



## LAT-156 – EXPLORING THE COTOPAXI REGION – A NATURE PARADISE

Andean Waterfalls and Lake, Volcano & Cotopaxi National Park

Four Days / Three Nights

Daily Departures from Quito

Physical Effort: Low - Moderate

### ITINERARY

#### DAY 01: QUITO & SANTA RITA PRIVATE ECOLOGICAL RESERVE

We leave Quito early in the morning, after a 1.5-hour drive (approximately) we will arrive at our starting point at an altitude of 3,200 meters (10,499 ft). Today's adventure will be guided by the Pita River! This river is born from the Cotopaxi, forming waterfalls and unique landscapes in which we will hike. We will trek on an out-and-back trail (3-4 hours round) with lush vegetation and enchanted waterfalls where we can also have a refreshing splash. This path will take us to Condor Machay, a majestic waterfall of about 80 mts (263ft).

Once back to the starting point, we will have a 10 minutes' walk on a secondary road getting up to Santa Rita Private Ecological Reserve, where we will trek for about 20 minutes to observe Condor Machay waterfall from a rarely seen angle. We will have lunch at Santa Rita and then have a 30-minute drive to Hacienda El Porvenir. In the afternoon we will take a short walk to Bosque del Tentadero, a Polylepis or paper barked tree forest which is part of a reforestation program. The rest of the afternoon is at leisure, you can book a massage at APU Mountain Spa or relax by the warm fire of the chimneys.

Meals: Lunch

Overnight accommodation Hacienda Porvenir

#### DAY 02: RUMIÑAHUI VOLCANO HIKE

After a recharging breakfast, we begin our Rumiñahui Volcano hike, crossing vast highlands swept by the cold breath of the Andes. In one single frame one can take valleys, mountains, and neighboring volcanoes. On a cloudless day, we can even admire in the distance the Illinizas peaks and Chimborazo, the highest snow-capped mountain of Ecuador. This hike takes about 5 hours total round trip. Hiking difficulty is middle. We will hike along with a local guide that will share with us his knowledge about the mountains, the páramo and the local

culture. We will have a lunch-date with the Apus (Mountain Spirit) taking a packed lunch for this hike. A warm fireplace will be waiting for you once you are back in the Hacienda.

Meals: Breakfast, Packed Lunch

Overnight accommodation Hacienda Porvenir



### DAY 03: COTOPAXI NATIONAL PARK VISIT

Have you ever thought that glaciers are possible on the Equatorial line? Have you ever wondered how it is to climb an active volcano? Would you like to discover why ancient explorers pointed out Cotopaxi as one of the most beautiful mountains in the World? This is a great opportunity to immerse yourself in a fantastic day trip of exploration to the Iconic Cotopaxi National Park. Home of herds of wild- truly wild- horses, Andean foxes, and deer. Where migratory birds stop by to get some rest on their way South.

The location is the perfect place to learn about Andean geology, with Pasochoa, Rumiñahui, Sincholagua, and Cotopaxi Volcano being the hosts. On the visit, you will reach the car park below the Cotopaxi Refuge, where you begin a short hike up to the climbing hut (Refugio José Ribas) at 4,800m (15,744 ft). It is hard not to be overwhelmed by the sheer immensity of the Volcano on this short hike (about 1.5 miles round). Once back in the vehicle, you will continue the way, driving down to Limpiopungo Lake, where a wholesome box lunch will be served. After lunch, the exploration will continue - a vast territory with ancient Inca military fortresses and plains full of volcanic rocks from past eruptions. Don't forget to hydrate and bring your camera for this spectacle! (Breakfast/Packed lunch).

Meals: Breakfast, Packed Lunch

Overnight accommodation Hacienda Porvenir



## DAY 04: QUILOTOA LAKE VISIT

Early in the morning, we will drive you from El Porvenir to Quilotoa, this is considered one of the most beautiful lagoons of volcanic origin in the whole world. It is in the Ecuadorian Andes specifically in Pujilí, in the province of Cotopaxi. Quilotoa volcano, which is home to this magical lagoon, always surprises those who visit it not only because of the variety of colors of its waters, but because of the extraordinary nature of the site. The drive to Laguna Quilotoa displays a beautiful view of the Andean mountains, passing the ancient canyon of Zumbahua and many indigenous towns and farmlands. The trip through the villages of the area provides a fantastic chance to see one of the most authentic parts of the country.

It is possible to hike down into the crater to the lakeshore (45 min), with an optional mule ride out if you feel tired. After this short excursion, we will have a delicious, packed lunch. In the afternoon we will drive you to Quito.

Meals: Breakfast, Packed Lunch

Overnight accommodation Hacienda Porvenir

## TOUR RATES INCLUDE:

Three-night accommodation at Hacienda Porvenir based on double occupancy.

Land service and daily tours as indicated in itinerary fully escorted by Licensed English speaking guides.

Round trip transfers between a hotel in Quito and Hacienda Porvenir.

Gears required for the activities.

Entrance fees to Santa Rita Ecological Reserve, Machay Waterfalls and to Quilotoa

Entrance to APU Mountain SPA wet area

Meals as indicated in itinerary plus one soft drink per meal.

## NOT INCLUDED:

International air between points in USA and Quito.

Travel and Health Insurance (Highly Recommended)

Land service, tours, accommodations not indicated in itinerary.

Expenses of personal nature. Alcoholic drinks

Gratuities/Tips to guides.