CUSCO GUIDE

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1. **ACLLA HUASI / ST CATALINA.** Aklya Wasi. The nunnery location is small area on N side of this block along small plaza area. The wall of the original building is to the right of El Triunfo and “adjacent side of the square” and down the Calle Loreto. The longest surviving Inca wall in Cusco.

**ACLLAHUASI.** Palace of the Virgins of the Sun, or Chosen Women. Acllas wove fine cumbi and textiles, made chicha. The women were given to chiefs and officials as awarded wives or concubines. Dedicated to religious service, made royal garments, made chicha, and concubines.

Mamaconas were dedicated to religious life, stayed chaste, and cloistered from men. Ruled by a mother superior.

**CONVENTO SANTA CATALINA.** Owned by the nuns of Santa Catalina, as of 1604. Colonial decoration destroyed in 1858. A restoration series of canvases from Bolognesi School: Francisco Albani (1578-1660). Also, many Cuzco school paintings, mostly by Juan de Espinoza de los Monteros in 1600s.

2. **ANTISUYA ROAD.** Royal Road. The Tahuantinsuyo was broken into 4 parts, these roads lead to each. This one to the jungles toward the NE. The road begins from the Tocacahi Plaza, Salt Window.

3. **CHRIST THE REDEEMER.** Erected in 1944, donated by Palestinian refugees, “grateful for the city's help.”

4. **COLLASUYU ROAD.** Royal Road. The Tahuantinsuyo was broken into 4 parts, these roads lead to each. This one to Lake Titicaca in the SE. The Collasuyu was from the Andes to the Bolivia/Argentina steppes.

5. **CORICANCHA / SUN TEMPLE.** see other guide.

6. **EL CONVENTO DE LAS NAZARENAS.** Faces a small plaza of the same name. Post-conquest, transitional Incaic style. Spanish had Incan mason build the structure.

**HOUSE OF THE SERPENTS.** Across the plaza from House of Cabrera. For conquistador, Mancio Sierra de Leguisamo, it had carvings of serpents and mermaids on lintels. Stones were taken and reshaped from Amaru Cancha (temple of serpents). Built by Francisco Cartagena Velay Acuna. A “tunneled arch” connects the building to San Antonio Abad.

**LA CASA DE CARTAGENA.** Near House of Cabreras. On Street of Pumakurku at Plaza of the Nazarene, next door to Convent of Nazarenas.

7. **EL TEMPO DE SAN BLAS.** Poorer parish, reached by steep and difficult cobbled street, along Plaza of San Blas. In district of Tocco-cache. Exterior is in poorer shape. Canvases depict life and martyrdom of San Blas in typical cuzqeno style—golden backgrounds, halos made of precious stones. Built in 1562 of small adobe.

From the late 1600s, maybe the greatest wood carving in the world. The pulpit is carved from one large treetrunk. From bottom to top, 20ft: 8 heretics being crushed, 7 “ghastly chimera,” then angels and columns with the gospels and Mary with St Thomas in the background. The canopy has the 9 doctors of the church and seraphim carrying the implements of the Crucifixion. St Paul is at the top, under his foot is a skull—the artist’s. Maybe created by Juan Tomas Tuirutupa, native leper.

8. **HATUN CANCHA.** Location based on Hemming and Frost. Huayna Capac’s palace consisting of 100s of buildings inside the compound including an artificial pond.

Pucamarca, “red settlement”. The Palace of
Inca Tupac Yupanqui: on St Catalina Ancha St. Part of the building became La Casa de Concha. The rear side, along Calle Maruri is still intact, except for doorways.

9. **HATUN RUMIYOC.** Twelve Angled Stone is proof that no stone was too difficult for the Incas. “Street of the great stone.” In the center of the wall is a large 12 sided stone. It’s also on Cusquena beer. It’s impressive how each angle fits the neighboring stones perfectly. The top of the wall is transitional/fake - made of darker gray stones.

10. **HOUSE OF DIEGO MALDONADO.** One of the original conquistadors. It’s behind the Palace of Inca Roca. His nickname was “El Rico” because of his great luck. Doubled his share of Atahualpa’s ransom by gaming with dice.

11. **INTI PAMPA.** The park between Coricancha and Avenida Sol was built in the 1990s is not the “field of gold”. A museum is underneath showing the artifacts found while creating the park.

12. **LA CAPILLA DE SAN ANDRES.** On street to RR. Now the Court of Justice. Inca walls remain at entrance.

13. **LA CAPILLA DE SAN ANTONIO.** W of Nazarenas, faces the plaza. Bordering Street of Seven Serpents. Church was built in 1732 by Bp Mollinedo, the Maecenas of Cuzco. Small, intimate church, known for canvases showing the temptations of St Anthony – valuable for their depictions of life in Cuzco during 1600s, excellent quality.

14. **LA CASA DE CONCHA.** On Street Santa Catalina Ancha and near Santa Catalina Convent. Best surviving colonial palacios of early 1700s. Traditional spanish house built on top of Incan walls. Intricate carved balconies, house has 3 sections.

The Conchas, criollos beginning with Dr Jose de Santiago Concha in 1600s, all Peruvian born. Managed important mercury mines at Huancavelica. Made a count by Philip V in 1718. Remained loyal to the crown. Martin Pio Concha lived here, colonel and last colonial governor of Cusco.


Two storied house, one side made of Inca stones on Calle Atuad. Doorway has coat of arms of Count of Laguana, plumed knight with raised sword, Spanish Renaissance.

Built in early 1600s by Admiral Francisco
Maldonado. It’s now a part of a university and is the Inca Museum. The corner window has an intriguing center column—from the outside it looks like a naked woman, from the inside it looks like a bearded man.3

The admiral was said to be incredibly vain. Legend: He kicked out an old woman. Her son, a priest, came to complain. The admiral verbally and physically beat him. He prayed for vengeance. Three months later the admiral was found hung from gallows in his own courtyard. Then this became property of Pedro Peralta de los Rios, Count of Laguna.11

16. INTIKIJLLU STREET. Also called Loreto Street. Modern street, runs along side of Accllahuasi. Wall has coursed masonry and tightly sunken joints with a drainage.4

17. PALACE OF INCA ROCA / CASA DE MARQUESES. La Casa de los Marqueses de Buena Vista on Hatun Runiyoc Street. Built on palace of Inca Roca in 1400. Colonial house built by Jeronimo Costilla in late 1500s. Now residence of Bishops of Cusco.11

Excellent walls remain along Hatunrumiyoc St. and rear side and south side. It is now Museum of Art.3

18. PALACE OF INCA VIRACOCHA. Quishuarcancha. Later turned into a temple dedicated to the creator god Viracocha. Given to Catholic church to use for cathedral. Possibility used as a palace for successive living Incas.4

Enclosure of Quishuan Trees.”. Statue as 10yr old boy made of gold.5

19. PALACE OF INCA YUPANQUI. Unsure which palace this description belongs with. Two large main gates. One inside the other. At the first, 2000 soldiers were stationed. A vast courtyard before reaching the second gate, only the Inca and the 4 members of his private council could enter. The second gate had Cuzco native guards. Nearby was an armory. Next another courtyard for palace officials and servants. Then there’s the Inca’s residence. Lodgings were very large and many gardens with plants from all over Peru. Many lifesize plants and animals were modeled in gold.13

20. AMARUCANCHA PALACE / JESUIT COMPAÑIA. The palace of Huayna Capac. A gateway of red, white, and multicolored marble.13 It had a round tower. Name means “serpent enclosure”, a symbol of knowledge and learning.6 Largest Inca building in Cuzco.12 There are carved serpents over the doorway and “fine niches” in the school courtyard and inside Hotel Loreto.3

Second of two palaces for Huayna Capac. Finest of palaces, marble gateway, two 30ft towers.6

One of the towers was 30ft high and the building’s roof was still higher. Estete.4. The tower was 60ft in diameter.13.4. And at the top of the roof there was a tall pole.4

Kallanka along plaza so large it easily held 60 mounted men and they jousted with canes. JESUITS. Owned by Hernando de Soto then conquerador Diego de Silva, who gave it to the Jesuits. De Silva is buried in crypt here.

Now occupied by the Jesuit Compania. Jesuit church which faces Plaza de Armas. Started in 1571, architecturally one of the best in S America. Controversially rebuilt to rival the cathedral after 1650 after earthquake. Excellent dome, carved wood balustrade, carved altars with corkscrew golden pillars by Cipriano Guitierrez. Paintings
mostly of St Ignacia Loyola by mestizo Marco Zapata. The altar is a solid sheet of gold. To the left is a painting of the marriage of Martin García de Loyola (nephew to St Ignatius and the one to capture Tupac Amaru) to Beatriz Nusta (daughter of Sayri Tupac). There’s a painting of the marriage of Ana María (daughter of García) and Juan de Borja (descended from the other Jesuit cofounder, St Francisco de Borja). Interview with a Jesuit, Universidad de Cuzco, attached to La Compañía. It was a Jesuit college until their expulsion in 1707, then used as soldier barracks. Simon Bolivar entered Cuzco in 1825 and made it a School of Science. 21. PALACE OF HUASCAR. Palace was completed just before Huascar’s capture by Atahualpa. Diego de Almagro moved into this palace. 22. YACHA HUASI PALACE / CASA CABRERAS. Also called The Schools. Built on 3 acres on the Huatanay R. Official Inca schools teaching quipus. 4 years of high quality education. 1, Quechua. 2, theology. 3, quipu. 4, quipu, math, geography. 23. PUCA MARCA PALACE. Palace of Inca Topa Yupanqui. The “Red Ward”. On 3 large acres. Temple to Illapa, also stayed here was the body of Pachacuti. 24. Qenko. See Sacred Valley guide. 25. RIMAC PAMPA. Small plaza, from here leads the royal road to Collasuyu, to Titicaca and on to Chile. Means “speaking pampa”. Inca officials would make declarations here. Built in 1452 by Topa Inca.
DESCRIPTIONS

31. CALLE CONCEVIDAYOC. Side street along side El Convento de Santa Clara, near plaza of San Francisco.¹¹

32. CALLE DE LA COCA. Between La Casa de Jose Chacon and La Casa de Garcilaso.¹¹

33. CHINCHAYSUYU ROAD. Royal road. The Tahuantinsuyo was broken into 4 parts, this one Quito. This quarter was from the Andes down to the coast, northwest area of Cuzco.

34. COLCAPampa PALACE / SAN CRISTOBAL. Kolkam-pata. In Hanan part of Cuzco, within eyesight of Sacsahuaman, near the Plaza and Church of San Cristobal, the city is below.¹¹

At the age of 14, the Incas would undergo an endurance test of a 6 day fast of only water and maize then a testing of arms skills.⁵ In sep, the Sapa Inca would plant the first corn here. It was used for ritual chicha later in the year.³

“Storage place.” Palace of Manco Capac I. Original walls remain as terraces along the plaza.³ Has a row of full height double-jamb niches.⁴ More ruins of the building continue up the hillside: follow main road from church, along the left curve in road, turn left into gateway. 54yd on right side is doorway. There is a large boulder 4ft tall and carved into the shape of a frog. See cecues Ch4.3 and Ch4.4.³

Built post-conquest. Stones bulge almost too much. This was a palace of Huascar, later occupied by Paulu Inca.¹¹ Then by Carlos Inca, a cousin of Titu Cusi.² Given to Paulu by Almagro. After the capture of Tupac Amaru, Toledo had Carlos and other royal Incas arrested and their property confiscated. Toledo turned it into a fortress to house Tupac Amaru and the other Inca prisoners. Tupac was instructed in christianity and baptised Pedro. In 1582, Colcapampa was returned to Carlos’ son, Melchior Carlos.⁴

EL TEMPLE DE SAN CRISTOBAL, first built in Cuzco. Adobe with stone tower. Paulu-Inca was a willing collaborator of the Spanish. He adopted the Christian name Cristobal and built the church.¹¹

The neighboring spanish mansion was owned by Lope de Aguirre, a crazy conquistador and portrayed in the 1972 movie Aguirre, Wrath of God (filmed in Peru). It was also used for a short while by Simon Bolivar. Now private.³

35. CORA CORA PALACE. Along the right side of Suécia – uphill and parallel to Procuradores St.³ N end of plaza.⁴

Palace of Inca Roca.² Palace of Sinchi Roca.³ Later told as Huascar. Given to Almagro.⁴ Condor Cancha. Pachacuti also had lodging here, northern corner of square.⁵

Fought over during Manco Capac’s rebellion.⁴ Occupied by Manco’s troops during the 1536 siege. Some of the original walls remain, look into the patios.³

36. CUSIPATA PLAZA. “Joy Square”.¹¹ Part of Plaza de Armas, but separated by Saphy R. Plaza Regocijo, mostly covered with buildings now.³
This whole area was a square, used for entertainment and festivals. Both squares were paved with a fine gravel, probably from the coast and at places 2ft thick. Sancho, Ondegardo. The squares also had underground sewers for collecting dedicated chicha and fountains.


38. EL CONVENTO DE SANTA TERESA. Along Incan highway, Saphi. Convent was partially built of Incan stones. Before nunery, part of home of Diego de Silva, conquistador. Colonial pronouncements were made from the upper balcony on the corner of Saphi. The church is not open to the public, but maybe the doors will be open, “one of the prettiest in Cusco.”

39. HOUSE OF DIEGO ALMAGRO. Faces Plaza de Armas, fronting Calle Harinas and Street of Pocuradores. Almagro is buried in crypt under Convent Merced.

40. HOUSE OF PUMAS. 385 St Teresa St. Has a transitional-style doorway (fake) and has 6 pumas carved over the door.

41. KARMENKA HILL / ST AÑA. The Chancas approached Cuzco from here, they were kept out by stones turned into warriors.

1533. From here, looking down on Cuzco, Hernando de Soto, set about speeding the payment of gold and silver for Atahualpa’s ransom.

1534 MAR 23. Francisco Pizarro entered Cuzco here on Calle de la Conquista.

The first shrine encountered on Chinchaysuyu road from Cuzco. The Huaca-puncu, Holy Gate. Stones were taken from here and used in the church Santa Aña. Guarded by the Cañaris, an elite guard, 800mi from home to guard N entrance.

LA IGLESIA DE SANTA ANA. 10 important canvases representing the Procession of Corpus Christi, from the late 1600s. The paintings show the native costumes and outfits. The church was began in 1560 and completed in 1622. It is the oldest surviving church in Cusco.


43. LA CASA DE DIEGO SILVA. At Plaza de Silva / St Teresa, adjoins Convent. Called “most joyful house in Cusco.” Diego Silva, well born and
10 Description of Locations from the Left Side of the Map.

Opposite the House of the Counts of Peralta and set back from the street. It has Inca walls. Viceroy Francisco de Toledo watched from the balcony as Tupac Amaru was dragged to his judgement on 1572. Now a girls’ school.

44. La Casa de García de la Vega. Across the street from La Casa Chacon. One of the most famous houses in Cusco. A plaque notes his importance.

Born in 1539, he three published books remain important to Inca studies. See García de la Vega for more.


José Chacon, born in Cuzco 1700s. Early patriot against Spain. Put to death 1815, 5 years before Martín entered Peru.

46. La Casa de Juan Diez Betanzos. A chronicler born in Spain 1510, came to Peru in 1540. Married Angelina, sister of Atahualpa, former mistress fo Pizarro. Learned quechua. Official interpreter to Viceroy Andres Hurtado de Mendoza to Vilcabamba and Melchor de los Reyes brought back Sayri Tupac. Wrote Suma y Jarracion de los Incas in 1574. Given land in Quarninga, part of Santa Ana precint, next to Pedro Lopez, public scrivener.

47. La Casa de los Condes de Peralta. Faces street of St Teresa, near St Teresa Convent. Now used as an office to Department of Cuzco. Built by Pedro Peralta y Ríos. Given title of Count by Charles II in 1687. Place of legendary carousals. Wife was relative of famous Cuzco Mares de Valle Umbroso.

48. La Iglesia y Convento de la Merced. Off Plaza de Armas, partly facing the small plaza Espinar. It occupies most of the block.

1534, oldest institution, started by Fr Sebastian de Trujillo with conquistadors, given by Pizarro. Inca Tito Yupanqui donated the large Hacienda Korimcaru to this group. Church was completely destroyed by 1650 Earthquake. Decoration by indigenous craftsman.

Convent, church, museum. And a painting showing the life of San Pedro de Nolasco, Merced founder. The museum has “the best little collection of old paintings in Cusco,” including a Rubens’ Holy Family. Also rich Catholic vestments and a solid gold 4ft tall monstrance decorated with diamonds and pearls (in the form of a mermaid). The church has several paintings
of Diego de Almagro’s conquest of Chile and he’s entombed below. Other weird paintings in the church: decapitated San Laureano to the right of the altar, a sage being carried away by angels but still reading a good book, back of the church has 2 cherubs executing the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and child statue of Jesus with modern day toys.

49. LA IGLESIA Y CONVENTO DE LOS FRANCISCANOS. On Plaza of San Francisco. Very little art, poverty observed. Church and monastery. Contains excellent colonial paintings: Last Judgment by Diego Quispe Tito, and others by Marcos Zapata. The monastery is excellent colonial style and has paintings of the life of St Francis of Assisi and there’s a giant painting of the Franciscans, it includes 683 people. The choir loft includes excellent and weird carvings of saints and also a giant rotating wooden music stand. There is also a German organ from the 1600s. One of the best buildings in Cusco.

50. LAS IGLESIA DE SAN PEDRO. Part of the Espiritu Santo Hospital, built in 1688. Along the Contisuyu road. All stones from the Incan ruins Picchu in NW, near RR to Urubamba and Machu Picchu. In front of Market.

51. PLAZA DE ARMAS. Huacaypata (Joy Square), Aucaypata. Hawkaypata. Huakaypata (Leisure Square). The center of the Tahuantinsuyu. Hub of the 4 royal roads. Raymi, summer solstice, celebrated here. Every October a black llama was tied to a post and starved. Its weeping fertilized the ground and brought rain. See Religion. Several prominate beheadings, see History.

Soil from each suyu was brought here. The surface was covered with white sand from the cost and “ritual objects of gold, silver, coral and shells” were placed around.

The original square was more than twice this size. Plaza Wacaypata, “weeping square” because of the mourning that took place there after the death of an Inca ruler. Also called Aucaypata, “square of war.” There was a great stone usnu here covered in gold. Offerings were made here for the start of military campaigns. Carved channels carried offerings to the Saphi R. The sunset was observed from here by the use of stone towers on the horizon. West side of the Saphi R was the Cusipata plaza.

52. QASANA. Palace of Huayna Capac. Only the corner of the building remains (the travel agency). Cassana means something to freeze, because...
you froze in place by its beauty. Capable of holding 3000 people. Had the largest kallanka. The roof thatch was so thick it took 8 days for it to burn through during Manco’s Seige. It was 3 sided. Pedro Pizarro, 2 round towers on each side of the gate, faced with silver and metals. Miguel de Estete Palace once contained a scared pool. Cobo. 4 Built by Huayna Capac. Sarmiento, P Pizarro. Cobo. The palaces along the square had huge halls for hosting festivals. Casana, the largest, was 200 x 60yd. 1533, Francisco Pizarro claimed the palace for himself. House faces Plaza de Armas. Along one side is Calle de los plateros. Sacsahuaman. Primarily a shrine and storehouse for ruling family and army. A temple of the sun more magnificent than any before. Cieza. See other Tour Guide.

54. TOPA INCA PALACE. To the right of Casana. Gonzalo Pizarro claimed it. 1548, destroyed when Gonzalo rebelled against Spain. 

55. SUNTUR HUASI / TRIUNFO. At the right side of the Cathedral. It was a great hall in Cuzco. “The triumph,” was built here and it was the first church built in Cusco, in honor of the miracle. 

56. CATHEDRAL. NE side of square. Built on Quiswarcancha, Viracocha’s palace. Or it was just a giant kallanka hall. 

56. LAST SUPPER. M Roscoe

56. HOLY FAMILY. K Christy

Also at location is El Templo de Jesus y Maria on north side (left) and El Templo de Triunfo on the south side (right).

The first building of the Spanish in 1534. Built using stones from Palace of Viracocha Inca. Area was originally given to conquistador, Alonso de Mesa. Later acquired by Bishop of Cusco, Solano for $2800 pesos. Named cathedral in 1536.

1536 FEB. Manco besieged Cuzco and set fire to the roofs of almost every building using hot stones. Only the Cathedral did not burn, though several fires started upon it. An apparition of Mary was seen protecting the church. She was seen by both Spanish and Inca warriors. It was also said that the patron saint of Spain, St James, charged out into battle. Titu Cusi said there were black slaves on the roof to put out the flames.

1560. Reconstruction began, 94 years to complete.

1650. Earthquake flattened it. Rebuilt following Juan de Herrera style used in building Escorial Palace in Spain and then repeated all over the colonies.

1732. El Templo de Jesus y Maria built by Bishop Gabriel de Arrequi.

It has 400 colonial paintings including the Cusco School from the 1600s. The Cusco School sent paintings all over Spanish Americas (as far as Santa Fe, NM). Last Supper includes a cuy. There’s a rare pregnant Virgin Mary and group of cherubs don’t have wings thus they cling to the curtains. St John Paul II “crowned Pucartambo’s image the Virgin of Carman at Sacsayhuamun.” To the left of the main altar is a painting of the 1650 earthquake (pre-current Cusco). The Crucifixion at the sacristy is by Van Dyck.

The largest bell in S America was cast in 1659 and can be heard 25mi away, Maria Angola; named after a black woman who added 25lbs of gold to the casting.

Legend: an Inca prince was walled inside one of the towers, waiting to be released. Thousands waited for the tower to collapse after the 1950 earthquake, but it held.

57. CUNTISUYU ROAD. Royal road. The Tahuantinsuyo was broken into 4 parts. This quarter was the area southwest of Cusco.

MINI-BIBLIOGRAPHY

If you’d like to contribute photos, I’d love to have your help, andy@andyroscoe.com


See Full Bibliography at website.

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