \$0.80 for the bus from urubamba to cusco.

Arrived in Cusco around 5pm at the bus terminal i could not find for the tr. I had reserved the same room again at Hotel Marqueses and knew it was waiting for me. Thought maybe i would need a cab, but after asking directions, realized i knew where i was and could walk the few blocks to the hotel which i did.

Checked back into my old room and made use of the tub. By this point i was extremely sore

from the climb and took a nap. woke up and went out to have some dinner and relax on my last night in town.