



## The volcano trail: from Cotopaxi to Quilotoa

### ECUADOR

An exciting **trail ride** for riders looking to tick some of the most impressive **volcanoes of Ecuador** off their list, including Volcano Quilotoa and of course the mighty Cotopaxi. Ride through the cloud forest, the Avenue of Volcanoes and the wild Ecuadorian paramo with your knowledgeable guide Gabriel, enjoying some of the most stunning views in **South America**. A **incredible riding holiday** in Ecuador with some of the highest gallops in the world! It is also possible to add days before or after the ride - please contact us.

<b>Trail Riding</b>	 <b>12 days / 10 days riding</b>	 <b>From £2,485</b>	
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### ITINERARY

#### Highlights

- A very knowledgeable guide and home-bred horses
- Ride through the tropical cloud forests whilst acclimatising to the altitude
- Experience the unique fauna of the Andes - alpacas, eagles, pumas and the impressive condor
- Discover the Avenue of the Volcanoes and ride to the majestic Quilotoa and Cotopaxi volcanoes


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

 Hacienda La Alegria

Flight from London or anywhere to Quito. Please note that flights are not included. It is likely that you will fly via a hub airport such as Madrid or Miami as there are no direct flights from the UK.

On arrival at Quito airport you will be transferred to the hacienda to overnight (2,890m). Transfers from Quito city centre are also possible.

#### Day 2 — 2: ALOAG - 4 hours riding


 Hacienda La Alegria

After breakfast, get to know the horses and tack by starting in the arena before heading out to ride around neighbouring haciendas. Today is about acclimatising to the altitude and so it will be a steady five hour ride before you head back. From the Viudita Mountain you can appreciate the green and fertile Machachi Valley and take a look at the routes you will take the next day along the east mountain chain.

In the afternoon you can rest and try out the hot tub or visit the milking barn and cave where cheeses are aged.

## Day 3 — 3: ALOAG - CORAZON VOLCANO - BOMBOLI - 6 hours riding

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 Hacienda Bomboli


Crossing extensive pastures and eucalyptus forests, enjoy the stunning views of the “Avenue of the Volcanoes”. Ascend by Corazon Volcano up to 4,000 meters and descend through the Cloud forest reserve.

In the Cloud forest you will be able to observe a great biodiversity of plants and flowers, including giant guneras, orchids, and birds such as the turkey of the forest. In the afternoon you will arrive to Hacienda Bomboli at 3,000 m, and relax by the fireplace enjoying the sunset and watching the lights of the villages near the coast. Arrive in time for tea before a delicious meal.

Dinner and overnight at Hacienda Bomboli.

## Day 4 — 4: BOMBOLI - CORAZON VOLCANO - ALOAG - 4-5 hours riding

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 Hacienda La Alegria

In the morning, enjoy a walk around the Hacienda gardens to learn about orchids and plants of the Cloud Forest. Then ride uphill admiring the forest and the incredible flora that thrives in this part of Ecuador. You will use the old road that was built in 1873 to connect Quito with the coast.

Arrive to Hacienda La Alegria for lunch. In the afternoon you are free to relax and enjoy the hot tub and the fireplace.

## Day 5 — 5: COTOPAXI VOLCANO - 8 hours riding

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 Refuge Tambopaxi

After breakfast, get the horses ready for your first long journey from Hacienda La Alegria. You head eastward in the Andes, crossing the Machachi valley and volcano Rumiñahui to arrive to your overnight refuge at Cotopaxi National Park.

Enjoy the hot shower and a delicious dinner by the fire, with the views over the Cotopaxi active volcano. You spend the night a rustic mountain refuge at 3750 meters.

## Day 6 — 6: SOUTHERN SIDE OF COTOPAXI VOLCANO - 8 hours riding

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This morning, you leave the mountains behind and head west towards the vast plains and their pine trees. Continue along the warmer valley and stop for lunch enjoying the views on Ecuador's giant, volcano Cotopaxi, from its southern side.

The night is spent camping on the ground of Hacienda Pansache.

## Day 7 — 7: LA CIENEGA - 6 hours riding

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 Hacienda Cienega

Ride early in the morning to enjoy the extraordinary view of the active volcano before breakfast. The challenge of the day will be to cover the northern base of Cotopaxi, heading east on a long journey that ends on the skirts of the Morro mountain

We ride in close proximity to the wild horse herds that live in the park and are the descendants of the horses brought by the Spanish in the 16th century.

At the end of the afternoon you will arrive to Hacienda La Cienega built in 1570, now a comfortable hotel that will allow you to rest after a long journey.

## Day 8 — 8: SIGCHOS - 8 hours riding

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 Isinlivi Lodge

You start the ride 30 minutes south of Hacienda la Cienega, and will be transferred by car to this point to start your adventure at the West Andes. Ride by the Inca trail and dirt trails that will take your group to Sigchos, the village that was known as the “last home” of Inca general Ruminahui. From this day on you will ride through dramatic landscape, including steep ravines and narrow passages.

This area is a combination of forest, rock peaks and eroded land from the past centuries. Arrive at the Hacienda San Jose, a working dairy farm and guesthouse, in time for a good meal, Jacuzzi, sauna and a comfortable night, while the horses enjoy lush fields of fresh grass.

## Day 9 — 9: SIGCHOS - QUILOTOA - 8 hours riding

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 Quilotoa Inn

After breakfast you head south to the Quilotoa Crater Lake. The trail goes across the highest mountain heading west. There we will find some small dairy farms and a couple of artisanal cheese makers. As you descend to the Canyon the environment becomes arid and desolate. The soil is composed by pumice from the Quilotoa volcano that erupted 1,280 years ago.

In the afternoon, you finally reach the Quilotoa volcano summit at 3,800 meters above sea level, where your hostel is located. At the edge of the volcano you will enjoy an amazing view of the breathtaking Quilotoa Crater Lake. The 3 kilometers wide caldera was formed by the collapse of this volcano after the last eruption.

## Day 10 — 10: QUILOTOA - INSILVI - 4-5 hours riding

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The early morning light will provide an excellent background for your last photos from the viewpoint of the crater lake. You will then start our ride down the volcano via a beautiful old trail. It will take you a half day to descend to the Canyon, crossing a few villages that will remind you of The Good, The Bad and The Ugly! Volcano pumice and dry soil hinder agriculture and just a few people live on this region.

The ride continues through several hills, arriving to the small village of Insilivi, founded in 1857. Here we will find our Hostel for the night.

## Day 11 — 11: INSILVI - PLANCHALOMA - ALOAG - 5 hours riding

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The last day riding in the region will pass through several narrow old paths ascending to the high Andes paramo. From here enjoy the incredible scenery from one valley to another.

The colours and the mountains make the changes from paramo to eroded land full of different colour patches. At the distance you will see the Eastern Mountain Chain before you make your way back to your starting point and Hacienda la Alegria.

## Day 12 — 12: ALOAG - QUITO - EUROPE

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After breakfast you are transferred to Quito airport for your flight home. Depending on your flight route you may arrive home tonight or tomorrow.

We are also able to organise extensions in Quito or to the Galapagos Islands, please contact us for more information.

### DATES & PRICES

DEPARTURE	RETURN	PRICE WITHOUT FLIGHTS	PRICE INCLUDING FLIGHTS	STATUS
05/11/2021	16/11/2021	£2,485		Open
04/11/2022	15/11/2022	£2,485		Open

## Price details

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- International flights are not included. Please contact us and we can arrange flights on request.
- Airport transfers are not included and are payable locally - \$100 per car, return rate.
- The group is composed of 2 - 12 riders plus guides. There is a supplement of £120/\$150/€125 per rider if there are only two riders.
- There is a single supplement of £150/\$200/€175 where possible, payable if you are not prepared to share a room with another rider of the same sex.
- Children are welcome as long as they are competent riders and able to ride horses. There is a discount of c. £150/\$200/€175 for children of 15 years and younger (mini 12 years old).
- There is a rider weight limit of 90kgs. If you are over this limit please contact us.
- There is a possibility to extend your stay. The cost is £180/\$250/€210 pers/night (sharing). This price includes full-board accommodation and riding lessons or a trail ride.

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

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### **SUPPORT TEAM**

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1 English speaking horse guide

### **LOGISTIC**

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1 support vehicle

1 "chagras" support team for horses and logistic

### **ACCOMMODATION**

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Double, twin or triple rooms in a variety of accommodation from haciendas, refuges and even camping for a few nights

### **MEALS**

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Full board from first diner D1 to last breakfast D12

Beverages including beer and wine (at the Hacienda in Aloag)

### **ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT**

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Ponchos, rain ponchos, helmet, chaps

Saddle bags

## Price doesn't include

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### **MEALS**

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Beverage and personal extra if taken outside the hacienda Aloag

### **TRANSPORTS**

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International flights bookable on request

Visa fees if applicable

Return airport transfers - see "dates and prices" for details

### **EXTRA**

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Tips to local team

### **EXTRAS**

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Small group supplement - see above for details

### **INSURANCE**

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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

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### **ACCOMMODATION**

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Single room supplement

### **EXTRA**

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Extension at the Hacienda

EQUESTRIAN INFO

## Horses

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

## Minimum riding ability

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### MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

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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

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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

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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

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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. The ascent is gradual and the itinerary was created to help riders get used to the altitude progressively. This trail is not suitable for riders suffering from vertigo.

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

### EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

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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

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You stay in a variety of accommodation from haciendas, refuges and even camping for a few nights. Some of the haciendas are more rustic than others and refuges provide dormitory accommodation.

### MEALS

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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

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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.

### GUIDE AND LOCAL TEAM

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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.

### TIPS

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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

### 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

- Sleeping bag with a comfort rating of at least minus 5c, preferably minus 10c. We also suggest adding a liner, such as silk or fleece for extra warmth
  - Thermarest pad or similar self-inflating mattress
- (These items can be hired at extra cost - payable locally, but must be requested in advance).

### 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 for moving around camp at night - bring spare batteries and bulbs
- Ear plugs (for light sleepers)
- Water bottle - 2 x 1 litre, or equivalent
- Wet wipes for when washing water isn't available

### 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
- Toilet paper

### 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!

## VISA & HEALTH

### Formalities

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All tourists need a passport valid for at least six months beyond their travel dates. In principal you also need an onward ticket or return ticket as well, although this is rarely asked for. Upon entry you will have to complete an international embarkation/disembarkation form, which is stamped along with your passport and must be kept together with it; you will have to present it when leaving the country.

#### Passport note:

You are legally required to carry your passport with you at all times in case of a spot check by local authorities; a photocopy is not an officially acceptable substitute and you may find that you are not allowed to return to your hotel to collect the original.

#### Visas:

Visas are not required by American, Canadian, Australian, British or other EU nationals for stays of up to 90 days in a 12-month period.

#### Visa note:

Nationals not referred to are advised to contact the embassy to check visa requirements for Ecuador.

#### Insurance:

From 22nd July 2018 onwards, tourists arriving for a stay of 90 days or less will be asked to show proof that they have appropriate travel medical insurance. This also applies to the Galapagos Islands.

#### Embassies

Embassy of the Republic of Ecuador in the UK

Telephone: (020) 7584 1367. Opening times: Mon-Fri 0930-1330, 1400-1630; Mon-Fri 1400-1630 (phone enquiries).

British Embassy in Ecuador

Telephone: (2) 2970 800/801. Website: <https://www.gov.uk/world/ecuador> / Opening times: Mon-Thur 0830-1130 (consular services).

#### ADDRESSES OF CONSULATES

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- Consulat d'Equateur en Belgique  
Avenue Louise  
B-1050 Bruxelles  
Tél. : 2644 30 50  
Fax : 2644 28 13
- Consulat et ambassade d'Equateur  
34 Avenue de Messine  
75008 PARIS  
Tél. : 01 45 61 10 04  
Fax : 01 42 56 06 64
- Consulat d'Equateur à Marseille  
boulevard des Bassins-du-Radoub, Cap Pinède  
13002 Marseille  
Tél. : 04 91 02 55 55  
Fax : 04 91 58 52 59
- Ambassade de France  
Calle General Leonidas Plaza  
107 y Patria  
QUITO  
Tél. : +593 (2) 294 38 00  
Fax : +593 9416 0662  
[cancilleria.quito-amba@diplomatie.gouv.fr](mailto:cancilleria.quito-amba@diplomatie.gouv.fr)

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## Health

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There are no vaccinations legally required to travel to Ecuador. There is one exception though. You need a yellow fever vaccination if you have travelled to a country (7 days or less before entering Ecuador) where that disease is widely prevalent. A yellow fever vaccination is required anyway, when travelling in the Amazon rainforest east of the Andes.

It's a good thing to get your vaccinations in order before travelling to Ecuador. The general vaccination against Diphtheria, Tetanus and Polio (DTP) is recommended. Also a hepatitis A vaccination is recommended and vaccination against hepatitis B, tuberculosis, rabies and typhoid are also sometimes recommended for stays longer than 3 months.

Malaria is prevalent in some parts of the country (below 2,000 metres, especially in the rainforest but also some coastal areas, none on the Galapagos Islands) and it is recommended to take malaria pills and take other normal anti-mosquito precautions as well. Dengue sometimes occurs as well. There is no vaccination, so buy mosquito repellent (preferably with 50% DEET), and sleep under a net. Also wear long sleeves if possible.

UK health authorities have classified Ecuador as having a risk of Zika virus transmission.

Finally, other possible health issues include diarrhea and other general travellers' diseases like motion sickness. Watch what you eat and drink and in case you get it, drink plenty of fluids (to prevent dehydration) and bring ORS.

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## Insurance

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It is a condition of your booking with Equus Journeys that you have travel insurance which covers you for the riding activities to be undertaken. Your travel insurance should cover you for medical expenses and repatriation. Your guides will require your travel insurance details before they allow you to ride and may refuse to let you ride if you cannot provide them. You should take your insurance documents with you.

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## Voltage

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120 volts AC, 60Hz. Plugs used are American-style (two perpendicular flat blades with or without a circular grounding pin).

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## Budget and money

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The US Dollar, is the national currency of Ecuador. One dollar consists of 100 cents. Frequently used coins are the penny (1¢), nickel (5¢), dime (10¢) and quarter (25¢). 50¢ and \$1 coins also exist, but are rarely used. Frequently used banknotes are the \$1, \$5, \$10 and \$20 notes. \$2, \$50 and \$100 notes can also be found, but are rarely used.

Ecuador has minted their own coins that are the same value as the US coins. There is a larger 50 ¢, 20 ¢ and a 2 ¢ coin. Most people do not like taking bills that are larger than \$10 and it can be quite hard to break \$20 bills at most restaurants and shops. It is recommended to come into the country with plenty of \$1, \$5 and \$10 bills. Most ATMs give \$20 bills.

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## Telephone and jetlag

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To dial Ecuador from the UK: 00 + 593 + City Area Code + Local number

Ecuador's standard time is -5 Hours away from Greenwich Mean Time and Ecuador does not utilise Daylight Time Saving.