



# Ecuador Mountaineering Program

## 15 days

Andes Mountain Climbing with Acclimatization and Rest Days

### Trip Highlights

**Summit Cotopaxi, World's Highest Active Volcano**

**Summit Chimborazo, World's Highest Mountain from the center of the Earth**

**Volcanology**

**Thermal Springs**

**Astonishing Scenery**



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## Introduction

Ecuador has an unrivaled aspect for mountaineering. Mountains are extremely accessible. Mountain climbing always poses a challenge in organization and logistics: getting to the refuges, carrying food and water, approximation, etc. In Ecuador, mountain infrastructure is very good. Excellent highways, good and inexpensive refuges, easy access camping sites, car roads that get far up. All these make Ecuador an excellent country for climbing in short periods of time and also a great place to acclimatize for higher peaks like Aconcagua or Himalayas. Chimborazo has 6268m / 20564.3ft and is the highest mountain of the World measured from the center of the planet, 1,8km higher than Mt. Everest! This is caused by the Earth's bulge in the equator.

This magnificent country also has ten above 5000m / 16404.2ft peaks, including Cayambe, Cotopaxi, Antisana, Altar and others.

Since Ecuador is right in the equator (thus the name) seasons is not an issue, so mountains can be climbed all year round.

When we combine these three aspects we have the best country in the World to climb mountains in short periods of time, with good services and amazing diversity and comfort.

### Tip

**Ecuador uses US dollars. No money exchange needed if you are coming from the US!**



Mountaineer in Cayambe

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## Itinerary

### Day 1 Old Town – Historic Centre

We meet up at 8am in Plaza de la Independencia, Quito's main square. We start a walking City Tour to Old Town's main attractions, including colonial churches, tasting tropical fruits and local chocolate and a visit to a local market. The goal for the day is just enjoy and get to know everyone in the group. At the end of the tour we will have a very interesting surprise that will boost your good energy and get you ready for the adventure in the mountains.

#### Did you know...?

**Quito, Ecuador's capital city, is the largest and best preserved colonial Historic Center in the entire American Continent.**

### Day 2 Fuya Fuya Peaks – Mojanda Volcanic Complex

#### Technical information

<b>Max alt</b>	<b>4275m / 14,025ft</b>
<b>Min alt</b>	<b>3722m / 12,211ft</b>
<b>Altitude Gain</b>	<b>553m / 1814.3ft</b>
<b>Distance</b>	<b>5km / 3.1miles</b>
<b>Difficulty (1-5)</b>	<b>1 – 2 (very easy - easy)</b>
<b>Average time</b>	<b>4 – 6 hours</b>

You will start acclimatizing in Fuya Fuya. To get to this scenic district, we will leave Quito early in the morning; at 6am and drive for about 2 hours to the trail head. To get to Otavalo, renowned indigenous town where we will take a secondary road to the to the trail head, we will pass by the equator.

The hike to the first summit takes around 3 hours. To reach the highest point you will need to scramble a grade

4 rock section. Your guide will belay and assist you all the way. After this peak you will climb a second peak, if time and weather allows. The second peak is easier but still poses an easy scramble in a short section. Descend to the base and return to Quito.

Meals included: box lunch.



Mojanda Lake from Fuya Fuya trail



Climbers in Fuya Fuya

### Day 3 Pichincha Massif Trail

#### Technical information

<b>Max alt</b>	<b>4784m / 15,695ft</b>
<b>Min alt</b>	<b>3932m / 12,900ft</b>
<b>Altitude Gain</b>	<b>853m / 2,795ft</b>
<b>Distance</b>	<b>13.18km / 8.18miles</b>
<b>Difficulty (1-5)</b>	<b>3 – 4 (Medium – hard)</b>
<b>Average time</b>	<b>8 – 10 hours</b>

Pichincha is a volcanic complex to the west of Quito. It has 4 major summits and all four have a volcanic origin. The highest one, Guagua, meaning "child" in Kichwa is active and its last eruption was in 2002. It is possible to see the fumaroles and smell the sulfur from the rim.

We start the hike early in the morning, at 7am from the Guagua Pichincha refuge. From there we hike to the summit and then start traversing with ascents and descents to the Padre Encantado summit. Next is Ladrillos summit and finally Ruco summit. After this last peak we head down to Teleferico and take a cable car back to the city.

Meals included: box lunch.

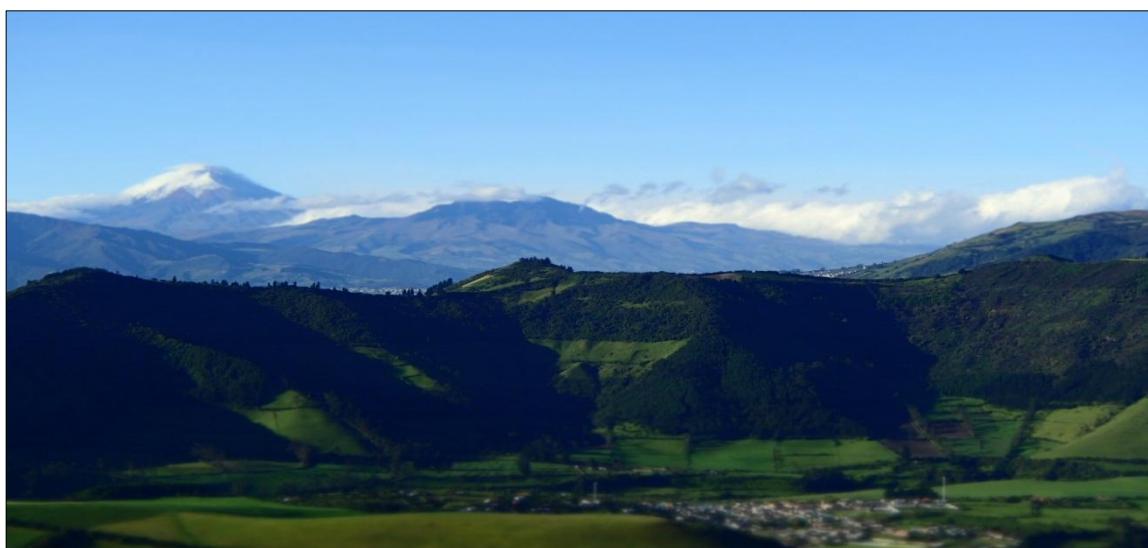


Hikers in the rim of Guagua Pichincha

### Day 4 Rest and preparation

After two hikes you will definitely need a pause, and active rest is the way. The only thing you have to make this day is your bag. Take your time so you don't forget anything. If you need to rent any piece of equipment for the technical mountains, this is the day. We will assist and help you.

Also, eating properly and sleeping enough is crucial for a good body recovery, so make sure you enjoy some of Ecuador's cuisine and sleep early. Ask us for recommendations!



Cotopaxi from Guagua Pichincha slopes

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## Day 5 Illinizas Hut

Technical information	
<b>Max alt</b>	<b>4700m / 15,419ft</b>
<b>Min alt</b>	<b>3950m / 12,959ft</b>
<b>Altitude gain</b>	<b>750m / 2,460ft</b>
<b>Distance</b>	<b>4km / 2.5miles</b>
<b>Difficulty (1-5)</b>	<b>3 Medium</b>
<b>Average time</b>	<b>2 – 3 hours</b>

Transportation will pick us from Quito at 10am. We will head south in to the Avenue of the Volcanoes, name given by the German Explorer Alexander Von Humboldt to the inter-Andean valleys surrounded by volcanoes in the central area of Ecuador. After checking in with the Park Ranger at Illiniza Ecological Reserve entrance, the transportation will drive for 30 minutes on a dirt road, until we reach the trail head at 3950m / 12959.32ft. There we will start a 3 hour hike to get to the hut at 4700m / 15419.95ft. We will carry all our gear (mountaineering equipment, sleeping bag, personal supplies).

Meals included: box lunch, dinner at the refuge.



Iliniza Norte from the Hut

## Day 6 Illiniza Norte Summit

Technical information	
<b>Max alt</b>	<b>5126m / 16,817ft</b>
<b>Min alt</b>	<b>4700m / 15,419ft</b>
<b>Altitude gain</b>	<b>426m / 1397ft</b>
<b>Distance (hut – summit- hut)</b>	<b>3km / 1.86miles</b>
<b>Difficulty (1-5)</b>	<b>4 (hard)</b>
<b>Average time (hut – summit – hut)</b>	<b>5 hours</b>

We wake up at 5am, have a good stirring coffee and breakfast and leave at 6am for the summit. From the refuge the route takes us on the south-east ridge on an easy scramble terrain. Ropes and helmet are mandatory.

To reach the summit it usually takes around 3 hours and 2 more to get back to the refuge. Ideally, we will reach the hut at 11am. After a light lunch, we will prepare our bags to go back down to the parking lot (2 hours) and head to Machachi, to enjoy an earned satisfying lunch. Arrival to Quito around 6pm.

Meals included: Breakfast and snack in the refuge, box lunch, lunch in Machachi.



Climbers in Iliniza Norte

## Day 7 Cayambe Hut

Technical information	
Max alt	4600m / 14370ft
Min alt	4600m / 11883ft
Distance	0km / 0miles
Difficulty (1-5)	-
Average time	-

After a night of good uplifting sleep we are ready for one of the main goals of the program: Cayambe Volcano.

We will leave Quito at 10am after picking up the technical equipment from a rental store. The transportation will drive us for 1h30 to the town of Cayambe, where we will have lunch.

After buying last minute supplies, we will head to the hut in a 4WD vehicle. The road is very adventurous and in some sections may be more than interesting. Expect real 4WD action.

We will arrive to the hut around 4pm. After checking in with the refuge staff and settle in, a warm dinner will be served. No hiking or walking this day.

Altitude can be hard for digestion and sleep. Try to rest for some hours for this is essential for a good performance during the climb.

Wake up at 11pm, gear up and have some light snacks before leaving the refuge at midnight.

Meals included: dinner at the hut.



Mountaineers close to the summit on Cayambe

### Did you know...?

Glaciated mountains are usually climbed during the night. Colder temperatures in the night make ice more stable and sunrise in the summit superb!

## Day 8 Cayambe Summmmit

Technical information	
Max alt	5790m / 18,996ft
Min alt	4600m / 15,091ft
Altitude gain	1190m / 3,904ft
Distance	8.4km / 5.2miles
Difficulty (1-5)	5 (very hard)
Average time	10 – 12 hours

We start the climb at 00h00. Reaching the summit can take anywhere from 4 to 12 hours. All depends on acclimatization and experience in altitude. Average is 6 hours to the summit and 3 hours back to the hut, adding 9 to 10 hours round trip. Ideally we will be returning to the hut around 10am where some snacks will be served. After packing we will head down to Cayambe for a good meaty lunch. Arrival to Quito around 6pm.

Meals included: light snacks before summit push, box lunch during the

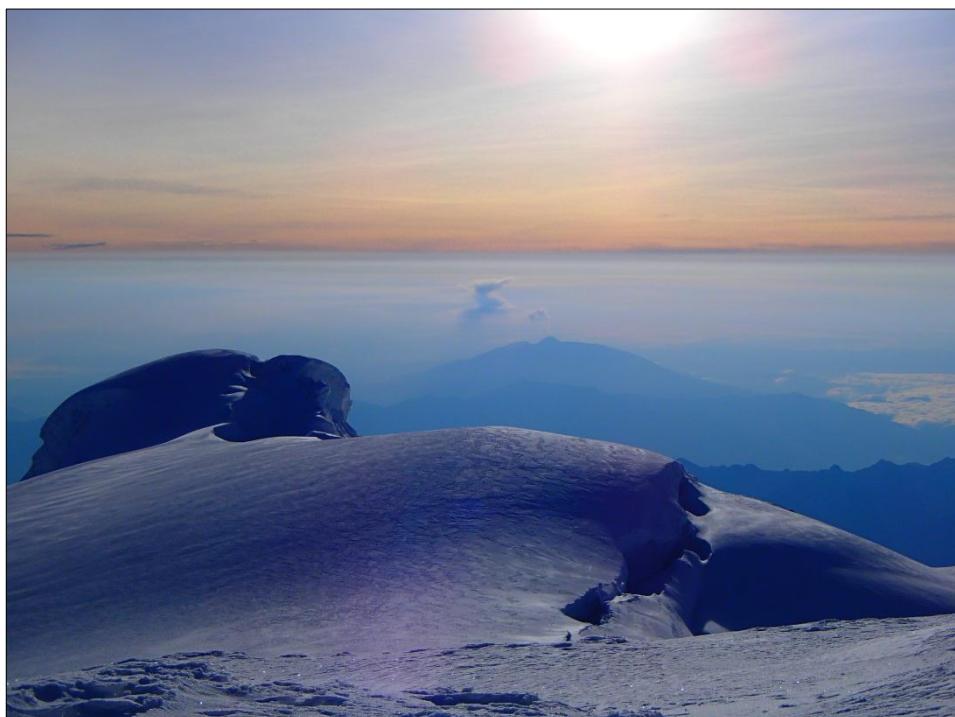
climb, light breakfast in the refuge after the climb.

## Day 9 Rest

After Cayambe you will be tired. Just rest and eat. If you want to visit museums or similar attractions we can recommend something for this day.

### Did you know...?

Cayambe has the highest point on Earth where the equatorial line crosses.



View from the Cayambe's Summit

## Day 10 Cotopaxi Hut

Technical information	
Max alt	4860m / 15,944ft
Min alt	4636m / 15,203ft
Altitude gain	224m / 734ft
Distance	1km / 0.6miles
Difficulty (1-5)	2 (easy)
Average time	60 minutes

Back on the adventure!

Transportation will pick us up at 11am and drive us to Machachi where we will have lunch. After a delightful dessert we will head to Cotopaxi National Park. As usual we will check in with the Park Rangers and then drive to the parking lot at 4600 m / 15,091ft. There we will start the 45 minute hike to the hut with an elevation gain of 180 meters / 590ft. In our backpacks we will carry technical gear, sleeping bag and personal supplies. Try to keep it light. The guide will assist you before leaving Quito.

Once we reach the refuge, we will settle

in and rest. Dinner will be served around 6pm. Like in Cayambe, rest or trying to sleep is essential.

Wake up at 11pm, gear up and have a snack. Leave at midnight.

Meals included: dinner at the refuge, snacks before summit push.

### Did you know...?

Cotopaxi is the highest active volcano in the world, and also the fourth most guided mountain in the world.



Climber in Cotopaxi with the volcano's shadow casted in the back

## Day 11 Cotopaxi Summit

Technical information	
Max alt	5897m / 19,347ft
Min alt	4860m / 15,944ft
Altitude gain	1037m / 3,402ft
Distance (hut – summit – hut)	6km / 0.6miles
Difficulty (1-5)	4 – 5 (hard - very hard)
Average time (hut – summit – hut)	8 hours

Around 6am you will be summiting the world's highest active volcano and, if weather allows, see the crater and fantastic views of the northern Ecuadorian Andes.

Arrive back at the refuge at 10am. After a light breakfast we pack and leave for our after-summit traditional lunch, this time in Quito.

Arrive in Quito around 4pm.

Meals included: light breakfast, box lunch for the summit push.



[Sunrise in Cotopaxi](#)



[Amazing view from the summit! Cotopaxi's Crater.](#)

## Day 12 Rest

Eat rest and recover!

Perfect day to visit some of the classic tourist attractions, like Mitad del Mundo (Middle of the World) or some museums. We will gladly recommend something that fits your interests.

lunch and buy last minute supplies.

The ride to Chimborazo Fauna Production Reserve takes around one hour and a half. In the parking lot at 4800m / 15748.03ft we will gear up and prepare our climbing backpacks. We will start the approach hike to the high camp at 5300m / 17388.45ft. This usually takes 2h15. Arrival at high camp around 4pm.

## Day 13 Chimborazo High Camp

Technical information	
Max alt	5300m / 17,388ft
Min alt	4800m / 15,748ft
Altitude gain	500m / 1,640ft
Distance	2km / 1.2miles
Difficulty (1-5)	3 (medium)
Average time	2h30

The final goal is very close!

Transportation will pick us up at 8am. We will drive for 3h30 to the City of Riobamba, Ecuador's first capital city before Quito. There we will eat a light

High Camp provides tents and all meals. You have to carry your sleeping bag and sleeping mat plus your climbing gear and personal supplies.

Meals included: Lunch at Riobamba, Dinner at high camp.

### Did you know...?

**Due to Earth's bulge in the equator, Chimborazo is 1,8km higher than Mt. Everest from the center of the Earth!**



High Camp in Chimborazo

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## Day 14 Chimborazo Summit

Technical information	
<b>Max alt</b>	<b>6268m / 17,388ft</b>
<b>Min alt</b>	<b>5200m / 15,748ft</b>
<b>Altitude gain</b>	<b>500m / 1,640ft</b>
<b>Distance (high camp – Whimper summit – high camp)</b>	<b>6.44km / 4.01miles</b>
<b>Difficulty (1-5)</b>	<b>5 (very hard)</b>
<b>Average time (high camp – Whimper summit – high camp)</b>	<b>10 – 12 hours</b>

The average time to reach the summit is 8 hours. We will leave the high camp at midnight. Reaching the Whymper summit (main summit) depends a lot on the mountain conditions, (snow, and weather). Most of the teams reach Veintimilla summit and turn back. Expect any of the two.

Return at high camp around 11am.



Veintimilla Summit with main sumit at the back

Pack and leave for the parking lot.

We will drive to Riobamba to have the classic after-summit merriment lunch. This time it will be more special, since it will be the last of the trip. Big celebration is a must!

After lunch the transportation will take us to Baños, a very touristic town in the eastern slopes of the Andes, at an elevation of 1800m / 5905.512ft.

We will spend the night there. Thermal springs, good restaurants, active night life or rest in the warm subtropics of Ecuador makes the best closing for an awesome trip.

Meals included: Breakfast in high camp.

## Day 15 Baños

After lunch we will head to Quito. Before that you will be able to visit the thermal baths, walk or ride bikes around the town or just sleep in in Baños.

Arrival to Quito around 6pm.

END OF PROGRAM

## Difficulty

The program is designed for people with some experience. No extraordinary technical skills are needed, but previous basic practice in altitude and in glacier traverse is highly recommended.

## Training

We recommend that you train before starting the program. If you can contact a personal trainer who can give you exercise routines specific for mountaineering it would make a great difference. Running, biking and swimming 2 or 3 days a week are a good idea too. We can prepare a training program before your travel. Ask us about it!

### Remember!

We are a highly flexible company.  
We can change any item of the program so it fits your needs the best way possible!



Chimborazo High camp

## Gear Checklist

### Clothing - Outerwear

- Waterproof/breathable jacket
- Waterproof/breathable pants
- Down jacket/synthetic insulated jacket
- Fleece jacket or wool sweater
- Fleece pants (optional)
- Waterproof gaiters
- Synthetic hiking pants (2)

### Clothing - Base Layer

- Midweight long john top
- Midweight long john bottoms

### Accessories

- Wool or fleece hat
- Synthetic liner gloves
- Balaclava
- Midweight wool or fleece gloves
- Waterproof overmitts

### Footwear

- Running or sport shoes (optional)
- Waterproof hiking boots
- Wool or synthetic socks (3)
- Liner socks (2)

### Extras

- Sun hat
- Personal locator beacon (optional)

### Bandanna

### Technical equipment

- Climbing helmet
- Harness
- Traverse ice axe
- Mountaineering boots
- Crampons
- 2 locking Karabiners
- Glacier crampons

### Remember!

Any piece of gear can be rented in Ecuador.

## Prices

### The price includes:

- Certified Mountain Guide (ASEGUIM / UIAGM-IFMGA).
  - o Guide ratio 2:4 in Illiniza Norte
  - o Guide ratio 2:2 In Cayambe, Cotopaxi and Chimborazo
- National Park Climbing Fee (National Parks in Ecuador are free to visit but climbing requires a special permit).
- Private transportation during the entire program.
- Refuges and high camps with their respective meals.
- Box lunch for every hike / climb.
- Assistance for gear rental.

Number of participants	Price in US Dollars
1	\$4210
2	\$2370
3	\$2160
4	\$1830
5	\$1950
6	\$1780
7	\$1840
9	\$1800
10	\$1780

### Does not include

- Meals not listed above.
- Accommodations in Quito and Baños.
- Life insurance.
- Gear rental.

### Remember!

If you are a single traveler, join a scheduled trip.



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