Photography in the Mountains of Peru, 2006

Ron Anderson, Minnetonka Camera Club
Presentation, March 20, 2008
Peru, Sacred Valley & Machu Picchu
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My personal, photo-related question:

Why does religious community thrive in high altitudes?

1. Sacred places theory (Martin Gray)?
2. Religion reaches toward the heavens?
3. Accident of geography?

In that sense, the mountain trips were religious pilgrimages for me.
Lima, Peru (sea level)
Ron the photographer in Lima
Cusco, Peru (11,000 feet)
Former capital of Inca Nation of some 13 million people in 16th century
Closer Up, Cusco Main Square

ISO 250, 1/250 at F9, 120 mm
Sacred Valley
So named for rich river soil, famous for 100s of varieties of corn and beans
Moray Agricultural Experiment Station with complex irrigation & terraces to take advantages of variations in humidity and
alternate composition

Which do you like best?
Another Ag. Research Station at Moray

Note terraces are about 5 ft high.
Girl enjoying sun in Sacred Valley
Sacsayhuaman Ceremonial Grounds

I like to capture photographers in a composition to help tell a story about what a place means to people.
Machu Picchu

Hidden at the edge of the jungle at 10,000 feet
Machu Picchu
The other side of the mountain
Machu Picchu
From the mountain top looking down to the Urabumba River

Clouds or river gorge? Which composition do you like the best?
More light, still mysterious

ISO400, 1/430 at F/9
Mysterious cloud but that’s all
Machu Picchu Peak

Which composition would you choose?
Long or wide?

ISO 200, 1/200 at F7.1
Good Choice
Another view of the peak
And another with river
Final shot atop Machu Picchu?
Japanese Singing at Machu Picchu
Sacred Trail
To build Machu Picchu, laborers ran with sacks of rocks on their backs for as far as 25 miles.
Town hub at the base of Machu Picchu
One way to shoot a llama or alpaca
A better way

ISO250, 1/250 at F/7.1
Machu Picchu flowers & birds thrive from the jungle climate on one side of the mountain.
View of Pisac Valley in Southern Sacred Valley

Which composition do you like best, long or wide?
Remains of Sacred City in Pisac #1
Remains of Sacred City in Pisac
Sacred City ruins in Pisac
Flute Master in Pisac, Sacred Valley
Mother & Child in Sacred City above Pisac
School Field Trip to Ollantaytambo Ruins
Family & Sheep in Ollantaytambo
So, why does religious community thrive in high altitudes?

1. It is easy to feel a sense of the *sacred* in the presence of mountains
2. Mountains symbolize *beauty*
3. Mountains *symbolize spirituality*, in the sense of character and virtue, and being above earthly matters.
4. Mountains make us *stronger*
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