



Volcanoes and Haciendas

ECUADOR

This **horseback trail ride** journeys between charming haciendas in the Ecuadorian highlands. Ride through tropical cloud forest and across the wide open paramos, where the local chagras and herders roam. Journey through the avenue of volcanoes, with the snow covered peaks of Ruminahui, Quilindana and Cotopaxi your eternal companions.

Trail Riding	10 days / 8 days riding	From £2,171		Open to non-riders
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Explore Ecuador on horseback



The conical peak of the Cotopaxi Volcano, always best seen from horseback



Ride with Chagras - the Ecuadorian cowboys

ITINERARY

Highlights

- Meet local Chagras - the breeders and horsemen of the Ecuadorian Andes
- Comfort and friendly welcome of charming haciendas
- Ride into the mighty Quilotoa crater lake
- Ride through the tropical cloud forests whilst acclimatising to the altitude
- Visit the colourful Indian market at Machachi
- Experience the unique fauna of the Andes - alpacas, eagles, pumas and the impressive condor

Day 1 — 1: EUROPE - QUITO - ALOAG - No riding

Hacienda La Alegria

International flight to Quito. Please note that flights are not included.

On arrival at Quito airport, you will be transferred to the hacienda (2890m) where you will meet the rest of the group and enjoy a welcome dinner and briefing. Airport transfers are not included, please see the 'dates and prices' tab for details.

Dinner and overnight at Hacienda La Alegria.

Day 2 — 2: ALOAG - 4 hours riding

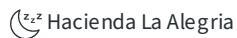
Hacienda La Alegria

Today is a relaxed day for you to acclimatise to the altitude. After breakfast, you'll meet the horses and have a short ride in the arena before heading out for a ride in the local area, passing neighbouring haciendas.

You'll return to the hacienda for lunch, and in the afternoon, you can rest, try out the hot tub or visit the milking barn and cave where cheeses are aged.

Dinner and overnight at Hacienda La Alegria.

Day 3 — 3: ALOAG - 5 hours riding



Today you will enjoy another trail ride near the hacienda, which is nestled in the lush Machachi Valley, also known as 'the Valley of the Nine Volcanoes'.

Depending on the day's programme, you may ride through the Valley of Gualilahua Aloag and along historical paths, admiring the nearby volcanoes of Viudita, Atacazo and Pasocha.

Or you may ride to Viudita Mountain, where the panorama is spectacular, with breathtaking views of the valley.

Dinner and overnight at Hacienda La Alegria.

Day 4 — 4: ALOAG - CORAZON VOLCANO - 4 hours riding



Crossing pastures and eucalyptus forests, today you'll enjoy the stunning views of the "Avenue of the Volcanoes" and the Machachi Valley.

You will ascend the Corazón Volcano up to 3,400 meters, and notice a dramatic difference between the valley and the páramo (high-altitude moorland). You'll also visit the Inca Pucará, an ancient fortress that once served as a key connection point between Quito and Cuzco. This site functioned both as a military and astronomical station. From here, enjoy panoramic views of the valley and spot other Pucará to the east.

Later, it's back to the hacienda for a late lunch and to visit another farm, where you can see the mares and their foals.

Dinner and overnight at Hacienda La Alegria.

Day 5 — 5: ALOAG - ATACAZO VOLCANO - TAMBILLO - ALOAG - 5 hours riding



You will ride north to the village of Tambillo today, sometimes riding parallel with the old train track and along haciendas' cobblestone roads.

You'll arrive at Hacienda Sierra Alisos where you can enjoy a short walk in the Andean forest. Here you can observe a rich ecosystem that includes a variety of plants, trees (including the iconic Alisó tree) and fresh water sources such as small creeks, artesian springs and natural irrigation systems.

Lunch will be served at Hacienda Sierra Alisos, before an afternoon ride to another hacienda, known for its fantastic gardens filled with native plant species. You'll then continue back to Hacienda La Alegria, where you can relax, enjoy the hot tub and have dinner.

Dinner and overnight at Hacienda La Alegria.

Day 6 — 6: ALEGRIA - ISINLIVI - 5 hours riding



Today is a longer day in the saddle. You'll transfer to the start point (one hour south of the hacienda) and from here you'll begin a 4-day adventure in the southern Andes.

From today, you'll ride through dramatic landscapes, including steep ravines and narrow passages. From a distance you'll see the magnificent Eastern Mountain chain.

Today you'll ride along the Inca trails through the breathtaking hills and scenery, before arriving at a small village called Isinlivi, which dates back to 1857.

Dinner and overnight at the lodge in Isinlivi.

Day 7 — 7: ISINLIVI - QUILOTOA - 5 hours riding



After breakfast, you'll head south to the Quilotoa Crater Lake. The trail goes across the highest mountain heading west.

As you descend to the canyon, the environment becomes arid and desolate. The soil is composed of pumice from the Quilotoa Volcano that erupted 1,280 years ago.

In the afternoon, you'll finally reach the Quilotoa Volcano summit at 3,800m, where your hostel is located. At the edge of the volcano you can enjoy amazing views of the breathtaking Quilotoa Crater Lake. The 3km-wide caldera was formed by the collapse of the volcano after the last eruption.

Dinner and overnight at the inn near Quilotoa.

Day 8 — 8: QUILOTOA - SIGCHOS - SAN JOSE - 7 hours riding



Today is another long day in the saddle, as you ride to Sigchos, a village that is known as the "last home" of the Inca general Ruminahui.

You will head north to the ridge of Quilotoa Crater lake. The trail will take you across the highest mountain, heading north-west. Here, you will find some small dairy farms and some artisanal cheese makers where you can take a short break and try some of the delicious, locally produced cheese.

In the afternoon, you will arrive at Hacienda San Jose, a working dairy farm and guest house. You will have time to relax and enjoy the jacuzzi and sauna.

Dinner and overnight at the Hacienda San Jose.

Day 9 — 9: SAN JOSE - PLANCHALOMA - ALOAG - 6 hours riding



Today is your last day of riding. You will ride along narrow paths, ascending to the high Andes paramo.

From here you can enjoy the incredible scenery from one valley to another. In the distance, you will see the Eastern Mountain Chain. You'll then make your way back to the hacienda for a last dinner with the group.

Dinner and overnight at Hacienda La Alegria.

Day 10 — 10: ALOAG - QUITO - EUROPE - No riding

After breakfast you will be transferred to Quito airport for your flight home.

Lunch is not included but is available at the hacienda for an additional fee, please see 'dates and prices' for details.

DATES & PRICES

DEPARTURE	RETURN	PRICE WITHOUT FLIGHTS	STATUS
12/02/2026	21/02/2026	£2,171	Guaranteed departure
26/02/2026	07/03/2026	£2,171	Open
18/06/2026	27/06/2026	£2,171	Open
23/07/2026	01/08/2026	£2,171	Guaranteed departure
10/09/2026	19/09/2026	£2,171	Open
18/10/2026	27/10/2026	£2,171	Open

Price details

- Flights or transportation to your destination (international/domestic) are not included, but can be booked on request - please contact us for rates.

- Rates are per person, based on two riders sharing a twin or double room during the ride.
- Groups are composed of a minimum of 3 riders and a maximum of 8 international riders, plus guides.
- Please note: the ride will also confirm for 2 riders on payment of a supplement of c. \$250 / £200 / €235 per person. Once the group has reached 3 people, we will remove this supplement from your invoice and refund you if you have already paid it.
- If you sign up to the ride as a solo rider and there are no other riders likely to share your room, you will be charged a single room supplement of approx. \$190 / £155 / €185. You will then be reimbursed if a sharer is found for you at a later date.
- Airport transfers are not included and are payable locally - US\$50 per car (max. 3 riders), per way.
- Lunch is not included on arrival or departures days but is available at the hacienda for an additional US\$25 (per lunch).
- There is a possibility to extend your stay. The cost is \$250 / £200 / €235 person/night (sharing). This price includes full-board accommodation and riding lessons or a trail ride.

- Accompanied minors are welcome from 12yo, provided they match the riding requirements. Children aged 15 or under will receive a 10% discount.
Please Note

The itinerary may be modified at anytime for security reasons, meteorological or events beyond our control such as blocked roads, rivers in flood, drought, strikes and local holidays. Equus Journeys, our local partners and their local guides will always strive to find the best solution and will alter the itinerary as needed.

The names of the hotels and accommodation are given for information only and depending on availability, they may be modified without notice and replaced by another of a similar standard.

Price includes

SUPPORT TEAM

1 English speaking horse guide

LOGISTIC

1 support vehicle

1 "chagras" support team for horses and logistic

ACCOMMODATION

Double or triple room in Haciendas

2 nights in double or triple room in Guesthouse

MEALS

Full board from first dinner D1 to last breakfast D10

Beverages including beer and wine at the Hacienda in Aloag

ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT

Ponchos, rain ponchos, helmet, chaps

Saddle bags

Price doesn't include

MEALS

Beverage and personal extra if taken outside the hacienda la Alegria

TRANSPORTS

International flights bookable on request

Return airport transfers

Visa fees

EXTRA

Tips to local team

INSURANCE

Cancellation and travel insurances are not included. Please note that insurance is mandatory. We recommend to take out an insurance policy as soon as your travel is booked in case of cancellation.

Optional

ACCOMMODATION

Single room supplement

EXTRA

Extension at the Hacienda

EQUESTRIAN INFO

Horses

You ride local Criollo horses which are sure footed and ideally suited to the terrain and altitude.

Guide & local team

Gabriel is your host and owner of the hacienda. He speaks good English, is very knowledgeable about his country and delighted to share it with his guests. He will be supported by local chagras.

Minimum riding ability

MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

You need to be a capable rider who is comfortable in all paces across varied terrain.

There is a rider weight limit of 90kgs.

PACE

The pace is varied depending on the terrain, with long periods of walk due to the altitude. There are plenty of opportunities to canter.

TACKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION

You will be asked to help groom, tack and untack your horse but help is on hand if required. You are also welcome to assist with feeding and watering the horses if you wish.

TRIP CONDITIONS AND REQUESTED EXPERIENCE

You need to be physically fit with good endurance. This ride is at high altitude (4,500 - 5,000m) and there is a possibility of altitude sickness.

Previous experience of trail rides over a number of days would be beneficial. Riders who do not ride regularly are required to get fit before joining the trail.

EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

The saddles are similar to western but have a basic frame over which sheepskins are placed for comfort. Bridles are usually simple snaffles. Ponchos and waterproof trousers are provided to help in cold weather but you should still take your own warm clothes and jackets. Saddlebags are provided on the horses.

TRAVEL INFO

COMFORT

6 nights at Hacienda la Alegría, 3 nights at different haciendas.

You stay in double/twin rooms, usually with private bathrooms. Some of the haciendas are more rustic than others but there is no camping.

MEALS

Meals are produced each day by your guide. Lunches are taken as picnics in the saddle bags and dinner will be warm and hearty. Local produce is used wherever possible and is of high quality.

Be careful if drinking water from unknown sources and ask for boiled water or mineral water if you are unsure. You could also take purification tablets.

CLIMATE

The weather can be unpredictable and it is not unusual to experience all four seasons in one day. It can be sunny, windy, cloudy or rainy and the whole range of variations can occur within a matter of hours. Temperatures can fluctuate from 7c - 10c or even as high as 25c.

At lower altitudes the weather is less variable and can be warm and sunny throughout the dry season, which is usually around June - September and December.

TIPS

It is customary to tip in Ecuador. Porters in airports and hotels will expect c. USD 1 per bag. City restaurants will include both tax and a 10% service charge, but smaller restaurants may not include tax or tips so you will need to add them.

We would recommend tipping c. USD 5 per person per day for your guide and USD 3 per day for your driver.

PACKING LIST

Please note: if you wish to pack lighter, Gabriel can provide ponchos and a limited supply of long chaps. Please let us know in advance.

Head

- Equus Journeys strongly recommend that you wear a riding helmet and that you take your own to ensure a correct fit.
- Sunhat for when not riding
- Sunglasses - with a cord attached so they don't fly off when riding
- Buff or bandana for protecting your neck and face from the sun and dust
- Warm hat

Upper body

- Thermals in case of cold weather (can also be worn at night)
- Down jacket or warm coat for the cold evenings
- Long sleeved shirts provide protection from the sun
- T-shirts
- Lightweight fleece or jumper
- Warm polar fleece or equivalent (plus a spare in case one gets wet)
- Waterproof jacket - rain can be difficult to predict and it's better to be prepared.

Legs

- Lightweight, comfortable riding trousers or jodhpurs - we recommend riding in them at home before taking them on holiday to ensure they don't rub
- Waterproof over trousers
- Casual clothes for the evenings (jeans or walking trousers)
- Thermals in case of cold weather

Hands and Feet

- Comfortable riding boots. We recommend short boots with half chaps but you may wish to take long chaps. We don't recommend taking your favourite long leather boots in case they get damaged
- Lightweight shoes or trainers for the evenings
- Good walking boots (or hybrid walking/riding boots)
- Several pairs of warm socks
- Gloves - your hands are particularly exposed to the sun, wind or rain whilst riding

Nightwear

- For extra comfort, a sleeping bag liner.

Other useful items

- Swimsuit - for swimming/bathing in rivers
- Camera and high capacity memory card. Spare battery

- Bumbag for carrying your camera and small items whilst riding
- Headtorch or small torch
- Ear plugs (for light sleepers)
- Water bottle - 2 x 1 litre, or equivalent

Medical kit

- Sunscreen and lip balm - should be high factor
- Insect repellent
- Any medication you regularly take
- Blister plasters in case of any rubs
- Antiseptic cream, plasters, aspirin, anti-histamine, insect-bite salve etc...
- Spare prescription glasses/contact lenses
- Eye drops
- Imodium or similar anti-diarrhoea medication
- Micropur or similar water purification tablets
- Re-hydration sachets
- Antiseptic wipes
- Handwash gel

Our Recommendations

- You should use a soft sided suitcase which can easily be transported - we recommend a large backpack or rucksack of c. 60-80 litres
- Backpacks cannot be worn whilst riding. We recommend a small bumbag or a coat with pockets so that you can carry small items with you during the day (camera, sunscreen, lipbalm etc)
- We recommend travelling in your riding boots and carrying your hat and some riding clothes in your hand luggage - then if your luggage goes astray you are still able to ride!

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

1. **Travel light.** It's a little known fact, but the lighter you pack, the better for the environment as heavy bags will produce higher emissions (when flying a plane or driving a car!).
2. **Reduce plastic waste.** Take your favorite reusable bottle with you. Avoid single-use bags, cups, or straws.
3. **Preserve nature.** Always take your rubbish with you during the ride and recycle them. Leave all the flowers or plants as you found them, and never get too close when observing wildlife. Make sure to use eco-friendly products such as body wash or laundry detergent (if camping) to protect both your skin and the environment.
4. **Choose your experiences carefully.** Respect animal life by not participating in any activities that abuse wild animals (shows, elephant rides, etc.).
5. **Support local populations.** Buy local handicrafts, be respectful of customs, and learn about the culture of local communities.
6. **Share!** Raise awareness among your family and friends about sustainable tourism.

For more information please [see this page](#).