



20 Days

Ecuador

Andean Condor Expedition

Ecuador maybe less visited than its neighbour Peru, but don't be fooled, its small size is perfectly formed for a great adventure. With high snow capped mountains, lush rainforests, traditional Andean and Amazonian cultures and a range of adrenalin filled activities that rivals anywhere in the world, Ecuador is bursting with expedition opportunity. This three week expedition delves deep into all these highlights, with a short trek, time spend canoeing and rafting in the Amazon and a community project high in the Paramo. Our Ecuadorian expedition leaders will show you their homeland and let you in on her secrets.



Recommended expedition itinerary

Day
1

Fly UK to Quito

Transfer in Quito from airport to hotel.

Day
2

Full day in Quito, cookery class

Today we start our Andean expedition with a mixture of activities including visiting the equator where you can have one foot in each hemisphere, and exploring Quito itself with its backdrop of the Andes. For some fun we'll head to one of the oldest bakeries in the city to see how the iconic quesadilla is made. We sample traditional flavours which have been perfected over generations, and enjoy some hands on cooking experience!

Day
3

Quito - Hot Springs (Papallacta) - Tena

Heading towards the Napo province we stop off at a hot springs resort. It's a great way to break the journey and we spend a couple of hours soaking in the divine thermal pools that range in temperature from frigid to steaming hot. After, we carry on to Tena, one of the best spots in Ecuador for adventurous activities in the stunning Andean foothills. The scenery around here is breath taking. We stay in a jungle lodge with a pool for everyone to relax and unwind at the end of today's travels.

Day
4

White water rafting

One of the highlights in the trip, we head to the Jatunyacu River, which is considered one of Ecuador's best one-day river runs. After a safety briefing, our white water rafting adventure begins. We'll pass indigenous communities that live along the shores in small bamboo and wood houses. The Jatunyacu is famed for its big waves, fun holes, and high water volume (Class III - III+). An action packed day. Overnight back in our jungle lodge in Tena.

Day
5-6

Tena, canoeing, trekking & Huaorani tribal visit

Situated in the Amazon basin we spend the day travelling out in canoes in the Napo River system learning about local traditions, such as how many of the rainforest plants are used in medicines and also learn about Huaorani history and culture. There will also be lots of opportunity for swimming to cool off along the way. We enjoy a full day with the Huaorani Community learning about their life and use of the forest.

Day
7

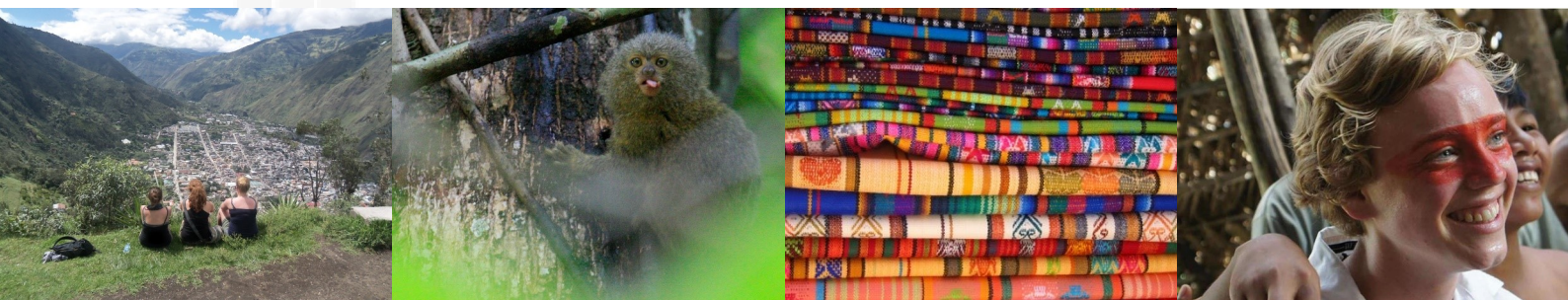
Banos

After Breakfast we drive for 2 ½ hours to Baños, a beautiful colonial town where the rainforest meets the highlands at an altitude of 5,000 feet (1,500 meters). We spend the afternoon exploring the town.

Day
8

Multi-activity day

Get ready for a full day of adventure: cable car ride, canyoning and mountain biking. In the late afternoon we will go to a view point to witness the Tungurahua volcanic activity.





Baños – Riobamba – Casa Condor

Day
9

In the morning, we drive to Riobamba. This is an especially scenic route, with high rock walls giving way to deep cloud forest canyons. Along the way, we will pass by gorgeous waterfalls, and we explore some of the area's most famous falls including Pailón del Diablo (Devil's Cauldron) and Manto de la Novia (Bride's Veil). We continue our journey towards the Chimborazo Volcano, Ecuador's highest mountain at 6310 meters. We arrive at our Andean volunteer project in time for a delicious welcome dinner. The project manager will give us an overview of the project and explain how environmentally, socially, and culturally significant our volunteer work is.

Day
10-12

Community volunteer program in Casa Condor:

We will be living and working in a fascinating community in the Andean paramo where the houses are built out of mud and bamboo. We will assist with reforestation, helping with the construction of a school or similar community projects. Reforestation is especially important in this region of the Andes because deforestation and the introduction of non-native trees such as pine and eucalyptus are creating terrible erosion problems, which can cause mudslides and ruin farmland.

Day
13-14

Hike Hacienda Releche in Sangay National Park & El Altar Nature Reserve

After a wholesome breakfast, we hike up Altar valley to 3,900 meters. The change in vegetation as we gain altitude is incredible. We walk through grassy paramo fields amongst striking local flowers, including the Andean Orchid, Chuquirahuas and Muyas. After dinner we will be listening to the legends of the local indigenous people.

Day
15

Laguna Amarilla Crater Lake

After breakfast, hike for approximately 4 hours until we reach the extinct volcanic crater of Laguna Amarilla at 4,200 meters. Vertical walls and breath-taking glacier formations engulf this amazing yellow lake. Later in the afternoon we hike back to our camp and enjoy our last evening under the stars.

Day
16

Return hike & transfer to Riobamba

With horses to help us carry our equipment, we'll make our way back down to Hacienda Releche, where our vehicle will be waiting to drive us back to Riobamba for dinner and overnight.

Day
17

Devil's Nose train ride

This is not your average train journey! We depart very early in the morning to the Alausi Terminal to catch the train to discover the 'Devil's Nose' - an amazing series of zig-zags down one of the world's most unique train tracks. Arrive at Sibambe Station where we will have time to visit the Condor Puñuna Centre. Then we board the train again to Alausí and head north to Cotopaxi. Dinner and overnight at a traditional Hacienda.

Day
18

Biking

Today we head off on two wheels in the spectacular surroundings of Cotopaxi Volcano before heading back to Quito for a farewell dinner.

Day
19-20

Transfer out

Transfer out of Quito to the airport in time for our overnight flight back to the UK.

Further information

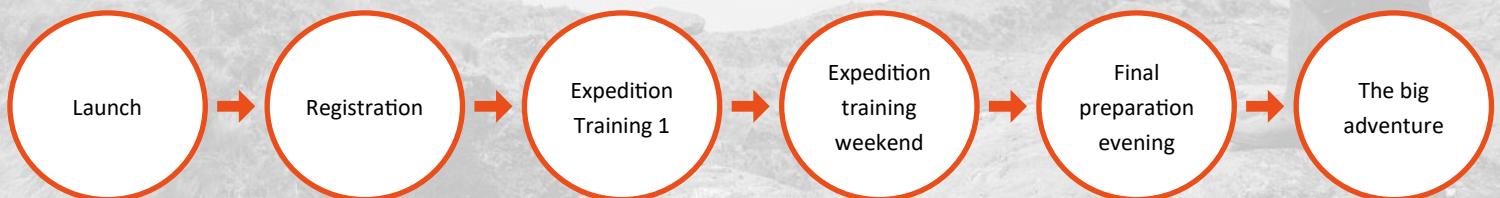
Look what's included!

- International flights
- All accommodation
- All food
- All transportation and activities
- Bi-lingual, first-aid qualified local expedition leader
- Parent and student expedition launch evening
- Comprehensive pre-expedition training programme
- 1-day offsite safety INSET day for staff
- ATOL financial protection
- Medical Emergency / Repatriation Travel Insurance
- Group first aid kit and prescription meds pack
- BS8848 safety management and risk assessments
- Detailed pre-departure information and kit lists
- Comprehensive teacher travel packs
- Permanent operations team in your destination
- 24-hour UK operational support whilst overseas
- Carbon offsetting of all flights
- Free t-shirt for every participant and teacher

What's excluded?

- Transport to airport in UK
- Drinks (advice will be given on purification of water)
- Visas or tourist cards if required
- Any required inoculations
- Personal spending money
- Tips for guides, drivers and porters
- Airport departure taxes paid locally
- Cancellation and personal effects insurance

Your expedition timeline



Physical expedition rating:

● ● ● ● ○ 4/5

Fitness is important at this grade, which compares to extended walking in mountainous terrain such as the Lakes or Snowdonia, for up to three to five days in a row. It is likely that significant sections of a trip will involve walking and trekking with some days up to eight hours. Some of the trip could be at altitudes of up to 4,500m, but the itinerary will be designed with appropriate acclimatisation in mind. Be prepared for significant possible variations in temperatures throughout the tour. There is not usually time to 'get fit' on these treks, so a two to four month fitness improvement programme would ensure you get the most out of the trip.

Culture shock rating:

● ● ● ○ ○ 3/5

Students should expect some culture shock. You'll be exposed to signs of poverty. The food will be quite different to home and English, whilst still spoken, will be less prevalent. Respecting the local culture will make it easier to fit in and get the most out of your trip. We're likely to visit remoter locations on this tour where access to western style services may be sporadic. Often on trips of this grading there are parts of the itinerary which are more remote, interspersed with sections which are more 'comfortable'.

A journey of 1,000 miles...

Starts with a single step... Contact us now to start your expedition journey

1 Get your tailor-made proposal and further information

If this itinerary doesn't quite scratch your expedition itch then let us tailor-make one for you. Our wealth of experience and expert in-country contacts means we can design an itinerary just for you. Contact us for more information and a detailed quote.

2 Ask for risk assessments and marketing materials

We can provide initial risk assessments and destination threat assessments to help you with your expedition approval process. Ask for posters and your pre-booking information pack too.

3 Arrange an expedition launch evening at your school

This is a chance for students and parents to hear more about the expedition with a comprehensive information evening with opportunity for questions.



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