



**American  
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*The Spirit of Alpinism*

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## **Ecuador Antisana-Illiniza Expedition Program Itinerary (not including Chimborazo)**

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### **Day 1: Arrive Quito (9500 ft)**

Arrive in Quito and meet your guide and other members of the expedition at Hotel Quito. The first day is designated for traveling to Ecuador and becoming situated in country. If you are arriving early, we will provide you with suggestions for a variety of sight seeing options (e.g., the historic colonial sector of Quito and El Panacillo overlooking the city). We will spend the night at Hotel Reina Isabel.

### **Day 2: Acclimatize - Otavalo Market**

After meeting the rest of your group for breakfast, we will drive north, crossing the line of the Equator on our way to the town of Otavalo. We achieve some good, active acclimatization while exploring the market, which is filled with indigenous crafts and food. We later take a leisurely walk to Lago de San Pablo and dine on the lakeshore across from the dormant volcano Imbabura (15,255ft). We return to Hotel Reina Isabel in Quito for the evening.

### **Day 3: Acclimatize – Cerro Pasochoa (13,776ft)**

Today we will go on our first acclimatization hike on Cerro Pasochoa. The Pasochoa forest has been protected since 1984 and exists as at did in pre-Columbian times free of non-native plants. Here we will hike among stands of pumamaqui, polyapis, podocarpus, and sandalwood trees. We will return to Hotel Reina Isabel for the evening.

### **Day 4: Acclimatize – Gua Gua Pichincha (15,728')**

We head north of Quito to the Pichincha Massif for an acclimatization hike on Gua Gua Pichincha. Though we will be climbing 2000 feet this day above our previous high mark, our cumulative acclimatization should mean that you will feel relatively comfortable at this high altitude. This is a very photogenic hike that provides views of the entire central valley from high above Quito (the "Avenue of the Volcanoes," as tourism literature describes it). After the hike, we will return to Hotel Reina Isabel for the evening.

### **Day 5: Illiniza Hut & Climb of Illiniza Norte (16,817 ft)**

After enjoying breakfast at our hotel in Quito, we drive south to the Illiniza trailhead. Our rangers and their pack animals carry our gear on horseback to a hut, which is beautifully situated at 15,250 feet below the col between Illiniza Sur and Illiniza Norte. To reach the hut we hike through grassy plains following braided streams into the sub-alpine environment. We will arrive early enough in the day to make the largely 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> class scramble to the summit of Illiniza Norte. Our route begins near the hut and gains a narrow ridge sometimes requiring roped belays. We then drop behind the ridge

into a gully system of solid 4th class rock eventually opening up onto the jagged summit ridge where we enjoy excellent views of Cotopaxi (19,347') and Antisana (18,891') and our next objective, Illiniza Sur. Night in the Illiniza Hut.

#### **Day 6: Climb Illiniza Sur (17,267 ft)**

The glaciers of Illiniza Sur have changed dramatically since we began guiding here thirty years ago. The normal route varies from year to year and often involves steep snow and ice up to 60 degrees. This is an all-day climb, and we will take full advantage of an alpine start (pre-dawn) to ensure our success on this technically demanding and rewarding summit. After we descend from our climb, we travel to a local hacienda for the night.

#### **Day 7: Saquisilí Market**

This is a day for rest and for an exploration of aspects of Ecuador's culture. Saquisilí is a village an hour south of Quito that hosts an authentic Indian Market on Thursdays. Campesinos come from all around to buy and sell goods, including animals, produce, tools, and other homemaking goods. This is not a market designed for tourists. It offers an untarnished window into the lives of these hardworking mountain people and provides an excellent opportunity to capture unique cultural photos. Night in a local hacienda.

#### **Day 8: Antisana Basecamp.**

We leave Quito, and drive through the remote Andean village of Pujili. We follow a winding mountain road up into the páramo, and through the land surrounding an old private hacienda. We hike a short distance to establish our camp near the base of the glacier at approximately 15,500 ft.

#### **Day 9: Climb Antisana (18,891')**

After an alpine start, we take advantage of the firm route conditions and we begin our ascent to Antisana's highest of four summits. Our route will most likely head toward the saddle between Antisana Cumbre Maxima (highest summit) and Pico Sur (south summit). As we near the saddle route finding becomes integral to finding access to the upper reaches of the mountain. Ultimately our route will involve a combination of moderately angled glacier travel and short, steep sections that require the use of a full range of snow and ice techniques for intermediate terrain. We will spend the night at base camp or descend to a hacienda.

#### **Day 10 Return to Quito or Climb**

After an optional stop at Papallacta or Ilalo hot springs, we will return to Quito and enjoy the culture of Ecuador's capital city for a final evening. If we experience inclement weather on Day 9 and conditions improve overnight, we will attempt to climb the mountain today. Final night at Hotel Reina Isabel in Quito before departing for home the following day.

#### **Program Cost Inclusions and Exclusions**

[http://www.aai.cc/ProgramDetail/ecuador\\_antisana/](http://www.aai.cc/ProgramDetail/ecuador_antisana/)