MOUNTAINEERING IN ECUADOR

AVENTURAS PATAGONICAS - MOUNTAIN GUIDES

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TRIP DESCRIPTION

Join us to climb three spectacular Ecuadorian snow and ice volcanoes on our Equatorial High Altitude Expedition to these classic volcanic giants; Cayambe (18,997'), Cotopaxi (19,348'), and Chimborazo (20,703'); exploring this fascinating and colorful Equatorial country between climbs, a mosaic of mountains and rainforest, native peoples and their colorful, ancient culture.

Our Expedition begins as we land in the beautiful historic city of Quito, Ecuador, situated at 9,400', in the Pre Andes Mountains. Quito is the second highest city in South America, La Paz, Bolivia being the first highest. Quito's elevation start out our acclimatization process as soon as we step off the plane. We spend our first day exploring Quito, visiting the markets, renowned for fabulous handmade Otavalan sweaters, and brilliantly colorful local and indigenous artwork. The next day we hike up to Ruca Pichincha (15,706'), a hike in the foothills of Quito passing through aromatic eucalyptus forests filled with exotic birds as we ascend and acclimitize. The next day we drive winding roads typical of Ecuador to our first volcano, Cayambe, Ecuador's third highest, a giant surrounded by glaciers and snow slopes approaching 35 degrees. On this climb we will encounter crevassed terrain with spectacular seracs.

After our ascent and a well deserved rest, we travel through the pastoral countryside and villages to Cotopaxi, our second, and the world's highest active volcano, located in Ecuador's eastern cordillera. We arrive at a hut (refugio) at snowline where we rest and begin our ascent at night to ensure firm snow conditions. Cotopaxi is a classic glaciated volcanic cone which steepens to 40 degrees as we coronate the summit crater and a dramatic panoramic sunrise approaches, a breathtaking experience as the summits of Ecuador's volcanoes light up a rosey hue, one by one and you look down upon waking Ecuador. After Cotopaxi we take a rest day on a 17th century hacienda. Finally, we head for our last, but not least, volcano, the highest of them all, Chimborazo, Ecuador's highest peak, a massive five-summitted mountain that rises eleven thousand feet above Ecuador's central agricultural valley. By this time we will be well acclimatized, which will improve our chances of summiting Chimborazo, a diverse mountain, higher and more technical than it's neighbors Cotopaxi and Cayambe. An early start and spectacular snow and ice climbing takes us to the vast summit crater with views of the Andes and the Amazon Basin that you will not soon forget!
DATES OF TRIP 2010 / 2011

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COST OF TRIP: $ 3600
DEPOSIT DUE TO RESERVE A POSITION: $ 700
BALANCE AMOUNT: $ 2900
DATE BALANCE DUE: 75 Days before departure

COST INCLUDES:
Professional Mountain Guides, 2 nights hotel accommodation in Quito, 2 nights accommodation at hacienda, huts, all land transportation, meals while in the mountains, all community gear (tents, stoves, cooking gear, ropes, ice screws, pickets, medical kit, etc.), National Park fee.

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:
Professional Mountain Guides, 2 nights hotel accommodation in Quito, 2 nights accommodation at hacienda, huts, all land transportation, meals while in the mountains, all community gear (tents, stoves, cooking gear, ropes, ice screws, pickets, medical kit, Flights to Quito, meals (except while you are climbing), personal equipment, passport, personal items and services (laundry, drinks, tips, etc.), and expenses incurred in the event of a rescue.
DAY 1: Group meets in Quito, Ecuador’s beautiful capital city, the world’s second highest capital at 9400 ft (La Paz, Bolivia being the highest), starting our acclimatization program as soon as you step out of the plane. Gear check and afternoon briefing at the hotel.

DAY 2: Free day, the main purpose of our second day is to spend another night above 9,000’. This is a great occasion to visit Otavalo, known the world over for its colorful sweaters.

DAY 3: Hike up Rucu Pichincha, essential to our acclimatization program before tackling Ecuador’s giants. At 15,706 ft, Rucu Pichincha lies in the foothills of Quito.

DAY 4: Drive towards Cayambe, 18,997 ft, Ecuador’s third highest peak. Cayambe offers spectacular snow and ice climbing and intricate glacier travel. Stay in hut at 15,290 ft.

DAY 5: Acclimatization day, we work on glacier travel techniques. Our route isn’t technical but we will encounter many very large crevasses on our climb.

DAY 6: We start our climb with headlamps on very early in the morning, a standard procedure of tropical high altitude climbing in Ecuador for firm snow conditions during our ascent and descent. An exciting day, challenging glacier travel takes us to the summit, culminating with an exciting line along the glaciated edge of the volcano’s crater. Descend to our hut and possibly drive south to our next objective.

DAY 7: Our next objective will be Cotopaxi, at 19,348 ft, Ecuador’s second highest peak and one of the most beautiful peaks in the Ecuadorian Andes, a perfect cone covered by glaciers and snowfields. We will stop for a rest at a 17th Century Hacienda on our way to Cotopaxi, a beautiful place to relax and enjoy views of Illiniza Sur and Cotopaxi.

DAY 8: Drive east into Cotopaxi National Park. Travel through pine forest to above treeline for a spectacular drive and a wide-open view of Cotopaxi. The fourwheel drive road is quite exciting taking us as high as 15,000 ft. From here a short hike will take us to the Jose Ribas Hut, at 15,729 ft.

DAY 9: Again we leave for the summit shortly after midnight for firm snow conditions. Challenging glacier travel will take us to the base of the 400 foot wall Yanasacha, meaning “large black rock” in the native Quechua language, from were we head west up Cotopaxi’s upper glacier on 35 to 40 degree slopes to finally coronate the summit with striking views of Cotopaxi’s summit crater at sunrise. The changes in color as dawn approaches will be a memorable experience of this day’s climb. Return to hut.

DAY 10: Another rest day at the Hacienda before heading towards our last objective, Chimborazo, at 20,703 ft, it is Ecuador’s highest point.

DAY 11: Drive towards Chimborazo. We will stay at the Whymper Hut at 16,405 ft.

DAY 12: Summit day. It will be a long summit day. Climbers should be well acclimatized by now after several days above 15,000 ft and well conditioned after climbing two of Ecuador’s highest peaks. Chimborazo is a great challenge and a major peak. Lately the standard Whymper route has been out of shape due to dry seasons, so most likely we will take a more challenging line, left of the Whymper. Exciting ice and snow climbing will take us to the summit. Down to the hut.

DAY 13: Drive back to Quito. Next day fly back home, at the earliest, or continue traveling in South America.

Note: This itinerary is intended to be a guideline only, weather days and rest days are always a possibility.
MOUNTAINEERING IN ECUADOR

EQUIPMENT LIST

FEET
- Socks, thick wool or polypropylene - 2-3 pair (outer socks) thin silk or polypropylene -2 pair (inner socks) Vapor Barrier Liner (VBL) socks, (optional -1 pair Cotton sock- 2 pair. - Plastic double mountaineering boots - Lightweight hiking boots or sturdy tennis shoes - Booties, down or polarguard (optional) - Gaitors

UPPER BODY
- Lightweight polypropylene or capilene turtleneck-2 - Expedition weight polypropylene or capilene shirt -1 - Fleece or Pile Jacket - Breathable windproof outer jacket, such as goretex, with hood - Lightweight Down or Polarguard parka with hood - Cotton T-shirts - 2

LOWER BODY
- Polypropylene or nylon briefs or underpants -2 pair - Lightweight polypropylene or capilene long underwear bottoms - 1 pair - Expedition weight polypropylene or capilene long underwear bottoms - 1 pair - Fleece or Pile pants (optional) - Breathable windproof pants or bibs such as Goretex (full length side zippers recommended) - Shorts - 1 pair - Lightweight cotton pants (hike in, base camp - optional)

HANDS
- Mittens, wool Dachstein or pile - 2 pair - Gloves, polypropylene or capilene - 1 pair - Goretx wind shells - 1 pair

HEAD
- Ski hat, wool or pile - Balaclava, wool, polypropylene or capilene - Baseball cap

SLEEPING GEAR
- Down or polarguard sleeping bag comfortable to -10ºF - 1 foam pad or 1 thermarest pad (full length recommended)

PACK
- Pack with 5000 cubic inches capacity - Day and a half pack

TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT
- Ice axe - Crampons, 12 points non-rigid recommended. - Seat harness, to fit comfortably over bulky clothing. - Carabiners, 6 regular, 2 locking - 1 Ascender - 30 feet of 6mm perlon rope - Ski poles - adjustable preferred (optional)

PERSONALS
- Head lamp and extra batteries - Ski goggles - Sun screen lotion SPF 29 - 1 tube - Sun screen lip protection - 1 stick - Mole skin, bandaids, tape, throat lozenges - Pocket knife - Plastic bowl, large cup, spoon - Water bottles (2) nalgene 1 quart capacity wide mouth - Tooth brush and tooth paste - Toilet paper- 1 roll - Antibiotics - 1 cycle broad spectrum - Aspirin or Ibuprofen - 20 - Disposable lighter - Stuff sacks 2-3, assorted sizes - Lodine pills -1-2 new small bottle (for water purification)

OPTIONALS
- Camera and film - Journal, pencil, book, games, walkman - Small towel and soap, baby wipes, foot powder - Swimsuit - Cotton bandana - Pee bottle - 1 qt. capacity, wide mouth - 2 lbs. of your favorite lunch treat (we do provide full lunches)
REFERENCES
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A VENTURAS PATAGONICAS

To contact past AP clients directly refer to:
http://www.patagonicas.com/clientcontacts.html

We hope that the experiences and comments of our past clients will help you better to understand the dedication of Aventuras Patagonicas.

Gentlemen,

For the past five years have I known Mr. Mujica and Bonnie Schwahn as Guides both on Denali and Aconcagua. I personally have been twice on expeditions with his company, Aventuras Patagonicas, on Aconcagua. I also feel I have a fair assessment of guide companies and their quality of guides. I am very pleased to inform you that Aventuras Patagonicas scores a solid A+ in virtually all areas:

- The cost of the Aconcagua expedition is less than others I was aware of.
- Their information and communication before the climb are thorough, helpful and geared toward your individual needs. Someone is always available.
- Once in South America you find yourself in the top hotels available. You feel safe, looked after and entertained in a tasteful first class manner. Everyone goes out of their way to show you the interesting parts of the Chilean culture, which of course as locals only they can do.
- The arrangements for the hike-in and climb are flawless and professional. Nothing is left to chance. You begin to feel in competent and safe hands. The equipment is state of the art. On both of my expeditions the tents were brand new, a trademark of the Company.
- Once on the mountain you begin to realize what a superb guide Rodrigo Mujica really is. He is very sensitive to his clients, anticipates their strengths, their weaknesses and uniquenesses. The food is good and plenty as I have ever had on a mountain. Most important he is a safe topnotch climber and knows Aconcagua better than any person I know, to the point that guides of other companies rely on his input, decisions and judgment, especially in tight spots. Truly, cowboys, rangers, guides, and climbers alike consider Rodrigo as Mr. Aconcagua. You feel he owns the mountain. His summit success ratio speaks by itself and you know if anyone can get you to the summit, Rodrigo will.
- On the way down, you get surprised with all kind of niceties. While other companies camp at Plaza de Mulas, we stayed at the hotel, showered, ate quasi restaurant food and slept in beds. What a treat, and all part of the package fee. At the trailhead watermelon and beer was waiting for us, followed by an incredible feast of a meal, followed by another first class hotel in Santiago, which again is part of the fee. An evening of dinner and top entertainment are followed by a sad good bye.

If you don’t already know by now, in my opinion Aventuras Patagonicas is a first class act. I recommend them highly and you are welcome to give out my name for future references. As busy as our lives are, one does not want to go wrong and expose oneself to three weeks of misery or possibly danger. Both of my trips with this company were marvelous, safe and extremely enjoyable.

Sincerely,

-Hubertus Guenther, Spokane, WA (509) 838-1543
hpguenther@aol.com
Dear Rodrigo

Thanks for your kind note on the recent Aconcagua climb. I also hope we can climb together again. I have filled out the evaluation sheet, and you’ll see that I’ve given you and your Aventuras Patagonicas colleagues top marks in every category. However, I would like to briefly record my assessment in words.

In all respects, your management and leadership of the Aconcagua climb was outstanding. I say this not merely because your support enable me to reach the summit, although that was certainly a key goal of mine.

Your concern for the health and safety of all the group was exemplary. The well-paced itinerary gave us the conditioning and acclimatizing to altitude that we all needed to give us the best opportunity to summit. You showed great skill and organizational ability in managing the difficult job of assuring that all the necessary gear for the climb was where it needed to be, when it needed to be there. In the Andean world, this is no small feat!

Third, the food and equipment were all first class. Nobody expected a gourmet experience on the mountain, but we had excellent food, which fueled our effort. Also, your professionalism and friendliness brought a group of strangers together into a real team, which not only succeeded in the climb, but enjoyed this demanding experience. I know that I will be keeping up with these new friends in the future. All the information you provided on equipment, conditioning, preparation and travel was concise, accurate and helpful. Our accommodations in Santiago and Penitentes were quite well chosen. And finally, the cost of the trip was reasonable and fair, considering everything included in the package.

In short, I would enthusiastically recommend that anyone wanting to climb Aconcagua (or any other mountain, for that matter) strongly consider doing so with you.

Best regards, and keep in touch

Carlton Stoiber
Washington, DC.
It is imperative that everyone joining a mountaineering expedition be in a high standard of physical fitness when the expedition begins. The amount of time needed for training is completely dependent on the general level of fitness a person is in prior to the expedition.

For the person that has spent the last ten years behind a desk with no emphasis on keeping in shape, it may take two years to regain top physical ability. The person that has always prioritized conditioning and a rigorous workout as a part of their daily routine may only take a few months to fine tune for the demands of mountaineering.

Consider, when setting up your program, that you will need to develop the endurance to carry a 15 lb. pack, wearing climbing boots, for 6-8 hours per day. Though it is impossible to “train” for altitude you can put yourself on a conditioning program that will best prepare you for this type of physical stress. How to do this? It is impossible to be specific and say if you do this and that you will be ready for a physically demanding expedition. Each person is different and everyone has different terrain and time at their disposal. After many years of observing climbers there are some reoccurring training schemes that seem to help some people be better prepared than others.

1- **Train for developing stamina.** Run, bike, ski, fast walk. Vary your routine to prevent overuse injuries and push yourself without injuring yourself. Do warm up and cool down stretches.

2- **Progressive resistance weight training.** This type of training improves anaerobic metabolism that feeds much of muscular work. This type of human energy production is fed by stored carbohydrates that require no additional oxygen to metabolize.

3- **Train on hills or stairs with a pack on.** You must be prepared for several thousand feet uphill and downhill, ideally wearing a 15lb pack. Never run with a pack on.

4- **Wear 2 lb. ankle weights to help condition for the extra weight of climbing boots, soft snow and loose scree.** (Don’t wear these while running).

5- **Train as often as possible by skiing or hiking for all day, weekend or longer trips.** Train for what you are going to do! If you want to be good at climbing big mountains with a big pack on, start on little mountains with a small pack on and work your way up. Conditioning by climbing is the best thing you can do. Get comfortable moving in mountainous terrain all day long!! Heavy packs tend to tire climbers the most. Be prepared by training ahead of time and you will do fine. Don’t expect to get used to wearing a pack while you are on the expedition.

6- **A good diet cannot be underestimated.** Research out a diet that will help develop stamina and strength and that you can live with. There are lots of books and articles that will get you started or consult a professional nutritionist that has worked with athletes.
7 - Be mentally prepared for the expedition. Know before you start the climb and accept the fact that at times you will be uncomfortable and that your body is going to be uncooperative. You are going to have to push yourself (unless you are superhuman). If you don’t have the ability to do this you won’t be successful. You may be in a cramped tent for many storm days. You are leaving the comforts of home in order to experience a unique challenge and a remarkable mountain. It is worth it! You must also be well enough “in tune” with yourself to know the difference between pushing yourself and acute mountain sickness, pulmonary or cerebral edema. These are all serious altitude related problems, which must be acknowledged. It is possible to “push yourself” too far. For the safety of the team, the chief guide will make a final decision on who needs a rest day, who continues to ascend, or who descends.

We hope this gives you ideas on which to base your training schedule. We recommend talking to a professional exercise trainer and setting up a conditioning program that you can incorporate into your daily routine, which will meet these goals. This type of training can easily take two hours per day, 5 days a week. Be committed to it and be consistent. It will pay off many times over! Start today with your training and keep it up. Good luck and please call or email us, if you have any questions.