

## Cotopaxi Challenge

A quest for the senses in a magical route to one of Ecuador's most iconic scenery

DURATION

5 days

DIFFICULTY

Easy

### ITINERARY

DAY

**01**

#### Hike to Hacienda Santa Rita [3.280 m / 10,758 ft]

After a short drive of only one hour, we start hiking from the village of Santa Clara located in the Valley of Los Chillos at 2.750 m / 9,020 ft. The trek follows cobble stone roads on the side of the Pita River, which comes from Cotopaxi National Park. Close to the Hacienda Santa Rita we pass in front of a shrine where locals come to worship the "Virgen de la Piedra", the Virgin of the Rock.

Today's hike will take around 5 hours. When you get to the Hacienda the camp will already be set up. You will spend your first night at an altitude of 3.280 m / 10,758 ft.



**Activity:** Drive / 4-5 hours hiking



**Accommodation:** Camping



**Transportation:** Private van or jeep transfer



**Meals:** Lunch, Dinner

DAY

**02**

#### Pasochoa Hike [4.200 m / 13,776 ft]

Today we leave in the morning around 8 a.m. for a 6 hours hike to the Pasochoa volcano. We will be crossing the fields of Hacienda Santa Rita. Pasochoa is an ancient and heavily eroded volcano that has been inactive since the last ice age. If the weather permits, from the summit, we will be able to take a good look at the crater. Inside you will see the Pasochoa Protected Forest Reserve, a humid Andean forest with more than 110 species of birds and 45 species of trees, located between 2.700 m / 8,856 ft and 4.200 m / 13,776 ft. On a sunny day you can eventually see condors. We return to Santa Rita campsite for the night.

 **Activity:** 5-6 hours trekking up and down Pasochoa

 **Accommodation:** Camping

 **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner


---

DAY

**03**

### Hike to Hacienda El Porvenir or Los Mortiños [3.600 m / 11,808 ft]

Today we hike towards the hacienda El Porvenir. Part of the hike goes through humid Andean forest where there is a chance to see hummingbirds. El Porvenir is one of the largest farms in Ecuador. It can be used as a base for excellent hikes within the Cotopaxi National Park. Located at 3.600 m / 11,808 ft, El Porvenir is surrounded by four volcanoes: Cotopaxi, Sincholagua, Pasochoa and Rumiñahui. Here you will be able to enjoy your stay in a comfortable, functional and beautiful traditional Andean hacienda. The "casa de hacienda", or farmhouse, is built with materials such as brick, straw, wood and adobe that have been used for centuries. If Porvenir is not available we will use Hacienda Los Mortiños.

 **Activity:** 4-5 hours trekking

 **Accommodation:** Hacienda El Porvenir

 **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

---

DAY

**04**

### Central Summit of Rumiñahui [4.600 m / 15,092 ft]

From Hacienda El Porvenir we start trekking towards the central ridge of Rumiñahui, leading to the middle summit. The rock on this mountain can be a bit loose underfoot, so we have to take care, but the views from the summit are really worth it. The volcano is located only 13 km North West of Cotopaxi and it is named after Atahualpa's general, who was the last Inca Emperor. After the emperor was murdered, Rumiñahui led the fight against the Spanish conquerors. In Quichua his name means "stone face". We spend the night at Tambopaxi.

 **Activity:** 5-6 hours trekking up and down Rumiñahui

 **Accommodation:** Tambopaxi Lodge

 **Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

---

---

DAY

**05**

## Hike to José Rivas Refuge [5.000 m / 16,400 ft]

After breakfast we start hiking towards Cotopaxi Volcano. Cotopaxi is the highest active volcano in the world and its refuge is as high as the highest mountain in Western Europe. The hike will take 4 hours uphill until we reach the refuge at 4.800 m / 15,744 ft. The hut stands at the highest altitude reached during our trip. With luck we will be able to enjoy the sun setting over the surrounding peaks. Return to Quito.



**Activity:** 4 hours trekking up / Drive back to Quito



**Transportation:** Private van or jeep transfer



**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

---

**Important:** Please note that this itinerary is a guideline only. We will do every effort to follow it, but in case of unforeseen circumstances we may have to make changes.

## Got Questions?

Please feel free to contact us at:

info@andeanface.com | +593 2 245 6135

[www.andeanface.com](http://www.andeanface.com)