

## ECUADOR MAINLAND: Cotopaxi Hiking & Mountain Biking Tours

Ecuador is a wonderful destination for clients that want some adventure. Below are some of the Trekking & Mountain Biking options we can incorporate into our clients itineraries.

### **Option A:**

**Mountain Biking tour in Cotopaxi Volcano National Park 1 day, daily.**

#### **Tour details**

Soar with the condors, bike with the pumas. This moderate to challenging adventure takes place at the foothill of the majestic snow-capped active volcano Cotopaxi. Cycling will start at the Limpiopungo lake exploring the park from north to south through highland plateaus.

#### **Level: Moderate to Challenging**

Cotopaxi National Park is covered by a dense pine forest that is now home to deer and the endangered Andean Puma. The Andean Hillstar, a small hummingbird is one of the unique bird species that lives in this region along with the majestic Andean Condor, the largest flying bird in the world. Discover many other species that make this a rich fauna area. Besides the imposing Cotopaxi Volcano, the National Park is filled with serenely beautiful paramo, landscapes and lakes.

Depart from Quito to the Cotopaxi National Park up through Pedregal to the northern entrance. Explore the park from north to south crossing through Highland plateaus and observing unique vegetation and fauna amidst stunning volcanic scenery. Start cycling on sandy, volcanic trails to the lower section. Visit Limpiopungo Lake at the foothills of the Rumiñahui Volcano. Transportation team will provide support throughout the day. Exit the park through the valley that leads to Lasso.

#### **Included**

Private transportation and vehicle support from Quito.

Bilingual guide.

Box lunch and refreshment.

KHS TREK mountain bikes with front suspension (RST), 21 speed shimano components.

Fiona Urquhart-Derin  
Worldwide Holidays

Helmets and gloves

**Not included**

Cotopaxi National Park entrance fee \$10 High Season and \$7 Low Season.

**Travel facts**

Travel Time: 3 hours round trip

Riding Time: 2-4 hours, depending on physical condition

Season: Year-round

Altitude: 9,840 to 12,120 feet above sea level (3,000 to 4,000 meters).

Avg. Temperature: Day 46-68° F/8-20 °C

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**Option B:**

**Mountain Bike Cotopaxi and Illinizas (2 days/1 night, daily from Quito) (private)**

Explore off the beaten path of Ecuador's many wonders; visit remote and unspoiled regions; bike, ride or trek along breathtaking scenery. If you have a zest for life, a yen for adventure, a taste for the unseen and an eye for colour and beauty, Ecuador will instantly enchant you. Because of its location on the Equator and the Andes mountain ranges, Ecuador has no real seasons and it receives the most amount of sunlight on the planet. Ecuador's unique climate allows for year-round operation of outdoor adventure programs.

**Tour details**

Bike through stark paramo at the foot of the highest active volcano in the world<sup>9</sup> the mighty Cotopaxi and top it off with a cozy and relaxing evening spent at a colonial hacienda; gather strength for the journey to the stunning twin peaks of the Illinizas, home to the condor.

**Level: Moderate to Challenging**

Bike through stark paramo, the impressive Andean valleys and their quaint Indian villages. Throughout the day there will be excellent views of the Illiniza Twin Peaks, Corazon, Sincholagua Volcanoes and, of course, the majestic Cotopaxi. Spend the night in a Colonial Hacienda.

**Day 1 - Cotopaxi National Park:**

Start your biking adventure at 13,120 feet above sea level (4,000 meters) at the foot of the highest active volcano in the world, the mighty Cotopaxi. The scenic beauty of this park is its main

attraction as you cycle downhill on volcanic roads and dry lava paths. Reach Limpiopungo Glaciar Lake at the foothills of the Rumiñahui Volcano where a picnic lunch will be served. Here you can observe the abundant birdlife of the area, such as: Andean Gull, Andean Teal, Ducks, Coots, Falcons and possibly the endangered Andean Condor. Continue the journey downhill following off-roads into the valleys to observe some of the local farming. This evening will be spent at a traditional Colonial Hacienda now open for guests.

### **Day 2 - Illinizas Twin Peaks:**

After breakfast, depart by jeep to Pastocalle, located at the foothills of the Illinizas Twin Peaks. Start biking through the paramo, down a dirt road that leads to the valley and the small town of Chaupi. Along the way, enjoy excellent views of the Illinizas, Corazón, Sincholagua and many other surrounding volcanoes. Continue the journey following the old train tracks passing old train stations, farmlands and small colonial towns. Return to Quito in the afternoon.

#### **Included**

Private transportation and vehicle support from Quito.

Bilingual guide.

Accommodations and meals as described.

KHS & TREK mountain bikes with front suspension (RST), 21 speed shimano components.

Helmets and gloves

#### **Not included**

Cotopaxi National Park entrance fee \$10 High season and \$7 Low season.

#### **Travel facts**

Travel Time: 2 hours per day.

Riding Time: 3-5 hrs each day, depending on physical condition

Season: Year-round

Suggested: Rain shell and sunglasses

Altitude 10,496 to 4,920 feet above sea level (3,200. to 1,500 meters)

Avg. Temperature: Day 50-77° F/10-25 °C / Night 41-48° F/5-9 °C

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## Option C:

### Trekking Pasochoa Protected Forest (1 day, daily, from Quito) (private)

#### Tour details

The highlight of this trek is the humid cloud forest inside an extinct volcanic crater of Pasochoa, near Quito. A showcase of Andean original trees where deer, foxes and pumas can sometimes be observed while hiking this rather remarkable place.

#### Level: Moderate to Challenging (II - III+)

The highlight of the Pasochoa trek is the humid Cloud Forest inside an extinct volcanic crater, near Quito. Over one hundred bird species and 50 species of original Andean trees as well as deer, foxes and sometimes Pumas can be observed while hiking these impressive trails.

Depart from Quito travelling about 18 miles (30 km) south to the entrance of the Pasochoa Protected Forest, located within its collapsed crater. Start your hike in this thriving forest, which contains a wide range of highland trees and shrubs, as well as orchids, bromeliads, lichens and ferns. Prolific bird life includes at least 11 species of hummingbirds. Other birds endemic to Ecuador are also easily seen along the trails. The peaks of the Andean Mountains surround you throughout your hike. Choose to trek on the 1, 2, 4 or 6-hours paths, according to your preference.

#### Included

Bilingual guide.  
Private transportation.  
Lunch and snacks.

#### Not included

Pasochoa Protected Forest entrance fee \$7 high season, \$3 low season.

#### Travel facts

Travel Time: 45 minutes from Quito, each way.  
Hiking Time: 1-6 hours depending on physical condition  
Season: Year-round, better views June through August.

Altitude: 9,184 to 13,120 feet (2,800 to 4,000 meters)

Avg. Temperature Day: 50-68° F/ 10-20 °C

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## Option D:

### Pasochoa and Cotopaxi National Park 2 days/1 night at Hosteria La Ciénega

#### Level: Moderate

The highlight of Pasochoa is the protected Cloud Forest inside a collapsed volcanic crater. Cotopaxi National Park and its majestic volcano offers forests, dry lava flows and glacier lakes.

#### DAY 1 - Pasochoa Protected Forest:

Drive from Quito to the entrance of the Pasochoa Protected Forest, a collapsed crater south of Quito. Hike through this thriving forest, which contains a wide range of highland trees, bamboo forest and shrubs, as well as orchids, bromeliads, lichens and ferns. Prolific bird life includes at least 11 species of hummingbirds. Other birds endemic to Ecuador are also easily seen along the trails. Spend the night in a Colonial Hacienda in the Cotopaxi Valley.

#### DAY 2 - Cotopaxi National Park:

This morning arrive at the Cotopaxi National Park and visit the local museum before hiking. Walk along trails skirting glacier lakes, Inca ruins and stunning scenery on the foothills of the highest active volcano in the world. Sightings of Andean fauna such as wild horses, gulls, ducks, and possibly the majestic condor add to your adventure. Return to Quito in the afternoon.

#### Included

Bilingual guides.  
Private transportation.  
Accommodations and meals as described.

#### Not included

Pasochoa Protected Forest entrance fee \$7 high season and \$3 low season.  
Cotopaxi National Park entrance fee \$10 high season and \$7 low season.

#### Travel facts

Travel Time: 2 hours each day  
Hiking Time: 2-4 hours per day depending on physical condition  
Season: Year-round, better views June through August.

Altitude: 9,184 to 13,120 feet (2,800. to 4,000 meters)  
Avg. Temperature: Day 46-64° F/8-18°C

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### Option E:

#### Trekking Adventure Pasochoa and Cotopaxi National Park (2 days/1 night CAMPING, daily, from Quito) (private)

##### Tour details

A contrast by far, this option offers lush cloud forest at its best and the stark majesty of the Cotopaxi volcano with its dry lava flows and glacier lakes. Secondary roads provide opportunity for catching sight of deer, wild horses, gulls and possibly the magnificent condor.

##### Level: Challenging

The highlight of Pasochoa is the protected Cloud Forest inside a collapsed volcanic crater. Cotopaxi National Park and its majestic volcano offers forests, dry lava flows and glacier lakes.

#### DAY 1- Pasochoa Protected Forest:

Drive from Quito to the Pasochoa Protected Forest, a collapsed crater south of Quito. Start the hike at the Pita River Gorge at 9,184 feet (2,800 meters). Observe Andean animals and birds while walking through secondary roads that go up the mountain. During the day you can see the Highland Indians cultivating potatoes and cereals and tending cattle and horses. End the day at your campsite at 11,480 above sea level (3,500 meters) on the border of Cotopaxi National Park. (L/D)

#### DAY 2 - Cotopaxi National Park:

Begin the day hiking through Cotopaxi National Park, trekking through the moorlands and observing the highest active volcano in the world. Sightings of Andean flora and fauna such as wild horses, gulls, ducks, and possibly the magnificent condor, add to your adventure. Return to Quito in the afternoon. (B/L)

##### Included

Bilingual guides.  
Private transportation.  
Deluxe camping equipment.  
Accommodations and meals as described.

##### Not included

Sleeping bags  
Pasochoa Protected Forest entrance fee \$7 high season, \$3 low season.  
Cotopaxi National Park entrance fee \$10 high season and \$7 low season.

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Worldwide Holidays

**Travel facts**

Travel Time: 3 hours round trip.

Hiking Time: 3-5 hours each day

Season: Year-round, better views June through August.

Altitude: 9,184 to 13,120 feet (2,800. to 4,000 meters).

Avg. Temperature: Day 43-64° F / 6-18 °C / Night 32-46° F / 0-8 °C

Ecuador Adventure