Ecuador's Triple Crown

Trip Code: ECU

Version:

MOUNTAINEER	GUIDED GROUP	10 TOUGH



HIGHLIGHTS

- Climb Chimborazo (6,310m) and stand on the furthest point from the centre of the Earth!
- Summit Cotopaxi (5,897m) and Cayambe (5,790m), Ecuador's second and third highest peaks
- Acclimatise on Imbabura (4,616m) and Yanaurco (4,535m), plus skills training on Cayambe
- Unique 4-day acclimatisation trek through the Cotacachi-Cayapas bio-reserve
- Over 20 years experience of climbing Ecuador's Volcanoes

AT A GLANCE

- 12 days trekking and climbing. Max altitude - 6310 metres
- Join at Quito

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE

Introduction

Some of the highest volcanoes on earth can be found in Ecuador, right at the northern end of the Andean Chain; this exciting trekking and climbing holiday will give you the opportunity to climb the three highest! As part of a careful program of acclimatisation, we'll also enjoy a stunning 5-day trek across the Cotacachi-Cayapas highlands, one of the most diverse and spectacular of Ecuador's bio-reserves and ascents of the smaller volcanoes Yanaurco (4,535m) and Imbabura (4,609m). We've also time for a walking circuit of the amazing Cuicocha crater lake and a chance to improve your mountaineering technique with some skills training, all before we turn our attention to our 'Big 3'. First in line is Cayambe (5,790m), a peak that boasts the only glaciers in the world to actually straddle the equator. Next, we tackle Cotopaxi (5,895m), one of the world's highest active volcanoes. Our last peak, the stunning, snow-capped Chimborazo (6,310m), is the highest summit in Ecuador! On the summit, due to the equatorial bulge, you will be 2,168 metres further from the earth's centre than the top of Everest. With a varied programme of trekking, climbing, as well as sightseeing and the chance to visit a number of traditional towns and villages, this is a chance to improve your climbing skills, bag some noteworthy peaks, and gain an insight into the history of Ecuador and the colourful culture of its Quechua-speaking Indians.

Is this holiday for you?

The main focus of this holiday is climbing a number of specific peaks in the Avenue of the Volcanoes, which are situated in different parts of Ecuador. As it is possible to reach well into the mountain areas via road, the approach days to each peak are actually very short. By contrast the climbing days will be long (8 to 12 hours) and strenuous on account of the high altitude; so group members should not only have a high level of fitness but also be capable of completing long days in the mountains. The guiding ratio on Cayambe, Cotopaxi and Chimborazo will be at a ratio of 1:2. As part of a careful programme of acclimatisation we will also enjoy a 5-day trek through the high Paramo of the Cotacochi-Cayapas Nature Reserve, where you can expect to be walking for around 6-7hrs per day. This involves continuous trekking above 3,000 metres and up to 4,535 metres, mostly on established trails and paths. All baggage during this trek is carried by pack animals and group members will carry only what they need for the day.

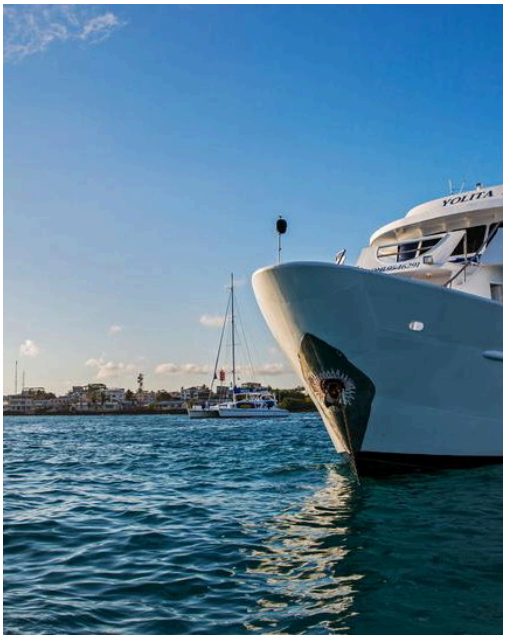
Overall this is an ambitious mountaineering programme and a high level of fitness and previous mountaineering experience using ice axe, crampons are a pre-requisite for us to complete all of our objectives. If you have limited winter mountaineering experience, we would recommend joining one of our introductory level mountaineering holidays first.

Itinerary

Version:

Extensions

When booking your holiday, you will be able to 'add an extension option'. Once we have received your booking we will contact you to discuss additional services required for the extension and to take any additional deposit.



Galapagos Islands Cruise

Create the perfect holiday-of-a-lifetime by adding an exploratory cruise of the stunning and unique Galapagos Islands

Needing little in the way of introduction, the Galapagos Islands are one of the most pristine natural environments left on Earth. Over 600 miles separate them from mainland Ecuador, meaning they have enjoyed splendid isolation and provide a habitat for a bewildering array of birds, reptiles, mammals and sea life you simply won't find anywhere else.

We have a variety of ships and itineraries and you can choose from two levels of service - Standard and Upgraded, many of which are more affordable than you may have thought. Itineraries are typically between 7 and 10 days which is the optimum length for visiting this natural paradise. During your cruise you will visit a number of the islands, each distinct and renowned in their own right. Sometimes these will be `dry` landings where you step onto a pier and at others you will make `wet` landings where you reach the island by small inflatable boats and step directly onto the beach. Every boat has a slightly different itinerary but all are focused on seeing as much of the amazing Galapagos wildlife as possible. There is also plenty of time for relaxation and for swimming and snorkelling from the boats. All of our itineraries begin and end in Quito and include the flight out to the islands.

Please contact us for details on availability, itinerary options and pricing. *(Sample itinerary detailed below)*

You might also want to consider our 10 day **Galapagos Islands Adventure,** for a more active and immersive experience of these diverse islands. This shore based trip stays in cosy small hotels and guesthouses, allowing us to experience the beaches and wildlife in the early mornings and evenings when the main tourists have disappeared on their boats. Alternatively, if you are looking for something a more luxurious why not spoil yourself on one of our Galapagos Cruises aboard the luxury Monserrat Motor Yacht.

Book this trip as a stand alone tour or in addition to any of our Latin America holidays.

7 days from
¤9,223,372,036,854,776,000 per person

Holiday Information

What's Included

- An experience UIAGM Mountain Guide
- Additional licensed mountain guides (1:2 guide/clients) for the 'Big 3' (Cayambe/Cotopaxi/Chimborazo)
- All accommodation as described
- Meals as detailed in the Meal Plan
- When camping a full service including food and all equipment (excluding personal equipment)
- Inflatable camping mattress whilst camping All land transport involved in the itinerary

What's not Included

- Travel Insurance
- Tips for local staff
- Airport transfers other than group transfers
- Some meals as detailed in the Meal Plan
- Miscellaneous expenses - drinks and souvenirs etc

Joining Arrangements & Transfers

The group will meet at the hotel in Quito.

A single transfer is provided from/to Quito Airport.

Hotel contact details along with an emergency contact number will be provided with your booking confirmation.

Meal Plan

All breakfasts, 13 lunches and 10 dinners are included in the holiday price. In Quito and Riobamba there is a wide range of dining options, to suit all budgets, and we have therefore not included the cost of meals in the holiday price (other than breakfasts) while staying in these towns, preferring to leave the choice to you. We suggest you budget between $7 and $20 for each of these non-included meals.

Special Diets

Whilst we can cater for vegetarians, albeit sometimes with a more limited choice, we cannot always provide for special diets. Due to the nature of some of the trips that we operate and the countries in which we operate them, it can be very hard (and sometimes impossible) to cater for a wide range of dietary choices and you may have to supplement your meals with food/snacks from home. If you have specific dietary requirements please do speak to our sales team and they will be able to advise you whether or not we will be able to offer your specific choice. Please note that we are unable to provide separate menus and cannot accept liability for any problems arising from special dietary requirements or intolerances.

Food & Water

Drinking Water

It is not recommended to drink untreated water from the taps. If you are on a trekking or cycling holiday, water is supplied to fill up your individual bottles. This will be boiled, filtered or provided in large jerry cans or 5 litre bottles. Additionally you should take purification tablets or a filter bottle (such as a Water-To-Go bottle) to treat your water when in towns or where water is not supplied. We do not encourage the purchasing of single use plastic bottles.

Quito and Riobamba have a wide variety of restaurants providing excellent cuisine from around the world. In the smaller towns where we stay in small hotels or hosteria, there will usually be a set meal. Ecuadorian cuisine is varied across different regions and includes excellent seafood (amazing Ceviche!), potatoes, toasted corn, and pastries stuffed with spiced meats or vegetables. For those wishing to fully immerse themselves in the local culture, you can try roasted cuy (guinea pig) - but this is strictly optional! Breakfasts consist of muesli, porridge, fruit, yogurt, eggs and toast. Depending on the day's itinerary lunches may be taken in a restaurant or café, or they may be provided as a packed lunch of sandwiches, fruit and biscuits. During the camping nights, evening meals will consist of a three course dinner using locally sourced ingredients cooked for us by our trained camp cooks.

Accommodation

We will spend a total of 6 nights in Quito and Riobamba, where we will stay in a simple, but comfortable and well located, family run, hosteria/guesthouses. In Tumbabiro and Lasso we will stay for 2 nights in a charming and colourful hosteria/guesthouse, with beautiful gardens.

During the trek in the Cotacachi-Cayapas we will spend 3 nights camping. Whilst camping all the camp equipment and luggage will be transported between camps by ponies, you need only carry your day pack. Our wonderful camp crew will erect and dismantle the tents for you, cook and take care of all the camp chores. In camp, as well as the tents used for sleeping, there will also be a mess tent, with chairs and tables, where the group will dine (and socialise into the evening) and a toilet tent. Hot water for washing will also be provided to you in the mornings and when you arrive at the camp each day. Thermarest camping mattresses are provided.

For our night at the San Clemente Community Project the group will be divided into smaller groups and will stay with different families in the community; this has been picked out as a particular highlight by many of our groups over the years. Room will be twin-share with a shared bathroom.

During the ascents of Cayambe, Cotopaxi and Chimborazo we spend a total of 3 nights in basic mountain huts/refuges. In the mountain huts the accommodation is mixed dormitories (don't forget to pack you earplugs!) with shared bathrooms.

All accommodation except the huts/refuges is on a twin-share basis. If you are travelling by yourself you will be paired up with another single client of the same sex. Depending on availability, it may be possible to pre-book single rooms/tents for the nights that you spend in hotels, guesthouses and when camping. For hotel prices and single supplement costs please refer to the dates and prices page of the trip on our website.

Group Leader & Support Staff

This trip will be led by an experienced UIAGM Mountain Guide. In addition, on the ascents of the three main peaks of Cayambe, Cotopaxi, and Chimborazo, we use additional licensed mountain guides up to a guide to client ratio of 1:2. We also use various support staff such as minibus drivers, and on trek the group will be accompanied by a team of cooks, camp staff, and horsemen.

Altitude

This holiday involves going to very high altitude. During the course of your trip you will be spending at least one night above 4000 metres and/or trekking to 5000 metres or above. This is not something that you should worry about; the human body is quite capable of adapting to a very wide range of altitudes, but it is important that we follow some simple rules in order to acclimatise successfully. Before coming on this holiday you should read the advice on trekking at high altitude. Unless you have previous experience of trekking above 4000 metres you should consult one of our trekking experts before embarking on this holiday. On this trip we carry a portable altitude chamber (PAC-bag) and/or bottled oxygen for use in emergencies.

Spending Money

We suggest you allow approximately US$400 for miscellaneous expenses. This amount should be sufficient to cover the above meals, plus your tips to local staff (allow approximately $100), drinks etc. It is possible to use credit and bank cards to withdraw cash from ATMs in Quito and other major towns. Credit cards can also be used in restaurants and are particularly useful for more expensive souvenirs. If you intend to bring your spending money out with you, we recommend carrying it in the form of cash US dollars which is the accepted currency in Ecuador.

Guidance on Tipping

Tips are the accepted way of saying 'thank you' to your local guides and porters. They do not form part of their wages. KE always pays local crews the best rates of pay, no matter what country they are in and any tips they receive are seen as a personal thank you from group members. For our part, we advise local teams that tips are not a duty or a prerequisite but are a bonus and entirely dependent on the service that was given. For your guides and trek crews we recommend that you give a tip if you feel that their services have met your satisfaction. We recommend that tips are given by the group as a whole rather than from individuals and that the group decides on a level of tipping that everyone is comfortable with. As a rough guide we suggest a contribution of around $100 from each group member should provide an appropriate 'pool' for tipping your crew.

Baggage Allowance

For this holiday you should take one piece of luggage, which should be a soft and sturdy duffel bag and a daypack. Your bag on trek will be carried by porters or pack animals and should not weigh more than 15kg. It is possible to leave extra baggage at the hotel in Quito. For international flights please check your baggage allowance with your airline.

Group Size & Holiday Status

For each holiday there is a minimum number of participants required to enable it to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from 'Available' to 'Guaranteed to run'. You can check the trip status for each departure in the 'Dates and Prices' table. Other than in exceptional circumstances, we will not cancel a trip once it has achieved this guaranteed to run status so you are free to proceed with your international flight booking and other travel arrangements.

General Information

Passport & Visas

The information that we provide is for UK passport holders.

A passport with 6 months remaining validity at the end of your stay is generally required**,** and you should have at least 2 blank pages for each country that you visit.

For other nationalities, please refer to your own Government website for the latest information.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents including vaccinations and health certificates *(see Health & Vaccinations below),* **and visas for your holiday.** Please ensure that you check the FCDO for the latest advice for **each country visited** before travel.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR THOSE TRANSITING THROUGH THE USA

If your flights pass through the USA, even if only in transit, you will require either a visa or an ESTA (Electronic System for Travel Authorisation). Citizens of the UK, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and passport holders from several EU countries can apply for an ESTA under certain conditions*. This must be done online via https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov, no later than 72 hours prior to travel and applies whether entering the country by sea or by air. You will need to have a biometric passport to apply for an ESTA. The fee is currently US$40 *(as of 30/09/25).* Travellers who have not registered before their trip are likely be refused boarding.

*If you have visited Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen since 2011 or have dual nationality with any of these countries, you cannot travel with an ESTA. You will need to apply for a visa from the nearest US Embassy or Consulate instead. Additionally, if you have travelled to or have been in Cuba since the 12th of January 2021, you will not be eligible for an ESTA visa waiver and will need to apply for a US visa. You should consult the US State Department website to determine which you will need.

When completing the ESTA application form you will be asked to enter your 'Point of Contact' information. This is not required if you are only transiting through the USA.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR THOSE TRANSITING THROUGH CANADA

UK citizens will require an ETA (Electronic Travel Authorisation), and you must get this before boarding any Canada-bound aircraft or ship, or entering on a land border. The fee is CAD$7 and you should apply for it at http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/visit/eta-start.asp. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office

Entry requirements can change regularly so please ensure you have the most up to date information before travelling by checking visa entry requirements at the relevant embassy in your country of residence: (US Embassy in London: http://london.usembassy.gov/niv/apply.html)

Visa Ecuador

UK and USA passport holders do not require a visa for short stays.

Health & Vaccinations

Vaccinations:

You should be up to date with the routine vaccinations recommended in the UK for overseas travel.

You must also contact your doctor or travel clinic to check if there are specific vaccinations or other preventive measures that you need for the area you are visiting, in good time before you are due to depart.

Please ensure you are looking at the recommendations for all countries visited on your holiday plus recommendations for any borders you cross.

On holidays to more remote areas you should also have a dental check-up.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents including vaccinations and health certificates.

Please check the FCDO and Travel Health Pro. For all of your intended destinations for up-to-date advice.

Severe Allergies:

If you have a severe allergy please inform the KE office before you travel. We will do all we can to help, but we cannot guarantee an allergy free environment on KE trips.

Preparing for your Holiday

Getting some additional exercise before coming on an active holiday makes a lot of sense. The fitter you are, after all, the more enjoyable you will find the experience. You should be aerobically fit and comfortable with walking 8 to 9 hours for consecutive days, and possibly for 12hrs or more on a summit day. Hill walking, with a good amount of ascent and descent, is the best training, and we would suggest that you try to fit in a number of long weekend walks before you depart. Running, cycling and swimming are also good for developing cardio vascular fitness and stamina. There is little you can do to prepare for the altitude but if you have an excellent level of fitness this can help.

For this trip you will need to be competent in the use of an ice axe and crampons. You should also ensure that your basic 'alpine' or winter walking skills are reasonably current and if not, consider taking a weekend course or joining one of our more straightforward Alpine mountaineering trips prior to departure.

Winter Skills Courses These courses are extremely helpful if you are undertaking one of our mountaineering trips. For information about available courses, please contact: Glenmore Lodge. (Scotland's National Outdoor Training Centre). Tel. 01479 861 256 email. enquiries@glenmorelodge.org.uk

Climate

With the Pacific Ocean to the west and the great basin of the Amazon to the east, Ecuador has a complex pattern of weather. In general, the Eastern Highlands receives the most precipitation. In the Central Highlands, it is drier though cloud and rain can, and do, occur at any time during the year. In general, the days are warm with temperatures between 12 and 22°C. Evenings can be chilly in the higher towns, with night-time temperatures at freezing point above 3500m. When staying in the refuges on Cayambe, Cotopaxi and Chimborazo; the outside temperature will drop well below freezing level, and this will be felt even more when camping at high camp meaning warm down-jackets are an absolute must. There is no real 'settled' weather period in Ecuador and the mountains can be attempted at any time of the year given suitable weather conditions on the day.

Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's **'Travel Aware'** campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that before travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at travelaware.campaign.gov.uk and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. All other nationalities should check their government websites for relevant information.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates directly from the FCDO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

Single Use Plastic

KE do not encourage the use of single use plastic items. We are ensuring that our agents all over the world are working together to reduce the problem and educate those around them. We are leading by example in our KE office by reducing our plastic use.

Books

- Ecuador. Rough Guides
- The Andes - A guide for Climbers.
- John Biggar Trekking in the Central Andes
- Lonely Planet Ecuador and Galapagos
- Galapagos Islands (Natural History guide) Pierre Constant

Maps

Ecuador. ITMB 1 ; 700,000

Double-sided map dividing the country north/south with a generous overlap. Relief is depicted by altitude tinting and spot heights for peaks and volcanoes. Glaciers, swamp areas, national parks and reserves are marked. Intermediate driving distances are indicated and further symbols depict places of interest, archaeological sites, thermal baths, beaches, etc. Latitude and longitude lines are drawn at 1° intervals. There is an index of place names and the legend is in English and Spanish.

Private Groups Information

Make this KE Adventure holiday your own!

- Do our normal group departure dates not fit?
- Would you prefer to travel with just friends and/or family?
- Are you looking to organise a trip for your local walking, biking or mountaineering club?

It's really easy to make a trip your own. Simply select from our full range of adventure holidays and choose the dates that work for you and your group.

We are experts in creating holidays for groups of friends, families, charities and clubs. Our personal service means you'll be fully involved as we make the arrangements for your perfect adventure holiday.

Independence with Security

Travelling as a KE Private Group allows you more flexibility and choice, but still with the peace of mind that everything is pre-planned and arranged for your group by a reputable adventure travel company.

To take your first step to an amazing adventure with your friends and family complete the private group enquiry form, or call our **Sales Experts on: 017687 73966**

Travel Insurance

It is an essential condition of joining a holiday with KE Adventure Travel that you have a valid travel insurance policy to cover the cost of medical treatment and to protect the value of your holiday in the event of cancellation. When taking out insurance please ensure the policy you choose covers you for the activities and altitude included in your itinerary.

For appropriate insurance cover we recommend Campbell Irvine Direct. Please go to our Travel Insurance page for further information and to get a quote.

Equipment Information

Equipment List

The following checklist should help you with your packing. As a general rule, you should always try to keep the weight of your equipment to a minimum. The packed weight of your kit bag while trekking should be no more than 15 kgs.

You must bring the following items:

- Hiking boots
- Gaiters
- Socks
- Trekking trousers
- Waterproof overtrousers
- Underwear
- Baselayer shirts
- Casual shirt and/or T-shirts
- Fleece jacket or warm jumper
- Waterproof jacket
- Sunhat
- Warm hat
- Sunglasses
- Ski goggles

- Gloves (1x lightweight inner pair, 1x waterproof warm pair and 1x waterproof warm mittens)
- Down jacket
- Sleeping bag (comfort rated -10°C)*
- Headtorch and spare batteries
- Sun protection (including total bloc for lips, nose etc.)
- Water bottles 1 Litre x2 (we encourage re-filling water bottles rather than single use plastic)
- Water purification tablets
- Washbag and toiletries
- Antibacterial handwash
- Small towel
- Selection of dry bags (to keep kit bag contents dry)
- Small padlock
- Daypack (approx. 50 litres)
- Basic First Aid Kit including: Antiseptic cream, throat lozenges, diarrhoea treatment (Imodium), altitude (Diamox), painkillers, plasters, blister treatment, insect repellent (DEET), and re-hydration salts (Dioralite).

Mountaineering Equipment

- Mountaineering boots (see note below)*
- Ice axe *
- Crampons (preferably with 'step-in' bindings)*

- Mountaineering or climbing harness*
- Climbing helmet*

The following items are optional:

- Thermarest (a foam camping mat is provided)
- Trekking poles (recommended)
- Trainers or similar for camp use
- Spare laces
- Shorts
- Thermal baselayer - leggings
- Scarf or buff
- Earplugs (especially if you are not the one snoring in huts)
- Swimwear (for use in thermal baths)
- Travel clothes
- Camera
- Pen-knife (remember to pack sharp objects in hold baggage)
- Repair kit - (eg. needle, thread, duct tape)
- Reusable cloth bag for shopping (to avoid plastic bags)

Notes

Mountaineering boots: We recommend either double mountaineering boots or insulated mountain boots designed for the conditions encountered at 6,000 metres. Examples of the latter type of boot are

the Sportiva Batura 2 and the Scarpa Phantom Guide.

Equipment hire / rental: Items marked * can be hired locally in Quito. The contract for any hire equipment will be between the hire shop and the client and not with KE Adventure Travel. However, any hire equipment required can be reserved in advance through the KE office. The approximate price** for hire equipment is given below.

- Insulated ‘double boot’ mountaineering boots: $72
- 12 point crampons: $48
- Ice axe: $36
- Climbing harness with karabiner: $54
- Climbing helmet: $36
- Sleeping bag: $10 per day

** The above prices are approximate and for guidance only. KE Adventure Travel cannot accept any responsibility for changes to the price of hire equipment.

PHD Gear Advisor

PHD specialise in cold weather equipment, from the world’s lightest right up to the most protective for Everest or the Poles. It’s a large range. So to help you choose what you need to keep you warm, PHD have listed the gear that is appropriate for this expedition. Click here.

Needle Sports (specialist mountaineering equipment shop)

Needle Sports is the English Lake District's foremost specialist climbing shop supplying mountaineering, rock, ice, alpine and expedition equipment worldwide. Internationally recognised as among the very best of the UK's top technical climbing gear retailers. They have a good range of equipment appropriate for this trip and offer knowledgeable advice both on their website and in store. View http://www.needlesports.com/

Land Only Information

Please refer to the 'Joining Arrangements & Transfers' within Holiday Information for further details.

Flights and other transport to your destination should not be booked until you have received your booking confirmation and the departure is showing 'Guaranteed to Run' or 'Limited'.

Land Only Information

The LAND ONLY dates and prices are for the itinerary, joining at the hotel in Quito. A single transfer is included from/to Quito Airport.

Flight Inclusive Information

Limited seats are available at the advertised flight price, please book as early as you can. If we are unable to secure seats at the price shown, or you have requested regional departures and/or upgrades, we will provide you with an alternative quote. It is likely that flight payment will be in advance of your final holiday balance. Booking a flight inclusive package means you will benefit from full financial protection, eases your holiday planning, and leaves us to deal with airlines and schedule changes. If you book flights through KE Adventure Travel we will offset the carbon of your flight.

Regional departures and/or alternative carriers are available on request.

Flight Inclusive Information

The FLIGHT INCLUSIVE dates and prices are based on UK flights from London (Heathrow) to Quito with KLM. Outbound flights will depart from the UK in the morning, arriving in the afternoon of the same day (day 1 of the itinerary). Return flights will depart in the late afternoon of the last day of the itinerary, arriving in the UK early the following day.

Why Choose KE

Why KE

Preparation, Preparation, Preparation! This holiday includes a careful programme of acclimatisation and time for some skills training to help improve your mountaineering expertise. All of which will give you the best chance of reaching the summit of 6,000m peak, Chimborazo, and standing on the point on planet Earth which is furthest from its centre!

Please Note This document was downloaded on 12/11/2026 and the trip is subject to change