

# THE ANDES: PEAKS, HIGHLANDS & BEYOND

4-Day Tour in the Andes



*Welcome to a 4-day adventure exploring the majestic Avenue of the Volcanoes. Experience the warm hospitality of local communities, admire stunning Sierra landscapes, visit traditional highlands haciendas, and savor delightful Andean cuisine.*



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## **Day 1: Cotopaxi & Rose Plantation (-/L/-)**

Embark on this volcanic journey, heading south from Quito, with a first stop at a traditional open market that offers great insights into Andean cuisine and its rich cultural heritage.

Upon arrival at the Cotopaxi National Park, diverse experiences await:

**Limpiopungo** lake offers a magnificent Andean experience. A walk around the lake and grounds, may grace you with sightings of local wildlife.\*

**\*Cotopaxi's first basecamp** (located at 16,400 feet) features a rewarding panoramic view after an invigorating hike of about 1,500 feet.\*

The Inca ruins of **Pucará Del Salitre**, a strategically built 15th century military fortress, offer a stunning view of the highlands plateau and the surrounding Andes.\*

**Cueva de los Buhos** (Owls Cave), a geological fault believed to have formed after an eruption, is home to two owl species, eagles and other wildlife.\*

To end this wonderful day of discovery, you will learn about the significance of Ecuador's rose industry at a blooming local plantation.





## **Day 2: Quilotoa Crater Lake & Tigua Workshop (B/L/-)**

A scenic drive through the central Andes takes you to Quilotoa, where you will admire the incredible, turquoise-colored lake inside the volcano's caldera. Enjoy the ever-changing water's color, perfectly contrasting with the breathtaking Sierra views and peaks.



There are three options to explore the breathtaking scenery of Quilotoa:

- Traditional Viewpoint: An easy 20-minute hike.
- Shalala Viewpoint: An active hike of approximately one hour.
- Lake-Shore Hike: A strenuous 2-hour trek.

Later, visit the Tigua art gallery and workshop, renowned for vibrant wood masks and intricate paintings on sheepskin, depicting everyday life scenes. Spend time admiring and shopping for these unique artworks before continuing the journey towards Baños.

## **Day 3: Baños: Waterfalls & Scenic Views (B/L/-)**

Today you will visit two impressive waterfalls in the region: the awe-inspiring *Devil's Cauldron* and the beautiful *Mantle of the Bride* (Pailón del Diablo & Manto de la Novia).





Next, a fantastic vantage point allows you to admire the lush valley and hills, framed by the majestic Tungurahua volcano. *Mano de la Pachamama* (Mother's nature hand) is a remarkable monument that emerges from the mountains, and nearby, you will find the iconic "swing at the end of the world".

Enjoy some exploration in Baños' charming streets, where you can visit local souvenir shops and indulge in tasting delightful 'melcocha'—a taffy-like treat handmade from whole cane sugar. At the end of the day, continue your journey south towards Riobamba.

#### **Day 4: Chimborazo – Hiking Experience (B/L/-)**

Today, a remarkable visit to Chimborazo, the "closest point to the sun" awaits! On your way from Riobamba to Chimborazo Mountain, pass through quaint indigenous villages and awesome highlands scenery.



Chimborazo presents a relatively easy hiking experience to its first basecamp located at approximately 15,915 feet. You will also explore the beautiful trail to Condor Cocha Lake, where sightings of Andean birds and other wildlife are possible.

A majestic view of Chimborazo and other peaks offers the perfect conclusion to this fantastic Andean adventure. After lunch, you will be transported back to your hotel in Quito. End of services



## INCLUDED

- Hotel Pick-up & Drop-off
- Private Transportation
- Bilingual Guide
- Meals as described in the itinerary (B=Breakfast, L= Lunch, BL= Box Lunch, BB= Box Breakfast). Meals include one soft drink per serving.
- Three nights of accommodation
- Entrance Fees
- Snacks

## NOT INCLUDED

- Dinner and meals not described in the itinerary
- **Cotopaxi Horseback riding** (available for an extra cost)
- Personal Expenses
- Extra soft beverages
- Alcoholic beverages
- Extra and/or non-scheduled visit/activity
- Tips

### Notes:

The itinerary and order of visits are subject to change due to guests' interests, time constraints, physical endurance, weather, municipal regulations, safety, and/or unforeseen circumstances.

\*Due to time constraints, not all these activities will be included in one day; your guide will tailor the experience to suit you and your party.