

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHS LIANNE MILTON

# PERU

*High in the Andes is the Sacred Valley — a fertile furrow in the Peruvian landscape and cradle of the Incan Empire. Today, it's a place where time-honoured traditions meld with culinary innovations and luxury lodges*





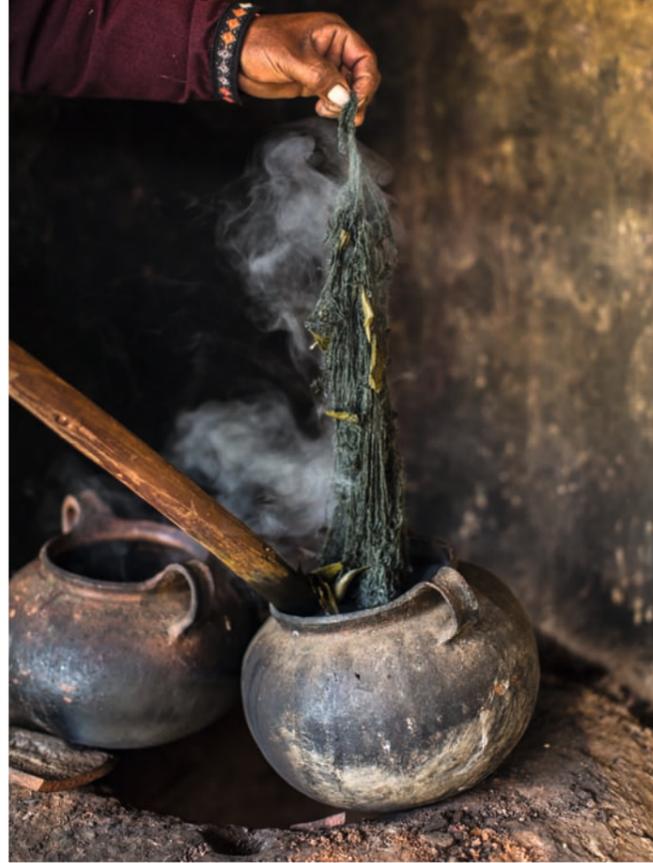
*Surrounded by snow-capped peaks and beneath a crisp, blue sky, an Andean family rests after harvesting potatoes at around 11,500ft. The land here has been cultivated since the Incas, who used tiered terraces — known as ‘andenes’ — like the ones dominating the landscape here at Moray, to maximise the land for agriculture. The step-like formation allows farmers to grow a variety of crops, such as maize, at different altitudes.*





*The Sacred Valley's modern culinary scene is best glimpsed at places such as Cuchara de Palo, the restaurant at the Pisac Inn, where diners enjoy Peruvian fare on the flowery, rose-coloured patio. Elsewhere, 11,500ft above the swirling slopes of Moray, master chef Virgilio Martínez's newest concept restaurant, Mil, blends ultra-local, farm-to-table experiences with chic, minimalist design.*





*In the district of Chinchero, a group of Chawaytiri artisans keep the centuries-old tradition of weaving and dyeing alive. The locals, most of whom speak only the native language of Quechua, work solely by hand. Proceeds from the sales of their craft go directly to the community, which helps maintain their art for both visitors and the Chawaytiri, and has greatly improved their quality of life.*





*Dotted along the Urubamba River, which snakes along the valley floor, are a string of high-end boltholes in the shadows of the Andes. Explora Valle Sagrado is a modern, airy lodge set on the site of a 15th-century corn plantation, meanwhile at Belmond Hotel Rio Sagrado, guests can unwind in lush gardens on the banks of the river or saddle up and explore the region on horseback. ▣*

