



5-day Cotopaxi Trek

A great trek for people without too much experience of high-altitude trekking, this 5-day trek takes you right through the "Avenue of the Volcanoes" so you get some amazing views of Cotopaxi, Antisana and Rumiñahui before we head on past some Inca ruins towards our final destination - the twin peaks of Illiniza.

We will spend the last night at the base of Illiniza in a lovely old hacienda, and then the next morning, depending on how the first few days have gone, we can either have a relaxing days walking in the foothills of Cotopaxi or attempt to summit Illiniza Norte - the easiest of the twin Illiniza peaks. This is a great non-technical opportunity to summit a 5000m+ mountain.



Day One - Trekking on Pasochoa

We will leave Quito this morning and head for the extinct volcano of Pasochoa, where our trek begins. As we walk uphill towards its summit (4200m) we will enjoy some gorgeous views of the neighbouring peaks such as Antisana, Rumiñahui and Cotopaxi. We will then head south on a easy-going trail along the crater edge of this extinct volcano, giving us a good chance to see condors and other birds of prey, before we descend into a lovely verdant valley where we will spend the night at the comparatively low altitude.



Day Two - Pasochoa to Limpiopungo

Today's walking is predominantly on flat terrain as we head towards the Cotopaxi National Park and explore its northern boundaries. We will also have a short visit to the pre-Inca ruins of El Salitre, which as well as being interesting themselves, also afford magnificent views of Cotopaxi's glaciers. Afterwards we will continue down into the Limpiopungo valley where tonight's campsite is located.



Day Three - Rumiñahui

Today is the longest day of our trekking tour as we walk along a winding trail around the peak of the imposing Rumiñahui. We can again observe several endemic birds of prey and on the horizon we will also begin to see Ecuador's largest and arguably most beautiful mountain, the mighty Chimborazo. The twin peaks of Illinizas will also come into view towards the end of the day, as we reach our campsite on the western boundary of the Cotopaxi National Park.



Day Four - Cotopaxi National Park and Illinizas Reserve

After breakfast we will keep on our trail and leave the Cotopaxi National Park by the old railway station. Continuing in a westerly direction, we will pass through woods, over rivers and across fields, until we reach a lovely old Hacienda at the base of Illiniza where we can enjoy a traditional meal and a drink or two!



Day Five - Climb of Illinizas Norte or Corazon

Depending on how we feel, today we can either attempt a summit of the north peak of Illinizas - an easy non-technical climb and definitely recommended as training for anyone thinking of attempting Cotopaxi - or we can enjoy an easier trek along the slopes of Corazón. Whichever we choose, we will then head back to Quito in the late afternoon.

This trek can fit into any of our tailor-made Ecuador holidays and the price of £750pp includes the following:

- All equipment, including tents, cooking equipment, sleeping bags, etc
- All transfers to/from Quito
- The services of a guide for the duration of the trip
- All meals on the trek
- One night's accommodation in an Andean hacienda, three nights camping