

Avenue of the Volcanoes

Venture into the Avenue of the Volcanoes, the long valley that separates the major Cordillera ranges, in this 10-day trekking itinerary that will take you to the summit of Ecuador's most impressive mountains, including the magical Cotopaxi.



Day 1 - Arrive Quito (D)

Arriving Quito early morning, you will be transferred from the airport to your hotel in the centre of the city. The rest of the day is free for you to explore Quito's sights and shops.

This evening, you will be met by your guide for a briefing on the journey ahead. This is a good time to ask any questions you may have about kit or the climb route.

Dinner and overnight at a central Quito Hotel (Vieja Cuba, or similar).

Day 2 - Sightseeing in Otavalo (B, L, D)

Depart Quito this morning and drive 2-3 hours to Otavalo.

Otavalo is a beautiful Andean mountain town, known for its traditional market. On arrival, check-in at your hotel (the Hacienda Las Palmeras, or similar), before embarking on a guided tour of the town with your guide, followed by lunch at a local restaurant.

Otavalo is located 2,500m above sea level and will provide good acclimatisation to the high altitudes of the Andes before you start the Avenue of Volcanoes trek tomorrow.

Dinner & overnight at Hacienda Las Palmeras.

Your Financial Protection

All monies paid by you for the air holiday package shown [or flights if appropriate] are ATOL protected by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 3145.

For more information see our booking terms and conditions.

Day 3 - Imbabura trek, 4,000m (B, L, D)

Depart Otavalo this morning and drive to Imbabura, an inactive volcanic peak located amid beautiful countryside some 30 minutes' drive from Otavalo.

Your goal is to trek to Imbabura's north summit (the higher south summit is only accessible via a demanding technical climb). The trek will take approx. 4 hours and see you ascend above 4,000m, with a picnic lunch en route.

After the trek, return to Quito for dinner and overnight at the Vieja Cuba, or similar.



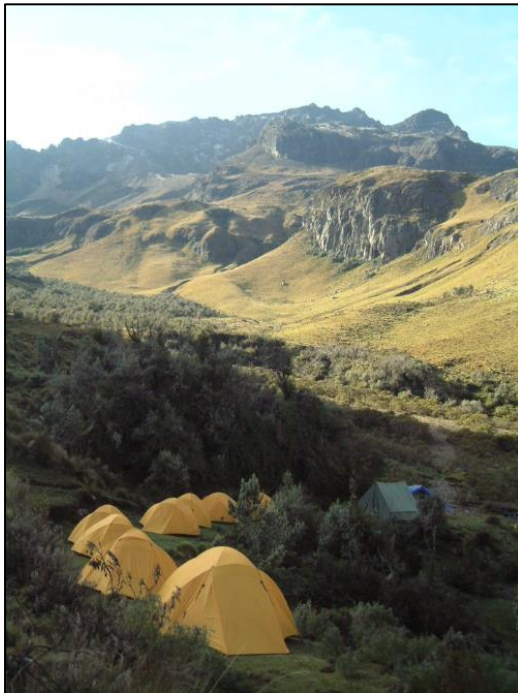
Day 4 - Pichinchas Trek, 3,700m (B, L, D)

Drive west of the city towards the Pichincha Volcano for a five-hour trek through forest and meadow before reaching a high point that overlooks Quito (3,700m). After enjoying the view, continue your trek down to a scenic spot (3,130m), where you can stop for a picnic lunch.

Late afternoon, return to Quito for dinner and overnight.

Day 5 - Pasochoa Volcano Trek, 4,200m (B, L, D)

Depart Quito this morning and drive 1½ hours to Pasochoa Volcano.



Pasochoa is a protected area with endemic plants, impressive birdlife, and great views from the high points. The five-hour trek from the ecological reserve to the summit takes you through highland native forest and upper grasslands. It's a tough trek to the summit along the ridge of the volcano, where you will hopefully see hummingbirds and other species of bird. Dinner and overnight at the hosteria La Estación.

Day 6 - La Virgen Base Camp, 3,860m (B, L, D)

Early morning drive to the small town of El Chasqui, from where you walk for about 3 hours to get to our camp (3,860m) at the base of Iliniza. In the afternoon there will be time for a short trek in the vicinity of the camp.

Our campsite for the night, La Virgen, is set at the base of the Ilinizas, between Iliniza Norte (our goal for tomorrow) and Iliniza Sud (a technical ice climbing peak). Overnight at La Virgen wild campsite.

Day 7 - Iliniza Norte Summit trek, 5,126m (B, L, D)

The summit climb begins at approx. 1am, and will typically take 5-6 hours. You will be walking on a ridge, where there is a possibility of snow (there is snow on the ridge for around 5 days a year) and if this happens crampons and ice axes are needed.



After the ridge (5,100m), you walk along the mountain to its end and then summit via a rocky gully. Note that the ridge is exposed and your guide may deem it necessary to use ropes during the traverse.

Descend Iliniza, lunch at base camp and relax in the afternoon. Dinner and overnight at La Virgen wild campsite.

Day 8 - Cotopaxi Plateau (B, L, D)

After breakfast at camp drive to Cotopaxi plateau for dinner and overnight at Tambopaxi mountain lodge.

Cotopaxi National Park is of course dominated by the volcano that you will climb over the next two days. However, it is also an area of outstanding beauty, and the site of an old Inca route along the Andes. Time allowing you will visit the archaeological site of Pucará this afternoon, which pre-dates the Inca civilisation.



Dinner and overnight at Tambopaxi mountain lodge.

Day 9 - Tambopaxi rest day (B, L, D)

If renting locally, your equipment for tomorrow's Cotopaxi climb will arrive early in the morning. An hour's drive will take you to the parking spot, which is a one-hour trek from

the refuge at 4,800m. You will have a snow and ice practice during the afternoon and go to bed early in preparation for the climb.



NB. Those not climbing Cotopaxi will have an extra day/night at Tambopaxi.

Day 10 - Cotopaxi Summit Trek, 5,897m (B, L, D)

This is a tough semi-technical climb and the weather can be extremely cold. You will wake early, and walk through the night, climbing steep icefields en route to Cotopaxi's summit. You will be using crampons and ice axes and will be roped to a professional guide.



The trek is daunting, but the rewards more than worth it – the views from the summit and during the daylight descent are breath-taking.

After summiting, descend to the refuge for lunch and rest, then down to the parking area to meet with the vehicle that will take you to Quito, where there will be a celebratory meal.

Overnight in Quito.

Day 11 - Departure (B)

Morning transfer to the airport your homeward flight.

Please see price guide overleaf.

Price Guide:

The cost of this itinerary is **£2,430 per person**, based on two travellers in shared twin/double accommodation. For groups of 4-5, prices start from **£1,898 per person**; for groups of 6+, from **£1,620 per person**.

For more information, or to enquire about a tailor-made holiday incorporating part or all of the above itinerary, please [contact us](#).

Includes:

- Accommodation (twin/double basis) as outlined in itinerary
- Meals as described
- Airport transfers
- Experienced mountain guide (on Cotopaxi, we provide 1 guide for every 2 climbers)
- Entrance fees to all sights mentioned in itinerary

Excludes:

- International flights – please ask us for a quote
- Personal mountain equipment (helmets, boots, axe) – local kit hire available
- Visas
- Personal travel insurance
- Personal expenses and tips
- Drinks