

16-DAY ADVENTURE

PEAKS OF ECUADOR

Ecuador

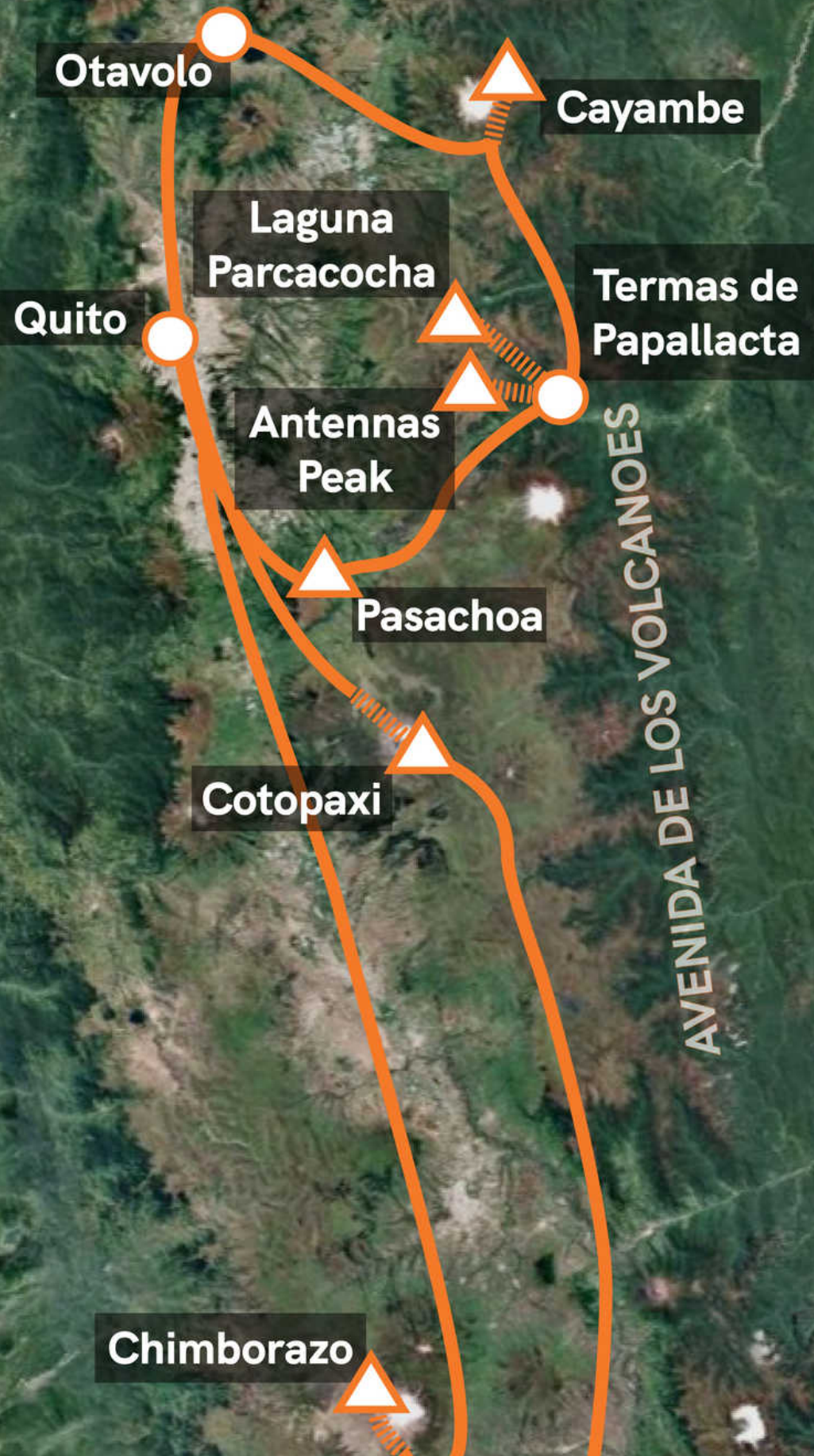


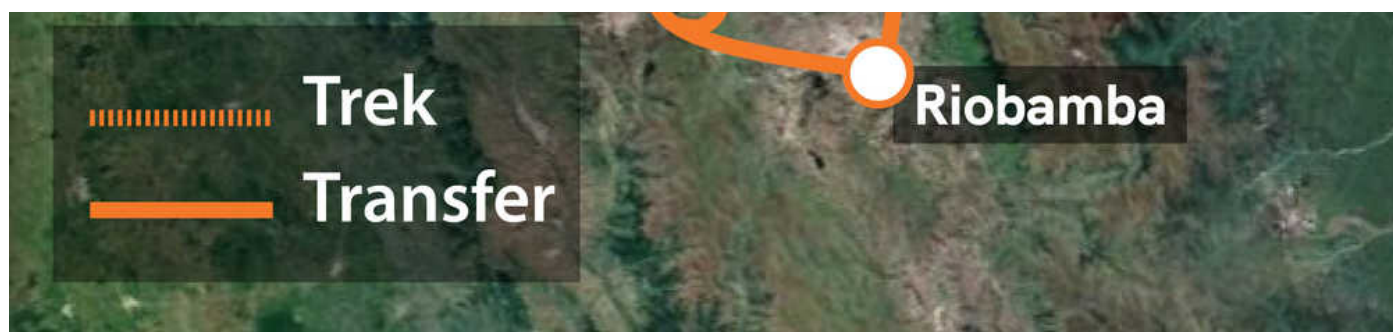
A combination of Ecuador's finest; the crème de la crème of volcanic climbs, providing a gritty, engaging experience from the ashen, scree covered lower slopes to the crusty, snow-capped peaks. Climb the triple crown in Ecuador; Cotopaxi, Cayambe and Chimborazo. A tough challenge in which you will reach the summit of the highest point - from core to summit - on earth! Gradually acclimatise as you embark on this journey from the lower peak of Cayambe, to the picturesque slopes of Cotopaxi and up the dizzying heights of Chimborazo, standing at 6310m. These giants dominate the Ecuadorian skylines and are a great challenge for those who have trekked to altitude before and are looking for their next adventure.

TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

- Summit Ecuador's three highest volcanic peaks - Cayambe, Cotopaxi and Chimborazo
- Take on a true alpine adventure on the only glacier lying on the equator line
- In preparation, relax your muscles in the Termas de Papallacta hot springs
- Trip fully carbon offset as standard

KANDOO ADVENTURES





ITINERARY

DAY 1

WELCOME TO QUITO!

Welcome to Quito! Declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1978, the city is considered the cultural capital of South America and is located on the equator in a valley at the foothills of the Pichincha volcano. Depending on our arrival time, we can spend today exploring the old town of Quito and the surrounding area. In the evening, one of our trip leaders will meet us at the hotel's lobby for a welcome briefing at 6pm. This is a time to ask any questions we may have regarding our upcoming adventure.

Transport: **Private transfer**

Accommodation: **Hotel**

DAY 2

QUITO ACCLIMATISATION AND CITY TOUR

Explore a truly unique experience in the heart of Quito city and discover its history from the eyes of the locals, walking around its narrow streets and visiting the iconic, architectural buildings of the Golden Church, San Francisco Square and the Main Square. We then attend Luis' local workshop "Cruz Verde". Luis is a well known artisan whose family has prepared the local candy "Colaciones" for the last 100 years, keeping alive Quito's timeless tradition. For lunch, we will have the opportunity to sit with the locals and enjoy a tasty meal, freshly prepared using local products and flavours.

Accommodation: **Hotel**

Meals included: **Breakfast**

DAY 3

PASOCHOA CLIMB AND HOT SPRINGS

We'll leave Quito this morning by car, heading south for the Avenida de los Volcanoes. During this drive we enjoy beautiful views of the typical Ecuadorian landscape, villages and highlands. The ascent of this extinct volcano will take us around 4 hours. Once on the top, we'll have some lunch at an incredible viewpoint which looks out over Cotopaxi and the other nearby volcanoes. We conclude our day at Termas de Papallacta and recharge in the volcanic hot springs, high up in the midst of the Andes.

Hiking time: **4 hours**

Ascent: **160 m**

Descent: **160 m**

Max. altitude: **4040 m**

Accommodation: **Termas de Papallacta**

Meals included: **Breakfast**

DAY 4

PARACOCHA LAKE

Today we wake early and are out by 7am to visit the Virgin of Papallacta before enjoying a scenic trek up through the rolling mountains beyond. From the top, we are treated to a beautiful Andean panorama, where gentle peaks are interspersed with hidden lagoons. The Agua y Vida Trek is part of the Cayambe Coca National Park and the higher levels of rainfall in this region provide a natural water reservoir that feeds the city of Quito. We visit the lagoon areas of the Negra, Paracocha, and Miraculous Waterfalls before returning to Termas de Papallacta for the night.

Hiking time: **5 hours**

Ascent: **800 m**

Max. altitude: **4100 m**

Accommodation: **Termas de Papallacta**

Meals included: **Breakfast**

DAY 5

HIKE TO ANTENNAS PEAK

Another day of acclimatisation and training awaits us today. Also known as "Papallacta Peak", this trek ascends to just over 4300 meters, within the Cayambe-Coca reserve, along a path lined with alpine shrubbery. Throughout our trek we are surrounded by small lakes, lagoons and natural hot springs that we can enjoy to break up the day.

Hiking time: **5 hours**

Ascent: **200 m**

Max. altitude: **4300 m**

Accommodation: **Guesthouse**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 6

GLACIER SKILLS ON CAYAMBE

After breakfast, we will take a private transfer to the Ruales-Oleas-Berge Hut, that is nestled on the lower scree slopes of Cayambe. Here we partake in a glacier training, to prepare us for our summit of Cayambe volcano. Our guide will run through snow and ice climbing techniques, climbing in a roped team on a glacier and crevasse rescue. We then return to our guesthouse this evening to prepare our bags for the following days climb.

Hiking time: **4 hours**

Ascent: **300 m**

Descent: **300 m**

Max. altitude: **4800 m**

Accommodation: **Guesthouse**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 7

PREPARATION AT CAYAMBE REFUGE

After breakfast, we continue with our glacier training, going over ice and snow anchorages, rappel and crevasse self-rescue. We then retreat to the Refuge to prepare our equipment for the next day's ascent and get an early night.

Hiking time: **4 hours**

Ascent: **300 m**

Descent: **300 m**

Max. altitude: **4800 m**

Accommodation: **Cayambe Refuge**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 8

CAYAMBE SUMMIT (5790M)

Around midnight we will get up, have a snack and set off up the route to the summit of Cayambe. The path begins by scrambling over large boulders, before steepening to the base of the glacier. Here we will rope up and get out our axes and crampons before beginning the slow plod, up through rocky snow fields, that give way to smooth glacier. It will take us around 7 hours to reach the summit, arriving for sunrise. If we are lucky we may even be treated to a glorious cloud inversion, before beginning the descent back to the Refuge. This will take us approximately 4 hours and once back, we hop into our vehicle and head on to Otavolo, where we can rest and recuperate after our first full-on day.

Hiking time: **10 - 12 hours**

Ascent: **1290 m**

Descent: **1290 m**

Max. altitude: **5790 m**

Accommodation: **Guesthouse**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 9

OTAVALO MARKET – COTOPAXI NATIONAL PARK

Today we will head into Otavalo to visit its colourful, indigenous market where we'll have the chance to try out our haggling skills and buy some souvenirs to remember our trip. Then we will continue South along the Panamerican highway to Cotopaxi National Park, where we check in to our hotel for tonight.

Transport: **Private transfer**

Accommodation: **Hotel**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 10

HIKE TO COTOPAXI REFUGE

This morning we will drive to the carpark at the base of Cotopaxi, which lies at 4864m. From there, we will trek for another hour, ochre hues of volcanic ash underfoot, before reaching the Jose Ribas Refuge (4862m). Here we'll do some recapping on the glacier before we have supper and prepare for our ascent the following day.

Hiking time: **1 hour**

Ascent: **250 m**

Max. altitude: **4864 m**

Accommodation: **Cotopaxi Refuge**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 11

COTOPAXI SUMMIT (5897M)

Rising once again at midnight, we begin our climb, which will take us around 7 hours. The hiking on Cotopaxi is much less technical than that on Cayambe, making it more accessible and therefore more popular. Upon reaching the top, we'll have a marvellous view of the snow covered crater and surrounding peaks; with a diameter of 800m, this sulfuric hollow provides a unique summit experience. Returning to the refuge by midday we head to our hotel, not far from the base of the volcano.

Hiking time: **9 - 11 hours**

Ascent: **1035 m**

Max. altitude: **5897 m**

Accommodation: **Hotel**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 12

AVENIDA DE LOS VOLCANOES – RIOBAMBA

Early this morning, we will drive through valleys and farming villages to reach Chimborazo, the highest mountain in Ecuador with an elevation of 6310m; whose summit is also the furthest point from the centre of the earth on the entire planet. On a clear day, the majestic peak of Chimborazo dominates the view of the surrounding area.

Upon arrival in this region, we will embark on a short 1 km acclimatisation hike to reach an elevation of 5000m where the glacier begins. We keep our eyes peeled for the animals that inhabit this volcanic wonderland such as the Andean condor, Cara-Cara, Hummingbirds, and the timid Vicuñas. Once extinct in Ecuador, Vicuñas have been reintroduced and are now a protected species; although much shyer, they bear a striking resemblance to their close relatives - alpacas and llamas.

Hiking time: **1 hour**

Ascent: **150 m**

Descent: **150 m**

Max. altitude: **5000 m**

Accommodation: **Hotel**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 13

TREK TO CASTLE CAMP

This morning we are transferred to the Hermanos Carrel refuge at 4800m where we begin our climb. From the refuge, we ascend a steep scree slope on mixed terrain, picking our way between larger boulders and loose sections, with the Thielman glacier towering over us above. Depending on weather we may need to use our crampons for some sections of this. We then traverse towards a col, at 5300m, next to which proudly stands a rocky outcrop called 'El Castillo' or 'the castle'. Dropping just below this we reach our high camp at 5300m, where a delicious hot tea awaits us. Here we will have the opportunity to relax and prepare the equipment for the ascent, dinner and rest.

Hiking time: **3 hours**

Ascent: **500 m**

Max. altitude: **5300 m**

Accommodation: **Camping**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 14

CHIMBORAZO SUMMIT (6310M)

Shortly after midnight, we get up and have a cup of hot tea and a snack. Well prepared and well acclimatized, we begin the ascent to the highest peak in Ecuador. From our camp, we climb along the glaciated ridgeline, that becomes increasingly wider as we get closer to the lower summit of Chimborazo. Just before this summit, the ridge steepens to around 35 degrees and offers up some icy sections and crevasses, increasing the challenge somewhat. We then traverse across several flat topped mushrooms and on to Veintimilla summit (6310m).

From Veintimilla summit, it is approximately 1 hours climb, wading through a snow filled glacial trough, to reach Whymper's summit at 6310m. Standing atop the summit, we take in the incredible views, before making our descent back down the way we have come. The further along the day it is, the higher likelihood of crevasse danger in the glacial trough between the two summits, so dependant on the progress of the group, our guide may choose to descend from Veintimilla instead.

Hiking time: **10 - 12 hours**

Ascent: **1010 m**

Descent: **1460 m**

Max. altitude: **6310 m**

Accommodation: **Hotel**

Meals included: **Breakfast / Lunch**

DAY 15

RETURN TO QUITO

Today we will take our private transfer back to Quito and have a leisurely evening in the city or our hotel.

Transport: **Private transfer**

Accommodation: **Hotel**

Meals included: **Breakfast**

DAY 16

DEPARTURE

Today we are wished a "buen viaje" and transferred to the airport for our onwards flights.

Transport: **Private transfer**

Meals included: **Breakfast**

PLEASE NOTE

Please be aware that some of the volcanoes we are summiting are still active and therefore, should they be in an active state of eruption during your trip, we will climb the alternative peaks of Illiniza and Antisana instead.

TRIP INFORMATION

DIFFICULTY

This trip is given a **tough challenge** rating because it is one of the hardest challenges we offer. With 3 glacial peaks over 5000m to summit, a significant amount of grit and determination is going to be necessary to complete this adventure. Although none of the peaks have any technical climbing, there will be sections of scrambling and areas where you will be roped together for safety.

On Cayambe, climbing through rough, uneven terrain and traversing crevasse fields makes the ascent probably the most technically challenging of all three peaks, however sitting at a lower altitude reduces the effects of altitude related sickness. Cotopaxi is the most accessible and therefore most popular peak, which makes it a good mood booster before attempting the giant that is Chimborazo. Chimborazo poses several challenges including glacier travel, a multiday ascent and the risks associated with climbing at high altitude.

To prepare for this trip we would recommend gaining some experience using ice axes and crampons. It is important that all team members are able to complete basic glacier self-rescue techniques however, you will be given training on these prior to embarking on any of the glacial sections of the trip. We would also recommend spending lots of time out in the mountains on uneven terrain. You will be hiking for multiple consecutive days and taking in over 1000m ascent in a day so it is important that your body is prepared for this.

FOOD & DRINK

In Ecuador, expect to try a whole host of exotic foods and spices as we travel through various different regions. From the traditional foods of toasted corn and stuffed meats, to the more trendy spicy empanadas and citrus-infused cerviche the cuisine here is delicious! The guesthouses and smaller hotels we stay in will provide hearty, generous meals and in the larger cities you will have the choice of local restaurants or hotel favourites. Drinks are not included with dinner, so please make sure you have some cash with you for any drinks you may want. Please also be aware that hotels in small villages and towns may not accept card payments.

In the smaller hotels, breakfasts will generally consist of a selection of fruit, bread, eggs, spreads and yoghurt. Packed lunches will be provided by the hotel or guesthouse and will range from rice and beans to sandwiches, fruit and pastries. You will carry your lunch items with you in your daysack. Remember to bring your favourite snacks (cereal or energy bars, dried fruits, chocolate) with you to keep you going through the day.

Water in Ecuador isn't necessarily safe to drink. We provide water bottle refills every morning and evening from a filtered water source, if you think you will need to refill your bottle during the day, we suggest you bring a water purification system. We do not encourage the purchase of single use plastic bottles so we would recommend either a charcoal filter or purification tablets to make your water safe to drink.

ACCOMMODATION

Your full day by day itinerary shows what is included in terms of accommodation and meal basis. All of our pre- and post- climb accommodation is based in Quito. Where your hotel basis is B&B, you can usually purchase snacks or meals at the hotel, which can be paid in US Dollars. When you arrive at the hotel, take a moment to familiarise yourself with the layout and the procedures in the event of a fire, especially your escape routes and fire exits.

On this trip we will stay in a range of accommodation. For some of the nights in the valleys between mountain days we will be staying in family run guesthouses or Hosteria. These are small, simple hotels with basic twin or double rooms. Most of the guesthouses we use have en-suite rooms however, dependant on the location, some have shared bathrooms.

Whilst on the volcanoes, we spend nights in mountains refuges and camping. Mountain refuges are basic mixed gender dormitory style rooms, with shared amenities such as dining area and toilet facilities. These are not designed to be luxury quarters and we recommend bringing ear plugs particularly for these nights. The beds all have thick mattresses and we will provide you with a warm, 4 season Husky sleeping bag as temperatures can reach -15 in the huts. For your night camping at "El Castillo" on Chimborazo, you will be staying in high altitude mountain tents, to ensure you stay warm, dry and comfortable. Please bear in mind, these are proper mountain tents, designed to cope with extreme conditions so don't expect to be able to stand up and walk around inside! We will provide you with a sleeping mat and sleeping bag for your night camping. You will take your meals in a group dining tent.

YOUR GUIDE

You will have an English speaking local guide with you for the duration of your trip to Ecuador. They will be joined by qualified, experienced mountain guides for your summit attempts. On summit nights, you will have a 1:2 guide to client ratio.

LUGGAGE

On this trip you have a maximum luggage allowance of 2 x 23kg bags. We recommend using soft 80-100L duffel bags.

Your bags will be transported by vehicle between locations, and you will carry a smaller 30-40L daysack on your treks each day.

On your Chimborazo climb, you will leave your main bag in the vehicle, which will stay at the refuge. For your climb to Castle Camp, on to the summit, then descending back to the refuge, you will be carrying all your personal equipment in your daysack - this will include some warm layers, snacks, camera, basic toiletries and water. Everything else will be provided for you at Castle Camp.

HOW DO I GET THERE?

Please do not book your international flight until you have confirmation from Kandoo staff that your booking is guaranteed.

You will need to fly into Mariscal Sucre International Airport (UIO) in Quito on Day 1 of your trip.

For US travellers, there are direct flights to Mariscal Sucre airport with American Airlines, LATAM and Delta from Miami and Atlanta. They also offer services from other main hubs such as New York, San Francisco and Dallas, via Miami. Copa Airlines also offer a service to Quito via Panama from San Francisco and Los Angeles.

From the UK, Delta offer flights from London Heathrow via Atlanta (ATL) and Iberia and British Airways have flights via Madrid (MAD) from all London airports. For UK guests who live further north, KLM have flights via Amsterdam (AMS) from Manchester, Glasgow, Birmingham and other main hubs.

Upon arrival at the airport, once you have exited the Arrivals area, keep an eye out for our driver who will be waiting to meet you. Our hotel is a 50 minute drive from the airport.

Travelling Responsibly

Here at Kandoo, we like to support our guests to make their travel more sustainable. As of 2025, we are offsetting the carbon on all of our trips from arrival in destination to dropping you back off at the airport. As we don't include flight travel in our trips these aren't included in our offsetting calculations, so we are providing you with the calculator below for you to do this yourselves.

[eC02 Flights Calculator](#)

PRE-TREK BRIEFING

It is a requirement of joining any of our trips that you attend a pre-trek briefing the evening before the trip begins. This gives our guide team the opportunity to review the plans for the trip with you, make sure you have all the right gear and answer any questions you may have. The briefing in Quito is held the at 6pm the evening before the trip begins in the hotel lobby. Should you arrive on a late flight, you will have your briefing on the morning of Day 2.

BUDGET & CHANGE

The main currency in Ecuador is the **US Dollar** (USD). These can be easily exchanged before travelling. It is very important that US bills be new (no more than 10 years old), crisp and untorn. You will also be able to exchange money upon arrival in Quito. Most hotels, banks and exchange bureaus will exchange money for you and our guides are happy to assist you to do this. Please note that whilst you are out of the big cities there won't be anywhere for you to exchange money, so we would recommend doing this before leaving Quito. Credit cards are accepted in most restaurants and shops in the cities however in the smaller towns and villages they will be useless, so please make sure to have some cash on you as well. If you are relying on a credit or debit card for emergency funds, make sure you tell your card issuer that you will be using it abroad, or you may find that it won't work when you really need it.

Depending on how many souvenirs you want to buy, we would suggest a recommended budget of US\$300 to \$350.

TIPS

Tipping is typically not expected in Ecuador, but is appreciated. The amount you tip should be based on the level of service you feel you have received and is completely voluntary. In restaurants and bars there is an official 10% service tax. For your trip crew, the decision on how much to tip should be determined by how well they serve you whilst you are on your adventure but the amounts below are a recommendation:

Guides: US\$10 – 20 per trekker per day

Drivers: US\$5 – 10 per trekker per day

Specialist mountain guides: US\$50 per person per climb

Specialist mountain guides will join you for the climbs. Any tip made to them should be made after your climb as you will leave them after the climb has ended.

Tips should be made in US Dollars and bills should be crisp, untorn and less than 10 years old.

FORMALITIES & HEALTH

PASSPORT

Most travellers require a passport that is valid for at least six months after the return date. It is your responsibility to confirm your specific passport requirements and please be aware that proof of onwards travel may be required. You can check your requirements on the website provided by the Ecuadorian government.

VISA

United States and UK passport holders do not require a visa to enter Ecuador. On arrival you will be granted a maximum 90 day stay in the country. This information may be subject to change, without notice, by the local authorities. It is your responsibility to check the latest travel requirements and information before departure.

VACCINATIONS

The World Health Organisation recommend the following vaccinations for travel to Ecuador:

Tetanus
Hepatitis A
Hepatitis B
Diphtheria
Typhoid
Rabies

Yellow Fever - This is necessary for all citizens of Peru, Bolivia, Columbia and Brazil and for any guests who have spent 10+ days in these countries prior to their Ecuador trip. It is also necessary if travelling from a country with Yellow Fever or transiting through one for 12+ hours.

It is your responsibility to check the latest health information before travelling.

INSURANCE

Before you can join any Kandoo Adventures trek, you will need to insure yourself against accident, injury, and illness. Your insurance must cover the cost of rescue and repatriation if necessary. Make sure your insurer knows of your travel plans, and verify that your policy fully covers your trek and any other activities you will participate in. Specifically, for our Peaks of Ecuador trip, you need to be covered for trekking up to 6500m and for our Volcanic Adventures trip you need to be covered for trekking up to 6000m. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are fully and adequately insured for the duration of your trip. Please ensure that all activities, excursions and destinations in your itinerary are included in your travel insurance policy, in addition to your regular cover for cancellation and medical expenses.

We ask that you keep a copy of your policy summary (containing policy number and the emergency contact number for your insurer) in your day sack at all times, so that we can access this information should we need to contact the insurer on your behalf. You will also need to bring details of your insurance cover to the pre-trek briefing.

HEALTH

Malaria

There is low to no risk of malaria in any of the regions we operate in Ecuador. When the risk is low to none, antimalarials are not normally advised.

MEDICATION

Your guide will carry a group first aid kit, however you will also need a personal first aid kit to include - tape, antiseptic wipes, assorted plasters, wound dressings, lip balm, re-hydration sachets, blister dressings, antihistamines, pain killers, Vaseline.

EQUIPMENT & CLOTHING

EQUIPMENT SUPPLIED BY KANDOO ADVENTURES

For this trip you will need specialist climbing equipment. We provide the following equipment as part of your trip package. This equipment is regularly checked and updated to meet regulations.

- Ropes
- Ice Axe
- Crampons
- Helmet
- Harness
- 2 x locking carabiners

Please note: we do not provide stiff boots (B2 or B3) for this trip so you will need to bring your own

As well as climbing kit, we also provide you with:

- Husky sleeping bag - rated to -20 degrees
- Black Diamond trekking poles

CLOTHING TO BRING

HEADGEAR

- Warm beanie style hat – knitted or fleece
- Neck gaiter or scarf. It can get very cold in the upper reaches of the volcanoes. A scarf or balaclava comes in useful as a warm layer for your neck and face!
- Sun hat – preferably wide-brimmed for protection
- Sunglasses – high UV protection
- Headlamp (plus extra batteries)
- Ski goggles – to protect against spindrift in high winds

UPPER BODY

- Thermal or fleece base layer
- Long sleeve shirt/tshirts – light or medium weight, sun shirts work well
- Short sleeved shirt/tshirts – lightweight, moisture wicking
- Fleece or soft shell jacket
- Thin insulated jacket/midlayer
- Thick insulated jacket – down or primaloft
- Water/windproof hard shell outer jacket
- Gloves – lightweight, fleece or quick drying fabric
- Gloves – heavyweight, insulated, preferably water resistant
- Over mittens – with safety straps
- Swimming costume – for use in hot springs

LEGS

- Leggings – thermal or fleece base layer
- Trekking trousers – light or medium weight – convertible trousers work well
- Waterproof hard shell trousers
- Gaiters

FEET

- Climbing boot – insulated, stiff-soled (B2 or B3)
- Trekking boots – with good ankle support
- Training shoe or similar – to wear in the evenings
- Mid-weight trekking socks
- Breathable, high-wicking liner socks
- Thermal trekking socks for upper reaches of your climbs

EQUIPMENT TO BRING

TREKKING GEAR

- Small Rucksack or Daypack (30-40 litres) to carry water and personal items
- Water bottle or hydration bag – must be able to carry 1.5-2L of water
- Water purification system - a charcoal filter or chlorine tablets will work well

CLIMBING GEAR

- B2 or B3 Boots

OTHER ACCESSORIES

- Sleeping bag liner
- Sunscreen and lip balm - high SPF
- Toiletries, including toilet paper, wet wipes and hand sanitiser
- Camera and spare batteries
- Plug adapter, for charging devices in hotels
- Personal medication and first aid kit
- Personal snacks and energy bars – dried fruit and nuts are a good option
- Isotonic drink powder / energy drink powder to mix in with your water
- Microfibre towel for wiping hands and face each day

HOW TO BOOK THIS TRIP

1 CHOOSE YOUR DATE AND CHECK AVAILABILITY

A full list of available dates can be found on our website.

2 CONTACT US

Contact us by phone, email or through our website. We will answer any questions you may have and send you a personalized itinerary and quote.

3 COMPLETE BOOKING AND PAYMENT

When you are ready to book, we will send you a link to our online booking forms and participation agreements. We accept all major credit and debit cards and require a low 20% deposit to secure your place.

