

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.

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

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

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

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

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)

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)

Day 9: Papallacta - Project Work

Day 10: Free time before Flight Departs

Day 11: Arrive London

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

All our trips are designed to provide a challenge. 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 are also taken into account. Some sections will feel more challenging than others, but the grade reflects the overall trip. Unusual weather conditions can also have a significant impact.

The Accommodation icon indicates the living conditions while trekking/cycling. While there are usually several factors that present a challenge, the Challenge icon indicates the trip's most challenging element, for most people.

[Trip grading explained](#)

CHALLENGE INFORMATION

DETAILED INFORMATION

Trip Safety

Your safety, and that of the rest of the group, is our highest priority. Our trips are designed and planned with safety in mind. Your crew will be equipped with communication devices (eg phones, radios and/or emergency satellite phones), medical kit and other safety apparatus appropriate to the destination. Our leaders always have access to our 24-hour emergency UK back-up. They are responsible for safety on the trip, and will make any changes to the itinerary they deem necessary, should local conditions dictate. Pre-trip administration - such as medical questionnaires and travel insurance as appropriate - is all done with your safety in mind.

Accommodation

Accommodation is usually in well-located, comfortable 2-3* hotel(s); standards are generally very good though there may be some variation.

PREPARING FOR THE CHALLENGE

Challenge Grading

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Clothing & Kit

We plan our trips around the optimal weather conditions, but could still be exposed to bad weather at any time. It is vital you are prepared for all conditions. We provide you with a detailed packing kit-list on registration, with plenty of information, and we are always available if you need advice.

Passport & Visa / Vaccinations

Entry requirements vary depending on your destination and nationality. It is your responsibility to ensure your passport is valid, and any visas are obtained in good time. Check the [FCO's advice](#) on entry requirements for your destination to be sure. Please ensure you allow plenty of time to apply for your visa; we will provide you with all necessary information 6 weeks prior to departure to assist with your application.

Your routine UK schedule of vaccinations should be up-to-date (especially tetanus). We recommend you check [Fit For Travel](#) for further details. You should always check with a GP or travel clinic for up-to-date travel health advice as it does change.

Foreign Travel Advice

For the latest travel advice from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office including security and local laws, plus passport and visa information, check www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice.

Travel Insurance

Travel Insurance is compulsory on all of our challenges outside of the UK; we strongly suggest that you arrange insurance cover as soon as your booking with us is confirmed, or as soon as you're able to purchase some, and at least 8 months prior to travel. Should you need to cancel prior to departure, you will need insurance to cover the costs involved (registration fee and any trip costs depending on cancellation date).

We all hope never to need it, and thankfully most of the time we don't, but on those rare occasions when you do, you want it to cover you as best it can. Whilst it's a fairly boring admin task relating to your trip of a lifetime, it is really important you ensure that you have adequate cover for the type of challenge you are taking part in as well as medical emergencies, evacuation and repatriation, so make sure you're happy with the level of cover. There are lots of suppliers out there, with a wide range in levels of cover; generally speaking, you get what you pay for! Get and pay for the right level of cover and then you can go on your adventure not having to worry about the what-if's. For more details click [here](#).

Once your travel insurance is arranged, just remember to let us know the policy number and 24-hr medical emergency phone number provided by your insurers.

BUY YOUR KITBAG

Only £45 (inc p&p) - designed to deal with the rigours of your challenge.

Easier for accessing gear than a rucksack (especially when camping) this is probably the most cost-effective way to take your luggage on a Discover Adventure challenge!



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 8 Jul 2025, and the challenge is subject to change.