**J&M4-10**

Danger... Danger.... Culture warning.....

We are getting a tour of Cuzco and hopefully getting some replacement components for those lost, left or worn out.

We also need more tipping funds.

Long night without that much sleep. Headaches are receding but shortness of breath still prevalent. Dawned to  bright and sunny skies, hazy clouds and about 18°

We visited ronto of Q'enqo, the mountain immediately above Cuzco. An ancient embalming centre for the wealthy and or famous...
Embalming was done with A gold tools which must have been a bugger to keep sharp. The VIP entrails were left out to one of their gods, namely the vultures. These birds were supposed to help carry the departed to the next life.... You can kid some of the people ALL of the time.
The balance of the body, basically the skin and bones were bound and trussed, knees to chin and the results, presumably when dried were placed in windows for want of a better term for servant of that important personage to feed on a regular basis, daily or weekly.

A proper con if ever there was one.

Annually, these VIP's were pulled out of their storage location and

carried downto the town in order to be venerated.

It occurred to me that if I were on my way to the next life, I'd be pretty ticked off to be dragged back to this one every year.

The next stop was Saqsaywaman. (Mispronounced Sexywoman). This very impressive pile of rocks was built by the Inca's ceremonial site that doubled as a fortress, education and contemplation centre.

The structure isade of massive stones upto one hundred tonnes laid in a zigzag pattern engineered to such a fine degree that no mortar was required to hold it together. The zigzag layout strengened the structure to withstand earth tremors that then and now affect the whole area.

I thought I was imagining these tremors or that they were the effect of high altitude 3500MASL.. I definitely felt something.

This centre also had escape in mind. Tunnels have recently been discovered that lead all the way back to the town square.

In the middle of this edifice is a large man-made reservoir, said to be the highes lt on the planet in another part, higher still, a circular pond, maybe 10-15 metres across. It is said that the high priest, the chief scholar and the king sat around this pond contemplating the meaning of life and other such heady subjects and also studied the Milky Way in the reflection..

On a personal note, we managed to clamber up and down these ruins upto 3750M (12,100 feet) without too much breathlessness or giddyness. Sounds hopeful. We have another day of acclimation tomorrow before we start our trek.

The rest of the day was spent in contemplating the extraordinary and appalling life of the faithful. Huge Cathedrals built at the whim and behest of the church on pain of excommunication.

It's not just here but everywhere you go you find these vast edifices built with the sweat and blood of the downtrodden. Damn thing all covered in gold and other riches, ornate carvings of what are essentially deities imagined by so call religious leaders, mostly the worst kind of hypocrites, all claiming to be the one true religion or belief.
Who are we to say which is right, the greatest probability is that they are all invention to keep the downtrodden downtrodden and keep the foot of power on the neck of the poor.

I'm afraid I've never been religious, my belief more that those in religious power can't get a real job and should be exposed as the con men they are.

Anyway apart from that.... Churches and religion are not my thing so excuse me.

We got back to the hotel, had a cup of coffee then walked back down to the town to try and do our shopping/banking. We got the latter done so hopefully enough to tip with.