

## Simply Business Avenue Of Volcanoes



Duration: 11 days

The Avenue of the Volcanoes, named in the early 1800s by famous explorer Humboldt, is a volcano-lined corridor stretching south through Ecuador. Many of these towering snow-capped cones are still active.

Between the volcanoes lie verdant valleys of tropical forest and farmland dotted with indigenous villages; our trek explores this diverse landscape, taking in dramatic canyons and mountain passes over 3000m. Our goal is Quilotoa, a vast volcanic crater known for its vivid turquoise colour lagoon.

With time to acclimatise to the altitude, this is a challenging trek through breathtakingly beautiful landscapes full of colourful Andean culture. Time to explore Quito's colonial old town and relax in hot springs book-end an unforgettable experience.

## DETAILED ITINERARY

### Day 1: Fly London to Quito

Arrive in Quito and transfer to hotel; dinner and trip briefing (time permitting). Night hotel.

### Day 2: Quito

Quito, located close to the equator in the foothills of the Andes, is one of the best-preserved colonial cities in the Americas, and was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site over 40 years ago. We spend the morning exploring the beautiful old town, soaking up the cobbled streets and colonial architecture. In the afternoon, you can explore independently or take the opportunity to visit a foundation supporting local homeless children. At an elevation of 2850m, our bodies will already be acclimatising to the altitude. Night hotel.

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### Day 3: Quito – Cotopaxi National Park

An early start sees us heading out of the city through the Avenue of Volcanoes to Cotopaxi National Park. Cotopaxi is one of the most famous active volcanoes in the world, and Ecuador's second-highest summit. Our warm-up trek takes us onto the slopes of nearby Rumiñahui, an impressive volcano in its own right, where we follow trails uphill from beautiful Limpiopungo Lake towards the central summit of this rocky mountain (its Quichuan name means 'rock face'.) Not only are we rewarded with magnificent views over Cotopaxi's symmetrical snow-capped cone, but, in heading up to approximately 4000m, this trek aids our acclimatisation for the coming week. After descending, we transfer to a hacienda on the outskirts of the Park. Night lodge.

**Trek approx 4-5 hours; total drive approx 2-2.5 hours**

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### Day 4: Cotopaxi National Park – Sigchos – Isinlivi

A short, scenic drive takes us to our trek start point at the small Andean village of Sigchos. Here we set off into increasingly inspiring mountain landscapes, following the dramatic Toachi canyon and passing rural communities living and farming traditionally in the heart of the sierra. A relatively gentle start as we head downhill on good track, but there are more tiring uphill sections after crossing the river. The combination of spectacular scenery and indigenous culture makes this a day packed with 'wow' moments. Night guesthouse (2800m).

**Drive approx 1 hour; trek approx 5-6 hours / 13-14km**

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### Day 5: Isinlivi – Chugchilan

The scenery ramps up a notch or two today, as we continue along the Toachi canyon, passing small villages and following the river for part of our way. Once again, the going gets tougher once we cross the river, with a long ascent which becomes particularly steep at times. We should be well-acclimatised to elevations around 3000m now, but everything is more of an effort at this altitude, so we take it steady. At the top of the steep section we come to another small community, adding colour to the magnificent natural surroundings, and continue more gradually uphill to our friendly accommodation. Night guesthouse (3200m).

**Trek approx 5 – 6 hours / 11km**

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### Day 6: Chugchilan – Quilotoa Crater

We head deeper into the mountains on small trails used for generations by small Andean communities for trading and visiting neighbours; it's still quite common to see local people bartering and exchanging goods and livestock. We descend gently for our final river crossing – marking today's lowest point at around 3000m – and then it's relentlessly uphill trekking for the rest of the day. Most of the gradient is relatively gradual, but it's our most challenging day for most. Our reward comes as we reach the crater rim of Quilotoa, an extinct volcano, with unrivalled views over Quilotoa Lake, which for most of the year is a striking vivid turquoise. We continue around the rim to our last night's accommodation in the mountains. Night guesthouse (3400m).

**Trek approx 5 – 7 hours / 11km**

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## Day 7: Quilotoa Crater – Papallacta Hot Springs

After breakfast, we trek fairly steeply down into the caldera to get a closer view of the lake; the views on the way down are mind-blowingly beautiful. At the bottom, we take some time to enjoy exploring the crater – it's possible to swim in the volcanic water, or rent kayaks (optional), or simply sit and drink in the views. We then tackle the last steep haul to the top again, where there are plenty of options for lunch. Our vehicles then whisk us away to the comfort of our wonderful hotel, where we can relax and celebrate in the volcanic hot springs and admire the views of the majestic mountains and cloudforest that surround it. Night hotel.

**Trek approx. 3 hours; drive approx. 3 hours**

*(Lunch not included)*

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## Day 8: Papallacta - Project Work

Our focus for the next two days will be in practical project work, putting something back into the local community or environment. Exact details will be confirmed once we know the needs of the local communities, and this may be in Quito itself, or the surrounding area. Experience is not necessary, but you should be fit, willing to get involved, and flexible in your expectations. Accommodation in simple hotel/guesthouse, depending on location.

*(Lunch & dinner not included either day)*

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## Day 9: Papallacta - Project Work

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## Day 10: Free time before Flight Departs

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## Day 11: Arrive London

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## WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Scheduled return flights from London
- All accommodation in hotels (twin-share) and fixed camps (dorm-style)
- All in-country transport
- Most meals (exceptions detailed in itinerary)
- Celebration meal
- Discover Adventure leaders; doctor with group of 15 or more participants
- Local guides, cooks, drivers etc
- Includes flight supplement

## WHAT'S EXCLUDED

- Meals as detailed in itinerary
- Personal travel insurance (to cover personal injury, cancellation/curtailment, lost items etc)

### GRADE | RED

Trips are graded Yellow, Orange or Red, in increasing level of challenge. This trip lies within the **RED** range.



The grade is determined by factors such as terrain, distance, climate, altitude, etc. Each colour grade has a **spectrum** which reflects the difficulty of these factors; trip duration, accommodation and living conditions (see icon) are also taken into account.

[Trip grading explained](#)

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Discover Adventure reserves the right to change the route or itinerary for safety reasons should local conditions dictate.

Please note: This document was downloaded on 27 Apr 2024, and the challenge is subject to change.