



Around the Plaza de Armas

TIMING This walk can be completed in a half day. The cathedral and the Inca museum warrant about an hour each.

(1) **Plaza de Armas.** The imposing plaza is a direct descendant of imperial Cusco's central square, which the Inca called the *Haukaypata* (the only name indicated on today's street signs). According to belief, it was the exact center of the Inca empire, *Tawantinsuyo*, the Four Corners of the Earth. **Eight colonial portales, or covered arcades**, now ring the plaza. Starting at the cathedral and going clockwise they bear religious or commercial names: Belen (Bethlehem); Carrizos (straw); la Compañia (Jesuits); Comercio (commerce); Confituria (preserves); Panes (breads); Harinas (flours); and Carnes (meats). **Each Sunday morning sees a military parade** on the cathedral side of the plaza that draws hundreds of spectators and, as a sign of the times in today's Peru, a few protesters.

*(2) **Catedral.** The baroque-style cathedral is built on the foundations of the palace of the Inca Wirachocha. Construction began in 1550. It is considered one of the most splendid Spanish colonial churches in the Americas. Within its high walls are some of the best examples of the Cusquena school of painting, including a Marcos Zapata painting of the Last Supper **with a local specialty, *cuy* (guinea pig), as the main dish.**

The cathedral's centerpieces are its massive, solid-silver altar, and the enormous 1659 Maria Angola bell, the largest in South America.

There's non-Christian imagery here, too: figures of pumas, the Inca representation of the Earth, are carved on the enormous main doors. Normal access to the cathedral is not via those doors but through the adjoining *Sagrada Familia* church, the structure on the left as you face the cathedral. You then pass through the cathedral itself, and exit via the *Iglesia del Triunfo*, the city's first Christian church. Pause before departing the *Triunfo* to note the two altars flanking the exit. One portrays a rustic Andean carving of Christ, the other a more traditional Spanish version. A small army of top-notch guides wait at the entrance to the complex and can guide you through all that you see in English. Their services are included in your admission price. *Haukaypata (Plaza de Armas S/13 or Boleto Integral Daily 10-6.*

(3) **Iglesia de La Compañia.** The "company" referred to here is the Society, of Jesus, the powerful Jesuit order that built this church on the foundation of the Inca Huayna Capac's palace in the late 17th century. Note the outstanding carved facade, the two baroque towers and, inside, the , Cusquena-school paintings of the life of Jesuit patron St. Ignatius Loyola. During construction, the Archbishop of Cusco complained that the church would rival the

cathedral a block away in beauty and stature. By the time the pope stepped in to rule in favor of the cathedral, it was too late; construction of the Compania church was nearly complete. The church is open several times a day for mass, but a guard stands at the door to scrutinize you and keep you out if he thinks you look too much like a tourist. *Haukaypata (Plaza de Armas)* Free *Mon.-Sat. 11-noon; Masses: Mon.-Sat. 7 AM, noon, 6 and 6:30 PM, Sun. 7:30, 11:30 AM, and 6 and 7 PM.*

*Follow the street everyone calls Arequipa-but the sign will say only Q'APHCHIK'IJLLU -along the **Inca wall** of the Acllawasi:* (4) [Convento de Santa Catalina de Siena](#). Still an active Dominican convent, Santa Catalina has a 1610 church with high and low choirs and a museum with religious art. Ironically, the site represents the change of one group of chosen women for another: the convent was built on the site, of the Acllawasi, the house of some 3,000 Inca chosen women dedicated to teaching, weaving Inca ceremonial robes, and service to the sun. *Santa Catalina Angosta* Boleto Turistic *Mon.-Thurs. and Sat. 9-5, Fri. 9-3:30.*

*Go around the corner to Loreto to see the **Inca Wall**. Afterward, backtrack to the Plaza de Armas. The street to the left as you face the cathedral, called Cuesta del Almirante, will take you to a beautiful colonial mansion, the Palacio del Almirante, the site of:* (5) [Museo Inka](#). The draw of this archaeological museum is its collection of eight Inca mummies-everyone comes here to "ooh" and "eeww" over them-but the entire facility is Cusco's best Spanish-language introduction to pre-Columbian Andean culture. English-language labeling of the exhibits is slowly being added in a project sponsored by the Inka Grill restaurant down the hill on the Plaza de Armas. The ceramics, vases and textiles provide a much-needed reminder that civilizations thrived in this region before the Inca. One room is dedicated to the story of Mamakuka ("Mother Coca") and documents indigenous peoples' use of the coca leaf for religious and medicinal purposes-coca tea is said to relieve altitude sickness. The building was once the palace of Admiral Francisco Aldrete Maldonado, hence its common designation as the Palacio del Almirante (Admiral's Palace). *Ataud at Cordoba del Tucuman S/10 Weekdays 8-6, Sat. 9-4*

Inca Walls

Hatunrumiyoc runs northeast from the Plaza de Armas. This pedestrian only street is famous for the **12 sided stone** found along the east wall. To find the stone look for the souvenir sellers which set up regularly directly across from the stone.

[Ilaría](#) Jewlery (Portal de Carnes 258. Haukaypata, Plaza de Armas)

[Seminario](#) Ceramics (Portal de Carnes, Haukaypata, Plaza de Armas)

Peru Etnico Textiles (Portal Mantas; Portal de Carnes 232, Haukaypata, Plaza de Armas; Heladeros 172)

[Alpaca's Best Textiles](#) (Portal Confiturias 221, Haukaypata, Plaza de Armas)

Artesanias Quipu Cancha Textiles (Plateros 321) most stylish, and expensive.

Center for Traditional Textiles of Cusco (Av. El Sol 603), a nonprofit organization dedicated to the survival of traditional textile weaving. You can purchase sweaters, ponchos, scarves, and wall hangings at fair-trade prices.

Centro Artesanal Cusco (Tullumayo and El Sol), containing **340** stands of artisan vendors.

Feria Inca (At San Andras and Quera)

North of the Plaza

TIMING A half day is all you need. It entails a trek up the narrow street of Cuesta [San Blas](#), portions of which have one lane of traffic and sidewalks wide enough for only one person.

Narrow streets lead north from the Plaza de Armas and take you toward the trendy artisan district of **San Blas**. Up the road from the **Museo Inka (5)** is the small Plazoleta Nazarenas and the:

(6) Museo de Arte Precolombino. Newest and flashiest of Cusco's tourist attractions, known around town as the MAP. Twelve rooms in the 1580 Casa Cabrera, which was used as the convent of Santa Clara until the 17th century, showcase all astounding collection of pre-Columbian art from the 13th-16th centuries. The art and artifacts were made by the Huari and Nazca, as well as the Inca, cultures *Plazoleta Nazarenas 231 S/20 Daily 9 AM- 10 PM.*

Continue northeast on Culebras then turn left on Choquechaca to reach a children's art museum.:

(7) Museo Irq'i Yachay. The museum's name translates as "Wisdom of the Young," and that it is. A rural-development venture, the Taller Movil de Arte (Mobile Art Workshop), has collected children's artworks from remote Andean communities as part of an educational project to enhance young people's cultural awareness and sense of expression. *Choquechaca and Free @ Wed.-Sun. 11-5.*

Backtrack on Choquechaca to the street leading up a steep, cobblestone hill known as the Cuesta de San Blas, the entry into the traditional artists' quarter of **San Blas**. Continue on the same street for one block to reach:

(8) Iglesia y Plazoleta de San Blas. The little square in San Blas has a simple adobe church with one of the jewels of colonial art in the Americas-the pulpit of San Blas, an intricately carved 17th-century cedar pulpit, arguably Latin America's most ornate. Figures of Martin Luther, John Calvin, and Henry VII-all opponents of Catholicism as well as those representing the seven deadly sins are condemned for eternity to hold up the pulpit's base. The work is dominated by the triumphant figure of Christ. At his feet rests a human skull, not carved, but the real thing. *IS/6 or Boletto Integral Church weekdays 8-6, weekends 10-6.*

Also on the square is:

***(9) Museo Hilario Mendivil.** In the home of famous 20th-century Peruvian religious artist Hilario Mendivil (1929-77), this

gallery displays the maguey-wood and rice-plaster sculptures of the Virgin with the elongated necks that were the artist's trademark. *Plazoleta San Free Mon.-Sat. 8-8.*

Heading back down the hill, at the point where the street name changes to Hatunrumiyoc stands what is believed to have been the:

(10) Palacio de Inca Roca. Inca Roca lived in the 13th or 14th century. Halfway along the palace's side wall, nestled amid other stones, is the famous 12-angled stone, an example of masterly Inca masonry. Ask one of the shopkeepers or one of the elaborately dressed Inca figures hanging out along the street to point it out. Around the corner is a series of stones on the wall that form the shapes of a puma and a serpent. Kids hang out there and are happy to trace the forms for a small tip. *Hatunrumiyoc and Palacio and Herrerajes.*

Today the colonial building that rests on the Inca foundations is the:

(11) Museo de Arte Religioso del Arzobispado. First the site of the Inca Roca's Hatun Rumiyoq palace, then the juxtaposed Moorish-style palace of the Marques de Buenavista, the building reverted to the archdiocese of Cusco and served as the archbishop's residence. Many of the works in the museum's 12 rooms are not labeled. One of the bilingual guides will be happy to give you a tour. Their services are included in the admission price. *Hatun Rumiyoq and Herrerajes S/6 or Boletto Integral Weekdays 8-6, weekends 10-6.*

Continue southwest on Hatunrumiyoc to return to the Plaza de Armas.

[Apacheta](#) Art (Santa Catalina Ancha 313)

Galeria Merida Ceramics (Carmen Alto 133, San Blas

Hecho en Cusco Textiles (Carmen Alto 105)

Galeria Mendivil Crafts Religious art (Plazoleta San Blas 5).

A nonprofit coop, **Antisuyo** (Triunfo) sells quality crafts from all over Peru.

[Carlos Chaquiras](#) Jewelry (*Triunfo 375*).

Maqui Arte Textiles (Sunturwasi (Triunfo) 118

Taller Maxi Crafts (Sunturwasi (Triunfo) 393

Alpaca 3 Textiles (Calle Ruinas 472).

Arte y Diseno (Sam Brown) where she can get a purse custom-made for \$35.

South of the Plaza

Timing You need a full day to complete this walk. The *Qorikancha* itself requires a half day to see everything. The San Pedro church borders on a dicey neighborhood. **Unless it really interests you, pass it by and take a taxi to the Qorikancha.**

The portion of the city south of the Plaza de Armas contains lesser known sights, with one glaring exception, *Qorikancha*. Don't miss it. Southwest of the Plaza de Armas, along the Calle del Medio, is the Kusipata (Plaza Regocijo). In the municipal building on the plaza sits

(12) **Museo de Arte Contemporaneo**. Take a refreshing turn back toward the present in this city that wears its history on its sleeve. Yet even the modern- art museum, in the Cusco municipal hall, focuses on the past. Twentieth- century artists have put a modern-art spin on imperial and colonial themes. *Kusiputa s/n (Plaza Regocijo)Boleto Turistico Weekdays 9-5.*

Alpaca 111 Textiles (Kusipata 202, Plaza Regocijo).
Royal Knitwear Textiles (Plaza Regocijo 203)
Royal Alpaca Textiles (Santa Teresa 387)

Beyond it is:

(13) **Casa de Garcilaso**. This is the colonial childhood home of Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, the famous chronicler of the Spanish conquest and illegitimate son of one of Pizarro's captains and an Inca princess. Inside the mansion, with its cobblestone courtyard., is the Museo de Historia Regional, with Cusquena-school paintings and pre-Inca mummies. *Heladeros at Garcilaso Boleto Turistico Mon-S. 8:30-5.*

Walk down Heladeros to Mantas to reach the church and monastery of:

(14) **La Merced**. Rebuilt in the 17th century, this monastery- with two stories of portals and a colonial fountain, gardens, and benches- has a spectacular series of murals that depict the life of the founder of the Mercedarian order, St. Peter of Nolasco. A small but impressive museum of the convent's treasures has the Custodia, a solid gold container for communion wafers encrusted with hundreds of precious stones. *Mantas 121 S/3 Church: Mon-Sat 7-7:30 AM and 5-8 PM, Sun 7-noon and 6:30-7:30 PM; museum: Mon.-Sat. 8-12:30 and 2-5:30.*

Galeria Latino Crafts (Calle Mantas 118)

Follow Mantas to the:

(15) **Plaza e Iglesia de San Francisco**. The plaza, though unimpressive, has an intriguing garden of native plants. The church has two sepulchers with arrangements of bones and skulls, some pinned to the wall to spell out morbid sayings. A small museum of religious art with paintings by Cusquena-school artists Marcos Zapata and Diego Quispe Tito is in the church sacristy. *3 blocks south of Plaza de Armas S/1 Weekdays 9-noon and 3-5.*

A few blocks away is one of the most splendid examples of Inca architecture, the Temple of the Sun, known as the:

*(18) **Qorikancha**. The Temple of the Sun was built during the reign of the Inca Pachacutec to honor Tawantinsuyos' most important divinity and served as astronomical observatory and repository of the realm's gold treasure. (The temple's name translates as "Court of Gold.") If Cusco was constructed to represent a puma, then Qorikancha was positioned as the animal's loins, the center from which all creation emanated. Some 4,000 priests and attendants are thought to have lived within its confines. Walls and altars were plated with gold, and in the center of the complex sat a giant gold disc, positioned to reflect the sun and bathe the temple in light. At the summer solstice, sunlight reflected into a niche in the wall where only the Inca were permitted to sit. Much of the wealth was removed to pay ransom for the captive Inca ruler Atahualpa at the time of the Spanish conquest, blood money that was paid in vain as Atahualpa was later murdered. Eventually, Francisco Pizarro awarded the site to his brother Juan. Upon Juan's death, the structure passed to the Dominicans, who began to construct the church of Santo Domingo, using stones from the temple and creating perhaps Cusco's most jarring imperial-colonial architectural juxtaposition.

An ingenious restoration to recover both buildings after the 1953 earthquake lets you see how the church was built on and around the walls and chambers of the temple. In the Inca parts of the structure left exposed, estimated to be about 40% of the original temple, you can admire the mortarless masonry, earthquake-proof trapezoidal doorways, curved retaining wall, and exquisite carvings that exemplify the artistic and engineering skills of the Inca. Bilingual guides lead tours **every day except Sunday**; the service is included in your admission price. *Pampa del Castillo at Plazoleta Santo Ruins and church, S/6; museum, Boleto Turistico Ruins and church, Mon.-Sat. 8:30-5:30, Sun. 2-5; museum, Mon.-Sat. 9-5:30, Sun. 9-1.*

Figuras

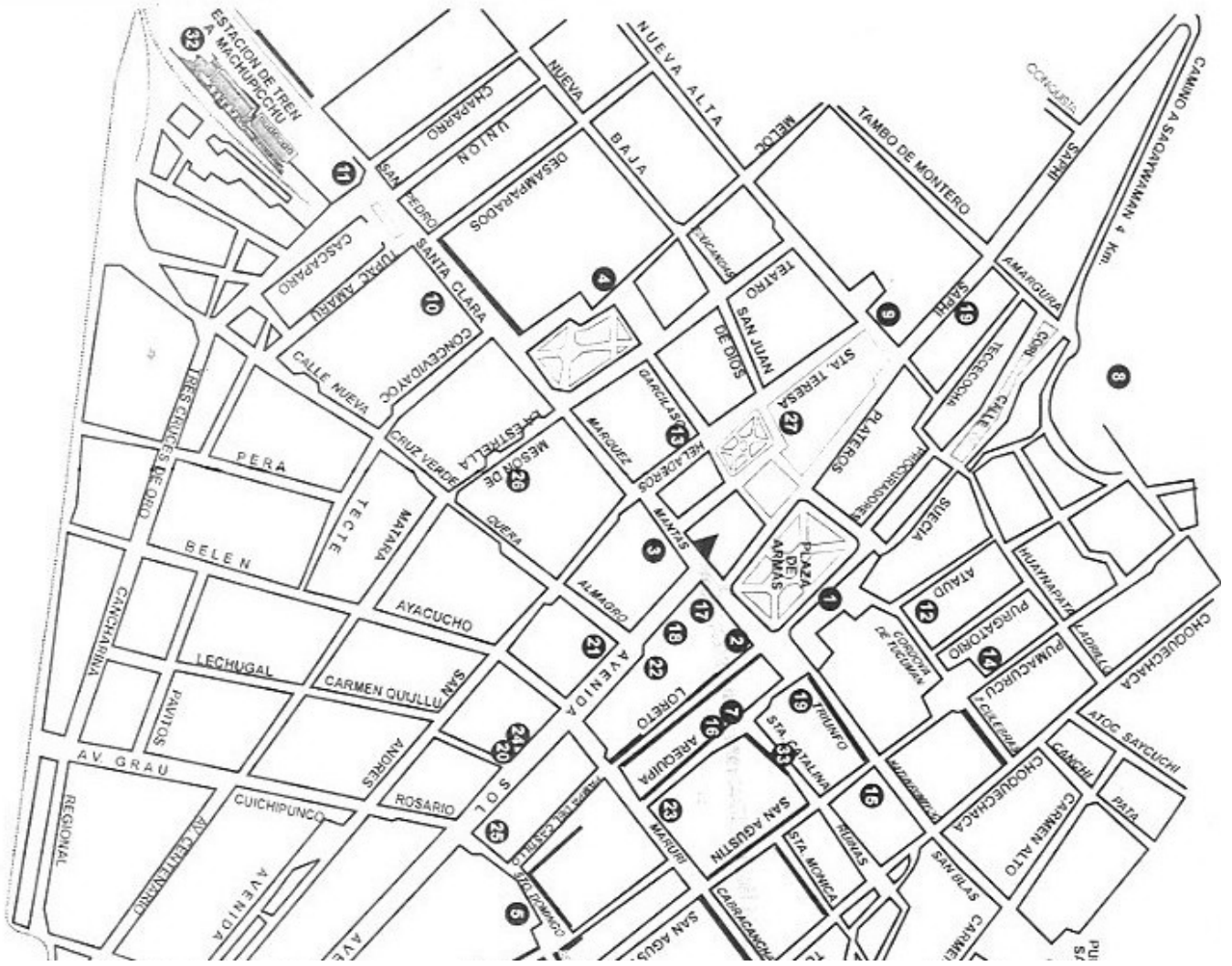
1. Catedral
2. La Compañía
3. La Merced
4. San Francisco
5. Santo Domingo (Qorkancha)
6. San Blas
7. Santa Catalina
8. San Cristóbal
9. Santa Teresa
10. Santa Clara
11. San Pedro

Museos

12. Museo Inka (Arqueológico)
13. Histórico Regional (Cristóbal Guevara)
14. Casa Cabrera
15. Arte Religioso
16. Santa Catalina
17. Historia Natural
18. Arte Popular

Figuras Importantes

19. Policía de Turismo
20. Interbank
21. Banco de la Nación
22. Banco de Crédito
23. Banco Wiese
24. Banco Continental
25. Banco Sur
26. Teatro Municipal
27. Municipalidad (Anto Centenario)
28. Correo
29. Monumento a Pachacutec
30. Oficina de Migraciones
31. Indecopi. Protección al Turista
32. Estación de Trenes
33. Biblioteca Municipal



- MUSEOS / ESPACIOS**
- 1. La Catedral
 - 2. La Compañía de Jesús
 - 3. Santo Domingo
 - 4. La Merced
 - 5. Santa Catalina
 - 6. Santa Clara
 - 7. San Francisco
 - 8. Santa Teresa
 - 9. San Juan
 - 10. San Pedro
 - 11. San Cristóbal
- MUSEOS / ESPACIOS**
- 12. De Arte Pre-Colombiano
 - 13. SIVA
 - 14. Casa Quevedo
 - 15. De Arte Contemporáneo



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Where to Eat in Cusco

Cafe

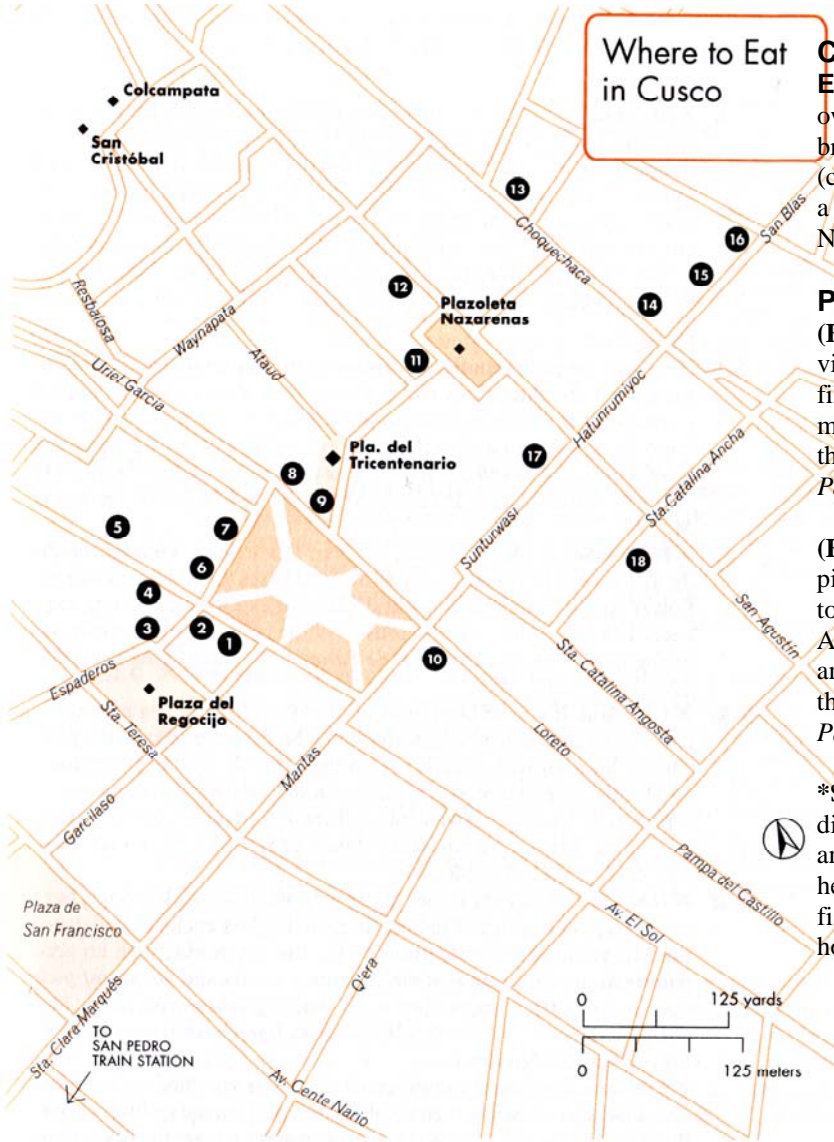
El Ayllu. This cafe on the Plaza de Armas really comes into its own in the morning as the consummate diner, serving hearty breakfasts accompanied by a big glass mug of *cafe' con leche* (coffee with steamed milk) and mouthwatering pastries, including a scrumptious apple strudel. Portal de Carnes 208, Plaza de Armas No credit. No dinner Sun.

Peruvian

(F&F) \$\$ La Retama. A cozy fireplace, Andean tapestries, a view of the Plaza de Armas, a nightly folk-music show, and vases filled with its namesake, flower found in the fields around Cusco make for a charming experience. The fish dishes are delicious—try the trout in fennel cream sauce, or the trout ceviche. *Portal de Panes* 123 %P, Plaza de Armas MC, V

(F&F) \$\$ Inka Grill. If you've been putting off trying *cuy guinea* pig), that peculiarly Andean delicacy, this might just be the place to take the plunge. This bi-level, upscale restaurant on the Plaza de Armas draws tourist and locals alike to its reassuring surroundings and attentive service. And top off your meal with a wait-'til-I-tell-the-folks-back-home dessert: coca leaf cream brulee. *Portal de Panes* 115, Plaza de Armas AE, V, M

***\$ Pucara.** This is the best place in Cusco to sample regional dishes, which means it's always busy. The lunch specials are ample and reasonably priced. The *aji de gallina* is outstanding but a bit heavy before an afternoon of sightseeing. On the lighter side, the fish dishes are served with a colorful assortment of vegetables. The homemade truffles are the perfect dessert. *Plateros309AE, MC, V*



Al Grano 18	Granja Heidi 15	Pucará 4
Baghdad Café 8	Inka Grill 7	Quinta Eulalia 13
Chez Maggy 5	Jack's 14	Tunupa 1
Cicciolina 17	La Retama 6	Varayoc 3
El Ayllu 9	Macondo 16	
El Mesón 2	MAP Café 12	
Fallen Angel 11	Paititi 10	