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Belmond Andean Explorer, South America's first luxury sleeper train





A rendering shows how a cabin in the Belmond Andean Explorer will look

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South America's first luxury sleeper train will commence service next year. Operated by Belmond, the company behind the Venice Simplon Orient-Express, the Belmond Royal Scotsman and Ireland's forthcoming Belmond Grand Hibernian train services, the Belmond Andean Explorer in Peru will cut across one of the highest rail routes on the planet and should provide a spectacular prospect from which to admire views of Cusco, Lake Titicaca and Arequipa.

A selection of four separate tours will be available to guests. Travelling from Cusco to Puno and onwards to the city of Arequipa, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, a three-day "Peruvian Highlands" package will provide passengers with the opportunity to explore the Colca Canyon, the islands of Lake Titicaca and remote villages en route. A more succinct "Spirit of the Andes" tour will offer a one-night trip from Lake Titicaca to Cusco.



A rendering of the dining carriage

With its interiors inspired by Peru's hand-woven fabrics and, says designer Inge Moore of The Gallery HBA, "the soft tones of the Alpaca wool blended with Andean slate greys", the train is expected to offer a resolutely Latin American aesthetic. Up to 68 guests will reside in en-suite cabins – there will be two double cabins; 20 twin cabins; and 12 bunk-bed cabins for two people – and will share access to two dining cars, an observation car with an open-air deck,

and a lounge car. Local ingredients will feature heavily in a menu devised by the chefs at Belmond Hotel Monasterio in Cusco.



The observation carriage



The Andean Explorer is Belmond's second luxury train in Peru, following the Hiram Bingham which offers day trips between Cusco and Machu Picchu. Luxury rail journeys to Machu Picchu are also provided by the local Inca Princess service, a wood-paneled eight-passenger train carriage that can be conjoined to scheduled Inca Train services between the town of Ollantaytambo and the historic site.





Lake Titicaca

Andean Explorer services are scheduled to commence in May 2017 and will cost from \$462 (£320) per person for the one-night Spirit of the Andes journey, inclusive of all meals, an open bar and scheduled excursions. Belmond's launch of the service comes shortly after British Airways inaugurated direct flights between London Heathrow and the Peruvian capital Lima.