



2009 Climb For Hope Cotopaxi Expedition

Introductory: No experience necessary; good physical fitness a must.



Cotopaxi Summit

There are ten volcanoes in Ecuador that rise above 5,000 meters (16,400 feet), two of which are still active. Nine of these peaks are glaciated, requiring technical mountaineering skills to ascend even their easiest routes. Ecuador is perhaps the best place in the world to develop high altitude mountaineering skills. The challenges you face here are similar to those found in all of the high mountain regions. Glacier travel, high altitude physiology, and snow climbing skills will be taught to you on your Earth Treks expedition.

On this skills development expedition, we will be ascending Cotopaxi (19,348 feet / 5,897 meters), Ecuador's second highest peak. Standing above several smaller peaks, it is one of the most beautiful and awe-inspiring mountains in the world. Cotopaxi is also the world's highest active volcano, last erupting in 1942. Most mountaineers agree, this is one of the finest summit views in the world.

Expedition team members will fly into the Ecuadorian capital of Quito, where we will spend our first night. The following morning we will meet for breakfast in one of the local restaurants well known for brilliantly crafted coffee. Over breakfast, we will meet the rest of our team and discuss some of the basics of high altitude physiology. In the mid-morning we will enjoy a tour of the historic old town section of Quito. The first hike will take us to Mt. Pasachoa (approx. 4200 meters), an extinct volcano in the Pasachoa National Park. This outing will serve to start your acclimatization schedule, which will continue the following day by climbing Mt. Pichincha (4794 meters) via a technical rock ridge, weather permitting.



Above the clouds



Descending off the summit

Earth Treks has led well over 150 expeditions since 1992 and goes to great lengths in the selection of our guides, most of whom have summited 8000 meter peaks. We are a company based in expeditionary learning, and we incorporate time in our courses to teach specific skills and give people an experience that is not purely guided.

Climbing is inherently dangerous and reaching the summit is not guaranteed. We reserve the right to turn down applications based on health or fitness. If climbing were easy or risk free, the rewards would be negligible.

Fact:
Earth Treks founder Chris Warner currently holds the record for the fastest hut to summit ascent of Cayambe: 2 hours 18 minutes (established in 2001).



Daily Itinerary

Day 1: Jan. 3 Depart the USA and arrive in Quito, Ecuador, in the evening. Transfer to our hotel. We stay in a small, family-run hotel that is located in the center of the city.



Day 2: Jan. 4 Introduction, breakfast, gear check out and Old Town Quito city tour.

Day 3: Jan. 5 Our acclimatization training starts with an ascent of Mt. Pasachoa (approximately 13750 ft), an extinct volcano in the Pasachoa National Park. Well traveled trails lead to the rim of the old caldera.

Day 4: Jan. 6 Our training continues with an ascent of Mt. Pichincha, a 15,728-foot volcano that rises above Quito. Depending on the conditions of the routes, we may ascend this peak via a technical rock ridge with the colorful local name of Ventana de Morte. This is a very rewarding climb, preparing both our bodies and our minds for the Cotopaxi climb. In the evening, we will return to our hotel in Quito

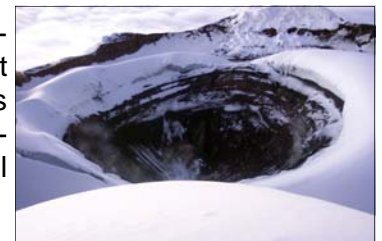


Day 5: Jan. 7 A rest day. In the afternoon we will have a packing class and prepare to depart for the Cotopaxi National Park.

Day 6: Jan. 8 Travel to the climbers' hut on Cotopaxi (15,744 feet). We will drive to within an hour of the hut and then backpack, with our gear, the last leg.

Day 7: Jan. 9 An early morning skill development class on the glacier of Cotopaxi. We'll learn and practice rope handling, glacier travel, and snow climbing skills. In the afternoon and early evening we will be sleeping and preparing for a midnight departure for the summit.

Day 8: Jan. 10 Starting at midnight, we will climb to the summit of Cotopaxi (19,348 feet), hopefully summiting at dawn. We will be rewarded with awe-inspiring views of the surrounding peaks and the crater of this glaciated volcano. After descending to the hut, we will pack up and travel to our hotel in Quito.



Day 9: Jan. 11 Depart Quito for home. Your flight will generally depart in the early morning and will have you home by dinner.

"... a fantastic trip; it was so far beyond our expectations and hopes! Your attention to both the big picture and details enabled everyone to squeeze life in the pips in Ecuador. I sincerely believe the expedition had a profound affect on us all."

TW, alumni of three mountaineering expeditions