



**MOUNTAINEERING EXPEDITIONS**

**ECUADOR — COTOPAXI / CAYEMBE**

(19,347 feet /  
5,897 meters)

(18,997 feet /  
5,790 meters)

**OPEN ENROLLMENT**

**January 10<sup>th</sup>- 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015** COTOPAXI \$2,995 non-members, \$2,745 members

**January 18<sup>th</sup>- 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2015** CAYEMBE \$850 (Add-On)

Ten volcanoes in Ecuador rise above 5,000 meters (16,400 feet), three of which are still active (Cotopaxi, Sangay & Tungurahua). Nine of these peaks are glaciated, requiring technical mountaineering skills to ascend even their easiest routes. Ecuador is perhaps the best place in the world to develop high altitude mountaineering skills. The challenges you face in this expedition will build a foundation for you to ascend peaks in the high mountain regions throughout the world.

Earth Treks' skills development expedition focuses on ascending Cotopaxi (19,347 feet / 5,897 meters), Ecuador's second highest peak. Standing above several smaller peaks, it is one of the most beautiful and awe-inspiring mountains in the world. Cotopaxi is also one of the world's highest active volcanoes, last erupting in 1942. Most mountaineers agree -- this is one of the finest summit views in the world.

Earth Treks has led well over 150 expeditions since 1990. We have gone to great lengths in the selection of our guides, many of whom have scaled mountains in remote regions throughout the world, including Everest and K2. We are a company based in expeditionary learning, and we incorporate time in our courses to teach specific skills to give people an experience that is not purely guided. In essence – YOU help make the experience. We take pride in the fact that our summit success in Ecuador is due to our attention to detail, executing time-proven formulas.

Hard skills during this expedition include: glacier travel, crevasse rescue (Extended expedition only), rope team efficiency, knots, ice axe usage, crampon technique, self-arrest on a glacier, steep ice technique, and may include lessons on glacier morphology, packing, weather and climate. Discussions will also include: high altitude physiology, expedition behavior and medical issues.



It is important for you to understand that your Earth Treks guides will do everything in their power to help you get to the summit, but not without managing the inherent risks associated with climbing. By climbing in small teams led by experienced guides, we maintain the flexibility needed to maximize each person's chances of summiting. It is important to note that your guides will review each individual's skills, endurance and medical background to be certain that each person is fit and healthy enough to take on a challenge of this magnitude. We reserve the right to turn down applications based on health or fitness.



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## Itinerary

**Day 1 Sat Jan 10<sup>th</sup>** Depart the USA and arrive in the capital city of Quito, Ecuador in the evening. Transfer to our hotel. We stay in a small, family-run hotel that is located in the center of the city.

**Day 2 Sun Jan 11<sup>th</sup>**

We start with breakfast and discussions including: introductions, itinerary overview, expectations, acclimatization, hygiene/medical, safety, do's & don'ts and amenities. In the afternoon we will take a few hours to begin our altitude training schedule by taking a tour of the cathedrals, sights and culture of the historic district of Old Town Quito (9,400 feet), gaining views of the surrounding area.

**Day 3 Mon Jan 12<sup>th</sup>**

Our first objective is Paschoa, an extinct volcano which is 13,780 feet/4200 meters. This 6-8 hour hike is partially located on a hacienda and the trek will expose us to a variety of flora and fauna, sure to capture your imagination. The gentle terrain and pastoral surrounding, combined with a scramble to the summit rocks, make this an ideal introduction to Ecuador mountain climbing. In the late afternoon, we will return to our hotel in Quito and prepare for our ascent of Pichincha.

**Day 4 Tues Jan 13<sup>th</sup>**

Our training continues with an ascent of Mt. Pichincha, a 15,413-foot volcano that rises above Quito. Depending on the conditions of the routes and our group, we may ascend this peak via a technical rock ridge with the colorful local name of Ventana de Muerte. This is a very rewarding climb, preparing both our bodies and our minds for the Cotopaxi climb. Our climb ends with a 15-minute gondola ride from a ridge on Pichincha which will expedite our descent to the hotel in Quito.

**Day 5 Wed Jan 14<sup>th</sup>**

The day will be spent arranging our gear for Cotopaxi. Mountain boots & crampons will be fitted, backpacks adjusted, and all equipment on our list double checked to ensure no detail is overlooked prior to heading to the mountains. Quito has a wide array of specialty stores that can handle any last-minute needs. There will also be some time to shop at a local artisans market for handcrafted gifts.

**Day 6 Thurs Jan 15<sup>th</sup>**

Travel to the climber's hut on Cotopaxi (15,744 feet). We will drive to within an hour of the hut and then backpack the last leg, with our gear.

**Day 7 Fri Jan 16<sup>th</sup>**

An early morning skill development class on the glacier of Cotopaxi. We'll learn and practice rope handling, glacier travel, and snow climbing skills. In the afternoon and early evening we will be preparing, resting & sleeping for a midnight departure for the summit.



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## **Itinerary** *(continued)*

### **Day 8 Sat Jan 17<sup>th</sup>**

Starting at midnight, we will climb to the summit of Cotopaxi (19,347 feet), hopefully summiting at dawn. We will be rewarded with awe-inspiring views of the surrounding peaks and the crater of this glaciated volcano. We will then have a 3-hour drive to return to Quito. The day will finish with a well deserved celebratory dinner. Cotopaxi only members will prepare for an early morning departure.

### **Day 9 Sun Jan 18<sup>th</sup>**

Cotopaxi only members depart Quito for home. Your flight will generally depart in the early morning and will have you home by dinner. Extended Ecuador Team members will enjoy a well deserved day of R&R, feasting, clothes washing and perhaps a massage.

### **Day 10 Mon Jan 19<sup>th</sup>**

Transport to the Cayambe Hut (the Ruales-Oleas-Berge refuge - at 15,748 feet/4800 meters – the same as the Cotopaxi refuge), crossing the equator on the way. Cayambe is the tallest mountain on the equator.

### **Day 11 Tues Jan 20<sup>th</sup>**

Skill development will take place on a nearby glacier. Your guides have you exploring inside a crevasse, working on developing your abilities on steep ice terrain such as front-pointing, as well as perfecting various ice axe techniques. In the afternoon we will prepare, rest and sleep for our ascent.

### **Day 12 Wed Jan 21<sup>st</sup>**

Midnight departure for the summit of Cayambe (18,997 feet/5790 meters). This mountain has a rock buttress that starts the climb so our previous training will serve us well on our ascent. We return to Quito in the evening for dinner and packing for those departing the next day.

### **Day 13 Thurs Jan 22<sup>nd</sup>**

Fly Home!





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## Equipment List

We have divided this list into several parts in order to facilitate shopping and packing. Please do not hesitate to call if you have any questions regarding the items on this list. In many cases, while shopping you will be presented with several manufacturers products to choose from. Please consult the sales staff before spending a lot of money on something that might not meet your needs.

While touring in the highlands, we can expect daytime temperatures in the 70's, evening temps in the 50's, and occasional rain showers. While in the mountains, we can expect highs in the 50's and lows of minus 10 degrees. Some clothing and equipment will be used for multiple portions of the trip. Laundry services are available while in the city.

Earth Treks will supply the following: Guides, group climbing gear, group camping gear and first aid supplies. The items marked with an \* are included as part of your expedition. Please complete your application and **indicate your shoe size.**

*These items are hard to find in Quito, save yourself a lot of headaches and money, and bring them from home!*

### CITY / TRAVEL

- T-Shirts
- Shorts
- Long sleeved shirts (at least one suitable for wear in a nice restaurant)
- Long pants
- Underwear
- Socks
- Tennis shoes or walking shoes which are good for extended city walks
- Fleece jacket
- Passport style wallet (worn around neck) or waist belt style wallet
- \$350 to \$500 spending money (restaurant meals, gifts, staff/guide tips)
- Sunglasses (or glacier glasses—see below)
- Baseball hat or visor (be sure the underside of the brim isn't white)

### CLIMBING CLOTHING

- Lightweight balaclava
- Wool/Polarfleece hat
- 2 pairs of lightweight glove liners or wind-stopper fleece gloves (that fit under the mountaineering glove/mitten—see below)
- Mountaineering gloves or mittens insulated enough for the Arctic, i.e. Gore-tex shelled with removable inner liner (DO NOT SKIMP ON THIS ITEM) *Example product: Outdoor Research Alti Gloves or Mitts*
- Gore-tex jacket (pit zip ventilation helpful)



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- Gore-tex breathable pants (side zips helpful)
- 2 pairs of heavy weight wool socks. *Example product: Thorlo or Smartwool brand in mountaineering weight*
- Hiking boots (light to medium weight) *Keen Bryce, Merrel MoAB ventilation 100-V75)*
- Bandanas
- Non-cotton underwear (men- capilene boxers or briefs / women- polypro sports bras, cotton or polypro briefs are ok)
- Silk-weight capilene (or other wicking synthetic) t-shirts
- Quick-dry shorts (can be same as city travel shorts)
- Long underwear (1 pair of mid-weight and 1 pair of expedition weight (100-200 weight or R2), capilene tops and bottoms).
- Down or synthetic filled insulated jacket (lightweight and packable) sized to fit over all of your insulation layers and Gore-tex outer shell. One with an attached hood is highly recommended. *Example products: Patagonia DAS Parka, Mountain Hardware Sub Zero, Marmot Guides Down Hoody*
- Gaiters (Sized to fit over mountain boots.) *Example product: Outdoor Research Crocodiles*

### EQUIPMENT PROVIDED BY EARTH TREKS

*Earth Treks will provide the following \*asterisked\* items but feel free to bring your own if you already have them.*

- 2 Locking carabiners
- Climbing harness (with belay loop and adjustable leg loops)
- Mountaineering boots (if you wish to purchase your own call us for details)
- Ice Axe (approximately 60 to 70 cm length) with a long leash
- Pair of crampons (step-in crampons with anti-balling plates are strongly recommended)

### GENERAL EQUIPMENT

- Passport/Visa. US citizens do not need a visa. International citizens: plan ahead - it may take 2 months to receive your visa. Make sure that your passport expiration date is at least 9 months beyond your departure date. Check with the US Department of State ([www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov)) for details and requirements.
- Backpack (5,000 cubic inch or more) Pack Cover (Optional)
- Compact sleeping bag, with stuffsack, rated to 20 degrees Fahrenheit. No sleeping pad needed.
- Stuff sacks (or plastic bags to help organize your gear)
- Headlamp with spare batteries and bulbs
- 4 Large heavy plastic garbage bags
- 6 Ziplock plastic bags (for books and organizing small items)
- Glacier glasses with strap (should have dark lenses and full side coverage)
- Ski goggles
- Sunblock and lipblock (bring SPF25 or stronger)
- Toilet articles (tooth brush, Pural type handwash, biodegradable soap, wash and dry towelettes, hand towel, shampoo, tampons, multi-vitamins, moisturizing lotion, etc.)



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## Equipment List *(continued)*

- Personal first aid kit (including band aids, ibuprofen, Tylenol, Roloids, Pepto-Bismol tablets, Imodium A-D, moleskin/molefoam and cough drops)
- Personal medications including 500 mg time release Diamox capsules and one course of Ciprofloxin - see your application, general information medical section, for details.
- Ear Plugs (a nice item for sleeping during the afternoon in huts)
- Locks for your luggage
- 6-8 zip-ties for luggage zippers
- Energy Food and Snacks *(see attached Food & Hydration Recommendations list)*
- Hydration System *(see attached Food & Hydration Recommendations list)*

### OPTIONAL ITEMS

- Camera (spare battery, extra media cards, etc)
- Day pack (for city, climbs and hikes; 2000-3500 cubic inch)
- Journal, sketch pad, paperback books, portable music (with replaceable batteries or battery pack)
- Pocket Spanish phrase book and dictionary
- Collapsible/Telescoping ski or trekking poles

### NOTES

Pack all equipment in 2 duffel bags. Make sure that you weigh your bags as most airlines are strict about a 50 lb limit (especially if you are traveling during the post December holiday season). To lock your baggage, use zip-ties or TSA approved locks. Once in the country you can lock your bags with your travel locks. For the climbing portion of the trip, you will carry your gear in your back pack from the road head to the climbers' hut. One of your duffle bags will be used to store any clothing at our hotel that you will not take on the climb.

The amount of fun you will have on this trip is directly proportional to how comfortable you are. The extra dollars and time you spend acquiring quality climbing gear and warm clothing will be your guarantee of comfort.





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## Food and Hydration Recommendations

In the sport of mountaineering, providing your body with the necessary fuel to get to the summit is critical. We recommend the combined use of electrolyte tablets, energy gels and bars such as Nuun tablets, GU gels, Clif Shots, GU Chomps, Clif Shot Bloks, and Clif bars. We particularly like Nuun's special formulation of electrolytes, which help increase the amount of water that's absorbed into the blood stream. Plus, it comes in a "no mess" tablet form that is quick to dissolve and easy to transport. Nuun- [www.nuun.com](http://www.nuun.com), GU- [www.guenergy.com](http://www.guenergy.com), Clif- [www.clifbar.com](http://www.clifbar.com)

These "energy foods" provide a stable release of energy unlike the sugar rush that a candy bar's will. They require very little digestive energy to metabolize, and are designed to be taken with a few sips of water.

**We recommend the following numbers as a minimum per person.**

**Pichincha-** 2 Bars and 2 Gels/ Chomps/ Bloks

**Cotopaxi-** 3 Bars and 8 Gels/ Chomps/ Bloks

**Cayembe-** 3 Bars and 8 Gels/ Chomps/ Bloks

**Chimborazo-** 3 Bars and 8 Gels/ Chomps/ Bloks

**Please Note:** We DO NOT recommend Power Bar brand bars since they are prone to freezing and require larger amounts of water to properly digest. Please experiment with different brands/flavors/textures PRIOR to your expedition to see how your body processes this type of food!

You **WILL NOT** find this type of product in Quito, so it is **IMPERATIVE** that you bring the number you think you are going to need for the expedition.

Earth Treks has found that the use of a Hydration Pack, allowing you to drink on the go, greatly reduces the chances of becoming dehydrated. The hydration system we recommend is a 2 quart hydration pack with an insulated hose. In addition a 1 quart water bottle with an insulated water bottle parka (with a zippered lid) is required.

**Here is the hydration system we strongly recommend:**

- Hydration Pack- *Example product: Camelbak Zoid*
- Quart Water Bottle - *Example product: Nalgene 1 Qt Wide Mouth*
- Water Bottle Parka - Must fully enclose the water bottle, including top.

*Example product: Outdoor Research Water Bottle Parka*

**These items are hard to find in Quito, save yourself a lot of headaches and money, and bring them from home!**

