

Ecuador, Volcano Trek

Trek the spectacular surrounding area of Cototpaxi



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Ecuador, South America

Trekking spectacular areas surrounding Mount Cotopaxi

Lying along the equator with Peru to the south and Colombia to the North, Ecuador is the smallest country in the rugged Andean highlands. Ecuador is small by South American standards, but peaceful and astonishingly beautiful. The majestic peaks of the Andean Cordillera run through the middle of the country, and divide the tropical jungles of the Amazon Basin from the rich farmlands of the coastal plain.

Ecuador is blessed with an amazingly varied geography that helps give this country some of the greatest biodiversity on earth and makes it one of the most rewarding travel destinations in South America.

This itinerary offers a combination of trekking and comfort in the Cotopaxi Volcano area staying both in Haciendas and camping. It will take us through valleys and Andean communities, private conservation areas, Cotopaxi National Park, archaeological sites through exclusive trails and properties, an opportunity not to be missed.



Detailed itinerary

Day 1: Depart London to Quito

Leave London via Madrid early in the morning to arrive in Quito (2,800 metres). Here, you will be given a briefing as to what to expect on the trek.

Day 2: Hacienda Santa Rita to El Porvenir

Average altitude 3,600 metres

6-7 hours trekking

Transfer from Quito to Santa Rita Private Reserve on the skirts of Pasochoa Volcano to start the trek to Hacienda El Porvenir. The trek will take about 6 hours and we will trek from 3,000 to 3,600m. Stunning views can be seen along the way of surrounding valleys and mountains including such mountains as Antisana, Cayambe and Pasochoa. We overnight in the beautiful Hacienda El Porvenir.



Day 3: El Porvenir to Santo Domingo

Average altitude 3,700 metres

6-7 hours trekking

After breakfast we follow the path towards Cotopaxi National Park. Today's trek is quite flat, which helps us with the acclimatisation process. From the entrance of the park we visit the Pucará del Salitre, an old Inca fortress, before following the Incañán (Inca path) eastwards. When we reach our camp at Santo Domingo Lagoon, we get our first fabulous views of Cotopaxi Volcano. Today takes between 6-7 hours with an average altitude of 3,700m. Overnight Camping.



Day 4: Santo Domingo to Chuquiragua

Average altitude 3,800 metres

7-8 hours trekking

Today's trek takes us to Hacienda El Tambo, on the eastern flanks of the Andes. We will cross hills and valleys, guarded by Quilindaña - a peak hard to see from the Central Andean Valley and which looks very much like the Matterhorn if seen from the Italian side. Today the terrain is mainly flat with a few steep ascents, a tough day. We reach an altitude of 4,200m on one mountain pass before descending to our overnight accommodation in the Hacienda El Tambo.

Day 5: Chirimachai

Average altitude 3,850 metres

6-8 hours trekking

Leaving Hacienda El Tambo, we cross the Chirimachai Canyon. In Chirimachai the climate from the eastern jungle rises to meet that of the Central Andean Valley. There is a great supply of natural water, straight from the glaciers of Cotopaxi. The scenery is truly unbeatable. We will be accompanied by local Chagras on their horses since we pass land where there are fighting bulls. Camp tonight is at 4,000m.

Detailed itinerary

Day 6: Cotopaxi National Park

Average altitude 3,850m

6-7 hours trekking

Today we start the trek early in the morning, heading West. We reach a well-trodden path, from where we can see some spectacular glacial valleys and get some wonderful panoramic views of the park. Our camp today is at 3,800m setting us in good stead that we are now acclimatised for our final challenge, summiting Rumiñahui Volcano at 4,720m (15,482 feet).

Day 7: Climbing Rumiñahui

Altitude from 3600m to 4720m

7-9 hours trekking

Today we begin our climb of Rumiñahui Volcano very early in the morning. We cross vast highlands swept by the cold breath of the Andes. In one single picture one can take in valleys, mountains and neighbouring volcanoes. On a cloudless day, we will even have the opportunity to admire in the distance Ilinizas peaks and Chimborazo, the highest snow capped mountain of Ecuador. Tonight we head back to the hacienda for our gala dinner.

Day 9: Overnight flight to London

Depart Quito on an overnight flight to London.

Day 10:

Arrive London early morning

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This itinerary is complex and subject to change

Challenge grade

Challenging

Best time of year

All year round

