



American  
Alpine Institute

*The Spirit of Alpinism*

[www.AlpineInstitute.com](http://www.AlpineInstitute.com)

[Info@AlpineInstitute.com](mailto:Info@AlpineInstitute.com)

Administrative Office: 360-671-1505

Equipment Shop: 360-671-1570

## Antisana-Illiniza Expedition and Chimborazo Climb Program Itinerary

© 2017 American Alpine Institute

### Part One: Antisana-Illiniza Expedition

#### Day 1: Arrive Quito

This is the first scheduled day of the program. Arrive in Quito and meet your guide and other members of the expedition at Hotel Reina Isabel at 19:00. The first day is designated for traveling to Ecuador and becoming situated in the country. For those who arrive early, we will provide you with a variety of sightseeing options including a tour of the historic colonial sector of Quito and El Panecillo overlooking the city.

- **Altitudes:** Quito: 9,350ft / 2,850m
- **Vertical gain during the day:** n/a
- **Travel times:** n/a
- **Walking distance:** n/a
- **Accommodations:** Hotel Reina Isabel
- **Sleeping elevation:** 9,350ft / 2,850m
- **Meals included:** Breakfast\*

#### Day 2: Acclimatize - Quito City Tour

After meeting the rest of your group for breakfast at 08:00 am at the hotel, the guides will brief you on the details of the expedition and conduct a gear check. We will then leave the hotel and visit some of the main colonial churches in the old part of Quito such as Basilica, la Compania, San Francisco.

- **Altitudes:** Quito: 9,350ft / 2,850m
- **Vertical gain during the day:** n/a
- **Travel times:** n/a
- **Walking distance:** Varies
- **Accommodations:** Hotel Reina Isabel
- **Sleeping elevation:** 9,350ft / 2,850m
- **Meals included:** Breakfast\*

#### Day 3: Acclimatize Hike - Cerro Pasochoa (13,776 ft.)

Today we will go on our first acclimatization hike on Cerro Pasochoa. The Pasochoa Wildlife Refuge has been protected since 1982, and exists as it did in pre-Colombian times. In the forest below Cerro Pasochoa we will hike among stands of pumamaqui, polylepis, podocarpus, and sandalwood trees as we watch for some of the more than one hundred species of native birds.

- **Altitudes:** Begin at Quito: 9,350ft / 2,850m; Cerro Pasochoa: 13,776ft / 4,200m
- **Vertical gain during the day:** 2,296ft / 700m
- **Travel Time:** 2 hours driving time; 4-5 hours walking time
- **Walking Distance:** 5 miles
- **Accommodations:** Hotel Reina Isabel
- **Sleeping elevation:** 9,350ft / 2,850m
- **Meals Included:** Breakfast, Lunch\*

#### **Day 4: Acclimatize Hike - Rucu Pichincha (15,413 ft.)**

On day four, we head to the East of Quito to the Pichincha Massif today for our final acclimatization hike on Rucu Pichincha. This hike involves first taking a cable car ride above the city, then hiking on trail through rolling hills with a few rock scrambles for good measure. The summit provides views of the central valley from high above Quito. In the afternoon, we travel to one of the oldest haciendas in Ecuador, Hacienda Guachala (built in 1580). The hacienda is a beautiful property, maintaining its rustic charm, and was used by Edward Whymper before his first ascent of Cayambe in 1880.

- **Altitudes:** Begin at Quito: 9,350ft / 2,850m; Rucu Pichincha: 15,413ft / 4,698m
- **Vertical gain during the day:** 2,673ft / 815m
- **Travel Time:** 3 hours driving; 4-5 hours walking
- **Walking Distance:** 6 miles
- **Accommodations:** Hacienda Guachala
- **Sleeping elevation:** 9,184ft / 2,800m
- **Meals Included:** Breakfast, Lunch\*

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

After enjoying breakfast at our hotel in Quito, we drive south to the Illiniza trailhead. Our Arrieros 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 summit 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 ft.) and Antisana (18,891 ft.) and our next objective, Illiniza Sur. Night in the Illiniza Hut.

- **Altitudes:** Begin at Quito: 9,350ft / 2,850m; Illiniza Norte: 16,817ft / 5,126m
- **Vertical gain during the day:** 1,968ft / 600m to the hut + 1,394ft / 425m to the summit= 3,362ft / 1,024m total
- **Travel times:** 3 hours to the hut + 3 hours to the summit = 6 hours walking total
- **Walking distance:** 4 miles to the hut + 2 miles to summit of the north peak = 6 miles total
- **Accommodations:** Nuevos Horizontes Hut (a.k.a. Illiniza Hut)
- **Sleeping elevation:** 15,250ft / 4,648m
- **Meals included:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

#### **Day 6: Summit Illiniza Sur (17,217 ft.)**

The glaciers of Illiniza Sur have changed dramatically since AAI began guiding here forty 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 our pre-dawn, "alpine start" 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.

- **Altitudes:** Begin at Nuevos Horizontes Hut: 15,250ft / 4,648m; Illiniza Sur 17,217ft / 5,248m
- **Vertical gain during the day:** 1,797ft / 548m
- **Travel times:** 4 hours walking
- **Walking distance:** 2 miles
- **Accommodations:** Hacienda Chuquiragua
- **Sleeping elevation:** 10,663ft / 3,250m
- **Meals included:** Breakfast, Lunch\*

### **Day 7: Travel / Recovery Day - Saquisilí Market**

This day allows for rest and recovery after our acclimatization hikes. We will travel to Saquisilí village, which 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, however, this is not a market designed for tourists. The Saquisilí Market offers an untarnished window into the lives of these hardworking mountain people and provides an excellent opportunity to capture unique cultural photos.

- **Altitudes:** Begin at Hacienda Chuquiragua ; Saquisilí Market: 9,425ft / 2,900m
- **Vertical gain during the day:** n/a
- **Travel times:** 2 hours driving
- **Walking distance:** n/a
- **Accommodations:** Hacienda Guaytara
- **Sleeping elevation:** 11,480ft / 3,500m
- **Meals included:** Breakfast\*

### **Day 8: Travel to Antisana Base Camp**

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 basecamp near the base of the glacier at approximately 15,500 ft.

- **Altitudes:** Begin at Hacienda Guaytara: 11,480ft / 3,500m ; Antisana Basecamp 15,080ft / 4,600m
- **Vertical gain during the day:** 984ft / 300m
- **Travel times:** 2 hours driving; 1-2 hours walking
- **Walking distance:** 2-3 miles
- **Accommodations:** Antisana Basecamp
- **Sleeping elevation:** 15,500ft / 4,724m
- **Meals included:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

### **Day 9: Antisana Summit Attempt Day #1 (18,891 ft.)**

Depending on weather, we will make our first attempt at the Antisana Summit on this day. After an alpine start (pre-dawn), 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, depending on weather.

- **Altitudes:** Begin at Antisana Basecamp: 15,080ft / 4,600m ; Antisana Cumbre Maxima: 18,891ft / 5,758m
- **Vertical gain during the day:** 3,739ft / 1,140m
- **Travel times:** 8-12 hours walking
- **Walking distance:** 4 miles
- **Accommodations:** Antisana Basecamp
- **Sleeping elevation:** 15,500ft / 4,724m
- **Meals included:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

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

If we experience inclement weather on Day 9 and conditions improve overnight, we will attempt to climb the mountain today.

If the group was successful on the first Antisana Summit Attempt Day, we have an option to stop at Papallacta (a small village) or Ilalo hot springs. We will then return to Quito and enjoy the culture of Ecuador's capital city for the final evening. The final night will be spent at the Hotel Reina Isabel in Quito before departing the following day.

- **Altitudes:** \*If successful summit on day 9\* Begin at Antisana Basecamp: 15,500ft / 4,724m ; Quito 9,350ft / 2,850m
- **Vertical gain during the day:** n/a
- **Travel times:** 2 hours driving
- **Walking distance:** n/a
- **Accommodations:** Hotel Reina Isabel
- **Sleeping elevation:** 9,350ft / 2,850m
- **Meals included:** Breakfast, Lunch\*

## **Part Two (optional): Chimborazo Climb**

### **Day 11: Travel to the flank of Chimborazo**

From Quito we drive south, down the "Valley of Volcanoes" along the Panamerican Highway through the towns of Latacunga and Ambato. We will stop along the way for lunch. In the afternoon we move up onto the eastern flanks of Chimborazo where we spend an evening in a lodge at 11,480 feet. It sits picturesquely in grassy plains below Chimborazo and allows us to rest and enjoy views of the Ecuadorian Altiplano surrounding Chimborazo and Carihuairazo (also known as "Chimborazo's Wife").

- **Altitudes:** Begin at Hotel Reina Isabel: 9,184ft / 2,800m
- **Vertical gain during the day:** n/a
- **Travel Time:** 4 hours driving
- **Walking Distance:** n/a
- **Accommodations:** Urbina Mountain Lodge
- **Sleeping elevation:** 11,480ft / 3,500m
- **Meals Included:** Breakfast

### **Day 12: Travel to Chimborazo Basecamp**

From the lodge on the eastern side of Chimborazo we drive to the western side of the volcano passing through the town of Riobamba. Chimborazo Province is very hilly and is populated by a very high percentage of indigenous people. Great views of the Chimborazo massif, the surrounding rolling terrain and wild vicuñas and llamas will be had during our drive. Around noon we will reach the Carrel hut (15,700 ft / 4800 m) for

lunch. The afternoon will be used to complete a two-hour hike to the Stubel Camp. Climbers carry their own personal gear to camp while porters carry water, tents, and food. In preparation for our alpine start around midnight we will have an early dinner. Despite the building excitement for the next day's summit climb we will go to bed early, with anticipation for a safe and rewarding climb in the morning. If conditions on the mountain are different and a direct route is more favorable, the team may stay in the Whymper or Carrel huts and make the summit attempt from there.

- **Altitudes:** Begin at Urbina Mountain Lodge: 11,480ft / 3,500m; Stubel Base camp: 16,564ft / 5,050m
- **Vertical gain during the day:** 820ft / 250m
- **Travel Time:** 2 hours walking
- **Walking Distance:** 2 miles
- **Accommodations:** Stubel Camp
- **Sleeping elevation:** 16,564ft / 5,050m
- **Meals Included:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

### **Day 13: Chimborazo Summit Attempt #1 (20,703 ft.)**

From Stubel Camp, we follow the Stübel glacier until it joins the Castle Saddle (18,044 ft.). It takes an average of eight hours to get to the Whymper summit from Stübel Camp. By the time we reach the 18,500 foot level (5640 m), we will have surmounted most of the technical challenges on the mountain, and on the remainder of our route we will ascend compact and moderately angled snow. The summit crater area is a vast one that is normally covered in its entirety either in soft snow or nieve penitentes. Although this is our longest day, we will be well acclimatized from the conditioning we have achieved on our previous climbs. Round trip we will spend 10 to 12 hours on route, which includes some ice ramps, snow bridges, and sections of icefall. It is a very interesting route on an impressively large mountain. We will descend to the Carrel hut and then continue in our vehicle to the lower altitude and oxygen rich town of Baños at the edge of the Amazon Basin.

- **Altitudes:** Begin at Stubel Camp: 16,564ft / 5,050m; Chimborazo Cumbre Máxima: 20,703ft / 6,310m
- **Vertical gain during the day:** 4,034ft / 1,230m
- **Travel Time:** 10-12 hours walking
- **Walking Distance:** 4-5 miles
- **Accommodations:** Hotel in Baños (or camp/ hut depending on how the climb goes)
- **Sleeping elevation:** 6,232ft / 1,900m (or other)
- **Meals Included:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

### **Day 14: Chimborazo Summit Attempt #2 (20,703 ft.)**

This day is a cushion day in our itinerary. Should Day 13 be needed to wait out inclement weather, we will make our summit climb on this day. If we climb on Day 14, we will hike out after our ascent and drive to Baños where we will spend the night in a hotel. Once in the semi-tropical town of Baños we will rest, relax, enjoy good food, and some time in the hot springs.

- **Altitudes:** \*if successful summit on Day 13\* Begin at Hotel in Baños: 6,232ft / 1,900m
- **Vertical gain during the day:** n/a
- **Travel Time:** n/a
- **Walking Distance:** n/a
- **Accommodations:** Hotel in Baños
- **Sleeping elevation:** 6,232ft / 1,900m

- **Meals Included:** Breakfast, Lunch\*

### **Day 15: Return to Quito – End of Part 2**

This is the last scheduled day of the program. We will have an easy morning in Baños and return to Quito in the afternoon. The last evening is usually spent recounting, celebrating our successes and discussing plans for future adventures. The final night will be spent at the Hotel Reina Isabel in Quito before departing; fly home, or continue your exploration of Ecuador in the Amazon Basin, or with a flight to the Galapagos Islands.

- **Altitudes:** Begin at Hotel in Baños: 6,232ft / 1,900m; Quito: 9,350ft / 2,850m
- **Vertical gain during the day:** n/a
- **Travel Time:** 3 hours driving
- **Walking Distance:** n/a
- **Accommodations:** Hotel Reina Isabel
- **Sleeping elevation:** 9,350ft / 2,850m
- **Meals Included:** Breakfast\*

---

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

#### **Inclusions:**

Lodging in hotels, haciendas, huts, and tents on a shared basis for the dates of your program (available on a private basis by special arrangement, subject to availability, and at added cost); meals while at huts and while climbing; group cooking equipment; admissions to museums and national parks; group climbing equipment; transportation during trip; porters for communal supplies on Chimborazo.

#### **\*Exclusions:**

Airfare, transportation to/from airport, personal equipment, meals in cities, hotels, haciendas, and lodges, single supplement for lodging is requested (as available), gratuities to guides, government and airport taxes, inoculations; personal insurance, excess baggage, personal porters for personal gear on Chimborazo. *You can plan to spend approximately \$12-16/meal, and you will be on your own for up to nine meals on the trip. We offer airport transfers for \$50 per transfer vehicle (1-3 climbers + gear).*