



ECUADOR : DISCOVERY TRAIL AROUND COTOPAXI VOLCANO YOUR ITINERARY

Come with us enjoy an incredible ride amidst the highest volcanoes of the world! You will approach the summits of the Andean range such as Corazon, Ruminahui, Viudita, Illinizas, Pasochoa and the majestic Cotopaxi.

This trip will give you an authentic taste of "Chagra" (Andean cowboy) life. Each day we ride through the spectacular landscape of the high Andes. The scenery changes day by day as we pass through diverse ecosystems including paramo (high grassland), volcanic Andean environments and the unique cloud forest of Ecuador. Each night, we stay in traditional countryside accommodation ; old haciendas and "tambos" which have been used by riders and other travelers since colonial times.

DAY 1 : EUROPE – QUITO

Welcome at the airport and transfer from airport to the accommodation. Gabriel, the hacienda's "patron" will acquaint visitors with his hacienda in the country side, at 2800 meters! The hacienda will offer to you a new living room area with chimney and rooms with private bathroom and great view on the wonderful Pasochoa's mountain... Dinner and night.

DAY 2

(above 3 hours on horseback)

This morning, you will go to the arena to try out the horses and make sure each rider feels comfortable on his saddle and horse. Today's ride is an acclimatizing ride around the hacienda surroundings. From its top you will be able to enjoy a spectacular sunset view of the Volcano Avenue, your riding area for the following days... Native moorland vegetation enriched with the humidity that rises from the coast provides the most unbelievable landscape and view of Quito and its surrounding valleys of Machachi... This

mountain is a perfect fit for a first day ride on Ecuador's highlands. In the evening, riders will return to the hacienda for dinner. Overnight.



DAY 3

Today, we will have a very special day : we will discover a local Indian market ! As it is located in the small village of Saquisilí, we join it by car. This native's market, one of the biggest of the region takes place each week. We can observe several specialties : animals, fruits, vegetables, herb... during this day, we will meet a lot of



inhabitants! Dinner and night at the Gabriel's hacienda close to Quito.

DAY 4

(riding time : 5 hours)

Today, we get back on our horses and ride towards the west through the dairy farms. Up to 3500 m, we continue behind the Viudita mountain (3800 mts) with the opportunity to ascend to the top! We will have a snack and come back to Hacienda for a late lunch. Afternoon at leisure. Dinner and night at the Gabriel's hacienda.



DAY 5

(4 to 5 hours on horseback)

This morning, we have a special emotion discovering the local cow-boys demonstration and lasso practice : the Chagras! After the lunch at the Hacienda, we leave for a ride to Bomboli cloud forest, located on the skirts of Corazon, near 3500 mts. We could estimate the important biological variety. Then, we will arrive at the Hacienda located at 3000 mts, and will have time for a short walk, and appreciate beautiful orchids, fern trees and guneras before dinner. Dinner and night in a hacienda or camp.

DAY 6

(riding time : above 6 hours)

Today, we leave behind the cloud forest and ascend to the Corazon Volcano up to 4000 meters! From there, we can appreciate the green and fertile Machachi Valley. We can also see the routes that we will take the next day. Crossing

extensive pastures and eucalyptus forests, we initiate the descent toward the valley. After the snack, we continue to the valley. Late afternoon, we arrive for a delicious lunch at the Gabriel's hacienda.

DAY 7

(riding time : 6 hours)

After breakfast we continue the ride towards the Machachi Valley through secondary roads and dairy farms. The opportunity to meet new people and share experiences. For the lunch time, we have our picnic in front of a wonderful view. After this break, we continue our ride to get the new hacienda. Dinner and night.

DAY 8

(7 hours on horseback)

We start our ride from the hacienda, across Mulalo valley, towards east. We will have a break closed to a river. We arrive at the hacienda. Afternoon at leisure with hot spring water at 3600 mts. Dinner and night.

DAY 9

(4 to 5 hours on horseback)

After breakfast we follow our ride to Morro and Quilindaña. We appreciate the change of vegetation from the valley to the paramo with pine forests... Dinner and night at hacienda



DAY 10

(riding time : 8 hours)

Our day ride takes the western direction through the valleys of lava, located in the feet of the



volcano Cotopaxi. We are aroundn 4200 meters in height. Maybe we shall be lucky to meet wild horses... Then, we cross the arms of volcanic rock, today static but which fell down towards the valley when they were in fusion. We reach then the only accommodation of the region for the dinner and the night: a comfortable and warm cottage.

DAY 11

(riding time : 7 to 8 hours)

This morning, we get into the saddle and leave to the plain of Lipiopungo. We have then the sensation to ride on a lunar ground, where we gallop... We pass then on the slopes of Ruminahui, the highest point of our trail: 4200 meters in height! We follow then through green valley Machachi to the city of Aloag, before joining the hacienda for a good dinner and a last evening of rest.



DAY12 - QUITO

This morning we leave the hacienda to each Quito for visiting the city : old city with its churches and museums. Lunch included. We have a dinner in a restaurant. Overnight at the hotel



DAY 13 : QUITO – EUROPE

Transfer to the airport according to your flight.