

Kat's Great Adventures

Ecuador – The Andean Condor's Light Trekking Tour 2023

Guided Tour

10 Days / 9 Nights



On this ten day itinerary we offer you an exciting program for one of the best trekking programs in Ecuador: The Condor's Trek, an absolutely beautiful, authentic and remote area which is rarely visited by other tourists or mountaineers. The trek starts on the Eastern flank of the Ecuadorian Andes, just above the tree line and with panoramic views to the valley that descends into the Amazon basin, as well as the mountain sides of the Antisana Volcano and its glaciers. The trail starts at 3642 meters and follows a series of trails through the Paramo lands (Andean highlands). There is lush vegetation and beautiful lakes along the way. The itinerary progressively ascends to the highland plateau where Cotopaxi National Park is located. Hiking under the foot of Iliniza, following an extensive valley of high grass, which leads to the extinct Sincholagua pass on the volcano of the same name. This is the highest point of the trek and one of the best view points to the national park; in the background the mighty Cotopaxi volcano, highest active volcano in the world, and the neighboring Pasochoa, Ilinizas and Corazon. The trail continues over the highland and will take the hiker up to Cotopaxi's glacier before descending into the valley known as the "volcanoes avenue" that divides the Eastern and Western volcanoes of Ecuador.

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TICO # 50022092

Itinerary Day to Day

Day 1: Arrival in Quito

Reception at the airport and transfer to hotel.



Day 2: City Tour in Quito

Half day private city tour in the historical part of Quito, including La Basílica Church, La Compañía Church and El Panecillo Hill. We leave the hotel, by private transportation, and will see the transformation from the new part of the city to the absolutely beautiful historical and colonial part of Quito. We will have time to see all the interesting churches, plazas etc. But also simply enjoy the local atmosphere, the many shops and sellers. After these interesting sights, we continue to “El Panecillo”, the hill in the centre of Quito with a view of the city and the historical centre. Also from here, on clear days, we may observe several of the snow-capped volcanoes surrounding Quito.

Day 3: Guagua Pichincha volcano (4794 m) 6 hours + 644 - 644 m

The Pichinchas are three summits located on the western range just above Quito. The Guagua Pichincha is the highest and the youngest of the summits, the other two are the Rucu Pichincha and the Padre Encantado (Enchanted Father) and both of them are lower. Guagua is also where the last eruption took place in the year 1999, but it is considered safe to climb by geologists. The Guagua and the Rucu are very popular ascents, due to their location on the outskirts of the capital and their convenient access. Pick up at the hotel in Quito and transfer (two hours) to a parking place at the head of the trail at 4150 m. From the parking place, the hike will ascent by a “paramo” area finding its way through changing vegetation up to the moraine. The ascent is very straight forward, but the distance to cover is still considerable. There is a big gain in altitude during the hike, which works well as a preparation for higher summits. The trail back is the same of the ascent. From the parking place there is a 3 hour drive across Los Chillos and Tumbaco valley and up over the Andes, down to Papallacta town (3300 m).

Day 4: Trekking: Laguna Volcan Campsite (3642 m) 5 hours + 312 m + 308 m

The transport will pick the group up and drive back up the valley (45 minutes) until we arrive at the head of trail called El Tambo (3638 m). The hike starts by a horseshoe trail over a swampy area and up to the Potrerillos pass (3950 m), then descends by a valley densely cover with “paramo” vegetation down to to the Volcano Lake, where the first campsite will be established (3642 m).

Day 5: Trekking: Antisanilla Campsite (4090 m) 8 hours + 738 m - 290 m

Today is the longest ascent of the trek; therefore an early start is a must. Leaving the Volcan Lake, the trail begins with a constant ascent between shallow valleys and ridges until reaching the highland’s plateau. Then an

eastwards traverse to a volcanic valley that gently ascents passing Santa Lucia Lake and up to Santa Lucia Pass (4380 m) to descend to one of the camping areas around Antisanilla (4090 m).





Day 6: Trekking: Taracocha lake Campsite (4214 m) 8 - 9 hours + 170 m - 294 m

Once again an early departure, due to the long distance to be covered today. The altitude difference is dramatic, but the hike is close to 20 km. The first part, from Antisanilla to Hacienda Pullurima (3920 m), is mostly flat and a bit downwards; crossing some of the most beautiful swampy valleys covered with hard vegetation called Cushions "Cojines". During the hike the view is quite impressive, having the Antisana volcano to the east and in the distance the Sincholagua and Cotopaxi volcanoes. From Hacienda Pullurima, which is a huge ranch specialized in the breeding of bulls, the trail goes in an almost straight line up the slope, aiming to the base of Sincholagua volcano, and just before the Taracocha Lake and the campsite (4214 m).

Day 7: Trekking: Rio Pita (3750 m) – End of trek 7 – 8 hours + 194 - 658 m

Sunrise on Taracocha Lake is amazing, having the mighty Cotopaxi just in front and the Antisana behind. After breakfast, the team will head up to the highest point in the trek: Sincholagua Mountain Pass (4408 m). The ascent is progressive and will go from "Paramo" vegetation with high grass to a rocky moraine. On the pass there is a great panorama to the Cotopaxi Volcano and the valley below. The Rumiñahui, Pasochoa, Ilinizas and Corazon volcanoes are also visible and, in the distance, the city of Quito. Descending is a great walk by a lovely green valley that ends at Pita River's bed (3750 m). A short 40 minute hike by the river up to the mountain lodge with a perfect view to Cotopaxi volcano.

Day 8: Cotopaxi's Glacier – Limpiopungo's lake (5000 m) 6 hours + 500 m - 1200

Transfer (one hour and forty five minutes) to the parking area (4500 m). Then hike to the high refuge José Rivas Hut (4800 m) and on to the glacier (5000 m). After a break to enjoy the amazing views, we will descend past the parking place and into the Lava Valley that follows a gorge into the plateau. Then a flat walk until Limpiopungo Lake, where we will hike around it before being picked up and drive back to the mountain hut.



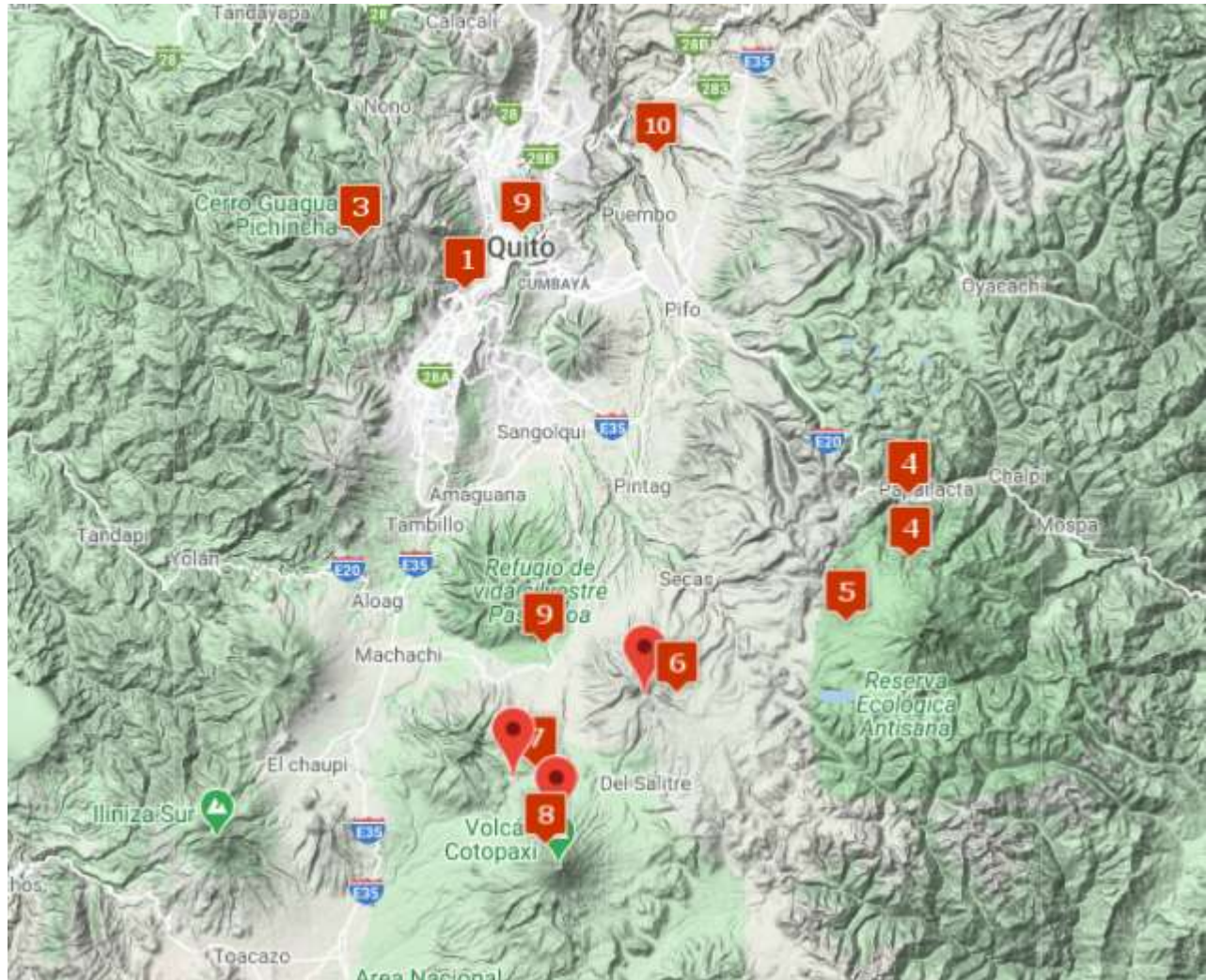
Day 9: Trekking: Hacienda Santa Rita (3400 m) 5 hours - 400 m

After enjoying the fabulous mountain hut, the last trekking day will be mostly downwards, following some of the local trails, into a more greener and fertile land ending at the Hacienda Santa Rita. This is a rarely hiked section, very authentic and a nice way to finish up this unique trek. At the hacienda, there will be a transport ready to take the group back to Quito's area (two hours).

Day 10: Departure

Time to leave the volcanoes of Ecuador! Pick up at the hotel and transfer out to Quito's Airport (one to two hours). End of services.

Route



Technical Characteristics:

Route Profile: Medium. Daily walks up to 8 hours per day, at high altitude. Previous hiking experience and physical conditioning would be of benefit.

Travel Season: Any date on request from January 2 to December 31, 2023



Prices per Person

Double Occupancy	\$ 2500.00 USD
Single Occupancy Supplement (for single travelers who want a single room in hotels but will share a tent during the treks)	\$ 350.00 USD
Single Room and Tent Supplement (for single travelers who want a single room in hotels and a single tent during the treks)	\$ 336.00 USD
Tour Leader (for groups up to 4 people)	\$ 753.00 USD

*Group rates available for this tour. As this is a guided tour, the pricing improves with more people participating. Please ask us for details

Accommodation:

3* hotels, lodges and tents

Included:

- Local mountain guide during the entire program
- Assistant mountain guide during the mountain itinerary in a ratio 1:5
- City guide for Quito's city tour
- Private transportation throughout the entire program
- 3 nights in shared double rooms in hotels in the city of Quito
- 1 night in shared double room in hotel in the town of Papallacta
- 2 nights in shared dormitory at Cotopaxi National Park lower hut
- 3 nights in campsite
- Meals as specified in the itinerary (9 breakfasts, 7 lunches and 5 dinners)
- Entry fee to the National parks and natural reserves
- Entry fees to museums and sights mentioned in the program
- Quality mountain tents – 2 people per tent during the trek
- Group common campsite equipment
- Porters and mule/horses for group campsite equipment and personal equipment
- Cook during the trek

Not Included:

- Domestic and international flights
- Meals not mentioned in the program
- Alcoholic and soft drinks
- Personal expenses
- Personal camping gear
- Tips
- Everything not mentioned in the "Included" list

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